Dropbox
Interface
REDESIGN

CGT 27108
Excercise One
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Goals &
Purpose

Design Space
Using a screenshot of the current Dropbox desktop interface, redesign the platform by focusing on the smaller visual characteristics rather than adjusting physical elements. The outcome of the exercise should display my knowledge of the importance of applying strong visual design principles to enhance user engagement and experience of the current interface.

Constraints
This exercise is assigned to help designers understand the impact visual features can have on a product. Therefore, no alterations to the screenshot's physical elements can be made. The only changes allowed on this redesign are coding modifications to CSS declarations.
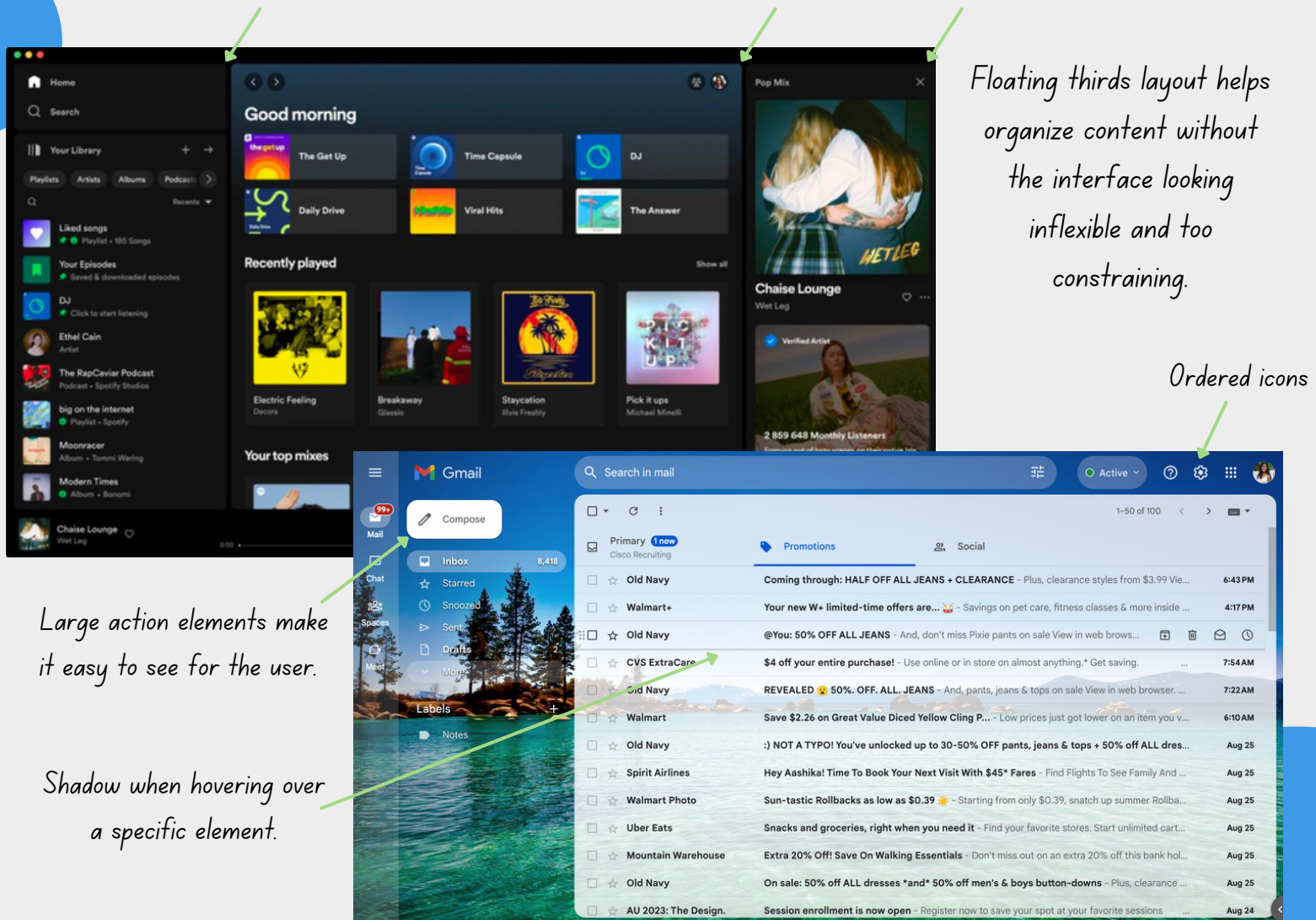
Deliverables
A file documenting the full design journey: includes research, insights, design rationale explaining the CSS property manipulations, sketches, a low-fidelity wireframe, a high-fidelity mockup, and a conclusion reflecting my experience accomplishing this project.

