

Design and Product Leader

Hi! I'm Chris. I have had a long and fruitful career in the SaaS space as a leader, founder, employee, and consultant. I started my career in design, but have always been drawn to strategy, planning, and understanding the data that drives organizations forward. In my current role at WorkTango as Sr. Director, Product Management, I am managing multiple scrum teams as a product manager, our product design team, and business analysts.

As a product and people leader I am committed to building teams, creating high-quality UX, and defining clear processes to create a focused roadmap. My goal is to use design thinking and research to balance and synthesize the needs of the business, users, and stakeholders into a strategic, actionable product plan.

Career Experience

Leadership

- 15+ years of experience in a highly cross-functional role running strategic projects from idea through implementation. 7+ years leading & mentoring UX teams. 5+ years leading product management.
- Co-founder experience as design and product leader.
- Success with leading a large team of designers (8+), as well as experience managing product managers, analysts, engineers, marketing designers, and copywriters.
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills; ability to work successfully with teams across the organization, including Product Management, Engineering, Customer Success, and Marketing.
- Highly organized with planning, conducting, and tracking work. Configures team members to track and be responsible for their own projects in a similar fashion.
- Experience presenting at multiple conferences and Meetups. Experience writing whitepapers, blog posts, and UX content.

Product Design

- Many examples of broadly influential UX work that contributed directly to the achievement of business goals (check out my website!).
- Experience designing for enterprise SaaS platforms for fintech, HR, adtech, legal tech, document management, fleet management, IoT, asset performance management.
- Passion for the field of User Experience and User Interface design. Deeply knowledgeable on best practices, design patterns, design systems, and research.
- Robust research background. Can lead design sprints, facilitate multiple research activities to gather insights on user needs. Understanding of best practices for conducting usability and acceptance testing.
- Experience finding simple, innovative solutions for complex problems. Great at finding the MLP and striking a balance between product needs and engineering limitations.
- Very strong visual design skills and sensibilities.
- Expert in Figma, wireframing, and prototyping tools.
- Frames all work in terms of personas and their journeys. Ability to articulate design decisions and advocate for the user.
- Founder of the largest UX Meetup in Chicago.
- Experience leading accessibility best practice and remediation.
- Expert writing HTML and CSS. Expert in CMS platforms.

Product Management & Data Analytics

- Platform product manager focused on user management, authentication, communication tools, data and reporting, integrations and system infrastructure.
- Product manager for ETL and data systems. I have created data warehouses that function to connect all internal data systems for generating customer and company reporting. Strong familiarity with GCP.
- Product manager for integrations with OpenAI, Vertex, Slack, MS Teams, MS Outlook, HRIS systems, HealthKit, Google Fit, Google BigQuery, Hevo, Pendo, Salesforce, BI tools, SSO, Stripe, and email systems.
- Responsible for building roadmaps that take into account a wide set of variables across user, customer, market needs with internal limitations to define a path forward.
- Sophisticated approach to Agile methodologies, building roadmaps, journey maps, service design workflows, and improving internal processes.
- Extremely data driven, responsible for building and tracking KPIs for both product and UX.
- Experience across multiple M&As and product re-brands.
- Experience with multiple BI platforms, and creating internal and customer facing dashboards.
- Experience building and using generative AI on ChatGPT and Google Vertex.
- Responsible for managing vendor relationships and facilitating contract negotiations.
- Facilitate using best in breed tools to empower teams and customers. JIRA, Git, Figma, Sketch, Product Board, UserTesting, BI systems, and more.

Work History

WorkTango

Sr. Director, Product Management 7/23 - Present
Director, Product Insights & Design 1/21 - 6/23
Director, Product Design 4/20 - 12/20
Sr. Manager, Product Design 4/19 - 3/20

Egen

Head of Design 10/17 - 03/19

Zoku Technologies

Co-Founder, VP Head of Product 06/16 - 10/17

Centro

Sr. UI Designer 07/15 - 03/17

Backstop Solutions Group

UI/UX Manager 07/13 - 7/15
Software Engineer 06/12 - 06/13
Sr. Web Designer 01/10 - 05/12
Web Designer 09/08 - 12/09

VisionFriendly.com

Lead Web Designer 01/08 - 08/08
Web Designer 07/07 - 01/08

Education

Northern Illinois University

BFA, Illustration 2005

Volunteering

PMX & UXD Chicago Meetup

Founder & Organizer 12/15 - Present

Chicago Tech Rocks

Committee Member 2016

WorkTango

Senior Director, Product Management 4/19 - Present

WorkTango is a Vista SaaS platform providing employee experience and performance management solutions that drive engagement and business results. My current responsibilities encompass a variety of initiatives which includes ownership across design, research, analytics, and product.

