HERDING THE POLITICAL ANIMALS

KEY STRATEGIES FOR DELIVERING A SUCCESSFUL PROJECT IN SPITE OF ORGANIZATIONAL POLITICS

WHO AM I?

- Obligitory photo ->

- cecrs on d.o

- cecrs on Twitter

- I am a co-founder of Roomify - roomify.us

- Formerly a technical project manager at Bluespark

POLITICS, FTW!

Draft

Just kidding.

Client politics make building a site 10 times harder.

What to do?

OPTION 1: IGNORE THE POLITICS

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- Bad, Bad, Bad.

- Spend all your budget playing "Bring me a rock".

- You lose the blame game.

STRONG WORKING RELATIONSHIPS ARE KEY TO PROJECT SUCCESS

BUILDING THESE RELATIONSHIPS TAKES TIME AND PATIENCE.

WHAT DOES PROJECT SUCCESS EVEN MEAN?

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- Agency perspective

- Project Coordinator/Owner perspective

- Stakeholder perspective

- Influencer perspective

- User perspective

THE CULTURE OF POLITICS

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- Fiefdoms. (e.g. Departments. Committees. Sub-committees. Working Groups.)

- No one wants to say no--even when they want to.

- All the things!

THE PLAYERS: THE ENEMIES / AXIS / OBSTACLES

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Identify the enemy. These people are not *your* enemy, they are the enemy of a successful project.

- Naysayers.

- The Late-comer.

- The Schizophrenic.

THE PLAYERS : ALLIES

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Identify your allies. They are not your friends and they may well turn on you. But they will not actively sabotage your efforts.

- Stakeholders.

- Project Coordinator.

- Users.

- Need these people on your side. If you don't have them, cut your losses.

BUILDING THE RELATIONSHIPS

STRATEGIES FOR BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

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- Talk openly about the issue of politics with allies.

- Help identify goals and how they map to user needs.

- Assert user dominance. Agree on what those needs are. Document assumptions around user needs.

- Wooing stakeholders. Who stakeholders are.

- Countermeasures for the torpedoes.

- Additional SOWs must include time to manage politics.

- Don't let the project coordinator serve as an intermediary.

USING THE SCOPE HAMMER

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- Set clear goals.

    - e.g. Phase 1: Build the framework for future growth.

- The challenge of setting priorities.

FINITE SCOPE

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- Budgets < Feature requests

- Time != Infinite

- Patience = Runs out eventually

- Too many cooks = Spoil the soup

FLEXIBLE SITE ARCHITECTURE

IMPLEMENTATION MUSTS FOR A SITE WITH MULTIPLE INTERESTS

- Fiefdoms

  - Everyone needs their own little kingdom to rule

- Flexibility

  - Re-usable components and leaving the door open for growth

- Ease of management

  - You may notice that I didn't alliterate the last one

  - The goal is to *avoid* content managers thinking of words that start with F

FIEFDOMS

- Stakeholders should be able to customize their personal domain, without affecting the overall functionality and look of the site. They should have a sense of ownership, but no actual power.

