

I like to make things people can use.

Christopher Dowson. Designer for hire.

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I started out in print and publishing, but moved to digital in the mid-to-late 2000s. That start in paper and ink left me with a solid grounding in artwork and production, the kind of technical habits that still save me when a wild deadline suddenly appears.

My transition to digital started as the best things do, by accident. I was bored in the summer of 2005, so I decided to teach myself CSS via the obvious route of pulling apart and putting back together the theme files of an open-source shopping cart. I learn best by doing.

This quickly snowballed, and twenty years on I'm still pulling apart shopping trolleys, only now it's to fix the buying experience for a multinational tour operator. Or a chartered institute. Or a supplier of fine wines. Or any client needing my three decades of experience.

I still learn best by getting deep into the problem and building my way out. Whether it's UX flow, producing in-house event graphics and campaigns, or nudging a brand just enough to keep it relevant, the experience is in knowing how far to push and where to stop.

Find out more at **christopherdowson.studio**

Skills

Design: Typography, layout, colour theory, and design systems. Branding across digital and physical. Prototyping in Figma and After Effects. Building and scaling design systems.

Technical: Advanced HTML, Sass/CSS, Gulp, and working JavaScript. Builds to WCAG AA as a minimum. Figma, Affinity, Adobe Creative Suite, Sketch, Penpot. Analytics and testing across Google Analytics, Hotjar, Matomo, Litmus, and Sendgrid.

How I work: I lead and mentor designers, present design decisions to clients and stakeholders, and build consensus across teams. Comfortable in Agile, Scrum, and Kanban workflows, balancing user needs, business goals, and technical limits. I solve through research, collaboration, and a willingness to take things apart to understand them.

Work Experience

Freelance Designer, My First Raygun | April 2005 to present

- Brand, web, and product work for clients across eCommerce, propTech, education, and publishing, including Royal Mail, Nimbus Maps, and The Arts Council.
- Designed logos selected for publication by Taschen.
- Spoke at industry events in the UK and abroad, with work featured in design journals.

Principal Designer, JH | November 2023 to October 2024

- Led design for eCommerce projects, working to Magento best practice alongside developers and project managers.
- Used user research and iterative design to sharpen eCommerce flows, contributing to a 194% increase in revenue, 178% more transactions, and a 22% lift in conversions for Big Bus Tours.
- Delivered designs for clients including Wayland Games, Graham & Green, and Woodie's.
- Created the event branding and digital assets for Meet Magento UK, a 750-attendee conference.

Head of Design, Contrast | November 2018 to March 2020

- Oversaw all creative output, across internal and client-facing projects.
- Developed branding and UI/UX solutions to budget and deadline.
- Mentored a junior designer and held a high creative standard.
- Built a collaborative team environment to drive delivery.

Senior Designer, 20i | October 2015 to October 2016

- Built a design system that scaled easily and streamlined development workflows.
- Designed and launched the company's sales website at speed.
- Improved user experience through responsive UI/UX work.
- Delivered measurable outcomes, including better engineering efficiency and improved user satisfaction.

Senior Designer, Distinction | January 2014 to October 2014

- Designed and built responsive websites for international clients across education, publishing, and retail.
- Delivered tailored projects for business schools, partywear suppliers, and intelligence specialists, balancing brand goals with user needs.
- Took projects from concept to launch, owning both visual design and front-end delivery.

Senior Designer, Heart Internet | June 2013 to December 2013

- Redesigned the company's main website and wrote the production front-end code, modernising the identity and improving key signup flows.
- Built a reusable HTML/CSS framework to standardise layout and components, cutting build time and keeping the design consistent across pages.
- Owned the work end to end, from visual design through to shipped, production-ready code.

Designer / Artworker, various roles | 1998 to 2010

- Started out in 1998 creating artwork and websites for local businesses, building a foundation in design and digital media.
- Joined the Nottingham Post in 2004, producing concept adverts for local newspapers to daily deadlines.
- Worked at Starprint producing print-ready artwork across a range of projects, developing technical expertise in print production.
- Freelanced long-term with New Start Publishing: designed recruitment sections and the annual Regeneration Index, and overhauled their static site into a CMS-driven platform on ExpressionEngine, adding directory listings, an online job index, a blog, and improved news search.

Education

Creative Visualisation (BA Hons) | Certificate of Higher Education
University of Teesside, 2001 to 2004

Design, BTEC National Diploma | Merit
The Sheffield College, 1998 to 2000

Recommendation

If you're looking for a designer who thrives on turning design struggles into standout solutions, Christopher is the person to call. He combines artistic talent with a can-do approach that drives meaningful results for any project.

Jamie Huskisson | CEO, JH
wearejh.com