

# Using Research to Avoid Creating Crimes Against Humanity

**iterate.**

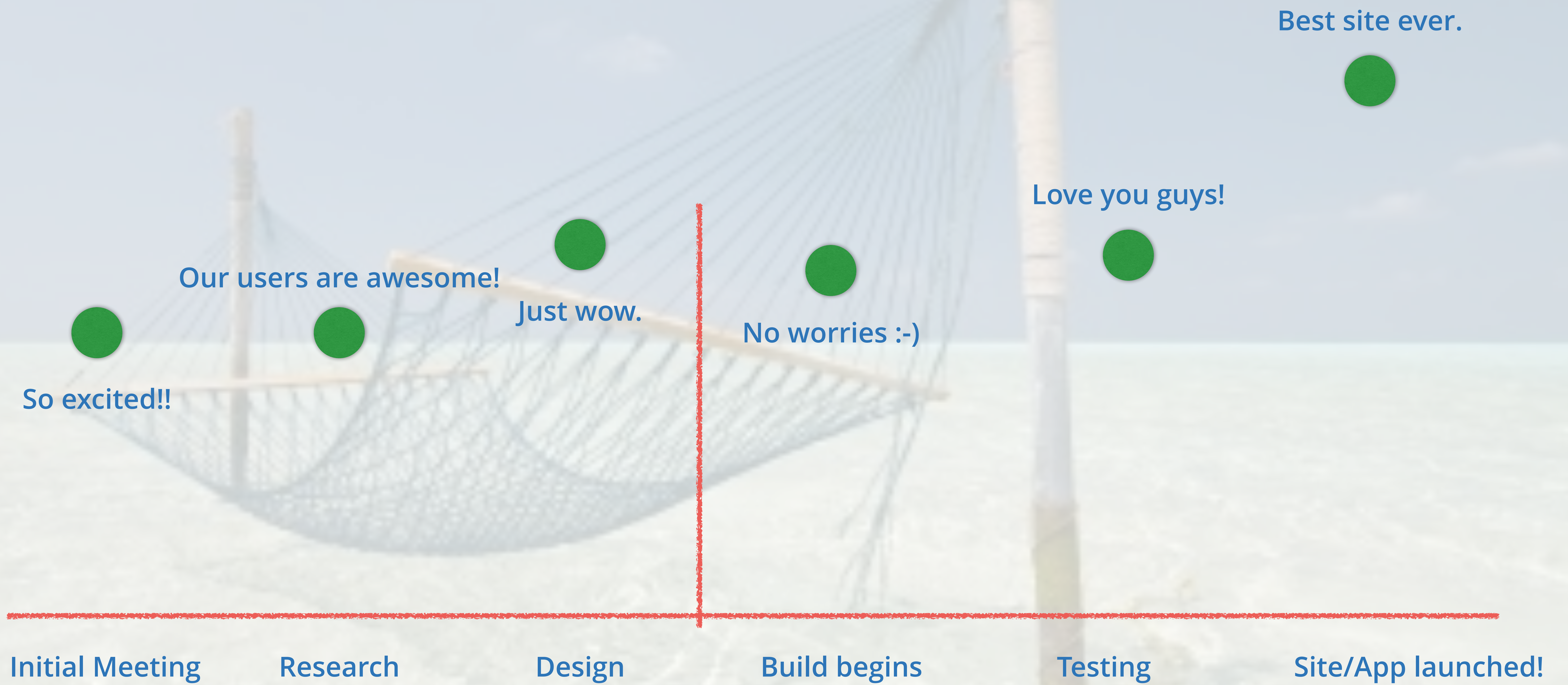
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@hereiamagain

- The Perfect Project
- Kansas
- Why research?
- Where to start
- What next?
- Translating research to design
- Tools & Resources





# 1. The Perfect Project





2. You're not in Kansas anymore...



## Everything is cool in the beginning.

The client communicates their needs. You set expectations.

Enthusiasm and excitement all 'round.



## The client shows you their current website.

You both laugh at how terrible it is.



Credit to The Oatmeal <http://boydstoast.com/>

## 2. "Our last designer was an IDIOT!"



## You re-design the website.

It looks nice and works well. This is the high point of the design.



## Just a few “minor” changes.

So this design is perfect, but I'm the CEO so I feel obligated to make changes to feel like I've done my job properly.

Also, I'll use phrases like “user experience” and “conversion oriented” to sound smart even though I barely know how to use a computer.



Could you make the design “pop” a bit more? It needs to be more edgy.

