

# LEAD PRODUCT DESIGNER

Demystify Lingerie Experience	2018
PDP Redesign	2019
Sparks Relaunch	2020
Personalisation	2021
Outfitting	2022
Navigation Redesign	2024

Aishwarya  
Karve



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**ENGLISH IS NOT MY FIRST LANGUAGE, DESIGN IS!**

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**What originally brought you to M&S? Did you study at college /university before joining? Explain the journey and what drove you.**

A decade ago, I decided to move to the UK from India to pursue Master's in Design and was eventually drawn into the world of User Experience Design and have been since designing for high-impact brands globally.

In 2018, I came across an exciting opportunity to work for M&S as a Lead Product Designer and 3 years later I am happy that I am playing an integral part in M&S' Digital Transformation strategy to become a 'digital first' retailer!

**Tell us a bit about the function you work in and the role it plays within the business. Why is it key to our transformation?**

*“We don't just use design to make things look pretty. We use design to solve problems.”*

Becoming a digital first business is core to M&S transformation and creating cutting edge experience design is imperative. The design team is at the heart of this transformation working alongside product team as we believe that perfect user experience should look good and work even better!

**Describe your role and what you do on a day-to-day basis.**

*“A Product Designer, at its core, is a problem solver.”*

As a product design lead my job is to solve problems for the end-users and ship high quality, user-friendly, pixel perfect products which are aligned with the business goals.

At M&S, designers work alongside product managers, UX researchers, data scientists and engineers to identify pain points, design solutions & to understand data sets to determine success of the product. While designing a solution, we not only need to be subject matter experts of our users & their problems but also need to understand their motivations, triggers, aspirations, and goals

After understanding our users and their problems, we start to draft of our first solutions. There are various methods and workshops for ideating a process. At M&S we have a design system that allows us to quickly mock-up and prototype a design. This means we can rapidly test our designs that ensures a cohesive visual and interactive experience that matches our design principles. With our final design as a blueprint, our engineering team works in a series of sprints to build our solution. Working closely with the engineers, we go through a series of daily stand-ups and QA to ensure our solution is on track with the design.

We believe that designing user experience is incomplete without measuring and analysing the data of your product once it's live. We carefully monitor to determine if we are moving the needle and making progress. That data then helps us to make informed decisions in the next iteration of the design and process. Product & UX design is this constant loop of analysing, designing, testing, launching, monitoring, and evolving through experimentation!

**What's your biggest achievement at M&S, and what do you find rewarding about your role?**

Launching the new loyalty scheme has been a significant milestone in M&S' journey to turbocharging digital transformation and I am super honoured that I could play an integral part in this journey by leading the UX and service design for SPARKS.

As a designer, it is rewarding is to see the product you have designed has reached 10 million customers and that it has enabled M&S to grow and unlock the power of data, to make better customer decisions and deliver a seamless experience for the customers.

*“The new SPARKS is not only simpler and easier to use but is also building relationship with our 10 million customers through a more personalised experience.”*

**Why would someone enjoy a career in your area and what qualities would you see in an ideal candidate/colleague?**

*“We're Decentralised & Cross-functional”*

At many companies, designers are specialised & centralised, meaning they sit together as a team and are "contracted" out to work for other teams and stakeholders and are often divided into UX designers and visual designers. At M&S, product designers are cross-functional and are embedded on small product & missions' squads, alongside a PM and several engineers. This makes collaboration quick & easy, increases the feeling of ownership and allow us to deliver better designed products faster.

Designers manage the design process on their team all the way from problem definition to polished pixel. Often, they have deep knowledge or skills in a particular area but are still able to go wide.

**Why is now a great time to work for M&S?**

*“Pandemic has accelerated the digitisation of customer interactions by several years.”*

Retail is playing a critical role in these uncertain times and becoming digital first is not only need of an hour but also something which is on the top agenda. M&S is revolutionising ways of working by introducing programs like MS2 & SVPG that will help turbocharge online growth.

If you are looking to make an impact, then now is the great time to work for M&S as the digital transformation journey has just started!