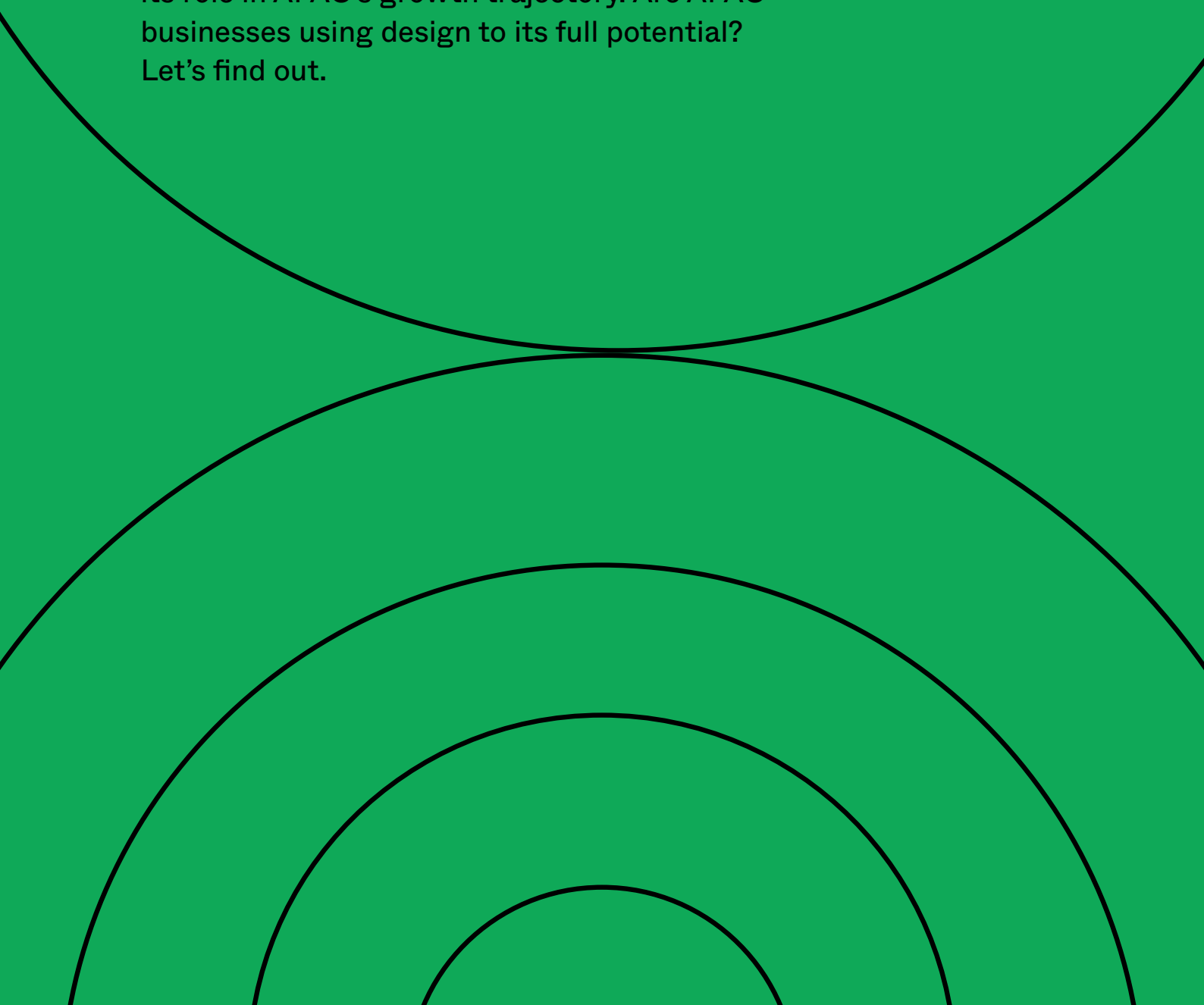# Figma

Design: APAC's growth engine

Exploring the business impact of design and its role in APAC's growth trajectory. Are APAC businesses using design to its full potential? Let's find out.

Introduction

Across Asia-Pacific, businesses are evolving. They're embracing the digital wave, and some key trends are already starting to emerge that underscore the crucial role collaborative design is playing for today's leading businesses.

