

Dave Cunningham - Designer

I am a designer who does design operations, accessibility and builds effective teams that deliver impactful work.

I work with organisations in a lean, agile user-centred way, delivering:

- strategic user-centred design for products and services.
- high-quality collaborative, outcome-focused work.
- trusted by Co-op, BBC and the UK Government to deliver accessible services and products.

DEFRA (UK Government) - Senior Interaction Designer

January 2023 — August 2024 (Contract)

I worked within a multi-disciplinary team to understand how to best aid nature's recovery by providing services and tools to help people do their jobs to the best of their ability.

- I gave the team focus by breaking a complex project down into understandable chunks to help improve workflow and reduce the risk of too much work in progress.
- I facilitated better conversations by creating user flows to help bridge the data, tech and design gaps.
- Co-designed prototypes and led sessions to iterate with key stakeholders, SMEs and users.
- I influenced and brought accountability to a world-leading software provider to adhere to accessibility standards.

Pip Decks - Content Designer for Team Tactics

March 2022 — December 2022 (Contract)

I created a card deck of 54 tactics to help people leading design teams. I used quantitative and qualitative data, including interviews with hundreds of design leaders, to unpack what stops teams from doing their best work.

- Content design including videos for 54 proven tactics to help teams succeed from setting up their environment to show impact.

- They are used by leaders across the world including Apple, Google and Ikea, to empower their teams using my card deck: [Team Tactics](#).
- 15,000+ copies sold.

UKHSA (NHS Test and Trace) - Head of Design Operations

May 2021 — Feb 2022 (Contract)

I supported a team of 120 designers (service, content, interaction, visual and research). By reducing their workload allowing them to focus on impactful work. I created a collaborative and supportive environment, to reduce stress and lower attrition rates.

- Reduced workload by 30% by giving visibility to projects. Encouraging better conversations through ceremonies and artefacts. Which fit in with ways of working.
- Supported the expansion design team from 60 to 120. Tackled and reduced poor attrition rates. By introducing and iterating on onboarding and offboarding programs.
- Highlighted and mitigated key risks with senior stakeholders and heads of design.
- Mentored community of practice leads to create safe spaces for learning and collaboration.

Co-op Digital - Design Operations and Accessibility Lead

June 2019 — May 2021

I established the first-ever design operations team and program of work at co-op.

I hired an operations team with sustainable and impactful roles. To ensure the design team can do their best work in the future.

- Established the function of Design Operations in a large organisation.
- Led the co-creation of the design patterns library, helped get funding for the design system and supported the rebranding of the design system to the experience library.
- Increased cross-discipline collaboration by 200% by transitioning from Sketch to Figma. Designing advocate-based training for a smooth transition. I brought the disciplines closer by co-designing a lean component library for faster prototyping.
- We went from “Nobody wants to talk about accessibility in our team”. To be independently ranked no 1 supermarket in the UK for accessibility.
- Saved hundreds of thousands of pounds by embedding accessibility in teams. In a sustainable way. Through policy, standards, self-sustaining peer-led training and the procurement of tools to work at speed.

BBC - Senior UX Designer

May 2017 — June 2019

I worked in a cross-disciplinary team on a redesign of the UK's most popular educational website BBC Bitesize. Redesigning the home page and information architecture. Taking a user-centred approach co-designing and researching the needs of students throughout the UK to establish a product strategy.

- Enabled 1.5 million more students to find the content they needed.
- Set up knowledge systems designed that are still used 5 years later.
- Introduced lean pattern library allowing teams to move faster whilst rolling out a rebrand of the site.
- Influenced a shift in approach from stakeholder wants to customer needs.

Co-operative Bank - UX Designer

Oct 2016 — May 2017

I worked within a small team improving customer experiences in online banking. In a complex and heavily constrained by complex IT infrastructure introduced in the 1970s. I focused on delivering within us constraints and introducing user-centred design to bring better collaboration in house.

- Delivered end-to-end PPI journey within 4 sprint cycles. While bringing our legal or design team together by showing videos of people trying to understand content. Resulting in better working relationships and empathy on both sides.
- Worked across many agile teams struggling to deliver due to heavy constraints. I supported the teams to focus on learning what we could affect and mapping out our constraints and improving their ways of working.
- Mentored designers to up-skill and influence products. Resulting in Co-op's first accessibility champions' network. Enabled graduates to establish themselves as designers within their careers.

Carbon Creative Ltd - Head of Design & UX

Mar 2009 — Oct 2016

I established user-centred design ways of working and grew a digital team from 1 to 20. In a fast-paced and challenging workplace. With clients from start-ups to internationally renowned businesses in the public, private and charities across many industries from education, and medical to start-up ECOM shops.

- I helped double turnover in 3 years by going from a boom-bust model. To partner with businesses to grow their customer base. Through defined online strategies, SEO, and continuous improvement.
- Pitched for and worked on and delivered over 300 digital projects.
- I designed and ran 100s of external and internal workshops to encourage a culture of user-centred design and development. Partnering with business leaders to understand their customers better.

Giving back to the community:

- I am [Accessibility Manchester](#) co-founder and organiser. Raising the awareness of accessibility for 1000s of people across the digital industry and beyond. I have run multiple events on service design and design systems to bring people together in our communities.
 - I have mentored and coached many designers and leaders over the years. Helping them establish themselves in their industries.
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Thanks for reaching the bottom. You will go far!