Balsamiq (/)

Intro to UI Wireframing

Intro to UI Wireframing (/learn/courses/wireframing/) > 5. Templates

5. Templates

You've probably used file templates before. A common type is an office document template, like a cover letter template in a text editing application.

Templates can be great because they provide a starting point for a document with some preset attributes. They help you go faster by starting your project from ready-made screens that you can edit.
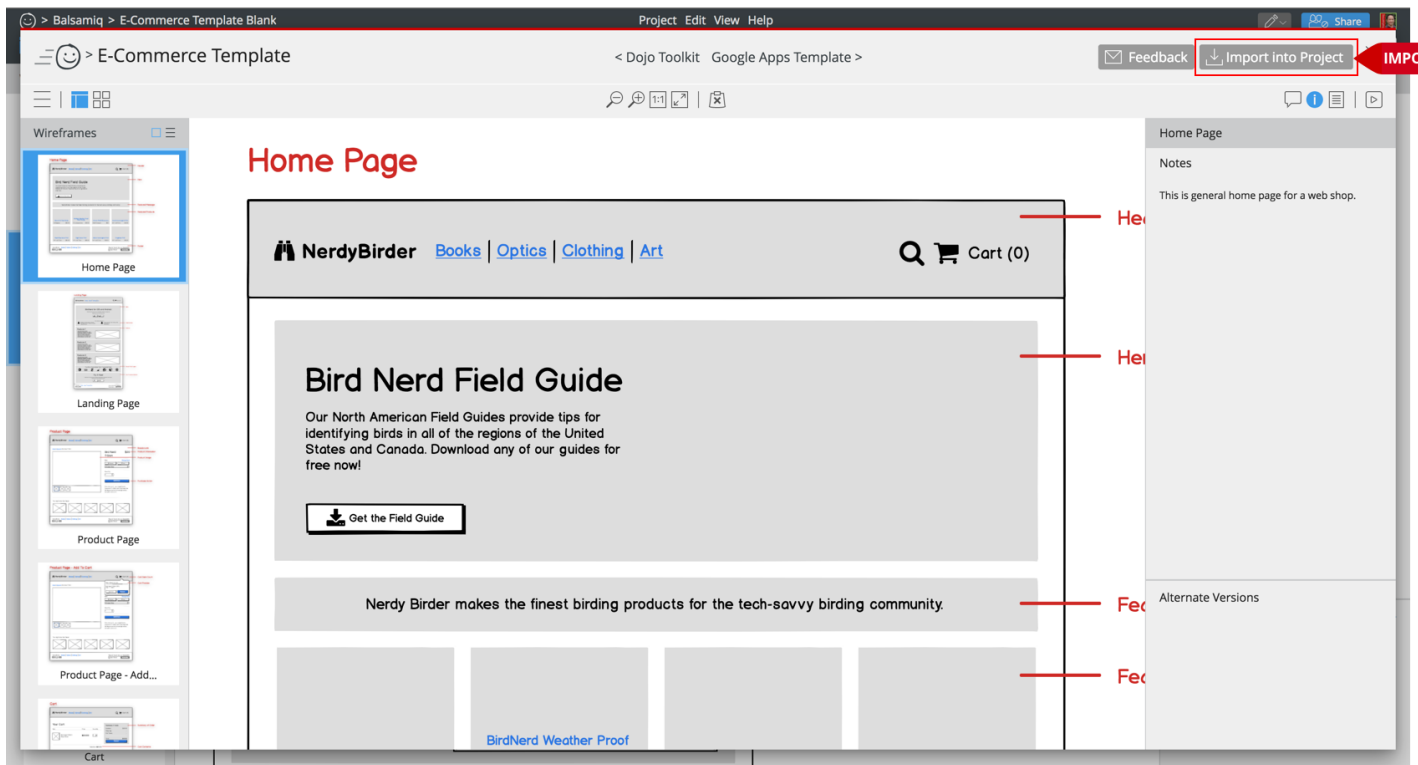
There are a few types of templates for interface design that you might use:

- *Solution-Specific*
  Templates may be specific to a type of problem you're solving, and provide pages (screens) laid out with a Symbol library of controls for typical solutions. One example might be a Template for creating a Search feature, or our previously mentioned E-Commerce Shopping Cart Solution.
- *System/Framework Specific*
  A template may provide standardized screen layout and Symbols for a particular design framework. Some example templates may be for the Bootstrap framework or a design system like Material Design.
- *Corporate/Product Specific*
  You may find it useful to create templates that are very specific to your use, like a template for your product with Symbols for your style guide.

