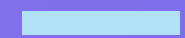


Why your design system needs an API



Louis Chenais
Specify

Pitch

UX Ghent Frontend Edition
2021 April 14th

Bonjour 🙌



I'm Louis Chenais



Co-founder
& Chief Evangelist

- W3C Design Tokens Community Group Member
- Author of "Design Tokens for Dummies"

Previously

Front-End Developer @ SportEasy, 5emeGauche & Ultranoir

Find me on

- @chuckn0risk
- lucho.cool



What's in store for us

1. Design tokens kézako?
2. What is a Design API?
3. Design tokens standardization
4. Demo of a Design API



1.

Design tokens kézako?



~~What are design tokens?~~

What **business issue** do we want to address?

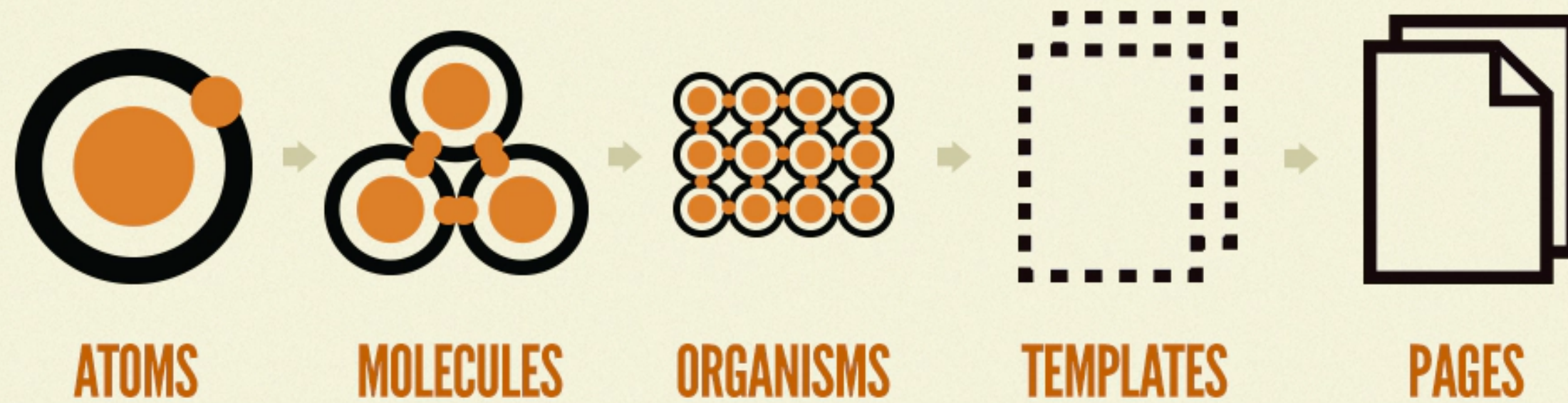


Encore Foundation

The basic building blocks that
make Spotify ‘Spotify.’

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

Design tokens are a language for communicating intent between disparate parts of a **design system**.



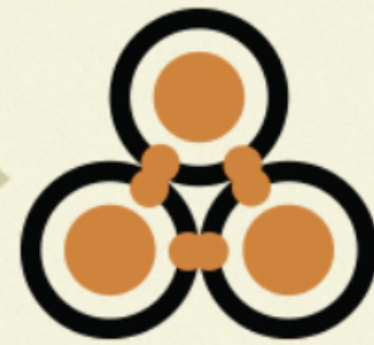
Credits: Brad Frost's breakdown of its Atomic Design taxonomy



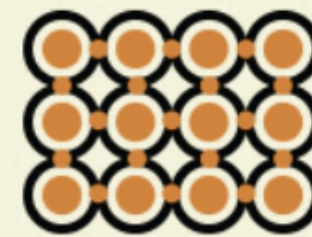
DESIGN TOKENS



ATOMS



MOLECULES



ORGANISMS



TEMPLATES








PAGES









"Design tokens are cross platform variables that define key design data."

— Sarah Federman | @sarah_federman

Anatomy of a design token

```
{  
  "name": "green-100",  
  "value": "rgb(21, 230, 73)",  
  "type": "color"  
}
```


	Color		COLOR
		Brand	COLOR_BRAND
		Background	COLOR_BACKGROUND
		Border	COLOR_BORDER
		Gradient	COLOR_GRADIENT
		Text	COLOR_TEXT
		Text Link	COLOR_TEXT_LINK
	Font		FONT
		Style	FONT_STYLE
		Size	FONT_SIZE
		Weight	FONT_WEIGHT
	Opacity		OPACITY
	Line-height		LINE-HEIGHT
	Spacing		SPACING

	Radius		RADIUS
	Sizing		SIZING
		Border	SIZING_BORDER
		Square	SIZING_SQUARE
		Width	SIZING_WIDTH
	Shadow		SHADOW
	Duration		DURATION
	Touch		TOUCH
	Media Query		MQ
	Depth		DEPTH
	Variable		VAR
		Spacing	VAR_SPACING
		Font Size	VAR_FONT_SIZE

Credits: Salesforce team

Design tokens allow product teams to better collaborate and ensure brand consistency across any platform.

