



BUILDBOX AUDIT.

A no-code game engine with a conversion problem it thinks is a marketing problem. We audited the product — and the team that builds it.

TIME TO FIRST FINISHED GAME

2 wks

FOR A SIMPLE RUNNER • REPORTED BY USERS



8

JOURNEY STAGES
MAPPED END TO END

12

USERS AND TEAM
MEMBERS INTERVIEWED

WHAT'S *inside.*

Two audits in one engagement. The first looks outward at what users hit when they open Buildbox. The second looks inward at the design and product operation that produces it — because the friction in the interface is downstream of the friction in the org.

Findings are ordered by impact against effort. Everything marked **RECOMMENDATION** is something the team can start on inside one sprint.

01	PRODUCT AUDIT	How the product functions today — and what it needs.	P . 04–15
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02	DESIGN OPERATIONS	How the team is structured today — and how it can unify.	P . 16–25
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03	TEMPLATES	Frameworks to keep using after we leave.	P . 26–28
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THE

mission.

01 / 02

PRODUCT

Evaluate AppOnboard's Buildbox ecosystem with a current focus on BB3, followed by a WANDR audit and prioritised recommendations.

DELIVERABLES

User interviews · Journey mapping · Heuristic review · Ranked findings · Evolution journey

02 / 02

DESIGN OPERATIONS

Evaluate AppOnboard's design operations and structure, and align them to a best-practice model the team can actually run.

DELIVERABLES

Team interviews · Workflow model · Responsibility matrix · Recruitment & onboarding structure

01

12 users and team members interviewed

02

2 personas, 1 combined journey model

03

9-stage journey mapped end to end

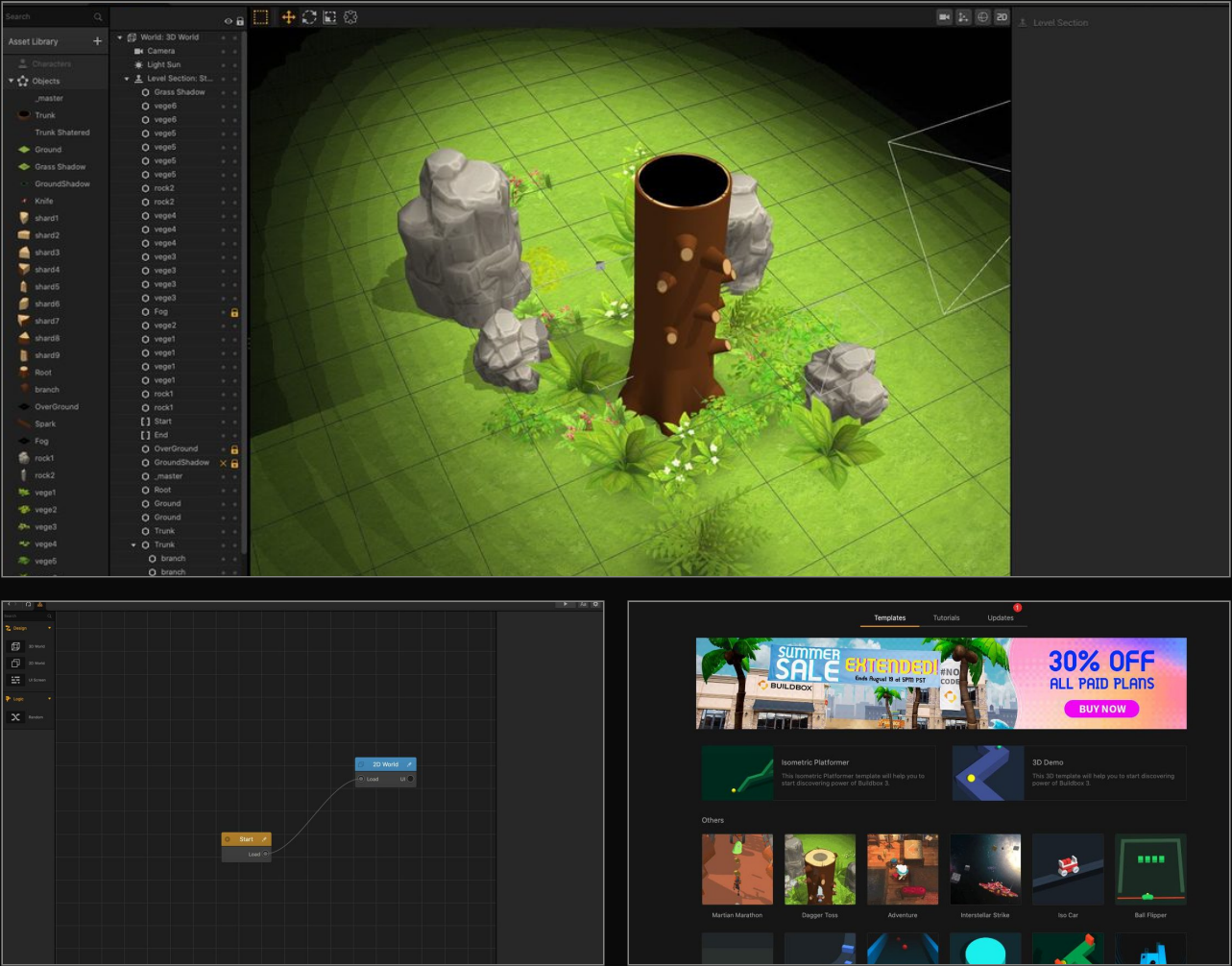
04

10-point heuristic template handed over

PART 01

PRODUCT *audit.*

How does the product function today — and what does it need?



