VINOTH K MANICKAM

LEAD / STAFF PRODUCT DESIGNER | DEVELOPER TOOLS, AI PRODUCTS & DESIGN SYSTEMS | REACT & TYPESCRIPT

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SUMMARY

Lead / Staff Product Designer with 11+ years designing developer platforms, AI-enabled workflows, design systems, and fintech products for regulated enterprises (Fannie Mae, PayPal, Vanguard, Atlassian, Esper). Works AI-native and in code: builds working prototypes and design-system components in React, TypeScript, and Tailwind with Claude Code, Cursor, Codex, Figma Make, and Lovable, tests them against live APIs before engineering commits, then brings work into Figma for full state coverage and production-ready handoff. Designs human-in-the-loop AI with explicit override, escalation, and fallback paths, and partners with Product and Engineering to set success metrics, using research, funnel data, and A/B tests. Impact includes cutting model approval time from 5 days to 2 at Fannie Mae and, at PayPal, growing monthly U.S. developer-portal visits from ~45K to ~160K while reducing platform-reported errors 62%.

CORE STRENGTHS

Developer Tools & Platforms • AI-Native Design & Prototyping • React, TypeScript & Tailwind Prototyping • Claude Code, Cursor & Codex • Design Systems & Component Architecture • Human-in-the-Loop AI & Trust-Critical UX • Enterprise & Regulated Product Design • Fintech, Payments & Merchant Platforms • Product Strategy & Success Metrics • A/B Testing & Experimentation • User Research & Usability Testing • Interaction Design, States & Error Handling • 0-to-1 Startup Design

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Lead Product Designer • Fannie Mae

Jun '23 – Aug '26 | Austin, TX

- Owned end-to-end product design for MUSE, Fannie Mae's enterprise model registry and model-management platform, translating complex model development, discovery, lineage, governance, validation, and reporting requirements into intuitive workflows for quantitative researchers, risk analysts, and engineering teams.
- Cut model approval time from 5 days to 2 by combining workflow telemetry, user research, and federal/regulatory guideline analysis to identify bottlenecks in a three-stage approval process; reframed which approvals truly needed to block each stage and redistributed requirements across the model lifecycle.
- Designed a human-in-the-loop AI inspection experience for property claims that analyzes contractor-submitted photos of roofs, repairs, and structural damage; enabled AI auto-approval of qualifying submissions without manual review, with image-quality checks, retake flows, escalation paths, live-video fallback, and human override for exceptions. Cut claims approval from about 2 weeks (up to 2 months at the slowest) to about 2 hours; claims that return an error are inspected in 2–4 days.
- Set design direction as the sole product designer on MUSE, serving ~500 internal users, turning ambiguous requirements into problem frames, journey models, prototypes, and proposals presented to Director, Senior Director, and VP leaders.
- Built working React, TypeScript, and Tailwind prototypes of MUSE approval stages, risk categories, form controls, and data tables with Claude Code, Cursor, Figma Make, and Lovable, tested against live APIs; one data table crashed on real responses, an issue static mockups would not have shown, caught before any engineering time was spent. The prototypes also supported usability testing, A/B tests, and stakeholder review.
- Defined the visual and interaction system for MUSE and related data-heavy products: a shared component language for navigation, search and filtering, dense tables, and states, with WCAG 2.2 AA guidance and documentation for engineering.
- Built and updated design-system components in the codebase with AI coding tools under engineering review, and used AI agents to audit implementations against system standards, including WCAG 2.2 AA issues; wrote agent instruction files so coding agents default to correct system usage.
- Partnered with Engineering to balance experience quality with feasibility, escalating experience-critical tradeoffs; reviewed builds against system standards in design QA and UAT across positive, negative, and edge cases.
- Ran workshops and wrote usage guides and release notes so teams could adopt the system consistently.
- Redesigned recovery and billing workflows with AI document extraction, cutting case and invoice processing time from about one week to a few hours.

Senior Product Designer • PayPal

Oct '21 – Jun '23 | Austin, TX

- Led product design for developer.paypal.com and its documentation portal, unifying portal, documentation, and tooling into one integration journey, partnering with Product, Research, Design, and Engineering through launch and post-launch iteration.
- Led developer research through diary studies, interviews, journey mapping, and behavioral analysis to identify integration friction; synthesized findings for Product leadership and influenced a strategy shift from third-party tooling toward a step-by-step documentation and integration experience.

