



Tweaking Figma for Design/Dev Collaboration

*mobile***LIVE**

The right tools are essential for collaboration and communication between the Design, Development, and Business Teams.

mobileLIVE uses **Figma** for collaboration because of its extraordinary features:

- **Real-time shared editing**
- **Contextual comments**
- **Components and styles**
- **Plugin support**

However, no single tool meets every need for every project.

As a result, we created our mobileLIVE framework that **expands** on the features and **functional limitations** of Figma and **specifically caters** to our delivery process. We'll demonstrate how we use it for our **Design Systems**, and how it enables a seamless hand-off with our **Deliverables in Sprints.**

Design System

Design systems enable **fast, rapid prototyping** because they provide designers with an easy set of **reusable tools and guidelines**. Figma supports the use of **components and styles**, which are easily transferable between mockups.

However, this **doesn't capture the full scope** of each design decision: so we've **added supporting best practices** that enable seamless collaboration and hand-off between teams.



This icon identifies our mobileLIVE best practices

Supporting Branding

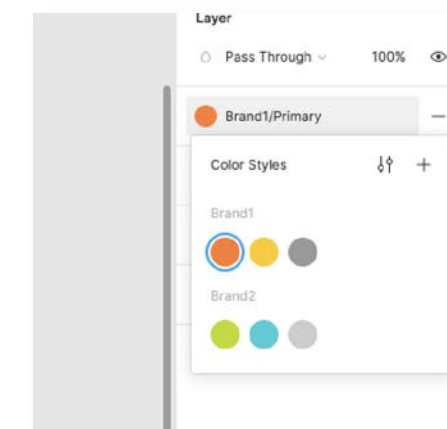
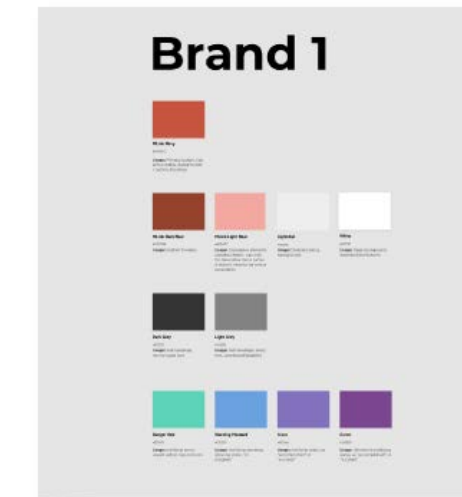
How do you modify Figma's reusable styles for projects that span multiple brands?

Developers and designers **work together** to set up a **template style page** in the shared environment of Figma, using this **as a source of truth** for both the **development framework** and design system. All brands are organized on one shared page in Figma, using **different frames** to separate the particular brands and their components.

Plugins such as 'Design Lint' and 'Link to Documentation' help us ensure consistent branding across multiple screens.

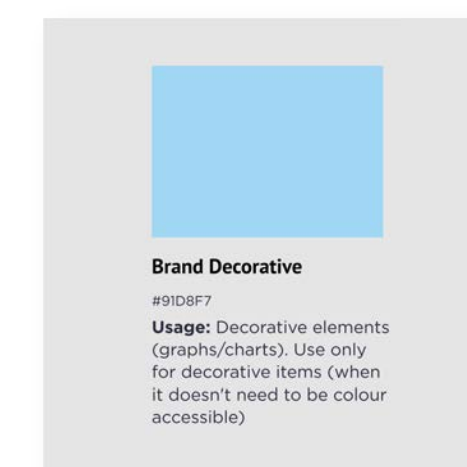


Give developers access to the template style page so they can refer to it during development.



Name styles with flexible and generic names such as Primary or Secondary. You can use the '/' to group styles, but this will only allow one set of hierarchy.

Add descriptions in the style under each set of styles to describe its function, such as body text, or identify use-cases such as transparency.



Supporting Components

How do you keep the many components in Figma efficient and organized?

We **break down components** into different variations and statuses, with our Design System **segmented into pages** such as forms, controls, and navigations, enabling teams to view them **based on their needs**. Various states for components are **nested** within '/' hierarchies.

