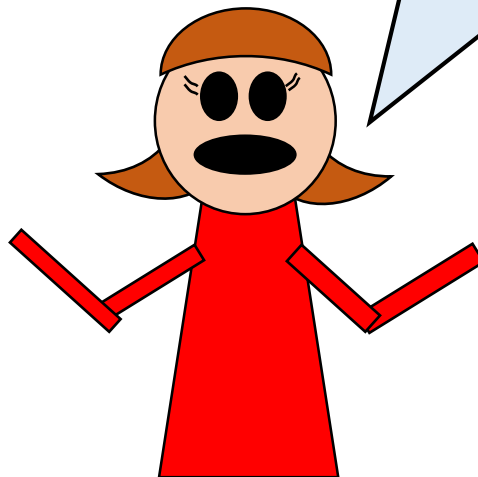
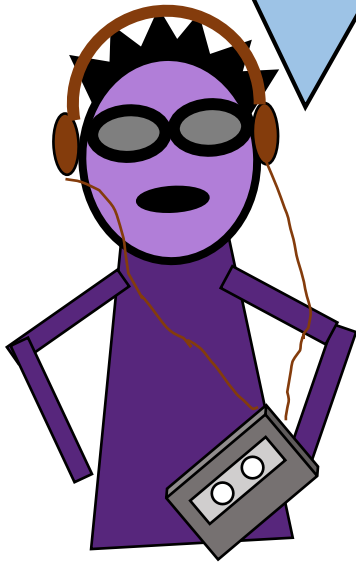


# “Eat The Menu”

*Starring  
Janet & Morgan*



**A UX Design Lesson**  
**BY DAN WARD**

Limousines...  
oranges...

Hiya Morgan! Whatcha listening to? Another UX podcast?

In a manner of speaking, I suppose I am.

Have, have, have  
some salad...

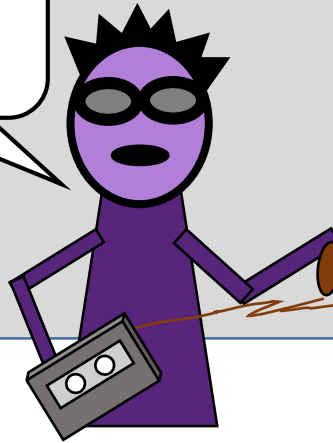
Is it [Laura Klein](#) & [Kate Rutter](#)?  
I love them!

Nope. It's *Eat The Menu*, by 80's Icelandic alt-pop band The Sugarcubes. Want to listen?

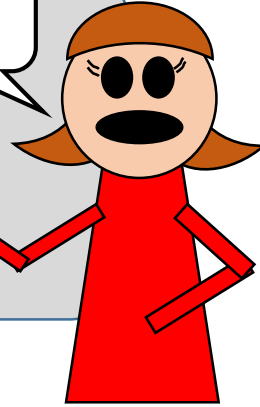
On a Walkman? OMG, how old are you? And what does a song have to do with UX?

Yes to food is  
yes to life...

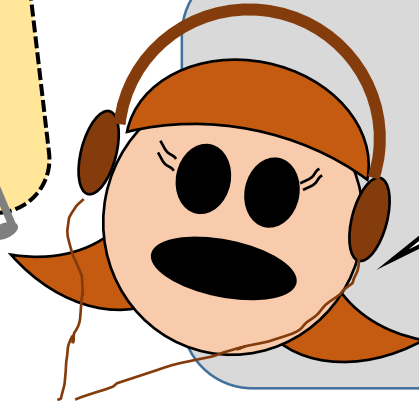
Very funny. Just give it a listen and you'll see what I mean.



Er, OK.

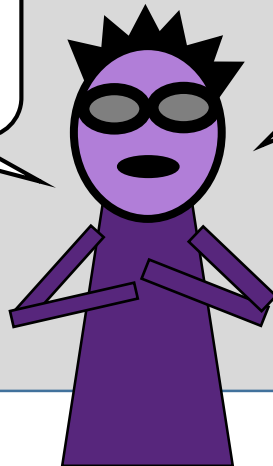


*I've got to eat some thing otherwise I'll die but the choice is too great*




Uh, I don't get it. Care to explain?

