CO7223: Interaction Design (ID) and User Experience (UX)

Coursework 2: Design Portfolio and Assessment Criteria

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DESIGN PORTFOLIO

A portfolio is as much about exhibiting the design approach, process, and performance as it is about the design itself. This is actually done using a collection of prototypes of any app or technology and without technical design training. Being a little imaginative is the key to be reliable in obtaining the best design and interface through the prototypes. We are going to present how realistic the prototypes are by using the concept of fidelity which gives us the exact scenario of how our product looks like. We use Low fidelity and medium fidelity which are just a sketches of prototypes and contain wireframes but doesn't look realistic to use, whereas the high fidelity prototypes looks so similar to final product this high fidelity prototypes are achieved by using graphical designs.

Now to present a report on Design portfolio, I chose an application which is popular but not so demanding today that is Apple Mail. Gmail have overtaken Apple mail because a lot of apple users still trust Gmail as the better option. As I am a long time Apple user I've been using both the Gmail and apple mail simultaneously for two of my iCloud and Google accounts. I found Apple mail to be boring when compared to Gmail. Gmail's interface is much more fun than Apple mail. The vibrant graphical user Interface of Gmail is no joke against the simple, yet minimalistic approach of Apple. I would love if apple would make a better interface which is way more interactive to the User.

In terms of Usability and appearance, The Gmail app has a simple design that consists of three text boxes that ask you to enter the receiver of the email, the subject, and the key message. Alternatively, a one-tap alternative is available to use attachments in the email. A quick drop-down next to the input box for the receiver helps you to apply the addresses 'cc' and 'bcc'. The Gmail client, however does not provide customisation of text like it does on its web address. Whereas Interface-composing IOS mail app, Stock e-mail composition screen for the iOS mail app. It is a little difficult to use the stock iOS mail software. This displays the option 'Cc/Bcc' by default which can be changed in the setup. Besides that, except that it is more minimalistic, it is close to the GUI of the Gmail app. The greatest downside here is that attachments can not be used quickly. Without even an attachment button, to add anything like a photograph, documents or any kind of files you'll need to press and hold on the body content of an open email.

So here I am proposing some new prototypes for Apple mail which could make it efficient and much likeable for a client to use it.

Existing application's screenshots which describes the layouts and interface of the Apple mail and I am going to talk about the lacking points which could be improved in the new design prototypes.

A. Image 1:

New Message
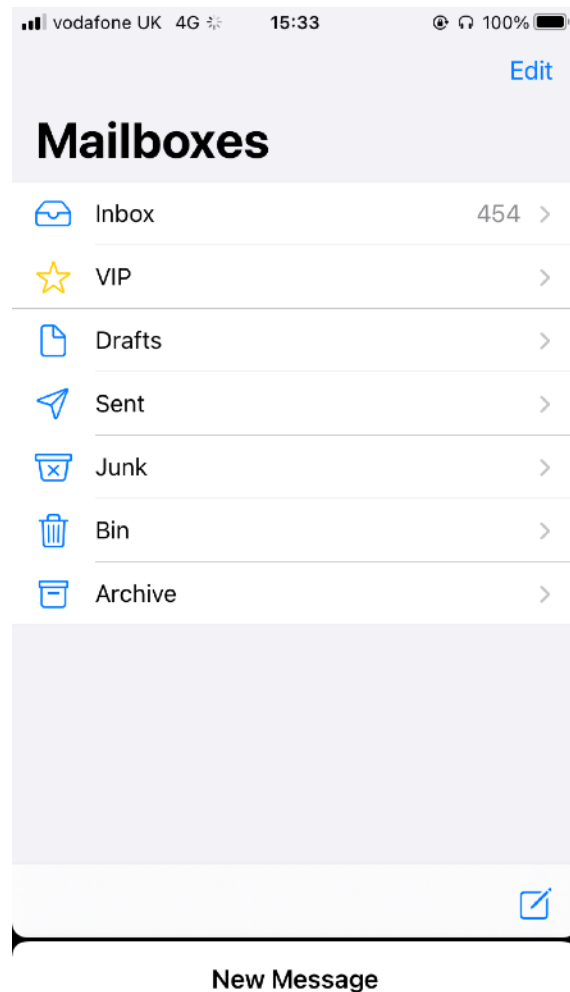
The first image of existing application is the dashboard which shows us a menu such as Inbox, drafts, sent, and Archived mails etc. for a new mail composition a user has to press bottom right icon so that a new page opens up which allows us to pen a new mail. there aren't many drawbacks in this page, but when compared to Gmail, when the Gmail app is opened it shows all the new mails received in the inbox, and can select menu to see all the above categories individually, but here in Apple mail when it's loaded it shows us the categories to select which one to view but not the mails in the inbox.

