UXOPS STUDIO · STEVE MOORE

UXOps Studio Requirements

Product requirements for a design operations platform, discovery phase. Concept and design by Steve Moore.

Product: UXOps Studio Tagline: Design operations, simplified. Document status: Discovery phase working document Prepared by: Steve Moore, Product Designer Version: 0.1

Status statement

UXOps Studio is a design concept in the discovery phase. The problem framing, product concept, information architecture, and screen designs exist. Development has not begun. There is no live product, no customer base, and no usage data. Everything in this document describes intent: what the product would do, who it would serve, and what a first version would and would not include. Requirements here are proposals to be validated, not commitments.

1. Problem statement

Design teams are drowning in tools. Research lives in one place, files in another, feedback in a third. A single project can scatter its brief, its research, its design files, its review comments, and its delivery status across five or more disconnected systems. The consequences are consistent across teams:

- **Team members waste time searching for work that already exists.**
- **Research gets duplicated because prior findings cannot be found.**
- **Context is lost when a project changes hands or a team member leaves.**
- **Leads cannot see the state of the practice as a whole, so staffing, prioritization, and delivery risk surface late.**

Design operations is often invisible work, but it determines whether a team ships great work or gets bogged down. The work of organizing projects, research, and workflow is real work, and today it is done manually, in fragments, on top of the design work itself.

2. Product concept

UXOps Studio is a single workspace that centralizes an entire design practice, including research, in one place. It brings projects, research, and team workflows together so designers spend less time managing tools and more time designing. The product supports a wide range of study types, from comparative analysis to literature reviews, and uses AI assistance to streamline repetitive operational work such as organizing, tagging, and summarizing.

Three steps define the intended experience:

1. **Set up your workspace. Create projects, invite your team, and import existing work.**
2. **Organize and track. Use dashboards to track progress, research, and deliverables.**
3. **Ship better work. Focus on design while operations run smoothly in the background.**

3. Target users

3.1 Design team leads and design managers

People accountable for delivery across several projects at once. They need a reliable view of what is active, what is blocked, and what is at risk without chasing status in meetings and chat threads. They are the primary buyers and the primary daily users of the tracking and analytics areas.

3.2 Design operations staff

People whose job is the health of the practice itself: intake, resourcing, process, tooling, and standards. They need intake and workflow tooling, a maintained design system reference, and reporting they can hand to leadership.

3.3 UX researchers

People who plan, run, and synthesize studies. They need a repository where findings stay findable after the study ends, structured by project, method, and topic, so prior research informs new work instead of being repeated.

3.4 Individual contributors (product designers)

People doing the design work. They need their projects, files, feedback, and tasks in one place with as little administrative overhead as possible. If the product adds busywork for this group, adoption fails regardless of its value to leads.

4. Goals and non-goals

4.1 Goals

- **G1. Give a design team one workspace for projects, research, and workflow, replacing the search across disconnected tools.**
- **G2. Make research findable and reusable after a study closes.**
- **G3. Give leads an accurate, current view of project status and practice health with no manual status collection.**
- **G4. Reduce repetitive operational work (status updates, approvals, handoffs) through automation and AI assistance.**
- **G5. Keep the administrative cost to individual contributors near zero. The tool serves the work; the work does not serve the tool.**

4.2 Non-goals

- **NG1. UXOps Studio is not a design editor. It does not compete with tools for drawing, prototyping, or visual design.**
- **NG2. It is not a general purpose project management product for engineering or product management. Scope stays on the design practice.**
- **NG3. It is not a participant recruitment or research panel product in v1.**
- **NG4. It does not replace a team's design system source of truth in v1. It references and organizes design system material; it does not author it.**
- **NG5. No marketplace, plugin ecosystem, or public API in v1.**

5. User stories

5.1 Project Management

- **As a design lead, I want to see every active project with its owner, phase, and status in one view, so that I can spot stalled work without a status meeting.**
- **As a design lead, I want to create a project from a brief in under two minutes, so that intake does not become its own project.**
- **As a contributor, I want my assigned work and upcoming deadlines on one personal dashboard, so that I never have to reconstruct my week from chat and email.**

5.2 Research Repository

- **As a researcher, I want to store a study's plan, materials, and findings against its project, so that the record of the work survives the study.**

- **As a researcher, I want to search past findings by topic, product area, and method, so that I can answer "what do we already know about this" before planning new research.**
- **As a design lead, I want to cite a prior finding inside a new project brief, so that decisions visibly rest on evidence the team already has.**

5.3 Team Collaboration

- **As a contributor, I want to comment on a project or finding in context, so that feedback stops living in chat threads nobody can find later.**
- **As a reviewer, I want to see what changed since I last looked, so that I can give feedback without re-reading everything.**
- **As a design lead, I want a single activity view across my projects, so that I can follow progress without interrupting the team.**

5.4 Design System Tools

- **As a design ops staff member, I want to publish component and token documentation in the workspace, so that the team has one reference for the current system.**
- **As a contributor, I want to check which version of a component a project is using, so that outdated patterns get caught before delivery.**
- **As a design lead, I want guidelines linked from the projects that use them, so that standards are visible at the point of work.**

