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# WRITING PORTFOLIO

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Case studies of my most relevant Content Design and UX writing work.

**Eliza Marin**

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## Technical and UX writing | Case Study Etventure

**CHALLENGE** Provide a knowledge-based experience for families who want to build a house from scratch.

**SOLUTION** As part of a team of designers and developers, I helped design the content for an app that explains how building a house works in simple, clear language.

**RECOMMENDATIONS** Users prefer to deal with interior design rather than engineering, but it's foundational.

- Collaborated with designers, product managers, and experts to articulate goals and align on a key message;
- Participated in user research sessions and developed content strategy;
- Analyzed existing content and adjusted tone of voice;
- Message development and prototypes for testing;
- Simplified technical jargon into clear copy;

**PROCESS**

- Documentation: To filter key notions, I worked with the engineering and construction experts to write/review the documentation.
- Taxonomy: Working with a team of engineers, I made recommendations to categorize the content.
- Team learning sessions: Sharing content and design recommendations to align the approach.

**OUTCOME** Considering the time constraints, the number of stakeholders, Engineering documents involve compromise, so all in all, I was pleased with the work.

Award: The innovation award was announced in 2017 in Romania. The content was seen by 2 million users.

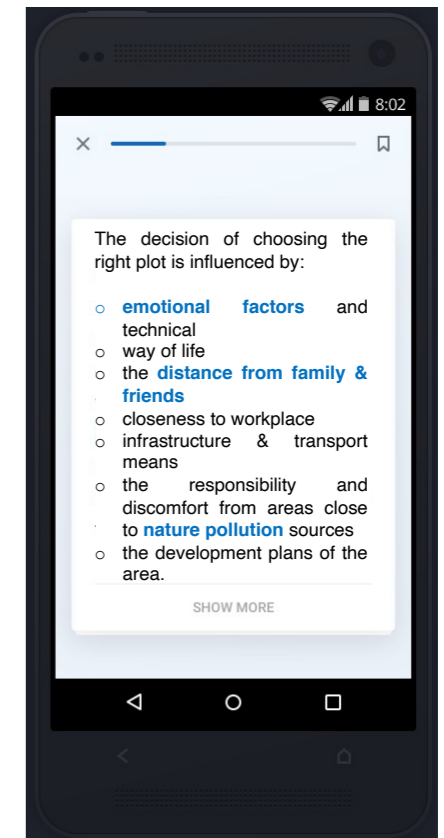
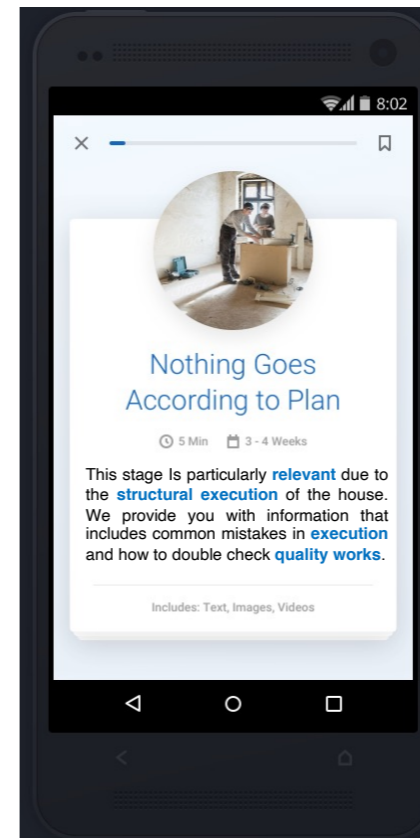
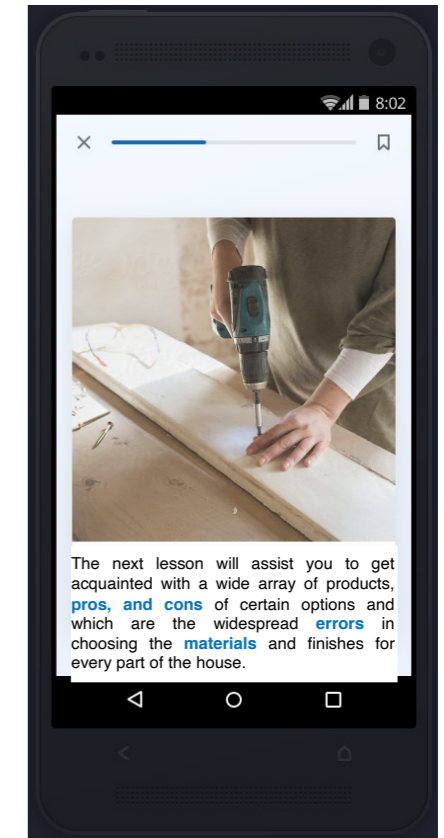
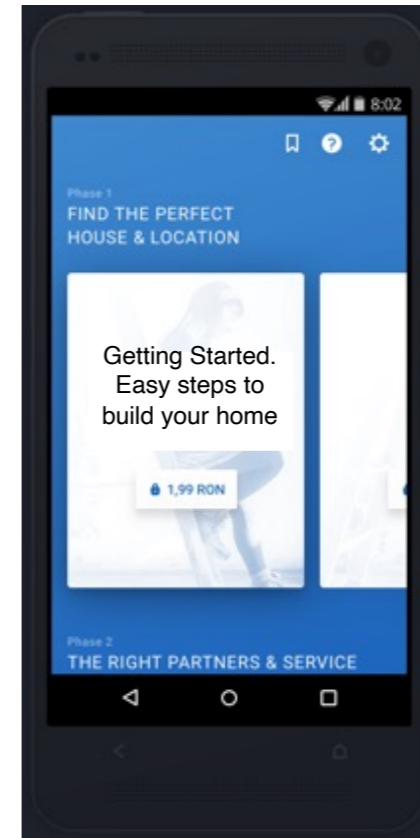
**Demographics**

