

STRATEGIC WRITING: WORDS MATTER

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ENGL 5394 – UX Design

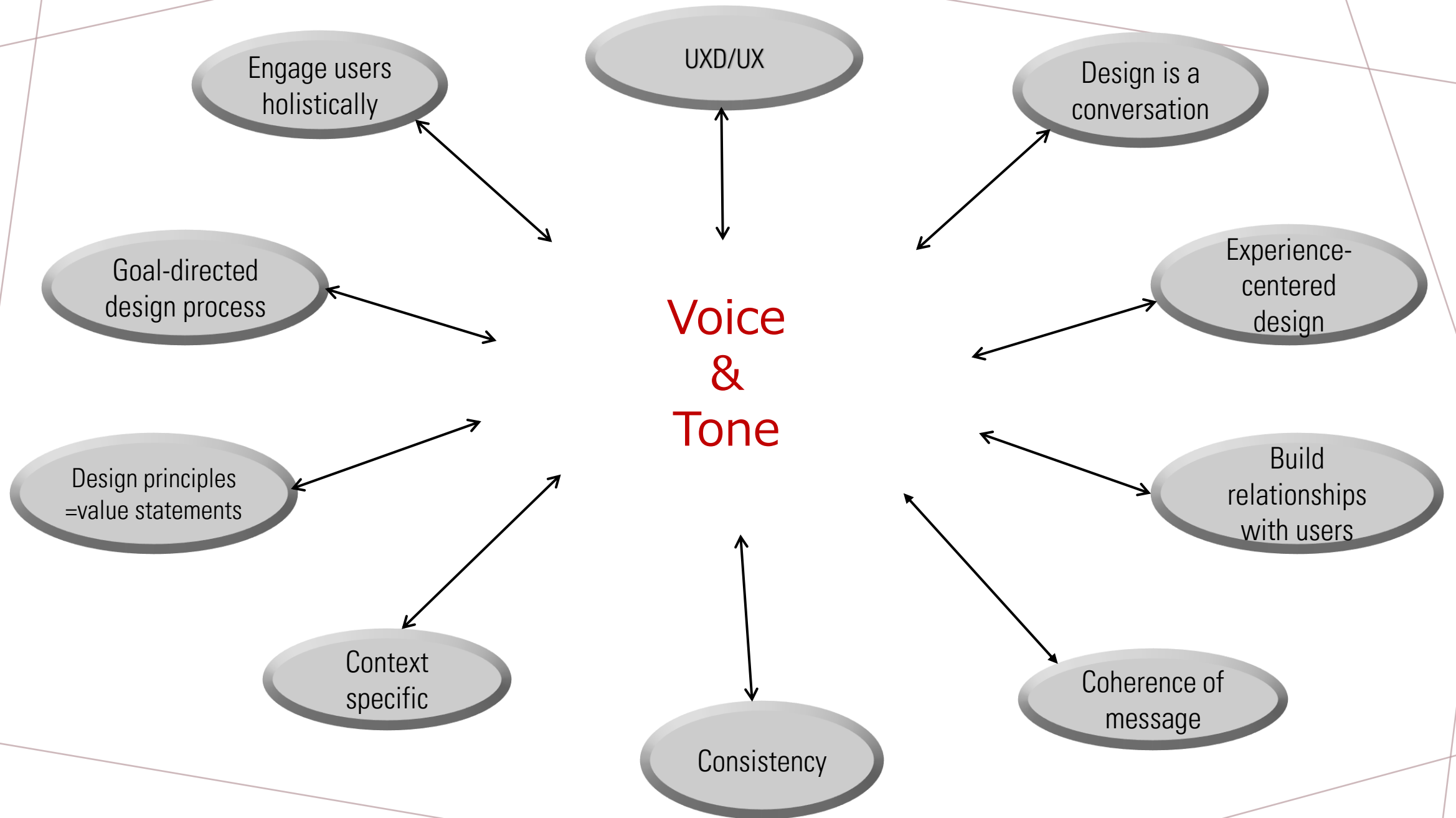
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INTRODUCTION

- Product desirability and engagement are tied to research on human thought which shows that **cognition and emotion are intertwined**: cognitive thoughts lead to emotions and emotions drive cognitive thoughts. (Norman 2013)
 - What are the implications of this research on user experience?
What do we need to get right?
 - Which elements of our designs have a significant impact on the overall success of our users' experience?

Voice & Tone





What is voice?

