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User Story Mapping: Discover The Whole Story, Build The Right Product

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User Story Mapping

DISCOVER THE WHOLE STORY,
BUILD THE RIGHT PRODUCT

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with Peter Economy
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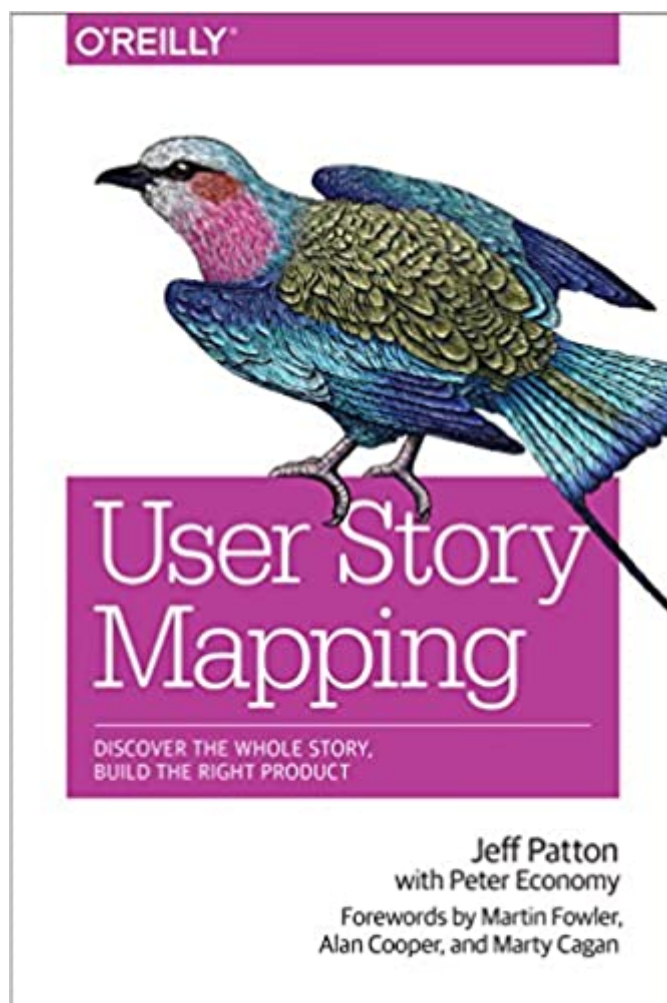
Synopsis

User story mapping is a valuable tool for software development, once you understand why and how to use it. This insightful book examines how this often misunderstood technique can help your team stay focused on users and their needs without getting lost in the enthusiasm for individual product features.Author Jeff Patton shows you how changeable story maps enable your team to hold better conversations about the project throughout the development process. Your team will learn to come away with a shared understanding of what youÃ¢â¬â„¢re attempting to build and why.Get a high-level view of story mapping, with an exercise to learn key concepts quicklyUnderstand how stories really work, and how they come to life in Agile and Lean projectsDive into a storyÃ¢â¬â„¢s lifecycle, starting with opportunities and moving deeper into discoveryPrepare your stories, pay attention while theyÃ¢â¬â„¢re built, and learn from those you convert to working software

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Who Should Read This Book?   You should, of course. Especially if you bought it. I, for one, think youÃƒÂ¢ â¬Ã â„¢ve made a wise investment. If youÃƒÂ¢ â¬Ã â„¢re just borrowing it, you should order your own now, and return the one youÃƒÂ¢ â¬Ã â„¢ve borrowed when the new one arrives at your door. However, reading this book offers specific reasons and benefits for practitioners in specific roles: - Product managers and user experience (UX) practitioners in commercial product companies should read this book to help them bridge the gap between thinking about whole products and user experience and thinking about tactical plans and backlog items. If

youÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ve been struggling to get from the vision youÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢re imagining to the details your teams can build, story maps will help. If youÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ve been struggling to help others imagine the experience ofÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â •and empathize withÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â •the users of your product, story mapping will help. If youÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ve been struggling to figure out how to incorporate good UX and product design practice, this book will help. If youÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ve been working to incorporate Lean StartupÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â œstyle experimentation in the way you work, this book will help.   - Product owners, business analysts, and project managers in information technology (IT) organizations should read this book to help them bridge the gap between their internal users, stakeholders, and developers. If youÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ve been struggling to convince lots of stakeholders in your company to get on the same page, then story maps will help. If youÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ve been struggling to help developers see the big picture, story maps will help.   - Agile and Lean process coaches with the goal of helping individuals and teams improve should read this book. And, as you do, think about the misconceptions people in your organization have about stories. Use the stories, simple exercises, and practices described in this book to help your teams improve.   - Everyone else. When using Agile processes, we often look to roles like product owners or business analysts to steer a lot of the work with stories, but effective use of stories requires that everyone get the basics. When people donÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢t understand the basics, you hear complaints that 'stories arenÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢t well written' or that theyÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢re 'too big,' or that they 'donÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢t have enough detail.' This book will help, but not in the way you think. You and everyone else will learn that xxiv | Preface stories arenÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢t a way to write better requirements, but a way to organize and have better conversations. This book will help you understand what kinds of conversations you should be having to help you get the information you need when you need it.

View larger   This Book Is for You If YouÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢re Struggling with Stories   Because so many organizations have adopted Agile and Lean processes, and stories along with them, you may fall into one or more of the traps caused by misconceptions about stories. Traps like these: (below). If youÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ve fallen into any of those traps, then IÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ll try to wipe away the misconceptions that lead to those traps in the first place. YouÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ll learn how to think of the big picture, how to plan and estimate in the large (and in the small), and how to have productive conversations about what users are trying to accomplish, as well as what a good piece of software needs to do to help them.   Because stories let you focus on building small things,

itÃƒÂ¢Ã â¬Ã â„¢s easy to lose sight of the big picture. The result is often a ÃƒÂ¢Ã â¬Ã Å"Franken-productÃƒÂ¢Ã â¬Ã Â• where itÃƒÂ¢Ã â¬Ã â„¢s clear to everyone using the product that itÃƒÂ¢Ã â¬Ã â„¢s assembled from mismatched parts.   When youÃƒÂ¢Ã â¬Ã â„¢re building a product of any significant size, building one small thing after another leaves people wondering when youÃƒÂ¢Ã â¬Ã â„¢ll ever be done, or what exactly youÃƒÂ¢Ã â¬Ã â„¢ll deliver. If youÃƒÂ¢Ã â¬Ã â„¢re the builder, you wonder, too.   Because stories are about conversations, people use that idea to avoid writing anything down. Then they forget what they talked about and agreed to in the conversations.   Because good stories are supposed to have acceptance criteria, we focus on getting acceptance criteria written, but thereÃƒÂ¢Ã â¬Ã â„¢s still not a common understanding of what needs to be built. As a consequence, teams donÃƒÂ¢Ã â¬Ã â„¢t finish the work they plan on in the timeframe they planned to.   Because good stories are supposed to be written from a userÃƒÂ¢Ã â¬Ã â„¢s perspective, and there are lots of parts that users never see, team members argue that "our product doesnÃƒÂ¢Ã â¬Ã â„¢t have users, so user stories wonÃƒÂ¢Ã â¬Ã â„¢t work here."

Over his past two decades of experience, Jeff Patton has learned thereÃ¢â¬â„¢s no Ã¢â¬Å"one right wayÃ¢â¬Â• to design and build software, but thereÃ¢â¬â„¢s lots of wrong ways. Jeff makes use of over 15 years experience with a wide variety of products from on-line aircraft parts ordering to electronic medical records to help organizations improve the way they work. Where many development processes focus on delivery speed and efficiency, Jeff balances those concerns with the need for building products that deliver exceptional value and marketplace success.Jeff has focused on Agile approaches since working on an early Extreme Programming team in 2000. In particular he specializes in integrating effective user experience design and product management practice with strong engineering practice.Jeff currently works as an independent consultant, agile process coach, product design process coach, and instructor. Current articles, essays, and presentations on variety of topics in Agile product development can be found at www.AgileProductDesign.com and in Alistair CockburnÃ¢â¬â„¢s Crystal Clear. Jeff is founder and list moderator of the agile-usability Yahoo discussion group, a columnist with StickyMinds.com and IEEE Software, a Certified Scrum Trainer, and winner of the Agile AllianceÃ¢â¬â„¢s 2007 Gordon Pask Award for contributions to Agile Development.

