

*the*

# WEB NATIVE

*designer*

Paul Robert Lloyd

APA DIGITAL BREAKFAST  
8TH MARCH 2011

# HELLO!

- Originally intended to reprise the previous talk about Styleguides for the Web.
- As reviewed slides, started to think more about todays theme: Web Design Trends.

# TRENDS

- Dangerous to focus too much on what everyone else is doing.
- Should focus on the specific requirements of your own users.
- What's fashionable might not always be appropriate.
- Instead talk about some underlying trends: process, communication and our understanding of the web.

# WHAT IS THE WEB?

- But first, we need to understand what the web is, how it differs from other mediums.
- Growing maturity amongst web designers (and some clients too) as we start to understand the web.

# *Radio with pictures*

- For much of its short existence, the web has been treated as if it were the printed page.
- Terms we use like ‘page’, but also phrases like ‘above the fold’.
- Television was often referred to as ‘radio with pictures’.

“ People in the newspaper industry saw the web as a newspaper. People in TV saw the web as TV, and people in book publishing saw it as a weird kind of potential book. But the web is not a magic all-absorbing meta-medium. It’s its own thing.

— *Paul Ford*

<http://www.ftrain.com/wwic.html>

- There is a growing acceptance that the web works best when it's treated on its own terms.

# *Three qualities*

- Three aspects of the web that I think make it unique.



**DYNAMIC**

**ADAPTABLE**

**SYSTEMATIC**

- Clients commission redesigns once every two or so years, but this ignores a fantastic opportunity.
- Unparalleled access to users, tremendous amount of feedback.
- Downside—no reliable method of preserving historically relevant content.



DYNAMIC

ADAPTABLE

SYSTEMATIC

- Fluidity of the web important for designers to recognise.
- Web works best when you embrace its fluidity.
- Proliferation of devices show this to be a strength, not a weakness.



**DYNAMIC**

**ADAPTABLE**

**SYSTEMATIC**

- Fundamentally a technology, borne of logic, rules and systems.
- Key concepts such as URLs and hypertext need to be understood.
- The web is not just a visual medium.
- Google's spidering tools, assistive tools such as screen readers.
- None of these pay any credence to the visual design of your site.

“ It’s time to throw out the rituals of the printed page, and to engage with the medium of the web and its own nature.

— *Jon Allsopp*

<http://www.alistapart.com/articles/dao/>

- You might think this was a recent article.
- Written in 2000.
- Taken us a decade to recognise the foresightedness of his words.

# MATURITY

- So it's taken us some time, but in recent years I've notice a growing maturity.
- We have studied and applied techniques that have existed in print, accessed how well they apply online.
- Seen how users react and interact with websites.
- Started to better understand the platform.

# *Content*

- Content an afterthought, existing copy ‘dumped’ into a template.
- Need to write copy specifically for the web.
- Right amount presented at appropriate time.
- Large amounts of copy easy to skim.

# *Microcopy*

- Interactive medium, microcopy plays an important role.
- Indicate desired behaviour, provides a personality and tone of voice.

# *Without context*

- Content appearing outside the context of the website.
- RSS readers, tools like Readability and Instapaper.
- Portability.

# *Layout*

- Grids have long been a fundamental tenant of print design.



## Subtraction



Version 7.1  
Khoi Vinh's Web Site

Search via Google

 Go[Home](#)[Archives](#)[About](#)[Previous](#)[Next](#)

Wed 02 Mar  
2011

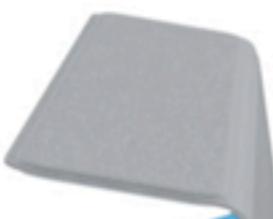
### Cover Story

Posted 08:22 pm

Author Khoi Vinh

Rating ★★

Body At first glance, what interests me the most about Apple's just-announced iPad 2 is its innovative new "Smart Cover," which fastens to magnets built into the frame of the new tablet, allowing easy removal. When closed, the cover puts the device to sleep, and when opened and folded back, it forms a triangular base upon which the device can rest. Through and through, this strikes me as a truly clever design, the kind of protective layer that only Apple — and none of the third party case manufacturers vying for this market — can come up with, because they can make all the pieces fit together. It also strikes me as the kind of intelligent engineering that Apple *should* be coming up with, meaning it corrects the blight on industrial design that was Apple's old iPad cover, a chintzy, polyurethane rain slicker of a cover; I found it ill-fitting, remarkably un-Apple like in nearly every way. It always seemed to me more like something you'd find sold under a generic or unfamiliar brand name at Staples than something designed in Cupertino. Good riddance.



### Quick Access

5,036 posts since July 2000.

Dates

Categories

### Ads by the Deck



The future of the Web starts with you.  
**MIX** is where you get started. Vegas,  
April.

### Help Wanted



**Company confidential**  
Designer for website and web app UI

**Company confidential**  
WordPress Designer/Developer

**Company confidential**  
Front-end developer + focus on  
interactive implementation

- Some designers (such as Khoi Vinh) have been using them for years.
- Only caught the imagination of web designers in the last few years or so.

Desktop

Search

Show Grid

Join The Forum

The ultimate resource in grid systems.

*"The grid system is an aid, not a guarantee. It permits a number of possible uses and each designer can look for a solution appropriate to his personal style. But one must learn how to use the grid; it is an art that requires practice."*

