Hilary Albuquerque

Art Director & Brand Design Leader · UX & Digital Product Design

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Art director and brand designer who also designs digital products, with 25+ years of experience, including 13 at McKinsey & Company. Builds brand identities, campaigns and digital experiences that make complex ideas clear, partnering with strategists, product managers and engineers. Leads creative work from concept to delivery, coaches designers, and prototypes with generative AI.

Selected Work

Two brand identities, built from the ground up

Created the Tech Ecosystem identity and brand toolkit (about 4,000 views), then TE Next with the design strategy team and senior leadership, including its credo statement and launch communications.

Gen AI at McKinsey's largest conference

Led event design for gen AI product teams two years running for about 1,200 attendees, earning the Tech Ecosystem's second-highest booth traffic, 300+ beta sign-ups and praise from senior Firm leaders.

Interactive adoption playbook

Turned a 100+ slide deck into an interactive Ceros experience that ranked in the top 1% of 49,000+ sources in Lilli, McKinsey's gen AI platform, with about 231,000 Slack views.

InclusionLens, award-winning AI app

Conceived and built an app that checks documents for inclusive representation and accessibility and suggests fixes, using Lovable and Claude. Won an award at a McKinsey AI hackathon (2026).

Experience

McKinsey & Company — Boston, MA | 2013–26

Senior Designer, UX and Service Design — Tech Ecosystem — 2024–26

Led brand, visual and UX design across 20+ Firm products and services a year.

Brand leadership. Launched the Tech Ecosystem and TE Next identities and brand toolkit, and ran office hours to drive adoption across product teams.

Platform usability. Led design improvements for core Firm platforms including People Central, BizOps, AppSpace and SharePoint, delivering developer-ready designs.

Platform adoption. Designed Golden Paths bootcamp and hackathon materials (100+ participants, 11 teams), supporting 50% faster app deployment.

Cross-functional partner. Facilitated design reviews with product managers and engineers, and mentored designers and non-designers on brand and accessibility.

Visual Communication Designer → Senior Visual Communications Designer — Tech Ecosystem — 2017–24

Promoted to senior in 2022, then became the team's sole visual designer, supporting adoption of the Firm's technology products.

Creative output at scale. In one year, designed 140+ emails, 75+ illustrations, 20+ animations, 2 videos and 5 major decks across 20+ products.

Data-informed design. Ran A/B tests and built engagement dashboards; Lilli launch emails averaged 84% opens and 82% clicks, and a redesigned newsletter hit a record 23.9% click-through rate.

Art direction. Directed designers from another Firm team on the ADAPT playbook, from concept through final design.

Coaching. Mentored 8+ colleagues a year on design and brand, and became the team's go-to reference on Firm brand guidelines.

Senior Designer — Global Editorial Services 2013–17

Editorial design and art direction. Created data visualizations, illustrations and layouts for reports and McKinsey.com, and commissioned illustrators for practice publications.

Associate Director of Creative Services — Valparaiso University, IN 2011–13

Led visual marketing strategy and brand standards for the University and its Law School, directing print and digital production.

Senior Graphic Designer — Concordia University, St. Paul, MN 2007–10

Designed marketing for the whole University, from the quarterly magazine and annual reports to brand identity, viewbooks and advertising.

Assistant Professor and Instructor, Graphic Design — University of Minnesota Duluth 2005–07

Taught graphic and interactive design, wrote syllabi and led critiques.

Earlier Experience

Graphic Designer, Minnesota Zoo 2005

Graphic and Web Designer, Carlson and Kirwan, Duluth, MN 2000–04

Skills

Creative	Art direction · Brand identity and systems · Visual storytelling · Illustration · Motion · Data visualization · Editorial and campaign design
UX	Information architecture · User journeys · Wireframing and prototyping · Design systems · Accessibility · Design thinking · A/B testing
Leadership	Coaching and critique · Workshop facilitation · Stakeholder alignment · Directing illustrators and designers
Tools	Adobe Creative Cloud (Illustrator, Photoshop, InDesign, Premiere Pro, Animate) · Figma · Sketch · Ceros · Miro · Jira · Confluence
AI	Claude · ChatGPT · Gemini · Figma AI · Cursor · Lovable · v0 · Prompt engineering

Education

Master of Fine Arts, Graphic Design — University of Minnesota Duluth

Master of Science, Geology — University of Mumbai, India

Continuing education: Design Thinking and Innovation, Harvard Business School Online; about 10 McKinsey leadership development programs.