Apps Expert Review

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What is a usability expert review?

With a usability expert review, an evaluator uses a product or web site and assesses its usability against a set of principles or best practice guidelines. Expert reviews are popular because they are much quicker and cheaper to carry out than a usability test.

userfocus.co.uk

Expert Review
One Pager

Background: MySpace apps are not performing cf. Facebook regarding churn and installs. It's believed that these performance problems are caused by basic usability issues.

Aim: To provide recommendations that will increase installs and reduce churn of MySpace apps.

Proposal: Review the install, invite and uninstall flows for MySpace apps to look for basic usability issues that may reduce the performance of the platform. Document the flows and provide basic recommendations using standard heuristics and best practice. This project is just a first pass to identify obvious problems.

KPI's: 1. Reduce the churn of apps 2. Increase the number of installs, after marketing of the app has finished.

Expert Review
Initial thoughts (outside of expert review)

Product Brand

Many of the Apps pages don't look very good, general navigation around Apps is confusing and a lot of the apps are of a low quality. I believe this has negatively effected our users perception of apps, leading to a reluctance to engage in any way.

Recommendations

1. Aesthetic overhaul
2. Redesign navigation and flows (See Appendix)
3. Bury bad apps, either using human editor or build rating system

Discovery

The tools we provide to help our users discover apps are not very sophisticated and I believe are limiting the network effect. An invite from someone I don't know feels very spammy. Instead we should rely on 'Social Proof' to propagate apps. I would prefer to hear about apps less often, but in a more prominent place, when an app is 'buzzing' amongst my strong friends.

Recommendations

1. Combined feeds on UHP, and include app recommendations when a certain number of friends are interacting with a particular app (See Appendix)
2. Re-architect folder structure for mail to un-bury app invites

Expert Review
The Heuristics Part 1

1. Concise flows
Can the user complete the task in the minimum number of steps / pages?
Does the flow terminate at an appropriate place once the task is complete?

2. User control and freedom
Do users feel in control of the task they are performing (Does the system behave as expected)?
Do we give the users the tools they need to complete common tasks?
Do we give users the controls they need to recover from an error? E.g. Undo and Redo

3. Flexibility of use
Does the site cater for different types of users (Novice, Advanced, regular, artist, advertiser, promoter etc)?
Do we provide the flexibility / tools for advanced users to speed up interactions for common tasks?
Are users able to tailor the site to their own needs?

4. Visibility of system status & Visual Feedback
Are visual clues provided to the user to help them know;
Where they are in the process
What the system is doing
What they have to do next
What fields are mandatory etc.

5. Aesthetic and minimalist design
Is unnecessary or irrelevant information provided?
Is the layout aligned?
Is there consistent placement of information?
Are there unnecessary graphics?
Are there progressive levels of detail?
Can the user quickly grock the page(i.e. decode the page, take on board information and understand the next steps)

Expert Review
The Heuristics Part 2

6. Consistency and standards
Are ways of performing similar actions consistent?
Are the aesthetics of controls (e.g. button design and link design) consistent?
Is information design consistent (e.g. plain text all looks the same, headers all look the same etc)

7. Match between system and the real world
Does the task utilise metaphors from the real world? (e.g. item list on Amazon to represented as shopping cart)
Is the language simple? Does the language communicate well? Is technical language avoided?

8. Recognition rather than recall
Do we put all the information a user needs to complete a task at the users finger tips; on the page where the task is completed?
Do users have to remember information from one part of the system to the other?

9. Error prevention & Recovery
Do we actively prevent user errors ?
Do we support users is rapidly recovering from an error?
Error messages should be expressed in plain language (no codes), precisely indicate the problem, and constructively suggest a solution.

10. Help and documentation
Is help and other information provided to guide new users, and can it be easily searched and followed?

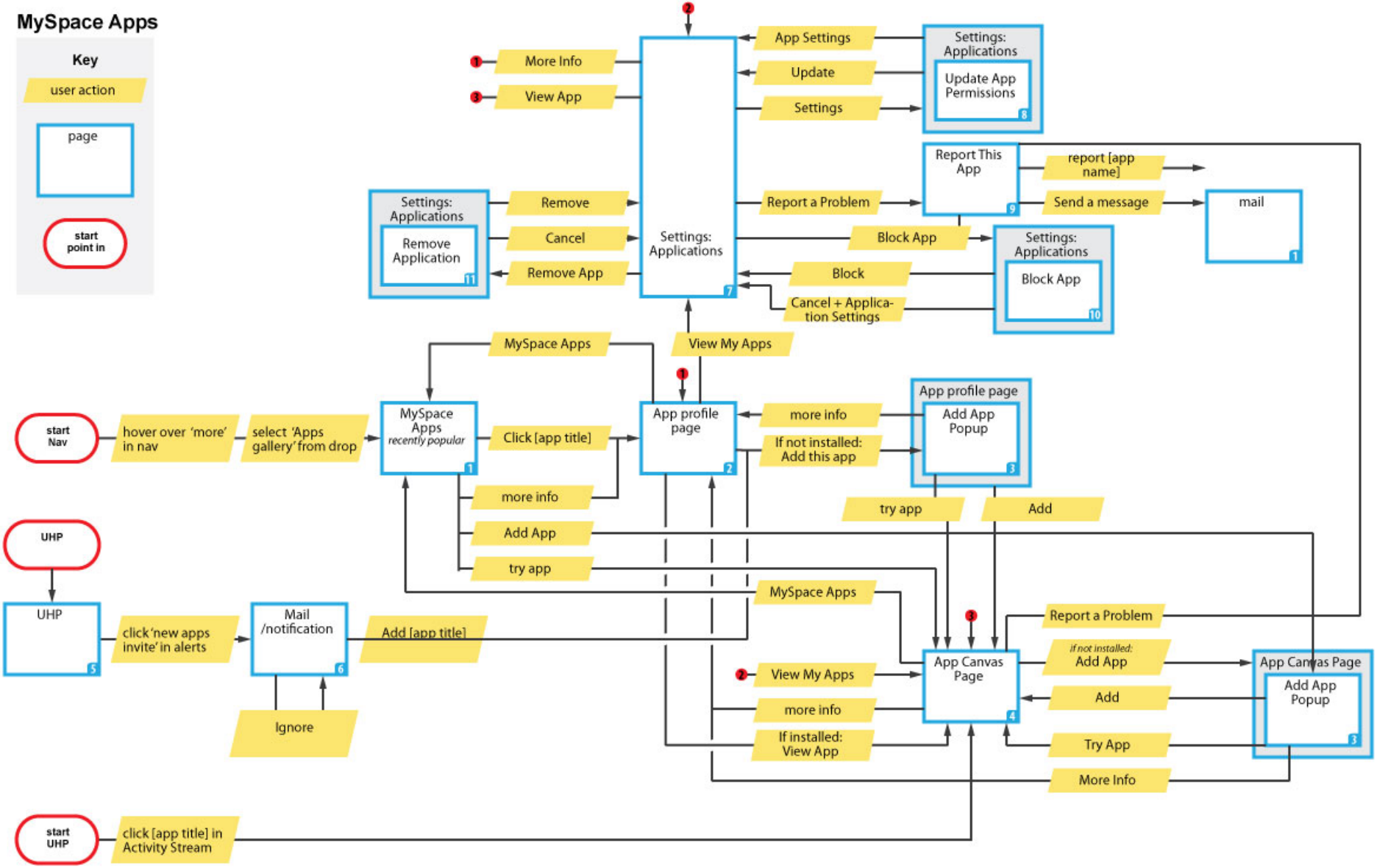
Colour Coding of comments fro Expert Review

