Linnify

Unleash your UX/UI design superpowers

Your essential handbook for
generating the design that matters

• Simplifying life through innovation
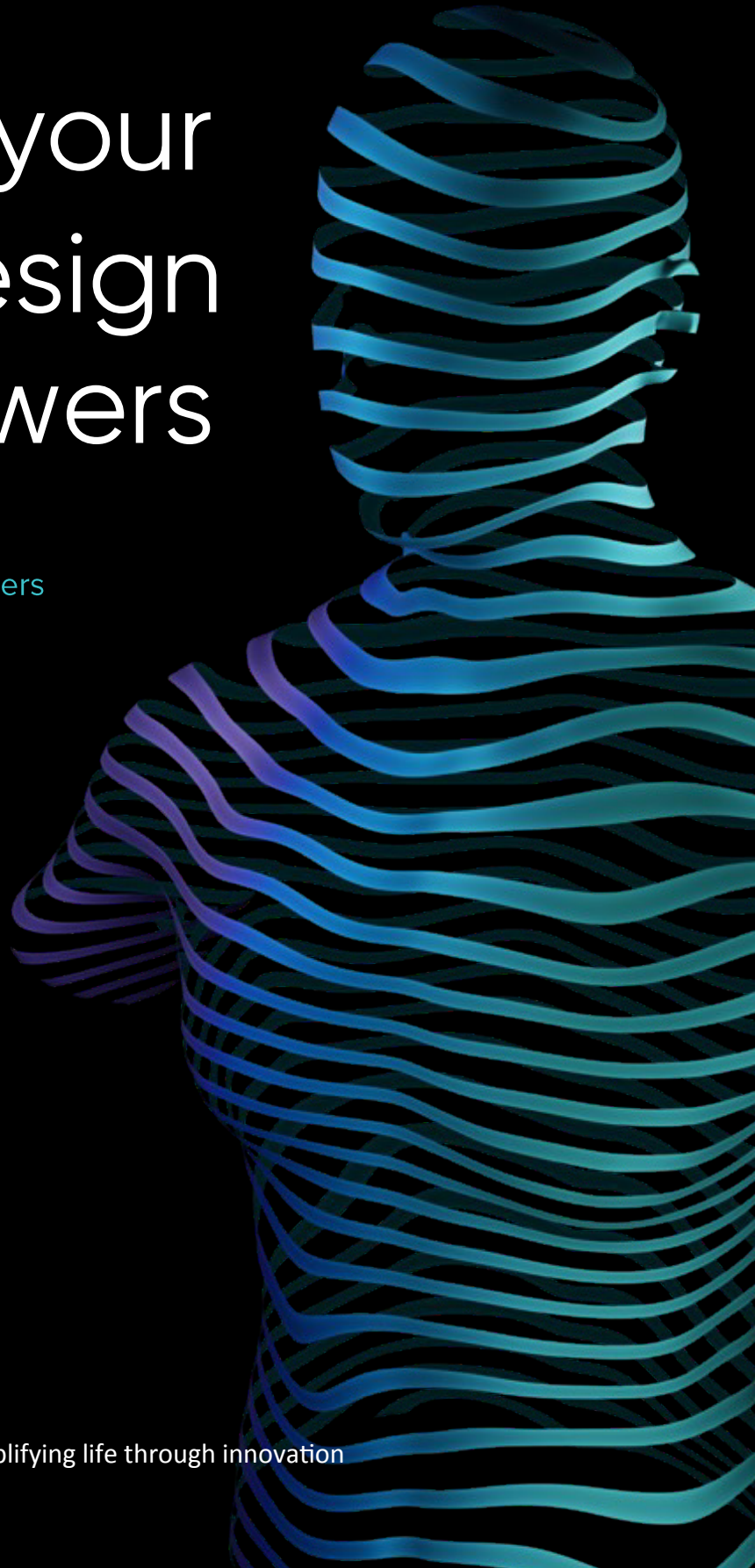
Why we wrote this white paper

With every year more ideas get ready to see the light of the market. The expansion of technology and digital innovations fasten up our schedule and we all need to stay on top of the ever-changing trends. And act immediately.

One new tool is shaking the market each day. For the better and for quicker results. Your role is critical and sometimes you might feel overwhelmed by the high pressure and demands coming from customers, critical feedback from your close stakeholders, and constant running cash flows. And at the bottom line is your return on investment, the eternal main character that hesitates to make its entry on the stage. It's never on time, isn't it?

The truth is that we see many great ideas out there. Maybe too many. If you still believe that a cutting-edge idea is all that you need to succeed on the market, you might fall behind the curve right before starting your ascension. Unfortunately, 8 out of 10 new products fail. At different stages of their life-cycle and for a diverse set of reasons. But one of the main reasons is the capability to deliver a design that matters to their customers. We all know the golden rules for a product playground, and we cannot stress more how relevant it is to know your target audience and your differentiators on the market.

Our colleagues in design at Linnify ran many projects from the ground up. And they know that bringing a product from zero to hero it's never easy. It is the job of a team with the right expertise and with access to the right resources. But even with all the right settings, the products are not moving without challenge.

Linnify design experts crafted this white paper to help individuals from all kinds of backgrounds to simplify their customers' experience, create a design that matters, and set a product successfully on the market.

What you should do next is:

- Start your design with your target in mind and always for them
- Read this white paper

It will cost you less to read it than it will if not.

Summary

Computer technology has significantly transformed, in a virtual way, every part of human society. From the way we communicate with each other to the way we travel and we make various purchases to the way we entertain ourselves, everything progressed remarkably.

In a similar way, technological progress moved at a fast pace, changing the way we see hardware, software, and product design.

This white paper looks at the way in which products fail before reaching the market. This happens due to various reasons from not dedicating time to User Research to not taking into consideration the recent advancements in product design, namely User Experience, and User Interface when developing a successful product.

It also provides an extensive and useful comparison between two of the most popular UX/UI design tools, namely Figma and Adobe XD. What is more, finding the right tool that can help your team achieve the best results is extremely important. It even brings a glimpse into how an efficient team structure should look like

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1. How we differentiate and connect User Experience (UX) and User Interface (UI) correctly

What exactly is User Experience?

User Experience (UX) Design provides the human experience in a world that is predominantly computer-based. It is a design approach that encompasses all the aspects of a product or service with the user. This means that a product is seen as a broad experience rather than just the underlying product.

- Valuable
- Accesibile
- Desirable
- Credible
- Findable
- Usable
- Useful

According to a study from the Oxford Journal Interacting With Computers (Interacting with Computers, Volume 23, Issue 5, September 2011):

> **'The goal of UX design in business is to 'improve customer satisfaction and loyalty through the utility, ease of use, and pleasure provided in the interaction with a product.'**

Yet, bringing the product in front of its users comes with many challenges given by the misalignment between product owners, decision-makers, and UX/UI designers. A framework that our experts witnessed to be often missed out of the process is the User Research stage. Delivering a product that is engaging and relevant to its users must be tested correctly, but still, more than 50% of the product owners bypass this step.

Often User Research seems to be too time-consuming and requires more resources allocation, but the costs of not doing it are far higher than initially thought. Your product success or failure hangs in the balance of this step. You will need to learn and validate what users really want.

Hassenzahl and Tractinsky (2006) believe that the concept of UX should go beyond the task-oriented approach of traditional Human-Computer Interaction (HCI) by bringing out aspects such as beauty, fun, pleasure, and personal growth that satisfy general human needs but have little instrumental value. This means that when talking about usability, the level of 'enjoyability' plays an essential role in user experience.

UX Design can be applied to many respects such as service, a particular business, web design, a product, and many more. A UX designer is preoccupied with the **entire** process of developing and integrating a product. This includes a variety of aspects such as branding, design, usability, and function.

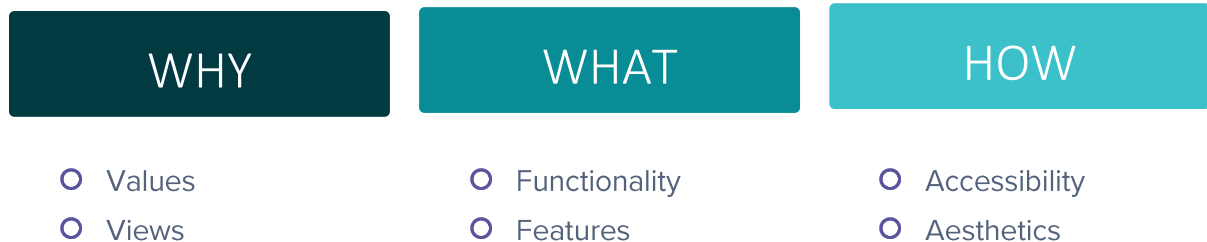# The story begins even before the product is in the user's hands.