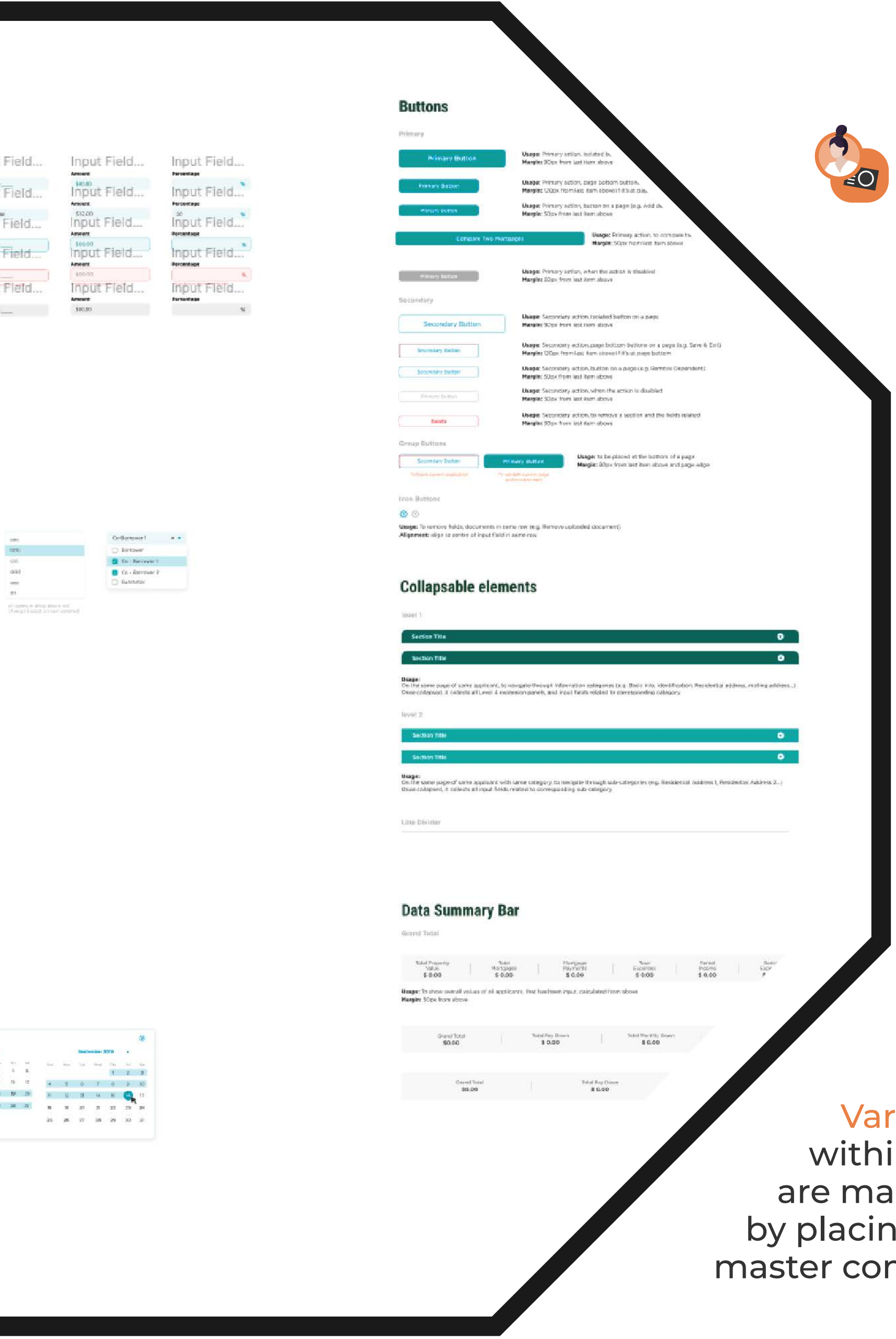
Plugins such as 'Component Cloner' handle the organizing and versioning of components.



Developers assist in designing components and writing their documentation inside of Figma.

Pages and frames for components are segmented based on their functional use, as opposed to being flow-specific.

Various nested states within the '/' hierarchies are made easier to discover by placing them next to their master component.



Spacing and Margins

How do you ensure accurate spacing and margins with Figma components?

