

Beyond the Gradient

James Wilson
@lithiumcorp

Close your eyes for a minute or two...
Pay attention to all your remaining senses...
...You will know part of what you are missing.

Keeping It Straight
Patrick Rhone



User Interface



Feel

Mental Model

Intent and Feature

Trust

Sync

Post-PC



Feel

- Used to be vague and hard to define.
- Now it's tactile and direct.
- **Gestures.**

Tap
I want this.

Swipe
Get rid of this.

Pan / Drag
Change this.

Pinch/Zoom
See this differently.

Three tiers of gestures....

Tier 1 Tap.

- Foundation, intuitive and immediate.

Tier 2 Swipe, Drag and Move.

- Immersive, spatial and alternative.

Tier 3 Pinch and Zoom.

- Very specific to the usage case.

Is the gesture intuitive?

Does the gesture **make sense** given:

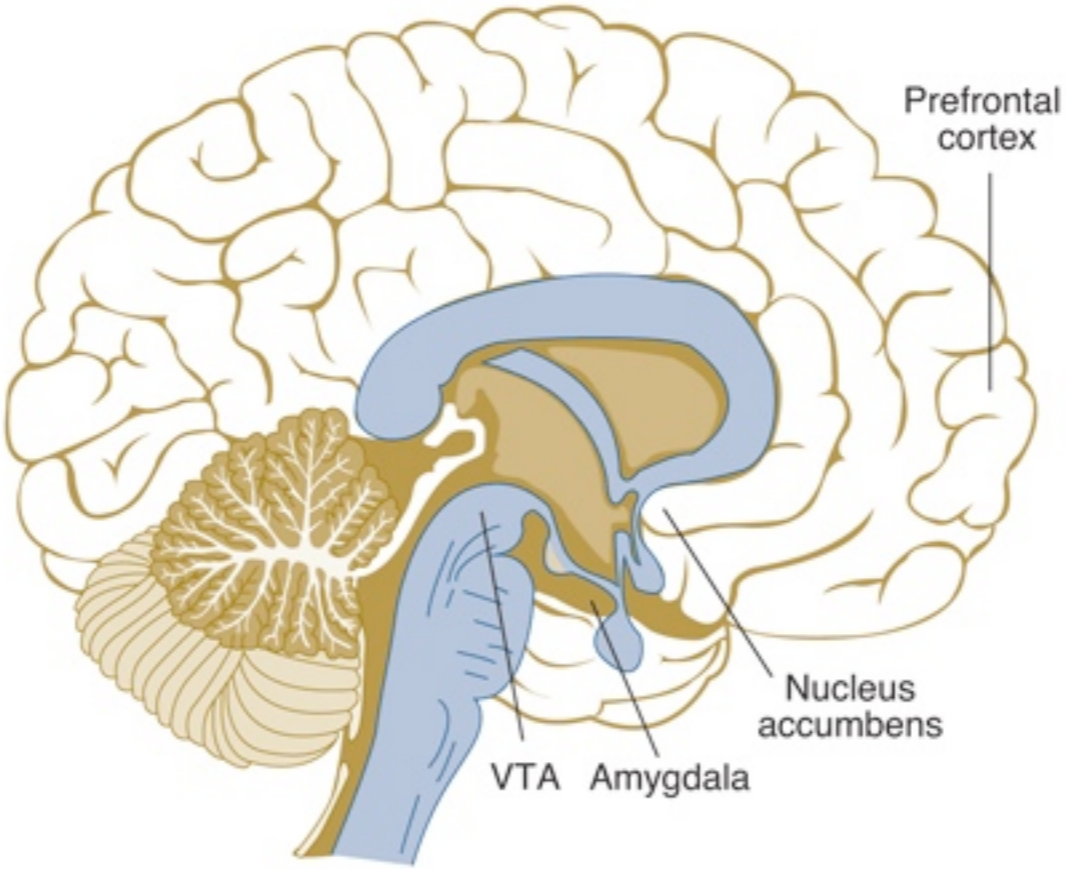
- The intention of the user.
- The emotion of the gesture.
- What the user is familiar with.

Could this guy work it out?



A child will:

- Tap to get things.
- Moves things around in a spatial environment.
- Doesn't pinch and zoom.



Prefrontal cortex

Nucleus accumbens

VTA Amygdala

Front-brain develops and allows us to **interpret** and make more detailed decisions about how to work a UI.

Back-brain will always beat it to the punch on **instinct.**

Avoid Really Cool Islands.

Gestures have the potential to be over-used for the sake of creating a new user experience.

Would the experience you're engineering work well in **other apps** too?

If not, you may be creating yourself a really cool experience...but one that is foreign to everything else and isolates your app.



Mental Model

- The users in-head roadmap of your app.

Create a translational matrix between the users intent and the features in your app.

You implement features in code.

The user exercises intent with actions.

...and reacts with emotion.

