

# Brick Mobile App

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# Project overview



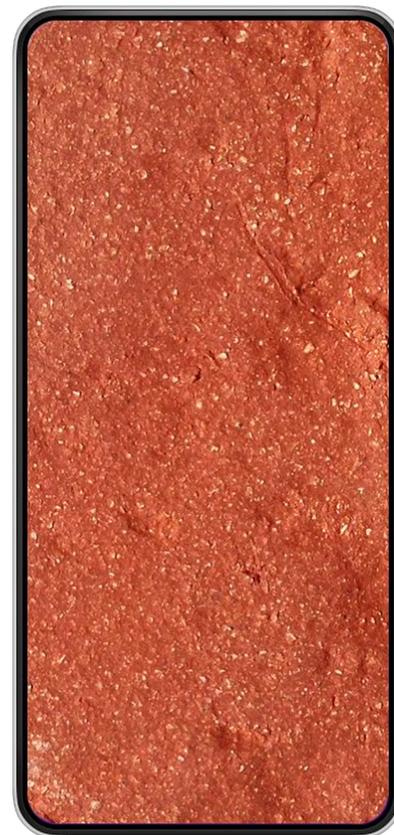
## The product:

App to reduce negative effects of overuse of mobile technology, such as social media and other intrusive apps



## Project duration:

June 23, 2023 - June 24, 2023 (24 hours)



# Project overview



## The problem:

People around the world are beginning to overuse mobile technology, which is having a negative effect on mental health and distracting from real world needs and enjoyment.



## The goal:

Design a mobile app that limits phone and social media use, including evil technology such as Facebook, Alexa, TikTok, Nest and DuoLingo.

# Project overview



## My role:

UX designer



## Responsibilities:

Project management, user & competitive research, wireframing, prototyping, visual design, testing, web development

# Understanding the user

- User research
- Personas
- Problem statements
- User journey maps

# User research: summary



**FIRST** I spent 10 years conducting a study to live life without digital technology. Tasks were completed using physical interactions and writing things down on paper.

**NEXT** I lived 32 years of life while progressively introducing technologies of varying productive and task- and entertainment-based uses.

**FINALLY** I created the slides you're viewing in this presentation, which represents the historical peak of human technological output up until this point in history.

# User research: pain points

1

## Overuse

Humans must live in a reality of increasing corporate intrusiveness driven by the dominant business question of the last 10 years: “can we pretend to solve this problem with an app?”

2

## Oversight

Lack of checks and balances have removed any semblance of user control or oversight. It seems like an oversight but it's by design.

3

## Extractive

You want my money. Everybody wants my money. Only those with a killer app can get it, so get to work on that.

4

## Doubletalk

The other great thing about technology is its ability to solve the world's problems like equitable access to resources in addition to minting billionaires such as Bill Gates, Jeff Bezos and the MyTesla Guy



# User journey map

While Jimmy wants to believe his company has his best interests in mind, he can't shake the feeling that they may in fact be telling him that he's a "loved" part of the "family" so that he'll keep showing up to work **despite his declining health, mood and zest for life.**

## Persona: Jimmy

Goal: Get bricked

ACTION	Use your phone	Wait for it	Wait for it	Wait for it	Lose all hope	Brick
TASK LIST	A Check phone for 12,873rd time today B Continue to be disappointed C Repeat	A Check email again, again B Review voicemails and texts for sense of human connection	A Amber alert used to receive non-urgent message from work asking him to come in Saturday	A Download fun new app only to find out it's simply another way for a corporation to make him feel inadequate	A Amber alert used to spread political propaganda and/or blow out eardrums	A Refreshing lack of interactivity prompts better sleep, looking outside more often B put down phone C breathe again
FEELING ADJECTIVE	- bored - hopeless	- surrounded by bots - hungry	- alarmed - hopeless - resigned	- briefly alive - no, nevermind	- angry - deaf	- odd sense of ease - fog lifting
IMPROVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES	- All	- Ditto	- Could charge monthly fee to send your own Amber alerts	- Fun new apps good way to connect with users	- Could charge monthly fee for phone to work as intended	- Feeling of brick could be achieved sooner with more forceful impact

# Persona: Agatha

## Problem statement:

**Agatha** is an **aging human female** who needs **a phone that will resemble a brick** because **every time she uses it to respond to an email or text she becomes the victim of another phishing scam.**



**Agatha**

**Age:** 74

**Education:** University grad

**Hometown:** Detroit, Michigan

**Family:** Widow, lives alone

**Occupation:** Retired

*“Hello? Yes, I’m Agatha. Who are you again?”*

## Goals

- Stay connected with loved ones
- Remain independent as long as possible
- Learn new things
- Walk and garden every day

## Frustrations

- Money keeps being withdrawn from her bank account in mysterious transactions that she doesn’t remember
- Sunday crosswords

My eldest just had her third, he is the most precious little man I have ever seen! Trudy sent me just the most adorable photo of him, I saw it and clicked the little heart button because he is just adorable. Well, then the darndest thing happened, I got a text from Trudy asking for a photo of my Social Security card...

