

RESUME

# Sky Rivers

*Senior Product Strategist & UX Architect*

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EXECUTIVE PROFILE

## 20 years turning dense product logic into effortless experiences

Accomplished Senior Product Strategist and UX Architect with 20 years of experience designing high-retention digital products, complex platform ecosystems, and intuitive workflows. Recognised for distilling dense, multi-layered product logic into effortless human experiences. Proven entrepreneurial background as a tech founder, CTO, and Lead UX Designer, raising VC/angel funding and leading cross-functional design and dev teams. Expert in aligning product experience (PX) with retention metrics, feature adoption, and business outcomes.

CORE COMPETENCIES

## Where I add the most leverage

|                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                 |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Product Experience (PX) Strategy</b><br>Feature value optimisation, user retention architecture, user journey mapping. | <b>UX &amp; Information Architecture</b><br>Complex workflow simplification, creator & admin dashboards, multi-sided platforms. |
| <b>Growth &amp; Engagement</b><br>Onboarding optimisation, funnel drop-off analysis, retention loop design.               | <b>Venture &amp; Product Strategy</b><br>Business Model Alignment, AI-Assisted Rapid Prototyping, Product Roadmapping.          |

PRODUCT PHILOSOPHY & LEADERSHIP VALUES

## How I lead teams and shape decisions

|                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                           |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Empathetic Leadership</b><br>Empowering multidisciplinary teams by creating psychologically safe environments where designers and developers do their best work. | <b>Cross-Functional Alignment</b><br>Translating complex business goals into clear user problems so engineering, product, and design move in sync without friction. | <b>Talent Empowerment</b><br>Coaching emerging talent, building collaborative design systems, and helping teams simplify problem-solving. |
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## Twenty years of client work across founder, CTO & UX roles

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### Senior Product Strategist & UX Architect (Freelance / Consultant)

2006 – Present · Sydney / Global

Sky Rivers (formerly Katrin Suess)

- **Strategic Product Consulting:** Consult with scaling tech platforms, enterprise tools, and early-stage ventures on UX architecture, feature adoption, and user retention strategies.
  - **Workflow & Interface Optimisation:** Audit complex digital ecosystems to identify engagement bottlenecks and deliver high-fidelity interface solutions prior to engineering execution.
  - **AI & Workflow Integration:** Leverage generative AI tools (Claude, Gemini, Midjourney, Higgsfield) to accelerate strategic research, rapid wireframing, and workflow mapping.
  - **Key Client Impact (50+ Platforms Globally):** Delivered end-to-end UX architecture and visual identity systems across Australia, Germany, the UK, and the US.
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### Founder & Creator

2018 – Present · Sydney, AU

Sky Rivers Wellness

- **Real-World to Digital Wellness Experiences:** Designed end-to-end user journeys, scaling live multi-sensory events (500+ Sydney events) into digital audio-visual media and online community platforms.
  - **Audio Engineering & Sound Design:** Produced original music, guided meditations, and spatial soundscapes, optimising audio for presence, relaxation, and listener retention.
  - **Platform Migration & Creator Economy Workflow:** Simplified digital touchpoints by migrating offerings from a custom-built Squarespace member site to a Patreon community-driven subscription platform.
  - **Community-First Ecosystem:** Actively building a YouTube channel for wellness experiences, utilising YouTube Studio for analytics tracking, audience retention analysis, and community engagement.
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### Founder & Creative Director

Jan 2014 – Mar 2016 · London, UK

Styleicon

- **Design & Strategy:** Directed the full product lifecycle for a mobile fashion discovery app, creating end-to-end UX/UI design, brand strategy, and value proposition while managing external engineering execution.
  - **Venture Capital & Commercial Partnerships:** Secured £90k (~\$170k AUD) seed investment from retail VC TrueStart and closed a major commercial partnership with Land Securities to activate interactive mall campaigns.
  - **In-Store Experience & Product Mechanics:** Scaled early platform engagement during soft launch to over 332k outfit votes, 5k brand tags, and 3.5k uploaded looks across 1,500 active users, creating a seamless in-store fashion feedback feature for shoppers.
  - **Creator Marketing & Physical-to-Digital Activations:** Managed influencer marketing campaigns with top fashion creators and executed physical-to-digital activations at Trinity Leeds shopping centre to drive organic user acquisition.
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## Co-Founder, CTO & Design Director

Apr 2012 – Dec 2013 · Sydney, AU

Vimily

- **End-to-End Product & Technical Leadership:** Led product strategy, UX/UI architecture, and software engineering teams for an interactive video platform, overseeing iOS development, web interfaces, and cloud transcoding pipelines.
- **Venture Capital & Investor Relations:** Raised \$180k in angel seed funding across Australia, the UK, and the US to build and launch the initial mobile app and cloud infrastructure.
- **Strategic B2C to B2B Platform Pivot:** Re-architected core product infrastructure from a consumer storytelling app (Vimily Family) into a high-growth, multi-tenant B2B enterprise marketing and testimonial engine.
- **B2B Deployment & Enterprise Dashboards:** Designed corporate web identities, admin portals, and custom campaign workflows for commercial partners to collect, moderate, and deploy high-trust user-generated video content at scale.

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## Lead UI/UX Designer

Jan 2012 – Jun 2012 · Sydney, AU

BlueChilli Tech Accelerator

- **Portfolio UX & Design System Architecture:** Architected end-to-end UX/UI journeys, wireframes, and scalable design systems for over 10 portfolio startups (including Lime, Housl, and GiggledIn).
- **Founder Collaboration & MVP Execution:** Collaborated directly with founders to distil complex technical ideas into rapid, high-converting product MVPs.

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## Co-Founder & UX Engineer

Jan 2011 – Jan 2012 · Sydney, AU

ZeroMail

- **Product Architecture & UI/UX Design:** Architected the complete UI/UX framework and interaction design for an innovative inbox productivity platform aimed at streamlining email workflows.
  - **Capital Acquisition & Seed Funding:** Secured \$200k in seed investment from enterprise tech provider Citrix Systems to validate and scale core technology development.
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TECHNICAL & STRATEGIC TOOLKIT

Tools I move fastest in

|                                      |                                                                                  |                                   |                      |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------|
| UX Architecture & Methodologies      | Information Architecture                                                         | User Journey Mapping              | Wireframing          |
|                                      | Rapid Prototyping                                                                | Design Systems                    | Spatial Audio Design |
| Creative, Technical & Media Software | Ableton Live                                                                     | Logic Pro                         | DaVinci Resolve      |
|                                      | Premiere Pro                                                                     | Adobe Creative Suite              | Canva                |
|                                      | Visual Studio Code                                                               | Cloudflare                        |                      |
| AI & Analytics Workflows             | Gemini – Market Research, Large-Scale Data Synthesis, Strategic Planning         |                                   |                      |
|                                      | Claude – Rapid Prototyping, Prompt Engineering, Strategic Copy, Workflow Mapping |                                   |                      |
|                                      | Higgsfield – AI Video Prototyping                                                | Midjourney – AI Visual Generation |                      |

EDUCATION

Formal grounding in design & interaction

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|------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|
| <b>Master of Arts (MA) in Design Innovation (Interactive Design)</b>   | With Distinction |
| De Montfort University, Leicester, UK                                  |                  |
| <b>Bachelor of Arts (BA) in Web Design, PR &amp; Online Journalism</b> |                  |
| Cologne University of Applied Sciences, Germany                        |                  |