Nazar Kulikov

Product Designer & Design Engineer

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Summary

- Product designer with 12 years in UI and UX. Designs marketing websites and product interfaces and builds them in code.
- Lead Product Designer at Zest Protocol through its $3.5M seed round led by Draper Associates and growth to $77M+ TVL; designed its Bitcoin staking vault, which filled its 70.05 BTC capacity in the first week.
- Head of Design at Pizza Ninjas from launch through Bitcoin Collection of the Year 2024 and ~$30M in first-year trading volume; designed Pizza Pets, a massively multiplayer on-chain game with $3M in monthly trading volume.
- Led product design at Bancor and took Carbon DeFi, a new kind of on-chain trading tool, from concept to launch, with coverage in CoinDesk and The Block.

Skills

- **Expertise:** Product Design, UI & UX Design, Marketing Websites, Design Systems, Prototyping, User Research, Motion Design, Branding.
- **Design tools:** Figma (Motion, Dev Mode, Sites), Adobe (After Effects, Photoshop, Illustrator, Premiere Pro), Framer, Webflow, Rive, Lottie.
- **Front-end:** HTML, CSS, JavaScript, React, Tailwind CSS, Bootstrap.
- **Back-end:** Node.js, REST APIs, SQL, PostgreSQL (Supabase), MongoDB.
- **iOS:** Swift, SwiftUI.
- **Workflow:** Git (GitHub, GitLab), Vercel, AI-assisted development (Claude Code, Cursor, Codex, MCP).

Experience

JOLT – Founding Designer

Jan 2026 – Present · Full-time
Activity-booking platform connecting people with studios, gyms and sports venues.

- Joined as the first designer and defined the product scope for a two-sided platform: iOS and Android apps for discovering and booking activities, and a web platform where venues manage services, schedules, availability and bookings.
- Designed the full product in Figma, then built the working iOS app myself in Swift and SwiftUI with AI-assisted development; the app is now in beta on TestFlight.

- Built back-end and web features on Supabase, Vercel and Resend: database schema, authentication, storage, API integrations, transactional email and deployment.
- Created investor presentations, product demos and go-to-market materials for the company's fundraising.

Zest Protocol – Lead Product Designer

Jan 2024 – Oct 2026 · Contract, Part-Time
Bitcoin lending protocol (DeFi)

- Designed the Levered Bitcoin Staking Vault (stBTC) from concept to launch; the vault filled its full 70.05 BTC capacity within its first week.
- Led a full redesign of the Zest lending app, simplifying borrow and supply flows and rebuilding the UI across core product surfaces. The protocol has grown to $77M+ TVL (November 2026) and closed a $3.5M seed led by Draper Associates, with Binance Labs and Flow Traders (May 2024).
- Partnered directly with the founders and engineering to define new features, resolve edge cases and take the product beyond its MVP scope.

Pizza Ninjas – Head of Design

Jan 2024 – Jan 2026 · Full-time
Bitcoin Ordinals collectibles brand with 5K+ holders · Bitcoin Collection of the Year 2024

- Joined at the collection's launch. In its first year it reached ~$30M in trading volume, a top-5 floor price among 1,500+ Bitcoin collections and the #1 unique-holder ratio, and Pizza Ninja #1 sold at a Sotheby's Ordinals auction for 2.23 BTC.
- Designed Pizza Pets from zero to its December 2024 launch: a massively multiplayer on-chain game on Bitcoin, with 54,671 pets airdropped to 400+ communities and $3M in monthly trading volume during the game. Created the flows, states and interaction patterns for pet evolution and collecting, with no established UX pattern to follow.
- Set product and design direction and led four launches end to end: Pizza Pets, Ninjalerts V2, a second collection mint with live character customization, and a full brand-system overhaul, working alongside designers covering illustration, motion and 3D, and marketing.
- Set up an AI-assisted design-to-code workflow (Midjourney, Claude, Cursor, Codex) that extended the team's output across product, brand and marketing.

Bancor – Lead Product Designer

Feb 2022 – Jan 2024
DeFi protocol and decentralized exchange

- Led a 3-person product design team while staying hands-on: set design direction, reviewed and supported the team's work, and designed core flows myself.
- Led product design for Carbon DeFi from concept to its April 2023 launch: an on-chain tool that lets traders set automated buy and sell strategies, with no established UX pattern to follow. Launch covered by CoinDesk and The Block; Carbon DeFi has since passed $170M+ in cumulative trading volume across deployments (end of 2025).

- Turned complex protocol mechanics into interfaces that work for both retail and advanced traders, and consolidated Bancor's legacy protocol flows into one interface with reusable design patterns.
- Ran design reviews and async handoffs with engineering, protocol research, product and marketing across time zones, using Figma and Framer prototypes for validation, community feedback and investor demos.

TITL Agency – Product Designer

Jan 2020 – Dec 2021
Product design agency for VC-backed startups and consumer brands

- Led the full redesign of Automate.io as its sole product designer; the company was later acquired by Notion.
- Delivered product design for startups backed by Google Ventures, Village Global and Redpoint Ventures, from discovery and research to flows, prototypes and production-ready UI.
- Designed responsive web and mobile experiences for Procter & Gamble and SodaStream, presenting work directly to client leadership.

Freelance – Product Designer

Sep 2017 – Dec 2019

- Research, information architecture, prototyping and UI for SaaS, healthcare and startup clients in the US and Europe; 100% Job Success Score and 5.0 rating on Upwork.

Earlier Experience – UI & UX Designer

Jan 2015 – Aug 2017

- Habitat Agency, a 20-person brand and digital studio (2016–2017): user and market analysis, concept development, interface design and client presentations. Freelance UI and UX design before that (2015–2016).

Education

IT STEP Academy

Sep 2012 – May 2016

- Computer Graphics & Design. 4-Year Professional Program.