

Ben Lilley

Head of Product

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PROFILE

Product leader with 18 years across product, engineering and business operations. For the last 10 years I have been Head of Product at SiteHost, New Zealand's largest locally owned hosting and cloud infrastructure provider, where I run the Product & Automation team and lead product strategy, design and delivery across the portfolio alongside the founders.

I joined a seven person team in 2013. It is now around 50 people, with two platforms built from scratch, businesses acquired and integrated, and an international brand launched in that time. I started as a front end developer and co-founded a design and development studio, so I am equally comfortable in a technical design discussion and a pricing or commercial one.

EXPERIENCE

Head of Product

Aug 2016 - present

[SiteHost](#) · Auckland, New Zealand

- Run the Product & Automation team, who deliver all product design and delivery across the business, internal tooling and customer facing alike.
- Set product strategy and the roadmap across the portfolio with the founders and team leads.
- Took Cloud Containers from launch in 2016 to the company's flagship product, and set the direction for the platform work that followed it.
- Hold the design and UX view across all customer facing surfaces, briefing the work, reviewing it and signing it off.
- Run the people side alongside product: hiring and onboarding, 1-on-1s, performance and career development. Introduced remote working and an around the sun support model as the team grew roughly fivefold.
- Lead the team on building and launching a new international product and brand webslice.com, with a complex serverless product on AWS.
- Still hands on in the codebase: 143 merge requests across SiteHost's repositories in 2026.

Senior Service Delivery Manager

Aug 2013 - Aug 2016

[SiteHost](#) · Auckland, New Zealand

- Joined as the seventh employee and worked directly with the founders across support, delivery, marketing and operations.
- Built the service delivery function as the customer base grew, including escalation paths, incident communication and reporting.
- Led a full rebrand in 2016, covering identity, website, product naming and customer facing material.
- Product owner for Cloud Containers through discovery, build and launch.

Technical Director & Co-Founder

May 2008 - Jul 2013

[Pitch](#) · Auckland, New Zealand

- Co-founded an award winning design and development studio and grew it from no clients or revenue to a profitable business with five full time staff.
- Led all development work, set the technical direction and ran infrastructure, hosting and support.
- Owned sales and client relationships end to end, from pitch and scoping through to project management and delivery.
- Ran the business operations: accounts, payroll, hiring and team management.
- Handed over to my business partner in 2013; the studio continues to operate today.

Front-End Developer

Mar 2008 - May 2008

[Marker](#) · Auckland, New Zealand

- Delivered front end builds for clients including Sony and Courier Post.

Design & Usability Contractor

Dec 2007 - Feb 2008

[Brand IT](#) · Auckland, New Zealand

- Contracted into the web team while studying to improve site design and usability, and to resolve security issues and ongoing bugs.

SELECTED PROJECTS

AI Platform and Adoption

2023 - present

[Product lead](#) · with engineering

Open weight models hosted on our own GPUs in Auckland, sold on token pricing, with no request data retained. It gives New Zealand organisations somewhere to run summarisation and data processing without their data leaving the country.

- Specified the customer facing half of the product: the control panel module for issuing and revoking tokens, usage and cost visibility, and the documentation. Shipped July 2026 and launched on 4 August 2026. The inference service behind it was built by our engineers.
- Priced at NZ\$0.28 per million input tokens, roughly a fifth of the cheapest comparable commercial model.
- Led the team onto AI coding tools and contribute to the shared standards behind them - review heuristics, security gates and writing rules - alongside the engineer who has done most of that build.

Cloud Containers

2016 - present

[Product owner](#) · container hosting platform

A container hosting platform built on Docker and Salt, designed so agencies and developers can run many isolated sites on one server with independent PHP versions, access control and resource limits. Launched March 2016 and now SiteHost's flagship product.

- Put platform performance on the roadmap and set the metrics behind it; the 2023 work cut container start times from 24.2s to 3.4s, restarts by 80% and shutdowns by 90%.
- Kept the platform current through successive OS and PHP upgrades, including the move to PHP 8 and an OS upgrade that secured Linux support for a further four years.
- Formed the basis of the international Webslice product line launched in 2024.

WebSlice Serverless

2020 - Present

[Product lead](#) · from first concept to launch

PHP-first serverless hosting with usage based billing. It closes the gap between a virtual server you pay for in full whether you use it or not, and serverless platforms that never supported PHP or the way developers actually work. I led the team on this from day one through to public launch on 10 November 2025.

- Wrote the founding design briefs in April and May 2019 - control panel, authentication, REST API, job queue and orchestration layer - and ran the delivery cycles from there through to launch.
- Six years from the first public airing of the idea at a 2019 WordCamp to general availability, through a private beta and a staged release.
- Horizontal auto scaling with customer set limits, so a site holds its performance from one visitor to thousands.
- Priced as utility billing: a small monthly fee per site and database, plus actual consumption, so customers stop paying for capacity they never use.
- Kept the developer workflow intact rather than trading it away for elasticity: Git integration with GitHub, GitLab and Bitbucket, build and release scripts, CDN and SSL management, and PHP version control.

Acquisitions and Migrations

2017 - 2022

[Product and integration lead](#) · with the founders

Businesses brought into the group, each needing a migration plan, a brand decision and customer communication that held churn down. I led the product and integration side; the deals themselves sat with the owners.

- WebSlice Ltd in 2017, adding a second hosting brand to the group which was eventually merged into MyHost with a large migration.
- Vocus NZ's domain and hosting business in 2022, covering the iSERVE, Kiwi Web Host and Maxnet brands. Thousands of .nz domains had to move before the new IRS registry platform went live on 1 November 2022, which set a fixed, externally imposed deadline.

Brands and customer experience

2016 - present

[Product and design lead](#) · SiteHost, MyHost, Domains Direct, Webslice

Four consumer brands, and the sign up, control panel and website experience behind each of them. I hold the design and UX view across all of it and run the team that ships it.

- Led the SiteHost rebrand in 2016, covering identity, website, product naming and customer facing material.
- Brought WebSlice into MyHost in 2021: one brand, one control panel and one website in place of two of each, which retired duplicated systems and freed up engineering capacity. The brand has been refreshed steadily since, through the store, sign up and content.
- Redesigned the SiteHost control panel in 2019, its first significant refresh in over a decade. Set three design goals up front and held scope against them, choosing targeted improvements over a rebuild, then ran weeks of internal testing and a customer beta before release.
- Kept the sign up and purchase funnel under continuous work from 2019 to now across both hosting brands, alongside domain search, pricing presentation and the knowledge base improving conversation rates.

SKILLS

Product

Portfolio strategy, roadmapping, discovery and customer research, pricing and packaging, launch and go to market, product analytics

Leadership

Hiring and onboarding, 1-on-1s and performance, coaching, remote and distributed teams, process design

Design

Design direction and review across control panel and web UI, design systems and Figma, brand and identity, sign up and conversion flows

Technical

Hands on in PHP, JavaScript and React, HTML and CSS, Statamic and Terraform. Lead across two very different stacks: Linux, Docker and Salt at SiteHost, and Go on AWS Lambda at Webslice

Delivery

Service delivery management, incident and customer communication, specification writing, incremental release

EDUCATION

Diploma, Digital Media

2007 - 2008

[Media Design School](#) · Auckland, New Zealand