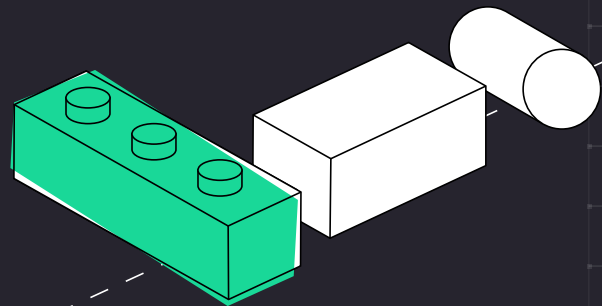


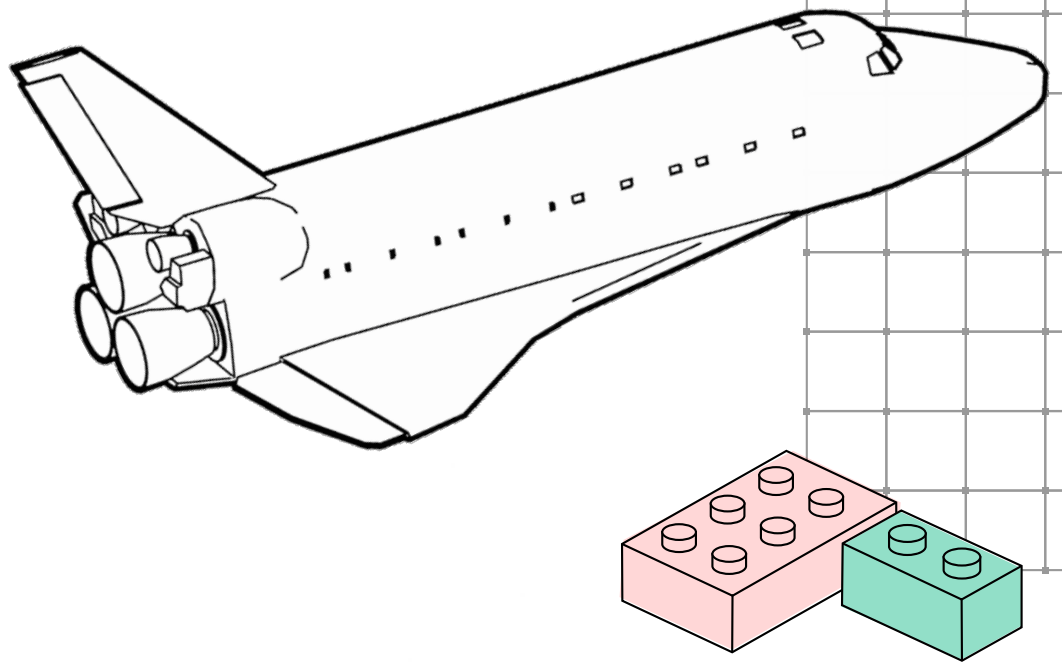
Measuring Digital Design System ROI

Why a design system saves companies a significant amount of time and money.

2024 Edition



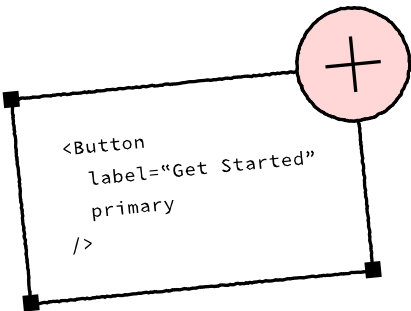
This white paper has been written by
Tall – A digital brand experience agency



Project inefficiencies, slow time to market, duplication of tasks across teams, and consistency struggles during design and development.

Here's why a design system could be your answer...

Research shows that implementing a design system can lead to significant cost and time savings.



