

# CHRIS WATKINS

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I love combining my skills in **user experience**, **storytelling**, and **design**, my passion for **making connections** and **helping others reach their goals**, and my background in **leadership**, **education**, and **technology** to bring exciting new experiences to life!

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## Principal User Experience Designer :: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt

August 2021 – present

Spear-heading UX design and design discipline growth for the Digital Product Design team dedicated to HMH's *Ed* e-learning platform and its interrelated products.

- Building close cross-functional relationships across product verticals, engineering, design and business teams to facilitate the implementation of holistically designed cross-product experiences for teachers, students, and school administrators.
- Hands-on design work from workflows, wireframes and mock-ups to prototypes, UX requirements documents, and facilitation of collaborative workshops.
- Evolution of UX design processes and integration methods to support rapid delivery of solutions for user needs and business requirements.
- Co-creation and extension of design systems including UX patterns, components, templates, iconography, and copy patterns.
- Mentorship and supervision of design staff at multiple experience levels.
- Planning and facilitation of user research studies in concert with the dedicated user research team.

## Principal User Experience Designer :: PTC

July 2017 – August 2021

Led UX design for complex software products and product suites, including *ThingWorx*, PTC's premier platform for creating Internet of Things apps, and the related ecosystem of PTC tools like *Solution Central*, *Kepware*, and the *Smart Connected Operations* apps.

- Principal designer on the *Solution Central* portal and tool set for publishing and deploying apps across enterprise environments. Created strategy, UX roadmaps, and development requirements.
- Lead designer of configuration tools across the *Smart Connected Operations* apps. Holistic user-centered methods resulted in improved user comprehension, success, and speed. Supervised design staff.
- Designed the core concept for the next generation of the *ThingWorx* build environment, combining tools to create IoT mashups and AR experiences for users of varying skill levels.
- Regularly co-planned and facilitated design thinking workshops for cross-functional teams.
- Collaboratively built common patterns, components, and integration methods in development of a company-wide design system.
- Planned, ran, and reported on research studies and usability tests to inform design and product teams.
- Evolved design processes with organizational leadership to improve lean UX engagement with project teams. Integrated with agile dev teams and provided prototypes, storyboards, and other design artifacts.

## Manager, User Experience Design :: Bose Corporation

February 2012 – June 2017

Guided a team of interaction designers, graphic designers, user researchers, technical writers and document production specialists to craft the highest quality integrated product and out-of-box experiences.

- Directed the creation and implementation of a UX design system for hardware, software, and integrated product experiences.
- Spearheaded a corporate initiative to create a holistic strategic vision for the Bose out-of-box experience, setting direction for packaging artwork, structural packaging design, interaction design, and user support and documentation. Identified and evolved the "north star" vision and presented vision direction to stakeholders, key leads, and partner organizations.
- Facilitated relationships and evolved processes to integrate design and engineering teams and efforts.
- Managed designers, researchers and writers delivering the largest single year product portfolio launched by Bose, including the ecosystem of *SoundTouch* Wi-Fi music products.
- Provided creative direction of product visual UI design in apps, hardware, and embedded UIs.

## Cartoonist :: OdoriPark.com

April 2007 – present

Creator, writer and artist of comics including *Odori Park*, an all-ages friendly comedy strip published at [OdoriPark.com](http://OdoriPark.com), and new long-form stories for kids, plus teacher of cartooning and comics-craft.

- Wrote, illustrated, and collaborated on comics and stories a variety of online and print venues.
- Produced and published multiple books and book collections of comics and bonus content.
- Created the site at [OdoriPark.com](http://OdoriPark.com), leveraging CSS, JavaScript, and teaching myself PHP to build a heavily customized WordPress theme for a better user experience and unique visual design.
- Promoted work at comic arts festivals and book signings as well as print, Web, and social media outlets.
- Handled all business operations from accounting to vendor and project management.
- Instructor of workshops and classes for children in drawing cartoons and making comics.
- Now developing new comics for kids that mix comedy-adventure stories with riddles, puzzles, and games.

## **Manager, User Interface Design :: Eastman Kodak Company**

January 2011 – February 2012

Led a multi-disciplinary user experience team through the development of still- and video-capture device and software UIs.

