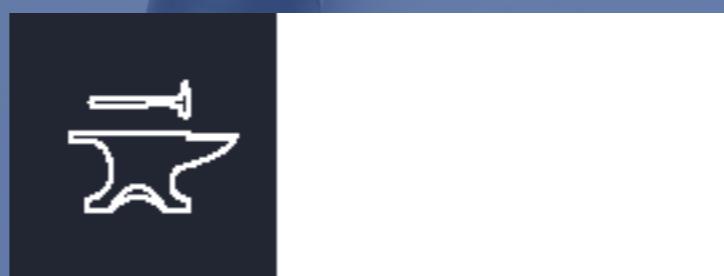


Digital Projects 101

FOR ARTS & CULTURE ORGANIZATIONS



Today's agenda

- How to define a project
- Understanding the process and terms
- Understanding the technologies involved
- Keeping these projects current



Have questions?

- Post your questions in the chat
- We'll try to bring up questions throughout and answer the rest of the questions at the end!



About Interactive Mechanics

Interactive Mechanics is an award-winning digital design firm. We work with museums and archives on beautiful, user-centered digital projects for web, mobile, and in-gallery exhibit interactives.

Five key takeaways

Five key takeaways

- Do your research upfront
- Help everyone understand your audiences
- Communicate with partners early in the process
- Think about content early and often
- Just because your project is launched doesn't mean that it's complete.



A photograph of a large, classical-style building with a prominent tiled roof and decorative moldings. The building is partially hidden behind several large, leafy trees in the foreground. The overall atmosphere is one of historical significance and academic tradition.

Do your research upfront

What research is needed?

- More than likely, you already have this info!
- Simple research & evaluation doesn't need to be difficult or expensive
 - Conduct interviews with patrons
 - Send out surveys to existing mailing lists
 - Incorporate opportunities for feedback through existing channels (website, social media)



Why are you doing this project?

- What's the overall objective?
- Is it tied to organizational strategy?
- Is it in response to some new initiative/funding?



Who are you building this for?

- Be specific!
 - You already know these audiences
 - ex. donors, school groups, families with children
 - General public is too vague—get specific!



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 - General public is too vague—get specific!
- Prioritize
 - Know which groups are most critical
 - This will help you make design decisions later



What resources do you have?

- Staff
 - What kind of dedicated staff is available?
 - Are there plans to hire someone new?
 - What skills are required now? In the future?
- Content
 - What content already exists?
 - What might you need to create or acquire?





Know your audiences

Luca



"I'm interested in fun and engaging experiences while traveling on a budget"

Age: 33

Work: Soccer Coach

Family: Married

Location: Rome, Italy

Character: Adventurous

Personality

Introvert	Extrovert
Analytical	Creative
Conservative	Liberal
Passive	Active

Athletic Curious Spontaneous
Charming

Goals

- Find exhibits easily.
- Stay within a budget.
- Visit all the museums in Washington, D.C.
- Learn about American aviation and space history.

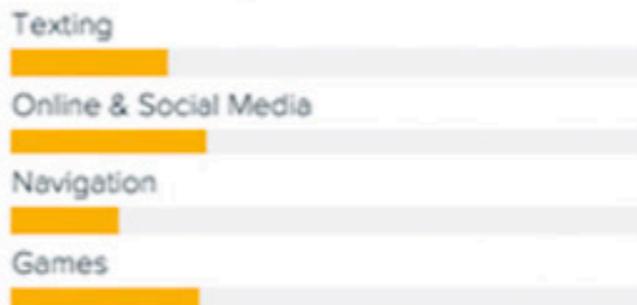
Frustrations

- Avoiding crowds at the museums.
- Being able to understand the exhibits in Italian.
- Keeping my wife entertained.
- Having healthy options for food.

