



DRUPALCON
SYDNEY

Designing for Uncertainty

Visual Systems, Drupal & Drawing on Quicksand

Front End Track | Jason Pamental | February 7 2013



About Me

- + Jason Pamental
principal, co-founder of h+w design
- + Have realized I can't work where I can't contribute
- + Can be found @jpamental in most places
- + Post thoughts, work, instigations & pics from Instagr.am @ hwdesignco.com



Why Are We Here?

- + *My job is to challenge you & what you know about web design*
- + Your job is to **make me**
- + *My challenge is to inspire you to do more*
- + Your task is to **listen, think & create**
- + **Rinse & repeat**

What's Our Agenda?

- + To learn we know **nothing**
- + To build a new understanding of **design**
- + Take our Yesterday & **tear it apart**
- + Use our new normal to **build our Tomorrow**

Few Things Are Certain

- + We'll all die eventually
- + Usually after paying a lot of taxes
- + We have no idea how someone is going to view our design – **none**
- + **Really. Think about that last one**

Even Less Is Certain About Users

- + Impossible to know how your design will be consumed
- + On what size screen with what kind of input
- + Or what else they might be doing at the time
- + Desktop/Laptop/Tablet/eReader/Phone/Console/TV/Car

**so frankly, we can't be
certain of all that much**

It's Time To Rethink Our Design Thinking

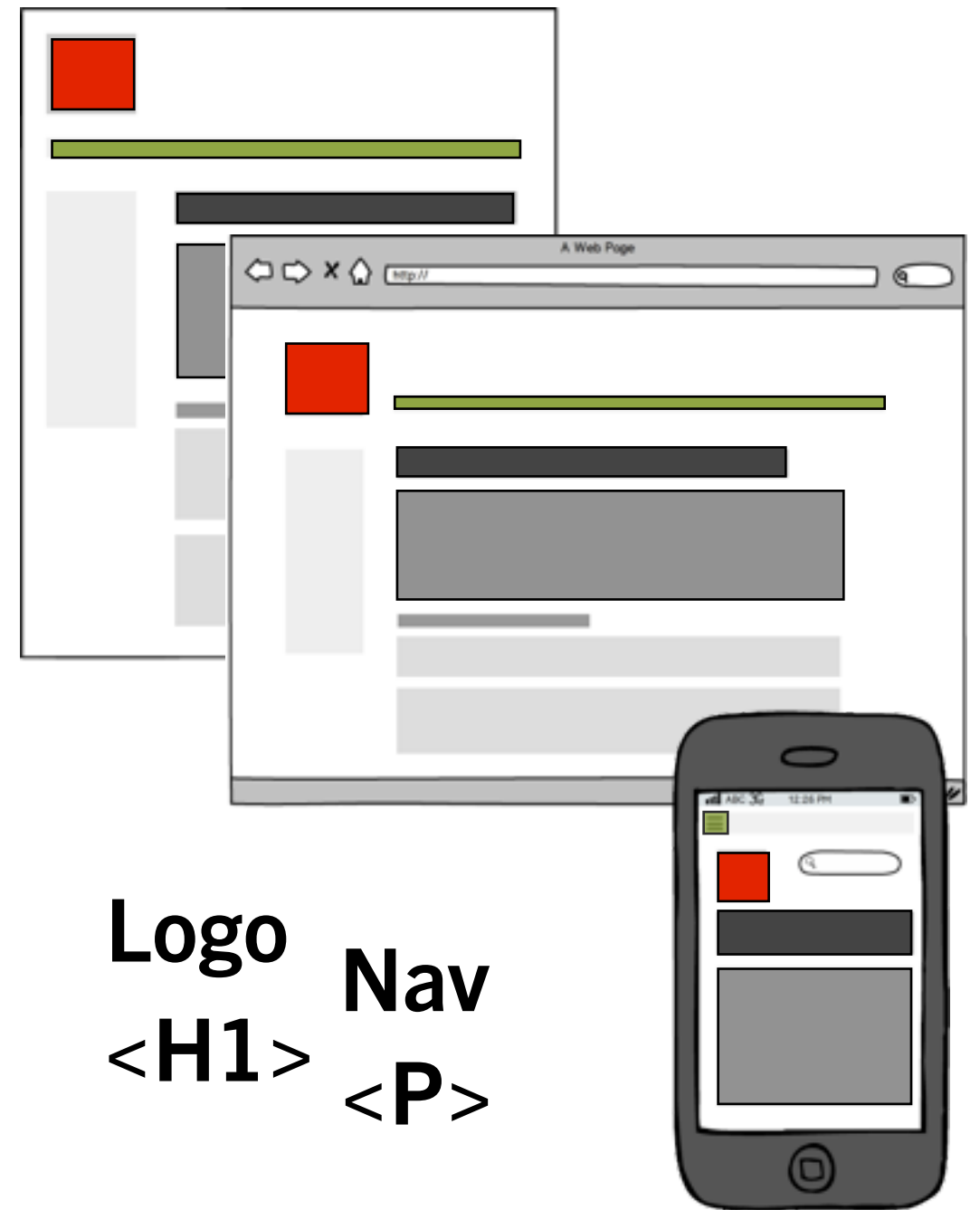
and Drupal will be our canvas

We're Not Designing Pages

- + We're designing **systems** of **relationships** & **hierarchy** to infer **meaning** & **importance**
- + Good **design** has **structure** — but that structure **must be fluid**
- ✦ **960 pixels is a copout.** Our work will be viewed on phones, tablets, tv's more than on computers

We're Designing Meaning

- + Information & understanding **must hold true** no matter how it's conveyed
- + How users **understand** & **learn** is as **crucial** as how they see
- + Start with **semantics** & adapt your **presentation**



Psychology & Cognitive Science are The New Black

- + In order to **preserve meaning & reinforce understanding**, you must know how **learning works**
- + Once you know how **learning works**, you can tailor your **system of design**
- + That system of **visual & information hierarchy** can then survive across **platforms & screen sizes**

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+ A place for **everything** & **everything** in its **place**



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Task-Appropriate Design is the OTHER New Black

- + A **place** for **everything** & **everything** in its **place**
- + But the **place** might be **different** on a **phone**... or in a **car**
- + As may be the **importance** of some **tasks** versus others



