



FRAGMENTS  
UNITED

# MUSEUM OF UX

VOLUME I

21 exhibits every designer can learn from.

KATARINA KAPLARSKI VUKOVIĆ

Great things are done  
from the series of small  
things brought together.

— Vincent van Gogh



FRAGMENTS  
UNITED

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## CURATOR'S WELCOME

# Why a Museum?

Museums don't lecture. They place an artifact in front of you, light it well, and let you look until you see it. That's the idea behind this collection: instead of chapters and rules, you'll walk through **five galleries** holding **twenty-one exhibits** — real screens, flows and fragments recovered from actual products and prototypes, each preserving one design mistake worth remembering.

The mistakes here aren't displayed to shame anyone. They're displayed because they're **common, human, and instructive** — and because you'll recognize at least a few from your own work. That flash of recognition is the whole exhibition. Behind every artifact is the same conviction: there is a person on the other side of the screen, and they should feel happy using what we build.

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**THE ARTIFACT** The evidence itself — the screen, flow, form or dashboard, preserved as found.

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**ABOUT THE ARTIFACT** What you're looking at, and how this pattern quietly finds its way into products.

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**CURATOR'S NOTE** The one sentence worth carrying out of the room.

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**FRAGMENTS RECONSTRUCTION** How to rebuild it right — the practical fixes, fragment by fragment.

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## THE COLLECTION CONTINUES — UPCOMING VOLUMES

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**Vol. I**      **Museum of UX**      The mistakes wing — 21 exhibits every designer can learn from. You are here.

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**Vol. II**      **Museum of UX Awesomeness**      The masterpieces wing — what great design looks like, and why it works.

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**Vol. III**      **The Research Wing**      A working UX research handbook — methods, questions, and how to actually listen.

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**Vol. IV**      **The Mind Room — UX Psychology**      The cognitive science behind every exhibit — memory, attention, emotion, habit.

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**Vol. V**      **The New Wing — AI for UX**      Designing with, and for, intelligent products — without losing the person.

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**Vol. VI**      **Product Thinking**      From screens to outcomes — strategy, metrics, and products people love.

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GALLERY I

# Thinking Like a Designer

Before a single pixel is drawn, every interface already makes a claim about how people think and decide. This wing collects four case artifacts — real screens and flows pulled from student prototypes — each exhibiting one quiet assumption that shaped the wrong solution. Walk the floor slowly; the mistakes teach more than the fixes.

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- |           |  |   |
|-----------|--|---|
| <b>01</b> | <b>Designing for Yourself</b>            | The danger of designing from personal assumptions instead of user research. |
| <b>02</b> | <b>The Login Screen</b>                  | When authentication becomes unnecessary friction.                           |
| <b>03</b> | <b>Falling in Love with the Solution</b> | Starting with features instead of problems.                                 |
| <b>04</b> | <b>The Imaginary User</b>                | Personas created without evidence.  |
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# Designing for Yourself

Artifact: assumption board vs. observation board, recovered from a task-manager usability test.



Fig. 1 — Recovered research artifact, task-manager usability session, 5 participants.

## ABOUT THE ARTIFACT

Designers default to their own taste, habits and mental models when no research exists to contradict them. The result is an interface optimized for the person who built it — not the person who has to use it.

## CURATOR'S NOTE

**You are not your user.** The only reliable way to know what people need is to watch them struggle with what you already built.

## FRAGMENTS RECONSTRUCTION

- Talk to real users before finalizing a flow.
- Separate personal preference from evidence.
- Test with people outside your own bubble.
- Replace assumptions with observation.



# The Login Screen

Artifact: login-as-first-interaction, Figma prototype, Metropolitan University Belgrade, 2026.

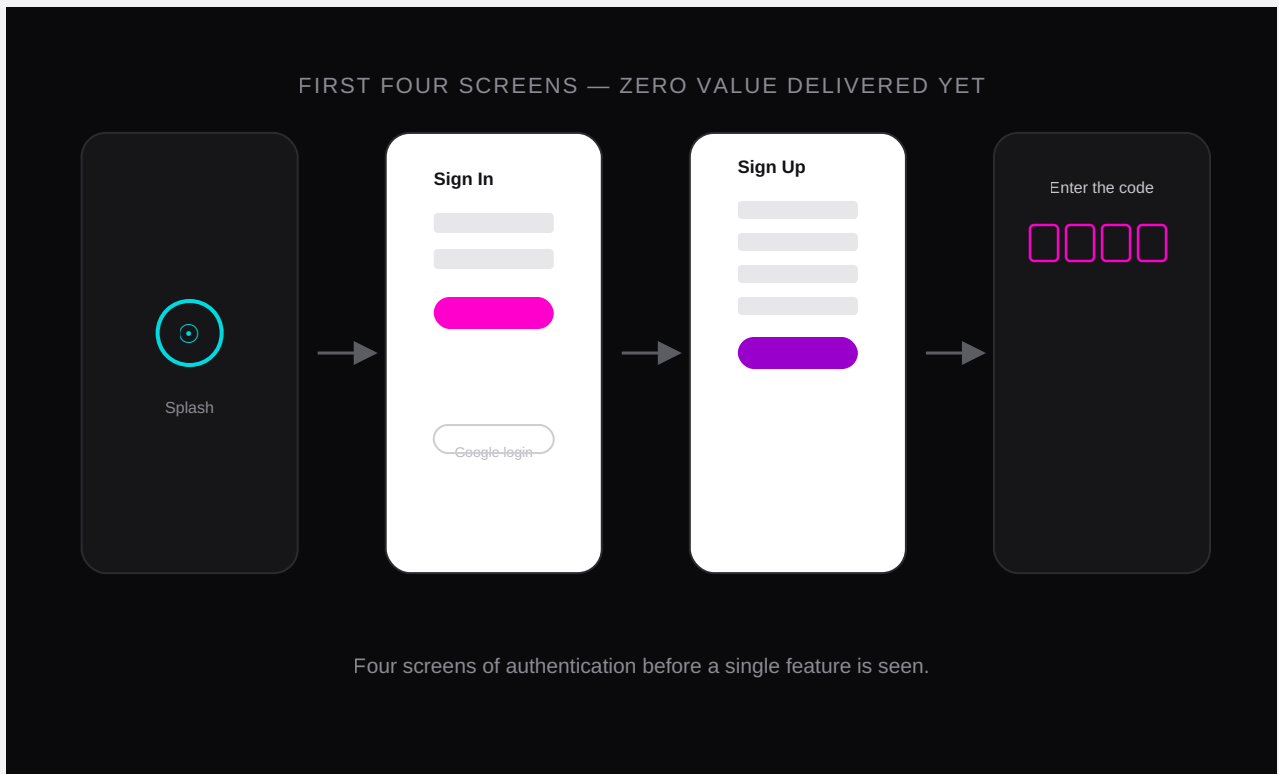


Fig. 2 — Sign in / sign up / OTP flow, presented before any product value is shown.

## ABOUT THE ARTIFACT

The login screen is one of the most overused patterns in mobile prototypes. Many products ask people to create an account before they've experienced any value — turning curiosity into friction.

## CURATOR'S NOTE

Authentication is essential for banking, messaging and private services — not every recipe app, portfolio or event guide. The first interaction should answer **"why should I stay?"** Only afterwards should it ask **"who are you?"**

## FRAGMENTS RECONSTRUCTION

- Let visitors browse before asking them to sign up.
- Delay registration until value is understood.
- Offer Guest Mode or Continue without account.
- Use progressive onboarding, not mandatory forms.



# Falling in Love with the Solution

Artifact: user flow for an organizing app that shows no value for the user, 2023.

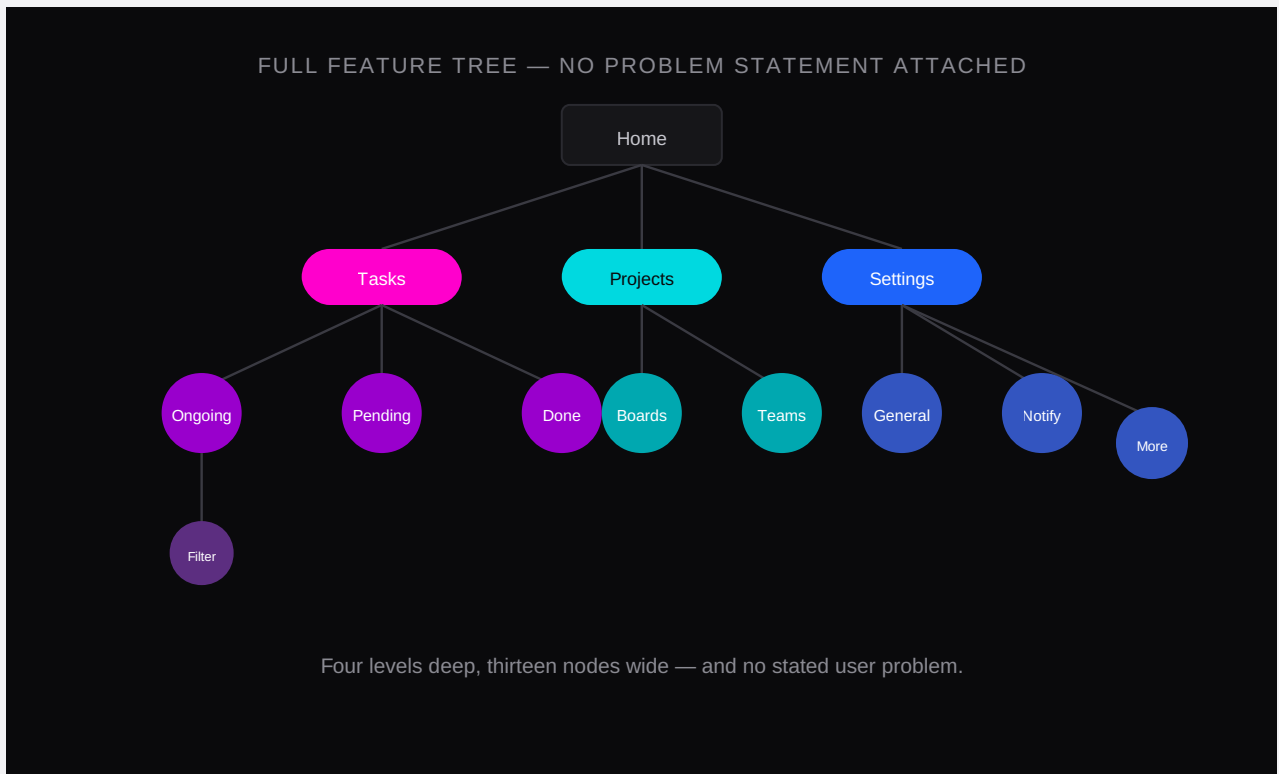


Fig. 3 — Full task-management flow, built before the underlying problem was defined.

