
Effective wireframes

pitfalls to avoid and tips for success

Al Power @alpower
UXCampBrighton 2016



Al Power

@alpower

Currently writing a talk on effective wireframes.
When wire-framing, what one thing really helps
you communicate? What doesn't? [#UX](#) [#design](#)

RETWEETS

2

LIKES

4



Definition:

A wireframe is a two-dimensional illustration of a page's interface that specifically focuses on space allocation and prioritisation of content, functionalities available, and intended behaviours.

- usability.gov

Problems I've faced

CREATING/PRESENTING::

Addressing surface design only

Expensive/high time costs

Narrowing focus too early

Client Misunderstanding

ITERATING:

Endless amendments

Problem: Addressing surface design only

Solution: **Documenting
behaviour**

Problem: addressing surface design only

Wireframes combine a lot of things (IA, layout, user journey) and don't communicate the nuances of these well.

**"I'd go as far as to say the document
you build for the wireframes is more
important than the wireframes
themselves."**

James Seymour Locke @JamesSLocke

Documenting

- Don't dive straight into wireframes
- Think about and documented more than just wireframes - e.g. IA, User journey, User stories, metrics, feature specs, competitor analysis
- Keep high level - design related things better addressed in detailed designs

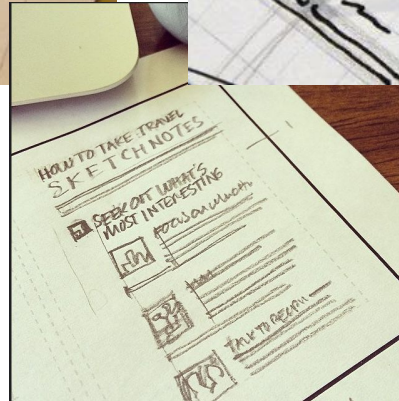
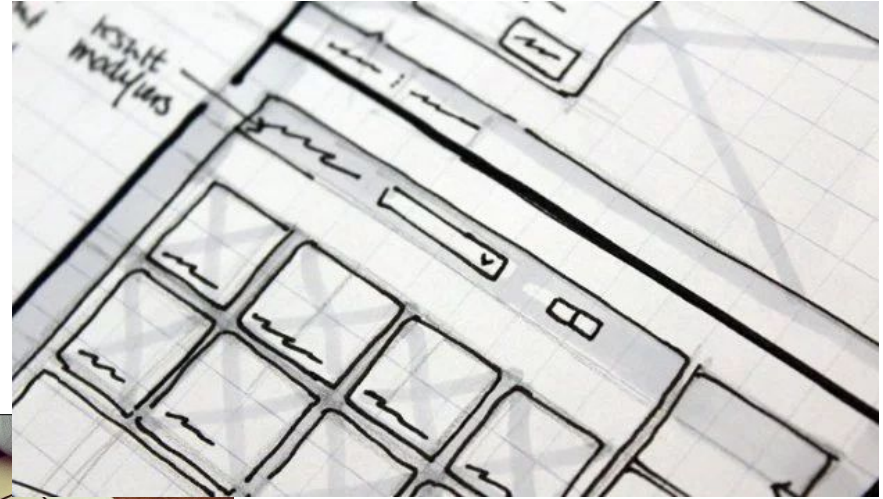
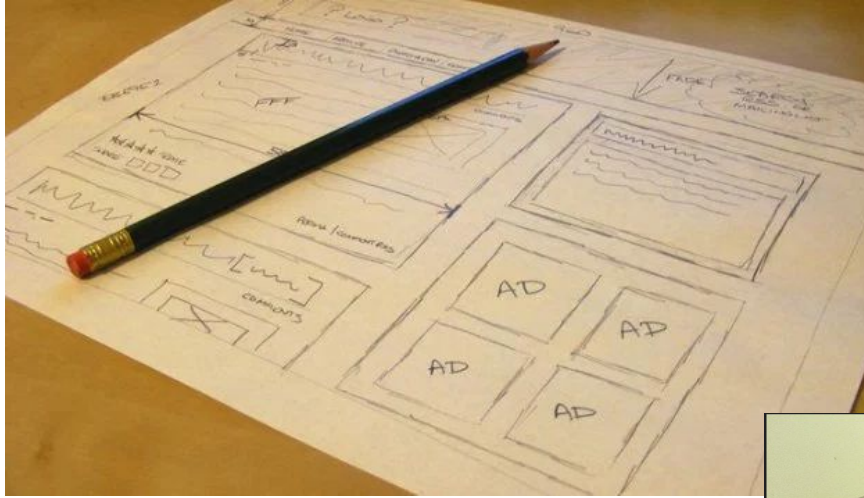
Problem: Expensive/high time costs