Market Research

Analyzing Trends

Many online platforms are continuously going through redesigns. The best way to gather strong insights is to analyze the design principles that are repeated throughout the designs.

Floating thirds layout helps organize content without the interface looking inflexible and too constraining.

Ordered icons

Large action elements make it easy to see for the user.

Shadow when hovering over a specific element.

Secondary
Research

Designing with curves

UX Trends: Moving from edges to rounds

A common trend many website and mobile applications are switching to is the use of round curves when working with elements in the shape of rectangles. Recent redesigns of interfaces are increasingly choosing this option due to the psychology response of users.
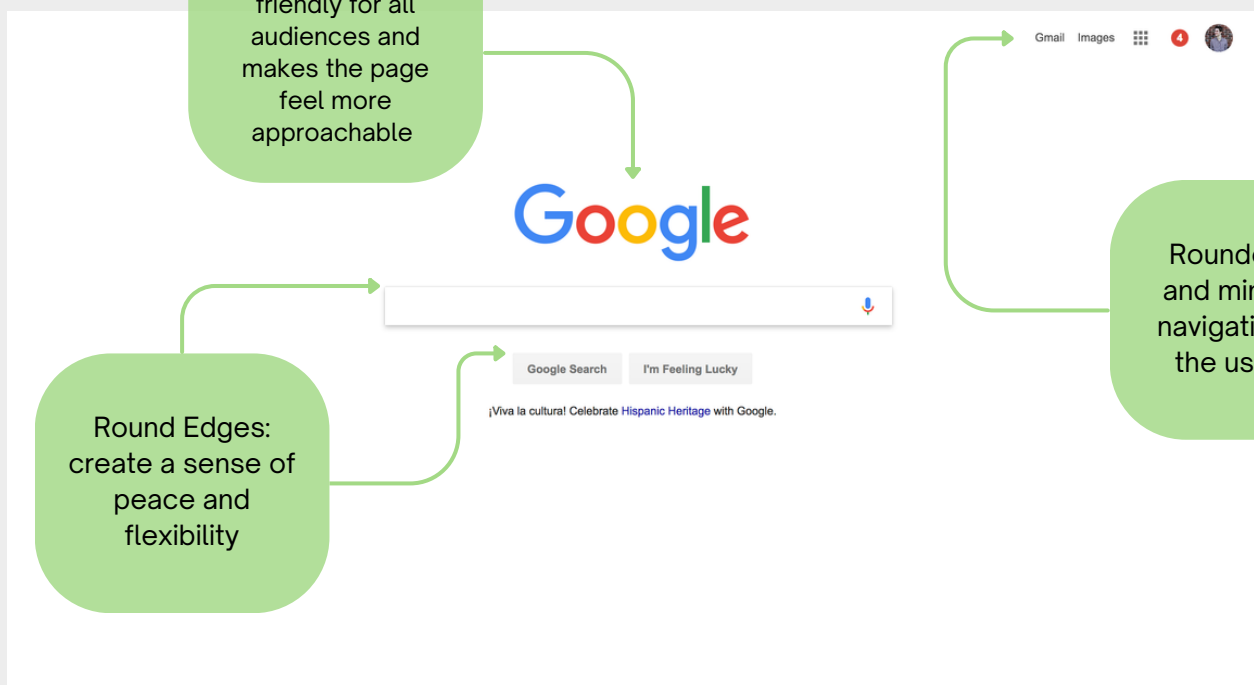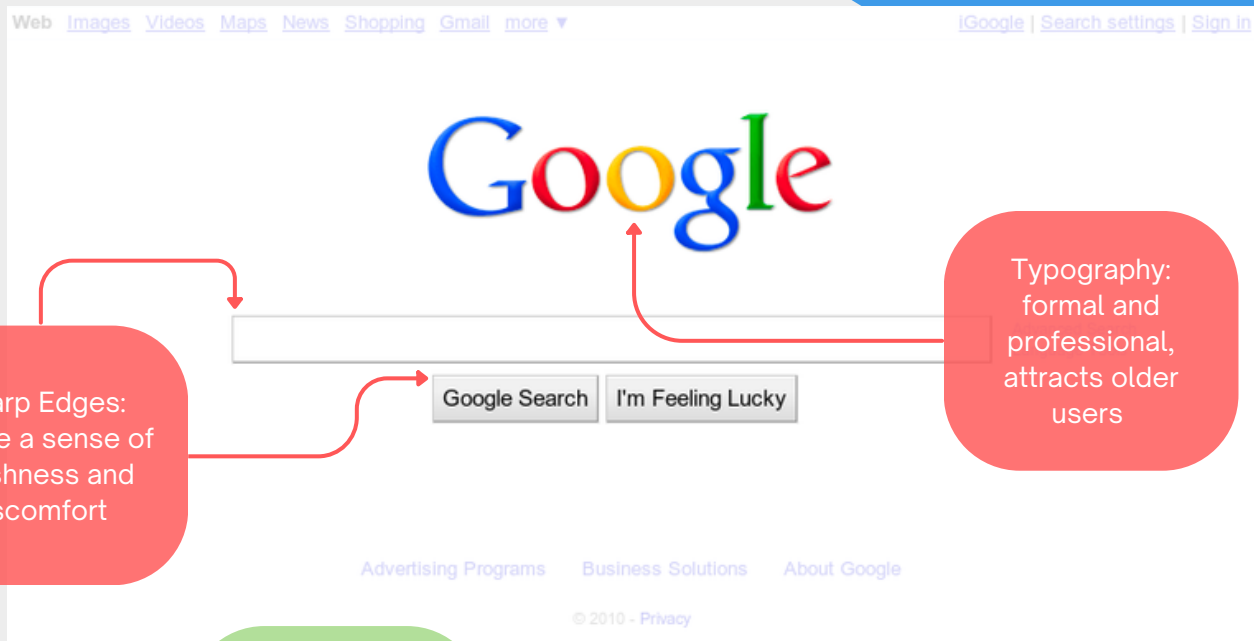
Psychology of Designing with curves