Josef Müller-Brockmann

Search

Articles	Tools	Books	Templates	Blog	Inspiration
<b>Musings on the Relationship Between Grids and Guides</b> An article that takes a look at the relationship between the grid and the use of guides. <b>06.Feb.2011</b>	<b>GuideGuide</b> A columns, rows and mid-points panel for Photoshop CS4 & CS5. <b>06.Feb.2011</b>	<b>Ordering Disorder: Grid Principles for Web Design</b> Ordering Disorder is a book by Khoi Vinh that delivers a definitive take on grids and the Web and provides both the big ideas and techniques of grid-based design. <b>11.Nov.2010</b>	<b>960px Grid Templates</b> A selection of 960 pixel-wide uniform grid templates ranging from 3-columns to 16-columns, for both Adobe Photoshop and Fireworks. <b>11.Nov.2010</b>	<b>The Columnist</b> A grid based WordPress theme that features a newspaper column layout and neat typographic hierarchy.. <b>06.Feb.2011</b>	Ace Jet 170 AisleOne Athletics BBDK Blanka Build Corporate Risk Watch Counter Print David Airey Design Assembly Dirty Mouse Experimental Jetset Form Fifty Five Grafik Magazine Grain Edit Graphic Hug I Love Typography Lamosca Mark Boulton Minimal Sites Monocle Neubau NewWork OK-RM Original Linkage
<b>Regulatory Policy Newsletter</b> An article outlining the redesign of ICMA's quarterly publication and its grid. <b>06.Feb.2011</b>	<b>Modular Grid Pattern</b> A web app and Photoshop extension that aids in creating modular grid systems. <b>06.Feb.2011</b>	<b>Universal Principles of Design</b> Universal Principles of Design is the first comprehensive, cross-disciplinary encyclopedia of design. <b>04.Nov.2009</b>	<b>The Golden Grid Template</b> A PSD template based on the CSS framework The Golden Grid by Vladimir Carrer. <b>02.Mar.2010</b>	<b>Grid-A-Licious 2.0</b> A beautiful grid based theme for WordPress. <b>06.Feb.2011</b>	

- There's been a period of education within the industry.
- This benefited developers as well as designers.
- They have become an accepted means of layout on the web.
- **BUT** grids come from print design, and are often based on assumptions of fixed width.

[ABOUT](#)[writing](#)[portfolio](#)[contact](#)

# ETHAN MARCOTTE

*is a web designer & developer,  
a speaker and author.*

Ethan lives in Boston, Massachusetts, and is passionate about beautiful design, elegant code, and the intersection of the two. He is a popular and experienced speaker, having been featured at An Event Apart, Carsonified Workshop, and South by Southwest, and co-hosts the Handcrafted CSS seminar series with Dan Cederholm.

More fun facts: Ethan has a [blog](#), and blathers incessantly on [Twitter](#). His clientele has included *New York Magazine*, Stanford University, and the World Wide Web Consortium. Also, he is tall.

- People like Ethan Marcotte are starting to experiment and evangelise about flexible layouts.
- Termed ‘Responsive Design’, these layouts can adapt to the constraints of any given device.
- Here is Ethan’s website on the desktop...

Tablet

The screenshot shows a tablet interface with a white header bar containing icons for back, forward, search, and refresh. Below the header is a navigation menu with links labeled 'ABOUT', 'writing', 'portfolio', and 'contact'. The main content area features a large, stylized title 'ETHAN MARCOTTE' in a serif font. Below the title is a subtitle in a smaller, italicized serif font: 'is a web designer & developer, a speaker and author.' A paragraph of text follows, describing Ethan's background and speaking engagements. At the bottom of the page is a footer menu with links labeled 'about', 'WRITING', 'portfolio', and 'contact', separated by a horizontal bar.

*ABOUT*    *writing*    *portfolio*    *contact*

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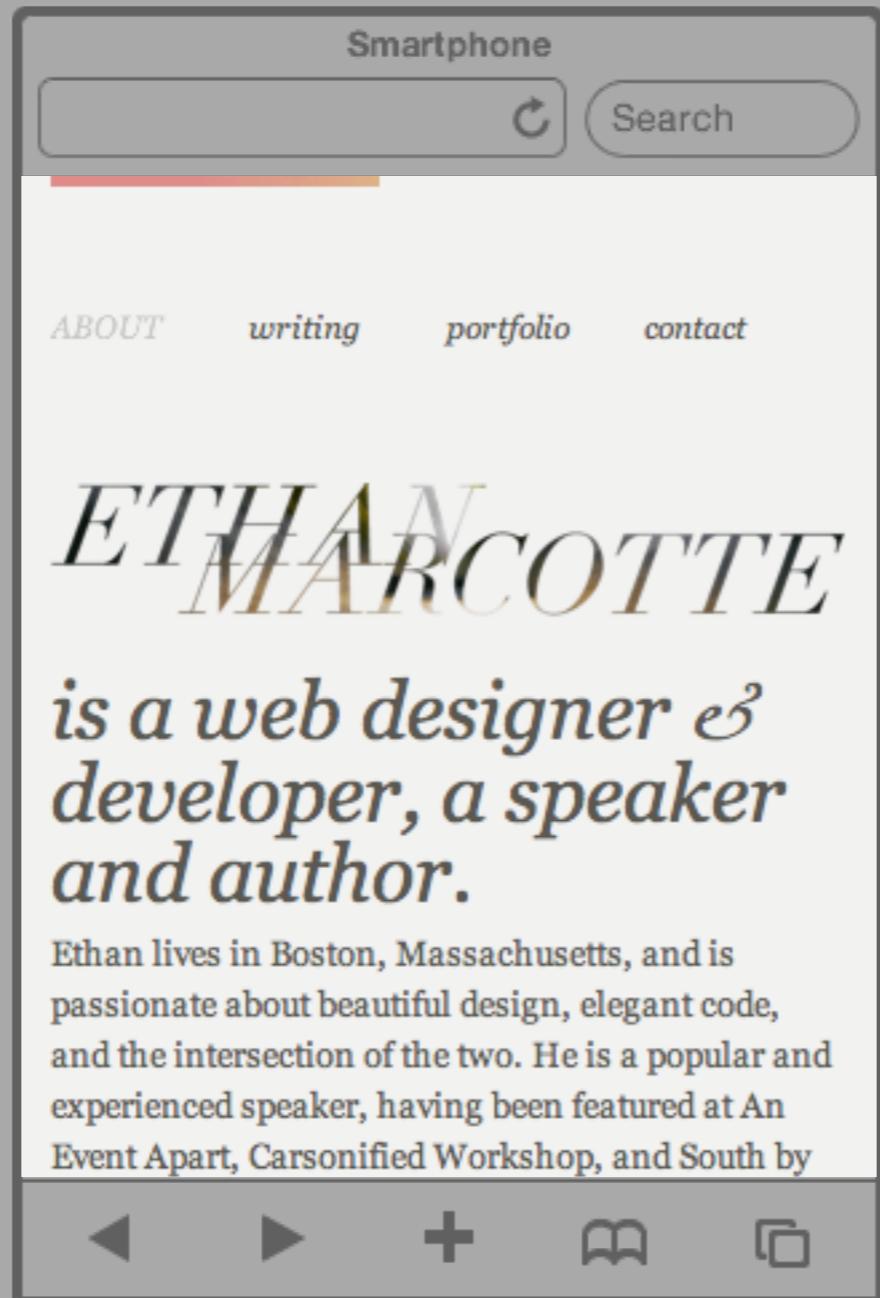
If you'd like someone to speak at your conference or company, or to work on your next design project, Ethan is available for freelance engagements from **April 2011**. Care to [get in touch](#)?

