

MARK CHRISTIAN JAMES

Product & UX leader, helping to create technology for Psychedelic Assisted Psychotherapy, neuroscience research, and digital products that reduce mental suffering

CAREER SUMMARY

- Over two decades experience in Product, UX & Design Leadership
- Expertise in Mental Health & Marketplaces
- Experience building & leading teams in small start-ups through to large corporates
- Effective leader and equally passionate individual contributor
- Led, designed and built Pattern Libraries & Design Systems for five organisation

WHY INTERVIEW ME?

My working style in a paragraph:

I like using Lean, first principle thinking as well as a healthy dose of Bayesian reasoning in my work & most of the things I do. I adore working with cross-functional, loosely coupled/tightly-aligned teams, with coherent & compelling objectives; together with the freedom to chase after those objectives autonomously.

I'm happiest when working with people that challenge, inspire & scare me; where we collectively produce incredible work & have a tonne of fun doing it.

I'm driven by a desire to better humanity, ideally focusing on suffering amelioration.

I like working with companies who really understand the importance of their why/purpose and their culture. For me it's the biggest turn-on when talking to a new company about our potential future together. I know the combination of the above leads to the planets' most incredible products, happiest customers & profitable companies.

Fundamentally, I try to do good

:D

WHY NOT HIRE ME

While I love diving into data platforms, sadly I'm not the strongest at writing my own SQL queries. I'm great at asking the right quantitative questions, but then love to work with quant specialists to extract the answer. I like using quant to inform & validate work; that said, I struggle in organisations more naively "quant led" (e.g. not inconsiderate of quant fallacies & broader vision).

On the subject of vision, I love working with a genuine why/purpose. Organisations that are ambivalent of purpose probably aren't right for me.

I'm a "doer" who's also a great leader. If you need someone adept at "politicking" in board meetings, I might not be a good fit. If you're looking for someone who builds>measures>learns; and can also build teams of smart, kind, & vision led people; I might be your man.

LINKEDIN

linkedin.com/in/markchristianjames

THOUGHTS

blog.markchristianjames.com



CAREER HISTORY

Product & Design Advisor - Lumenate • 2022 - Present

- Advising Founders on everything startup related, including:
 - Product Strategy | Resource allocation | Talent acquisition
 - Setting and implementing vision, mission, purpose
- Mentored Head of Design in:
 - Developing a minimally viable Pattern Library
 - Establishing research best practice, analysing highly complex & unusual user behaviour
- Implemented foundational measure of product efficacy

BIGGEST ACHIEVEMENTS

- By focusing on deep research, followed by a trivially small solution, increased primary onboarding KPI to 118% (p = 0.06)

Head of Product & Design - Wavepaths • 2021 - 2022

- Establish product strategy based on Founder's vision
- Conducted all research, running multiple mixed-method initiatives investigating deeply complex and emotional stimuli
- Helped to ship product changes that had profound impact on peoples' mental health

BIGGEST ACHIEVEMENTS

- Revolutionised a highly novel product based on deep user insight

Head of Product & UX - Koru Kids • 2018 - 2020

- Designed & developed all Product strategies, frameworks & practices
- Helped the organisation transition from being Ops, to Product led
- Joined as the sole Product & UX resource and built a team to 6 Product Designers with associated ceremonies, recruitment strategy and development framework

BIGGEST ACHIEVEMENTS

- Helped organisation raise a great Series A and grow our primary metric (LTV) by 610% over 2 years

Head of Product & UX - OLX • 2017 - 2018

- Built the entire Product, Design, Research & UX function from ground up (0-5 employees)
- Set long-term product vision & strategy
- Launched in 5 new countries in 12 months
- Designed product development disciplines, maximising for autonomy, alignment & effectiveness

BIGGEST ACHIEVEMENTS

- In 1 year, took NPS from -17 to +84. Increased primary (liquidity) & secondary KPIs by 736% & 1,116%

