



503108

UI/UX DESIGN

CHAPTER 6: WIREFRAMES

**LESSON 07 – WIREFRAMES**

# OUTLINE

1. Introduction
2. What Are Annotations?
3. Who Uses Wireframes?
4. Design Basic Wireframe
5. Creating Wireframes: A Sample Process

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# 1. Introduction

- Wireframes and annotations are ways to identify the proposed content and structure, as well as functional behaviors, of a view of a web page or an application.
- Wireframes are typically presented in grayscale, bereft of graphical elements or finalized content
- Wireframes are used as a tool for communicating your designs

# 1. Introduction

- A wireframe is used to identify the elements that will be displayed on the page or screen, such as
  - Navigation
  - Content sections
  - Imagery and/or media
  - Form elements
  - Calls to action (CTAs)

# 1. Introduction

- Wireframes are typically created in black and white or shades of gray, use placeholders for images, and do not get into specifics of fonts
- They come in all shapes and sizes—from the very basic to so advanced that they nearly replicate full-screen design.
- Wireframes are now used to represent the site or application to clients, designers, developers, and any other team members who have a stake in it

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## 2. What Are Annotations?

- Annotations are, quite simply, explanations and notes about an element or an interaction on a wireframe
- They typically contain such information as
  - Content identification or labeling
  - Content source(s)
  - Display rules
  - Interaction rules
  - Interaction destinations
  - Process rules
  - Error content/messaging



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# 3. Who Uses Wireframes?

**TABLE 12.1 Wireframe Audiences**

AUDIENCE	PURPOSE
Project Management	Project managers may use wireframes as discussion points within the team to highlight strategy, technology needs, and a very high-level user experience.
Business Analysts	Business analysts may use wireframes to ensure that their requirements are being met and to validate that they have not missed requirements that need to be included.
Visual Designers	Visual designers may use wireframes as a blueprint for their output. Wireframes provide them with an accounting of page elements and behaviors that need to be included.
Content Creators	Copywriters, content strategists, editors, and other people responsible for copy may use wireframes to map to a content matrix and identify content needs throughout a project.
Search Engine Optimization (SEO) Specialists	SEO specialists can use wireframes to help identify appropriate naming schemes, copy needs, and enhancements to the overall SEO strategy. (For more information on SEO, see the online chapter, "User Experience Design and Search Engine Optimization," available on the companion website.)
Developers	Developers often use wireframes in conjunction with (and sometimes instead of) business requirements to understand the expected functions and behaviors of the design. In some cases, the wireframes may be used as the basis for a proof of concept.
Quality Assurance	A QA team can use wireframes as the basis for authoring its testing scripts. Once wireframes have been approved by the client, the variation should be minimal, and this allows the QA team to begin working on their tasks earlier.
Users	Users may see wireframes in very early stages, sometimes in the form of "paper prototypes," as a mechanism to test the design direction. (See Chapter 13.)
Clients	Clients are increasingly more involved in the review of wireframes to validate whether the business requirements, goals, and objectives are met and to provide approval to move forward into the visual design phase.

# 3. Who Uses Wireframes?

- Creating Wireframes
  - Need a set of requirements
  - Understanding of what it is that you are trying to create for a user, what the connections are, and a general understanding of the technological limitations and expectations
  - Read through all the requirements, ask questions, and consider the answers to obtain any additional clarity

# 3. Who Uses Wireframes?

- Tools of the Trade
  - Microsoft Visio (<http://office.microsoft.com/visio>)
  - Axure RP Pro ([www.axure.com](http://www.axure.com))
  - OmniGraffle ([www.omnigroup.com/products/omniGraffle](http://www.omnigroup.com/products/omniGraffle))
  - Balsamiq (<http://balsamiq.com>)
  - Adobe indesign ([www.adobe.com/products/indesign](http://www.adobe.com/products/indesign))
  - Adobe illustrator ([www.adobe.com/products/illustrator](http://www.adobe.com/products/illustrator))
  - Microsoft PowerPoint (<http://office.microsoft.com/powerpoint>)
  - OpenOffice draw ([www.openoffice.org](http://www.openoffice.org))
  - Blueprint CSS ([www.blueprintcss.org](http://www.blueprintcss.org))

# 3. Who Uses Wireframes?

- Stencils galore online
  - Welie.com (<http://www.welie.com/patterns>)
  - Ui-Patterns.com (<http://ui-patterns.com>)
  - Patternry (<http://patternry.com>)
  - Graffletopia (<http://graffletopia.com>)
  - Axure Widget Libraries (<http://www.axure.com/widgetlibraries>)
  - Loren Baxter's Better defaults for Axure, A Widget Library (<http://www.acleandesign.com/2009/04/better-defaults-for-axure-a-widget-library>)

