

Lunch Money Buddy

Process Document

Adriana Cerrotti

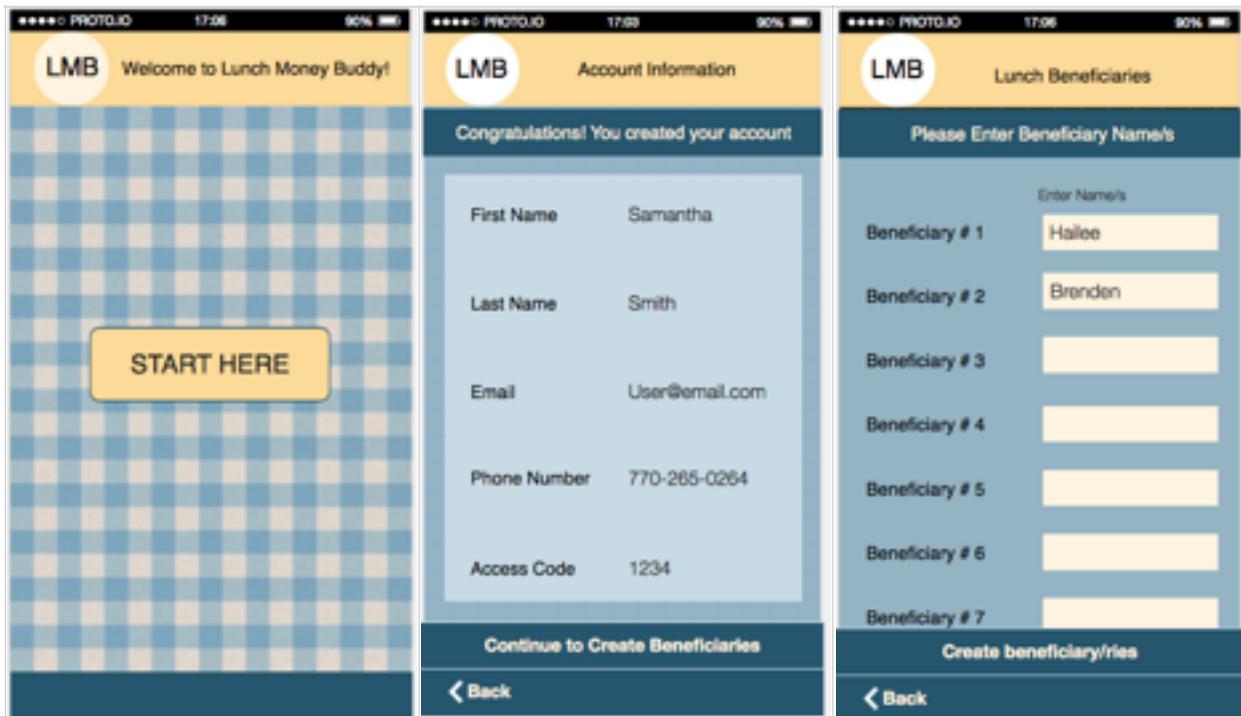
Thursday, June 23, 2016

Several patterns and standards influenced my design and guided me through the process of designing the *Lunch Money Buddy* (LMB) app. As a consequence, I was able to create a more efficient, usable, and easily learnable product. I pushed myself to think critically about my UI design, with the purpose of helping *LMB*'s users to enjoy a pleasant experience.

