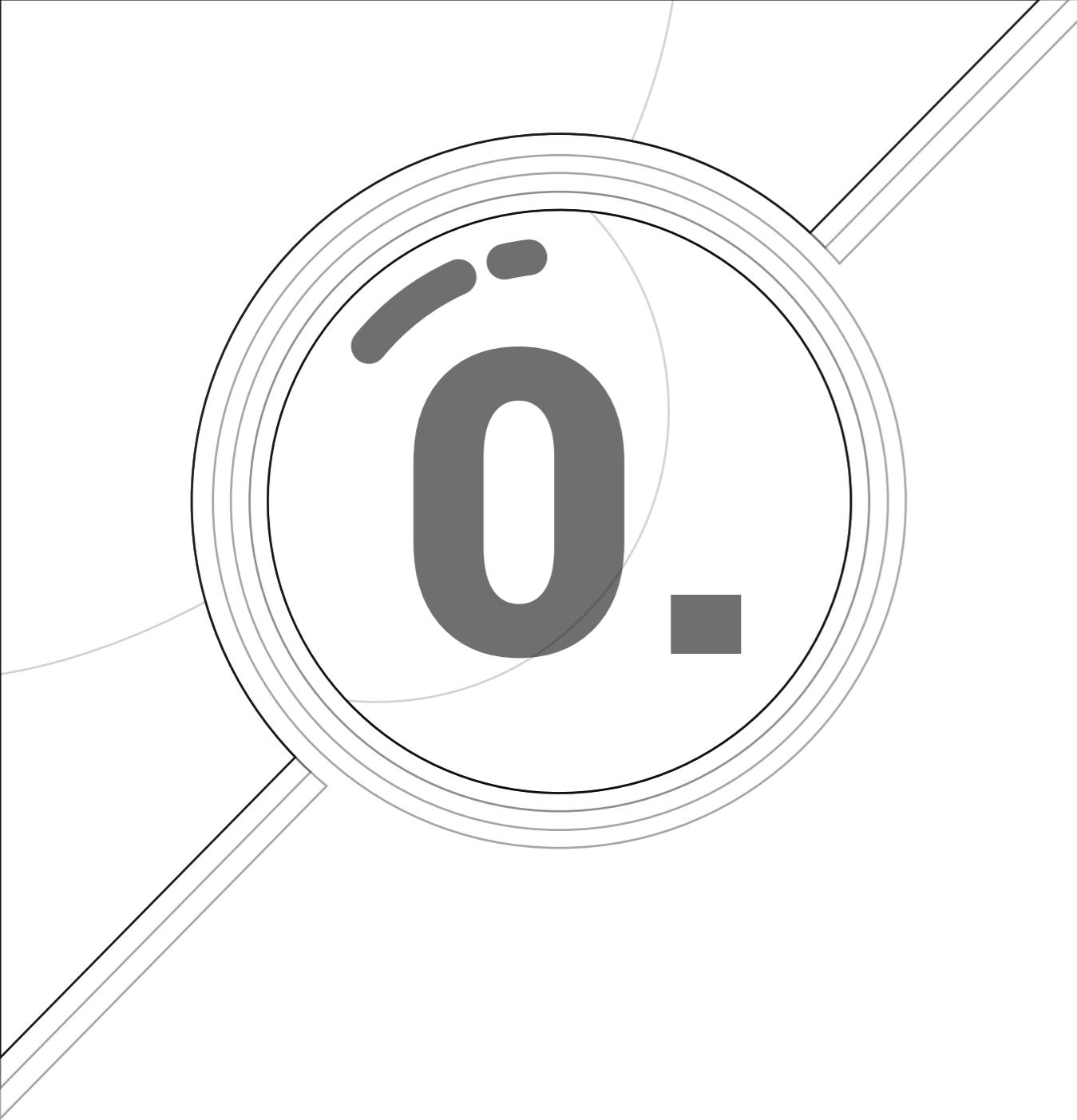




worldly

**EE2620 | Design for Mobile
1712540**



Content

1. Research
2. Planning
3. Navigation System
4. Design
5. Development
6. Testing
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Research



Branding

Before researching the functionality of competitors, I decided it would be best to understand how they have marketed themselves towards their demographic (mostly millennial and generation Z).