It doesn't quite feel right. \*

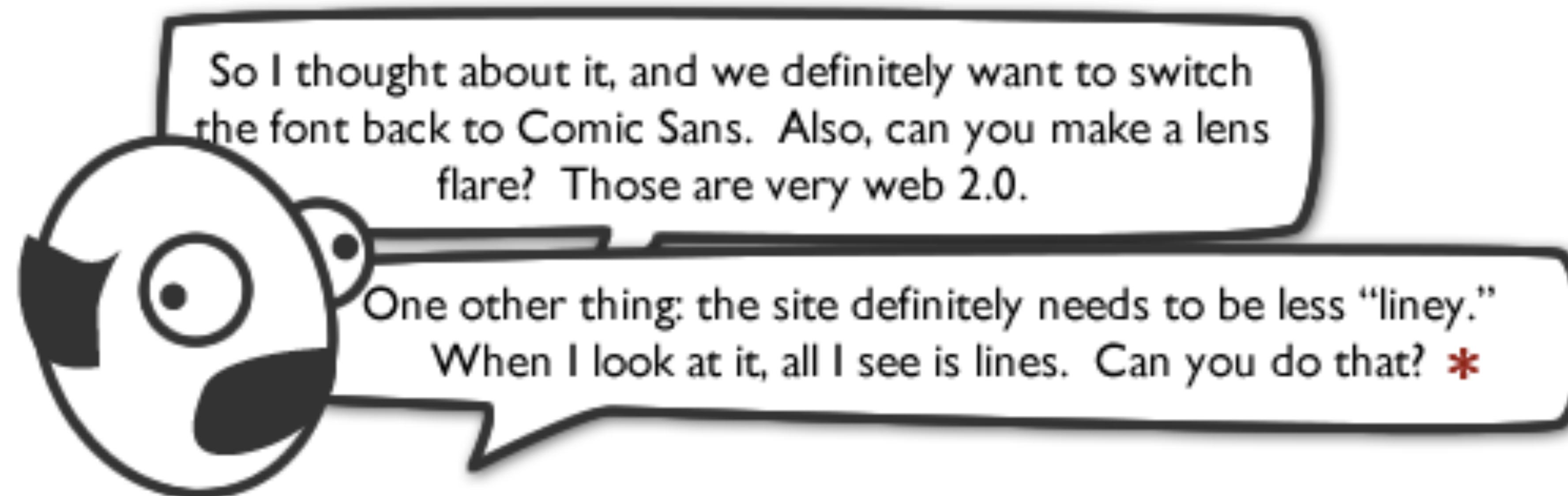
\* Author's note: Clients have actually said all these things to me. To this day I still don't know what “pop” or “edgy” mean in regards to web design. I also don't know how to design websites based on someone else's feelings.

## 2. “I want to make love to it”



## Minor changes start to add up

Soon they become not-so-minor



\* Author's note: a client actually said this to me. The design had no horizontal rules or lines of any kind, they were referring to the rectangular shape created by things such as `<div>` or `<p>` tags.

## The client gets others involved

"Looks great, but I want to get feedback from my friend, co-workers, uncle, pet hamster, etc"



\* Author's note: I actually had a client include their mother in the design process so she could provide feedback and criticism.

## 2. "She has an 'eye' for design"



## All hope is lost

You begin to fantasize about other careers, like someone who digs ditches for a living or gives sponge baths to the elderly.



Ok so my dog, Miffles, is a big deal. He's basically the most important part of my life. I want you to add "stream of consciousness" copy to the web page, where it's like Miffles is talking to the user. I'll send you a few pages of narration of what Miffles is probably thinking about, such as "I love tasty treats!" and "Hello! Welcome to my website! I am a dog and you should shake my paw! LOL" \*

\* Author's note: I did not make this up - a client **actually** made this request. I've never come closer to braining someone with a car battery as I did that day.

## You are no longer a web designer

You are now a mouse cursor inside a graphics program which the client can control by speaking, emailing, and instant messaging.



\* Author's note: I once had a client take my design and start revising it themselves in photoshop. They would then send me updated versions of how they felt it should look. After the 13th revision I fired the client.

## 2. "Shake my paw!"



# An abomination is born

The client has completely forgotten that they hired *you*, the web designer, to build them a great product.

If you were an engineer designing the turbine of a commercial airplane, would they interfere then, I wonder?



## 2. "Please, no more."



How to avoid “durr hurr depp depp...”

### 3. Research



- BSc Psychology applied to IT
- MSc Cyberpsychology
- Previous Work:
  - Course Coordinator - Irish University
  - Community Specialist - Social Network
  - Operations Lead - Digital Forensics Company
- Now - Director of User Experience at iterate.



- Explore - Understand - Evaluate
- Research empowers you, your clients and their customers
- Help your clients understand their customers
- Shouldn't base decisions on your clients assumptions or yours
- Helps us to empathise with people
- Understand context
- Identify new opportunities
- Reduce risk of “durr durr deee hurrrr”



- Allows you to say:

“No, we will not add a picture of an elephant sitting on a monkey to your site.”





