

# Visual Design Principles

Marcela Esteves Guetter

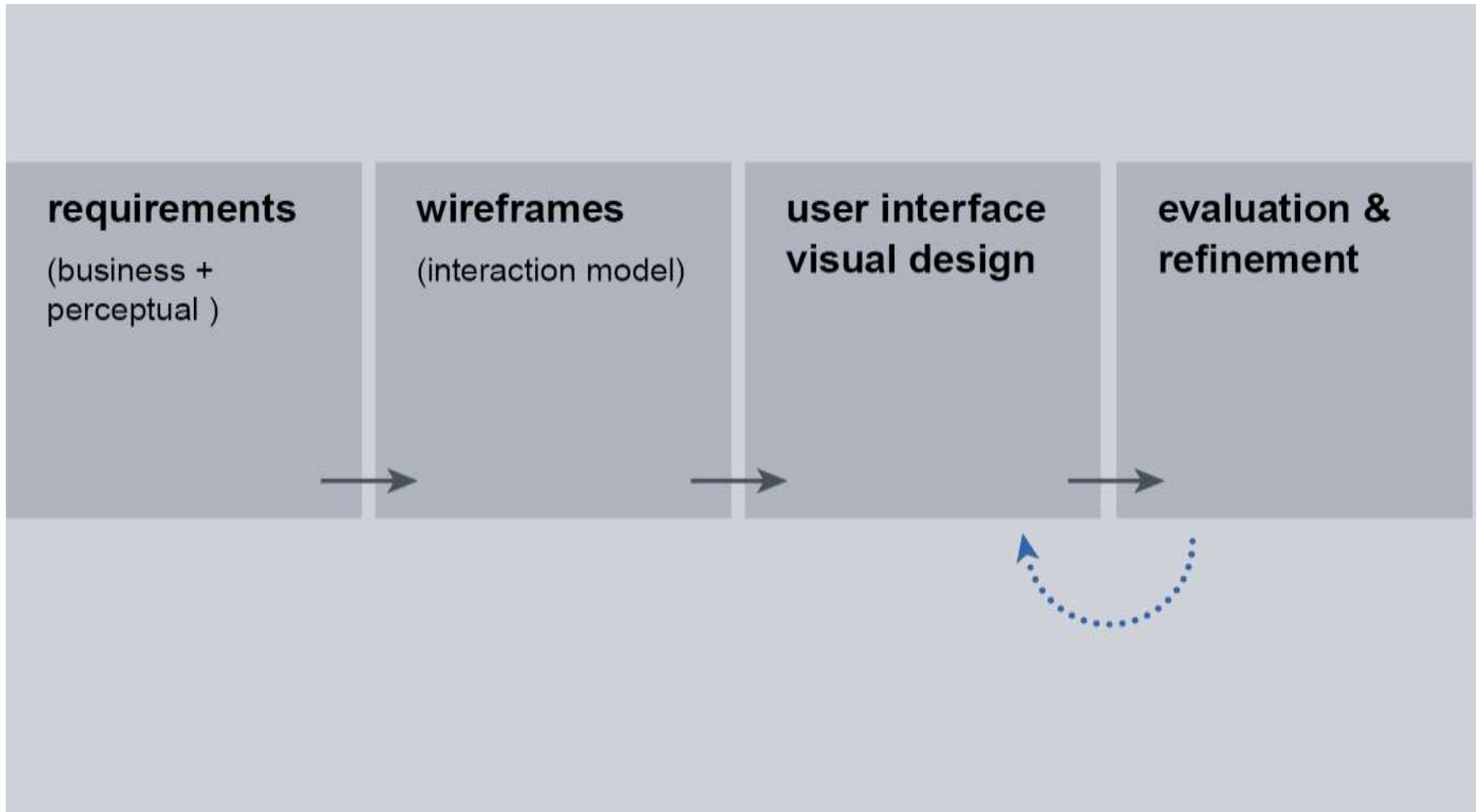
UX Project Manager at Siemens Corp. Research