Bio

Luca is a young, professional soccer coach from Rome, Italy. He is visiting Washington, D.C. with his wife, Chiara. Luca tends to be more adventurous and interested in history, whereas Chiara is more into the shopping scene in Georgetown; however, a museum that tends to be more engaging and fun could sway her. They are a spontaneous couple that don't want to plan their trip to a tee but still want to maintain their budget. While visiting the National Air and Space Museum, Luca is excited to see life sized aircrafts.

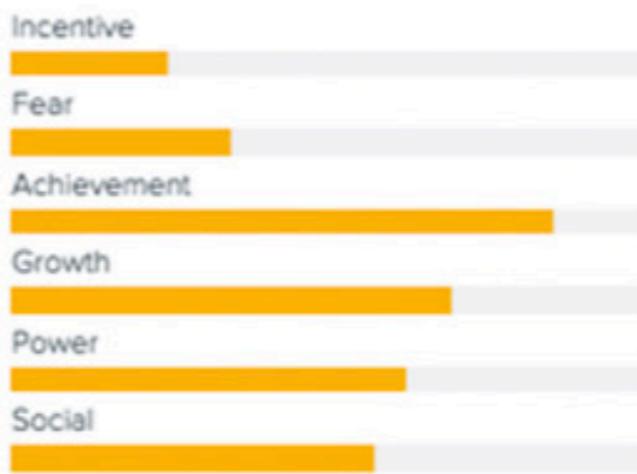
Mobile Usage



Brands

Ducati
Adidas
Zara
Lotto

Motivations



Who are your stakeholders?

- Whose approval or buy-in is required?
- How much involvement will they need or want throughout the process?



Making the most of your research



Summarize your findings

- Compile a product definition document
 - You can do this by yourself, and is a great tool
 - Outline all of this research to submit with your funding request or request for proposals
 - Share it with your leadership, stakeholders, partners



Summarize your findings

- Compile a product definition document
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 - Outline all of this research to submit with your funding request or request for proposals
 - Share it with your leadership, stakeholders, partners
- Use this as a talking point for conversations or to validate your assumptions



How much will this cost?

- Do you need to bring in a digital partner?
 - Start the conversation with partners
 - You don't need to have all the answers now
 - Ask for estimates or comparable project quotes
- Request for Quotes (RFQ)



Finding & selecting a vendor

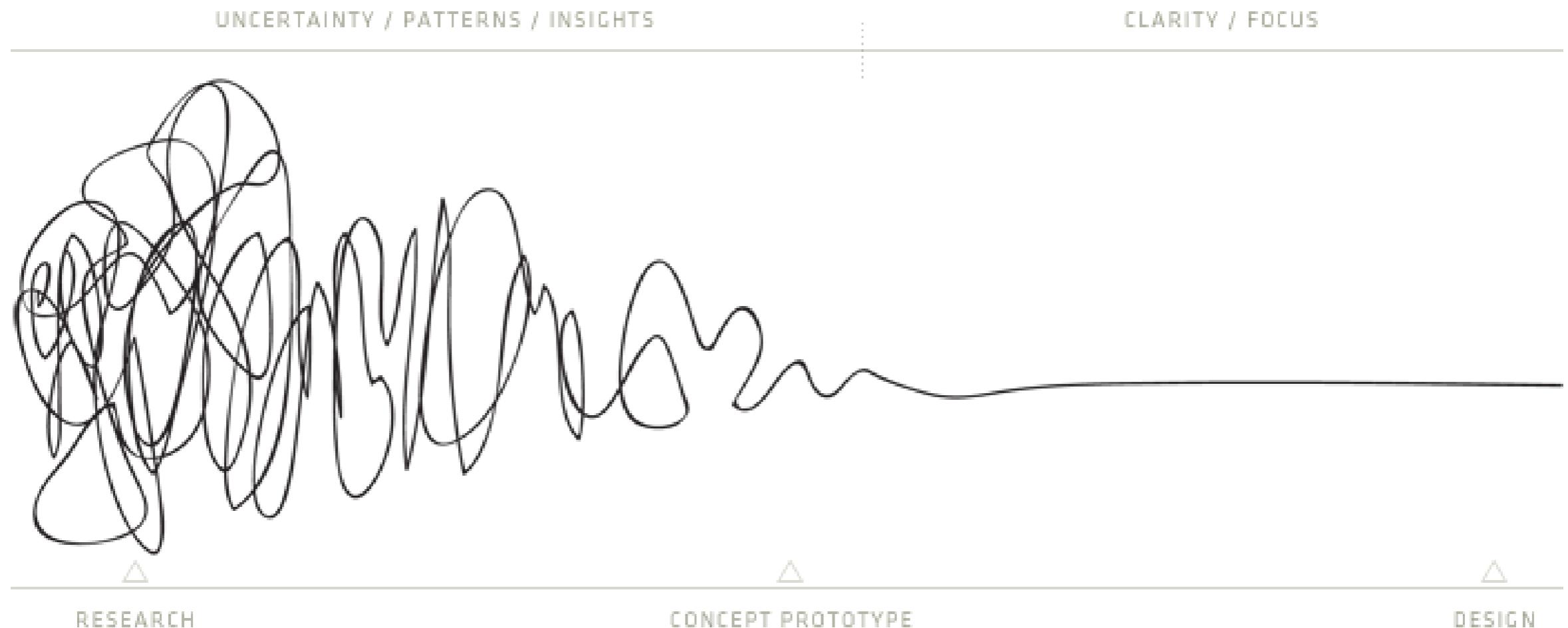
- Request for Proposals (RFP)
 - Learn the terminology you plan to use
 - Provide the information you gathered upfront
 - Contact partners that you'd like to work with
- It's not just about price; find the best fit
 - Are they collaborative?
 - Will their values/process align with yours?