The first thing that stands out, is the simplicity of their logos. With the exception of AJ+ (Fig.1), they all have very easy to understand typefaces. Although AJ+ is easy to read, it is not necessarily easy to understand. It is meant to be read as AJ+, but could be misunderstood as A+J which would deviate from the idea of "Al Jazeera +".

Secondly, with the exception of QUARTZ (Fig.3), they also have easy to recognise logos. The short comings of AJ+ do not remove from the fact that once you know the logo it is easy to recognise. BuzzFeed (Fig.2) and Vice (Fig.4) also have distinct visuals (i.e. Vice's font and BuzzFeed's logo). QUARTZ on the other hand is not recognisable, although the typeface is unique to them, it is not unique enough to stand out in a sea of similar branding. Many brands use Helvetica-esque typefaces (i.e. BuzzFeed), in order to stand out this way I believe they need something more (i.e. BuzzFeed's logo).

In conclusion, the logo must be simple, understandable but also unique and recognisable.

Fig.1



Fig.2



Fig.3



Fig.4



Functionality and Interface

The spine and vital organs of the application.

I did my research on 4 apps. AJ+ beta, BuzzFeed, QUARTZ, and Vice News to see how they try to market themselves to the demographic.

AJ+ beta

Possibly the weakest of the 4. Although it is worth mentioning the app is in beta and unfinished, it was also discontinued in April. However, the app is still on the PlayStore and a valuable resource on what not to do.

AJ+ beta comprises of one page (Fig.5) which lists the most popular articles. Most news apps list the articles with a photo and a headline. AJ+ do the same but they replace the image with a video. Most likely to appeal to the users need of quick information. This could have been a good idea, if AJ+ had provided customisation options that allow you to filter what you see so that you can consume information relevant to you and your interests. This forces you to scroll through everything before finding something that you are interested in, therefore, contradicting the idea of fast information.

I believe this was their downfall.

Although AJ+ is clearly a failed app (they don't add new articles anymore), it is very useful to understand why they failed in order to avoid the same mistakes.

BuzzFeed

BuzzFeed markets itself as more than just a news app. When the user opens the app, it displays a personalised feed of news articles, non-news articles, videos and games (i.e. quizzes). (Fig.6.1)

This is most likely to appeal to a wide audience. People who are interested in news and people who are not. Arguably, this model is what has led to their large user base and online following. Although this kind of app is not what I am trying to design, it is very useful to understand why they are so popular.

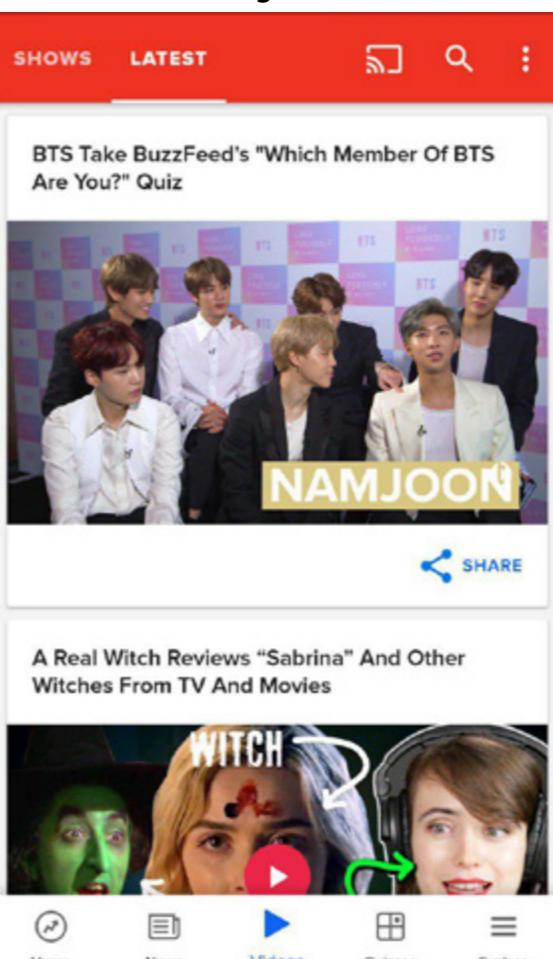
They keep their users on the app for as long as possible. Whether this is through videos involving celebrities/content creators (Fig.6.2) or interactive games such as quizzes (Fig.6.3). Extra activities and gamification is vital to keeping users engaged and coming back on a standard news day once they have read all the articles interesting to them.

