



Rett Alcott

**DATA DRIVEN, CUSTOMER OBSESSED, UX PRODUCT INNOVATION LEADER**

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## UX/UI Product Design Leader

Award winning UX/UI Product Owner & Design Leader who consistently delivers KPI improving results by understanding and empathizing with the user's needs and wants, while utilizing and championing the design thinking process. A leader of leaders, fostering a culture of continuous learning and growth. Finely honed communication skills leading and coaching teams of UX and UI designers, researchers, creatives, and more, by setting clear expectations and providing actionable feedback. Obsesses over the customer or user through qualitative user testing and quantitative data analytics to inform product design decisions in order to develop empathy and create joyful experiences that lead to loyalty. Over two decades of experience delivering innovative products, systems, and stories that people love in a diverse range of spaces from retail, to media, to fintech, B2B, entertainment, and more.

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- **Award Winning Design:** The Hollywood Reporter's website and web applications have won multiple awards under my leadership, in addition to several Webby Award nominations for Billboard.com features.
  - **Consistent, Continuous KPI Improvement:** While I was leading the design team for Kohls.com we saw a 10% increase in conversion rate and a 9% increase in order total. The Motley Fool saw significant increases in member acquisition (+43%), member retention (+365) and a decrease in bounce rate of 37%. Across the board, Valence Media's web magazines have seen consistent improvement in all measurable categories including averages of: Bounce Rate decrease of 42%, More than 2x improvement in Page Views, Time On Site improvement of 67%, Ad Impressions to near 100% visibility, Newsletter Open Rate improved by 19%. While at e-commerce site Luxury Link the conversion rate nearly doubled.
  - **Efficient Process Improvement and Implementation:** Improved and implemented a design thinking agile process for the design and development of new products. At Valence Media, after implementing a fully developed design system that incorporates front end development, the average time from ideation to launch was cut down by almost 66%.
  - **Design Thinking Leadership:** Managed managers of design teams while working closely with cross-channel leaders to promote UX vision and design strategy by being the voice of the customer. Deep understanding of customers by diving deep into user data and research in order to inform the design and development of improvements to existing products as well as new products.
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## SKILLS

User Experience Design | User Interface Design | Product Ownership | UX Research | Jobs To Be Done | User Personas | Style Guides and Design Systems | Interactive Prototyping | Usability Testing | Wire framing | Animation | Project Management | Roadmap Creation and Management | Creative Direction | Strategic Planning | Web, Mobile, and Touchpoint Applications | Team Building, Training and Development | Process and Quality Improvements | Design Strategy | Systems Design | Storytelling

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## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

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### Sr. Product Design Manager

Kohl's, 2022 - Present

*Kohl's is a Fortune 500 retailer with over 1,000 stores nationally. They have a wide range of products they sell both in store and on-line.*

**Kohls.com had plateaued across all of their business metrics. A desire to improve the customer experience and deliver a joyful experience that would lead to customer loyalty was needed. Customers had inconsistent experiences that were slow to load and often frustrating when the site and app did not respond to their expectations. A holistic and responsive experience was needed to meet customers' needs. In-store customer experiences were also less than ideal as transaction time had increased causing customer sentiment to decline.**

Lead the design of the enterprise systems, and in-store products for both associates and customer facing product teams to improve efficiency through time on task. Managed other leaders of those teams and their direct reports. Previously lead the design team for the customer facing digital experience. Taking a first principles approach and utilizing the design thinking process in order to break down a siloed production, the business was able to see improved conversion rates, basket size, and average order value, as well as a decrease in bounce rate and negative customer service feedback. This allowed the business to think holistically and put the customer experience first. The team was then unlocked to think even wider as to how the experiences we championed helped support other areas of the business within marketing, merchandising, and omni / in-store experiences.

- Improved the customer's digital experience by championing the creation of a true design system in order to create consistency and delight. This led to the creation of a new Kohl's design system and management team.
- Successfully pitched, along with the VP of technology, to executive leadership the future of kohls.com from a technological and designed experience leading to a new site architecture built completely from the ground up. This saw a speed improvement of over 50% faster loading times for customers. The new tech stack was fully implemented with the Kohl's Design System.
- Helped to grow the entire design team by hiring strong product researchers and designers. Championed the team members' growth and development in their careers leading to several promotions.
- KPI improvements for kohls.com include: A Bounce Rate decrease of 12% on the homepage, conversion rate improved by roughly 10%, and average order value improved by 9%.
- Associate facing products in store saw 61% reduction in time on task and the enablement of multifaceted transactions reducing customer wait time by over 20%.
- Participated in the advanced leadership program after being recognized as a high performer for business impact, as well as winning the award within the design practice for best leader of design and team building.

