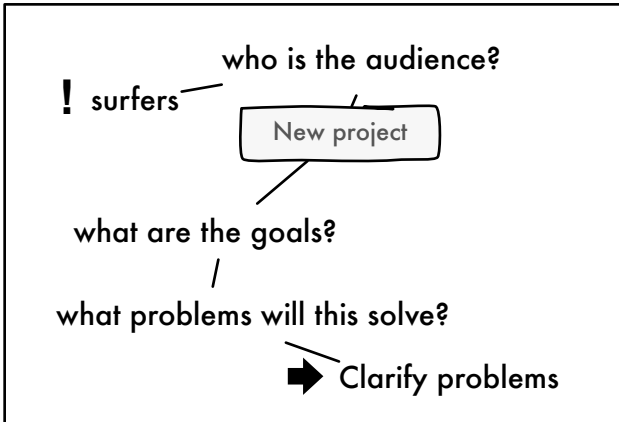


Defining

The entire process begins with getting a clear idea of what we're trying to accomplish, what the gist of the project is.

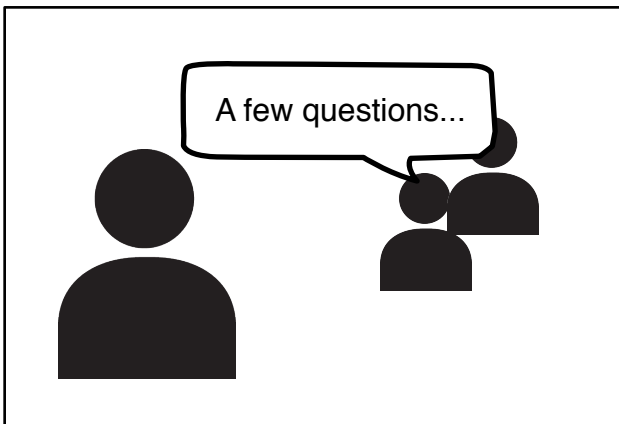
Our goal is to define the problem(s) we're trying to solve.



Bit of note taking, mind mapping

Often I do mind maps to help get my head around things, even as we're gathering initial information from the client.

My notes often are written like mind maps so I can retrace conversations and mark special items. An exclamation point marks a good/important idea or point. Arrows indicate further action.



Exploring

Whether the project is internal or external, we'll start asking questions. We need to gather as much information as we can. Who is this for? Who is the competition for this business? What are the differentiators? (think: SWOT)

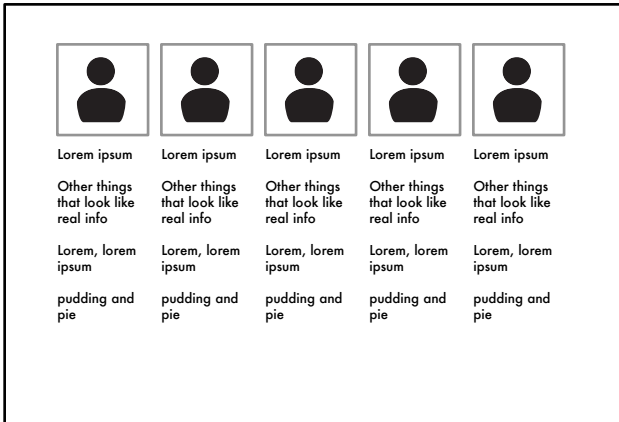
Next steps may include heuristic evaluations, reviewing existing data, conducting surveys, etc. We may conduct research testing with user groups or go guerilla style - all depends on what resources we have and what seems necessary.