- kidding

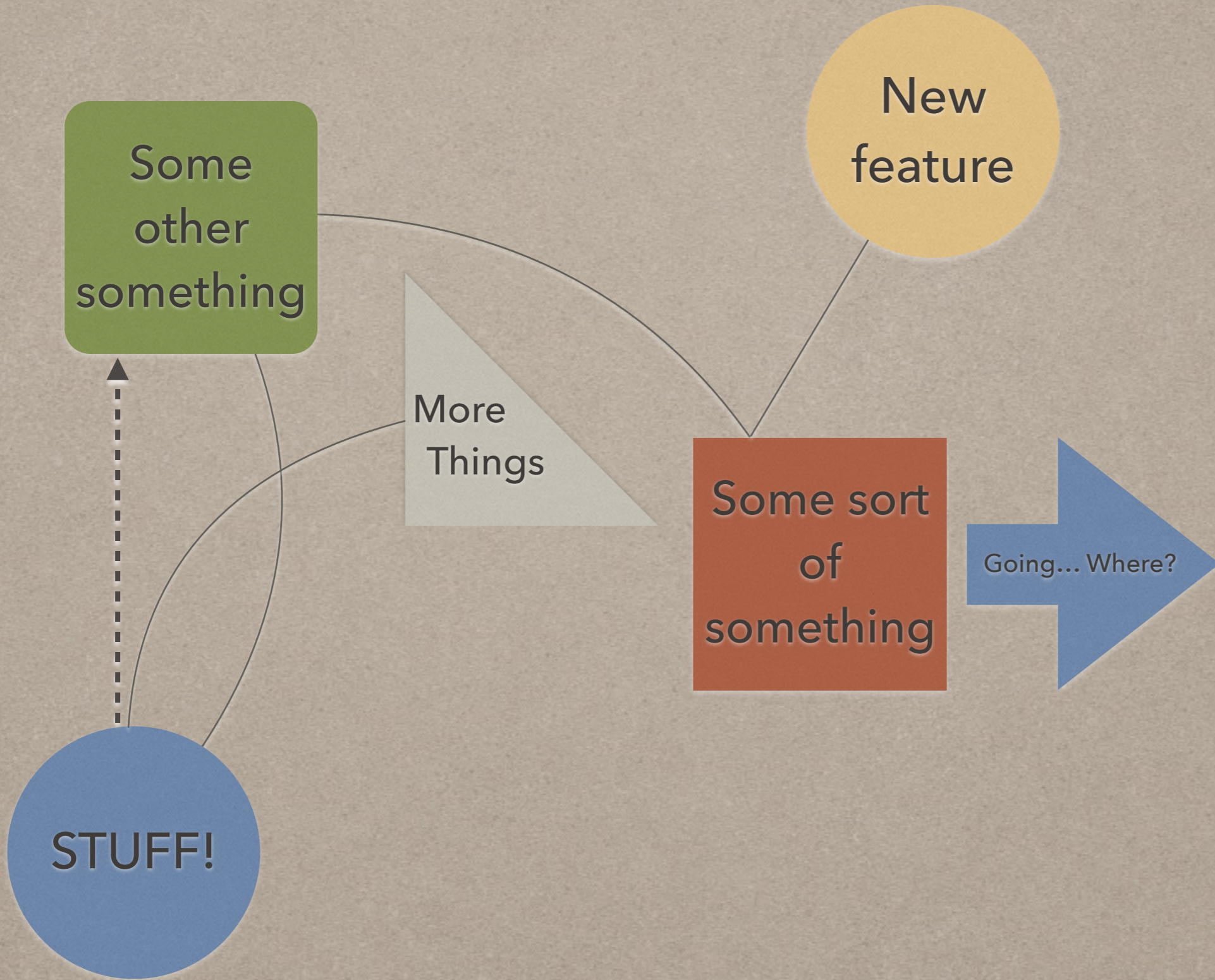- mostly

FLEXIBILITY : THE CERTAINTY OF UNCERTAINTY

- A site is never finished

- UX is the art of making assumptions about what other people want

  - And lest we forget, you probably promised someone that they could have their pet feature "down the road", but currently, "there isn't budget"

- Sometimes the only way to find out what people are actually going to use is to let them, well, use it.

EASE OF USE

- Content creators should not be overwhelmed by (allthethings). Big Sites have BIG CONTENT!

- Content creators keep a site fresh. and so clean. They should have easy access to their content, without being overwhelmed by the rest of the site.

