# Assignment 11: Aesthetic Plan
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## User Personas and Stories Overview
*User persona and stories (no points, but your assignment will not be accepted without them)*

- My primary persona is a 30-year-old software developer named Michael Davis. Michael studied computer science at Stanford and works at Stratos Cloud where he's on a team with 3 other front-end developers who all work together to translate mockups into working code. Most of the mockups come from their design team lead by James Schlotzsky. Michael and his team are constantly having to go back and forth with James and his team regarding missing requirements or just (in their opinion) plain downright poor design. Michael wants to improve communication between his team and the design team and minimize this back and forth to ultimately get more done faster. Being able to communicate better through design assets seems like a good start and Michael is willing to give that a shot with hopes that it may eliminate the long design related threads that make their way into the teams Kanban board software while also minimizing impromptu meetings between his team and the design team. Michael realizes to power of telemetry and metrics but he's cautious to implement it in haste and risk compromising sensitive user data in the process.

- **Michaels user stories…**
  - When I'm conducting the scrubbing meeting, I can easily assign a designer and developer to a mockup, that way each person knows who to contact with questions.
  - When I run into a blocking issue on a feature I'm working on, I can easily leave a message at a position on the mockup that will notify the designer of my issue, that way I don't have to setup a time to video chat with the designer with the mockup.
  - When I'm leaving a message on a mockup, I can easily search for and tag one of my teammates to notify them that they need to be brought into the conversation.
  - When I want to get notified of updates to a mockup, messages I'm tagged in, and messages of mine that have been responded to, I can configure an integration for slack or email so I can be attentive and not a blocker for me teammates.

- My secondary persona is a 46-year-old user experience designer names James Schlotzsky. James is on the receiving end of Michaels constant complaining about designs and design requirements. This happens on every project James has worked on though so he's gotten used to it. Regardless, James heard about the application from Michael and his team and is willing to have his group use it as long as it improves communication between everyone and gets the developers to stop bugging him and his design team. James is skeptical about whether the app will really help but he appreciates the effort Michael and his team are putting forward to improve the relationship between the two groups, so he'll give a shot. The most important thing to James is that he and his team are able to communicate the requirements better or at

least answer questions quicker and more conveniently, that way their department can meet the tight deadlines set by leadership.

- **James' user stories…**
  - When I complete a mockup, I can easily upload it to the app and receive a shortlink to the mockup online, that way the mockup is easily accessible from our agile software.
  - When I need to iterate on a design that had an error, I can re-upload the mockup, updating the last mockup and notifying the parties involved of the change
  - When someone has a question about my design, I can get notified via slack with a message including the mockups short link, that way I can respond quickly to problems and get the developers back on track.

## Aesthetic Needs

*Explain exactly what the aesthetic needs of the persona using your app are and whether or not the person is aware of them or not.*

This application is relatively utilitarian considering both Michael and James would use it at work and only to get work done quicker and more effortlessly. For Michael and James, aesthetics isn't as important as the app accomplishing its goal of fostering communication between the development and design team. But where aesthetics can improve how effective the app can accomplish this goal is where those aesthetic elements can really prove beneficial. For James and Michael, aesthetic properties of the app that help make the app more easily useable and more intuitive will provide the most added value. James and Michael would prefer to use the app for about as long as they would any other workflow/communication tool, not at all. So, the quicker Michael and James can enter the app, accomplish their task and get back to work, the better experience they have and aesthetics should help to foster this goal as well by not getting in the way.

With this in mind, it's important that the application's aesthetic pulls the user's focus into whatever is important in regard to the feature the user is working with at that time. For example, a great amount of screen real estate is given to the user when their viewing a mockup but once an annotation is clicked, a popover appears and easily grabs the user's attention, making it easy for the user to discern what's important resulting from that specific interaction. This helps lead to user throughout the app and helps them get things done quicker.

