Smita Pawa
Creative Director at Photon

Dallas, Texas.
972.974.7058
smitapawa07@gmail.com
smitapawa.com

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

With over 16 years of experience in product design, UX strategy, and experience leadership, I specialize in creating impactful, human-centered digital products that drive measurable business outcomes. Currently serving as a Creative Director at Photon—a global digital and AI agency partnering with 40% of Fortune 100 companies—I lead multidisciplinary teams in delivering innovative, scalable experiences for complex enterprise ecosystems.

My expertise spans product design, UX research, and experience strategy, enabling organizations to align user needs with business objectives while simplifying complex digital journeys. Throughout my career, I have collaborated with global brands to design products used by billions of users and generating significant business value.

Beyond my professional role, I actively contribute to the design community as a mentor, speaker, and judge, working with organizations such as AIGA, AIVA, A' Design, and Orpetron to support and inspire the next generation of design leaders.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Recognized in **Forbes** for pioneering a design process that optimizes cost management, budgeting, and timeline efficiency, ensuring streamlined project execution and delivering exceptional value.

- Invited as a speaker at **Amity University**—one of India's leading universities—to present at the International Conference on Innovation in Visual Arts.

- Serving as an **Executive Board Member** of the **American Institute of Graphic Arts (AIGA)**, where I support, mentor, and advocate for emerging professionals in the design community.

- Honored with **four awards** by Photon, recognizing excellence in design leadership, delivering high-quality outputs, and fostering exceptional client engagement.

COMPANIES/CLIENTS

- Photon
- Citi
- Jack Henry & Associates
- Sabre
- Intone Networks
- Jumpstart
- Technicolor
- Krispy Kreme
- Nothing Bundt Cakes
- Go To Foods (Moe's, Jamba, McAlister's Deli, Schlotzsky's, Auntie Anne's, Cinnabon, Carvel)
- Classic Collision
- Pelican
- Etihad Airways
- Virgin Australia
- Ethiopian Airways
- Kulula Airlines
- Air Serbia
- DreamWorks
- Nickelodeon
- Lego
- EA Sports
- Marvel
- Labcorp Lab Diagnostics
- Optima Health Insurance
- Sentara Healthcare
- Symitar

SKILLS

Leadership & Strategy
- Design Leadership
- Product & UX Strategy
- Vision & Roadmap Development
- Cross-Functional Leadership
- Stakeholder/Client Management
- Executive Communication
- Design Advocacy

Design & Experience
- UX, Wireframes & Information Architecture
- User Interface & Design Systems
- Accessibility & Inclusive Design

Research & Insights
- UX Research & Journey Mapping
- User Interviews & Usability Testing
- Persona Development
- Data-Driven Design Decisions
- A/B Testing & CX Strategy

Team & Organizational Leadership
- Building and Scaling Design Teams
- Design Mentorship & Coaching
- Design Operations (DesignOps)
- Hiring & Talent Development
- Performance Management
- Design Workshop Facilitation

Product & Business
- KPI & Metrics-Driven Design
- Business Strategy Alignment
- Product Lifecycle Management
- Agile / Lean Product Development
- Design Thinking
- Innovation Strategy

Collaboration & Delivery
- Cross-Functional Collaboration
- Engineering Collaboration
- Design QA & Handoff
- End-to-End Product Development

TOOLS

- Figma, FigJam
- Miro
- Adobe Suite
- Jira, Confluence
- Microsoft Office 365
- AI Tools (ChatGPT, Figma Make, Co-Pilot)

EDUCATION

- **Bachelor of Arts -** CSJM, U.P. India (Fine Arts & Computer Science)

- **3D Certification** - MAAC, New Delhi, India.

Smita Pawa

Creative Director at Photon

Dallas, Texas.

972.974.7058

smitapawa07@gmail.com

smitapawa.com

EXPERIENCE

Photon Infotech - Dallas, Texas

Creative Director (04/2024 - **Present**) - Full-time

- Oversee multiple client products and portfolios valued in the millions, ensuring each project aligns with client objectives and delivers measurable, impactful outcomes that drive business success.
- Facilitate design thinking workshops to gain in-depth product insights, gather comprehensive requirements, and foster collaborative, innovative solutions.
- Lead the product design strategies and oversee the entire program lifecycle, from inception to successful implementation.
- Implemented streamlined design processes that ensure all requirements are met efficiently and seamlessly, driving clarity, consistency, and effectiveness throughout project execution.
- Recruit top industry talent and provide mentorship, guiding team members in their career development and fostering a high-performance culture.
- Accountable for the overall quality of design deliverables, ensuring adherence to timelines, effective resource management, and budget optimization throughout the product lifecycle.

