

George Penston

PRINCIPAL PRODUCT DESIGNER

gpenston.com



I've spent the last decade leading design at scale at LinkedIn, Pinterest, and my startup, Flite. Now I'm back in the work itself — closer to the craft, closer to the problem.

Product design is changing fast. AI tools have collapsed the distance between concept and something you can feel and interact with. I wanted to be closer to that, doing the work rather than directing it.

I work at the intersection of product thinking and hands-on craft. That means getting to an interactive, testable concept as fast as possible and figuring out what that changes about how we design.

01 EXPERIENCE

05.2026 – PRESENT

Principal Product Designer

LINKEDIN

Back in the work itself. Spanning product thinking and hands-on craft, using code-based AI tools like Claude Code to prototype interactive concepts across a range of directions at once, compressing the time from idea to something you can actually feel and react to.

09.2018 – 05.2026

Design Director, Product Design

LINKEDIN

Led multiple product design teams across the main app, focused on everything from launching new features and generative AI to rolling out a new design language, accessibility upgrades, and dark mode. Launched LinkedIn Games, a new product category bringing daily play to a professional platform, driven by word of mouth, with nearly half of new players joining through a connection. Built and managed cross-functional teams spanning core product areas (Home, Messaging, Profile, Groups, Pages) and strategic horizontals (Premium, Trust, Infra UX, Navigation).

05.2017 – 08.2018

Design Director, Product Design

PINTEREST

Led product design for new ways to grow the business and improve the ads experience. Launched the Creators initiative, which has become central to Pinterest's long-term strategy. Focused on making content more relevant and building tools advertisers actually wanted to use. Worked closely with engineers and user research to solve real problems for people using the platform. Pushed for a practical, hands-on approach centered on experiments and learning fast.

02.2011 – 01.2017

Head of Product & Design

FLITE (ACQUIRED BY SNAP)

Responsible for both Product and Design. Grew the team from early startup to a full organization, guiding the platform from MVP into the enterprise space. Managed the Snap acquisition and led the team through transition.

02 SKILLS

UX / PRODUCT DESIGN

ACCESSIBILITY + INCLUSIVE DESIGN

PRODUCT STRATEGY

BRAND STRATEGY

AI PROTOTYPING

DESIGN LEADERSHIP

INFORMATION ARCHITECTURE

IDENTITY DESIGN

03 EDUCATION

ART INSTITUTE OF ATLANTA

Associates, Visual Communications

04 PUBLICATIONS

ADAGE • 2016 ↗

The Creative Director Role (As We Know It) Will Not Exist in 10 Years

ADOBE PRESS • 2005 ↗

Adobe Creative Suite 2 How-Tos: 100 Essential Techniques

CREATIVEPRO • 2000–2004 ↗

The Creative Toolbox / CreativePro Staff

MACWORLD • 2000 ↗

Photoshop 6.0 Vectors in on One-Stop Solution