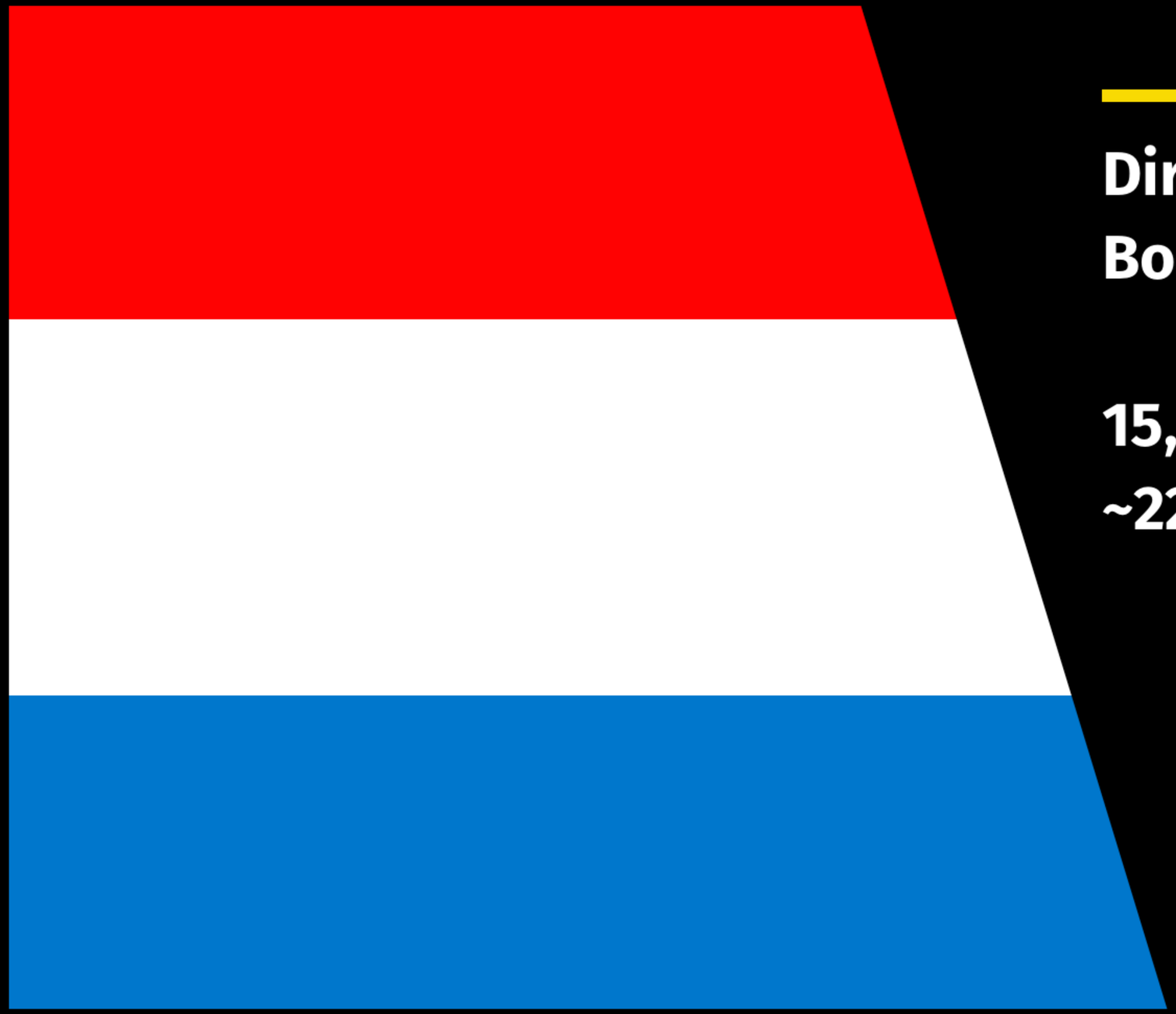
Scaling Design

Stuart Frisby

mfr.is

@stuartfrisby



Director of Design - Booking.com

15,000 staff
~220 designers

2011-2017

5 Designers

220 Designers

Designer