A photograph of a workshop or meeting in progress. A group of approximately 15 people are seated around a long, rectangular conference table. The table is covered with various items: several laptops, numerous white sticky notes, notebooks, pens, and small cups. The participants are diverse in age and attire, suggesting a professional or educational environment. In the upper right corner of the frame, a man stands behind the table, facing the group. He is wearing a dark polo shirt and appears to be speaking or leading the discussion. The room has a modern feel with large windows in the background and a red exit sign visible above a door. The overall atmosphere is one of focused collaboration and learning.

The typical project process

... can feel crazy at first



Discovery & further research

- Clarify project mission & goals
- Take a look at comparators (likes & dislike)
- Confirm your approach from your research
- Brainstorm and explore alternative ideas



Content

- Content audit
 - What do you have already?
- Content strategy
 - What do you need?
 - Who's going to do it?
 - When does it need to be done?



Design

- Sketching and concept development
- Wireframes, interactive prototypes
- Visual designs, style guides, mood boards



User testing & iterating

- Test your assumptions as you build and iterate
- Start small and scale up, as needed
- Take advantage of your patrons
 - Early adopters/enthusiasts love to give feedback
 - Five to seven users is a good number!



A wide-angle photograph of a massive floral display inside a large glass and steel conservatory. The floor is covered with a dense carpet of small, yellow and red flowers, forming a winding path that leads the eye through the space. Large, green, tropical-style plants and trees frame the display, and a large, ornate chandelier hangs from the ceiling in the background.

The technology landscape

Building for the web

- Most websites should be viewable on any device (responsive web design)
- Do you need a content management system?
 - Drupal, WordPress, ExpressionEngine, Omeka...
- What “third-party” integrations do you need?
 - e-commerce, social media, CRM, ticketing?



Building for mobile

- How and where will people access the app?
 - Do you want beacons in your lobby or gallery?
 - BYO vs. provided devices
- Do you need a native mobile app in the app stores?
- Could it actually be a responsive web app?