**“A lot of trial and error goes into making things look effortless.”**

– Bill Moggridge, founder of IDEO

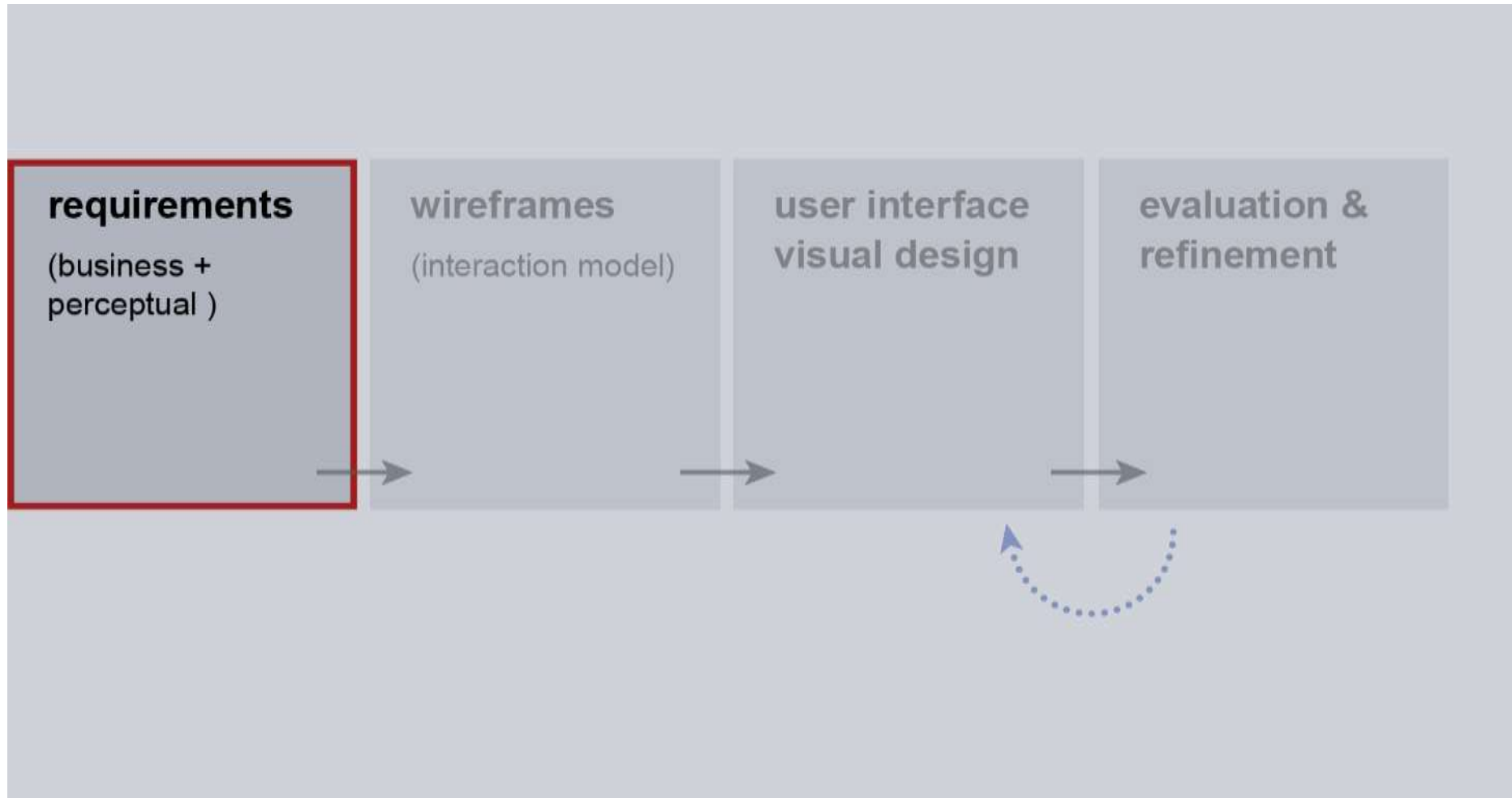
# Visual Design in UX Process

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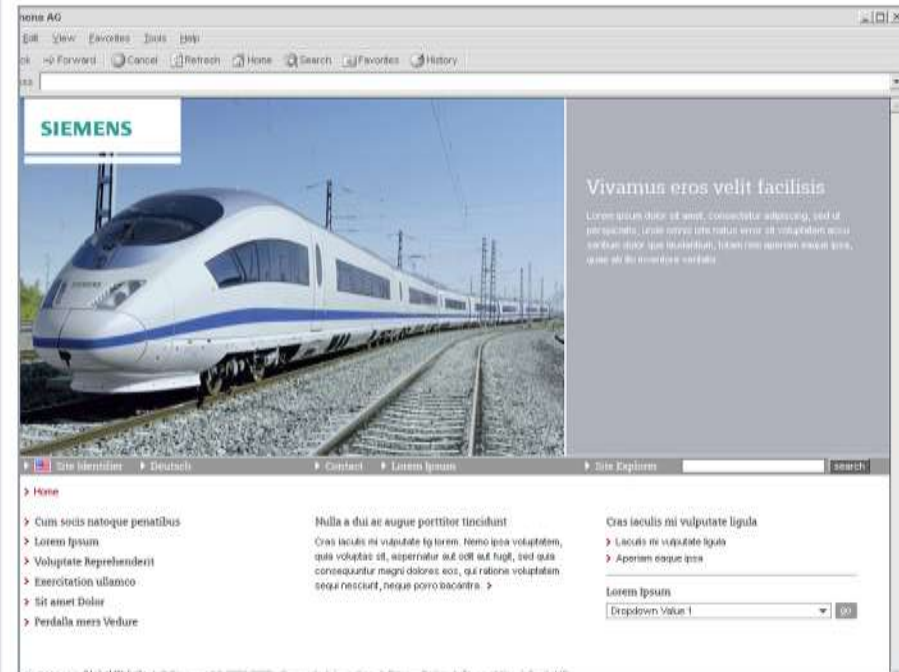
# Business Requirements

## Branding

- Existing standards and guidelines
- Assure coherence between product and product family, or products that share a business unit
- Establishes familiarity and sets expectations

Do these standards stifle innovation?

Innovative design develops in tandem with innovative technology and does not equate to the latest fad.



# Business Requirements

## Marketability/Affective Expectations

### Marketing requirements

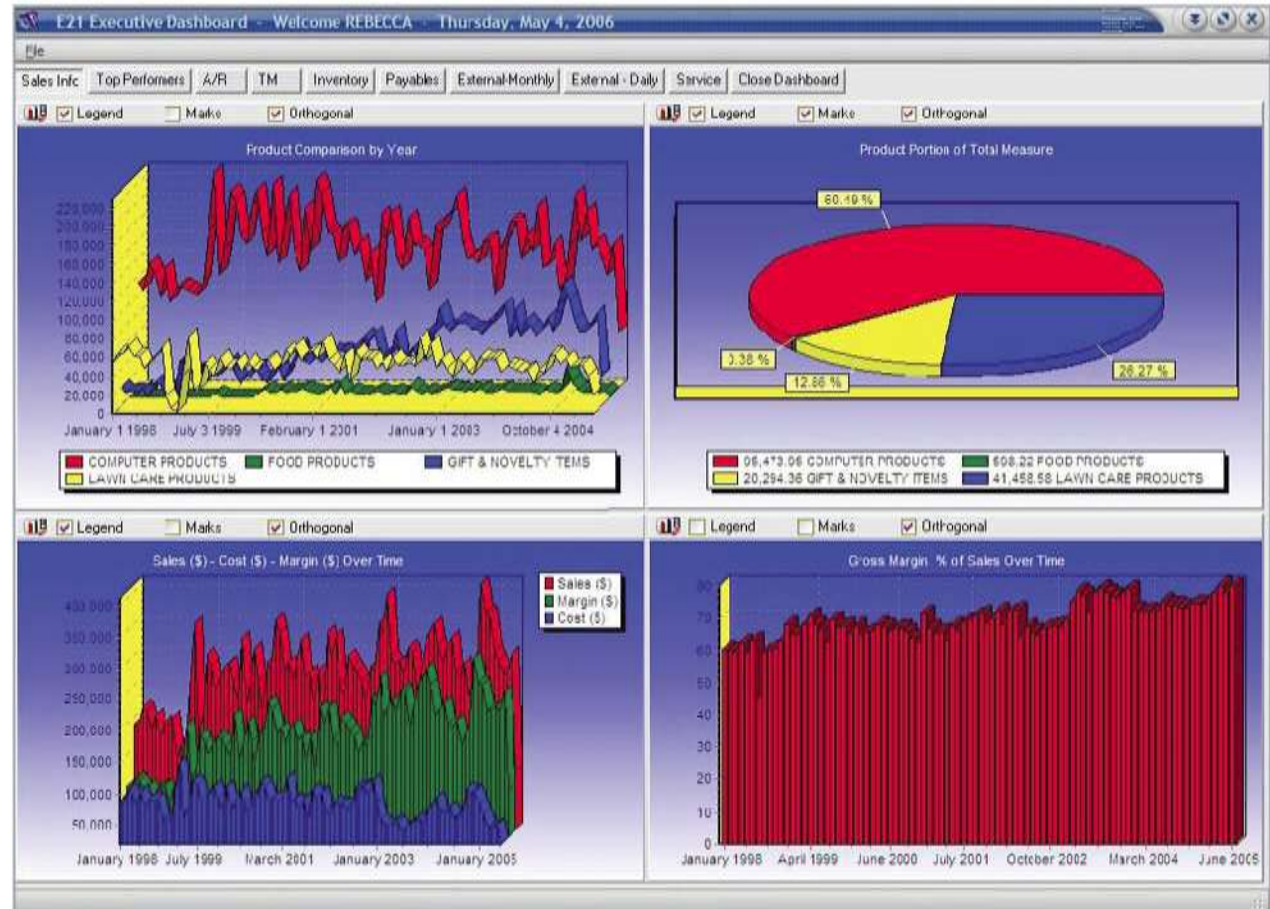
- Business unit's communication objectives, brand strategy, competition
  - What is the key message of the product?
  - What are the key emotions/experience to be reinforced?
- Visual design with impact will differentiate your product from the competition



# Perceptual Requirements

What is  
visually salient?

