

MICHAEL SYNOGROUND

(206) 251-2183 • mike.synoground@gmail.com • [linkedin.com/in/synoground](https://www.linkedin.com/in/synoground)

Strategic Product Leader

Accomplished and insightful leader with a solid foundation in entrepreneurship and a commitment to product-led growth. I've had the privilege of contributing to and learning from dynamic teams at organizations like *Microsoft*, *T-Mobile*, *Amazon*, *Discovery Education*, and *DreamBox Learning*. My journey has been marked by a collaborative approach to developing innovative, impact-driven teams, solutions and systems that positively impact users and communities.

CORE COMPETENCIES

- **Leadership:** Experienced in fostering collaborative, high-performing product teams and driving cross-functional initiatives, while acting as a strategic advisor across the organization.
- **Product Strategy and Vision:** Crafting and implementing strategic roadmaps, guiding M&A, and managing diverse portfolios to position products for scalable growth and product-market fit.
- **Innovation:** Innovator of digital solutions across mobile and web, incorporating technologies like AR/VR to create immersive, engaging user experiences.
- **Customer-Centric and Results-Oriented:** Dedicated to a customer-first approach, leveraging data and research to inform product decisions, while establishing success metrics that align with user needs and business objectives.
- **Brand & GTM:** Skilled in brand building and go-to-market strategies, with proven expertise in B2B, D2C, and Freemium models.
- **Design and User Experience:** Years of creating useful, usable, and delightful experiences across a broad range of products, while establishing design systems and the integration of user research.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

SVP Product Experience | DISCOVERY EDUCATION

2020 to Present

Transformed Discovery Education's product teams, experience, and strategic direction, resulting in the company's successful transaction to Clearlake in 2022. Continued to lead through significant growth phases, including the acquisition of several companies including Mystery Science and DreamBox Learning. Led the design, development and launch of several innovative, educational offerings resulting in a comprehensive portfolio of products and brands that reach and impact the lives of millions of students worldwide.

- **Enterprise Value:** Spearheaded a comprehensive redesign of DE's flagship SaaS product, surpassing growth, engagement, and revenue objectives, and substantially enhancing the company's valuation.
- **Leadership:** Actively participated in Discovery Education's Product and Executive Leadership Teams, advised on OKRs and provided strategic insights across multiple business units and sectors.
- **Cross-Functional Team Building:** Built and developed multiple product teams including design, product management, product marketing, user-research, and immersive learning. Promoted a culture of user-centered, product-led growth and innovation.
- **Product Portfolio Strategy:** Achieved significant ARR growth and built an award-winning portfolio through a combination of M&A, net-new and revitalization of existing products used by millions of students worldwide.
- **Innovative and Engaging Experiences:** Cutting edge interactive and game-based learning experiences consistently exceeded key KRAs. Launched a mobile AR app that went from 0 to over 1 million users.
- **Product Led Growth:** Championed a user-centric approach leveraging research, data, experimentation, and leading to iterative enhancements that significantly improved acquisition, usage and engagement.
- **Brand and Design:** Contributed to brand evolution through strategic design initiatives, design systems, and the creation of a unique character set that enhanced our brand's recognition and appeal.
- **GTM:** Orchestrated diverse Go-To-Market strategies, including enterprise sales, advocacy models, and freemium, effectively broadening product reach, awareness and adoption across multiple channels.

Sr. Director of User Experience | DREAMBOX LEARNING

Bellevue, WA: 2016 to 2020

Recruited to lead UX and product strategy for this award-winning, adaptive learning platform utilized by millions of K-8 students and educators around the globe. Mentor/manage teams in creation of all product elements and constantly update the product portfolio to meet evolving user needs and changing market

trends. The company's flagship product suite includes a SaaS style user management and data visualization tool for administrators, in addition to three student-focused desktop/mobile learning environments.

- **Leadership:** Contributed to the company's growth through definition and execution of strategic goals.
- **Product Strategy and Vision:** Defined the UX Strategy resulting in double-digit YoY growth.
- **Team Building:** Built and led a team of artists, designers, and researchers in transforming the design practice.
- **Operations:** Gained efficiencies with best practices including design systems, prototyping, and user journeys.
- **User-Centric:** Coached design thinking practices throughout the org, integrating UXR and VOC.
- **Product Lifecycle:** Worked collaboratively from inception to launch ensuring value creation and delivery.

Founder & CEO | DYNAMO PLUS

Seattle, WA: 2013 to 2016

Successfully applied entrepreneurial experience to build a second design agency from the ground up, guiding teams in delivering a robust array of product, design, development, marketing, and recruiting services.

- Top tier list of clients that included AllRecipes.com, Amazon, SanMar.com and T-Mobile.
- Built a campaign team & system for Amazon/Goodreads including A/B testing, analytics, and creative.
- Built a social media and content team for Amazon Publishing/Kindle Worlds.
- Retained by T-Mobile to deliver UX research and prototyping in support of the company's My Account app.
- Optimized SanMar.com's e-commerce, order and partner management experiences.

Product Manager, Mobile Games | T-MOBILE

Bellevue, WA: 2011 to 2013

Recruited by this top wireless carrier to manage the mobile games, discovery & e-commerce, and hardware product categories. Authored a strategy that helped establish T-Mobile as a leader in the gaming space, including the design of innovative smartphone/tablet and retail experiences. Managed pivotal relationships with outside game studios including Electronic Arts, Rovio, Zynga, WildTangent, Gameloft and Glu.

- Led product strategy and roadmap for Game Base—a mobile app store for games. Brought together gaming studios and hardware PMs for successful GTM via distribution on flagship phones and in-store experiences.
- Negotiated a custom build of EA's Need for Speed for the company's hero device, the Samsung Galaxy Note II.
- Secured an industry-first deal with Zynga to provide an exclusive and innovative social gaming mobile app.
- Supported the T-Mobile Mall, an application storefront on Android and Java platforms, as well as working with Rovio and Walmart on the Angry Birds Space GTM launch.

Founder & Chief Design Officer | BIG FISH (INNER AGENCY)

Seattle, WA: 1994 to 2011

Launched this digital agency to provide design, development, and staffing. Led execution of branding / marketing initiatives that resulted in significant market share growth, in addition to developing a pioneering cloud-based recruiting application. Managed business strategy throughout periods of both rapid growth and market turbulence, while leading a 20-member cross-disciplinary team.

Highlighted Projects, Contributions & Interim Roles:

- **2002-2011 | MICROSOFT:** Worked across a broad spectrum websites including shop.microsoft.com, Microsoft's e-commerce storefront. Built CMS and publishing systems for sites like Events & Webcasts.
- **2010-2011 | T-MOBILE:** Worked with T-Mobile's Creation Center to deliver a variety of mobile apps. Led teams through delivery of user experiences in collaboration with internal business owners.
- **1996-1998 | Various Brand & Digital Creative Agencies**

FUNCTIONAL SKILLS & EXPERTISE

Roadmap Creation	Cross-Functional Team Leadership	Cloud, SaaS & Mobile Products
Product Portfolio Strategy	Product Lifecycle Management	Design Guides & Systems
Mergers & Acquisitions (M&A)	Vendor & Partner Negotiations	Interactive Experiences, AR/VR
Market Research & Analysis	Brand, GTM & Launch Strategy	B2B, D2C, and Freemium
User Research & Voice of Customer	Team Building & Coaching	Product-Led Growth

EDUCATION & ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

BA in Visual Communications with a Minor in Music | WESTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY
Outside Interests | Hiking, Paddleboarding & Surfing