RACHEL EARLEY

Design Director | Product & Experience Design Leader | Human-Centred AI

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PROFILE

Design leader with 20+ years in product, service and experience design, currently leading multidisciplinary teams at Accenture's global innovation hub, The Dock. I help organisations work out which problem they actually need to solve, bring the right expertise around it, and turn complex ideas into products and strategies that leaders can believe in and act on.

My recent work sits where AI meets people: leading product design for an AI-native enterprise platform, and building a human-centred AI adoption offering from research into client delivery. I build trusted relationships with senior and C-suite stakeholders, and I lead empathetic, high-performing teams through ambiguity and change.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

- **Co-lead a team of 35 designers** at Accenture's global innovation hub, The Dock, with **8 direct reports** in my area, setting direction for capability, talent and portfolio.
- **Shifted a product organisation to a platform model:** led the design system and platform foundation for an AI-native enterprise platform, now used by five product teams, 40 designers and 60 developers, saving 160 design hours a week.
- **Took human-centred AI from R&D to revenue:** led Accenture's Human + AI Impact Initiative, helping C-suite leaders build user trust, transparency and human control into AI adoption; built a pipeline of 15+ clients and supported five completed engagements.
- **Built the Rapid Design team** into a fully functioning, high-impact unit, scaling it from 2 to 10 designers.
- **Led the ID2020 team** that took a digital identity prototype from concept to the United Nations in seven weeks.
- **Transformed a telco's digital product suite:** led O2 and Three Ireland's digital design through consolidation and rebrand, delivering +4.25% e-commerce conversion, +32% 90-day loyalty engagement and record CSAT.
- **Recognised with 15 industry awards**, including two IDI Design Awards (2019, 2023), the Accenture Global Greater Than Award (2020), a DMA Grand Prix (2013) and three Golden Spider Awards (2010).

EXPERIENCE

Accenture

2020 – Present

The Dock, Accenture's global innovation hub | Dublin (hybrid)

Product & Experience Design Director

The Dock is Accenture's global innovation hub in Dublin, pioneering AI innovation that creates real-world impact. Accenture employs around 814,000 people and serves clients in more than 120 countries. Reporting to the Dock Director, I co-lead a multidisciplinary design team of 35 and line-manage 8 direct reports in my area, partnering with product, engineering and client leadership to turn AI innovation into scalable products and measurable client impact.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- Identified a critical scalability gap and led the creation of a design system, now used by five product teams, 40 designers and 60 developers inside and outside my own team, saving 160 design hours a week.
- Developed an AI prototyping tool that turned ideas into working prototypes using the design system components, accelerating exploration while reducing design-to-code drift.
- Introduced AI-enabled design and prototyping practices and helped shape a repeatable AI-native product design methodology that could be applied across future products and client engagements.

- Led Accenture's **Human + AI Impact Initiative**, helping C-suite leaders understand how to maximise user trust, transparency and human control in AI, bringing together design, behavioural science and research, building a pipeline of **15+ clients** and **five completed client engagements**.
- Developed AI adoption mindsets, a workforce diagnostic tool that pinpoints barriers to adoption, and intervention points that build AI into specific role methodologies, creating a collaborative human + AI way of working.
- Built senior sponsorship across Talent & Organisation, Data & AI and Global Delivery, positioning human-centred adoption as core to enterprise AI transformation, and turned engagements into reusable IP backed by real-world adoption data.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

- Co-lead an award-winning multidisciplinary team of **35 designers**, and line-manage **8 direct reports** in my area, setting direction for the team's capabilities and growth, talent strategy and structure (hiring and promoting), and fostering a culture of collaboration, experimentation and constructive feedback (includes managing performance and performance outcomes with HR).
- Lead product design for an **AI-native enterprise workflow platform**, partnering with research, product and engineering leaders to translate customer needs and business strategy into cohesive, scalable experiences.
- Direct product, service and system design across the Dock portfolio including for a global **e-invoicing** solution, bringing clarity to complex compliance workflows across multiple jurisdictions and clients.
- Advocate for design as a strategic capability with commercial, technology and AI leaders, grounding decisions in data-driven insight and customer experience.