Everything and  
therefore nothing.



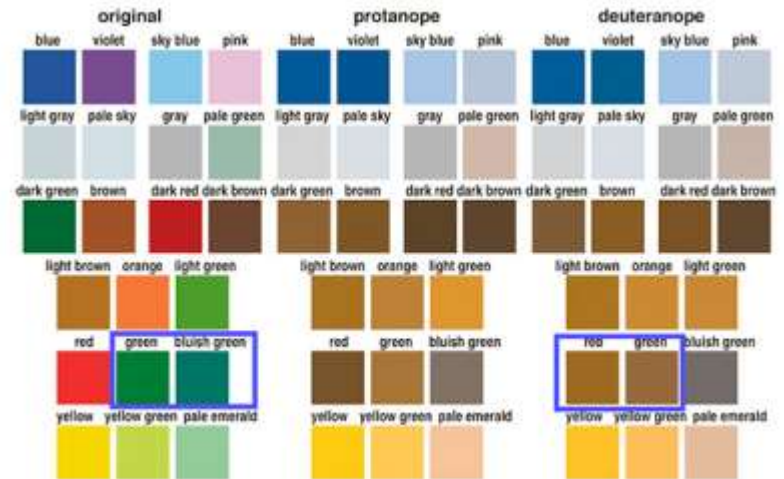
example screen from <http://www.inovasolutions.com/call-center-reporting/media/dashboard-whitepaper.pdf>



# Perceptual Requirements

## Human factors / ergonomics of use

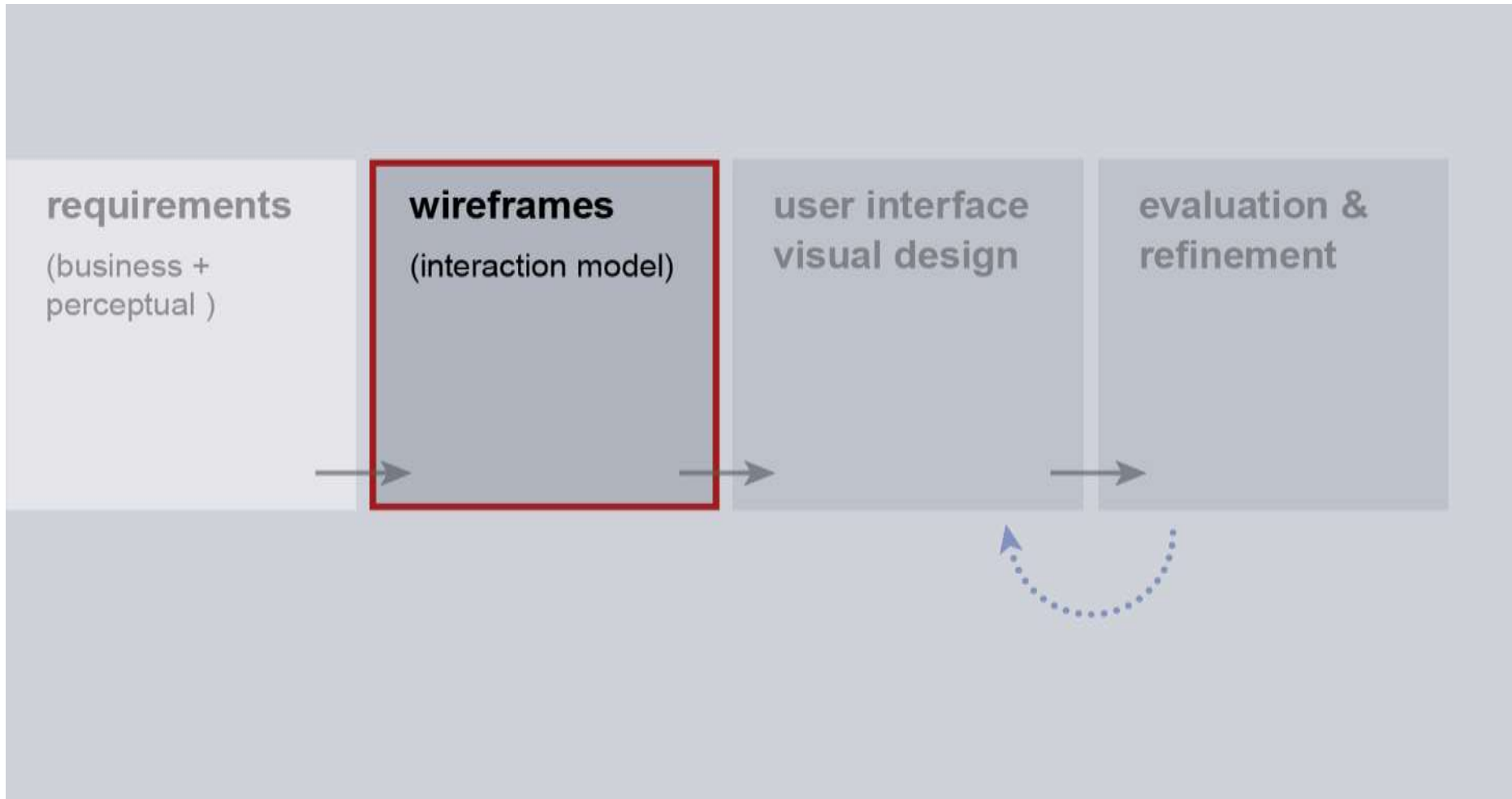
- 5% of all males exhibit red-green color blindness
- Indoor vs. outdoor lighting conditions may affect the perception of visual design solution



Example screen from <http://designshack.net/articles/accessibility/tips-for-designing-for-colorblind-users>

