

APP360

“the cursed animosity of inanimate objects”

John Ruskin 1819-1900

Aim

The aim of this project is to give you the opportunity to bring together all that you have learned so far on the module, in order to create high fidelity prototypes of a potential smartphone app that meets the requirements of an imaginary design competition.

Introduction

This final project of the module, is an incremental step up from the earlier projects for a number of reasons. You will be developing a prototype mock up of a smartphone app and working through all the stages of an iterative design process. You will also be setting your own brief, in that you will need to identify your own focus for the app. Finally, you will be applying some elements of psychology and design theory to your final product.

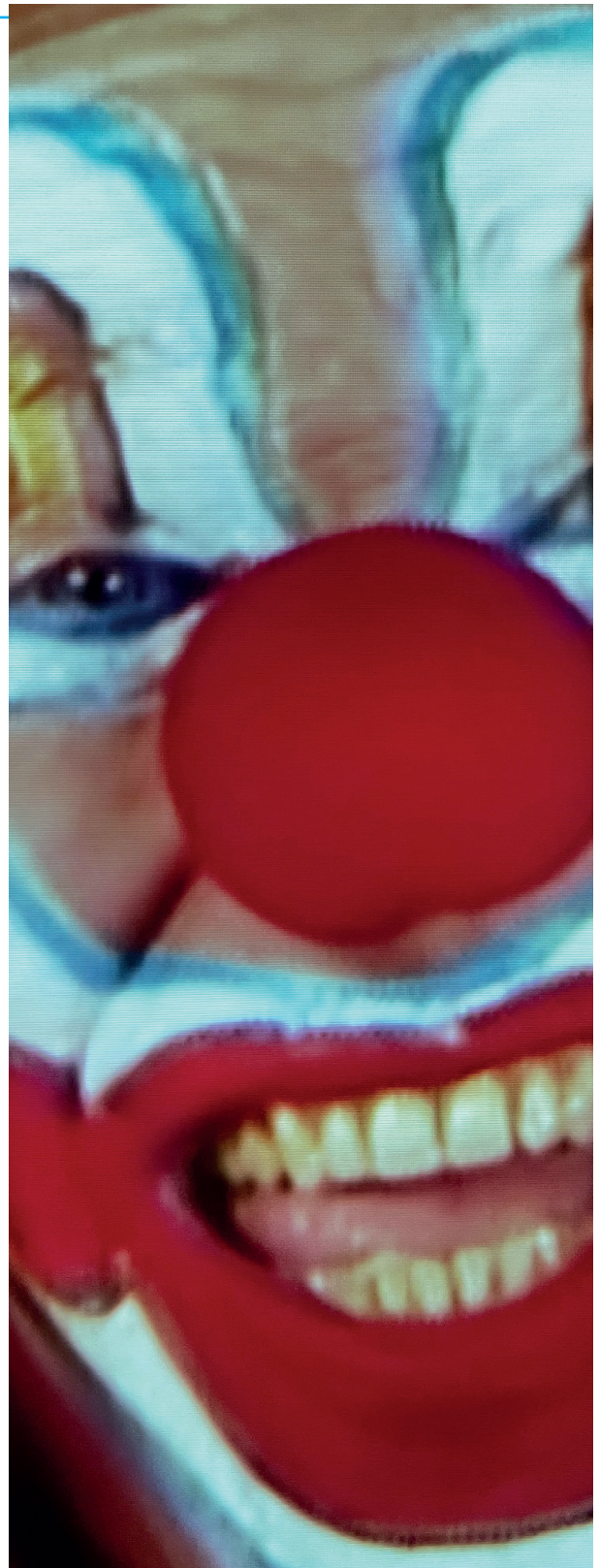
Brief

Imagine you are applying for a six month internship with a leading design studio. Applications for this position will be numerous and highly competitive, so the studio have decided to base selection on a design competition.

To enter the competition you must design a smartphone app for an appliance or other device - a physical thing - in common usage amongst international students in the UK. Having identified a suitable device, you will need to develop your ideas for the app using user-research and ideation through to lo- and hi-fidelity prototyping of the final product. Testing will need to be done and an iterative design process undertaken. The competition hosts will also want to see the process that underpins the evolution of your ideas.

