

Skinning Cats: Dynamic Discovery and Planning

Who are we?



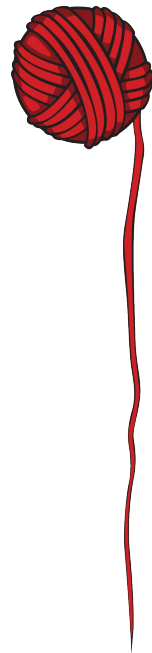
Wouter Lagerweij

@wouterla@mastodon.social
@wouterla.bsky.social



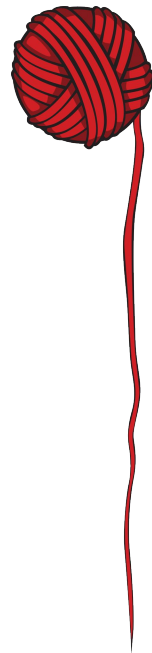
Suzanne Lagerweij

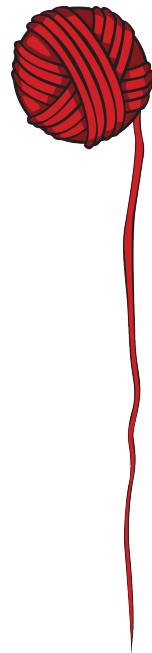
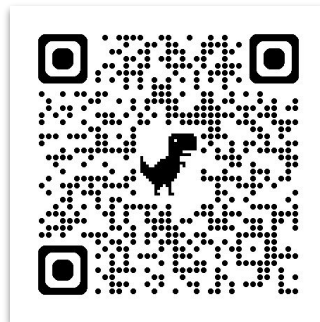
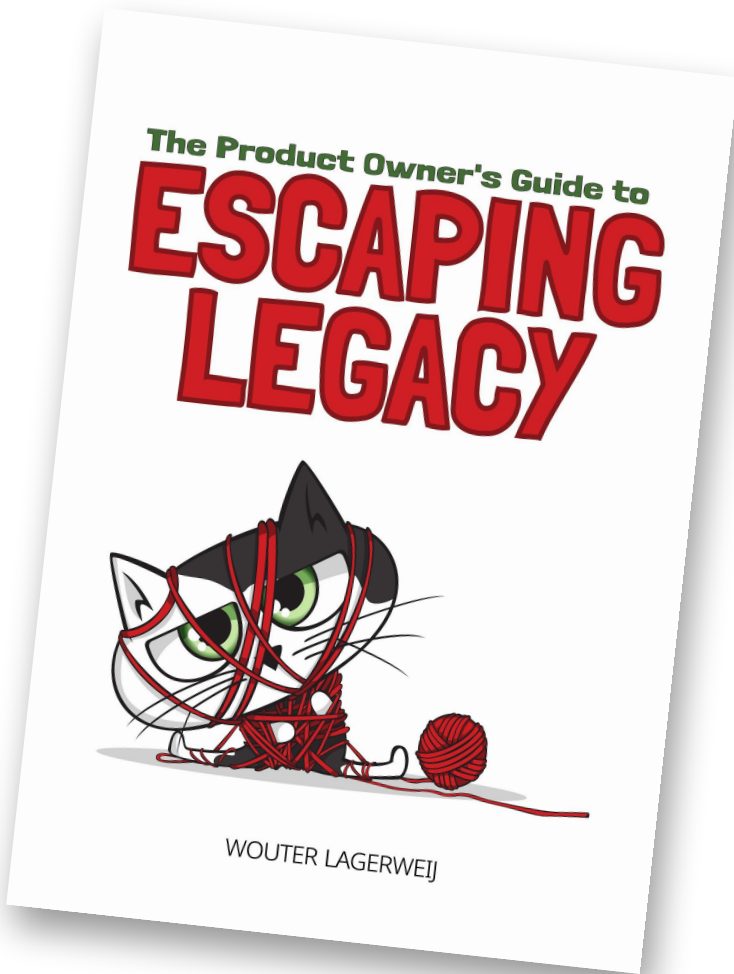
@lasuzyla@mastodon.social
@suzyla.bsky.social



Agenda

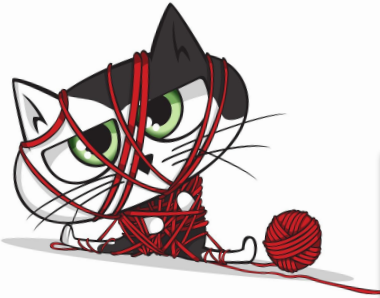
- Introduction
- Table share: Why do we plan?
- Planning vs Having a Plan
- Story Mapping
- First steps: From Story Map to a linear plan
- Deadlines?
- Activity: Changing your plans
- Legacy, complexity and dependencies
- Activity: The plans keep changing!
- Closing and Q&A



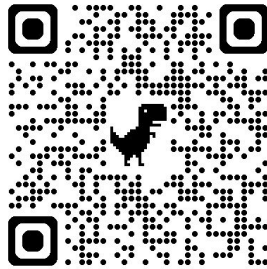


Preprint online!

The Product Owner's Guide to
**ESCAPING
LEGACY**



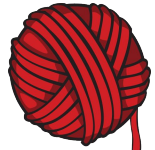
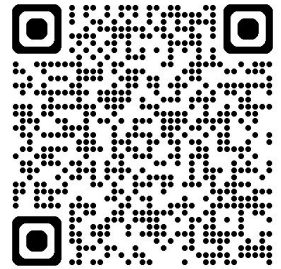
WOUTER LAGERWEIJ



The Product Owner's Guide to
**STORYMAPPING
& REFINEMENT**



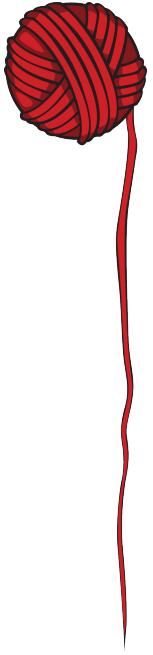
WOUTER LAGERWEIJ



Planning



*Planning is easy,
if everything is known in advance.*

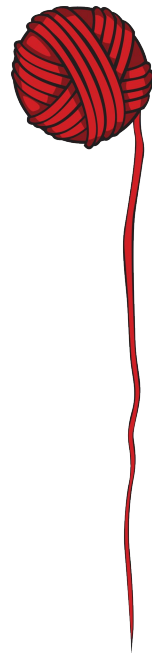


Activity: Why do we plan?

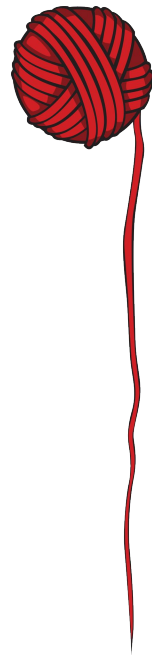
At your table, consider:

- What was a successful plan for you? Why?
- What was a not-so-successful plan? Why?

5 Minute discussion



Why do we plan?

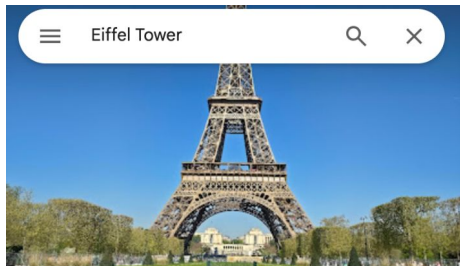


- Planning is... creating options
- Planning is... thinking about risks
- Planning is... understanding when to make decisions

But what is a plan?

Roadmaps are not linear!