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# 4. Design Basic Wireframe

- Getting Started
  - Wireframes will help you identify gaps in the information you are working with
  - Design does not have to be perfect, but you do want to make sure it looks clean and professional, and that in the worst case it's wrong in the right direction

# 4. Design Basic Wireframe

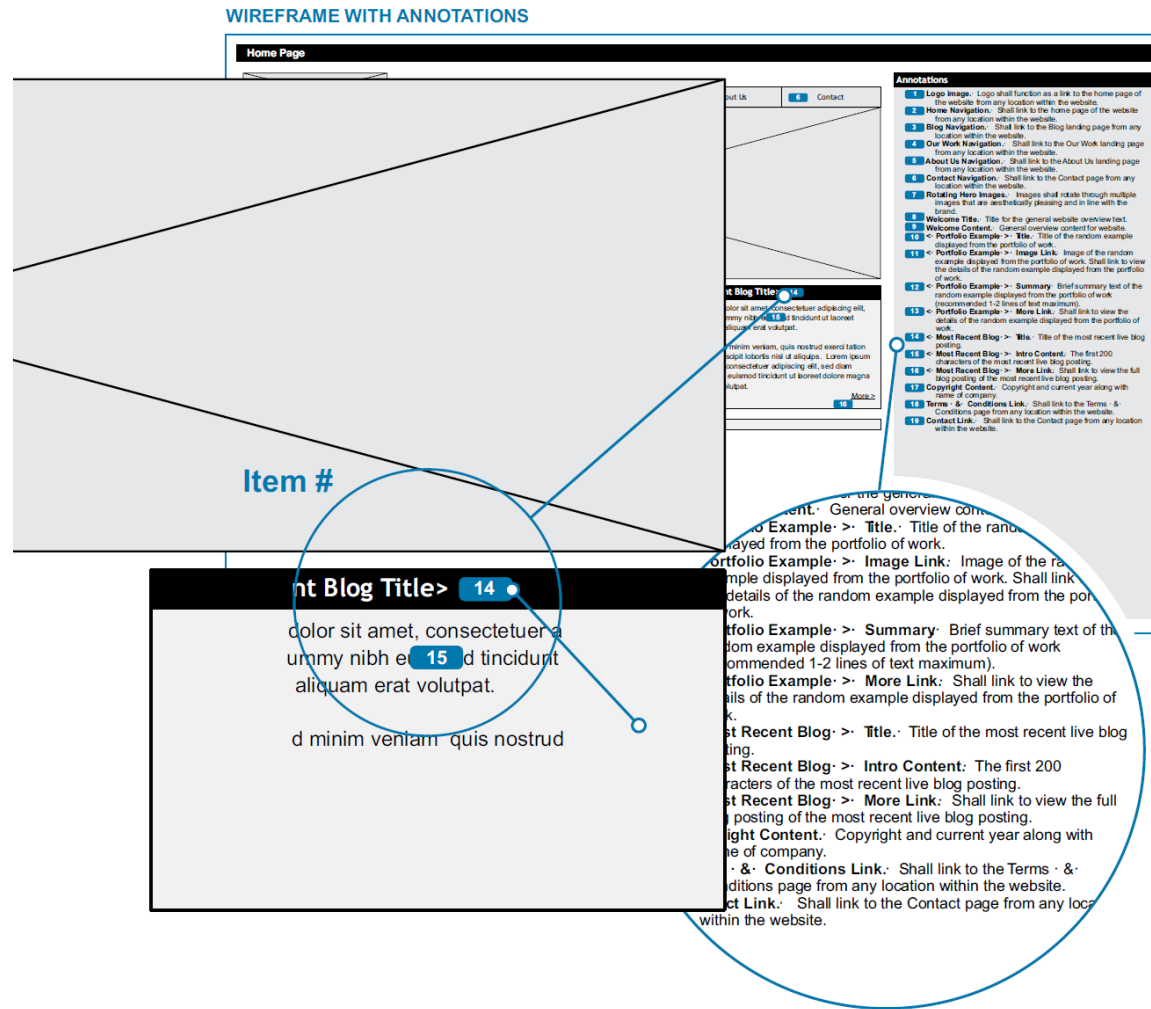
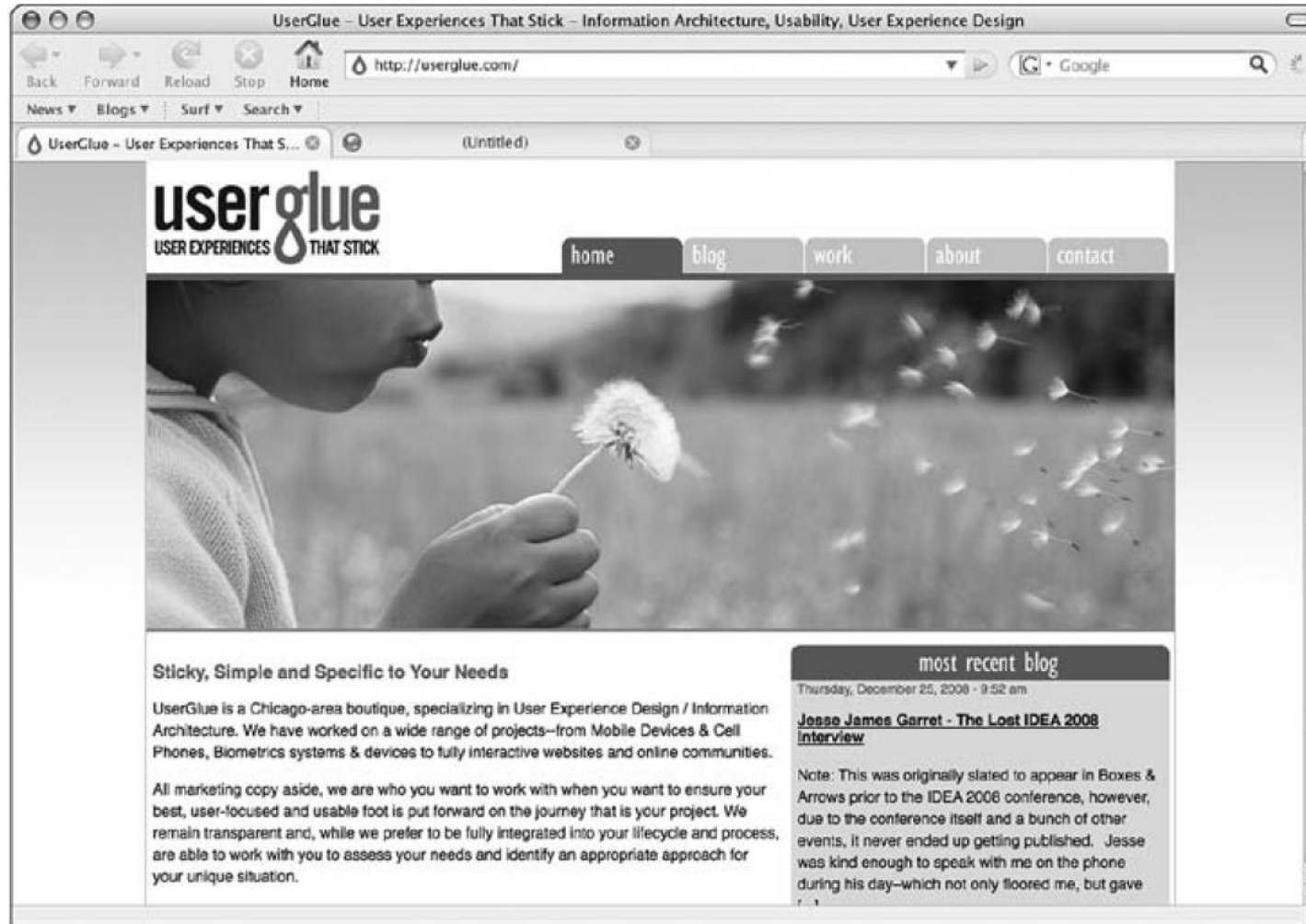


