
Michelle Walstra

PRODUCT DESIGN LEADER

A design leader who builds.

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Product design leader with 13 years across product, web, and visual design, including a year as COO. Built and led a design team; now lead design across a consumer app and B2B platform. Combine strategy, research, and design systems with hands-on development and AI workflows.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Lead Product Designer | Jotson

May 2024 – Present · Calgary, Canada

- Sole designer across two products; partner with the CPO on strategy, prioritization, and sprint planning.
- Led design and AI-driven prototype development with three developers to take a B2B platform **from concept to launch in four weeks**.
- Built and govern the design system, defining shared components, tokens, and product-specific patterns.
- Lead research and usability testing; write queries and build dashboards to inform product decisions.
- Streamlined and automated processes across the product lifecycle using AI workflows, helping teams reduce manual work and increase output.

Lead Product Designer | Ecoation

Dec 2021 – May 2024 · Canada

- Increased product engagement by **72%** through UX improvements informed by LogRocket session analysis, Pendo data, and user testing.
- Shipped redesigned navigation and information architecture. Designed map overlays so growers could compare pests, disease, and climate data in one view.
- Introduced product analytics and regular user testing; partnered with product, engineering, data science, and QA to deliver designs.
- Reduced advertising cost-per-click by **76%** through social strategy and marketing collateral optimization.

Chief of Operations (COO) | Codeo

Feb 2021 – Dec 2021 · South Africa

- Selected by the directors to lead operations alongside design. Managed and mentored **two agile teams of 5–10** designers and developers.
- Moved the company to fixed six-week delivery cycles: **18% higher team performance** and **13% higher client-measured work quality**. Owned client and stakeholder relationships.

Senior to Lead Product Designer | Codeo

Aug 2015 – Feb 2021 · South Africa

- Grew the design function from a solo role into a team I hired and led. Mentored junior designers and owned and delivered design and product KPIs.
- Owned backlogs, prioritization, user stories, and acceptance criteria. Ran design sprints and user testing; shipped mobile-first, responsive front-end experiences.
- Redesigned SPAR's specials journey (**120% more page views**) and Debonairs Pizza's store selection (**14.55% lower checkout bounce**).

Web & Graphic Designer

Red Giant Design · Swag Tab · iX Online Motoring | 2013 – 2015

Built foundations in typography, visual design, and website development.

INDEPENDENT PROJECTS

Winnow · iOS app · 2026

Designed, built, and shipped a conversation analysis app solo, [live on the App Store](#). Owned delivery end to end: product strategy, UX/UI, React Native development, the AI pipeline, and subscriptions.

Winsome · AI automation · 2026

Built an autonomous system for local-business websites and Google rankings, automating recurring client work while directing design quality.

SKILLS

Product & leadership: Product strategy, product operations, product ownership, prioritization, roadmapping, stakeholder management, hiring, mentoring, agile delivery.

Design & research: UX/UI, interaction design, information architecture, design systems, user research, usability testing, prototyping, accessibility, Figma.

AI, build & data: AI workflows and agents, Claude Code, AI-driven prototyping, React, React Native, front-end development, BigQuery, Pendo, LogRocket, acceptance criteria, QA.

EDUCATION

BA, Creative Brand Communications (Visual Design)

Vega School · 2011 – 2013

Interaction Design Foundation certificates · 2019 – 2020

UX Management · Usability Testing · Adoption & Appropriation