

Samuel (Sam) Lombardo

Product Design Leader | Builds and Scales Design and Marketing Organizations | AI Native Product Builder
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PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Product design leader with 17+ years of design leadership who builds organizations and still ships the work. I have grown design organizations from 8 to 30+ designers and led 75+ design professionals across my career, including a combined design and marketing organization of 4 senior managers, 4 managers, and 10 senior leads. Most recently, I directed design for a 7-platform enterprise SaaS ecosystem serving 10,000+ users, then founded ClarityOS and built it myself in Cursor and Claude Code to 380+ paying subscribers. My early career in themed entertainment, including leading 25 designers on Universal's Volcano Bay, means I understand physical builds as well as screens, and I have worked directly beside CEOs to turn their ideas into products people actually use. Now I want to bring what I learned building ClarityOS into a design organization as a full-time leader.

CORE SKILLS

Leadership: Building and Scaling Design Organizations, Managing Managers, Combined Design and Marketing Leadership, Hiring and Promoting Leaders, Design Governance, DesignOps, CEO and Executive Partnership, New Business Development

Product Design: Enterprise SaaS, Consumer Mobile and Web, AI-Powered Experiences, Onboarding and Retention, Design Systems, Accessibility, Physical and Digital Experience Design

AI Native Building: Working Prototypes and Production Code in Cursor and Claude Code, Claude API, React, Tailwind CSS, Critical Review of AI Output

Tools: Figma, Framer, Adobe CC, Cursor, Claude Code, React, Tailwind CSS, Supabase, Stripe, Heap, Jira, Maya, AutoCAD

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Founder, Product Design and AI Strategy

March 2026 to Present

Digital Tech Solutions LLC, Orlando, FL (Remote)

- Spent two years researching the problem before building, drawing on my own experience and conversations with executives, hiring managers, department leads, and employees.
- Designed and built ClarityOS, a four-product AI-native subscription suite, taking it from a blank page to 380+ paying subscribers while owning product, design, and build.
- Built the product directly in Cursor and Claude Code from Figma designs and written specs, on Supabase, Stripe, and Heap, then merged four tools with four logins into one hub after watching how subscribers used them.
- Designed and shipped ClearFile AI, a live document analysis product for loan officers, mortgage professionals, and landlords, reaching 99% extraction accuracy in user testing.

Director, User Experience & Product Design

June 2024 to February 2026

JRA, Part of RWS Global, Cincinnati, OH (Remote), digital product design firm

- Directed design for UserCore, a client's 7-platform enterprise SaaS ecosystem serving 10,000+ users, lifting retention 18% and feature engagement 26% over an 8-month engagement by standardizing interaction patterns across all seven products and clarifying decision rights between Product, Engineering, and Design.
- Consolidated a second client's design system across React, Vue, and iOS, cutting frontend delivery 40%, retiring 60%+ of redundant components, and setting C-suite-backed governance and accessibility standards.
- Led a distributed team of 12+ design professionals, with research and content design reporting directly, building the team through direct hiring and developing inherited talent.
- Led the end-to-end reset of Vaultix, a consumer FinTech mobile app, partnering with the CTO to rebuild onboarding around trust, taking completion from 35% to 60%, cutting acquisition cost 31%, and lifting CLV to CAC from 0.8:1 to 2.4:1.
- Led Fresh Fusion, an AI-powered kitchen app, from discovery through brand, UX, and AI interaction design, directing three teams of 10; it launched with 38.4% scan-to-recipe conversion, a 24.2% lift in 7-day retention, and 29.1% less food waste.

Director of Product Strategy and Experience

August 2021 to June 2024

Haan Consulting Group, Alpharetta, GA (Remote)

Part-time alongside Scenario from August 2021, full-time from May 2023

- Reported directly to the Founder and CEO, turning the ideas of executives and business owners into clear visual strategy so clients could see what their business could become before investing in it.
- Managed up to five client engagements at a time, delivering 40+ production-ready client launches, and joined the CEO on client calls and presentations, growing into a partner in bringing in new business.

