

User Scenarios

Understanding the user's context, needs, and goals to drive your design



Before designing and building an application, it is helpful to understand the user scenarios that drive the decisions about *what*, *why*, and *how* the application is being built. By understanding who the audience is, the context in which they will use the application, as well as their goals and motivations for using it, one can then identify the priorities, features, and considerations that should be taken to ensure the application's usability. Here are recommended steps for establishing user scenarios for your project.

User Personas

Creating a user personas is way to understand the key archetypes or audiences that you seek to serve. By observing users, collecting feedback, and communicating with key stakeholders, one can get a picture of the context, goals, limitations, and values that are important to these audiences. Some key questions to help develop personas can include:

- Why would the user come to the site? What is their goal?
- Describe the user and their personal/professional context
- What devices are they most likely to use? What is their technical background?
- How much time would they spend browsing the site?
- What is the goal of the site (stakeholders) for this user?

User Stories

A user story briefly describes the user and their goals. A user story can be create for each persona and can have the following format:

User Story Example:

As a [**role**], I want [**feature**] because [**reason**].

As a **political scientist**, Janet wants a **map feature** that **visualizes the effects of gerrymandering** on district boundaries over time.

Write three user stories for the personas you want to target.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

User Scenarios

User scenarios detail how the users navigate and perform tasks on your site. It is a way to develop the user stories from the context of each user and map out the steps they would take to accomplish their goals (also known as user flows). One way to easily map out these scenarios is to write out user flows on post it notes for each user. These key steps can be annotated with working questions that help the team iterate through the details of the features and to focus scope.

<p><i>David clicks onto an object inside a virtual archeological site</i></p> <p><i>Q. What metadata should be displayed?</i></p>	<p><i>David sees a detailed gallery view of object with a link to a map.</i></p> <p><i>David clicks "View Map"</i></p> <p><i>Q. Where will the images be pulled from and what is the best format?</i></p>	<p><i>Davis sees a map view that details where the object originated, traveled and is currently displayed.</i></p> <p><i>Sees "View History"</i></p> <p><i>Q. What data will be used to visualize the object's travel over time?</i></p>	<p><i>David reads the object history and provenance along with scholarly commentary and essays</i></p> <p><i>Q. What is actions can users take here, i.e. share, annotate, cite?</i></p>
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Ideate, Get Feedback, Map it Out

With these tools under your belt, it's a good idea to first generate a lot of ideas before committing them to code. Share the scenarios get some feedback, and then refine. By the end of this process, you'll have identified the key users, priorities, and features that will then become a road map for the wireframing process. The findings can be distilled into a **user journey map** that details profiled users with steps in their journey along with annotations about their goals, process, experience, pain points, and opportunities.

UX Journey Map

Map and analyze the process and quality of the user scenario



Persona:

User story:



User Goals

Process

Experience

Pain Points

Opportunities

UX Journey Map

Map and analyze the process and quality of the user scenario



Persona:

Transcriber

User story:

Laura X is a translator of Cherokee literature who wants to contribute transcriptions of manuscripts from the Beinecke Library's online collection.

Browse

View

Mark

Save

User Goals

Browse collection of manuscripts available for transcription

Find a page to start the transcription process

Transcribe the page as accurately as possible

Save your work

Process

Scroll down simple landing page to browse manuscript materials by image and title. Option to log in before transcribing.

Clearly identify and click on a manuscript item and browse pages available for transcription

Click onto a page to begin transcribing. Enter data into the 'Transcribe' field. Option to discuss with other contributors in order to clarify questions.

After transcribing, user can Save work. Progress bars on browse pages will reflect % of transcription completed.

Experience

Simple and easy to browse. Offer a clear view of archive item with essential metadata. Visually frame pages without cropping edges.

Easy to navigate to individual pages to get started and clear page hierarchy.

Enable collaborative work. Be able to get help guide where needed.

Be able to save and verify work.

Pain Points

Clarify status of work in progress

How to deal with ambiguous marks, marginalia, and other spatially arranged text?

Workflow needed to verify completed work

Opportunities

Progress bar and rollover text to indicate status of transcription

Create Help guides in the Transcribe view to address commonly asked questions. Create form for FAQs.

Create approval process for another party to check and verify quality of transcriptions