

How Visuals Power Team Collaboration and Communication



Introduction

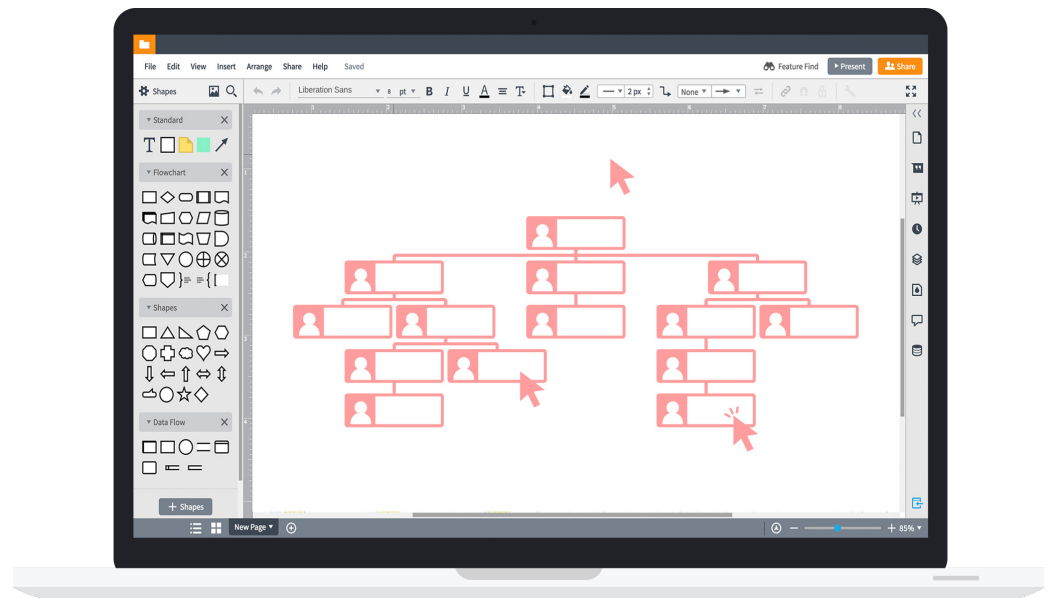
Imagine that you need to communicate time-sensitive details of a major project to your team—but your team is located in offices around the world. No one wants to read a 500-word email to understand what they have to do. Not to mention, you don't have time to write a 500-word email explaining what to do. And forget about trying to coordinate a meeting time that works for everyone.

This is the reality of the modern workplace. 96% of executives cite lack of collaboration or ineffective communication as the main reasons for workplace failures, and collaboration only becomes more difficult when you work in large teams or teams spread across different locations. However, there's a simple tactic that will help you highlight what's important and increase understanding when you communicate with your team. Turn that 500-word email into a visual.

Visuals display the important details in a format your brain can register in less than a second. Additionally, people retain information longer when it's presented as a visual—humans remember 80% of what they see and do, as opposed to 10% of what they hear and 20% of what they read. Through visuals, co-workers can quickly share and process each

other's ideas so the team can move forward with giving feedback and executing the finalized plans.

Take a look at the difference visuals have made for team collaboration at Mozilla, DocuSign, and Delta.