- Built the firm's design practice from a team of one, hiring five designers, strategists, and developers and moving into a player-coach role directing the work.
- Built and led a three-person marketing team (social media, brand design, and marketing), taking ownership of design and marketing for both the firm and its clients.
- Led Kids View, a learning app for ages 4 to 9, as Principal Product & Interaction Designer; testing with 12 parents and 15 kids showed 94% usability, 60% higher onboarding self-sufficiency, and 52.4% longer sessions.

Creative Design Lead (Design Department Manager)

September 2021 to May 2023

Scenario, Orlando, FL, global themed entertainment manufacturer

- Lead design manager on Universal Epic Universe, working across all four themed worlds of the park as the daily link between design, engineering, and manufacturing.
- Ran the company's design department, coordinating five departments while consulting with project managers on smaller individual projects running alongside Epic Universe.
- Led design on multiple concurrent capital projects within a \$500M program, each with a design team of 12 to 15, turning design plans into buildable work alongside project and manufacturing managers.
- Won approval on 75% of concepts presented to institutional asset owners and C-suite partners.

Director of Digital Product and Design

August 2017 to August 2021

Demetree Global, Winter Park, FL (promoted from Design Manager)

- Joined as Design Manager, working side by side with the marketing manager. When that role was vacated three months in, stepped up to run both design and marketing and was promoted to Director two months later.
- Built and led a combined design and marketing organization in a 200+ person company, creating two new departments, leading 4 senior managers, 4 managers, and 10 senior leads, and promoting six team members into upper management.
- Grew active users from 10,000 to 50,000+ with interactive MLS property listings featuring 3D fly-throughs and rebuilt the sales journey to lift conversions 15%.
- Owned design budgets from \$20K to \$145K, including \$145K on Gateway Garden Station, a \$200M development for the City of Winter Park, and \$61K on an Amazon Go marketplace concept for the City of Oviedo.

Senior Product Experience Designer (Multi-Department Lead)

November 2014 to August 2017

Falcon's Creative Group, Orlando, FL

- Hired into a hybrid leadership role overseeing six departments of 10 to 15 people each (concept, 3D modeling, CAD engineering, special effects, animation, and post-production) on destination builds from \$500K to \$20M, including National Geographic, Busch Gardens, and Katmandu Punta Cana.
- Led a 7-person 3D modeling team on Halo: Outpost Discovery for Herschend Live and 343 Industries, overseeing concept, CAD, effects, and animation, and consulting with the manufacturing partner on life-size builds; my team built or rebuilt every 3D model in Falcon's Ring Experience, which won Platinum at the 2020 MUSE Creative Awards.

3D Design Manager

November 2012 to November 2014

The Nassal Company, Orlando, FL

- Joined as the only designer on Universal's Volcano Bay in its pre-announcement design and engineering phase, working directly with Universal Creative on what Nassal could build.
- Engineered in CAD the 6 by 6 rebar panel system that formed the park's signature volcano centerpiece, then the rest of the park.
- Promoted to 3D Design Manager within months and built the new department to 25 designers, moving fully into leading the teams and partnering with manufacturing, project, estimating, and scenic managers.
- Presented design direction in Universal board meetings and helped deliver two months ahead of schedule.
- Went on to direct five design teams on five concurrent projects, including 24 floats for Universal Studios' holiday parade, with 10 designers working in two-person teams that each carried two floats at a time.

EARLIER CAREER

- 3D Design Specialist, promoted to Senior 3D Design Lead, Advanced Recreational Concepts: built a 3D visualization pipeline from client site visits to rendered environments that turned \$5,000 to \$20,000 surfacing jobs into combined playground projects from \$50,000 to over \$3 million, and led design and marketing teams of 10 each.
- Regional Operations Manager, Publix Super Markets: full P&L accountability for a 47+ location retail territory.

EDUCATION

Master of Fine Arts in Digital Design Media, Full Sail University

Bachelor of Fine Arts in 3D Computer Animation, Digital Media Arts College

UX/UI Design Certification, TripleTen