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### UX/UI Design Lead

The Motley Fool, 2019 - 2022

*The Motley Fool provides free financial literacy education through fool.com. Members have access to custom stock picks and other products that provide financial investing advice.*

**The New Ventures team of The Motley Fool is responsible for bringing new and specific financial websites to life and growing the audience. After engaging with outside vendors, they quickly realized they needed an expert in-house to develop a UX and UI strategy to optimize for usability and enhance SEO. After less than a year of implementing design and development processes that cut the time from ideation to development in half, I was tasked with taking on a larger leadership role within the entirety of The Motley Fool's universe.**

Championed design thinking and processes across the company proving the value of user centric and data driven design. This led to the creation of the new design team as equal partners amongst other business units. From here I was tasked with hiring more design professionals and tripling the size of the team. Utilizing best UX practices KPIs have seen significant improvement and continue to do so through optimization and testing: Member Acquisition has increased over 40%, and Member Retention over 35%. Improvements to the free portion of fool.com articles and templates have seen better SEO rankings and increased traffic to the site.

- Building off of an already strong domain authority, implemented new adaptive templates optimized for enhanced readability and technical SEO rankings. Providing guidance to the editorial team on best SEO content practices as well.
- Built up the new company wide design team of UX researchers and designers, implemented best practices and processes in order to maintain a cohesive user experience and branding. Championed the team members' growth and development in their careers.
- Reduced development time by more than 2x through a robust design and development system implementation.
- KPI improvements for fool.com include: A Bounce Rate decrease of 37%, Conversion rate for purchase funnel improved by roughly 43%, Members retention for year over year memberships improved by over 36%. Clarity of message and understanding of what The Motley Fool does have improved dramatically in qualitative testing.
- Worked closely with company leadership to execute the CEO's vision while also pitching new products and feature sets upwards based on member's desires leading to an improved ease of use and perceived value of our products and services.

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## **UX/UI Product & Design Director**

Valence Media (Penske Media Corporation), 2013 - 2019

*Valence Media (now Penske Media Corporation) is a global entertainment news and media company. Online publications included The Hollywood Reporter, Billboard, Spin, Vibe, and more.*

**Hollywood Reporter was a well-established print brand but was struggling to get a foothold in the digital space. An outdated desktop only website, poor SEO optimization, and lacking a consistent visual language or reader centric design, coupled with a convoluted content management system had stunted any growth into the ever-expanding digital space. Knowing that the future health of the company lied in the digital properties, leadership needed to be brought in to transform the company to a digital first platform.**

Lead the process of building up the product and design teams for all digital properties. Implemented usability and A/B testing processes, as well as agile design that includes a fully developed design system, in order to create a cohesive and efficient product design team. By focusing on UX best practices and being user focused and data driven, all KPIs improved dramatically. The most telling KPI of all was the ability to triple ad revenue within the first three years due to an improved ad map along with: increased traffic, time on site, page views, and a decrease in bounce rate.

- Redesigned website to be adaptive to all devices and screen sizes allowed for all properties to be optimized and create the best experience and meet the readers where they are as mobile traffic steadily increased from less than 50% to more than 80%.
- Worked closely with the AdTech team to establish new ad placements for improved visibility as well as incorporating higher value ads to increase revenue without negatively impacting the reader's experience.
- Improved SEO through the redesign, and a faster loading website, along with providing editorial guidelines that worked together in harmony to improve google page rankings and drive significant traffic growth that has consistently set new records year over year. Valence Media's entertainment news properties now consistently rank near the top of ComScore for entertainment media.
- KPI improvements across all properties averaged out to: A Bounce Rate decrease of 42%, More than 2x improvement in Page Views, Time on Site improvement of 67%, Ad Impressions to near 100% visibility, Newsletter Open Rate improved by 19%.
- Managed designers for all interactive properties as well as advertising units and RFPs by working closely with the Marketing team leaders. Served as the voice of the customer to provide cross channel leaders with what was understood about our customers in order to identify new product offerings as well as revenue generation and sponsorship opportunities for launch partners of new products and features.

