GeneXus by Globant

Design of a mobile application

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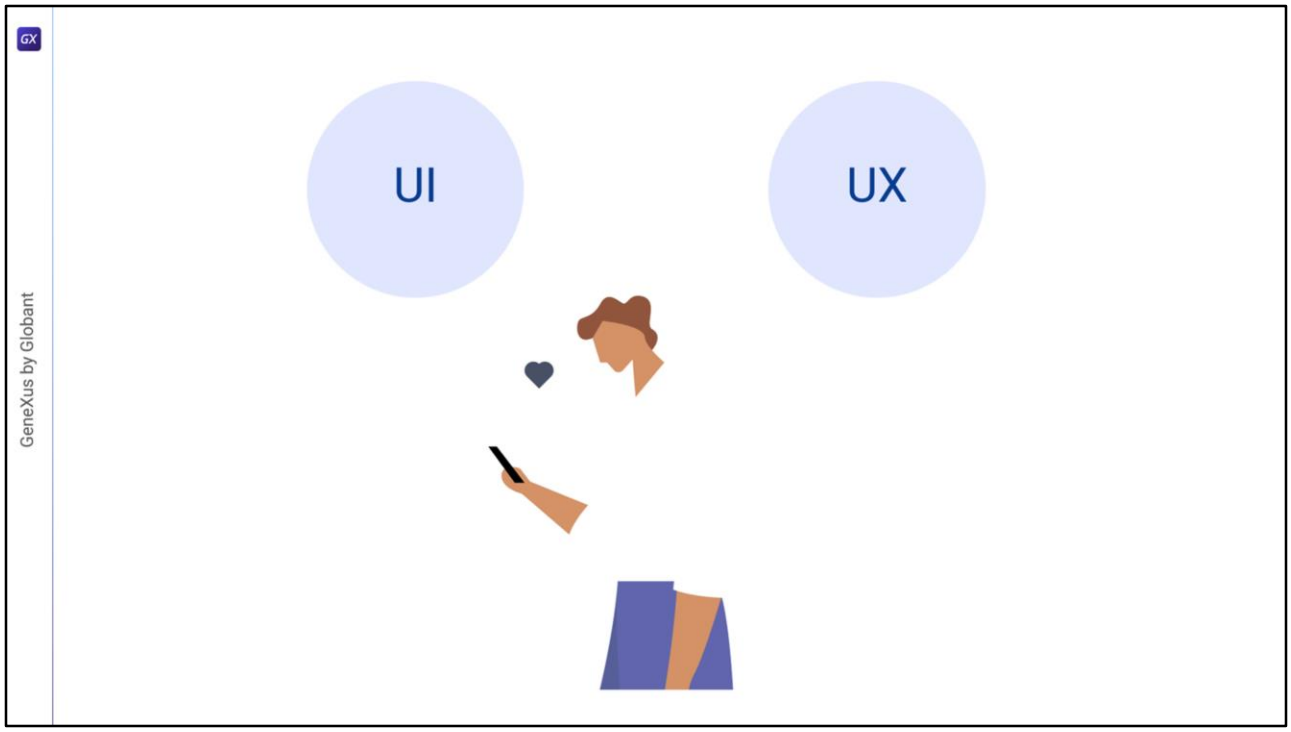
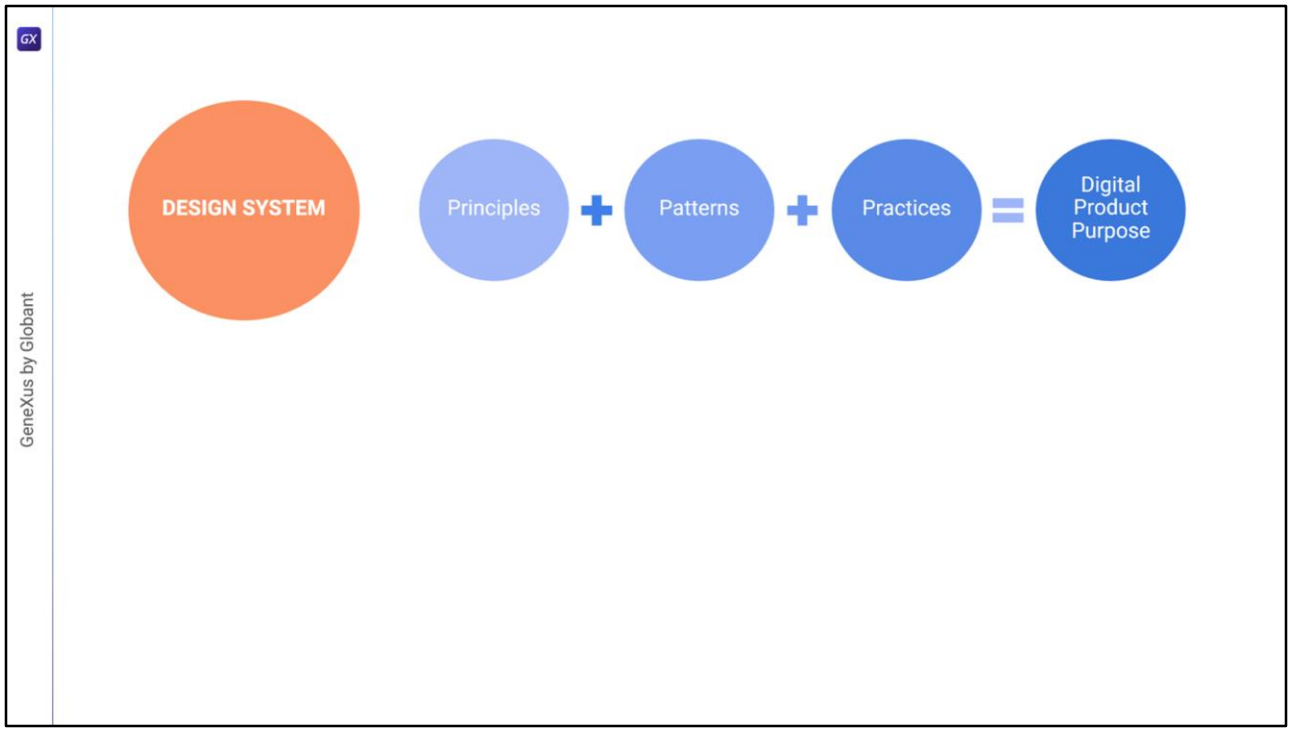
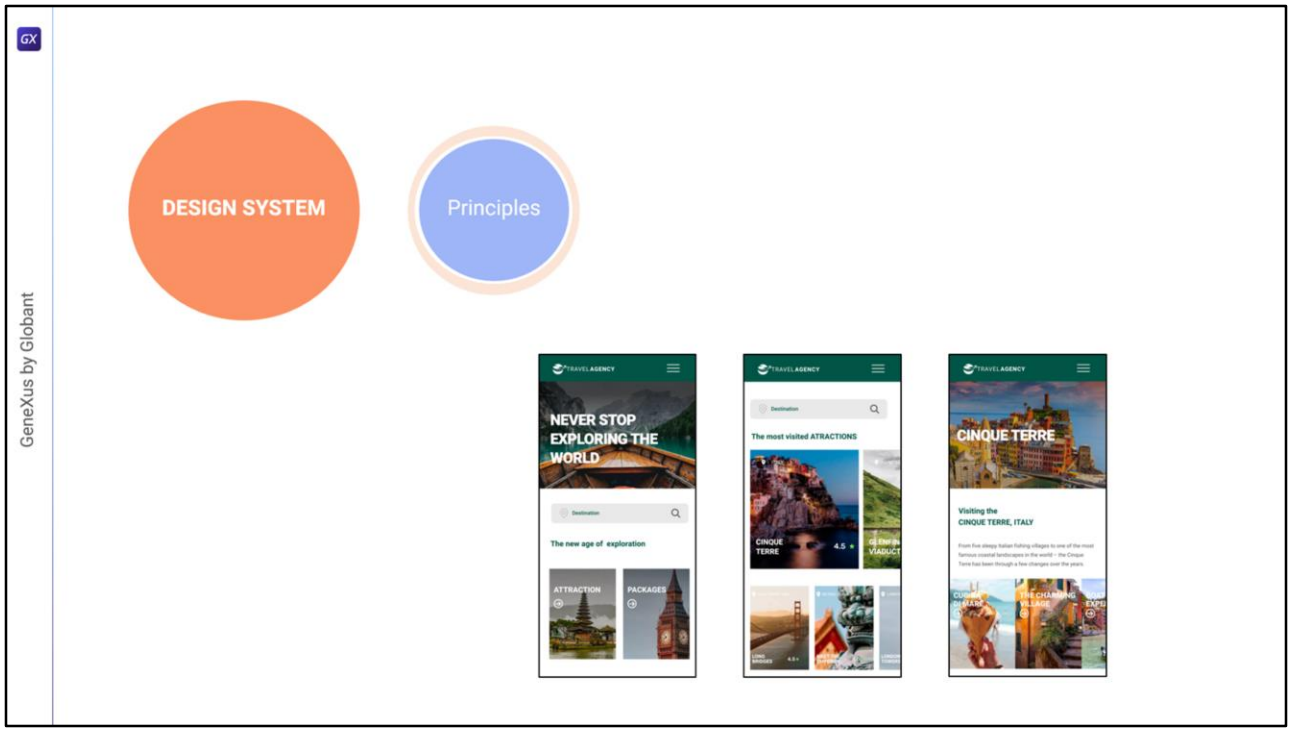