Technology

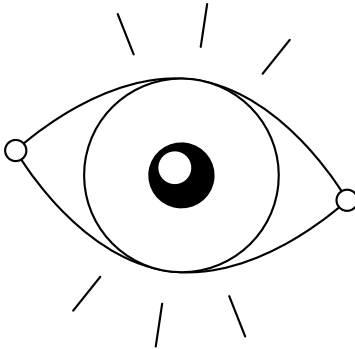
Up to

37%

of development time saved

30–35%

of tech-reduction in costs



Design

30%

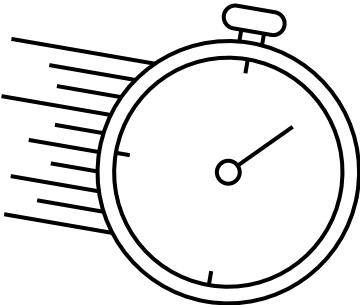
decrease in design costs

26%

higher design efficiency

17–25%

faster time to market



Speed

50%

faster design-to-development handoff

27%

reduction in design production time

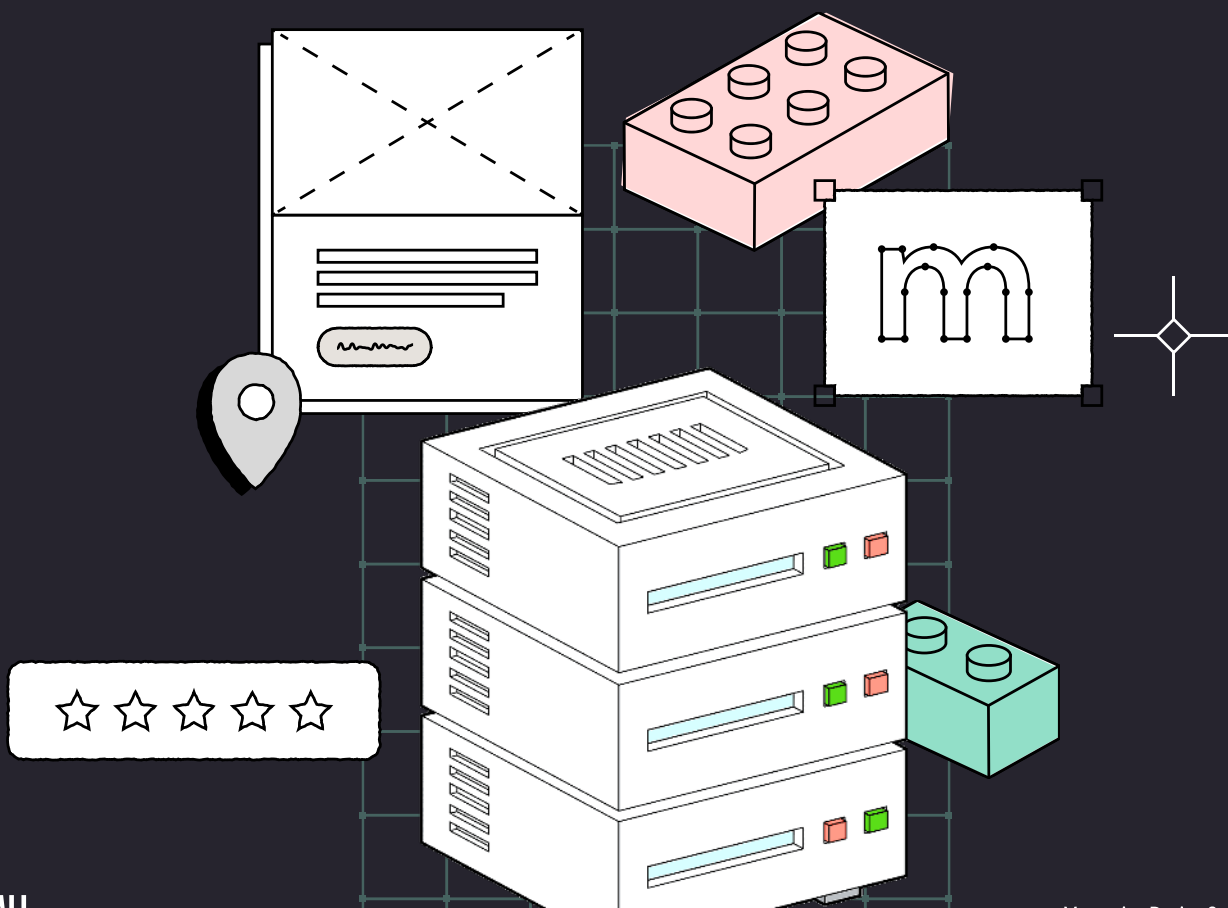
All information is based on our own experience and research from the following sources – Kluver, Ray, Slack, Figma & Sparkbox.

But what is a design system?

Here is the 101

A design system provides components and tools to enhance the productivity of product teams and create a cohesive experience across digital experiences. The development of a design system is guided by foundational principles.

Think of design systems as “open-source” style implementations of commonly used components across your entire digital ecosystem, reinforced with detailed usage guidelines.



Some common design system elements include:

01

Brand identity / visual language

Brand

Colour

Typography

Visual context

02

Tools

UI kit (design)

Components library (code)

Framework reference

Symbols & components in Figma (assembled)

