

Assignment 1: Redesign an Application

Intro

In this first assignment, students will become familiar with the application design and redesign. They will learn how to analyze an application with respect to its effectiveness, ease of use, user experience, etc using tools like personas, user flows, competitive analysis, wireframes, and more. Based on this research, students will propose a redesign for the whole, or part of, the application that improves issues identified and demonstrate their redesign with an interactive prototype and a presentation.

Assignment

Assignment 1 is an individual project. Using research and planning tools, students will analyze, restructure, and redesign an app with a specific user and user scenario in mind. Through prototyping, wireframing, and low and high fidelity designs, the final product of this assignment will be a functional prototype and a design document/presentation explaining how this redesign could be extended to the entire application.

Subjects worth exploring include

- Why is this application or this *part* of the application in need of a redesign?
- What user/users would this redesign help, and why?
- How does this redesign impact other users (not the primary target audience)?
- How can this redesign be expanded to apply to the entire application?

Expectations

Each student is expected to:

- Document real-life user research including observing other people interact with the existing application.
- Create a comparative competitive analysis of the existing application.
- Find Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWAT) for the existing application.
- Develop fact-based personas and empathy maps for the target audience.
- Create user flows, information architecture, and wireframes for the redesign.
- Create a functional interactive prototype for the redesign.
- Create a design document explaining how the redesign can be applied to the entire application.
- Present the research findings, the functional prototype, and the design document to class at the end of the project in a live presentation.

- Deliver research findings, the functional prototype, design documents, presentation, and other relevant documents to the instructors for grading.

What to think of or look for when choosing your app:

- Pick an app you are familiar with and have personal interest in improving.
- Pick a moderately advanced app. A clock or timer app is too simple, Adobe Photoshop is too complex.
- You can redesign an existing interaction or interaction pattern, or choose to add new features or interactions to the app.
- Success in all projects depends on defining a clear scope of work. At the onset, clearly define and write down what you are going to do and what you are *not* going to do in the redesign.