

# Melissa Waller

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## Design Leader | Experience Strategy, Design Systems, Accessibility & UX Operations

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Design leader with 15+ years of experience shaping digital products, teams, and operating models across enterprise and higher-education environments. Known for building scalable design systems, clarifying cross-functional ways of working, and turning complex product and service problems into practical, measurable improvements. Brings a collaborative, accessibility-informed approach to quality and consistency.

## Core Expertise

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Design Leadership | Team Enablement | Experience Strategy | Service Design | Design Systems and Governance | UX Operations | Process Improvement | Cross-Functional Facilitation | Stakeholder Alignment | Product Quality, Usability, and Accessibility-Informed Design | Coaching, Mentorship, and Organizational Enablement

## Experience

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### Walmart | Principal UX Designer, Experience Strategy Lead

2025 - Present | Bentonville, AR

- Lead enterprise design and experience strategy initiatives across multiple product teams, partnering with product, engineering, research, and QA to improve consistency, delivery quality, and team alignment.
- Build lightweight governance frameworks, review checkpoints, and quality standards that help teams make better decisions earlier in the process.
- Facilitate workshops, stakeholder sessions, and executive-ready communications that translate complex work into clear priorities and action plans.
- Coach designers and cross-functional partners through training, feedback, and reusable templates that scale effective ways of working.
- Partner with peers to remediate UX and accessibility-related defects through structured triage and coordinated follow-through.

### Walmart | Staff UX Designer, Experience Operations & Enablement Lead

2024 - 2025 | Bentonville, AR

- Led cross-functional digital experience, governance, and modernization work supporting university-wide web ecosystems.
- Directed 4 teams of UX designers, developers, accessibility specialists, content strategists, and student employees.
- Built scalable design systems, standards documentation, and operational workflows supporting 100+ responsive layouts and 50+ high-fidelity assets.
- Led migration of 10 large-scale websites and improved adoption of new standards by 20%.
- Reduced decision paralysis by 60% through journey-based redesign for ACES Program Explorer.

### University of Illinois College of ACES | Director of Web Development

2019 - 2024 | Urbana, IL

- Led cross-functional digital experience strategy, service design, governance, and platform modernization initiatives supporting university-wide digital ecosystems.

- Directed four multidisciplinary teams of UX professionals, developers, accessibility specialists, and stakeholders in defining and delivering user-centered digital experiences.
- Facilitated stakeholder workshops, alignment sessions, and strategic planning activities that drove consensus around experience priorities and investment decisions.
- Developed scalable design systems, governance standards, and digital experience frameworks supporting 100+ responsive layouts and 50+ high-fidelity assets.
- Conducted usability testing, user research, and insight synthesis to inform experience improvements and service enhancements.
- Created journey-based approaches to improve program discovery, reducing user decision paralysis by 60% for the ACES Program Explorer.
- Communicated strategy, roadmap progress, and adoption metrics through executive and stakeholder forums, contributing to a 20% increase in organizational adoption of new digital standards.

### **University of Illinois Campus Recreation | Communications and Marketing Manager**

2014 - 2019 | Urbana, IL

- Led digital experience strategy and service improvements across web, mobile, and operational channels.
- Increased program registrations by 12% through user-centered content and engagement strategy.
- Managed platform modernization and organizational change efforts.
- Supervised and mentored staff, graduate assistants, and student employees.
- Built onboarding resources, training materials, and communication standards that improved consistency.

### **Melissa Waller Photography & Design | Owner**

2011 - 2014 | Monticello, IL

- Built and launched an e-commerce platform with membership features, increasing digital sales by 35%.
- Created educational content, tutorials, and customer learning resources that improved adoption and retention.
- Managed product strategy, customer experience, marketing, and day-to-day business operations.

### **University of Illinois Division of Intercollegiate Athletics | Graphic Designer**

2005 - 2011 | Urbana, IL

- Developed print and digital communications supporting university programs, marketing initiatives, and stakeholder engagement efforts.

## **Education**

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**Bachelor of Fine Arts, Graphic Design | University of Illinois**

## **Certifications**

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**Certified Professional in Accessibility Core Competencies (CPACC) | International Association of Accessibility Professionals (IAAP), 2023**

## **Professional Learning**

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- Generative AI for Leaders - Vanderbilt University
- Agentic AI and AI Agents: A Primer for Leaders - Vanderbilt University
- Microsoft 365 Copilot for Leaders - Vanderbilt University
- Trustworthy Generative AI - Vanderbilt University
- OpenAI GPTs: Creating Your Own Custom AI Assistants - Vanderbilt University