Samuel Obadina

Digital Product & Design Systems Leader

Digital strategy · Product roadmaps · Platform architecture · Team leadership

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Digital product and design systems leader who shapes roadmaps, guides technical and product decisions and leads cross-functional delivery. At Reach plc, which reaches 66%+ of the UK online population monthly, I own the roadmap for Navigator, the design system for its 70+ regional brands, aligning stakeholders with design and technology leaders. At LoopSave and Zilla, I built and led design teams and shaped product strategy. I bring systems thinking, hands-on product experience and people leadership.

Work Experience

Reach plc / Senior Product Designer
JANUARY 2023 – PRESENT, LONDON (REMOTE)

Own the Navigator design-system roadmap and prioritisation, shaping a horizontal capability that serves multiple product verticals and delivery teams across Reach's portfolio of 70+ regional brands, at the UK and Ireland's largest commercial news publisher (£518m revenue in 2025), which reaches over 66% of the UK online population every month.

Developed and presented the design-system roadmap and proposed approach at stakeholder meetings, including presenting alongside my line manager to the Chief Product and Technology Officer. Work with my manager to chart delivery and align priorities with wider product and technology objectives.

Established a scalable, token-based system adopted by approximately 50 designers and developers across 10+ teams, helping reduce the time needed to launch regional sites and features from weeks to days.

Lead design-system governance across design and engineering, aligning teams around shared components, standards, workflows and implementation priorities.

Led the migration from Sketch, Abstract and Zeplin to Figma, supporting adoption through workshops, training and knowledge-sharing.

Delivered an initial design-to-code MVP using an npm package and am helping shape the next phase of integration, exploring Code Connect, Storybook and Figma Make.

Champion AI adoption and lead exploration of design-code parity: evaluated three frameworks, presented them to leadership and piloted one as a proof of concept. Designers adopted it strongly, using shared components with AI to prototype in real code, and gave positive feedback on how it improved their work. Now presenting the findings and proof of concept to technology stakeholders, with buy-in building, aiming for a first version by the end of 2026.

Reach plc / Senior User Interface Designer
JUNE 2021 – JANUARY 2023, LONDON (REMOTE)

LoopSave / Chief Product Officer
AUGUST 2023 – JANUARY 2026, PART-TIME

Led product direction and roadmap from concept through pilot and early adoption, partnering with the founders on product strategy, market entry and development priorities.

Education

Udacity / UX Design Nanodegree
2019 – 2020

Obafemi Awolowo University / BA Fine and Applied Arts
2011 – 2016

Certifications

Design Systems and Pattern Libraries (Nielsen Norman Group, January 2023)

Data Analytics and Reporting with Power BI

Create a Brand Strategy

HTML, CSS and JavaScript: The Big Picture

Skills

Digital product and strategy: product roadmaps and prioritisation • product discovery • testing and iteration • product delivery • cross-functional planning

Platforms and design systems: design-system architecture • design tokens • component libraries • governance • platform consistency • design-to-code workflows • Storybook and Figma integration

People and organisational leadership: team management • recruitment • onboarding • mentoring • training • professional development • stakeholder alignment • workshop facilitation

Innovation and commercial awareness: AI-assisted workflows • technical prototyping • team resource planning • tools and training decisions • commercial strategy contribution

Onboarded 10+ group leaders, whose groups have more than 50 members combined.

Guided product testing and iteration, defining and monitoring metrics to assess product performance and inform decisions about improvements.

Designed a scalable, web-first product framework and token architecture to support the initial platform and potential future mobile expansion.

Built the brand system from scratch, connecting product experience, visual identity and launch communications.

Recruited and trained two designers, establishing the design capability needed to support product development.

Contributed to resource planning and commercial discussions, advising on potential directions and making the case for tooling and training costs while balancing the company's stage, team needs and available resources.

Zilla / Head of Product

DECEMBER 2021 – AUGUST 2023, PART-TIME

Led product and design delivery in partnership with engineering and marketing, shaping priorities across customer onboarding, checkout and payment-card experiences.

Managed a team of five designers, supporting performance and development through regular one-to-ones, team catch-ups and conversations about individual goals and aspirations.

Built a designer development pathway, recruiting talent through a six-month apprenticeship programme before progressing designers into permanent design roles; negotiated salaries for team members. Set the six-month goals apprentices needed to reach before joining as full designers, and established training structures and onboarding templates.

Managed team resources across recruitment, tools and training, balancing capability needs against the constraints of an early-stage business.

Sourced and managed external creative contractors across videography, brand identity and illustration, negotiating fees and overseeing delivery.

Led the development of ACE v2, a shared design system and token structure supporting customer and merchant experiences across web and mobile.

Contributed to product experiences for a buy-now-pay-later platform serving 4,000+ merchants and reporting more than ₦230m in transaction volume. The company recorded 30,000+ customer sign-ups. All figures are for 2022.

Wakanow / Senior UI/UX Designer

JULY 2019 – JUNE 2021, LAGOS

Improved booking experiences across B2C and B2B web and mobile products at a leading Nigerian online travel company serving 500,000+ travellers a year.

Used Firebase behavioural insights to identify friction in booking flows and reduce drop-off.

Partnered with business analysts and product owners to deliver flight add-ons, seat maps and a refund flow.

Languages

English (native) • Yoruba (native) • French (elementary)

Leadership and additional experience

ADPList / Design Mentor

MARCH 2021 – PRESENT

Mentored 50+ designers through portfolio reviews and guidance on UI/UX and creative practice. Accumulated 2,620 minutes of mentorship and ranked among ADPList's top 1% of mentors in March 2022.

Feathers Consulting / Creative Director

NOVEMBER 2015 – JUNE 2019

Built a learning platform and a training and mentorship curriculum, tested with 300+ students across several cities in Nigeria.

FourthCanvas / Senior Designer, Lagos

SEP 2016 – SEP 2018

Led brand identity-system projects including two African electoral campaigns.

Service: I play drums in my church choir.