LOCODOCO



PROFESSIONAL ESPORTS
ATHLETE

25+ · Global presence
Intermediate skill set
Visual Studio · Unreal

IN FOCUS

- Community togetherness
- Revolving door of influence
- Time to learn vs. task

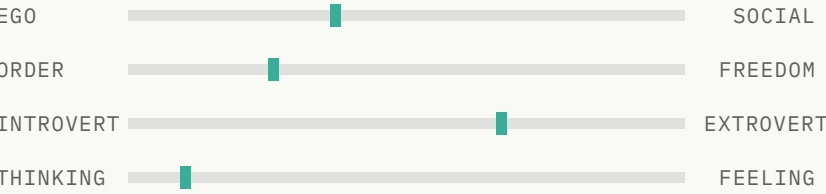
MOTIVATIONS

As a public figure in gaming, he wants to influence and lead community efforts.

GOALS

Developing skills to understand what and how games are built — and spot the opportunity in it.

PSYCHOLOGY OF THE USER



INTELLECTION



FRUSTRATION

“If I am going to spend time sitting in tutorials watching videos step by step, I might as well take a class.”

LAURENNE



FULL-STACK DESIGNER

30+ · North America
Advanced skill set
Sketch · Flinto · UnityPro

IN FOCUS

- All in one
- Rapid editing
- Prototypes in design and code

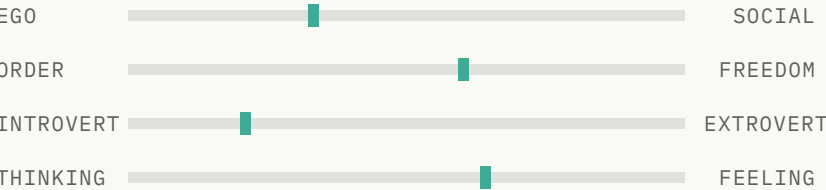
MOTIVATIONS

“What motivates me as a designer and developer is seeing how small yet successful you can be with little effort.”

GOALS

“As a hobby I would love to sell mini game ideas as if I were simply selling a piece of art.”

PSYCHOLOGY OF THE USER



INTELLECTION



FRUSTRATION

“The cycle of creating an asset to testing just for a simple change makes the system feel more complicated than Unity.”

HIGH LEARNING *curve.*

2 wks

TO SHIP A SIMPLE RUNNER GAME

GAINS

ENTICING

"When I first saw the ad I got excited. The home page and the site look great and make it seem like it's going to be easy..."

THE CORE

"I understand the intent and end goal for the application. It has a lot of great pieces... it's just not flowing."

PAINS

TIME TO LEARN

"If I am going to spend time sitting in tutorials watching videos step by step, I might as well take a class. I learn better with 1-on-1 sessions."

ON THE GO

"Since I basically need a mouse, it is virtually impossible to create anything since I only use my trackpad."

CLARITY OF FUNCTIONS

"I have no idea what feature or button does what. Like why is there no hover indicator?"

COGNITION

"When I load a new project it always takes me time to understand where to even start."

CREATING AND EDITING

"From start to finish it usually takes me roughly 2 weeks to complete a simple runner game."