## ABOUT THE ARTIFACT

Teams often design features before they understand the problem. This flow branches into task types, statuses and settings screens — without ever stating what pain it relieves.

## CURATOR'S NOTE

**Users buy outcomes, not features.** A flow this elaborate should be earned by evidence, not assumed by enthusiasm.

## FRAGMENTS RECONSTRUCTION

- Define the problem first.
- Test assumptions.
- Remove unnecessary functionality.



# The Imaginary User

Artifact: persona card, assembled from a single hallway conversation and a stock icon.

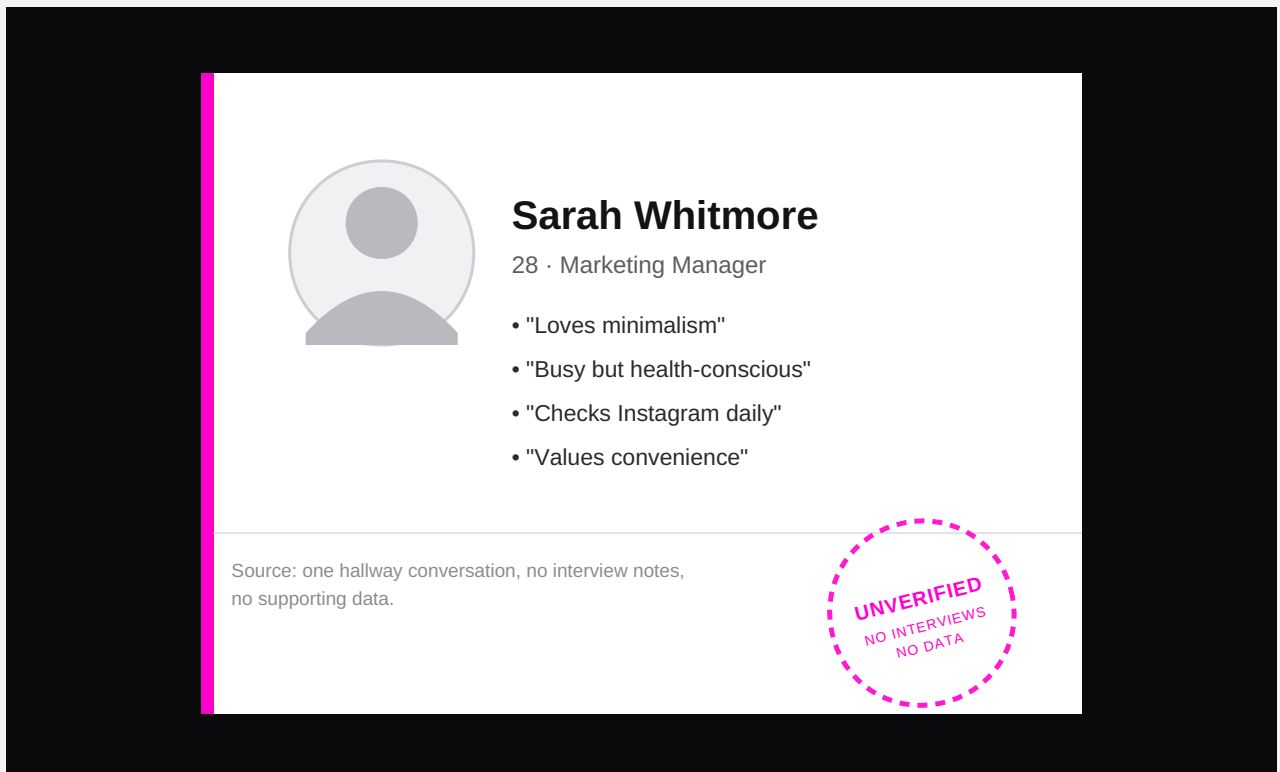


Fig. 4 — A persona built from imagination, later mistaken for research by the whole team.

## ABOUT THE ARTIFACT

Personas invented from stereotypes or a single conversation give teams false confidence. They read like research, cite like research, and carry none of its evidence.

## CURATOR'S NOTE

**A persona without evidence is fan fiction with a name and a face.** If no one can point to the interview it came from, it isn't a user — it's a guess wearing a costume.

## FRAGMENTS RECONSTRUCTION

- Base personas on interviews, not assumptions.
- Include real quotes and behavioral data.
- Update personas when evidence changes.
- Avoid demographic stereotypes disguised as insight.

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## GALLERY II

# Structure & Information Architecture

A product can have beautiful screens and still be impossible to use if the structure underneath doesn't hold. This wing collects four artifacts of information architecture gone wrong — where hierarchy, navigation and choice were left to grow unchecked instead of being designed.

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### 05 Everything Is Important

Why hierarchy is essential.

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### 06 The Maze

Navigation that explains instead of guides.

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### 07 Hidden Treasure

Important features users never discover.

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### 08 Too Many Doors

Choice overload and Hick's Law.

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# Everything Is Important

Artifact: dashboard screen where every element competes at full volume, recovered from a v1 admin panel.

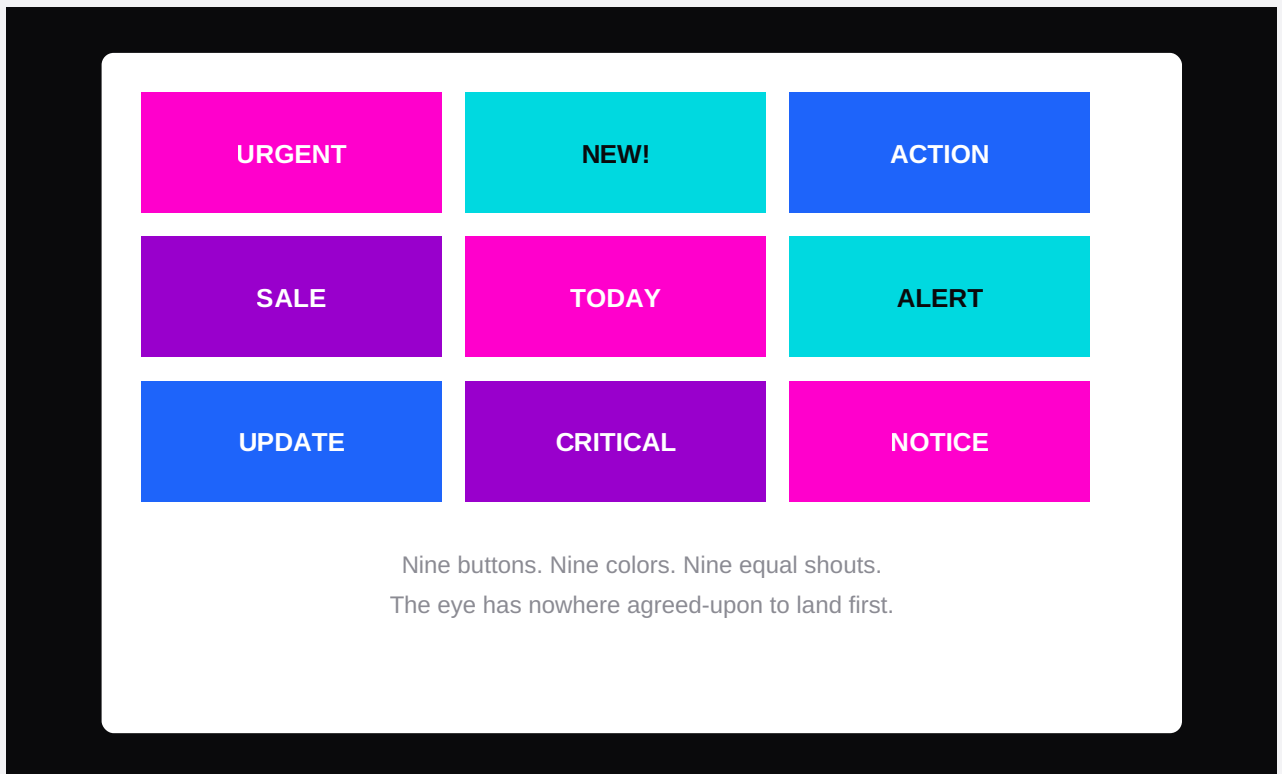


Fig. 5 — Admin dashboard, first draft, before any visual hierarchy pass.

## ABOUT THE ARTIFACT

When every button, badge and label is bold, saturated and the same size, the interface loses the one job hierarchy exists to do: tell the eye where to look first.

## CURATOR'S NOTE

**If everything is emphasized, nothing is.** A screen that shouts everything at once has nothing urgent left to say.

## FRAGMENTS RECONSTRUCTION

- Establish one clear focal point per screen.
- Use size, weight and color with intention.
- Group related actions, separate the rest.
- Let secondary actions look secondary.



# The Maze

Artifact: navigation map that explains every turn instead of making the turn obvious.

