

Alex McCarthy

Product leader. Advertising, live video and content discovery.

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Product and engineering executive, ten years in consumer products, the last four leading **product** for a direct-to-consumer streaming platform selling subscriptions and advertising against one catalog. **Zero to \$36M** in revenue and **4M new users**. Built the **product management organization** through two acquisitions and ran six business units, owning the **roadmap and the P&L**. Most of it **0 to 1** with small teams. The ad platform team was seven people. My expertise is in connected skill sets so I can make **cross domain decisions** that are driven by risk reduction during adoption. Retained direct ownership of **advertising, live video and content discovery**, the platform's highest-leverage product surfaces. An operator who sets the bar high, treating good enough as a standard to raise, not settle for.

EXPERIENCE

Sovren Technologies (Parler, Edgecast) · Senior VP, Product

2022 – Present

Consumer streaming, social and commerce platform built from three merged companies. 4M members, \$36M in revenue. Ran product and engineering: 175 people, reporting to the CEO. Board member.

- **Team and structure:** Built the product management function through two acquisitions, hiring into it and promoting from within into management. Restructured surface-aligned PMs into one owner per business unit. Led six PMs, five designers, three product marketers, QA and engineering.
- **AI operating model:** Rolled assisted development out to 80+ engineers. Code contribution per engineer rose 27% in our analytics, and review became the constraint: longer diffs, agents rebuilding components that already existed. Two competing models on first-pass review, tuned to cut noise, then a human on every PR and a second reviewer over 400 lines.
- **Content discovery:** Built one content shelf ranking short-form, long-form and live against a single objective. Classified live in flight so a four-minute-old broadcast could compete with a series carrying two years of watch data.
- **Recommender evals:** Stood up the eval suite, labeling tool and feed spec for the For You personalization engine. It exposed defects the unit tests never caught. Designed the machine learning grading ladder: CI assertions, human labeling, interleaved online tests.
- **Ad server and yield:** Built the sell side and its clearing rules. Real-time auction over our own supply, floors by creator tier and inventory type. Raised floors to trade fill rate for revenue per available impression, holding paid fill in a 60 to 80 percent band.
- **Advertiser platform:** Launched the self-serve buy side 0 to 1: campaign setup, targeting and reporting, integrated across social, streaming, web and email. Direct sales sold the reserved first slot as sponsorship against floors I set. Reported fill to leadership.
- **Live advertising:** Shipped live video in 45 days against a 90-day plan with the same seven people: ingest, the player and server-side ad insertion. Negotiated the partner channel terms: revenue share on filled breaks, house spots as fallback. Tens of millions of live impressions.
- **Creator Studio:** Built the creator economy product 0 to 1 with five people and ran it as one of six business units. Led discovery with content partners, then prototyped with creators before any code shipped. The prototype replaced the written spec as the unit of decision.
- **Payments platform:** Chose the rails and vendors, then ran the team that shipped them. Premium tiered subscriptions and custom memberships on in-app purchase and external payment, domestic and international, for 4M members. A payment SDK underneath handles hybrid crypto and fiat.
- **Data platform:** Set direction for the data lake architecture and the internal dashboards on top of it. Per-platform admin systems under role-based access. Consolidated dashboards across the business units for planning and forecasting.

AI-driven SaaS for winery Compliance and Club Management.

- **Product and P&L:** Co-founded and shipped the suite, now on 55+ wineries. Four people, none full time, bootstrapped and profitable. Same operating model as the day job at the other end of the scale: prototype as spec, agents in the build, support and onboarding.

Skylab Apps · Product Manager → Senior Product Manager → VP, Product & Engineering 2016 – 2022

White-label multi-tenant B2B SaaS. 100+ branded enterprise and mid-market applications, 3M+ end users. Ran a 40-person product and engineering organization with five direct reports.

- **Platform strategy:** Made the call to move from bespoke client builds to one configurable product serving every tenant on a single codebase.
- **Search and discovery:** Put 100+ applications on one shared search cluster through a tenant isolation model. Replaced per-tenant keyword lookup with a retrieval service on Elasticsearch and Redis.
- **Ranking and relevance:** Settled competing enterprise feature requests with metrics. Replaced recency ordering with a scored blend of text relevance, engagement and recency decay. Instrumented zero-result rate and A/B tested against click-through and time to first action.
- **Monetization:** Removed the vendor's revenue share and roadmap veto: integrated a third-party ad server, then replaced it with a self-serve platform built in house.

I.E. Pacific and C.W. Driver · Project Engineer

2011 – 2016

- **Project delivery:** Managed \$100M+ in federal and commercial construction from planning through closeout, on time and on budget.

TECHNICAL CAPABILITIES

I build the prototype myself, on our production components, with real logic and every state, so the room argues with something that runs. Every ranking and ad-load change ran against a holdout: session time as the target, week-two retention as the guardrail. Adoption runs on one question, if this is wrong how long until we find out, and that set the risk tiers for agent-written code.

TECHNICAL INVENTORY

Owned, built against, or evaluated. Nothing listed that I cannot draw on a whiteboard.

Ad serving, yield and advertiser platform: First-party ad server · Server-side ad insertion · Auction design and clearing rules · Floor and pricing strategy · Yield optimization · Holdout tests and incrementality · Self-serve campaign management · Advertiser billing and onboarding · Brand safety and ad review

Live video and streaming delivery: RTMP and OBS ingest · HLS packaging and delivery · Manifest stitching · SCTE-35 cue handling across three dialects · Splice timing and worst-case decision budgets · Pod decisioning ahead of the break · Transcode and encode pipelines · Owned CDN across 25 points of presence · In-flight content classification · Live failure modes and guardrail metrics

Discovery, ranking and personalization: Retrieval and candidate generation · Ranking and relevance tuning · Signal design and weighting · Cold start · Elasticsearch and Redis · Multi-tenant search

Enterprise platform, identity and access: Multi-tenant SaaS architecture · Tenant isolation · Role-based access control · Single sign-on and MFA · Admin consoles and internal tooling · Bot defense · Data lake and BI architecture · Reporting and dashboards · Configurable product for enterprise customers

Payments and commerce: Subscription and membership billing · In-app purchase and web billing on one entitlement · International recurring billing · Creator payouts and ledger design · Payment SDK for fiat and crypto · Stripe and Stripe Connect · Plaid · Sumsb KYC · PCI and GDPR · Multi-vendor marketplaces · Marketplace verification and risk

Product management and AI: Eval suites and labeling pipelines · Offline-to-online grading ladders · Guardrail metric design · Objective function definition · Experiment design and holdout gating · Error analysis and failure taxonomy · Agent risk tiering · Adversarial review across models · Prototype as spec · Claude Code, Codex, Cursor and MCP · User research and discovery · Coaching product managers

EDUCATION

B.S. Engineering, San Diego State University, 2012