Michael Sparks

NYC
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Seasoned product management expert with a decade-long tech journey, now pivoting towards GIS, cartography, and climate. Fuelled by a passion for storytelling through maps and armed with a master's in Digital Mapping. Ready to blend expertise and enthusiasm in a new role focused on protecting the environment.

EDUCATION

University of Kentucky, Dept. of Geography, 2022-2024

Masters of Science in Digital Mapping

Yale University, New Haven, 2009-2013

Bachelor of Arts in Psychology

EXPERIENCE

CrowdedParks.Org - *Creator, Engineer, Writer*

2021 - Present

- Created a site to focus on promoting the protection of public lands as a way to mitigate the climate crisis
- Independently conceived, designed, and coded the entire site. Incorporated mobile-first design, JavaScript, HTML, CSS, Bootstrap, and DOM manipulation.
- I have written multiple stories on topics ranging from crowding in the national parks to how parks are preserving ecosystems under threat from climate change
- Interviewed dozens of park officials, scientists, park visitors, government officials, and academics, including traveling to Maryland and California to interview park superintendents

National Parks Traveler - *Contract Writer, Climate & Parks*

2021 - 2023

- Cover climate change and America's National Parks for the number one site for national parks news.
- Articles include sea level rise's impact on parks, how parks are adapting to electric vehicles, and how parks recover from extreme weather events

The New York Times

Senior Product Manager, Growth

2021 - 2023

- Lead group focusing on transforming the *New York Times'* access model and audience segmentation products
- Collaborated with stakeholders across the business and newsroom teams to launch Subscriber Only Newsletters–the first paid feature in NYT history
- Identified gaps in audience targeting and ran AB tests that improved subscriber conversion by 27%

Product Manager, Growth

2019 - 2021
- Directed a 10-person team through multiple design and AB test iterations to build an entirely new landing page for the Home Delivery product that increased conversion by 10%
- Led a 25-person team that built country-specific pricing and increased subscriber conversion by 200% outside of the U.S.

The Knot

Lead Product Manager, Guest Zone

2018 - 2019
- Defined product strategy and roadmap in collaboration with top management and a cross-functional working group
- Prepared and conducted user research, including NPS surveys, demographic surveys, user interviews, and data analysis that led directly to a 3X increase in guest list usage
- Used data segmentation to identify sources of user error, then led team that designed & introduced features to reduce user error rate by 85% in The Knot's online RSVP tool
- Work with the executive team to lead diversity and inclusion initiatives across the company, including anti-bias training & new hiring processes

Senior Product Manager, Mobile

2016 - 2018
- Coordinated cross-functional team through new product inception, launch, and multiple iterations to grow mobile users 250% YoY
- Evangelized for and helped implement a company-wide shift to "Mobile first" by leading "App Academy," & mentoring product managers to use mobile best practices

Life360

Senior Product Manager, Monetization

2014 - 2016
- Promoted to larger scale priority for the organization, driving initial monetization and product re-branding efforts for the company. Doubled sign-ups to the app's paid service within 6 months.
- Executed AB tests to test hypotheses and uncover insights about user behavior. Used results to influence management on the future direction of Life360's monetization efforts.

Product Manager, Localization

2013 - 2015
- Product lead on Life360's international product to launch the company's i18n strategy. Grew international user base to more than 30MM within 16 months.
- Launched partnership with Yahoo! Japan to localize Life360 in Japan and deliver 5 MM downloads over 2 years

TECHNICAL SKILLS

Web development, GIS, Front End Design, HTML, CSS, Javascript, Python, Mapbox GL JS, Mapbox Studio, SQL, Bootstrap, Git, GitHub, QGIS, Cartography, Data Visualization, Geospatial Data Analysis, Adobe Illustrator