Eiffel Tower

Tour Eiffel

4.7 ★★★★★ (436,538) ⓘ

Historical landmark · 📍

Overview

Tickets

Reviews

About



Directions



Save



Nearby



Send to
phone



Share

Gustave Eiffel's iconic, wrought-iron 1889 tower, with steps and elevators to observation decks. ➔

Admission

Gives you entry to this place

About these results ⓘ



Eiffel Tower

Official website

Instant confirmation · Mobile ticket

£11.95 ➔



Places to Go

Free cancellation · Instant confirmation

£9.26 ➔

2 more options ▼

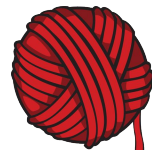


Booking.com

Instant confirmation

£25.16 ➔

5 more options ▼



Best 6h 40m 4h 3m 5 days 1 day

Amsterdam, Netherlands

Eiffel Tower, Av. Gustave Eiffel, 75007 Paris

Arrive by 19:55 Wed 14 May

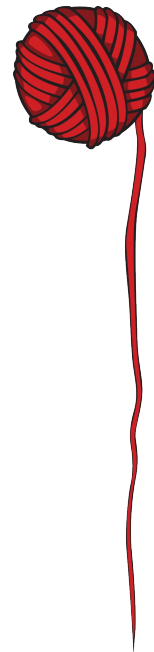
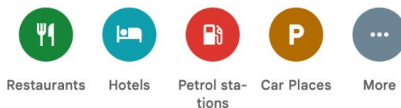
Send directions to your phone Copy link

via A1 typically 5 hr 30 min to 8 hr 30 min
Details
Leave at about 11:25
507 km

via E19 typically 6 hr 30 min to 9 hr 20 min
Leave at about 10:35
546 km

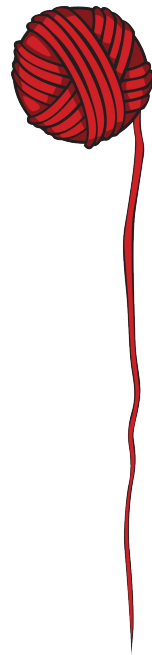
via E19 and A1 typically 5 hr 40 min to 8 hr 20 min
Leave at about 11:35
517 km

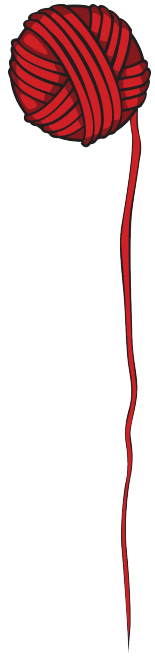
Explore nearby Eiffel Tower



Planning vs. 'delivering a plan'

- Options, and when to execute on them
- You can't plan without knowing the work
 - Discovery of the work is the most important part of planning!

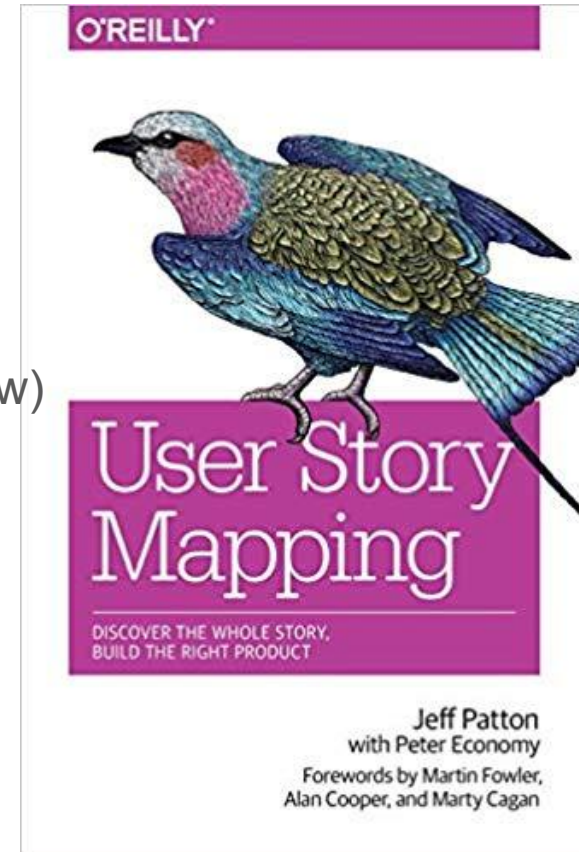




Discovery of the work is the most
important part of planning!

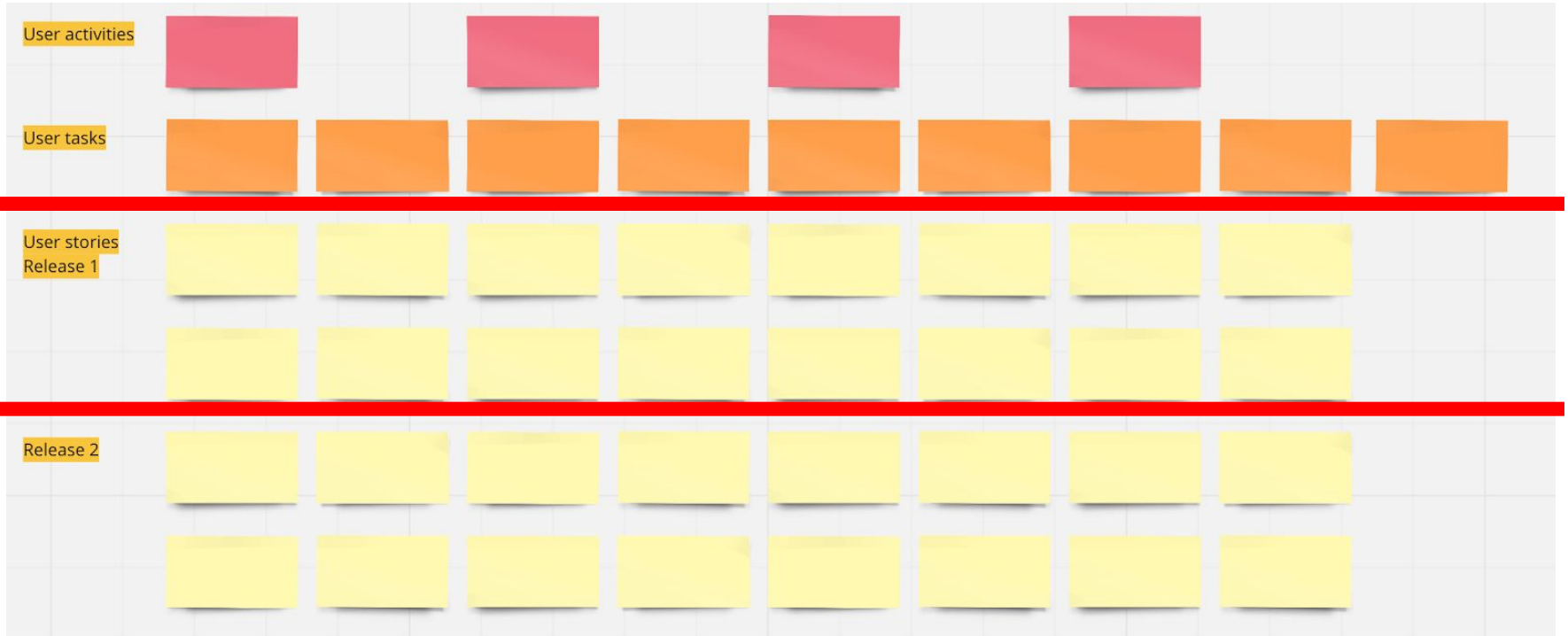
Discovery: using Story Mapping

- Follow the flow through the application (user steps)
- Specific User Stories in that flow (detailed actions)
- Slices (things that go well together, variations on a flow)
- Priority (what do we do/release first?)

