

plainlanguage.gov

Design workshop

October 4, 2017

Agenda

- Introductions
- Goals and approach
- Research highlights
- Demo and design review
- Federalist and Markdown basics
- Training program discussion with Wendy (~3pm)
- Roadmapping and feasibility exercise

DIRECTIONS

Hopes and fears

5 MINS

Brainstorm

5 MINS

Cluster

10 MINS

Share and document



Goals and approach

DIRECTIONS

Mad libs exercise

5 MINS

Write

10 MINS

Share and discuss



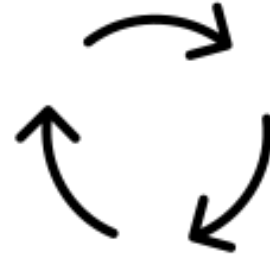
Approach



Make



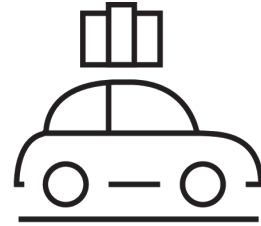
Learn



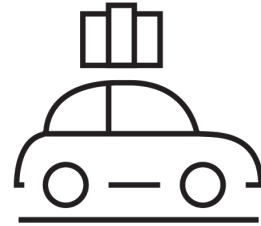
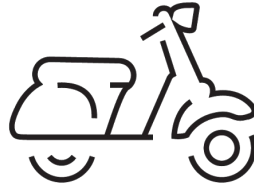
Repeat

Building a minimum viable product

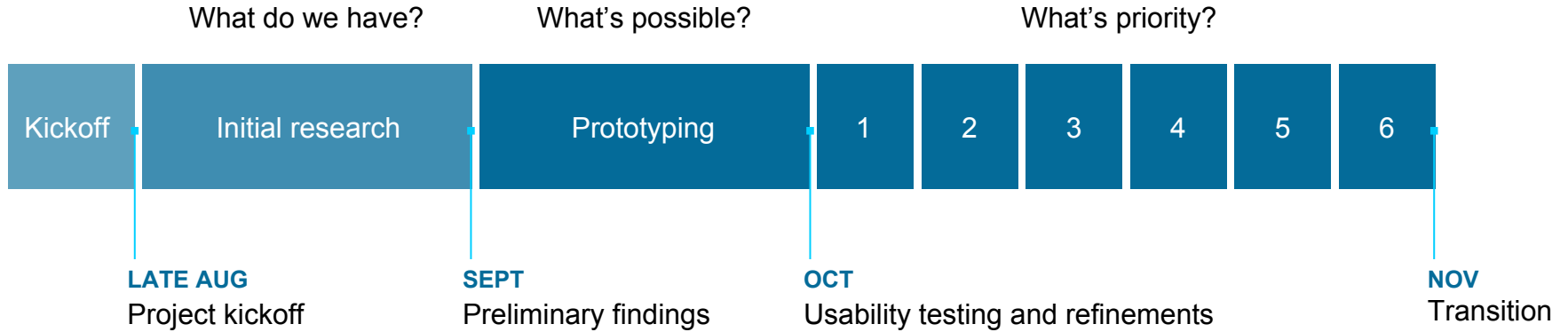
NOT this.



THIS



Timeline



What we've accomplished so far

- Reviewed site functionality and content
 - Content audit
 - Sitemapping exercise
 - Technical review
 - Analytics review
- Conducted 3 interviews
- Built initial prototype and made design refinements
- Scheduled 4 usability sessions for next week