2.

What is a Design API ?

Current situation 🤕

**Crafting cohesive user experiences
across several platforms is a **real
challenge.****

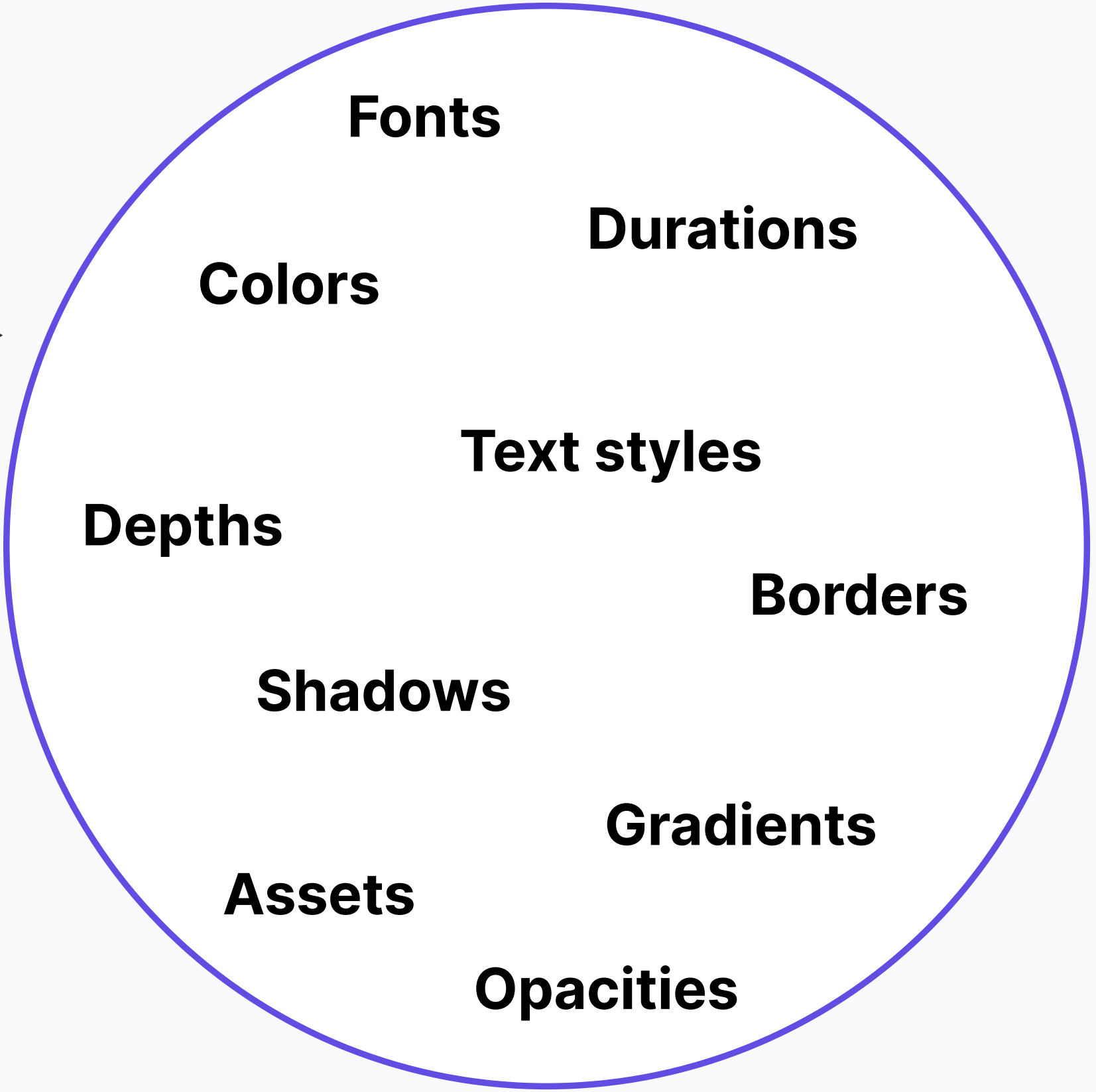
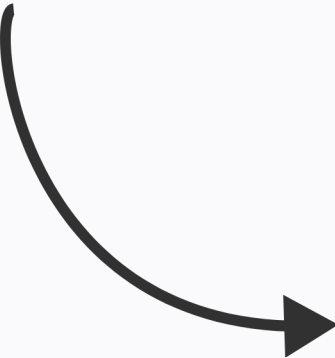
Nowadays:

Design systems to the rescue

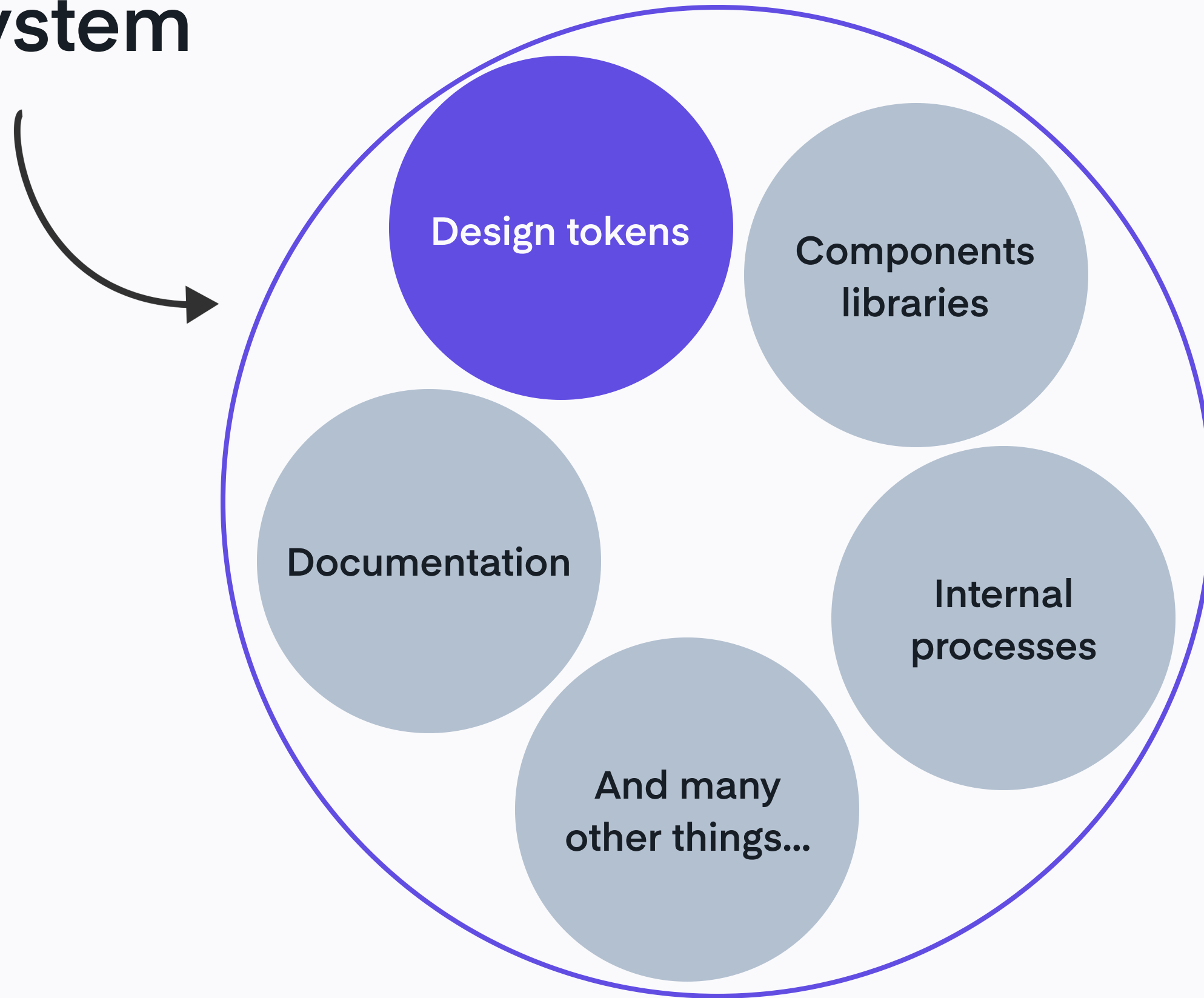
**"A design system isn't a project.
It's a product, serving products."**

