UKG Internship

Summer 2021 | UX Design

An accessibility assessment of UKG Ready's current Workforce Ready product to determine potential inconsistencies and areas for improvement

Role

UX Designer

Duration

10 weeks

Tools Used

Sketch, Abstract, Aha!, Confluence, Mentimeter, Teams, Mural

Scope

Participatory User Research, Recruitment, User Flows, Wireframing, Audit Testing, Interaction Design

Overview

My internship at UKG focused on UKG Ready's Design Language System and how it can be improved for future releases, within the lens of accessibility. In previous launches, accessibility and meeting WCAG criteria was not a major factor for the company. However, my role on the team was to explore how the team's future designs can incorporate inclusive and accessible designs through color, size and other interactive components. By looking at color contrast, tab sequencing and focus states, I completed an in-depth audit of the existing system and provided solutions that be incorporated in future releases.

Internship Goals

- Assist in laying the foundation for UKG Ready's Design Language System (DLS) by analyzing UX patterns & components and defining it as a logical and consistent schema of modular units
- Work on organizing, documenting and expanding on the Design system through the lens of accessibility so that it can be easily consumed across the organization while meeting all user backgrounds and greatest product suite needs.
- Conduct accessibility testing/evaluation on UKG Workforce Ready Product to determine potential accessibility inconsistencies
- Develop user interfaces from low-fidelity wireframes to pixel-perfect interactive mock-ups and prototypes for user research across mobile and web.

My Projects

Color & Font Accessibility Audit

Starting my internship, I was tasked with doing an in-depth audit on color contrast and font choice within UKG Ready's Workforce Ready product. Prior to this work, I looked into the different components found within UKG Ready's Component Library and UX Showcase, which are both important resources that the designers utilize when building their designs. The Components Library, which included all documentation for each component used throughout the product and how it is used, was an important tool that I utilized throughout this task because it clearly outlined how it can be used and potential accessibility inconsistencies that are found within a specific component.

Looking at the UX Showcase, this tool provided specification for each component and is updated at a frequent rate. Both tools helped my audit search throughout the product as I was able to become more familiar with each given section and how different components are used on different product sections. Additionally, I was able to learn UKG's framework and how they iterate over designs based on user feedback and design critique sessions. Overall, from an audit I learned that consistent communication & organized documentation of design changes can reduce accessibility issues and increase ease of use for all users

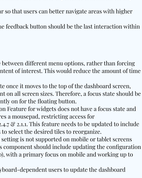
Focus State Accessibility Audit

Following the first audit, I did a secondary audit on focus states within Workforce Ready. This was a very pivoting task for me because it really exposed a lot of inconsistencies when it comes to matching the WCAG 2.0 standards that were published in 2018. Some of the accessibility issues include no visible focus state, components' icons that are skipped over during the tab sequence, cursor location issues within wizard components, and instances of broken tab sequences (particularly with popup/ side panels).

1. Components or icons with missing focus state for all instances of that component:
   - Close button (ex. Global Panel, Date Picker, etc)
   - Accordion Container in Global Side Panel (Blue =x37C2C2 over Grey =#111111)
   - The clear button of the search input field
   - The more actions icon - button
   - Back arrow and other icon buttons on the different Dashboards within the classic UI Checklists component for Add/ Remove Columns popup
   - Main header on all pages with color UKG Legacy Blue (=x4A7C2)

2. For the wizard components, there should be further discussions across the development and UX teams to determine how to best update component to allow users to jump to different widgets on a page. This can be done by altering or updating the cursor location based on the user's selection (ex. hyperlinks in 'Jump To' section)

Demonstrates focus state on different types of button components



3. There are instances in which the tab sequence is broken due to secondary popup screens or side panels, resulting in the tab sequence continuing on the primary landing screen (the previous page) rather than the popup/ side panel. In some cases, if the user accidentally tabs out of the popup or side panel, the user is unable to go back the necessary screen (popup/ side panel), creating a keyboard trap. This inhibits keyboard users from efficiently using different components in the product.

4. In order of allowing users to be able to bypass information (ex. menu navigation bar, wizard page, etc), there needs to be a 'skip to main content' hyperlink added at the beginning of the tab sequence.

Overall, I learned that accessibility guidelines and rules should be considered before product development to reduce potential accessibility inconsistencies

Tab Sequence Audit

The final audit that I conducted throughout my internship was on the tab sequence within Workforce Ready with the goal of recommending a better flow to increase accessibility for keyboard-only users. Similar to the focus state audit, this task exposed a number of inconsistencies when it comes to matching the current WCAG 2.0 standards that were published in 2018. Some of the accessibility issues include broken tab sequence on 'Jump to' side panels, settings configuration on mobile devices, skipping specific icons throughout all pages, and inconsistent tab sequence on secondary menu navigation bars. Below are general recommendations for each page within the product:

Employee Profile

- For the general tab sequence, its navigation must follow a left-to-right, top-to-bottom sequence, in accordance with the WCAG 2.0 guidelines
- The mobile layout is top priority for UI design & tab sequence to make sure the user experience is seamless for any device.
- It is important to Enable arrow key navigation for navigation bar so that users can better navigate areas with higher densities of data (Example found here)
- As the feedback button is an add-on to gather user feedback, the feedback button should be the last interaction within the tab sequence