Content audit



nicole.fenton@gsa.gov

File Edit View Insert Format Data Tools Add-ons Help All changes saved in Drive

Comments

Share

100% \$ % .0 .00 123 Arial 10 B I S A

fx

Examples

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1	Migrated	Edited	Level	Topic	Subtopic	Title	URL
2	X	X	0.00	Site	Terms	Privacy Policy	http://www.plainlanguage.gov/site/privacy.cfm
3	X	X	0.00	Site		404: Oops!	http://www.plainlanguage.gov/site/oops.cfm
4	X	X	2.00	Law and Requirements	Compliance	How to Comply with the President's Me	http://www.plainlanguage.gov/howto/guidelines/PresMemoGuidelin
5	X	X	2.00	Law and Requirements	Compliance	Plain Writing Act Compliance Report	http://www.plainlanguage.gov/plLaw/law/agency_compliance_repo
6	X	X	2.00	Law and Requirements	Compliance	Plain Writing Act of 2010: Plain Language	http://www.plainlanguage.gov/plLaw/fedGovt/
7	X	X	2.00	Law and Requirements	Compliance	Plain Language: It's the law	http://www.plainlanguage.gov/plLaw/index.cfm
8	X	X	2.00	Law and Requirements	Compliance	Model Language for Agency Plain Language	http://www.plainlanguage.gov/plLaw/law/agency_pl_page.cfm
9	X	X	2.00	Law and Requirements	Compliance	Plain Writing Act of 2010: Federal Agency	http://www.plainlanguage.gov/plLaw/law/index.cfm
10	X	X	2.00	Law and Requirements	Examples	Army Regulations	http://www.plainlanguage.gov/examples/before_after/govregarmy.c
11	X	X	2.00	Law and Requirements	Examples	Before-and-After Comparisons	http://www.plainlanguage.gov/examples/before_after/index.cfm
12	X	X	2.00	Law and Requirements	Examples	Johnson Space Center Manual Examp	http://www.plainlanguage.gov/examples/before_after/johnsonmanu
13	X	X	2.00	Law and Requirements	Examples	Johnson Space Center Manual Examp	http://www.plainlanguage.gov/examples/before_after/johnsonmanu
14	X	X	2.00	Law and Requirements	Examples	Johnson Space Center Manual Examp	http://www.plainlanguage.gov/examples/before_after/johnsonmanu
15	X	X	2.00	Law and Requirements	Examples	Johnson Space Center Manual Examp	http://www.plainlanguage.gov/examples/before_after/johnsonmanu
16	X	X	2.00	Law and Requirements	Examples	Johnson Space Center Manual Examp	http://www.plainlanguage.gov/examples/before_after/johnsonmanu
17	X	X	2.00	Law and Requirements	Examples	Johnson Space Center Manual Examp	http://www.plainlanguage.gov/examples/before_after/johnsonmanu
18	X	X	2.00	Law and Requirements	Examples	Plain Language and Jury Instructions	http://www.plainlanguage.gov/examples/before_after/jury.cfm
19	X	X	2.00	Law and Requirements	Examples	Health Resources and Services Admin	http://www.plainlanguage.gov/examples/before_after/pub_hhs_hlth
20	X	X	2.00	Law and Requirements	Examples	Public Health Service, Department of H	http://www.plainlanguage.gov/examples/before_after/pub_hhs_lose
21	X	X	2.00	Law and Requirements	Examples	National Marine Fisheries Service, Nat	http://www.plainlanguage.gov/examples/before_after/renfisheries.c

Home

Internal page

External site

PDF

Nav

Law and Requirements

Writing Guidelines

Training

Resources

About Us

Footer

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Research highlights

“Everybody in the federal government should know about plainlanguage.gov.”

“We don’t want it to be totally different from everything else, but we do want it to be different enough from DigitalGov to not feel like GSA.”

“99% of the time, [training] requests are from people who are **writers by necessity.”**

“There’s always an underlying irritant like the sand in the oyster shell that has led them to find whatever help they can.”

“It is really difficult to navigate.”

“We need a large amount of fresh site content.”

**“We could use shorter one-pagers...
Something people can pin up in their
cubes would be great.”**

Demo

Design direction

Plain language makes it easier for the public to read, understand, and use government communications.

[Learn more](#)



Law and requirements

Learn more about the Plain Writing Act of 2010 and a short history of plain language in government.

[Read more >](#)



Writing guidelines

Tips for understanding your users, writing information clearly, being concise, and testing your content.

[Read more >](#)



Training

An overview of free training sessions we offer along with course materials for trainers.

[Read more >](#)



Resources

Links to books, articles, checklists, style guides, and online resources about plain language.

[Read more >](#)

It's the law

President Obama signed the Plain Writing Act of 2010 on October 13, 2010. The law requires that federal agencies use clear government communication that the public can understand and use. On January 18, 2011, he issued Executive Order 13563 - Improving Regulation and Regulatory Review, which states that our regulatory system "must ensure that regulations are accessible, consistent, written in plain language, and easy to understand."