- ➔ Voice represents a company's or product's personality, identity, and values.
- ➔ Voice is the unique, consistent, recognizable **choice of words** across an entire experience. These words create a coherent message that defines and reinforces the company's or product's brand. **If your brand were a person, how would you describe them?**
- ➔ A carefully crafted brand can evoke positive, powerful feelings that forge strong bonds between user and product, an essential strategy for building loyalty and trust.

What is tone?

- ➔ Tone refers to the sound of our words; it influences how users receive messages.
- ➔ "It's not what you say, but how you say it."
- ➔ If we want our products to be likable, we need to give them a likable personality that sounds human and real.

(Podmajersky 2019; Cooper 2014; Leibtag 2013; Lee 2012)

How do we create content to make a product likeable?

Hint: Make the content sound human and real.

Conversational

Respectful

Empathetic

Familiar

Consistent



THINK ABOUT THIS . . .

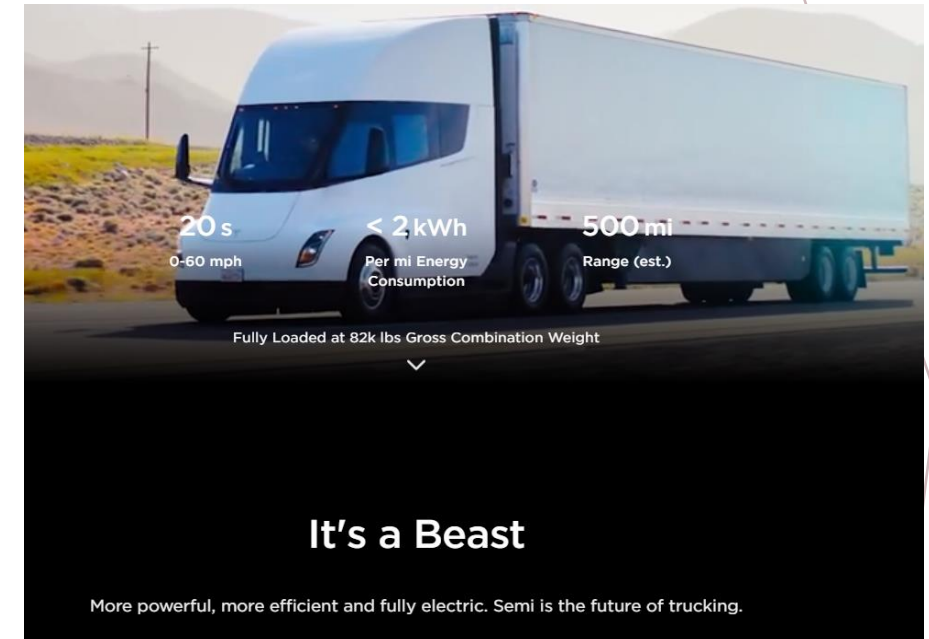
“People may forget what you said, but they will *never* forget how you made them feel.”

—Attributed to several people



Examples of text that reflect voice

Tesla



More examples of text that reflect voice

Mack




Rediscover an American legend.

We took more than a century of experience building America and put it to work tackling the challenges of our industry. The result? The new Mack Anthem™—a truck that will make you rethink what's possible on the highway. Boldly designed and engineered tough, Anthem is born ready for whatever the road demands.

BUILT FOR YOUR BUSINESS.
Efficient in every sense of the word, Anthem saves on fuel and reduces maintenance costs while maximizing uptime—and your bottom line.

DESIGNED FOR THE DRIVER.
Anthem's cab design and driver environment are built around the way work gets done on the road, keeping drivers comfortable, safe and focused all day long.



We are Mack. This is our Anthem.

With bold design, tough engineering and a highly comfortable interior, the new Mack Anthem™ is built for your business and designed for drivers.

UX Text Elements

Titles and labels

Context of use:

- Provide a signpost to help users know where they are.
- Provide context to the user regarding purpose of page.
- Define the brand.
- Use it to group chunks of information (e.g., content sections, tasks, action categories).
- Provide structure to a page, making it easy to scan.

Problem:

- Need for structure, organization, and context.
- Need to engage the user and reinforce the brand.

Best practices for titles/solution:

- Text should be clear, descriptive, concise, engaging, conversational, and relevant.
- Because titles are a first point of contact for users, they should provide a great impression.
- Titles should align with the company's voice.
- Text should provide context in an unambiguous way.
- Serve as signposts to reassure users they are where they need to be to accomplish their goal.
- Font size and type should stand out and indicate hierarchy.

