Sofia Charalampous

Product Design Leader

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Summary

Strategic Product Design Leader with 20+ years of experience shaping digital experiences across fintech, e-commerce, travel, and gaming industries worldwide. Known for bridging the gap between design, development, and business strategy, I excel at fostering collaboration and driving innovation in fast-paced environments. With a deep expertise in user-centered design, I translate complex business challenges into intuitive, high-impact solutions that enhance user engagement and deliver measurable results.

Work Experience

Lead Product Designer | Betsson Group (Remote)
Feb 2024 - Oct 2024 | Malta

Led strategic UX initiatives for a leading international online gambling operator, enhancing the digital experience across multiple casino brands and markets.

- Spearheaded UX optimizations that improved customer engagement and conversion rates across global markets.
- Partnered with cross-functional teams to redesign and launch products tailored to diverse user needs.
- Strengthened collaboration within the UX department, refining workflows and design processes.

Product Design Manager | Motorway (Hybrid)
Mar 2023 - Jun 2023 | London, UK

Managed and mentored a multidisciplinary team of designers and copywriters to create seamless, user-friendly experiences for car sellers & buyers.

- Established and refined UX processes, improving alignment and efficiency across product and engineering teams.
- Championed a user-first approach, driving innovation and usability improvements in key product areas.
- Provided hands-on coaching and strategic direction, fostering team growth and elevating design quality.

Head of Product Design | Auden (Hybrid)
Mar 2023 - Jun 2023 | Manchester, UK

Directed the design function at a fintech company, shaping UX strategy and scaling the design team.

- Built and led a cross-functional design team, aligning UX, product, and graphic design efforts.
- Defined and implemented a company-wide UX vision, enhancing usability and accessibility.
- Established streamlined design processes, boosting team efficiency and output.

Lead Product Designer | AO.com (On-site)
Aug 2019 - Oct 2022 | Manchester, UK

Provided strategic design leadership at one of the UK's largest online electronics retailers, enhancing customer experiences across multiple platforms.

- Managed and mentored UX designers across cross-functional product teams, driving innovation and usability improvements.
- Directed three key product teams (Product Page, Lister Page, Findability), optimizing design to maximize conversion rates.
- Developed a **Design Competency Framework**, creating clear career progression paths for designers.
- Spearheaded the creation of a unified Design System, improving efficiency and consistency across products.
- Balanced stakeholder priorities across B2B and B2C initiatives while maintaining design integrity.

Senior Product Designer | BookingGO (On-site)
Feb 2019 - Aug 2019 | Manchester, UK

Played a key role in enhancing ground transport solutions within Booking.com's mobility division.

- Designed end-to-end user experiences that simplified car rental bookings across web and mobile platforms.
- Created high-fidelity prototypes and user flows that enhanced usability and customer retention.
- Partnered with researchers to conduct usability testing, translating insights into actionable design improvements.

Senior Product Designer | Retail InMotion (On-ste)
Mar 2018 - Dec 2018 | Dublin, Ireland

Enhanced digital experiences for a leading aviation retail technology provider serving global airlines.

- Redesigned critical touchpoints in airline platforms, driving increased revenue and user satisfaction.
- Conducted user research and usability testing to inform design decisions.
- Developed cross-platform design solutions that streamlined in-flight retail operations.

UX Designer | Booking.com (On-site)
Jan 2017 - Mar 2018 | Amsterdam, NL

Drove UX innovations for the world's leading online accommodation marketplace, focusing on customer loyalty and new product development.

- Identified user pain points through data-driven research, developing UX solutions that improved engagement.
- Designed and executed A/B tests that increased conversion rates and customer satisfaction.
- Delivered seamless experiences across desktop, mobile web, iOS, and Android applications.

Founder, Project Manager & Lead Designer | CortexWave Agency (On-site)
Jan 2011 - Dec 2016 | Athens, GR

Founded and led a digital agency delivering full-scale product design and development services.

- Built and managed cross-functional teams, overseeing design, development, and strategy.
- Defined product strategies aligned with client business goals, ensuring successful execution.
- Conducted comprehensive user research and usability testing, shaping user-friendly digital experiences.
- Established end-to-end project management processes, ensuring seamless execution and delivery.

Skills

User Experience Design | User Research | AI Design | Product Design | Frontend Development (HTML, CSS, JavaScript) | A/B Testing & Data Driven Design | Information Architecture | AI Driven Design & Personalization | Agile & Lean UX Methodologies | Team Leadership | Mentorship & Talent Development | Cross-Functional Collaboration (Design, Product, Engineering)

Education

Homer Educational Group (2004 - 2006)
- Associate's Degree in Sound Engineering & Music Technology

Professional Certifications

IxDF - The Interaction Design Foundation
- Human-Computer Interaction
- User Research: Methods & Best Practices
- Conducting Usability Testing
- Mobile User Experience (UX) Design
- UX Management: Strategy and Tactics
- Gestalt Psychology and Web Design
- Accessibility: How to Design for All

Northwestern University
- High Performance Collaboration: Leadership, Teamwork & Negotiation
- Leadership Communication for Maximum Impact: Storytelling
- Leadership Through Social Influence

University of Michigan
- Inspiring and Motivating Individuals
- Managing Talent
- Influencing People
- Leading Teams

Google Professional Certifications
- Google AI Essentials
- Foundations of Project Management
- Project Initiation: Starting a Successful Project
- Project Planning: Putting it all together

Languages
- English (Professional Level)
- Greek (Native)
- German (Basic Level)