B. Image 2:
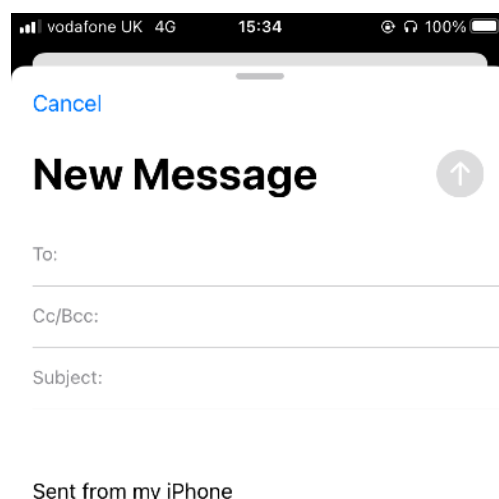
On clicking the bottom right icon which is given to compose a new mail, a page opens up as shown in the image below.

Which has a To, Cc/Bcc and a subject. On adding a recipient's email address and subject you can see the arrow highlighted to blue which means the mail to the given address is ready to send, after that you can add your desired content and can click the arrow to send the mail. The drawback here is you can't find an attachment option anywhere to attach desired files into the composition, you have to browse through the files locally and share them separately as a new email via mail app.

C. <u>Image 3</u>:
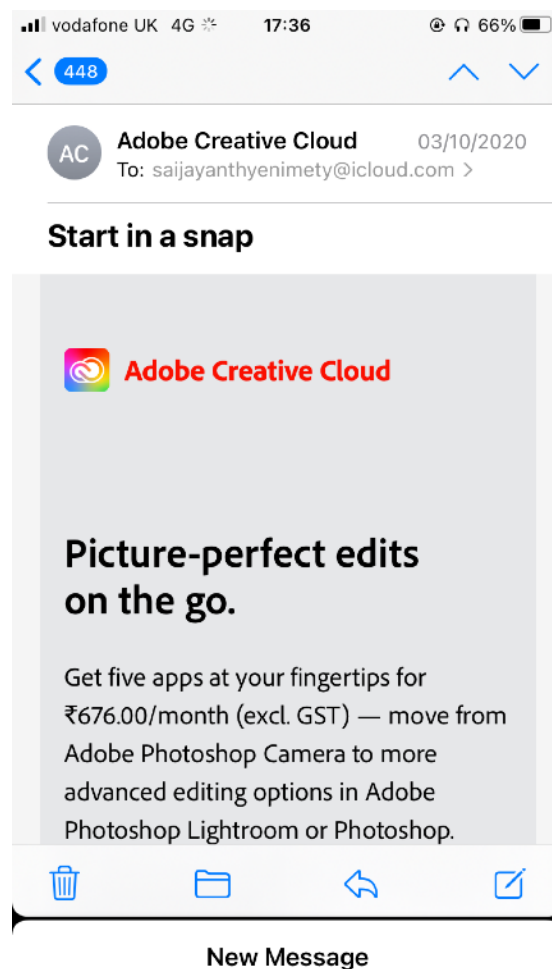
This Image depicts the representation of the page when an unopened mail is opened and how the details such as sender information, Text and attachments are displayed on the screen.

the drawbacks in this page is that the sender information is displayed only when it's tapped on the panel above the subject.

I have made some design portfolio which has a collection of prototypes and in those prototypes the above mentioned drawbacks of each page image are treated and made

better for a user to use conveniently. So these prototypes are designed based on two categories and they are:

• Low Fidelity.
• Medium Fidelity.

