

# nate iott

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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20+ years leading global footwear, apparel, innovation, and digital product design teams. Creator of multiple billion-dollar products and founder of an AI-driven innovation and visualization team. Expertise in enterprise design leadership, creative direction, talent development, and experience-led product strategy. Proven ability to translate insights into brand-defining, commercially successful, culturally relevant, and technologically advanced products. Builder of collaborative, high-performing teams that drive brand and business growth

## EXPERIENCE

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### ***Head of Innovation and Performance Design / January 2025 - October 2025*** ***Vans / Costa Mesa, Ca***

**Defined and led Vans' innovation ecosystem, integrating product design, culture, and co-creation to shape the future of the brand.** Conceived and realized Vans' on-campus innovation center—a connected footwear and apparel workshop, skatepark/event plaza, and design and innovation showcase facility.

**Leadership of the global footwear + apparel innovation team** focusing on insight driven long-term (3-6 year) strategic priorities, technologies and brand alignment.

**Directed advanced concepts design**, establishing new visual languages, technologies, and methods of make while pushing the boundaries of function, form, and style.

**Led global performance design teams** delivering industry-leading products across skateboarding, surfing, snowboarding/outdoor, and BMX.

**Founded AI Innovation and Digital Visualization team**, modernizing the digital-to-physical product journey by enhancing design accuracy, generating consumer-ready visuals + storytelling, accelerating feedback and alignment for footwear, apparel, and accessories.

### ***Senior Director - Global Product Design / May 2017 - January 2025*** ***Vans / Costa Mesa, Ca***

**Led all global Vans footwear product design organizations** across skateboarding, lifestyle, icons/classics, sandals, snowboard boots, pinnacle collaborations, and special projects, overseeing design strategy, execution, and team development at scale.

**Defined product branding standards, visual design strategy, and new technology creation and implementation** across footwear and performance apparel.

**Led apparel design teams for skateboarding, surf and outdoor/snowboarding categories**, aligning product, brand, and performance objectives.

Established Vans' **sustainable design protocol** and directed innovation workstreams delivering **circular and fully regenerative** footwear solutions. Re-engineered core classics to reduce carbon footprint, lower cost, improve durability, and enhance comfort.

**Led all category, multi-year comfort improvement and consolidation initiative**, including the design and engineering of Vans' premium LX Classics—the brand's most elevated, highest-quality, and most comfortable classic footwear—supporting the launch of the OTW pinnacle lifestyle category.

Partnered cross-functionally in the development of a **global 3D digital product strategy**, representing product design in partnership with digital visualization, development, and factory manufacturing teams.

## ***Director / Global Product Design / December 2013 - April 2017***

### ***Vans / Cypress, Ca***

**Management of all footwear product design teams** along with tier-zero pinnacle collaborations and partnerships including Gucci, Leica, Supreme, Palace, Takashi Murakami.

Helped create the brand's "Creative Vision" **design principles** in collaboration with BMW Designworks and cross-functional creative leaders. **Managed advanced concepts and special projects** design workstreams including leadership of a Vans x Fiat concept car.

**Story, concept & design work for full year 50th Anniversary collection** footwear, apparel, and limited edition quickstrike energy collaborations. Concept & design for limited edition, numbered **Made in USA Vans**.

## ***Head Designer / Product Design / December 2010 - November 2013***

### ***Vans / Cypress, Ca***

**Led design teams for performance and lifestyle footwear categories**, established new fashion and sport brand extension categories and design leadership for **high-profile collaborators** including Supreme, Filson, and Tyler, The Creator.

Concept and delivery of **brand-defining footwear innovations** that re-established Vans' leadership in skateboarding footwear after decades as a market follower, while leading design that drove massive growth in the mainstream action sports and lifestyle categories.

## ***Senior Designer / December 2007 - November 2010***

### ***Vans / Santa Fe Springs, Ca***

**Design leadership for Skateboarding, Snowboarding/Outdoor, and Surf + Sandals as well as Sports Lifestyle and Streetwear** categories as well as principal designer for the "Vault" pinnacle lifestyle category, setting the Vans "California" tone. Collaborated with iconic artists and brands, including Fender, Metallica, Slayer, Robert Williams, R. Crumb, and the estate of Rick Griffin footwear and apparel.

**Concept and design for a re-defined and re-imagined version of the Vans "Old Skool"** inspired by decades of handmade factory variance and lost fit and form - growing from 4% of sales to **generating \$1 billion in annual revenue by 2018 and over 45% of Vans' business**.

## ***Footwear Design / April 2001 - November 2007***

### ***Vans / Santa Fe Springs, Ca***

Design of several footwear styles achieving over 1 million units sold annually, driving significant revenue growth with several styles still in production at high volume.

## ***EDUCATION***

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### **Art Center College of Design**

Visual Communication and Product Design courses  
2003 - 2004

### **Roanoke College**

Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) Business Administration  
1997-2000

### **Virginia Tech**

Engineering Program  
1996-1997