

Laura Melbourne CV

Customer Experience Leader | Omnichannel Innovation | Digital Transformation

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Results-driven leader of omnichannel customer experience with strong leadership, adaptability, and critical thinking skills. Skilled in prioritization, motivating teams, and navigating ambiguity to deliver innovative customer-centric solutions that align with company goals.

Education

Southern Illinois University - Edwardsville 1985-1987

Bachelor of Fine Arts - GPA 4.4/5.0

- Who's Who among American College Students
- Fine Arts Awards recipient

Western Illinois University - Macomb 1983-1985

- Fine Art Scholarship & Fine Arts Awards recipient

Research Interests

- Experience Design & Innovation
- Digital Transformation
- Omnichannel Strategy
- Personalization
- AI and LLM for productivity

Professional Experience

Senior Manager Experience Strategy

Mar 2021 - May 2024

Abercrombie & Fitch | New Albany, OH (remote)

Research and Strategic Leadership

- Orchestrated end-to-end Customer Journey Evolution initiative for Abercrombie & Fitch North America, developing data-driven strategies across 7 key customer segments that contributed to digital revenue growth to \$2.2B (47% of total sales) and operating margin increase from 1.7% to 8% over 3 years
- Architected cross-functional transformation through customer journey mapping, implementing "Know and Wow" framework that drove 95% YoY mobile app downloads and 300bps increase in repeat purchase rates, while improving stock performance from \$11 to \$80+
- Pioneered identification and prioritization of 26 key friction points in the returns process, resulting in implementation of AI-powered size recommendations, paperless returns systems, and standardized global return policies to reduce return rates and enhance customer satisfaction
- Designed MVP requirements and implementation roadmap for innovative shared-payment experience through cross-functional workshops, delivering comprehensive strategy including journey mapping, risk assessment, and future-state vision for teen retail experience

- Transformed global Digital Service Platform (DSP) strategy and vision, conducting extensive research across 12 stores and 963 associates to define technology-enabled solutions for an 81% part-time workforce experiencing 47% quarterly turnover

Design Strategy Consultant

Aug 2020 - Mar 2021

Under Armour | Baltimore, MD (remote)

Research and Framework Development

- Led research workshops and sessions with cross-functional teams to capture athletic consumer behavior during pandemic-driven digital transformation
- Developed 11 global personas and data-based omnichannel journeys to document customer decision-making processes within strategic categories
- Implemented innovative research methodology combining jobs-to-be-done theory with design thinking principles to define global opportunities to innovate products and experience for the “focused performer”
- Created comprehensive documentation of research methodologies and frameworks for organizational adoption via a CX toolkit

CX Experience Strategist

Apr 2018 - May 2020

Chico's FAS | Fort Myers (On-site)

Strategic Research Implementation

- Designed and implemented the Style Connect virtual styling service based on research findings, integrating personalized recommendations across three brands and developing measurement framework that tracked \$100 million in sales and 1 million customer engagements in 2020
- Designed evidence-based implementation strategy through synthesis of customer research, establishing BOPIS MVP and future-state recommendations that prioritized inventory visibility, multi-store fulfillment capabilities, and enhanced pickup experiences, resulting in successful omnichannel service launch across three brands
- Designed evidence-based implementation framework categorizing retail innovation opportunities into immediate/one-year/three-year horizons, incorporating emerging technologies assessment and competitive analysis to establish brand differentiation strategies in personalization, community-building, and strategic partnerships
- Led comprehensive multi-city qualitative research study engaging 75+ participants across diverse customer segments, establishing foundational insights for brand repositioning

UX Strategist, Design Manager

Sep 2010 - Mar 2018

Lee Health | Fort Myers (On-site)

Research and Design Leadership

- Directed the comprehensive redesign and rebranding of Lee Health's digital properties, implementing a new design system and development framework, resulting in 147% increase in mobile engagement and \$1M cost savings
- Spearheaded a comprehensive SEO strategy that elevated website search rankings and targeted keywords, resulting in a 50% increase in organic traffic over six months
- Built and mentored a three-person experience design team, implementing accessibility guidelines and best practices that resulted in a 27% YOY increase in output efficiency, improved time-management and collaboration

UX Director

Jun 2006 - Jun 2008

MIVA | Fort Myers (On-site)