IT Specialist   Needs Plan/assurance   Pain-point no skilled mason

Wants to get beaurocracy   Pain-point delays   Wants to decreas cost

Needs verify mason   Pain-point durable material   Online inspiration   36 Y

CLIENT	TASK	TOOLS	YEAR
Etventure   Berlin	UX writing	Google Docs	2016



## Article Sample | Case Study Retail

### CHALLENGE

Write a content article of 1200 words max to market a project management school product. Targeted for project managers in the retail industry to help them stay competitive in a changing market.

### SOLUTION

Write a knowledge-based article differentiated from regular articles. Avoid aphorisms and cliches in the marketing of saying nothing.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

- Engaging & bring value
- Meet needs and solve pain points
- Address users with casual/relaxed language style
- The content should be more of a conversational (marketing) content

### PROCESS

- Opted to approach the article with the why questions: why was the company founded, why is the Project Manager does this job, what's the purpose, etc.
- Stating the WHY behind the product can create transparency and a connection between the reader and his/her/x customers because it shows who they are, what drives actions, and are the brand values.
- This approach builds trust through vulnerability or trust. It creates customer loyalty.

### OUTCOME

The article turned out all right, considering the time constraints. However, I would have loved to work more with the marketing and product management team to have a more effective outcome.

### Demographics

Retail Director	Be competitive Needs	Pain-point No long-term plan	
Smart decision-making Wants	Pain-point instability	Leadership Wants	
Drive results Needs	Pain-point declining sales	New career interests	48 Y

### CLIENT

SB Agency

### TASK

Content writing

### TOOLS

Google Docs

### YEAR

2020



Photo by Ryoji Iwata on Unsplash

## Article Sample | Case Study Retail

### 9 Steps to Successfully Overcoming Competition in Retail

#### Why Do Some Retail Leaders Fail?

During the Covid-19 crisis, the textile industries had the most to suffer from the pandemic, dropping in sales up to 80% in the first quarter of last year. All following the restriction waves, according to recent [Eurostat](#). This past year dominated the retail world with one word: uncertainty. Here are some issues that key retail leaders struggle with.

#### Hoping for a Retail Rebound

There are many types of retailers that got seriously affected by this past year. Not surprisingly the legacy laggards were at the top of them. [Bain & Co](#) identifies one as "once-mighty company which has fallen on hard times and is struggling to adapt to market changes". These companies' main minuses are failing to keep retail estates or sales up, ahead of rival competitors. They also face immense board pressure to stay ahead of other competitors. Because going back to the store normally is what many retailers dreamed of last year, Covid-19 augmented that gap for them. Except, according to [Forbes](#), predictions tell us that this might never happen.

