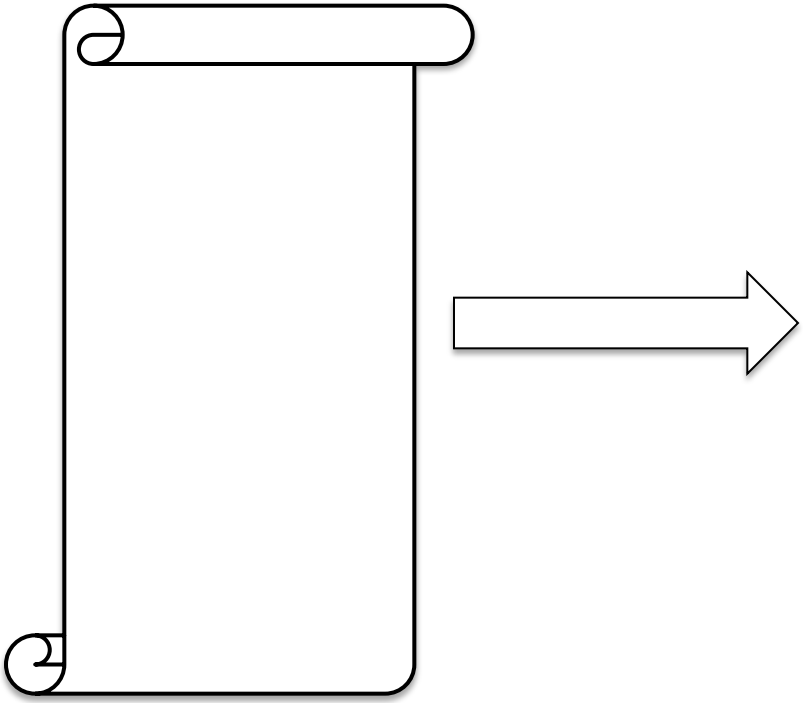
From Research to Design: One Designer's Perspective

UC Berkeley I School 09.27.2012

How do we go from reams of interview notes to polished designs?



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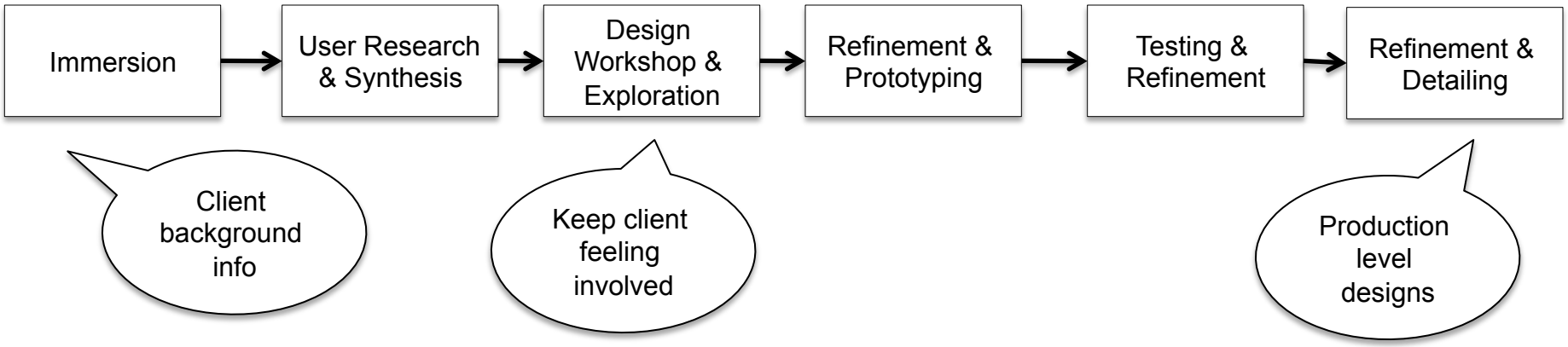
Sample User-Centered Approach



