

UX & Product basics for Startups

Session 1: Personas & Validation

Ricardo Lamego

UX / Product Designer

“

*Eighty-six percent of product ideas are born
from a developer's personal pain.*

These ideas are for products nobody needs.

Tomer Sharon

in Validating Product Ideas

BASED ON ANALYSIS OF 101 STARTUP POSTMORTEMS Top 20 Reasons Startups Fail

NO MARKET NEED



42%

RAN OUT OF CASH



29%

*"I realized, essentially, that we had no customers because no one was really interested in the model we were pitching. **Doctors want more patients, not an efficient office.**"*

4 Agenda



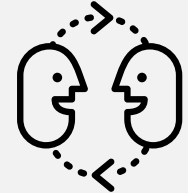
Personas



Q&A



Validation



Q&A



Personas Workshop

What is a Persona?

A Persona is a **fictional** representation of an actual **user** segment that describes their needs, desires, and goals.

Typically it also includes social and demographic characteristics, habits & behaviour, personality, and expertise among others.



FIRST TIME BUYER

Fiona

USER PERSONA
OFFR

ABOUT

Fiona and her fiancé are nervous buyers as they have read the horror stories online and in the newspapers. Initially they were very trusting of parties, but this trust has worn away and left them feeling uncertain and fearful about the process of buying a house.

Examples



"I look forward to the day when I can handle all my sales from my desk using online technology."

AGE	30 - 35
STATUS	Married
LOCATION	Dublin
JOB TITLE	Estate Agent
BUSINESS	Commercial
RANGE	Nationwide

ORGANIZED

OUTGOING

PATIENT

CONFLICT AVERSE



"I feel very daunted by the entire process, due to my inexperience, and I don't know who I should believe. I hope I never have to do this again."

AGE	25 - 35
STATUS	Married
LOCATION	Cork
JOB TITLE	Marketing manager
BUSINESS	Residential
RANGE	Cork

ENTHUSIASTIC

EXHAUSTED

NERVOUS

MORTGAGE BUYER

FIRST TIME BUYER

Fiona

ABOUT

Fiona and her fiancé are nervous buyers as they have read the horror stories online and in the newspapers. Initially they were very trusting of parties, but this trust has worn away and left them much more cynical after their one unsuccessful attempt to buy a property, when the sale fell through after being sale agreed for 3 months. She's still very willing to put hours of time and effort into the process, but this time is precious, particularly with the baby.

PAIN POINTS

- Having to arrange viewings over the phone during their working hours
- Placing offers is a very stressful experience
- They never know for sure if the other bidder is real

RATIONAL NEEDS

- To be guided through the process
- To trust someone so she feels no one is taking advantage of their inexperience

USER PERSONA
OFFR

DESIRES

- To get to the end of the process as quickly as possible
- An affordable one stop shop with all the services they need
- To get good advice and guidance from an impartial party with no agenda

EMOTIONAL NEEDS

- To feel reassured that everything is on track
- To be certain that the process is standard
- To go through it as painlessly as possible



USER PERSONA
OFFR

ch gives him the freedom to pursue his property ed. Like many other property investors, of property and a small but diverse part to markets. As he already spends so much of his in eye on properties, he's looking forward to

DESIRES

- To do their own research
- Professional treatment
- Fast(er) processes
- A proper platform

EMOTIONAL NEEDS

- Others to react as quickly as they do
- Proof there are other bidders
- Trust indicators



Examples

Persona Template

Name: DANIEL Age: 17 Occupation: STUDENT

Education: SLACKER

Description: Fill it with a story of your Persona problems that you're about to solve with your product.

DANIEL IS A SLACKER Reluctant learner
WORKS in SHORT BURSTS, NOT ACADEMIC
LIKES GAMES
RELATIVELY PRIVATE
5'10 / 6th year

Goals: What is this person trying to achieve? (one goal per line, 5 goals max)

REASSURANCE (DASHBOARD) /
LEADERSHIP / DIRECTION FROM SITE.
PROOF THAT HE IS WORKING
REWARD DRIVEN
CRAMMER QUICK FIX BARE BONES
GET THROUGH SCHOOL; GET THROUGH WORK QUICKLY.

Frustrations: What troubles or bothers this person? (one frustration per line, 5 max)

TOO MUCH STUFF TO READ
SOME TEACHERS DON'T 'GET' HIM.
EVERYTHING IS ABOUT COLLEGE
NOT ENOUGH ON SPORTS / NOT RELEVANT.

Trigger Words: What words is this person scanning for or subject to react to? (one per line, max 5)

ANSWERS
SHORTCUTS
VALIDATION ON TRACK
BULLETED (LISTS)

Personas: Fiona - First time buyer

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1lMbLNOHklvm2jMMm_raQGh2k7JU_rv7zG2MAIX2Nqo0/...

Personas: Fiona - First time buyer

File Edit View Insert Format Tools Add-ons Help Last edit was on July 17

100%

Viewing

Fiona

Age: 25 - 35
Occupation: Marketing manager
Location: Cork
Range: Looking to buy a 3 bed semi in a specific area of Cork
Education: 3rd level or level 8

Short bio:

Recently married with one small baby
Works Monday to Friday 9-5
Fiona and her fiancé are nervous buyers as they have read the horror stories online and in the newspapers. Initially they were very trusting of parties, but this trust has worn away and left them much more cynical after their one unsuccessful attempt to buy a property, when the sale fell through after being sale agreed for 3 months.
She's still very willing to put hours of time and effort into the process, but this time is precious, particularly with the baby.

