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# Optimizing **UX** for **Agile** ... ... and vice versa

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# Agenda

- **Understanding** users in Agile projects
- **Designing** experiences in Agile projects
  - **Large-scale design** i.e., overall project design direction
  - **Small-scale design** i.e., design in an individual sprint story
- **Evaluating** designs in Agile projects

# Understanding users

## in Agile projects

- How much UX research is enough?
  - Data collection – quantity and quality
  - Analysis and artifacts
- How to align with the project schedule?

Options:

  - Up front - before project kick-off (sprint 0)
  - In parallel with sprints
  - In lockstep with the sprint schedule

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*In my current project,  
we are interviewing many end users to  
create personas and other artifacts*

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*The intent of Agile is to get customers  
involved during development. However,  
teams I work with usually consider it  
sufficient to only collect data from user  
proxies or domain experts*

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# Designing

user experiences in Agile projects

## Large-scale design

Is there adequate consideration of UX in:

- **Product ownership:** Setting project direction setting, UI architecture and design concepts
- **Sprint planning:** Striving for a great UX, rather than adding as many new features as possible

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I try to work on designs two or three iterations ahead of the agile team to allow more high-level design work.

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It's hard to juggle supporting the sprint in progress with designing for upcoming sprints.

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# Designing

user experiences in Agile projects

## Small-scale design (in a sprint story)

Are sprint work practices conducive to UX success in terms of:

- Story definition – Clarity about the problem being solved
- Developers engaging in the UX design work
- UX input being welcome during design implementation

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*An advantage of agile is that we can adjust the design of a feature as the developer works on it.*

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*Developers sometimes want to develop only the basic functionality then stop before the experience is refined*

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# Evaluating

user experiences in Agile projects

- Are there adequate opportunities to conduct evaluations?
  - Are there barriers related to: staff resources, scheduling, access to users?
- Are the issues found in evaluations fixed?
  - Is the story different for small fixes vs. large fixes?

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We conducted quick usability tests and discussed design options with a small number of users.

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Often the closest approximation of design evaluation has been agile sprint reviews held for stakeholder feedback.

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Let's continue the discussion

**Prenup Pub**  
191 College St.

