

RACHEL RUTHERFORD

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Product leader specializing in innovative interactive experiences for children and families. Deep expertise in AR/VR, physical-digital product integration, and AI-powered experience design. Track record of shipping 200+ products from concept through retail and digital distribution, with hands-on playtesting and iterative design at every stage. 15 years leading cross-functional teams, with a player-coach approach to prototyping, building, and shipping.

EXPERIENCE

Head of Product | Remento

February 2024 – July 2025

Startup for memoir-writing with AI. Sole product leader for subscription consumer product with two-sided user model (adult children purchase, elderly parents use).

- Applied AI hands-on in product design: shaped LLM prompt engineering approach, evaluated output quality with real users aged 70+, and defined responsible AI guardrails for a vulnerable user population
- Drove user growth from 6,000 to 150,000 users through landing page optimization, pricing strategy, CRM overhaul, and product-led growth initiatives
- Conducted intensive user research with ~25 people aged 70–90s in one week, creating visual persona boards that drove product roadmap and AI strategy
- Increased user engagement 15% by redesigning recording experience based on playtesting and shaping AI-generated outputs to preserve individual voice and storytelling patterns
- Led product design and collaborated with team of <10, operating as player-coach across product management, product marketing, and user research

BEGiN | September 2018 – August 2022

Subscription EdTech mobile apps and games for families with young children.

Chief Product Officer | *January 2021 – August 2022*

- Led 30-person product and design organization, scaling interactive learning platform to 100,000+ subscribing families
- Drove engagement through new character and IP strategy and a dashboard for parents. Introduced game mechanics and learning pathway to HOMER's learn-to-read app.
- Led product development for Sesame Workshop partnership: physical-digital subscription box and mobile game focused on social-emotional learning.
- Established product development processes: OKR-based quarterly planning, PM rubric system, research-driven prioritization, and cross-functional decision frameworks

VP, Product | *September 2018 – January 2021*

- Integrated Seedling team, led new product strategy
- Created an activity center for parents during COVID to increase learning opportunities while families stayed at home.

Chief Product Officer | Seedling

January 2016 – September 2018

Physical-digital hybrid gaming products for young children.

- Pioneered Parker, the world's first AR teddy bear: interactive doctor roleplay simulation for ages 3–6, launched in Apple Stores globally, \$2M+ sales, 60,000+ app downloads, concept to market in under 1 year
- Created Marble Maze VR: children design physical mazes, app translates to playable VR game with themed environments; featured by Apple and covered by Vox
- Shipped 200+ physical-digital products and 7 apps (3 with integrated interactive experiences) in under 2 years, managing 40–50 products simultaneously across different development phases
- Extensive playtesting with children: developed prototyping methods for testing AR before physical products were manufactured; traveled to factories to ensure accessories/materials worked with interactive technology
- Won 2017 PAL Award, Tillywig Brain Child Award, and 2016 Tagie Award for Digital Toy/Game Designer Innovator of the Year; products sold in Target, Best Buy, Nordstrom, Apple worldwide
- Acquired by BEGiN

Pose | November 2011 – May 2015

Fashion social network scaled to 4M+ users and successful acquisition.

Co-CEO | *April 2014 – May 2015*

- Led company to acquisition, scaling platform to 4M+ active users through product innovation and growth strategies
- Developed one of the first influencer marketing products, pioneering creator monetization features
- Built commerce engine enabling users to shop looks, creating revenue streams beyond advertising

VP of Product | *November 2011 – April 2014*

- Directed product roadmap and UX strategy for web and mobile platforms, scaling from launch to millions of users through data-driven iterations
- Led development of iOS and iPad apps, achieving Apple "App of the Week" and "App of the Day" recognition

Product Manager | Whalerock Industries (formerly BermanBraun)

February 2010 – November 2011

First product management role at digital media company.

- Led product development for MSN's women's lifestyle channel (Glo.com) from concept to launch
 - Managed partnership with AOL/Huffington Post to launch three large-scale content sites
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EDUCATION

Oberlin College | BA, Cinema Studies, Theater Arts

AWARDS & RECOGNITION

- 2016 Tagie Award for Digital Toy or Game Designer Innovator of the Year
- 2017 PAL Award (Play Advances Language)
- 2017 Tillywig Brain Child Award
- Apple App of the Week
- Apple App of the Day