

LAB 126 PRODUCT FAMILY OOBE UNIFICATION

Project: Multiple product verticals OOBE/setup process visual/UX unification

Role: UX / Visual design

Date: November 2015

In a massive project with a very broad scope, I, as part of a six-person design team, was tasked to unify the OOBE (out-of-the-box) experience of every product vertical in Amazon Digital Products' rapidly expanding portfolio of loosely related properties. Many of these products, such as Echo and the tiny Dash Button previously had little or no brand identity, but now share a much greater degree of cohesion thanks to my team's efforts in creating a modern and adaptable visual and user experience design language. These schema provided both a positive brand statement and a robust and flexible framework for future designers and products.

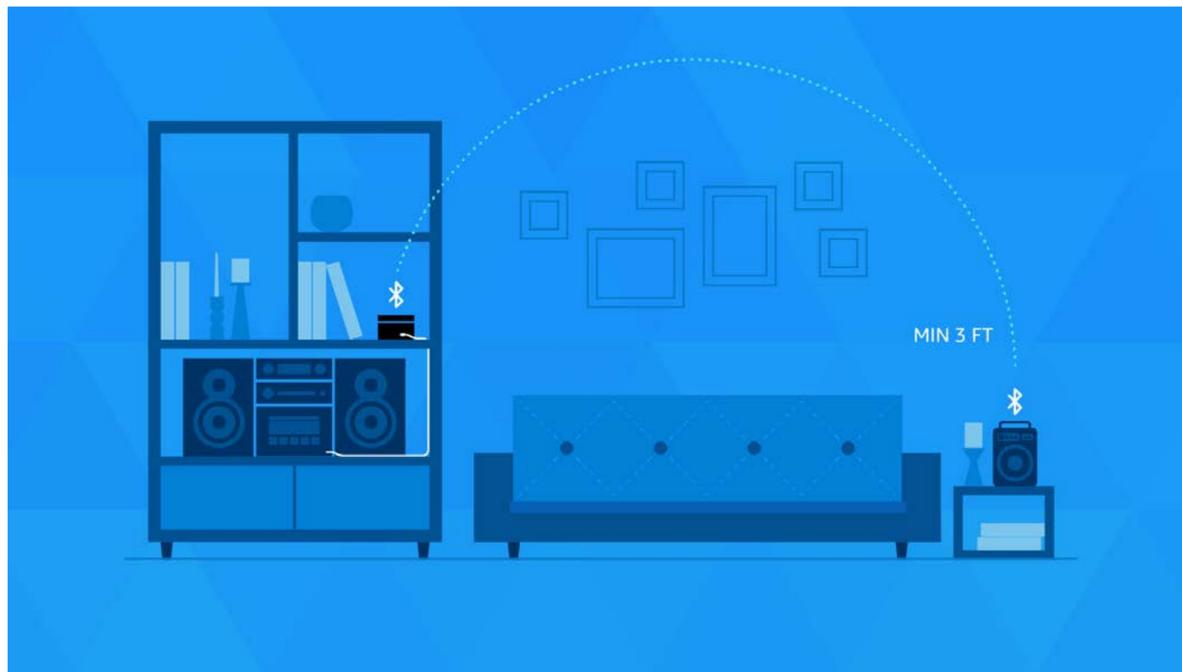


Fig. E059: Echo Family First-Run Video Featuring TTF Styling

Building from my team's early success in streamlining the setup process for the most recent version of the Dash button, we sought to bring the same ease of use and great first impression to the various soon-to-be released Alexa-powered products. As stated, the project was massive in scope, especially for a team of three designers. Below is an initial audit of Amazon Digital Products' properties and OOBE components, an early step in determining the project's total breadth, set milestones, and otherwise form strategy.

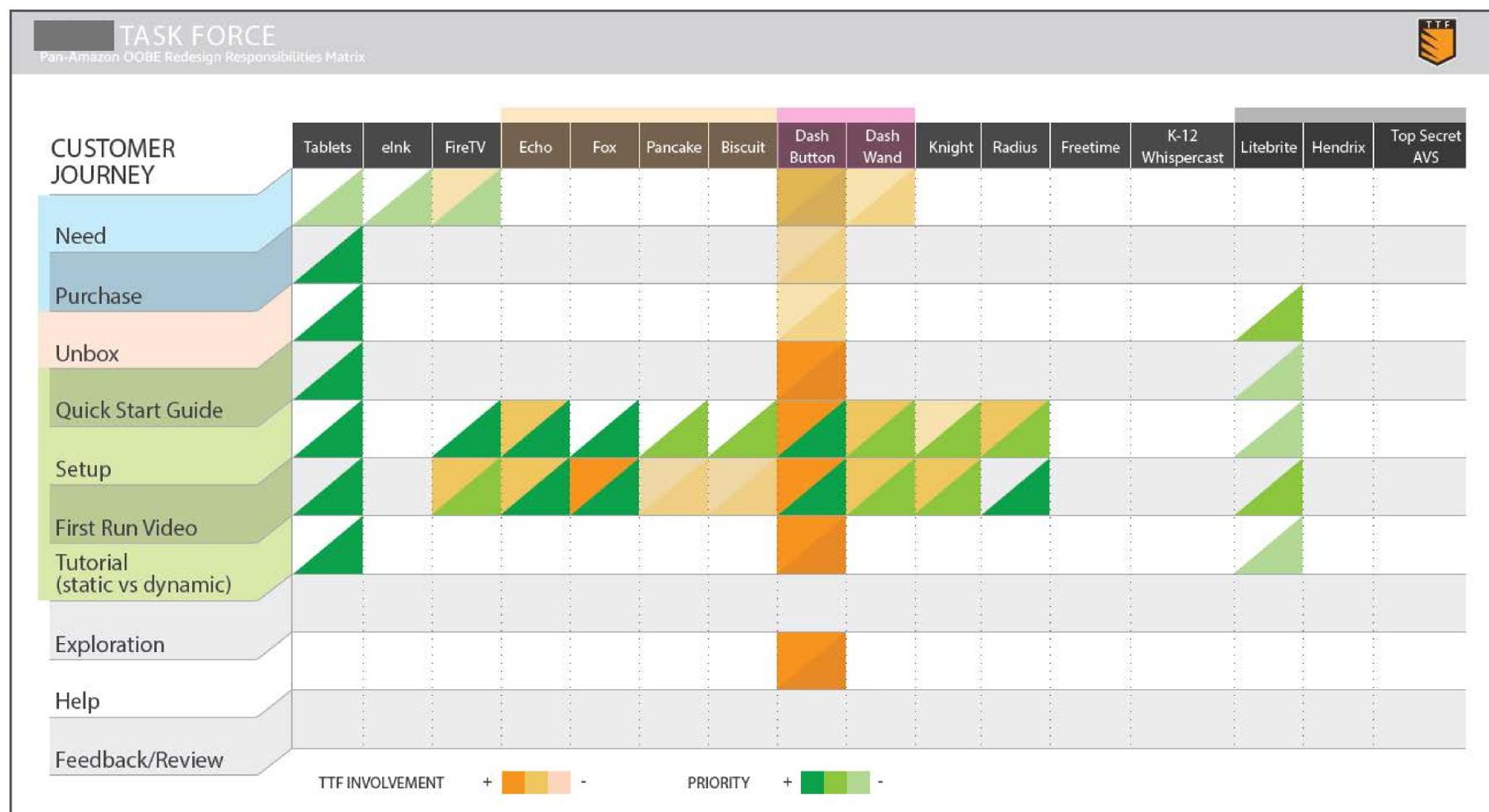


Fig. E060: Early Process Matrix to Determine Number, Complexity, and Task Force Involvement with Lab 126 Product Verticals

An example of the early work done by my team at Amazon, the streamlined OOBЕ flow for the Dash Button and Echo Dot (left) brought consistency to a product family largely lacking in such. At right is a frame from the original Fire TV first run video, an example of the functional yet brand-free design work that characterized the products at the time.

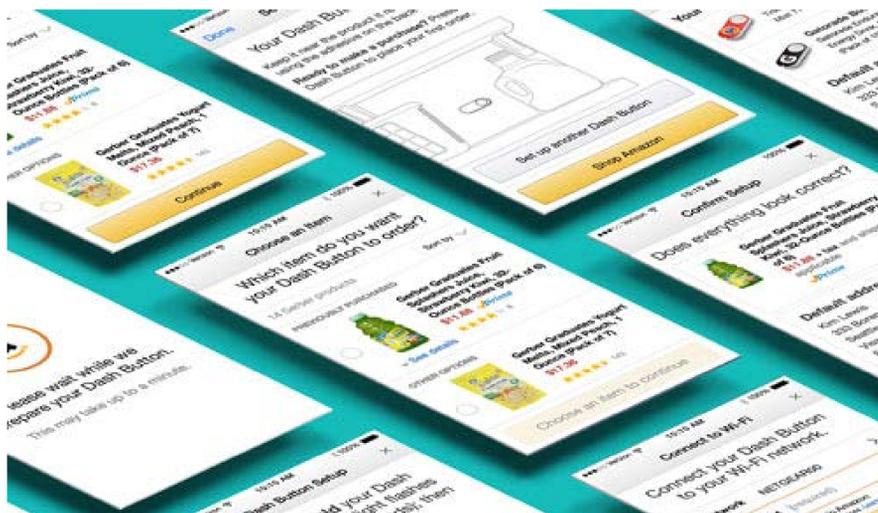


Fig. E065: Echo Dot Quick Start Guide



Fig. E066: "Janky Steve" the crudely rendered host of the original Fire TV First-Run Video

My greatest individual contribution to the process of unifying the portfolio's OOBЕ experiences was in my work to develop a visual style of illustrative content throughout the OOBЕ processes, especially important in tutorial and introduction videos. A visual language was almost entirely absent from Amazon's products at this time but I, along with the team's art director distilled a visual style that is both feasible, scalable, and adaptable across various products and media.

Some examples of the visual style developed from the Echo Dot, Fire TV, and Echo Show first-run videos.

