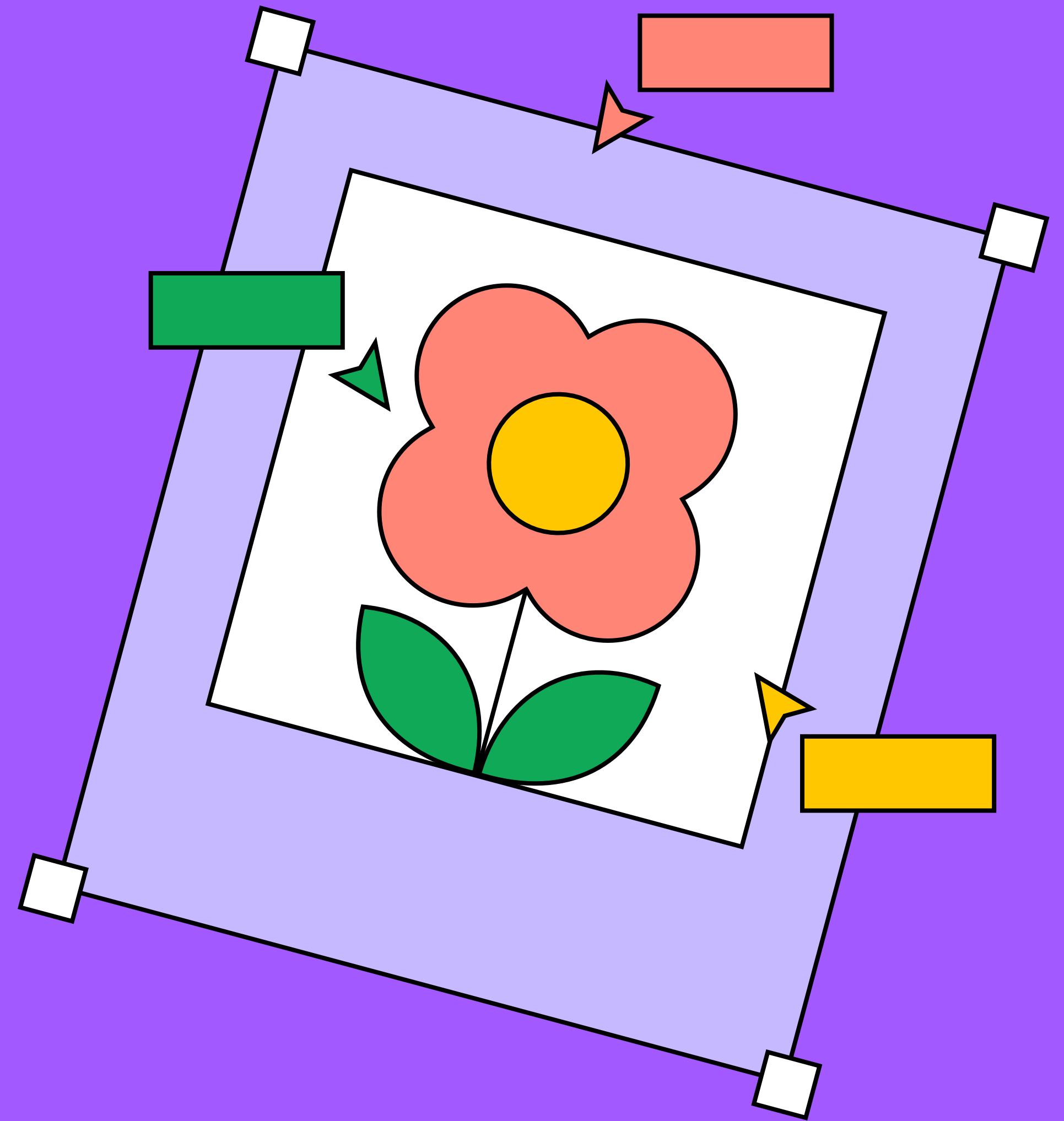


Figma

5 companies that busted silos between design and everyone else



Digital collaboration is having a *moment*. While remote work has forced companies to figure out how to get by, many design teams are running forward into new possibilities.

And a big one is bringing new people into the product development process.

From company leaders to customer success teams to actual customers, outside perspectives enhance product outcomes. Getting cross-company input helps designers align products around business priorities *and* elevates the role of design in a company. When designers work with business leaders, they gain influence and opportunities to show their unique ways of looking at problems.

