

Step 9: Conceptual Model Mock-ups

Purpose of this step:

The purpose of this step is to support the formal evaluation of the designs generated in step 8.

Overview:

- Recruiting users to evaluate very early, very high-level design ideas helps to continue the ongoing, highly iterative process of understanding and addressing user requirements.
- Mock-ups will only include small, representative pieces of the total product functionality.
- Only high-level presentation and navigation issues are included in the mock-ups.
- There will be little, if any, real content to any particular display in the mock-ups.
- Use “high-fidelity” mockups (such as prototypes) or “low-fidelity” (such as paper-based).

Practical application of these principles to your site:

- 1) Select the functionality:** Select a small subset of functionality to feature in a mock-up, based on the most important issues. Some criteria to use to select functionality:
 - Parts that all users will use
 - New features with high visibility
 - Features with mission-critical outcomes
 - Older features that have been updated
 - Parts of the product interface that the team has concerns about
 - Features involving safety or liability concerns
 - Features that will be highlighted in marketing efforts
- 2) Sketch the user interface design:** Sketch the exact design for the mock-up. Include screen design detail only when it seems essential to establish enough content for the user to understand each step in the process of navigating through the interface.
- 3) Build mock-ups:** Either construct paper-based mock-ups, or implement the design as a simple running prototype. If you use paper, use one piece of paper to represent the screen.

Examples: See examples of this step in the “Examples” folder.