Sure! The singer is describing the paralysis of too many choices.

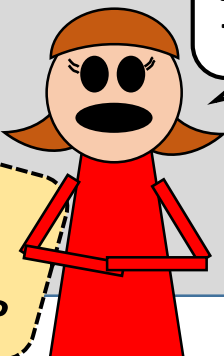


Faced with an unlimited menu, he can't make a decision. Sound familiar?

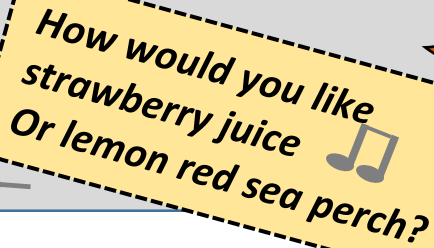
*I can't decide what to eat. I'll possibly just eat the menu!*




The other singer,  
Bjork, offers more  
suggestions.



Is strawberry  
juice even a  
thing?

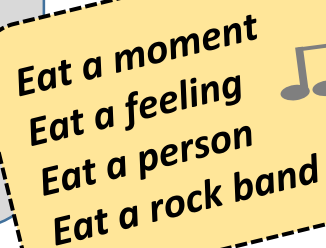


How would you like  
strawberry juice  
Or lemon red sea perch?

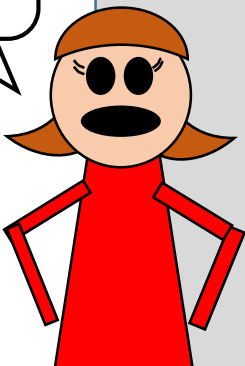


Maybe it is in Iceland. But  
the point is he doesn't  
need *more* suggestions.  
He needs *less*!

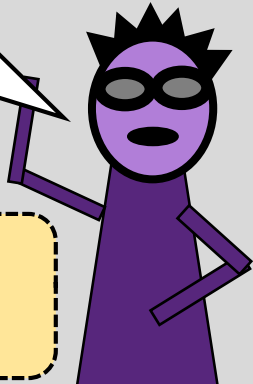
And most of her  
suggestions aren't  
very helpful.



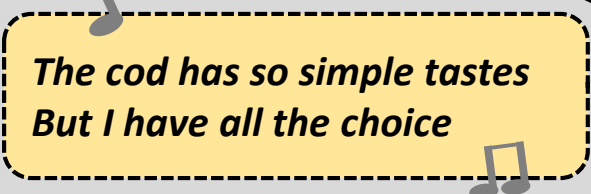
Eat a moment  
Eat a feeling  
Eat a person  
Eat a rock band



Wow, the  
80's were  
so weird.



It gets better! Next the  
guy says he wishes he  
was a cod and could  
just eat small fish.



The cod has so simple tastes  
But I have all the choice

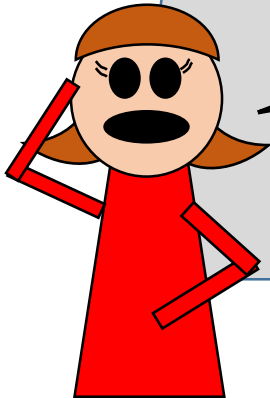
She ends up blaming him for being vague and sends him away.



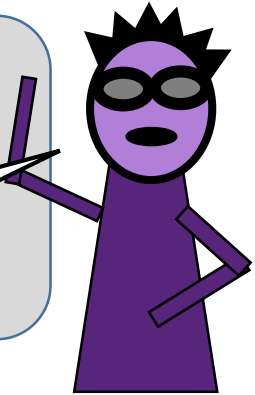
It's a scene right out of bad UX 101!

*Oh you vague customer  
You'll have to look  
somewhere else*

Maybe you could expand on that a little for me.



Look, a menu with too many items makes it really hard to pick something.



