

JAN 27, 2022



WEBINAR

How to use wireframes with Agile user stories



Presented by Leon Barnard
Education Team Lead

balsamiq®



as a <user role>
I want <goal>
so that <benefit>

Before we start...

We will be recording this webinar and posting it to YouTube but none of your personal information will be shown in the recording.

You can ask questions anonymously if you don't want to share your name with other attendees.

Articles > Using Wireframes with Agile User Stories ▾

Using Wireframes with Agile User Stories

8 min. read

Tips & Tricks Process For PMs

A step-by-step guide on how to use wireframes in your Agile User Stories. Tips: add just enough detail and focus on what developers really need to know.

Agile User Stories are great because they focus on user needs and are short and decipherable, unlike functional specification documents. But they often lack details that front-end developers need to design the user interface. In this article we'll learn how wireframes and User Stories can work together to provide adequate information without unnecessary effort.

Imagine that you've come up with a design that allows users to view a list of customer demographic information. Something like this:

balsamiq.com/learn/articles/wireframing-agile-user-stories/

<input type="text"/>	<input type="button" value="Search"/>	<input type="button" value="Export"/>		
Last Name	▲ First Name	Address	Phone	Actions

Agenda

- What is Agile?
- What are User Stories?
- Agile + UX \neq BFF
- Wireframes and Agile
- Using wireframes with User Stories
- Q&A

What is Agile?

- Agile was created as a way to prevent problems caused by “Waterfall” development, specifically
 - Adapting to changes in user or business priorities
 - Communication challenges between departments (PM, design, dev, etc.)
- It is a philosophy of software development centered around efficiency and quality.

Manifesto for Agile Software Development

We are uncovering better ways of developing software by doing it and helping others do it. Through this work we have come to value:

Individuals and interactions over processes and tools
Working software over comprehensive documentation
Customer collaboration over contract negotiation
Responding to change over following a plan

That is, while there is value in the items on the right, we value the items on the left more.

Kent Beck
Mike Beedle
Arie van Bennekum
Alistair Cockburn
Ward Cunningham
Martin Fowler

James Grenning
Jim Highsmith
Andrew Hunt
Ron Jeffries
Jon Kern
Brian Marick

Robert C. Martin
Steve Mellor
Ken Schwaber
Jeff Sutherland
Dave Thomas

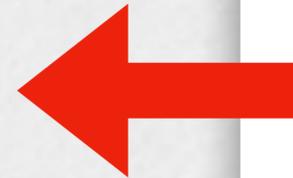
The 12 principles of Agile software

- #4: Business people and developers must work together daily throughout the project.
- #6: The most efficient and effective method of conveying information to and within a development team is face-to-face conversation.
- #10: Simplicity—the art of maximizing the amount of work not done—is essential.

Agile is a series of principles more than a set of procedures or rules to follow.

Companies hire Agile for a variety of reasons. Some see it as a way to ensure high code quality. Others see it as a way to increase production. Yet others see it as a way to be more customer-centered.

Just because it's codified in a manifesto or guide or book doesn't mean everyone understands it the same way, applies it the same way or uses it for the same purposes.



Late last month [someone on twitter called me](#) an “anti-agile bigot” who “doesn’t understand” agile. The comment was triggered by [this blog post](#) where I pointed out, as an aside to the main point of the article, that the broad-scale adoption of Agile made it more difficult for UX designers to do good work. As a UX designer who was actively working during this time period I can personally attest to the challenges we faced.

As my twitter friend and others like him called me names and insulted my work, it got me thinking about what set them off. What was it about noting a factual challenge to good Agile implementation that instantly delegitimized my credibility?

And then it dawned on me. It wasn’t the challenges to Agile implementation that warranted my deplatforming. It was the perceived assault I’d made on Agile as an idea. I was attacking The Church, or in this case, [The Agile manifesto](#). Except, I wasn’t.

MANIFESTOS VS METHODS VS REALITY

The Agile manifesto has been transcribed into many different methods. Each of those methods has met with various levels of adoption, success, adaptation and critique. The methods attempt to hold the values of the manifesto in mind as best they can. When the harsh realities of domain, industry, politics, egos, agendas, new disciplines, technologies, pace of work and an infinite number of other variables are smashed up against these methods they bend. Some break. Some evolve and get better.

The methods that survive are the most agile. They take in feedback from their users and adapt the technique to accommodate for new needs. The values are retained as best they can but practices evolve to reflect modern ways of working, consuming and delivering value.

This is Agile.

CRITIQUE IS KEY TO PROGRESS

Companies hire Agile for a variety of reasons. Some of them align with the manifesto. Some don’t. Coaches. trainers. consultants. CTO’s. engineering/product/design leads

jeffgothelf.com/blog/what-is-agile/

What are User Stories?

- User stories are a tool for making software according to Agile principles.
- They are primarily focused on
 - Being user-centered
 - Delivering small chunks of working code
 - Efficiency and flexibility.

