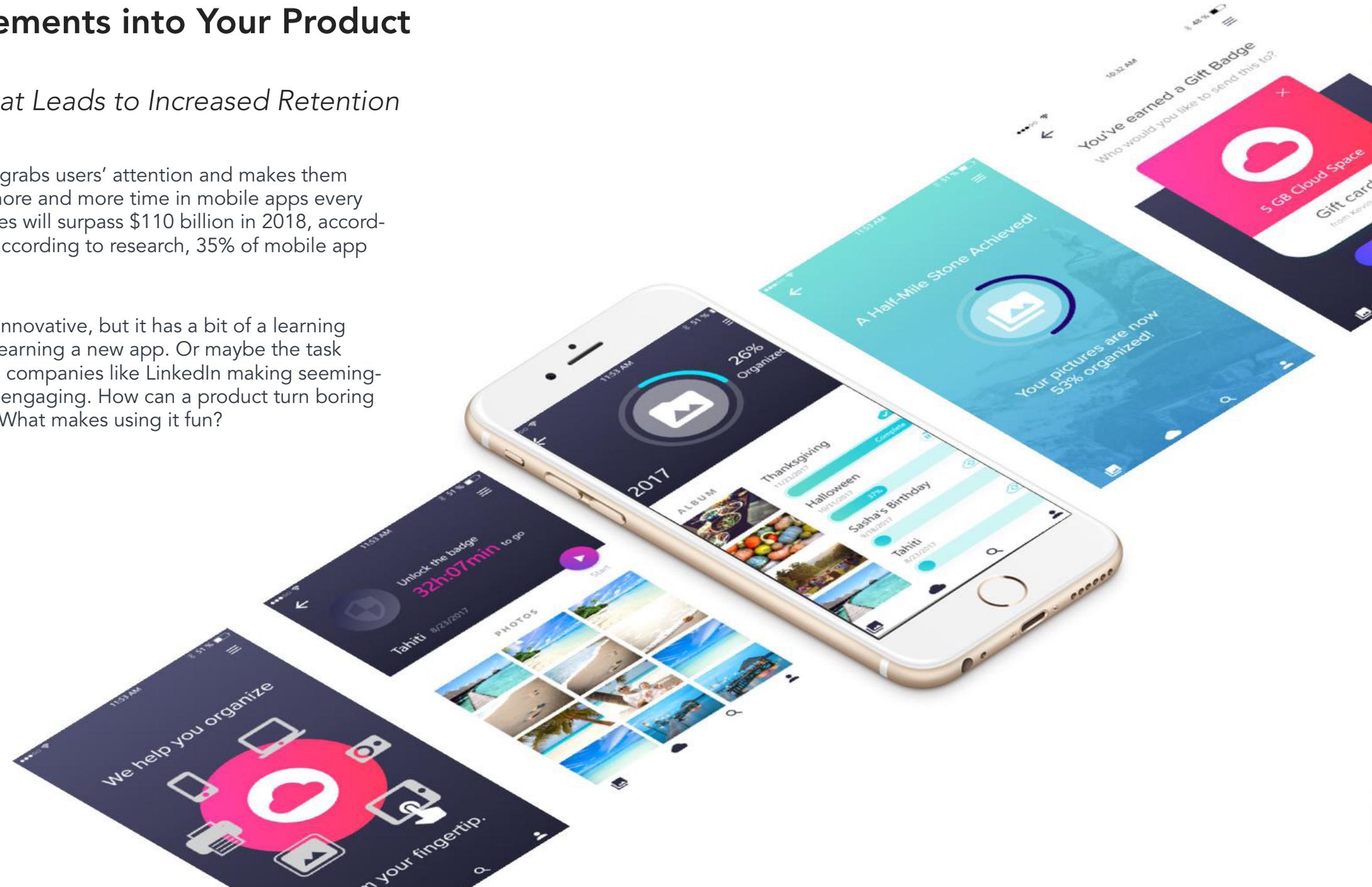


How to Implement Fun Elements into Your Product to Motivate Users

- A UX Product Design Strategy that Leads to Increased Retention

What does it take to create an app/product that grabs users' attention and makes them want to continually use it? Users are spending more and more time in mobile apps every year; Consumer spending on all mobile app stores will surpass \$110 billion in 2018, according to a new report from App Annie. However, according to research, 35% of mobile app engagements last less than a minute.

