

ITI0209: User Interfaces

03. Design Brief

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The documentation describes how a product, system, or service works, what it's for, why it's been built the way it has, and how you can work on it without losing your already threadbare connection with your own sanity.

Frederick O'Brien

Software Engineer. Guardian.

Benefits of Documentation

Every decision is documented.

All the knowledge generated around will stay in project forever, so other people can look at it and iterate from where you left.

Improves communication.

Helps everyone stay on the same page and being aware of the decisions made.

Limits endless changes from stakeholders.

Every stage focuses on a different angle of the problem, going from wider solutions to narrow ones. This allows people to focus on a single problem at a time.

The product is built collaboratively.

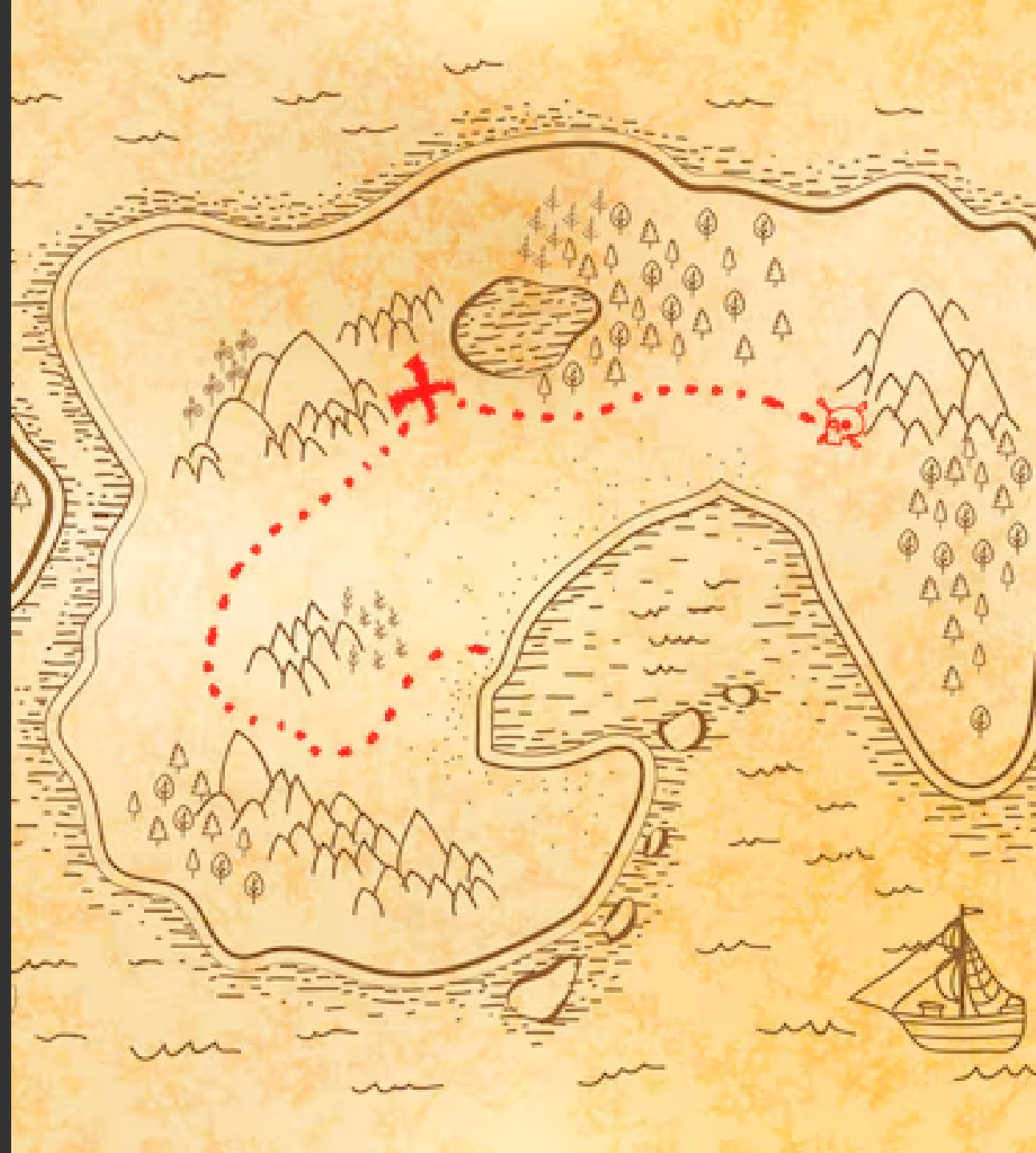
Instead of the stakeholders defining specific solutions, we let engineering, design, and other teams engage with the solution making them part of it.

Project Brief

It is a quick summary for project stakeholders that should create a common understanding and communicate the project requirements without bogging the parties down with too many details.

A **brief** is like a charted path: It asks you questions, and the answers will guide you to where you want to be.

It will not make the walk much shorter, but the chances of getting lost will be much lower.