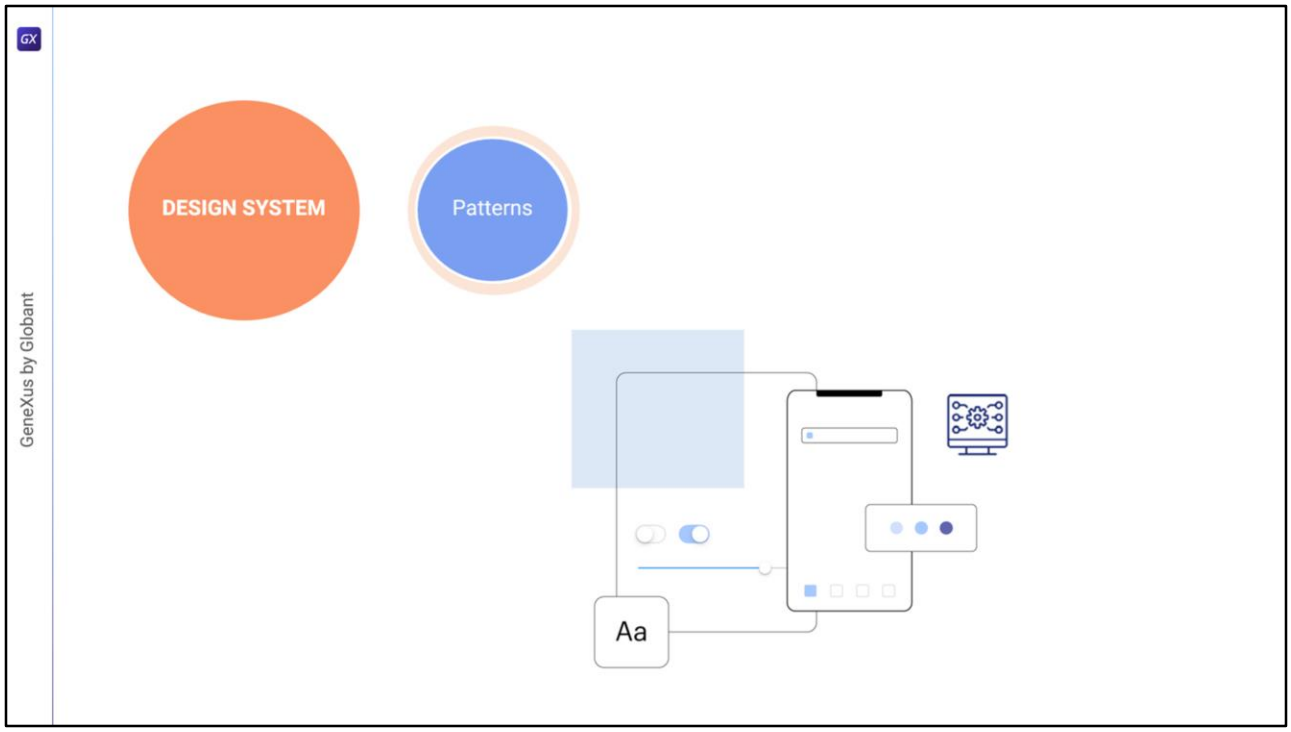
More than ever before, the focus is on the user: that is why the aspects related to the User Interface (commonly called UI - User Interface) and the User Experience (called UX - User Experience) have become so relevant. Our application must engage the user from the start, and that is why we are faced with a growing need to define design systems.