This also provides the extra bonus of maintaining a user engaged even on days where there are no articles they are interested in.

Fig.5



Fig.6.2



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Fig.6.1

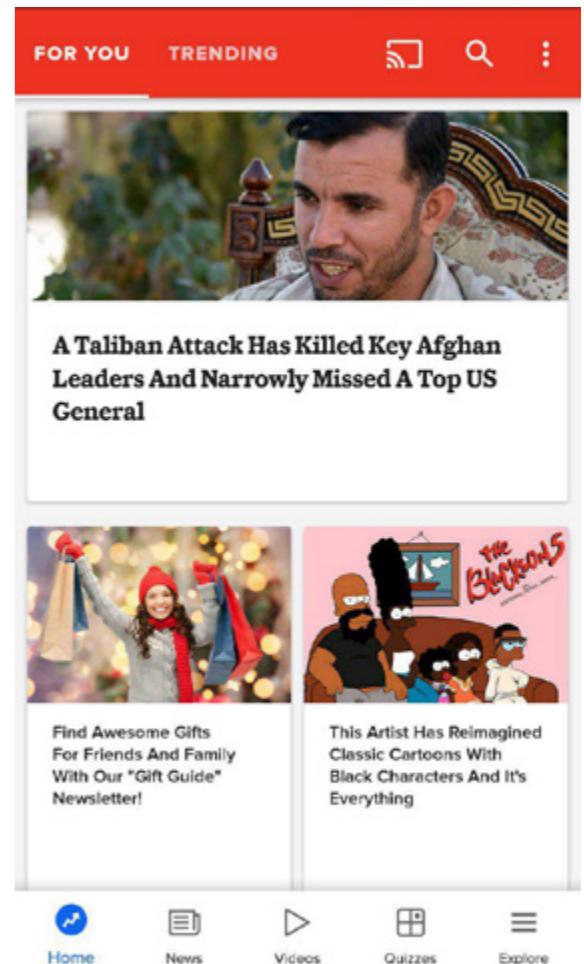
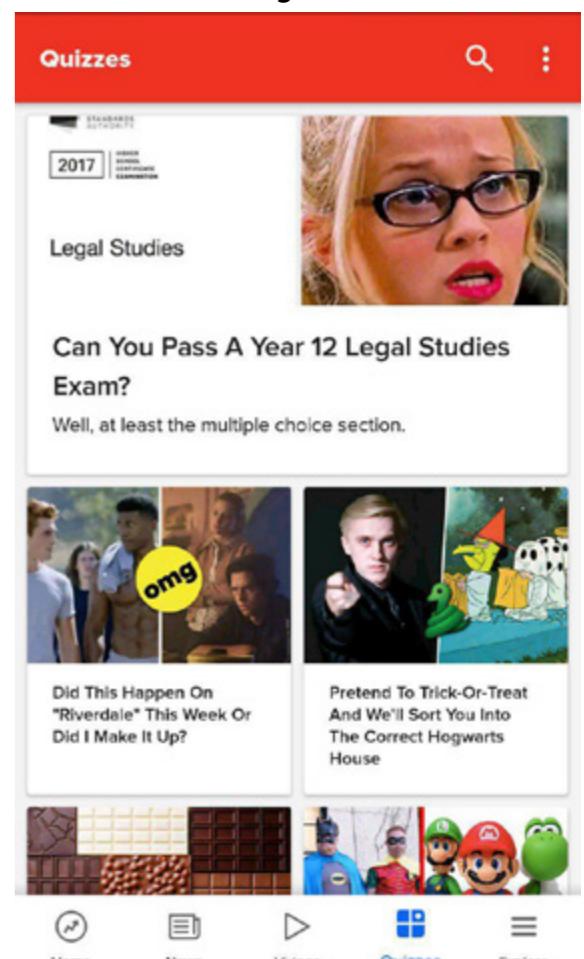


Fig.6.3



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QUARTZ

Quartz have by far the most unique interface. However, I don't think that helps with engagement. They implement a "messaging" style interface (Fig.7.1) where articles are delivered as if you are talking to a friend.

