

# CAROLINE CONNER

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## DESIGN OPERATIONS LEADER

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Cross-functional Team Leadership | Leadership Development | Conflict Resolution | Organizational Leadership | Process Improvement | Product Design Support | Strategic Planning | Talent Management | Reporting & Analytics | Project Management | Business Development | Contract Negotiation

*A high-energy, accomplished senior Design Operations leader with a passion for efficient, repeatable processes that empower cross-functional teams to create best-in-class innovative products from a human-centered mindset.* Proven track record as a self-motivated builder and fixer by nature that enjoys digging into the most complex challenges ensuring teams run effectively, optimizing the quality of their output while fostering a healthy and engaging work environment. Extensive leadership, program management, and operations experience, managing cross-functional teams, and stakeholders for highly matrixed organizations.

## EXPERTISE

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- Leading, supporting, mentoring, & scaling teams mindfully and intentionally
- Defining, streamlining, & evangelizing workflow processes
- Building & maintaining authentic relationships based on trust & keen insights
- Facilitating meetings, mediating difficult conversations, & driving executive decisions
- Reading a room, situation, & organization to intuitively determine best action items

## EXPERIENCE

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WillowTree, Inc.

*WillowTree is where digital experts thrive, helping the most admired companies in the world build applications that matter.*

### Program Director, Growth Marketing

May 2021 | Jun 2022

As part of the leadership team, collaborated to define the strategic vision and goals, establishing a culture of accountability and psychological safety. Defined client services and project management best practices for the newly formed Growth Marketing group. Led navigation of change management within a hyper-growth company and branch growth over 500% in 1 year, that operates like a startup within the larger organization. Conducted tool assessments and led process improvements. Ran the largest growth account, IBM Cloud Services, with multiple workstreams, evangelizing our work to executive stakeholders through multiple reorganizations. Led cross-functional teams of Product Strategists, Content Strategists, Designers, Engineers, QA, and Data Analysts. Supervised the team of Project Managers, mentored Marketing Managers and Directors in team and client management, ensuring the Growth team demonstrated company core values.

- **Defined and delivered upon OKRs and KPIs within a hyper-growth company.** Successes include:
  - increased client satisfaction score from 6 to 7/8
  - grew account revenue from \$2.5MM to \$4.2MM, doubling the size of the team
  - increased team satisfaction score from 59 to 88/100
- **Supervised the redefinition of the product roadmap based on data insights.** Increased velocity in Agile sprints on a low-impact execution workstream. Utilized campaign performance data to shift the focus to high-impact initiatives that drive product adoption and trial conversion rates.

Punchcut, LLC.

2010 - 2019

*We design the future and accelerate innovation through experience design.*

### Director, Leadership Team

Apr 2017 | Mar 2019

Led initiatives, including new reporting format for utilization, identifying and maintaining employee targets, and implementing new automation tools (HRIS, Resourcing, Recruiting). Introduced new onboarding-offboarding, performance evaluation processes. Conducted analysis, planning, and support for the company restructure. Took charge of the Recruiting function, almost doubling company headcount, tripling our internship engagement, and quadrupling our relationships with design schools to inject fresh talent. Mentored and supported design Directors, provided counsel for Executive decisions.

- **Established the framework for evaluating performance to add 2-career levels, lowered attrition by 25%, increased female design leadership by 25%, and ensured equal compensation across genders.** Defined new levels and titles, and the performance rating system for evaluating new and existing hires.
- **Led a cross-functional project team to grow the Nissan account from \$300K to over \$3MM.** Produced over 10 RFP presentations and executed subsequent Statements of Work (SOW).

### Director, Delivery – previous titles Associate Director, Senior Project Manager

Jul 2010 | Apr 2017

Developed and maintained agency best practices, supervising the team of project managers. Doubled the size of the Delivery team while leading cross-functional teams for a variety of digital, mobile, and wearable design projects. Ensured solution adherence to business, functional and technical requirements. Risk mitigation for project schedules and budgets. Facilitated design review meetings serving as the primary client contact. Managed third-party vendors, freelance designers and coordinated user research. Executed company-wide resource allocations, assignments, project scope, produced statements of work (SOW) and created and authored new business proposals. Served as the program manager for internal and marketing projects.

