

Mini Kurhan

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Introduction:

As a seasoned leader in user experience and digital marketing, I'm in touch with the intangibles that make customer journeys amazing. My expertise revolves around creating cohesive end-to-end experiences, product optimization, and setting foundations for scale.

Being detail-oriented, I notice problems others might not see, and I passionately devise strategies for improvement. Innovation is key—leveraging proven methods while exploring new ideas with creativity and data-driven testing to come up with something even better. I put my heart into my work, always aiming for the highest positive impact on the business. I am excited to help build a brand, scale a team, and take the customer's experience to the next level.

You can find me cooking healthy meals, snapping photos, spinning 1960s reggae records, and hunting for vintage collectibles.

Education:

UCLA, School of Arts & Architecture

BA, Design

Skills (Expert): Figma, Sketch, Photoshop, Illustrator

Skills (Knowledgeable): User Research, Prototyping, Adobe CS, HTML/CSS knowledge, plus experience with AI, NLP, and ML technology

Skills (Auxiliary): Photography, Video, Music, Silkscreen, Interior Design, Visual Display, Jewelry, DIY

Title:

Creative Director, UX Director, Art Director, Principal Designer

Expertise:

User-centered design thinking and personalized omni-channel customer experiences for mission-driven brands. Personalization and relevancy, clothing fit and user reviews, responsive web and iOS apps, A/B testing, e-commerce, social and marketplace shopping, content integration, acquisition, and retention.

Management & Direction (since 2011):

Operational improvements for scaling teams using principles of servant leadership. Foundational structure, process enhancement, workflow efficiency, strategic systems thinking, cross-departmental collaboration, design libraries, problem-solving, and course correction.

Mobile Design (since 2002), Web Design (since 2000), Print Design (since 1998):

Thoughtful, purpose-driven design across a broad spectrum of mediums. Responsive web, UX design, UI design, graphic design, creative direction, art direction, photo art direction, branded experiences, website and product audits, landing pages, newsletter and social marketing, iPhone apps, marketing materials, and logos.

Design Experience:

July 2022 – Current

Head of UX — Stealth Mode Startup (Contract)

ToSelf is a journaling app that leverages AI to provide data-driven personal insights. I turned a loose concept into buildable, user-centered designs. My vision work included concepts for turning insights into actionable goals.

July 2020 – May 2022

Director of UX — Dropps (Full-time)

Dropps is a high-growth e-commerce DTC brand selling eco-friendly cleaning products. As their first UX leader, I transformed the website and established systems, led optimization testing, and created process for the UX and Dev teams. The gist of it: optimize the website for acquisition and retention, create brand styles and establish design pattern library, photo art direction, creative direction, create cross-team collaboration for cohesive customer journeys, build structure for product discovery, and set foundations for personalized experiences. Plus advise on brand redesign, creative, and ideas for packaging innovation.

Feb 2019 – Feb 2020

Principal UX Designer and Art Director — Cariuma (Contract, via Anatta)

Cariuma is a high-growth e-commerce company selling sustainable sneakers. As a lead designer, my work included Art Direction to revamp brand styles for the website, creating brand-heavy landing pages for the customer acquisition funnel, redesigns for core shopping funnel pages, designing systems for responsive marketing graphics, and consultation on product photography. All UX work was geared towards improving KPIs, and testing design variations to find the best solutions.

Jan 2019 – Feb 2020

Principal UX Designer and Art Director — Anatta Design (Contract)

Anatta's agency model is to work with health & wellness e-commerce clients long-term as an "in-house design and dev team", helping brands exponentially scale growth and revenue over time. I worked on a variety of projects, with an emphasis on brand-heavy user-centered designs. My work included Art Direction and UX design for acquisition pages, core shopping funnel redesigns, a complete website overhaul to launch a brand, style guides, and direction for product photography and responsive graphics. Clients included Cariuma, Dry Farm Wines, and FOCL CBD.

April 2017 – July 2018

Principal Designer & Creative Director, Web — Rothy's (Contract)

Rothy's is a high-growth e-commerce company selling sustainable women's shoes. I created foundational structure for the Design and e-commerce Photography teams to improve efficiency and workflow for scaling, created visual consistency across the website and marketing channels, led creative direction and hands-on UX design for the website, art-directed product photography, with occasional creative direction for marketing emails.

July 2014 – Aug 2016

Principal, User Experience — @Walmartlabs/Walmart E-Commerce (Full-time)

Coming to @Walmartlabs via the Luvocracy acquisition, I created customer-focused omnichannel vision strategies for a millennial segment, led a small team of designers in a responsive web home page redesign and ongoing hypothesis testing, and reduced workload across teams through revised UX systems with solutions for responsive graphics. I explored explicit vs. implicit personalization, as well as led a complete redesign of a personalized home page and global nav experience. I was dubbed "the liaison between UX and Creative" teams.

