Fluid

Designing software
that works – for everyone

The Fluid Project

An Open Source Community for Inclusive Design

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Fluid Project board member

Project Funded by Andrew W. Mellon Foundation

Topics We'll Cover

Fluid

Designing software
that works – for everyone

- Fluid Vision
- UX Toolkit: walkthroughs, patterns, and more
- Components
- Project roadmap
- How to get involved

USER EXPERIENCE

Fluid

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that works – for everyone

What Is Fluid?

An community source project which creates a user experience, tools, and software capable of addressing the needs of a diverse set of demanding and creative users and projects.

Core Institutions: University of Toronto | University of California, Berkeley | York University | University of British Columbia | Cambridge

Other Participating Institutions: Michigan State | University of Colorado | University of Michigan | Georgia Tech | UK Open University | Your University Here

Participating Projects: Sakai | uPortal | Kuali Student | Moodle | Open Collections | ATutor

Corporate Partners: Sun Microsystems | IBM | Mozillla Foundation | Unicon

USER EXPERIENCE

Who Are We?

Fluid
Designing software
that works – for everyone

- Fluid is intentionally open and distributed
- Fluid *is* Sakai, Moodle, Kuali, OpenCollection, uPortal, Etc..
- We're members of many communities
- All solving UX issues together
- Collaborate as an integral part of development teams
- Engage across projects -- what is of cross-cutting importance?
- Consult

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Fluid Vision

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- Foster user experience design and development within academic community source projects

  …so that they can fulfill their potential as platforms for innovation
- Build a presentation layer that supports:
  - Cross-application sharing of designs
  - The diversity of needs are unique within higher education
- Support, evangelize, and educate about the precarious values of usability, accessibility, quality assurance, and more
- Create a broad and deep community of UX expertise
- Encourage and model investment in these values and expertise

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The Fluid Approach to UX in Community Source

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- UX is a challenge for all open source projects and all institutions
  - (UX is a challenge for **most** software projects)
- Cross-project collaboration:
  - Share scarce UX resources across projects
  - Solve common & high priority challenges
  - Recognize recurring user interface idioms and needs
- Breaking down cultural & geographic barriers:
  - Can non-technical people get involved and to gain respect in OSS?
  - Can designers and developers speak a shared language?
  - How do you conduct UX activities in a distributed environment?
- A two-fold approach:
  - **Social**: build a community around UX
  - **Technical**: new UI development tools

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Encompassing Principle

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focus on user goals:

Tools must be usable and undemanding

- Users should focus on teaching, learning, research and administrative tasks… not on operating the tools
- Institutions should invest in furthering research and learning not in…ballooning support needs
- Institutions should not be concerned with cost of tool rejection and difficult implementations
- Tools should be platforms for innovation

USER EXPERIENCE

“You say tomato, I say tomato, lets call the whole thing off”

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- Academic communities are very diverse
- They differ greatly in their preferences, needs, habits, concepts, comforts, convictions….
  - Institutional preferences and branding
  - Conventions of academic discipline
  - Linguistic differences
  - Perspectives vary related to role (student, staff, faculty)
  - Different teaching approaches
  - Different learning approaches
  - Different research approaches

The academic community fosters and thrives on diversity!

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Accessibility & Usability challenge today

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- Legal commitment to equal access (Rehab 508, Section 255, ADA, state commitments, institutional policies)
- “Consistency will solve the problem”
- “One size fits all” has significant limitations
  - Constrain user experience for those meant to help
  - Accessibility guidelines seen to constrain creativity
  - “Accessible for everyone, optimal for no one”

We can’t afford to be this limited!

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Fluid:
“Flexible User Interface”

Fluid

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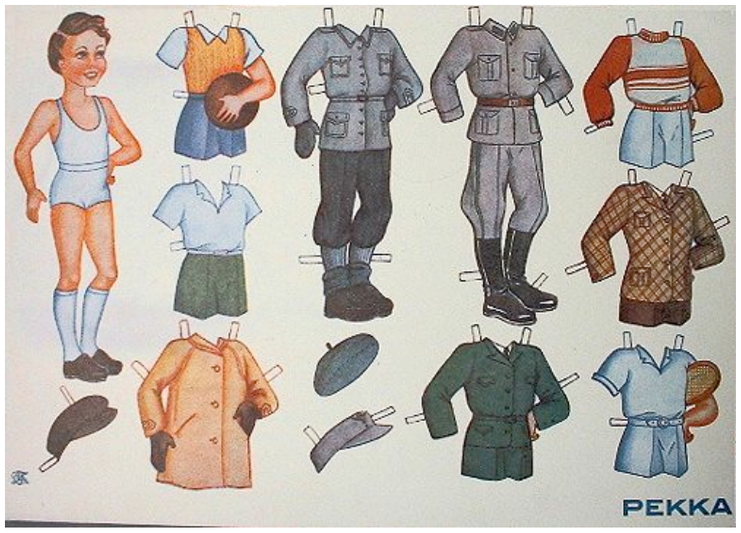
- Swappable styles
- Modular, reusable UI components
- Web 2.0 -- engage me -- focus
- Either runtime transformation for unique needs of the individual
- Or customization through configuration



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Community source UX in higher education has a unique opportunity

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- Co-located with our users
  - Our workplace is our laboratory
  - Gather ideas and feedback
  - Observe and involve our users
- Have explicit mission to meet teaching, learning, research, and public service needs (we have permission!)
- Highly motivated staff

USER EXPERIENCE

State of the Union

Usability/Accessibility in Open Source Software

Fluid

Designing software that works – for everyone

- Systemic problem of poor and inconsistent user interface
- Poor UX an impediment to adoption & support challenge
- Tackled at the end or in-production
- Redundantly developed
- Inadequately tested and refined
- Often left to programmers
- UX designers not well integrated into development culture
- Range of design roles not understood nor invested in

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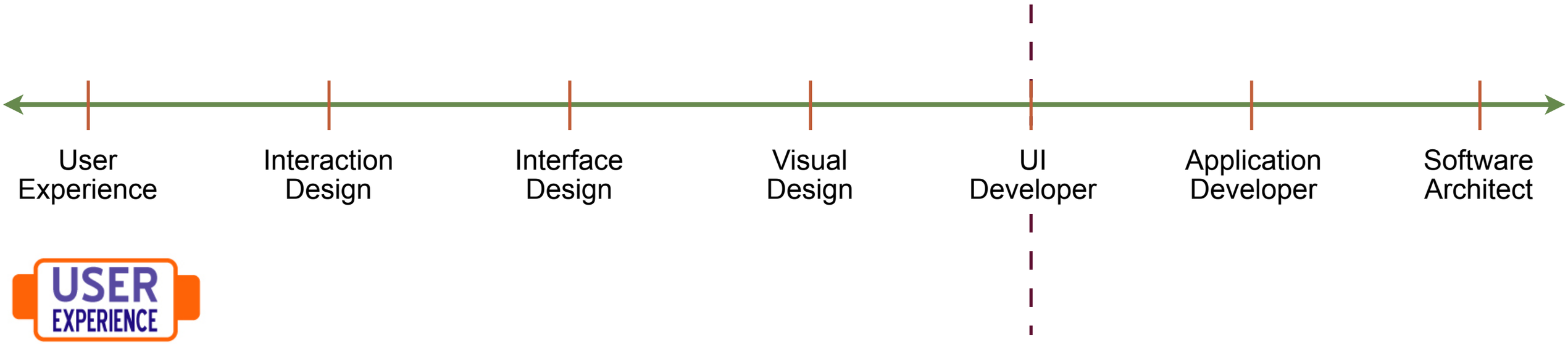

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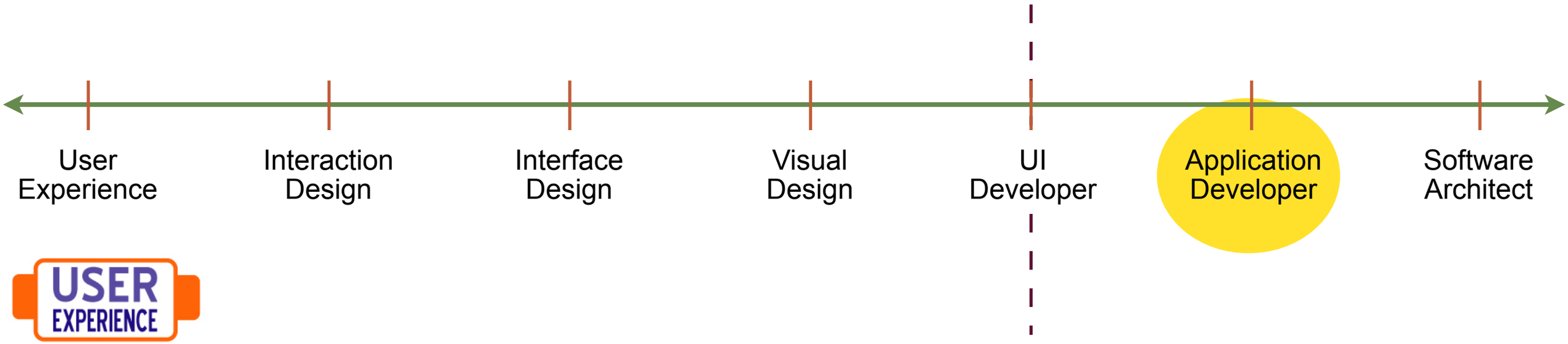

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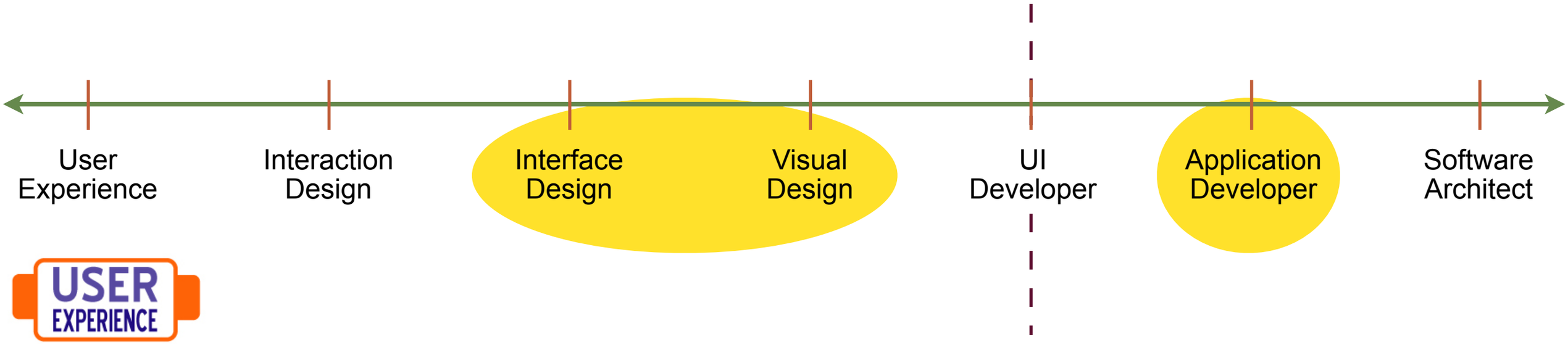

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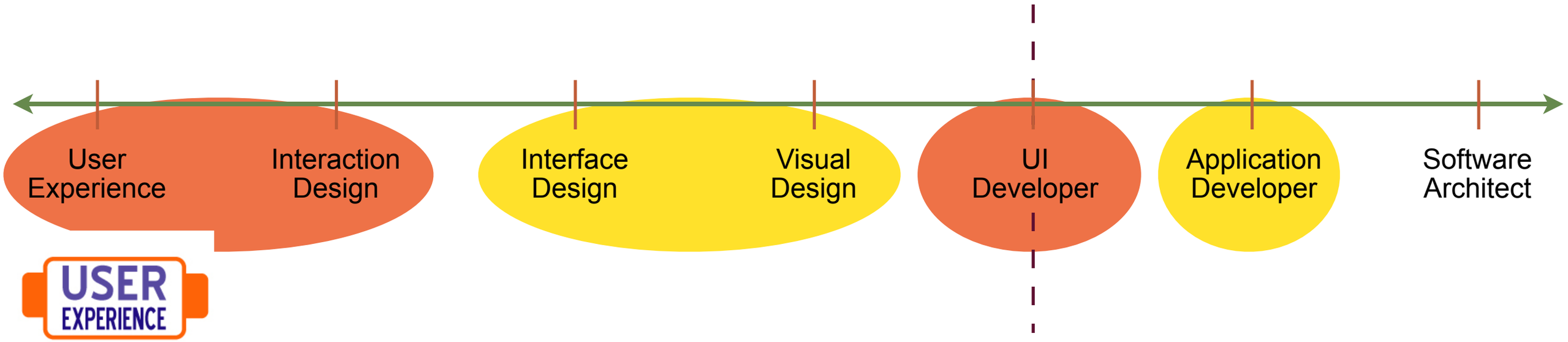

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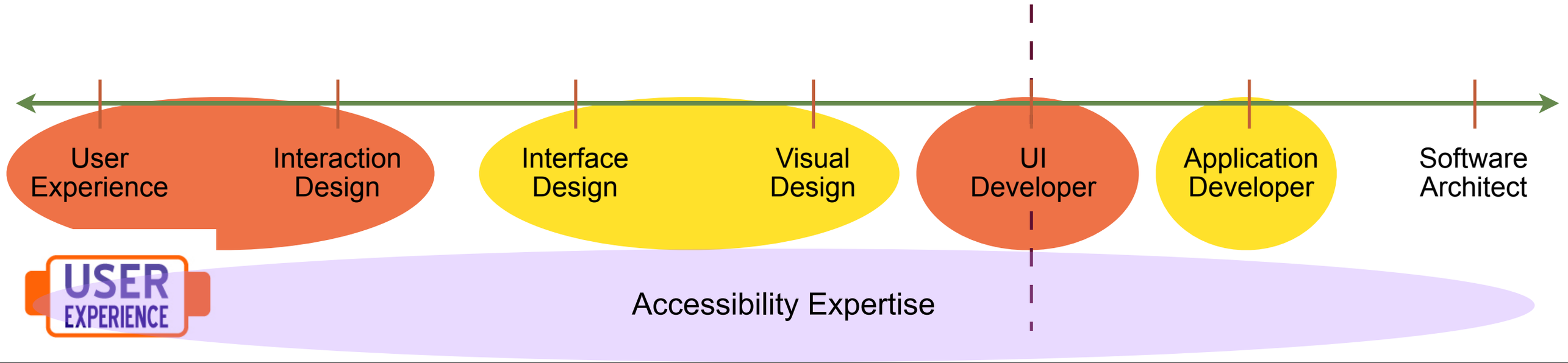

