REDESIGNING WIKIPEDIA

FOR USABILITY

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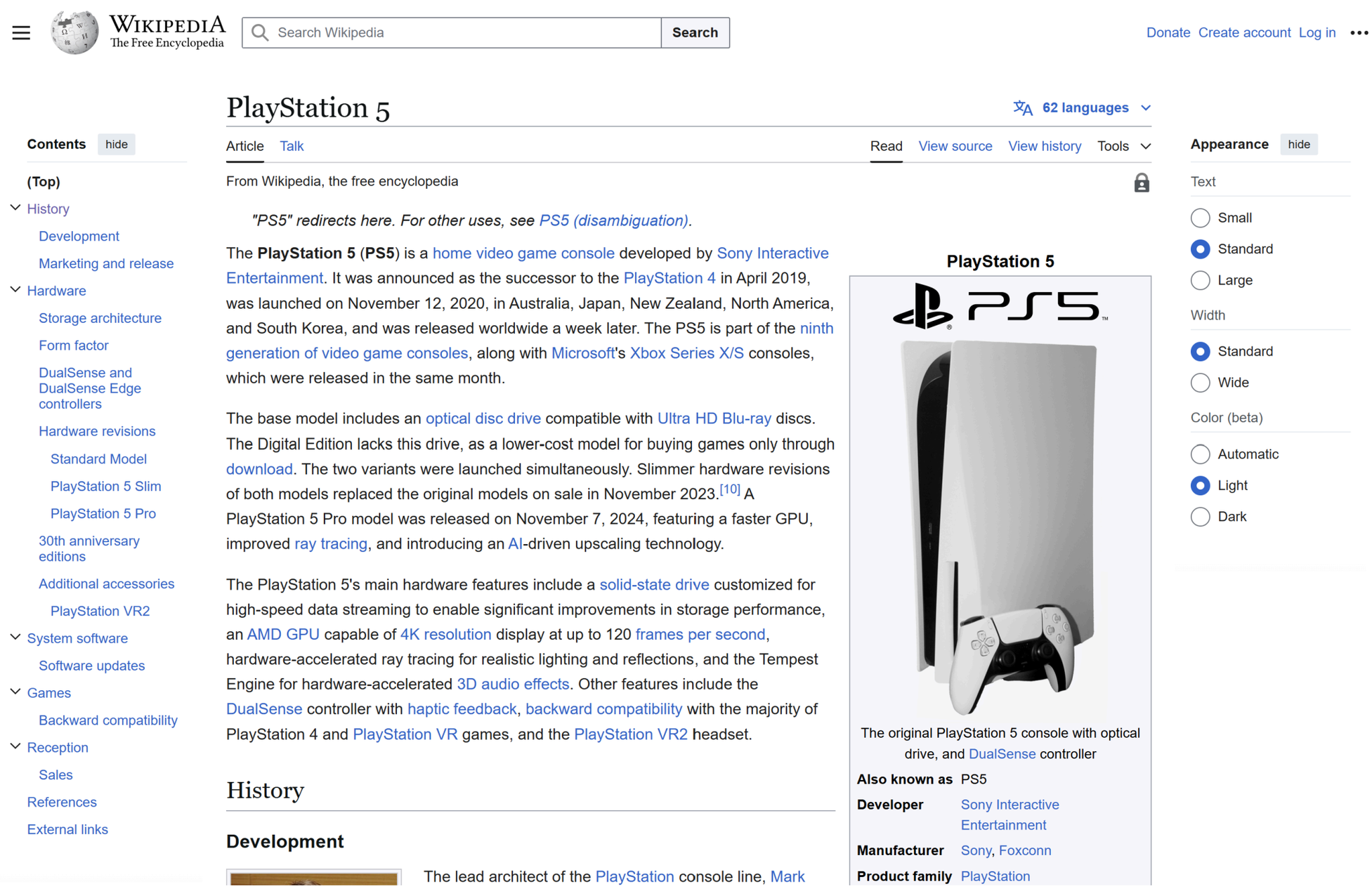
Introduction

Wikipedia is one of the most widely accessed knowledge platforms, yet its **user interface** can often feel overwhelming, particularly for casual readers who seek quick and clear information. This project aimed to redesign the Wikipedia page for PlayStation 5, applying **UX/UI** principles to enhance readability, accessibility, and navigation while maintaining the integrity of Wikipedia's informational structure.

WIKIPEDIA
The Free Encyclopedia

UNDERSTANDING THE EXISTING STRUCTURE

The first step in the redesign process was selecting a Wikipedia page that met the project's criteria. The "PlayStation 5" page was chosen due to its extensive content, exceeding 2,500 words with multiple subcategories. To effectively redesign this page, it was necessary to analyze and document its existing information architecture by identifying its **structural**, associative, and utility components.



WIKIPEDIA The Free Encyclopedia | Search Wikipedia | Search | Donate | Create account | Log in

PlayStation 5 | 62 languages

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From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

"PS5" redirects here. For other uses, see PS5 (disambiguation).

The **PlayStation 5** (**PS5**) is a home video game console developed by Sony Interactive Entertainment. It was announced as the successor to the PlayStation 4 in April 2019, was launched on November 12, 2020, in Australia, Japan, New Zealand, North America, and South Korea, and was released worldwide a week later. The PS5 is part of the ninth generation of video game consoles, along with Microsoft's Xbox Series X/S consoles, which were released in the same month.

The base model includes an optical disc drive compatible with Ultra HD Blu-ray discs. The Digital Edition lacks this drive, as a lower-cost model for buying games only through download. The two variants were launched simultaneously. Slimmer hardware revisions of both models replaced the original models on sale in November 2023.[10] A PlayStation 5 Pro model was released on November 7, 2024, featuring a faster GPU, improved ray tracing, and introducing an AI-driven upscaling technology.

The PlayStation 5's main hardware features include a solid-state drive customized for high-speed data streaming to enable significant improvements in storage performance, an AMD GPU capable of 4K resolution display at up to 120 frames per second, hardware-accelerated ray tracing for realistic lighting and reflections, and the Tempest Engine for hardware-accelerated 3D audio effects. Other features include the DualSense controller with haptic feedback, backward compatibility with the majority of PlayStation 4 and PlayStation VR games, and the PlayStation VR2 headset.