Visuals defining user experience

Mozilla

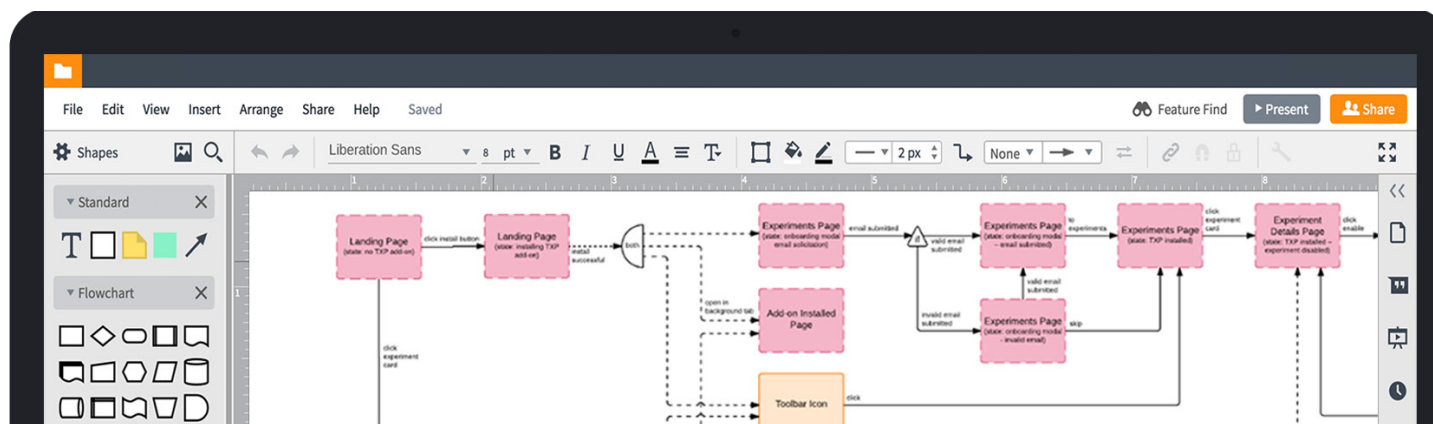
John Gruen, a product manager at Firefox, explained how high-level visuals kept his team on the same page as they designed Test Pilot, a platform to test experimental Firefox features. The designers were already creating mockups in Photoshop or Sketch, but these high-fidelity mockups were not the most efficient use of time before the team decided how a user would move from screen to screen.

John explains, “It’s better for us to be working at a fidelity that matches the problem that we’re trying to solve.” If the team needs to work together to create the user experience, it doesn’t help to see only one screen at a time—they need to see the

entire user flow. John created user flow diagrams to get everyone on the same page before they moved further in the design process. He could quickly produce these diagrams in Lucidchart and send them onto the team to view or edit in real time.

For Mozilla, user flow diagrams not only promote clear communication about Test Pilot, but they also save the company hours of valuable time. Designers spend hours and hours designing high-fidelity mockups, but because the user flow diagrams clearly explain what they need to build, the designers can make a perfect mockup the first time around.

With just one visual, this Mozilla team could step back and make sure that their designs fit into an experience that’s perfect for users.



Visuals connecting a global workforce

DocuSign

As the program management team at DocuSign began using a scaled agile framework, they discovered quarterly product planning to be key. Each quarter, they worked off of a large product development board with swimlanes designating teams and sprints, Post-it notes recording stories and epics, and string linking dependencies.

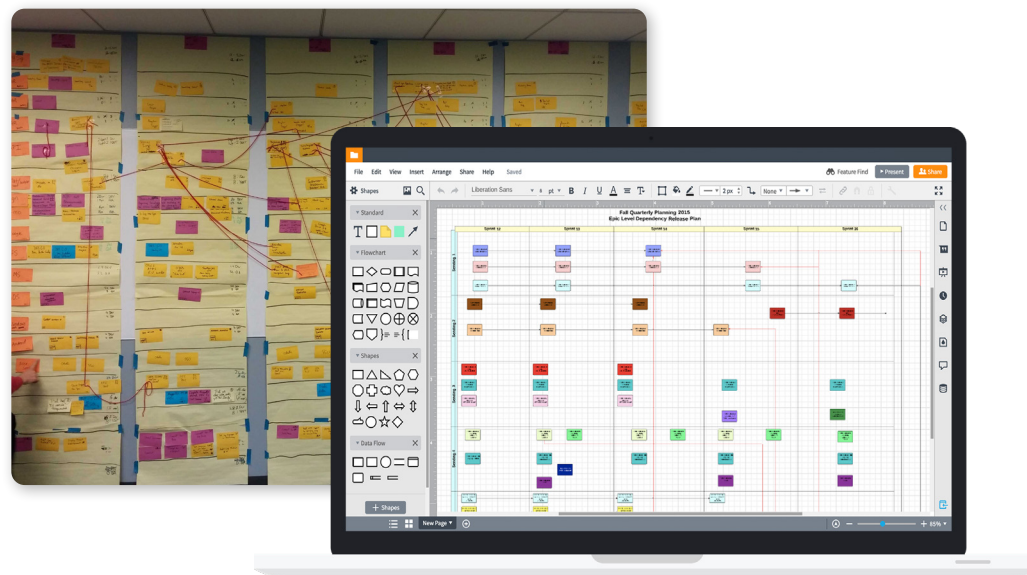
While they liked the visual format of this process, with employees in several different office locations and others working remotely, this hands-on approach was proving inefficient. DocuSign had to fly employees in each time they had to meet—it was simply too much of a hassle to get all the right people in a single room every time. The team needed a solution that was still visual but that would allow all employees to easily contribute and collaborate, regardless of location.

