

Icon Design

Idea/Introduction

Designers use their creativity to identify the most significant aspects of an idea and then interpret those ideas in a visual format.

Learning Outcome

By the end of the activity, participants will have an icon that represents their project. They will also have the beginnings of a visual identity as they choose their colors.

Time

20 min

Definition

Logo: “Consumer identifier, recognizable and distinctive. Solely for identifying an organization, not a product, it is a graphic design, stylized name, unique symbol, or other device. Also known as logotype. Appearing on all advertising, buildings, communications, literature, products, stationery, and vehicles, it is obvious, affixed, included, or printed.

Contrast to a brand, which identifies a product or family of products.”¹

Icon: An icon is the representation of the app when it is available on a device. Each app you download has an icon “button” that differentiates the app. The icon can be the logo or it can incorporate the logo.

Activity

Participants can start by choosing three main colors for their app. Choosing a color pallet is a great way to get participants to make informed decisions about their apps look and feel and a great way for them to structure their first attempts at designing their app in Code Studio. This activity favors the participants that love to draw, but if participants are struggling with drawing, you can remind them that they can write on their icon. You can also provide them with paper or some simple stickers to build their icon from pre-made elements. The next challenge for participants is to simplify their icon into a tiny size. It is easier to start large and then simplify. Encourage participants to simplify elements and imagine their app on a little screen.

Extend the activity.

¹ Law Dictionary: What is LOGO? definition of LOGO (Black's Law Dictionary) <http://thelawdictionary.org/logo/>

App Lab allows participants to add their own pictures. To take “Icon Design” one step further, take pictures of the participants’ icon drawings and then share those pictures to the devices they are working on. That way participants can upload their own icon designs to the digital workspace for their applications. This process should bring together the unplugged activities with the plugged activities. It is a great way for participants to connect their creative ideas with their newfound code skills!

Framing for slower-paced participants

For participants that struggle with visual production, you can supply colored paper, stickers, and pre-made elements to help them design their icon. Have these participants concentrate on the larger icon and let them skip the resizing part of the activity.

Framing for faster-paced participants

participants that love this activity should be challenged to make their icon fit in both the small square and the large square. participants could also design custom backgrounds for their app if they speed through this activity. They can be added like images to each screen.