

Lab 4 – Starting to Design Interfaces

Storyboarding an Interface Design – Paper Prototyping

Once we know the required functionality of a program we can start to consider what its interface should look like. Sketches of the different screens of the program can be drawn up to describe the interface. This can be done in any package that allows the use of graphics – MSWord, PowerPoint – but the best way to come up with initial ideas is to sketch them on paper as storyboards. These should show the controls to be used and the information to be displayed as closely as possible. The storyboard should reflect *what the user actually sees*, not what happens underneath. It should also display the effects of selecting controls if these selections lead to a change in the display.

Visit <https://www.uxpin.com/studio/blog/paper-prototyping-the-practical-beginners-guide/> for an industry perspective on this.

For example, suppose we want to design an interface for an internet pizza delivery service. The user wants to be able to log into the site, select their pizza and log out. The storyboard for this task might look something like that in figure 4.1 (on page 2) these were created using MS PowerPoint). The six panels represent each of the six web pages seen by the user. The arrows represent the navigational effect of clicking on the controls.

When creating a storyboard, you must also state any assumptions or limitations that apply. In figure 4.1 we assume that

- Only registered users can order pizza
- Only one pizza per order
- Once ordered, a pizza cannot be changed
- All pizzas will be delivered
- All pizzas are the same price
- Pizzas can only be paid for with the registered credit card

The storyboard is the first real attempt at the interface design. In reality the final interface will often look a little different to the original storyboard, as in large projects the storyboard is taken to the clients/users for comments and suggestions. This feedback is then used to improve the interface design in an iterative manner.

Exercise 4.1

Consider the *Pizza With Pzzaz!* storyboards in figure 4.1 in terms of usability, effectiveness, efficiency and satisfaction. Is it a good interface? What improvements that could be made to it?

- ✳ Think about both visual elements and control elements. Is anything missing? Is anything redundant? Is it consistent?

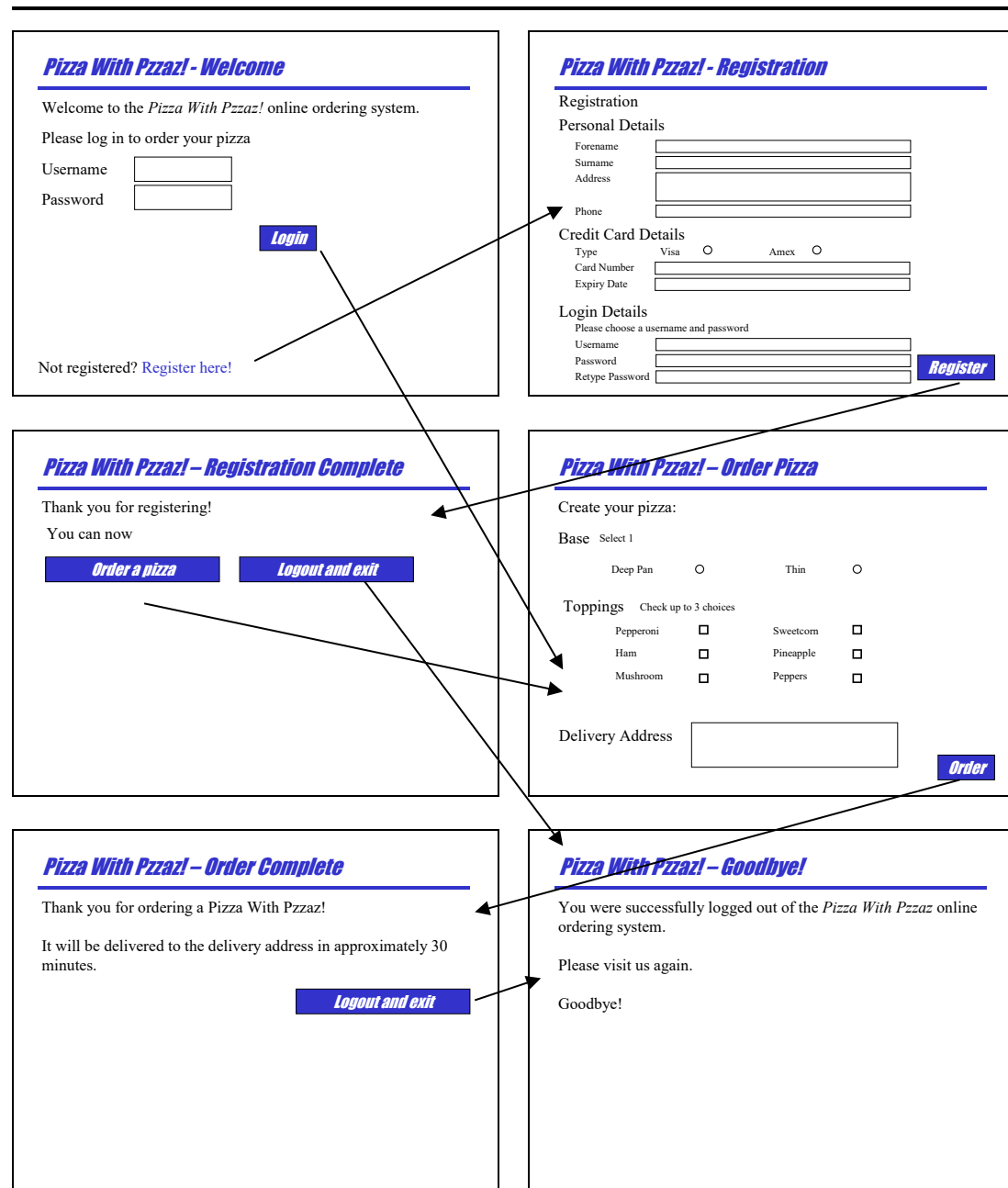


Figure 4.1: Storyboard for Pizza With Pzzaz!