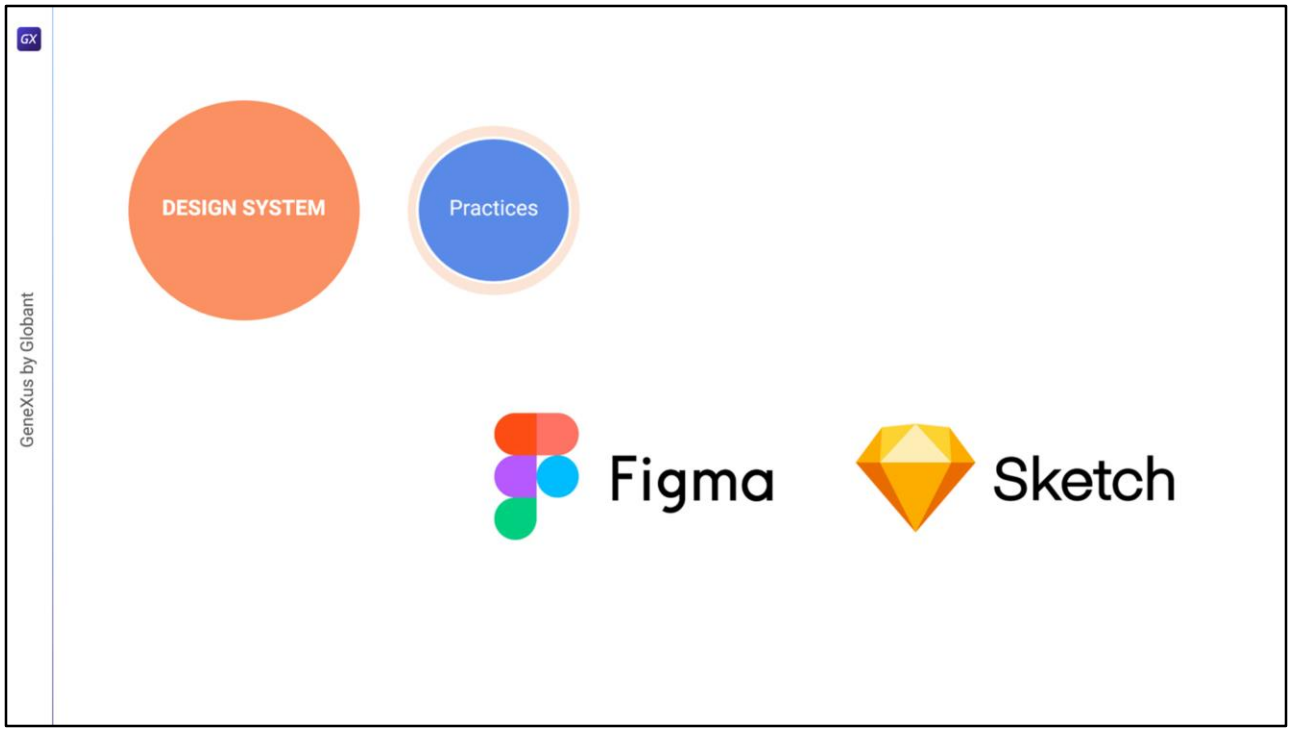
A Design System consists of using a set of principles, patterns, and organized practices in order to design applications that are consistent. They must keep the same style and aesthetics to achieve the purpose of the digital product.