The way that I researched these apps was that I used them myself for 1-2 days in order to see if I (as a member of the target market) would be able to stay engaged. I found that the Quartz interface made it difficult to get the articles I wanted because I couldn't choose what to see. Although they do provide customisation to filter out articles (Fig.7.2), I couldn't specifically ask for "Politics" or other topics. I believe this leads to lower engagement because the target market is not patient enough to sift through many articles before finding what they want (a similar problem to AJ+). In addition, the completely revamped UI creates a slight adjustment curve needed to be comfortable using the app.

This made me believe that I should design an app that allows you to easily filter out articles that you are not interested in. But most importantly, the UI must be within the normal format so that a user can install the app and immediately know the controls. As an app developer myself I understand that if a user cannot figure out how to navigate quickly, they will uninstall and go to another similar app.

Vice News

Vice news has the easiest to read interface, their brand colours are just black and white which provide very good contrast when choosing and reading articles.

In terms of functionality, the app is quite limited. It doesn't allow you to filter topics and has one page of popular articles (Fig.8.1) and another page of popular videos (Fig.8.2). Although the app itself is similar to more established news apps (BBC, Guardian, Sky News etc.) Vice appeal to millennials through the topics they discuss. Vice is known for fringe content such as very personal inside looks on African Warlords (often with interviews) and going to dangerous areas most news organisations would report from a distance.

Although this doesn't help with the functionality/UI of the app, it provides evidence to show that the app can be quite simple. It doesn't need to have the wide variety of content that apps such as BuzzFeed have in order to maintain engagement, (Vice is so popular they have their own TV channel now).

Fig.7.1

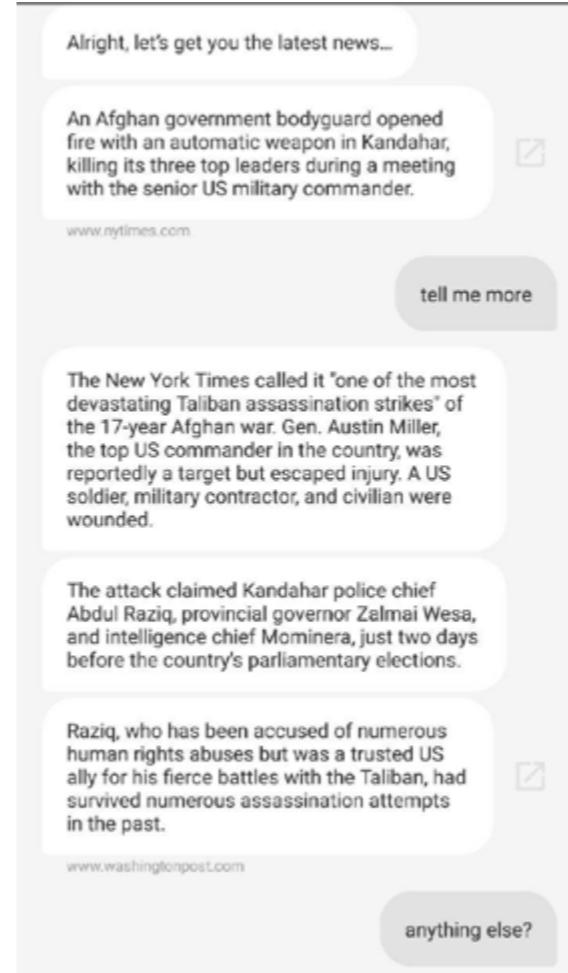


Fig.8.1



Fig.7.2

Customize your experience

Notifications

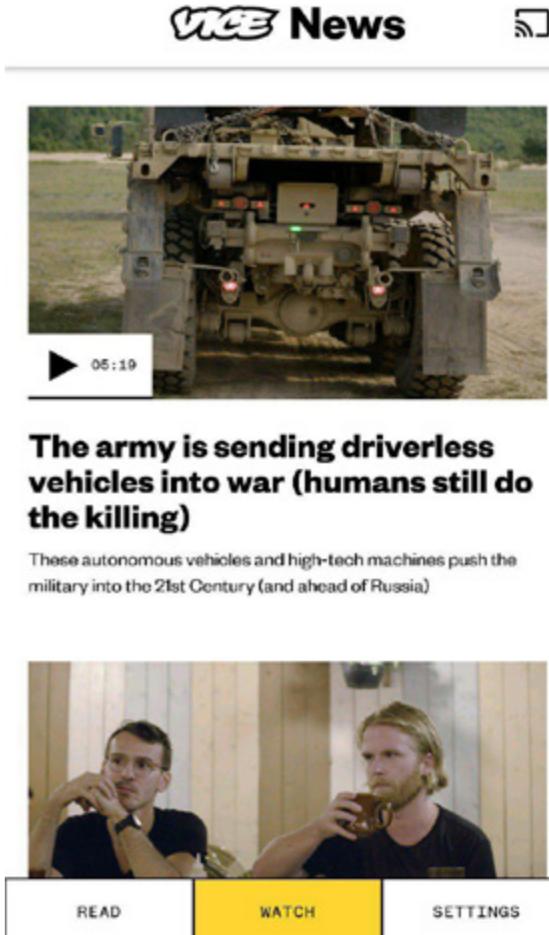
You can select what alerts you want to receive. We'll only buzz you when it's really important; otherwise, your phone will just light up quietly. Enjoy.

