

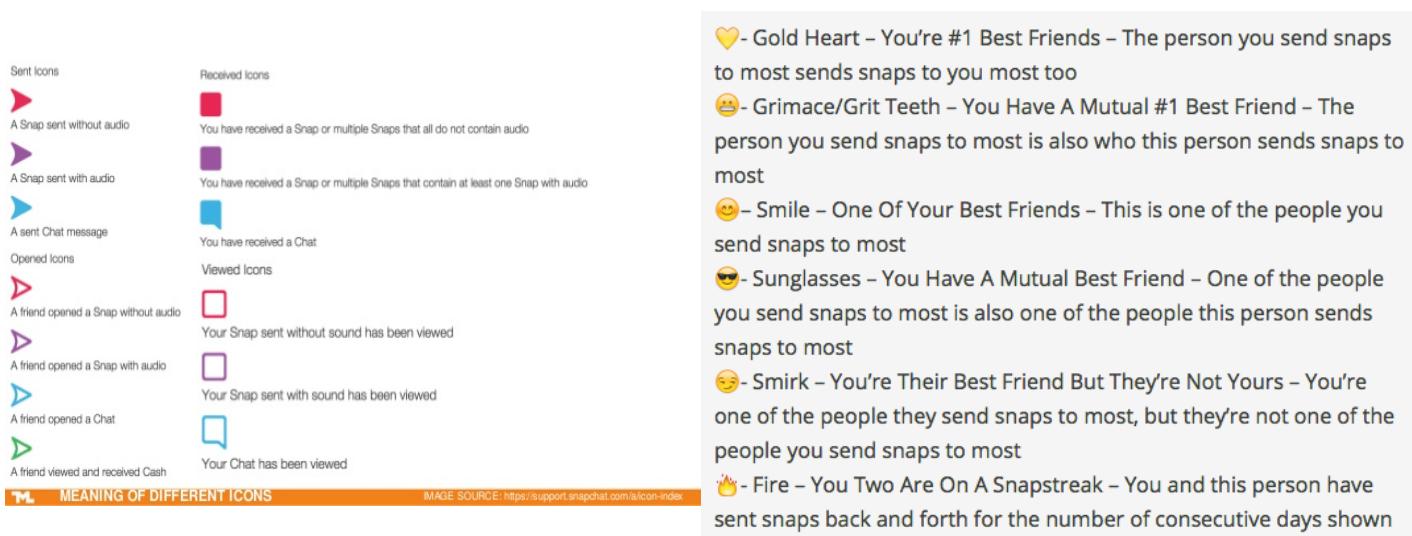
UI Hall of Fame and Shame

Michelle Huang

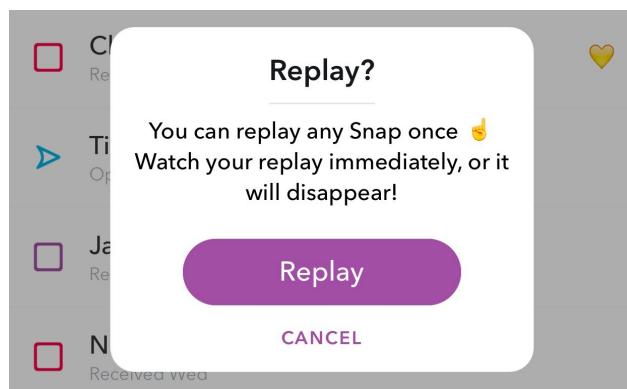
Discussed with: Eric Chen

UI Hall of Shame:

Snapchat, a smartphone app targeted towards people less than 24 years old, has a UI that goes in the UI Hall of Shame. There are many different icons indicating different things, but there is no description for any of the icons in the app. This means the user has to look up or recall what the icons mean. Here are just some of the icons used in Snapchat:



Furthermore, it's very easy to skip through other users' snaps to you, but it is not easy to go back after accidentally skipping too far. This makes the app more efficient, but also sacrifices safety of usage. It would be impossible to recover the snap unless the user has replays enabled. Some users may not even know this feature exists. Even with replay, it only works if the user has not exited the app or put their phone on sleep.



Similarly, chats sent through the messaging portion of the app also disappear. The only way to save chats is to tap and hold on them. There are no instructions inside the app telling you about this. This is an example of how users learn from watching or asking other users. From a safety perspective, it is difficult to recall what was previously said in the conversation if the user does not respond immediately after the chat was received. This is consistent with their model of both images and messages disappearing after they have been received though.



UI Hall of Fame:

Pinterest's mobile application makes it into the UI Hall of Fame because of its ease of use through direct manipulation. The target users started out with females, but in recent years, there has been an increase in male users as well. This is an app that allows users to save posts they are interested in to virtual boards to keep track of them. Topics for posts range from fashion, food, interior design, to sports and fitness.

From a learnability perspective, it's intuitive to drag a selected photo down to "drop" the photo and go back to the list of photos. The list of photos allows users to quickly scroll their thumbnail images of photos to see what they are interested. However, if the user chooses to stay in the single image mode, the user can slide left and right to go through every single post instead of skimming through the list.

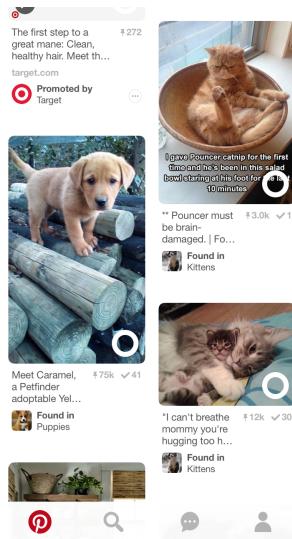


Figure 1: full list of thumbnails

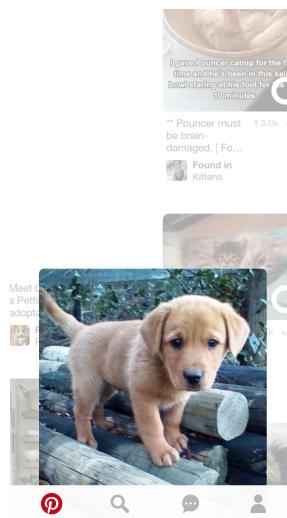


Figure 2: drag photo down to go back to figure 1

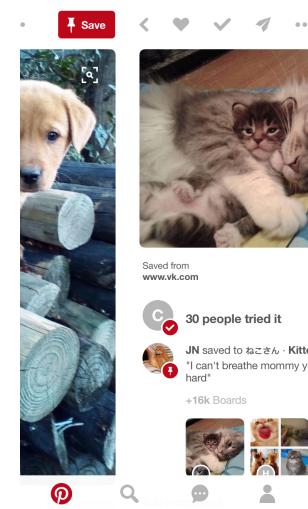


Figure 3: swipe left/right to see posts in order without going back to figure 1

Because Pinterest has a more intuitive direct manipulation UI, it makes it very efficient to scroll through and save posts, a.k.a. "pins", while also including safety features. It's simple to recover from scrolling too far by simply going back. Additionally, there is a duplicate pin check that asks the user to confirm before the user saves the same pin twice.

While there are shortcuts for efficiency that the user has to learn either by doing or from other users, Pinterest provides explicit buttons the user can use to perform the same function.