Contributes to poor UE

Significant cause of poor UE

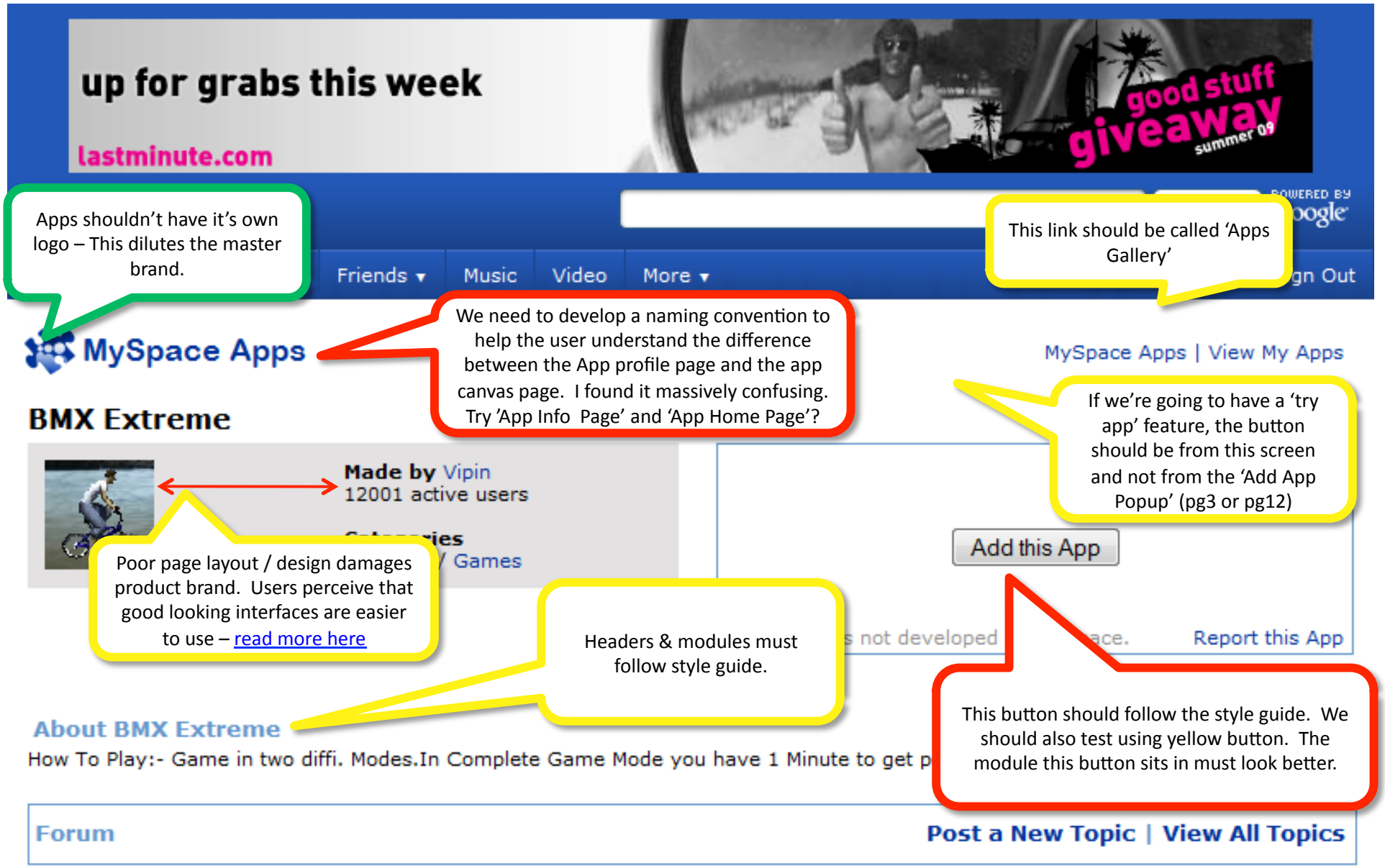
Must be changed to reduce App churn and increase app installs

