

# CRITIQUE CHEATSHEET

TAMING THE ELEPHANT IN THE ROOM:  
A GUIDE FOR RUNNING SMOOTH  
CROSS-DISCIPLINARY DESIGN CRITIQUES

CUT OUT THE ROLES &  
HAND EACH ONE TO A  
REPRESENTATIVE FROM  
EACH DISCIPLINE

*The Lead Designer should...*

- Start by telling the story about the design (goals, problems, inspirations, decisions)
- Clarify critique goals (ask questions, relay time left on design)
- Present professionally and quickly
- Identify what you feel is working and what is not
- Ask specific people for specific feedback based on their role
- Make designs available for extended discussion
- Keep your critique team in the loop through the duration of the project



## GENERAL GUIDELINES

*Critiquers should...*

- Begin with questions
- Acknowledge what works, what doesn't, and why
- Provide feedback based on your role and be the representative from your group
- Relate feedback to the designer's goals
- Follow up later with longer feedback or spellchecking

## 3 VISUAL DESIGNER

*Usually the Design Director or a Senior Designer. You look at the AESTHETICS and EMOTIONAL IMPACT of the design.*

- Is the visual presentation telling the intended story or otherwise communicating clearly?
- Has time and care been put into the details and nuances of design?
- Will the design be able to be built out within the budget and timeframe available?
- Have web standards and accessibility been taken into consideration?
- Are any opportunities to push the envelope being missed?

## 1 PROJECT MANAGER

*You represent the CLIENT POINT-OF-VIEW.*

- Does the design match up with the expectations?
- Are business goals represented?
- Do desired calls to action stand out?
- Is there anything notable or buzzworthy about the design?
- Will people like the design a year from now? Is the client getting their money's worth?
- Any typos or embarrassing oversights?

## 4 DEVELOPER(S)

*Includes a Developer and/or Front-End Developer. You look for TECHNICAL FEASIBILITY.*

- Do you have questions about the functionality?
- What design decisions are affecting how the site is developed, and why?
- What could be changed to significantly save time/cost?
- Are opportunities to innovate within the budget being missed?

## 2 UX DESIGNER

*You look at USABILITY, ACCESSIBILITY and DESIGN PATTERNS.*

- What is the single most important activity for the user on this page? Is that activity clearly communicated and supported?
- Does the language used match that of the user? Have we avoided jargon?
- Is the interaction design internally consistent? Are similar actions represented in similar ways?
- How will this design change over time? Will it scale to meet changing needs of the user?
- What can go wrong? Is the user protected when things go wrong?

## 5 MARKETING

*You look at the MARKETABILITY of the design.*

- Do you have any questions about decisions made in the design?
- Are the value propositions and key call to actions visible and clear?
- Does the design use phrases users will likely scan/search for?
- Do you have any notes about page structure before the design goes into buildout?
- Is the design organized in a way that is reflective of the goals of audience? (hierarchy, calls to action, etc)