

Moving from execution to strategy as a designer

Design in Product 2022

Hi, I'm Catt!



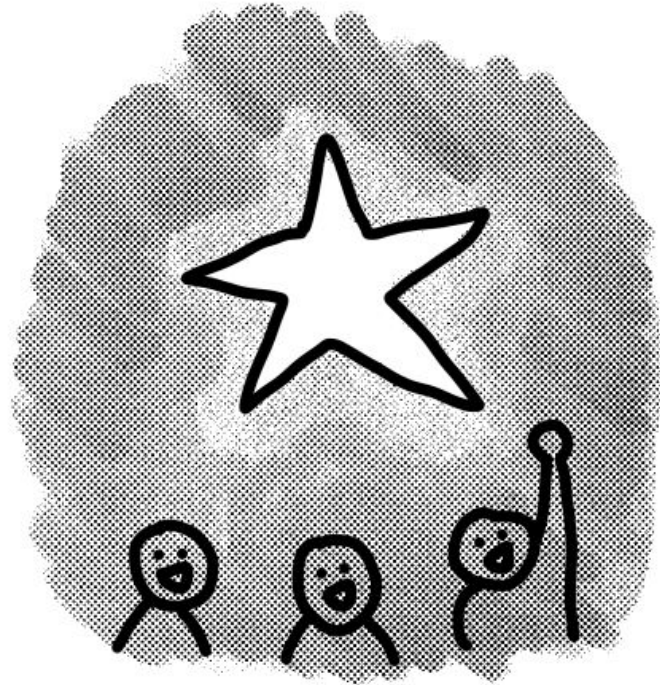
- ◇ Director of Product Design, All Turtles
- ◇ Game developer
- ◇ Co-organizer, Game Devs of Color Expo

Today, we'll discuss:

- ◇ Strategic design
- ◇ How designers get sidelined
- ◇ Tips and tactics for adding design value to product strategy

Why strategic
design matters

Direction



Innovation



Confidence





Why do designers get
sidelined so often?



Too many companies **wait until they think they know the solution** to a problem then engage design

— Sarrah Vesselov, *Why UX Designers Don't Feel Valued—and Why This Is a Problem for Your Business* (2022)