What is Low fidelity:

Low-fidelity prototyping is an effective way to obtain concept knowledge since it is a simple approach that can act as a way to test the core behaviour of user interface groups as a whole. This Low fidelity can be achieved in a low cost and can be quickly and easily built. We use this Low fidelity prototyping at the early stages of development it takes less time to be made and this allows us to implement all the ideas as many versions within a short period of time.

What is Medium fidelity:

This Medium fidelity prototyping is the next step of the low fidelity prototyping. Here we need to apply some additional information and modifications to designs to boost the level of prototyping, making them more likely represent finished designs. Medium-fidelity prototypes, for the following explanations, take longer to produce and can be more costly. Therefore before moving on to using medium-fidelity samples, you can verify and remove enough premature problems and conclusions for lower-fidelity versions.

• Our Low fidelity prototypes used here are the paper sketches of the proposed designs which are given below:

FIGURE 1 :

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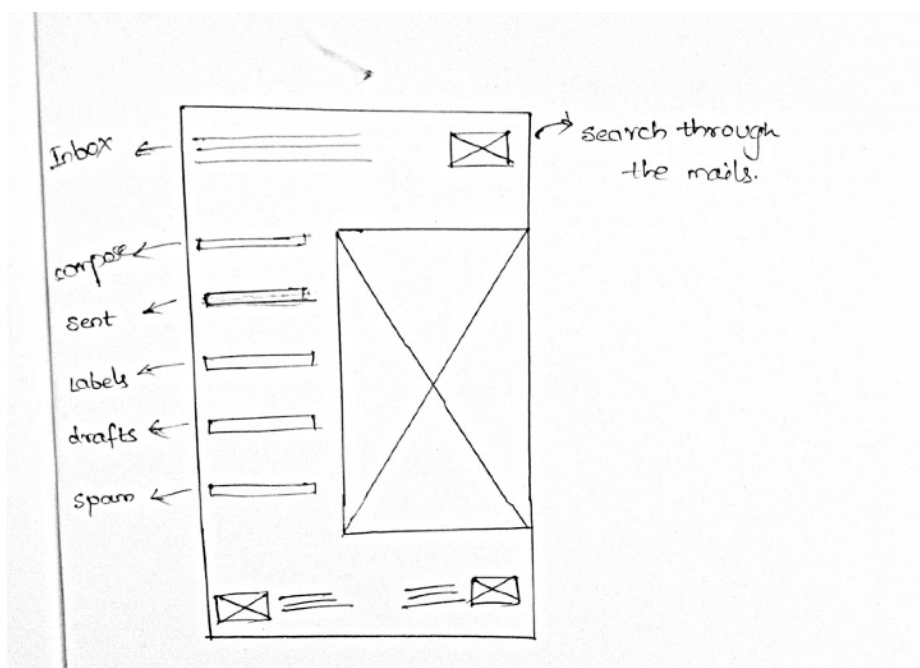
The figure 1 represents the prototype which has all the options on the go when the app is opened. Like Inbox, compose a new mail, Labels, drafts, spam folder. and at the bottom we add two more options which is a profile option and a sign out option which is absent in the native Apple mail app. And by profile option, A user can switch between his accounts, and in the native app there is no chance of switching between multiple accounts.

