



Mathew Cleveland

San Francisco Bay Area, US/GER Dual Citizen

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PROFILE

I turn ideas into things people can use. My background is in creative direction, storytelling and team leadership. In 2026, I taught myself to build software with AI, taking Culture Stack, Get Milk and Splay from ideas or existing code into working products. I carried most of that work solo, from concept to interface to code. I do my best work alongside curious, capable teammates who challenge my thinking and bring their own strengths.

CORE SKILLS

Product Conception & Prototyping | AI-Assisted Software Building | User Insight | Interface Design | Creative Direction | Concept & Narrative Development | Cross-functional Collaboration | Team Development

EXPERIENCE

[Culture Stack](#) | April 2026 - present

FOUNDER & CREATIVE DIRECTOR

Hiring-fit and organizational-culture software. [culturestack.de](#) / [cultureclaim.com](#)

- Built a behavioral engine that turns public career and company data into structured hiring-fit readings without a questionnaire.
- Built two web products solo, owning concept, brand, interface and AI-assisted development with Next.js, Supabase and Vercel.
- Ran a live pilot with a sales leader who tested readings against his own hiring judgment; used feedback and calibration issues to revise the engine.
- Cut the questionnaire from 21 to 12 questions and replaced a complex results page with one interactive map, simplifying the path to a useful reading.

[Get Milk!](#) | August 2026 - today | San Francisco, CA

FOUNDER & PRODUCT BUILDER

Civic radar for local decisions with real deadlines. [getmilk.net](#)

- Defined the concept, four product laws and interface, then audited official public-data sources before choosing the architecture.
- Built and launched a React/TypeScript PWA in 25 days with five source adapters, automated sweeps, relevance evaluation and email digests.
- Exchanged feedback with a GrowSF contact and connected with civic-tech founders to explore relevance and distribution.

INDEPENDENT PRODUCT WORK

Splay | June - August 2026

INDEPENDENT PRODUCT BUILDER

An ambient macOS recording app, reworked from Daniel Moon's open-source MacParakeet.

- Designed an ambient island around the Mac's physical notch, inspired by iPhone's Dynamic Island, to make the interface feel like part of the hardware.
- Removed in-app AI features to focus on recording and verbatim transcripts; built, signed and notarized a working Mac app, not yet publicly released.
- Other explorations: an iOS interval timer and Fit Ring, a lightweight browser-overlay prototype for hiring-fit readings.

EXPERIENCE CONTINUED

iServ | 2025 | Braunschweig, Germany

SENIOR COPYWRITER

Germany's leading school-software platform (EdTech)

- Owned the Help Center, built the project management structure it never had, brought it to a genuinely usable state, and prepared it for a CMS migration - the product's first real content workflow.
- Joined mid-reorg and became a culture steward, helping the marketing team name diffuse roles, inconsistent values in practice, missing accountability structures and under-prioritized action fields.
- Gained direct, ground-level exposure to B2G procurement and communication in Germany, relevant to products serving institutional or public-sector buyers.

Self-employed | May 2022 - December 2025 | Hamburg, Germany

INDEPENDENT CREATIVE DIRECTOR, PHOTOGRAPHER & VIDEOGRAPHER

Project-based freelance work

- Ran a solo creative practice spanning photography, video, concept development, pitch decks, brand naming, website copy and translation for German and international clients including Sunzinet, HiFi Klubben, Digital Hub Logistics and the British Chamber of Commerce.
- Managed the full client relationship personally, from pitch to delivery, across formats and industries.
- Hands-on across photography and video production, including cameras, flash and continuous lighting, rigging, editing and pitch development.

Side project:

Wrote the TV pilot BEIL and the AI short film IPSUM with director Axel Stasny.

Justaddsugar | Feb 2021 - May 2022 | Hamburg, Germany

CREATIVE DIRECTOR, CONCEPT & COPY

Social media agency

- Co-built and co-led a five-person creative team into a functioning unit running 150+ projects in one year for clients including Montblanc, Vodafone, HSV, Generali and ALDI Süd.
- Owned social and brand campaigns from concept through on-set direction and post-production, including the Montblanc Haus opening and HSV '21 shirt launch.
- Developed junior creatives, then stepped back so they could lead their own work.
- Directed professional talent including Guido Maria Kretschmer and Sylvie Meis.

EARLIER EXPERIENCE

Copywriting

- Junior Copywriter, Kolle Rebbe / Accenture Interactive (May 2020 - Nov 2020): Integrated advertising for Peloton, Google, Facebook, Zalando and DOSB. Lead copy on the Peloton Bike+ launch.
- Junior Copywriter, ressourcenmangel / RYSM (Apr 2019 - May 2020): campaigns and change communication for clients including Subway, HAMBURG ENERGIE and Volvic.
- Copywriting Intern, DDB Germany (Oct 2018 - Mar 2019): creative copy for Lufthansa and IKEA Austria.
- SEO Copywriter / Customer Service Agent, Aosom (Jul 2017 - Oct 2018): in-house copy and SEO at volume.

Sales

- Sales & Rental Consultant, ips (Sep 2023 - Sep 2024): specialized rental consulting for professional photographers and industry clients.
- Digital Strategist, Digital Squad NZ (Oct 2016 - Jan 2017): agency sales, content and outbound.
- Project Assistant, Von Jungfeld / stilfaser (Sep 2015 - Dec 2015): company events and sales tours.

PERSONAL VOLUNTEERING

- Volt Europa | Dec 2023 - Jun 2025: PR photography for Hamburg lead candidates and support for the Tiny House tour.
- Pro Bono Photography | Jan 2022 - Jun 2024: family portraits and business headshots for Welcome to Barmbek and Fördern & Wohnen in Hamburg.
- VaPassion e.V. | Jan 2015 - Aug 2016: student advocacy and PR for events connecting Mannheim students with companies beyond banking and consulting.

EDUCATION

2018/2019

HAMBURG SCHOOL OF IDEAS

Copywriter Bootcamp

2012-2016

UNIVERSITY OF MANNHEIM

Bachelor of Arts, History & German

LANGUAGES, TOOLS & WORKING METHODS

German | Native

English | Fluent, professional working proficiency

Photoshop / Capture One / DaVinci Resolve

AI-assisted building with Claude Code, Codex and local models