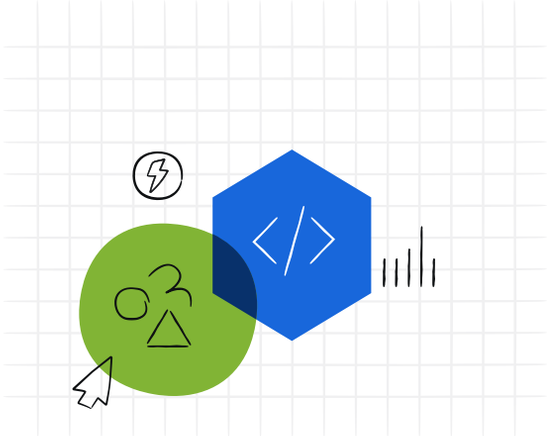
ATLASSIAN | FROM THE TEAMWORK LAB



Design Technologists: turning creativity into code

Design Technologists are democratizing innovation and transforming Atlassian's software development lifecycle—turning design concepts into real, testable experiences much earlier in projects.

What is a Design Technologist?

Sometimes called Creative Technologists or Design Engineers, this role has been around for years, but AI has massively amplified its impact.

- Thinks like a designer, codes like an engineer
- Works in real code, real data, and real interfaces
- Bridges the gap between idea and delivery

What Design Technologists do at Atlassian

- **Build coded prototypes (not just mockups):** High-fidelity, interactive, data-connected experiences used to quickly test feasibility, user experience, and edge cases
- **Create tools and automation for handoffs:** Shared extensions, scripts, and automation that turn design intent into code, migrating tokens and guiding designers and developers as they work
- **Integrate AI into the design system:** Create AI-integrated design-system scaffolding so anyone can spin up realistic, on-brand, coded prototypes in minutes

"Our Design technologists at Atlassian are driving higher confidence in the feasibility of complex ideas faster and a lot earlier on. As a result we are shifting decisions to be made sooner as stakeholders and leaders can feel the experience that our customers will receive."

Maria Christley, Head of Atlassian Design System

Why it matters

Scalable frameworks

DTs build the infra, context layers, and system that teams can plug into and leverage quickly. This enables more people across the org to make highly interactive solutions with AI prototyping, integrate with tooling, and speed up delivery.

Experimenting at the edge

DTs work a step ahead, testing new technologies, malleable UI patterns, and workflows. They make it faster and low risk to prototype unconventional ideas and more ambitious concepts. Solutions are refined at a higher cadence, allowing for better precision and craft execution.

Faster, smoother delivery

DTs prove feasibility in code before big bets move forward. PMs and designers quickly get to ~70%-accurate, mid-fidelity prototypes and real user feedback. Earlier collaboration turns handoffs into handshakes—less rework, fewer surprises, faster delivery.

Where Design Technologists shine

Early-stage, ambiguous explorations where experimenting with possible solutions drives greater clarity and alignment

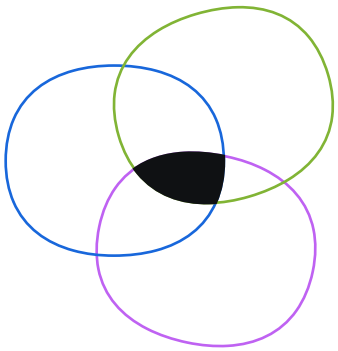
AI-native experiences driving how we work with new tools, evolving workflows, and emerging AI infra

High-stakes flows where static designs miss key nuances and ability to assess for how an experience feels

Amplifying the designer-developer relationship that enables all crafts to speak the same language

Design Technologists sit at the intersection of multiple roles

- Design Technologists
- Engineering
- Product
- Design



> **"AI is collapsing the distance between imagining possible futures and making them come to life. As building becomes part of every role, our boldest ideas won't just live in static mocks, they'll be interactive functional prototypes that we can feel, learn from, and ship faster than we have before."**
>
> Lewis Healey, Principal Design Technologist

IMPACT AT A GLANCE

DTs have directly contributed to evolving Atlassian's prototyping culture at scale:

35%

month-over-month growth in AI prototyping activity

12,000+

AI-powered prototypes run across Atlassian teams

92%

of PMs and designers report that prototyping has a significant impact on decision-making

42%

report faster delivery speeds, freeing developers to focus on the hardest problems

Learn more

Check out these resources for a deeper dive on Design Technologists at Atlassian:

Maker Hour: Being a Design Technologist in the AI era ›

The trick to AI prototyping with your design system ›

Turning Handoffs into Handshakes: Integrating Design Systems for AI Prototyping at Scale ›