According to Don Norman, the inventor of the term **User Experience**:

'No product is an island. A product is more than a product. It is a cohesive, integrated set of experiences. Think through all of the stages of a product or service – from initial intentions through final reflections, from the first usage to help, service, and maintenance. Make them all work together seamlessly.'

Thus, products that provide high-quality UX are designed with not only the way a product will be consumed or used in mind. At the same time, they are concerned with the entire process of developing, owning, and even troubleshooting the product.

UX designers should take into consideration the **why**, **what**, and **how** a product is going to be used.

The Why, What and How of UX Design

WHY	WHAT	HOW
O Values	O Functionality	O Accessibility
O Views	O Features	O Aesthetics

As seen above, the **why** of product use entails the users' motivation for using certain products (for example it can be a task they wish to accomplish with it).

The **what** refers to the product's functionality, meaning the various things the user can do with it.

Ultimately, the **how** represents how the functionality is designed, as the products have to be aesthetically pleasing and accessible to the user.

Each of these steps leads the UX designer to create products that create meaningful experiences for the users.

Below, you can see a more detailed and visual description of the UX design process. From strategy and all the way to production.

Strategy

1. Stakeholder discussions
2. Project's vision/goals
3. Brand strategy
4. Measure of success

Discovery

1. Competitor analysis
2. Analytics review
3. Content audit
4. User interviews
5. Surveys

Analysis

1. User cases
2. Persona creation
3. Storyboards
4. Red route diagram
5. Experience map

Design

1. Mood board
2. Site map
3. Sketching
4. Wireframing
5. Prototyping

Production

1. Prototyping
2. Beta launch
3. User testing
4. Launch

UX Design Process

What is User Interface (UI)?

User Interface (UI) is the place where the interactions between humans (users) and machines occur. It is the entire visual part of the software and it is the graphical layout of an application. It consists of various elements such as the buttons users click on, the text they read, the images, sliders, text entry fields, and all the rest of the items the user interacts with.

Screen layout, transitions, interface animations, and every single micro-interaction are all included in the UI. Any type of element, interaction, or animation must all be designed.

It allows users to efficiently operate a product to complete a task or achieve a specific goal (for example to make a purchase).
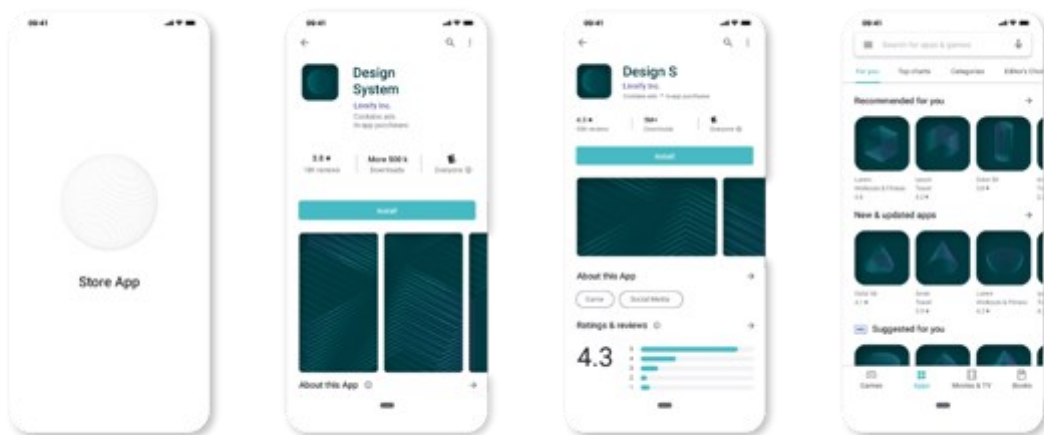
While UX is a conglomeration of tasks that aim to optimize how effective and enjoyable the use of a product really is, UI design is its complement. It is the look and feel, the presentation, and the interactivity of a product.

The goal of UI design is to visually guide the user through a product's interface. The secret here is to create an intuitive experience that doesn't require the user to put too much thought in the process.

UI designers are responsible for creating and executing the appearance of an app or website. They determine the aesthetics of all the various elements of the UI and they are the ones who communicate the brand to the user. They are also responsible for the artistic side of an app or website, always keeping in mind the interests of attracting users, communicating with users, and driving affinity among users.

What is more, they have to ensure that the software makes sense (conveying via the user interface and coordinating the layout, elements, and images of the UI).

In short, User Interface Design (UI) is responsible for the strengths and visuals of the design and it enhances the interactivity between the user, the product, and the user's experience.

What are the main differences between UX and UI?

Even though UI design is often confused with UX design, UI is more concerned with the overall feel of a design. UX design on the other hand covers the **entire** spectrum of the user experience. They are both essential in a product as they are intertwined.
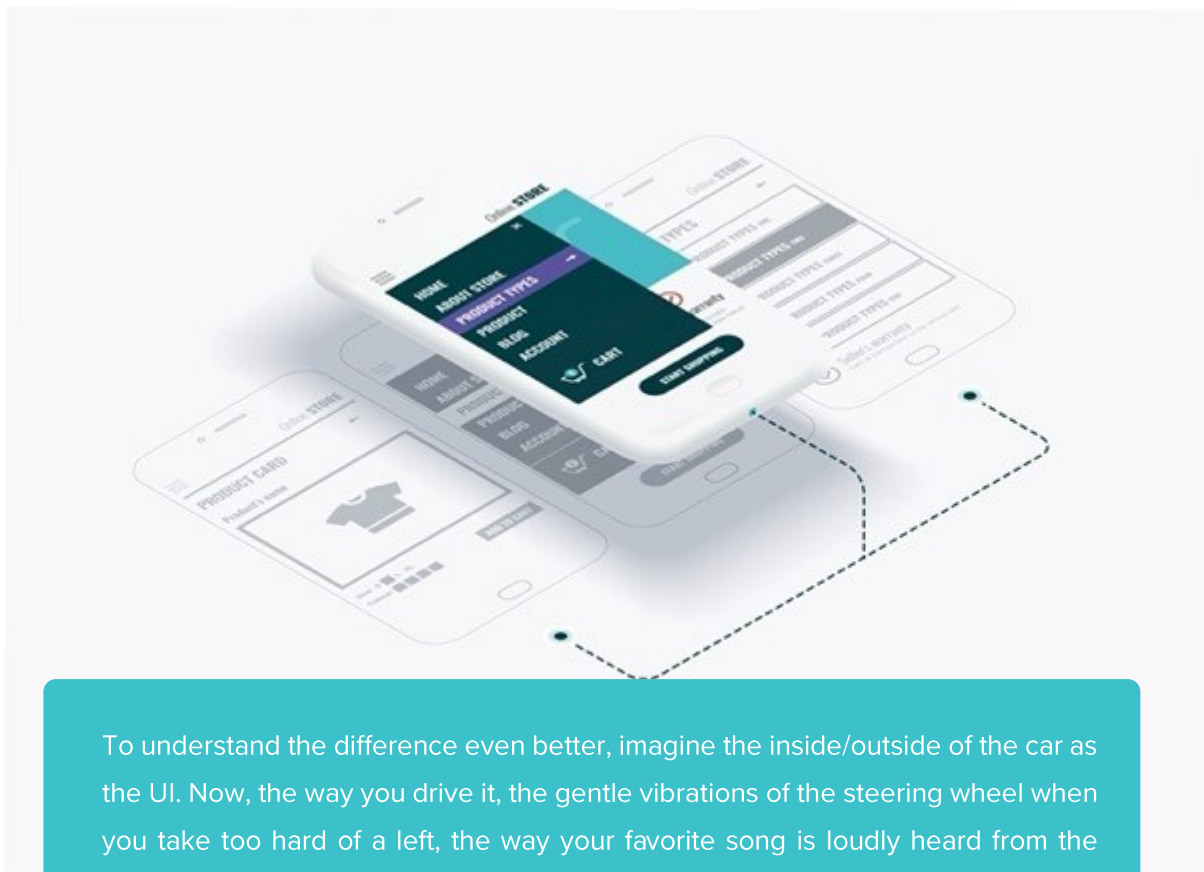
> To understand the difference even better, imagine the inside/outside of the car as the UI. Now, the way you drive it, the gentle vibrations of the steering wheel when you take too hard of a left, the way your favorite song is loudly heard from the speakers, all of these represent the UX.