#### Simple Data

Whether we are talking about retail physical or online stores, it is undeniable that the conversion rate is the backbone of shopping success. Retail leaders, who are behind hundreds of division stores and have dozens of experienced retailers working with them, also have a cluster of information to follow. If you find it difficult to grow and stay ahead of competitors in the marketplace, you are not asking yourself some simple questions.

#### Transferring Old Models

Many of the failings of the retail leaders in the past years were to transfer their in-store long-praised models to online markets. Some of them went so far as to try and keep both under the same umbrella. At the beginning of the internet frenzy, few companies did the unexpected and invested full-on in new technological stores, while others were on the bench waiting for it to either fail or aggressively replicate models. This set the difference for successful retailers in pandemic times.

#### How to Overcome Competition?

Competition success translated from setting the next trends. Most companies think within the confinement of competition rules with clear boundaries of winners and losers. What if successful businesses play an entirely different game, outside of best practices? What if they change the rules all the time to cater to their vision? But how do you find an opportunity to lead in the face of unprecedented adversities and chaos?

#### 1. Thinking Fast vs. Thinking Slow

Oftentimes opportunity means taking risks. Failing to have a direction is linked to the lack of imagining the future, of thinking fast. Relying on old models to deliver new results may be the cause of not having a guiding vision.

#### 2. Rituals

In an increasingly standardized world, with plenty of retail stores looking alike and selling the same promise of social status and reproductive success, the way to differentiate yourself are through rituals. In a technology-led world, we need the psychological stability and promise of rituals in the face of chaos. It may be a routine that connects to a family member. Do we need to ask ourselves why we buy? We know it connects to the sense of familiarity. Also, it triggers the pleasure chemical called dopamine. It is addictive and it also makes us happier, even in the short term. Finding out what rituals drive customers and making it more convenient for them, can lead to religious loyalty. Even in the face of unprecedented change, such as the global pandemic, keeping a ritual, translates to being a beacon of hope where all else fails.

#### 3. Sense of Awe

Think of a place that inspires you and keeps you coming. Successful brands drive that sense of awe from grandeur. Be it in architectural intricacies, the detail of the sun shining through a Murano glass, or just sitting on the highest peak of a mountain. The feeling of grandeur reminds us of our finite time on Earth. It also lures us with a sense of inspiration, ambition, and vision to make the best of it. It creates a sense of devotion to an experience that makes us feel part of a tribe, a community, a brand. An experience almost spiritual that challenges your customers to thrive will do the same thing for you.

#### 4. Evangelia after Retail

The most successful brands that made it across the board were inciting the idea of being a part of something greater. Whether it is an invitation-only strategy or associating the company with a greater cause-such as sustainability, taking a meaningful stance before everyone else will win new acolytes. Making consumers experience premium, with a particular set of values, wildly differentiated from competitors, forms a cult.

#### 5. Less is Now

Whether we are talking about what Generation Z wants or how the pandemic changed our consumer behavior, it is no doubt that we will consume less. What the pandemic taught us is that in the face of adversities, the first things to cross off the list are textiles and footwear. It also taught retail leaders that producing more products does not necessarily produce more profits.

#### 6. Closures

As current [predictions](#) confirm, keeping retail stores will be considered a luxury in the future. Deciding to close many retail stores will be hard but necessary for many businesses to survive and have closures with inefficient spaces as well.

#### 7. The Tipping Point

You may look at epidemics not only from a disease standpoint but also from a phenomenon perspective. Take the digital revolution. Much like other revolutions, the printing press or industrial, they function in the form of waves. Understanding what differentiates a mere trend follower from a trend inventor is the key to creating a product that sticks, according to Malcolm Gladwell. So, inventing new models that shape future consumer behavior may rely on understanding how this phenomenon is built first.

#### 8. Small Changes with High Impact

Winning over stakeholders as a leader of a legacy lagger seems impossible. A tipping point is the crown of a successful trend or brand. To build one, you need connectors. They are people with strategic links between many networks. They set the trends for others to follow in that field, so they are an elite, a reliable source of information. Too often, retail leaders are more preoccupied with impressing superiors. Instead, what we know from [Malcolm Gladwell](#) is that we ought to analyze and learn from them. Understanding our surrounding ecosystems can lead us to small but impactful changes that are sustainable over time.

