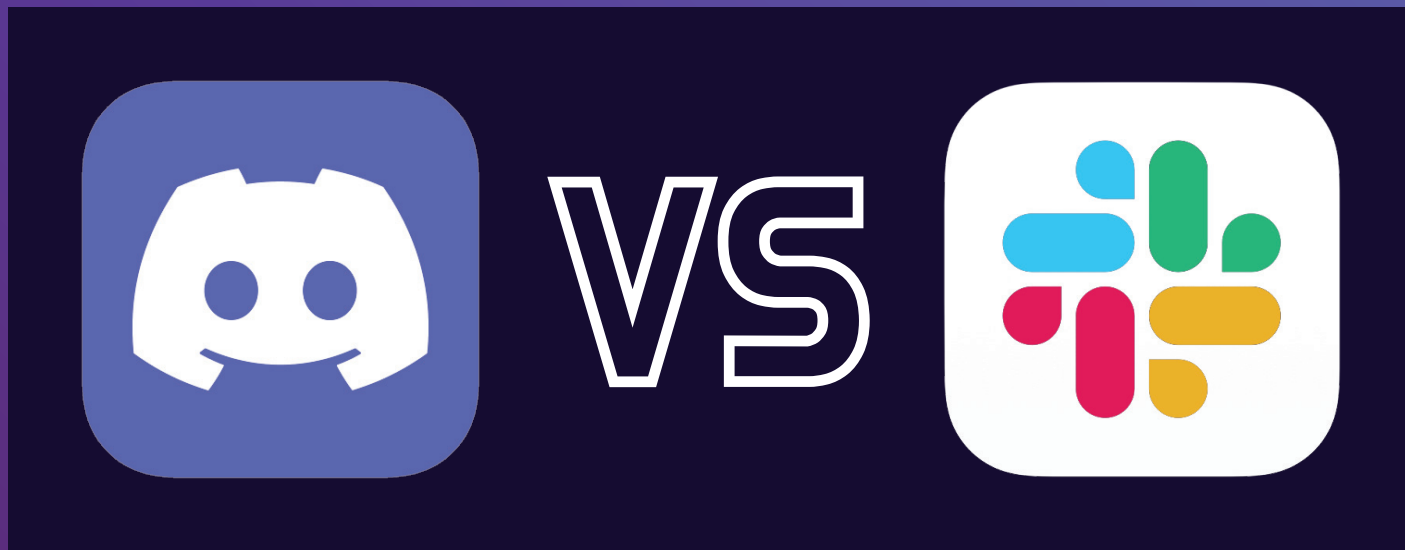# Discord and Slack:
A Web Analysis

ICM 512: Principles of UX Design
Luke McMullin
Spring 2022

About the Test Subjects

Feels and Needs

Discord and Slack are both widely-known, team-based communication applications. Both sites allow communities to connect with one another, live chat, organize and customize channels, and invite others to join them and grow their network. The main difference between the two apps, though, boils down to their main target audience. Discord caters to gaming communities, whereas Slack caters to working and business communities. Although they are not exclusive to those communities, they tend to market and function best for them.