History

Development

The lead architect of the PlayStation console line, Mark

PlayStation 5

The original PlayStation 5 console with optical drive, and DualSense controller

Also known as	PS5
Developer	Sony Interactive Entertainment
Manufacturer	Sony, Foxconn
Product family	PlayStation

Appearance hide

Text
Small
Standard
Large

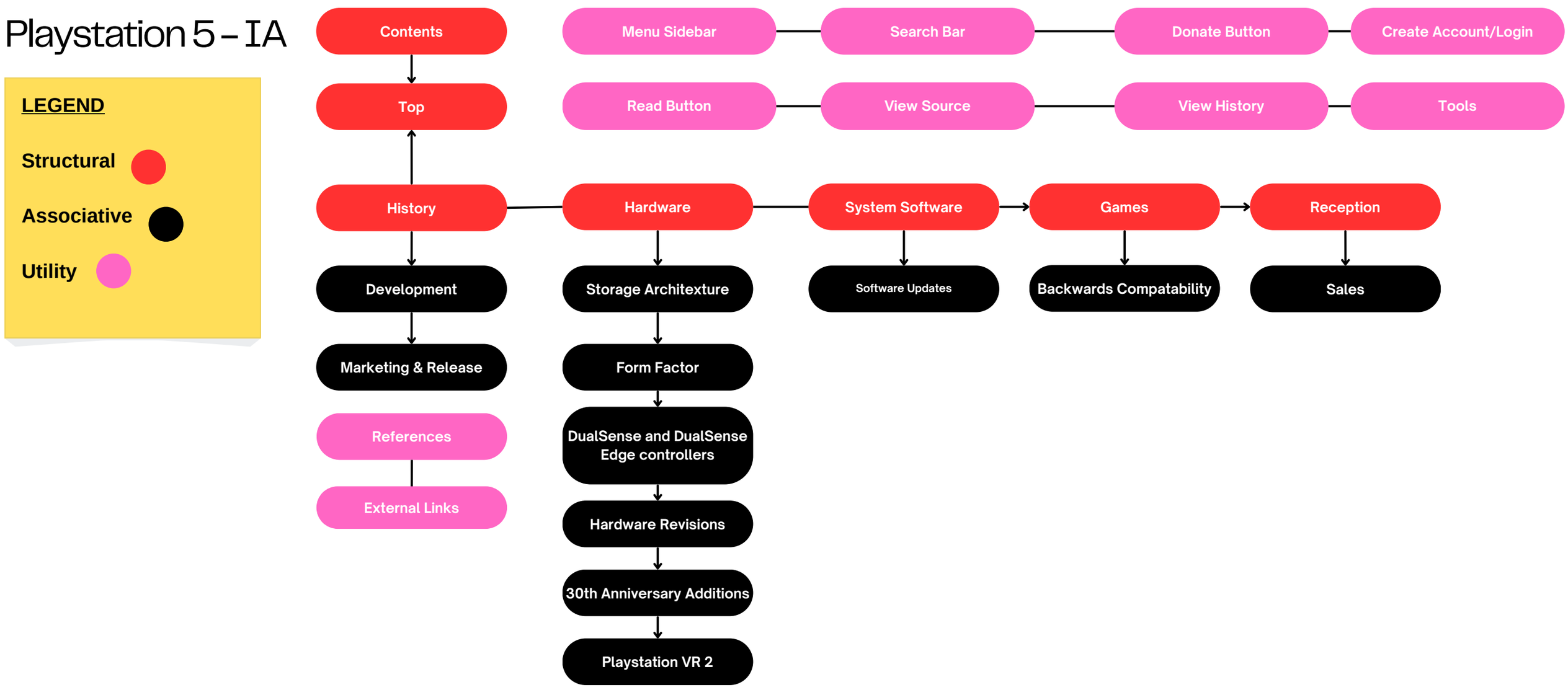
Width
Standard
Wide

Color (beta)
Automatic
Light
Dark

Information Architecture I

NON-REVISED INFORMATION ARCHITECTURE

The original Wikipedia page followed a hierarchical but somewhat cluttered node tree, making it challenging for users to quickly locate relevant information.



A node link tree was mapped out to illustrate the page's structure, highlighting areas where navigation could be streamlined.

ANALYSIS

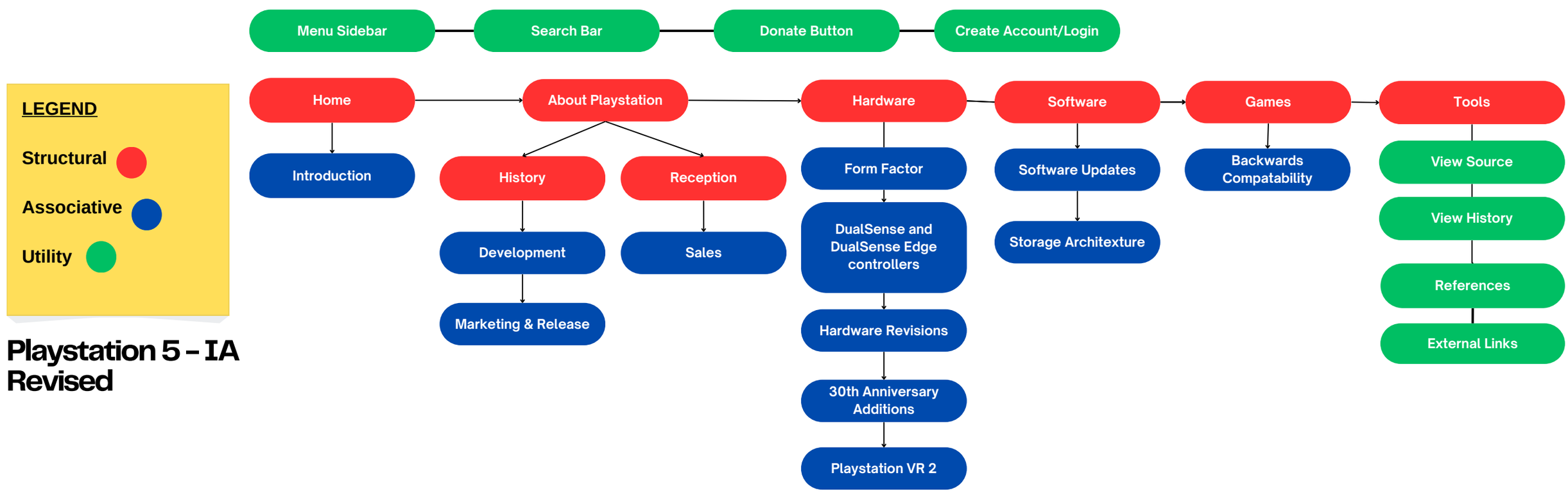
The existing structure relies on a deep hierarchical system, which can make it difficult for users to quickly find specific information without excessive scrolling or multiple clicks. However, there is a lack of clear **visual hierarchy**, as all sections appear uniform in size and importance, making it harder for users to distinguish key areas of content. The navigation elements are scattered, with some links buried within text while others are placed inconsistently

The **associative navigation** is not well-defined, making it challenging for users to explore related topics in an intuitive manner. Utility tools such as "View History" and "Edit Page" are positioned in a way that may not be immediately recognizable to non-expert users. The **search function** is present but not emphasized, relying heavily on users already being familiar with Wikipedia's layout.