"When imaging a safe and comfortable object would it have sharp edges or smooth surfaces?" Human subconscious' unknowingly apply emotion to physical objects and elements, colors, and sizes. For instance, a sharp point could remind a user of a needle or a thorn. These items are considered unsafe and dangerous, leaving a negative connotation in the user's mind. On the flip side, a pebble or rim of a cup, forms a secure and comfortable feeling for the user. This same logic can be applied to features on a virtual product.

Applying curves to the redesign

By integrating this new trend, the interface will appear less rigid and constraining for the user. An well known example from Google's search page shows the benefits of this adaptation. The arrows and annotations below explain the difference in the old versus new design that Google has launched.

Old vs. New

Web Images Videos Maps News Shopping Gmail more ▼   iGoogle | Search settings | Sign in

Google

Google Search   I'm Feeling Lucky

Sharp Edges: create a sense of harshness and discomfort

Typography: formal and professional, attracts older users

Advertising Programs   Business Solutions   About Google

© 2010 - Privacy

Typography: user-friendly for all audiences and makes the page feel more approachable

Gmail Images

Google

Google Search   I'm Feeling Lucky

¡Viva la cultura! Celebrate Hispanic Heritage with Google.

Round Edges: create a sense of peace and flexibility

Rounded icons and minimalistic navigation eases the user's eye

Current
Pain Points

Rigid edges

No selection indication

Makes the top feel too cluttered

CSS
Manipulations

Visual Design Principle: Shape

After conducting secondary research on the upcoming UX trends, many redesigns of virtual platforms are evolving from a structured rectangle consistency to a rectangle with rounded curves. Elements that will be modified are "Upload", "Create", "List of files", "Search bar", and "Info".

CSS Manipulation
```
#listOfFiles  {
     border-radius: 5px;
     background: #FFFFFF;
}
```

Visual Design Principle: Position

Due to the abundant number of files and buttons towards the top of the platform, moving the "upload" and "create" boxes to the side panel and the search bar to the center, will align the elements on the page in a more organized way.

