

AHMED ESSA

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Entrepreneur-Turned-Product Leader | E-commerce | MENA

PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Product leader with 11+ years of end-to-end product experience across physical and digital products. Built foundation in product design and manufacturing before moving into digital marketplace and e-commerce leadership. Currently leading product strategy at elGrocer by Smiles (e& Group), delivering measurable growth through disciplined product discovery and experimentation, including 2× improvement in key conversion metrics and 30% revenue uplift. Brings a business-first mindset shaped by founder experience and deep understanding of customer behavior, positioning, and operational constraints.

CORE COMPETENCIES

- **Strategy & Leadership:** Product Vision & Roadmapping, OKR Planning, Stakeholder Management, Team Leadership & Mentoring, Cross-functional Collaboration.
- **Growth & Analytics:** Product-Led Growth (PLG), A/B Testing & Experimentation, Data analysis (Mixpanel), Conversion Rate Optimization (CRO), Data-Driven Decision Making.
- **Discovery & Design:** User Research, Product Discovery Frameworks, Dual-Track Agile, UX/UI Design Principles.
- **Domain Expertise:** E-commerce & Marketplace Dynamics, Go-to-Market (GTM) Strategy, Product Lifecycle Management (Physical & Digital).

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

HEAD OF PRODUCT | elGrocer by Smiles (e& Group)

Dubai, UAE | January 2024 – Present

- **Strategic Leadership:** Directing product vision and roadmap for a multi-million GMV marketplace.
- **Operational Excellence:** architected scalable Product Operations and Dual-Track Agile frameworks, accelerating feature delivery cycles by 25% and reducing time-to-market.
- **Revenue & Growth:** Achieved 30% YoY revenue growth via AI-powered product merchandising and ranking features, and an ML search overhaul that reduced search abandonment by 60%.
- **Product Discovery:** Established continuous discovery practices including weekly customer interviews and usability testing; built a centralized research repository adopted across product and design functions.
- **Stakeholder Management:** Presenting monthly business reviews to C-suite executives, aligning product OKRs with e& Group's enterprise goals.

PRODUCT MANAGER | eGrocer by Smiles (e& Group)

Dubai, UAE | September 2021 – December 2023

- **Conversion Optimization:** Doubled checkout conversion from 14% to 28% by redesigning the checkout funnel and launching one-click reordering.
- **Retention Growth:** Increased repeat purchase rate from 22% to 38% through a revamped loyalty program and data-triggered push notifications.
- **Data Infrastructure:** Architected the company's Mixpanel framework from scratch, implementing 50+ event triggers to enable a 100% data-informed roadmap.

PRODUCT MANAGER | Eksab (Fantasy Sports)

Cairo, Egypt | March 2020 – September 2021

- **User Engagement:** Boosted Daily Active Users (DAU) by 55% through the introduction of real-time gamification and competitive leaderboards.
- **Retention Strategy:** Improved weekly retention from 35% to 52% by launching a points-based reward system that increased average session duration by 75%.

FOUNDATIONAL PRODUCT EXPERIENCE

FOUNDER & PRODUCT LEAD | Unity (Furniture Manufacturing)

Cairo, Egypt | 2017 – 2020

Founded and managed the end-to-end lifecycle for a physical product business, from market discovery and customer research to manufacturing and GTM. Developed core competencies in pricing strategy, supply chain complexity, and market positioning that transitioned directly into tech leadership.

PRODUCT & UI/UX DESIGNER | Inovatian, Gemma Ceramics

Cairo, Egypt | 2014 – 2020

Led industrial design specifications for large-scale manufacturing and designed core UI/UX flows for blockchain-based digital currency platforms. Built the design-thinking foundation used to drive current user-centric product strategies.

EDUCATION & CERTIFICATIONS

- **Bachelor of Applied Arts**, Cairo, Egypt | 2009 – 2013
- **Certifications:** Product Strategy (Product School), Mixpanel Analysis Expert, Product-Led Growth (Product School), Product Analytics (Product School), Foundations of UX Design (Google).