Aesthetic Analysis

Why did you pick these two examples? How do they relate to your UI design?

These are two conference apps for iPhone. They are for a design conference and a game developer conference. They contain similar features to those planned for the Beyond Academia app, although they are more complicated than needed for my purposes.
Pivot AIGA Conference App

Write a comparison that weighs usability vs. aesthetics. When is the designer taking design liberties for aesthetic reasons? How does the design layout help you or the user navigate successfully or unsuccessfully? Was its success or failure due to aesthetics or technology or something else? Is the overall appearance beautiful to you? Why?

The first app is for the American Institute of Graphic Arts conference. It is visually striking, but is overly complicated. For example, the transition from one screen to the next involves several seconds of animation that scrolls through all of the different features before settling on the selected one. When I tried to select events to add to my starred section, the app crashed several times. It was clear that the designer(s) prioritized aesthetics over usability, and as a result I found it frustrating to use. Overall, it is quite beautiful, despite being on the verge of overdesigned. The colors are bold, the text is stylistically interesting, and there are unique visual components in the background.
01: Home Screen

This is the home screen, where users can select which features to go to.

02: Conference Agenda

This is where users go to quickly find where or when an event is. They can click on a given event to see more detailed information, in image 3.

03: Event Details

More information about a given event is here. The main information is at the top, with a description and then more information about the event.
Objectives

Objective 1: Make it easy for attendees to locate desired conference information

Objective 2: Create a visually appealing app

Objective 3: Improve the overall attendees conference experience
Pivot AIGA Conference App

Attendees of Pivot Conference use this app to find and save the events they desire to see. They can quickly open the app to see what time or room an event is in. They can also read about the speakers and search for information about the locale. Users with this app might be more focused on their mobile device than if they had to rely on program booklets or information desks. One drawback is this means less interaction between attendees. However, the gains in efficiency and ease of use outweigh this.
**Analysis 1**

**Color Palette**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Color</th>
<th>RGB Values</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 01: Dark Plum | R - 50%
G - 5%
B - 90% |
| 02: Tangerine  | R - 80%
G - 10%
B - 10% |
| 03: Cornflower | R - 10%
G - 10%
B - 60% |
| 04: Dark Teal  | R - 10%
G - 10%
B - 10% |

These colors are very bold and saturated. Even the background is bright and attention-grabbing.
Why do you think they chose these colors? Are they functional or aesthetic decisions? When are they functional and when are they aesthetic? How does it fit within a brand or does it stand alone?

These colors fit in with the location of the conference: Phoenix, AZ. I can’t be certain because no other years are available, but I would assume they update the color scheme each year to adapt to the new locale, while still providing a bold and colorful palate.
**Type Inventory:**
How many fonts are there? 2
How many sizes are there within those fonts? 1 & 3
What do those variations represent? 1: Main Heading; 3: Headings for each section, Subheadings for each section, Body Copy
Is this consistent across the UI? Yes

You may try a font detector app (e.g., *WhatTheFont*). WhatTheFont was not able to identify either of the fonts, however the first one was a sans-serif, and was only used in all caps. The second used in the main text was a slab serif font.
Why do you think the designers chose this typeface(s)? Is this successful or unsuccessful? Are they functional or aesthetic decisions? What would you do differently?

They chose these two fonts to differentiate between two categories: information that repeats in all areas (such as day of the week), and information that changes for each feature, such as the list of speakers. I found the different fonts to be distracting, especially when all of the text manipulations were considered: different sizes, subheadings in bold, times in bold/blue, speaker subheadings in larger font/blue.. etc. I would simply these to only have one or two font characteristic (font, size, color, style) changes at most.
Pivot AIGA Conference App

About the Conference
About AIGA
Credits
Getting to Pivot
Convention Center Map

CULTURE
Arizona Science Center
Burton Barr Central Library
Children’s Museum
Civic Space Park
Desert Botanical Garden
FilmBar
Heard Museum
Herberger Theater Center
Heritage Square Park
Japanese Friendship Garden
Murphy Bridle Path
Pivot AIGA Conference App

- Schedule
- Conference Feed
- Command X
- Phoenix Culture
- Guide & Map
- Weather
- Presenters
- About the Conference
- Sponsors
Pivot AIGA Conference App

Why do you think they chose this imagery? Are they functional or aesthetic decisions?