Summary:

- Young and enthusiastic
- Exhausted from the pressures of work, baby and having to rent
- Nervous about making a mistake
- Educated and smart, quick to learn
- Professionals with good income
- Tech enabled and mobile centric
- Online banking, shopping and travel

Pain Points

- Having to arrange viewings over the phone during their working hours.
- Placing offers is a very stressful experience. They have to wait to hear from the estate agent to see if their offer has been accepted and inevitably the phone call is to tell them a higher offer has been received
- They have had to take so much time off work to view properties, sign documents, call into the estate agent's office.

1 of 3

Why are Personas important?

- Personas bring focus to organisations

They provide the teams with a shared understanding of the users' goals and needs

- Personas create empathy

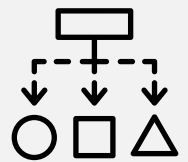
A user centric organisation has a better chance of succeeding

- Personas drive decisions

They remove the guesswork and reduce conflicts of interest among stakeholders

- Personas have *possibly* the highest ROI

Of all UX activities, Personas have the deepest and longest impact across all areas of business



Persona Framework

1. Pick a source and gather data

- Google Analytics, interviews, support tickets, direct observation, etc
- Create a record

2. Validate

- Is this consistent with previous data?
- Can you cross-reference with other sources?

3. Classify and aggregate

- What type of information is this?
- Does this pertain to a new section or user?

4. Check for bias and repeat

- Reexamine your findings, check for bias and repeat:

1

Let's build your first Persona

- * Before you start, go through the list and ask yourself if each particular element is relevant for your product / service.



Age range:

- ☐ 18 - 24
- ☐ 25 - 34
- ☐ 35 - 44
- ☐ 45 - 54
- ☐ 55 - 65
- ☐ > 65

Gender distr.

- ☐ Men
- ☐ Women
- ☐ Mostly men
- ☐ Mostly women
- ☐ Even
- ☐ Irrelevant

Occupation _____

Name _____

Marital Status _____

Occupation _____

Family size _____

Income _____

Summary _____

Quote _____

Goals _____

Pain points _____



Quick persona worksheet
RicardoLamego.design

1st: Demographic information

Fill out **age range, gender / gender distribution and occupation.**

If you know them and they are relevant for your product/service, fill out Marital status, Family size, Income, and Education



2nd: Name

Based on the gender (and gender distribution) pick a name for your persona.

Descriptive names are good because they hint on important aspects like the user occupation or the main personality trait, like ***Bob the Builder, Postman Pat, Hardworking Harry*** or ***Competitive Carl*** for example but you can simply use *Bob, Pat, Harry and Carl*.



Name: dos and don'ts

Do

- Make it descriptive even if it reflects negative aspects.
- Pick a name you'd feel comfortable using in public.
- Use a gender neutral name if the distribution is even (*Alex, Casey, Dylan, etc.*)
- Avoid bias at all costs by reviewing constantly and working with others.

Don't

- Use a *real* name, either from your team or customers/users, or historical figure.
- Pick a name that promotes bias like *Betty the blonde* or *Slow Steve*.
- Use *ethnic* or *generational* name unless it represents your target market/audience.
- Make it unnecessary long



Example

Persona Template

Name: DANIEL

Age: 17

Occupation: STUDENT

Education: SLACKER

Description:

Fill it with a story of your Persona problems that you're about to solve with your product.

DANIEL is A ~~SLACKER~~ Reluctant learner

WORKS in SHORT BURSTS, NOT ACADEMIC

LIKES GAMES

RELATIVELY PRIVATE

5th / 6th year



3rd: Background information

Add a **summary** and a **quote**.

Summary is a short (2 or 3 sentences long) biographical paragraph to provide some context to each persona.

Quote is a personal statement, made in the 1st person, that helps understand the persona's needs or challenges.

** If you are stuck:*

- Think of a story about this persona's problems you're about to solve with your product/service. That's your summary.



Example



"I look forward to the day when I can handle all my sales from my desk using online technology."

ESTATE AGENT

Aoife

USER PERSONA

OFFR

ABOUT

Aoife is an Estate Agent with 10 years of experience, working as a Senior Surveyor for one of the biggest Real Estate names in the country. She is specialised in commercial properties and although the majority of them is in Dublin, she works with properties nationwide. She typically deals with lots of customers and she's very conscious that she represents her company. Aoife recently got married and moved to a bigger place where she got a mortgage.

PAIN POINTS

DESIRES

4th: Goals

Add a bullet list of 3 to 5 goals, max.
Make them short and simple.

* *If you are stuck:*

- Think about rational and emotional needs in the first person.
 - *I need a way to measure the KPIs I report*
 - *I need to be recognised as a leader within my organisation*
- Mix **wants** and **needs**.
 - *I want a more efficient way to do these tasks*



5th: Pain points

Add a bullet list of 3 to 5 pain points, max.
Make them short and simple.

* *If you are stuck:*

- Think about obstacles your product/service might address or competitive advantages and turn them on their head to be expressed as a problem, eg:
 - Product saves time -> *Current method takes too much time*
 - Product is easy to use -> *All existing tools are hard to use*
 - Product is cheaper than competitors' -> *Existing solutions are way too expensive*



Finished?

Now that you've completed all the basic steps, look at your product again and ask yourself these questions:

- Would *persona_name* **use** my product / service?
- Would *persona_name* **buy** my product / service?

**You're now ready to move on to Step 2
of the Persona _____ Framework: Validate**



Step 2 - Validate

Survey

I have included a sample survey you can use to validate your assumptions. You'll need to copy to your Drive, add your own qualifying questions, customise its language, and look & feel.

<http://bit.ly/UXWSP-samplesurvey>

A screenshot of a Google Form titled "Persona survey" displayed on a tablet. The form has a yellow header and a white content area. The text inside the form reads: "Welcome message and description of survey purpose. Inform people that this form is anonymous and how much time it should take." Below this text is a grey button labeled "NEXT". To the right of the button is a progress bar with a blue segment and the text "Page 1 of 5". At the bottom of the form, it says "Never submit passwords through Google Forms." The tablet is shown with a black bezel and rounded corners.

