Valerie Craig

Brand, Design & Creative Director

Accomplished, enthusiastic Brand, Design and Creative Director whose work is intentional, and delivers remarkable results. Possesses over 10 years of diverse experience overseeing projects, people, and shaping an organization's branding and marketing strategies. A passionate advocate of the design community, with a 9-year tenure on a professional design board. Excellent communication skills with the ability to bring to life ideas and stories to build credible relationships. An effective leader, coach, and mentor, driven to recruit and hire the most talented individuals and companies. Thrives in a fast-paced, constantly changing and learning environment, continual evolution, and learning.

Say Hey

heyvaleriecraig.com ↗

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312-375-2741

Expertise

+ Creative Direction
+ Team & Project Leadership
+ Ideation & Concepting
+ Conscious Leadership

+ Brand Development & Management
+ Structured Content & Style Consistency
+ Event Organization
+ Entrepreneurial Mindset

+ Meaningful Content Creation
+ Outstanding Presentation Skills
+ Financial & Budget Management
+ Go-To-Market Strategy

Select Accomplishments & Performance Highlights

+ Developed and managed brand presence of Uptake from 50 person start-up to an 850 person tech Unicorn valued at 2.3B.

+ Developed company messaging, positioning, brand guidelines, brand voice at Uptake.

+ Managed 150+ pieces of collateral and case studies.

+ Built a Jira ticketing system to manage and prioritize team workload. 20-50 projects at any given time across a team of six.

+ Created company-wide internal communications tool. Served as the primary company wiki from 6/2015-9/2019.

+ Fast-paced project management of company website within 10-week timeline from concept to launch.

+ Developed a comprehensive plan to shorten the sales cycle. Shaving 1-2 months off a 9-12 month cycle.

+ Developed and shaped employee onboarding and employee messaging with People team. This included shaping theme, schedule, content, welcome kits, and ongoing engagement.

+ Developed a company-wide culture of awareness and feedback through the Conscious Leadership Champions Forum.

Professional Experience

Uptake // Chicago, IL

Senior Director, Brand & Marketing   07/2019 – 03/2020

+ Led brand design, marketing, content, and demand generation marketing.

+ Oversaw brand development, content and social calendars, video/multimedia creation, advertising, and events for Uptake.

+ Developed a data-driven environment through analytics and engagement.

+ Partnered with Sales to innovate sales cycle shortening initiatives and bringing in marketing qualified leads.

+ Aligned and prioritized the team's workload with the company strategy, ensuring project and initiative decisions were based on company vision.

+ Served on the Executive Leadership team, with responsibility for positioning, differentiation, naming, and strategic alignment across company.

Director, Brand   12/2016 – 06/2019

+ Led the team to create impactful and beautiful communications that tell the story of the brand.

+ Researched and developed best practices and dynamically responded to the organization's needs through visual design, messaging, and physical space.

+ Created best practices for team management of projects and priorities.

Lead, Brand   03/2015 – 12/2016

+ Established and built the Uptake brand from the ground up. Worked closely with a team of designers, writers, and strategists to bring to life a complex data-driven start-up, including the development of identity, company culture, values, website, new hire experience, and swag.

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Organizations

AIGA Chicago
Co President
11/2018 – Present

Public face of the chapter overseeing all activities, programs, and decision-making organization-wide.

VP of Programming
09/2015 – 11/2018

Developed an annual programming calendar aligning the chapter's mission with programming needs in our community.

Programming Co-Chair
09/2014 – 09/2015

Developed programs that elevated and nurtured our design community.

Small Talk Co-Chair
01/2011 – 12/2014

Organize and facilitate intimately scaled events that offer attendees the opportunity to experience studios and firms first-hand.

Society of Typographic Arts
Member 04/2020

GNMAA
Social Media Chair Spring 2010

Tulips on the Magnificent Mile Committee

Professional Experience Cont.

Acquity Group part of Accenture Interactive // Chicago, IL
Senior Designer   08/2013 – 03/2015

+ Expanded the Acquity Group brand with a focus on brand touchpoints and experiences.

+ Developed event and business collateral, campaigns, newsletters, infographics, trade show booths, and presentations.

+ Handled aquitygroup.com visuals and content. Supported digital marketing efforts.

+ Supervised and oversaw vendors from around the world to make magic happen.

ROOM 509 // Chicago, IL
Creative Director/Owner   May 2010 – Aug 2013

+ Worked on a wide range of branding, print, digital design and branded experiences for clients such as Robert Wood Johnson, JAM Productions, CBS Interactive, Freeman, Allscripts, Riot Fest, Classic Color, PMK|HBH, ITC Lighting, Blue Daring, Formaticum, Time Out Chicago, Cheesemonger Invitational, Letterform, FetchFind, Food Genius.

Education

Bachelor of Fine Arts, Visual Communications // Illinois Institute of Art · Chicago

Technical Skills & Knowledge

+ Adobe Creative Suite (Design & Layout, Photo Editing, Illustration; experience in video editing and motion graphics)

+ Microsoft Office & Google Drive

+ Photoshoot/Video Art Direction

+ Experience with HTML & CSS

+ Keynote

+ Website CMS: Wordpress, Craft, Custom

+ Content CMS: Highspot

+ Project Management Tools: Basecamp, Jira, Asana, Trello

+ Display Advertising: Rollworks/Adroll

+ Website Building software: Webflow, Wordpress, Shopify, Virb, Squarespace, Google Sites

+ Marketing Automation Software: Marketo, Hubspot, Mailchimp, Constant Contact,

+ Other software: Slack, Canva, Dropbox, Box

Speaking Engagements

+ In Good Company // AIGA Chicago – 10/2014

+ UX Panel with Uptake, Lightbank, & Groupon // General Assembly – 06/ 2015

+ U-Talk: Diversity at Tech Companies // Uptake – 08/2015

+ Intro to the Design Community // General Assembly – January 2016

+ People Geeks @ Uptake // Culture Amp – March 2016

+ AIGA Leadership Retreat // Atlanta, GA – 08/2019