This analysis will take form of me comparing and contrasting my **feels** and **needs** of two similar applications as it relates to User Interface and User Experience (UI and UX). Before I begin, I will admit that I am biased because I have used Discord virtually everyday for the past 5 years, whereas I will be installing Slack as a new user for the purpose of this analysis. I will try my best to view each platform through the perspective of its respective target audience.
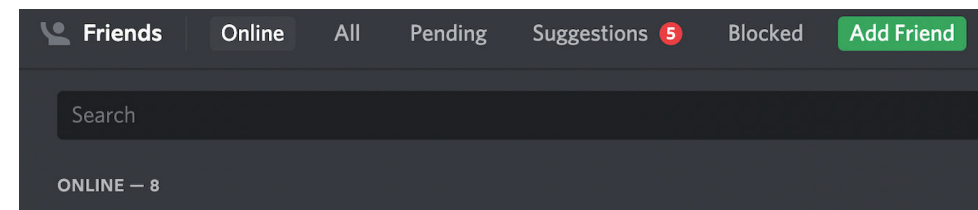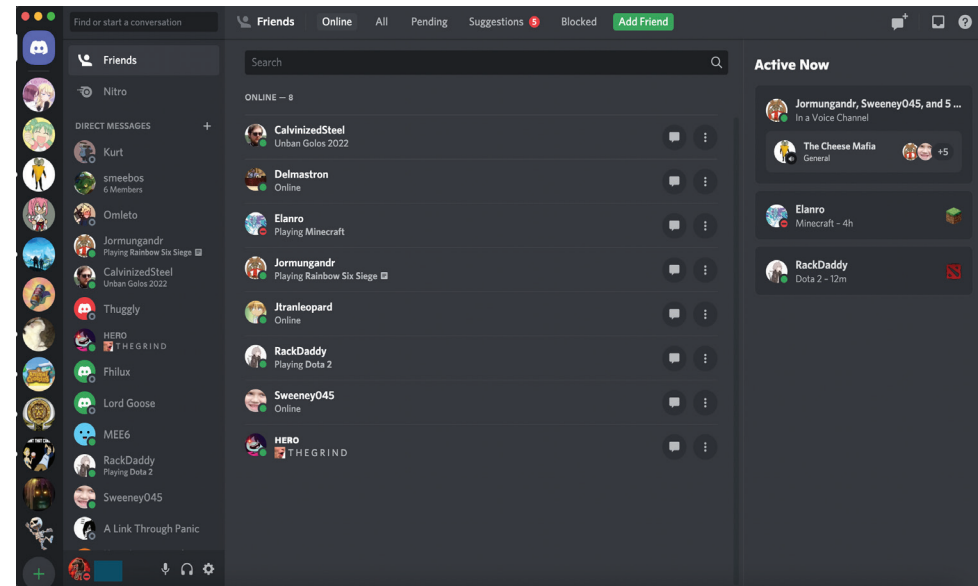
General Aesthetics

First Impression

At first glance, Discord's landing page makes me **FEEL CURIOUS** and a bit **CONFUSED** because my **NEED** for **DISCOVERY** and **SIMPLICITY** is being met and not being met, respectively. A new user may be overwhelmed by the landing page's layout when opening Discord for the first time. That being said, I have populated my page over time with my servers and friends, which is why it may appear cluttered in this screenshot.

Color

The general color scheme makes me **FEEL SERENE** and **FREE** because my **NEED** for **EASE** and **INDEPENDENCE** is being met. I am sensitive to light, which makes me prefer darker interfaces. Hence, I feel like I have more autonomy in what seems to be a tech world that favors brightness. Plus, there is 'light mode' for those who do prefer brighter interfaces.
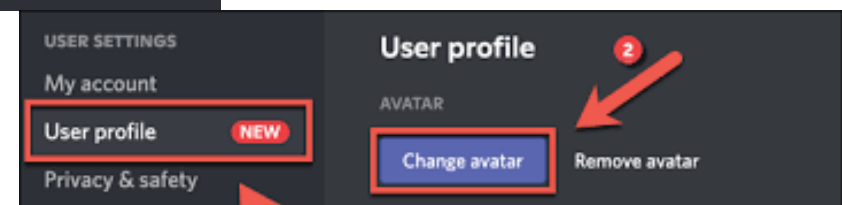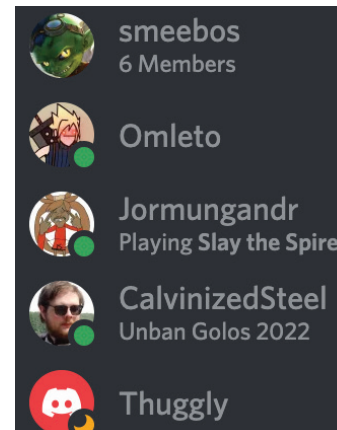
General Aesthetics

Fonts

The fonts make me **FEEL RELAXED** and **RESPECTED** because my **NEED** for **FLOW** and **SPACE** is being met. Many websites and apps tend to have very flamboyant, and at times annoying, fonts and font weights in order to grab the user's attention or to make it easier to read. Personally, I like fonts that are easy to read but are not in my face—and Discord accomplishes this goal.

Avatars

The avatars for the users and servers alike make me **FEEL JOYFUL** and **INSPIRED** because my **NEED** for **CHOICE** and **SELF EXPRESSION** is being met. The ability to upload the JPEG of one's choosing, and the environment that Discord allows to prosper, allow for users to freely express themselves. The avatar could be a JPEG of the user, a fictional character, some artwork, or even a meme—the choice is there.