Let's start by seeing how to modify a template. By the end of this section, you should be able to create your own.

Importing Templates

In Balsamiq, a Template is simply a starter project file that you import. If you're using Balsamiq Cloud, add a template via the menu *Project > Import Controls From Wireframes to Go...* Browse for templates use the import button to add it into your own projects.
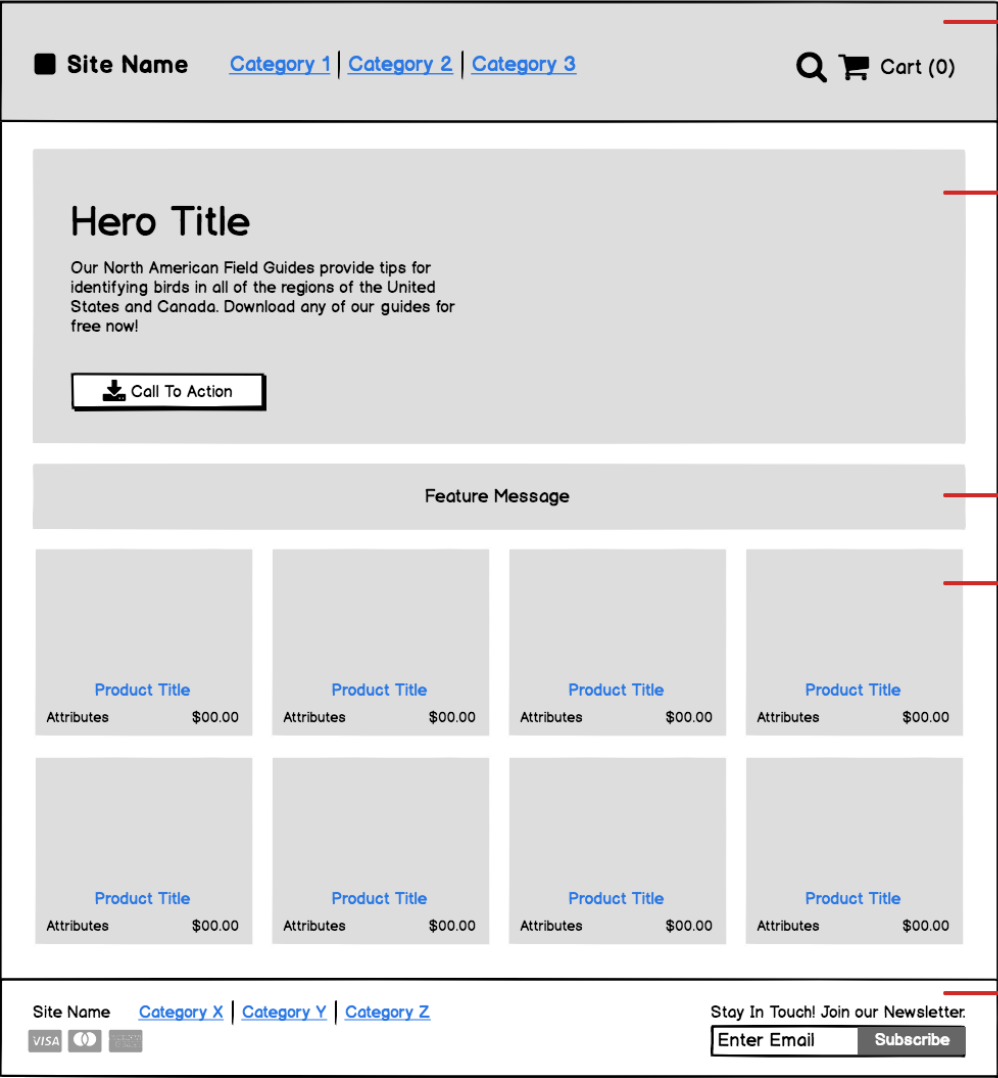
(///media.balsamiq.com/img/support/ui101/templates/Import%20From%20WTG.png)

Selecting the screens you need

Continuing _our example of an online shop (/learn/courses/wireframing/patterns/#design-pattern-example)_, let's use an _E-Commerce template (https://wireframestogo.com/3cf8-E-Commerce-Template/)_ to design more of the shopping experience. Obviously, we'll want to flesh out our shopping cart flow all the way through confirming the transaction.

