

Griffin Kelton

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I'm a **Design Leader** with **13+ years of making innovation practical** through human-centered design across Enterprise SaaS, e-commerce, education, and consulting. I pick up new industries fast. **Genuinely fast.** I assume I know nothing, then go learn. I lead and grow high-performing teams who ship, **write production code when it matters**, and make sure design goals and business objectives are the same goal. **Design. Business strategy. Engineering. Marketing.** I've worked all four sides of that table. Most people pick one. I can run a C-suite strategy session in the morning and tell a junior designer their kerning is off in the afternoon. I show up the same way in both rooms.

WHAT I DO.

- UX strategy, research, and usability testing
- Leadership & career development
- Client engagement & consulting delivery
- Service design and blueprinting
- DesignOps & enterprise design systems
- UX engineering (HTML, CSS, TypeScript, Vue)
- Product development & roadmap alignment
- Executive & client relationship management
- Human-centered design & design thinking
- Accessibility & inclusive design (WCAG 2.2)
- Generative AI design & responsible AI

WHAT I'VE DONE.

Panorama Education

Aug 2022 – Mar 2026

Director of Product Design

- Led human-centered design across three product areas, owning UX strategy, research cycles, and cross-functional alignment with product and engineering. The team went from 25 designers to 5. The work didn't stop.
- As a core member of the Technical Leadership Team, I shaped product investment decisions, annual planning, and responsible AI adoption at the org level.
- Introduced Customer Value Index (CVI) and UX-Lite to connect user experience directly to business retention metrics. These contributed to a \$5.8M ARR client save. I built them because gut feelings weren't cutting it as a business case for design investment.
- Led design for Strategic Priority Advisor from concept through GA. The problem was already proven. A white-glove service with real traction. The job was translating human expertise into something that scales.
- I wrote the AI-Figma design system playbook because we kept solving the same component governance problem from scratch on every squad. Now teams don't have to. It became the standard for how the design org works with AI tooling.
- Launched a Career Progression Model and Growth Dimensions framework for designers, managers, and leaders. Clear paths. Equitable. Because do good work and hope someone notices isn't a career plan. I grew two designers into lead roles during my tenure.
- Advanced the team's craft through workshops on AI in Design Systems, Advanced Figma, UX Content, and Accessibility. People kept asking for more, so I kept running them.
- Tangrams, Panorama's design system, didn't exist before I built it. It spans Figma and Cursor and cut the back-and-forth between design and engineering. Teams still use it.
- Shipped product-ready components, built high-fidelity prototypes, and mentored the team. 1:1s are the first thing to slip when you're in the thick of delivery. I made them happen anyway. Mentorship is the part that compounds.
- Pushed Panorama's Operative Model into product, design, and engineering. The kind of cross-functional operating change that usually dies in a slide deck. It didn't.

Terra Dotta

Nov 2021 – Aug 2022

UX Manager

Terra Dotta was a Smashing Boxes client. They brought me on full-time after the engagement.

- Defined an inclusive UX strategy grounded in WCAG 2.2, neurodiversity principles, and human-centered design. Then made it operational. It lived in the product, not a folder.
- Standardized design-to-engineering handoffs and deliverables. Less friction, better shipped work.

Smashing Boxes

Apr 2021 – Nov 2021

Director of UX & Design

- I came in as a lifeboat right before the ship sank. I built the team and kept them there. That's where I was really tested, and where I grew the most.
- Led service blueprinting, synthesis, and solution definition for clients with real complexity and tight timelines.
- Owned client relationships from kickoff through delivery, shaping proposals, scoping engagements, presenting strategy, and making sure clients left with more confidence in their product direction than when they arrived. I treated their roadmap like my own.
- Raised the bar on consulting craft across facilitation, communication, and strategic framing. Clients noticed. One of our largest brought me on full-time after the engagement.
- Mentored designers and researchers on what great work looks like inside a client engagement. Not just a beautiful Figma file.

Second Nature

Aug 2018 – Dec 2020

Director of Digital Experience

- Led end-to-end redesign of the e-commerce experience (UX, UI, architecture, content strategy) resulting in a 60% conversion lift and CTRs roughly double the industry average. Making air filters seem sexy turned out to be a viable strategy.
- Built a cross-functional UX and content platform that the team used long after I left.

OLDER ROLES.

Independent Brand Building & Content Marketing Consultant across multiple client engagements

Mar 2010 – Jul 2018

Director of Marketing at Social House Vodka

Jan 2017 – Jul 2017

Partner, Lead Marketing Strategist at Adena Studios

Jul 2015 – Dec 2016

Concept Store Design Strategist at Starbucks HQ

Nov 2012 – Jan 2014

BA in Marketing, Minor in Biblical Studies, Cedarville University. The rest I taught myself.

TECH I USE.

EXPECTED *What every design lead should have cold.*

Figma · Sketch · Miro · MURAL · Adobe Creative Cloud · Zeplin · Lovable

SEMI-EXPECTED *Where most designers stop. I kept going.*

HTML · SCSS/CSS · JavaScript · TypeScript · Storybook · SEO · Martech architecture · Codebuff · CSPO

WAIT, REALLY? *Fair. The list is real.*

Vue · Angular · Chromatic · Git · Windsurf · Cursor