

Designing **FOR** **User** Experience

Joe Myers
UX/UI DESIGN DIRECTOR



What is UX?

User Experience is:

The *overall impression* and quality of interaction a user has with a product.

- **impacted by** images, word choice, color, load time, animation, usability, readability, and much more
- **personal** and unique
- something that **cannot be absolutely controlled**
- not the same as **user interface**



OUR MISSION

Provide the best possible chance for a great User Experience.



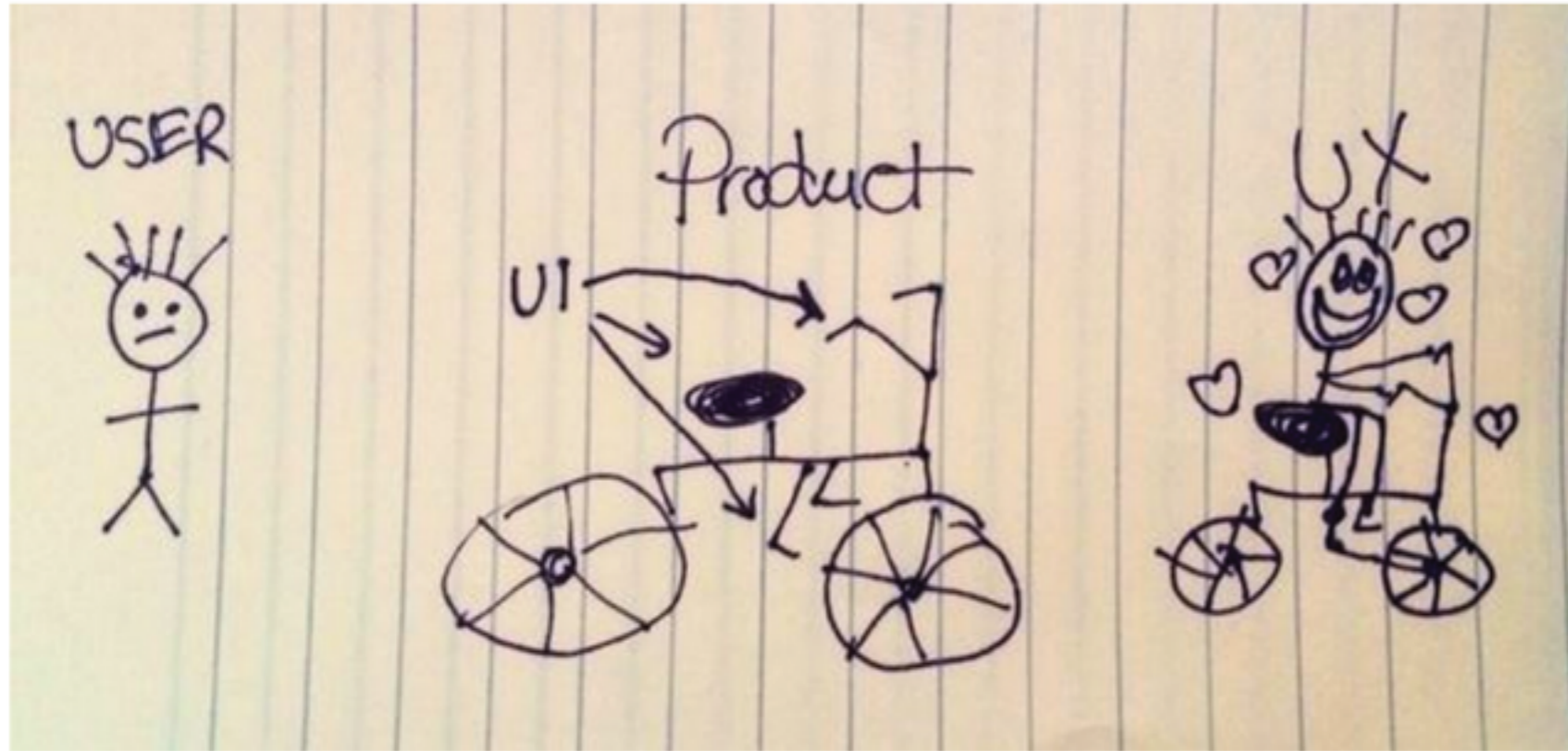
Jennifer Aldrich
@jma245



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And then my kiddo asked, "What's the difference between UX and UI?" #ux #design #ui