For Example

- + Restaurant site on a phone: **What I can eat & how do I get there?**



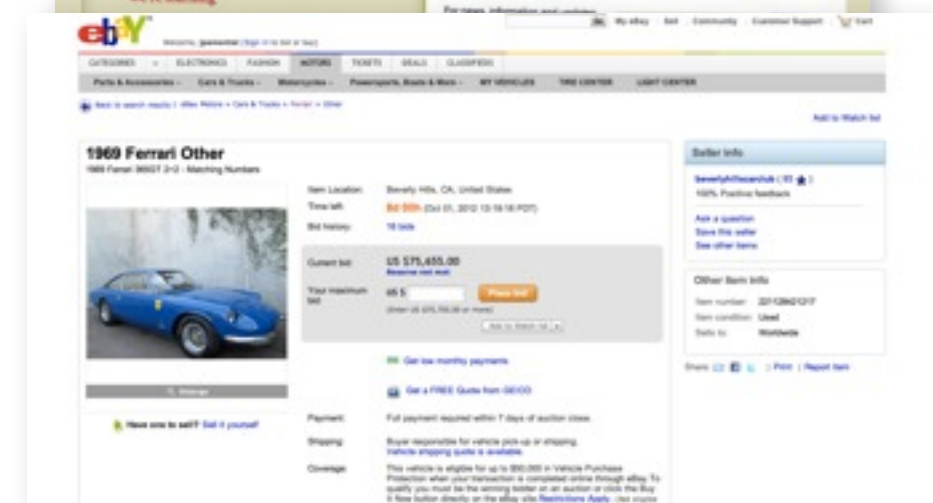
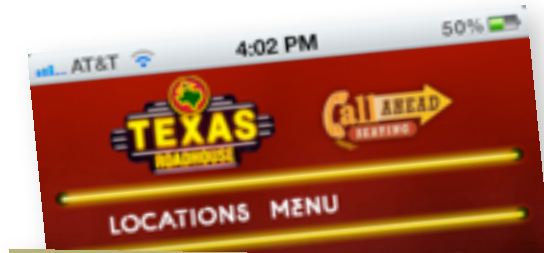
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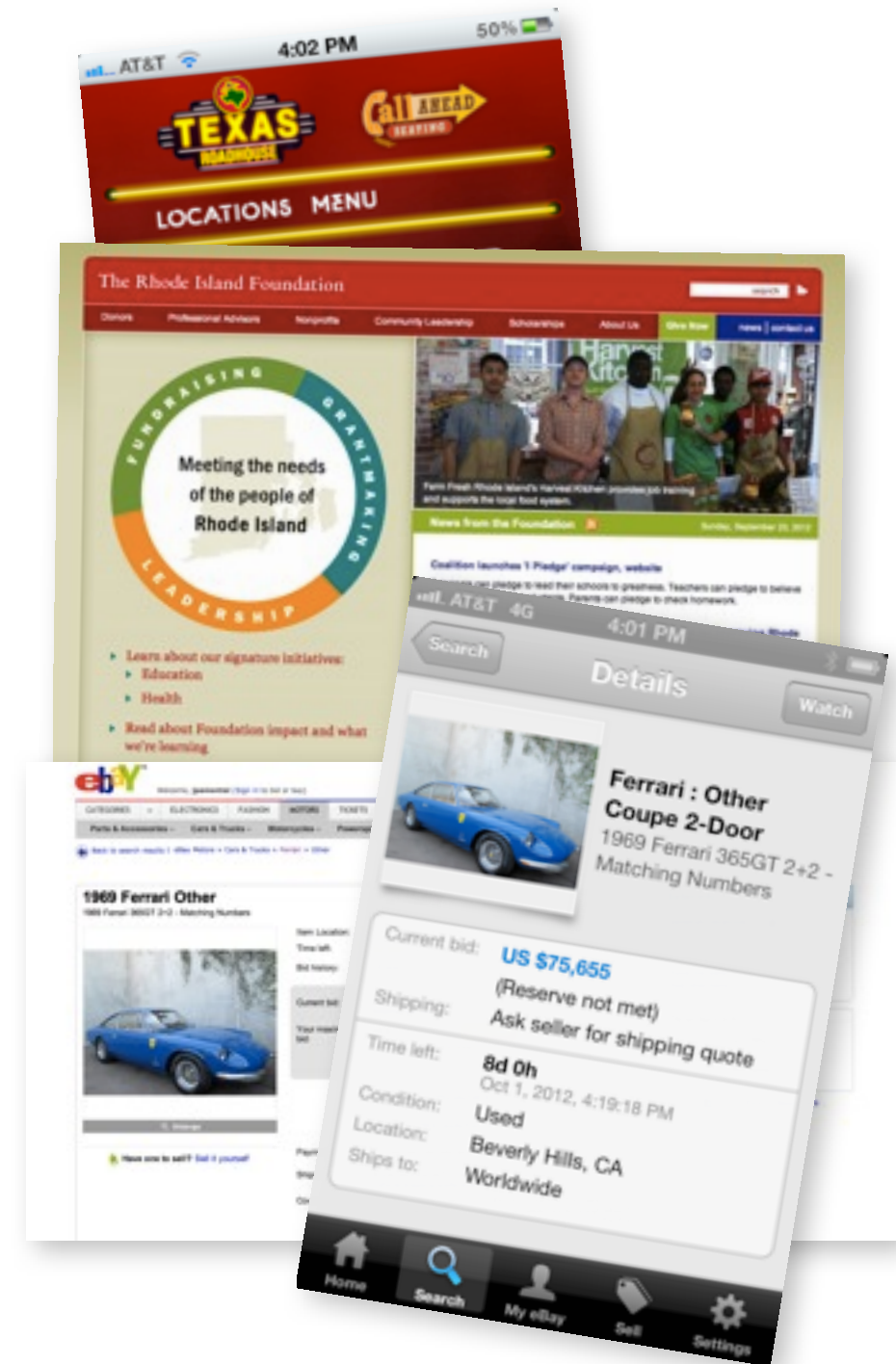
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- + eBay from either: I want to **buy that Ferrari** now. **Really**.
- + Contexts may coincide with one case or the other – but should never exclude the other behavior



