Darshan Rughani

Strategy Design | Innovation | Growth & Transformation

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SUMMARY

Strategic Design and Innovation professional with 8+ years of experience working at the intersection of design, operations, and business strategy. Began career in interior design, where managing complex projects, cross-functional teams, and real-world constraints shaped a deep understanding of systems, workflows, and human behavior.

Now focused on retail transformation, omnichannel strategy, e-commerce ecosystems, and AI-enabled innovation, with a strong interest in how emerging technologies can improve decision-making and operational efficiency. Brings a practical, execution-driven approach to strategy—grounded in experimentation, iteration, and building solutions that work beyond the slide deck.

WORK EXPERIENCE

Strategy & AI Innovations　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　June 2025 - Dec 2025
New Commercial Development Division
Colruyt Group - Halle, Belgium

- Designed and built an **AI-assisted working prototype** using rapid vibe-coding techniques to help the innovation team **structure, track, and streamline their innovation workflow,** improving clarity across idea exploration, experimentation, and iteration phases.
- Led early-stage **research, concept framing, and prototyping** for an AI-enabled product developed in collaboration with an external technology vendor; provided strategic inputs that directly informed the vendor's product development roadmap.
- Created an early **prototype and concept logic for trend detection,** enabling teams to identify emerging product signals and act on opportunities earlier in the innovation cycle.
- Contributed to the design of an **omnichannel strategy** aimed at strengthening competitive advantage across physical and digital touchpoints; supported pilot implementation at store level and iterative refinement based on experimentation and learning.
- Applied **strategic and service design methodologies** to translate ambiguity into testable solutions, balancing innovation ambition with operational feasibility in a large-scale retail environment.

Design, Operations & Business Development　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　May 2016 - Aug 2024
Innovheads Design Studio - Ahmedabad, India

- Founded and scaled a multidisciplinary design studio delivering **interior design, digital visualization, and remote design services** for clients in India and overseas.
- Designed and evolved **end-to-end service systems**-from client onboarding and discovery to execution and delivery-ensuring consistency, efficiency, and quality across projects.
- Led a **business model pivot during COVID,** transitioning from on-site interior projects to remote digital design and consulting services, significantly improving delivery speed and geographic reach.
- Built and managed a distributed team of designers and project collaborators, establishing **clear workflows, role definitions, and project visibility systems.**
- Worked closely with architects, designers, and brands to translate ambiguous requirements into **structured solutions**, improving decision-making and reducing execution friction.

EDUCATION

Masters of Science in Strategic Design　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　Oct 2024 - Jan 2026
POLI Design - Politecnico Di Milano - Milano, Italy
- Specialization in Design Thinking and Product-Service-System Design.
- Thesis on "Innovation in Systems and Workflows with AI".

Diploma in Operations Management　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　June 2017 - May 2018

NIRMA University of Management Studies
- Relevant coursework in Operations and Project Management.

Bachelors of Commerce　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　July 2007 - Nov 2011

NIRMA University of Management Studies
- Relevant coursework in Operations and Project Management.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- **Core Skills** : Design Thinking, Service Design, AI-driven Innovation, Project Leadership, Vibe Coding Prototypes
- **Technical & Tools** : Miro, Adobe Suite, Figma, CapCut, Lovable, Replit, Emergent, n8n, Prompt Engineering
- **Languages** : English, Hindi, Gujarati
- **Awards/Activities** : Innovation Sprint Winner – In collaboration between POLI.Design & Antwerp Management School for Colruyt Group Retail Solution.