Although Figma supports **Auto-Layout** and **constraints** on components, we still implement a **margin rule** on our components page. By establishing spacing rules early in the design system, we can easily implement these margins **into the development environment**, to ensure consistency and accuracy.

Plugins such as 'GuideMate' help us support accurate and responsive spacing.



Carefully define the unit of measurement for padding, whether pixels or points.

Naming Conventions

How do you handle exporting assets from Figma to the development environment?

Our teams collaborate on setting **standardized naming conventions for assets**. For example, a joint decision was made to save the most team effort by **naming icons** in a format that ends with “_##px.” Our Dev Team then uses a tool to massively **export various icons** as CSS code to their **front-end library**.

Plugins such as ‘Material Design Icons’ help us implement icons that are developer ready.

- | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------|
| ▶ # sorting_down_24px | ▶ # complete_24px |
| ▶ # sorting_24px | ▶ # complete_24px |
| ▶ # drop_down_24px | ▶ # application_list_24px |
| ▶ # refresh_24px | ▶ # upload_24px |
| ▶ # new_application_24px | ▶ # preview_24px |
| ▶ # existing_portal_24px | ▶ # file_24px |
| ▶ # mortgage_calculator_24px | ▶ # address_lookup_24px |
| ▶ # document_checklist_24px | ▶ # preview_file_24px |
| ▶ # information_24px | ▶ # date_picker_24px |
| ▶ # information_24px | ▶ # description_24px |



Set a consistent naming convention that includes sizes as well as resolutions for the various devices using the asset.

Design System Future Thinking



Due to the **ever-expanding nature** of design systems, these best practices are constantly changing and evolving. One particular area of **innovation** in our design system practices has been the **additional collaboration** with the **Business team**. Project access in Figma, as well as plugins such as Google Sheet Sync, allow the Business team to contribute to the project while still going through the necessary stakeholders.

Another example of future-oriented thinking within Figma is the **custom development of plugins**. Our internal engineering team collaborates with Design and Development to build **project-specific plugins** that address our **particular challenges** in hand-off and collaboration, especially padding and margins in responsive design.



Design Sprint

We work in Design sprints, bringing together the Design, Development, and Business teams to foster **iteration and collaboration**. Figma plays a critical role in our approach by hosting our designs in a shared environment.