The reason for this varies. Maybe the product is innovative, but it has a bit of a learning curve and users don't want to spend extra time learning a new app. Or maybe the task itself is mundane and boring. However, there are companies like LinkedIn making seemingly dry business-related tasks much more fun and engaging. How can a product turn boring resume pages into an engaging social network? What makes using it fun?

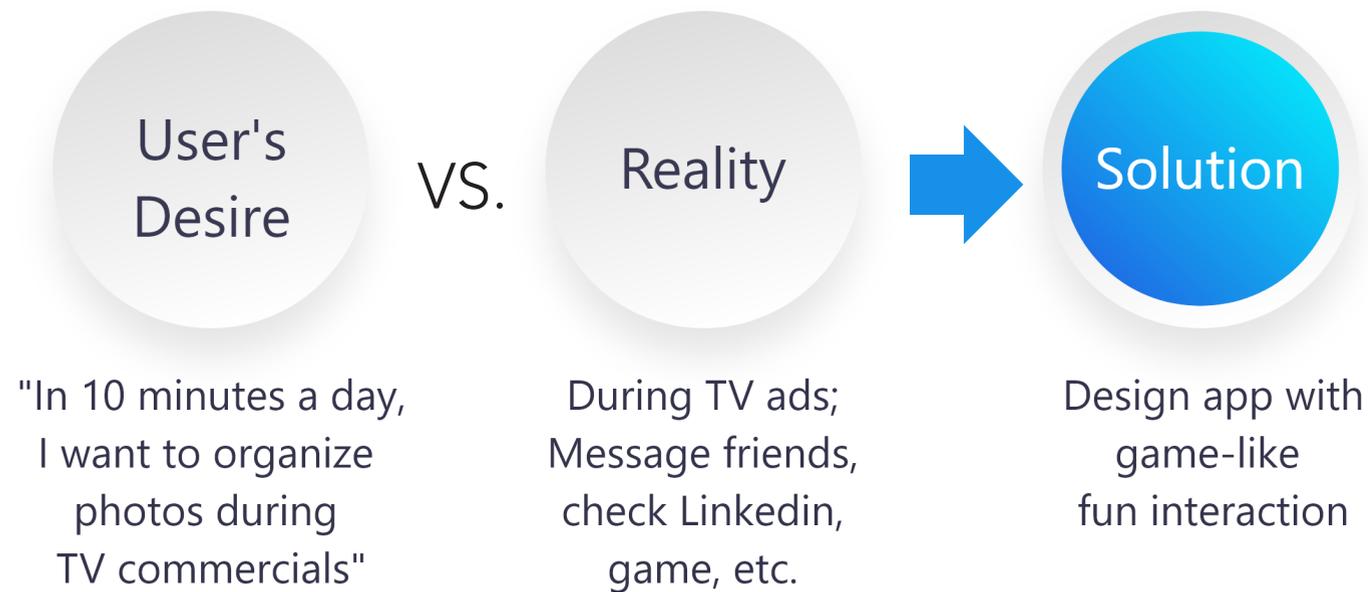


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1. We studied why people stop using products

There are a lot of tasks people feel like they have to do it, but they don't want to do. Distinguish first what our users 'want to do' and what they 'have to do.'

