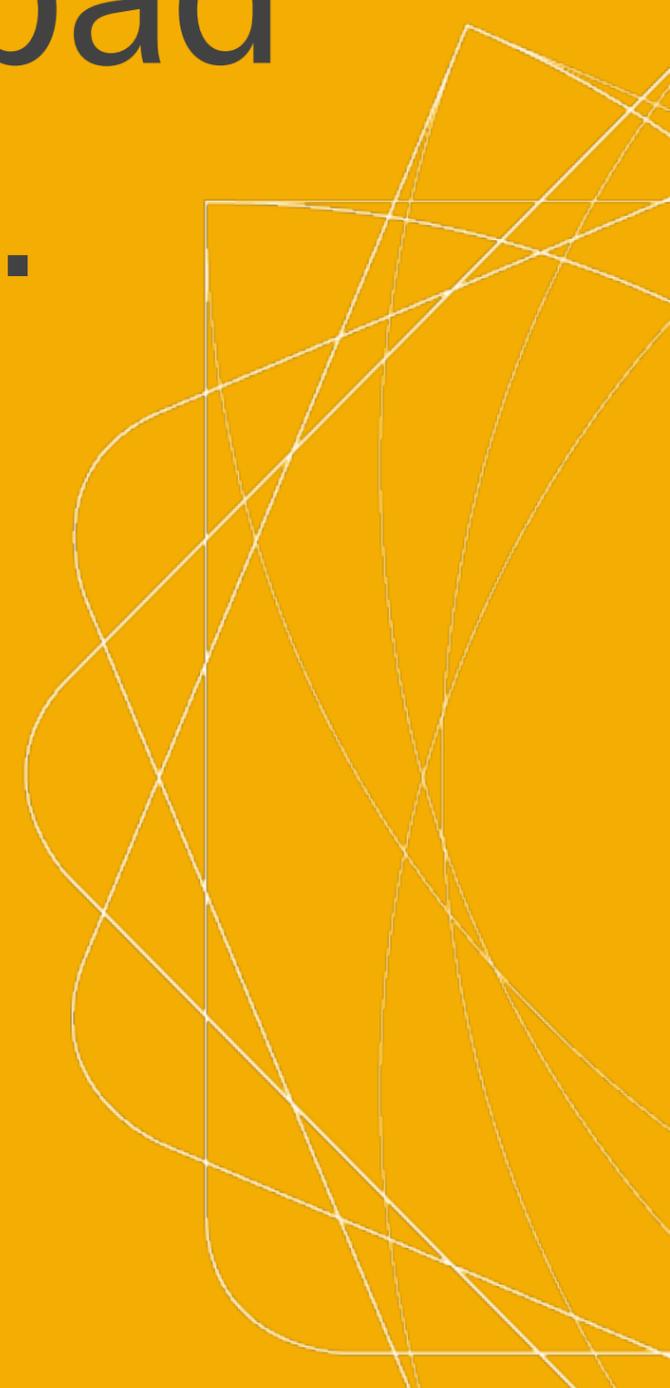


# Designing around bad business decisions.

Simon Clayson



This talk is going to be all about when we encounter decisions that are beyond our control and especially those we don't agree with.

I want to highlight a few basic things that recognise this and what we can do to deal with them.

# What?

- ▶ You're the designer, the programmer, the do-er, the blue collar geek. You make things.
- ▶ You are always right.

Designers and programmers make things.

You have opinions and generally think they are right.

# Hierarchy.

- ▶ You provide a service.
- ▶ Answerable to your account manager.
- ▶ Answerable to your boss.
- ▶ Answerable to your client.
- ▶ Answerable to the punters.

But designers and programmers need to remember they are only part of a story.

\* You're answerable to everyone

Enthusiasm

The new site will be  
**GREAT!**



The Client

Great?  
It'll be **INCREDIBLE!**  
It'll soar like an eagle in outer space!



