



SYSTEM NAV



Overview

A high-level interaction concept to push the boundaries of the 10 foot experience and align with changing user behaviors.

The Team The core project team consisted of a Producer, a Design Director, an Associate Design Director, and up to five designers at any given time (myself included).

My Role As one of the designers on the project for its duration, I was completely involved in all phases of the project. The final model is an evolution of two of the concepts I designed.

Deliverables Concept Generation, Wireframes, Prototypes

Timeframe June – October 2017



The Problem

How can we craft a fluid, frictionless 10 foot experience that caters to gamers and accommodates new user behaviors on the PlayStation console?

CONSIDERATIONS

More Than Playing Games

In recent years, media streaming has greatly increased, and users are watching TV shows and movies on their console more than ever.

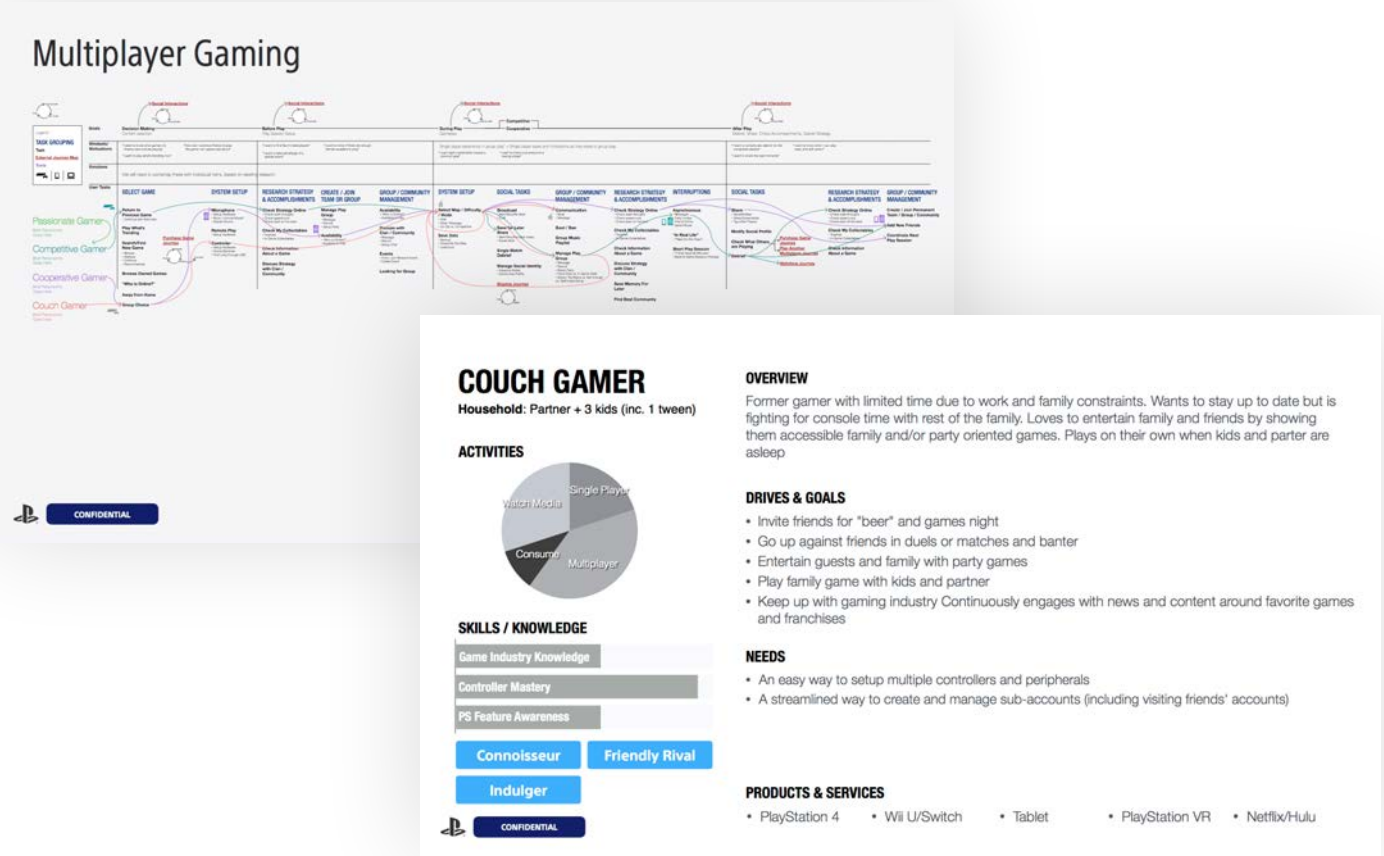
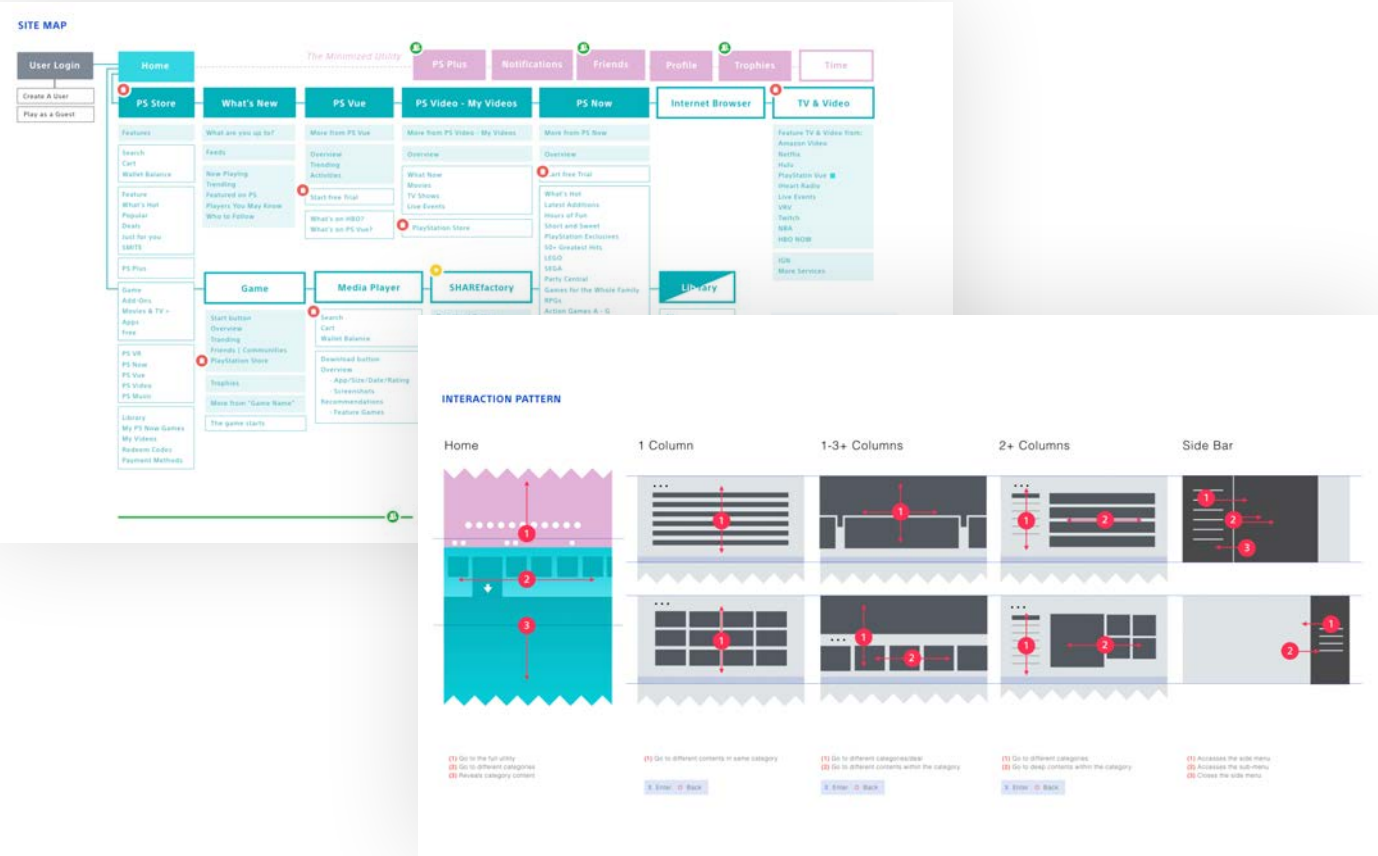
Simplify Navigation Patterns

Because PlayStation users range in tech-savviness and might use a remote instead of the DualShock 4 controller, navigation must be possible with four-way directional control, select, and back.

Learning from Current Users

Some aspects of the current PlayStation interface receive low engagement, providing insight into what might not work in the future.

What We Were Provided



First Impression	Discoverability	Learnability
Ease of Use	Relevancy	Context
Timeliness	Feedback	Immediacy
Layered Experience	Control	Personalization
Holistic Experience	Serendipity	Organized
Voice + Personality	Safe + Secure	Accessible

Current Console Language

Basic interaction patterns, layout templates, and a detailed console architecture for the current platform

User Personas & Journeys

Nine key personas and the common tasks they complete, ranging from multiplayer gaming to watching media

UX Themes

A list of high level ideas that might drive the new interaction model

Our Process

Our Plan

Because the project brief from Sony was very broad, we started out with a rough idea of how we would get from our initial brainstorming to the final deliverable that we adapted over the course of the project.



