

# THOMAS DRENNING

## PRINCIPAL PRODUCT DESIGNER | PRODUCT DESIGN LEADER

ENTERPRISE UX | AI PRODUCT EXPERIENCE | DESIGN ORGANIZATIONS

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### SUMMARY

Executive product design leader with 15+ years of experience transforming complex enterprise software into intelligent, user-centered platforms across financial services, healthcare, automotive, SaaS, and high-traffic digital products. Known for defining the right problem before prescribing a solution, aligning Product, Engineering, Research, Analytics, Business, and executive leadership around a shared vision, and converting design strategy into measurable customer and business outcomes. Led design organizations of up to 37 UX professionals, including six design managers, and influenced cross-functional organizations of 75+ people across as many as six concurrent product teams. Regularly advised CEOs, boards, SVPs, VPs, and client executives; built and restructured teams; hired and developed talent; established design-system governance; and shaped product direction before requirements were defined. Career-defining work includes leading AutoSoft's transformation from a legacy MS-DOS product into a responsive enterprise SaaS suite, creating a Highmark provider self-service experience credited with millions in annual savings, and defining Empower's AI-native Plan Service Center vision across the dashboard, Plan Insights, Action Center, Mega Menu, case management, and Empower Coach.

### KEY QUALIFICATIONS

- 15+ years of product design, UX strategy, enterprise transformation, and cross-platform experience across web and responsive mobile products.
- Led organizations of up to 37 UX designers, including six design managers; responsible for hiring, performance reviews, restructuring, mentorship, and standards.
- Influenced 75+ cross-functional professionals across Product, Engineering, Research, Analytics, Business, and Design while supporting up to six product teams.
- Defined AI-native interaction models for conversational assistants, agentic workflows, recommendations, search, summaries, dashboards, document understanding, and next-best actions.
- Built and evolved design systems, including component standards, naming, governance, accessibility, interaction standards, documentation, and engineering alignment.
- Presented product vision and recommendations to CEOs, boards, SVPs, VPs, and client executive teams; shaped strategy before requirements were defined.
- Products and experiences collectively served an estimated 33M+ people; work contributed to millions in annual savings and improvements in adoption, sales, support volume, training, and engineering efficiency.

### CORE SKILLS

**Design Leadership** • Managing Managers • Hiring & Performance Management • **Product Strategy** • AI Experience Design • Conversational UX • **Agentic Workflows** • Enterprise UX • Design Systems • **Design Operations** • Cross-Platform Design • Information Architecture • **User Research** • Usability Testing • Journey Mapping • **Accessibility/WCAG** • Executive Communication • Data-Informed Design • **SaaS Transformation** • Responsive Web & Mobile

### EXPERIENCE

#### **Empower** | Senior Lead UX Designer

2024 - Present

- Own the end-to-end UX vision for Empower's Plan Service Center transformation, spanning the dashboard, Plan Insights, Action Center, Mega Menu and AI search, case management, reporting, payroll, and adjacent servicing workflows.
- Defined the overall vision, information architecture, and interaction model for the next-generation PSC Dashboard, shifting the experience from passive data presentation toward proactive insights, opportunities, recommended actions, and guided task completion.
- Serve as UX owner for Plan Insights, shaping 100% of the experience and translating complex plan data and documents into understandable summaries, prioritized findings, and actionable next steps.
- Originated and led Empower Coach/EVA from concept through UX strategy and design execution, defining conversational and agentic patterns for case creation, workflow completion, guided servicing, summarization, and next-best-action recommendations.

- Defined AI interaction models before product requirements were written for AI search, Mega Menu, Daily Digest, dashboard intelligence, and agentic servicing workflows, enabling Product and Engineering to develop requirements from a coherent experience vision.
- Reshaped an inherited enterprise design system by improving component usage, interaction standards, accessibility, documentation, and design-to-development consistency while socializing changes and incorporating feedback across disciplines.

#### **SDLC Partners | Senior UX Designer / UX Manager**

**2021 - 2024**

- Led UX strategy and organizational delivery across enterprise healthcare, benefits, provider, and platform engagements, partnering with Product, Engineering, Research, Compliance, and client executives before requirements were finalized.
- Directed and developed a multi-level UX organization, with responsibilities spanning hiring, performance reviews, team restructuring, coaching, career development, resource allocation, and design quality across concurrent product initiatives.
- Created Highmark's Provider Resource Center after research revealed that providers struggled to identify current treatment and reimbursement codes, resulting in rejected submissions, third-party billing expense, heavy call volume, and all-day wait times.
- Designed a continuously updated, searchable self-service experience that enabled providers to research treatment-related codes and reimbursement guidance, contributing to a dramatic reduction in support demand and millions of dollars in annual operational savings.
- Established research-informed experience strategies, information architectures, personas, journey maps, prototypes, and usability validation for complex healthcare and benefits workflows.

#### **AutoSoft | UX Manager / Senior UX Designer**

**2018 - 2021**

- Led the strategic transformation of AutoSoft's legacy MS-DOS dealership management product into a modern, responsive enterprise SaaS suite, defining the product experience vision, information architecture, interaction model, and design-system strategy.
- Championed a mobile-first strategy despite initial resistance from Product and subject-matter experts who believed dealership software would remain desktop-only; demonstrated how mobility could unlock new workflows and revenue opportunities.
- Enabled differentiated capabilities including service-bay walk-around inspections, vehicle check-in from transport haulers, and automatic website inventory publishing - features that increased sales, strengthened competitive positioning, and later became industry standards.
- Partnered directly with the CEO and executive team to present alternative product directions, shape future offerings, and reshape existing products through customer research, business context, and evidence-based design recommendations.
- Set UX vision across a portfolio supporting up to six product teams while leading a multi-tiered organization, managing managers, hiring, conducting performance reviews, mentoring designers, and restructuring teams and processes.
- Created the design-system strategy and held final accountability for component standards, naming conventions, governance, accessibility, and interaction standards, using a collaborative review model rather than top-down approval.

#### **Oracle | Lead UX Designer**

**2017 - 2018**

- Led enterprise UX initiatives focused on workflow modernization, product clarity, scalable interaction patterns, and alignment across Product, Engineering, and executive stakeholders.
- Used research, personas, journey mapping, wireframes, and prototypes to convert complex requirements into actionable product strategies and implementation-ready experiences.

#### **Opus Technologies | Senior UX Engineer**

**2016 - 2017**

- Bridged product design and front-end engineering to create responsive enterprise interfaces, functional prototypes, and reusable UI components.

#### **AccuWeather | Web UI Developer**

**2015 - 2016**

- Designed and developed responsive interfaces for high-traffic weather products and enterprise applications across desktop and mobile breakpoints.

#### **Earlier Experience | Application / Web / UI Development**

**2010 - 2015**

- Designed and developed responsive websites, internal applications, ecommerce platforms, learning systems, and digital campaigns using HTML, CSS, JavaScript, PHP, ColdFusion, and related front-end technologies.

### **EDUCATION & TOOLS**

**Bachelor of Science, Web Development & Interactive Media** - The Art Institute of Pittsburgh

Figma, FigJam, Miro, Mural, Jira, Confluence, Adobe Creative Suite, Sketch, HTML, CSS, JavaScript, Salesforce Experience Cloud