

# ERIC TOMLINSON

Head of Product Design · Director of Design

Fintech · Payments · Regulated Platforms

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## SUMMARY

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Product design leader with fifteen years across enterprise fintech (PayPal Consumer Financial Services, 10M+ users), global payments infrastructure (Flowbird, 6,000+ cities), and 0-to-1 (first design hire at KIRU, co-founder at Viziphi). Leads distributed teams while personally designing the highest-complexity workflows, in compliance-heavy environments where the design decision and the regulatory constraint arrive together.

## AI-NATIVE DESIGN PRACTICE

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- Built a repeatable method for AI-assisted product discovery that filters for evidence quality over output volume, keeping AI-generated research from becoming confident noise.
- Integrated AI into live commerce operations: merchandising copy and video for a catalog that turns over weekly, letting a five-person team keep pace with continuous inventory change.
- Designed and shipped two production marketing platforms end to end (Webflow), including design tokens, JSON-LD structured data, and WCAG accessibility remediation.

## EXPERIENCE

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### Head of UX Design | Flowbird Group (acquired by Arrive.com)

Austin, TX · Remote | Oct 2022 – May 2025 | Engaged through A Stronger Idea Design at full-time capacity; role consolidated post-acquisition

Led product design for a global payments and mobility platform processing parking, transit, and EV charging transactions across 6,000+ cities in 80+ countries, spanning consumer mobile, operator SaaS, and physical payment terminals.

- Built and led a 10-person distributed design organization across France, Poland, Switzerland, India, the UK and the US, structured by platform vertical (mobile, SaaS, terminals) to create clear ownership and deep expertise.
- Retained 9 of 10 designers (90%) through an 18-month Flowbird to Arrive.com integration, against a roughly 65% industry norm for post-acquisition design teams. Promoted one designer to Design Lead; 8 of 10 advanced skill levels during tenure.
- Diagnosed an immature design function through a 15-interview stakeholder audit, then rebuilt it: sprint cadence, Figma standards, a shared design system, bi-weekly design reviews, and quarterly business presentations. Design cycle time went from 4 weeks to 2.2 weeks; OKR attainment went from 75% to 95%.
- Owned design across the platform portfolio: operator SaaS hub, core consumer app (payments, EV charging, CarPlay), 10+ white-label city apps including New York (850K MAU, 3.5M sessions/month, 4.8 stars) and Detroit (200K+, 4.6 stars), and ADA-compliant transit terminals, with component libraries spanning all four surfaces.

### Principal | A Stronger Idea Design

Austin, TX · Remote | Jun 2022 – Present

Independent practice providing fractional design leadership and hands-on product work for fintech, enterprise SaaS, and commerce clients. Flowbird (above) was the anchor engagement from Oct 2022 to May 2025; the engagements below ran concurrently by arrangement, at 1 to 10 hours per week each.

#### Feathers | Fractional CMO

Jun 2025 – Present · Luxury vintage retail, Austin

- Leading brand positioning, e-commerce, and AI integration for a twenty-year-old luxury vintage retailer with national press including Vogue, repositioning a local boutique into a brand with national editorial standing.
- Rebuilt the Shopify merchandising taxonomy and product catalog, and instrumented weekly performance measurement across Shopify, Klaviyo and Microsoft Clarity where no measurement layer previously existed.

#### Euvic, for Alter Domus | Fractional Head of Design

Jan 2023 – Feb 2025 · CapAssure, enterprise fund administration platform

- Provided fractional design leadership for a mission-critical platform used by a global fund administrator, supporting 150+ onboarded funds with individual AUM ranging from \$150M to \$20B.
- Operated as player-coach: personally designed the highest-complexity financial workflows for expert users while directing a mid-level designer, leading client presentations, and owning design strategy in a compliance-heavy environment.
- Resisted simplification as the default answer, preserving expert context while removing friction through expandable data rows, standardized interaction patterns and reworked hierarchy. Delivered 45% improvement in user satisfaction and 25% reduction in time on task.

#### Estate Guru | Chief Product Designer, Fractional

Aug 2022 – Apr 2025 · Estate planning fintech

- Led design for a platform managing 1.2M+ legal documents in the generational wealth transfer market. A comprehensive UX audit and phased redesign improved task completion 35% and reduced user errors 50%.
- Ran the research program (15+ stakeholder interviews, prototype testing, behavioral surveys) informing the roadmap, partnered with the CEO, CPO and engineering leads on product strategy, and built the Figma design system from scratch.

