Sean Smith

Product designer and leader with 15+ years of experience shaping AI-native, cross-platform products. Known for a player/coach approach that blends hands-on craft, systems thinking, and leadership with a modern, builder oriented mindset. Actively embrace generative design and AI-assisted development workflows to move faster from concept to production, using emerging tools to prototype, test, and ship ideas with clarity and quality at global scale.

AI PRODUCT DESIGNER, BUILDER, LEADER, ADVISOR

Nov 2025 – Present

Fractional work designing and building AI-native products while advising teams on product strategy, design systems, and AI experience quality. Operate as a player/coach, combining hands-on execution with leadership and guidance across product definition, prototyping, and early production to translate emerging AI capabilities into clear, usable product experiences.

MICROSOFT

MICROSOFT OUTLOOK

2021–2025 Principal Product Design Leader
(previously Senior and Principal Product Design Manager roles)

Led cross-platform product design across Outlook Mobile and Mac, spanning AI-powered experiences, core reading workflows, and shared systems used by hundreds of millions of people worldwide.

- Led and managed design for Outlook Mobile and Mac during a period of significant growth, with monthly active usage more than doubling while maintaining strong daily engagement at global scale.

- Operated as a player/coach, balancing hands-on design and prototyping with strategic direction and cross-functional leadership.

- Managed and mentored a global design team of 11, supporting growth from early career through principal level.

CONTACT

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PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Future London Academy

Executive Programme for Design Leaders ("Design MBA") | 2025-2026

International program for experienced design leaders, covering strategy, business, and organizational leadership through in-person modules in London and California. Participants include design executives from global companies and studios.

Designer Fund

Design for Business Impact | 2019

Design leadership series with case studies from Pinterest, Gusto, Slack, and Dropbox, focused on connecting craft to business outcomes and strategic influence.

CodePath

SwiftUI for Designers | 2015

A hands-on technical course providing app prototyping skills in SwiftUI tailored to designers. A practical, bootcamp-style introduction to native iOS prototyping tools.

EDUCATION

Art Institute of California - San Francisco

Graphic Design | 2007-2010

- Drove adoption of design systems to reduce design debt and improve consistency across Outlook mobile and partner teams.

MICROSOFT MILEIQ / SMB INCUBATION

2015 – 2021 Senior Designer & Senior Design Manager

First in-house designer at MileIQ, helping guide the transition from startup to Microsoft while building the product, team, and design foundations that supported growth and acquisition.

- Led design across a suite of SMB and consumer apps including MileIQ, Spend, Visits, and Money in Excel.
- Supported hiring and growth of the design team while balancing hands-on execution with product strategy during post-acquisition scaling.

MILEIQ (MOBILE DATA LABS)

Lead Product Designer │ 2015

- First in-house designer, partnered closely with founders and peers to refine MileIQ's core experience.
- Led vision and design for a suite of SMB apps, supporting funding and acquisition strategy.
- Built an early design system in Sketch and prototyped in Principle to streamline cross-team collaboration and engineering handoff.

BEST APPS MARKET & FETCH

Lead Product Designer & "Design Engineer" │ 2012 – 2015

- Designed Android app store alternative; modernized the UI with Material Design. Led the launch of a rebranded version of the Android app to align with Google's Material Design guidelines.
- Led front-end XML implementation and UI updates for Material design v1 as the core engineering team did not have capacity.

FREELANCE DESIGN

Freelance Designer │ 2009 – 2012

- Led branding and UI work for startups.
- Launched and ran an apparel business (design, printing, eCommerce).

Academy of Art

Graphic Design │ 2006-2007

SKILLS

Design Leadership & Management

Design Leadership, Design Management, Team Hiring, Team Resourcing, Sprint Facilitation, Mentorship

Product Thinking & Strategy

Product Strategy, Human-Centered Design, Storytelling, Collaboration, Cross-functional Alignment

Favorite Tools Right Now

Figma, Cursor, Claude Code, Notion, Wispr Flow, Vercel, Lovable, Jitter