

Matteo Balocco

Design Lead · UX Researcher — SaaS & Digital Products

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Senior Design Lead with 20+ years in digital products, operating as a high-impact individual contributor at the intersection of UX research, interaction design, and front-end culture. Currently the sole designer at DatoCMS — a profitable, bootstrapped SaaS with €6.5M ARR and top-5% global margins — owning the full design process from user research to shipped UI. Specialist in complex information architecture, design systems, and editor/developer experience for API-first products.

EXPERIENCE

Design Lead Apr 2013 – Present

[DatoCMS \(Florence\)](#) · Full remote · Bootstrapped SaaS · Team of 13

- Own the end-to-end design process — from research to shipped UI — as the sole designer in a product used at scale: 3.5B API calls/month, 500TB traffic/month, global client base.
- Drove product growth from €5M to €6.5M ARR through editor-experience improvements that reduced friction for the CMS's core user base, in a company sustaining a 65% EBIT margin.
- Conducted qualitative and quantitative research (interviews, usability testing, surveys, heuristic evaluation, card sorting) to surface users' mental models; findings directly shaped the final product.
- Introduced a new information architecture and navigation system (2023) — well received by users and still in place — improving findability and reducing cognitive load across the interface.
- Designed the new color palette (2023) and Dark mode (2026), establishing a unified visual foundation adopted across the entire product.
- Defined and evolved the product design system using the Shape Up methodology, enabling engineering to ship confidently without design bottlenecks.
- Collaborated with engineering on [try.datocms.com](#), an interactive product demo that logged 3,000+ uses in its first 5 months, shortening time-to-value for new users.

UX Engineering Lead Feb 2019 – Feb 2023

[Fifth Beat \(Rome\)](#) · Full remote · Design consultancy

- Reported directly to the CEO; led the front-end development team (3 engineers) and managed two cross-functional teams of 4–6 (UX researchers, React developers, UI designers).
- Maintained director-level client relationships and was accountable for project delivery quality and timelines across simultaneous engagements.

Digital Product Manager Mar 2020 – Jun 2021

[Sorgenia via Fifth Beat \(Milan\)](#) · Hybrid · Fast-growing Italian energy supplier

- Managed the design roadmap for mySorgenia (Web, Android, iOS), coordinating design, development, and marketing suppliers using Agile/SCRUM.
- Achieved a 45% YoY budget increase — from €275K to €400K — a direct signal of client confidence in design output and project management quality.

Design System Coordinator Mar 2020 – Nov 2021

[Zanichelli via Fifth Beat \(Bologna\)](#) · Full remote · Italian publishing house, digital products division

- Established the governance model and versioning strategy for Albe, the company design system, enabling 5 supplier teams to collaborate in parallel without conflicts on a €300K/year programme.
- Defined the roadmap and coordinated a cross-functional team of designers and developers across multiple agencies, reporting to the Head of Digital Products.

UX/UI Designer & Front-end Developer Jan 2013 – Present

[MB Studio \(Vercelli\)](#) — Independent practice · Freelance

- Selected clients across finance, media, and technology: Agos Ducato, Hera, DeAgostini, RSI RadioTelevisione Svizzera Italiana, Sorin, Certilogo.
- Engagements spanning end-to-end UX design, information architecture, and front-end delivery — typically for product teams without an in-house designer.

Tech Lead & Digital Designer 2013 – Present

[Design in Town \(Milan\)](#) · ADI Design Index-awarded initiative

- Designed and built the digital presence — information architecture, UX, and front-end development — for an initiative that brings design culture to Italian high school students, supporting the programme across multiple annual editions reaching hundreds of participants nationwide.

TEACHING

Lecturer — User Experience Design

Istituto Europeo di Design, Turin · 2025 – Present

First-year module on UX Research and Information Architecture within a 3-year Visual Communication degree. Topics: qualitative methods, COM-B behavioural framework, IA fundamentals (ontology, taxonomy, choreography), usability testing.

Previous roles

Raffles Institute, Milan · Design & Development for the Web · 2018–2020

Istituto Marangoni, Milan · Introduction to Web Programming · 2016–2018

SKILLS & TOOLS

RESEARCH

User Interviews · Usability Testing · Card Sorting · Affinity Mapping · Surveys · Tree Testing · Heuristic Evaluation

DESIGN

Interaction Design · Information Architecture · Wireframing · Prototyping · Design Systems · Visual Design

METHODOLOGIES

Shape Up · Agile / SCRUM · Double Diamond · Jobs-to-be-Done

TOOLS

Figma · Dovetail · Condens · Zeroheight · Storybook · Miro · Notion · Jira · Linear · Obsidian · Claude Code

DEVELOPMENT

HTML · CSS · JavaScript · PHP · Git

CMS

DatoCMS · Sanity · Kirby · WordPress

EDUCATION

Laurea Magistrale — Modern Humanities, Digital Technologies · 110/110 Graduated

Università del Piemonte Orientale, Vercelli · Master's-equivalent single-cycle degree (pre-Bologna reform, 4 years)

LANGUAGES

Italian (native) · **English** (C1 — daily written and verbal use with international clients)