CREATING A PROTOTYPE – SOFTWARE

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Why Bother Prototyping?

- Serves 2 main purposes
  - To clarify user interface to user and/or developer
  - To clarify functionality supported
- Benefits:
  - Reduce cost & time relative to building full product and iterating.
  - Can involve other stakeholders such as non-engineering founders into product discussions
  - Increase product quality by ensuring UX & UI are clear before implementation

Types of Prototypes

Throwaway Prototyping

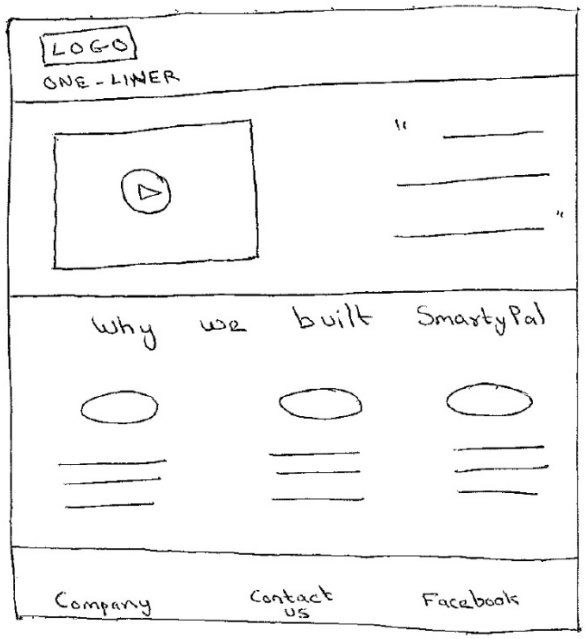
- Create a model of the final system that the user can evaluate.
- Once feedback is obtained, design & requirements are frozen, development begins and the prototype may be discarded.
- Relatively fast method of prototyping

Evolutionary Prototyping

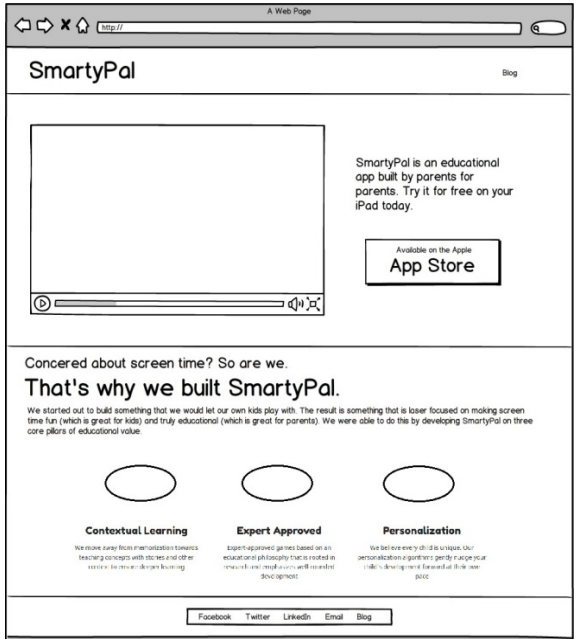
- Build only those portions of the system that we understand and slowly working our way to other portions.
- Development team creates a system with the features that are well understood
- Prototype evolves to become the final product

Types of Prototypes - Fidelity

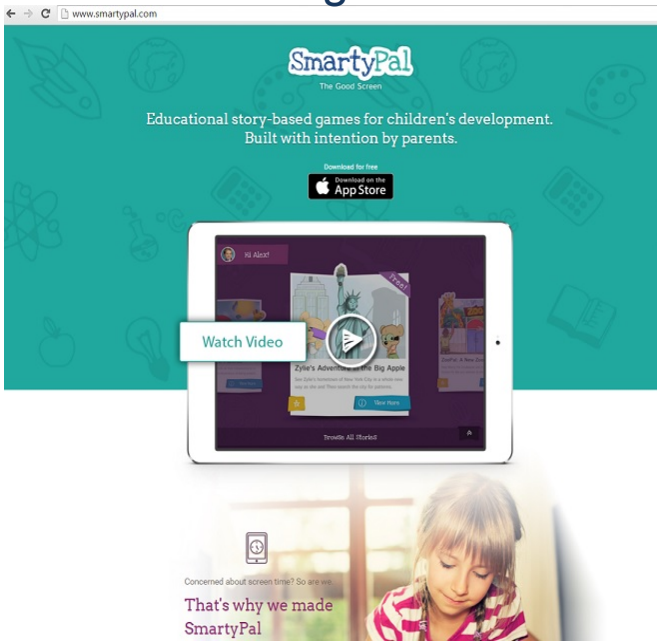
Low



Medium



High



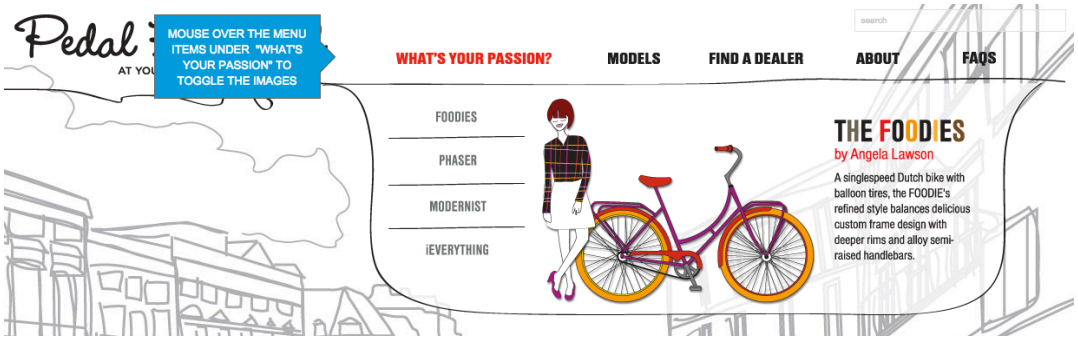
Types of Prototypes - Interactivity

Interactive

- Reacts to user's input. It is clickable and allows the user to enter input into forms.
- Simulates how the final product will work

Static

- Series of screens
- Can help focus on content instead of minor details



Tools for Prototyping

Fidelity/ Interactivity	Tools	
Low		Low fidelity, static prototype: hand-drawn sketches
Medium/High Static	Ps V P	Medium/High fidelity static prototype: drawing tools like Photoshop, Visio or Powerpoint
Medium/High Interactive	axure balsamiq	Medium/High fidelity interactive prototype: wireframing tools like Axure, Balsamiq, and OmniGraffle
Evolutionary	Visual Studio eclipse	Evolutionary prototype: development tools like Visual Studio & Eclipse

Practical tips on Prototyping

- Gather requirements
- Develop initial prototype that is static and of low/medium fidelity
- Get initial feedback
- Develop interactive prototype of medium to high fidelity. Get feedback and iterate
- Freeze design and proceed to development

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