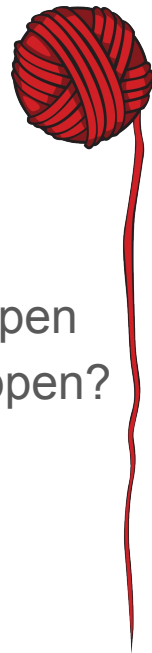


[User Story Mapping by Jeff Patton](#)

Elements of a Story Map



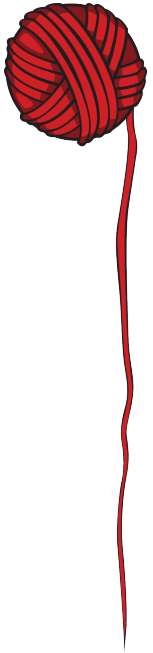
How to make a Story Map



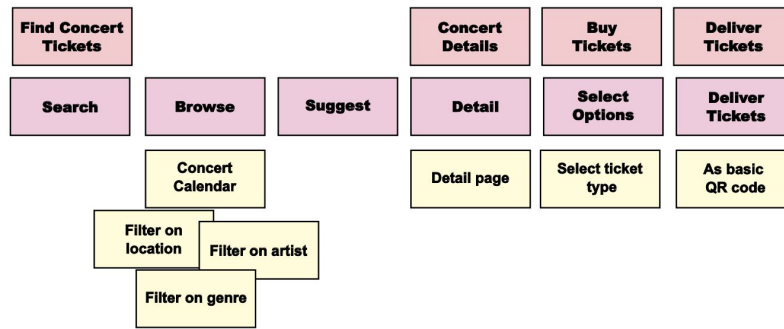
- We start with the main flow horizontally (orange)
- Each step in the flow can have multiple stories (yellow): what should happen in each step of the flow? Are there different variations of what should happen?

We do this together (three amigos)

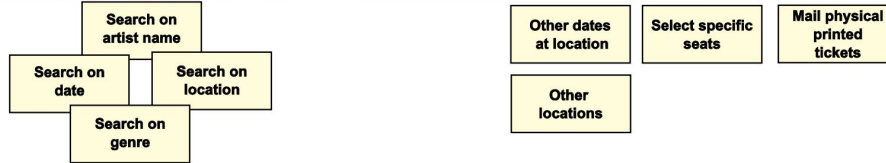
Find Concert Tickets			Concert Details	Buy Tickets	Deliver Tickets
Search	Browse	Suggest	Detail	Select Options	Deliver Tickets
Search on artist name	Concert Calendar	Spotlighted concerts page	Detail page	Select ticket type	As basic QR code
Search on date	Filter on location	Suggest based on location	Other dates at location	Select specific seats	Mail physical printed tickets
Search on location	Filter on artist	Suggest based on date	Other locations	Parking	Secure, dynamic QR code
Search on genre	Filter on genre	Suggest based on music bought	More Images	Limit tickets per customer	Google/Apple Wallet Integration
		Suggest based on other tickets bought	Videos		
			Venue info		
			Pre-sale for selected people		
			Waiting lists		
			Artist		



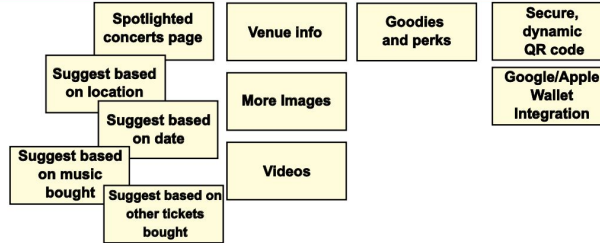
Find Concert Tickets			Concert Details	Buy Tickets	Deliver Tickets
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Search on genre	Filter on genre	Suggest based on music bought	More Images	Limit tickets per customer	Google/Apple Wallet Integration
		Suggest based on other tickets	Videos		Our own ticket presentation



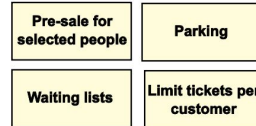
Release A: Sell simple electronic tickets



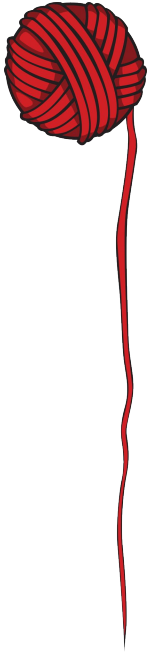
Release B: Search and offer other dates/locations