Persona survey

Welcome message and description of survey purpose.
Inform people that this form is anonymous and how much time it should take.

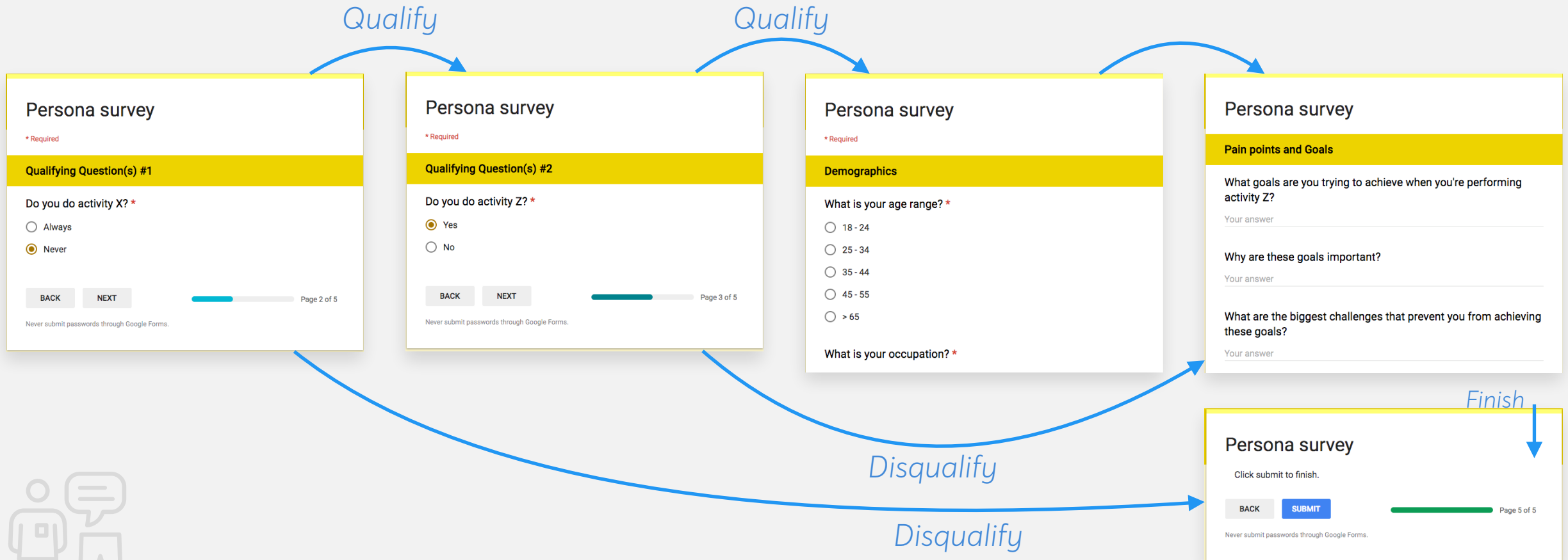
NEXT

Page 1 of 5

Never submit passwords through Google Forms.

Tip: use qualifying questions

How the form was created:

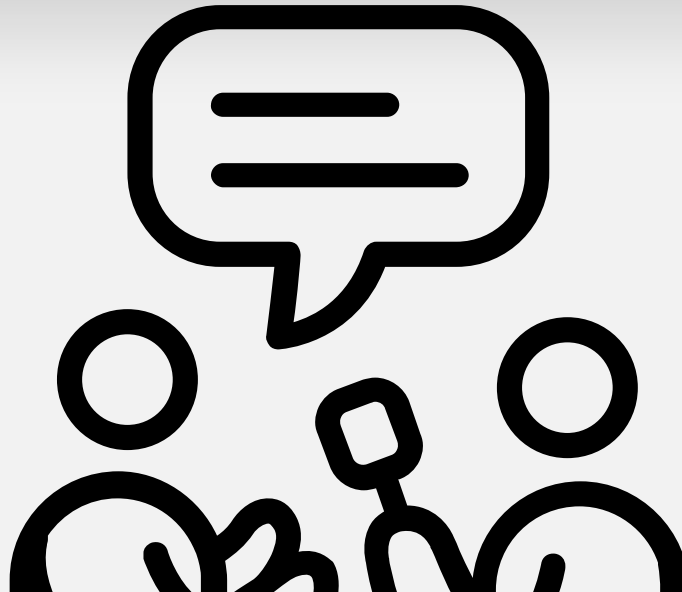


2 Step 2 - Validate

User interviews

I have included a few sample questions to kickstart your conversations with users.

<http://bit.ly/UXWSP-sampleq>



Questions

Use these in an informal conversation with your (potential) users.
Take notes and record their answers for future reference.

- So tell me about how you spend a typical day or week ...
- What activities take up most of your time?
- What is/are your biggest pain point(s)?
- What would an ideal day or week look like? What would you be doing?
- How is the real world different from that ideal week?
- So tell me how you use [product name] ...
- What does it allow you to do, that you couldn't do otherwise?
- Have you used other [products] to do that in the past

