

Serena Bales

design • illustration • multimedia

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[LINK TO PORTFOLIO](#)

Summary

I am a Senior Graphic Designer / Illustrator with many years of experience leading projects, individually or as part of a team. The versatility of designing, from a small drawing to a complicated brand strategy, is what I like best about working as a designer. One of the main reasons I went into design, illustration, and art is to help others tell a story. Figuring out a challenging project keeps me learning and growing as a designer/artist. In essence I have always enjoyed what I have accomplished and done with my career but having my designs or illustrations have an impact in my clients audiences is the best acknowledgment I did my job right.

Print

- Pre-press
- Layout
- Vendor coordination

Art Direction

- Project/team lead
- Photo direction
- Vendor selection
- Budgeting
- Scheduling and timelines
- Press checks and approvals

Illustration

- Concept sketching
- Technical and realistic
- Digital and traditional
- 2D & 3D

Additional

- Agile Methodology
- Brand development & management
- Creating UX visual designs
- Copywriting
- Concept development
- Digital Asset Management (DAM)
- Lean Methodology
- Market research

Technical Skills

Knowledge of MAC and PC platforms.

Adobe

- InDesign
- Photoshop
- Illustrator
- Acrobat
- Premiere Pro
- After Effects
- Dreamweaver

Apple

- iMovie & iPhoto
- Keynotes
- Pages

Autodesk

- Revit Architecture

Microsoft

- Word
- PowerPoint
- Excel
- Outlook
- Teams

Working Knowledge of:

- Authorware
- HTML
- CSS
- Java
- LightWave 3D
- Google Analytics
- Google Developer Tools

Learn and adapt quickly to current and emerging technology.

Professional Experience

GRAPHIC DESIGNER

American Family Insurance, Madison, WI

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June 2018 – Present

August 2015 – June 2018 - On-Site Contractor with Spherion

- Provide designs, illustrations, copy, editing support, and banding guidelines for company events, correspondence, posters, banners, electronic media, book layouts, bulk mailings, and etc.

Lead Designer Highlights

- LIFE Product Playbook - 2022
- Guide to Allyship - 2022
- Institute Venture Capital Report - 2022
- SPARK Building Guide, 2021
- Madison Area Attractions for New Employees - 2018
- Corporate Responsibility Report - 2018, 2019, 2020
- Redesigned the corporate billing statement and customer facing correspondences to incorporate color and new formatting - 2018
- Redesigned the Atlas Property letters. These letters consist of either a point or a range estimate that is sent out from the agent to potential customers who own homes.- 2021
- Lead designer for the Enterprise One Platform correspondence. These customer facing documents consists of billing statements, letters, quotes, decs, and etc for American Family and its' operating companies. Provided designs and branding guidance for team members.
- Worked cohesively with HR, Marketing, Branding, and Communication Departments on marketing or branding projects.
- Leadership roles for the Graphic Design team in CT&O:
 - Assist in reviewing resumes, interviewing, and hiring design contingent workers and a full-time designer
 - Lead graphic designer workload meetings
 - Used Agile Methodology for the records management and E1P
 - Used Lean Methodology
- Prepare files for print, digital hand-offs, and conduct press checks.

FREELANCE DESIGNER, ILLUSTRATOR, ARTIST

Designs by Serena, Oregon, WI

[LINK TO PORTFOLIO](#)

February 1992 – Present

Specialize in creating engaging and original designs, illustrations, and fine artwork for companies and individuals.

Independent Contractor for:

Piston Mfg. - Freelance design projects: Creating short videos, illustrations, document design

US Vet, LLC. - Government proposal and misc documents

SENIOR GRAPHIC DESIGNER

American Girl, Middleton, WI

On-Site Contractor with American Girl & Pro Unlimited, Inc.

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May 2014 – August 2015

- Designed retail store signage, product packaging, and marketing materials that adheres to marketing objectives, product specifications, and branding requirements.
- Created detailed sketches for product photo shoots, packaging, signage, retail store product windows, and marketing collateral.
- Lead designer for the Fancy Cocker Spaniel Pet package.
- Art Directed product photo shoots.
- Part of a team that designed key retail store displays and marketing collateral for Beforever®, TrulyMe®, and 2015 Girl of the Year®, Grace Thomas®.

