LEAN UX

Applying Lean Principals to Improve User Experience

Based on the book by Jeff Gothelf with Josh Seiden

1/5/14 – Seattle Lean Startup Meetup Group
Presenter – Devon DeLapp
Founder/Web Designer, DeLapp Design
We’ll be talking about:

- Why Lean UX?
- Core Principals
- The Lean UX Process
  - Vision, Framing, and Outcomes
  - Collaborative Design
  - MVPs and Experiments
  - Feedback and Research
- Integrating with Agile
WHY LEAN UX?

Let’s talk about the 1990’s...
It’s all about the deliverables, baby.

• Making artifacts was the goal of designers
• Constrained by production limitations (e.g., set up a printing press)
• Getting it wrong could cost big $$$
• A designer had to know exactly what they’re creating before sharing it with the world
• This approach carried over to software UX.

Value was placed on the deliverable, not on the experience it created
Then, something magical happened...
Interactive Experiences Evolve Rapidly

Customers expect more.

“Get it all figured out first” approaches not workable.

So what is a designer to do?
Enter Lean UX

Inspired by Eric Reis’ *Lean Startup* and the Agile development approach, Lean UX emphasizes working faster, lighter, with less emphasis on the deliverable and more emphasis on the actual experience being designed.

It changes the design conversation:
- less on “features” and “documents”
+ more talk about what actually works
Foundations

• Design Thinking
  • Every aspect of business can be approached with design methods

• Agile software development
  • Individuals and interactions over process and tools
  • Working software over extensive documentation
  • Customer collaboration
  • Responding to change over following a plan

• Lean Startup method
  • Build-Measure-Learn feedback loop
  • Minimum Viable Products
Principals

- Cross Functional Teams
- Small, Dedicated
- Progress = Outcomes, Not Output
- Problem-Focused Team
- Removing Waste
- Making Over Analysis
- Permission to Fail

- Small Batch Size
- Continuous Discovery
- GOOB
- Shared Understanding
- No Rockstars
- Externalize Your Work
- Learning Over Growth
PROCESS

“Speed first. Aesthetics second.”
– Jason Fried, Basecamp
DECLARE ASSUMPTIONS

CREATE AN MVP

FEEDBACK AND RESEARCH

RUN AN EXPERIMENT
Vision

HYPOTHESIS STATEMENT
• Main starting point of project
• States a clear vision for the work
• Shift conversation from “outputs” (“Create a single sign on page.”) to “outcomes” (“We want to increase the number of signups.”)
• Expresses assumptions in a testable form.

• Start by declaring your Problem, then Assumptions how to fix it, then we break down the assumption in more granular Hypothesis...
Problem Statement

[Our service/product] was designed to achieve [these goals]. We have observed that the product/service isn’t meeting [these goals] which is causing [this adverse effect] to our business. How might we improve [service/product] so that our customers are more successful based on [these measurable criteria].
Assumptions

We have lots of them!
• I believe my customers have a need to _______.
• These needs can be solved by _______.
• I will acquire the majority of my customers through _______.
• I will make money by _______.

PRIORITIZE

With so many assumptions, which one do you test first?
It’s easy: The higher the risk, and the larger the unknown, the higher the priority to test it.
Hypothesis Statement Components

We believe that [doing this/building this feature] for [these people/personas] will achieve [this outcome]. We will know this is true when we see [this market feedback, quantitative measure, or qualitative insight].

- Build list of outcomes, then vote (4 votes each) what is more important.
- Personas: Create a proto-personas, then check against users.
- Finally, decide what features the team feels will achieve the outcome.
COLLABORATIVE DESIGN
Get everyone involved...
Design Studio

Get the whole team in one room. Everyone, not just designers! Here’s the studio process:

1. Problem definition
2. Individual idea generation (sketches)
3. Presentation and critique
4. Iterate and refine (emerge)
5. Team idea generation (converge)
A word on Style Guides

Non-designers (and even some designers) all presenting user experience can lead to disparate quality and presentation of solutions, which can lead to unfair judgment of those solutions.

A Style Guide helps keep everything at a comparable level of quality and on-brand.
MVP AND EXPERIMENTS

Try, try, try again.
DECLARE ASSUMPTIONS

CREATE AN MVP

FEEDBACK AND RESEARCH

RUN AN EXPERIMENT
Why an MVP?

MVP is to test assumption, and to learn. There are two types:

1. Creates no market value, and exists only to learn what the market wants (e.g., “Sign up for our Beta!”)

2. Mini-version of product, that users will interact with.
Prototyping

- Lots of options, from pencil and paper, to fully coded. To choose a method, ask:

  Who will be interacting with my prototype?
  What do I want to learn from it?
  How much time is there to create it?
Prototyping

- Paper
Prototyping

- Clickable Wireframes
Prototyping

- Clickable Wireframe tools:
  - Balsamiq
  - Microsoft Visio
  - OmniGraffle
  - Microsoft Powerpoint
Prototyping

- High-fidelity Design, Coded Prototypes
DECLARE ASSUMPTIONS

CREATE AN MVP

FEEDBACK AND RESEARCH

RUN AN EXPERIMENT
Experiments

- In building the experiment, ask:
- What am I trying to learn?
- What are the main signals I need from the market to validate hypothesis?
- Are there any other signals I can test that will serve as indicators for my main signal?
- What’s the fastest way to get this info?
FEEDBACK AND RESEARCH

You need to get out of the building...
DECLARE ASSUMPTIONS

CREATE AN MVP

RUN AN EXPERIMENT

FEEDBACK AND RESEARCH
GOOB: Get Out Of the Building

• Get the **whole** team involved
• Go to where your customers are and interview them using an interview guide (pre-considered questions and responses) and an MVP.
• Carefully note the customers interaction.
• Switch up roles of question-asker and note-taker.
• Ask customers for referrals to who else we can talk to.
Making Sense of the Research

• **Look for patterns.** These are the trends we’re looking for.

• **Park your outliers** – do not discard them! They may form a pattern later.

• **Verify with other sources.**
Other Sources of Feedback

• Web forms
• Search logs
• Site usage analytics (behavior doesn’t lie!)
• Customer Service reps
• Community websites
INTEGRATING WITH AGILE
Beyond staggered sprints...
Staggered Sprints

- Hands off between designer and developer
- Can lead to mini-waterfall workflow
- Designer and developers can remain in separate silos
Lean UX and Agile

- Themes to organize efforts over sprints
- Participation from all parties!
- Proactive communications with management
  - How the project is going.
  - What you tried so far and learned.
  - What you’ll be trying next.
Lean UX and Agile

- Working with the rhythm of Scrum
- Themes used to tie together multiple sprints
Conclusion

• Lean UX is the evolution of product design.
• It combines the best of interaction design techniques with the scientific method to create products that are easy to use, beautiful, and measurably successful.

Thank you!