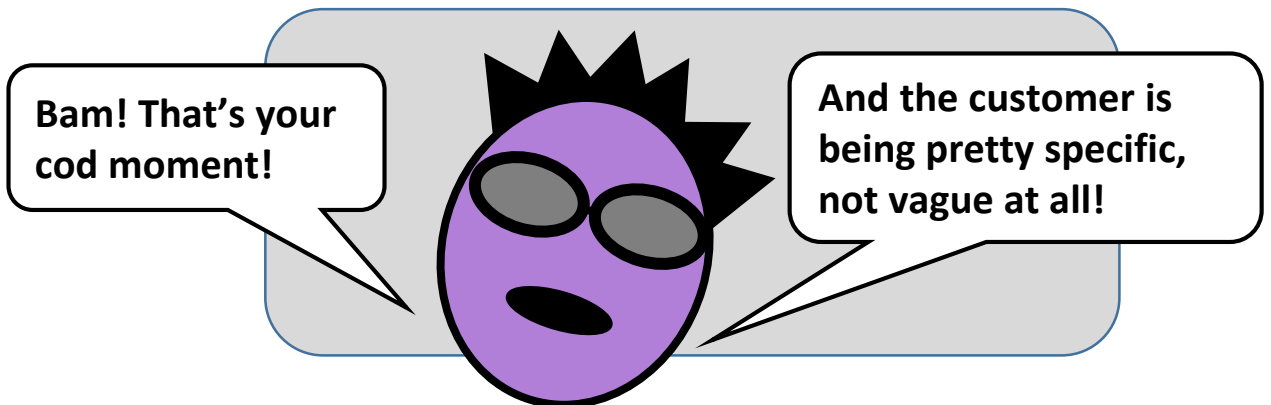
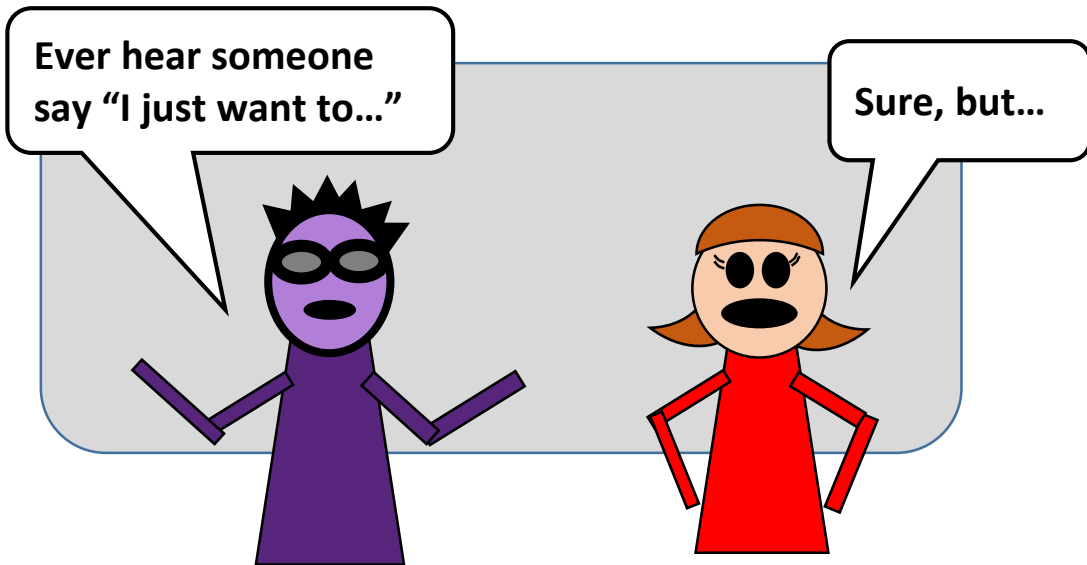
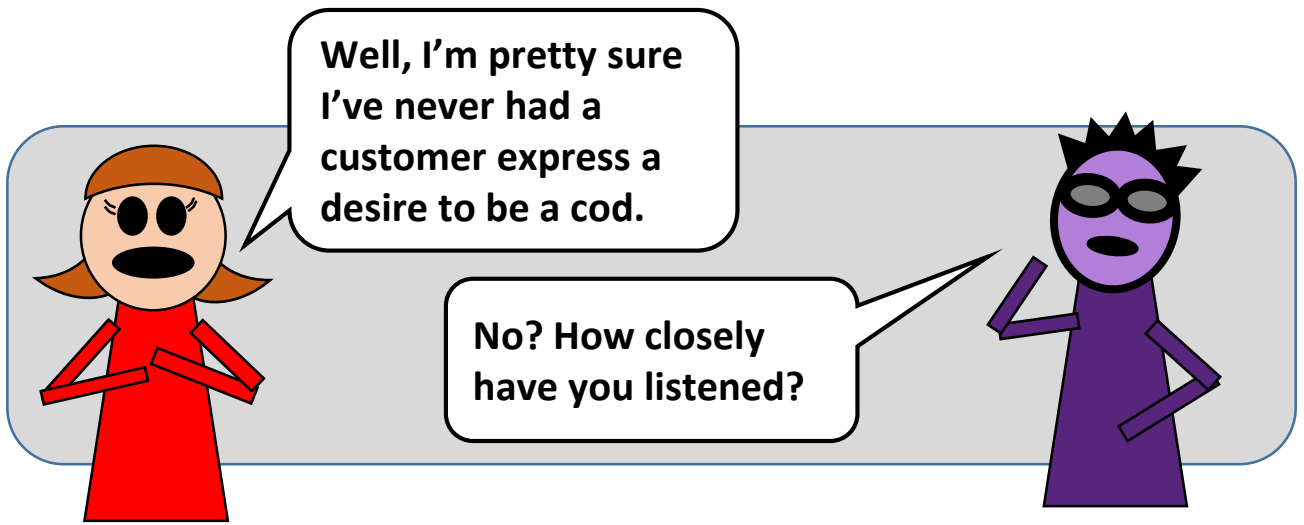
Giving users too many options is frustrating and doesn't improve their experience...