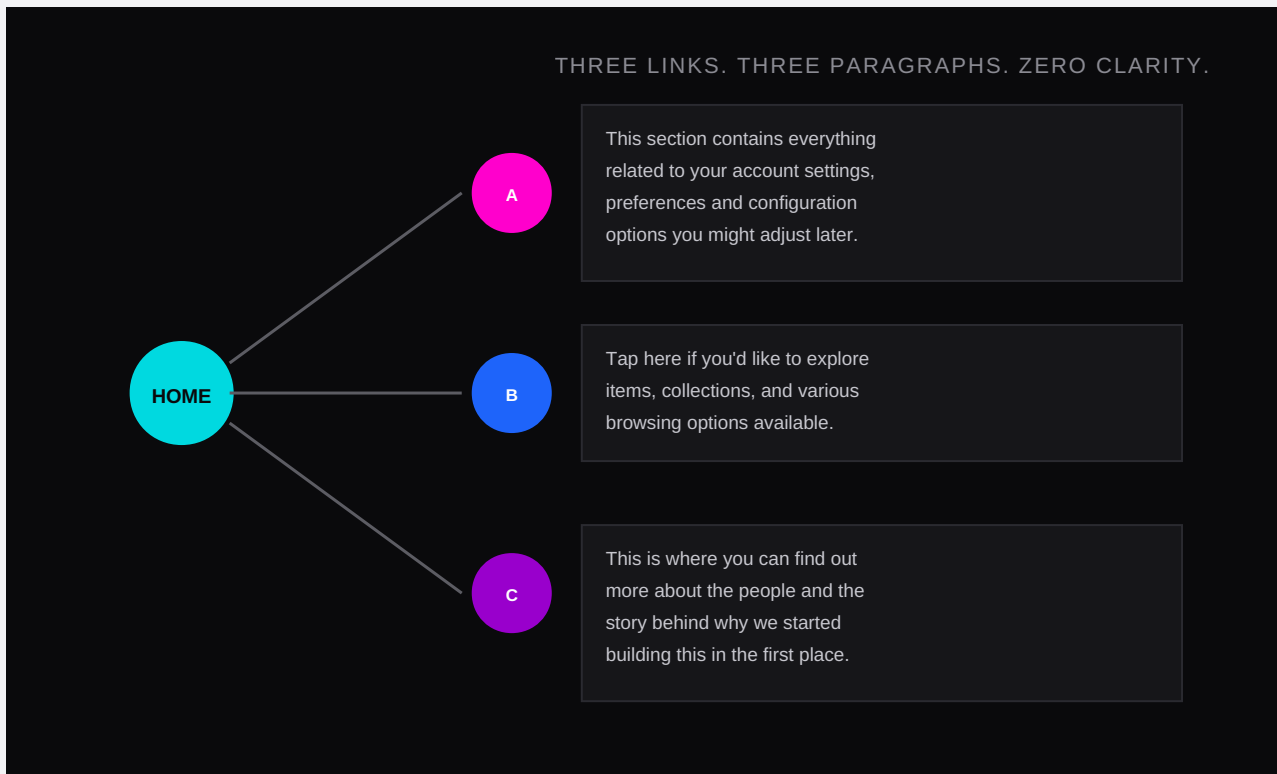


Fig. 6 — Primary navigation, annotated with explanatory copy instead of clear labels.

## ABOUT THE ARTIFACT

Some navigation tries to compensate for unclear structure by explaining itself at every turn — tooltips, subtitles, paragraphs — instead of simply being easy to follow.

## CURATOR'S NOTE

Good navigation doesn't need a tour guide. **If a link needs a paragraph, the link is the problem** — not the missing sentence.

## FRAGMENTS RECONSTRUCTION

- Make destinations self-evident from labels alone.
- Replace explanatory copy with clearer structure.
- Test navigation with the descriptions hidden.
- A good IA needs no instructions.



# Hidden Treasure

Artifact: usage-map of a feature buried four menus deep, recovered from a product analytics review.

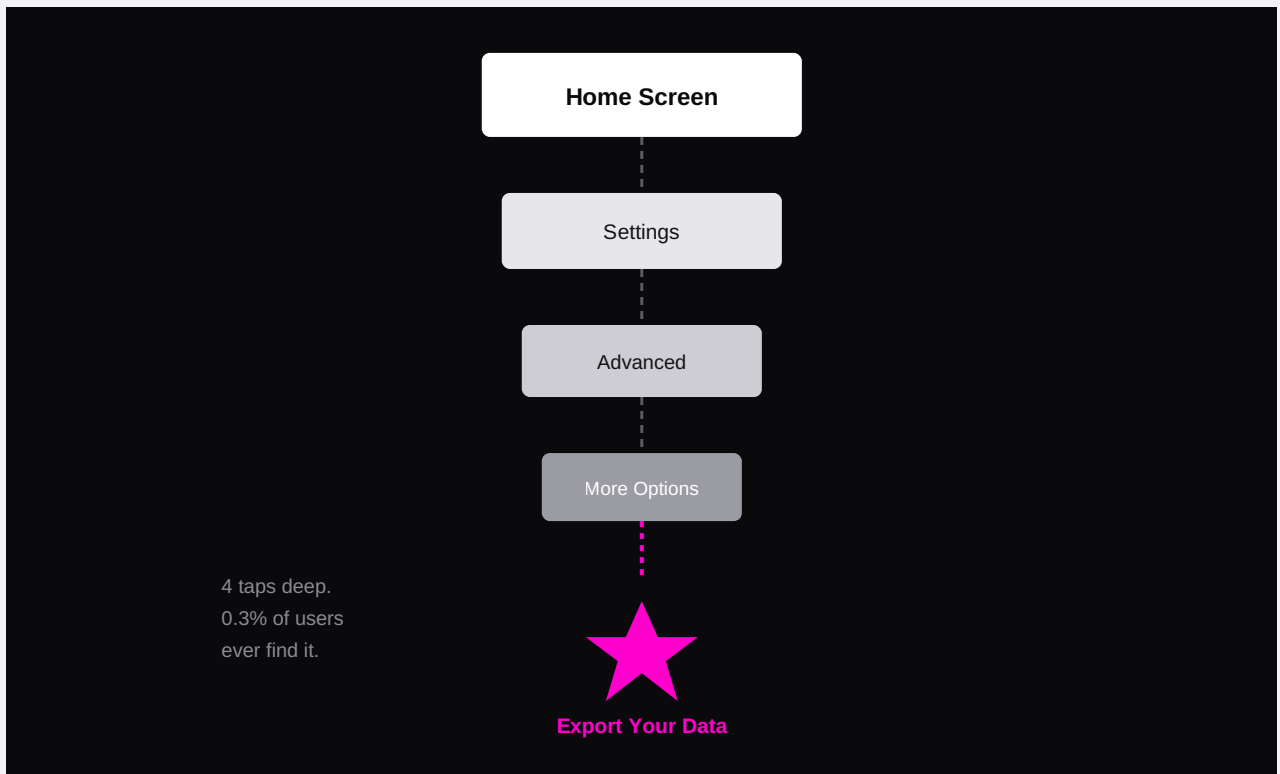


Fig. 7 — Feature depth map: four taps between the home screen and a high-value action.

## ABOUT THE ARTIFACT

Some of the most valuable features in a product are the ones almost nobody finds — buried three or four menus deep, unlabeled, waiting to be discovered by accident.

## CURATOR'S NOTE

**A feature nobody finds might as well not exist.** Usage data doesn't lie about value — it lies about visibility.

## FRAGMENTS RECONSTRUCTION

- Surface high-value features at the top level.
- Track discovery, not just usage.
- Don't bury power features to keep the UI "clean."
- If it's worth building, it's worth surfacing.



# Too Many Doors

Artifact: pricing-plan selector with twenty near-identical options, recovered from a SaaS onboarding flow.

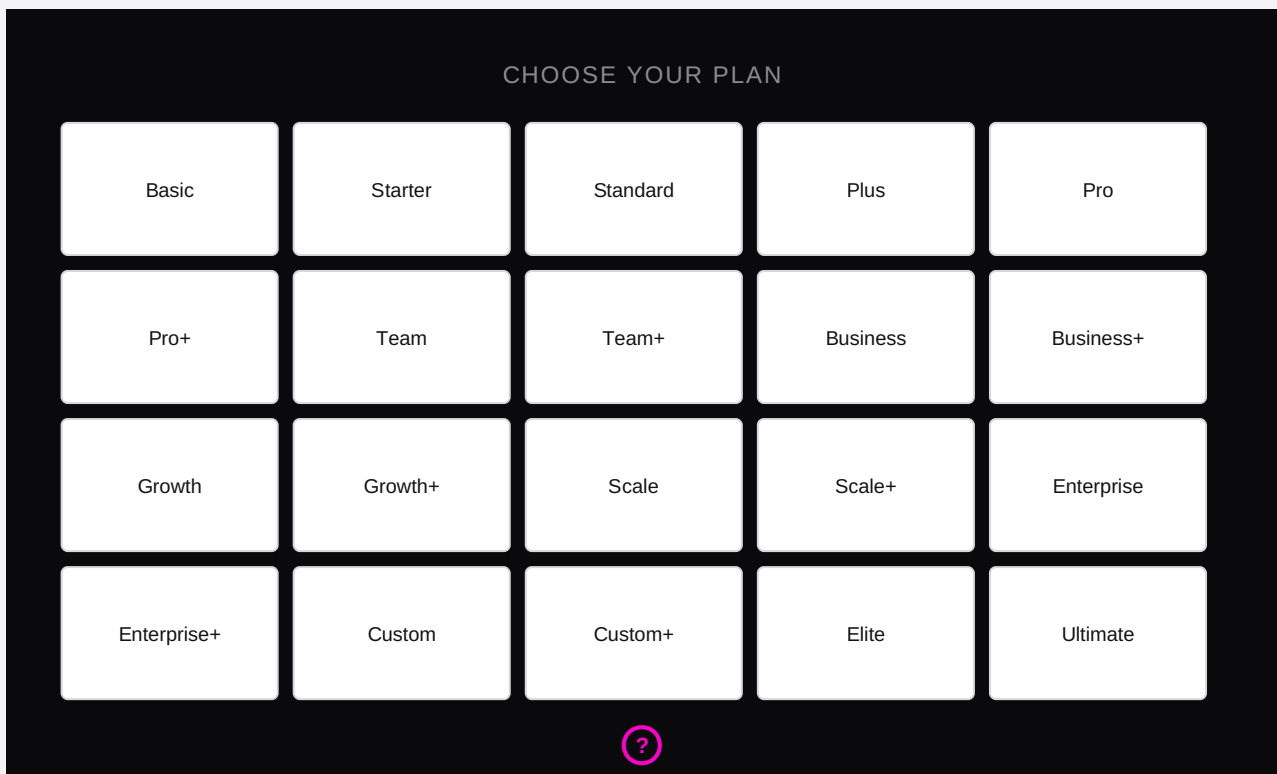


Fig. 8 — Plan selector, twenty options, no visual distinction between recommended and edge-case tiers.

## ABOUT THE ARTIFACT

Hick's Law holds that decision time increases with the number and complexity of choices. A menu of twenty similar options doesn't feel generous — it feels paralyzing.

## CURATOR'S NOTE

**More options isn't more freedom.** Every extra door is one more decision standing between someone and what they came for.

## FRAGMENTS RECONSTRUCTION

- Reduce options to the ones that matter most.
- Use progressive disclosure for advanced choices.
- Default to the most common path.
- Test decision time, not just satisfaction.

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## GALLERY III

# Interaction

The moment a person's finger touches a screen, the interface makes a promise: I heard you, here's what's happening, here's what to do next. This wing collects four artifacts of that promise being broken — through forms, silence, blame, and beauty that arrives too late.