---

*about*    *WRITING*    *portfolio*    *contact*

*SELECTED WRITING*

- On an iPad (with portrait orientation).



- And on a smartphone.

Desktop

Search

home projects about us people blog contact

# edenspiekermann\_ strategy design communication

A photograph of a man in a dark jacket and cap bending over to look at small pink footprints on a cobblestone street. The footprints are scattered across the sidewalk. A white text box in the lower-left corner contains the German text: "Große Fußstapfen gibt es hier zu erleben ...".

- Eden Spiekermann's website is another example I'm fond of.



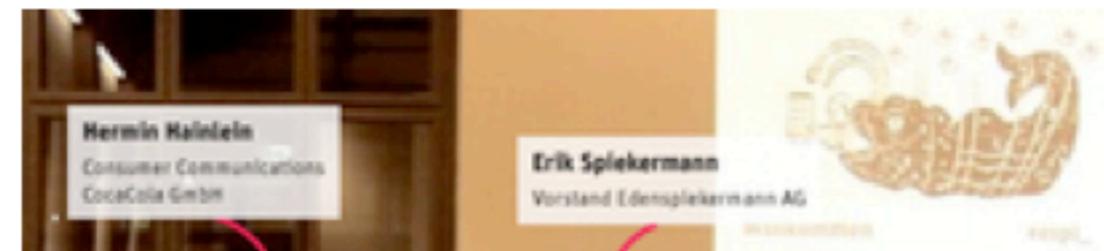
Search

[home](#) [projects](#) [about us](#) [people](#) [blog](#) [contact](#)

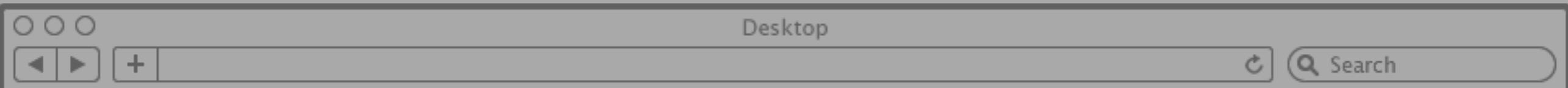
# **edenspiekermann\_** **strategy design** **communication**



**Große Fußstapfen gibt es hier zu erleben ...**

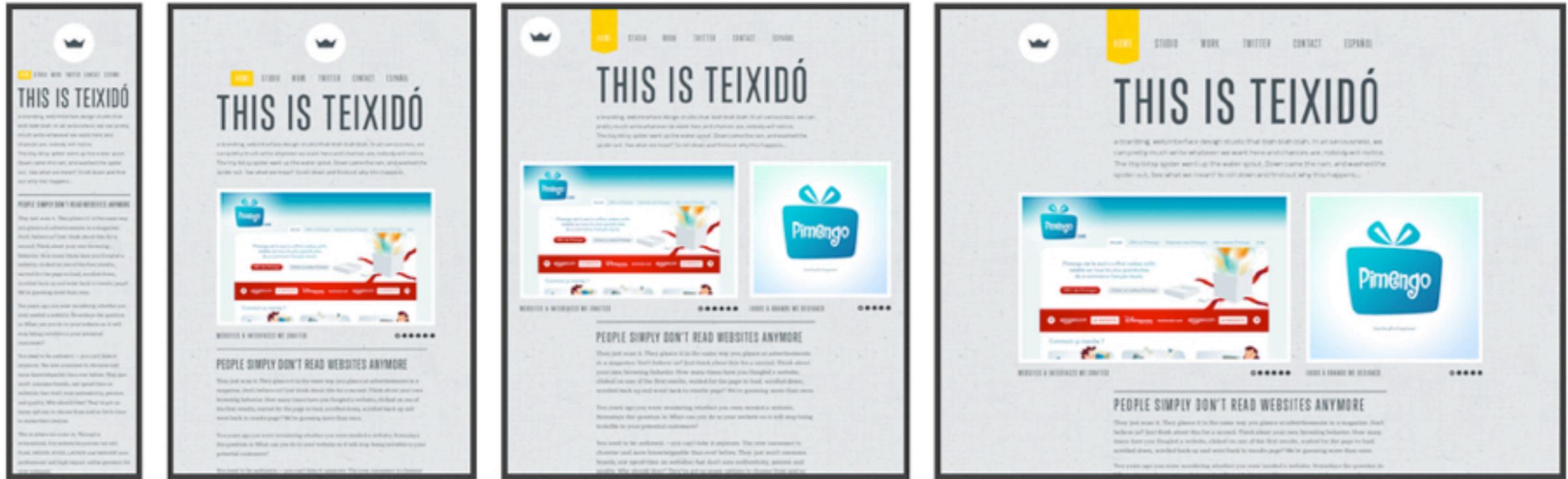






# Teixidó

1



# Earth Hour

Details

1



- Can find more examples on mediaqueri.es.
- These layouts haven't been designed to adjust to fit a particular width.
- Content-out approach suggests a key change in how we approach design on the web.
- Reinforces the importance of content.
- Need a strong visual language, a recognisable palette of elements to choose from.

# *Typography*

- Much like grids, typography has its roots in print.
- But here we have been more aware of the web's limitations.
- Only six 'web safe' fonts you can use with any certainty.

