Darren Beason

Product Design Leader | Design Strategist | User-Centered Designer

Mission Viejo, CA | darren.beason@gmail.com | (949) 293-4541 | Portfolio: www.beasondesign.com | linkedin.com/in/darrenbeason/

PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Innovative product design leader with a 20+ year track record of building and scaling digital products across industries such as finance, gaming and health services. Specializing in visual UI, design systems, UX strategy and team mentorship. I'm passionate at solving complex experiences and aligning design, engineering, and product to create impactful user experiences that drive business success. I'm also an expert Figma user, always providing designers with guidance and direction, prototype skills, variant and design system knowledge.

SKILLS & EXPERTISE

- Design Leadership
- Mentoring & Coaching
- Design Ops
- Engineering Alignment
- Agile / FE Backlog Creation

- Design Systems
- Visual Design
- Interaction Design
- Info Architecture
- Prototyping

- User Research
- Usability Testing
- Journey Mapping
- UX Writing
- Artificial Intelligence (AI)

WORK HISTORY

Principal Product Designer
Jun 2022 - present

West Monroe

Overview (Non-Project Related)

- Collaborated with design leaders to help guide and shape the day-to-day operations within the design team.
- Presented and educated the design team on tools, practices and client work to drive inspiration and efficiency.
- Provided mentorship to 2-8 designers, supporting their growth in design execution, workshops, and leadership skills.
- Partnered with business development teams, driving $2M+ in new opportunities through strategic design advocacy, rapport building with potential clients and enhanced prototype demos.
- Led design and product management for a sales platform, overseeing a redesign, design system alignment, and front-end engineering team management, including story writing and assignment.

Project: Blizzard / Activision, TACT Game Deployment Platform

- Led the redesign of Blizzard's game deployment platform, collaborating across product, engineering, and game studios to enhance integration, usability, and adoption of a system used to releases game updates to millions of users.
- Led workshops with stakeholders, engineering and game studios to gather insights and identify existing user issues.
- Created several low-fidelity wireframe prototypes for solving navigation and batch uploading.
- Conducted moderated user testing sessions for 10 users, across 5 game studios.
- Improvements led to improving navigation, accelerating batch operations for uploading, and reducing teams from using unmanaged automated API solutions outside the platform.
- Led visual design efforts with a junior visual designer to align brand new Blizzard design system efforts.
- Created and structured a comprehensive wiki of technical and functional specifications on Confluence, detailing content, data, and interaction requirements to enhance engineering efficiency, assist the product team in accurately writing and breaking down stories, and ensure design precision during the build process.
- Facilitate feature kick-off meetings with engineering to align on vision, scope and alignment.
- Worked with the product owner to help create a backlog, write engineering stories, and prioritize stories.

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Project: Monarch Landscaping, Time Management Mobile App

- Led the creation and design of a mobile app that would eliminate using paper timesheets and automate time tracking using geo-fencing technology to accurately manage time — saving the company $100,000s in the 1st year from waste, resource time and inaccurate time tracking. The app's data will lead the way in providing precise sales forecasts, ensuring accurate pricing and justifying any price hikes.
- Led the effort for conducting onsite user research with a junior product owner across four U.S. branches, presenting a 30+ page report to the CEO, who remarked, "Darren, this is exactly what I was looking for.".
- Created and identified 9 personas to help us identify the 2-3 core users of the mobile app.
- Translated user research into service journey maps that would help us to identify the user experience and key features.
- Created an info-architecture map and a technology integration map to help align the team with identifying where data and features would live and how to choose integration tools (ie. geo-fencing, CMS, data).
- Design low-fidelity wireframes to help visualize screens, features and eventually help us create a feature roadmap.
- Partnered with product team to develop a comprehensive feature roadmap, categorizing and prioritizing features based on scope and impact, ultimately enabling more accurate effort estimation.
- Designed an initial beta 1 for testing the accuracy and confidence of our geo-fencing solution. This would help us to determine whether or not to use this 3rd party solution.
- Helped to identify logic with engineering and product such as driving speed, geo-fencing overlapping, type of login credentials, automatic logout and timesheet submissions.
- Designed and prototyped a high-fidelity app that would include features such as login, select team members, clock-in and out, breaks and most of all, the automated time tracking screen.
- The release of the app was a success — within the first month of 3-4 teams using the app, teams had little-to-no issues.

Project: Wemo Design System, West Monroe

- Established a company-wide design system, accelerating development cycles, increasing collaboration with engineering and ensuring design consistency across internal and client-facing applications.
- Collaborated with 3 initial product teams to coordinate a redesign and implementation of the design system.
- Researched design system best practices, variant naming conventions and figma component organization.
- Implemented the design system across one application to provide a roadmap and knowledge for the other product teams.
- The design system was released company-wide for designers to rapidly launch new designs across client projects.