Brainstorming

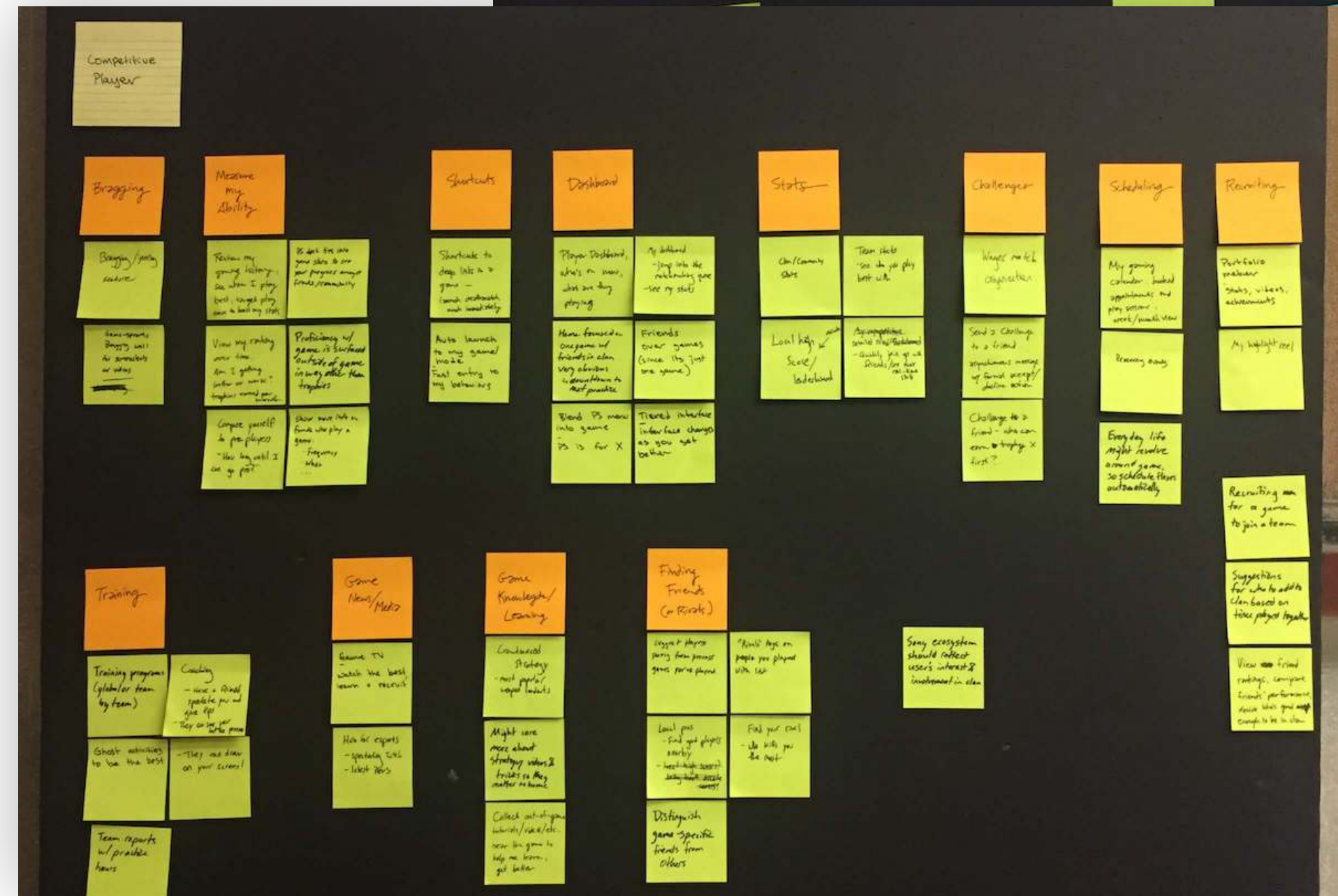
Idea Generation

Our goal for brainstorming was to identify overarching opportunities that we could leverage to generate successful models.

The current architecture, user personas, and UX themes served as the prompts for our brainstorming sessions.

For the first few days of brainstorms, the whole team contributed in seven minute sessions followed by group discussion.

Due to other project needs, one other designer and I were left to do the rest of the brainstorming ourselves. We weren't able to come up with as many ideas alone, so we worked together, riffing off each other's ideas.



Brainstorming

Common Threads

After we generated ideas across all of the prompts, this same designer and I found ideas that had come up multiple times within each brainstormed area.

We wrote statements to encapsulate the common thread and surfaced the most compelling ideas that supported it.

Shortcuts to Content

Make it easier to navigate directly to a specific game mode or media content.

- Directly surface the multiplayer queue for the TDM Call of Duty game mode
- Link directly to the new season of House of Cards on Netflix's app

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Building Relationships

Find new people you'll like, and connect with your current ones more often.

- Suggest new friends because you have crossed paths and played well together
- Encourage you to play games with someone on your friend list instead of with strangers

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Game Immersion

All aspects of the interface should help you stay engaged with your games.

- What's left to do in each game
- Friends are actively playing them
- Live streams and game clips
- Access to DLC

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Quantified Self

Track your behavior, providing statistics about your usage and offering more relevant suggestions.

- Number of hours spent playing RPGs, watching TV shows, etc.
- Show how you stack up against the pros
- Local high scores across users on the same console

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Discovery

Find new games / media / friends based on your changing interests.

- You finished watching the Lego Batman movie, now play the game
- Your friends are all playing this game, so you should check it out
- You've crossed paths with this person a few times. Become friends?

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Content / Function Clusters

Group content and functions because they accomplish a similar goal.

- Group your game with a party of friends playing it to encourage you to join them
- All of your last shows watched are grouped, regardless of the service you used to watch

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Brainstorming

Opportunities

Our set of fifteen common threads helped to inform a set of overarching opportunities, which we used to generate more concepts and validate our interaction models.

Extended Universe

How can we collect and present all of the activities and media that surround a game?

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Welcome Back

How can we make coming back to Playstation feel fresh, timely, and relevant?

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Participant Awareness

How can we leverage what we know about you and those around you?

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Content Awareness

How does our understanding of the player's content improve their Playstation experience?

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Modes

How can we customize the UI to suit different use-cases or modes?

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Other Channels

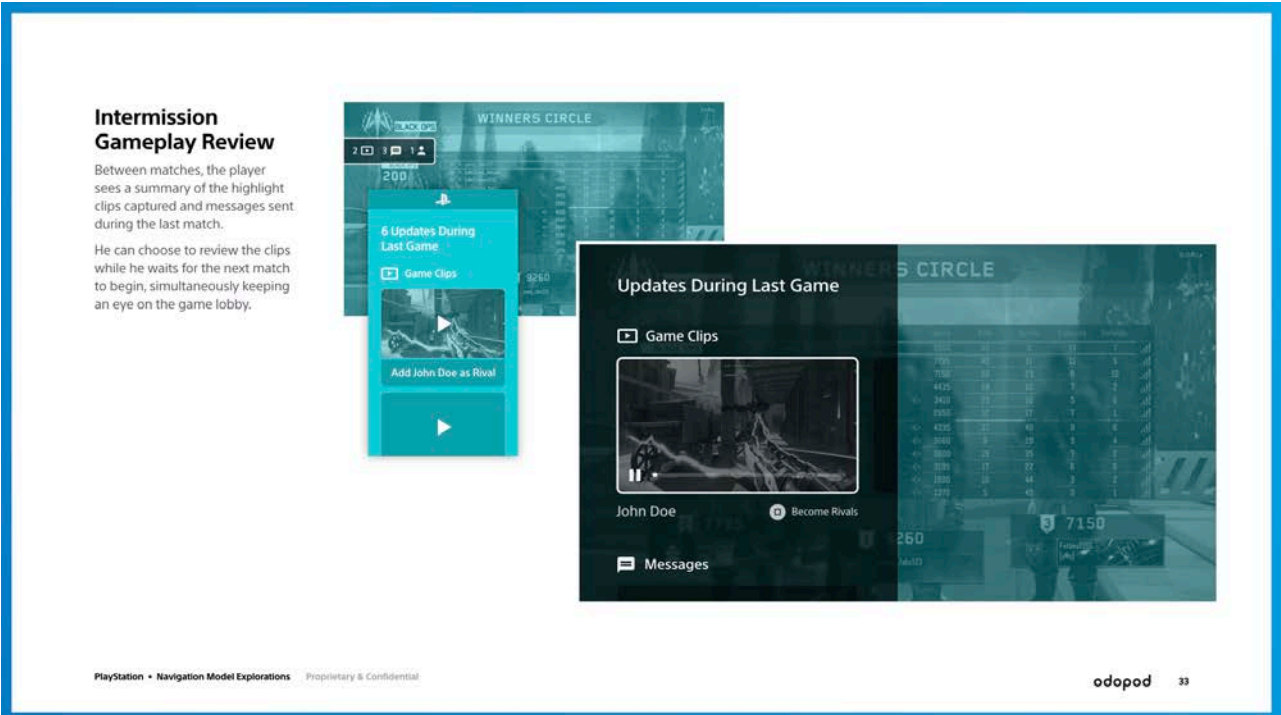
How can we use other channels (smartphone, SNS, etc.) to extend the Playstation experience?

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Concept Illustrations

We mocked up the most promising individual sticky notes that came out of the brainstorm as well as some new ideas that were sparked by the common threads and opportunity areas.

When reviewing with Sony, we printed the designs and went through an exercise to mark the best ideas together.