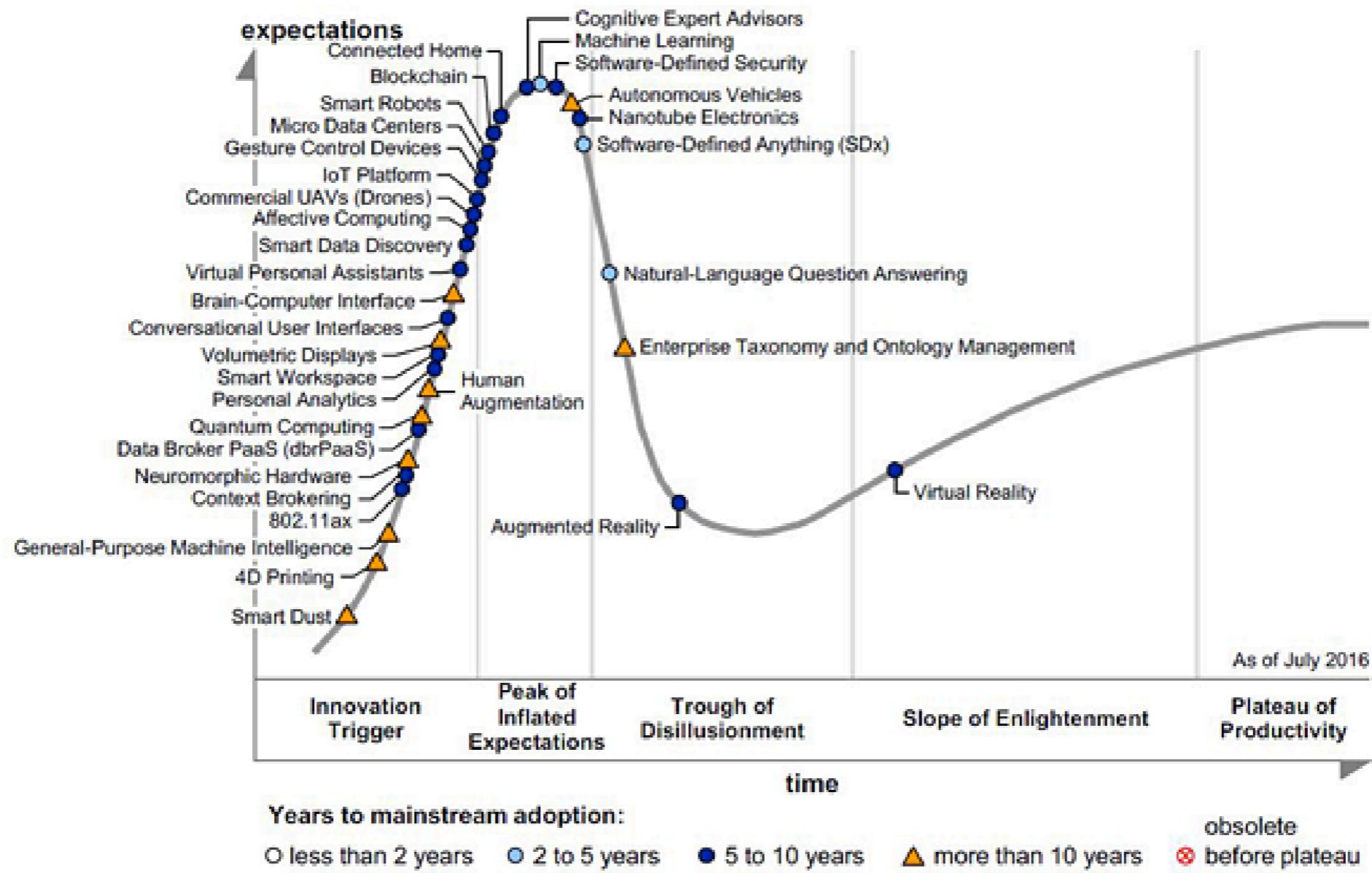


Something else?

- Touchscreens, projections
- Motion with Kinect, LeapMotion
- Immersive Experiences (AR, VR, MR)
- Bleeding edge can sometimes mean painful
 - What is the development cost?
 - Will it work like you expect?
 - Will it be around in the long-term?



Something else?