According to Ken Norton, Partner at Google Ventures, Ex-Product Manager at Google:

> **'UX is focused on the user's journey to solve a problem; UI is focused on how a product's surfaces look and function.'**

UX and UI go hand-in-hand as the design of the product interface has a major impact on the overall user experience. Below you can observe better the main differences between UX and UI:
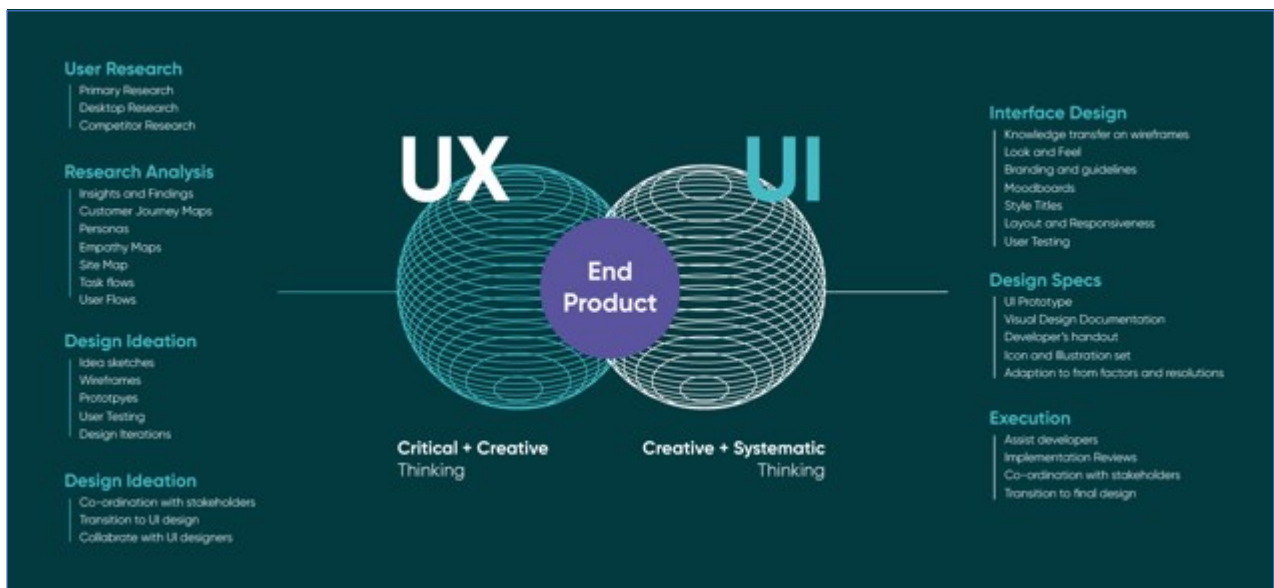
To explain the difference simply, Emil Lamprecht, a user researcher, offered the following analogy:

> **'If you imagine a product as the human body, the bones represent the code which give it structure. The organs represent the UX design: measuring and optimizing against input for supporting life functions. And UI design represents the cosmetics of the body – its presentation, its senses, and reactions.'**

As we have seen above, UX and UI are two different concepts that complement each other during the design process. In order for a product to be successful and effective, **both UX and UI need to be present.** There are a lot of products that even though they look beautiful and smooth, they fail to take off due to the UX design of the product. Likewise, there are many products that are easy to use but lack the **'wow factor'** that efficient UI can bring.

2. What we lose when we don't take User Experience into consideration today

At the end of the day money talks. What UX does for your business? It saves the business money. Ignoring this aspect could be costly.

Only 55% of companies are currently conducting any type of online user experience testing, despite the fact that it's an effective way of growing any business and saving lots of money.

To succeed, companies should slow down and think through every side of an idea, design, or feature choice before going to the market. Any business **needs** to invest in user experience research and design.

- Increased Sales
- Increased Engagement
- Increased Adoption
- Increased User Retention
- Time-Saving
- Increased Brand Loyalty

Charlie Claxton, Head of UX at Amazon said,

'Every dollar invested in UX yields a return between $2 and $100.'

'That's an **ROI of 9900%.** These two statements are also confirmed by research performed'

by Forrester

When you think about design-led companies, you might observe their revenue is worth billions of dollars. UX has a long history of building successful brands:

amazon
Amazon's Jeff Bezos funded customer experience over advertising 100:0 in its first year.

Google
Google's founders, Larry Page and Sergey Brin attended usability classes together at Stanford prior to starting Google.

airbnb
Airbnb was on the brink of failure only when it decided to leverage user research and alter its future to become the $30B organization it is today.

What is more, Airbnb uses principles of design thinking for increasing their sales for their business. Apple's UX has a major impact on its brand credibility. Frictionless UX has a positive impact on customer satisfaction and it increases their trust.

No matter if good or bad, your idea might fail

An idea could be the biggest and boldest ever seen, however, without testing the market before launching, it remains just that, an idea.

Before launching any idea, as a business, you need to know the following things:
- What your customer or user needs
- How your product will solve their problems
- That the customer will actually use your product

You need to invest time and money into comprehensive User Research to test your target market.

You need to have actual facts or statistics that will contribute to the way your product is going to be developed.

This way you avoid wasting development time and money and even the product's complete failure.

How to stop wasting time and money on rework

It is simple. Without investing in user experience right at the beginning you wind up wasting valuable amounts of money and time.

For example, for every £1 spent resolving a problem during design, £10 would be spent on the same problem during development. This would multiply to £100 or more if the problem has to be solved after the product's release.

UX User experience activities can reduce development inefficiencies

In IT organizations, speed is paramount.

1 STOP WASTED DEVELOPMENT TIME

50%

UX helps define usability requirements up front, avoiding re-work.[1]

2 REDUCE DEVELOPMENT TIME

User involvement helps improve decision making and prioritie dev tasks.[2]

33-50%

3 FOCUS ON GETTING THE USER INTERFACE (UI) RIGHT

The User Interface (UI) of software is:

46-47% of project's total code

40% of the development effort

80% of the unforseen fixes required (the other 20% are bugs)

Dr. Susan Weinschenk, a behavioral psychologist, found out that:

> **'You can avoid unnecessary rework for developers and programmers by 50% if you invest in user experience.'**

This happens when, for example, you decide to build a feature that the user doesn't use or need.

Steve Olenski of Forbes stated:

Forbes

**'According to IBM, code defects are 30 times more expensive to correct than using the right information in the first place. It is extremely unlikely that these coding defects will occur if you choose the UX design.'**

A UX designer should understand what the business is trying to achieve, who the customer is (for whom are you designing the product for), and the features that need to be designed.

This way, as a business, you can avoid unnecessary rework and save yourself valuable time, effort, and, in the end, the most important aspect, investment.

By carefully evaluating all these aspects from the very beginning, software developers can focus on creating and implementing new features that will improve what's already been done (rather than working again on older features).
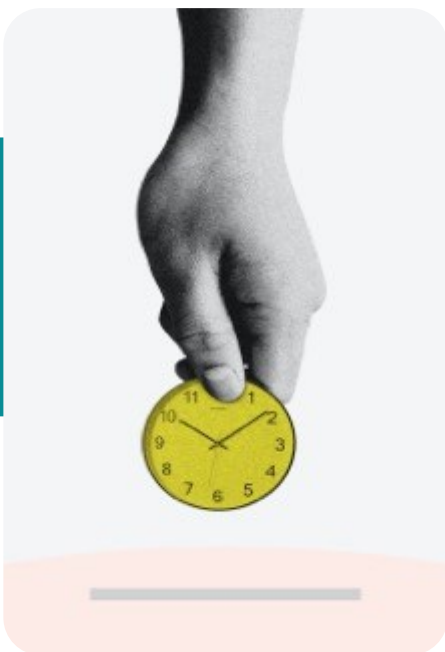
Time means money. Saving time means bigger budgets. Having more budget means increasing usability testing and more detailed prototyping.

It is essential to understand the business values of user experience design.

Is it a hunch, is it a fact or is your conversion rate limited?

A study published by [Forrester Research](#) stated that:

> **'while a great user interface (UI) could increase the conversion rate of a website by 200%, a great user experience could increase the same by almost 400%.'**

When a user comes across your product, you only have mere seconds to catch their attention and influence their opinion.

It goes without saying that good UX optimization is a must to gain trust fast, ensure user retention and achieve brand recognition.

