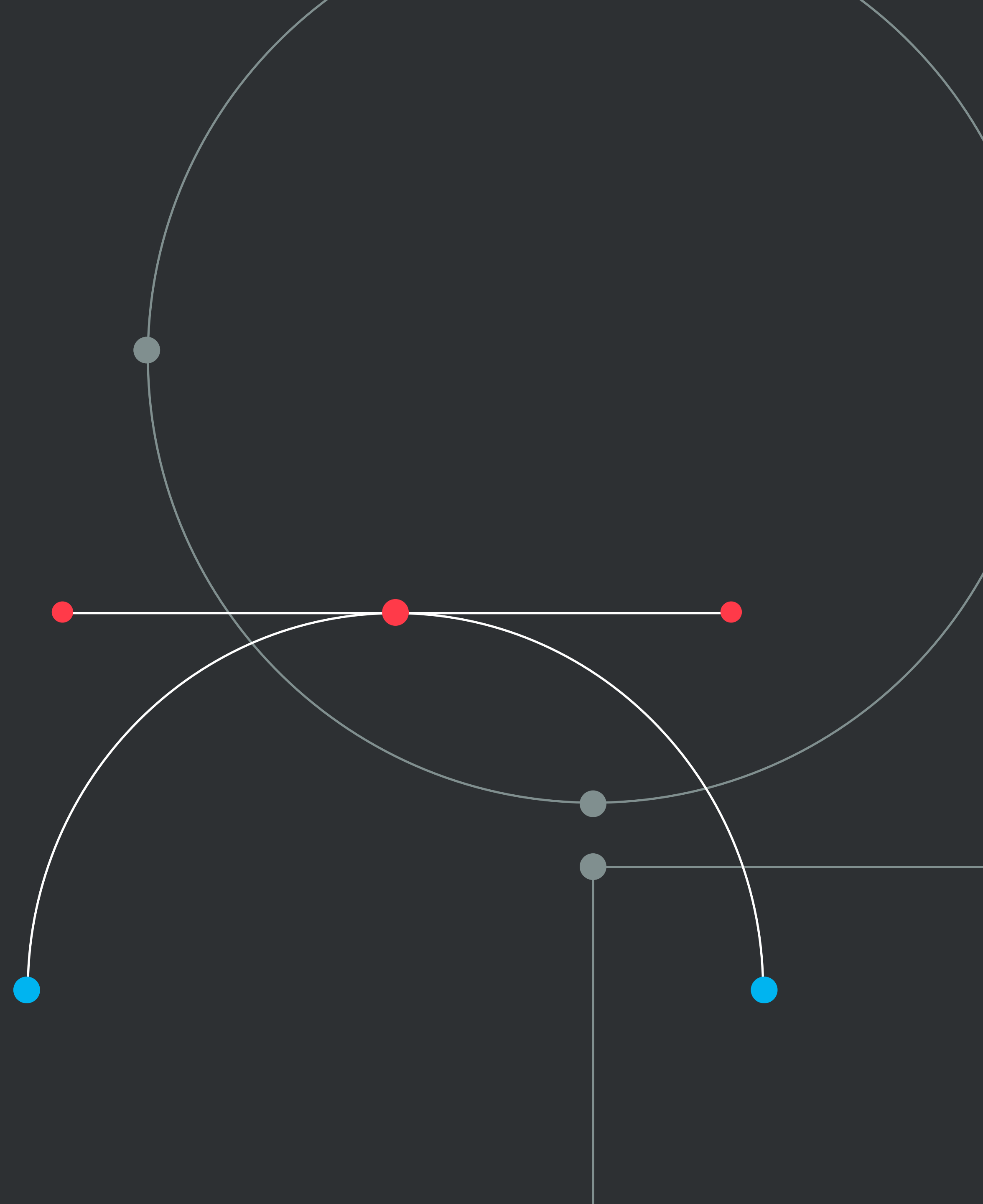# Vaadin Designer

An intuitive visual Vaadin UI builder
for Eclipse & IntelliJ IDEA

Overview

Vaadin Designer is the fastest way to visually build UI designs for Vaadin apps, while maintaining a clear understanding of the component hierarchy of your application.

