

# Derek Orr

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Product Design Leader · AI-Driven Experience Maker

Greater Seattle Area · Open to Remote, Hybrid, or In-Office

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## Summary

I'm a maker and leader with 20+ years designing and shipping at scale for eBay, Airbnb, Uber, Amazon, Microsoft, and Instagram. My work spans AI-first personalization, large-scale discovery and search, UX/UI, system and service design, motion, rapid prototyping, and storytelling—grounded by a Master's in HCI and a career-long focus on customer impact.

I excel at getting “clay on the wheel” fast—building in-hand prototypes and vision narratives so teams can think big, fail fast, and rally around tangible starting points. I know when to leverage a design system and when to go outside the system to serve the customer best.

I've built and led high-performing teams while staying close to the craft. My approach blends customer insight, data-informed decisions, and high-bar execution to deliver useful, beautiful products—quickly.

## Core Strengths & Skills

AI-first personalization & large-scale discovery/search · Rapid prototyping (interactive, multimodal, in code) · System & service design for complex ecosystems · Cross-platform UX/UI craft + motion storytelling · Customer-centered, data-informed decision making · Inspiring teams & raising the quality bar · Storytelling & vision narratives · Multimodal interaction design (voice, image, text, chat) · Design systems · Information architecture · Leadership & mentoring

***"Just hire Derek Orr. He's a triple threat: excellent designer, outstanding storyteller, inspiring leader. His impact was immediate."***

*— Christine Fernandez, VP Product Design*

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## Experience

### eBay

Head of Design & Senior Product Design Manager, eBay Motors (Focused Categories)  
Mar 2023 - Mar 2025 · 2 yrs 1 mo · Seattle, WA

- Led AI-powered 0–1 features (e.g., Mod Mode, Smart Offers, post-purchase GenAI sneaker videos with Tooploox) and core flows across navigation, fitment, and sizing. Partnered with Tooploox (AI software) and Frog Design on eBay's biggest AI bets; regular partner to eBay's AI designer on assistant/assistance interaction models.
- Designed dual navigation paths for Parts & Accessories: precise Year/Make/Model/Trim flows and playful, data-driven AI vehicle personas ("Trail Blazer," "Speed Demon," etc.) for lighter, more engaging refinement.
- Partnered with Fashion to align sizing/personalization patterns across sneaker/apparel and vehicle fitment; pushed and leveraged the Design System judiciously.
- Explored intelligent pre-fill via VIN, photos, and voice to reduce friction. Represented Design in GenAI summits, roadmap storytelling, and cross-org strategic planning.
- Built multimodal search prototypes (voice, image, text, chat); created a live-coded Design Ops hub centralizing resources and improving team velocity.
- Launched Critapalooza (org-wide critique festival), ran multi-day design sprints with Frog, and led FIGJAM "chat-storming" plus hands-on AI workshops to upskill teams at pace.

## **Amazon**

Senior Product Design Manager, Amazon Photos

Sep 2019 to Jan 2022 · 2 yrs 5 mos · Seattle, WA

- Led a cross-platform reimagining (iOS, Android, web, desktop, devices); advocated a Photos-first design system and secured buy-in from Amazon's central Design Systems team.
- Prototyped natural language/voice search ("Show me photos of Henry in the snow from two years ago..."), later influencing Amazon's native NL capabilities.
- Championed a fit-for-purpose redesign over a reskin through rapid, high-fidelity prototypes; demonstrated multimodal interaction patterns and inspired a ground-up rethink of the experience.
- Partnered with engineering and applied science teams to explore ranking systems, AI-powered personalization, and catalog-scale image data to improve discovery and relevance.

## **Microsoft**

Product Design & UXR Director, Microsoft AI

Oct 2013 - Dec 2016 · 3 yrs 3 mos · Redmond, WA

- Directed 45 designers across 5 countries, evolving Cortana from voice assistant to ecosystem connector; drove alignment across geographies and disciplines.
- Partnered with engineering and research to prototype and validate AI-driven experiences; championed human-in-the-loop design principles for responsible AI across Windows, Office, Xbox, Devices and more.
- Explored multimodal voice, image, and text concepts grounded in customer needs, anticipating patterns now core to Microsoft's AI ecosystem.  
Previously: Senior Product Designer, Office 365 Mobile — designed new-category productivity apps for iOS/Android, shipped rapidly, and earned a US patent for interaction design.

## **Airbnb**

Head of Design / Senior Director, Product & Service Excellence

May 2017 - Jul 2018 · 1 yr 3 mos · Seattle, WA & San Francisco, CA

- Led system and service design for the “Future of Help” initiative — reimaged IVR flows, agent tools, and cross-channel CX with smart, automated features that reduced time-to-resolution.
- Redesigned taxonomy and IA of help content, boosting findability for both customers and CX agents.
- Scaled and led design teams across SF, SEA, and PDX; co-led the Seattle site; set long-term vision and elevated storytelling to align executives and XFN partners on CX strategy.

## **Uber**

Senior Design Manager / Head of Design, Seattle Product, Design & Engineering

Sep 2015 to May 2017 · 1 yr 9 mos · Seattle, WA & San Francisco, CA

- Sole designer on 0–1 Uber Family & Uber Teen — trust-first experiences balancing safety, clarity, and independence.
- Grew from Seattle’s first senior design hire to site Head of Design and co-site lead, building the location’s design presence from scratch while hiring, mentoring, and setting vision.
- Contributed to Scheduled Rides, Airports, and Uber Movement, setting early vision, storytelling, and product direction.

## **Instagram**

Senior Product Design Manager, IGDS, Web & Accessibility

Jan 2022 - Apr 2022 · 4 mos · New York, NY

- Recruited by Mig Reyes (now VP at Duolingo) to lead systems, web, and accessibility design, driving cross-platform improvements.
- In just 4 months, stood up an XFN team across Design, Product, and Engineering; coordinated NYC design sprints; and ran cross-company “jams” with peer teams at Google.

- Delivered outsized impact in a short tenure — raising the quality bar and accelerating delivery through deep stakeholder partnerships.

## **Career Impact**

A consistent thread across my career is delivering high-impact outcomes quickly, pairing ambitious ideas with disciplined execution:

- Shipped high-impact AI features at speed — AI-powered reviews in 2 weeks; Smart Offers MVP in 1 month; post-transaction GenAI sneaker video with tailored social content.
- Reimagined flagship products and systems — Amazon Photos cross-platform redesign; sole designer on 0–1 Uber Family & Uber Teen; Airbnb “Future of Help” with system & service design.
- Built and led high-performing teams — Grew and mentored design orgs at eBay, Uber, and Airbnb; partnered with Tooploox and Frog Design on eBay’s biggest AI bets.
- Consistently recognized for excellence — top-tier performer across roles, with 30+ “You Made My Day” awards, Luminary Award nomination, and a track record of raising the design quality bar.

## **Education**

Master’s in Human-Computer Interaction (HCI) — Griffith University (UW Equivalency)

Bachelor’s in Built Environment — Queensland University of Technology