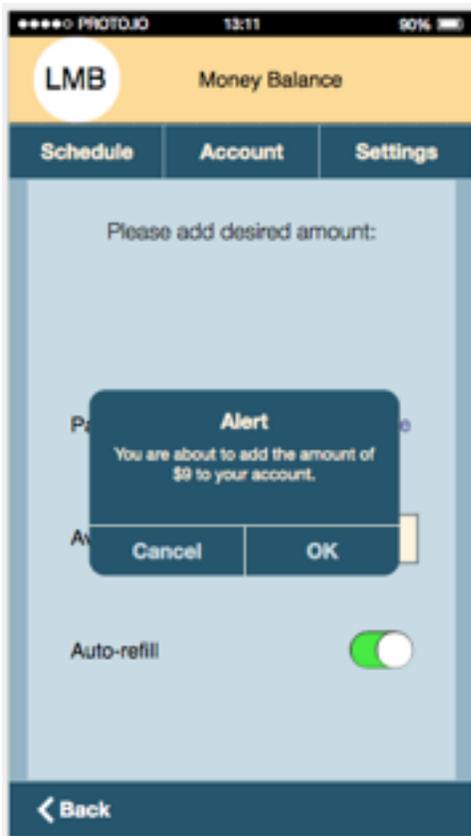
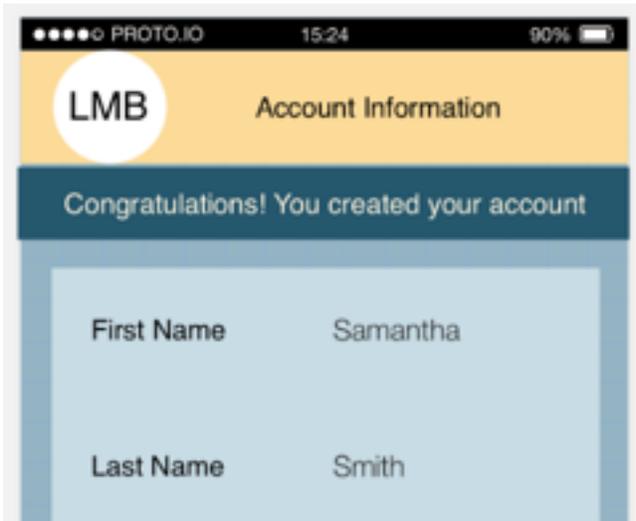
LMB was designed for parents to schedule lunches for their children by quickly accessing to a lunch calendar menu. Parents then could track kid's favorite school meals and receive alerts based on their preferences. I based my content organization and pattern decisions on the mentioned goals and the characteristics of my user personas, Henry, Jorge, and Samantha.

Before the user starts using the *LMB* app, she must open an account, create a beneficiary or beneficiaries (children that would make use of the meals selected by their parents), and fund her account. To design this specific segment of the navigation interaction, I followed the progressive disclosure solution. By fragmenting the information into independent sections, the user can attend to the tasks at hand, without the intervention of irrelevant information that would distract her, such as graphics, buttons, or other type of content. This is particularly important when users are attending to matters that involve personal information and money issues. Then, as I designed the app, I decided that my user should not be exposed to other options until she finished creating the account and the beneficiaries (the children that would enjoy the lunches).

Below, I illustrate the process by showing key screens within the progressive path I mentioned before. The screens offer only options that the user need, to accomplish the task, moving from one section to another obviously and explicitly. This way of restricting the options for my user makes it easier for her to concentrate on what is strictly necessary, reducing cognitive expenditure and disorientation, and creating an easier and perceptively “safer” experience as a consequence.



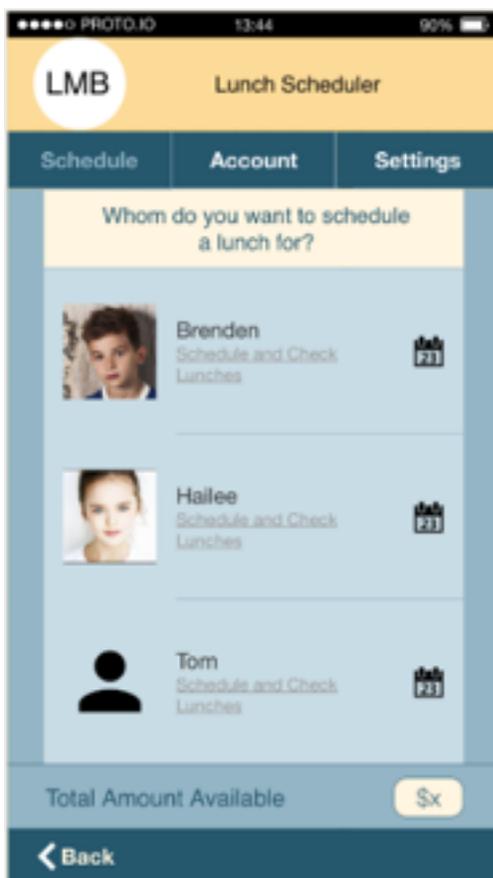
As the navigation progresses, I communicate with the user by using confirmation notes, to assure her that the tasks have been completed.



In addition to that, I offer a *Back* button. The *Back* button is consistently placed at the left down corner of the app throughout the whole navigation, to reduce user anxiety about making irreparable mistakes, and to make the user feel easy about the process.

