



Brett Christenson

Driving Product Strategy Through Design Leadership

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Visionary Senior Director of User Experience with 26 years of experience shaping UX strategy for enterprise software and customer engagement platforms. Proven record of driving measurable impact—boosting user satisfaction by 19 points and reducing rework by 30% through a unified design system. Skilled in aligning design leadership with business goals, fostering cross-functional collaboration, and championing user-centric innovation that accelerates growth.

EXPERIENCE

2020-01 - PRESENT

Senior Director of User Experience

SugarCRM

Remote

- Lead UX strategy and execution across an enterprise-scale customer engagement and data intelligence platform deployed by thousands of teams worldwide, with a focus on AI-augmented seller experiences and platform modernization. Improved user satisfaction scores by 19 points and accelerated sales conversion rates.
- Serve as strategic design partner to C-suite, Product, Engineering, and Revenue leadership, embedding UX into quarterly OKR planning and product lifecycle decisions with direct impact on company roadmap. Influenced multi-million-dollar roadmap investments by aligning UX insights with business KPIs.
- Champion system-wide design thinking from design systems to research operations, improving cross-product experience cohesion and operational scalability across 50+ product features. Reduced design and development rework by 30% through implementation of a unified design system.
- Coach and develop distributed team of UX designers and researchers across multiple time zones, driving both tactical delivery excellence and long-term team health. Increased team retention and engagement, with 70% of direct reports advancing in role or responsibility within two years.
- Present regularly to executive stakeholders on user insights, design strategy, and investment priorities, directly influencing resource allocation. Secured ongoing UX investment that resulted in measurable increases in adoption, NPS, and time-to-value for key workflows.

2018-10 - 2020-12

Product Owner

Pentaho (Hitachi Vantara)

Orlando, FL

- Designed data integration and enterprise business analytics applications for Fortune 500 clients.
- Led usability testing and information architecture for complex B2B analytical tools serving data scientists and business analysts.
- Prioritized and refined product backlogs for multi-disciplinary agile teams, translating stakeholder requirements into actionable user stories for data platform enhancements.

2014-06 - 2018-10

UX Manager

Pentaho (Hitachi Vantara)

Orlando, FL

- Scaled team 4x (3 to 12 members) in 18 months.
- Reduced design delivery time by 50% (6 weeks to 3 weeks).

2007-10 - 2014-06

- Established design operations infrastructure including weekly critique sessions, comprehensive pattern library with 150+ components, and quarterly research reviews that improved cross-team alignment by 60%.

UX Designer

Pentaho (Hitachi Vantara)
Orlando, FL

- Translated user needs into actionable product strategy and backlog priorities.
- Conducted usability testing sessions with 100+ end users annually, improving task completion rates by 35% and reducing user error rates by 50%.
- Facilitated cross-functional workshops for strategic planning, aligning stakeholders across multiple business units.
- Led information architecture redesign for complex B2B analytical tools, resulting in 40% faster user onboarding and 25% increase in feature adoption across data scientist and business analyst user segments.

1999-08 - 2007-10

UX Designer / UX Lead

Fintech SaaS

- Transitioned from internet banking UX design to leading multi-product platform strategy, scaling design leadership across 6 integrated products and establishing cross-functional delivery practices.
- Reduced product delivery time by 20% through collaborative design reviews with Product Management, Engineering, and Design teams, establishing integrated planning processes that became standard practice.
- Led design initiatives for early-stage SaaS platforms, establishing UX practices and design systems that scaled with business growth.
- Pioneered the integration of open-source frameworks into core fintech SaaS web applications, elevating accessibility standards and fostering ecosystem-wide adoption among partner engineering teams.

EDUCATION

Bachelors

Ringling School of Art and Design
Bachelors Fine Arts Graphic and Interactive Communication |Ringling School of Art and Design
Minor in Photography, Sarasota, FL

SKILLS

UX Strategy, Design Vision, Team Leadership, Organizational Change Management, Executive Stakeholder Management

Design Systems, ResearchOps, Design Operations, Scalable Processes, Agile Product Development, Cross-Functional Collaboration

AI-Supported Workflows, Enterprise Software, B2B SaaS, CRM Platforms, Data Intelligence, Service Design, Accessibility & Compliance

Outcome-Driven Metrics, Roadmap Planning, Business KPI Alignment, Design Maturity Assessment, ROI Optimization