Visual components

03

Design systems as products

Relief at scale

Devoted teams, budgets to be sustained

Feedback on customers

What features are or are not working

04

Design systems as a process

Governance

How to build digital products

Steps of process

Accountability

Process x Workflow

How teams work

05

Design systems as a service

A design system team is its own entity

As design system scales

Orders x Components x Solutions

06

Design systems as a practice

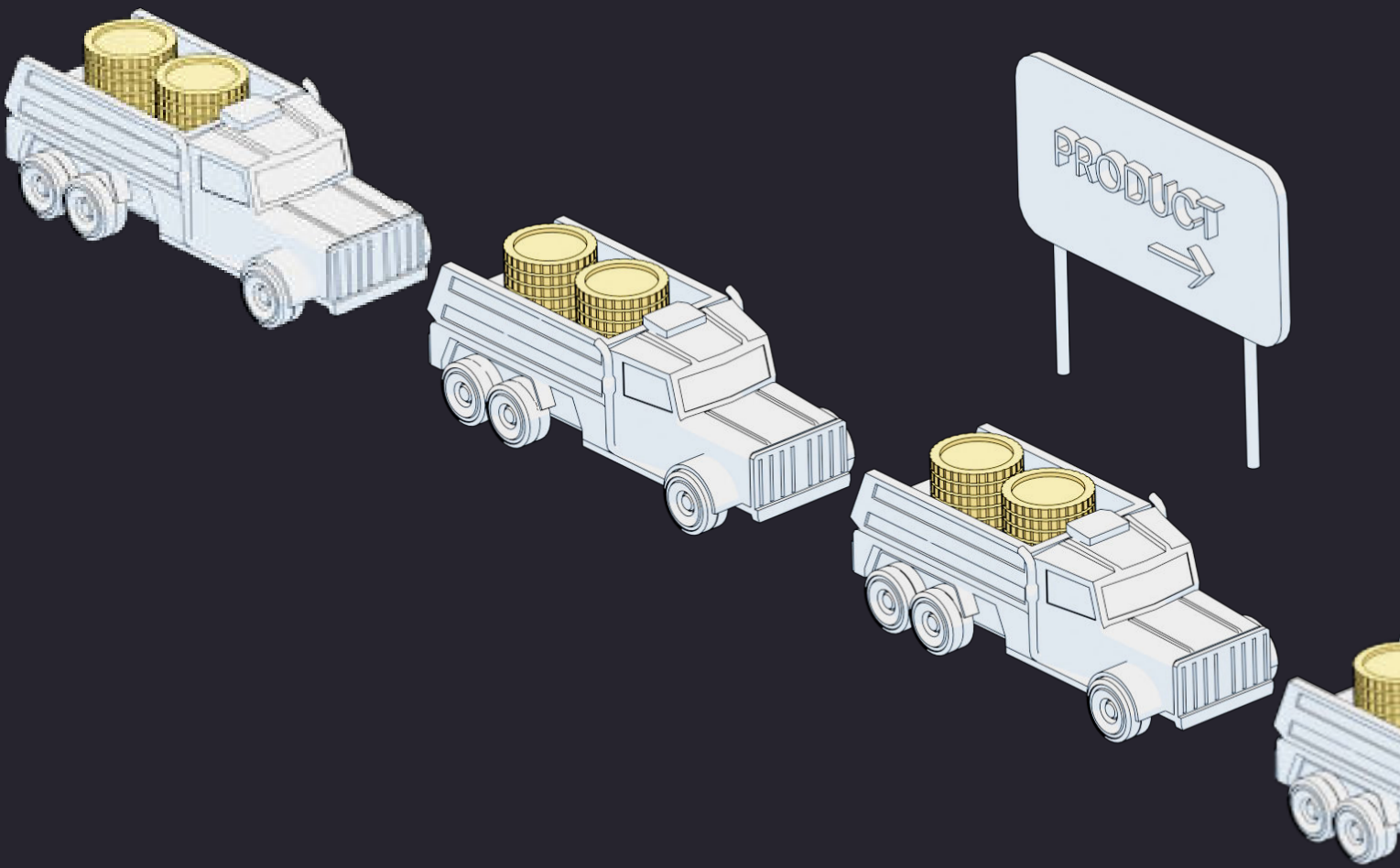
Most mature stage

More efficiency

More consistent

Repeated use of same components and patterns

Scale better



**Not having a design system
in place can have several
negative business impacts.**

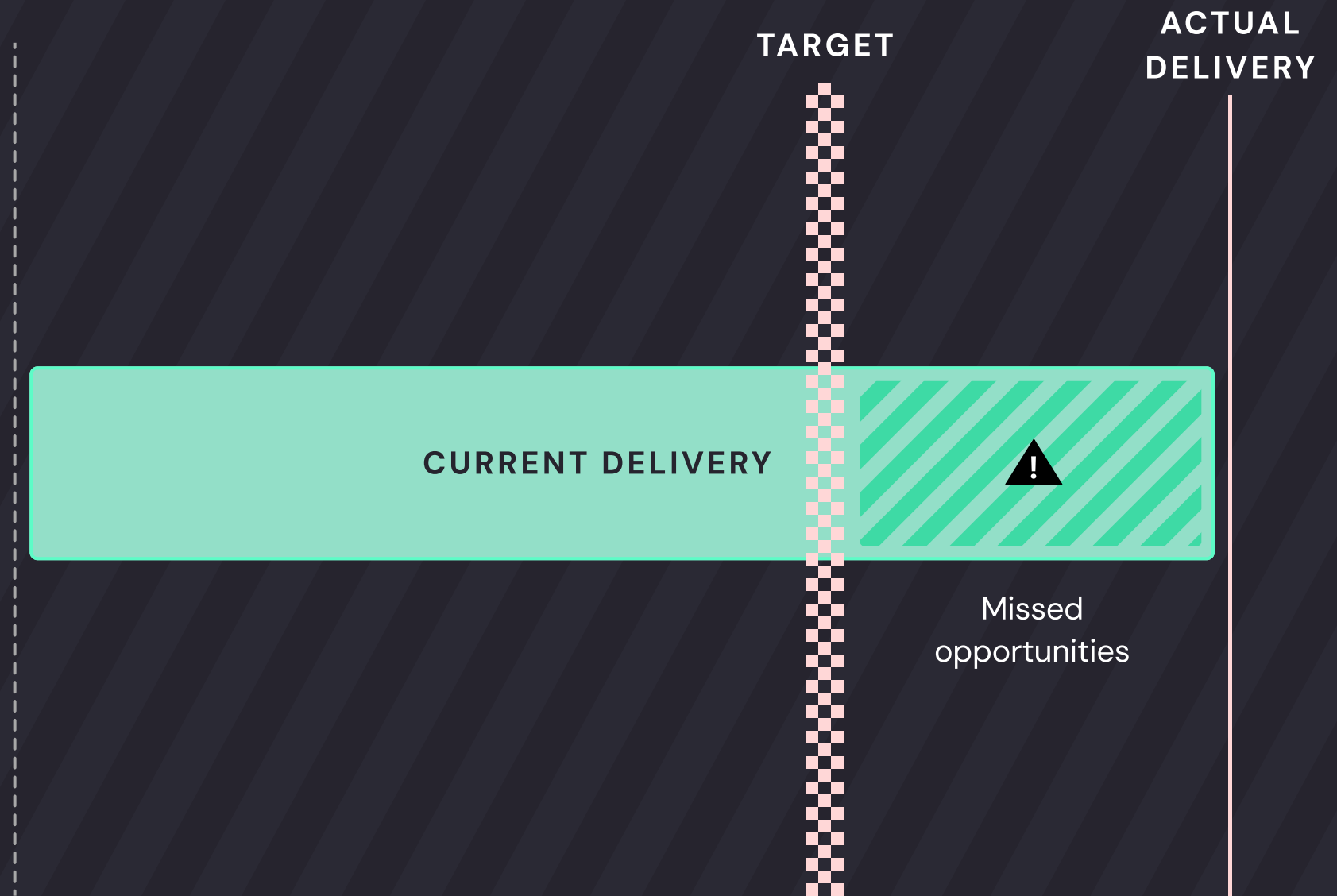
Longer project delivery

Challenge

The prevailing siloed environment and collaboration inefficiencies in digital operations contribute to longer project delivery times.

Impact