SIGN UP FOR NEWS ABOUT FUTURE SEED CONFERENCES

\* A ONE-DAY CONFERENCE *on* DESIGN, ENTREPRENEURSHIP *and* INSPIRATION \*

# On Friday, June the 6th 2008 in Chicago

Learn about *taking control of your own work* by seeking out methods to

INSPIRE NEW THINKING AND ADOPT UNCONVENTIONAL IDEAS ABOUT COLLABORATION AND BUSINESS VIA  
SIX PRESENTATIONS AND DISCUSSIONS LED BY 37 SIGNALS, SEGURA INC, COUDAL PARTNERS AND FRIENDS

# The 3rd SEED CONFERENCE

WILL FILL YOUR HEAD WITH KNOWLEDGE YOU CAN USE. THIS ISN'T ABOUT THEORY, IT'S ABOUT PRACTICE

*You should attend if you're a designer (print, web or video) or a business-minded soul who is looking to take creative ideas and turn them into something SATISFYING & BANKABLE. Anyone creative with an open mind will take away something useful. This is a day of active learning, not just idle listening. Only 270 seats available. REGISTER NOW*

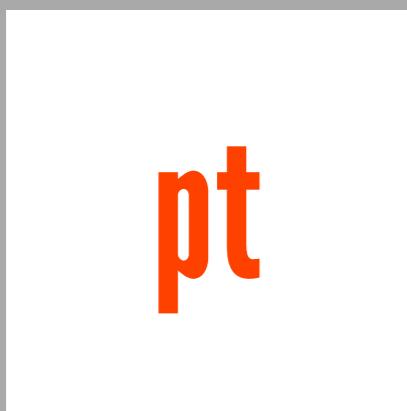
THE VENUE WILL INFORM THE DISCUSSION TOO, SEED WILL BE HELD IN THE "CATHEDRAL OF MODERNISM"

## CROWN HALL *by* Mies van der Rohe

*Painstakingly renovated in 2005, Crown Hall stands as one of the most important buildings of the modern age and it was also held in the highest regard by Mies himself who said it best represented his "architecture of almost nothing."*

\* THE DAY'S SCHEDULE *and* INVITED GUESTS \*

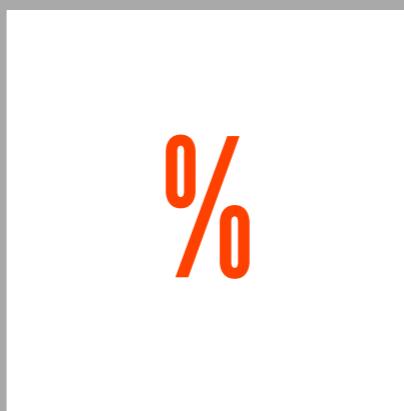
- Limitation has encouraged us to concentrate on the other aspects of typography we can control.



PRINT



SCREEN



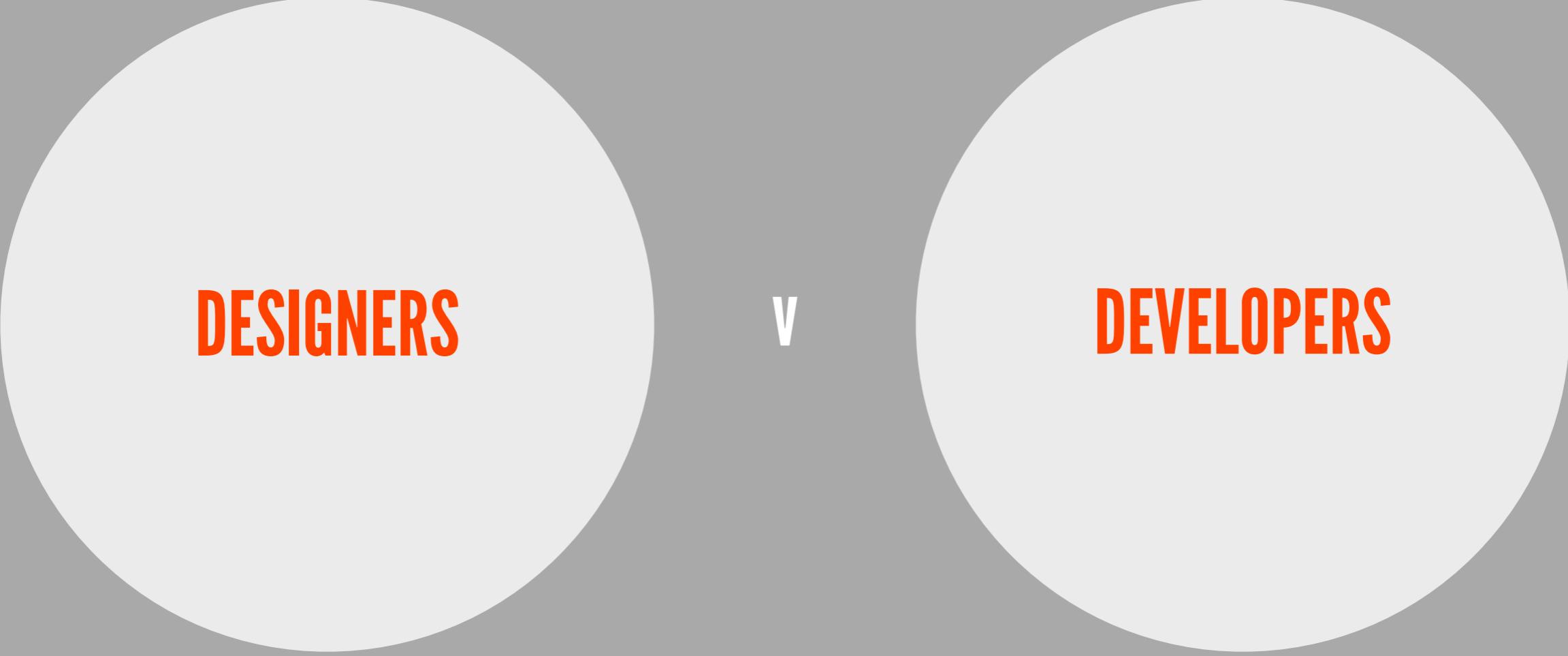
WEB



- We also tend to think in a web native way in terms of the units of measure we choose to use.
- Print and screen units are absolute, web units are relative to elements of the design.

