Information **Architecture – Equipment Support**

INTRO

To make an application feel effortless to navigate, it has to have a strong skeleton or foundation. Information architecture is more than just the menu navigation at the top of a website – it’s the map of a product’s parts, and how those parts need to interact with each other. When designing a new feature for an existing product, creating a map of its pieces is one of the first steps.

PROJECT  
Through an online survey, we found that our client’s user base spent 75% of their time helping their customers troubleshoot cell phone problems over the phone. Without the ability to see the phone the customer was using, the users were spending more time than was necessary to troubleshoot, and often unable to solve the customer’s problem. The solution was a tool that would allow customers to go into a Target store for in-person device troubleshooting, thereby reducing call volume and duration for our users.

PROCESS  
Since this was going to be a new feature, with implementations across a couple of platforms, it was necessary to map out all the required information and parameters before beginning on the workflows.

RESULTS

**Research Methods – UX Testing, Personas, Card Sorting, Interviews/Observations**

INTRO

User research is always the first thing I turn to before tackling any project. Understanding both the qualitative and quantitative data behind a project is the key to developing a successful design. Knowing which methods to employ is also half the battle.

UX TESTING  
Usability testing is a necessity for all stages of the development process. Preliminary testing of a current interface can help designers understand user pain points and areas of interest, whereas post-release testing monitors whether design implementations were successful. Paper prototyping is my favorite method for gathering iterative feedback during the design lifecycle and avoiding major pitfalls.

PERSONAS

Personas are a great tool for getting a team on the same page about who is using the products they are creating. My success with personas is not in the physical profile itself, but its adoption from all stakeholders involved and application by a company. I work closely with clients, product owners, developers, and most importantly, end users, to ensure that the personas produced are accurate and useful.  
  
CARD SORTING

The wrong label can make or break a design. Luckily, a quick card sort is one of the simplest ways to evaluate whether the terms used in a design are terms your users can understand. I use this research method often, either internally or with my end users, to test whether a grouping of information is logical beyond my own assumptions and biases.

SURVEY DESIGN

Surveys help establish both quantitative and qualitative data as a base line before beginning a project, or alternatively, assess whether a design implementation was successful. I find that the key to crafting a useful and accurate survey is to narrow the scope so that the questions are specific and focused on a portion of the product. This reduces the margin for error due to generalities or ambiguity in the survey responses.

INTERVIEWS/OBSERVATIONS

If the opportunity to have face-to-face time with an end user is available, it can be the most valuable time spent on a project. As a designer, the desire to empathize with my users can only go so far without observing their daily tasks or hearing stories of their struggles with a product. The art of asking questions is a skill I strive to perfect and often helps me answer the “why” when looking at quantitative data or metrics.

**Visual Designs – Customer Summary**

INTRO

Discussing UX designs with a development team is the best way to convey the mechanics of a design and thought process that went into it. But at the end of the day, the visual design artifacts I build must be strong enough to convey all the necessary information to the developer.

**WIREFRAMES**

**PROTOTYPES**

**HIGH FIDELITY MOCK-UPS**

**Project Management – AltSource Website**

INTRO

PROJECT  
  
PROCESS  
  
RESULTS

**Front-End Development – Pattern Library**

INTRO

PROJECT  
  
PROCESS  
  
RESULTS

**Extra**

PROBLEM  
Our goal was to help our client decrease the training time required for their employees to learn application they used to manage customers. After assessing the product, the team decided to tackle a portion of the application that had the highest visibility in order to make the most impact.

The upper section of the application was built on old legacy code, but also controlled a large portion of the tool’s functionality: editing customer information, account actions, account statuses and alerts. Updating the code would decrease loading times, but organizing the information in a more intuitive way would cut down on new employee training as well as existing employee errors.

[Old Customer Summary Section with lots of stuff]

PROCESS  
I worked with a developer to gather information about all of the pieces in the Customer Summary that could be displayed, and organized them into four categories: Personal, Account, Financial, and Balance Information. By placing all pieces of the application into these four buckets, it would reduce the amount of time users spent looking for a specific piece of customer information, as well as make the system easier to learn for new employees.

Interviews conducted with users early on in the process focused our efforts on the actions of editing customer information and handling account notifications.

We tested our assumptions with an interactive prototype that allowed us to time user interactions and gauge overall response to the new look and feel.

[Prototype]

RESULTS