@ **Kurt** ●   AKA   Raisin Bran Crunch, Bernard Babybel

KUOE / ENGLISH

KUOE OLD SMITH 90-002 Japan Made Deep Green Dial Automatic with Han...

This item will be back in stock in Mid or End January. KUOE is a watch brand that was established in the historic Japanese city of Kyoto in 2020. The brand was created with the vision of

smeebos
6 Members

Omleto

Jormungandr
Playing **Slay the Spire**

CalvinizedSteel
Unban Golos 2022

Thuggly

USER SETTINGS

My account

User profile   NEW

Privacy & safety

User profile   2

AVATAR

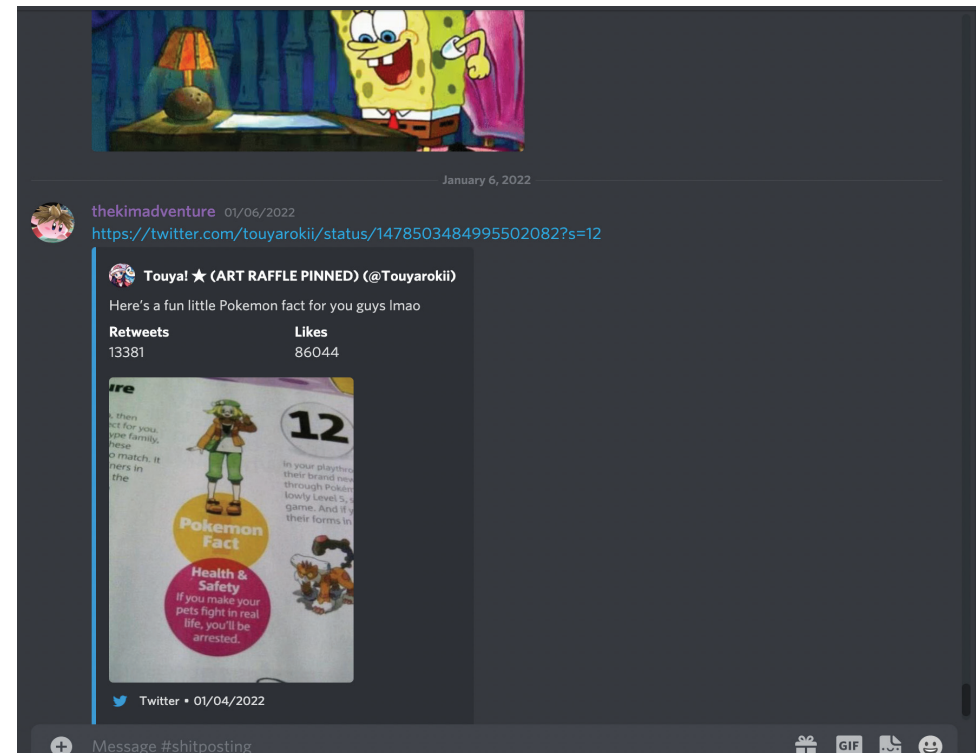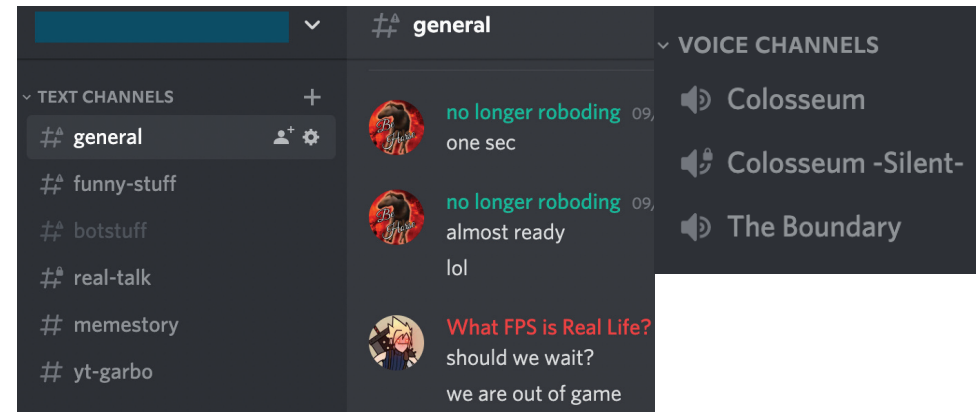Change avatar   Remove avatar

The Servers

Channels

The ability to create different channels (text and voice alike) within each server makes me **FEEL CREATIVE** and **PROUD** because my **NEED** for **CUSTOMIZATION** and **ORGANIZATION** is being met. I have the freedom to divide different conversations and topic by having different channels, instead of everyone dog-piling onto one main chat.