# TWO TRIBES

- There are a multitude of different skills involved in designing for the web.
- Practitioners are often divided into two camps: designers and developers.

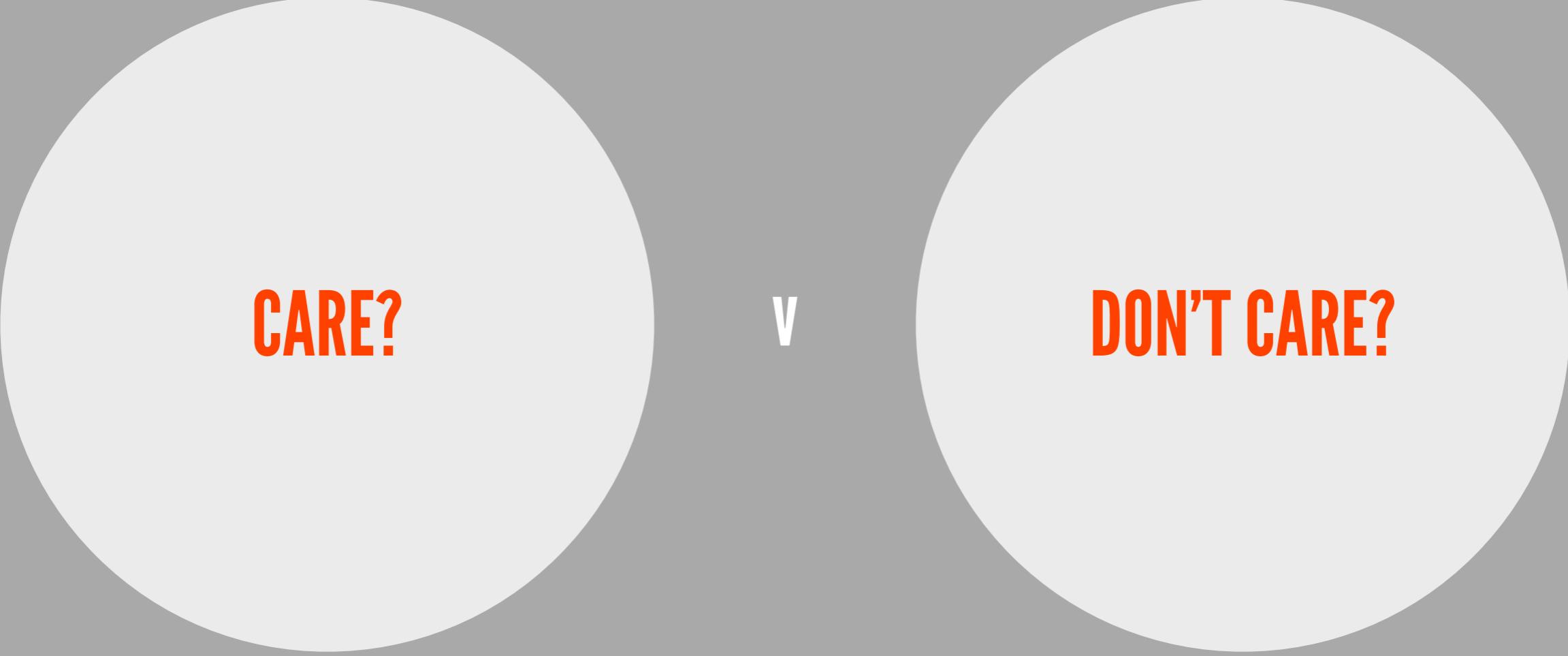


**DESIGNERS**

v

**DEVELOPERS**

- **This is a false division.**
- Visual language is developed, a database designed.
- Are these in fact interchangeable terms?
- Instead we should realise individual specialisms.
- All involved should maintain a broad set of knowledge.
- Developer: copy, designer: databases.