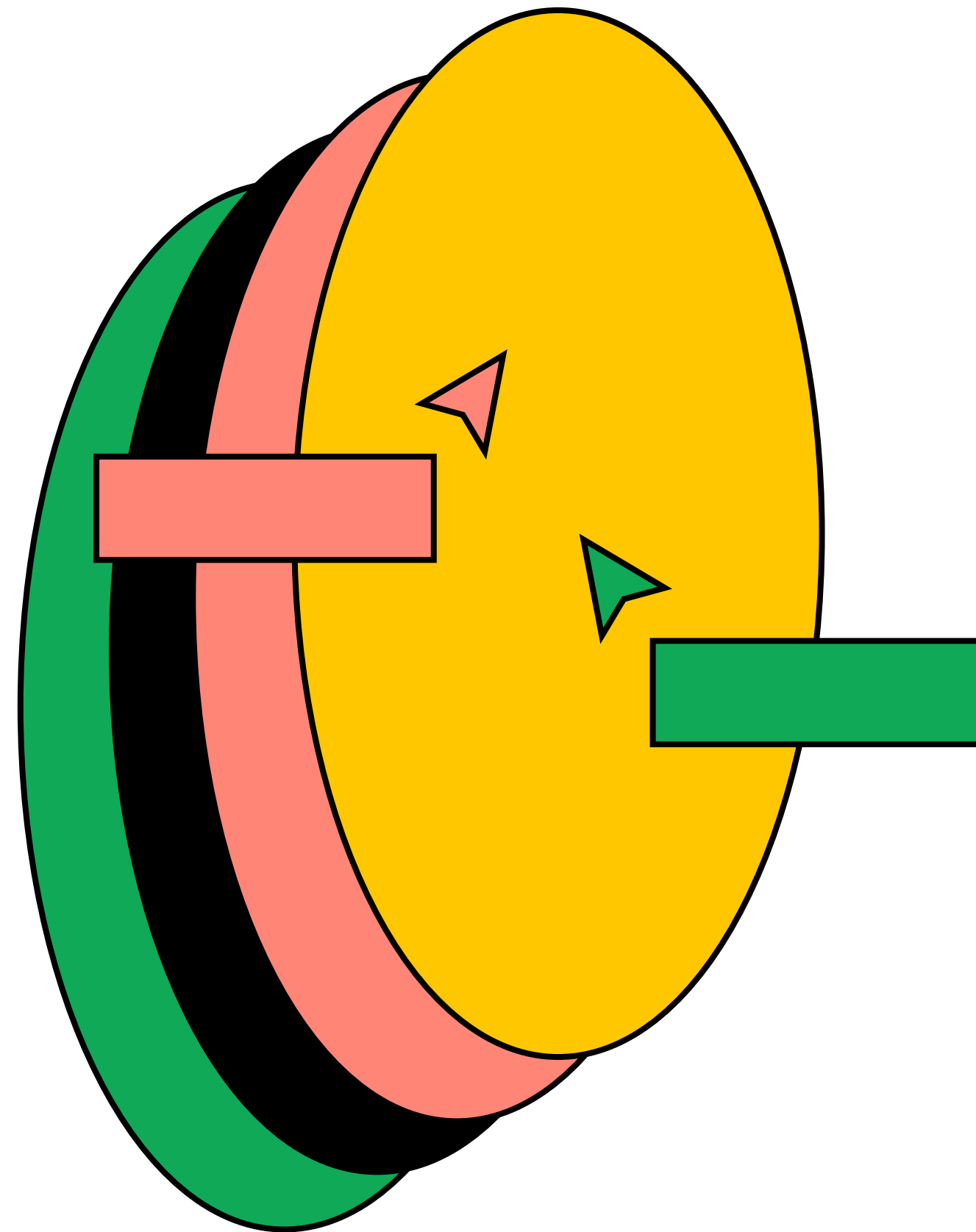
But getting input from people outside the design team poses a number of challenges. The digital collaboration competencies acquired in the pandemic have removed barriers: it's now easier to collaborate with people in other locations. But there's still the problem of working with people who don't speak design.

Many companies are finding visual collaboration tools like Figma are the key. Visuals have the unique ability to convey ideas in an intuitive fashion that lets stakeholders quickly understand the context.

But even for companies who use visual tools, there's a lot of clunk standing in the way of collaboration. Some of the visual systems designed on the fly—from emailed whiteboard photos to jumping in and out of different design tools—work better than others.

We talked to five companies busting through silos to invite new voices into the work, and time and again we heard the pain boiled down to one problem: different teams were using too many tools to design, write, ideate, develop and get feedback.