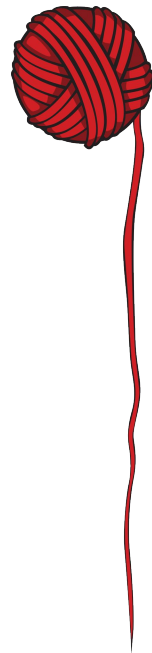
Release C: Suggestions and up-sell



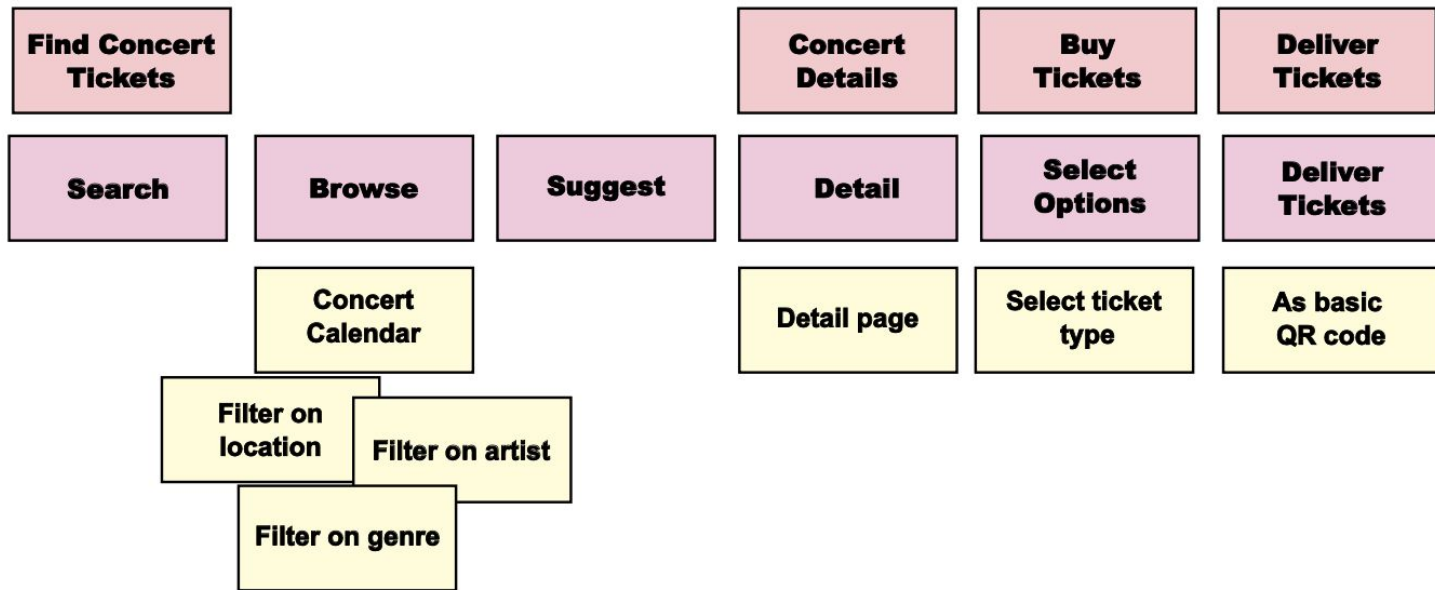
Release D: Support for big events



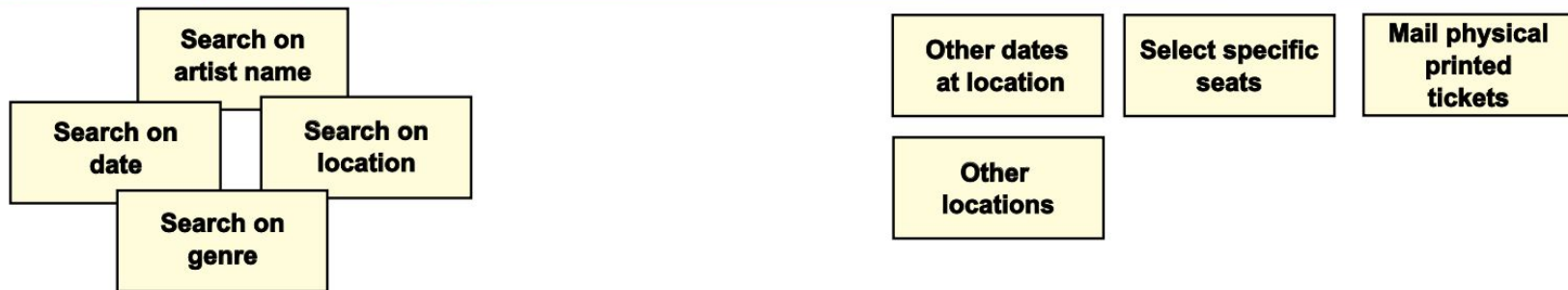
How to make a Story Map



- Incorporate priority by looking at what functionality (stories) we want to release first
- Use lines to create different levels of priority (release slices)
- Make each horizontal 'slice' something you can give a name to



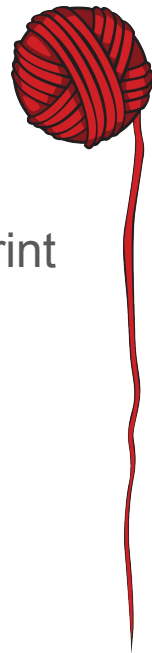
Release A: Sell simple electronic tickets



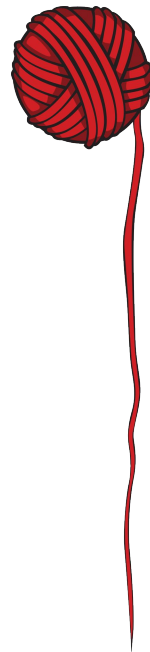
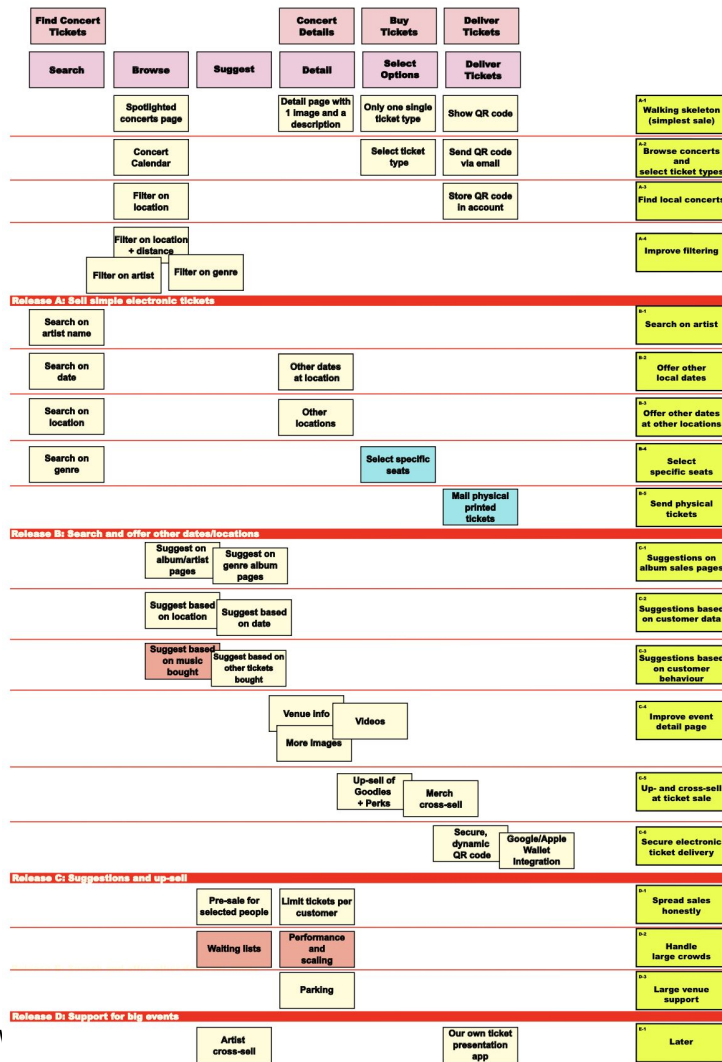
Release B: Search and offer other dates/locations



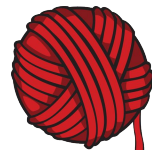
The Story Map... extended!



- Split up your release slices into smaller slices, ones that fit in a single sprint
- Give those smaller slices (planning slices) descriptive names
 - You could make those Epics. Or sprint goals. Or both!
- Splitting on...
 - Incremental *and* iterative
 - Fidelity



Fidelity?



“So fidelity refers to the finesse of the feature, or solution. A low fidelity solution will be low in things like precision, granularity, or usability, but will still solve the original problem. As fidelity increases, so does the precision, granularity, usability etc.”

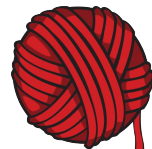
– Karl Scotland, “[Fidelity – The Lost Dimension of the Iron Triangle](https://availagility.co.uk/2009/12/22/fidelity-the-lost-dimension-of-the-iron-triangle/)”

<https://availagility.co.uk/2009/12/22/fidelity-the-lost-dimension-of-the-iron-triangle/>

But what about value?



But what about value?

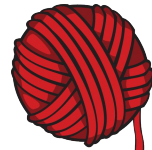
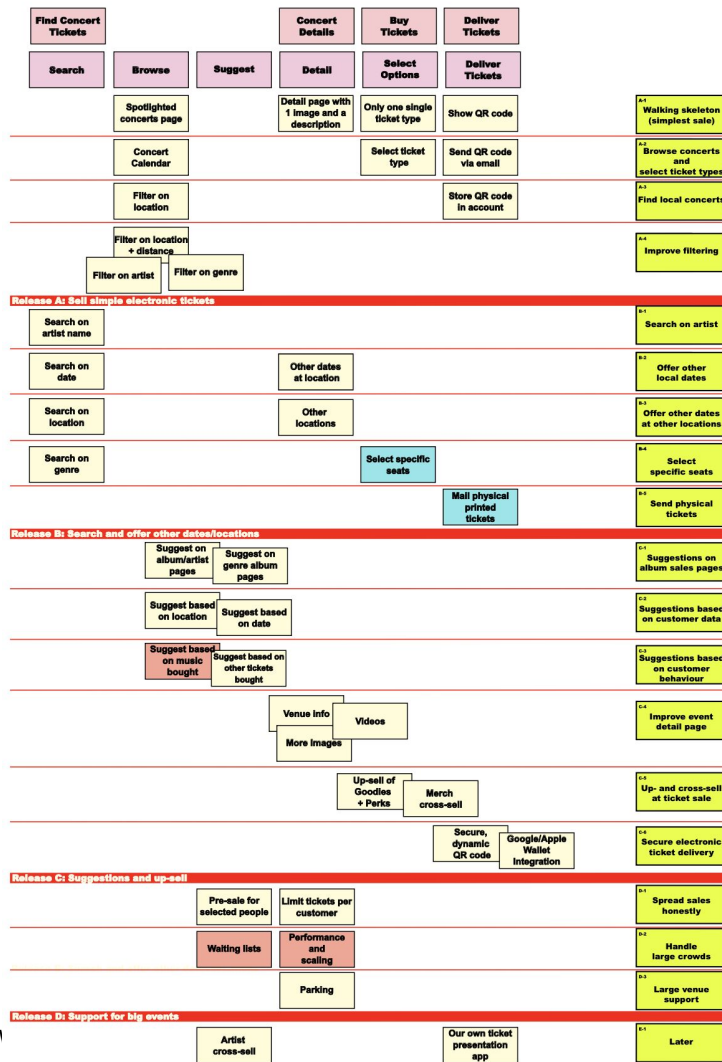


