

# Kesha M. Watson

PMP, PMI-ACP, CSPO, CSM, UXMC, CUA

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Introduction Video: <https://bit.ly/meetKeshaWatson>

Portfolio: <http://www.bennumediagroup.com/>

## Technology & User Experience Program Manager

**Strategic leader delivering enterprise-scale digital solutions by uniting emerging tech, user-centered design, and cross-functional leadership to drive measurable business outcomes. Trained and Certified in SAFe, Scrum, and PMP methodologies with a track record of accelerating time-to-market, reducing defects, and optimizing user engagement across domestic and international markets.**

Proficient in UX methodologies, including research, strategy development, personas, task flows, usability testing, and heuristic evaluations to influence technology adoption. Adept at integrating UX into project planning to drive user-centered outcomes. Strong in Agile and Traditional Project Management, with extensive expertise in risk mitigation, financial governance, and cross-functional team leadership. Skilled in creating innovative user experiences that improve customer satisfaction and business outcomes. Collaborative leader with a servant leadership mindset, focusing on excellence, innovation, and multi-stakeholder collaboration.

### Areas of Expertise

- Executive Leadership
- Product Management
- Program Management
- Planning & Project Execution
- Agile Methodologies
- Design Thinking & Workshoping
- User Experience Strategy
- Team Building & Resource Allocation
- Systems Development Lifecycle (SDLC) Mgmt
- Cloud Computing Technologies
- User Research
- Cost & Budget Management

### Accomplishments

- Partnered with the **City of Chicago** to combat food insecurity by developing COVID-safe workshops that led to the creation of a community-based application, enabling communication, data collection, and resource sharing among urban growers, academia, and government officials.
- At **Press Ganey**, reduced the time to market for the Integrated Analytics Dashboard by 6 months, helping hospitals manage healthcare data during COVID and beyond. The dashboard, powered by advanced algorithms, provides actionable insights for healthcare providers and policymakers, enabling swift, informed decision-making.
- At **BMW**, achieved the complete elimination of all defects in the OAP application code base, a first in the application's history, ensuring flawless performance and post-release stability of the OAP platform.
- At **TIAA**, led the user experience and development of the Enterprise-Level Telephony Toolbar application, reducing call handling times from 8 minutes to under 5 minutes. This innovative softphone product with voice biometric integration revolutionized call center operations and improved overall efficiency.

### Freelance Experience

**User Experience Director and Technology Program Manager | Bennumedia, Chicago, Illinois**

**2009 – Present**

**At Bennumedia, we bring bold ideas to life at the intersection of technology, design, and strategy.** We specialize in crafting human-centered digital experiences that are elegant, efficient, and aligned to business outcomes. Our solutions blend executive-level technology consulting with high-impact UX, Agile program delivery, and digital transformation.

From shaping OKRs and KPIs to leading cross-functional teams and building scalable product roadmaps, we deliver operational models that drive measurable value. We lead Agile transformations, define UX strategy, conduct in-depth user research, and translate findings into actionable requirements that guide team execution.

We ensure cohesion across all digital touchpoints, working seamlessly with design and engineering teams using tools like: Management (Atlassian (JIRA, CONFLUENCE), Notion, Meeting and Workshop Facilitation, Design (User Zoom, Adobe Creative Suite, Axure, Sketch, Figma), Front End (HTML, CSS, React, Angular, etc.), Content Management Systems (CQ5, FATWIRE, SharePoint, Drupal, WordPress, etc.), Middleware (MuleSoft), Back End (Java, .Net, JBoss, Redis, Enterprise Data Warehouses, etc.), DevOps (Maven, Jenkins, etc.), Cloud Technologies (Azure, AWS, GCP, SAP) and Generative AI.

We speak the language of technology and design—delivering results that are not only beautiful and functional but built to perform.

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## Professional Experience

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### **Principle Project Manager, Artisan Studios, Remote**

**Feb 2025 – June 2025**

**Products:** GenAI Concierge Platform | Custom Franchise Technology Ecosystem

Lead cross-functional initiatives delivering enterprise-grade, user-centered technology platforms for Fortune 500 and high-growth wellness clients. Operated at the intersection of project management, user experience, and technical execution to guide multi-stakeholder efforts from ideation to proof of concept.

#### **Rail Concierge (GenAI + PWA Platform)**

- Directed delivery of a scalable GenAI-powered PWA to streamline freight operations, leveraging real-time data, AWS infrastructure, and conversational AI to assist customer support workflows.
- Facilitated UX-to-engineering handoffs and integration of chatbot use cases driven by real customer scenarios.
- Managed stakeholder partnerships across AWS/Client/Artisan resources.

#### **Franchise Systems (Childcare + Wellness Operations Platform)**

- Led the systems analysis for a proposed human-centered SaaS platform aimed at unifying childcare scheduling, wellness service booking, member engagement, and franchise operations.
- Conducted stakeholder interviews, contextual inquiry, and persona development to uncover operational pain points and define scope.
- Delivered a comprehensive Systems Analysis and Design document, including user research findings, functional and non-functional requirements, and a phased rollout strategy aligned to business goals.