It is also an excellent entry point into the world of Vaadin development, as it provides a visual sandbox for teams to test and experiment with Vaadin's capabilities.

Released as a plugin for 2 of the most popular Java IDEs around, **Eclipse** and **IntelliJ IDEA**, Vaadin Designer is available as an exclusive tool for Vaadin Pro, Prime and Enterprise subscribers. We offer a free full-featured 2-week trial of Designer here.
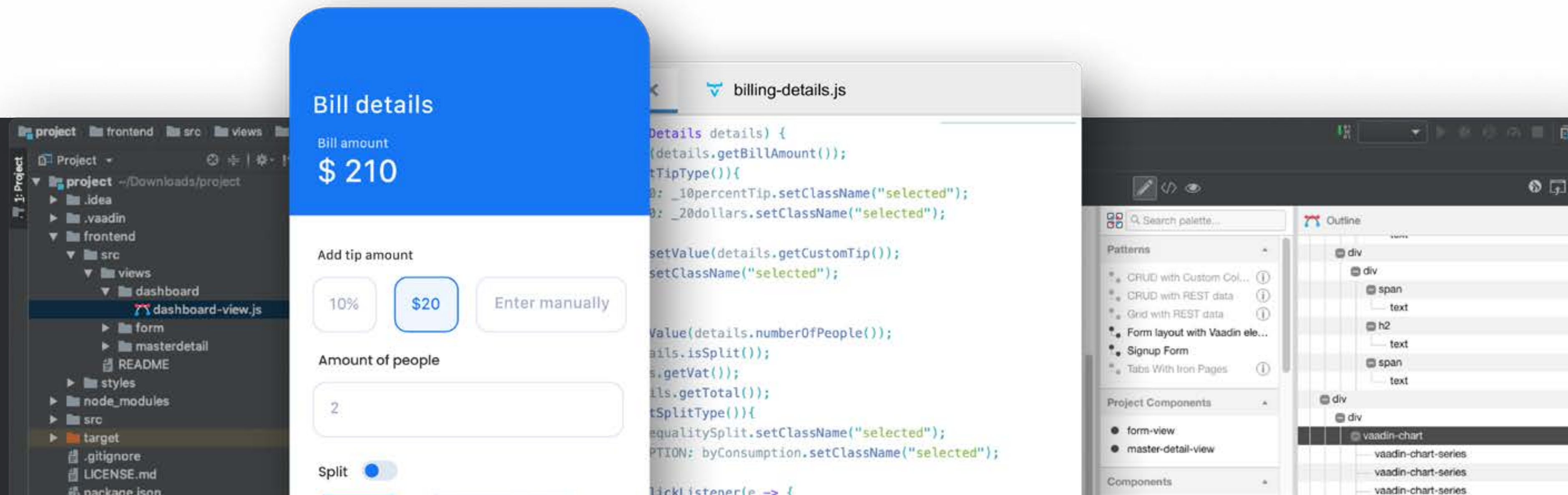
How does Vaadin Designer work?

Vaadin Designer creates an HTML template that defines a part of the UI declaratively. This is called a **design**. A design can be the whole UI or (more commonly) a smaller part of the UI, such as a single view or a sub-component. A single UI or view can be made up of multiple designs.

