

Figma Feature Interview Notes

Participant #1

Participant Info

Age: 31

Occupation: Massage Therapist (11yrs) Business Owner (4 yrs) UX Designer 8 mos

Work Location: Mix of on-location & remote

Work on Team(s): Clients

Process

- ❖ How often do you use components?
 - Often, in the wireframing step.
 - Affected by phase of development.
- ❖ What is your confidence level with them?
 - Low-medium
- ❖ What do you use components for?
 - When making many screens, not for few screens
- ❖ How do you use components?
 - When deciding something needs to be a component, she takes non-componentized elements and stacks in another frame on the same page.
- ❖ How do you organize components?
 - Organizes it as she goes and makes changes even afterwards.
 - Stores them in working form on the same pages as a design, and eventually on a different page.

- ❖ What is your approach to designing and iterating on responsive design for multiple devices?
 - Usually starts with desktop first, then tablet, then mobile.
 - When getting to the next size, makes sure things translates well.
 - Starts with just one master component
 - Does not use variants yet, too unfamiliar
 - Detaches and makes new component sizes as needed
- ❖ What is your approach to making instance overrides?
 - Going on YouTube and refreshing what that means and how to do it properly.
 - Just works through it with no specific approach, changing what is needed
- ❖ What is your process for editing master components?
 - Right click, edit master, edit, return back to instance

Pains & Gains

- ❖ What frustrations do you face with components?
 - Feels like she is always detaching to make changes, that it's never correct and maybe she is missing something that she isn't getting, due to lack of practice.
 - What could help make it easier?
 - Would be nice to have tooltips or help button/icon.
 - Figma is constantly updated and sometimes hard to stay on top of as a beginner.
 - “With all updates in products they always add new features, but it's never about fixing old features”.
 - Community “Beta” doesn't always show as beta for other users and it a bit uneasy, wondering if she is maybe missing an update
 - Sidebar is a bit confusing overall
 - Not very clear what does what on the sidebar
- ❖ What are your workarounds?
 - Still learning and in process of developing her own methods

- ❖ What works well with components?
 - Consistency throughout the design better
 - Would like to know more about and use components well, and work on project that are using well made components
- ❖ What do other design tools do well regarding components?
 - Didn't get that far when using Sketch
 - Working with Sketch has a good feeling
 - More professional UI
 - Makes her feel like a pro
 - Vector flows better with Sketch
 - Figma doesn't feel as good but it is more popular so she uses it
 - Feels more like a beginner when using it
 - Would like to work on a team using Sketch
 - Wants to study and get decent at both
- ❖ Do you have any final thoughts on improving Figma components?
 - No specific ideas, just that it needs to be better
 - Doesn't know components well enough to give a better answer

Figma Feature Interview Notes

Participant #2

Participant Info

Age: 38

Occupation: UX Designer (5 yrs)

Work Location: Remote

Work on Team(s): Team

Process

- ❖ How often do you use components?
 - Depends on project
 - If long in scope and many screens, yes
 - If new feature or single page, no
 - It's only going to be one instance
 - When you do need components, how often?
 - Not very frequently
- ❖ What is your confidence level with them?
 - 8/10
- ❖ What do you use components for?
 - Text fields
 - Buttons
 - If something is used across the board
- ❖ How do you create and structure components?
 - Start by creating different states
 - Then interactions & animations

How do you structure them and do you have an approach

- Atomic design
 - Company doesn't have a lot of UX guidelines
 - Needs to build from small to whole
- ❖ How do you organize components?
 - Page with a list of all components for project
 - Follows Material Design approach
 - Separate Design system file with pages by element type
 - List of element types on separate pages
 - Typography
 - Look and feel
 - Buttons
 - Tabs
 - Radio buttons
- ❖ What is your approach to designing and iterating on responsive design for multiple devices?
 - Starts on desktop
 - Needs to see all possible elements
 - Modify the elements to the mobile experience
 - Knows mobile is important but this works better
 - Tries to make one component to work for all sizes
 - How do you ensure that they work well on all sizes?
 - Adjusts the width of the container bounds
 - Isn't constantly adjusting
- ❖ What is your approach to making instance overrides?
 - When something is needing to be different or changed
 - Copied the instance
 - Broke the component
 - Created a new component to solve a new design need

- ❖ What is your process for editing master components?
 - Ideally you have all your components and simply build things with them
 - When something isn't working as understood or intended, he will adapt into what he needs
 - Navigates with right click

