

Abel Lenz

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I like solving hard problems

I'm a veteran of R/GA, Huge, AOL, and many startups. Clients include Verizon, HBO, Clear Channel, J&J, Under Armour, Nike, Ollie, and more. I've worked across nearly all industries, types of businesses, and types of digital products. I have deep experience in product design including ideation, UX, UI design, prototyping, architecture, user research, and creative direction. Expert in mobile, desktop, responsive web, design systems, data visualization, and AI; well-versed in Storybook, CSS, front-end web frameworks, accessibility, and Swift. I've been a part of organizations large and small, built and managed teams, and been a mentor and friend to team members across all disciplines and levels.

Abel Lenz Design - Consultant - New York, Massachusetts

June 2025 - Present (6 months)

Product design, brand strategy, and user research for various clients.

Syndio - Principal Designer - Massachusetts

Oct 2020 - May 2025 (4 years 8 months)

Syndio promotes fairness in the workplace by helping companies analyze and improve on equal pay, pay policy, representation, and career paths for women and underrepresented minorities. Centered on applying regression analysis to labor economics data, the products had complex UIs with profound cultural and legal implications. In addition to hands-on design collaboration, as a principal I collaborated across the entire org, led critical initiatives, and mentored designers and product managers. We delivered several new products, a well documented storybook design system, platform strategy, ML strategy, a support chatbot, and an ever growing set of complex, high stakes data visualizations.

Racket - Co-founder - New York

Aug 2017 - Mar 2021 (3 years 8 months)

Racket was a messaging and audio app for remote teams. Sort of like a version of Slack you can use with both your fingers AND your voice. I co-designed the product, collaborated on UI development in Swift, developed the brand, and wrote the patent, along with everything else at a small startup. With a robust WebRTC platform at the core, we designed, prototyped, and implemented a number of cutting edge audio user experiences like multi-channel recording and playback, multi-modal conversations (speech to text and vice-versa), proximity muting, spatial audio, predictive VOIP connections, and ML based automatic mute.

All Turtles - Design/UX - San Francisco

Sep 2017 - Feb 2020 (2 years 6 months)

All Turtles is an AI-focused product incubator. I provided consulting and product prototyping for companies like Bose and Commure.

Big Spaceship - UX Director (Freelance) - New York

Apr 2016 - Jul 2016 (4 months)

I led UX on a revolutionary new shoe customizer for Under Armour that lets customers put literally anything on a sneaker, including photography, repeating patterns, typography, and an endless choice of colors. The project included traditional wireframes, prototyping, design, and extensive user testing. I managed several UX contributors, coordinated across a large agency team, and interfaced with a large client team on a daily basis.

Opticlose - Co-founder - New York

October 2014 - April 2016 (1 year 7 months)

I designed and built the MVP for a sales optimization product that matches salespeople with the best prospects in real time. I designed the full brand, built out all the marketing, designed the product, specified Salesforce integration, and implemented the front end in AngularJS. I also lead technical product management for our small team, performed embedded customer research, and helped pitch to customers and investors.

Tapraise - Co-founder - New York

January 2014 - September 2014 (9 months)

Invented the idea of instant giving and built out the MVP of our first product: the "Dollar Button" for one-tap giving on websites, email, Twitter and Facebook. I designed the full brand, built out all the marketing, designed the product, and implemented the front end in AngularJS. Also user, customer, and market research, and investor presentations.

Patch.com (AOL) - Executive Creative Director - New York

September 2011 - August 2013 (2 years)

Patch was a media brand and content platform offering local news in more than 800 communities nationwide. I was brought on to re-architect the user experience to embrace user content alongside original reporting from local editors in order to expand the number of towns we could serve. Think Facebook groups (but better designed) with elevated editorial content and local self-serve advertising. I directly managed the 10 person product design team, oversaw creative for the 8 person marketing team, partnered closely with the Patch C-suite and met regularly with the CEO of AOL. I partnered with engineering and product to build the new platform and at the same time travelled nationally to explain the changes to over 1000 editorial staff and advertising salespeople on the ground. We also performed extensive ethnographic and UX research, built out visual design and brand voice style guides and managed agencies on side projects.

Miami Ad School - Teacher - New York

October 2010 - June 2012 (1 year 9 months)

Miami ad school is an industry leading advertising and design program taught by working professionals. I taught digital campaigns/platforms, mobile campaigns/platforms, and product creation/extension. Classes were centered around the meaning and value of brand, and included concepting, critique, and portfolio development.

HUGE - Associate Experience Director - New York

October 2010 - August 2011 (11 months)

In its heyday, HUGE was the hip new tech-focused digital agency. I joined to oversee research, product design, and strategy for a complete rethink of the "I Heart Radio" music product, leading a 20 person team on the account. We ran the team like a startup, collaborating with ClearChannel and its investors to completely rethink the strategy for content, monetization, marketing, technology, and UX.

R/GA - Interaction Design Director - New York

January 2006 - October 2010 (4 years 10 months)

R/GA was the preeminent agency of its time applying new technology to marketing and branding, winning countless awards. I worked on projects for dozens of brands across some of the agency's biggest clients including Verizon, Johnson & Johnson, HBO, and Nike. As an ID director, I essentially performed the role of product manager, estimating costs, developing design and requirements, collaborating with engineering, performing user research, and managing stakeholders. Projects were far ranging, extending to digital strategy, planning, brand development, naming, and video direction. Highlights include managing 11 UX designers on the Verizon team, designing self service and ecommerce for Verizon, launching HBO.com, designing an integrated messaging platform, rebranding a familiar food brand, imagining tablets before the iPad, and group texting before Twitter.

POPstick - Director of Innovation and User Experience - New York

2004 - January 2006 (2 years)

I led the design, specification, and development of the company's key products including a social networking platform and a marketplace for music licensing. Managed the creative team in New York, overseeing 4-7 designers and developers serving POPstick's anchor clients, Microsoft and Virgin HealthMiles (now Virgin Pulse).

Massachusetts College of Art - Instructor - Boston

September 2003 - December 2004 (1 year 4 months)

I taught an interdisciplinary course for designers and developers intended to build collaboration skills between roles. Rewrote the curriculum entirely, covering information architecture, design, branding, and web application development.

New Tilt - Director of User Experience, Co-Founder - Boston

2000 - 2004 (4 years)

I was a co-founder of this ten-person award-winning web application design shop, acquired in 2006. Client highlights include Smithsonian Institution, Dana Farber Cancer Institute, Boston's Logan Airport, MIT, and RSA Security.

RainCastle Communications - Experience Design Director - Boston

1997 - 2000 (3 years)

Starting as the only web designer, I was part of RainCastle's growth from a 4 person design shop to a 35 person web shop. Responsible for information architecture, interface design & prototyping, graphic design, animation, web development, and usability testing.

Music Interactive - Designer - Boston

1994 - 1996 (2 years)

Responsible for the architecture, interface design, and development of web projects for the music industry, including our flagship web property, an online community for musicians.

Education

Massachusetts College of Art

BFA, Graphic Design · (September 1993 - May 1998)
