

Beyond Wireframes: Documenting Applications

adaptive path

Ryan Freitas
with examples from:
Dan Saffer, Brandon Schauer,
and Yahoo!'s Bill Scott



“Wireframing AJAX is a [expletive]... We have to determine all the things a user might do, and wireframe the blessed moments of each possibility.”

- Jeffrey Zeldman, *Web 3.0*

(you should see what's in the comments section)

AJAX BRINGS THE PAIN TO THE WEB

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OZ-1A 2006

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We're all in the same boat now,
web, software, mobile designers.

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The screenshot shows a music player window with a menu bar (File, Edit, Song, Region(s), List, Playback, RadioD1, Tools, View, Window, Help) and a toolbar with various playback controls. Below the toolbar is a playlist table with columns for Song, Duration, and Info. The song 'Apoptygma Berzerk - Starsign' is selected, and a context menu is open over it, showing the file path 'D:\My Music\apoptygma berzerk - starsign.mp3 (6.41 Mb)' and album information: 'Artist: Apoptygma Berzerk' and 'Album: Welcome To Earth Promo'. At the bottom of the window, a green banner contains the text '“BLESSED MOMENTS” = MICROSTATES'. Below the banner, a taskbar shows several folders: 'CD Misc', 'All Music', 'offspring', 'moby', and 'apoptygma'. A tooltip for the 'All Music' folder displays 'Ripped by HANS'.

Song	Duration	Info
Babe - Ko Me Tero	3:25	128 - 44
Body Count - Dead Man Walking	4:50	128 - 44
Covenant - Leviathan	5:19	128 - 44
Beborn Beton - Another World (extended Remix)	5:20	128 - 44
Moby - Any Given Sunday	5:25	128 - 44
Apoptygma Berzerk - Nightliner Interview	1:51	192 - 44
Razed In Black - Never Meant	5:14	128 - 44
Deine Lakaien - Fighting The Green	5:12	128 - 44
Apoptygma Berzerk - Starsign	5:35	160 - 44
Kismet - Baubles, Bangles, And	4:42	160 - 44
Covenant - Humility		
Kings Of Convenience - Badly Drawn		
Rem - Daysleeper (acoustic)		

“BLESSED MOMENTS” = MICROSTATES

Ripped by HANS

HAVING MICROSTATES MEANS DOCUMENTING

Invitation, Activation, Updates Affordances and Constraints Timing

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layout
priority
behavior
content
functionality
exception handling
technical specifications
microstates
+ timing
woah!

YOU WANT ALL THIS IN A WIREFRAME??



ONE DOCUMENT TO RULE THEM ALL?

THREE EXPERIMENTS
Frame-by-Frames
Lo-Fi Animations
Wireframes with Key Frames



FRAME-BY-FRAMES

Drag and Drop Modules - Interesting Moments Grid

	Currently on beta.my.yahoo.com	ID: Bill Scott & Eric Miraglia			
	Mouse Hover	Mouse Down	Drag Initiated	Drag Over Valid Target	Drag Over Invalid Target
Cursor	 CSS Move cur(CSS Move cursor)	 CSS Move cursor	 CSS Move cursor	 CSS Move cursor	 CSS Move cursor
Tool Tip					
Drag Object	 Full Opacity	 Reduced Opacity	 Reduced Opacity	 Reduced Opacity & Invalid Bar	
Drop Target	 No insertion bar, just a gap	 No insertion bar, just a gap	 Insertion bar showing where it will drop	 No insertion bar, just a gap	

ADVANTAGES

**Clear and Concise
Sequence of Interaction
Amazing Level of Detail**

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DISADVANTAGES

**No Context
No Timing
Time-Consuming**

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adaptive path | home | team | services | events | publications | **contact**

contact

Contact Adaptive Path

Would you like more information about working with us? Please fill in **all fields** below to send us a message.

name

e-mail

topic
please select one...

message title

message

How to Find Us

Our address
363 Brannan St.
San Francisco, CA
94107-1810
[View map >](#)