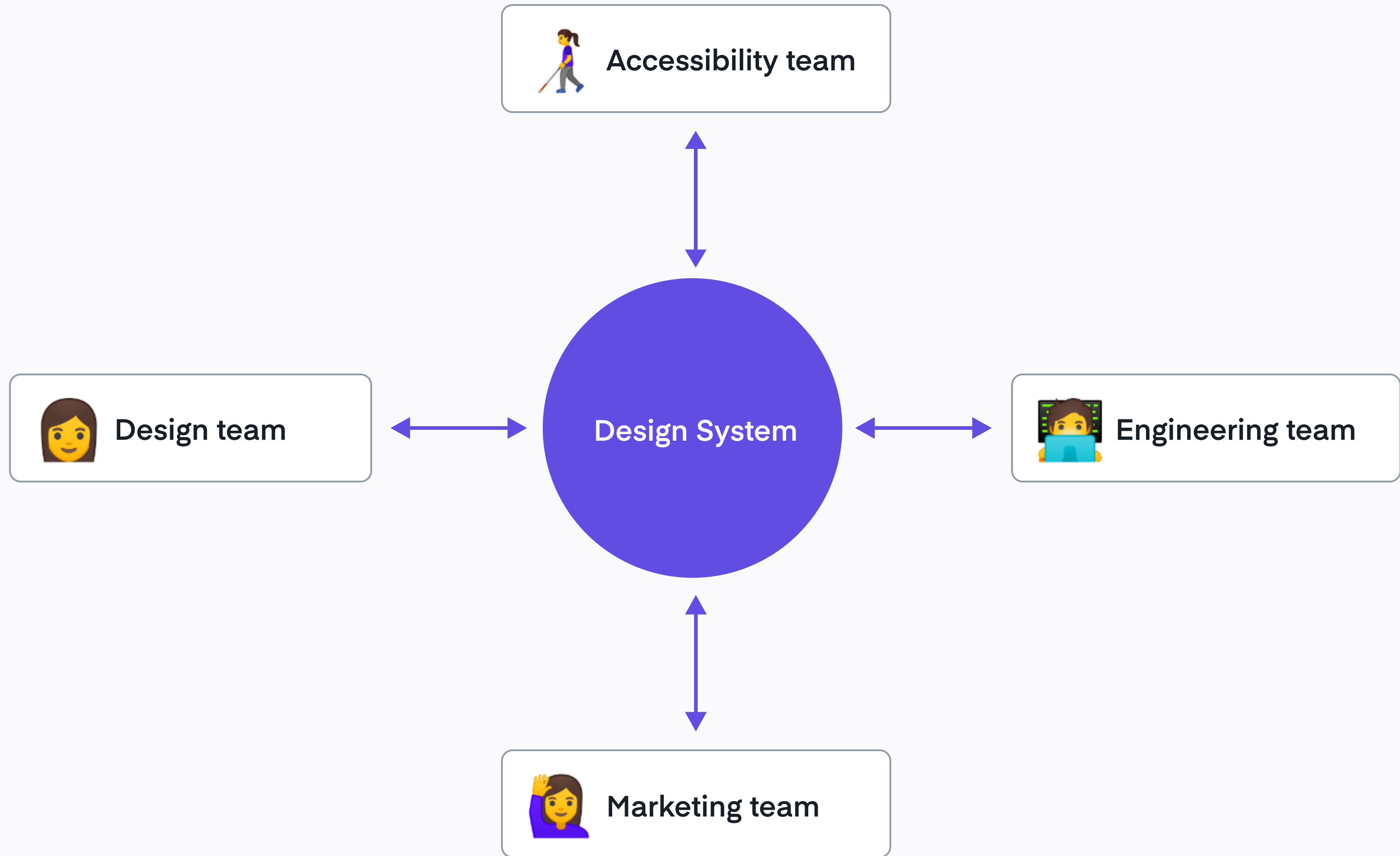
— Nathan Curtis | @nathancurtis

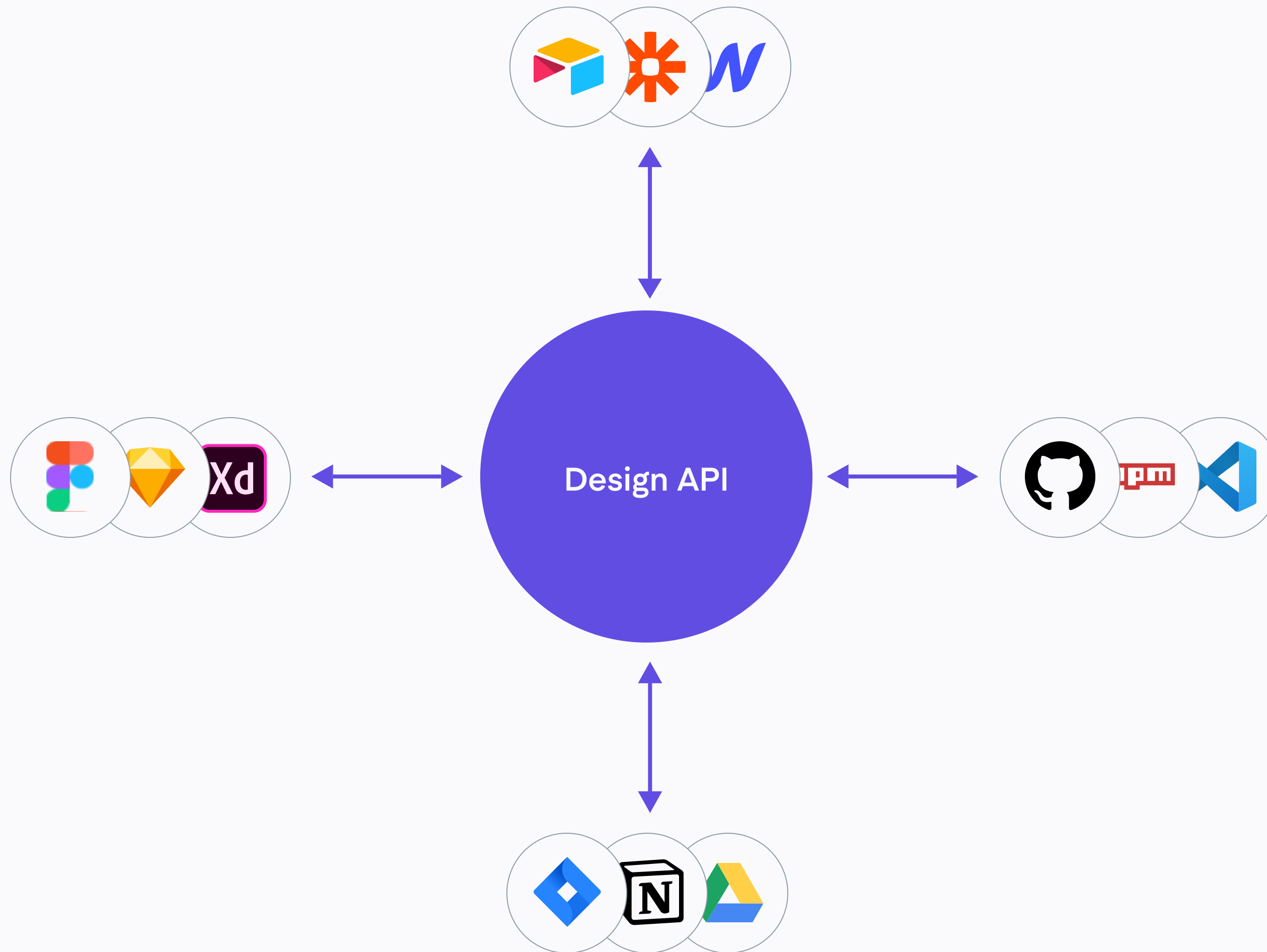
Design tokens