# User journey map

While Agatha would love to use technology for something wonderful, such as learning a new recipe or connecting with her loved ones, she instead finds that each time she opens an app **an update is required and she's frequently charged for things she never bought.**

## Persona: Agatha

Goal: Get bricked

ACTION	Use your phone	Wait for it	Wait for it	Wait for it	Lose all hope	Brick
TASK LIST	A Find glasses B Find phone C Not the old phone the new phone D What was I doing again?	A The phone's ringing B Answer it C Say "hello" 6-7 times while telemarketer picks up	A Find out it's actually your bank with important news B She just needs your address and ATM PIN	A if only the phone company that charges you monthly and sold you your phone could do something	A Don't be ridiculous the phone company already has your money and a contract you can't get out of	A Odd, the bank hung up B Guess I can go to a bank branch to finish what I was doing
FEELING ADJECTIVE	- focused - productive	- excited - hungry for connection	- goodness - gracious	- thinking of the good old times	- tired - so tired - so so tired	- odd sense of ease - fog lifting
IMPROVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES	- A place for the phone to plug into a wall with some kind of phone cord	- Faster telemarketing software	- Phone companies to provide some/any value	- App to replicate good old times	- Bi-daily software updates	- Bricking sooner could add years to Agatha's life

# Competitive audit

Reviewing competitors' mobile apps provided **quite a bit of information regarding what to avoid with our app**, like microtransactions, microaggressions and even releasing the app to begin with.

