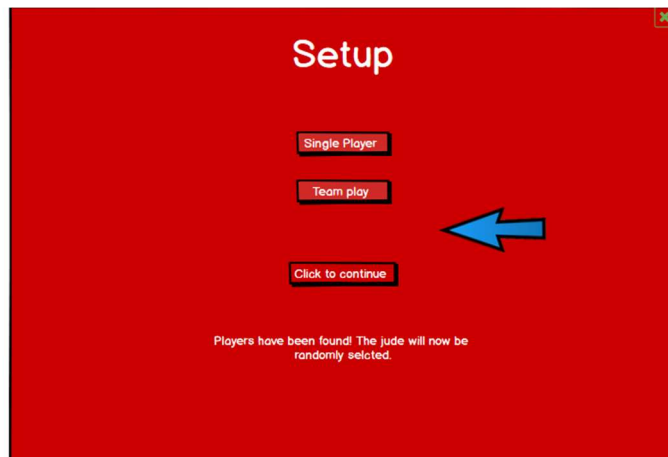


Goals / Inspiration

Before we began work on this iteration, we reviewed the negative aspects of our self-critique from the last project. When we completed work on the PowerPoint, we felt that there were some aspects of the design that were still lacking. Specifically, we thought that our interaction design was shallow. We had difficulty prototyping the full range of interactions that make up the core gameplay. Because our game is so minimal in its graphics and animations, lacking in interaction made the game seem far more simple than it really is. We also thought that the visual design, while far better than our paper prototype, needed some work. We felt that the color scheme might be overwhelming, and that we may have stuck too closely to our concept of minimalism, making the prototype seem incomplete or half-baked. Our focus in conceptualizing this iteration was to address these issues and bring the prototype to a higher level.

With the PowerPoint prototype, we were able to increase the fidelity of the visual design. In this iteration, we wanted to increase the fidelity of the interaction design. Balsamiq allows for greater depth when prototyping gameplay elements. We wanted to refine the gameplay elements we presented in the PowerPoint design, and to create greater cohesion between the interaction design and the editorial content. We decided that we needed to carefully consider each of our design decisions up to this point, assessing whether or not we had in fact harmed our design by going with a minimalistic approach. Our main goal for the visual design of this prototype was to give the game a sense of polish and professionalism.

With this iteration, we wanted add depth to the gameplay in our prototype by adding a new gameplay element. When deciding on a feature, we wanted it to utilize our initial design goals. We wanted the new feature to utilize the communication mechanics we established in previous iterations. We looked at several other online card games, as well as similar off-line card games for inspiration, and we decided to go with a team-play option. We think that this new feature will add depth to the overall game design, while not taking away from any of the other mechanics and features we have already implemented. We also think that we can use this feature to add depth to the visual design of the game, bringing new visual elements and colors into the design to make the game feel more well-rounded and polished.



Selecting Team Play

This new element will also allow us to further explore and develop our communication mechanics. We always knew that communication between players was one of the most important aspects of our game, and by adding team play we can explore a new avenue for inter-player communication. We hope to implement this addition to an existing mechanic along with the new gameplay feature, giving players a fuller experience when testing our prototype.

We also wanted to refine the existing interactions that we had in previous prototypes. With PowerPoint, some of the core interactions such as drag-and-drop were difficult to implement. This left the prototype feeling incomplete, and testers could not have the full experience of playing the game. With this iteration, we wanted to go back through our existing mechanics and screens to flesh them out by making them more interactable and adding more functionality.



New Lobby Screen

Instructions for Use

- From the Main Screen, click to start
- From the Home Page, click 'Leaderboard'
- The leaderboard has been modified to look more like a table, and to make the page feel more organized. Click the X to return.
- Click 'Store'
- The store has been re-organized to appear more polished and professional. Click the X to return
- Press 'Host Game' to start a new game.
- The host game options are the same as they were in previous iterations. Press 'Communicate Via' to see a drop-down list. Press 'Text' to select your communication method
- Press 'Invite Friends' to find a friend to play
- The Friends tab will appear. Press 'Invite' by Chandler's name to invite him to play
- Now, playing as Chandler, select 'Find Game' to join the game you were invited to.

- The Game Mode screen will appear. Players will be able to choose between Team Play and Single Player. In our demo, Single Player is not available, so **press 'Continue'** to begin the game
- The Lobby screen will appear. It will display the two teams, with two players underneath each team's banner. **In this game, you will play as both Chandler and Will.**
- **Press 'Next'** to continue.
- The main game screen will appear. **Press 'Deal the Cards'** to continue.
- **Chandler will go first.** His cards will be displayed at the bottom of the screen. The game card will appear both on the table and at the top of the screen.
- **Click 'Clowns'.** This simulates the drag-and-drop functionality the final product will have
- The 'Clowns' card will appear on the table. **Click 'End Turn'** to **end Chandler's turn.**
- **Will's turn will begin,** and his hand will appear. **Click 'College'** from his hand.
- The 'College' card will appear on the table next to Chandler's card. **Press 'End Turn'** to **end Will's turn.**
- You will now see your team's cards, as well as the other team's cards, on the table. The judge will select which team has won. **Press 'Next'** to continue.
- The judge selects your team as the winner. You are now ready to play a new game. **Press 'Next Game'** to end the simulation

