

Ana-Maria Popescu

CREATIVE & ART DIRECTION. DESIGN. BRANDING. PRODUCTION CONSULTANCY.

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Utrecht, Netherlands (open to travel and relocate) | EU/EEA citizen, no work permit required

PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Designer, Creative and Art Director, and Production Broker with 20+ years of delivering campaigns, brand systems, and visual storytelling for global B2B and B2C clients across industrial software, science, pharma, retail, and advertising.

During my years as an entrepreneur, I managed budgets, tight deadlines, clients, and external suppliers. Most recently, I led art direction and creative quality for an international team working on scientific and product communication under regulated review. I make sure complex information stays intact during handoffs and deliver it in a simple, appealing form to the people using it. I mentored designers to step up from junior to senior, and from senior to director.

My career began in prepress and print production, which grounds every creative decision in what is feasible to execute. Trained in mathematics and computer science, I approach design, craft, and technology as a single discipline, whether the output is DPI or PPI, delivered on budget and on time.

SELECTED ACHIEVEMENTS

- Co-founded and ran a creative studio and production broker for 8 years without losing a client.
- Directed a national retail campaign across 21 locations, with 400,000+ printed pieces built as one coherent visual system. Sales doubled.
- Conceived and delivered a full office redesign with embedded AR technology for PTC, a global industrial software company. Their own AR product running inside their own offices. Concept adopted by other PTC offices internationally.
- Rebranded Ciprian Cucu's project management consulting practice end-to-end and built the system that held it together. Bookings doubled.
- Led art direction, creative quality, and a mentorship program for an international team of 12 designers. Review rounds decreased by 40%.
- Made dense pharma material legible to non-specialists. Built narratives with subject-matter experts, signed off by scientific reviewers. Trained the team to do the same.

EXPERIENCE

Art Director (Creative Director remit)

BlueNovius B.V. (Digital pharma & life-science marketing) | **Rotterdam, Netherlands** | **Jan 2021 – May 2026**

- Led art direction and creative quality for 12 designers producing 2D animated and interactive visual communication for global pharmaceutical and biotech brands including Pfizer, Roche, Merck, AstraZeneca, Bristol Myers Squibb, Novo Nordisk, Moderna, and Novartis.
- Mentored and developed designers through structured feedback, workshops, and creative sparring, reducing review rounds by 40%.
- Directed the creative process from brief to delivery: concept review, storyboard direction, visual development, motion design review, and final production quality control.
- Restructured and directed the company's visual foundation: comprehensive rebrand, new design system and component library, redesigned templates, and streamlined production workflows so that non-designers could apply the identity correctly without supervision.
- Navigated a stakeholder landscape among scientific, medical, commercial, and client teams, basing creative decisions on strategic, brand, and executional considerations and presenting rationale to clients.

Skills applied: art direction, creative direction, data visualization, technical communication, brand governance, design systems, team leadership, stakeholder management.

Co-founder, Creative and Art Director, Production Manager

HighWatt S.R.L. (Creative Studio and Production Broker) | Bucharest, Romania | Sep 2013 – Jan 2021

Co-founded and ran a creative studio and production broker for 8 years, owning creative vision and business operations end-to-end. Clients ranged from industrial software to national retail and finance. Directed external partners and owned production, from materials and suppliers to installed results.

- Held a multi-year creative partnership with PTC, a global industrial software company, across dozens of projects: corporate event concepts developed, produced, and run end-to-end. Conceived and redesigned the common areas for their offices based on behavioral research. Designed and produced supporting campaign materials. Integrated PTC's own augmented reality (AR) technology so the physical environment revealed its digital layer. Concept adopted by PTC offices internationally.
- Stepped in as interim Marketing Manager for Gorenje Romania during a year-long leadership gap, running the marketing operation while serving as design and production supplier.
- Directed a national retail campaign for Gorenje across 21 locations. 400,000+ printed pieces (point-of-sale materials, display systems), loyalty program, and social media campaign, designed and produced as one coherent visual system using brand guidelines and asset creation workflows. Sales doubled.
- Built visual identity systems and guidelines that enabled clients to apply the brand independently. Ciprian Cucu's bookings doubled after launch.

Skills applied: creative direction, art direction, brand identity, event concept and production, augmented reality integration, external partner management, production management, budget management.

Graphic Designer, Print Production Consultant

Funny S.R.L. | Bucharest, Romania | Sep 2006 – Dec 2013

Grew from desktop publishing and graphic design to art direction for catalogs, annual reports, Point-of-Sale Materials (PoSM), and brand collateral. Clients: Cora Romania, UPC, Royal Bank of Scotland, and Intesa Sanpaolo Bank. Advised the client roster on production feasibility.

Early Career

Euroital S.A. (Printing House) – Tempo Advertising S.R.L. – MediaOn S.A. | Bucharest, Romania | 2003 – 2006

Entered design from database programming, learning print from the press floor up: prepress and packaging production, campaign design for Orange, Danone, and Raiffeisen Bank, and editorial design for the financial press.

SKILLS

- **Core Creative:** Art Direction, Creative Direction, Brand Development, Brand Identity, Concept Development, Visual Storytelling, Storyboarding, Design Systems, Design System Implementation, Brand Guidelines, Brand Governance, Brand Consistency, Rebrand, Typography
- **Specialized Domains:** Motion Graphics Direction, Data Visualization, Technical Illustration Direction, Scientific Communication, Pharmaceutical & Biotech Communication, Augmented Reality Integration
- **Collaboration & Leadership:** Team Leadership, Team Mentoring, Stakeholder Management, Cross-Functional Collaboration, Client Presentations, External Partner Management, Budget Management
- **Production & Quality:** Print Production, Creative Quality Assurance, Production Feasibility
- **Methodologies:** User-Centered Design (UCD), Agile, Scrum Product Owner
- **Adobe Creative Cloud:** Illustrator, InDesign, Photoshop, After Effects, Lightroom, Dimension, Firefly
- **Design & Prototyping Tools:** Figma, Framer, Procreate, Blender, Gravity Sketch (VR)

EDUCATION & CERTIFICATIONS

- UX Research & Design Specialization, University of Michigan (via Coursera)
- Scrum Product Owner Certified (SPOPC), International Scrum Institute
- AI Fluency Framework: Foundations & Teaching (Anthropic)
- **Formal education:** Mathematics & Computer Science, Ovidius University of Constanța

LANGUAGES

Romanian: native | **English:** professional proficiency | **French:** basic proficiency | **Norwegian:** beginner

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