

16 January 2024

# Buried in Blocks

How Modular CMS Page Builders Are Killing Your Team, and How To Save Them



**AUTOGRAM**

# Page Builders: Threat or Menace?

Brand Strategy

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua.

TEXT

Content Strategy

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua.

UX Strategy

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua.

Format Background Colors

GRID

Row Count 19

Gap

SECTION

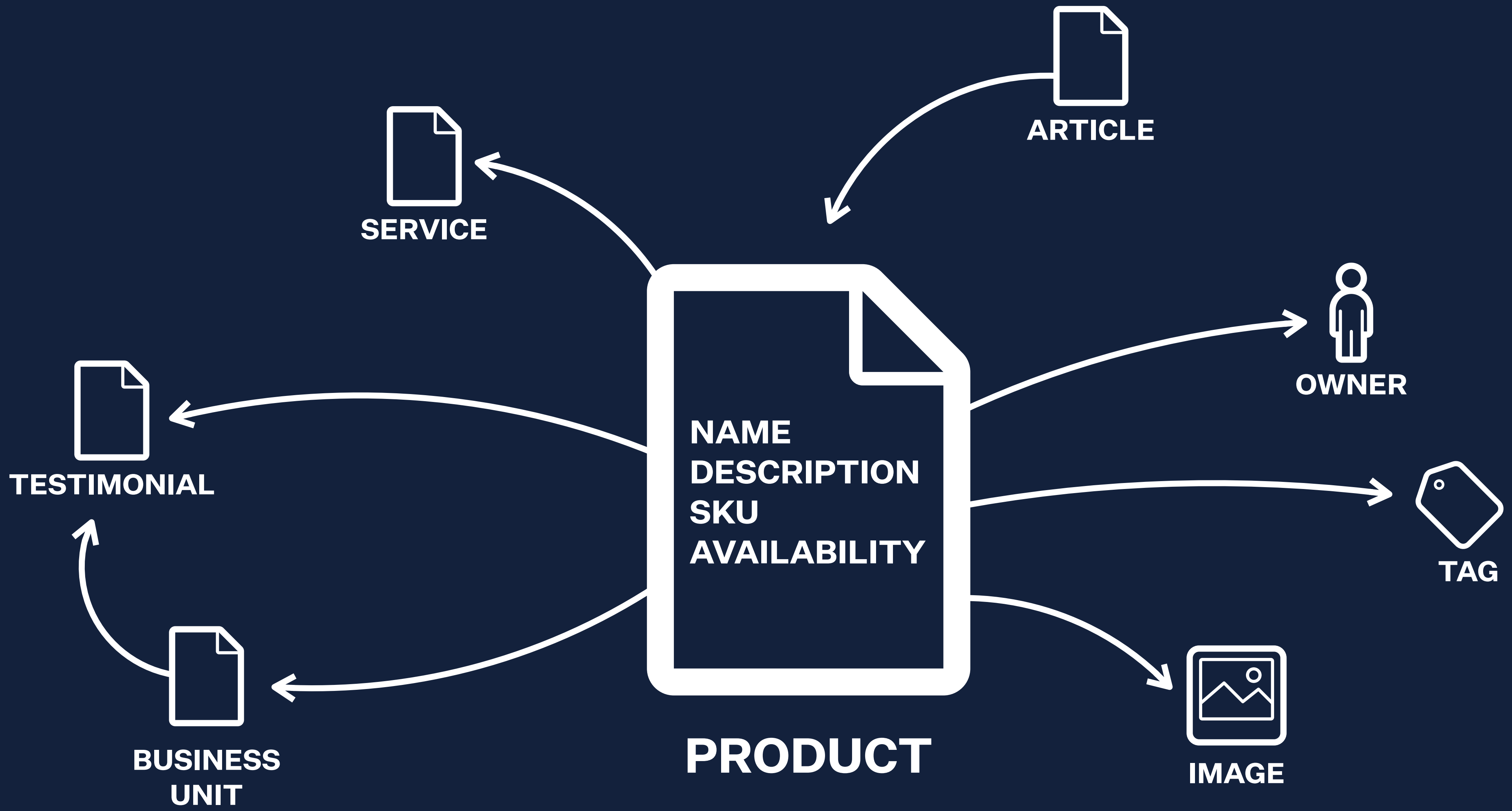
Fill Screen

Height S M L ...

Alignment

Fill screen will expand the background height to fill a portion of the user's screen.

STYLING



# The Balancing Act

Templates and carefully modeled content types are used for consistent, high-volume content.

Unique and unpredictable content requires dedicated design and development of “custom pages.”

<b>UNPREDICTABLE</b>	<b>CUSTOM DESIGN, DEVELOPMENT</b>	<b>HERE BE DRAGONS</b>
<b>CONSISTENT</b>	<b>PIECE OF CAKE</b>	<b>STRUCTURE, TEMPLATES, CONTENT APIS</b>
	<b>LOW VOLUME</b>	<b>HIGH VOLUME</b>



# New Needs, New Pressures

**Acceleration:** More content, shorter timelines, more competition.

**Consolidation:** One system for “all” content, across channels and teams.

**The Snowflake Effect:** High-touch design for previously simple content.

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CONSISTENT	LOW VOLUME	HIGH VOLUME



Home > News & features

# We're Pleased to Paws and Announce Kindfull, Target's New Pet Food Owned Brand

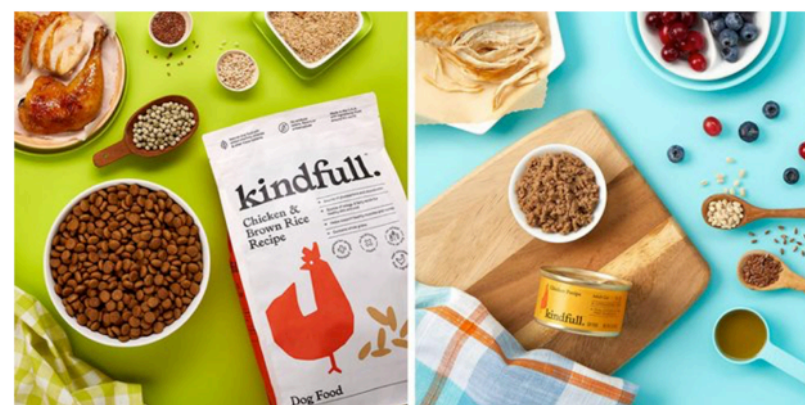
August 11, 2021 - Article reads in 2 minutes

LIFESTYLE

f Share | Tweet | in Share | Pin It



The cat's out of the bag ... **Kindfull**, our new owned brand dog and cat food, arrives in stores and on [Target.com](https://www.target.com) Aug. 15, and your fur babies are going to love it. More than a year in the making, Kindfull delivers high quality at an amazing, only-at-Target value (more than half of the 50+ items are under \$10). The assortment of wet and dry food, treats and toppers includes delectable items like Chicken & Brown Rice Recipe Dry Dog Food, Wild Caught Salmon Recipe Wet Cat Food, and Chicken, Pumpkin & Turmeric Recipe Toppers.



## Paws and effect

In 2020, more families than ever before welcomed new pets. The majority of Target guests are pet parents, and they told us they were looking for high-quality pet food at a great value. So our in-house team got to work with pet food and nutrition experts, diving deep into guest insights to create a line of pet food with no artificial colors, flavors or preservatives and no wheat, corn or soy. What is in our products? Ingredients like real poultry, pasture-raised beef and fish that are wild-caught using sustainable practices that help protect ocean resources. And more than 40% of Kindfull items are in recyclable packaging, which supports our **Target Forward** ambition to innovate to eliminate waste.

"Kindfull highlights Target's continued commitment to providing our guests with an incredible cross-category portfolio of owned brand options to choose from alongside their favorite national brands," says **Jill Sando**, executive vice president and chief merchandising officer, Target. "With Kindfull, our newest owned brand offers guests pet food for their furry family members that showcases our commitment to quality, value and thoughtfully selected ingredients."

## One-stop pet shop

Our signature mix of owned and national pet brands gives guests hundreds of options across *all* categories, including pet supplies, food and treats, to create a one-stop shop for your pet's needs. Kindfull also joins **Boots & Barkley**, Target's owned brand apparel and accessory line for pets, plus seasonal owned brand pet gear and accessories from Sun Squad, Hyde & EEK! Boutique and Wondershop. And that's pawsome.