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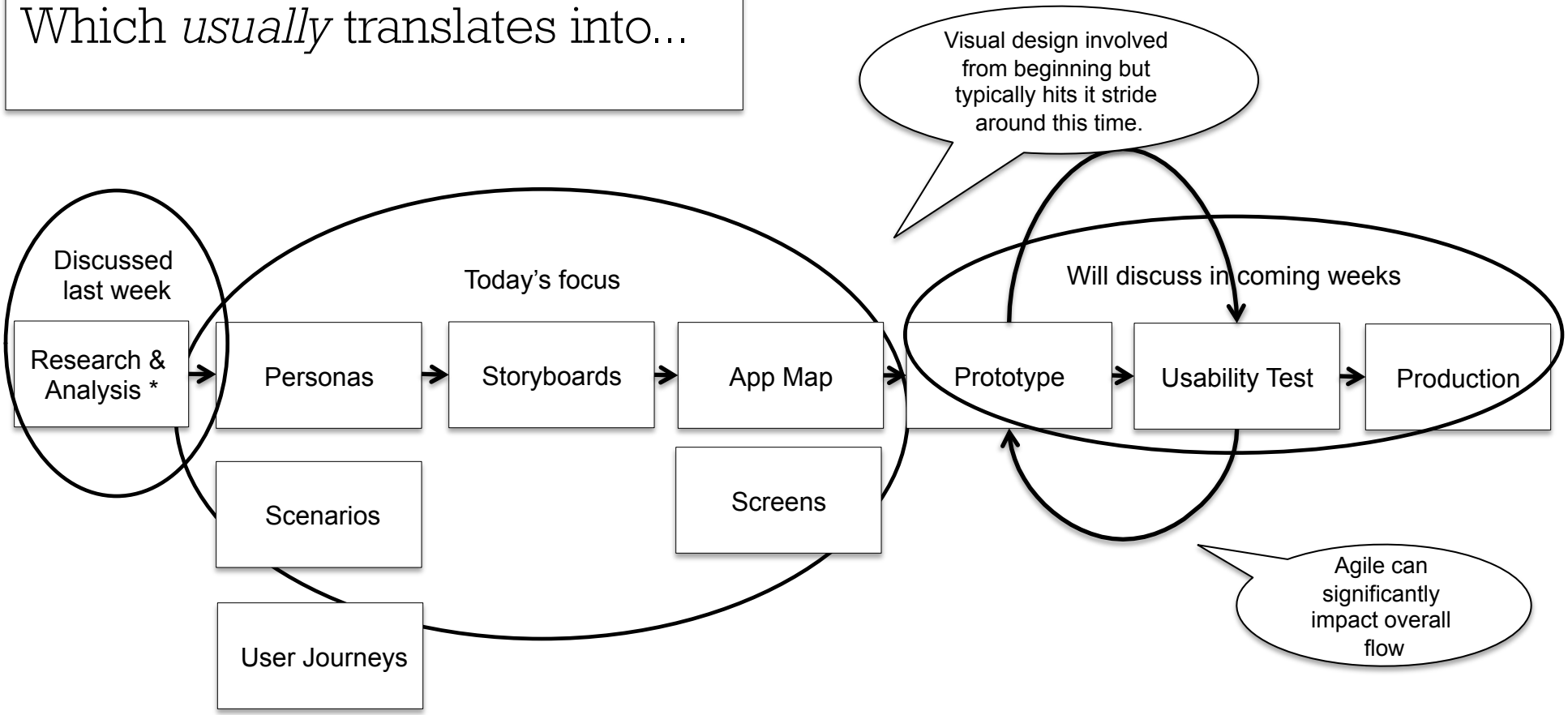
Which *usually* translates into...



* May do competitive analysis and early concepts prior to research

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Personas

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What are Personas?

- Profiles of archetypal users, as opposed to profiles of actual users, thus they represent the needs of many users.
- Created to keep design teams on the same page with regard to the target users and to prevent team members from being self-referential.
- Developed from multiple research sources: user research, customer support, app analytics.

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Typical Personas Contents

- Name, profession, age, location
- Attitudes
- Activities
- Influencers
- Work flows
- Pain points & frustrations
- Goals
- Mobile personas may include detailed information on the context of use, the computer and synching setup, and the usage of web and desktop versions of iPhone applications.

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Sample Persona

Michael, College Sophmore

COLLEGE SOPHOMORE

MICHAEL

Age: 19

Occupation: Sophomore at NYU majoring in psychology.

Home: Shares apartment with two other NYU students.

iPhone: 3G

Computer: iMac laptop

"I often get caught up in my iPhone."

Every morning Michael reaches across his bed to grab his iPhone to check his email, calendar, and friends' status updates on Facebook. If he forgot to charge his phone overnight, he'll plug it in and let it charge while he gets ready for school.

Michael typically brings both his laptop and iPhone to campus. The laptop is stowed away in his backpack while the iPhone is tucked in his pocket. Over the course of the day, he'll use the phone to listen to music, check his friends' status updates and look up information via Safari.