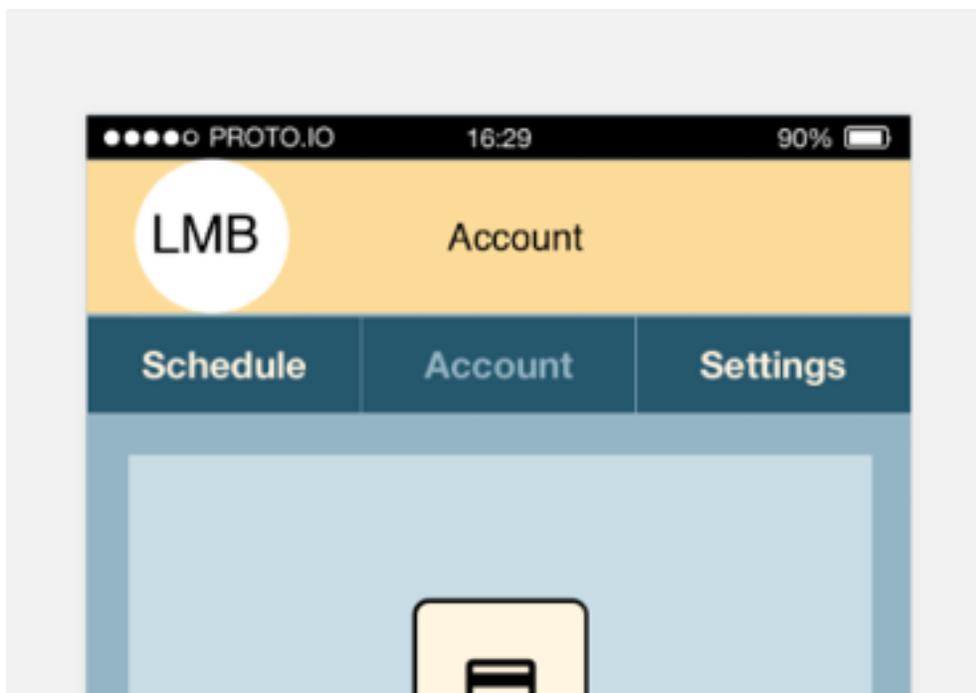
Once the user has created the account and the beneficiaries, she will enter the *Schedule* page. From here on, my design continues displaying a clear visual hierarchy. The first rectangle along the top of the page tells the user where she is. The center part of the screen tells the user what is inside and about. And at the bottom, the app provides other paths the user can take (the *Back* button and occasional task specific buttons).

The *Schedule* page is the main page at where the user will always arrive, every time she opens the app. From this point on, I organize the content using navigation tabs (*Schedule*, *Account* and *Settings*), and task specific buttons when necessary.



I determined that this solution was the best for the app because the content has three clearly defined sections that do not depend on each other. I placed the three tags, *Schedule*, *Account* and *Settings*, along the top-level navigation bar. One of the reasons I chose this solution was because one of my personas, Henry, is a novice user. Tags are common. Then, it is likely that my persona is familiar with this particular pattern and knows how to use the tags. In addition to that, tabs provide a clean and free of clutter Interface look. This will also help my personas to stay easily oriented. Some of the tabs in my app take the user to further content.

The three tabs are consistently displayed in the same place within the screens. The consistency of my design allows the user to operate the app in the same fashion from any of the app's screens, by easily moving from one category to another when necessary. As shown in the previous image, when the user selected a tab, this one is highlighted, to distinguish it from the other two unselected tags. This helps the user know where she is and helps her to decide where to go.



I used clear, short, and familiar names for each tag, that would describe the actions and content to the user. The *Schedule* is the section where the user starts the process to scheduling lunches. The *Account* section offers everything the user needs referent to her account. And the *Settings* serves as a place where to set the alerts the user might receive when she favors a menu. At first glance, the name Alerts might sound more appropriate to the case. However, the name Settings will allow me, in the future, to add further settings without disrupting the user model already implemented and learned.

The choices I made prioritized usability and learnability. Looks and fancy features became secondary elements to the design of the *LMB* app. The purpose was to design an app that would fit the personas' needs and deliver a pleasant user experience. My decisions about what patterns and models would be appropriate for such a design were based on this goal. Nevertheless, through iterative design and testing, it will be possible to refine and implement changes to the design, as needed, in order to improve the app.

Link to the Prototype: <https://adrianacerrotti.proto.io/share/?id=97415520-a5e7-4da4-a41c-d76c44e9cd40&v=7>