Zhuzh it up

Add spice

*Make this
prettier*

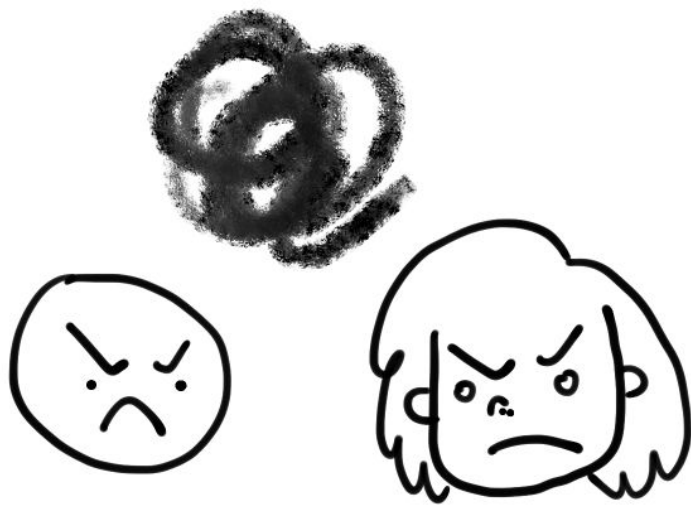
*Tighten up
the graphics*

*Mock this up
for me*

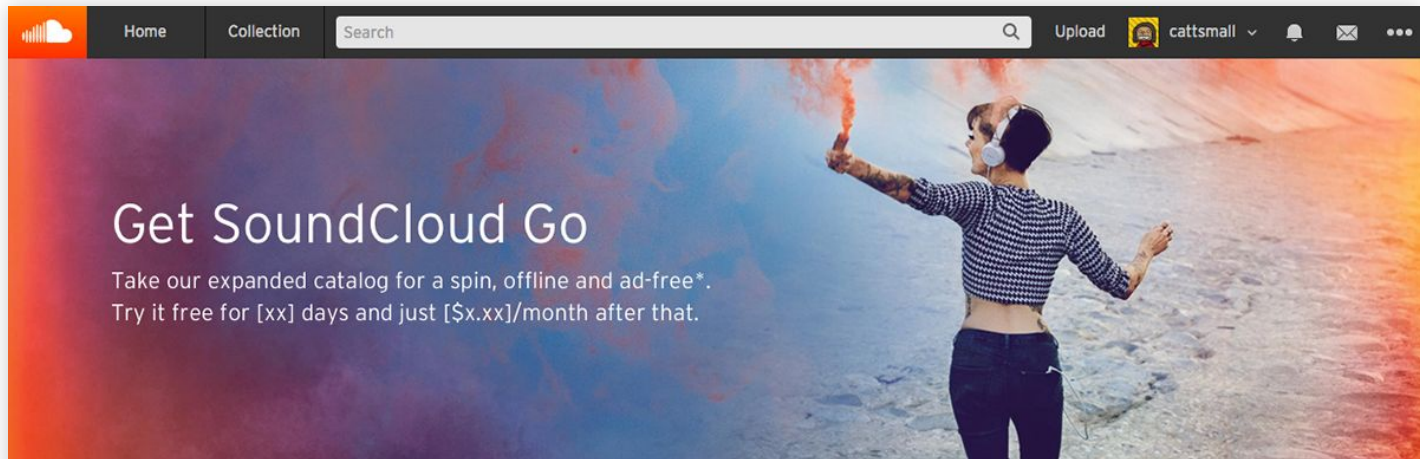
*Photoshop
my idea*

*I need this
to *POP**





This results in frustrating
outcomes for designers,
teams, and customers.



Choose your payment method

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US-issued cards only. Your card won't be charged until your trial ends on [Month DD, YYYY], after which you'll be charged monthly. You can cancel at any time. With this purchase, you agree to the [SoundCloud Go Terms of Use](#).

*No interruptive audio or visual experiences.

Under pressure from investors, SoundCloud introduced advertising on the site in 2014 and the following year launched SoundCloud Go, a \$9.99 a month subscription service that puts it in direct competition with Spotify and Apple Music.

But despite monthly user numbers of 175m — Spotify has 140m — more than a third of whom are under the age of 25, SoundCloud has been unable to persuade advertisers to buy space. Its users are also unwilling to buy subscriptions.

Adding strategy to product design

Tactic 1

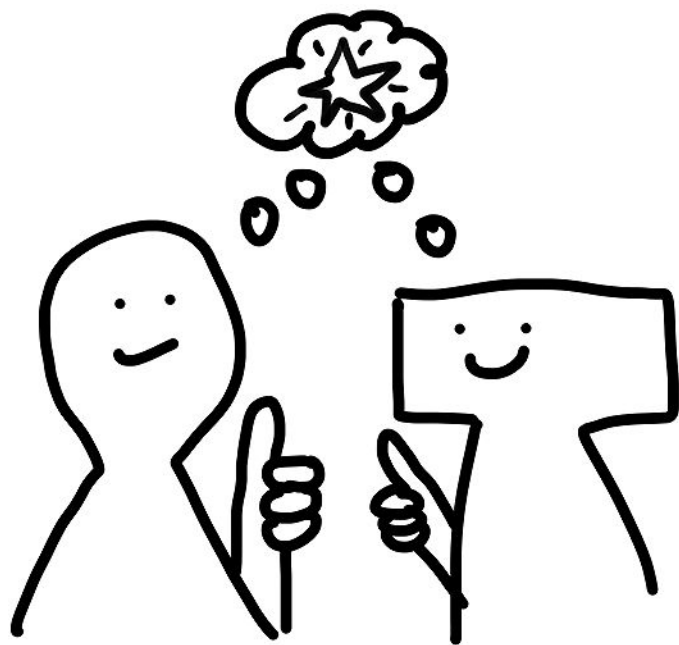
Focus on goals



Where many designers fall short is not learning about the organization. They **lack an understanding of the business strategy**, which can lead to misalignment amongst cross-functional teams.