Solution: **Fidelity and
Technique**

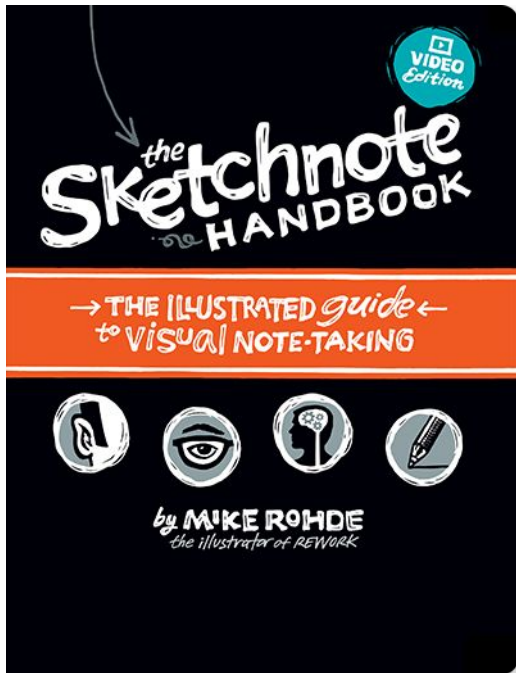
Problem

- Wireframes can be expensive (time/cost)
- An insistence on wireframing everything

Lofi drawing tips



Lofi drawing tips



<http://sketchsheets.com/> - printable free templates for web and devices

<http://pinterest.com> - search for 'ux and wireframes' for good inspiration

"personally I think: use whatever approach let's you make and test "the thing" fastest. It can be quickest to start with a "clickable" prototype of sketches and 'wireframey' things"

Sophie Dennis @sophiedennis

Quick Clickable Prototype



<https://marvelapp.com/>

" ...If fidelity is too high, stakeholders tend to expect the final designs to look exactly like that initial concept. I keep mine as simple as possible but enough detail to show functionality..."