Michael mostly uses the iPhone for fun but he's been experimenting with some apps for school. He found spreadsheet and word processing apps that work well for basic edits but he'll switch to his laptop to get significant work done. Reference apps—like the flashcards for his Chinese class—have been more valuable to him.

Functional goals:

Check email & AIM.

Update status on Facebook & Loopt.

Listen to music.

Emotional goals:

Stay in contact with friends & family.

Entertain himself & friends.

Enjoy simple and pleasing aesthetics.

Influencers:

Friends recommend apps to him.

His parents pay for his monthly plan.

Frustrations

Many apps feel disconnected, e.g., he edits photos with Photoshop on his laptop before posting them to Facebook.

Wish list:

He wishes he could customize the look and feel of some iPhone apps.

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But how does this happen in practice?

- One dedicated team member—usually user researcher—works on the personas and asks team for feedback.
- The ‘‘user’’ experts—UX, marketing, customer support—work on the personas together and ask team for feedback.
- The entire team builds the personas collaboratively.

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Collaborative Persona Building

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Scenarios

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What are Scenarios

- Describe how your persona may use your app to achieve their goals. In the very early stages, they tend to be written at a high level without many user interface elements.
- Sometimes completely devoid of solutions & used to brainstorm.
- Can help uncover gaps in your concept and potential usability issues. May also illuminate features, spark ideas.
- Should feel real yet also uncover some worst case scenario moments.
- Later on they can be useful when demoing your working app or authoring user-interface specifications.

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How many should I create? How long should they be?

- Every app will be different. May help to think through your user journey and the key user tasks over the course of the journey—first use, core tasks, edge tasks.
- For a large e-commerce app, we created scenarios for these 5 situations. Each one was about 2 sentences long.
    - Browsing during downtime
    - Looking for something specific
    - Tracking an order
    - Finding a store
    - Adding item to shopping list

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Typical Scenario Contents

- **Motivation:** What prompted the persona to embark on the scenario?
- **Context:** Where is the persona while the scenario is taking place? Does the context change over the course of the scenario? Who else is involved? What other devices are involved?
- **Distractions:** What kind of distractions or interruptions typically occur in the scenario? How does the persona deal with such distractions?
- **Goal:** What is the persona's goal in the scenario? Is it information, an artifact, an emotion?

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Sample Scenario *Michael, College Sophmore*

COLLEGE SOPHOMORE

MICHAEL

Getting to new classroom

It's the first day of Michael's sophomore year at NYU. He just finished eating lunch at a café on Waverly Place and is scanning his afternoon schedule via iCal. All of his classes are on his iPhone since he synched it with his laptop the night before.

Michael notices that his 2PM class is held in The Puck Building. Although Michael is a sophomore, he's never taken any classes at Puck. He goes to the NYU web site using Safari, but it's not formatted for the device. After several minutes of pinching and zooming, Michael finally finds the building. It's not linked to Google Maps, so he mentally notes the cross-streets before exiting Safari.

Brainstorm topic:

How can an iPhone app make Michael's life easier?

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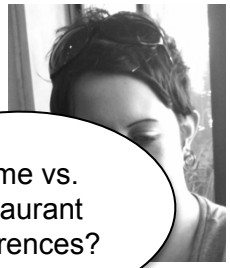
But how does this happen in practice? Food Dictionary Example



Melanie the Foodie

Lives in Mission, dines out several times a week, has iPhone & iPad, usually dines with boyfriend or group of girlfrien

Home vs. restaurant differences?

Started thinking about name

''It's Friday night and Melanie is excited to try the new Chinese restaurant in the Mission, Eat Mau. Before Melanie and her boyfriend, Beau, leave home she peruses their menu online. Everything sounded delicious except Melanie wasn't sure what ''Duroc'' Pork Belly was all about. She pulled out her iPhone, opened her Foodie Friend app, and typed in ''Duroc.'' As she types in ''Duroc'' the app shows a list of suggestions, including ''Duroc Pork Belly.'' She taps that item, leading to a new screen with information on the dish.''

Don't want to make user work too much. What if item not found? Can user add it? Nice to know pronunciation.

Start sketching ideas & noting questions—show animal or dish? Both? Nice to know which places serving it now (Foodspotting?) What does it go well with?