- Simplified signup, documentation discovery, and integration workflows to improve developer activation, growing monthly U.S. developer-portal visits from ~45K to ~160K in the quarter after launch, while reducing platform-reported errors 62%.
- Measured post-launch funnels across signup, integration stages, and completion to find friction, compare against the previous experience, and guide each iteration.

Senior UX Designer • Advisor & Employee Experience • Vanguard Oct '19 – Sep '21 | Dallas, TX

- Headed design for internal financial-advisor consoles and back-office tools, prioritizing scanning speed, visual hierarchy, system observability, and low cognitive load across regulated financial workflows.
- Designed a crypto-enabled giving portal for ultra-high-net-worth clients, covering cause discovery, multi-asset transfers, parallel signature orchestration, and post-settlement tax delivery.
- Planned and conducted user interviews, contextual inquiries, usability testing, A/B testing, and journey-mapping sessions with financial advisors to evaluate and improve portfolio and client-management workflows; established quantitative tracking to measure task success.
- Drove system-wide migrations of advisor and back-office tools onto unified component libraries, standardizing patterns across products, accelerating engineering handoffs, and reducing rework across global squads.

Senior Product Designer • Esper Apr '18 – Oct '19 | Bengaluru, India

- As the sole designer and entire design function, led 0-to-1 design for Esper's device-management platform, turning an ambiguous product space into the foundational information architecture, workflows, high-fidelity UI, and Figma design system.
- Designed the enterprise admin console, including role-based permissions, role-specific views, and an audit trail, plus self-serve onboarding flows, including physical device setup, for non-technical customers, enabling them to onboard without Esper team assistance, speeding up setup, and eliminating onboarding-related support requests.
- Designed in-product help using a regression-based chatbot and rule-based contextual triggers, with automated deflection workflows that reduced UX-related support demand.

UX Designer • Atlassian Jul '17 – Mar '18 | Gdansk, Poland

- Designed Jira's JQL search experience for high-density power-user workflows and designed filters and shared dashboards that improved search productivity and reduced administrator workload.
- Designed the guided administrator experience for Jira Data Center zero-downtime upgrades, including readiness checks, monitoring, and recovery.
- Introduced a new Jira data-table interaction pattern, defining structure, behavior, states, motion, and documentation, and partnered with Engineering and QA to ship it.
- Contributed reusable patterns to the Atlassian Design System.

UX Designer • Cropin May '16 – Jun '17 | Bengaluru, India

- Conducted on-field research with low-tech-literacy field officers and operators to design mobile field-operation tools for low-connectivity, physical-world environments, contributing to a 59% increase in retention.
- Designed a conversational experience for low-tech-literacy farmers across six languages.

Senior UX Designer • InMobi Jan '15 – Apr '16 | Bengaluru, India

- Designed mobile wallet, checkout, and integration experiences for mobile commerce.

Project Engineer • Minimelt Engineers 2008 – 2014 | India

- Coordinated on-site execution of steel-plant and aluminium-factory projects with multidisciplinary engineering teams.

TOOLS & METHODS

Code & AI Tools: React, TypeScript, Tailwind CSS, HTML, CSS, JavaScript, Claude Code, Cursor, Codex, Lovable, Figma Make, Claude, ChatGPT.

Product Design & Research: Problem Framing, Information Architecture, User Interviews, Diary Studies, Contextual Inquiry, Journey Mapping, Usability Testing, A/B Testing, Concept Validation, Research Synthesis, Conversational Interfaces.

Systems & Craft: Design Systems (Tokens, Contribution Models, Variants), Interaction Pattern Libraries, Figma, FigJam, High-Density Data Visualization, Observability & Error Recovery, Design QA, Implementation Review, UAT, WCAG 2.2 AA Accessibility.

Metrics & Leadership: Task Success Rates, Onboarding & Activation Funnels, Telemetry & Funnel Analysis, Experiment Design, Quantitative/Qualitative Analysis, Cross-Functional Leadership, Executive Stakeholder Alignment, Design Critique, Agile, Linear, Jira.

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Engineering • Computer Science • VIT University, Vellore, India • 2008