Information Architecture II

REVISED INFORMATION ARCHITEXTURE

A new information architecture was developed with a focus on simplicity and efficiency. The key changes included:



Playstation 5 – IA Revised

Utility Navigation: Placing essential Wikipedia-wide tools (such as the search bar and donation link) in a fixed, easily accessible top section.
Global Structural Navigation: Implementing a sticky horizontal navigation bar for switching between main categories seamlessly.
Content Organization: Condensing overly segmented categories, such as merging the "History" and "Reception" sections, to reduce clutter.
Mobile Optimization: Implementing a **swipe-based** category navigation system, similar to Instagram's horizontal scrolling, for an intuitive mobile experience.

EXPLANATION

The revised IA starts off with the main utility navigation (top green) right at the top, things such as a main 'wiki sidebar' or a search bar are present right at the top in order to be convenient. It is where the user expects such things to be placed, if they want to browse the greater wikipedia search system or if they want to donate, it is readily and consistently available right at the top.

The next thing the user would see is the main **global/structural navigation (red)** which serves as the main method of traversal through the different categories. I wanted this navigation to be a horizontal bar near the top that stays visible and the user can switch between each category just by the press of a button and the text would slide away.

Information Architecture II

EXPLANATION CONT.

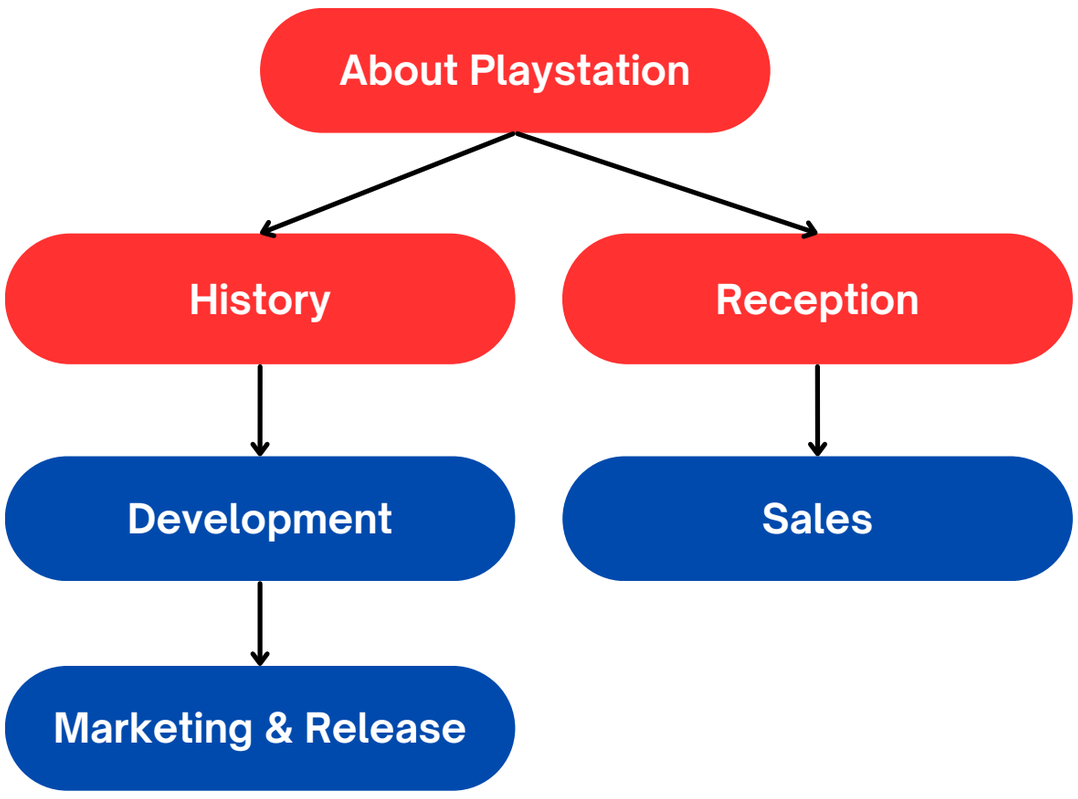
On mobile, this would be done by the user sliding the screen 'left or right' to move through the categories and then 'up and down' to move through the associative navigation (similar to that of Instagram's swipe style navigation from 'DMs' to 'notifications').

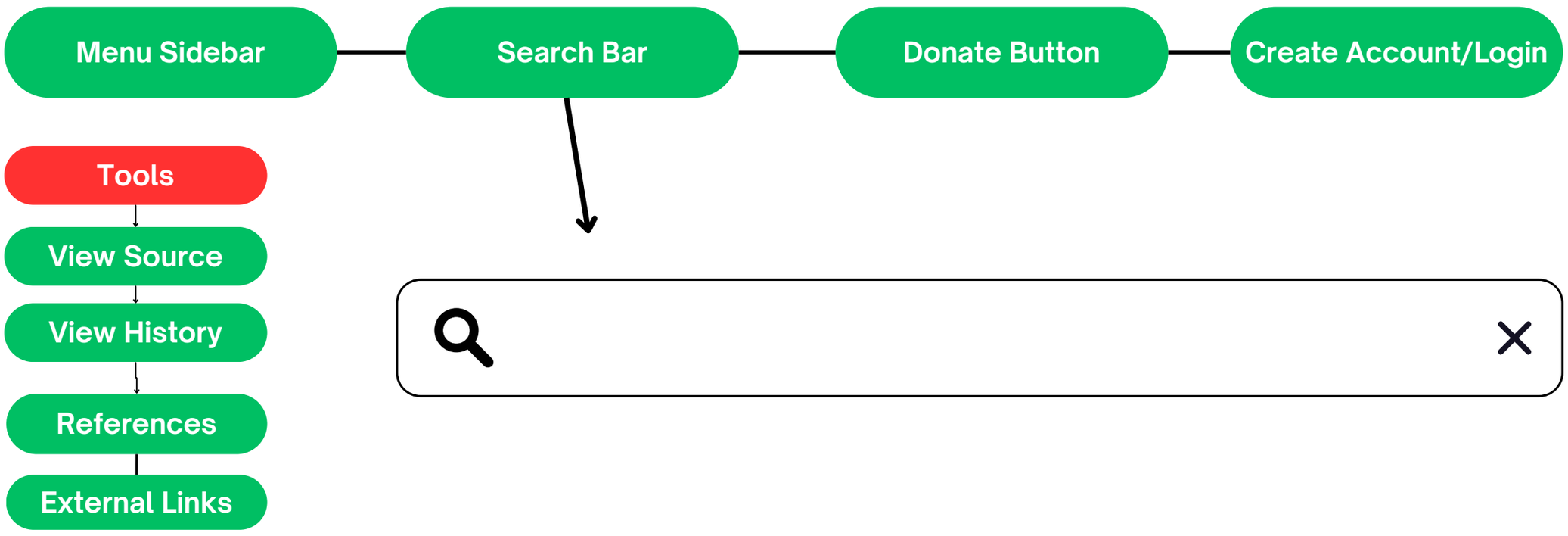
For utility, instead of their being clutter everywhere, I decided on splitting it into two distinct parts. The top utility (top green) is for **utility navigation** concerning that of Wikipedia overall navigational tools such as the search bar which is a universal tool present on all wiki pages.