Design system







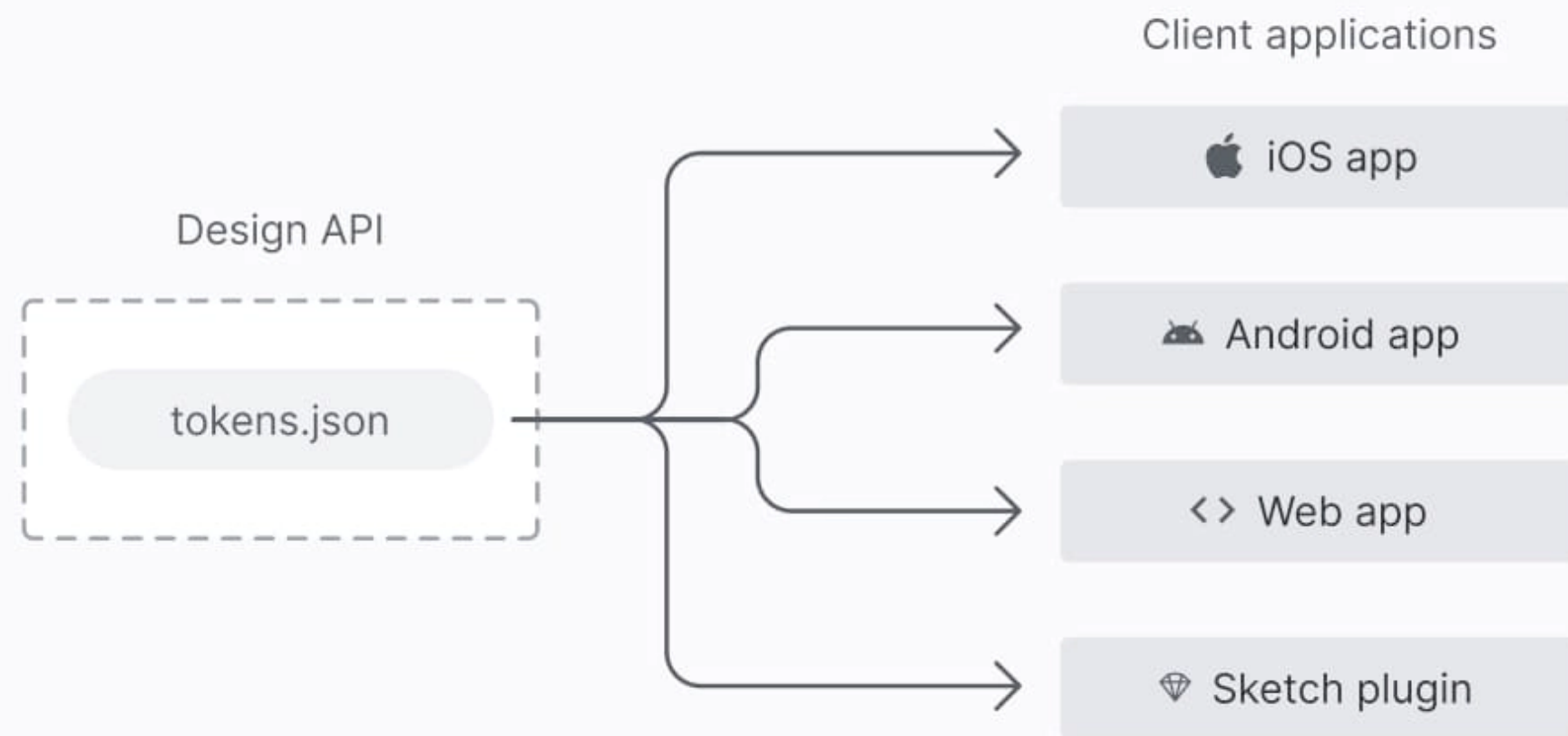
**Design APIs are the logical evolution
of design systems.**

