

# SHOWCASE

Profile

## INFO

**Location:** Prague, Czech Republic

**Designing since:** 2010

**Areas of expertise:** Dashboard design, web design, visual design, UX, UI kits

**Career:** Tapdaq, Badoo, Social Bakers





\* PROFILE

# JAN LOSERT

*tapdaq.com*

The lead designer at Tapdaq tells us about his digital products and his nomadic lifestyle



The lead designer at Tapdaq (*tapdaq.com*), which is an in-app advertising platform, Jan Losert (*janlosert.com*) has covered a lot of ground since dropping out of university in 2011. That's not solely in terms of his career though, but also in terms of the actual miles that he has travelled whilst working; he's an incorrigible global traveller who works almost entirely remotely.

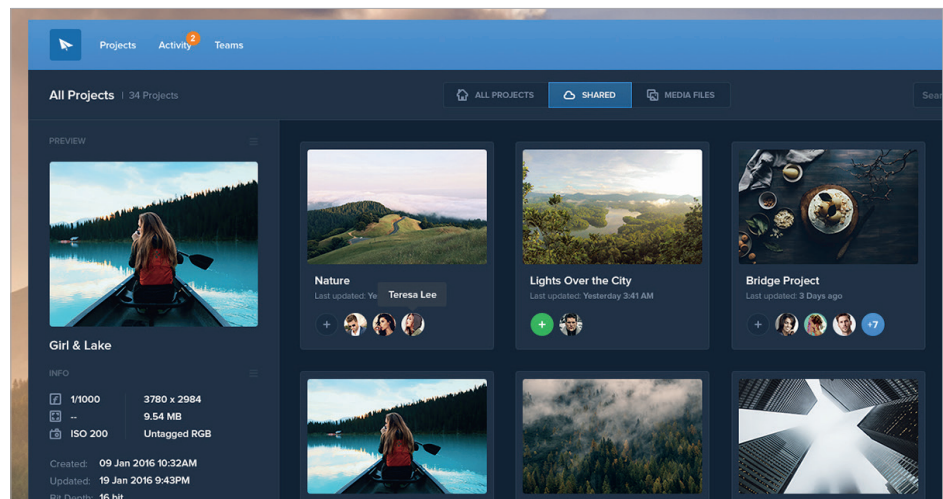
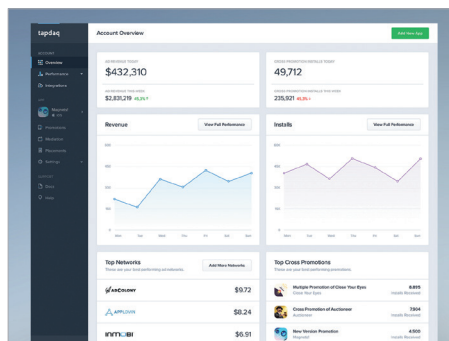
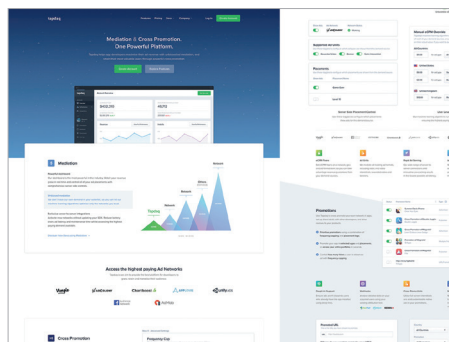
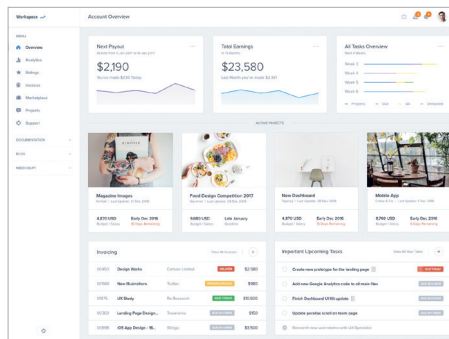
We were lucky enough to pin him down, just days before he set off on a two month round-the-world trip, and ask him about his work, his product-design process, his sideline in digital products and of course his nomadic lifestyle; here's what he had to say.