- Really, really big news
Rare. This is the only alert that will buzz your phone.
- Important and interesting
Once or twice a day. News we think deserves your notice.
- Markets haiku
At trading day's end / The bell rings, let's all go home / Hark! Here's a poem
- News updates
A few times daily when there's a bunch more stuff to read in the app.

Things to enjoy

- Quartz Daily Brief email
Sign up to receive the most important and interesting news from around the world in your inbox.

Fig.8.2



Functionality

Main Goals

- Provide the news
- Maximise user engagement on both breaking and standard news days

Problems

- 1 There is only so much a user can do on most news apps.
- 2 Once the relevant articles have been read, there is nothing to engage the user.
- 3 There is no incentive to share articles and therefore, expose more users to the app.

Solution

- Google Play integration to tailor articles to the user
- Points system: For every action you gain points
- A levelling system, each point milestone gives levels you up. You will be placed in a ranking list with your friends to promote competition.
- Social integration. You can speak with friends and the wider community about subjects in designated chat rooms (or private rooms if with friends)

My goal was to design an app that only provides the news on a breaking news day but engages the user on standard days where news is not as interesting.

By integrating the user's Google Play account (every android user must have one to download apps) we can give them the option to filter out certain topics that they are or are not interested in. This can help their experience because they do not need to sift through 10 articles they don't want to read in order to find the one they do.

The points system however, is the most different to any other news app I could find. For every action (e.g. sharing an article on social media) the user gains points (called Insight). After each milestone (e.g. every 1000 points) the user will level up. They will also be ranked against their friends on the level and the amount of insight they have to promote competition and therefore increase user engagement on a standard news day.

The social system not only allows them to share articles to each other within the app, but to discuss the topics with each other. This can also increase engagement by replacing other messaging apps such as Messenger, WhatsApp and Telegram where (in my experience) a lot of discussion of the news takes place. Users will be able to link their account to Facebook to integrate their friends list or if they do not want to link their Facebook there will also be a manual search to connect with users within the app.

Planning



Branding

I began by recapping my research in order to boil down the main factors of a successful logo:

- Simple
- Unique
- Recognisable
- Easy to recognise
- Easy to understand (if there is a message)

My initial idea, was to have a logo in a similar style to BuzzFeed, where there is a symbol cut out of a circle.

I had already decided that the font used would be Roboto. This is one of the free to use fonts offered by Google. This meant that no license would have to be bought for commercial use and free offered to download.

Roboto is also easy on the eyes and doesn't strain the reader's vision (this whole document uses Roboto).

As of writing this, all android devices use Roboto as their default typeface; the app's typeface would not clash with the rest of the system as long as the user did not manually change it.

In reference to the points system, the name would be InSight and a stylised letter S would be present in the logo (as seen right). However, I did not believe that the logo satisfied my criteria of being unique and recognisable. The S is also hard to identify without prior knowledge.

The colour scheme works for a logo, however I believe that red/orange is too strong to be used as the main colours for an entire app. I created a small mockup (Fig.9) that confirmed this theory.