Presenting the plan

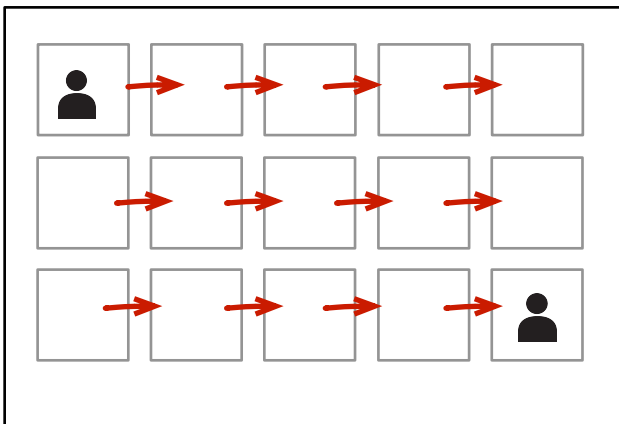
By now we'll have distilled the project down to something that's easy to communicate. Time to produce a PRD and share this with our client (if there is one).

We'll translate the PRD into a backlog of features (ala Scrum) and determine which ones get priority. We'll set the length of our sprints.



Personas

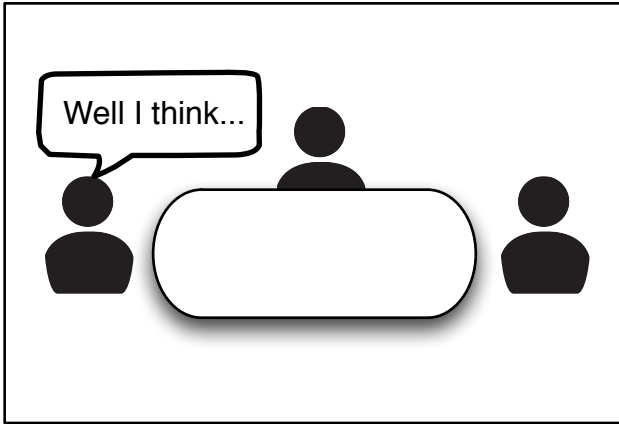
We'll now create personas to represent our users in as much detail as necessary. We need to know their backgrounds, their technologies, their habits and lifestyles. Where they are from, age, occupation - these can all be factors.



Scenarios

We need to define situations that our personas will be in, related to the product we're developing. We can communicate these with storyboards, Post-It notes, Power Point slides, interactive sketches, or other methods.

We need to follow the user from one place to another. This could include mobile versions of the product.

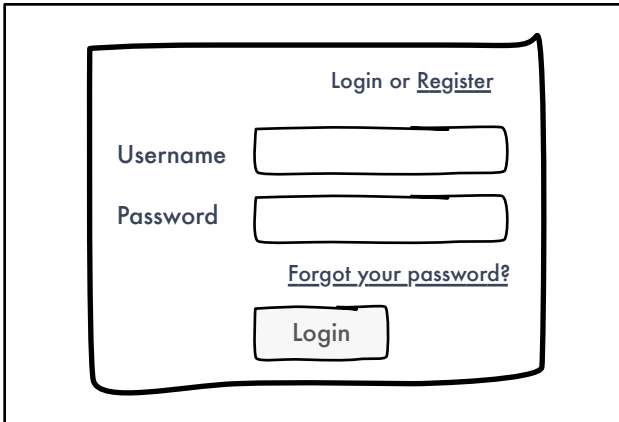


Full-team brainstorming sessions

Team brainstorming sessions can and should happen in many parts of this process.

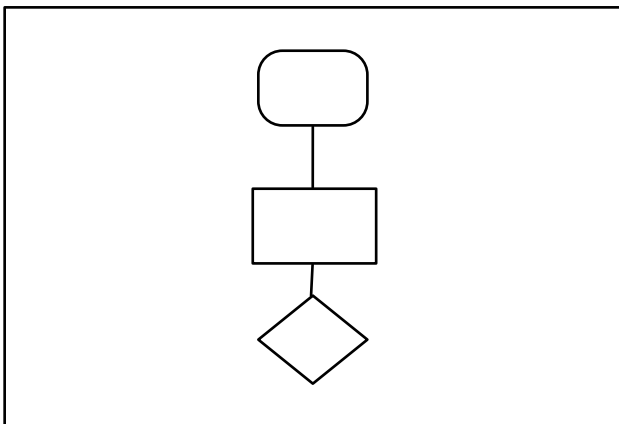
We always need ideas and they can come from anywhere so I believe it's best to include developers, sales people, designers, and product owners. The scroll wheel idea for the iPod came from someone in marketing, after all.

