Victoria Crabb- Assignment 4 Signifiers, Mapping, Affordances, and Nonsense

Link: https://xd.adobe.com/view/47d9cce4-ab33-49e2-8921-debb456b3d33-128a/

Concept

For this assignment, I chose to create an app that essentially tells the user useless information, specifically what they have missed. While there seems to be intention behind the app idea, it becomes very nonsensical as certain buttons lead to random screens, the game functions out of order and more.

Feedback

To see how people would react to my app, I had my friend and my roommate play the game. My first friend became very impatient after going through the app for less than thirty seconds because nothing was happening the way he thought it would be. My roommate, on the other hand, found the game to be quite fun even though she had no idea what was going on. In the end, she probably spent about three minutes playing before she realized there was no objective.

Signifiers

Icons
- Calendar: The calendar is an icon because it is the digital representation of a physical calendar.
- Clock: The clock is an icon because it represents an analog clock.
- Train: The train is an icon because it represents a representation of a real train.
- Home: I would argue that the home button is an icon because it depicts something physical.

Symbols
- Notifications: I would consider the notifications element to be a symbol. A bell ringing is something that we as a culture have come to understand as representing digital notifications and is, thus, arbitrary if someone doesn't understand the culture.
- Location: The location symbol I used is something that is often seen with Apple devices. However, if you look up location other images will also come up. Due to this, I would consider this to be a symbol because it is something specific to a demographic (for example Apple users) and has been learned to represent a certain element.
- Question Mark: I would consider the question mark a symbol because it isn't a physical representation of searching for help. Although we use the question mark for questions, I

don't think it directly translates to the question mark symbol and is more of a cultural constraint.
- Volume Button: The volume button would be considered a symbol because it is something that we have come to learn as a society to mean sound.
- Settings: The settings gear is a symbol because the gear does not have a direct correlation to settings. Instead, we understand that the gear equates to all of the setting functions, illustrating that it is a symbol rather than an icon or index.

Indices
- Dark Clouds: After the user clicks on the clouds, it goes from being white to dark with rain, which can suggest that the weather has worsened since we associated dark clouds with bad weather.
- "Location", "Notifications" and "Volume": These three written words create a relationship between the icon and symbol, indicating that the user should look towards the toggle for a function.
- Back and Forth Arrows: I believe the arrows are indices because they direct the users in the direction in which they should press the button to get to a certain page.
- Toggle: I would argue that the toggle button is an index because it signifies the user to press the button to turn something on and off.
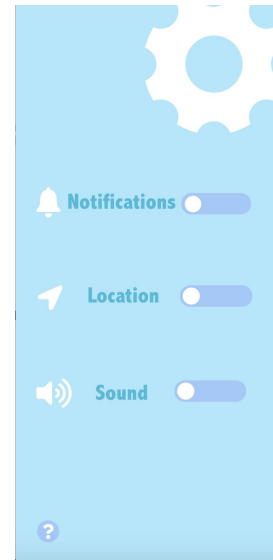
Affordances

Perceived
- Although the screens don't appear in the correct order, the individual screens function in the standard way a user would expect. For example:
    - The weather screen (and all of the other icon screens) give information relating to the weather. Even though the information is not helpful, it also alludes to its title as well seeing as the information is what the viewer missed.
- While some of the buttons don't function properly or lead to a random screen, there are some that go directly to their designated screen. For example, the settings symbol on the homepage actually leads to the settings.
- On the settings screen, a perceived affordance is the toggle buttons. Although there aren't any instructions on the page, a user would know that the toggle button turns something on and off.
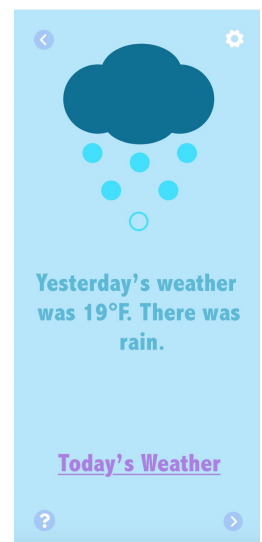
Hidden