Source: Gartner (July 2016)



How software is built

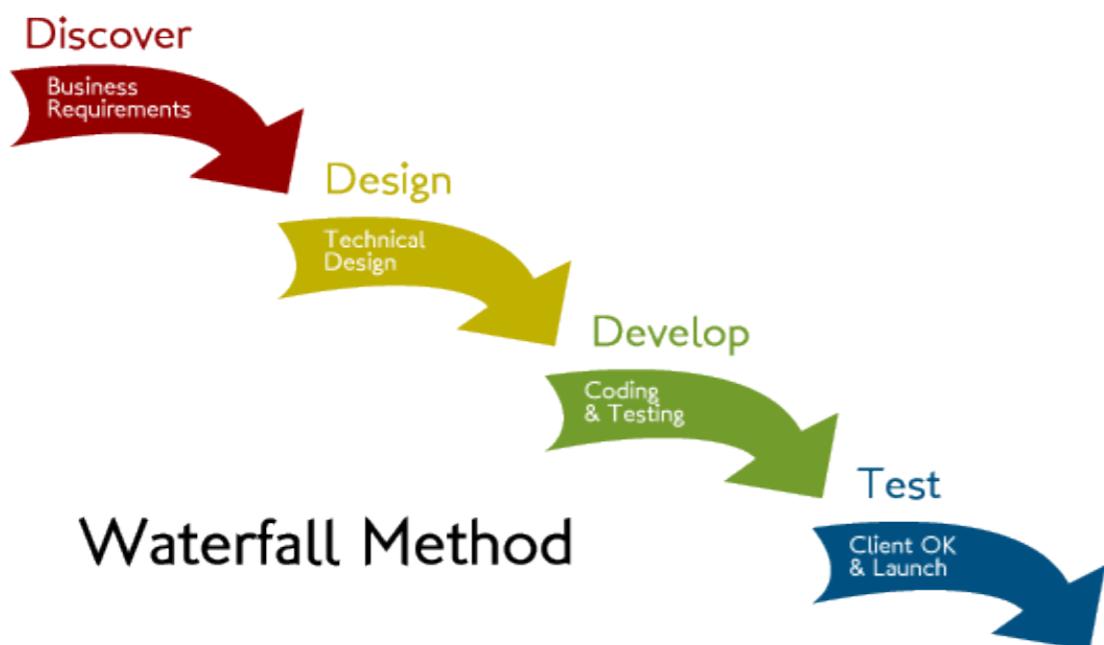


How software is built

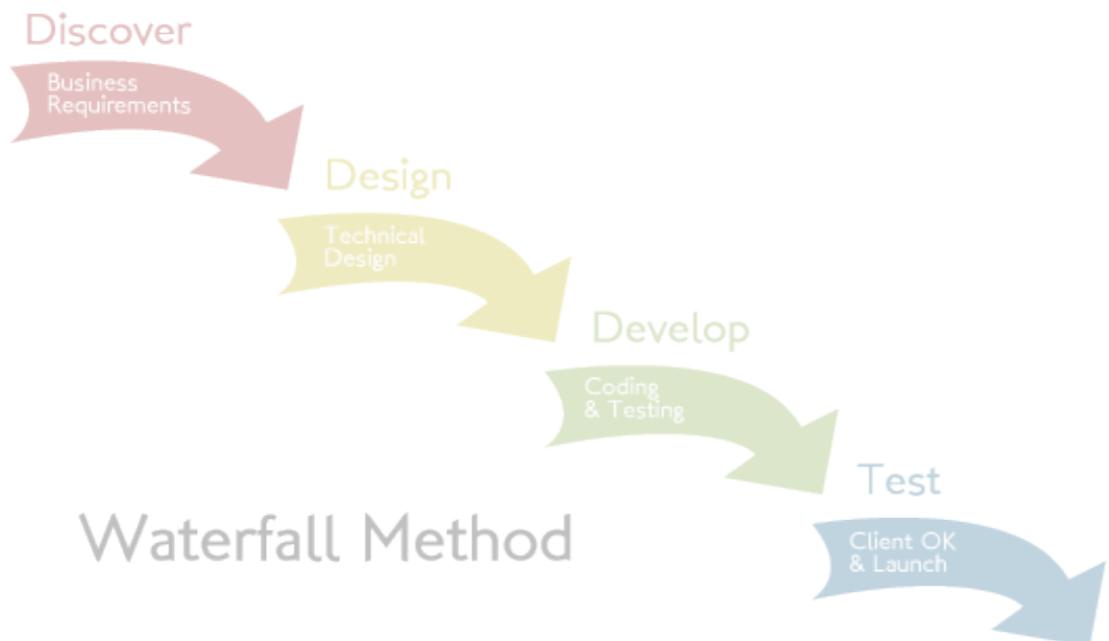
- Developers adopt processes for writing code, and this decision can impact collaboration
 - Waterfall (linear process)
 - Agile (iterative process)