How to know if you prioritize correctly what users need or fail them?

The best products solve a problem.

By not getting the much-needed insight into your user base, by not understanding what their actual and current problems are and how you can help them overcome their challenges, your product is bound to fail.

You need to discuss with your user base and understand what would help them perform more efficiently at their jobs. This way, you won't prioritize and focus on only one area of development, but you might also learn that your users want something totally different from what you've thought.

Understanding your users' needs and wants will help you develop your product road map and you will be able to prioritize features that will not only help your current user base but grow that user base through customer success.

Why do customers feel estranged from your product?

Retaining customers is a vital action to your business as they are the ambassadors of your brand and are the ones who bring value to it.

A site that is well-designed, has page abandonment rates up to 41% lower than their inferior cousins.

Customers that are pleased with your product are going to be your best salespeople. Harvard Business Review reported that 'over 20% of happy customers told 10 or more people about their experience.' This means that happy users (when they are provided with good experiences) become the best advocates for your product. Free of charge.

3. How the tools we use can lead us to endless issues

UX tools are the digital tools that UX and product designers use at different stages of their work to create usable websites, apps, and products. UX designers face a real struggle when trying to find a single tool that allows them to perform all their needed tasks: wireframing, prototyping, creating mockups, and development.

The trick is to find the right tool that can help you use it in the context of a user-centric UX design strategy to achieve the best results. It can support product-oriented teams across the entire development process (from the ideation phase, through prototyping and design, up to the testing and iterating stage)

UX tools help reconcile your vision of your product's user experience with how your users actually use it.

The competition for the best tool for UX designers is now between Figma and Adobe XD. Research done by uxtool.co for 2020 shows that Figma is the preferred tool for designers. 66% of designers use Figma for UI design, as opposed to 37% in 2019. This huge growth is likely due to the rise of remote work in 2020.

UXmatters.com offers a complex insight into all the various differences between each design program, as well as comprehensive information regarding User Experience. It offers insights and inspiration for the UX community and it's definitely worthy to take a look. It was of great help in developing this chapter.

Figma

Figma is one of the most revolutionary graphics editing apps that's taking over the design world by storm. It can be used for various tasks of graphic design work from wireframing websites, designing mobile app interfaces, prototyping designs, crafting social media posts, and everything in between.

It is a web-based graphics editing and user interface design app that is online, collaborative, and dedicated to vector design.

By collaborative, it means that multiple people can work on the same design simultaneously. Its user interface is also easy to use, which made this tool popular amongst UX professionals.

Here is how Figma describes itself:

> **'Figma helps teams create, test, and ship better designs from start to finish. Packed with design features you already love plus unique inventions like the Arc tool and Vector Networks, Figma helps you keep the ideas flowing. No need to stop to install, save, or export. It's what any good cloud software should be.'**

Figma is different from other graphics editing tools, mainly, because it works directly on your browser. This means that UX designers get access to their projects and they can start designing from any computer or platform without having to buy multiple licenses or install the software.

The most amazing thing is that Figma actually offers a generous free plan where designers can create and store 3 active projects at a time. This could save valuable sums of money at the beginning as anyone has the chance to learn, experiment, and work on small projects.
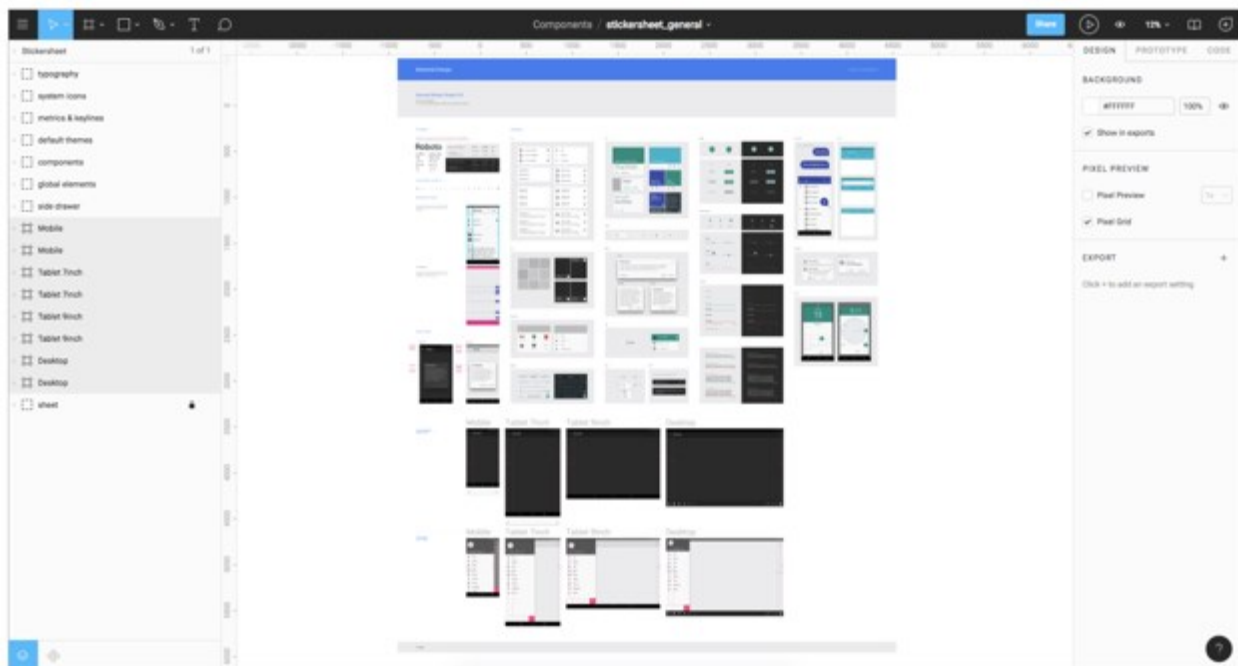
Figma is a cloud-based design that is similar to Sketch in functionality and features, but with big differences that make Figma better for **team collaboration**. It has a familiar interface that makes it easy to adopt.

No installation package or applications are required. All you must do is visit figma.com, login, and start working.

It is important to note that top reputed companies in the field of technology and design have all switched to Figma. This is because it makes the workflow smooth and fast. Some primary examples that trust this tool would be: Microsoft, Zoom, Uber, Airbnb.

What's that gap between your teams?

Figma works on any operating system that runs a web browser. You can use anything with Figma, from Macs, Windows PCs to Linux machines and even Chromebooks. It is the only design tool of this type that can do that. What is more, **everyone** can share, open, and edit Figma files.

In a lot of organizations, designers and developers don't use the same operating systems, as they use either Macs or Windows PCs. In this situation, Figma helps bring these groups together.

Figma also displays component attributes and code snippets on any selected frame or object in CSS, iOS, or Android formats for developers to use when reviewing a design file. The design components can be analyzed by any developer in any file they can view without the use of a third-party tool to get the information
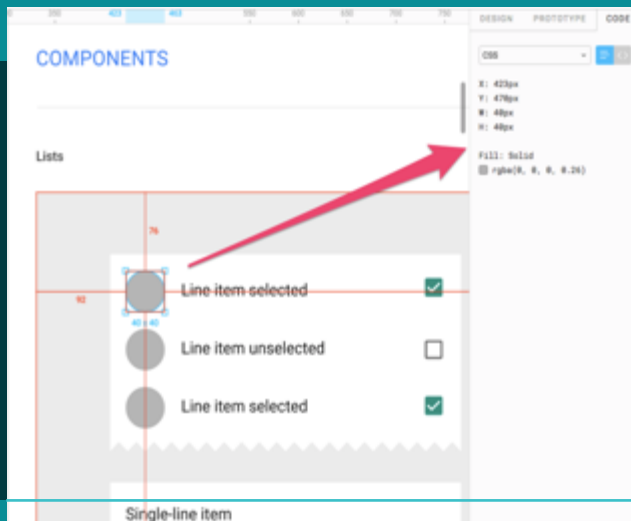
Small things matter. Slipping information can be contained

As Figma is browser-based, teams can collaborate as smoothly as they would in Google Docs. Team members can see who is viewing and editing a file at the top of the app. Tracking who is doing what is easy as each person has a named cursor.

