Before the Backlog

Interactive Techniques for Tying Stories to Stakeholders

March 23, 2011 / 6pm / slides available at **www.dominiondigital.com**

Tonight's Objectives

1. Identify highest priority improvements to the Agile Richmond website

2. Teach techniques which can be used in Agile Development

Who are we?

Ryan Shriver

Leader of Dominion Digital's IT Performance Improvement solution

Ryan has more than 15 years experience in software design and delivery. For the past 10 years he's leveraged lean and agile methods to help organizations deliver the right software, quicker and with higher quality. Ryan speaks on agile topics at national and international conferences and maintains a blog at theagileengineer.com.

blog: theagileengineer.com / twitter: @ryanshriver

Darrell Estabrook

Art Director and User Experience Lead for Dominion Digital

Darrell has been designing usable web user interfaces since 1996. He does everything humanly possible to keep systems from offering users options such as, "Are you sure you want to cancel changes? OK or Cancel."

twitter: @UXdesignThought

Hope Norman

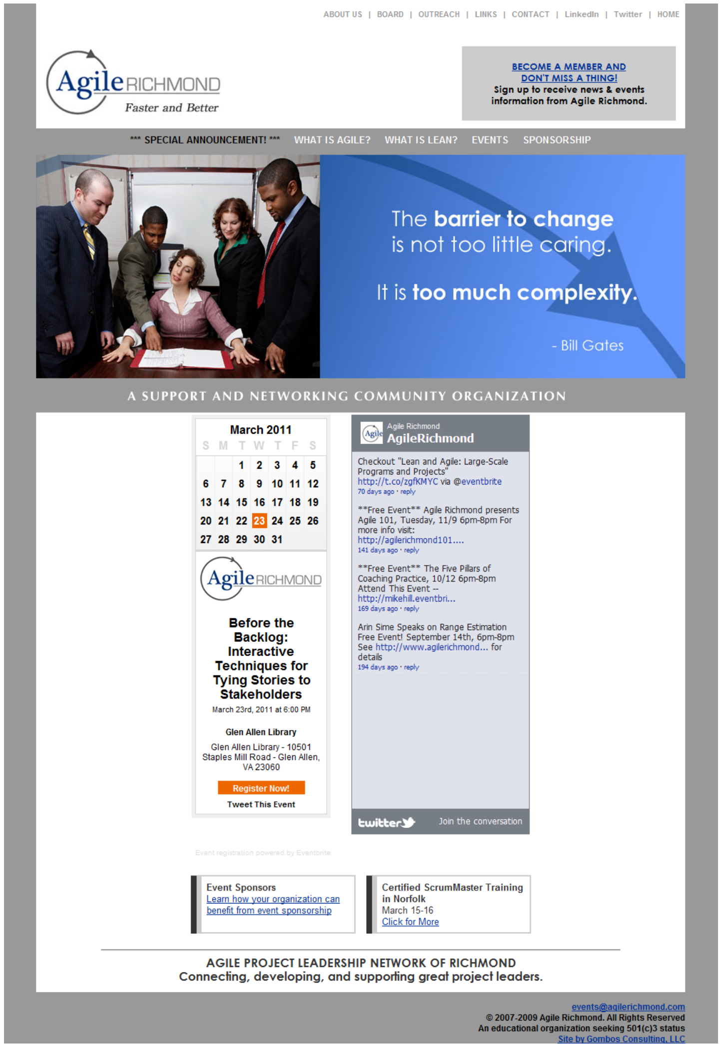
Senior Consultant with Dominion Digital

Hope has over 10 years experience in e-business and web design including team leadership and project management, business and requirements analysis, information architecture, design and implementation, website analytics, and content creation.

twitter: @maryhopeful

Motives for improving the Agile Richmond website

- **Make Events more prominent and easier to maintain**
- **Become a better Agile repository (reorganize what's here)**
- **Take control of social networking**
- **Refresh the look (over 5 years old)**



How to get started

Who needs to be involved?

- **Product Owner (and other relevant Stakeholders)**
- **Agile Coach**
- **Team (UX Designers, Analysts, Architects, Developers, Testers)**

When to do this?