State of the Union

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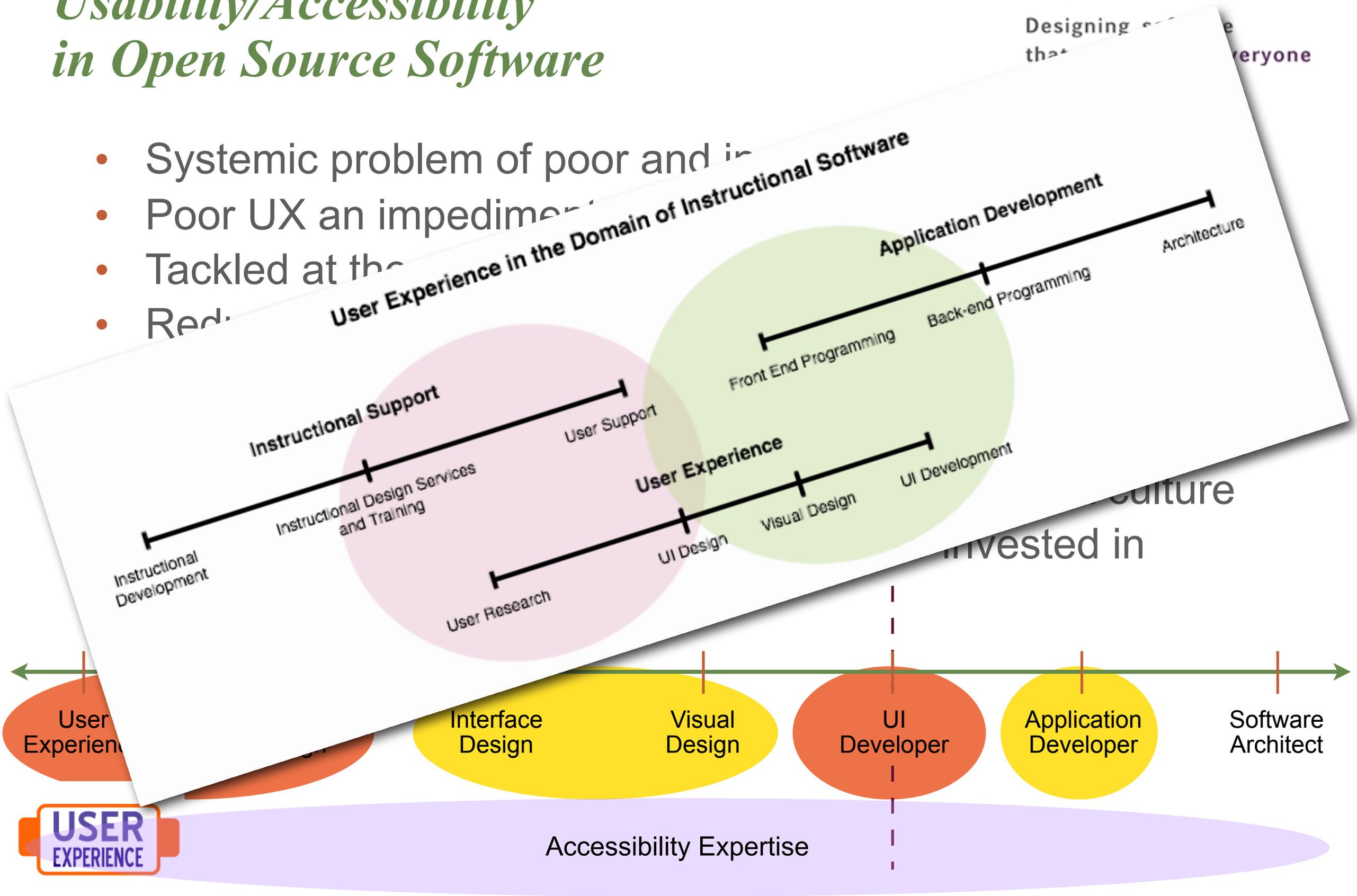

What are we Building?

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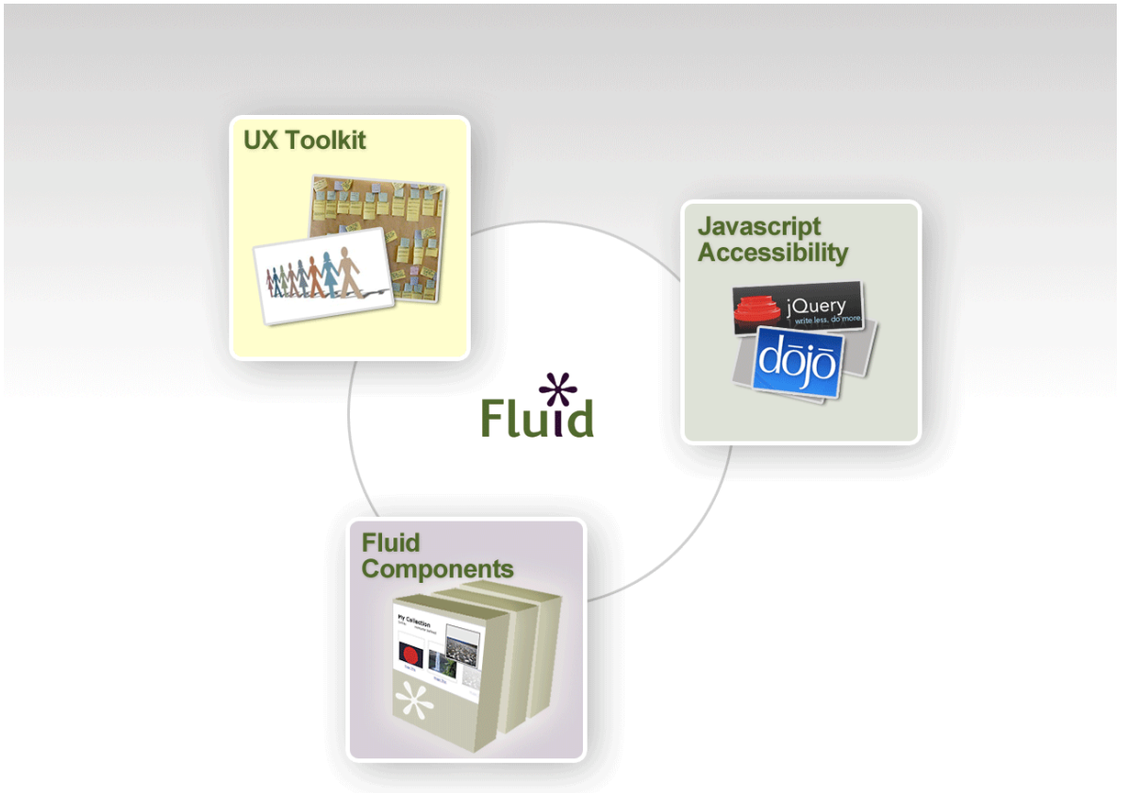
- Rich, flexible, reusable user interface components
- Lightweight JavaScript development tools
- User Experience Toolkit
- Great Interaction Designs



Interconnected activities

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Silo-delete

Designing software
that works – for everyone

Sakai | uPortal | Moodle | OpenCollection | Kuali

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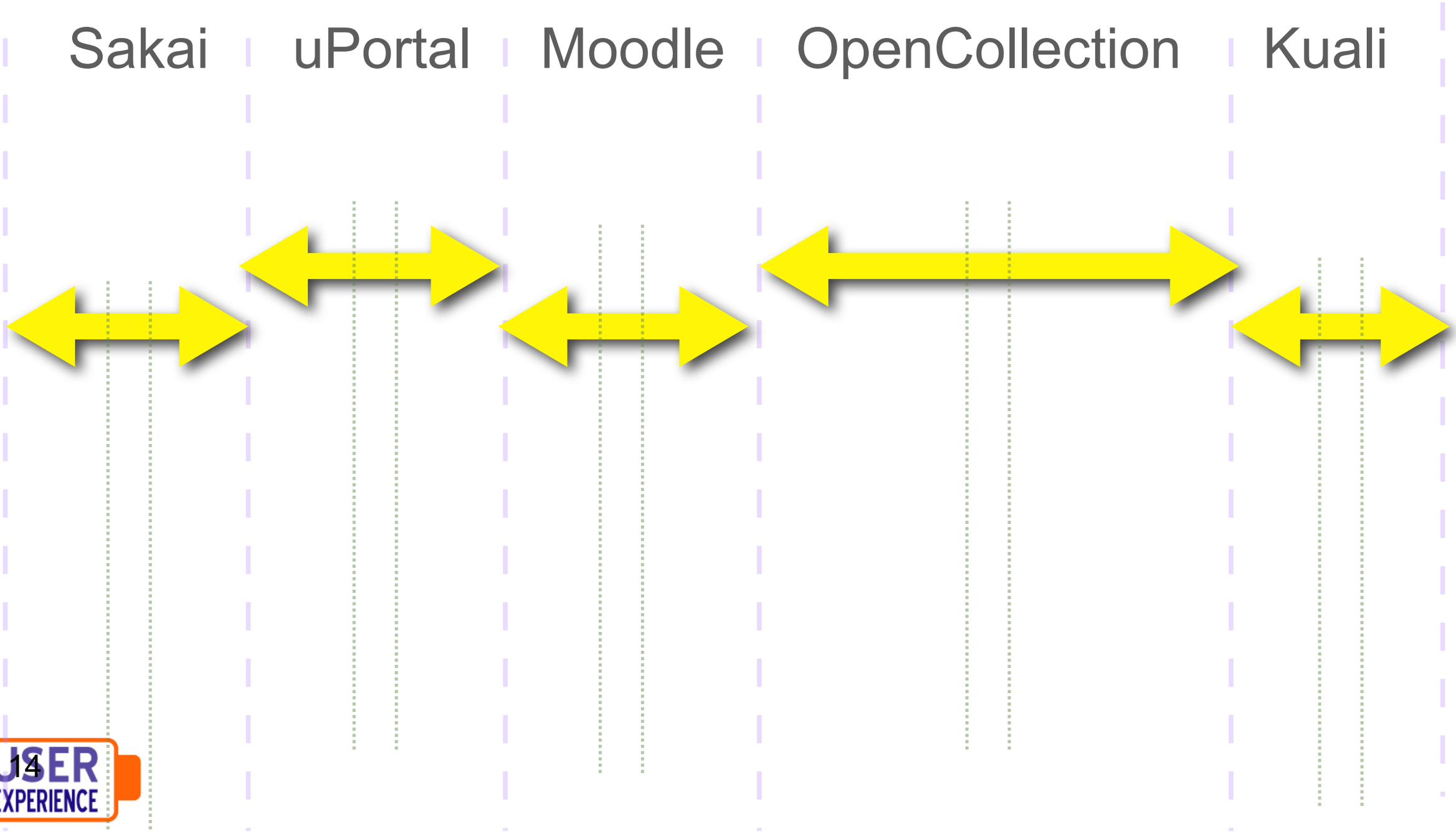

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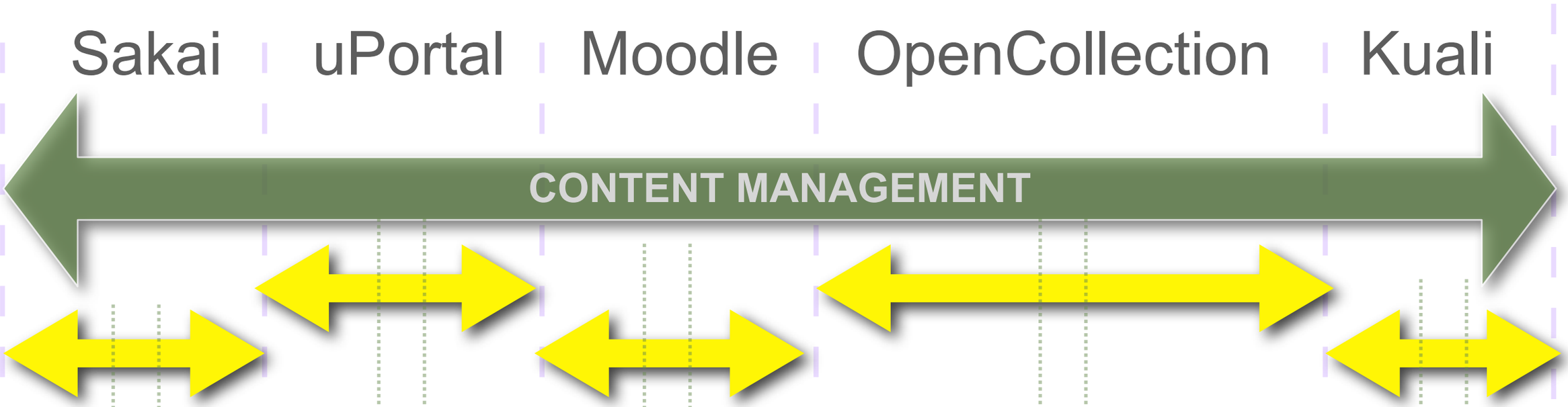

