

User Flow & Task Analysis Flow & Wireflows

Definitions, Differences, When to Optimize

What is the difference between a task analysis and a user flow (think, *digital* user flow)? Discuss the purpose and value of each.

User flows:

- Key to remember flow=movement=helps think about what happens before and after that step too.
- Diagrams, highlighting the path a User must take, to complete a task.
- Internal facing, they are meant to improve the Customer Journey.
- Artifacts that act as a step-by-step guide—in a way—to helping customers achieve their goals.
- Take User requirements as the key point of work, along with User Journeys.
- Have a goal to offer a UX design direction in the next stage.

Their purpose is to:

- Show key opportunities in time for businesses to interact with the customer
- Improve the user experience.
- Outline user tasks and visualize how customers will interact with products and services.
- Account for multiple pathways to a successful User Journey.
- Provide first step towards creating a working prototype.

They are valuable because:

- They provide INSIGHTS and help identify opportunities not obvious.
- Predicts and shows the possible paths Users take to interact with the product.
- Help spot misses in the Customer Journey before a product ships.
- Directly improve User Experience, thus increasing User satisfaction.
- Help you explicitly consider customer entry points. User flows differ depending on where Users enter.
- Good time to use them, with an existing app, trying to resolve pain points.

Caution: People often confuse User Flow and User Journey.

- User Journey focuses on User Experience during the entire process. It addresses User state and how the user progresses to realize their goal.
- User Flow designs the possible routes with which the goal can be achieved. It focuses on the steps using the product. It occurs completely in the product.

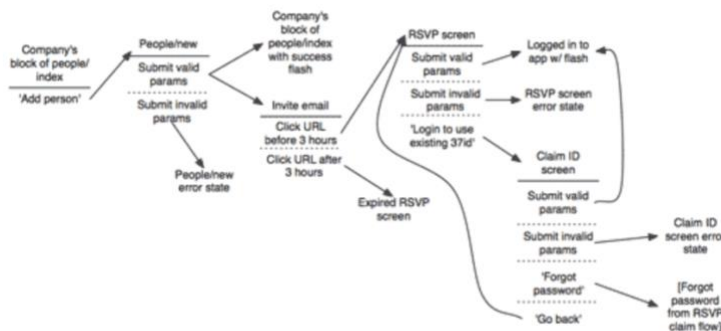
- This is not hard and fast, but User Flows tend to optimize for existing solutions. User Journey's tend to for new apps.

Source: HubSpot has a [comprehensive post](#) with 8 steps to optimize User Flow diagrams and examples: Mobile App, Music, eLearning Platform.

Task Analysis Flow are:

- Break downs of one or a series of tasks the customer will perform with the product or service.
- Also, flow=movement=helps think about what happens before and after that step too.
- First step towards creating a working prototype.
- Helps developers understand how alternate states should work.
- Task flow is, yes, task specific.
- Show a single flow completed in the same manner by all users for a specific action.
- Task flows are a singular flow, they don't branch.

Source: Here is an excellent example in the readings, [from Ryan](#)



When would you gain the most value from the following:

[Wireflows](#) are a combination of wireframes and flowcharts.

- The term was coined by Nielsen Norman Group.
- They can document workflow PLUS screen designs better.
- Better for complex apps.
- [NNG Definition](#): Wireflows are a design-specification format that combines wireframe-style page layout designs with a simplified flowchart-like way of representing interactions.
- Best for complex interactions for mobile and webapps.

- Work less well capturing flow capturing flows through many relatively static pages linked together
- Useful to ideate screen designs along with user flows.