Figure 12.3 Wireframes with annotations submitted for home page design



# 4. Design Basic Wireframe



*Figure 12.4 Live home page design for www.userglue.com*

# 4. Design Basic Wireframe

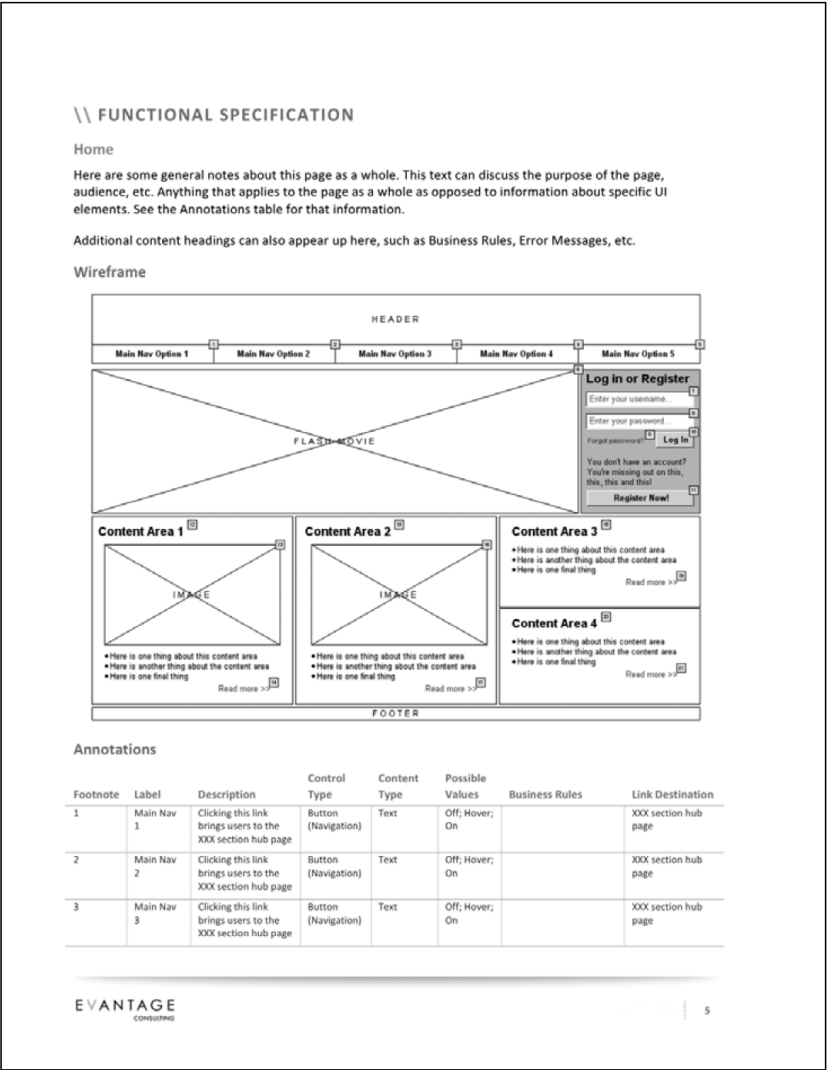


Figure 12.5 A wireframe with annotations, created in Axure

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# 5. Creating Wireframes: A Sample Process

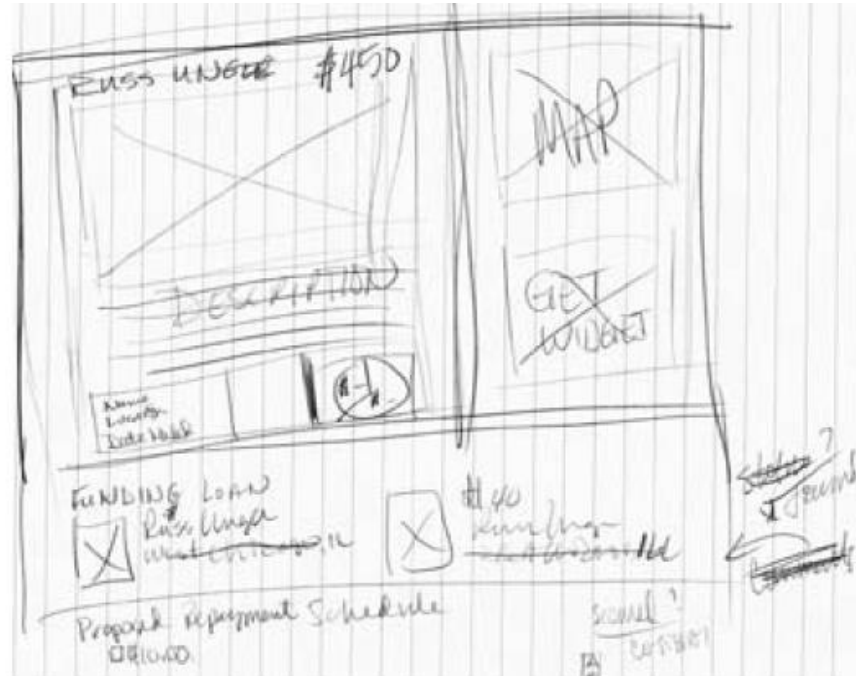
- Start by having as much information as possible in regards to your project:
  - Business requirements
  - Design briefs, or creative briefs, or other named briefs that are relevant
  - Stakeholder interviews
  - Research performed
  - Website analytics
  - Personas that are rich with information about your users
  - Site map
  - User/Task flows or paths
  - Content strategy documentation
  - Statement of work
  - ...anything else that you can find that is related to the project