Extended project timelines have a cascading effect on the overall business operation. Delays in delivering digital projects impede the speed at which the company can adapt to market trends and customer demands. This, in turn, affects the company's agility in responding to competitive pressures and emerging opportunities.



Costly expansion into new regions

Challenge

Expanding into new markets or regions can be tricky at the best of times. Considering cultural differences, region specific content, and multilingual digital experiences can be a daunting process.

Impact

Duplication of design and development efforts, with no central source of tested and pre-approved components with usage guidelines, contributes to inflated costs and slows down expansion into new regions.

Lack of process for streamlining the adaptation of content for new territories will also result in increased costs and duplicated efforts. These impede an organisation's ability to enter new markets at speed which ultimately results in lost opportunities and revenues.



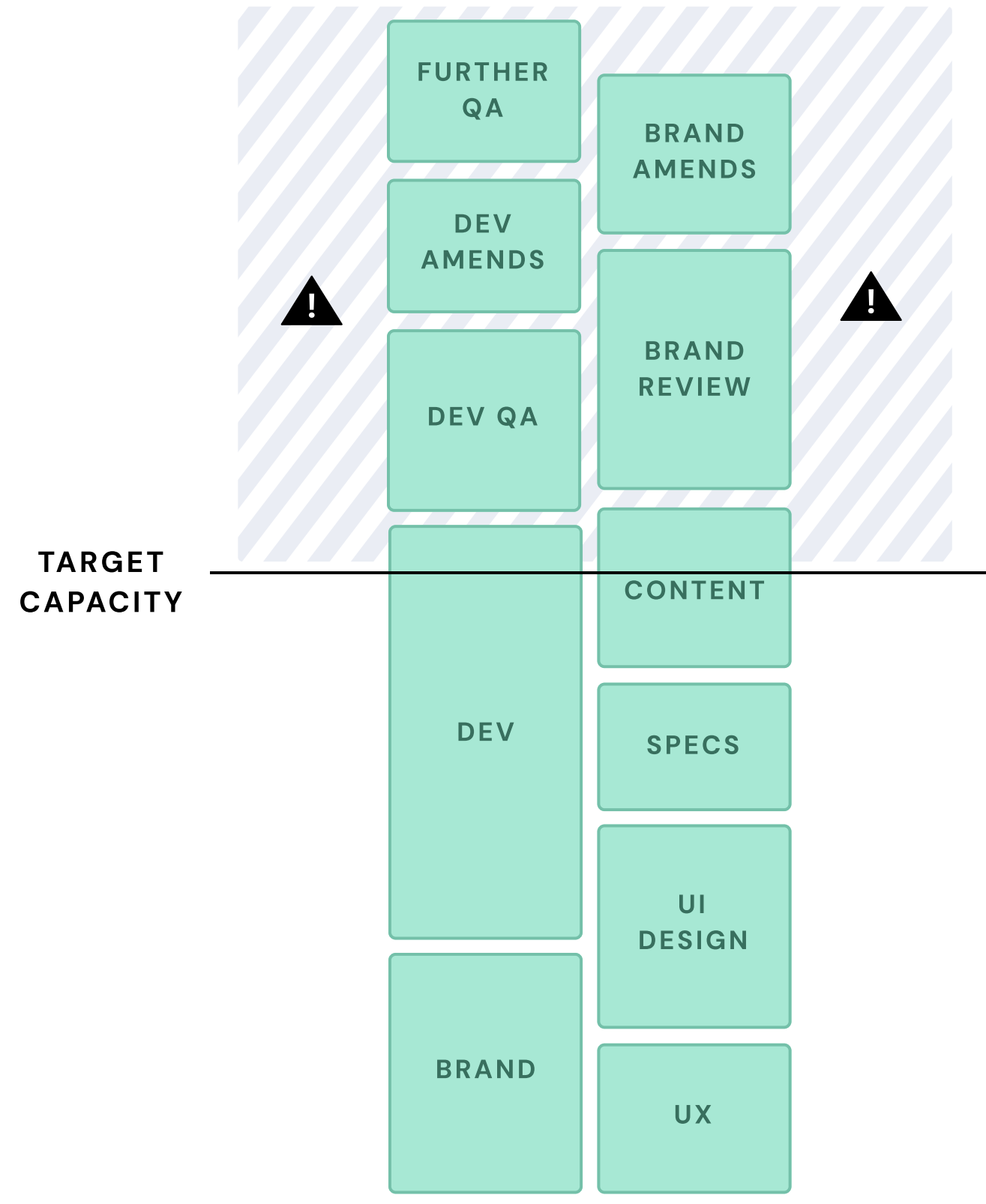
Increased team resource needs

Challenge

Tackling the increased resources needed to grow the business efficiently and rapidly.

