Illia Pashkov

AI-native product leader. I build products that check the claim against evidence before anyone acts on it.

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Abstract

I've spent twenty years building products people rely on, and the last two on one question: when an AI sounds sure, how do you know it's right? At Acton Labs I ran product, including The Agent Times, a news layer that about 1M agents read directly. Every claim comes with its sources and a signature, so an agent can check before it acts instead of guessing. At SINT I built the other half: deciding what an agent is allowed to do before it does it. Before that I spent eight years as co-founder and CPO of Player's Health, owning the consumer product end to end through a $100M+ raise and an exit. I like working close to the decision-makers and the customers: a clear thesis, a locked spec, agents that build, and a separate check that decides what ships. These days most of my team is agents.

1 Capabilities

- **The whole loop in one seat:** design, product, build, launch and growth. Twenty years across design and creative direction (Meta, BMW, Verizon, Adidas, PSHKV studio), product leadership (Player's Health: co-founder, CPO, exit), development (I set the architecture, agents build it, and I've run engineering teams of up to 60) and go-to-market (founder-led sales, partnerships, community). I see where an idea breaks before it reaches a team.
- **Product:** co-owning strategy with a founder and holding my ground in the argument. I turn a thesis into a falsifiable outcome, a locked spec, a verified prototype and a ship-or-hold call. Consumer quality bars written as tests, not adjectives. I reframe the problem before I solve it.
- **Trust and verification:** checking claims against evidence before they reach anyone: sources and signing, stated confidence, moderation rules, public benchmarks, and approve-or-block gates for what agents do.
- **Design and consumer taste:** decision-first interfaces where the answer comes in one line and the evidence sits beside it (SINT Widget Layer); voice and 3D agents (SINT Face); brand systems and creative direction for twenty years.
- **Discovery (SEO, AEO, GEO):** making a product the page search ranks and the source AI assistants cite: structured pages, `llms.txt`, MCP tools and registry listings. TAT gets picked by agents with no ad spend.
- **Go-to-market and growth:** founder-to-founder sales and partnerships, pricing for per-call access, launches, and community built in person: a 650-registration SF event on agents and capital (Oct 2026), a 31K LinkedIn audience.
- **Leading, mentoring, presenting:** hired and led engineering, product and design teams of up to 60, and coached designers and PMs inside them; now a small senior team plus agents. I pitch investors and partners and speak on stage (Defense One, Consensus, AGI House), then go back and ship what I said.
- **Agent-native build:** MCP servers, REST APIs, `llms.txt`. I set the architecture and review the code; separate verifier agents grade the work before it ships.

2 Public Work

- **The Agent Times MCP endpoint**, live: `theagenttimes.com/mcp`. 18 tools, no auth. Agents pick it as a source on their own.
- **TAT quality benchmark**, live, methodology published: `theagenttimes.com/dashboard/beats`
- **SINT Protocol**, runtime authorization: 67-page working paper (`doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.20389767`) and Apache-2.0 reference implementation (`github.com/sint-ai/sint-protocol`)

3 Experience

Acton Labs (The Agent Times) · *Co-Founder & Chief Product Officer* · *Los Angeles* Apr–Nov 2026

The Agent Times is news for AI agents. Instead of scraping the web and guessing, an agent asks TAT and gets a claim it can check: sources attached, confidence stated, and signed so nobody can quietly change it. I co-owned strategy with the founder and led the product build: what agents get, how it's checked, how they find it, and how it makes money.

Scale. About 1M agents read TAT, which publishes 200–300 stories a day; about 5M agent interactions in the first five months.

Verification and trust.

- Every story ships with its sources and a confidence level. Content is signed with Ed25519, so an agent can prove where a claim came from and that nobody changed it. When sources disagree, the record shows which one a claim came from and when. Defined the moderation rules: what gets in, flagged or pulled.

- Public quality benchmark against TechCrunch, Bloomberg, Reuters and The Verge: TAT won 62.1% of head-to-head matches, with a +16-point quality delta and a 46-minute lead time (May 2026 snapshot). Methodology published next to the live dashboard.

