Christopher B. Hayes

UX & Digital Product Innovation Leader

Ellisville, Missouri | (314) 223-0739 | chris@chrishayes.me

LinkedIn: https://www.linkedin.com/in/cbhayes/ | Portfolio: https://www.chrishayes.me/

Executive Overview

Visionary UX and Product Design Executive with over 25 years of leadership experience driving world-class digital experiences across Fortune 500 and high-growth companies. Expert in building and scaling multidisciplinary UX teams, defining customer-centered product strategies, and delivering innovative, measurable business outcomes. Deep expertise in UX strategy, human-centered design, Agile environments, product transformation, and design operations at scale. A passionate leader who bridges the gap between technology, business goals, and human needs to foster growth, innovation, and impact.

Major Accomplishments

- Designed and developed products generating $1B+ in annual client revenue by leading digital product strategy at Whereoware.
- Scaled UX practice from 5 to 50+ professionals, driving $15M+ yearly UX group revenue growth at Daugherty Business Solutions.
- Redesigned and replatformed 27 Marriott hotel brand websites, creating a unified design system that enhanced operational and UX efficiencies.
- Created Greyhound's first mobile apps, improving revenue recognition cycle times by 95% and creating new sales channels.
- Delivered the world's first mobile app-based car owner's manual for Hyundai, setting a new industry benchmark for digital innovation. Webby recipient.

UX Leadership: Building High-Impact, Cross-Functional Design Organizations

- Scaled UX and Design teams from 5 to 50+ members, encompassing UX Research, Content Strategy, Product Design, and DesignOps.
- Established performance-driven cultures, aligning UX output with strategic business goals through clear OKRs and SMART metrics.
- Fostered inclusive, high-performing environments, enabling continuous innovation and iterative improvement.
- Defined talent strategies and career growth frameworks, enhancing team engagement, retention, and succession planning.

Executive Presence: Championing UX at the C-Suite and Board Level
- Acted as a trusted advisor to senior executives, presenting UX and Product strategies, customer insights, and growth initiatives.
- Built executive buy-in for major UX investments through data-driven storytelling and outcome-led roadmaps.
- Defined KPIs and success metrics to quantify UX impact on revenue, satisfaction, and operational efficiencies.
- Advocated for the customer's voice in strategic decision-making across executive and boardroom discussions.

UX Research and Insights: Driving Deep Customer Understanding and Behavioral Change
- Led customer research initiatives spanning discovery interviews, usability testing, heuristic reviews, and journey mapping.
- Aligned research findings directly to product innovation opportunities, creating measurable behavioral improvements.
- Advocated for proactive, continuous discovery processes rooted in Human Centered Design frameworks.
- Frequently collaborate with Data teams to create insightful dashboards, connecting UX to conversion attribution and sales

Technical Leadership: Shaping Scalable, Human-Centered Design Systems
- Oversaw creation, scaling, and governance of enterprise-wide design systems, impacting consumer-facing apps with millions of users, balancing creativity with operational rigor.
- Created and integrated personalization strategies, predictive UX models, and anticipatory design principles into digital products.
- Embedded agentic and generative AI automation frameworks into UX workflows, guiding future-of-work design innovations.
- Championed best practices in Lean UX, Agile methodologies, and modern product discovery practices.

Product Strategy and Innovation: Driving Experience-Led Business Transformation
- Crafted long-term UX visions tied to enterprise product strategies, setting North Star goals and incremental roadmaps.
- Balanced business requirements, market trends, customer needs, and design excellence to guide prioritization.
- Led UX contribution to $1B+ in client revenue through digital transformation initiatives, focusing on massive User Experience improvements, DTC/B2B eCommerce, and AI-driven product innovation.
- Partnered closely with Product, Engineering, Marketing, and Business teams to operationalize user-centered product roadmaps.

Cross-Department Collaboration: Forging Strategic Partnerships Across Organizations

- Built enduring cross-functional partnerships with Product Management, Engineering, Marketing, and Sales teams.
- Embedded UX research and design into agile delivery processes, ensuring customer voice was central to product evolution.
- Drove alignment between platform roadmaps and user insights to accelerate time-to-value and product-market fit.
- Served as a strategic liaison between Digital Experience Offices, Product Centers of Excellence, and Business Units.

Skills and Expertise

- UX Design Strategy
- Human Centered Design (HCD)
- UX Research & Insights
- Executive Stakeholder Engagement
- Design Systems Creation and Management
- Agile, Lean, MVP and MMP Leadership
- Product Roadmap Creation & Alignment to Business Outcomes

- Team Leadership, Mentorship, Career Growth Programs
- Workshop Facilitation and Strategic Collaboration
- Figma, Sketch, Adobe tools, Mural
- Adobe Target, AEM, Optimizely, Wordpress
- AI-enabled UX and Personalization

Work History

WHEREOWARE | Senior Director, Digital Product Strategy | 2023–Present
Daugherty | Sr. Director of UX Insights & Design; Principal UX Designer | 2020–2023
ROI-DNA | Senior Digital Transformation Consultant | 2019–2023
HLK | Director of User Experience | 2017–2020
R2integrated | Director of UX Strategy | 2016–2017
Perficient, Inc. | Practice Leader, Mobile Apps; ; Senior UX Designer | Engagement Manager | 2012–2016
Aspect | National Practice Leader, Mobile | Senior UX Designer| 2009–2012
Maritz | Director, Multimedia Development; Product Manager; Senior UX Designer | 2006–2009
SSE Inc. | Senior Web Designer; Senior eLearning Developer | 2002–2006
Drone & Mueller | Web Designer; Front End Engineer | 2000 - 2002
US Marine Corps | Operations Chief | 1992 - 1996

Education

Sanford-Brown Business College – Fenton, MO | Associate of Arts, Media Communication
University of South Carolina – Beaufort, SC | General Studies