

Maryam Richards

AI-Driven Senior UX Designer

Dubai, UAE / Cape Town | maryamrichardsdesigner@gmail.com | linkedin.com/in/maryam-r-37a0a0122 |
www.maryam-richards.com

PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Senior UX Designer with over 8 years of experience. Proven expertise in reducing user friction, mapping complex digital journeys, and applying behavioral design principles across the travel and financial sectors. Specialized in leveraging AI for generative user research and implementing scalable DesignOps workflows to bridge the gap between design and engineering.

EXPERIENCE

Freelance Senior UX & Product Designer | Independent Consultant | Cape Town (Remote)

2024 – Present

- Deliver end-to-end product design as an independent consultant — discovery, PRDs, scoping, prototyping, AI-assisted build and App Store release — working in Figma with Claude, ChatGPT, Gemini and Lovable.
- Acelt (iOS, live on the App Store): designed and shipped an AI mock-interview app that builds question tracks from a job description and CV, records spoken answers and returns transcript-based feedback, on a freemium subscription model.
- Snap2Meal (iOS, live on the App Store): designed and shipped an AI-vision cooking app that turns a photo of available ingredients into three meal ideas; took it through two App Store rejections to approval, and capped results at three to control per-request AI cost.
- Little Roots (web and iOS, live): designed and launched a play-based learning platform for parents and educators, with 130+ activities across six developmental pillars for ages 1–6.
- FitConnect (web, live): designed and built a two-sided marketplace for booking verified personal trainers — client booking, payments and chat plus a trainer business tool — from one React Native and Firebase codebase.

Senior Product Designer | Almosafer (Seera Group) | Dubai, UAE

May 2021 – 2024

- Conducted a platform-wide UX funnel audit across web and mobile platforms to identify usability bottlenecks; streamlined the checkout architecture to achieve a 5% increase in task completion and overall conversion.
- Led the UX discovery and behavioral mapping for the Fare Families initiative, aligning the interface with customer mental models to drive a 17% increase in targeted upsell interactions.
- Designed the user experience for new add-on services, ensuring seamless integration into the primary booking flow without increasing cognitive load, which lifted attachment rates by 12%.
- Standardized UX components for cross-product ad templates, ensuring a consistent user experience across the platform while speeding up developer handoff by 15%.
- Refined qualitative testing standards across product teams, fostering a culture of continuous iteration and enabling a 25% faster pivot cycle based on user feedback.

Senior UX Designer | Immersion Group (Consultant at Old Mutual) | Cape Town

Feb 2020 – Jun 2022

- Optimized the customer journey for retirement annuities by utilizing behavioral psychology and rewards-based UI design to build user trust and engagement.

- Identified and resolved over 65 usability issues through rigorous heuristic evaluations, leading to a 37% increase in task completion success and a 24% reduction in user errors.
- Decreased user drop-offs by 25% by streamlining the application architecture and simplifying the complex financial language for Retirement policies.
- Leveraged personalized UX nudges to break down complex financial choices into manageable, accessible steps, increasing successful application completions by 30%.

UX/UI Designer | Grove | Cape Town

Jan 2018 – Dec 2018

- Conducted primary user research, competitor analysis, and usability testing to propose data-driven UX enhancements that directly addressed user pain points across e-commerce and social products.

Junior Web Designer | EOH | Cape Town

Jul 2014 – Dec 2017

- Executed comprehensive UX audits of existing client platforms and redesigned mobile and web applications to align with core accessibility and usability standards.

SKILLS

UX & Research: User Experience (UX), Behavioral Design, Information Architecture, Heuristic Evaluation, Usability Mapping, Generative User Research

Collaboration: DesignOps, Developer Handoff, Agile/Scrum, Figma

Technology & AI: AI for UX Research & Insights, Generative AI Workflows, Basic HTML/CSS

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Arts | University of the Western Cape

Diplomas in Graphic & Web Design | Shaw Academy and Academy of Digital Arts

CERTIFICATIONS

- AI & Innovation: Google AI Fundamentals (Coursera); AI for Research & Insights (Google - 2026).
- UX Strategy & Data: Design Powered by Data: UX Web Analytics, UX Deep Dive: Usability Testing & Mapping (LinkedIn); Foundations of Digital Marketing & E-commerce (Coursera).
- DesignOps: UX DesignOps: Working with Developers, Figma: Handing off to Developers (LinkedIn).