We'll be creating moodboards, playing with Post-It notes, collecting, and sharing.



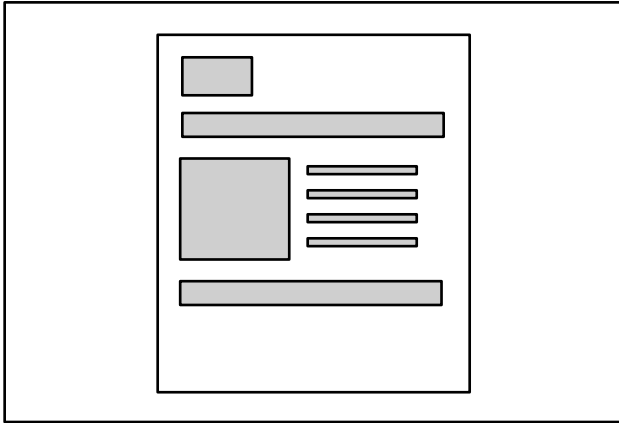
Sketching

We'll sketch. A lot. On paper, whiteboards, computers, maybe someone's forehead (for all I know, it's happened).



Go with the flow

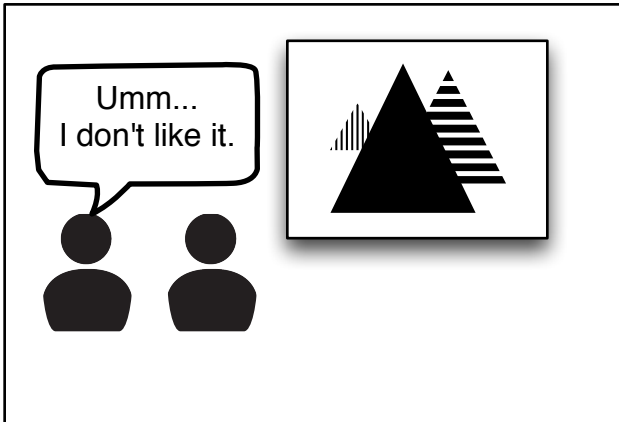
We'll need to work out the user flows and all the little things that happen along the way. We'll be doing flow charts, storyboards and other interactive flow documents.



Wireframes

Next we'll wireframes our views and iterate. We should do cognitive walkthroughs of our wireframes.

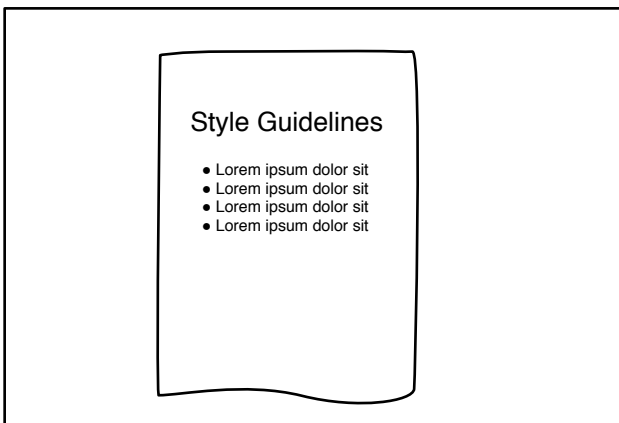
We'll also be making notes about style rules as we go (if they don't already exist).



More than painting

User experience design is about creating enjoyable experiences through and through and that includes look and feel.

