Aarti Kava

Design Strategy Consulting · Fractional Design Leadership

Shanghai, China · hello@aartikava.com · WeChat: Arqua_
Portfolio: www.aartikava.com · LinkedIn: linkedin.com/in/aarti-kava

PROFILE

I help founders and leaders find the real problem behind the brief, then build the research, systems and team that keep the work going after I have moved on. Nine years in design, seven of them leading it, across three online businesses in luxury, fashion and beauty at Tata CLiQ: new products built from zero, and redesigns that moved the numbers. I take on a few projects at a time, so each one gets my full attention.

+31% conversion, bounce rate halved, on the app homepage (control group)	**+80%** add-to-cart after the watches redesign, within three months of launch	**40%** faster design turnaround, through the design system and Research Lab	**4.2 → 4.8** iOS rating, held across 90,000+ ratings	**12** designers and interns led at the team's largest, across three businesses

HOW I WORK WITH CLIENTS

Experience audit — 2–3 weeks

A fresh, senior look at your product through your customers' eyes. You get a clear list of where trust, clarity and feeling are leaking, and what to fix first.

Research-led strategy sprint — 4–6 weeks

Depth interviews, synthesis with your team in the room, and a rewritten brief: the one underneath the one you started with.

Design org and system setup — Ongoing

Design systems, research practice and rituals that let a small team work like a larger one, and keep quality steady as you scale.

Fractional design leadership — Retainer

Hands-on direction for teams that need a Head of Design's judgement before they need a full-time hire.

SELECTED WORK

- **Luxury watches, research-led redesign.** Depth interviews and four personas: people don't buy watches, they buy the story they'll tell about them. Within three months of launch: +30% conversion, +80% add-to-cart, +25% engagement. The business team pitched Richemont with the redesigned experience, and TimeVallée (Richemont Group) chose Tata CLiQ Luxury as its exclusive partner for its first India launch.
- **App homepage.** Revamped around what people do first: context-based homepages and modular components the business runs on its own. Against a control group: +31% conversion, +200% clicks per visit, bounce rate halved.
- **India's first AI-powered luxury shopping assistant.** Designed the interaction model, conversation structure and tone. The challenge was restraint as much as capability.
- **Bvlgari's first digital boutique in India.** Homepage, navigation and store-in-store design to global luxury standards. The store-in-store gives each partner brand, including Bvlgari and The Collective, its own visible space.
- **Design system and Research Lab.** A design system of 500+ components for three businesses, and a research practice that became the first step of every project. Turnaround became 40% faster.
- **Palette, built from zero.** A social-led beauty commerce platform built on original research, first in its category.

EXPERIENCE

Tata CLiQ · Luxury, Fashion & Palette — Aug 2018 – Present

Tata Group's multi-brand online marketplace for luxury, fashion and beauty in India.

- Built and led a team of up to twelve designers and interns across three businesses. Have grown four designers into senior roles, one of whom became a design manager.
- When the Head of Design left, I stepped up to lead design, and introduced design operations, accessibility audits and research practices that became group-wide standards.
- Introduced the team to AI tools early; AI is now part of how the team designs every day.

> **Senior Product Design Manager** — May 2024 – Present · Shanghai (Remote)
>
> *Leading design for three businesses at once and for Tata CLiQ Luxury since 2019, across app and web.*
>
> **Lead Product Designer** — Oct 2021 – May 2024 · Mumbai (Remote)
>
> *Led experience design for the highest-value categories and designed a new social commerce platform from scratch.*
>
> **Senior Product Designer** — Jun 2020 – Oct 2021 · Mumbai (Remote)
>
> *Owned checkout, payments, seller portal and onboarding: +28% cart conversion after the redesign.*
>
> **UI & UX Designer** — Aug 2018 – Jun 2020 · Mumbai
>
> *Sole designer for CLiQ Luxury in its formative years; redesigned the full web and app experience from scratch.*

UX Designer · Dwello, JM Financial — Nov 2017 – Jul 2018 · Mumbai

Designed trustworthy interfaces and digital-to-offline journeys for a real estate platform.

Beyond e-commerce: scooter HMI for Victoria (2024) · Olli autonomous bus user journey, Best User Story award (2018) · social rewards chat app, freelance (2019)

SKILLS

Strategy and research: Design strategy, Qualitative research, Depth interviews, Journey mapping, A/B testing, Accessibility audits

Systems and teams: Design systems, Design operations, Hiring and team building, Mentoring, Stakeholder management

Product design: Interaction design, Mobile apps, E-commerce, 0-to-1 products, Luxury and emotional design, HMI, AR

AI: AI product design, Conversational design, AI coding agents (Claude Code)

EDUCATION

London Business School · Tata Bluemint Leadership Programme · 2022

Symbiosis Institute of Design · B.Des Industrial Design · 2013–2017

Certification: AI Prompting Essentials, Google · 2025

MENTORING

144 sessions across 12 countries on ADPList. Top 10% contributor in India; qualified for ADPList Advance, the platform's highest mentor tier. 100% of mentees rate communication as exceptional.

LANGUAGES

English (fluent) · Hindi and Marathi (native) · Gujarati (fluent) · French (beginner) · Mandarin (beginner, HSK 2)