Below is an overview of the screens that come in this template. Your solution may not require all of them. You'll likely have unique user expectations to consider and business rules to meet, so you'll modify the experience as necessary, pick out the ones you need and discard the rest.

For our example, let's say we want to flesh out the the pre-purchase experience on screens like the landing pages. Let's use the template to create a landing page for a fictional smartphone app.

Home Page

■ Site Name   Category 1 | Category 2 | Category 3   🔍 🛒 Cart (0)

Hero Title

Our North American Field Guides provide tips for identifying birds in all of the regions of the United States and Canada. Download any of our guides for free now!

⬇ Call To Action

Hero

Feature Message

Featured Message

| Product Title | Product Title | Product Title | Product Title |
| Attributes $00.00 | Attributes $00.00 | Attributes $00.00 | Attributes $00.00 |

Featured Products

| Product Title | Product Title | Product Title | Product Title |
| Attributes $00.00 | Attributes $00.00 | Attributes $00.00 | Attributes $00.00 |

Site Name   Category X | Category Y | Category Z   Stay In Touch! Join our Newsletter.
VISA ◖◗ ▭   Enter Email   Subscribe

Footer

(///media.balsamiq.com/img/support/ui101/templates/Home%20Page.png)

Landing Page

Site Name | Category 1 | Category 2 | Category 3

🔍 🛒 Cart (0)

Landing Page Hero Heading

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipisicing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua.

⬇ Call To Action

Hero

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipisicing elit.
—Kenny Bostick

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipisicing elit.
—Brad Harris

Testimonials

Feature 1

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipisicing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua. Ut enim ad minim veniam, quis nostrud exercitation ullamco laboris nisi ut aliquip ex ea commodo consequat.

Feature

Feature 1

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipisicing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua. Ut enim ad minim veniam, quis nostrud exercitation ullamco laboris nisi ut aliquip ex ea commodo consequat.

Feature 1

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipisicing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua. Ut enim ad minim veniam, quis nostrud exercitation ullamco laboris nisi ut aliquip ex ea commodo consequat.

Social Proof Logos

Social Proof Heading

Call To Action Bottom

Heading for Call To Action Bottom

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipisicing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua.

 iPhone | 🤖 Android

Site Name | Category X | Category Y | Category Z

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VISA

Product Page

Home ﹥ Category X ﹥ Product Title — **Breadcrumb**

Product Title $20 — **Product Information**
Goes Here

— **Product Image**

Size | Sizing Chart

[Women] [Men]

[Choose Size ▾]

Quantity

[1 ▾]

[**Add To Cart**] — **Purchase Action**

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet,
consectetur adipisicing elit, sed do
eiusmod tempor incididunt ut