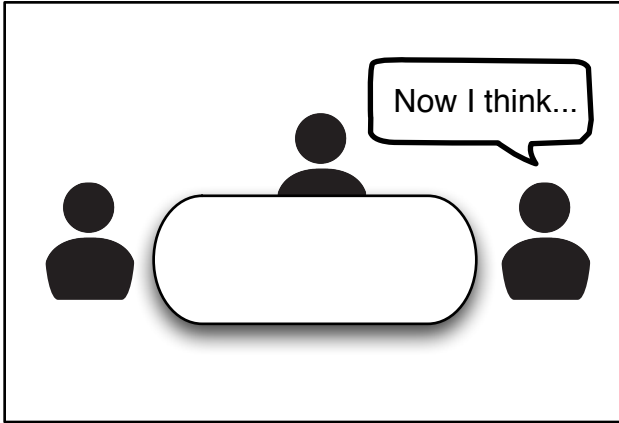
Through our competitive analysis, general research, and personas, we should be able to get a reasonable idea of the expectations our our audience and what they will find appealing.



Documentation: Laying down the rules

As designs evolve, rules will evolve. So with product requirement documents. These need to be updated and "finalized".

To make sure the project maintains consistency in branding, predictability for the user, and so on, we'll need to create and adhere to guidelines for style, UI, verbiage, localization - whatever the project needs.

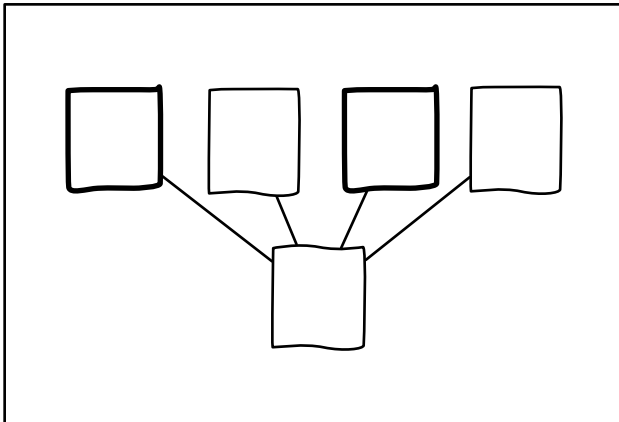


Scrum meetings and more brainstorming

Morning Scrum meetings help keep everybody on track and up to date. Here we always get a chance to redirect our efforts if requirements need to suddenly change.

To keep good ideas flowing, parts of the team should meet fairly regularly. These meetings must be focused on priority items and kept purposely brief.

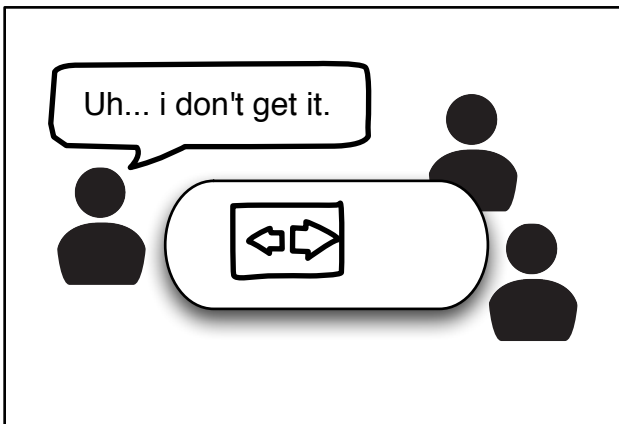
Meetings should include people of varied disciplines as much as possible.



Centralizing the stuff

Whether we use a whiteboard, a wall with sticky notes, or something completely digital, we need our materials in one place where everybody on the team can get to them.

Google Docs can help, but proprietary solutions can be good, too.