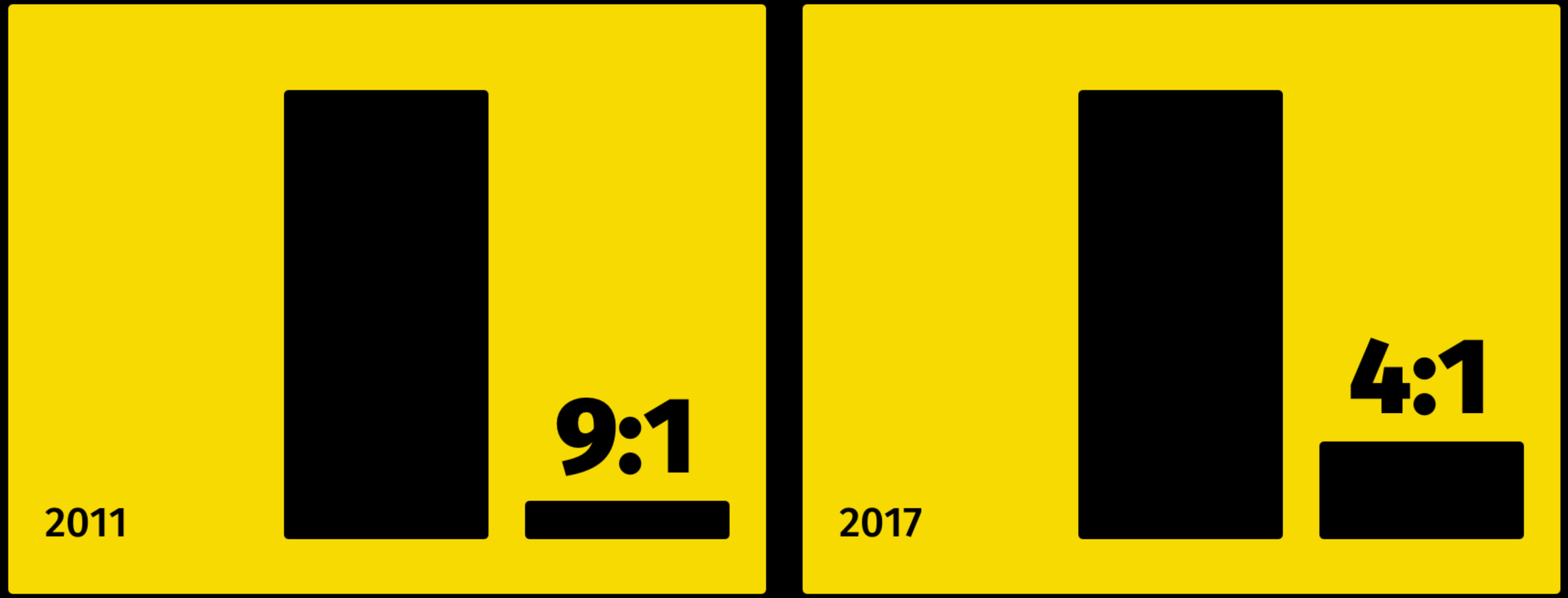
Designer
&
Product Owner

Senior Product
Owner

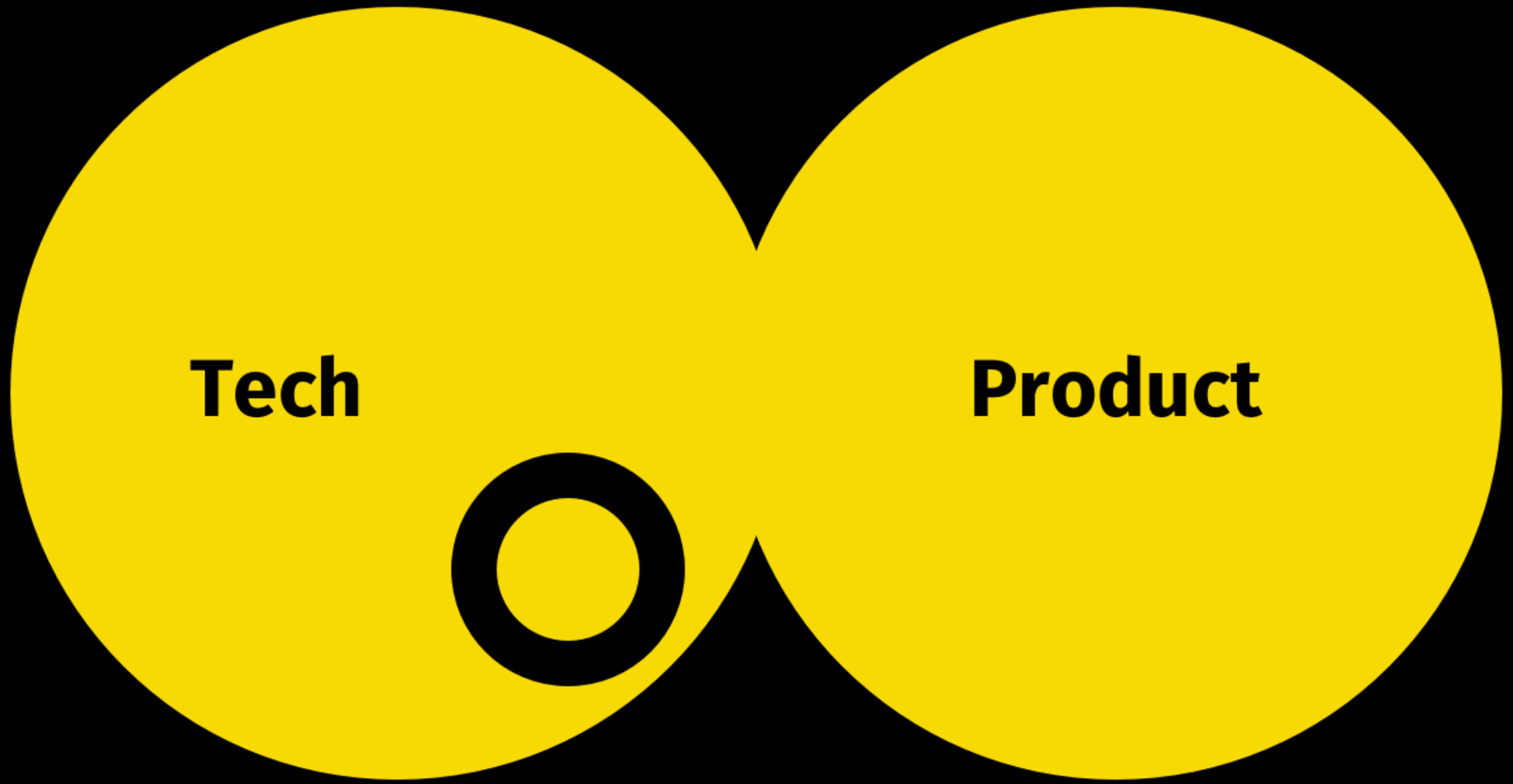
Principal
Designer

Director of
Design

Engineers:Designers.



Design ‘Org’.