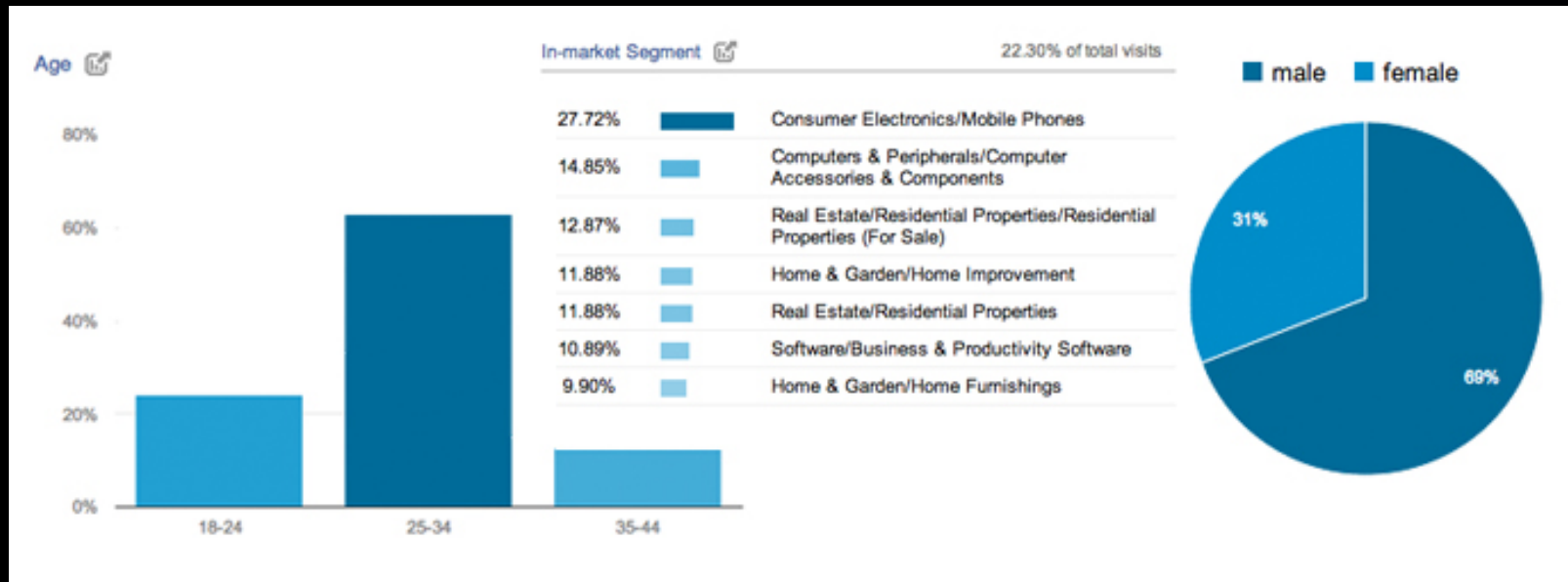


2

Step 2 - Validate

Google Analytics

In the next session...