Impact

A demand for additional resources, both human and financial, places a strain on the overall budget and hampers resource allocation efficiency. Increased team resource needs not only escalate costs, but also potentially limit the scalability of the business, hindering its ability to pursue multiple projects simultaneously and successfully.



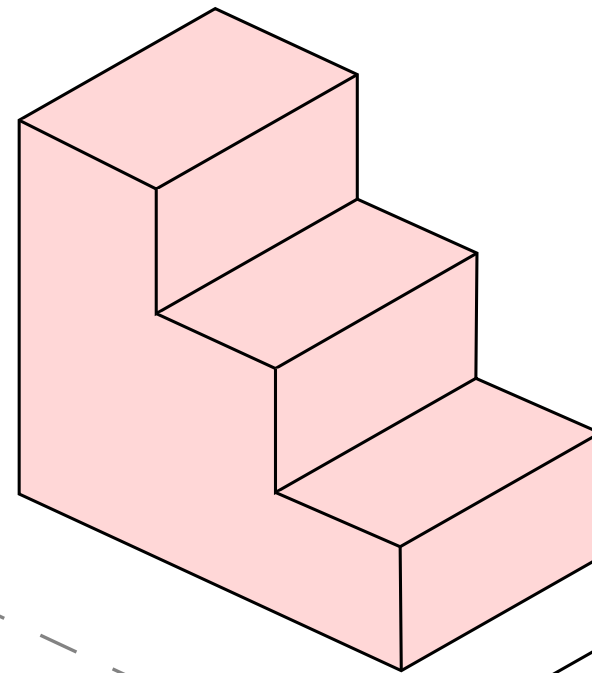
Brand inconsistencies

Challenge

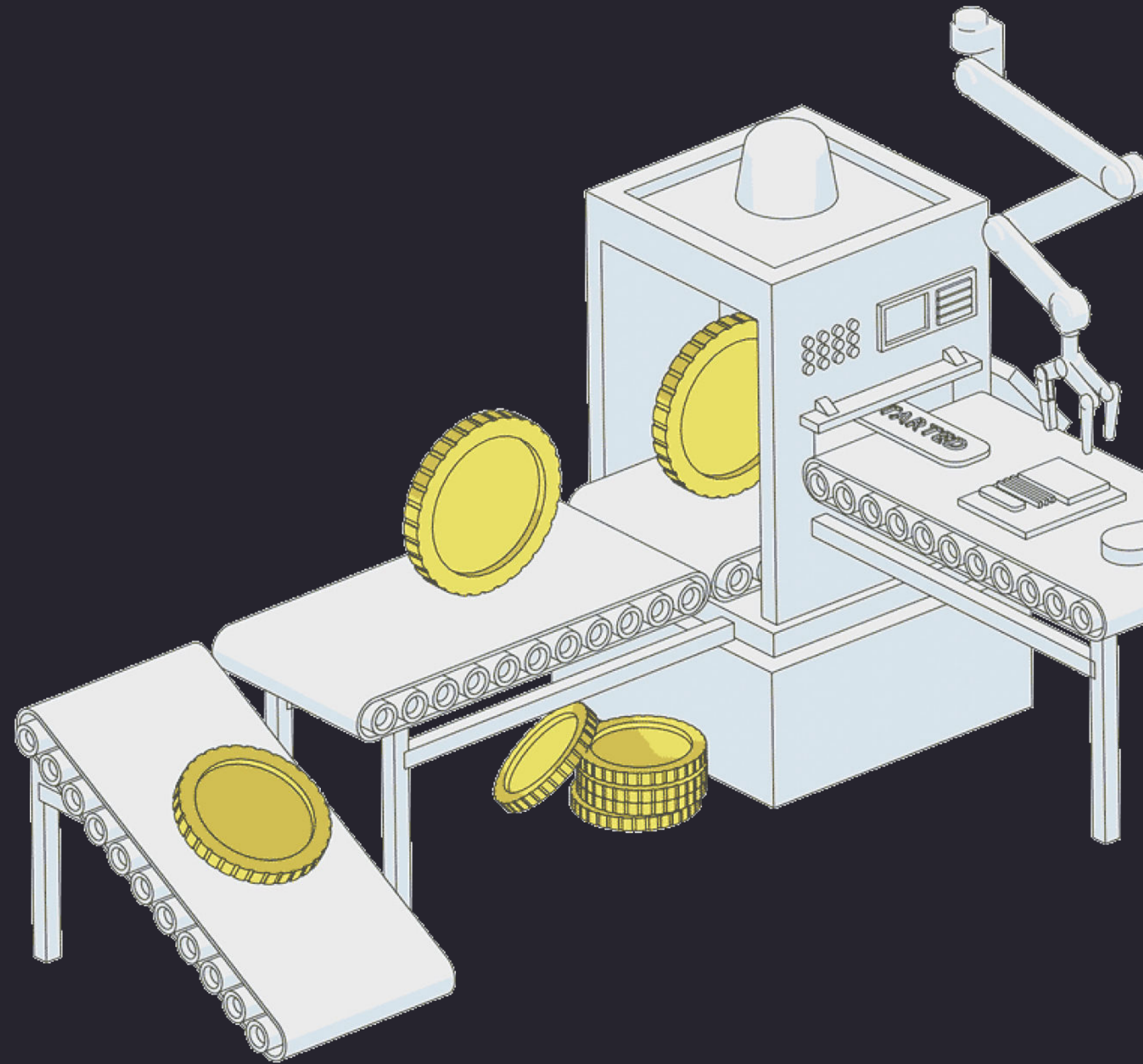
Keeping a consistent brand representation across digital channels to retain company's overall brand perception.