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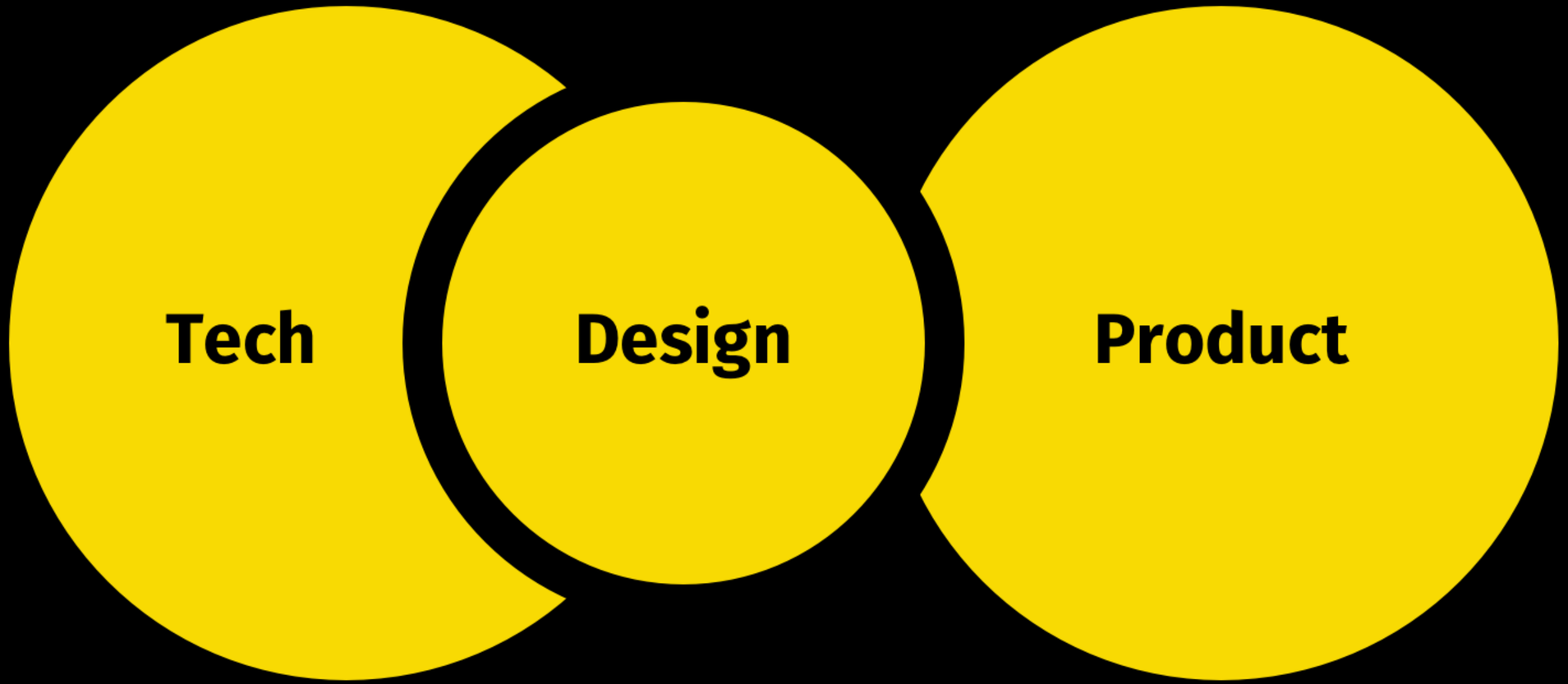
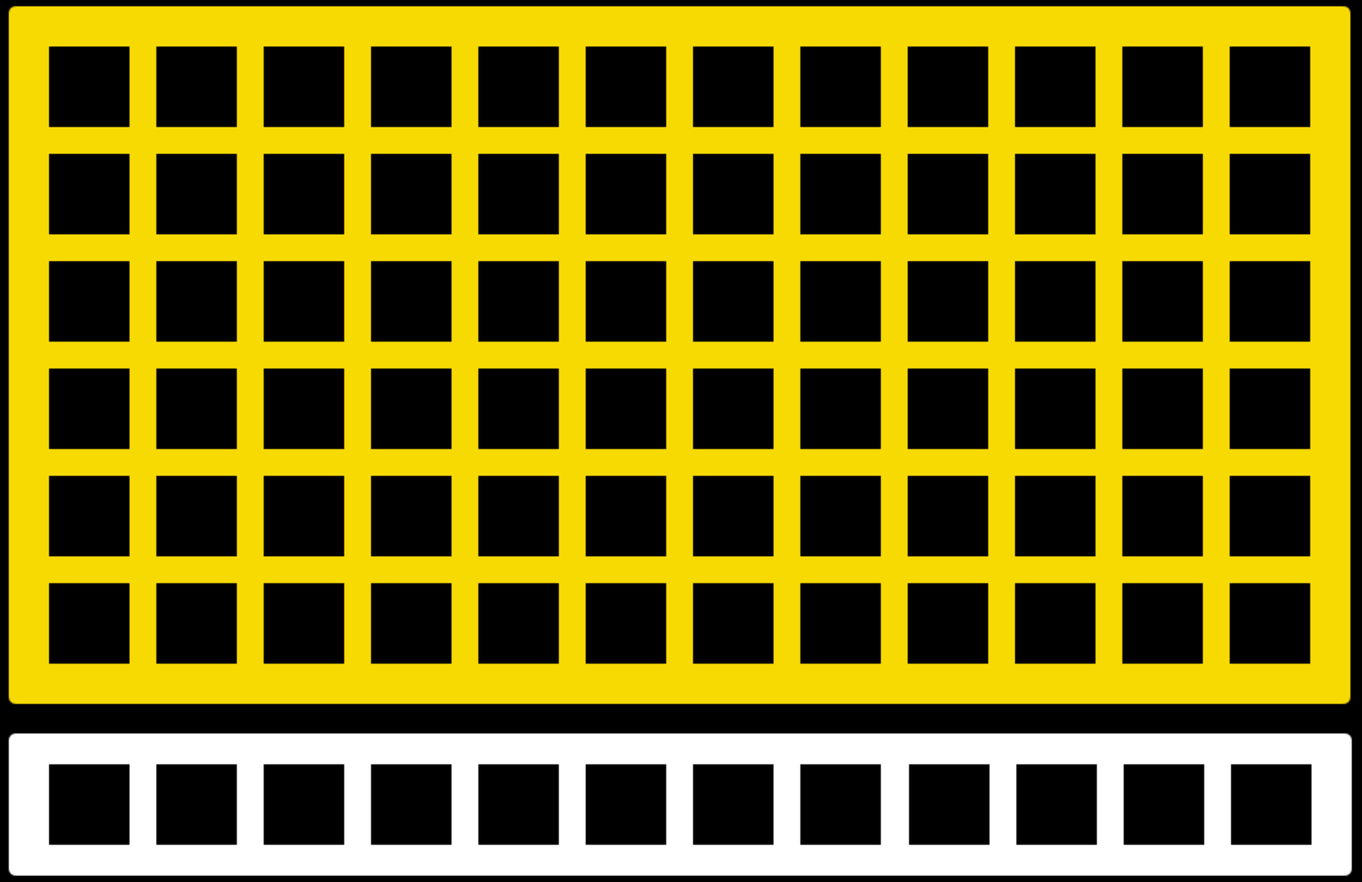


Designers.



