

DESIGN BRIEF

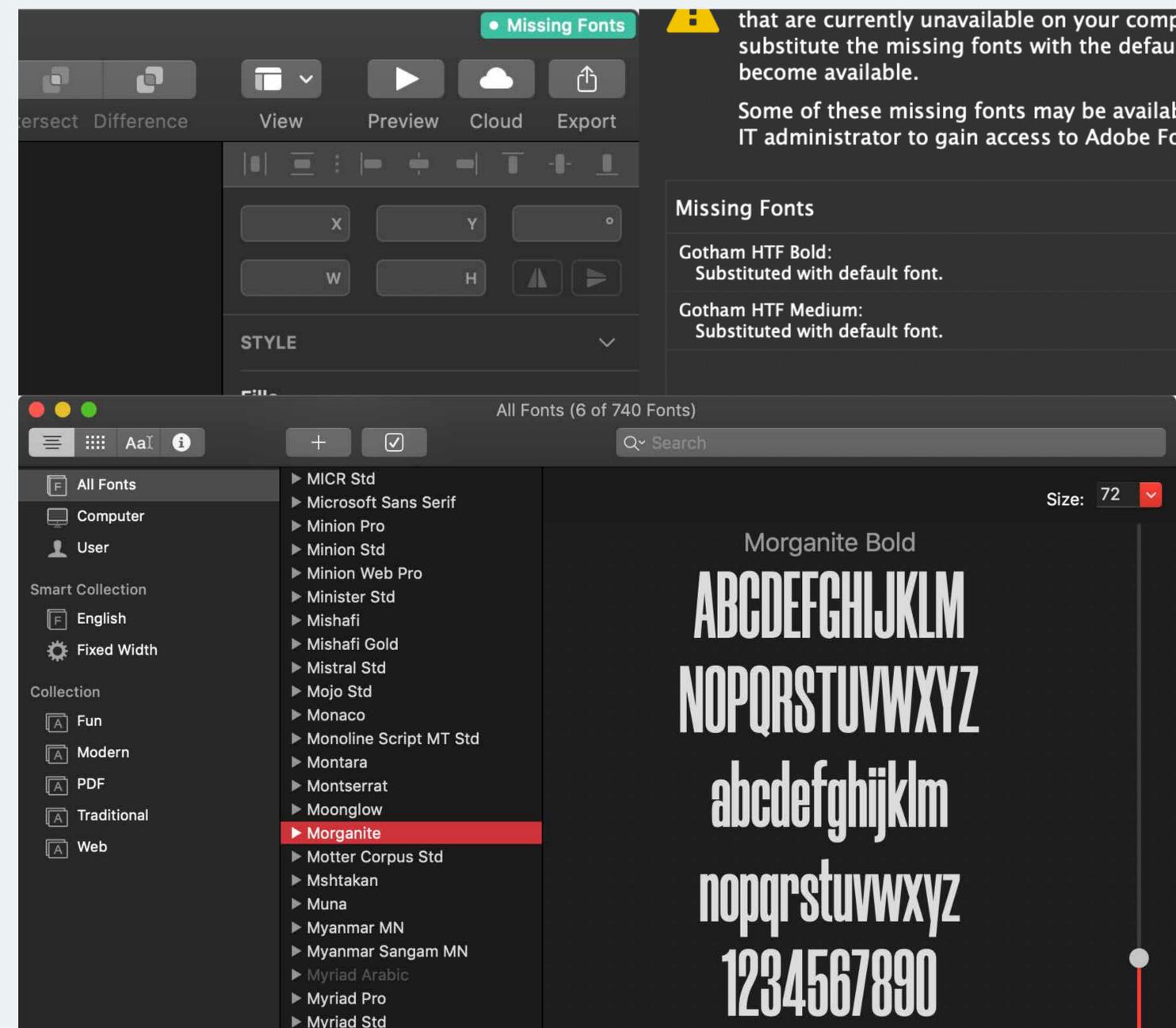
Current App & Redesigned App

DEMONSTRATION OF PROBLEM

The current font book app is a utility through and through. Add a font to it, it installs it. Delete a font, it removes it. Anything more than that, the user is pretty much shit out of luck. The amount of time spent to go hunting for a font that I know is on the computer, just not installed, or for one of the web is way too high as a designer.

