James Carleton

I love designing elegant and engaging product experiences for humans.

I have led big changes that start with small details using design systems and accessibility. These critical details add up to make a big impact on the experiences we build for our end customers. Collaboration is the thread I use to build a strong culture and productive teamwork.

Experience

2019 to 2024 - PayPal Inc. - Sr. User Experience Designer 2, Design Systems & Accessibility

- Lead designer for new visual language update (Sep 2023-Jan 2024) to consumer products, our small team delivered in just 3 weeks to meet deadlines by new exec leadership. App launched to public 1/20/24 with new design system colors, typography, assets, and architecture.
- Contributed to the foundations of design and engineering libraries built over previous years which enabled rapid iteration of the DS to support new initiatives and features
- Led support for various downstream teams to grow system and adoption across product and brand silos (Consumer, Merchant, Credit, Checkout, Marketing)
- Built and led DS support efforts for our customers (internal design+eng) in cross-time zone office hours, slack channels, share-outs
- Established and iterated DS team processes to improve design collaboration across the range of product design groups at PayPal
- Supported UX Ops staff in tooling upgrades, pilots, and training efforts
- Initiated efforts to raise the bar on accessibility in design and engineering, partnering with A11y staff to integrate standards into the design system, employee onboarding, and learning platforms. Helped kickstart internal accessibility champions network to spread influence across org lines
- Internal mentoring, hiring support, frequent presentations and speaking, driving UX team culture of learning and support through remote work transition
- External outreach: publishing on corporate blog and personal channels, speaking engagements at industry events, and design mentoring programs

Experience (continued)

2016 to 2019 - PayPal Inc. - Sr. User Experience Designer 1, Design Systems

- Started a brand new design system from scratch with 2 other designers, reporting to VP of Design, consoldated existing design directions as baseline system
- Nurtured our design system startup from concept into a functional product team with dedicated triad (design, engineering, product) delivering libraries for design and multiple code libraries on native (iOs/Android) and web platforms. This structure unlocked adoption of the DS by downstream product teams
- Established and evolved initial team process: agile scrum ceremonies, design reviews, design QA process, office hours, slack channels, stakeholder reports
- Built foundational design component libraries in Sketch, then later Figma, setup token and asset delivery tracks with engineers. Quickly adapted strategies as tooling developed greater support for DS management
- Taught product teams how to use library features and how to contribute to the DS

2011 to 2016 - Realtor.com - Sr. User Experience Designer, Consumer UX group

- Started as Jr UX after switching careers, promoted to Sr UX leading top priority projects on app and web consumer products.
- Bootstrapped the first UX pattern library (early design system) and design ops programs
- Contributor to UX team culture building, peer design reviews, shared learning, research integration

Education

1998 to 2003 - San Jose State University - Bachelor of Science, Industrial Design

Let's Connect

I like to keep things simple, but I can provide more details as needed. Just let me know, thanks!

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