

FRANKLIN J. WARD

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(708)-426-6657

CHICAGO, IL

LINKEDIN: FRANKLIN J. WARD
WWW.FJWARD.COM

Senior Product Designer | User-Centered Design Expert

A highly motivated and results-oriented senior product designer with a proven track record of success in human-centered design, design systems, Agile, Lean, Scrum and Kanban methodologies, UX research, design principles, user personas, customer engagement and success, data analytics, prototyping, stakeholder collaboration, scalable design documentation, and UI development. With a history of developing and deploying innovative, user-friendly digital solutions. Crafts intuitive digital experiences that drive engagement, improve business outcomes, and streamline user workflows. A forward-thinking leader who serves as a key contributor to the lasting success of an organization.

Core Skills & Expertise

User-Centered Design & UX Research: Deep understanding of design principles, user personas, and customer journeys through direct engagement and data analysis.

Prototyping & UI Development: Expert in creating high-fidelity designs & interactive prototypes using Figma and Adobe Creative Suite.

Design Systems: Experienced in building and maintaining scalable design systems that enhance consistency and efficiency.

Cross-Functional Collaboration: Strong communicator, working closely with engineering, customer success, and business stakeholders to align design goals with user needs.

Agile & Lean Methodologies: Skilled in working within Scrum and Kanban environments to iterate quickly and deliver high-impact designs.

Professional Experience

UX Designer | Valtech Inc. (Formerly Kin + Carta) | Chicago, IL

2021 - 2025

- Led design initiatives for enterprise-grade mobile and web applications for enterprise clients; driving a 5% increase in user engagement over 12 months by optimizing user workflows.
- Designed and maintained a scalable design system, improving design consistency and product development for agile teams.
- Facilitated workshops
- Developed high-fidelity prototypes and interactive wireframes, accelerating user testing and stakeholder buy-in.
- Conducted user research and usability testing, identifying key pain points that led to a 15% increase in user satisfaction.
- Collaborated with engineering teams to ensure seamless design implementation, reducing rework and improving product launch efficiency.
- Co-led the "Black+Kin" Employee Resource Group by promoting diversity, equality and inclusion at the workplace.

Product Designer | Kotoo Earth | Seattle, WA (Remote)

2020

- Created a refreshed UI/UX experience that increased new user sign-ups by 20% through data-driven design enhancements.
- Developed a new brand identity and digital design strategy, aligning the company with sustainability industry standards.
- Delivered a complete design system, including high-fidelity screens and interactive prototypes, improving developer efficiency.

Creative Director | FRWD Style Weddings & Events | Chicago, IL

2018 - Present

- Plan and execute special events and activities for clients from a unique viewpoint that celebrates and highlights their authentic selves.
- Design cohesive visual identities for clients, incorporating branding strategies that led to increased customer engagement and event success.
- Develop marketing materials and digital assets, enhancing event visibility across social media and web platforms

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Additional Experience

Merchandise Coordinator | LEVI STRAUSS AND COMPANY Chicago, IL. 2015-2020. Managed 6 business segments within key chain and department stores, accounting for \$5 million in annual revenue. Analyzed vendor reports to make profitable execution decisions regarding product placement, fixture layout, and visual enhancements. Educated and directed store staff on core product and presentation guidelines. Provide feedback to corporate partners regarding actionable insights on accounts. Developed and executed creative merchandising techniques to enhance in-store presentations to elevate the consumer shopping experience and increase brand recognition. Conducted daily in-store visits to monitor stock levels, audit marketing and visual directives in store. Managed 3rd party staff to assist in the achievement of sales plan goals for accounts.

Men's Designer Manager | MACY'S INC. | Chicago, IL. 2012 to 2015. Monitored sales and merchandising standards for Men's Designer and Impulse departments. Executed and communicated corporate and vendor directives to sales staff. Partnered with store management to develop specific strategies for designer and impulse vendors. Developed creative strategies to train staff on sales incentives and merchandising techniques. Fostered vendor relationships during store visits and various communications to ensure vendor standards were within Macy's guidelines.

Merchandise Team Manager | MACY'S INC. | Chicago, IL. 2008 – 2012. Managed a successful team of associates on merchandising standards and quarterly guidelines. Directed merchandise receipt placement, replenishment and sales promotion set-up according to corporate and vendor guidelines. Partnered with planners and merchants to develop plans to drive sales and exceed business goals. Developed strategies to execute price changes, markdowns and fixture/floor moves efficiently.

Customer Service Coordinator | TJ MAXX | Chicago, IL. 2006 – 2011. Assisted customers directly by processing purchases, returns, and credit applications. Trained and developed associates on front-line techniques and customer service standards provided by the company. Motivated associates provide superior customer service and achieve loyalty goals. Utilized daily line-up report to effectively determine associate breaks, lunches and floor zone coverage for maximum coverage during peak times.

Certifications

Certification; ERG Leadership - ERG Leadership Alliance | 2024

UI/UX Design Certification – FlatIron School | Chicago, IL | 2020

Wedding/Event Planning Certification – Triton College | River Grove, IL | 2013

Education

Bachelor of Arts; Business Marketing, Fashion Design & Merchandising

Clark Atlanta University | Atlanta, GA | 2005

Tools & Technologies

Figma | Adobe Creative Suite | Jira | Miro | Notion | Trello | Confluence | G Suite | Microsoft Suite | Canva | Zoom