5.5 Analytics and Insights

- **As a design lead, I want project health indicators (stalled, overdue, awaiting review) computed from actual project data, so that risk surfaces early.**
- **As a design ops staff member, I want workload by person and by team, so that resourcing conversations rest on evidence.**
- **As a design manager, I want a periodic summary of practice activity I can hand to leadership, so that the value and load of the design team are legible outside it.**

5.6 Workflow Automation

- **As a design ops staff member, I want recurring status requests and approval steps to run automatically, so that the team stops spending design time on administration.**
- **As a contributor, I want review requests routed to the right reviewer with the right context attached, so that feedback cycles start faster.**
- **As a design lead, I want to be notified only when a project crosses a threshold I set, so that automation reduces noise instead of adding to it.**

6. Functional requirements

Requirements are numbered by feature area. Each is written to be testable: a reviewer can state pass or fail for each one.

6.1 Project Management (PM)

- **PM-1. The system shall let a user create a project with a title, owner, brief, phase, and target delivery date, and shall require no more than a title and owner to save it.**
- **PM-2. The system shall display all projects in the workspace in a single list filterable by owner, phase, and status.**
- **PM-3. The system shall show each project's status as one of: not started, in progress, in review, blocked, delivered.**
- **PM-4. The system shall record who changed a project's status and when, and shall show that history on the project page.**
- **PM-5. The system shall let a user import existing project records from a CSV file, and shall report any rows it could not import and why.**
- **PM-6. The system shall show each signed-in user a personal dashboard of their assigned projects and deadlines within the next 14 days.**

6.2 Research Repository (RR)

- **RR-1. The system shall let a user create a study record linked to a project, with fields for research question, method, status, and date range.**
- **RR-2. The system shall let a user attach files and links to a study record and shall display them on the study page.**
- **RR-3. The system shall let a user publish findings to a study as discrete, individually linkable entries, each with a title, summary, and supporting evidence.**
- **RR-4. The system shall provide full text search across finding titles and summaries, returning results in under two seconds for a repository of 10,000 findings.**
- **RR-5. The system shall let users filter search results by project, method, topic tag, and date.**
- **RR-6. The system shall let a user insert a reference to an existing finding into a project brief, rendered as a link back to the finding.**
- **RR-7. The system shall suggest topic tags for a new finding based on its content, and shall let the user accept, edit, or reject each suggestion before saving. (AI assistance; suggestion only, never silent.)**

6.3 Team Collaboration (TC)

- **TC-1. The system shall let users comment on projects, studies, and findings, with comments displayed in chronological order on the item itself.**
- **TC-2. The system shall let a user mention a teammate in a comment, and shall notify that teammate in the product and by email.**
- **TC-3. The system shall show each user a changes view listing items they follow that changed since their last visit, grouped by item.**
- **TC-4. The system shall provide an activity feed per project covering status changes, new findings, and comments.**
- **TC-5. The system shall let a user follow or unfollow any project, study, or finding, and shall default project members to following their own projects.**

6.4 Design System Tools (DS)

- **DS-1. The system shall let an authorized user publish a documentation page for a component, including usage guidance and do and do not examples.**
- **DS-2. The system shall let an authorized user record token values (color, spacing, type) against a named version of the design system.**
- **DS-3. The system shall let a project declare which design system version it uses, and shall display that declaration on the project page.**
- **DS-4. The system shall flag, on a project page, when the project's declared version is not the current published version.**
- **DS-5. The system shall let users link a guideline page from a project, and shall show those links in both places.**

6.5 Analytics and Insights (AN)

- **AN-1. The system shall compute project health from project data: a project is flagged stalled when it has had no activity for a configurable number of days, and overdue when past its target delivery date and not delivered.**
- **AN-2. The system shall display a workspace dashboard showing counts of projects by status and by health flag.**
- **AN-3. The system shall display active project load per person and per team, derived from project ownership and assignment.**
- **AN-4. The system shall let an authorized user export a summary report of practice activity for a chosen date range as a PDF.**
- **AN-5. The system shall not present any metric it cannot compute from data the workspace actually contains. No estimated or placeholder figures.**

6.6 Workflow Automation (WA)

- **WA-1. The system shall let an authorized user define an automation rule with a trigger (event or schedule), a condition, and an action, using a form with no code.**
- **WA-2. The system shall support, at minimum, these actions: send a status request, route a review request, post a reminder, and notify a user.**
- **WA-3. The system shall log every automation run with its trigger, action, and result, and shall make that log visible to workspace administrators.**
- **WA-4. The system shall let a user set personal notification thresholds, and shall not send automated notifications that fall below the user's settings except for direct mentions.**
- **WA-5. The system shall let an administrator disable any automation rule in one action, taking effect immediately.**

6.7 Platform wide (PL)

- **PL-1. The system shall require sign-in and shall scope all data to a single workspace per account in v1.**
- **PL-2. The system shall support three roles: administrator, member, and viewer, with viewers unable to create or edit content.**
- **PL-3. The system shall meet WCAG 2.2 AA for all primary workflows.**
- **PL-4. The system shall load primary views in under two seconds on a standard broadband connection for workspaces at v1 scale.**
- **PL-5. The system shall let an administrator export all workspace data in a documented, machine readable format. A team's data is never held hostage.**

7. Information architecture summary

The workspace is organized around the team's work, not around the tool's features.