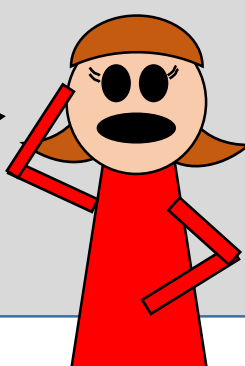
... particularly if those options range from strawberry juice to feelings.



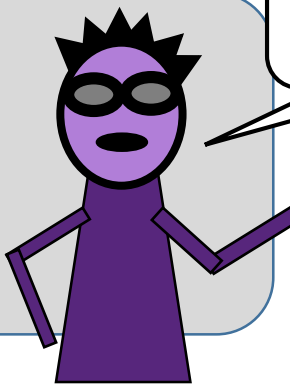
They are better served with a more focused menu.

Also, it's not their fault if the menu designer makes choosing impossible.



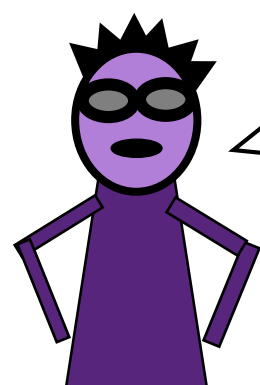


So you're saying I should treat users like cod?

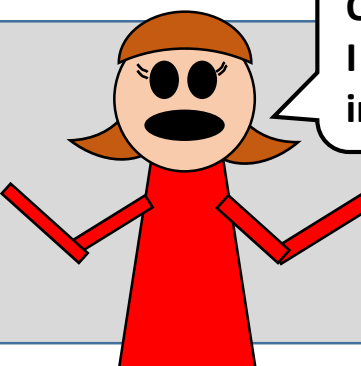


Not exactly. It's OK to give them a few options.


But overstuffed menus are a sign of lazy design.



The key is to avoid causing feature fatigue.