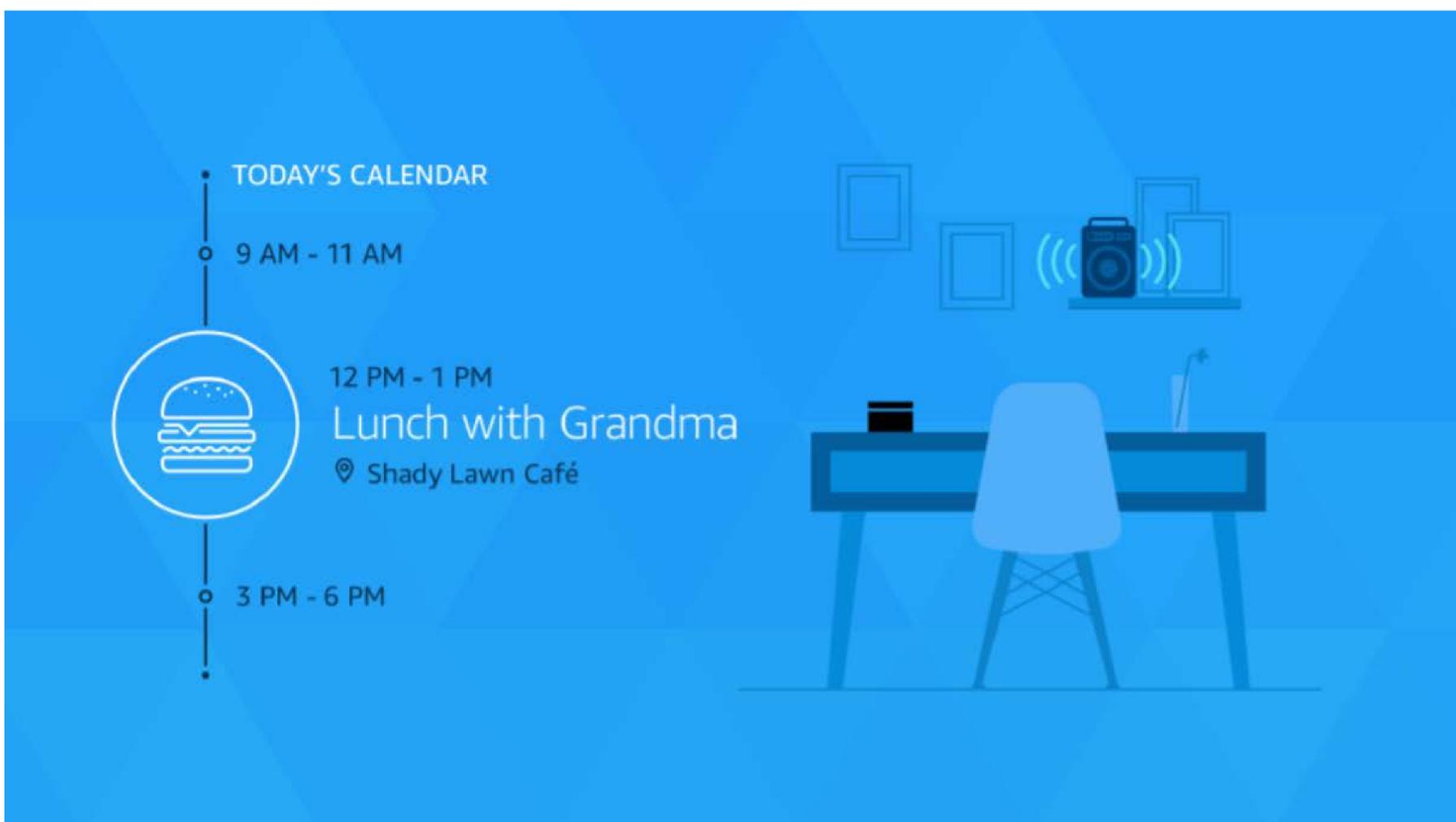


Fig. E068: An Early Storyboard Panel for the Echo Dot First-Run Video



Fig. E069: A Still Frame from the Echo Tap First-Run Video



Fig. E070: A Still Frame from the Echo Tap First-Run Video



Fig. E071: A Still Frame from the Fire TV First-Run Video

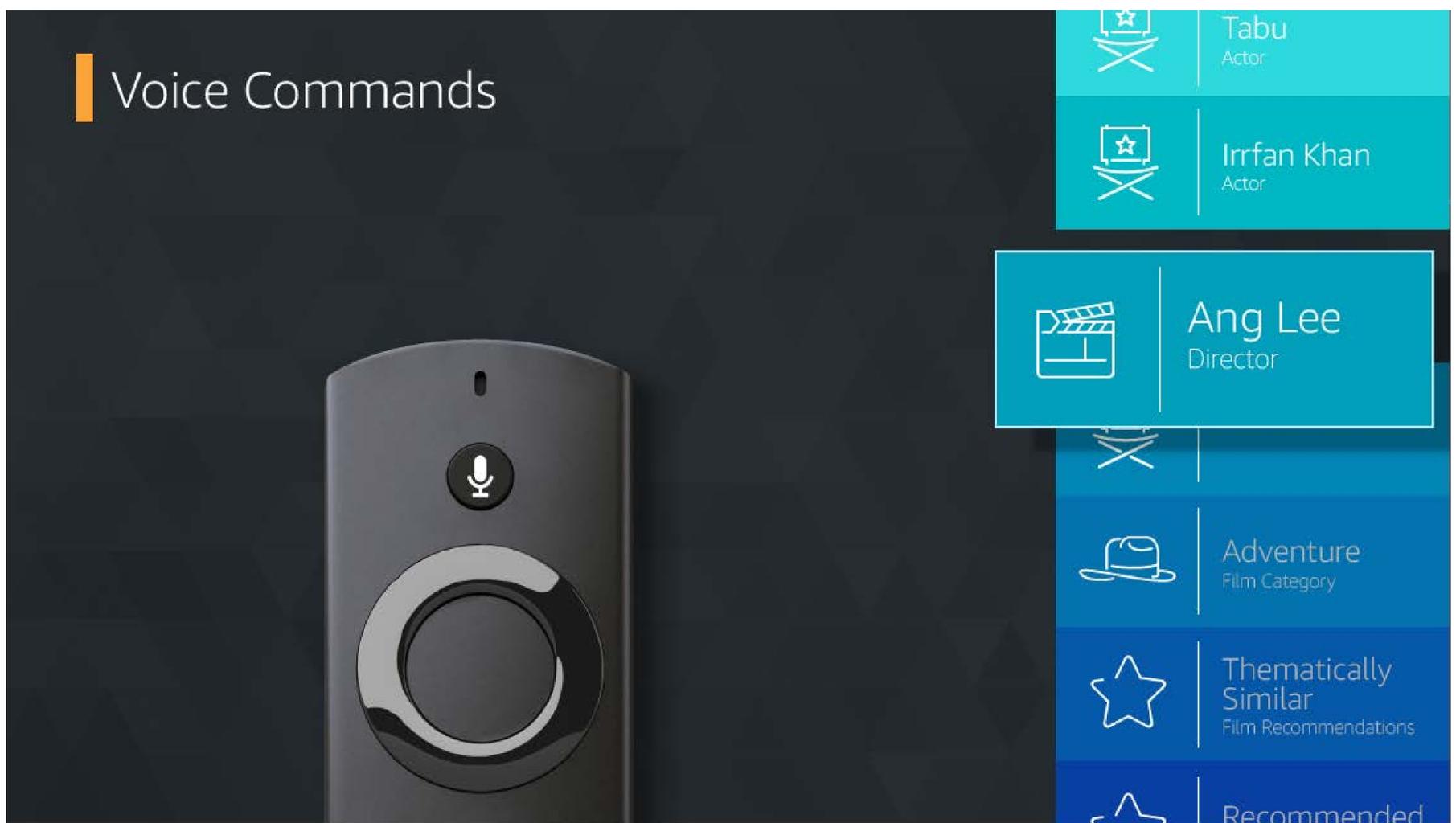


Fig. E072: A Still Frame from a conceptual Fire TV First-Run Video

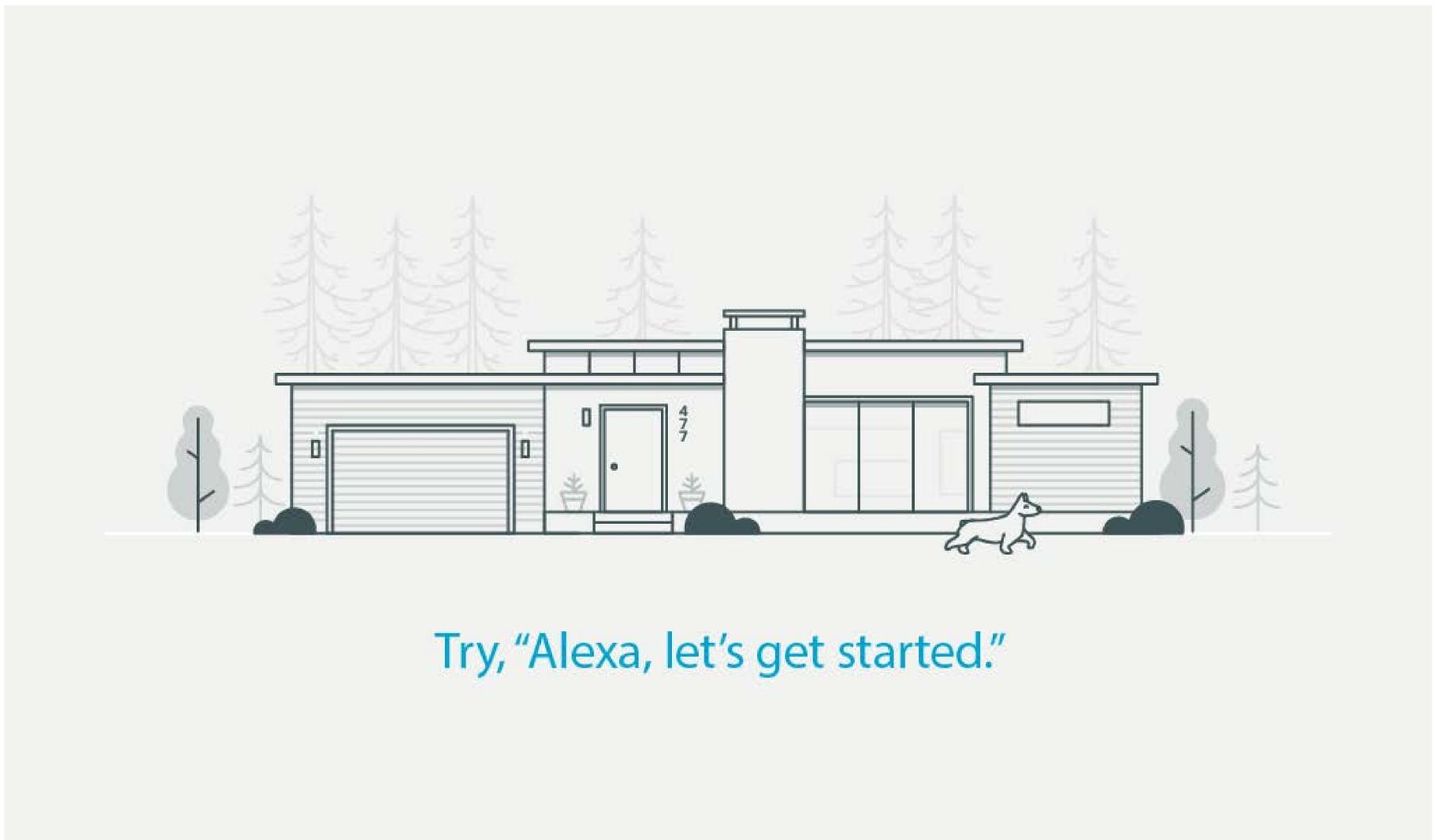


Fig. E072 A Still Frame from a Conceptual Echo View First-Run Video

The style was synthesized from what extant design language we could find, beginning with a tessellated triangular pattern, and growing into a unifying visual character that can be seen in the OOB sequences of all of the Echo product family and to a lesser extent in the Fire TV first-run video. Over the course of a year, the setup experiences and visual styles we created became pervasive enough and sufficiently accepted by the Amazon design community that it began to become incorporated into not just the OOB experiences but the very systems and UI of new products, as can be seen here in the Echo Show's update screens, messaging app, and Fire TV's settings menu.



Fig. E062-63: Amazon Digital Products Packaging Samples

Some examples of UI into which the OOBE/first run video visual style began to propagate