The second category of utility tools are the ones under the **structural tool navigation** on the right; these tools essentially serve as any tool that a person may use on that specific wiki page they are on, so things such as view source or view history are present there.

This split also allowed the removal of the 'read' utility button as it is not necessary since you're not switching pages when clicking on 'view source' anymore.

As for structural navigation, the history and reception categories were condensed into one structural branch in order to remove clutter and save space. So if a user wanted to just learn about PlayStation, they would click on the structural (red) 'about PlayStation' menu and the sub-categorical options would be present from then on.





Rich Media Production

CAPTURING PLAYSTATION 5 VISUALS

To enhance the redesigned page's visual appeal, high-quality images of PlayStation 5 hardware were captured and edited. The photography process followed specific camera techniques to ensure clarity and aesthetic appeal:

PlayStation 5 Console & Controller: Medium shot, slightly high-angle for clarity, aperture set to f/5.6–f/8.

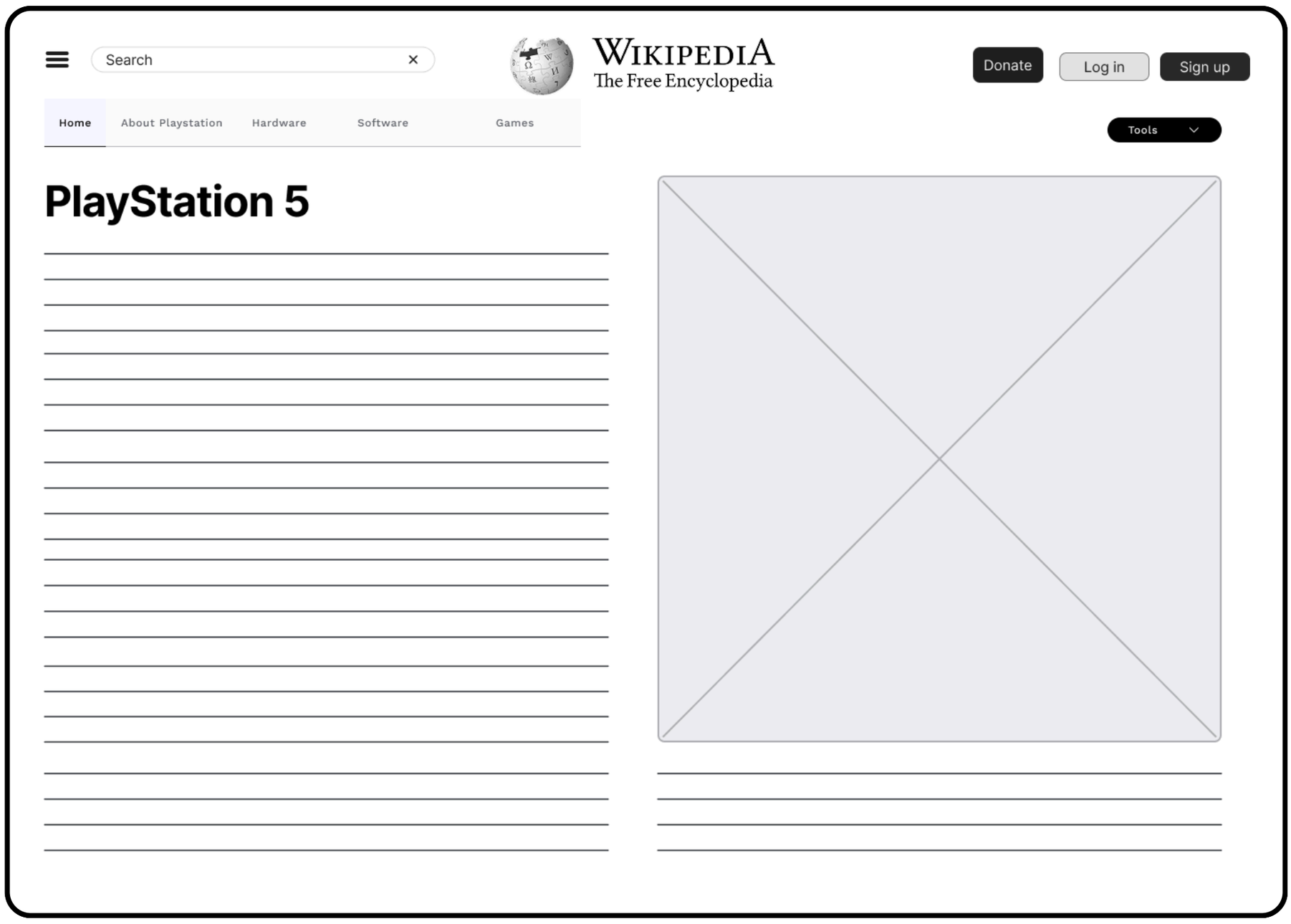
Dual Sense Controller: Close-up shot with a straight-on angle to highlight design details, aperture at f/2.8 for a sharp focus.

Game Box Art: Straight-on close-up shot, ensuring minimal distortion and clear readability of text and graphics.

