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CS-257-01

Design Process

Initial Research

To begin redesigning WSBU 88.3 FM for mobile, my partner and I analyzed the current website and identified key usability issues while incorporating the ones discussed in class. Some of these included the live stream not continuing to play while users browse, articles and music content being separated, show schedules hard to find, and the site's commenting system relies on Facebook. Since a majority of listeners used their phones to visit the site. We prioritized designing a mobile design that centers around listening and smoother access to news and engagement features. Szafir's "The Good, The Bad, and The Biased" guided our approach to color, contrast, and clarity. Chapter 11 of Designing the User Interface also reminded us that effective communication and collaboration are essential for creating interfaces that serve real user needs.

Sketching & Early Concept Work

Instead of using the Five Design-Sheet method, my partner and I created two sketches each for all seven screens in the app: Home, Player, News, Profile, Articles, Request a Song, and Notification Settings. This gave us a total of fourteen sketches to compare, combine, and critique. Our sketches explored different layouts for integrating the live stream with articles, whether the mini-player should float or sit at the bottom, etc. We tested these sketches with friends by asking them simple questions such as, "Where would you tap to listen?" This sketching phase was essential for quickly exploring ideas before committing to Figma.

Design & Implementation of Screens

All screens were created in **Figma**, using a visual system and integrating real WSBU content such as Sports, Music, and Campus articles.

Home Screen

The Home screen includes:

- “**LIVE NOW**” card
- Latest news articles pulled directly from WSBU categories
- A **persistent mini player** at the bottom so audio continues everywhere
- Clean category chips for browsing

Player Screen

The Player screen is built around clarity and interaction:

- Large album
- Song metadata and show title
- Buttons for **Chat to DJ**, **Request a Song**, and **Call Studio**

News Screen

The News screen displays:

- Real WSBU article styles with tags (Sports, Music, Campus)
- Thumbnail placeholders
- A redesigned comment system that removes Facebook dependence

Profile Screen

- Favorited shows
- Bookmarked songs
- Listening analytics (time listened, time of day, etc.)
- Link to Notification Settings
- Admin login for DJ bios

Article Page

- Back navigation

- Article tag
- Headline, timestamp, and hero image
- Clean, readable, left-aligned body text
- A new **moderated comment system** replacing Facebook comments

Request a Song Screen

- A simple form
- Song title / artist inputs
- Optional message to the DJ
- A clean, radio-themed design

Notification Settings Screen

- Alerts for favorite shows
- Alerts for bookmarked songs
- Breaking news notifications
- Live stream notifications
- Quiet hours

These screens focused on clarity, readability, and ease of interaction.

Prototype Testing

We conducted informal usability testing with several friends by walking them through the seven screens. We asked them to interpret the interface without an explanation to check for navigation.

Some of the questions we asked were: “Is it obvious what’s currently playing?”, “Can you tell how to switch between shows, news, and the player?”, “Does the mini-player help or get in the way?”, “Would you use the song request or chat features?”

Feedback:

- Liked the persistent mini-player and said it made the app feel like a real radio experience
- Category chips needed to be slightly larger for easier tapping
- Some buttons needed more spacing

- The Player screen felt the most polished
- The News screen was improved by simplifying the article card layout

