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Visual Project Written Report

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Sharemoji: a social media app for sharing stickers and emoji

Recently, Apple introduced two new features to their devices: the ability to use any image as an emoji or iMessage sticker, and the ability to create any emoji you want with a feature called Genmoji. These features have been a lot of fun and inspired my idea for this visual project: **Sharemoji**, a social media-type app where you can share emojis, Genmojis, and stickers. As far as I can tell, no such app exists, but the potential for one certainly does. I have talked with friends and family, and they all agree that having an app for sharing Genmojis and stickers would be very useful, and the feedback from my prevention reaffirmed this.

Sharemoji has the potential to reach a wide audience. In addition to the feedback from my friends and family, I've noticed that many people share their creations on existing platforms like Twitter. However, these platforms primarily use images, making them unsuitable for sharing Genmojis and stickers. Sharemoji will be developed specifically for this purpose, using the specific technologies that allow proper sharing and saving of the Genmojis and stickers. Sharemoji is not only a great way to share Genmojis with friends and family, but it's also the best way to discover new ones you may have never thought of before! Additionally, it's great for people who don't yet have a device that supports the Genmoji feature, since you can still save them even if you cannot create them. For example, my mom's iPhone does not support Genmoji, and she often asks me to make Genmojis for her. With Sharemoji, she could instead search for the emoji she wants and see a wealth of options rather than having to wait for me to be able to do it, and relying on my judgement as to which one is best. Except for currently being an app

exclusive to Apple platforms, I don't think that the reach of Sharemoji is limited. People of all ages and generations enjoy emojis and stickers. However, one concern I identified was people who dislike generative AI, particularly AI images (which Genmojis certainly qualify as), may not like the app. To help combat this, Sharemoji has a mandatory "Was generative AI used in the creation of this emoji?" question when creating a new post. If the user answers yes, they are also required to provide the prompt they used. Of course, some people will still be against AI imagery, but I hope that this disclosure will help reduce those negative feelings. For example, I was happy to hear that Amber Goldhagen from our class, someone who dislikes AI imagery, was not deterred by this aspect of the app.

My Sharemoji project consists of two primary parts: the branding and the interface. I worked on the branding and overall look and feel first, so that I could have an established style before working on the interface concepts. The name was fairly simple: "Sharemoji" is a combination of "share" and "emoji", which conveniently share an "e" at the ending / beginning of the word. Before designing anything, I first spent an entire weekend researching and brainstorming how I wanted the app to look, work, and feel. As part of this, I wrote out a long document that contained all of the information I needed: the primary features and views of the app, each aspect of the branding that I wanted to design, and reference apps and designs that I wanted to take inspiration from in designing the app. I decided that I wanted the app to feel fun and bright, and that based on the fact that Genmojis can also be used as stickers, a sticker-style look should be an important part of the branding.

To achieve these desired branding goals, most main brand elements have a bold and rounded look, use a bright and colorful gradient based on Apple's colors for Apple Intelligence / Genmoji, and use a CMYK Halftone effect with a large white border to make them appear like

printed stickers. For certain elements, namely buttons, I use a pink color sourced from part of the gradient. For the “Sharemoji” workmark, I used a rounded font (specifically, Apple’s SF Pro Rounded) and a jumbled letter style (achieved by moving each letter up or down, and then rotating about 3° left or right) to give it the desired fun and bubbly look. For the logo, I wanted something simple and recognizable that conveyed the name. I started by compiling some areas of inspiration and creating some sketches. For my first sketch, I referenced Apple’s smiling emoji, Genmoji icon, and share icon. For the next few ideas, I referenced Apple’s iMessage bubble icon, share icon, and smiling emoji. These sketches are shown in the visual presentation pages. In the end, I decided on a message bubble with the eyes and mouth of the standard happy emoji. The message bubble conveys “share”, and the easily recognizable emoji face conveys, “emoji”, making it a perfect fit for Sharemoji! This icon was also used for the app icons, though the gradient and halftone effect were lightly modified to make the icon have better visibility at small sizes. I also designed many alternate app icons so that users will have the opportunity to pick an icon style that suits them best. For these icons, five of them are based on the standard branding for Sharemoji, just done in different ways. For the last two, I took inspiration from elsewhere: one is based on classic Skeuomorphic iOS app icons from pre-2013, and one is based on the blueprint style of TestFlight, Apple’s app for testing beta (pre-release) apps. All of this design work was done in Pixelmator Pro.