# Visual Design in UX Process

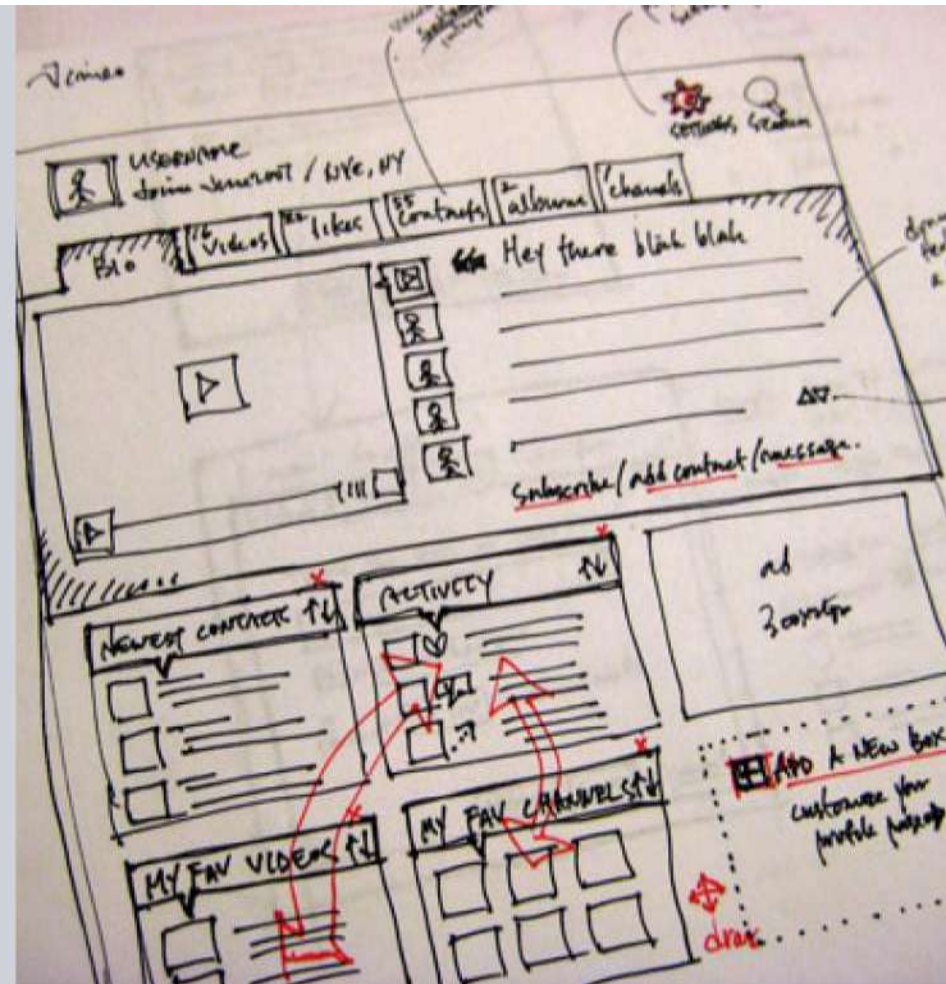
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# Wireframes

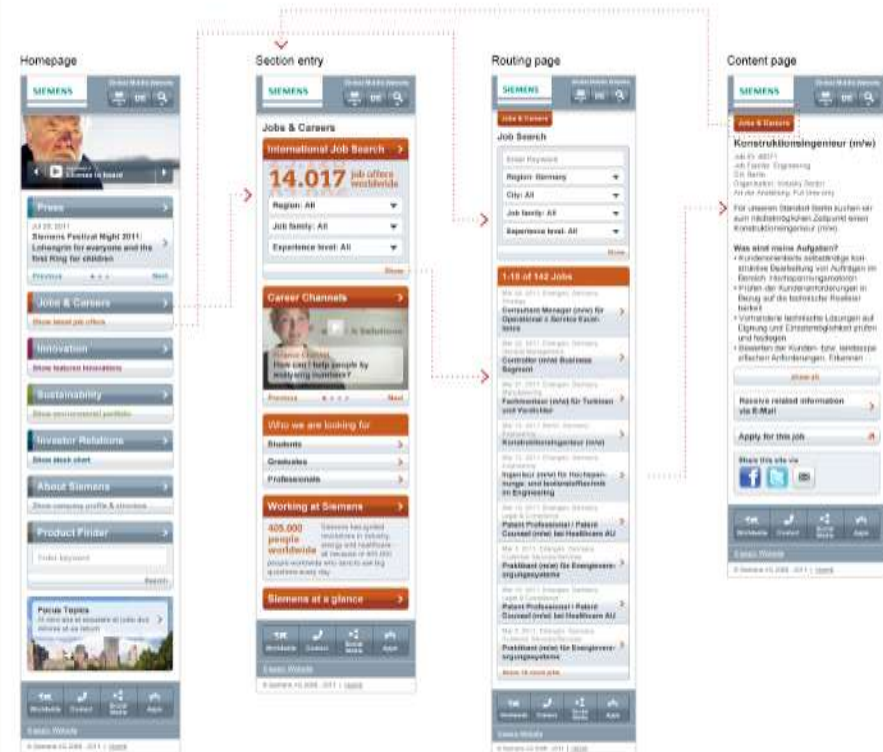
- Backbone of visual design
- Primary focus should be enabling and emphasize the interaction model by well founded principles of design
- Can be at high-level or low-level for details
- Clear definition of functionality and task hierarchy, as in the interaction model