FIGURE 2:
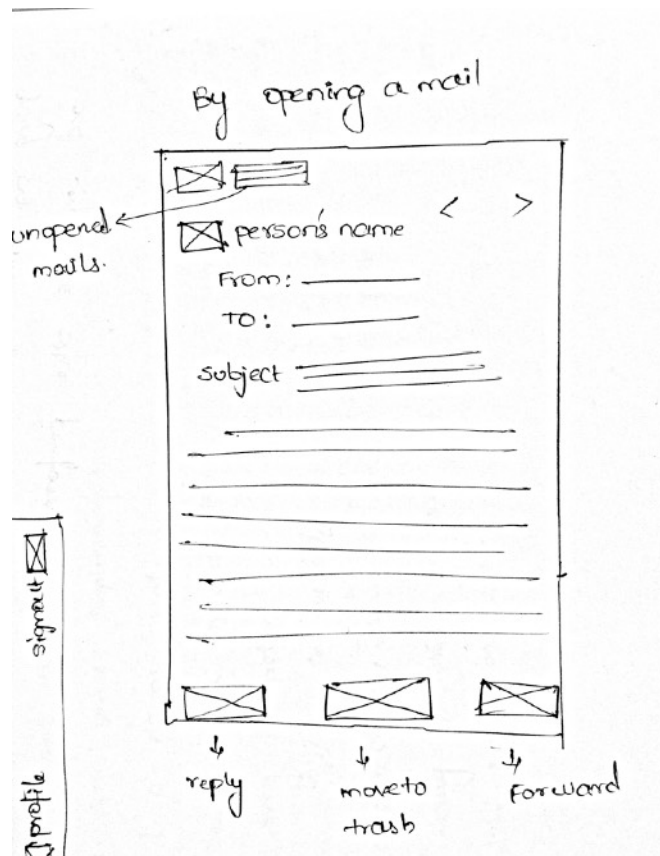
The Motivation for the second prototype is to make a user clear of from whom the mail has come, without touching anywhere on the panel, easy switching between the mails by clicking the arrows given at the top right, which means by clicking a left arrow it opens you a previous mail and by clicking the right arrow you can switch to the next mail. And at the bottom you can see that the options are reduced when compared to the native mail app and only three options such as Reply button, Move to trash, and Forward option. If we see in the native Apple mail app, you can see 4 options there such as Bin, reply, add to files, and Compose option. In the prototype we had removed compose option and added that to the Home page or Dashboard, accordingly we've added Forward mail option in place of that.
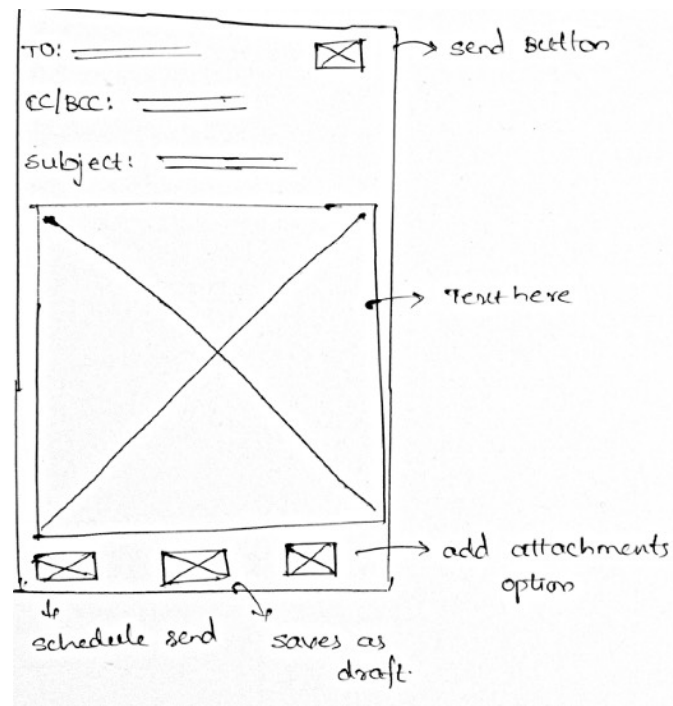
The last prototype depicts the representation of composition interface, the background colour here would be white and the text is black, some new options are added here such as Schedule send, saves as draft, and an add attachment option. A schedule send is an option which allows the user to send the email to anyone at a particular time which has to be set after the composition of mail and after setting the time, the mail would be automatically sent to the mentioned email address at that time. Saves as draft is an option which allows the user to add the mail to drafts and can come back anytime to modify the typed mail which hasn't been sent. Finally coming to the attachments, I am going to add an attachment option in for the user who is composing a new mail, because of the absence of that option people find it difficult to add files into the mail.

• Medium fidelity prototypes are designed based on the above given low fidelity designs by adding some amount of logos, shapes and texts with particular font styles and sizes making the user to understand the prototypes in a more better way.