Model Explorations

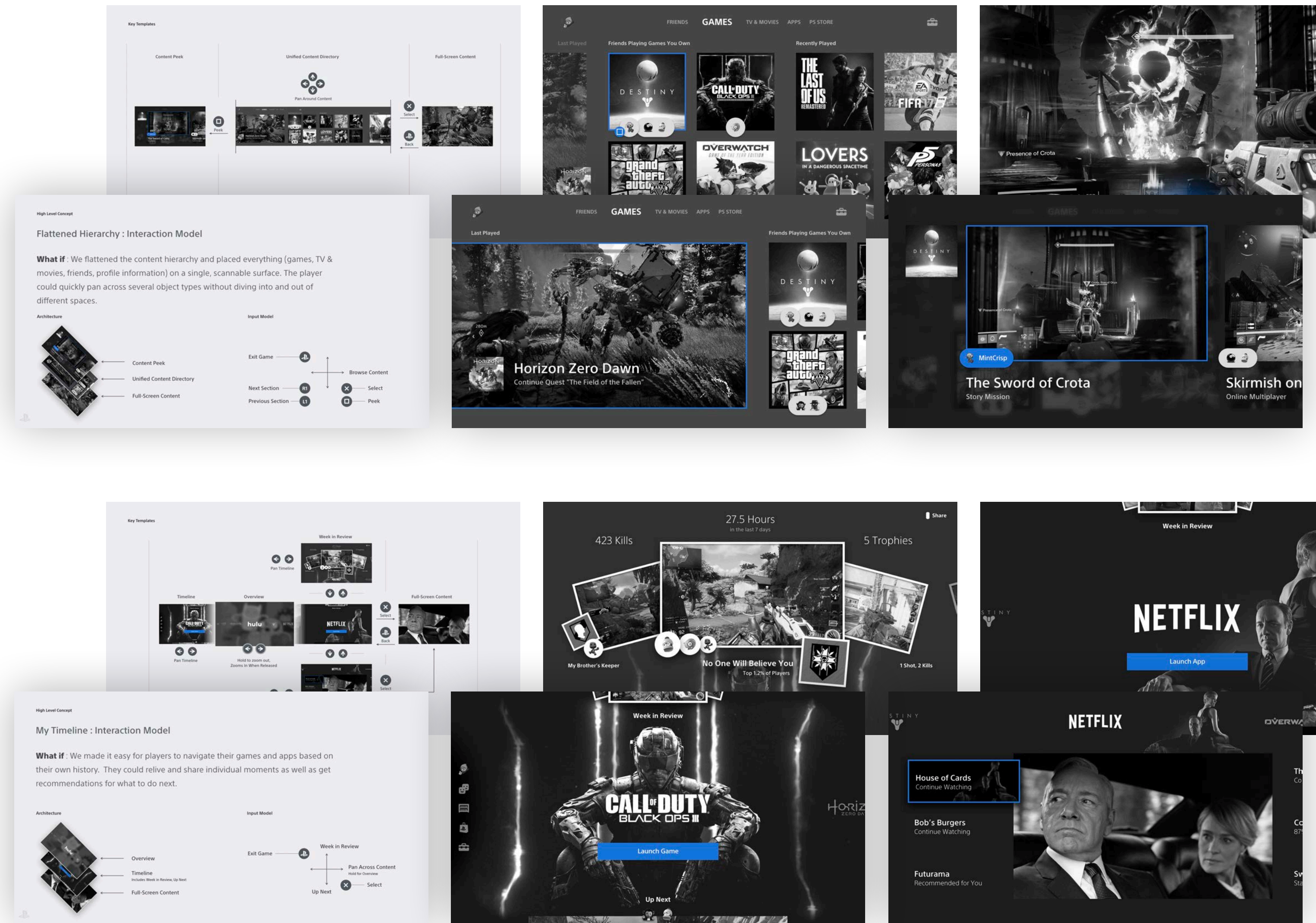
Many Broad Models

We developed multiple concepts in tandem, incorporating our favorite ideas from the previous round of illustrations.

After an initial review of four models by a larger client team in Tokyo, we generated six more models, bringing us to a total of ten.

Because more designers had joined the project, we were each able to flesh out two models as we saw fit.

Similar to during the Concept Illustrations phase, we printed our designs to share with Sony and highlighted the best parts of each model that were worth pursuing.