Again, the spirit matters most

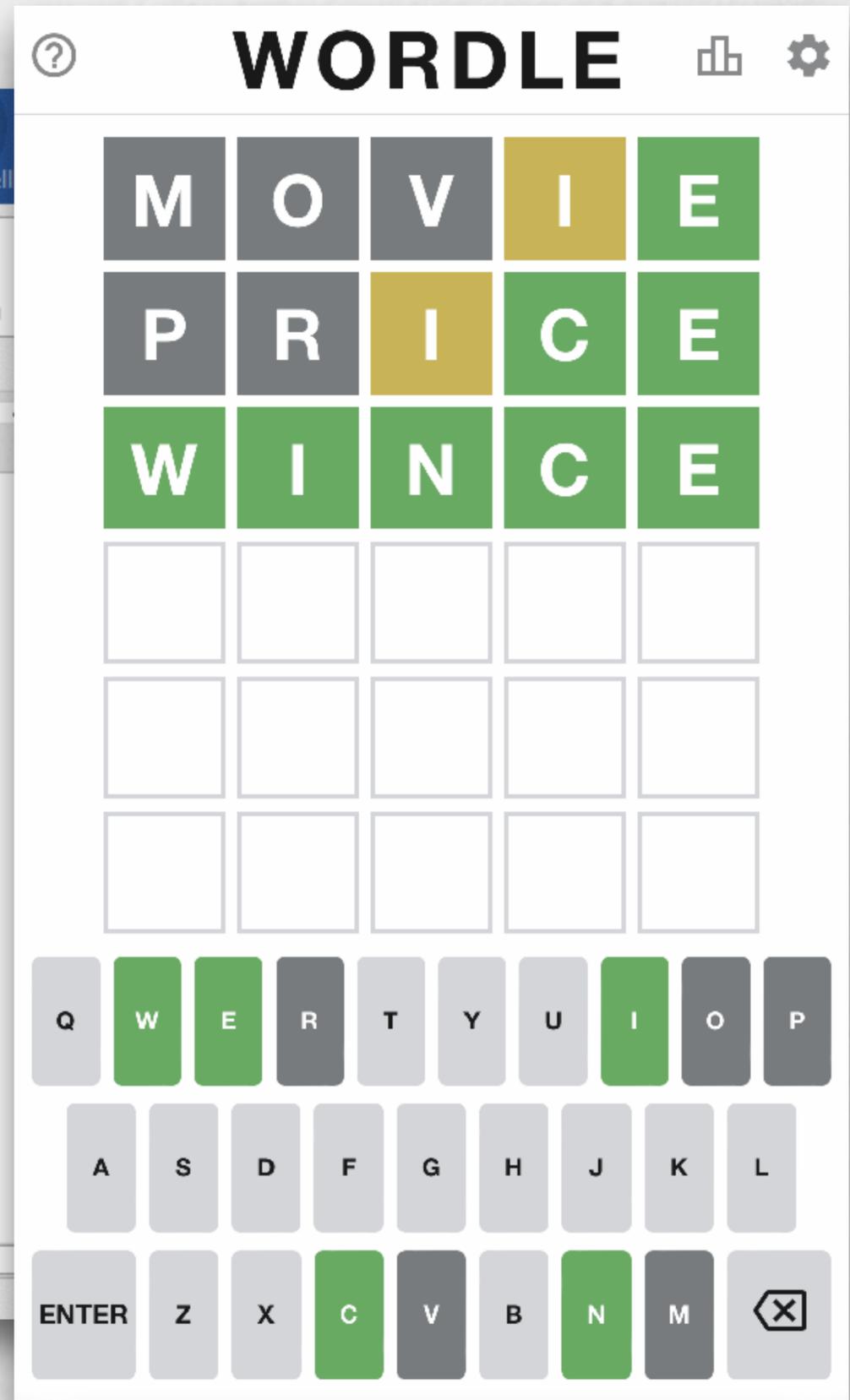
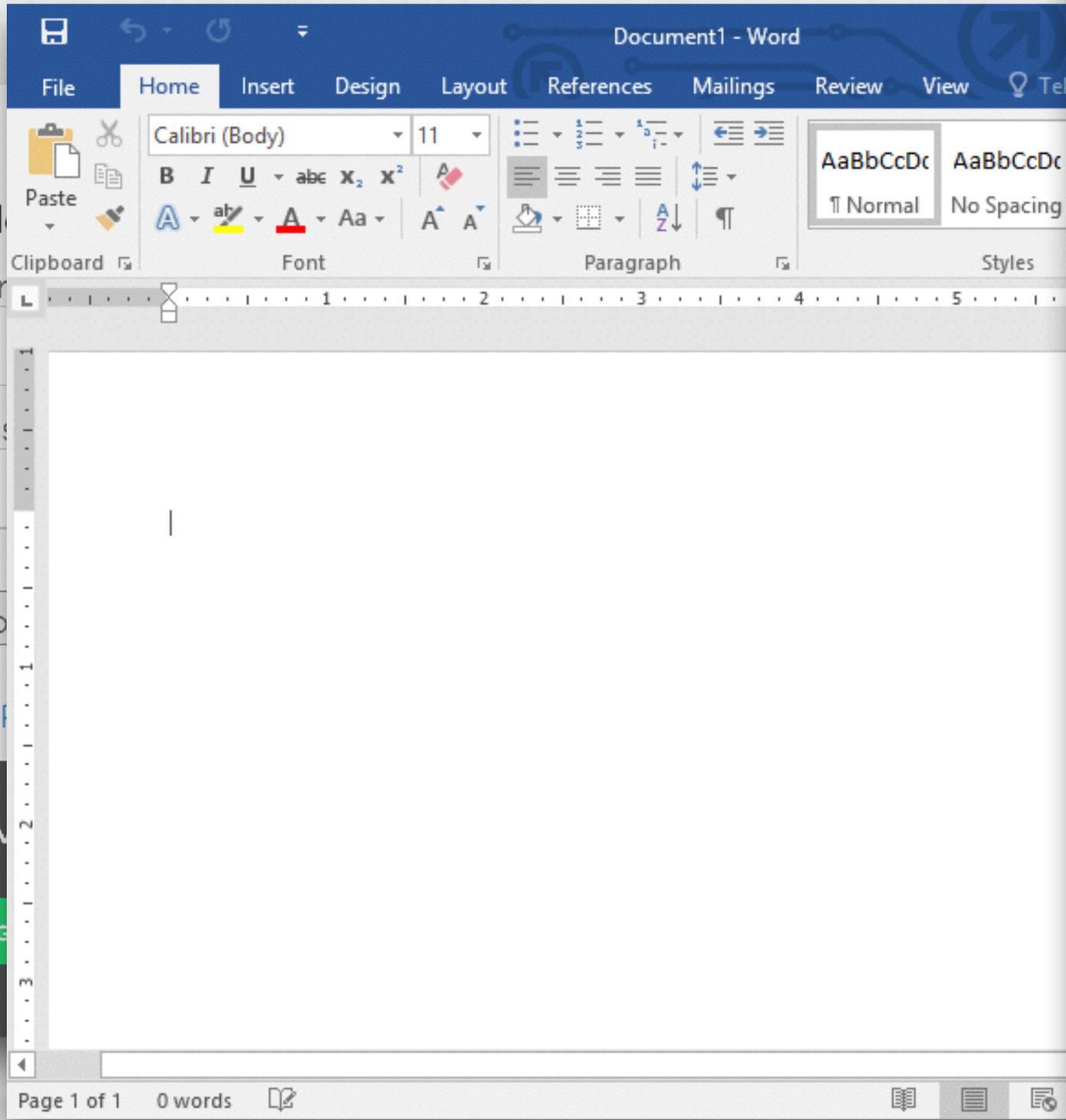
Not the execution

