Chetan Ankola

Principal Product Manager · 0→1 AI product builder

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PROFILE

Principal Product Manager at Yahoo Mail who writes and ships software. Led product for Yahoo Mail on iOS as the app reached 20 million daily active users in 2024. Led consumer launches across iOS and Android and built three internal tools on GCP for publishing apps, answering planning questions and studying customer feedback.

EXPERIENCE

Yahoo | Product Management and Engineering

June 2012–present · Mountain View, CA

Principal Product Manager, Yahoo Mail · 2022–present

Earlier at Yahoo: iOS Engineer, Yahoo Mail, 2016–2021, leading product and engineering for AR ads from 2017 · Front-end Engineer, Yahoo Search (JavaScript, Node.js, React), 2012–2016.

Internal AI products

- Built DROP, an internal publishing platform with drag-and-drop deployment, a real-time database, collaboration, access controls and a Claude CLI workflow. Employees had created 300+ DROPs by November 2026.
- Built OCEAN, a web app, Slack bot and coding-agent integration that answers questions about Mail plans and links to its sources. Linked 27 squad planning packs and 14 repositories. Colleagues submitted 291 questions from July through September 2026, excluding known creator and test activity.
- Built CUSS, a customer insight agent for Yahoo’s hundreds of product managers. Each day it brings together customer feedback so PMs can ask which problems recur and read the reviews behind each answer. Its September 24, 2026 snapshot covered 370,413 records from five sources. Read-only queries and independent checks validate record counts.
- Solo-built Echo, an in-house UserVoice replacement, in four days. Owned the frontend, backend and GCP deployment for a service designed to replace a six-figure vendor contract.
- Built regression and adversarial tests for the internal tools. Recorded runs across DROP, OCEAN, CUSS and SIGNAL totaled 4,135 passing software checks.

Yahoo Mail mobile product leadership

- Led product for Yahoo Mail’s Inbox & Organize team on iOS and Android. Owned the main message list, the cards at the top of the inbox, and the controls for swiping, pinning and clearing mail. Led the redesign of message rows so people could scan previews and act directly from the list.
- Founded MobX and later led X Team, two small product teams at Yahoo Mail. Their remit was to build and ship real products quickly, put them in users’ hands and find product-market fit.
- Led Catch Up with the Yahoo Mail team. The inbox review experience reached approximately 19% of iOS and 16% of Android weekly active users in 2025. Revenue per user rose 1.6% and 2.1%, respectively.
- Partnered with data science to define Triage7, a measure of inbox actions. In 2025, Catch Up lifted that measure by 5.6% on iOS and 2.9% on Android.
- Led the team that built Yahoo Mail’s first native mobile Calendar on iOS and Android, including Gmail Calendar integration. We used an LLM to extract events from unstructured email and put them on the calendar. About 10% of Mail’s weekly active users used Calendar in 2025.
- Led Revisit, which brought saved mail, reminders and calendar items into one view. Revisit experiments reached 20% of weekly active users. That work evolved into Planner, where cards surface events and to-dos from email alongside the calendar.
- Brought Delete by Sender to iOS and Android and expanded cleanup across a sender’s related domains. On Android in 2024, deleted messages rose 188% and revenue per user rose 2%. Separate unsubscribe improvements increased Android unsubscribe actions by 275%.

- Shipped Priority Inbox with Mail Intelligence on both platforms. Pageviews rose 7% in 2025. Shipped AI summaries in the message list so readers could understand an email before opening it.
- Led X Team's first versions of Digest and Spaces in about 14 weeks. Digest summarized recent mail. Spaces on iOS groups related messages and next steps for travel, family and finances.
- Led the Home initiative to explore how Yahoo Mail could work as a conversational assistant. Prototyped ways to surface relevant mail and tested which actions people wanted to confirm or undo.
- Led the Mail 7 redesign across iOS and Android, introducing pill-bar navigation. Simplified roughly 40 theme combinations to four.
- Productized Schedule Send on iOS and Android. Brought event actions into the inbox and reduced RSVP from four steps to one.

Augmented reality, iOS and search engineering

- Built Yahoo Mail AR experiences and tools that let creative teams author ads. The work supported $2M in AR ad sales across advertisers including Home Depot, Macy's, Pottery Barn and HP.
- Built the AR Ad Generator and SPAARC composer so creative teams could author campaigns without writing JSON. Led the iOS App Tracking Transparency rollout and cut notification-tap association calls from 100 million to 10 million.
- Owned Yahoo's Search Assist front-end library and led the mobile search front-end rewrite in Node.js and React.

Nokia Siemens Networks | R&D Engineer

July 2008–July 2010 · Bangalore, India

Built simulation, performance and test tools for WiMAX, W-CDMA and LTE in C/C++ and Python.

INDEPENDENT PRODUCTS

- Shipped DexRelay, an iPhone remote for Claude Code and Codex on a Mac. Used it to switch projects, build an app and upload it to TestFlight from a flight over a 4 Mbps connection.
- Built interactive 3DITIONS worlds with Three.js and Blender. Across X, Threads and Reddit, 80 tracked posts had about 4.4 million observed views by November 12, 2026.
- Created a driving and music game for the ElevenLabs Chroma Awards and a separate interactive world for a paid Tripo AI collaboration. Shipped POLLY Retro Cam, AppTruffle and Foldline Tales on the App Store and built DROP3, a public web-hosting service on Cloudflare.

SKILLS

Product discovery, experimentation, metric design, iOS and Android product leadership, LLM features, source-grounded Q&A, model routing, regression testing, Claude Code, Codex, Swift and SwiftUI, React, Node.js, Python, GCP, Cloudflare Workers, Three.js and Blender.

EDUCATION AND RECOGNITION

University of Southern California · M.S., Computer Science, 2012

PES Institute of Technology · B.E., Information Science, 2008

Co-inventor of four US patents: US 12,783,570, granted in 2026, for AI-generated email summaries shown in the inbox, and three for AR interfaces, granted 2020 to 2022, starting with US 10,679,414 B2. Contributed to RYOT / Yahoo Mail AR, which received the Advanced Imaging Society's 2018 Lumiere Technology Award.