Something is valuable when it:

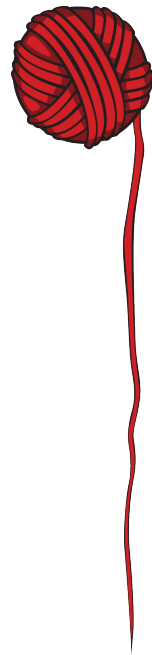
- Increases knowledge
- Decreases risk
- Generates useful feedback

– Seb Rose, “User Stories - [From Good Intentions To Bad Advice](https://www.slideshare.net/sebrose/user-stories-from-good-intentions-to-bad-advice-lean-agile-scotland-2019)”, Lean Agile Scotland 2019

<https://www.slideshare.net/sebrose/user-stories-from-good-intentions-to-bad-advice-lean-agile-scotland-2019>

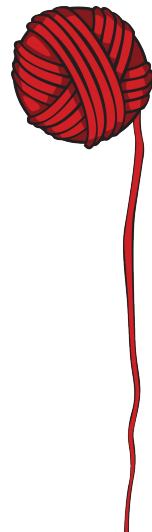


The Story Map... extended!



- Slices (sprint goals, epics, ...) are the level of granularity for planning
- Slices can be placed on a timeline

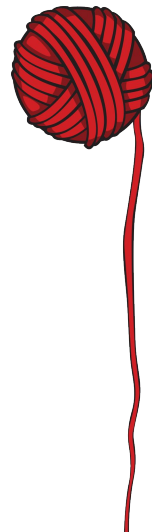
The Story Map... extended!



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	July 4	July 11	July 18	July 25	August 1	August 8
Sprint	1	2	3	4	5	6
Slice						

The Story Map... extended!

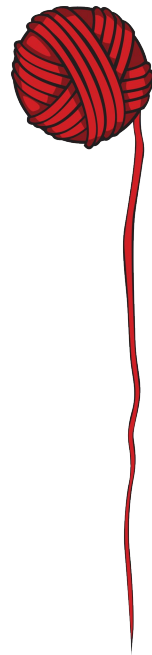


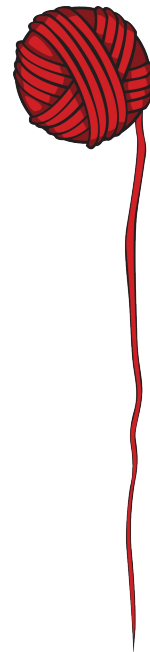
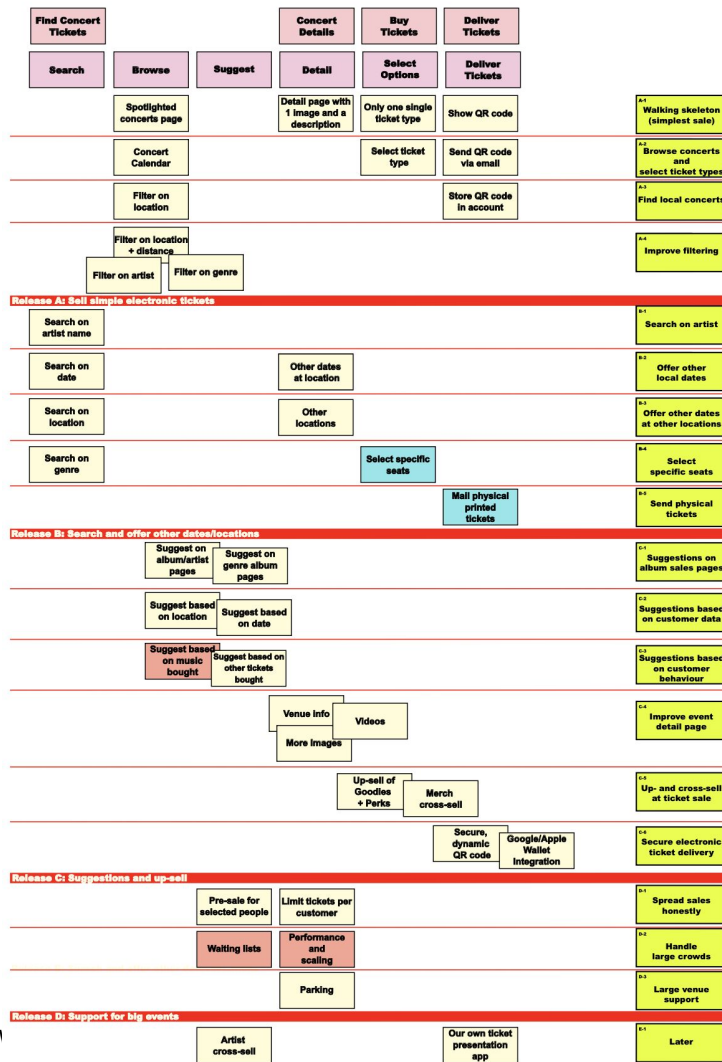
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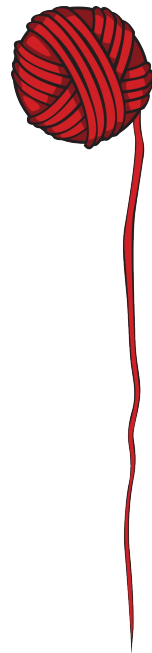
	July 4	July 11	July 18	July 25	August 1	August 8
Sprint	1	2	3	4	5	6
Slice			<div>C-2 Suggestions based on customer data</div>			

First steps: “Plan the next quarter”

- We take the full Story Map with planning slices as starting point
- We use the slice-cards and place them on the planning timeline







A-1

**Walking skeleton
(simplest sale)**

A-2

**Browse concerts
and
select ticket types**

A-3

Find local concerts

A-4

Improve filtering

B-1

Search on artist

B-2

**Offer other
local dates**

B-3

**Offer other dates
at other locations**

B-4

Select specific seats

B-5

**Send physical
tickets**

C-1

**Suggestions on
album sales pages**

C-2

**Suggestions based
on customer data**

C-3

**Suggestions based
on customer
behaviour**

C-4

**Improve event
detail page**

C-5

**Up- and cross-sell
at ticket sale**

C-6

**Secure electronic
ticket delivery**

D-1

**Spread sales
honestly**

D-2

Handle large crowds

D-3

Large venue support



		July 4	July 11	July 18	July 25	August 1	August 8
Sprint		1	2	3	4	5	6
Slice		A-1 Walking skeleton (simplest sale)	A-2 Browse concerts and select ticket types	A-3 Find local concerts	A-4 Improve filtering	B-1 Search on artist	B-2 Offer other local dates

B-5
Send physiscal
tickets

C-6
Secure electronic
ticket delivery

D-1
Spread sales
honestly

D-2
Handle large crowds

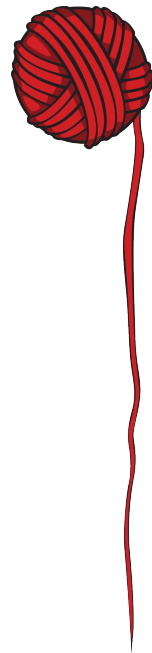
D-3
Large venue support

August 15	August 22	August 29	September 5	September 12	September 19	September 26
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
B-3 Offer other dates at other locations	B-4 Select specific seats	C-1 Suggestions on album sales pages	C-2 Suggestions based on customer data	C-3 Suggestions based on customer behaviour	C-4 Improve event detail page	C-5 Up- and cross-sell at ticket sale

Activity: “Plan the next quarter”

- When will you be done?
- When will you release?

