

DUSTIN YOUNSE

DESIGN SYSTEMS AREN'T HARD

But they are complex.
And also hard.

OPENJS 2020

WHO'S THIS GUY?

@milsyobtaf from the internet

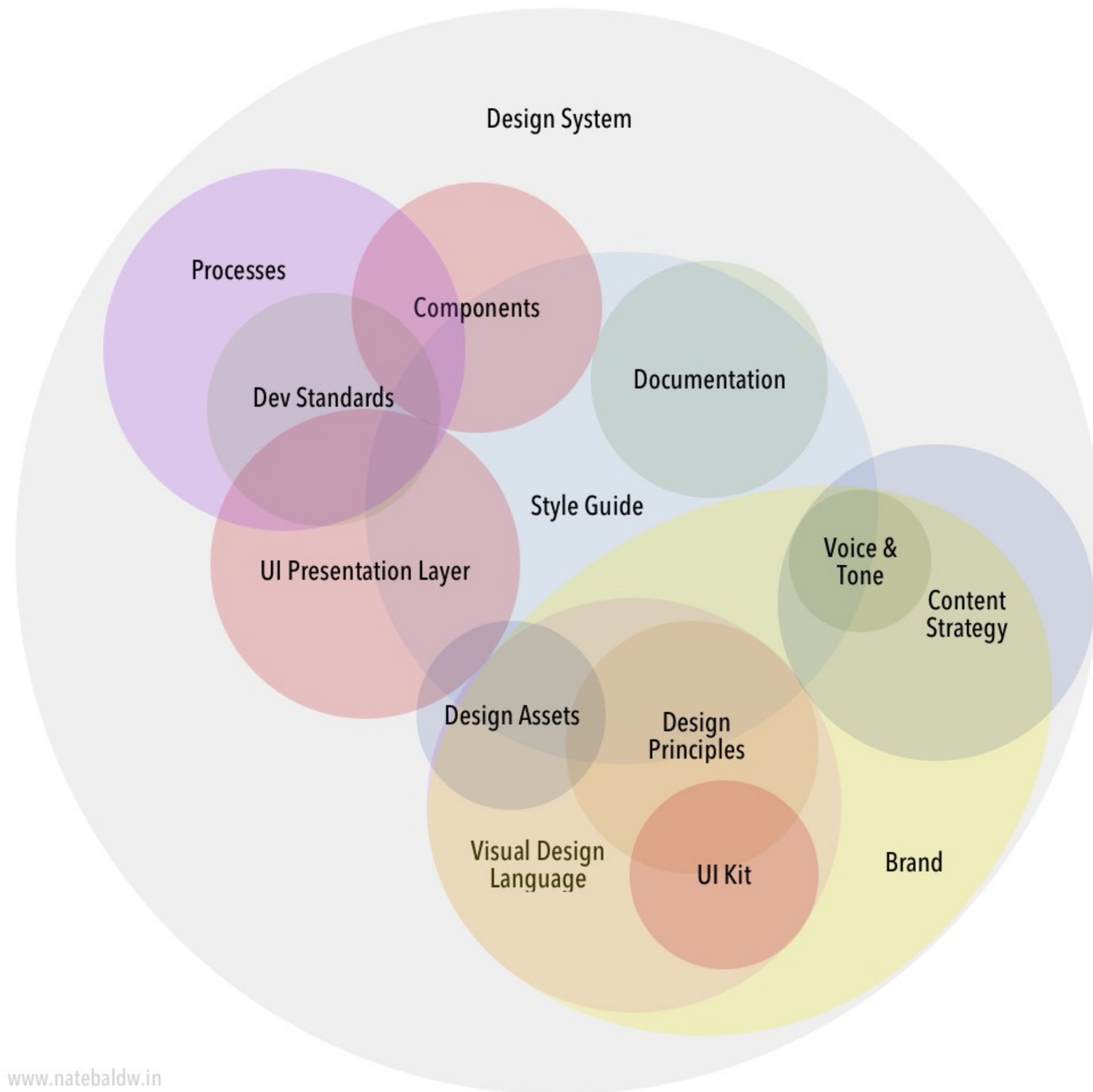
**I've worked on large websites
since 2008**

**I've worked with "design systems"
since we called them "swatches"
and "style tiles"**

**Currently in Design Engineering at
Indeed, a job that comes with the
greatest laptop sticker**



WHAT IS A DESIGN SYSTEM?