# 5. Creating Wireframes: A Sample Process

- Sketching
  - Sketching is not about drawing. Rather, it is about design.
  - A fundamental tool that helps designers express, develop and communicate design ideas
  - A critical part of a process that begins with idea generation, to design elaboration, to design choices, and ultimately to engineering

# 5. Creating Wireframes: A Sample Process

- Sketching



**Figure 12.6** Sketches. The unpretty kind. They do the trick.

# 5. Creating Wireframes: A Sample Process

- Into the Digital: Wireframes

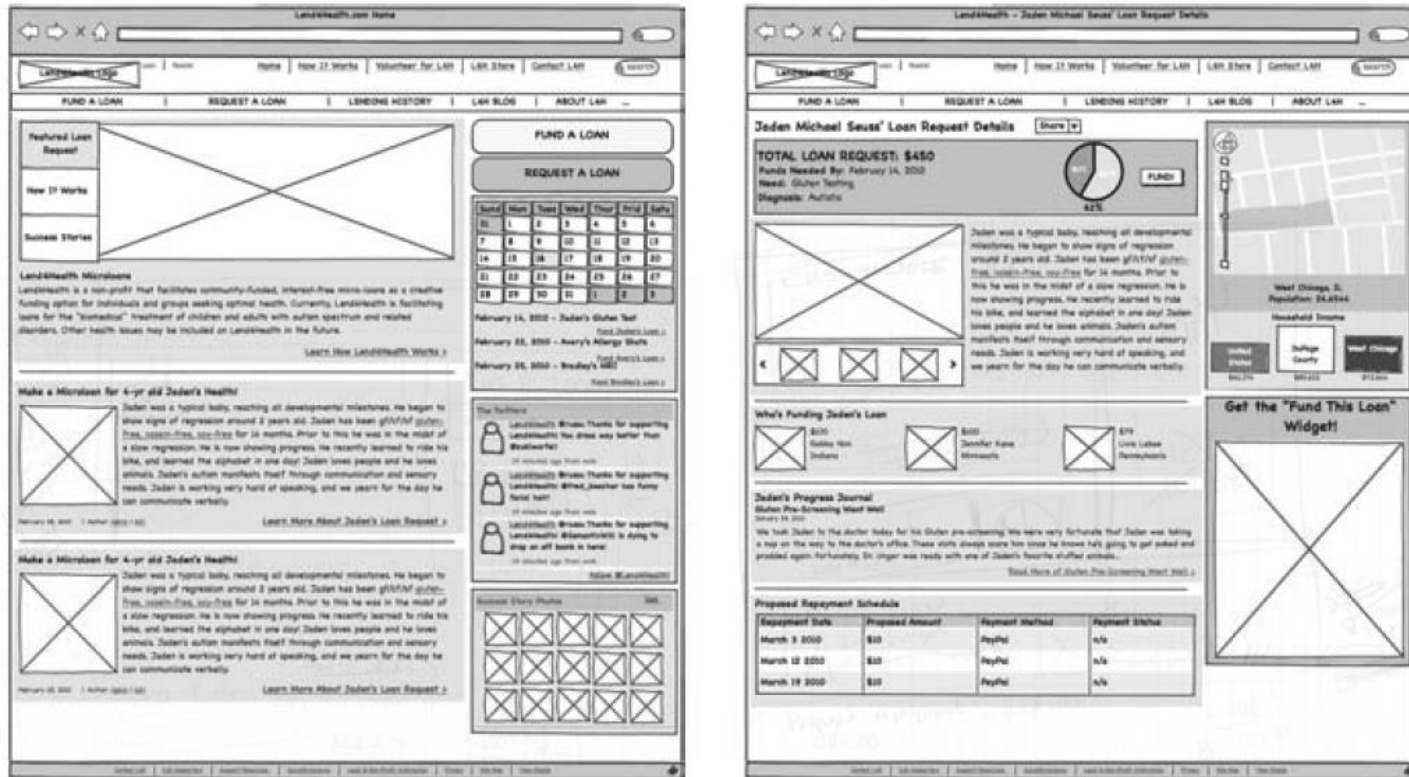


Figure 12.8 The sketches turned into beautiful Balsamiq wireframes