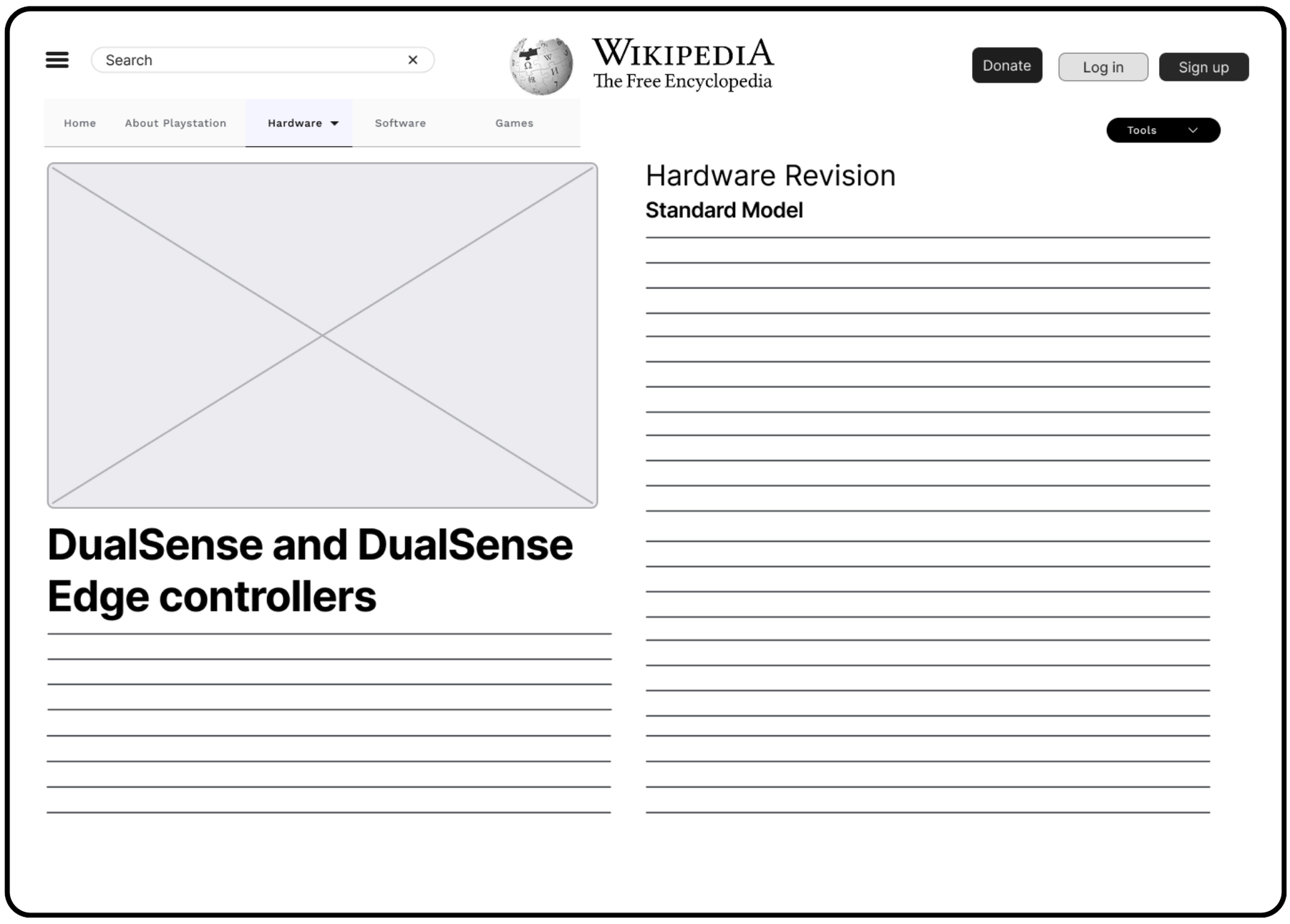
Wireframe

Three wireframes were created for key sections:

HOMEPAGE



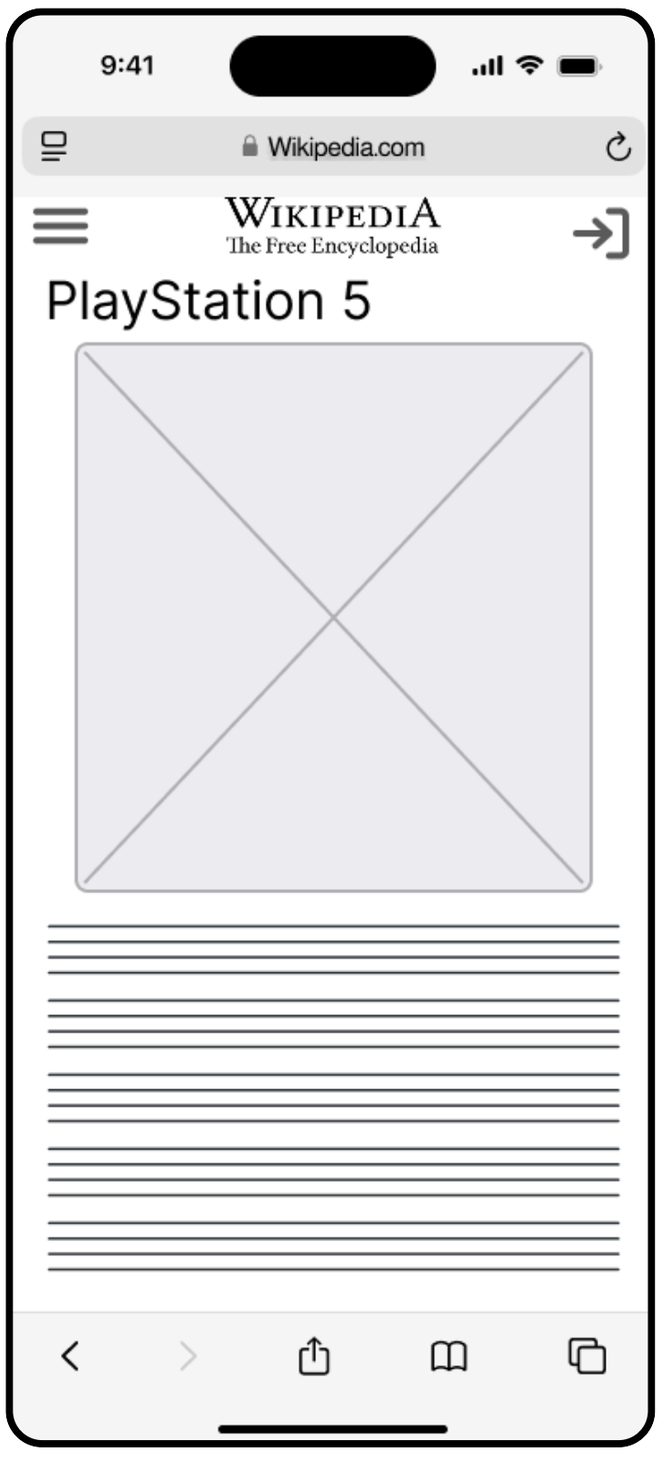
DUAL SENSE CONTROLLER PAGE



Wireframe Cont.