Designers embedded in multidisciplinary teams

Centralised design function

Measuring design makes scaling possible.

A
B

EVERCORE EQUITY RESEARCH

“[Booking.com’s] utilization of A/B testing … drives higher conversion across its entire platform, resulting in conversion levels 2-3x the industry average”.

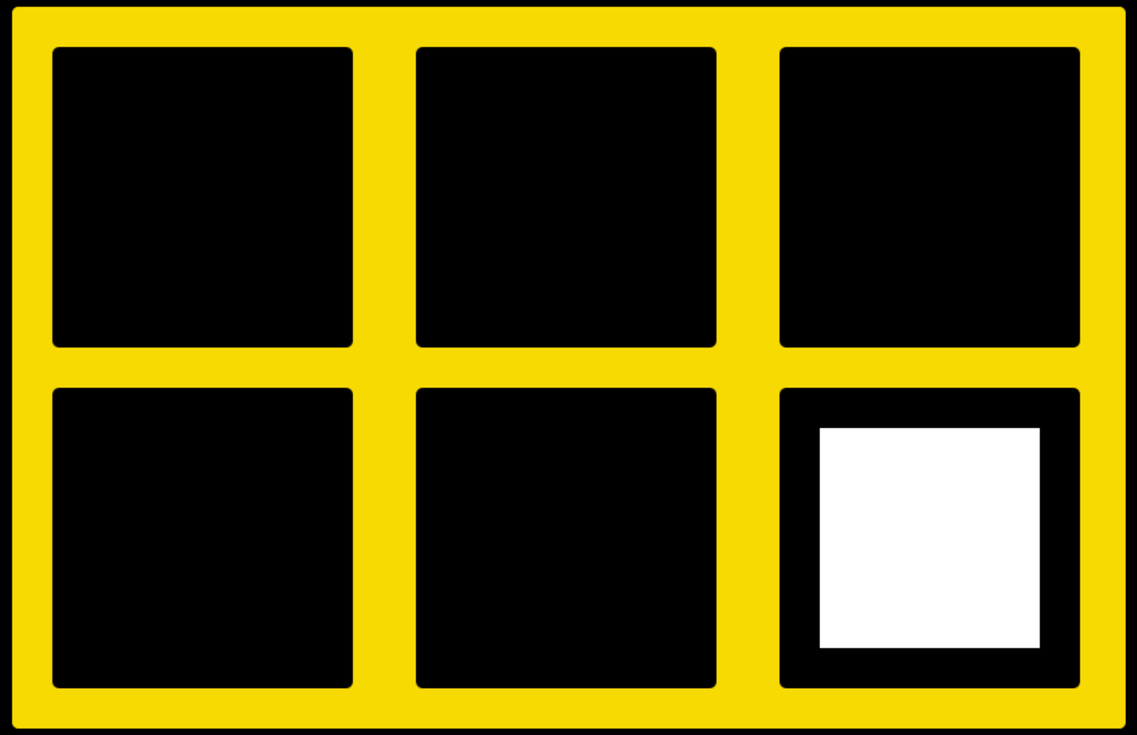
http://bkng.it/1jypoK5

Design makes a positive, measurable impact to our business & our customers.

Design makes a positive, **measurable** impact to our business & our customers.

We hired more designers.

Teams, Designers.

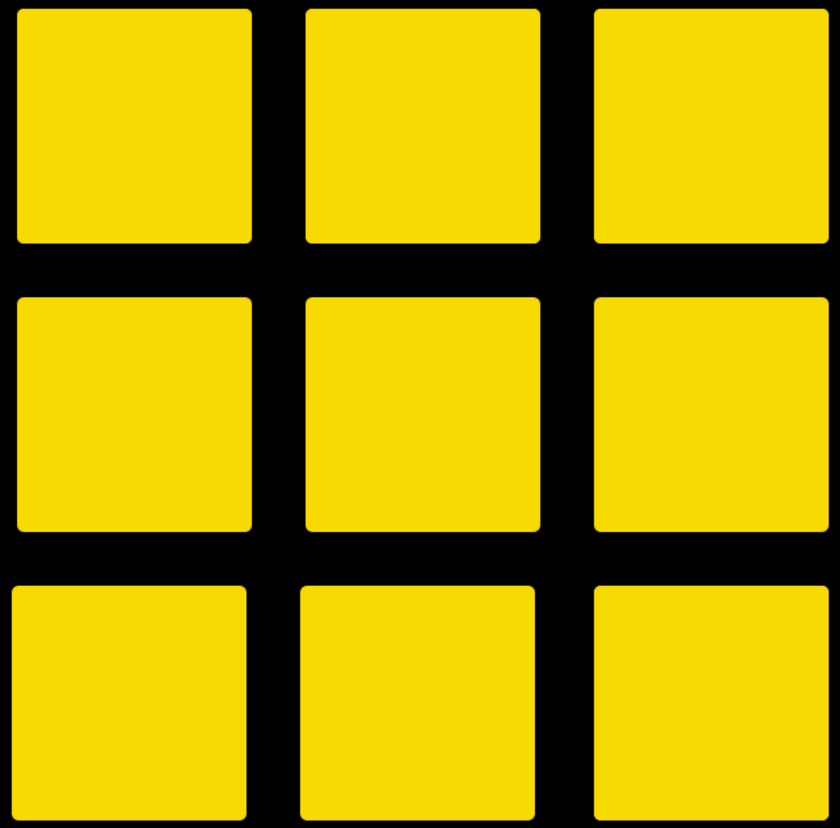


The Team is the organisational unit of growth, every team has a designer.