Pains & Gains

- ❖ What frustrations do you face with components?
 - Naming convention
 - All instances are similar in name
 - Would be useful upon creation to rename
 - Would help to organize and differentiate layers
 - Hard to find elements if not uniquely named when making interactions and animations
 - Generally components are easy to use
 - What are your workarounds?
 - Rename it manually
 - Group components by placements
 - Ex: "header"
 - No plugins
 - Uses plugins for images & illustrations
- ❖ What works well with components?
 - Global edits save time
- ❖ What do other design tools do well regarding components?
 - Adobe XD
 - Overrides
 - Animation & Interactions

- ❖ Do you have any final thoughts on improving Figma components?
 - Overall intuitive and nothing major enough to need a feature

Figma Feature Interview Notes

Participant #3

Participant Info

Age: 25

Occupation: Case Manager (1yr)

Work Location: Remotely

Work on Team(s): No

Process

- ❖ How often do you use components?
 - Not as much as she would like
 - Any reason?
 - Useful when knowing for sure she will use exact layout in other places
 - Afraid to make changes or make a firm decision
- ❖ What is your confidence level with them?
 - Average (low-medium)
- ❖ What do you use components for?
 - Nav bar
 - Footer
 - Cards
 - Has most difficult time with
 - E.g. multiple text
 - Master has 1 line of text and instance needs 2
 - Other two don't have huge changes

- ❖ How do you create and structure components?
 - Wasn't sure what I meant by structuring components
 - Just has non-component elements, no nested instances
- ❖ How do you organize components?
 - At most, naming it
 - Doesn't really know how to properly organize them
 - Where do you store the master components?
 - Puts them on the same file where designing
 - Haven't had the time prioritized to deeply get familiar with components
 - Does having them on the same page help or is it just due to not knowing or thinking of putting it elsewhere?
 - Didn't know of another way to do it
 - Wants to know what the element looks like with the overall design
 - "How am I supposed to make changes as a separate element when I'm not looking at it within the entire page? And if the master is somewhere else on another page, then I can't really be changing the entire thing all at once and still be able to look at the overall picture. So, it doesn't really make sense to me to put it on another page"
 - Would only put component masters on another page if handing over to a developer as a UI kit
 - ◆ Do you have any ideas on what Figma could do to make editing it in context possible?
 - Webflow reference
 - You can update a duplicate component and update the master
 - NEED TO CONFIRM THIS
 - Mentioned it would be nice to update a master from an instance that is modified
 - Informed her that you can

- ❖ What is your approach to designing and iterating on responsive design for multiple devices?
 - Usually has a desktop page first
 - Creates a different pages for different devices
 - Moves masters into the new device pages to have available
 - Creates a device-specific version of component
 - One responsive component or device-centric?
 - Device-centric
 - Avoids component “frustration”
- ❖ What is your approach to making instance overrides?
 - Makes the changes directly to the instance
 - Really only changes:
 - Color
 - Text
 - Sometimes pictures
 - Can be tricky to work with, especially with masks
 - Realizes she needs to become more familiar with components
- ❖ What is your process for editing master components?
 - Has Master in same page as design
 - Finds or navigates to the master to make edits
 - Master components are actually used in the design
 - Keeps them living within the design
 - Makes editing in context easier but less organized in terms of design system for team functionality

Pains & Gains

- ❖ What frustrations do you face with components?
 - Lacking in flexibility with instances
 - An easier way to go back and forth between master and final design
- ❖ What are your workarounds?
 - Duplicating frames
 - Copying and pasting elements
 - Changing text or other attributes as needed
 - Doesn't use plugins
- ❖ What works well with components?
 - Consistency
 - Efficiency
 - If it works as planned
- ❖ What do other design tools do well regarding components?
 - Pen tool ability is much more advanced in Illustrator
- ❖ Do you have any final thoughts on improving Figma components?
 - Ability to allow users to input their own text into components for prototyping and interactions
 - Better tutorials
 - Maybe a question mark button that links to help docs/videos
 - Maybe an onboarding type thing to show you what can be done
 - Feels somewhat guilty for not having invested time into components along with thinking Figma needs to do better at informing users on capabilities.