Model Explorations

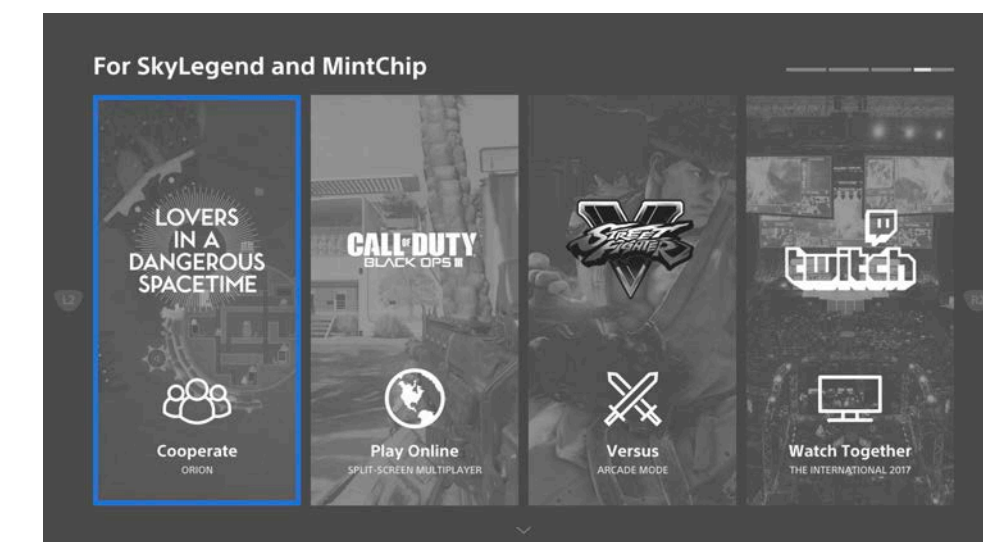
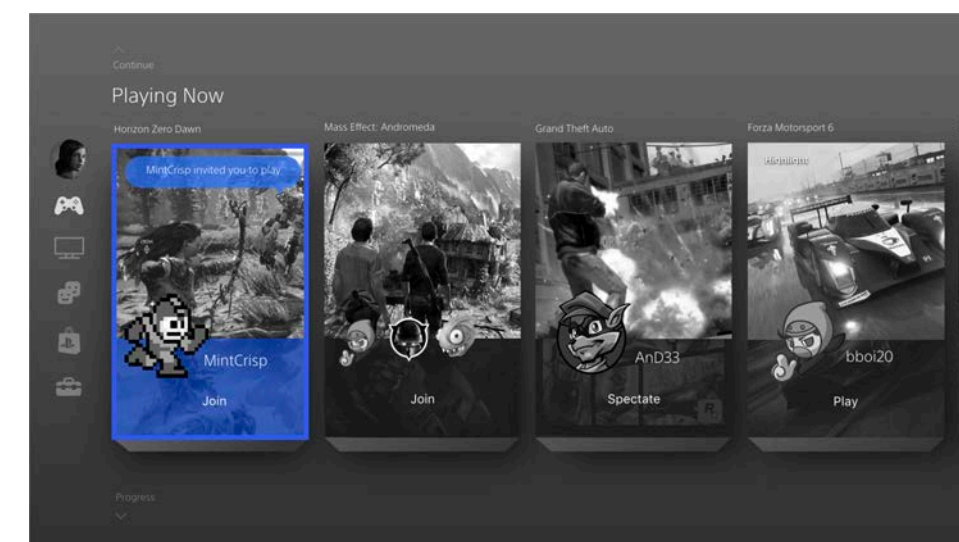
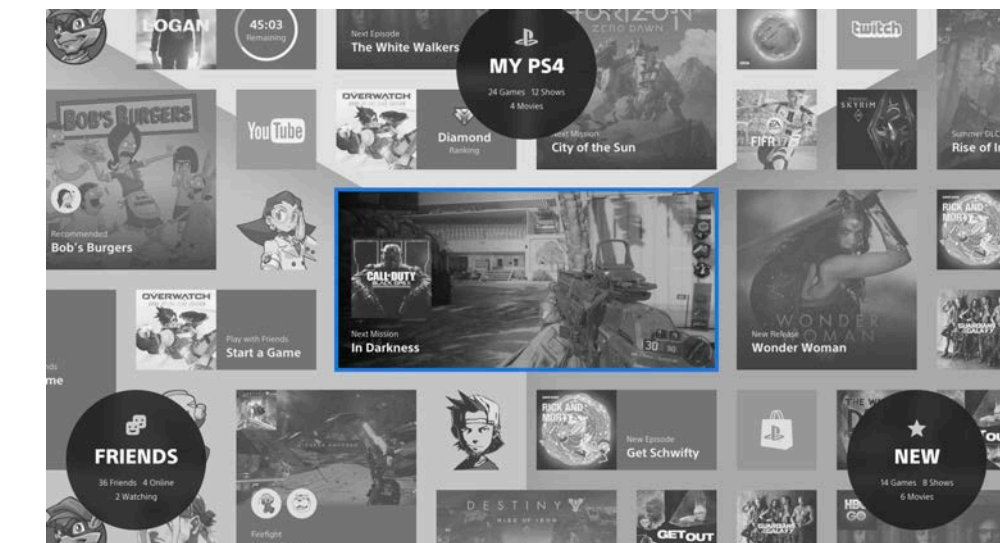
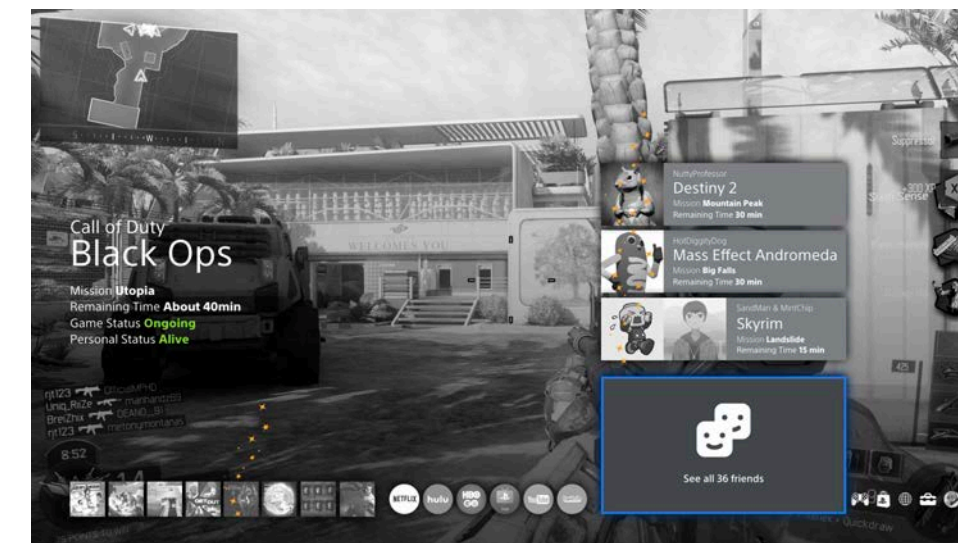
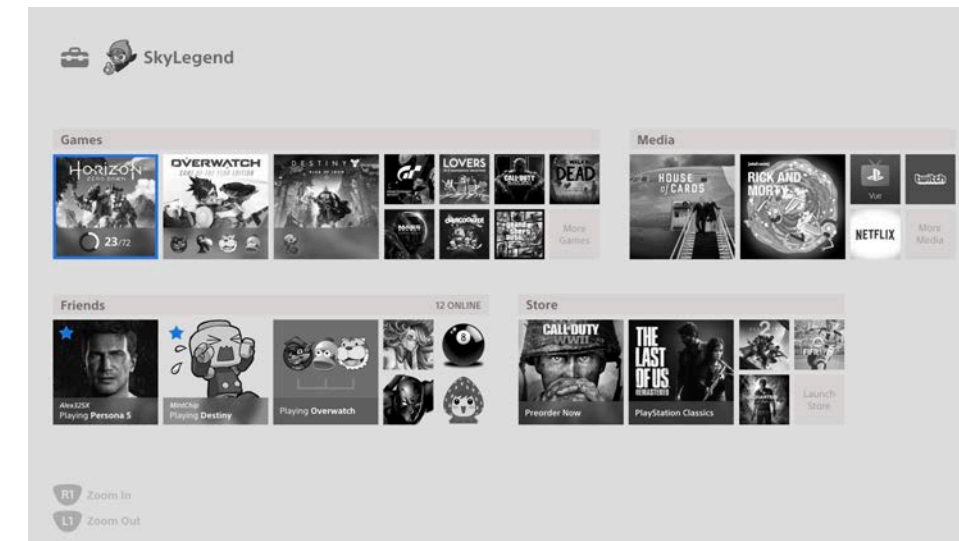
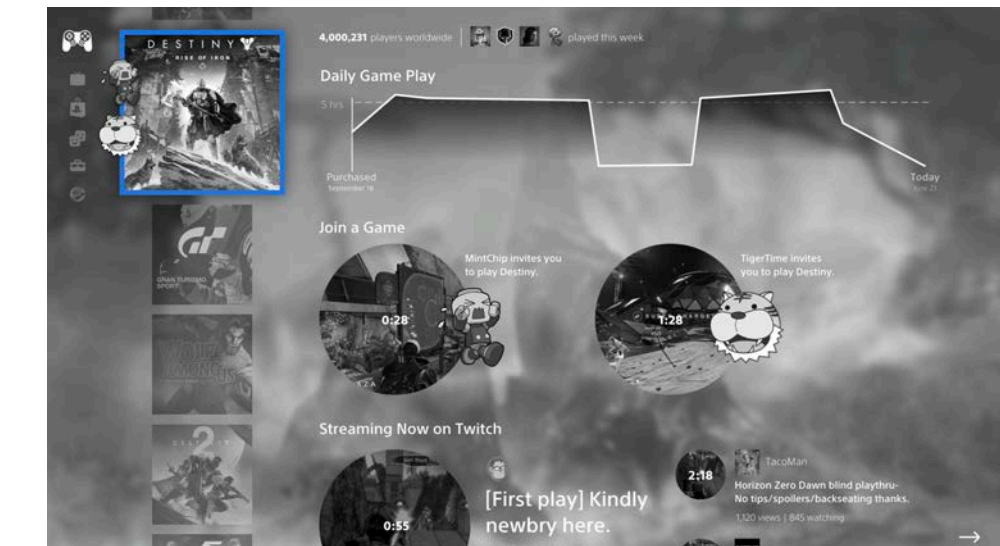
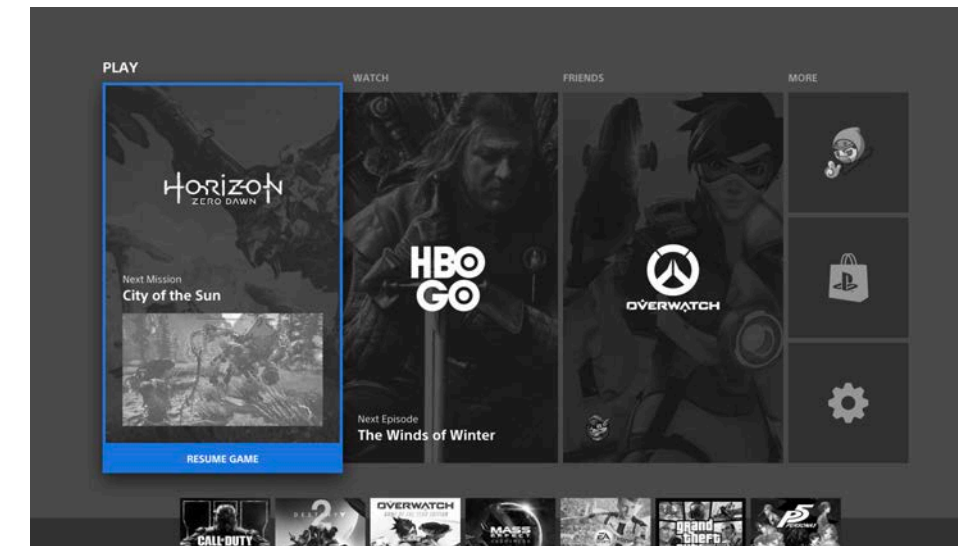