Leo Barnes @productoven

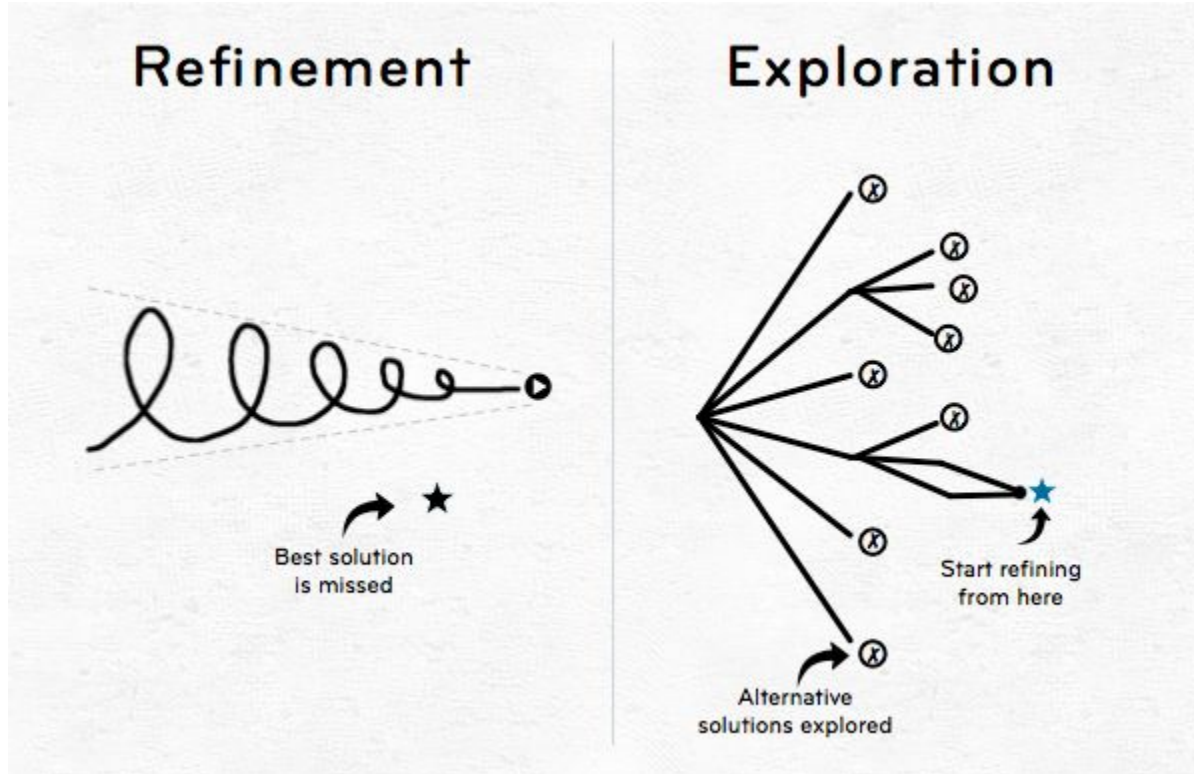
Problem: Narrowing focus too early

Solution: **lofi exploration**

Problem: Narrowing focus too early

- Designer loves first idea
- 'Not quite right'
- Deeper understanding required

Refinement vs Exploration



Sketchboarding



<http://bit.ly/sketchboarding-slides> - presentation by Leah Buley

<http://bit.ly/sketchboarding> - great blog post by Jason Furnell

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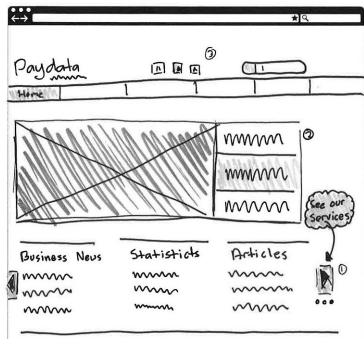
6up templates



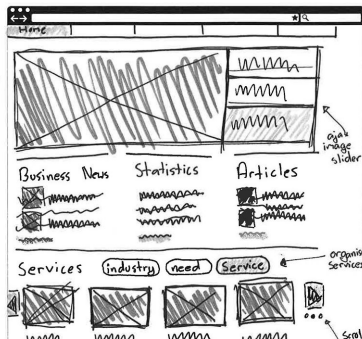
<http://bit.ly/sketchboard-templates> from Box UK

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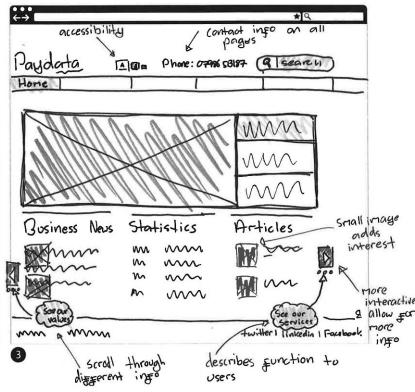
6up example



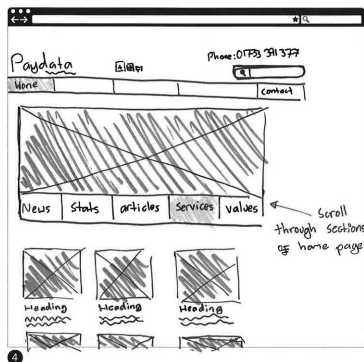
- 1 ① scroll through different content ② ajax image slider contains important & exciting news ③ search functions text size etc