Designer creates and updates a related "companion file", which exposes elements of the design to the app's Java UI logic, allowing for data-binding between the design and the backend. This approach complies with the separation of concerns principle, since the design file defines the layout, while the companion Java file contains the logic.
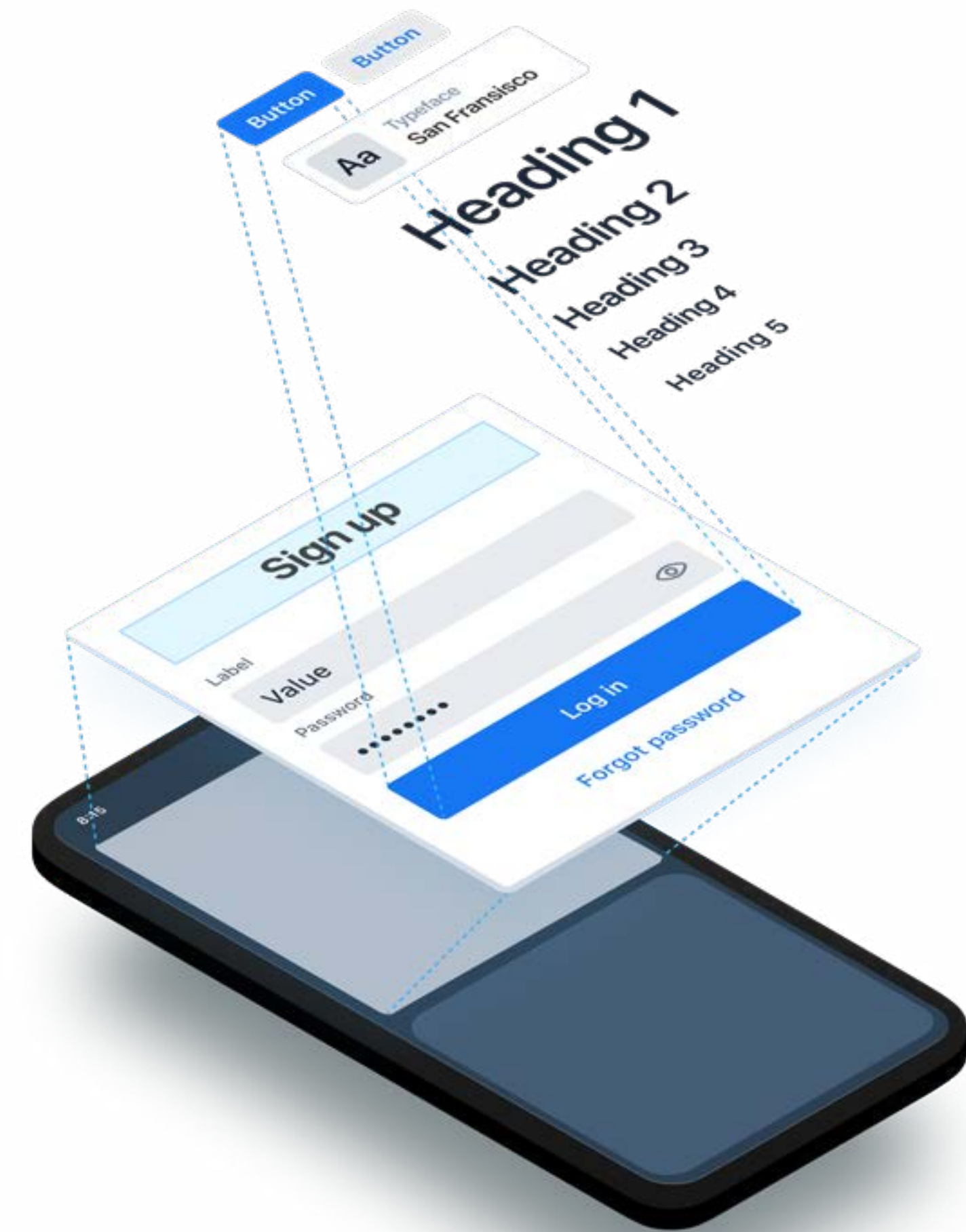
You can visually edit and style the entire visual aspect of the UI element, using Vaadin Designer's WISYWYG Drag & Drop Editor. This allows you to rapidly build UIs for Vaadin apps, with minimal coding and hassle.

Because designs created in Vaadin Designer are saved in a declarative format, these HTML template-based designs can gracefully co-exist with any Java UI elements in your Vaadin application.

What can you build with Vaadin Designer?

Vaadin Designer allows you to build all kinds of UI elements, from complete views containing multiple sub- components, such as grids, text boxes and buttons, to individual custom web components that suit your unique needs.
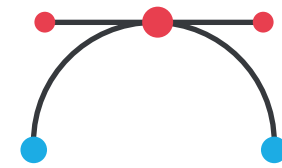
What types of teams benefit from Vaadin Designer?