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1:26 PM - 4 Mar 2014



Jennifer Aldrich

@jma245

userexperiencerocks.com

UX is BIG

Things you notice right away

- look & feel
- major functionality
- navigation
- animation

UX is SMALL

Time-consuming UI enhancements

- mouseover behavior & hit area
- tool tips
- animation timing for usability
- reduced clicks or taps required to accomplish a task

Check Out: littlebigdetails.com

SUGGESTION

Leave enough time to obsess about details.

summer | blog | mobile app | 1-888-DI



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DISCOVER GETTING HERE LODGING TICKETS & PASSES THE MOUNTAIN PHOTOS & VIDEO WEATHER & CAMS

UX is affordance

“perceived action possibilities”

- What happens when I push the **red button**?
- Many forms: metaphor, relationships, direction, value, size, copywriting
- Affordance in User Interface led to buttons and iconography conventions



SUGGESTION

Don't reinvent the wheel. Just make a really kickass wheel.

UX is sympathetic

*Walking a mile in someone else's shoes
is a great way to make better shoes.*

- Understand users' challenges
- Find ways to offer **unexpected** benefits
- Add **real** value

UX is
personal.

“Who took my button?”



Designers and developers have strong opinions about best practices, usability, process, methodology.

Users do too.

Ask two tech people how to pronounce .GIF

UX is
subjective

My preference may not be your preference.

Can we make an experience that's

- flexible?
- customizable?
- adaptive?

SUGGESTION

Try some basic user testing.

BONUS POINTS:

Leave time to do act on user feedback.

UX is
portable
Now more than ever.



It doesn't have to look the same on all devices.

It just has to work.

And look good.

And make money.

And...

SUGGESTION

Responsive design is not the end all, be all.

But do you have a better idea?

Good UX is
honest

No tricks. No gimmicks.

An **honest** user experience is one where the user is empowered, rather than persuaded.

REMINDER

Good design translates to credibility. Consistent quality leads to trust.

UX Doesn't end *when the lights go out.*

Users DO grade every interaction.

Consistency, quality, ease of use, and **readability** matter.

Users DON'T care if a site is responsive.

A website should just work right. Right?

SUGGESTION

Each experience affects the next.

Every member
of our team is a
UX professional.

ARE YOU UX-UALLY ACTIVE?

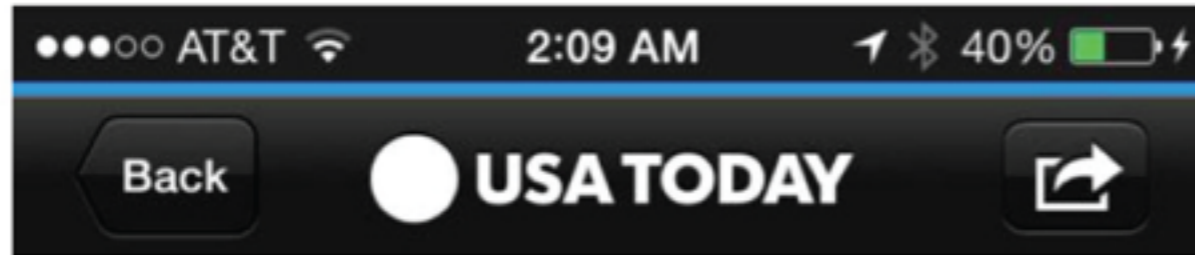
What kind of experience are we working on?

Trends.



Jeffrey Zeldman
@zeldman

Good old USA Today, always first to cover an emerging story.



More Americans
using mobile devices
to access Internet

USAToday

Updated 6h ago

Manhattan, NY

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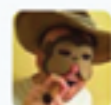


7:03 AM - 16 Oct 2014



Fred Gates Design @fredgatesdesign · 40m
@zeldman OMG why didn't anyone tell me??

