

Raul Varela

Lead Product & UX Designer | UX Consultant | Product Designer

hello@beautifullyfunctional.com | +44 7598 432560 | www.beautifullyfunctional.com

Executive Summary

Versatile Lead Product & UX Designer with 15+ years of experience architecting scalable digital solutions for Global 500 companies. Expert in bridging complex business logic with intuitive user experiences in Fintech, Web3, Healthcare, and Enterprise SaaS. Proven track record in Design Systems (DesignOps), cross-functional leadership, and leveraging Generative AI workflows to accelerate product delivery and innovation. Clients include Aviva, Citibank, EasyJet, Farfetch, and others, with additional project experience via agency partnerships with Google (Potato London) and Microsoft Gold Partner Plain Concepts.

Technical Skills & Core Competencies

- **Design Strategy:** Product Strategy, User Research, Information Architecture, Interaction Design, User Journey Mapping, Rapid Prototyping, Accessibility.
- **Leadership & Ops:** Design Mentoring, Stakeholder Management, DesignOps, Hiring & Team Building, Workshop Facilitation (Design Sprints).
- **AI & Development:** Vibe Coding (AI-assisted prototyping), Custom Figma Plugin Development, Frontend Awareness (HTML/CSS/WPF/Tailwind), LLM integration.
- **Tools:** Figma (Expert), FigJam, AI Tools (Claude Code, ChatGPT, Copilot), Principle, ZeroHeight, Axure RP, Adobe Creative Suite, Sketch.

Professional Experience

Senior Product Designer | **Aviva** | May 2024 – Present (Projected May 2026)

- **Domain:** Digital transformation across Aviva Health (B2B/D2C) and Direct Wealth (Pensions, Investments, ISA/SIPPs).
- **Key Achievement:** Engineered significant performance gains for SIPP transfers, achieving a **15% reduction** in onboarding drop-off, a **49% reduction** in investment choice abandonment, and a **4% lift** in overall journey conversion.
- **DesignOps Innovation:** Scaled team efficiency by developing custom Figma plugins (Auto-annotations for A11y, Variable Color Matcher, Content Manager), automating repetitive documentation and accessibility tasks for the wider design organization.
- Delivered high-fidelity variable-based prototypes and enterprise-level components within a complex, high-compliance regulatory environment.

Design Lead | **Socrates (Web3 Social App)** | May 2023 – Feb 2024

- **Mentorship & Ops:** Scaled the design department from 0 to 5, implementing a formal mentorship program for junior designers and establishing high-speed creative workflows that reduced design-to-development latency by 40%.
- **Plato Design System:** Architected a comprehensive, token-based design system (Plato DS) using a variables-first approach (Primitives/Tokens). This unified mobile (iOS/Android) and responsive web platforms, ensuring 1:1 parity between Figma and code.
- Designed an AI-integrated question creation flow and increased engagement by transitioning the UI to a progressive discoverability model with interactive card stacks and swipeable interaction patterns.

Lead UI Designer | **Norman & Sons for Citibank** | May 2022 – Mar 2023

- **Domain:** Global Institutional Banking & Fintech.
- Facilitated a comprehensive UI audit and pattern library overhaul, standardizing interfaces for 5+ internal global applications.
- Collaborated with Global Design Systems teams to ensure 100% compliance with institutional accessibility (WCAG) and production standards.

Lead UI Designer | **Norman & Sons for ICIS** | Feb 2022 – Apr 2022

- Delivered a unified UI framework that significantly improved data visualization clarity for global energy and chemical market analysts.

Senior Product Designer | **BlackSwan Data for EasyJet** | Aug 2020 – Feb 2022

- Lead Product Designer for Beyond, an end-to-end digital in-flight service platform for EasyJet. Designed a browser-based, contactless interface to digitize the passenger experience (in-flight menus, duty-free retail, and travel information).
- Architected a robust, fully responsive design system in Figma to ensure performance across varied cabin Wi-Fi constraints and mobile devices, facilitating rapid cross-fleet deployment.

Earlier Career Highlights (2007 – 2020)

- **Jelly:** Partnered with the founder to scale a kitchen-ops mobile MVP into a comprehensive desktop SaaS. Built the foundational Figma Design System and automated margin/allergen tracking modules.
- **Inconvo:** Directed brand refresh and end-to-end product design for a conversational marketing platform. Re-architected core UX to a conversational-first interface, enabling businesses to manage complex customer interactions through automated chat flows.
- **Octopus Wealth:** Led the Lifeline tool design, transforming complex data into a visual Financial Health Score. Prototyped high-fidelity horizontal-scroll interactions in Principle.
- **Canonical (Ubuntu):** UX/UI for Ubuntu Phone; pioneered gesture-based interactions and designed the modular, plugin-based Calculator and Weather apps.
- **Farfetch:** Product Designer for internal Back Office platform. Optimized high-impact logistics workflows including global shipping lifecycle scheduling, boutique barcode management, and inventory duplicate detection.
- **Trustology (Consensys):** Led end-to-end product design and branding for a secure crypto-custody iOS application. Executed a rapid 3-month sprint covering brand identity (logo, hex-system), UX research, and high-fidelity prototyping.
- **Native Design for HP (Sprout):** Lead UX/UI for Sprout by HP, a blended-reality platform. Designed a dual-screen ecosystem (vertical touch + 20-point touch mat) and custom gesture-based 3D scanning workflows for creative professionals.
- **Plain Concepts (Microsoft Gold Partner) for Repsol & BBVA:** 3 years delivering enterprise UX/UI solutions exclusively using Microsoft technologies (Silverlight, WPF, Expression Blend) for major end clients like Repsol and BBVA among others.
- **Potato London for Google:** UX/UI design engagement delivered via Potato London, a digital agency working exclusively with Google.

Selected Client List

Aviva · Citibank · EasyJet · Farfetch · Nomura International · Walmart · Telefónica/O2 · Acciona · Consensys · IDEO · Native Design · AMV BBDO · Adeslas · Premier Inn · Canonical · Sporting Index · BlackSwan Data · Google (via Potato London) · Repsol & BBVA (via Plain Concepts — Microsoft Gold Partner)

Education

Cádiz Art School | Associate Degree in Graphic Design, Typography, Digital Media & Branding

Languages

English: Professional Working Proficiency | **Spanish:** Native

References available upon request | www.beautifullyfunctional.com