### **Product Owner, Lockheed Martin – Enterprise Operations, Remote**

**Jan 2023 – Dec 2024**

**Product:** ERP UX Enablement, SAP Work Zone, Technical Foundations (CTI)

Product Owner within Lockheed Martin's 1LMX ERP transformation, focusing on SAP Work Zone and UX technical foundations across multi-team Agile Release Trains. Served as the primary interface between business stakeholders, solution architects, and development teams, ensuring clear vision, strategic alignment, and delivery of high-value integrations and user experiences.

- Owned and prioritized complex product backlogs across multiple teams within the 1LMX ERP Tech Foundation ART, delivering scalable digital solutions aligned with SAFe methodology.
- Facilitated PI Planning, backlog refinement, cross-team dependencies, and risk mitigation.
- Championed CTI (Cross Team Integration) coordination to manage SAP-focused integration milestones including specification reviews, and defect remediation.
- Drove WorkZone platform strategy by managing change requests and Service Central tickets while aligning UX and infrastructure priorities across domains.
- Partnered closely with Product Managers, Product Owners and Solution Architects to refine features, define capabilities, and maintain high delivery velocity across quarterly sprints.
- Established structured Agile metrics tracking, EV reporting, Jira health logs, and Work Package progress reports to inform executive leadership and program stakeholders.

### **UX Operations Program Manager, McDonald's Corporate, Chicago, Illinois**

**April 2022 – Dec 2022**

**Product:** Food Services - Global App, Kiosk and Website

Managed capacity across internal design teams and external vendors, overseeing the Global McDonald's design agency relationship, budget, and capacity roadmap. Ensured role clarity and smooth collaboration across teams. Focused on evolving McDonald's offerings to align with customer needs, ensuring delivery of exceptional products and services. Led the UX department through strategic design growth and operational transformation to enhance collaboration, foster a positive creative environment, and drive the achievement of product goals. Collaborated with product management to integrate customer requirements into the design and development of core McDonald's global products—App, Kiosk, and Web. Partnered with research, analytics, engineering, accessibility, and external design teams to deliver detailed, end-to-end designs.

- Reduced design handoff timelines by 10% through the establishment of an internal design team and implementing a weekly rapid prototyping cycle.

- Scoped, tracked, and reported on 20-30 global projects per quarter from brief to completion, monitoring cross-product dependencies, impacts, and opportunities for optimization. Implemented gift card payment functionality within McDonald's app, enhancing the user experience.
- Championed the adoption of Agile Experience Design practices and Scrum methodology. Trained teams on agile processes, guided implementation, and ensured agile practices delivered customer value.

#### **IT Program Manager, Press Ganey, Chicago, Illinois**

**Sep 2019 – Dec 2021**

**Product:** Healthcare – Data Visualization, Analytics and Reporting Applications

Oversaw strategic initiatives to enhance the patient experience for over 26,000 healthcare organizations, with a commitment to continuous, sustainable improvement in healthcare delivery. Aligned time, budget, forecasting, and resources to ensure completion within program guidelines. Collaborated with Product and Application Development management to plan and monitor program progress, ensuring milestone achievement across various projects.

- Steered user research for the Nursing Excellence Program during the COVID pandemic, identifying user needs, pain points, and behaviors.
- Delivered the Integrated Analytics (IA) Dashboard, the flagship tool of Press Ganey that provides comprehensive cross-domain analytics. This solution enhances clients' capacity to fulfill the patient promise of safe, high-quality, and patient-centered care, supported by an engaged and resilient workforce.
- Identified and resolved project and program-level issues, risks, and dependencies while serving as the centralized point of contact for IA Go-To-Market preparation activities.
- Strategically managed a \$7M+ portfolio of projects, providing transparency to executive leadership regarding technology health and project status across 15-20 projects per quarter. Focused on creating high-veracity, high-availability healthcare data for hospitals.

#### **IT Program Manager, BMW Technology, Chicago, Illinois**

**Jan 2019 – Sep 2019**

**Product:** Automotive - In-car Head-Unit Displays (Dashboard) & Connected Drive App on iOS devices

Coordinated software engineering efforts for BMW's Connected Drive Application on iOS devices and in-car head-unit displays, while supporting Agile transformation across development teams. Led Scrum ceremonies, planned, tracked, and organized daily activities for iOS and Online Application Platform (OAP) head-unit teams during 2-week Agile sprint cycles.

- Guided automated unit testing, test-driven development (TDD), behavior-driven design (BDD), pair programming, refactoring, and continuous integration/continuous deployment (CI/CD) activities to enhance development quality and efficiency.
- Worked closely with business, UX design, and technology teams, providing mentorship on Agile principles and practices. Acted as a servant leader, resolving blockers and ensuring smooth progress.
- Achieved 100% elimination of defects in the OAP code base, marking a first in the history of BMW's application. Delivered post-release defect-free code for both iOS and OAP platforms.