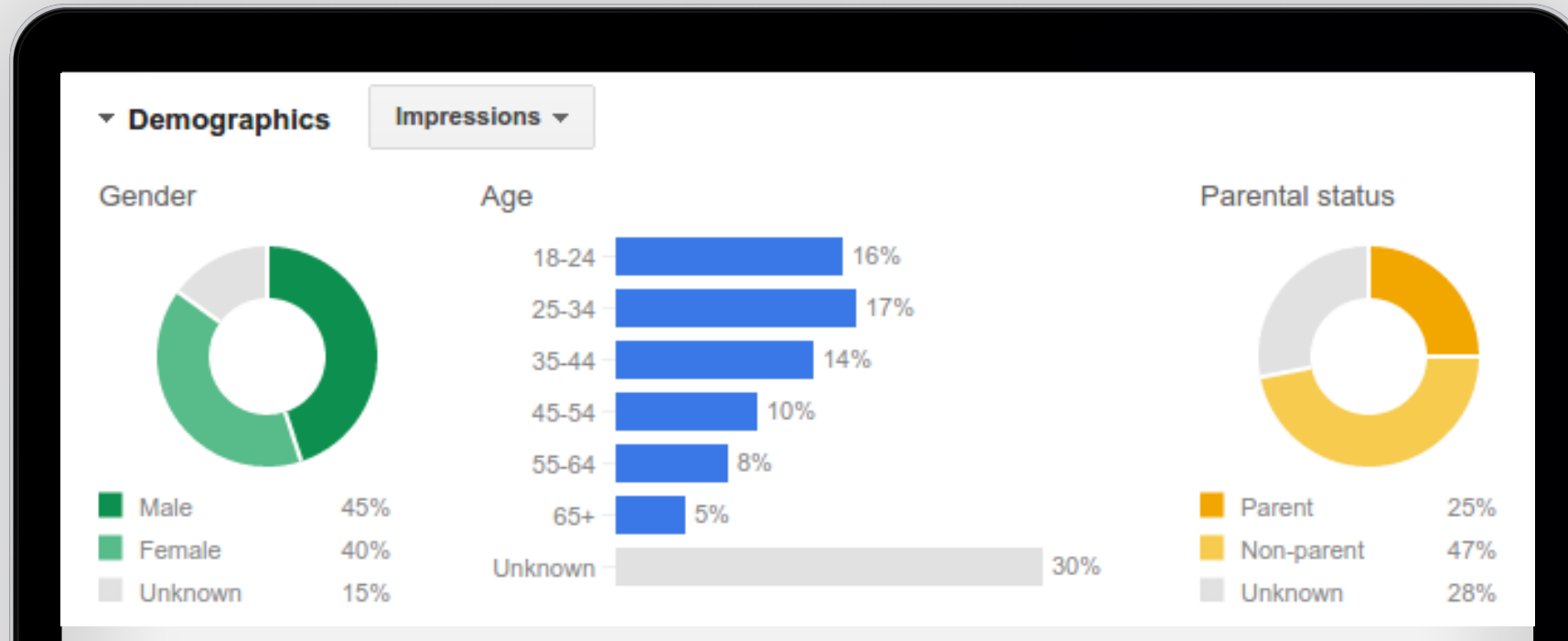


2

Step 2 - Validate

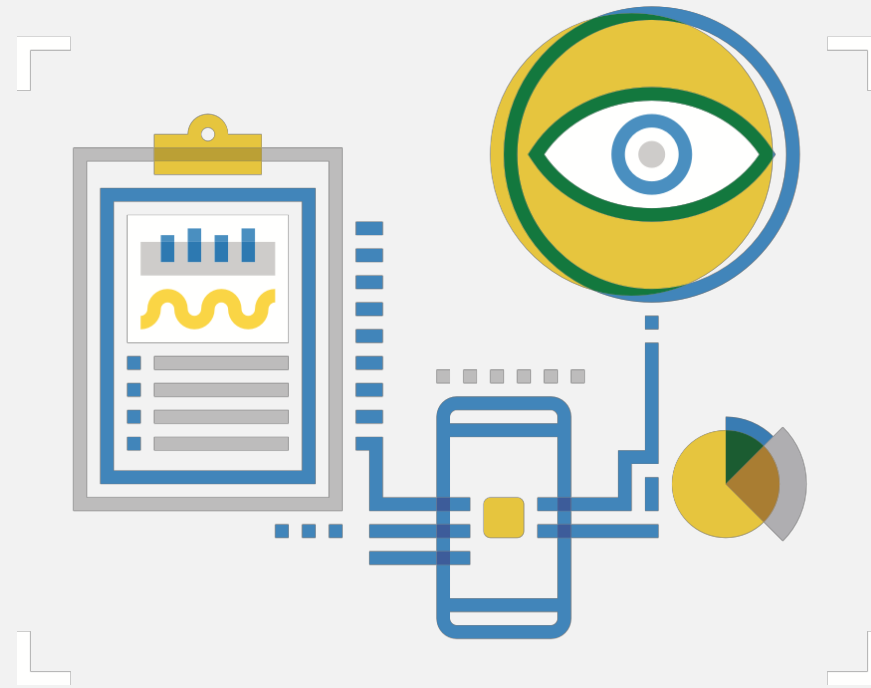
Google Analytics (+ Google Ads)

In the next session...





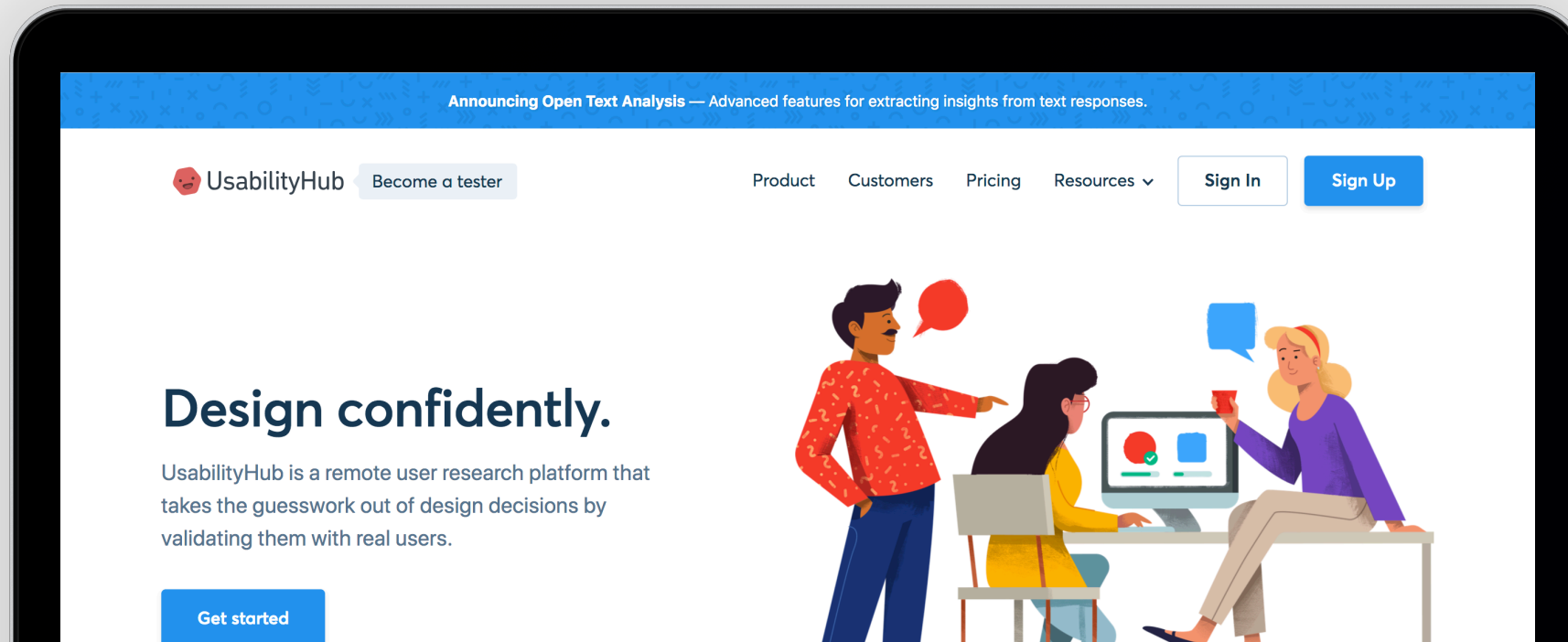
Questions?