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Storyboards

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What are Storyboards

- Contain a series of illustrations or images displayed in sequence. Originally created for pre-visualizing films.
- The "story" behind the storyboard is typically one of the scenarios from upfront user research.
- Each illustration in the sequence represents an action the user must take to reach the scenario goal.
- May include arrows or instructions to indicate movement as well as annotations.
- Effective way to uncover potential user experience issues.
- Can be hand-drawn or electronic.

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What makes a storyboard "mobile"?

- Including context and/or change of context when it may impact the UX.
- Showing user interacting with the device and possibly related devices.
- Zooming in/out of device views.

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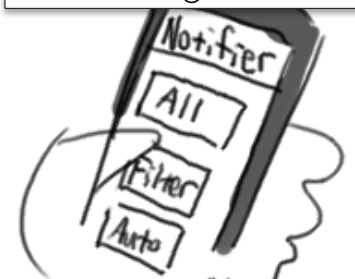
Sample Storyboard

Dan Chang

Pete is extremely busy and has less time to micromanage.

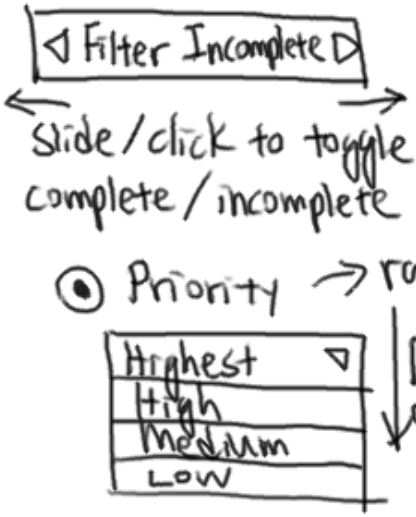
The engineers' tasks pile up before the alpha release ...

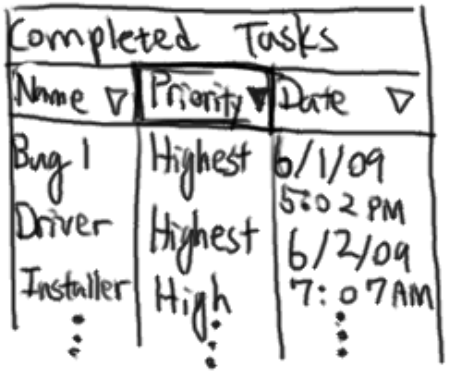
Pete wonders if any tasks are behind ...



He opens iManagr auto task notifier.

Pete can view all task progress by filtering Completed or Incomplete

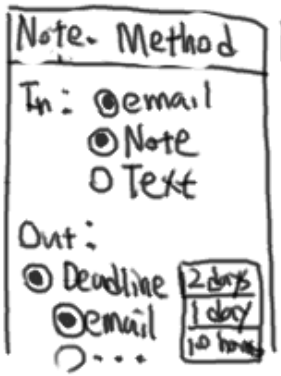




Can also view all and order by metrics.

Or, can receive real-time feed of completion.

Multiple radio buttons allow a range of results to be returned.