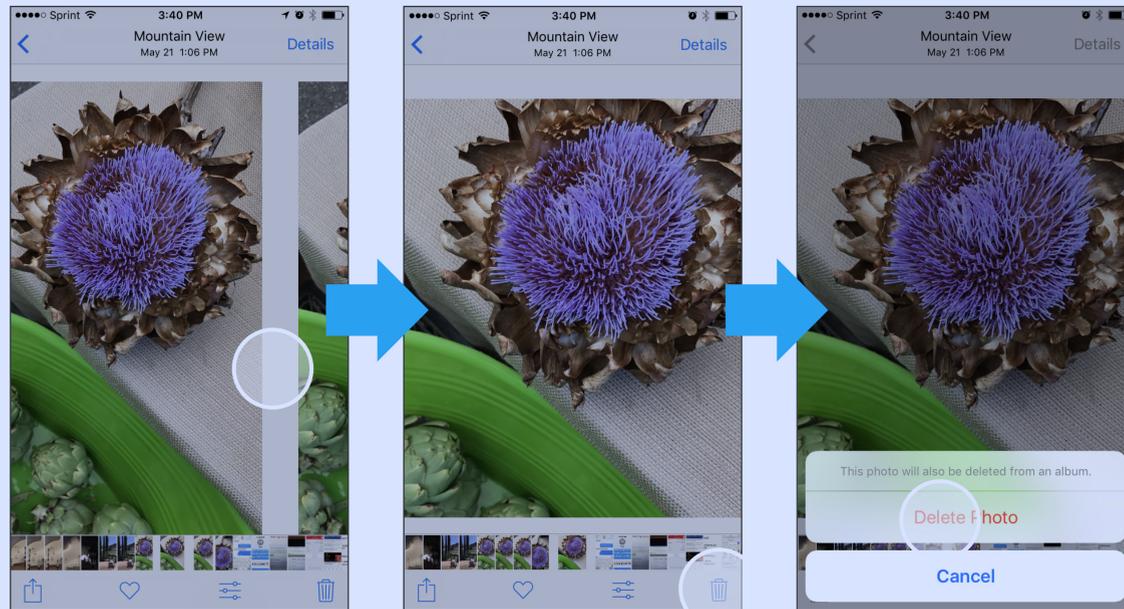
Digital Picture Organizing problems. If you're like most users, you probably have multiple devices with your picture folders, multiple accounts like Flickr, Dropbox, Facebook, cloud drives, etc. Your pictures are everywhere and are unorganized. You may occasionally find some photos you didn't know where in Google Photo or iCloud, and you usually ignore the problem. Some day you plan on organizing them, right? There is not yet one, centralized place to organize your photo collections.

Why is that?

The answer is simple...because it's not fun. Sorting pictures on your desktop feels like work. Unlike organizing your room, digital photo organization doesn't give you real-life results. People want feedback from others, but in the digital world you don't get that after organizing photos. No one sees or shares your results.

What does our user do instead of doing 'have-to-do-task' such as organizing files? How do they use their time? What makes using these apps fun? Find out what motivates user and apply it in our app.

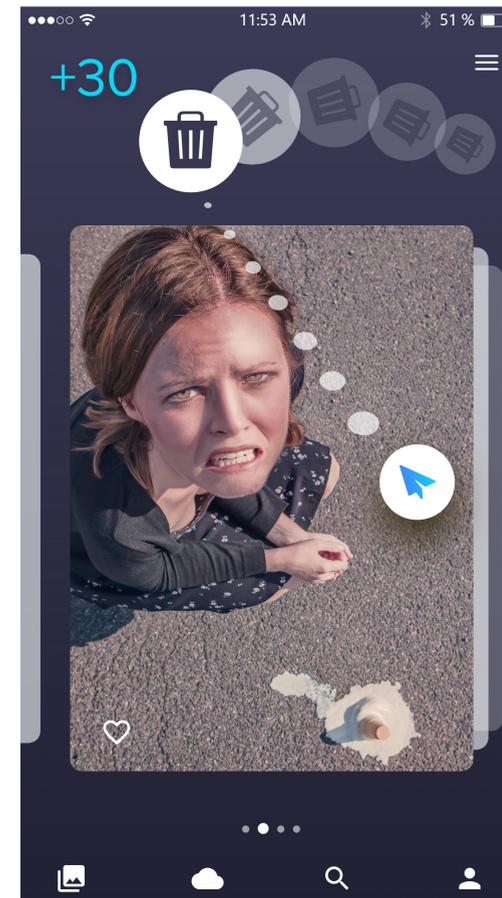
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Previous album solution

Most of the photo albums require several steps and clicks to delete.
Photo organizing needs mundane repeating actions.

