



# James Howle

## Central Design System Lead

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### Professional Profile

Design System Lead with 20 years' experience across digital, brand and product design. Currently leading the strategy, governance and adoption of Virgin Media O2's multi-brand Central Design System across web, app and marketing experiences. I connect Design, Engineering, Brand and Accessibility to create scalable systems, clearer operating models and AI-enabled design-to-build workflows.

#### Core Capabilities

- Design system strategy and governance
- Multi-brand systems and theming
- Token and component architecture
- AI-enabled design-to-build workflows
- Operating models and adoption
- Product strategy and roadmapping
- Cross-functional leadership
- Accessibility and inclusive design
- Figma variables and libraries

### Professional Experience

Virgin Media O2 (December 2023 – Present)

#### Central Design System Lead

November 2025 – Present

Own the strategy, governance, and evolution of the organisation's central Design System, positioning it as a foundational product.

- Lead the strategy, governance and adoption of Virgin Media O2's Central Design System across O2, Virgin Media and VMO2 experiences.
- Led the rationalisation of a fragmented estate of 147+ components into a clearer architecture of core components, structural components and brand-specific patterns.
- Established a scalable token architecture and multi-brand variable libraries in Figma, aligning design decisions with coded implementation.
- Designed an AI-enabled workflow connecting Figma documentation, Jira and cloud development agents with Tailwind, Next.js, Fuma Docs and Storybook.
- Introduced component governance, contribution and review processes spanning Design, Engineering, Brand and Accessibility.
- Positioned the design system as a product with a defined roadmap, adoption model and measurable organisational value

#### Senior UX/UI Designer

November 2024 – November 2025

- Led complex digital initiatives across web and app journeys
- Mentored designers within squad-based teams

#### UX/UI Designer

December 2023 – November 2024

- Delivered digital design solutions across commercial and customer platforms
- Collaborated within cross-functional agile squads

## Professional Experience (Earlier Career)

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### **Upp Next Level Broadband Creative Lead**

March 2022 – December 2023

- Led and mentored a multidisciplinary design team across web, email, social and brand
- Established brand governance and asset consistency standards across channels
- Partnered with Commercial and Marketing leadership on strategic direction and board-level presentations

### **Linney**

#### **Creative Lead – Key Accounts**

March 2018 – March 2022

- Led creative direction across multi-channel campaigns for national brands
- Designed digital and web experiences using Figma-based workflows
- Acted as primary client liaison from concept through delivery

### **Allen Design Team**

#### **Senior Creative Designer**

July 2016 – March 2018

- Managed designers and developers delivering digital and offline solutions
- Oversaw projects from concept through production
- Led client engagement and creative direction

### **The Football Association (FA)**

#### **Creative Designer**

July 2012 – July 2016

- Established and coordinated an in-house design function at St George's Park
- Defined visual identity and tone for FA Education and key programmes
- Delivered multi-channel digital and print communications

### **Arena Racing**

Digital Designer (2010 – 2012)

### **Presence Marketing**

Creative Designer (2009 – 2010)

### **StudioDM**

Graphic Designer (2008 – 2009)

### **HCR**

Graphic/Web Designer (2006 – 2008)

Built foundational experience across digital design, email marketing, web development, and client delivery.

## Education

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### **Solent University**

#### **BA (Hons) Fine Art and Media**

(2002 – 2005)

### **Loughborough University**

#### **Foundation in Art and Design**

(2001 – 2002)