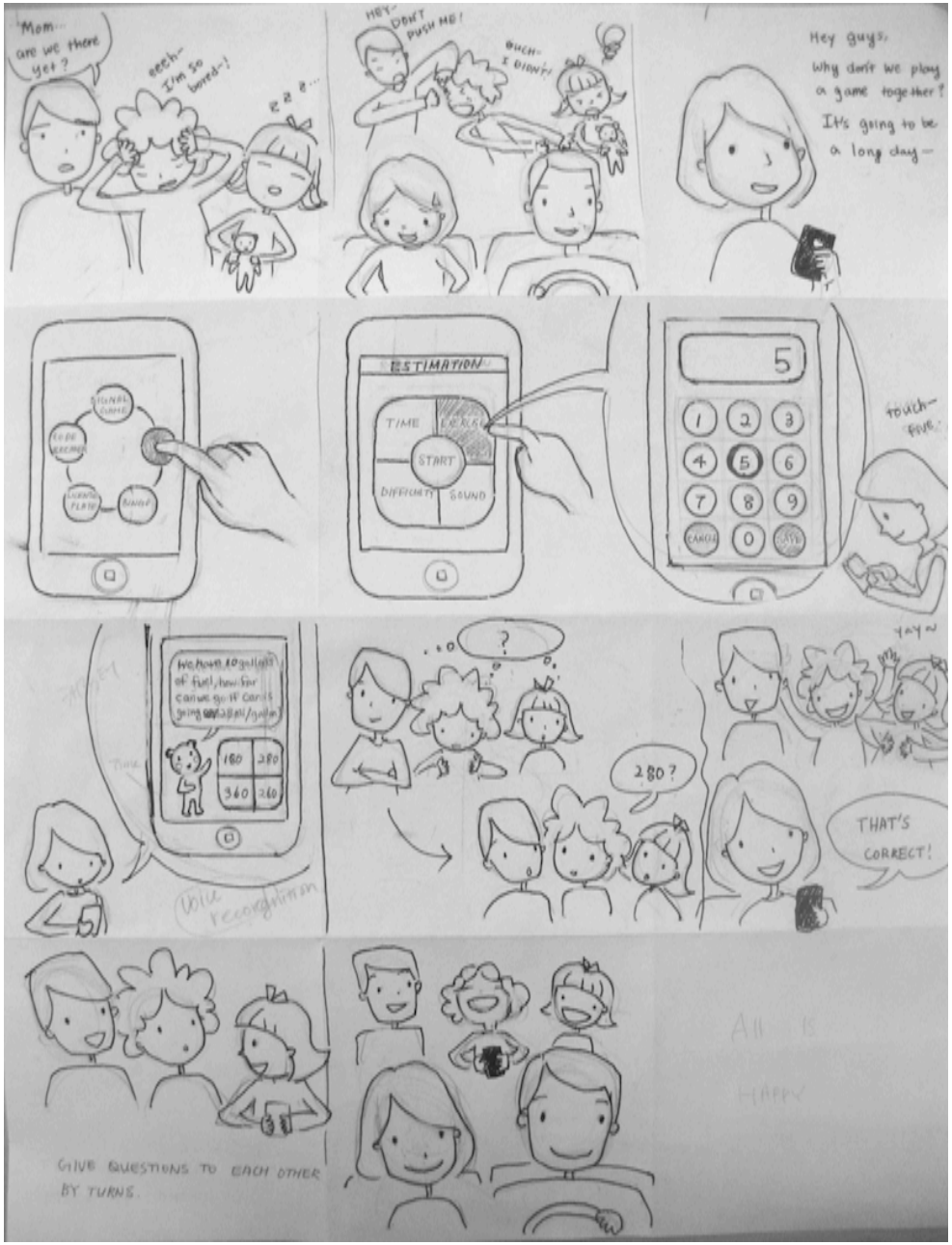


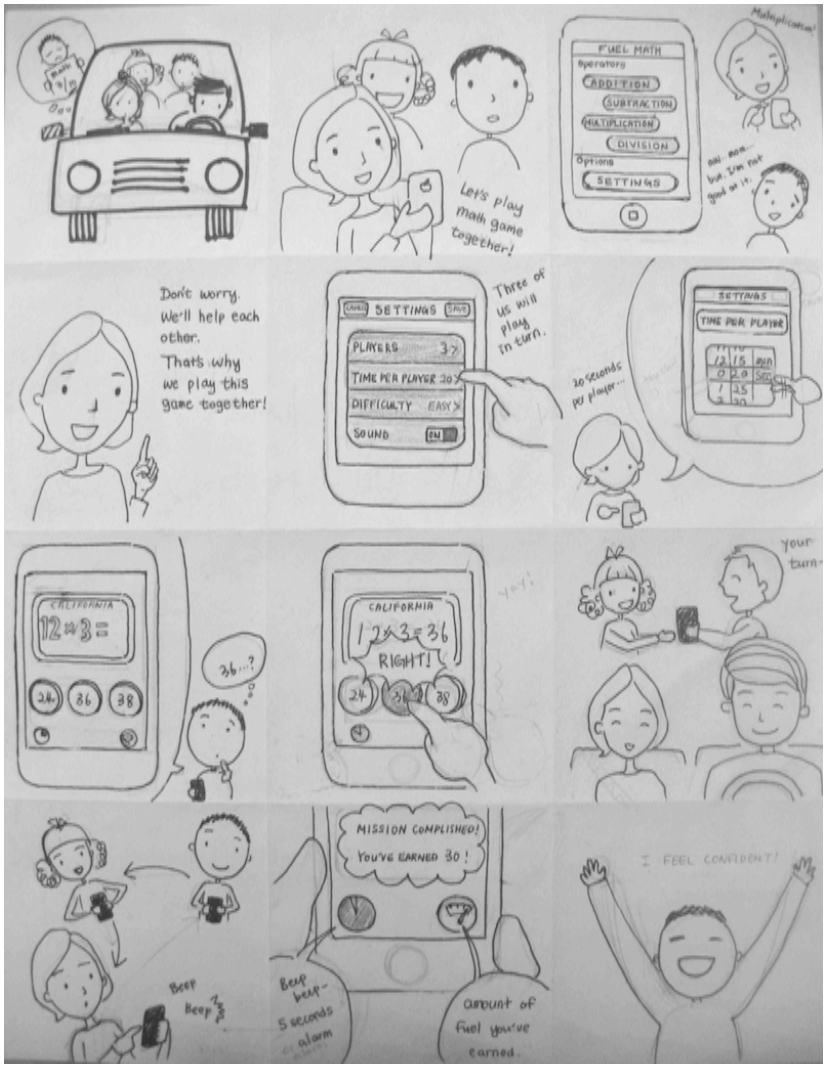
Notification method, both in and out, can be custom tailored.