As a User

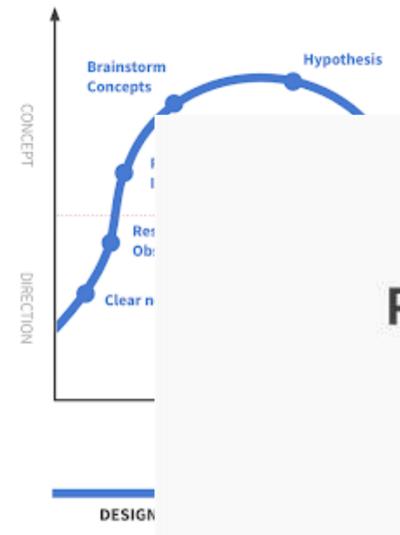
I want a Login page

So that I can Log In.

- *Not* specific
- Doesn't add *value*
- *Not* their actual goal



Agile We're still



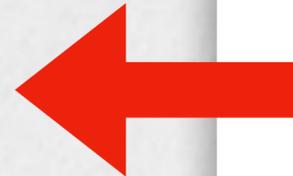
Plan



Backl

One of the fundamental conflicts

- *For traditional UX work, “done” = designed and tested with users and revised as needed.*
- *For Lean UX, “done” = validated*
- *For Scrum (Agile), “done” = working software.*



A screenshot of a web browser displaying a Medium article. The browser's address bar shows the URL 'uxdesign.cc/agile-wont-get-you-to-done-here-are-4-ways-to-fix-that-4...'. The page header includes the 'UX Collective' logo, a search bar, and an 'Upgrade' button. The article title is 'Agile Won't Get You to Done: Here Are Four Ways to Fix That' by Josh Seiden, dated Mar 21, 2019, with a 6-minute read time. The article text begins with 'Last month, Jeff Gothelf and I were at Barcelona's annual Llum festival, an amazing event that features light installations stretching across Barcelona's Poblenou neighborhood.' The second paragraph starts with 'Some of the installations were breathtaking. Others were downright baffling. Looking at one particularly confusing student work, Jeff turned to me and asked, "How did they know they were done?"' Below the text is a photograph of a light installation at night, featuring various beams of light and structures.