<u>Image 1</u>:

The image 1 for the medium fidelity prototype describes us the actual text, it's font and sizes, how much is the spacing between the texts. This page in the image is the dashboard which generally appears when the app is loaded. A box which is resides beside the menu shows us all the inbox mails. Right above that box there lies a search symbol which on clicking, it allows us to search through the mails by giving some inputs such as subject, or mail address or names of the sender, by giving such inputs, the app gives us the related mails to those inputs. At the bottom, the profile and the sign out options can be seen with an appropriate logos added besides to them making them more representative to the user
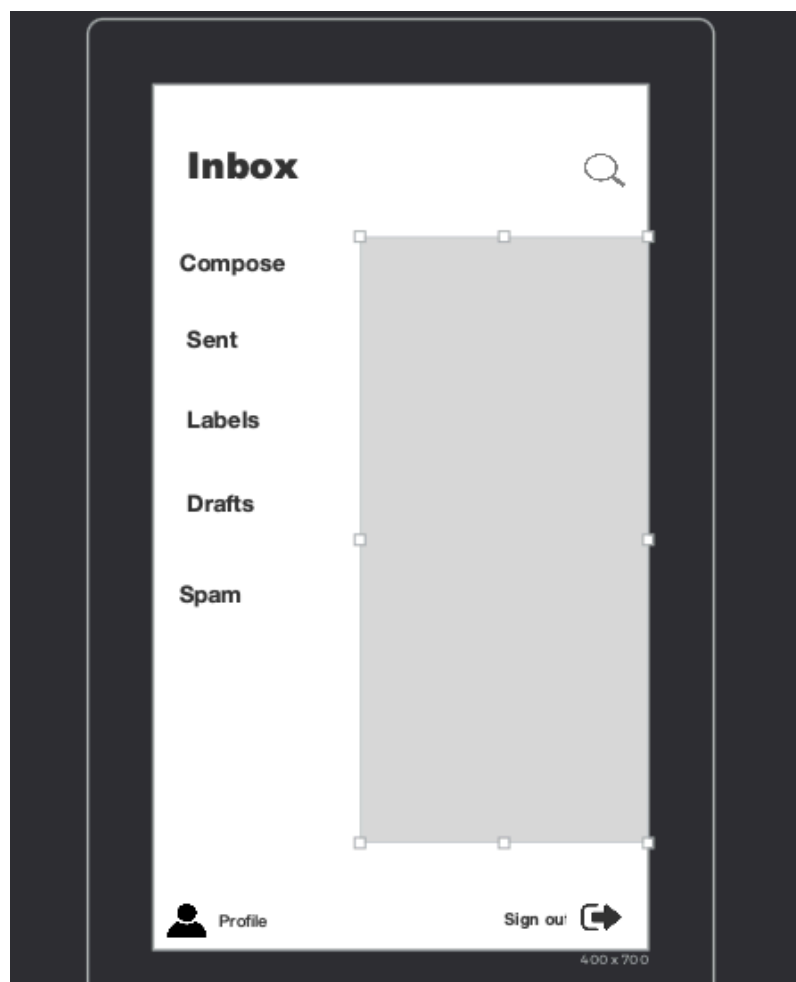
Inbox

Compose

Sent

Labels

Drafts

Spam

Profile   Sign out

400 x 700

<u>Image 2</u>:

As we have discussed in the low fidelity design of this medium fidelity prototype. It's made clear of each of the new proposed design and it's representation. As we go through the digitally sketched design, in the top, the number 450 represents the unread emails which is same as the feature in the existing app, but to switch between next and previous emails the left and right facing arrows have been used. For representation in the bottom I've added the symbols of reply to the mail, forward the mail and move to trash. And the body of the mail is displayed just below where the subject lies in.
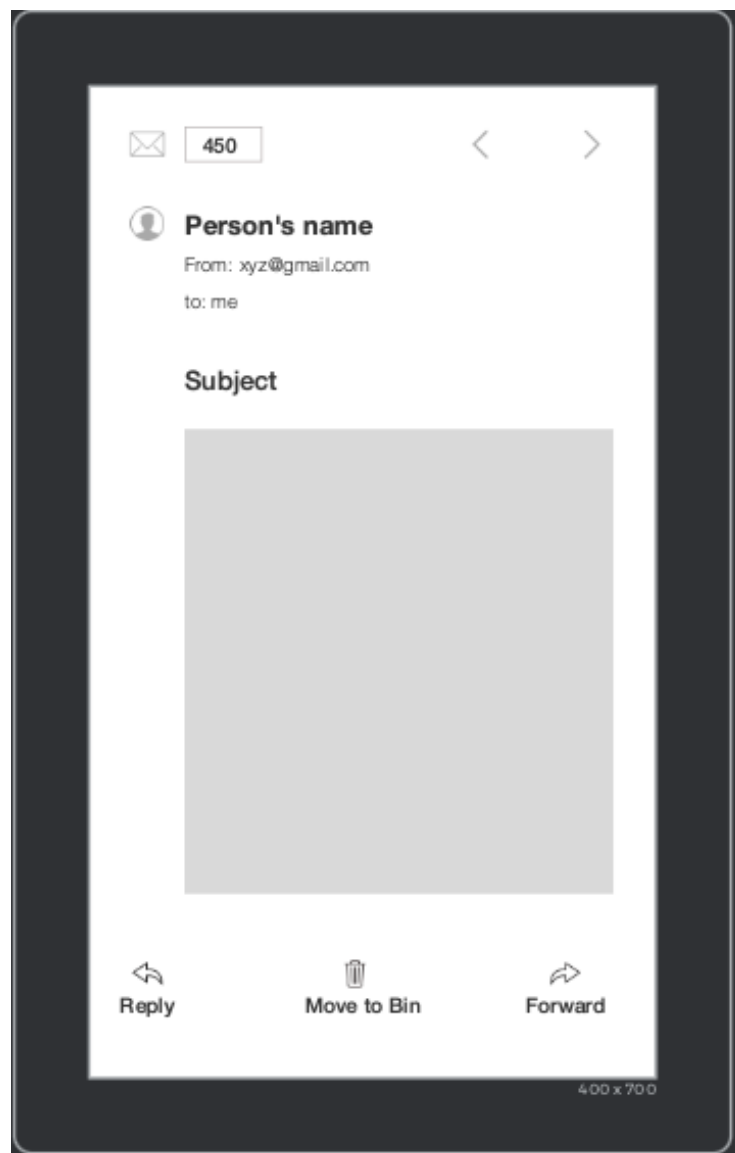
Image 3:

The image 3 is the better version of the paper sketch which was digitally sketched to describe the prototype clearly. As we can see a lot more new options and design when compared to the existing interface of the mail application of Apple. We can find a new attachments option at the bottom right side of the prototype, besides that which showcases us a drawer symbol depicts the save to drafts option. And at the bottom left the symbol which has represents us a timer is used to send a mail at a scheduled time. The send button is replaced with a new symbol and it is located at the same place where the existing original application has in it. The motive for the replacement of new send button is done because many couldn't identify the upward arrow symbol is used to send the mail. So it could be easy if the symbol is quite easy to predict for it's purpose.
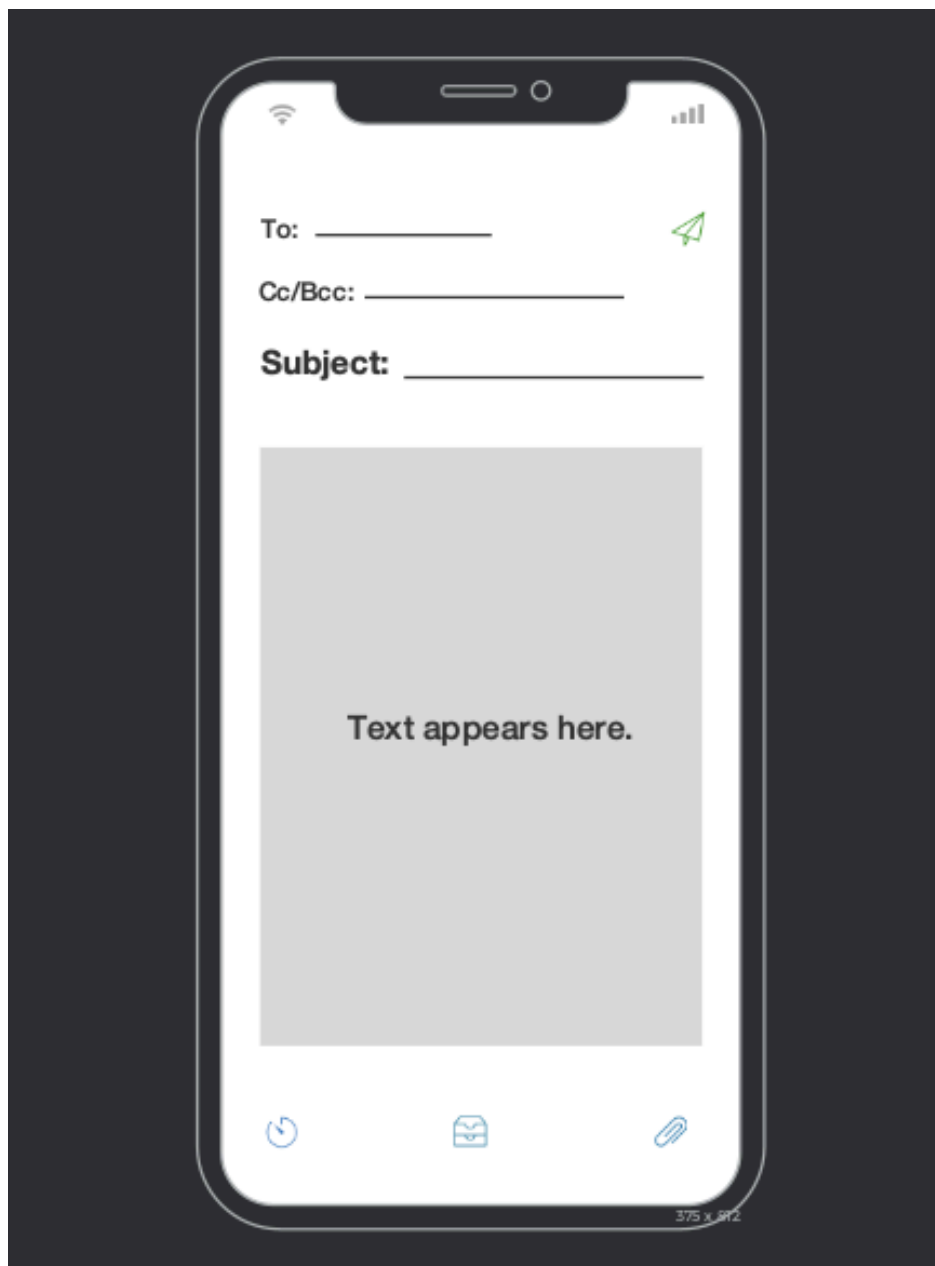
Personas:

Creating personas makes you begin to think about who and who you are designing for. And if your predictions are completely incorrect, a concept identity has your assumptions on paper about your client.

A persona is categorised into 4 sections which are known as:

• Sketch and name:
With a rough sketch of their face, give meaning to your persona, along with their name and position.
• Behavioural demographics:
demographic statistics on the actions of the customers.
• Pain points and needs:
Collect the desires and frustrations of the customer with their current situation. Try to be clear on the pressure issues that the product is working to overcome or the potential you are trying to fix.
• Potential solutions:
Generate concepts for those specifications, either written or sketched. In your Hypothesis Argument, these concepts can also be used.

User Scenarios:

If you want to make goods that individuals can use, designers need to consider their customers. You will help develop strategies to help them fulfil their tasks by understanding them. And they would continue to buy the product again because they are willing to accomplish their goals, but for that you need to fully understand the consumer.

