# Design for Developers/CM Tool/Competing visual design

With having a background in graphic design, you develop a sense about a designer’s intent. We all are designers in one way or another, and the project I’d like to talk about is an internal tool that was designed by a developer. The tool at its core showed all the available information in one html table.

[screenshot of existing tool]

Yet this table did surface all the necessary information the users typically needed to get the job done. For the redesign the quick approach of adding web responsiveness, applying our established style and convention guides, and cleaning up the typical userflow was the easy part.

The tricky part was how to display a request and display its flow status (pending/approved/failed), the impact level (low/med/high), and lastly if it was a critical request. This of course wasn’t identified until I presented my first design, in my attempts to take a large table of information and clean it up into clumps of digestible information.

[screenshot of v1]

From the first design I tried to maintain the use of icons with the status of the request. This was something used in the original tool, except that this time the icons were updated to use the Font Awesome library. At a glance it was much easier to identify the status of a request, but unable to tell if it was a critical request.

[screenshot of v2]

The second version introduced a thin red vertical bar left aligned to the request panel and in addition adding “ - EMERGENCY” to the impact field. This would identify if that request were submitted as a critical request. The challenges were to create a visual treatment that wouldn’t conflict with the status visual treatment. Designing with the Bootstrap framework in mind, this new vertical critical visual treatment uses a custom style effect, which also differs from the danger class used for the failed statuses.

[screenshot of variations]

In the end, the design could identify which requests were submitted as critical, the current status of each request, and a page filter to display precise impact levels.