

George White

Innovation Leader

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Profile

My name is George White and I am a design and innovation leader with over 25 years of experience. I have worked for large enterprises and small businesses, serving a variety of roles. My passion is solving interesting problems, sometimes with digital solutions, sometimes working in the physical world, sometimes with pictures and words. But always with thoughtfulness.

Over the span of my career I have filled many roles. I have been a consultant, strategist, designer, team leader, architect, systems engineer, and programmer. At most of my jobs, I have become the go-to guy for technical matters big and small.

I have experience managing and running teams. I have built teams for multiple purposes, including experience strategy, innovation, and engineering. I love to teach and mentor; many people have told me that is what I should be doing for a living.

When I am not working, I am spending time with my wife and daughter, taking photos when I get the chance, and may occasionally be found staring at the sky or a tree, looking at some interesting bird.

Experience

Adjunct, Massachusetts College of Art and Design

Boston, MA — 2023–present

Adjunct in the Masters of Design Innovation (MDes) program.

I have been teaching a course I originated on prototyping as part of the core curriculum of the MDes program.

Director, Slalom Boston

Boston, MA — 2022–present

Currently, Director, Client Leadership and integrated solution lead.

Formerly (2022-2025) Director in the Business Transformation Center of Excellence.

Enabling business transformation for customers and building up capability with the Slalom Boston office.

Principal, Orange Octopus

Boston, MA — 2022–present

Independent consulting focused on product and service design.

As an independent consultant, I have been working on product and services design with several organizations. This has included qualitative customer research, product strategy, communications planning, team development, and business strategy.

Chief Innovation Officer, Cantina Consulting

Formerly SVP, Innovation (2013-2017)

Formerly Technical Architect (2010-2013)

Boston, MA — 2010–2021

Agency focused on the creation of digital products and services with a blend of strategy, research, technology capability, and expert consulting.

As the Chief Innovation Officer at Cantina Consulting, my responsibilities included building and leading the client-facing innovation practice and directing internal innovation initiatives. I was responsible for product strategy and development work, strategic consulting, systems design, content creation and research. I often ran workshops and design charrettes to explore product concepts and strategy.

In 2018, I formed the Experience Strategy & Service Design Practice. This group is focused strategic product and service development work, including UX research, service design, organizational change, and design transformation.

In addition, I acted as a principal consultant and technical architect, a role I've had since I first came aboard. I was the strategy or technical lead on select projects, service and product prototypes, a whole lot of sales support, and speaking engagements on innovation, design, and technology.

Over more than a decade, I worked to help our clients develop unique and engaging solutions. This work ranged from finance to healthcare, smart and connected products to satellite communications. Some of my clients included:

- Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts
- Bose
- LinkAKC
- Empower Retirement
- Newport Folk Festival
- SES

Freelance Software Developer, Stonehippo Code & Consulting

Cambridge, MA — 2010

Independent application development and product consulting.

In May 2010, I departed Bit Group to start my own freelance software development practice with a concentration on mobile and Web application development. Projects thus far have included:

- Development of a white-label version of a crowd-sourcing iPhone app client for a corporate innovation initiative
- Development of a children's game for the iPhone and iPad
- Architecture consulting and Moodle platform development for a large educational publisher

As of August 2010, I have suspended my freelance practice to join Cantina Consulting.

Principal Consultant, Technical Architect, Bit Group

Cambridge, MA — 2007–2010

Digital agency focused on e-commerce, content management, design, and platform development for enterprise.

I served as a consultant at Bit Group, working with multiple clients and platforms.

The work at Bit Group was highly variable. My time was divided between pure coding, technical design, platform and application support for existing client applications and websites, and the occasional user experience and visual design work.

- Designed and developed a custom crowd-sourcing application iPhone application and Ruby on Rails backend for a small app developer
- Designed and developed an iPhone client for the API of a prominent Web-based crowd-sourcing platform
- Implemented multiple websites using various content management platforms and solutions
- Lead a usability study and user interface redesign for a compliance management Web application

Systems Architect, Course Technology/Thomson Learning (now Cengage)

Boston, MA — 2000–2007

Educational publishing and digital learning platforms focused on computing skills and digital literacy for training and higher education.

I began at Course Technology, an educational publisher within Thomson Learning, as a Web application developer, writing ColdFusion code. I was promoted to a tech lead position within the development group and was made responsible for overseeing all database and Web development.

I was promoted to systems architect and given responsibility for overseeing the design and development of several application platforms with Course Technology as well as supporting and implementing solutions for other Boston-area Thomson divisions. I spent a lot of time writing code in support of my designs, reviewing the code of the engineers on the team, and working

with the editorial and sales teams to define the product strategies for the company.

- Designed the next-generation architecture for a Microsoft Office simulation training and assessment platform
- Built and co-managed a development team to implement the simulation platform
- Designed and implemented a single sign-on Web platform and unified grade book interface to support digital learning products
- Lead load testing and performance tuning and improvement efforts on an 1000+ database SQL Server environment and related codebase
- Designed and implemented server architecture for
- Designed and implemented code libraries to support
- Provided technology guidance and mentoring to the development team

Chief Technologist, Ember Media

New York, NY – 1998–1999

Digital content development for media and interactive systems.

Editorial Technology Group, BusinessWeek Magazine

New York, NY – 1995–1998

Business and finance journalism.

Consultant/Technician, Dynamic Computer Maintenance

South Orange, NJ – 1994–1995

Computer design and build, and software training.

Activities

Board Chair, Design Museum Foundation (2021-present)

Treasurer, Design Museum Foundation (2018-2020)

A virtual museum dedicated to making design accessible to everyone, with a focus on community. Centered on bridging the sometimes esoteric notions of design to the real world, including social impact, sustainability, play, workplace innovation, and vibrant cities, the Design Museum has delivered programs, exhibits and content that illustrate that design is everywhere.

I have been working with the Design Museum for nearly a decade, first as a member and participant in various programs, including judging the Urban Innovation Festival in 2017, and the Neighborhood Design Project in 2019. I joined the Board of the Design Museum Foundation in 2018 and was elected to the Executive Committee as Treasurer.

In 2021, I was elected to Board Chair and have been focused on improving the role of the board in the development and operations of the museum.

Education

Montclair State College – did not complete degree program

Skills

Over the course of my career I have picked up a broad range of skills and expertise. I am a generalist by nature, with a wide range of knowledge; it has occasionally been remarked that I seem to know something about everything. I am a decent consultant and pretty good at working with people to find solutions to strategic and technology challenges. I have played just about every role on a digital product team there is, from developer, to designer, to lead, to strategist.

I excel at solving difficult, hard to visualize problems. More than once I have demonstrated that I can look at a difficult product, engineering or systems problem, find ways to analyze what is breaking inside and tease out the answer to fix it. This skill is a major reason for any success I have had.

I am a fast learner and a compulsive problem solver. If you put an interesting problem in front of me, I will be compelled to solve that problem. This can be a good thing or a bad thing, depending upon whether you need me to be concentrating on something else at the moment.

I am very good at systems and design thinking. I prefer to build and design systems from the ground up, but I am also good at working with—and sometimes improving—existing architecture. My experience and desire for simple, efficient systems has served me well in this realm.

I have a broad experience of software development environments, languages and methodologies. I can do the sorts of things you would expect of a competent software engineer with more than a decade of experience.

References

References available upon request.

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