

DARIN HANSFORD

Lead Design Program Manager · DesignOps · AI Design Enablement

Oakland, CA · 213.458.4901 · darin.hansford@gmail.com · linkedin.com/in/darinhansford

PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

DesignOps and Design Program leader with 10+ years of experience building the operational foundation that lets design teams focus on what they do best. I thrive at the intersection of people, process, and product — creating the structure, clarity, and cross-functional trust that high-performing UX teams need to deliver great work consistently. Whether it's building planning frameworks from scratch, untangling complex design and product dependencies, or establishing the rhythms that keep distributed teams connected and moving, I bring both the strategic vision and the hands-on execution to make it happen. Currently focused on AI design enablement — helping design orgs develop the practices and workflows to integrate AI thoughtfully into how they work.

AREAS OF EXPERTISE

DesignOps · Design Program Management · UX Delivery & Operations · Systems Thinking · AI Design Enablement · Cross-Functional Leadership · Stakeholder Management · Agile & Lean UX · Strategic Planning · Executive Communication

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Lead Design Program Manager · Cisco

San Francisco Bay Area · April 2021 – Present

Lead DPM within Cisco Security's DesignOps team — a team chartered with building the programs, systems, and processes that enable a 200+ person org of designers and researchers to operate at their best. Promoted from Senior to Lead DPM in recognition of growing scope and impact, contributing to overall DesignOps strategy while directly owning and leading critical design programs across a portfolio of cross-functional teams.

- Operationalize how product design teams work together — building the rituals, cadences, planning frameworks, and community programs that foster team connection, shared purpose, and a collaborative UX culture.
- Work closely with Product and Engineering counterparts to connect design priorities to shared OKRs and delivery milestones — keeping the right people informed and ensuring design work moves in sync with broader product execution.
- Serve as the primary operational partner to Design Leadership — coordinating reviews, leading team events, and managing communications up, down, and out across a complex network of product teams, business units, and cross-functional partners.
- Led a 2-year initiative to bring consistency to how design assets are managed throughout the org — establishing version-controlled shared libraries, templates, and system components now adopted across 18+ products at a 70% adoption rate.
- Developed and launched a Design Ambassador program throughout Cisco's 300+ person design org — creating a grassroots network of advocates that built momentum for design system adoption in ways a top-down rollout alone could not have achieved.
- Currently pioneering Cisco's first AI UX processes and workflows — establishing structured approaches to integrating AI into design practice and leading org-wide rollout spanning a 300+ person design organization.

Design Program Manager · Meta (Facebook) — Contract

Menlo Park, CA · March 2020 – March 2021

Contract DPM embedded within a cross-disciplinary product pod of 20–30 people — spanning UX Design, Design Systems, Research, Product Management, and Engineering — brought in to own and lead a high-priority, complex product initiative that required navigating tight dependencies and driving alignment across a matrixed team.

- Implemented and facilitated weekly rituals and team cadences — creating the recurring structure that kept a 20–30 person cross-disciplinary pod aligned, accountable, and moving forward on a complex, high-priority product initiative.
- Developed and owned program communication strategies to keep stakeholders and teams informed — delivering clear, consistent updates up, down, and out across design, product management, and engineering.

- Identified process gaps in real time and implemented lightweight solutions to keep the team unblocked — adapting quickly to the pace and demands of a fast-moving product environment.
- Partnered closely with Design and Product leadership to manage dependencies, surface risks early, and ensure the team had the clarity and resources needed to execute effectively.

Director, Program Management · Y Media Labs

Redwood City, CA · January 2019 – September 2019

Director of Program Management at Y Media Labs, a design and technology agency delivering product design and front-end development for consumer and enterprise clients. Led multiple client programs simultaneously — serving as the primary client-facing lead from design concept through to build, owning the full program lifecycle end-to-end.