- **Before starting development (before the backlog)**

Where to do this?

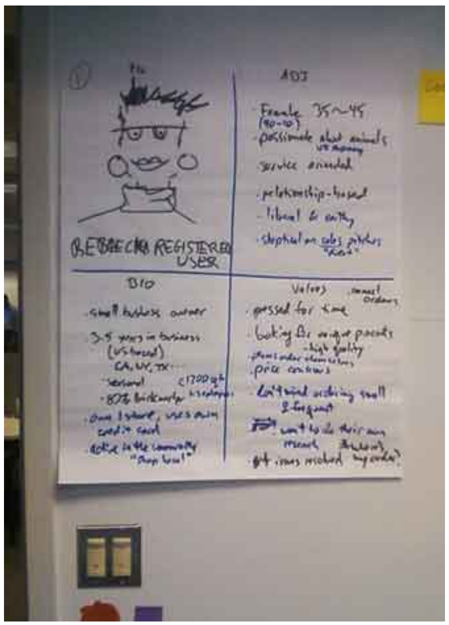
- **A large enough room to hold everyone and to move around in**
- **A blank wall for sticky notes**

Why go about it this way?

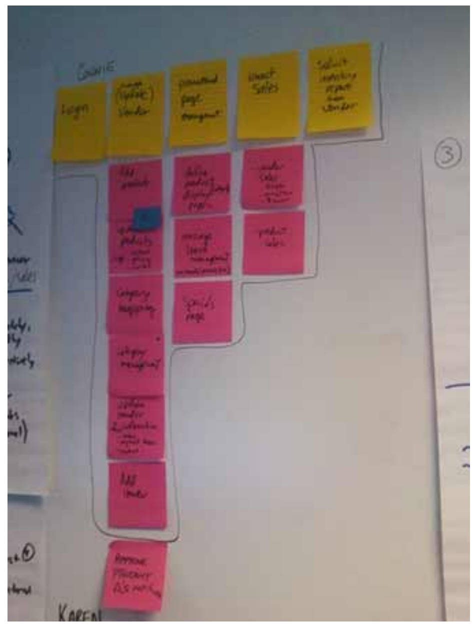
- Quickly identify who you are focusing on, and what is important to them
- Ensure feature prioritization is tied to user's goals
- Team-wide understanding of context and overall priorities
- Persistent visual reminder is great for motivating the team and celebrating wins
- Quick, Easy & Fun!

Here we go…

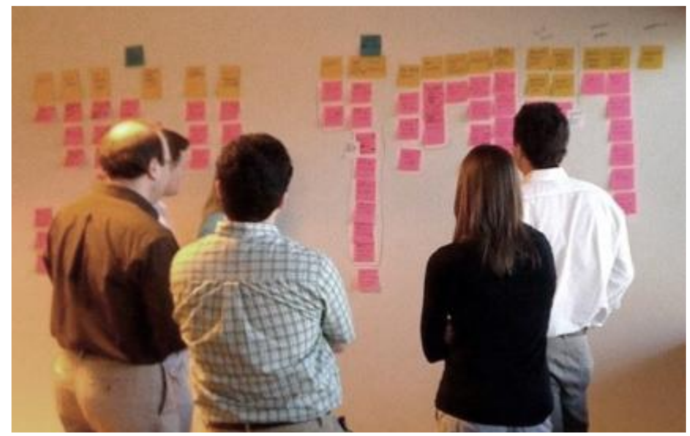
Sticky Personas



Story Mapping



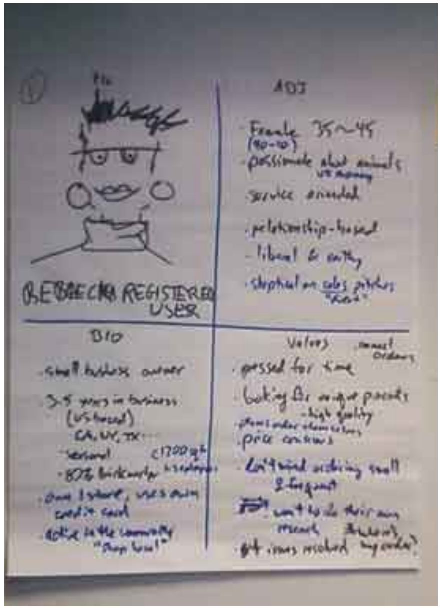
Visual Release Planning



Sticky Personas

Purpose

- To identify the target people using your system
- To put the face on a classification of users—we're building software for people, not computers
- To drive the flow of the system and purpose of the stories



