



Think First: My No-Nonsense Approach to Creating Successful Products, Memorable User Experiences + Very Happy Customers

By Joe Natoli

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Creating an app, site or any product that succeeds -- or *sells* -- is most definitely a tall order. Designing anything for people is tough, because we're inherently complex and...well...messy. Which means that things like market share and ROI don't come easy. But time and effort spent finding the right problems to solve allows designers, developers and product teams to take quantum leaps forward in exceeding the expectations of everyone involved.

In *Think First*, Joe Natoli shows you exactly how to do this, using lessons learned from his 26 years as a UX consultant to Fortune 100 and 500 organizations. You'll find proven principles, step-by-step methods and straightforward, jargon-free advice that can be applied to any kind of digital product. *Think First* proves that while people are indeed messy and complex, designing for them doesn't have to be.

Author Joe Natoli explains why he believes *Think First* is unlike any other book on the subject of UX strategy and design: "I didn't want to write yet another book that covers the narrow, tactical pieces of the design process," he says, "because great design and great UX are the result of multiple activities across multiple people, roles and disciplines. It's everybody's business. *Think First* walks you through everything that must be considered to create great UX -- and gives you a roadmap to make it happen."

Think First details Joe's no-nonsense approach to creating successful products, powerful user experiences and very happy customers. *Think First* serves as a roadmap to building a solid foundation for UX that's strong enough to withstand any weather as projects move into design and coding. Here are just some of the things you'll learn:

- Simple user research methods that anyone can perform -- even if you've never done research of any kind.

- The right questions to ask stakeholders and users at the outset of any (and every) project.
- The 3 crucial questions you must ask of every client, every time.
- How to tell the difference between what people say they need vs. what they really need.
- A better, simpler way to generate meaningful UX requirements at the outset of the project.
- How to figure out what features and functions will result in great UX and deliver value to both users and the business.
- How to avoid scope creep and the never-ending project scenario.

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Editorial Review

Review

"A very practical guide to success in business."

- Dr. Don Norman, Director of the DesignLab, UC San Diego and Author of The Design of Everyday Things

"Think First is a practical guide to UX that makes sense of strategy and structure. Highly recommended!"

- Peter Morville, Bestselling Author of Intertwingled

"For designers and developers, understanding strategy and UX is an increasingly necessary skill. Joe Natoli's Think First demystifies these foundational ideas in a very conversational, easy to read style."

- Ilise Benun, Founder of Marketing-Mentor.com and Author of 7+ Books

From the Author

For 26 years, I have helped Fortune 100, 500 and Government organizations design and reimagine digital products to improve User Experience (UX). From strategy to features to functionality to User Interface (UI) design, I work alongside product design and development teams to help them find and remove UX-related obstacles. Which, quite conveniently, helps these organizations save or make money.

In addition, I coach and train designers and developers to deliver better experiences via online courses. I am honored to have helped more than 30,000 students to date start a career in UX or transition from a related discipline.

Everything I have ever done has revolved around a core principle: if you're in the business of creating digital products, **those products serve as your ambassadors.**

As such, user trust and customer loyalty depend wholly on the experience people have with those ambassadors. If the product is hard to use, people assume it's hard to do business with you. If the site sucks, *you suck*. If the system is slow and unresponsive, *so are you*. If the app is confusing and frustrating, they're frustrated with *you* too.

Products are used by people, after all, so putting people and their experiences first is a pretty good place to start. At the same time, **creation always entails cost**: time, effort, money. And every creator is looking for a way to cover that cost, along with a little extra. In order to do that, you need to design and deliver **superior product experiences** -- consistently, repeatedly, over time.

In order to do *that*, you need to uncover the sweet spots between what **users expect** from the product and what the **business needs** to accomplish in order to survive and prosper.

These are strategic concerns, not tactical ones. In these scenarios the greatest tool any consultant, manager, designer or developer has is what's between his or her ears.

The thinking part of design and UX is the most valuable part. That's what this book is about. That's what

creates the value loop I talk about so often, where value goes out to users, and in doing so comes back to the business as well. There are no shortcuts to great experiences. There is only the discipline to investigate, the patience to analyze, the willingness to be wrong and a mind open enough (and brave enough) to admit it.

Think First is my roadmap for practicing and applying that philosophy.

About the Author

Joe Natoli has been preaching and practicing the gospel of User and Customer Experience to Fortune 100, 500 and Government organizations for over 26 years. He ran his own Experience Design firm for 10 years, selling it in 2007. Now, as the founder of Give Good UX, Joe offers coaching, training and product audit programs for enterprise product teams, in addition to speaking and writing.

Joe works with product design and development teams to uncover the sweet spots between what users want to make their lives easier and what businesses need to accomplish in order to survive and prosper. He believes UX is a value loop: value goes out to users, value comes back to the business in the form of ROI.

Joe has recently dedicated a significant portion of his practice to developing online training for designers and developers. The first of these, *User Experience Design Fundamentals*, launched via Udemy in 2013, now has over 30,000 students -- and that number grows daily. His second course, *UX & Web Design Master Course*, recently launched in direct partnership with Udemy.

Think First, published in October of 2015, is his second book on User and Customer Experience Strategy.

Joe has written numerous articles about the roles design and technology play in business success for publications such as *Fast Company*, *HOW*, *SmartCEO* and *The AIGA Journal*. His articles, speaking videos and ebooks can be seen on his website at givegoodux.com.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Nick Peoples:

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