

simpleBox

Save, Share, and Collaborate

simpleBox is a web application that allows users to collect information and store it in a single place. Users can create documents, store images, links to websites, and collaborate with others. This is a student project that I worked on for the Bloc program.

UX RESEARCH (USER PERSONAS AND SURVEY)

User surveys and user stories are used to decide what features are necessary for simpleBox. To do that, I sent out a survey to find out what users were proactively using, their habits, and their competition in content and devices use. From the data that I've collected, I was able to come up with appropriate user stories and personas to help me understand users' goals, behaviors, and how they will interact with the application.

ERICA LOPEZ

AGE: 20
OCCUPATION: STUDENT

MOTIVATIONS
Erica is typically a disorganized student who needs to take notes to remember things. She has trouble writing down her ideas and wants to have a central place to store them.

JOHN DOE

AGE: 19
OCCUPATION: STUDENT/ROTC
LOCATION: BERKELEY
GENDER: MALE
TIER: XX

MOTIVATIONS
John doesn't really use his laptop to take notes as often. He uses his phone a lot to record things that he will try to remember for the future. He thinks that bookmarking takes efforts.

GOALS

- To remember content and links for school
- Keep track of sites' password and username
- To view notes where ever he go

FRUSTRATION

- Don't use laptop to take notes as much; phones are more portable.
- Too late to bookmark
- For notes and bookmarks, you'll have to carry around your laptop.

BIO
John is an ROTC student at the University of California, Berkeley. On top of ROTC, he has other commitments such as school and his fraternity. He uses his phone mainly to browse social media and sports. John often stays up late to finish his homework because ROTC takes a lot of his time.

Role	Task
As a new user	I want to find out more about BlocBox
As a new user	I want to create an account with email and password
As a new user	I want to create an account using Twitter
As a new user	I want to create an account using Facebook
As a new user	I want to view my content
As a new user	I want to view my favorites
As a new user	I want to create a group (box)
As a new user	I want to add a link
As a new user	I want to add an image
As a new user	I want to add a text-based note
As a new user	I want to select an item via email
As a new user	I want to share an item on Facebook
As a new user	I want to share an item on Twitter
As a new user	I want to share an item via email
As a new user	I want to add a collaborator
As a new user	I want to view my collaborators
As a new user	I want to manage my collaborators
As a new user	I want to add tags to my saved items
As a new user	I want to view a link
As a new user	I want to view an image
As a new user	I want to view a text-based note
As a new user	I want to upgrade my account
As a new user	I want to update my account settings

- 63% of users typically use their smart phones to browse the net.
- 50% of users typically use their laptop to browse the net.
- 63% of users save online content by bookmarking it in their browser.
- What most users like about using tools to bookmark is that it is convenience and integrated across all of their devices.
- What most users don't like about these tools is that most of them are complicated and has too many features.

Based on the survey, I was able to determine that simpleBox needs to be accessible across multiple platforms because majority of users use laptop or smartphones to browse the internet. Additionally, organization and centralization seems to be the main theme from the survey. Many users feel that some of the tools they use leads to a clutter space, particularly bookmarking. Therefore, it is important that simpleBox provides a space of organization for the end-users.

USER FLOW

From the research, I made a list of user stories to help me create user flows. In the diagram, I focus on the different user experience for both new and returning users, with several similarities. This process helped me in creating a minimum viable product for simpleBox.

New User - Homepage

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graph TD; FirstTimeUser[First-time user] --> VisitBlobox[Visit Blobox]; VisitBlobox --> WantsSignUp[Wants to sign up]; VisitBlobox --> WantsFindInfo[Wants to find out more info]; VisitBlobox --> WantsKnowPricing[Wants to know pricing]; VisitBlobox --> WantsHearOtherUsers[Wants to hear what other users say]
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Returning User - Sign in

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graph TD; ReturningUser[Returning User] --> SignIn[Sign in]; ReturningUser --> ResetPassword[Reset Password]; SignIn --> EmailPassword[Email/Password]; EmailPassword --> AuthTwitter[Auth w/Twitter]; EmailPassword --> AuthFacebook[Auth w/Facebook]; AuthTwitter --> Dashboard[Dashboard]; AuthFacebook --> Dashboard
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Shared Dashboard