Figma Feature Interview Notes

Participant #4

Participant Info

Age: 28

Occupation: Product Designer (3 yrs)

Work Location: Remote

Work on Team(s): Solo Role- Affects other Teams

Process

- ❖ How often do you use components?
 - Constantly
 - Whole job is to make the components
 - While at GrubHub doing feature work they didn't have a design system, but he built it out
 - Can get messy on web if everything is a component
 - Different definitions of components
 - Reusable piece of a design
 - Reusable code
 - Some things are worth the work and others aren't
 - Typically stuff you see all over the place
 - Can be a design component but not a code component
 - Not for "one-offs" which are rarely used elements

- Contextual component
 - Always hold same material but may be needed on multiple screens
 - Eg: Profile card shown on account and some other page
 - Not as strictly linked
- Primitives
 - Color and text styles
 - ◆ Used in any case
 - ◆ Even for one-offs
 - ◆ Except exportable assets
- ❖ What is your confidence level with them?
 - One day feels confident
 - Another day something happens
 - Figma updated
 - Retro needed on everything
 - Code impact
 - What is in a component changes
 - Aliasing things at multiple levels
 - All properties have a naming convention
 - Background
 - ◆ Fill color
 - ◆ Border color
 - ◆ Weight
 - ◆ Other styles
 - Allows overriding at any level

- Confidence comes from:
 - Knowing that no one knows the right answer
 - Design Systems are still ≤ 5 years old
 - Not defined enough to say what the right way is
- Component family text styles
 - Card / H1
 - Would inherit global H1
 - Could be overridden at text style card level
 - Card only had 4 text styles
 - Allowed for a card to have its own relative hierarchies
- ❖ What do you use components for?
 - Everything
 - No reason to have anything on a screen that isn't a design component
 - Otherwise setting up for a headache
- ❖ How do you create and structure components?
 - Doesn't design components for feature work
 - Starts out messy and refines it as he progresses
 - Two hats as a creator
 - Creator
 - Messy screens
 - No components
 - Borrows from existing library where possible
 - Goes back and looks at what needs to be componentized

- When no components work and need a new one:
 - ◆ Creates it on the spot for that screen
 - ◆ Becomes a question of:
 - Whether it works for all screens
 - Will it actually be reusable?
 - What can you foresee being needed in the future?
 - Good idea to think about use cases in advance
 - Devs don't like when elements in components aren't used or are hidden
 - Come to appreciate it when it does become needed
- Publisher
 - Component libraries
- Nesting components
- Use tools to make things easier
 - Variants for toggles
- Document everything so it is written down consistently
- Try to be as close to the actual component
 - Unlikely for rules in some other place to actually be written
- Do you use a structural component?
 - Has limitations
 - Once you make a component and you use an instance of that component to make another one
 - Auto-layout sometimes doesn't play well with instances
 - Really consider what will actually be needed or used

- Can be easy to over-optimize
 - e.g. if a button will never be resized, don't worry about making a structural control for it
 - Make sure the whole team know how to use it
 - “Not everyone will be a Figma wizard and understand what they can or can't do”
- ❖ How do you organize components?
 - For Mobile design at GrubHub
 - Android and Apple libraries
 - Had to all be in one library due to Figma limitation
 - A file with master components duplicated creates new local master components
 - Template had to be styled
 - Designers had to duplicate and re-style as needed
 - Difficult to manage as one big file
 - Current Role
 - Only one product
 - File for each asset type
 - ◆ Color
 - ◆ Type
 - ◆ Icons
 - Organizes similar to Material Design
 - Buttons
 - Cards
 - Form elements
 - Snackbars
 - Etc

➤ Status

- Released
- In Design
- In Discovery
- In Testing (new idea)

➤ Type

- Reusable
 - Be sure devs will actually reuse this
- Contextual
- One-off

➤ Atomic Design

- Doesn't describe things as "elements"
 - Feels too arbitrary to discern what the line is for the next level in atomic design
 - Refers to everything as simply components, nested components, etc
- Does use the term regions for elements large enough as a screen sized item or view
 - If not stored as an element in code
 - Mostly used by designers to not have to rebuild things
- Terms used
 - Primitives (building blocks)
 - ◆ Styles
 - ◆ Effects
 - ◆ Backgrounds
 - ◆ Shadows
 - ◆ Any other tokens

- Components
 - ◆ Combination of primitives
 - ◆ Up to large items
- Regions
 - ◆ Large screen items
- ❖ What is your approach to designing and iterating on responsive design for multiple devices?
 - Doesn't have much experience with that
 - Worked in mobile and now web only
 - Doesn't have to worry about it and won't until needed
- ❖ What is your approach to making instance overrides?
 - Populating a component with instance overrides
 - Don't break components
 - Need a different component
 - Update to existing component
 - Make a one-off and separate it out and documented
 - Do you do a lot of overrides to instances of a main component?
 - No primitives updated at instance level
 - If needing that, you need a new variant
 - Typical overrides
 - Fill image
 - Swap icon
 - Dummy text
 - Views
 - Turn on or off dividers
 - Make sure true with development and documented
 - Or a variant with something hidden