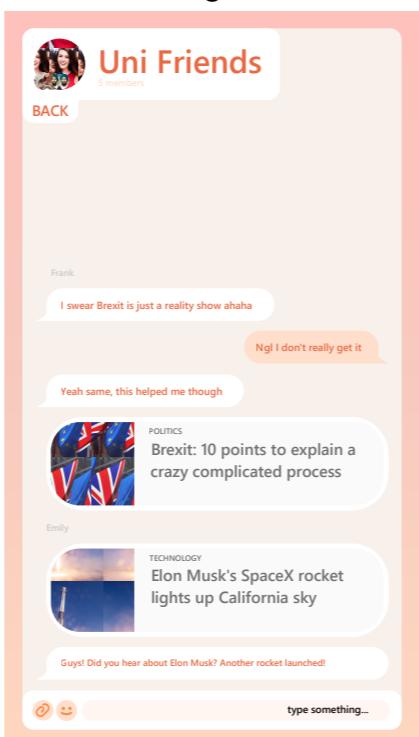


Fig.9

Roboto Light

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890.,;?!

#FF4E3E

Roboto Regular

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890.,;?!

#E86944

Roboto Medium

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890.,;?!

#FF8E4B



InSight



InSight

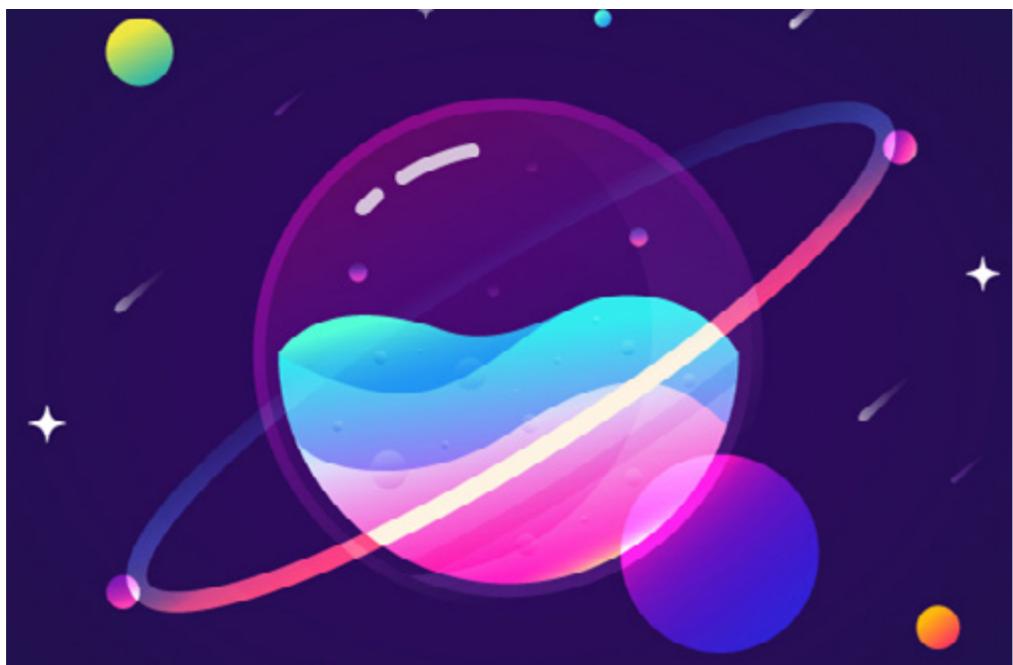


InSight



The art style of the second (and final) version was inspired by [Fantastic Planet 001 by Brentton](#) (Fig.10)

Fig.9



The typeface remains the same, but I chose to use the Baskerville Old Face font for the logo because the serif breaks up the letters and makes it clear that is the name of the app in contrast to the sans-serif Roboto.

I believe the earth design also satisfies my criteria because there not many apps that use this imagery and it is very recognisable to almost anybody on the planet. The logo and name represents the world news that can be read on the app as well as giving off the idea of worldly knowledge.

“worldly”
/’wə:ldli/
adjective
1.
(of a person) experienced and sophisticated.

The colour scheme, while being true to the earth's colours is also easier on the eyes than the previous one. Blue and green analogous colour schemes are often found in nature therefore, providing a sense of familiarity and harmony.

This can be important to relax the user while they read long texts.

Baskerville Old Face

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890.,;?!#65B0D0

Roboto Regular

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890.,;?!#65C8D0

Roboto Medium

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890.,;?!#65B897

The Difference

Most news app have one main section where the user can navigate popular articles, topics and read the articles.

However, there is no direct connect from the app to the user and the app becomes a data bank where, if they wish, the user can get information that they could easily get somewhere else (another app, website or newspaper).

