Mini Portfolio 3 – Final Memo

When researching the iPhone Clock app, 14 of the 14 users interviewed said they use the app for alarms. All of the users said they use the app often and over half of the users said they use it daily. When using the app for alarms, users' desired goals and behaviors are to be on time, whether that be waking up on time or being somewhere on time. The three most common problems that users experience while using the app that constrain them from achieving their desired goals and behaviors efficiently are 1) accidentally snoozing or dismissing their alarms, 2) setting their alarms for AM instead of PM and vice versa, and 3) not having a way to change the snooze length to a shorter or longer amount of time. Looking at the final four wireframes that make up mini portfolio 3, the most effective concepts and principles were pulled from each to create a final revised design that solves the problems framed in the existing system.

The final revised wireframe affords users achieving their desired goals and behaviors by accommodating the design principles Entry Point, Consistency, Flexibility-Usability Tradeoff, Symmetry, Chunking, Picture Superiority Effect, Ockham's Razor, and Confirmation. The most common problem that users experience while using the app is accidentally snoozing or dismissing their alarms. Dialog confirmation constrains user error by requiring verification of the action before it is performed. The alarm will only stop going off after the user selects yes when prompted with the confirmation. If the user accidentally clicked dismiss when they meant to click snooze or vice versa, they will be taken back to the previous screen to correct their mistake if they click no on the dialog confirmation box.

Setting their alarms for AM instead of PM and vice versa is another common problem that users experience while using the app. The existing system affords user error because of the sensitivity of the scroll area. It is easy to brush the area and accidentally switch AM to PM without realizing it. That is no longer an issue thanks to the principles picture superiority effect and chunking. Picture superiority effect strengthens the user's recognition of the action they are taking and the selection they are making. The user can quickly associate the sun with AM and the moon with PM based off their own mental models. It is obvious which option has been chosen because the selected time will appear yellow. If the user were to select the undesired time, their mistake would be easy to see right away and fixed with one click. Chunking is helpful in separating different elements by their importance. The existing system has the user make any changes to the alarm all on one screen. The revised design chunks the information into two categories: setting the time and editing custom features. For the user to achieve their desired goals and behaviors, they must first set the alarm to the correct time. Choosing the desired time and selecting AM or PM are the most important actions involved in setting the alarm. After this has been done the user can then make changes that allow for customization. Accidental changes will not occur on the first two selections because they are on the previous page already saved.

A new custom feature is the option to change the snooze length. Not having a way to change the snooze length to a shorter or longer amount of time is the third most common problem that users experience while using the app. Consistent controls make learnability of the new feature easy on the user. Consistency throughout the design is accommodated by making the same controls do the same thing. For example, the same control is used throughout the design to turn something on or off. The scrolling action is used to pick a desired time in both setting the alarm and setting the snooze length. The flexibility-usability tradeoff principle is in place at this point because while the user has more flexibility in customizing the alarm, the usability has remained the same. There is a balance of both flexibility and usability with this new feature.

After the design satisfied the solutions to the framed problems, it accommodated additional design principles that favored simplicity and visual balance. By using a central axis on the page, symmetry creates a visual balance throughout the app, making it more aesthetically pleasing and easy to understand. All of the previous designs have the same functionality, but the final design favors simplicity over complexity. The functions are the same, but they are placed in the simplest way possible. Finally, the principle entry point is accommodated with the addition of an Alarm app. The alarm is now independent of the Clock app. All of the users interviewed said they use the Clock app for alarms, and there is now an attentional entry into the design with a separate Alarm app. The final revised wireframe affords users achieving their desired goals and behaviors efficiently while constraining user error.