James Bursey

Product Designer

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EXPERIENCE

The New York Times — Product Designer — Jan 2025 - Present

I design growth experiences across Times products where I:

- Designed and shipped three Athletic conversion screens:
  - A ticket-style paywall that **lifted subscription starts 24%** (~215/week).
  - An onboarding offer that drove a 31% lift (~130 starts/week).
  - A landing page that shifted annual starts from 18% to 54% of starts.
- Aligned Engineering, Legal, and Product stakeholders to implement growth patterns that **scale as part of a larger system** across platforms and products.
- Partnered with Athletic engineers to bring Rive into the codebase for the first time, and **shipped Rive animation** in both The Athletic and the Games app.
- Built coded prototypes, including Games TimesArcade (Maker Week), where I wrote code with Claude Code, and merged and reviewed PRs with engineers.
- Taught designers new ways of working through demos on Figma/GitHub collaboration, a video on my Obsidian + Glean MCP + Claude Code workflow, and Growth Learning Day talks on spec-driven development and the Rive MCP.

Pilot — Design Lead — Jan 2023 - Present

I led a cross-functional team where I:

- Shipped products and features from 0-1 eg. mobile app & AI trip planner.
- Used data to prove efficacy of new features, eg. increasing activation by 45%.
- Led a **full rebrand** of Pilot from brand fundamentals to a scalable design system.
- Designed the **"Quick Start" AI feature**, which helped raise $300K+ from investors.
- Conducted A/B tests that lifted a core feature's CVR by 30%.
- Project-managed and mentored two junior product designers.

Nook Calendar — UX & Marketing Designer — Jan - Dec 2022

- Improved UX and conversion through an **animation-driven onboarding flow.**
- Maintained and expanded a robust design system, ensuring consistency and usability.
- Crafted assets and animations and produced a branded marketing video that helped us win **Product of the Day on ProductHunt**.
- Designed and built two responsive websites using Webflow.

Xesto Fit — User Experience Designer — Jul 2021 - Jan 2022

- Pitched and designed custom fitting UI for Swiss watchmakers Audemars Piguet.
- Conducted research into enhancing accessibility, and **shipped a fully redesigned product experience** with haptic feedback, animations, and sound cues.
- Designed the **Xesto.io** website, ensuring WCAG accessibility compliance.

University Health Network (UHN) Openlab — Design Intern — Oct - Dec 2018

- Collaborated with researchers exploring VR therapy for seniors with dementia.
- Designed a **participant & caregiver webpage** based on physician and patient insights.
- Created an explainer video for patients and caregivers and design process artifacts.

TOOLBOX

Skills

Design thinking
A/B testing
Design systems/libraries
Cross-functional facilitation
Prototyping

Methods

Design sprints
Facilitating workshops & creative exercises
Vibe coding
Accessibility auditing

Software

Figma, Rive,
Claude Code, Xcode,
Adobe After Effects,
Photoshop, Illustrator.

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Design
Industrial Design major
at OCAD University

UX Design Certificate
BrainStation

Exchange Program
National Institute of Design (Ahmedabad)