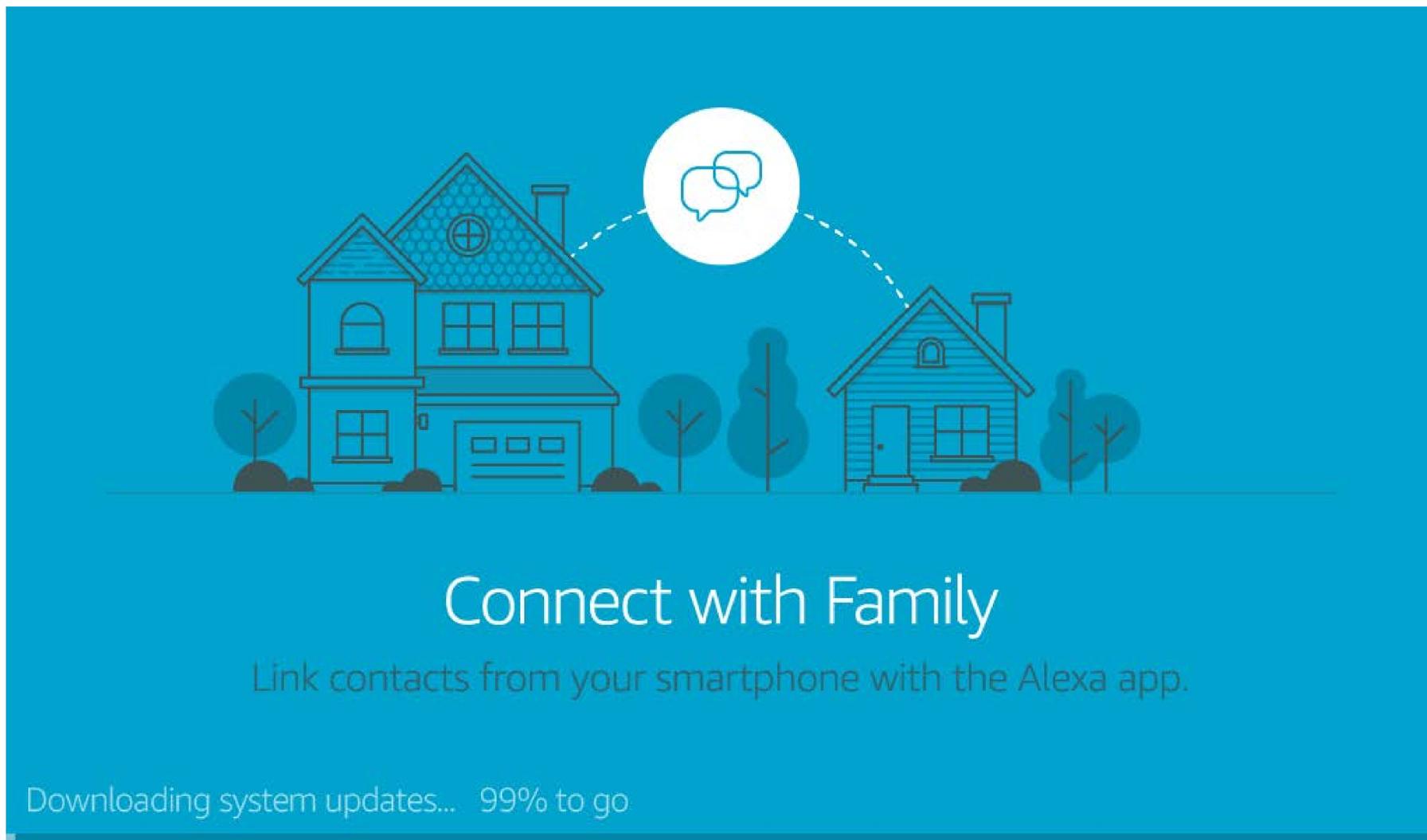


Fig. E073: A Screen from the Echo Show Over-the-Air System Update

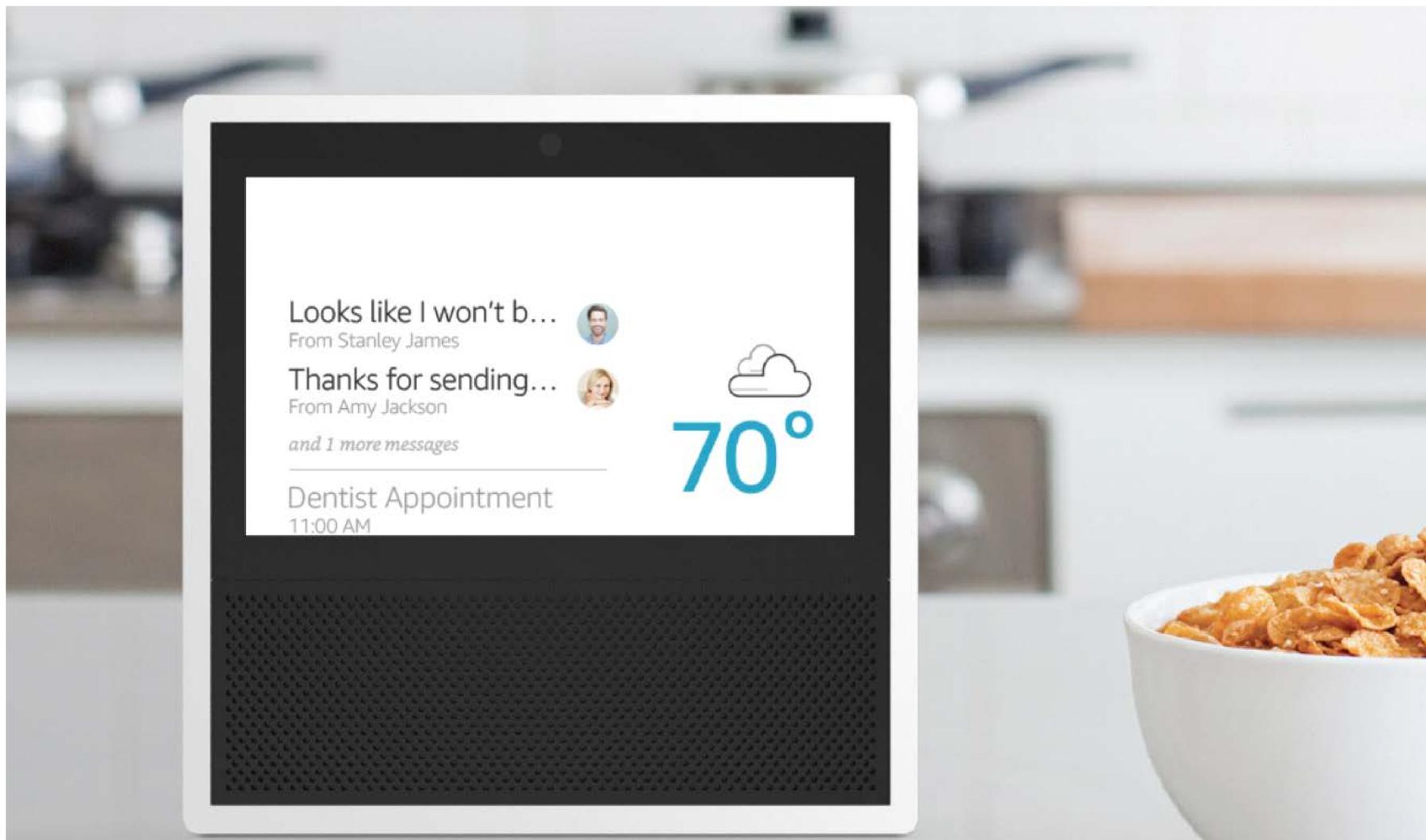


Fig. E074: A Mockup of the Echo Show Messaging App Showing Tiger Task Force-Inspired Iconography

Connect to your Network

Press  to do this later.



Pancake House



Cafe Internet



John's House



Join Other
Network



Configure
Ethernet
Connection

Fig. E075: The Fire TV WiFi Setup Screen Featuring Task Force Visual Styling

In conclusion, my team and I brought a brand identity to a product family that previously lacked one. Though my original design work was constrained to the OOB and first-run videos, my team's work has now expanded beyond those segments and has become part of the DNA of Lab 126 verticals. As part of this team I helped deliver a simple and high-quality design system that will endure into the future and remain a lasting, positive contribution to Amazon and its products.

DISNEY MOVIES ANYWHERE

Project: Disney Movies Anywhere Fire TV app login

Role: UX / Visual design

Date: February 2016

The Disney Movies Anywhere (DMA) app allows users to watch their purchased Disney content on any device that supports it. When DMA first came on board Fire TV, however, there were some real problems. Connecting to an existing Disney account was wearisome, and, under certain circumstances could prevent users from seeing some of their previously purchased content. By working with developers and insisting on a high standard, I was able to almost entirely mitigate sign-in issues and greatly streamline the process, resulting in a huge win for the user.

Initially I was tasked with alleviating the common but significant user pain of the multi-step, multi-device login process. This cumbersome process requires a user to access Disney.com on an alternate, internet-connected device to generate a code which must then be entered on their Fire TV. The user, in order to purchase content, must then return to their alternate device to enter their Amazon Instant Video credentials, linking their Disney and Amazon account. The following screens show the essence of the original login user pain followed by a mockup flow which was my initial counter-proposal, a simplified and technically feasible solution.

Fig. E025 Disney Movies Anywhere Android Tablet App

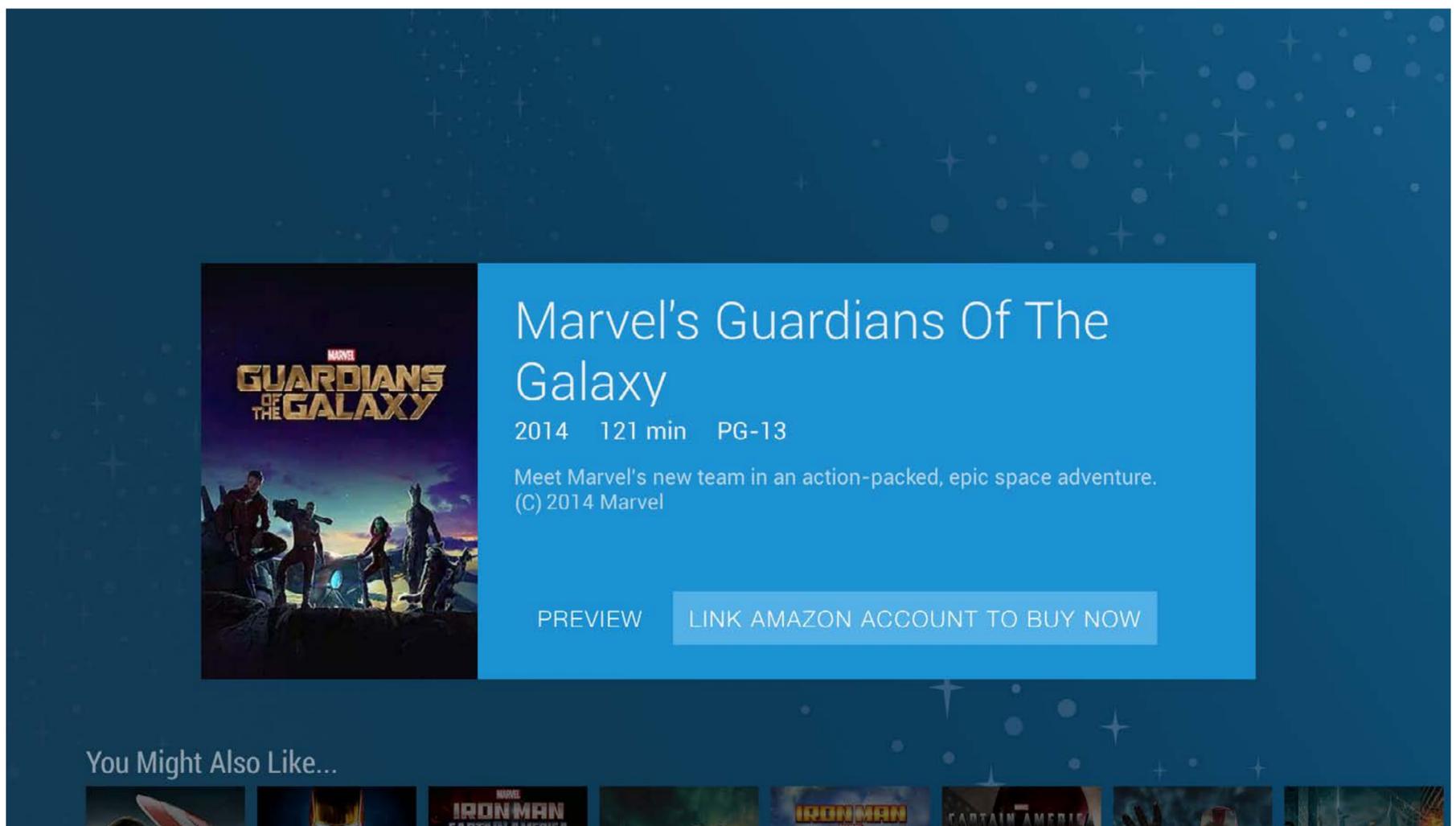
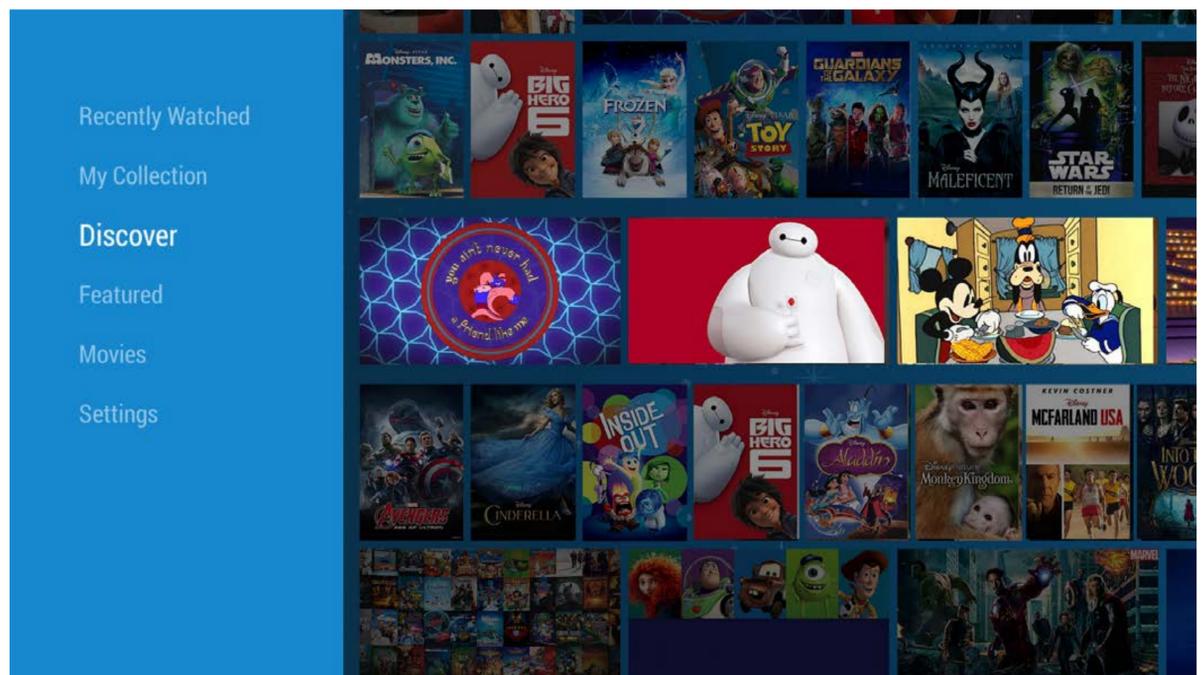