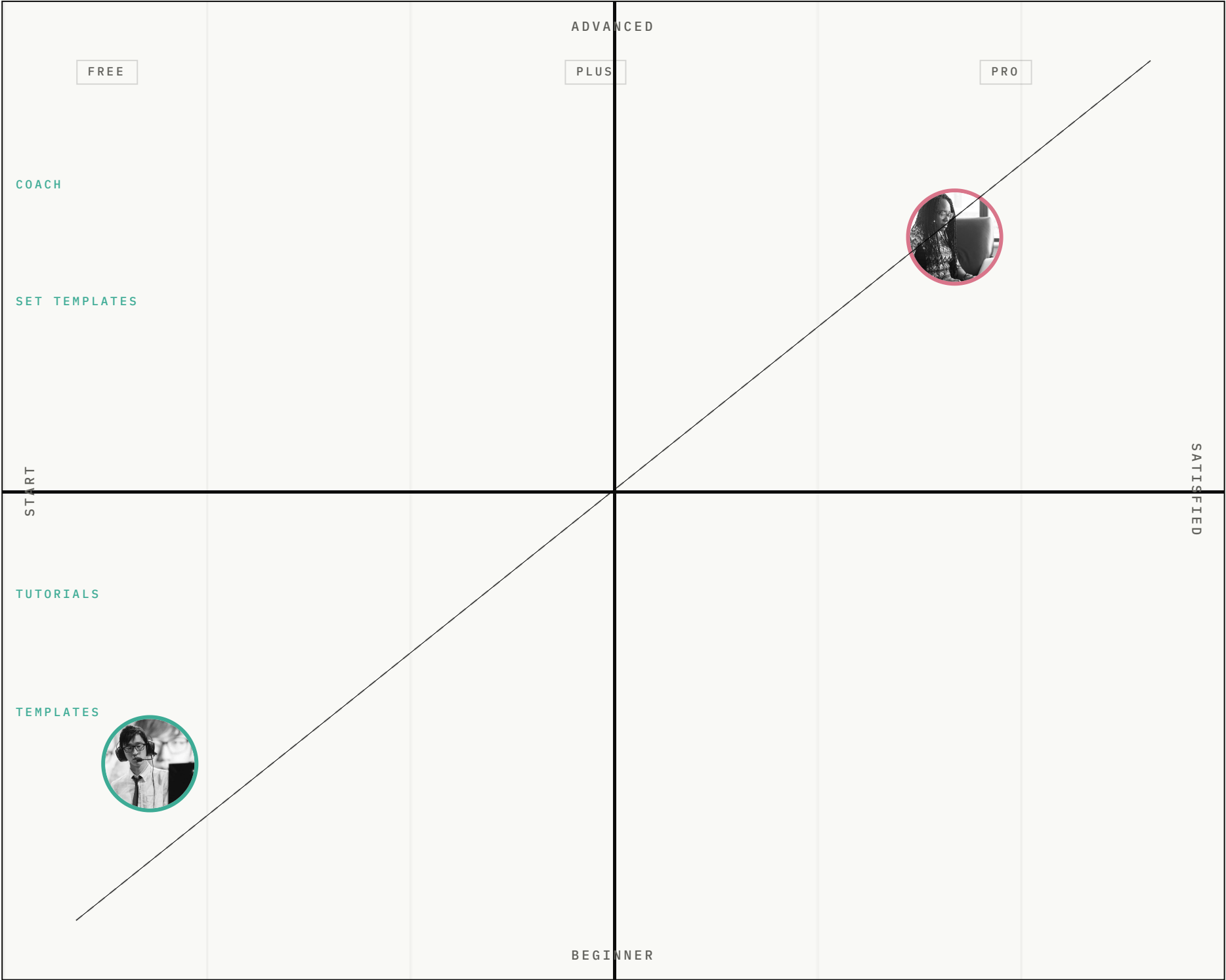
VERSATILITY

"I felt excited at first, but it seems that you can only make the same game over and over again."

TWO USERS. TWO *ceilings.*

Advanced users on a paid tier get where they want to go. Beginners on the free tier stall before they reach satisfaction — the tools that would carry them across (coaching, set templates) sit behind the plan they haven't bought yet.

- Locodoco — free tier, beginner, unsatisfied
- Laurenne — pro tier, advanced, satisfied



MEET *Harry.*

A combined hypothetical user, balanced from the real interview data. Harry is who the funnel is actually pointed at.



HARRY

Graphic designer · 23 · New user

SCENARIO

Harry has some free time and, as a trained creative, has always wanted to make his own video game. He doesn't have enough time to learn to code. He heard about Buildbox and will try to build his first simple game.

WHAT HE EXPECTS

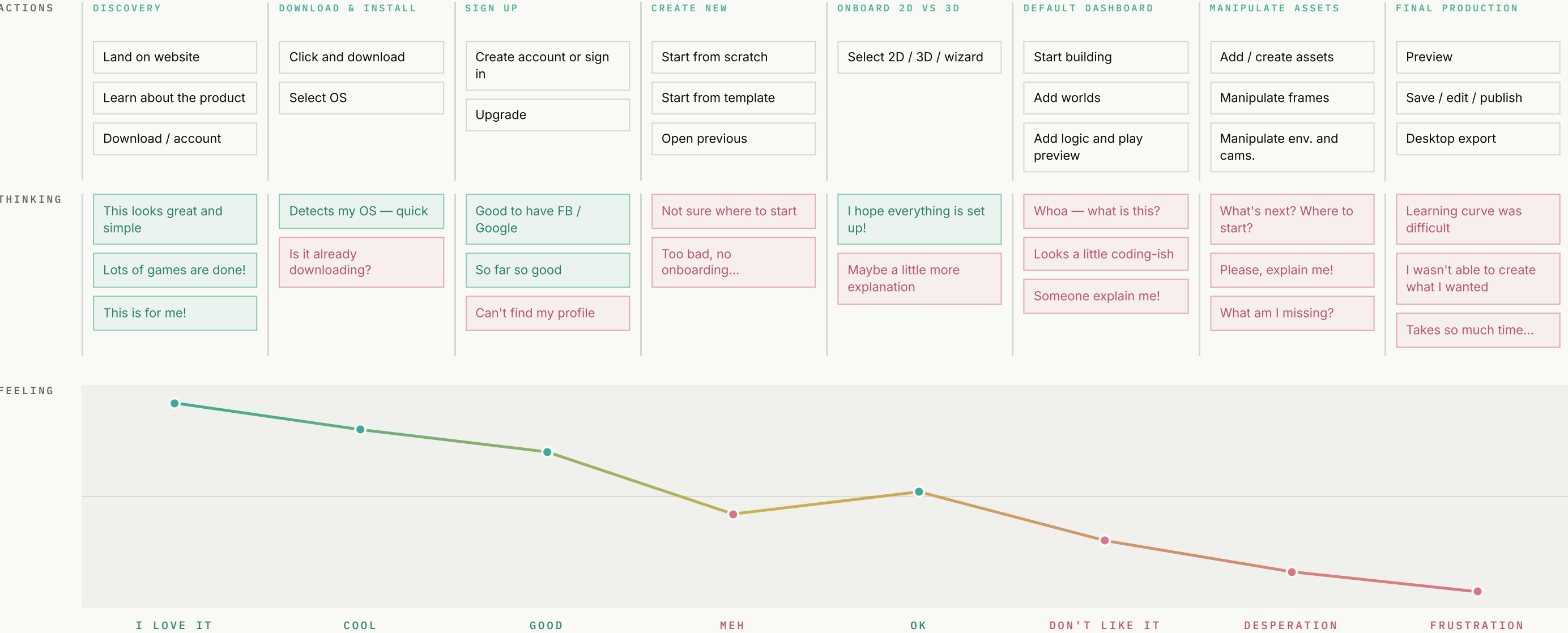
- 01 No coding, and an easy environment setup
- 02 A quick and short learning curve
- 03 Easy tools and commands, so time goes to the creative work
- 04 A user-friendly interface

