

Sarah Cole

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Summary

Strategic, innovative, CPACC-certified design leader with 15+ years in educational publishing and EdTech. Expert in creating elegant, inclusive user experiences across print and digital platforms. Known for team leadership, cross-functional collaboration, and scalable design systems that meet accessibility and business needs while keeping users engaged.

Experience

Cengage Group, virtual

April 2021– present

Art Director for EdTech company

- Served as the Accessibility lead for Creative Studio (26 people). Shared accessibility best practices, created accessibility audit guidelines, and presented to 4 different business units to educate colleagues on the importance of accessibility and to clarify their role in ensuring products meet accessibility standards. Represented the Creative Studio on a task force to create accessible templates for the most commonly used types of HTML activities.
- Accepted into an Aspiring Leaders training program where I collaborated with colleagues across the company on best practices for building talent, empowering colleagues, and acting as a company ambassador and cultural steward.
- Created efficient workflows for 5 complex Art titles where layout and color accuracy were paramount to their success. Managed a color correction specialist and designer. Reviewed all pages and worked with the printer to ensure contract proofs were accurate.
- Trained and mentored 3 new hires on workflows and processes.
- Initiated a monthly meeting with other art directors from different business units to discuss best practices and foster a sense of community within Creative Studio.

Cengage Group, Boston, MA and virtual

October 2014– May 2021

Senior Designer for EdTech company

- Responsible for designing and art-directing print (cover and interior) and interactive products across 10+ disciplines. Conducted accessibility audits and made suggestions for better usability for all new editions. Led design launches and presentations for all new editions to ensure business needs from marketing, content, and learning design were addressed.
- Created workflows and templates for more efficiency. Developed a Visual Design Plan template for content partners to use to streamline the handoff from Content to Design. Led a team of 10 colleagues from different business areas to create a more efficient HTML5 workflow.
- Hired and art-directed 10+ illustrators, production artists, and photographers to create compelling covers and interiors.

Textbooks.com, Boston, MA

March 2014–September 2014

Senior Designer for Textbook eCommerce company

- Redesigned the look and feel of the company's email and advertising campaign.
- Completed a website audit and made recommendations for updating design, content, and overall consistency throughout the site.
- Worked with the Creative Director, Copywriter, and Marketing staff to create a social media strategy.
- Prepared final files for handover to production for coding.

Skills

Design Tools:

- Adobe InDesign
- Adobe Illustrator
- Adobe Photoshop
- Adobe Acrobat

Accessibility Tools:

- WCAG guidelines
- CPACC Certified
- Aria

Web and UI Tools:

- Adobe XD
- InVision
- Sketch
- Figma
- HTML5
- CSS

Project Tools:

- Microsoft Office
- Workfront
- Smartsheet
- Dropbox
- Box

Education:

International Association of Accessibility Professionals (IAAP); Certified Professional in Accessibility Core Competencies (CPACC)

Boston University, Center for Digital Imaging Arts; Web Design Certificate

University of Massachusetts at Amherst; Bachelor of Arts; English major/Art minor

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Six Red Marbles, Boston, MA

2011–February 2014

Senior Designer for EdTech company

- Designed, managed and art-directed large print and digital programs for colleges, non-profits, and publishers across all disciplines. Responsible for managing designers, photoshop artists, and art buyers. Created checklists for quality assurance specialists. Led design pitches and presentations for clients. Created and maintained status trackers.
- Interfaced with Design and Production departments in New Delhi office, providing creative and technical guidance.

Vista Higher Learning, Boston, MA

2009–2011

Senior Graphic Designer for Higher Education Language Publisher

- Designed and art-directed language textbooks. Reviewed pages for quality, consistency, and compliance with templates.
- Managed two junior designers and off-site vendors. Collaborated with Design, Production, Editorial, and Marketing to ensure deadlines were met with quality results and efficient workflows. Interfaced with Design and Production in South American office, providing creative and technical guidance.
- Commissioned and reviewed illustrations, maps, and photographs for visual appeal while remaining sensitive to each culture represented.

Brown Publishing Network, Waltham, MA

2006–2008

Senior Graphic Designer for Full-Service Educational Development House

- Designed covers and interiors, commissioned art, and art-directed illustrators and photographers for a K–2 leveled literacy program. Directed photo shoots and managed photo researchers. Conducted quality control.
- Designed prototypes for science, math, and history books targeted to grades K–college.
- Managed a large vocabulary card program. Defined workflows, created templates, monitored schedules, tracking, and budgets. Acquired art, provided art direction, implemented notes from InCopy, and managed a junior designer and photo researcher.

Educators Publishing Service, Cambridge, MA

2004–2006

Graphic Designer for Educational Publisher

- Managed and designed grade 2–12 vocabulary programs with multiple components. Managed internal and external staff while ensuring schedules and budgets were on track.
- Designed covers and interiors. Acquired art and photos. Collaborated with illustrators, Editorial, Marketing, Production, and web teams to create books from concept to final files.

Williamson Publishing, Charlotte, VT

2001–2004

Graphic Designer and Illustrator for Children's Book Publisher

- Designed and illustrated interiors and covers in multiple series, from pre-K to grade 8.
- Designed all marketing collateral (ads, pins, posters, trade show signage, and packaging).

Charlesbridge Publishing, Watertown, MA

2000–2001

Production Assistant for children's Trade and Educational Publisher

- Designed books and collateral for the School and Trade departments.
- Provided assistance with scanning, inventory, and reprint corrections.