Chris Pizzo

Creative Director │ Driving Clarity, Consistency & Impact for Brands and Creative Teams

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Professional Summary

Creative leader with 17+ years building and scaling brands in high-growth tech. I partner with Marketing to turn positioning into campaigns, design systems, and enterprise storytelling that resonate across web, social, video, events, and sales enablement. Known for leading global refreshes, directing marquee activations, and mentoring creative teams, I set a high craft bar while driving adoption of generative AI to accelerate workflows. My focus: brand clarity, consistency, and creative that builds trust with diverse audiences.

Professional Experience

Creative Director   Jan 2023 – Jun 2025

Expel │ Herndon, Virginia (Remote)

Cybersecurity company offering managed detection and response (MDR) across cloud, on-prem, and SaaS.

- Led company-wide brand transformation, aligning product, marketing, and sales around a unified identity that strengthened enterprise credibility.
- Built creative operations and a scalable visual design system that enabled a small US-based team to deliver high-impact creative across US and UK teams.
- Directed brand enablement efforts, launching templates and decks praised as a "game-changer" by Sales and CS for improving customer credibility.
- Oversaw brand activation across all major events, including our flagship RSA Conference, unifying messaging, motion design, swag, and environmental creative in partnership with the Events team.
- Integrated generative AI tools (Midjourney, ChatGPT) to accelerate concepting, support brainstorming, and streamline brand documentation.

Senior Creative Director   Mar 2021 – Dec 2022

Doma │ San Francisco, California

Fast-growing, technology-driven real estate startup and legacy title company navigating post-merger integration and preparing for IPO.

- Unified three acquired brands into a single identity and design system, navigating cultural tensions and aligning legacy and startup teams across GTM functions.
- Built creative operations from scratch, enabling a lean team to deliver 600+ assets per quarter while maintaining quality and avoiding burnout.
- Led IPO-readiness efforts, developing investor decks, press materials, and internal brand systems aligned to executive strategy.
- Reestablished trust in the brand by partnering with ERGs on inclusive design work, addressing internal backlash around the company name.
- Scaled the team from 2 to 7 and built a mentorship model that developed senior leaders and ensured junior designers had ongoing support.

Head of Brand Design   **Jun 2015 – Mar 2021**

SAP Concur | San Francisco, California

TripIt is a consumer travel app owned by SAP Concur, designed to help travelers organize and manage itineraries across platforms and devices.

- Repositioned TripIt's outdated brand identity to serve both consumer and enterprise audiences—led a full rebrand across visual identity, messaging, and product touchpoints.
- Directed redesign of TripIt's marketing website, improving accessibility, mobile responsiveness, and content strategy—resulting in a 10% lift in signups post-launch.
- Built TripIt's global design system and scalable illustration library, enabling localized, on-brand experiences and increasing design velocity across teams.
- Redesigned the app icon for use across mobile, wearables, and web platforms—modernizing TripIt's visual presence in key digital environments.
- Partnered with product, marketing, and agency teams to integrate the brand system across app, web, and enterprise marketing, ensuring global consistency and cross-functional alignment.

Publications

Author of articles on creative leadership, scalable systems, and brand clarity, offering practical frameworks for leading teams and delivering impactful brand experiences.

- **The Age of Authenticity: Why AI Can't Save a Brand That Doesn't Know Itself:** Explores why brand clarity and authenticity remain critical in the AI era.
- **People → Process → Product: Leaders as Mechanics, Not Race Car Drivers:** Presents a leadership framework for sustainable, high-performing teams.
- **Tend to Your CROPs: Why Creative Ops is a Leadership Mindset:** Defines Creative Ops as a leadership mindset for scalability and engagement.

Skills

- **Creative Leadership:** Brand Strategy & Development, Creative Direction, Team Leadership, Project Management, Mentorship, Creative Operations
- **Design & AI Tools:** Figma, Adobe Creative Suite, Generative AI, Motion/Video Design, Design Thinking, Prototyping, Digital Accessibility
- **Marketing & Communication:** Strategic Storytelling, Presentation Skills, Digital Marketing Strategy, Cross-Functional Collaboration, Executive Communication
- **Digital & User Experience:** UX/UI Design, Multicultural Literacy, Business Strategy Alignment, Stakeholder Engagement
- **People & Culture:** Team Building, Recruitment, Professional Development, Mentorship, Culture Building

Education

- **B.S., Business Administration (Marketing)** - California State University, Sacramento

Certifications & Awards

- **IDEO U Certifications** - Foundations in Design Thinking, Change Leadership, Cultivating Creative Collaboration, Storytelling for Influence, Leading for Creativity
- **Deloitte** - Six Signature Traits of Inclusive Leadership
- **2019 Marketing Excellence Award** – SAP Concur (TripIt.com Website Redesign)