The Designer

How a Web Design Goes Straight to Hell - [http://theoatmeal.com/comics/design\\_hell](http://theoatmeal.com/comics/design_hell)

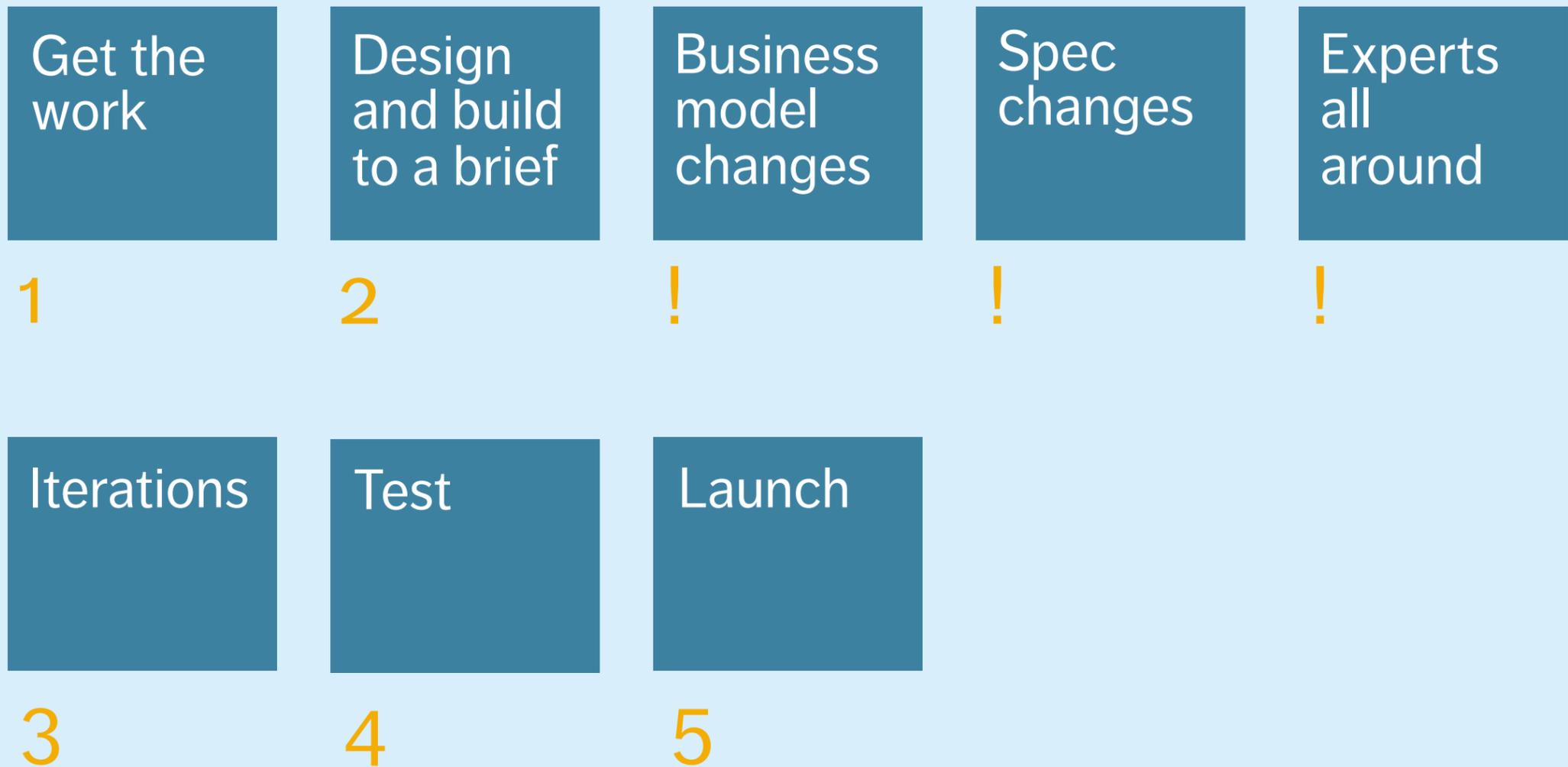
See also: Clients from Hell - <http://clientsfromhell.net/>

We've been here before.