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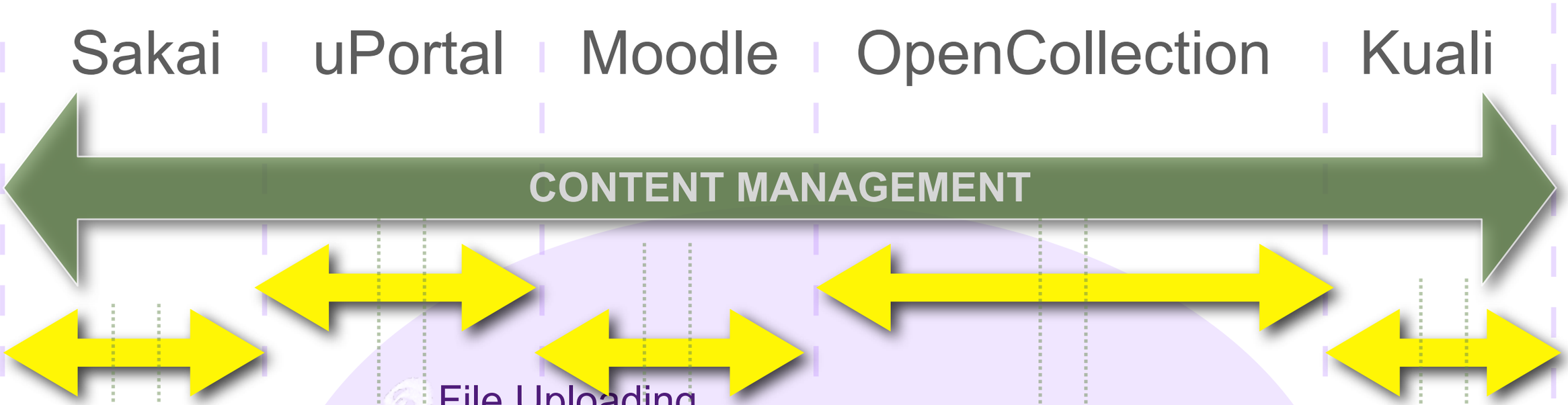

File Uploading
Reworked, lightweight File Picking
Tagging and Tag Clouds
Smart folders, “playlists,” contextual filtering
Favourites and Clipboard/File Basket
Infrastructure: Accessible Thick Box, Tree, Sortable Tabs
Drag and drop portlets

UX Toolkit

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- User Research Tools
  - Contextual Inquiry
  - Persona development
- UI Design Patterns:
  - Open Source Design Patterns Library
  - Shared design advice and guidance
- UX Walkthroughs:
  - Tools for assessing your user experience
- Testing techniques and guidelines
  - How to test your designs and talk to users
- User profile library:
  - Understanding higher education users and beyond

USER EXPERIENCE

All the stuff you need to design great interfaces in OSS!

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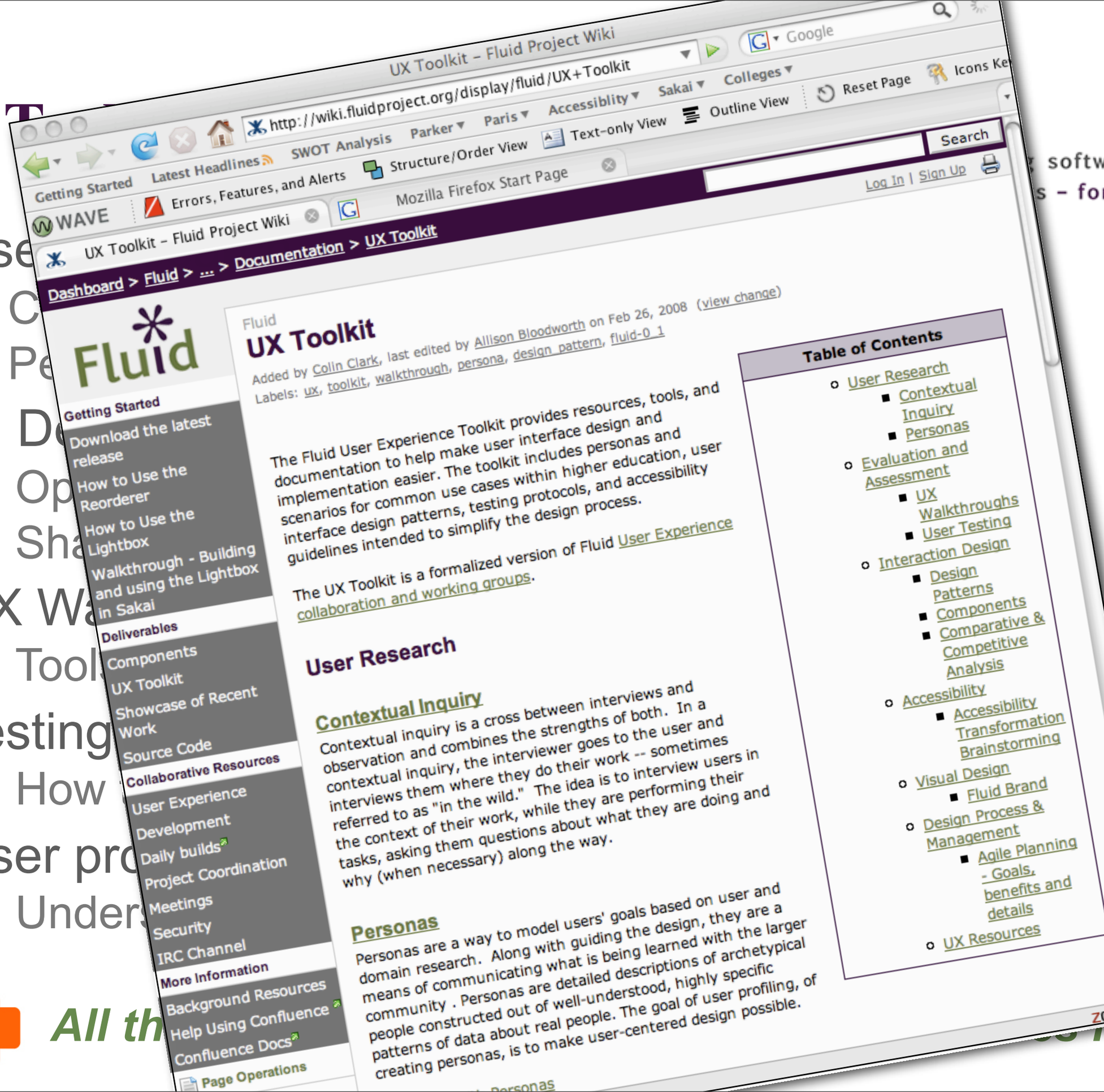

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All th ***s in OSS!***

User Research:

Contextual Inquiry

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Contextual inquiry is a cross between interviews and observation and combines the strengths of both. In a contextual inquiry, the interviewer goes to the user and interviews them where they do their work -- sometimes referred to as "in the wild." The idea is to interview users in the context of their work, while they are performing their tasks, asking them questions about what they are doing and why (when necessary) along the way.

Interview
(Process influenced more by designers)

Contextual Inquiry
(Process influenced by both designers and end-users)

Observation
(Process influenced more by end-users)

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UI Design Patterns

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- A pattern is a proven solution to a common problem in a specified context
- Practical tool to help designers and developers choose the right interface for the job
- Open Source Design Patterns Library:
  - The first truly open, collaborative pattern repository
  - Map to components
- Share patterns across communities
  - Tag, customize, adapt for your context
- Advice on how to use Fluid components

USER EXPERIENCE

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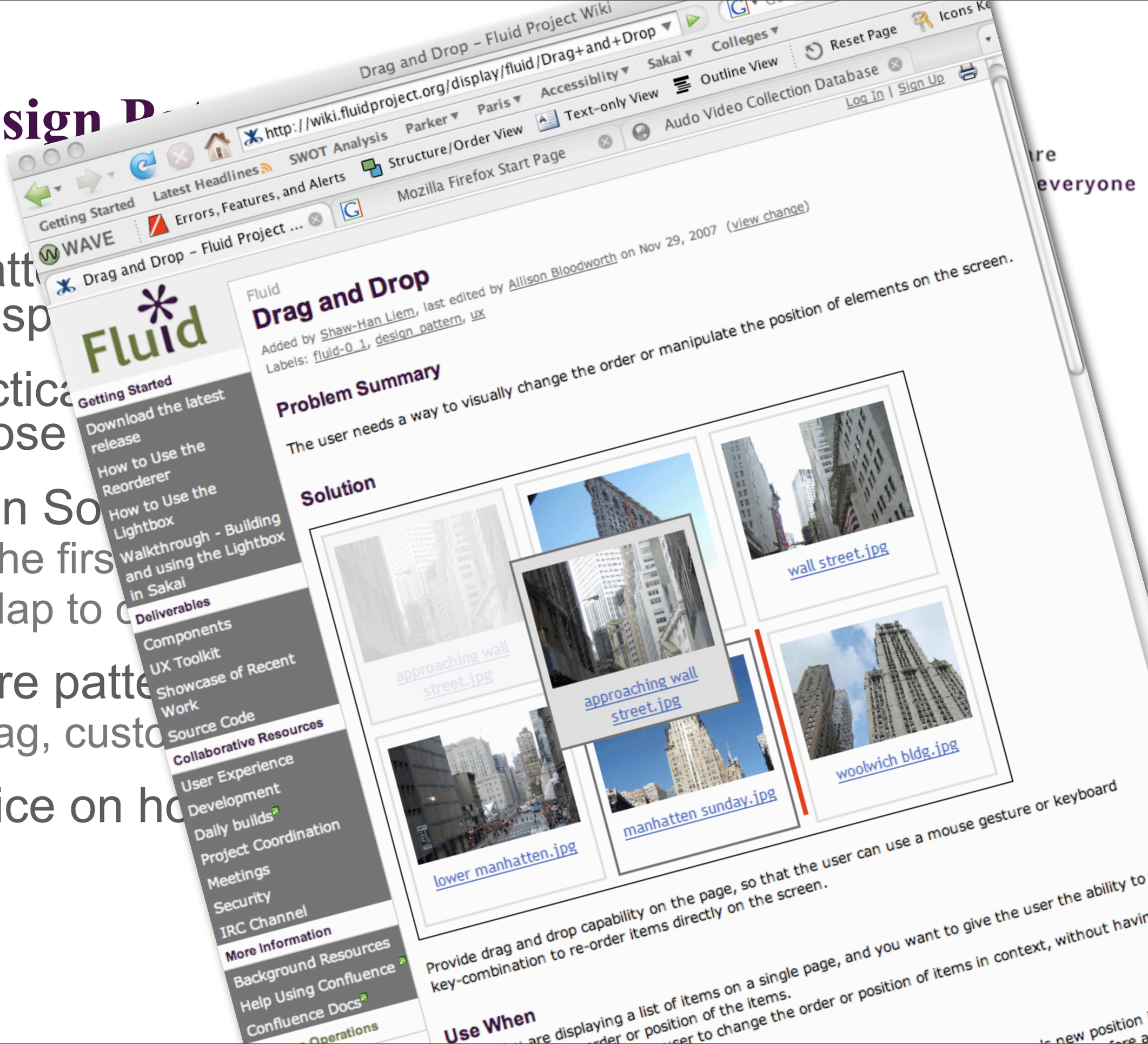

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UX Walkthroughs

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- What are they?
  - Assess where you are: identify user pain points
  - Identify “componentizable” solutions
    - do the same thing across apps
  - Drive development priorities

- What is Fluid providing?
  - Simple, approachable techniques for usability and accessibility assessment
  - A tool that communities can use to assess their own usability and accessibility
    - Anyone can do a UX walkthrough!
    - Try out our checklists and heuristics

UX Walkthroughs

- What
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  - A tool that usability a
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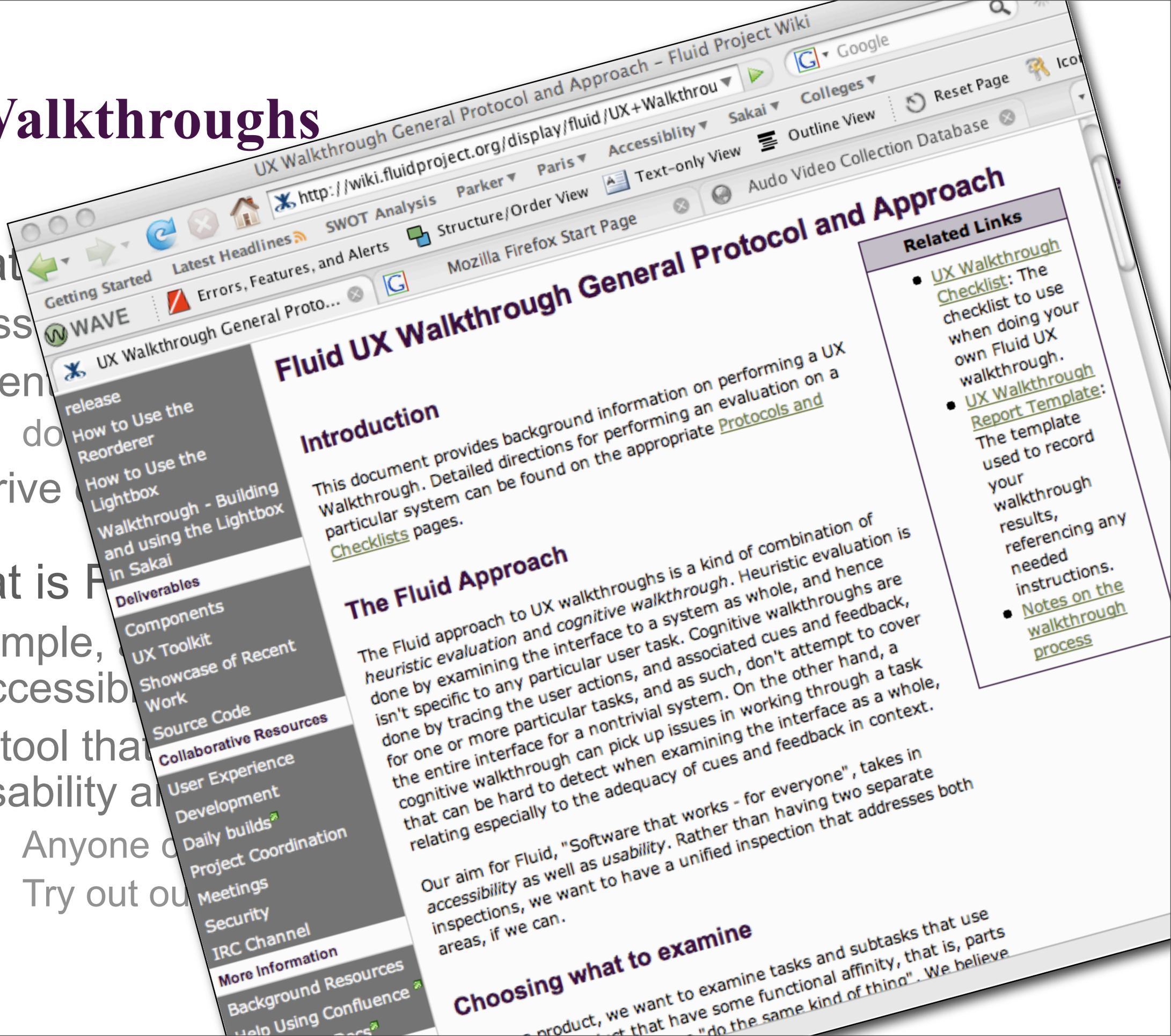
    - Try out ou