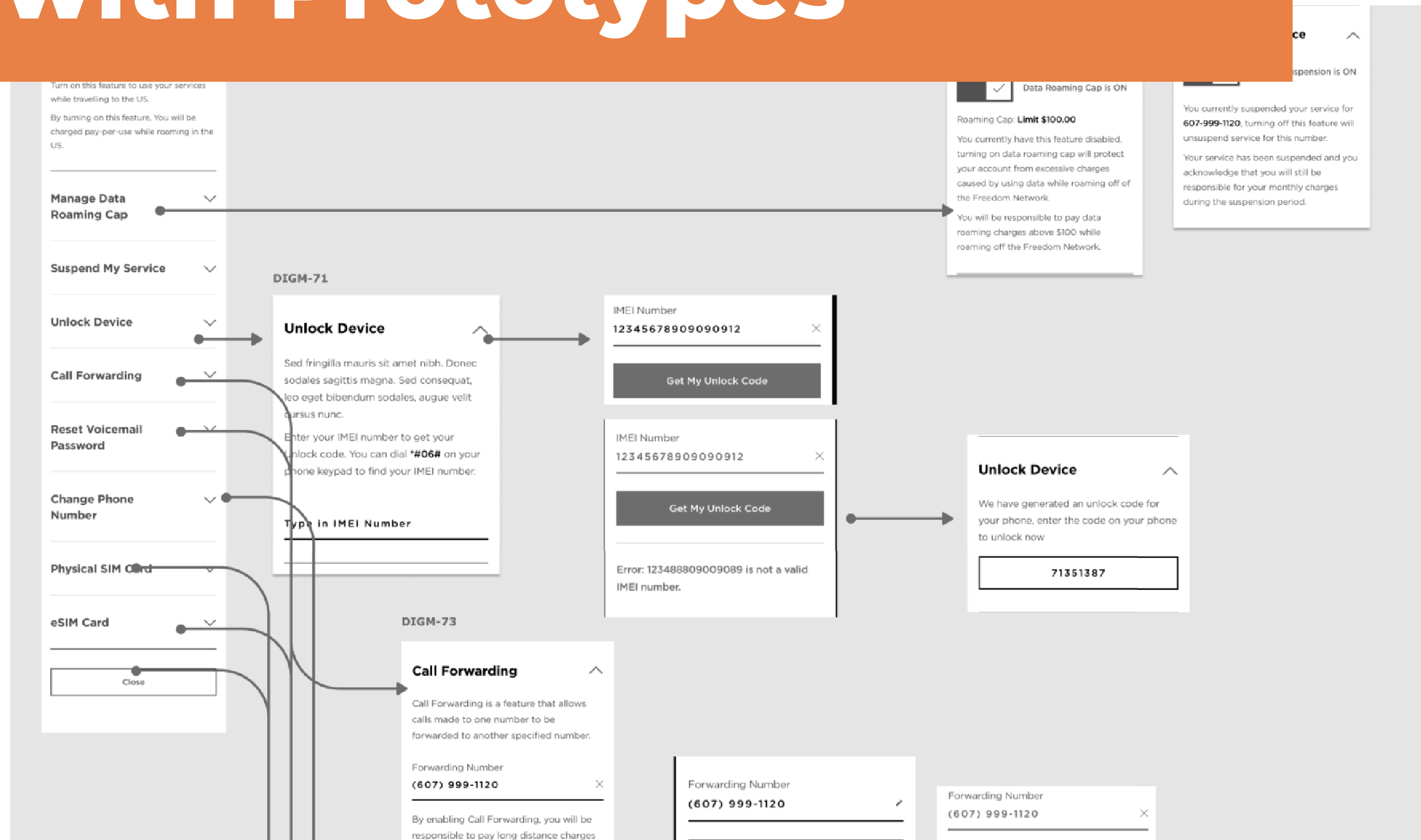
This however, doesn't cover the **complex process** of Design sprints, so we've refined an **additional set of practices** to help support agile projects while keeping **stakeholders on the same page**.

The Overall Picture with Prototypes

The foundational step of **onboarding new team members**, and rapidly building context, is to walk the team through the end-to-end experience and the overall picture of what we are working on.

Click-through prototypes are a great way to demonstrate the overall experience, as well as its flow and interactions. We build click-throughs as part of our discovery phase for our clients, and they come in handy to onboard development teams as well.

Click-through **doesn't cover every interaction** and the smaller details of the user flow. For that, we use our additional set of practices, such as plugins, to cover specific interactions and annotations to explain particular use-cases.