Another common issue is that a font was installed some time ago but can't remember the name. You know it's there, what it looks like, and maybe when you installed it but not the name. Font Book doesn't have a solution for that. I recently had that issue with the font "Morganite." I knew what it looked like but couldn't remember the name. The only thing I could do is to make a smart collection for condensed fonts and go from there.

There are many other problems with Font Book from how the app displays the fonts to how the app installs new fonts. This project seeks to address those issues and make the app better for all.



PROJECT STATEMENT

Font book is a font manager made by Apple Inc. for macOS first released in 2003. Unfortunately, the app hasn't changed a whole lot since that time. There is so much that could be done with the app now that the font world has changed; fonts are no longer just a description of bézier curves but software.

This leads to the purpose of this project. This project seeks to reimagine Font Book for the modern age. There are several ways of accomplishing that. The first way is adding a marketplace where users can browse, download, update, and purchase fonts. There would also be an updated library where users can view the fonts they have and find the one they want by sorting—by recently added, recently used, popular, etc.—and filtering—by fonts similar to the ones they've selected, by kind or category, and so on.

PROBLEM DESCRIPTION

The current font book app is fine. It's nobody's favourite app and it shows. Using the app feels like taking a dip in tepid bath water with your clothes on. It needs some love because, the fact is, everybody who owns a mac has probably used it—at least to try to install some knock off of whatever the default font is in Word.

There are many pain points which can be identified and eliminated. One pain point is when a user opens a file and they don't have a font installed. Now, the user has to find the font or replace it with something similar but not the same. The solution would be to automatically install that font if it's free or allow the user to obtain a license for a fee or to suggest a similar font that would suite the users need. Another pain point, with the app itself, is actually finding a font. I can't tell you the amount of times I know I have a font installed but can't remember the name of it but I know what it looks like. Now, finding it is impossible but with better sorting and filtering, finding a font will be more possible.

CONSTRAINTS

One of the biggest constraints for this project is going to be time. To complete the A+ end accomplishment, I would need to learn React Native and that's probably going to take a few hundred hours. That's why I have my other end accomplishment goals (on the next page).

There are quite a few constraints that do not apply however. These include: user-testing subjects, everyone in the program uses font book; money, there's only me working on this thing and all of the tools are paid for/free; and scope, where font book is a tiny app—nothing like redesigning iTunes which is a massive endeavour.

NEEDS OF THE PROBLEM

Everybody who uses a mac uses Font Book from time to time either for installing fonts or finding the name of a font; less frequently for removing fonts, disabling fonts, or checking their data integrity or version number.

There has been a renaissance of sorts for typography with an explosion of digital fonts made available by inexpensive, professional font software like Glyphs.app or FontForge. This also includes new formats as well like svg fonts, which allow colour and emoji, as well as variable fonts, which allow any variation on a typeface based on certain axes like weight, spacing, or width. Having a venue for these new fonts and established greats is currently being underserved. A new Font Book could integrate with popular services such as Google Fonts, FontSquirrel, Adobe Fonts, fonts.com, and others. Similar to how Apple Books does for books, or Apple music for music, this new Font Book could be the preeminent destination of all things type.

GOALS

The goal of this project is to reimagine font book into an app that is more useful, easier to use, adds functionality, and looks modern. In the end, the aim is to make font book not only a utility but an app people want to use.

END ACCOMPLISHMENT

At the end of this project there are a few stages at which one could call this done; each successively requiring more time, learning but pay dividends in actual functionality and visibility of design.

The first, let's call it a "B" on a grade point scale, would be high-fidelity prototype with accurate animations and placement of all elements on all screens.

The second, an "A", would be a coded prototype on the web with animations and people could actually play with the prototype.

The last, an full "A+", would be a fully coded, fleshed-out, functional-as-can-be prototype using reactjs or react native (depending on how difficult that is). This would actually allow people to view their local library of fonts and use the functionality their lives.