# Outcome

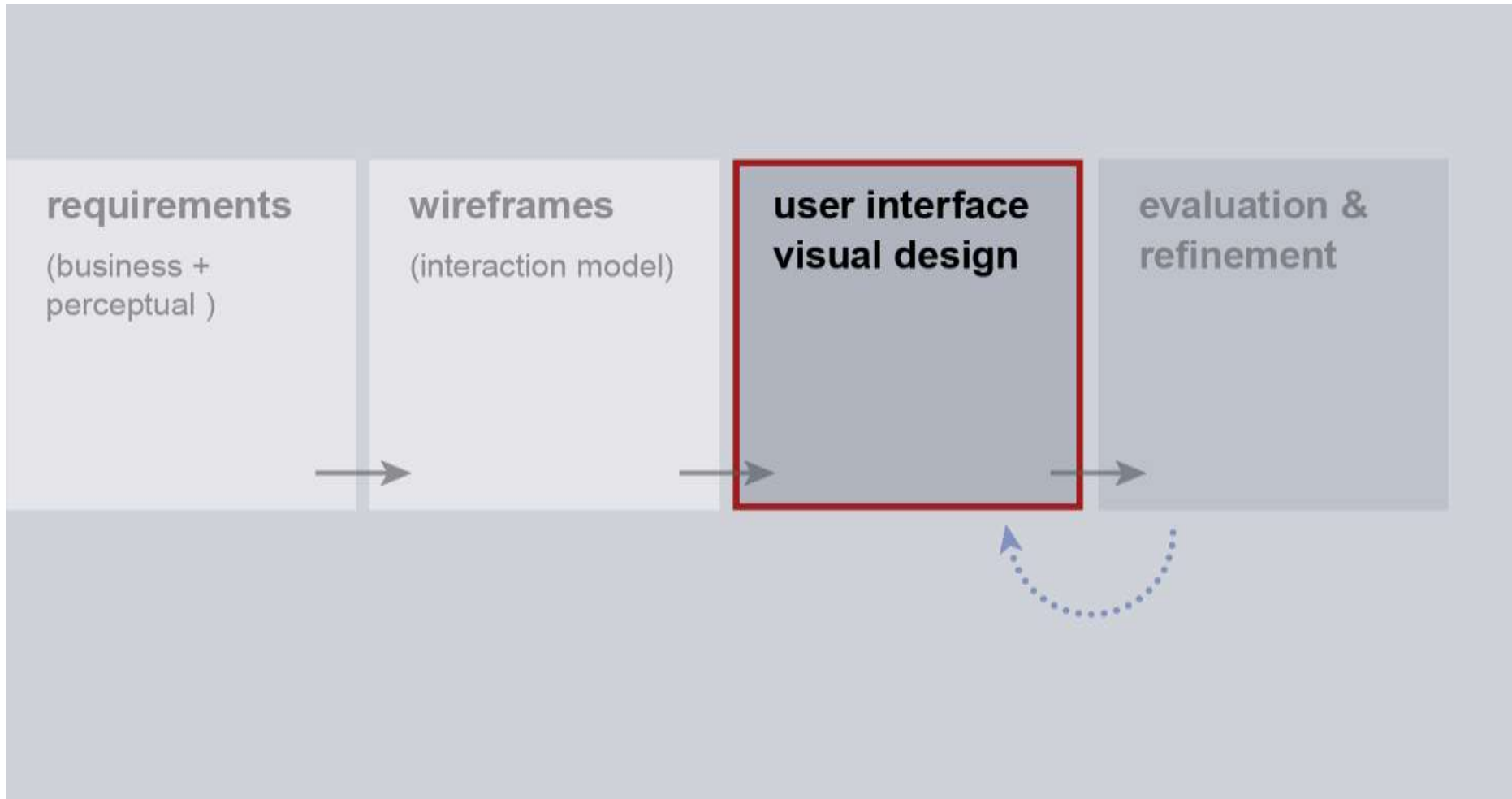
## Expected output

- Visual language, set of visual design rules & application
  - Best enable the interaction model
  - Compliant with brand guidelines
- Meet the expectations of stakeholders
- Secure appropriate market place for the product
- Design solution that can meet the expectations of the users



# Visual Design UX Process

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Manage Calls

Monitor Floor

Eboard

### Staff

- RN Anna Chesterfield 25002
- RN Barbara McKinley 25007
- RN Sandra Kemden 25015  
Diabetes Specialist
- RN Christine Thompson 25004
- LPN Maria Florent 22078
- PCT Irene Sommers 23091
- PCT Susan Parker 23045
- Aide Victoria Steiner 20007  
Dialysis Expert

### Floor Plan



call list

map view

eboard



Staff On Duty



RN Anna Chesterfield  
Dialysis Expert Station

RN Barbara McKinley  
Dialysis Expert Room 1203

RN Sandra Kemden  
Dialysis Expert Hallway

RN Christine Thompson  
Dialysis Expert Supply Room

LPN Maria Florent  
Dialysis Expert Room 1232

PCT Irene Sommers  
Dialysis Expert Station

PCT Susan Parker  
Dialysis Expert Out of Range

Aide Victoria Steiner  
Dialysis Expert Room 1201

### Map





# Visual Design Elements



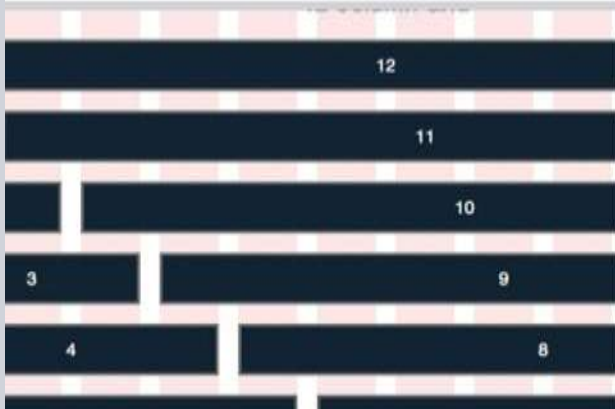
**Brand**



**Typography**



**Form**



**Grid**



**Symbols**

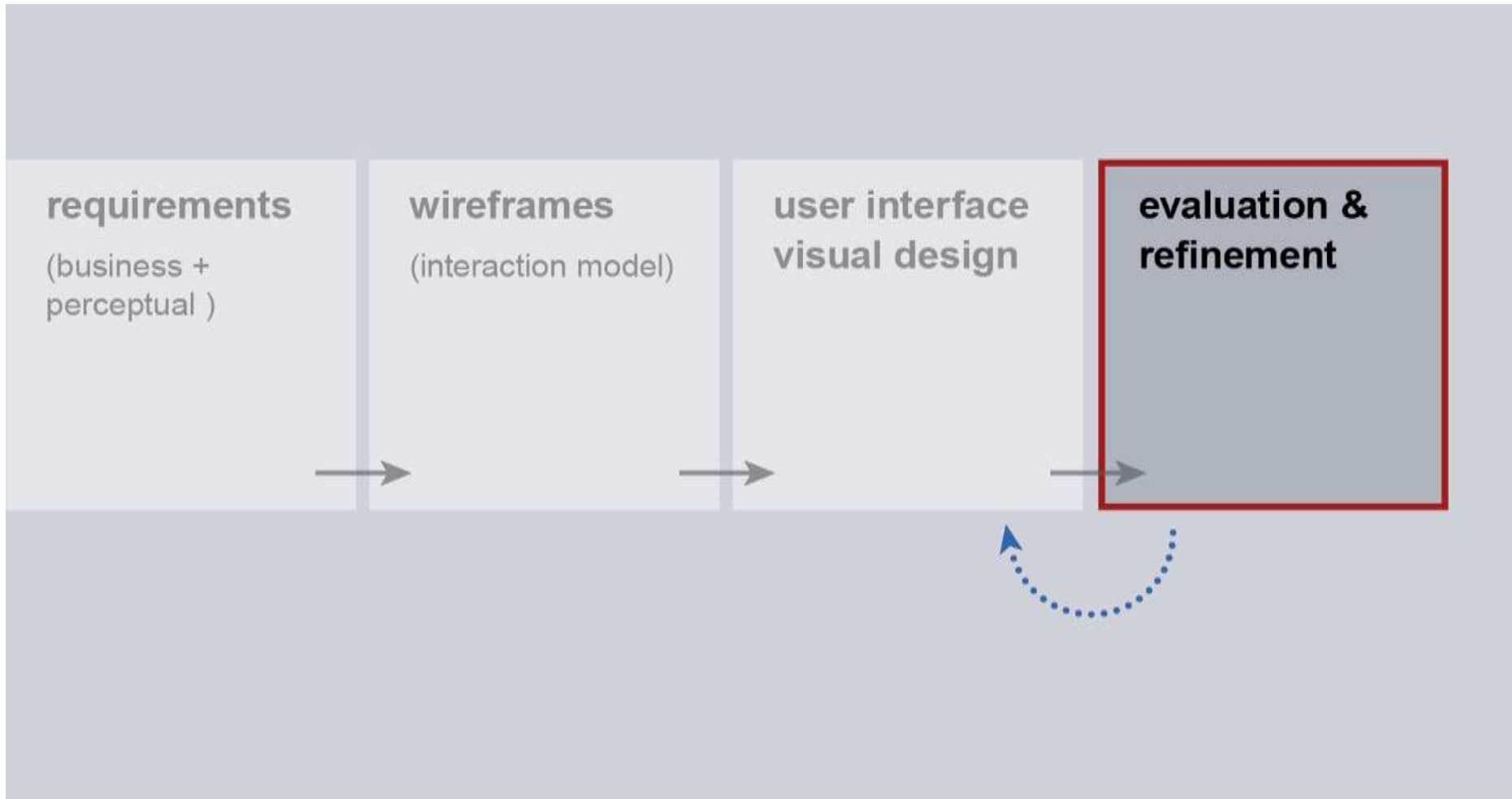


**Materials, tools & tech.**



# Visual Design in UX Process

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## Selecting the “right” answer

- Visual language can communicate the same message in different ways



## Selecting the “right” answer

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### **How to find...**

- Look at requirements
- Design it to as detailed as possible
- Test approach

### **The most elegant solution...**

- will yield a design that is moderated with restraint and precision
- is both useful and beautiful

## How to help your designer help you

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### **Begin with questions**

- Make sure you understand something before you react to it.

