

User Scenarios

Kick-Off-Sprint - Phase 1

User scenarios describe **realistic situations** from the perspective of a user or a persona. The detailed description of the user interaction is formulated in a stimulating way and helps to **understand the user context**, which in turn is relevant for the development of the product solution. This also ensures that the **practical needs and behaviors of the users are understood**. Their purpose is to provide **motivation and backstories** that explain how and **why** the user needs to interact with the solution the way they do. In this way, **empathy and understanding** are encouraged and **the user is placed at the center of a technological solution**.

Why Are They Important?

User scenarios bring the following benefits to a project process:

1. They help **explore and explain motivations** for specific user needs and behaviors.
2. They help **identify what the personas' expectation** of the solution approach is, how the interactions must proceed, the technical formats of input and output, and the details of the information required to effectively implement the described scenario.
3. They point out the **pain points in an existing process** or the expected complexity in new processes.

The Anatomy of a Scenario

The scenarios focus on a task that is central to the solution approach and includes a total of **five important elements**:

- an actor
- a motivator
- an intention or a plan
- an action
- a resolution

It is best to use a specific predefined persona as the actor when writing the scenario. This way one gets additional context and insight into how the particular user segment might perform the task.

Below is an example of a possible scenario for a hotel booking website (Source: <https://www.nngroup.com/articles/scenario-mapping-personas/>):

„Detailed Debbie is going on a business trip. She needs to book a hotel room that’s affordable and has good reviews. Debbie browses the site to find a hotel for her upcoming trip. She looks closely at the various hotels to find one that meets her needs. She considers price and user ratings heavily as she shops. Debbie selects a hotel and books a room“

Actor

Action

Motivator

Resolution

Intention

Other sources

- <https://www.interaction-design.org/literature/topics/user-scenarios>
- <https://ux-everything.com/user-scenarios/>
- <https://www.justinmind.com/blog/how-to-design-user-scenarios/>
- <https://www.nngroup.com/articles/scenario-mapping-personas/>