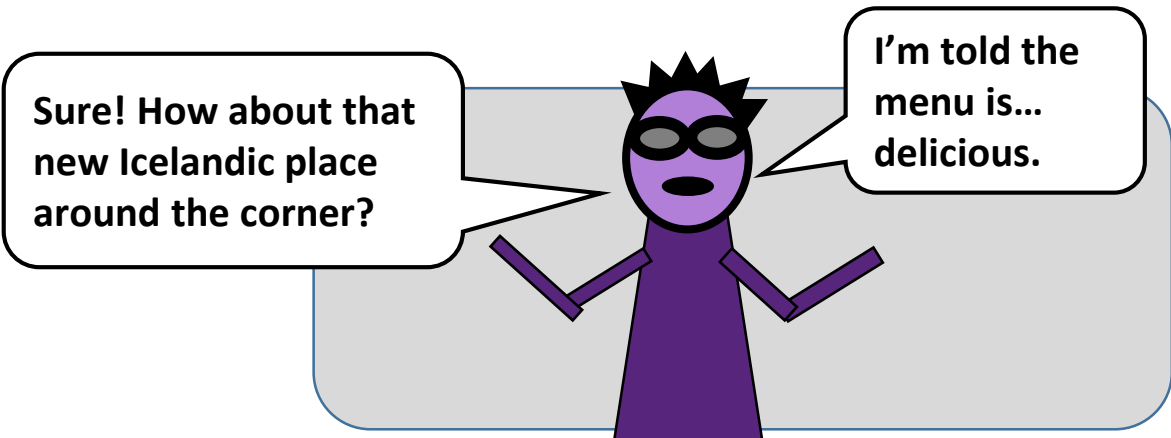
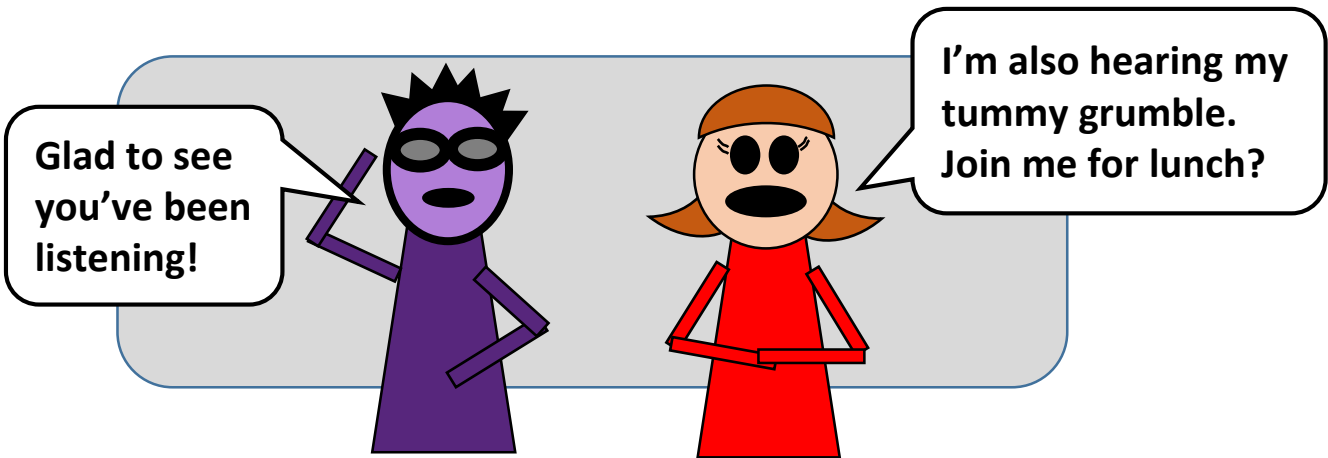
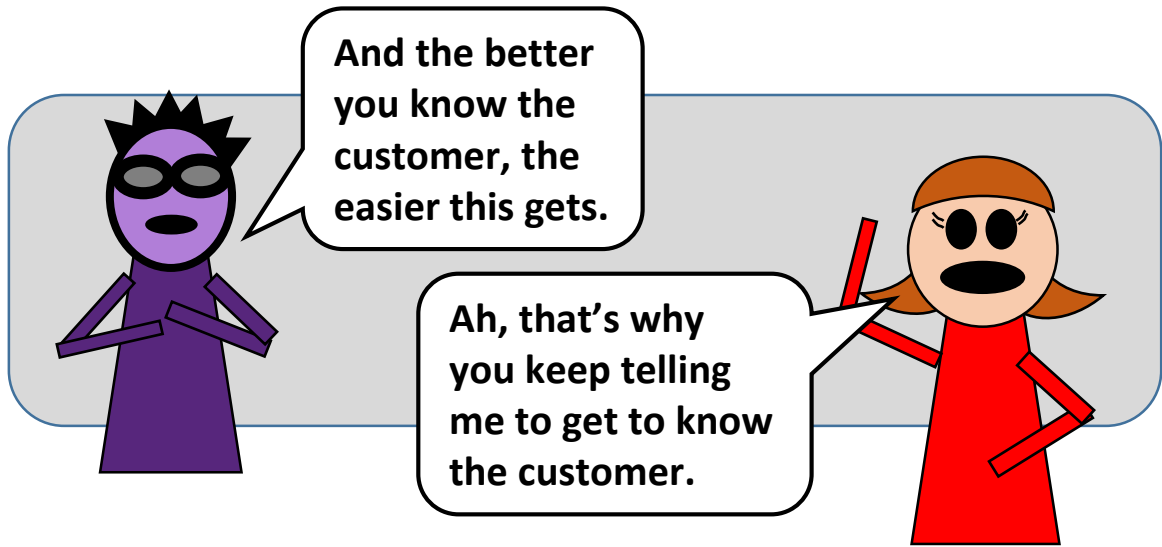


