

Franco Lodato

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CHIEF INNOVATION OFFICER

Visionary Chief Design Innovation Officer with over **30 years of experience** driving transformative innovation across multiple industries, including **healthcare, luxury goods, wearables, and consumer electronics**. Expert in leveraging **biomimicry and sustainability** principles to develop innovative, market-leading products that meet evolving consumer demands. With a **portfolio of over 70 patents**, a proven track record at global organizations such as **Motorola, Pininfarina, and Masimo**, and a deep commitment to **sustainable growth**, offers unparalleled expertise in **leading cross-functional teams**, fostering a culture of innovation, and **aligning product strategies with business objectives**. Fluent in **English, Italian, and Spanish**, with additional skills in **French and Portuguese**.

Core Skills and Competencies

Innovation Strategy | Technology Integration | Cross-Functional Leadership | Product Development | R&D Management | Market-Driven Innovation | Biomimicry & Sustainability | Intellectual Property Management | Global Expansion | Human-Centered Design | Agile Methodologies | Consumer Electronics | Brand Strategy | Strategic Partnerships | Design Education & Mentorship | Industrial Design

Executive Achievements

- **Strategic Innovation Leadership:** Pioneered the creation of the world's first Android tablet, setting new standards in the healthcare and education sectors and positioning the company as a leader in tech-driven solutions.
- **Technology and Market Integration:** Led the MIT-Motorola Offspring Wearables project, integrating IoT and modular technology to create a family of connected devices that redefined personal communication.
- **Sustainable Growth Initiatives:** At Masimo, spearheaded the launch of the Freedom Smartwatch Program, leading the company's shift from B2B to B2C markets while incorporating sustainable packaging solutions.
- **Global Impact:** Directed the development of over 100 patents annually at Kids2, resulting in significant cost reductions, enhanced sustainability, and a broader market reach.

Executive Experience

Pininfarina

Senior Design Business Advisor @Lodato Design | Miami, FL

2023–Present

- **Strategic Planning:** Developed a five-year innovation roadmap that expanded Pininfarina's U.S. footprint by diversifying into architecture and lifestyle products, forming strategic partnerships with U.S. firms, and adapting the brand's European design language to American tastes while prioritizing sustainability and cross-industry innovation.
- **Sustainability Leadership:** Mentored design teams to embed sustainable practices across all projects, focusing on reducing environmental impact, innovating with eco-friendly materials, and ensuring economic viability. Strengthened the brand, expanded green industry partnerships, and positioned Pininfarina as a leader in sustainable design.

Masimo Corporation

Senior Director, Industrial Design & User Experience (UX) | Irvine, CA

2020–2023

- **Strategic Transformation:** Directed the strategic shift from B2B hospital solutions to B2C luxury wearables at Masimo, successfully redefining brand perception and establishing the company in a competitive luxury market. Led efforts to educate consumers on medical-grade technology while differentiating products through premium materials, sustainable practices, and consumer-centric design. Formed strategic partnerships with luxury brands, created an intuitive user experience, and developed new distribution channels, effectively blending healthcare expertise with luxury market demands.
- **Product Launch:** Spearheaded the launch of the Masimo Freedom Smartwatch, a flagship product showcasing the company's medical technology innovation. Leveraged advanced sensor and digital signal processing technology from the Masimo W1, enabling continuous, accurate readings of key health metrics such as arterial blood oxygen saturation (SpO2).

Kids2 Inc.**SVP, Global Design & Innovation | Atlanta, GA****2017–2020**

- **Innovation Management:** Drove the creation of a holistic, modular design process, integrating lean innovation, design for manufacturing (DFM), and strategic partnerships. This approach generated 100 patents annually and reduced product costs by 50%. Focused on standardization with flexibility and sustainability, streamlining the development pipeline through continuous improvement, automation, and a scalable patent strategy. Leveraged modularity to minimize waste, optimize resources, and accelerate the delivery of impactful, cost-efficient products.
- **Consumer Engagement:** Led the development of interactive toy technology that significantly enhanced consumer engagement and brand loyalty. Integrated user-centered design with emerging technologies such as AR, AI, and sensory feedback to create personalized and customizable experiences. Focused on cross-platform integration, sustainable materials, and community-building features like connected play and user-generated content. Balanced fun with educational value, aligning with consumer values to foster deep connections with children and parents, driving long-term brand loyalty.