Embrace the New World Order

Design by Sharpie

- + Sketch out your design with a marker to sort out hierarchy



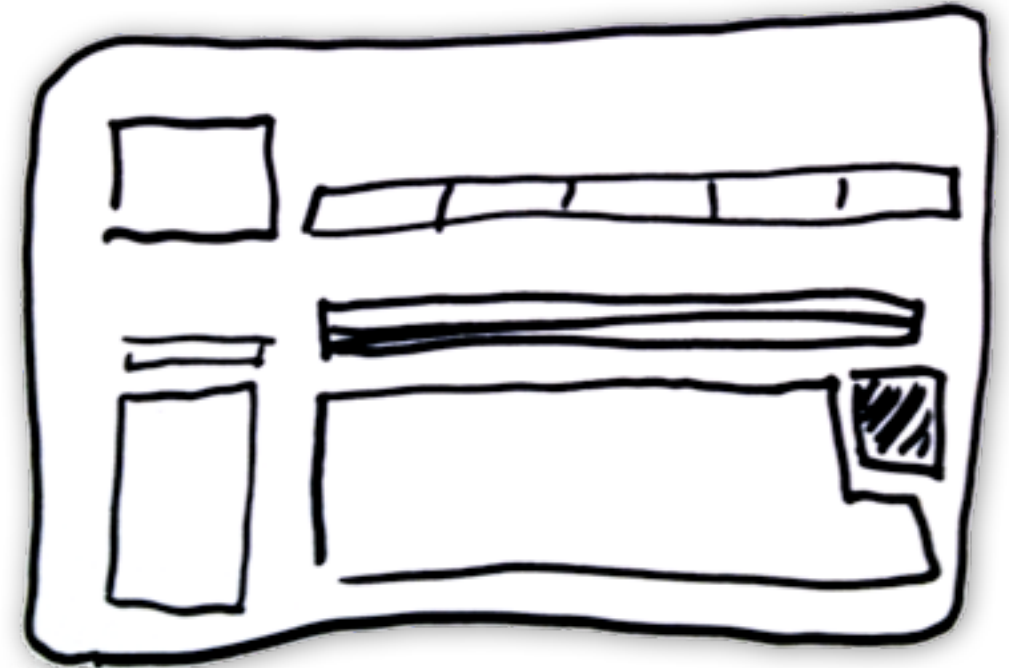
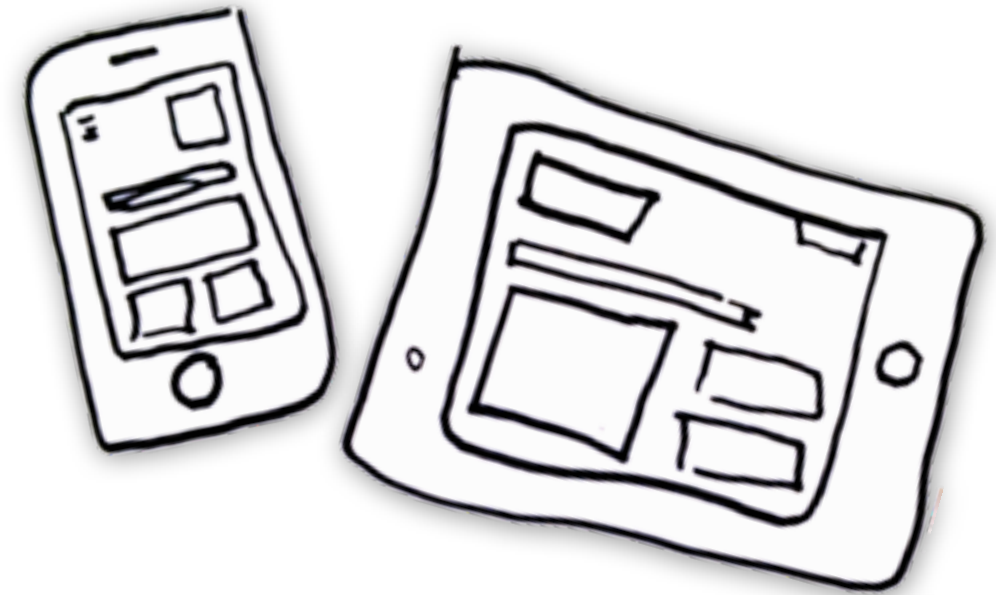
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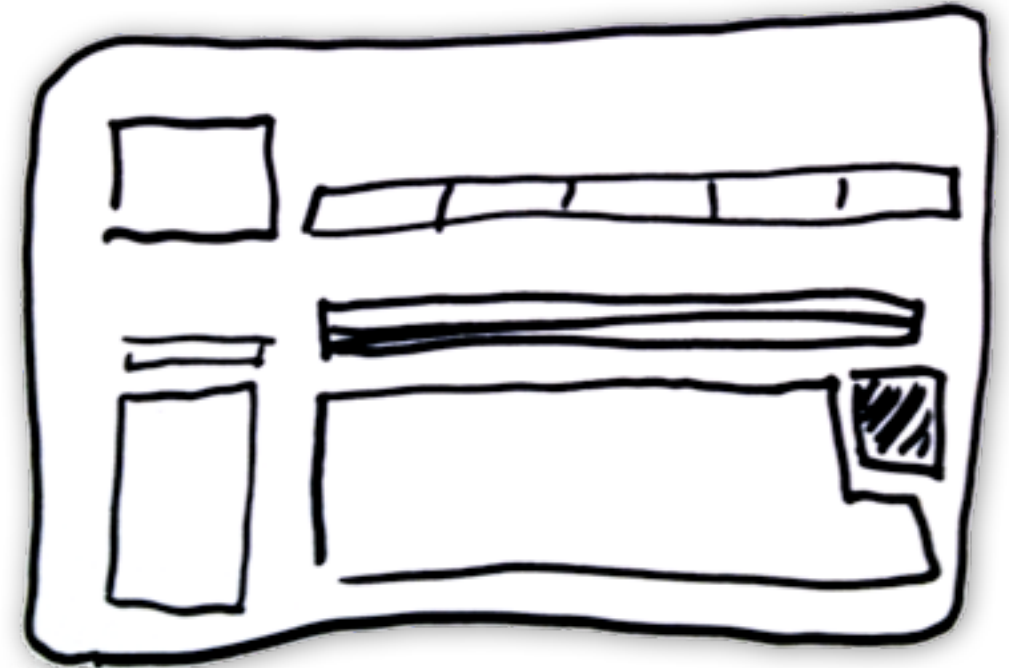