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mike k @mkelley · 38m
@zeldman USA Today....from 2002.

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Jeffrey Zeldman

@zeldman

zeldman.com

Smaller Screens

*One thumb, one eyeball**



- **Pervasive mobile-first philosophy**
- **Less real estate, same hunger for content**
- **Larger UI elements for touch control**
- **Inconsistent attention span**
- **Increasing demand for rich interaction requires smarter UI controls**

* Luke Wroblewski

CHALLENGE

Varying bandwidth: smart phone \neq smart network

Mobile-First Web Design

- ✓ Address smartphone/tablet interaction first by optimizing experience for small screens and gestural interfaces.
- ✓ Prioritize design and development for mobile devices to avoid loading non-essential assets.
- ✓ Relies on progressive enhancement (*additive*) rather than mobile exclusion or graceful degradation (*reductive*).
- ✓ Forces content discipline.



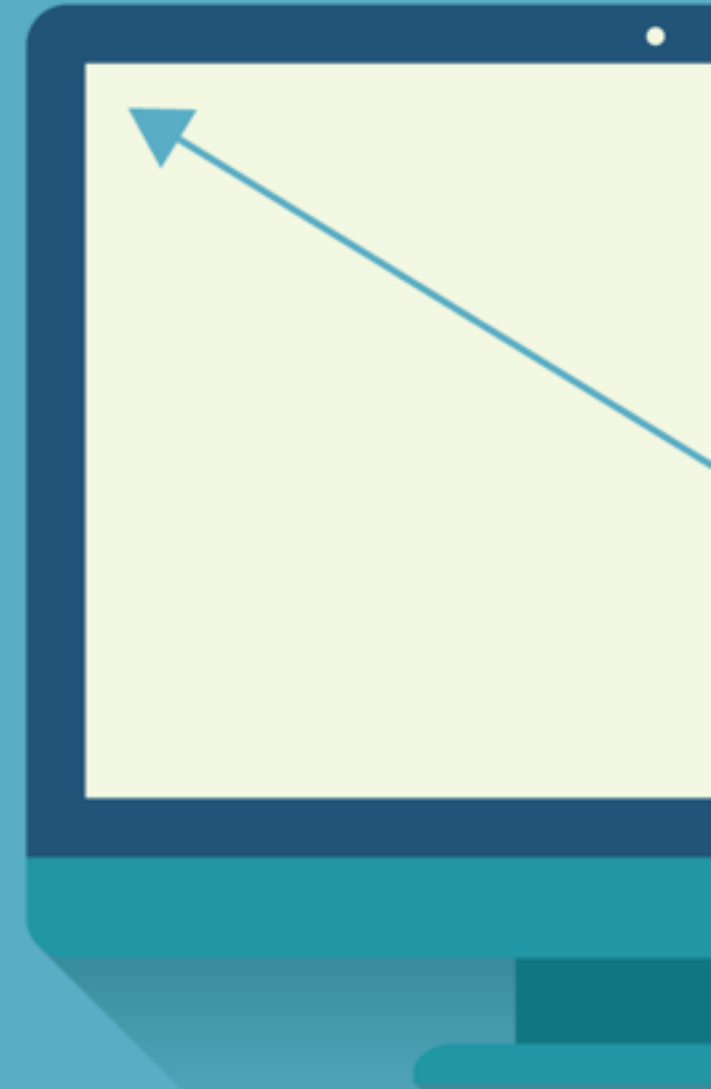
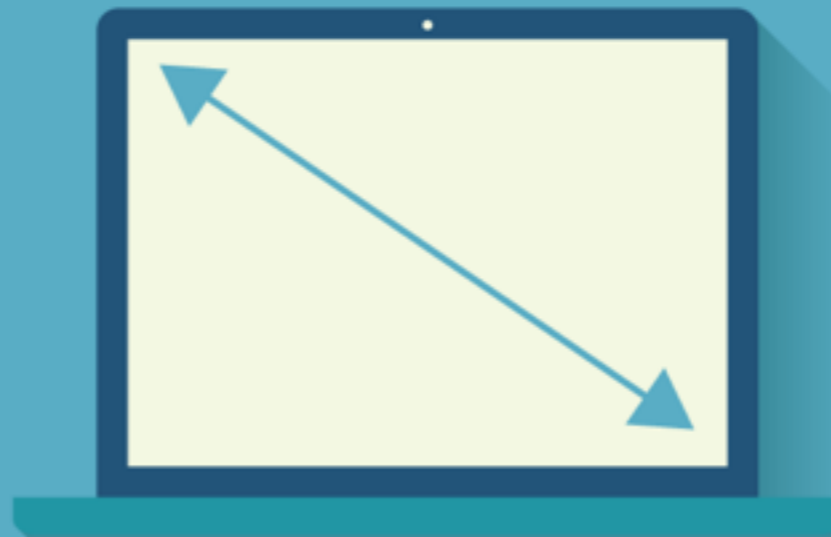
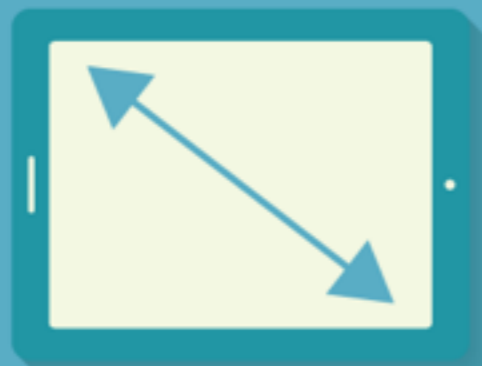
THEORY

