

MARC THORNTON

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Digital, Product & Technology Director

Commercial growth | Product strategy | Team leadership | Business systems & applied AI
British & Irish citizen | UK & EU work rights | Native English | Based in France
Permanent, interim & contract | UK, Europe & North America | Remote with international travel

I combine commercial direction, product strategy and technical delivery to build digital businesses and the teams behind them.

Across 15+ years, I have taken propositions through launch, growth and international scale, often working as an embedded partner inside client organisations. I turn complex goals into clear priorities, visual plans and systems that keep people, information and delivery connected.

Recent independent work extends this approach into applied AI, knowledge management and business workflows. I now want to bring that experience into one organisation, leading or building a distributed team with responsibility for product direction, commercial decisions and results.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

CLICKASNAP | EMBEDDED LEADERSHIP & BREAKOUT GROWTH

As a long-term product and technology partner, I helped shape the proposition and led delivery from early development to international scale.

30k → 2.2m+ REPORTED SIGN-UPS	£36k → £1.6m REPORTED TURNOVER
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Company-reported growth published in 2021, during the partnership.

SKYLAB | BUILT A PROFITABLE SOFTWARE & VENTURE BUSINESS

I built and ran SKYLAB, taking responsibility for commercial strategy, pricing, clients, resourcing, delivery and margin.

£713k TURNOVER	£346k PRE-TAX PROFIT	81% GROSS MARGIN
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Final 18-month reporting period.

DIGITAL SHIFT & SKYLAB | BUILT TEAMS & CAPABILITY TO GROW

Built a core team and wider specialist network, bringing people, clients and ventures together through the agency and Centre for Innovation.

12+ PERSON CORE TEAM	13 ROOM INNOVATION CENTRE
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HOW I OPERATE

SEE THE WHOLE PICTURE
Make complex commercial, product and technical dependencies clear enough for teams to act on.

BUILD THE CONDITIONS FOR DELIVERY
Connect visual plans, project tracking, version control and communication so specialists can work together.

BRING OUT THE BEST IN PEOPLE
Give specialists clear goals, context, trust and support; stay close enough to remove obstacles.

KEEP IT COMMERCIAL
Tie scope, priorities and technical trade-offs to customer value, revenue, margin and delivery.

WIDER CLIENT & PROJECT EXPERIENCE

NHS Direct	UPS	ESPN	RNLI	House of Commons
Whyte & Mackay	Clipper Teas	Whole Earth	Bournemouth University	Devon County Council

LEADERSHIP & SELECTED CLIENT PARTNERSHIPS

I ran Digital SHIFT and SKYLAB as complementary businesses. ClickASnap and Blue Pelican were embedded client partnerships, delivered alongside our wider agency and venture work.

ClickASnap / Videscape

2014–2023

Embedded Product & Technology Partner

- I helped reshape Videscape into ClickASnap and led successive product roadmaps as the platform scaled internationally, combining product direction, commercial proposals and technical delivery.
- Used analytics to prioritise onboarding, conversion, subscriptions and platform performance; coordinated specialists across UX, engineering, image processing, content delivery and distributed infrastructure.
- Accountable for delivery from research, planning and budgets through implementation, testing and review.

Digital SHIFT

2014–2023

Founder & Digital Director

- I founded Digital SHIFT by bringing together our personal brands and client relationships, then expanded through the acquisition of an established local agency.
- Built and led a 12+ person core team supported by a wider specialist network, with responsibility for client relationships, pricing, resourcing, product direction and delivery.

SKYLAB

2015–2023

Founder & Venture Director | Software, ventures & Centre for Innovation

- I built SKYLAB as a specialist software and venture business, alongside the 13-room Centre for Innovation in a Grade II-listed Bournemouth building.
- Led the building's conversion and developed a community connecting technical and creative specialists, clients and early-stage ventures. Helped local start-ups secure their first funding through commercial guidance, investor introductions and access to media facilities.

Blue Pelican

2014–2023

Embedded Digital, Product & Growth Partner

- Led a rebrand and recruitment platform as principal client contact for almost a decade, covering candidate journeys, product direction, SEO, analytics, infrastructure and delivery.

INDEPENDENT PRODUCT & APPLIED AI DEVELOPMENT

Independent and collaborative product R&D | 2014–present

- **LifeOS:** Designed and built a self-hosted knowledge and workflow platform and companion app, linking contacts, organisations, opportunities, tasks, projects and cases with email, financial records, messaging archives and scanned documents. Combined multilingual processing, local language models and persistent linked knowledge to support retrieval, coordination and review.
- **Fate of the Few:** Led product direction and managed a specialist developer across 5.5+ years of Unreal Engine R&D, delivering a reusable modular gameplay framework integrating advanced locomotion and traversal, inventory, interaction, weapons and vehicle physics, with a supporting technical demo.
- **Voxel Plugin:** Led the transformation of a free Unreal Engine community project into a commercial product, owning market research, positioning, brand, pricing, routes to market, community building, promotional content and v1 launch.

Further Unreal Engine collaborations span multiplayer frameworks, procedural tools and interactive music.

- **AURA:** Early alpha contributor, evaluating onboarding, real-world workflows and product refinement.
- **Genarrator™, Bournemouth University:** Led an interactive storytelling platform hosting 2,000+ narratives, supporting education and published research.

Technical & creative practice: Web development and cloud infrastructure; applied AI, knowledge systems and integration; project-management and version-control workflows; design, video, real-time 3D and audio production.

Selected technologies: AWS / Adobe Suite / Unreal Engine / Python / HTML / Perforce

Community: The Arts Poole CIC, voluntary board member and Marketing Director, working with the council, funders and artists.

Earlier career: Creative Director, EBE; Marketing Manager, ROK plc.