Expert Review
The Review

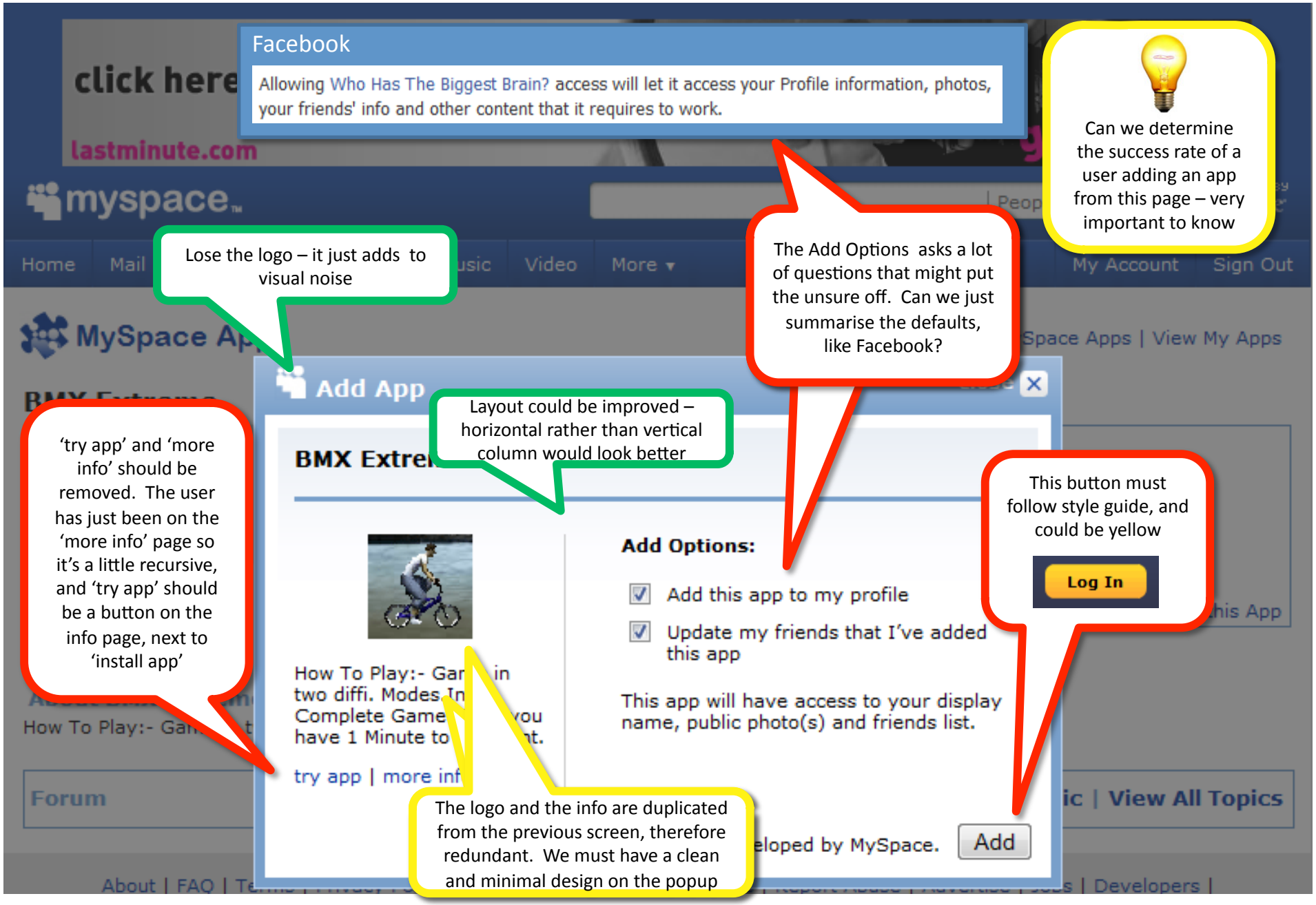


Page 1: MySpace Apps

Page 2: App Profile Page



Page 3: Add App Popup



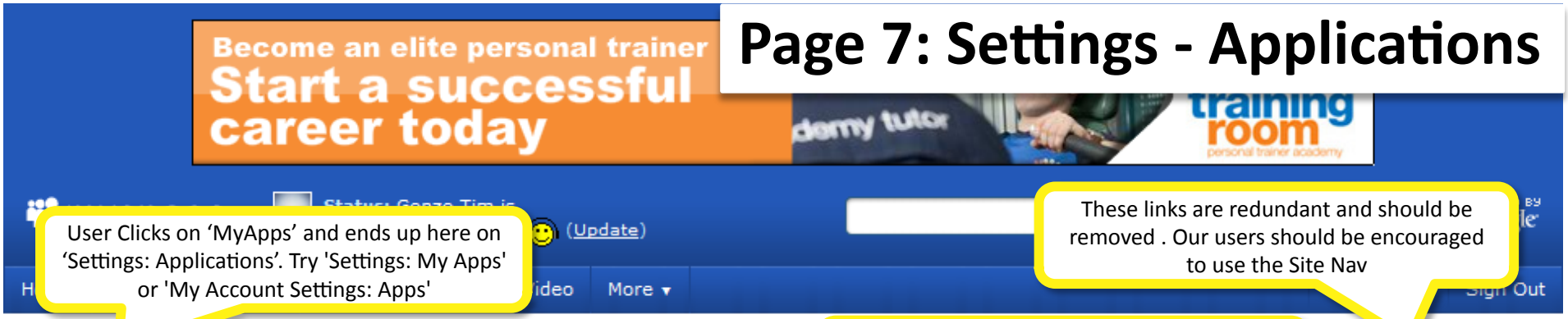
Page 4: App Canvas page

Page 5: UHP

First line of module, 'Hand picked apps for you' confused users about the purpose of module.
My Apps
Hand picked apps just for you. Check out our Editor's Picks!
Gravity Mouse
Word Challenge
tiny piranha
Turkey Attack
luis launch
What Billy Mays Product Are You?
Under Cover
manage apps | view all
Icons too small to grock – remove them as they just add to visual clutter.
Get our broadband and phone Essent
£6.49 a month
Click here
Line rental £11.25 a month. Subject to availability and minimum term contract. Full terms and conditions at talktalk.co.uk
myspace
Home
Mail
Profile
Friends
Music
Video
More
This counter should display the total number of items in mail, including invites
Edit Profile]
Status and Mood
What are you doing right now?
Gonzo Tim Can you solve 2 Rubicks cubes and play Mr Crowley on Guitar Hero with your elbow, simultaneously ? mm? This kid can can http://lnk.ms/04x3f 3 hours ago
Mood: not jet-lagged
view more | comment
Lindsay is loving friday 4 hours ago
Mood: & not sleepin'
Layout could be improved. Also follow styleguide re colour schemes.
CHARLIE DARK'S LONDON
View My:
Alerts
New Videos!
New Blog Posts!
New App Invites!
New Status Commments!
App invites are only explicitly surfaced through alerts box – below the fold.
Apps feature in activity steam (below the fold). Status and Mood and Activity Stream should be rolled together.
Activity Stream
Today
edit settings | view all updates
Timtest Two added the Own Kittens app.
Timtest Two added the Mafia Wars app.

