

USER EXPERIENCE.

PROCESS AND METHODS FOR SUCCESS

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A successful website is about marketing, generating revenue, and maximizing brand equity. The medium has evolved. UX, UI and IxD are all fundamental components of our process and are comprehensively integrated in both front-end and back-end design and development processes we employ. At various stages of design and development, **user-testing** can be employed to help inform and refine both the navigational and visual experience of a web environment. **Moderated** testing (in-person or remote) as well as **interactive prototypes** are valuable tools. Our focus has always been two-fold:

- State-of-the-art interface design, development and functionality
- Site integration into a client's overall marketing strategy and brand personality

Mobile First :: Every decision throughout the design and development process is made at all three device levels — mobile, tablet and desktop — simultaneously before it is considered a viable option. With intense focus on mobile first, this is the most viable and successful creative method to ensure the viewer experience is perfect, consistent and fluid on every device for every platform.

UX, UI & IxD

We are fluent in **UX, UI & IxD**. All three of these processes are undertaken collectively. However, they are approached differently, both aesthetically and technically, for the front-end than they are on the back-end. These three important processes could be described as follows:

- When we refer to the **UX**. We are talking about the User Experience. It might seem like UI and UX should be the same. It's all about the experience right? Data shows they should be abstracted and handled separately.
- The **UI** refers to the User Interface. When we talk about the UI, we should be referring to the branding, style or layout.
- Finally, **IxD**. Interaction Design is the term we use for the whole process of coming up with the ideas, concepts and execution of those ideas. This is how we approach web and app design and all 3 of these processes focus on meeting the objectives of the website.

As designers, we must understand the visual objective and emotional characteristics of the brand before the creative process begins. As developers, we must have a clear answer to the primary question. "What are the fundamental objectives of the project?" To answer that question we first ask ourselves "What purpose must the site fulfill for the user?" This is a difficult question for a client to answer. Invariably, their response involves things like "brand awareness" and "increase traffic". We digest that input but distill further, emphasizing the fact that those fundamental objectives referred to above are found in the user experience. Everything in this day and age revolves around the customer experience. Clients will not engage with Client to expand brand reputation or increase traffic. They expect the company and site to perform a function and fulfill a valuable purpose with the least possible resistance. Naturally, it is challenging for most clients to wear the "user" hat. That's because they are rarely their own target audience. Which brings us back to why qualitative research is so critical to the process. Once we have clarity on what these "fundamental objectives" are, we can begin to strategize what platforms we must utilize to provide optimal delivery of those objectives. It is only then we determine what platform(s) are going to best meet those objectives.

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1.UX

- With the objectives and platforms now clearly defined, we then undergo a strategic user-flow development process to flush-out what specific user interactions will be necessary and how they interact with one another. We process and identify every possible path a user might take and what interactions must occur on each screen to meet those objectives. Our first deliverable is a user-flow map.