- ❖ What is your process for editing master components?
 - At GrubHub
 - Only designer for mobile
 - Loose with the component updates
 - Current Role
 - Decisions impact other designers
 - More careful with it now
 - Until Figma and branching is ready:
 - In a separate doc, take instance, break it, send to dev with notes and ticket
 - Once released, will update the main component in design system with documentation and component description
 - ◆ Goes back to main component and rebuilds it based on the other temporary one
 - ◆ Wishes he could copy and paste layout like he can with styles
 - ◆ Would be nice to find and replace all instances with a new updated component
 - Goal when publishing is to let designers be able to accept any publishing changes
 - Doesn't make changes to the library until it's real in code

Pains & Gains

1. What frustrations do you face with components?
 - Limitations of design software
 - Things not directly matching code
 - Hacked ways to do things that don't translate into code
 - Designers draw pictures and it doesn't matter if it doesn't turn into workable code at some point
 - Designers tend to kid themselves on their systems being the source of truth, when really the final product and code is

- These lead to discrepancies
 - Realizes it is ok that it's not exact match
- Autolayout
 - Sees all layer elements as the same vertical or horizontal element to be spaced out
 - No way to nest a component *inside* of it that isn't affected by auto layout settings
- Hard to test components in isolation
 - Can't really do research
- What could make this easier?
 - Learn how to code and send code snippet or github link
- What are your workarounds?
 - Understand when it is worth it and when to move on
 - Sometimes you just have to leave a note for designers when things have to be done manually
 - Will reach out to them on how to better do something
 - Most important thing is that all things are built correctly
 - In theory, should be able to build off of designs with grey boxes and labels

2. What works well with components?

- Autolayout and Variants
 - Complete game-changers
 - Helps designers to think more like devs
 - Inside out approach
 - More code-centric
- Being able to isolate different types of styles
 - Compared to Sketch where you have to include too many properties in one thing
- Ability to organized styles with drag

- versus having to use complicated naming to make it work.

3. What do other design tools do well regarding components?

- Seeing overrides in Sketch was nice
- Abstract
 - Another tool like GitHub
 - Allowed branching

4. Do you have any final thoughts on improving Figma components?

- Further nesting levels
 - Color styles
 - Text Styles
 - Projects
 - Team > Project > Folders
 - Would like folders inside a project
- Overrides panel options like Sketch
 - Floating panel option like Adobe has
- Border Radius style
- Color styles for borders named in inspect panel
 - Currently only shows a hex and not the named color style used
 - Leads to colors being hard-coded vs styled, which is not ideal

Figma Feature Interview Notes

Participant #5

Participant Info

Age: 50+

Occupation: Designer (25yrs)

Work Location: Remote

Work on Team(s): On occasion as a freelancer

Process

- ❖ How often do you use components?
 - Pretty much every project
 - When it's called for
 - Unless simple form
 - Multiple pages or screens
- ❖ What is your confidence level with them?
 - Relatively comfortable
 - Not expert
 - "I don't know if I'm a nerd about components, like I see videos of people doing it...I'm not that"
- ❖ What do you use components for?
 - Use them for what is needed
 - Elements
 - Buttons
 - Cards
 - Groups of things
 - Headers & Footers
 - Items used multiple places
- ❖ How do you create and structure components?

- Big challenge
 - Have to plan
 - Deciding on what is a component, style, etc
 - A lot of trial and error
- ❖ How do you organize components?
 - Still figuring that out
 - Unsure how best to organize
 - Haven't felt comfy knowing what he wants to do
 - Haven't really thought that much about it yet
 - Setting masters to side of same page
 - At first thought it was weird but ended up liking it
 - Nice to have it able to be in the design itself
 - Unlike Sketch which defaults symbols to a separate page and back, it is nice that Figma allows you the ability to not have to do that
 - Not having to go to separate page and then back to the design
 - Putting in a separate location
 - Design is really about organization
 - Gives a good overview of all elements and structure
 - More organized than floating around with the design
- ❖ What is your approach to designing and iterating on responsive design for multiple devices?
 - Keep the styles consistent
 - One document and multiple pages wherever possible
 - Components adjusted
 - One for each size, not one multi-purpose component
 - Never had success making them responsive even with constraints

- ❖ What is your approach to making instance overrides?
 - Just selects the element to change and updating it

- ❖ What is your process for editing master components?
 - Just navigate and update
 - Checks the instances to confirm looking right
 - Checks Figma Mirror on relevant device

Pains & Gains

- ❖ What frustrations do you face with components?
 - Unclear about what can be overridden
 - Sometimes afraid to mess with it
 - Constant updates and sometimes unsure what the latest capabilities are
 - What are your workarounds?
 - Detaches or groups items and moves on
 - Doesn't use plugins for components
 - Components are not primetime
 - Figma still young and working out the kinks
 - Does a decent job at what it can do

