

Overview

Problem Statement

Sketching is a useful skill to have today. Most of us are required to use this skill at some point in our lives, for illustrating ideas, making art, adding a pause to monotonous text or to personalize a message. However, most of us neglect developing this skill. Even at school, only a few of us gain any acceptable level of proficiency in sketching, whereas our language skills are polished over the years. Being skilled at sketching improves ones ability to brainstorm, express ideas clearly to others and makes us aware of the details in the world around us: skills that may not be expected, but are often admired.

In a productivity focused world of today, there has been an explosion of tools that help you develop skills in short sessions. One such example is Duolingo, that helps you learn new languages. But there is no such tool to learn sketching.

Target Audience

My primary target audiences are busy individuals who desire to learn and improve their sketching skills, possibly to create a web-comic, storyboard a game concept or sketch together with their children. Their aim isn't to become artists, but be good enough to draw "precisely rough" (*Baskinger & Bardel, 2013, p. 20*) sketches that show a clear message but also invite feedback.

Target Solution

A platform (website and apps) that facilitates members to learn how to sketch in short bursts of time. Sketching can be done in app or any physical media, which can then be uploaded onto the platform to earn reputation points and feedback. To make it a habit, the user will be able to schedule short practice sessions of digital sketching that would work a lot like a buddha board (*"Buddha Board | Water Painting Art – Official Website"*). It will also provide ways for members to sketch collaboratively but in an asynchronous way, making the whole process engaging as well as social.

Features

1. Users can upload their sketch to collect reputation points and receive feedback from other members
2. Users can practice sketching digitally, where they quickly draw multiple iterations of a sketch in a short time
3. Users can take turns to play a game of Sketch Improv, where each player gets only one stroke per turn and they eventually end up making an interesting sketch
4. Users can teach other users by uploading videos or by providing their sketches as a source of reference for practice by other users

Critical Feature Focused On

The social aspect of earning reputation points and receiving feedback from other members is critical in making sketching a habit. It is useful and relevant to the whole user base, from busy individuals to those who spend a significant time practicing how to sketch. This feature is also platform agnostic, and can be implemented as a website.

Feature Approaches

Approach 1

Commitment -> In-app drawing -> Submission Reputation Points -> Feedback Reputation Points

1. Open the app
2. Commit to sketch at least 1 day in advance — potentially earn 20 points a day, the earlier you commit, the more points you get (up to 200 points)
3. On the committed date and time, start sketching in-app
4. If you fulfill the commitment, you get the points for commitment as well as submission points
5. If you don't fulfill the commitment, you lose the half the amount of points you would have earned
6. If users give you feedback, they earn reputation points based on how helpful they were to you
7. Close the app

Design Rationale

In-app drawing is convenient: one can sketch at any place and any time, provided they have their touchscreen device with them, preferably a tablet with a stylus. It is also easy to verify the authenticity of the sketch, as the app knows it was drawn at the committed time and assumed to be the owner of the device.

Reputation points have been successfully used in many apps to form habits. Prior commitment helps you to be serious about your goal to learn how to sketch. Earning additional points or losing points will make the users more aware of how they plan and time their sketching habits.

Approach 2

Sketch Buddy -> Upload a digital sketch or picture of physical sketch -> Submission Coupons Raffle -> Feedback Coupons Raffle

1. Your sketch buddy tells you his/her progress and reminds you to draw
2. You sketch on paper
3. Open the platform's website
4. Upload the sketch on the website
5. You enter a raffle to earn coupons on popular platforms
6. If users give you feedback, they enter a raffle to earn coupons on popular platforms, if they were helpful to you

7. Close the website
8. You will be notified if you won the raffle

Design Rationale

A sketch buddy is a great way to motivate habit formation as well as monitor progress. Ability to upload digital or physical sketches offers the user the flexibility to use their own tools and does not get in the way.

Raffle has the luck component which will possibly keep the users motivated and get benefit out of their sketching habit. This will lead to positive reinforcement.

Approach 3

Calendar Integration -> In-app drawing -> Submission: Unlock features -> Feedback: Unlock features

1. You get daily / weekly reminder to draw at a selected time
2. You open the app and start sketching
3. Once you are happy with the sketch, you can submit the sketch on the platform
4. You receive points that can be redeemed to unlock features like new tools, papers, videos, etc.
5. If users give you feedback, they earn points to unlock features, if they were helpful to you.
6. Close the app.

Design Rationale

Blocking time for sketching is a proven way to ensure you end up sketching. In-app drawing offers the convenience of sketching anytime, anywhere. Earning points to unlock features keeps the user excited, but could keep the social pressure at bay.

Final Decision

Now that I look at all 3 approaches together, a combination of the approaches makes a lot of sense: *calendar integration + sketch buddy -> In-app drawing or upload -> Submission reputation points -> Feedback: unlock features.*

I think calendar integration would work initially, while a sketch buddy could work when you have reached a certain skill level. A raffle might be a turn-off to some users and the disappointment of not winning the raffle could drive off users. Keeping the submission points separate from the feedback points would provide different motivation to these different actions.