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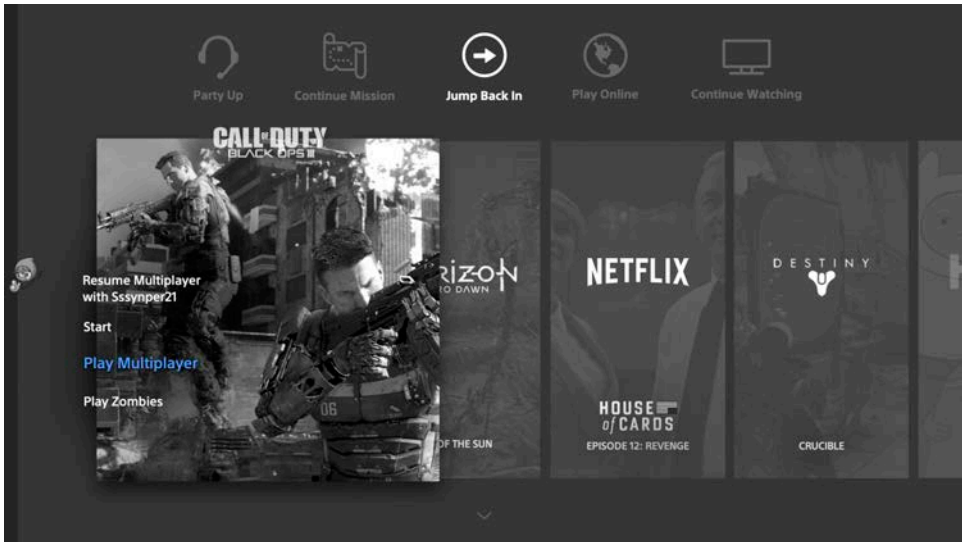
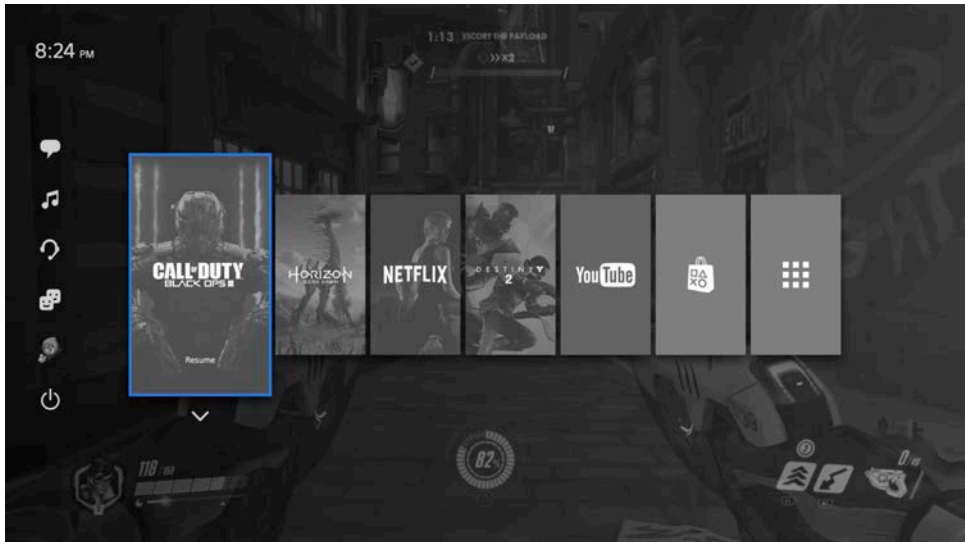
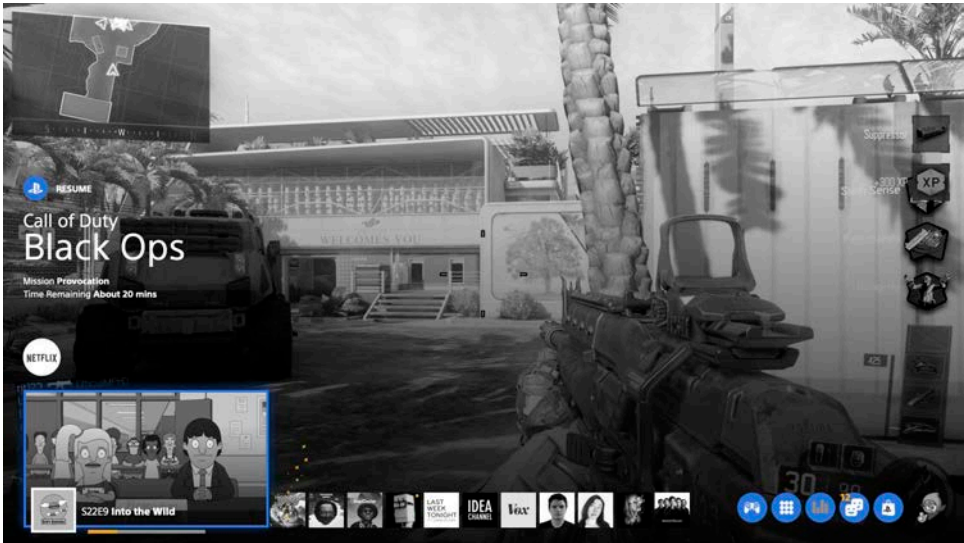
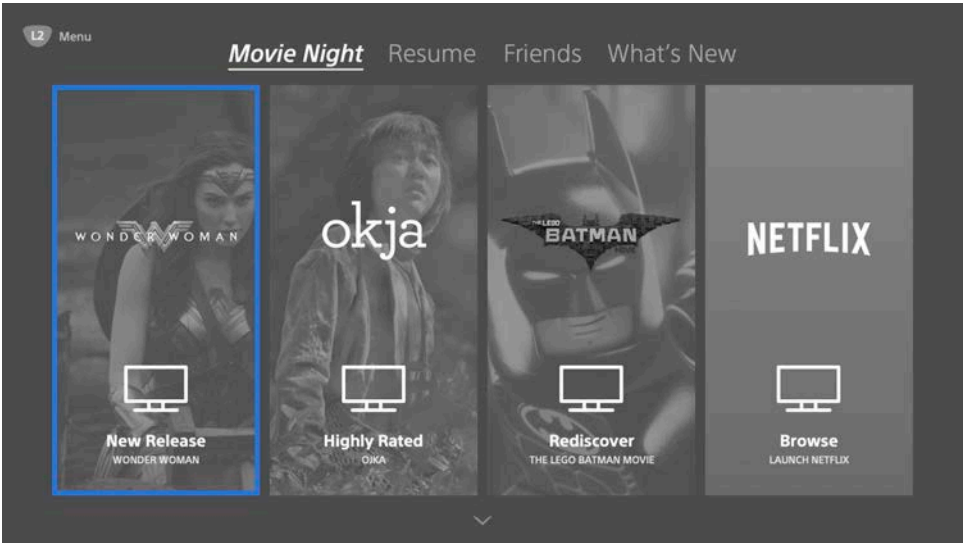
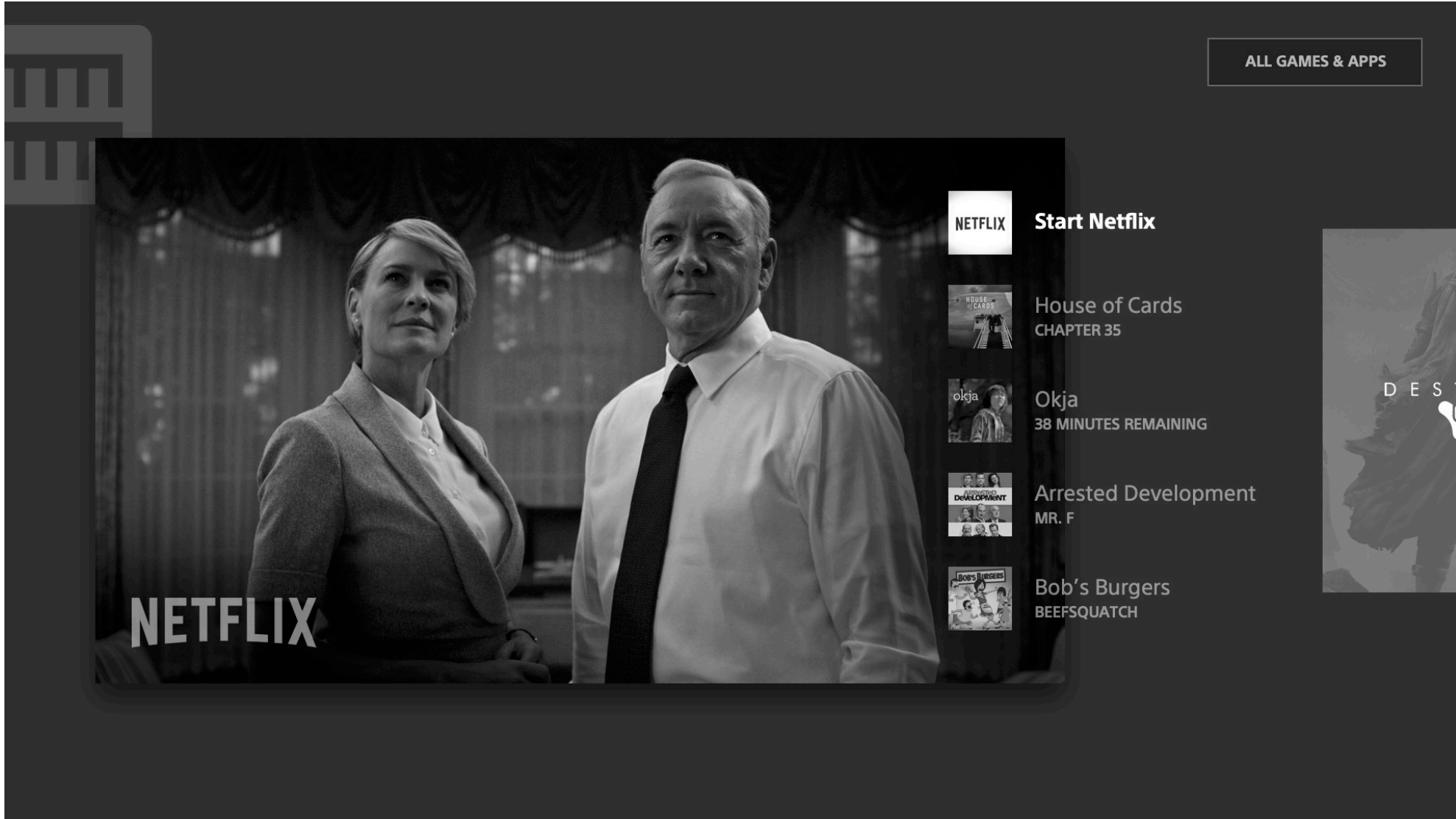
Model Explorations

