

Rafael Kurosawa

Product Designer Lead

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SUMMARY

Product Designer and Art Director with 15+ years of experience converting design decisions into ROI, scalability, and operational efficiency. Has led design across automotive marketplace, vehicle financing, credit card, and asset-backed lending products — bridging B2B and B2C surfaces at one of Latin America's largest financial institutions. In 2024, led the award-winning iCarros redesign (Bronze, Brazil Design Awards · Bronze, Latin America Design Awards). In 2026, contributed to back-to-back historical net production records in Home Equity: BRL 163M (March) and BRL 196M (June). Currently drives design at scale within Itaú Unibanco's credit operation: BRL 1.48 trillion portfolio, +7.2% YoY growth, and a 37.1% efficiency index — the best Q1 result in the institution's history. Background spans advertising, branding, and digital product.

SKILLS

Proficient: Product Design (UX/UI), Art Direction, Design Leadership, Visual Direction, Brand Strategy, Prototyping & User Testing, Stakeholder Communication, Creative Direction, Cross-functional Collaboration, Business Indicators & Impact Metrics, Figma

Intermediate: UX Research, Service Design, Design Thinking, Information Architecture, Design System, Design Ops, Product Strategy, Workshop Facilitation, AI-assisted Design (Figma Make), Claude Design.

Beginner: Motion Design, Data-driven Design (metrics/analytics), Design Tokens (code-level), Frontend Handoff (CSS/tokens), Business Strategy & OKRs.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Group Design Manager

Itaú Unibanco, São Paulo, BR – Hybrid (2 days on-site)

03/2022 to present

Core Responsibilities:

- Led a multidisciplinary design team focused on asset-backed lending products, contributing to back-to-back historical net production records in the Home Equity product line: BRL 163M in March and BRL 196M in June.
- Drove design strategy, team growth, cross-functional alignment, and scalable design solutions across B2B, B2C, and B2B2C surfaces — integrating end-to-end digital journeys across buyer and seller touchpoints within the automotive marketplace ecosystem. Delivered a 98% increase in leads generated on iCarros' listing page and a 125% uplift in lead conversion rate, amplifying value generation for both end consumers and B2B clients (dealerships) looking to connect with qualified buyers.
- Defined the design vision and roadmap aligned with product and business goals. Translated business problems into design opportunities and advocated for user-centered design at the leadership level — integrating products, journeys, and digital experiences across multiple surfaces to amplify value generation for users and business alike.
- Partnered with Product, Engineering, Data, and Business stakeholders to align on priorities, scope, and delivery. Represented design in planning ceremonies and executive reviews.
- Tracked and communicated design impact through business indicators including net production

volume, lead generation rate, conversion uplift, NPS, and digital adoption metrics — enabling data-informed prioritization and executive-level reporting.

- Built and structured design teams from the ground up across 4 different product groups over 4 years, defining roles, hiring criteria, and team composition. Managed pipelines, conducted interviews, and made hiring decisions that shaped long-term capability — leading a total of approximately 20 designers across successive teams throughout the tenure — also contributing to the evolution of design practices, rituals, and career frameworks across the broader design organization.
- Championed the adoption of AI-assisted design practices within the team, leveraging tools such as Figma Make, Claude, and ChatGPT to accelerate discovery, ideation, and prototyping workflows — driving efficiency and innovation in product design at scale.

Key Technologies and Tools:

- Product & Strategy: Discovery, Visioning, Stakeholder Management, OKRs, Data Driven
- Design & Prototyping: Figma, FigJam, Figma Make
- Research & Testing: Maze, Hotjar, Dovetail, FullStory
- Collaboration & Productivity: Miro, Slack, Microsoft Teams
- AI-assisted Design: Figma Make, Claude/Claude Design, ChatGPT, Copilot/Cowork

Senior Product Designer

Itaú Unibanco, São Paulo, BR – Hybrid

01/2021 to 03/2022

Core Responsibilities:

- Designed end-to-end experiences for credit card products, covering the full lifecycle from acquisition and onboarding to account management and dispute resolution — contributing to a year in which Itaú Unibanco's card segment posted 17.2% revenue growth, reaching BRL 2.57 billion in peak quarter, with the credit card base growing 17.3% to 38.2 million cards.
- Led UX research cycles including user interviews, usability testing, and synthesis — translating insights into actionable design decisions that supported a 2x increase in virtual card generation compared to 2020, reflecting a strong digitalization trend driven by improved in-app experiences.
- Created high-fidelity prototypes and interaction specs in Figma, working in close collaboration with Engineering and Product to ensure feasibility and delivery quality.
- Contributed to the evolution of the design system, proposing and documenting new components aligned with credit card product needs — supporting a digital adoption milestone in which 63% of individual product contracts were completed digitally in Q4 2021, with mobile NPS reaching 71 points in December 2021.
- Facilitated design critiques and alignment sessions with cross-functional stakeholders including Product, Engineering, and Business teams.

Key Technologies and Tools:

- Design & Prototyping: Figma, FigJam
- Research & Testing: Maze, Hotjar
- Collaboration & Productivity: Miro, Microsoft Teams

Art Director

Havas, São Paulo, BR

08/2015 to 06/2017

Core Responsibilities:

- Led art direction for integrated campaigns across digital, TV, and print for a diverse portfolio of clients including ibis Hotels, Klabin, Hershey's, Kero Coco, Mercury, and Reckitt Benckiser.
- Conceptualized and executed brand-consistent visual work across display advertising, social media, video, and OOH formats.
- Collaborated closely with copywriters, planners, and account teams to develop creative concepts from brief to final delivery.
- Directed photo and video productions, overseeing visual identity alignment and quality control on set and in post-production.

- Adapted global brand guidelines for local market activations, ensuring consistency across touchpoints while meeting regional audience needs.

Key Technologies and Tools:

- Design & Production: Adobe Creative Suite (Photoshop, Illustrator, InDesign, After Effects)
- Collaboration & Productivity: Slack, Microsoft Teams

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Design

Universidade Presbiteriana Mackenzie, São Paulo, BR

02/2006 to 12/2010

- **Relevant coursework:** Visual Communication, Typography, Brand Identity, Graphic Design, Advertising Design, Photography, Digital Media.

Master of Arts, Strategic Design & Innovation

Istituto Europeo di Design (IED), São Paulo, BR

02/2015 to 12/2016

- **Relevant coursework:** Design Strategy, Innovation Management, Service Design, Design Thinking, Business & Entrepreneurship, Future Thinking.

CERTIFICATES / COURSES

Human Centered Design, Hyper Island, São Paulo, 08/2021

Innovation & Future Thinking, IED Barcelona, Spain, 07/2015

English as a Second Language — Fluency & Proficiency, ILSC Education Group, Canada, 12/2014

LANGUAGES

Portuguese: Native

English: Professional Working Proficiency