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graph TD; Dashboard --> AddNew[Add a New]; AddNew --> Link[Link]; Link --> UserInputs[User inputs diff.]; Link --> Image[Image]; Image --> UserUploads[User uploads an image]; Image --> Note[Note]; Note --> UserAddHeadline[User adds headline and description]; Note --> Box[Box]; Box --> UserTypeInName[User types in a name for the box]; Box --> EmailSetCollaborator[Email set to collaborator];
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New User - Sign Up

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graph TD; FirstTimeUser --> SignUpForAnAccount[Sign up for an account]; SignUpForAnAccount --> UseFacebook[Use Facebook]; UseFacebook --> AuthTwitter[Auth w/Twitter]; UseFacebook --> EmailPassword[Email/Password]; AuthTwitter --> DashboardBlank[Dashboard Blank]; AuthTwitter --> DashboardBlank
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BRANDING AND TYPOGRAPHY

The next step in building the application is deciding on the brand and typography. The main goal of this web app is to provide a collection of notes, images, and links where users can store and share. Therefore, I wanted the brand and typography to reflect on the scheme of both professional and personal and casual usage.

HEADERS

H1 Varela Round

H2 Varela Round

H3 Varela Round

COLOR PALETTE

#34495E	#5F81A3	#3498DB	#2ECC71	#333333	#E2E2E2
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LOGO

LOW-FIDELITY PROTOTYPES AND USABILITY TESTING

After defining the brand identity for simpleBox, I created low-fidelity/medium-fidelity wireframes with balsamiq and photoshop to test on usertesting.com and in-person to see whether the product was user friendly to the users. These are the main questions I asked.

1. Look around and talk about what you think this is about? What can you do here? What is it for? What strikes you about it?

2. Think of something you want to do here. Try and do that thing.

3. What, if anything, do you like or dislike? Since this isn't a final version, what would you like to see in the final version.

Based on the test, users understand full well what the application does, referring to similarities to other tools such as dropbox. They also like the simplicity of the design and logo.

LOW/MEDIUM-FIDELITY MOCKUPS

HIGH-FIDELITY MOCKUP

SIGN IN CREDENTIAL | MAIN DASHBOARD | ACCOUNT SETTINGS

HIGH-FIDELITY PROTOTYPES

After going through user testing for the low/medium prototypes and making it iteration based on feedback, I used Sketch to create high-fidelity prototypes. Then I made a clickable prototypes on InVision and asked users to navigate through the prototypes and provide feedback. Below are the discussion questions I asked during the interview process:

1. What do you make of the page? What strikes you about it?

2. What frustrations do you have when navigating through the pages?

3. What are some things that you like about the website?

4. Do you see yourself using this application? Why or Why not?

Overall, users thought that the experience was pleasing and that the application is presentable in a simplified, yet professional design.

However, I found out that there was a slight delay when users were trying to add content to simpleBox. To tackle this issue, I created two versions of the dashboard with two different placements of the add button. I then conducted a preference test on UsabilityHub to see which version is more intuitive. Based on the results, version one (original) performs better than version two by 80:20. The test had 10 responses which may not be the best representative of the majority. Although the add button in version two is bigger, it was slightly more difficult to spot according to some users. Therefore, it was safe to conclude that the placement of the add button in version one is more intuitive.

Option #1 Winner

This alternative is performing better, and the difference is 99.0% likely to be statistically significant. This means that you can be very confident that it is actually better, and not performing better due to random chance.

Chosen 8 Times	Success Rate 80.00%	Avg. Time Taken 55.8 seconds
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Option #2

Chosen 2 Times	Success Rate 20.00%	Avg. Time Taken 1 minute 33.2 seconds
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FINAL PRODUCT

After researching, user testing, and designing through Balsamiq, Illustrator, and Photoshop/Sketch, the final product is completed with harmoniously-working colors and design elements that achieve simpleBox's goal in creating a friendly user experience in collecting and sharing contents.

This was my first project going through the different UX process as a designer. This project had me realize how important it is to test often and early to create an intuitive experience for potential end-users. Designing is more than just creating visually appealing elements. Data and research are the main components to synthesizing the design elements. An InVision clickable prototype and a website mockup in GitHub can be found in the Behance description.

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