

Graham Beale

Design and Product Leadership | Human-Centred AI | Cross-Functional Practice

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Areas of expertise: Design Leadership · Product Design · UX Strategy · Design Systems · User Research · Human-Centred AI · Accessibility (ISO 30071-1) · Cross-Functional Leadership

PROFESSIONAL PROFILE

Graham Beale is a senior design and product leader with over twenty-five years of experience across cybersecurity, fintech, media and marketplace platforms, working at the intersection of user need, commercial reality and technical constraint. His pattern is consistent: identify what an organisation is not yet ready to tackle, build the evidence to make the case, and create the infrastructure in teams and product that makes good work sustainable. His current focus is human-centred AI in enterprise environments, building the organisational conditions, confidence, collaboration and open critique, that let people exercise genuine judgement as AI removes the technical barriers between roles. He is looking for a director-level role where design, product and engineering work as genuine partners.

EXPERIENCE

Design and Research Director to User Experience Director

Mimecast | Cybersecurity SaaS

Oct 2020 – Mar 2026

Joined as Design and Research Director in an engineering-led organisation; progressed to User Experience Director with full ownership of UX strategy across the portfolio.

- Built three practices from the ground up: a user research function embedded across product squads, an accessibility programme (ISO 30071-1:2019, delivered with Hassell Inclusive) that moved accessibility into standard development and QA, and Mimecast Elements, a shared design system adopted across the portfolio.
- Grew the team from four designers with no research or accessibility function to eight people across three disciplines, four senior designers, two researchers and a dedicated accessibility lead.
- Wrote the organisation's first UX strategy, presented directly to the CPO and CTO, shifting prioritisation from feature-level requests to outcome-led thinking structured around OKRs.
- Restructured the design function into a guild when Mimecast moved to an AI-first operating model, embedding daily use of Figma Make, Claude and You.com, and Cursor training run by engineering leads.

Head of User Experience Design

Yell | Digital Marketplace and Business Directory

May 2015 – Jun 2019

Led UX across three concurrent product teams during Yell's transition from directory to digital marketplace, managing up to six designers.

- Led a research and validation programme, competitive analysis, NPS survey data and moderated prototype testing, that identified a two-sided marketplace as Yell's strategic direction, at a time when consumer NPS was -1 and call volumes were down 39% year on year.
- Presented the concept to the CEO, CTO and CPO as a formal decision. The business built it on Sendbird, scaled it from beta in nine months, and reached a touchpoint NPS of 47. Corroborated by Keith Merriman, Product Owner on the delivery programme.
- Set up a graduate UX scheme; one graduate went on to a senior role at Which?.

Senior Manager, User Experience

Nationwide Building Society | Financial Services

Dec 2013 – Apr 2015

Led experience design for PayM and Zapp, two new payment systems rolled out to Nationwide's full customer base, in a strict waterfall environment with heavy compliance requirements.

- Started a voluntary Lightning Talks programme drawing 20 to 30 people from across the business, breaking down barriers between two competing internal design teams and building the trust that made delivery possible. Both products launched successfully at full customer scale.

Lead UX/UI Design Instructor

Flatiron School | Global Technology Bootcamp

Jun 2019 – Sep 2020

Led and taught UX and UI design to international cohorts on a 24-week career-ready bootcamp, coaching over 300 students through a significant career change. Graduates went on to roles at Facebook, Government Digital Service, Sky, Starling Bank and the Home Office.

Earlier Career

- Head of User Experience, Everyclick Ltd (giveasyoulive.com), 2012 – 2013. Led UX for a charitable giving startup; designed a marketplace concept with Age UK.
- Principal Information Architect, Vodafone, 2012. Led UX on NewCo, a large-scale digital platform redevelopment delivered with HP.
- Senior HCI Specialist to User Experience Team Manager, Symantec, 2009 – 2012. Built a UX capability from scratch in a newly acquired SaaS division; designed the organisation's first iOS app. Two Symantec CEO Applause Awards.
- Senior Interaction Designer, Yahoo!, 2007 – 2009. Led design for Yahoo! Finance's currencies section, including a location-first currency converter used across European and US markets.
- Interaction Designer, BBC, 2002 – 2007. Brought user-centred design into BBC Radio and Music; led the Radio 2 website redesign; contributed to BBC News.
- Web Designer, The Daily Telegraph, 1999 – 2001. Part of the team behind the redesign of one of the UK's first newspaper websites.

CIVIC LEADERSHIP

Elected Borough Councillor, Warden Hill | Cheltenham Borough Council | May 2022 to present
Casework covers planning, highways, housing and local infrastructure. Applies the same evidence-led, cross-stakeholder approach to civic work as to professional practice.

EDUCATION & DEVELOPMENT

Oxford Programme in Organising for AI, Saïd Business School, 2026
Google PAIR, Hands-on AI Masterclass, June 2025
BA (Hons) Graphic Communication, First Class, Falmouth University College
Certified PRINCE2 Practitioner

RECOGNITION

AWS AI Trailblazers Community, peer leadership forum on AI adoption and strategy, by invitation (2025/6) · Yell Leadership Award nomination, 2019 · Symantec CEO Applause Award for Innovation, FY12 · Symantec CEO Applause Award for Team Working, FY11 · Yahoo! Hack Day Winner, 2007