Typefaces are always important but with this application, they're especially important. With this application serving as a daily workflow/communication tool, an easy to read typeface is an essential component in ensuring the user doesn't feel fatigued from having to use this app. We want both personas to feel comfortable in the application that way they have zero anxiety or pain related to opening and viewing the application numerous times throughout their workday. An easy to read typeface and a soft color pallet could help accomplish both of these goals.

The user personas would most likely be unaware of these aesthetics, however. These aesthetics are not designed to make the application fanciful as much as they're designed to make the

application more frictionless and painless for the user. Intuitiveness is the goal, so things should feel natural and like "it just works." Unfortunately, if the aesthetics accomplish their goal then they're likely to go unnoticed, it's when the aesthetics are poor and detrimental to the user experience that the user personas will become aware of what aesthetics they need that the app failed to provide. Hopefully, this won't become the case.

## Publishers Aesthetic Goals

*Explain the goals of the aesthetic portion of your app from the publisher's point of view. What are the goals of your project?*

The publisher's goal is to fit as much information onto the page as possible. If a user is opening this application during their workday it's to find a piece of information or add a piece of information and that information should be easy to work with without having to look all over the screen. The application full screen mockup view and use of popovers helps accomplish this mission by having nearly all of a mockup's information on one screen. However, a mockup could easily get crowded with annotations and their resulting popover messages and become difficult to work with. In order to keep the user engaged with the application and not avoiding having to use it, we want to not just have the info there for the user to click on but we also want to help the user find what's relevant. For this, we'll use app elements (in this apps case, representing annotations) accented with colors that help to portray the severity of the information they contain. The idea is that this will help guide the user to what is important and will help to get the user to a small a-ha moment each time they enter the app looking for a piece of information regarding a mockup. The user should also feel comfortable visiting the application as one of their daily workflow tools. We want them coming back often throughout the day, so a comfortable to use and easy on the eye's aesthetic is also an essential component of this application.

## Aesthetic Plan

*Now that you know what each party needs, construct a plan to satisfy both.*

### Typeface

A legible and easy to look at typeface is vital for the success of this application. Ultimately, all of the information in this app is delivered in some text form via comments back and forth between users. So having a difficult to read typeface could easily destroy any experience the user may have with the application. Ideally, I would have chosen a set of Helvetica fonts as the font for this application. However, Helvetica is known to come with some pretty expensive licensing requirements. Considering that, I chose the popular and free Google Fonts alternative called Open Sans. Open Sans is a modern, legible, and easy to look at typeface and currently ranks as one of the top typefaces on the Google Fonts platform.

**Characters**

ABCČĆDĐEFGHIJKLMNOP
QRSŠTUVWXYZŽabcčćđef
ghijklmnopqrsštuvwxyzžА
БВГЃДЂЕЁЄЖЗSИІЇЙЈКЛЉ
МНЊОПРСТЋУЎФХЦЧЏШ
ЩЪЫЬЭЮЯабвгѓдђеёєжз
ѕиіїйјклљмнњопрстћуўф
хцчџшщъыьэюяАВГΔΕΖΗ
ΘΙΚΛΜΝΞΟΠΡΣΤΥΦΧΨΩαβ
γδεζηθικλμνξοπρστυφχψ
ωάΆέΈήΉίϊΐΊόΌύῪϋΰ'ΥΫΏΑΆ
ÊÔ0Ưăâêôơư1234567890'
?'"!"(%)[#]{@}/&\<-+÷×=>
®©$€£¥¢:;,.*

**Styles**

Type here to preview text          40px ●

Light
*Light Italic*
Regular
*Regular Italic*
**Semi-Bold**
***Semi-Bold Italic***
**Bold**
***Bold Italic***
**Extra-Bold**
***Extra-Bold Italic***