Feed

The layout of the channel feed makes me **FEEL STIMULATED** and **FREE** because my **NEED** for **COMMUNITY** and **EXPRESSION** is being met. I love the ability to type in unlimited characters, see unlimited conversations, add and create custom reactions/emojis, and easily post GIF's via the GIF plugin. The website hyperlink thumbnails are also very convenient and well-formatted.
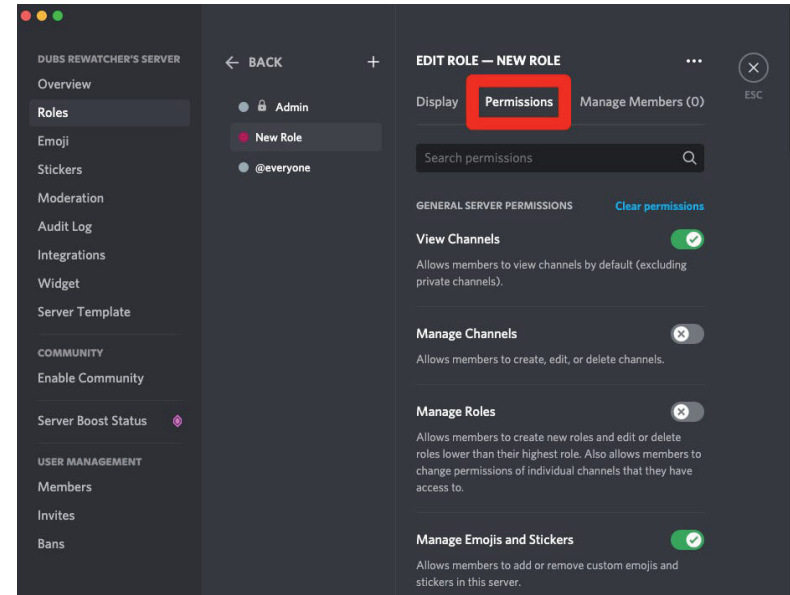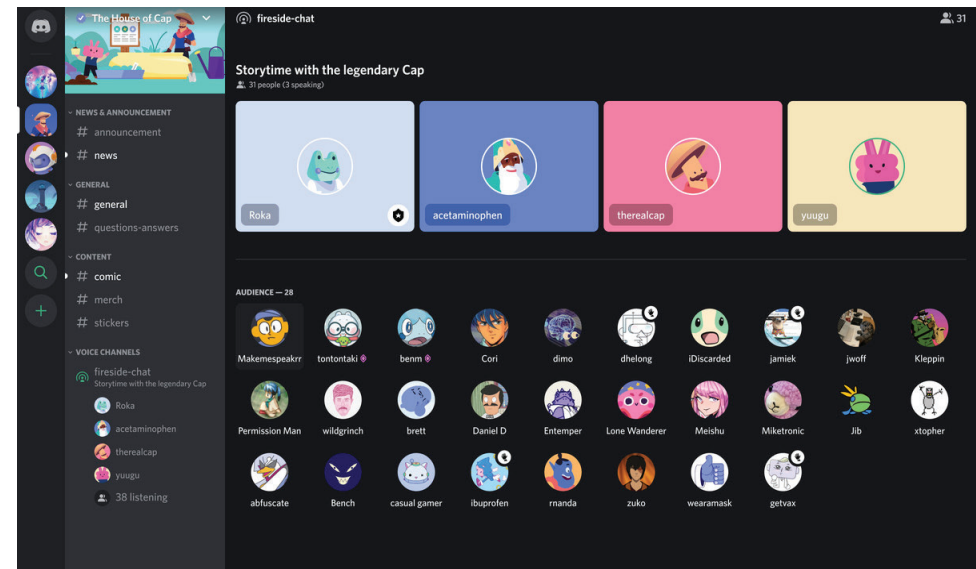
The Servers

Roles

The ability to assign roles to each member of a server makes me **FEEL GRATEFUL** and **CONFIDENT** because my **NEED** for **ORDER** and **COOPERATION** are being met. In a server, depending on my role, I may have permissions such as access to certain text and voice channels, channel and emoji management, and the ability to grant permissions. I also may mute/block/ban people, or be muted/blocked/banned.

