GRACE BRINDLE

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SUMMARY

A design-oriented product leader who builds tools that help people make and share stories. As founding product manager at Variant, I own the entire user experience and platform design for an AI-native gaming UGC platform backed by a16z Speedrun and 2048 Ventures, where anyone can turn an idea into a playable experience and share it. Previously a Senior Product Manager at Electronic Arts on a mobile title within *The Sims* franchise. My work bridges design, user insight, and product strategy, grounded in a love for digital storytelling and for products that spark creativity, curiosity, and connection.

EXPERIENCE

Variant | *Founding Product Manager* | New York, NY — August 2025 – Present

- **Built an AI-native gaming UGC platform from concept to launch** on iOS and Android in six months as the company's first hire, owning the roadmap across creation, growth, and monetization as the team scaled from 2 to 20+.
- **Own the entire user experience and platform design**: the content creation flow, the marketplace, onboarding, the feed, explore page, and discovery surfaces people find new experiences through.
- **Established the platform's creator onboarding and education program**, launching a student developer initiative in partnership with Northeastern University, selecting a cohort of 10 through a formal application and interview process, and delivering the curriculum that carried them from signup to published work.
- **Led monetization strategy for the platform**, defining price points across the content catalog and designing and balancing the virtual currency system that underpins the platform economy.
- **Author all functional requirements for the platform** and partner daily with engineering, design, and growth, establishing sprint and release cadence, triaging production issues in Sentry, and managing the repository.
- **Established the platform's measurement foundation in PostHog**, defining the event taxonomy, funnels, and dashboards behind the company's KPIs so activation, retention, and conversion can be analyzed by cohort without engineering support.
- **Led go-to-market for launch**, setting launch strategy and timing, developing app store positioning and materials, partnering with marketing, and driving a community-led motion through Discord and the creator cohort.

Electronic Arts | *Senior Product Manager* | Redwood City, CA — August 2023 – October 2025

- **Managed product for two live-service mobile titles**: a 0-to-1 Sims-franchise title carried from prototyping through live market testing with a 30-person studio, and Covet Fashion, a ten-year-old game with 250K daily active users.
- **Owned the content pipeline and lifecycle for 570 character customization assets and 400 build and decoration assets** in Unity, defining unlock requirements, metadata, and monetization strategy to establish core player progression; specified tooling improvements including an asset import system and a validation tool, delivered with Engineering and Tech Art.
- **Owned data analysis for all market tests**, writing SQL in BigQuery and Snowflake to evaluate feature and product performance by cohort across 5 market tests (8K+ players each, spanning 2 countries), then presenting studio-wide debriefs on the results and recommended next steps.
- **Designed and ran a month-long A/B test that enrolled 1M+ players**, lifting D7 average revenue per user (ARPU) 9% and core item engagement 24%, owning the hypothesis, segments, success metrics, and the rollout call.
- **Owned all player research for the studio**: designed the survey instrument (38% response rate), ran five UserTesting playtests with about 50 outside participants and a four-day diary study with 70+ participants, led affinity analysis, and turned findings into prioritized roadmaps within a week. D1 retention rose 28%.

Product Manager Intern, Covet Fashion — May – August 2022

- **Redesigned the game's social features to drive long-term engagement**, improving the matchmaking algorithm and introducing group messaging and announcements.
- **Moderated 6 focus groups** and paired those findings with live player data to author 6 requirement documents that shaped the social roadmap.

Braid | *Product Designer & Gamification Advisor* — January 2023 – Present

- **Designed Braid Camp**, the onboarding curriculum for three kinds of members (Storytellers, Guides, and Builders), and now advise leadership on gamification, from profile progress and badges to a redesigned member email.

WolverineSoft Studios | *Producer, Design Lead & Project Lead* | Ann Arbor, MI — September – December 2022

- **Led a 10-person student team of designers and programmers** to add online multiplayer to a tower defense game and release it on Steam in 12 weeks, planning each sprint with the lead engineer and directing the designers' feature specs.

EDUCATION

University of Michigan School of Information | M.S., Human-Computer Interaction — April 2023

Carleton College | B.A., History (magna cum laude, Distinction); Minor, Digital Arts & Humanities — June 2021

SKILLS

Creator & Platform: Creation and publishing flows, creator onboarding and education, content moderation and trust & safety, admin and internal tooling, community programs, creator ecosystem growth.
Product & Delivery: Roadmap ownership, functional requirements and PRDs, KPI definition and measurement, agile and lean process, rapid prototyping, go-to-market, competitive analysis.
Data & Technical: SQL (BigQuery, Snowflake), PostHog, Looker, Excel, A/B testing and experimentation, Jira, Confluence, GitHub, Sentry, Unity, React Native.
Design & Research: UI design in Figma, customer discovery, interview moderation, survey design, usability testing, focus group moderation, affinity analysis, accessibility research.