Page 6: Mail notification

Page 7: Settings - Applications



User Clicks on 'MyApps' and ends up here on 'Settings: Applications'. Try 'Settings: My Apps' or 'My Account Settings: Apps'

These links are redundant and should be removed . Our users should be encouraged to use the Site Nav

Subnav should follow current standard

View My Profile
Edit Profile

Settings: Applications

No need for Logo

Conta | Password | Privacy | Spam | Notifications | Applications | MySpaceID | IM | Mobile | Calendar | Miscellaneous

The currently selected tab should be highlighted

The layout could be improved - Generally we should avoid centrally aligned layouts.

Apps I've Added

Happy Flickr

Settings | View App | More Info
Report a Problem | Block App | Remove App

Access to private photos and videos disabled.

TFL Service Updates

Settings | View App | More Info
Report a Problem | Block App | Remove App

Profile module disabled.
Home module disabled.
Activity Stream publishing disabled.
Access to private photos and videos disabled.

Texas Holdem Poker

Settings | View App | More Info
Report a Problem | Block App | Remove App

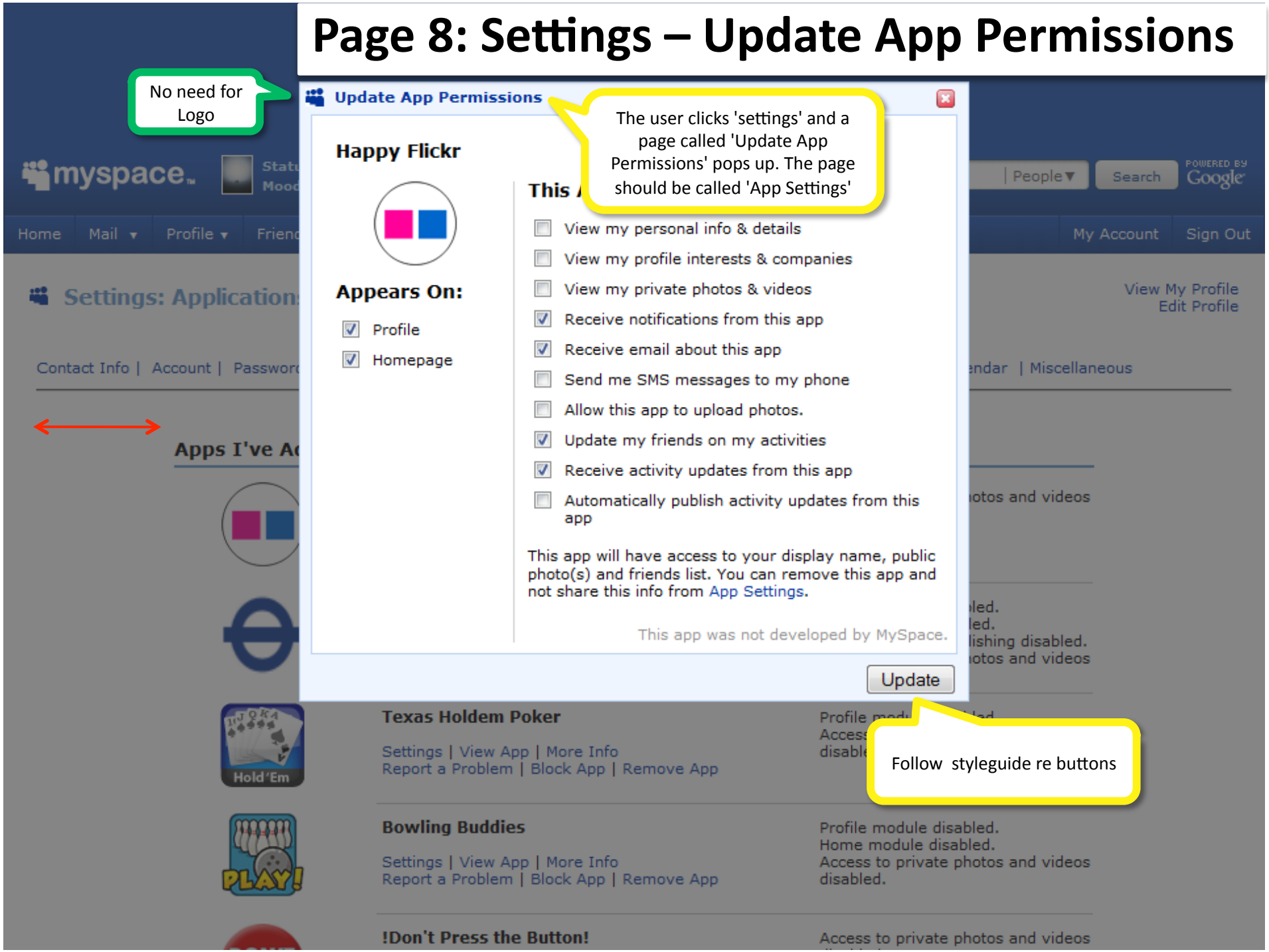
Profile module disabled.
Access to private photos and videos disabled.