#### 9. Celebrate Employees

Closures will drive unemployment, and this will drive retail leaders to keep only a few employees. Always remember a company is their employees. Investing in the best training program or adding benefits to compensate for some losses during this period will not only help your business, but also make your employees feel celebrated.

What are your methods for delivering successful change initiatives?  
Let us know in the comments below.

## Data analysis and visualization | Case Study Interreg

### CHALLENGE

Provide a visualized analysis of how [E.U. Interreg Programme](#) between Italy and Croatia contributed to the Sustainable Development Goals. Help officials decide if the programme should be further funded or not.

### SOLUTION

As part of a team of researchers, I visualized complex results using excel charts that explains the degree of objectives checked by the countries during this programme.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

- Analyzed multiple data sources across disciplines;
- Visualized final data comparing them with initial Project Objectives;
- Use a simple way to explain rigid jargon;
- Wrote detailed analysis of the data;

### PROCESS

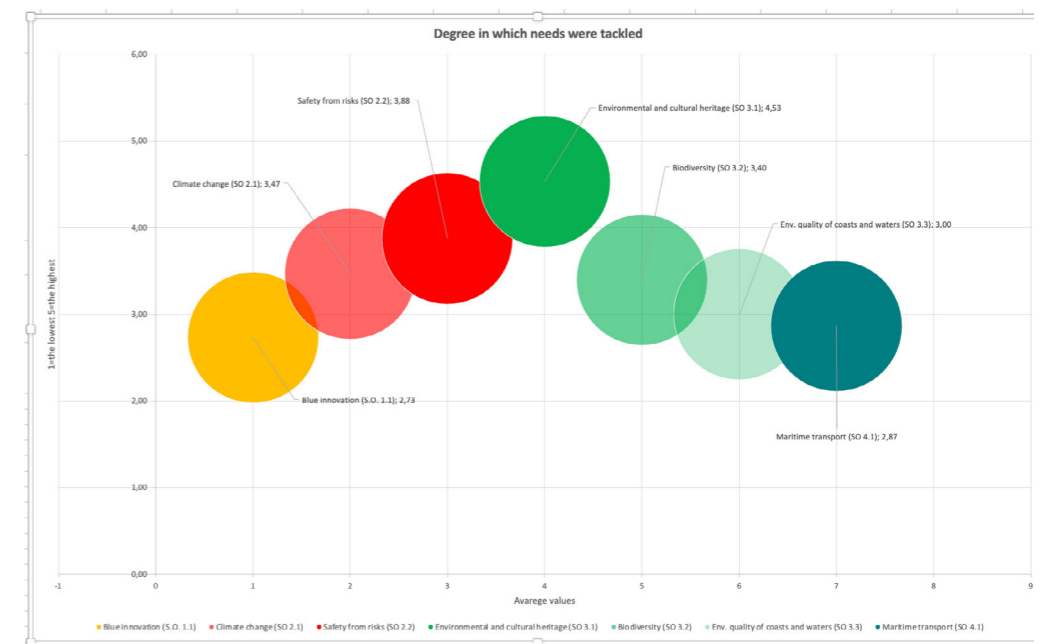
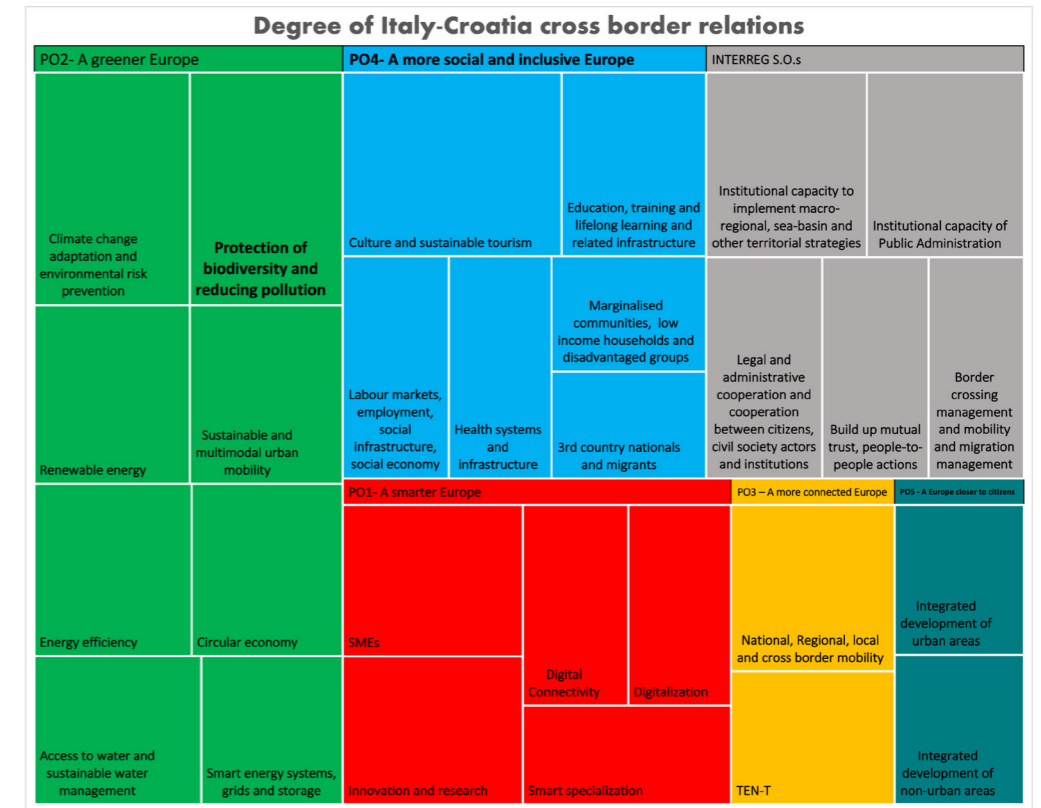
Users prefer to deal with interior design rather than engineering, but it's foundational.