- **Project management lead growing a \$40K single project into a \$2MM anchor account, becoming the embedded design team.** Gained the trust of over 50 client stakeholders to define an active engagement.
- **Streamlined resource management for opportunity cost savings of \$5K weekly, a total over \$240K annually.** Shortened weekly meetings by 50% and facilitated ad hoc requests saving weekly opportunity costs over \$5500 per week.

Independent Contractor

### Senior Project Manager

Jul 2007 | Jun 2010

Independent Project Management Contractor for *Euro RSCG, Publicis Modem, Giant Creative-Strategy (now Evoke), Anderson DDB Health & Lifestyle, PayPal, Wells Fargo, OneTouch, Genentech,* and pharmaceutical companies.

- **Produced websites and online advertising campaigns, launched new drug campaigns.**

Cutwater (previously TBWA/Chiat/Day)

### Senior Project Manager

Jun 2005 | Jun 2007

Implemented and enforced procedures for the agency. Leader for all accounts (*adidas, Jeep, Motorola, Seagate, Ray-Ban, Persol, Arnette*). Projects included traditional, collateral, outdoor, station domination, digital, and broadcast. Supervised all Project Managers, Proofreaders, Creative Directors, and teams. Interim Manager for the Studio between Studio Managers. Supported the Creative Services Director and Studio Manager with resource management. Produced all New Business pitches (over 30 significant presentations in two years), and coordinated with Global TBWA network offices in Milan, Amsterdam, and China.

- **Pitched and won the successful AOR (Agency of Record) for Jeep launching a nationwide brand campaign for over 2500 insertions.** Set up the production process and timelines for over 1,000 print mechanicals by size and creative rotation, including station domination, newspaper, magazine, and collateral, for production.
  - Coordinated with art buyers, online and broadcast producers to align 2-3 photoshoots, 5 video shoot and online presence schedules with production timelines and content.
- **Constructed up to 3 presentations simultaneously while overseeing production for existing accounts.**

Hamilton Partners, Inc., **Traffic Manager**

Jul 2003 | Jun 2005

Traffic Manager for all accounts (*HP, Microsoft, RadioShack, and Pro Bono*). Developed processes with the Production Director, assisted with Studio Management and produced Traditional, DM, POS, Packaging, CD-ROM, Direct Email, Online, and Trade Show materials. Performed stock photography Art Buying, provided photoshoot support, and supervised in-house color correction and pre-press process.

Independent Contractor, **Project Manager**

Jun 2000 | Jul 2003

Contracted for *Highway One, J. Walter Thompson-Tonic, and Harrison, Wilson & Associates*. Assigned to high-volume accounts such as *Levi's Dockers, Sun Microsystems, and Microsoft*.

**Earlier Roles:** Publicis & Hal Riney, **Project Manager**

## EDUCATION & TRAINING

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Bachelor of Arts (BA) | Classic Civilization | Williams College

SAFe framework training

Leadership coaching & training

## TECHNOLOGY EXPERTISE

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Mac OS, Microsoft Office, Confluence, Jira, Zeplin, Trello, MS Project, Basecamp, Google Workspace, OmniPlan, Keynote, BambooHR, Notion, Wrike, Accelo, Harvest Forecast, Capsule CRM, Lattice, Small Improvements, Adobe Creative Cloud, Sketch, Figma, Figjam, Mural, Miro

## KEY ATTRIBUTES

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e-Commerce, B2B, B2C, Advertising, Project Coordination, Multimedia, Marketing Support, Key Account Management, Detail-oriented, Enthusiastic, Interview, Recruit, Hire, & Train, Strategic Roadmaps, Change Management, SaaS, Sales Management, Sales Support, CRM, Cost Reduction, Client Relations, Customer Service, Scrum, Agile, Telecommunications, Cost Containment, Pricing, Policies & Procedures, Performance Improvement, Office Management, Operations Design & Management, Performance Measurement Metrics, KPIs, Retention, Risk Management, Business Strategy, Business Process Development, Budgeting, Process Re-engineering, Continuous Process Improvement, Vendor Negotiations, Web Development, Workforce Planning, SWOT Analysis