

M. David Conrad

DavidConrad.com *password: mdc2022*

206.349.5477

mdconrad@gmail.com

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/davidconrad>

I'm a systems-thinker and leader with a passion for building customer-centered product design teams and culture.

Professional Experience

Head of Product Design, Arcadia

2022 – 2023

At Arcadia, a leading climate-tech start-up focused on decarbonization through energy analytics, I led the product design function including teams of designers for both the Community Solar and Arc data platform businesses.

Outcomes:

- **PLATFORM INTEGRATION STRATEGY:** I worked closely with partners in product management and engineering to define a strategy for integrating three products into a single platform including release milestones, UX implications, and customer migration scenarios.
- **PLATFORM DESIGN DIRECTION:** With the consolidation of Arcadia's two 2022 acquisitions into a unified data platform, I provided direction for vision of our platform experiences and clarity on roles-and-responsibilities for the design team that enabled the team to work in parallel while ensuring cohesive experiences.
- **VOICE OF CUSTOMER PROGRAM:** In partnership with VP of Sales and Director of Strategy, I help define a framework to be used for capturing and synthesizing our voice of the customer program which sought to develop a deeper and more consistent understanding of customer needs.
- **MANAGED THROUGH RESTRUCTURING:** Before being laid-off myself, I helped support my teams through two rounds of restructuring where team-members and/or peer positions were eliminated by facilitating strategic micro-re-orgs and promoting self-care.

Principal Studio Manager – Data Cloud Studio, Microsoft

2017 – 2022

At Microsoft, I worked with my peers on our leadership team to craft vision and strategy for our Data Platform products. Additionally, I led a globally distributed studio of over 30 people across four separate teams of design managers, UX designers, visual designers, and design engineers where my focus was on hiring, coaching, and enabling impact.

Outcomes:

- **PRODUCT LAUNCHES:** Delivered product launches of Azure Data Factory, Azure Synapse Analytics, and Azure Purview Data Governance products, resulting in combined growth of over 40k organizations since launch.
- **DESIGN QUALITY:** Drove improvements in design quality standards through the creation of an org-wide design system and review boards resulting in improvements to CSAT.
- **PRODUCT ENVISIONING:** Lead design teams responsible for envisioning work which drove CEO-level approval for new product initiatives.
- **TEAM GROWTH:** Facilitated growth of the team from 12 to over 30 through advocacy and direct hiring work.
- **GLOBAL TEAMS:** Built remote design studios in Beijing and Bangalore, hiring designers, establishing processes, and structuring cultural standards.
- **TEAM STABILITY:** Brought stability in leadership to the team through two substantial reorgs, reducing attrition to near-zero (compared to over 40% for partner orgs) and driving clarity for the team on how to move forward.
- **LEADERSHIP VALUES:** Demonstrated values and principles for the company through mentoring, team coaching, and caring for my team and our partners.

Co-Founder / Design Director, Design Commission

2004 – 2017

As a Co-Founder and Design Director at Design Commission, I was primarily responsible for working with clients to identify goals and opportunities and then creating a plan to address them. Additionally, I handled

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job costing and resource planning, worked with our team to identify and execute design directions, and to coordinate production and implementation with our engineers.

Outcomes:

- **SALES AND MARKETING OVERSIGHT:** Defined a sales strategy and associated marketing channels, including social media, referral networks, and event-based marketing.
- **DESIGN OPS:** Worked with studio producers to define Design Operations processes which scaled across multiple clients and project teams.
- **RESOURCING:** Lead growth of studio strategically to align with business need and anticipated client demand for over thirteen years.
- **BUSINESS MANAGEMENT:** Managed the business with annual revenue of over \$2m.
- **CLIENT SUCCESS:** Supported multiple startups to successful exits through acquisition and series B + funding rounds.

Co-Founder at UI Stencils

2007 – 2015

As a co-founder and product designer for the UI design tool company, I was involved in all aspects of the business – from collaborating on product strategy and design to supply-chain management and inventory-control, and customer service. I also coordinated planning for social media campaigns and channel marketing partnerships. We grew the company from its start as a holiday gift idea for our clients at Design Commission, to fully matured and profitable product company.

Outcomes:

- **BUSINESS OPS:** Supported business operations for direct-to-consumer product company with annual revenue of over \$500k
- **DESIGN DIRECTION AND PRODUCTION:** Co-lead product design direction and production with the release of dozens of products with manufacturing in the US as well as China

Additional Experience:

Mobile Experience Design Instructor, University of Washington

March 2014—May 2016

Freelance Graphic Designer at Conrad Design

September 2000—December 2004

Experience Design Lead at Electronic Arts

February 2000—August 2000

Designer at 800.com

August 1998—January 2000

Volunteer Experience

Board Member, Wild Steelhead Coalition

September 2019— Present

Founding Chapter Organizer and Host, Seattle CreativeMornings

November 2011—February 2019

Advisor, Brand.ai (InVision DSM)

July 2015—November 2017

Mentor, Techstars

May 2012—September 2015

Advisory Board Member, AIGA Seattle

August 2011—October 2015

Education

University of Washington

Certificate, Design Firm Leadership & Mgmt.,
2002

Fort Lewis College

BFA, English / Communications
1993–1997