EIGHT STAGES. IT *falls apart* AT FOUR.



HARRY

GRAPHIC DESIGNER · 23

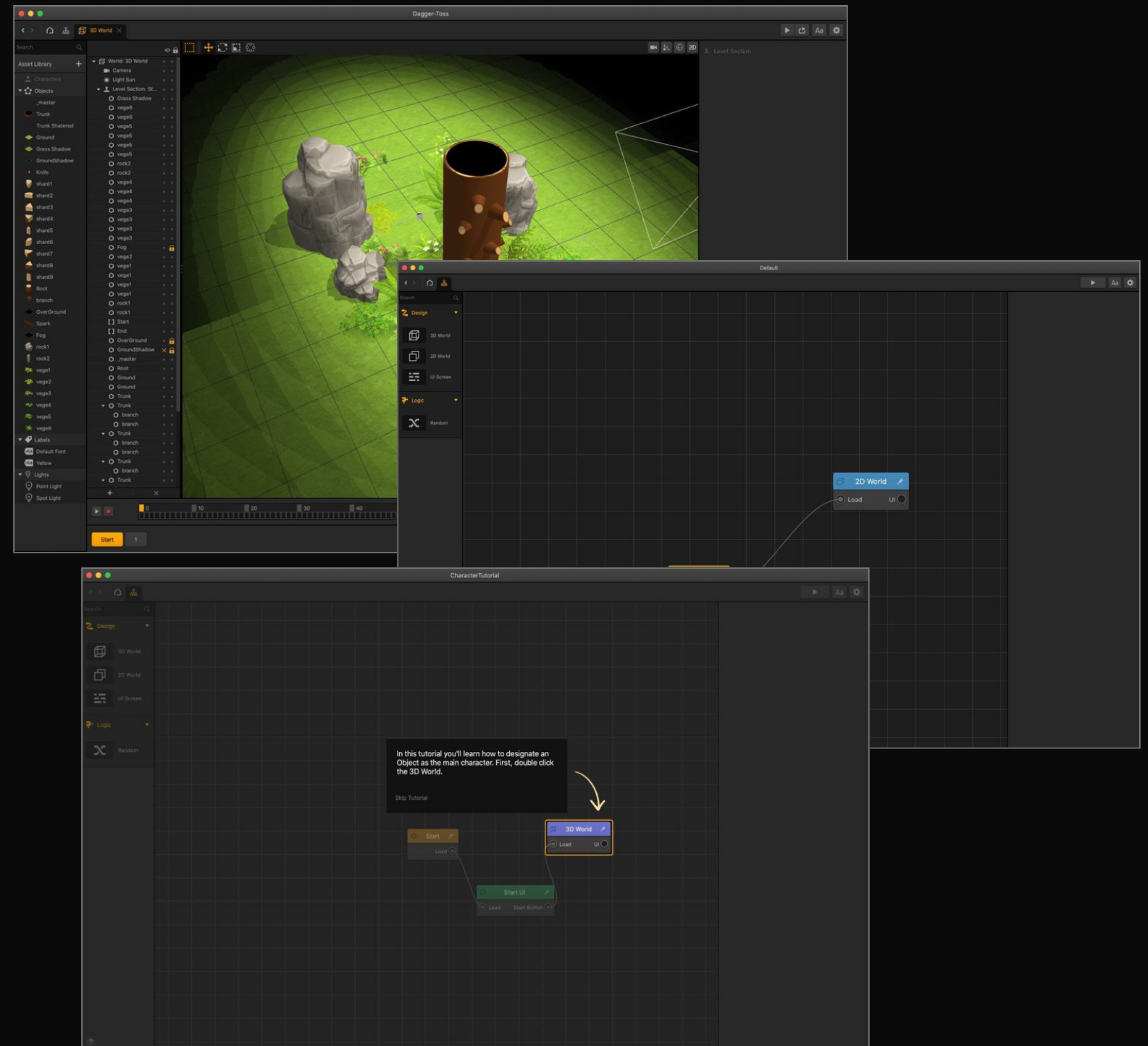


THE CROSSING POINT

Sentiment goes negative at **create new** — stage four of eight, and three stages before the user has made anything at all. Every recommendation in this deck is aimed at moving that crossing point to the right.

