

Pete Kingston

Product Design Leadership, Design Systems & Craft

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Summary

Design leader, currently Head of Product Design at tombola, with 15+ years in human-centred design across e-commerce, betting and gaming. I build design practices: the team, the standards, the career paths and the community around them. I lead design for products that have to be clear, fair and easy to use, in a regulated space where getting the experience wrong has real consequences for players. At iTech Media I led a team of 11 across five countries. I work at leadership team level and coach people to a high bar while staying hands-on with the craft, building future vision and concept work in Figma, using AI to speed up design and review.

Key highlights

- **Design system live across all UK products and internationally.** Built v1 myself and upskilled 10 designers on it
- **Put the design system into Claude** so Product Managers and experimentation can explore on-brand ideas, improving product discovery and idea generation. Built a persona skill that tests early ideas on public data
- **Grew a design team from three to seven at peak in a year as Head.** Hired four. Now supporting around 14 squads
- **Visiontype adopted as the company's Product Vision.** It now feeds into a company OKR
- **Wrote a career framework for Product Designers and UX Researchers**, with individual contributor and people management tracks. Two designers promoted to Senior in April 2026

Experience

tombola - UX Consultant → Principal → Head of Product Design

Sep 2023 to present. Remote

- **Built the product design function from scratch.** Joined with three non-product designers, Adobe XD and no UI consistency. Upskilled them, moved the team to Figma and hired three Product Designers (one a Lead) and a Lead UX Researcher, reaching seven at peak within a year as Head of Product Design. Ran a design maturity assessment in-house.
- **Built v1 of the design system myself:** most components and all primitive and semantic tokens across 6 themes, plus the Storybook integration.
- **Won leadership buy-in** through senior leadership team (SLT) and OKR sessions. The system became a key business initiative, live across all UK products and internationally. System use is part of the definition of done. As Principal, ran ideation workshops with stakeholders and leadership, and now coach the team and Product Managers to run them.
- **Put the design system into Claude.** Product Managers and experimentation explore on-brand ideas to aid discovery. Built a persona skill on public data (own data planned) and a team goal-tracking skill.
- **Leading the design to merge two brands into one app (in progress).** Each has its own offer and customers. The aim is clear distinctions between them, easy navigation into each game, and safer gambling at the forefront.
- **Wrote a career framework** for design and research, Junior to Head, with two tracks: individual contributor and people management. Built a competency review with self, peer and manager scores, averaged to show development focus areas, plus 360 feedback from 12 key peers.
- **Created the Visiontype**, adopted as the Product Vision and presented to the leadership team, Flutter and town halls. It fed into a company OKR. I'm the go-to person for future concepts across the business, reusing existing work or creating new.
- **Plan, define and report** on the initiatives under one of the company's key OKRs, with product and engineering leads, reporting progress to senior leaders.
- **Led design for complex, regulated products** used in several languages and markets. Mapped end-to-end player journeys, balancing player needs, accessibility, technical constraints and commercial goals.
- **Built the research practice.** Set up player testing and co-wrote the business case for scaling UX research.
- **Started hypothesis-driven experiments** with the new Experimentation Lead's team.
- **Run the design community:** Creative Lens critiques and the Design Drops newsletter for senior leaders. Set ground rules for how the team gives and receives feedback. Planned a Creative Guild with SLT buy-in, not yet launched.
- **Set craft standards and ways of working.** Coach the team in user-centred design, information architecture and service design. Started the component documentation. Now building motion guidelines.
- **Backed an Accessibility guild**, set up by a Senior Product Designer, with key members from teams across the business to raise the accessibility bar on every surface.
- **Own the Figma and UserTesting contracts and budget**, including a six-figure renewal. Named contributor to Flutter international's Book of Casino maturity benchmark.

iTech Media (now Legend) - Senior Product Design Manager

Aug 2022 to Aug 2023. Remote

- **Grew the team from 5 to 11 designers, researchers and creatives across 5 countries.**
- **Set vision and strategy** for the Sports pillar, aligned to business KPIs. Managed design budgets and agency partners.
- **Sat on the Product Design leadership team and the Sports pillar leadership group**, leading design alongside counterparts in Product, Engineering and Marketing.
- **Initiated a cross-product design system** with brand and engineering teams.
- **Managed performance and development.** Appraisals, reviews and coaching for the team, using the GROW model.
- **Started hypothesis-driven experiments** with a dedicated conversion rate optimisation Product Manager, new to the team.
- **Championed user research and usability testing.** It led to a new research-request process across the wider business.
- **Ran design jams and design sprints** with the team and stakeholders.
- **Set up a new onboarding process.** It helped new starters build relationships and know what to expect in their first 30 days.
- **Consolidated the team's tools** into one design process. It improved collaboration across the team and stakeholders.

Sky Betting & Gaming - Senior Product Designer → Product Design Lead

Jan 2016 to Aug 2022. Hybrid

- **Co-led design, UX writing, game design and research** across four brands and 12 products with another Lead. Team of 12, line managing 6.
- **Created and led Nevada**, the Gaming Tribe design system. Ran design leader forums across the Flutter group, including Betfair, Paddy Power, PokerStars and FanDuel.
- **Led UX for a new live gaming format** on mobile, driving a 13%+ revenue uplift and bringing new segments to the app.
- **Member of the gaming leadership team.** Drove a 3-year design vision across 6 product lines.
- **Delivered a continuous discovery and experimentation framework.** Worked with the Vegas squad to run hypothesis-driven experiments every month.
- **Wrote the Design Bible.** A guide to our double-diamond process, with expected timescales for each step. It helped promote user research across the business and introduced a user-centred design framework, new to the business.
- **Ran Design Jams** with stakeholders to gather ideas early, and templated the format for the team.
- **Introduced Design Briefs.** One day set aside for the team to work on a brief outside their day job and industry, such as redoing Ocado's onboarding flow. We presented the results to the wider Product team, and Product Managers asked to join the sessions.
- **Ran regular tool audits and trials**, and brought in the best fit for the team. Owned the Figma contract.
- **Worked on information architecture and hierarchy** across products, first as a designer and then as design lead.
- **Stayed hands-on as a Senior Product Designer.** Built complex prototypes in Sketch, UXPin and Axure, and did UX engineering in HTML, CSS and SASS within agile squads.

Skills and tools

Design leadership: Team building · Hiring · Career frameworks · Performance management · Coaching · Stakeholder management · Budget and vendor ownership

Design craft: Figma · FigJam · Miro · Design systems · Design tokens · Prototyping · Accessibility · Sketch · UXPin · Axure · Adobe suite (including Illustrator)

Research and testing: User research · Usability testing · Experimentation · A/B testing · Continuous discovery · Design maturity assessment · UserTesting · Google Analytics · Quantum Metrics

Process and collaboration: Agile squads · OKRs · Design thinking and sprints · Jira · Confluence · Asana

AI-enabled design: Claude: design system for Product Managers, persona research skill, goal builder for team · Figma Make (proofs of concept)

Technical: Storybook (Figma integration) · HTML · CSS · SASS

Earlier experience

Wren Kitchens - Lead Web Designer Aug 2013 to Dec 2015

Ebuyer.com - Web Designer / Front End Developer Feb 2012 to Aug 2013

Position Nightclub - Web Designer Dec 2009 to Feb 2012

Tiger Tiger Newcastle - Designer Sep 2007 to Jul 2009

Education

BA (Hons) Computer-Aided Product Design, 2:1 Northumbria University, 2006 to 2009