Fig. E026 "Original" DMA Movie Purchase Screen

The original DMA design called for this blackout screen to redirect users away from their FTV to their phone or computer

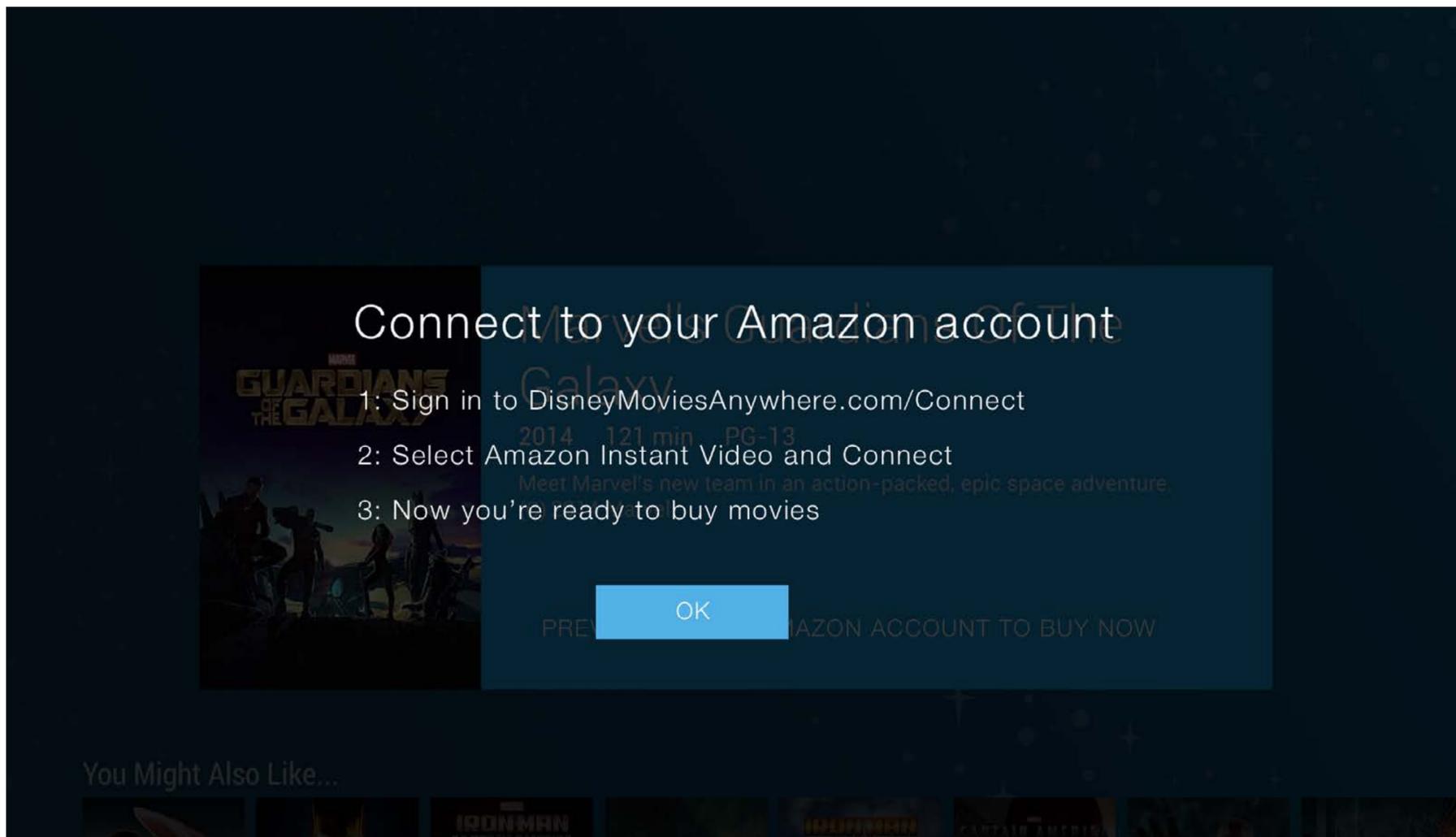


Fig. E027 DMA: User Is Directed away from Fire TV in "Original" Design

Initial Counter-Proposal: User Logs in via In-App Keyboard

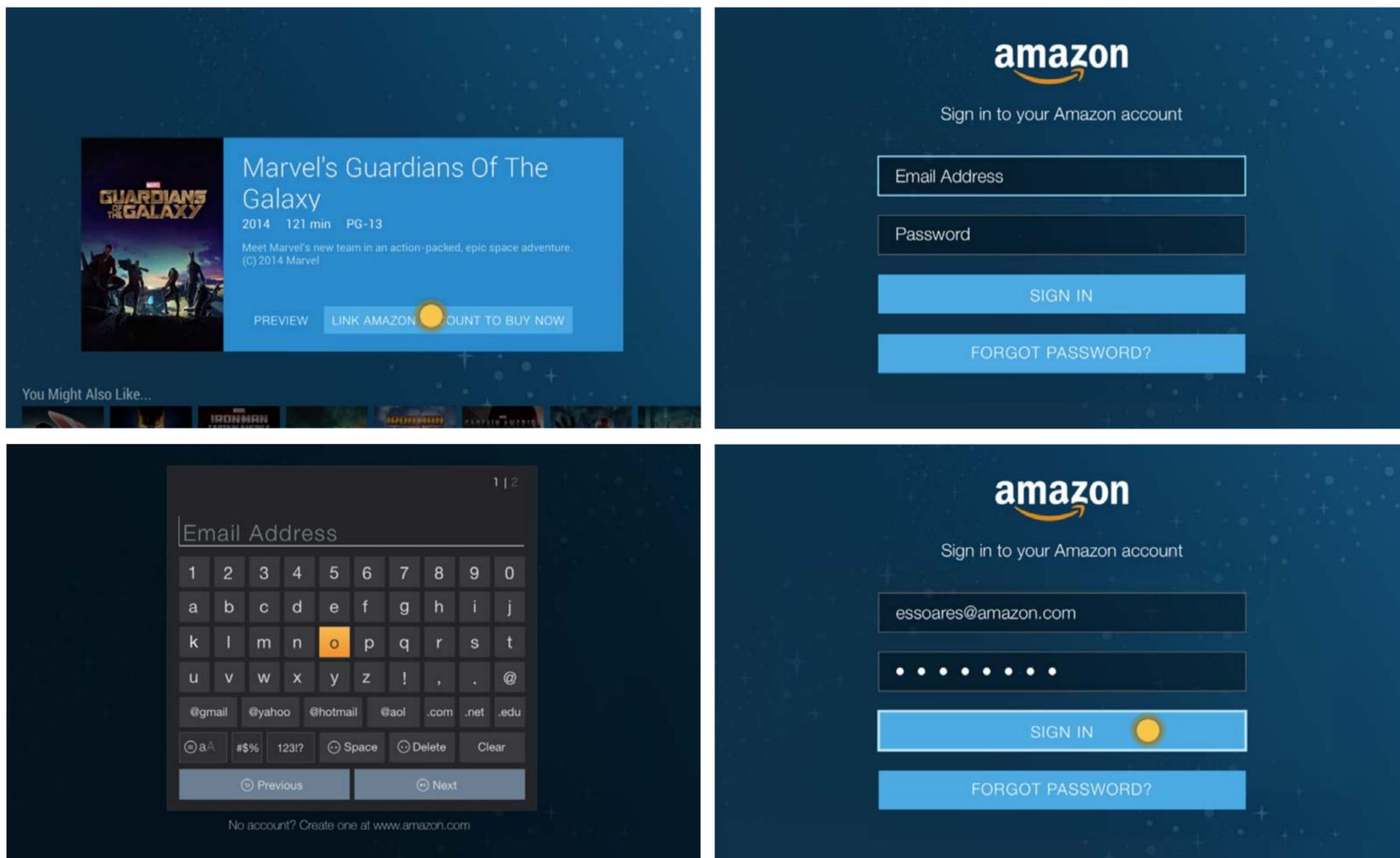


Fig. E028 UX Proposal: Unregistered User Attempts AIV Purchase, Logs on via In-App Keyboard

The above counter-proposal mitigated the pain of the multi-device sign-in process, but a larger problem still remained. If a user were to sign into a Disney account other than the one linked to their Amazon account, they would potentially be unable to view their previously purchased Disney content on the device, an obviously catastrophic user pain. I took the initiative to explore solutions to this imposing problem.

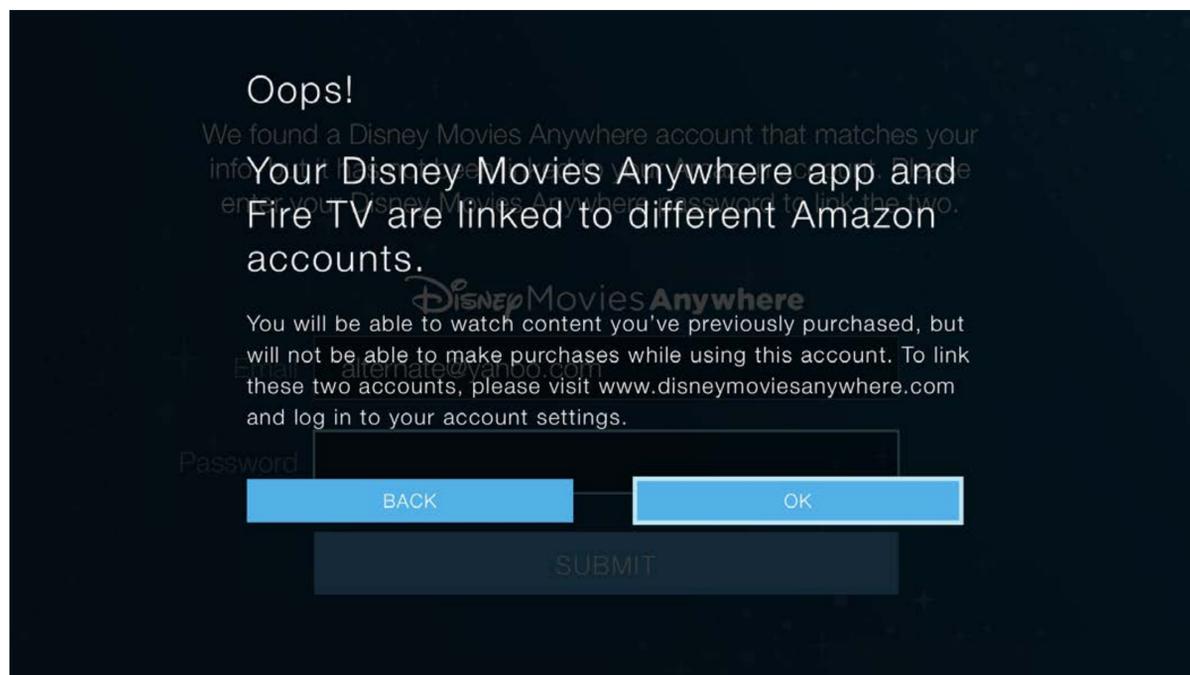


Fig. E030: Screen Similar to Proposed Warning Dialog

While speaking to developers to find a way of automatically detecting account discrepancies, I discovered, through an Amazon Digital Products Senior Solutions Architect, an opportunity to implement the same login and authentication system used by the primary Amazon app. This authentication system would automatically check for previously linked accounts or any unlinked accounts associated by name or email address. This new system would reduce the multi-step, multi-device sign-in process, in most cases, to a one-click experience. Below is an exploration of the five most distinct possible user sign-in paths.