UX Leadership and International Strategy

- Led comprehensive mixed-method UX research study engaging 30 digital marketing professionals across US and EU markets, implementing findings to optimize user workflows and information architecture, resulting in 25% increase in platform engagement
- Developed and executed European market expansion strategy through systematic UX localization research, creating scalable design system that drove 25% increase in regional user engagement and enabled successful market entry within 6-month timeline

Sr. Designer

MIVA | Fort Myers (On-site)

UX Leadership and Design

- Conducted comprehensive user experience research studying workflow patterns of 30 digital marketing professionals, implementing findings to develop intuitive information architecture that increased platform engagement by 25% and reduced user error rates by 40%
- Created systematic design evaluation framework incorporating usability testing, behavioral analytics, and user feedback loops, establishing research-based methodology for iterative platform improvements that reduced feature development cycles by 30%

Art Director

Mar 1998 - Mar 2001

America Online - AOL | Dulles, VA

Design Leadership and Member Experience

- Managed 3 direct reports and pool of 12 designers responsible for the visual direction and user experience across AOL's core products and services; providing guidance, feedback, and opportunities for professional growth within AOL's innovative design culture
- Led the design of AOL's core products and services, including Member Publishing & Social Tools (first community chat boards/social network/member web publishing), AOL.com (platforms high-profile front door), AOLPLUS (first broadband content), AOL Weather, AOL News, AOL Politics (Government), AOL Pictures (first online photo sharing), AOL Families & Message Boards
- Served as a Senior Design Ambassador during the Netscape acquisition, ensuring seamless change management and integration of design processes

Sr. Designer

May 1996 - Mar 1998

America Online - AOL | Dulles, VA

Content Design and Member Experience

- One of the first designers hired within AOL's Greenhouses - the company's Innovation Hub, driving cutting-edge digital experiences
- Designed the groundbreaking dual-published women's content network, one of the first of its kind on the web, which was later acquired by Oprah Winfrey to create the "O" Network
- Contributed design expertise to other emerging digital offerings during a period of rapid growth and innovation for the company

Presentations

- [CX-UX Examples](#)
- [A&F DSP Vision Presentation](#)
- [Chico's Bopis Presentation](#)
- [Chico's Experiential Retail Presentation](#)

Teaching & Mentorship

- ADPList Mentor - ADPList.org

Volunteer Experience

- The House That Tech Built (Board Member) - Habitat for Humanity

Professional Service

- A&F Diversity & Inclusion Leader - Women in STEM ARG
- AOL Senior Design Ambassador

Professional Memberships

- UXPA - User Experience Professional Association
- CXPA - Customer Experience Professional Association
- Interaction Design Association

Professional Honors & Awards

- Chico's The "Power of &" Award Finalist and Recipient - This Award is a leadership-nominated award given to a team who exemplify the highest and most valued standards of Chico's FAS.
- A&F 3X "Golden Moose Award" nominee

Courses & Certifications

- Design Thinking: From Insights to Viability (Accelerated Design Track Certificate) - Stanford University
- Inbound Marketing Certificate - Hubspot
- Scrum Basics - LinkedIn
- UX Foundations: Research - LinkedIn
- UX Foundations: Accessibility - LinkedIn
- UX Foundations: Content Strategy - LinkedIn
- Design Thinking - Understanding the Process - LinkedIn

Technical Expertise

Experience Strategy, Experience Design, CX Design & Strategy, Customer Journey Management, Customer Experience Management, Design Management, Design Ops, Sentiment Analysis, Stakeholder Management, Change Management, Customer Journey Mapping, Service Design, Customer Segmentation, CRM, Customer Research, User Interviews, Ethnographic Research, Surveys, Heuristic Analysis, Usability Testing, Root Cause Analysis, Design Thinking, Jobs to be-Done, Empathy Maps, Storyboards, Personas, Statistical Analysis, Revenue Growth, KPIs & OKRs, Key Performance Indicators, Performance Indicators, Data-Driven Insights, Emerging Technologies, Lean, Agile, HTML, CSS, Prototypes, Industry Trends, AI & LLM, Midjourney, ChatGPT, Adobe Creative Suite, Microsoft Suite, Miro, Mural, Sketch, Figma, Jira, Google Analytics, User Testing, Optimizely, Qualtrics, Medallia, Omnichannel, Retail, Healthcare, SaaS, Marketing, Graphic Design, Branding