

Michael R. Nelson

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Twenty years of creative product development and product management gathering voice of the customer and translating their needs into successful, engaging user experiences, products, and strategies. Over the years, I have been responsible for all aspects of product development and product management process including P&L management, acquisition analysis, sales strategy development, customer research, competitive analysis, product & assortment strategy, industrial design, marketing launch, digital marketing strategies, merchandising, store environments, inventory management, product lifecycle management, brand strategies, price management & negotiation, and post-launch customer service.

Professional Experience

2022-Present

AMICO - Marketing and Product Management Architectural Division Leader

Birmingham Alabama: Lead all marketing, product development, and business development activities for Architectural Division and new product categories.

Notable Accomplishments:

- Developed new patentable façade attachment systems.
- Lead Kaizen events to streamline internal operations and improve customer experience in the sales process.
- Built digital marketing strategy from the ground up and executed creative design. 21K impressions in first 30 days.
- Grew customer engagement: Increased sample distribution 4x and lunch and learns 7x.

2018 – 2021

Southwire - Director of Product Management and Development

Carrollton, Georgia: Led a team of 16 product managers and engineers to develop innovative new products and drive retail, distribution, MRO, and online strategies. Responsible for managing the P&L of \$300M in business in Southwire's assembled products division managing electrical accessories, conduit fittings, extension cords, lighting, home controls, landscape lighting, data center power distribution, surge protection, temp power, and others.

Notable Accomplishments:

- Developed and launched \$10M in new products.
- Developed assortments, planograms, and successful pitches winning line reviews with Home Depot (US and CAN), Rona, Grainger, Fastenal, Ace, Blains, True Value, Menards, Orgill, Sam's Club, and Autozone.
- Drove acquisition analysis & strategy and subsequent acquisition integration for Garvin Industries, ProBuilt Lighting, and CEP.

2011 – 2018

The Home Depot - Industrial Design Manager

Atlanta, Georgia: My design team was responsible for developing products under all of Home Depot's private-label brands. My responsibilities include qualitative customer research, quantitative sales analysis, competitive and assortment analysis, development of functional features, the aesthetic design of hardline and decorative products, and serving any new product development needs of HD's merchants.

Notable Accomplishments:

- Founded and successfully grew the Industrial Design Department in Home Depot and created a new product development engine within HD that served nearly every department. I was able to build a team skilled at becoming category experts quickly, analyzing data, gaining new customer insights, and assisting my PDM and Merchant customers to create better private label products.
- Designs created by my team sold \$1.2 Billion of product during FY2017. We completed 70+ projects per year with 3 designers each with great success stories of top-line and gross margin sales growth.
- Responsible for creating, implementing, and policing the Husky visual brand language (VBL) for all Husky products. My design leadership resulted in brand sales growth that outpaces the store and department average and grew the brand by more than \$700M during my time there.
- Developed a new lean, voice of the customer research methodologies to serve the private label organization.
- Aided in strategy creation and development of products for our private brand Internet of things (IoT) program.
- Left the company as the largest holder of patents in the history of the Home Depot.

2007 – 2011

Cooper Industries

- **2007-2009 Cooper Lighting – Industrial Design**
- **2009-2011 Cooper Wiring Devices – Marketing Communications + Industrial Design**

Peachtree City, Georgia: Worked with two different divisions within the business developing and launching new and innovative products. Duties ranged from VOC, product sketching, CAD development to marketing strategy, collateral and asset design, and product launch execution.

Notable Accomplishments:

- Re-designed Cooper Wiring Device's lighting controls merchandising bay for our customer Lowe's; The retail set increased sales \$5 Million dollars annually across all Lowe's stores in a market when competitors were either flat or declining.
- Contributed utility and design patent-worthy industrial design work on numerous projects that significantly improved the viability of the product. The industrial design work for the QuickGrip product significantly altered the course of the project and received notice from Lowe's who ultimately picked up the product, increasing the annual production demand by 10 fold.
- Served the Cooper Controls division for a new line of commercial occupancy sensors (36 SKUs). The Senior Marketing Manager called the family of products a "series of home runs." Customer research preferred our new designs 8-to-1 over competitor's products and usability testing showed that our scene control products increased user accuracy by 8-fold over our competitors. The occupancy sensor won a platinum ADEX award in 2011 for excellence.
- Art directed & project managed the creation of 600 page Arrow Hart catalog. When I took over the project, it was behind schedule and not meeting management's expectations. After re-scoping the timeline, and making design changes, the design team I put together went to print on schedule, impressed our customers, and aided in an easier shopping experience.

2003 – 2007

Principal Designer / Owner - Ninth Hour Design

Atlanta, Georgia: Design firm contracting to companies of various sizes to fulfill any of their creative service needs. I was responsible for all aspects of the business from client acquisition and management to completing high-quality design work. The company offered services in retail design, graphic design, exhibit design, industrial design, web design, SEO, and user interface design.

Notable Clients:

- The Coca-Cola Company: (Brand communications and product design) Worked with Coca-Cola's Worldwide Licensing Department. Created product designs and graphics applications for their licensed products. My specific area of focus was 'home/kitchen' product lines; the client liked the graphics program so much that they extended the program to the 'back to school product. Assisted in creating and preparing the consumer trend forecasting report for 2006.
- Miller Zell: (Retail design) Lead designer in preparing design and strategy for new store fixture designs, and graphic signage layout for Blue-Linx (a Georgia-Pacific Company). The designs successfully gained Miller Zell business from the company.
- Mr. Bar-B-Q: (Product design) Developed a new line of spatulas and grill lighters for high-end market.
- Murphy & Orr - (exhibit and environmental graphic design) Designed ~\$3M in various museums and halls of fame for colleges such as Duke Basketball, West Virginia Football, Marquette Basketball, and others.

Education

MERCER UNIVERSITY

Atlanta GA
Master's in Business Administration
Focus in Marketing

GEORGIA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

Atlanta GA
BS Industrial Design Graduated
with Highest Honors

Computer Skills

- Adobe Creative Cloud
- Illustrator + Indesign + Photoshop
- Microsoft Office
- Microsoft Project
- SAP
- Stackline
- SolidWorks (certified in SW Essentials, Surfacing, Advanced Assembly, and Advanced Parts)
- Autodesk Inventor
- Sketchbook Pro
- HTML + CSS
- Wordpress
- Sprout Social

Honors / Activities

- Foster parent 2016-present
- 2011 ADEX Platinum Award Winner
- Received Georgia Tech's President's Undergraduate Research Award 2001-2002; research published by the IDSA
- Re-occurring speaker at various Management and Industrial Design classes at Georgia Tech.
- Georgia Tech student mentor from 2011-2016, 2020-Present
- Fayette County Young Life Volunteer and Team Leader for nine years – Sandy Creek High School
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