

AKANKSHA GUPTA

Product Innovation & Strategy Lead

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PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Strategic designer and product innovation leader with 8+ years of experience translating complex, ambiguous challenges into validated services and scalable digital products. Operating at the intersection of business strategy, human-centered design and AI, I lead cross-functional teams from discovery through MVP to market adoption. I bring the rigour of a strategist, the empathy of a researcher, and the clarity to cut through complexity and make the right calls.

Experienced across AI products, healthcare, mobility, financial services and energy sector in Europe, US and Middle East. Currently driving AI-enabled product initiatives at BCG X.

CORE COMPETENCIES

Service Design • Product Management • User Research & Discovery • AI-Enabled Products • Experience & Interaction Design • Workshop Facilitation • Venture Building • Go-to-Market Strategy • Cross-Functional Team Leadership • Systems Thinking

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Senior Strategic Designer & Product Manager | BCG X, Boston Consulting Group

Berlin, Germany | Jan 2023 – Present

- Lead end-to-end service and product discovery across Europe, US, China, Japan and Middle East, shaping AI, healthcare and mobility propositions from insight through validated MVP.
- Defined service model, product vision and market strategy for an AI-enabled cardiology solution, identifying capacity unlock of +1 procedure/day/physician and building a €900M+ 10-year NPV business case.
- Conducted in-hospital ethnographic research and led MVP build for a clinical asset management platform; translated frontline operational pain points into a prioritised roadmap, with 60% of clinical staff reporting expected reductions in scheduling interruptions and procedure delays.
- Directed global adoption workstream for BCG's CEO-flagship internal AI productivity product; managed a cross-functional team across engineering, product and UX, led change management with pilot teams, and scaled from initial pilots to 90+ deployments across NAMR, EMEA and APAC ahead of global launch.
- Partnered closely with a Saudi venture builder to originate and validate 3 new service propositions; led discovery sprints, defined business models, and upskilled client teams in research and service design methodologies to enable independent venture building and transition into product development.

Senior UX & Service Designer | Tangity, NTT DATA

Milan, Italy | Feb 2020 – Dec 2022

- Led service design and governance for a cross-market digital banking platform across 9 CEE countries; built shared design system reducing development costs by 65%.
- Delivered end-to-end service and interaction design for a two-wheeler OEM, reimagining the rider-vehicle experience to improve safety and usability. Took the project from research and concept development through prototyping and validation to successful market launch.
- Led a service innovation project for an energy client to define future service propositions enabled by next-generation smart meters amid the energy transition; conducted 40+ interviews with users and senior stakeholders to synthesise needs, define opportunity areas, and develop validated service concepts.
- Ran capability-building programmes for non-design client teams; Teaching Assistant for Business Design & Innovation Sprint with Poli.Design and Antwerp School of Management.

Co-founder & Digital Strategist | Ibrida Birra

Milan, Italy | 2019 – Present

- Co-founded circular economy venture producing craft beer from surplus bread; defined service concept, business model and go-to-market strategy.
- Recognised as Forbes Italy 30 Under 30; awarded Best Sustainable Business by the Italian Ministry of Environment.

Assistant Professor – Inclusive Design | Politecnico di Milano

Milan, Italy | 2022

- Designed and taught the Inclusive Design elective for MSc students at one of Europe's top design schools; equipping future designers with practical frameworks to embed accessibility and equity into service and product strategy.

Service Designer | T-Labs, Telekom Innovation Laboratories

Berlin, Germany | Feb 2019 – Aug 2019

- Used service design to support Deutsche Telekom's Blockchain team, translated highly technical distributed ledger concepts (IoT, identity management, smart contracts) into clear user journeys and service models that the team used to prioritise which use cases to pursue.

Architect | Ashok B Lall Architects

New Delhi, India | Jul 2016 – Jul 2017

- Project Lead on Caterpillar's flagship India campus (LEED Platinum certified), coordinating multidisciplinary stakeholders from concept to delivery.
- Authored IDFC Bank national design manual, standardising experience, sustainability and design guidelines across branches.

EDUCATION & CERTIFICATIONS

AI for Leaders — Certificate of Completion

Harvard Business School

Online | 2025

MSc Product Service System Design (110L/110 with Honours)

Politecnico di Milano

Milan, Italy | 2017 – 2019

Master of Architecture – Cooperative Master Class

Hochschule Anhalt University

Dessau, Germany | 2015 – 2016

Bachelor of Architecture

University School of Architecture & Planning, GGSIPU

New Delhi, India | 2011 – 2016

SKILLS & TOOLS

Service & Experience Design: Service blueprinting, journey orchestration, systems mapping, participatory design, design governance

Product Management: Roadmapping, MVP scoping, backlog prioritisation, OKRs, stakeholder alignment, agile collaboration

Strategy & Research: Ethnographic research, insight synthesis, business case development, venture ideation

Tools: Figma, Miro, Mural, Adobe Suite

Languages: Hindi (native) • English (C1) • Italian (B2) • French (basic)

HONOURS & RECOGNITION

- **Forbes Italy 30 Under 30 (2020):** Ibrida Birra featured for social innovation
- **Best Sustainable Business – 'Vivere a Spreco Zero' (2020):** Awarded by the Italian Ministry of Environment, ANCI and the World Food Programme Italy.
- **IXDA Awards Finalist (2021):** Shortlisted in the 'Optimising/Production' category for Ibrida Birra's circular economy model.
- **European Commission (2019):** Two winning projects selected for 'Future of Government 2030+' challenge by EU Policy Lab.
- **Thought Leadership (2018–2021):** Invited to speak at IXDA World Interaction Design Day, EuroIA, Service Design Drinks, Ladies That UX and Innovation Café.