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Designing Components

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- Components are recurring interactions:
  - Navigation: wizards, sequences, workflows
  - Content: file management, uploading, finding content
  - Direct manipulation of objects
- They are often larger than “widgets”
- Choosing components is based on:
  - Talking with users (all that user research!)
  - Analysis of existing applications across projects
  - Solving the most frequent and severe problems
- Some Examples...

USER EXPERIENCE

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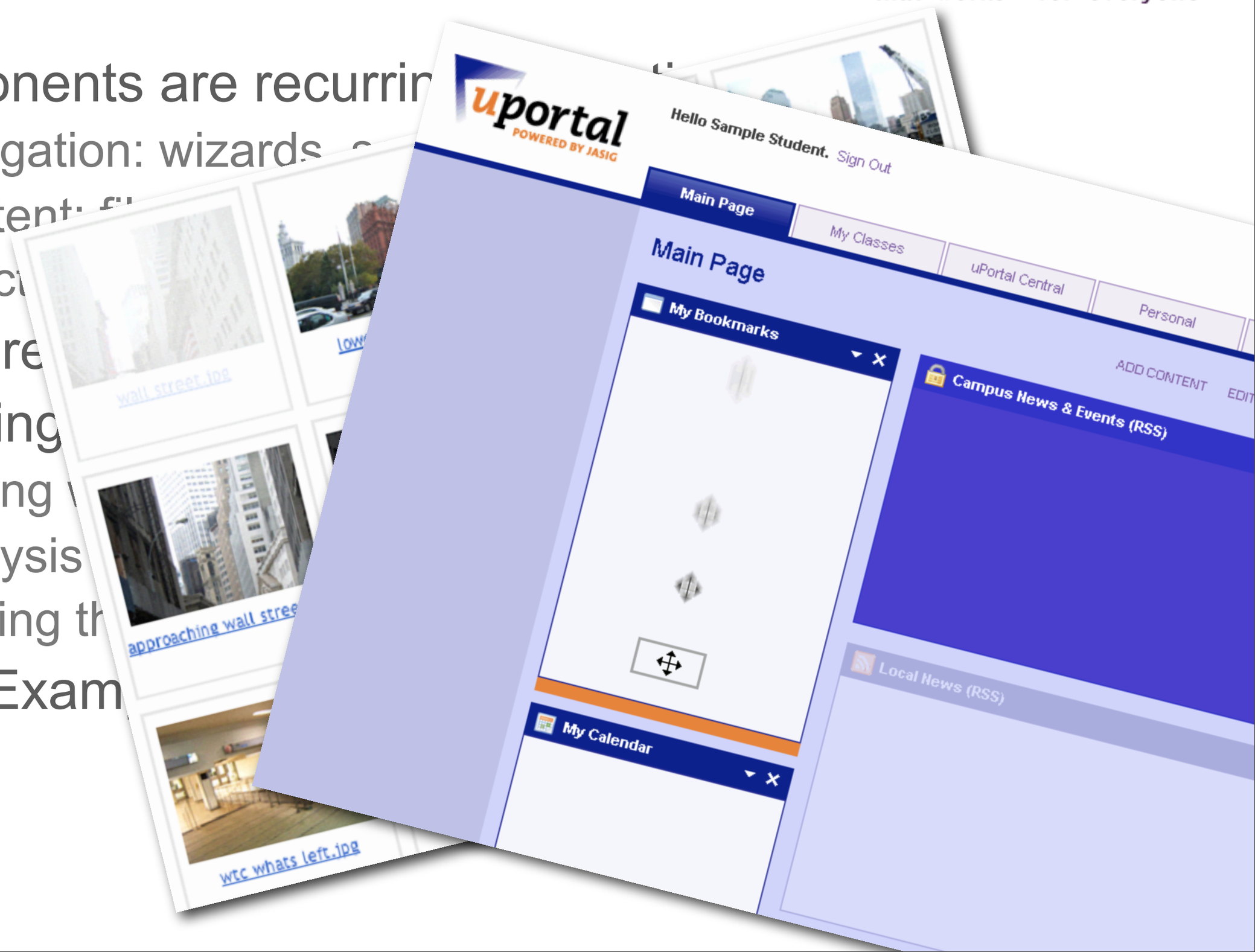

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File Upload

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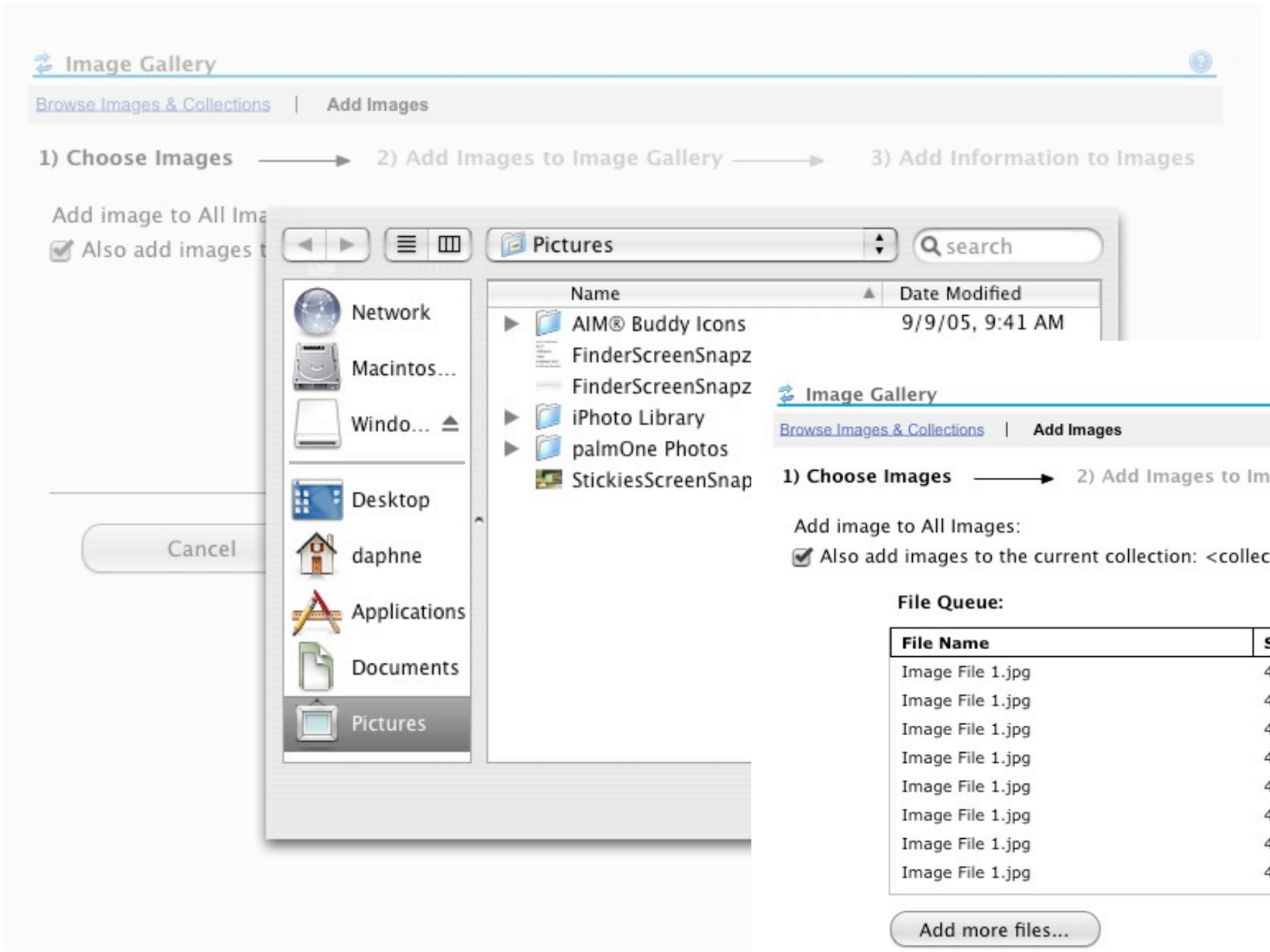

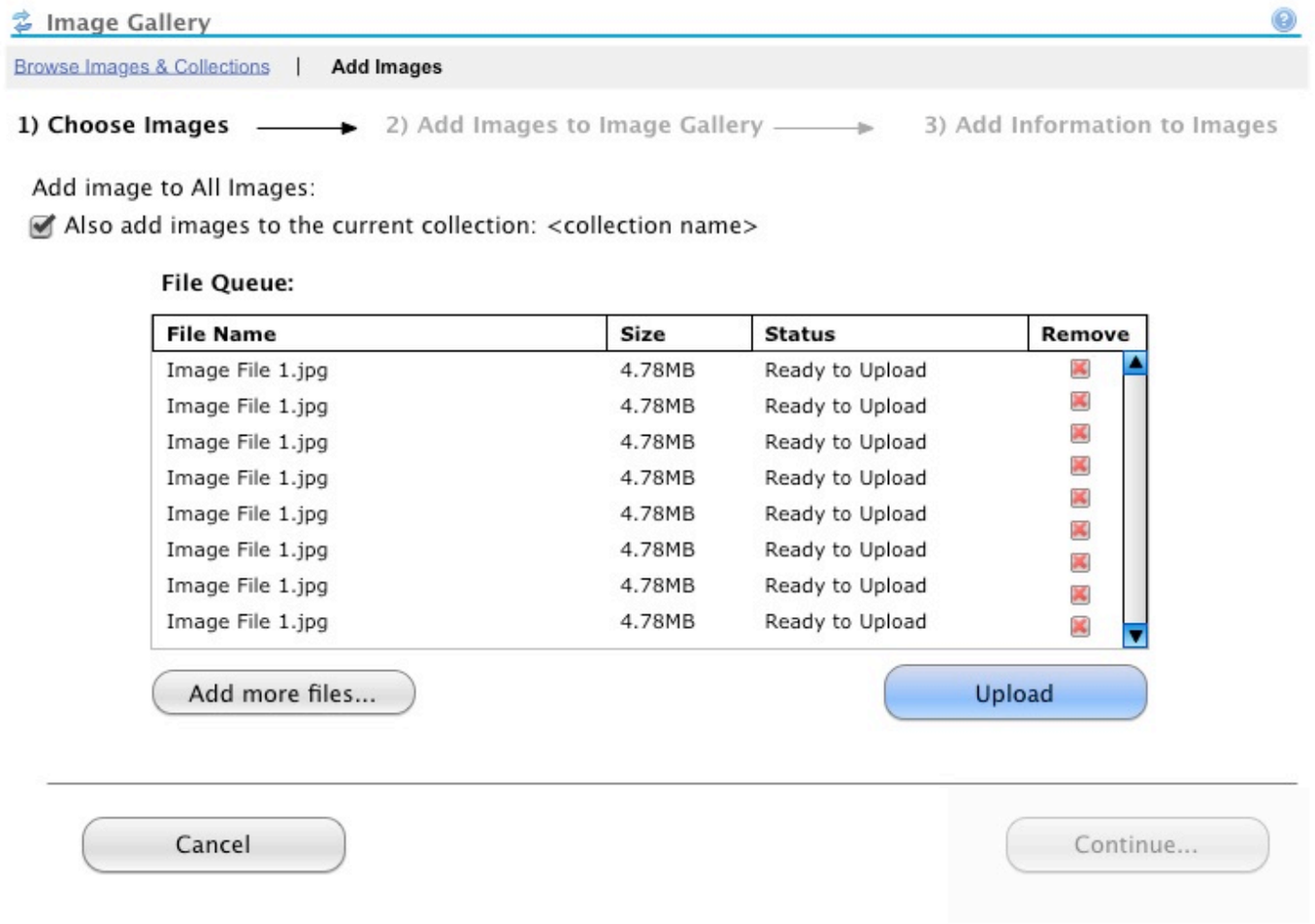

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Smart Pager

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Start typing a name... Find

|< < Page 2 of 19 > >| Show 10 per page

Name	User ID	Email Address	Role
Campeau, Patrick	15234314	pcampe@berkeley.edu	Student
Capovilla, Megan	19269508	megan@berkeley.edu	Student
Catania, Natalie	19435570	ncatania@berkeley.edu	Student
Chalhoub, George	19206726	gchalhoub@berkeley.edu	Student
Chan, Julie	19206726	jchan@berkeley.edu	Instructor
Choi, Daniel	16984247	dchoi@berkeley.edu	Student
Clarkson, Ian	19286942	iclarkson@berkeley.edu	Student
Cole, Paul	19446940	pcole@berkeley.edu	Student
Colgate, Abbey	14644786	acolgate@berkeley.edu	Instructor
Colville, Tony	19283731	tcolville@berkeley.edu	Student

