

Introduction:

This report is intended to introduce an app I created I call *The White Elephant*. The White Elephant app is intended to aid in facilitating a game of White Elephant amongst a group of people in a virtual setting. In my report I will justify the application by providing insight on who may have a need for this type of app as well as provide comparisons of competing applications. In addition, I will be providing the features and functions of this app as well as design elements.

STRATEGY

Since the pandemic began almost every aspect of our lives has been turned upside down. From education to remote employment, organizations have been forced to re-think the ways in which they do business with not only their customers, but in how they provide support to their employees. As an employee who has been working from home since April, and who is also happens to be on my departments rewards and recognition committee, the impact of suddenly becoming a remote worker has completely changed how our committee boosts morale, plans events, and recognizes employee accomplishments. With so much uncertainty in the world right now, the pressure to ensure we provide (virtual) activities and (virtual) events that are entertaining, engaging and provide a human element is more important than ever.

The idea for this app was brought on by a dilemma I recently found myself in, planning for the end of year holiday event. The most common suggestion we got from employees was some type of gift giving activity, secret Santa, White Elephant, anything involving gifts. Because our organization is in healthcare, sending physical gifts can get messy logistically speaking, and sending employees to the post office right now, is not a good idea, and does not align with the company's overall brand, I needed figure out if there was another way to make this work. In my research I could not find any type of technology that provided the functions that I needed, so I created an app called *The White Elephant*.

The White Elephant is an app that aids users in facilitating a white elephant game virtually and without physical gifts. The app is intended to be used in conjunction with a video conferencing platform but can be used in real life at events such as a socially distanced gatherings.

Intended Audiences

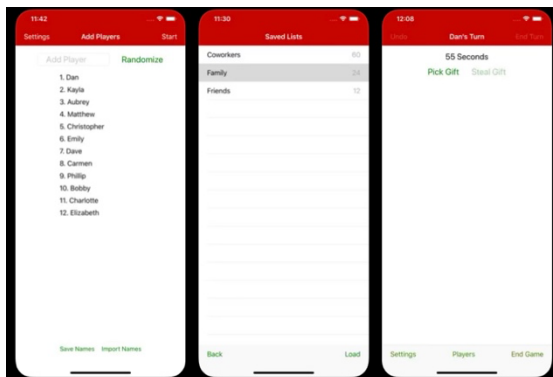
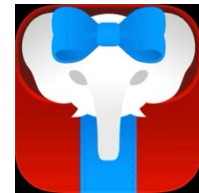
The intended audiences for this app can be anyone who works remotely and would like to engage in a game of white elephant, organizations looking to provide an activity for a remote event, and people who may want to host socially distanced events. In my research for an app similar to this I came across two apps that were in the same category but did not meet my needs.

Competitive Examples

The two apps I came across that seemed relevant to my needs were the Elephant Gift Exchange and Gift Xchange.

Elephant Gift Exchange:

Although, I do think this app serves a function to facilitate a white elephant game, it would not work in virtual setting. The app does not allow users to interact with each other, nor send gifts. It essentially is utilized to keep track of where each player is at in the game and establish customized rules. The design is simple, which



I think is a good idea, but I feel it could use a few improvements. I would suggest enlarging the font to increase usability and creating affordances so the user understands where to go next.

Gift Xchange:

The next app I reviewed is called Gift Xchange. This app was much closer to what I was looking for in comparison to the Elephant Gift Exchange. The app allows users to create profiles, interact with each other, and exchange gifts. There are areas that allow users to shop for gifts online, input gift information and send to other users. In analyzing this app, my first impressions were that it is very difficult to look at. There is way too much





information on the screen, which is overwhelming to users. As for the user guide, it is not clear enough and is too complicated to understand.

When designing apps, it is imperative that you create with minimalist design. I like the concept of this application, but it needs to be simplified.

Scope:

The intention of the application is to simulate an in-person game of White Elephant. The game takes place within the app, the only reason video conferencing is encouraged is to provide a human element to the game.

To begin the user will first need to download the app and create a profile.

On the opening page the user will see an icon of a white elephant and two buttons “log in” or “sign up”.

The log-in button will take the user to their profile where they will see their profile information this includes profile picture, name, nickname, email address, gift and buttons that will allow the user to begin creating a meeting or the option to join a meeting. Users creating a game will not have to enter a gift code and will have the ability to customize rules for the game.

The sign-up feature will take the user to a profile creation page and at that page the user must provide profile picture, name, nickname, and email address. An icon in the upper left corner will allow user to upload a picture and the form will designate what to input where.

In addition, the user will have to add a gift, if they would like to join a meeting. In the add gift section the user will find fields such as “Enter gift code” and If applicable enter additional code, to include images of what the user should be looking for. The game will only allow the user to upload gift codes by design and only after a gift is added will a button populate to allow the user to join a meeting. Once the player enters the game, they are prompted to submit a gift, if they are storing multiple gifts in the app, they will

be prompted to “pick a gift”. Once gift is chosen, they are able to “submit” gift to the game. Once all invited players arrive, the game will begin. The game will begin in order attendees arrived to meeting and will be prompted by a gift icon and two buttons appearing in the app. The buttons that appear will say “Keep” or “steal”. If the user would like to keep, the gift card code will be pulled into the “gift” section of their profile.