(Podmajersky 2019; Cooper 2014; Leibtag 2013)

UX Text Elements

Buttons and links

Context of use:

- When users need guidance to access app functionality.
- When users need to perform an action, navigate elsewhere in the app, or move to another screen to achieve a goal.
- When users need to know where to go to save information, select an image to view.

Problem:

- Need text to communicate available options to users and guides them to where they need to go to obtain additional information or make a selection among options.
- Need to engage users.
- Need to persuade users to purchase items or register for events.

Best practices for buttons/solution:

- Text should be clear, specific, concise, and familiar.
- Text should be legible.
- Calls-to-action buttons should be action-packed, start with a verb and create a sense of urgency.
- They should be context-specific and use first person.
- Buttons that are part of a menu or list should be easy to disambiguate and they usually start with a noun.

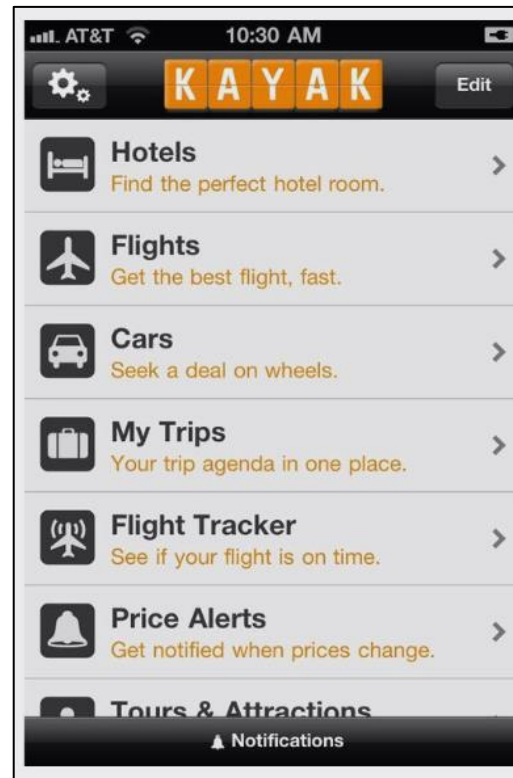
(Podmajersky 2019; Cooper 2014; Leibtag 2013)

