

JULIAN GRIMES

Brand Strategist & Creative Lead

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As a seasoned strategist and brand architect, I fuse creative vision with analytical rigor to sculpt impactful brand experiences that drive tangible results. My expertise encompasses design, art direction, brand and creative strategy, consistently achieving measurable growth and elevating brand resonance. I excel at translating complex data into actionable insights, crafting refined brand architectures, and delivering clear, strategic frameworks that ensure unwavering brand consistency and foster meaningful customer engagement.

Skills

Project Management
Client Communication
Cross-Functional Collaboration
Strategic Planning
Market Research & Data Analytics
Content Strategy
Experience Strategy
Digital & Retail Marketing
Communication & Storytelling
Brand Architecture
Visual Identity
UX/UI Design

Education

Virginia Commonwealth University, Brandcenter . 2019
M.S. Business, Branding/Strategy

University of North Carolina at Charlotte . 2007
B.A. Art - Graphic Design
B.S. Mechanical Engineering

Experience

Senior Strategy Consultant

This Place, Los Angeles, CA

Dec 2023 - Dec 2024

Client: Google

I specialized in creating meaningful customer experiences through strategic consultancy and design. My work bridged Google retail and brand, delivering purpose-driven product strategy for Google Chromebooks. This strategy emphasized value through affordability, innovation, and user-centric design. It ensured a cohesive user experience and leveraged Google's ecosystem to enhance productivity and convenience.

I developed messaging and content strategies to drive purchase consideration and challenge consumer perceptions. Collaborating with design partners, I created positive and frictionless experiences across various touchpoints. These efforts increased customer satisfaction, loyalty, and advocacy.

Achievements:

- Led biannual third-party (3P) retail refresh for Chromebook, increasing in-store engagement by 20%. Key partners included Best Buy, Amazon, and Target.
- Developed benefit-led copy and design systems to guide in-store and online purchase journeys.
- Collaborated with Product and Design teams to solidify brand architecture and implementation strategies for the launch of featured Google AI products, including Gemini integration.

Senior Strategist

TBWA\Chiat\Day, Los Angeles, CA

May 2022 - Dec 2023

Client: Jack in the Box

- Directed the strategic planning and execution of Limited Time Offer (LTO) product cycles, including the development of TVC/OLV, paid social, digital assets, and social activations. Collaborated with internal teams and integrated agency partners to boost the market presence of the leading challenger brand in QSR.
- Established core brand foundations to define the Jack in the Box DNA for FY23 fiscal planning, reinforcing the Disruption platform to challenge industry standards and set a forward-thinking brand direction. This strategic framework became pivotal to JITB's approach, influencing brand values, behaviors, and truths.

Client: DirecTV (Design by Disruption)

- Led visual identity exploration focused on evaluating design systems and competitive category influences to improve creative strategy and evolve DirecTV's brand and campaign visibility without heavy reliance on celebrity IP. Identified core brand attributes that defined consumer experience and product performance.

Achievements:

- Designed and executed qualitative research for JITB, partnering with Cultural Insights clients and research consultants to uncover key insights that drive impactful product launches and provide fresh perspectives on brand challenges.
- Directed Jack In The Box's first new market expansion in over a decade into Salt Lake City and Louisville, KY, achieving record-breaking first-month sales. Salt Lake City stores surpassed previous new market records by 66%.
- Launched the "24 Days of Jackmas" holiday campaign, offering exclusive deals for rewards members. This promotion boosted same-store sales by 11% and set record-breaking December sales system-wide.

Experience

Strategic Planner

The Martin Agency, Richmond, VA

Nov 2020 - May 2022

Clients: Buffalo Wild Wings, Virginia Tourism, Terminix

- Led performance marketing and social media campaign planning initiatives for Buffalo Wild Wings. Informed decision-making by analyzing market trends and consumer insights to guide the development and launch of new product offerings in collaboration with Mtn Dew and Doritos.
- Spearheaded creative strategy for Buffalo Wild Wings International clients, managing projects from brief to creative execution and delivery.
- Built a comprehensive communications plan for the 2022 Virginia Tourism brand campaign and authored creative tactical briefs for seasonal deliverables across paid social, OOH, digital, and video.
- Designed a customized consumer journey map for Terminix, utilizing Martin's Tension Mapping practice to identify consumer barriers and uncover opportunities to inform creative briefs that directly address consumer pain points.

Junior Brand Strategist

Droga5, New York, NY

June 2019 - Nov 2020

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

- Played a key role in the agency's first global new business pitch as a part of Accenture Interactive, winning the Kimberly-Clark/Huggies account.
- Provided strategic research support in the development of brand architecture and brand positioning for Meta.
- Conducted competitive audits; developed discussion guides; led expert, stakeholder, and audience interviews; observed focus groups for qualitative research.

UX Designer

Lowe's Companies, Inc., Mooresville, NC

Sept 2016 - Aug 2017

- Developed product architecture, user flows, libraries and page layouts for Lowes.com and Lowesforpros.com.
- Redesigned category pages for patio collections, paint, light bulbs, and lighting — included improved hierarchy, product education, and inspirational in-home designs.

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 brand redesign for American Forest Management, one of the country's largest land management companies, and helped HarperLove, specialists in the cardboard industry, define their brand voice in the B2B landscape.
- Contributed to creative pitches and designed new business proposals
- Managed and mentored junior designers, freelance creatives, and design interns.

Art Director

Charlotte Regional Business Alliance, Charlotte, NC

Nov 2011 - Dec 2015

- Owned brand management, creative direction and execution across all departments.
- Maintained project deadlines, creative resource budgets and vendor partnerships.
- Managed junior designers, design interns and agency partners.

Lead Brand Designer

Food Lion, LLC, Salisbury, NC

Aug 2009 - Nov 2011

- Served as creative team lead and project manager for branded projects.
- Creative featured in Southern Living Magazine and the NASCAR Hall of Fame annual yearbook.

Leadership & Development

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 dev program

The Center for Intentional Leadership

Cross Functional Leadership Academy, 2014

Community Building Initiative (CBI Charlotte)

Leaders Under 40 (LU40), Class 4, 2013

More About Me

Not Just Selling Sneakers

Early in my career, I donned the uniform of a sales associate at Foot Locker and its sister brands, Champs Sports and Footaction. This wasn't just a job; it was a masterclass in the art of brand differentiation and the nuances of how people connect with a brand. Each day on the floor, I observed firsthand how a brand's story and identity could captivate and connect with customers. These invaluable insights became the bedrock of my strategic approach to brand management and development, shaping my journey from the sales floor to the boardroom.