Various sites like the Oatmeal and Clients from Hell lampooning the whole process are just two.

Make the Logo bigger, nothing below the fold, users don't scroll, white space is empty space – it's easy to mock.

# The process.



The process more or less consists of 5 parts, but it doesn't always happen so smoothly.

Add in for example:

\* Business Model Changes

\* Spec changes

\* Everyone is suddenly an expert at YOUR job.

# Us.

- ▶ Account and project managers promising the known world.
- ▶ Not anticipating changes and then getting all resentful.
- ▶ Realising implementing a new feature or idea is always a challenge.

Can't just blame clients, there's issues on both sides.

# Them.

- ▶ Sales team, accounts and the company budget weigh in - everyone's got an opinion.
- ▶ Top level management gets involved.
- ▶ My niece writes nice stuff for the South African Embassy, she can do some proofing.
- ▶ Computers are easy, I just don't know the program well enough.

There's also common client issues so it only seems fair to dig in while we're at it.

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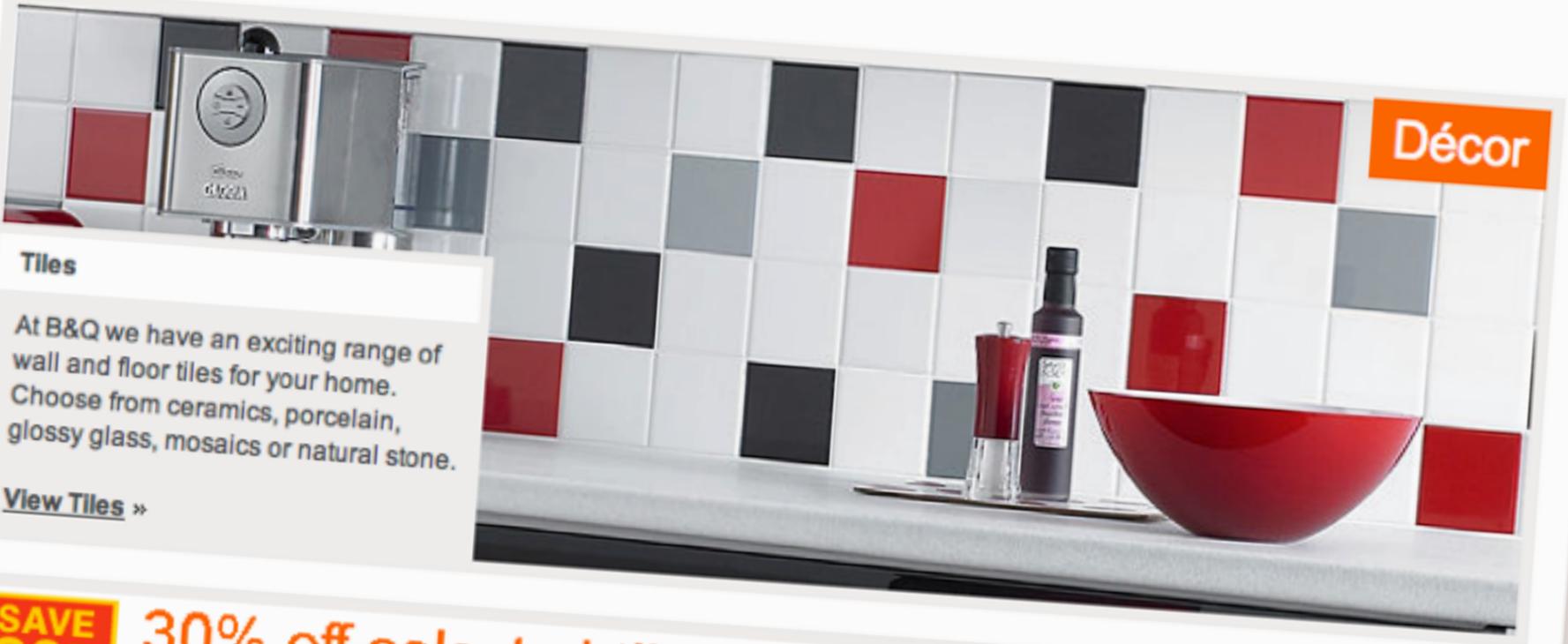
<http://www.npower.com/Home/Electricity-and-gas/Products/index.htm>