"An interoperable, guessable design API is the foundation of a fully networked design system, [...]. It's the next step in the evolution of design systems."

— Matthew Ström | A design API in practice

Benefits of a single source of truth for design tokens:

- 01 Removing handoff files from the workflow process
- 02 Version software products based on their token releases
- 03 Control how website look without pushing any new code



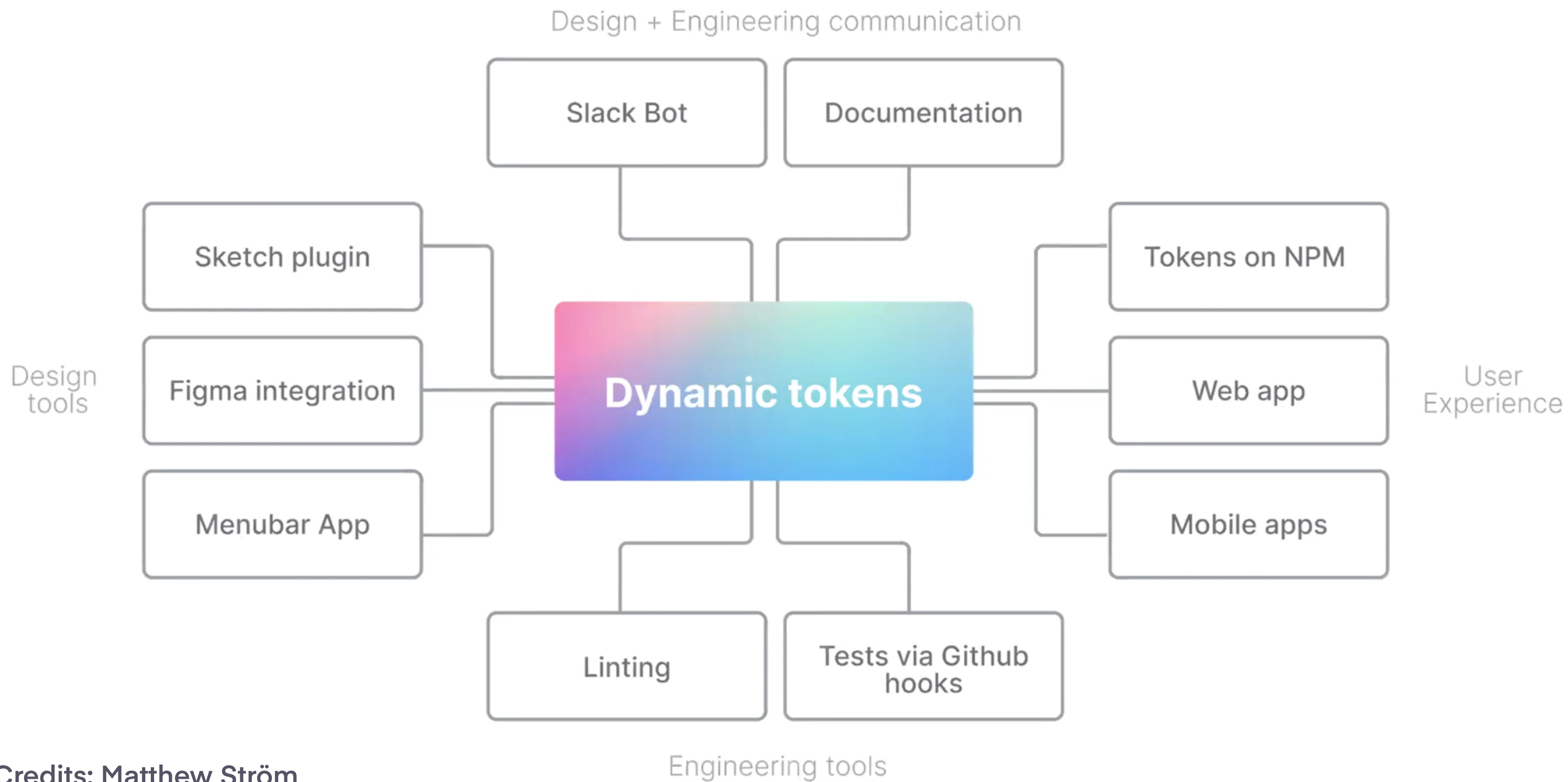
Credits: Matthew Ström

Nowadays:

Design systems to the rescue

The future:

Fully networked design systems



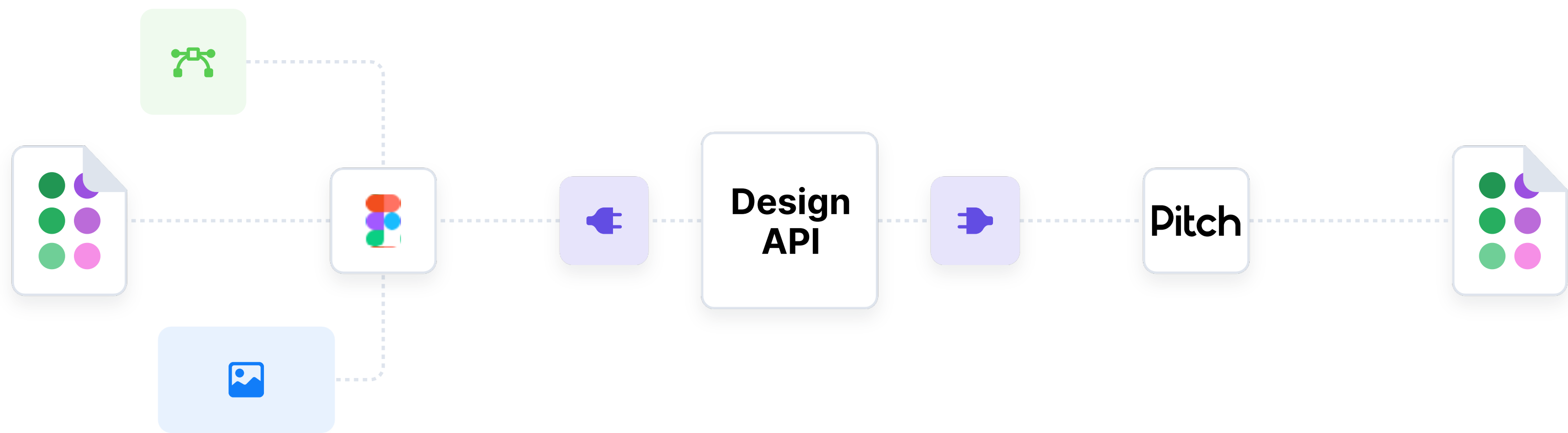
Credits: Matthew Ström

3.

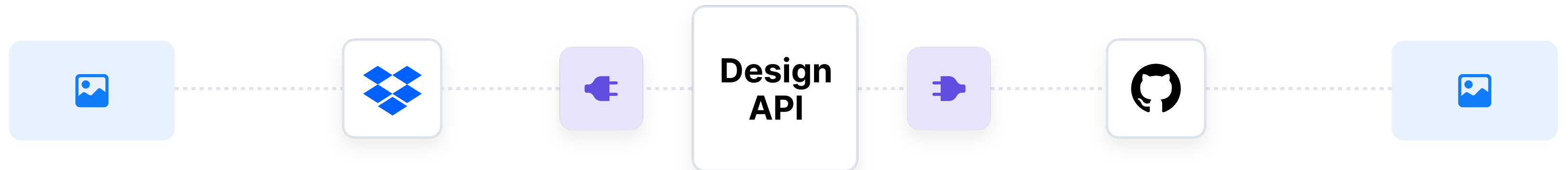
Design tokens standardization?

As an organization's brand identity must be used and applied as easily as possible, its design tokens must be able to transit freely from one tool to another.

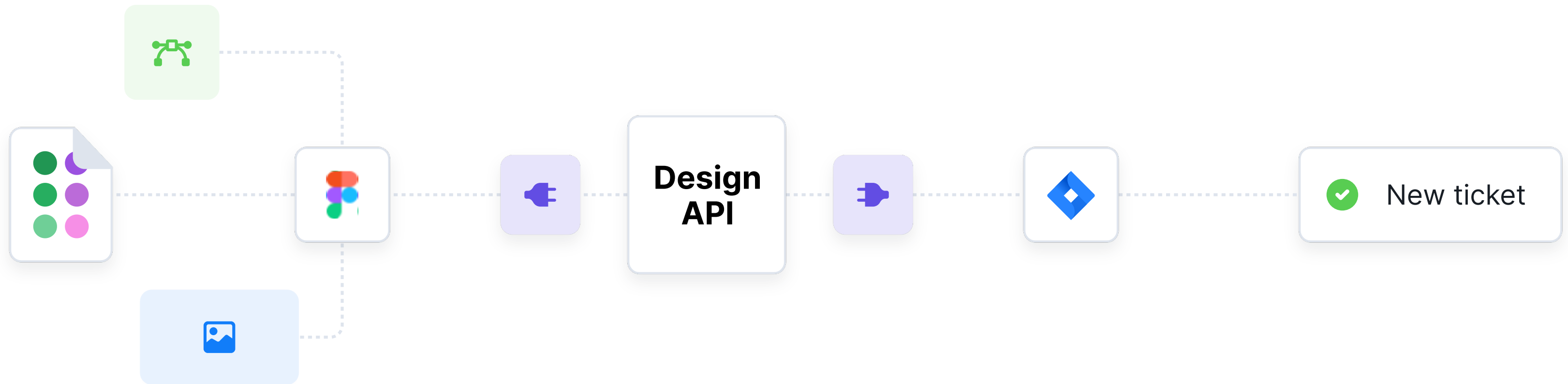
Colors, icons and images from Figma to Pitch.