And having too many tools isn't just slow and frustrating. All the input collected in the design process gets dispersed and doesn't end up having the impact it should.



Digitally savvy design teams are finding out consolidating tools opens up all kinds of possibilities.

Five brands shared how they use Figma and FigJam to bring more people into the design process, open up more meaningful communication, and keep everyone pointing in the same direction. And the tools are even letting design teams harness additional help by empowering non-designers to build simple assets—removing bottlenecks while freeing up time for designers to work on higher-impact projects.

Keep reading to see how these companies brought more people and perspectives into design to spark the insight, creativity and flow that moves brands.



Patagonia builds experiences and activism

Patagonia balances two goals that *seem* totally incompatible: reduce consumerism while selling products. Their insanely dedicated team designs experiences that aim to bolster environmental activism and get buyers to focus on purchasing (and reusing) fewer, higher-quality items.

To meet these ambitious goals, they bring a lot of perspectives into the experience design process.

“We’ve seen success when we put uncommon disciplines together—a river ecologist, a writer, and an experience designer collaborating on a clear objective that leads to an impactful and engaging experience.”—Levon Sharrow, Director of Experience Design

But bringing together brand folks, category designers, marketers, copywriters, and subject matter experts meant working through a chaotic mix of tools, from Sketch, InDesign and Invision to plain-old documents.

Their team recounted projects where they emailed photos of whiteboards with notes in a separate doc. Stakeholder reviews where work was spread across multiple places. Writers who had to look at screenshots, edit copy in docs, and send them back to design.

Figma changed everything

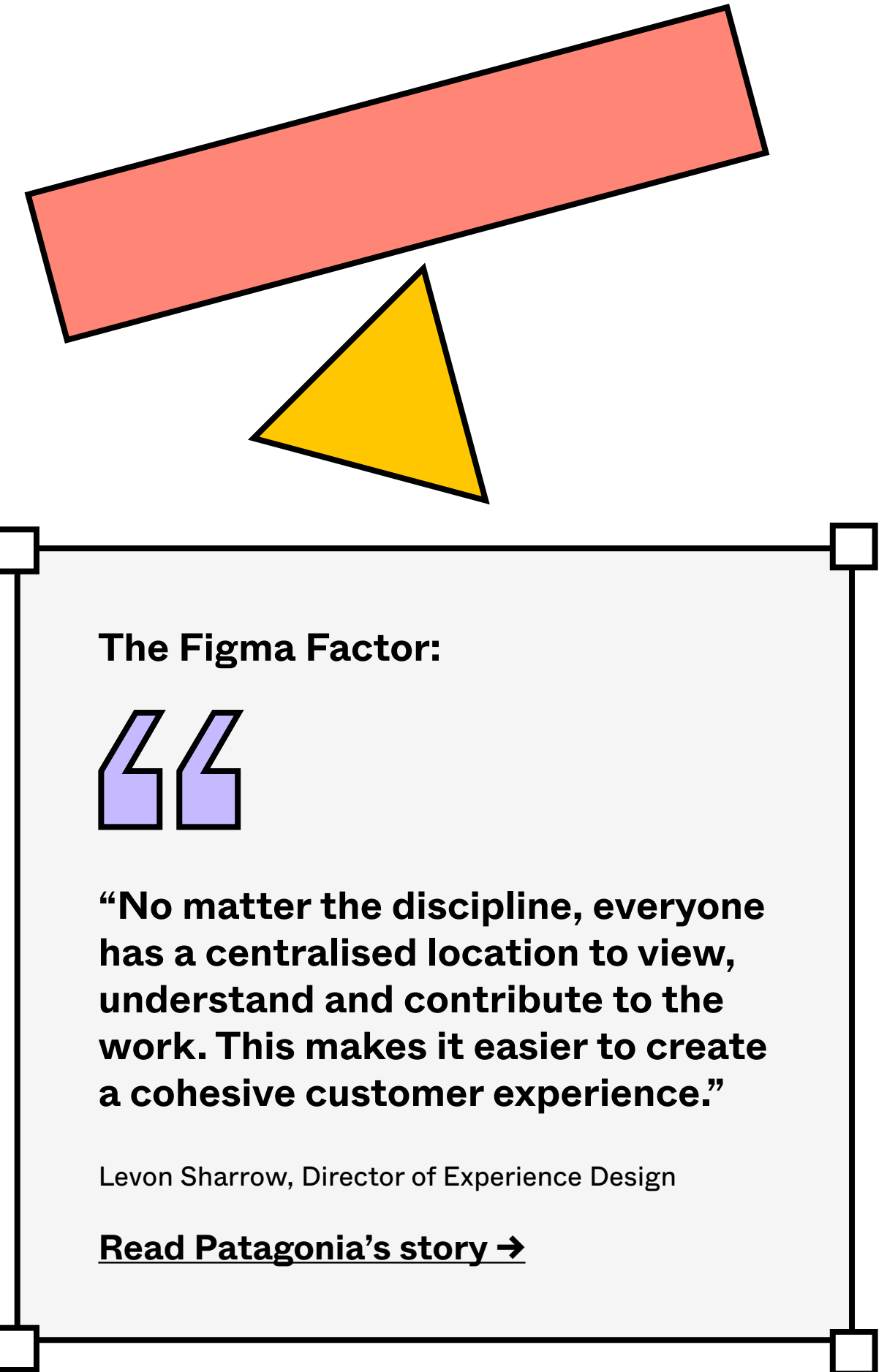
Now, stakeholders can see everything in one place, in a clear visual format where they can comment. Writers can edit copy knowing how it will look in the final product.