- **Content modelling on whiteboards:** organizing content by identifying the type of available data (primary/secondary), but also, filling in spaces where data was completely missing.
- **Color coding:** colors match the official [Interreg Thematic Objectives](#) brand identity
- **Grouping by objectives:** Programme Objectives were the primary focus and this was the essential filter to navigate the sea of relevant research.
- **One-on-one feedback sessions:** Content critiquing and weekly feedback with the team and project manager was fundamental to getting this monolithic work up and running.

### OUTCOME

The project was funded further. But the most remarkable thing encountered was the objective voice of the data helped building a more balanced view of two competitive countries.

Positive feedback: The two countries ministries were satisfied with the outcome of the analysis and the recommendations based on the research conducted.



CLIENT TASK TOOLS YEAR

European Union Data analysis Microsoft Excel 2021

## White paper writing sample | Case Study Interreg

### CHALLENGE

Provide a written analysis of how [E.U. Interreg Programme](#) between Italy and Croatia contributed to the Sustainable Development Goals. Help officials decide if the programme should be further funded or not.

### SOLUTION

As part of a team of researchers, I wrote content that explains the charts from above considering the degree of objectives checked by the countries during this programme.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

- Analyzed multiple data sources across disciplines;
- Compared gathered data with initial Project Objectives;
- Explained in simple way jargon;

### PROCESS

- **Content modelling on whiteboards:** organizing content by grouping the type of data (primary/secondary)available.
- **Grouping by objectives:** Programme Objectives were the primary focus and this was the essential filter to navigate the sea of relevant research.
- **Macro>micro perspective:** Explaining complex concepts easy by using the approach of looking at the topic from a macro gradually into the micro perspectives.

### OUTCOME

The analysis was used also for the development strategy.

### Energy efficiency

The United Nation's Agenda 2030 tackles energy efficiency through "SDG7 – Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all", which promotes global-level efforts to increase the energy efficiency improvement rate. The goal has been integrated in the European Green Deal, which dedicates a specific focus on the energy efficiency in the building sector.

In recent years, the European Union has taken significant steps towards improving the energy sector. A Union energy strategy was published in 2015. Under this strategy, the Commission aimed at diversifying Europe's sources of energy, enabling the free flow of energy through the EU by investments in infrastructure, improve energy efficiency, promote research and decarbonize the European economy.

The 2019 Commission assessment report, in relation to the industrial sector, states that most Member States (including Italy), have reported reductions in terms of energy intensity, but a marginal increase of 0.6% was observed at the level of Croatia.

On the part of the assessment related to the energy consumption in the transport sector, the report reveals an almost general increase at the level of the European Union. Significantly, Italy was amongst the seven Member States that decreased their energy consumption in this sector, with a reduction of 12%.