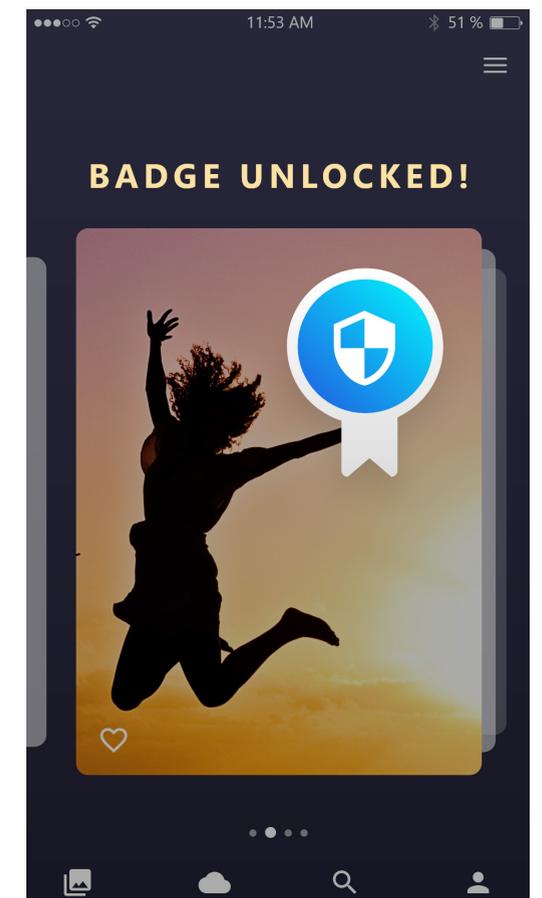
VS



New organizing solution

Delete photos with one shot.
Satisfying sound is another interactive element.

Aim and shoot a photo to the trash bin and the next photo comes up automatically.



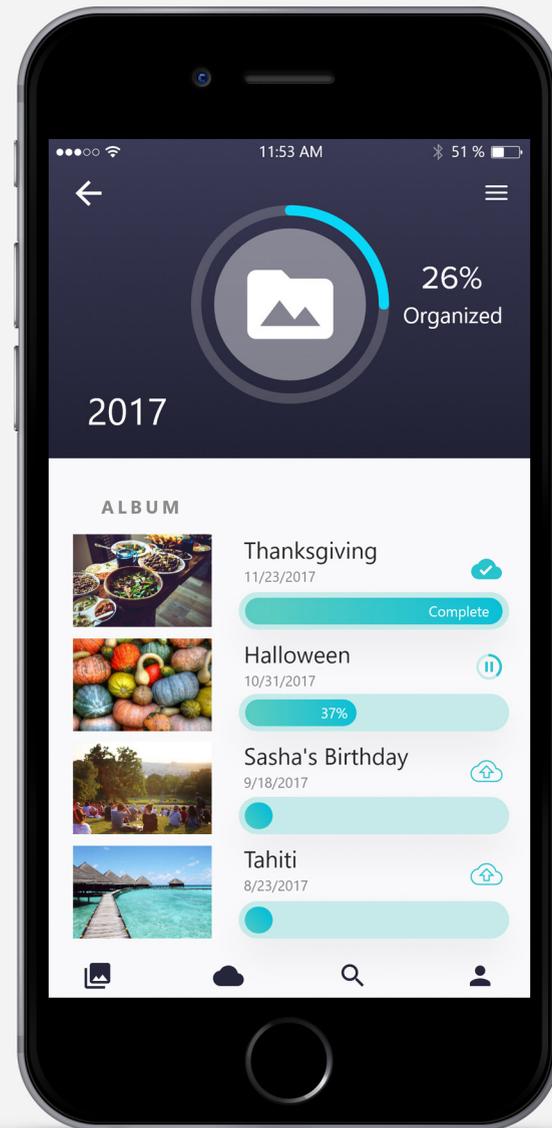
The user gets points or badges that they can use to buy more cloud space.

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2. We created a strategy to make users more easily engaged with our app/product

Benchmarking other industries can benefit you. The gaming industry, for example, has mastered motivation and engagement techniques for quite a while. Can we learn game-design elements and apply them to our non-game contexts, such as our photo organization app?