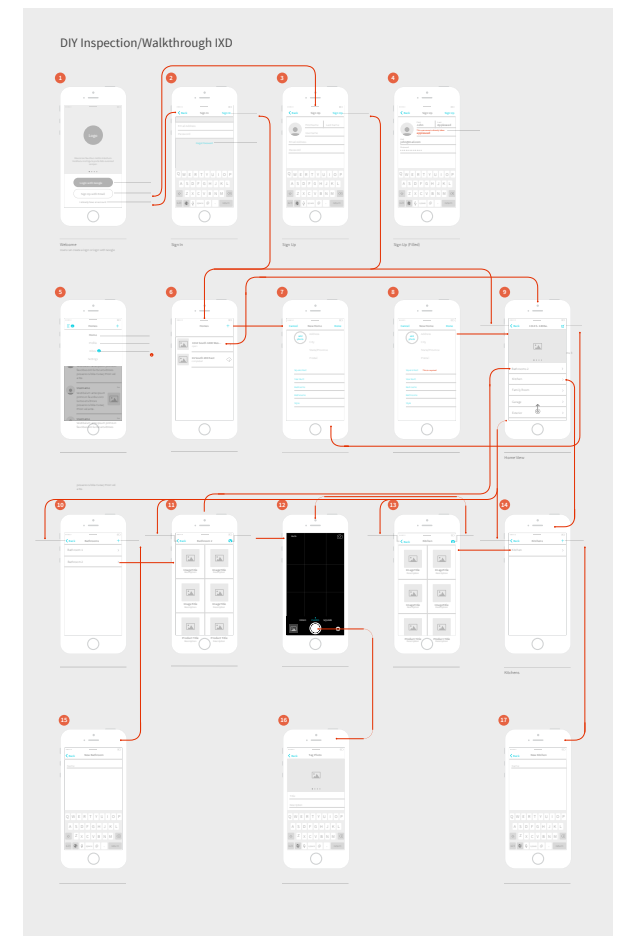
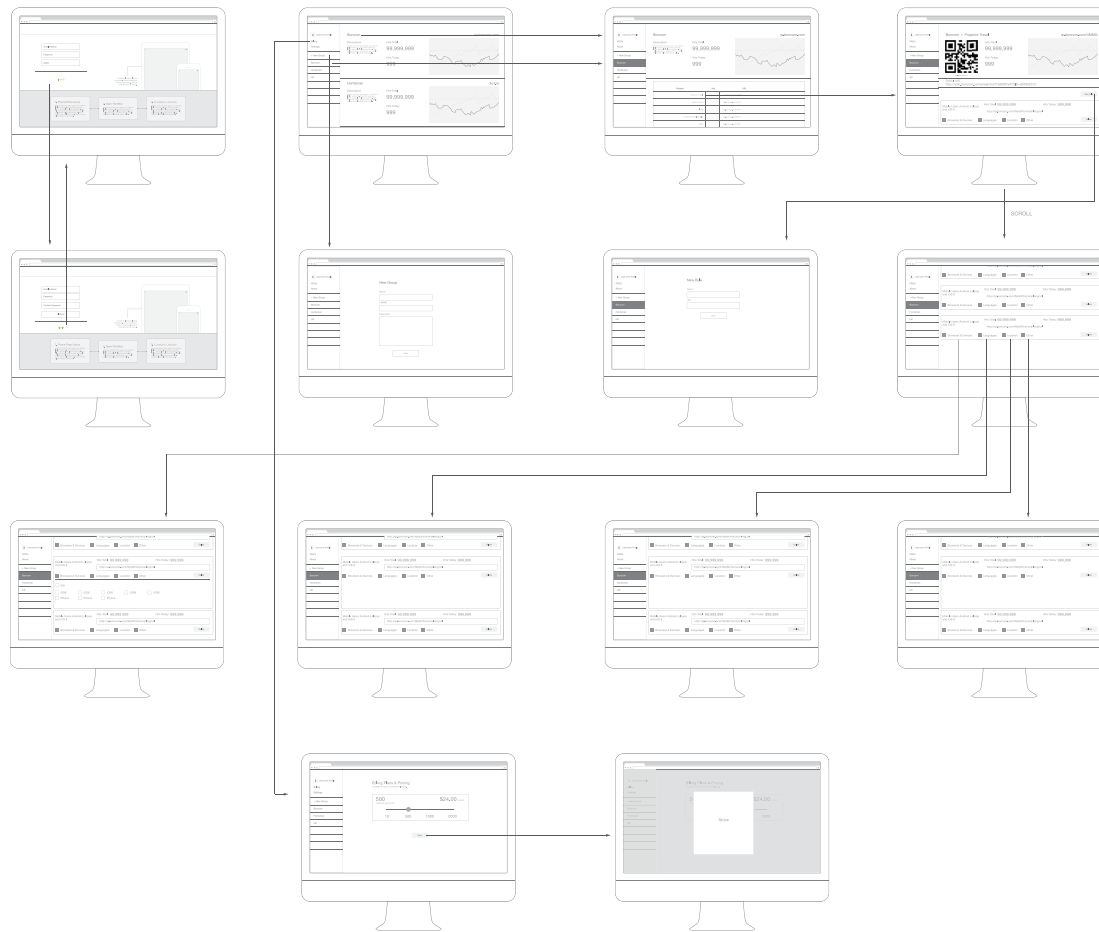


- A dashboard view with important KPI and other data points which will be most important to the user upon first entering the app.
- Detailed user reports outlining listings, contacts, appointments, agreements and transactions on a daily, weekly and monthly basis.
- This section will allow the user to view recently recorded items. It will also allow them to record new items, the date they were completed, and other data depending on what is recorded.
- The teams section will allow users to view teams they belong to, search for new teams or organizations to join, and view team profiles and join them.

