

Kathy Simpson

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Summary

My background is in engineering, and I've always been a maker. I am extremely motivated, intensely curious, and radically passionate about technology. I am interested in helping teams navigate the ever expanding world of tech, but leveraging it to solve strategic challenges is just half of the puzzle. Product innovation is a by-product of cohesive team dynamics and strong leadership. I believe that successful products are second to smart teams. I love exploring new ways to build products, and with today's breadth of devices, the options are seemingly endless. At work, I love finding new ways to get my hands dirty; exploring new tools, prototyping potential solutions, trying different processes, and kicking-off initiatives. At heart I'm a geek who's often found engaging with the SF tech community through meetups, Twitter, Facebook, etc. I've played a critical role in the creation of new products, and am eager to be in a position where I can work to make products successful well beyond launch.

Technology is my life, and I will always be passionate about it. I am grateful to live in San Francisco, where I am continually surrounded by people who appreciate innovative and progressive technology as much as I do.

Skills

- Concept to launch product development
- Highly analytical with a passion for evaluating and interpreting data
- Deep understanding of mobile technologies, devices, and interaction patterns (mobile first, responsive design)
- Creative problem solving abilities and attention to detail
- Excellent communication and written skills
- Strong leadership abilities, great collaborator
- Code and deployment: HTML/CSS/JS, experience with RoR, iOS, HTML5 (as well as hybrid apps), GitHub, Jenkins/Cucumber, TestFlight

Work Experience

Sr Product Manager, Substantial

Now

At Substantial I work with a team of developers and designers to take product ideas from conception to launch. Along with daily product management tasks like reporting, data analysis, scrum management, I specialize in refining our communication and process, which helps us tone our weaknesses and improve our strengths. We employ a deep level of honesty and analysis for what we do and how we do it. My team is skilled at successful product launches that continue to grow in the real world. To help ensure future growth and stability, I empower my team by leveraging tools to help us succeed such as authoring Product Opportunity Assessment or Lean Canvas, defining our MVP criteria and hypotheses, collaborating to move past road blocks intelligently, and highlighting product market fit goals and roadmap.

Sr. Product Manager, Disqus

8/12-8/13

At Disqus, I managed the core commenting product. Making and maintaining an established product with hundreds of thousands of users was daunting, but welcome. Often, I dove deep into user experience challenges. I partnered with senior leadership, product designers, front-end, support and infrastructure engineers to cultivate an intense curiosity for understanding user happiness. Day to day we used a combination of user feedback, product design intuition and data to help us make decisions that result in everything from subtle to blue sky executions.

Product Manager, Say Media

8/12-8/13

My work at Say began as the Product Manager for Mobile. My initial focus was to improve and manage the mobile product suite for network advertising. I was able to scale the mobile product to respond to a marketplace and revenue stream that continues to grow, tripling in my first three months. Currently, I focus on building and maintaining a product suite that Say's global studio uses to build, traffic and publish all of our ad units. Additionally, I spearheaded our HTML5 strategy, and am working to scale our capabilities around this technology.

Technical Architect, Hot Studio Inc

12/10-8/12

At Hot, I was promoted to collaborate with a cross-disciplinary team to identify

product requirements for design, technology, and operations. Defined PRDs, constructing product road maps that pair with business objectives, wrote/estimated/prioritized stories; maintaining communication and flexibility through the agile process of product development was core to my role. I played a creative role, pairing with engineering to write HTML5 proof of concepts which increased my team's productivity and contributed to the success of our products.

Technical Strategist, Hot Studio Inc.

12/07-12/10

Engineering begins when the project starts. My promotion to Technical Strategist focused on identifying project requirements for engineering and design as they relate to publishing platforms and frameworks. These requirements informed recommendations for new technologies, and instructions regarding how to navigate and build within legacy systems.

Web Application Developer, Hot Studio Inc.

12/06-12/07

During my time at Hot as a front-end coder, I was the sole member of the engineering team, so I quickly learned how to wear many hats. My primary responsibility was both client-side programming for design template support, and for prepping CMS integration. Additionally, I often found myself as a lead technical consultant for our UX and Visual Design teams.

Web Developer, Google Inc.

7/06-12/06

I worked on the Google.com client-side development team. My focus was on google.com/jobs, where I worked to maintain I18N across our international domains. Through collaboration with the Google's global translation and engineering groups, I developed key communication skills for working with remote teams. Additionally, I worked with the UX team to iteratively update google.com/jobs using end-user test driven design methodologies.

Education

Pacific Lutheran University

Philosophy and Physical Anthropology 9/00-5/04

Achievements

- Owner and founder of ThingsKnit
- Co-Host for Making Product Better podcast (currently in production)
- Lecturer at General Assembly SF
- Lead member of the Product and Engineering Culture Club at Say Media
Honorable Mention in the Say Media Hack to the Future 2, Hackathon
- Founder of The Breakfast Club, a bimonthly breakfast for SOMA tech entrepreneurs Editor of the dailymile blog | dailymile.com/blog
- Active member of the women in technology and science community
- Founding team member of The StepsFoundation nonprofit
- Competitive marathon runner