

Nikita Simakov

Head of Product / VP of Product: AI, Consumer & 0→1

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SUMMARY

AI product leader with 7+ years building and scaling consumer and B2B products from 0→1 to millions of users. Former CPO at Sidekick Browser, acquired by Perplexity, where I grew monthly revenue 4x and built B2B from 0→200+ teams in 3 months. Hands-on across PMF, growth, monetization, GTM, and production LLM products spanning search, retrieval, recommendations, and evaluation.

CORE EXPERTISE

0→1 · Product Strategy · PMF · Growth · Monetization · Pricing · GTM · B2B · Consumer · LLM Products · RAG & Retrieval · Agentic AI · AI Evals · Experimentation · Product Analytics · Team Building · Roadmaps / OKRs · Stakeholder Alignment

EXPERIENCE

Head of Product | VL Projects, PE-style consumer app operator (Bending Spoons model), ~3M MAU **Oct 2025 – Present**

- Added **~\$1M in mobile ARR in 12 months** on a **~\$2M baseline** by making the case to the CEO to prioritize mobile and leading a cross-functional experimentation roadmap.
- Cut **time-to-insight from 14 days to 3** by rebuilding cohort, behavioral, and experiment analytics, making segment-level product decisions data-driven.

CPO | Gentlxy (lovel.ai), consumer AI **Aug 2024 – Sep 2025**

- Launched the app **0→1** and scaled it to **300–400K MAU**, reaching **break-even after 11 months** at **~\$25K monthly revenue**.
- Owned the **conversational and image-generation pipelines** end to end: prompt and model orchestration, output quality, latency, and per-request cost.
- Built the operating model and delivery process for a **12-person team**.

CPO | Sidekick Browser, acquired by Perplexity ([perplexity.ai](https://www.perplexity.ai)) **Dec 2022 – Aug 2024**

- Owned the **12–18 month** product strategy, roadmap, and consumer growth funnel; narrowed 10+ user segments to the **4 strongest PMF cohorts**, lifting activation from **~60% to 77%** and **tripling DAU in 18 months**.
- Grew **monthly revenue 4x to ~\$700K** through pricing, paywall, messaging, and localization experiments.
- Built B2B from **0→200+ teams in 3 months** while leading a **20+ person** cross-functional org; cut **TTM ~50%**.

Lead ML/AI Product Manager | Yandex, leading Search & AI platform in CIS, 75M+ MAU **Mar 2021 – Dec 2022**

- Increased **search engagement +12%** across **SERP & Alice (50M+ users)** and ad revenue **+~1.1%** by aligning **4 teams** across Search Ranking, NLU, Ads, and Design.
- Launched 2 recommendation and discovery surfaces in Yandex SuperApp, reaching **~1.5M MAU in 2 months** against **40+** competing internal services; improved **LTV +18%** through attribution and experimentation tooling.
- Built a **0→1 LLM product for legal data extraction** with a **15-person team**, reaching first **~\$10K revenue in 4 months**.
- Built the **LLM eval stack** end to end, with expert-labeled golden sets, scoring rubrics, SxS model and prompt comparisons, and a failure taxonomy; cut response time from **~60s to 15–20s**.

Product Manager | Hoff, Mobile & Checkout, ~\$600M retailer, ~6M MAU **Mar 2019 – Apr 2021**

- Simplified the shared API surface from **~200 to ~120 methods**, cutting release cycles from **4 weeks to 2**
- Increased **checkout conversion +0.8%** and **payment completion +7%**.

SELECTED AI & ADVISORY WORK

AI Product Lead (Fractional) | Bureau of National Statistics of Kazakhstan

- Built a **production RAG/LLM assistant** serving **8–10K MAU / 350–500 requests per day**; prioritized the top 3 user journeys, built the knowledge and retrieval layer, benchmarked against internal experts, and piloted during the Agricultural Census (**~8.5K questions**) before production rollout.

Fractional PM, Revenue Attribution & CRM | Avito, ~70M MAU classifieds marketplace **Oct 2024 – Oct 2025**

- Led a redesign of revenue attribution across **11 business verticals**, improving accuracy **~30%** by aligning engineering, analytics, finance, sales, vertical leads, and C-level stakeholders on one methodology.

karta.io (HeyCard), Launch PM, **first 100 paying users** · WhiteLark, GTM & positioning, payment orchestration · Mentor to 5 PMs, 2025–2026

EDUCATION

MIREA, Russian Technological University, Moscow, B.S. in Physical Chemistry (2015–2019) · Y Combinator Startup School (2022)