We gave user control and visual cue on uploading the pictures in the cloud. Automatic cloud update often confuses user. If the user feels 'confused' or 'bad about himself' by not understanding it, he stops using your app.



A progress bar makes the user want to finish the task. Also, our brains get excited when we feel we're getting better at a task.



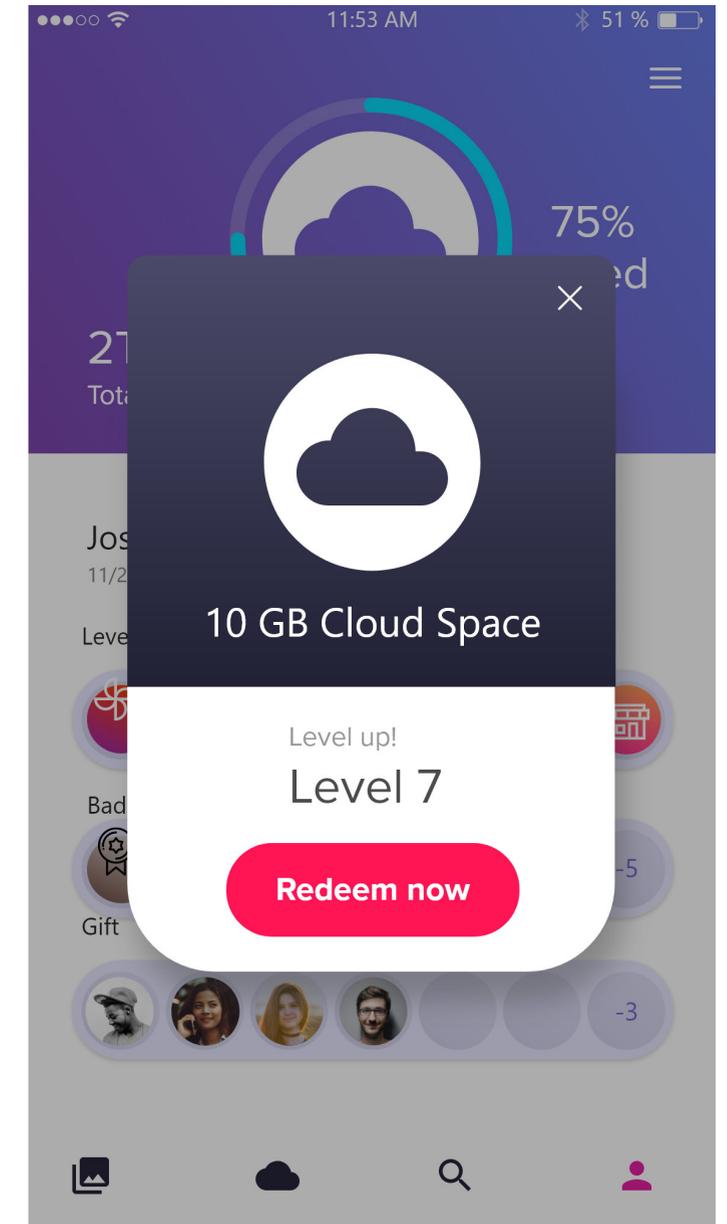
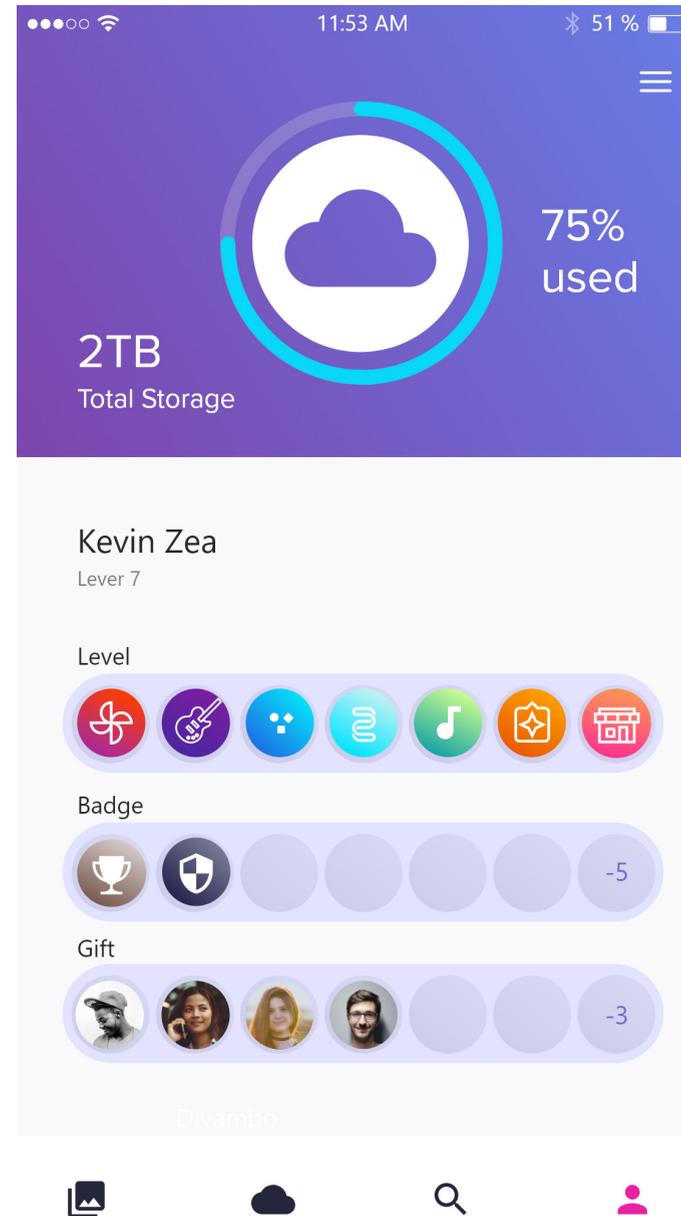
Sense of urgency gives them pressure to act: If the user finishes within the next 3 days, they get a new badge.