Examples of UX text elements — titles, labels, buttons

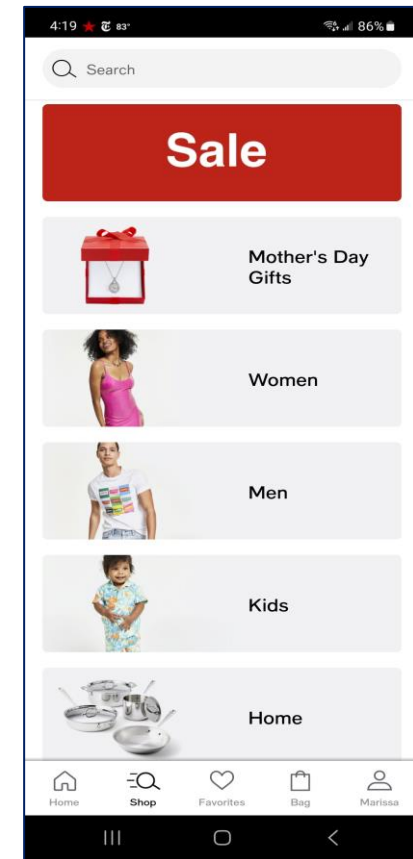
LOGO



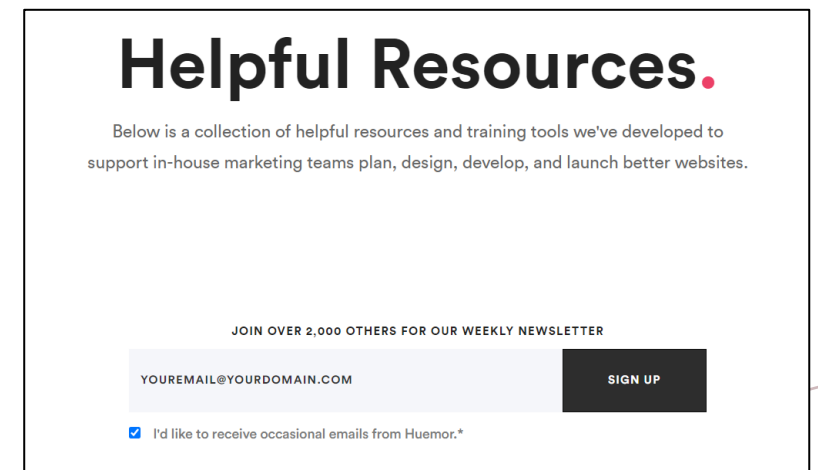
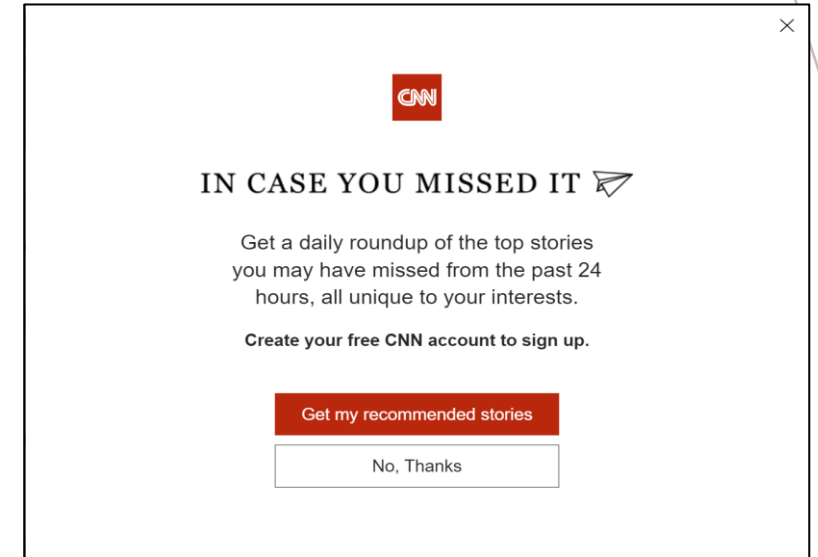
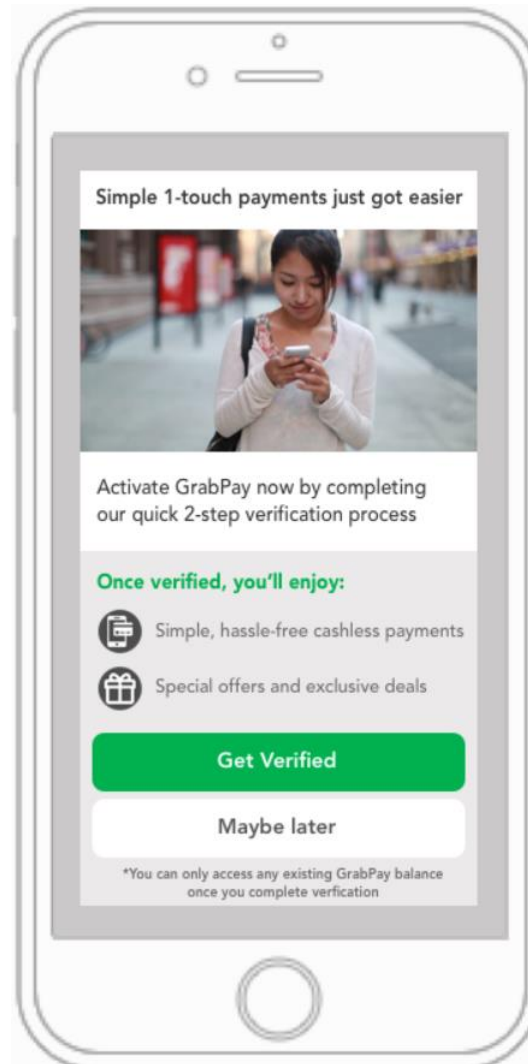
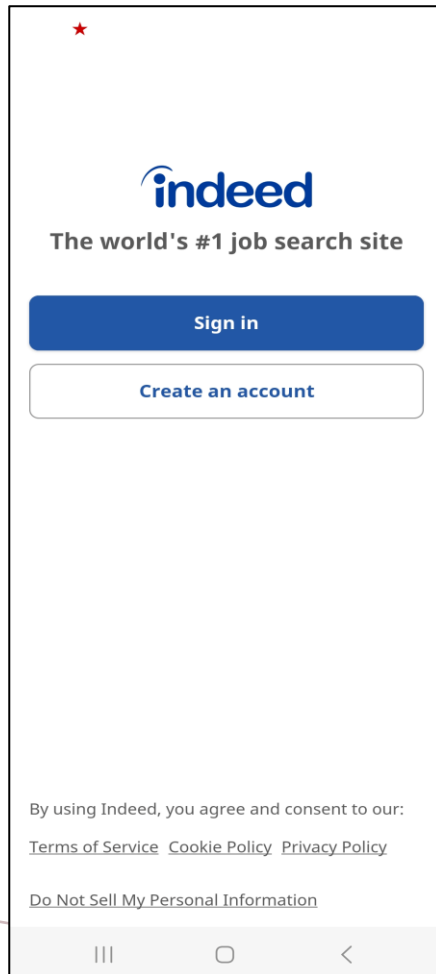
Kayak



Macy's



More examples of UX text elements — titles, labels, buttons



UX Text Elements

Error messages

Context of use:

- Need to explain a user or system error.
- Need to warn the user that something needs correction.