Use Case A - User has Previously-Linked Accounts (Single-Sign-In, Ideal User Path)

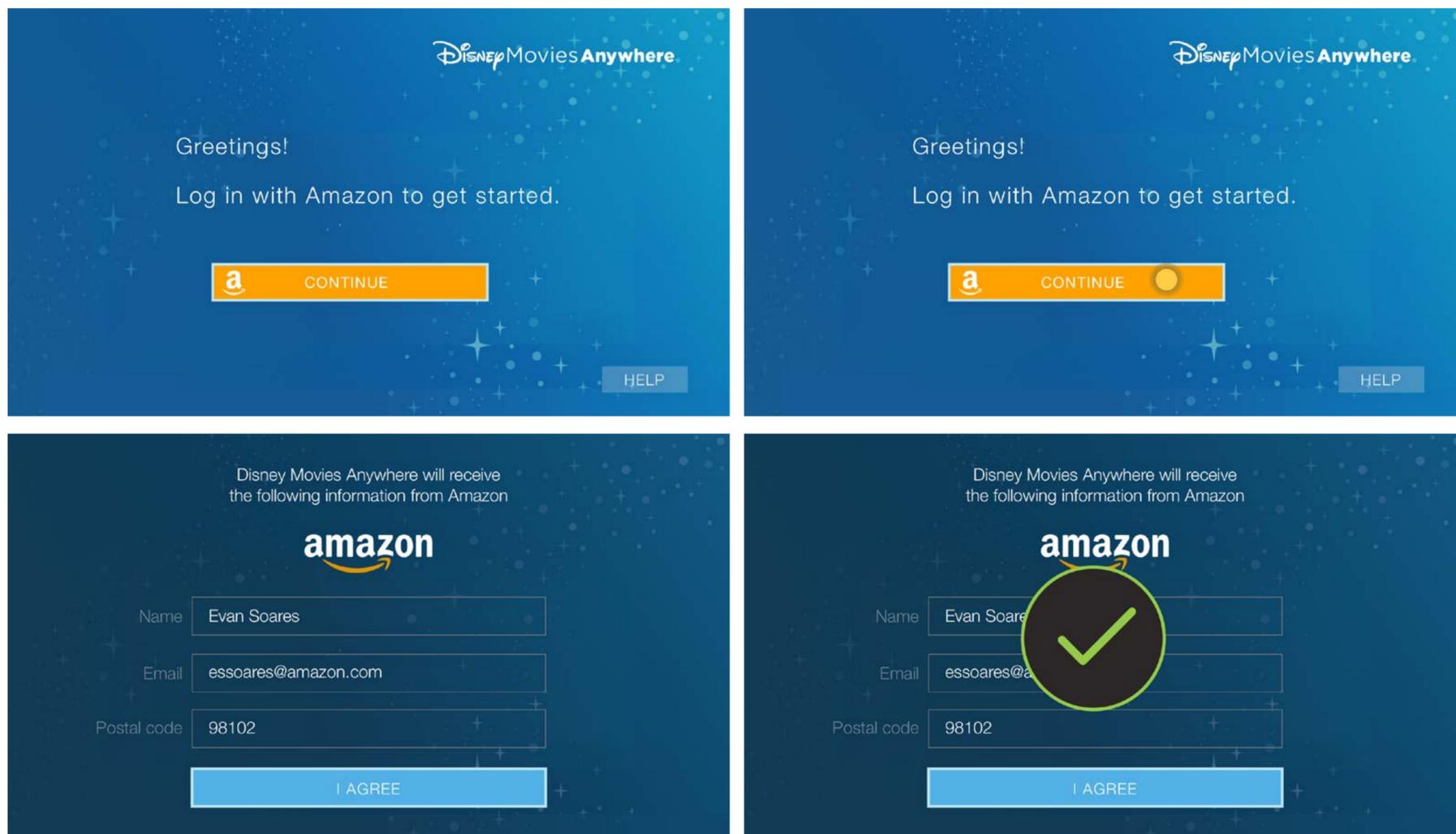


Fig. E031: Use Case A - User has Previously-Linked Accounts (Single-Sign-In)

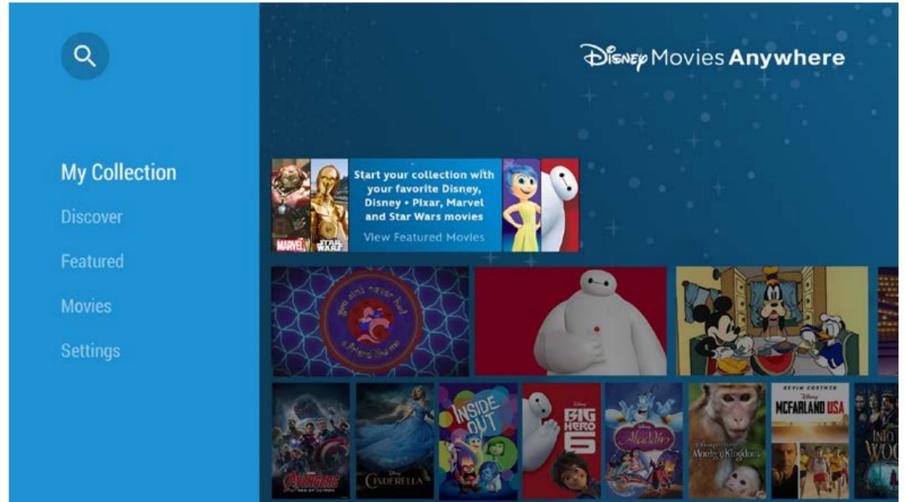
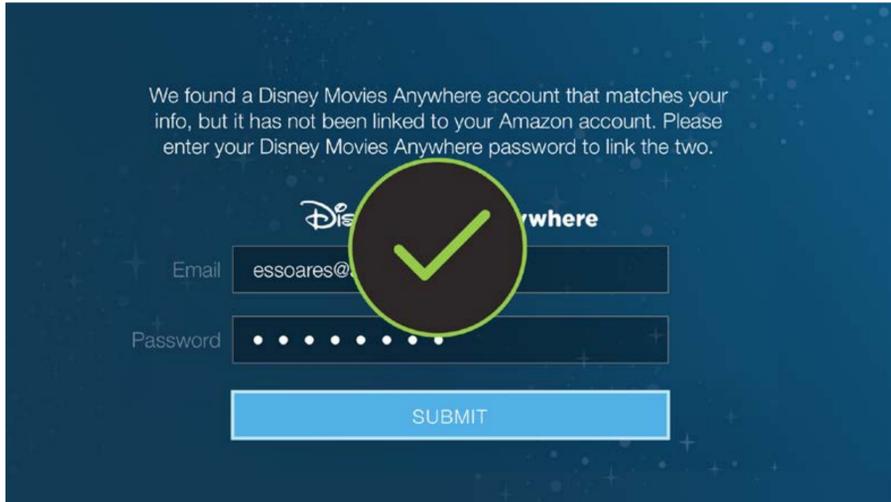
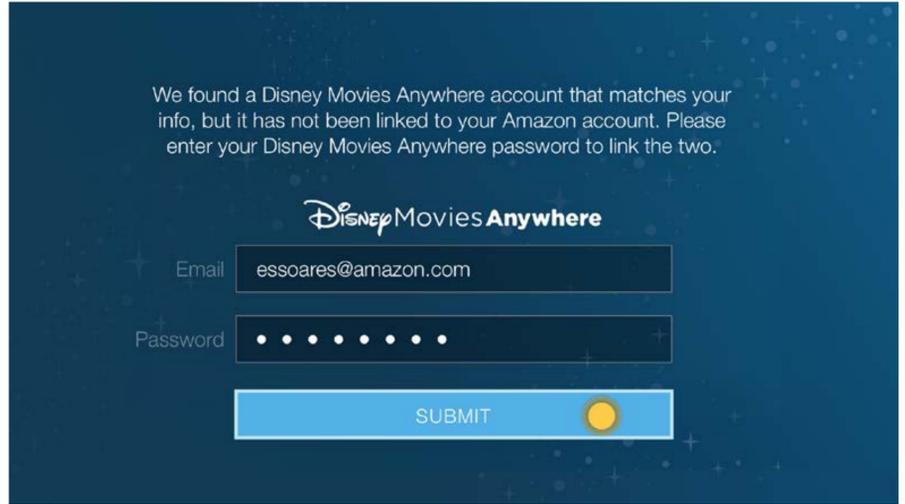
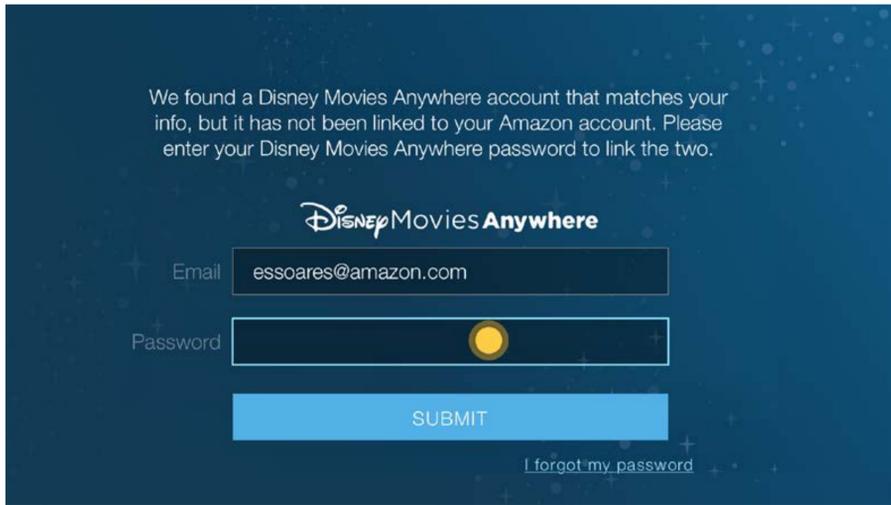
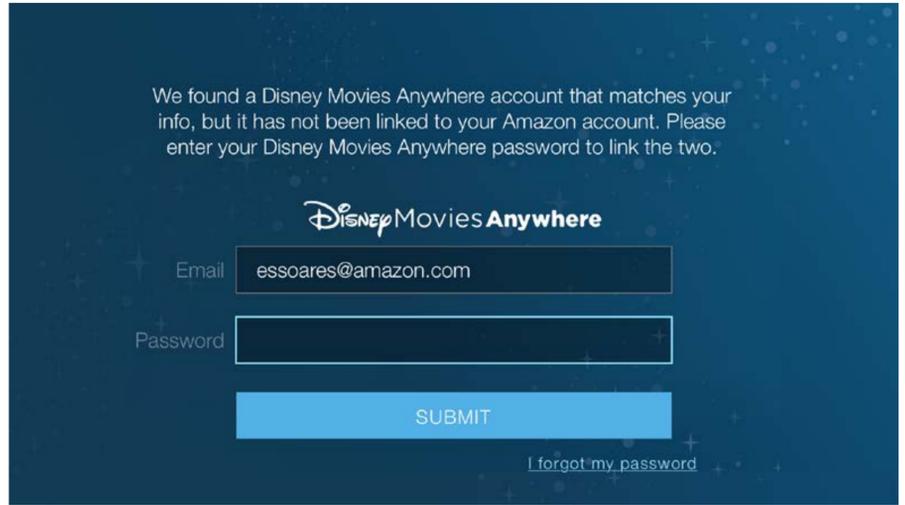
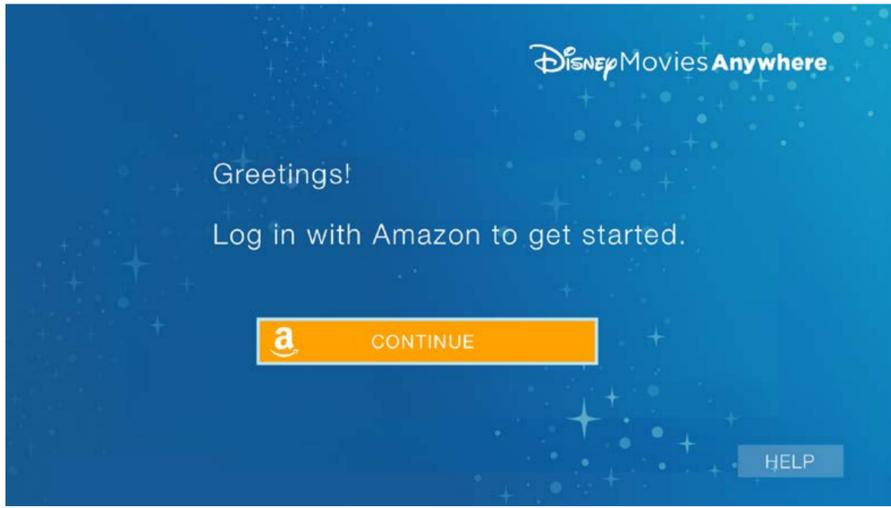