— Eric Chung, *Why designers should get involved in business strategy* (2022)

Everyone around you has goals. Learn what they are.



Deconstructing Business models

Types

Freemium

Offers a product or service for free, charges for additional (premium) features. Good for acquiring new customers.

Subscription

Customer pays a recurring fee to access a product. Can be added to freemium model. SaaS falls under this category.

Advertising

Doesn't charge a fee for product, but does show ads. Makes money by selling access to that audience. Can also be mixed with freemium.

Business model canvas

(Through the lens of a lemonade stand)

CUSTOMERS

Users of your company's products or services



CHANNELS

How your company interacts with its customers, markets, and makes sales.



VALUE PROPOSITION

Value your company provides to its customers.



ACTIVITIES

Things you do and build as a company to function.



PARTNERS

Anyone (person, group, or company) your biz works with to be a successful company.



REVENUE

How your company makes money.



COSTS

What your biz spends money on.



At a large company, the list of activities (and their dependencies) might be huge.



Think about who your business depends on. Prioritize the dependencies and focus on winning at those!



Marketplace

Facilitates transactions between buyers and sellers. Charges a fee to participate and/or takes a percentage of each sale.

* Requires buyers and sellers; can lead to a chicken + egg problem.

Estimating MARKET or OPPORTUNITY SIZE

TAM

(TOTAL ADDRESSABLE MARKET)
The total market demand for a product that would be captured in an ideal market.

Examples

of people wanting to order a taxi from point A to point B



of people who travel & need a place to stay

TAM shows a company's potential to grow, even though it's impossible to capture the entire market.

Goal: land in the right order of magnitude. (dozens vs hundreds, etc.)



How To ESTIMATE TAM

(using chocolate bar sales as an example)

① Identify moments of opportunity
Key use cases.



② Approximate approach
Storyboarding to assess the potential market.

$$\begin{matrix} \text{\# people who eat chocolate} \\ \times \\ \text{\# chocolate bars consumed per year} \end{matrix} = \text{Annual demand}$$

③ Simplify with assumptions
Add guesstimations to your scenario.

$$\begin{matrix} 5 \text{ billion chocolate lovers} \\ \times \\ 10 \text{ chocolate bars per year} \end{matrix} = 50 \text{ billion chocolate bars per year}$$

\$50b market! (it's actually \$100b - correct scale!)

Uses for TAM

- Illustrate potential impact of a new feature or product
- Estimate the impact of investing in new locations or languages
- Evaluating the value of a rebrand or new internal system

IN OTHER WORDS...

Fake numbers can help build CONFIDENCE to take risk!

Tactic 2

Show up

*What are open
questions research
can help us
answer?*

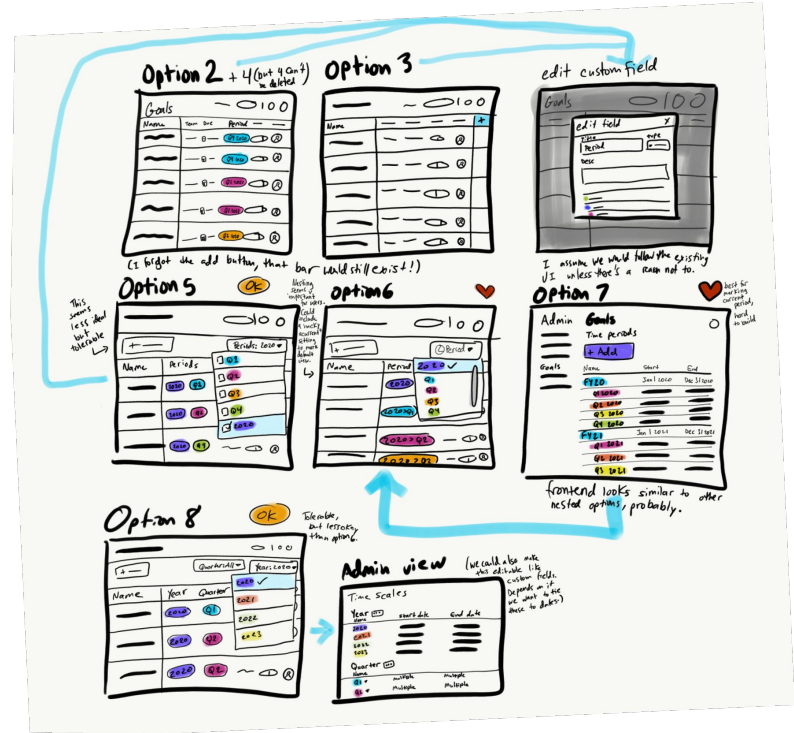
*Where else in the
product might this
experience provide
value?*