- **Directing Product Design** I manage all UI design efforts including individual team member projects, our design system, and component library across web, mobile and integration experiences. I guide our design team through UX best practices for a systematic and consistent approach in our platform with the right systems, patterns, personas, and journey maps. I coached the entire team on practices for non-biased research that encompass discovery, validation, and acceptance testing.
- **Directing Product Management** I oversee efforts of our data engineering, platform, and mobile development teams. I help define product strategy, roadmap creation, platform UX, and user interface for our entire product suite. I have supported M&As and full platform rebrands. I have delivered integrations for Slack, MS Teams, MS Outlook, Bamboo HR, ADP, HealthKit, Google Fit, Google BigQuery, Hevo, Pendo, ChurnZero, Salesforce, Mode, and Courier.
- **Directing Insights & Analytics** I oversee dashboard creation and metric tracking for internal KPIs across our product lines which includes data from our ETL pipeline, Pendo, customer health reporting, and NPS. My team builds embedded customer dashboards and reporting tools for our 700K user customer base. I work with Marketing to deliver metrics that show platform ROI which resulted in white papers and thought leadership for the business.

Egen

Head of Design 10/17 - 3/19

Egen has served as the technical backbone on complex data-driven projects for Uptake Technologies, Tempus Labs, and Caterpillar. As Head of Design I packaged, marketed, and managed design sprints as a service. I worked with our team to craft products for internal and client projects, designed our product management and customer success methodologies, and worked with the sales team to pitch and sell clients.

- **Product Design** Lead designer across multiple platforms including data pipeline PaaS, IoT, fin-tech, marketing, data ingestion, asset performance management, and inspections services with a focus on human centered design.
- **Design Sprints** Packaged, sold, and facilitated design sprints to our clients, used design sprints internally to develop business process.
- **Product Management** Responsible for creation and implementation of our product management process including requirements gathering, contract generation, design, development documentation, delivery, and KPIs.
- **Business Development** Created and optimized online sales funnels, blogging, sales presentations, and white paper generation. Worked directly with both sales and clients to manage design and development projects.

Zoku Technologies

Co-Founder, VP Head of Product 6/16 - 10/17

ZokuVault is a secure online safety deposit box that allows users to organize, store, and share important documents with their family members and trusted advisors. Stored items can include estate plans (wills, trusts, powers of attorney), financial information, insurance details, online accounts, final wishes and tax records.

- **Design** Designed ZokuVault's brand, product interface, user experience, marketing website, collateral, and videos.
- **Product Management** Oversaw end-to-end construction of software including roadmap planning, research and requirements gathering, design, documentation, development, testing, and deployment.
- **Team Management** Managed development, design, marketing, and security staff.
- **Project Management** Coordinated international teams, requirements, and software release cycles using agile methodologies.
- **Business Development** Involved in fundraising and sales. Created and optimized online sales funnels, affiliate program, and blogging.
- **Software Engineering** Created responsive front-end interface and pattern library. Manage code integration, migrations, and deploys.

Centro

Senior UI Designer 07/15 - 03/17

At Centro I designed the future of digital media buying. Centro Platform allows users to create, purchase, and track media campaigns across all inventory and buy types combining Direct, Search, Programmatic, DSP, and Social under a single login.

- **Design** Delivered software designs with wireframes, UX prototypes, pixel perfect mockups, and production code.
- **Component Development & Design** Contributed, iterated, and documented our library of highly modular react components.
- **Teamwork** Worked with a large international cross disciplinary team to deliver software across multiple platforms.
- **Project Management** Helped to define process for technology team using agile and kanban methodologies.
- **Company Improvement** Redesigned and launched Centro's intranet. Hosted company events and planning committees.
- **Mentorship** Provided design, coding, and career mentorship to junior staff members.

Backstop Solutions

UI/UX Manager 09/08 - 7/15

Backstop provides a suite of software solutions for alternative investment firms tracking over \$2T in capital: Backstop CRM, Backstop Mobile, InvestorBridge (investor portal + CMS), Outlook and Excel applications. Backstop tracks more than 2 trillion dollars in capital.

- **Design** Lead product designer across multiple platforms, created style guides, icon libraries, software, videos, and client portals.
- **Product Management** Executed UI/UX focused roadmap for Backstop CRM system. Product Manager for InvestorBridge CMS.
- **Consultant Professional** Services group designer managed over 100 website builds and software implementations for clients.
- **Business Development** Lead software demos and defined project scope in sales and consulting projects.
- **Staff Management** Managed UI/UX team to establish career goals and verify productivity with one-on-ones and performance reviews.
- **Conference** Presented mobile keynote and lead UX and Product workshops and roundtables at Backstop User Conferences.
- **Software Engineering** Created responsive front-end interface and pattern libraries for Java and RoR software applications.