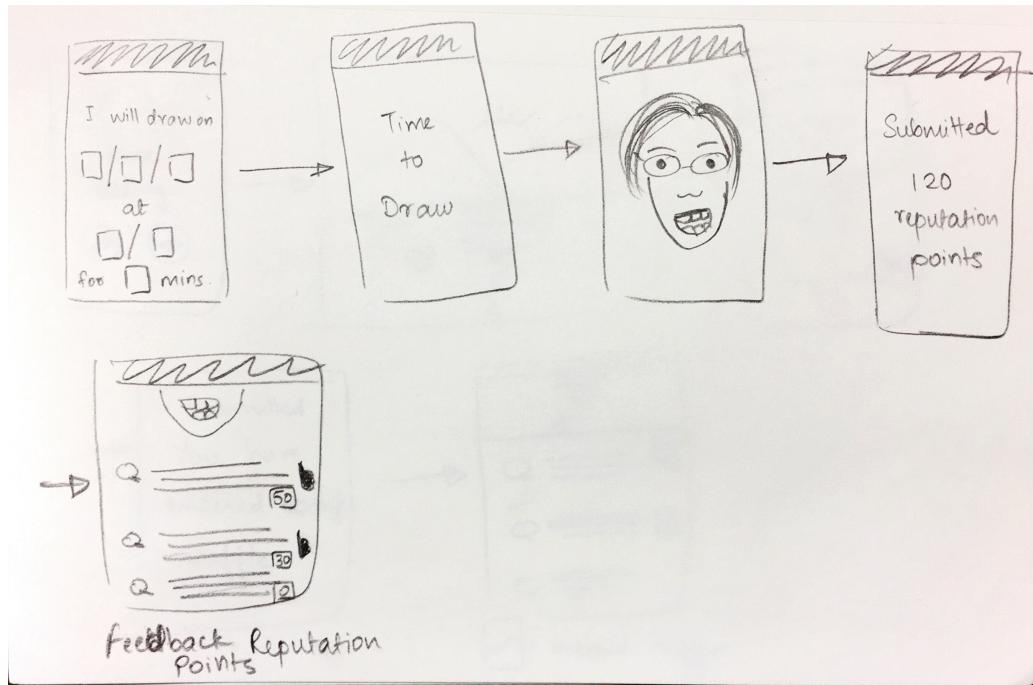
References

Baskinger, M., & Bardel, W. (2013). Drawing ideas: a designer's guide to refining, communicating, and selling your concepts. New York: Watson-Guptill Publications.

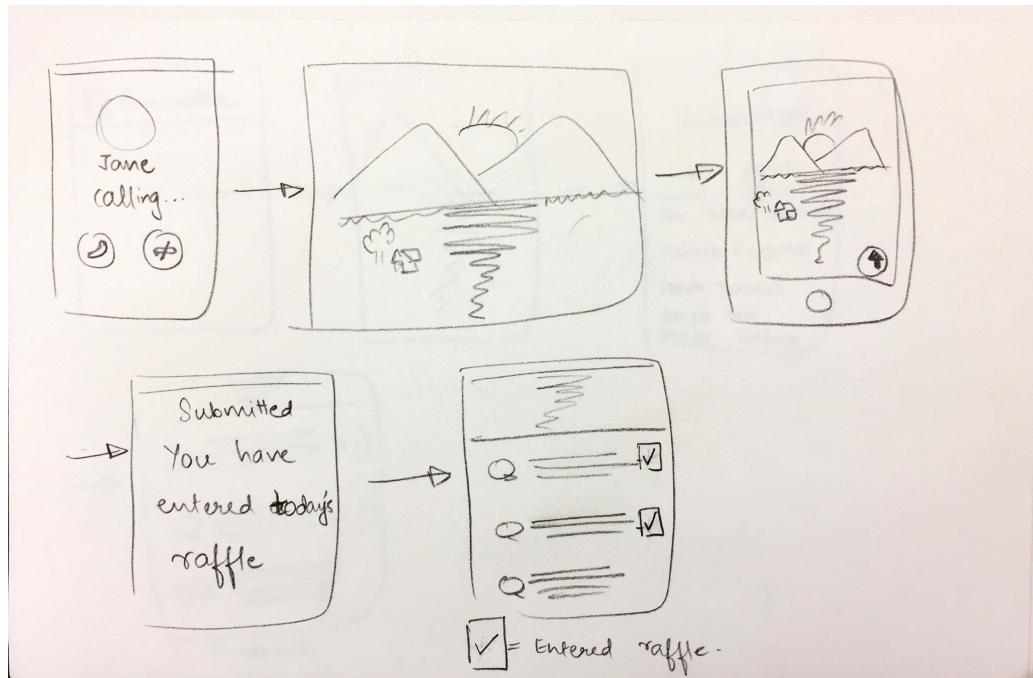
Buddha Board | Water Painting Art – Official Website. (n.d.). Retrieved March 16, 2017, from <http://www.buddhaboard.com/#theoriginalbuddhaboard>

