Figma

Content

As you'll see when we dive into wireframing, there are benefits to starting with no content, or even fake content, and keeping only the customer experience and layout in mind.

But, with this method, you'll start to notice that your design mocks don't match up to your finished app with real customer content in them. Lines of text might be longer than the space allotted to it in the design files

Designing with real customer information, and as close to final content is always the best case scenario. This is so important that if you were to create a webpage right now, I would recommend that you spend many hours working on the words themselves that will be on the site before you open up a computer.

It's essential to map out the types of things you want to tell people. You'll quickly find yourself blindly designing pages that might not be necessary, or even duplicate others that already exist. This process helps uncover considerations you might otherwise forget, and understand the overall flow of your product.

Writing copy is hard, I won't lie, which makes it one of the most overlooked parts of the design process. Like Viba Mohan pointed out, however, it's often the 'neglected middle child' of design, because lousy copy is able to ruin the entire experience of your design for a customer.

The easiest way to improve at writing merely is by doing it. Practice writing regularly, either for your app or maybe as a personal goal–tools like 750 Words help

you learn to build a habit of writing every day just for the purpose of improving yourself.

If you're a bit beyond that, these some general tips we've gathered from our writing friends that you may find useful:
- Write things that you would only say to someone out-loud, in person
- Keep your writing as simple and clear as possible
- When you're writing, say everything you write out-loud before signing off on it
- Avoid jargon at all costs
- Less is more

The timeless book, On Writing Well by William Zinsser, is a great resource for learning the art of writing and knowing when to say less:

> *Examine every word you put on paper. You'll find a surprising number that don't serve any purpose.*

Working with draft content

To start designing you don't need the final copy, but you do need to know the content that will be used. What sections will you need? What is the general message that the paragraphs will say? You can use placeholders in your designs too. You're indicating what is going to be there with the intent to replace that with final content later on.

Both understanding what content is coming and using placeholders can be helpful in establishing hierarchy, blocking out content areas in your designs, and visualizing spacing.

It's important to clearly communicate with developers, stakeholders, or any other content reviewers that the placeholders are not the real content. If your temporary text, imagery, or other objects seem too developed, then it may be mistaken as actual content and critiqued as such. Clear communication is vital here.

Additionally, as you gather content, keep in mind that you don't have to create everything yourself. There are fonts, icon libraries, photography resources and

more available online. Just remember to use them legally and, when required, with the creator's permission.

Further reading

William Zinsser's On Writing Well

Verlyn Klinkenborg's Several Short Sentences About Writing

The Design Life Podcast: Getting Content For Your Designs

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