Erica Lakata 👋

Product Designer · AI Experience Design · UX/UI · Design Systems

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Senior Product Designer who thinks in systems and loves building as much as designing.
I thrive in end-to-end design and 0→1 environments. I specialize in UX/UI (+ branding) for scalable web and mobile products, including AI applications and agentic experiences.

Work Experience

Tribe AI Fractional Product Designer — Dec 2025 – Present

Sole product designer on Fortune 500 AI engagements, through a firm partnered with OpenAI, Anthropic, Google, and AWS.

Koch Socratic AI companion app — Feb – May 2026

- **Led 0→1 strategy for Koch's first AI product:** brought in after previous design directions stalled, **I won stakeholder alignment in week one** by prototyping a new direction as a PWA. Shipped the native iOS + Android app **in under 3 months to a 130K+** employee audience (**~2.6K** daily active users).
- **Designed a Socratic AI model** and the app's information architecture, **working with AI architects and ML engineers** to turn Koch's 60-year management philosophy into repeatable conversation behaviors and guardrails.
- **Built the full Claude-ready design system and documentation** (Figma → Tailwind tokens) that engineers and Claude Code worked with directly as the single source of truth.

Microsoft AI Skills Navigator Knowledge Checks, Global Skilling — May 2026 – Present

- **Owned end-to-end UX/UI as sole product designer for a net-new agentic surface** in Microsoft's Global Skilling platform: an in-lesson AI Learning Partner with voice + text scenario coaching, industry-based personalization, contextual help chips, and an end-of-session reflection. **V1 approved by Microsoft,** launching fall 2026.
- **Defined the agent's conversation design and behavior rules** (no grading or pass/fail language) with Microsoft PMs and design leads on a ~10-person cross-functional team; all **8 of 8** research participants preferred the Learning Partner over video-only lessons.
- **Extended Microsoft's enterprise design systems,** reconciling Fluent with the platform's own design system and **creating net-new components** where neither had a pattern, including voice interaction states (listening, transcribing, muted, error).

Baked Potato Studio Founder and Principal Designer — 2023 – Present

Independent product and brand design studio partnering with established creators and growing brands on digital products, platforms, and launches.

- **Solve complex product and brand challenges** for clients, from **7-figure digital products** serving **80K+ users** to the brand and website for an author with a **$500K+** book deal.

Marie Forleo International Junior → Senior → Lead Designer — 2018 – 2023

- **Drove design for flagship programs,** from brand to product: took Dream Club, a new membership platform, from concept to launch, **generating $1.98M in year one (35.14% upsell rate)**, and optimized The Copy Cure's funnel, contributing to **225% revenue growth.**
- **Established a WCAG 2.1 AA design system** across Figma and Webflow, cutting handoff and QA time by **~70–90%** with **96+** Lighthouse scores across key pages.
- **Designed an early 'Marie LLM'-powered knowledge tool** that cut product ideation and creation time **from 4–5 weeks to 5–7 days.**

Education

St. Francis College, New York City
Bachelor's Degree
NCAA Division I Student-Athlete, Women's Volleyball, Dean's Honor List
2012 – 2016

Institut Catholique de Paris
Study Abroad | Fall 2016

Skills

Tools

Figma, FigJam, Linear, Jira, Notion, TestFlight, Webflow, Framer, Midjourney, CrUX, UserTesting, Adobe Creative Suite, MS Office

AI & Design Engineering

Claude Code, ChatGPT, Cursor, Codex, v0, Conductor, Figma Make, React, Storybook, Paper, GitHub, HTML/CSS, Xcode

Product & UX

Product Strategy (0→1), AI Product Design, Design Systems & Tokens, Prototyping, Wireframing, Design Engineering, Conversation & Voice Design, Agent Behavior & Guardrails, Interaction Design, Information Architecture, User Research, User Flows, Usability Testing, Accessibility (WCAG), A/B Testing, Cross-Functional Collaboration, Branding & Identity, Graphic Design

Recognitions

Recognized five times in 2026 among ADPList's top mentors.

Top 1% Mentor, Design
Jul and Aug 2026

Top 10 Product Marketing Mentor
Q1, Q2 and Q3 2026