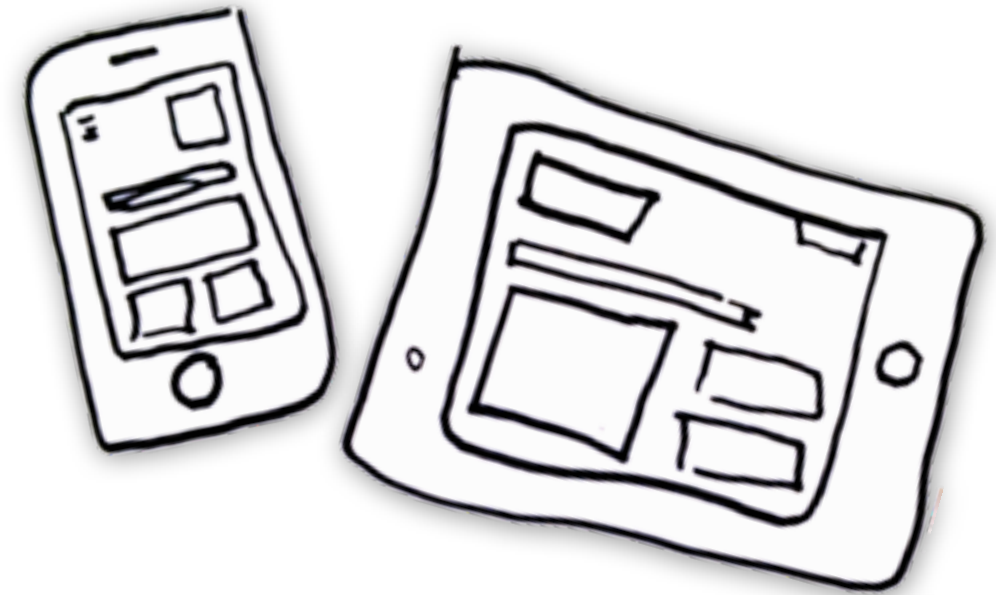
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- + Don't forget about BIG (#RWD isn't just for smartphones)
- + Now interaction: what's natural to the device & method of use



