

High Fidelity Agile

A UX centric approach to agile product development

Context:

Direct to consumer, mass market, mobile-first

UX performed by a dedicated product design function

Situation

New product, completely greenfield build

First public release to be 'feature-rich' (ie. multiple months of build effort)

No public shipping of incrementally built features before then

A dedicated product design function exists and/or will be stood up

Product design is the 'custodian' of:

- Market and customer research
- The voice of the customer (VOC)
- UX-centric approach to product development

Implications

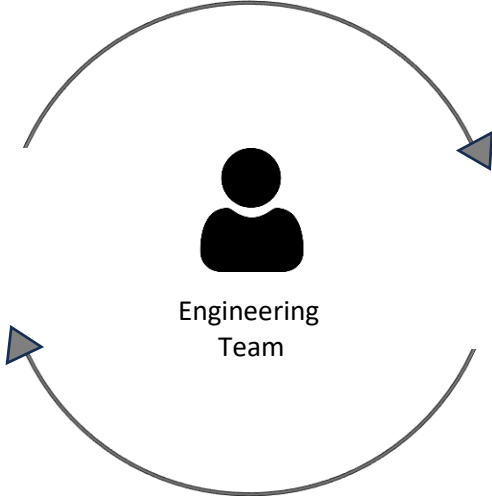
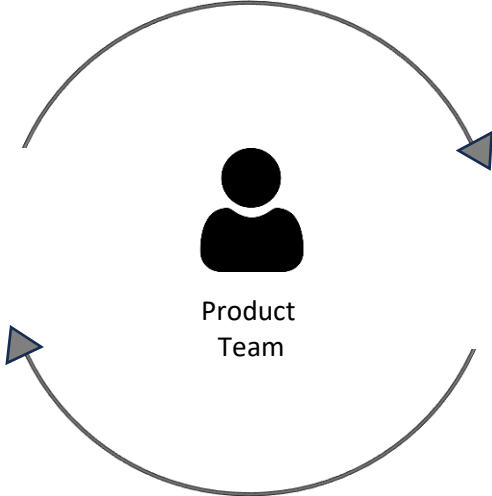
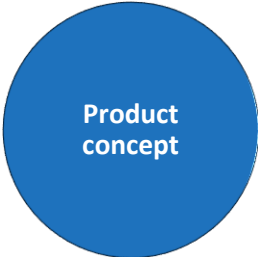
Customer experiences are designed ahead of development

Customer experiences are designed holistically, not piecemeal

Detailed UX design produces high-fidelity, end-to-end user journeys

Technical involvement in the design process ensures feasible designs

Technical team reviews user journeys and converts them into user stories



Delivery approach

Some form of agile/iterative development approach will be taken

User journeys will be produced by product design in advance of development

User journeys will be reviewed by the technical team for development readiness

User journeys will be converted into one or more dev-ready user stories

User stories will primarily be 1) front-end UI, or 2) back-stage components

User stories will be refined by the technical team ahead of development

UI design system of standard, reusable components and layouts will build up over time

Technical debt retirement may be added to the backlog for prioritisation, as necessary

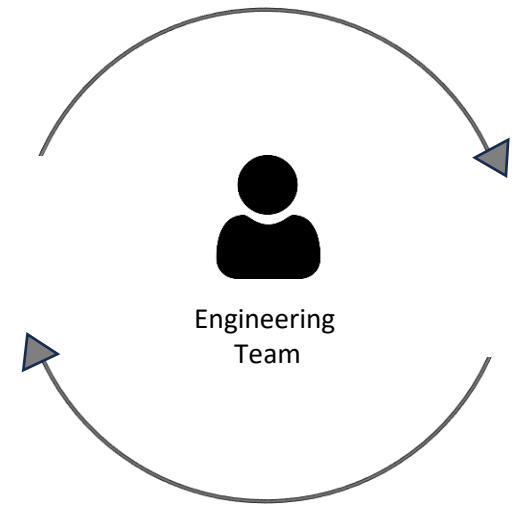
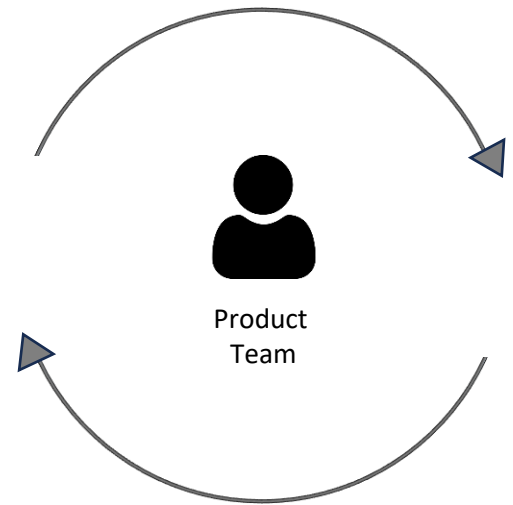
Key activities

