MATTHEW CASSELLA

Head of Product Design - Northport, NY (Remote)

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SUMMARY

Design leader with 20+ years building design teams, including managers, and tying design to revenue. At MNTN, grew design from 2 to 12+, led MNTN Select to nearly $17M in its first year and built an AI-native workflow that made production nearly 10x faster. At Newsday, led a 20+ person team and grew digital subscription revenue 200%+.

SKILLS

Design Leadership, Managing Managers, Hiring and Promotions, Coaching and Critique, Design Rituals, Org Design (Squads), Design Strategy, Product Vision, Outcome Metrics, Cross-Functional Leadership, Executive Communication, User Research, Product Analytics, A/B Testing, Pendo, Design Systems, Design System Governance, Accessibility (WCAG 2.1 AA), Consumer Mobile, Native iOS and Android, Enterprise B2B SaaS, AI-Native Design Workflows, Trust in AI, Claude, Claude Code, Cursor, Typography, Branding, Figma, Storybook, Adobe Creative Suite (Photoshop, Illustrator)

WORK EXPERIENCE

MNTN, Austin, TX (Remote) | *Head of Product Design (promoted from Senior UX Designer)*
03/2022 – PRESENT

- Scaled the product design organization from 2 to 12+ designers, including design managers, owning hiring, coaching, performance and promotions.
- As Head of Product Design, moved designers into outcome squads (Audience, Campaign, Innovation and others), each owning happy-path completion rates, with APX as the shared foundation every squad built on.
- Partnered with Product, Engineering and Go-to-Market leadership to shape product strategy and roadmap priorities, cutting iteration cycles by 23%.
- Led design of MNTN Select, a 0 to 1 self-serve marketplace, framing the bet with Product and Engineering: live in 6 months, nearly $17M in its first year, with Warner Bros., NBC, Disney and Paramount onboard.
- Introduced an AI-native design workflow (design system as prompt fuel, options explored in Claude, refined in Figma, reviewed in working front-end code) that raised production speed nearly 10x.
- Built APX, a themeable, WCAG 2.1 AA-compliant design system with primitives, core tokens and three themes, maintained in Figma and Storybook, improving design-to-engineering efficiency by 30%.
- Set up a feedback loop with Pendo, Hotjar, UserTesting and a Claude-built UX dashboard, validating customer requests against real usage so fewer one-off requests reached the roadmap.
- Designed FlightPlan, an AI media-planning assistant with a trust-in-AI feature that showed users the raw data behind each plan, driving quick adoption and more purchases.
- Trained an AI plugin engineers ran on front-end work before design review, validated against design system specs, cutting design-engineering back-and-forth and shipping faster.

Newsday Media Group, Melville, NY | *UX & Design Director (joined as Lead Designer)*
02/2008 – 03/2022

- Led a 20+ person multidisciplinary team, including managers, across design, engineering and QA for a high-traffic news site and native iOS and Android apps.
- A/B tested subscription funnels, moved to a hard paywall when data showed readers otherwise never subscribed and ruled out deep discounts that drove churn, growing digital subscription revenue 200%+.
- Led the Newsday.com platform rebuild: 78% faster page loads, ad viewability up from 15% to nearly 70%, ad revenue up 24% year over year and design-to-development time down 62%.
- Built in-house design capabilities and the Newsday Design System, which the React CMS used to render all site content, cutting outsourcing costs by 56%; introduced agile rituals that cut delivery time by 32%.
- Introduced UX research and analytics frameworks and used behavioral data to guide decisions; championed accessibility and responsive design, increasing user engagement by 34%.

- Designed and managed Newsday's native iOS and Android apps alongside the responsive website, keeping one consistent experience and driving higher engagement and more downloads.
- Art-directed interactive storytelling and special projects across imagery, typography, motion and layout, earning four New York Emmy Awards.
- Wrote UX copy for every project and turned large datasets into clear, digestible experiences that heightened reader engagement.
- Led design and front-end development on Long Island Divided, a three-year investigation built on large real estate datasets, adapting to shifting timelines and finishing before competitors could scoop it.

Earlier Experience | *Creative Director and Senior Designer*
2004 – 2008

- Microsoft / Sybari Software: led creative for an anti-spam and email security company, including corporate collateral and global web creative with Europe-based offices.
- Freelance, Razorshark Technologies and Berwald Creative: designed e-commerce storefronts for BigBuzz, motion-driven Flash interfaces and web, brand, print and direct mail creative.

EDUCATION

Marist College, Poughkeepsie, NY | *Bachelor of Arts, Graphic Design, with a Certificate in Advertising, Marketing and Design*