- **Home / My dashboard. Personal view: assigned projects, deadlines, mentions, changes since last visit.**
- **Projects. The Project Vault. List of all projects, filterable, with a page per project holding its brief, status history, linked research, linked guidelines, activity, and comments.**
- **Research. The repository. Studies grouped by project; findings as individual, searchable, linkable entries with topic tags.**
- **Design System. Published component and token documentation, versioned, with project usage visible from each guideline.**
- **Insights. Workspace dashboards and exportable summaries: project health, load, activity.**
- **Automations. Rule list, rule editor, and run log. Administrator managed.**

- **Settings. Workspace, members and roles, notification preferences, data export.**

Navigation is a single left rail with these seven areas. Search is global and always available, spanning projects, studies, findings, and guidelines.

8. Discovery phase scope and phasing

8.1 What exists now (discovery)

- **Problem framing and product concept.**
- **Information architecture as summarized above.**
- **Screen designs: Platform Overview, Project Vault, Pricing, plus one screen per feature area in design now (Project Management, Research Repository, Team Collaboration, Design System Tools, Analytics and Insights, Workflow Automation).**
- **This requirements document and the brand dossier.**

8.2 Proposed v1 scope

A first version would prove one claim: a team will keep its projects and research in one workspace if doing so costs contributors almost nothing.

- **Included: workspaces and roles (PL-1, PL-2), Project Management (all), Research Repository (all), comments and mentions (TC-1, TC-2), basic Insights dashboard (AN-1, AN-2), global search, data export (PL-5).**
- **Included in reduced form: Design System Tools as published documentation pages with version declaration (DS-1, DS-3), without token management.**
- **Not in v1: Workflow Automation beyond scheduled status requests; per person load analytics (AN-3); AI tag suggestions (RR-7) if they cannot be validated to a quality bar before release; integrations with external design tools; multiple workspaces per account; public API; mobile applications.**

8.3 Later phases (direction only, not committed)

- **Full automation rules, token management and version flagging, integrations with common design and research tools, cross workspace reporting for large organizations.**

9. Success metrics

No metrics exist yet; the product is in discovery. The following are the measures a v1 would be judged by, defined now so the design can instrument for them from the start. Targets are proposals for stakeholder discussion, not results.

- **Activation: percentage of invited team members who create or join a project in their first week.**

- **Repository reuse: percentage of new project briefs that reference at least one prior finding. This is the core behavioral claim of the product.**
- **Findability: in moderated task tests, percentage of participants who locate a specified prior finding in under 60 seconds.**
- **Status freshness: percentage of active projects whose status reflects activity within the last seven days, without manual status collection by the lead.**
- **Contributor cost: median weekly time contributors report spending on administrative actions in the product, measured by survey. The design target is minutes, not hours.**
- **Retention: percentage of workspaces still active at 90 days.**

10. Open questions

- **Q1. Import reality: what does "import existing work" have to cover for a team to actually move? File links only, or file migration?**
- **Q2. Research sensitivity: what access controls do teams need around participant data and unreleased findings before they will store research centrally?**
- **Q3. AI boundaries: which AI assists (tagging, summarizing, drafting status) do teams trust, and which read as surveillance? Analytics and automation carry this risk most.**
- **Q4. Design system depth: is documentation and version declaration enough, or do teams expect live sync with their design tool libraries from day one?**
- **Q5. Buying motion: is the buyer the design lead, design ops, or a broader product organization, and does that change the v1 feature order?**
- **Q6. Pricing model: the pricing screen design explores tiered plans. Per seat, per workspace, or per active project, and what belongs in a free tier, if any?**

11. Risks

- **R1. Adoption risk. Operations tools fail when contributors route around them. Mitigation: keep contributor cost near zero (G5); leads' views must be computed from work already in the system, never from extra reporting.**
- **R2. Scope risk. Six feature areas is a platform, not a product. Mitigation: the phased scope in section 8.2; v1 proves projects plus research before anything else is built.**
- **R3. Trust risk. Analytics on team activity can read as monitoring individuals. Mitigation: AN-5 honesty rule, team level reporting by default, transparent definitions for every metric.**
- **R4. Migration risk. Teams will not abandon existing tools on a promise. Mitigation: linking and import before migration; the product must be useful alongside current tools first.**
- **R5. Solo project risk. UXOps Studio is currently one designer's concept in discovery, with no engineering team and no funding decision behind it. Any timeline discussion is premature until**

resourcing exists.

12. Decision requested

None at this stage. This document exists to make the concept reviewable: the problem, the intended users, the requirements a build would be held to, and the questions discovery still has to answer.