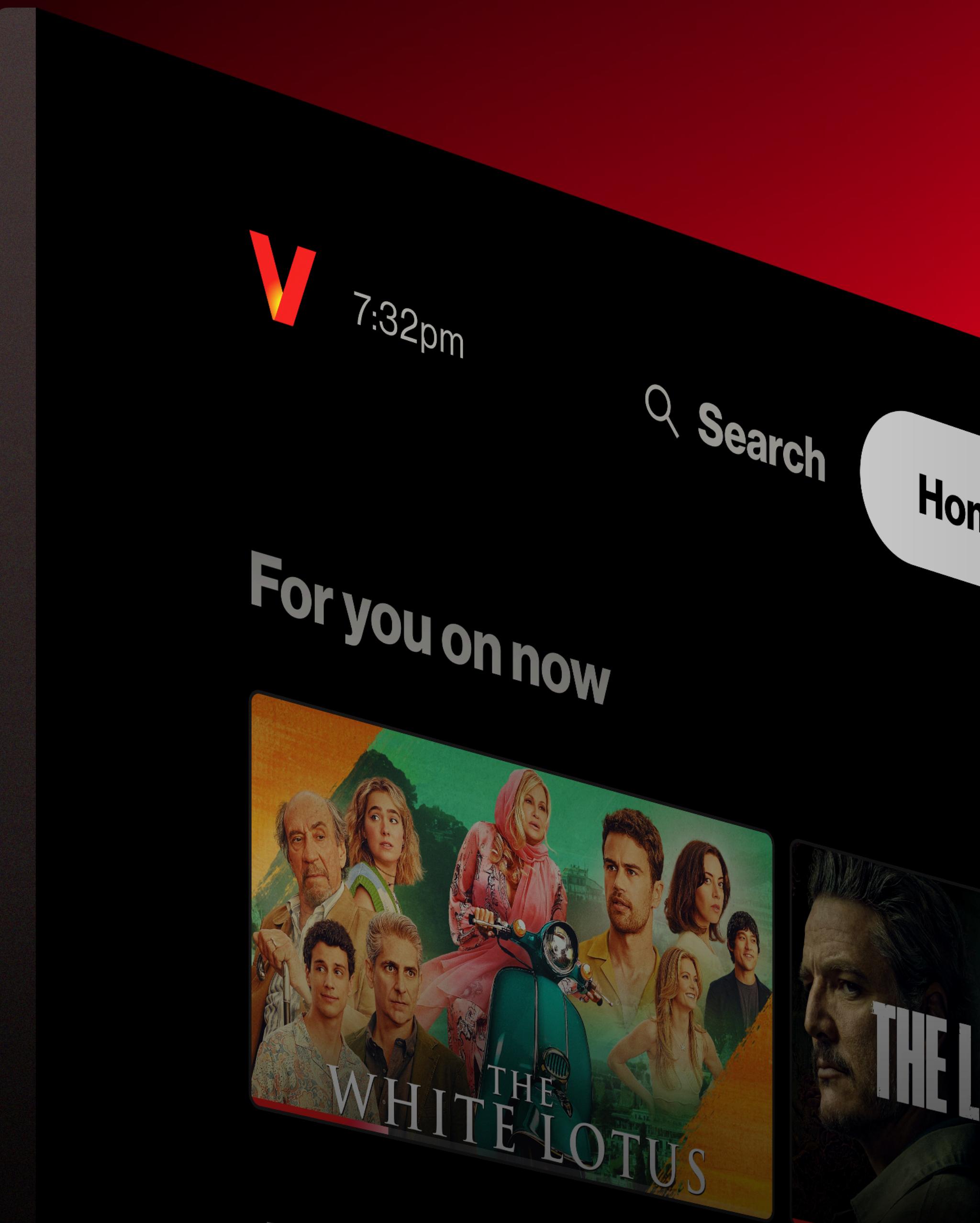


Leading the Future of TV

Joel Freeborn

Design Director at TCS (Verizon Fios TV account)





Executive summary

As a TCS Design Director for Verizon Fios TV, I have lead a cross-continental design team delivering strategy, innovation and design across set-top box, mobile and web. My focus has been on driving business outcomes, elevating product experience and maintaining Verizon's competitive edge in a rapidly evolving media landscape.

- Led a team of eight designers (London & New York).
- Partnered with Verizon product leadership to shape design and product strategy.
- Delivered design enhancements contributing to doubled ARPU and 15% YoY churn reduction.
- Drove innovations including AI integrations and a ground breaking content discovery feature.
- Secured \$9M Verizon contract renewal with 100% client satisfaction.



My role

I lead Verizon's cross-platform Fios TV design team, managing eight designers across London and New York (20 at its peak) and partnering closely with product, engineering, and analytics stakeholders. I oversee all design delivery for set-top box, mobile, web, with direct accountability for business outcomes and client satisfaction.

Key contributions include restructuring and aligning the design team, driving cross-platform consistency, leading AI and innovation initiatives, and supporting Verizon's product roadmap and strategic planning. In parallel, I provide line management and career development for my team while contributing to the broader transformation of the TCS global design practice.

