# MATT STONE

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## PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Creative Director and design leader with 15+ years building brand and marketing creative that performs across campaign, social, video, and product touchpoints. Eight years at Capital One owning visual direction and motion design while leading a small team, and working as the creative technologist between design and engineering, prototyping and building the experiences that were too complex to hand off cleanly. Player-coach by definition: presenting direction to senior stakeholders, coaching designers through critique, and staying in the work myself on every project. Currently building AI into day-to-day creative production, using generative video for motion campaigns and AI-assisted front-end development to move faster and explore more directions without giving up craft or brand authenticity. Deep experience partnering with Marketing, Product, Engineering, and Legal to embed creative early rather than at the end.

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

**Freelance | Chicago, IL**

*Creative Director / Motion Designer • Oct 2025 – Present*

- Serve as design director and creative lead on client engagements across brand, campaign, and product work, setting direction and executing it.
- Directed and animated a cinematic brand launch film for Cognichip, a gen-AI chip design company, where every asset including video, voiceover, and music was AI-generated.
- Led direction, design, and animation for Rally, an app-based racquet sport platform, culminating in a documented design system handed to engineering and built 1:1 against the spec.
- Produced a suite of animated promos for Cboe's expansion into prediction markets, using a type-driven motion style to make an unfamiliar financial product legible.
- Directed and designed goodgrowth.com, a Three.js portfolio with custom shaders, GSAP motion, and an original sound design system, storyboarding the transitions and directing an AI coding assistant through implementation.

**Capital One | Chicago, IL**

*Design Manager • Sept 2017 – Oct 2025*

- Owned visual direction and motion design across web, product, and marketing projects at a national consumer financial brand, setting the creative bar in a highly regulated category.
- Led a rotating team of 3-4 designers as a hands-on player-coach, directing across design, motion, and photography as the team's makeup shifted; ran critique as a two-way conversation and stayed in the work alongside them.
- Worked as the creative technologist between design and engineering, translating creative intent into what could actually be built and prototyping solutions when the handoff would have lost the idea.
- Designed and built complex internal experiences end to end in Google Apps Script, including a budget reporting dashboard that saved stakeholders an estimated 30 hours a month and an HR site with a Sheets-backed CMS that let non-technical owners publish updates themselves.
- Solved for clarity in dense, data-heavy interfaces, turning complex information into experiences non-technical teams could actually use day to day.
- Partnered with Product, Engineering, Marketing, and Legal to bring creative in early on major initiatives; presented direction to senior stakeholders and built support for the approach.
- Used motion to work out and sell interaction ideas that a static comp cannot show, then defined the guidelines and animation packages engineering built from; created templates and workflows that sped up delivery and kept output consistent.

- Directed agency, contractor, and production partners, scoping work, setting the quality bar, and giving clear feedback on strategy, timing, and execution.

**ParkWhiz | Chicago, IL**

*Lead Designer (Freelance) • May 2017 – Sept 2017*

- Directed redesign of priority product experiences, using motion studies and high-fidelity prototypes to demonstrate how interactions should feel and align stakeholders and engineers on intent.
- Developed motion and content systems (transitions, micro-interactions, content toolkits) that created a cohesive brand experience across app, web, and marketing creative.
- Produced animated broadcast and digital video supporting brand campaigns and promotions, aligning creative to brand strategy and target audiences.

**Trading Technologies | Chicago, IL**

*Lead Designer (Freelance) • Nov 2015 – May 2017*

- Led branding and UX/UI for enterprise platforms; established modular design patterns and motion guidelines that made complex data legible and built product trust.
- Designed animated marketing content and interactive product showcases that clarified advanced capabilities and improved customer understanding.

**Publicis Groupe • Rightpoint • STA Digital | Chicago, IL**

*Senior Designer / Art Director / Animator (Freelance) • Jul 2012 – Nov 2015*

- Delivered multi-platform marketing campaigns, UI/UX, and motion graphics for enterprise clients; built design systems and styleframes that scaled across paid, organic, and owned touchpoints.
- Provided creative direction and partnered with producers, editors, and engineering to balance speed and craft against fixed campaign deadlines.