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|-----------|----------------------------|---|
| <b>09</b> | <b>The Tax Form</b>        | Designing forms people actually complete. |
| <b>10</b> | <b>Silent Interfaces</b>   | The importance of system feedback.        |
| <b>11</b> | <b>Blaming the Visitor</b> | Helpful error messages instead of blame.  |
| <b>12</b> | <b>Beautiful but Slow</b>  | Balancing aesthetics with usability.      |
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# The Tax Form

Artifact: fifteen-field signup form, recovered from an onboarding flow with a 61% abandonment rate.

First Name \*

Last Name \*

Confirm First Name \*

Email Address \*

Confirm Email Address \*

Phone Number \*

Confirm Phone Number \*

Street Address Line 1 \*

City \*

State / Province \*

ZIP / Postal Code \*

Country \*

Date of Birth \*

How did you hear about us? \*

▼ continues for 2 more screens

Fig. 9 — Signup form, page one of three, before field consolidation.

## ABOUT THE ARTIFACT

Some forms multiply fields the way tax paperwork does — asking for information twice, splitting one answer into three inputs, marking half the fields "required" out of habit rather than necessity.

## CURATOR'S NOTE

**Every field is a toll booth.** The shortest path to "done" is the one that respects the visitor's time.

## FRAGMENTS RECONSTRUCTION

- Ask only for what you'll actually use.
- Combine redundant fields, not confirm-fields.
- Mark only the truly required fields.
- Save progress — don't force one long sitting.



# Silent Interfaces

Artifact: tap sequence on a button that gives no response, recovered from a checkout flow session recording.

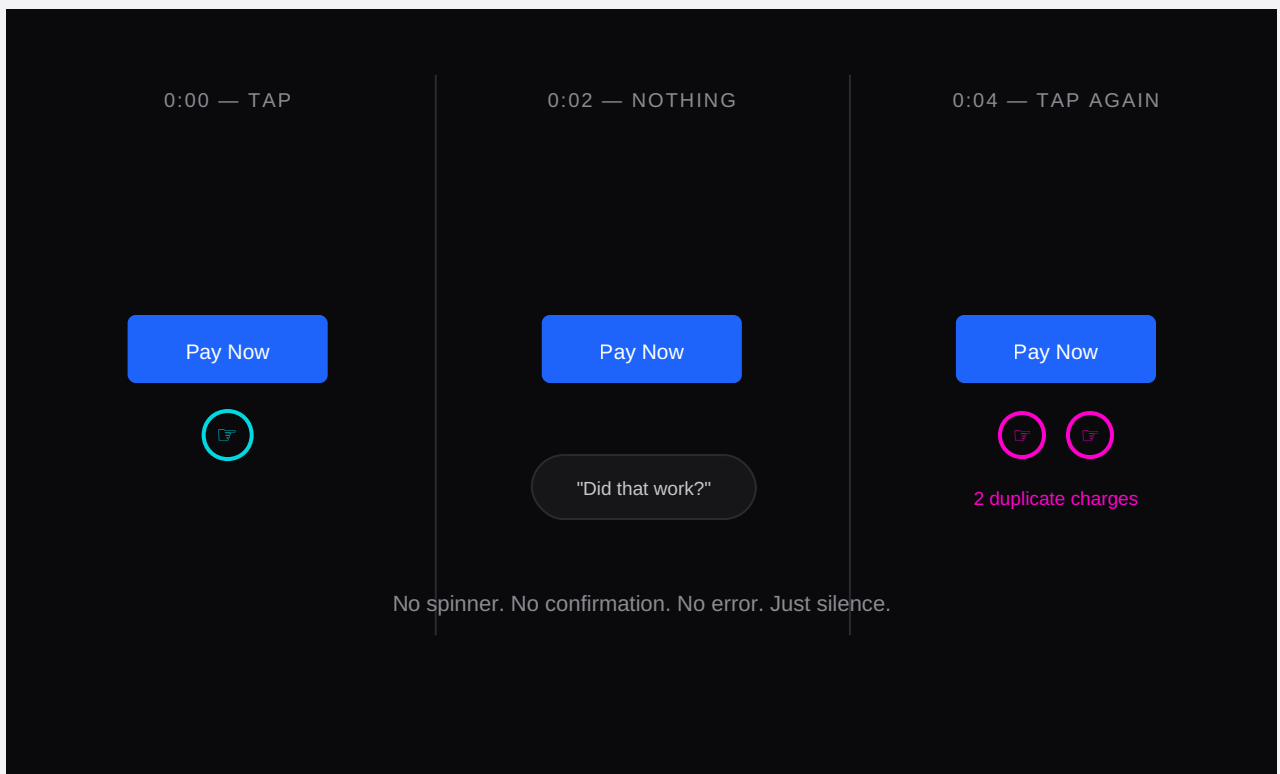


Fig. 10 — Payment button, no loading or confirmation state across a 4-second gap.

## ABOUT THE ARTIFACT

An interface that gives no response to input leaves people guessing whether their action worked, failed, or is still processing — so they click again, and again.

## CURATOR'S NOTE

**Silence isn't neutral; it reads as broken.** Every action deserves an acknowledgment, even a successful one.

## FRAGMENTS RECONSTRUCTION

- Confirm every action, even successful ones.
- Show loading states for anything over 300ms.
- Disable buttons mid-submission to prevent duplicates.
- Never let "nothing happened" be the only answer.



# Blaming the Visitor

Artifact: error dialog recovered from a password-reset flow, verbatim copy preserved.

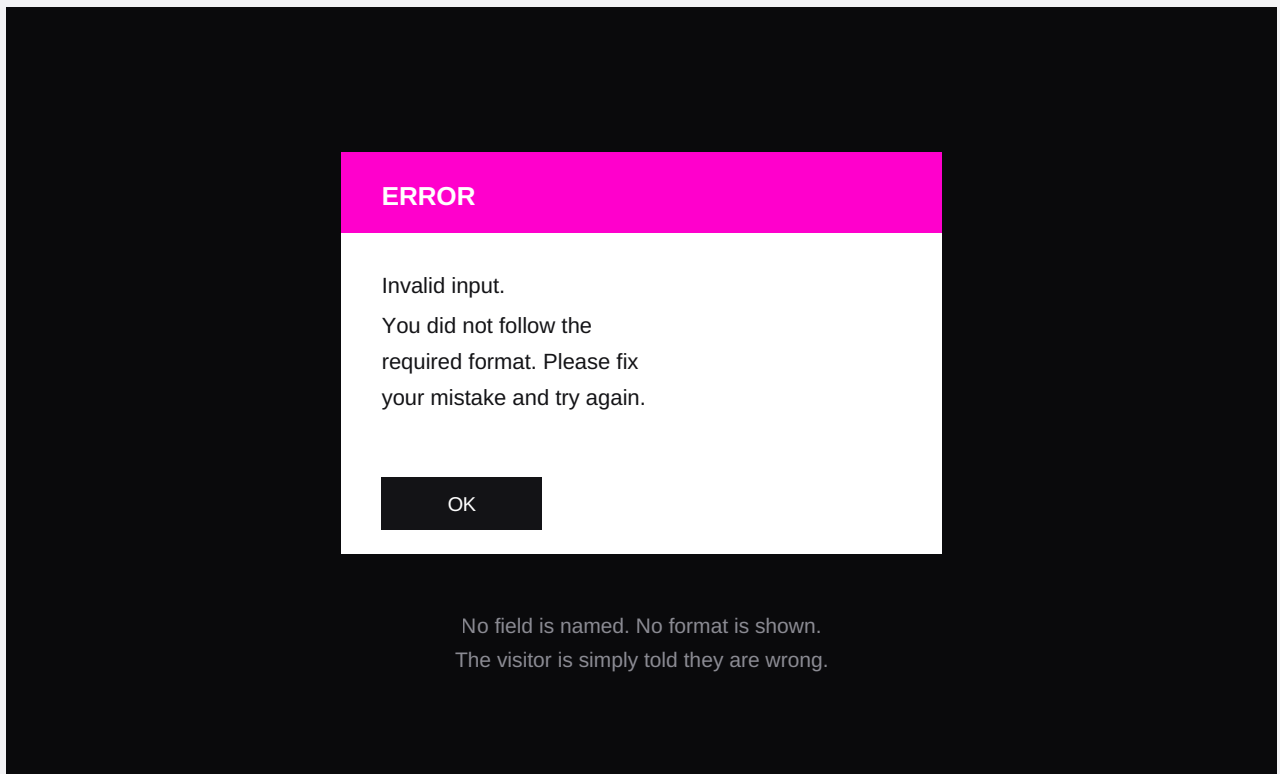


Fig. 11 — Error dialog, original copy preserved for the record.

## ABOUT THE ARTIFACT

Some error messages read like a scolding — vague blame with no explanation of what went wrong or how to fix it, as if the interface bears no responsibility for the failure.

## CURATOR'S NOTE

**Users don't fail forms. Forms fail users.** A good error message names the problem and hands back a way forward.

## FRAGMENTS RECONSTRUCTION

- State exactly what went wrong.
- Show where, not just that, the error occurred.
- Offer a clear next step, not just a label.
- Write errors in the interface's voice, not a scold's.



# Beautiful but Slow

Artifact: hero-loading sequence, recovered from a landing page performance audit.

