

Ali Tawfiq

Product Director

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Summary of Qualifications

- Founded, built, and grew a venture, Boomerang, that tackles social isolation for baby boomers
- In 6-months we shipped our app to 70k registered users with 20% weekly engaged users
- Managed and grew a team of 15 product managers, designers, marketers and ops team members
- Managed and grew the core product at 500px, an online social platform with 14 million users
- Applied human-centered design to prototype new ventures in the online communities space
- Devised product strategies for fintech, social networking, community and wearable tech products
- Possess proven team management skills and advocate for capital efficient product development
- Offer freelance on product strategy, rapid prototyping, product experimentation & coaching

Professional Experience

Co-founder and CEO, *Boomerang*

Feb 2019 – Dec 2021 | Toronto, Canada

- Researched, prototyped and built an online platform for retired people to tackle social isolation by offering experiences and meet-ups to exchange skills, learn and connect
- After scrappily building an MVP with no code and acquiring 8k users, I secured two small rounds of funding to grow the team, continue growing the platform and to accelerate user growth
- Led the team efforts to pivot our product during the pandemic, launching and growing our app to over 70k users, with 20% WAU and 10% MoM revenue growth
- Enabled and mentored our earliest team members to grow into a leadership team that supports each of the functional units (Product, Operations, Marketing and Engineering)
- Alongside a talented team of designers, developers, digital marketers, and operations we've built a culture of hypothesis driven testing in order to validate the venture at scale
- After growing the team to over 15 employees, my role shifted to mostly focus on the business side, medium to long term strategy, partnerships and team growth and enablement
- As of December 2021, I shifted to an executive advisory role

Product & Business Advisor, *Freelance*

2015 – present | Remote

As a freelance product manager and startup consultant I work with small to medium size startups on product experimentation, rapid prototyping, product strategy and product coaching. I specialize in utilizing scrappy and capital efficient means to validating early stage concepts, building MVPs and iterating to find problem/solution and product/market fit

- **Product Experimentation:** help with mapping out the full scope of product experiments, including: scoping the experiment parameters, mapping out the user journey, identifying KPIs and managing the execution
- **Rapid Prototyping:** help with validating new product/ feature hypotheses through no-code prototyping, including: building landing pages, integrating with payment providers, integrating analytics, and synthesizing the learnings
- **Product Strategy:** support venture and product leads with mapping out, validating and strengthening their product strategies, including: mapping out competitive landscapes, roadmap validation and business concept validation
- **Product Coaching:** support and strengthen the skills of existing product teams to help them adapt agile and rapid product development practices

Product Director/ Executive Advisor, RBC Ventures  [Apr 2018 – present](#) | Toronto, Canada

- Support venture leads with mapping out, validating and strengthening their product strategies
- Enable early stage ventures with data driven product experimentations and rapid prototyping
- Introduce and implement lean product development practices at early stage and scaling ventures
- Tasked with identifying pain-points, prototyping, building, and raising funds for new ventures
- Coach existing product teams with adopting an agile and rapid approach to product development
- Build & launch MVPs to validate needs, test hypothesized solutions and validate user demand

Lead Product Manager, 500px  [May 2016 – Apr 2018](#) | Toronto, Canada

- Defined and owned the community product roadmap, defined success metrics and managed scope and expectations with internal and external stakeholders
- Developed lean and agile product development practices by seamlessly integrating design sprints and Engineering sprints to focus on problem solving and iteration
- Worked with the engineering, marketing and design leads to align business strategy with product strategy and lead the team to an acquisition
- Prioritized work across product, tech and design to balance the ROI for the user and 500px
- Products: personalized photo discovery, paid online educational classes, global photographer directory, premium memberships and online photography marketplace
- Managed and shipped products to a global community of over 14 million photographers with a mission of making 500px the place where photographers grow
- Managed multiple major product launches from inception to completion that enabled 500px to deliver added value to our membership product and be on track for a 60% YoY revenue growth
- Worked cross-functionally with Design, Engineering, Marketing and the Product teams

Co-founder & Product Lead, Harvst Health [Oct 2015 – Feb 2017](#) | Toronto, Canada

Part agency, part venture; harvst focused on helping Orthopaedic surgeons monitor post-op patient recovery by connecting wearable data to pre-existing EMR platforms

Engineering & Product Lead, OMsignal [Mar 2014 – Sep 2015](#) | Montreal, Canada

Software Developer, Huron Technologies  [Feb 2013 – Aug 2013](#) | Waterloo, Canada

Algorithm Developer - Digital Pathology, GE Healthcare [May 2012 – Nov 2012](#) | Toronto, Canada

Education

M.A.Sc. in Electrical Engineering, University of Toronto [2010 – 2012](#) | Toronto, Canada

B.A.Sc. in Electrical Engineering (Bioengineering Minor), University of Toronto [2006 – 2010](#) | Toronto, Canada

Interests and Hobbies

Travelling & Photography 

Visual storytelling and networking with strangers

Sports

Soccer, long distance running, and skiing

Extracurricular Activities

Hacking Health, Free the Children, MSF, Volunteer

Brainstation, Educator - Product Management

Ruby Lighting Talks, Roadmunk, Speaker & Panellist

References

Available upon request