O'REILLY

3rd Edition
Jolt Award Winner

JEFF GOTHELF & JOSH SEIDEN

LEAN UX

Designing Great Products
with Agile Teams

 THE LEAN SERIES
ERIC RIES SERIES EDITOR

Wireframes, UX, and Agile

Or, Why wireframes are great for User Stories

- **Agile**

- Focused on **speed**
- Optimized for **flexibility**
- Cares about **reducing waste**
- Emphasizes **cross-department participation**
- Encourages **communication**

- **Wireframes**

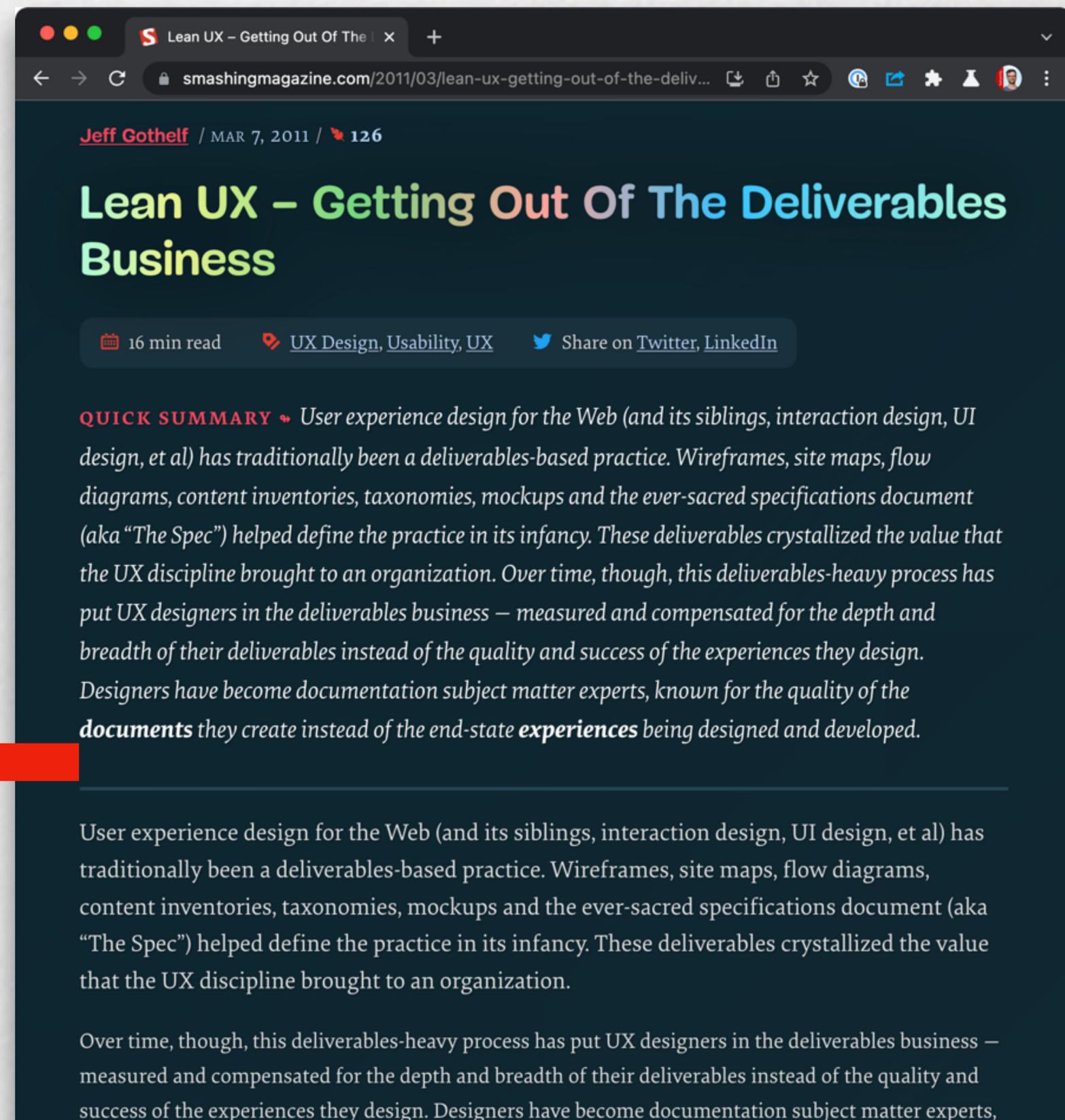
- **Quick** to create
- Easy to **change**
- Provide a **high return on time investment**
- Can be **made by anyone**
- Facilitate **shared understanding**

“Individuals and interactions
over processes and tools;
Working software over
comprehensive documentation”

- Agile Manifesto

*Traditional documents are discarded or stripped down to their bare components, providing **the minimum amount of information necessary to get started on implementation.***

*...Keep the deliverables light and editable. Eliminate waste by **not spending hours getting the pixels exactly right and the annotations perfect.***



Lean UX – Getting Out Of The Deliverables Business

Jeff Gothelf / MAR 7, 2011 / 126

16 min read UX Design, Usability, UX Share on Twitter, LinkedIn

QUICK SUMMARY ✦ User experience design for the Web (and its siblings, interaction design, UI design, et al) has traditionally been a deliverables-based practice. Wireframes, site maps, flow diagrams, content inventories, taxonomies, mockups and the ever-sacred specifications document (aka “The Spec”) helped define the practice in its infancy. These deliverables crystallized the value that the UX discipline brought to an organization. Over time, though, this deliverables-heavy process has put UX designers in the deliverables business – measured and compensated for the depth and breadth of their deliverables instead of the quality and success of the experiences they design. Designers have become documentation subject matter experts, known for the quality of the **documents** they create instead of the end-state **experiences** being designed and developed.