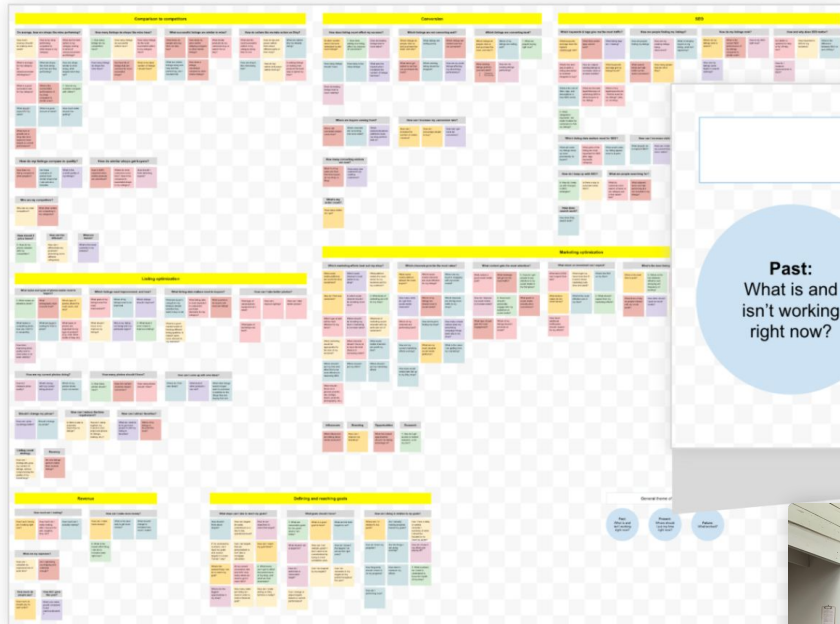
*Who fits into our
target audience?*

*When are we
planning to launch
this experience?*

*Why do we believe
this change must
be made now?*

I noticed y'all were struggling while discussing this topic without an example of what it might look like...



