

## Robert Squires

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## Currently

### Head of Concept at Magnetic Rock started March 2023

Magnetic Rock is a product incubator on a mission to up skill humanity, specifically focused on solving the cyber security skills gap. My role in that mission has been finding tangential markets and groups of users who are responsible for cyber security without it being their day to day role. My research and prototyping has so far focused on gaining a deep understanding of how software engineers, and more broadly product engineering teams, keep the applications they develop secure. I've led this project from early generative research through to development of proof of concepts for three distinct products ready for investment.

### Mentor at CodeHub & Womens Tech Hub started May 2020

Teaching on a wide range of topics from TypeScript and functional programming to user testing and research. I've mentored a number of designers and developers one to one, all of whom are now in full time employment, as well as leading the WebDev101 workshop. WebDev101 started as an informal drop in session for all things web development. I changed the format to be focused on a single project, to which attendees could contribute and learn the ins and outs of collaborative product development, an aspect of the role that juniors and graduates do not have much exposure to.

## Was

### Head of Product Design at Elliptic from October 2021 to March 2023

Joined as part of an expansion of the company's product and design capabilities. My focus has been on cataloguing existing research in a scalable repository, working out what questions we still need to answer, and running discovery workshops with internal stakeholders, clients, and peers. I'm also working closely with the web engineering team to build out a centralised design system, both in code and Figma. This will not only allow us to iterate on the products at a higher velocity but also gives a kit to quickly build realistic prototypes for usability testing and discovery projects.

### Founder at parrot.to from February 2021 to October 2022

Started as an experiment to discover if web technologies could be used to create a platform for language learning. I worked with tutors and students to design and build an application with which students are able to record phrases they've learnt, and be tested on them. Initial version was a utilitarian, minimal, and form focused interface which users found difficult to comprehend. After several months of qualitative research I pivoted the application to be a virtual Parrot that users teach. Although functionally the same, this decision made the apps functionality less abstract and easier to learn. Currently in an open beta, I'm collecting data and analytics on a number of key research topics that will drive the next phase of the product's development.

### Senior Product Designer at ranges.io from January 2020 to October 2021

Part of a cross-functional product development team on a cyber security training and capture the flag platform. Originally working for Magnetic Rock with the platform called Tomahawque, our team and product were acquired by the SANS Institute in January 2021. During the transition period I worked closely with both SANS staff and their students conducting field research, usability tests and workshops. This research shaped the platform's roadmap and allowed myself and the team to empathise with users in a complex, technical industry. Upon leaving I had created a searchable repository for my research allowing my colleagues, and replacement, to keep sight of all the evidence, facts, insights, and recommendations generated during my time.

### Digital Designer at Proctor + Stevenson from October 2018 to January 2020

Predominantly focused on interaction design and prototyping for the company's multinational clients. I championed UX best practices within the business whilst also creating engaging, animated interfaces that drove conversion rate improvements for our client's B2B marketing websites. Highlight of my time here was leading the design for a highly functional parametric search tool for Panasonic, commended by both the business and their clients for its simplicity.

### Digital Designer at RAC from March 2018 to October 2018

Working on a multi-disciplined prototyping team (RAC employees and CX Partners), we iteratively user tested and prototyped a new version of the RACs breakdown cover payment journey. The objective for this project was ensuring customers fully understood the product they were buying, in line with IDD regulations. The project began with an evaluation of the current journey, competitor analysis and user interviews. We then iterated through different concepts, always focussing on improving users retention of information. My time working with CX Partners shaped my own process, testing realistic prototypes in short feedback cycles with a clear, well documented, and thoroughly understood set of research questions.

### Digital Designer at Element78 from March 2017 to March 2018

Designed a number of marketing websites and tools for existing clients and prospects. During my time at Element78, although relatively junior, I put myself forward to present our design ideas to clients as much as possible. This experience of presenting helped me to formalise my approach to design and cemented some core concepts.

### Junior Designer at Unite Students from July 2016 to March 2017

I predominantly worked on the MyUnite app, a companion mobile application for students living in the company's properties. Although I'm proud of aspects of the work I did, predominantly the UI, ultimately this app was a failure. The reason for this is that we conducted no discovery research prior to starting the project. A better way to approach this application would have been to work with students and understand what would have actually improved their experience when staying with Unite Students.

### Designer and Developer at Filtration Ltd from February 2016 to July 2016

Rebuilt the company website, including the introduction of ecommerce. Strategic direction for this rebuild was based on customer needs that I researched independently. Business was initially hesitant to make such a big change, both of the website and branding, but after presenting them with a clear plan and rationale it was approved.