

STARBREEZE DESIGN TEST

Tools used: Photoshop / Adobe XD

/ THE CHALLENGE

Remake the main menu for Payday 2, a game that can be played both on PC and console. Players have expressed that the information is difficult to read, and that the current experience is hard to understand for beginners.

/ THE OUTCOME

A main menu with a clearer information hierarchy, sorted by the prioritisation of the players needs, and promoting the DLC's. With a focus on readability, usability and desirability, the new main menu should have a less cognitive load, guide the player, and not denote their flow.

/ HOW IT IS TODAY



RESEARCH & ANALYSIS

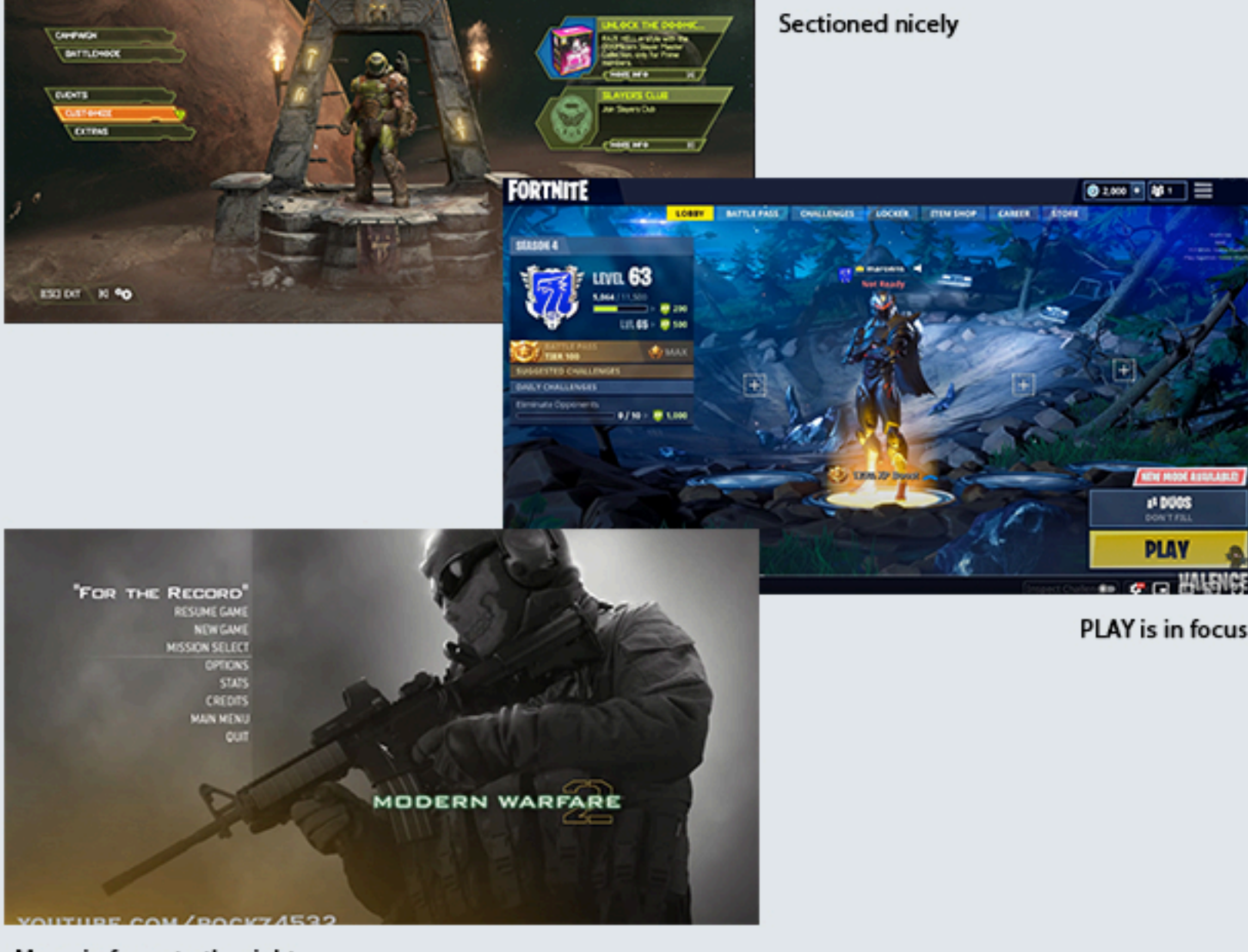
Methods: Heuristic analysis / competitor analysis / desk research

/ WHAT HAVE OTHERS DONE WELL OR NOT?

