J. Phillip Byars

Product Design Engineer

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SUMMARY

Product design engineer who takes a customer problem from discovery through design and prototype, then ships the solution in **React and TypeScript**. For three years I have designed and built AI products for paying customers and daily users, working directly with the people who use them. CareerFoundry-trained designer, Security+ certified, and I build in Claude Code every day.

EXPERIENCE

Founding Product Designer & Engineer · Exitium Labs, San Francisco Bay Area — Jan 2025 – Present

- Designed and shipped **eastbay.direct** for East Bay Furniture: a React storefront with checkout and an AI designer that drives the page itself (opens pieces, picks colors, scrolls to dimensions) instead of answering in a chat bubble. **$10K+ in online sales in the first month.**
- Ran field research with retailers and manufacturers at national trade shows (Las Vegas Market, High Point Market), then designed and built the sales desk: staff see the same shopper the website does, search nearly 9,000 pieces by voice, and text a list to the customer's phone.
- Designed the phone agent's conversation (turn-taking, barge-in, persona, latency budget) and its mid-call SMS/MMS flow that texts matched product photos, with semantic search across manufacturer catalogs of 90,000+ SKUs.
- Made the AI safe to sell with: every action is validated against the live catalog, backed by a 230-check search eval.

Founder, Product Designer & Instructor · Palstart (palstart.app) — 2023 – Present

- Designed and built Palstart on my own: students build real apps and games with an AI partner, publish to a live link, and get tested by classmates. **70 students use it every day.**
- Designed peer user testing into the product itself: 650+ projects built and 500+ comments left on each other's work.
- Wrote a public spec for AI assistants (llms.txt) so code from ChatGPT or Claude pastes in and runs the first time.
- Have taught UX/UI design and product development for three years, from real problem to tested prototype.

Founding Product Designer & Engineer, Voice AI · FrontDesker, San Francisco Bay Area — Dec 2023 – Jan 2025

- Designed and built clinician-facing React web and desktop apps for hands-free ambient note-taking, AI-assisted X-ray review, and voice appointment briefings.
- Designed around clinical constraints: no typing during exams, PHI handling, and HIPAA-eligible infrastructure.

UX/UI Designer / Project Manager, Security Audits · Least Authority, Berlin (Remote) — May 2021 – Feb 2023

- Designed the UX/UI for Destiny, a private file-transfer desktop app, and led development of PrivateStorage.
- Managed enterprise security audit projects, owning client communication from kickoff through final report.

SELECTED CLIENT WORK

Drizzled dessert trailer · drizzled209.com · React 19, TypeScript, Tailwind 4, Vercel — 2026

- Designed and built the site in React and TypeScript (pre-rendered, bilingual, online ordering). **Online sales up 85%.**
- Built the staff app the crew runs each shift on: one-item-per-screen stock counts, schedules, tasks, and an AI ordering agent that drafts the next shopping list for a person to approve.

SKILLS

Design: Customer discovery · UX research · UX/UI design · Prototyping · Figma · Design systems · Usability testing

Build: React · TypeScript · JavaScript · HTML/CSS · Tailwind · Node · Python · Supabase · Vercel · Claude Code · Cursor

AI product: Agent UX and tool calls · Conversation design · Evals and guardrails · RAG and semantic search · llms.txt

EDUCATION & CERTIFICATIONS

CareerFoundry, UX/UI Design certificate · **UC Berkeley Extension**, Cybersecurity (98% average) · **CompTIA Security+**

United Nations Mandated University for Peace, M.A. · **Continental Theological Seminary**, B.A.