The analysis revealed that, in terms of energy efficiency, the policy instruments set-up at the level of the European Union created the legislative framework for the improvement of energy efficiency activities, in particular building renovation, across the European territory.

However, the two participating Member States have reported a trend of increasing the rate of energy-renovation of both non-residential and residential buildings, typically at values higher than the corresponding EU-level averages, but following different national patterns.

Investments in "deep" energy building renovation find the area strongly split between Italian territory, recording values much higher than the EU average and the Croatian territory, lagging behind (national values)

CLIENT	TASK	TOOLS	YEAR
European Union	Data analysis	Microsoft Word	2021

# My take on UX writing Challenge | Case Study

## CHALLENGE

[Daily UX Writing Challenge](#) in 15 Days. Write on actual prompts from the largest product organizations in the world. Write within a given scenario and prototypes.

## SOLUTION

The brain on notifications triggers anxiety and stress hormones, kicking us into the fight, flight, or flee response. The brain does not distinguish between real and perceived threats. Lowering the perceived threats with compassionate copy, simple language and simple steps towards solving the 'problem' can be a game-changer.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Write with empathy, free of judgments
- Use neuroscience to make the user feel first rather than think

## PROCESS

- The brain on notifications triggers anxiety and stress hormones, kicking us into fight, flight or flee response. The brain does not distinguish between real and perceived threats.
- Lowering the perceived threats with compassionate copy, simple language and simple steps towards solving the 'problem' can be a game-changer.

## OUTCOME

I can say I loved the challenge. If I were to do it again I would remake it differently. Also, I appreciate more a team of people around me to pinpoint aspects I can miss. This is a way funner and enriching work experience. Products are always better with help from a team of smarter people.

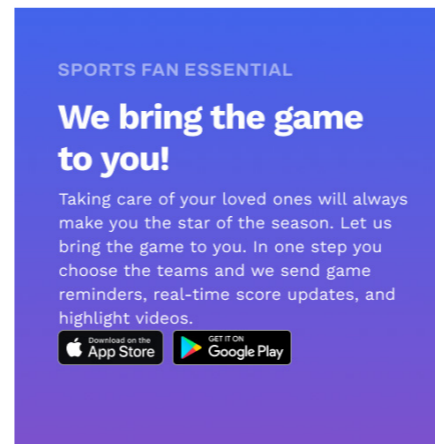
### UX Writing Challenge: Day 2

Scenario: A user is a working parent, and a big sports fan, in the midst of their favorite sports season who can no longer attend games.

Challenge: Write a promotional screen for an app that lets a user choose teams, sends game reminders, real-time score updates and highlight videos.

Headline: 40 characters max  
Body: 175 characters max  
Button(s): 25 characters max

Need some guidance? Here's an article on [how to write a promo screen for a mobile app or website](#)



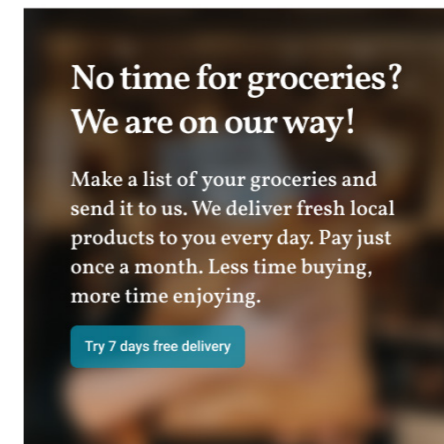
### UX Writing Challenge: Day 4

Scenario: A user is in their favorite supermarket. They open the supermarket's app on their phone to see what's on sale and are greeted by a promotion.

Challenge: Write a promotional home screen for a subscription service that delivers groceries to the user once-a-month for a flat fee.

Headline: 45 characters max  
Body: 175 characters max  
Button(s): 25 characters max

Related content: [How to write a promotional pop-up modal or overlay screen](#)

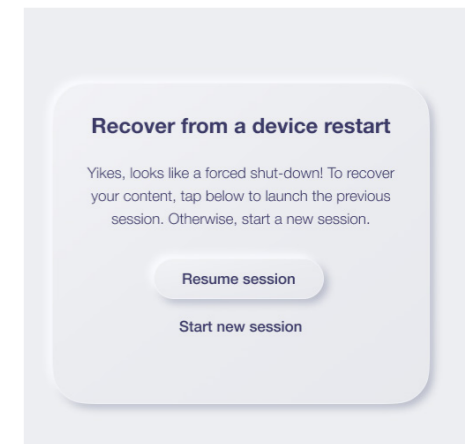


### UX Writing Challenge: Day 5

Scenario: The user works in graphic design. While critiquing a design in a mobile app, their phone abruptly turns off. When they restart the phone, they reopen the app.

