

Christopher Abarca

Brand & Creative Lead | Art Direction, Identity Systems & Integrated Campaigns

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PROFILE

I build brand systems and campaigns that hold together across screens, print, packaging, retail, presentations, and physical spaces. My work combines hands-on design and art direction with stakeholder communication, team guidance, production, and budget ownership.

SELECTED PROOF

- \$500,000 current marketing budget supporting integrated creative across web, email, social, presentations, campaigns, and in-store communications.
- Longs Drugs digital work produced quarterly increases of up to 120% and a later 300% quarter-over-quarter gain across traffic, tracked events, and click-through measures.
- Bringing Longs website and social work in-house freed approximately \$140,000 annually; a digital retail campaign moved a 3% monthly decline into approximately 2% monthly growth.
- Manoa Now grew beyond 80,000 app downloads while teams of 5-35 built a successful local-vendor market, filled appointment books, and helped move student media from a deficit to more than \$300,000 in the green.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Digital Creative and Marketing Manager

CVS Health | Remote | Feb 2024 - Present

- Lead creative and marketing work across web, email, social, campaigns, presentations, and in-store communications while managing a current budget of approximately \$500,000.
- Led a completed, fully live Longs Drugs revival with CVS Health end-to-end, preserving the existing wordmark while building the new brand voice and connected system across standards, web, retail, packaging, campaigns, production, launch, and measurement.
- Launched and improved a website that produced quarterly increases of up to 120%; a later major update drove another 300% quarter-over-quarter increase across traffic, tracked events, and click-through measures.
- Brought website and social work in-house to free approximately \$140,000 annually and led a retail campaign that moved store sales and foot traffic from a 3% monthly decline to approximately 2% monthly growth.

Creative Marketing Director

University of Hawai'i Student Media Programs | Honolulu, HI | 2023 - Jun 2025

- Promoted in 2023 to lead creative marketing across Manoa Now, Ka Leo, KTUH, and Hawaii Review after advancing at Manoa Now from Graphic Designer (2018-2020) to Design Lead (2020-2021), Design and Marketing Lead (2021-2022), and Program Manager (2022-2023).
- Managed and mentored teams ranging from 5 to 35 people across marketing, design, photography, video, web development, events, vendors, and student media operations.
- Helped grow the Manoa Now app beyond 80,000 downloads, build a successful local-vendor pop-up market, fill program appointment books, and move student media from a deficit to more than \$300,000 in the green.

Design Lab Operations Manager

University of Hawai'i at Manoa | Honolulu, HI | Concurrent role | Aug 2023 - Jul 2026

- Managed daily design lab operations, student support, equipment, stakeholder intake, and production workflows across print and digital work.
- Led graphic design and print skill sessions and coached students on portfolios, resumes, typography, file setup, production quality, and clear handoff.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE CONTINUED

Independent Brand Designer and Creative Director

Freelance | Hawaii / Remote | Contract work | Jan 2022 - Present

- Lead broad client product ideas through positioning, naming and trademark pitches, identity, packaging, retail systems, and production development.
- Work directly with clients and factories to develop packaging and physical products, including Island Living, Hana Paw, Hoku Lei, and Wai Shield.

Regional Visual Merchandising Manager

Godiva, Ted Baker, Ben Bridge | Honolulu, HI | 2019 - 2023

- Managed visual standards, display updates, customer-facing presentation, seasonal launches, and store-team communication across luxury retail environments.
- Translated established brand direction into storytelling, signage, product presentation, event displays, and repeatable execution guidance for teams.

Information Systems Technician, Petty Officer First Class

United States Navy | Yokosuka, Japan and Honolulu, HI | Nov 2012 - Aug 2018

- Led information systems technicians and managed reliable communication and data workflows for mission-critical naval operations.
- Developed data visuals, trend analysis, executive briefings, program updates, and decision-support reports for senior military leadership and partner agencies.
- Turned complex operational information into clear charts, reports, briefings, and status materials under tight deadlines and high accountability.

SELECTED WORK

Longs Drugs Brand Revival: A completed, fully live CVS Health project led end-to-end around the existing wordmark, creating the new voice and system across standards, web, retail, packaging, campaigns, production, and measurement.

Manoa Now Identity and Program Growth: A brand and program rebuild that reached 80,000+ app downloads and helped move student media from a deficit to \$300,000+ in the green.

Vital View 3D Website: A focused healthcare launch site built around clear information, scheduling, contact paths, and a credible path to opening.

Client Product Development: Positioning, naming and trademark pitches, identity, packaging, factory coordination, and retail systems for Island Living, Hana Paw, Hoku Lei, and Wai Shield.

EDUCATION AND TOOLS

- Bachelor of Fine Arts, Graphic Design - University of Hawai'i at Manoa, 2023
- Military service: Petty Officer First Class - United States Navy, Nov 2012 - Aug 2018
- Tools and craft: Adobe Photoshop, Illustrator, InDesign, After Effects, Figma, Canva, PowerPoint, AI-assisted creative workflows, identity systems, packaging, presentation design, accessibility, and production handoff