Bowling Buddies

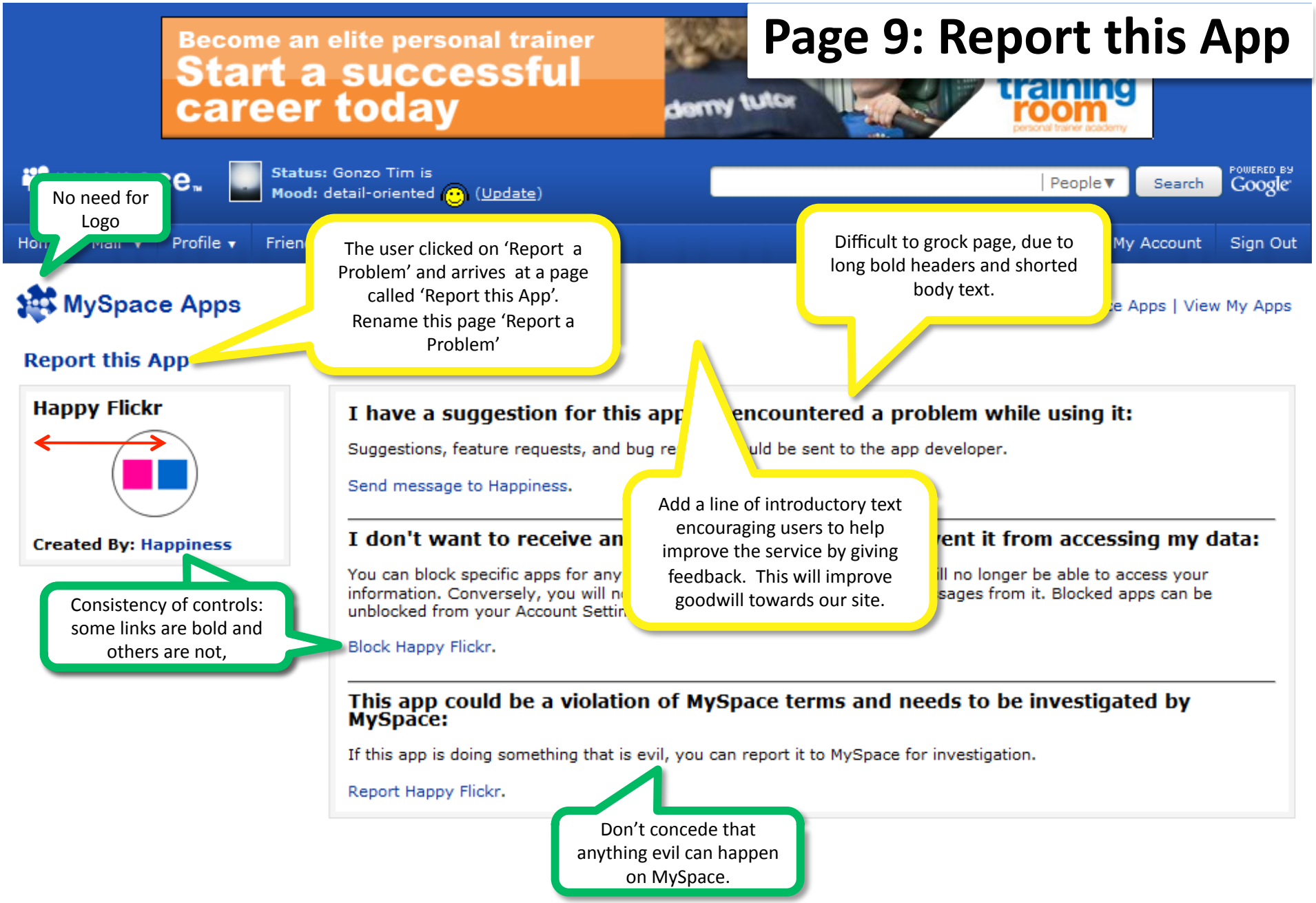
Settings | View App | More Info
Report a Problem | Block App | Remove App

Profile module disabled.
Home module disabled.
Access to private photos and videos disabled.

Page 8: Settings – Update App Permissions



Page 9: Report this App



No need for Logo

The user clicked on 'Report a Problem' and arrives at a page called 'Report this App'. Rename this page 'Report a Problem'

Difficult to grock page, due to long bold headers and shorted body text.

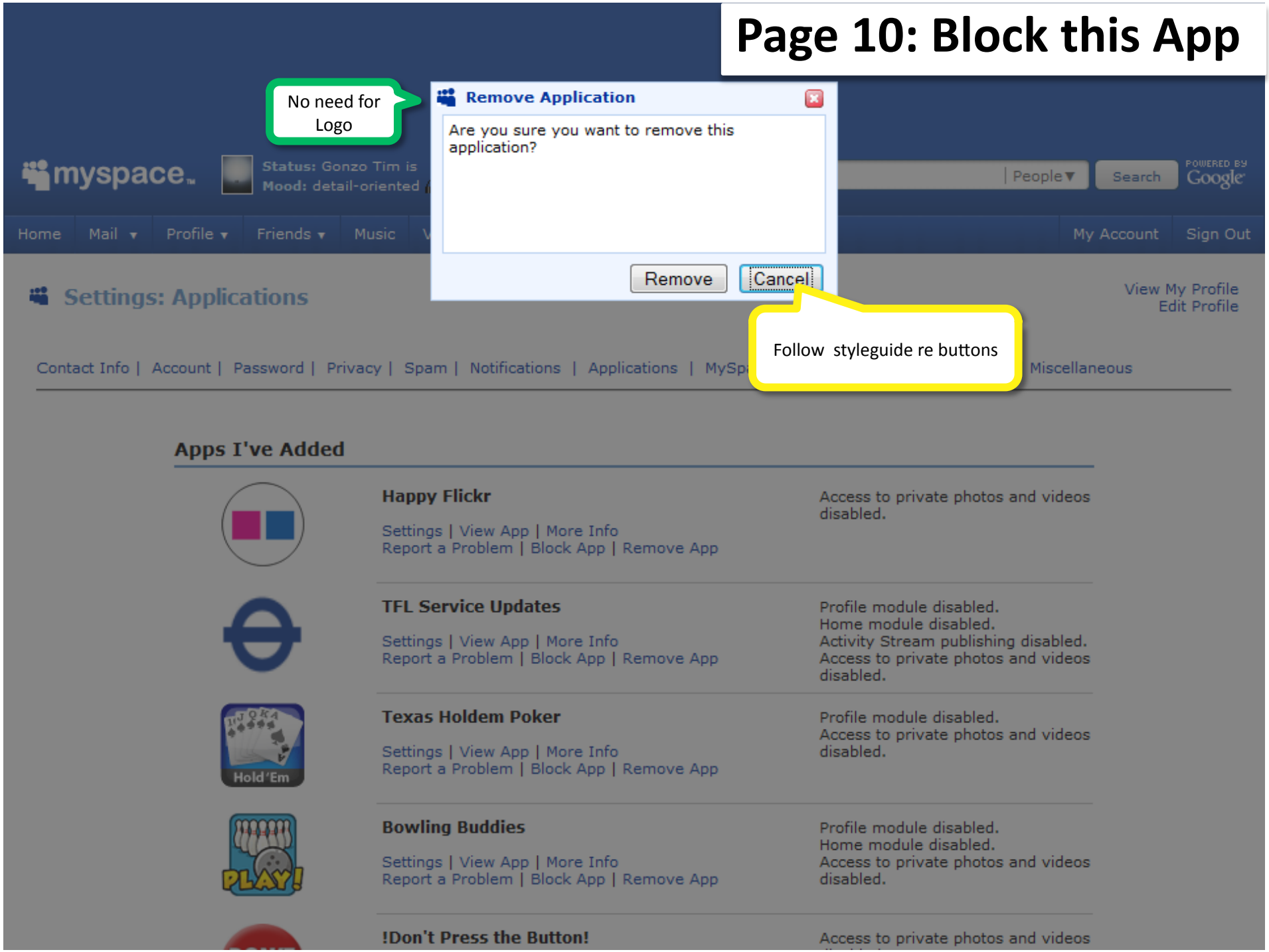
Add a line of introductory text encouraging users to help improve the service by giving feedback. This will improve goodwill towards our site.