### **Evaluate the work, what works, what doesn't, and why**

- What do you mean by “better?”
- What feeling come to mind when you see one design over the other?
- What don't you like about A? What is more effective in B?
- In your favored version, what is the focal point or call to action?  
What does it entice you to do?

# How to help your designer help you

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## Communicate the experience

- Take a moment to think about the different things that you mean to communicate when giving feedback.
- Describe the ideal experience in seeing and interacting and compare to the design.

## Provide feedback based on role

- What perspective do you represent? Should be more than your personal feedback--it should represent the goals related to what you do.



# Visual Hierarchy

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## **Weak hierarchy**

- Loud, messy, cluttered, busy, “too much going on”
- May leave out something important
- May frame their topic incorrectly
- Fail to organize information in a helpful way

## **Strong hierarchy**

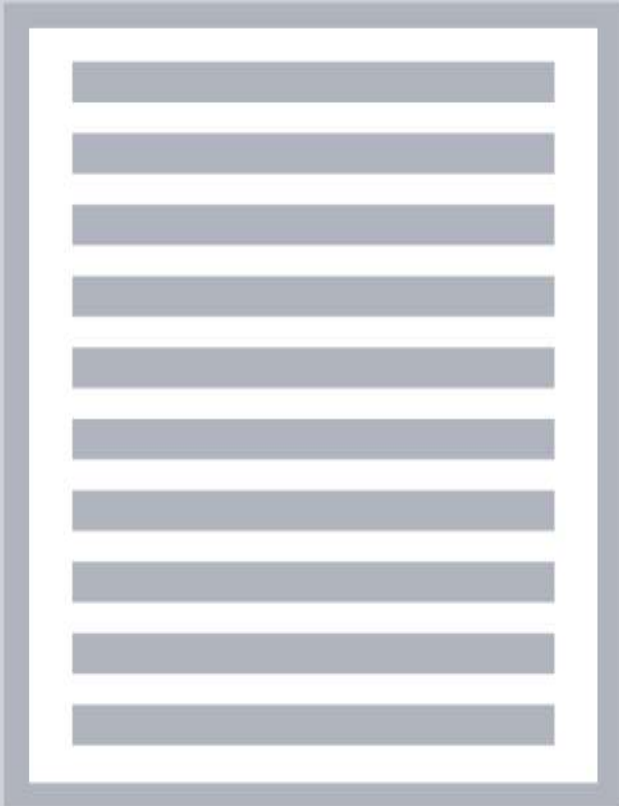
- Guides visual and logical progression by showing what is important
- Allow users to take action confidently
- Obvious order to which they view or act on things
- View most important thing first



# Visual Hierarchy

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weak hierarchy



strong hierarchy

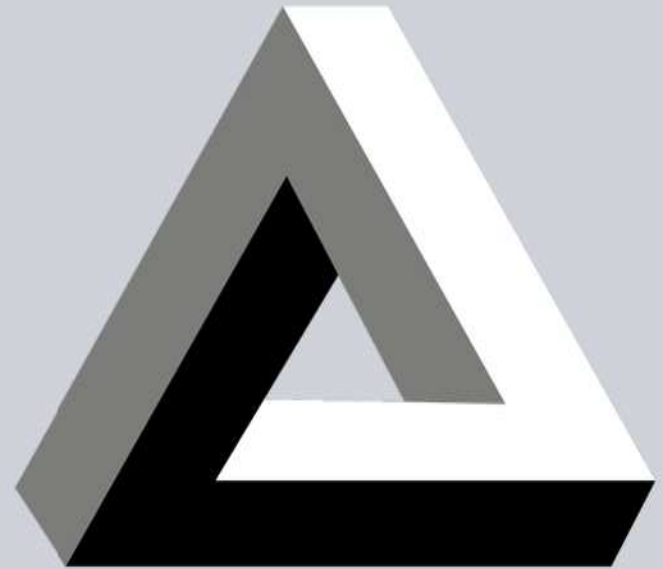


# Gestalt Principles

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**It's a matter of perception.**

- **Proximity**
- **Similarity**
- Continuity
- Figure-Ground
- Closure
- Uniform Connectedness
- **Affordance**

