

UX Checklist

By Holly Jade, UXONOMY





OVERVIEW

The world is becoming increasingly digital in how we connect with others, shop, use apps, and navigate this world. We have more insight than ever that highlights the importance of seamless User Experience (UX) as a foundation to a highly successful brands and businesses' apps, websites, and even analog experiences.

Company's profitability, bottom line, and competitive advantage lean more on User and Customer Experiences than most than ever. In recent studies, a strong UX has been shown to increase conversion rates up to 400% [1].

We created a free comprehensive UX Checklist to get founders & coders started on the right foot, in terms of thinking about their product build from a UX perspective. If you don't know where to start, we recommend these ten steps to get you started with UX as a forethought in your product build. Best of luck!

Ping us at uxonomy@gmail.com with any questions / comments.



THE UX CHECKLIST

❑ 1 - DEFINE USER GOAL(S)

❑ Take a few moments to sit back. Clear your head for a moment, as this is the most critical step forward in building a seamless User Experience. Once your mind is clear, drill down on answering the following questions. Write them down:

- ❑ What is the core reason that a person uses your product/service?
- ❑ What is the one thing that a user wants to achieve when using your product/service?
- ❑ Given the two answers above, write in one sentence a summary of your product's core user goal.

Example: User Goals

- Airbnb's core user goal is to allow people to book travel through the offerings of local people at said destinations.
- Facebook's core user goal is to make the world "more connected." What is your product's core user goal? Don't worry about specifying the solution; just specify the goal)

❑ 2 - IDEATE + BRAINSTORM YOUR FEATURES

- ❑ What are some tasks/things that a user can do when interacting with your ideal product/service.
- ❑ Brainstorm for 5-10 minutes what features you'd like to include in your project. Don't worry about relevancy too much, as we will narrow focus in the following steps.
- ❑ Right now the goal is to list any features that come to mind, and ideally help your users achieve the user goals defined in step 1.

Example: Feature Brainstorm

- When brainstorming features, for example, if you're creating a travel app, users will likely have to search by X key criteria for where they want to travel (i.e. price, location, attractions etc.). Other feature considerations may be the ability to bookmark or save destinations that they like.
- Other feature examples are discovery feeds, a calendar, a timer... Be open and creative with your thinking. Right now, the goal is to jot down ideas that meet your user goals. If the goal is to allow people to track their hours, a timer will be important; On the other hand, if the user goal is to discover farmer's markets, a map feature may be critical. Think in terms of your user goal.

❑ 3 - PRIORITIZE FEATURES INTO 3 CATEGORIES

- ❑ Primary: Which features directly meet the defined user goal?
- ❑ Secondary: Which features are necessary but don't meet the goal? (i.e. settings panel, profile, etc)
- ❑ Maybe later: Which features don't meet the goal and aren't necessary?

Example: Feature Prioritization

- Yelp's primary features are reviewing restaurants and a business search based on locations, reviews, food type, price.
- Yelp's secondary features might be user profiles, history of places reviewed, ability to publish articles.

- Note: the primary features are what people know the application for, whereas secondary features are more reserved for “power users,” or users who might spend more than average time within the application. Primary features are the focus when first scoping out the core flow of your application.

❑ 4 - WRITE OR STORYBOARD THE FLOW

- ❑ Jot down the steps that the user takes from introduction to your brand, to onboarding, through to their core actions
- ❑ Now, specify the product flow that the user undergoes to meet their primary goal as defined in step 1.

Example: Written Flow

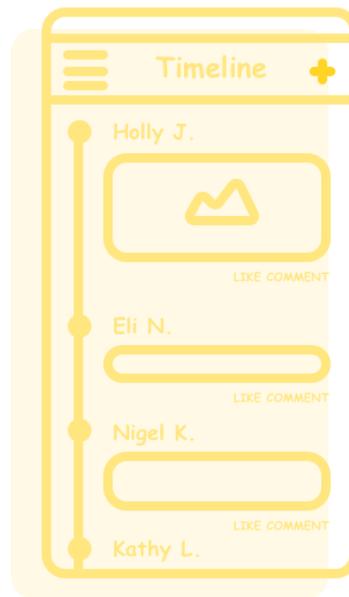
- For a written flow example, talk yourself through the user’s journey to the user goal. For example, if you’re writing out a concept for Amazon’s purchase flow, it might look like the following:
 - a. Pre-app, user searches for an item they’re looking to buy*
 - b. They click on a link to Amazon and are prompted to open or download the Amazon app*
 - c. User logs into their Amazon account and is brought to the product page for the item they clicked on*
 - d. They gather information to “audit” the quality of the product by looking through the images and reviews of a product*
 - e. They either save to list or are ready to buy now*
 - f. If they’re ready to buy now, they see a clear CTA buy-now button*
 - g. They’re brought through a quick checkout flow to confirm key information for shipping and payment*
 - h. The purchase is made and user receives confirmation*
- There are no hard, fast rules when it comes to writing and jotting out user flows. The goal is to highlight key actions that a user will take in order to arrive to their goal.
- To bring more clarity to your flow, you can feel free to add quick sketches to illustrate context to each of the steps. This is not mandatory, but recommended for visual thinkers.

❑ 5 - WIREFRAME THE INTERFACE ARCHITECTURE

- ❑ Use whatever medium that you're most comfortable; If you're unsure of where to start, grab clean paper and a pen
- ❑ Conceptualize the interface UI concepts for each steps of the story
- ❑ Include primary features along the way
- ❑ Stuck? Leverage other apps for inspiration when drawing out concepts. Look for apps that have similar features.

