

Arwen Varner-Howland

Senior Product Designer
Charlotte, NC, United States

Senior Product Designer with 10+ years experience, adept in user research, information architecture, and product design ranging from small startups to Fortune 50 international companies.

Contact

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Proficiencies

Design

Prototyping
Design systems
Data visualization
Responsive design, including mobile
Low & high fidelity mockups
Storyboarding
Content & site mapping
User & task flows
Design reviews
Design QA

Research

Design-thinking workshops
User interviews (e.g. cognitive inquiry)
Card-sorting
Journey mapping
Surveying
Usability testing
Multivariate testing
Gap analysis
Analysis reports
Kano model prioritization

Experience

Ekos, LLC

Nov 2019 – Sep 2021

Senior User Experience Architect

Ekos is a market leader in providing inventory, production, accounting, and sales management software to craft breweries and wineries.

- designed **customizable brew logs**, enabling breweries to accurately enforce and capture their brewing process. I designed an interactive prototype that was tested with 8 users via task-based inquiry sessions. I collaborated closely with engineers and product owners to refine the prototype into an actionable MVP that could grow into the larger vision without major rearchitecting.
- **redesigned the information architecture and primary navigation** of the entire Ekos application. Customers received these changes with enthusiasm because of the improvements to usability, especially efficiency of navigation and discoverability.
- designed a comprehensive **wine harvest module** to help Ekos expand into the winemakers market. Prototype was received well by 6 users during task-based inquiry sessions.
- designed a **new equipment scheduling module** that was received with overwhelming enthusiasm during a feedback workshop I conducted with customers at Ekos Con 2021.
- paired with our primary visual designer to organize an effective **design system** used by the design and engineering teams.

Collins Aerospace

Oct 2018 – Aug 2019

Senior User Experience Architect

The Aftermarket division of Collins Aerospace (Fortune 50) accounts for ~40% of annual company sales, \$9.2 billion in 2017. I researched and designed a work management platform for their 60+ international repair facilities (MROs).

- Increased user adoption and energized stakeholder buy-in by creating a unifying product vision in the form of a future-state prototype and site map.
- Ensured high-value, effective design of new work management capabilities by conducting design-thinking workshops with more than 100 Collins leaders from several different countries.
- Fostered essential change management by hosting a 3-day affinity mapping workshop to identify the common needs of facilities, which had previously struggled to find common ground.
- Where previous tools only furthered the divide between facilities, I embedded the new platform with a well-researched information architecture (IA) and lexicon that would enabled the process consistency necessary to gain analytic insights across facilities.

Proficiencies (Cont.)

Tools

Figma
Miro
Sketch
Invision
Dovetail

Technical

(intermediate level)

CSS3
HTML5
Git & Github
Javascript & JSON

Project Management

Agile Scrum
Jira
Trello
Basecamp
Drafting project schedules

Education

May 2011

Elon University

Bachelor of Arts, English Literature
Theatre Studies Minor
GPA: 3.9 / 4.0
English Scholar of the Year 2011

Dec 2014

ISTQB® Certified Software Tester

Experience (Cont.)

LPL Financial

Jan 2016 – Jun 2018

User Experience Designer

LPL provides 15,000+ financial advisors with the tools, services, and oversight to grow successful practices. In my 2.5 years at LPL, I flourished in my skills and experience as a UX designer by working closely with a team of talented designers and researchers on more than 20 distinct projects, always balancing multiple engagements at once.

- For over nine months, I was the lead UX designer on a complex, high-profile project to enable advisors to manage custom financial models for their client's accounts while still outsourcing trading. The product has been well received: as of Aug. 2018, 28 advisors allocated \$39 million across 195 accounts. (Full details in portfolio.)
- Identified the IA and functionality required to support user needs over the course of several phased releases. This forward-thinking design benefited users in that they experienced minimal changes as new features were released, and also benefited budget and timelines by minimizing code rework.
- Conducted in-depth user interviews to create a desired-state journey map and focused value proposition, which kept the project on time and budget by preventing unnecessary scope creep.

TradeKing Group, inc.

Jun 2015 – Jan 2016

User Experience Designer

now Ally Invest

I was the lead UX designer for TradeKing's next-gen platform, TradeKing LIVE, a responsive online brokerage platform that provided research and trading tools for self-directed investors to buy and sell stocks, options, and bonds.

Rubbermaid Healthcare

May 2014 – Jun 2015

User Experience Designer

acquired by Capsa Solutions

& Senior Software Quality Assurance Analyst

Cardinal Solutions Group

Sep 2013 – May 2014

Software Quality Assurance Lead

acquired by Insight Global

ACS Technologies

Jan 2011 – Aug 2013

Test Automation Developer

Jan 2012 – Aug 2013

Technical Writer

Jan 2011 – Jan 2012