Impact

Brand inconsistencies undermine the effectiveness of digital efforts and dilute the impact of the company's messaging. This can lead to customer confusion, reduced brand loyalty, and a less compelling market presence, impacting customer trust and the ability to differentiate the brand's products or services.



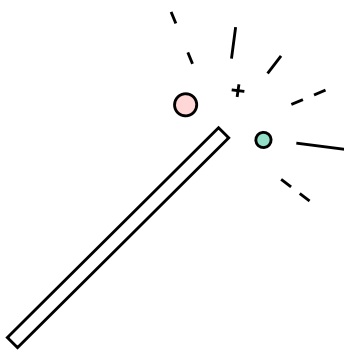
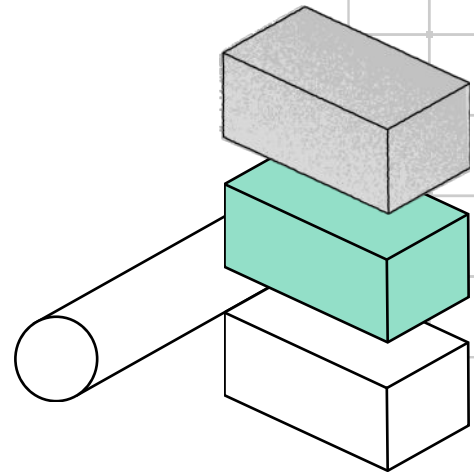
What are the solutions?



Recommendations

Standardisation

Standardisation of documentation, process and web components for use across content, design and development teams both regionally and/or globally.

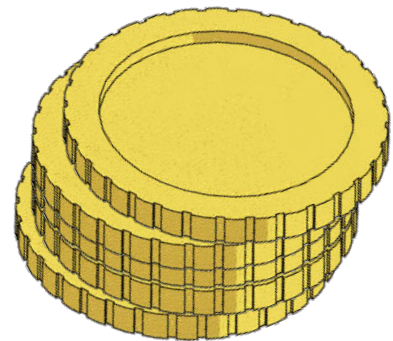


Governance

Design system governance for updating and versioning components, defining roles and responsibilities for contributors, and maintaining alignment with overall goals. Effectively implemented governance helps maintain the integrity and usability of a design system as it evolves over time.

Tokenisation

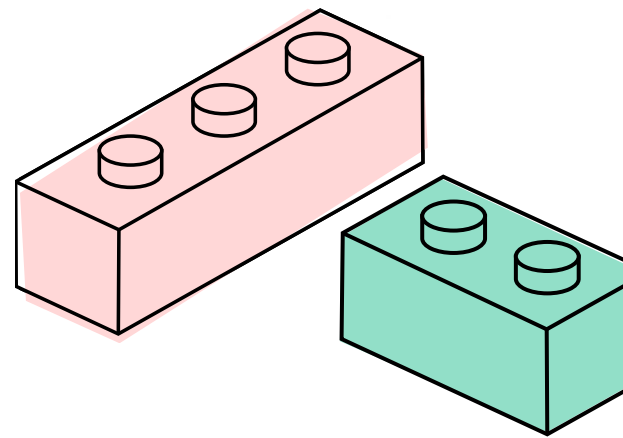
Design tokens are foundational elements for UI components, unifying designs, tools, and code. They define style attributes like colours and fonts, promoting flexibility over hardcoded values. Tokens, named for their purpose, maintain consistency even if their values change, ensuring seamless integration across the user interface.



A key method of speeding up things...

Tokenisation is used to break down the design and code into reusable building blocks.

These building blocks, called design tokens, contain important design choices like colours, fonts, and spacing. Instead of recreating these design elements each time you build a new page or feature, you can use these tokens like LEGO bricks to easily (and consistently) put together your design. It's a systematic approach to designing and building digital assets in a more efficient and consistent way.



Design tokens

Learn more about the design tokens.