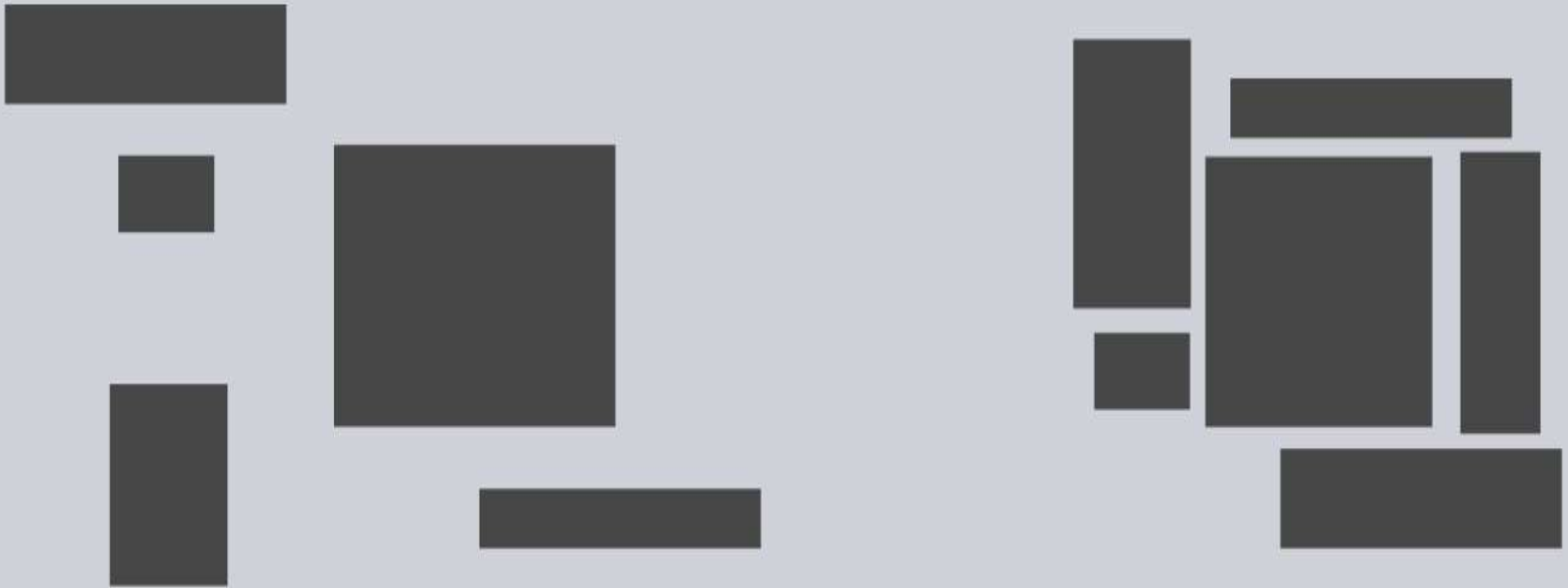


# Gestalt Principles

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## Proximity

- Things perceived to be more related because they are close together.

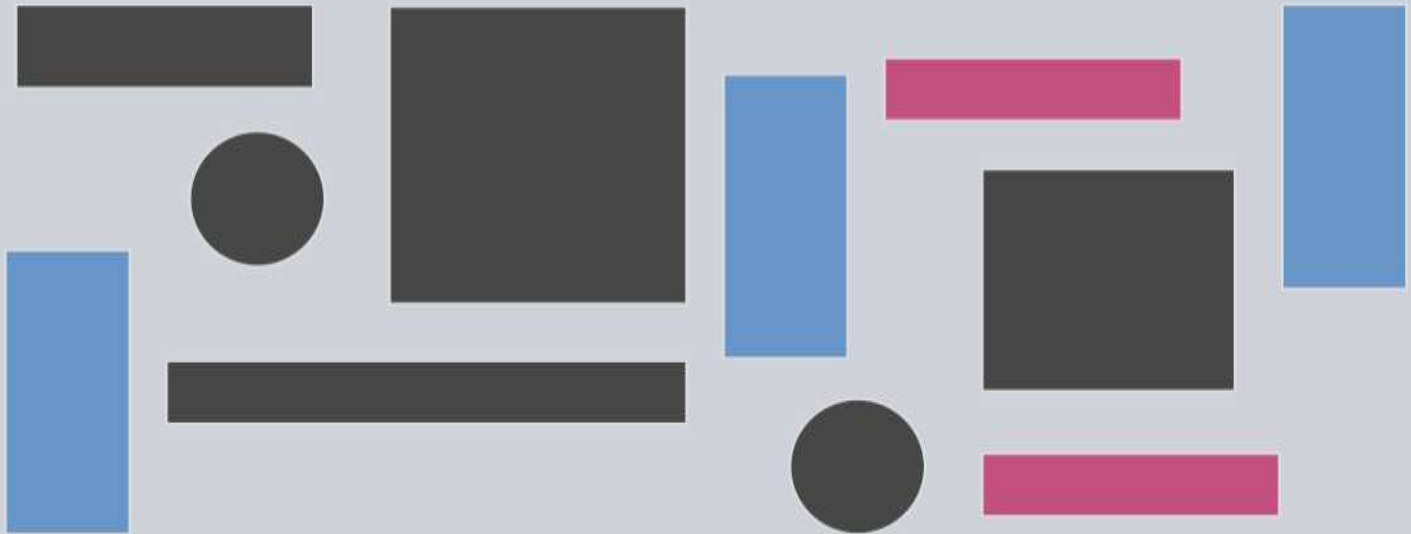


# Gestalt Principles

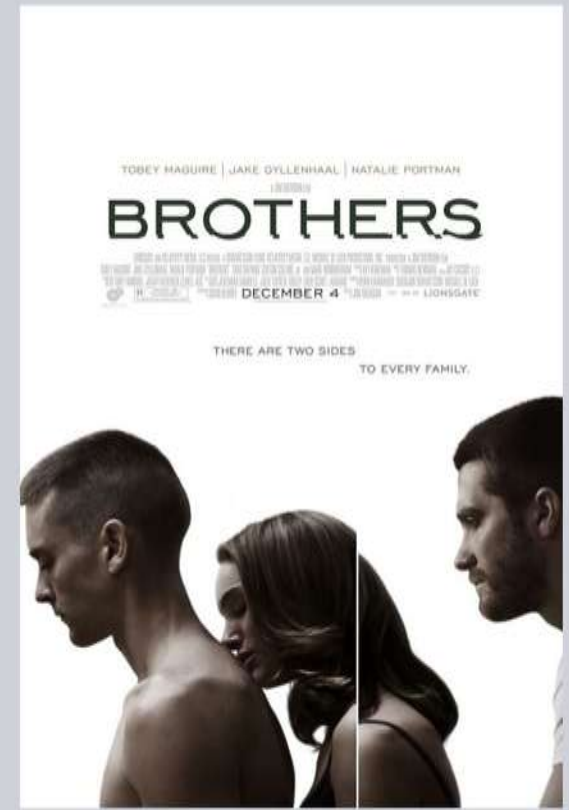
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## Similarity

- Things perceived to be related because of similar characteristics, such as, shape, size, color, or orientation.



