James Cooke

I'm a founder, director, and product leader based in Sydney, Australia, helping organisations to discover, design, and innovate.

✉ hello@jamescooke.me   ☎ 0434 996 039   in linkedin.com/in/jamescookeau   ⊕ jamescooke.me

Summary

Results-oriented and innovative Director and Founder with 15+ years of experience building user-centric digital products and platforms. Successfully led cross-functional design and development teams, shaped product strategy, and consistently delivered outstanding experiences across various sectors, like education, fashion, finance, and sustainability.

A proven ability to spot growth opportunities, improve processes, and deliver projects that surpass client expectations.

Top Skills

Product/Design Management

- Product Management / Product Strategy
- Stakeholder Management
- Roadmap Design and Strategic Planning
- Creative Direction
- Design Leadership and Mentoring
- Data-Driven Decision Making
- Cross-Functional Team Collaboration
- Decision-Making & Prioritisation
- User Research Methodologies
- Innovation Leadership & Workshop Facilitation

Agile Methodologies

- Agile Methodologies (Scrum, Kanban)
- Sprint Planning, Retrospectives, Continuous Improvement
- Jobs-to-be-Done Framework
- Design Sprints & Rapid Prototyping
- User Testing and Validation Techniques
- OKR Development and Implementation
- Stakeholder Management & Alignment

Technical Proficiencies

- Design Systems (Figma)
- Interaction Design/Development
- React/Typescript
- UI development
- Jira / Confluence Administration
- Workflow Automation
- AI enablement

Professional Experience

Founder, Director & Head of Product & Innovation
Hello Human

Sep 2017 – Current
Sydney, AU

I created Hello Human to stand apart from traditional consultancies. Our special approach revolves around supporting organisations in understanding their customers, testing, validating, and forming innovative digital products/platforms, and strengthening internal teams. This enables them to tackle the right problems at the right time, setting us apart from traditional consultancies.

As Hello Human's director and head of product innovation, I play a key role in the initiation, presentation, planning, and strategic implementation of new projects.

Through extensive experience in product ownership, I have successfully implemented Agile methodologies across multiple organisations, consistently prioritising tasks based on business impact and user feedback, driving efficient decision-making, and measuring the success of product delivery across all stages.

My experience spans diverse sectors, encompassing education, agriculture, fashion, finance, law, sustainability, and traceability, where I have assisted clients in developing, automating, and capitalising on novel avenues for growth and increased revenue.

Some select accomplishments include:

- Building Hello Human into a **$3M annual revenue agency**
- Innovated customer streaming experiences for SBS, resulting in a **25% increase in user engagement**
- Created a world-first "Componentised On-demand manufacturing platform" for the fashion industry, helping secure **$8M in new funding**
- Developed and launched Meat and Livestock's first holistic design system to **improve delivery efficiency by 30-40%**
- Managed a team of designers, engineers and in-house advisors to create and launch a digital platform improving traceability and sustainability efforts that reduced paper-based usage by 65% and is actively used by **every single Red Meat farmer** in Australia today
- Digitised and automated sustainability reporting to help farms reduce emissions, reduce costs and move towards a **more sustainable future**
- Created an aggregated content platform for Sunshine Coast Tourism to allow internal teams to create content, optimise content delivery and **reduce ongoing costs by 300%** throughout their networks

Product Owner / Lead User Experience Designer
International Towers Barangaroo

Sep 2016 – Sep 2017
Sydney, AU

Ran an embedded product team to own the roadmap, strategic vision and unified digital experience for a new way of connecting cities.

Role included, but not limited to:

- Managing a product team consisting of developers, UX designers, QA and Agile coaches
- Conducting contextual research to understand possible areas for improvement
- Rapid prototyping concepts and possible solutions
- Working with internal and external stakeholders to ensure product deliverables were on time and in scope
- User testing possible solutions
- Build a cohesive roadmap to bring all elements of the product together
- Running sprint planning, retrospectives and continuous improvement Sprints
- Utilising the Jobs-to-be-done framework to understand customer pains and potential gains
- Workshopping with the development team to possible solutions and potential pitfalls

Design Team Lead (Manager) - JIRA Software
Atlassian

Dec 2015 – Sep 2016
Sydney, AU

Managed a team of designers to work towards the future of JIRA Software and help maintain a development cadence with any current work.

A design team leads role included, but not limited to:

- Develop OKR's for the JIRA Software design team to guide career growth
- Participate in workshops to understand pain points, potential solutions and Concepts
- Work with the Product Owners to facilitate a vision for the next 1-3 years
- Conduct user testing on current and possible future solutions
- Weekly 1-on-1's with the design team to help wherever possible
- Run design sprints to quickly ideate, validate and present concepts for JIRA software
- Using the Jobs to be done framework to understand what our customers want to use task management platforms to do

Senior Service Designer (Consultant)
AMP

Working as part of the Service Design & Innovations HCD team to help design an entirely new way of mobile banking.

This role included:

- Working with the BA's, Product Owner, developers and UX teams to ensure the design vision was kept on track
- Rapidly prototyping and testing mobile onboarding flows and application processes
- Conducting in-home research to help frame potential pains and gains
- User testing concepts and paper prototypes

Lead User Experience / Lead Product Designer (Consultant)
Vodafone Australia

Jan 2013 – Jul 2015
Sydney, AU

As the Lead UX throughout Vodafone's core agile teams, I helped drive innovation, design standards, and best practices for Vodafone's customers.

Responsible for the overall user experience, including workshop facilitation, ideation & rapid prototyping, user journey development, interaction design/development and managing UXD resources.

Implemented a cross-team design/development framework to improve design consistency, development time and team up-skilling which helped deliver Vodafone's flagship Data product.

Lead UX Engineer / Front End Tech Lead
Community Engine

Dec 2009 – Dec 2012
Sydney, AU

Lead UX developer in charge of the overall UX standards and JavaScript framework, managing the frontend team to set coding and experience guidelines meet business requirements.

Previous Employment history available on request

Education

BEng Hons, Computer Network Management & Design
University Of Portsmouth

2001 – 2004
Portsmouth, UK

Specialised in User Research, Web development and Interface Design