Shop Kindfull products starting Aug. 15 at Target stores, [Target.com](https://www.target.com) and via Target's industry-leading same-day services — **Order Pickup**, **Drive Up** and **Same Day Delivery with Shipt**.

Don't miss out on the latest Target news and behind-the-scenes happenings! **Subscribe** to our bi weekly newsletter and get the top stories from A Bullseye View delivered straight to your inbox!

## The joy of everyday life



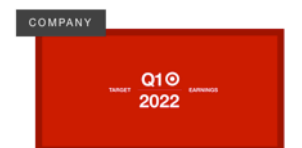
We're here to help all families discover the joy of everyday life – from our distinctive products to easy ways to get them from the store to your door.

[Learn more about our products & services](#)

## Just published



Here's How Target's Celebrating Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month



A Closer Look at Target's Q1 2022



Tabitha Brown for Target Channels Joy All Year Long with Four Limited-Time Collections

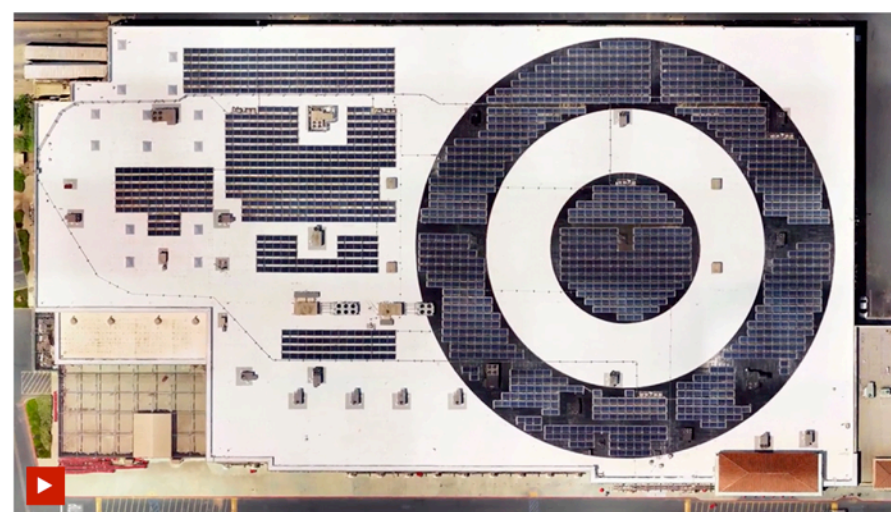
## Readers also enjoyed

Home > Sustainability & ESG

# Target Forward: Our Sustainability Strategy

Our vision is to co-create an equitable and regenerative future together with our guests, partners and communities.

- Sustainability & ESG Home
- Sustainability Strategy: Target Forward
- Diversity, Equity & Inclusion
- Environment
- Social
- Governance & Reporting
- Community Engagement
- Target Foundation



## Our ambitions



Design and elevate sustainable brands



Innovate to eliminate waste



Accelerate opportunity and equity

“

"As a company and a member of the global community, it's imperative for the health of both our business and our planet that we embrace new ways to move forward. We know sustainability is tied to business resiliency and growth, and that our size and scale can drive change that is good for all. Target Forward influences every corner of our business, deepens our collaboration with our partners and builds on our past efforts to ensure a better future for generations to come."

**BRIAN CORNELL**  
CHAIRMAN AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF TARGET

## How does Target approach sustainability?

Target takes a holistic view of sustainability, with efforts focused on our business driving positive impact for both people and planet. We see sustainability efforts as part of an interconnected system, where our actions to help address climate, restore natural systems, and drive opportunity and equity for our teams, communities and partners impact and reinforce one another to create change that is good for all.

## Target's sustainability journey

Filter by topic | Formative years | Founding of Target | Recent milestones | Tour the highlights

## Highlights

Explore the most impactful, meaningful moments in Target's history.

1902



## Dayton Dry Goods Company

The future Target Corporation was founded by George Draper Dayton.

[More](#)

1946

## 5% Practice

Second U.S. company to establish preset annual giving

[More](#)

1962

## Creation of Iconic Name and Logo

Origin of the Target name and Bullseye

[More](#)



1962



## The Birth of Target

The first four Target stores opened in Minnesota.

[More](#)

1966



## Expansion: Target Growth Beyond Minnesota

Target opened two stores in Denver, Colorado, as the first step in its national expansion plans.

Sustainability & ESG Home

Sustainability Strategy: Target Forward

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

Environment

Social

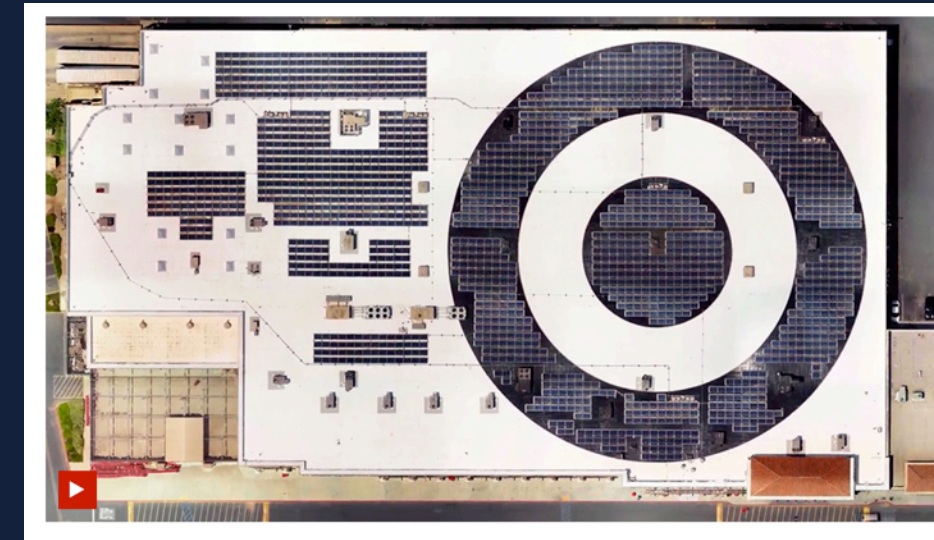
Governance & Reporting

Community Engagement

Target Foundation

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## Target's sustainability journey

Our work to bring solutions that better serve our communities and our environment can be seen across our business — from our inclusive and sustainable product assortments and the increasing renewable energy footprint in our operations, to our social justice commitments and philanthropic support of underserved communities at home and around the world.

- In 2019, we **set science-based targets** for emissions reductions across scopes 1, 2 and 3 — becoming a leader in U.S. retail — and we've also committed to join the **Business Ambition for 1.5°C**, ensuring that our emissions will contribute to no more than 1.5 degree warming. Within our renewable energy efforts, we currently have projects and partnerships in place that, when complete, will result in our purchasing **nearly 50% of our electricity from renewable sources**, well on our way to 100% by 2030.
- Circular design principles can be seen in two of our owned brands, **Universal Thread** and **Everspring**, and we accelerated our commitments to sustainable packaging in 2018 when we became signatories to the **New Plastics Economy**.
- Target's **Racial Equity Action and Change (REACH) committee** was established in 2020 and accelerates our work to create racial equity for Black team members, guests and communities. REACH builds on 15 years of progress in creating a diverse workforce, and setting diversity and inclusion goals for Target's team and business.

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Sustainability & ESG Home

Sustainability Strategy: Target Forward

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

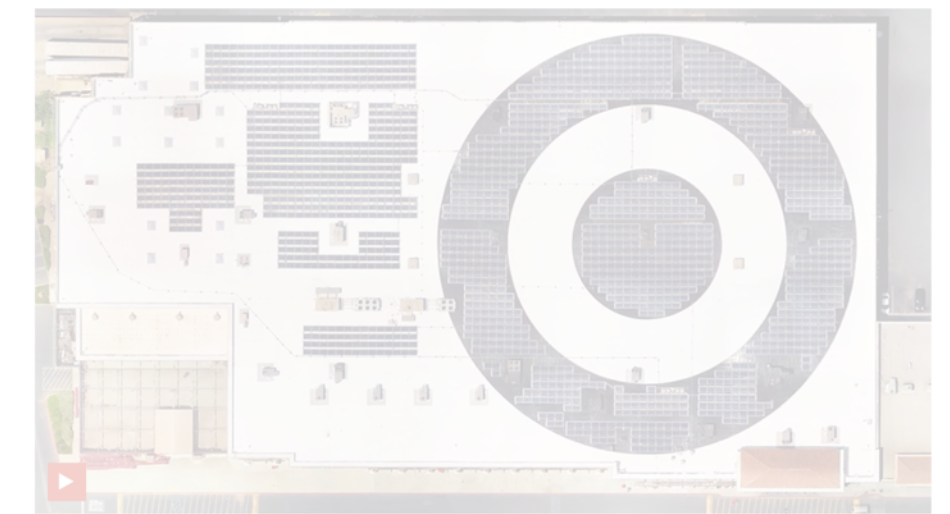
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## Target's sustainability journey

# Defining the “Page Builder”



**Self-Serve  
Creation**



**Structured  
Pieces**



**Unstructured  
Containers**





Page builders are a coping  
mechanism for uncertain  
requirements

# 1. Pages Become Mystery Meat

Page-level intent and semantics are hidden in component choices.