Consistency of controls: some links are bold and others are not,

Don't concede that anything evil can happen on MySpace.

Page 10: Block this App

Page 10: Block this App

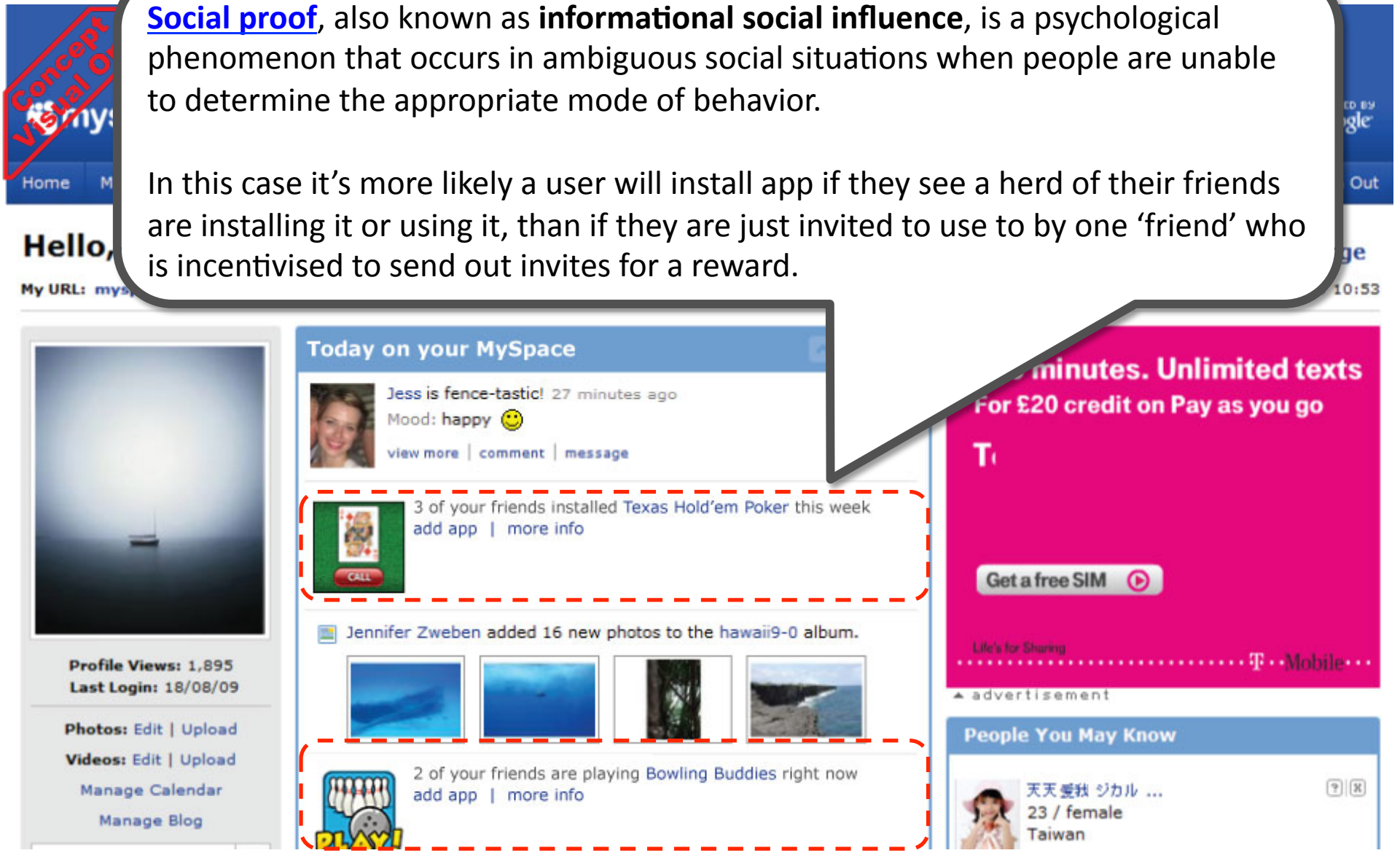


Appendix

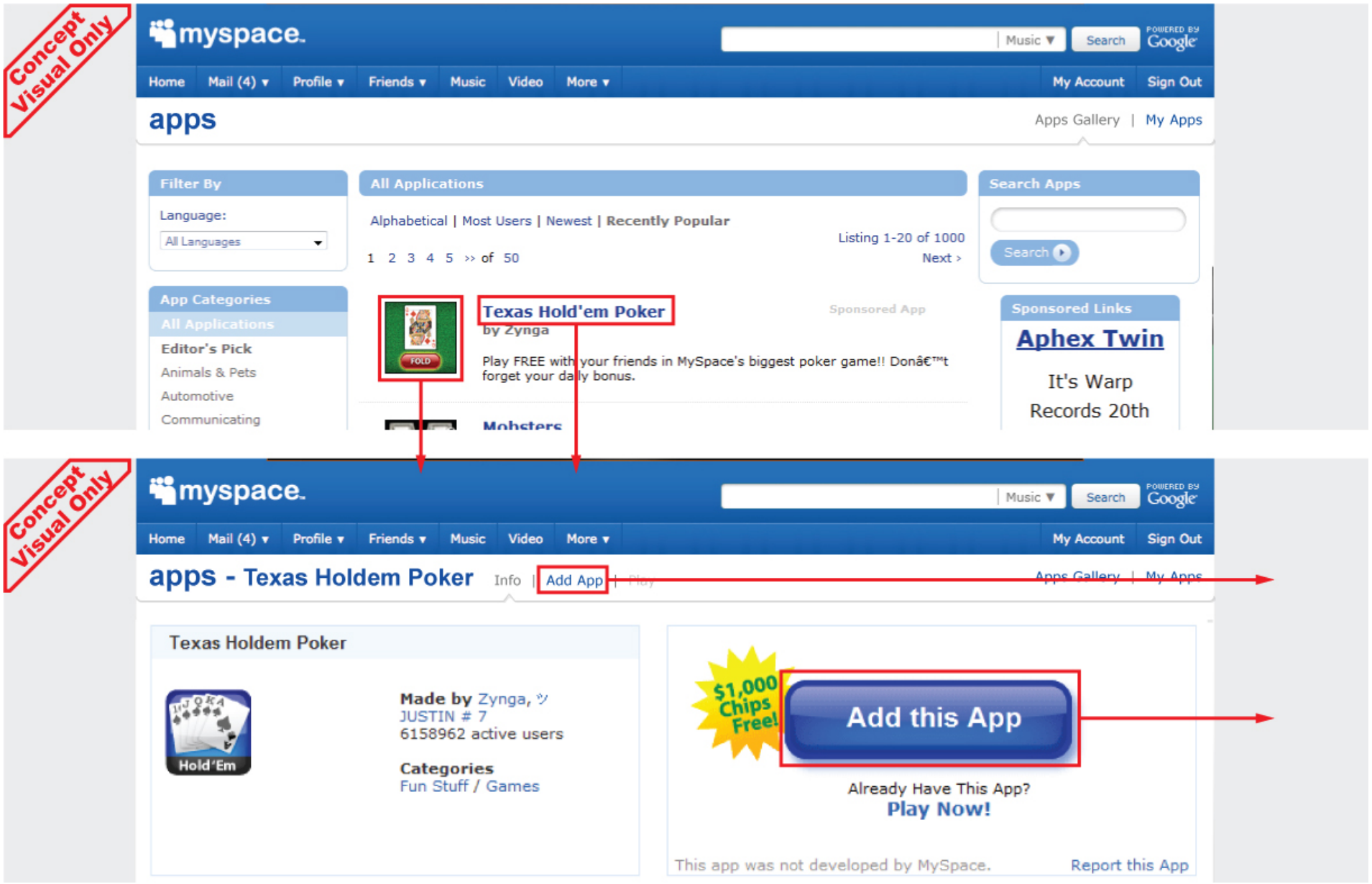
Appendix
Discovery through social proof

[Social proof](), also known as **informational social influence**, is a psychological