Karen Galstyan

Senior Product Leader || AI & ML || Growth & Retention || 12+ yrs

About me

I build AI-driven products that deliver real results - from the chaos of early ideas to scalable, adaptive systems that engage and retain millions. My approach blends rigorous systems thinking, deep technical intuition, and genuine curiosity about how people interact with technology. I believe in creating tools that do more than optimize: they should amplify human thought, spark creativity, and genuinely deserve our attention.

Whether scaling platforms or mentoring independent - thinking teams, my goal is always clarity over complexity, and meaningful impact over mere noise. I'm deeply drawn to technology that's ethical and human-centered - focusing less on what we *can* build, and more on what we truly *should*.

Career highlights

→ **Scaled AI Talent Marketplace** from scratch to 1M+ candidates by building an efficient talent platform with 50% reactivation

→ **Delivered impactful ML automation,** as a result - reducing overhead, boosting productivity, and enabling teams to concentrate on meaningful, high-value tasks

→ **Rebuilt global CRM operations multiple times:** streamlined processes, improved retention, and transformed user journeys across multiple markets

→ **Turned retention into a growth driver** by leveraging advanced AI/ML personalisation alongside traditional retention strategies to significantly boost user loyalty and revenue

→ **Mentored agile, independent teams.** Cultivated a culture of innovation, experimentation, and ownership

→ **Launched high-impact operational tooling** (cost calculators, GPT-powered bots, mass-edit scripts and extensions), automating workflows and dramatically cutting manual effort across recruiting and support teams

Experience

Product Owner, AI Tutor Platform

Toloka AI | AI Data Training Startup

August 2023 - Present

Leading Mindrift.ai, Toloka's expert marketplace powering large-scale AI training datasets.

Leading product for Mindrift.ai, Toloka's AI tutor marketplace - from Excel workflows to a full-stack, scalable platform serving 1M+ candidates, with 10K+ active high-profile Expert community.

- Built Talent Acquisition, Reactivation & Distribution pipelines from scratch - scaled from **10 experts managing via Excel** to **1M+ candidates processed, 10k+ active experts**, with an average reactivation rate of **50%**.

- Created a full-stack Communications Platform (Iterable) and Discord Community, tightly integrated into product. Now central to Toloka's operational excellence.

- Led ML-driven acquisition automations (like CV scoring) with high-quality outcomes, significantly reducing operational overhead and optimising budgets.

- Established a standardised, company-wide CJM framework used daily by **70+ staff** to accelerate funnel optimisation and decision-making.

- Developed productivity tooling (cost calculator, GPT-powered Telegram bot, mass-edit scripts, chrome extension), significantly automating workloads for recruiters and support teams.

Head of Engagement & CRM

Yango Ride | Global Ride-Hailing Platform (EMEA, Asia, LatAm)

Nov 2022 – Aug 2023

Owned global driver lifecycle management, engagement strategy, and cross-functional leadership across 12 countries.

- Launched a global engagement infrastructure by opening **7 hubs** and training **14 leads**, cutting new-market launch cycles by **15%**.

- Overhauled contact center operations: new CRM and telephony boosted agent productivity by **40%**, eliminated lead backlog, and raised conversion rates (**6.9%**), dramatically lowering acquisition costs.

- Rolled out **20+ automated lifecycle journeys**, significantly improving early activation and retention metrics, lifting driver retention by **13%**.

- Expanded offline driver training coverage from **15% to 30%**, reduced training cost to **$5.5 per driver**, and introduced localized "fake-order" simulations and multi-language resources.

- Introduced comprehensive CJM analytics and dashboards, quickly identifying growth and retention opportunities.

- Optimized hub cost structures by shifting non-core spending, implementing tight governance without compromising service quality.

- Established and led a cross-functional engagement team, aligning hubs, contact centers, communications, and training around clear OKRs, creating a robust long-term retention strategy.

Head of Retention

Emerging Travel Group (Ostrovok.ru, RateHawk) | Global Travel Tech

Sept 2020 – Sept 2022

Directed global retention across B2C, B2B, and Supply segments, driving significant incremental revenue growth.

- Unified CRM and loyalty strategies, increasing YoY revenue (**B2C +6%, B2B +15%, Supply +10%**).

- Deployed Exponea CDP, executing **300+ omni-channel A/B tests quarterly**, improving email-to-booking conversions by **22%**.

- Introduced dynamic tiered loyalty programs, lifting repeat bookings from **34% to 47%**, adding **$1M net revenue**.

- Integrated ML churn prediction and upsell models, reducing B2B churn by **10%** and tripling upsell per account.

- Automated real-time retention dashboards, reducing data latency from **7 days to immediate insights**, cutting manual SQL tasks by **80%**.

- Led a 15-member cross-functional squad plus 4 external vendors, consistently delivering roadmap initiatives on time and **12% under budget**.

- Fostered customer-centric culture through quarterly "Voice of Customer" initiatives, driving **+8 pts** NPS improvement.

Senior Retention Manager

Kaspersky

2016 – 2020

Spearheaded global subscription and retention transformations, significantly boosting recurring revenue.

- Transitioned Consumer business to subscription model across **60+ countries**, generating **$8.3M incremental revenue** within the first year.

- Redesigned global renewal funnels, lifting renewal rates by **7 percentage points** and reducing churn by **12%**.

- Implemented ML propensity models and dynamic price testing, increasing ARPU by **18%** without raising CAC.

- Localized lifecycle campaigns across **10 languages**, achieving average open rates of **65%** and click rates of **23%**.

- Created the Retention Operations Playbook, adopted globally, reducing campaign setup from **5 days to 1 day**.

- Mentored and promoted **3 out of 6 direct reports** into leadership roles; earned CEO Award (2019) for outstanding revenue contributions.

Education

MS, Computer Science – Bauman State University

BS, International Economics – Plekhanov University of Economics (2016)

Contacts

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