Fig. E032: Use Case B - User has Unlinked, But Associated Accounts

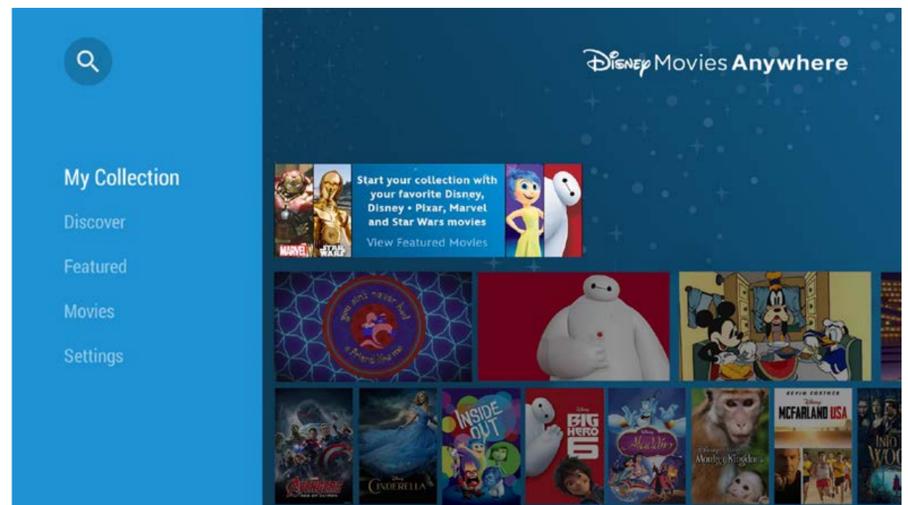
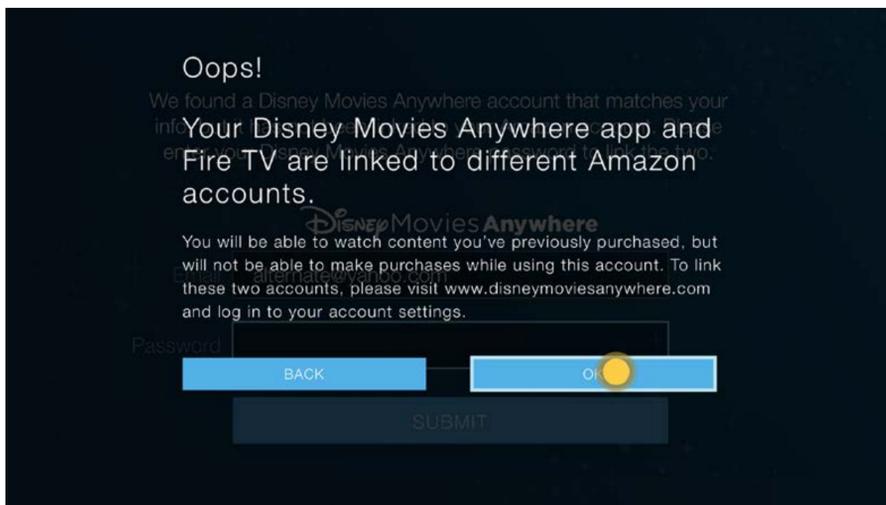
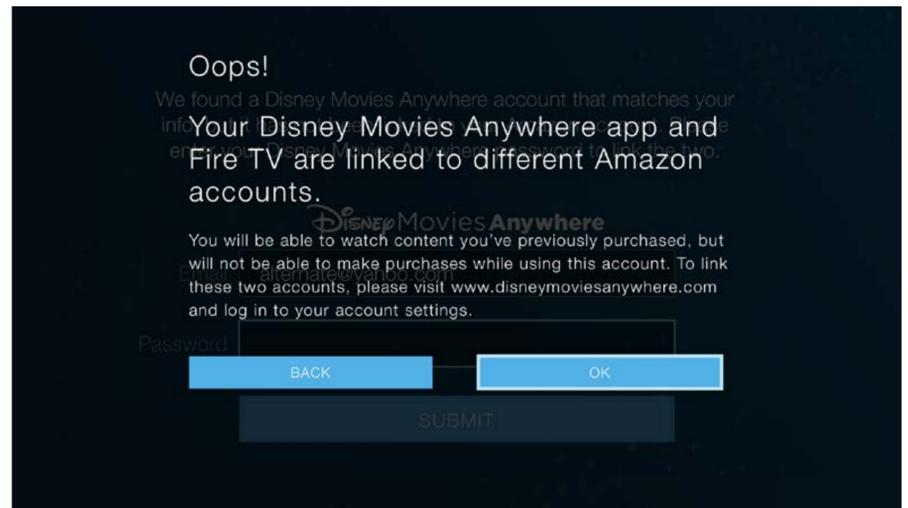
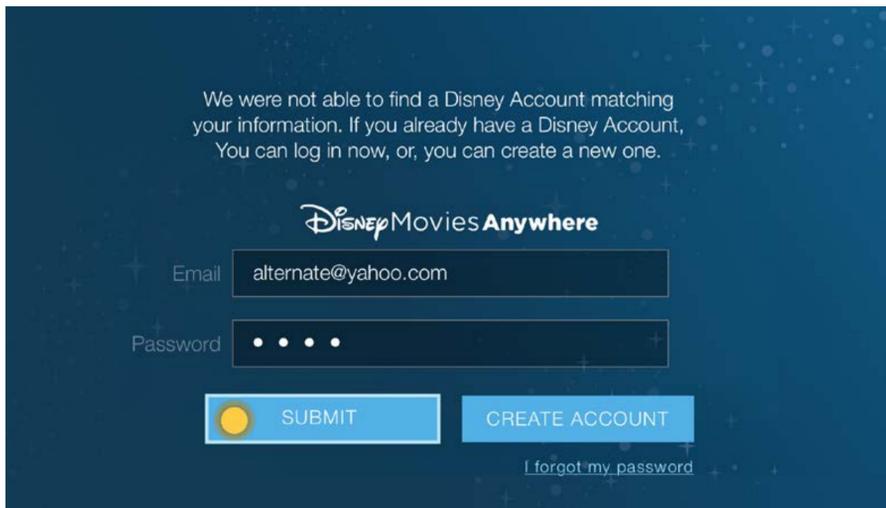
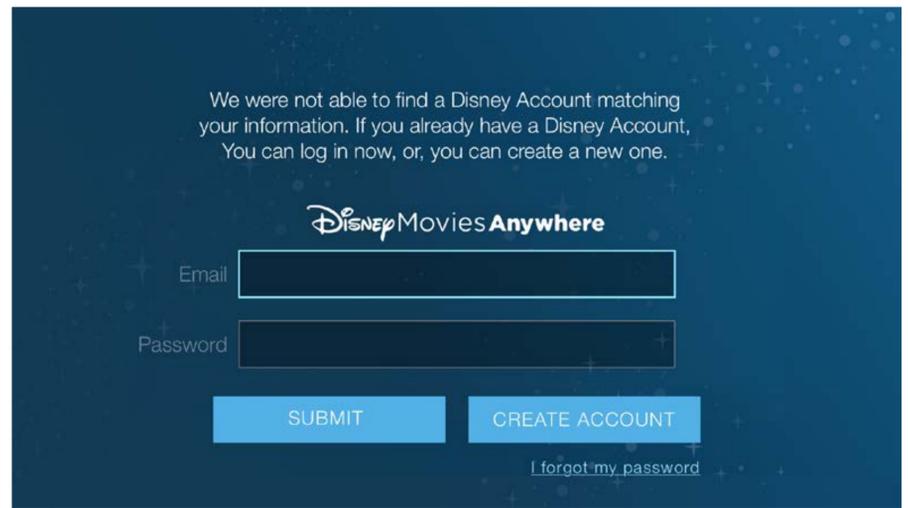
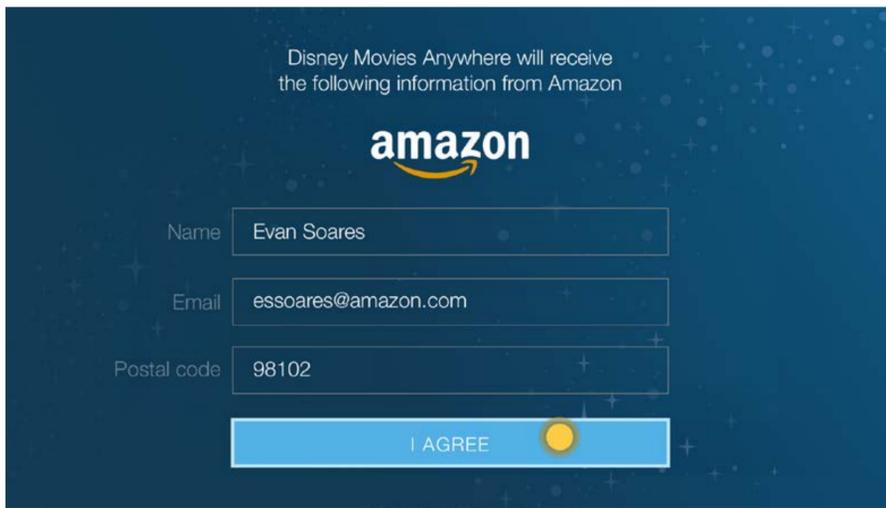


Fig. E035: Use Case E - User Signs in with Unassociated Disney Account That Is Linked to Different Amazon Account

Users who had not previously linked Disney and Amazon Instant Video ID's, but had previously created each using the same email address would need only to enter their Disney account password, and those who had no associated Disney account would be provided with the opportunity to create one in that moment through the app. Ultimately, very few users would be subject to the previously described user pain of unavailable content. This is a very clean solution to a previously sticky problem. Working as the lone UX designer attached to this phase of the app development, I consider this solution my greatest individual UX design win, and a very positive result for the app, Disney, Amazon, and ultimately the user.

STANDALONE FIRE TV DEVICE

Project: Fire TV Standalone Device

Role: UX / Visual design

Date: April 2016

Amazon began working on the standalone Fire TV in early 2016. The familiar Fire TV platform would need to cross product categories from HDMI stick and/or connected box to fully-fledged television capable of functioning without being connected to the internet or logged in to an Amazon account, which introduced some interesting user experience design problems. My UX design and visual explorations helped bridge the gap between product categories as well as from Fire TV 2.0 to the much more fluid and visually rich interface that followed.