Fewer Detailed Models

As we reduced our number of models to five (one per designer), we considered how successful each model was based on predetermined criteria.

Metrics for success included:

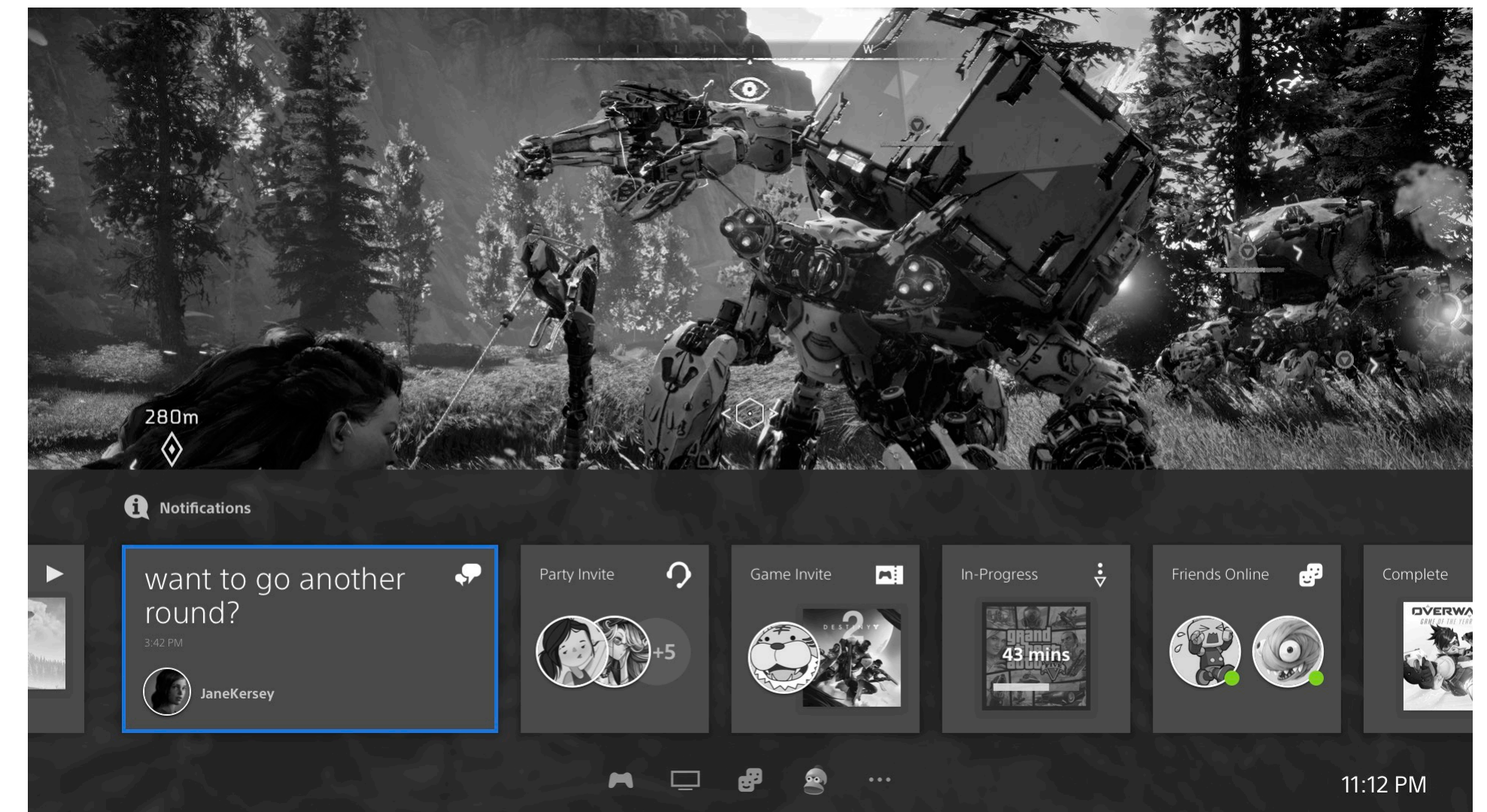
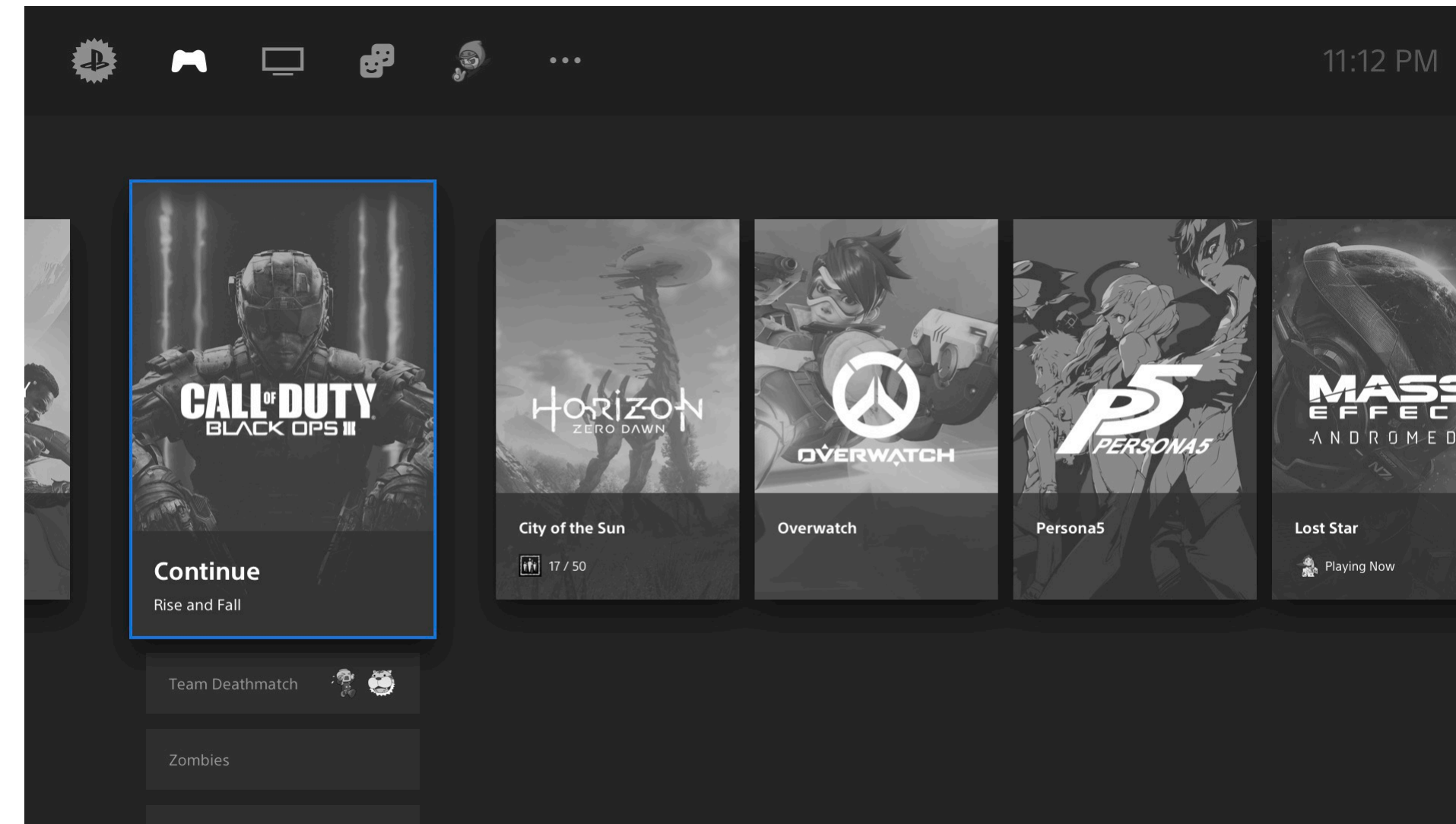
- How well the model aligned with opportunities and key features
- How well each persona could navigate the model to complete common use cases
- How well the model functioned using four-way directional control, select, and back



One Final Model

Because the project goal was to have one final model, we collectively decided on a direction and fleshed it out by considering secondary components of the navigation, such as the Quick Menu and Notifications.

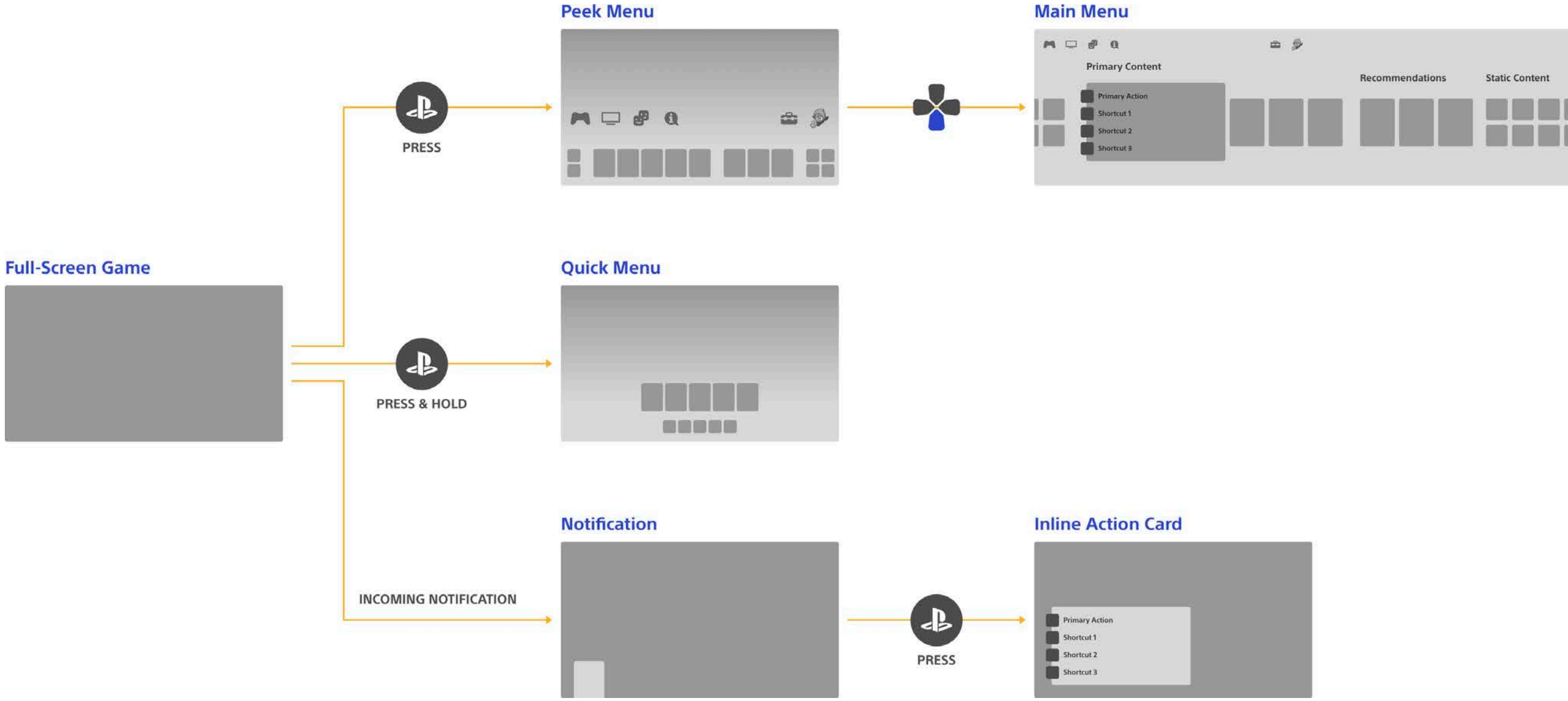
We also built multiple flows and a full tile set to prove that the concept accommodated all possible content types and user journeys.



What We Delivered

High Level Overview

Before diving into the full set of wireframes and prototypes, we gave a high level overview of the model we had created and each of the stages of the navigation.



Goals

- Timely and Relevant**
Actions and content that the user is most likely to engage with are prioritized. Recognize the context and situation to push those actions and make the system easy to engage with.
- Fast and Direct**
Provide overviews of the system so users can quickly navigate to what they care about and take action on something specific.
- Immersive**
Overlap the user's primary content minimally when she wants to peek at the menu. When she is fully engaged with the menu, provide rich content previews.
- Unique Content Spaces**
Create an ecosystem with experiences to quickly engage or dive deep into content switching and searching. Each will be optimized to that experience.
- Aid Discovery**
Seamlessly blend new content with owned content so that users discover new games and media to engage with.

