

MANDI CLARK

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SUMMARY

Strategic and globally minded Trend & Design Director with deep expertise in trend forecasting, private brand design development, and product innovation across fashion, home, and lifestyle. Recognized for translating forward-looking market and consumer insights into brand-defining product that drives growth. Trusted partner to executive leadership, with a high taste level and a proven ability to lead multidisciplinary teams, shape short and long-term vision, and deliver consumer-centric product.

WORK EXPERIENCE

MICHAELS ARTS & CRAFTS STORES, INC.

Irving, TX, USA

Design Director, Trend & Product Design

2022-2025

- Directed design across 13 private brands and 20+ product categories, achieving 70%+ brand penetration in a \$5B business.
- Managed a 17-person design team including trend, concept, print, and technical designers, delivering 4,000+ SKUs annually.
- Built and presented 40+ trend/color reports to leadership and total organization to influence \$225M in seasonal aesthetics.
- Translated pop cultural trends into assortments that exceeded sales plans by 10–15% (trend) and 5%+ (everyday).
- Developed a design adoption metric system that increased in-house design utilization by 20%.
- Oversaw a \$500K design team operating budget and implemented tools to support innovation.
- Trained designers in competitive market shopping and sales data analysis using Power BI and Excel.
- Standardized 3 gold finishes across 13 brands by partnering with global sourcing for consistency.
- Integrated trend milestones into RACI processes to align CFTs and boost accountability.
- Acted as brand and trend expert featured in *Good Morning America*, *USA Today*, and *Better Homes & Gardens*.
- Directed creative vision for refreshing private brand DNA including Simply Tidy, Ashland, Studio Décor, and Makery brands.
- Increased travel ROI by launching cross-functional trend-sharing sessions to drive visibility and alignment across teams.
- Traveled globally and domestically to conduct retail analysis and gather trend insights, directly informing seasonal product direction and influencing multi-million-dollar private brand collections.

MICHAELS ARTS & CRAFTS STORES, INC.

Irving, TX, USA

Design Manager, Trend & Product Design

2016-2022

- Managed 6–10 designers across 16 departments; directed strategy for 5 brands delivering 2,000+ SKUs annually.
- Created a core color palette to align everyday product across 13 brands and improve merchandising consistency.
- Delivered 23 trend briefs annually and 20+ trend/color reports supporting \$150M in seasonal influence.
- Traveled to Asia 2–4 times annually for factory collaboration and led design vendor innovation calls.
- Oversaw graphic art direction to create 20+ annual asset style guides used by vendors for consistent brand execution.
- Launched the first in-house \$6M holiday gift wrap line with 120+ exclusive designs.
- Managed a \$30K print studio budget and sourced artwork to anchor seasonal assortments.
- Created trend validation strategies (comp shopping analysis and schematics) to increase line success.

MICHAELS ARTS & CRAFTS STORES, INC

Irving, TX, USA

Designer, Jewelry, Apparel & Accessories

2012-2016

- Designed 600+ SKUs per year contributing to \$30M+ in revenue.
- Created 12 standardized plating colors and quarterly trend reports.
- Traveled to Asia 2–4 times annually for factory collaboration and design innovation.
- Promoted from designer to leadership, demonstrating adaptability and long-term growth.

MAD ENGINE, LLC.

San Diego, CA, USA

Design Manager, Product Design Apparel

2010-2012

- Led team of 10 designers across licensed apparel and accessories for brands such as Marvel, Star Wars & Coca-Cola.
- Oversaw art direction for quarterly refreshes for 20+ licenses and brands that would include 12-24 new styles each.
- Presented seasonal lines to Merchants at key retailers 2-4x a year (Walmart, Kohl's, JCPenney, Target, Hot Topic).

CINDY KIRK INC.

Addison, TX, USA

Senior Designer, Jewelry, Footwear & Accessories

2010-2010

- Designed 500+ SKUs per year for jewelry, footwear, and accessories collections for fast fashion retailers (Forever 21, H&M).
- Managed product development from concept through sampling in direct coordination with factories.

CONCEPT ONE ACCESSORIES

New York, NY, USA

Design Manager, Apparel, Footwear & Accessories

2007-2010

- Led team of 6 designers across licensed headwear, apparel, footwear, swimwear, and accessories for major brands such as Hello Kitty, Budweiser, The Rolling Stones and private label programs delivering 2000+ SKUs annually.
- Oversaw art direction, technical design, sampling, and merchant presentations for key retailers (Walmart, Kohl's, JCPenney, Hot Topic, Spencer's, Lids).

BIOWORLD MERCHANDISING

Irving, TX, USA

Designer, Headwear & Accessories

2004-2007

- Designed 250+ SKUs per year of licensed and private brand headwear, cold weather, and accessories for major retailers.
- Created technical specs then managed factory sampling and prototype sample approvals for design consistency.
- Presented seasonal lines to Merchants at key retailers 2-4x a year (Walmart, Kohl's, Hot Topic, Spencer's, and Lids).
- Managed relationships with licensors, securing timely design approvals, and maintaining brand alignment.

EDUCATION

HENDERSON STATE UNIVERSITY, Arkadelphia, AR

Bachelor of Fine Art, Graphic Design

SKILLS

Strategic & Creative Leadership: Private Brand Strategy, Trend Forecasting, Design Management, Product Innovation, Cross-Functional Collaboration, Media & PR Representation, Licensed & Private Brand, Global Sourcing, CMF (Color Material Finish)

Business & Market Acumen: Retail Analysis, Consumer Insights, Cost Engineering, Category Strategy

Tools & Platforms: Adobe Creative Suite (Illustrator, Photoshop, InDesign), PLM (Product Lifecycle Management), Microsoft Suite, Power BI, ClickUp, MIRO, Excel