Individual components may be structured, but their purpose in the page is opaque.

<b>HERO</b>
<b>CLIENT STORY</b>
<b>PRICE COMPARISON</b>
<b>BENEFITS LIST</b>
<b>CALL TO ACTION</b>

<b>HERO</b>
<b>BENEFITS LIST</b>
<b>RESOURCES LIST</b>
<b>CALL TO ACTION</b>
<b>WEIRD SECOND HERO</b>
<b>LEGAL DISCLAIMERS</b>

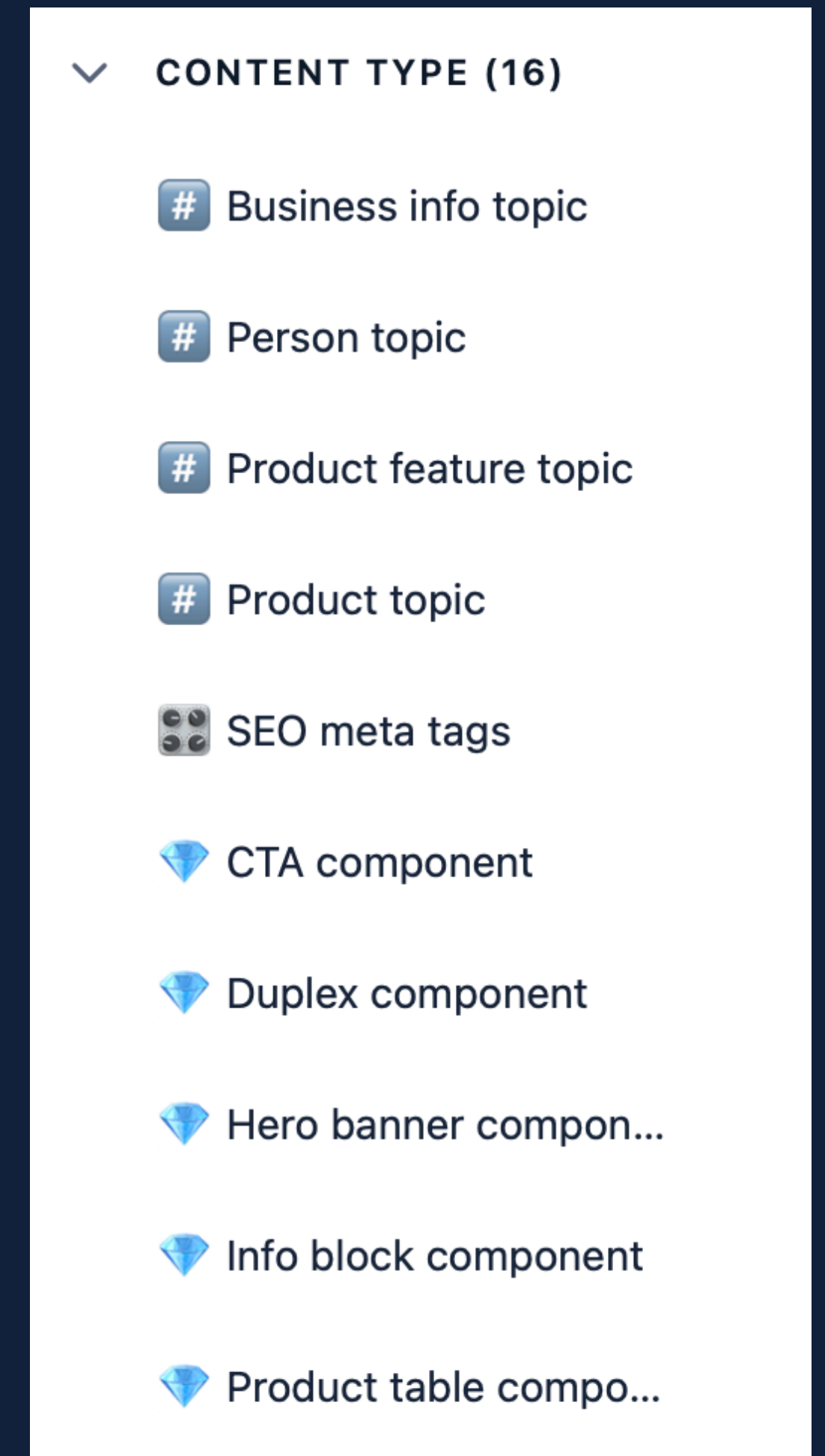
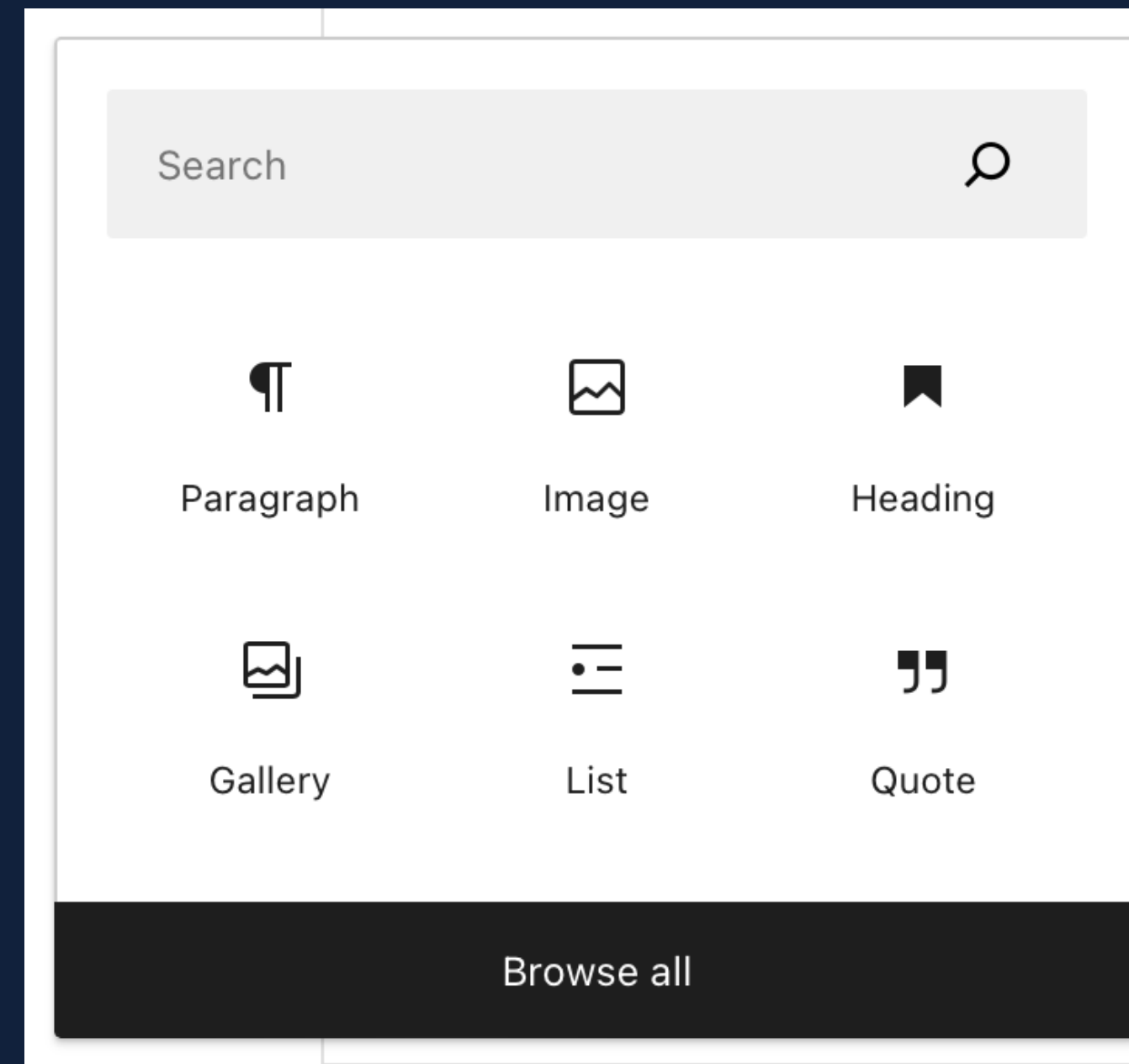


# 2. Design Becomes the Content Model

Available components become the building blocks of content.