#### **Senior IT Project Manager, PeopleScout, Chicago, Illinois**

**Feb 2018 – Jan 2019**

**Product:** Human Resources - Applicant Tracking System, Middleware Data Integrations, Enterprise Websites

Headed the Affinix mobile-first, cloud-based platform that enhances candidate experience and optimizes sourcing processes with cutting-edge technology, integrated with PeopleScout's global talent solutions. Administered updates, execution, and results for the Enterprise-Level PeopleScout IT Portfolio across all projects. Structured and coordinated the Middleware Development Team through 3-week Agile sprint cycles using the Scrum framework, ensuring efficient development and delivery.

- Built trust and facilitated process development by working with all organizational levels (executives, infrastructure teams, and vendors). Oversaw Affinix change control, deployment, and release management for new and existing clients.
- Streamlined team processes and encouraged Agile best practices, enhancing accuracy and meeting client implementation deadlines for major clients such as Hallmark, Reinhart, and Save-A-Lot.
- Developed a 16-step technical process for SaaS delivery of Affinix, optimizing expectations for delivery and identifying continuous improvement opportunities for technical teams.

#### **IT Project Manager, Northern Trust, Chicago, Illinois**

**May 2017 – Feb 2018**

**Product:** Financial Services - Digital Transformation, Enterprise Website

Steered the user-centered redesign of the NorthernTrust.com website, focusing on enhancing user experience for one of the world's leading financial institutions. Navigated a diverse financial audience of decision-makers through an iterative redesign process, engaging all levels from C-suite to developers, ensuring on-time delivery of key milestones. Analyzed user feedback and data, providing strategic recommendations to executive stakeholders to inform the direction of the digital transformation.

- Directed a \$1.8M+ project portfolio, overseeing all phases of the website redesign, including Agile project management, vendor onboarding, budget management, and project reporting.
- Conducted comprehensive research across Northern Trust's Wealth Management, Asset Management, and Asset Servicing lines of business. Led over 125+ stakeholder interviews and focus groups with Ultra High-Net-Worth clients to identify user needs, pain points, and behaviors.

**User Experience Manager, HeathWallace UX Agency, Chicago, Illinois**

**Nov 2016 – April 2017**

**Product:** Financial Services - Digital Transformation, Enterprise Website

Developed and delivered user interfaces for HSBC, the sixth-largest British-based multinational bank, as part of the Deposit Onboarding Workstream. Directed UX and front-end development activities to deliver a global product onboarding solution for HSBC retail banking staff, coordinating 3-week Agile Sprint cycles.

- Spearheaded the development of creative talent and onboarding resources for the Chicago office, ensuring alignment with project goals and international standards.
- Conducted comprehensive user testing across multiple interfaces for various international financial markets, utilizing tools like Axure, HTML, CSS, Bitbucket, and SourceTree to ensure optimal user experience and functionality.

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## Additional Experience

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**IT Project Manager & UX Researcher at TIAA | Chicago, Illinois**

**Technology Manager at American Bar Association | Chicago, Illinois**

**Project Manager & Web Developer at Moraine Valley Community College | Palos Hills, Illinois**

**Project Manager & Web Developer at Axel Springer Digital TV | Berlin, Germany**

**Communications Officer & Web Developer at JPMorgan Chase | Chicago, Illinois**

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## Certifications, Training, & Awards

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**Project Management Professional (PMP) | PMI, Credential ID: 5580062**

**Agile Certified Practitioner (PMI-ACP) | PMI, Credential ID: 2774228**

**Certified Scrum Product Owner (CSPO) | Scrum Alliance, License: 1251382**

**Certified Scrum Master (CSM) | Scrum Alliance, License: 638529**

**NN/g UX Master Certified (UXMC) | Nielsen Norman Group, Credential ID: 1001001**

**Certified Usability Analyst (CUA) | Human Factors International, Credential ID: 2020-7869**

**Applied Project Management Certification | Northwestern University**

**My Fair Lady Poster (Silver - 2012) | National Council for Marketing and Public Relations Medallion Awards, District 3**

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## Education

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**Master of Science in Human-Computer Interaction | DePaul University, Chicago, IL**

**Bachelor of Science in Marketing Management | Chicago State University, Chicago, IL**

**Interactive Media Design | The Illinois Institute of Art, Chicago, IL**

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## Community Leadership & Volunteering

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**Product Manager & Delivery Lead | Community Food Navigator**

Philanthropy: Led the development of digital platforms aimed at addressing food insecurity in Chicago's BIPOC communities. Worked with urban growers and partners to create resilient local food ecosystems, applying a phased approach to technology implementation for community impact.

**Board Member - Director of Technology & Media Delivery | Dorothy J. Pilgrim Women's Haven**

Social Services: Directed technological solutions and media outreach to support the shelter's mission of helping troubled teens and young adults with life skills, education, and resources.

**Volunteer | Pacific Garden Mission**

Poverty Alleviation: Supporting efforts in poverty alleviation through service at one of Chicago's oldest homeless shelters.