GAMES PAGE

IOS WIREFRAMES



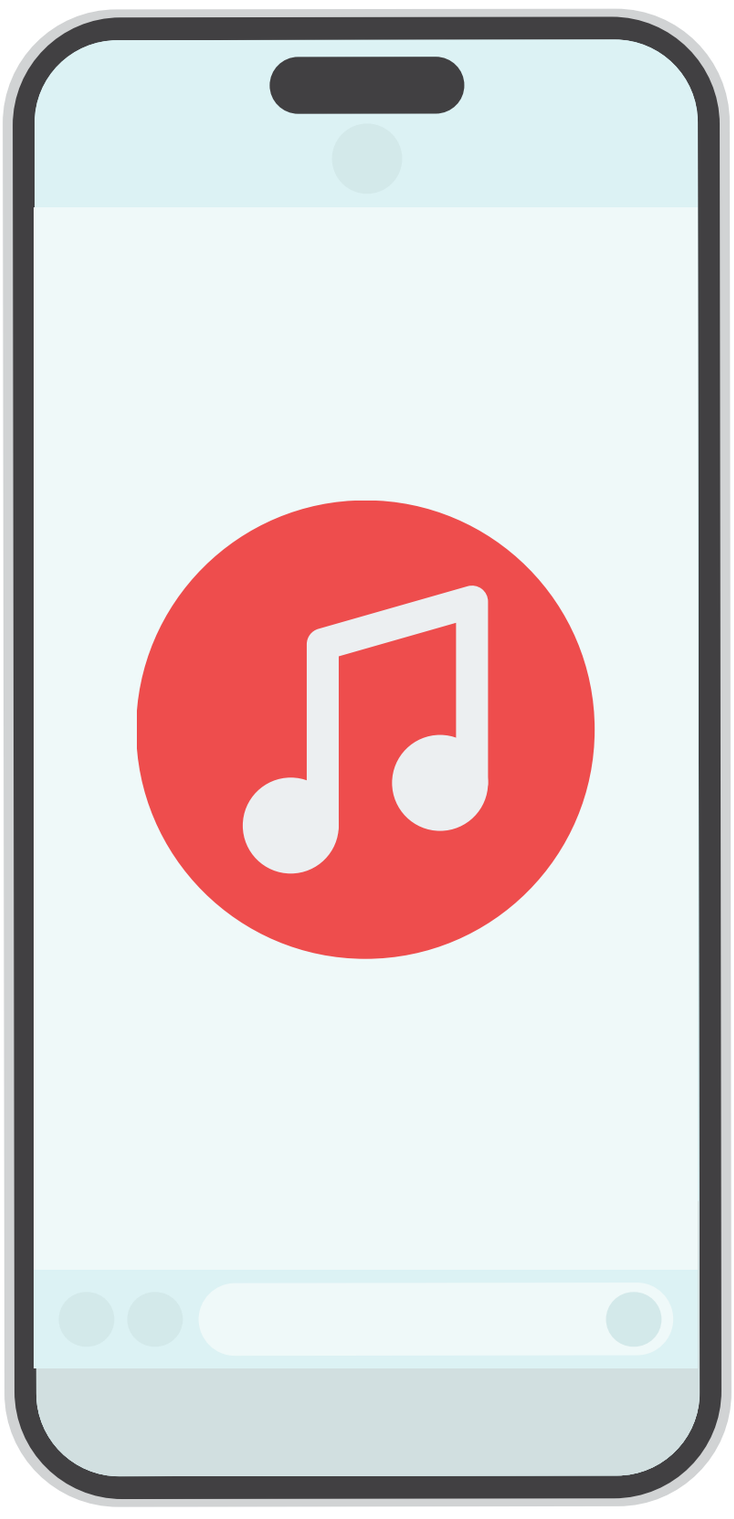
Discussion

WIREFRAME- A REVIEW

The main thought process behind these wireframes and overall design was ease-of-use and simplicity. Wikipedia users come to the site for one task most of the time; reading, as such, it is imperative that the webpage be structured around that and make it as easy as possible to do so.

These wireframes have been designed with a strong focus on usability by prioritizing clear and simple layouts that minimize cognitive load for the user. The structure ensures that the most important content is easily accessible by applying the principle of focused navigation, creating distinct and logical sections within the wireframes.

The placement of elements on the page is intentional and is designed for ease of scanning, using a **visual hierarchy** to help guide the user's eye through the most important information. This can be seen in the way that things like the search bar are at the very top left which allows an ease of browsing. Furthermore, the wireframes use short and descriptive labels, which aligns with the principle of disclosure, giving users enough information to understand the content without overwhelming them.



WIKIPEDIA

Discussion Cont.

WIREFRAME- A REVIEW

The wireframes are a direct reflection of the proposed information architecture, emphasizing a logical hierarchy and structure. The sitemap format is clearly translated into the wireframe layouts, ensuring that users can easily navigate through the site. The structure of the site also reflects common **mental models** that users may have, with categories and content labels that are intuitive and easy to find.

The wireframes emphasize clear structural navigation, using menus and links that enable users to move up and down the site hierarchy, in addition, associative navigation is used to connect similar pages that are related to each other on the navigational horizontal bar that helps the reader move through the different categories of the specific article they are reading. So in the case of the **PlayStation article**, this could be moving through the software section to the hardware section. Each section of the site also has clear labels and drop down menus for when you're on that specific section, which allows the user to understand where they are at, in relation to the site.

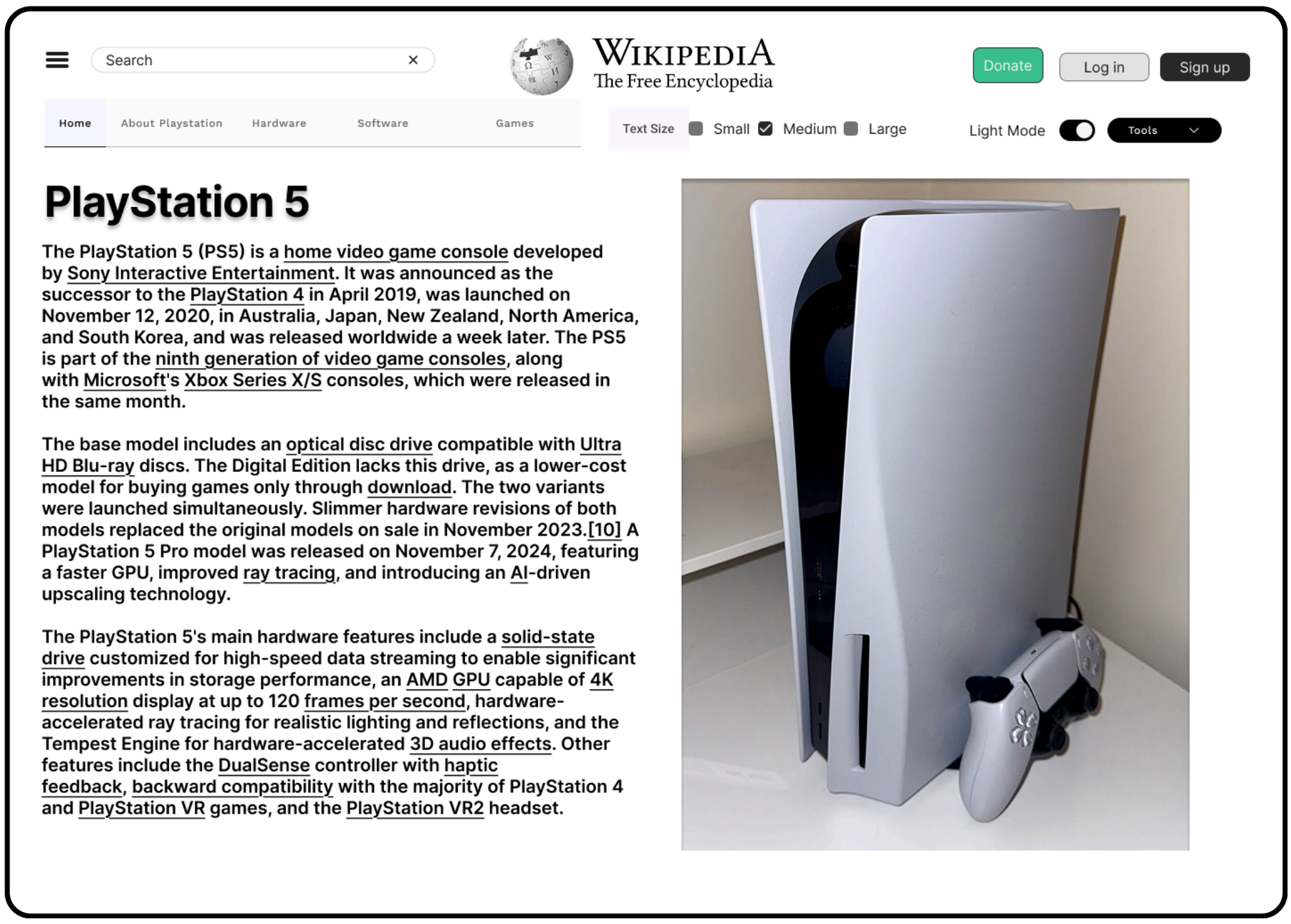
Several key principles of usability have been applied when creating these wireframes, such as the **principle of choices** by providing a limited amount of options, making navigation less overwhelming. This principle is obvious in the way menus and links are limited to essential categories and actions.