- What decisions did you make?
- What future decisions do you foresee?
- What is missing from this plan?



Activity “Plan the next quarter”: Takeaways



- There is always more work than you can fit in the available time
- Discovery gives you possibilities, then you need to make hard decisions
- Having each increment with a descriptive name helps make those decisions
- Having each increment with a descriptive name makes the plan easy to explain
- Having each increment be of similar size makes changing the plan easier

Deadlines!

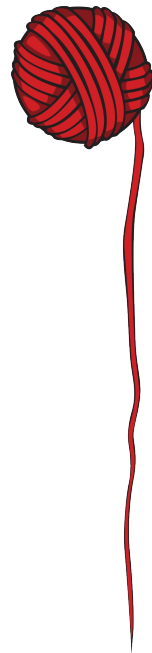


What is a deadline?



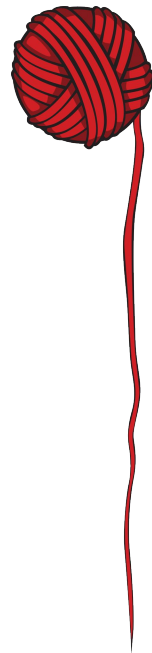
What is a deadline?

- What is a **good** deadline?
- What is a **bad** deadline?
- How do you plan for a deadline? How sure do you need to be?

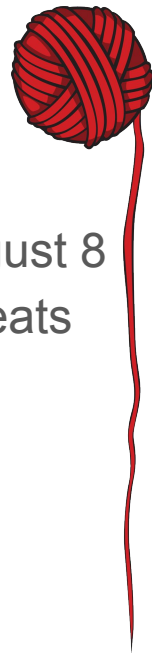


Activity: Deadlines!

- The public release of ticket sales is... July 25
→ Replan the first 4 sprints



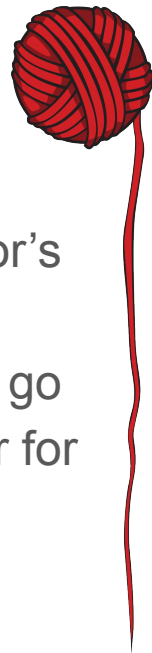
Activity: Deadlines!



- We landed a great deal to sell theatre tickets! This goes into effect... August 8
- To be able to sell theatre tickets, we need to allow selection of specific seats

How does this change your plan?

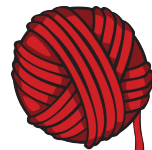
Activity: Deadlines!



- Our sales people are magic: we're going to be selling the tickets for Taylor's next tour! Ticket sales start September 1!
- Taylor's version of ticket sales needs to support large events. We cannot go down during the sale, and we need some things in-place so sales are fair for the fans.

How does this change your plan?

Activity: Deadlines!



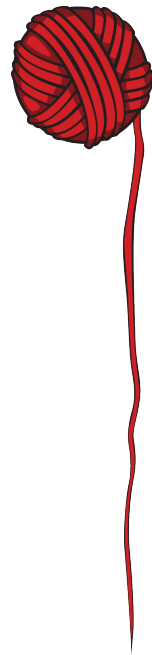
- *We landed a great deal to sell theatre tickets! This goes into effect... August 8*
- To be able to sell theatre tickets, we need to allow selection of specific seats

How does this change your plan?

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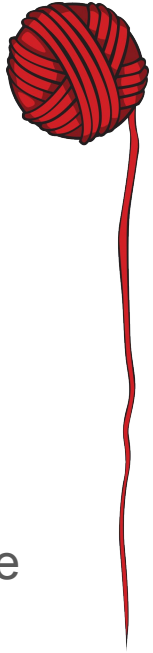
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Activity: Deadlines!

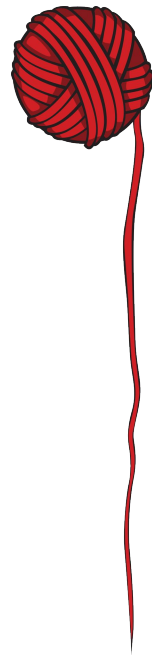


- How did your plans change?
- Which deadlines did you accept?
 - Why?
- Did you have the level of detail you needed to make decisions?

Activity “Deadlines!”: Takeaways



- Not all deadlines are created equally
- A real deadline is based on external reasons
- Adjusting the plan for one deadline can impact another
 - And not all deadlines are created equally
- A new deadline comes with new business goals, including new priorities
- A plan that gets the necessary changes in-place *just* in time for a deadline sets you up for...?

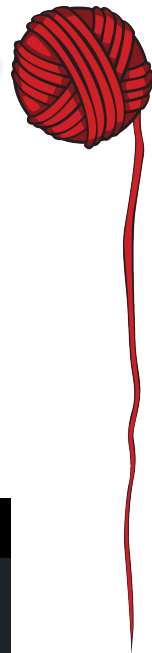
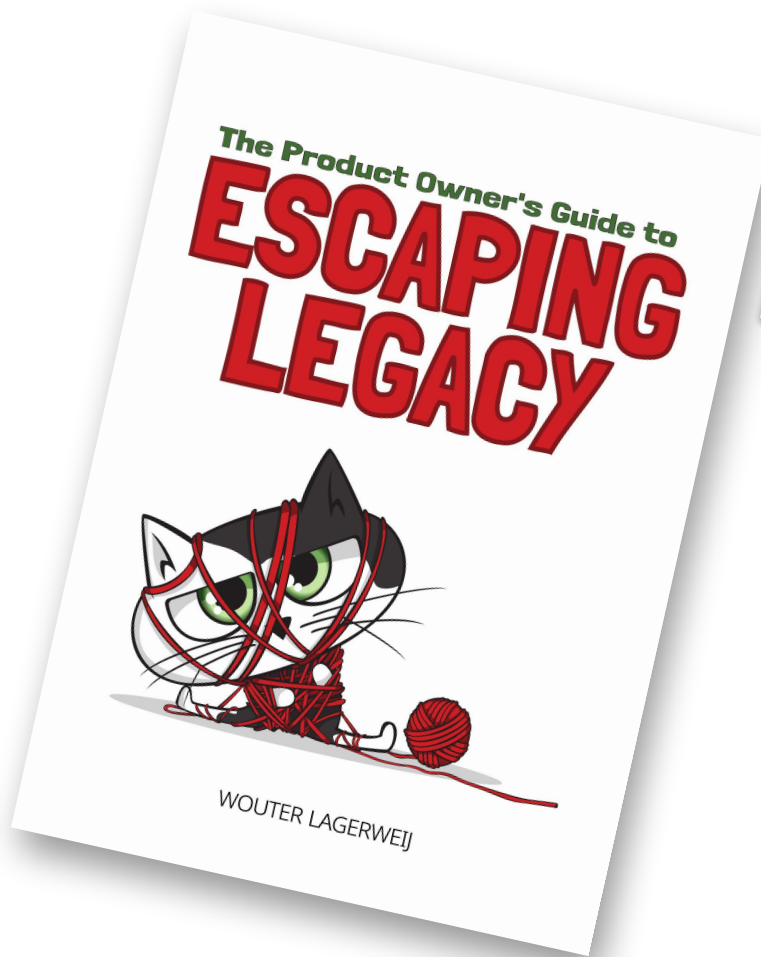
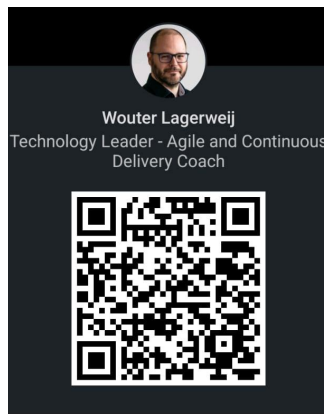


- Change happens
- Small steps of *done* software gives you options
- Making the steps the size of your sprint/cadence simplifies planning and reporting
- Value is as value does
- Never plan yourself into a corner
- Planning is about understanding the work and creating options

Thank you!