Pete automatically sends and receives progress reports only on tasks/divisions he's interested in!!

Sample Storyboards

Jaehi Jung





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App Map

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What is an App Map?

- May also be referred to as a ‘‘flow chart’’
- Includes all major screens/views of your app and how they connect to one another.
- Often evolve as the design progresses, e.g., starts out as a box but eventually screen schematics are filled in.
- May also include hotspots on each screen and what gestures are required to interact with the hotspot, e.g., tap, tap & hold, etc.
- Screens may be numbered and referenced in a more detailed user-interface specification.

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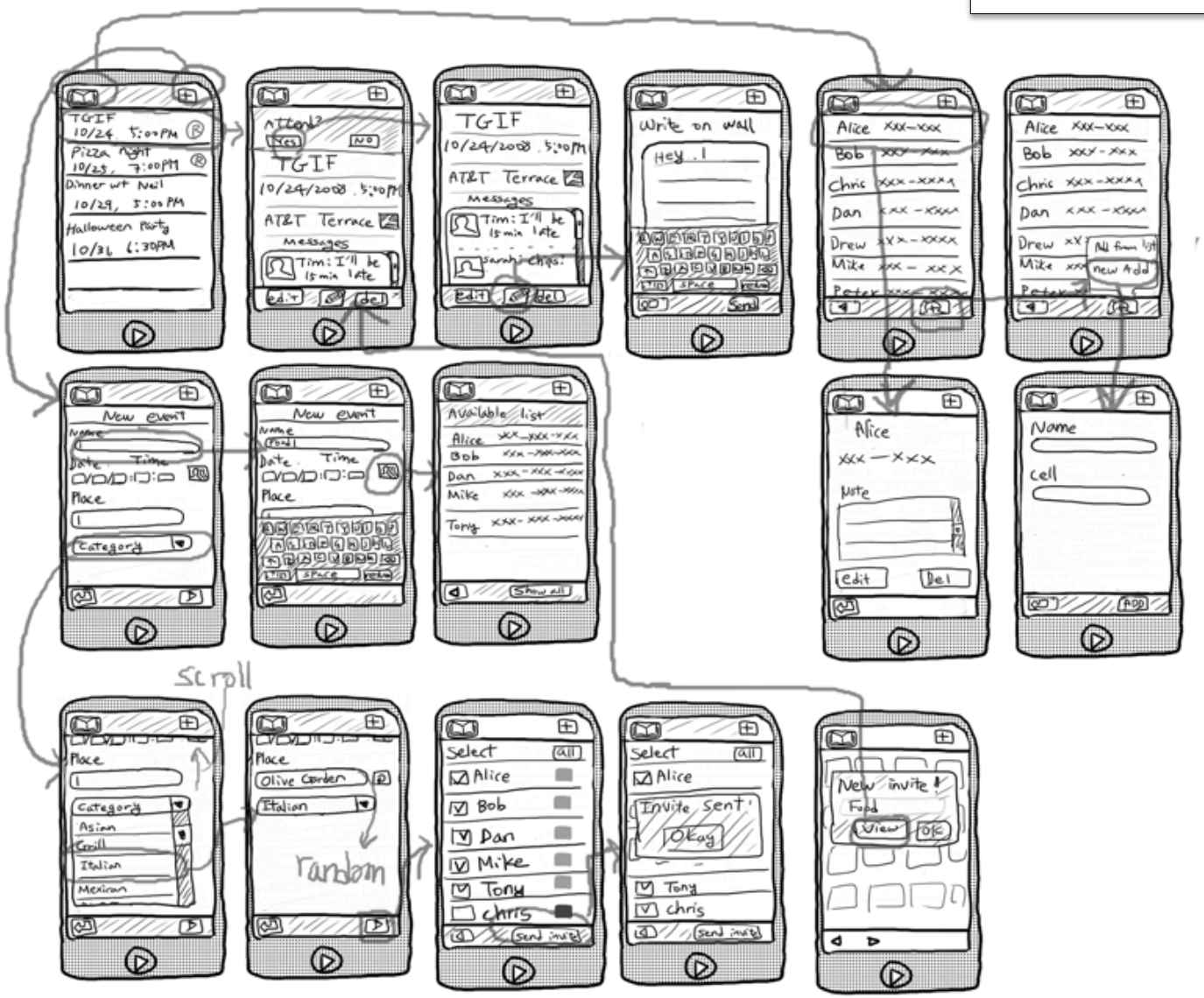
Sample App Map