Dashboard

- Tab Menu Navigation bar should utilize the arrow keys to move between different menu options, rather than forcing the user to tab through each menu option to get to the main content of interest. This would reduce the amount of time required to have the user reach the main content
- Floating 'jump to the top' button does not have a clear focus state once it moves to the top of the dashboard screen, making it not an effective tool for keyboard users. This is present on all screen sizes. Therefore, a focus state should be added on the menu button based on the page that user is currently on for the floating button.
- The 'Rearrange Tiles' feature under the Edit Mode Customization Feature for widgets does not have a focus state and is not accessible/ usable for keyboard users. This feature requires a mouse-pad, restricting access for keyboard-dependent users, thereby violating WCAG 2.0 rules' 2.4.7 & 2.1.1. This feature needs to be updated to include individual input fields for each tile, rather than requiring users to select the desired tiles to reorganize.
- Start widget configuration under the Edit Mode Customization settings is not supported on mobile or tablet screens due to lack of responsive designs. Future choices regarding this component should include updating the configuration so that it is supported on all devices (ex. mobile/ tablet/ desktop), with a primary focus on mobile and working up to larger screens.
- Customize widgets feature on the dashboard does not allow keyboard-dependent users to update the dashboard

Timesheet

- The tab sequence for the reports on the Timesheets pages should be updated so that the focus state continues on the icon-delete button when clicking on the plus button to add additional time to an employee's timesheet.

Workspace

- Update tab sequence to allow keyboard-dependent users to select links in pill header on the Job Requisition page

Time Off

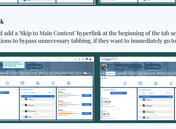
- Add a focus state on the details popup for events within the calendar component (example shown here)
- Remove extra tab sequence on individual days on the Time Off Library @ Time Off Balance pages.

Overall, from this task I learned that team feedback and design iteration are important to developing an effective prototype that meets the needs of all targeted users.

Recommendations based on my findings

Focus State Color Scale

UKG Ready should implement a focus state color scale depending on the background color. For all components, the color of the focus state should be dependent on the background color and should be tested based on the primary color scale to make sure it meets proper contrast ratios. This will prevent future instances of color contrast violations according to WCAG guidelines.



Tab Sequence Recommendations

Menu Navigation Bar

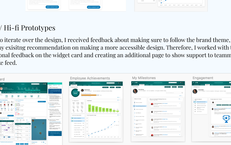
UKG Ready UX Team should update tab sequence to include arrow keys in menu navigation or add a 'skip menu navigation link.' This would increase efficiency for keyboard users by allowing them to skip over additional tabs and navigation menu bars.

'Skip to Main Content' Link

UKG Ready UX Team should add a 'Skip to Main Content' hyperlink at the beginning of the tab sequence. This will allow users with mobility restrictions to bypass unnecessary tabbing, if they want to immediately go to the main content on a page.

Wizard Component

UKG Ready UX Team should add an anchor link to go to each wizard component. Since the focus state should go straight to the content of the widget, the correct behavior for all child-to-child elements in the wizard component should be going directly to the section of the page when clicking on an anchor link.



Intern Collaboration Project: Employee Recognition Program

Another opportunity that I got to explore throughout this internship was to work alongside three other interns (2 Product Management (PM) interns and 1 UX Research Intern) to develop a Employee Recognition Program within the current product. This project was a great opportunity to see how the UX Design process works firsthand within the industry because my team had to work from the groundup, since this program had not been created before. Prior to my work, I had various meetings with the other interns, as well as, other employees that researched other employee recognition programs from companies. This was very helpful in understanding the general industry standards and what general limitations that our team had to work with. Ultimately, this led the team in separating roles where the two PM interns continued to do background research on existing programs and how other teams could get involved in the development of this program, whereas the UX Research intern created a SurveyMonkey survey to send out to all employees to get their general input about ways that they would want to be recognized at work. This shaped how I approach the current problem and to develop the design specs.

Icon Exploration

My first task was to look into what icon would best represent the Employee Recognition card on the dashboard. Based on my previous design feedback huddles throughout the summer, I learned that continuous research and feedback was crucial to the success of the UX team. Therefore, I felt this task needed to have some research on existing platforms and gathering feedback on a variety of icons that would represent a celebration of accomplishments or tasks. Overall, I created three different icons based on my research which I presented to my team, as well as, the 2 PM interns for feedback.

Wireframes

Based on the feedback, I went with the ribbon icon (first icon) as the Employee Recognition icon on the Dashboard. Additional feedback from the surveys led me to creating one other page, along with the four design specs for the Dashboard widget card, that shows total point progression and how a user would compare to other employees in their company. Other features included recent awards, as well as, ways to earn more points.

Final Design/ Hi-fi Prototypes

As I continued to iterate over the design, I received feedback about making sure to follow the brand theme, as well as, incorporating my existing recommendation on making a more accessible design. Therefore, I worked with the PM interns to gather additional feedback on the widget card and creating an additional page to show support to teammates through a social media-like feed.

Takeaways

This internship really demonstrated the strong eye to detail that is necessary when upholding a product brand. As a result of all of my work at UKG, my attention to detail has increased tremendously and really shifted my focus to further include a consideration for Accessibility in my future work. Additionally, my work made me a better teammate. UKG's close-knit teams and strong collaboration efforts altered my perspectives on what it means to work on a team and I hope to be on a team similar to what I worked with over the summer within my future career. I also gained valuable knowledge about how to thrive in a corporate setting. Throughout my time this summer, I learned new soft skills such as strong communicator, stronger eye to detail (as mentioned previously), as well as had the opportunity to explore the awesome tools such as Aha!, Confluence and deepening my knowledge on Sketch, which was an amazing experience. Finally, my time at UKG has increased my interest in UX Design. Prior to the internship, most of my experience was in nonprofits so I am thankful to have the opportunity to explore how to work in a corporate environment and meet the business requirements of the company's clients.

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