Hoyos (VSN Mobil Technologies)**Head of Wearable Technology | Fort Lauderdale, FL****2013–2015**

- **Product Development:** Brought the 360fly camera to market, pioneering consumer-friendly 360-degree video capture with a single-lens design and rugged waterproof build. Integrated smart features such as GPS and sensors, making immersive content creation more accessible and interactive. This innovation democratized 360-degree video, driving the growth of user-generated VR/AR content and influencing the broader wearable tech market. Contributed to increased demand for VR headsets and inspired further advancements in immersive technology and wearable devices.

Early Career Experience

Motorola Mobility | Head of Product Innovation | Fort Lauderdale, FL

Pininfarina | VP & Managing Director, Americas | Miami, FL

- Led the award-winning Maserati Birdcage 75 project, collaborated with Paolo Pininfarina and Jim Glickenhaus on high-profile luxury automotive designs, and integrated cutting-edge mobile technologies into Pininfarina's portfolio, merging advanced technology with timeless design principles.

Herman Miller | VP, Design Exploration & Advanced Development | Holland, MI

Education & Certifications**Master of Science in Industrial Design** | Istituto Europeo di Design, Milan, Italy**Bachelor of Science in Industrial Design** | Santiago Mariño Polytechnic University Institute, Caracas, Venezuela**Executive Education, Business** | MIT Sloan School of Management**Lean Six Sigma Certification** | Nova Southeastern University**Sustainability Strategies for Industries** | MIT SDP**Board Memberships & Advisory Roles****Meetmo** – Member of the Board of Advisors (2020–Present)

Working with Michael Mansouri to develop AR/VR/MR technologies applications.

Florida Institute for Human & Machine Cognition (IHMC) – Research Associate (2017–Present)

Collaborating on advanced UX projects, including space research funded by NASA.

Professional Affiliations**Industrial Designers Society of America IDSA** | **American Institute for Graphic Arts (AIGA)****The Design Management Institute DMI** | **Visiting Lecturer** – MIT Media Lab | **Associate Professor** – Université de Montréal**Publications**

A selection of authored books, journal articles, and major industry contributions reflecting expertise in biomimicry, industrial design, and sustainable innovation.

- [The Nature of Design \(2010\)](#)

Comprehensive exploration of integrating biomimicry and human-centered design to create sustainable, innovative products.

- **Bionics in Action: The Nature of Invention (2010)**
Examination of applying bionic principles in industrial design, featuring case studies of successful products developed through biomimicry.
- **[Bionics in Action: The Design Work of Franco Lodato \(2004\)](#)**
In-depth look at the prolific career and contributions to industrial design, authored by Jens Bernsen, focusing on key projects with Motorola.
- **Frontiers in Bioengineering and Biotechnology: Bionics and Biomimetics (2022)**
As Associate Editor contributed to advancing bioengineering and biomimetics with key articles such as:
 - *Kinematics and Aerodynamics of Dragonflies in Climbing Flight*
 - *Egg-inspired Engineering in the Design of Thin-walled Shelled Vessels: A Theoretical Approach for Shell Strength*
 - *Convenient Design Method for Customized Implants Based on Bionic Vein Structure Features*
 - *DPED: Bio-inspired Dual-Pathway Network for Edge Detection*
- **Biomimicry: Nature-Inspired Designs (2008)**
Article in *Fast Company* discussing the integration of nature's principles into modern design.
- **[Better by Design: An Innovation Guide](#)**
Contribution to this guide exploring natural design solutions and their application in product development, published by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency.
- **Various Papers in Bionics and Bioengineering**
Published multiple papers in academic journals focused on the intersection of biology, engineering, and design, including bio-inspired design methodologies and industrial design applications.