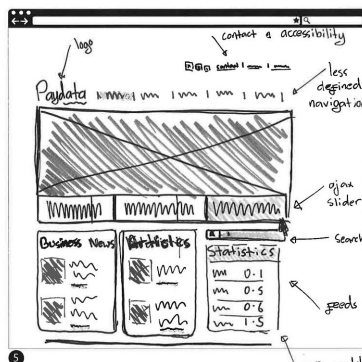
- 2 scroll to view services in different format



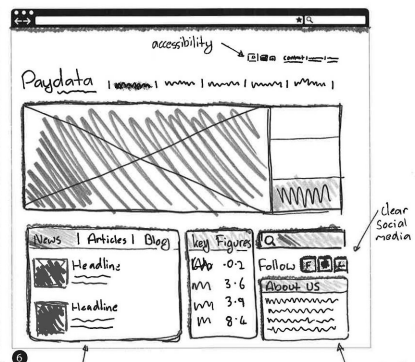
- 3 scroll through different info



- 4

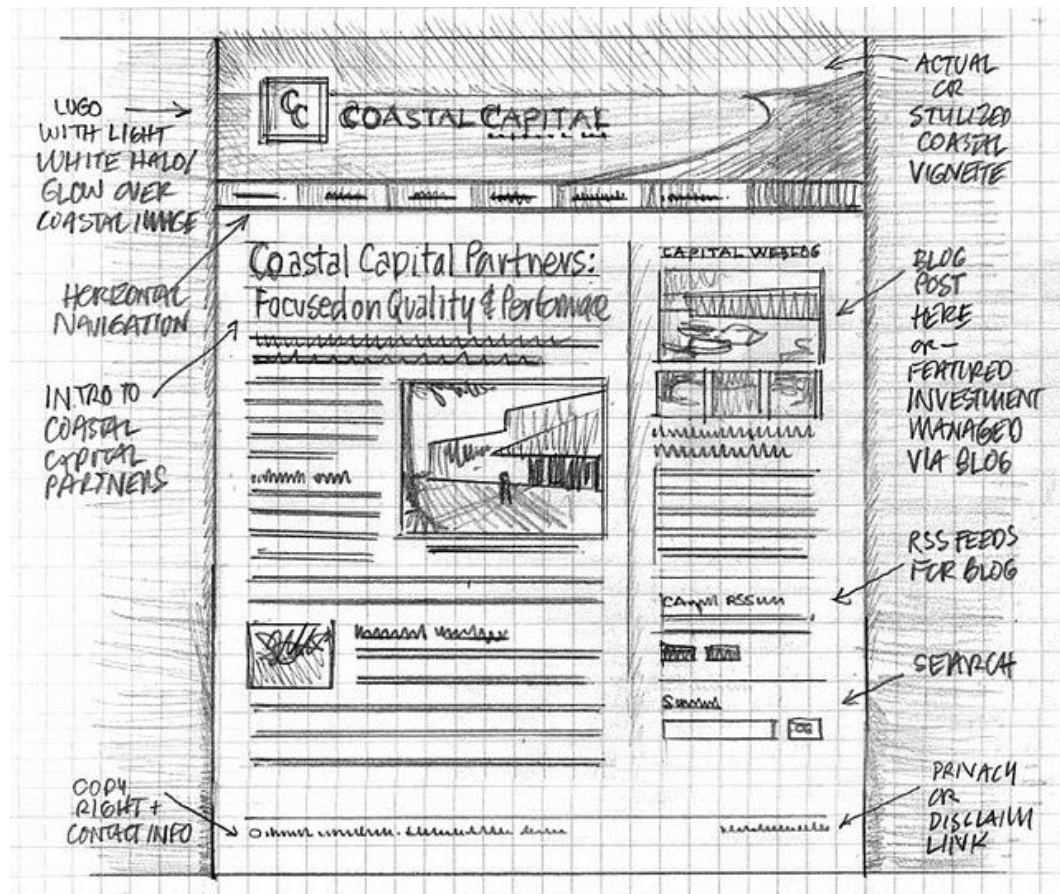


- 5



- 6 Java slider for people who don't know us

...then 1up



Problem: Client Misunderstanding

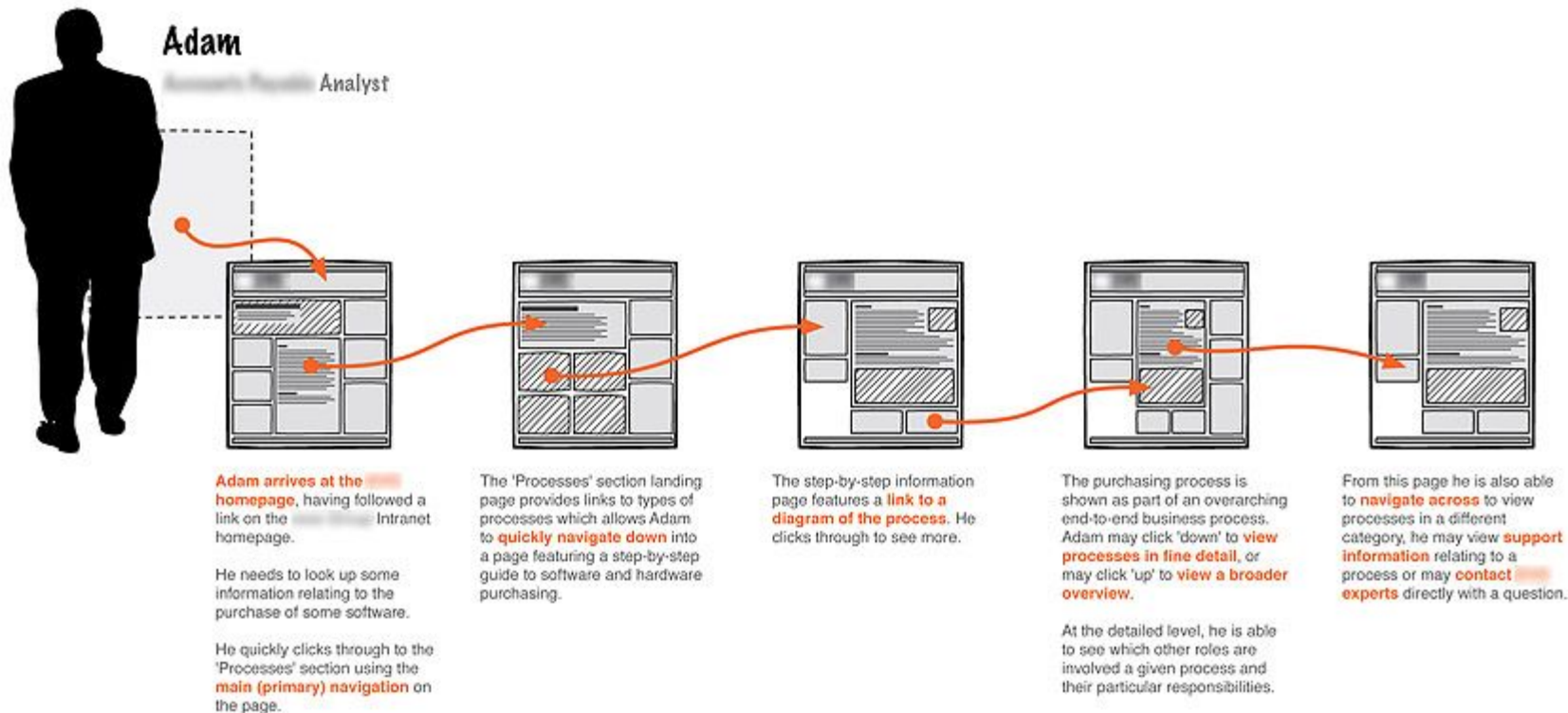
Solution: **Presentation
and Context**

Problem: Client Misunderstanding

- Focusing on the wrong parts of the presentation
- Chinese whispers
- “Is this the finished design?”
- Goals of the wireframes not aligned with stakeholder

Problem: Client Misunderstanding

Solution: Show context



Problem: Client Misunderstanding

Solution: Show context

INFORMATION DASHBOARD DESIGN

1. Scan the big picture
2. Zoom in on important specifics
3. Links to supporting data

SIGN IN



- smart defaults
- "locked" screen design
- overview for quick understanding
- monitored items can quickly be transitioned back to analysis mode