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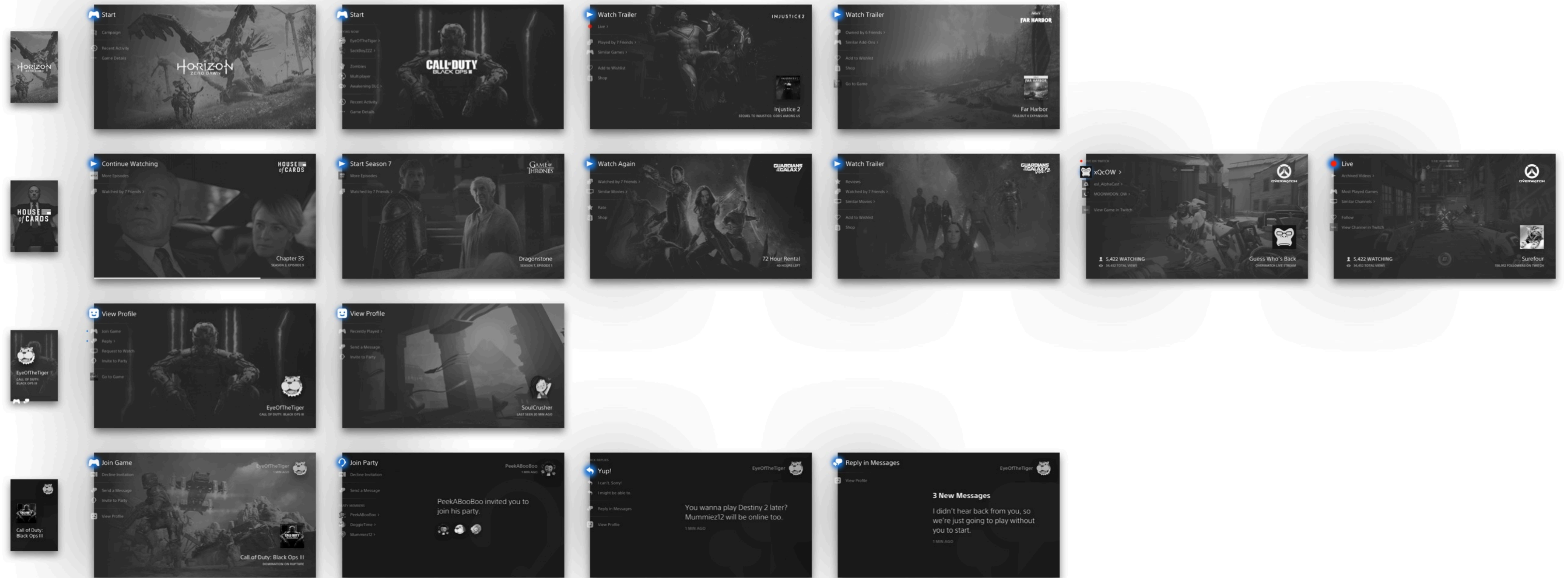
Overview

The various stages of the navigation model provide different experiences that are optimized for specific use cases.

- Peek Menu**
The best way for users to get an overview of their entire system. Quickly move through sections to get a snapshot before diving in.
- Quick Menu**
A quick engagement that gives the user a selection of suggested actions and common utilities.
- Main Menu**
A detailed look at individual content blocks. Provides shortcuts to engage with content in new ways.
- Notification**
Awareness of system activity with the option to directly act on a notification without leaving the game.

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A Robust Tile System

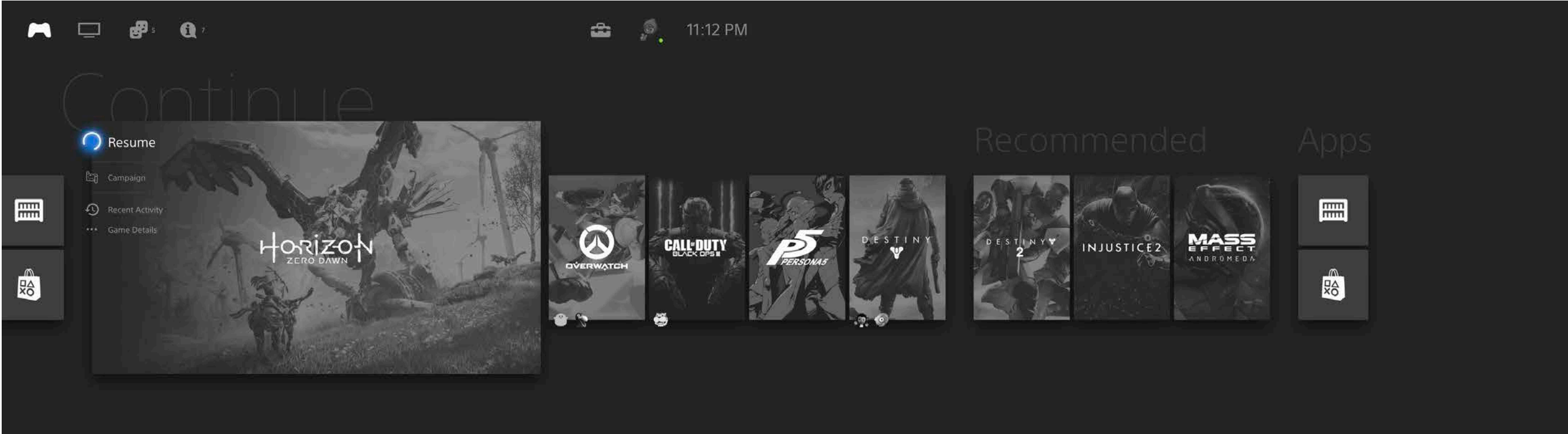


Play, Watch, Friends, and Notifications

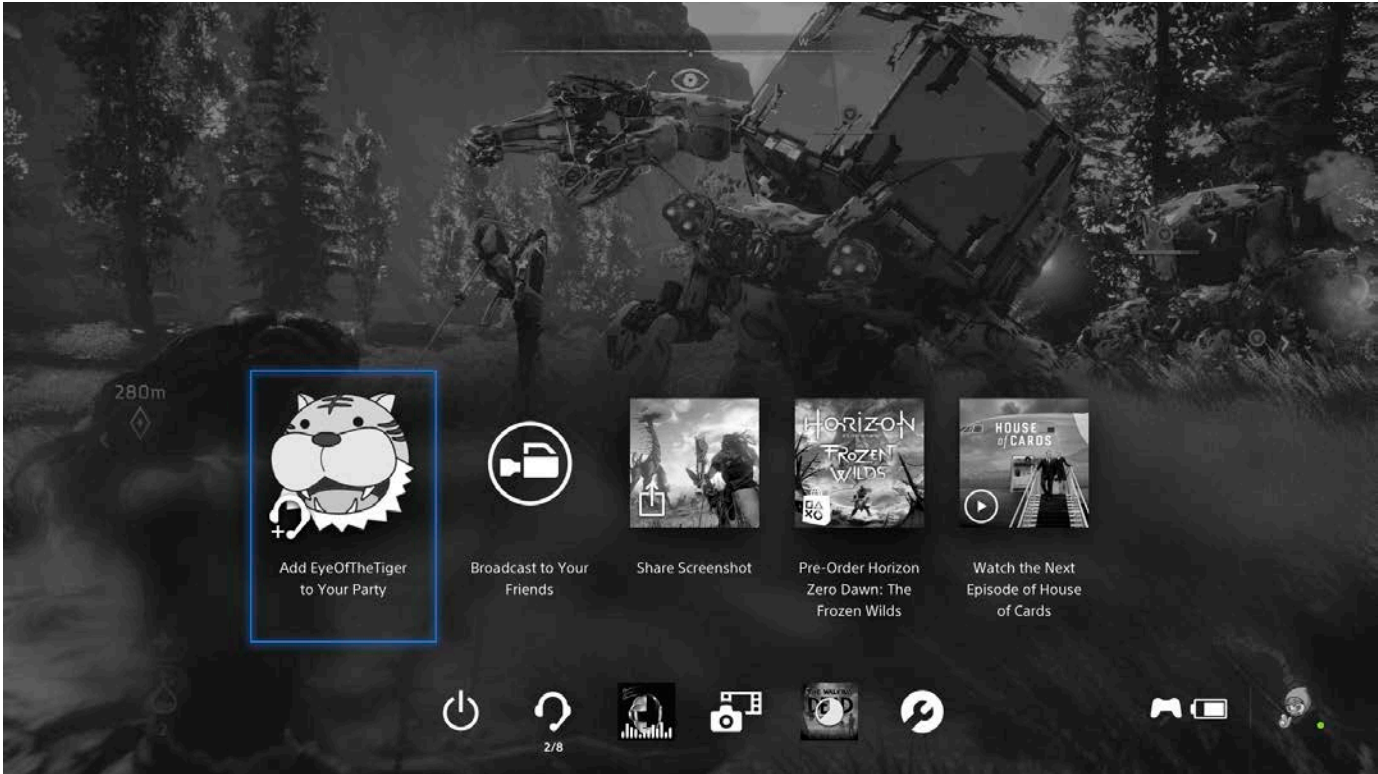
Wireframes for the Primary Spaces



Peek Menu



Main Menu



Quick Menu



Notifications

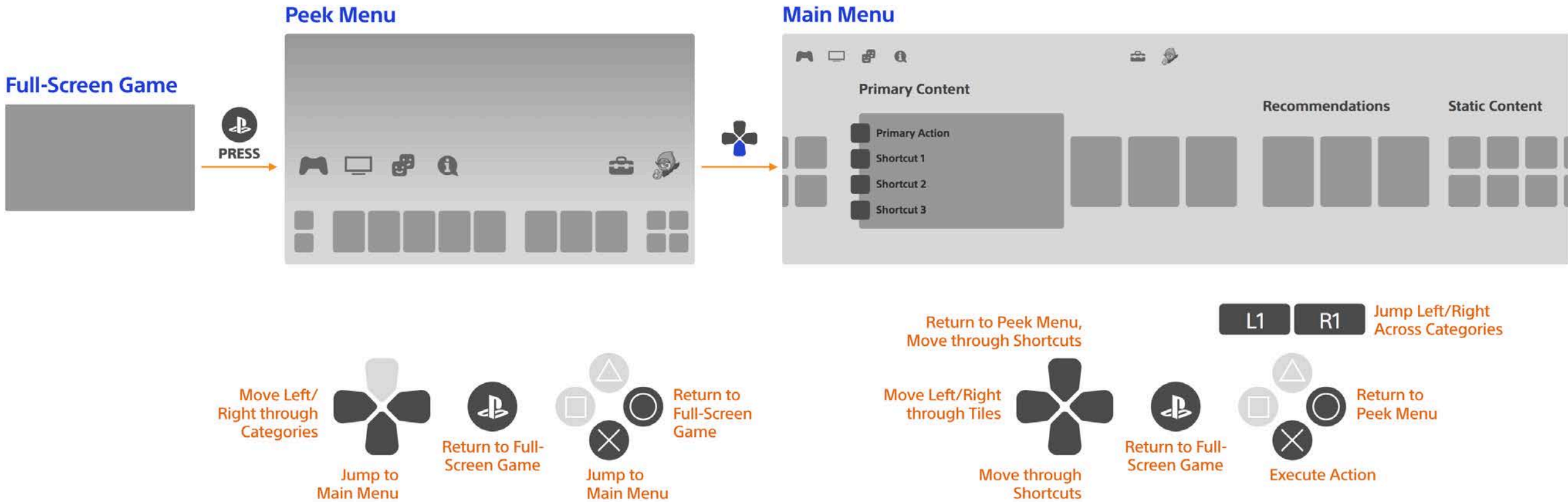


Interaction Pattern

Peek & Main Menu

The Peek Menu provides a bird’s-eye view of the user’s content so they can quickly evaluate their options.