Validation Workshop

UsabilityHub.com

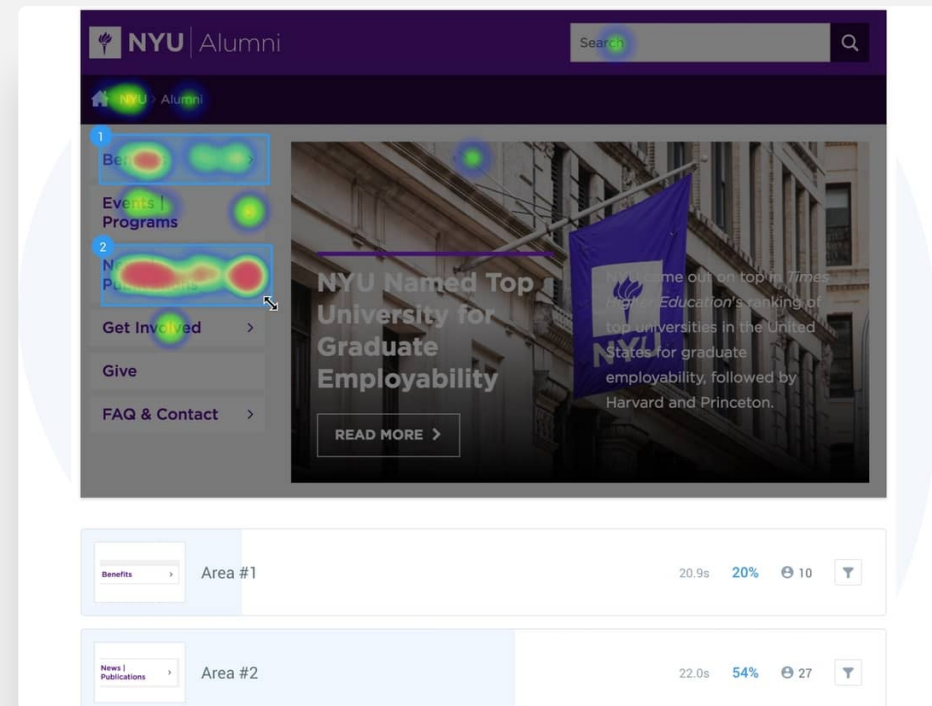
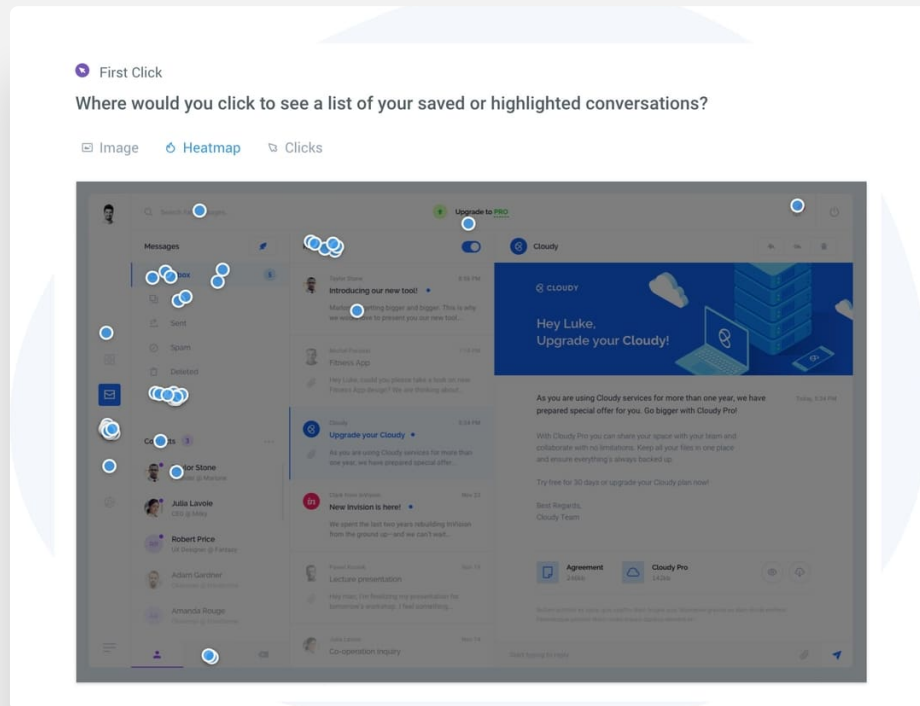
UsabilityHub is a remote user research platform that takes the guesswork out of design decisions by validating them with real users



