

Sam Cusano

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Experience

Product design consultant, Various companies, Remote Dec 2024-Present

- Built explainable AI interfaces that reduced support tickets by 20%, improving operational efficiency for care providers and customer teams.
- Led a redesign that boosted content engagement 50% and reduced churn 40% by building adaptive personalization logic across the user lifecycle.
- Built a guided matching flow that reduced time-to-first-connection from 12 days to 4 days, improving funnel velocity and activation.
- Prototyped conversational checkout flows using AI intent detection, reducing cart abandonment by 18% and streamlining purchase friction.

Senior Product Designer, Apartment List, San Francisco, CA Jun 2021-Sep 2024

Rental marketplace | B2B/B2C Marketplace | 100K+ DAU | Medium design maturity

- Drove 45% increase in inventory and 80% SMB adoption by defining the product vision, conducting generative and evaluative research, and leading end-to-end design for a scalable SaaS ad-tech platform. Collaborated with sales and executive leadership to align on GTM priorities.
- Achieved 75% lead conversion for 70% of enterprise partners by designing an AI-powered B2B lead-generation platform and ad-tech management platform, directly accelerating revenue growth.
- Boosted B2C monetization conversion by 10% by designing and testing featured deals, dynamic pricing, and cross-sell experiments. Collaborated with finance for validation across mweb, desktop, and iOS platforms.
- Reduced developer handoff time by 6+ hours per project by evolving a multi-branded design system and embedding workflows into CI/CD pipelines.
- Mentored 2 designers, improving team velocity and quality through structured growth plans, design critiques, and async feedback systems.

Senior Product Designer, Preqin, New York, NY Jan 2020 - Jun 2021

Private market data platform | B2B SaaS | 500K+ DAU | Medium design maturity

- Increased operational efficiency by 15% and revenue by 20% by designing a B2B SaaS management platform for mobile web and desktop. Simplified compliance-heavy workflows in collaboration with data and engineering teams.
- Drove a 10% increase in annual recurring revenue (ARR) by launching 6 financial management features (risk forecast, custom benchmark, compliance tool, pricing, task management, and news aggregation), improving portfolio transparency and client retention.
- Achieved 15% revenue impact by aligning UX direction with GTM and C-suite stakeholders. Conducted design-led workshops and experimentation to influence pricing strategy.
- Mentored 3 designers, creating growth plans, facilitating critique rituals, and embedding scalable systems for feedback and craft development.

Senior Product Designer, Emissary, New York, NY Oct 2017 - Jul 2019

Sales intelligence marketplace | B2B SaaS | 10K+ DAU | Low design maturity

- Increased user adoption by 5% by designing key B2B flows, including onboarding, CRM integration, and discovery. Collaborated closely with product and engineering teams to ensure successful implementation.
- Boosted team efficiency by 30% by designing four tools to streamline user operations, feedback loops, and account insights.
- Improved design velocity and consistency by 20% by founding Emissary's first design system and establishing scalable UX foundations in a low-maturity environment.
- Influenced product direction by embedding customer insights early in the process through direct storytelling with Customer Success and Sales teams.
- Mentored 3 CSMs transitioning to product management, teaching product thinking, UX validation, and

aligning customer needs with business goals.

Product Designer, Etsy, New York, NY

Jul 2012 - May 2017

E-commerce | B2C & B2B2C Marketplace | 90M+ DAU | High design maturity

- Increased conversion by 10% through the launch of 5+ B2C growth features (gift cards, curated shopping, personalization, and more). Collaborated with merchandisers and data scientists to optimize user experiences across mobile web, desktop, iOS, and Android platforms.
- Boosted marketing ops efficiency by 40% by designing tools that streamlined campaign and promotion management, reducing time-to-launch and increasing marketing productivity.
- Cut development time by 80% through co-creating a platform-agnostic, multi-brand design system, ensuring scalability in partnership with engineering leads and design leadership.
- Enhanced campaign engagement by 10% by designing high-performing marketing assets (email, microsites), blending storytelling with visual craft to connect more effectively with users.
- Reduced tech debt by 5% through foundational updates across web and mobile systems, collaborating with front-end engineers and tech leads.
- Aligned cross-functional teams by leading customer journey mapping workshops and insight-driven roadmap rituals to ensure product and UX alignment across the organization.
- Led inclusive design efforts by conducting workshops and audits, embedding accessibility principles throughout the product lifecycle.

Expertise

- Product Management–experienced in stakeholder management, product lifecycle management and strategic planning, market research, project management and competitive analysis.
- User-Centered Design & Research–expertise in conducting user interviews, usability testing, and journey mapping to inform design decisions.
- Design Systems & Tools–proficient in Figma; experienced in building prototypes and maintaining scalable design systems.
- Cross-Functional Collaboration–adept at working with engineering, product management, and marketing teams to align design strategies with business goals.
- Data-Driven Design–skilled in leveraging analytics and A/B testing to optimize user experiences and drive key performance metrics.
- Mentorship & Leadership–proven ability to mentor junior designers and other career paths, fostering professional growth and enhancing team capabilities.

Education

Bachelor of Science New Media Publishing RIT, Rochester, NY