- Coordinated assignments, resources, and design direction for a team of interaction designers, graphic designers, and human factors specialists across an annual portfolio of roughly twenty products, multiple product lines, and affiliated software applications.
- Initiated and led integration of a new process for iterative design and testing on touchscreen products, garnering significant measurable improvements in user satisfaction.
- Tracked and maintained reduced budgets while guiding team through continued implementation of the new UI language, improvements in touchscreen product experiences, and multiple user testing activities.
- Engaged with local and international branches and vendors, particularly engineering and operations management teams, to build relationships that empowered UX team members to deliver their best work.

## **Senior Interaction Designer :: Eastman Kodak Company**

October 2005 – January 2011

Designed experiences, interfaces, layouts, icons, and other attributes across a variety of consumer and commercial imaging products. Led design and integration of two new UI design languages across the digital capture portfolio. Integrated with engineers to improve and employ the Kodak New User Interface, a method of streamlining the design-to-development pipeline with XML, VPN, and a custom simulation engine. Led interaction design for digital still cameras for five years. Primary designer for touchscreen cameras including the CES Innovations Award-winning *Slice*.

## **Freelance Illustrator and Designer**

August 2003 – September 2006

Illustrator, concept artist, and character designer for Web, book, board game, video game, comics, and marketing projects. Designed and built websites including a content management system using HTML, ASP, SQL, and CSS. Clients included Thomson-Delmar Learning, the USADA, Slugfest Games, and West End Games. Defined requirements, planned and managed projects, and handled all finance operations.

## **Cartoonist, Editor, & Publisher :: BorderWalker.com**

June 2000 – June 2005

Creator, editor, publisher, web developer, and cartoonist for an online comics anthology site featuring eleven serialized comic features and ten columns plus a news blog. Created serial comic content including an interactive language-teaching comic (built in Flash with ActionScript). Designed and developed the anthology website, incorporating a robust time-scheduled CMS, forums, and support for multiple content types.

## **ESL Instructor & Japanese-to-English Translator :: Language Intelligence**

July 1999 – October 2005

Identified student language needs. Built and employed custom lesson plans. Translated surveys and technical documentation.

## **Senior Graphic Designer :: LogicalSolutions.net**

July 1999 – August 2003

Designed and developed Web sites and multimedia content. Client liaison for visual and UI design. Created processes and templates.

## **English as a Second Language Instructor :: ACS Institute, Japan**

May 1998 – May 1999

Designed and taught English as a Second Language (ESL) curriculum. Created instructional comics and designed and built Institute websites.

## **Graphic Designer :: Netstar System & Design Innovations, LLC**

August 1997 – April 1998

Designed and coded Web sites, developed marketing materials, and met with clients to assess needs and plan strategies.

## **:: Projects, Publications, and Patents ::**

*Gamescape: The Memory Stone*, self-published, 2016.

*The Odori Park Omnibus*, self-published, 2014.

*Camera for displaying digital images*, patent number 8432472, issued 2013.

*Variable rate browsing of an image collection*, patent number 8274592, issued 2012.

Comic Creators for Freedom, collaborative illustrations for charity, 2011, 2012, 2013.

*Odori Park: East Marries West*, self-published, 2011.

*Searching digital image collections using face recognition*, patent application number 20110243397, filed 2010.

"SuperFogeys Origins: Operation C.O.W.", artist for short story at SuperFogeys.com, 2010.

Instances 2, Gallery Show at Pulp Nouveau Comix, 2010.

*ComixTalk* cover illustration, September 2009.

Instances, Gallery Show at Nazareth College, 2009.

*Surreality, Inc.*, developed in 2008, published at OdoriPark.com, 2010, and in *The Odori Park Omnibus*, 2014.

"Odori Park," the 24-Hour Comic, published in *24 Hour Comics Day Highlights 2004*, About Comics, 2004.

*The Webcomic Examiner* cover comic: "24 Hours with Joe," September 2004.

*The BorderWalker Anthology 2004*, writer and illustrator of short story within anthology comic, self-published, 2004.

The Webcomic Tribute Project, organizer and co-operator of charity drive to benefit the Red Cross, 2001.

## **:: Education ::**

### **Bachelor of Arts :: Magna Cum Laude :: Washington College, Chestertown, MD**

1993-1997

- Major in English (Creative Writing), Minor in Visual Arts.
- Member of Omicron Delta Kappa, a National Leadership Honor Society. Founder and President of the WC Japanese Club.
- Co-founder and three-year editor of *Menagerie*, an annual arts and literature anthology. Staff cartoonist for the Washington College *Elm*.