First click tests

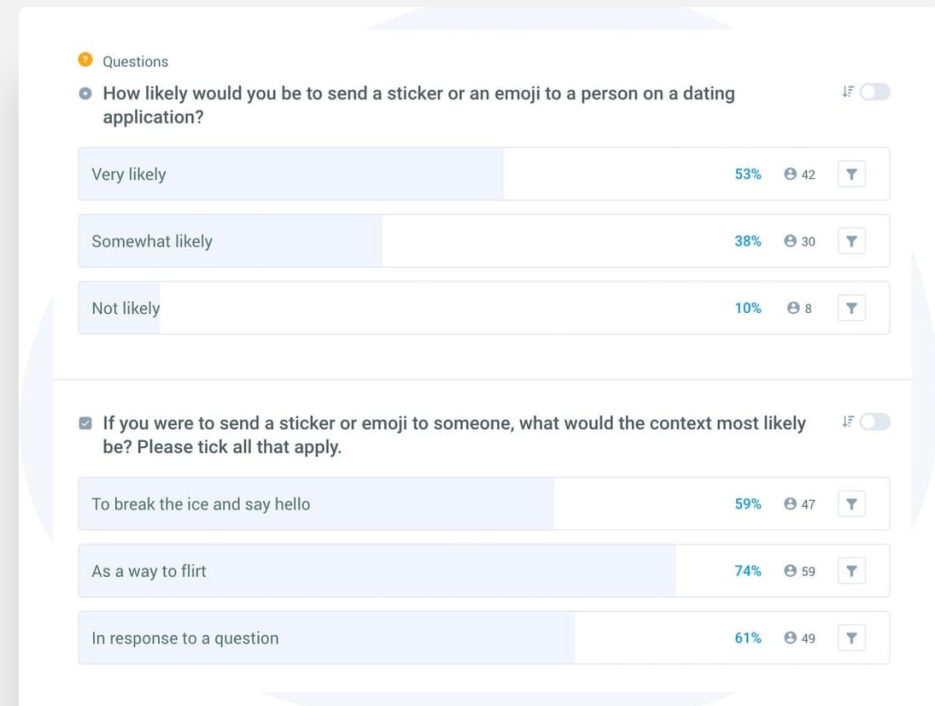
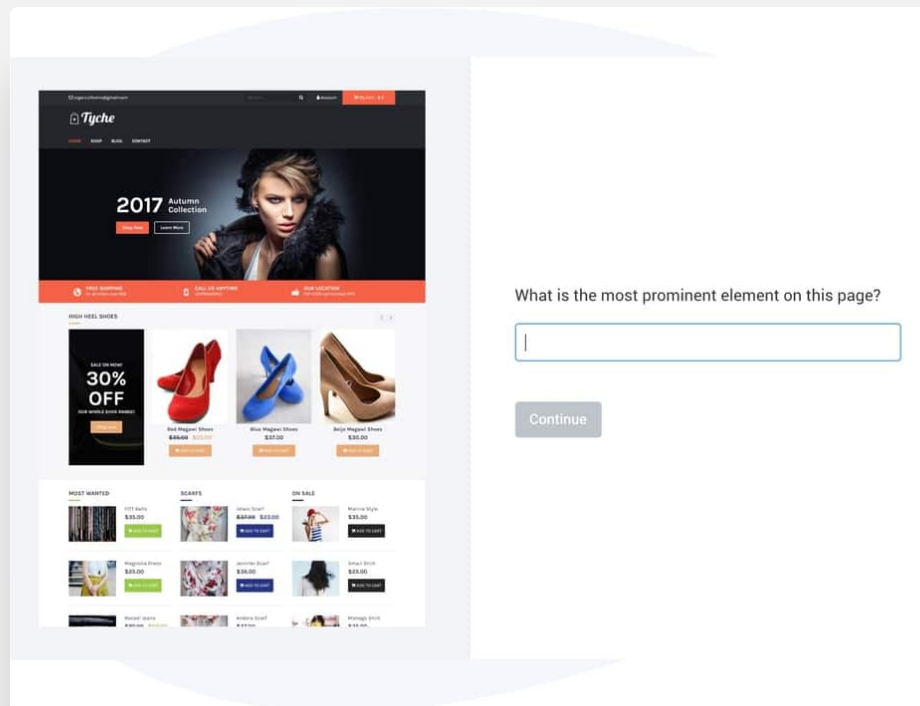
Click analysis

Assess the effectiveness of the links and content hierarchy, by measuring how people complete tasks using your designs.



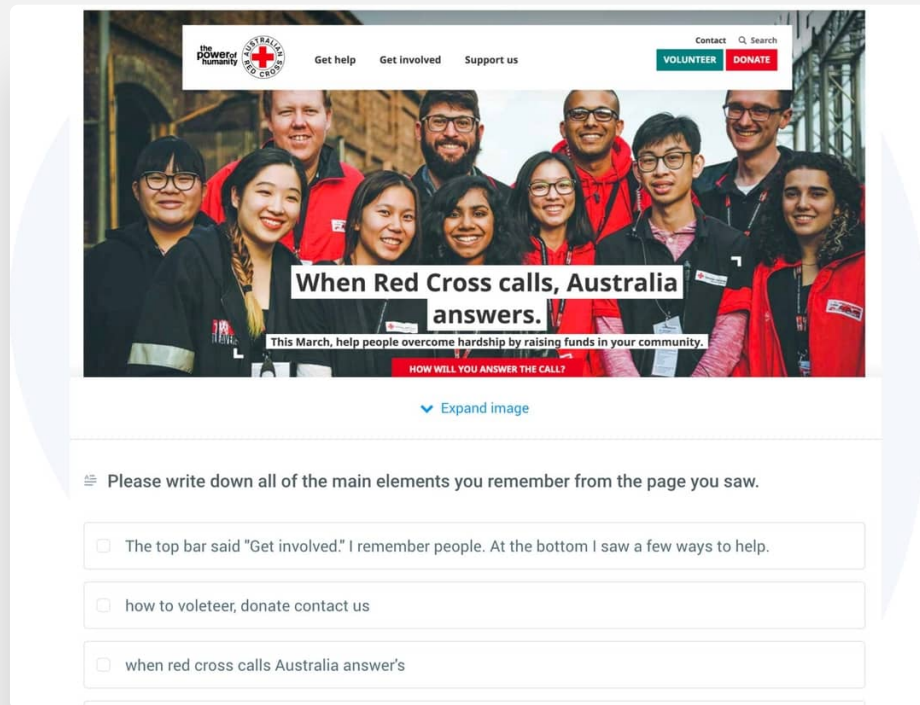
Design surveys

Make confident decisions by collecting user feedback validating your assumptions.



Five second tests

Optimise the clarity of your designs by measuring first impressions





Questions?

