

# Mariana Johnels

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## Professional Summary

Strategic and hands-on design leader with 15+ years of experience driving end-to-end product design, UX, and design operations across SaaS, B2C, and B2B platforms. Expert at building scalable design systems, operational workflows, and cross-EPD collaboration frameworks that improve quality, speed, and clarity. Proven track record leading global teams, creating design rhythms and design critiques, mentoring talent, and aligning user-centered design with business and growth goals. Fluent in Spanish and English; passionate about accessibility, inclusivity, and data-informed decision-making.

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## Core Competencies

**Design Operations & Leadership:** Design Ops Ownership, Team Rhythms & Reviews, Capacity Planning, Cross-Functional EPD Collaboration, Leadership Enablement, Onboarding & Enablement Programs, Process Scaling, Operational Metrics, Culture & Team Building

**UX & Product Design:** Product Design Strategy, End-to-End Design, Interaction Design, Micro-Interactions, User Journey Mapping, Customer Experience Mapping, UX Writing, Information Architecture, Responsive & Mobile-First Design, Accessibility & Inclusive Design, Privacy-Centered UX, CRO & Data-Driven Design, Low-Fidelity & High-Fidelity Prototyping, Design Critiques

**Digital Design:** Digital Marketing Assets (brochures, catalogs, flyers, posters, social media graphics), Email & Newsletter Design, Banner Ads & Display Advertising, Motion Graphics & GIFs, Digital Branding & Visual Identity, Presentation & Pitch Deck Design, Infographics & Data Visualization, Typography, Color & Layout for Digital Media, Image Editing & Retouching, Campaign Asset Production & Consistency, Cross-Channel Design, Creative & Art Direction, Design for Engagement & Conversion

**Systems & Tooling:** Design Systems, Component Libraries, Design Tokens, Figma Library Ownership, Scalable Frameworks, Wireframing, Prototyping, Developer Handoff

**Research & Analytics:** User Research, Usability Testing, Behavioral Data Analysis, A/B & Multivariate Testing, Analytics (Google Analytics, Redash, Clarity, CrazyEgg)

**Collaboration & Productivity:** Figma, FigJam, Adobe Creative Suite, Framer, Adobe XD, JIRA, Trello, Confluence, Notion, Dropbox, Slack

**AI & Automation:** ChatGPT, Claude, Stitch, Perplexity, Canvas, Lovable, Figma AI

**Development:** HTML, CSS, JavaScript, React(Familiarity)

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## Experience

### Emeritus Institute of Management | Senior Product Designer

Remote – Georgia, U.S. | Jan 2023 – Jul 2025

- Owned the design operating system and workflows across multiple programs, establishing review meetings, design critiques, and alignment processes that improved efficiency and quality.
- Led creation of Blueprint, a scalable and accessible design system with system-wide patterns across global applications adopted org-wide, reducing engineering implementation time by 50 percent and lowering maintenance costs.
- Redesigned account creation flows on landing pages, reducing steps and enabling post-lead account creation, resulting in an 82 percent lift in L2AC and 37 percent lift in L2A globally.
- Modernized referral landing pages and expanded referral options, achieving a 134 percent lift in referral share rate, impacting 120M in revenue.
- Designed and launched Bundles offering, increasing ARPU by 162 dollars per user and contributing 57K in margin for the new product line.
- Co-designed an AI-powered tutoring platform integrated with Canvas LMS, improving personalized learning experiences for education partners.

- Leveraged emerging AI design tools to streamline workflows and accelerate team productivity.
- Mentored junior designers and partnered closely with Product, Engineering, and Growth teams.

## **2U, Inc. | Senior Design Manager**

Remote – Georgia, U.S. | Jan 2021 – Aug 2022

- Directed design operations across 55+ global brands and 200+ programs, ensuring consistent and scalable UX and visual systems that reinforced brand identity.
- Led a remote team of six designers, providing mentorship, performance coaching, and career development to elevate craft and autonomy.
- Established team meetings, design critiques, and operational frameworks to improve clarity, speed, and cross-functional collaboration.
- Partnered across Product, Growth, Marketing, and Engineering to deliver end-to-end design for self-serve learner journeys, enterprise onboarding flows, and high-impact marketing initiatives.
- Managed design contributions for growth-focused projects—campaign landing pages, referral flows, and A/B tests—optimizing CAC, V2L, and L2PA metrics.
- Oversaw onboarding and enablement programs, reducing ramp-up time while maintaining high design quality standards.
- Advocated for a user-centered design culture, balancing data-driven insights with creative innovation to increase engagement, retention, and team alignment.

## **2U, Inc. (via Trilogy Education Services) | Senior Designer**

Boca Raton, Florida, U.S. | Jul 2018 – Jan 2021

- Built design foundations and scalable, accessible systems during rapid startup growth, supporting Trilogy's acquisition by 2U for \$750M.
- Developed and maintained visual identity systems and white-label design frameworks, ensuring cohesive brand expression across digital and offline channels.
- Delivered high-impact marketing and product assets, including websites, ad campaigns, emails, presentations, and brand manuals, driving learner acquisition and program launches.
- Led UX research, prototyping, and responsive product design for conversion-focused, mobile-first landing pages and optimized user flows.
- Established team feedback loops, design critiques, and review practices to elevate craft, improve consistency, and foster collaboration.
- Collaborated closely with engineering and cross-functional teams to implement scalable design solutions aligned with strategic marketing and business objectives.
- Presented design solutions and campaigns to stakeholders with clear rationale, balancing business impact with creative integrity.

## **Office Depot | Senior Web Designer, E-Commerce Functional Lead**

Boca Raton, Florida, U.S. | Jan 2014 – Jul 2018

- Led a team of seven designers, managing projects, timelines, and recruitment for marketing and product design.
- Created style guides, training materials, and CMS operational workflows for brand consistency.
- Implemented Scrum and Agile practices to improve delivery speed and collaboration for digital campaigns.

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## **Education & Certifications**

Florida Atlantic University – BFA, Graphic Design

Keiser College – Associate of Science, Computer Graphics & Design

AI for Designers, IxDF (2025)

Accessibility: How to Design for All, IxDF (2025)

Product Management Insights, PMI (2024)

Advanced Design Thinking, Harvard DCE (2021)

Leadership Foundations & Becoming a Leader, PMI & Harvard DCE (2021)

Lean Foundations, Problem Solving, Communicating Culturally Sensitive Issues, PMI (2021–2023)