The design lead can check in to see what each member is designing in real-time (by simply opening a shared file). **Countless hours could be saved by intervening and correcting issues at the right time if a design misinterprets the brief or user story.**
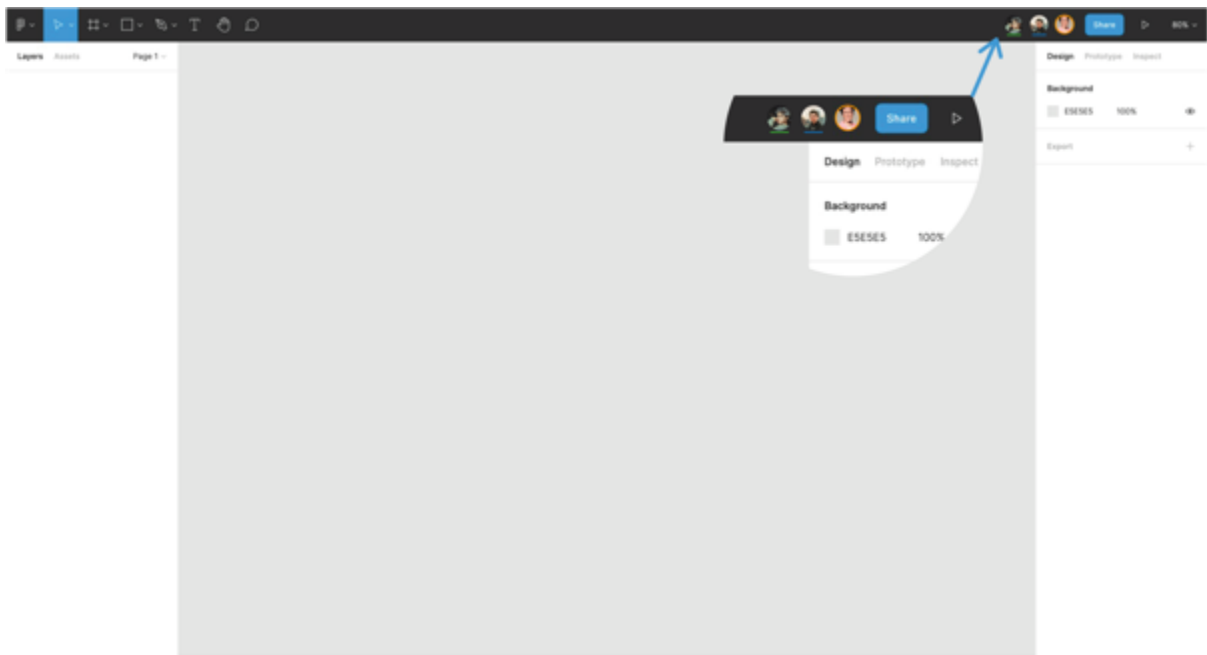
How many files do you update a day? Would you fancy a cut?

Before Figma, teams required several other tools in order to facilitate the exchange of design mockups and updates. This means a series of back-and-forth file updates just so that team members could review and implement the current design.

There is no need to find third-party tools anymore. Figma handles the same functionality of third-party tools and encapsulates them in only one step in the process. If you move from sketches to Figma, all the groups will have access to the latest versions.

If a change is made to the mockups (by anyone in Figma) that change can be seen live in the embedded Confluence mockup. This feature can be observed in the following diagram:

BEFORE FIGMA

Pencil sketches of concepts	Create and update mockups	Create prototype (optional)	Publish draft design	Review design with team	Publish final design	Deliver to developer

Example Tools

	Sketch Illustrator OmniGraffle Balsamiq	Invision/Marvel UXPin proto.io HTML/CSS	Invision/Marvel Google Drive File Server	Invision/Marvel Confluence Email Slack	Invision/Jira Google Drive File Server Trello	Invision/Jira Email notification Slack notification

AFTER FIGMA

Pencil sketches of concepts	Create and update mockups	Prototype (optiona)	Review and edit	Deliver to developer

Realtime in Figma

Live embedding in:
Confluence/Jira
Trello
Pattern Library

On your way to perfection, be aware of some weaknesses

- It is dependent on the internet connection.
- There is no rounding of half pixels.

However, Figma is definitely worth a chance. All the advantages of Figma speak louder than words in terms of the laborious work of developers over the product and paying close heed to the community, which guarantees a pleasant experience.

Adobe XD

Adobe XD is a vector-based UI and UX design tool that can be used for apps and websites. It is used to create and collaborate on various tasks from prototypes to mockups to full designs.

The tool works on Mac and Windows machines and iOS and Android for mobile functionality. It can be used only by direct download or in the cloud for mobile devices.

By collaborative, it means that multiple people can work on the same design simultaneously. Its user interface is also easy to use, which made this tool popular amongst UX professionals.

Here is how Adobe describes it:

> **'Adobe XD is the fastest and most reliable UX design solution on the market for companies of 10 or 10,000. Breakthrough bottlenecks, iterate rapidly, and scale for the future. The security and control you need are built right in.'**

XD filled a significant gap in the Adobe Suite of tools, as before its release, many of the available features were not part of Photoshop or Illustrator. That meant that designers had to piece together when they wanted to create user interfaces with the help of Adobe software. A true challenge.

Adobe XD works best for individual designers and developers who want to create projects in vector format. This tool works for all types of projects as it is scalable.

They say consistency is key. How to find it?

XD makes the process easier and more efficient. Designers can build and leverage component libraries, which are used to reference and implement common UI elements, interaction details, and established patterns throughout the entire site or app. This is particularly helpful when you have a tight timeline for a project.
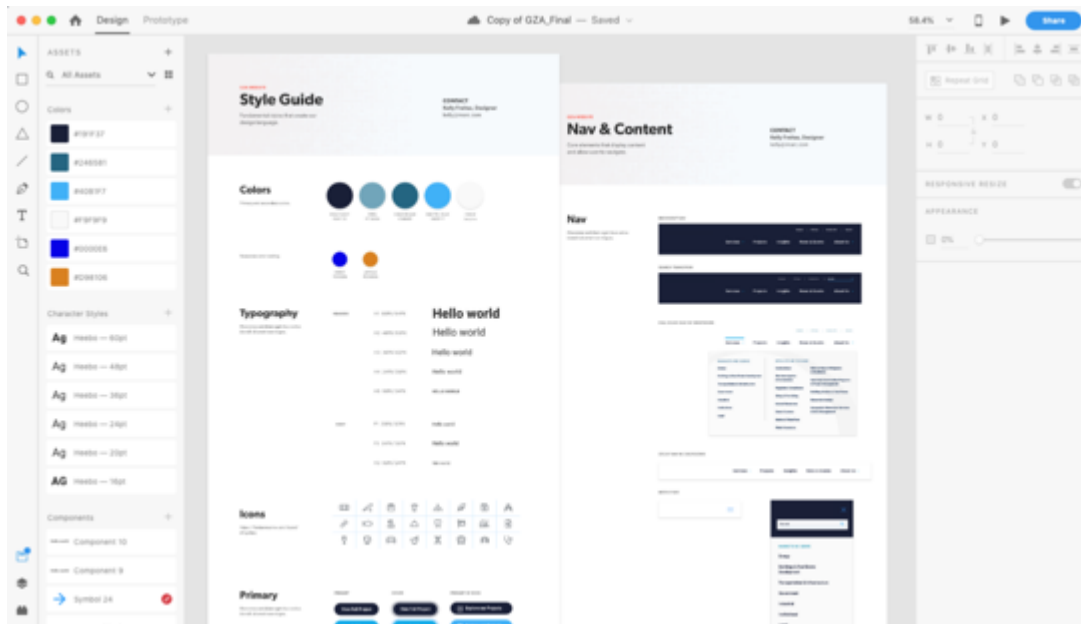
The re-work you blindly do is the amount of time you waste

One of the most useful components of Adobe XD is its prototyping functionality. This enables designers to create a mockup of the user's journey throughout the site, create interactive menus and dropdowns, and click through from page to page.

Nothing is more annoying than losing track of your documents

As it is a vector-based platform, XD allows designers to create and edit vector files (that are also easy to scale and optimize for the high-resolution displays that are used in modern mobile phones and computer monitors).

This tool offers you the possibility to design an entire website or a whole mobile application in a single file. The process becomes even easier when you create components that can be used further in both web and mobile design. XD also makes sharing works-in-progress with stakeholders (including clients, developers, and other designers) smoother.

On your way to perfection, be aware of some weaknesses

Once you have multiple components, the program starts to work extremely slowly, and sometimes, after the app crashes, you might lose all your work.

*Trust us, it happened to us before. The only solution is to divide the artboards/screens into different, individual projects. For example, when you have 1000 components, you should divide it into 10 individual projects, each of them including 100 components.

