

# Robert Chu

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## SUMMARY

Product design leader with 20+ years of experience across UX, interaction design, brand management, visual design, and team leadership for enterprise, B2B, and consumer products. I am currently leading a team of 7 designers at Cisco, driving AI governance through vibe-coded apps, agents, and practices that accelerate execution and facilitate collaboration.

My leadership is people-focused and systems-minded. I clarify problems, identify opportunities for interaction design, align Product and Engineering early, establish ways of working, and raise the quality of decision-making across the team. I'm strongest where design must connect user insight, business strategy, technical constraints, and measurable outcomes.

## SKILLS

**Design Leadership & People Management:** Team leadership, mentorship, coaching, player-coach practice, career development, inclusive culture, team norming, workshop facilitation, stakeholder management, cross-disciplinary influence, art direction, creative direction, project management

**AI-Integrated Design Workflows:** AI governance, prompt engineering, evaluation loops, AI-assisted research methods, generative prototyping, vibe coding / building apps, agents, and `skills.md` workflows that accelerate design teams

**Research & Product Strategy:** Qualitative and quantitative research, unmoderated and moderated usability testing, contextual inquiry, journey mapping, problem framing, north-star definition, service blueprint, written design briefs, decision frameworks, product discovery, vision setting and roadmapping

**UX, Product & Interaction Design:** Information architecture, UX architecture, interaction design, user flows, low/mid/high-fidelity prototyping, responsive design, accessibility, storyboarding, user need statements

**Design Ops:** Design system governance, component libraries, multi-product consistency, service design

**Tools:** Figma, Figma Make, Cursor, Claude, ChatGPT, MCP (Model Context Protocol) servers, Firefly, Stable Diffusion, Adobe Creative Suite, Miro, UserTesting, Jira, Confluence, GitHub

## EXPERIENCE

### Cisco — Product Design Manager

Apr 2025 – Present

*Bothell, WA (Remote)*

- Lead and coach a team of 7 designers across the full product design process, from problem framing and discovery through scoping, establishing KPIs, stakeholder alignment, QA, delivery oversight, and design critique.
- Coach, model behaviors, and support design team members; boosting morale, retaining top talent, and consistently rated highly in team engagement surveys.
- Create and share AI-enabled agents, apps, `skills.md` workflows, and utilities via GitHub repo to support designers across functions and encourage responsible AI-assisted collaboration; achieved broad team adoption and iteration.
- Partner with Product Management, Strategy, and Engineering to align product direction, ways of working, scope, and delivery priorities for critical initiatives, contributing to user sentiment improvements of up to 15 points.
- Integrate AI prototyping and research-synthesis tools into the team workflow ahead of the formal roadmap, substantially reducing time from concept to clickable prototype.

### Cisco — Senior UX Designer

Jan 2022 – Apr 2025

*Bellevue, WA (Remote)*

- Led end-to-end UX for four complex product spaces, including discovery, user research, information architecture, user flows, wireframes, Figma prototypes, design-system contribution, and engineering handoff.
- Helped ship large applications on time and within scope by translating ambiguous product requirements into clear UX architecture, interaction models, and implementation-ready design support.
- Conducted both moderated and unmoderated usability testing and synthesized findings into prioritized design recommendations for product and engineering stakeholders.

### Blackboard — Senior Product Designer

May 2019 – Jan 2022

*Austin, TX*

- Designed interaction patterns for instructor and administrator workflows across the Blackboard Data ecosystem, focused on making student data available, legible, and actionable.
- Contributed components and patterns to the Blackboard design system while partnering with Product, Engineering, and Research to evolve the product's interaction ecosystem alongside a large legacy codebase.
- Ran user research and concept testing to separate stated requests from underlying user needs, then translated findings into shipped product improvements used by multiple educational institutions worldwide.

**Ketra (acquired by Lutron) — Creative Director**

Dec 2017 – Jan 2019

*Austin, TX*

- Owned brand experience and outward-facing customer touchpoints for a category-defining lighting technology startup, including identity system, photography, video, web UX, UI, trade show, and sales enablement.
- Built and directed a blended team, leveraging internal marketers and designers alongside a group of external creative resources in establishing brand voice and UX language across all customer touchpoints.
- Established creative review and approval processes that helped a small team produce with the velocity and quality control of a much larger organization.

**BuildASign.com — Design Director**

Jan 2012 – Dec 2017

*Austin, TX*

- Led design and UX across a vast array of startup e-commerce brands.
- Managed a cross-functional design team inside an agile product organization, partnering closely with Product, Marketing, and Engineering.
- Defined and ran a continuous A/B-testing program that compounded conversion improvements year over year.
- Stewarded brand tone, visual systems, UX consistency, storefront experiences, email, packaging, and paid media across multiple brands.
- Built hiring, critique, and mentorship practices that developed a strong designer pipeline; several reports went on to senior design and design-leadership roles at other organizations.

**AIGA Austin — Education Chair / Small Talks Chair**

2012 – 2016

*Austin, TX*

- Built an after-school design education program for high-school students in partnership with local nonprofits.
- Curated a recurring TED Talk-like series connecting the Austin design community with leading local design studios.

**EDUCATION**

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**The University of Texas at Austin** — BA, Communications (College of Communication)**PORTFOLIO**

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[robertchuportfolio.com/index.html](http://robertchuportfolio.com/index.html) (password for hidden areas: RobDesigns1!) — case studies are being refreshed. More recent AI Cisco work samples available upon request.