Thomas Elliott Smith

Creative Director | Design Engineer | Creative Operations & Product Development

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Professional Summary

Creative director and multidisciplinary design engineer with 10+ years of experience in brand and product design, creative operations, web development, and entrepreneurial ventures. Experienced in established organizations and as an early team member at startups, bringing strategic leadership and hands-on execution to cross-functional teams. Develops scalable design systems, marketing infrastructure, internal tools, and digital products that help lean teams work effectively. Background includes creative team direction, full-stack venture launches, and long-term embedded consulting engagements.

Core Skills

- **Creative leadership:** Creative direction, art direction, brand strategy, design management, team mentorship, stakeholder management, creative operations.
- **Design and marketing:** UI/UX, product design, Figma design systems, auto-layout and variables, marketing campaigns, visual identity, motion graphics, Adobe Creative Cloud.
- **Development and tools:** HTML, CSS, JavaScript, Hugo, Tailwind CSS, Astro, WordPress Multisite, frontend development, custom internal tools, generative AI workflows.
- **Product and business:** MVP development, rapid prototyping, product launches, venture validation, cross-functional collaboration, fractional creative leadership.

Professional Experience

Founder | Hatrack Digital LLC June 2026 – Present
Portland, Maine

Founded and operate a boutique venture studio developing and validating digital products across design, development, marketing, and business strategy.

- Lead venture development from brand strategy and UI/UX through implementation, launch, and market validation; projects have moved from concept to launch in approximately two weeks.
- Developed repeatable processes including the Minimum Viable Brand framework and reverse prototype-to-Figma methodology to accelerate launches.
- Built ventures including West End Ghost Tours, StoryBrags, and Tusque Gallery, combining product development with marketing and business operations.

Embedded Creative Partner | The Action Company February 2026 – Present
Contract, Remote

Embedded within the Growth Marketing department, delivering creative direction and hands-on design while expanding internal production capabilities.

- Produce outward-facing marketing assets across digital and print channels; art-direct internal staff and third-party vendors.
- Develop reusable templates, design systems, and workflows enabling stakeholders to create brand-consistent assets independently.
- Build custom internal tools that streamline creative production and augment output by non-designers.

Principal Creative Director | Tom Smith Design May 2024 – Present

Independent Consultancy, Remote

Provide creative direction, design systems, brand development, and technical implementation for startups, growing businesses, and established organizations.

- Architect Figma marketing systems and reusable asset libraries that make brand-consistent design accessible to internal teams.
- Lead cross-functional initiatives involving designers, developers, marketers, and stakeholders, from creative strategy to digital implementation.
- Deliver brand identities, websites, digital experiences, and repeatable creative workflows through embedded and fractional partnerships.
- Selected clients: Total Synergy, Action Analytics, No To The Man Brands, Tidus Wallet/NYCrypto.

Embedded Creative Partner | Total Synergy December 2024 – July 2026

Contract, Remote

Served as an embedded creative partner for an Australian SaaS provider of project management software for architecture and engineering firms.

- Led marketing design across campaigns, landing pages, motion graphics, and WordPress updates.
- Architected a Figma-based marketing system with reusable components, auto-layout templates, and brand variables.
- Built a centralized creative asset library enabling non-designers to produce and update branded materials independently.

Director of Creative Operations | tea.xyz (tea Protocol) March 2022 – May 2024

Contract, Remote

Joined as one of the first 10 team members at a startup focused on rewarding open-source software contributors.

- Independently designed, developed, and deployed the company's first two marketing websites using Hugo, allowing product engineers to focus on the core application.
- Led creative operations and marketing design during the company's growth to 1 million users in 71 days.
- Collaborated with product and engineering teams on the tea GUI, a visual package-management application recognized on Product Hunt.
- Developed Stable Diffusion workflows to generate imagery for user-submitted software packages.

Owner & Founder | Anchor Point Collective Inc. May 2021 – May 2022

Savannah, Georgia

Founded and independently owned a creative agency serving as the design and development partner to a Savannah venture studio.

- Led the launch of 10+ brands and MVPs in 12 months, translating founders' ideas into roadmaps and deliverables.
- Managed interns, freelance specialists, and vendors delivering websites and functional web applications.
- Established repeatable creative and production workflows to support multiple ventures with a lean team.

Creative Director | Candor USA Inc. (Acquired by MyHealthily) March 2019 – February 2021
Savannah, Georgia

Joined the healthcare SaaS startup as an early team member, leading creative direction and brand governance across product, marketing, and sales.

- Developed organic growth marketing initiatives that helped reach 1,000+ active users without paid advertising.
- Architected WordPress Multisite infrastructure supporting 20+ subsidiary brands and websites, accelerating brand and site deployment.
- Established the foundations of the Minimum Viable Brand methodology through repeatable brand-launch processes.
- Led product demonstrations for enterprise prospects and investors.

Earlier Experience

Independent Freelance Graphic Designer | Self-Employed December 2016 – March 2019
Remote

- Served 100+ clients across six continents with branding, web design, and marketing work, managing concurrent remote engagements.
- Maintained an Upwork Job Success Score above 90%.

Creative and Production Design Contracts | Robert Half / The Creative Group 2015 – 2016
New York and New Jersey

- RadicalMedia — Freelance Graphic Designer (November 2016): Produced digital marketing assets for an American Express UNSTAGED campaign.
- Sakar International / Vivitar — Freelance Packaging Designer (October–November 2016): Developed consumer electronics packaging, hand-built prototypes, and prepared production-ready dielines for manufacturers in China.
- Horizon Group USA — Freelance Packaging Designer (September 2016): Supported consumer product packaging design and production for Walmart Canada.
- EngenderHealth — Interim Senior Graphic Designer (February–August 2016): Reported to the Creative Director and produced advocacy and public awareness materials, including flyers, posters, emails, and presentations.
- Verizon — Freelance Graphic Designer (October 2015): Created 50 vector illustrations aligned with the Pentagram-developed corporate identity.
- Quidsi (Amazon subsidiary) — Freelance Production Designer (July–September 2015): Produced seasonal advertising and e-commerce assets across seven consumer brands.

Education

Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA), Graphic Design 2015
Savannah College of Art and Design