Components are chosen by appearance, regardless of purpose or structure.

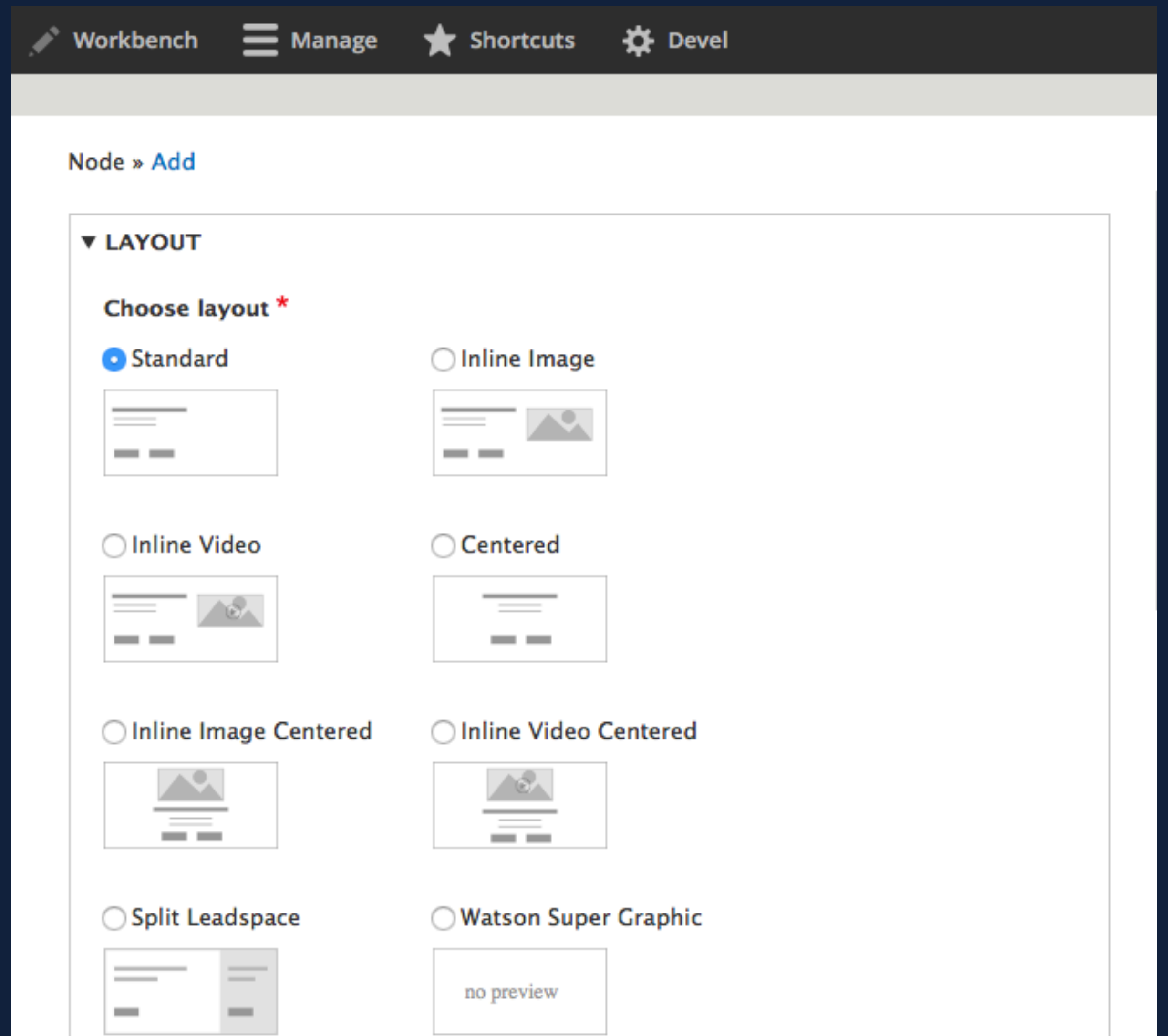
Design updates break tightly-bound content.

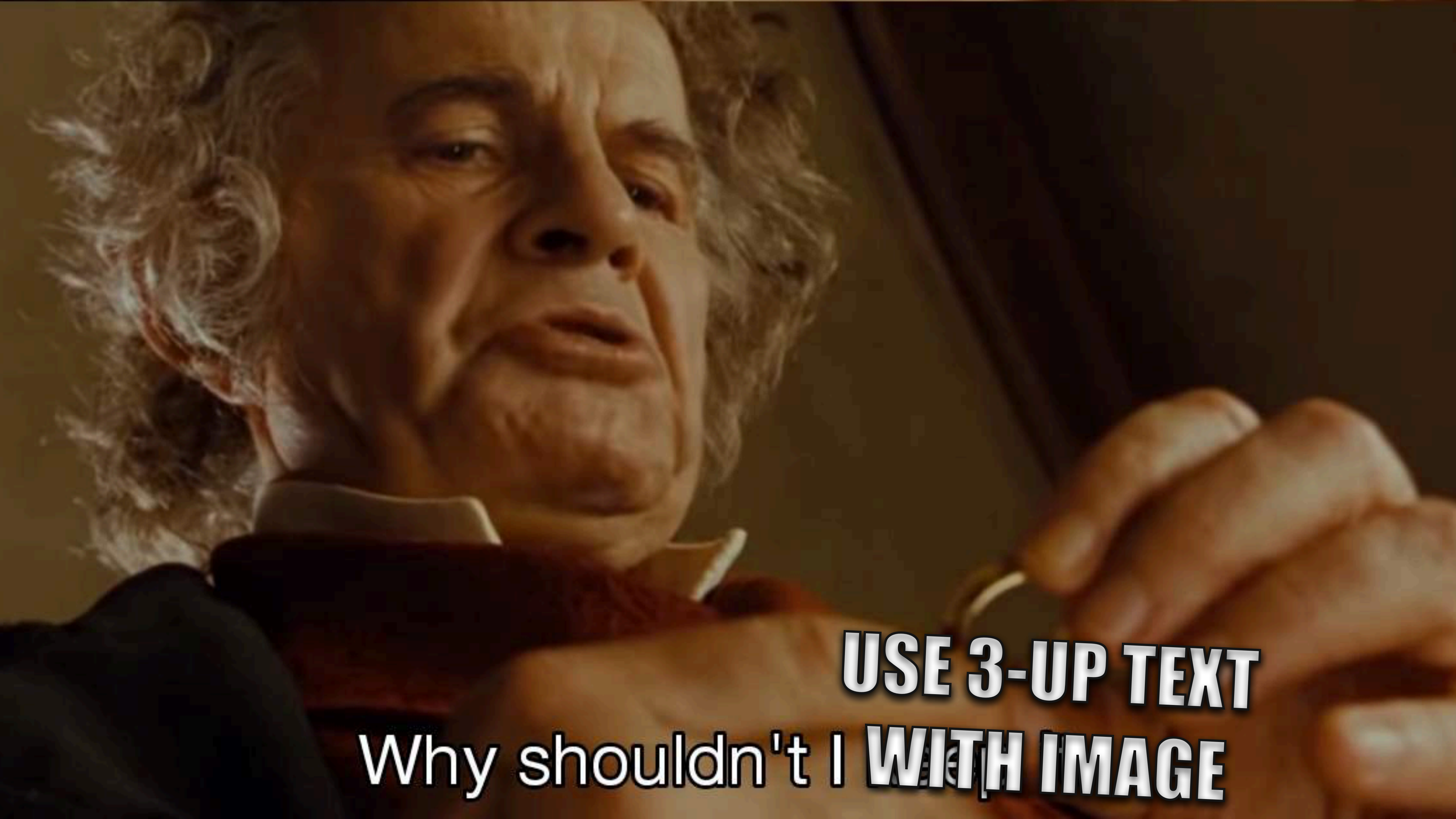


# 3. Complexity Pops Up Everywhere

Component counts and complexity grow.