### Head of Design | KIRU

Remote · USA / Colombia / Poland | Jun 2020 – Jul 2022

Multi-sided payroll platform serving corporate clients and their employees across Costa Rica and Colombia.

- Joined as first design hire (employee #7) and built the product and design function from zero, scaling to serve 400 corporate clients and 9,000+ end users within 24 months.
- Reached NPS 80 and CSAT 83% within 24 months of launch, comparable to best-in-class consumer applications.
- Established an international design team across the USA, Colombia and Poland, standardizing async process, critique, and quality frameworks across three time zones.
- Built a 200+ component Figma design system with tokens and documentation, improving onboarding completion 20% and reducing support tickets 15%.

### Product Design Lead | PayPal

San Jose, CA | Nov 2016 – Jun 2020

Led product design across consumer platform initiatives serving 10M+ active users on web, iOS and Android, spanning two areas: Consumer Financial Services and Core Consumer Product.

- Consumer Financial Services: designed products extending banking access to underserved customers, including PayPal Cash Card, Virtual Card, Direct Deposit, Unified Card Servicing, wallet and spend controls, Goals, Bill Pay, mobile check capture, and Early Wage Access with Paychex and PayActiv as a direct alternative to payday lending.
- Core Consumer Product: led design through PayPal's post-eBay platform modernization, covering global navigation, settings architecture, transaction activity, multi-currency, negative balance UX, FinCEN CIP compliance, GDPR redesign and shared pattern libraries. Restructured the team from platform-specific to cross-platform feature ownership.
- Diagnosed a settings architecture failure in which the landing page absorbed 75% of traffic while containing only 25% of features, driving avoidable customer service volume. The redesign redistributed navigation and simplified access globally.
- Drove a 40% increase in feature adoption through the Unified Card System redesign and a 20% reduction in customer service calls for card loss and replacement. Partnered on hiring as the design team grew from 8 to 15; every candidate I recommended was hired. Mentored 3 junior designers, all promoted within 18 months.

### Product Design Lead | Appleton Talent (RoleCall)

Contract | Huntsville, AL · Remote | Jun 2015 – Oct 2016

Designed RoleCall, a K-12 workforce management platform covering absence, substitute matching, time and attendance across three distinct user roles, built on embedded field research. Districts reached a 97% fill rate; Appleton made the Inc. 5000 in 2016 and was acquired by Spur Staffing in 2018.

### Co-Founder & Lead Designer | Visualize Wealth (Viziphi)

New York, NY | 2013 – Nov 2015 · Wealth analytics for asset managers and advisors

Co-founded a wealth data visualization startup with a quantitative finance partner and led all product design: research, UX/UI, branding, and the risk, extreme-loss, diversification and correlation analytics that made portfolio behavior legible to advisors and their clients. Pitched to investors and secured acceptance into Startupbootcamp's 2016 FinTech Accelerator; covered by American Banker.

### Design Director | Moxie Interactive (Publicis Groupe)

New York, NY | Apr 2011 – Jul 2014

UX/UI strategy and client presentations for Verizon, L'Oréal Paris, Google/YouTube, BBC America and Maybelline.

## SKILLS & TOOLS

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Design leadership: design strategy, team building and scaling, distributed and nearshore team management, design operations, hiring and performance management, executive and stakeholder communication.

Product craft: design systems and component libraries, design tokens, mobile app design (iOS/Android), SaaS and enterprise UX, data-dense interface design, user research, usability testing, A/B testing, heuristic evaluation, WCAG accessibility, GDPR and compliance-driven design. Figma, Webflow, Cursor, Claude, HTML/CSS, Jira, Agile/Scrum.

## EDUCATION & WRITING

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Georgia State University | Bachelor of Arts, English · Graduate coursework, Computer Information Systems

Published at erictomlinson.com. "WealthTech Design in 2026: Money Was Never the Hard Part." "AI in Product Design: Where It Helps, Where It Breaks, and What Mature Teams Do Differently." "Why Distributed Teams Expose Weak Leadership Faster."