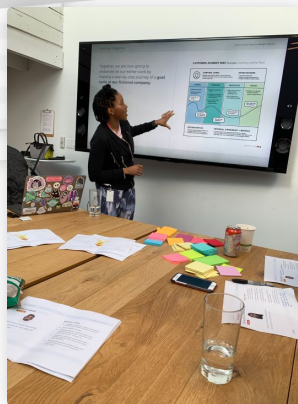


General theme of questions

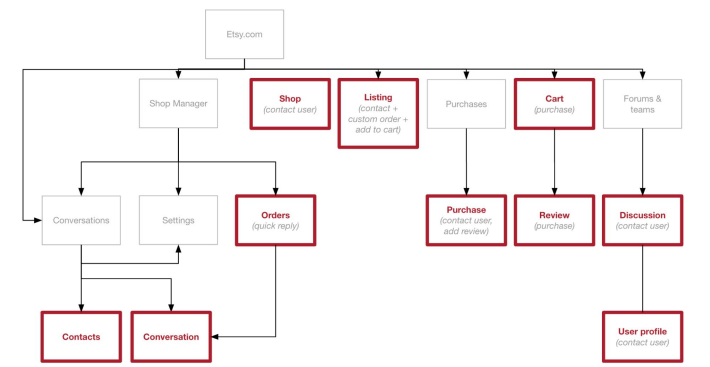
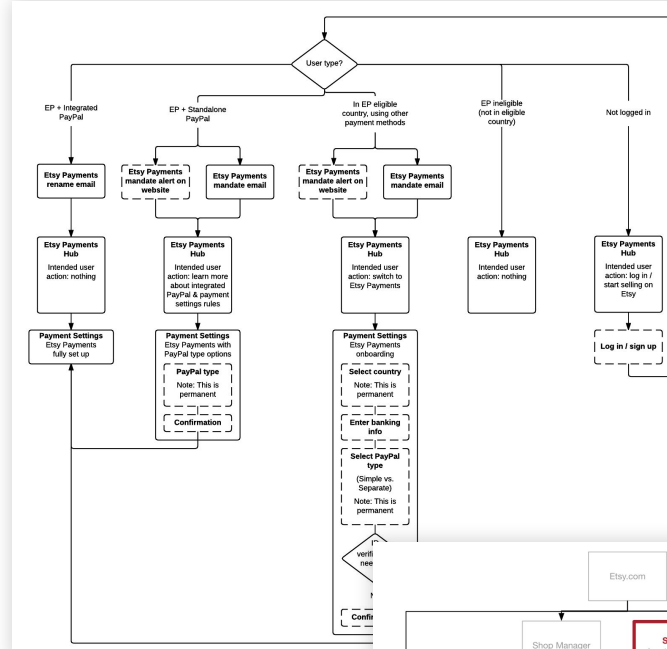
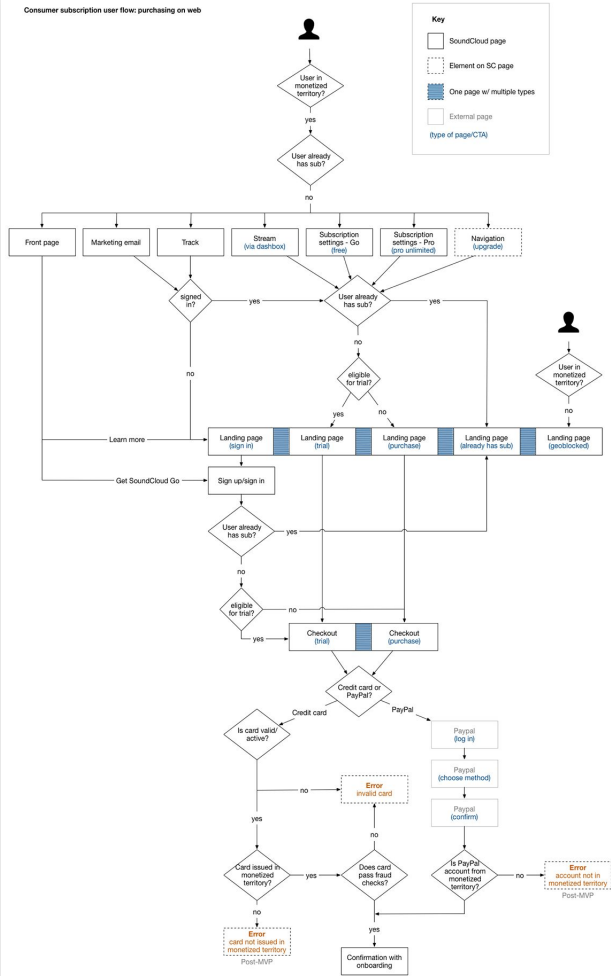
Past:
What is and
isn't working
right now?

Present:
Where should
I put my time
right now?

Future:
What worked?



Consumer subscription user flow: purchasing on web



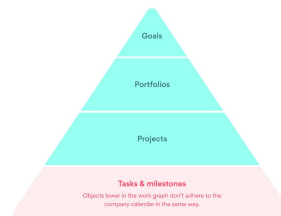


Cross-Asana Time periods vision



What should time periods be used for?

