Mark Barilla

User Experience Design Strategist ▪ Staff Interaction Designer ▪ Global Product Strategist ▪ Billion-Dollar Initiative Leadership
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Professional summary

Strategic design leader with 15+ years of experience building enterprise tools, data platforms, and design systems for world-class technology and media companies. Proven at translating complex, ambiguous challenges into scalable, intuitive experiences, from dual-sided publishing platforms at Google to responsive content systems at CNN, serving millions of users across global markets.

Core competencies

Product Innovation & Technical Excellence: Enterprise-scale design systems built for longevity ▪ Data-heavy interface design and information architecture ▪ AI-assisted prototyping and generative interaction paradigms ▪ Multi-platform strategy (iOS, Android, web)

Leadership & Strategy: Cross-functional stakeholder orchestration across legal, editorial, engineering, and partnerships ▪ Executive-level product visioning for high-stakes initiatives ▪ Crisis management and rapid response coordination

Industry Expertise: B2B tools for sophisticated professional users ▪ Complex workflow design for regulated environments ▪ Publisher and partner-facing platform development ▪ Compliance-driven product design

Technical skills

Figma ▪ Design Systems & Component Libraries ▪ AI-Assisted Prototyping (Gemini, Claude, Cursor) ▪ Design Operations (DesignOps) ▪ Accessibility Standards (WCAG 2.1) ▪ HTML/CSS ▪ Information Architecture ▪ Interaction Design Patterns ▪ Data Visualization ▪ A/B Testing & Experimentation ▪ User Research & Usability Testing ▪ Responsive Web Design ▪ Design Thinking & Workshop Facilitation ▪ Agile/Scrum Methodologies

Career highlights

Architected Google's $1B News Showcase program, designing a dual-sided data platform and publisher CMS that established the first direct licensing revenue stream for the global journalism industry

Directed multidisciplinary teams for 1B+ DAU products, including Google Lens integrations across Chrome, YouTube, and the Google App

Drove a 10%+ lift in daily active users for Google News through a comprehensive global desktop relaunch

Transformed CNN.com as Creative Director, architecting the Live Story ecosystem and establishing design systems and editorial layouts still in production today

Professional experience

Google Cambridge, MA | 2019 - 2025

UX Design Lead | Google Lens Integrations and Contextual Search | June 2024 – October 2025
- Directed design strategy for Google Lens integrations across 1B+ DAU surfaces (Chrome, YouTube, Google App), orchestrating alignment between competing product philosophies and design systems
- Negotiated complex technical and design trade-offs across disparate organizations, including 5+ distinct YouTube workstreams to secure cross-functional approval for high-visibility AI launches

- Architected adaptive UI frameworks capable of evolving alongside real-time AI advancements, ensuring Lens features remained cohesive across desktop-specific Chrome sidebars and mobile environments
- Pioneered novel interaction paradigms for short-form video by leading a multidisciplinary team of 7 to create bespoke AI-search experiences that balanced platform-specific constraints with user-intent signals
- Facilitated high-stakes UX partnerships with external platforms to pilot experimental in-app search integrations, expanding the reach of Google's AI-powered discovery tools

UX Design Lead | **Google News** | January 2022 – May 2024

- Spearheaded global relaunch of news.google.com for 140+ international editions, achieving a 10%+ lift in DAUs by transforming a legacy aggregator into a structured, modern news experience
- Directed a multidisciplinary team of 5, delivering the first Google web product to implement Material Design 3 (GM3), negotiating a visual language that harmonized GM3 UI with Search Design System (SDS) content patterns
- Translated UXR insights into core product strategy for topic-following and feed customization, moving the product from algorithmic-only feeds to a user-controlled experience that increased repeat usage
- Managed rapid-response design strategy during major global news events to ensure information integrity and user safety across high-traffic desktop surfaces

Senior Interaction Designer & UX Design Manager | **Google News Showcase** | March 2020 – December 2021

- Architected end-to-end UX for Google's $1B journalism investment, designing a dual-sided ecosystem (Publisher CMS and Consumer Panels) that established the first direct licensing revenue stream for 2,800+ publishers
- Directed design strategy across Google News and Discover, negotiating complex requirements to give publishers greater editorial control while maintaining cohesive user journeys across multiple Google surfaces
- Resolved high-stakes ambiguity between Legal, Partnerships, and Product to scale tools supporting 750M+ curated panels across 31 international markets
- Established a durable design system and visual language that remains Google's journalism standard 5+ years post-launch
- Mentored and led a cross-functional design workstream to accelerate launch velocity while ensuring design consistency and technical feasibility during a high-visibility global rollout

Interaction Designer | **Google News - Context Everywhere Initiative** | September 2019 – February 2020

- Designed information literacy tools helping users evaluate content credibility
- Created Android messenger integration concepts for content verification and fact-checking
- Developed foundation for current source information features with Search teams

CNN Digital Atlanta, GA | 2011 - 2019

Creative Director | **CNN.com, CNN Politics** | March 2014 – August 2019

- Transformed CNN.com into a revenue-optimized digital platform, scaling the nation's leading news destination to record-breaking engagement while maintaining editorial integrity during high-velocity news cycles
- Architected the Live Story ecosystem, a resilient live-blogging product that remains CNN's primary breaking-news driver a decade later, consistently supporting 3–4 daily live events with minimal structural changes
- Led strategic and visual design for the 2016 Presidential Election, orchestrating complex real-time data visualizations and results-driven interfaces for a global audience of 50M+ concurrent users
- Directed the visual identity and brand system for CNN Politics, establishing a high-polish aesthetic through custom layouts, illustration styles, and typography that defined the look and feel of the category
- Evangelized an adaptive layout system adopted as the foundation for all site programming, ensuring a cohesive user experience across CNN's expanding digital ecosystem

- Established user-centric design methodologies and CMS workflows that became the organizational standard, bridging the gap between high-speed editorial needs and product strategic execution

Senior Designer | March 2012 – February 2014

- Led the multi-year responsive redesign of CNN.com, a landmark digital transformation that dramatically expanded mobile engagement and unlocked significant new advertising revenue streams
- Codified editorial programming standards and CMS patterns for the global organization, reducing production friction for hundreds of journalists and editors across time zones
- Orchestrated the data-driven evolution of the CNN homepage, utilizing iterative testing to optimize content hierarchy for the world's most-visited news site

Designer | September 2011 – February 2012

- Designed microsites and internal brand campaigns for beat and show blogs (The Lead, Amanpour)
- Designed, edited and produced CNN Digital's annual retrospective publication

Early Career 2008 - 2011

Front End Developer (Contract) | The Home Depot · Atlanta, GA | June 2011 – August 2011

- Collaborated with front-end developers and designers to implement CSS and HTML on primary checkout and payment process for all products on homedepot.com

Interactive Designer | Burdette Ketchum | Jacksonville, FL | August 2009 – May 2011

- Led web design and front-end development for client websites, email newsletter and online advertising campaigns, flash animations, and logos, providing solutions from concept to production and collaborating directly with primary partners, account executives and print designers

Interactive Designer & Front-End Developer | Pippin Design · Jacksonville, FL | June 2008 – July 2009

- Oversaw design, development and administration of all online initiatives, including implementation and customization of content management systems (Wordpress, Expression Engine), to accomplish client objectives

Education

University of Florida | Gainesville, FL
Bachelor of Science in Advertising | 2004–2008

Awards & Recognition

- News Showcase launch featured in The Verge, TechCrunch, and Google Blog
- Multiple Google internal awards for design excellence and impact