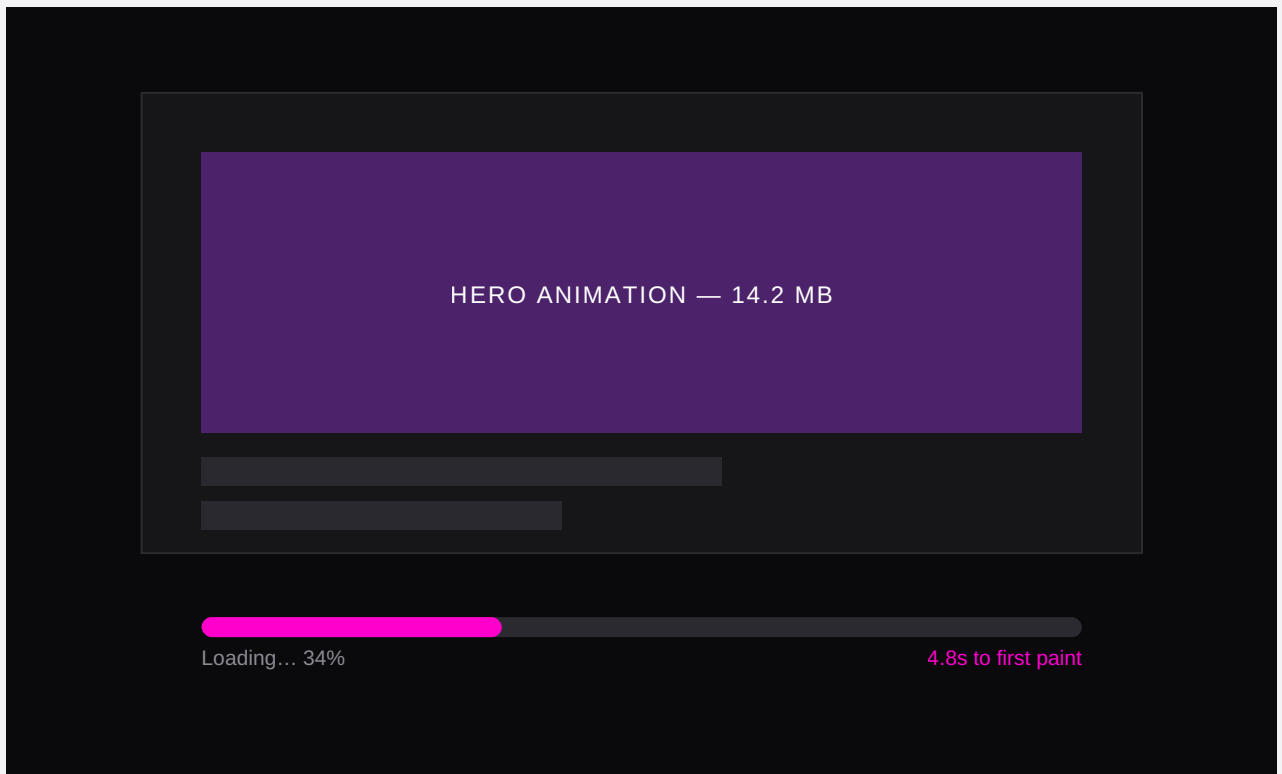


Fig. 12 — Landing page hero, largest contentful paint measured at 4.8 seconds.

## ABOUT THE ARTIFACT

A beautifully art-directed screen that takes too long to load doesn't feel premium — it feels broken. Visual polish and performance are both part of the experience, not competing priorities.

## CURATOR'S NOTE

**Users don't wait for beauty. They bounce.** A gorgeous interface nobody sees because it hasn't loaded yet is a gorgeous interface that failed.

## FRAGMENTS RECONSTRUCTION

- Treat load time as a design constraint, not an afterthought.
- Optimize hero imagery and custom fonts first.
- Show meaningful content before decoration.
- Measure real performance, not just visual polish.

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## GALLERY IV

# Human Psychology

Good interfaces aren't designed for an idealized user who reads every word, remembers every icon, and welcomes every new gesture. They're designed for the actual person — scanning, forgetting, and relying on habit. This wing collects four artifacts of interfaces that fought human nature instead of designing for it.

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|-----------|------------------------------|--|
| <b>13</b> | <b>Nobody Reads</b>          | Designing for scanning instead of reading. |
| <b>14</b> | <b>Memory Is Expensive</b>   | Recognition over recall.                   |
| <b>15</b> | <b>Fighting Human Nature</b> | Respecting familiar interaction patterns.  |
| <b>16</b> | <b>The Invisible Visitor</b> | Accessibility as a design principle.       |
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# Nobody Reads

Artifact: eye-tracking overlay on an unbroken wall of text, recovered from a five-second usability test.

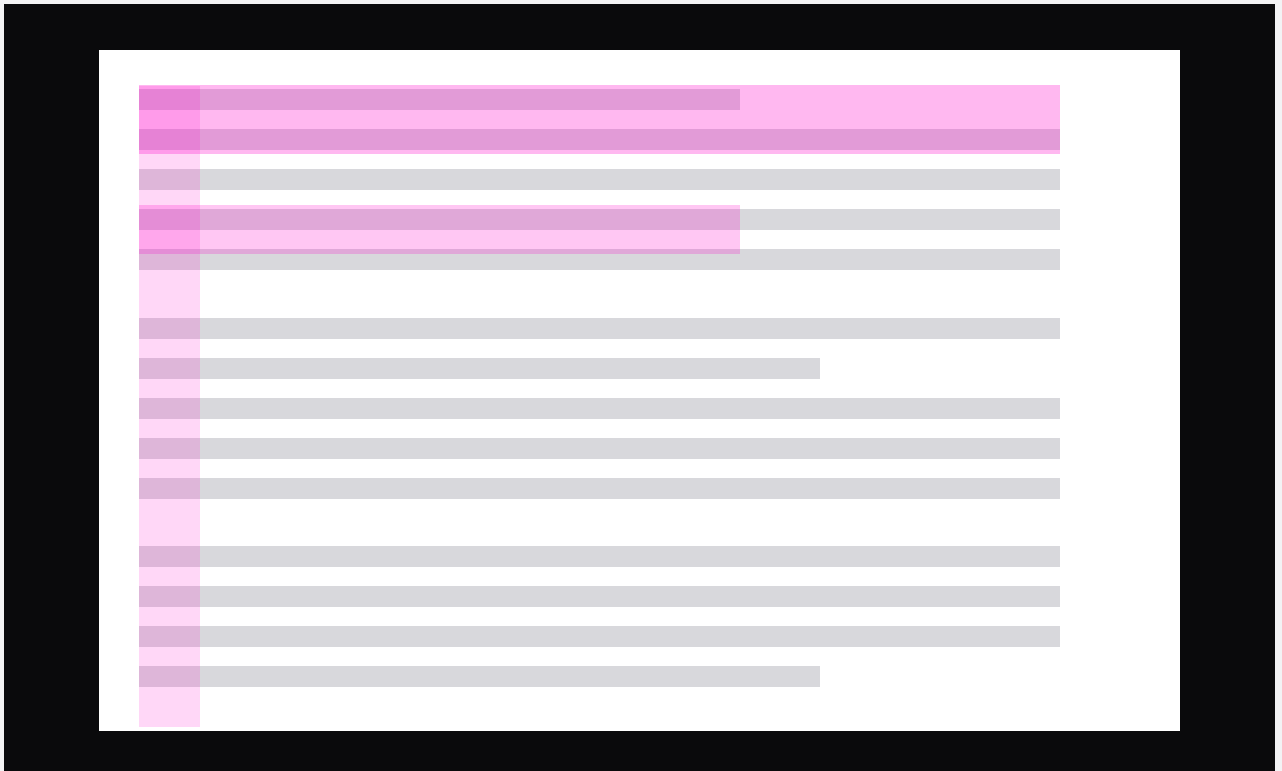


Fig. 13 — F-pattern heatmap over a dense product description, 5-second exposure.

## ABOUT THE ARTIFACT

People don't read pages, they scan them — hunting for keywords, headings and visual anchors. A page that's all paragraph and no hierarchy gets three seconds of attention before it's abandoned.

## CURATOR'S NOTE

**Design for the reader who is already leaving.** If your key message isn't visible in the first scan, it doesn't exist.

## FRAGMENTS RECONSTRUCTION

- Front-load the most important words.
- Use headings, bullets and bold as scan-anchors.
- Break walls of text into short paragraphs.
- Write for skimmers, reward the readers who stay.



# Memory Is Expensive

Artifact: unlabeled icon navigation, recovered from a "cleaner" redesign that cut task success by 22%.

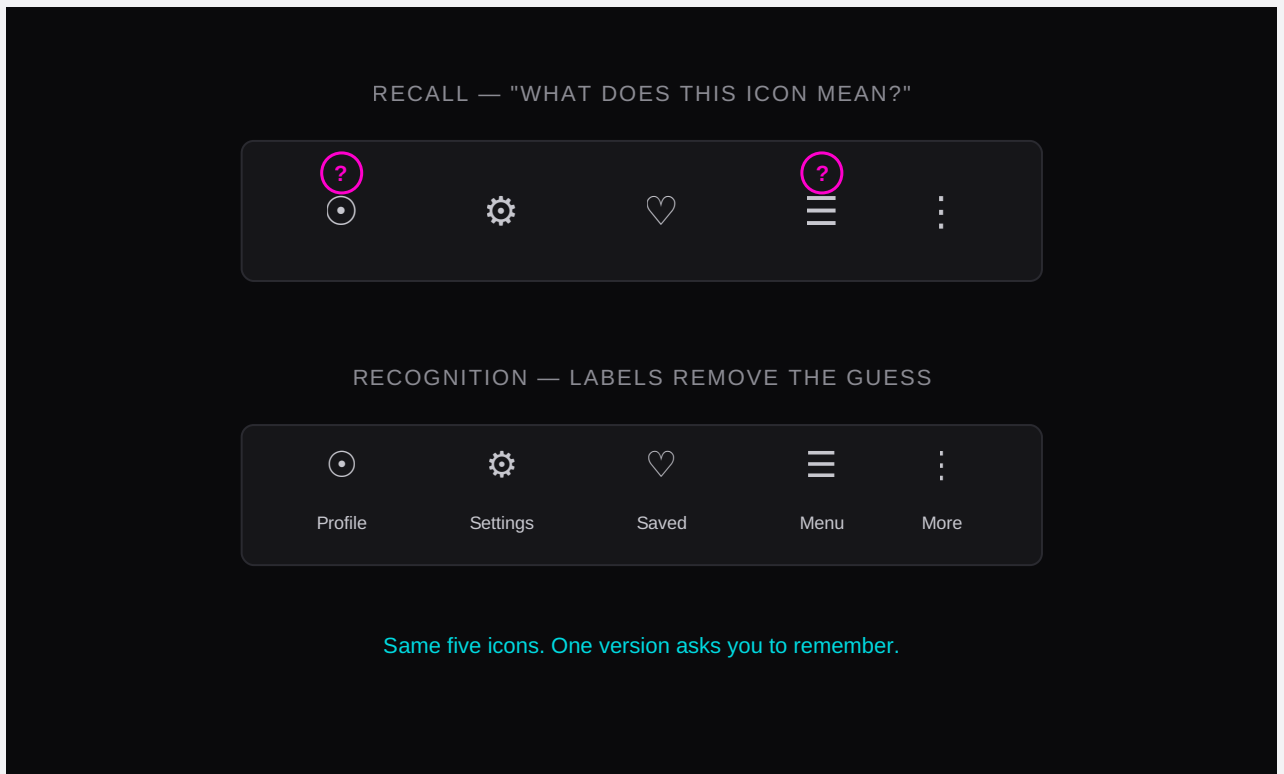


Fig. 14 — Same navigation bar, unlabeled vs. labeled.

