

Kristi Pagoulatos

kristi pagoulatos

Creative Director
Branding/Art Direction/UX/UI/Strategy

hello!

A strategic visionary, fostering creative thinkers to go beyond the expected, do their research and create solutions in lockstep with our day-to-day human experience. Proven success spearheading innovative campaigns and driving significant brand growth, consistently exceeding KPIs and increasing engagement.

skills

Creative Direction	Information Architecture	Design Systems	Mural/Miro
Brand Strategy	User Experience Design	User Journeys/Personas	Share Point
Digital Strategy	User Interface Design	Art Direction	FMG
Content Strategy	User Research	Project Management	Omni-Channel Marketing
Concept Creation	User Testing	Adobe Creative Suite	Team Leadership
Storytelling	Design Thinking	Figma	Mentoring

industries + clients

Fintech	BCBS Association	Every Body Eat	Kitchenaid
Healthcare	Booth School of Business	G4 Dental Implants	Lenovo
Abbott Labs	CTCA (Cancer Treatment)	GlaxoSmithKline	Miller/Coors
Amway + Sub-brands	Casper	HUB International	Powerbar
Bacardi	Comcast	Humana	Sensient Flavors
Biogen Labs	Cox Communication	Hydrofarm	Tamarack Resort/Real Estate
BMW	Consumers Energy	Illinois Lottery	US Foods

experience

Opa Design | Founder | Creative Director, Branding, Strategic UI/UX

October 2010–present 

Consultant and freelance expert. Most recent engagements:

Commonwealth Financial Network

January 2023–present

Design and strategy lead for Commonwealth Advisor Marketing. Working directly with North American independent wealth management firms to create unique strategies, brand identity and websites. Cultivating change management through internal communications around an acquisition.

REAKT Agency

December 2022–present

User experience expert bringing strategic insights, information architecture and UX design. Conducted extensive user research and testing, utilizing insights to inform design decisions and enhance user experience for brands including, Brightcove, Tamarack Resort/Real Estate and Noah water filtration systems,

Avanade | Chicago, IL | Group Manager/Group Creative Director UX/UI

August 2021–September 2022

Joined the leadership team to elevate a deep understanding of user-centered design principles. Managed and developed a remote team of 25 talented individuals, fostering high-performance within a collaborative environment that resulted in improved project delivery timelines, project scope and client satisfaction. Ran \$24.5M in accounts, one of which resulted in a 900% YoY growth with the data and analytics team, managing \$93B+ in assets. Career Advisor for 5 designers helping them grow into promotions along with holding a leadership position in the global Avanade Women's Network.

SGK | Chicago, IL | Creative Director

April 2019–October 2020

Took the creative lead for the Chicago office to elevate the department of 20+ full time and freelance art directors, writers and strategists. Developed and implemented programs to improve agency process, strategic problem solving, presentation skills, and creative thinking, leading to several rounds of team/individual promotions and paving the way for future creative leaders. Created a culture of open communication and trust, strengthening \$12M+ in client partnerships and new business wins.

Kristi Pagoulatos

kristi pagoulatos

Creative Director
Branding/Art Direction/UX/UI/Strategy

experience, continued

Civilian | Chicago, IL | Creative Director

August 2015–April 2019

Oversaw creative strategy and development, concept to completion. Worked hands-on to manage and mentor creative teams through the strategic process. Leading member of the pitch team—driving creative and strategic collaboration for new business. Fostered strong relationships with clients to drive excellence in user experience—achieving a 25% increase in conversion rates and increased engagement up to 250% across several websites in the healthcare industry.

FCB Chicago | Chicago, IL | Associate Creative Director

October 2013–April 2014 + January 2015–June 2015

Developed and launched several integrated Pharma brands for Hemophilia from pre- to post-FDA approvals and introduction into mainstream. Worked closely with compliance to lead design and the brand's overall communication to both current users and potential candidates for each drug. Created more than 70 omnichannel campaigns.

Catapult | Chicago, IL | Freelance Creative Director

May 2014 – December 2014

Managed and worked hands-on with a cross-agency creative team to strategically launch Kitchenaid's new line of appliances, giving the brand a 33% increase in engagement.

Ogilvy & Mather | Chicago, IL | Freelance Associate Creative Director

January 2013 – September 2013

Worked across a variety of brands strengthening conceptual campaign art direction and video direction.

Commonground | Chicago, IL | Associate Creative Director

January 2012 – November 2012

Led creative teams in strategic campaign development for existing clients and new business pitches. Worked closely with clients to grow each brand. Created an art direction standard for the agency and individual brands.

education

The Creative Circus | Atlanta, GA

Design & art direction program

September 2000–September 2002

Portfolio program specializing in creative strategy and execution as well as typography and color theory. Teaching assistant for the typography classes during the second year in the program, mentoring the incoming students to master kerning and type designs.

University of New Mexico | Albuquerque, NM

BA mass communication and journalism

August 1995–December 1999

Worked through the communication program with a mix of fine arts and psychology. Interned with local agencies while bartending and waiting tables. (who only wants to do one thing at a time?!!)

stuff

Board of Directors—Awaken Chicago

Term: July 2023–July 2026

Secretary position June 2024–end of term

Certifications:

Luma Design Thinking Practitioner Certified

Microsoft Catalyst Certified

Angel awards—best in public service advertising

Woman's Image Network—best art direction, television

Featured in Luerzer's Archive

Cannes Shortlisted

One Show Merit

Art Directors Club—Global Member

International Society of Female Professionals