Open sans will be used throughout the application in body text and comment areas with the "Regular" font weight used most often but heavier font weights will be implemented for elements such as comment thread titles, menu titles, and headers throughout the application.
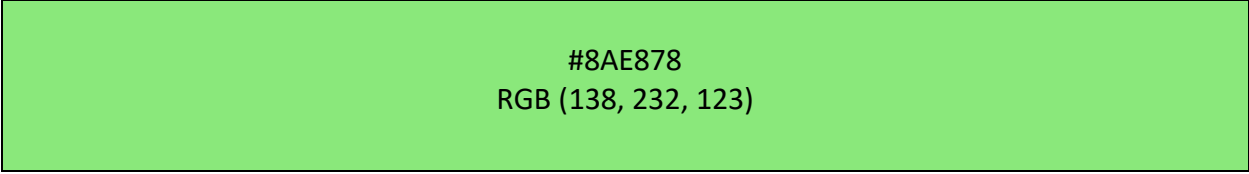
## Color Pallet

The requirements for the use of colors in this application are relatively simple due to the nature of the application. The application is essentially a communication tool where messages are attached to a mockup and messages have different levels of importance (note, blocker, etc...). Taking this into consideration, it makes sense to follow a pattern similar to Twitter Bootstraps alert color pattern, albeit this color pallet is softer and meant to be easier on the eyes.

The messaging color palette consists of 4 colors; green, blue, yellow and red. It's designed to highlight potentially important and impactful happenings in the application while also avoiding getting in the way of the user and how they may use the application.

The colors in the below section were discovered with help from the Adobe Color CC app at color.adobe.com.
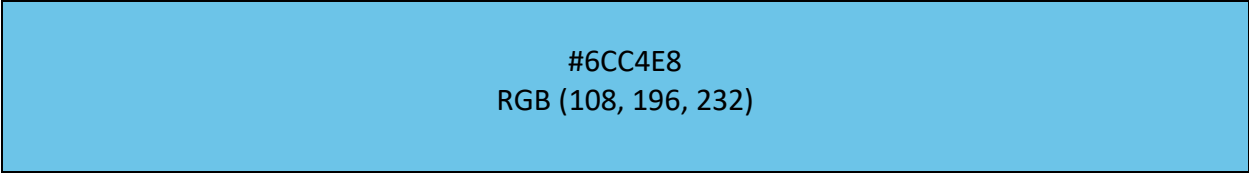
### *Success Messaging*

The success messaging color will be used to help display items that require little attention like resolved blockers or resolve buttons. This color will help to casually tell the user that this is where some user annotation is and that the content at one time may have been important, but has since been resolved and is still accessible.

```
#8AE878
RGB (138, 232, 123)
```
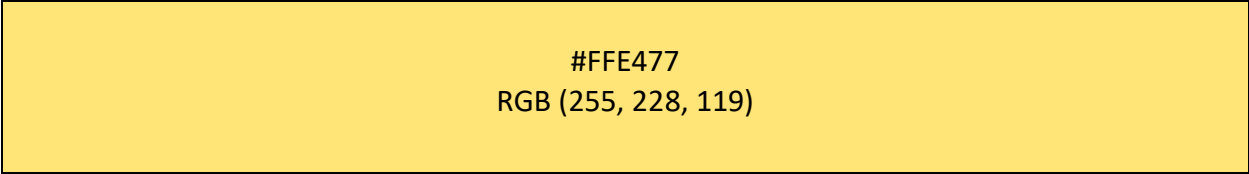
### *Neutral Messaging*

The neutral messaging color will be used to draw attention to user generated information about the mockups even though the information is of questionable importance compared to other elements in the mockup such as annotations. One example could be the mockup info popup dialog where user generated information (like mockup name) is present but may provide little value and insight and be of little urgency.

```
#6CC4E8
RGB (108, 196, 232)
```
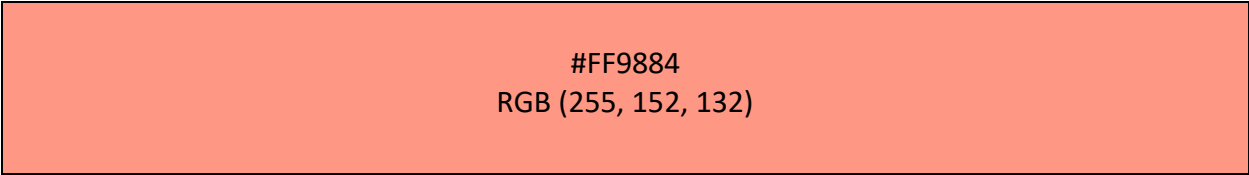
### *Warning Messaging*