Content Fidelity Matrix

Content	Very Low Fidelity	Low Fidelity	Medium Fidelity	High Fidelity	Very High Fidelity
Information Design				X	
Interaction Design				X	
Visual Design & Branding				X	
Editorial Content				X	

Information Design:

Our interactive Balsamiq application is described as high fidelity in information design because of the organization of all the elements in the interactive space. Each option on the screen/page is spaced out evenly and visible for the user to explore. Our goal is to keep a consistent flow throughout the game making it easy for the user to follow. We used whitespace and boxes to provide the labeling for the options and gameplay help making it understandable and visually appealing for the user. We tried to make the game easy to navigate for the user.

Interaction Design:

Our interactive Balsamiq application is perceived as high fidelity in interaction design because of the ways the user can interact with the game as well as other users/friends. We allow the user to interact with the game through checking leaderboards, inviting friends, sending invites, customizing options for the game, as well as hosting and finding games. We allow the users to complete their task during the game by allowing the user to pick their card as well view other profiles of users within the game. We also allow the user to interact with a store that they can buy items to help them in the game or make the game more customizable.

Visual Design & Branding:

Our interactive Balsamiq application is perceived as high fidelity in visual design because we provide a simple color design and show the graphical elements in one way. Our interactive Balsamiq application is based around one color but provide a consistent layout for each screen. We show a simple white font with a red background throughout the different screens/pages. We provide graphical elements/visual imagery by showing icons on user profiles making it more visually appealing for the user.

Editorial Content:

Our interactive Balsamiq application is perceived as high fidelity in editorial content because of the information that is shown and how it is presented. We wanted to present our writing in a way that it makes welcoming for the user as well as easy to understand. We focused our editorial content around our information design by making sure we followed the layout that we wanted and providing accurate information to the user. Followed a way that would make it easy to guide the user through the steps of the game.

Prototyping Process Critique

Balsamiq is a powerful tool that allows us as designers to implement features and functionality that we were unable to do with the paper and PowerPoint prototypes.

Pros:

The most obvious advantage of using Balsamiq was the cloud feature. With PowerPoint, it was impossible for multiple people to be working at the same time, and it was also difficult to share work

with the entire group to get feedback and edits. This forced us to have to make last-minute edits that may have affected the quality of our final product. With Balsamiq, we were able to communicate our designs, ideas, and feedback quickly. This created a much more streamlined workflow, and we think that we were able to get significant work done faster and more efficiently.

Balsamiq allows for us to quickly lay out screens and to fill them with editorial content. This allows us to place more focus on developing the interactive elements. We were able to test different uses of interactive elements and see if they accomplish our goals for the design as well as create an enjoyable experience for players. By doing this, we were able to refine our design to a degree we were not able to with paper or PowerPoint.

We were also able to quickly design multiple versions of our screens. This allowed us to try out different layouts and designs for screens, and to be able to compare them and receive feedback from group members quickly. We were able to assess whether or not our original layouts and designs were as effective as they could be. By going through this process, we were able to make some changes to our designs that we feel were effective and brought the overall quality of the design to a higher level.

Cons:

Balsamiq is a powerful tool. There are many options and features available to the user, and the number of these can become overwhelming to a new user. Unlike PowerPoint, which we were all familiar with, none of us had used Balsamiq before this course, and we had to spend some time learning how to navigate the system and use the tools properly.

Design Self-Critique

With this iteration, our design has reached a new level of fidelity, interactivity, and professionalism. With Balsamiq, we were able to focus on making the design as interactive as possible while still maintaining the visual cohesion and fidelity we were able to achieve with the PowerPoint prototype.

We think that with this iteration, all the systems we have created so far have come together, making the game feel more cohesive rather than a collection of different mechanics. The game's system are all connected, and with this version we can see how each system will interact with the others.

We also think that we were able to refine the visual branding and fidelity of the previous design. In our last review, we thought that the color scheme and layout of the pages could distract from the overall experience. We feel that we addressed this issue, and now the game is easier to see, understand, and use.

We refined the in-game mechanics and layout by rearranging some of the information pop-ups and slide-ins. This makes the game screen feel less cluttered, allowing the player to better enjoy the experience without having the anxiety of so much information. However, we do not feel that any player control or status information had to be compromised to achieve this.

With this iteration, we were not able to fully prototype all the interactive elements that will be present in the final product. This makes the game feel less polished, and we think it could hurt the

overall experience a tester has. We want to fully implement such interactivity (such as drag-and-drop) in future prototypes. This will bring the interaction design to a higher level, and will give testers the full experience we expect end users to have.

We also feel that the visual design and branding could still use some work. We want the game to have a minimalistic feel, as this was one of our original goals for the design, but we don't want that to come at the price of the game feeling polished and professional. In future designs, we need to address this by experimenting with multiple layouts and color schemes to see which fits our design goals best.