## ABOUT THE ARTIFACT

Interfaces that rely on recall — remembering what an icon means, memorizing a command, recalling where a setting lives — cost more mental effort than interfaces that let people recognize the right choice.

## FRAGMENTS RECONSTRUCTION

- Pair icons with labels wherever ambiguity is possible.
- Show options rather than requiring memorized commands.

## CURATOR'S NOTE

**Recognition is cheap. Recall is expensive.**

Every icon without a label is a small memory test most people quietly fail.

- Keep frequent actions visible, not hidden in memory.
- Test icons blind before shipping them unlabeled.



# Fighting Human Nature

Artifact: a reversed swipe-to-go-back gesture, recovered from an app redesign notorious for its support tickets.

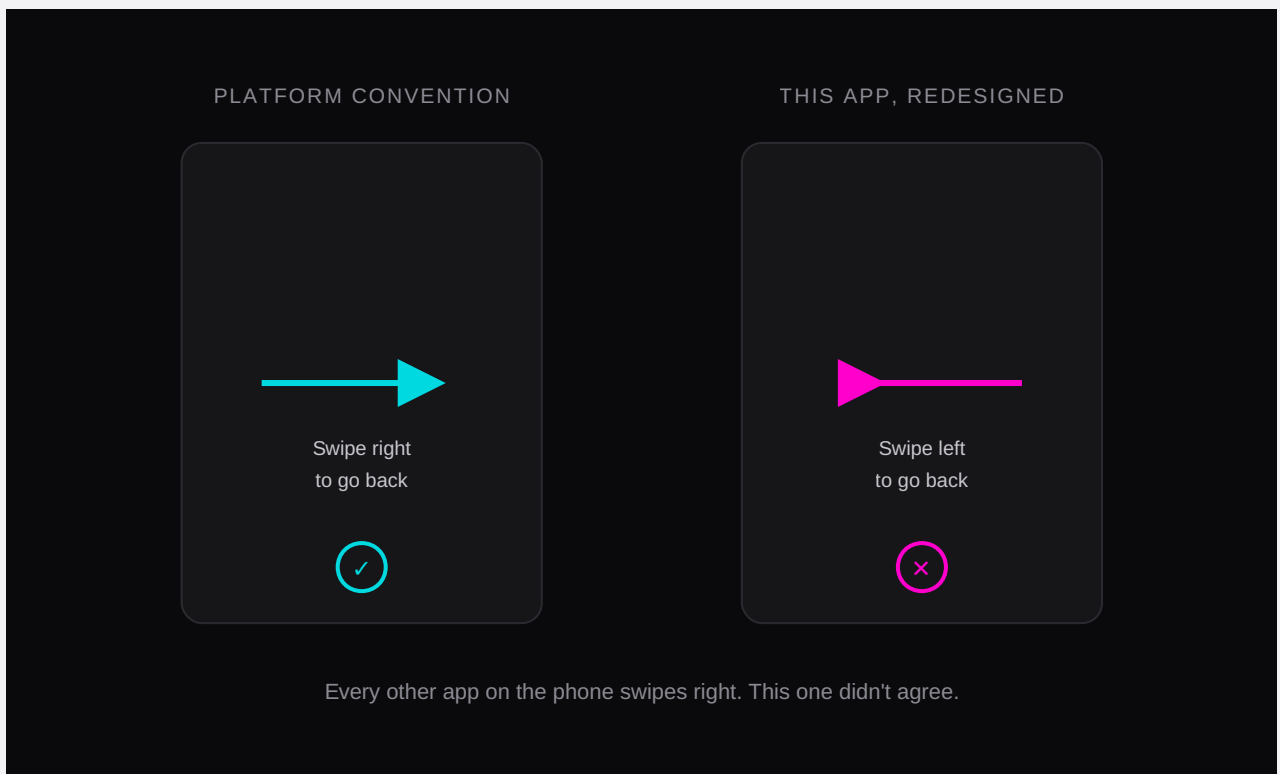


Fig. 15 — Gesture direction compared against platform convention.

## ABOUT THE ARTIFACT

Every interaction pattern a person has learned elsewhere — swipe to delete, pull to refresh, pinch to zoom — becomes an expectation. Reinventing it "for originality" doesn't feel fresh; it feels broken.

## CURATOR'S NOTE

**Novelty is not a feature when it costs muscle memory.** Innovate on what's actually broken, not on gestures people already trust.

## FRAGMENTS RECONSTRUCTION

- Follow platform conventions unless evidence says otherwise.
- Reserve novelty for moments that need it.
- Test unfamiliar patterns against the standard ones.
- Familiar isn't boring — it's fast.



# The Invisible Visitor

Artifact: contrast and touch-target audit, recovered from a checkout flow that failed WCAG AA.

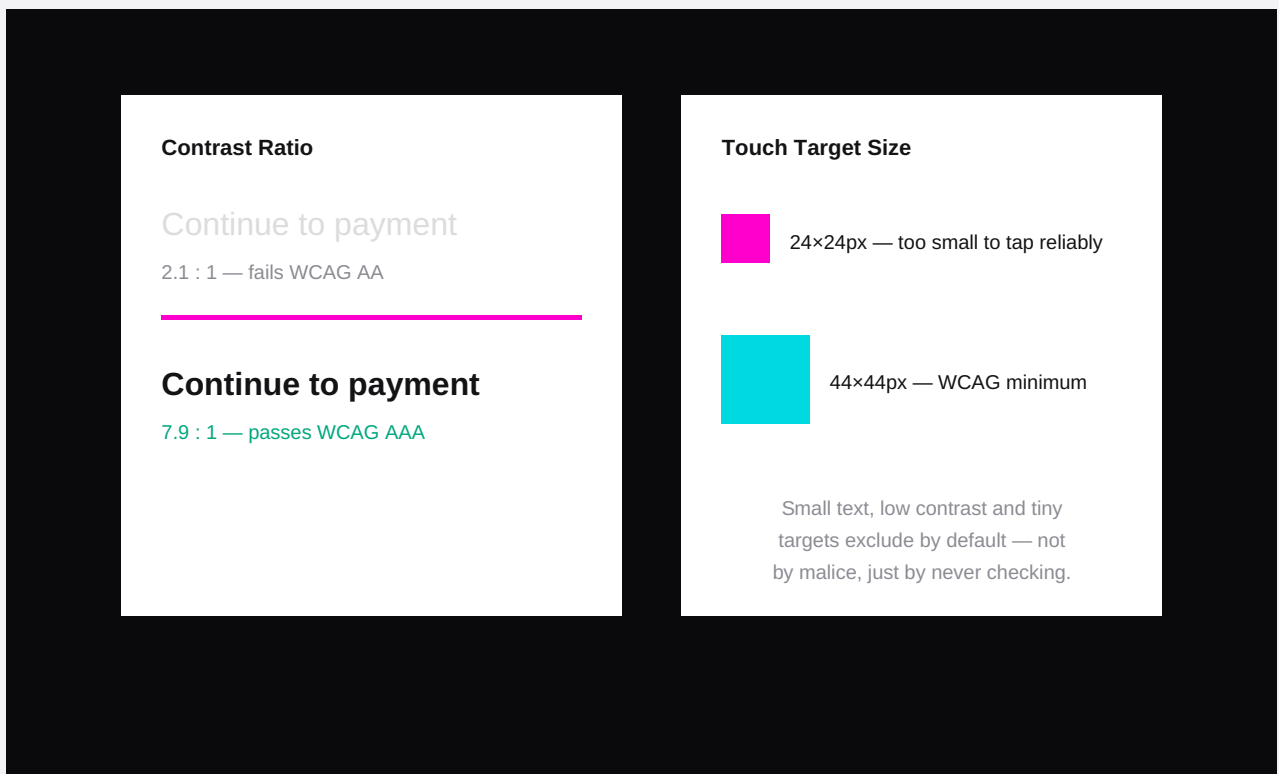


Fig. 16 — Side-by-side audit: failing contrast and undersized tap targets vs. WCAG-compliant versions.

## ABOUT THE ARTIFACT

Accessibility isn't an edge case or a legal checkbox — it's the same principle as good design, applied to everyone, including people using screen readers, keyboards, or needing higher contrast.

## FRAGMENTS RECONSTRUCTION

- Meet WCAG AA contrast ratios (4.5:1) by default.
- Make touch targets at least 44×44px.

## CURATOR'S NOTE

**If your interface excludes someone by default, it isn't minimal — it's incomplete.** Accessibility is not a feature; it's a floor.

- Support keyboard and screen-reader navigation from day one.
- Test with real assistive technology, not just scanners.

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GALLERY V

# Experience & Product Thinking

The final wing steps back from screens to the product itself — what it says when there's nothing to show, whether it has a voice at all, what it asks for before it has earned the right, what it measures, and whether it ever stops changing. These are the questions that outlast any single interface.

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- |           |                               |                                    |
|-----------|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <b>17</b> | <b>The Empty Room</b>         | Designing meaningful empty states. |
| <b>18</b> | <b>The Personality Crisis</b> | Character and emotional resonance. |
| <b>19</b> | <b>The Interrogation Room</b> | Earn the right to ask questions.   |
| <b>20</b> | <b>Vanity Metrics</b>         | Measuring success, not clicks.     |
| <b>21</b> | <b>The Finished Product</b>   | Research and iteration never stop. |
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# The Empty Room

Artifact: first-run empty state, before and after a redesign that raised first-week activation by 19%.

