



Nazar Kulikov

Senior Product Designer and Design Director building AI-native, native iOS, Web3, DeFi, SaaS, and consumer products.

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Professional Summary

Senior Product Designer and Design Director with 12+ years of experience leading complex product initiatives from early problem framing and research through prototyping, validation, implementation, and launch. Designed and built LLM-powered products and conversational experiences alongside technically complex Web3, DeFi, SaaS, and consumer systems. Shipped Carbon DeFi to \$180M+ in trading volume and redesigned Zest Protocol before it reached \$75M+ TVL and secured \$3.5M in seed funding. Combines product design leadership with hands-on expertise in Swift, SwiftUI, Xcode, LLM APIs, MCP, AI-assisted prototyping, and native iOS product development.

Core Expertise

End-to-End Product Design; LLM Product Design; Conversational AI & UX; UX Strategy; Product Strategy; Interaction Design; Systems Thinking; Information Architecture; User Research; Usability Testing; Rapid Prototyping; High-Fidelity UI; Design Systems, Variables & Tokens; Motion Design; Native iOS Product Development; Swift; SwiftUI; Xcode; Responsive Web & Mobile; Cross-Functional Leadership; Design Critique; Executive Presentations; AI-Assisted Design; Design-to-Code.

Professional Experience

JOLT Design Director

January 2026 – Present

- Defined JOLT’s product direction through deep market and competitor analysis, researching the strongest UX patterns and UI practices across global activity-booking platforms. Turned these insights into a clear product structure, feature priorities, and a scalable user experience.
- Designed the complete product ecosystem from the ground up: iOS and Android apps that help users discover and book activities, and a web platform for studios, gyms, and sports venues to manage their services, schedules, availability, and bookings.
- Supported JOLT’s go-to-market and fundraising efforts by creating marketing campaigns, investor presentations, product demos, and other strategic materials that clearly communicated the product’s value, business model, and growth potential.

Pizza Ninjas Design Director (Contract)

August 2024 – January 2026

- Set product and design direction and led four initiatives end to end for a 5K+ holder community: Pizza Pets, Ninjalerts V2, Pizza Ninjas Mint #2 with live customization, and a full brand-system overhaul.
- Owned the complete product development cycle as the sole design lead, moving from ambiguous concepts and UX architecture to interaction patterns, high-fidelity prototypes, production handoff, launch, and iteration.
- Designed Pizza Pets from zero to launch, creating novel flows, states, and interaction patterns for on-chain evolutionary and collectible mechanics with no direct category precedent.
- Built an AI-assisted creative and design-to-code workflow across Midjourney, Grok, ChatGPT, Claude, Cursor, and Codex, increasing output across product, brand, marketing, UX writing, and implementation support without additional headcount.

Zest Protocol Head of Design

January 2024 – January 2026

- Initiated and led a full redesign of the lending protocol, simplifying complex borrowing and liquidity flows while delivering a complete UI overhaul across core product surfaces.
- Partnered closely with founders and engineering to shape product direction, introduce new features, resolve edge cases, and expand the platform beyond its initial MVP scope.
- Delivered a launch-ready experience before the protocol reached \$75M+ TVL and secured \$3.5M in seed funding from investors including Binance Labs, Draper Associates, and Flow Traders.

StackingDAO Head of Design

Zest Protocol Ecosystem

January 2024 – January 2026

- Led a complete redesign of the StackingDAO app, rethinking the core UX and creating an entirely new UI that made the product clearer, more intuitive, and ready to scale.
- Defined the brand’s marketing language and visual communication across every major touchpoint, including a new landing page, social media presence, campaign assets, and supporting product materials.
- Delivered the redesigned product and brand experience ahead of StackingDAO’s \$4M+ seed round, helping position the company with a more polished, credible, and consistent presence for users and investors.

Bancor Network Lead Product Designer

February 2022 – January 2024

- Led Carbon DeFi from concept to launch: a category-defining automated on-chain trading strategy builder with no direct UX precedent, reaching \$180M+ in trading volume.
- Owned end-to-end UX across major product flows, translating complex protocol mechanics into intuitive experiences for both retail and advanced traders through systems thinking, interaction design, and high-fidelity prototyping.
- Partnered across a distributed team of 20-30 in engineering, protocol research, product, and marketing; led design reviews, communicated rationale, managed async handoffs, and aligned stakeholders across time zones.
- Established reusable design patterns while consolidating Bancor’s legacy protocol flows into a unified interface, then evolved the system for Carbon DeFi as a standalone product.
- Created Figma and Framer prototypes for validation, community feedback, investor demos, and engineering delivery; launch coverage included CoinDesk and The Block.

TITL Agency Product Designer

January 2020 – December 2021

- Delivered end-to-end product design for VC-backed startups, including companies backed by Google Ventures, Village Global, Redpoint Ventures, and Snowflake; covered discovery, user research, competitive analysis, flows, wireframes, prototypes, and production-ready UI.
- Led the full redesign of Automate.io as sole product designer; the company was subsequently acquired by Notion.
- Designed responsive web and mobile experiences for global consumer brands including Procter & Gamble and SodaStream while balancing multiple fast-moving engagements.
- Presented work and design rationale directly to client leadership, facilitated critiques and design reviews, and translated feedback into clear product decisions and implementation-ready specifications.

Freelance Senior Product Designer

September 2017 – December 2019

- Owned research, information architecture, wireframing, prototyping, usability-focused iteration, and final UI handoff across SaaS, healthcare, and startup products for clients in the US and Europe.
- Maintained a 100% Job Success Score and 5.0-star rating on Upwork across all engagements through clear communication, reliable ownership, and consistently high craft quality.

Habitat Agency UI & UX Designer

January 2016 – August 2017

- Worked within a 20-person multidisciplinary team across brand, digital, and product engagements; owned user and market analysis, concept development, interface design, and client presentations across concurrent projects.

Freelance UI & UX Designer

January 2015 – January 2016

- Built an early freelance practice on Upwork and with local companies, establishing client relationships and developing foundational visual, interaction, and product design skills.

Tools

Design & Systems

Figma, FigJam, Figma Dev Mode, Figma Variables, Figma Code Connect, Figma Make, Figma Sites, Storybook, Framer, Webflow, Sketch.

AI & Product Building

OpenAI API, Anthropic API, Claude Code, Cursor, Codex, ChatGPT, v0, Replit, Bolt, Lovable, Model Context Protocol (MCP).

iOS & Engineering

Swift, SwiftUI, Xcode, Git, GitHub, Apple Human Interface Guidelines (Apple HIG).

Motion, Creative & Analytics

Rive, Lottie, Adobe Illustrator, Adobe Photoshop, Midjourney, Grok, Mixpanel, Hotjar, Linear, Notion.

Education

Academy of Computing Technologies IT STEP Computer Graphics & Design

September 2012 – May 2016

- Four-year professional program covering UX/UI design, graphic design, brand identity, advertising, motion design, 3D modeling, usability principles, mobile and web interface design, and prototyping. International ITSTEP diploma; certifications from Microsoft, Cisco, and Autodesk.