[EXPERIENCE]

Mark Foster

Product Designer

MFSTUDIO.DIGITAL

01 / PROFILE

I'm a product designer with more than fifteen years' experience, the last twelve designing a B2B SaaS platform used by media, events and membership organisations. I own design end to end: problem framing, research, prototyping, interaction design for complex, data-heavy workflows, the design system underneath, and the build itself. I work closely with product, engineering and clients, test with users, and keep improving the work after release. My recent focus is a build-first way of working with AI agents, shipping designs as working interfaces rather than static files.

This document shows the work behind my CV: what each problem was, what I did, and what changed as a result.

02 / HOW I WORK NOW

Designers are moving closer to the product. I now ship designs as working screens rather than static files, with AI agents doing much of the building. This is how I work at Affino and on other products.

- **The problem comes first, written down.** Before I open any tool, I write down the problem and what a good result looks like. The agent builds what I describe, so the thinking has to be clear first.
- **Systems, not screens.** I design the components, rules and patterns that screens are made from. Build it once and the agent uses it everywhere: the rules are written as Claude Code skills and checked by hooks, so every screen follows the system without me policing it. That's how one listing template rebuilt 300+ admin screens without each being redesigned by hand.
- **Build first.** I've moved from Figma-to-code agent workflows to building first: ideas go straight to working screens that people can click through, test and refine.
- **Figma for visual direction.** I still use Figma where it's fastest: setting the look and feel and exploring visual options at speed.
- **Reviewing the code.** I'm comfortable enough in code to review what an agent produces and catch what's wrong, even where I haven't written it myself.
- **Building AI products.** I design and build standalone AI plugins that work on any website, from an AI assistant and enhanced search to article summaries and an AI analyst, as well as the agent workflows I design with.
- **Accessibility is built in.** WCAG AA is the baseline, and checking it is automated so it can't quietly slip.
- **Bringing people with me.** I've run client workshops, training and onboarding, produced a video and written help guide series, and I explain complex ideas to non-specialists.

03 / SELECTED WORK

Redesigning a large SaaS admin platform

LEAD PRODUCT DESIGNER / AFFINO / 2023 - PRESENT

PROBLEM

The platform's admin side has over a thousand screens, built one at a time over many years. Layouts varied from screen to screen, finding things depended on knowing where they lived, and none of it was responsive. Client teams spend their whole working day in it.

WHAT I DID

I audited every screen by type and found that most fell into a handful of patterns: listings, view and edit screens, and a smaller set of bespoke tools. I designed the shell that everything sits in (navigation, menus, actions, AI search and assistant, light and dark modes, user preferences), then a single listing template, then the record templates. I built it as components and rules that AI agents build the screens from: first a Figma-to-Claude Code workflow, now fully build-first.

OUTCOME

The new admin is used by every client, with over 500,000 screen views a week. All 900+ legacy screens have now been rebuilt on the design system, 300+ of them from one listing template, and the first was built from my handover spec in two days.

CASE STUDY → CONTROL CENTRE

Building a design system from scratch

LEAD PRODUCT DESIGNER / AFFINO / 2024 - PRESENT

PROBLEM — Hundreds of legacy screens had to move onto one modern, responsive framework without each becoming a project of its own. The development team had ruled out off-the-shelf CSS frameworks, and the system had to serve the admin, the AI features and client websites, each in light and dark, for more than one brand.

WHAT I DID — I built a Figma-first system in plain HTML and CSS, now 155 components, 122 patterns and 269 tokens across six light and dark modes. Tokens are exported from Figma and compiled to CSS, named for their purpose rather than their value, and components may only use tokens. Components size to their container, so the same one works in a full page, a side panel or a phone. I linked it to code with Code Connect and published it on a documentation site.

OUTCOME — One set of decisions now flows through every surface, and every legacy admin screen has been rebuilt on it. Accessibility is checked as part of the build, not at the end: all 552 colour pairings are tested against WCAG 2.2 AA automatically, so a regression shows up the moment it's introduced.

