

AUGUSTUS "A.J." RUSSO

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PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY & SKILLS

Experienced design and marketing leader with proven expertise in developing and promoting technology solutions that enhance brand engagement. Known for fostering collaborative environments where creativity thrives.

Creative Direction
UI/UX Design
User-Centric Design

Brand Development
Product Development
Product Marketing

Content Creation
Content Strategy
Strategic Storytelling

Cross-Functional Collaboration
Market & User Research
Strategic Planning

WORK EXPERIENCE

Marketing Director

Dec 2023 - Aug 2024

Apple Industries, Greenvale, NY

- Created conversion-focused marketing collateral and sales pitch presentations, which persuaded The Walt Disney Company and other Fortune 500 firms to integrate photo booth experiences into their experiential marketing campaigns. Led press relations and brand development strategies to further amplify product visibility and enhance the company's reputation as a trusted partner for innovative marketing solutions.
- Oversaw content creation team developing branded product experiences for Disney Parks & Resorts, Regal Cinemas, Major League Baseball stadiums, NASCAR, and the NBA, using fandom to drive user engagement.
- Helped forge strategic partnerships with the Collegiate Licensing Company for NCAA-licensed product experiences and with the World Association of Zoos and Aquariums to facilitate global sales.

Creative Director (Marketing, Content, and UX)

Apr 2009 - Jun 2023

AMI Entertainment Network, Trevoose, PA

- Provided creative direction and content strategy for interactive music and television products deployed across 30,000+ hospitality and retail locations. Collaborated with the product development team to design mobile and web-based interfaces featuring sophisticated backend controls for B2B customers and intuitive B2C experiences, driving in-store engagement and facilitating 650 million purchase transactions annually.
- Led user research and designed the UI/UX for the AMI Co-Pilot app, a mobile management solution that streamlined operations for B2B customers. The app enabled users to monitor the financial performance of deployed products, adjust device settings, and deploy digital signage across devices—driving a 152% increase in local business marketing across the network.
- Designed the UI/UX for the AMI Music app, enabling smartphone users to browse music on jukeboxes nationwide and pay for song selections with virtual funds. Adopting a user-centric design approach, the app offered anonymous music selection and personalized recommendations, resulting in more than 2.5 million downloads, a 40% higher spending rate among users, and \$5 million in recurring monthly revenue.
- Led the user experience design of the Atom digital jukebox interface, which became the fastest-selling jukebox in the UK in half a century. This work involved UX research, user flows, wireframing, and art direction for high-fidelity mockups. The design, focused on advanced customization and video content delivery, contributed to a 60% increase in average revenue per user.

- Led the user experience design for Tap TV, an interactive trivia and promotional platform for commercial venues. Facilitated cross-functional collaboration, managing art, content creation, and engineering teams to develop social games with real-time leaderboards and competitions, allowing patrons to team up and compete against venues nationwide.
- Led the strategic planning and execution of multi-channel marketing across digital and print—including advertising, email marketing, SEO, social media, press, marketing collateral, presentations, training videos, and trade shows—driving network expansion across all 50 states and top 25 DMAs.
- Collaborated with licensing and marketing teams from Universal Music Group, Sony Music Entertainment, and Warner Music Group on interactive advertising campaigns and promotional giveaways that boosted user engagement with music content by 15%, reinforcing the company's position as a valued ally to major record labels and recording artists.
- Developed and maintained a comprehensive design system, overseeing the creation of over a dozen product brands, including naming, logo designs, style guides, trademarks, and strategic storytelling, to ensure consistent brand identity and cohesive user experiences across all touchpoints.

Creative Director

Mar 2006 - Mar 2009

Merit Industries, Bensalem, PA

- Directed content strategies and product marketing for Megatouch, a gaming system for bars and social venues that pioneered touchscreen entertainment prior to the advent of the smartphone.
- Led UI/UX design for over 45 applications, driving user-centered experiences through user flows, wireframes, A/B testing, and iterative design, optimizing accessibility and engagement.
- Strengthened the brand's reputation as a must-have entertainment solution with impactful advertising and collateral, driving sales across 30 countries and generating 5.5 billion annual plays worldwide.

UI/UX Designer

May 1999 - Mar 2006

Merit Industries, Bensalem, PA

- Designed and optimized user interfaces for over 30 touchscreen games, working cross-functionally with engineers to enhance user engagement and long-term profitability for Megatouch systems.

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Arts in Integrative Arts

Aug 1994 - May 1999

Penn State University, University Park, PA

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Board Member and Softball Director

Sept 2021 - Present

Whitpain Recreation Association, Blue Bell, PA

- Revitalized Whitpain Softball, increasing participation from under 60 girls to over 300 by expanding program offerings, spearheading community engagement strategies, and using social media storytelling to showcase the player experience via Instagram.
- Designed and launched playwra.com, creating all content and establishing it as the association's central hub for marketing, news, and registration. The site now manages nearly \$1 million annually in sports registration fees.