

## **UX Design Process**

## 1 Version

Version	Summary Change History	Updated by	Version Date
1.0	Initial Documentation	MZillhardt	10/01/2020

## 2 Introduction

UX Design is, in a lot of ways, about creative and strategic process more than it is deliverables. The biggest procedural challenge starts with learning how to intake a new project, articulate a design challenge, align a group of stakeholders, then decide what a team is going to build.

The UX design process is broken down into seven steps which are:

1. Define goals
2. Perform user research
3. Create maps or user flow diagrams
4. Design wireframes and prototypes
5. Develop the user interface
6. Launch the project
7. Analyze the results

## 3 Steps

### 1. Define Goals

Each UX design process should include clear goals. Establish the reasons for the project. In most cases, the goals should align with the needs of your users.

List the main objectives for the project. This may include a timeline, budget, and specific metrics for evaluating the success of the website or application.

### 2. Perform User Research

User research is the most important stage of the UX design process as it informs the rest of your decisions. UX designers perform initial demographic research before receiving first-hand input from users. There are several methods for gaining feedback from your users, including:

- Interviews
- Surveys

- Focus groups

Face-to-face interviews offer the most value for the UX design process, as designers can evaluate the verbal and nonverbal responses from users. This offers deep insight into the issues that users face and how to address them. You can also gauge their responses to determine how they feel about specific features.

The next option is the user survey. Surveys are less personal. However, they still help you explore the attitudes of your users. You can evaluate their opinions on various features or topics. In order to guarantee the most honest results, avoid using leading questions that may sway their opinions.

Focus groups are interactive experiences involving a small group of users. Instead of one-on-one interviews, you encourage the focus group to discuss their opinions amongst themselves. The discussion may help users come up with additional responses that they may have overlooked during an interview or survey.

How to perform user research is outside of the current scope of this document.

### 3. Create Maps or User Flow Diagrams

Your UX design process diagram may also include scenario maps or site maps. Mapping the needs of the user helps create more efficient wireframes. Site maps are necessary when designing websites and web-based applications. For more complex applications, create a user flow diagram.

A user flow diagram outlines the steps that users need to take to complete specific actions. The diagram starts from an entry point and includes all possible outcomes. For example, a user flow diagram for a website may start with a landing page. The diagram then branches off to all the potential links and menu options.

A valuable aspect of the UX design process, a diagram helps provide a clearer picture of the paths that users take. Reviewing these paths in your design process may help you eliminate redundancy and reduce the steps needed to carry out specific tasks on the product.

### 4. Design Wireframes and Prototypes

Before designing the visual user interface, you need to develop a wireframe. The wireframe is a very important and time-consuming part of the UX design process. Outline the user interface without any visual elements. It is a simple outline of the structure of the website or application.

### 5. Develop the User Interface

While a different team may develop the user interface (UI), it is still part of the overall UX design process. The wireframes and prototypes that you develop are brought to life by the UI development team. The UX team and UI team often work together to maintain consistency. The UX designers may even create a style guide for UI designers to use throughout the design process.

### 6. Launch the Project

After designing and developing the project, the overall UX design process is not complete. You need to launch the project. Depending on the scale of the project, you may start with a beta launch.

A beta launch is a small-scale release to a limited number of users. It allows you to perform user testing and internal testing before the public launch.

## 7. Analyze the Results

During beta launches and public launches, continue to analyze the success of the project. Pay attention to feedback from users and examine data related to their usage of the website or application. We may wish to go back to step two at this point and do another round of user research.

Use the goals that were established at the start of the UX design process to determine what areas need improvement.

## 3 UX Documentation

UX documentation has to be actionable and provide practical guidance not just for the design team, but for everyone else involved in the development of the product. To achieve this, UX designers need to document their projects from start to finish i.e. from the research phase all the way to product deployment.

### **Why is documentation so important?**

1. It helps you keep a single source of information for your projects. When every step of the design process is properly documented, there is no room for misinformation to creep in and cause bad decisions.
2. It helps your team collaborate more effectively. Designing and building successful digital products is a cross-functional effort. Good documentation creates bridges between different stakeholders on the project.
3. It provides design ideas and guidance for future projects. You use your UX documentation to inform decisions for future projects. It is your best source of information on what was done right so you can replicate that, helping you improve your design process in the long run.
4. It helps us improve on what we have already created. Because the process was documented previously, we can see what works and what doesn't, and improve upon

### **What makes UX Documentation good?**

1. Needs to be usable to the intended audience and make it easy to find, consume, and understand the information provided
2. Needs to be useful to the intended audience, in that they help inform and support decision making

### **What should be included?**

1. Design brief. Need to communicate the project's goals, objectives, and vision to team and stakeholders. Design briefs are also a great tool for capturing all you need to accomplish in a project, including things like deliverables, budget and schedule.

2. User flow diagrams that were created. A valuable aspect of the UX design process, a diagram helps provide a clearer picture of the paths that users take. Reviewing these paths in your design process may help you eliminate redundancy and reduce the steps needed to carry out specific tasks on the product.
3. Sketches and wireframes. Sketches are the initial designs. Usually quick, useful for visualizing ideas and showcasing concepts and early designs. Sketches are fast to create, they give team members something to bounce off, and are easy to iterate. Wireframes show the basic structure and hierarchy of key UI elements and, depending on the level of fidelity, can be gray-scale or convey some of the design aesthetics.
4. Mockups and prototypes. These are the fleshed out designs, showcasing the color scheme, layout, typography, iconography, and the overall visual feel of the product. We should also be including the original resources, PSDs, PNGs, etc in case we need to make adjustments to graphics.
5. Usability testing reports. Usability reports are the documents that communicate the process and the results of usability testing. They may include anything from onsite interview scripts to user tasks and final results and statistics. These could also include any analytics that we run to determine engagements. These would be generated in step 7 of the process where we analyze the results.
6. Specifications. UX design specifications communicate UI design details such as color schemes, styles and measurements, as well as user flows and functionality to developers. This would also include the requirements for the project, possibly the BRD

## 4 Design Briefs

A design brief, also known as a creative brief, is a project management document that allows you to identify the scope, scale, and core details of your upcoming design project. Kicking off a new project with a design brief provides so many other benefits for your project workflow.

It can be used to inform design decisions and guide the overall workflow of a project; from conception to completion. A well-written creative brief helps you to identify and avoid roadblocks early on, and it can even streamline and accelerate your prototyping, design, and development process. Here are just a few more benefits that it will give you.

- Provides designers with the necessary insight, background, and foundation to create the visual design
- Offers your team a more detailed vision of the business expectations
- Helps keep individual contributors aligned and on track, while keeping the project on time and on budget
- Gives the business a sense of involvement in the process, and comfort that their goals and vision are understood
- Provides you with all design specs upfront