Direct control of design components puts unnecessary choices on editors.





**USE 3-UP TEXT**

**Why shouldn't I WITH IMAGE**

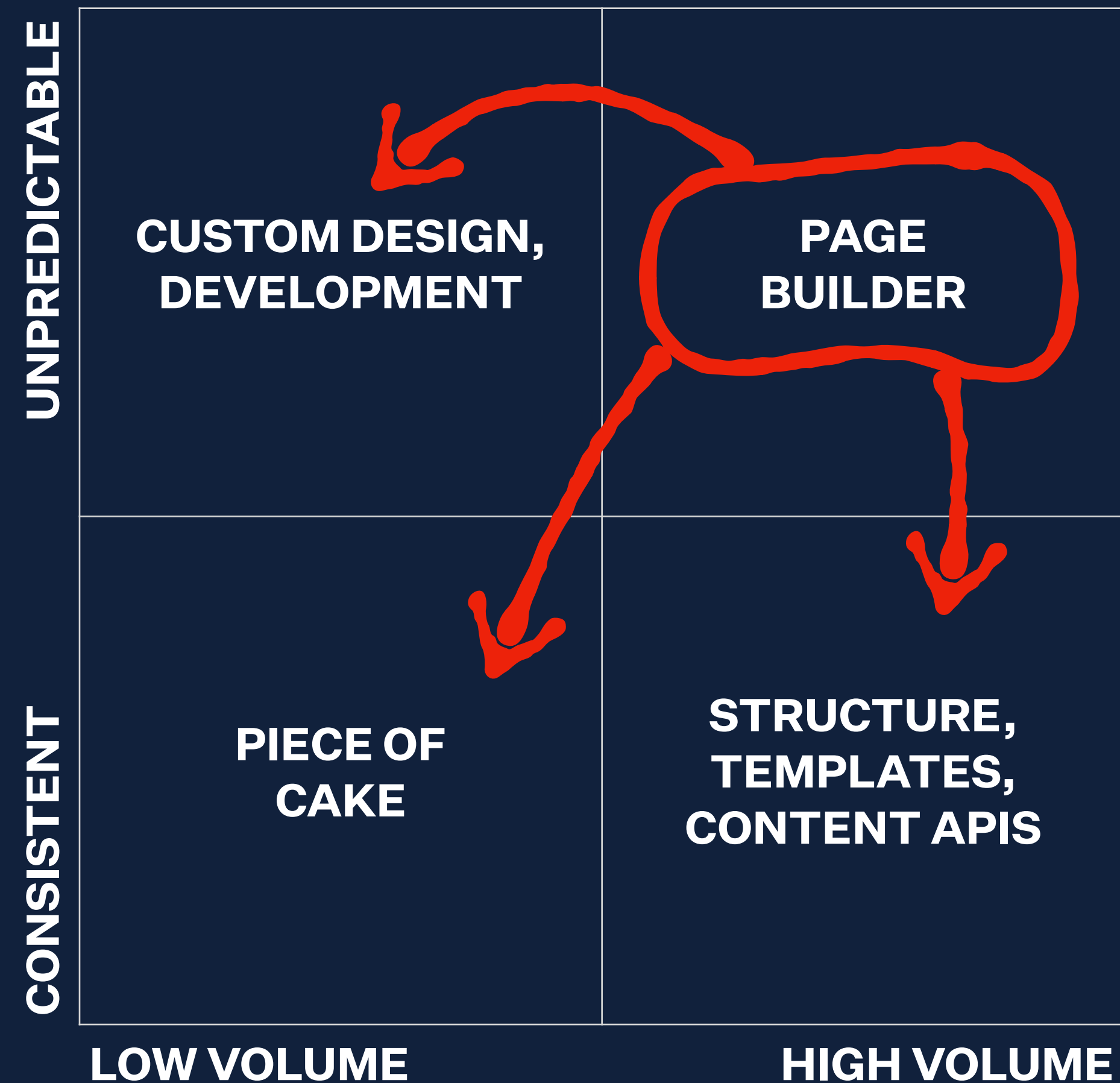
**Only need one?**

**No time to model?**

**Want some pizzazz?**

**Can't pick a content type?**

**Need something new?**



**Only need one?** Use the page builder.

**No time to model?** Use the page builder.

**Want some pizzazz?** Use the page builder.

**Can't pick a content type?** Use the page builder.

**Need something new?** Add it to the page builder!



# A story about good intentions

*Children in class at the new Caroline Brevard School, 1959, State Archives of Florida*



Soon there were many red tomatoes.

Miguel gave his mother some tomatoes.  
She cut some up for dinner.  
Miguel's family liked the fresh tomatoes.

The next spring Miguel's family  
helped him plant a **garden**  
It was a little roof garden in the city.

# Phonics

Start with spoken language

Map letters to sounds

“Sound out” unfamiliar words



Soon there were many red tomatoes

Miguel **the fresh tomatoes.**

She cut some up for dinner.

**helped him plant**

The next spring Miguel's family

helped him plant **go** garden.

It was a little roof garden in the city.



# Whole Language

Reading is problem-solving

Prioritize the whole text

Use clues to fill vocabulary gaps





Coping mechanisms can't  
replace core skills



The page building bill  
is coming due

# What We're Seeing

Financial Services: **30-40%** of all content

State Government: **50%** of all content

IT Services: **20%** at launch, **80%** after 2 years

SaaS Vendor: **100%** of CMS content

Hardware: **100% of 250,000** pages



# What We're Seeing

They can't **deliver** content quickly

They can't **reuse** expensive assets

They can't **test or personalize** at scale

They can't **measure** meaningful outcomes

They can't **change** the system, only expand it



# How Are They Responding?



**Staff up or  
stress out**



**Burn it down  
and start over**



**Blame the CMS  
and migrate**





You know what? Fair.

We know the culprit.

We know what's breaking.

We know what it costs us.



We know the culprit.

We know what's breaking.

We know what it costs us.

**The solution isn't a product, just hard work.**

**...But there is a playbook.**





Eliminate the  
mystery meat

# Audit to Group, Interview To Understand

Gather clues, use heuristics

- Topics, timeframes, and metadata
- Site section and CTAs
- Yes, visual structure and component usage



Find owners and ask, “What is this?” “Are there more like it?”

# Capture Intent, Extrapolate Type

What outcome is a piece of content expected to achieve?

Intent may translate to content type, may become metadata.

Content with clear goals can be measured and improved; mystery meat just sits there.

## Intents and Metrics

The measurable impact a given content item is expected to produce, in order to further CLIENT'S business goals.

Reach

Progress

Cultivate

Trust

Efficiency

Risk Reduction

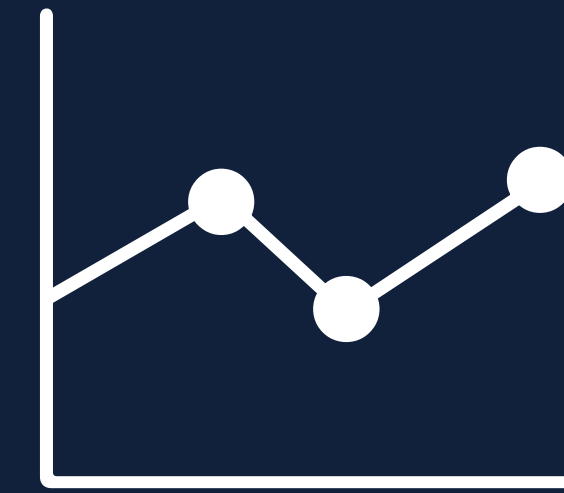
Task Success



# Monitor Ongoing Usage

Monitor and measure how the page builder is being used.