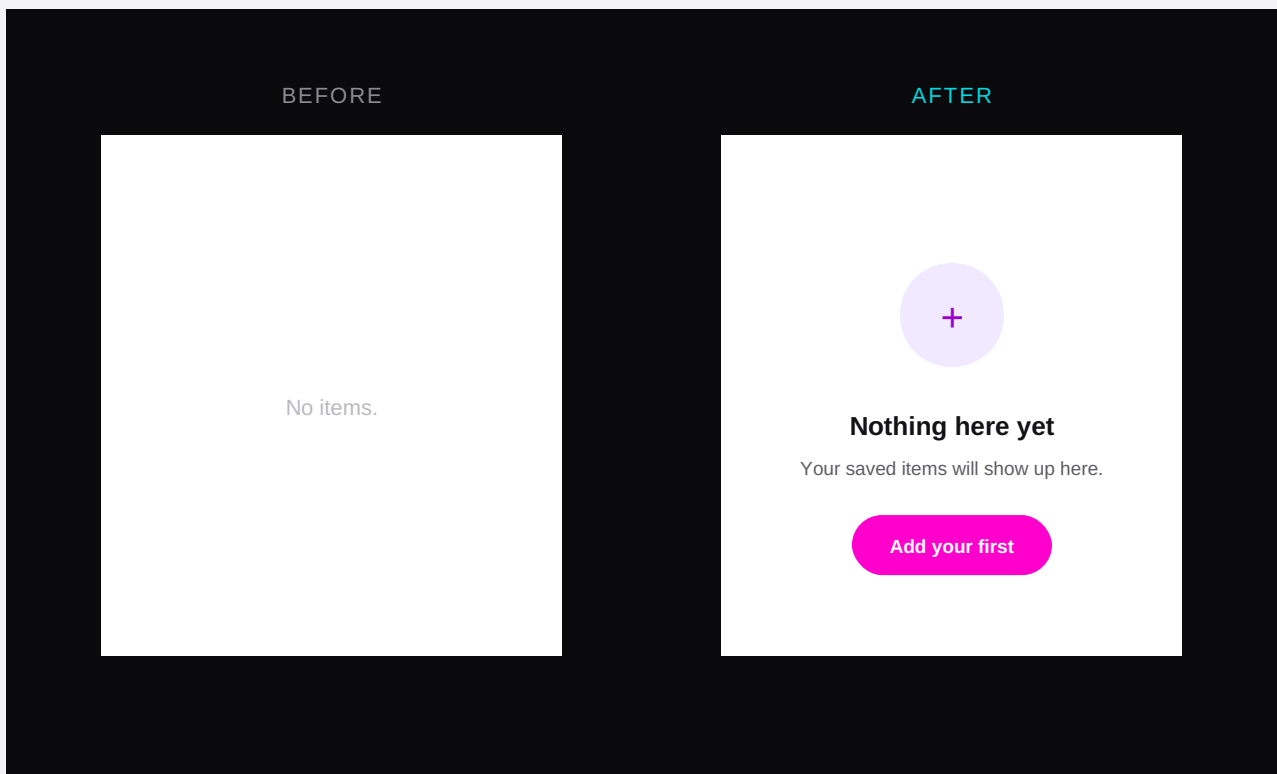


Fig. 17 — Same empty state, before and after treating it as onboarding.

## ABOUT THE ARTIFACT

An empty state is not "nothing" — it's often the first thing a new user sees, and often the last thing a designer thinks about. A blank screen with no guidance quietly tells people they've done something wrong.

## CURATOR'S NOTE

**Design the zero, not just the hundred.** The first empty screen is a chance to say "here's what to do next," not "there's nothing here."

## FRAGMENTS RECONSTRUCTION

- Treat empty states as onboarding, not an afterthought.
- Explain why the screen is empty.
- Offer one clear next action.
- Use illustration or tone to keep it human.



# The Personality Crisis

Artifact: the same three system messages, written in two voices, recovered from a product copy audit.

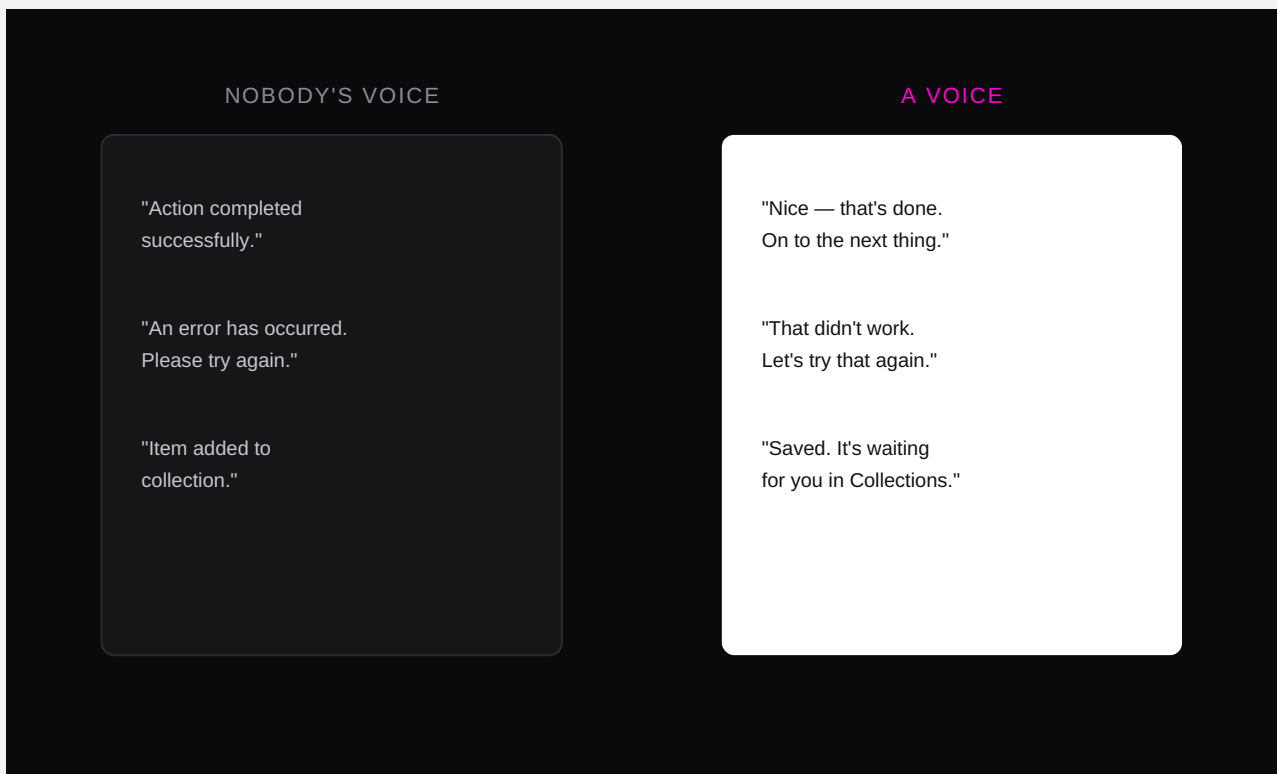


Fig. 18 — Three identical events, two different products.

## ABOUT THE ARTIFACT

Many products read like they were written by no one in particular — correct, neutral, forgettable. Without a consistent voice, an interface never builds a relationship with the person using it.

## CURATOR'S NOTE

**A product without personality isn't safer — it's invisible.** People remember products that sound like someone.

## FRAGMENTS RECONSTRUCTION

- Define a voice and apply it everywhere, not just marketing.
- Let copy reflect the product's actual values.
- Replace generic system messages with your own voice.
- Tone consistency builds trust faster than pixel consistency.



# The Interrogation Room

Artifact: twelve-step onboarding questionnaire, recovered before a single screen of the product itself.

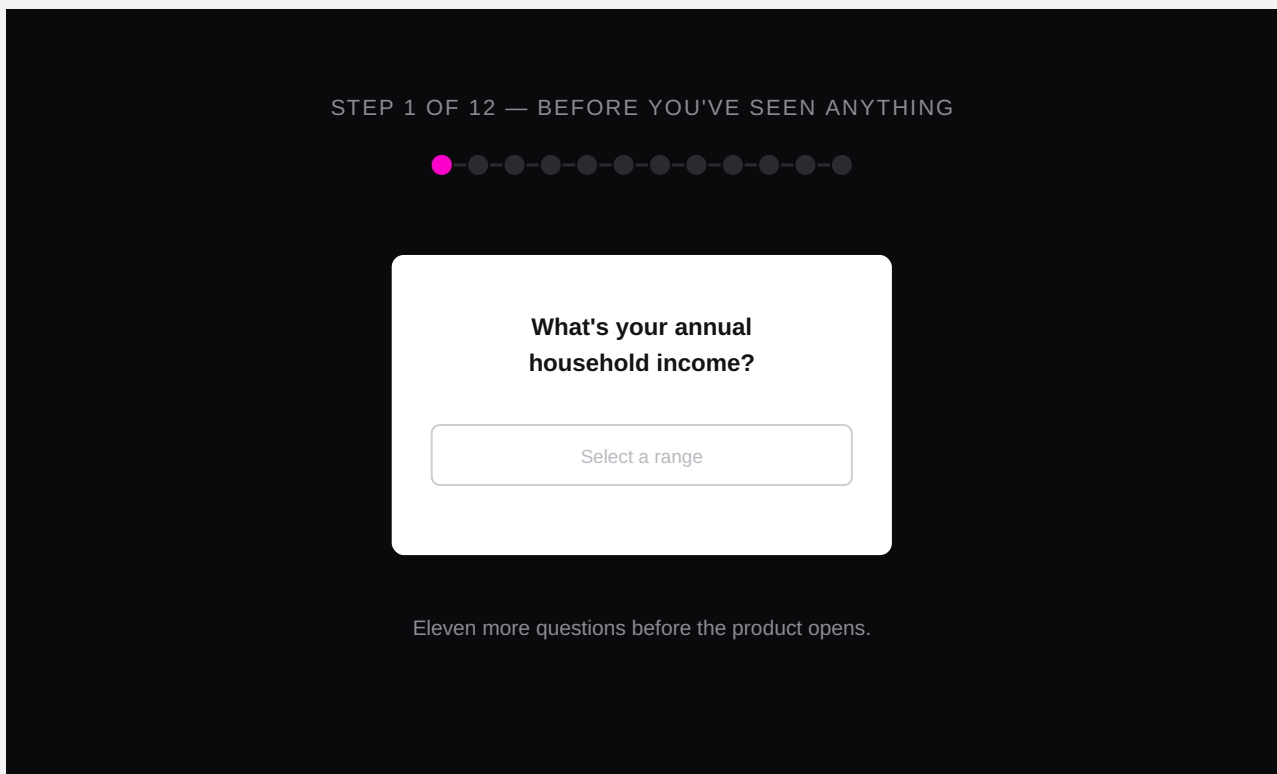


Fig. 19 — Onboarding step 1 of 12, no product value delivered yet.

## ABOUT THE ARTIFACT

Some onboarding flows interrogate new users before they've seen a single moment of value — a dozen questions, mandatory fields, "tell us everything about yourself" before "here's what we can do for you."