CSS Manipulation
```
#uploadButton {
     position: absolute;
     top: 10px;
     left: 50px;
}
```
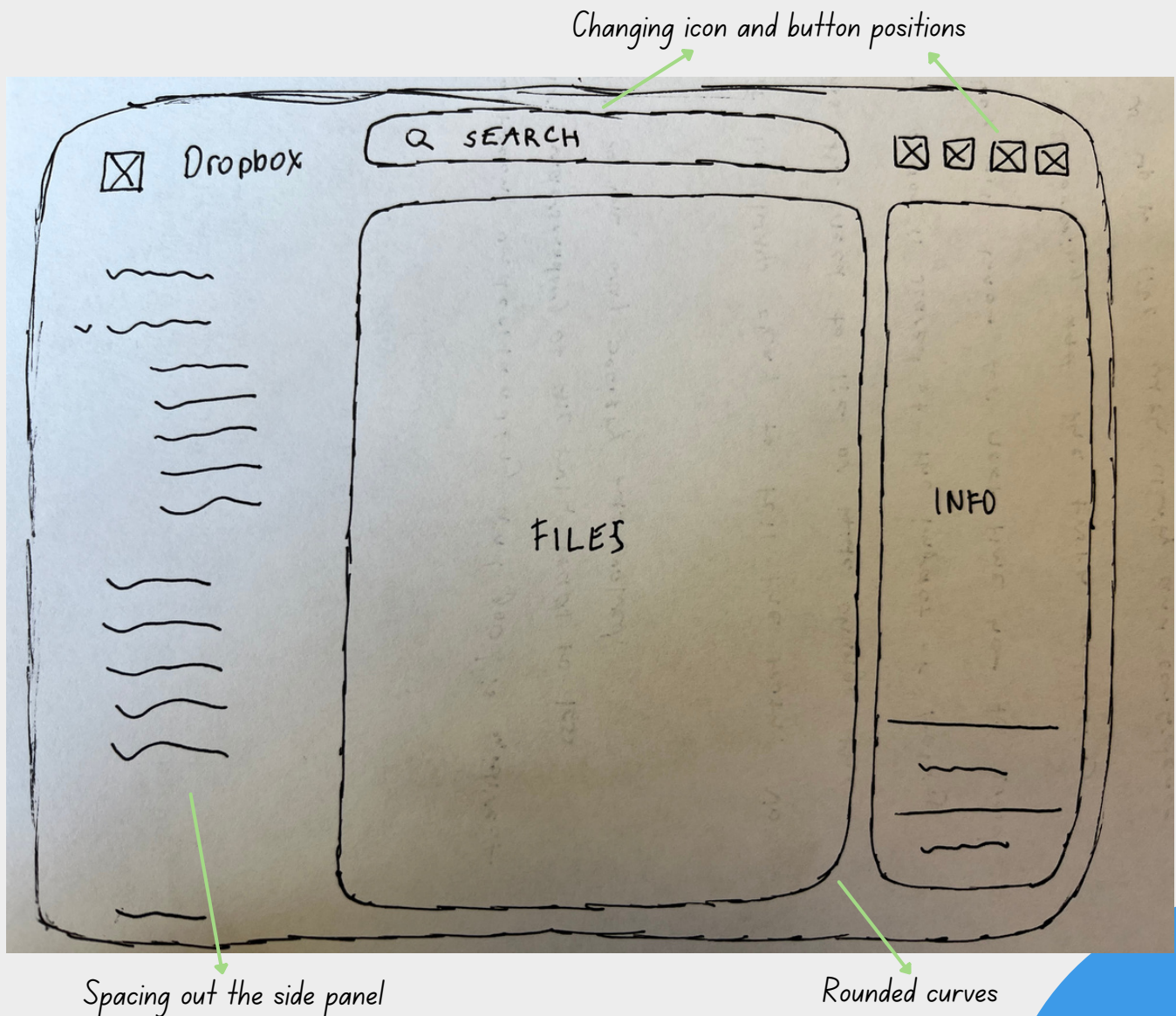
Visual Design Principle: Color

Indicating a file that has been chosen in a list of files can help the user identify their selection better. In order to display the desired file, the user can hover the mouse over the file and the row should darken.

CSS Manipulation
```
#listOfFiless .audioMemos a:hover {
     background-color: #000000;
}
```