- smart defaults
- user customizable to build unexpected connections
- drill-downs, slices, widgets, views
- can be shifted back to monitoring



* single data set investigation
- drill down
- slice
- widget
- zoom

* multi-data set investigation
- drill down
- slice
- widget
- zoom
- comparisons
- overlay (addition/sub)

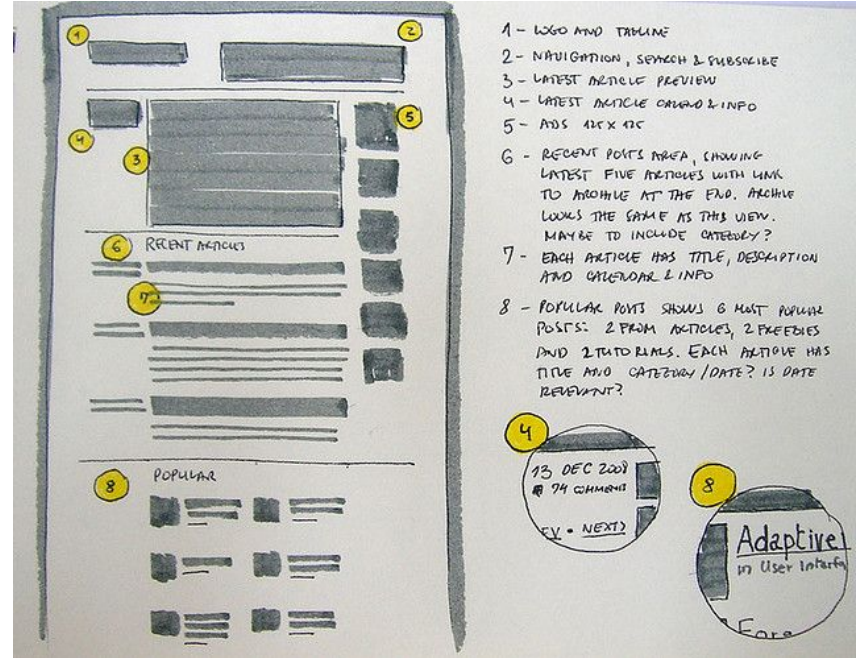
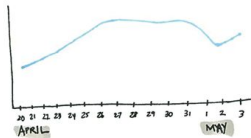
* specific ACTION MENU, FUNCTIONS
"what I need to do on this screen or to this info"

* SINGLE DATA SET w/ actions

* data set with user selected data set 2 for analytic comparison

NOT JUST EXCEPTIONS;
COMPLETE SITUATIONAL AWARENESS

- 3 components without borders,
does that give you a better
sense of connectedness?



1 - LOGO AND TIMELINE

2 - NAVIGATION, SEARCH & SUBSCRIBE

3 - LATEST ARTICLE PREVIEW

4 - LATEST ARTICLE CATEGORY & INFO

5 - ADS AREA

6 - RECENT POSTS AREA, SHOWING LATEST FIVE ARTICLES WITH LINK TO ARCHIVE AT THE END. ARCHIVE LOOKS THE SAME AS THIS VIEW. MAYBE TO INCLUDE CATEGORY?

7 - EACH ARTICLE HAS TITLE, DESCRIPTION AND CATEGORY & INFO

8 - POPULAR POSTS SHOWS 6 MOST POPULAR POSTS: 2 FROM ARTICLES, 2 FREEBIES AND 2 TUTORIALS. EACH ARTICLE HAS TITLE AND CATEGORY/DATE. IS DATE RELEVANT?



Goals not aligned

- Understand motivations of those reading the wireframes when you present

Problem: Endless amendments

Solution: **Taking and
actioning feedback**

Problem

Endless amendments: - receiving the wrong kind of feedback and entering into an endless feedback loop of tweaking things

Keep control of meetings

- Refer back to previous feedback
- Set agenda before you present
- Park unrelated feedback
- Keep to time

Recap

- Document things up front and use them as drivers
- Explore things **alongside** your customers
- Present your wireframes with reference to your other UX deliverables
- Keep control of your feedback

Thank you!

...what problems
have you faced?

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