UX Design Brief

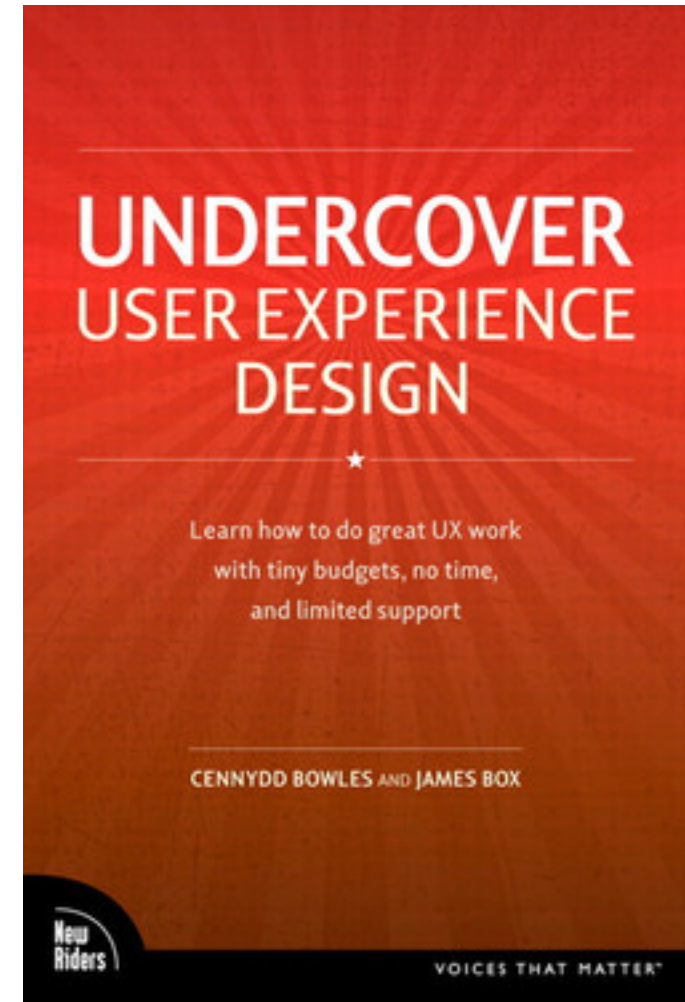
Covers all aspects of project being intialzied:

- Organization
- Application
- Users
- People involved
- Project itself

Undercover User Experience Design: Learn How to Do Great UX Work with Tiny Budgets, No Time, and Limited Support.

Cennydd Bowles. 2010

<https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/9039673-undercover-user-experience-design>



The Organization

1. What is the organization's history?
2. What is the current standing of the organization?
3. What are the organization's goals?
4. Who are the competitors?
5. What are the organization's strengths and weaknesses compared to them?
6. How is the organization structured?
7. How do we want the organization to be seen?

The Application

1. What is it for?
2. What is its history (if any)?
3. What does it do well? What does it do poorly?
4. What technical platform does it run on?
5. Does it use a CMS?
6. What content management processes support the site?
7. How much flexibility for technical change is there?
8. How would you rate its usability? Structure? Content? Visual design?

Users

1. Who are the current users?
2. Are they the same people the company is targeting?
3. What characteristics do they have?
4. Why do they use our application and not a competitors?
5. What do users say about our application?
6. How do they use our application now?
7. What do users need to do for us to be successful?

People

1. What is your role in the project?
2. Who else is working on the project?
3. What are their roles?
4. What is the decision-making/sign-off process? How long will it take?
5. Who else do we need to talk to?

The Project

1. What problem will the project solve?
2. What are the projects objectives?
3. How do they relate to the overall business objectives?
4. Why are we doing the project now?
5. What specific project requirements do exist?
6. What are the constraints (time, resources, technical, legal, and so on)?
7. What is causing them?
8. When do you think the project will be released?
9. Have we tried anything like this before? What happened?

The Project ..

10. Does anyone else do this well?
11. What factors could make the project a success? Could we handle success?
12. What issues could throw the project off course? Could we handle failure?
13. How could we really screw this up?
14. How will we measure success or failure?
15. What is your gut feeling about the project??

A minimal brief:

Answers the following questions

1. What is the purpose of the service/product, what is it about and why is it necessary, what can be done there?
2. Who is it for, who needs this service/product? Why?
3. Who could this person be? What is his interest in using it?
4. Does this idea also have a commercial purpose? What is the model?
5. What functionality does the environment contain (purchase process, payment with bank links, ordering, product filtering, blog, etc.)?



In Conclusion:

- A brief is supposed to be brief.
- The brief is the what to be done. The creative is the how.
- A brief defines the creative need and scope for a particular project engagement.
- A brief is one the most important parts of the creative process.
- The brief process also uncovers the hidden soft-values that your client finds important, helping to build an understanding of what drives your client.

Links

- Better Documentation And Team Communication With Product Design Docs.
<https://www.smashingmagazine.com/2021/04/better-documentation-team-communication-product-design-docs/>
- The power of the design doc. <https://medium.com/deliveroo-design/the-power-of-the-design-doc-fbf5070163f8>
- How To Write a Perfect UX Design Brief? 10 useful tips.
<https://www.elpassion.com/blog/how-to-write-ux-design-brief>
- The Creative Brief - An Exercise in Soft Values.
<https://makrprocess.com/articles/2013/11/23/the-creative-brief-an-exercise-in-soft-values-between-client-and-agency>

Thank you! :)