This report is fuelled by insights from an online survey of 700 businesses across Australia, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Singapore, and South Korea—each bringing a distinct narrative to the region's broader digital tapestry.

We talked to the heads of design, the product champs, and the IT directors—a group that includes those at the helm of their company's design and the people that give them the tools they need to get the job done. These are companies of all ages, mostly at least five years old, with clients ranging from local startups to international enterprises.

Ready to explore how design is driving growth in APAC? Let's dive in.

Chapter

1

APAC's design-driven growth landscape

The APAC region is known for its dynamic and varied economies. Within this vibrant region, a majority of organisations have reported business growth over the past year:

APAC business growth in 2023

54%
Positive growth

35%
Fair growth

12%
Negative growth
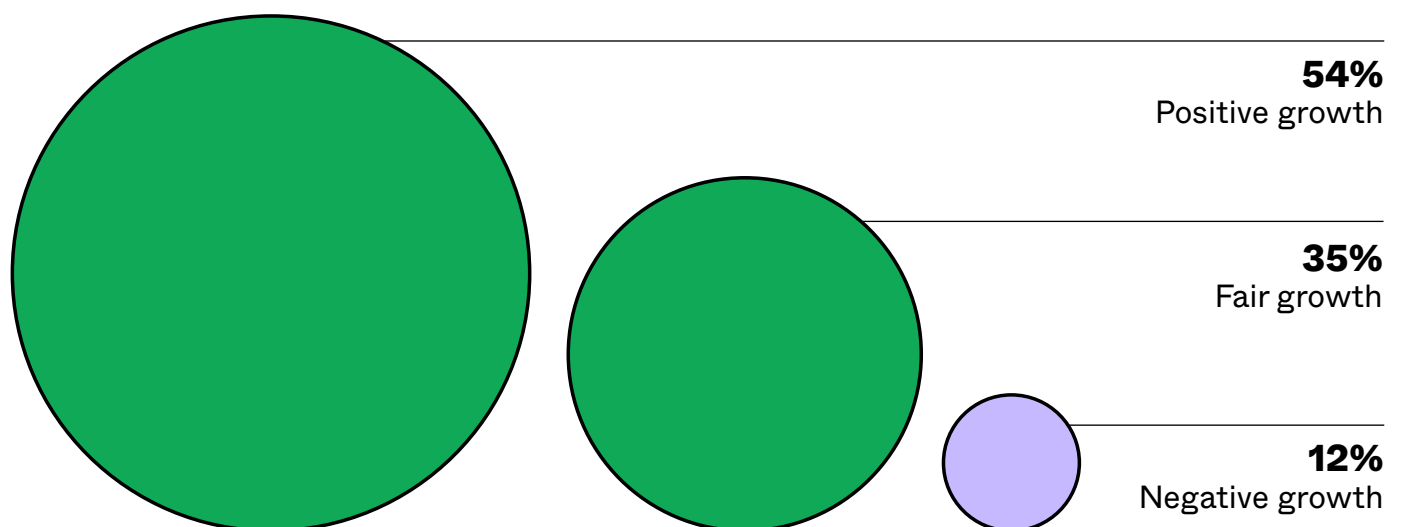
**APAC's cloud-based
design adoption**

46%

rise in digital design tool
investment over five years

Investment surge is especially pronounced in:

Australia **63%**

Indonesia **62%**

India **57%**

The standout performers—India (**51%**), Indonesia (**45%**), and Australia (**45%**)—have reported 'excellent' growth rates in the past 12 months, positioning themselves as the frontrunners in APAC's growth story.

Design takes centre stage

What's driving this upward trajectory? One significant factor is the increasingly strategic integration of design into APAC's business operations.

Leading organisations are making design a central pillar of how they innovate and communicate, while using the latest tools to improve the way they operate.

We are still at a relatively early point in a developing story, with not all companies being at the same stage of the journey.

Yet while the trends are still evolving, the momentum is unmistakable, with a **46%** uptick in digital design tool investment over the past five years among APAC businesses. The investment surge is especially pronounced in Australia, where **63%** of businesses we surveyed are increasing investment in digital product design, as well as Indonesia (**62%**), and India (**57%**)—the same markets that are currently reporting excellent rates of business growth.

"For Groww to become India's most trusted finance brand, design is our core asset. And Figma is the backbone of how we think and operationalise that design."

