

Valentine Zubkov

Design Engineer

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Summary

Design Engineer with 10+ years in Product & UX/UI Design and 3+ years in Apple-platform & web development, focused on building high-craft, clean and focused interfaces that are both accessible and engaging. Combines strong design judgment with hands-on engineering expertise, and owns user experiences end-to-end, from component interactions to complete shipped products. Grounding this work in data-driven design and clean, scalable UI architecture, accelerates delivery through robust design systems and pragmatic, outcome-targeted development.

Over a decade, designed and built multiple consumer and B2B 0→1 products, spanning product design, UI systems, engineering, and deployment. Delivered five MVPs for eight global startups, built four production microservices for a large corporate platform, and launched four App Store apps end-to-end. Designed and scaled four cross-platform design systems used across multiple products, and shipped a design framework distributed for Codex and Claude Code through an MCP integration.

Professional Experience

The Freak Company

Design Engineer, 2023 to Present

Owns end-to-end design, engineering, and distribution for four multi-platform Apple applications in the Freak Apps bundle (personal finance & fitness), the bookmark manager and web launchpad Tinypad, and the design framework FreakUI. Takes products from early exploration through production release, with a strong focus on interaction quality and system integrity.

- Built and launched Tinypad in React, TypeScript, and Next.js, reaching 150%+ average month-over-month user growth, 60%+ average month-over-month revenue growth, and 1.4x ROAS as of August 2026. It uses MongoDB, is deployed on Vercel, and handles payments through Paddle.
- Designed and shipped complete product experiences across the Freak Apps bundle in Swift/SwiftUI, owning features from research and UX through App Store-ready production code.
- Architected scalable application foundations using MVVM, dependency injection, and programmatic navigation, enabling smooth performance, fast iteration, and long-term maintainability.
- Built a privacy-aware, real-time data layer using Firebase (Authentication, Firestore, security rules) to support secure cross-device synchronization and consistent state management.
- Authored and published FreakUI, an open-source SwiftUI framework providing reusable components, theming, navigation, accessibility, and interaction patterns for faster Apple-platform development. Packaged FreakUI for Codex and Claude Code, exposing shared skills through an authenticated production MCP service.
- Continues to iterate deeply on interaction details, transitions, and state handling to ensure shipped experiences feel cohesive, intentional, and polished.

BlockTrust

Senior Product & UX/UI Designer, 2023

Led design and discovery across revenue-critical products in fintech, customer engagement, and sports, owning UX systems and interface direction with a focus on clarity and measurable outcomes.

- Designed BrandPay's connected brand, customer, venue, and wallet experiences for 21 campaigns across 12 brands, which reported 1.5M+ engagements from June to August 2023.
- Accelerated client onboarding and feature delivery by ~30% by building and maintaining a scalable design system across Figma, Storybook, and Notion.
- Improved predictability between clients, internal teams, and external partners by introducing a circular knowledge-sharing system.
- Partnered closely with engineers to translate design intent into pixel-accurate, system-driven implementations.
- Provided hands-on UI guidance across smaller initiatives, improving engagement and conversion through clearer flows while raising overall interface quality and consistency.

Stimul

Product Owner, 2022–2026

Senior UX/UI Designer, 2021–2022

UX/UI Designer, 2021

Owned product strategy, discovery, and interface systems across four production microservices within a large corporate ecosystem.

- Designed a control center supporting 300 teams across five regions and 15 concurrent campaigns by translating strategic objectives into clear campaign, ownership, deadline, and progress flows.
- Built and scaled a design system spanning 14 connected modules, 100+ UI components, and 50+ user flows, improving consistency across services and engineering teams.
- Reduced feature lead time by up to 20% by integrating continuous discovery and fast feedback loops into product development.
- Reduced annual development costs by ~15% by systemizing design and collaboration workflows across teams.
- Reduced designer onboarding time by ~60% through regular 1:1 workshops, hands-on guidance, and closer design–engineering collaboration.

Freelance

UX/UI Designer, Product Manager, Project Manager, 2017–2022

Worked remotely with early-stage founders across real estate, interior design, fintech, marketplaces, and social products.

- Delivered five MVPs while contributing to eight global startups by defining product scope, information architecture, user flows, interactive prototypes, responsive interfaces, and implementation-ready design systems.
- Reduced time-to-market by prioritizing features, clarifying requirements, and coordinating delivery directly with founders and engineers.

Skills

Product & Interaction Design

Product discovery, user research, 0→1 product development, information architecture, user flows, visual design, interaction design, motion, rapid prototyping, data-informed iteration

Design Systems & UI Architecture

Cross-platform design systems, reusable component libraries, component APIs, design-to-code workflows, Figma, Storybook, documentation, responsive UI, accessibility

Frontend & Native Development

Swift, SwiftUI, React, TypeScript, JavaScript, Next.js, semantic HTML, modern CSS, component-based frontend architecture

Application Architecture

MVVM, dependency injection, programmatic navigation, state-driven UI, authentication, real-time data synchronization, performance-conscious UI development

Agentic Engineering

Codex, Claude Code, MCP integrations, agent skills, plugin development, AI-assisted prototyping, implementation, testing, and validation

Education

Russian Academy of National Economy and Public Administration, Saint Petersburg

Master of Management Strategy, 2011–2017