Design now grows with the business.

From 5, to 50, to 200.

From 5, to 50.



- Proven methodology
- Established working practises
- Concurrent scaling of recruitment

Things we should've done then.

- Invest in Design Ops
- Plan for more aggressive growth
- Formally define design career paths
- Make our design culture explicit
- Bring Research, Copy & Design closer together

Suddenly, everything was difficult.

Not a team, not yet a community.

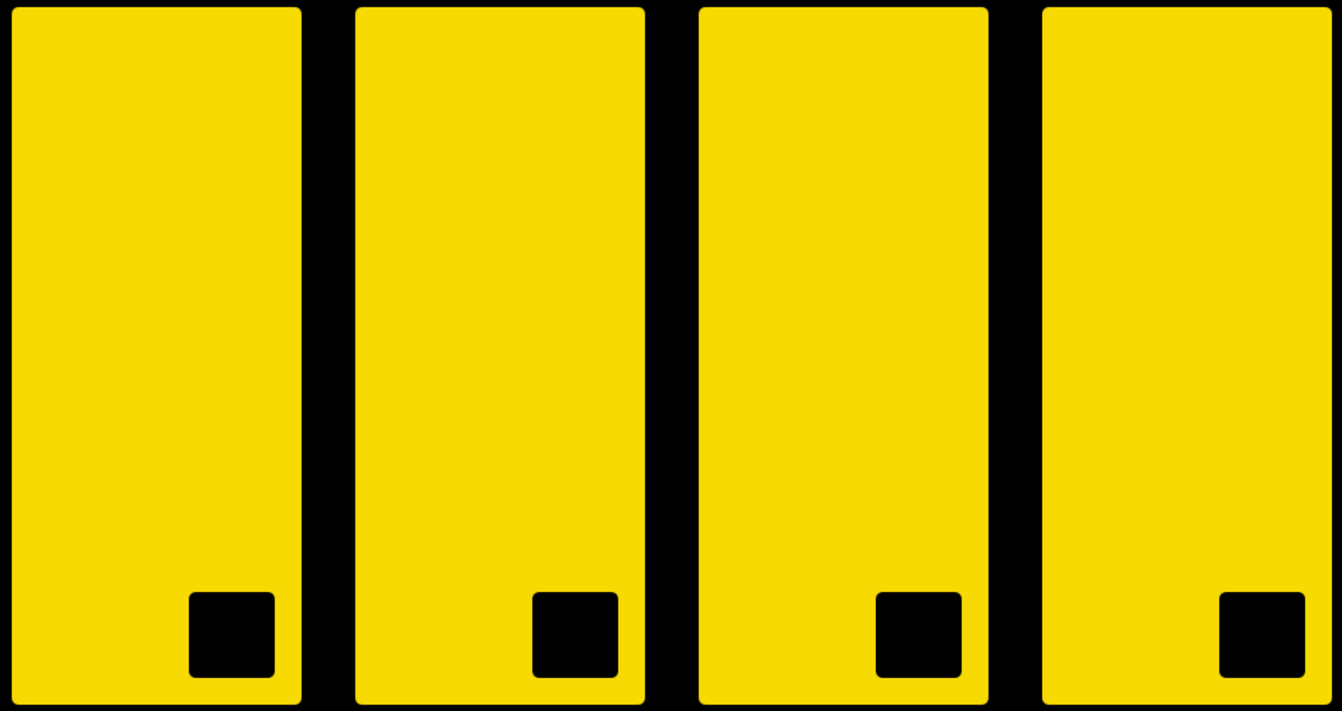
Yes, that's a Britney reference.

Rebooting...

Designing the community.

- Equipment
- In-house design curriculum
- Designer onboarding programme
- Rewritten job specs
- Cross-team collaboration processes
- Formal Critiquing forums
- Design Leadership AMA
- Skills Assessment Model

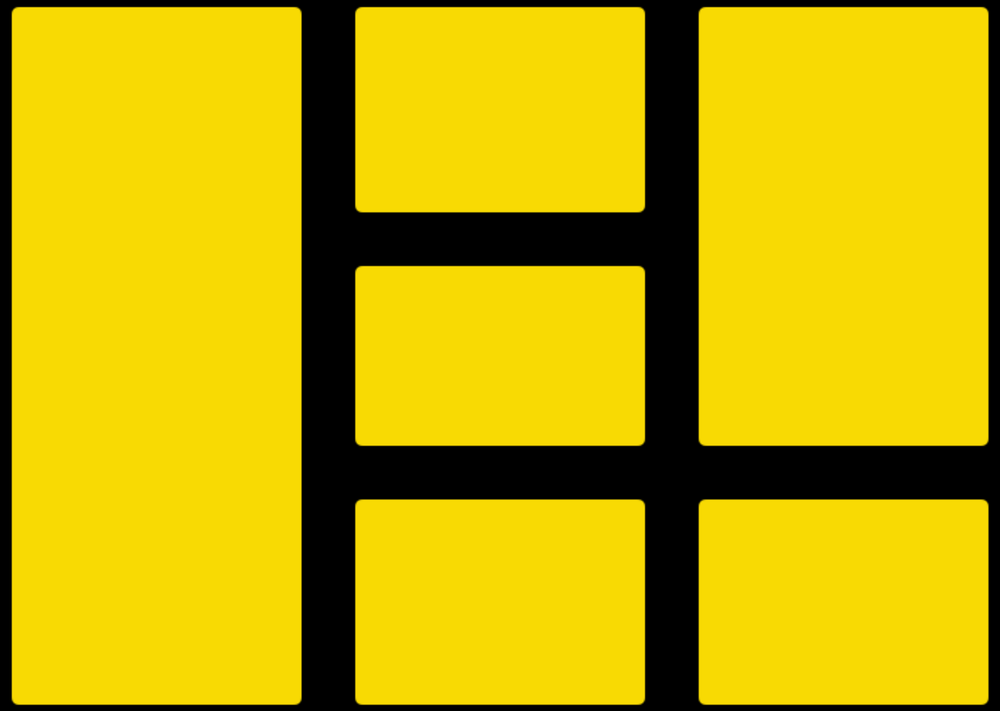
Multiple distinct communities.