# Putting It All Together



# Good Design

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**enduring**

**+**

**clear**

**+**

**simple**

- logical
- comfortable (even beautiful)
- does not intrude on the experience



## Good Design: Common Practices

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**clarity**

**+**

**consistency**

**+**

**timelessness**

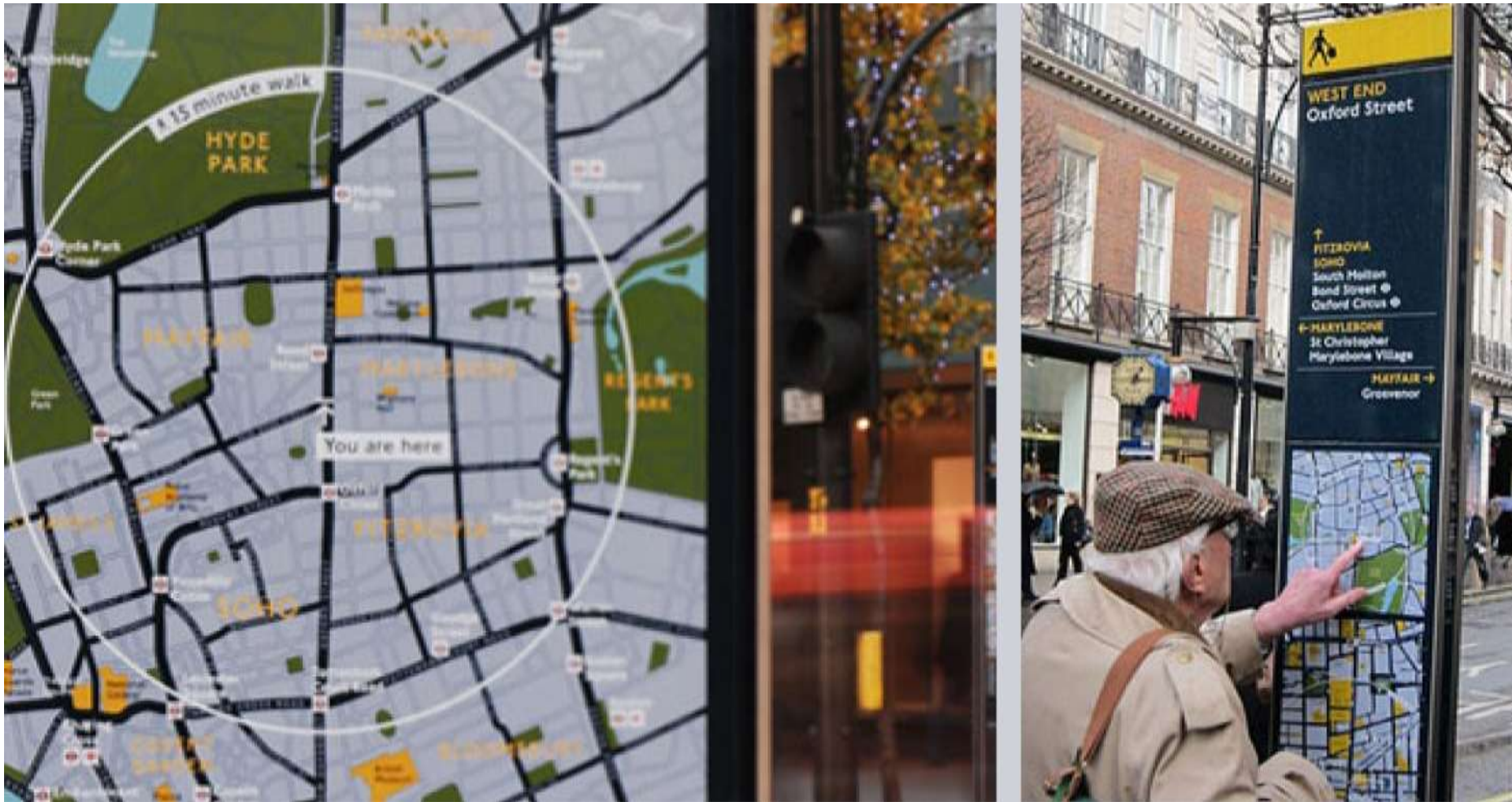
## Good Design: Common Practices

### Clarity

- **Clear starting and end points**  
It is obvious how to use the function.
- **Progressive disclosure**  
Put appropriate focus on the details that will help with the current task.
- **Obvious paths**  
Provide clear transitions to the next step or to the next level of detail.



# Good Design: Common Practices



# Good Design: Common Practices

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## Consistency

- **Routine**

Identify similar processes and use similar approaches.  
Allow user to feel like they are mastering the application.

- **Building patterns**

Put similar things in similar places so people can act through intuition.  
Use similar visual application.

- **Efficiency**

Feature to be approachable enough to seem enjoyable.  
User does not waste their energy.



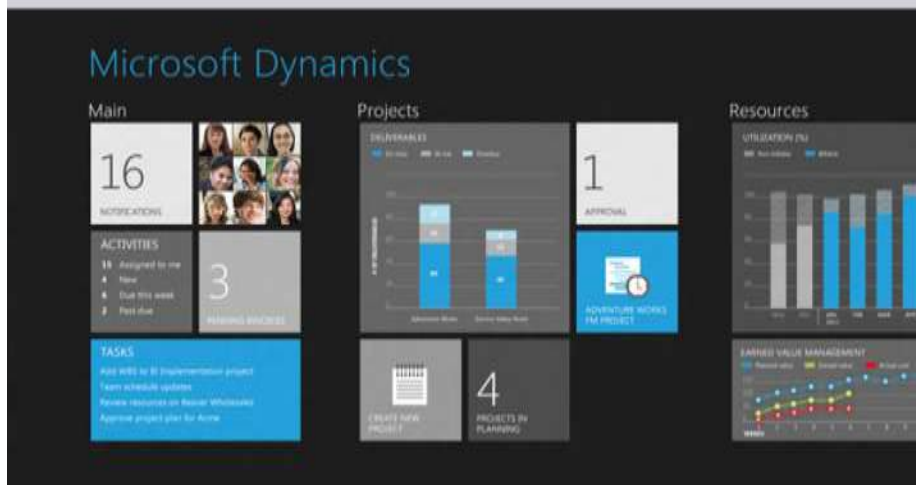
# Good Design: Common Practices

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## Consistency



# Good Design: Common Practices

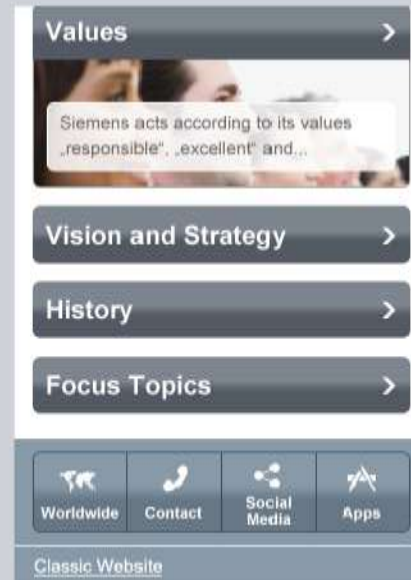
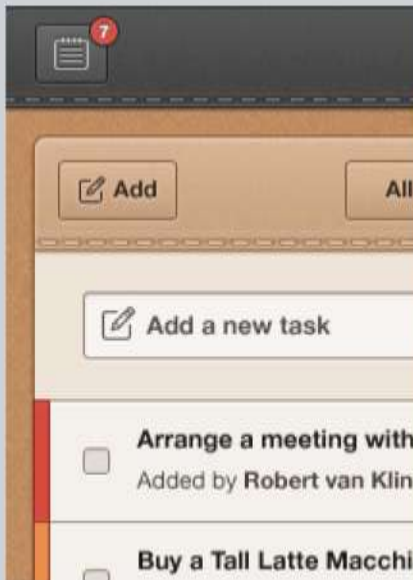




# Good Design: Common Practices

## Timelessness

- **Fads fade**  
Do not rely on trends to convey the message.
- **Purposeful application of sensible design**



# Good Design: Common Practices

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## Timelessness

- **Appropriate**  
Reflect content in its appropriate manner.
- **Invest**  
Economy of design avoid wasteful exercises, respects investment and lasts longer.



*RT 20 tischsuper radio, 1961, by Dieter Rams for Braun*

## Dieter Rams: Ten principles of good design

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Good design is innovative.

Good design makes a product useful.

Good design is aesthetic.

Good design makes a product understandable.

Good design is unobtrusive.

Good design is honest.

Good design is long-lasting.

Good design is thorough down to the last detail.

Good design is environmentally friendly.

Good design is as little design as possible.



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