Design
Sketch

Changing icon and button positions

Q SEARCH

Dropbox

FILES

INFO

Spacing out the side panel

Rounded curves

Design

Lo–Fi
Wireframe

Logo

Search

Text

Icon Bar

Upload   Create

Category 1

Category 1

Text

Text

Title

Text

Text

Image

Text

Files

Category 3

Category 4

Category 5

Category 6

Category 7

Text

Text

Text
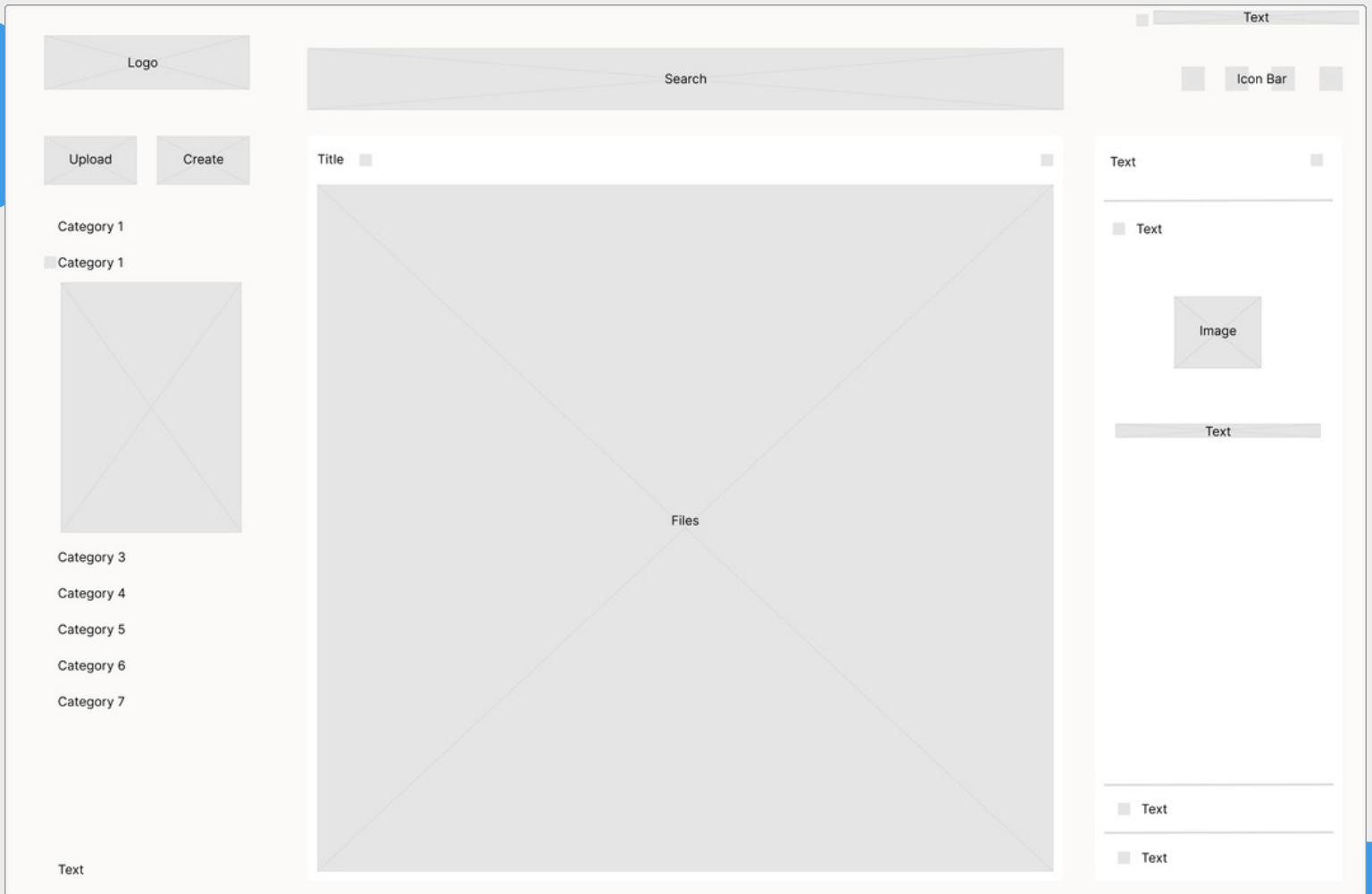
Design

Hi-Fi
Mockup

Reflections & Summarization
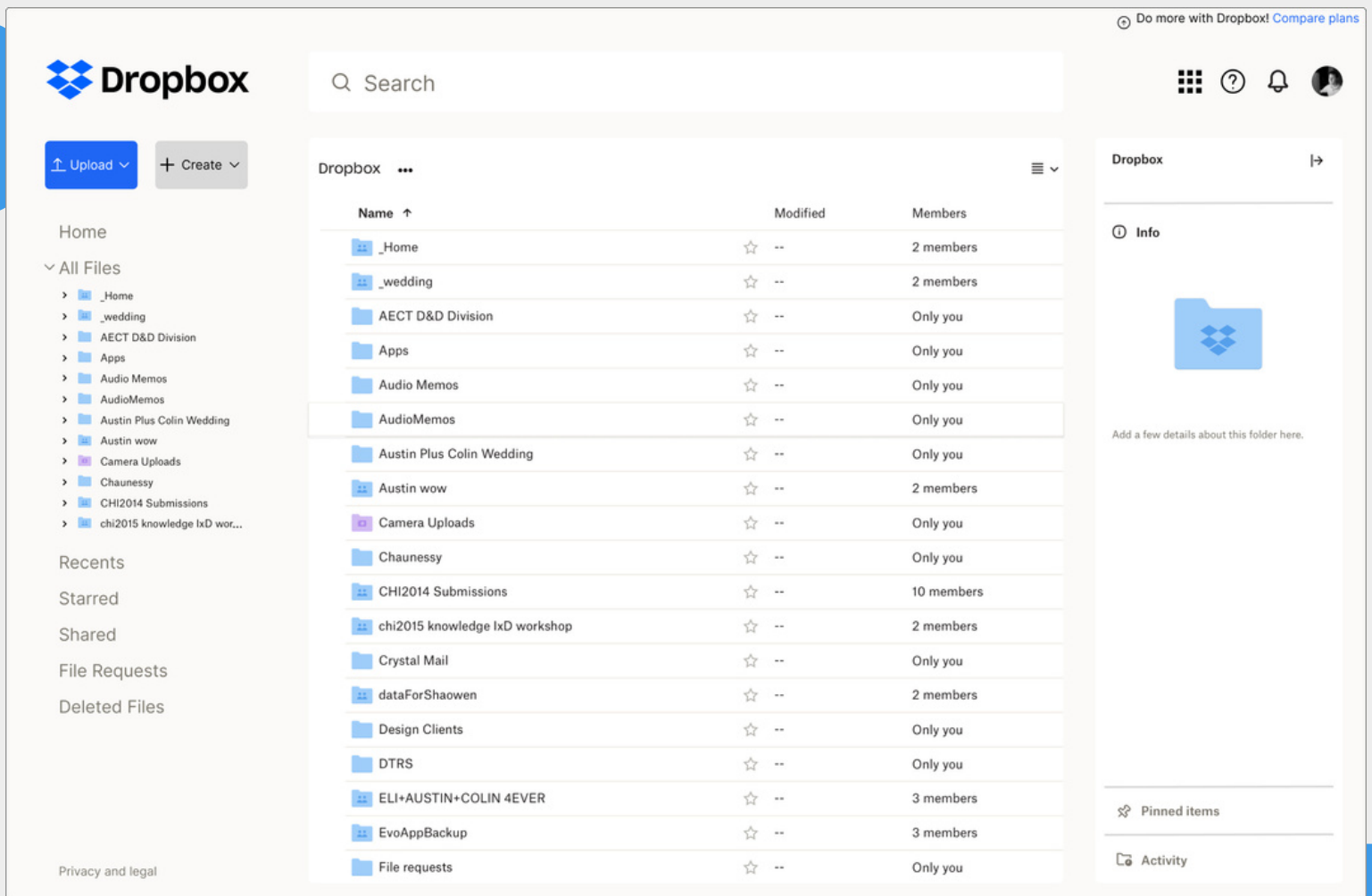
Design Journey

The beginning of this project seemed a bit daunting due to the constraints given. I first began to research redesigns of other popular platforms such as Google Drive, Gmail, Spotify, and YouTube. This helped me spot design patterns that could potentially be adapted into my redesign. I gained insight into common trends such as the edges of rectangles, hovering shadow manipulation, clean side panel configurations, and action button organization. My next step was to analyze the "why" behind the patterns I noticed. After examining outside sources, I started identifying the pain points of the current Dropbox design. It seemed a bit crowded at first, so I drew a couple of sketches that would restructure the layout into floating thirds, instead of stiff boundaries. I adjusted the position of the buttons and icons to add more space to the main section with all the files, so it's easier to read. Once all my design ideas from the sketches were implemented into the low-fidelity mockup, I started designing the high-fidelity prototype. I'm confident that I accomplished the purpose of this exercise and understood the difference between element and property manipulation. I had a positive experience working on this project.

Summarization

Design Tools:
- Figma

Visual Design Principles Applied:
- Position: Changing the location of the elements
- Sizing: Increasing icon and button sizes
- Color: Shadow when the cursor hovers over a file
- Proximity: Grouping icons and buttons in the top right corner
- Alignment: Switching the layout of the interface