- Component and variation usage
- Contents of each component
- New spikes by team or topic
- Common combinations and patterns



# Establish Observability

## Content **quality**

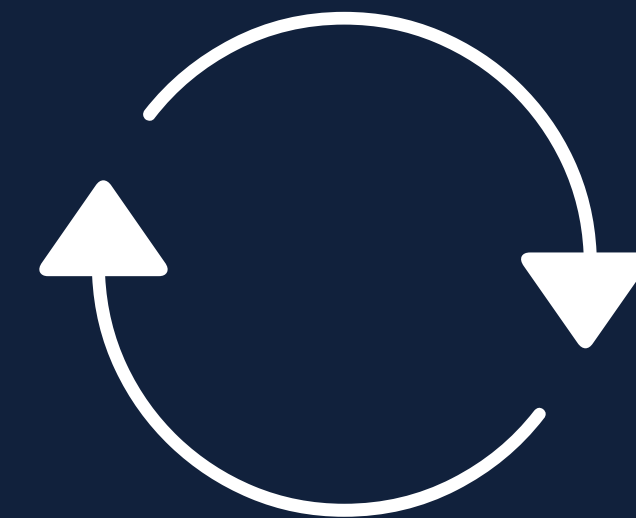
- Accessibility, clarity, brand standards

## **Health** checks

- Ratios, page traffic, front end performance

## **Performance**

- Intentions have outcomes; try to measure them







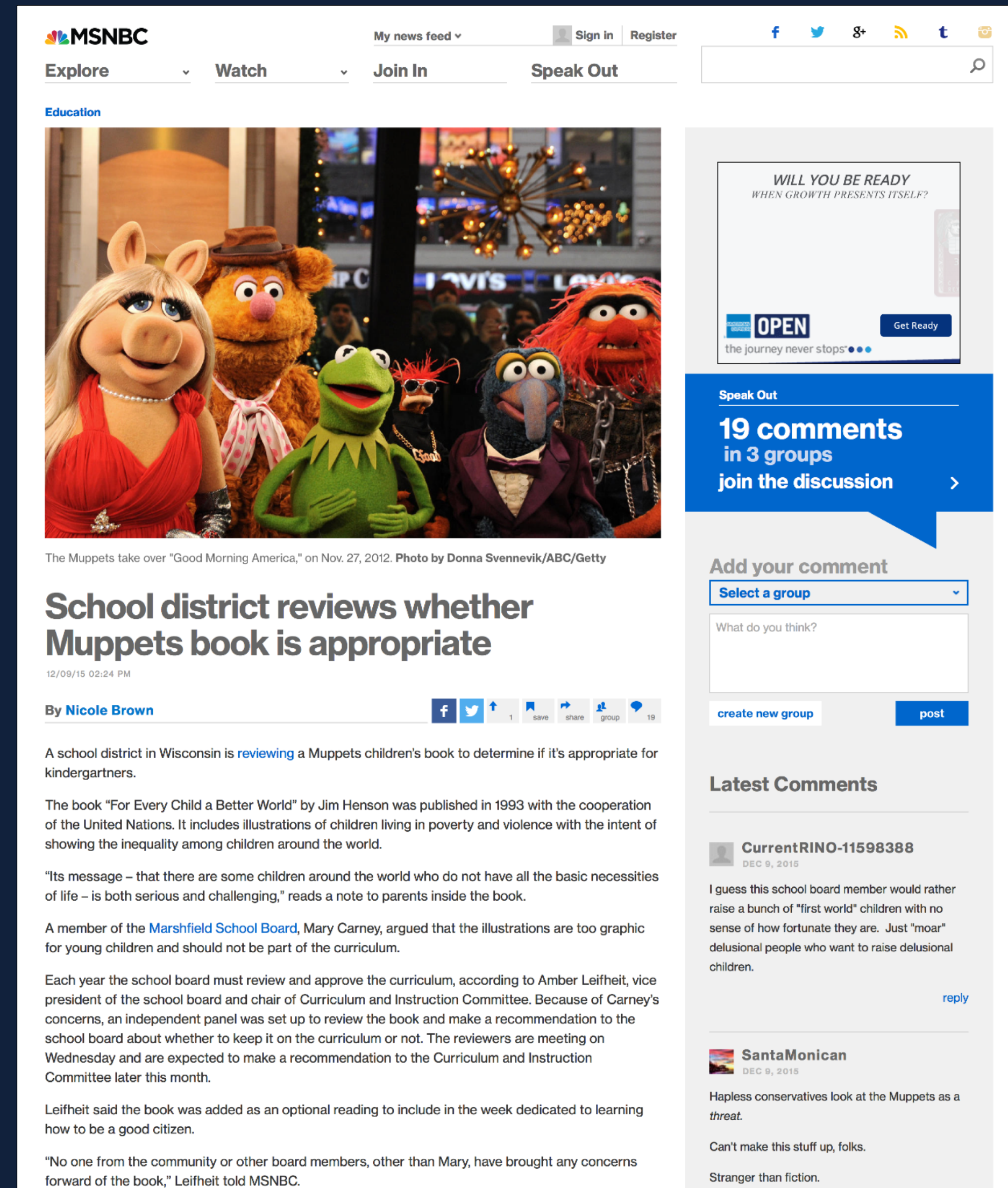
Simpler choices,  
smarter templates

# Decisions That Inform Design

Design communicates information:

- ▶ Priority and emphasis
- ▶ Sequence and similarity
- ▶ Context and next steps


Capture those as metadata, then swap templates or components.



MSNBC My news feed Sign in Register

Explore Watch Join In Speak Out

Education



The Muppets take over "Good Morning America," on Nov. 27, 2012. Photo by Donna Svennevik/ABC/Getty

## School district reviews whether Muppets book is appropriate

12/09/15 02:24 PM

By Nicole Brown

A school district in Wisconsin is [reviewing](#) a Muppets children's book to determine if it's appropriate for kindergartners.

The book "For Every Child a Better World" by Jim Henson was published in 1993 with the cooperation of the United Nations. It includes illustrations of children living in poverty and violence with the intent of showing the inequality among children around the world.

"Its message – that there are some children around the world who do not have all the basic necessities of life – is both serious and challenging," reads a note to parents inside the book.

A member of the [Marshfield School Board](#), Mary Carney, argued that the illustrations are too graphic for young children and should not be part of the curriculum.

Each year the school board must review and approve the curriculum, according to Amber Leifheit, vice president of the school board and chair of Curriculum and Instruction Committee. Because of Carney's concerns, an independent panel was set up to review the book and make a recommendation to the school board about whether to keep it on the curriculum or not. The reviewers are meeting on Wednesday and are expected to make a recommendation to the Curriculum and Instruction Committee later this month.

Leifheit said the book was added as an optional reading to include in the week dedicated to learning how to be a good citizen.

"No one from the community or other board members, other than Mary, have brought any concerns forward of the book," Leifheit told MSNBC.

WILL YOU BE READY  
WHEN GROWTH PRESENTS ITSELF?

OPEN the journey never stops

Speak Out

19 comments in 3 groups  
join the discussion

Add your comment

Select a group

What do you think?

create new group post

Latest Comments

CurrentRINO-11598388  
DEC 9, 2015

I guess this school board member would rather raise a bunch of "first world" children with no sense of how fortunate they are. Just "moar" delusional people who want to raise delusional children.

reply

SantaMonican  
DEC 9, 2015

Hapless conservatives look at the Muppets as a threat.

Can't make this stuff up, folks.

Stranger than fiction.



# Templates Can Flex

Augment explicit properties with optional slots.

Properties can contain rules and filters, not just specific content.

Rich text is more than text; embedding items keeps long narratives intact.



It is a term with broad meaning. The name is derived from the Cascade Tunnel, originally a 2.6-mile railroad tube completed in 1900 that connected the east and west sides of the Cascades, a boon for the growth of Seattle and Puget Sound. The mountain pass that it borrowed beneath was named for the project's engineer, John Frank Stevens, who later helped build the Panama Canal.

In late February 1910, ceaseless snowstorms over several days marooned two passenger trains just outside the tunnel's west portal. Before the tracks could be cleared, the trains were buried by what still stands as the nation's deadliest avalanche. It killed 96 people.

Bodies were extricated and wrapped in blankets from the Great Northern Railway, then hauled away on sleds. Some were not found until the snow melted many months later.



Wreckage after the Wellington, Wash., avalanche in 1910, which buried two passenger trains marooned by snowstorms outside the Cascade Tunnel and killed 96 people. Rescue workers transported bodies from the scene on sleds. Museum of History & Industry

To skiers and snowboarders today, Tunnel Creek is a serendipitous junction of place and powder. It features nearly 3,000 vertical feet — a rarely matched descent — of open meadows framed by thick stands of trees. Steep gullies drain each spring's runoff to the valley floor and into a small, short gorge called Tunnel Creek.