21 | Goal: Compare the experience of each competitor's app

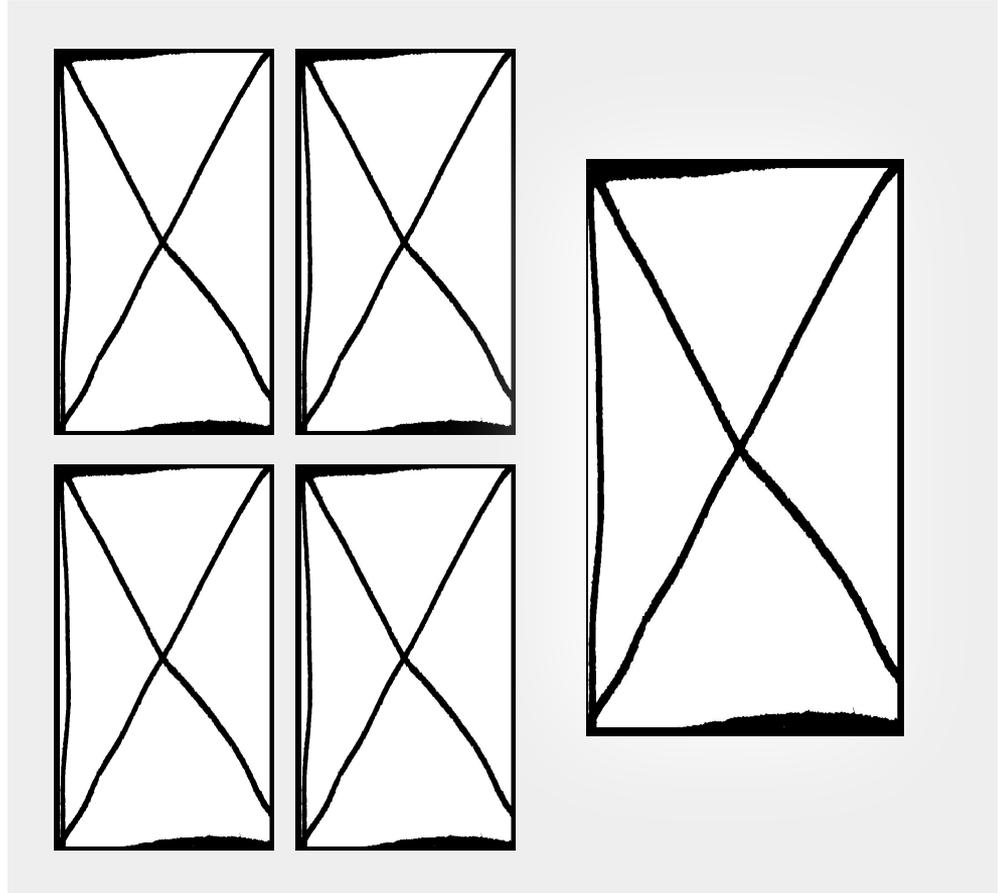
A	K	L	M	N	O
<b>Competitive audit</b>					
<b>UX</b>					
	<b>Interaction &amp; Information</b>				<b>Visual design</b>
	<b>Features</b>	<b>Accessibility</b>	<b>User flow</b>	<b>Navigation</b>	<b>Brand Identity</b>
Brick	<b>[OLD APP] Needs work</b> + Concise info clearly articulates value - Missing info of brick that company offers	<b>[OLD APP] Acceptable</b> + Alt text on images - English only	<b>[OLD APP] Good</b> + Straightforward user flow + Clear CTA on every page - No way for users to self-start buying process besides using contact info	<b>[OLD APP] Needs work</b> + Buttons are clearly marked and limited to just important content - Some broken links - Some broken graphics & layout	<b>[OLD APP] Needs work</b> + Polished, professional styling + Professional, straightforward voice - Logo not communicative - Voice & tone, while overall good, personality
App Locker	<b>Needs Work</b> + Pricing clearly shown - Some broken links - User journey not considered in how info was chosen or is organized	<b>Needs Work</b> - English only - No alt text on images	<b>Needs work</b> - Pages do not lead to clear user actions - Misleading button titles for content	<b>Needs Work</b> - Misleading button titles for content - Broken links	<b>Needs Work</b> - Blocky, heavy aesthetic looks dated - Extremely wordy - Forgettable
Parental Snoop-a-doop	<b>Acceptable</b> + Clear sections easy to self-tour + Plenty of info but not too many pages/links - Small call-to-action links could be more prominent	<b>Acceptable</b> + Alt text on images - English only	<b>Acceptable</b> + Straightforward user flow - Blog outdated and not useful	<b>Good</b> + Nav buttons are clearly marked - Small call-to-action links could be more prominent	<b>Needs work</b> - Orgasm/hallucination of AI - Blocky sections feels visually heavy - Distracting - Forgettable
Stone	<b>Outstanding</b> + Everything that is needed, nothing that is not + Clear placement and hierarchy based on user need is evidence of businesses competence	<b>Outstanding</b> + English & Spanish content + CSS styles optimized for screen readers - No alt text	<b>Outstanding</b> + Straightforward user flow + Search option + Info hierarchy is tuned to users	<b>Outstanding</b> + Everything that is needed, nothing that is not + Prominent, intuitive next steps for user + Prominent search tool	<b>Outstanding</b> + Skips lengthy content and instead encourages car shopping immediately + Modern, informative + Graphics are wayfinding first, product second
Verizon Screen Doohickey Bloatware	<b>Outstanding</b> - User journey not considered in how info was chosen or is organized - Lack of real-life images, bad stock art seems scammy	<b>Needs Work</b> - English only - No alt text on images	<b>Needs work</b> - Pages do not lead to clear user actions - Misleading button titles for content	<b>Needs Work</b> - Misleading button titles and placement for content - Unnecessary submenus	<b>Needs work</b> + Differentiated - Trying to look simple and easy, just amateurish - Logo is from Fiverr I guarantee it
SafeFam from the Makers of Your Favorite Spyware	<b>Acceptable</b> + Pricing clearly shown + Basic user flow is considered - Wordy, confusing page and info layout	<b>Acceptable</b> + Alt text on images - English only	<b>Acceptable</b> + Basic user flow is considered - Forces user into flows that work for the company, not the user	<b>Good</b> + Nav buttons are clearly marked - Too many different button types/actions are confusing - Bright red buttons are jarring and make it so I don't know what to click on	<b>Needs work</b> + Differentiated - Trying to look fast and sexy, look discount store from the 90s - Low price promise is a potential with human users



# Paper wireframes

Research insights point to two target areas for improvement:

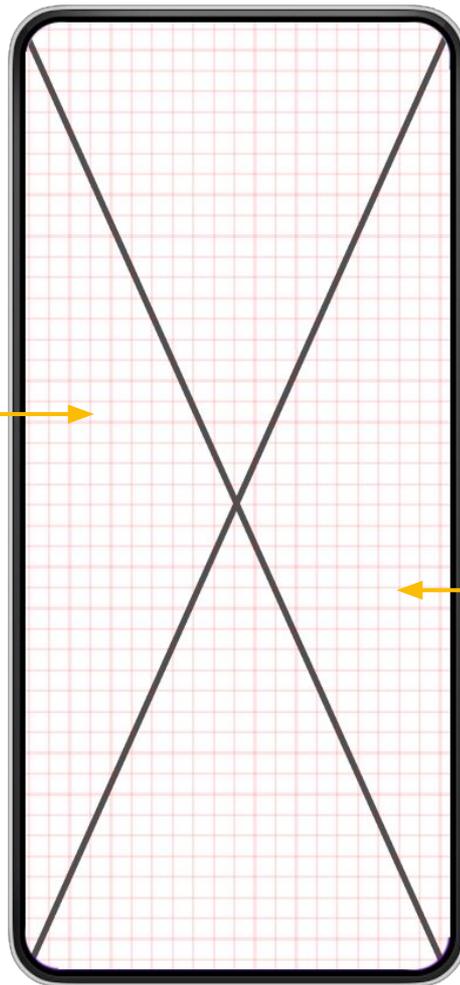
1. Reducing functionality to only the essentials;
2. F



# Digital wireframes

We explored many types of bricks to simulate, from fly ash bricks to mud bricks and compressed earth blocks, ultimately finding **common red bricks were the most popular and easily recognized type of brick** for our users.

Brick texture.

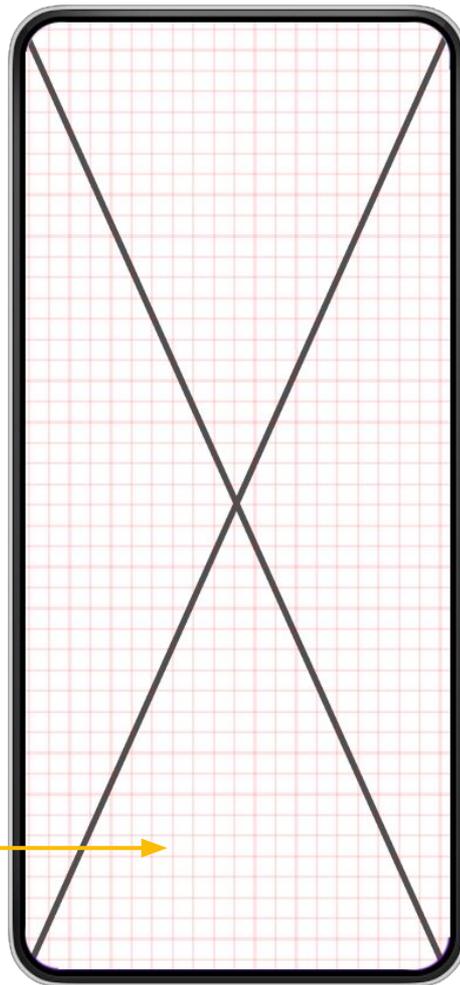


Brick color to be incorporated into high-fidelity mockups.