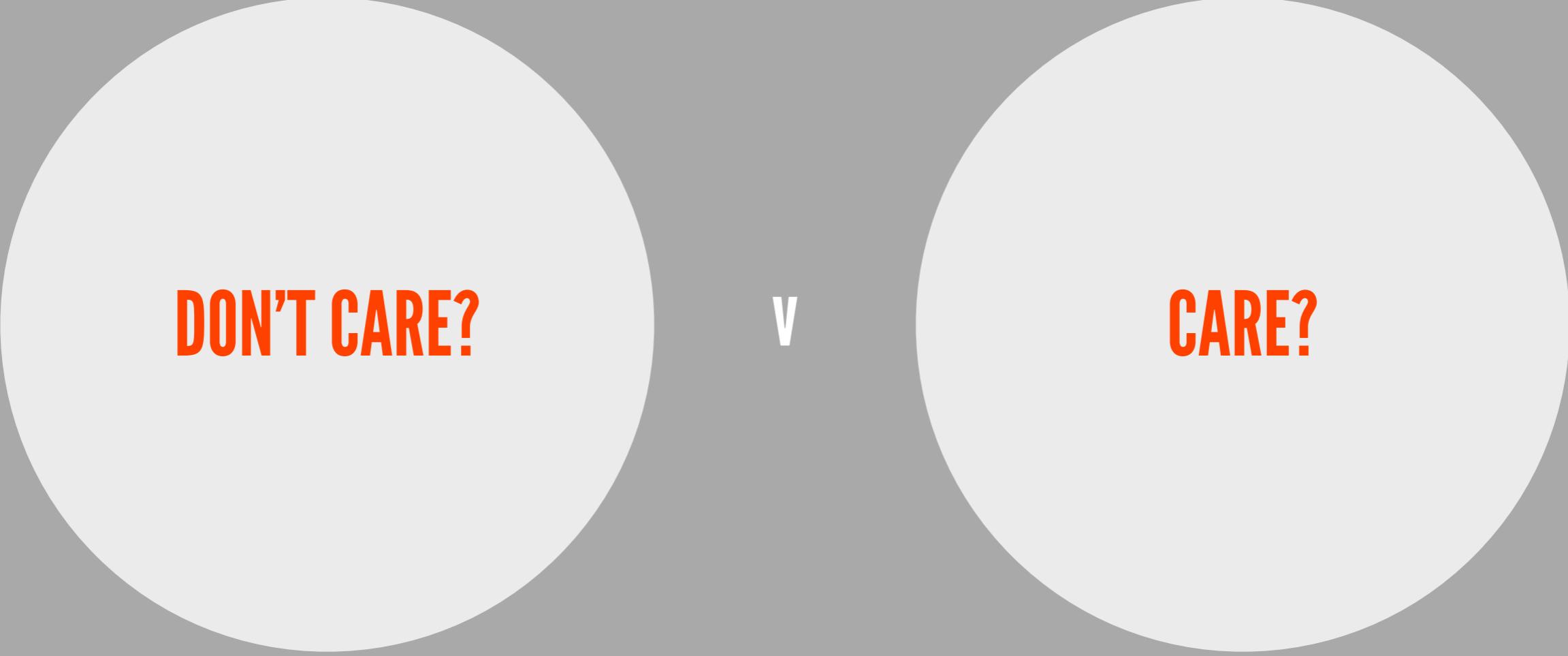


CARE?

DON'T CARE?

V

- Started to think whether the actual difference was those who care about a project, and those who don't.
- Designers will often ask for more time to complete a project, can **often find it difficult to ship**.
- Developers will often cite budgets and timeframes, suggesting that **if something works, it's ready**.