Associate Creative Director (04/2022 - 03/2024) - Full-time

- Facilitated collaborative design workshops with clients and internal teams to deepen product understanding and gather comprehensive requirements.
- Drove the creation of product strategies and oversaw end-to-end program planning, from initial concept through to implementation.
- Managed a diverse team of designers, researchers, UX content writers, and usability testing moderators to ensure cohesive and high-quality outputs.
- Collaborated effectively across business, technology, and design teams to maintain a seamless, integrated product design process.
- Possessed hands-on UX expertise and stayed current with industry trends and tools to continually enhance design quality and relevance.

Citi - Irving, Texas

Creative Director (04/2021 - 03/2022) - Contract

Led product design for Citi's high-impact Service Domain, serving over 1 billion account holders, with a focus on improving key flows such as fraud, disputes, and card replacement. Guided the team to create accessible, user-friendly solutions that reduced call volumes and increased digital adoption, contributing to revenue growth. Recognized with a promotion during COVID-19 for strong performance as digital self-service became critical. Led design thinking workshops, collaborated with engineering and business teams, recruited and mentored designers, and fostered a culture of innovation and career development.

Associate Creative Director (10/2019 - 06/2020) - Contract

As a Design Lead, I designed and oversaw the product's overall user experience and visual design, ensuring cohesive and engaging interfaces. I collaborated with researchers, analysts, engineers, and product managers to create intuitive, user-friendly applications, using research insights to guide key design decisions. I also reviewed design artifacts, contributed to high-quality prototypes, and coordinated resources with project managers to optimize team performance and project outcomes.

Smita Pawa

Creative Director at Photon

📍 Dallas, Texas.

📞 972.974.7058

✉ smitapawa07@gmail.com

🌐 smitapawa.com

EXPERIENCE

Jack Henry & Associates – Allen, Texas

Sr. Product Designer (05/2018 – 10/2019) – Full-time

Developed a scalable white-label product for over 650 credit unions, enabling customizable, branded experiences while maintaining core functionality and design consistency. Led product strategies to simplify complex applications, conducted contextual research to understand user needs, and collaborated with engineering to support scalable customization. Translated business requirements into interactive prototypes and built a design system with guidelines to ensure consistency across the product.

Sabre– Southlake, Texas

User Experience Designer (02/2016 – 05/2018) – Full-time

Designed white-label desktop and mobile booking experiences for major airlines, including Etihad, Virgin Australia, Ethiopian Airways, Kulula, and Air Serbia. Recognized for outstanding performance in research, analysis, and high-fidelity prototype delivery. Led usability and accessibility testing across diverse user groups and spearheaded an HR learning platform impacting over 10,000 employees at Sabre. Facilitated cross-functional training on KPIs, ROI, and product goals, and was recognized as an SME for introducing accessibility standards across mobile and web platforms.

Apostek Software Pvt. Ltd – Bangalore, India

Game UI Artist (09/2012 – 10/2014)

Contributed to the core design team to enhance the overall theme and user experience of gaming applications, translating business requirements into concepts, wireframes, and visual mockups. Collaborated cross-functionally with business and technology teams, delivering end-to-end solutions across iOS, Android, and web platforms.

Jumpstart – Bangalore, India

Game UI Artist (07/2011 – 09/2012)

Designed and delivered engaging e-learning websites for children, including Math Blaster, JumpStart, and Knowledge Adventure. Collaborated with cross-functional teams from concept through release and contributed as a designer on a DreamWorks project.

Technicolor – Bangalore, India

Texturing Artist (07/2009 – 09/2010)

Worked as a Character and Background Texturing Artist for renowned clients such as DreamWorks, Nickelodeon, Marvel, LEGO, and EA Sports, and contributed to projects that earned prestigious accolades, including Emmy and Cannes awards. **Projects** - Shrek commercials, Kung Fu Panda TV Series, Lego Atlantis, Back at the Barnyard TV series, The Penguin of Madagascar TV series, Marvel 4D Trailer, EA Spore online game.