- It does not provide gifs or HTML video support
- You can test android prototypes into Adobe XD's inbuilt system, but there is also one option to test that project on your real device. That option is available both on iOS and Android
- Adobe XD is still lacking a smoothness in the process of some designing features like real-time collaboration (there are issues in terms of synchronization)
- Constant crashing
- Less **custom** image editing functionality

So, what's the difference between Figma and Adobe XD?

Cost-effectiveness

Figma has a free starter plan for up to two editors and three projects. They also provide a 30-day version history and unlimited cloud storage with this plan. The individual plan costs between $12 to $15 USD per editor, per month. The enterprise plan costs $45 per editor, per month.

Adobe XD also provides a free starter plan, ranging from free to $9.99 for individuals and free to $22.99 for their business plan.

The choice: Even though both Figma and Adobe XD offer free and paid pricing plans, due to XD's restrictions to collaboration and saving, **Figma is a clear choice.** What is more, Figma offers more features in its free plan, in comparison to Adobe XD.

Table 1 – Comparison of free versions			
Tools	Cloud Storage	Share Documents	Shared Links
Figma	Unlimited	Unlimited	Unlimited
Adobe XD	2 GB	Unlimited until October 2020	Unlimited until October 2020

What platforms Figma and Adobe XD support?

Figma offers a browser-based application that supports editing in any browser that supports WebGL. Its users can view designs in desktop browsers. It also offers desktop applications for Windows, Mac OS X, and Linux operating systems.

Figma Mirror App offers users the chance to preview their designs on mobile devices to see how they look and feel on an actual device. They can preview both static designs and interactive prototypes.

Adobe XD is a desktop application and is available on both Windows and Mac OS X. Users can generate previews that people can view in their browsers and get feedback on their designs.

The choice: Figma is the winner because it runs on Chrome OS and Linux, as well as Windows and Mac OS, while Adobe XD runs only on Windows or Mac OS.

Make the best of your collaboration

Both Figma and Adobe XD let users do collaboration and screen-sharing sessions with their fellow designers, stakeholders, or clients.

However, **Figma** lets multiple users log in and edit the same document simultaneously. Each user has an avatar (which appears at the right of the toolbar) that has a distinct color. Other strengths here would be:

- **Automatic saving and syncing**. Figma automatically saves any updates to the designs and documents a user is working on. When users are working on a shared project and a change occurs, they will be immediately notified and can update what they are seeing. This way all team member's screens are up-to-date at all times. There is no need to upload, download or manually merge any files.

The choice: It is clear, Figma is the winner here. Collaboration is a key functionality that is core to Figma. Collaboration features that distinguish Figma from Adobe XD include observation mode, team libraries, a flawless sync process, and updates of changes to shared assets.

What is the best way to share documents?

Both Figma and Adobe XD have document-sharing features.

Figma allows users to share a document by sending a link to other users. This allows others to view or edit the document in their browser. It is also possible to create teams and add people to them (rather than inviting individuals one at a time) then share designs with the team. Figma offers four levels of sharing permissions: viewer, editor, admin, or owner. Users can set these permissions at the team, project, and document levels.

Adobe XD lets users create a link and optimize it for the following purposes:

- design review
- development
- presentation
- user testing
- custom

The choice: Figma is once again the winner here as it has an advanced team management and permissions system and a certain ease of sharing via browser.

Be aware of the interactions you can choose from

Both Figma and Adobe XD offer a wide range of interaction possibilities for the users.

Below, it can be observed which are the triggers, actions, transitions, and easing interactions for both of these tools.

Table 2 - Interactions in Figma and Adobe XD							
Triggers		**Actions**		**Transitions**		**Easing**	
One click	Tap	Navigate to framemoves between artboard	Transition	Instant	Dissolve	Ease in	None (linear)
One click	Drag	Open overlay, or frame	Auto-animate	Dissolve	Slide left	Ease out	Ease out
While hovering	Hover	Swap with frame-swaps in alternate component frames for example, buttons	Overlay	Smart animate	Slide right	Ease in and out	Ease in
While pressing	Time	Black	Speeck playback	Move in	Slide up	Linear	Ease in/out
Mouse enter	Voice	Close overlay	Previous artboard	Move out	Slide down	–	Snap
Mouse leave	Keys	Open URL	State change	Push	Push left	–	Wind up
Mouse down	Keys	–	Slide in	–	–	–	Bounce
Mouse up	Game pad	–	Slide out	–	–	–	–
After delay	–	–	–	–	–	–	–

The choice: Adobe XD is the winner in this category. What is more, this tool provides speech playback, keys, and game-pad triggers.

What's the best designer developer collaboration tool?

In **Figma**, once a user shares a link, there is no need anymore to republish and share the document multiple times as certain specifications get updated. This tool allows the user to keep all the specifications in the same document. This means that developers can inspect design files, grab code snippets and view annotations.

On the other hand, **Adobe XD** has a different operating style. The users can publish the specifications on different sheets on a link that is available to the others. In this case, XD does not provide a good user experience as it is necessary to republish this specification sheet each time a designer makes an edit to a design.

The choice: Figma. Once again, the clear winner. Its ability to update documents that have been shared for review without republishing them is a huge advantage.

Which UX/UI design tool is the most efficient with preview?

Figma allows users to simply send a link to different stakeholders (clients for example) in order to demonstrate a mockup to them live in the browser. The user can set the link either for viewing only (no one will be able to make unwanted changes to the document) or allow people to edit and directly interact with the document. This shows the owner what changes the client would want to make to the design or the other changes that they would want such as adding a different copy.

It is also possible to embed documents within web pages. However, when the user clicks the *Present* icon in Figma to run a prototype, it usually takes a bit of time to load the entire process into the browser.

In **Adobe XD**, users can share a design mockup with the client or manager after generating a link. This allows them to view and make comments on the mockup.

In this case, Adobe XD is definitely the winner as it also allows users to add voice narration to a demonstration. It is an excellent feature for those who work in different time zones or who have busy schedules.
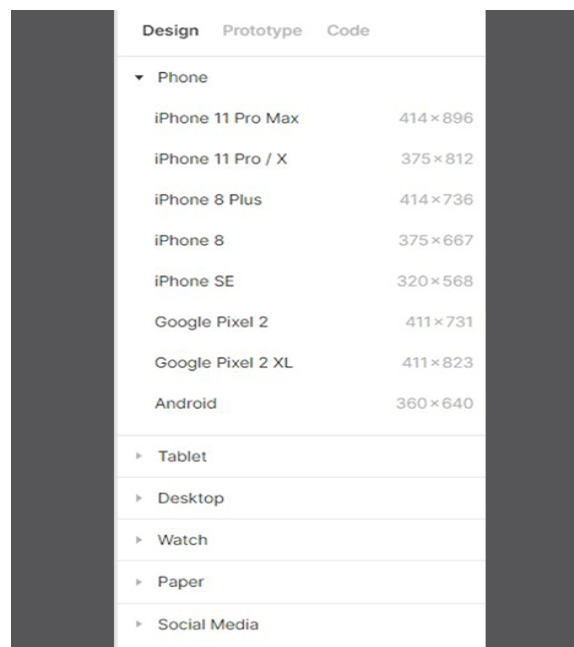
What is more, as Adobe XD runs locally on the user\s computer. This means that prototypes appear quickly when the user runs them, in comparison to Figma's slower load times.

The choice: As mentioned above, Adobe XD is the clear winner in this case. The voice narration feature is extremely relevant for those who work in different time zones. Another plus is the fact that viewing prototypes in XD's Desktop Preview have quicker load times.

Is a Figma frame an Adobe XD artboard?

Figma uses frames to contain designs. On the other hand, **Adobe XD** uses artboards.

Frames contain design prototypes on a canvas. Users can create two or more frames on the same canvas. You can see below how it works.


These frames are particularly useful as they help users add layers to the canvas and they also allow them to create a container for a design prototype (for example for specific screen size or device).

These frames offer the same functionality as Adobe XD's artboards but they have a plus. Users can nest frames and use them in creating buttons and navigation bars.

Figma also offers various frame sizes (from Windows and Mac desktop computers, iPhones, Android and Google Pixel mobile devices, iPads and other tablets, watches, social media platforms). It also allows users to create custom frame sizes. This means Figma users can create both landscape and portrait views on smartphones.