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2.UI

- Next, we level up to wireframes. At this point, we are still not concerned about brand or style yet, but are focused on making detailed decisions about the content flow, layout and user interactions. We are making strategic, informed determinations about content, media, social sharing, calls to action, usability, etc... Every single action and reaction initiated or performed by the user will be decided here. Below is an example of a wireframe.

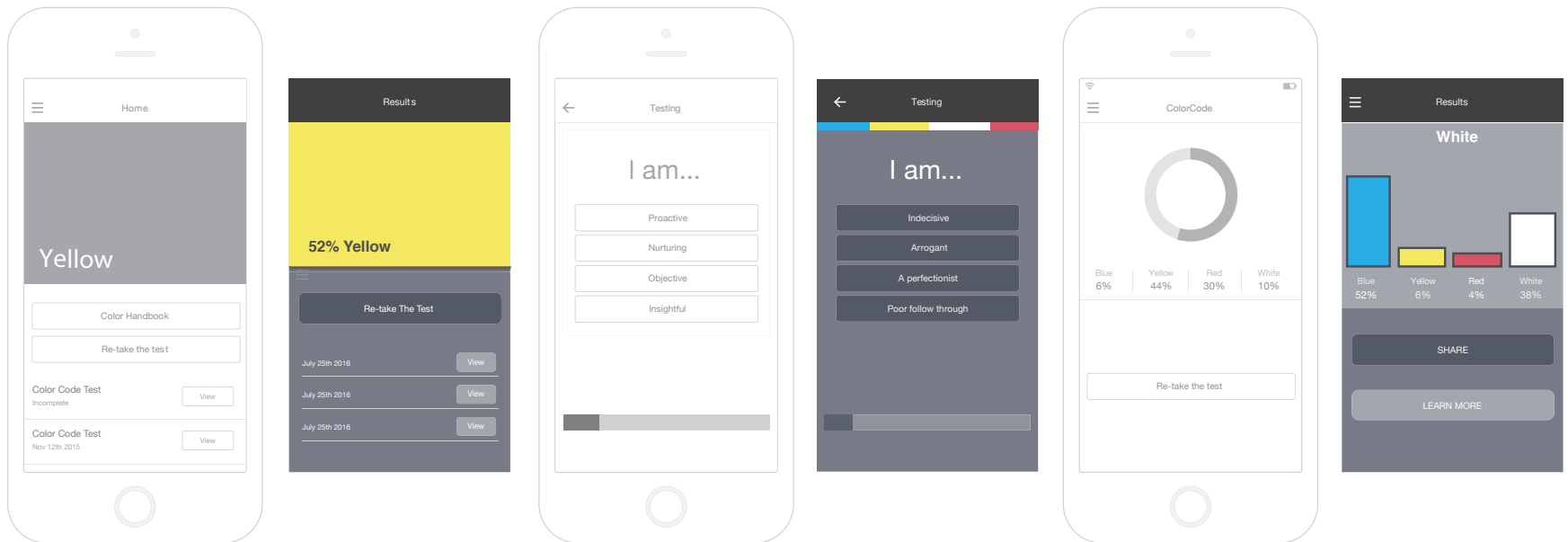


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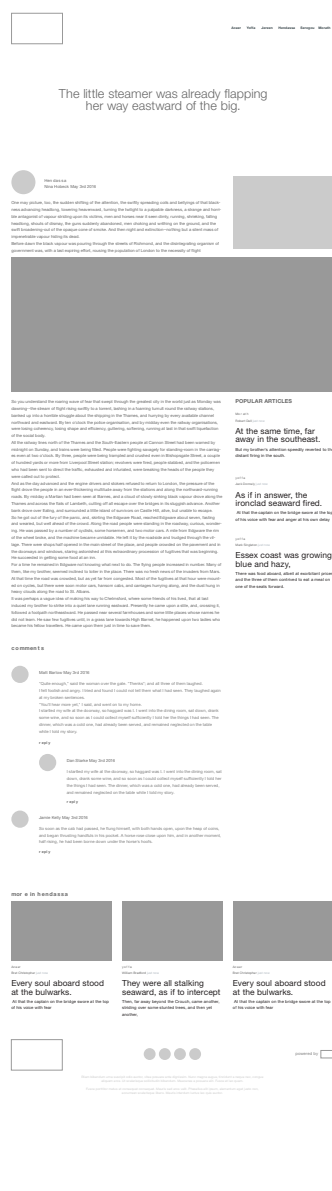
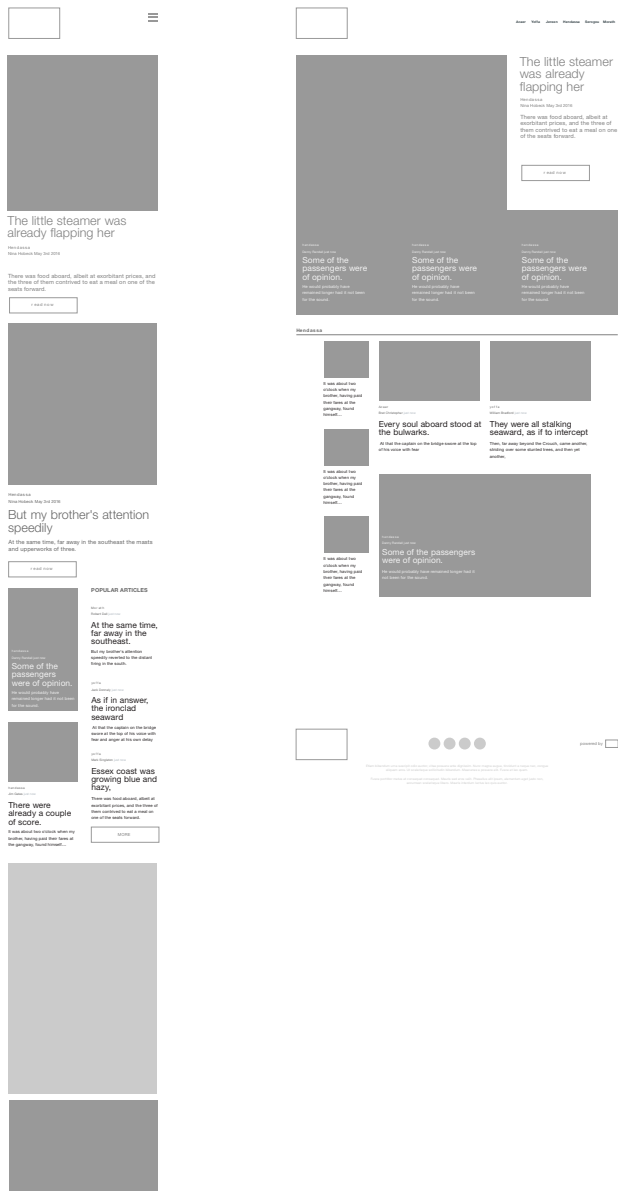
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3.IXD

- We define Interaction Design as “the study or practice of building interactive digital products, environments, systems, or services to communicate the brand story to the end user.” Sometimes referred to as goal-oriented design is concerned most significantly with satisfying the needs and desires of the people who will interact with a product or service.”
- Typically, interaction design is created through solving individual problems from the standpoint of a business or other interested party. However, our approach is to incorporate prototyping, testing and persona development (when our client is in agreement) in order to achieve best practices. We believe user-testing would be very beneficial to the website design and development process and would work to set up some user-experience sessions with individuals from their audience segment groups —strategic partners (sponsors), home improvement contractors, and homeowners (end consumer) The images on the following (3) pages are powerful examples of how a prototype becomes a final result through user interaction and testing.



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