Joel Njoroge Mbugua

Principal Product Designer — AI Agents, Design Systems & Enterprise UX

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Principal design leader with 19+ years across product, UX and software engineering, including 5+ years at Microsoft shaping AI-powered experiences in the Copilot ecosystem and Microsoft 365. I define how people trust, steer and work with AI agents, and I turn recurring product problems into shared patterns, components and guidance that teams and AI tools can reuse. I'm a hands-on design builder: I ship runnable prototypes and contribute production code through agentic, Copilot-assisted workflows. I work fluently with PM, Engineering and Research, and I lead a team of designers across multiple geographies, including Norway and Canada.

CORE STRENGTHS

AI & agents	Agent trust & steerability, human–AI collaboration patterns, conversational and AI-first UX, agent-readable guidance
Design systems	Shared components & patterns, design–code alignment, accessibility, cross-surface consistency, documentation
Build	Runnable prototypes, agentic coding with GitHub Copilot, pull-request workflow, HTML/CSS/JavaScript
Strategy & leadership	North-star vision from ambiguity, 0-to-1 strategy, design sprints, mentoring & coaching, cross-functional alignment
Tools	Figma · AI assistants & agentic tools (ChatGPT, Claude, GitHub Copilot)

EXPERIENCE

Microsoft

Feb 2021 — Present

Principal Product Design Manager

- Own north-star **design vision and strategy** for ambiguous, complex AI product areas in the Copilot ecosystem, partnering with PM, Engineering and Research from discovery to delivery.
- Design **AI-agent interaction patterns** from the ground up, defining how people trust, steer and work with an agent so agentic experiences feel clear rather than opaque.
- Build and extend **design systems** and guidelines across screens and input modalities, including the shared People UI Kit, and keep design and code aligned.
- Work as a design builder: runnable prototypes, my own design branches, and **production code contributions** using agentic, Copilot-assisted workflows.
- Lead a distributed team of designers across multiple geographies, including Norway and Canada. I **mentor and coach** designers, facilitate workshops and design sprints, and hold partners to a shared standard of craft and accessibility.
- Winner, Microsoft Global Hackathon 2022.

Arrowthemes

Aug 2011 — Feb 2021

Founder & Design Consultant

Founded and ran a design studio combining **UI/UX design**, **web development** and hands-on client delivery.

- Created **wireframes**, low- and high-fidelity mockups, **prototypes** and digital assets for web and mobile applications.
- Turned designs into working **web interfaces**, collaborating directly with customers and delivery teams from kickoff to launch.
- Owned client proposals, contracts, tenders and **product documentation**.
- Trained and supported customers on advanced features and customization, and maintained **application frameworks and third-party software**.

Incentro
Apr 2019 — Mar 2020

UI/UX Design Consultant

Designed and developed interfaces for **web and mobile products**, working directly with clients and cross-functional teams from kickoff to launch.

- Translated ideas into **low- and high-fidelity mockups** to communicate layouts, interactions and visual direction.
- Created **graphics and digital assets**, bringing imagery, content and interface elements together into cohesive experiences.
- Partnered with delivery teams to ensure implementation met project requirements and **UI/UX design standards**.

iLanga Systems
Jul 2009 — Jul 2011

Software Engineering Manager

Led the **development team** and served as **lead developer** and **interface designer** across the iLanga product suite.

- Designed **frontend interfaces** for new applications and modernized the look and feel of existing software.
- Guided clients on **server environments** and **integrated** iLanga products with their core systems for seamless information sharing.
- Oversaw **user acceptance testing**, implementation and **deployment** on client servers.
- Demonstrated products to prospective clients and **trained customers** after implementation.

Onpoint IT Solutions International
Oct 2007 — Apr 2009

Co-founder / Technical Manager

Combined **technical leadership** and **business development** as co-founder, overseeing software projects and the company's **product portfolio**.

- Managed system development as **lead developer**, **system designer** and **project manager** for in-house and client work.
- Presented products to prospective clients and evaluated new ideas and opportunities to extend the **product portfolio**.
- Owned **new business** and client documentation, including proposals, contracts and tenders.

Epicor Software Corp.
Feb 2007 — Oct 2008

Technical Consultant

Delivered **Scala ERP** technical implementations, helping clients establish reliable environments and supporting them through installation and **live operation**.

- Assessed **client environments** against Scala requirements and advised on **network and computer setup**.
- Installed Scala and its **database management system**, explaining technical features in the context of each client's environment.
- Documented **technical configurations** to make issues reproducible and addressed problems during implementation and **live operation**.

PATENT APPLICATIONS

Intelligent Coaching Conversational AI Assistant
Co-inventor · Microsoft · Filed May 21, 2025

Generating and Processing Contextualized Group Data
Co-inventor · Microsoft · Filed Mar 25, 2022

SKILLS & TOOLS

AI & Agents
Agentic UX · Agent trust & steerability · Human–AI collaboration patterns · Conversational & AI-first UX · Copilot experiences · Agent-readable guidance

Systems & Build
Design systems · Component & pattern libraries · Design–code alignment · Accessibility · Runnable prototypes · Agentic coding (Copilot) · Pull-request workflow

Design & Strategy
Design Leadership · Design Strategy · Vision Communication · Design Craft · Information Architecture · UX Design · UI Design · Product Design · Wireframing & Prototyping · Dashboard Design · Web & Mobile Design · Branding

Leadership & Product

Team Management · Product Management · Product Development · Project Management · Business Alignment · Strategic Thinking · Problem Solving · Business Analysis · Mentoring

Engineering

HTML5 / CSS3 · JavaScript · PHP · SQL / MS SQL Server · XML · System Integration · E-commerce · WordPress / Joomla / Drupal

EDUCATION

BSc. Information Technology 2002 — 2005

Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture & Technology

CERTIFICATIONS & AWARDS

Microsoft Global Hackathon 2022 — Award Winner — Microsoft	Dec 2022
Microsoft Global Hackathon 2022 — Microsoft	Aug 2022
Mobile User Experience (UX) Design — Interaction Design Foundation	Nov 2020
Interaction Design for Usability — Interaction Design Foundation	Jun 2020
How to Create Intuitive Products by Imitating Physicality — Interaction Design Foundation	Apr 2020
Design Thinking: The Beginner's Guide — Interaction Design Foundation	Feb 2020
Human-Computer Interaction (HCI) — Interaction Design Foundation	Jan 2020
IxDF Membership — Interaction Design Foundation	Jun 2019
Joomla Certified Administrator — Joomla!	Mar 2018
Oracle Database 10g Administration — Oracle	2006

LANGUAGES

English — Fluent · Swahili — Native