“Invisible UI”

Where the **intent** of the user, and the **features** offered by the app are **one**.



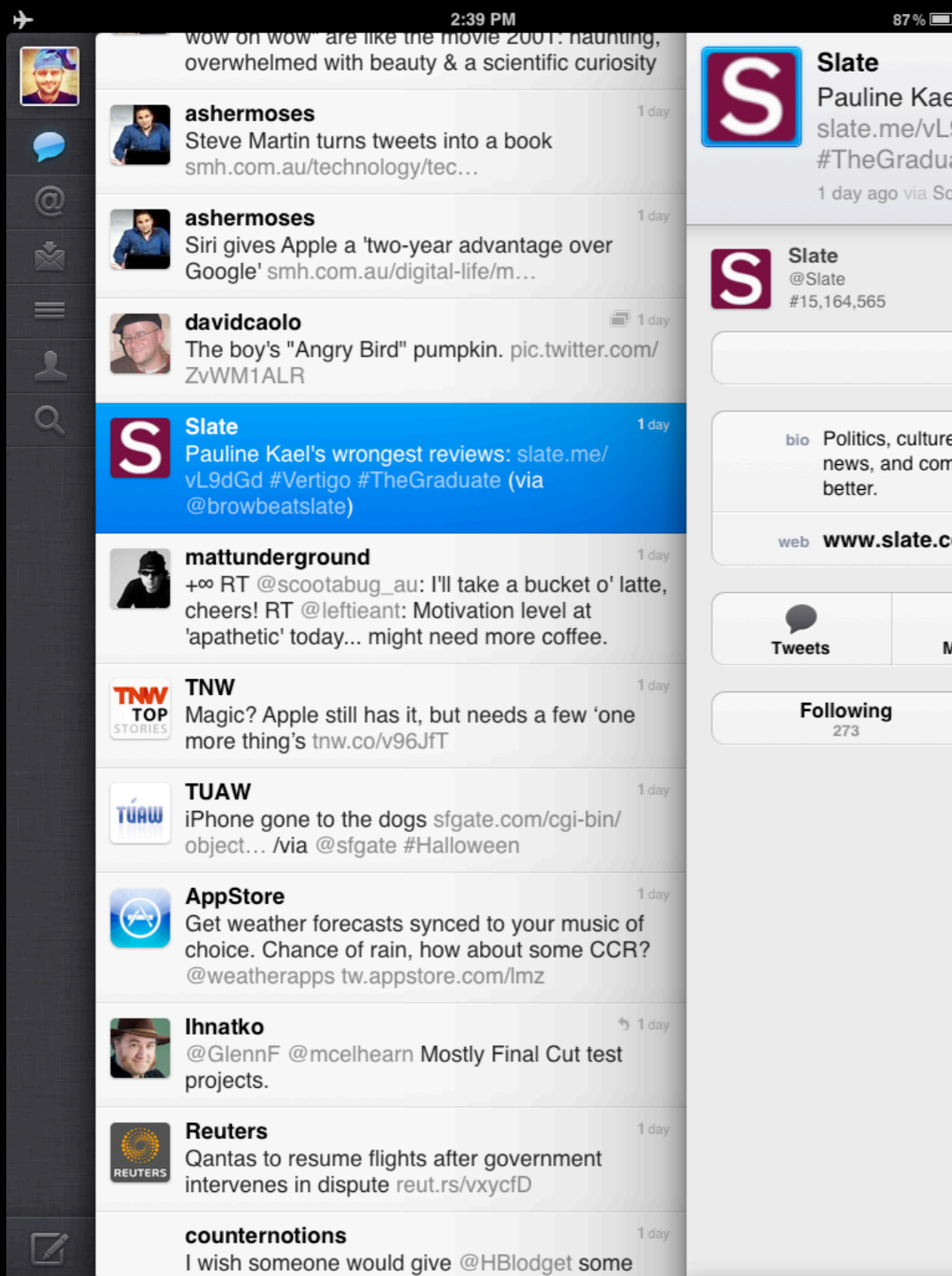
Intent and Feature

Don't break the user's stride.

The smart-end of the users brain is concerned with their intent: *What they want to get done.*

Don't tie it up with:

- Working out **how to do it.**
- **Waiting** for modal dialogs, etc.



Twitter on iPad

Virtually no modal dialogs.

Web pages, user info can be loading off to the side whilst you scroll the timeline.