- ❖ What works well with components?
 - Ability to make adjustments as you go
 - Ability to find the master component
 - **Ability to work with other features**
 - Auto layout
 - Styles

- ❖ What do other design tools do well regarding components?
 - Sketch overrides list

- ❖ Do you have any final thoughts on improving Figma components?
 - Not sure exactly what that answer is but it does still need work
 - Needs to be clearer
 - What can it do or not do?
 - What can be overridden?
 - Explaining it to his students is hard
 - It's a lot to wrap your brain around

Figma Feature Interview Notes

Participant #6

Participant Info

Age: 35

Occupation: Student (1yr), Healthcare (5 yrs)

Work Location: N/A

Work on Team(s): N/A

Process

- ❖ How often do you use components?
 - Pretty often once style guide is established and approaching wireframing step and deciding what will be a component
 - More often with more practice at Figma
 - Had to learn the hard way when he should have used them
 - Updating a lot of elements manually
 - Variants was a big deal for him
- ❖ What is your confidence level with them?
 - 6/10
- ❖ What do you use components for?
 - UI elements
 - Text Placeholders
 - Larger groupings of items
 - Progress bars
 - Lo-fi & Hi-fi components
- ❖ How do you create and structure components?
 - Uses Variants
 - Would like to use Auto-layout more but it's still confusing
 - Doesn't use nested instances much

- Hasn't experimented with it that much
- It's a good idea
- Wouldn't instinctively think about it that way
- Creates them inside the design and then moves them
 - Aligns to a grid to ensure it works
 - Right click > Move to Component
- ❖ How do you organize components?
 - Separate page
 - Thinks of it like a Desktop
 - Things end up there
 - When moving items they end up in weird places
 - Doesn't think to arrange components page like any other frame
 - Would like to have better way of organizing them so Assets panel is cleaner
- ❖ What is your approach to designing and iterating on responsive design for multiple devices?
 - Auto-Layout would come in handy but isn't good with it yet
 - If he was better he would tweak the component to work for all devices
 - Currently does just separate
 - Starts separately for each device
 - Weighing out the time to learn it vs manual work to get the work done
- ❖ What is your approach to making instance overrides?
 - Does it a lot with colors
 - Adjusting style definitions
 - Publish changes and sync to working file
 - On component instances
 - Updates the master and checks the instance
 - Will swap selection colors on properties panel

- Potential issues
 - May not notice misalignments
 - Negative space changes if adjusting sizes
- ❖ What is your process for editing master components?
 - Typically adjusts the master in file location
 - Will often just add a new variant vs a new component
 - Starts edits from the master
 - Wasn't aware of push overrides to master component
 - Tries not to detach too many instances
 - How do you change dimensions of a master and know it will translate well on the instances?
 - Width
 - Checks design & grid to find a goal
 - Less worried about this than height
 - Height
 - Checks the design and grid to find a goal
 - More concerned about this
 - Will sometimes adjust the container holding instances and just update the master to ensure it fits
 - Not really clear on what a property is within a variant

Pains & Gains

- ❖ What frustrations do you face with components?
 - Some of the terminology is not intuitive
 - Reset all overrides
 - Overrides
 - I think there may be confusion between *updating* a master and *overriding* an instance property
 - No levels adjustments on images

- Being unclear on auto-layout
- Wishes Figma would make learning easier
- Dealing with how constraints will function
 - Will it move the way intended?
- What are your workarounds?
 - Manual work
 - Uses plugins to help find elements in components
 - Does not use plugins to adjust or manipulate components
- ❖ What works well about components?
 - Variants
 - Allows him to focus and easily add a variant
 - Not having many limitations
 - Choice to nest instances
 - Generally he can do what he wants to do
- ❖ What do other design tools do well regarding components?
 - XD repeat grids
- ❖ Do you have any final thoughts on improving Figma components?
 - Levels adjustments on images
 - More control over the asset panel
 - Ability to favorite things
 - Organize the items in groups
 - Wasn't aware of the naming convention or storing components into frames
 - Maybe a quick view of the page itself when expanding the panel to full width
 - Could search but doesn't always remember component names

- More support for learning design systems & component
 - Feels really hard to get started
 - Blank canvas is daunting
 - Placeholder buttons and elements?
 - Allow them to be tweaked to help with learning
 - Like playground files but not tucked away in the community file but on screen in front of you

- Uses audio editing software
 - They help you learn with example demo files