Senior Director Jen Zagofsky decided to recreate the team's giant board in Lucidchart. She shares the single document with her entire team, and everyone adds their specific deliverables for the quarter. The whole team then walks through the diagram together. With this new visual, all employees can

be on the document at once, providing feedback in real time. The power of visuals has spread, allowing the team to collaborate and stay transparent without being in a single location.

"This new process allows our teams to more accurately and efficiently reflect what their commitments are each sprint," says Senior Program Manager Kunal Arora.

For DocuSign, visuals have become the bridge linking their geographically scattered teams.



Visuals increasing accountability

Delta

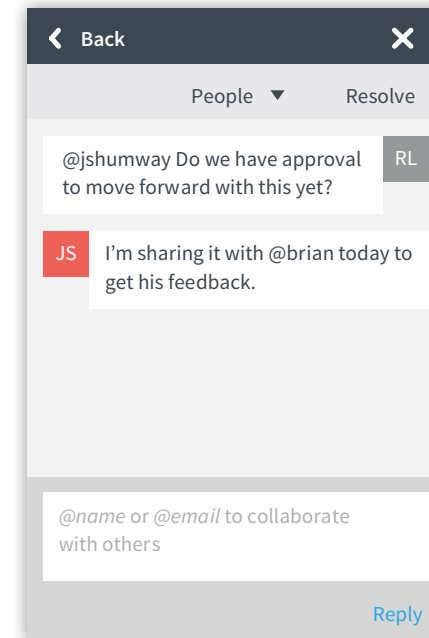
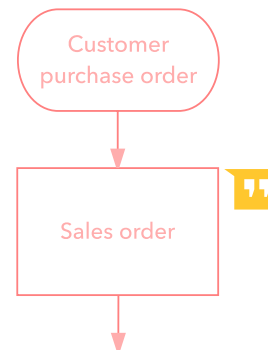
In addition to explaining a process, visuals can generate buy-in and reinforce the responsibilities of each member of the team, as Steve Groff discovered when he started as a process engineer at Delta Airlines. He was hired to oversee processes for using and storing parts at the Minneapolis maintenance hub, but the existing processes hadn't been enforced for a while. Steve explained, "We have millions and millions and millions of dollars of aircraft parts sitting around, and then we can't find probably 20% of them... We don't hold people accountable because nobody really knows what the process is anymore."

Steve developed an optimized process for storing parts and turned it into a flowchart. When employees need to know what to do with a certain part, they don't need someone there to walk them through the steps—all they need to do is consult the diagrammed process.

But of course, wherever there's change, there's also pushback. Using Lucidchart, Steve was able to easily share the process with co-workers and record their feedback, making them feel involved

and more committed to the process. "If you give people that sense of 'your opinion counts'... people are more than happy to help out."

Through collaborating on this evolving process, the members of Delta Airlines' Minneapolis team more clearly understood the importance of the process, felt accountable for their roles in the process, and increased efficiency.



Collaborate with Lucidchart

Lucidchart can be the catalyst for perfected team collaboration at your company, too. The product itself was created specifically for the purpose of combating inefficient team collaboration.

Teams experience a 38% increase in productivity and a 43% in transparency when they use Lucidchart.

[Check out our ROI page](#) to see how else Lucidchart can improve communication and understanding at your company.



Lucidchart is a visual workspace that combines diagramming, data visualization, and collaboration to accelerate understanding and drive innovation. With this intuitive, cloud-based solution, everyone can work visually and collaborate in real time while building flowcharts, mockups, UML diagrams, and more.

Lucidchart is utilized in over 180 countries by more than 15 million users, from sales managers mapping out target organizations to IT directors visualizing their network infrastructure. Ninety-nine percent of the Fortune 500 use Lucidchart, and customers include Google, GE, NBC Universal and Johnson & Johnson.

Since the Utah-based company's founding in 2010, it has received numerous awards for its product, business and workplace culture.

For more information, visit lucidchart.com.