Research, Research, Research. Repeat.

+ Responsive Design is new

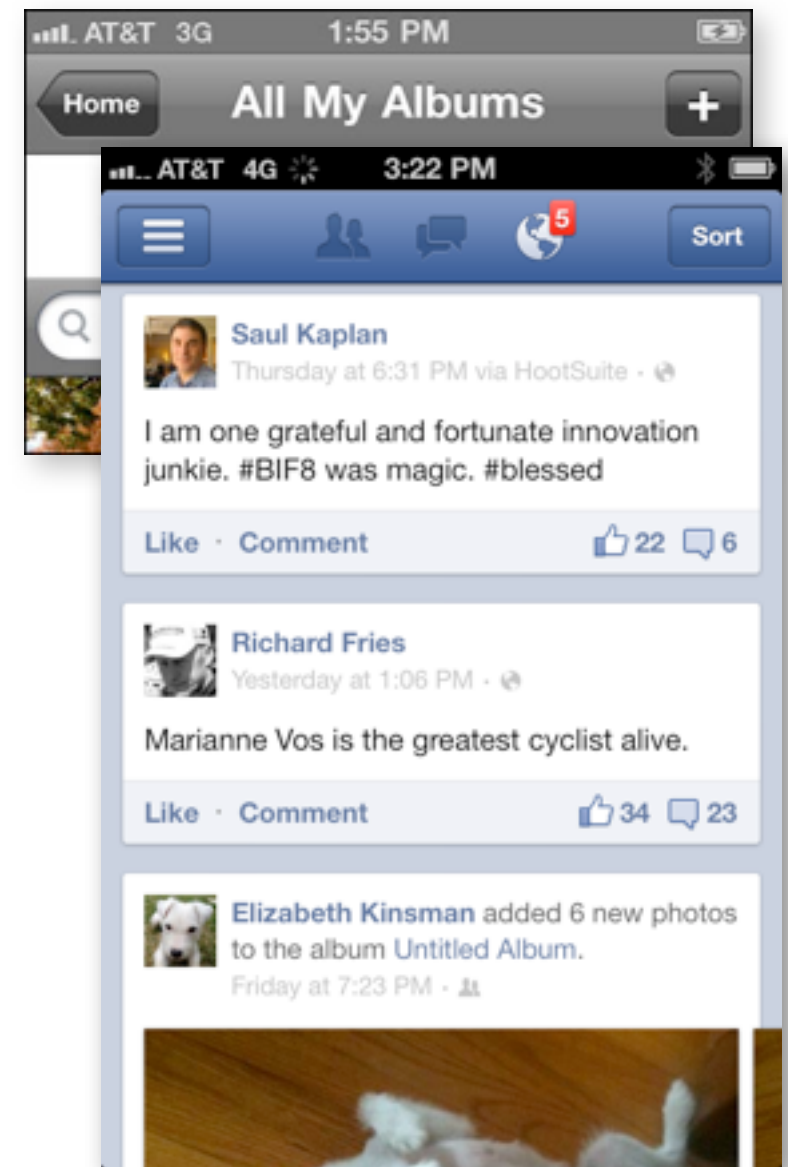
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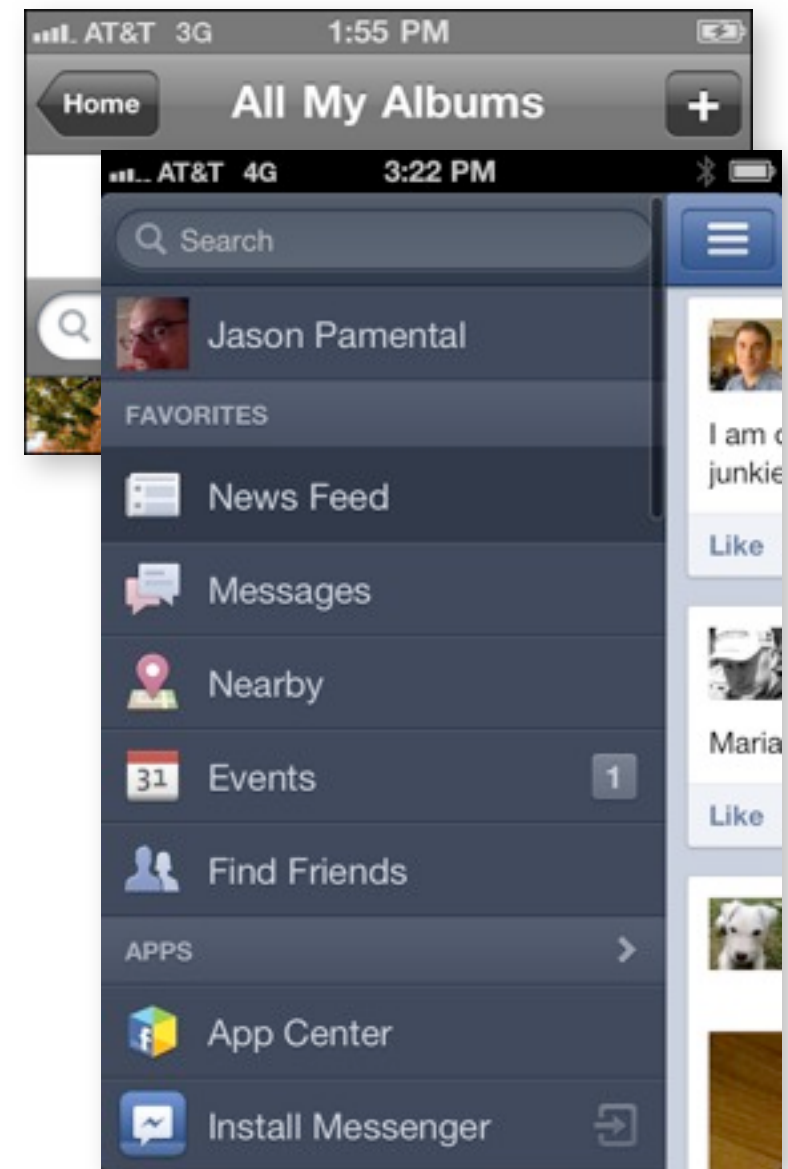
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- + Responsive Design is new
- + UI patterns evolving, but conventions are emerging
- + Native Apps work: think about why. Decode your favorites
- + Some App UI patterns can be used on the web