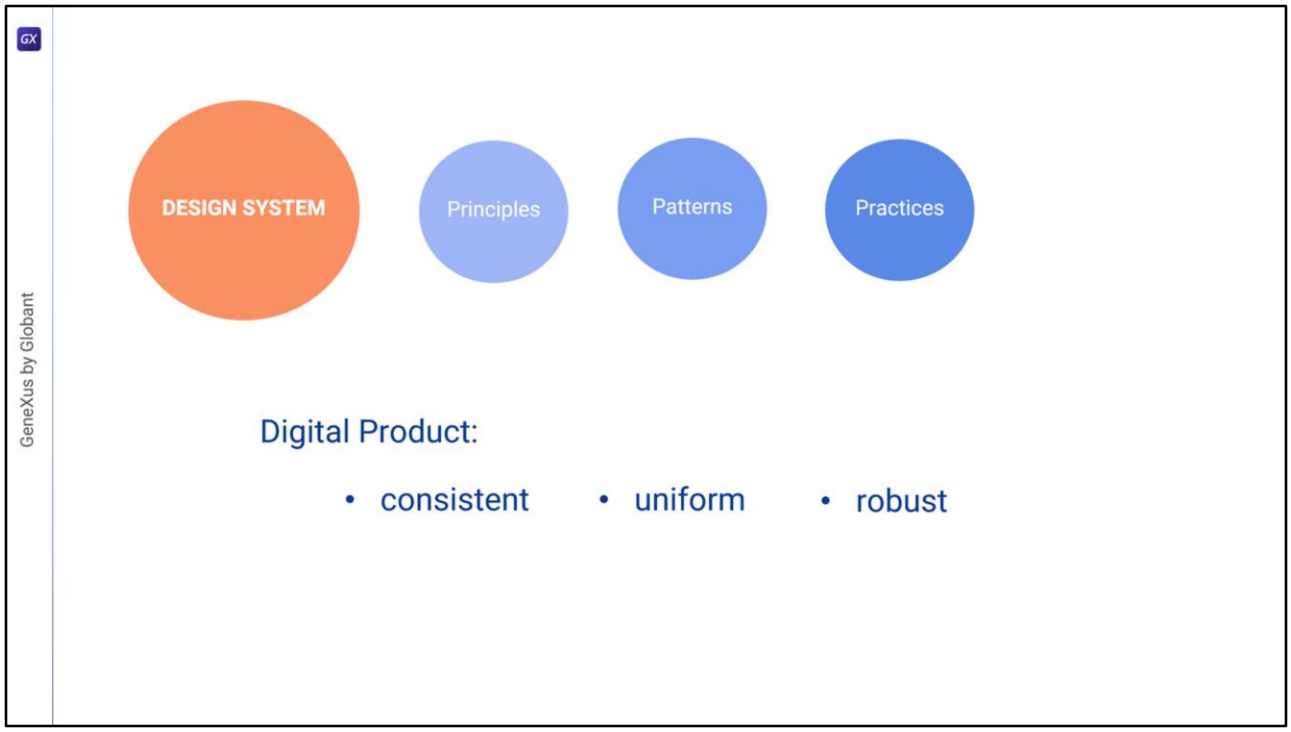
The Principles define what is good design in your industry. For example, a design that is mostly unambiguous above all other aspects, followed by efficiency, consistency and appeal.



Patterns define the fonts, colors to be used for the different parts, and functional aspects, such as the division into components that can be assembled like a jigsaw puzzle to form screens that convey the idea of an organized application.

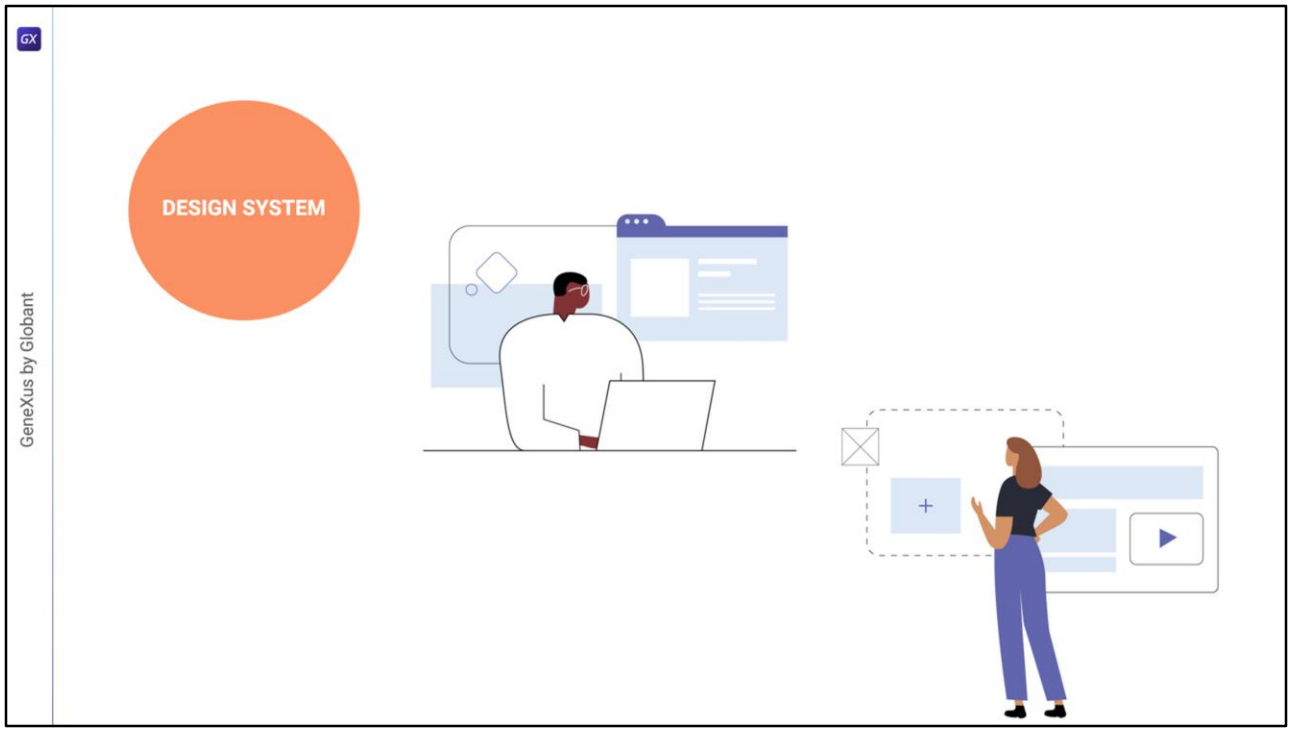


The Practices are related to the tools with which it is developed or designed, and how it is done.