**DON'T CARE?**

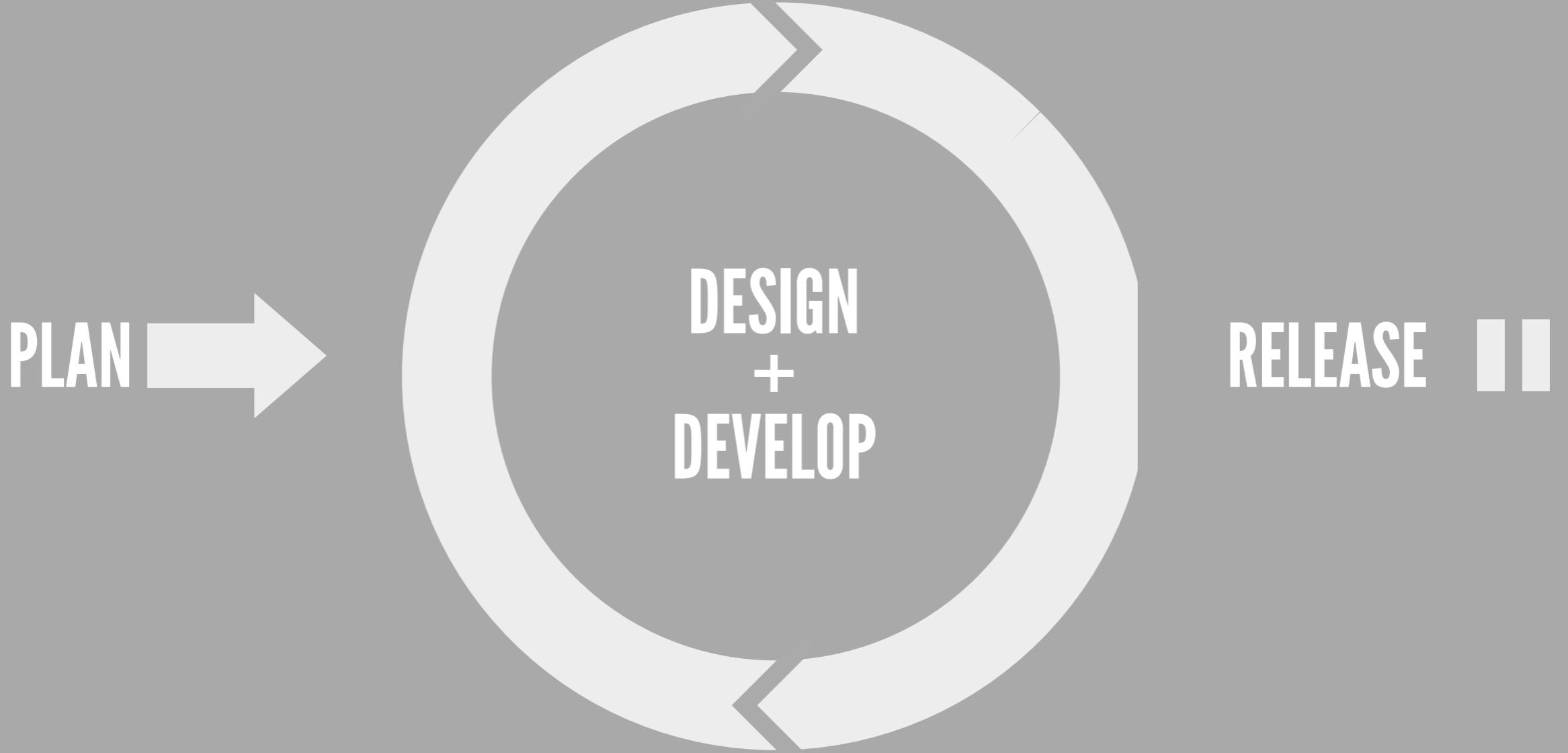
V

**CARE?**

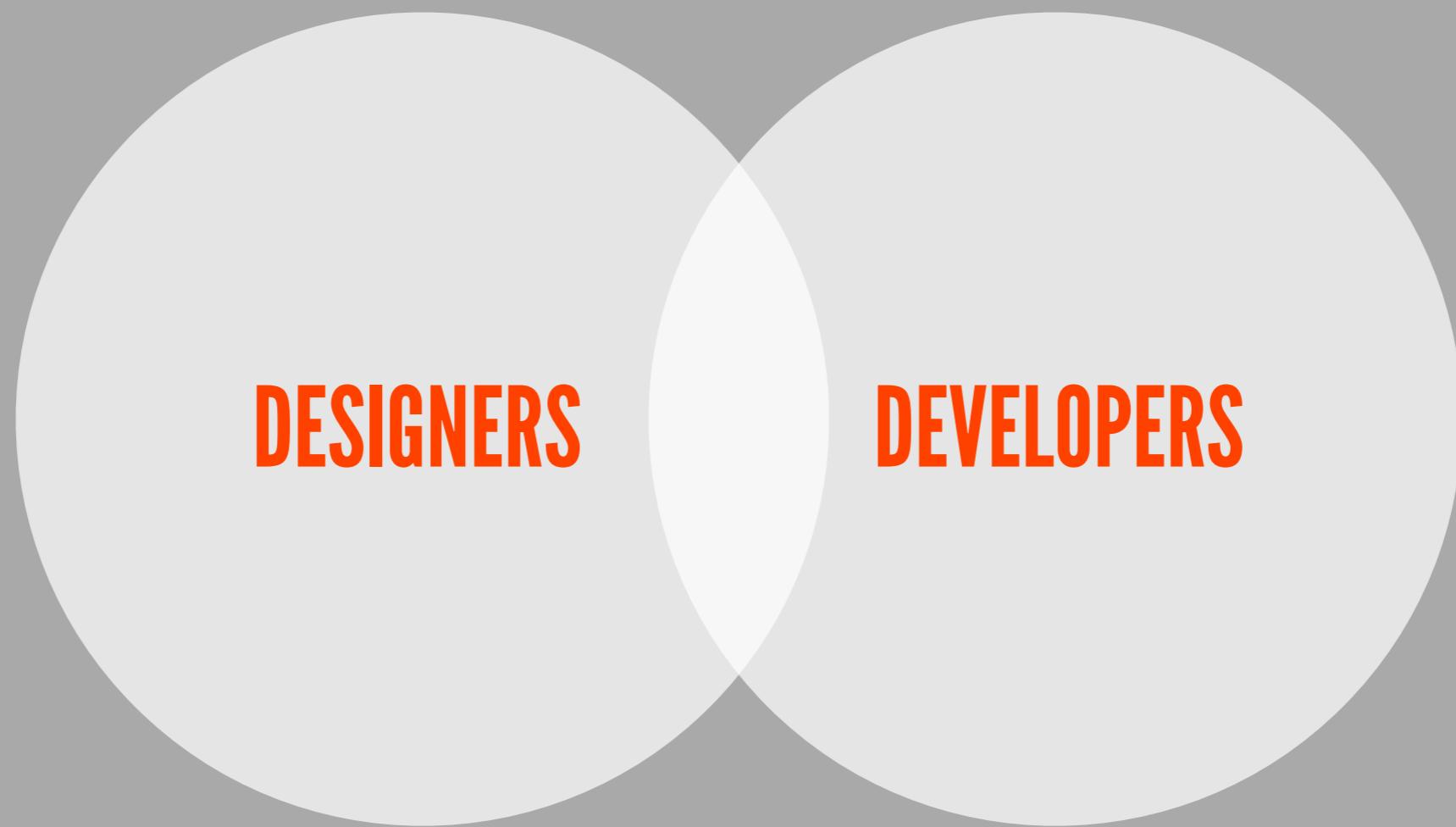
- When I was talking to my colleagues, there are plenty of examples where it's the other way round too!
- Easy to fall into the trap!



- Tension often a result of the process.
- After months of research, wire-framing and designing, left to developers to actually deliver the product.
- Yet too often they have had little involvement in the project during the earlier stages.



- Here developers work alongside designers, typically working in iterations.
- Building out a product over time; means you can test your designs as you go.
- Only agile if you do many cycles!
- No process is foolproof, you can have good waterfall projects, and bad agile projects.



- Best projects occur when everybody is involved at every stage.
- Then you can solve problems together.
- Static comps.
- Many questions arise when creating a website that means a close relationship is essential.
- Even more important as we begin to build websites that adapt to different browsers and devices.

# COMMUNICATION

- Good communication is essential.
- I think style guides can be an important addition to how we work on the web.
- Big projects with a large number of stakeholders.
- Ensure consistency and promote a common working language.

# *Global visual language*

- One example is the Global Visual Language now being used by the BBC.

Desktop

Search

BBC

News | Sport | Weather | iPlayer | TV | Radio | More ▾

Search the BBC

# GEL | Global Experience Language

Home | Philosophy | Foundations | Building Blocks | Patterns

An Introduction to GEL

# GEL Authentic, Current, Pioneering, Modern British, Local/Global, Compelling, Distinctive, Joined-up, Universal, Best.

## Building a Global Experience Language for the BBC

We are evolving a global experience language for the BBC's digital services.

The GEL guidelines are a reference point for all designers creating BBC websites (future iterations will also incorporate mobile and IPTV recommendations).

 Download GEL styleguide

**BUILDING BLOCKS**

### Typography

Large bold type should be used to establish a clear information hierarchy.

**FOUNDATIONS**

### Universal Grid

Your starting point is a universal grid, divided into 61 x 16px vertical units.

**FOUNDATIONS**

### The Masthead

The global masthead retains the current global navigation links with additional links.

**PATTERNS**

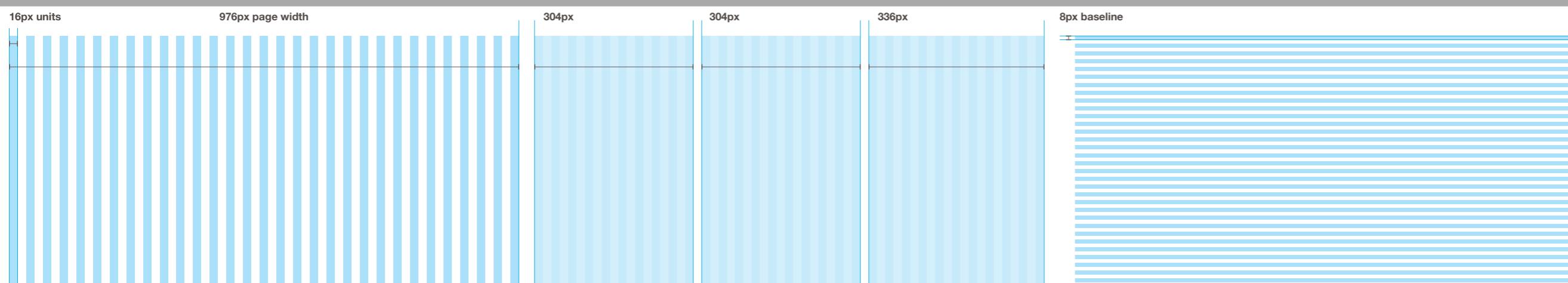
### Overlay Panels

The overlay panel is an interaction pattern that is used to shift the user's focus from the main page to a single element or group of elements.