Oct 2013 – July 2014

Senior Art Director — Luvocracy (Acquired) (Contract to Hire)

Luvocracy is a social shopping platform that leverages online influencers to build its audience. I developed the company's visual identity in all marketing communications and created foundational structure to help the company scale. The company was acquired by Walmart E-commerce in July 2014.

May 2013 – Jan 2014

Senior UX Designer — Dolls Kill (Contract)

High-growth e-commerce brand. Redesign the m-web e-commerce site, as well as create editorial landing pages and lookbooks, redesign shopping funnel pages, global nav, feature enhancements, and website art direction.

Dec 2012 – June 2013

Senior Art Director and UX Designer — Flit Shopping (Contract)

Flit was a small start-up of 5 people that made a social shopping iPad app. Hired to do a quick visual design re-skin of the app, I was kept on to further enhance the product. I worked with the CEO, CTO and PM to translate physical shopping experiences into a digital experience, thinking

through in-store customer behaviors with a focus on the social interactions inherent to human emotion and thought processes.

Nov 2012 – April 2013

Senior Designer — Stella & Dot (Contract)

I worked on website product enhancements and accompanying email newsletters for new features including social-focused Trunk Shows and Style Events, event invitation pages, portals, theme personalization, RSVP, and sign-in and check-out revisions. I worked cross-functionally between the UX and Creative teams, ensuring consistency of branding and style guide elements.

Jan 2011 – Oct 2012

Design Manager / Associate Creative Director — ModCloth (Full-time)

While encouraging inter-departmental collaboration, I built a team of graphic designers, strengthening brand recognition through visual consistency and the introduction of style guides. I gave direction and feedback on all design projects, managed design team assignments, art-directed Creative Team projects, worked closely with Marketing, Editorial, Social Media and Blog teams on project briefs and overarching strategy, and created workflow processes and structure for the Creative Team.

May 2010 – Dec 2010

Senior UX Designer and Senior Graphic Designer — ModCloth (Full-time)

As Senior UX Designer, I created new site features and functionality from concept through visual design phases. As Senior Graphic Designer, I conceptualized and designed story-driven interactive lookbooks, email newsletters, home page graphics, ads, social media graphics, blog and editorial graphics, and designed internal-facing materials as needed.

2002 – 2010

Senior Designer — Skyrocket (Acquired) (formerly Moderati, Faith West, Inc.) (Full-time)

As an in-house designer at a digital marketing agency, I was a pioneer in the early days of mobile. I conceptualized, designed, and art-directed mobile phone and iPhone applications, animated ringtones, mobile wallpapers, printed marketing collateral, and web design.

Clients Include: glaceau/vitaminwater, Harrah's, NBC, Nickelodeon, AOL-Time Warner, Zippo, A&E Television Network, EMI/Capitol Records, Sony Music, Cosmopolitan, Virgin Mobile, Verizon Wireless, Qualcomm

2000 – present (off and on)

Freelance Designer and Consultant

I've handled all aspects of design for mobile, responsive web, and print, run teams at a leadership level, and have contributed to online design publications and conferences. I use a customer-centric approach to my solutions, thinking through creative and technical implementations for supporting multiple devices, while also developing workflow efficiencies to create work quickly and reduce costs for the business.

Clients Include: ToSelf, Anatta Design, Cariuma, Macys.com, FOCL CBD, Dry Farm Wines, Rothy's, Zenefits, Luvocracy, Dolls Kill, Stella & Dot, Flit Shopping, Trendy Blendy, PJA Agency, Design*Sponge, 7x7 Magazine, Rock River Music and Starmaker Karaoke, RedHot Apps and Pressman Toys, ARC, Progressive Strategy Partners for Barbara Boxer, Adwire LLC, and Looney Tunes, plus several bands and wedding clients.

Retail Experience:

1993 – 2002

Manager and Store Associate

I worked for several small, independently run retail boutiques in trendy Los Angeles and Bay Area shopping districts starting at age 15. This gave me foundational knowledge of customer experience design—creating shopping experiences based on the needs and responses of the customer.

My goal was to create an atmosphere that encouraged the customer to return—whether it be through directing them to the right item to purchase, helping them discover new things, or giving genuine recommendations of where else they might find the items they're looking for. With experience from sales to management, I ran the day-to-day operations, managed employees, created window and in-store displays, and turned a store from loss to profit.

Testimonials:

“You're an ideas powerhouse. I love how you think critically and you always have the question to ask which will make people think. Thank you for trying to make us better in all ways!”

— *Dropps*

“Mini just set the bar for UX deliverables really, really high.”