- Uncover project goals
- Identify objectives
- Evaluate the current product - online user testing
  - Create a list of tasks - can users complete those tasks?
  - What are their main frustrations?
  - Observe users in real life situations (if feasible)
- Interview stakeholders to get a view of current issues, needs, goals
- Interview users to understand their current uses, requirements, goals
- **Align clients & users goals and requirements**



- Use the research to instil empathy in clients towards their users
- Create design experience goals - what do the users want to do?
- Evaluate competitor websites - what are they doing well, not so well and what kind of language is used?
- Always refer back to your research at every stage of the project
- 5 Why's



- Communicate - Solve - Analyse and Explore
- Use ED goals to ensure it's easy for users to complete their tasks
- Rank priorities - objectives, goals based on NEEDS
- Model the user journey so everyone understands their actions, feelings and thoughts

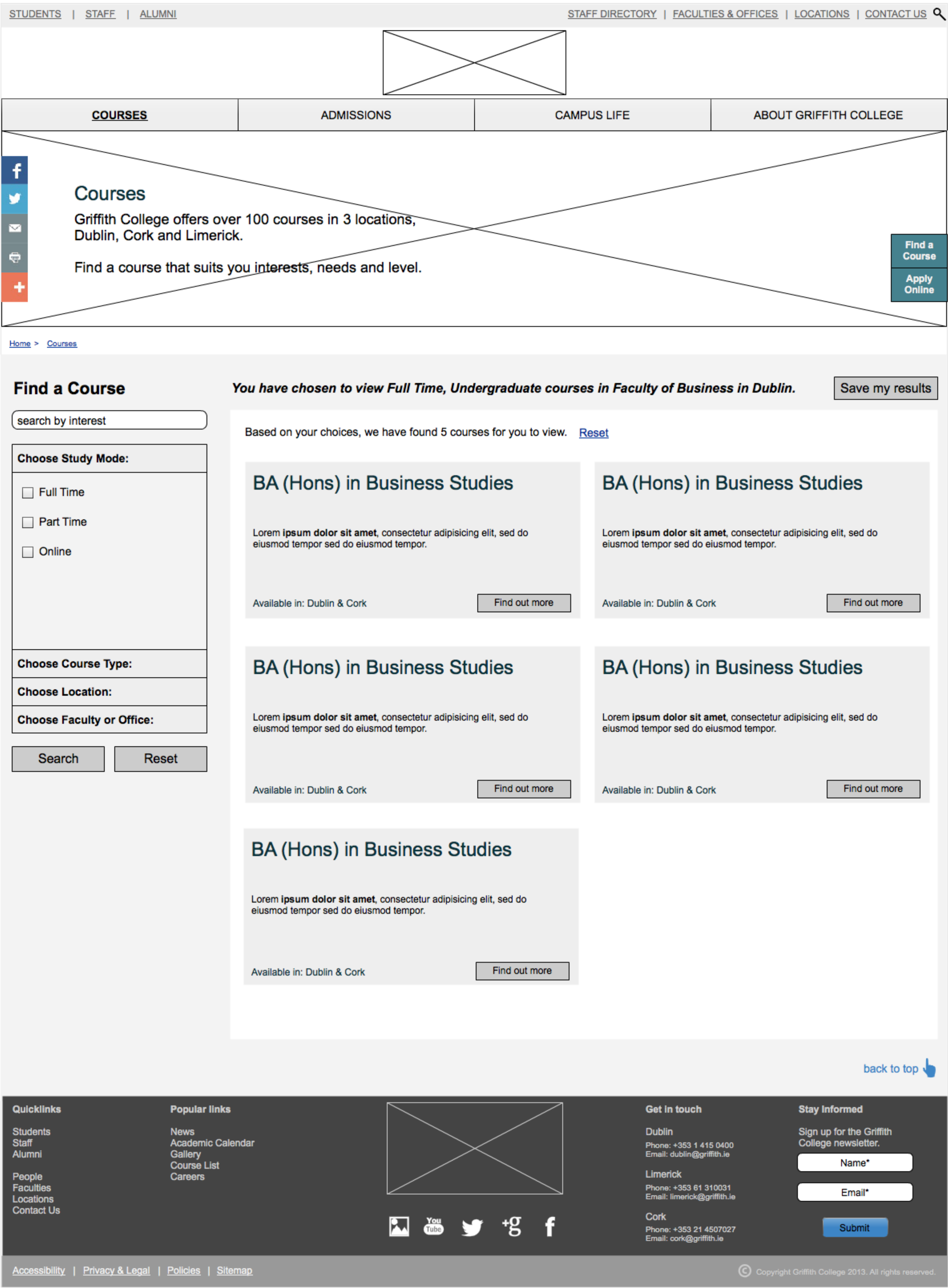


- Create an easily digestible information architecture document
- Create personas for user groups
- Always show clients visually what you mean
  - Use storyboards, sketches, lo-fi wireframes



3.4 Translating Research to Design

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- Information Architecture - Slickplan
- Personas - Illustrator, Photoshop
- Prototyping - Pop
- Wireframing - Omnigraffle, Flairbuilder, Balsamiq, UXPin
- Lo-fi wireframing - paper!





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# Thank you!