



Hello there! I'm Levi Wanyoike, a Brand and UX Consultant based in ever-sunny South Coast of Kenya. This one-pager is the story of my career.

(10-15 MIN READ)

1995 - 1996 / Junior Graphic Designer

GREY Advertising - Nairobi, Kenya

I started off in advertising working with art directors and copywriters, and got hands-on practical experience on how to create visual concepts. I worked on layouts for press ads, brochures, magazines, and various communications materials for brands like EABL and Unilever.

This was my introduction to the world of branding.

1996 - 1998 / Web and Graphic Designer

Raha - Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

Raha was at the time the leading ISP in Tanzania, and my ultimate vehicle into the digital world. I was hired to establish an in-house design studio, and in the process stumbled upon a new and exciting medium - the internet. I rapidly developed skills in web design using the only available tools at the time (Fireworks and Netscape Navigator). Yes, the struggle was real :) but this paved the way to a whole new world.

1998 - 2000 / Web and Graphic Designer

Firstcom - Dublin, Ireland

I moved to Ireland to attend film and photography school, and was fortunate to land a part-time job with a then young ad agency. I was instrumental in establishing web design as a key discipline, but also grew my overall design skills while working alongside great art and creative directors.

2000 - 2001 / Senior Web and Graphic Designer, Art Director / Netsmart Interactive - Nicosia, Cyprus

I did two years in beautiful Cyprus, and this is where I really got into front-end design after using Dreamweaver (we've come a long way!). I now was able to create basic brochure websites with limited knowledge of code. This ultimately changed the game for me.

2001 - 2002 / Senior Web and Graphic Designer, Art Director / 3Mice Interactive - Nairobi, Kenya

This was my first job at a purely digital agency, and my launch into user-centered design.

I worked closely with a team of 40+ to develop marketing websites for a number of key clients including Kenya Airways and Coca Cola.

2002 - 2011 / Founder, Lead Brand & UX Designer eQuest NewMedia - Nairobi, Kenya

As owner I wore many hats, but my key responsibility was leading my small team of collaborators through ideation and concept development for digital and print work. We did a lot of work for UNEP and the EU.

2012 - 2016 / UX/UI Designer, Brand Designer Independent Consultant - Nairobi, Kenya

In 2011 I shifted my focus towards user experience. New screen design tools were emerging (R.I.P Fireworks), and I immersed myself in learning all I could get my hands on, while adopting and developing new methodologies and work-flows.

I also put more emphasis on understanding how businesses work, which ultimately changed my approach to design. My key goal in any given project became ensuring business goals and customer needs align and remained the focus.

2016 - 2019 / Head of Experience Design

AIM Group - Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania

I led product design in a digital marketing agency of 90+, by championing a human-centered approach to both; user experience and brand design. This role tested and advanced my creative leadership skills and was a pivotal point in my career and life.

This was my impact;

- > I introduced and grew Experience Design as a key practice, which rapidly became the cohesive link between all teams. A key factor was the adoption of a design methodology that called for and fostered co-creation between *Product Management, Design, Research and Engineering*. This ultimately helped break existing silos.
- > I also worked with HR to grow design capacity, by recruiting UI designers, and training them on UX, research, and general design principles.
- > On same note, I helped blur the lines between engineering and design, two of the biggest silos at the time. We achieved this in two steps; One, I trained developers on fundamentals of

user experience, research and prototyping. And two, I started involving them earlier in the discovery stage, which, with time, converted them into advocates of good usability and design. This greatly eased hand-over.

- > I worked closely with the *Research and Test Lab* unit to adopt a more human-centered approach, in a practice typically led by quantitative data. This helped us uncover deeper behavioral insights, which in turn informed product experience.
- > In addition, I introduced rapid prototyping through various platforms. This was a game-changer, as we now could test and iterate quickly with clients and users, in an intuitive interactive environment, before committing development resources.
- > I facilitated HCD workshops with clients to help identify various social and brand-related challenges. These workshops also acted as a learning platform for internal staff.

A few highlights;

- > Strategy and design of a SaaS workflow automation platform for **Vodacom**.
- > Strategy and redesign of corporate website for **NMB Bank**
- > Strategy, naming and design of brand identity for a boutique resort, **The Overhang**.
- > UX audit and complete redesign of a music platform, **Mkito**.

Working in a floor full of professionals and novices from diverse fields and social backgrounds, really broadened my perspective in so many areas.

2020 / Human-Centered Design and Research / Independent Consultant - Nairobi, Kenya

I relocated back home in December 2019, and launched my consultancy practice shortly after.

My first project was HCD research for a **Mastercard Foundation** project in Uganda, aimed at reaching over 300,000 young entrepreneurs.

We interviewed and observed various individuals across different sectors, to understand the needs, goals and current experiences of entrepreneurs, ecosystem builders and community managers.

Our research surfaced key archetypes with interesting behavioral insights. This, in turn, informed solutions that seek to inspire new futures for the entire entrepreneurship ecosystem in Uganda, and drive towards Mastercard's goal.

This project was a welcome change, and a great way to kick off this new phase of my journey.

WHAT I ACTUALLY DO

UX Strategy & Design;
Mobile Apps, SaaS, Websites, Auditing

Brand Strategy & Design;
Naming, Logo Design, Identity Systems, Communications Collateral

Workshops & Coaching;
Brand Strategy, Design Thinking

A FEW ACCOLADES

Kenya Design Excellence Awards
First Place Web Design - Origins Safaris

Kenya Design Excellence Awards
First Place Multimedia Design - Amadeus

EDUCATION

- + *DesignThinkers Academy, South Africa*
- + *Griffith College, Ireland*
- + *Nyeri Baptist High School, Kenya*
- + *International School of Kenya*

THE OTHER SIDE.

I live for the outdoors, from beach, to basketball, cycling or hiking on some back trail. I also love my kitchen, the center of my health and numerous failed culinary experiments :-[

REACH OUT

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