# 5. Creating Wireframes: A Sample Process

- Into the Digital: Visual Design

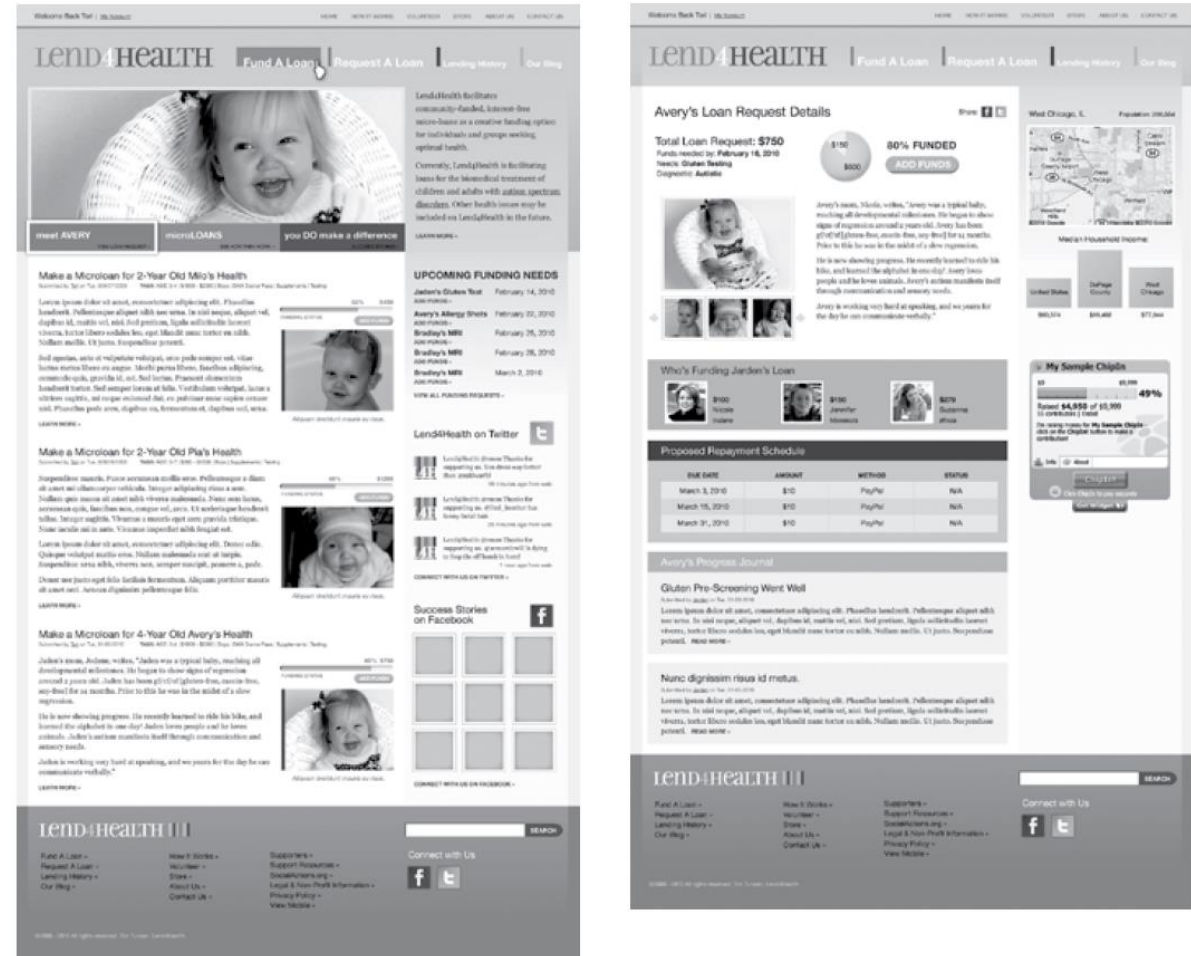


Figure 12.9 Wireframes turned into stunning design. Preciousssssss...



# 5. Creating Wireframes: A Sample Process

- if possible, engage your client's team during discovery; try to get them involved in actively drawing on a whiteboard.
- Find strong metaphors to convey the differences between your wireframes and the final design of the project
- Tell your meeting attendees that the wireframes are not a final representation of the graphical treatment of the site
- Engage your visual designers
- Explain how other members of your project team will use the wireframes