

GHAITH AKKAD

UI/UX Lead | Product Design Lead

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PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Dynamic **UI/UX Lead** and **Product Design Lead** with 20+ years of expertise designing consumer-facing digital products across B2C platforms, retail digitalization, and large-scale digital transformation. I bring **hands-on design leadership combined with people management** — equally comfortable owning end-to-end product design as mentoring teams and shaping design culture. Experienced in building **Product Design Guilds**, governing modular **design systems** in Figma, and triangulating **qualitative, quantitative, and behavioral research** to drive **product discovery** and business ROI. A **systems thinker** skilled in **stakeholder influence, continuous discovery, and experimentation culture** in high-growth, high-traffic environments. Aligns product design strategy with **Drive-to-Store** retail goals and **WCAG accessibility standards**. Leverages AI and emerging technologies to keep design solutions innovative and competitive. Passionate about **mentorship, career development**, coaching senior designers and leads, and fostering **autonomy** and cross-functional collaboration with Product, Engineering, and Leadership.

CORE COMPETENCIES

- ✓ Product Design Leadership & Mentorship
- ✓ User Research & Usability Testing
- ✓ Strategic Research Triangulation
- ✓ Stakeholder Influence & Communication
- ✓ Design Systems & Quality Standards
- ✓ A/B Testing & Experimentation Culture
- ✓ Product Discovery & Feature Validation
- ✓ Career Development & Design Guild Direction
- ✓ Prototyping & Interaction Design
- ✓ Design Thinking & Systems Thinking
- ✓ Business Awareness & ROI Alignment
- ✓ Agile/Scrum & Design Rituals
- ✓ Accessibility & Inclusive Design (WCAG)
- ✓ Continuous Discovery & Design Ops

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Product Design Lead & UI/UX Lead | **e& UAE (Etisalat)** | 2017 – Present

Design Leadership

- **Defined product design strategy and UX direction** for consumer-facing digital platforms, aligning design vision with product strategy, customer needs, and measurable business outcomes across B2C web, mobile, and enterprise channels.
- Led end-to-end product design for 15+ consumer-facing digital platforms, from product discovery and hypothesis-driven research through high-fidelity Figma prototypes, interaction design, and developer handoff via Zeplin.
- **Triangulated qualitative, quantitative, and behavioral research** to identify root-cause problems and drive data-driven design solutions tied to product metrics, ROI, and revenue streams.
- Built and governed a unified Design System and component library in Figma, ensuring brand alignment, scalability, WCAG compliance, and 40% faster design-to-development handoffs.
- **Partnered with Product Managers and Engineering Leads in cross-functional product squads**, co-owning product discovery, feature prioritization, and translating product strategy into design execution through dual-track Agile.
- Drove experimentation culture through A/B testing (Adobe Target, Google Optimize), behavioral analytics (Google Analytics, Hotjar), and iterative hypothesis-driven design that optimized conversion rates across high-traffic consumer platforms.
- **Facilitated continuous discovery workshops** and hypothesis testing to validate features pre-launch, reducing development rework by 30% and ensuring design solutions were grounded in real user needs.
- Established design quality frameworks including design reviews, critiques, and feature validation, ensuring all designs met accessibility and inclusive design standards.
- Applied AI-powered features where they improved user journeys and product outcomes: integrated personalization and predictive UX analytics into product experiences, reducing AHT by 65%, ticket volume by 40%, and boosting self-service success rates.

- **Contributed to the design of an AI-powered learning assistant for People of Determination**, enhancing accessibility and engagement through interactive speech and avatar experiences — demonstrating commitment to inclusive design beyond WCAG compliance.

Team & Stakeholder Leadership

- **Mentored, guided, and coached** designers at all levels — from junior to senior designers and design leads — providing career development frameworks, regular feedback, and fostering a culture of collaboration, respect, and autonomy.
- Oversaw design rituals (reviews, critiques, discovery workshops), coordinated design work, and ensured timely delivery — all visible and documented through Jira.
- Defined and aligned OKRs for product design teams across Product, Engineering, and Leadership stakeholders.
- **Guided stakeholders toward user-centered decisions** based on research and testing, tying design outcomes to business objectives and revenue streams.
- Contributed to hiring and onboarding designers, shaping design org maturity and building a scalable, knowledge-sharing team culture.