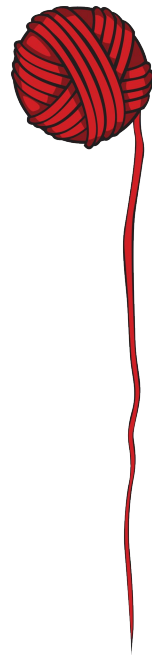
Buy 'Escaping Legacy'!
escapinglegacy.com

Read 'Story Mapping and
Refinement' on-line!
lagerweij.com/books



Legacy, complexity and dependencies

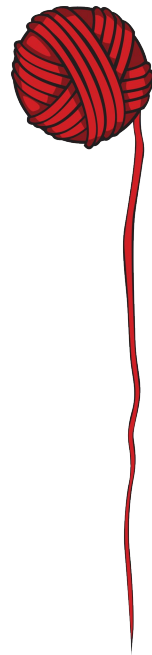




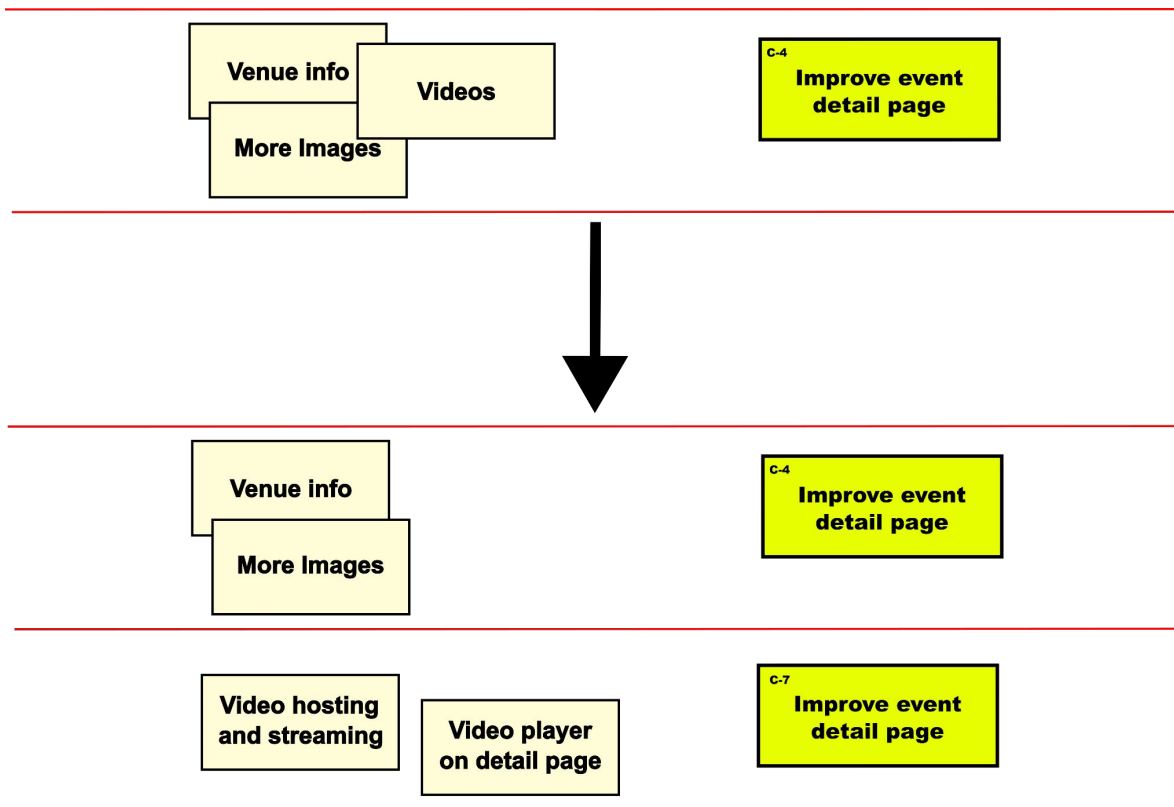
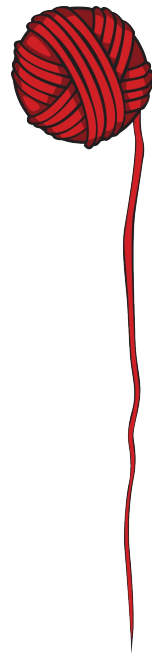
Legacy means uncertainty

Dealing with uncertainty

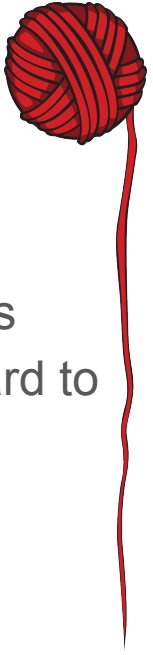
- Slack
- Reduce uncertainty
 - Make the change easy, then make the easy change
- Can you split slices further?
- Can you find more leeway towards your deadlines?



Splitting a slice



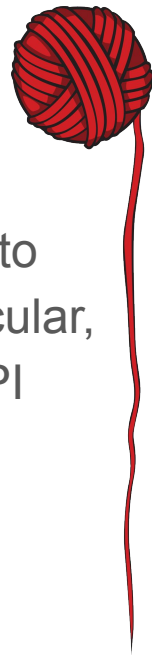
Activity: Dealing with uncertainty



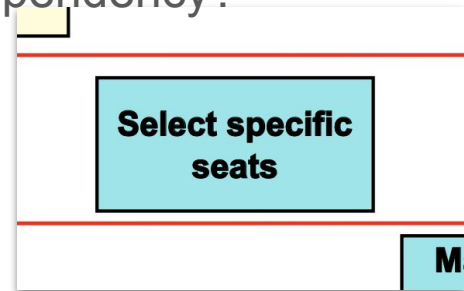
- Pink stories on the Story Map are ones your development team has designated as risky. Either because they touch a part of the system that is hard to work in (legacy), or because it's something they think might be hard to do in general, so they're not sure how long it might take.
- How do you change your plan to accommodate this uncertainty?



