

JULIAN GRIMES

Senior Strategist

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As a seasoned strategist and brand architect, I blend bold creativity with sharp insight to build experiences that resonate and deliver measurable impact. With a background in UX/UI and art direction, I excel at translating complex data into compelling narratives and purpose-driven products. My focus is on aligning creative vision with business goals to unlock growth, improve market positioning, and strengthen long-term brand equity.

Skills

Creative & Strategic Planning
Brand Strategy & Management
User & Market Research
Data Analytics & Insights
UX/UI Design & Art Direction
Cross-functional Leadership

Education

Virginia Commonwealth University, Brandcenter
M.S. Business, Brand Strategy

University of North Carolina at Charlotte
B.A. Art, Graphic Design
B.S. Mechanical Engineering

Experience

Strategist, Freelance

Charlotte, NC - Remote

June 2025 - Present

Client: The Brandon Agency: New Business

- Develop and execute comprehensive brand strategies, integrating consumer insights and market research to drive new business growth and client success.
- Define and align brand architecture, brand positioning, and product naming, translating strategic vision into compelling narratives for diverse clients.
- Collaborate with key stakeholders to deliver marketing goals and manage project deliverables.

Senior Experience Strategist

This Place, Los Angeles, CA

Dec 2023 - Dec 2024

Client: Google

- Bridged the gap between Google Retail and Brand, developing customer-centric designs and omnichannel experiences that synchronized physical and digital touchpoints.
- Developed holistic messaging, content strategies, and design systems to guide complex in-store and online purchase journeys for global product launches.
- Solidified brand architecture and implementation strategies for Google AI products, collaborating with Product and Design teams to lead the strategic integration of Gemini into the user ecosystem.

Senior Strategist

TBWA\Chiat\Day, Los Angeles, CA

May 2022 - Dec 2023

Client: Jack in the Box; DirecTV (Design by Disruption)

- Defined core brand foundations and "Brand DNA," establishing the strategic framework for FY23 fiscal planning and long-term brand evolution.
- Directed the end-to-end strategic planning for high-volume LTO product cycles.
- Designed and executed qualitative research, leading consumer workshops and co-creation sessions to extract deep audience insights.
- Led visual identity exploration for DirecTV, utilizing "Design by Disruption" methodology to evaluate category influences and modern design systems.

Strategic Planner

The Martin Agency, Richmond, VA

Nov 2020 - May 2022

Clients: Buffalo Wild Wings, Virginia Tourism, Terminix

- Spearheaded global creative strategy for Buffalo Wild Wings International, while leading performance marketing and social media campaign planning for domestic initiatives.
- Built a comprehensive communications plan for the 2022 Virginia Tourism brand campaign, aligning multi-channel messaging with regional travel trends and visitor insights.
- Designed a customized consumer journey map for Terminix, identifying critical friction points and barriers to conversion to optimize the end-to-end customer experience.

Junior Brand Strategist

Droga5, New York, NY

June 2019 - Nov 2020

Clients: Kimberly-Clark/Huggies, Sprint, Meta, Chase, Under Armour, United Rentals, The Africa Center

- Collaborated on the agency's first global new business win under Accenture Interactive, helping craft the strategic

frameworks and creative territory for the Kimberly-Clark/Huggies pitch.

- Mastered qualitative research methodologies, including competitive audits, stakeholder interviews, and focus group observation, to extract actionable consumer insights for clients like Sprint, Huggies and The Africa Center.
- Translated raw audience data into strategic discussion guides and frameworks, ensuring creative teams had a clear, insight-led path for campaign development.

UX Designer

Lowe's Companies, Inc., Mooresville, NC

Sept 2016 – Aug 2017

- Developed product architecture and user flows for Lowes.com and Lowesforpros.com, creating high-quality digital experiences that bridged the gap between consumer needs and business goals.
- Redesigned high-traffic category pages, including patio, paint, and lighting, to improve information hierarchy, product education, and overall user engagement.
- Built and maintained reusable UI assets and libraries, contributing to the enterprise-wide design system to ensure visual consistency and development efficiency.

Art Director

Spark Strategic Ideas, Charlotte, NC

Dec 2015 – Sept 2016

Clients: Moe's Southwest Grill, HANES, Blaze Pizza, American Forest Management, HarperLove, Teupen USA

- Led the comprehensive brand redesign for American Forest Management, modernizing their visual identity to align with long-term business objectives.
- Developed the B2B brand voice and positioning for HarperLove, translating technical expertise into a compelling narrative for the industrial landscape.
- Fueled business growth by contributing to creative pitches and designing high-impact proposals for a diverse client roster, including Moe's Southwest Grill and Hanes.

Art Director

Charlotte Regional Business Alliance (formerly Charlotte Chamber of Commerce),
Charlotte, NC

Nov 2011 – Dec 2015

- Steered holistic brand management and creative direction, ensuring strategic alignment across all internal departments and initiatives.
- Managed end-to-end marketing campaign lifecycles, developing targeted creative for membership recruitment, retention and community engagement.
- Optimized creative operations through the management of resource budgets, vendor partnerships and production timelines.

Lead Brand Designer

Food Lion, LLC, Salisbury, NC

Aug 2009 – Nov 2011

- Developed end-to-end in-store creative strategies, overseeing the design and execution of Point of Purchase (POP) systems and high-volume CRM campaigns to drive customer loyalty and basket growth.
- Spearheaded brand design standards for internal and external initiatives.
- Directed high-profile creative features for national placements, including Southern Living Magazine and the NASCAR Hall of Fame annual yearbook.

Leadership & Development

Student Mentor, 2019 - present

VCU Brandcenter & UNC School of Journalism

- Guide students through specialized career pathing, advising on the strategic transition from academia to high-tier advertising agencies.
- Provide portfolio reviews and industry insights, using personal graduate portfolio (grimesjulian.com) to demonstrate the intersection of strategy and design.
- Consult on the decision-making process for students navigating roles in Brand Strategy, Experience Design, and Creative Direction.

Courageous Conversation Academy, 2020

Award-winning course for systemic racial equity transformation

AAF – Charlotte Chapter Board Member

Creative Director & Diversity Chair, 2014 - 2016

Tech Talent & Strategy

JavaScript Application Development, Jan - Apr, 2016
Intro to Web Design and Creation, Oct - Nov, 2015

Skookum (now Method) – Night Shift, Feb - May, 2015

14-week intensive digital strategy, design and development program

The Center for Intentional Leadership

Cross Functional Leadership Academy, 2014

Community Building Initiative (CBI Charlotte)

Leaders Under 40 (LU40), Class 4, 2013