Lead Product Designer & UX Manager | Advance Digital Media (Startup) | 2015 – 2017

- **Led a large-scale media ecosystem digital transformation**, consolidating 7 platforms (TV, radio, news, magazines) into a unified consumer-facing product experience using design thinking, systems thinking, and continuous discovery — delivered within an aggressive 2-month timeline.
- **Partnered with Product Managers and executives in cross-functional squads**, co-owning roadmap and feature prioritization to align UX with revenue goals.
- Created modular UI component libraries and adaptive design systems for brand consistency and flexibility across diverse content types — a scalable approach for multi-brand product portfolios.
- Conducted user research and usability testing with discovery workshops, improving user satisfaction by 50% and reducing page load times by 20%.

UI/UX Design Lead | Picasso Interactive (Startup) | 2011 – 2015

- **Designed the award-winning Showtimes.ae consumer app** — 'Best UX Design in Dubai 2016' (Shortlist Middle East) — 500,000+ users in 6 months, 35% higher retention than competitors.
- **Led UX governance**, established scalable design standards, ran design reviews, and mentored designers on career growth and quality delivery.
- Conducted user research, persona development, and feature validation. Pioneered AR prototypes, increasing retention by 30% and session duration by 25%.

Web Designer & Developer | Awal Solutions / Data-CD | 2003 – 2011

- Designed high-traffic websites and interactive experiences for GCC clients. Pioneered one of the region's first 360° virtual tours.

SELECTED PROJECTS & PRODUCT IMPACT

ADO.ae – Media Ecosystem Unification: Consolidated 7 media platforms into a unified consumer-facing digital ecosystem. Dynamic adaptive headers, modular UI libraries, Agile delivery in 2 months. Balanced brand identities with enhanced usability and product discoverability.

STARZPlay – Consumer App Navigation: Full continuous discovery: stakeholder interviews, user research, card sorting, competitor analysis, prototyping, usability testing. +30% discoverability, +15% retention, +25% interaction, +20% time-in-app.

Cinema Showtimes – Award-Winning Consumer App: Product discovery, persona development, UX/UI design, mobile optimization. 500K+ users in 6 months. Won 'Best UX Design in Dubai 2016.'

e& Platforms – AI-Enhanced Product Experiences: Applied AI-powered features to improve user journeys: predictive UX analytics and personalization into product flows. GenAI conversational experiences with 90% resolution accuracy across 300K+ monthly interactions.

Biometric Authentication UX: Designed multi-modal biometric flows (voice, facial, fingerprint) across 42 retail stores, 5,000+ daily transactions. Cut validation costs by 20%.

TOOLS & TECHNOLOGIES

Design & Prototyping: Figma (Expert), Sketch, Adobe XD, InVision, Zeplin, Adobe Photoshop, Adobe Illustrator

Research & Analytics: Google Analytics, Hotjar, Adobe Target, Google Optimize, Adjust, A/B Testing, Usability Testing

Product & Project Mgmt: Jira, Azure DevOps, Agile (Scrum, Kanban), OKR Frameworks, Dual-Track Agile

Front-End Knowledge: HTML5, CSS3, JavaScript, jQuery, Angular

AI & Emerging Tech: Generative AI (OpenAI, Anthropic Claude), Azure Cognitive Services, Predictive UX, Streamlit, Power Automate, ISO/IEC 42001:2023

CERTIFICATIONS

- AI Management System (AIMS): Lead Implementer ISO/IEC 42001:2023 – BSI Training Academy, 2025

EDUCATION

- BSc Computer Science & Engineering – Aleppo University
- Diploma IT & Business Administration – Tishreen University

HONORS & AWARDS

CTIO Star of the Month – e& UAE (2024) | Best UX Design in Dubai – Shortlist Middle East (2016) | Monthly Excellence Award – Etisalat (2018–2019)

LANGUAGES

English: Fluent | **Arabic:** Native