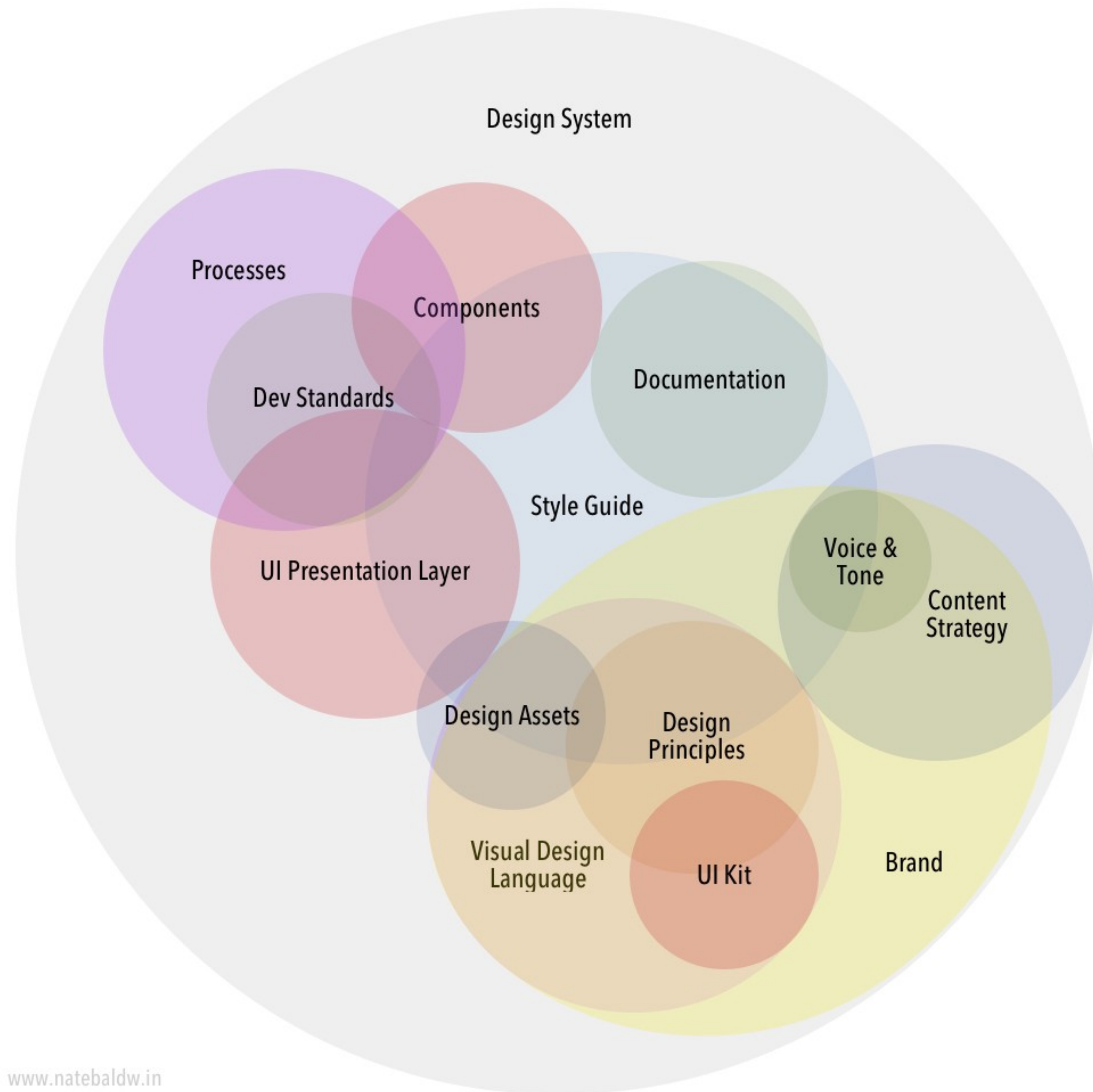


**Organizations which design systems ...
are constrained to produce designs
which are copies of the
communication structures of
these organizations."**

CONWAY'S LAW

Your website is a *manifestation*
of your organization's *problems*

“UNCLE” DAVE RUPERT’S LAW



WHAT *ISN'T* A DESIGN SYSTEM?

A FIGMA LIBRARY

WHAT *ISN'T* A DESIGN SYSTEM?

A REACT COMPONENT LIBRARY

WHAT *ISN'T* A DESIGN SYSTEM?

AN EXTERNAL WEBSITE PROMOTING YOUR DESIGN SYSTEM

THESE ARE ARTIFACTS - NOT THE SYSTEM

SO... WHAT *IS* A DESIGN SYSTEM?

**AN AGREEMENT ON HOW
DIGITAL PRODUCTS ARE MADE**

DESIGN SYSTEM AGREEMENTS

User Interface Design: *how a digital experience looks*

Interaction Design: *how a digital experience feels*

Content Strategy: *how a digital experience sounds*

Documentation: *how a digital experience is crafted*



DESIGN SYSTEMS TAKE TIME

Brand Button

BUTTON

Button Primary

Button

Create store



DESIGN SYSTEMS TAKE TIME AND THEY TAKE MONEY

WHY BOTHER WITH A DESIGN SYSTEM?

DESIGN SYSTEMS ARE ALL ABOUT SCALE

Interface Design *at scale*

Interaction Building *at scale*

Content Creation *at scale*

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When everyone on your team knows *how* a thing should be built, they can just *build it*.

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#1 Support Request: How do I do X?

