Michael Chaves

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AI-Native Design Engineer | Product Systems & Human-in-the-Loop AI

Design engineer and product systems builder focused on AI-assisted workflows, internal tooling, moderation infrastructure, and human-centered interaction systems. Own products from ambiguous problem definition through shipped UI, workflow logic, evaluation, documentation, and operational adoption. Experience spans AI-powered creator platforms, enterprise internal tools, XR interaction systems, and founder-led product development.

Core Strengths

AI Product Systems: Human-in-the-loop AI workflows, LLM evaluation, RAG pipelines, agentic tools, moderation systems, structured outputs, reliability testing
Design Engineering: React, Next.js 15, TypeScript, JavaScript, UI architecture, interaction design, design systems, usability testing
Operational Tooling: QA calibration, review queues, workflow automation, creator feedback loops, documentation, audit processes
Interactive Systems: Unity3D, C#, WebGL, voice UI, XR/AR/VR interaction design, accessibility-focused prototyping
Infrastructure: Vercel, Neon Postgres, Drizzle ORM, GitHub Actions, REST APIs, GCP, AWS, Cloudflare Workers

Professional Experience

UGC Engineer, Contract

Astrocade | Los Altos, CA | Nov 2025 – Apr 2026

- Owned end-to-end UGC review systems for an AI-powered game creation platform, spanning auto-review logic, QA annotation workflows, final review queue behavior, creator feedback loops, and daily publishing support.
- Built and refined QA calibration processes that compared automated review behavior with human judgment, reducing ambiguity across false rejection patterns, repeat rejections, and reviewer consistency issues.
- Shipped tooling and workflow improvements across QA annotation, rubric structure, reviewer sampling, final review quality signals, and comment response handling.
- Produced documentation, audits, and operational guardrails that aligned enforcement logic, creator feedback, and internal review standards under production constraints.

Lead UX/UI Designer III, Contract

Starbucks | Seattle, WA | Mar 2022 – Dec 2022

- Designed immersive VR and mobile internal tools for high-priority learning and operations modules, using research and usability testing to improve simulation fidelity and task completion.
- Partnered with engineering and ML stakeholders to prototype AI-enhanced learning simulations and translate complex operational workflows into usable training experiences.
- Created high-fidelity prototypes and interaction flows that helped cross-functional teams validate learning workflows before full implementation.

Software Engineer II (Unity), Contract

Ford Motor Company | Dearborn, MI | Oct 2021 – Mar 2022

- Developed a Unity3D time-study tool deployed globally across manufacturing environments, contributing to over $1M in annual operational savings per plant.
- Built WebGL dashboards for factory analytics using custom shaders and interactive data visualization, reducing data-entry time by 40%.
- Translated complex manufacturing workflows into interactive tooling for operations and analytics stakeholders.

Frontend Engineer
POWER Engineers | Meridian, ID | Jun 2020 – Oct 2021

- Led design and development of GeoVoice, a web and VR platform for spatial storytelling, increasing stakeholder engagement by 60%.
- Developed responsive interfaces and interactive prototypes for geospatial and data-rich tools across web, AR, and VR formats.
- Built product interfaces that made complex spatial and infrastructure data easier for non-technical stakeholders to understand.

Selected Product & Research Work

Wizzo | AI Product Systems Platform
Founder-led Product Build | Aug 2025 – Present

- Built an AI-driven social productivity platform using Next.js 15, TypeScript, Postgres, Drizzle ORM, Neon, and Vercel, with a product model centered on quests, trials, achievements, and agent-assisted guidance.
- Designed AI tool workflows for web search, file uploads, document analysis, structured outputs, and explicit user controls to improve reliability and reduce model error.
- Implemented security and reliability improvements including SSRF guardrails, CSP header hardening, chat hydration fixes, and safer outbound fetch behavior.

SpeakEasy | Voice-First Mixed Reality Accessibility System
Master of Design Thesis | 2023 – 2025

- Designed and prototyped a voice-controlled mixed reality experience for users with low muscle tone, combining Unity3D, voice interaction, accessibility research, and immersive prototyping.
- Explored voice-first interaction patterns for inclusive computing, translating research into prototype flows, interaction logic, and accessibility-focused design decisions.

Independent Product & UX Engineering Work
Selected Client and Prototype Work | 2023 – 2025

- Completed selected UX, web, and interactive product work while completing a Master of Design and transitioning deeper into AI-focused product systems.
- Built high-fidelity prototypes and product concepts that connected user experience, technical implementation, and emerging interaction models.

Education

Master of Design, Experience Design
San José State University | May 2025

Bachelor of Science, Games, Interactive Media & Mobile Technology
Boise State University | May 2020

Selected Leadership & Recognition

- **Snap Inc. Spectacles Accelerator, 2025:** Built voice-first AR concepts focused on accessibility and spatial interaction.
- **Guest, XReality Podcast, Nov 2025:** Discussed AI-assisted accessibility and voice-first XR experiences.
- **Presenter, XR Access Symposium, 2024, Cornell Tech, NYC:** Presented voice-driven mixed reality work for inclusive interaction.
- **Adobe Student Ambassador, 2024:** Led creative AI and experiential design workshops and demos.
- **Perplexity AI Campus Strategist, 2024:** Supported academic adoption of generative AI tools for creative workflows.