LACK OF DISCOVERABILITY AND *visual cues*.

- Two failure modes on every screen: too much information, or not enough.
- No hover states on buttons or interactions.
- Alerts and saving modals appear in unexpected windows, out of context.
- No milestones or main guidance to move the user through the platform.



FIX THE *cues*, NOT THE ENGINE.

Nothing here requires rebuilding the node editor. Every recommendation is a layer on top of what already ships.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 01

Create an information architecture plan that supports the ideal user journey.
- 02

Prevent errors rather than fix them — add help and hint elements.
- 03

Onboard your new users, and re-onboard your existing ones.
- 04

Submit designed components to a heuristics evaluation, then implement. Template on p. 28.

IMPACT

More engagement

Less frustration

Reduced game development time

More discoverability

Decreased product drop-off

Conversion

SEQUENCE

IA plan first — the hint elements, onboarding and heuristic pass all depend on knowing what the ideal journey is. Everything else can run in parallel.

MARKETING
SELLS
THE *discount,*
NOT THE CRAFT.

7/7

CONSECUTIVE CAMPAIGN EMAILS THAT ARE
PURELY PROMOTIONAL

- All promotional.
- No content distribution to encourage building, or to show people how.

BUILDBOX • INBOX, LAST 7 SENDS		
■	BUILDBOX	No further extensions on the SUMMER SALE!
■	BUILDBOX	Summer Sale Has Been Extended!
■	BUILDBOX	Summer Sale EXTENDED!
■	BUILDBOX	Livestream with Zack Griset & Buildbox Summer Sale!
■	BUILDBOX	Buildbox Summer Sale Ongoing!
■	BUILDBOX	Save the Date: Get in the Game Summit 2020!
■	BUILDBOX	Oops! Summer Sale DOESN'T END tomorrow!

TEACH THE TOOL, *then* SELL IT.

01 / 03

CURATED TUTORIAL SENDS

Send tutorial videos and how-to steps that show what each tool is actually capable of. Re-engage on what the user was last building.

OWNED CHANNEL

02 / 03

A COMMUNITY THAT BUILDS IN PUBLIC

A space where gamers watch notable creators make games. The proof that the tool is versatile is other people's output.

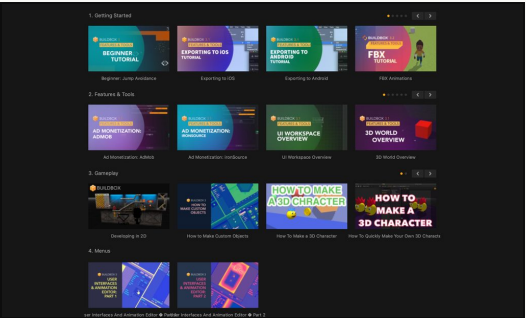
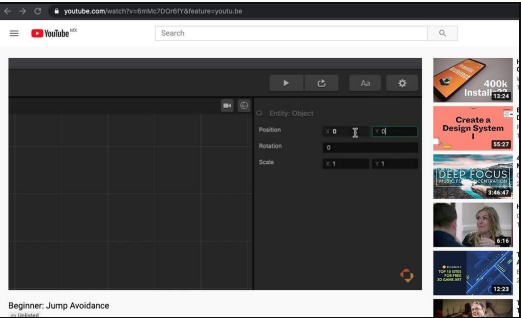
RETENTION

03 / 03

COURSE PARTNERSHIPS

Partner with Coding Dojo, General Assembly and similar. Set Buildbox as a standard tool in game-dev education as early as possible.