In **Adobe XD** users can find artboards, which are containers that hold design prototypes, as seen below.
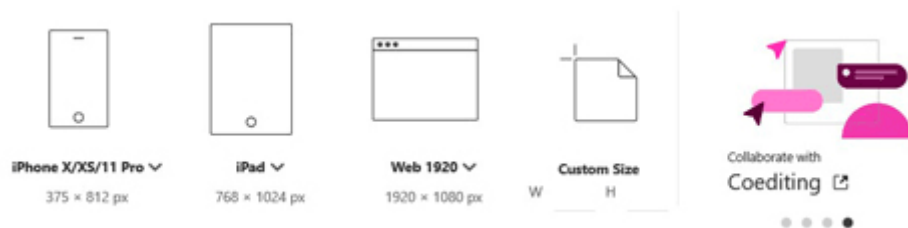
Users can create any number of artboards to contain their design and link them together, as per their project's requirements.

It also provides the user with various frame sizes that are similar to Figma and offers them the ability to create custom frame sizes.

The choice: The frames are way ahead of the artboards, this makes Figma a clear winner. Frames provide *all* the functionality that artboards also offer, plus many other features that XD does not provide.

What's the best tool for design component reuse?

A footer, a header, or even a button could be called a component. The components can be reused in your designs when necessary.

In **Figma**, a dotted, purple, diamond symbol indicates a component (as shown below). The following properties are present:

- Text - font, weight, size, line height, letter spacing, paragraph spacing, and indentation.
- Color - fill, stroke, background color, and opacity.
- Effect - drop shadow, inner shadow, and blur.
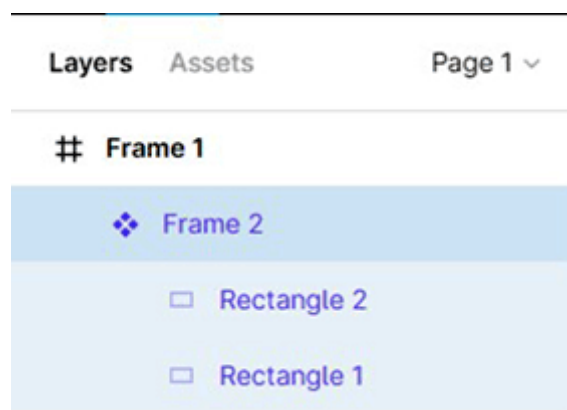
There is no specific state function in Figma, but users can create a hover effect and toggle the effect on and off to emulate states.

In **Adobe XD** a component is represented by a green, diamond symbol (as shown below). You can add states to components to create more versions of buttons, toggle states, fields, and more. One example would be that you can create a button component, then create a hover state to show how the button should behave when the user triggers a hover event.
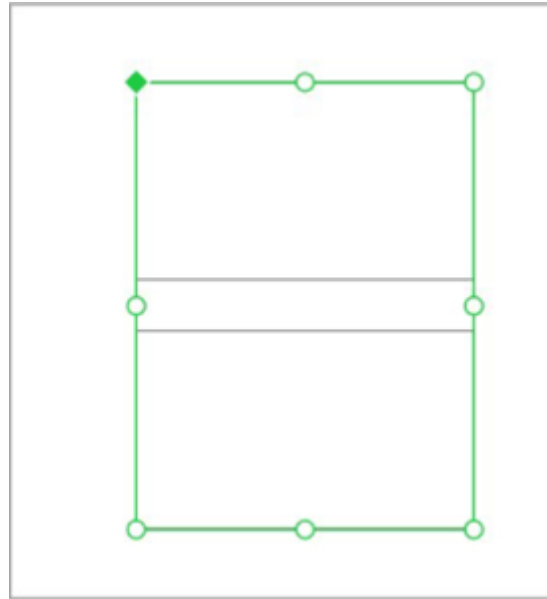
The choice: Adobe XD lets you add states to the components which makes it the winner.

Which are the plugins and integrations features?

Both Figma and Adobe XD have plugins and integration features.

Figma allows integration with applications such as Principle, Zeplin, and Dribbble. Users have the possibility to install plugins and also build private plugins for the use of teams or organizations.

Adobe XD offers various plugins. Users can also create private plugins by building them as *.xdx files.* Then they can share them with their team.

The choice: There is a tie.

What is Figma compatible with? What is Adobe XD compatible with?

In **Figma,** you can open and edit Sketch files directly.

Adobe XD allows you to open Photoshop and Illustrator files. What is more, users can export XD files to After Effects in order to add custom animations and micro-interactions.

The choice: XD allows users to edit their files using other applications in the Creative Cloud Suite. This is a huge plus and makes XD a clear winner.

Final thoughts

We have compared the pricing models, supported platforms, and many features of two of the most powerful, vector design tools: Figma and Adobe XD. We have seen the key features of these tools and the differences between each tool. In the end, you are the one who decides what works best for your design and prototyping needs.

For us at Linnify, Figma seems to be the future choice as we are slowly moving towards implementing Figma in all of our projects.

Below, you can see a clearer differentiation between Figma and Adobe XD.

	Figma	Adobe XD
Platform support	Apple | Windows | Linux	
Plugin support	✓	✓
Collaboration	✓	✓
Download at the link	✓	✗
Comments and code review	☁ +	☁
Offline mode	For opened projects	✓
Multiple artboards	✓	✓
Prototyping	✓	✓
Responsive resizing	✓	✓
Free plan without trail	✓	✓

4. What makes or breaks a cohesive product design?

At Linnify, we are fully aware and fully prepared to support the crucial collaboration between User Experience and User Interface. Our authentic design team conducts the flow of these essential processes for complete delivery of products. We are the creators of the bond between the logic of usability and the appeal to the visual.

UX/UI design is not only about a visual journey. It is about the experience of your audience and how the ideas unfold. Thus, there is no doubt when saying the design department is the silent problem solver.

A great design team is one in which the team members complement each other due to their diverse backgrounds, creating a multidisciplinary perspective. We understood that early on.

That is why now, we are able to find the most thought-through approach to bring the clients' product into the spotlight. This is what works best for us and it is something that brought us into a place in which we can share our methodology with others. Take these practices and discover if you can implement them within your own team.

Design is so much more than visual. A story is unfolding before our eyes.

Our design team members come from different fields that intertwine together perfectly. The main fields are psychology, arts and design, and technology. It was essential for us to build a team that can bring to the table valuable expertise from these three main fields. Below, you can observe the top qualities of our team:

Design is about co-creation. Here is why these apparently different fields work perfectly together:

Psychology

UX/UI has its conceptual roots in cognitive and behavioral psychology. It is considered the blueprint of a human being's interaction with machines. Thus, having a graduate in Psychology is a great asset in our design decisions. Understanding human tendencies, reasoning, decision principles, brings value in creating relevant navigation in the user flow.

Arts and Design

Intertwined with all the other UX/UI must-haves is, of course, the very art of it. Subconsciously, having in-store and using all the concepts taught through the University of Arts and Design, the department is able to direct even more attention to the right details. And that is what brings the real relevancy into the conversation.

Technology

Technologically speaking, design should not be alone in an environment that is so digitized. Including someone who has a Computer Science background among our designers, the department is able to see more clearly and deliver on-point hand-offs to the Development team, having in mind the sprints that follow.

5. Product development challenges: from launch to market

Launching a new product is tough.

No matter the years of experience some people have in putting out successful products, developing a new product from scratch can present several unprecedented challenges. Finding the right expertise and trustworthy support, to validate the market needs and fit, ahead of going live, is one of the biggest struggles for startups and product owners.

PMs struggle a lot in the process of facing the rigors of a fast-paced marketplace. They need to adapt to the quick way in which consumer trends change so that customer satisfaction and product performance are maximized.

Each decision made, especially within the early stages of product development, can make or can break a product market entry. For every new product that is successfully launched on the market, there are thousands of them that do not even reach the market.

As mentioned before, User Research and User Testing are crucial when talking about the early stages of a new product. The goal is to discover how users experience certain products or services. You can validate at any stage in the design process, the usability of your product.

8 out of 10 products fail to achieve market fit and stability, or cannot go beyond the early adopter's stage and experience stagnated growth.

But what if there's a way of validating your product ahead of making any fundamental decisions or investments?

Meet 'Sprint', the 5-day successful fast validating framework, initially created to support Silicon Valley start-ups, spin-offs, and scale-ups ahead of building their product and going to market.

We have been there too.

But the good news is that there are authentic ways of decreasing risks and loss of investment. Build and validate your product in just five days.

If you are a start-up, spin-off, or prepare to scale up, sign up with your most innovative idea. Bring your vision into reality and validate it ahead of going to market.

Curious about how our testing worked out with daily details?

Find more from our [Case Study](#).