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Time/Date Picker

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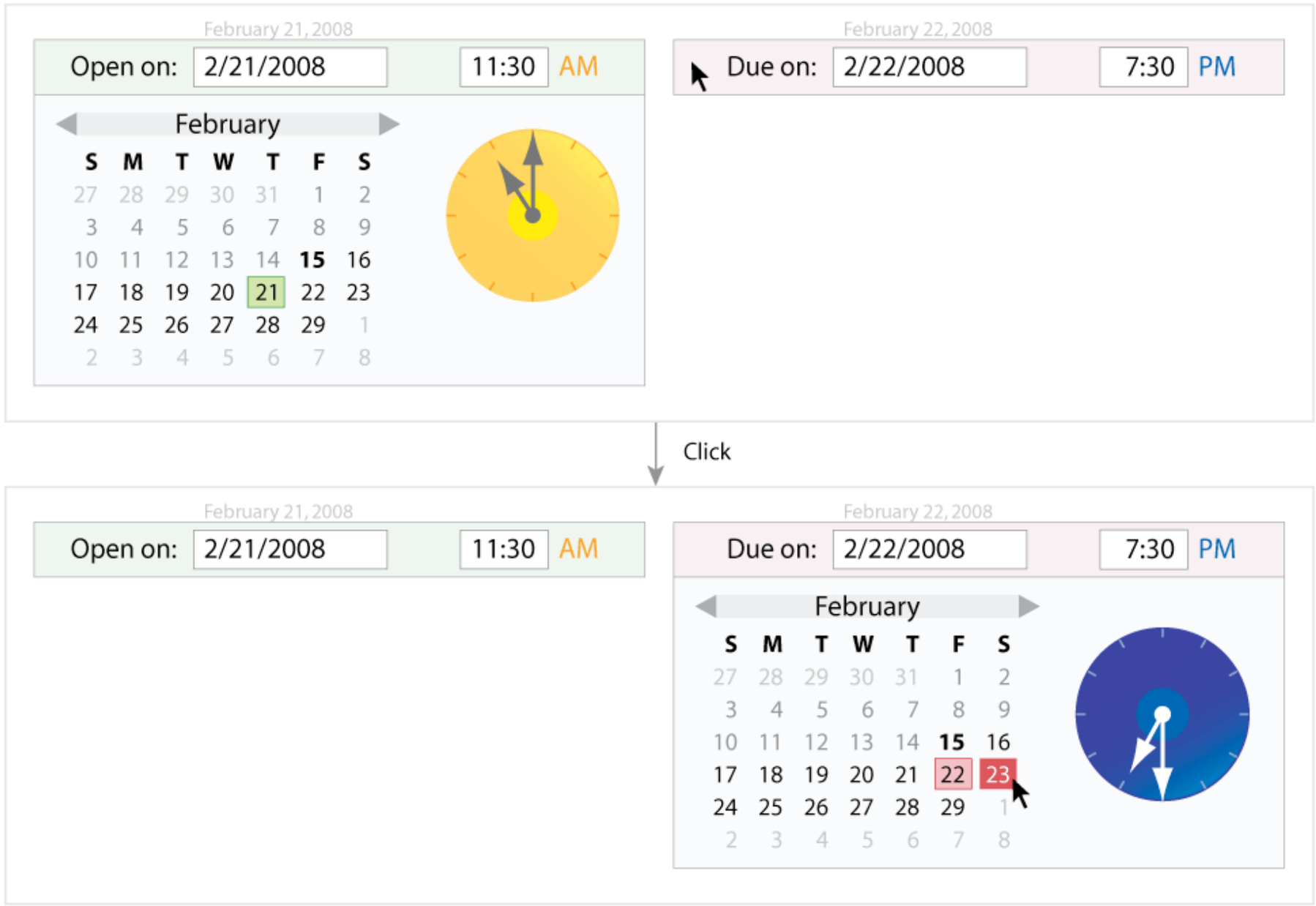

USER EXPERIENCE

Component Roadmap

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that works – for everyone

- Focus on file management and navigation
- *"My files available from anywhere"*
- Embeddable components:
  - File Uploading
  - Reworked, lightweight File Picking
  - Tagging and Tag Clouds
  - Smart folders, "playlists," contextual filtering
  - Favourites and Clipboard/File Basket
  - Infrastructure: Accessible Thick Box, Tree, Sortable Tabs
  - Drag and drop portlets

USER EXPERIENCE

Image Gallery

Browse Images & Collections | **Add Images**

1) Choose Images → 2) Add Images to Image Gallery → 3) Add Information to Images

Choose Images from:
- (•) Your computer
- ( ) Images in **this** site
- ( ) Images in **another** site

Browse to upload images. Use the control and shift keyboard shortcuts to choose multiple images at once.

Browse...

Flash Version 8 required for optimal viewing. Download now or go to the basic upload view

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IG - 4

Image Gallery

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1) Choose Images → Multi-step Indicator Component → 3) Add Information to Images

Choose Images from: Your computer
Images in **this** site
Images in **another** site

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Browse...

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Image Gallery

IG - 1

Browse Images & Collections | Add Images

Search All Images | enter filename or tag | Find

Search currently out of scope

All Images (228)

Recently Added (22)

Collections

Flagged (118)

Week 1 (21)

Week 2 (45)

Week 3 (28)

Week 4 (35)

New Collection

Tags / Keywords

Select tag to view tagged images

tag tag tag tag tag
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Collection Name

Show: Title Description Tags

View: **Thumbnails** | Slideshow | List

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Image Gallery

IG - 1

Browse Images & Collections | Add Images

Search All Images | enter filename or tag | Find

Search currently out of scope

All Images (228)

Recently Added (22)

Collections

Flagged (118)

Week 1 (21)

Week 4 (35)

New Collection

Playlist Component

Tags / Keywords

Select tag to view tagged images

tag tag tag tag tag tag tag tag tag tag tag tag tag tag tag tag tag tag tag tag tag

Tagcloud Component

Collection Name

Show: Title Description Tags

View: **Thumbnails** | Slideshow | List

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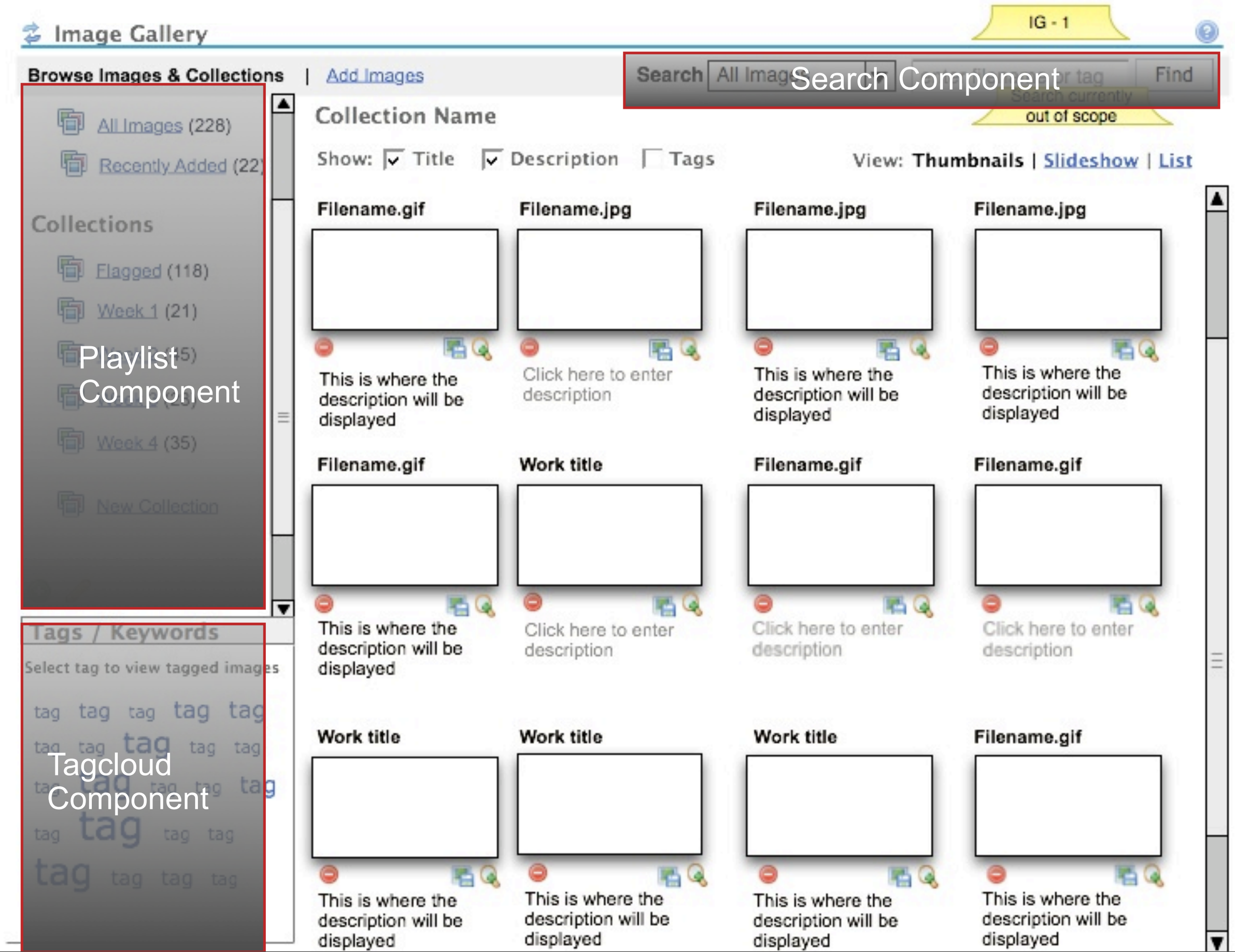
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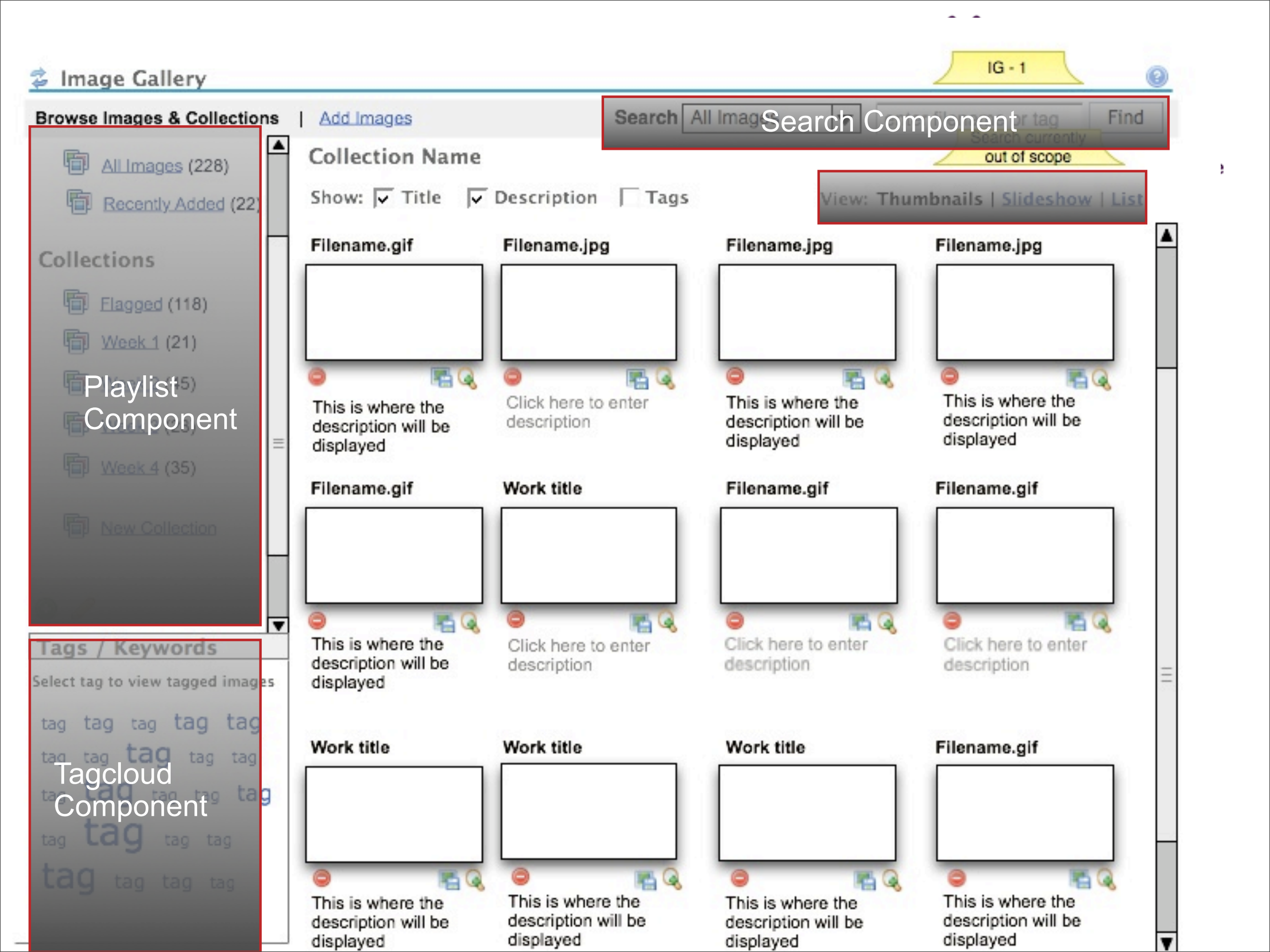
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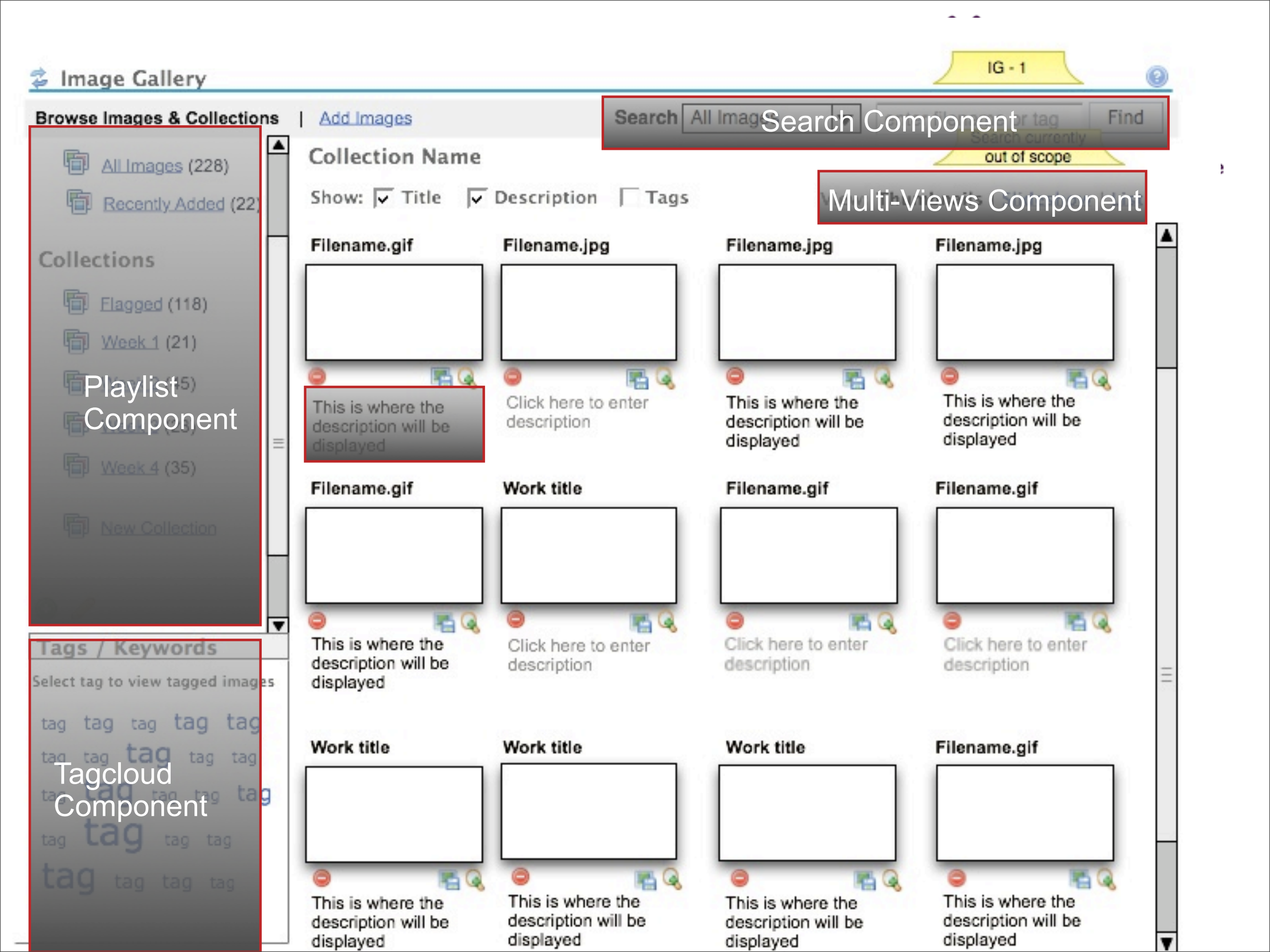
Tagcloud Component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In-line Edit Component

