

Rafael Polutta

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Product designer with 11+ years of experience designing useful, mindful digital products for startups and established brands. I work across product design, design systems, mobile apps, brand identity, and visual storytelling – best in small, ambitious teams where clarity, craft, and shipping actually matter.

Experience

UI Design Lead, Phrase / 2020–Present

Joined as the only designer when there was no design system in place. Helped hire and scale the design team from 1 to 12 designers, shaped the product UI and visual foundations, and created Syntax, Phrase's shared design system.

Built the component language, Figma structure, guidelines, and designer–engineer workflow behind Syntax, now used by every product team. Advocated for dedicated engineering ownership and helped turn design–system work from a side effort into product infrastructure.

Mentored two designers at a time and helped them grow into senior roles.

Senior Product Designer, Share Now / 2019–2020

Helped merge car2go and DriveNow into one unified mobility product and brand experience. Focused on trust, orientation, familiar patterns, and clear mobile flows for existing users across cities and brands.

Product Designer, car2go / 2016–2019

Designed core mobile app experiences for a global car-sharing product across iOS, Android, Windows Phone, and BlackBerry. Worked on real-world flows: finding, booking, opening, driving, and ending a trip – with a focus on speed, clarity, and trust under pressure.

Product Design Intern, mytaxi / 2015–2016

Joined the car2go app team through a six-month internship that turned into an early full-time hire after five months. Supported mobile product design, interface production, and user flows.

Freelance Designer / 2012–2022

Designed websites, MVPs, brand identities, product visuals, photography, and video for clients alongside my full-time roles – including Tomorrow and a San Francisco-based startup. Worked hands-on across concept, UI, visual direction, production, and launch.

Education

Communications Design & Art Direction / 2012–2015, with Distinction

Typography, illustration, photography, video, web and app design, concept development, and writing. Thesis produced as a printed editorial design object.

Skills

Product design · UI design · UX design · Design systems · Mobile apps · Web design · Design leadership · Mentoring · Prototyping · Information architecture · Interaction design · Visual design · Brand identity · Art direction · Product strategy · Design QA · Writing · Photography · Video editing · Visual storytelling

Languages

English · German