

# Event Storming a Domain

Build one shared wall showing a whole domain end-to-end, with every function that touches it in the room, and come out with a prioritised shortlist of hotspots worth zooming into next.

## DURATION

1+

day

## GROUP SIZE

8-20

people

## WHAT YOU BRING

A long wall, orange/pink/yellow sticky notes, markers, dots, and a sponsor-agreed scope phrased in one short sentence.

## WHAT YOU LEAVE WITH

- One shared wall-sized picture of the domain the whole room agrees on
- A prioritised shortlist of dot-voted hotspots worth investigating
- A schedule of 3-5 follow-up Process Level sessions, booked within two weeks
- Panoramic photos, transcribed event and hotspot lists, participant summary

## WHO TO INVITE

- **Facilitator(s).** Two for groups over ten -- one watches the wall, one watches the room and keeps the discipline.
- **Domain experts from every slice.** Two per area across product, ops, support, finance, logistics. Any slice missing will be missing from the wall.
- **Developers and architects.** Not to design, but to listen and discover where the business model and the code model have quietly diverged.
- **Operations and frontline support.** They see the surprises and workarounds -- the ground truth leadership's picture usually misses.
- **Sponsor (briefly).** Opens the session, leaves, returns for wrap-up. Briefed not to correct events during the session.

## USE WHEN

- A major initiative is starting and several teams need one picture before committing
- Nobody in the organisation can describe the domain end-to-end without stopping to ask
- An incident crossed many services and the timeline lives in Slack, git, and heads
- Two companies are integrating and each side needs to see the other's domain

## AVOID WHEN

- × You already know the specific flow to work on -- run Process Level instead
- × You can't get the right people in the room for most of a day
- × Leadership will sit in and correct every event they disagree with
- × The scope is one team, one product, one well-understood flow

## How the session runs

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- **Phase 1 -- Chaotic exploration (60-90 min)**

Silent writing: everyone sticks orange past-tense events on the wall at once. The facilitator sets safety and granularity, asks the most junior person to place the first note, then protects the silence until 150-400 events land.

- **Phase 2 -- Enforce the timeline (45-60 min)**

The room arranges events left-to-right in rough chronology, spreading into parallel tracks where flows fork. Thirty minutes in, pause to name 4-8 pivotal events and mark them; the phases between them organise the rest.

- **Phase 3 -- Reverse narrative (20-30 min)**

Walk the wall right-to-left once, asking what had to be true for each event. This Brandolini move surfaces the steps the room was handwaving and typically adds 20-40 new events, mostly on the left.

- **Phase 4 -- Explicit walkthrough (60-120 min)**

One person narrates the wall end-to-end at ten seconds per event while everyone else interrupts when the story doesn't match what they know. Every interruption becomes a pink note stuck on the event; disagreements are captured, not resolved.

- **Phase 5 -- Pain and systems (60 min)**

Deliberately add pink notes for pain, workarounds, and lost information, plus yellow notes for the systems and people that keep reappearing. Surface everything; solve nothing. The wall should end dense with pink.

- **Phase 6 -- Dot-voting (20-30 min)**

Give everyone five or six dots to place on the pinks that matter most, asking frontline to vote before leadership. The clusters with the most dots become the candidate topics for follow-up Process Level sessions.