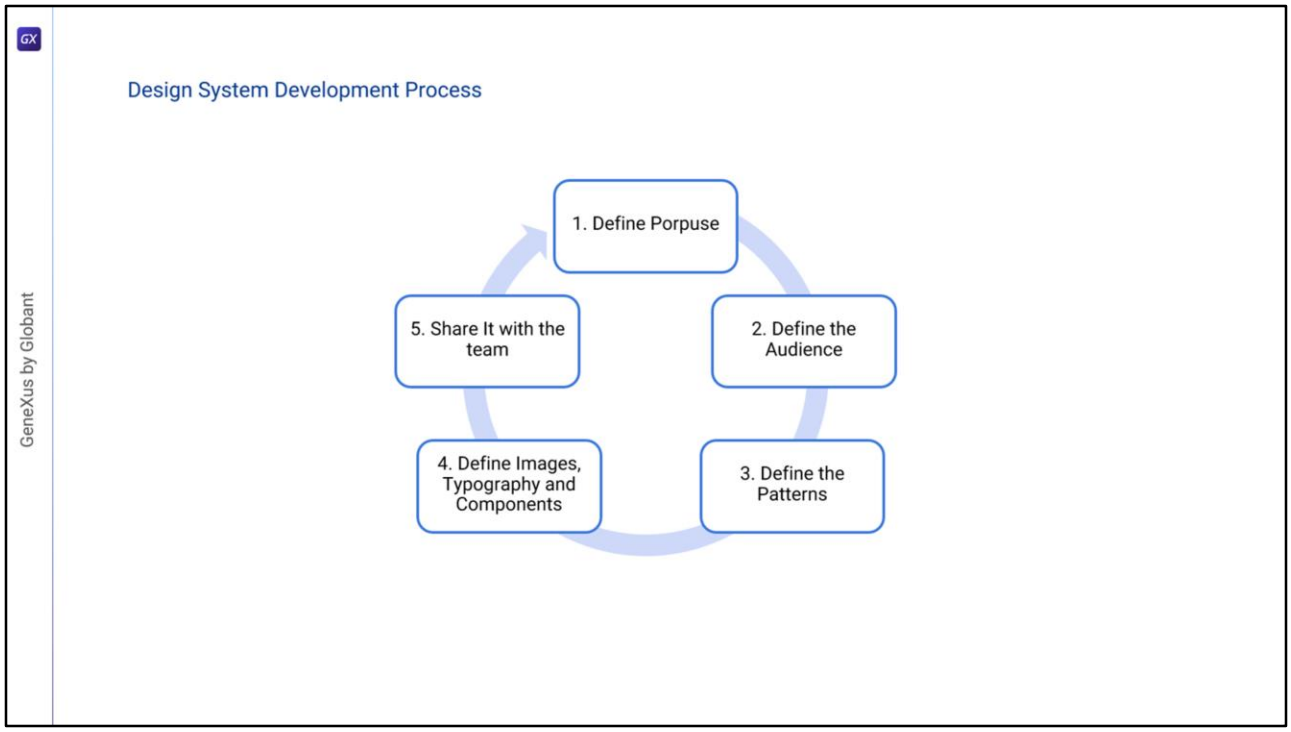


This set of principles, patterns, and practices are aimed at building a digital product that is consistent, uniform, and robust.

A Design System also systematizes and reuses components to avoid redesigning them repeatedly, thus helping to reduce design times.



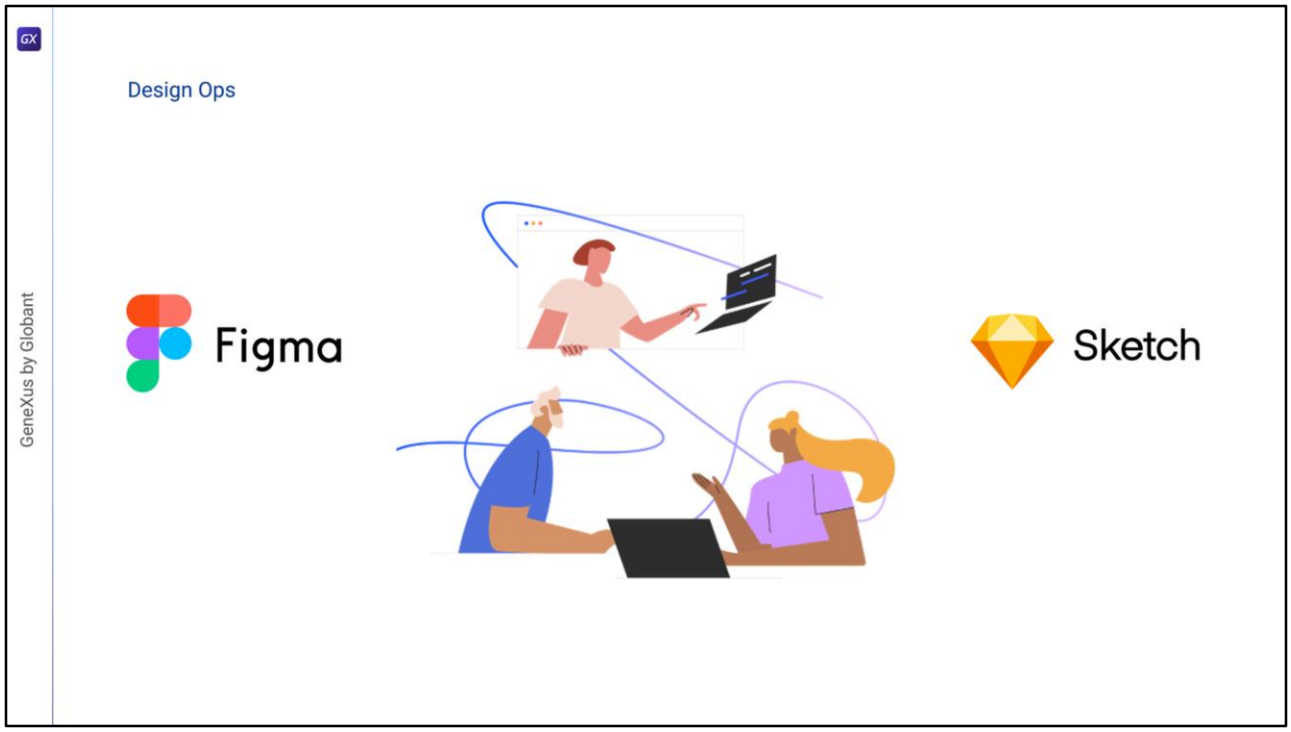
At the same time, it integrates and accelerates the interaction between designers and developers.