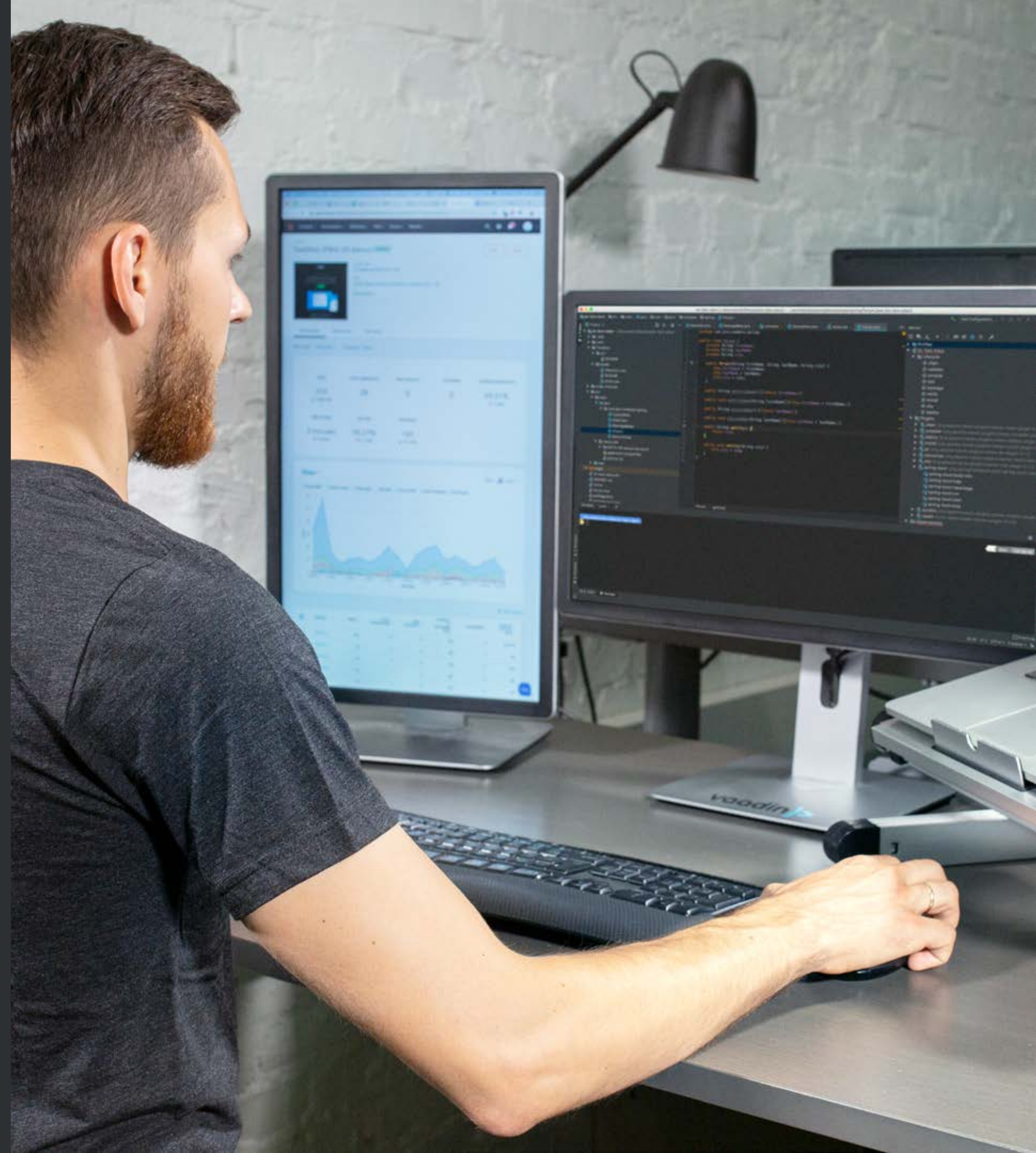Vaadin Designer benefits a wide range of teams, including those that:

- Build apps that have a Java-based UI and backend using Vaadin.

- Prefer visual UI building over Java-coded layouts.

- Require rapid UI building capabilities with feedback and input from multiple stakeholders.

