



# Colin Van Ert

vanert.design

Product Designer | Product Manager

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Denver, CO

## About Me

Product leader and designer with over a decade of professional experience, including 7+ focused on building early-stage technology products from the ground up. Many years of hands on experience as both a product designer and lead product manager. Skilled in user research, design thinking, UX/UI design, and product roadmapping. I lead cross-functional teams to transform insights into impactful solutions. With experience in managing design systems, collaborating with engineering, and driving product strategy, I ensure seamless execution and alignment in pursuit of business goals.

## Skills

- Product Design
- User Experience Design
- User Interface Design
- User Research
- Product Management
- Lean MVP Development
- Wireframing
- Rapid Prototyping
- Usability Testing
- Design Thinking & Ideation
- Information Architecture
- Web Design
- AI-Driven Design
- Project Management
- Business Strategy
- Team Leadership

## Key Attributes

- Fast Learner
- Strategic Thinker
- Excellent Communicator
- Proactive
- Honest
- Accountable
- People-focused
- Highly Creative

## Education & Certifications

UW - Milwaukee

BA, Global Communications, Minor in Portuguese Language

Universidade do Sul de Santa Catarina

International Business and Advanced Portuguese Language Program

Continuing Education and Self Study

Life-long learner committed personal and professional development, having accumulated 600+ hours of continuing ed. through workshops, courses, self study and formal mentorship in product and design outside of work projects.

LearnUI Design Certified Designer

Completed comprehensive user interface design course.

Landing Page Academy

Completed comprehensive landing page design course.

Formal Mentorship

March 2023- December 2023 — Harry O'Connor  
Founder, Agency Owner, Coach & Advisor — Voodoo Chili, Mentara

December 2023 - Present — Emiliano Villareal  
Professor of Design, Founder, Product Consultant - Austin Center For Design, Student Loan Genius

Other Certifications

Certified Strength & Conditioning Specialist (NSCA - CSCS)

Certified Nutrition Coach (Precision Nutrition Level 1)

## Professional Activities

Guest Speaker - Antler Boulder Spring 2023 Cohort

Gave a guest presentation on early-stage concept validation for the Antler Boulder Spring 2023 Cohort and served as an advisor and consultant for their cohort companies

Guest Speaker - Antler NYC Refugee Entrepreneurship Program 2023

Gave a guest presentation on how to conduct user research and create actionable product ideas for the Antler NYC Refugee Entrepreneurship Program in fall 2023

Colorado Startups Community Member

Member of the Colorado Startups Community since 2021

Denver UX Meetup Community Member

Member of the Denver UX Meetup Community since 2022

Creative Mornings Community Member

Active member and attendee of Creative Mornings monthly meetup in Denver, CO and Austin, TX.

## Experience

Sci-Fi.dev (Remote)

Head of Product

July 2025 - Present

- Cofounded consulting studio with Head of Technology**, delivering advanced systems design and product expertise for small businesses and startups.
- Sold and kicked off a \$100K+ engagement within the first two weeks of launch.**
- Lead discovery → prototype → refine → deploy cycles** to deliver AI-enabled, human-centered tools.
- Align product, engineering, and leadership** on scope, trade-offs, and delivery plans.
- Notable Project:** Common Trust EO Planner and Services to Product-led org transition
  - Since July of 2025, I led Common Trust, a financial services company in Employee Ownership, to scope, design, test and build their first technology product, the EO Planner. This transformed their business model and helped them achieve their goal of moving from financial services company to a product-led technology organization.

Love Ari, Inc. (Remote)

Founding Product Lead

January 2025 - June 2025

- Led 0→1 product development for an AI-powered family wellness platform**, from discovery to functional MVP in under 90 days
- Ran end-to-end user discovery and validation**, identifying core needs and rapidly testing and validating concepts lean startup methodology and experimentation
- Defined product strategy and user experience models**, directly informing design and technical implementation
- Built and launched a live beta with early adopters**, generating actionable feedback and supporting early traction
- Developed investor-facing materials, refined product positioning, and contributed to customer acquisition efforts** to validate market demand

Cipher (Remote)

Senior Product Designer

October 2023 - October 2024

- Led all design efforts as the sole designer**, driving the creation and implementation of new features, concepts, and product designs for development.
- Established a user-centric product development process** by advocating for a new approach, securing budgets, and sourcing and recruiting target users.
- Conducted comprehensive user research initiatives**, including user interviews, contextual inquiries, usability tests, and collaborative design sessions, ensuring insights directly informed design decisions.
- Developed and maintained the Cipher design library**, codifying patterns to ensure design consistency and scalability across all products and experiences.
- Synthesized user research, customer feedback, and business strategy** into actionable opportunities, driving product innovation and growth.
- Sketched, prototyped, and tested solutions** with users and customers, validating both user and business value before implementation.
- Delivered high-quality user interface designs**, integrating them seamlessly into the overall product experience.
- Collaborated with the software engineering team** to ensure accurate implementation of designs, troubleshooting any design and technical challenges in the Cipher product.

Flux Bucket (Austin, TX / Remote)

Principal, Head of Product & Design

January 2022 - October 2023

- Became principal operating partner**, managing all aspects of the business, including sales, account management, company vision, and team leadership.
- Led product vision, strategy, and roadmapping**, aligning client goals to successfully launch digital products from scratch.
- Established company-wide operational standards**, unifying teams and streamlining processes across multiple projects.
- Scaled the company from 3 to 10 team members**, and reaching over \$800K in annual revenue.
- Delivered high-impact projects for multi-million-dollar clients, contributing both as a team leader and hands-on designer.

Product & Design Lead

September 2020 - January 2022

- Managed cross-functional teams** of designers, engineers, and project managers to successfully deliver multiple client projects simultaneously.
- Led design initiatives** across various projects, including new product development, product redesigns, and zero-to-one MVPs.
- Directed strategic product vision and roadmaps**, ensuring alignment with client business goals and targeted outcomes.

UX/UI Designer (contract)

January 2019 - September 2020

- Managed the end-to-end design process** across multiple client projects simultaneously.
- Synthesized user research and business needs** to create design solutions aligned with business outcomes.
- Sketched, prototyped, and tested designs** for viability, feasibility, desirability, and usability, ensuring successful product creation.
- Delivered high-fidelity, pixel-perfect designs** to meet project specifications.
- Created and maintained design libraries** to ensure consistency and continuity across product experiences.

Vizias (Austin, TX / Remote)

Web Designer (contract)

June 2019 - November 2020

- Managed and developed websites for key projects**, including The Austin Forum on Technology and The DellHPC Community.
- Improved user experience and accessibility**, driving community engagement and supporting marketing initiatives.

VanErt.Design (Austin, TX / Remote)

Freelance UX/UI Designer

August 2018 - September 2020

- Built a successful freelance business** specializing in UX research, product discovery, and designing innovative tech solutions.
- Designed and delivered tailored digital experiences** for startups and small businesses, balancing creative and business objectives.
- Managed all freelance operations**, including client acquisition, project delivery, and financial management.

Grasshopper Strength & Wellness (Austin, TX)

Business Owner, Strength & Nutrition Coach

July 2013 - May 2018

- Started a coaching business**, driven by a passion for health and wellness.
- Built the business from the ground up**, coaching over 100 clients through personalized training and nutrition programs.
- Managed all aspects of the business** for 5 years, consistently generating full-time income.
- Created and maintained multiple websites, a blog, and a wellness podcast** to drive client engagement and brand growth.
- Applied entrepreneurial experience** to transition into product design and product management, utilizing skills in client management, user-centered design, and digital engagement.