The warning messaging color will be used to draw attention to items that need to be noticed but have a level of urgency lower than that of an element using the danger messaging color. Elements decorated with this color, such as info annotations, are meant to stand out but not to call attention to themselves as of critical importance.

```
#FFE477
RGB (255, 228, 119)
```

### *Danger Messaging*

The danger messaging color will be used to draw attention to items that are critical to getting the mockup from design to production. This color is reserved for blocking annotations that often times stop development tasks in their tracks. Elements decorated with this color are meant to call attention to themselves as the most important item on the screen, calling to be noticed, worked on, and resolved.

```
#FF9884
RGB (255, 152, 132)
```

## Incorporating the color palette

The application is primarily popover dialog based and this adds a level of convenience when it comes to incorporating the color palette. Popover trigger locations are provided by the icons representing the types of annotations (note, info, blocker) they're related to. The annotation type will be obvious before ever clicking and revealing the popover due to both the icon and the icons color in regard to the color pallet. Popovers will incorporate colored borders and a background hue representing the severity of the annotation being viewed.

## Additional Colors

A low-key blue based complementary color theme is also included to make the navbar and administrative portions of the application more enjoyable and user friendly. This pallet serves no real purpose in regard to relaying any data to the user, it's more for decoration and to make the app a little less monochromatic so it's easier on the eyes.

| #4192B2 (65, 146, 178) | #90DFFF (144, 223, 255) | #77D7FF (119, 215, 255) | #B2752F (178, 117, 47) | #FFBF77 (255, 191, 119) |
|---|---|---|---|---|

## Users Experience

*Explain how your aesthetic plan will avoid degrading the user's overall experience by even a tiny little bit.*

Preserving the user experience is vital. Fortunately for this project, much of the application revolves around the massive mockup image being viewed in the main view. This element is the bases for much of the rest of the UX, including elements such as popovers and placing annotations on the mockup. This mockup image, encompassing a large majority portion of the main view and acting as an entry point for much of the UX, forces our hand at implementing aesthetics on elements like the popovers and navigation and administrative pages, rather than on the mockup area itself (since it's just a user uploaded image). Of course, this makes adding fancy aesthetics more difficult since we have less opportunities to add them throughout the application. However, I think it also makes aesthetics, and poor aesthetics especially, a little less intrusive. Nonetheless, where aesthetics is applied, they'll be applied with purpose. Much of this aesthetic plan outlines aesthetic ideas that are geared toward helping the user make more sense of the application by focusing their attention on certain parts of the app using colors, borders, etc... Since the app is somewhat utilitarian, making it fanciful isn't the top priority, making it intuitive and useful is. I think this mindset has helped to create an aesthetic plan that compliments the user experience rather than one that decorates the app at the detriment of the user experience.

## UX Enhancement
*Explain how and why your aesthetic plan will enhance your UX.*

A lot of web apps are can be complicated and the last thing an employee wants to do at work is remember or figure out how to use yet another tool they've been directed to use. I think a great added benefit of the aesthetic plan here is that it helps to make the application a bit more intuitive by using aesthetic elements to help suggest which direction they user might want to go in (i.e. investigating at a red colored blocking annotation that's begging for attention). I think this aesthetic will complement the user experience by creating a little bit more of an intuitive overall interface and a better overall experience where the user can more quickly get to a small a-ha moment, realize the value of the application, and get back to work developing or designing.

## References / Tools Used
Google Fonts Open Sans Images
*Google Fonts*, Google, fonts.google.com/specimen/Open+Sans?selection.family=Open%2BSans.

Adobe Color CC Color Pallet Web App
https://color.adobe.com