The **principle of exemplars** is addressed by presenting a few key content items within categories to illustrate the types of content users can expect; this would be seen in how the drop down menus work with the downwards arrow on the structural navigation. The **principle of 'front doors'** is taken into account by ensuring that all pages are informative and provide context to new users, regardless of how they access them.

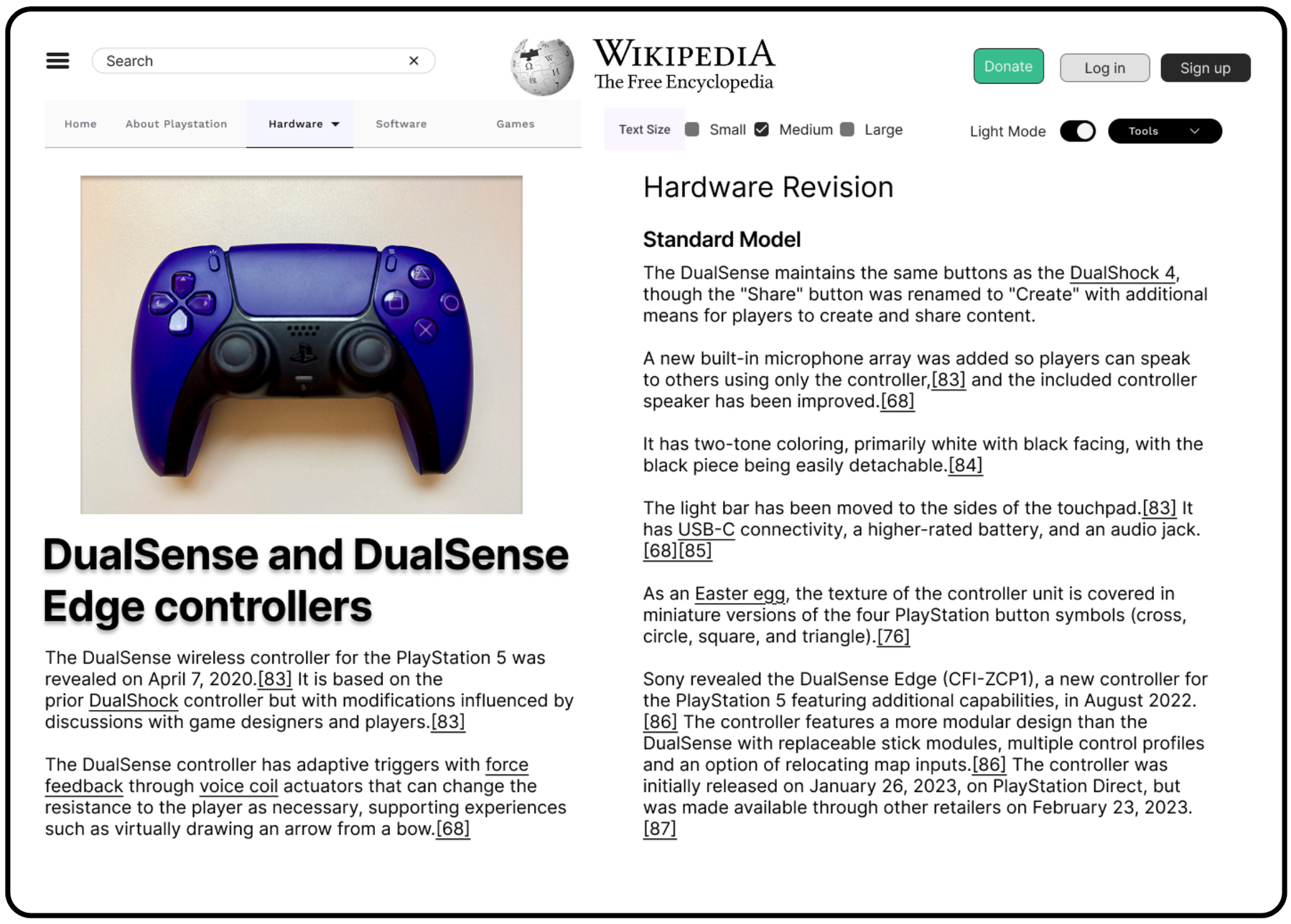
Final Prototype Design

Using the wireframes as a foundation, the final high-fidelity prototypes were developed, incorporating:

HOMEPAGE

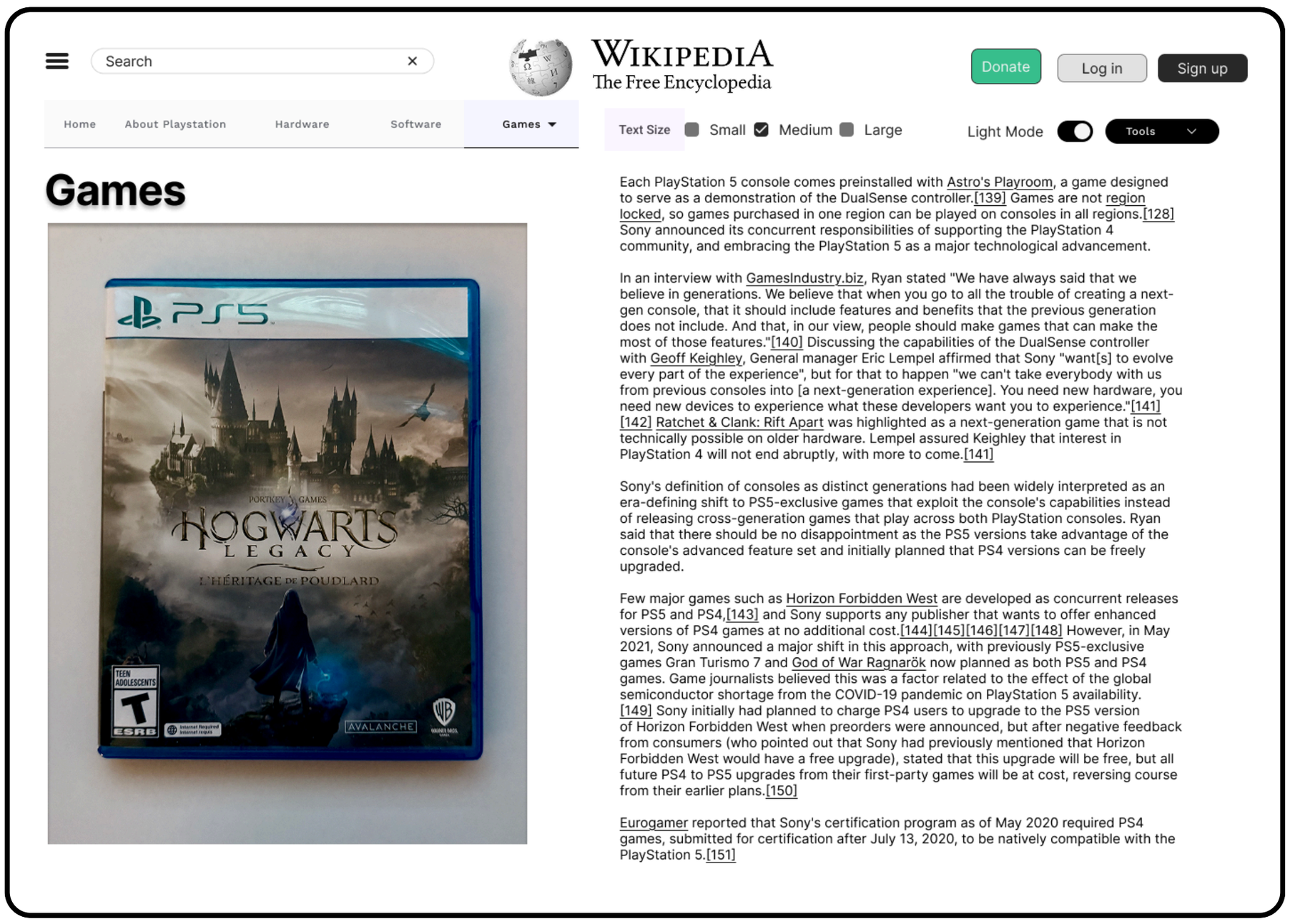


DUAL SENSE CONTROLLER PAGE

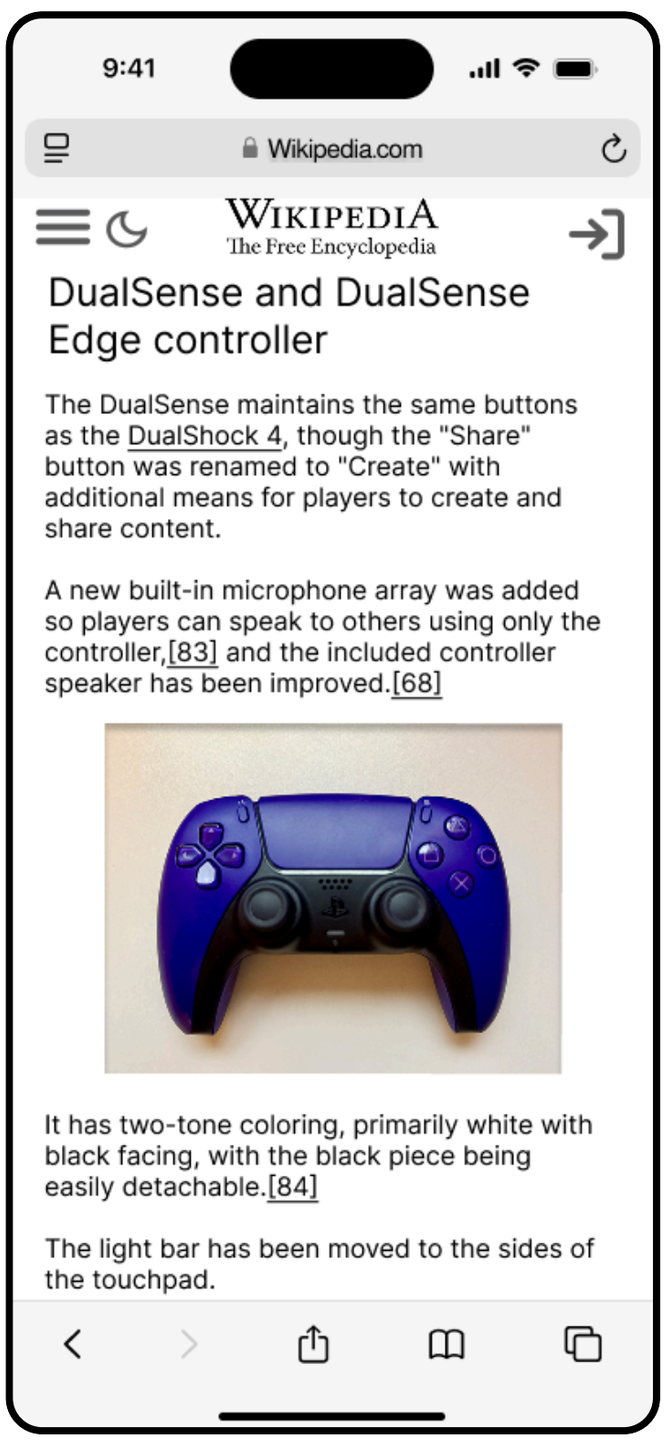


Prototype Cont.

GAMES PAGE



IOS WIREFRAMES



Conclusion

KEY TAKEAWAYS

This project underscored the importance of user-centric design in digital knowledge platforms. By restructuring Wikipedia's navigation and improving its layout, the redesigned page aims to create a more accessible and engaging reading experience. The proposed changes prioritize clarity, ease of use, and adaptability across devices without sacrificing Wikipedia's core function—providing reliable and freely accessible knowledge.

The iterative process of research, wireframing, prototyping, and testing provided valuable insights into UX/UI design. By focusing on usability, this redesign enhances Wikipedia's ability to serve both casual readers and in-depth researchers alike.

Additionally, this project highlights the importance of balancing functionality with simplicity. Many modern websites prioritize aesthetics over usability, often leading to cluttered interfaces. By contrast, Wikipedia must maintain its core function as an information hub while improving ease of access. This redesign demonstrates how thoughtful structuring can reduce cognitive load, enhance readability, and improve navigation efficiency.

Furthermore, the experience reinforced the value of prototyping and user feedback in the design process. Iterative refinements based on usability testing can help bridge the gap between an initial concept and a truly optimized user experience. Future research could explore how interactive elements and personalized content organization might further improve Wikipedia's user engagement.

Ultimately, this project serves as a case study in UX/UI problem-solving, illustrating how small but strategic design changes can make a major impact on user interaction with digital platforms. By continuing to explore these improvements, Wikipedia and similar knowledge platforms can evolve to better serve their vast and diverse audience.

- Muhammad Ibrahim Noorani