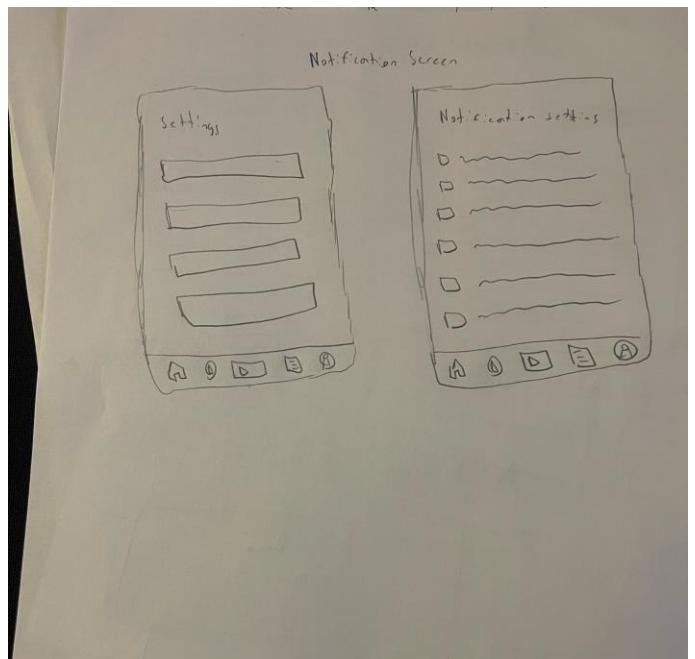
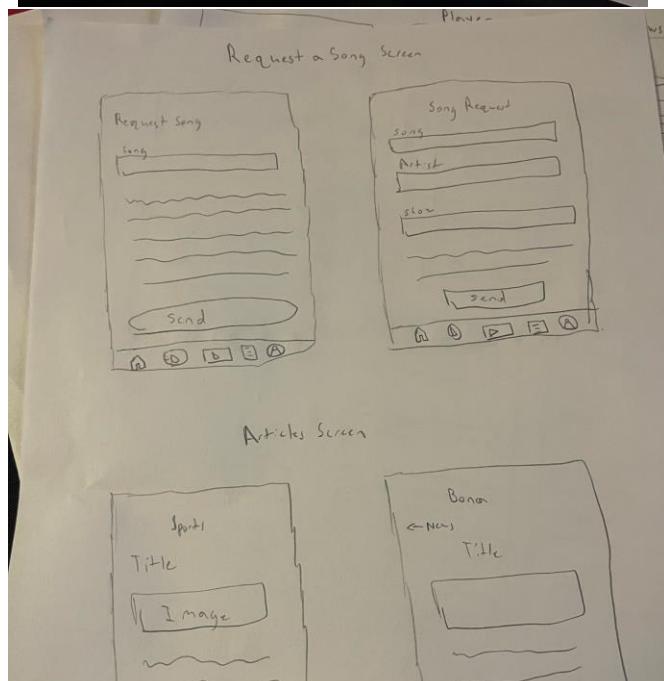
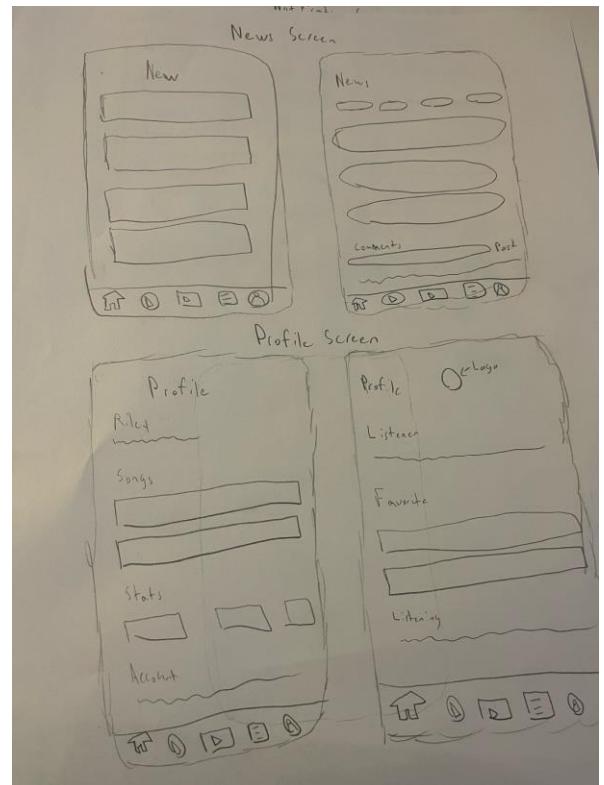
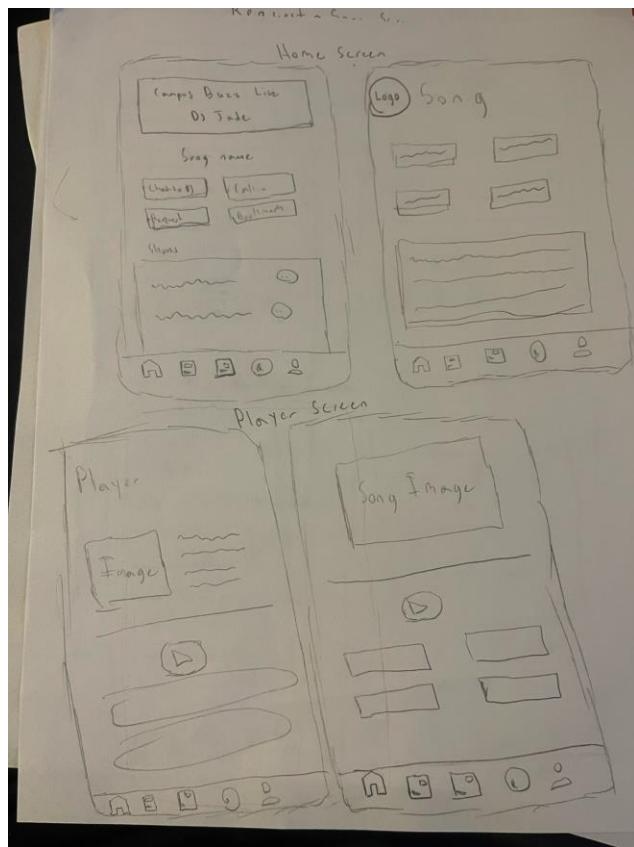
These changes were integrated into our final design.

Reflection

I became more conscious of the numerous choices involved in creating an interface that feels both useful and interesting while working on this project. Continuous listening, content discovery, and user engagement had to all be balanced simultaneously for this design. Understanding how components affected navigation throughout the system was one of the most important lessons. Szafir's observations on color and perception served as a helpful reminder to use contrast and avoid deceptive emphasis. In the meantime, as noted in Designing the User Interface. Making each screen feel related to the others while still fulfilling its own functions was the most difficult task. We were able to develop a mobile design that more closely resembles how actual WSBU users feel by iterating through ideas, prototypes, and user feedback. We were able to develop a mobile design that seems more in line with how actual WSBU users interact with the station by iterating through ideas, prototypes, and user input. My knowledge of effective mobile design and how careful decisions affect the user's overall experience has grown as a result of the project.

Link to Figma- <https://www.figma.com/design/AEi9jeyxlj4ySPvwUuQ5ur/CS-257-Design-For-Collaboration?node-id=0-1&p=f&t=JLb1K7IE6GVGAFvj-0>

Rough Sketches



Final sketches