— *Walmart E-Commerce*

“Mini provided great design direction and her work was always of the highest quality.”

— *Rothy's*

“Mini is a great advocate for her team and is very thoughtful about all aspects of Creative at ModCloth—always interested in improving process as well as Creative Team output.”

— *ModCloth*

“Your honesty has been appreciated and definitely reminds me that you look out for the company as a whole, and more so, of how our team can succeed within it. You always identify ways in which we can improve as individuals and as designers.”

— *ModCloth*

“Thank you for your transparency in communication, your willingness to push the envelope, and your vision for the future.”

— *Dropps*

“Mini is able to jump in and understand the big picture, brand aesthetics, as well as product objectives and then quickly create design solutions that always exceed expectations.”

— *Stella & Dot*

“You are by far the most collaborative and invested designer I’ve worked with at Anatta Design.”

— *Anatta Design*

“I appreciate your style, your temperament, your amazing ideas, and your collaborative spirit. It’s also so impressive how much one woman is able to juggle, and execute it all perfectly!”

— *Dropps*

“You’ve done such a great job at creating the design foundations for this project. Your work and visions were instrumental in getting this project to where it is today.”

— *ToSelf*

Accolades:

2022

Dropps Exponential Growth

47% annual growth in first year, with projected 68% annual growth in second year (roughly, 147% growth over 2 years).

2020

Dropps Major Redesign, Measurable Improvements

2x completion rate from homepage to PDP, and 3x from PDP to Cart. Plus 60% reduction in Customer Service tickets.

2020

Cariuma Exponential Growth

25% growth month over month, and 2x sales increase quarterly.

2018

Rohty's Exponential Growth

350% compounded growth rate, over \$140 million in sales, selling over 1 million pairs of shoes.

2018

Rothy's Customer Reviews, New Feature

My design introduced contextual reviews to Yotpo, and was deemed "one of the best I've seen" by our Yotpo (3rd-party reviews platform) account manager.

2016

Podcast Guest: A Responsive Web Design Podcast (Episode 69, WalmartLabs)

I was interviewed by Karen McGrane and Ethan Marcotte, sharing the story of how Walmart launched a responsive e-comm website while minimizing disruption of service.

2015

Conference Speaker: Responsive Field Day

I presented a case study of work I did at @Walmartlabs on responsive hero graphics, sharing the stage with high profile contributors in the responsive web design field, including Ethan Marcotte, Steve Souders, Jen Simmons, Jeremy Keith and many more. Presentation titled, "Responsive Heroes at Scale."

2014

Acquisition: Luvocracy

Luvocracy acquired by Walmart E-Commerce (WalmartLabs).

2013

Featured on App Design Served by Behance

My "Life After People" iPhone app from 2009 (the History Channel's first mobile app) was featured on the appdesignserved.co home page.

2012

Panel Moderator, ModCloth Fashion Workshop

I facilitated and contributed to a discussion on working in fashion when coming from a variety of experiences and backgrounds.

2012

ModCloth Email Marketing Recognition

My team designed and co-conceptualized email marketing, for which ModCloth was recognized.

2012

ModCloth, Top Twitter Brand Page

My team spearheaded and implemented the look and feel of all social media channels, which gained ModCloth recognition as top brand page on Twitter.

2011, 2012

ModCloth Revenue and Metrics Increase

My Graphic + UX design initiative increased projected sales revenue by \$450,000 – \$600,000 annually. My team experimented with non-traditional page real estate to call attention to site features, driving estimated 4% increase in feature usage. Other experiments resulted in reduced bounce rate and increased page depth.

2010

ModCloth, My Measurements Feature Created

I enhanced user reviews by adding customer body measurements, to give context and relevance for finding clothes that fit. My design remained unchanged until 2017, and the redesign remains in use today. My full original idea was later brought to fruition in 2013 via customer research with the launch of Fit For Me.

2010

Design*Sponge Contributor

I contributed the first article about designing for mobile on Design*Sponge's business educational section—Biz Ladies: Creating The Perfect iPhone App For Your Biz.

2009

Zippo iPhone App, Apple Recognition

The Zippo iPhone app I designed reached #2 most-downloaded free apps, had over 10 million unique customers, with mentions in over 100 stories in consumer, advertising, mobile and entertainment publications such as Entertainment Weekly, Adweek, AdAge, TechCrunch and the Wall Street Journal, and was featured in an Apple TV commercial.

2009

SouljaBoy Romplr iPhone App Recognition

The music mixer app I designed was featured in the Los Angeles Times, Wired, Tech-Crunch, Billboard and the Washington Post online.

2007

Acquisition: Moderati

Moderati acquired by Bellrock Media.