As a non tech tech team leader I have been searching for a simple way to continuously share understanding of the market/customer expectations with the dev team - I want this front of mind -

and despite plenty of 'out of the building' activity - product releases kept falling short of my expectations - the big picture and UX flow was patchy. Our product is large and ambitious in vision with multiple stakeholders (often with divergent viewpoints) and getting caught in the details of micro features very real and challenging. Reading "User Story Mapping" was an instant aha - I knew that mapping was the missing tool for building understanding across the team - and it has worked incredibly well and hope our maps will continue to evolve in their usefulness as our main meeting room is unlikely to ever look the same again. Thanks Jeff Paton!

I highly recommend this book to anyone on a software development team. The book is about "User Story Mapping" which is the process of using sticky notes to map out what software to build, but its more than that. This book is about how to communicate with your team in a software development world. A lot of the points made are sort of common-sense, but the book is an easy read and has a good amount of information.This book is aimed more at Product Managers, but I think its extremely relevant for anyone in the software development process. I'm in QA and thought it was rather insightful.

If Good Product manager Bad Product manager was the perfect 'What' book for Product management, then this is the perfect 'How' book (although I'm sure that the author would prefer a reader not describe it that way since it's not exactly a how to guide...). Perfect for someone who has heard and read about Scrum and Agile practices but is missing some context having never practiced it before. After reading this- I feel more confident getting started.

"Story mapping keeps us focused on users and their experience, and the result is a better conversation, and ultimately a better product." - Jeff PattonWhile user stories are a great tool for talking about user needs, by themselves they aren't very good at helping the team understand the big picture. If you've ever had that feeling that you're missing the forest for the trees, user story mapping can mean the difference between building the right thing, or building the wrong thing.Although he didn't invent user story mapping, Jeff has clearly mastered it and his years of experience are finally available in this book for all to benefit from.Using many actual examples, anecdotes, metaphors, and humor, Jeff spends the first four chapters explaining what user story maps are, what they're not, and how to apply the knowledge you gain by using them effectively. You'll also learn secrets to estimating (which shouldn't be secrets to anyone), development and delivery strategies that help you reduce risk, and how to know if you're focusing on the right

outcomes and building the right thing.This is the chapter in which Jeff explains how to build a map. And the good news is (spoiler alert), building a story map isn't hard. Using a simple example of a day in your own life, he walks you through each step and drives home each key concept.Now that you've got a story map, the next six full chapters are devoted to understanding how user stories really work and how to get the most out of them. No matter how much you think you know about stories, you're going to learn some things you didn't know.If the book ended at this point, I think you'd feel very satisfied that you learned more about stories and story mapping than you thought possible. But there's more.Jeff then shares more stories and advice about the user story life cycle, managing your backlog, and lots of things you can do to discover what your product should be.For the finale, you get three chapters devoted to `Better Building'. You'll learn how to conduct user story workshops, how to plan sprints and releases, how to collaborate (and how to not collaborate), and how to get the most from your story maps during the entire delivery process.User story mapping is an essential tool for the tool box of anybody involved in shaping or building a product and this is the definitive book on how to do it well. The skills you'll learn will have a profound impact on your ability to learn, understand, and build great products.

The best thing about this book isn't the concepts, nor is it the case studies. It's the humorous, fun writing style that makes it a joy to read. Jeff explains the concepts and benefits of user story mapping in an engaging way and the book made me laugh out loud a number of times.Regarding the ideas, user story mapping is a clarifying and motivating way to organize your projects and in my experience, in organizations large and small, it's vital to avoiding wasted time, wasted money and wasted energy.By the end of the first chapter, I was putting the ideas into practice.The only downside is that half of my walls and floors are covered in post-it notes and my cat is getting annoyed.

Keeping track of backlogs, breaking stories down and understanding product development and progress are three really hard areas of agile software development.This gold nugget of a book manage not only to make those things easy(ier) through a very practical hands on approach, but also fun and entertaining. I cannot remember when I laughed out loud from a textbook before.Thank you

Takes your Agile scrum experience to new levels. I was introduced to this book at the Agile Ashburn workshop and really need to thank the speaker for bringing it to my attention. Excellent read with

relevant examples of real world events. You will grow and your team will thank you.

Recommended for anyone wanting to get better at structuring a product or set of solutions or planning almost anything. I was able to take the methods described and rethink how to look at not just one product but a product roadmap. I plan to re-read it again and use it as a frequent reference to keep my approach simple and clear.

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