Challenge: Write a message that the user will read immediately upon opening the app. What do they need to know? What steps (if any) do they need to take to recover their content? What if they can't recover the content?

Headline: 40 characters max  
Body: 140 characters max  
Button(s): 20 characters max  
Feeling weird about this one? Check out our guide to [UX and loss aversion](#)



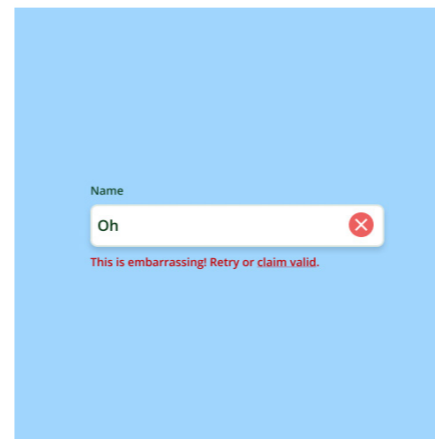
### UX Writing Challenge: Day 12

Scenario: A user is creating an account. When they come to the step where they are asked to enter their name, they get an error message. A fraud detection software thinks their name is fake—but it's wrong 5% of the time.

Challenge: Write an error message that prompts them to fix the error without shaming them for having a fake-sounding name.

45 characters max

Sound weird? Need some assistance? We wrote an article on ["How to write with empathy when there is no 'answer' to an error."](#)



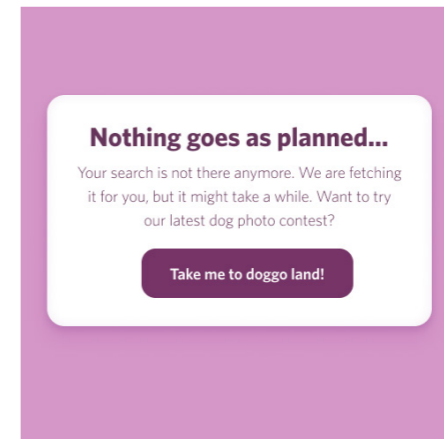
### UX Writing Challenge: Day 14

Scenario: a user is shopping using a price comparison app that boasts "real-time" pricing on items. As they are checking the price of an item, something goes wrong. The problem is unknown.

Challenge: write a message that informs the user that they cannot access the app right now. You cannot specify "why" the app doesn't work, you also want them to continue using the app.

Headline: 30 characters max  
Body: 120 characters max  
Button(s): 15 characters max

Hint: error messages come in all shapes and sizes; the two things that they all have in common is they suck to read and they suck to write. Especially ones like this. Here's a longer guide on ["How to write an 'error message' without knowing the error"](#)



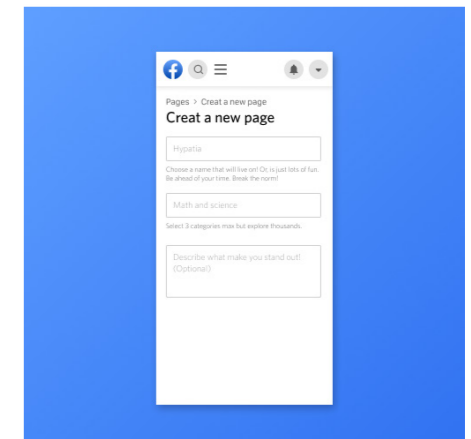
### UX Writing Challenge: Day 15

Challenge: Using the browser on your mobile device, please go to Facebook and log in. Tap the menu icon and then tap Create New Page in the Pages section.

Your task: Rewrite the page creation and user onboarding experience. Be bold and take risks. Character constraints per screen (all challenges):

Headline: 45 characters  
Body: 100 characters  
Button: 25 characters  
Time limit: 1 hour

Once you are done with your chosen challenge, include a short, one-paragraph explanation of your design decisions. Defend and rationalize your work.



CLIENT

TASK

TOOLS

YEAR

DUXW

UX writing

Figma

2022

**THANK YOU**