

Jon Thompson

Creative & Digital Experience Leader

Creative Direction · Digital Experience · UX · Brand · Customer & Guest Experience · Team Leadership
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PROFILE

I'm a creative and digital leader with more than 20 years' experience shaping customer experiences across entertainment, retail, leisure and ecommerce.

My work sits between creative direction, digital product and customer experience. I've led major website and platform redesigns, built brands from scratch, helped shape physical retail and guest environments, and led multidisciplinary teams across creative, UX, web, video and front-end development.

I'm particularly interested in how digital can improve a wider experience rather than sit alongside it, how people discover something, move through it, interact with it and ultimately remember it.

EXPERIENCE

Digital Creative Manager

Play'n GO · Digital Entertainment – 2022–Present

Leading Digital, UX & Creative across customer-facing platforms

I lead the creative and experience direction of Play'n GO's digital platforms across global markets, working across design, UX, web, video, content, development and marketing.

- Own the experience and direction of major customer-facing platforms including corporate websites, Client Zone and ecommerce.
- Lead creative, UX and web teams across regions, from initial concept and customer journey through design and delivery.
- Led a mobile-first rebuild of Play'n GO's main website, using behavioural data and user insight to rethink navigation, content and discovery.
- Led the complete UX redesign of Client Zone, simplifying a complex B2B platform and improving usability, accessibility and everyday client experience.
- Created and directed new digital products including a branded music platform and ecommerce store.
- Work closely with developers, marketers, content teams and senior stakeholders to balance customer needs, creative ambition, technical constraints and commercial priorities.
- Introduced AI-supported workflows for ideation, prototyping and QA while keeping creative judgement and quality with the team.

Online UI / Creative Front-End Development Manager

Next – 2018–2022

Led UI, creative and front-end teams during a major evolution of Next's ecommerce experience across UK and international markets.

- Led the design and delivery of a significant UI overhaul across Next's core ecommerce platform.
- Worked across design, development, ecommerce, trading and marketing to improve customer journeys while supporting commercial priorities.
- Developed modular UI and front-end approaches that improved consistency and allowed teams to work more quickly across a huge volume of content.
- Helped simplify navigation and key customer journeys across desktop and mobile.
- Oversaw the digital integration of acquired brands while protecting their individual identities within the wider Next experience.
- Acted as creative and brand steward for premium brands, balancing visual expression, usability and trading requirements.

GM Digital Creative Manager

Ocado Group · Fetch, Fabled by Marie Claire, Sizzle – 2014–2018

Led creative, brand and digital experience across several Ocado-owned consumer businesses, working across ecommerce, campaigns, photography and physical retail.

Fabled by Marie Claire

- Created the Fabled visual brand and helped take it from initial concept into ecommerce, marketing and physical retail.
- Helped shape the flagship store experience, including layout, customer flow, signage and digital touchpoints.
- Worked on how customers moved through the space, including improving discovery of the less-visible mezzanine retail area.
- Art directed brand and seasonal photography, including Christmas campaigns.
- Created launch and campaign creative across digital, in-store screens, signage and marketing.
- Contributed to seasonal window displays and the wider visual presentation of the store.

Fetch

- Led brand, ecommerce and customer experience across Fetch as it grew into the UK's leading online pet retailer.
- Led a major digital review and site overhaul focused on navigation, usability and customer journeys.

Ocado

- Led creative for premium non-food catalogue ranges.
- Art directed product and lifestyle photography across catalogue and marketing content.

Creative Lead

Bourne Leisure · Butlin's / Haven – 2009–2014

Worked as part of the major repositioning of Butlin's, helping move the brand away from its dated image and reconnect it with the optimism, colour, showmanship and British seaside heritage of the Billy Butlin era.

- Helped carry the refreshed brand across digital and on-resort guest experiences.
- Designed creative for signage, maps, guest materials, campaigns, pricing literature, websites and email.
- Created visual identities and campaign work for live entertainment and seasonal activity.
- Worked alongside marketing, entertainment, production and resort teams to create a more consistent experience across different guest touchpoints.
- Helped shape the direction of online and on-resort video content.
- Worked within the realities of a live leisure business, balancing creative ideas with operational and commercial requirements.

SELECTED EXPERIENCE

Digital & Physical Experience

Play'n GO platform transformation · Next ecommerce UX · Fabled flagship retail experience · Butlin's guest experience and brand transformation

Creative & Art Direction

Fabled photography and seasonal campaigns · Ocado premium catalogue photography · Butlin's campaign and entertainment creative

Leadership

Creative · UX · Web · Video · Front-end development · Cross-functional stakeholder teams

EDUCATION

HND Communication Design · BTEC Graphic Design

ABOUT

Outside work, I write fiction and have a long-standing interest in film, entertainment, technology and the way physical and digital experiences come together. I also collect and restore 1980s and 1990s technology and memorabilia.