

Ben Kucsan, Designer

Ben Kucsan is a designer pursuing the meaningful, pure and simple. He likes hard problems that most people assume are impossible to solve. He is driven by curiosity, relentless optimism and the fundamental belief in the simple concept of when you make something, the way it will be perceived has a direct relationship with the amount of care that's been extended in its creation. As a designer, his focus is on maximising this care and attention, as a leader it's on enabling others to do the same with a profound reverence for the creative process.

He co-founded and until recently served as Head of Design at Thread — the company building a truly personal shopping experience using a mixture of the world's best stylists and data science. He was responsible for all design at the company, including the look and feel of Thread products, user interface, packaging, as well as new ideas and initiatives. He led the product team and oversaw brand and product development working across a variety of disciplines crafting a cohesive experience from online to offline. Prior to starting Thread, he built Tasks, a simple and intuitive task management application, worked at Silverorange and founded his own multidisciplinary design consultancy with clients including individuals like Om Malik, Kevin Rose, Apple veteran Alain Rossmann along with companies like Twitter, Duolingo and Mozilla. In 2012 he was selected to take part in Y Combinator, the Silicon Valley startup accelerator program, which according to WIRED magazine is "the most prestigious program for digital entrepreneurs".

## Awards

- 2017 Best Fashion Tech Startup Award  
The Europas Awards  
Best Use of Content Award  
Drapers Awards
- 2016 Best Innovation in Fashion Retail Award  
Drapers Awards  
Real-Time Innovator Award  
British Fashion Council
- 2015 Best Fashion Startup Nominee  
The Europas Awards
- 2014 Best E-Commerce Startup Nominee  
The Europas Awards
- 2013 Best Use of Technology Nominee  
Smarta 100 Awards

## Work History

2012 Thread  
Co-Founder, Head of Design  
2012 - 2017

Ben was responsible for all design at the company, including the look and feel of products, user interface, packaging, as well as new ideas and initiatives. He led the product team and oversaw brand and product development working across a variety of disciplines crafting a cohesive experience from online to offline.

Twice consecutively, in 2016 and in 2017 the company has been selected as one of UK's 30 most promising technology companies by a collection of some of the country's top entrepreneurs and investors including Skype founder Niklas Zennström and Lovefilm founder Simon Calver.

Most notable contributions:

- Created, refined and continuously expressed the product vision through the years.
- Helped define company and team priorities in service of the product vision.
- Helped grow the company from 0 to 45 employees.
- Helped build all hiring processes, remote and on-site exercises and personally led design hiring.
- Personally interviewed all on-site candidates.
- Created internal infrastructure and processes enabling the working together of product managers, designers, engineers, stylists and operations.
- Created and championed the social mission and the responsible recycling initiative of the company.
- Served on the board of directors.

2010 Tasks  
Co-Founder, Designer  
2010 - 2012

Ben and his brother, software developer Greg Kucsan set off to build a simple, intuitive task management experience for the iPhone. A thoughtfully designed, universally accessible and highly adaptive application that helped people effortlessly capture, organise and navigate their to-dos and make the most of every day.

2010 Foundation  
Designer  
2010 - 2015

Worked with Kevin Rose and Graham Hancock on the interview series called Foundation capturing this and the next generation's Silicon Valley.

2010 Various  
2010 - 2012

Designed and prototyped new products and experiences with and for a select collection of clients.

Most notable projects:

- Helped design and prototype the first version of Alain Rossmann's mobile video application, Klip.
- Designed the social news aggregator app Summify that got bought by Twitter after its launch.
- Designed and prototyped the initial vision of the cross-platform development environment, Xamarin.

2007 Silverorange  
Designer  
2007 - 2010

Ben was part of the team designing and prototyping new products and experiences with and for a select collection of clients.

Most notable projects:

- Designed and prototyped the first version of video integration in a tweet for Twitter.
- Led early design exploration on the first iteration of the language learning platform Duolingo.
- Was part of the team redesigning Mozilla's website on two occasions for major Firefox and Thunderbird product launches.
- Worked on design adjustments to the front page of Digg, and collaborated on an unreleased project.
- Led the redesign of GigaOm, Om Malik's popular technology news website.
- Designed and prototyped the first version of the revolutionary reverse image search engine, TinEye.
- Redesigned the landing page, sign in flow and user profiles of Bebo, the UK's largest social networking service before Facebook's market gain.
- Designed for singer, songwriter Feist, most known for "1,2,3,4" from Apple's iPod nano ad.

## Education

2001 Bundeshandelsakademie, Austria  
2001 - 2004

Informationmanagement, Communication and Design  
Entrepreneurship Education Society

## Invited Programs

2012 Y Combinator

Ben was invited to take part in Y Combinator, the Silicon Valley startup accelerator program, which according to WIRED magazine is "the most prestigious program for digital entrepreneurs".

Program highlights:

- Moved out the founding team of Thread to the US.
- Built the initial, completely manual version of Thread for 200 users with 5 freelance stylists.
- Established international operations to deliver a complete product experience.
- Closed the program with \$1.5M in seed investment from Y Combinator, Michael Birch, Tom Hulme, Errol Damelin, Edgar Bronfman Jr., Andrew Jennings, Guy Hipwell and Elizabeth Saltzman among many.

## Publications

- 2016    Why AI Should Be Your Next Business Partner  
Forbes Magazine
- The 15 Best Fashion Startups in London  
Business Insider
- How Thread Creates a Formula for Men's Style  
Drapers Magazine
- Skype Founder on Speed Dial for Start-Ups  
The Telegraph
- 2015    Thread's Fashion Algorithm Has 3.7 Trillion Style Tips  
WIRED Magazine
- Thread, the Online Personal Styling Service for Men  
TechCrunch
- Groomed for Growth  
The Sunday Times
- How We Shop in 2015: the Rise of the Male Spender  
Esquire Magazine
- 2014    Look Out, Silicon Valley: London Tech Is on the Rise  
USA TODAY
- Fashion Start-Ups Bring Style to Silicon Roundabout  
The Financial Times
- 2013    Is This Your New Go-To Guy?  
GQ Magazine
- A Personal Stylist for Every Shopper  
The Business of Fashion
- The 100 Best Places To Shop  
VOGUE Magazine

## Other Activities

In addition to technical activities Ben is also working on setting up a foundation aiming to provide Apple hardware, software and localised programming curriculum for a high school in Hungary.

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