

ZHENYA LUCHININ

Product leader · generative AI · founder.
The long version is at genu.me.



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Barcelona, Spain — open to relocating to SF or NYC

SUMMARY

Repeat founder and product leader who takes a model capability from research to a shipped, paying product. Everything below was designed, built and launched solo: four iOS apps in ten months, plus a frontier-model benchmark and an agent prototype — no engineering team. Aya Photo went from idea to App Store in one month and reached roughly 10,000 downloads, a 4.7 rating, 8.43% paid conversion and \$2,170 MRR at peak. Twenty years in digital product before that, including a design studio grown to 40+ people, ranked top-6 in Russia and top-1 for UX and research, delivering with cross-functional engineering teams at Mindbox, Yango and Mappable.

WHAT I DO

0-to-1	Concept, prototype, build, launch, monetisation — the whole cycle, solo.
research → product	Evaluate a capability that just became possible, then build the smallest real thing on top of it and put it in front of users.
evaluation	Frontier-model benchmarking; capability testing before committing to a build.
prototyping	React Native / Expo, Supabase, fal.ai , Replicate, frontier model APIs.
growth	UGC-led acquisition, paywall and subscription funnels, conversion optimisation.
leadership	Ran a 40-person studio; delivered with enterprise engineering teams.
languages	Russian (native), English (fluent).

AI PRODUCTS AND RESEARCH PROTOTYPES

TUZYK

2026, in progress

tuzik.vercel.app — AI for kids

- An iPad app on a mission to make kids' screen time worth it: activities that use voice, computer vision and generative models to send the kid back into the physical world.
- Working prototype — the draw activity: the agent suggests what to draw, generates an instant reference image, starts the timer, and the kid draws on paper, off the screen; the agent then helps photograph the drawing and keeps the artifact. Five-plus minutes off the screen, an artifact at the end. Play-tested with my own kids.

Voice, computer vision, fast image models, live camera

AYA PHOTO

App Store, Dec 2025

aya.photo — generative photoshoot app

- One selfie plus any reference image becomes a full photoshoot of you. Idea to App Store in one month; defined, designed, built and launched solo.
- Server-driven model registry: every model and its generation function live in Supabase, so a newly released image or video model reaches users the same day it ships — no app update, no App Store review. 20+ image and 10+ video models wired in; turnaround from a trending model to live in the app is hours.
- Owned distribution and monetisation as product: ~2M views from a single UGC creator channel, ~10,000 downloads, 4.7 rating, 2-3× conversion lift from paywall and pricing experiments, 8.43% paid conversion, 5,206 new customers, peaking at 254 active subscriptions and \$2,170 MRR.

React Native / Expo, Supabase, fal.ai, Replicate, Gemini

AIGMA

2025

aigma.co – capability benchmark, then a tool

- Benchmarked every frontier model on how precisely it rebuilds an image or screenshot as working HTML – a capability question no public benchmark covered. Gemini won on layout fidelity.
- Turned the finding into a product: reference image in, real website out, on an infinite canvas. Prompt work aimed specifically at escaping the AI-slop look.
- Shipped a CLI so Aigma plugs into terminal coding agents and generates design options from the command line. Roughly 200 registered users.

HTML, canvas UI, frontier model APIs, CLI

DEAR JOURNAL

App Store, 2025

Ezra: AI chat journal – minimal journaling with an AI companion

- A minimal, customizable journaling app with Ezra, an AI companion for reflection, insights and guided entries. Designed and built solo, from a daily journaling habit and a frustration with noisy journaling apps.
- Complete cycle owned end to end: concept, design system, build, App Store submission, subscriptions.

React Native / Expo, Supabase, LLM APIs

OVAL AI SKIN ANALYZER · CELLR CELL TOWER MAP · WATUMEAN

2025–2026

- Two further shipped iOS apps across beauty-tech and utilities, and a WhatsApp agent experiment – eight personas behind one number, with per-user memory and an ad-to-conversation-depth funnel.

React Native / Expo, Supabase edge functions, WhatsApp Business API

EXPERIENCE

INDEPENDENT AI PRODUCTS

2025 – present

Founder – product, design and engineering · Barcelona

- Four iOS apps shipped solo in ten months, plus research tooling and agent prototypes. Set the direction, prototyped to validate it, built it, launched it and ran growth – with no engineering team and no long development cycle.
- Work from what the models can newly do rather than from a fixed roadmap, which is why the architecture is built to absorb new models the week they ship instead of the quarter after.

GENUE / LOOCH

2011 – 2025

Founder & CEO, design studio · Russia · behance.net/looch-studio

- Built a digital product design studio to 40+ people at peak, 25–30 from 2022 to 2025. Ranked top-6 digital design studio in Russia and top-1 for UX and research.
- Mindbox (2020–2023): led the cross-functional team that redesigned the customer dashboard for Russia's largest omnichannel marketing platform, cutting interface-related support tickets by 50%.
- Mappable, Amsterdam (2023–2025): delivered new interfaces and a full brand identity in three months, leading the design team in close partnership with engineering.
- Yango (2020–2024): led the design team for news and maps products in the Turkish and Dubai markets.
- Closed the studio in 2025 in response to the political and economic situation in Russia.

THELOCALS

2011 – 2019

Founder, majority owner (51%) · Moscow & Saint Petersburg

- Founded an apartment rental platform for Moscow and Saint Petersburg, plus two further proptech products. Ran monetisation and growth solo after the co-founder exited early. Named one of the top-20 proptech founders in Russia.

TASTY

2008 – 2011

Co-founder (50%), product · Russia

- Owned the entire product side of a social platform that reached 1.5M active users in Russia, with a 50/50 co-founder as CTO.

YANDEX · HABR · BOOKMATE · LOOK AT MEDIA · LIVEJOURNAL

2003 – 2010

Art director, lead designer, web designer · Russia

- Art director at Yandex (redesign of Afisha and Nightparty) and at Look At Media. Web designer at Habr.com, Russia's largest tech media platform. Lead designer at Bookmate on the Zvooq.ru music streaming UI. Frontend developer at LiveJournal.

EDUCATION

M.ENG., ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING

2000 – 2005

Vyatka State University – and never worked a day as an engineer