Consider designing a site just for mobile and building up from there.

Larger Screens

An embarrassment of pixels

- **More pixels, more negative space**
- **Large canvas doesn't make it ok to break basic type rules**
- **Opportunity for enhanced experience with more relief**
- **Question:** *Should we expand the max width of Lawrence content area?*



CHALLENGE

How do we fill space in a useful way without overwhelming user?

Pixel Density



- @1x, @2x, @3x?
- Requires serving bitmap graphics at multiple sizes
- Has accelerated adoption of alternate methods like SVG, icon fonts, and Canvas/CSS art
- PS: Many high pixel screens offer more detail than the human eye can process. *Ain't that a bitch?*

REMINDER

Just because a user has a retina display doesn't mean they're on a high speed connection.

Web Typography

It's finally here! Oh crap.

- We can now embed “real typefaces”
- Emergence of “type as art”
- Many typefaces, not all good
- Varying methods
- Many services to choose from

Google Fonts (free)

Adobe Typekit

Typography.com

FontSquirrel

etc.

- Challenges: Rendering; Fallbacks; FOUT

OBSERVATION

We need flexible methods for testing and efficient global overrides.

Long Form Stories

Feature content, premium presentation.



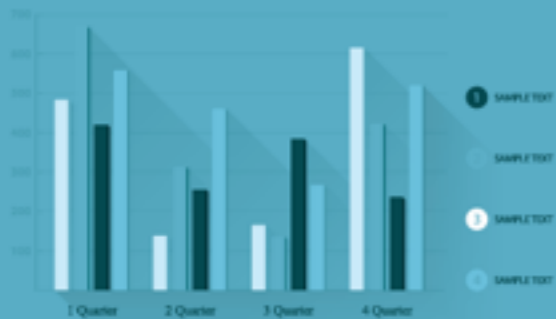
- Pleasurable and dramatic treatment
- Large, high-quality imagery
- Rich media and custom artwork
- Interactive features
- Parallax scrolling and animated responses to user input