Built off the existing org. structure

Senior Designers

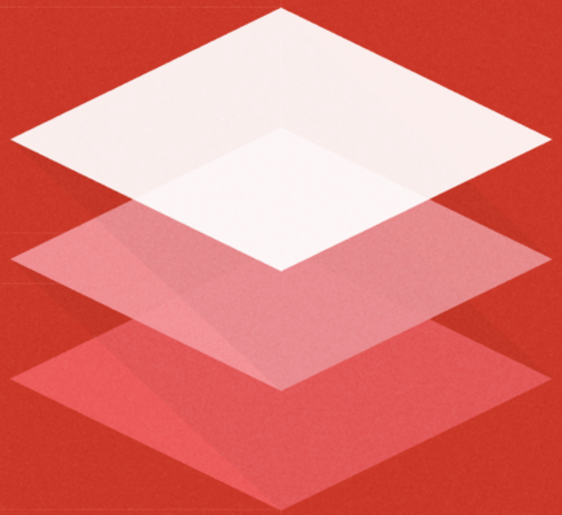
Specialist hiring.



An implicit design culture is a fragile one

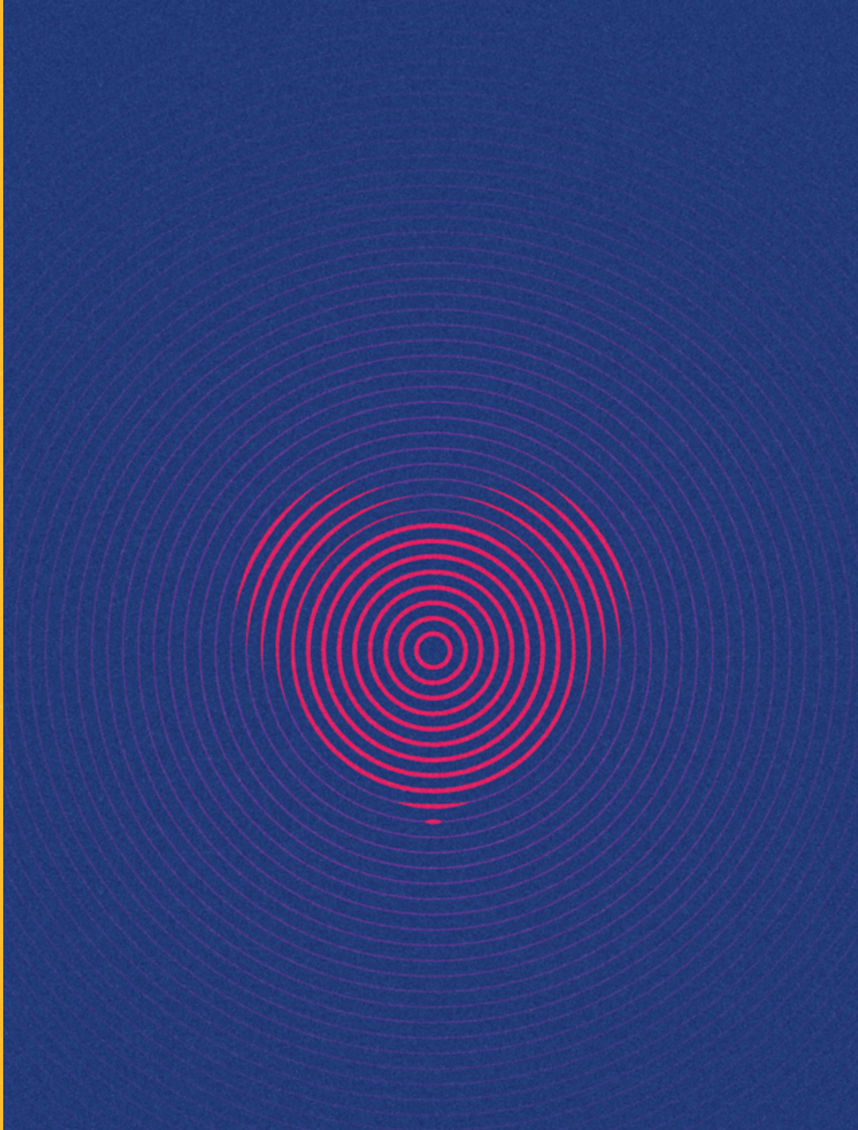
Design Principles

- Codify loose consensus
- Short-hand terminology for our shared beliefs
- Complimentary to the business formula & vision
- Behaviours we have seen deliver success