Fjord @ Accenture

2017 – 2020

Design and innovation consultancy, part of Accenture | The Dock, Dublin

Interaction & Rapid Innovation Director

Fjord was Accenture's global design and innovation consultancy, combining human-centred design, technology and strategy to reinvent products, services and experiences. Reporting to the Head of Fjord, Dublin, I led multidisciplinary design across a portfolio of client engagements, shaping product and experience strategy and translating complex business challenges into innovative, human-centred solutions.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- Built the Rapid Design team into a fully functioning, high-impact unit, growing it from 2 to 10 designers and transforming the studio's design capability to drive strategic impact and product innovation for clients.
- Turned around a challenging client relationship with Vitality/Discovery, rebuilding trust and delivery momentum.
- Directed the design team behind ID2020, a scalable, human-centred global digital identity solution using blockchain and biometrics, taking it from concept to the **United Nations** in seven weeks.
- Led The Dock's Future Home research, reimagining the human experience of the home. Qualitative research with 25 participants, followed by quantitative research with 5,500 people across 13 geographies to validate the outputs. Its findings became The Dock's first piece of thought leadership, published in **Harvard Business Review** (hbr.org), and recalibrated our client conversations towards new products and services grounded in tangible outcomes.

O2 / Three Ireland

2013 – 2017

Leading Irish mobile operator, merged with Three in 2014 | Dublin

Digital Design Lead

O2 / Three Ireland is one of Ireland's leading telecommunications businesses, delivering mobile and digital services to millions of customers. Reporting to the Chief Commercial Officer, I led a team of 6 designers across key digital products and services, partnering with product, technology and business leadership to transform complex customer journeys and improve the end-to-end digital experience.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- Owned the design strategy and transformation of the digital product suite across e-commerce, business and customer care, aligned with the C-suite's vision.
- Guided the design team through the consolidation and rebrand of O2 and Three's digital estate.

- Made accessibility a core standard across all of O2 and Three's digital products and services.
- Increased e-commerce conversion by **4.25%**, lifted 90-day loyalty engagement by **32%**, and achieved record CSAT with a redesign of the My3 self-care product.
- Led comprehensive research and testing with 80 users across the customer base on the My3 self-care product which resulted in a senior leadership investment in a full redesign which led to the record CSAT scores.
- Brought innovation to the brands' sponsorship programmes.

Earlier career

- **Senior UX/UI Designer, Eightytwenty** (2009 – 2013): led creative concepts for an award-winning interactive agency, including Ireland's first second-screen campaign, for Meteor's sponsorship of The Apprentice.
- **Principal Designer, Blastbeat** (2007 – 2009) and **Web Design Lead, Mediaone** (2005 – 2007): digital presence for a global music-education start-up and its Coca-Cola partnership; UI and front-end for O2, Bank of Ireland, Jameson and Bulmers.

SKILLS

Leadership: design leadership, team building, talent strategy, coaching, cross-functional and distributed teams

Strategy: product and design strategy, problem framing, proposition development, go-to-market, innovation (0→1)

AI: human-centred AI, trust, transparency and human control, AI adoption, AI-native product design, AI-enabled prototyping

Craft & systems: design systems, accessibility and inclusive design, design tokens, Figma-to-React, Storybook, service, interaction and data design

Influence: executive and C-suite stakeholder management, storytelling, workshop and co-creation facilitation

EDUCATION & SPEAKING

Design Strategy, IDEO (2024)

Professional Diploma, Design Management, Park Design Leadership (2019)

BSc (Hons) Multimedia, 2:1, University of Wales (2004)

SPEAKING

2026 Podcast Guest | Human + AI Initiative podcast | From access to fluency: Why silence is not adoption

2025 Speaker | IBEC Leadership Summit | The power of understanding AI Adoption Mindsets

2025 Panel Speaker | Accenture – AI Client Series | Embracing the Era of Agentic AI

2024 Panel Speaker | TU Dublin, Getting Hired in UX and Product Design

2024 Judge | Business to Arts Awards

AWARDS, RECOGNITION & WRITING

IDI Design Awards, Digital Design (2023) · Accenture Global Greater Than Award (2020) · IDI Design Awards, ID2020 (2019) · Grand Prix, DMA Awards (2013) · Golden Spider Awards ×3 (2010) · DMA Awards ×7, incl. Best Design Agency (2010) · Biomnis Healthcare Innovation Award (2009)

Future Home research published in HBR.org

Featured in 100 Archive's In the Making series on Irish designers

BEYOND WORK

Art lover, gig-goer, vinyl collector and photographer, with a soft spot for renovating houses and travelling to far-flung places.