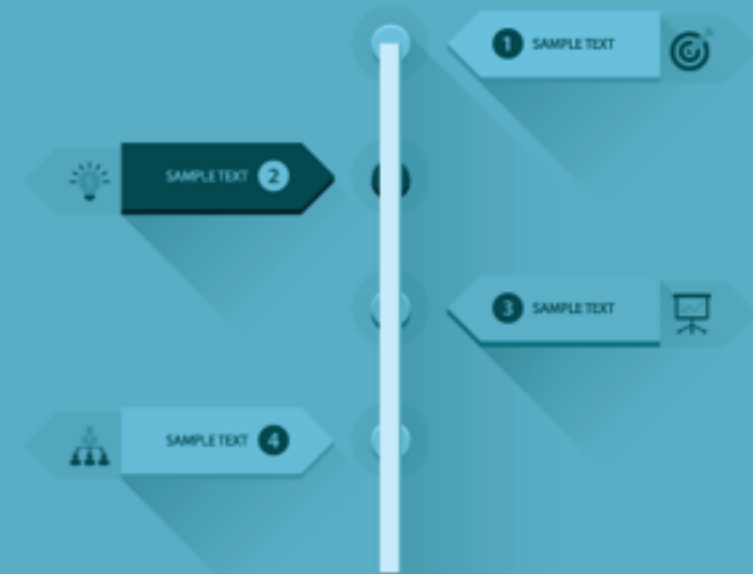
CHALLENGE

Immerse user without surrendering control or overwhelming content

Data Visualization



- Smooth custom animated infographics
- User initiation aids user comprehension
- Unique experience makes content more impactful



CHALLENGE

Lack of resources can make this seem out of reach. But is it?