Lead Designer   Mar 2017 - Jun 2022
Verys (acquired by West Monroe)

Overview (Non-Project Related)

- Grew and managed a team of 3-7 designers, fostering a collaborative environment that emphasized innovation and execution excellence.
- Engaged with prospective clients to drive design strategy and solutioning.

Project: Bethesda / Zenimax, Bethesda Game Launcher

- Led UX for Bethesda's game launcher for 5 years, transforming it from beta to a fully featured PC gaming platform supporting 25+ titles.
- Collaborated with product and engineering regularly through daily scrums, feature kick-offs and planning.
- Led the design for expanding new features such as game installment, game updates, game library, navigation and game content.
- Created Bethesda Service Group's first design system.
- Wrote and designed content for over 50 modals aligning the tone of voice and experience, such modals include: warning, installment, help and sign out.
- Performed user testing, both moderated and unmoderated.

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CONTINUED Project: Bethesda / Zenimax, Bethesda Game Launcher

- Created and structured a comprehensive wiki of technical and functional specifications on Confluence, detailing content, data, and interaction requirements to enhance engineering efficiency, assist the product team in accurately writing and breaking down stories, and ensure design precision during the build process.
- Write frontend engineering stories to increase accuracy and continuously fill the backlog for 6 weeks to allow for accurate forecasting.

Project: Experian, Credit Card Marketplace

- Redesigned Experian's Credit Marketplace, leveraging data insights to boost user confidence and increase conversions, contributing to a 10% year-over-year revenue increase.
- Collaborated with 3 product owners over a course of 6 months, including working with 3 engineers.
- Meet with multiple teams to understand the current state, user's data collected through Experian credit reports, and align on vision from stakeholders.
- Identified a new solution for combining data points into a Credit Match solution to provide users with more assurance of getting an approval versus not getting approved.
- Designed dynamic features for 3 persona types with multiple variants for each persona that provided users with specific personalized credit knowledge, so that users could understand how to improve their credit score.
- Designed a new credit comparison feature.
- Designed high-fidelity prototypes and planned out a 2-day moderated user testing event in which we partnered with Experian's user research group and a 3rd party facility to host 30-60 minute sessions testing both desktop and mobile with 12 users.

Lead UX Designer   Nov 2014 - Jan 2017
PriceSpider

- Developed UX solutions for e-commerce analytics tools, enhancing data visualization and user engagement.
- Led the design of their portfolio of products for Where-to-Buy, Prowl (MAP), and their primary analytics platform that helped accelerate the massive growth of the company including clients: P&G, Samsung, Activision, and Bosch.

Senior UI/UX Designer   Jan 2013 - Jan 2014
MotorTrend Group

- Overseeing the design for every project handled by the team, which includes micro-sites for automotive brands like GMC, Chevy, and BMW.
- Designed from the ground-up, a new mobile app for TireRack that would manage and track a user's tire lifespan.
- Redesigned a mobile app for an advertising tracking solution that provides users with analytical data on every advertisement.

Creative Services Manager   Oct 2006 - Jun 2012
Bio-Rad Laboratories

- Managed the Marketing Communications team for the Quality Systems Division, including the management of 3 team members, including 2 Art Directors and a Website Manager.
- Responsible for advertising, catalog creation, QCnet website, user experience and all branding.
- Completely redesigned their entire advertisement messaging to elevate the brand and raise the journals survey scores. Scores saw a 20-25% increase within a year.
- Designed a user experience for automating content that would populate our 120+ page printed catalog, as well as translate it into multiple languages. This would allow Product Managers to be able to review and approve content before going to print.

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Web Division Director   Apr 2006 - Oct 2006
Hobbs Herder Advertising

- Managed the Web Division overseeing all website creation.
- Managed 8 Web Designers and 2 Account Managers, providing design direction, project assignment and mentoring.
- Responsible for collaborating with clients, designers and account managers to align on brand alignment, content and features.

Art Director   Jun 2003 - Oct 2005
LendingTree / HomeLoanCenter.com

- Managed the creative and brand communications for a leading mortgage lender including work on websites, online advertising, email campaigns, direct mail, advertising, brochures, tradeshow, corporate collateral.
- A/B Testing for direct response campaigns.
- Created the highly recognized brand of HomeLoanCenter.com resulting in the acquisition by LendingTree.
- Launched 2 successful award-winning websites.
- Managed a designer and copywriter.

EDUCATION

Laguna College of Art & Design
Graphic Design
Laguna Beach, CA

Marymount College
Fine Art
Palos Verdes, CA