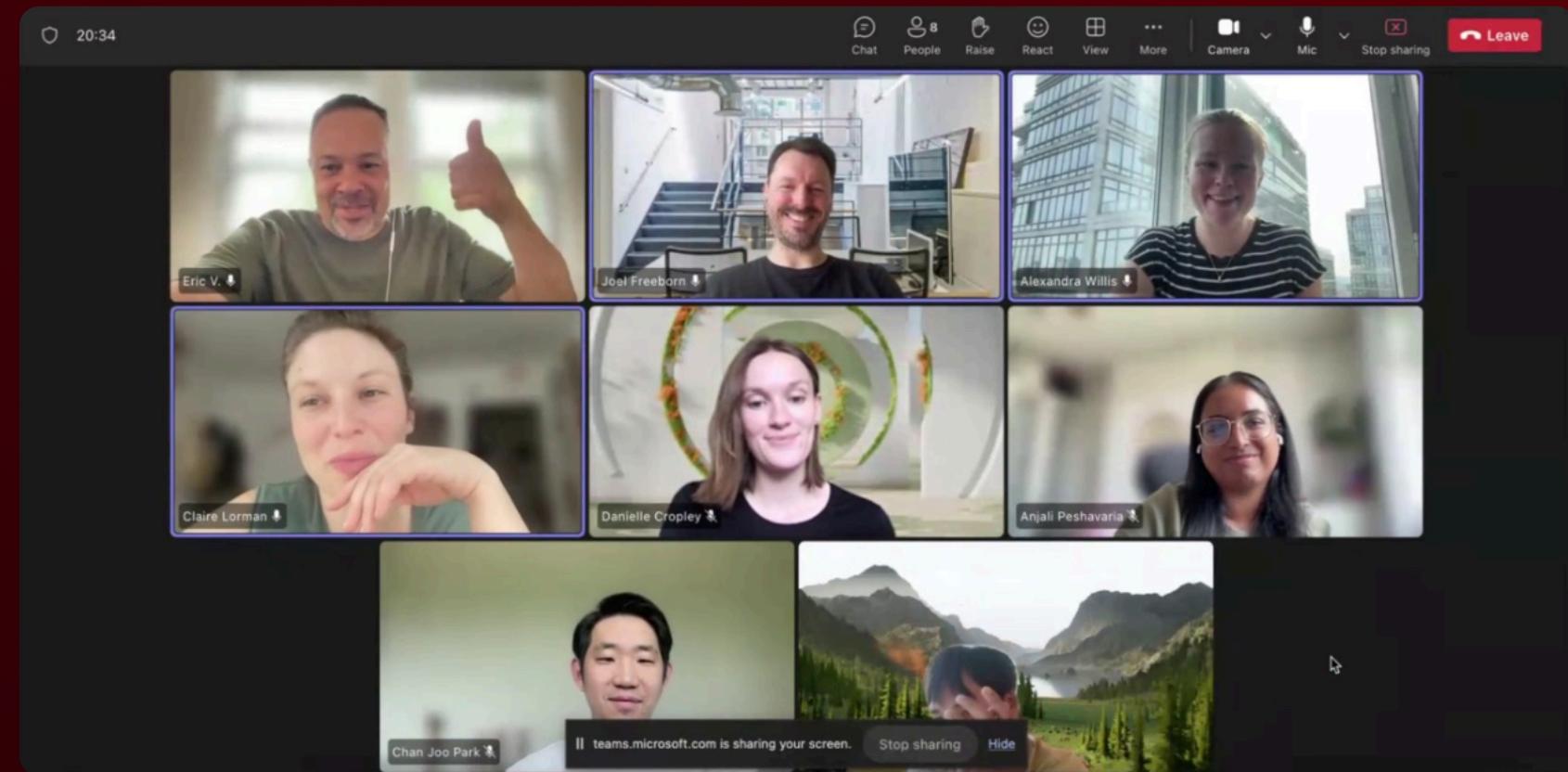
The challenge

When I joined, Verizon had just launched a new Fios set-top box and companion mobile app, but the experience was inconsistent across platforms, and internal ways of working reflected this fragmentation. Product owners and design teams were siloed, slowing innovation and weakening the user experience.

My mandate was to unify the product vision and design practice, drive engagement and retention, and introduce future-facing design thinking to ensure Verizon remained competitive. At the same time, I had to navigate reduced budgets and shifting priorities as the business moved from build mode to long-term evolution.



NEW YORK



LONDON



Building a high performing cross-continental team

I unified a fragmented design team across London and New York, restructuring team models and ways of working to drive consistency, quality, and culture.

Through regular design forums, crit sessions, and individual coaching, I broke down platform silos and fostered a culture of openness and shared ownership. This empowered the designers to

contribute across platforms, support each other's growth, and drive consistent product outcomes.

This alignment directly supported design enhancements that helped double ARPU and reduce churn by 15% YoY, proving that strong team culture drives measurable business impact.

Strategic product innovation

I led future-focused design initiatives to keep Verizon's Fios TV products competitive in an evolving media landscape.

A key focus was applying generational theory to identify shifting media behaviours from Gen Alpha to Boomers. Our insights helped to inform long-term product strategy and roadmap decisions.

In parallel, I drove initiatives such as 'Help Me Decide' (pictured right) and AI search for Fios TV Mobile, both designed to enhance content discovery and drive deeper user engagement.



Building trusted client partnerships

As a trusted advisor to Verizon product leadership, I played a key role in shaping product roadmaps, guiding strategic planning, and aligning design delivery with evolving business priorities.

Beyond day-to-day execution, I worked closely with Verizon's VPs and product owners to identify growth opportunities, navigate organisational challenges, and bring new strategic thinking, from AI to generational engagement.

This leadership and partnership directly contributed to securing a \$9M contract renewal with a 100% client satisfaction score and positioned our team as a core strategic partner within the Fios TV organisation.

The design team consistently brings strong expertise and strategic thinking, grounded in Verizon's priorities. A valued long-term partner.

Carl Knopf
Head of Video at Verizon

Thank you

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