The area has all of the alluring qualities of the backcountry — fresh snow, expert terrain and relative solitude — but few of the customary inconveniences. Reaching Tunnel Creek from Stevens Pass ski area requires a ride of just more than five minutes up SkyLine Express, a high-speed four-person chairlift, followed by a shorter ride up Seventh Heaven, a steep two-person lift. Slip through the open boundary gate, with its "continue at your own risk" warning signs, and hike 10 minutes to the top of Cowboy Mountain.

When snow conditions are right, the preferred method of descent used by those experienced in Tunnel Creek, based on the shared wisdom passed over generations, is to haphazardly descend the mountain through a series of log meadows. Weave down the first meadow, maybe punctuate the run with a jump off a rock outcropping near the bottom, then veer hard left, up and out of the narrowing gully and into the next open glade.

Another powder-filled drop ends with another hard left, into another meadow that leads to the valley floor.

Tunnel Creek is, in the vernacular of locals, a "hippow run" — breezy and unobstructed, the kind that makes skiers giggle in glee as they descend through a billowing cloud of their own soft powder and emerge at the bottom coated in white frosting.

Despite trends toward extreme skiing (now called freeskiing), with improbable descents over cliffs and down chutes that test the gullies of even the fiercest daredevils, the ageless lure of fresh, smooth powder endures.

But powder and people are key ingredients for avalanches. And the worry among avalanche forecasters, snow-science experts and search-and-rescue leaders is that the number of fatalities — roughly 200 around the world each year — will keep rising as the rush to the backcountry continues among skiers, snowboarders, climbers and snowmobilers.

The backcountry represents the fastest-growing segment of the ski industry. More than ever, people are looking for fresh descents accessible by helicopters, hiking or even the simple ride up a chairlift.

Before 1980, it was unusual to have more than 10 avalanche deaths in the United States each winter. There were 34 last season, including 20 skiers and snowboarders. Eight victims were skiing out of bounds, legally, with a lift ticket. And many of the dead were backcountry experts intimate with the terrain that killed them.

"It's a cultural shift, where more skiers are going farther, faster, bigger," said John Stifter, the

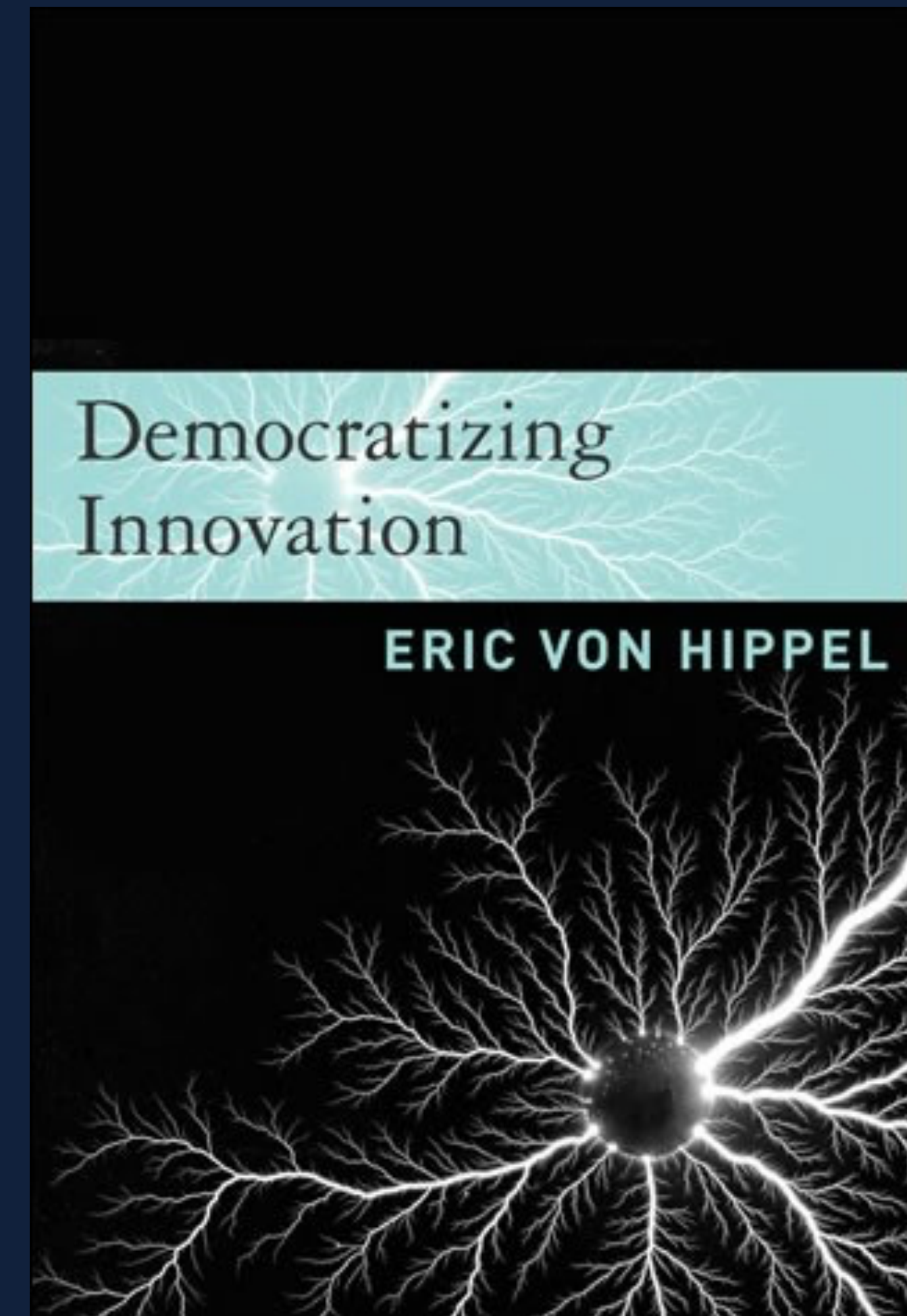


# Custom Pages Are Template R&D

Page builders can fill emerging and unmet needs.

Use observability to identify emerging needs and effective solutions.

Codify valuable patterns as real content types, template options, and tools.





