

James Grey

Product-minded builder. { Design • Engineering • Systems }

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Portfolio • smokemeakipper.xyz

Profile

I design and build production systems—from first spec to shipped product—without needing a full team to do it. Fifteen years across SaaS, B2B, agency, and internal platforms. I work across design, engineering, and product without treating them as separate handoffs. My most useful skill is judgment: knowing what to build, recognizing when it's right, and making the calls that move work forward.

Core Skills

HTML, CSS, JavaScript, PHP • production-level implementation UI architecture, design systems, component-based interfaces JSON data modeling, content pipelines, API integration
Self-hosted infrastructure: Linux, Caddy, PHP-FPM, Cloudflare Filesystem-backed data models, session auth, HTTP range streaming Design-to-build ownership • spec, implement, ship, maintain

Selected Projects

Self-Hosted Media Platform

Personal—smokemeakipper.xyz

A fully self-hosted media archive and playback platform—no CMS, no database, no third-party media infrastructure. The filesystem is the canonical source of availability; JSON is the catalog.

- Ingest pipeline that reconciles filesystem state with JSON catalogs and pulls metadata from OMDb—the only mechanism that writes JSON

- Dual-mode card renderer: IMDb mode for metadata-rich content, tree mode for collection browsing with a fully recursive accordion
- Custom media player handling audio and video through a single interface, with HTTP range request streaming for video seeking
- Session-based auth protecting every request—pages, JSON indexes, posters, and raw media—enforced at the Caddy layer with PHP session validation on all routes
- Client-side filtering with no re-fetch—all sources fetched in parallel on init

KXTX Content Platform

Personal—kxtx.xyz

A publishing platform built around three structurally distinct verticals—Blog, Shop, and Fiction—each with its own data flow, rendering path, and visual identity. No CMS, no build step, no framework.

- Blog: Markdown → JSON → UI pipeline with a Python CLI that scans content, rebuilds the JSON index, generates PHP stubs, and updates sitemap.xml in one pass. 76 posts across 8 categories.
 - Shop: Shopify Storefront API integration with server-side caching, featured product system, and editorial Markdown support on individual product pages
 - Fiction: per-work visual identity—distinct font, colour palette, and CSS per title—with a full issue reader for serialized long-form fiction
 - Conditional JS loading via page-level flags—only what each page needs is sent
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Professional Experience

Lead Designer

Integrity XD | Remote | 2024

- Directed UI systems and modular page architecture for education and contractor client rebuilds
- Improved navigation structure, content hierarchy, and primary user flows across customer-facing sites
- Produced implementation-ready components and documentation for developer handoff
- Delivered across web, print, and multi-surface digital work

Principal UI Designer

SubHQ | Remote | 2022–2023

- Designed and documented a complete interface system: buttons, inputs, navigation, tables, modals, and toasts
- Defined UX patterns for bidding, scheduling, documentation, and asset handoff
- Maintained consistency across product and marketing surfaces
- Worked directly with product leadership on requirements, scope, and architecture decisions

UI Designer

PureRed | Remote | 2021–2022

- Built landing pages and campaign UI for Spectrum within a strict enterprise brand and compliance system
- Designed reusable layout modules for high-volume, repeatable campaign launches
- Delivered under fast turnaround with strong accuracy and compliance requirements

UI / Web Designer

Huckabuy | Remote | 2020–2021

- Maintained and improved UI across marketing and product surfaces for a B2B SaaS platform
- Built style guide foundations and contributed to conversion-focused site iteration

Creative Developer / Marketing Manager

Accretive Technology Group | On-site | 2010–2019

- Built and iterated frontend campaign systems across 2,000+ white-label properties supporting tens of millions of daily visitors
- Created sandbox testing workflows that informed join-funnel optimization
- Increased conversions 40% on a top-performing desktop template and 23% on a top-performing mobile concept
- Partnered with engineering and sales to move winning variants into production

UI / Product Designer

Strategic Observation Systems | On-site | 2009–2010

- Built the primary web application UI for a GPS monitoring platform used in regulated government environments
- Implemented and maintained internal workflows and case-management interfaces

Web Designer / Developer

Key Design Websites | On-site | 2007–2009

- Delivered small-business websites from design through implementation on HTML and WordPress