COUNTER-EXAMPLE: NAME CHANGED TO PROTECT THE INNOCENT

- www.don'tbuildthisway.com

- No overarching site organization

- Incredibly complex permissions, but no way to easily present relevant content to CXers

- Additional features crammed in, makes maintenance well nigh impossible, and the source of a site component is always difficult to pinpoint
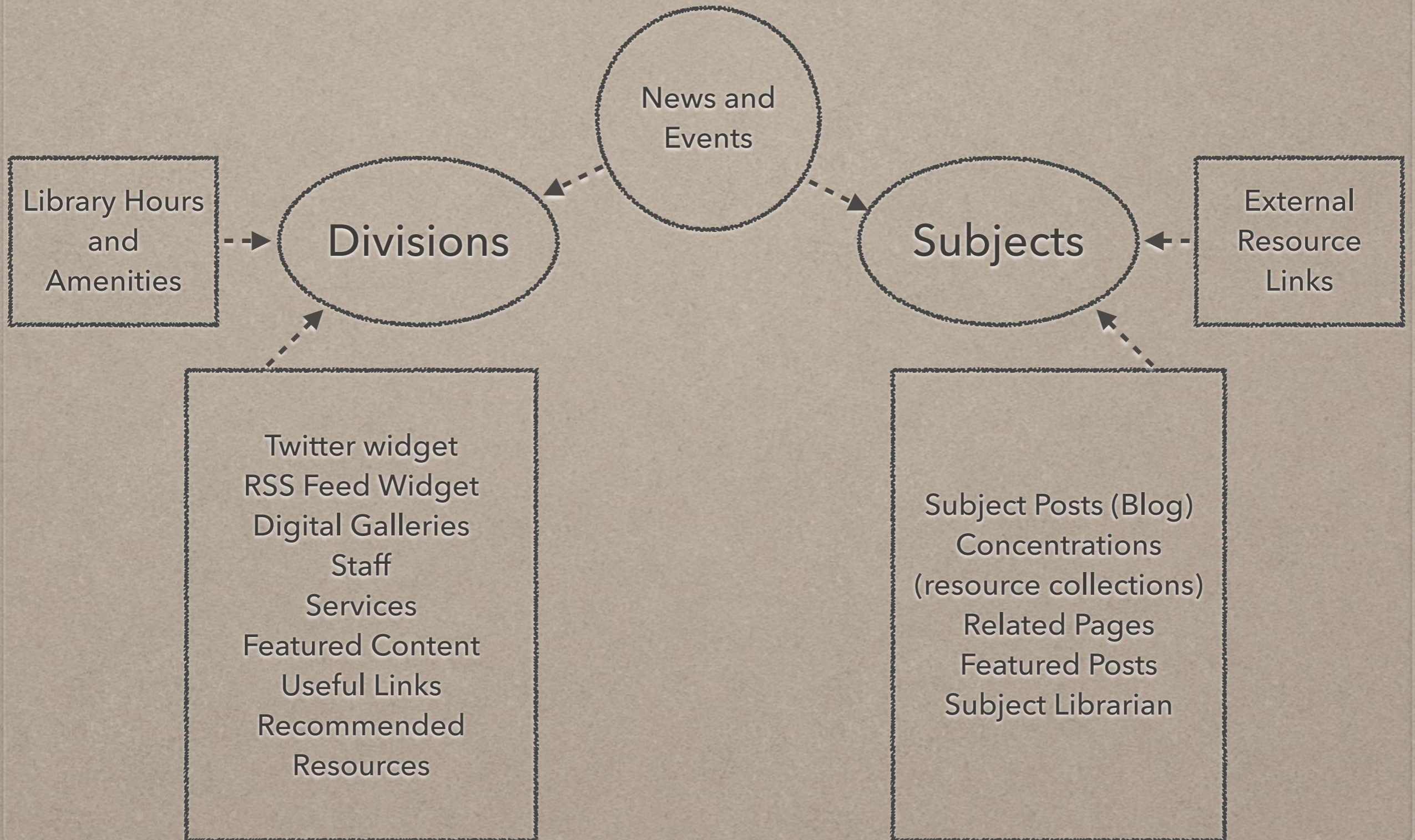
ACTUAL SOLUTIONS!

