



GC Design System

Comparative analysis

September 2021

Compared 21 design systems

13 from the private sector

- IBM Carbon
- Material Design (Google)
- Salesforce Lightning
 Design System
- Adobe Spectrum
- Shopify
- Intuit-Quickbooks
- Fluent (Microsoft)

- Mailchimp
- Base-Uber
- Atlassian
- Dynatrace Barista
- Modulz Radix
- Sprout Social

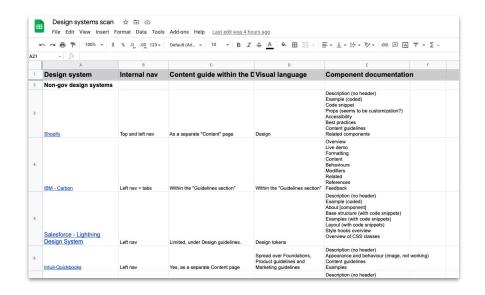


- GOV.UK
- Australia
- New Zealand
- New South Wales
- US Web Design System
- France
- Québec
- Ville de Montréal
- Clone (Talent Cloud)
- Aurora (GCCollab)

Aspects of the design system

Compared the design systems on these aspects:

- Navigation
- Inclusion of content guidance
- Visual foundations guidance
- Component guidance
- Versioning and history of components



Navigation

- 23/23 have navigation between elements within a section (20/21 have it on the left)
- 11/23 have both a top and left nav (top nav for the sections in the design system, left nav for elements within that section)
- Some mobile version of navigation are better than others (<u>USWDS</u> is pretty good)

Take-away:

 Making the design system a separate product, with internal navigation, seems like a must

Content guidance

- A minority (8/23) have separate "writing guidance"
- 15/23 have at least some content guidance within specific component guidance

Take-away:

- Component guidance should have some content guidance specific to that component
- The "overarching", non-component-specific guidance from the Canada.ca Content Style Guide should be in a separate section, within the design system.

Visual foundations guidance

- 20/23 have some kind of separate "visual foundations" section
- No consensus on a name for such a section. Contenders: Styles, Foundations, Basics, Design tokens...

Take-away:

 The design system needs a separate "Foundations" section, however we choose to call it

Component guidance

- There are many differences in how guidance is presented in the design systems
- Commonalities include a description, examples and variants (with code), customization, when to use and not use, content guidelines, accessibility guidelines, etc.)

Take-away:

• There are many ways how we could present guidance for developers and designers for each component. Having 2 separate tabs is an option, but not the only option.

Component history and versioning

Only 6/23 have a clear changelog or version history at the component level

Take-away:

 There's an opportunity to figure out the best way of conveying changes, versioning, how to upgrade, etc.