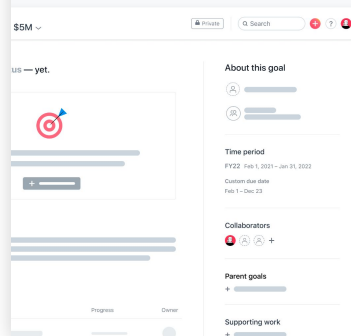
Time periods are best for work graph objects at the **project level and above**.



Want more details? [Read our full principles doc!](#)

Time periods are a special kind of date range

Organizations coordinate the start and end dates of time periods to synchronize the kickoff, reporting, and completion of objectives.



Users can select time periods and custom due dates for goals. However, objects lower in the work graph like tasks or milestones don't adhere to the company calendar in the same way. We assume each team or individual will have different timelines for tasks and milestones. If necessary, we can infer the approximate period using their custom dates.

Show the value of design

Tactic 3

Incentivize




If there are no sponsors or leaders in design who **push UX priorities** ... efforts still run the risk of unfortunately being ignored, or “not prioritized”

— Jonathan Lee, *Why UX designers are still ignored* (2022)

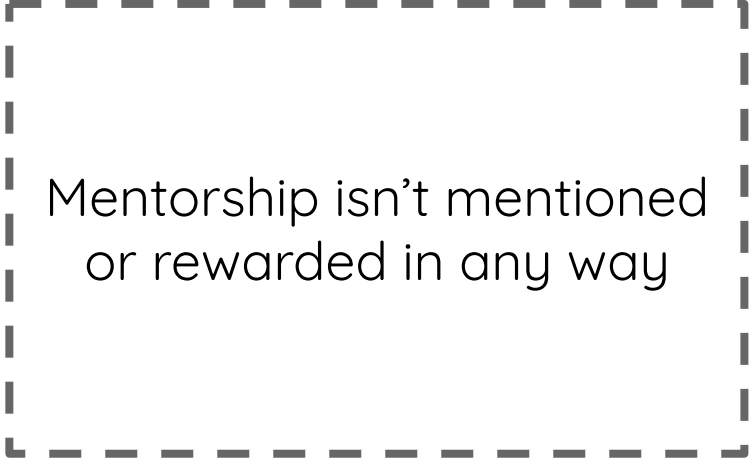
Align words and incentives

Me:



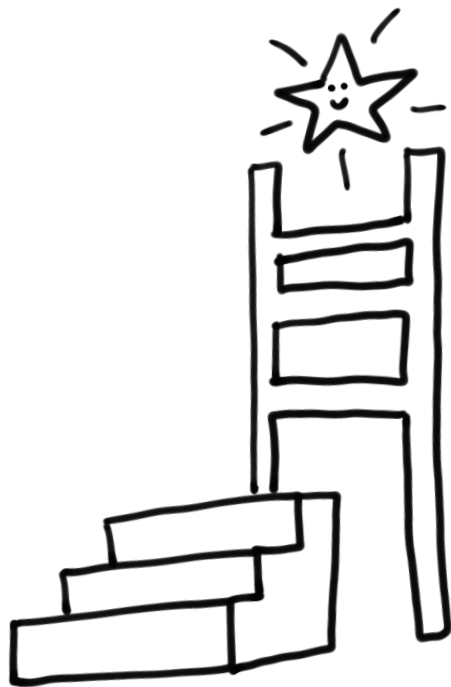
*Are you interested
in mentorship?*

Career ladder:



Mentorship isn't mentioned
or rewarded in any way

How can Design's goals and
career ladder complement
other functions?



ICs: get manager support



Wrap-up

- ◇ Many think design == aesthetics
- ◇ Help your team see how design contributes to the business
- ◇ Get involved in an open, curious, and goal-oriented way

Questions?

Email me! catt@cattsmall.com