

Danyal Rao

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SUMMARY

Product Designer with 2 years shipping user-centered products across consumer, B2B, and SaaS. Founded a design studio to get more industry work, reaching \$200K+ ARR while still in school. Builds with AI-native workflows (Claude Code, Cursor, Figma Make) to move from research to production-quality prototypes at startup speed, grounded in enterprise craft and care.

EDUCATION

University of California, San Diego La Jolla, CA
B.S. Human-Computer Interaction and Design, Minor in Computer Science Expected Dec 2026

EXPERIENCE

Founder & Lead Designer Sep 2025 – Present
Aether Studios (AI-Native Design Studio) San Francisco Bay Area, CA

- Founded solo design studio serving YC-backed and adjacent VC backed startups and growth-stage companies, reaching **\$200K+ ARR run rate** within first year.
- Ship end-to-end product design leveraging AI-native workflows (Claude Code, Cursor, HTML/CSS prototyping), to deliver client work at the speed and scope of a small team.

Product Designer Nov 2025 – Present
Contract | Complify (GRC SaaS Startup) San Francisco Bay Area, CA

- Sole designer for AI-powered compliance platform, owning UX from research through interactive prototypes to developer handoff for SOC audit workflows. **Landed RSM (top 5 audit company)** on a paid pilot for them by showcasing my new designs to the prospective client in first sales call.
- Built high-fidelity prototypes with **Claude Code + HTML/CSS/React/JS/ShadCN/Tailwind**, reducing iteration cycles from days to hours and enabling rapid client feedback loops.
- Conducted competitive analysis across 5 GRC platforms to define information architecture for complex document review workflows.

Product Designer Jan 2025 – Mar 2025
Contract | SafetyWing (YC-Backed SaaS Startup) Remote

- Designed 0-1 features driving **20% conversion increase** and **\$400K+ projected annual revenue** through improvements to pricing, onboarding, and checkout flows.
- Conducted **25+ user interviews and usability sessions**, translating findings into design solutions that reduced friction across the customer journey.

Product Designer Jun 2024 – Sep 2024
Internship | ServiceNow (Fortune 500 Enterprise SaaS) San Diego, CA

- Designed AI-enabled collaboration tools serving **8,000+ users** across Fortune 500 clients, **reducing security risk assessment time by 30%**.
- Conducted **30+ user research sessions** with executive stakeholders, translating insights into wireframes, prototypes, and design specs.
- Extended design system components for new use cases while maintaining pattern consistency across the business unit.

Junior Designer Mar 2023 – Sep 2023
UCSD Design Lab, under Don Norman La Jolla, CA

- Worked under Don Norman (author of *The Design of Everyday Things*) contributing to design research and user-centered design initiatives at the university's flagship design research lab.
- Designed and built client-facing React interfaces from wireframes to production, creating accessible web experiences for the lab's healthcare technology projects.