

Simon Meek

UX Design

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As **UX Manager** for the Access Group within the Not-for-Profit (NFP) division, I balance a user-focused approach to research, design and product work with business empathy, allowing design teams to flourish and innovate while creating value for both users and the business.

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I love collaborating in a cross-functional team and have worked in a wide range of sectors including recruitment, media, telecoms, commercial property and not-for-profit.

Proven track records in:

Product direction and prioritisation based on value for users and business strategy

Stakeholder management and alliance-building, from developers to C-level

Innovating around design processes

UX approach around the 5 planes of UX, from strategy to surface

Mentoring and development of design teams including recruitment, coaching, one-to-ones, and learning objectives

Assembling teams to work on key projects, working fast to deliver value at every stage

Research, both qualitative (creating scripts and conducting user interviews) and quantitative (data pulls, live experiments)

Aligning research and product design with business strategy and commercials

Synthesis of research into key value to bring to market

Wireframing, prototyping and high-fidelity designs

Recent projects

Leading a cross-functional review of accessibility for our websites offering

With new accessibility legislation for certain charities coming into force in 2020, we needed a full review around accessibility.

I led customer research around this area and having achieved high-level stakeholder buy-in led the cross-functional team (Customer Success, Design, Development, Sales, Legal) to achieve hugely improved outcomes - around 80% improvement in terms of reported issues.

A new payment provider

The NFP space is fundamentally transactional. Without income from donations, memberships, events and shop sales, none of the great work the sector achieves can happen.

In early 2020 we investigated a new payment provider within our new parent company as part of strategic initiatives within the company.

In and of itself this seemed to provide only marginal value for customers, but digging deeper with extensive customer research, we realised that the deeper data we'd get from using our own payments systems would allow for new, smarter actionable insights for customers.

Leading the team creating a new design framework, with international rollout

The team wrote an in-house CSS framework to allow us to create bespoke design work for clients in a fraction of the usual time. We created an initial lean canvas as a starting point.

We then had to re-work every element of our processes to roll that out across our UK and Australian territories.

The new framework and accompanying process is now in place. It's still early days, but the business savings are spectacular (around 66% savings per site), and come with huge technical benefits because of the productisation of the process. Plus, the designers love that they're now in charge of their own site builds.

Research, wireframes and UI for a new product (see [portfolio](#))

As part of the product team I investigated a new, simplified approach to our low-tier offering.

It didn't come to fruition in exactly this way, but many of the ideas within this are now in production in different ways.

Work Experience

Current Role:
UX Manager, Not-For-Profit Division, The Access Group

Previously:
Head of Design
Senior Design Lead,
Freelancer

2019-present

Reporting to our Head of Product, my role involves UX, UI and product strategy, working with Product Managers and developers across the NFP division to help create great solutions for our customers.

I'm responsible for:

- Product UX & UI, including creation and maintenance of the main product's design system
- User research including customer interviews, live experiments and data-based research
- Ideation, validation and design of new product ideas, along with the core product and development teams
- Stakeholder management

Previous Role:
Head of Design, Raising IT Ltd, acquired by The Access Group

Previously:
Senior Design Lead,
Freelancer

2014-2019

Raising IT was a small startup making websites for charities based on our own SaaS platform. We were acquired by The Access Group in 2019. I managed 3 internal designers and a small team of freelancers who are continually working on creating amazing work for our charity clients.

Responsible for:

- Client-facing digital design output
- Client rescues
- Design team management
- Representing the design team at management meetings and to the wider company
- Recruitment

Role: Founder, Okayso

2006-2017

Okayso was my sole trader freelance name used when doing end-client work as diverse as a high-end society band in Chicago and the Oxford University Museum of Natural History.

For our award-winning work for the Oxford University Museum of Natural History (Goes to Town) we delivered identity work, a exhibit trail website, video trailers and a full set of print templates.

You can see more on the OUMNH work here: <http://okayso.com/goestotown/>

Work Experience

Role: Lead Designer

Client: Estates Today Ltd
2009-2013

Estates Today specialises in web-based software for the commercial property industry, and I looked after all our design-side work for many years, building lasting relationships with all our clients in the process. I designed and helped create the interface and user experience for Glasnost21, a web and iOS-based project management system.

Role: Freelance Designer

Client: JWT SC, 33,
Camber Group
1999-2009

Over the years, I have enjoyed working in both agency environments, and as a traditional freelancer working from home. With JWT SC and 33 I designed and created employer brands for BT, Barclays and T-Mobile, working with copywriters and photographers to produce the final products. This included conceptual brand work and art directing photoshoots. Most of this work is now offline, but can be produced on request, from the depths of the backup drives.

With Camber group I worked on luxury brands like Criterion Capital, Nicole Farhi and Candy & Candy. I learned the value of a healthy dose of minimal, clean, pixel-perfect design, as well as the importance of trying your hardest to break a newly-formed website.

Role: Co-Author, The
Photoshop CS3 Layers
Bible

Client: Wiley Publishers
2007

My Elated.com partner and I were approached by US publisher Wiley to write “The Photoshop CS3 Layers Bible” in 2007. The final published book runs to hundreds of pages of our extensive Photoshop knowledge. An interesting experience, and I learned a lot about my design tool of choice.
[You can still get it on Amazon.](#)

Role: Web Designer

Client: MediaTel Group
1996-1999

Back in the days of the dotcom boom I was learning my trade as a newbie web designer on the mean streets of Soho. This was the time of tables for layout, the single-pixel gif trick and epic budgets. Good times, and a great grounding in Photoshop, working to briefs, dealing with deadlines and managing client expectations.

Education

Postgraduate Diploma, Silsoe College, 1992-93

BSc Hons, Reading University, 1989-1992

7 O levels, 4 A levels, Bedford Modern School, 1984-89

Other stuff

I'm married with 2 kids, and live in Brighton.

I run, very slowly.

I'm in a book group. We're reading Normal People, by Sally Rooney at the moment.

I create synthpop in a bank called [Fake Complex](#). The album's out now!

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