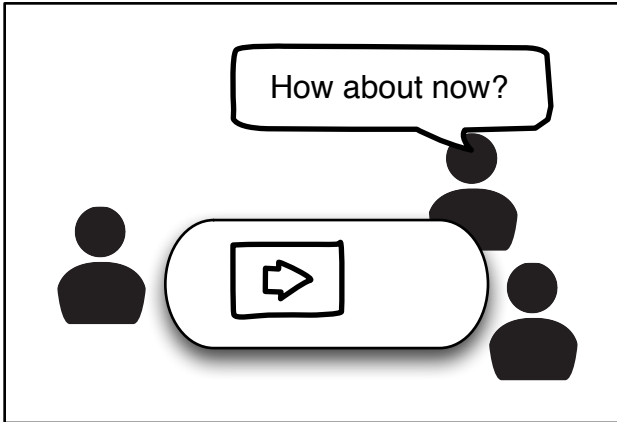


Prototype, test, iterate, repeat

We'll create prototypes of our ideas. These can be paper or digital - whatever makes things feel more real in the least amount of time.

We'll test the prototypes on ourselves, other team members, and user groups (if available). We'll take the feedback, make changes, and start the process again.

Changes might include aesthetics if what we're creating turns out to be not so appealing visually.

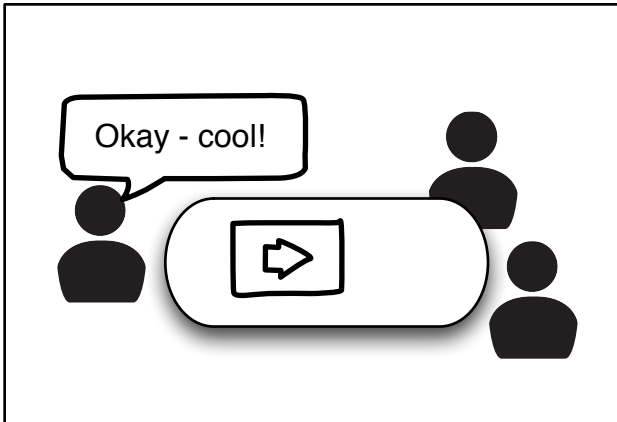


Develop, test, iterate, repeat

Now we're actually developing the real thing. Designs are being converted to HTML, CSS, JS, etc; databases created; models and controllers built.

We test and iterate. Testing can take many forms: usability, unit, ambushing team members, and so on. We'll be fixing lots of bugs, improving the look and feel, and optimizing.

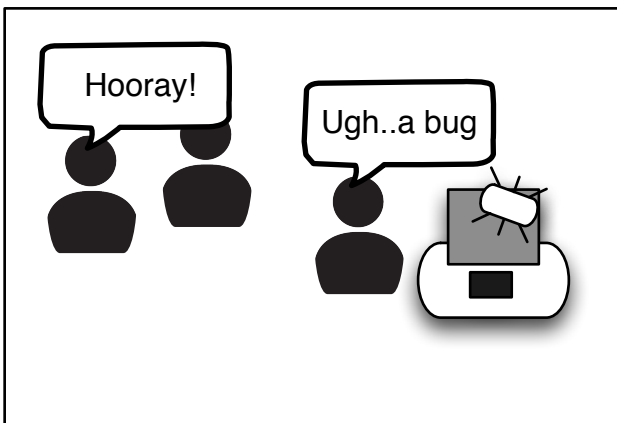
I believe it's smart to release early and often, give the public a chance to steer the development and to show serious support for them.



Beta

Private and/or public beta time. Nothing quite like using the product in real-life situations, so we'll recruit for access to beta versions. If we're really fortunate, we might be able to get video and/or screen captures of expert users putting our product to the test.

We take the feedback and data and keep working out the kinks.



Release and support

We celebrate our successful release by fixing the bugs that somehow slipped through the cracks. Hopefully we did a thorough job and these are edge cases.

Break out the bubbly!

UX Process Storyboard

Created by Weszt Hart

www.hanamidesign.com | [westz@hanamidesign.com](mailto:weszt@hanamidesign.com)