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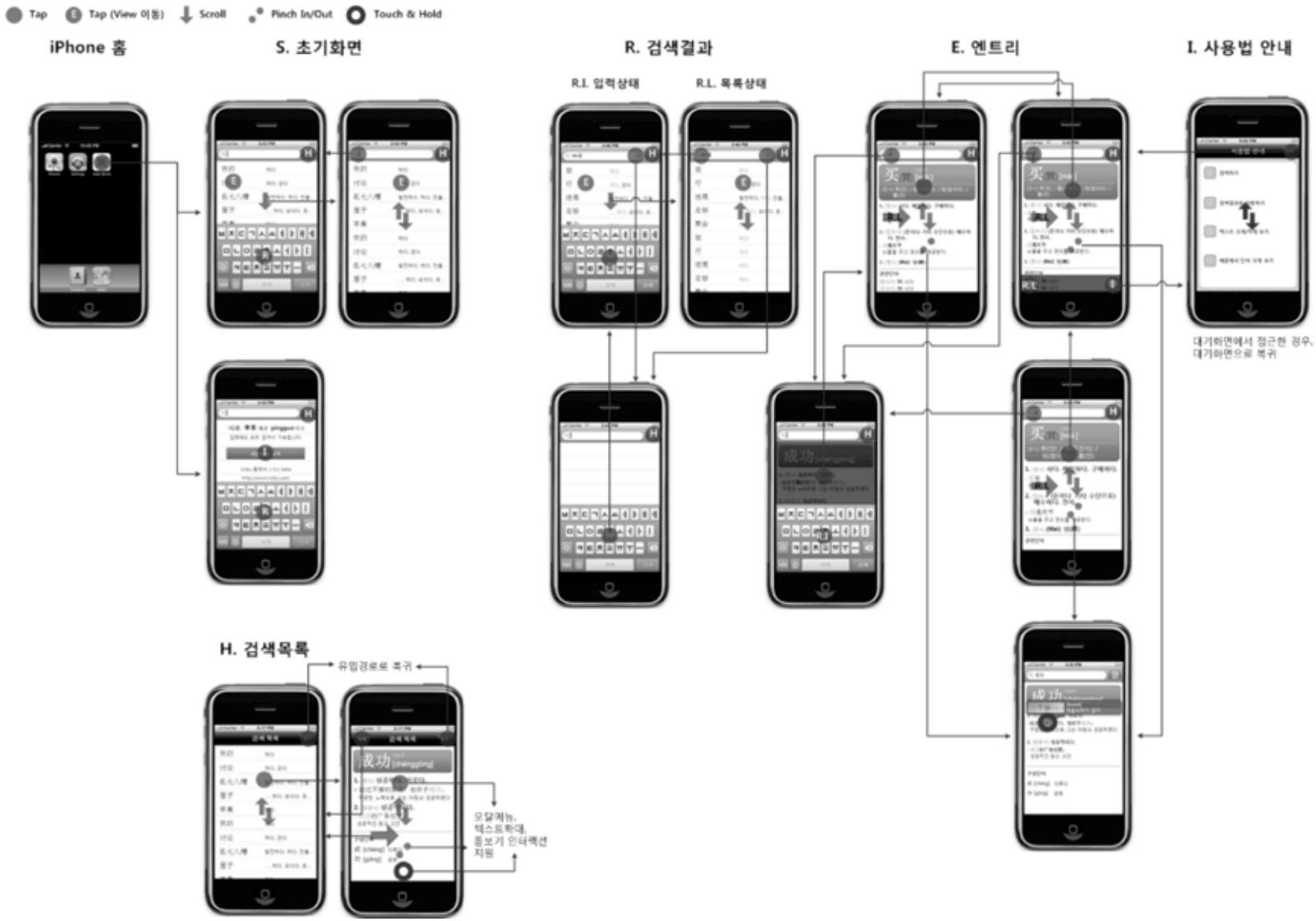