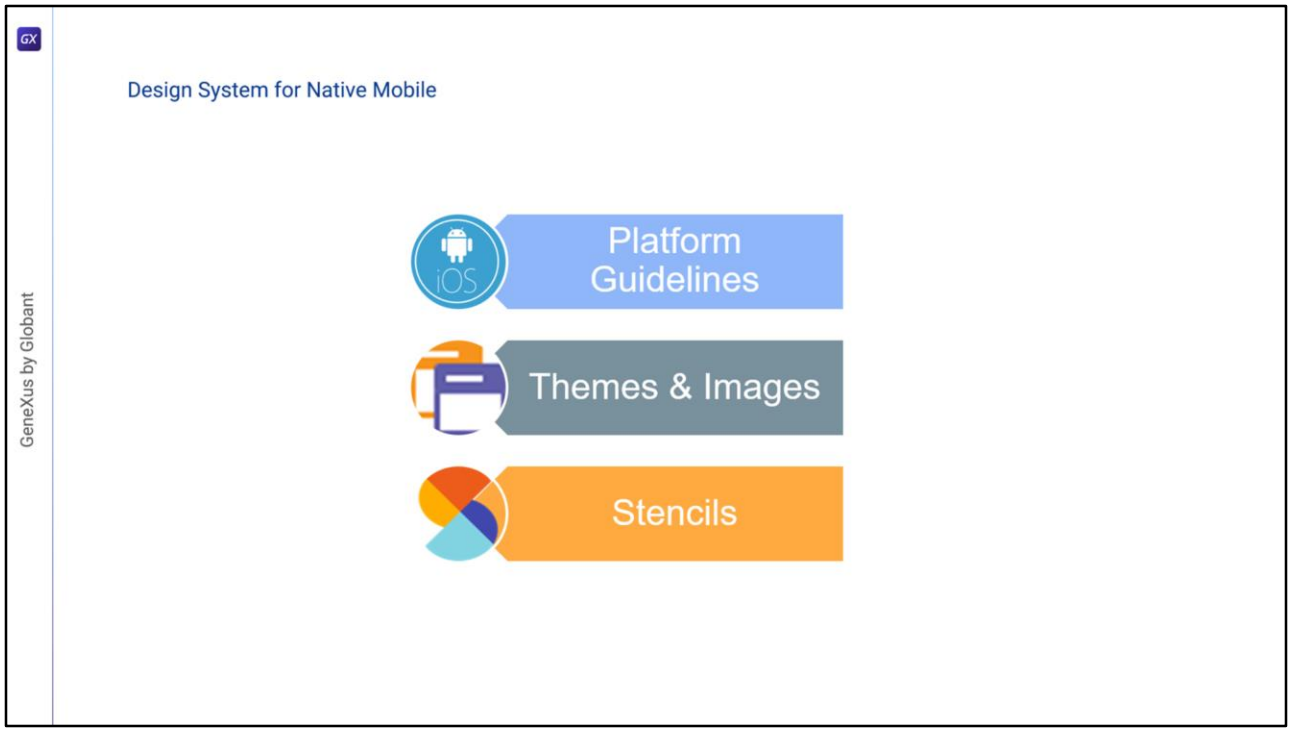
Similar to a software development process, we can see the development of a Design System as an evolutionary process:

- This process starts by defining a purpose, which is the digital product for which we need it.
- It continues with the definition of the audience.
- Then, the team should find themes together, i.e., capture common design patterns or visual styles that can be used in the UI and discuss how to apply them to the system as a whole.
- Next, the images and icons, fonts and components identified will be defined.
- Finally, a way to share the design and documentation with the team will be established, so that everyone can implement the design system during the application development.

The process will be repeated throughout the life cycle of the product just like the systems' functionality, which is constantly evolving.

