



SARAH KARLSON

SR. BRAND DESIGNER / SR. ART DIRECTOR

DESIGNER AND CREATIVE LEADER WITH OVER 18 YEARS EXPERIENCE IN RETAIL, SPORTS, FASHION AND TECH. MY STRENGTHS LIE AT THE INTERSECTION OF BRAND STRATEGY AND THE HUMAN EXPERIENCE.

CONTACT

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CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

Key stakeholder and driver of the launch of Amazon's first-ever physical retail fashion store with locations in Los Angeles and Columbus

Experience working with Fortune 500 companies including Amazon, HBO, Viacom, Whole Foods Market, Oprah Winfrey Network (OWN)

Experience collaborating directly with VP/SVP stakeholders across Marketing, Merchandising, Digital UX, Product & Tech, Store Development, UX Research, Finance, and Core Brand teams

Launched 15+ large-scale Amazon products, programs, and retail events as creative leader and key decision-driver

Grew the Amazon.com homepage advertising platform from 11 businesses to more than 150 in three years by driving user research and creating a scalable framework for custom campaigns

Acquired HBO and Viacom onto the Prime Video service through brand collaboration and identity design strategy, the first streaming platform deal for these companies

Established the first brand lifestyle and product photography for Prime Video and Amazon Style

Drove the expansion of Amazon's global 404 Dog Page experience in three new locales by scaling design, web dev, and production

CREDENTIALS & VOLUNTEERING

Amazon Global Mentor Program, 2010–2022

Amazon Design Community
Conflux (Global Design Conference) Keynote Speaker, 2022
Conflux Event Volunteer, 2017–2022

Amazon Women In Design Organization
Board Member, 2020–2021
Brand and Identity Design, 2020

Global Amazon Accessibility Month
Identity Designer, 2018
GAAM Volunteer, 2018

Amazon Core Shopping Organization
Recognition of Ownership Award, 2017

Arizona State University, School of Visual Communications
Senior Thesis Guest Panelist, 2021



EDUCATION

BSD, Graphic Design, Arizona State University, 2006
Dean's Honor List, College of Design, 2002–2006
ASU Women's Swim Team, 2001–2005
Maroon & Gold Scholar Athlete, 2002–2005

EXPERIENCE

Producer and Creative Director, Tony's Deli, 2023–present

As founding partner, developed the brand, visual identity, and business strategy for a local creative media production company. As producer, estimate and source talent, and produce end-to-end projects exceeding \$300k within budget. Foster collaborative relationships with clients and stakeholders, working closely to execute their vision within budgetary constraints while optimizing available resources.

Sr. Brand Designer, Amazon Style, 2020–2023

Create and launch brand architecture including naming, visual identity, design tenets, and expression across the innovative end-to-end digital and physical retail store. Key decision-driver in defining the customer experience.

- Collaborate with Directors, VPs, and SVP stakeholders, Store Design & Development, Merchandising, Category/Selection, Bis-Dev, and Product teams to build an intuitive experience
- Define wayfinding signage system and in-store marketing/merchandising/educational content hierarchy
- Concept, design, and build physical and digital prototypes; manage testing requests
- Define brand strategy for marketing campaigns and high-visibility events
- Lead development of Brand/creative team through defining multi-level roles, hiring, on-boarding, and mentoring team members including four contractor designers, two mid-level visual designers, Sr. Art Director, Sr. Copywriter, and Creative Director
- Directly manage Brand team; successful career development of one designer from contractor to full time to level promotion in three years
- Source, manage, and provide direction to external print vendors and creative agencies (large format & traditional printing, branded products and apparel, brand photography, video, and motion design)
- Manage brand budget and allocation across CAPEX, OPEX, and external vendors
- Selected member of tiger teams that defined the org's operational tenets and evolved management approaches

Sr. Retail Experience Designer, Amazon Go, 2019–2020

Design environmental graphics, contribute to team management and hiring, and work with business leaders to launch the first physical retail format of Amazon Go Grocery brand with Just Walk Out Technology.

- Define and execute strategy for customer education and electronic shelf label system
- Establish and continuously improve creative project intake system
- Demonstrate leadership by establishing and running the design team's weekly creative studio

Sr. Art Director, Amazon Core Shopping, 2016–2019

Define global campaign visual direction, content strategy, templates, and event style guides for Amazon.com Homepage. Partner with UX and Research to develop strategic programs and features.

- Provide creative direction to 150+ businesses, external partnerships, and sub-brands including Alexa, Prime, Fresh, Music, and Video
- Drive content and creative strategy for company-wide events like Prime Day, Oprah's Favorite Things, Holiday, and International Women's Day
- Influence strategic partnerships and drive buy-in for feature testing with S-Team visibility
- Establish, build, and maintained global internal resources, templates & guidelines, and approvals for three content systems
- Hire, developed, and managed Art Directors
- Create a scalable model for 3P advertisers to be featured on Prime Day with increased ad success by 3x
- Define Homepage visual strategy and champion 2016 redesign in collaboration with leadership
- Create visual identity, collaborate on program strategy, and launch org-wide research program
- Drive international expansion of Dogs 404 Page experience in three locales

Sr. Visual Designer, Prime Video, 2011–2016

Drive Brand visual identity by developing cross-platform templates and content guidelines and manage implementation. Define visual direction for national marketing campaigns and original content launches.

- Identify need for original editorial brand photography; defined and executed on-site art direction and application across product/service
- Launch first original television content in partnership with Amazon Studios
- Design multiple Amazon Global All-Hands Prime Video business presentations
- Demonstrate leadership by developing project management processes, hiring and onboarding best practices, and own community-building activities like Visual Design Summit and weekly design studio
- Design vendor-facing documentation for content ingestion, key art application, and print-on-demand packaging

Creative Department Manager, Fiesta Bowl Organization, 2006–2009

Define visual direction, design, and produce graphic packages across digital, physical, and large-format print creative annually for two college football bowl games, 40+ state-wide events, the 2007 BCS National Championship Game, Fiesta Bowl Museum, and internal projects. Hired and managed seasonal designers.