Brad Tober

Strategic Design Leader | Systems Thinker | Experience Architect

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Executive Summary

Design leader specializing in the strategic orchestration of complex systems, data-driven experiences, and human-centered innovation. Uniquely positioned at the intersection of AI, product strategy, and experience architecture with expertise in both industry and academia. Proven ability to drive cross-functional alignment, establish scalable design frameworks, and translate vision into impactful business outcomes.

Professional Experience

Epsilon (Publicis Groupe)

Director of Product Design Strategy & Research *| August 2020 - Present*
Associate Director of Product Design *| October 2017 - August 2020*

Led vision-setting and design strategy for PeopleCloud, an enterprise SaaS suite enabling data-driven marketing and customer intelligence. Orchestrated cross-product experience design, platform cohesion, and innovation initiatives while cultivating a high-performing design culture grounded in systems thinking.

Strategic Leadership & Innovation

- Pioneered a six-lens framework for evaluating AI integration in user experiences, establishing new standards for responsible and effective AI deployment across products
- Developed and delivered Epsilon's cross-product design strategy for actionable analytics, integrating data visualization best practices, third-party tools (e.g., Tableau), and system-level componentization to optimize value delivery
- Led design vision and execution for a privacy-first cleanroom environment empowering data scientists to engage with sensitive data
- Conceptualized "Data Stories," a narrative-driven experience layer for analytics that received both senior leadership and industry analyst recognition as a driver of innovation
- Formalized a comprehensive strategy and research playbook, increasing maturity of the design strategy capability and enhancing team self-sufficiency / operational clarity

Organizational Impact & Transformation

- Elevated organizational design maturity post-acquisition of Epsilon by Publicis by implementing rigorous product and service design processes, improving quality and consistency across the combined enterprise
- Led harmonization of legacy design systems, unifying Epsilon, Conversant, and Publicis platforms while reducing duplicative UX and engineering work
- Scaled UX research output by ~50% year-over-year (2023–2024) with minimal team growth through process innovation and cross-functional alignment
- Evolved team structure and hiring practices, aligning career development with organizational needs and improving equity in recruitment

Academic Leadership & Research

Lecturer, Graduate Program in Digital Media | *Northeastern University | September 2019 - Present*
Assistant Professor of Design and Visual Analytics | *Boston University | July 2016 - January 2018*
Assistant Professor of Graphic Design | *University of Illinois | August 2011 - June 2016*

Initiated a foundational research program on design futures and meta-design that continues to influence my approach to product strategy and experience architecture in industry contexts today. Developed and taught both undergraduate- and graduate-level courses in creative code, human-centered AI, and strategic user experience design across a variety of diverse academic programs, reaching thousands of students.

Thought Leadership

Meta-Design and AI Integration Framework (2025)

Authored a white paper titled "From Prompts to Principles: Meta-Design and the Evolution of AI Interfaces," helping to establish a six-lens framework for evaluating how AI should be integrated into user experiences through a systems-aware, human-centered perspective.

Selected Publications & Presentations

- "Anticipating Gaze-Based HCI Applications with the Tech Receptivity Interval," *Visible Language* (2020)
- "Adopting Visual Narratives as Points of Entry to Meaningful Data-Oriented Product UX," *CIOReview* (2019)
- "Toward a Dynamic-Data-Visualization-Based Model for Building Communities," xCoAx, Universidade de Lisboa (2017)
- "Designing for Creativity: Contemporary Digital Culture and the Role of the Designer," Cumulus REDO Conference (2017)
- "Envisioning Design Futures via Practice-led Speculative Design Research," *Networking Knowledge* (2016)
- "Visually Mapping Cross-Referential Relationships Within Non-Linear Data Sets," *Parsons Journal for Information Mapping* (2016)
- "Data Aesthetics," Sensory Overload: A Conference on Big Data and Data Perceptualization, University of Georgia (2015)

Education

- **MDes** (Design) | York University, Toronto, Ontario | 2011
- **BFA** (Graphic Design) | Savannah College of Art and Design, Savannah, Georgia | 2008
- **BA** (Mathematics) | University at Buffalo, Buffalo, New York | 2008

Core Competencies

Strategic Design Leadership | Cross-Product Experience Architecture | Data Visualization & Analytics Design | Human-Centered AI Integration | Design Research | Team Development & Mentorship | Cross-Functional Collaboration | Systems Thinking & Meta-Design | Executive Communication & Advocacy

Technical Expertise

Design & Prototyping (Figma, Sketch, Adobe Creative Cloud, Axure, Zeplin, Abstract) | Development (HTML/CSS/JavaScript, Processing/p5.js) | Data Visualization (Tableau integration, custom visualization frameworks) | Research (Qualitative & quantitative methodologies, user testing, eye tracking, Lyssna)