Problem:

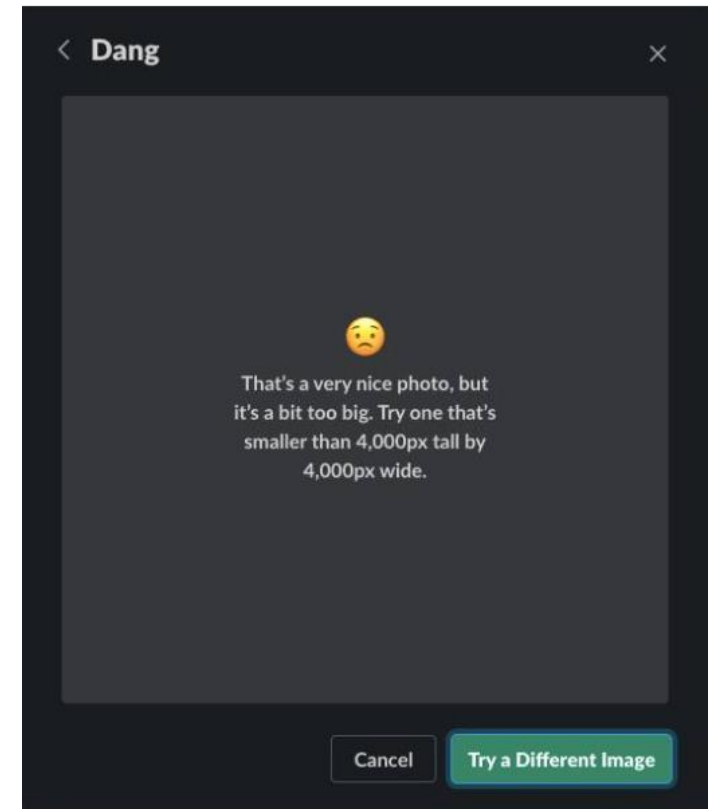
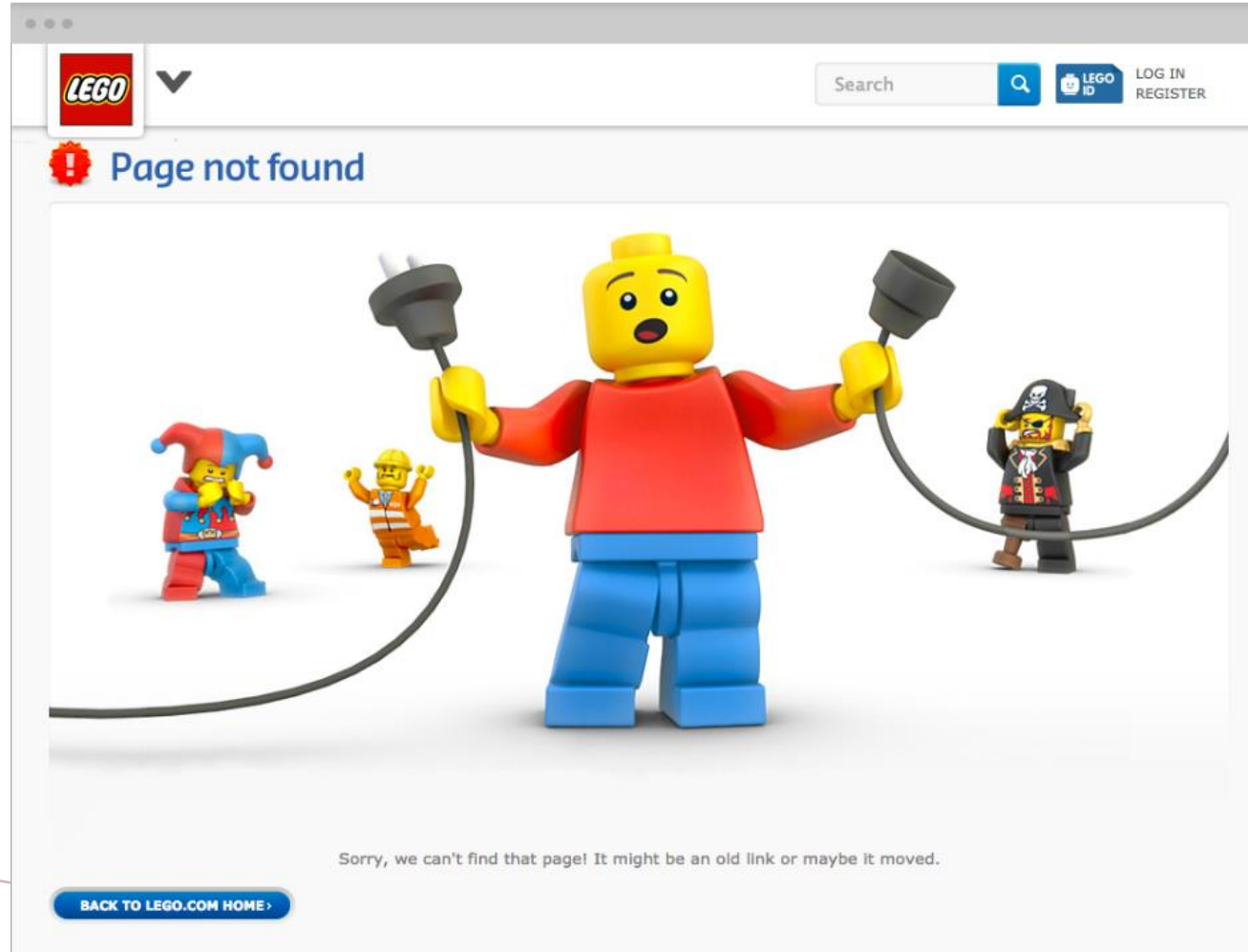
- User enters incorrect information.
- User's Internet connection is not working.
- Incorrect operation entered by user.

