

# Ryan Spohn

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**Product designer with over 20 years of experience building products and leading teams at Google, Salesforce, & startups.** I both design & build. Delivered more than 100 product launches. Three acquisitions. Co-founded one company. Currently spearheading design strategy for Google Drive's AI transformation, shaping interaction models for capabilities that lack established conventions.

## WORK EXPERIENCE

**Google** • Boulder, CO

**UX Design Manager, Google Drive** | Oct 2021 – Present

**Design strategy lead for Drive's AI investments, defining AI-native interaction models for a billion-user platform.**

- Authored the foundational UX brief for AI Mode, reframing how users find and recall information in Drive. Took the MVP from pitch to internal testing in under two months, securing SVP-level buy-in for a dedicated immersive analysis view.
- **Led UX strategy and hands-on design across Drive's AI transformation: AI Mode, AI Overviews, PDF and video summaries, and early-stage agentic capabilities.** Ran cross-functional design sprints shaping the 2024-2026 AI roadmaps.
- Drove a 17% increase in AI 28-day MAU through Homepage Inline Summaries. Directed Help Me Organize to Alpha with a 96% user helpfulness rating. Shipped Mobile Homepage redesign (40% hit rate increase), the Drive video player (8M views/day), and Mobile Scanner improvements (20% scan increase).
- Assumed Director-level responsibilities in 2024, scaling from 6 to 14 direct reports across 6 product areas. **Oversaw 26 GA launches in 2023 and 85+ in 2024.** Team's accessibility remediation helped win back a \$17M enterprise contract renewal.
- Built functional prototypes in code to validate direction before committing engineering resources, including a Chrome extension emulating AI Mode pre-launch and responsive Gemini-in-Workspace typography behavior. **Maintained 100+ design critique reviews annually.** Team owns the Drive Figma component library used by 100+ teams across Google.
- Supported 3 direct report promotions in 2024 and 5 additional promotions since 2018. Manager survey scores consistently among the highest at Google. **Currently implementing a team-wide AI literacy program** covering LLM fundamentals, non-deterministic design, agentic patterns, and eval integration.

## SKILLS

### Design Craft:

Interaction design, visual design, prototyping in code (HTML/CSS/JS, React), Figma, design systems, rapid prototyping, user research, usability testing, accessibility (WCAG), end-to-end product design

### AI & Development:

Claude Code, Cursor, Antigravity, Google AI Studio, MCP servers, System Instructions and Skills, Google ADK, Gemini, GCP, LLM integration, prompt engineering, agent orchestration

### Domains:

Human-AI interaction, conversational and agentic UX, responsible AI, AI safety and trust, enterprise SaaS, cross-platform (web, mobile, desktop), 0-to-1 product development, data-informed design

**Leadership:** Design team management (up to 14 reports), design critique and review, cross-functional partnership, stakeholder communication, design operations, design culture development

## INDEPENDENT PROJECTS

### Family Briefing Agent | 2026

Built and deployed an autonomous coordination agent using Google ADK, Gemini, & GCP. A 5-stage LLM pipeline scans 9 calendars and 2 inboxes nightly, tracks deadlines across runs, and delivers a synthesized HTML brief. In production daily.

## EDUCATION

### Columbus College of Art & Design

BFA, Industrial Design | 1997 – 2002

## Staff UX Designer, Google Drive | Aug 2019 – Oct 2021

**Information Governance UX lead for Drive's highest-priority enterprise initiatives.**

- Co-founded and co-authored the charter for the Drive Advisory Board, a quarterly forum with enterprise customers and regional technology leaders that **directly informed product investment and roadmap decisions**.
- **Led UX for Drive Labels, an enterprise classification system** spanning Drive, Docs, Sheets, & Slides, from Beta through GA. Delivered specs, full-fidelity prototypes, & UX approvals that **unblocked a 9-figure multi-year enterprise contract**.
- Labels grew to thousands of customers, **classifying millions of items in year one**, with DLP integration scanning billions of items. Featured in Google Cloud Next keynote. Co-presented work to Forrester analysts.
- **Led InfoGov design strategy** across Client-Side Encryption, Labels, Counter-abuse, & Data Loss Prevention (6+ designers)

## UX Design Manager, Google Drive | Jul 2016 – Aug 2019

**Led an 8-person UX team while maintaining hands-on IC design leadership.**

- **Originated and led UX for the unification of Google's desktop sync strategy** (Backup & Sync and Drive File Stream became Drive for Desktop), a vision I first pitched in 2016 and shipped as a rationalized product offering for 30M+ users.
- **Stepped in as interim PM** for Backup & Sync when the PM departed pre-launch, managing cross-product-area negotiations and resolving 97 technical and UX issues to ship on time.
- **Established team critique culture, design review processes, and quality standards** that became the operational foundation for Drive UX. Hands-on design system contributions included tokenization of the Drive typography system.

## Salesforce ◦ San Francisco, CA

### Principal Product Designer | Oct 2013 – Jul 2016

**Led Salesforce1 mobile design across iOS, Android, Windows, & web.**

**Co-created the Lightning Design System.**

- **Built Salesforce's first dedicated mobile UX team** (3-5 reports) and defined the cross-product roadmap, closing functionality gaps between desktop and mobile.
- **Co-created the Lightning Design System and led its extension from mobile into the desktop platform**, working across every first-party product team.
- Initiated and led the design track of "Adapt" (20+ designers), the largest coordinated UX effort in Salesforce's history at that time: a **pattern-by-pattern modernization of the legacy UI** into the Lightning Experience.
- **Presented UX strategy directly to CEO Marc Benioff** on three occasions. Provided daily design updates to co-founder Parker Harris and orchestrated the Product Experience section of monthly executive sprint reviews.

## **Lead Designer, User Experience** | Oct 2011 – Sep 2013

**Designed & launched Salesforce1 mobile.**

**Co-created one of the first code-based design systems.**

- **Defined the global record layout primitives and IA structure for Salesforce1 mobile**, used across 40+ scrum teams. Participated in daily standups with co-founder Parker Harris from the initial war room through launch. Work resulted in two US design patents (USD743999S1, USD744000S1).
- **Co-created the Salesforce1 Living Style Guide, a code-based design system** built before the practice was standardized across the industry. Precursor to the Lightning Design System.
- Took over **leadership of the design systems UX team** (~7 reports) after being nominated by the departing team lead. First management role.

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### **EARLIER ROLES**

#### **Lead UX Designer, SafetyWeb** (acquired by Experian) | 2010 – 2011

Design lead across web and mobile. Managed contractors.

#### **UX Designer, FamilyLink** | 2009 – 2010

Designed web, iPhone, and Facebook apps for a platform with 80M+ users.

#### **UX Designer, HiveLive** (acquired by RightNow Technologies) | 2008 – 2009

Sole UX designer on enterprise social software platform.

#### **Co-founder, ProtectMyPhotos** | 2005 – 2007

Photo backup service. Designer + front-end developer. Deals with ArcSoft and Best Buy.

#### **Designer, Pearl Street Software** (acquired by MyHeritage) | 2003 – 2007

Graphic & packaging design, Windows native app UI design