If the user decides to steal a player’s gift, once they touch the “steal button” they will be directed to a new page with a drop down of all the users currently in the game. Once they pick the player, they would like to steal from, the app will automatically “steal” that players gift. The player whose gift was stolen will be prompted to steal another player’s gift or pull a different gift.

Structure.

- **In order to utilize The White Elephant app, the user must download the app from the app store/play store.**
- **Once downloaded, the user is prompted to**
 - A. Log In>User is directed to profile
 - B. Sign Up>User is directed to create a profile
- **On profile page user is able to upload profile picture, input information/edit information, upload gift cards or create/join meeting.**

Features:

- Gift": Player is prompted to upload gift card information to be utilized as gift that they must submit to play game. This function allows multiple gifts to be stored or player to reuse gifts award in previous games.
- Join meeting: User enters meeting number assigned by facilitator to join meeting. Only users participating may join.
- **Player joins meeting**
 - Once user joins meeting, they are prompted to choose a gift to submit
 - User chooses gift and a prompt will appear, user will have to click to submit button to submit gift into game.

- **Once all users join game app will randomize gifts and first player will begin.**
 - Players will be assigned in order they entered the meeting. (Can be customized)
- **User plays a turn. On the users turn a gift icon will appear in the app.**
 - Player will be prompted to touch gift icon which will reveal gift.
 - Buttons will below gift icon prompt the user to keep the gift or steal

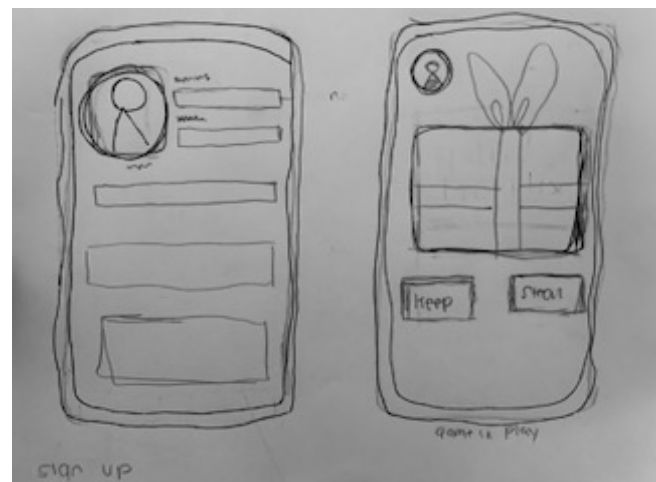
Keep: User keeps gift, gift code is uploaded to users' profile and user exits the game

Steal: a new page with a drop appears and user can pick a player in the game to steal from. App will pull that players the option to steal from another user or pull a different gift.

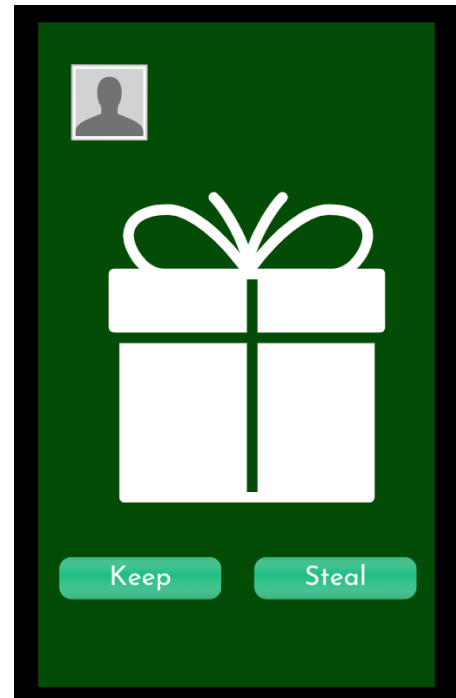
This continues to end of game

- **End of game: User can keep gift code information within profile or choose to email or text information to themselves.**

Skeleton: Low fidelity wireframes



Surface: High fidelity wireframes



Conclusion:

When designing interface, I aimed to keep overall design as minimal as I could without compromising function. According to the article *"Less is More' - Minimalism in UX Design"*, Bascetta explains in applying minimal UX design the creator should make an effort to strip design down to use only essential content. She also explains the importance of being be mindful of white space and incorporating flat design.

My aim was to give the user the impression my app was easy to use, simple. The White Elephant game is known to be a game that one needs to pay attention for and can be considered complicated. I felt an over-complicated design might scare a potential user away because of this. I also incorporated a san-serif text to make it easy for the user to read pertinent text. In addition, I used a very simple color scheme to give off a feel of simplicity and draw focus to the buttons, that aid in helping the user understand where to go next.

References:

Bascetta, A. (2020, January 03). 'Less is More' - Minimalism in UX Design. Retrieved December 03, 2020, from <https://info.keylimeinteractive.com/less-is-more-minimalism-in-ux-design>

Garret, J. J. (n.d.). Peachpit. Retrieved December 03, 2020, from <https://www.peachpit.com/articles/article.aspx?p=1681039>