Adit Gupta
Senior Director of Product Design
Groww, India

Even more striking, among companies that have migrated to cloud-based design and collaboration tools, nearly two-thirds (**62%**) say they've gained a competitive advantage from early adoption.

Redefining market leadership through design

These APAC companies are showing that an investment in design tools is an investment in the future.

This design-centric approach unlocks creative potential, enhances team collaboration, and significantly boosts the digital footprints of APAC businesses.

Brand loyalty in the digital era

51%

of APAC businesses using cloud-based design and collaboration tools report increased loyalty

Great design is helping APAC businesses create digital experiences that engage, delight, and build deeper connections with customers. These experiences extend beyond essential digital products like apps and websites.

From simple clicks to complex transactions, they form the subtle connections between every user interaction with a brand, ensuring these moments are not only smooth but also memorable.

"We've invested heavily in how we structure our design process and tooling—there's a lot that we will be doing to try and bring people together."

Head of Product Design

→ Cultivating brand loyalty in the digital era

In the digital era, brand loyalty isn't just about repeat purchases. It's the bedrock of a company's success.

Over half (**51%**) of businesses that have embraced cloud-based design and collaboration tools to date report a significant boost in loyalty thanks to superior digital experiences.

The emerging trend is clear: creating standout digital experiences is key to winning loyal customers and keeping them.

Cloud-based design tools as APAC's competitive advantage

51%

of APAC businesses using cloud-based design and collaboration tools report increased competitive advantage

"We inject emotion into our products to elevate them from transactional to magical. The result? An emotional bond with our customers."

Leo Lin,
Senior Vice President.
DBS, Singapore

→ **Gaining competitive advantage with design**

Alongside loyalty, there's also an emerging competitive advantage, and among businesses that have started leveraging cloud-based design and collaboration tools, the same proportion (**51%**) also say that their enhanced digital experiences give them a leg up on the competition.

Figma users are even further ahead, with **55%** saying they're enjoying a competitive advantage, suggesting that cloud adoption has clear links to achieving a superior market position.

This strategic design-driven advantage leverages the benefits of cloud-based tools—like improved collaboration and streamlined product development—helping businesses to stand out in a crowded market.

"If we've balanced business and user needs, those [projects] add up."
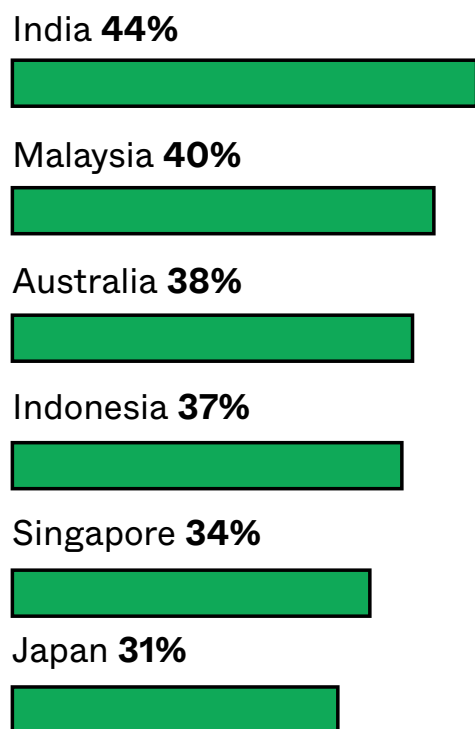
Senior UX Design Manager

Chapter

2

The blueprint for success: APAC's adoption of cloud-based design tools

Adoption rate of cloud-based design tools in APAC nations*

India **44%**

Malaysia **40%**

Australia **38%**

Indonesia **37%**

Singapore **34%**

Japan **31%**

*Based on a survey of 700 businesses across APAC

As we have seen, integration of cloud-based design tools is surging across APAC, with India leading at **44%** adoption, followed by Malaysia (**40%**), Australia (**38%**), and Indonesia (**37%**), with adoption strong in the same markets that are reporting the best rates of business growth.

This early snapshot across APAC shows the varied yet significant adoption of cloud-based tools across the region, signalling a collective move towards more integrated and collaborative processes.

Markets like India, Australia, and Indonesia are spearheading the emerging narrative: embrace cloud-based design and collaboration tools, and set the stage for growth.