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Tagcloud Component

U-Camps

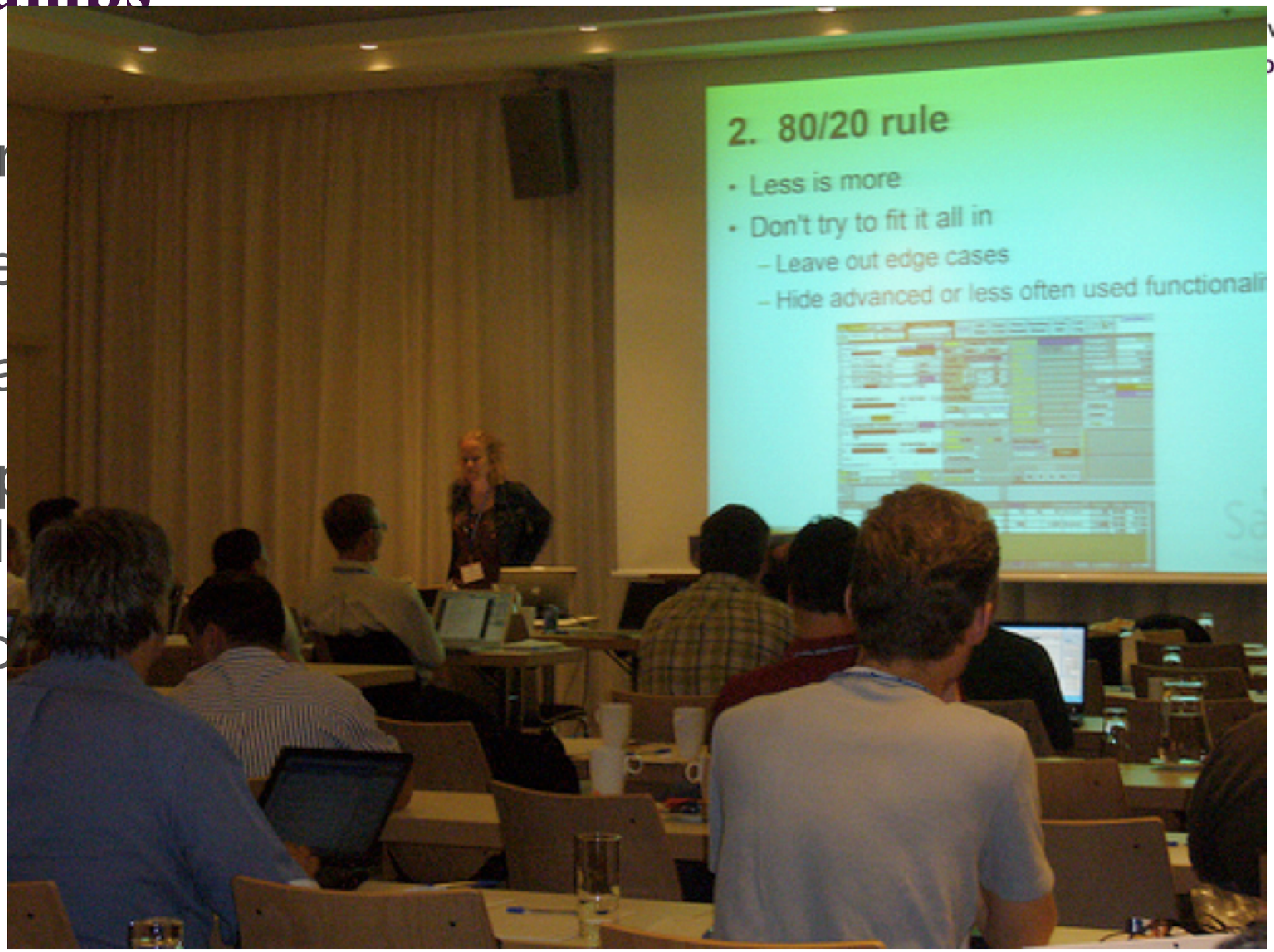
Fluid
Designing software
that works – for everyone

- Our main educational effort
- Everyone should have a basic UX vocabulary
- Share a repertoire of viable UX techniques
- Opportunity for designers and developers to collaborate
- Loose agenda, open participation

USER EXPERIENCE

U-Camps

- Our
- Eve
- Sha
- Opp
  coll
- Loc



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or everyone

USER EXPERIENCE

U-Camps

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USER EXPERIENCE

U-Camps

Fluid

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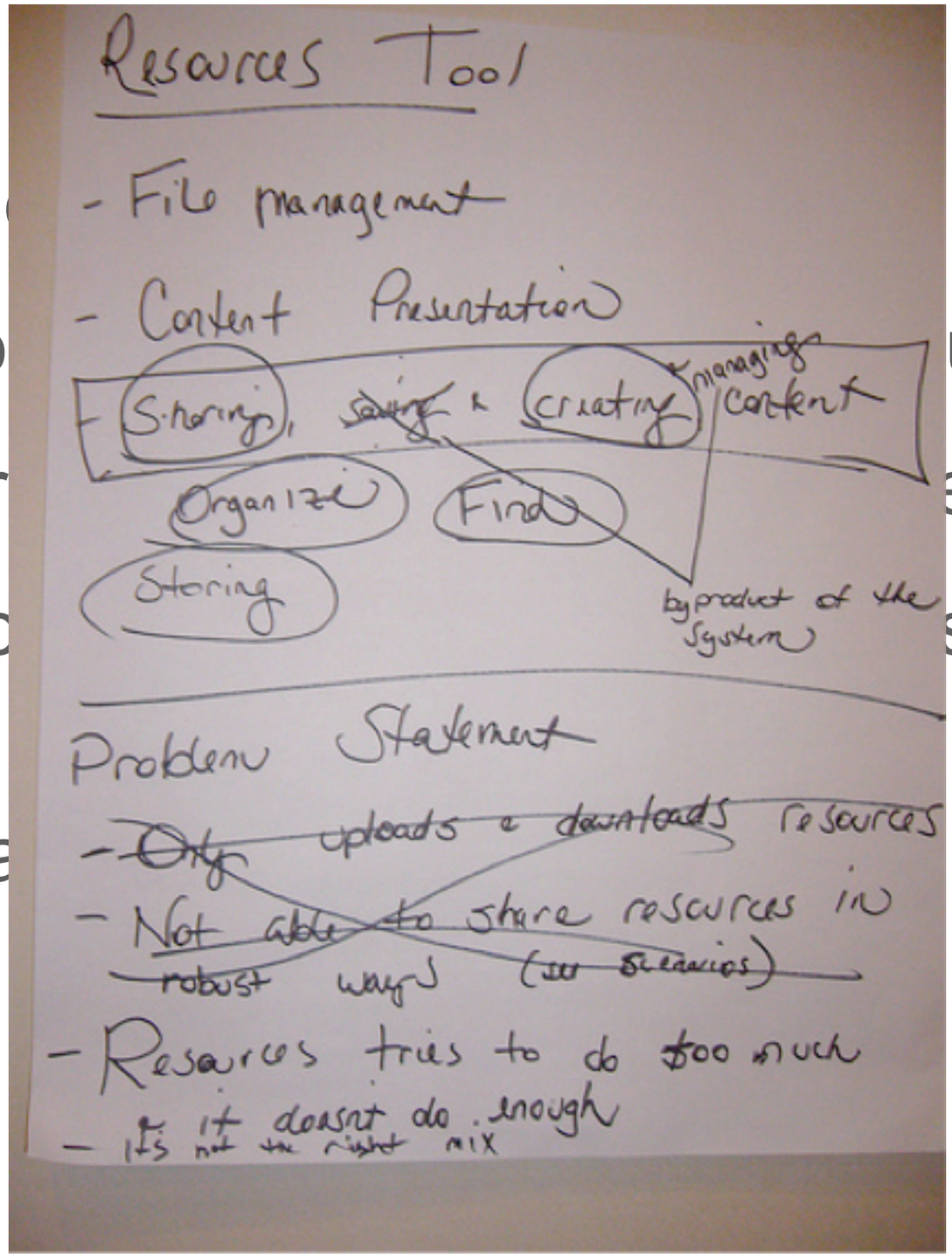

