

MIKE ORTEGA

Principal Product Designer | Product Strategy & Design Systems

I shape product direction across complex digital ecosystems.

Product design leader with nearly 30 years of experience building digital products at enterprise scale, from pioneering one of the world's first electronic ticketing experiences to leading product strategy, design systems, and AI-native product development for products used by millions. I've spent my career helping organizations transform complexity into intuitive customer experiences.

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50M+

Monthly customer interactions

20+

Core customer journeys

13

Years at Verizon

CORE STRENGTHS

Product Strategy

Systems Thinking

Design Leadership

Design Systems

User-Centered Design

Product Vision

Consumer Product Design

Cross-Functional Collaboration

End-to-End Product Design

Experience Strategy

AI-Accelerated Prototyping

AI-Native Product Development

Figma & Prototyping

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

verizon

2013-2026

Led product strategy and experience design for flagship digital products serving tens of millions of customers while helping establish an enterprise design system adopted across the organization. Advanced through progressively senior leadership roles by solving increasingly complex product challenges.

Principal Product Designer & Design Systems Leader

Lead Experience Manager II

Led product strategy and experience design across flagship consumer products used by more than 50 million customers each month. Partnered with executive leadership across product, engineering, and design to define strategy, scale design systems, and deliver enterprise customer experiences.

KEY CONTRIBUTIONS

- Aligned product, engineering, marketing, and business leaders around complex customer problems, translating strategy into intuitive digital products.
- Led product strategy and experience design across a flagship digital ecosystem supporting more than 50 million customer interactions each month.
- Established foundational elements of Verizon's enterprise design system by creating reusable Figma libraries, scalable components, and interaction patterns adopted across multiple product teams.
- Built alignment across design, product, engineering, and executive stakeholders, enabling faster execution through shared clarity and measurable outcomes.
- Standardized product patterns across a large digital ecosystem, improving consistency, accelerating delivery, and reducing implementation complexity.
- Led end-to-end product design for major customer initiatives spanning subscription management, device lifecycle, account management, and connected service experiences.
- Simplified complex customer journeys through systems thinking, balancing business goals, customer needs, and technical constraints.
- Integrated AI into product discovery, rapid prototyping, documentation, and team collaboration, accelerating exploration, improving decision quality, and shortening delivery cycles.
- Influenced product direction through systems thinking, customer insight, rapid experimentation, and close partnership across design, product, and engineering.
- Mentored designers through critique, collaboration, and hands-on coaching, helping raise product quality and design maturity across the organization.

CAREER FOUNDATIONS

Dichotome

Independent Product Designer & Creative Consultant

1999-Present

Built an independent design consultancy serving organizations across the Southeast and Midwest, creating websites, digital products, and interactive experiences for regional businesses and nationally recognized brands. Representative clients included Church's Fried Chicken, Blain Kern Studios, Mardi Gras World, MECO Water Purification Systems, Man Dip Spicy Cheese Dip, and Riverfest Arkansas.

Flex360

Creative Director

2004-2013

Led a multidisciplinary team designing websites and digital products for clients across a wide range of industries. Partnered directly with executives to shape digital strategy, guide creative direction, and deliver products from discovery through launch, helping organizations solve complex business challenges through intuitive digital products and experiences.

Stone Ward Advertising

Interactive Designer

2001-2004

Created websites and digital experiences for national and regional brands, collaborating with strategists, copywriters, designers, and developers to deliver integrated campaigns from concept through launch. Representative clients included TCBY, Terminix, Carvel, and Meineke.

Anheuser-Busch Adventure Parks

Interactive Designer

1999-2001

Designed digital experiences for SeaWorld, Busch Gardens, and Discovery Cove, helping launch the world's first electronic ticket (eTicket) in 1999, an innovation later featured in The Wall Street Journal.

Global Image

Interactive Designer

1997-1999

Designed and developed websites for a fast-growing dot-com startup, helping establish the foundation for a career in digital product design.

MY DESIGN PHILOSOPHY

I believe the best digital products rarely draw attention to themselves.

Remove friction.
Create clarity.
Build trust.
Leave people smiling.

Whether I'm designing for thousands of users or millions, my goal never changes.

Leave people free to do what they came to do.

EDUCATION AND CERTIFICATIONS



Lincoln University of Missouri

Bachelor of Science, Computer Science

NCAA Soccer: 4-Year Starter,

1st Team All-Conference Striker (x2)

President of Phi Lambda Chi Fraternity



University of Missouri-Columbia

Visiting Student

Professional Certifications

- Google Introduction to Generative AI
- Google AI Essentials
- Nielsen Norman Group UX Certification (UXC)
- Human Factors International Certified User Analyst (CUA)
- Human Factors International Certified Customer Experience Analyst (CXA)
- U.S. Soccer Federation National “E” Coaches License
- U.S. Soccer Federation Referee License