Related Products

Site Name | Category X | Category Y | Category Z

VISA

Stay In Touch! Join our Newsletter.
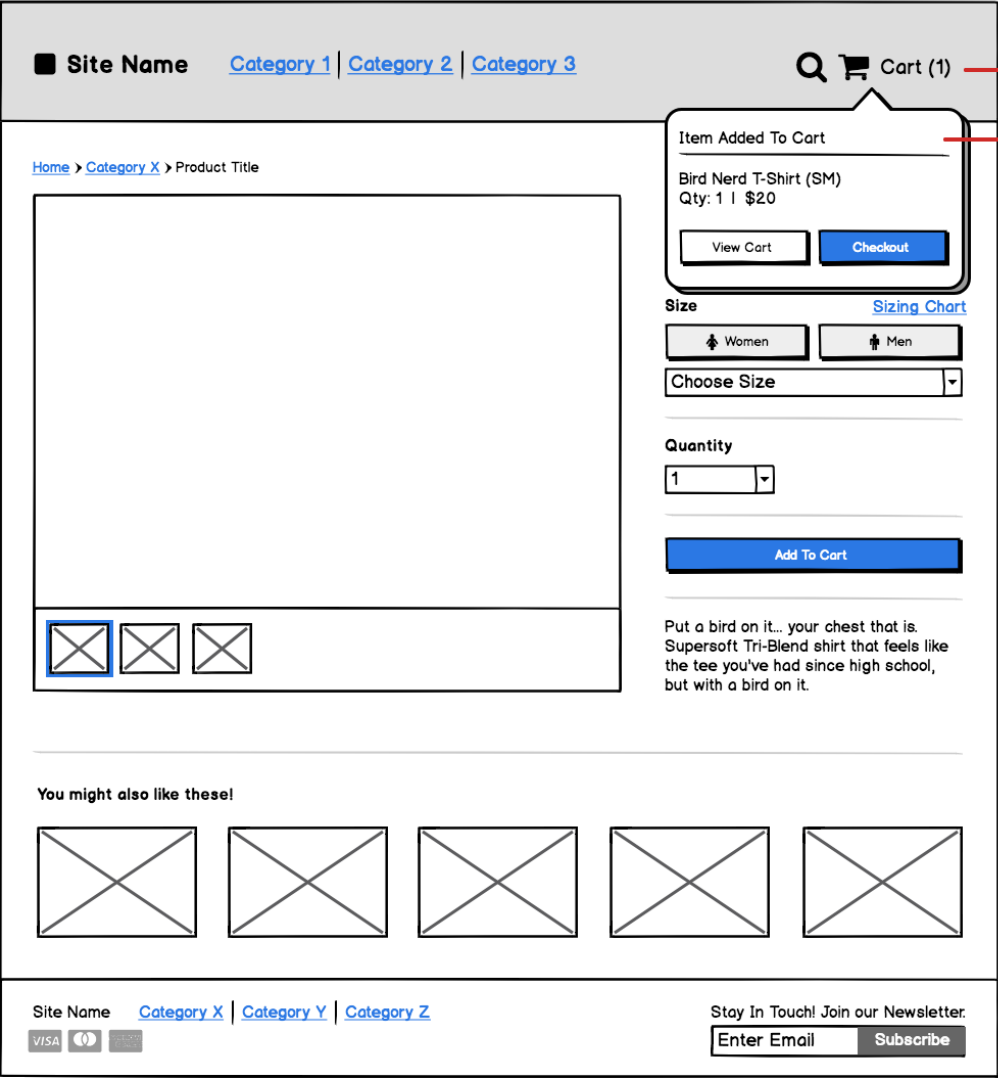[Enter Email] [Subscribe]

(///media.balsamiq.com/img/support/ui101/templates/Product%20Page.png)

Product Page - Add To Cart

■ **Site Name**   Category 1 | Category 2 | Category 3   🔍 🛒 Cart (1) —— **Cart Item Count**

Home ▸ Category X ▸ Product Title

Item Added To Cart

Bird Nerd T-Shirt (SM)
Qty: 1 | $20

[View Cart]   [Checkout]   —— **Cart Preview**

Size   Sizing Chart

[♀ Women]   [♂ Men]

[Choose Size   ▾]

Quantity

[1   ▾]

[**Add To Cart**]

Put a bird on it... your chest that is.
Supersoft Tri-Blend shirt that feels like
the tee you've had since high school,
but with a bird on it.

You might also like these!

Site Name   Category X | Category Y | Category Z   Stay In Touch! Join our Newsletter.

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(///media.balsamiq.com/img/support/ui101/templates/Product%20Page%20-%20Add%20To%20Cart.png)

Cart

■ **Site Name**   Category 1 | Category 2 | Category 3   🔍 🛒 Cart (1)

Your Cart

Item	Price	Quantity
⊠ T-Shirt Size: Small	**$20.00**	1 ▾

Subtotal: **$20.00**

Summary (1 item) ———— Summary of Order
Subtotal $20.00
Shipping   -
Est. Taxes   -

Total   **$20.00**

[Checkout]

Cart Contents

Site Name   Category X | Category Y | Category Z
VISA ⬤ ▭

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(///media.balsamiq.com/img/support/ui101/templates/Cart.png)

Checkout - Customer Info

■ Site Name   Category 1 | Category 2 | Category 3   🔍 🛒 Cart (1)

Cart > **Customer Information** > Shipping Information > Payment Method   —————————— **Cart Progress**

Customer Information
Already have an account? Log In

Email

Shipping Address

First Name | Last Name

Company (optional)

Address | Apt. (Optional)

Country ▼ | State ▼ | Zip

< Return to Cart   **Continue to Shipping Method**

Summary (1 item)

Subtotal $20.00
Shipping   -
Est. Taxes   -

Gift card or discount code

     Apply

Total   **$20.00**

Site Name   Category X | Category Y | Category Z   Stay In Touch! Join our Newsletter.