CASE STUDY → AFFINO DESIGN SYSTEM

Making AI plugins feel like one product

LEAD PRODUCT DESIGNER / AFFINO / 2026

PROBLEM — The platform's AI plugins had been added one at a time, and each looked and behaved differently: AI Assistant, AI Chat, AI Article Summaries, News AI, AI Enhanced Search, Article Questions and AI Analyst. They're standalone, so they work on any website, not only on the platform.

WHAT I DID — I designed one visual and interaction system for all of them, covering how an assistant presents results, explains itself and hands control back to the user.

OUTCOME — Every plugin now shares one consistent AI experience, shipped in the 2026 release.

Seating planner for events

LEAD PRODUCT DESIGNER / AFFINO, WITH A CLIENT / 2026

PROBLEM — Clients run conferences, gala dinners and awards nights on the platform but planned seating in spreadsheets and reconciled it by hand. The people using it aren't technical, it's used at the venue on the day, and every seat has to take anyone: attendees, sponsors, speakers, or a guest with no record at all.

WHAT I DID — Working with the client, I took it from their requirements to high-fidelity designs and a fully working prototype. I designed it against one test: someone who has never seen the screen can find an event, spot the half-empty tables and seat six people in under two minutes. On a phone, tap-to-assign replaces drag, which also makes it work from the keyboard.

OUTCOME — A single seating workspace inside the admin, following the design system, with role colours that each client can set and exports to PDF, Excel and CSV. The prototype is live to try.

CASE STUDY → SEATING PLANNER

Bet with Friends: a football game app

PRODUCT DESIGNER / WITH PRBLM.CO / 2024

PROBLEM — A last-man-standing football game that began on Facebook needed to become a proper app. It handles real money and real tension, and players need to know at a glance whether they're winning, losing or out while the match is still being played.

WHAT I DID — I designed the app end to end across 27 screens and every state a match can be in, built the design system in Figma, and built a fully working prototype. prblm.co built the React Native app and its Python back end from my designs and prototype. Money is always shown before anything is committed, with no dark patterns rushing a pick.

OUTCOME — A complete mobile app with a working prototype that plays a simulated round from kick-off to full time, so every live state was tested in use. Every colour pairing meets WCAG 2.2 AA.

CASE STUDY → BET WITH FRIENDS

More work

- **Client website launches (2014–2026).** Twelve years designing and building sites for 50+ media, publishing and charity brands.
- **RARIK 75th anniversary timeline (2024).** An interactive, scroll-driven history of Iceland's national power utility, 1904–2023. Five designed compositions act as templates for all 29 years, and each year has its own composition on a phone. Concept, design and build were mine.
- **Kixx (2025).** Visual direction and a new tone of voice for a national football academy, built around its existing logo and colours, with the strapline "It's not about the score". The style is now being brought into the live site.

04 / EXPERIENCE

Lead Product Designer, Affino, London

APRIL 2014 - PRESENT

A SaaS business platform (CRM, marketing automation, publishing, commerce, events, membership and AI) used by media, publishing, events and professional services organisations. I'm one of two designers, working with the founders, Product, Engineering and commercial teams.

Higher Education Lecturer, Digital & Product Design, University Centre Doncaster

APRIL 2012 - 2014

Taught the UI/UX and digital product design modules on a BA (Hons) Design programme, and contributed to curriculum development.

Lead Designer & Front-End Developer, Ask My Community, Rotherham

APRIL 2010 - 2012

Design lead (identity, brand and UI/UX) and front-end developer for a community platform built with Rotherham Council. Winner, Digital Entrepreneur Awards, Digital Charity / Community Project category (2012).

05 / SKILLS AND TOOLS

PRODUCT DESIGN

discovery, user research, journey mapping, usability testing, information architecture, interaction design for complex workflows, prototyping, UI design, UX writing

DESIGN SYSTEMS

tokens and Figma variables, components and patterns, Code Connect, dark mode, multi-brand theming, documentation, WCAG 2.2 AA

AI

AI-enabled product experiences, human–AI interaction patterns, build-first agentic workflows, AI plugins, code review of agent output (Claude Code)

CODE

HTML, CSS, JavaScript, Tailwind, Alpine.js, HTMX, React, Python, Django

06 / EDUCATION

- PGCE, Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector (2014), University of Hull
- BA (Hons) Graphic Design (2012), First Class Honours, University of Hull