How-to

1. Brainstorm Personas and determine who's in-scope for the next release
2. For each in-scope Persona, divide a large sticky into four content areas: Sketch, Biography, Adjectives, Values (Needs).
3. Also for each, create a sticky name, preferably something alliterative e.g. Susan the Supervisor
4. Fill in the content areas interactively with your stakeholders

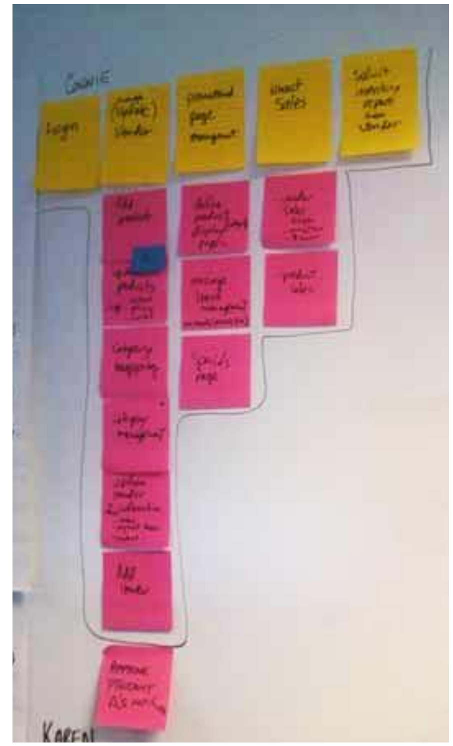
Story Mapping

Purpose

- To visually identify Activities and Tasks necessary for the Personas to complete their goals

How-to

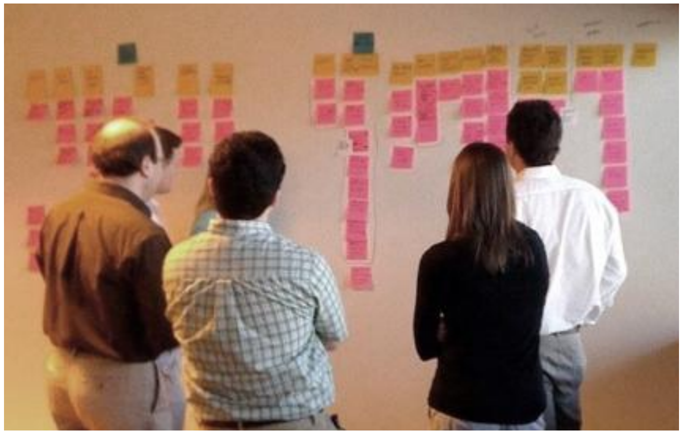
1. For each in-scope Persona, identify Goals (i.e. "purchase") as endpoints
2. For each endpoint, identify necessary Activities needed to complete Goal (i.e. find a product, place in cart, enter payment, etc.)
3. For each Activity, identify the supporting tasks necessary to complete the Activity (i.e. search by keyword, browse new products, etc.)
4. Remember to validate along the way that the tasks would likely be done by the Persona: "Would Susie the Soccer Mom really ?"



Visual Release Planning

Purpose

- To visually identify what's in-scope for the upcoming release ensuring the Persona can complete their goal by using the release (i.e. it's not a partial system)
- To set expectations for all stakeholders
- To understand where there are opportunities for tradeoffs
- To inform the implementation plan



How-to

1. For each Activity, prioritize the supporting tasks
2. Visually identify the minimum tasks necessary to complete the goal by drawing a line between the in-release/out-of-release tasks
3. Translate Activities and Tasks into User Stories
4. Prioritize User Stories in the Release Backlog

After the backlog

A suggestion of parallel workstreams after this process