USER EXPERIENCE

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USER EXPERIENCE

Distributed Design

Fluid

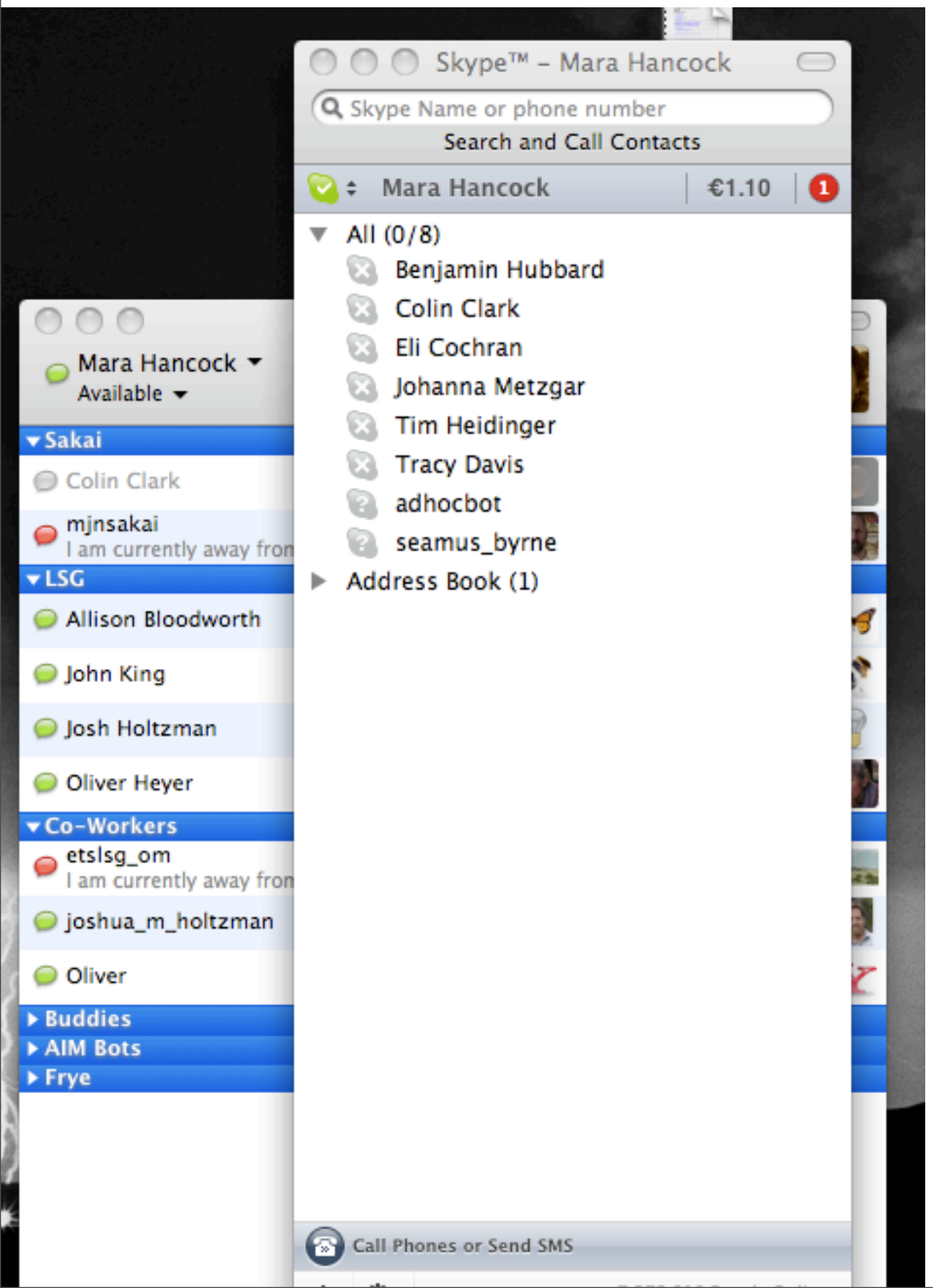
Designing software
that works – for everyone

USER EXPERIENCE

Distributed Design

Fluid

Designing software
that works – for everyone



Distributed Design

Designing software
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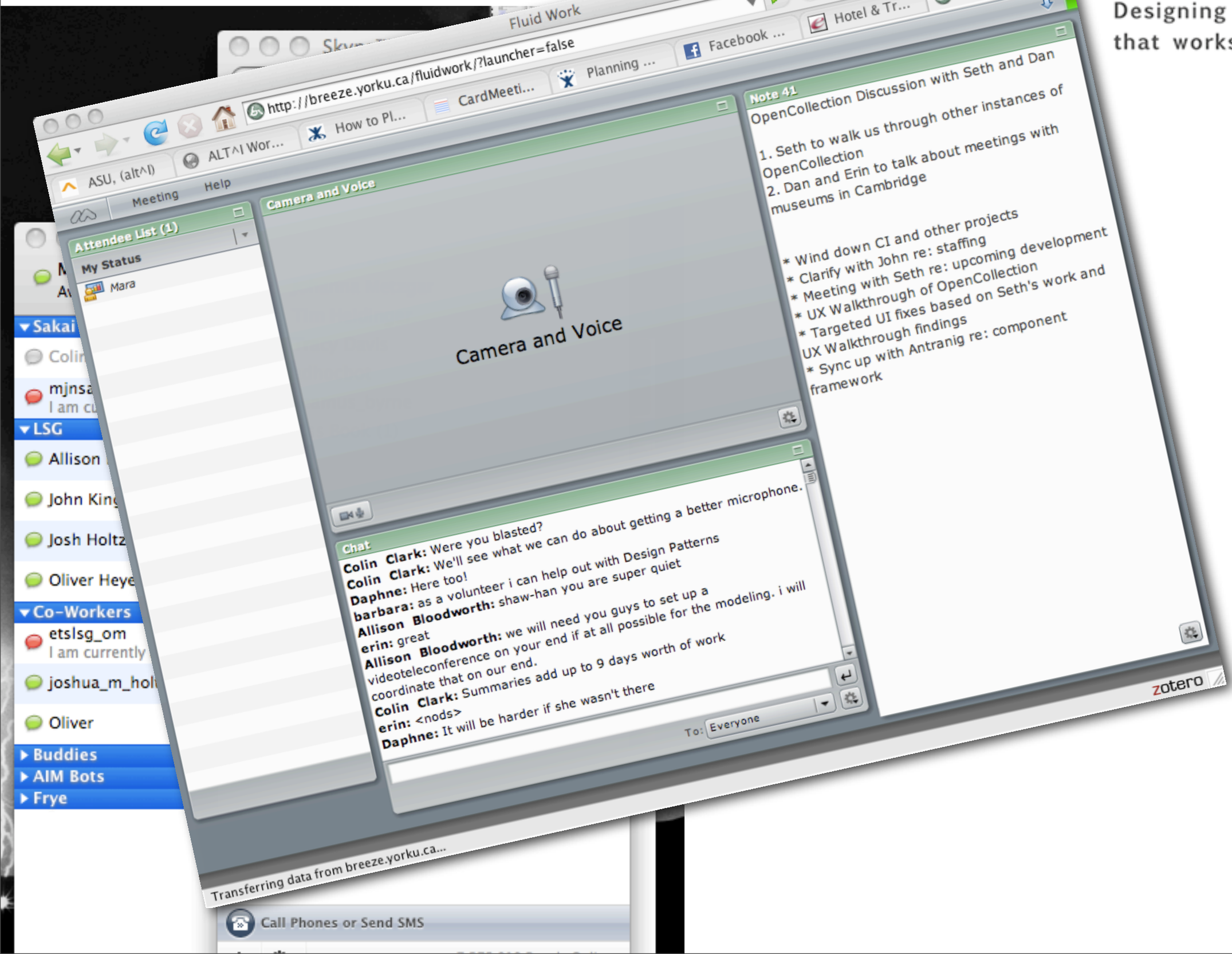
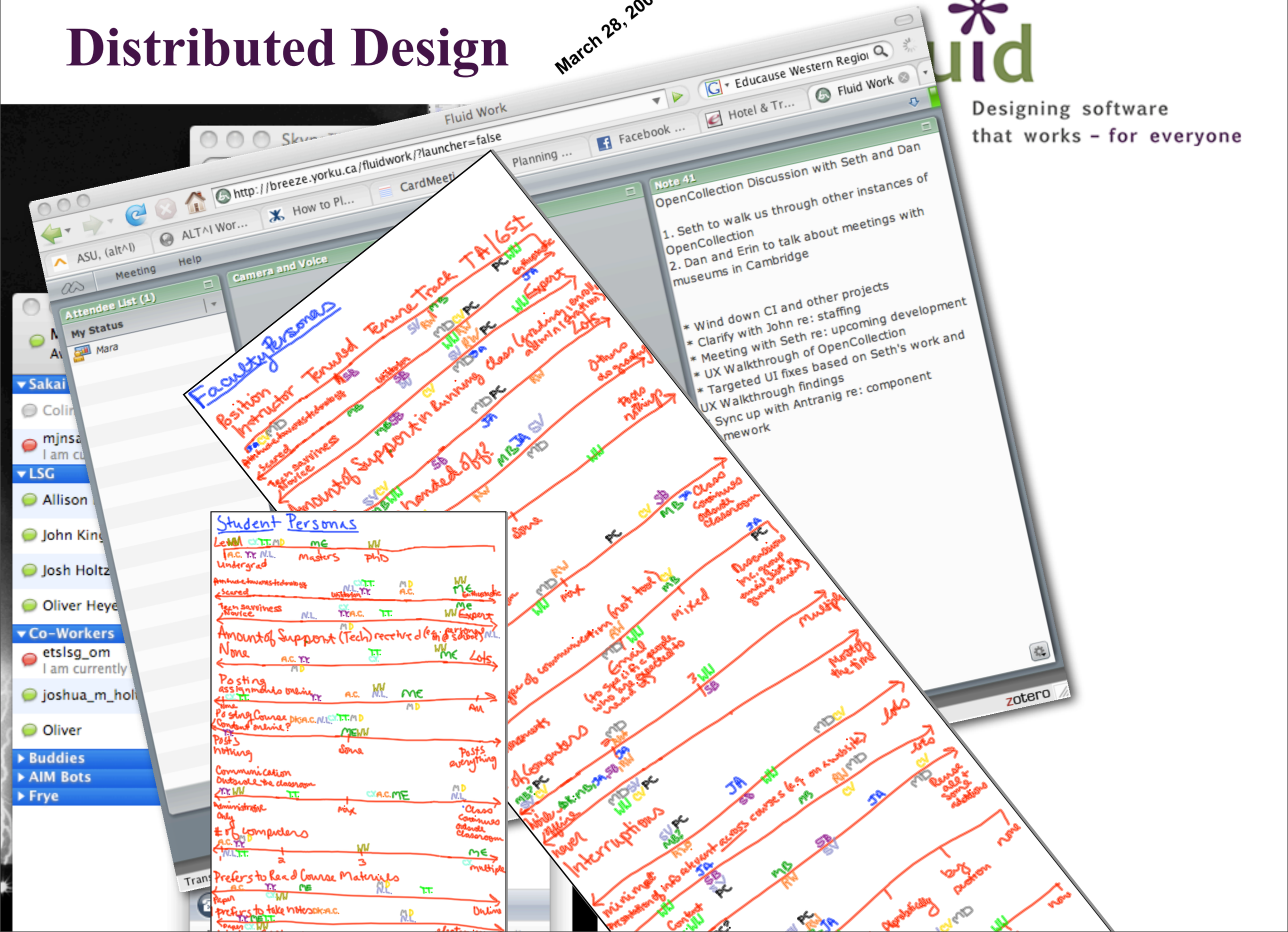