**Critical Mass • Walgreens | Chicago, IL**

*Senior Designer (Freelance) • Jul 2011 – Jul 2012*

- Shipped high-visibility digital experiences and content toolkits for a national retail brand; optimized workflows and handoffs to improve quality and throughput.

**Arc Worldwide | Chicago, IL**

*Senior Designer / Art Director • Sept 2009 – Jul 2011*

- Led concept-to-delivery creative across digital campaigns, interactive experiences, and motion assets; aligned creative to brand objectives and KPI targets.

**Publicis Groupe | Chicago, IL**

*Designer / Animator (Freelance) • Jan 2006 – Sept 2009*

- Produced motion graphics, animation, and campaign assets for integrated marketing programs; collaborated with account and production teams on deadlines and deliverables.

**GFX Dynamics | Chicago, IL**

*Lead Motion Graphics Designer • Feb 2005 – Dec 2005*

- Led design and animation for motion graphics packages and video content; established templates and repeatable systems to speed production and ensure consistency.

## SKILLS

- Creative Leadership: Creative Direction, Brand Strategy, Design Leadership, Team Coaching and Mentorship, Executive Presentations, Creative Reviews and Critique

- Brand & Campaign: Brand Systems, Visual Identity, Messaging Consistency, Integrated Campaigns, Social Content, Video and Broadcast, Storyboarding, Styleframes
- Creative Operations: Creative Workflows, Production Systems, AI-Assisted Production, Content Toolkits, Template-Driven Production, Quality Standards, Agency and Contractor Management
- AI in Creative: Generative AI Video, AI-Assisted Front-End Development, AI-Supported Concepting and Iteration, Prompt-Driven Asset Generation
- Motion & Design: Motion Design, Animation, Interaction and Interface Motion, Motion Prototyping for Engineering Handoff, Compositing, Visual Design, Accessibility
- Creative Technology: Design-to-Development Bridge, Rapid Prototyping, Dashboard and Data Visualization Design, CMS and Internal Tooling, Google Apps Script, HTML/CSS/JavaScript, GSAP, Webflow
- Tools: Figma, Adobe After Effects, Premiere Pro, Illustrator, Photoshop, Media Encoder, Cinema 4D, Jira, Confluence, Agile

## SELECTED CAPABILITIES & IMPACT

- Creative Vision: Set concept-through-execution direction for brand and motion; established visual languages that extend beyond a single campaign or release.
- Motion as a Thinking Tool: Use motion to explore and communicate interaction ideas as well as to polish them; prototype how something should behave so teams can react to the real thing rather than a description of it.
- Player-Coach Leadership: Mentor and develop designers while staying hands-on in the work; run critique as a two-way conversation, on the belief that good ideas come from anywhere on the team.
- Creative Technologist: Bridge design and development, prototyping in code and building working tools when that is the fastest way to prove an idea or ship it; comfortable owning a complex experience from visual direction through implementation.
- Modern Creative Tooling: Hands-on with generative AI for video and AI-assisted development in live client work; pragmatic about where these tools genuinely improve speed and quality and where human craft and brand judgment still have to lead.
- Vendor & Agency Partnership: Directed agency, contractor, and production partners; evaluated approaches and gave clear feedback on strategy, timing, and quality.
- Cross-Functional Influence: Peer-to-peer leadership across Product, Marketing, Brand, Engineering, and Legal; built trust around shared goals and embedded creative early in major initiatives.
- Executive Communication: Presented creative strategy to senior leadership, simplifying complexity and connecting creative decisions to business priorities.

## EDUCATION

**The Illinois Institute of Art | Schaumburg, IL**

Bachelor of Fine Arts, Interactive Design

Dean's List