- When you click on the background of the home screen, it changes from blue to green.
- There is a screen of just flowers and if the user clicks on certain flowers, they are directed back to random screens.
- On the screen of icon choices (screen 2), if the user clicks on the white shapes behind the icons they will be directed back to the beginning of the app.
- On the different icon pages (i.e the weather page or the calendar page), if the user clicks on the icons themselves they change color and/or reveal more information relating to the topic.
- On the homepage, if the user hovers over the title of the app, it changes color.
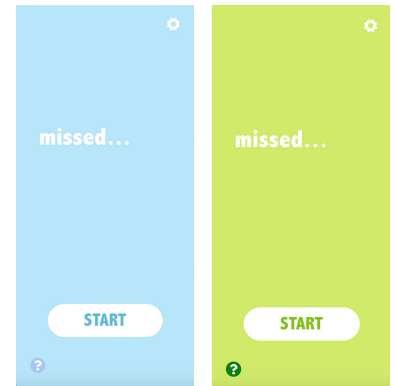
False

- "Click here" in the notification tab is underlined, which would suggest that it is clickable but it doesn't actually lead to anything.
- "Today's Weather" is underlined and suggests that clicking it will lead to another page with the weather but all it does is change the color of the words.
- For many of the buttons, they do not function the proper way that one expects them to. Some of these include:
    - The start button doesn't start the game but takes the user to the end.
    - The back and forward arrows lead to either the very beginning or end of the game.
    - The icon buttons lead to different pages (i.e the weather leads to the clock page, the clock page leads to the transportation etc.)
    - If you click on the help button or the setting buttons, it often takes the user to a different screen.
        - Some of these also just aren't clickable and, thus, lead nowhere.
    - The toggles on the settings page change the wrong setting.
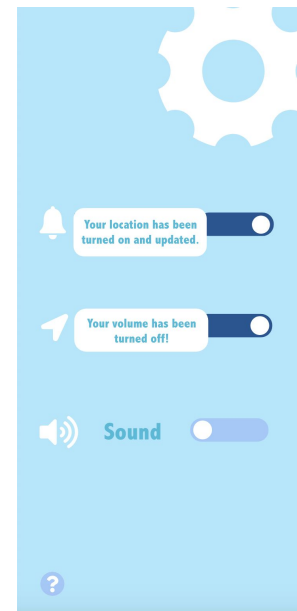
Previous Iterations

First App: https://xd.adobe.com/view/b6149d64-ba63-43e7-9d9a-3d35cf42d17e-e347/

- From the first version, once I had figured out the basic functionality, I started playing with how I could make it even more nonsensical. This included adding more false affordances (like the start button going to the end or the help button going to a random page with flowers) as well as making sure I included as many icons, symbols and indices as possible.
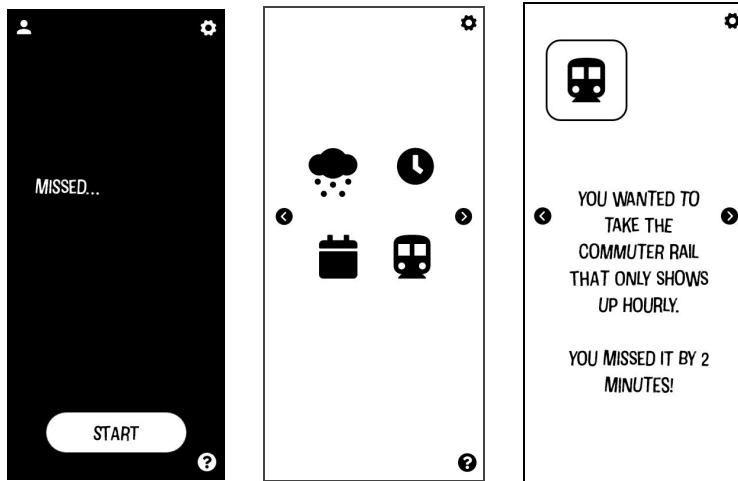
Here are some of the screens from the first version.

The second version of my game is closer related to the final version. That involved changing colors, reformatting the screens and, again, adding more nonsensical elements.

Initial Sketches