

The Blaise Template Designer

overview

IBUC 2010 – Pre Conference workshop

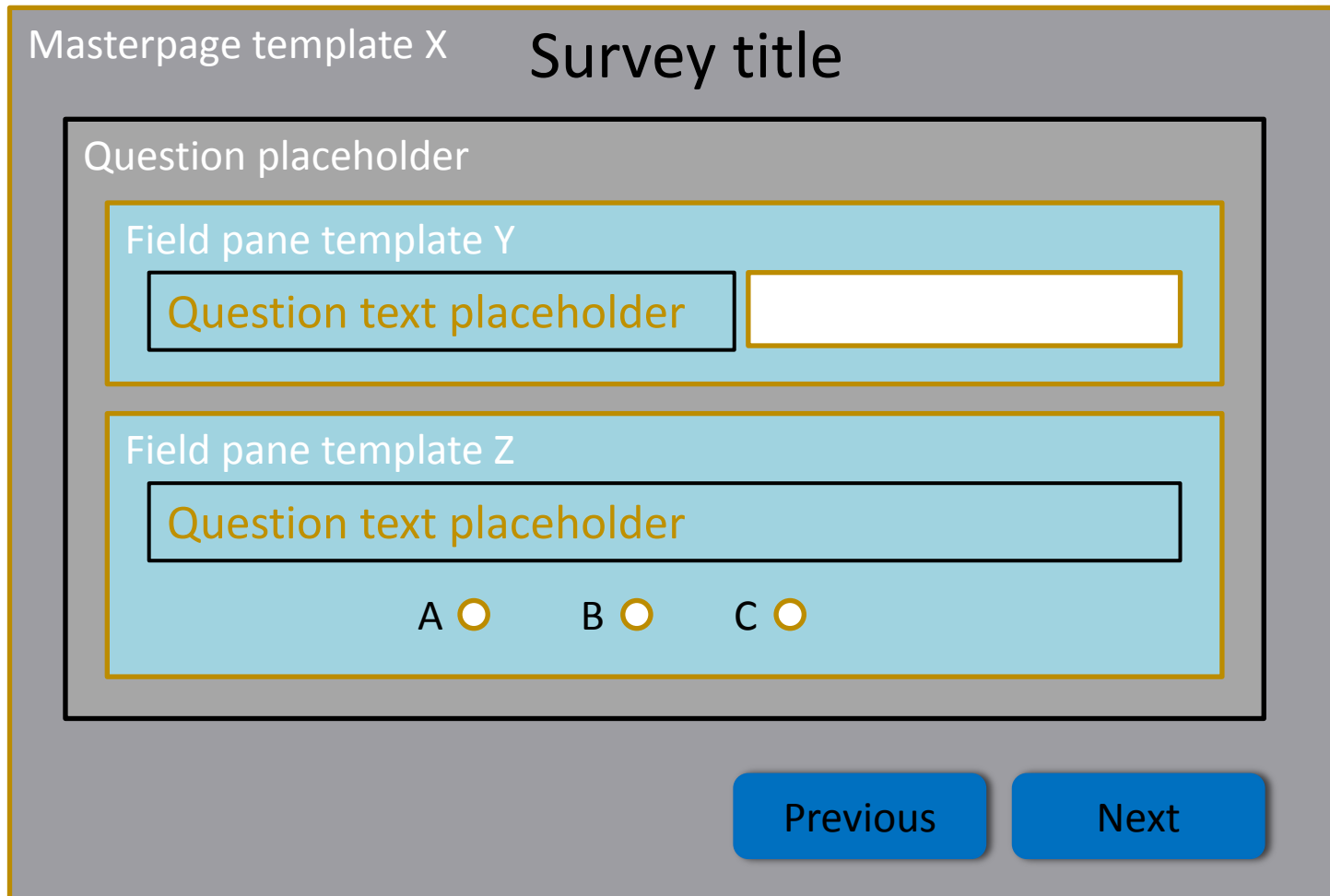
What is it?

- A custom tool to design:
 - Blaise layout templates:
 - Master page templates
 - Field pane templates
 - Other template types
 - Grouping, Dialogs, Popups, etc.
 - Styles
- A “domain specific” designer.
 - Doesn’t replace tools like Adobe Illustrator or Microsoft Expression Blend. Aimed to offer the tools for the vast majority of design needs.
- The quickest and easiest way to customize survey layout!

What is a template?

- The blueprint for (parts of) the layout of an instrument
- Consists of template elements
 - Shapes
 - Texts
 - Input controls
 - Containers
 - Placeholders

Template hierarchy



Element types

- **GRID**

- Is a container element that can hold other elements
- Most flexible control for layout
- All templates have a grid at the root level
- Has columns and rows
- Can contain more than 1 element
- Can contain sub-grids

Element types

- **STACKPANEL**

- Is a container element that stacks other elements
- Can contain more than one element

Vertically



OR

Horizontally



Element types

- **BORDER**
 - Is a container element that holds another element
 - Can contain only one element



Element types

- **PLACEHOLDER**

- Is a container element that reserves space for elements that are dynamically inserted (at run-time).
- You cannot add elements to a placeholder in the designer (at design-time).



What is a placeholder?

- An element that reserves space for other elements or template instances.
 - Example “Content area”:
 - Has to be placed on a master page template to determine where questions should appear.
 - Example “Question text placeholder”:
 - Has to be placed on a field pane template to position the question text.

Styles?

- Styles set properties of elements
 - Colors
 - Font type, size, weight etc.
 - Margins
 - etc.
- Changing a style changes all elements that refer to it.
- Useful for consistent layout and increased productivity.
- A style element is a combination of a key, an attribute and a value.

- Examples:

Key	Attribute	Value
DefaultBackground	BackgroundColor	Green
InputControlMargin	Margin	5

Applying a style

Style X

Masterpage template X

Survey title

Question placeholder

Field pane template Y

Question text placeholder

Field pane template Z

Question text placeholder

A B C

Previous

Next

Applying a style

Style Y

Masterpage template X

Survey title

Question placeholder

Field pane template Y

Question text placeholder

Field pane template Z

Question text placeholder

A B C

Previous

Next

Important notices

- Layout preferably is dynamic, not fixed
 - Element sizes are based on
 - Their content
 - Environment variables like
 - Screen resolution
 - DPI settings in OS
 - Font sizes
 - Language settings
- Designing templates for dynamic layout makes them more flexible in the (unpredictable) run-time environment.

Important notices

- Styles and templates are related
 - An element refers to a specific style key that the style definition should contain.
- Master page templates and field pane templates are related
 - Esthetics: They probably need to “fit” together.
 - Consistency
 - Exception: “Lookless” templates (inherit their style from their parent element)