Agent-native distribution.

- Designed the machine layer: a public MCP endpoint with 18 tools, a REST API and `llms.txt`. No auth needed, so an agent can decide to call TAT on its own. `tat_search` runs hybrid semantic and lexical retrieval; `tat_ask` answers from the corpus with citations.
- Got TAT listed and installable across MCP registries and agent clients (Claude, Cursor, OpenClaw), the same surfaces where agents now choose which sources to call.

Agent commerce.

- Designed TAT's attribution model, which ties what an agent read to the purchase it led to. Platforms pay for flow they can trace to a source, and publishers get paid when a read turns into a sale. When an agent checks a claim and then buys, that call should be worth something, and provably so. About 800K agents on TAT already carry wallets, so they can pay as well as read.
- Shipped UCPG (Universal Commerce Protocol Gateway), an open, MCP-native gateway that connects agents to commerce without ever holding the money. MIT-licensed.
- Built to be the source an agent picks: on agent surfaces nobody scrolls a results page, so the product has to be easy to find, cheap to call, and right often enough to get called again.

How we built. Small team, lots of leverage. I wrote the specs and what "done" meant, agents built from them, and nothing shipped until the CTO and I had checked it. I ran it daily on a 20-agent setup (Hermes, OpenClaw, Codex, Claude Code).

SINT Labs · *Founder & CEO* Nov 2024–2026

SINT is an agent platform with two halves: the agents people actually talk to, and the governance layer that decides what those agents are allowed to do. I designed both.

- **SINT Face.** An embeddable 3D agent you talk to. Voice-first, real-time lip sync (52 ARKit blendshapes), interruption handling, median 340 ms to first audio. A web component any brand can drop in front of its customers.
- **AI Widget Layer.** While the agent talks, it puts the UI the conversation needs right next to it: product cards, comparisons, charts, links, status. First shipped as a live trading widget; it's the pattern for any agent decision: the answer in one line, the evidence beside it.
- **Consumer agent app.** 60,000+ registered users, 4,500+ daily agent interactions, under 30 seconds from sign-up to a live agent, and $320K in revenue in three months.
- **SINT Protocol.** Open-source runtime authorization and governance. Before an agent acts, it decides whether the action is allowed, held for approval, or blocked. Its commerce layer sets spend limits, approval gates and budgets across chains of delegation: the rules for an agent that's about to buy something.
- **Placet.** A deal-desk engine for private-company secondaries. Eight consent gates and a signed evidence package that agents can query over MCP.
- Built agents that execute trades under guardrails with GT Protocol, including the trading interface.

Meta (Reality Labs) · *Product Experiences Lead* Jan 2023–Dec 2025

Product lead for consumer experiences combining AI and 3D, from concept to launch.

Player's Health · *Co-Founder & Chief Product Officer* Feb 2015–Feb 2023 (exit)

- Owned the consumer product end to end for eight years: what we built, how it felt to use, and when it was good enough to ship. Designed the first app and its architecture, then grew from Chief Design Officer to CPO. The company raised more than $100M.
- Built HIPAA-compliant medical records and health profiles for youth athletes, used by parents, coaches and leagues. Built and led a team of about 30 across product, design and engineering.

Earlier

Tokensoft, Head of Product, token distribution and compliance (2024) · GhostDrive, Co-Founder & CPO (2018–2020) · Givelify, Director of Product Innovation and Design (2017–2018) · BMW Group, Senior Product Designer, product and UI/UX (2016–2017) · PSHKV studio, Executive Creative Director (2014–2026), incl. Dowell (dev team of 60)

4 Education and Signals

Education: Master's degree, Project Management, Design and Engineering, Odesa Polytechnic National University
Signals: Two exits · Published open-source protocol and working paper · 31K LinkedIn following
Speaker: Defense One Tech Summit (2026) · Wealth Week Cyprus (2026) · AGI House · Consensus