These were big wins but Patagonia took it a step further, inviting *customers* into the design process. Customers interact with live prototypes and share feedback, allowing designers to identify usability issues and refine products before they’re released.

Patagonia increased site conversions by 3% using Figma prototypes to gain signoff to push website navigation changes—in just two months.

They told us using Figma was better than working in person in many ways. For instance, lots of people who weren’t comfortable sharing in live reviews started to leave notes.

Senior Experience Designer Manu Garzaron recalls live-editing a climate action page. “I got put in a room with the photo editor and copywriter. I saw their eyes open, and they were super excited. That sense of collaboration and speed [of working] together has been contagious.”



The Figma Factor:

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“No matter the discipline, everyone has a centralised location to view, understand and contribute to the work. This makes it easier to create a cohesive customer experience.”

Levon Sharrow, Director of Experience Design

[Read Patagonia’s story →](#)

Carta moves fast *without* breaking things

Carta was born in a burst of innovation. They created a way to issue shares electronically—solving a cumbersome mail-based stock-purchasing process, and becoming the de facto central registry for public companies. They capitalised on that data by offering valuations and then built on that into a comprehensive platform.

That meant Carta's brand had to catch up. And they wanted to do it the right way, with processes that would scale their branding system over projects and teams.

With distributed teams who had never met, Carta thought deeply about how they could collaborate, and landed on using Figma and FigJam.

Instead of jumping back and forth from 3D modelling to high-fidelity illustration software, Carta keeps everything in Figma.

"Figma is like an endless playground for us to explore and collaborate."—Xuefei Zhang, Senior Visual Designer and leader of Carta's rebrand

Front-end developers use FigJam to experiment with components and provide feedback in one central location, and copywriters edit in situ. Teammates across web and design can see exactly what a page should look like and give feedback or edit the copy.

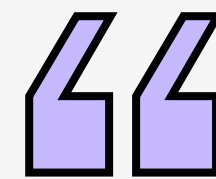
It gave them the structure to get creative with their isometric illustrations and experiences.

In fact, Carta now uses Figma to bring cross-functional product, brand and engineering teams together.

Amazingly, Carta's new brand came together in two months.

How's that for a big win?