The Main Menu provides direct access to content as well as shortcuts and special content views.



Peek Spaces

From the peek menu, the player can preview the content in each of the primary spaces.

Play

The Play space presents the games the user has played recently alongside recommended games.

Watch

The Watch space shows the TV shows, movies, and other videos content the user has watched recently along with recommended media.

Friends

The Friends space lists the player's online and offline friends.

Notifications

The Notifications space presents a reverse-chronological list of the player's most recent notifications.

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Primary Spaces

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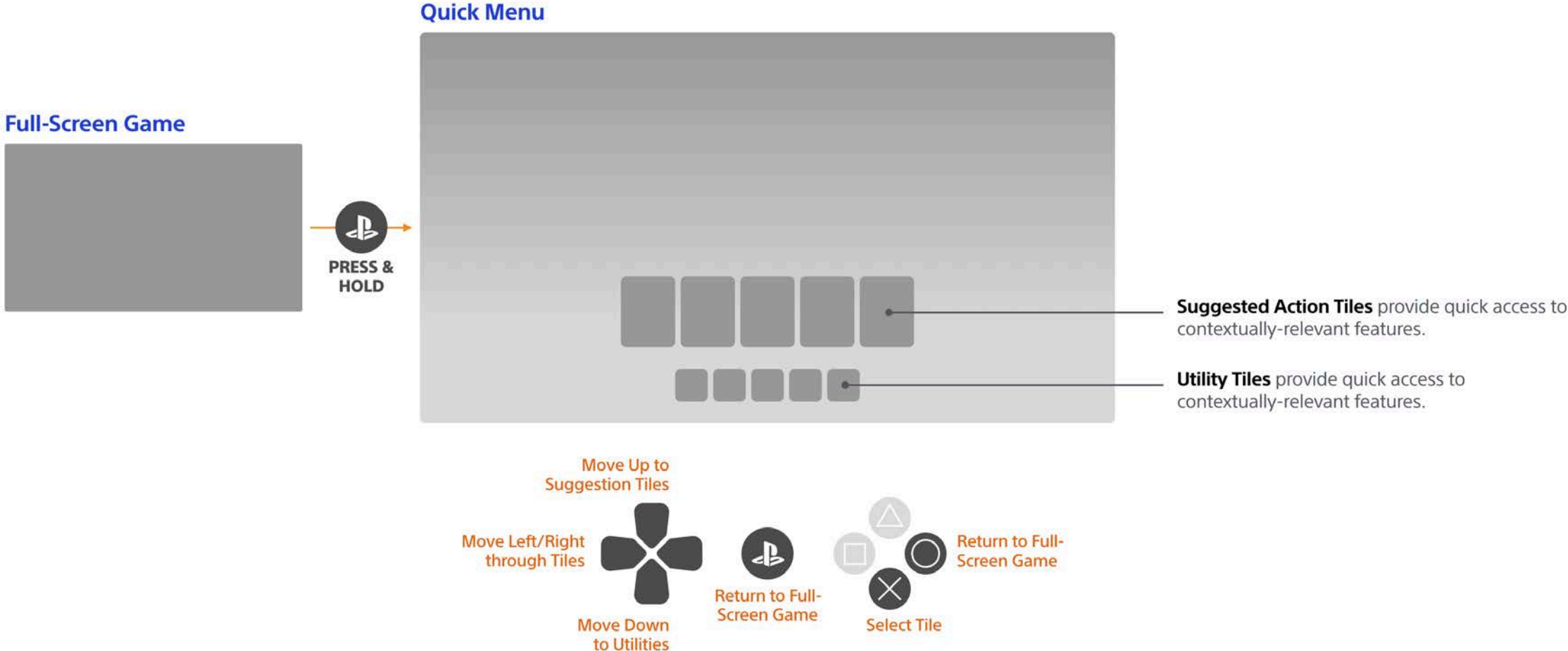
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View video of prototype [here](#)

Interaction Pattern

Quick Menu

With all of the features PlayStation has to offer, the Quick Menu serves as a space to surface only the most relevant and timely functions. Users can quickly jump in and out for status information, content switching, notifications, and more.



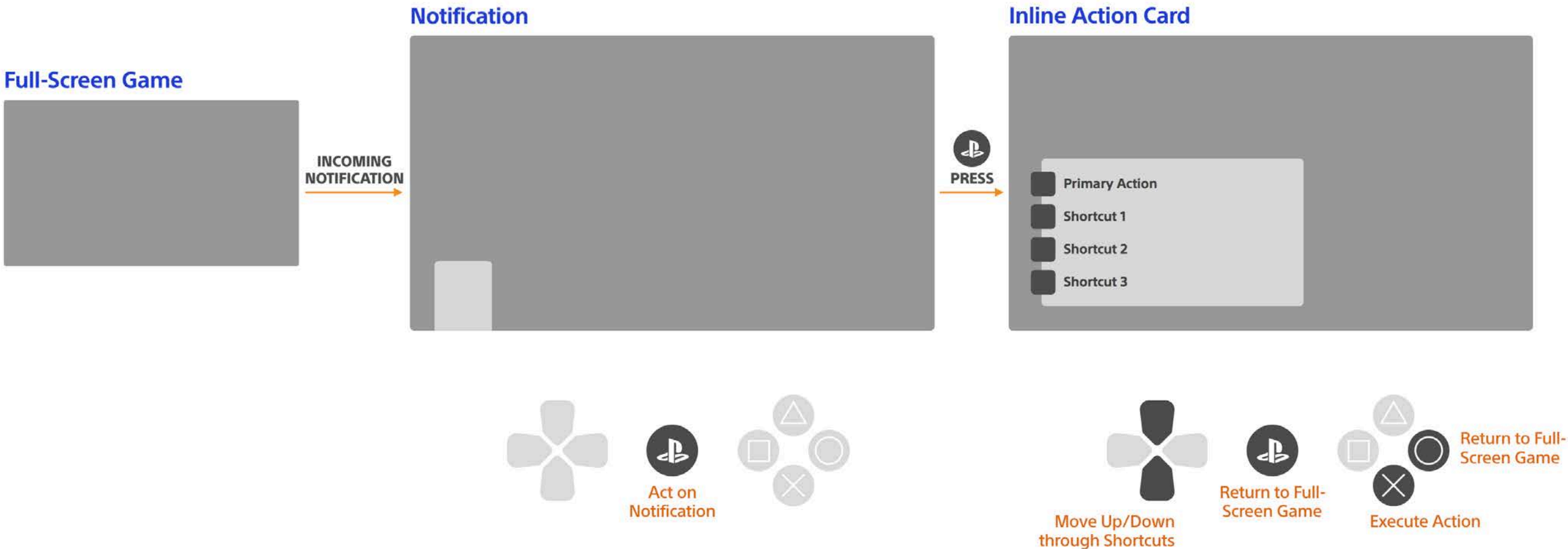
View video of Keynote prototype [here](#)

Interaction Pattern

Notifications

Notifications let the user act on key alerts and quickly jump back into their game.

Reusing cards creates a consistent interaction system that is instantly understandable.



View video of prototype [here](#)

Reflection

What Worked Well

Regular Client Check-Ins

Because we were figuring out the best way to approach brainstorming to meet the broad project goals, we shared our work in progress with Sony on a weekly basis to align on a direction forward.

Many Models

Because there were up to five designers on the project at any given time, each person was able to explore one or two of their own concepts.

Defining the Flow Early

Having a set user journey helped make sure all of the designers kept the right items in mind while still accounting for secondary navigation items.

Challenges We Overcame

New Features vs. Models

When brainstorming, it was easier to come up with features than navigation models, so we dedicated time to thinking specifically about potential models, some of which stemmed from thinking through current features in new ways.

Unclear Deliverable

Our main point of contact had a different impression of what our deliverable would be than the group we were meeting with regularly, so we recommended a level of fidelity and deliverable for the client to agree to.

Only Two Brainstormers

Because only two of us were available to brainstorm on a daily basis and we weren't coming up with a wide range of ideas using our normal process, we adapted our process to sketch and talk through ideas together.

Merging Concepts

After marking interesting ideas with the client, we would find the best way to incorporate what the client liked about each idea in a way that made sense within the model.

What I Would Change

Future-Thinking Direction

Sony kept pushing us in a direction that was safe and easy to develop, so the final model turned into an evolution of the current one instead of a future concept. If I did the project again, I would invest more time trying to sell the client on innovation.

Consider Unexplored Sections

Due to time constraints, we were not able to fully explore secondary sections of the navigation, such as Profile, which might have led us to rethinking certain aspects of our final model.

More Time for Prototyping

If we had narrowed our direction sooner, we could have explored a few rounds of prototypes to finesse the interactions and update the model to create a better experience for the user.

What I Learned

Clients Won't Always Like New Work

This is the first project I've been on where the client preferred a previous direction to new options that we presented, but this might have been because we were stretching ourselves to come up with new models.

The Xbox Perspective

As a semi-regular Xbox gamer that also uses the console for media, I was able to bring a new perspective to the project that no other team member seemed to have.

Printing Can Be Very Useful

I tend to avoid printing when working on digital products, but it was the only way we could present the same flow for all ten of our models at a large enough size to view them simultaneously.

Symbols Are Great for Consistency

Because tools for working collaboratively in Sketch weren't reliable yet, I created a shared symbol library for all five designers to use when wireframing.

Thank you!