- Indiana University Libraries = Organic Groups

- UCLA Libraries = Taxonomies and Beans

- All other sites = Artsy pictures of pots that I was too lazy to replace with something relevant

EXAMPLE: INDIANA UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

- Architecture of the site relies heavily on the Organic Groups module

AN ONLY SOMEWHAT SIMPLIFIED DIAGRAM OF THE IUL SITE STRUCTURE

News and Events

Library Hours and Amenities

Divisions

Subjects

External Resource Links

Twitter widget
RSS Feed Widget
Digital Galleries
Staff
Services
Featured Content
Useful Links
Recommended Resources

Subject Posts (Blog)
Concentrations
(resource collections)
Related Pages
Featured Posts
Subject Librarian

IUL :ORGANIC FIEFDOMS

- Two Organic Groups on the site

- Divisions (Encompasses Libraries, Departments, and Units) and Subjects

- Each Organic Group has its own Ruler (less interestingly known as the administrative member) and Minions (members)

- Permissions are granted on a per Group basis, Group Rulers and Group Minions have NO site wide role, aside from being authenticated users.

- This means that when a fiefdoms minions are doing this, it doesn't affect anyone else's content

IUL : FLEXIBILITY AND ROOM TO GROW

- As you can see on the oh-so-technical site structure diagram, each Division and Subject has multiple components available to them for use and customization

- They can utilize those to whatever extent they wish

- This structure also means that there is room to grow. New widgets/functionality can be added without having to re-work anything that exists.

- I have actually come up with a few ideas for future work…

LOL-CAT WIDGET

- Need I say more?

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ANIMATED GIFS FOR STAFF PHOTOS

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IUL: KIND USER INTERFACES

- Don't let your content editors be overwhelmed

- Organic Groups allows us to present editors with content that is relevant to them

- Custom views based user dashboard

🚉 **Dashboard** 📄 Content 🔗 Structure 🔧 Appearance 👥 People 🧩 Modules 🔧 Configuration 📊 Reports ❓ Help   **Site Alert Settings**   ⬅|

DASHBOARD ⊕

Blue Spark
Edit profile

Filters | My Content ▾ | | All States ▾ | | All Groups ○ | | **Go** |

	TITLE	CREATOR	GROUP	TYPE	STATE	UPDATED ▾	TOTAL VISITORS	TOTAL UNIQUE	TODAY'S UNIQUE
☐	🔒 PubMed	Blue S.	n/a	Resource	Need Approval	02 28 2014 - 11:20 n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
☐	🔒 ThomsonONE	Blue S.	n/a	Resource	Need Approval	02 28 2014 - 11:14 n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
☐	Guide: Tax Information	Blue S.	Government Information, Maps and Microform Services	Basic Page	Draft	02 28 2014 - 09:30 n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
☐	🔒 Film Index International	Blue S.	n/a	Resource	Draft	02 27 2014 - 15:02 n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
☐	Interlibrary Loan (ILL)	Blue S.	Document Delivery Services	Services	Live	02 27 2014 - 14:45 n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
☐	🔒 IMF eLibrary	Blue S.	n/a	Resource	Need Approval	02 27 2014 - 14:21 n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
☐	🔒 Guide to U.S. Elections	Blue S.	n/a	Resource	Need Approval	02 27 2014 - 14:10 n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
☐	🌐 GlobeSmart	Blue S.	n/a	Resource	Need Approval	02 27 2014 - 14:08 n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
☐	🔒 Grand Corpus des dictionnaires de langue francaise, du IXe au XXe siecle	Blue S.	n/a	Resource	Need Approval	02 27 2014 - 14:04 n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
☐	🔒 JapanKnowledge+	Blue S.	n/a	Resource	Need Approval	02 27 2014 - 13:57 n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
☐	🌐 *Major U.S. Newspapers	Blue S.	n/a	Resource	Draft	02 27 2014 - 12:16 n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
☐	🔒 Arts and Humanities Citation Index	Blue S.	n/a	Resource	Draft	02 27 2014 - 11:16 0	0	0	0
☐	🔒 Art Full Text	Blue S.	n/a	Resource	Need Approval	02 27 2014 - 11:10 0	0	0	0
☐	🔒 Rhizome.org	Blue S.	n/a	Resource	Need Approval	02 27 2014 - 10:17 n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
☐	🌐 Researching Mexico	Blue S.	n/a	Resource	Need Approval	02 27 2014 - 10:13 n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Delete

THE END! ANY QUESTIONS?