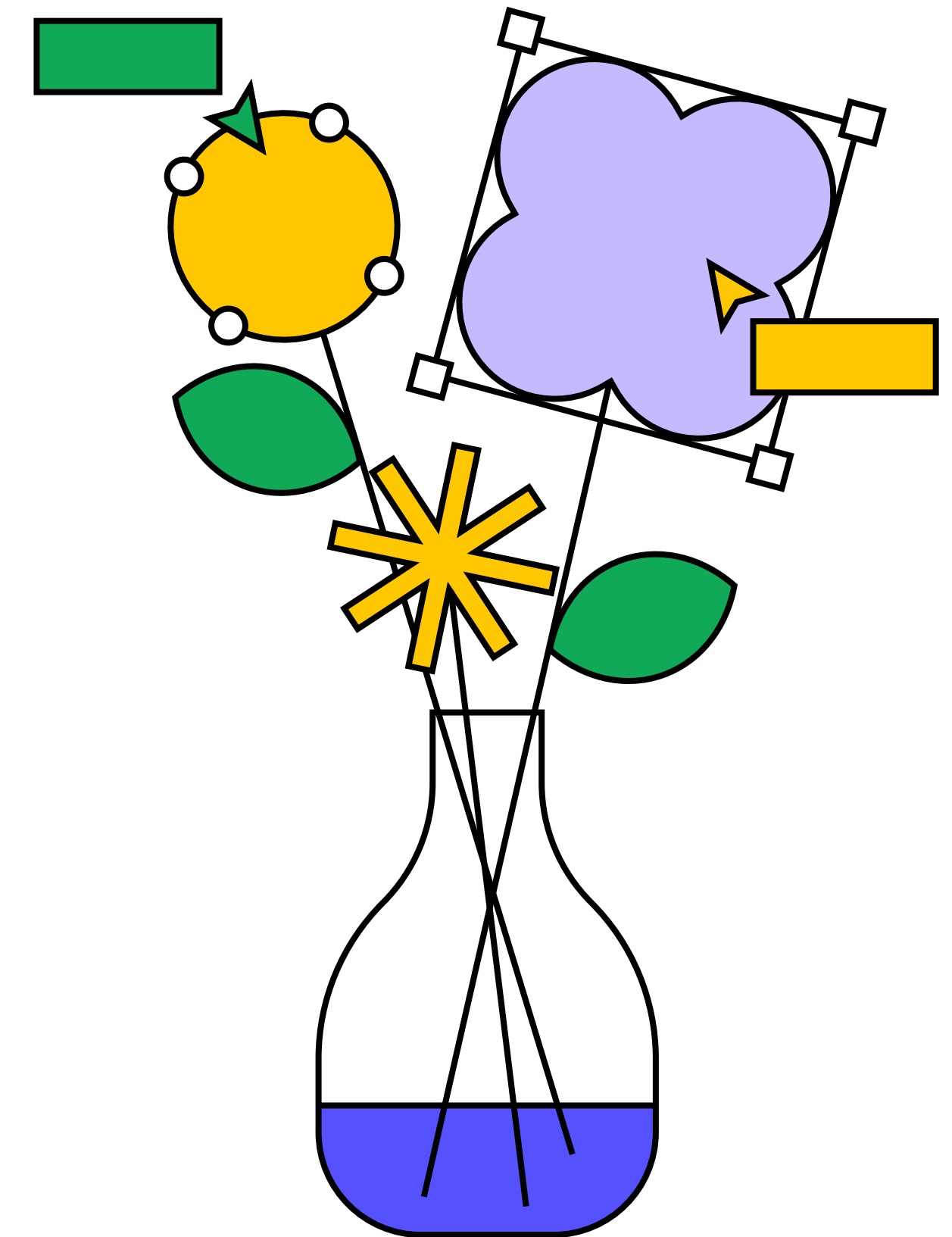
The Figma Factor:



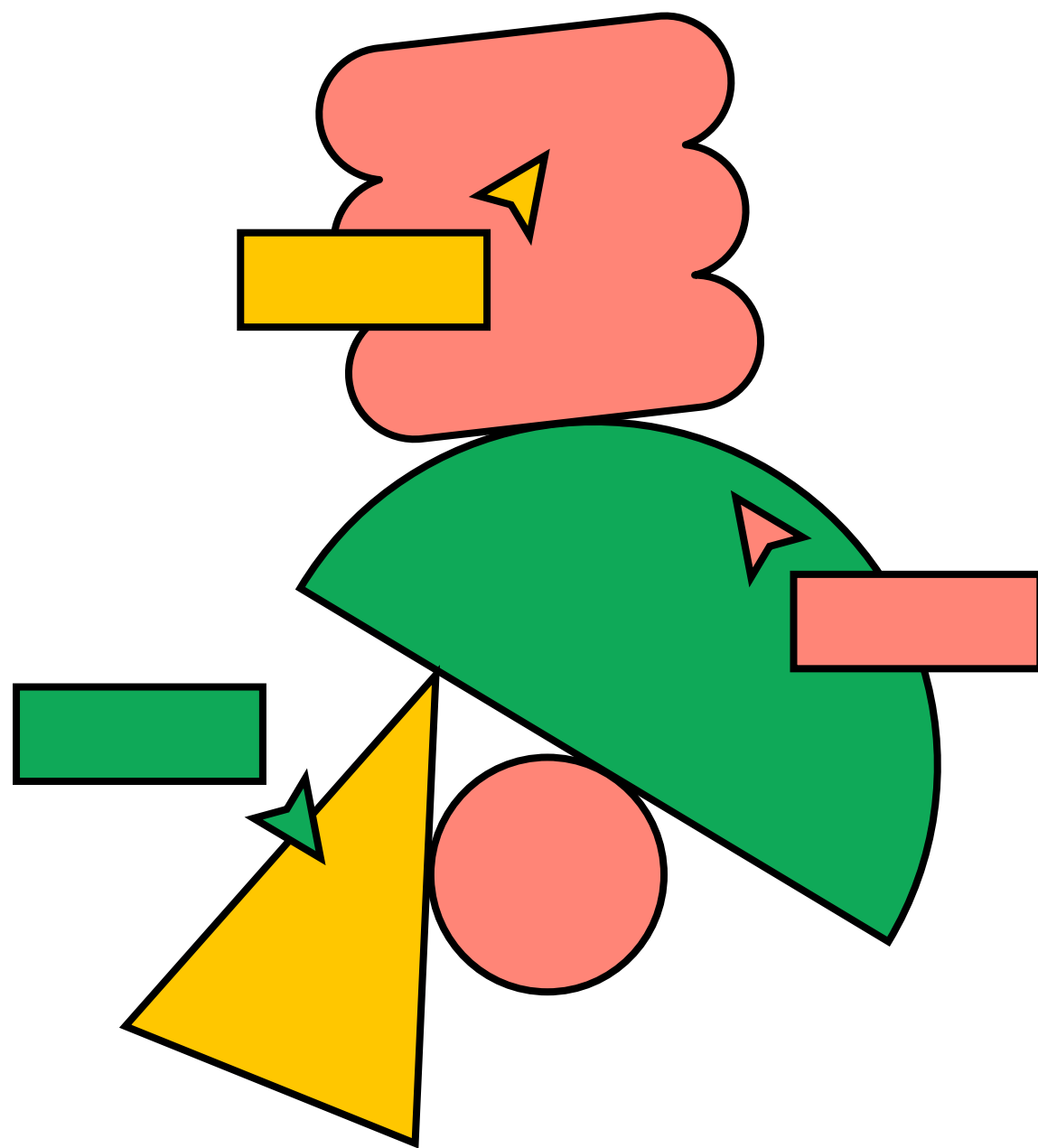
"Figma streamlined our design process by making it easy for us to share our prototypes and design system all in the same space, but it has also allowed engineers to collaborate on our designs and project managers to provide feedback and track progress. Collaborating in Figma has brought us all closer as a team, despite our locations."

Samuel Ong Sze Hern, Senior Designer

[Read Carta's story →](#)



Mixpanel builds trust through cohesive experiences—and products



In the course of a rebrand, event analytics company Mixpanel discovered a bold new mission: opening up analytics to everyone. They'd previously served engineering, product and design teams—but with the barriers to analytics getting lower every day, they saw an opportunity to open the platform up to any kind of user.

It meant they had to update product experiences to support new users—a show-don't-tell approach to learning. To do this in a cohesive way that reflected the new brand, Mixpanel needed to bring product folks into the design fold.

Mixpanel's tech varied drastically by team—they were using Sketch, Invision, Zeplin, Miro or Abstract—and there were major discrepancies in design languages and naming conventions.

And that brought on another 'aha' moment: siloed tech was getting in the way of meaningful collaboration.

People who were supposed to be working together were on different pages, and this exacerbated design inconsistencies in the products.

They decided to use Figma to build reusable components, styles and assets.

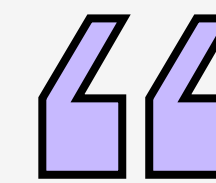
"We're using Figma for everything, from a whole new library of icons, typefaces, and layouts. We're at this point now where I honestly don't know who's really a brand or product designer because they have the entire system and toolset to start making stuff."—Paul Jun, Principal Brand Strategist

FigJam played a big role in bringing together everyone, from the CEO to individual contributors from marketing into the rebrand.

Mixpanel teams also use the online whiteboard to collaborate throughout the product development process.

Bonus: By streamlining their tech stack and operating solely out of Figma, Mixpanel was able to increase their monthly savings by 5x.

The Figma Factor:



"Especially for early stage product thinking, a canvas is less restrictive and enables more creativity than a doc."

Vijay Iyengar, Director of Product

[Read Mixpanel's story →](#)



EndeavourX creates dev-signers

UI designers and engineers team up on projects but have very different ways of thinking. EndeavourX, the digital experience arm of Australian retail powerhouse Endeavour Group, wondered whether they could create “dev-signers” expertise on the UI team.