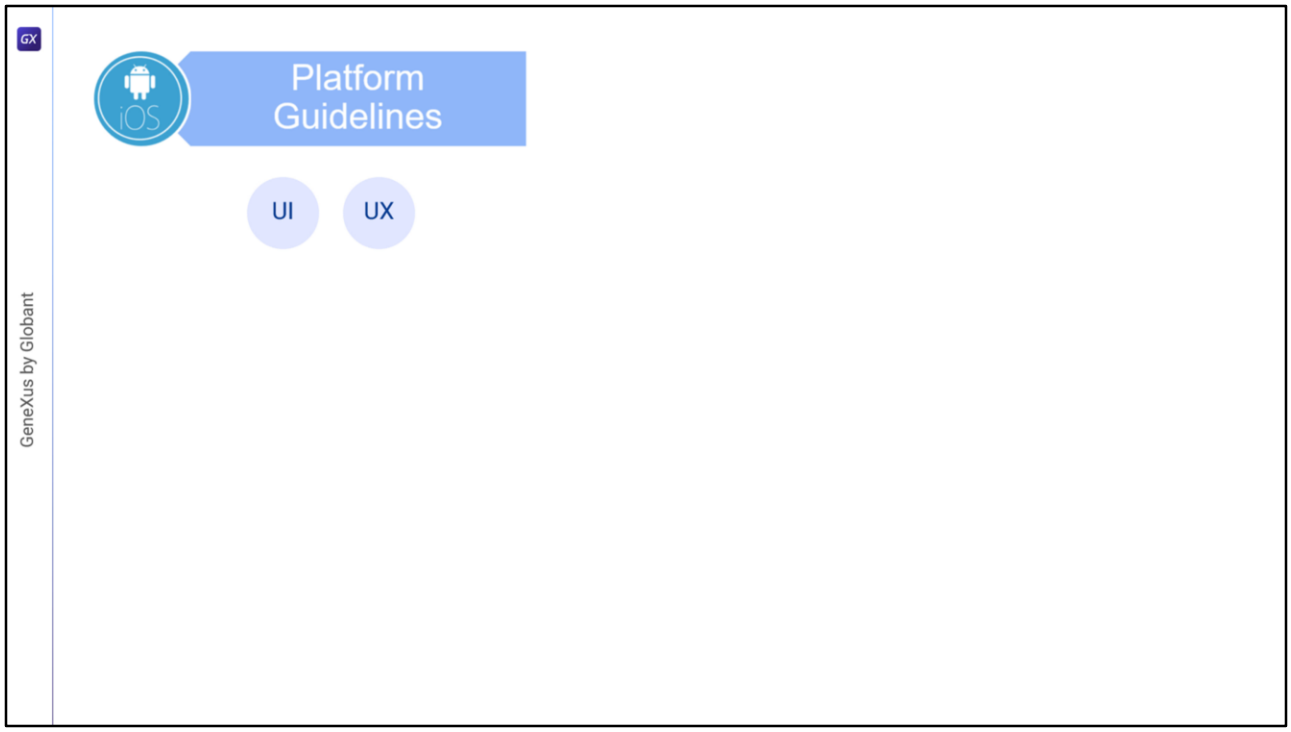


Just like the concept of DevOps (Developer Operations), the Design System deals with Design Ops and it means integrating designers into the DevOps chain so that they are part of it and work side by side with developers to ensure the results are those they intended to achieve. What we see here are the main tools used by designers to carry out all the design, which can be imported directly from GeneXus.

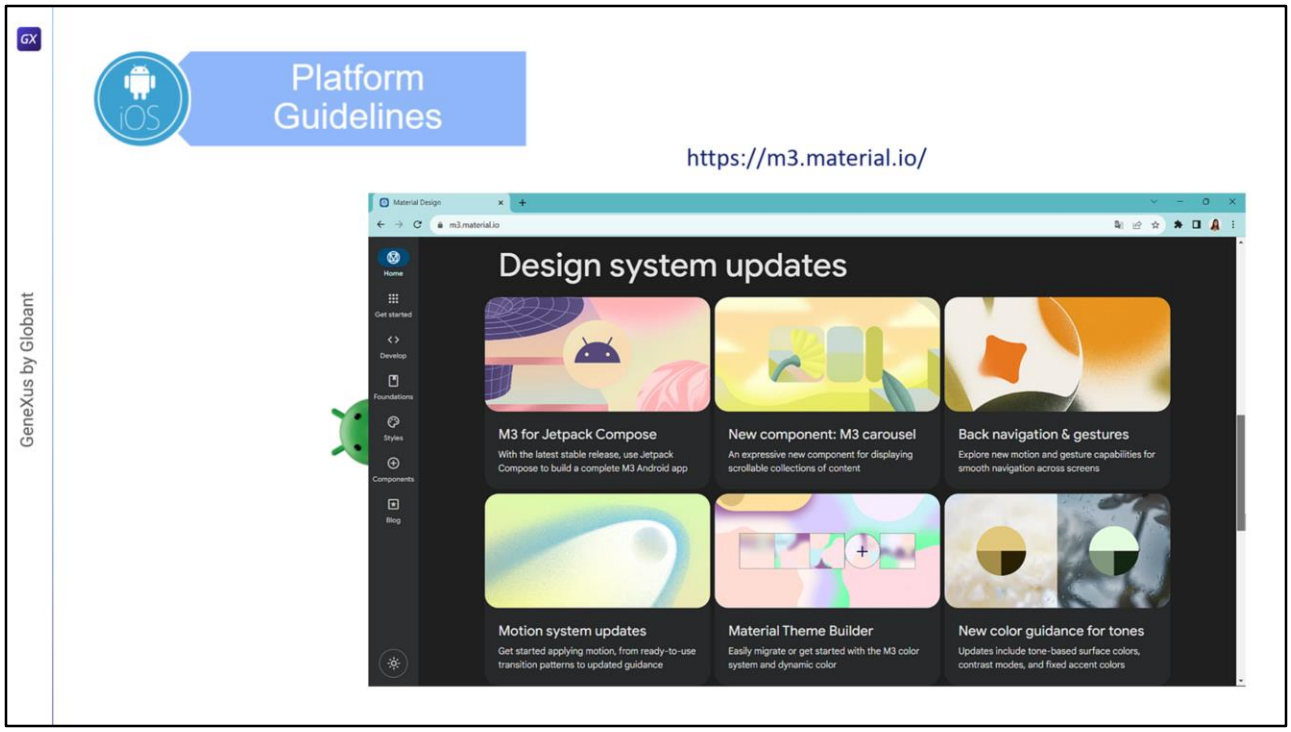


When creating a Design System for native mobile applications, the following should be considered:

- Design Guidelines of each platform,
- Theme and images, and
- Stencils (we will discuss them in a future video).