Our phone number
1-415-495-8270

LO-FI ANIMATIONS

send

Show me

Hide me

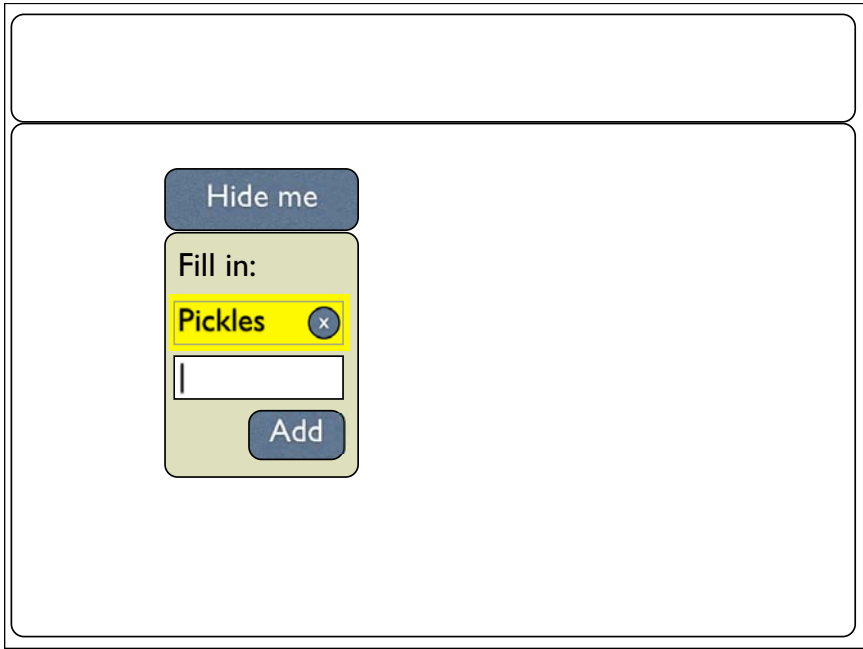
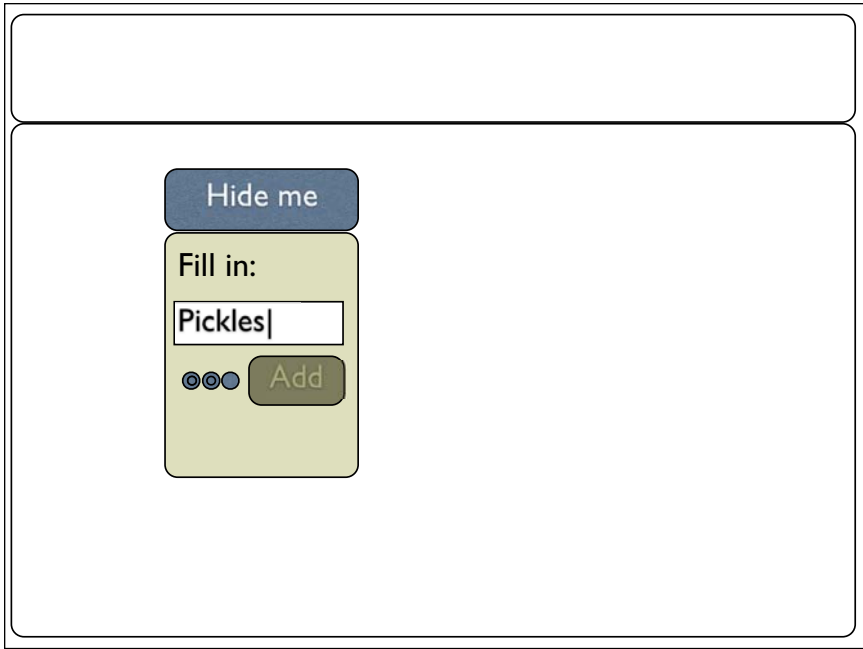
Fill in:

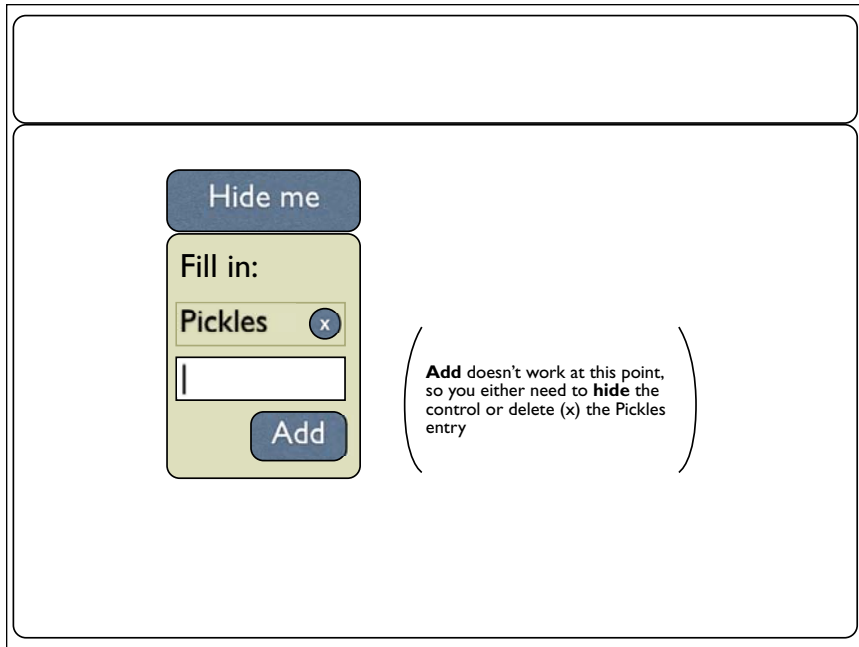
Add

Hide me

Fill in:

Add





ADVANTAGES

No Need for Working Prototype

Great ROI

Easily Understood

Can Compliment Other Docs

DISADVANTAGES

- No Detail
- No Discrete Steps
- No Technical Notes
- Non-Standard Deliverable

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page allows users to signup for Participate simply by entering a user name and a valid email address.

user with some notification of what the email a friend in Participate points to encourage follow-through from registered users in the incentive program.

email the user's entered email addresses and add to target addresses, and link user to a page

to have invited friends over email, provide reporting and if accepted. Hide actual names by default, but to view them by clicking the "view" link

a When user completes name entry and clicks to email entry, compare the entered name to previously claimed names on the site. If the name is a match, generate alternates that can be clicked on to fill the entry field.

The name ryan_c is unavailable.
How about:
ryan_c_01
iam_ryan
ryan_c_jshn

User makes selection or inputs new name that is valid & available.

That name works. Thank!

b Is it possible to treat the "submit" button click as a call to validate the form of the user's entered email? If there are any formatting errors, alert the user and prevent the page from loading the confirmation.

The address you entered isn't formatted properly.

register

All we really need is a unique name and email, everything after that is gravy. Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, nulla at fermentum nonummy turpis mauris rutrum justo, nec. Cras malesuada. [view all featured posts](#)

create a username: alternate names

enter your email: email error

Not posts

Instruction text lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. [archive >](#)

Tuesday, July 19, 2005 [tag: campaign](#)

written by: [authorname](#) [tag: fin](#)

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Monday, July 18, 2005 [tag: campaign](#)

written by: [authorname](#) [tag: campaign](#)

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Sign me up for the mailing list!

WIREFRAMES WITH KEY FRAMES

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- a When user completes name entry and clicks to email entry, compare the entered name to previously claimed names on the site. If the name is a match, generate alternates that can be clicked on to fill the entry field.

The name ryan_c is unavailable.
How about:
ryan_c_01
iam_ryan_c
ryan_c_isme

↓ User makes selection or inputs new name that is valid & available:

That name works. Thanks!

KEY FRAMES

ADVANTAGES
Known Deliverable
Holistic View
Can Show Full-Screen Changes
Good ROI

DISADVANTAGES

Tough with Many Microstates
Wireframes are Crowded
Timing is Lost

25

Wireframes with key frames
for CONTEXT

Storyboards
for DETAIL



Lo-fi animations
for TIMING

STILL NO ONE RING