Example: Wireframing

- Think of wireframes as stick-figure level versions of an application. If you have a discovery feature, for example, look at apps like Spotify, Yelp, and Airbnb for examples of how their UI's are laid out.
- Here's an example of what a mobile-timeline wireframe might look like. In this example, the wireframe would include key (primary) features already scoped out in the Step 3. Key features in this wireframe include showcasing the timeline in a literal-linear format. Notice that rather than say things like "NAME," wireframes that have copy examples such as *placeholder names (i.e. Holly C.)* will help you further visualize the product. Remember, pen and paper are 100% valid for wireframing.



Mobile Wireframe example by Holly Jade, UXONOMY

❑ 6 - LOW-FI PROTOTYPE (OPTIONAL)

- ❑ Low fidelity prototyping is the step where we begin to articulate the interface in a more detailed context. We are taking our wireframes, and now advancing them by filling out the copy, and being specific about the spacing, sizing and shape of elements -- and how they all fit together.
- ❑ **What low fidelity prototyping is not:** this stage does not include specifying color, shadows, typeface, texture, or interaction.
- ❑ **What low fidelity prototyping is:** Low fidelity prototyping is just a more detailed wireframe. It's getting specific on the layout spacing, element size, element shapes, and placement. Placeholder "example" copy is also complete in this step. No more Lorem Ipsum, but rather piece in tangible examples of what a real scenario would look like in the application.
- ❑ Whether you're using more advanced tools such as flinto, principle, or invision, or you're looking to use more accessible tools such as powerpoint and keynote, prototyping can be a really useful way to get early feedback (both from yourself and potential users).
- ❑ If you're a coder, don't get too caught up in the UI. Make sure your prototype is clean and consistent, but don't get too lost in the detail of what type, colors, and style your application is going to have. It's important to check and make sure users are able to understand the prototype before investing 100% of effort in creating the application, before knowing that the UX flow works for people. -- Also make sure you're only creating the key experience and key user flow early on; don't whip up the entire application, only the MVP.

Tips: Low-fidelity Prototyping

- Note that we are entering the realm of more advanced user experience design, where we're beginning to work in pixels. If you are non-technical or want to rapidly create a low fidelity prototype without using design software programs, you can certainly continue using paper and markers (something with a little more color is recommended, as we are progressing to further context in your app)

❑ 7 - BRAND AND VISUAL DESIGN

- ❑ Define what your brand aesthetic will be. This brand aesthetic will breathe across not only branding elements but your interface, website, and other mediums as well.

Tips: Gather Inspiration

Create a brand inspiration deck (this can be done in Pinterest, on a digital document, etc). Curate a handful of items that are cohesive with one another to compile your own brand inspiration board. Keep it to fewer than 5 colors, ideally 3 or less. Once you do this step, ideas for your brand aesthetic will start to form. Google “brand decks” for visual examples of companies’ decks.

❑ 8 - USER INTERFACE DESIGN

- ❑ Define what your product(s) aesthetic will be. Don’t be afraid to leverage other applications for inspiration. There is no “right” answer to what your UI should look like, other than the feeling you want to evoke, so long as it’s clean and consistent. Take Wikipedia versus Uber as an example; One is completely “bare” and minimal in its aesthetic while the other is a lot more dense and animated. Neither approach is correct or incorrect, it just must fit to the experience you’re trying to provide. Remember, cleanliness and consistency is key.

Tips: Deciding Your UI Design

a quick tip is to gain an understanding for what UI standards are familiar / resonate with your target audience. Gather screenshots and inspiration from 5-10 of the most popular applications to your user-base. Do not copy these UI’s directly as you’ll risk coming off as a wanna-be copycat application, but do feel free to take note of their

UI/UX decisions and refine to make them your own. For example, you might see that a few apps have a scrollable “discover” feed. Understand what works about their UI, and then refine it to have your own personality, if this feature is scoped to be within your app as well. For example, you might decide to have certain elements transition differently, be formatted differently, etc. Gather UI inspiration from what’s currently performing, and create concepts that improve upon those interfaces (whether it’s a simpler focus, more clear hierarchy, better visual design, etc.) in effort to make a better application.

❑ 9 - LEVERAGE TARGETED FEEDBACK; REFINE

- ❑ Constantly test what you make. Test with different devices, and test with different people. For the best tests with various people, be sure you’re working with people who would be potential users. This is key because if for example, you’re creating an app for firefighters, asking your cousin who’s a lifelong barista may not have the right set of eyes and experiences to give meaningful feedback.

Tips: Feedback isn’t always what it seems

- Take user feedback with a grain of salt and realize that people oftentimes know if they want *something* different, but are bad at coming up with perfect solutions. As the true Henry Ford statement goes, “If I had asked people what they wanted, they would have said faster horses.” -- People only know what they know; and they don’t always know the best solution, regardless of their authenticity in response. It’s been proven that people are really inaccurate at knowing what they want. When a group of consumers was asked how many choices they wanted, they said they wanted more choices. However, when it came down to actual purchase results, the consumers who were presented with fewer choices ended up buying more and being happier with their purchases(2). Users don’t always know what they want. That said, the “feedback” that you collect from users will be most informative in the problem statements they bring to light as opposed to literal solutions.

- Questions from your users about your product/service are especially useful in feedback collection. Record questions that your users ask and later figure out how to reduce the need for those questions by iterating on your product.



WRAP-UP

Woo-hoo. Thanks for reading our UX Checklist! This is a quick reference PDF resource that isn't meant to replace a full education on UX Design and Process, but is to be used as a soft guide and booster for those seeking a little guidance on the product process. If you have ideas or wishes for upcoming free resources, ping us at uxonomy@gmail.com. We look forward to having you along for the ride!

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