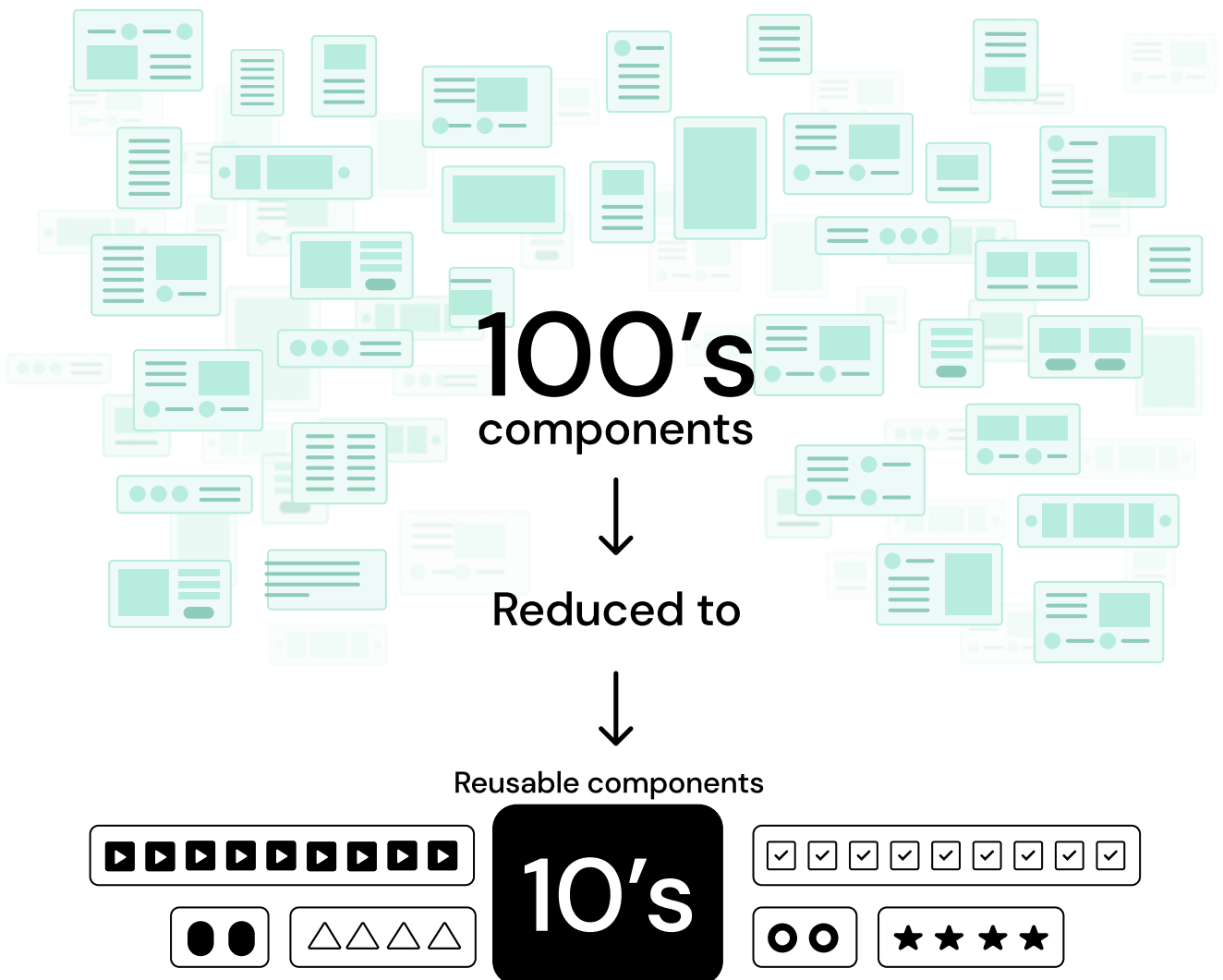
[Watch Youtube](#)

Removing repetition

Mass duplication of multi-site web components

The number of web components used by brands often runs into the 100's. These bring with them inconsistencies across many areas of the digital experiences such as product banners, hero banners, colour use, carousel elements, button styles, cards, table designs, form components, accordions and product feature tabs to list a handful.

Providing a core set of reusable components, with standardise design decisions dramatically reducing the number of total components otherwise required. The practice, removes many types of duplication of design and functions that normally creep in over time.