To be successful, your app needs to be differentiated from other competition entries. With this in mind, the studio are looking for novelty, functionality and practicality. As well as these characteristics, a successful competition entry will be usable, useful and will introduce an emotional element into the design. Most of all, the studio will expect you to demonstrate your creativity and to stand out from the crowd with compelling, relevant ideas.

Submission to the competition is by a pdf document (up to 10 screens), with annotated images which should include links to a short testing video and a video of the app - the latter either as a walkthrough of features or as a speculative scenario of the app in action.



Outputs

Submission for this project is in the form of a pdf document that meets all the requirements of the imaginary competition. These include:

- predominantly visual submission;
- user research;
- ideation;
- wireframes;
- pixel-perfect mock-ups;
- evidence of testing - video (link via pdf);
- walkthrough of app or speculative scenario (link via pdf);
- relevant process.

Limit your pdf document to no more than 10 screens / pages.
Submit via your portfolio website.

Guidance notes

- Your user group is international students in the UK. Use yourself and others as typical target users.
- The objective is to design an app to control whatever physical device you choose. Remember, you are not designing the device - the thing - but the link between it and your phone and, probably, the internet.
- Spend some time identifying a device - a thing - that could potentially interact with a smartphone. Avoid the obvious, such as rice cookers, kettles etc. Instead, look for the unusual or different.
- Design for only one specific smartphone eg iPhone iOS or Samsung Galaxy Android etc.
- Technical details relating to connecting things to the Internet or other devices are not part of this brief, and a current lack of connectedness of the machine you choose is not an issue. It is sufficient that connection would be feasible at some point in the future. Most suitable devices you identify will be powered by electricity, although connection of non-electrical devices is potentially possible through the addition of electrical control and sensors.
- Put into practice the skills and knowledge you have learned from the previous projects on the module. Start with the goals of the competition and the wants and needs of typical members of the user groups. Use your models of the user group to help identify a suitable device - the thing - for the project. Create ideas using sketches and use various techniques to turn rough ideas into potential solutions. Work through lo- to hi-fidelity prototypes to try out solutions and test with typical users. Ultimately, you will need to produce hi-fidelity, pixel-perfect, mock-ups of screens.
- Bring elements of emotion into your design. Use typography and colour to engage the user.
- Don't over complicate your final app, often the simplest designs and functional capabilities work the best.
- Present your competition entry in an organised manner. Your final pdf submission should be well-designed, predominantly visual and at the best standard as you can do. The content should be comprehensive, suitably structured and findable. The pdf should include clickable links to relevant videos - use Vimeo or YouTube to host them.
- Give your app a name and include your own name and details on the pdf.
- Have fun and enjoy the work!

Learning outcomes

This project covers all the module learning outcomes. Find these under Module Information in the main left-hand sidebar of the module Blackboard space.

Resources

Book. Jesse James Garrett. The Elements of User Experience: User-Centered Design for the Web and Beyond (2nd Edition) (Voices That Matter). Pearson Education. 2011.

Book. Donald Norman. Emotional Design: Why we love (or hate) everyday things. Basic Books. 2004. An extract from chapter 2 is available for reading on Blackboard.

Alice Botlyarenko. How to Design Emotional Interfaces for Boring Apps. Smashing Magazine. 2018. Available at: <https://www.smashingmagazine.com/2018/04/designing-emotional-interfaces-boring-apps/>

Academic Integrity

It is important that the work you submit for assessment is your own and does not include material that has been submitted for previous modules. Any third party elements must be clearly cited. For detailed guidance about plagiarism and the broader Academic Integrity policy of the University of Southampton please refer to the document: Academic Integrity Guidance for Students.

Health & Safety

In conducting this project, you should always operate in such a way as to ensure your personal safety and security as well as being mindful of your impact on others. Travel with a friend, preferably in daylight hours, and take particular care using and carrying equipment such as cameras, phones etc. Carry your UoS ID and always approach interviewees by informing them that you are undertaking a university-based assessment task. Avoid talking directly to children without parental/teacher permission. If you plan to photograph people or property, ask permission before taking any pictures.

Winter closure

Be aware that the University will be closed from 24/12/24 to 02/01/25 inclusive. Tutorial staff will be on leave during that period.

Images

AL stills from a screening of Clown Torture, a video by Bruce Nauman (1987). Part of an exhibition of Nauman's work at Tate Modern London (2010).



