

## Karl Friend

### AI-assisted Senior Product Designer / Product Lead

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## PROFILE

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Senior Product Designer / Product Lead with 15+ years' experience designing complex SaaS products across web, mobile, onboarding, and platform workflows. Strong at understanding customer needs, turning messy requirements into clear product flows, and using AI tools like Claude and ChatGPT to prototype, explore logic, and move faster toward buildable software. Founder-level SaaS experience across product strategy, customer discovery, developer collaboration, pricing, retention, and delivery.

## KEY STRENGTHS

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- AI-assisted product design and prototyping
- Customer discovery and customer-led UX
- Figma/Claude prototypes and developer handoff
- Legacy platform redesign
- Working with founders, developers and boards
- Complex SaaS workflow design
- Web and mobile product design
- Product strategy and feature planning
- SaaS onboarding, pricing and retention
- Fast-moving startup and small-team delivery

## SELECTED ACHIEVEMENTS

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- Designed and led SaaS products used by 600+ clubs and organisations.
- Designed hundreds of screens, components, modules and workflows across web and mobile products.
- Led product design for a mobile app adopted by 100 clubs within 48 hours.
- Managed and led teams of up to 15 full-time staff.
- Helped raise \$2m in equity funding and worked directly with boards, investors and senior leadership.
- Built PupManager, a multi-tenant SaaS product using Vue.js, Supabase, Claude and AI-assisted development.
- Helped reduce churn by listening to customers and turning their needs into product improvements.

## EXPERIENCE

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### Friendly Manager | Product Manager / Senior Product Designer

Sep 2024 to Present | Tauranga / Remote

SaaS platform for sports clubs, associations and community organisations, supporting registrations, member management, communication, websites, events, payments and club administration.

- Lead product design and product direction across major areas of the platform, including registrations, communication, member management, websites, events, mobile experiences and customer onboarding.
- Redesign and rebuild complex club management workflows by reviewing two existing platforms and designing improved screens, flows and customer touchpoints.
- Use Claude, ChatGPT, Figma and AI-assisted workflows to accelerate product thinking, edge-case exploration, prototyping and product specification.
- Work closely with developers, leadership, product stakeholders and customers to turn complex requirements into clear, buildable product experiences.

Key projects: Website Builder - designed a new drag-and-drop website builder from scratch, owning the UX, components, editor structure, page controls, integration points, migration thinking, responsive behaviour and developer specifications. Mobile App - led the mobile app product design, created Figma prototypes, gathered customer feedback, supported development handoff and helped the app reach 100 clubs within 48 hours.

### PupManager | Founder / AI-assisted Product Designer / SaaS Builder

2026 to Present | Tauranga / Remote

SaaS platform for dog trainers and behaviourists, designed around scheduling, registrations, client management, financials, notes, Google Calendar, Xero, Stripe integration and daily business workflows.

- Founded, designed and built a multi-tenant SaaS product using Vue.js, Supabase, Claude and AI-assisted development workflows.
- Used AI to accelerate product architecture, UX flows, feature planning, technical problem-solving, interface iteration and build delivery.
- Designed and built registrations, client management, financial workflows, Google Calendar integration, drag-and-drop scheduling, onboarding and trainer admin workflows.
- Turned real customer pain points from a dog training business into practical SaaS functionality and early go-to-market positioning.

### **KBMedia | Senior Product Designer / Web Designer / Founder**

*Sep 2022 to Present | Tauranga / Remote*

- Design and build responsive, mobile-first websites using Figma, Webflow, WordPress and custom front-end approaches.
- Create wireframes, high-fidelity designs, interactive prototypes and developer handoff processes for web and SaaS projects.
- Use Claude, ChatGPT and AI tools to support design, content, prototyping and delivery.
- Designed onboarding and UX improvements for SaaS and nonprofit clients, including Infoodle.
- Led design and project management for a government website redesign focused on accessibility, usability and clearer information architecture.

### **Infoodle | Senior Product Designer, Remote Contract**

*Sep 2023 to Sep 2024 | Remote*

- Worked on the customer onboarding journey from website entry through to first use of a nonprofit, church and payments SaaS platform.
- Redesigned key onboarding flows to reduce friction and make it easier for new customers to understand and start using the product.
- Proposed broader UI and UX improvements focused on simplifying complex admin workflows.
- Worked remotely with stakeholders to understand customer needs, product goals and implementation constraints.

### **Friendly Ltd / Friendly Manager | Founder / CEO / Product Owner / Senior Product Designer**

*Jun 2014 to Oct 2021 | Tauranga*

- Founded and grew Friendly Manager from a web and custom software business into a SaaS platform serving clubs, sports organisations and community groups across New Zealand.
- Set product vision, market direction, pricing strategy, customer communication and product priorities.
- Worked directly with customers to identify problems, improve product direction, support onboarding and reduce churn.
- Managed a cross-functional team across development, customer success, design and operations, growing the team to 15 staff members.
- Worked with governance teams, investors and senior leadership, helping raise over \$2m in equity funding.
- Supported sales demos, customer onboarding, product training, migration and long-term customer success.

### **Friendly Shops / Friendly Web | Founder / Product Designer / Web Designer**

*2009 to 2014 | Tauranga*

Founded and built early web, ecommerce and digital product businesses. Designed websites, ecommerce platforms, branding, CMS-based digital experiences and customer-facing digital tools for local businesses.

## **EDUCATION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

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- Diploma in Information Technology, Bay of Plenty Polytechnic.
- UX / product design training through UXL / Uxcel and ongoing self-directed learning across UX, SaaS product design, AI-assisted development, front-end development, product strategy and customer research.

## TOOLS AND TECHNICAL SKILLS

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**Design:** Figma, wireframing, high-fidelity UI, interactive prototyping, design systems, user flows and journey mapping.

**Product:** Customer discovery, roadmap input, feature planning, backlog management, developer handoff, stakeholder management, QA/testing, onboarding, training and demos.

**AI:** Claude, ChatGPT, AI-assisted prototyping, AI-assisted development, product ideation, workflow design and specification drafting.

**Web and technical:** HTML, CSS, JavaScript, Vue.js, PHP, Twig, Webflow, WordPress, Supabase, APIs, databases, permissions and integrations.

## AVAILABILITY

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Based in Tauranga, New Zealand. Open to remote NZ, Australian and global SaaS roles. Available for full-time, contract or freelance product design and product leadership opportunities. Willing to travel for meetings when required (NZ and Abroad).