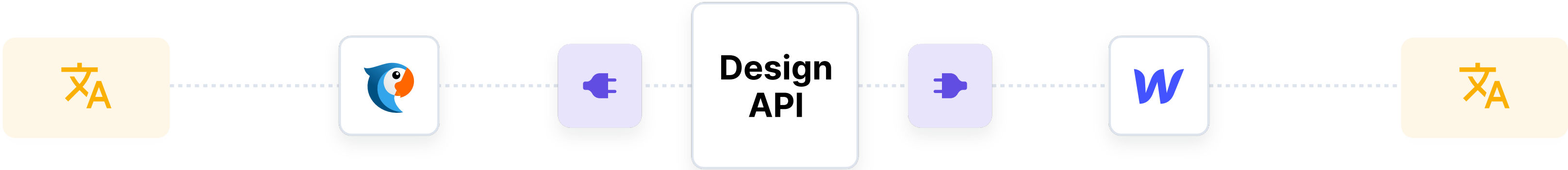
Images from Dropbox to Github.



Updating design tokens in Figma will create a ticket in Jira.



Locales from Phrase to Webflow.



**Our market direly needs a design
tokens standard widely spread so
that design decisions can transit
freely across an organization tools
ecosystem.**

"Systems should support
how creators work."

— Danny Banks | An Introduction to Multi-Platform
Design Systems

W3C Design Tokens Community Group to the rescue!



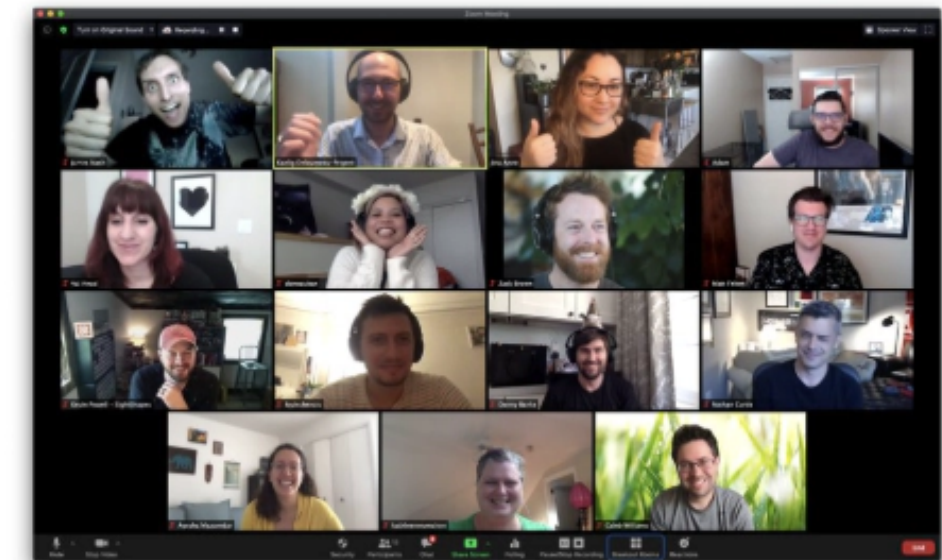
DTCG | @designtokens

1. Created in 2019 par Kaelig Deloumeau-Prigent & Jina Anne to gather the design tokens community
2. The need for a standard is now stronger than ever: a call for editors is made in February 2020
3. In June 2020 all editors are found and officially spread across different design tokens modules



Design Tokens W3C Community Group 
@DesignTokens

Yesterday we kicked off our specification work with the newly formed core team 🎉 @AyeshaKMaz @donnavitan @resource11 @vlh @jina @kevinmpowell @nathanacurtis @ChucKN0risK @mattfelten @dbanksDesign @c1rrus @AdamSedwick @zackaboo @calebwilliams12 @GarthDB (not in picture) @kaelig



♡ 73 5:45 PM - Jun 26, 2020

💬 25 people are talking about this

Objective #1

Provide a standard for design tokens. It will allow tool creators and tool consumers to have quality design that scales thanks to design APIs.

Lead by Kaelig Deloumeau-Prigent (UX Developer @ Shopify).

Objective #2

Manage the design tokens community and promote design tokens best practices.

Lead by Jina Anne (Design System Lead @ Asana).

4.

Demo of a design API

Sources

Destinations



Wanna try?

specifyapp.com

Shoukran 🙏

@chuckn0risk • lucho.cool