

Chia Wu: Digital Design Director

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Digital Design Director with 15+ years of experience leading brand and digital experiences for global consumer and tech brands, including Thermador, Starbucks, Bosch, and Western Digital. I build the systems, standards, and teams that keep a brand consistent across every channel, and I lead with empathy for both the people I work with and the people we design for.

core expertise

Creative Leadership: Design Direction · Brand Governance · Tone of Voice & Copy Direction · Stakeholder Alignment

Digital Experience: UX Strategy · UI Design · User Research · Conversion-Focused Design · SEO & Accessibility

Systems & Operations: Design Systems · Creative Operations · Digital Asset Management · Team Mentorship & Development

experience

Digital Design Director

SmartMagic (Formerly ELA) — Irvine, CA

2014 – Present

- Direct the Thermador digital brand across web, product launches, and campaigns, serving as the lead creative partner on the account for over a decade.
- Led design vision and strategy for the Thermador Kitchen Package Planner, a self-guided tool that simplified a complex incentive program across 8 product categories. Drove a 44% increase in sales leads in the first month, a 50% increase in package sales in year one, and a 127% increase in year two.
- Led UX, UI, and content strategy for the new Thermador website build.
- Led design direction for the global Starbucks x Peanuts campaign (launched September 2026).
- Direct and mentor a team of 6 to 8 designers and copywriters, from briefing and onboarding through final delivery.
- Established brand voice, landing page, and design system standards adopted across the team.

Freelance Design Director

ISH Food — Remote | Los Angeles, CA

2023

- Led design direction and digital strategy for the ISH Food website redesign, evolving a B2B-focused site into a mission-driven, consumer-first experience for a plant-based seafood brand.
- Refined brand messaging and communication strategy to connect with consumers' values while preserving the functionality retail partners rely on.
- Directed competitive analysis and persona development to shape a strategy for two distinct audiences.
- Developed three high-fidelity design concepts and guided the final direction through launch, then transitioned the project to the internal team with a roadmap for future phases.

Co-Founder & Chief Creative Officer

Boba&Vespa (now The Kind Pet) — Los Angeles, CA

2016 – 2021

- Co-founded a sustainable pet product brand rooted in empathy for animals, people, and the planet.
- Built the brand's full visual identity, packaging, and digital presence from the ground up.
- Designed biodegradable, health-conscious products that balanced aesthetics, function, and responsibility.
- Created the e-commerce and social experience that grew a loyal, mission-aligned community.
- Managed vendor and manufacturing partnerships grounded in sustainability and transparency.

Lead Visual Designer

Traffik Advertising — Irvine, CA

2009 – 2014

- Led visual design for national brands in healthcare, automotive, and hospitality across digital, print, and environmental.
- Established and maintained visual standards and design systems for ongoing client accounts.
- Partnered with strategists, copywriters, and developers to deliver integrated brand campaigns.

education

California State Polytechnic University, Pomona — B.A. in Graphic Design, 2009

tools

Figma, Adobe Creative Cloud