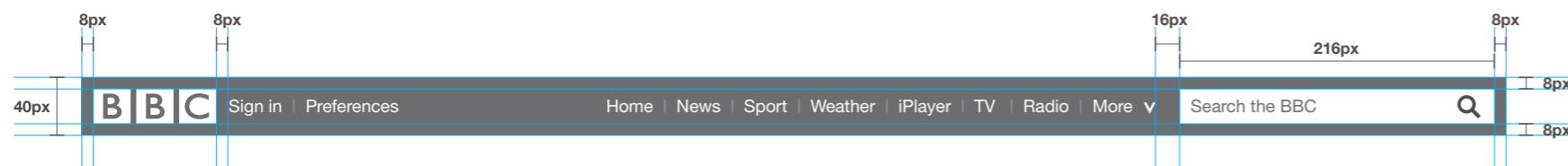
“This is probably the best job in the world!

Neville Brody, Research Studios

- Based on ten founding design principles summarise common goals and priorities.
- Used to weigh up design choices that might arise later.



## 04 Global Masthead



## 05 Local Mastheads



## 07 Typography

**Helvetica Regular**  
 ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ  
 abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz  
 1234567890!@£\$%^&\*()\_+

**Helvetica Bold**  
 ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ  
 abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz  
 1234567890!@£\$%^&\*()\_+

## 08 Typographic Hierarchy

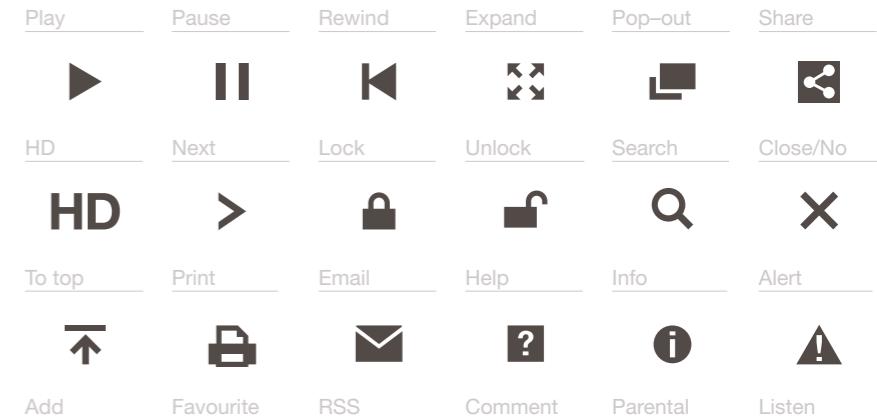
**Helvetica Bold 48px**  
48px Leading / -30 Tracking  
**Helvetica Bold 36px**  
36px Leading / -30 Tracking  
**Helvetica Bold 32px**  
32px Leading / -20 Tracking  
**Helvetica Bold 28px**  
28px Leading / -15 Tracking  
**Helvetica Bold 24px**

- Consisting of font usage, grids and layout variations.
- Building blocks.

## 06 Type Specification

**Super Header 36px**  
**Header 32px**  
**Subheader 20px**  
 TIME STAMPS 11PX CAPITALS  
 Copy 13px Helvetica Bold on 16px leading Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Fusce sed leo. Maecenas ultrices lorem sit amet diam. Aliquam sollicitudin tristique nulla. Duis libero diam, condimentum et, condimentum in, congue eu, tellus. Phasellus eu elit at nisi ultricies lobortis. Suspendisse porta commodo leo. Sed tincidunt tincidunt massa.  
 Copy 13px Helvetica Roman on 16px leading Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Fusce sed leo. Maecenas ultrices lorem sit amet diam. Aliquam sollicitudin tristique nulla. Duis libero diam, condimentum et, condimentum in, congue eu, tellus. Phasellus eu elit at nisi ultricies lobortis. Suspendisse porta commodo leo. Sed tincidunt tincidunt massa.  
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💬 COMMENTS 11PX CAPITAL  
✉ EMAIL 11PX CAPITAL  
🖨 PRINT 11PX CAPITAL

## 09 Iconography





Bellamy's People  
13.01.10

## Add more to this page X

Add your favourite BBC content and remove topics that don't interest you. Click here to choose anything from 'Entertainment' to 'History'. You can move sections around the page - and open and close them - so that everything's arranged just how you like it.

# SPORT

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# SPORT

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Eas

Eas

EastEnders

EastEnders omnibus

EastEnders revealed

EastEnders omnibus

EastEnders

**EastEnders omnibus**

EastEnders revealed

- Different interactions and behaviours of common elements used across the site.
- Can be added to over time as people find new components they use often.
- Updated and added to.

# *Fixed*

- Still fixed width, but again, a visual language is essential for websites appearing in different contexts.
- Matter of time before the BBC embraces the responsive design.
- More cost effective producing one adaptive site than several bespoke ones.

# *Common Foundation*

- Common foundation provides an element of predictability.
- Developers can build with a set of known assumptions in mind.
- Separate agencies or groups can build different websites that work as part of a greater whole.

# *Design system*

- Design principles define common goals.
- Visual language and design patterns provide building blocks.
- Sounds like a system doesn't it?



**DYNAMIC**

**ADAPTABLE**

**SYSTEMATIC**

- Design **system**.
- That can be **updated** as designers find new requirements.
- With a strong visual language that allows websites to **adapt** yet appear similar across devices.
- Sounds like the beginning of a web native approach.

# THANK-YOU

<http://paulrobertlloyd.com/2011/03/webnative>

@paulrobertlloyd