EndeavourX teams include designers, business analysts, delivery people and Agile coaches. Their design team expanded from 10 people to 45 in just two years, with expertise in service design, UX, UI and conversion rate optimisation.

Such a big bump in team size can easily lead to chaos.

But EndeavourX was on top of it. They consolidated four tools to just Figma to foster collaboration. And it worked—they use Figma for wireframing, prototyping with high-fidelity design, and as a final file for sharing with engineers.

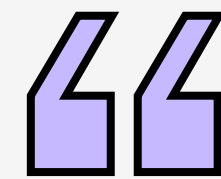
Figma also became a tool for front-end developers.

92% of front-end developers at EndeavourX say Figma makes collaborating with designers more efficient.

The developers feel more confident, and 53% believe Figma helps them work with other stakeholders like business analysts and delivery leads.

“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

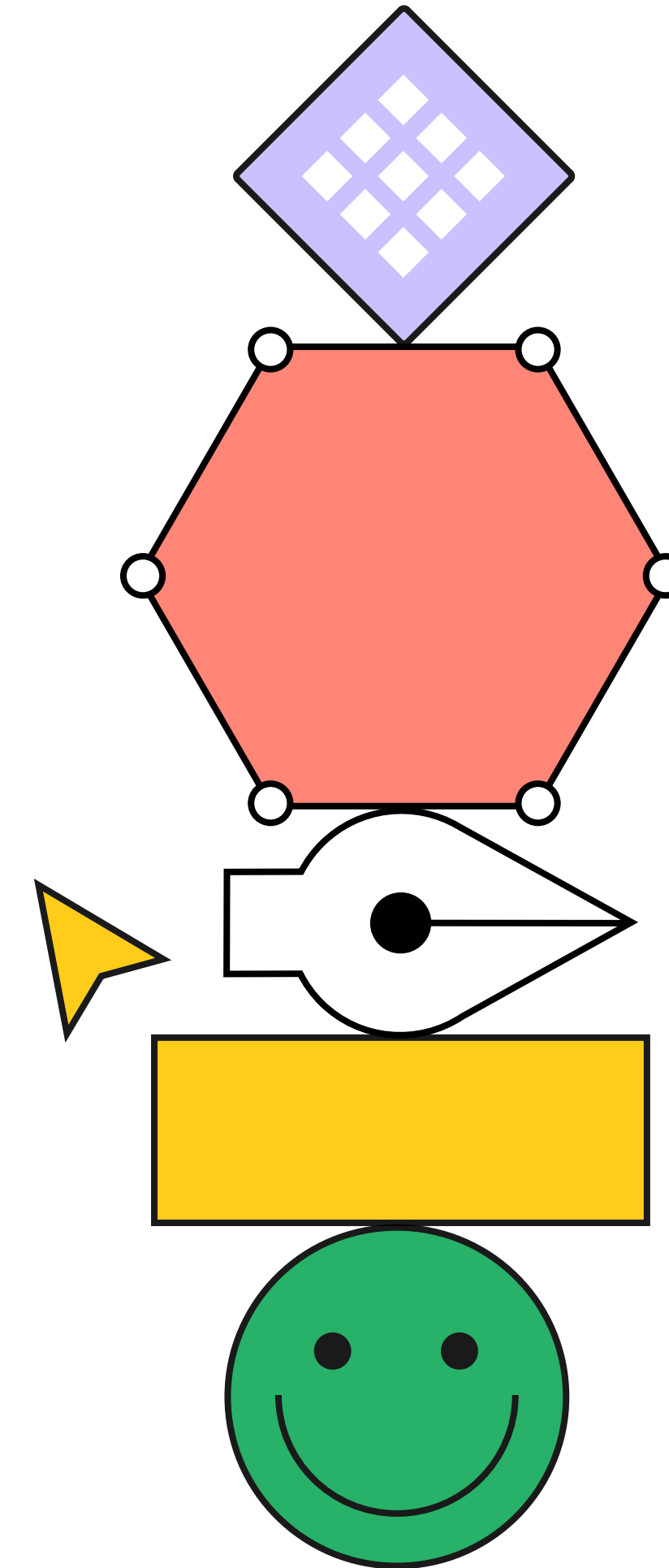
The Figma Factor:



“On top of helping us with technical capabilities, Figma is a strong pillar that supports our ways of working in cross-functional teams.”