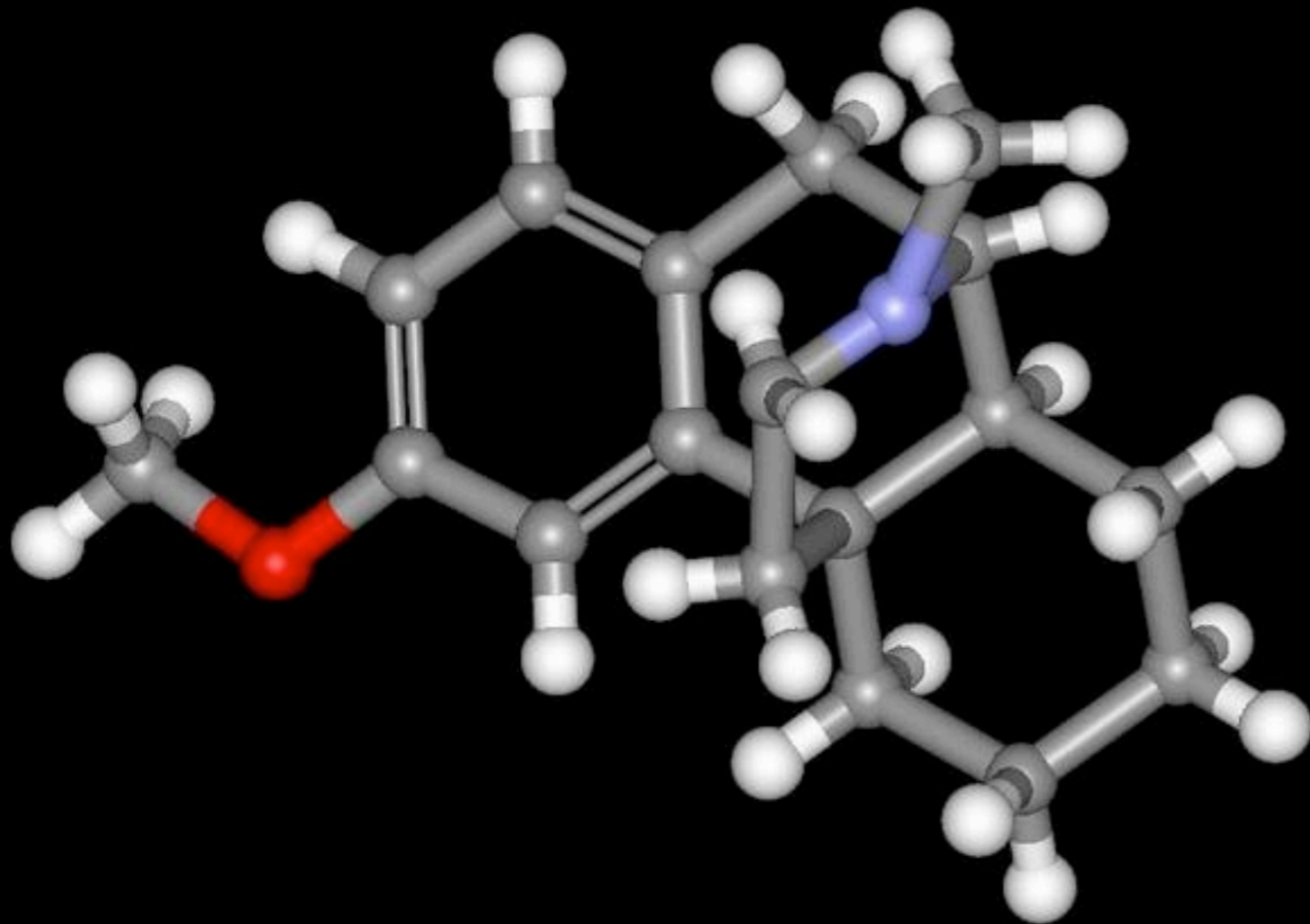
OmniFocus

Even when modal,
Quick-Entry is possible.

Don't break the user's stride.

- Short term memory is **short and limited**.
- iOS Apps, especially iPhone are “**In the moment**”
- User must be able to **quickly** do what they want before they forget or lose that moment.

Visualize your app like a 3D structure.



- Views
- Navigation
- Actions
- Transitions
- Feedback

All interconnected...

- What does it look like?
- Is it **tidy and symmetrical**... or spaghetti.
- Is there a **single, clear path** to features.
- Is it **compact and frugal**, or sprawling and exhaustive.
- Can't imagine it? Draw it.

Prune the tree **often** and **capriciously**.

The result...

- Gestures that **make sense** without explanation.
- Mental model that bridges **intent with features**.
- **Rationalized** and pruned app structure.
- Constant velocity, **no break in stride**.

Magnetism.

When the user realizes they can quickly, reliably and intuitively do what they want to do in your app over and over again, they become **magnetised**.

They'll stick with your app and keep coming back.



Trust

Trust.
The lurking
danger.

- The user grants you an initial level of trust when they purchase your app.
- That trust can be built upon or lost.
- Once lost, it **never comes back.**



Sync

Every morsel of data you accept from the user must be treated as sacred, no matter what.

Cloud sync is the focus of trust now.

Ideally: Be cloud or be local.

Local with the option for cloud sync using an external solution is a weak foundation.

Trust transcends everything.