6. Conclusions

To conclude this white paper, it is essential to keep in mind that having a great idea is never enough. There are plenty of great ideas out there. Falling behind the curve right before reaching the top is an imminent risk if you base your success only on your cutting-edge idea.

Delivering a design that makes sense for the customer is crucial for the destiny of your product. You need to stay up-to-date with the latest trends and make sure that you have the right team. And that their expertise will fit your product's needs like a glove. You need to act immediately.

The truth is you need to have a team that will help you take everything into consideration before reaching the market. It is vital to know your target audience and your differentiators on the market beforehand. You need to keep your composure in times of high levels of pressure from clients or stakeholders and stay true to yourself and your product.

User Experience (UX) Design provides the human experience in a world that is predominantly computer-based. This design approach encompasses all the aspects of a product or service with the user. This means that a product is seen as a broad experience rather than just the underlying product.

At the end of the day money talks. What UX does for your business? It saves the business money. Ignoring this aspect could be costly.

To succeed, companies should slow down and think through every side of an idea, design, or feature choice before going to the market. Any business needs to invest in user experience research and design. Delivering a product that is engaging and relevant to its users must be tested correctly. Your product's
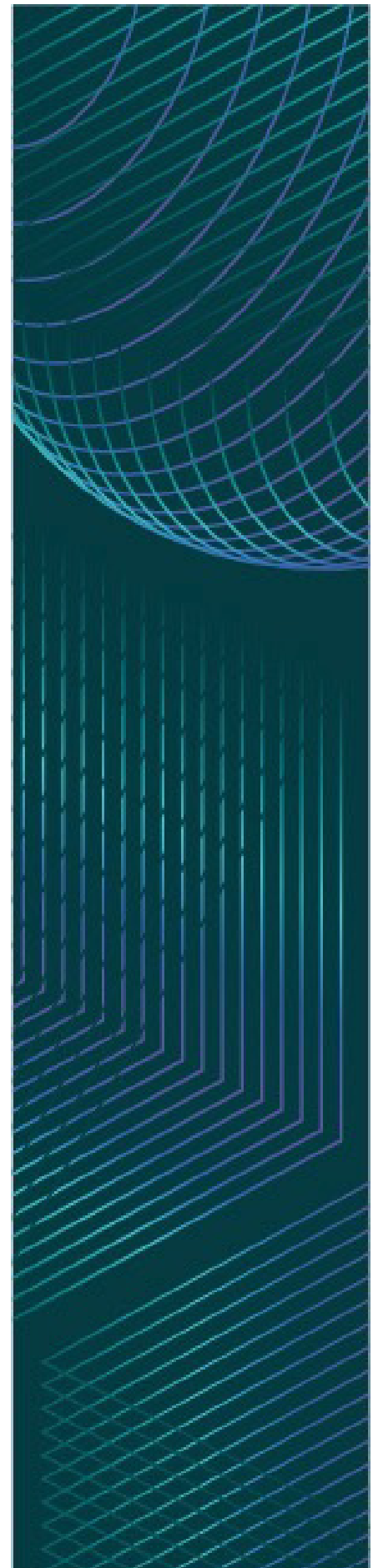
success or failure hangs in the balance of the User Research. You will need to learn and validate what users really want.

On the other side, the goal of UI design is to visually guide the user through a product's interface. User Interface (UI) is the place where the interactions between humans (users) and machines occur. The secret here is to create an intuitive experience that doesn't require the user to put too much thought into the process.

Even though UI design is often confused with UX design, UI is more concerned with the overall feel of a design. UX design on the other hand covers the entire spectrum of the user experience. They are both essential in a product as they are intertwined.

Finding the right tool that can help your team achieve the best results is extremely important. It can support product-oriented teams across the entire development process (from the ideation phase, through prototyping and design, up to the testing and iterating stage).

Read this white paper and get the insights that will lead you in the right direction. That of putting a successful product on the market. It is cheaper to read it than to reinvest money endlessly while not knowing why your product keeps failing.

7. Further readings

The 7 Factors that Influence User Experience

UX Curve: A method for evaluating long-term user experience

User Experience (UX) Design

User experience – a research agenda, Behaviour & Information Technology, 2006, vol. 252 (pg. 91-97)

The Difference Between UX and UI Design – A Beginner's Guide

What in the World-Wide-Web is UX Design?

UX Vs. UI — Similarity & Differences

How User Experience Will Save Your Business Money

The Six Steps For Justifying Better UX

Benefits of User-Centered Design

Leaving User Experience To Chance Hurts Companies

Making a Strong Business case for the ROI of UX

The Power of Figma as a Design Tool

Review: Figma Versus Adobe XD, Part 1

Review: Figma Versus Adobe XD, Part 2

What exactly turns good design into great design?

The Difference Between UX (Functional) and UI (Styling) Design

2020 Design Tools Survey

8. Authors

Andrada Farcaș

Head of the Design Department

Andrada Farcaș brings more than 6 years of experience in design to her role as Head of the Design Department at Linnify. She has a technical background (with a BA in Computer Science Engineering) which helps her understand better the complexity of Development-related tasks. What is more, she found herself being very passionate about Artificial Intelligence. This passion led her to pursue a Master's Degree in Vision and Artificial Intelligence, which offered her the chance to teach Intelligent Systems classes at the Technical University in Cluj-Napoca. It goes without saying that Andrada is a very complex human being.

She is the perfect binder between the Development and Design teams. During the 2 and a half years at Linnify, she has worked on more than 20 projects (both mobile and web). Projects within the education and health domain are the ones closest to her heart.

Andrada is the definition of multitasking and multipotentiality. Her artistic skills and aesthetics, as well as her smart approach to projects, make her a great UX/UI Designer. Andrada is also known for her managerial aptitudes and is always motivating the team to work better and achieve more.

Adrian A. Miclăuș

UX/UI Designer
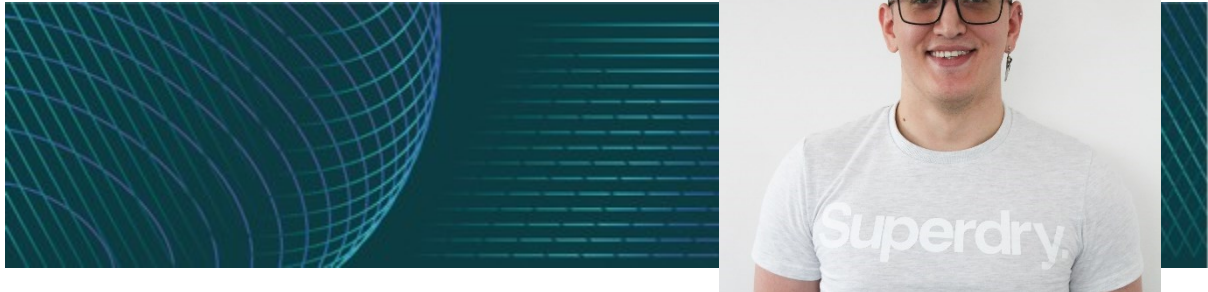
Adrian A. Miclăuș discovered his passion for everything design-related in 5th grade, at the age of 12. During that period, he started doing various artworks in Photoshop, driven by his enormous interest in sports. After that, he worked as a freelancer during high school and pursued an Arts Degree in Painting at the University of Arts and Design in Cluj-Napoca.

Adrian worked as a graphic designer for a while before deciding, in 2018, to enroll in a UX/UI course at the Informal School of IT in Cluj-Napoca, something that would change his career path in the best way.

He has been working at Linnify for 2 years. During these years, he has had the chance to work on more than 10 projects (applications such as Joyscore, websites, and various branding designs). What Adrian brings to the table in the design team is a significant amount of empathy and understanding, which really makes the difference. He loves listening to people and that helps him understand better what clients need.

Adrian is a designer whose work has left people impressed not only with the look of it but also with his deep understanding of visuals. He makes art that can be integrated into people's lives, as innovation doesn't have to look cold, boring, and unapproachable. Adrian is full of great ideas that he always shares with the team, making the collaboration with him one that never stops giving and making room for improvement.

About Linnify

Linnify is the technology and digital strategic partner of choice for innovative ideas which dare to disrupt the way people experience life.

Our expertise is diverse and solid in product strategy, UX/UI design, product development, and go-to-market strategy. We follow the latest trends and use the latest technologies to make sure our clients not only succeed in market placement but also are ready to scale up.

We are simplifying life through innovation.

Follow us on LinkedIn: www.linkedin.com/company/linnify

Visit our website: www.linnify.com

Contact us: contact@linnify.com

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