User experience design for the Web (and its siblings, interaction design, UI design, et al) has traditionally been a deliverables-based practice. Wireframes, site maps, flow diagrams, content inventories, taxonomies, mockups and the ever-sacred specifications document (aka “The Spec”) helped define the practice in its infancy. These deliverables crystallized the value that the UX discipline brought to an organization.

Over time, though, this deliverables-heavy process has put UX designers in the deliverables business – measured and compensated for the depth and breadth of their deliverables instead of the quality and success of the experiences they design. Designers have become documentation subject matter experts,

smashingmagazine.com/author/jeff-gothelf/

Wireframes ARE Agile

- By being less detailed, wireframes actually *encourage* individuals and interactions.
- They are light-weight and deliberately *not* comprehensive.
- Don't design for your portfolio — design for understanding and agreement.



Using wireframes with User Stories

Tips from real life

1. You don't have to stick to the script
2. Divide to conquer
3. Write a "recipe"
4. Know your audience

Add tags

Add tags

Detailed Story Narrative

Ingrid would like to select which columns she can see in her lists, so we should provide a w

Images/Mockups

Positive Cultures | Lists | Events | Denominators | NHSN Export | NHSN configuration

Create New List

List name:

Document type to show:

List description:

Columns to show

Available columns

- Patient Fields
 - Admit Date
 - Discharge Date
- Event Fields
 - Post-procedure
 - NHSN Procedure Code
 - ICD-9-CM Procedure Code
 - Date of Procedure
 - Location
 - If CU/Other locations, Central line
- Status Fields
 - Due Date

Columns to show (12 max.)

- Patient Name (linked)
- Event ID (linked)
- Date of Event
- Specific Event
- Status

Order by:

Acceptance Criteria

Given that Ingrid has chosen to create a new list

- Show a two-panel UI containing "Available columns" and "Columns to show"
 - the Available columns panel should show all the fields for the document type selected
 - the Columns to show panel should show a set of default fields for each document type
- Provide affordances for "Add", "Remove", "Move Up" and "Move Down" between the two panels
 - When a column is selected in the left panel, enable the "Add" affordance, which will add the column to the right panel
 - Multiple columns can be selected and moved by using Ctrl- and Shift-click combinations
 - The "Remove" affordance should behave the same as the "Add" affordance, but it will remove the column from the right panel
 - The "Move Up" and "Move Down" affordances will apply only to the right panel and will move the column up or down in the list, respectively
- The Columns to show panel should not allow more than 12 fields to be added, so when the 12th field is added, the "Add" button should be disabled
- Below the column selection panels, present two drop-downs for selecting the table sort order
 - "Order by:", [list of columns in the right panel], [ascending/descending]
 - The list of columns should get updated as columns are added and removed from the right panel
 - If a column that is selected as the sort column is removed from the right panel, the sort order should default to the first column in the list
- As in #1333, clicking the Save button should direct the user to the main Lists page and should show the newly-created list when clicked
 - The list should be displayed as it always has been (including date filter and print icon) with the columns that were selected
 - Multi-select fields should be shown as a comma-separated list of values within the field
 - All columns should wrap to accommodate the larger number of possible visible columns

Detailed Story Narrative

Because there is a clearly defined workflow for exporting documents to NHSN, we should create separate grid views of NHSN exportable documents so that they are a) not confused with non-NHSN exportable documents, b) placed more prominently, and c) oriented around exporting documents rather than just viewing or reviewing them.

This amounts to creating a separate navigation panel for NHSN exportable document types and new grid views (lists) that are similar to the existing ones, but provide functionality to export selected documents and view their exported status (to be done in later stories).

Images/Mockups

NHSN Export

- Procedures
- Events
- SSIs
- Summary Data

Dashboard | Documents | Rules | Patients | Admin | Reports

NHSN Reportable Infection Events (3)

Note: only documents that have a status of Closed and are marked as NHSN Reportable are shown. Refer to the document types in the List category for all documents.

from to

<input type="checkbox"/>	Patient	Event ID	Date	Export Status
<input type="checkbox"/>	Garfield, James	ESI-21	09/21/10	Exported, 10/01/10
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Mclover, Herbert	UTI-32	09/25/10	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Lincoln, Abraham	CLIP-33	09/26/10	

Acceptance Criteria

- Add a new navigation panel called 'NHSN Export' and place it above the 'Lists' navigation panel
- Add a link in the 'NHSN Export' navigation panel called "Events"
- Create a new list view that is similar to the existing lists for the IIAI document types, with the following criteria
 - Remove the core event column
 - Add a column called 'Export Status' at the far right of the table, which should be empty for all document types. The relative order, hyperlinks, sorting and names (use "Date" as the name of the date column) of the other columns should match the existing lists.
 - Retain the existing date filtering mechanism and wording
 - Retain the existing print icon and functionality
 - Remove the ability to export to CSV
 - Replace the title with "NHSN Reportable Infection Events (#)"
 - Only show **BST**, **CLIP**, **IARTD**, and **IITT** documents that fall within the selected date range and have a status of Closed and are marked as NHSN Reportable (see #1029)
 - Add text below the title indicating that the list is only showing documents that are Closed and NHSN Reportable (e.g., "Note: only documents that have a status of Closed and are marked as NHSN Reportable are shown. Refer to the document types in the List category for all documents.")

Exclusions & Constraints

This story does not include any work to actually validate or export documents.