## FRAGMENTS RECONSTRUCTION

- Deliver one moment of value before asking anything.
- Make onboarding questions optional or contextual.

## CURATOR'S NOTE

**You haven't earned the right to ask yet.** Value first, curiosity-driven questions later — asked in context, not as a checkpoint.

- Ask only what changes the immediate experience.
- Spread necessary questions across use, not upfront.



# Vanity Metrics

Artifact: two dashboards for the same product, recovered the week a growth chart stopped matching support tickets.

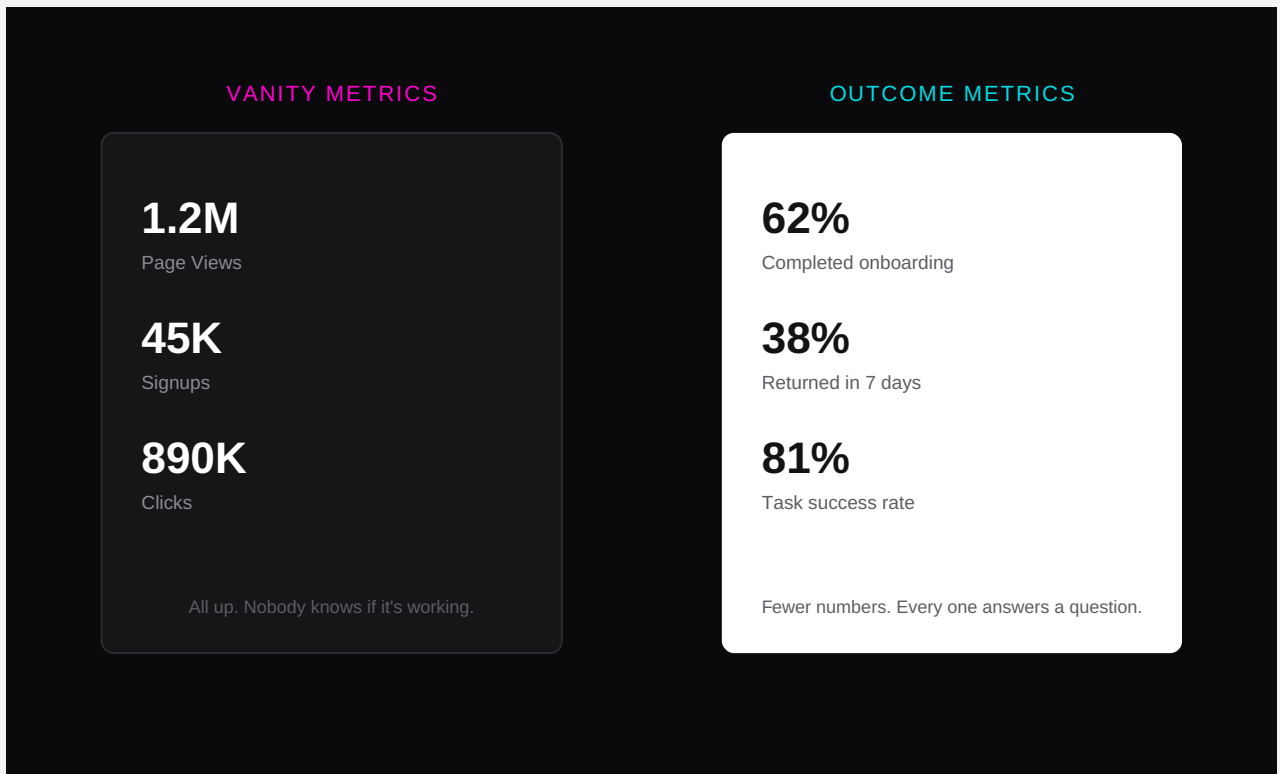


Fig. 20 — Same product, same week, two different definitions of success.

## ABOUT THE ARTIFACT

A dashboard full of page views, clicks and signups can rise every week while the product quietly fails the people using it. Vanity metrics count activity; they don't measure whether anyone succeeded.

## CURATOR'S NOTE

**A metric that can't tell you if someone succeeded isn't a success metric.** Count outcomes, not motion.

## FRAGMENTS RECONSTRUCTION

- Track task completion, not just traffic.
- Measure retention and return usage, not signups alone.
- Ask "did this help them?" before "did this get clicks?"
- Report outcomes to the whole team, not just growth.



# The Finished Product

Artifact: a roadmap that ends at launch, and the loop that should have replaced it. The closing exhibit of Volume I.

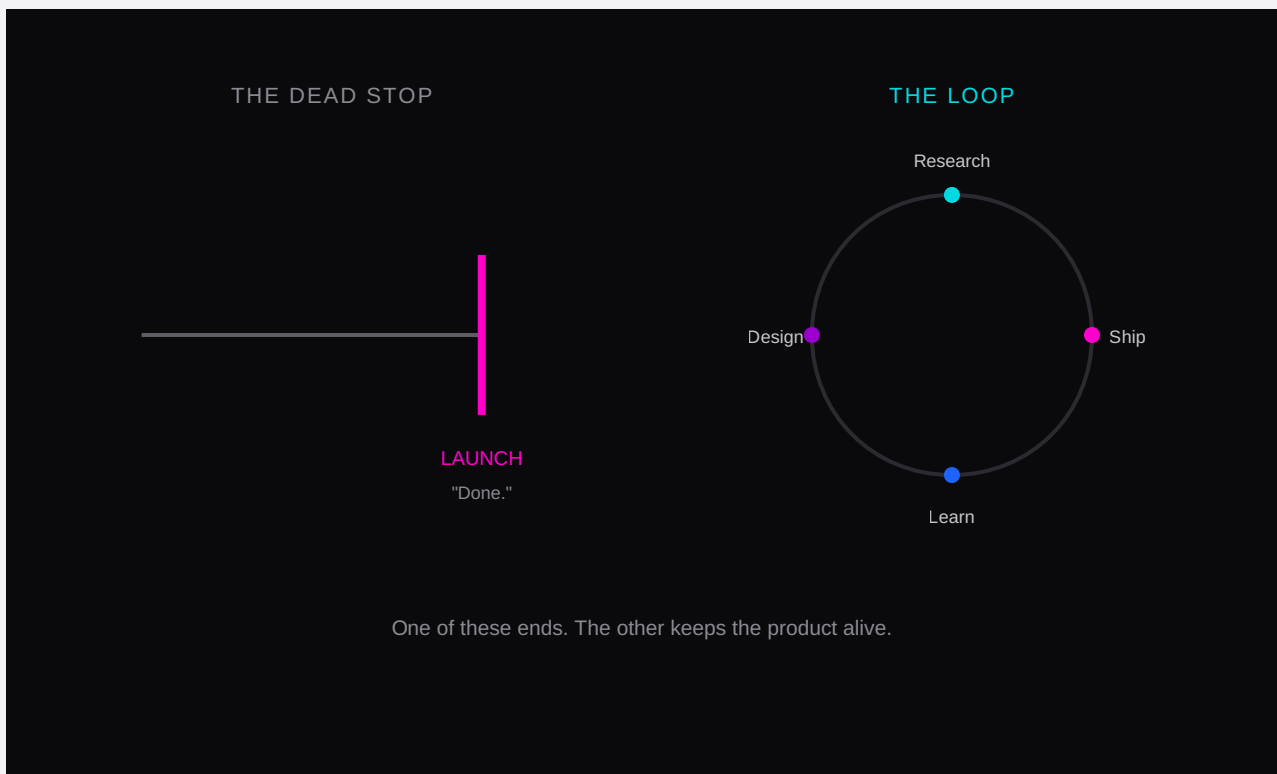


Fig. 21 — Roadmap artifact, before and after removing the finish line.

## ABOUT THE ARTIFACT

Some teams treat launch as the finish line — the point where research stops, feedback slows, and the product is declared "done." But the people using it keep changing, and so should the product.

## CURATOR'S NOTE

**Launch is a data point, not a destination.** The best products are the ones that never stopped being designed — including this collection.

## FRAGMENTS RECONSTRUCTION

- Keep collecting feedback after launch, not just before.
- Revisit assumptions as usage patterns emerge.
- Treat every release as a hypothesis, not a conclusion.
- A "finished" product is usually just an unmonitored one.



## ABOUT THE CURATOR

# Katarina Kaplarski Vuković

Senior UX Researcher & Consultant ·  
Founder, Fragments United

**Build products people actually love to use.**

I'm Katarina, a Senior UX Researcher and Consultant with 20+ years of experience helping teams create digital products users genuinely enjoy. Every exhibit in this museum comes from the same conviction: behind every screen there's a person, and they should feel happy — not confused, blamed, or interrogated — when using what we build.

Through Fragments, I share practical UX insights, product reviews and research methods — and offer consulting, mentoring and masterclasses for founders, freelancers and growing teams. I also teach Human-Computer Interaction at Metropolitan University Belgrade, where this museum first took shape as a way to make design critique stick.

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APPENDIX

# Suggested Reading

| *The Design of Everyday Things* — Don Norman

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| *Don't Make Me Think* — Steve Krug

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| *About Face* — Alan Cooper

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| *100 Things Every Designer Needs to Know About People* — Susan Weinschenk

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| *Designing Interfaces* — Jenifer Tidwell

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| Nielsen Norman Group — ongoing research & articles

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CONTINUE THE VISIT

# Take the Museum Further

Volume I is a walk through the mistakes. If you want the tools, the templates, and the guided critique that turn recognition into practice — and products people actually love to use — this is where the collection continues.

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## UX Handbook

€19

The companion reference — every principle in this museum, distilled into a working guide.

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## UX Templates

€39–59

Ready-to-use Figma files for research, IA, and interaction patterns — built the way these exhibits recommend.

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## Masterclass

€99

A guided course through the thinking behind this collection, with critique sessions on your own work.

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## Portfolio Review · 45 minutes

€79–99

A curator's eye on your portfolio — structured feedback on what to keep, cut, and reframe.

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## Product Critique · 90 minutes

€199

A live walkthrough of your product through the museum's lens — where users struggle, and why.

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## Product Deep Dive · 2 weeks

€399–699

Full UX review of your product — written report, video walkthrough, and prioritized recommendations.

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## 1:1 UX Mentoring

Limited  
Availability

Ongoing, personal guidance. Limited availability — enquire for current openings.

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[fragmentsunited.com](https://fragmentsunited.com)

START WITH THE MASTERCLASS — THE GUIDED VERSION OF THIS MUSEUM