- Led end-to-end planning and program execution for multiple concurrent client programs — managing timelines, milestones, deliverables, and team capacity across cross-functional teams of 5–10 designers, engineers, and PMs from design concept through front-end build.
- Ran design workshops and cross-functional collaboration sessions that aligned client stakeholders and internal teams around product direction, design decisions, and delivery expectations.
- Owned all client-facing communications — serving as the primary day-to-day contact for stakeholders, managing expectations, surfacing risks early, and maintaining trust throughout the program lifecycle.

Executive Producer · BASIC Agency @ Google (Onsite)

Mountain View, CA · July 2018 – November 2018

Brought in by BASIC, a creative design agency, to lead a 30+ person design team embedded onsite at Google — chartered with designing and delivering end-to-end product launch experiences for the Google Store. Served as the agency lead, directly managing a team of 8 producers while interfacing day-to-day with Google's program leads to keep a large, fast-moving team aligned and on track.

- Managed team capacity, delivery milestones, and timelines across a 30+ person embedded design team — keeping a complex, multi-workstream product launch on track from planning through delivery across a 6-month cycle.
- Directly managed a team of 8 producers — overseeing day-to-day workloads, unblocking dependencies, and ensuring design output across campaign assets, product pages, UI design, and animations met Google's quality standards.
- Served as the primary agency liaison to Google program leads — maintaining weekly check-ins to align on priorities, surface risks, and ensure the embedded team remained focused and on track throughout the launch cycle.

Program Director · Idean (part of Capgemini Invent)

San Francisco, CA · February 2016 – July 2018

Program Director at Idean, a UX design agency delivering strategic UX programs for Fortune 500 clients including Cisco, HPE, and Airbus. Led multiple client programs — with HPE and Cisco running concurrently — serving as the client-facing lead while owning resourcing, planning, and end-to-end program execution. Day-to-day team lead for 4 UX Project Managers, while overseeing cross-functional project teams of 5–7 UX designers per engagement.

- Led end-to-end program management for the Cisco Networking Academy UX redesign — owning planning, weekly check-ins, design workshops, and stakeholder communications across a multi-year engagement with a goal of growing the global user base from 1M to 2M+.
- Led the UX program for HPE's enterprise security platform (ArcSight) — working closely with HPE's lead Product Manager and developing deep subject matter expertise in Security Operations Center (SOC) workflows to effectively guide design decisions for a highly specialized user base. The redesign successfully shipped to customers.
- Revamped resource planning rituals for the Idean PM team — introducing a more structured approach to capacity planning that improved visibility into team workloads and kept multiple concurrent client programs properly resourced.

Director, Project Management & Creative Services · Vibrant Media

New York, NY · October 2011 – January 2016

Joined Vibrant Media, a digital ad technology company specializing in contextual ad experiences, as a Senior Creative Project Manager overseeing the design and development of digital ad campaigns. Promoted to lead Creative Services and Program Management — managing a creative team of 5 while owning day-to-day operations including work intake, resourcing, timelines, and delivery.

- Managed a creative team of 5 — overseeing workloads, priorities, and professional growth while maintaining a high-output, quality-focused team culture.

- Owned day-to-day Creative Services operations — running team meetings, managing work intake, resourcing, timelines, and delivery across a pipeline of digital ad campaigns for Fortune 500 clients including VW, Audi, GM, P&G, Microsoft, and Unilever.
- Developed a new intake and project tracking tool that provided real-time visibility into pipeline status and project health — giving the team and leadership a clearer view of capacity and delivery at any given time.

Creative Project Manager · Graphic Designer & Project Manager · TV Land (Viacom) · CBS Television

New York, NY & Los Angeles, CA · 2007 – 2011

Managed integrated advertising, marketing, and promotional campaigns across on/off-air and digital properties for major broadcast networks. Oversaw production schedules, vendor relationships, and agency partnerships from brief through delivery.

TOOLS & TECHNOLOGY

Figma · Miro · Jira · Asana · Airtable · Notion · Confluence · SharePoint · GitHub · Cursor · Claude AI

EDUCATION & CERTIFICATIONS

Bachelor of Science, Visual Communications · Westwood College of Design · 2002 – 2005

Certified Scrum Master (CSM) · Scrum Alliance · 2017