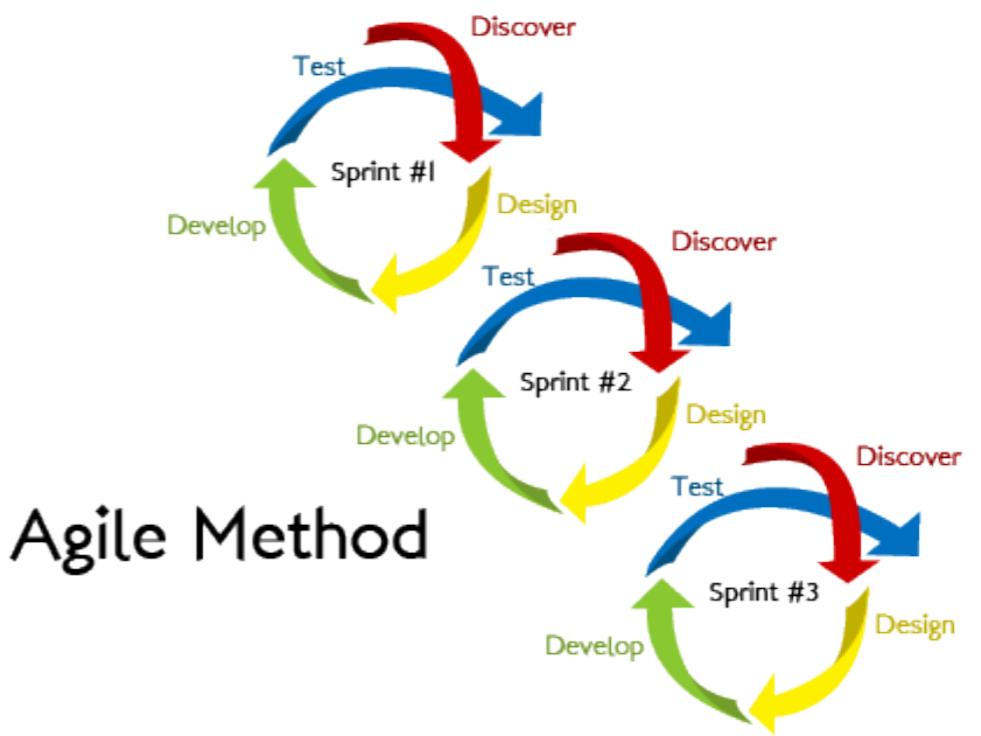
How software is built



How software is built



Waterfall Method



Agile Method



Keeping your project fresh



After your project goes live

- Create a maintenance plan to keep it running
- Review how the the project is doing with analytics
- Test regularly with your audiences
- Find small improvements and iterate



Make regular improvements

- Most vendors give you ~3 months of warranty, but what happens when that runs out?
- Do you have in-house support?
- Budget for maintenance & annual upkeep
 - Tie into your seasons schedule
 - Create a simple checklist so you know what changes need to be made and what money it'll require



CHECKLIST

Five key takeaways



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Thank you!

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