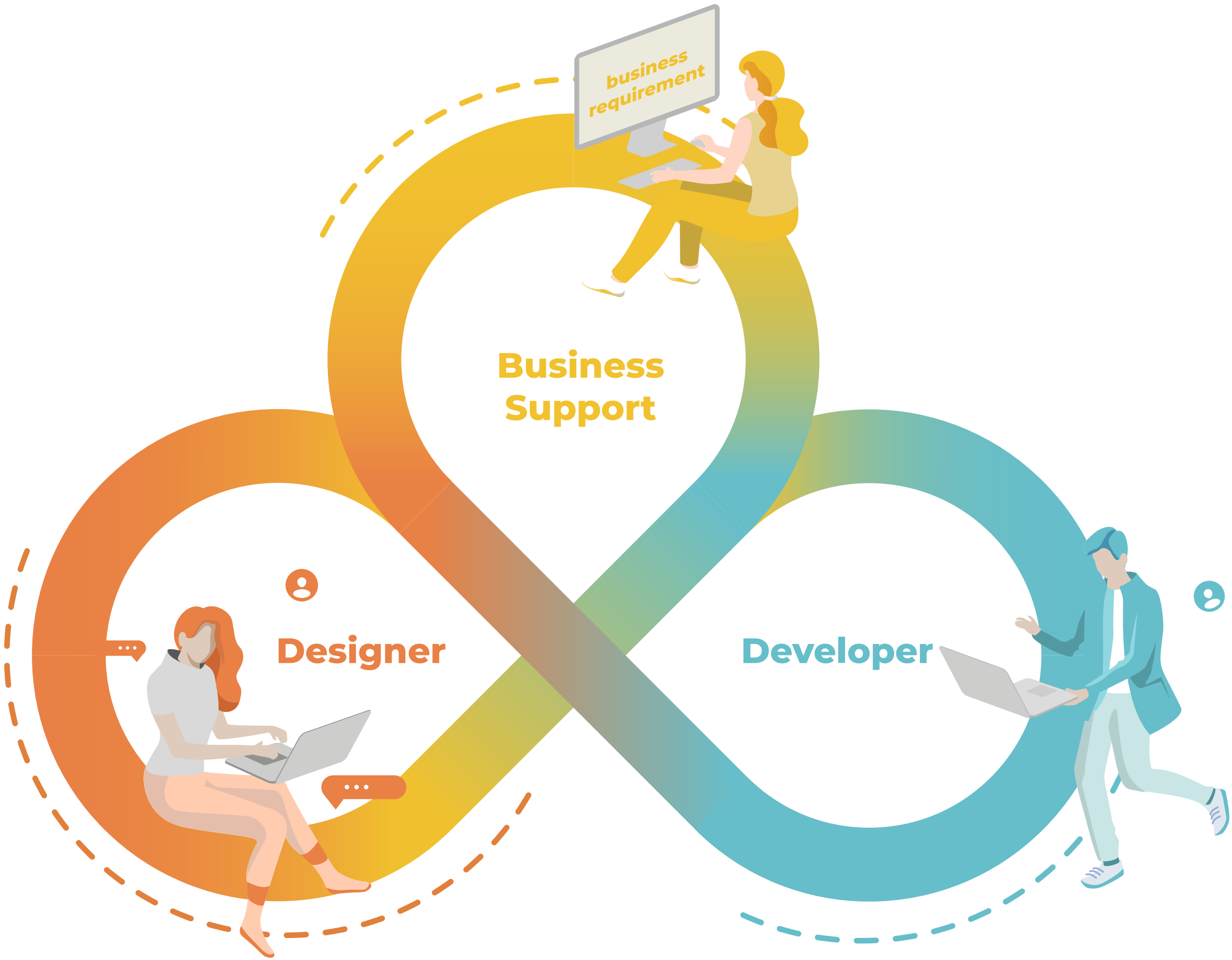


Team Collaboration

One or two people from each team take the lead while a project is unrolling, each **in charge of their team deliverables**, as well as acting as the touchpoint for requirements approval and execution. Outside of Figma, the Development team does a daily standup, and all team leads attend **weekly sync-up meetings** to review progress, discuss issues and plan for the coming week.

Learn more about how we bridge the gap between Design and Development to enable collaboration.