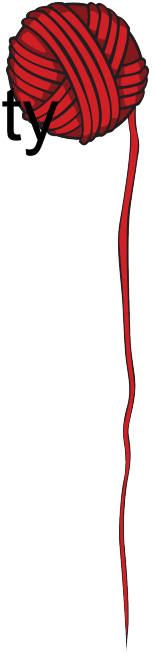
Activity: Dealing with dependencies



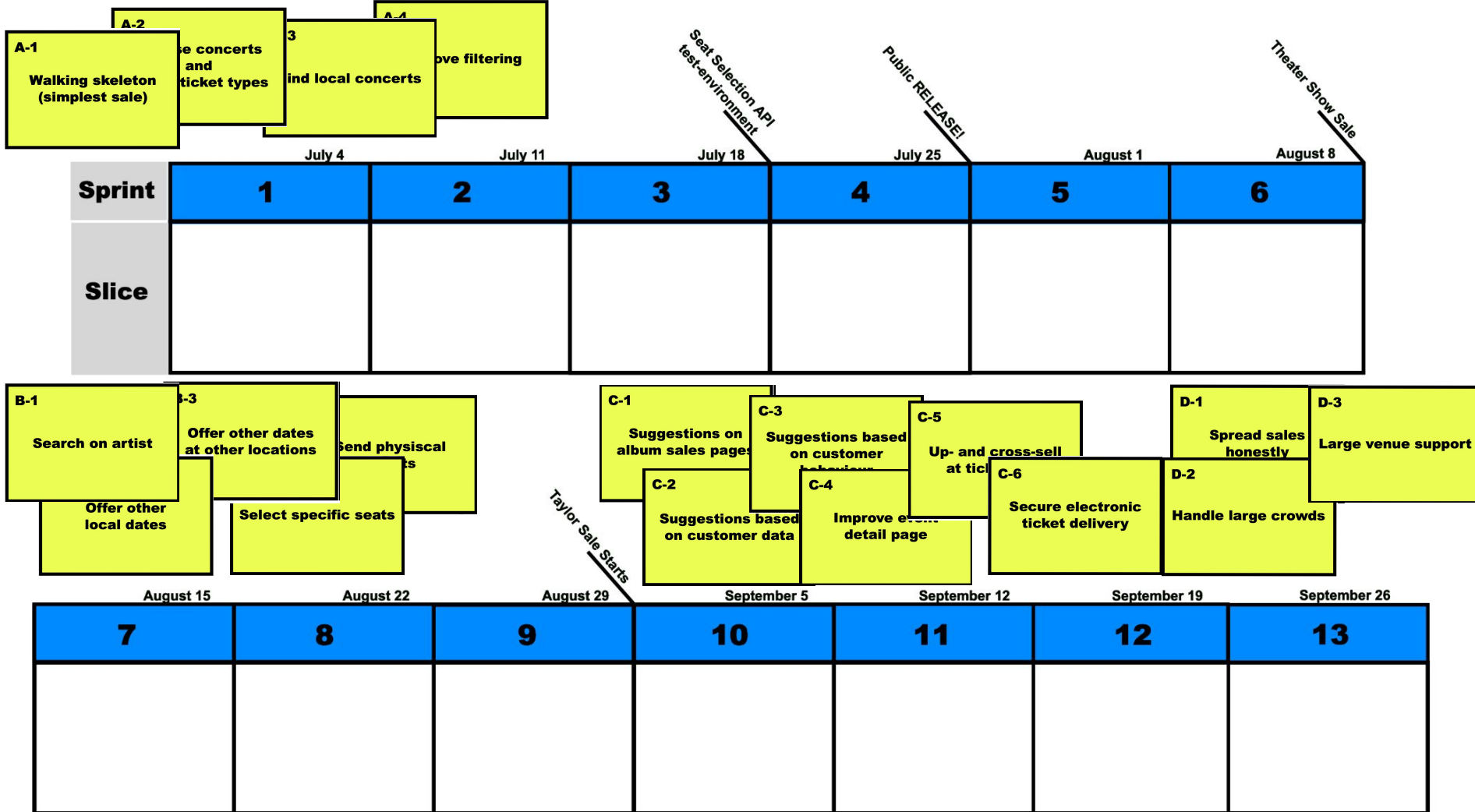
- Blue stories on the Story Map are ones for which an external part needs to deliver something before your team can deliver this functionality. In particular, for the selection of specific seats, the theatre needs give access to an API they have to retrieve available seats.
- How do you change your plan to accommodate this dependency?

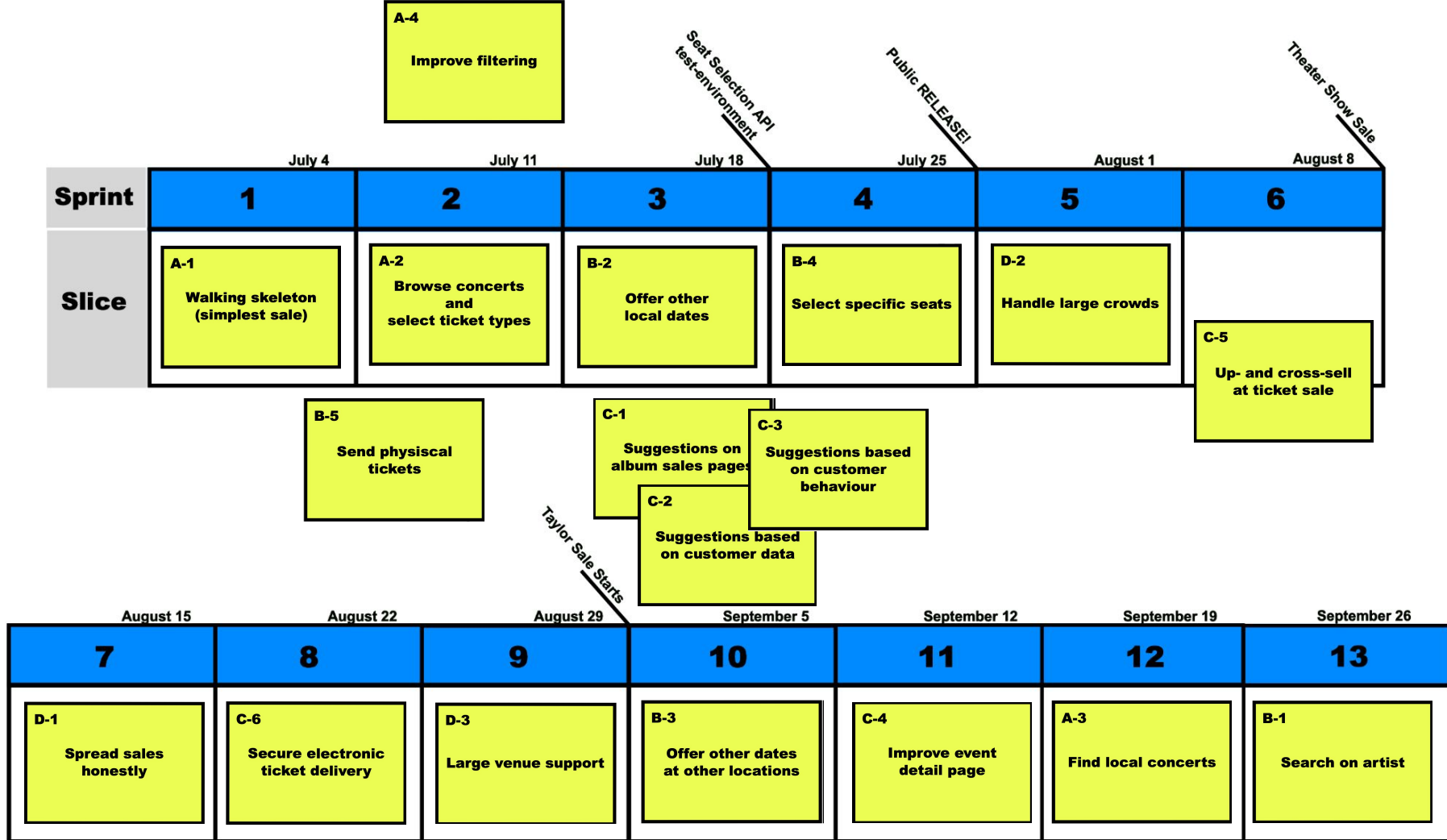


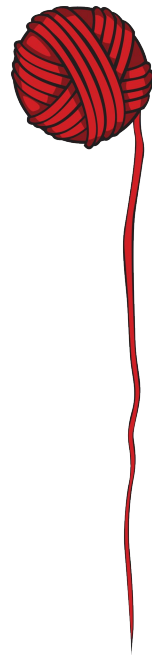
Activity: Dealing with dependencies and uncertainty



- How did the plan change?
- What is left of your original plan from the first activity?
- Is this a successful outcome?







- Change happens
- Small steps of *done* software gives you options
- Making the steps the size of your sprint/cadence simplifies planning and reporting
- Value is as value does
- Never plan yourself into a corner
- Planning is about understanding the work and creating options

Thank you!

Buy 'Escaping Legacy'!
escapinglegacy.com

Read 'Story Mapping and
Refinement' on-line!
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