

Creating a UX Design Library

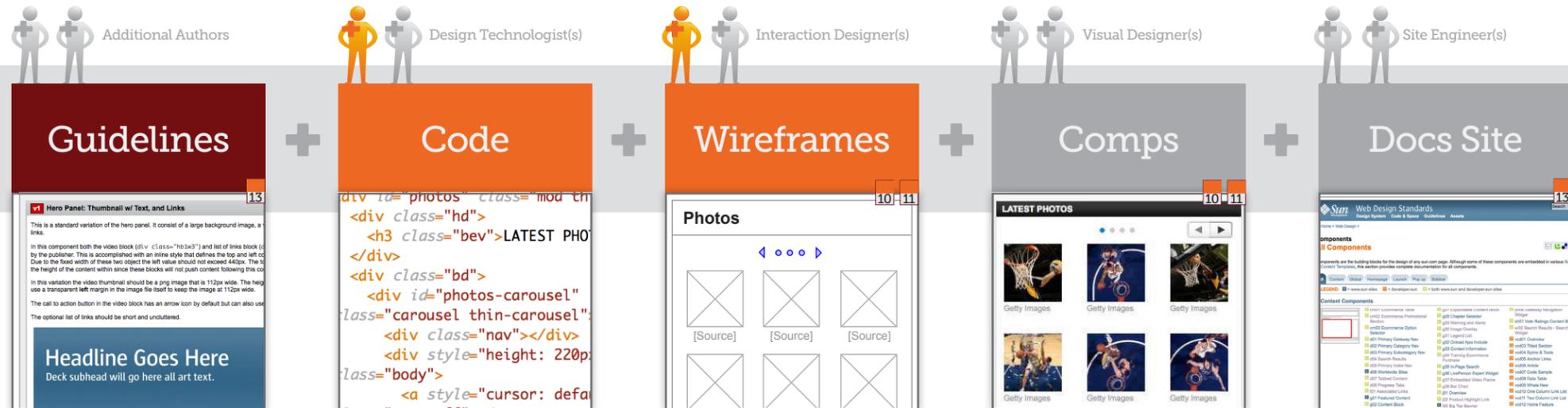
Version 1 prepared in August 2010 by Nathan Curtis (nathan@eightshapes.com)

What is the library?

In this case, a design library refers to a collection made up of a combination of **patterns, components, page types, grids, typography, editorial guidelines, color, and code**. However, a library may reach more broadly to include **rules, guidelines, and toolkits** to improve how teams build experiences.

What gets built by who?

■ Required ■ Recommended ■ Optional



The composition, review, & publishing of documentation that describes the system, how and when to use each part, and contains many real examples.

Standardizing, modularizing, and packaging of HTML, CSS, & JavaScript components and page type samples supported by stable styles & namespace.

The creation of page template and libraries (such as stencils) used for the rapid production of design schematics.

The creation of pixel-perfect page templates and asset libraries (likely, in separate files) used for the faster production of comps.

Implement a web platform for assets, guidelines, process, & collaboration.

How much should we (relatively) invest in each part?

■ What Teams Instinctually Think ■ What We Usually Recommend



Why Invest More?
Design assets, templates, & tools cannot be successfully and appropriately used without good instruction on how to apply each piece. Prioritizing the most important docs is key.



Why Invest So Much?
Code rules. Everything. If you have a solid foundation of markup that you can expect everyone to use and you can distribute and version over time in a predictable way, **you win**.



Why Invest More?
With a stable, standardized system, "designers" (including non-designers doing design) should be able to use tools to rapidly visualize pages & gain consensus faster with ideas aligned with the library.



Why Invest Far Less?
Sourcing the art - and then making files organized and usable - is a total pain. Instead, a few pixel-perfect, full-page templates and grids, a good color palette, and access to copy the most common shapes and styles should do it.