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3. Design small cheerleading elements

Once we got users' attention, we give them little challenges. We all like challenges we think we can achieve. Give users a sense of "I can win this one." Give them a little room to be creative with their strategy to win. Design our app so that after a few failures the user can achieve the goal. These achievements give our users a rush of dopamine, which makes them feel good and want to continue "playing."

Level up, rewards, a sense of urgency, a progress bar – they're all great elements to encourage users to do a small task. Well-designed elements like these can help with user engagement, entertainment, and retention.



Level up/reward: Create a potential badge space - the user has higher engagement to fill that space.

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4. Stay connected with the big goal of why they are doing it

The issue with these small cheerleading elements is that if you only use small elements they may lead to lack of sustain desirability. You need to present a bigger goal to achieve from the beginning, and remind users of it from time to time. They'll then feel a sense of accomplishment and empowerment when they achieve it.



From the beginning, make the user imagine the benefit. If you organize your photos through this app -- your phone, desktop, or cloud will update together.



Reminders from time-to-time: "A Half-Mile Stone Achieved! Your pictures are now 53% organized!" Use a picture/image to remind them of their achievement.

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5. Think about how your users like to be perceived by others

Word-of-mouth app recommendations are even more important these days. With trust in advertisements declining, trust in friends' advice and even on-line reviews is increasing.

Many companies try to make users invite their connections; however, users often hesitate because they don't want to be perceived as the one who constantly sends junk mail and invitations.