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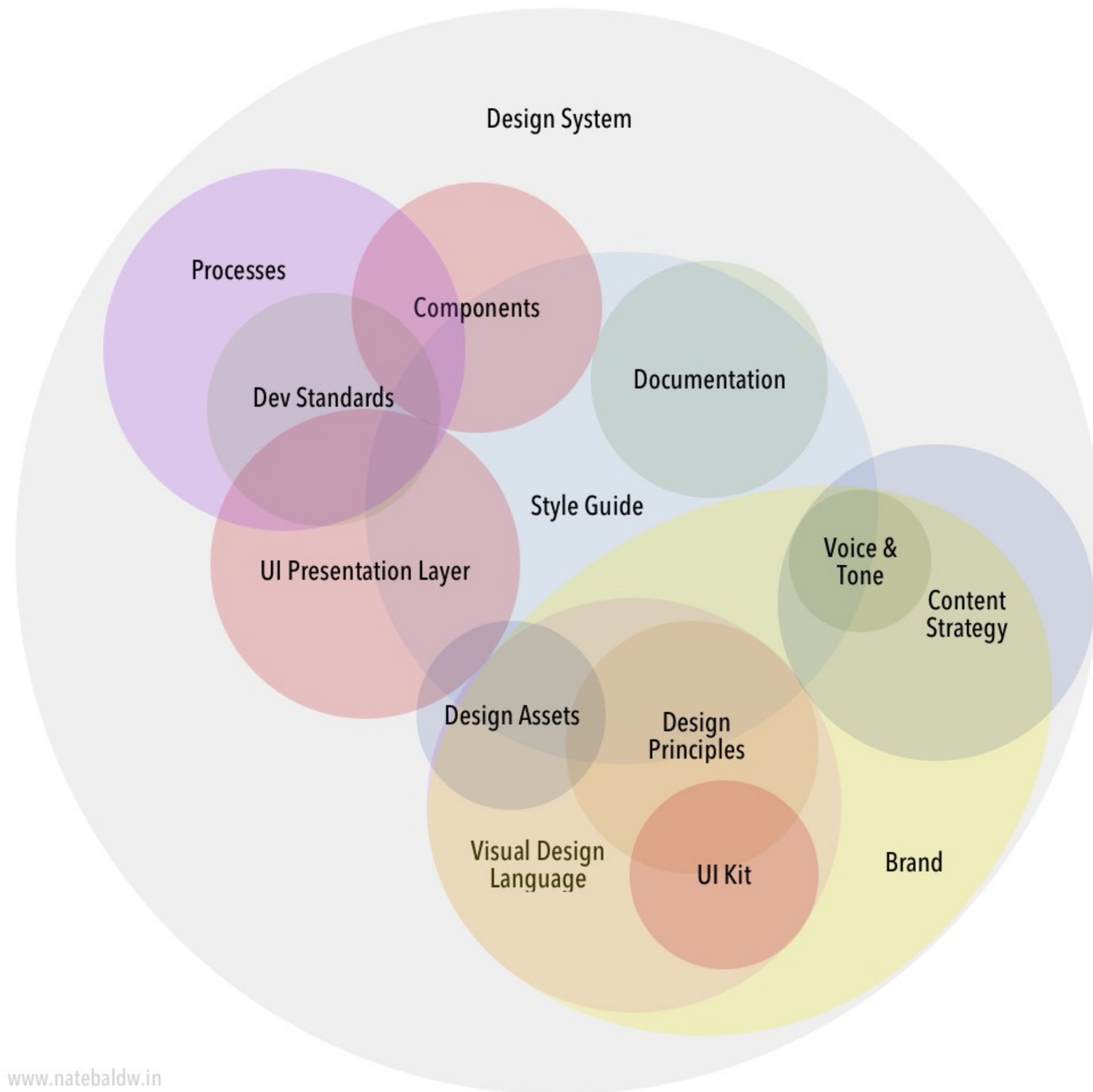
When everyone on your team knows *how* a thing should be built, they can just *build it*.

#1 Support Request: How do I do X?

#2 Support Request: Why do I do X?

**A DESIGN SYSTEM IS A *SERVICE*
NOT A *PRODUCT***

**YOU NEED TO *ANSWER QUESTIONS*,
NOT WRITE CODE**



**IF YOU ONLY HAVE THE TIME
OR THE MONEY FOR ONE ARTIFACT,
*WRITE DOCUMENTATION***

DESIGN SYSTEM DOCUMENTATION

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Should change as often as necessary.

DESIGN SYSTEM HELPS *EVERYONE*

ACCESSIBILITY AT SCALE

Buttons that work as buttons

ACCESSIBILITY AT SCALE

Buttons that work as buttons

Links that work as links

ACCESSIBILITY AT SCALE

Buttons that work as buttons

Links that work as links

Animations that respect *prefers-reduced-motion*

ACCESSIBILITY AT SCALE

Buttons that work as buttons

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INCLUSION AT SCALE

ACCESSIBILITY AT SCALE

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INCLUSION AT SCALE

Form fields that accept accented characters

ACCESSIBILITY AT SCALE

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INCLUSION AT SCALE

Form fields that accept accented characters

Right-to-left text presentation that just works

IF YOU DO NOTHING ELSE

WRITE DOCUMENTATION

WRITE DOCUMENTATION

HIRE A SERVICE DESIGNER

DESIGN SYSTEMS *ARE HARD*

DESIGN SYSTEMS *ARE HARD*
AND THAT'S *THE WORK*

RESOURCES

- Why Every Design System Needs a Service Designer
- Conway's Law / Uncle Dave's Law
- Anatomy of a Design System
- Design System Checklist
- How the Right Design System Streamlines a Large Organization's Digital Development