Hallan Moulin, Chapter Lead UI

[Read EndeavourX’s story →](#)



Contentsquare gets design help from above

What do you do when your company's success causes a spike in design bottlenecks? Rethink processes and offload the less challenging bits.

At least, that's what Contentsquare, a digital experience leader, did. Senior Brand and Growth Operations Manager Ornella Kolle looked at the process and saw a lot of waste, like a PR or HR person gathering requirements, putting in a request and waiting for it to get approved in a separate project management system.

And there were a lot of these projects—important ones, but they felt like busywork for designers. (And sometimes delays meant non-designers took matters into their own PowerPoint-armed hands.)

So Contentsquare did something really cool: created a Design Angels program.

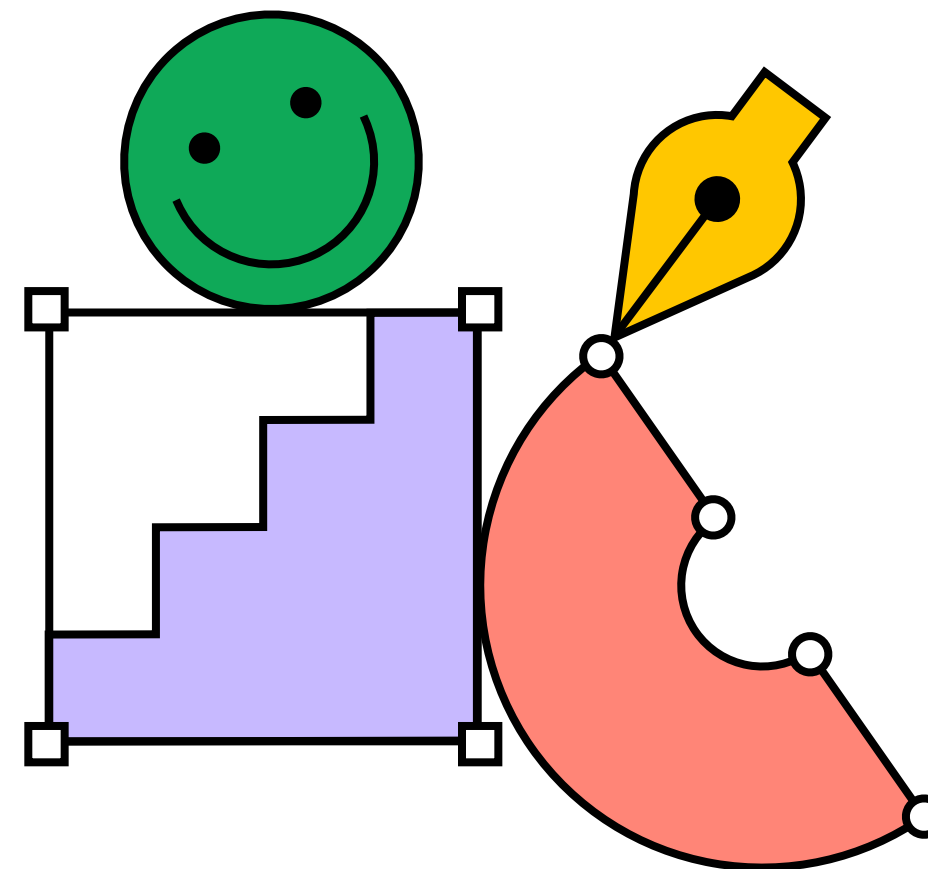
They were already using a Figma-based design system. The next step was to add an asset management solution within it and create templates for self-service design.

“People who don't think of themselves as designers find it very easy to create assets in Figma.”—Ornella Kolle, Operations Manager

The brand team then trained 20 non-designers across a bunch of departments, from PR to HR, to create everything from social posts to job ads.

“Non-designers” completed 35% of the Q1 2023 design workload using Figma.

The idea was a success all around. The first 20 people turned into 120, and designers were freed to work on more complex, higher-impact projects.



The Figma Factor:

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“The collaborative nature of Figma, as well as the fact that our designers are located all over the globe, made it super easy to check the assets before people exported them.”

[Read Contentsquare's story →](#)

The business world is growing wise to the special gifts designers bring: a visual, creative and deeply human perspective. And those gifts are pure magic when paired with other teams' subject matter expertise and different ways of looking at problems.

But too often, the technologies we use were built for individual teams, creating hurdles that slow communication—and impede these budding partnerships. Consolidating tools can open up a smooth runway for collaboration.

Our clients have shown that bringing non-designers into the fold can help companies make bolder choices and do exciting things. It's time to get excited, too.