## Can you tell us a bit about your professional background?

I'm originally from Prague, the capital of the Czech Republic, where I'm currently living now. I started working in design at the age of 18 when I used to play with photo manipulation in Photoshop. I dropped out from university after three weeks and I then decided to try my luck in design as a freelancer. Long story short: for the last four years I have been in a constant process of designing dashboards and applications. I have learned a lot about how to deal with different approaches in order to make product designs both better and more efficient.

## Tell us a bit about Tapdaq.

About the time when I was thinking about new challenges outside of my previous job ►



**Design assets** Jan's most successful product – Dashboard UI Kit – is a huge pack focusing on designs for dashboard user interfaces and web applications

### What does your day-to-day work at Tapdaq involve?

As the only designer at Tapdaq I'm responsible for everything. What people usually don't realise is that everything really means everything: from the dashboard and landing page over to example ads for our clients, pitch decks or sometimes even social images. We start every day with a team stand-up to keep everyone on track and talk about our wins and changes. Then I usually spend the day working on designing new features (new screens) or by watching user sessions on Inspectlet. This awesome tool helps me to understand where our users are struggling and how I can change the design based on their behaviour.

### What are you working on at the moment?

In Tapdaq we've recently launched our new main feature – Mediation. We are currently in the process of understanding the impact, preparing and optimising the onboarding process for all users who are starting to use it. I'm also starting to work on my second-year overview of Tapdaq designs as my next Behance project.

### You're very active on Dribbble and Behance; are these useful mediums for you as a designer?

Dribbble has helped me to get where I am now. When you pass the point of, say,

2,000 to 3,000 followers you'll start receiving five or more work offers/project inquiries every week. I wouldn't have had the Badoo offer without Dribbble, I wouldn't have been contacted by Ted (Tapdaq CEO) and I wouldn't have visited Yahoo for an interview with Flickr without the magic Dribbble Hire Me button. I think the most important thing on Dribbble is to really show your areas of specialisation.

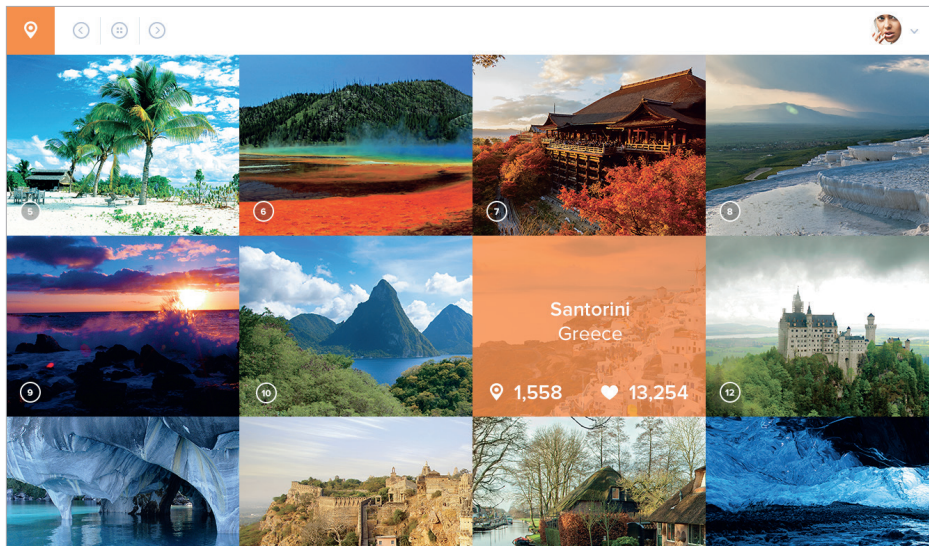
I use Behance to show overviews of full projects. So I take ten Dribbble shots and merge them into a Behance project in some way. It always works for me to describe what I've done and why I've done exactly that in these overviews. It's also a great way to show potential clients or companies your way of thinking and exactly how you approach projects.

### Your working style is extremely nomadic; how does that work for you?

When I had my first talks with the future team my main requirement was to accept me as fully remote employee. Mainly because I wanted to move back to Prague and start travelling. I fell in love with this lifestyle! For the past two years I've been sitting in different coffee shops in cities around the world pushing rectangles in Sketch. I've visited 25 countries in the past two years and I'm starting to get worried about if I'll ever be able to get back to normal nine-to-five work life.

