ZAKIR HOSENBUX

linkedin.com/in/zhosenbux/ | zhosenbux.com zak8018[at]outlook.com | +27 79 373 4495 Johannesburg, South Africa

Profile

Strategic leader with 17+ years of experience leading product innovation, commercial growth, regulated operations across sectors including remittances, mobile money, microlending, digital wallets, E-commerce. Strong expertise in SaaS, PaaS, API-driven platforms and scaling diverse services across Africa, UK, Europe, US and S.E.Asia.

Skilled in managing multidisciplinary teams (34 FTEs), go-to-market execution and building high-impact partnerships with telcos, banks, regulators and PSPs. Multilingual in English, French, and Malay/Indo.

	telcos, banks, regulators and PSPs. Multilingual in English, French, and Malay/Indo.
Professional Experience	Career Break May 2024 - Current • Planned 18 months of travel and personal time off. May 2024 - Current
	Optasia • Customer Engagement Director • Greece/South Africa Jul 2023 - May 2024
	 Led strategic management of Tier-1 accounts processing over \$75M in monthly disbursements (~200M transactions), driving a \$1B+ annual telco-lending portfolio across Vodacom Group and Telecel markets; 8 accounts, 6 African markets. Engineered customer segmentation strategies using Big Data analytics to identify behavioral patterns, funnels; enabling tailored growth plans and increasing customer engagement & LTV.
	 Built a dynamic 12-month revenue forecast model based on historical data, market/seasonal trends, prioritizing high growth levers. Exceeded Net Revenue targets by deploying growth levers, delivering +11% growth in Q3/Q4 2023 and +4% in Q1 2024, unlocking over \$1.2M incremental revenue.
	 Boosted upsell/cross-sell conversion on all live accounts by revamping customer experience and engagement triggers (e.g. low data). Delivered \$40K monthly incremental revenue in Telecel Ghana through enhanced risk modeling; a 50% uplift in Airtime credit.
	MFS Africa • General Manager • UK/South Africa Apr 2020 - Jan 2023
	• Led the UK remittance business unit, managing product, engineering, operations, marketing and compliance for a \$20M portfolio connecting diaspora corridors to an expanding 14 African markets via MTN and Airtel Mobile Money.
	 Led end-to-end budgeting and forecasting with P&L ownership. Implemented unit/resource expansion along with cost controls. Designed robust B2C KYC, fraud detection and AML frameworks (e.g. transaction velocity, card risk profiling), streamlining identity verification and transaction monitoring while ensuring full FCA compliance.
	• Launched hyper-targeted sender/receiver marketing campaigns with a \$2M annual budget; leveraging outdoor, PPC, Google Ads, SEM, social media and influencers to drive acquisition and retention.
	• Built and optimized operational workflows across compliance, reconciliation, failed transactions, customer support and refund handling, improving cross-collaboration, SLA adherence and audit-readiness.
	 Drove strategic partnerships including documenting contracts, RFPs and PSP Remittance License to the Bank of Spain. Grew transaction volumes from Q4 2021 and user engagement from 18% to 44% through continuous UX, pricing and optimizations.
	MFS Africa • Senior Product Manager • South Africa Apr 2016 - Mar 2020
	• Defined and executed the B2C mobile remittance product strategy, leveraging market research and user insights that shaped product requirements for a multi-country launch.
	• Led the full product lifecycle of the international remittance mobile app (Android/iOS) from design and sprint planning to launch in 2019; adopting Agile/Scrum methodologies to accelerate delivery and time-to-market.
	• Designed the core architecture and technical blueprint of a unified B2B Mobile Money Aggregator & Billing Platform, including seamless partner onboarding, API integrations, float/FX management, sanctions screening, transaction monitoring, commission structures, reporting system and automated reconciliation; enabling a 5x increase in transaction volume.
	 Piloted an e-commerce payment layer (POC) enabling card-to-mobile wallet linkage, unlocking new merchant payment use cases. Delivered a \$1M mobile money-powered school fee platform, in partnership with the Government of Benin and the University of Californi enabling inclusive education payments.
	• Spearheaded development of enterprise-grade compliance and scalability initiatives, successfully leading the organization through CMMI and ISO 27001 certification, enhancing product security and institutional trust.
	Interactivelab • Creative Director/Product Manager • Mauritius Jan 2013 - Apr 2016
	• Led cross-functional delivery of social media and digital product campaigns for 25+ B2B clients across France and Mauritius in diverse industries with projects related to branding, customer engagement and reputation management.
	• Directed product management and creative development of Facebook-integrated apps/games, Mobile Apps, Web Apps; aligning feature sets with social engagement metrics and marketing goals.
	 Defined and executed creative strategy across digital campaigns, ensuring on-brand messaging, high-impact visuals and gamified user journe that boosted client engagement and conversions. Managed media budgets exceeding \$5,000/day across Facebook Boost and Google Ads, ensuring channel mix efficiency, tailored performance
	and budget pacing.
	Game Theorem • Product Manager • Mauritius/South Africa Apr 2010 - Jul 2012
	• Owned end-to-end product lifecycle for mobile and web casino gaming (MobileMillions) and integrated Game Enterprise Management System (GEMS) overseeing concept SDLC launch and supporting live operations

(GEMS), overseeing concept, SDLC, launch and supporting live operations.

- Managed a portfolio of 52 games across 5 mobile platforms (iOS, Android, Symbian, BlackBerry, Windows Phone) and Web, driving multiplatform reach and unified user experience.
- Developed gamification mechanics, including a real-time leaderboard and points allocation engine for play-for-fun users that drove sustained engagement and repeat play.
- Launched game operations and product marketing strategies, collaborating with operations to enable smooth deployment and with marketing to maximize user acquisition.

Ashtech Systems • Project Manager/Creative Lead • Malaysia

- Developed & launched region-specific digital products across Malaysian, Singaporean, and Mediterranean markets; spanning e-commerce sites, SaaS platforms, Semantic search engines and digital libraries.
- Built search and content classification systems using semantic technologies for data visualization and interactive mapping; enhancing user navigation and discovery.
- Drove the overall visual design of graphics, digital products (UI/UX) and campaigns, delivering compelling, quality works that are user-centered and engaging.
- Led full project lifecycles; with multiple clients from discovery and requirements to delivery and quality assurance.

National University of Malaysia • Creative Lead, Developer • Malaysia

- Led full lifecycle development of the university's corporate website and faculty portals; overseeing platform design (Flash, HTML/CSS), interactive features, and CMS integration to enhance usability and maintainability.
- Architected structured navigation and content frameworks, enabling intuitive access across multiple faculty sites and streamlining editorial workflows via a unified CMS.
- Drove UI/UX design standards for all web properties, delivering visually coherent and responsive interfaces aligned with academic branding and accessibility norms.
- Designed a Learning Management System (LMS) using Moodle, defining course structures/content to support learning initiatives.

Early Career

Feb 2003 - Dec 2008

• Held roles; Teacher, University tutor, Web & Graphic Designer, Developer, Photographer. Details upon request.

Education BSc. (Honors) Information Technology National University of Malaysia Aug 2008 - Dec 2009

May 2008 - Jun 2009