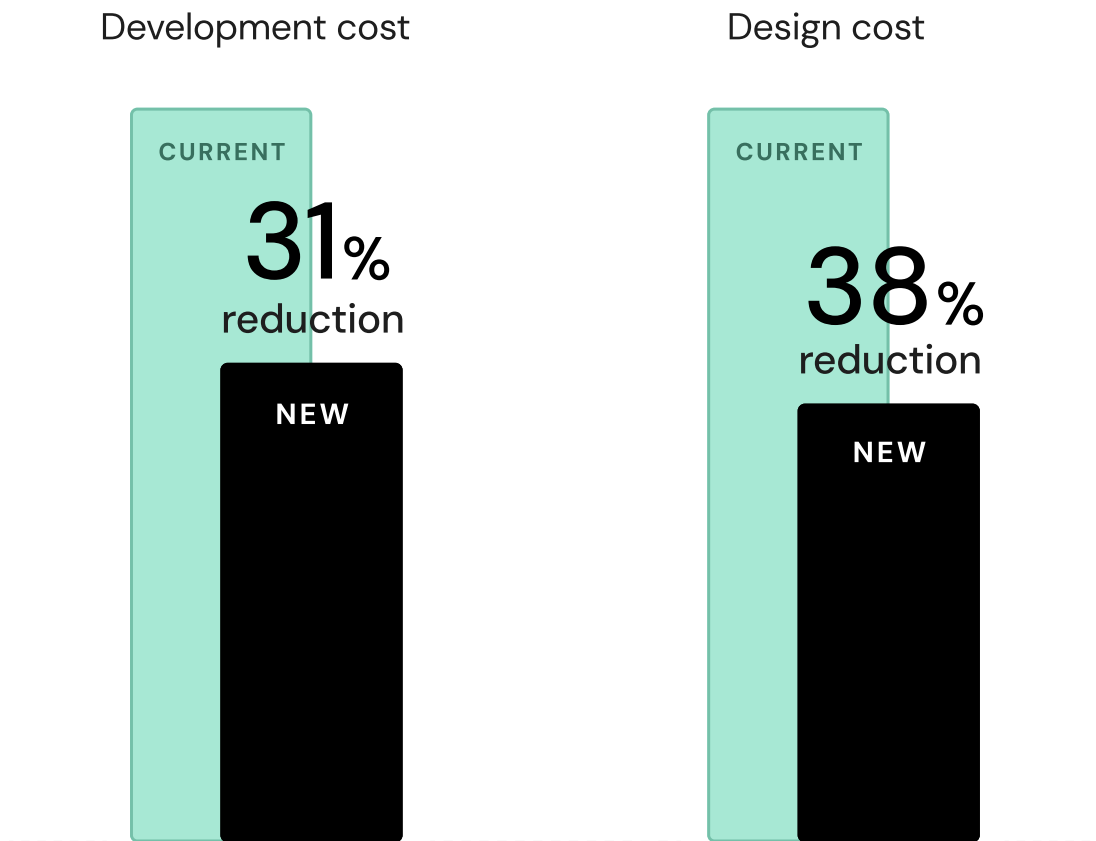


Reduction in costs

More efficient design production

From a design and development perspective, several companies have conducted experiments and surveys to assess the impact of their design systems. The results indicate that these systems can yield significant benefits, ranging from a 30% to 50% reduction in time spent on design work.

Figma also conducted an experiment where designers were observed to be 34% more efficient when using a design system. This translates to the equivalent of adding 3.5 additional designers to their team of 7 product designers each week. Figma estimates that using a design system can increase their output to up to 212 design hours per week.



Based on research - Kluver, Ray, Slack, Figma & Sparkbox

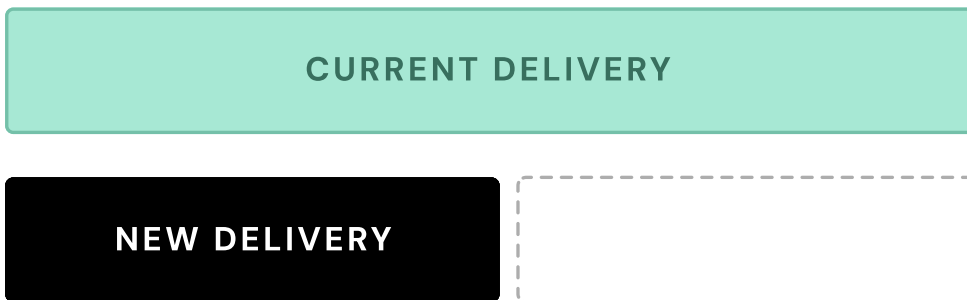
Reduced project delivery times

Produce faster to increase the number of deliveries






































Using a design system not only saves time for designers and developers but also significantly improves delivery efficiency. Bloomberg's Strategic Design Leader Bryn Ray's calculations show that by leveraging the efficiency of a design system, the time spent on delivery decreased from 277 person hours to 190 person hours. This resulted in an impressive increase in delivery frequency, jumping from 11 to 16 deliveries. The overall impact was a 45% increase in productive work time. In Bryn's example, he estimates that each team could accomplish the same amount of work in 31% fewer person hours.

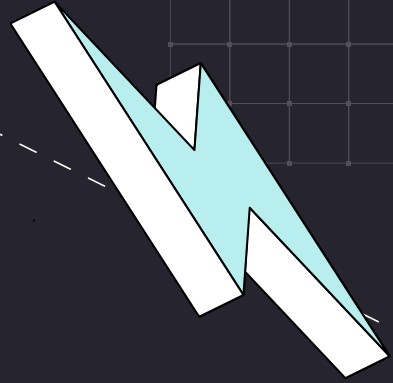
Delivery times reduced by

45-50%



The design system database

-  [Amazon Cloudscape](#)
-  [Gitlab Pajamas](#)
-  [Cisco Momentum Design](#)
-  [Twilio Paste](#)
-  [Google Material Design](#)
-  [MongoDB LeafyGreen](#)
-  [Miro Design System](#)
-  [Vercel Geist](#)
-  [Nordhealth Design System](#)
-  [Segment Evergreen](#)
-  [Wise Design System](#)
-  [Shopify Polaris](#)
-  [Porsche Design System](#)
-  [Dell Design System](#)
-  [Salesforce Lighting](#)
-  [Palantir Blueprint](#)
-  [Samsung ONE UI](#)
-  [IBM Carbon](#)
-  [Uber Base](#)
-  [MongoDB LeafyGrenn](#)
-  [Zendesk Garden](#)
-  [Pinterest Gestalt](#)
-  [Monday.com Vibe](#)
-  [Elastic Design System](#)
-  [Mozilla Protocol](#)
-  [CBRE Build Block](#)
-  [Biings Design System](#)
-  [Microsoft Fluent 2](#)
-  [Goldman Sachs Design system](#)
-  [Red Hat Patternfly](#)
-  [Github Primer](#)
-  [Audi Design System](#)
-  [LocalTapiola Duet](#)
-  [Apple HIG](#)
-  [Atlassian Design System](#)
-  [Workday Canvas](#)
-  [Mixpanel Design System](#)
-  [Adobe Spectrum](#)
-  [Wonderflow Wanda](#)
-  [Kiwicom Orbit](#)
-  [Pluralsight Design System](#)
-  [Mailchimp Design System](#)



TALL Success in a digital world

Now, more than ever, you need to future proof your brand. So you can seize every opportunity that emerges in today's ever-changing world.

Tall is a digital brand experience agency and have spent years creating digital experiences to help brands get close to their audiences. And stay close to them.

We'd love to help you too.

Written by Guy Utley Creative Director and Founder of guy@tall.agency

