

# Don Balanzat

## AI Enablement Leader & Builder

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Hands-on AI enablement leader and builder driving enterprise generative-AI adoption across thousands of employees. Currently leads Zillow's company-wide AI enablement for **>2,700 people** across Product, Engineering, Marketing, and Design — lifting **weekly-active AI-tool use in Product and Design from 30% to 75%+ in two months** by teaching Claude Code, skills, and agent harnesses, and by building the internal tooling and reference implementations that show teams what good looks like. A genuine builder: ships **TypeScript web apps, Python/PyTorch ML pipelines (incl. CUDA for robotics), and immersive work in Unity and Blender**. Operates as a peer to senior engineers and brings skeptical teams along.

### AREAS OF EXPERTISE

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Enterprise AI Adoption & Enablement · Hands-on Prototyping, Agents & Orchestration · Internal Tooling & Reference Implementations · AI Tool / Platform Evaluation · AI Champions Networks · Adoption Metrics & Executive / Board Reporting · Responsible-AI Governance, Data Classification & Regulated Data · Change Management & Influence Without Authority · Workshops, Training & Curriculum Design

**Technical Toolkit:** Claude Code (skills, subagents, harnesses), Codex, Cursor · TypeScript / web apps · Python, PyTorch, CUDA (ML pipelines, robotics) · Unity, Blender, Gaussian splatting · AWS, Docker, GitLab CI/CD, Terraform

### EXPERIENCE

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#### Zillow — AI Enablement Lead

*Dec 2025 – Present · Remote*

- Lead Zillow's company-wide AI enablement **supporting >2,700 employees** across Product, Engineering, Marketing, and Design — owning the roadmap, operating model, and adoption metrics reported to VP+ leadership.
- Lifted **weekly-active AI-tool use in Product and Design from 30% to 75%+ in two months** by teaching Claude Code (skills, subagents, harnesses), Codex, and Cursor and embedding them in real workflows.
- Authored the AI enablement **operating model** — intake, prioritization, content cadence, and VP+ stakeholder and champion-network partnership — and stood up an **AI Champions framework** across Zillow's largest orgs with a monthly cadence publishing winning workflows back to the business.
- Build internal tooling and **scheduled agent / skill workflows** that cut manual toil; training and rollouts linked to faster **PDLC and SDLC cycle times**.
- Evaluate the enterprise AI stack hands-on — **Claude, Claude Code & Cwork; ChatGPT & Codex; Gemini** — and set governed guidance for what data goes to hosted models versus private inference.

#### Blue Origin — Engineering Lead, Emerging Technology

*Mar 2022 – Dec 2025 · Phoenix, AZ*

- Drove adoption of generative-AI and AI-native workflows across engineering and design teams **that did not start out asking for it**, through hands-on workshops and demonstrations.
- Built and operationalized end-to-end XR/AI software stacks **from zero across dozens of facilities and all business units** (New Shepard, New Glenn, Blue Moon MK1 & MK2, Blue Ring) — shipping secure, high-uptime applications **scaled to >12,000 users** via GitLab CI/CD on AWS, Docker, Artifactory, and Terraform.
- Delivered **seven-figure cost avoidance** across multiple vehicle programs by embedding better tooling and human-factors practices into engineering workflows.
- Partnered across **IT, Legal, Design, and Engineering** on usability, accessibility, and **data-governance in ITAR / export-controlled environments** — the regulated-data analog to responsible AI: what can go to hosted models, what stays private, and what triggers legal review.
- Two-time **Blue Origin Liftoff Award** recipient for grit, bias for action, and delivering results.

#### Chaotic Curiosity LLC — Founder & Principal Consultant

*Mar 2024 – Present · Mesa, AZ · chaoticcuriosity.io*

- Advise organizations on building **AI-native engineering and design culture** — hands-on use-case development, tool selection, and org-wide adoption across sectors.

- Build production work end-to-end: **TypeScript web apps, Python/PyTorch ML pipelines (incl. CUDA for robotics), Unity/Blender immersive experiences, and Gaussian-splat pipelines** converting image/video into immersive-ready assets.
- Create reusable **enablement assets** (playbooks, video demos, prompt libraries) and reference implementations with Claude / Claude Code, Cursor, Vercel, Replit, and custom GPTs.

#### Arizona State University — Faculty Associate

Aug 2024 – May 2025 · Herberger Institute / AME

- Designed and taught a graduate course on **AI and immersive media** ("Hyperspace: Exploration at the Intersection of XR and AI"), with hands-on use of frontier tools and responsible, safety-first design.

#### Earlier Experience

- **NASA Goddard Space Flight Center** — VR Developer (2021): built HLSL shaders against NASA data sources and led an intern team to demo a mission-critical use case to Roman Space Telescope engineers.
- **Arizona State University** — XR Researcher & Developer, four labs (2020–2022): built Unity visualization platforms and MATLAB data pipelines; co-authored a peer-reviewed publication.
- **ASU, Dept. of Physics** — Sr. Lab Coordinator & Online Instructor (2016–2022): taught >3,000 students per semester; built dozens of physical and virtual experiments.
- **Rutgers University, Dept. of Physics** — Support Specialist (2012–2016).

#### EDUCATION

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**M.S., Human Factors** — Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, 2025 (*focus: Human Factors in XR & AI*)

**M.N.S., Geological Sciences** — Arizona State University, 2022 (*specialization: XR for STEM visualization*)

**B.S., Physics** — Rutgers University, 2016

#### SELECTED RECOGNITION

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Blue Origin Liftoff Awards (2022, 2023) · Space for Humanity Citizen Astronaut Finalist (2023) · ASU Physics Staff Awards (2017, 2021)