> **"We are being proactive about trying to be more inclusive in the design process. We want to encourage people to take part and to contribute."**
>
> Engineering Manager

It's not just about having a nice website or a smooth app anymore. It's about crafting digital experiences that resonate, engage, and ultimately, keep your customers coming back for more.

Why cloud-based design tools are transforming APAC

What makes these cloud-based design tools stand out? The adoption shows the multifaceted value they offer. They're not just about keeping the gears running smoothly, like, for example, cloud-based accounting software.

They're the spark for creativity, the glue for team cohesion, and the polish for digital presence, propelling businesses into new realms of growth.

The leap to cloud-based design tools also signals a departure from a world of isolated tasks to one where collaboration is inclusive and instantaneous.

Designers, developers, and stakeholders can now engage in real-time brainstorming sessions and feedback loops seamlessly, with ideas flowing freely across the organisation.

It's a shift in how we work together—less about solitary creation and more about collective innovation. And it's about breaking down silos and enabling collaboration that transcends geographical and departmental boundaries.

"It's really about creative community—enabling people and giving them the tools and the space to do really good work."

Head of Design

Teams can now work together in ways that were once thought impossible. A designer in Tokyo can create a prototype while a developer in Sydney watches in real time, suggesting changes that are implemented on the spot.

This dynamic approach to collaboration speeds up the design process and enriches it, bringing together diverse perspectives and skills to create exceptional digital experiences.

Designs are no longer created in a vacuum. They're the result of an ongoing conversation across the business, refined through the collaborative efforts of the entire team.

Chapter

3

Transforming workflows and mindsets with design-driven growth

The benefits of this collaboration extend well beyond the qualitative improvements in team dynamics.

They translate into tangible business outcomes, including significant cost savings, as streamlined workflows reduce the need for repetitive tasks and minimise the risk of errors. Real-time feedback also ensures a continuous loop of improvement, directly impacting product quality.

But the advantages don't stop there. By accelerating the design and development process, cloud-based design tools also drastically improve time to market, giving businesses a critical edge in today's fast-paced world.

Design as a revenue driver

57%

of APAC businesses using cloud-based design and collaboration tools report a boost in sales and revenue.

Only 29%

of businesses not using cloud-based design tools report similar growth

"**We've seen a lot of positives [from our evolving design processes]. The processing times [for generating inventory reports] have gone down drastically. There was a reduction of 80% in time that the admins were spending generating reports [as a result of improving design]."**

Senior Developer

The future shaped by a design-driven revenue engine

The strategic emphasis on design as a core business asset is more than just about refining user interfaces. It's revolutionising how businesses connect with their audience.

The impact of this shift is stark and compelling. Among businesses that have fully embraced cloud-based design and collaboration tools, **57%** report a direct boost in sales and revenue growth due to enhanced digital experiences.

In contrast, for those who haven't migrated design to the cloud, it's a more modest **29%**.

Streamlining costs, sprinting to market

Diving into the nitty-gritty, these tools are showing their mettle not just in sparking ideas but in delivering more tangible benefits like cost reduction and market agility.

FIGMA USERS

51%

report cost savings from digital tools

→ Navigating cost reduction

Among Figma users, **51%** have reported that their digital tools have led to cost savings, a significant increase over the **25%** of businesses not using any cloud-based solutions.

A Figma-commissioned [Forrester study](#), "The Total Economic Impact™ of Figma and FigJam," shows these financial advantages from a single composite organisation. It found significant savings from consolidating vendor licences, with businesses saving over $US740,000 in three years by streamlining their design process contracts.

Efficiency improvements in the design phase also led to substantial time savings, optimising processes by **60%**. This translated into annual savings of over $US10 million for one tech firm.

"You really need to have a clear set of outcomes, [have] clear alignment of the work, and make sure that you can actually see the work through. The only way that's going to happen is if we get alignment across our teams."

Head of Design

CLOUD-BASED DESIGN AND COLLABORATION TOOLS

41%

of adopters report quicker time to market.

→ **Accelerating time to market**

The agility delivered by cloud-based design and collaboration tools is notable, with **41%** of adopters reporting quicker time to market, nearly double the rate of non-adopters (**22%**).

The Forrester study highlighted a manufacturing firm that, equipped with Figma and its in-house team, now delivers projects four times quicker.

