

David Portelli

UX vision & strategy ▪ UX research ▪ Design ops.

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Profile

Hands-on Product Design Leader (IC + Manager) with 10+ years of experience crafting and scaling high-impact digital products across gaming, fintech, and tools. I blend systems thinking with deep UX/UI expertise and thrive in small, fast-paced environments where I can both build and lead. Skilled at design operations, team development, and shipping intuitive, scalable user experiences. I bring clarity to complexity—whether mentoring designers, facilitating workshops, or shaping end-to-end product journeys.

Skills

Design Strategy & Execution ● ● ● ● ●

UX/UI Design
Product Discovery
Design Systems
Prototyping
Research & Testing
Responsive Design

Leadership & Ops ● ● ● ● ●

Design Ops
Mentoring
Agile Ceremonies
Workshop Facilitation
Hiring & Coaching
Cross-functional Collaboration

Tools ● ● ● ● ●

Figma
Jira
Confluence
Notion
Lovable
ChatGPT
Gemini

Professional Experience

10/2024 – Present

Senior Product Design Manager
Kaizen Gaming
Lead two cross-functional product design teams across the gaming and rewards domains—while driving UX strategy, design ops, and systems thinking.

- Manage team leads, product designers, visual designers and UX researchers.
- Facilitate quarterly cross-functional discovery workshops, resulting in validated ideas pitched and adopted into the product roadmap.
- Built a centralized Design Ops hub in Confluence to unify documentation, rituals, contacts, and research across teams.
- Partner closely with experimentation, product, and tech to align vision, feasibility, and delivery.

- Lead UX strategy for both gaming and rewards across journeys and markets.
- Own team structure, hiring, mentoring, and continuous performance development.

01/2023 – 01/2024

Principal Product Designer
MrQ
Designed and delivered end-to-end customer journeys, internal tools, and design systems—while mentoring and shaping team process.

- Owned UX for conversion flows, KYC, onboarding, gaming, and in-game UI.
- Created "Excava," a bespoke CRM platform used by internal teams to manage segmentation and offers.
- Scaled and maintained design systems for tools, casino features, and in-house games.
- Led usability testing, user interviews, and design reviews across initiatives.
- Mentored junior designers and contributed to hiring, onboarding, and design documentation.

09/2021 – 12/2022

Senior Product Designer
MrQ
First product designer hired post-Head of Design; instrumental in scaling design from a blank slate.

- Delivered a full redesign of the casino platform and CMS tooling.
- Enhanced KYC UX to align with compliance while improving verification rates.
- Set standards for file structure, process documentation and research workflows.
- Supported recruitment and mentored junior designers in growing the design function.

02/2017 – 09/2021

Senior Product Designer → Product Design Lead
Casumo
Grew from IC to team lead across several product areas—balancing execution with team-building and operational improvements.

- Managed a team of 5 designers across multiple product verticals.
- Implemented a scalable design ops framework with documented processes and rituals.
- Contributed to roadmap planning and product strategy with stakeholders across product, data, and CRM.
- Designed end-to-end experiences for casino, payments, landing pages, and campaigns.
- Delivered high-fidelity, responsive designs and scalable systems in Figma.

04/2014 – 11/2016

Creative Director → Head of Art & UX
Hero Gaming
Built and led the design org spanning product, branding, game UI, and marketing—while still contributing as a senior hands-on designer.

- Hired and led a multidisciplinary team (UX designers, communication designers, 2D/3D artists).
- Created "Betser," a gamified sportsbook designed for the Scandinavian market.
- Delivered a full product and brand rebrand, shifting to a mobile-first experience.

- Designed the casino gamification layer (adventure, boss fights, loyalty store).
- Oversaw both product design and art direction across multiple touchpoints.

🎓 Education

BA, Graphic Design & Interactive Media
Malta College of Arts, Science & Technology

Behavioural Psychology in UX
The school of UX design

UX Strategy · Usability Testing Bootcamp
David Travis (Udemy)

UX/UI Design · Usability Fundamentals
Joe Natoli (Udemy)

SAFe Product Owner/Manager
Scaled Agile