Farhan Rao

Product Designer | Design Systems Lead | UX/UI Programming Background



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Dubai, UAE
Portfolio: farhanrao.com

ABOUT ME

I connect UX, code and systems thinking to build better digital products.

I am a Dubai-based Product Designer, freelancing since 2010 across enterprise, government and consumer products. My background in programming shapes how I approach UX, design systems, AI and technical constraints. I help teams simplify complex experiences, create scalable solutions and bridge the gap between design and development.

SELECTED EXPERIENCE

Freelance Product Designer
Self-employed
Oct 2010 - Present
Dubai, UAE

Partner with agencies, government organizations and product teams to solve complex UX challenges, establish design foundations and deliver web and mobile experiences. Take ownership of design decisions, stakeholder collaboration, detailed UI and development handoff.

Senior Product Designer / Design Systems Lead
Horizontal Digital · Contract
Jun 2025 - Sep 2026
Dubai, UAE

Played a key role in Saudi Energy's digital rebrand, creating the initial design concepts that shaped the approved direction and establishing the foundations for redesigning its web and mobile products. Unified 3 legacy design systems, built scalable components, tokens and themes, and supported 10–12 designers through design decisions, governance and implementation.

Senior UX/UI Designer
Americaneagle.com · Contract
Jan 2022 - Apr 2023
Dubai, UAE

Simplified complex government and enterprise experiences for ADSG, DGS and HRA, including a talent platform and employee intranet covering 200+ services. Improved information architecture, user journeys and responsive interfaces, creating reusable design patterns that supported consistency across products and made development handoff easier.

Design Team Lead
ATÖLYE · Contract
Mar 2021 - Sep 2021
Dubai, UAE

Promoted from Senior UX/UI Designer to Design Lead for TDRA's Unified Digital Platform (1.AE). Led UX/UI design across iOS, Android and web, making government services easier to access. Built a scalable design system and reusable components to maintain consistency across platforms and support development.

WHAT I BRING

Product Design and UX

Complex user journeys, information architecture, interaction design, responsive web and mobile experiences, usability and end-to-end product design.

Systems Thinking and Problem Solving

Breaking down complex requirements, connecting user needs with business goals, simplifying workflows and making practical design decisions.

Design Leadership and Collaboration

Taking ownership of design work, aligning stakeholders, guiding designers, facilitating decisions and working across multidisciplinary teams.

Technical Understanding and Delivery

Bridging design and development, understanding technical constraints, creating implementation-ready designs and supporting engineering teams.

Design Systems and Architecture

Scalable component libraries, Figma variables, design tokens, themes, accessibility, documentation and design system governance.

AI and Modern Design Workflows

Using AI for exploration, prototyping, problem-solving and implementation, combining design expertise with a programming background.

EARLIER CAREER

Multimedia Designer
Birdie Communications
Apr 2010 - Aug 2010
Infotouch Technologies
Dec 2008 - Mar 2010

Creative Manager
Xcel Technologies
May 2006 - Apr 2008

Graphic Designer
Rajab Printing Press
Mar 2004 - Nov 2005

CLIENTS AND PARTNERS

TDRA, careem, dnata, XPENCE, americaneagle.com, ATÖLYE, Horizontal, publicis sapient, MRM

adplist.org/mentors/farhan-rao linkedin.com/in/farhanrao farhanrao.com

Projects & Contributions

Selected projects highlighting my responsibilities, design decisions and contributions to delivery.



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SELECTED PROJECTS

Saudi Energy
Digital Rebrand & Design Systems

My role: UI & Design System Lead
Project for: Saudi Energy
Worked with: Horizontal Digital

Led early UI exploration and design system work for Saudi Energy's digital rebrand, covering thousands of existing screens across web and mobile. Rebuilt three fragmented design systems into shared foundations, allowing the new identity to be introduced without disrupting ongoing product work.

My responsibilities and deliverables

Early UI exploration, design system architecture, shared foundations, web and mobile UI kits, tokens, components, themes and governance. Supported 10–12 designers and collaborated with developers on implementation.

GovGPT
AI Product MVP Redesign

My role: Product Designer & UX/UI
Project for: AI Factory, DGE

Redesigned an AI-powered workspace MVP for Abu Dhabi government teams, addressing missing journeys, interactions and edge cases across desktop and mobile. Delivered 82 screens in three days, ahead of the deadline and ready for development.

My responsibilities and deliverables

UX review, user journeys, visual foundations, reusable components, desktop and mobile interfaces, interaction states and edge cases. Worked directly with the Design Lead to review decisions and prepare designs for development.

dnata
Global Website Redesign

My role: UI & Design System
Project for: dnata
Worked with: Valtech

Led UI design for dnata's global website redesign with Valtech, making services, locations and content easier to explore across five continents. Created a clearer visual hierarchy and responsive experience, supported by reusable components for future website updates.

My responsibilities and deliverables

UI direction, responsive page templates, mobile-first layouts, global network interactions and reusable UI components. Built a scalable UI kit and collaborated with UX and development teams to support implementation.

Talent Hub
Government Talent Platform

My role: UX/UI Lead
Project for: Abu Dhabi School of Government
Worked with: American Eagle

Led UX/UI design for Abu Dhabi School of Government's Talent Hub, connecting individual career development with government-wide workforce insights. Designed experiences for employees and senior leaders, turning complex talent data into useful profiles, dashboards and search tools.

My responsibilities and deliverables

Led UX/UI across employee and leadership experiences, including onboarding, talent search, dashboards and data visualization. Built reusable design patterns and collaborated with product and development teams.

PEOPLE I WORKED WITH

Farhan's experience in developing rational designs shows in his work.

He lets his work do the talking, and can be trusted to meet deadlines. He works well independently and with others, and I have thoroughly enjoyed working with him on a number of projects



Kenneth Wong
Design Strategy Lead
at Orbit Communications

A key team player with great personality, fun to work with and lean on for delivering good quality of work.

Farhan shown quick adaptivity to on going requirements and last minute changes under challenging timelines. Dedicated to his work and will always aim to finish any assigned tasks before the deadline.



Osama Harbe
Digital Platforms Director
Gulf Region at American Eagle

His strong UX knowledge was fundamental to the level of designs that were developed

I had the pleasure to work with Farhan on a quick turnaround project and was extremely impressed with his speed, accuracy and professionalism.



Nathalie Salas
Service & Business Designer
at Inibus & Co