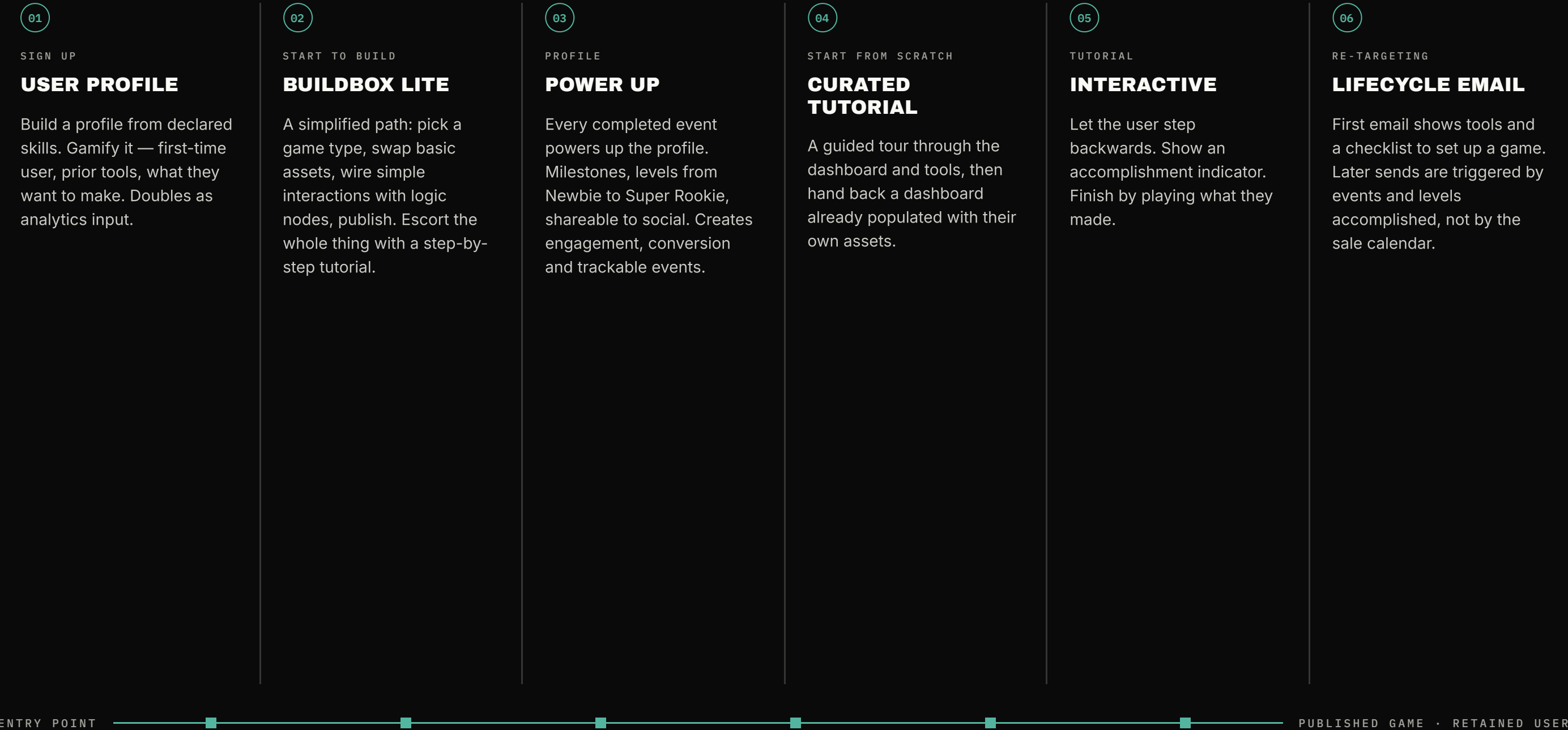
ACQUISITION



The tutorial library and community output already exist — they are buried under news and sale banners inside the desktop app, and absent from the email programme entirely. This is a distribution problem, not a production one.

SIX INTERVENTIONS, *one thread.*

Each proposition attaches to a stage the current journey already has. Nothing below asks for a new surface — only for the existing one to explain itself.



PART 02

DESIGN *operations.*

How are we structured today — and how can we unify?

FROM THE TEAM INTERVIEWS

“Honestly I have no idea if we are actually delivering what the users want or need — we just deliver what we think.”

THE LIGHT AT THE END OF THE *tunnel.*

WHAT'S WORKING

THE TOP 20%

"There's a solid, but unfortunately small group, that truly steers the ship."

THE CORE

"I've been here from the start. We have a lot of work to do, yet I'm not afraid of work... I believe in this product and see the light."

STRESSORS

TOP-DOWN

"Our work culture definitely reflects how the product functions. I liked the workshop because it forced us to interact. But why do we need to force it?"

USER IDENTITY

"Honestly I have no idea if we are actually delivering what the users want or need — we just deliver what we think."

PROCESS

"We just keep pumping out product with no means to an end."

COMMON PASSION

"If you aren't passionate about making games or its potential, why are you here?"

OWNERSHIP

"Engineering gets flooded from marketing, but marketing is under design... I don't get it."

TRAINING

"It's incredibly frustrating how some people keep producing work, yet actually don't know how to use Buildbox."

“WE NEED *a system.*”

Said, unprompted, in three separate interviews. The team is not asking for more people — they are asking for a shared way of working.

STRUCTURE

01 Recruitment

02 Onboarding

03 Training

PROCESS

01 User centred

02 Integration

COMMUNICATION

01 Channels

NO PROCESS IS *a process* — JUST AN EXPENSIVE ONE.

RECRUITMENT & INTERVIEW

CURRENT: NONE

- Create a 3-to-5 step candidate process that includes both interviews and a product / design test.
- Create a rubric grading system, so moving and matching a candidate down the process is systematic rather than a judgement call.