Voice Chat

The voice chat makes me **FEEL CONNECTED** and **SATISFIED** because my need for **COMMUNITY** and **FLOW** is being met. The interface is clean and a green halo appears around a user whenever they are currently speaking. Also, the sounds that Discord makes whenever someone enters or leaves the chat are distinct and satisfying.
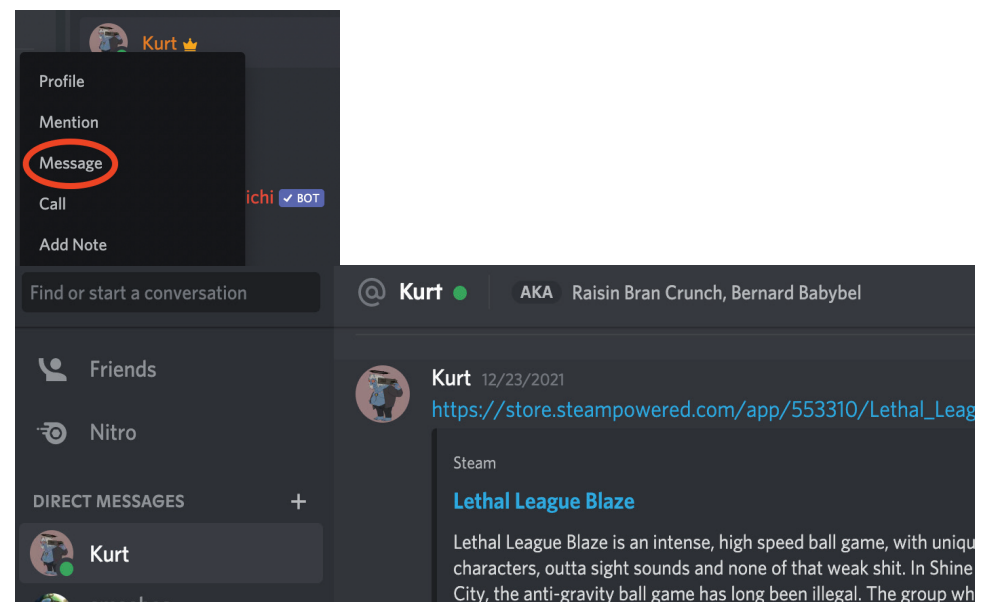
Streaming and Messaging

Video Streaming

The video streaming feature makes me **FEEL DELIGHTED** and **APPRECIATIVE** because my **NEED** for **CONNECTIVITY** and **INNOVATION** is being met. The ability to stream your screen or game with anyone in the voice chat is a huge part of what makes this app great. I can even stream Netflix for everyone's convenience.