phenomenon that occurs in ambiguous social situations when people are unable to determine the appropriate mode of behavior.

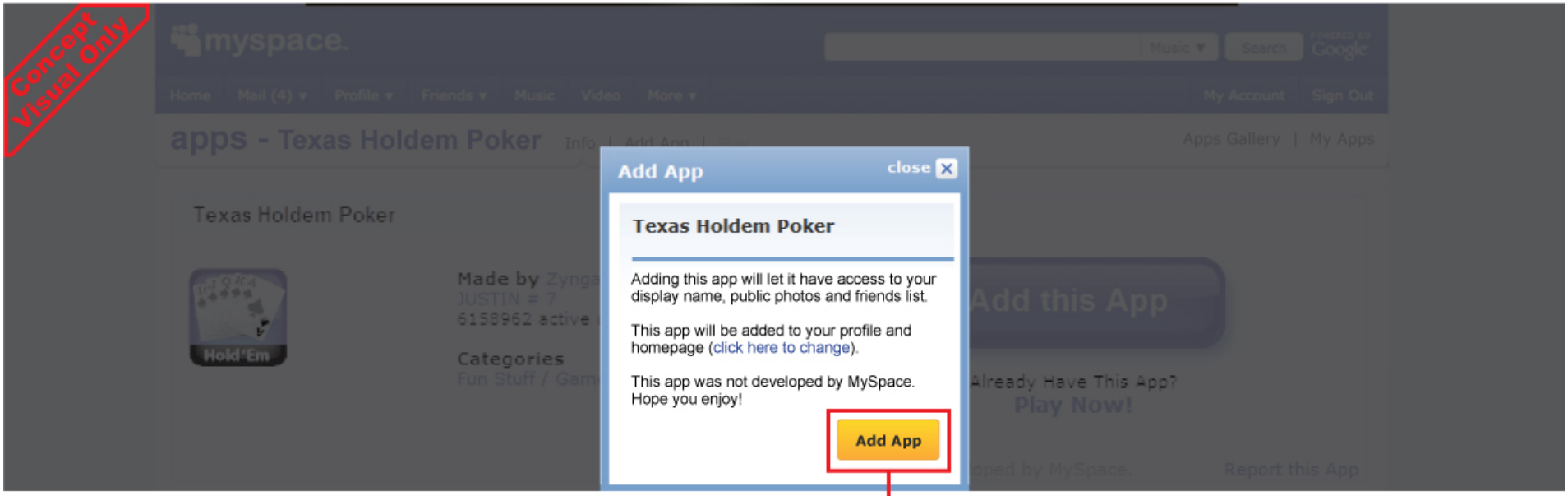
In this case it's more likely a user will install app if they see a herd of their friends are installing it or using it, than if they are just invited to use to by one 'friend' who is incentivised to send out invites for a reward.

