IMPROVING POKEMON GO

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Pokemon Go was released in July of 2016 to much fanfare. The cultural phenomenon set multiple world records with regards to downloads and revenue generated. Within the first month, Pokemon Go had generated over 200 million dollars in revenue and was downloaded over 130 million times (CITATION: Guinness). By the end of the year, Pokemon Go had generated 950 million dollars in revenue. Despite its initial success, revenue and downloads declined as initial hype died off. In July, Pokemon Go had 66 million monthly active users, however, in November, that number had fallen to 23 million (CITATION: TechCrunch). To reverse this decline, the product team conducted market research to understand why users were leaving the game. While most responses reflected a lack of interest as the reason for not using Pokemon Go, the team uncovered a few issues that were repeatedly offered as to why a user no longer used the application. One issue the team found was the lack of clarity in the design. Users were unsure how to play the game or use in game features. This sentiment was corroborated by active users expressing the need to look online for directions on how to play. The biggest complaint the team found among former and active users surrounded the tracking feature. The initial design showed nine nearby Pokemon characters, each with a number of footprint icons, one to three, to indicate how close a user was to that specific Pokemon. This design proved to be too much of a strain on performance, and was redesigned to its current state. The current design simply shows nearby Pokemon, with no indicator of distance. If a Pokemon is at a nearby Pokestop, the Pokemon is shown with the display picture of the associated Pokestop. However, these two displays share the same screen, and the Pokestop Pokemon take precedence with respect to space. This causes problems with Pokemon being too far away blocking users from seeing Pokemon that are actually nearby. This paper details the process the design team went through to mitigate these issues, from defining goals and requirements to evaluating and testing usability.