- Have dedicated UI / UX designers who need a solution to effectively collaborate with developers.

Vaadin Designer is a uniquely versatile tool
that speeds up development of Vaadin apps,
promotes collaboration between developers and UX designers
and makes learning Vaadin easy and fun!

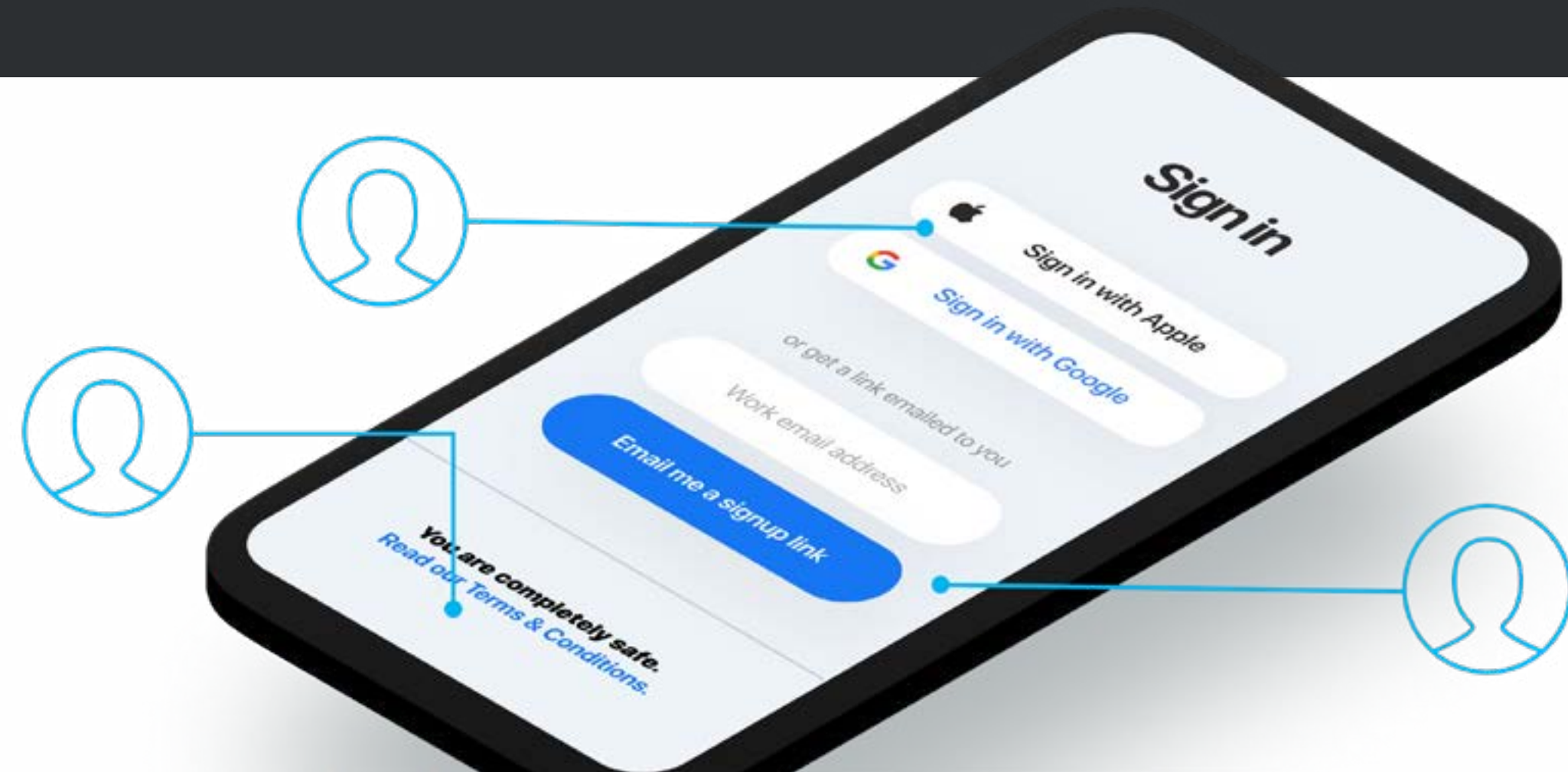# Rapid iterative UI development for Vaadin apps

Vaadin Designer offers a clean, clutter-free and efficient way to rapidly develop a view, share it with your team and iterate based on their feedback.