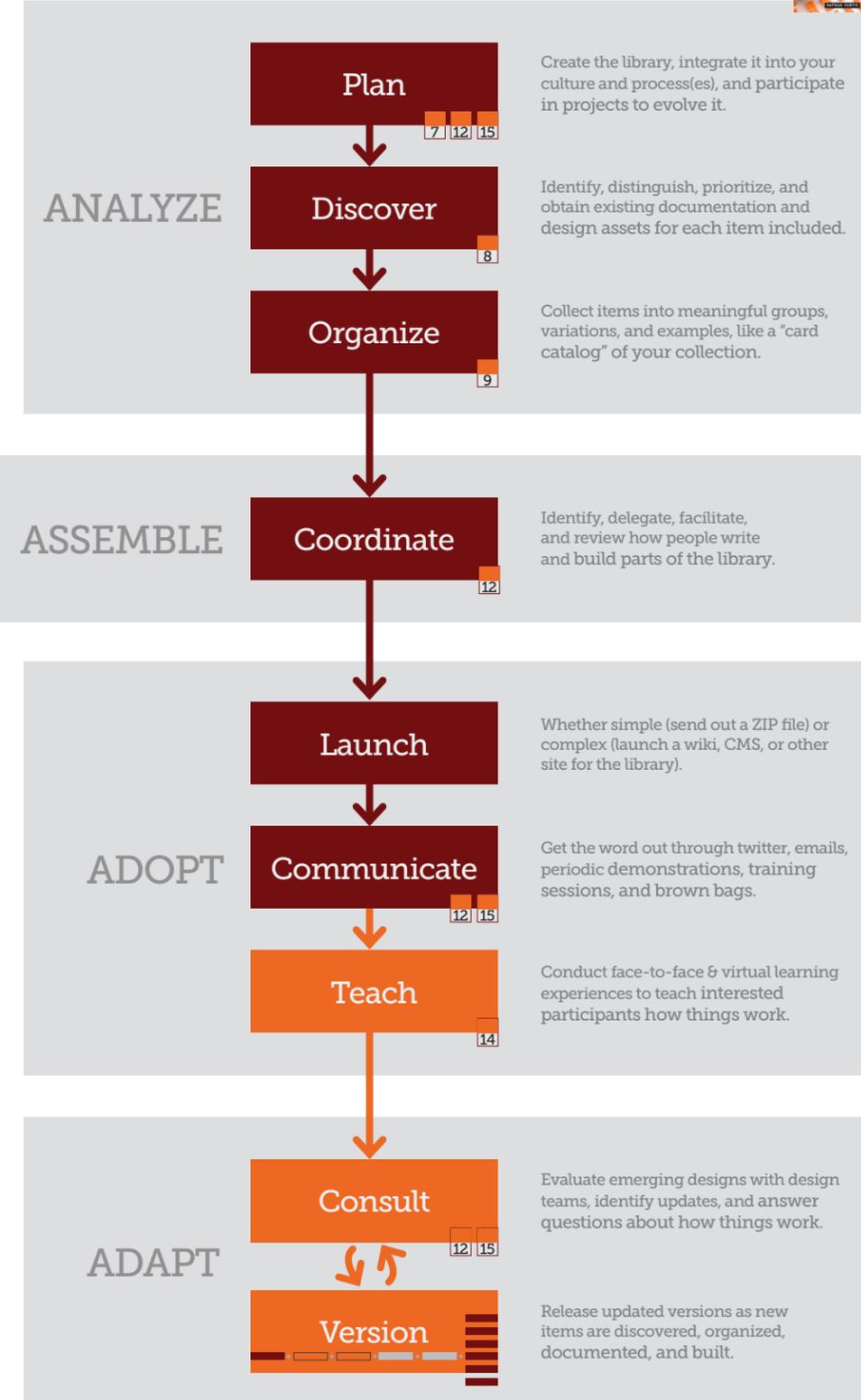
Why Invest More?
Some teams don't have the environment, skill, or approval to build one. It's unfortunate, but distributing communications via PDFs and ZIP files is better than nothing at all.

Who leads the effort?



A dedicated **librarian** serves as a leader, coordinator, evangelist, and teacher of the library's activities during the build process as well as when the library is adapted over time.

How does it get built?



Chapter Reference
Small markers refer to chapter numbers in Modular Web Design