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(///media.balsamiq.com/img/support/ui101/templates/Checkout%20-%20Customer%20Info.png)

Checkout - Shipping

Site Name   Category 1 | Category 2 | Category 3   🔍 🛒 Cart (1)

Cart > Customer Information > **Shipping Information** > Payment Method

Shipping Address 12 Waldo Point Road, Mishauken, NY 11200   Edit

Shipping Method

◉ UPS Ground $2.20
○ UPS 3 Day Select $5.50
○ UPS 2nd Day Air $9.50
○ UPS Next Day Air $12.50

< Return to Customer Information   **Continue to Payment Method**

Summary (1 item)

Subtotal $20.00
Shipping $2.20
Est. Taxes $1.40

Gift card or discount code
[   ] Apply

Total   **$23.60**

Site Name   Category X | Category Y | Category Z

VISA ◉◉ ▭

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(///media.balsamiq.com/img/support/ui101/templates/Checkout%20-%20Shipping.png)

Checkout - Payment

Site Name   Category 1 | Category 2 | Category 3   🔍 🛒 Cart (1)

Cart > Customer Information > **Shipping Information** > Payment Method

Shipping Address 12 Waldo Point Road, Mishauken, NY 11200   Edit

Shipping Method UPS Ground, $2.20   Edit

Payment Method   VISA 🔵 AMERICAN EXPRESS

| Card number | 🔒 |

| Name on card | MM/YY | CVV ❓ |

Billing Address

- ⦿ Same as shipping address
- ○ Use a different billing address

Remember Me

- ☐ Save my information for a faster checkout

< Return to Customer Information   **Complete Order**

Summary (1 item)

Subtotal	$20.00
Shipping	$2.20
Est. Taxes	$1.40

Gift card or discount code

| | Apply |

| **Total** | **$23.60** |

Site Name   Category X | Category Y | Category Z

VISA 🔵 AMEX

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Enter Email   Subscribe

(///media.balsamiq.com/img/support/ui101/templates/Checkout%20-%20Payment.png)

Checkout - Success

Order 131217312

Thank you, Kenny!

Your order is confirmed.

We've accepted your order and we're getting it ready.

Customer Information

Shipping Address
Kenny Bostick
12 Waldo Point Road
Mishauken, NY 11200
United States

Billing Address
Kenny Bostick
12 Waldo Point Road
Mishauken, NY 11200
United States

Shipping Method
UPS Ground (Estimated ship
time of 3-6 days)

Payment Method
VISA Ending in 3217 — $23.60

Summary (1 item)

Subtotal	$20.00
Shipping	$2.20
Est. Taxes	$1.40

Gift card or discount code

[   ] [Apply]

| **Total** | **$23.60** |

Site Name   Category X | Category Y | Category Z

VISA ◎

Stay In Touch! Join our Newsletter.

[Enter Email] [Subscribe]

(///media.balsamiq.com/img/support/ui101/templates/Checkout%20-%20Success.png)

Email Confirmation

Order 131217312 Confirmed

■ SiteName

Thank you for your purchase!

Hi Michael, we're getting your order ready to be shipped. We will notify you when it has been sent.

View your order   or [Visit our store](#).

Order Summary

Bird Nerd T-Shirt
Size: Small

$20.00

Subtotal	**$20.00**
Shipping	**$2.20**
Tax	**$1.40**
Total	**$23.60**

Customer Information

Shipping Address
Kenny Bostick
12 Waldo Point Road
Mishauken, NY 11200
United States

Billing Address
Kenny Bostick
12 Waldo Point Road
Mishauken, NY 11200
United States

Shipping Method
UPS Ground (Estimated ship time of 3-6 days)

Payment Method
VISA Ending in 3217 — $23.60

If you have any questions, reply to this email or contact us at hello@sitename.com

Modifying Pre-Made Screens

For this example, we'll modify the generic Landing Page template using our own copy and add some elements for our fictional smartphone app.