Comparing to other games that are similar, cross-platform, FPS with profiles and statistics, recurring elements can be found. The clearest button is play, the menu is sectioned by relevancy, readable text, and easy to interact both with a controller, and a mouse.

/ HEURISTIC ANALYSIS

- + Payday 2 keeps a strong thematic language, providing the player with a "heister" feeling, focusing on the players character.
- Payday 2 is not very readable, and the text could have a distinct background for better readability. There are a number of choices adding to the complexity, hindering the player to make an informed choice. The proximity of the elements (example: hover is not by the hovered item) increases the cognitive load of the player further. This makes the experience frustrating for onboarders, console users, and is not flexible for power players.



/ NEXT STEPS

I approach the next step by prioritising player needs while tending to business from the research learnings. This is my main guidance in refining the exploration, which is the next step.

/ HOW?

- Call to action Play button
- Informative menu, sectioned by relevancy
- Player identity, for a deeper relationship between the player and the game
- DLC & News that are eye-catching, but not overtaking

EXPLORE & REFINED

Methods and tools: Sketching / low-fidelity prototyping / Focus group Wireframing mixed fidelity / Figma



/ DESIGNING

I explore and refine the design with sketching, wireframes, and mockups. To progress further, I used what I learned from my research, and I talked to 3 friends that are hardcore players to gain further insights and ask questions about the usability and readability.

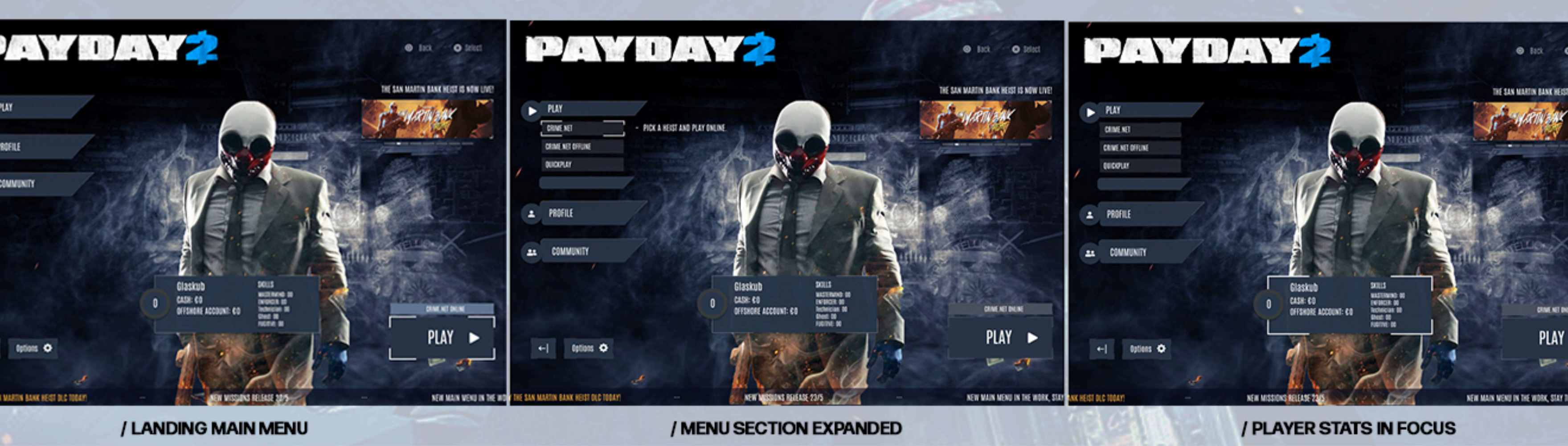


One of the iterations. Was not chosen due to a lot of space being taken up. I did not see this screen being adjustable with future features/elements. It was designed with console as main focus.



The iteration leading to the final design.

RESULT



The idea is to improve the main menu by sectioning the information, minding hierarchy, with cognitive bias taken into regard. This means that relevant elements are grouped in the menu, example; hovering over an element, shows the item info next to the element. Elements with text have distinct backgrounds, and the main elements in the screen are following clear composition. DLC and news are highlighted as moving elements to be eye-catching, but not overtaking. It is also intentional to have more empty space in the screen, not only to declutter, but also with the intention to have room for future features and elements.

The intention of the new main menu is to have the player see and make well-informed choices that they understand the value in. The player should be immersed into the heister world and have a pleasant, easy-to-understand interaction in the main menu.



Comments on what changes I've done. Resolution: 1440 x 1024.



Final result. Resolution 1920 x 1080.