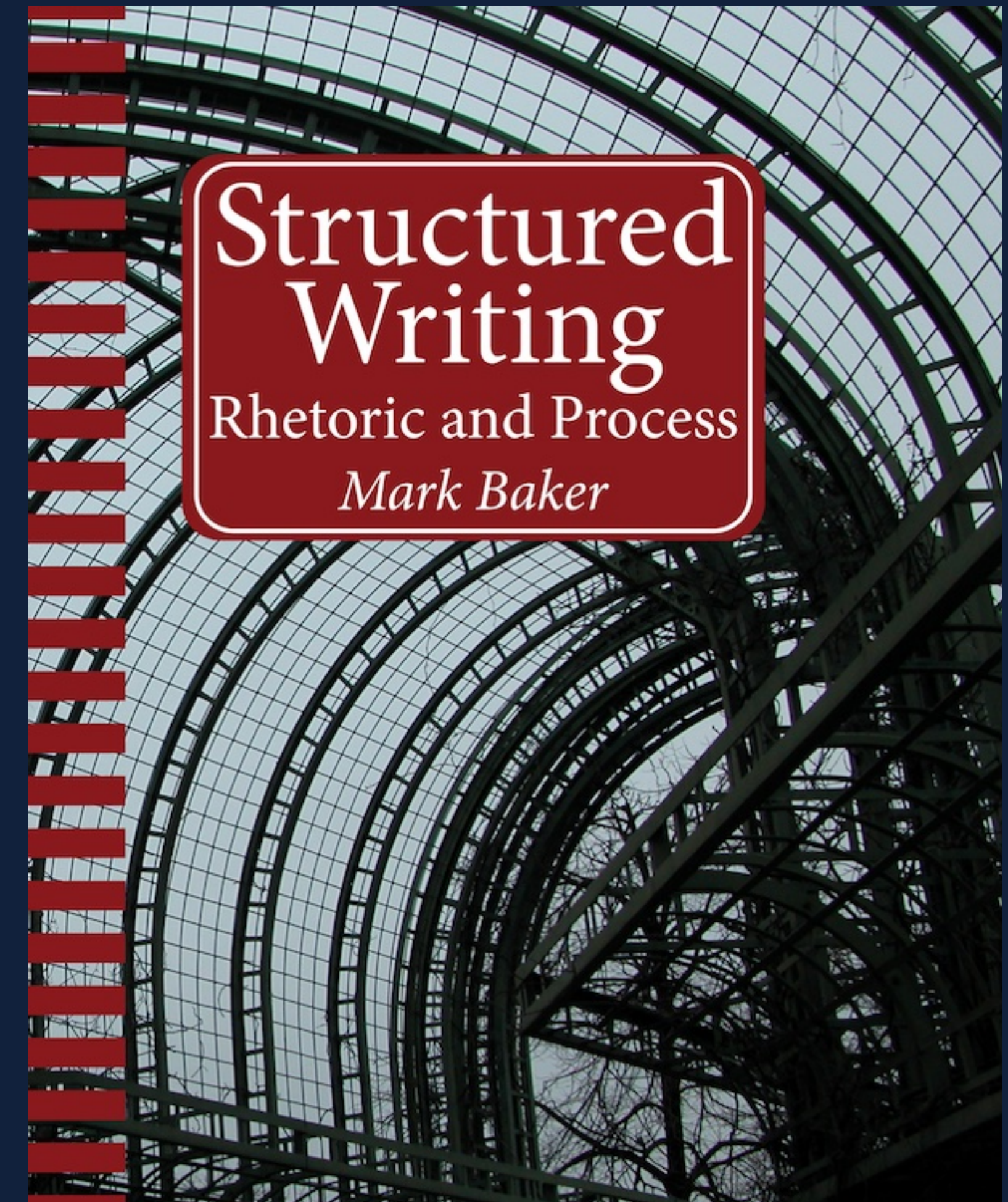
Plan for complexity  
with composable

# Composable Content Is Language-like

Content **communicates a specific message** to a particular audience.

Composable content arranges **small, incomplete pieces** to create new, complete messages.

It's complicated because **you're making a language.**



# Components With Roles and Rules

Grammar governs how things combine and interact to create meaning.

Relationships can be richer than “stacked” and “nested.”

*The boy rode a horse.*

*A boy rode the horse.*

*The horse rode a boy.*

*Rode horse a boy the.*

# Components With Roles and Rules

Articulate rules to govern how content types interact with each other.

## Simple Content

Predictable, data-driven items with consistent presentation. Form-based input, no per-item customization.

## Fragments

Items with no specific position in the site. They appear along or inside other content as support.

## Elastic Content

Key site messages with wide variation in structure, complexity, and importance.

## Collections

Tools for grouping items with a shared purpose, theme, or navigation system.

## Elastic Content

Start with simple defaults, “plus up” with embedded fragments, dynamic widgets, and metadata-driven design variation.

- |                    |                                    |
|--------------------|------------------------------------|
| <b>Article</b>     | Fixed in time, cumulative          |
| <b>Topic</b>       | Authoritative, evolving, ephemeral |
| <b>Index</b>       | Dynamic, criteria-based directory  |
| <b>Blank Slate</b> | Special snowflakes*                |

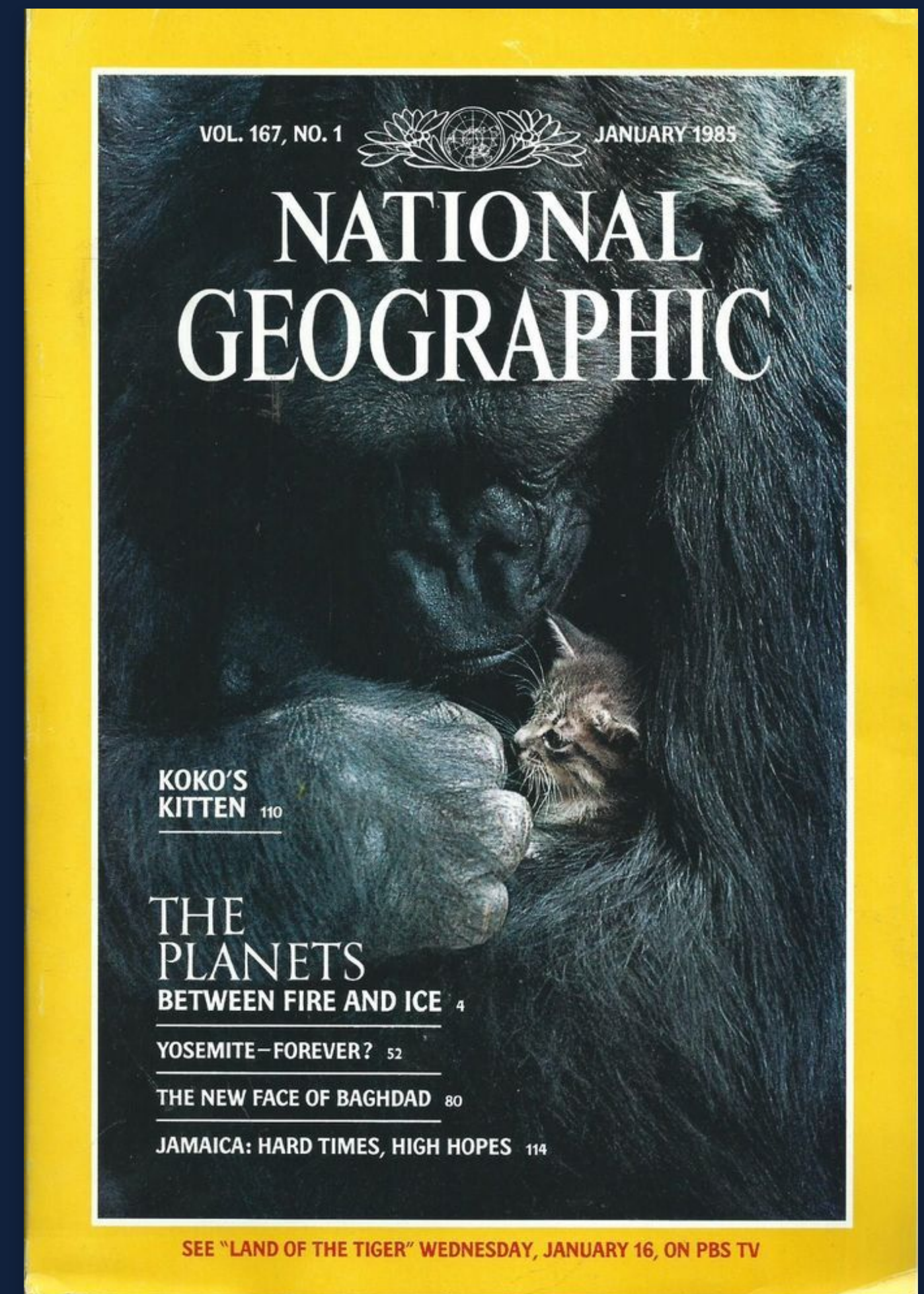




# Fewer Variations, More Combinations

Effective grammar allows a small set of components to do more work.

More precise words useful, but rich combinations are effective.



# Design as a Complimentary Layer

... in black shoots open a second-story window, climbs on a Dumpster, and jumps through the warehouse.

Officer sprints down the alley with flashlight and drawn, and follows him through the warehouse window.

WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

OFFICER  
Police! Drop your weapon and put your hands in the air!

MAN IN BLACK  
(Laughing) Do you really think you're going to stop me?

OFFICER  
Don't move, or I'll shoot!

MAN IN BLACK  
If you want me, come and get me.

The man in black disappears behind a tall row of steel cylinders and cranks open a valve on one of them. Pressurized gas HISSES out.

Officer curses and looks for another way around the forklift and jumps to a high shelf. Officer looks at the man in black, who



A man in a blue plaid shirt is looking down and to his left. Two women are walking past him. The woman on the left is wearing a red sleeveless top and is smiling. The woman on the right is wearing a light blue sleeveless top and is looking back at the man with a surprised expression. The background is a busy outdoor area with other people and buildings.

**LANGUAGE IS A  
USEFUL METAPHOR**

**ME FINISHING  
MY SLIDES**

**BOOTSTRAP IS  
PIG LATIN**

1. Page Builders promise to save teams from uncertainty, then bury them in mystery meat.
2. Use them sparingly, as an R&D lab for modeled types and smarter, flexible templates.
3. Capture intent and relationships; make content observable to avoid getting buried.
4. When full composability is needed, plan for complexity and use lessons from language.





# Thank you!



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[linkedin.com/company/autogram](https://www.linkedin.com/company/autogram)



**AUTOGRAM**