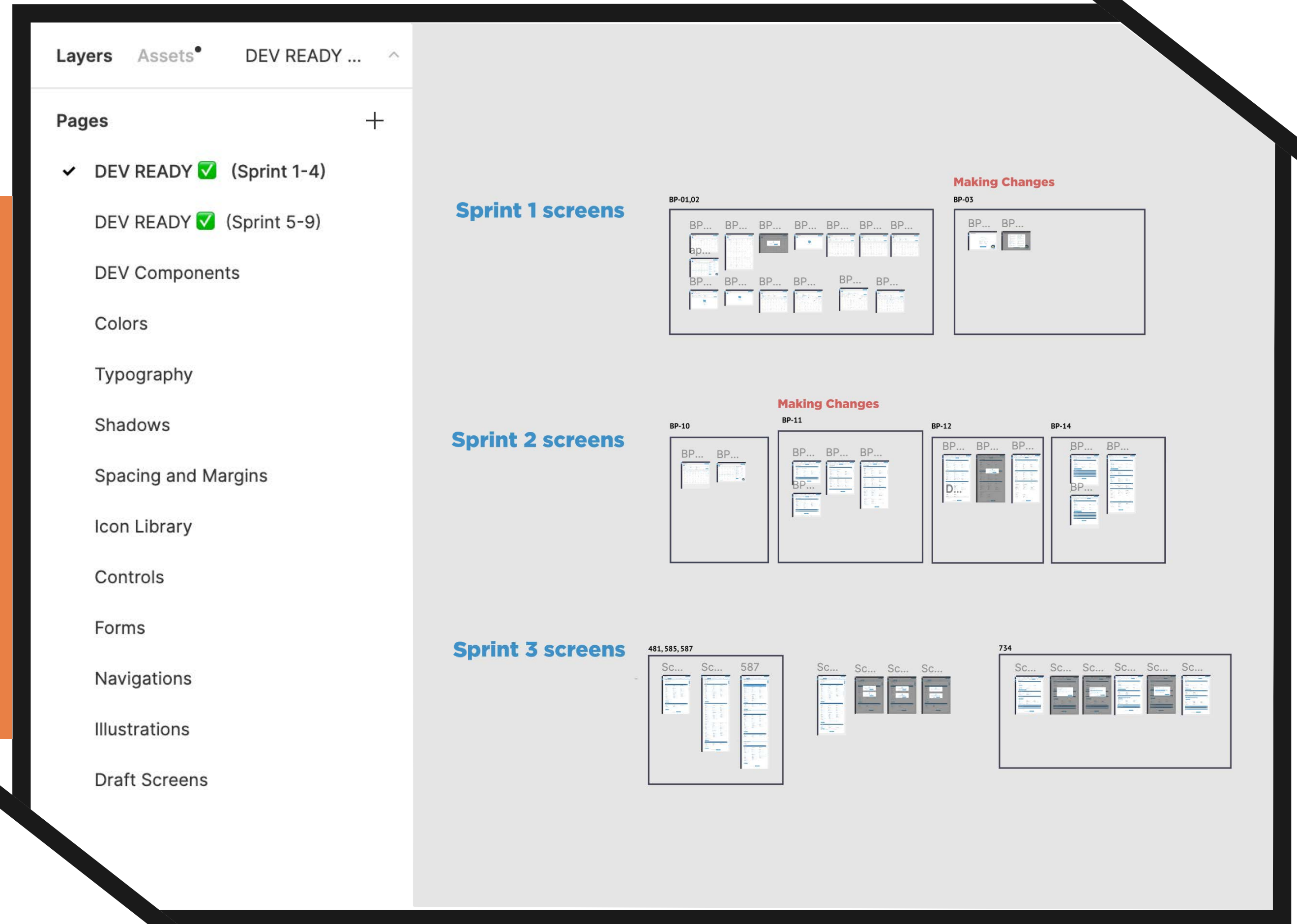
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Screen Arrangement

How do you organize screens in Figma?

During the development stage, **we arrange screens by sprint**. As **Figma doesn't support this**, we need to divide our mockups into ideation and developer-ready pages manually. Only screens **deemed implementable** and approved by team leads are moved to "DEV READY". Within the page, we break down the screens horizontally into sprints, with **different user stories in each sprint**.



Plugins such as 'Super Tidy' and 'Clean Document' keep pages organized and numbered for our sprints.

Change Management

How do you handle mid-sprint changes?