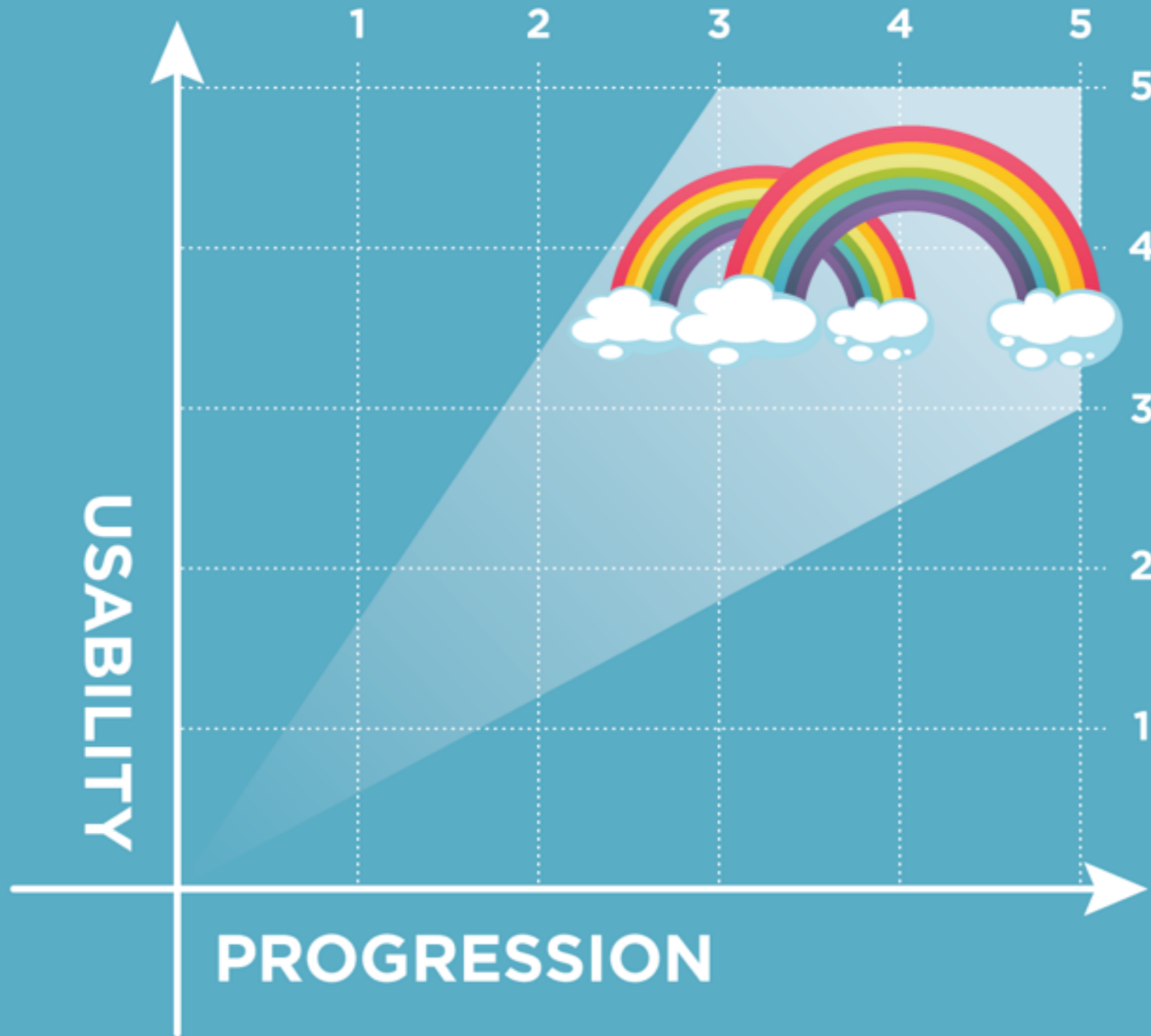
Visual Storytelling

Pictures doing the heavy lifting.

- Rich visuals as content
- Large imagery as navigation
- Crisp color and iconography as UI

CHALLENGE

Tough to find the right balance and hierarchy.



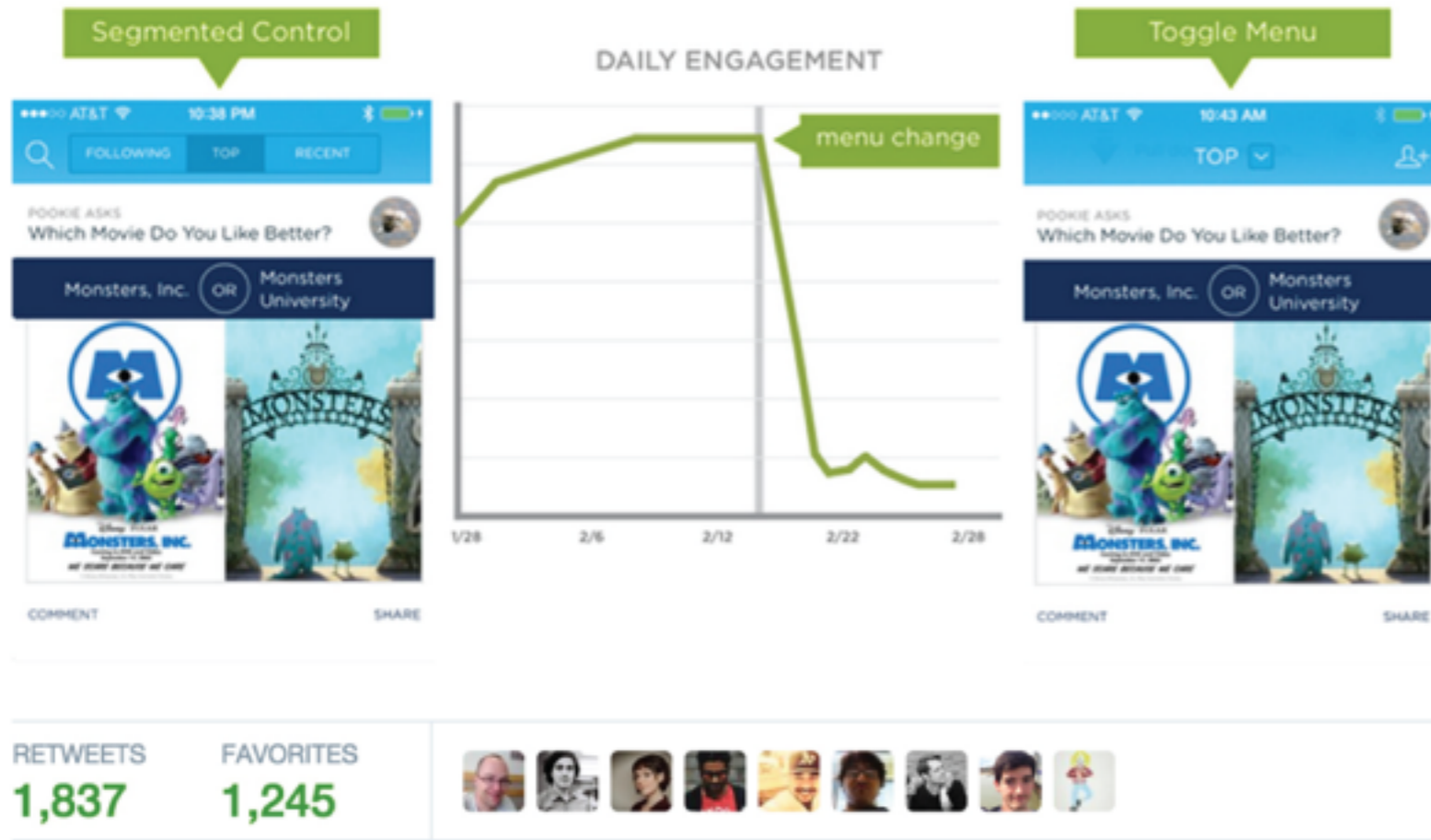
Innovation at the expense of usability can be deadly.