The greatest advantage of providing consumer scenarios is that they can give one quite a bit of perspective into the thinking, wants and desires of the user, but that is often achieved with several other testing methods. User situations are all about getting the usage meaning correctly and tailoring the experience to the desires and motives of the user. In order to accomplish tasks and verify elements of the architecture we have to follow the user's moves.

We are going to write 3 personas and two user scenarios for each persona, for the above mentioned prototypes:

Persona 1:
Name: Ruby
Age: 27
Gender: Female
Profession: Web Developer
Address: Lancaster, UK.
Motivations: to work for best multinational company
Pain points: standing out from each and every aspect

User scenario 1:

"Ruby, 27, a web developer for a multimedia company, needs constantly updated information on what projects they have been working on, while she travels between work and home so she can use/allocate resources optimally. She's highly skilled, organised and diligent. However, with recent layoffs she now struggles to manage her work in the office and decides to work from home. She strains to handle tasks with the mail app which is too inefficient to use, because she have to use it for sending mails to and fro for managing the tasks between her colleagues. She wants something convenient mail app to work efficiently without a hustle while reading through the texts in the mail and can send attachments on a go by just giving a single click while composing. She'd love to have all the information she needs securely on her smartphone by signing off and be able to easily sign-in again.

User scenario 2:

As a Web developer, Ruby expects a great interface and many colours in the interface as using colours that don't have enough contrast make the email difficult to read. As Ruby works from home and decides to work at night, that could lead her to strain her eyes soon because of the low contrast colours of the text and the background colour in the app, and at the same time Ruby was a user of Gmail for a long time, but however she decides to use the Apple mail and finds difficult to add the attachments to the new composition. So she wants to know how to get the attachments into the composition easily.

Persona 2:
Name: Jones King
Age: 44
Gender: Male
Profession: blogger
Address: Arizona, USA.
Motivations: Saving time, convenience.
Pain points: Questions everything.

<u>User scenario 1</u>:

Jones is an experienced blogger, and has many accounts in many websites such as Pinterest, Reddit etc. To login to these sites he uses multiples mail accounts. He has an iOS with an Apple mail pre-installed in it but he couldn't find where to switch between the accounts and he had recently deleted his IMAP account from Mail app and now he want to add it again.

<u>User scenario 2</u>:

As an elderly person of age 44, Jones is suffering with amnesia, that is sometimes he forgets things to do which are really important, So a schedule send option would do the work for him because, It makes it easier for him to send mails without forgetting when the time comes, freeing up more time to think about his content and achieving his blogging goals.

<u>Persona 3</u> :

Name: Alex Ferguson
Age: 25
Gender: Male
Profession: Student administrator
Address: Wellington, NZ.
Motivations: work quickly, keeps the work running smoothly.
Pain points: not a tech savvy, doesn't like when the information is lacking somewhere.

<u>User Scenario 1</u>:

As a student administrator, Alex job is guaranteeing that the needs of students are fulfilled and that all study is done in compliance with approved college procedures and professional requirements. So he has to be in contact with the students and sometimes he has to send the similar kind of mails very often. So he wants a save to drafts option in the composition page such that he could click that option to save the text for the next time whenever it's needed.

<u>User Scenario 2</u>:

Being an Administrator, Alex is typically responsible for assisting their company in a number of ways. Such as mails from the higher authorities often comes to student administrators to pass on the information to the respective students, in such cases because of the absence of forward option, Alex finds it difficult to send the mail as he has to type the mail again in order to send it. So he needs a Forward button after opening a

mail in the inbox such that he could just forward that mail to the desired person in just a single click.

Conclusion:

To sum up, a collection of prototypes of apple mail is considered, there are some points and features where the apple mail failed to address and provide to the users. I have realised that designer's job is not only to impress the users but also to bring value to the business. Considering the Flaws and required features which could help users, we've made some prototypes which could be the better versions than the existing app and also satisfies all the needs mentioned in the user's scenarios of each persona. I look forward to extending the same strategy to other big platforms.

References:

1. https://www.interaction-design.org/literature/article/what-kind-of-prototype-should-you-create (what kind of prototype you should design?)

2. https://www.workshoptactics.com/pages/prototype-persona (What is a prototype persona workshop?)