

Sam Caldera

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Work Experience

Senior Product Designer - Fractional

Achieve and Freedom Debt Relief

December 2025 - Present

- Designing and iterating on responsive web features including homepage enhancements, conversion-focused redesigns of existing elements, and a B2B partnerships page overhaul, presenting directly to senior leadership.
- Leveraging AI tools throughout the design workflow: using a combination of Claude, NotebookLM, and Figma Make for thought partnership, secondary research, copy drafts, wireframe ideation, and rapid prototyping, compressing early-stage exploration and accelerating delivery.
- Spearheading a design debt initiative auditing components, consolidating patterns, and rebuilding design files to align with a semantic system, supporting the groundwork for engineering org's transition to agentic design-to-code workflows.

Senior Product Designer - Contract

Self-employed

December 2023 - Present

Product Design Lead (Consumer Sites and Internal Tools)

Leaf Group, LTD.

August 2018 - November 2023

- Led and managed a cross-disciplinary design team of UX/UI and brand designers (full-time and contract) across Leaf Group's portfolio of consumer-facing sites and internal tools.
- Partnered with creative directors and brand designers across adjacent departments to maintain a unified visual language across touch points without duplicating effort or organizational overlap.
- Built and scaled design systems and atomic component libraries across multiple consumer products, thereby establishing design infrastructure for consistent experiences and faster engineering implementation.
- Defined and drove design strategy alongside product, engineering, editorial, SEO, sales, and business stakeholders, delivering on business and user priorities through coherent product experiences.

Product Design Lead and Strategist (Settings Experience - HCI Master's Capstone)

Project Jupyter

March 2020 - September 2020

- Led two designers from ideation through dev handoff to deliver JupyterLab's first Settings UI: a scalable, component-based implementation covering first-party and extension user controls.
- Authored and maintained a live stakeholder-facing strategy document consolidating feature vision, roadmap, user stories, timelines, and milestones to keep cross-functional teams aligned throughout delivery.
- Served as design liaison and MVP negotiator with Project Jupyter's open-source developer community on GitHub, securing engineering approvals through the design process and keeping delivery on schedule.

Product Manager and UX Designer (Travel and Leisure Portfolio)

Internet Brands, Inc.

April 2016 - August 2018

- Collaborated with managers across functional units to advance product roadmaps across multiple web properties, delivering site redesigns, feature implementations, and data migrations.
- Designed UX for key features across Fodor's Travel, including the homepage and destination guides by partnering with a senior visual designer to deliver modern, brand-forward experiences.

Skills & Tools

Skills

User Flows, Wireframes, Prototypes, User Testing, Iteration, High Fidelity Design, Dev Handoff Ready Files, Creation/Management/Use of Design Systems and Tokens, Component Libraries, Design Documentation, UAT/Design QA, Lean Research (Secondary Research, Competitive Audits, User Flows, Requirement and Pain Point Gathering), Strategy, Evaluation, Presentation/Advocacy/Negotiation, IC Mentorship, Cross-team Collaboration, Relationship Management

Tools

Figma/Make, Axure, UserTesting, Webflow, Github, Jira, Confluence, Asana, ChatGPT, Claude, NotebookLM

Education

Master's of Human Computer Interaction and Design

University of California, Irvine

4.0 GPA