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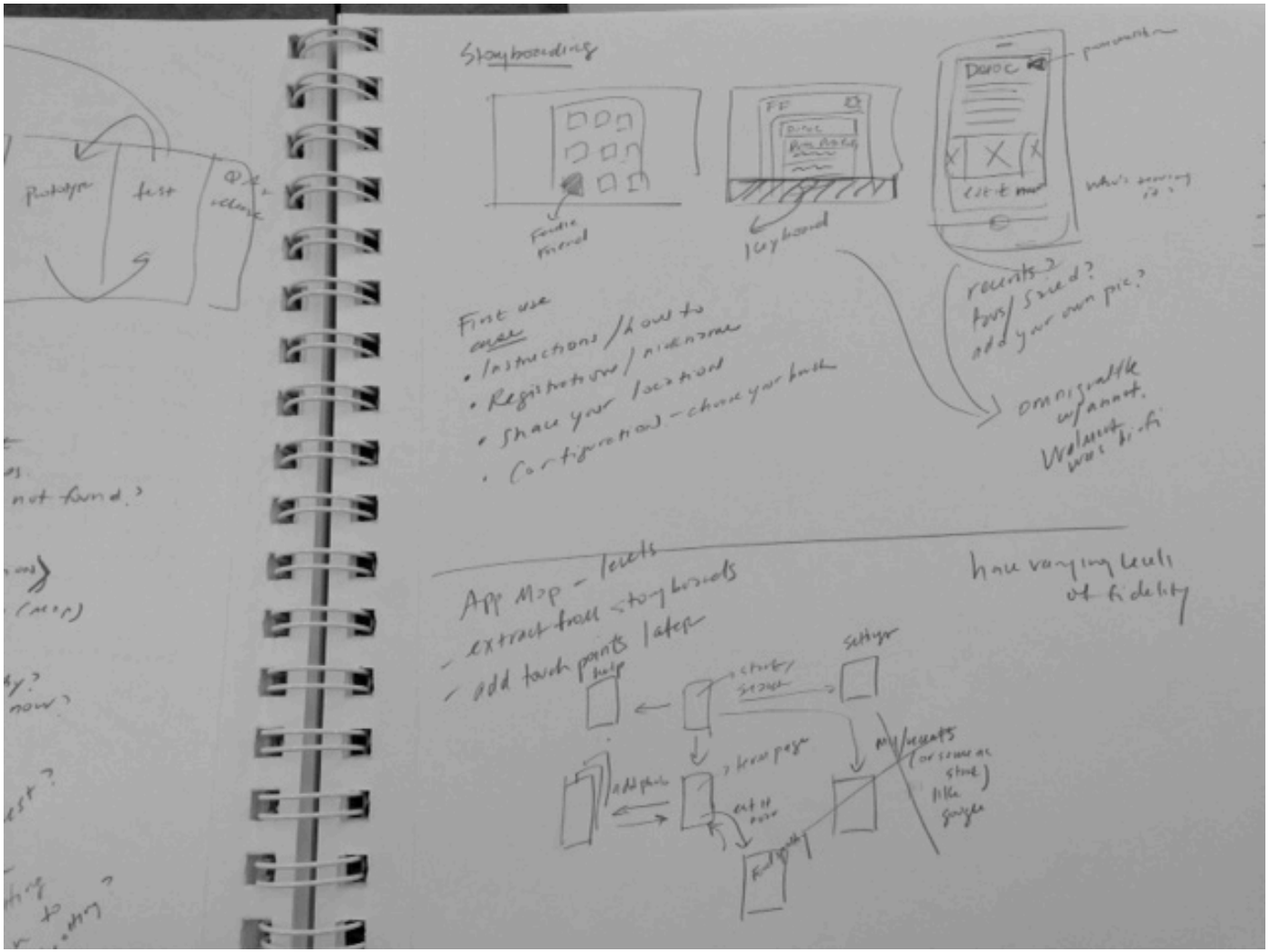

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