PROJECT 3: CREATING AN APP

This assignment will be focused on designing an interface by creating an app. The user interface, or UI, is often the most important of a website or app next to the functionality. If a user can't interact with your website or app successfully, they will find a website or app that they can. A successful user interface balances the functional requirements with visually interesting aesthetics.

User interface design also involves many more steps than creating a design for a traditional magazine or other print design. The functionality must be considered in the design. As such, steps like wireframing and user testing enter into the design process. We will explore these processes in this assignment.

For the assignment, you will need to choose information based content to make into an app. We will not be making games or other more complicated apps. For reference as to what is appropriate, you should have looked at the showcase of apps I posted from Adobe (http://dpsgallery.adobe.com/#/main). An appropriate example would be to make an app for the Fine Arts department here at Mott the covers the program requirements for all the areas/programs available. These apps will be able to be uploaded to the App Store for download on iPads (if you have one I recommend bringing it to class). We will use InDesign along with Adobe's Digital Publishing Suite to create these apps. Because you already now InDesign, this should allow you to focus on the design of the interface without getting caught up in the tech.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Start by brainstorming about ideas for your app. You can go with the idea above or you can come up with your own idea. Do keep in mind this apps will not be created for profit. You can choose to do that later for yourself if you want, but not for class purposes. You are required to have at least five different sections with at least one "page" per section. Each page/section should have an appropriate amount of images, text, and/or videos depending one the subject. You should also have a table of contents page and a splash screen. A portfolio is not an acceptable option for this project.

2. Once you have determined what your app will be about, you will want to map out what content you will use in your app. You should create a sitemap in order to make sense of where all material will go within your app. You should also begin creating wireframes or your interface focused on functionality.

3. We will review your sitemap and wireframes as a class to offer feedback and note any potential problems.

4. After receiving feedback and revising any necessary parts of your wireframe, you will begin sketching what your interface will actually look like. Your wireframed assigns where things go, now you will create what they look like. Think about what you see in existing apps. What is appropriate to the content of your app? What makes sense for the design?

5. Review your sketches with me for feedback.

6. Begin creating all necessary elements for your app. All images should be 72 dpi and RGB. You may use Illustrator and/or Photoshop. Please note that copyright law does apply. You should be creating your images and icons as much as possible. You may use other resources so long as you adhere to copyright rules. Please see me if you have any questions about this. Not adhereing to these rules will be seen as plagarism.

7. Start building your "pages" in InDesign. The pages should be 1024 x 768 pixels. You will want to do a horizontal and and a vertical version of your pages to support both orientations.

8. We will conduct user testing in groups in order to see how well your apps work.

9. Make any changes based on the user testing feedback.

10. Finalize your app and work through the process for getting the app ready for launch. The guide from Adobe is posted to blackboard if you need a reference. We will discuss necessary logins as we get closer to this point. If you already have an Apple ID and are an Adobe Creative Cloud member, you should be fine. If you are not, we will discuss what you need to do.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Final files should be placed in a folder in your class shares labeled Project3. Inside that folder, you will have the InDesign file (yourname_art245_project3.indd), an images folder, the development app, and the distribution app file. Note: Web file names ABSOLUTELY cannot have spaces in them. It may work on your desktop, but will not work when moved to a live server. Naming files and putting them in the specified places is part of your grade.

Don't forget that you are required to make 15 wiki posts over the course of the semester. If you find something that helps fix a problem or a resource that may be helpful to your classmates, you should post it to the wiki. Likewise, you can post if your have trouble with something and want to see if anyone else found a solution. This should be a resource for you.

DUE DATES

Sitemaps & Wireframes due by 9:30 am on February 5.

Interface layout sketches/ Mockups due by the start of class on February 10.

App must be ready for user testing on February 17 at the start of class.

Project should be submitted at the start of class on February 19. We will critique the projects in class. Please be prepared to participate in the critique and explain your work.

QUESTIONS

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Office Hours:
Varies, but I will be available on campus Mon, Tues, Wed, and Thurs.