As a standalone TV, users should expect the ability to use their device as a display without any internet connection or effort beyond connecting it to a power source. Previous Fire TV peripherals were not designed with the ability to access coaxial cable, antenna, or other inputs or to do anything at all before WiFi setup and user sign-in. These new paths needed to be explored. Additionally, due to the fast pace of development, at the time of my joining this project no visual exploration had been done for the setup screens or any of the menu and settings UI. No visuals had been developed yet for any UI segment outside of the homescreen or playback experiences, and so I developed those.

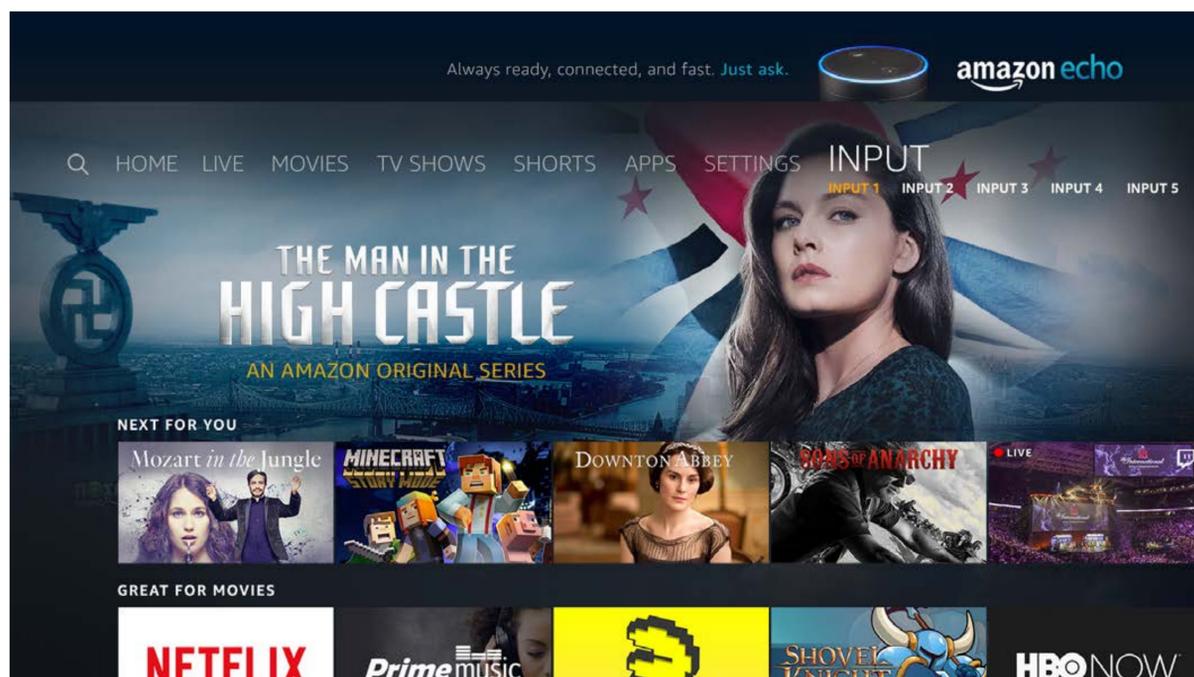


Fig. E040 Fire TV v-Next/X Interface

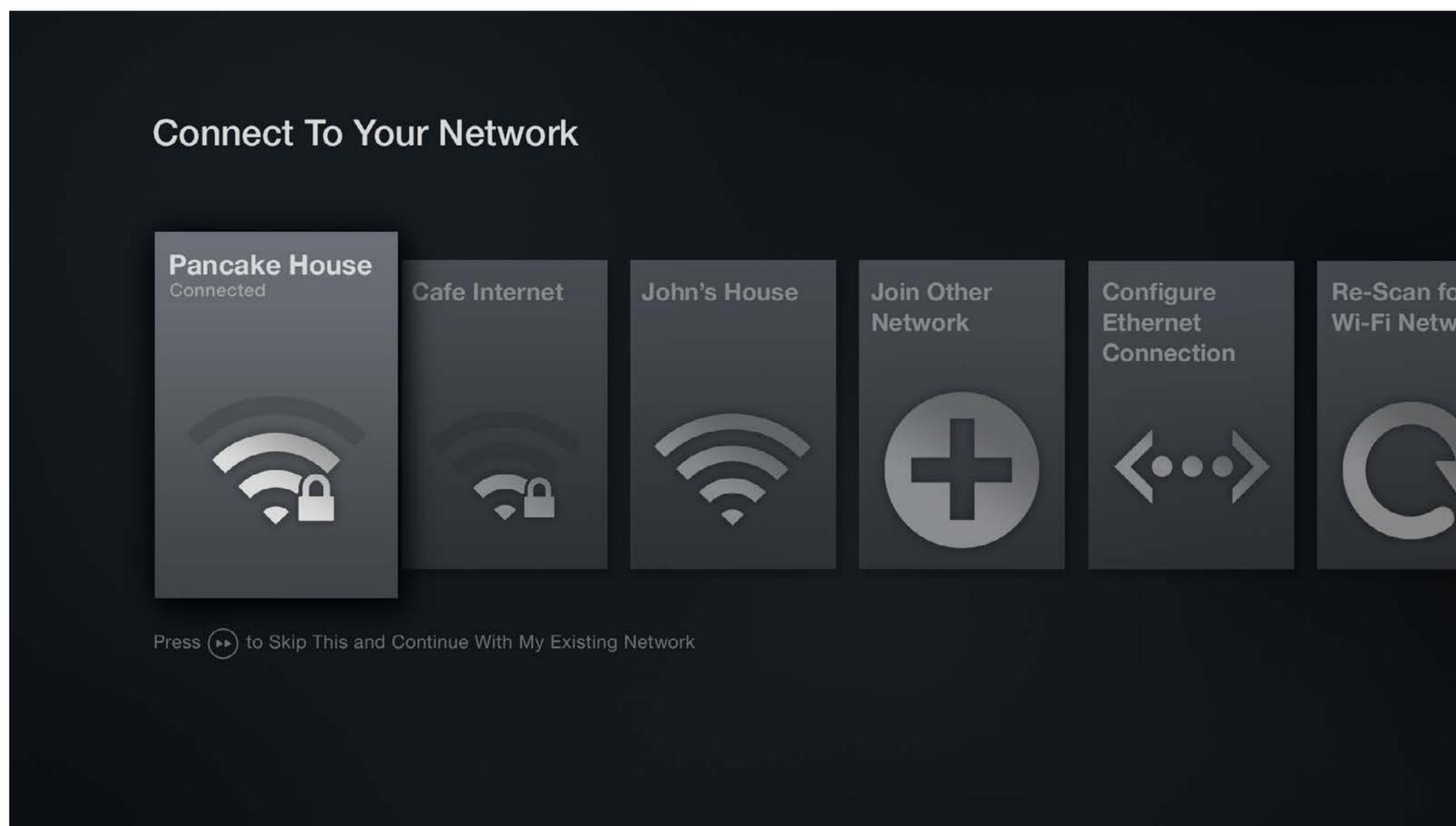


Fig. E041: 2013-era Fire TV WiFi Selection Screen from OOBE Flow

Without any new templates off of which to base my designs, I generated a set of wireframes from the then-current version of Fire TV. I then developed my first batch of use scenarios, exploring the pitfalls that would be particular to this new adaptation. Initially, plans called for three paths the user could follow: the ideal path whereupon the user connects to his or her WiFi network and logs in with their Amazon account; a path in which the user connects to WiFi and can therefore theoretically load content, but either does not have or does not enter user credentials; and a third path in which the user does not connect to a network and is, in effect, using a “dumb” TV. Some of the initial explorations and user pitfalls are shown below.