Best practices for error messages/solution:

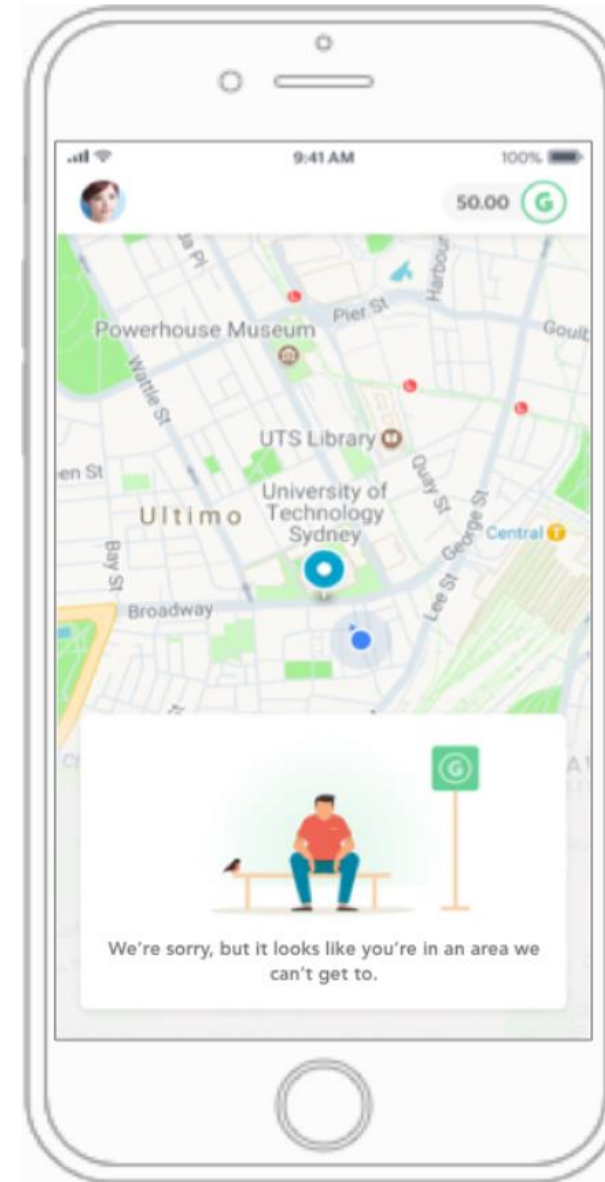
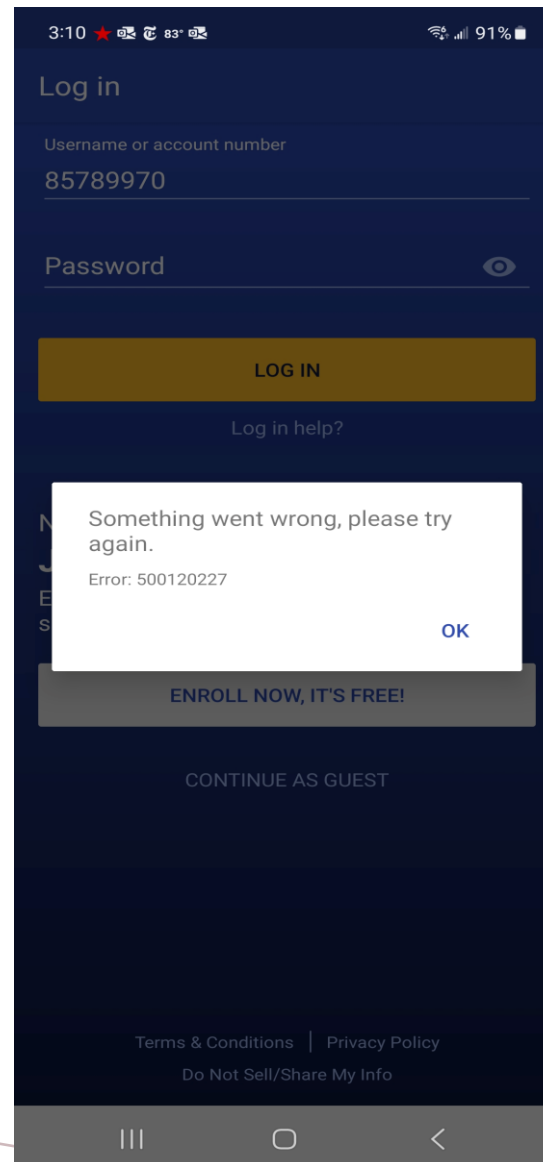
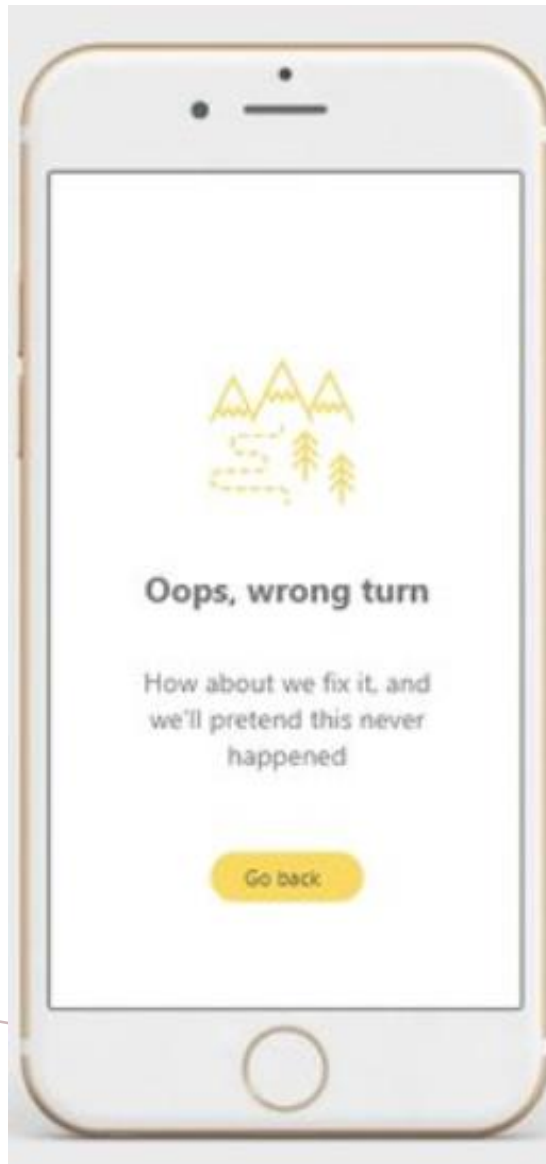
- We need to use an empathetic tone when an error occurs to validate the user's feelings.
- Customize the text to the actual error, so it's clear and specific. Avoid generic messages.
- Avoid using words that place blame; we want to maintain the users' trust.
- Give clear, positive instructions on how to correct the problem using conversational words.
- Present a solution and links to get out of the situation.