► at Badoo (*badoo.com*), this guy Ted reached out to me about his startup called Tapdaq. After a few conversations I found out not only about what my position would look like in the company but also who these guys are, what their vision is and how huge this could be. Later that year I ended up in a situation when I had to choose if I wanted to go work at Flickr or to work with three guys and try the start-up life from the company's early days. After considering everything I decided to go with the idea of starting from scratch and design everything in the company, so I started working at Tapdaq. If you asked me to sum up Tapdaq in a single sentence, it would be that we help app developers maximise their revenue with unbiased ad mediation and retain their most valuable users through powerful cross-promotion.





**Placing priority** Jan's early side project, Placeist, works as a bucket list of places to visit all around the globe. He designed this colourful platform to enhance travel with gamification

### Tell us about your 26 Steps of Product & Dashboard Design.

This breakdown ([netm.ag/losert-292](https://netm.ag/losert-292)) is sort of my update to a previous article '14 Ways of Product Design' which I wrote two years ago. I provide all the info about my view of the optimal process to follow in every product team, from the start of the project to the final implementation and to the way to test the results of your work.

It's been one of the top 25 articles per day on Medium for six days in a row. So far it's been viewed over 90,000 times and got over 2,000 recommendations, which I guess is quite amazing.

### Your previous job was with Badoo; could you tell us about your work there?

Badoo was my first job in London and actually my second full-time job. I started as a junior designer and worked on all types of various tasks that were required. Since Badoo had five designers for their two products and web, we were all working on various screens/tasks for each of those sectors. I was always chatting with our CTO about the dashboards I was working on for my clients and one day the design team got a request to redesign our internal support interface (customer care). Ideal for me!

Since most of the customer team were in-house I sat down with each member of the team to understand every pain and problem of the existing interface (which at

that point was still developed in HTML tables). We sketched out our ideas, wrote different types of user stories/approaches and then I moved over to Photoshop and prepared some possible solutions. We then discussed and tested this with different members of the team. Later on in the project I managed the whole dev process and I was even able to lead one of my first user sessions and play with the fully working prototype. I'm really glad that I was able to take on this project at that point of my career.

### You have a sideline in digital products; tell us about your Dashboard UI Kit.

A year ago I was marking most of my emails as read and just stacking them into a folder with potential future work. Most of these emails were coming from clients who wanted help with their dashboard projects. At that time I came up with my first successful digital product – Dashboard UI Kit. I've made some research and, except for a few packs of three to six screens, there was nothing on the market similar to the idea I had. When I started designing and preparing concepts I went crazy and turned this little idea of a few screens into creating a product full of designs where everybody (not only me) can prepare their own dashboard designs. I came up with over 100 files for dashboard design (including the new 2017 update).



### \* OFFICE CULTURE



JAN LOSERT

### What's on your desktop?

Wacom tablet, chalkboard globe, cinema display and a mug with 'Don't fucking procrastinate' written on it.

### Little things that make your life worthwhile

My Crossfit training in the morning, days when I release something new to the world or post something on Dribbble and definitely every day I spend in a different country.

### What will you do for lunch?

I've recently started to live healthy so I'd say salad or some decent pasta.

### What hours do you work?

I'm in constant process, I think about design all day. But I usually become super productive between 8pm to 3am. All the best projects of mine happened during the night.

### What else do you do in the office?

Shoot Nerf guns at my colleagues. I love our *NHL* and *Rocket League* nights in the office. Every two months we also try to solve quests in Escape Rooms.

### How often do you hang out with other designers?

From time to time. I recently started to join calls with other designers from around the world and talk about their work or my design problems and hear other's thoughts on design decisions.

### Describe your working culture in three words

(Please) Start before sunset.