Distributed Design

March 28, 2008

fluid

Designing software
that works – for everyone



Distributed Design

March 28, 2008

fluid

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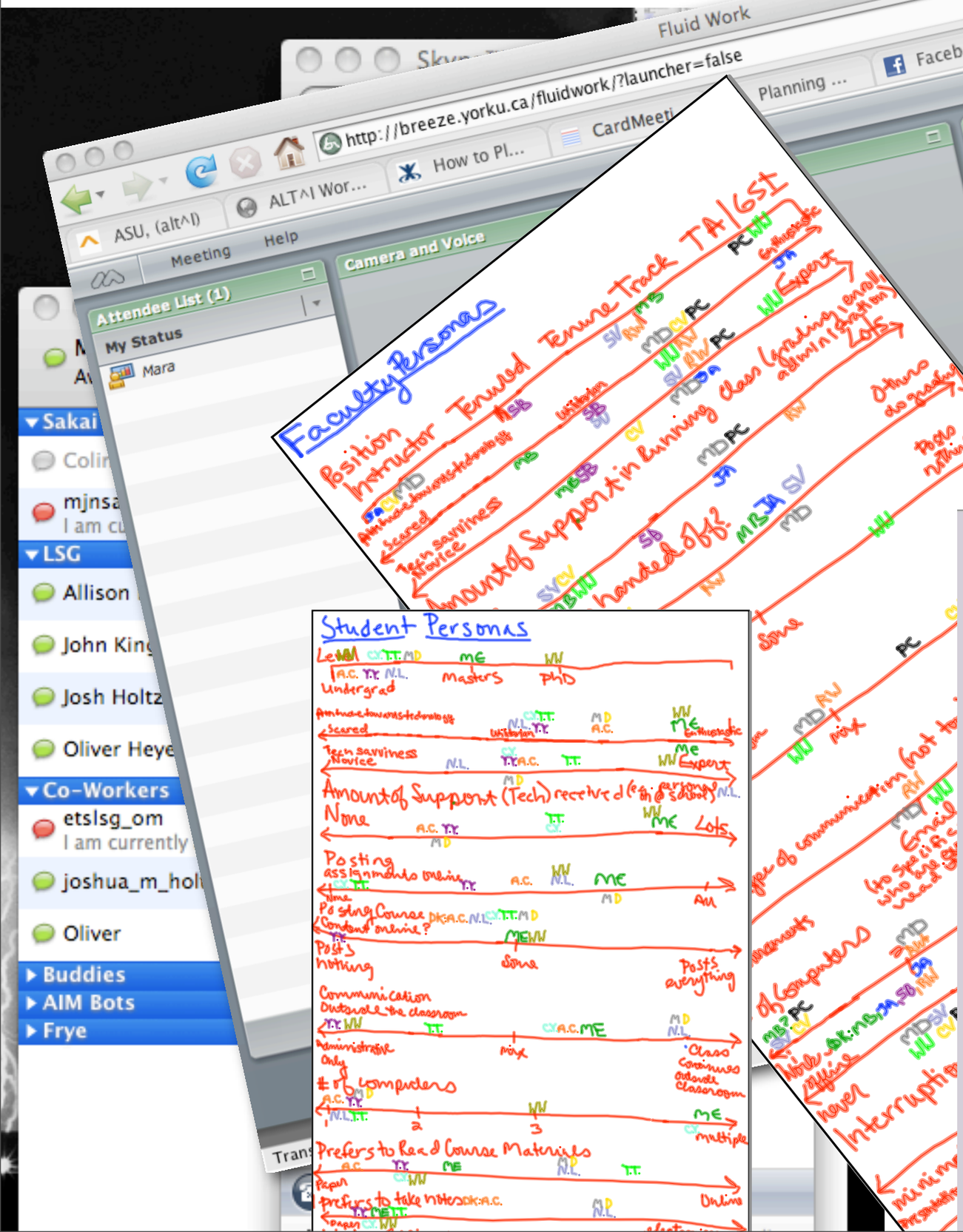
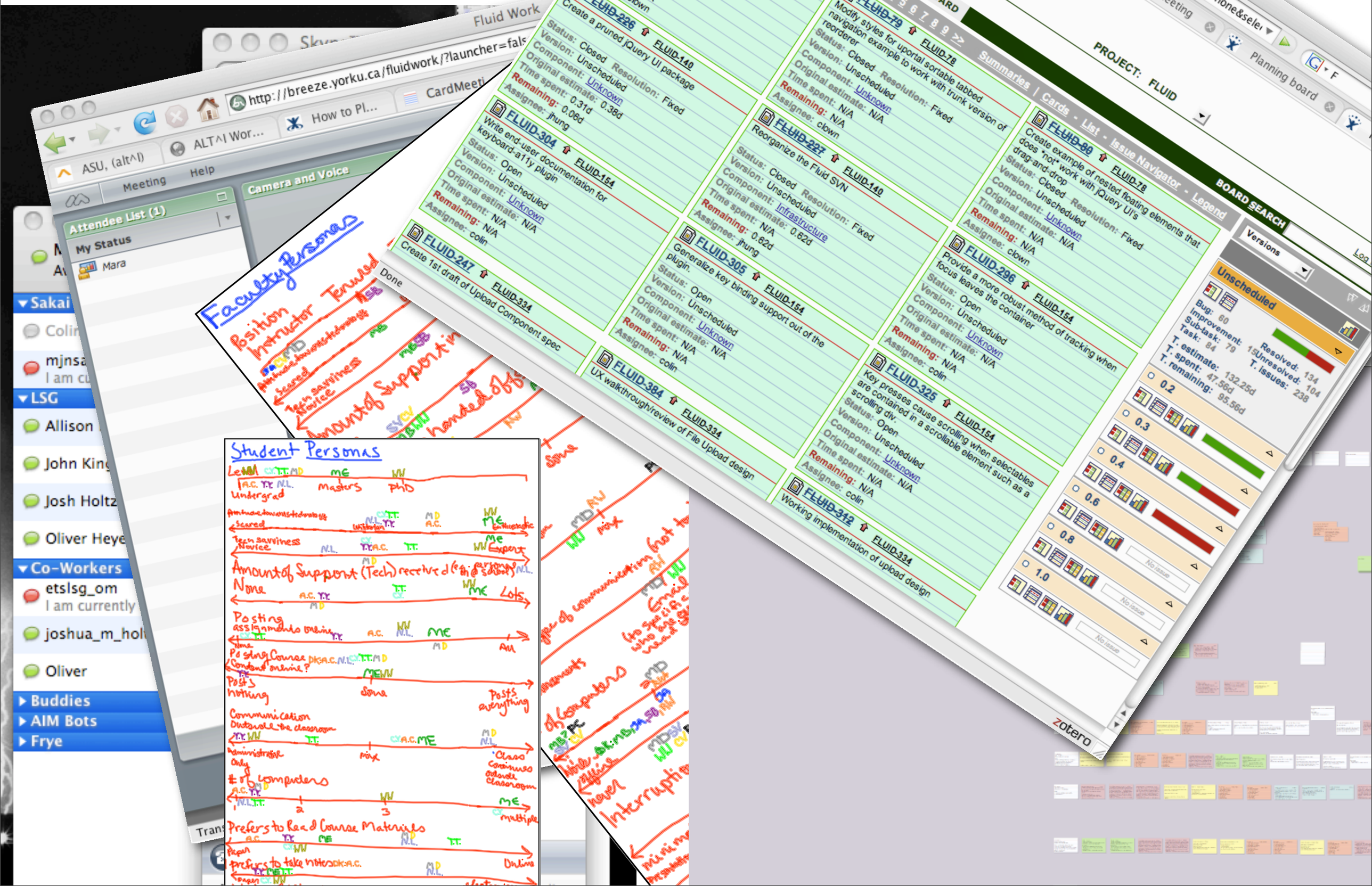


Distributed Design



Virtual Usability Lab

Fluid
Designing software
that works – for everyone

- Open source distributed usability testing
- Competition to expensive tools like Morae
- Powerful tool for usability testing
  - Before and after survey questions
  - Remote screen recording
  - No installation required
  - Mouse and keyboard tracking
  - Designed within a community that needs it!

http://www.vulab.ca/

USER EXPERIENCE

Technical Goals

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that works – for everyone

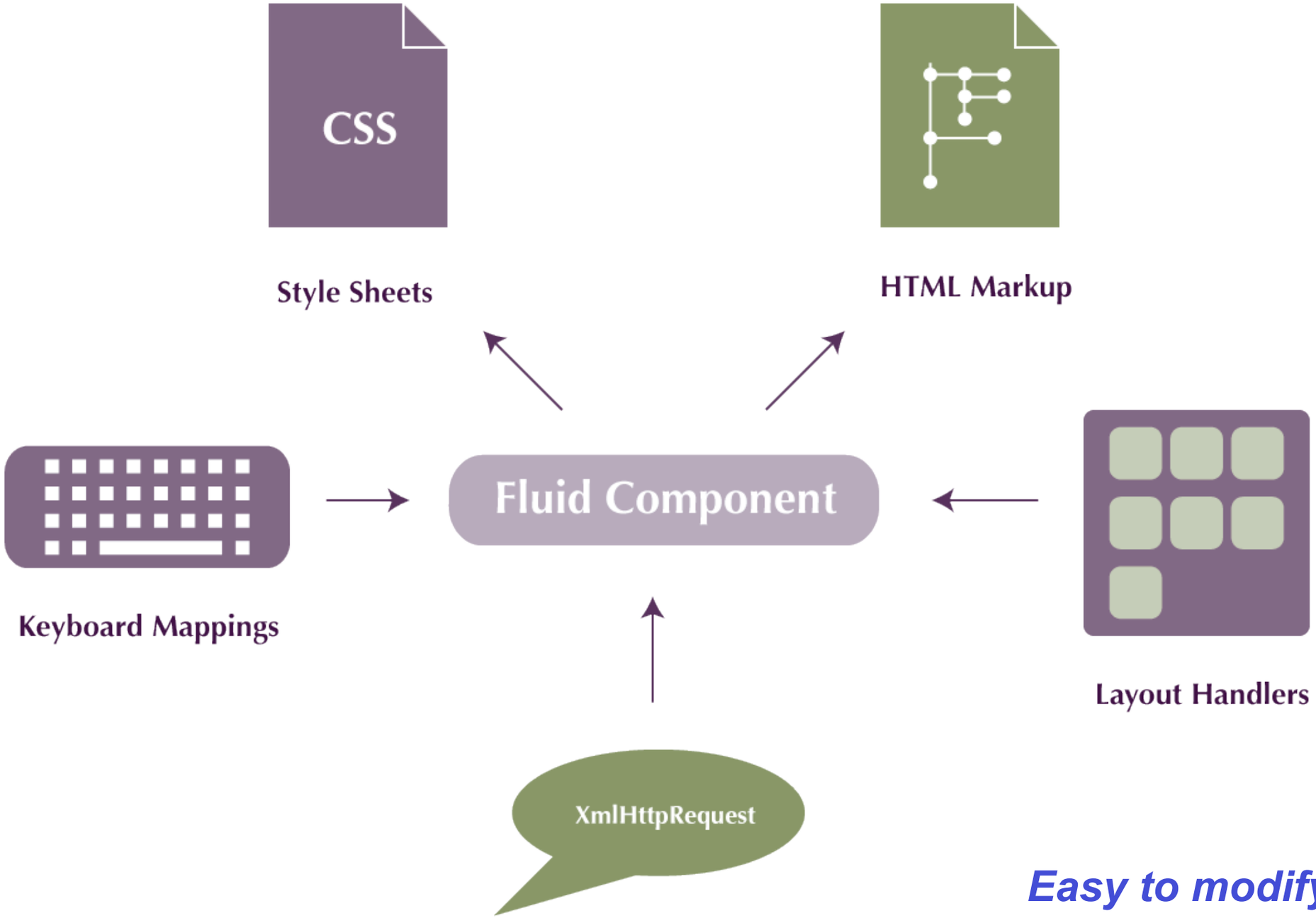
- Make it easier for developers to build better, more accessible user interfaces
- Support collaboration with designers
- Foster sharing of design and code
- Adaptable for a variety of tools and workflows
- Embrace the Web
- Support diverse presentation frameworks
- Don't reinvent the wheel: leverage good existing technologies and fill the gaps

USER EXPERIENCE

Component Composition (Flexible and reusable)

Fluid

Designing software
that works – for everyone



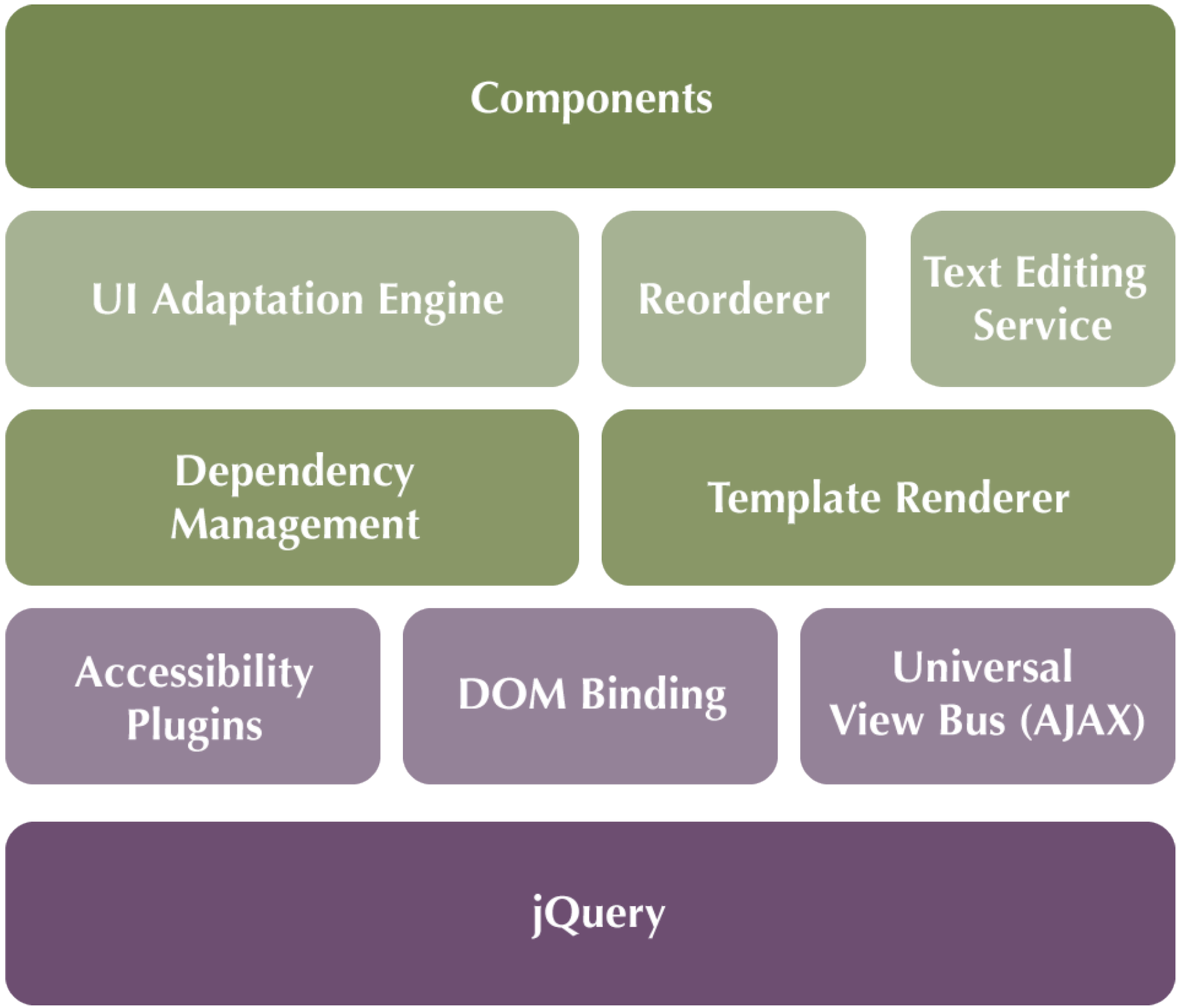
Easy to modify!

USER EXPERIENCE

Fluid Framework Illustrated

Fluid

Designing software
that works – for everyone



USER EXPERIENCE

Roadmap

Fluid

Designing software
that works – for everyone

June 2008
Fluid 0.4

- toolkit accessibility
- framework definition

- ui accessibility adaption
- file management components

December 2008
Fluid 0.8

- sustainable, active community

Early Adoption; Help Shape the Direction of Fluid

APIs Stabilize

Build and Share Your Own Fluid Components

March 2008
Fluid 0.3

- framework development
- open design patterns library

September 2008
Fluid 0.6

- new components, framwork refinements
- expand ux toolkit

March 2009
Fluid 1.0

We welcome participation!

USER EXPERIENCE

How You Can Help

Fluid
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that works – for everyone

- Join our mailing lists
- Share code
- Help with design effort
  - UX Walkthroughs are fun and easy
  - Contextual inquiry
  - Component design teams
- Use and extend Fluid components in your tools
- QA: design test plans, help with testing
- User testing
- Share design patterns

USER EXPERIENCE

Join in….

Fluid
Designing software
that works – for everyone

- Fluid Project Web Site:
  http://fluidproject.org
- Our wiki:
  http://wiki.fluidproject.org
- Our source code:
  https://source.fluidproject.org/svn
- Our mailing lists:
  fluid-work@ for community collaboration
  fluid-talk@ for anything you're interested in

USER EXPERIENCE