Luke Wroblewski
@lukew

Obvious always wins.

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9:11 AM - 11 Apr 2014



Luke Wroblewski
@lukew
lukew.com

Process.



Mike Monteiro
@monteiro

If you became a designer to express yourself get the fuck off the bus. It's not going to your stop.



Mike Monteiro
@monteiro

Never, ever, ever let them call you a “creative”. It's a way to be disenfranchised. You are a designer. It's not magic, it's a trade.



Mike Monteiro
@monteiro

Your job is not to make your client happy, it's to make them successful. If the former happens, so be it. But don't conflate the two.



Mike Monteiro
@monteiro

“A designer should never make you feel stupid for not understanding their craft.”



Mike Monteiro

@monteiro

mikemonteiro.com

User Flow

Pace.

- Show me what's most important
- Pique my interest
- Take me through a learning process
- Help me accomplish a task
- Immerse me in ongoing discovery
- Encourage me to share

KEEP IN MIND

Helping a user find what they want is more important than showing them what they don't.

Reimagine navigation

Simplicity.

- Not all pages need a place in primary nav
- Provide detail upon user-initiation
- Rely on contextual UI



SUGGESTION

Too many choices can be worse than no choice at all.

Design *systems*, not pages.



Visual Style Guide

- By designers, for designers
- Colors
- Fonts
- Logo treatments
- Photo usage

VS.

Pattern Library

- By the team, for the team
- Coded, contextual elements
- Grid System
- Form Elements
- Navigation
- Tables
- Lists
- Stats/Data

SUGGESTION

Don't get too hung up on designing individual screens.

Modern UX requires designers and developers to get along.

Flexible methods for a fluid process

- Agile development
- In-browser prototyping
- Pre-processor CSS (SCSS/LESS)
- Production-level UX iteration



SUGGESTION

This process is iterative. Chill out.

Pixel-perfection in a post-pixel world.

Endless user fragmentation

- Mobile-first thinking
- Flexible, fluid layouts
- Retina support, density-independence
- Progressive enhancement
- Embracing gestural interface conventions



Think resolution-independence.

More overlap in the process.

Designers, stay after class...

- Test production methods with code
- Be at the engineers' disposal for on-demand iteration
- Annotate designs to fill production gap
- Take on a quality assurance role

Engineers, jump in earlier...

- Rapid prototyping
- Sanity check data visualization
- Prepare resources and methods

Our Turn.

FOR EVERY PROJECT:

What is the
one thing
we must get right?

*This can be tough to pin down.
But once we do, questions begin
to answer themselves.*



SUGGESTION

Make this a pillar for all major UX decisions.

REAL TALK:

What are our
advantages & disadvantages?



SUGGESTION

How can we stack the deck in our favor?

What's stopping us?

Identify and address potential roadblocks before they undermine user experience.

Examples:

Internal politics

Too many cooks

Budget

Lack of resources

SUGGESTION

Have confidence in decisions made on users' behalf.

Oh yeah, make it pretty.

NOW *we're ready to
talk about design.*

There's a reason this slide was last.