Direct Messages

The direct messaging feature makes me **FEEL CONTENT** because my **NEED** for **SECURITY** and **CONVENIENCE** is being met. If I wish to chat with just ONE of my friends, Discord makes it easy. I can go to the Direct Messages tab on the home page, or right click a user profile anywhere on the app and hit 'Message.' I can even create a group chat without using a server by just adding users to the conversation.
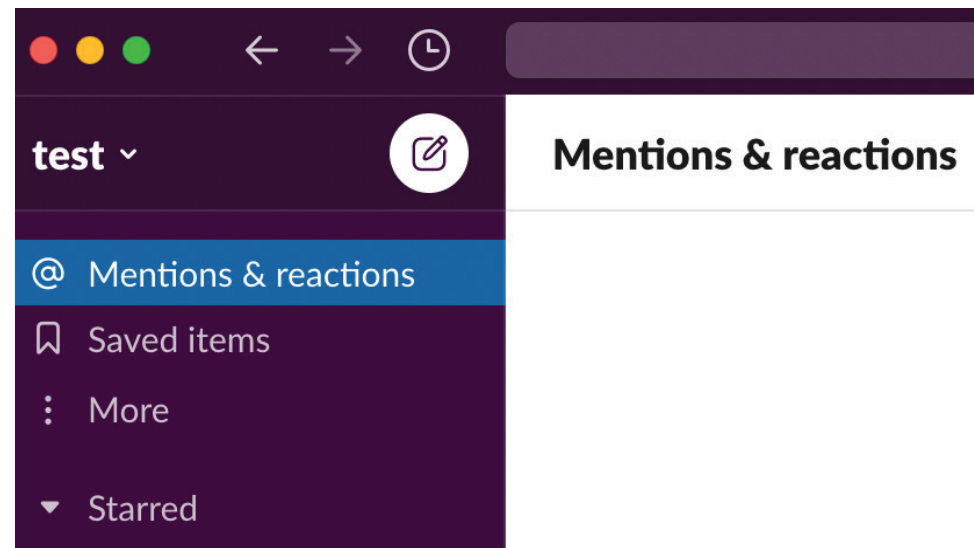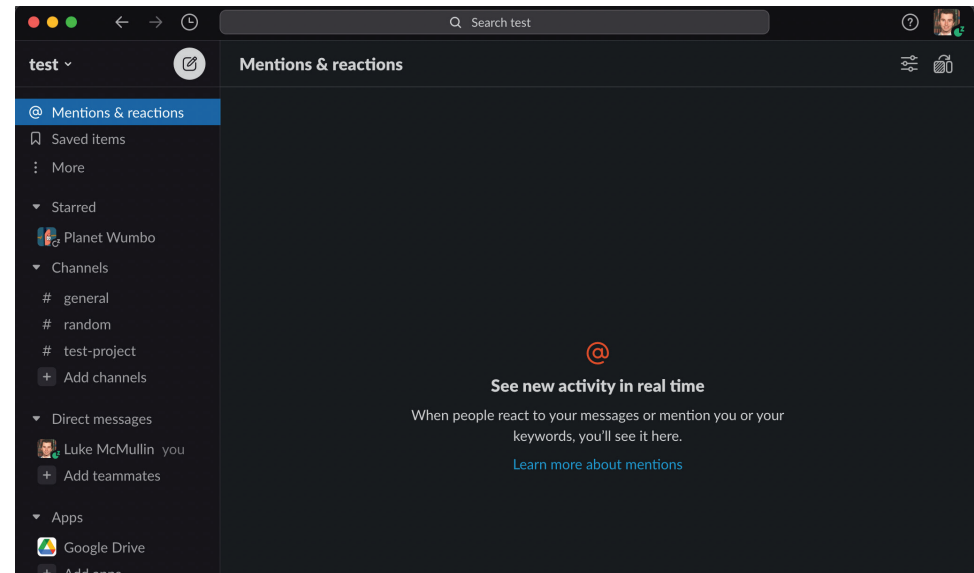
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General Aesthetics

First Impression

At first glance, Slack's landing page makes me **FEEL CONTENT** and **PEACEFUL** because my **NEED** for **SIMPLICITY** and **EASE** is being met. It seems to be a much more simplified version of Discord. It may have less features than Discord, however. I will find out soon enough.

Color

The general color scheme makes me **FEEL SERENE** and **FREE** because my **NEED** for **EASE** and **INDEPENDENCE** is being met. Similarly to Discord, I enjoy light-on-dark schemes even though it is seemingly unorthodox in our bright tech world. I tried 'light mode' and despite my biases toward dark schemes, I actually really like it, especially the red-violet side panel.
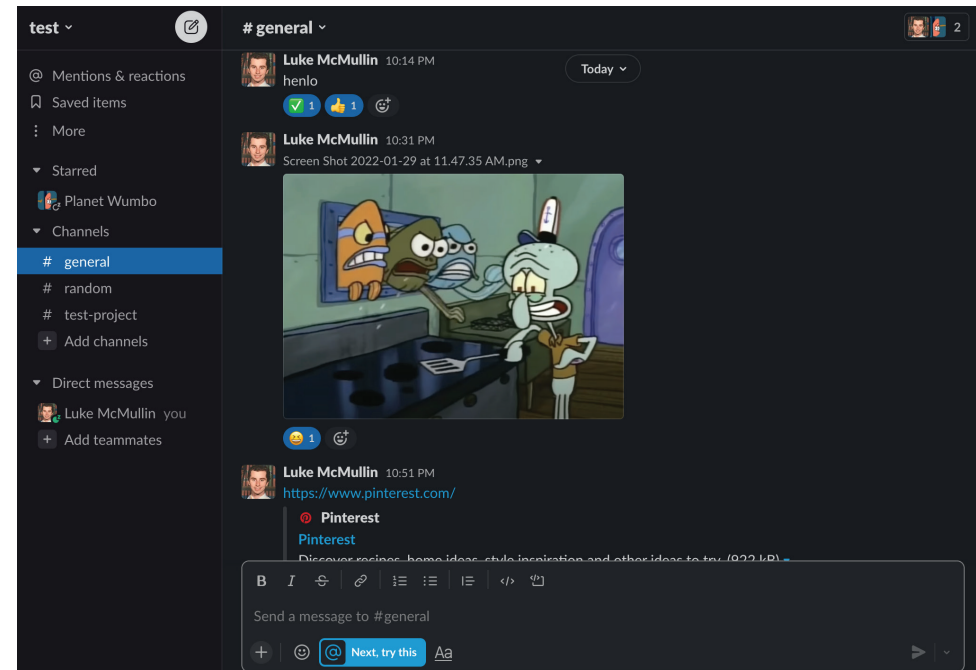
The Channels