Rubric weighting supplied as a working sheet — Discovery, Investigate, Research, Translate requirements, Track progress, Provide feedback, Present.

ONBOARDING

CURRENT: NONE

- Create a smooth relationship experience for employees, HR and management alike.
- Curate a step-by-step instruction wiki: processes, manuals, templates and how-tos.

Processes

Manuals

Templates

How-tos

Design training centre

Grading system

ENGINEERING-LED, *unaligned.*

CURRENT

- Engineering driven without proper alignment or workflow process. Results in a constant waterfall of bugs.
- The business relies heavily on self-publishing subscriptions.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Implement EOS (Entrepreneurial Operating System) to help the business understand design for production.
- Incorporate a pro-servicing component into the business model.

WHY THIS SITS IN A UX AUDIT

A waterfall of bugs and a single revenue line are both symptoms of the same thing the users named on page 7: no one owns the definition of done. Fixing the interface without fixing the operating model buys you one good release.

TOOLS TO *communicate.*

One channel per job. The stressor named “ownership” on page 17 is mostly a routing problem.

01

INSTANT

For anything that can be forgotten

SLACK

02

MILESTONE

For announcing significant developments

EMAIL

03

ASYNC

Tracking and documentation of files

JIRA

04

COLLABORATION

Work collaboratively, with record control

ZOOM · MIRO

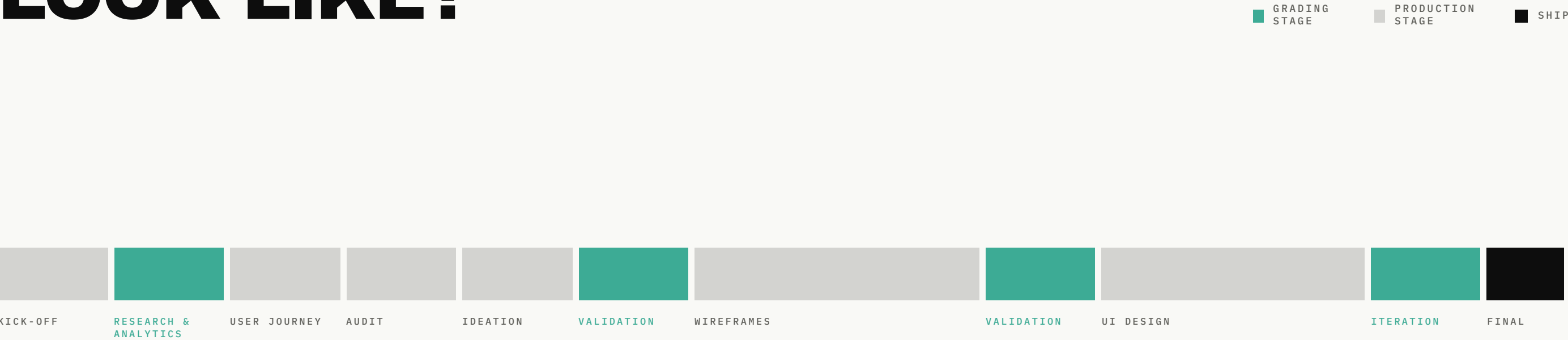
05

DESIGN

Collaborative design, version control, centralised libraries

FIGMA

WHAT SHOULD OUR *process* LOOK LIKE?



FOUR GRADING STAGES, NOT ONE

Research, validation before wireframes, validation before UI, and iteration after ship. Each one is a place to stop and ask whether this is still on track.

THE AUDIT SITS EARLY

Auditing after ideation rather than after build is the difference between a redirect and a rewrite.

ITERATION IS NOT A PHASE

It is a live loop: test, evaluate, plan, design, deploy, repeat. Budget for it in every cycle.

NUMBERS SHOW THE *what.* RESEARCH SHOWS THE *why.*

ANALYTICS

MONITORING THE TARGET

Analytics identify possible gaps or interruptions in the efficiency of your products.

GENERALISED TRACKING

The general health of the product and the active balance of user, system and trends over time. e.g. retention.

FOCUSED TRACKING

A specialised set of tolerances aimed at one issue, suite or independent source. e.g. identify the cause.

ON-SITE ENGAGEMENT

CUSTOMER

LIFECYCLE

FUNNELLING

MARKETING

MIXPANEL

RESEARCH

DEFINING ALIGNMENT

Numbers can't show feelings, or how a user interacts with your product. Research defines the why, the who and the what.

Market

Domain knowledge to clarify and prioritise features, white space and new business opportunity.

COMPETITIVE ANALYSIS • BUSINESS MODELLING

Macro

Quantitative data to identify statistical significance and groupthink.

SURVEYS • STATISTICS • A/B TESTING

Micro

Qualitative value found in connecting with people on a personal level.

OBSERVATION • INTERVIEWS • PROCESS TESTING

NOTHING GOES *off radar.*

VALIDATION

QUALITY CONTROL

A grading stage in the workflow maintains product expectations.

○ ALIGNMENT TO VISION

Validating at any stage forces the chance to step back and ask whether this is on track with the vision.