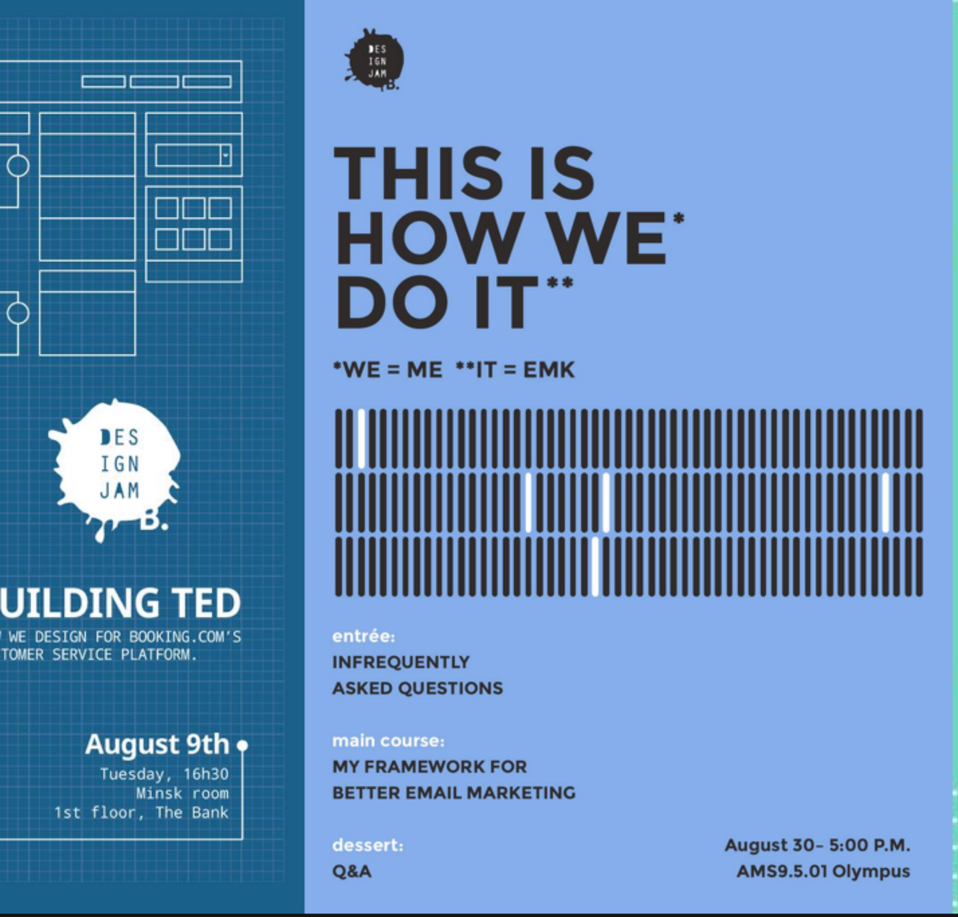


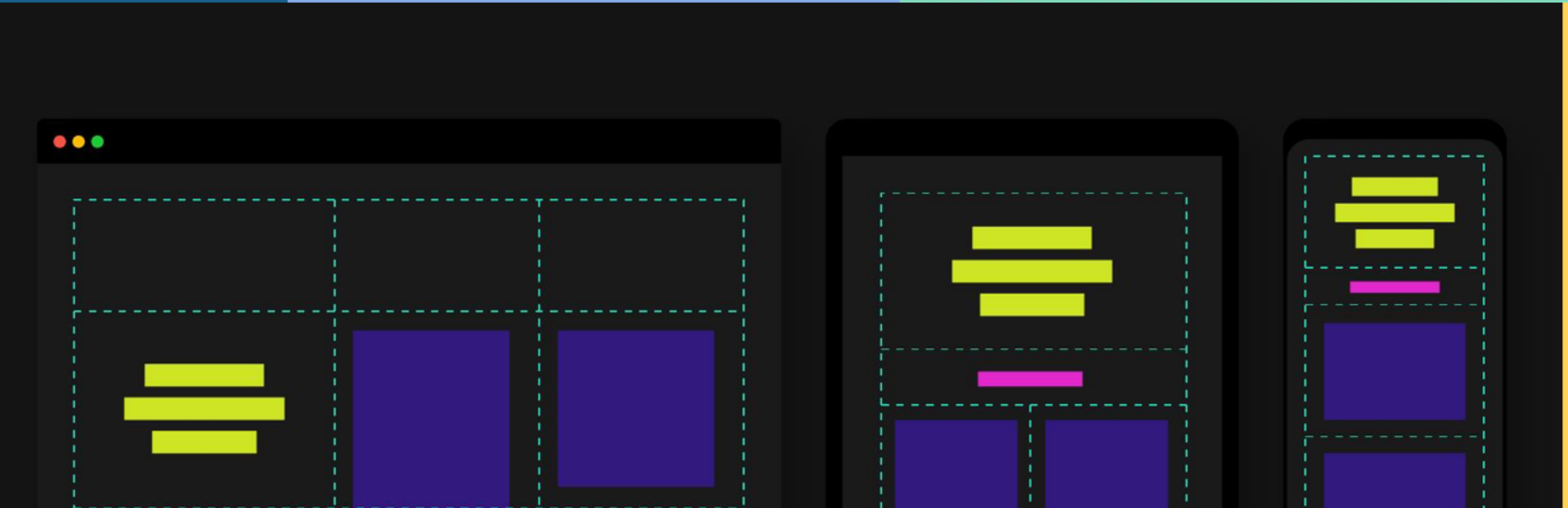
Design for people

DESIGN IS A TEAM SPORT



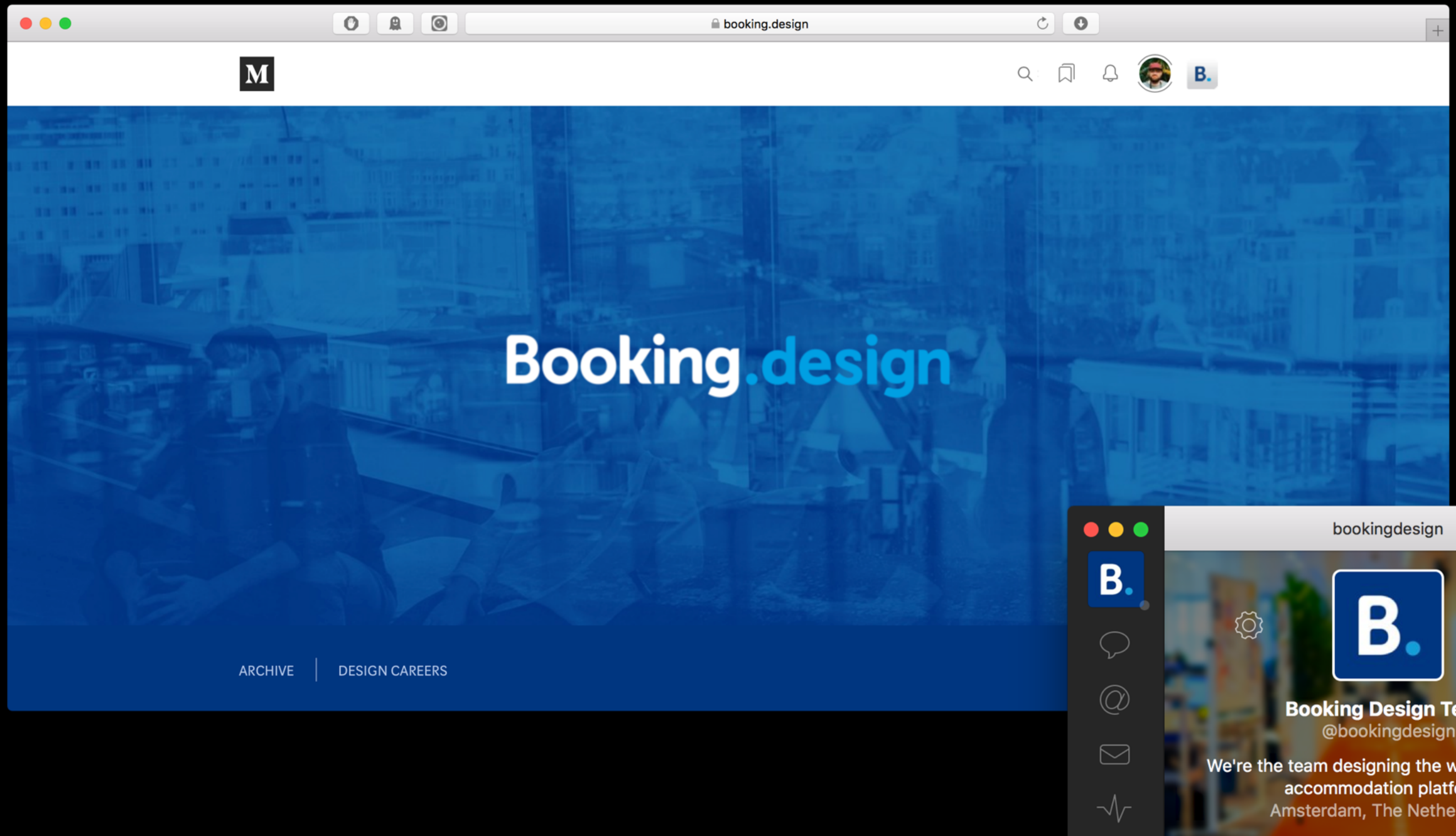
Informed by data, driven by empathy





MACHINE LEARNING

• for designers •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accommodation platform.
Amsterdam, The Netherlands

You can never ‘over-communicate’.

Lossy Communication

- 10% breakthrough-rate.
- Segregated Audiences with specific comms. needs.
- Organisational Memory Loss.
- Lack of Managerial Imperative.

Organisational Headwind.

- Autonomy, silos & competing agendas.
- Disagreements are better than surprises.
- Assume shared positive intent.
- Compromise isn’t a dirty word.

First designers, then design systems.

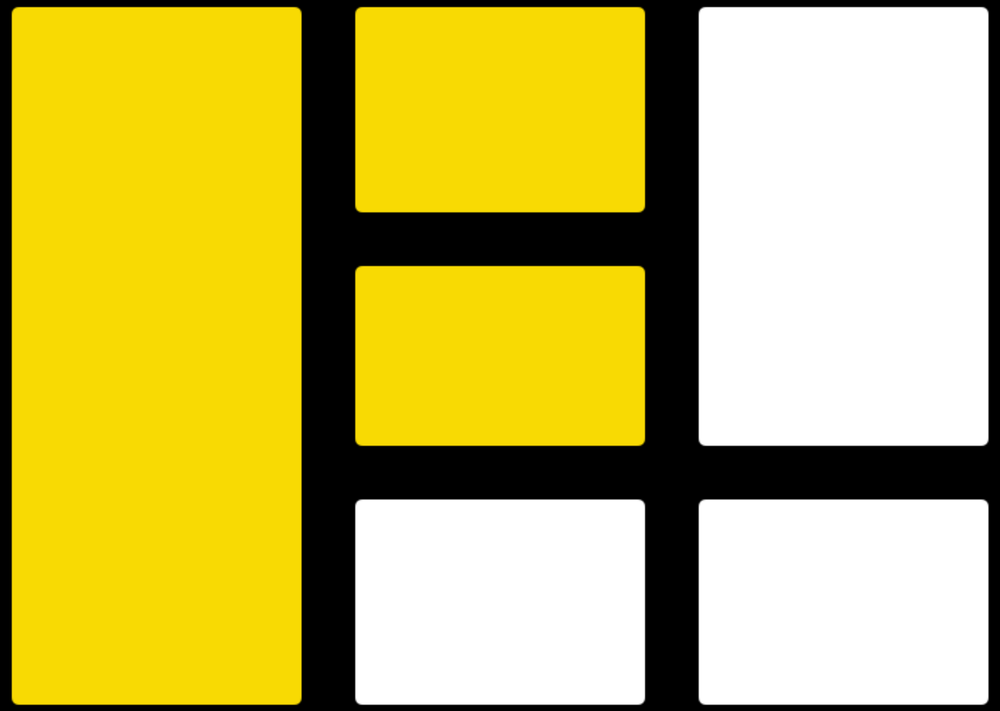
Design Systems

- ‘The Product is the Styleguide’.
- Invest in new teams, or in new tools?
- Prove the value first.

Finding Value, Measuring Impact.

- Test a design system without building a design system.
- Find an outcome, build that, measure impact.
- Establish sustainable metrics to support sustained investment.

Deployment Progress



Long-term Measurement.

- Does this stuff make it easier for you to do your job well?
- Does this stuff make a positive impact on the product?
- Is our approach being mirrored elsewhere in the organisation?
- Have we stopped having to justify our investment?

Gifting design

What we offer

- Design sprint facilitation & support
- Prototyping
- Skills model
- Hiring innovations
- Community event formats
- Design systems for non-designers

Design as a strategic partner

Redefining Design.

- Move from an end-of-process production task.
- Forming strategic alliances in product leadership.
- Pre-empting future pain through explorative design.
- Visualising abstract ambitions.

None of this is easy.

Experiment, learn, adapt & teach.

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