GETTING STARTED

User Story
Mapping
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what is a user story map?

A story map is a visual representation of the journey a customer takes with a product, including activities and tasks they complete. This understanding enables teams to focus development on providing the most value to customers and their desired outcomes.

It provides context for teams by answering the following questions:

Why are we building this?
Who are we building this for?
What value will it provide them?
examples of user story maps
## user story map breakdown

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Epic</th>
<th>Story</th>
<th>Sprint</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>the high level activities a user will accomplish using the product</td>
<td>under each activity, the team adds user stories that support the activity</td>
<td>sequencing work allows the team to plan what they will deliver and when</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
why create user story maps?

User story mapping helps teams answer the following questions:

- Who are our customers?
- What are the problems they face in their roles?
- What does a minimum viable solution look like to them?

Objectives - at the conclusion of the session, the team will have:

- alignment on who their customers are
- A clear picture of problems their customers face
- A backbone for the customers’ flow through the product
- An ordered Story Map, ideally scheduled by version or sprint
**benefits of user story mapping?**

**Focus on Desired Customer Outcomes:** visualisation of the customer journey allows teams to identify and implement features based on customer outcomes, and track progress at a glance against a story map.

**Bring the Customer Journey to Life:** the transformation of the flat backlog to a customer centric story map means teams have a better understanding of their customer journey and what customers want.

**Prioritising Actions Based on Value to Customer:** visualisation of the customer journey allows teams to prioritise work based on “value to customer”, resulting in better outcomes and less waste.
THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN

Flat Backlog vs. User Story Map
example: flat user story backlog
example: user story map
what’s wrong with flat user story story backlogs?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Identifier</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arranging user stories in the order you’ll build them doesn’t help me explain to others what the system does</td>
<td>BKL-1111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The flat backlog provides no context or ‘big picture’ around the work a team is doing</td>
<td>BKL-1121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For a new system, the flat backlog is poor at helping me determine if I’ve identified all the stories</td>
<td>BKL-483</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Release planning is difficult with a flat backlog - how do you prioritise what to build first by an endless list?</td>
<td>BKL-345</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The flat backlog makes it virtually impossible to discover the ‘backbone’ of your product</td>
<td>BKL-138</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
We spend lots of time working with our customers. We work hard to understand their goals, their users, and the major parts of the system we could build. Then we finally get down to the details - the pieces of functionality we’d like to build. In my head I see a tree where the trunk is built from their goals or desired benefits that drive the system; big branches are users; the small branches are twigs and the capabilities they need; then finally, the leaves are the user stories small enough to place into development iterations.

After all of that work, after establishing all that shared understanding I feel like we pull all the leaves off the tree and load them into a leaf bag - then cut down the tree.

That’s what a flat backlog is to me. A bag of context-free mulch - I need that context in order for me to really tell a story about the system - Jeff Patton
How User Story Mapping Assists Teams
product managers

What do they do? What do they care about?
• Setting the product vision/strategy
• Defining the ‘why’, ‘when’, ‘what’, ‘how’ and ‘who’ of the product that will be built

What do they want?
• Streamlined communication systems with all stakeholders
• Efficient systems for planning projects, sprints, and timelines for the next big release

User Story Mapping can help with the following:
• Tracking customer experience/customer outcomes
• To understand how/if the customer journey informs product vision/strategy
• Communicating product vision to all stakeholders
development managers

What do they do? What do they care about?
• Manage scope, timelines, and resources for an on-time release
• Ensuring expectations are met and all stakeholders are happy with the end product

What do they want?
• Streamlined communication systems with all stakeholders to ensure expectations are being met
• Efficient systems to ensure the development team has clear short and long term goals and a means of tracking workflow

User Story Mapping can help with the following:
• Understanding how their customers communicate their expectations of product releases to them and their team
• Relaying that information to the development team
• Using this information to shape the development of future products
What do they do? What do they care about?
• Ensuring the needs of their customers have been satisfied

What do they want?
• Streamlined communication systems with all stakeholders to ensure expectations are being met
• Ways of capturing the customer experiences and improving the customer journey

User Story Mapping can help with the following:
• Communicating customer inquiries, feedback, expectations to all stakeholders
• Capturing the customer journey to influence product vision?
• Equipping them with all the tools/information they need to respond to customer enquiries/feedback
Understanding What Your Customers Want With User Story Maps

Nicholas Muldoon
Past Product Manager of Jira Agile @ Atlassian
Past Agile Coach @ Twitter
My introduction to user story mapping came in early 2011 when I was the JIRA Agile Product Manager. We were exploring a completely new approach to supporting agile teams within JIRA; name name Rapid Board. We needed to revisit the way we framed our backlog and communicated our roadmap. **And to our delight to user story mapping technique worked extremely well.**

Prior to learning about agile User Story Maps, I’d simply add stories to the existing backlog ordered by customer value. As you can imagine, the backlog grew quickly and didn’t have much structure aside from the linear order of the issues. And with only the top 50 or so items ordered, the rest was a real mess.

The “flat” product backlog didn’t explain the customer’s journey or what they were trying to achieve. It was just feature after feature. Clearly this wasn’t the best way to represent the awesomeness that was Rapid Board to our customers and internal stakeholders.

User story mapping is the best technique I’ve come across to gain shared understanding within an agile team. Every team member participates in the session and it may take from 90 minutes to several hours over a couple of days.
CASE STUDY

Essentials of Agile User Story Mapping At Twitter

John Walpole
Senior Staff TPM @ Twitter
CASE STUDY

Essentials of Agile User Story Mapping at Twitter

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ATLASSIAN

Essentials of Agile User Story Mapping

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