○ MAINTENANCE & DE-BUGGING

A requirements document reduces the volume of product inefficiencies that reach build.

○ MAINTAIN BEST PRACTICES

Automated checking stages are invaluable practice in spotting mistakes.

○ WHEN

Before and after every design cycle.

ITERATION

A REVOLVING DOOR

Create a revolving door for constant improvement.

01 TEST

User testing validates new features and redesigns of old ones.

02 EVALUATE

Are the new features achieving metrics and product goals?

03 PLAN

Plan new design sprints from the evaluation results.

04 DESIGN

Design the new experience with the insights and a concrete plan for the ideal journey.

05 DEPLOY

Release, then submit to metrics and analytics.

06 REPEAT

Iteration is live. Repeat it and evolve with the users.

ROME WASN'T BUILT IN A DAY,
nor alone.

A WANDR best-practice model. Your system will vary with your tailored needs — what matters is that every column has a named owner.

	KICKOFF	RESEARCH	IDEATION	VALIDATION	DESIGN	DEVELOP	RELEASE	MARKET
PM								
ENGINEER								
DESIGNER								
ANALYTICS								
MARKETING								

Engineering currently enters at kickoff and disappears until design handoff. That gap is where the bug waterfall on page 20 comes from.

PART 03

TEMPLATES

to keep.

Two working frameworks, handed over. Use them without
us.

01

RESPONSIBILITY MATRIX

Who does what, at which decision. Fill it once per squad.

02

HEURISTICS EVALUATION

A 10-point severity-scored review any designer on the team
can run.

RESPONSIBILITY *matrix.*

FILL ONE PER SQUAD • REVIEW QUARTERLY

DECISION OR ACTIVITY	DESIGNER	DEVELOPER	PRODUCT OWNER	SVP OF DESIGN	CEO
DESIGN DECISION	Produces assets	Provides feedback to designer	Makes final decision	Advises designer	—
NEW FEATURE IMPLEMENTATION	Conducts research	Upon design handoff	Guardian of new features	Advises product owner	Aware
USABILITY TESTING	Conducts tests weekly	—	Gathers insights bi-weekly	Advises designer	Aware
TASK #1	—	—	—	—	—
TASK #2	—	—	—	—	—
TASK #3	—	—	—	—	—

Three rows are filled as worked examples. The rest are yours. The rule: exactly one owner per column-row, and “aware” is a valid answer.

HEURISTICS *evaluation.*

0

NOT A
USABILITY
PROBLEM

1

COSMETIC – FIX
IF THERE IS
TIME

2

MINOR – LOW
PRIORITY

3

MAJOR – HIGH
PRIORITY

4

CATASTROPHE –
SOLVE BEFORE
RELEASE

EVALUATOR

DATE

WEBSITE / APP

BROWSER / OS

FEATURE / TASK

01

VISIBILITY OF SYSTEM STATUS

0

1

2

3

4

Always keep users informed about what is going on, through appropriate feedback within reasonable time.

02

MATCH BETWEEN SYSTEM AND REAL WORLD

0

1

2

3

4

Speak the users' language, use familiar concepts, follow real-world conventions and logical order.

03

USER CONTROL AND FREEDOM

0

1

2

3

4

Users have a clearly marked emergency exit to leave an unwanted state. Support undo and redo.

04

CONSISTENCY AND STANDARDS

0

1

2

3

4

Users should not have to wonder whether different words, situations or actions mean the same thing.

05

ERROR PREVENTION

0

1

2

3

4

Careful design that prevents a problem occurring in the first place. Eliminate error-prone conditions or confirm.

06

RECOGNITION RATHER THAN RECALL

0

1

2

3

4

Minimise memory load by making objects, actions and options visible.

07

FLEXIBILITY AND EFFICIENCY OF USE

0

1

2

3

4

Accelerators, unseen by the novice, speed up interaction for experts. Allow users to tailor frequent actions.

08

AESTHETIC AND MINIMALIST DESIGN

0

1

2

3

4

Dialogs should not contain information which is irrelevant or rarely needed.

09

HELP USERS RECOVER FROM ERRORS

0

1

2

3

4

Error messages in plain language, precisely indicating the problem and suggesting a solution.

10

HELP AND DOCUMENTATION

0

1

2

3

4

Even if the system can be used without it, help may be necessary. Be concrete, and direct.

FOUR MOVES, *in order.*

Buildbox does not have a design problem. It has an evidence problem, and an ownership problem. Both are fixable inside a quarter.

wandr

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01

INFORMATION ARCHITECTURE PLAN

Unblocks onboarding, hint elements and the heuristic pass.

02

ONBOARD AND RE-ONBOARD

The drop happens at "create new". Fix that stage first.

WEEK 2-6

03

PROFILE AND MILESTONES

Gives marketing something to trigger on other than a sale.

WEEK 4-8

04

RUBRIC, WIKI AND RESPONSIBILITY MATRIX

Design ops work runs in parallel — it does not wait on product.

ONGOING

Everything in this deck was drawn from 12 interviews, one product walkthrough and one week inside the team. It is a starting position, not a verdict — argue with it.