FILL WITH YOUR NEXT TWO QUARTERS OF ROADMAP

Design Capacity Planner

A 20-minute worksheet for Heads of Product, Heads of Design and CTOs. Figure out whether your team needs extra designers, UX writers, design leads or developers — which roles, and for how long.

BY LINA SILVA, CEO, WANDR

How to use this

Fill it in with your next two quarters of roadmap in front of you. Be honest about what is actually shipping, not what is planned. It works best if a product lead and a design or engineering lead fill it in together.

Step 1: Map the demand

List the initiatives on your roadmap for the next two quarters.

INITIATIVE	TARGET DATE	NEEDS NEW UX/FLOWS?	NEEDS SIGNIFICANT COPY?	NEEDS FRONT-END BUILD?	WHO OWNS DESIGN TODAY?
		Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	
		Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	
		Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	
		Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	
		Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	

Step 2: Map the supply

ROLE	PEOPLE TODAY	SHARE OF TIME AVAILABLE FOR ROADMAP (AFTER SUPPORT, BUGS, MEETINGS)	EFFECTIVE CAPACITY (PEOPLE × %)
UX / product designers			
UX writers / content designers			
Design lead / manager			
Front-end / full-stack developers			

Step 3: Score the strain

Score each statement: **0** = not true · **1** = sometimes true · **2** = consistently true.

Design capacity

#	STATEMENT	SCORE
1	Engineers wait on designs, or start building before designs are ready.	_____
2	Designers work across more product areas than they can keep context on.	_____
3	Research and usability testing get skipped to hit dates.	_____
4	Your design system or component library is falling behind what ships.	_____

UX writing

#	STATEMENT	SCORE
5	Copy is written last, by whoever is free (often a PM or engineer).	_____
6	Support tickets or user feedback point to confusing labels, errors or instructions.	_____
7	Terminology is inconsistent across screens, emails and help content.	_____

Design leadership

#	STATEMENT	SCORE
8	Nobody owns design quality and consistency across teams.	____
9	Junior or mid-level designers lack regular critique and mentoring.	____
10	Design decisions get reopened by stakeholders late in the cycle.	____

Development

#	STATEMENT	SCORE
11	Finished designs sit in Figma for weeks before anyone builds them.	____
12	What ships looks noticeably different from what was designed.	____
13	Front-end work is the bottleneck in sprint planning.	____

Timing

#	STATEMENT	SCORE
14	A launch, redesign or deadline in the next 90 days is at risk because of people, not scope.	____
15	An open role has been unfilled long enough to hurt the roadmap.	____

Step 4: Read your results

SECTION	YOUR SCORE	SIGNAL
Design capacity (0–8)	____	5+ = you likely need at least one more UX/product designer
UX writing (0–6)	____	4+ = a UX writer will likely unblock more than another designer
Design leadership (0–6)	____	4+ = you need a design lead before you add more designers
Development (0–6)	____	4+ = add developer capacity, or new designs will just pile up
Timing (0–4)	____	3+ = you need capacity sooner than a normal hiring cycle allows

Total: _____ / 30

TOTAL	WHAT IT USUALLY MEANS
0–9	Your capacity roughly matches the roadmap. Revisit next quarter.
10–19	Specific gaps. Add one or two targeted roles for the busiest initiatives.

20–30	The roadmap has outgrown the team. Plan for a small embedded team, not a single hire.

Step 5: Size the gap

For each role with a high score, fill in one row.

ROLE	HOW MANY	WHY (INITIATIVES FROM STEP 1)	START BY	FOR HOW LONG	TEMP PUSH OR PERMANENT?

Rule of thumb for "how long": a defined push → initiative length + handoff · a gap until a hire starts → hiring timeline + overlap · ongoing roadmap load beyond two quarters → long-term embedded role, permanent hire, or both.

Red flags

- **Adding designers without a design lead.** More people with no one owning quality usually means more inconsistency, not more output.
- **Adding designers when developers are the bottleneck.** Designs pile up and go stale.
- **No one to onboard them.** Every new person needs a named point of contact and access on day one.
- **Unclear priorities.** Extra capacity amplifies whatever direction you already have.
- **Hiring for a temporary spike.** A permanent hire for a six-month push is a costly way to solve a short-term problem.
- **Copy as an afterthought.** If users are confused, another designer may not help. A UX writer might.

YOUR NEXT STEP

Bring this worksheet to a 30-minute call. I'll look at your scores and the gap you sized, and tell you honestly whether augmentation is the right answer, which roles you actually need and for how long.

BOOK A 30-MINUTE CALL ↗

Lina Silva, CEO, WANDR · wandr.studio