Appendix — Sketches

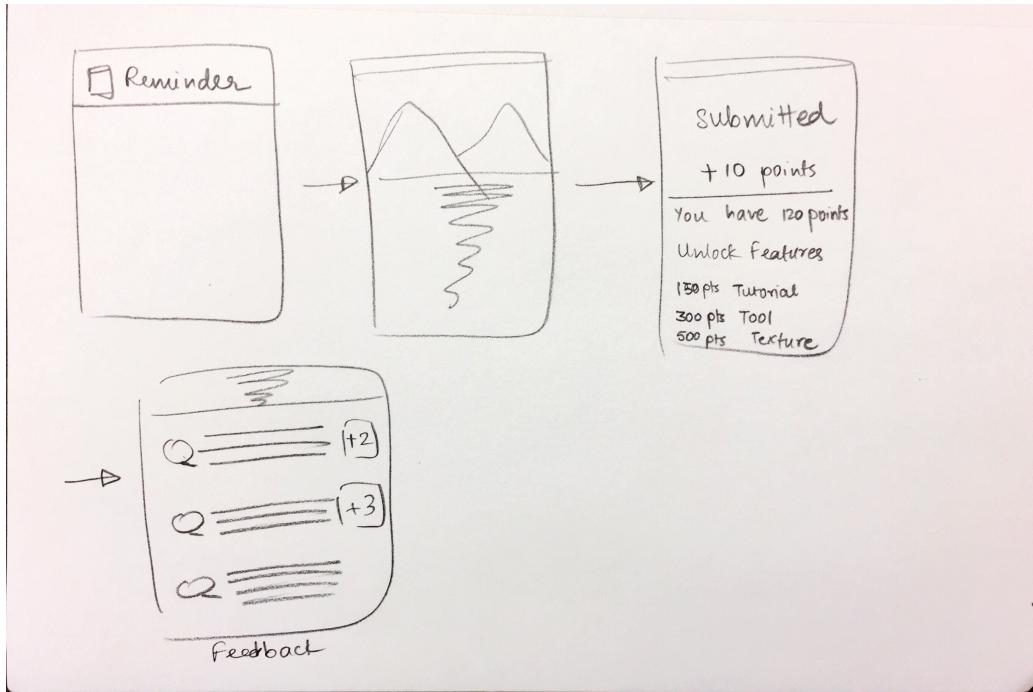
Approach 1



Approach 2



Approach 3



Appendix—QOC

Figure 1

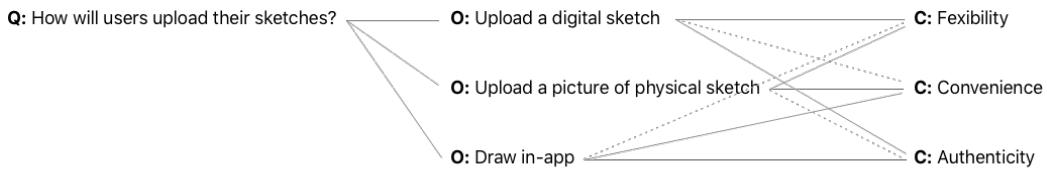


Figure 2

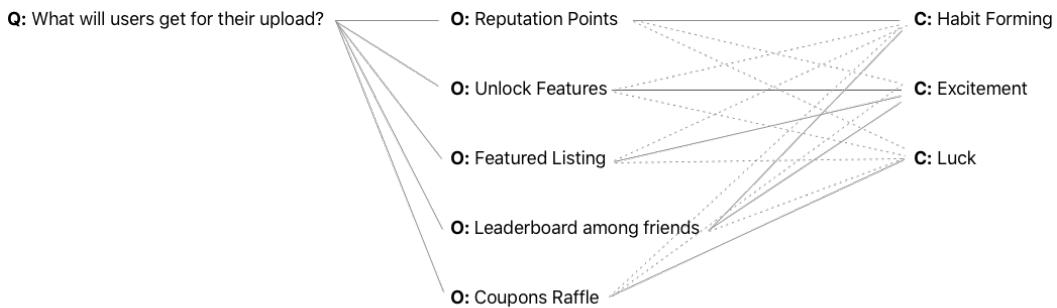


Figure 3

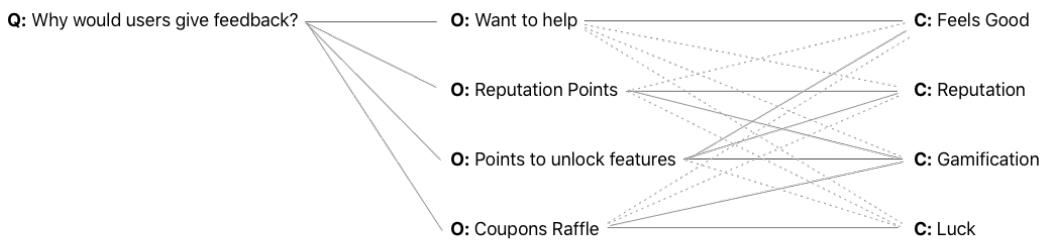


Figure 4