Head of UX - Three • 2014 - 2016

- Weaved Three's Brand Purpose into all experiences
- Defined a vision and culture, enabling Three to build a Digital team capable of delivering its Purpose
- Brought Product upstream within the organisation to help Three become more customer focused
- Questioned, challenged & drove change, leading 12 teams

BIGGEST ACHIEVEMENTS

- Changed the culture of a 5,000 person organisation to one more emblematic of Three's brand & vision

Head of UX - Dubizzle • 2012 - 2014

- Led the design, UX & brand integration of all products that come under the dubizzle umbrella (web, native apps, ATL)
- Helped the organisation understand why it exists, then communicated that through its products, culminating in our Brand, Design System, & Pattern Library

BIGGEST ACHIEVEMENTS

- Invented UX patterns later used by Google in Material Design & Uber. Reduced TTT by 525% using ML in 2012

WHAT OTHERS HAVE SAID

At Lumenate, Mark had a transformative impact. He prompted us to rethink our organisational structure, tools, communication channels & ceremonies.

Nish - Head of Design

Having Mark as a manager at Koru Kids is one of the most significant privileges of my career, and an experience that'll deeply impacts everything I do next.

Not only is he an excellent hands-on designer and product person with immense breadth and depth of industry experience; he's also built and developed a brilliant and diverse design team, supporting and empowering us to become better designers and better humans.

A true leader, Mark has a relentless drive to ensure teams work well together, so that team members, the business, and our customers thrive and succeed. He's equally unafraid to challenge you directly as he is to show and encourage vulnerability.

Above all, Mark brings compassion, humility, intelligence, honesty, and courage into everything he does.

Susan - Product Design Lead

Mark inspired me to think differently about life and work. Mark is unafraid to expose his vulnerability, and at Three he fostered a culture of transparency and honesty where any of us could ask any question (no matter how stupid) without fear. I found working with him to be revelatory and inspiring.

Frances - Product Owner

Mark is quite literally half the reason I joined Koru Kids. His understanding of how to go about building products that deliver value to their users and therefore the organisations that sell them is second to none.

Mark is a manager who inspires his team to deliver on their OKRs by delegating responsibility to his reports and leading his own squad from the coal face.

As a 10x designer I could rely on Mark to give invaluable input and leadership across design thinking, product strategy, UI and interaction design (I'm going to miss my personal design critiques). His abilities in lean design and managing product teams, combined with his humility and pragmatism set the standard to meet for a design team.

Iona - Senior Product Designer

Mark combines kindness, intelligence and creativity in a way that adds positivity to any project and to any interaction. [he] played a pivotal role in shaping both the strategy and structure of Lumenate... At this time, Mark felt like a mentor and is extremely effective at communicating the wealth of experience and knowledge that he holds.

Jay - Founder

Mark in a nutshell? Fantastic design and product skills, utter pleasure to work with. An asset to any team.

Jenna - Head of Research

Mark's had a profound, positive, and lasting impact on my whole approach to work which stays with me to this day, and for which I am eternally grateful. I witnessed a similar impact on those around me, and was fortunate enough to be able to thrive in the authentic, vibrant work culture he helped us create for many years after he left. He's incredibly smart with an EQ to match, and genuinely one of the kindest people I know.

Dan - Research Manager

...read more on LinkedIn

EDUCATION

MSc Psychology and Neuroscience of Mental Health
Kings College London - starting 2023

Fundamentals of Neuroscience MCB8oX
Harvard - 2020

Science of Well-Being
Yale - 2020

Psychology
University of Pennsylvania - 2020

Psychedelics & the Brain, Neuroscience Master Course
Andrew Gallimore - 2020

Positive Psychology
University of Pennsylvania - 2019

“WHY HIRE ME” SUMMARY

- Decades experience building & leading why/vision led orgs
- Bias for small, autonomous & empowered teams
- Loves to work Lean & pragmatic, but with passion & care
- Bayesian & first principle thinker
- Content & component in leadership & I.C. roles
- Expertise in neuroscience & mental health
- Superb verbal & written communicator
- I’m a jolly nice chap

WANNA CHAT?

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Smoke signal
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