SENIOR GRAPHIC DESIGNER

Tri-North Builders, Inc., Fitchburg, WI

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November 2006 – April 2013

- Designed, coordinated, updated, and finalized all company marketing collateral that adhered to Tri-North's branding specifications.
- Creative support and project management by working closely with the company's personnel to develop timely, high-quality, and competitive marketing proposals. Coordinated all materials submitted from project managers, estimators, officers, copywriters, administrators, architects, and outside sources.
- Art directed and lead designer for the companies 30th anniversary party.
- Budgeted, scheduled, and kept track of all print vendors and suppliers for proposals, marketing projects, and in-house company documents.
- Photographed company projects and also hired, directed, and scheduled professional photographers.
- Prepare files for print and conduct press checks

SENIOR GRAPHIC DESIGNER

Warner Electric/Altra Industrial Motion, S. Beloit, IL

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June 2002 – November 2006

- Created, designed, updated, and finalized product catalogs, 400 product user guides/manuals, and marketing collateral that adhered to Altra Industrial Motion's brand specifications for over 10-15 company brands.
- Worked directly with employees through multiple channels to translate their general concepts and ideas to creating high-quality engaging marketing pieces.
- Lead Designer and Administrator for the company's eLearning modules. These consisted of Paper Base Training (PBT) manuals and Web Base Training (WBT) courses. This project consists of extensive graphic conversion and course set-up within a vendors (Technomedia) courseware software using HTML. <http://apps.altramotion.com/elms/login.asp>
- Directed a freelance illustrator, freelance graphic designer, and a production assistant.

Civic Involvement

Team Manager for Girls U14/15, Oregon Youth Soccer League

Septemeber 2018 – June 2019

Volunteer Graphic Designer, Logan's Heart and Smiles

January 2007 – December 2015

Team Manager for Girls U10, Oregon Youth Soccer League

August 2015 - June 2016

Co-Chair, Oregon PTO Arts Festival

August 2010 – May 2013

Volunteer, American Red Cross

January 2007 – April 2013

Education

Master of Fine Arts in Media Design

[LINK TO THESIS](#)

GPA: 3.96 - November 2013

Full Sail University, Winter Park, FL

Courses: Brand Development, Defining Client Needs, Effective Copywriting, Multi-Platform Delivery, Client Relations, Design Analysis, Production Workflow, Design Document/Thesis

Bachelor of Fine Arts Degree in Illustration

GPA: 3.126 - April 1997

Rocky Mountain College of Art and Design, Lakewood, CO

Dean's List: 1995, 1997 and **Distinguished Honors:** 1996

Associate of Applied Arts Degree in Commercial Art

May 1991

Madison Area Technical College, Madison, WI

Additional Courses/ Workshops/Seminars

- USPS: Mail Design Professional Course. 2 year Certificate. 2021
- Lynda.com Certified Training Courses Completed
 - Adaptive Project Leadership - 2020*
 - Cultivating Growth Mindset - 2020*
 - Digital Transformation - 2020*
 - Creative Thinking - 2019*
 - Photoshop CC for Web Design - 2014*
 - Keynote - Builds, Transitions, Animations, and Effects - 2014*
 - Premiere Pro CS6 Essential Training - 2013*
 - After Effects Apprentice 1&2 - 2013*
 - iMovie - 2013*
- *Critical Intelligence: What you Absolutely Positively Must Know To Wire The Work and How to Find it*, American General Contractors of Wisconsin (AGC) - 2011
- *How to Write Effective Government Proposals*, MATC - 2011
- *BIM Seminar*, American General Contractors (AGC) - 2010
- *BIM Certification*, American General Contractors (AGC) - 2009
- *Revit Architecture Level 1*, Master Academy - 2008
- *Adobe PhotoShop Seminar* with Bert Monroy, Kelby Training - 2008
- *Figure Drawing*, UW-Madison - April 2003
- *The Secrets to Flawless Pre-Press and Printing*, CompuMaster - 2000
- *LightWave 3D Essentials*, Washburn University - 2000
- *Advanced Illustrator*, New Horizons - 2000
- *Biological Illustration* with Lucy Tyler, UW-Madison - 1993
- *Figure Drawing*, Madison Area Technical College - 1992