It's not the What but the Why & How

- + Josh Clark: '**I have some attention to spend**' — but how are they spending it?
- + @LukeW: with **one eye & one thumb**
- + There is **no mobile user** — there are only **mobile devices**
- + Tasks vary by circumstances of use (the **Why**)
- + **How** users **accomplish** those **tasks** varies by **device capability** (hover, touch, swipe)

Drupal's Doing It

- + It's hard to steer a boat of 630,000 — but:
- + **Focus** on **design** led by **Dries**
- + **Markup machismo** by **Morten**
- + **Mobile** made **first** by **John Albin**
- + Pioneering **UX** led by **Kevin Oleary**

Focus on design, usability & the admin

Users Are Looking For It

- + The **web** is **growing up** (slowly & quickly)
- + Users don't just want to access — they want to ***experience***
- + Tools like Drupal & Wordpress mean the next amazing site is one smart dropout away.

You can't afford to suck

So what will make your site memorable?

Our Process is Begging For It

- + The **Decline & Fall** of the Photoshop Empire
- + **Tiles** not Comps
- + **Prototype**, not promises
- + **Never**, *ever* use Arial again

So why do we still think in pages?

The Web Has Left the Building

- + It's in our **pocket**
- + It's on the **couch**
- + It's on our **television**
- + It's in the **dash**

*So **why** do we still think **960** matters?*

Power to the People

- + and their **Web clients**
- + Since we don't know what that client is, **the solution has to live there, not on the server** (for now)
- + **Drupal** can help us **deliver**
- + **Doing** so from scratch **can be hard**

So don't do that.

- + **Use conventions** to build appropriately
- + **Use Drupal** to deliver **one platform** with **many experiences**
- + **Nothing** we've discussed is **impossible** (or in many cases even difficult) in **Drupal**
- + It just takes... **Thought**

**Makes the ‘thinking’ part
sound pretty important, huh?**

Why Harp on This?

- + Because designing **a page** in Photoshop **is simply fantasy**
- + Worse: designing just a page is **only 1/400th of the answer** (or less)
- + Even prototyping in **static HTML** only tells **part of the story** (though doing so responsively is a start)

Be Prepared

- + You know **design**
- + You know your **client** (or you should)
- + You know the **web** & what can be done on it
- + Don't stop **looking, seeing & learning**
- + Use **Drupal** to help
- + Design **meaning** not pages

and now, please...

Get Out & Go Make Something Awesome



Thank You!

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PLEASE! Rate this session!
<http://bit.ly/dcs-jp>

Resources

- + Mobile UI Patterns:
<http://mobile-patterns.com/dashboard-navigation>
- + LukeW's Multi-Device Layout Patterns
<http://www.lukew.com/ff/entry.asp?1514>
- + Navicon (blog post)
Jeremy Keith (excellent post w/lots of references)
- + StyleTil.es (website)
Samantha Warren (this is your start, then go Google)

Books

- + Responsive Web Design

Ethan Marcotte, A Book Apart

- + Adaptive Web Design

Aaron Gustafson, Easy Readers

- + Mobile First

Luke Wroblewski, A Book Apart

- + Don't Make Me Think

Steve Krug (really - you still have to read it)

- + The Design of Everyday Things

Don Norman (web usability learned from the design of doors)