OK, but how do I decide what to include?



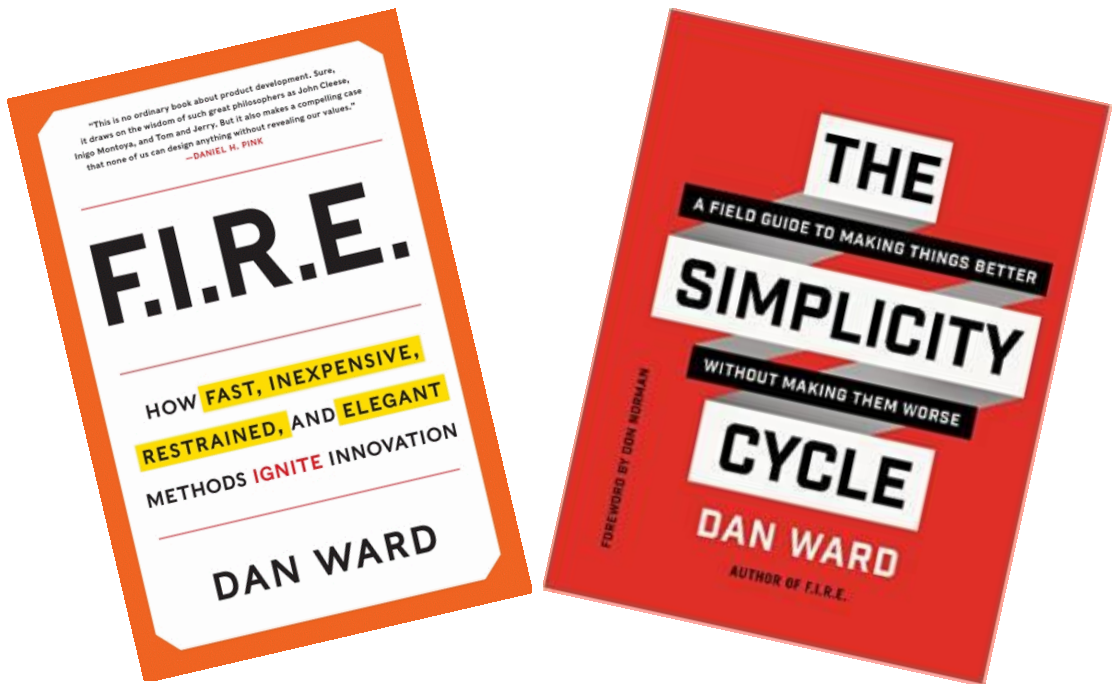
Well, it starts by *deciding to decide*.

Pick some things, and don't pick others. Resist the urge to just include all the things.





To learn more about UX design patterns and principles, as well as some tools and techniques for rapid innovation, check out [FIRE](#) and [The Simplicity Cycle](#), available wherever books are sold.



## [About Dan Ward Consulting LLC](#)

Dan helps a select group of clients manage complexity and innovate more effectively. He is passionate about design, leading small teams and helping shepherd the development of new tech projects.

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