By providing some extra screens where the user can interact with friends and the wider community in a competitive and conversational manner there is incentive to return to app on a standard news day or even once all news has been consumed.



Navigation System

Application Map

Screen 1 - Homepage

If the user decides to log in to the app, they start on the homepage and see a personalised news feed as well as some notifications of what their friends have been up to on the app.

Screen 2 - Profile

They can edit their details, see their insight points and how they rank against their friends and the rest of the community.

Screen 3 - Friends and Groups

A list of their friends and groups in descending order by contact date. A search bar is provided in case they need to find a specific friend quickly.

Screen 4 - Friends and Groups

A chatroom where they can speak to friends and groups depending if they came from screen 3 or screen 6.

Screen 5 - Frontpage

If the user does not log into the app, they start on the frontpage and see the trending articles of the day in a list.

Screen 6 - Topics

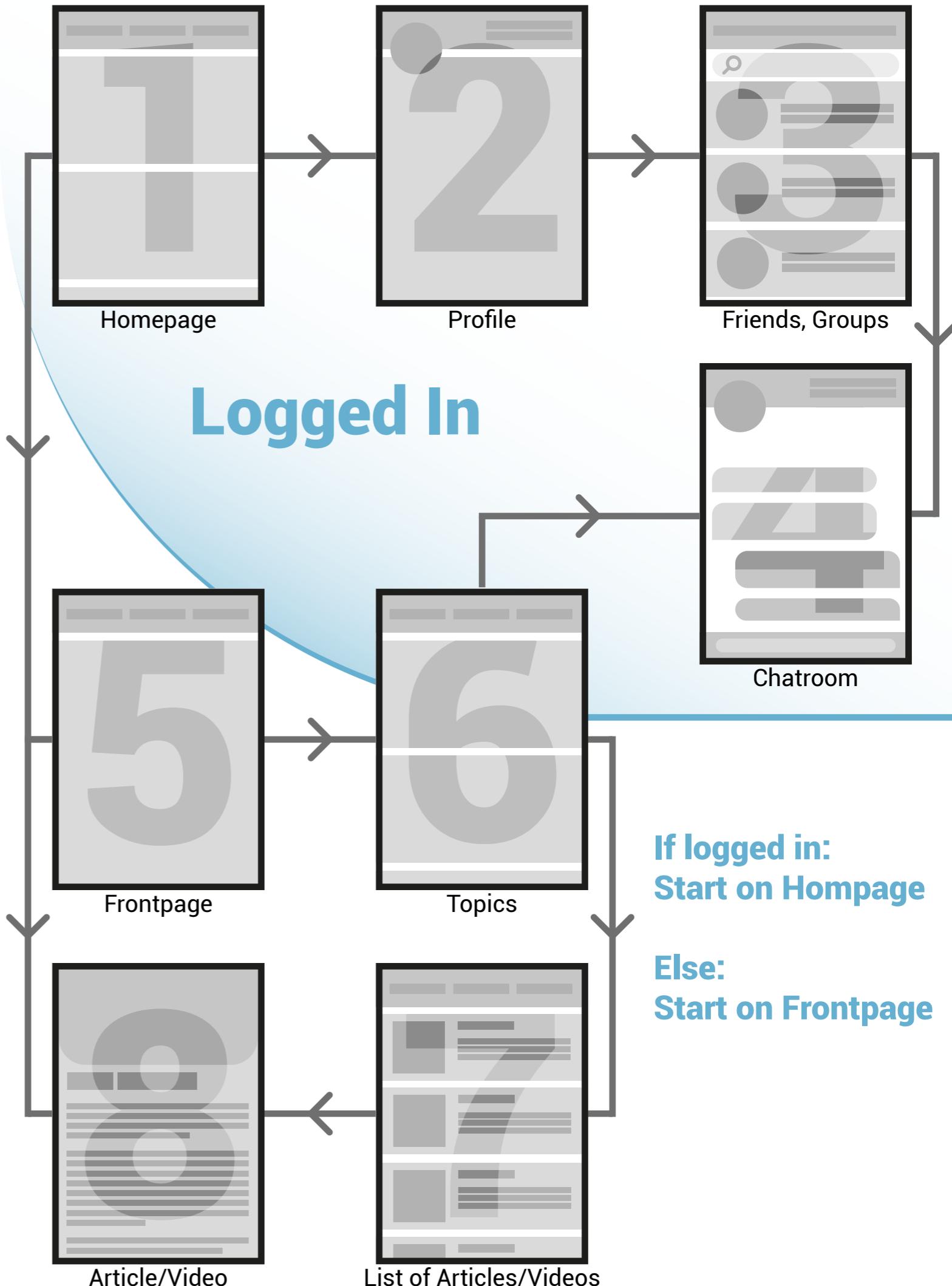
The different topics (UK politics, technology, health etc.) are listed, each with an image and small description. There is also an option to enter the chatroom for that topic where the user can interact with other members of the community.