Interface Considerations

Architecture Considerations

It will cease to work, so we need a replacement for it that uses the nicely-parsed new data that was there before in order to help her make a determination about the type of infection and easier to read now that we can separate each piece of data into separate fields. The mockup

Result	Status	Notes
S	F	
I	P	
R	F	
N	P	

Ingrid creates a new form from the CLL widget placed between the patient info and form fields, as it is currently used for each identified organism and a section at the bottom for details, which should list the drug comments)) (if present; if not, don't show the field label)

Ingrid creates a new form from the CLL widget placed between the patient info and form fields, as it is currently used for each identified organism and a section at the bottom for details, which should list the drug comments)) (if present; if not, don't show the field label)

1. You don't have to stick to the script

This is how I used to do it

Title: {user} wants to {action}

Narrative: {context} + {solution} + {benefit}

• *What* are we doing?

• *Why* does it matter?

The image shows a screenshot of a user story card and its detailed narrative. The card is titled "Ingrid would like to filter the CLL by document status" (v43 - Latest version, last modified 4 months ago) with ID #1029. Below the title is an "Add tags" button. The "Detailed Story Narrative" section describes the need for a filter on the CLL table to filter by document status (New, Open, Closed) to help Ingrid focus on work that needs to be done. The "Images/Mockups" section shows a mockup of a filter dropdown set to "Closed" and a date range selector from 08/31/2009 to 09/01/2010, with a "Run" button. A second card is partially visible behind it, titled "Ingrid wants to mark documents as NHSN reportable" (v60 - Latest version, last modified 4 months ago) with ID #1029. This card also has an "Add tags" button. Its "Detailed Story Narrative" section describes the need for the ability to mark documents as reportable to NHSN or not, to ensure that only reportable infections are exported. The "Images/Mockups" section shows a mockup of a "NHSN Reportable" checkbox (checked) and a "Validate" button, with a "Not validated Future functionality" label below it. Below the mockup, the text "BSI-18 LCBI - Laboratory Confirmed Bloodstream Infection" is visible, along with fields for "Sex: Male" and "Age: 44 years".

Ingrid would like to filter the CLL by document status (v43 - Latest version, last modified 4 months ago) #1029

Add tags

Detailed Story Narrative

Add a filter above the CLL table to filter the list by document status, e.g., New (no doc created), Open, Closed. This would help Ingrid has already created a document for and allow her to focus on the work that needs to be done (New cultures or Open docs).

Images/Mockups

Final, Positive Cultures (2)

Status: Closed View positive cultures resulted from 08/31/2009 to 09/01/2010 Run

Ingrid wants to mark documents as NHSN reportable (v60 - Latest version, last modified 4 months ago) #1029

Add tags

Detailed Story Narrative

For NHSN export purposes, Ingrid would like the ability to mark documents as reportable to NHSN or not. Most documented infections that can be reported probably will be reported, but we know that there are certain infections that don't meet the NHSN criteria as reportable. Also, currently there is no way to delete documents, so allowing Ingrid to mark them as not reportable will ensure that they don't show up on her lists of documents to export. Reporting an infection is a big deal, so it makes sense to add another layer of confirmation before uploading it to the CDC.

Images/Mockups

BSI-18 LCBI - Laboratory Confirmed Bloodstream Infection

NHSN Reportable Validate

Not validated Future functionality

Sex: Male Age: 44 years

2. Divide to conquer

Ok, I do have one tip for reconciling UX and Agile

Design in a non-Agile way

Customers

Search

Last Name	First Name	Address	Phone	Actions
aaa	bbb	ccc	ddd	Edit Delete
aaa	bbb	ccc	ddd	Edit Delete
aaa	bbb	ccc	ddd	Edit Delete
aaa	bbb	ccc	ddd	Edit Delete
aaa	bbb	ccc	ddd	Edit Delete

Split up the design

Customers

Search

Last Name	First Name	Address	Phone	Actions
aaa	bbb	ccc	ddd	Edit Delete
aaa	bbb	ccc	ddd	Edit Delete
aaa	bbb	ccc	ddd	Edit Delete
aaa	bbb	ccc	ddd	Edit Delete
aaa	bbb	ccc	ddd	Edit Delete

Write stories for each phase of the design

Customers

See #1234 Search See #1236

Last Name	First Name	Address	Phone	Actions
aaa	bbb	ccc	ddd	Edit Delete
aaa	bbb	ccc	ddd	Edit Delete
aaa	bbb	ccc	ddd	Edit Delete
aaa	bbb	ccc	ddd	Edit Delete
aaa	bbb	ccc	ddd	Edit Delete

See #1235

Not Started	In Progress	Done
Edit and Delete Export	Search	Table and content

London	UK	Riccardo Cambiassi
San Francisco, CA	USA	Darren Schreiber
Woodland Hills, California	USA	Jason Thompson
San Francisco, CA	USA	John Ulgar Dogru
London	UK	Dimo Trifonov
Wollerau	Switzerland	Eric Seuret

Q search

London	UK	Riccardo Cambiassi	Edit Delete
San Francisco, CA	USA	Darren Schreiber	Edit Delete
Woodland Hills, California	USA	Jason Thompson	Edit Delete
San Francisco, CA	USA	John Ulgar Dogru	Edit Delete
London	UK	Dimo Trifonov	Edit Delete
Wollerau	Switzerland	Eric Seuret	Edit Delete