After finishing the branding, I began work on the app interface concepts. My first step was to make very rough sketches for each screen of the app. While the sketches may look messy and simplistic, they are very helpful to me, as they help me record my ideas and visualize the overall design. Most of my original sketches are included in the visual presentation pages. There is one exception: I did not do a sketch for the Packs page, as it was added at the very end, and the work

I had already done for all of the other screens was sufficient to create a design for Packs. After completing my initial sketches, I began to create the concept for the main home page. I spent multiple days playing around with the design to get the overall style just right, which is why there are many early concepts included in the visual presentation pages. I also sought feedback from friends, family, and online social media before finalizing the design. The “actions bar”, which contains the like, share, save, etc. buttons was particularly hard to get right, and I created numerous concepts for what it might look like. My final decision was based primarily on feedback from social media and looking at the ways existing social media apps designed similar interfaces. After finalizing the home page concept, I started work on the other pages of the app, based on my initial sketches and the home page design. In the end, some original ideas did not pan out. For example, I originally planned a tab bar, but while working on the concepts I realized that a single view-switcher button would be more visually appealing and more in-line with the design of the app. One interface that was particularly difficult was the Tags interface. I have been designing my own interfaces for over eight years now, but I had never had to design a tags-type interface before. I am mostly satisfied with the design I ended up with, but I do hope to improve it in the future. Like the branding, all of the app interface concepts were created in Pixelmator Pro.

For the interface concepts, I created eight main pages: the home page (titled “Sharemoji”), Discover, Packs, Profile, Emoji Details, New Emoji, Tags, and the view switcher. The home page is essentially the “following feed” for Sharemoji: it shows you the posts from the people you follow, which are most likely your friends and family. These emojis are shown one-per-row and large, since you are more likely to want to see these emojis. On each post, you can see the username and profile picture of the uploader, as well as the title they assigned to the post. Under

each post is the “action bar” where you can like the post, share the post, save the emoji / sticker , or repost it. There is also a more button (•••) to access additional options, such as to report inappropriate content or add it to a Pack. The Discover page is similar, except that it shows posts from everyone on Sharemoji. This is a great place to discover new emojis and stickers you may have never thought of! These emojis are shown a little smaller and two-per-row so that you can see more at once. There is also an “action bar” with the same features as before. Tapping on a post in either of these screens brings you to Emoji Details. On this page, you can see the emoji, uploader details, and action bar like before, but you can also see associated tags, a description from the uploader, and the prompt they used if the image is AI generated. To make a new post, or in other words, upload a new emoji, you use the New Emoji screen. This is similar to Emoji Details, except everything is editable. This is also where you are required to disclose if the emoji / sticker was created using generative AI, and to provide the prompt if so. When creating your post, you can also add tags, which brings you to the Tags page. You can choose one or multiple categories for it, such as “emoji”, “sticker”, or “Genmoji”. You can also choose the mood and vibe of the post, such as “happy” or “funny”. Finally, you can add your own custom tags that help describe the post. These tags help people find what they’re looking for on the Discover page. Another main view is Packs, where you can curate your own selection of emojis and stickers for anything you want! For example, you can put together a “Music” pack with emojis of a record player, AirPods, a singer, and a DJ. Or you can put together a “springtime” pack with emojis of a cherry blossom tree, a meadow, a picnic basket, a rainy day, and a rabbit. While I didn’t have time to fully flesh out the Packs feature for these concepts, I think this could end up being a really big and important feature, and I look forward to expanding it in the future! The last main page is the Profile page, where you can edit your profile (name, username, photo,

etc.), change app settings, view the emojis and stickers you've saved, and the ones you've uploaded. I would like to add more here in the future, but I am not yet sure what I might add. Finally, there is the view switcher, where you can change between the main views of the app. At the bottom of each main view is a circular, sticker-style button that represents each view with a corresponding icon (for example, a magnifying glass for Discover). Tapping this opens a list where you can see all of the options, and tapping one takes you to that view.

In the end, I am very happy with how my Sharemoji project turned out. I really enjoyed getting to create the branding for the app, and it was fun (and good practice!) to implement those design elements into an app interface. I have done some work on coding the interface, but I hope to fully complete it soon. ~~After that, I will begin working on adding the social backend so that I can launch the app. I have had many people express interest in the app, so I would like to launch it soon (hopefully sometime this year). Along with that, I will need to design and launch a website for the app. I have already purchased the sharemoji.app domain, but currently it is nothing more than a "coming soon" landing page.~~ Over time, I would like to add more features. The first feature I would like to add is the ability to share and discover emoji packs, rather than just creating them for yourself. I will also address feedback from my presentation, such as adding an option to remove the halftone effect from in-app interface elements to improve visibility, and making sure that it is clearly indicated to the user how to create Genmojis and stickers using Apple's features. Hopefully at some point in the future there will be a way for developers to add these features directly, but for now, I am already researching ways to help, such as opening the user's keyboard directly to the emoji / stickers section. I am incredibly excited to continue refining Sharemoji and can't wait to share it with the world!