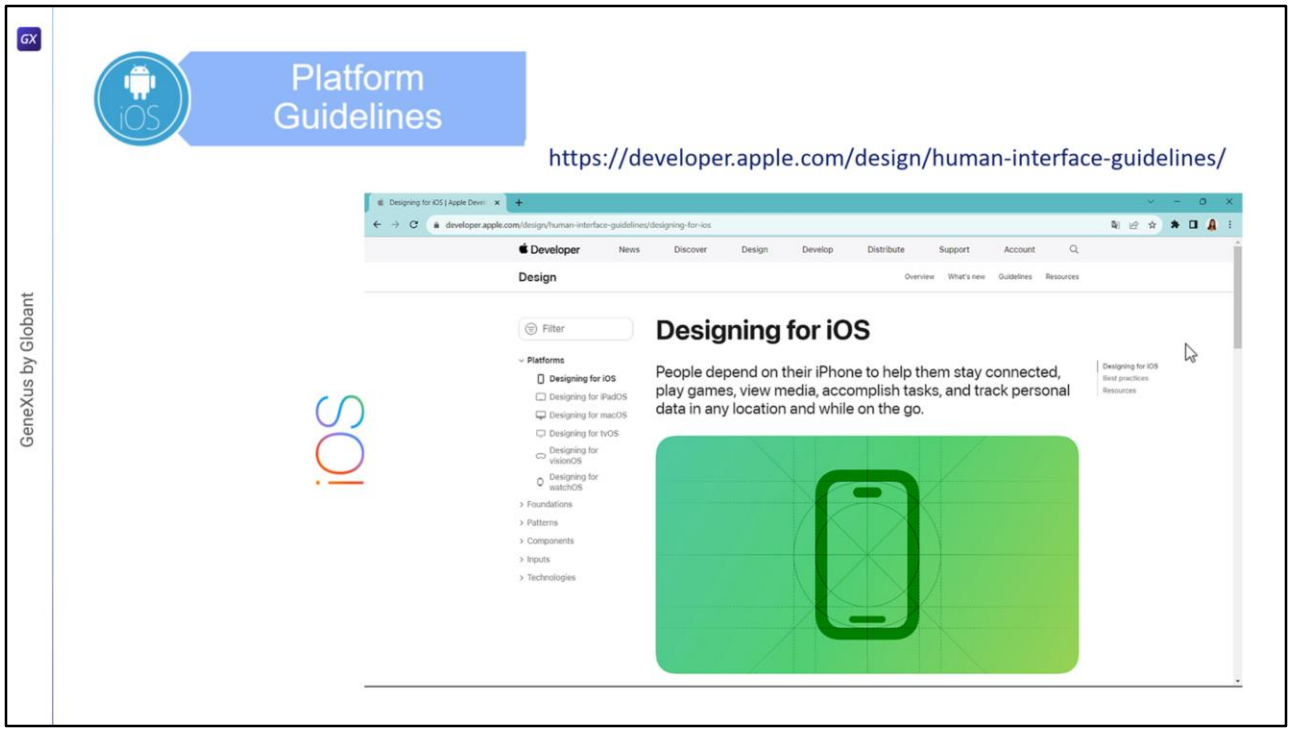


One of the reasons why we need the apps to be native is that they keep the same look & feel as all the other apps on the user's device. To do this, each platform defines design guidelines for their apps, both in terms of UI and UX.



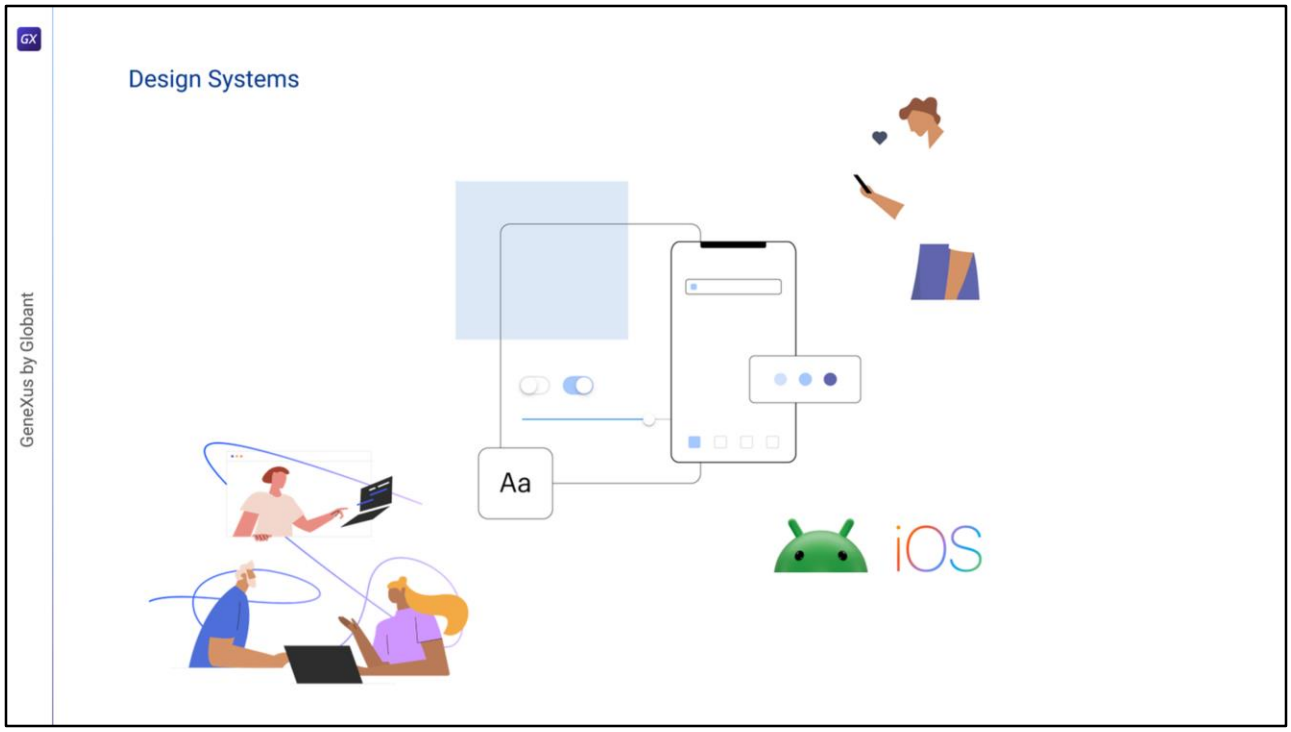
Android uses Material Design, which is an adaptive system of guidelines, components, and tools that support best practices in UI design. Relying on open source code, Material Design streamlines the collaboration between designers and developers, and helps teams to quickly create compelling products.

https://m3.material.io/



For the same purpose, Apple uses Human Interface Guidelines (HIG) for its platforms, and here we can find the specifications for iOS.

https://developer.apple.com/design/human-interface-guidelines/



In summary, Design Systems are essential in application development.

In the native mobile world, following Design Guidelines is key. Not only are these systems great references for staying on track with design, but they also maintain the visual identity of each platform.

In a competitive market, adopting Design Systems makes collaboration simpler and helps create products that not only meet requirements, but also stand out and capture the attention of users from the start. In short, we believe they are a must in application development to make a difference and deliver consistent and engaging experiences.

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