When you open a template you'll probably see some placeholder copy as in the example on the left below. Simply select and edit each of the place holders.
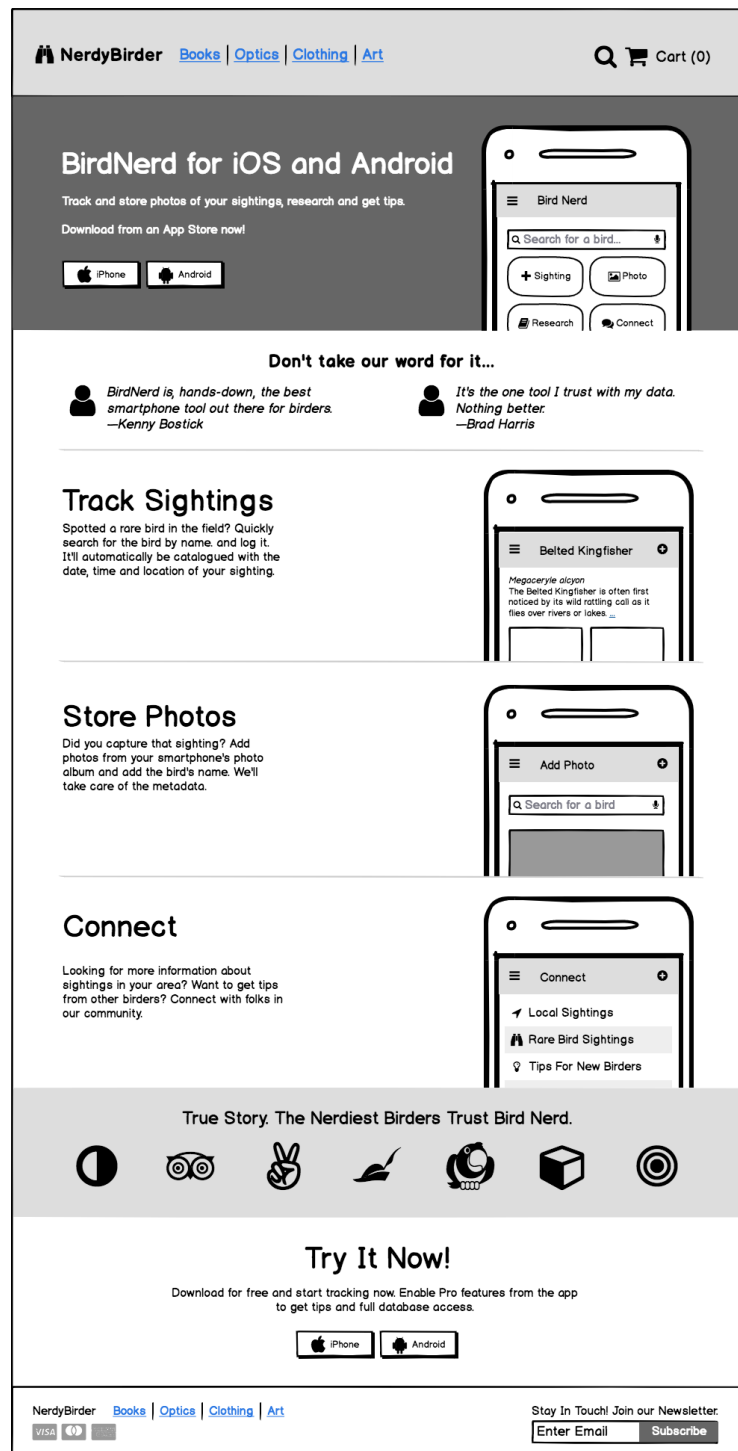
In the wireframe on the right, we've modified the text, we added some wireframed elements to illustrate our product, and using our new knowledge of design principles we laid out some of the parts to fit better with our new illustrations and copy.