Q search

London	UK	Riccardo Cambiassi
San Francisco, CA	USA	Darren Schreiber
Woodland Hills, California	USA	Jason Thompson
San Francisco, CA	USA	John Ulgar Dogru
London	UK	Dimo Trifonov
Wollerau	Switzerland	Eric Seuret

Q search

Export

London	UK	Riccardo Cambiassi
San Francisco, CA	USA	Darren Schreiber
Woodland Hills, California	USA	Jason Thompson
San Francisco, CA	USA	John Ulgar Dogru
London	UK	Dimo Trifonov
Wollerau	Switzerland	Eric Seuret

Context, context, context

A user story is always part of a larger narrative

Ingrid wants to mark documents as NHSN reportable #1029

(v60 - Latest version, last modified 4 months ago)

[Add tags](#)

Detailed Story Narrative

For NHSN export purposes, Ingrid would like the ability to mark documents as reportable to NHSN or not. Most documented infections that can be reported probably will be reported, but we know that there are certain infections that don't meet the NHSN criteria as reportable. Also, currently there is no way to delete documents, so allowing Ingrid to mark them as not reportable will ensure that they don't show up on her lists of documents to export. Reporting an infection is a big deal, so it makes sense to add another layer of confirmation before uploading it to the CDC.

Images/Mockups

BSI-18 LCBI - Laboratory Confirmed Bloodstream Infection

NHSN Reportable Validate

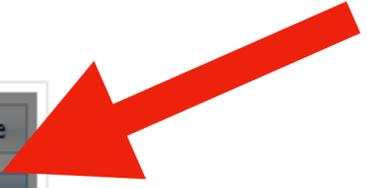
Not validated Future functionality

<p> Cameron, David</p>	Sex: Male	Age: 44 years (10/9/1966)
	SSN: 545-24-9824	Patient ID: youngPM
	Last Updated: 10/20/2010 4:44:23 PM	Account ID: cam234

Events

 **BSI-18 LCBI - Laboratory Confirmed Bloodstream Infection**

New Note: Add



3. Write a “recipe”

What else does the developer need to know?

Acceptance Criteria

1. Given that Ingrid has navigated to a View or Edit (*not* New) document screen for an NHSN-exportable document type (**BSI, CLIP, LABID, PROC, SSI, UTI, ICU denominator**)
 1. Show a checkbox with a label of 'NHSN Reportable'
 1. Place it next to the document title
 2. Place a grey border around it to match the other bordered elements in the page (right-aligned with the page content and baseline/bottom-aligned with the title text)
 3. It is expected that other UI elements (text, button(s)) will be added inside the border, so factor that in when designing
 4. Show tooltip text on hover-over of the checkbox and label ("Determines whether this document is shown in the list of events to export to NHSN")
 2. Save the state of the checkbox whenever it is checked (don't require the user to Save the document to update the state)
 1. This state will be used to determine which documents to show in a list of exportable documents, along with the Status (see [#1030](#))
 3. Place the Edit or Save and Cancel buttons immediately to the right of to the document title (move them from their current location)
 4. The title and button(s) should wrap when resized rather than forcing the new UI controls to the next line

Exclusions & Constraints

This story does not include any work to actually validate or export documents.

Interface Considerations

Architecture Considerations

1. Must work on form engine (e.g., BSI) and non-form engine document types (e.g., ICU denominator)
2. Will eventually be added to additional document types
3. Should be flexible enough to add extra UI controls (shown as 'future functionality' in mockup)