(Podmajersky 2019; Cooper 2014; Leibtag 2013; Lee 2012)

Examples of UX text elements — error messages

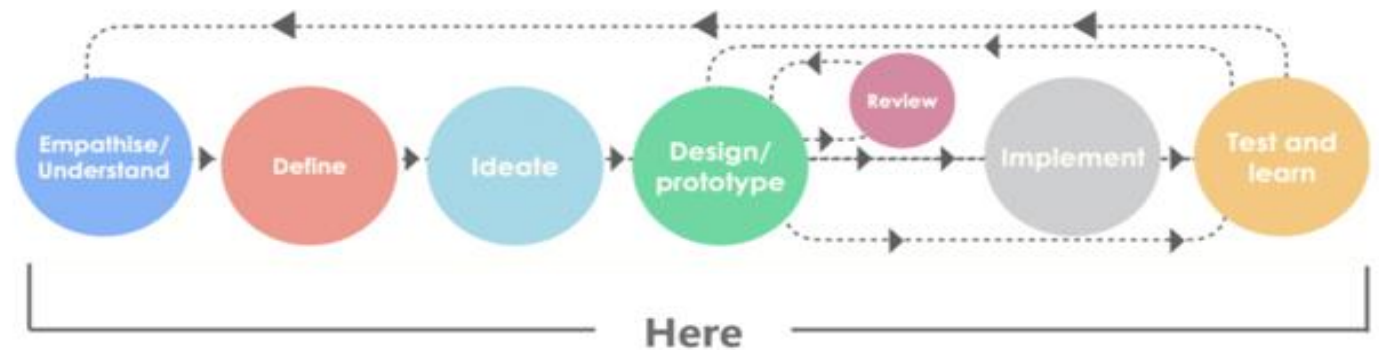


More examples of UX text elements — error messages

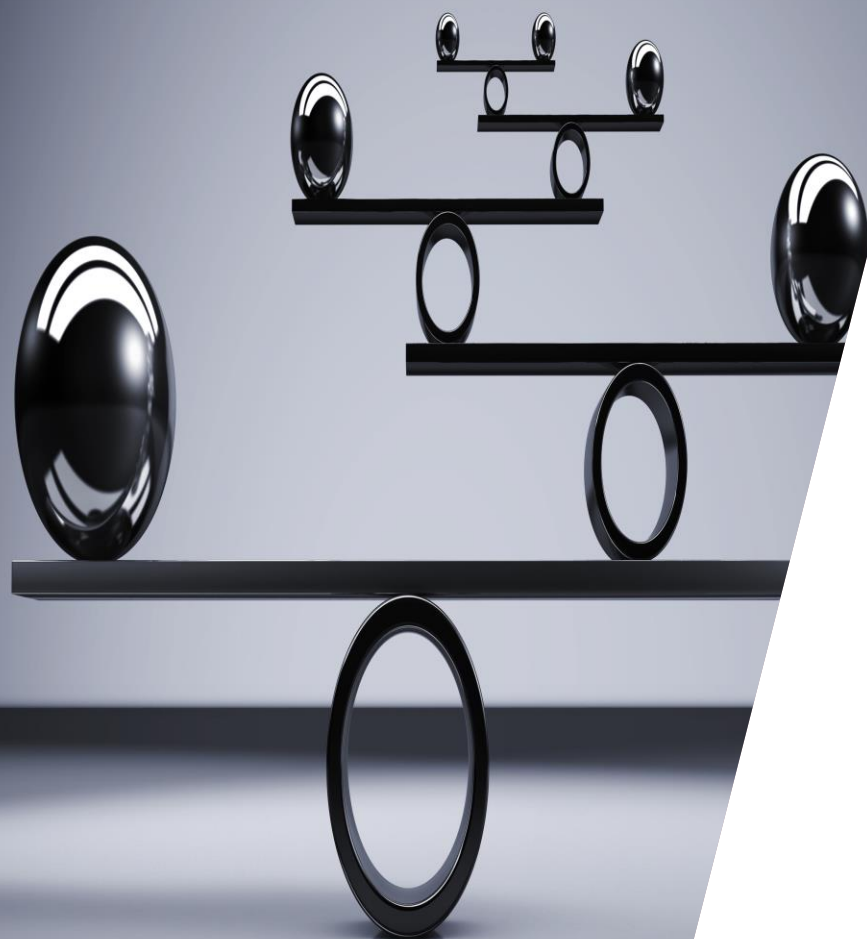


Takeaways — words matter

- UX writers must create compelling text that triggers emotions that resonate with users.
- Users' interaction with text in titles, buttons, labels, and error messages are part of and influence a user's experience.
- One tool UX writers use to ensure that voice is consistent throughout an experience is a style guide.



Okay so at what point in the process do I need a content strategist/UX writer?



Sources

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THANK YOU!