Template with starting suggestions to design a landing page   *Edit placeholders to customize the screen.*
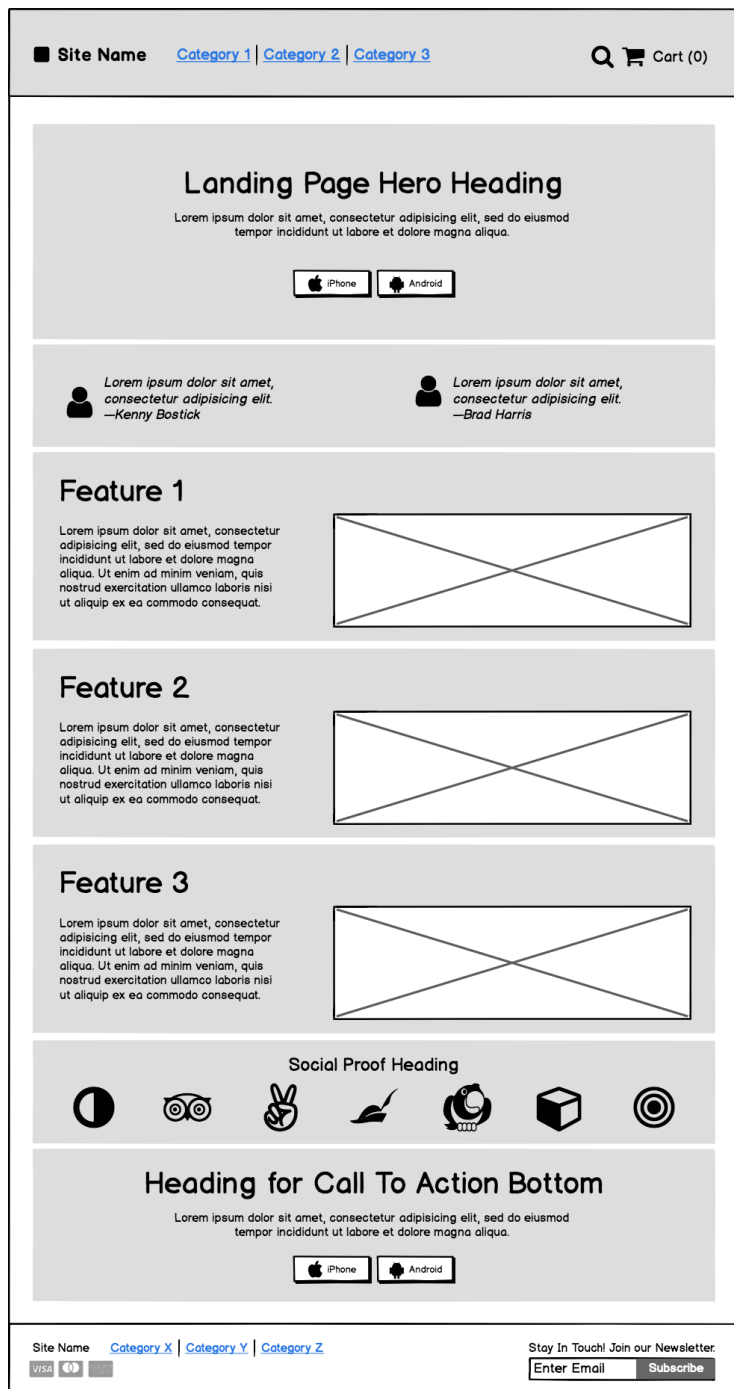
Pretty simple! Hopefully, editing a template should seem much faster than laying out all of the components from scratch. You'll want to tweak it to suit your needs, but it's a good way to start the design discussion with your team.

A note about Symbols Libraries

Some templates may also contain Symbols Libraries. Our E-Commerce template has Symbols for the components used on the screens above.

The idea behind using Symbols is that you can easily drop in these re-usable components that are made specifically for this type of project. You can find out more about Symbols in the *Balsamiq docs (/docs/)*.

Closing Thoughts

Like design patterns, templates serve as a starting point and are usually built on an understanding of what typically works well for a common problem. Templates differ from design patterns in that they usually propose a plan for solving a broader scope of problem.

Interface designers are known for building systems to make their work efficient. Templates are one example of that. Once you've become adept at working with templates you can start to set up your own systems to make your work go faster. If you work in-house on a product team, create templates that reflect your organizational style. If you work in an agency or design/development shop, create templates for the repeatable types of client projects you work on.

> *The Cooking Analogy:*
>
> Let's step back for a moment and put templates under the lens of our cooking analogy. In cooking, the orchestration of dishes that work well together create a meal—a complete culinary experience. Templates are like that. Pieces of user interface often go well together to create an entire experience.
>
> As you explore your users and problem more deeply, you'll begin to see what parts of the template work for your needs and swap out what doesn't, just as you would deviate from a recipe to make it your own.

Additional Resources

- Download the template used in this section: *E-Commerce Template from Wireframes To Go (https://wireframestogo.com/3cf8-E-Commerce-Template/)*
- Landing Page Template and *Designing a Landing Page (/learn/resources/articles/landingpages/)* tutorial

By *Mike Angeles*
Got questions or feedback? Email *mike@balsamiq.com (mailto:mike@balsamiq.com)*.