

Makai Smith

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Product Strategy & Execution Leader | AEC Tech & Design Systems

Full-spectrum product leader with deep roots in architecture and design technology. I've led global teams, defined product strategy, and delivered results in the AEC software space, where precision, complexity, and user empathy are paramount. I work directly with customers, partners, and developers to identify real needs and move decisively. My background in architecture and digital fabrication grounds my approach: pragmatic, creative, and market-aware. I speak the language of design, engineering, and business to connect the dots and build products that scale.

Product Strategy | AEC Technology | Generative Design | AI/ML for Design | Cross-functional Teams | Go-to-Market | Developer Platforms | Agile Development | SaaS | CAD & BIM | Digital Fabrication | Spatial Computing | R&D Operations

Professional Experience

GLODON USA SOFTWARE, INC.

Director of Product Management, Remote

2021 - 2024

Built the product function and drove AI strategy for a new generative 3D modeling platform targeting early-stage building design and infrastructure optimization, positioning the company for growth in the AEC tech market.

- **Hired and scaled a cross-functional team** (engineering, PM, design, QA) from zero to sustained delivery within 12 months.
- **Led applied AI/ML initiatives**, integrating LLMs and diffusion models into early-stage design workflows.
- **Implemented product ops in GitLab**, increasing iteration speed and transparency across backlog and roadmap cycles.
- **Provided domain and product leadership**, aligning architectural design expertise with generative modeling and platform thinking—while fostering a culture of support, learning, and servant leadership.

BENTLEY SYSTEMS, INC.

2007 - 2021

Director of Product Analytics, Remote

2019 - 2021

Selected to lead a pivotal company-wide initiative embedding product telemetry, machine learning, and voice-of-customer programs into the core of product and GTM strategy, **during a period culminating in Bentley's successful IPO (NASDAQ: BSY)**. Built technical depth and organizational capability for data-informed product development.

- **Independently engineered a full-stack Voice of the Customer system**, using Azure Functions (Python) to trigger Qualtrics surveys, orchestrated by Azure Data Factory pipelines over Snowflake, and visualized through a custom, user-configurable QlikSense reporting layer.
- **Enabled usage-based customer segmentation** and automated multilingual feedback from 1,000+ users per week, delivering governed UX metrics to product teams and **doubling email CTR** through precision-targeted marketing campaigns.

Director of Product Management, Exton, PA

2015 - 2019

Led product strategy for the *MicroStation* product line, Bentley's flagship CAD platform generating \$150M ARR and supporting vertical applications across architecture, engineering, and asset operations.

- **Directed global team of 100+** across product, QA, support, and services to deliver scalable, mission-critical CAD platform for AEC and infrastructure design.
- **Drove release cycle transformation**, shifting from multi-year to quarterly releases by scaling test automation (+50K tests/year) and reducing cycle time 25%.
- **Led SDK and ISV enablement strategy**, collaborating with Legal to open-source key components and drive adoption in niche markets—extending reach without diluting core product focus.
- **Improved org efficiency** while boosting engagement, cutting headcount by 10% through clear priorities, hands-on leadership, and cross-functional execution.
- **Represented product vision externally**, delivering keynotes at global industry events such as the AIA Conference.
- **Cut \$100K annually** by auditing licensing agreements and terminating redundant contracts.

BENTLEY SYSTEMS, INC. (Continued)**Senior Product Manager**, Exton, PA**2013 - 2015**

Owned company-wide 3D platform strategy—spanning modeling, visualization, rendering, interoperability, and 3D printing—across all product lines and market segments.

- **Integrated LumenRT (real-time rendering acquisition)** into core products, designing a frictionless trial-to-paid path that generated \$1.2M in new revenue.
- **Revived a failing parametric modeling initiative**, delivering a new system within 5 months through intensive cross-functional collaboration and iterative delivery.
- **Launched “Insiders” early-access program** and user council for strategic accounts, accelerating feedback loops and adoption among top 25 enterprise customers.

Product Manager, Exton, PA**2007 - 2012**

Established the company as a market leader in computational design with the launch of a category-defining new product (GenerativeComponents), securing a significant competitive advantage in the architectural and engineering markets and high-profile customers such as Foster + Partners, Arup, and SOM.

- **Defined market-driven roadmap** and introduced Agile/Scrum practices, enabling faster iteration and tighter alignment
- **Championed generative design globally**, running workshops and speaking at industry events such as SmartGeometry, building both user community and thought leadership.
- **Led go-to-market execution**, crafting messaging, sales training, and marketing collateral to support product launch and early adoption.

Additional Related Experience**KREYSLER & ASSOCIATES****Director of Digital Fabrication**, American Canyon, CA

Led transformation of the digital fabrication shop at a leading architectural composites manufacturer with integrated CNC, scanning, and advanced mold-making workflows, turning the unit into a profitable cost center with 70% revenue growth.

VENTURI, SCOTT BROWN AND ASSOCIATES**Architect**, Philadelphia, PA

Executed concept design and construction documentation at a seminal firm known for its landmark design.

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS**Visiting Instructor and Lecturer at Sci-ARC, UC Berkeley, UPenn, and Thomas Jefferson University**

Taught and lectured in architectural technology, composites, and digital fabrication at top-ranked architecture schools.

ACM SIGGRAPH**Conference Co-organizer**, Los Angeles, CA**2000 - 2025**

Held multiple chair roles at the world’s leading conference for computer graphics and interactive techniques. Provided early leadership in generative design, digital fabrication, and spatial computing—before these became industry norms.

- **Speaker and co-organizer at SIGGRAPH 2024**, presenting on digital twins and digital fabrication in the “Design for Spatial Computing” Frontiers Workshop.
- **Directed SIGGRAPH Labs, a large-scale digital studio and lecture series**, integrating 3D printing, XR, scanning, and motion capture; led a 45-person volunteer team.
- **Curated “Generative Design” exhibition (2009)** and **served on peer-review juries and an executive subcommittee**, advancing the role of design in SIGGRAPH’s strategic agenda.

Education**MBA**, University of Massachusetts Amherst (*Isenberg School of Management*), 2025 – GPA 4.0**Master of Architecture**, Arizona State University – *magna cum laude***Bachelor of Science, Design**, University of Florida – *summa cum laude*