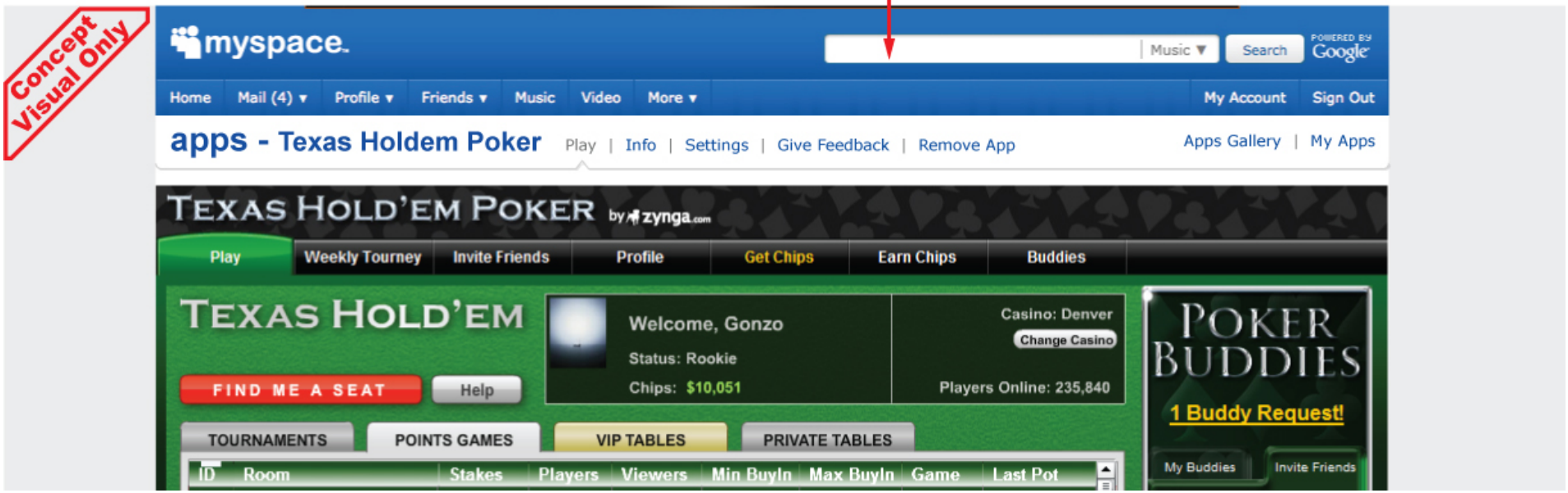
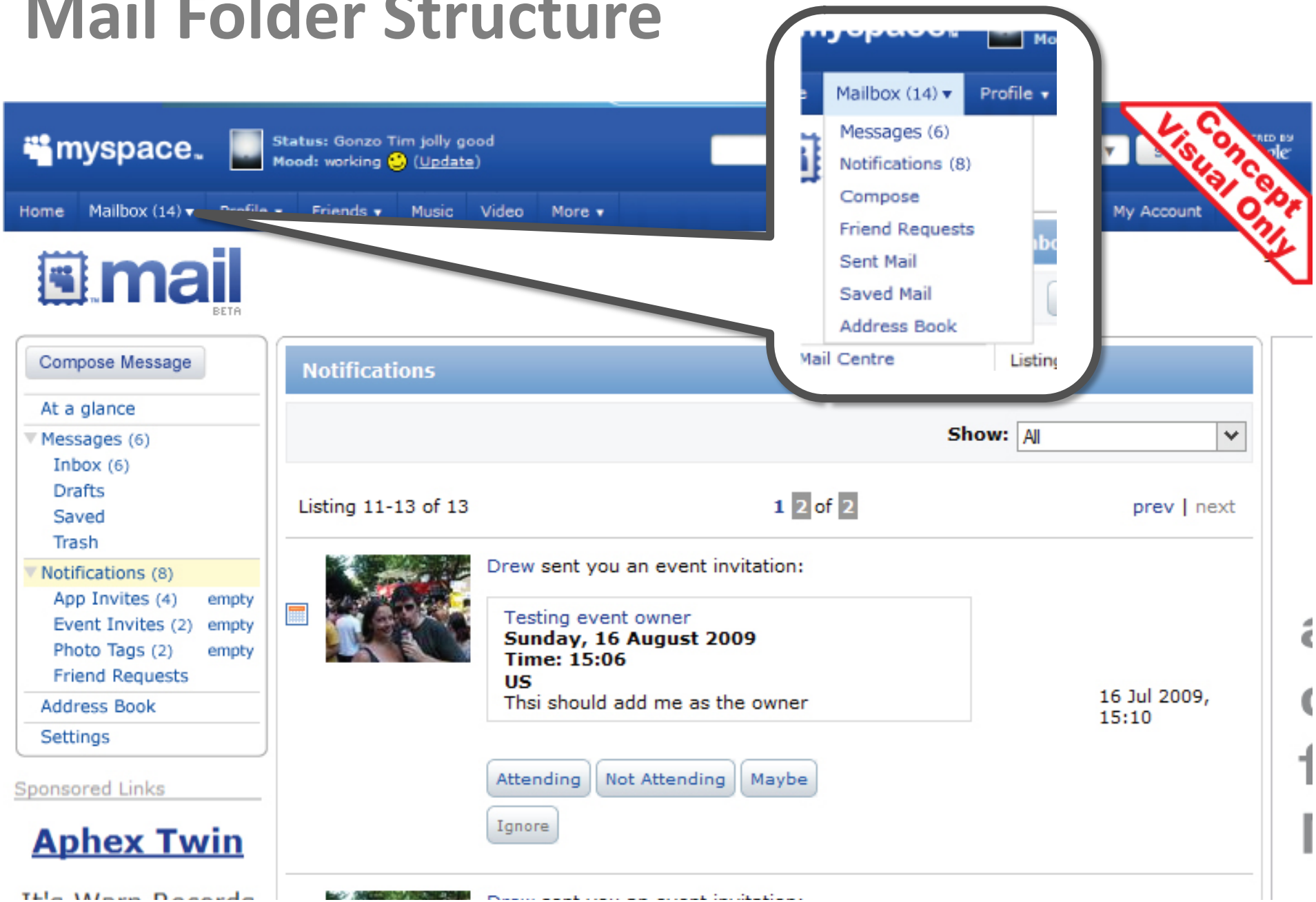


Appendix
Nav / Install Flow 1



Appendix
Nav / Install Flow 2





Appendix
Mail Folder Structure