This efficiency stems from the UX team's ability to shorten design cycles, using Figma's unified ecosystem for all tools and project files.

"**Figma is bringing designers and devs closer with every new release, and this translates into business efficiencies and stronger cross-collaboration for a more streamlined speed to market.**"

Hallan Moulin
Chapter Lead UI
EndeavourX, Australia

Chapter

4

Leading with design in APAC: tales of design-driven growth

FROM 2019-2022

35%

global increase in the size of design teams in financial organisations

Companies across APAC are stepping into the future with design-driven strategies that enhance work by marrying quality with efficiency. They're also igniting a spark of creativity that's lighting up industries like finance, technology, and retail.

Design: a game changer in financial services

Globally, we witnessed a **35%** increase in the size of design teams in financial organisations from 2019 to 2022. We found that it wasn't just about adding people but also about empowering teams to collaborate effectively and making strategic investments.

APAC financial services: spearheading growth

Across the region,

 40%

of financial companies are reporting 'excellent' growth, thanks to a blend of trust, tech, and quality digital experiences.

Good design in the digital banking space can transform lives, making complex financial decisions simpler and safer and providing services like banking to people that never had them before.

In APAC, companies that made strategic changes in their tools and workflows saw the benefits. And the results are clear to see—**72%** of financial services companies using cloud-based design and collaboration tools reported that design boosts their sales and revenue.

More than half (**56%**) are boasting a well-crafted design strategy, **44%** are tying sales targets directly to design innovation, and another **44%** are building dedicated teams around design.

Design: tech's secret weapon for sales and long-term relationships

In the tech sphere, design has stepped out to contribute significantly to business growth. A solid **48%** of tech companies that have embraced cloud-based tools acknowledge design's direct impact on sales.

What's more, **42%** of these cloud adopters boast a solid design strategy, showing the tech industry's commitment to making design a cornerstone of innovation and differentiation.

> **"Design is the core of everything we do. Simplifying user experience is our main value proposition in the fintech industry. So now, the question is, 'How can it be elevated for the users?'"**
>
> Adit Gupta
> Senior Director of Product Design
> Groww, India

"**Designing at scale, amidst the organisational complexities, while crafting exceptional and connected digital experience is no small feat. Encouraging collaboration across departments can be easier said than done. However, we've found the solution in Figma.**"

Nathan Streater
Group Design Manager
Coles, Australia

The design-driven experiences refreshing retail

In the APAC retail sector, shoppers are looking for innovative shopping experiences that align with emerging retail trends. And APAC retailers are using cloud-based design and collaboration tools to meet these expectations and increase revenue. Among APAC retailers that moved to cloud-based design tools, **57%** already say that these tools are helping them lift revenue.

The divide between the trendsetters and the followers is stark in retail: **33%** of the trailblazers have a design strategy in place, and the same percentage (**33%**) boast dedicated design teams, compared to just **18%** and **14%**, respectively, among those that don't.

The design-driven leap: stories of innovation and growth

APAC is brimming with stories of transformation, innovation, and success. Companies like Australia's EndeavourX, Singapore's DBS, and India's Groww stand out as beacons of progress, each harnessing cloud-based design tools like Figma to carve out new paths in their industries. Here's a snapshot of their journeys:

→ DBS: redesigning finance in Singapore

DBS's transformation story is a testament to the impact of design in the finance industry. It has not only increased UX maturity but also reinforced DBS's position as the "World's Best Bank," proving the indispensable value of design in the finance sector.

> **"We're a team that gets things done. We persevere, commit to long-term goals and focus on how putting the customer first can deliver real business value."**
>
> Leo Lin
> Senior Vice President
> DBS, Singapore

Leo Lin, Senior Vice President at DBS Bank in Singapore, captures it perfectly: "Every dollar means something. We want what it can give us. So we acknowledge that money is not really about money."

"We inject emotion into our products to elevate them from transactional to magical. The result? An emotional bond with our customers," he says.

→ Strategic design implementation:

Leo Lin's vision for user-first product development, supported by Figma, transformed DBS's digital channels.

→ Digital overhaul:

Going from no team at all to a 135-strong powerhouse, Figma-powered design elevated DBS's UX maturity and helped win it the title of World's Best Bank for the fifth year.