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Roles

- Product owner
- Product designer
- UX designer
- Copywriter
- Illustrator

- Business analyst
- Technical architect
- Technical lead
- Developer
- Quality assurance

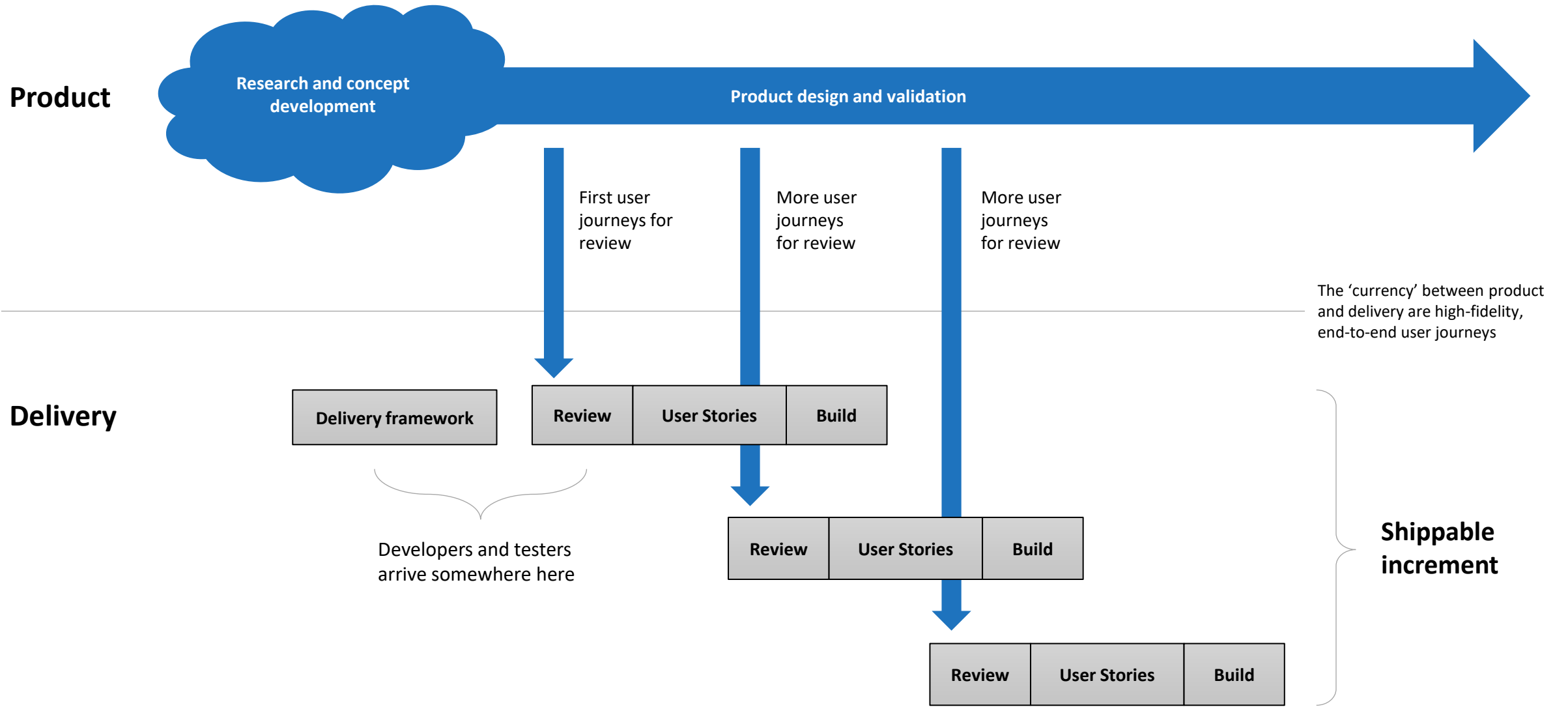
Further Guidance

[Huy Nguyen](#), a truly exceptional Agile Coach, was asked to provide his experiences with high-fidelity agile. He said:

- Customer experience, user experience, and service design are a confluence of new disciplines that agile needs to incorporate before you reach for the *“that’s waterfall”* or anti-BDUF reaction many people have.
- Good CX/UX can act as the VOC, and you’d have them sit at the table in the customer role (as you would in XP).
- Designers view experience as holistic; the desired impact of customer experience can be lost when designs are piecemeal.
- The user experience is iteratively built each time as a new whole, not as bits and pieces.
- Developers must provide strong input during the design process, ideally by co-creating the experience.
- Designs need to be treated like requirements, however none of them dictate the implementation of the underlying software.
- Agility is still needed to develop non-UI parts, such as the infrastructure and business rules. Those can be attacked separately.
- You could even make the most of the designed user experience and define it as the skeleton itself before you start fleshing out the underlying logic, which might take more time to create.
- You can’t do the *“everyday release a small bit of value”* thing. Value has to be released in phases so the experience makes sense.
- Yes, some batching up of features may be needed.
- The best dual track I’ve seen is where designers work 1 sprint ahead of developers when using Scrum.



Huy Nguyen



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