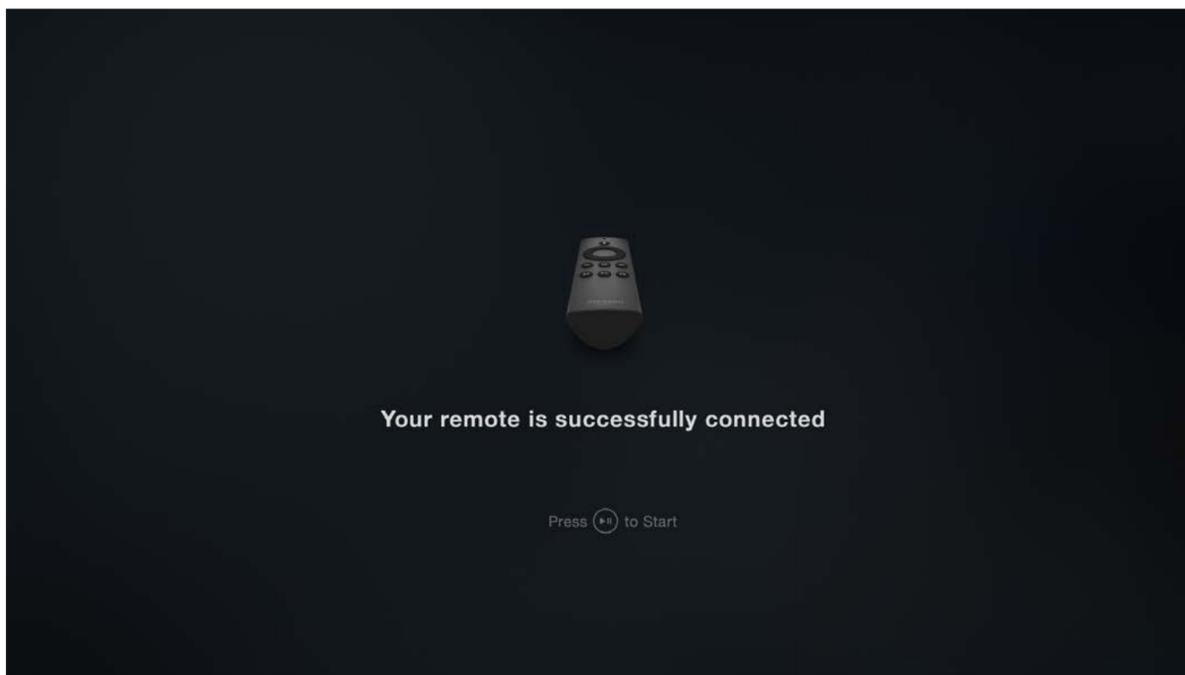


Fig. E042: 2013-era Fire TV Remote Pairing Screen from OOB Flow

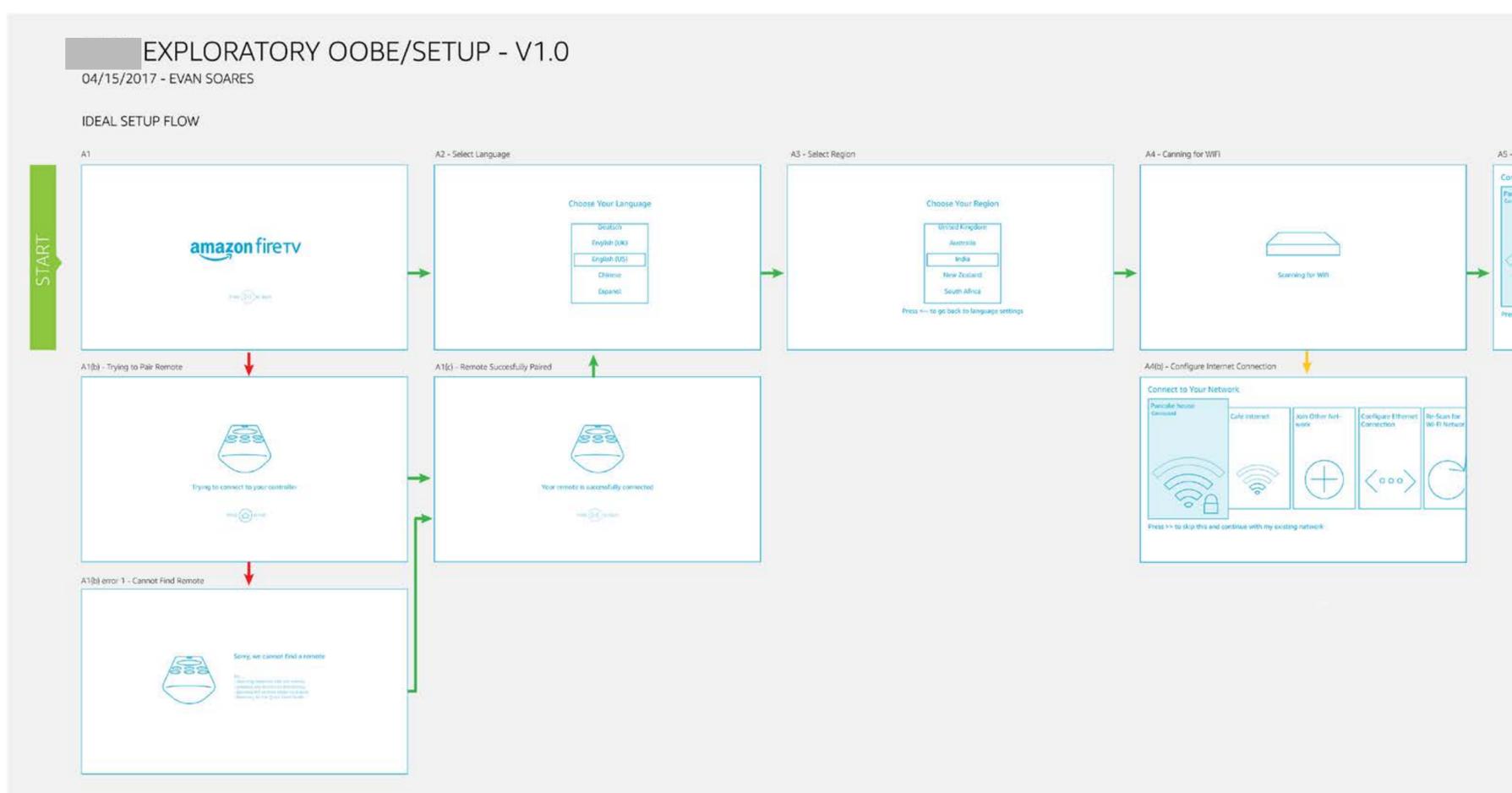


Fig. E045: FTV Exploratory OOB Flow Wireframes

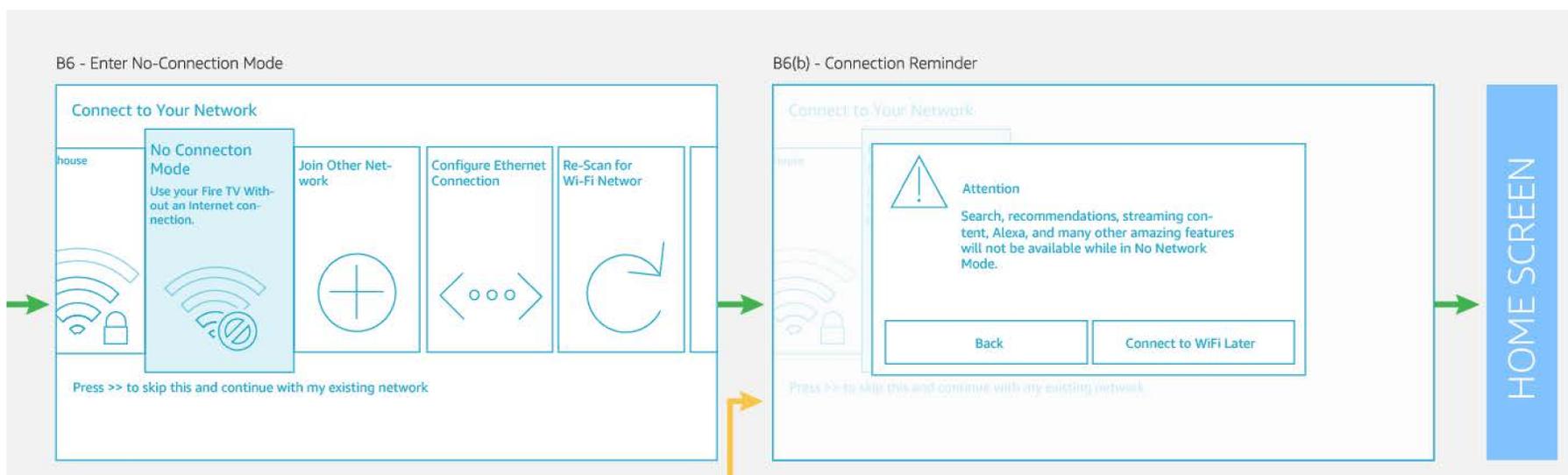
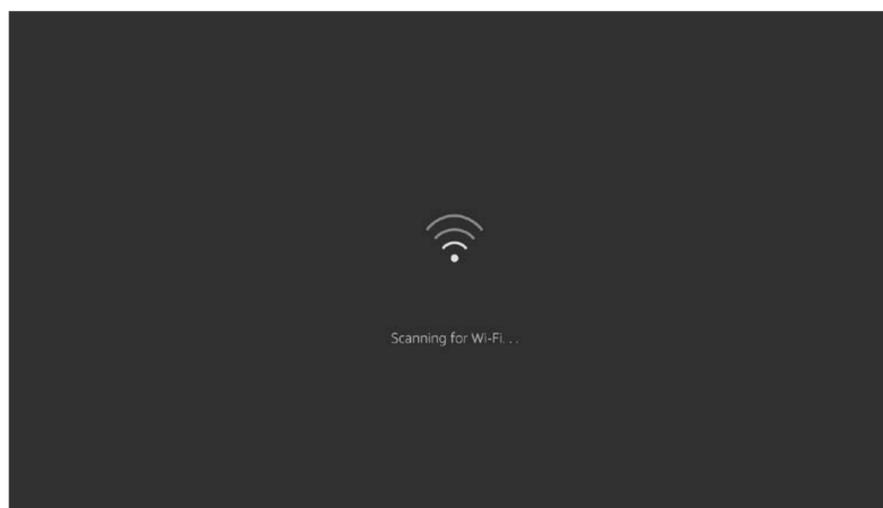
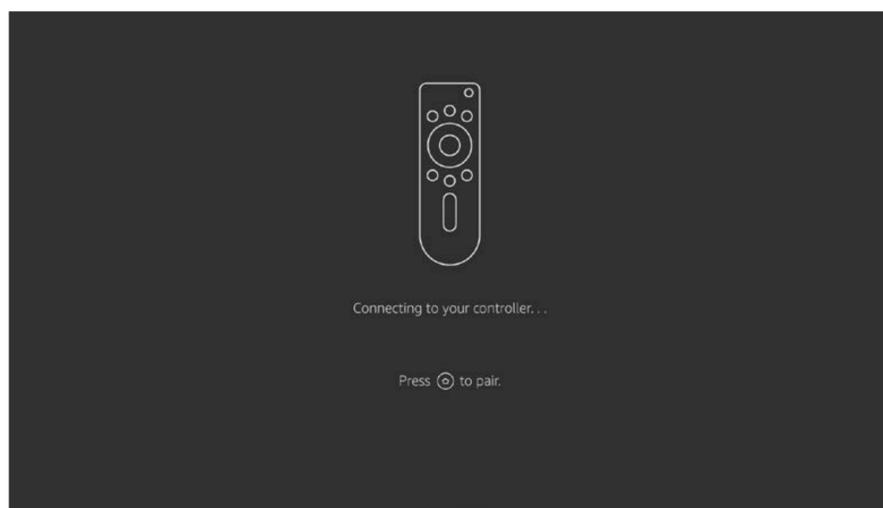


Fig. E046: FTV Exploratory OOB Flow, No-Connection Mode Warning



Fig. E049: FTV Exploratory OOBE Flow All-Up

Finally, as no visual exploration had been done for this product, I had the opportunity to put together some explorations for the system menus that both built on the previous system and would be familiar to its users, felt more in line with the quick-moving, stylish visuals of the modern system, and would be consistent with the OOBE (out-of-the-box) experience to be found across modern Amazon Digital Products verticals. Below are some of those explorations.



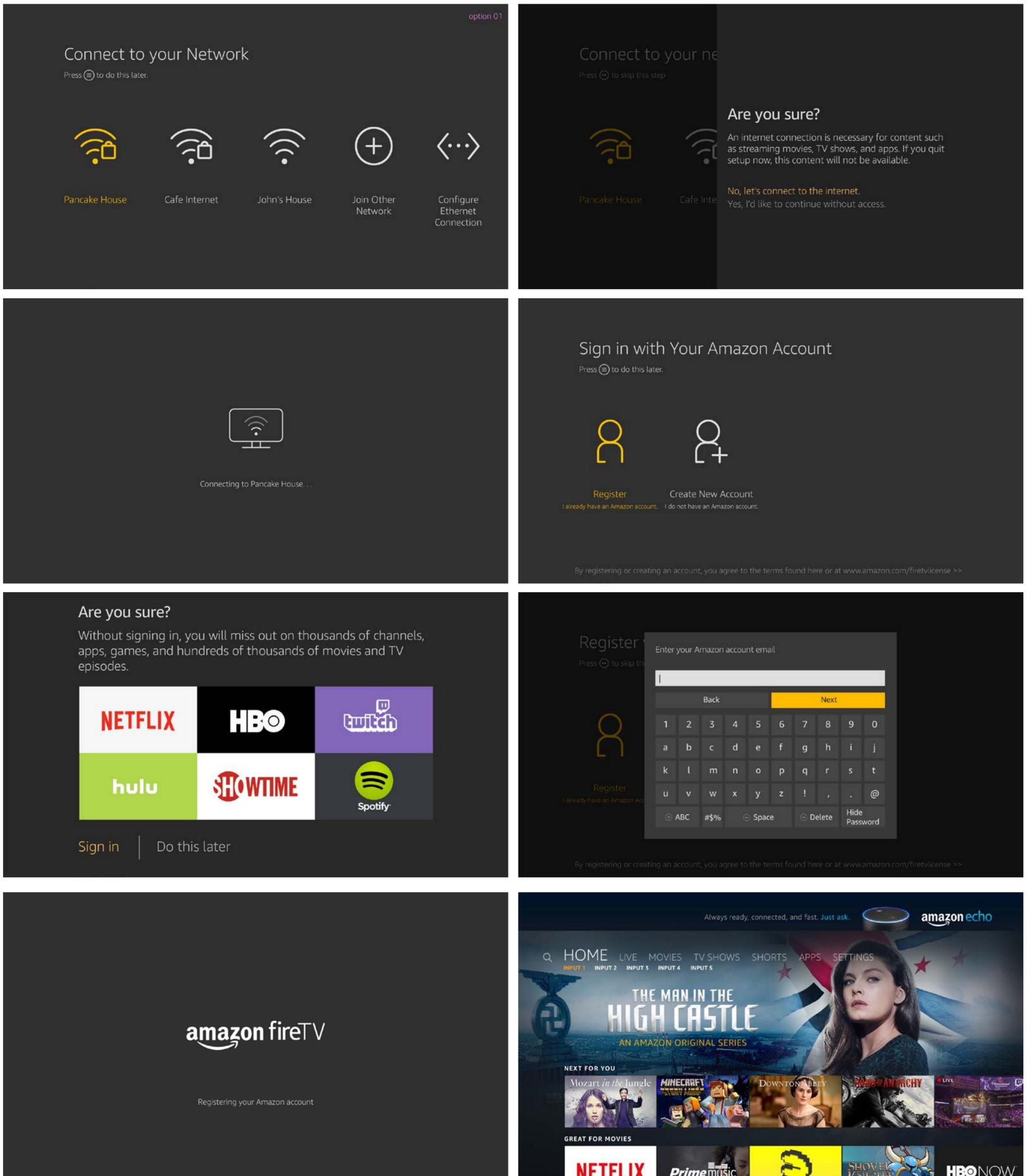


Fig. E052: Fire TV (3.0) Setup Flow Mockup as Updated by Me to Better Align with Other Products' OOBES

I took ownership of the design of this new product's setup process and explored the possible user paths as thoroughly as I could at an early stage. I then worked with design leaders to greatly simplify the process for the benefit of the user. Finally, I followed through on the project, taking my designs from simple wireframes to modern, clean graphic design. Thanks to my contributions, the design process of this version of Fire TV got off to a very strong start.