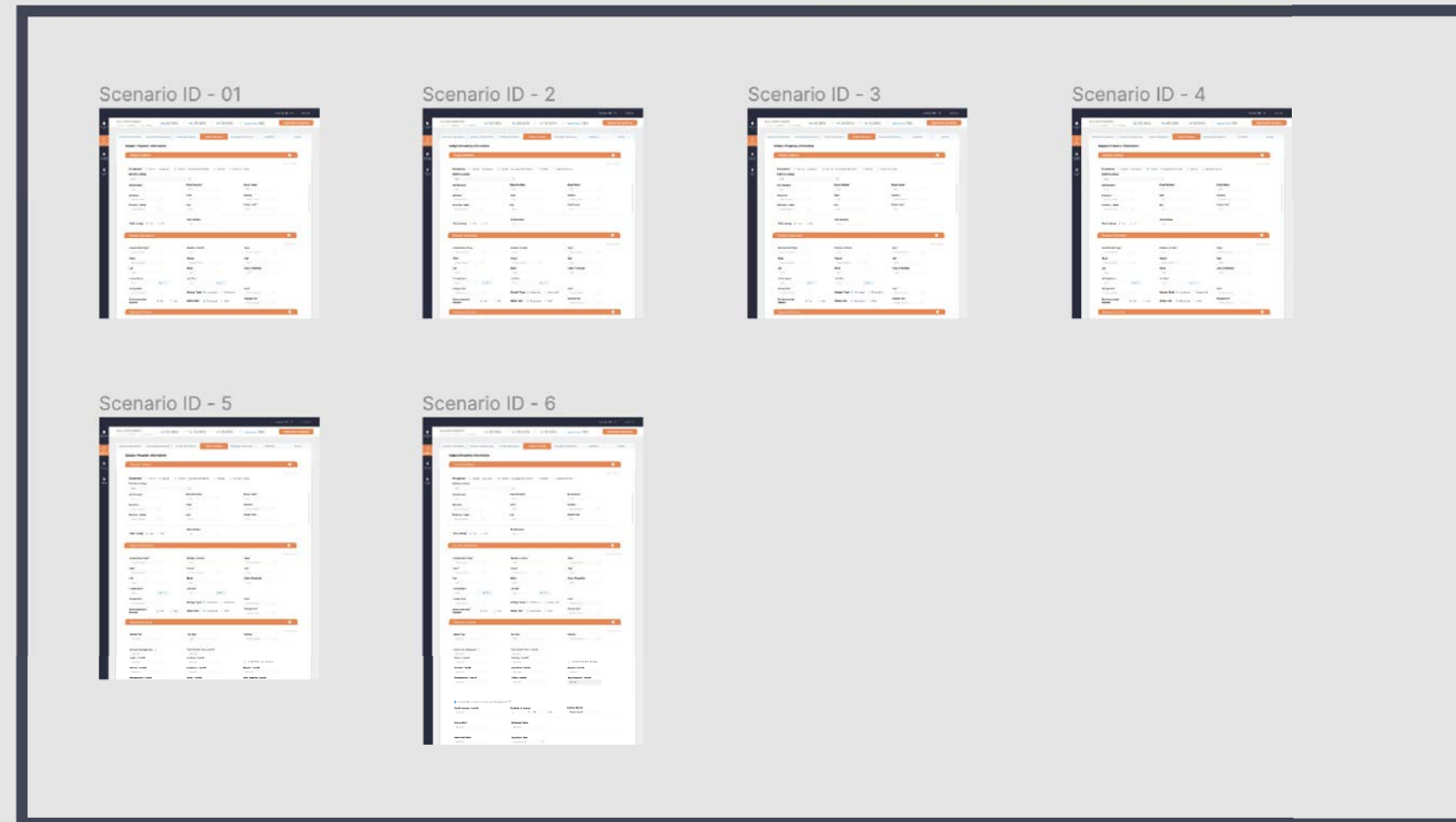
Once a change is called out on the “DEV READY” page, a mark is left on it to **notify development** that further changes will be made on this screen. To keep designers and developers on the same page, **only completed screens** are placed on the “DEV READY” page, so there’s no confusion about the most up-to-date versions.



Plugins such as ‘Component Page’ and ‘Time Machine’ automate the process of documenting and saving changed mockups.

Making Changes

497,498,499,778,500



Edit Indicators

How do you communicate changes?

Once a change has been made to a screen, a **change date** is placed on the top of the screen. In addition, a colour code date is **changed to green** to indicate the change is applied and ready to go, and an **arrow points to the changed area** with a short explanation if necessary.