These images are bright and textured. They draw your attention to look more closely to the design. This appears to be an entirely aesthetic decision, as it add little to nothing in the way of usability.
GDC: Game Developers Conference App

Write a comparison that weighs usability vs. aesthetics. When is the designer taking design liberties for aesthetic reasons? How does the design layout help you or the user navigate successfully or unsuccessfully? Was its success or failure due to aesthetics or technology or something else? Is the overall appearance beautiful to you? Why?

This app is much simpler than the previous example. There is only one main color, all the fonts are the same, and only 1 font size is used. Overall, it’s simplicity makes it very easy to navigate and use. I can quickly find and move to the feature for which I am searching. Although it is not ugly, I would also not call it beautiful. It is rather plain, lacking strong branding and visual interest. I would not be able to tell you what this conference is for just by looking at the aesthetics.
01: Home Screen
This is the home screen, where users can select which features to go to.

02: My Agenda
This is the personalized agenda. When users select events to get saved they go here. Users can easily toggle back and forth between the main agenda and the personalized agenda.

03: Speakers list
All of the speakers are listed here. Users can search by name, job description, company, etc. They can also save the contact info by selecting the icon to the right.

Running Application for iPhone
Objective 1: Make it easy for attendees to locate desired conference information

Objective 2: Improve use of social media at the conference

Objective 3: Improve the overall attendees conference experience
The main use of this app is very similar to example one: to quickly access event information. Some of the secondary uses are different. For example, in the first app there was information about the surrounding area and how to get around. This app instead focuses on the social experience, creating tools for chatting with other attendees before, during, and after the conference. There is also a place to upload photos.
Analysis 2

Color Palette

01: Dark Grey
R - 60%
G - 60%
B - 60%

02: Tangerine
R - 80%
G - 10%
B - 10%

03: White
R - 0%
G - 0%
B - 0%

03: Light Grey
R - 10%
G - 10%
B - 10%

These colors are very simple. The main color of interest is the bright orange, which I've labeled tangerine. All other colors were shades of grey on a white background.
GDC: Game Developers Conference App

The colors are very simple and clean, mainly a white background with shades of grey. They also chose one bright accent color. These decisions seem almost entirely functional. They do not fit with the brand, as they are very generic. It’s possible that they built this app from a template and changed very little in the way of design.
**Typography**

**Type Inventory:**
How many fonts are there? 1
How many sizes are there within those fonts? 1
What do those variations represent? Headlines, subheadings, body copy
Is this consistent across the UI? Yes

You may try a font detector app (e.g., *WhatTheFont)*.

*WhatTheFont* could not detect this font, but it was a very simple sans-serif font, perhaps Arial.
Why do you think the designers chose this typeface(s)? Is this successful or unsuccessful? Are they functional or aesthetic decisions? What would you do differently?

This simple typeface aided in the overall usability in the app. I believe the type was intentionally left generic so that the template could used for different conferences, and the GDC did not change this. I like that the type characteristics are very simple (bold for subheadings, occasional color change to highlight something important) and very consistent across different features of this app.
GDC: Game Developers Conference App

“IMPORTANT” If you haven’t updated the GDC app to the latest version, please do so immediately. It fixes a password reset bug.

Axel Liew
Anyone here staying in adelaide hostel during gdc?

Giovanni Caccioppoli
I wish they would release black ops 2 on Xbox one...just saying #GDCSquad

Jon Lovano
Donna Soto Noooooo they need to bring back MW3

13 more comments

Donna Soto Same, love playing AW!

Donna Soto Thanks for the add! I game during the day. Not too much at night. My connection sucks in the evening. Looking into getting a faster modem.
GDC: Game Developers Conference App

Leaderboard

1. Lindsay West 314
2. Alex Schwartz 296
3. Jon Lovano 109
4. Lana Bachynski 91
5. Yongzhi Wang 87
6. Brian Faulkner 84
7. Tjay Revett 84
8. Ana Carolina Pereira 79
9. Anish Chandak 78

Promoted Post

*IMPORTANT* If you haven’t updated the GDC app to the latest version, please do so immediately. It fixes a password reset bug.

Giovanni Caccioppoli

Jon Lovano, Anders Wass

Giovanni Caccioppoli @Ana Carolina Pereira I think it was you

Giovanni Caccioppoli #GDCSquad
GDC: Game Developers Conference App

Why do you think they chose this imagery? Are they functional or aesthetic decisions?

These imagery were chosen for function decisions, with the goal of providing a space for users to connect and share, even if they are not physically talking. In fact, most of the visual content is user-created.