→ Navigating regulation:

DBS' Figma implementation meets stringent security and compliance protocols, maintaining clear audit trails and version control in a highly-regulated environment.

→ Cross-platform collaboration:

Figma bridged the gap between Windows and Mac users, enabling real-time, frictionless collaboration across teams.

> **"Figma helps us democratise access to the company's design, and that's what made it our go-to platform. It's an open tool that's de-siloed our organisation and allowed us to share files with developers and product managers without needing much work on licensing."**

Sanket Chaudhari
Design Systems Lead
Groww, India

→ Groww: democratising fintech in India

Groww uses Figma to make investing accessible and straightforward for more than 40 million customers in India.

"User experience is one of Groww's strong suits. If you look at our reviews, ratings, or customer feedback, it's one of the main reasons why people use Groww and how clients came to trust us and our app," says Adit Gupta, Senior Director of Product Design at Groww.

The platform's design-centric approach has been crucial in scaling operations, enhancing cross-collaboration, and maintaining a user-focused strategy amid rapid expansion.

→ Scaling with design:

Groww used Figma to support rapid growth, ensuring seamless collaboration in an expanding team of more than 20 designers.

→ User experience at core:

Groww focuses on simplifying finance, making investing accessible to 40 million customers with aXSdesign-first approach.

> **"As UI designers, we can use many tools to bring a human-centred design approach to our work. Today, we chose Figma to help us run our design practice more efficiently."**
>
> Hallan Moulin
> Chapter Lead UI
> EndeavourX, Australia

→ Enhanced cross-collaboration:

Figma's introduction fostered effective collaboration between designers, developers, and product managers.

→ Cultural transformation:

Groww adopted FigJam for brainstorming and culture-building sessions, contributing to a healthy work environment and helping retain top talent.

→ EndeavourX: reimagining retail in Australia

EndeavourX shines in Australia's retail and hospitality sector, showcasing the power of design in crafting engaging customer experiences across 350 venues and 1700 outlets. Its strategic shift to Figma consolidated tools and fostered a culture of innovation and collaboration at the company.

"Figma is bringing designers and devs closer with every new release, and this translates into business efficiencies and stronger cross-collaboration for a more streamlined speed to market," says Hallan Moulin, Chapter Lead UI at EndeavourX.

By embracing cloud-based design tools like Figma, leading businesses including DBS, Groww, and EndeavourX have not only accelerated their growth trajectories but also set new benchmarks for success.

→ Transformation with Figma:

EndeavourX streamlined collaboration across major retail brands BWS, Dan Murphy's, and Jimmy Brings, saving every designer an average of three hours weekly.

→ Operational efficiency:

Figma consolidated work previously done using four separate tools, enhancing admin, procurement, and talent acquisition processes.

→ Collaboration across teams:

As Endeavour X grew from 10 to more than 45 designers, Figma facilitated cross-disciplinary collaboration across teams, including UX, Business Analysis, and Development.

By embracing cloud-based design tools like Figma, leading businesses including DBS, Groww, and EndeavourX have not only accelerated their growth trajectories but also set new benchmarks for success in their respective industries.

Their stories serve as a blueprint for other companies in APAC looking to navigate the future of business in the digital age, highlighting the transformative power of design in driving growth, efficiency, and innovation.

Conclusion

It's clear APAC is not just adapting to the digital era. It's thriving, and design-driven growth has set a new trajectory for businesses across the region.

This is an evolving tale with companies across APAC—from Sydney to Seoul—getting wise to the fact that good design equals good business.

It's an ongoing adventure, with more companies discovering how good design isn't just about making things look good. It's about sparking joy, connecting dots, and opening up a world of possibilities.

Among the companies riding the design wave, those fully harnessing the power of cloud-based design tools report a significant boost in sales and growth.

In the competitive APAC arena, design is your best play for staying ahead of the game, delivering real growth, increased revenue, and substantial cost reductions.

Elevating experiences, fuelling growth

Stories from innovative companies like EndeavourX, DBS, and Groww show us how, with the right design tools in hand, businesses can craft digital experiences that truly resonate and drive growth.

As we peer over the horizon, the future looks bright and incredibly creative. A standout digital experience, fuelled by great design, is the key to building deeper connections in this digital age.

Let's continue to create, innovate, and design— together, shaping the experiences of tomorrow with the visionary power of design today.

Figma