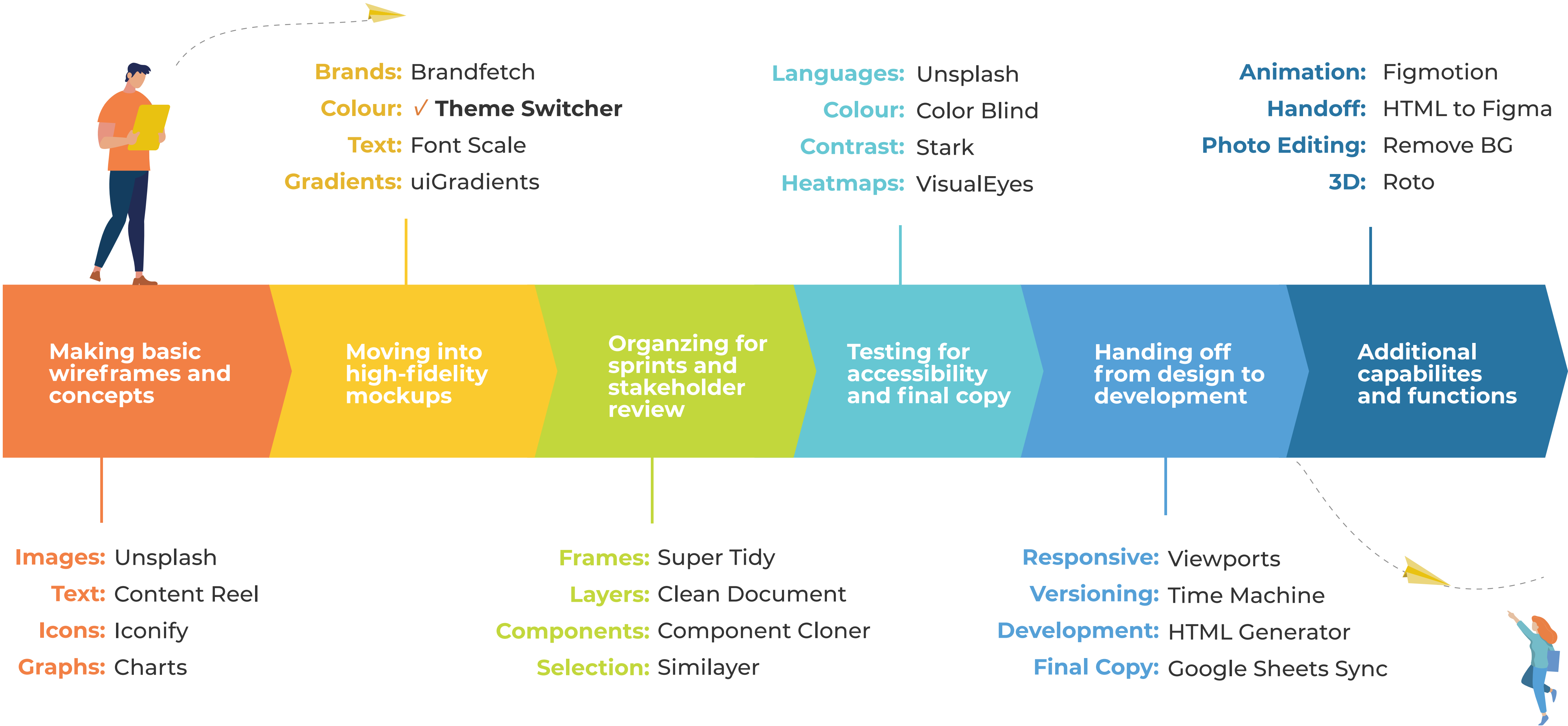
Plugins such as 'Status' and 'StickyNotes' help us document changes in Figma.

Screen Changes - Oct 22

Field has been added to accomodate new business requirements

Button CTA copy changed to reflect new interactions

Plugins Workflow for Figma



Conclusion

Figma includes **numerous functionalities** that help support the design to development process. However, the complexity and unique circumstances of each project exceed what any single software can provide, resulting in our **supporting practices** and plugins. It doesn't stop there: mobileLIVE always reflects on and **iterates our processes** to enable seamless collaboration between departments.



Learn more about how we bridge the gap between Design and Development to enable collaboration.

[Download our eGuide](#)




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It's rare to find a tool that meets every requirement, but Figma comes close by applying the **mobileLIVE framework** for Design/Development hand-off.

Find our Figma community page at figma.com/@mobileLIVE

About mobileLIVE

mobileLIVE is a Canadian tech-service provider unifying people, technology, and business to accelerate digital transformation. We don't see this transformation as a choice anymore; rather an imperative.

One that focuses on perfecting experiences, not just products and processes. One that empowers us to do more, by doing it more intelligently. And one that believes in the creation of tomorrow - today.

Our reputation - reliable; our industry recognition - notable; and our record of never having lost a customer - nonnegotiable.

At mobileLIVE, success isn't a decision. It is a choice. A choice to be better than yesterday!

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