So many products, so little space, so little to say.

# décor

## By category

- Lighting (1318)
- Soft Furnishings (1016)
- Tiles (962)
- Flooring (1372)
- Wallcoverings (677)
- Art, Mirrors & Frames (317)
- Kids' Zone (226)
- Decorating Sundries (581)
- Paint (2368)



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## Find Questions & Answers for the categories below...

- Lighting
- Flooring
- Finishing Touches
- Curtains & Blinds
- Wallcoverings
- Decorative Sundries
- Tiles
- Paint



## diy advice

- Lay laminate flooring
- Tile calculator
- Hang wallpaper



[http://www.diy.com/diy/jsp/bg/nav.jsp?fh\\_location=%2f%2fcatalogo1%2fen\\_GB%2fcategories%3c%7b9372013%7d&fh\\_edc=%c3%9f&zone=decor&linktype=topnav\\_decor](http://www.diy.com/diy/jsp/bg/nav.jsp?fh_location=%2f%2fcatalogo1%2fen_GB%2fcategories%3c%7b9372013%7d&fh_edc=%c3%9f&zone=decor&linktype=topnav_decor)

Lets give everyone access to the CMS – quality doesn't matter – everyone, not just designers can create banner graphics with no value!

\* 30% of selected tiling

# Other favourites.

- ▶ White space == Empty space.
- ▶ Auto opt-in mailers.
- ▶ Pie charts.
- ▶ “Forgetting” about accessibility.
- ▶ Hover and popup menus.
- ▶ Social Media trinkets.

These speak for themselves – and your own peeves here.

We confidently  
think every project  
will go brilliantly  
from the start.

Don't try to change clients, we can't "educate" them and no-one likes being told what to do.

To deal with issues, assess your own approach.

Don't be so idealistic and add some pragmatism from time-to-time.

Maybe it won't.

But we could  
give it the benefit  
of doubt.

The positive motivational bit: Channel your confidence and opinions to positive outcomes.

# Question.

- ▶ Ask questions. Don't be afraid of sounding stupid.
- ▶ Ask questions OF the client.
- ▶ Those opinions everyone has? Listen.

Always keep asking questions.

\* Chris Boardman – value people asking daft questions

\* Ask questions of your clients. What you think are their wacky ideas, to them, are completely feasible. Ask who? what? why? got some data to support this? Any other examples I can see?

\* No one knows everything and you aren't expected to.

# Do something.

- ▶ Avoid technical terms and jargon.
- ▶ Suggest alternatives to the “bad idea”, make it, do it, prove it can work, even just as a mockup.
- ▶ Recognise design is an iterative process where mistakes are acceptable.
- ▶ Stakeholder isn't a buzzword.

\* Don't just moan about it.

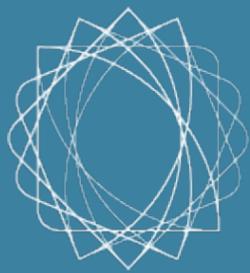
\* Do something. Be pro-active.

\* Get contracts written, make sure everyone in a project has clear roles.

\* Suggest alternatives

# Thank you.

simonclayson.co.uk  
@claypole



Simon Clayson design

The end.