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## Creative Director

Luxury Link, 2011 - 2013

*Luxury Link is a discounted retailer of luxurious hotel and resort stays that allows customers to both bid on packages and directly purchase custom vacations.*

**Luxury Link had a small but loyal customer base who had figured out how to navigate a very convoluted e-commerce website. It was in dire need of improvement to become mobile and tablet optimized, SEO optimized, more luxurious and aspiration feeling, and the company needed a much stronger understanding of its customers shopping habits.**

After a thorough testing of the current site many best practices were identified as areas needing improvement including: a responsive and adaptive site, better and larger aspirational imagery, improved SEO structure and text, faster loading pages that took advantage of lazy loading, improved UI that felt more luxurious and inspired trust. All these improvements lead to a decreased bounce rate of 27% site wide and a 94% increase in conversion rate.

- Created and implemented the user research plan for understanding how customers shopped for vacations in general as well as how they specifically used the Luxury Link Website. Combining this information with analytical data in order to create user journeys and jobs to be done documents lead to a deeper understanding on how to spend our SEM buys and better segment our audience based on a near 50/50 split of search starting points of destination or vacation styles.
- Simplified the bid and buying process to make it clear what the customers' expectations would be when purchasing a vacation. Created a package comparison tool that along with other design improvements lead to an almost doubling of the overall conversion rate, while improving the conversion rate from mobile devices over 5 times.
- Managed and inspired jr. designers to create eye catching branding materials and advertisements for many of our smaller and boutique style hotels and resorts as well as create imagery for the website that excited users and encouraged them to continue shopping.

## PREVIOUS PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

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### **Design Director**

Blue Waters Research, 2010 - 2011

Designed style and branding, as well as tone of voice guidelines for brighter.com. Designed the information architecture using the jobs to be done framework for both the consumer's side and the dental practice's side. Established A/B testing principles in order to design and optimize the initial roll out of the conversion funnel.

### **Lead Interactive Art Director**

Freelance, 2008 - 2010

Lead interactive design and managed teams of designers to improve usability KPIs, quality of design, and motion graphics. Projects include designing for: Interactive DVD games, Direct Marketing websites and landing pages, Video production and effects, Corporate websites, Mobile applications.

### **Senior Designer and Animator**

B1 Media, 2006-2008

Lead the design and animation for interactive DVD and Blu-ray films and games. Designed the UX for the first BD-Live film editing and on-line community in set top boxes.

### **Lead Designer**

webFeat, 2004-2006

Worked closely with clients to understand their need and then lead the design and front-end development for corporate and e-commerce websites.

### **Digital Designer**

Procter & Gamble, 2000-2003

Co-Op student working in the field of digital design. Participated in user testing sessions and designed P&G's first global intranet as well as interactive learning tools and interfaces for smart connected appliances.

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## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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### **Film and Television Production**

University of Southern California, Los Angeles, CA, 2004

### **Bachelor of Science in Digital Design**

University of Cincinnati, Cincinnati, OH, 1998-2003

## AWARDS

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- L.A. Press Club National Journalism Awards Best Entertainment Website Hollywood Reporter - 2013 / 2014 /2015 / 2016 / 2017
- L.A. Press Club National Journalism Awards Winner Best Multimedia Package Hollywood Reporter's Longform "Locked and Loaded: The Gun Industry's Lucrative Relationship with Hollywood" - 2017
- L.A. Press Club National Journalism Awards Winner Best Use of Social Media Hollywood Reporter's #TrumpMyHand - 2017
- ASME National Magazine Award General Excellence, Special Interest Magazine Hollywood Reporter - 2015 / 2016
- Webby Award Finalist Hollywood Reporter's Longform "The Last Survivors" - 2016
- L.A. Press Club National Journalism Awards Winner Best Multimedia Package Hollywood Reporter's Longform "The Last Survivors" 2016
- Webby Award Finalist Billboard Twitter Charts - 2015
- MIN Best of Web & Digital Award Winner Overall Editorial Excellence Hollywood Reporter, and Winner Best Magazine Branded Show Hollywood Reporter Roundtables - 2015