Screen 7 - Articles and Videos

The list of trending articles and videos for the topic chosen.

Screen 8 - Friends and Groups

The article/video chosen by the user.

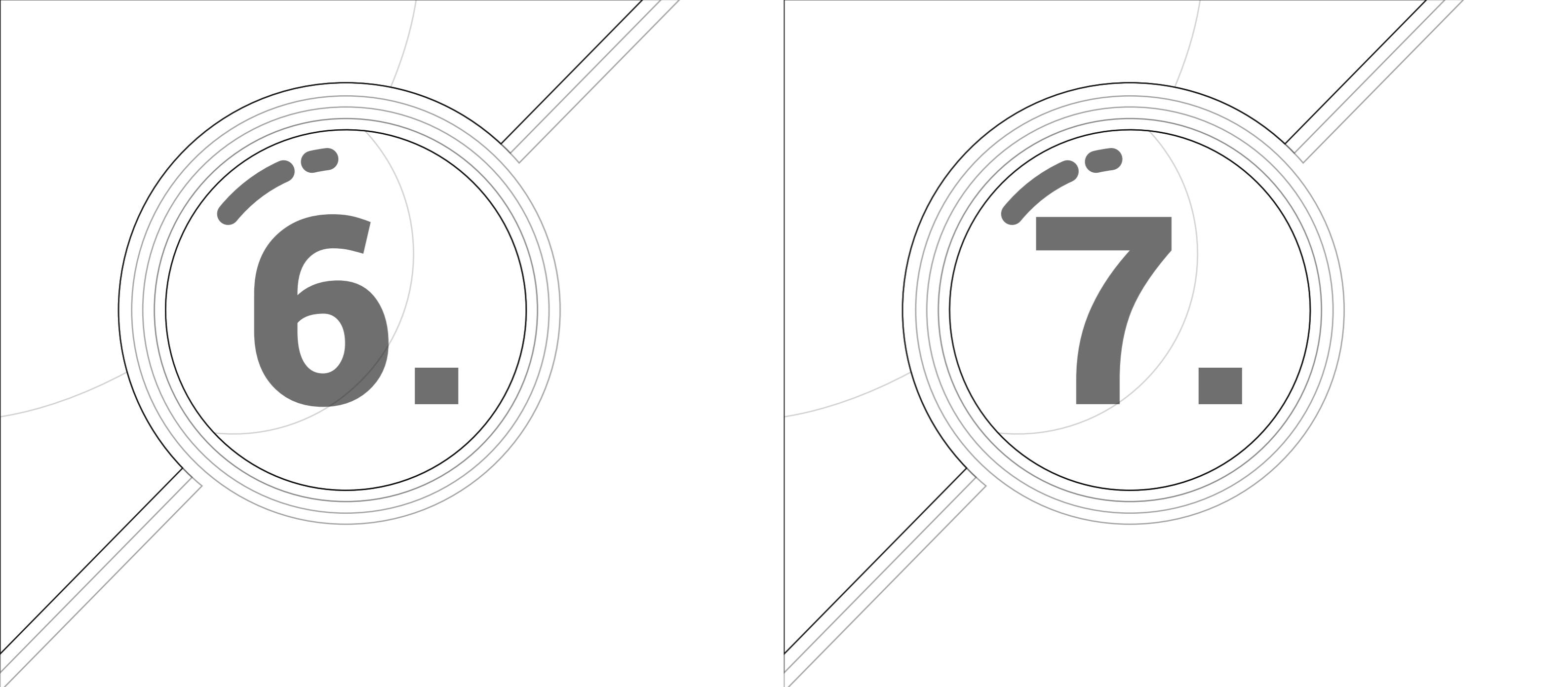




Design



Development



Testing

**Critical
Evaluation**



8.

References