Awards & Recognition

- **MIT Fire Hydrant Award (FHA)**, the Fire Hydrant Award (FHA), honors participants who demonstrate exceptional leadership and embody MIT's core values of excellence, meritocracy, courage, humility, curiosity, passion for problem-solving, and a strong desire to improve society. This award reflects the determination and resilience needed to thrive in MIT's challenging learning environment. Boston, Massachusetts (2023)
- **Honorary Ph.D. in Industrial Design** – Universidad Nueva Esparta, Caracas, Venezuela (2016)
Recognized for his pioneering work in industrial design and his contributions to advancing the integration of biomimicry in product development.
- **2019 German Toy Award for Magic Touch Piano**
Awarded for innovative design and engineering in developing the Magic Touch Piano for Kids2, which introduced capacitive touch technology in children's toys.
- **TEDx Speaker** – Bend, Oregon (2016)
Delivered a highly acclaimed talk on *What Woodpeckers, Sharks, and Snakes Teach Us About Design*, sharing insights into how natural mechanisms can inspire technological innovation.
- **DuPont REED Grant Recipient** – Wilmington, DE (1990)
Received this prestigious grant for groundbreaking research in bio-design, which laid the foundation for numerous advancements in automotive and consumer product design.
- **Solo Exhibit: Bionics in Action – The Nature of Invention** – Danish Design Center (2005)
Featured in a solo exhibition showcasing his innovative work in bionic design, emphasizing the connection between natural systems and industrial applications.
- **Subject of Book: Bionics in Action: The Design Work of Franco Lodato (2004)**
Highlighted as a leading figure in industrial design, with Jens Bernsen's book dedicated to exploring Lodato's contributions to the field.
- **Business Week IDEA Awards Juror (2008)**
Served as a knowledge expert and juror for the International Design Excellence Awards, recognizing excellence in industrial design.
- **Gravity Free Design Conference Speaker (2007)**
Presented at this influential design conference, sharing expertise in sustainable and industrial design.

Media & Speaking Engagements

Showcase of media appearances, interviews, and speaking engagements highlighting public influence and thought leadership in innovation and design.

- **[TEDxBend – What Woodpeckers, Sharks, and Snakes Teach Us About Design \(2016\)](#)**
Delivered a widely viewed TEDx talk, exploring lessons from nature for innovative design solutions, emphasizing the connection between natural mechanisms and technological advancements.
- **[Interview with the Sarasota Herald-Tribune \(2006\)](#)**
In-depth interview discussing career achievements, design philosophy, and visions for the future of industrial design.
- **[Featured in Fast Company – Biomimicry: Nature-Inspired Designs \(2008\)](#)**
Profile in *Fast Company* highlighting pioneering work in integrating nature's principles into modern design, positioning as a leader in sustainable innovation.
- **[Expert Interview on Shoot Online – Franco Lodato Joins Radiant Images as Chief Innovation Officer](#)**
Discussed role at Radiant Images, sharing a vision for the future of wearable technology and innovation.
- **[Solo Exhibition: Bionics in Action – The Nature of Invention – Danish Design Center \(2005\)](#)**
Groundbreaking work in bionic design, showcasing the impact of innovations on the global stage.
- **[Masters of Tomorrow – Miami, FL \(November 30, 2016\)](#)**
Presented on "Nature & Design," discussing the role of biomimicry in shaping the future of design and innovation.
- **[Living Machines Conference – Milan, Italy \(July 30, 2014\)](#)**
Keynote on "Bionics and Design, Pure and Applied Research," focusing on applying bionic principles in advanced industrial design.
- **[Sarasota International Design Summit – Sarasota, FL \(November 11, 2010\)](#)**
Presentation: "Designing Dreams," exploring the intersection of technology, nature, and human-centered design.
- **[Gravity Free Design Conference – Chicago, IL \(June 3, 2007\)](#)**
Spoke on "Nature and Design," exploring how nature-inspired innovation fosters sustainable product development.
- **[AFRL Munitions Directorate \(Classified Event\) – Eglin AFB, FL](#)**
Keynote speaker on "Nature-Inspired Innovation," highlighting biomimicry in military and defense technologies.

Patents

Holds over 70 patents in various fields, including consumer electronics, healthcare devices, and sustainable design. Selected patents include:

- **System, Method, and Apparatus for Modular Furniture - Patent No.: [US20200397146A1](#)**
Summary: This patent covers innovative methods for creating modular furniture systems that are customizable and adaptable for various environments, contributing to sustainable design practices.
- **Method and Apparatus for Acquiring and Displaying Biometric Data - Patent No.: [US10905326B1](#)**
Summary: This technology facilitates the acquisition and real-time display of biometric data, which is instrumental in wearable health devices.
- **Surface Conforming Shaving Razor - Patent No.: [CA2493970A1](#)**
Summary: This patent describes a shaving razor designed to conform to the skin's surface, providing an improved and safer shaving experience.
- **Wireless ECG System - Patent No.: [US7933642B2](#)**
Summary: This innovation involves a wireless electrocardiograph system, allowing for remote monitoring of heart activity, which is particularly beneficial in healthcare settings.
- **Digital Assistant - Patent No.: [USD503709S1](#)**
Summary: This design patent covers a communication device that integrates advanced ergonomics and user interface features, such as touch screens and voice-activated inputs, enhancing the user experience in mobile technology.
- **[Patents](#)**