

Damian Rees.

Operations Leadership | Business Strategy | People & Culture

A seasoned operations leader with over 20 years of agency leadership experience, from startups to global organisations. Extensive experience in building, optimising and running agencies of various sizes, with expertise in operational strategy and M&A integrations. Drawing on an applied psychology background, Damian brings an empathetic approach to leadership that puts people at the heart of strategic decisions. He creates cultures that drive innovation and sustainable growth across small, large, and global agencies.

Expertise

Strategic Operations | M&A Integration | Agency Leadership | Business Growth | People & Culture |

Customer Experience | Innovation Strategy | Organisational Design

Experience

Founder | Make Human | Apr 23 - Present

Company Profile: Specialist Research and Innovation agency

Founded a specialist agency delivering strategic insights to drive business transformation. Provide flexible C-suite support focused on operational excellence and customer-led innovation.

Fractional Chief Experience Officer (CXO) | Extra Brain | Sept 23 - Present

Company Profile: Consultancy collective working with founders of Agencies & SMEs

Board-level strategic advisor delivering operational excellence. Leading customer experience initiatives and transformation programmes while providing flexible leadership support.

Global User Experience Director | Ipsos | Apr 21 - Apr 23

Company Profile: Global Market Research Agency with a presence in 90 countries and 18,000 staff

Led global business operations and expansion. Orchestrated agency acquisitions and integrations across key markets. Implemented scalable operational frameworks for new UX teams globally.

Customer Experience Director (Contract) | Sweepr | Nov 20 - Mar 21

Company Profile: Fully remote tech startup with £11m raised in funding and 35 staff

Partnered with C-suite to transform product strategy and operations. Delivered highly personalised self-service digital product to Enterprise organisations.

Head of Design Ops (Contract) | Worth Systems | Mar 20 - Oct 20

Company Profile: Specialist Tech Agency with offices in UK & Netherlands

Working closely with CEO and CTO to establish a new design function within the business. Worked on overall strategy for sales and operations, organisational structure and processes.

Head of Experience (Interim) | Cohaesus | Jan 20 – Mar 20

Company Profile: Specialist Technical Digital Agency with offices in England, Scotland, & India

Managed a team of UX designers and researchers, supported new business initiatives, and consulted on client projects, including British Business Bank, Battersea, and NHS Give Blood projects

Founder & Operations Director | Experience UX | Jun 07 – Jan 20

Company Profile: Experience UX is a specialist UX agency working with top-tier clients

Built and scaled the agency to 15 staff. Established operational frameworks and culture initiatives, enabling consistent growth. Led relationships with enterprise clients, including Siemens, Financial Times, and Burberry.

Head of UX, Design & Marketing | Appius International | Jun 06 – Jun 07

Company Profile: A small digital marketing agency specialising in combining Technology and Marketing

Responsible for Design, Research, and Online Marketing within a MarTech agency.

Senior Human Factors Specialist | National Air Traffic Services | Aug 03 – Jun 06

Company Profile: 4,500 staff delivering the air traffic control service to the majority of the UK

Designing air traffic software, investigating near-miss incidents, and designing new air traffic operations rooms based on rigorous human factors research.

Senior Usability Engineer | BBC | Sep 01 – Aug 03

Company Profile: Public Service Broadcaster with over 22,000 staff

Introduced, mentored, trained, and delivered User-Centred Design projects within BBC New Media

Head of Usability | Wheel | Jan 00 – Aug 01

Company Profile: 200 Person London Agency working with M&S, Argos, and HSBC

Established Usability as a new discipline within the business. Hired a small team, pitched to clients, and established best practices that were embedded into the agency.

Education

BSc (Hons) Applied Psychology & Computing | 2:1 | Bournemouth University

Human-Computer Interaction, Human Factors, Interface Design, Cognitive Psychology, Motivation & Emotion

Recent Thought Leadership

Exceeding user expectations and the future of e-commerce	Ipsos Omnichannel Conference - Czechia
UX - What makes the difference between success and failure	Ipsos Client Webinar - Switzerland
User Adoption – The hidden reason why products and services fail	Dorset County Council Event
Understand human behaviour to improve user adoption	Travel Forward London Excel
8 steps to transform good UX into great UX	City University London
What role does UX play in driving brilliant CX	Ipsos Customer Perspective Podcast
Why the games industry should pay more attention to UX	Medium
Does personalisation enhance or detract from good UX?	Web Designer Magazine