Pavel Bukengolts

Product Design Leader | Product Strategy, Team Leadership, Design Systems & AI-Enabled Delivery | DesignOps
+1-615-866-2369 • pavel@ux.business • Nashville, TN • linkedin.com/in/pavelbukengolts • pavel.ux.business

Summary

Product design leader who builds teams, shapes product and experience strategy, and turns fragmented organizations and complex platforms into scalable products and operating models. Built, scaled, and led an in-house UX function up to 25, and directed distributed internal and partner teams of up to 40 across four global regions. Led design programs spanning 800+ digital properties while combining product strategy, hands-on design judgment, people development, accessibility, design systems, and AI-enabled delivery to improve product quality, accelerate execution, and reduce operating cost.

Selected Executive Impact

- Built an in-house UX function and led design organizations of up to 25, defining team structure, hiring, design practices, quality standards, and cross-functional operating models.
- Led distributed internal and partner teams of up to 40 across the U.S., LATAM, APAC, and EMEA, aligning design direction, delivery standards, and governance across 800+ digital properties.
- Architected and scaled an enterprise design system, reducing production time by 40%, vendor dependency costs by 50%, and critical accessibility defects by 18%.
- Led 0-to-1 product strategy and design for the Team Capability Engine, moving from concept to MVP in under 90 days through discovery, product definition, UX architecture, prototyping, and AI-assisted execution.
- Improved product adoption and engagement by up to 30% through product discovery, interaction design, prototyping, design reviews, and cross-functional product leadership.

Experience

Head of Product Design & Strategy

UX Design Lab, LLC | *Nashville, TN* 04.2024 – Present

- Lead product strategy, experience direction, and design delivery for enterprise and growth-stage clients, reframing ambiguous business problems into clear product opportunities, priorities, and execution plans.
- Shipped the Team Capability Engine from concept to MVP in under 90 days, leading product definition, UX architecture, core workflows, prototype execution, and AI-assisted delivery to secure three beta pilots.
- Reduced client design-to-delivery timelines by up to 60% by integrating AI-assisted research synthesis, prioritization, prototyping, and delivery into the product design process while maintaining human review and usability standards.
- Advise executives, product leaders, and engineering teams on experience strategy, product direction, accessibility, design systems, organizational workflows, and scalable design operating models.
- Establish reusable frameworks, governance practices, and decision-making models that enable client teams to sustain design quality and execution after engagements conclude.

Lead of Enterprise Design Operations & Strategy

Abbott | *Remote* 01.2022 – 04.2024

- Led a design-system team and distributed partner teams of up to 40 people across the U.S., LATAM, APAC, and EMEA, setting design direction, quality standards, governance, and delivery expectations across global programs.
- Architected and scaled an enterprise design system across 800+ digital properties, reducing production time by 40% and vendor dependency costs by 50% through reusable components, theming architecture, and integrated design-to-development workflows.
- Built executive support for global adoption by proving the model through a regional pilot and translating design performance into a business case for cost reduction, scalability, quality, and operational predictability.
- Raised the design-quality bar through structured design reviews, reusable interaction standards, component governance, and hands-on direction across internal and partner teams.
- Embedded WCAG 2.2 accessibility into design-system standards, procurement requirements, review gates, and delivery workflows, reducing critical accessibility defects by 18% and shifting accessibility from reactive remediation toward proactive product quality.

VP of User Experience and Web Management

Protective Life | *Remote* 01.2020 – 11.2021

- Built and scaled the UX function from a single contributor into a 10-person organization across two teams, defining team structure, hiring talent, design practices, and a sustainable operating model.
- Directed UX and product experience modernization across 70+ digital properties, replacing fragmented customer journeys with a cohesive multi-brand experience architecture and shared design system.
- Reduced departmental costs by 20% and improved team efficiency by 15% by redesigning intake, prioritization, collaboration, design workflows, and governance across business and technology teams.
- Developed team capability through design critique, shared standards, collaborative working practices, and clearer ownership while strengthening partnerships across product, marketing, technology, and business teams.
- Reduced developer dependency by 60% through reusable patterns, standardized components, clearer design-to-engineering workflows, and greater self-service capability for business and marketing teams.

Director of User Experience

DePalma Studios | *Nashville, TN* 10.2017 – 01.2020

- Led three distributed teams of up to 25 people across three countries, directing UX strategy and product design for healthcare, fintech, SaaS, logistics, and enterprise clients from discovery through delivery.
- Increased user engagement by 30% across client programs through research, service design, interaction design, high-fidelity prototyping, and disciplined design direction.
- Developed designers through critique, mentorship, repeatable standards, and hands-on design reviews while maintaining quality across multiple concurrent client programs.
- Improved team execution velocity by 25% by introducing Lean UX practices, clearer intake and prioritization, stronger design-to-engineering collaboration, and standardized delivery practices.
- Served as a strategic advisor to clients, challenging poorly framed solution requests, reframing business problems through evidence, and aligning executives and delivery teams before major technology investments.

Senior HCI Engineer (Principal UX Designer)

Sitecore Inc. – Platform Innovation and Engineering | *Remote* 04.2013 – 08.2017

- Led UX architecture and interaction design for advanced marketing, personalization, analytics, and platform innovation products, contributing to a 30% increase in product adoption.
- Shaped product direction as a principal-level design partner, translating emerging technical capabilities and complex requirements into coherent product workflows and experience strategy.
- Designed the UX architecture and interaction models for a large-scale platform proof of concept that established foundational design principles for visual design and engineering teams.
- Influenced product, engineering, and design stakeholders across international research and product initiatives, connecting customer evidence with platform strategy and execution.

Recognition, Teaching & Publications

- Contributing Author, UX Magazine, with published articles on UX strategy, AI-enhanced workflows, accessibility, and design systems.
- Adjunct Professor of UX, UI & AI, Nossi College of Art & Design.
- Top 100 World's Most Influential Mentors, ADPList.
- Top 3 Finalist, Tech Educator of the Year, Greater Nashville Technology Council Awards.

Education

Computer and Digital Communication Science | Master of Science
Belarus State University of Informatics and Electronics
Focus: Human Factors, Ergonomics
Graphic Design | Bachelor of Arts
School of Visual Arts

Skills

Leadership & Strategy: Product Design Leadership, UX Strategy, Design Direction, Team Development, DesignOps, Governance, Change Management, Service Design, Lean UX, Agile Delivery, Executive Stakeholder Alignment

Research & Experience Design: Discovery, Information Architecture, Interaction Design, Workflow Design, Prototyping, Usability Testing, Evaluative Research, Inclusive Design, Accessibility Reviews, WCAG 2.2 Compliance

Design Systems & Accessibility: Design System Architecture, Component Governance, Multi-Brand Systems, Design Tokens, Figma Variables, Storybook, Adobe Experience Manager, Accessibility Governance, Audit Readiness

AI & Systems: Human-Centered AI, AI-Assisted Workflows, AI Governance, Agentic Workflows, Prompt Engineering, Applied AI in Research and Prototyping, AI-Enabled Delivery Models

Tools: Figma, Storybook, Adobe Experience Manager, Miro, Sketch, UserTesting, Jira, Confluence, Cursor, Codex, Claude Code