

HARLEY WARD

VP, CULTURE & ENTERTAINMENT | BRAND INNOVATION LEADER

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Emmy-nominated. Clio Grand Prix winner. Webby Award honoree. I've spent 18 years building the experiential and cultural campaigns that make people feel something — not just see something. At AT&T, I conceived and executive-produced blockbuster IP activations for Game of Thrones, Friends, Harry Potter, and Justice League, directing a \$65M budget and 10+ agency relationships to generate over 1.5 billion earned impressions. I know how to build brand heat from scratch, orchestrate agency ecosystems, and turn a brand into a cultural destination.

PROOF OF CULTURAL IMPACT

- **Clio Grand Prix** FRIENDS 25th Anniversary — Experiential/Events | **Gold Clio** Home Entertainment
- **Emmy Nomination** Game of Thrones 4D-VR Fan Experience (Outstanding Creative Achievement, Interactive Media) | **Webby People's Voice Winner** HBO Max Orbit
- **Retail Store of the Year** Retail Design Institute | **Shop! Design Awards Gold & Silver** | VMSD 40 Under 40 Best Retail Designers

EXPERIENCE

VP, Engagement Marketing · My TOIBOX · 2024 – Present

Built brand strategy and go-to-market for a first-of-its-kind immersive MarTech platform — from zero.

- ▶ **Launched a category-defining platform** from concept to market, architecting a full brand ecosystem — positioning narrative, subscription pricing, and channel activation — that drove 80% user engagement growth within the first launch window.
- ▶ **Cut client campaign time-to-market by 50%** by deploying generative AI into the creative production pipeline, enabling content at scale without scaling headcount.
- ▶ **Cultivated strategic brand alliances and content partnerships** that expanded platform reach and unlocked new revenue channels — validating a go-to-market thesis built on community and cultural resonance, not traditional e-commerce.
- ▶ **Developed predictive consumer insights framework** to optimize subscription pricing, refine content curation, and pressure-test positioning — replacing guesswork with signal.

Director, Creative Direction & Culture Marketing · AT&T · 2017 – 2023

Led experiential, content, and brand partnership strategy for the nation's largest telecom retail network.

- ▶ **Conceived and executive-produced globally recognized IP activations** with Game of Thrones, Friends, Harry Potter, Justice League, and The Big Bang Theory — earning a Clio Grand Prix (Experiential) and Emmy Nomination for cultural impact in interactive entertainment.
- ▶ **Generated 1B+ impressions** through integrated IP campaigns that fused entertainment fandom with brand storytelling — translating cultural heat into measurable in-store foot traffic and conversion.
- ▶ **Directed \$65M marketing budget** across 10+ agency relationships (creative, experiential, production, PR), developing tight briefs that elevated output while enforcing brand standards at national scale.
- ▶ **Conceived and launched HBO Max Orbit Experience** — a 4D- custom fan activation that won the Webby People's Voice Award for its innovation in live scripted entertainment.
- ▶ **Built AT&T's Dallas Discovery District flagship** from brief to grand opening — a brand-immersive retail experience that earned Retail Design Institute's Retail Store of the Year and became the model for future experiential flagships.
- ▶ **Served as C-suite creative advisor**, pitching long-range cultural brand strategies to senior leadership and guiding executive decisions on experiential investment, partnership development, and brand innovation.
- ▶ **Managed high-profile VIP events and talent integrations** alongside celebrity appearances, ensuring seamless brand-to-culture alignment at every touchpoint.

Lead Marketing Manager, Retail & Experiential · AT&T · 2012 – 2017

Experiential planner and brand storyteller for entertainment-focused retail formats.

- ▶ **Pioneered AT&T's first entertainment-focused retail format** — designing pop-up stores and experiential flagships that married product with IP storytelling, establishing a template for the brand's future cultural positioning.
- ▶ **Launched a first-to-market window visual program on Chicago's Michigan Avenue**, earning Shop! Design Award Gold — and establishing the brand as a visual force in one of North America's highest-foot-traffic retail corridors.
- ▶ **Served as National MARCOM Liaison** for 5,000+ retail locations, translating national brand moments into in-market experiential execution with zero drift from creative intent.
- ▶ **Developed consumer storylines for national product launches**, partnering with product teams to craft narratives that turned technical features into culturally resonant moments of desire.

Sr. Marketing Manager & Visual Merchandising Specialist · AT&T · 2008 – 2012

Built foundational expertise in brand execution across a 280-location regional fleet.

- ▶ **Designed and managed visual standards compliance across 280 locations** (80 company-owned + 200 independent agents) — building the operational discipline to execute brand vision at massive scale.
- ▶ **Co-architected the iPOG national plan-o-gram system**, a cross-functional initiative that standardized store layouts nationally and became the operational backbone for brand rollout consistency.

Early Career: Retail Store Manager III — grew store from bottom-40% to top-5% national sales volume in under 2 years. Also provided VIP connected technology support for the U.S. Senate.

EDUCATION & CREDENTIALS

Master of Professional Studies, Retail Consumer Experience Columbus College of Art & Design, Columbus, OH

Bachelor of Arts, Theatre & French Lyon College, Batesville, AR

Certifications: Digital Marketing Certificate (University of Oregon) | Google Analytics Certified

SKILLS & TOOLS

Experiential Marketing & Live Activation | Brand Strategy & Cultural Positioning | Entertainment IP Partnerships | Agency Direction & Creative Briefs | Budget Management (\$65M+) | Content Creation & Storytelling | Community & Engagement Strategy | AI-Powered Workflow Automation | Adobe Creative Suite | Figma | Monday.com | Asana