①

Frictionless collaborative UX design in Vaadin apps

Developing a successful web app often requires close collaboration between developers and specialized UX designers. Disparities in tooling and technology are often a cause of friction between the development and design members of the team. Vaadin Designer endeavors to solve this by providing three essential collaboration features:

1. **WYSIWYG UI and layout editing:** Designer utilizes familiar design terminology and concepts, such as margins, padding and positioning. While it is possible to use conventional HTML / CSS to edit designs generated using Vaadin Designer, this is entirely optional, as the tools offer visual editing options for properties, styles, responsiveness and more.

2. **Generated HTML for easy collaboration:** Designer generates clean, lightweight HTML files based on WYSIWYG edits. This makes the files easy to share and they can be used by both developers and designers, enabling seamless collaboration.

3. **Visual representation of an app's layout hierarchy:** Vaadin Designer offers component-tree functionality, which provides a simple, visual representation of all elements in a given view. This allows both designers and developers to quickly understand the layout and structure of the UI. Teams can also simplify complex layouts by re-designing parts as simpler reusable components and then combining them.

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Familiarizing teams with Vaadin apps

Vaadin Designer serves as an excellent introduction to Vaadin. Its visual editing capabilities and component tree provide a convenient and efficient sandbox to experiment, learn how layouts work, test available components, live preview CSS changes and understand the structure of a Vaadin application.

3

Key features of Vaadin Designer

WYSIWYG design canvas

Drag, drop and position UI elements in your design.

Whether you edit visually or use code, the canvas reflects all UI changes in real-time.

Designer generates any required boilerplate code, so you can focus on functionality and design.

Edit element properties with one click

The properties panel allows one-click editing of properties and styles using CSS values.

Quick layout editing

Visually control the positioning and alignment of components in layouts, including flex containers, which traditionally require CSS.

Dedicated sizing and spacing panel

Set width, height, margin, padding and spacing properties with CSS values, or Lumo presets using a dropdown.

Viewport controls

Quickly check the responsiveness of the design against a variety of devices.

Palette shows snippets and components

Easily insertable pre-configured components and UX patterns.

Use any web component from the project.

Live preview in browser or on your devices

View your design on any mobile device with one click.

Share the preview link to others for quick collaboration.

Outline displays component hierarchy

View a visual representation of your **design**'s components-based layout

Modify component hierarchy using drag and drop.

Easily connect components to the Java companion file.

Work within your project

Work with designs directly in your Java project.

Easily connect your design to your backend in Java.

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Prerequisites for installing and using Vaadin Designer

System Requirements

IntelliJ 2019.1+ or Eclipse 3.0 +.

Java 8 or later (latest Java LTS is recommended). If your IDE uses Java 8, Google Chrome is not a requirement as it would then use an older embedded version of Vaadin Designer.

Google Chrome v.75+ (for IDEs running Java 11+, as the Vaadin Designer GUI opens in Chrome).

Supported Vaadin versions

All Vaadin 8+ projects are supported in Designer. We recommend our latest LTS Vaadin 14 for new projects.

License

Vaadin Designer requires a valid and active Vaadin Pro, Vaadin Prime or Vaadin Enterprise subscription.

If you would like to try out Vaadin Designer, we offer free 14-day trials here.

Get started with Vaadin Designer

For Vaadin 14 (latest LTS / recommended):
Visit
https://vaadin.com/docs/v14/designer/getting-started/
designer-getting-started.html

For Vaadin 10 / 11 / 12 / 13:
https://vaadin.com/docs/v10/designer/getting-started/
designer-getting-started.html

Vaadin Designer is available for Vaadin 8 as well. For new projects, we recommend starting our latest LTS, Vaadin 14.

Vaadin Designer is **not yet compatible** with TypeScript views created using our non-LTS versions, starting with Vaadin 15.