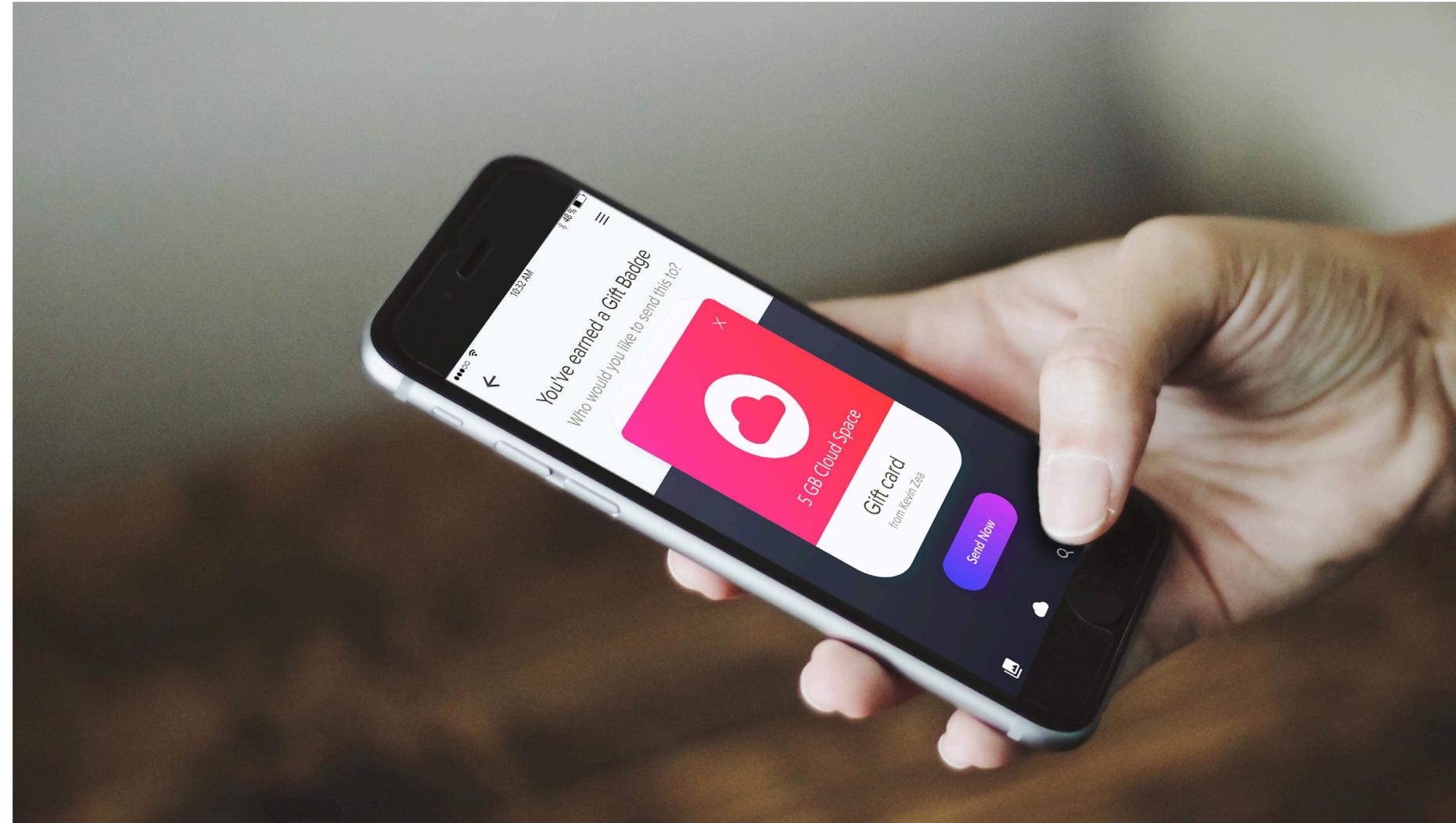
We designed a system to easily invite other users: Most users will recommend an app only if they feel like it will benefit friends and family. We designed a system that benefits both the user and the user's friends.



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We designed an experience that users want to share with others. In the end, it's not about product, it's about our users -- how they feel about themselves within their circle of friends and community, and their core drive. The product itself doesn't mean much to the user. How they feel while and after using the product matters the most.

We let them feel smarter and better by using our product. Let them be good at our product. They will introduce product when it makes them feel good to share it with their community. Sharing something useful with others empower users. When we design product, we considered how our users want to be perceived within their group because users could be the best advertisers of the product.



"You've earned your gifting badge. Would you like to send a 5 GB free cloud space to your friend?"

Make people feel they're giving something valuable to others. When people receive gifts, they're more likely to give back to others. Another reason to come back to the app overall, it helps increase user retention.