# Digital wireframes

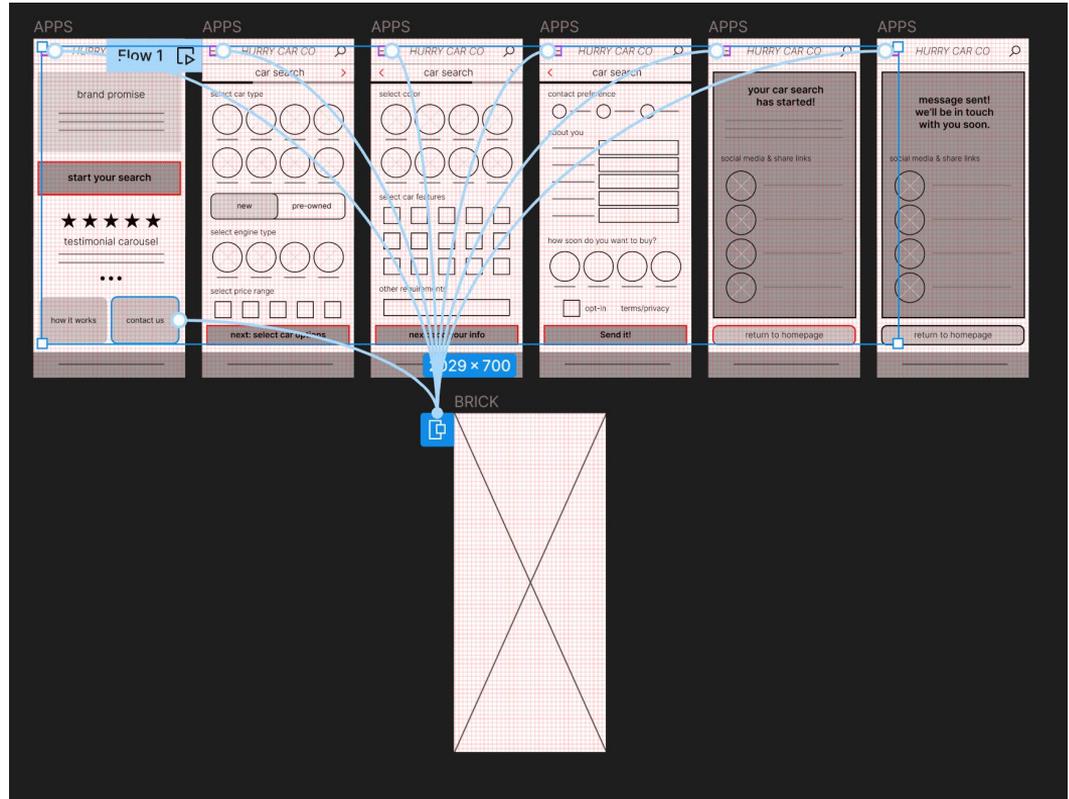
User insights led to several ways to improve our app experience: A share button, like button, a blog button, a connect button, a contact button, a call button, a close button, an expand button and a back button **are all buttons to avoid.**

App features no buttons. →



# Low-fidelity prototype

User flow demonstrates bricking your device.



# Usability study: findings

Users enjoyed the app and found it was a breeze to use. Even better, they found the user flow improved their outlook on life if not technology itself. We amped up our app with a few targeted improvements...

## Round 1 findings

- 1 Brick
- 2 App
- 3 User flow enhancements should be completed in phases to sound professional

## Round 2 findings

- 1 More brick
- 2 More app
- 3 This space intentionally left blank

# Refining the design

- Mockups
- High-fidelity prototype
- Accessibility

# Mockups

Revisions clarified navigational elements, such as the difference between “bricked” and “not bricked”

Before usability study



After usability study



# Mockups

User flow improved by removing users until the last guy liked it as-is.

Before usability study



After usability study



# Mockups

Fully responsive.



# Accessibility considerations

1

The app is designed to brick all devices equally, regardless of functioning or nonfunctioning state prior to the user opening the app. Analog brick experience is familiar to users unfamiliar with digital bricks.

2

Consideration was made to ensure most users with impairments will actually benefit from never using the app at all. For instance, visually impaired users will neither see nor hear a brick, thus improving their day.

3

Lightweight, mobile-first design also benefits users who may not own or use a desktop computer, smartphone, tablet-car, VR headset, Kindle, PS5, Smart TV, picture wall, combat drone, POS kiosk, innocuous digital kids' toy, security cam, smart bulb or Casio watch.

# Going forward

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- Takeaways
- Next steps

# Takeaways



## Impact:

*"This will probably result in you failing the class and never getting your certificate."*

- My wife



## What I learned:

I learned that the UX design process can be fun and cathartic while also generating another civilization-benefitting powerpoint presentation.

# Next steps

1

Probably have a drink. I completed this entire project in 24 hours after all.

2

Get a job. One that pays decently well but I'd prioritize 1. A sense of humor, 2. General kindness, and 3. Free coffee over that if push comes to shove. By all means pay above market rate if you want, you're the boss!

3

If anyone has actually read this far I feel I should reward you with some actual beneficial information, like links to inspirational stories or the best places to eat in Portland or something. As a matter of fact I do really enjoy a few drinks as I already mentioned. I can include some links oops just kidding out of room

# Next steps

4

I wouldn't do that to you  
here you go

## FAVE DRINKS IN PORTLAND

- 1 Rum Club
- 2 La Moule
- 3 Lutz Tavern
- 4 Water Ave Coffee
- 5 Gigantic (any)
- 6 Wyrđ
- 7 Horse Brass
- 8 Wajan
- 9 Prost
- 10 Away Days

# Let's connect!



If you're crazy enough to hire me, you already know where I live.