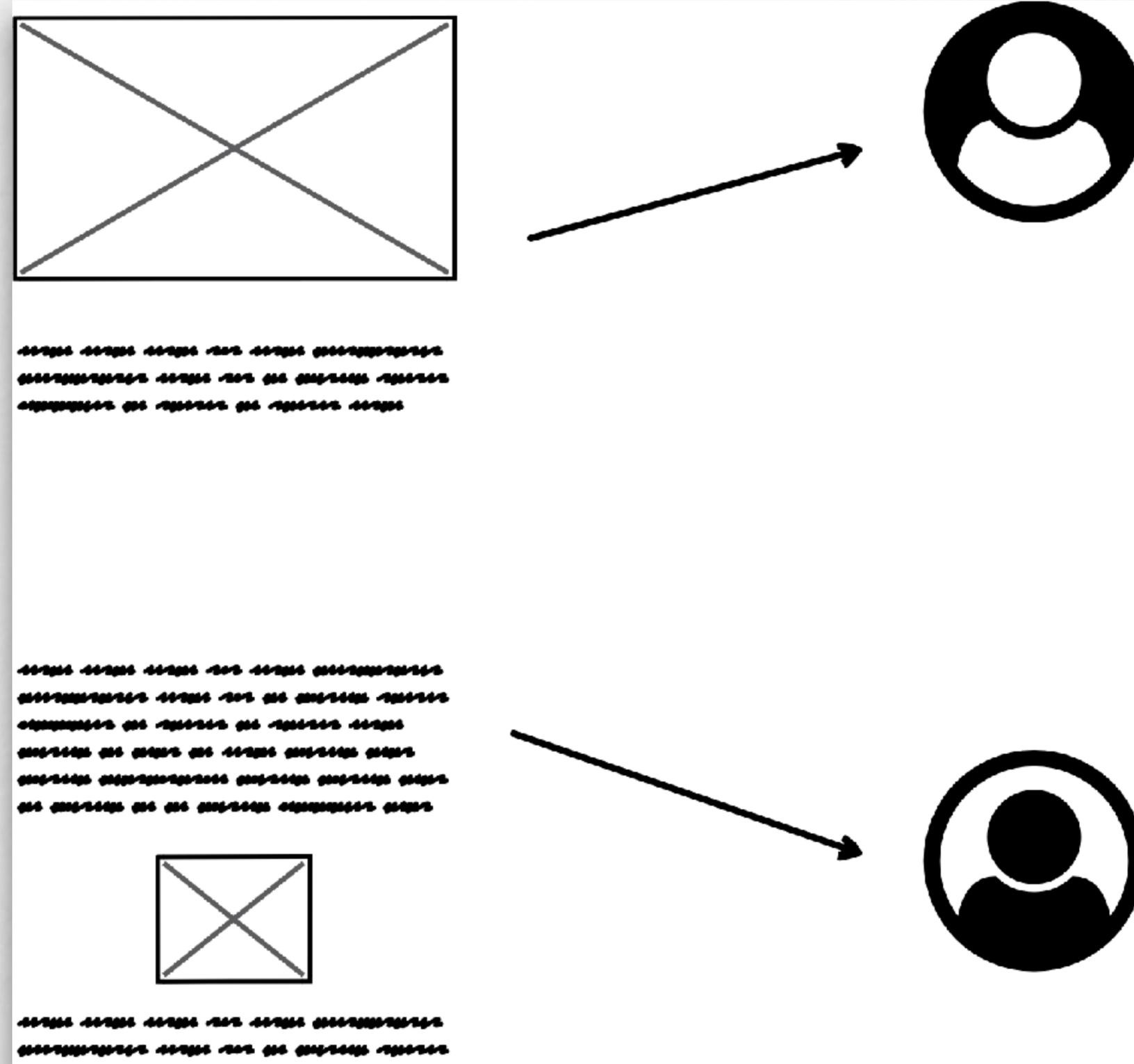
4. Know your audience

Every developer is different

Every developer is different, so you may end up changing the level of detail based on your team. Some just look at the wireframe, some go straight for the acceptance criteria. Some improvise when details are missing, others refuse to continue until they get clarification.

*Try to **learn their styles and preferences.***

*Ultimately, try to **take responsibility for making your Story clear and easy to understand.***



Recap

1. Agile was created to avoid the problems of Waterfall development
2. Follow the spirit of Agile and User Stories more than the “rules”
3. Wireframes are inherently Agile artifacts
4. Tips for writing better User Stories:
 1. You don't have to stick to the script
 2. Divide to conquer
 3. Write a “recipe”
 4. Know your audience

We'd love your help!



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Share your feedback with us



Hear what we're working on



Test new features



Swag



Product credit



Give back to our community

And, of course, our infinite gratitude :)

Thanks!

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Contact me:

- leon@balsamiq.com
- Twitter: [@leonbarnard](https://twitter.com/leonbarnard)

The screenshot shows the Balsamiq Wireframing Academy website. The top navigation bar includes links for PRODUCT, LEARN TO WIREFRAME, COMPANY, CONTACT US, BUY, and LOG IN, along with a search bar. The main header features the Balsamiq Wireframing Academy logo and navigation links for BWA Home, Articles, Videos, Courses, and Resources. The main content area has a large heading: "Practical training for creating more usable products" and a sub-heading: "Wireframing Academy by balsamiq". To the right is a large circular logo with "WA" inside. Below this, there are three columns of content. The first column is titled "New to Wireframing? Start Here." and contains three articles: "What Are Wireframes?", "Five Steps to Creating Great Wireframes", and "How to Start a Wireframe Project". The second column is titled "Learning Resources" and contains a list of links: "UI Control Guidelines", "User Interface Platform Guidelines", "UX/UI Links Of the Month", "UI Pattern Galleries", and "UX Apprentice". The third column is a dark grey box titled "Talk to our Design Experts!" with the text "Join our Slack Community to get".

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BWA Home Articles Videos Courses Resources

Practical training for creating more usable products

Wireframing Academy

by balsamiq⁺



New to Wireframing? Start Here.

What Are Wireframes?

Answers to common questions about wireframes and suggestions for how to start using them.

Five Steps to Creating Great Wireframes

Good wireframes solve real problems and lead to strong products. From writing out the scenario to gathering inputs, here is a proven path to a great website or app.

How to Start a Wireframe Project

Four techniques to start a wireframe project from scratch and ensure

Learning Resources

- [UI Control Guidelines](#)
- [User Interface Platform Guidelines](#)
- [UX/UI Links Of the Month](#)
- [UI Pattern Galleries](#)
- [UX Apprentice](#)

Talk to our Design Experts!

Join our Slack Community to get

Questions?

We're GOOD people & we CARE!



Balsamiq Retreat 2019 - Bologna, Italy