“

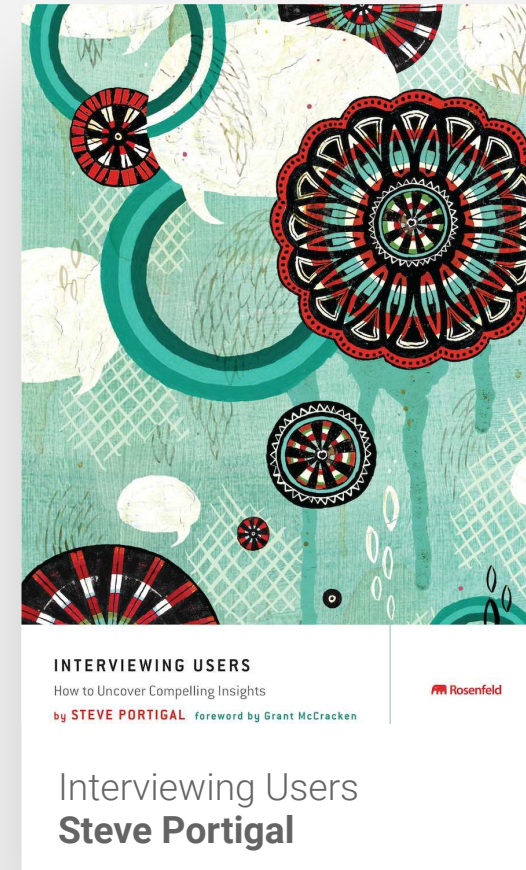
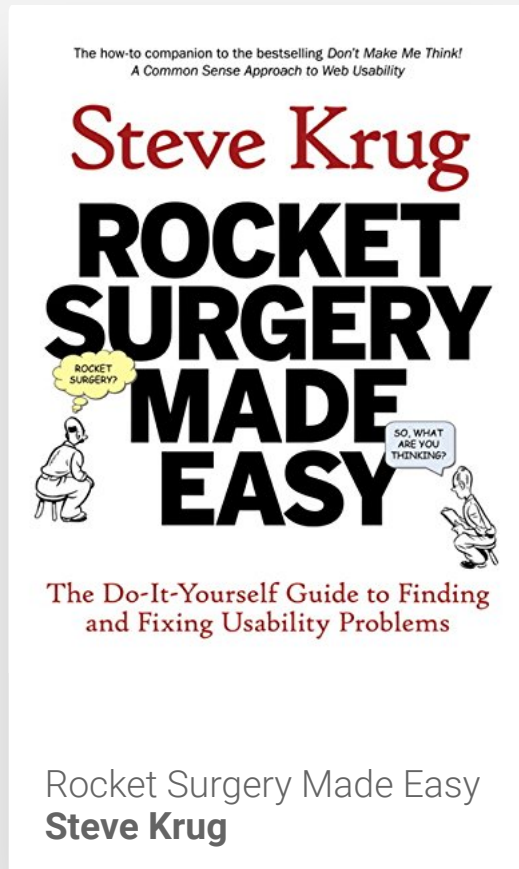
*The first rule of user research:
never ask anyone what they want.*



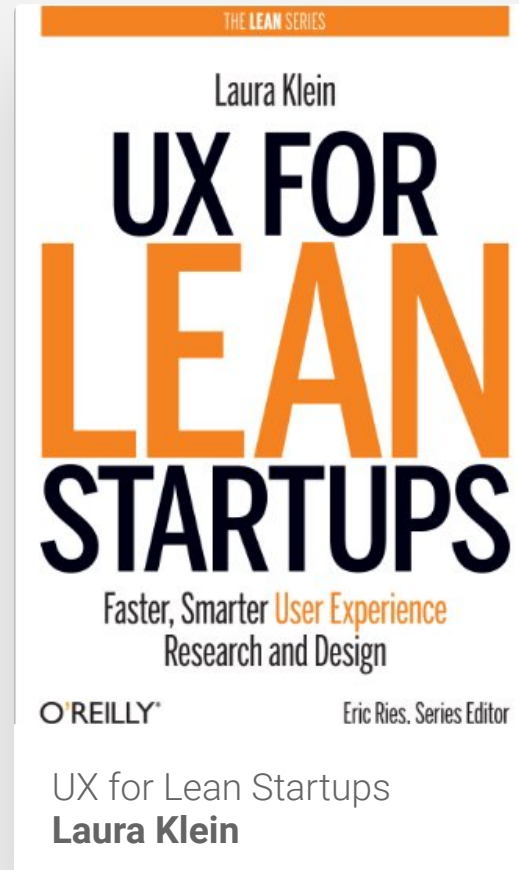
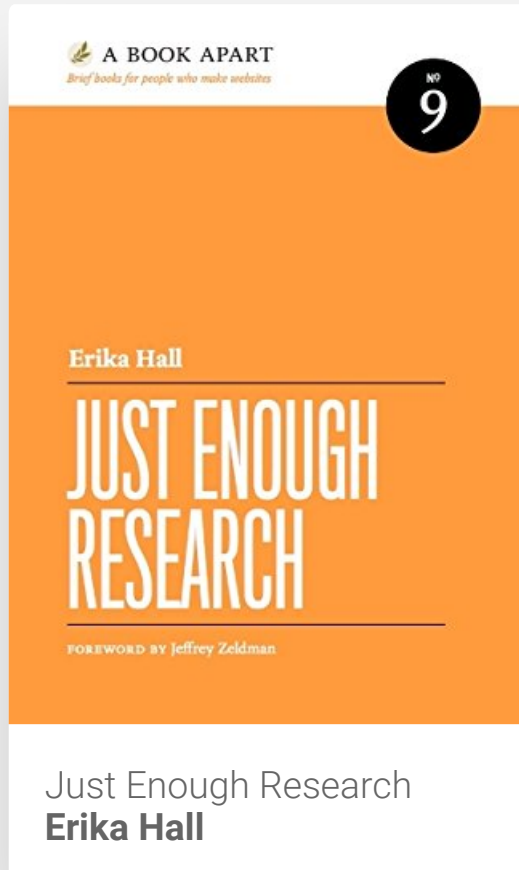
Erika Hall

in Just Enough Research

35 Recommended reading



36 Recommended reading



Thank you

hello@ricardolamego.design

Ricardo Lamego

UX / Product Designer