Upcoming events

Train-the-Trainer Bootcamp

SEPTEMBER 18, 2014

This month's meeting features Katherine Spivey on Plain Language Spectrum — how to move forward with plain language when you don't necessarily have permission to edit. [Find out more >](#)

Another Trainer Bootcamp

SEPTEMBER 18, 2014

This month's meeting features Katherine Spivey on Plain Language Spectrum — how to move forward with plain language when you don't necessarily have permission to edit. [Find out more >](#)

Unconference Conference

SEPTEMBER 18, 2014

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Another Trainer Bootcamp

March 22, 2018

This month's meeting features Katherine Spivey on Plain Language Spectrum — how to move forward with plain language when you don't necessarily have permission to edit. [Find out more >](#)

Unconference Conference

June 4, 2018

This month's meeting features Katherine Spivey on Plain Language Spectrum — how to move forward with plain language when you don't necessarily have permission to edit. [Find out more >](#)

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Break

Federalist and Markdown resources

- Federalist: static site generator
 - Product details: <https://federalist.18f.gov/>
 - Documentation: <https://federalist-docs.18f.gov/>
- Markdown: plain text formatting language
 - Documentation: <https://daringfireball.net/projects/markdown/syntax>
 - GitHub guide: <https://guides.github.com/features/mastering-markdown/>
 - GitHub cheatsheet:
<https://help.github.com/articles/basic-writing-and-formatting-syntax/>

Training program

Next steps

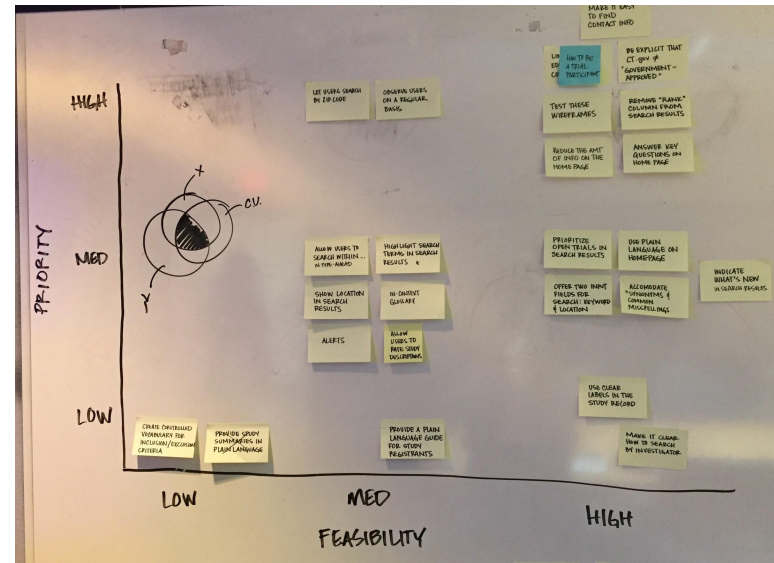
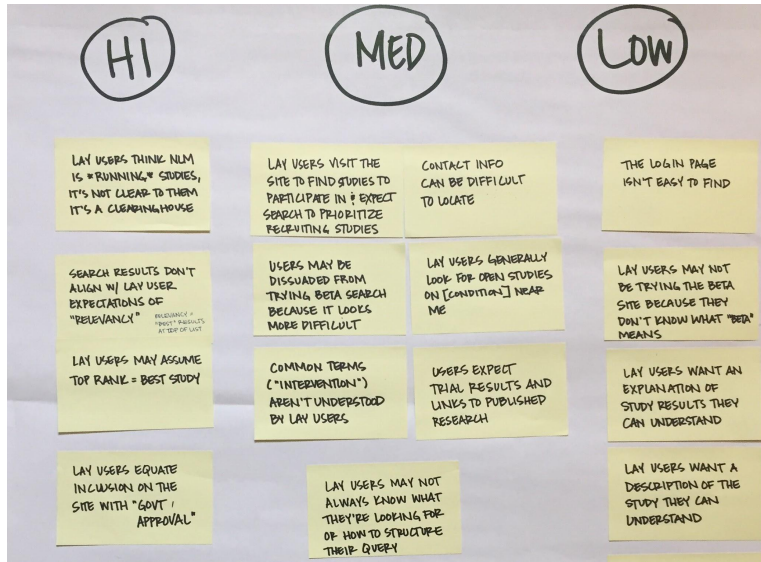
What needs to happen for you to consider this project a success?

What can wait until after launch so we can get user feedback?

Ideas we heard

- Examples
 - Reduce and update the examples
 - Incorporate the examples alongside the guidelines
- Training
 - Outreach campaign to top writers in government to become trainers
 - Advanced level classes or exercises
- Resources
 - Updated checklists or one-pagers
 - Links to and from DigitalGov for tutorials, articles, videos, etc.

Priority and feasibility



DIRECTIONS

Roadmapping

5 MINS

Brainstorm

5 MINS

Cluster

10 MINS

Share and document



Next steps

- Weekly or biweekly checkins
- Usability testing
- Launch planning
 - Launch communications
 - Migration plan
- Post-launch refinements

Questions?

Thank you!