Fiona Burns

Senior Product Designer

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Profile

I'm a Senior Product Designer with over ten years' experience working on digital products, including marketplaces, fintech and regulated platforms. I help teams understand where users are getting stuck, and design clearer flows that are easier to use and easier to maintain. I work closely with founders, product managers and engineers, often in small teams with limited time and strong opinions. I'm comfortable making trade-offs, saying no when needed, and focusing effort on the things that will make the biggest difference.

Experience

Senior Product Designer | Freelance - Global client base   *Jan 2020 – Present*

I work as a hands-on product designer with founders and small teams, usually on products that are early, complex, or both. A lot of my work sits at the point where things are starting to feel messy and someone needs to bring structure without overbuilding.

Recent projects:

- Led the redesign of search, listings and checkout for a B2B marketplace where buyers frequently contacted support because they weren't confident they'd chosen the right option. I focused on how people actually made decisions, what information helped versus distracted, and where the system needed clearer rules. This reduced support queries and improved completion through checkout.
- Helped a growing marketplace untangle several overlapping booking flows that had built up over time. I worked with engineering to identify the common structure underneath, then designed a single, flexible booking system that could support different service types without constant exceptions. This reduced edge cases and made new features quicker to ship.
- Worked with founders to diagnose funnel drop-offs, often using a mix of product data and user interviews. In one case, changes to onboarding improved completion by around 20%.
- Designed and shipped core marketplace foundations including onboarding, listings, pricing models, availability rules, checkout and post-purchase states.
- Acted as a product partner as well as a designer, helping founders decide what not to build yet, sequence work sensibly, and balance short-term goals with long-term maintainability.
- Worked closely with engineers to agree system behaviour early, reduce variation, and avoid design decisions that would create long-term complexity.

Senior UX Designer | Forward Partners (now Molten Ventures)   *Jul 2018 – Dec 2019*
This role had two main parts: working hands-on with very early-stage founders, and supporting later-stage companies in the portfolio.
With idea-stage founders:
- Ran user research to test assumptions, uncover real problems and decide whether ideas were worth pursuing.
- Facilitated design sprints to quickly explore solutions, test prototypes and iterate.
- Designed full MVPs from scratch and continued to evolve them as companies gained traction and user feedback.

With later-stage portfolio companies (pre-seed to Series A):
- Joined teams to run focused research projects or design and ship new features when additional design support was needed.
- Helped teams think through trade-offs around scope, speed and quality.

Alongside client work:
- Taught part of a six-week intensive programme for aspiring founders, focused on idea validation and early product thinking.
- Ran roundtable sessions on portfolio days, sharing patterns and lessons across companies.
- Contributed to internal OKR discussions and helped align internal initiatives with our business goals.

UX Designer | Touch Surgery (now Medtronic Digital Surgery)   *Jan 2017 – Jul 2018*
Designed a new product from scratch within an existing surgical training platform.
- Took a new concept, Touch Surgery Video, from idea through to MVP. The product allowed surgical teams to securely record, review and analyse surgical procedures.
- Conducted research with surgeons, observed real procedures, and worked closely with clinical users throughout design and validation.
- Designed workflows for recording, reviewing and analysing surgical video, where accuracy and reliability were critical.
- Worked with engineers and data scientists on AI-assisted features, including identifying surgical instruments and timestamping key moments in procedures.
- Designed and tested prototypes in a highly regulated, safety-critical environment where mistakes had real consequences.

Education

Lancaster University – BSc (Hons) Economics (2:1)   *2009*
General Assembly – UX Design Immersive   *2016*