### \*TIMELINE

A look at the key dates in Jon Losert's history

**APR 2011**

Lands first web design project



**OCT 2011**

Got his Dribbble invite



**AUG 2012**

First job/first dashboard projects



**JAN 2013**

Became fully focused on rich web applications/dashboards



**SEP 2013**

Joined Badoo and moved to London



**AUG 2014**

Joined Tapdaq as a lead designer



**DEC 2014**

Leads every design decision in every Tapdaq product



**JAN 2015**

Became fully remote – spending every month in a different country



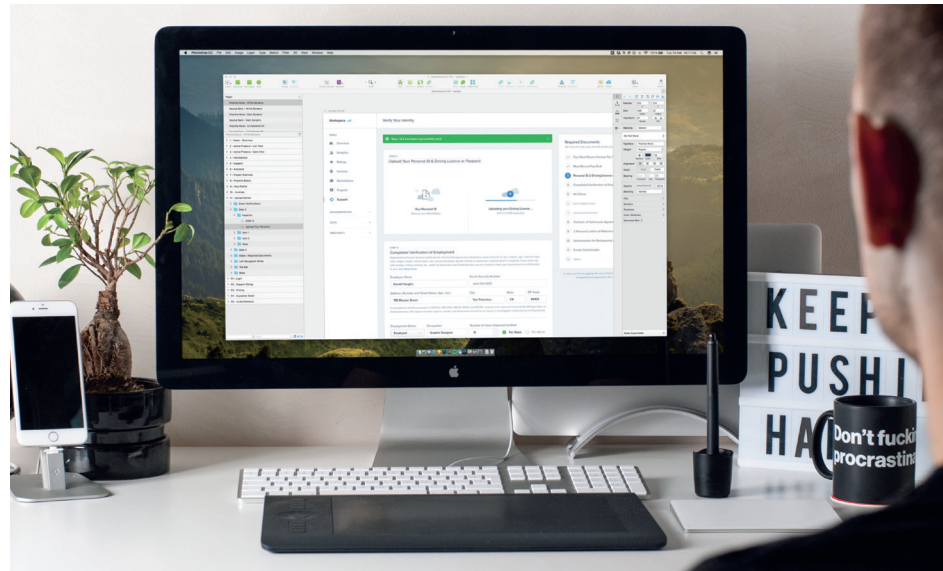
**FEB 2015**

Created first UI kit – Night & Travel



**MAR 2016**

Released Dashboard UI Kit (sold over 1,500 licences)



► People are still sending me requests for additional screens and sending thank-you emails after the purchase. This really makes me want to get up every morning.

#### Tell us about another of your side projects: Placeist.

Placeist was one of my earliest side projects. One day I was browsing the internet at work and I stumbled upon an article called 'The 100 Most Beautiful Places in the World in Pictures' on *escapenormal.com* and I loved it. Ever since I found it I've been eager to visit at least two of these locations per year. The idea behind Placeist was simple: a bucket list of places all around the globe that you can check and mark as visited and share with the world. The whole platform should have gamified travelling to these locations.

Sadly before we were able to finish it, my friend (the developer) and I joined Tapdaq. But at least I'm trying to actually visit those places in real life.

#### What do you get up to when you're not working for Tapdaq or on your products?

Hah, I always feel I'm in a constant process mode even though for those who know me it's impossible to understand that. So even in my free time I like to take on some side jobs to keep myself busy and keep on working on something new. I recently started going to Crossfit, which is definitely one of my best decisions in 2016. I was always struggling to push myself in

the gym, but when you're surrounded by like-minded people and coach you can't really slack off during your workout. I guess that's the same in everything, even with design.

#### What advice would you give to anyone starting out in product design?

I think the only advice is to try and test and always share your results, struggles and wins on social media. Don't be afraid to put stuff out and ask for feedback. If you're struggling to find good developers to help you with execution you can always just design your project and share it with the world through Dribbble or Behance. But to get yourself to the next level, work on the full project; design everything from the nice stuff to log-in forms, settings or payment screens. This will help you grow and learn about consistency and style guides, and help you to think about the whole design and development process.

#### What do you love most about your work?

I truly like the freedom. Being remote with a team that trusts you gives all of us freedom to work and at the same time not be worried about missing on life. I love one quote from the Weebly office in San Francisco which said: 'Work when you want, take days off, just get things done'. I think that really summarises the future.

► **Next month:** Hillary Clinton campaign designer Mina Markham