General UX

The ability to create different channels in a workspace makes me **FEEL ORGANIZED** and **PROUD** because my **NEED** for **NEATNESS** is being met. The experience feels very similar to that of Discord with the 'hashtag + channel name' setup as well as being able to pin (bookmark) chat posts. Although there are way less features, I may not need all of them for the purpose of business or workplace interaction. Even though I am very familiar with the structure thanks to Discord, I feel that new Slack users who are not familiar can easily get used to how it works.

Feed UI/UX

The layout of the channel feed makes me **FEEL STIMULATED** and **CONTENT** because my **NEED** for **COMMUNITY** and **COMPREHENSIBILITY** is being met. Like Discord, I can type in unlimited characters, react with emojis, and attach pictures, and view thumbnails to hyperlinks.

Slack Call

Layout

The Slack Call interface makes me **FEEL EXCITED** and **SERENE** because my **NEED** for **SPACE** and **FLOW** is being met. The call interface looks very clean—maybe even cleaner than Discord. Also, the large amount of empty space makes the layout not feel overwhelming.

General UX

The Slack Call experience makes me **FEEL CONNECTED** but a little **DISAPPOINTED** because my **NEED** for **COMMUNITY** is being only partially met. Instead of a green halo appearing around the user whenever they speak, the user's profile just appears larger and in the middle. Thankfully, I am used to this flow thanks to Zoom—and it may even be more efficient for the general population. The big downside is that with the free version of Slack, you can only call one person at a time.
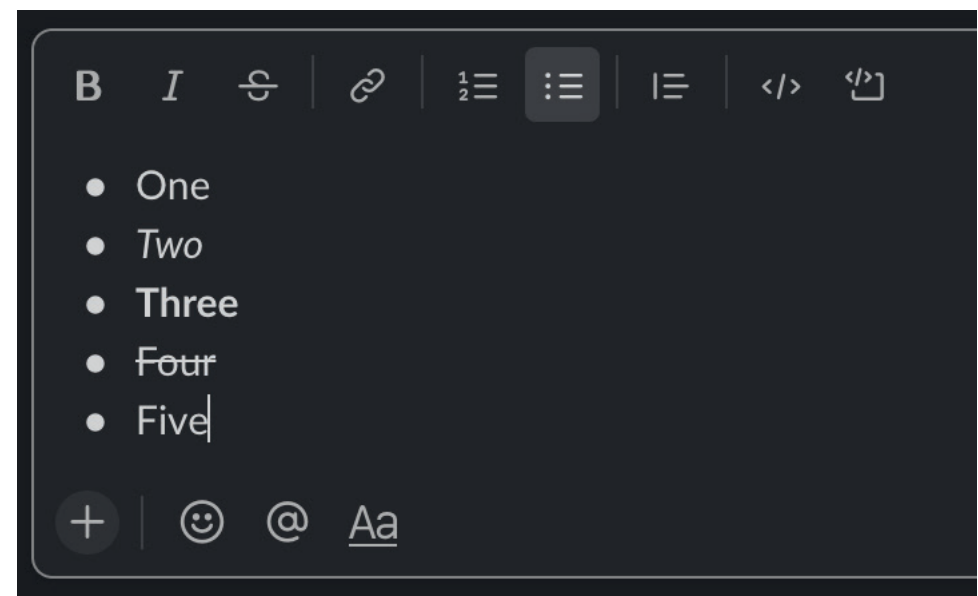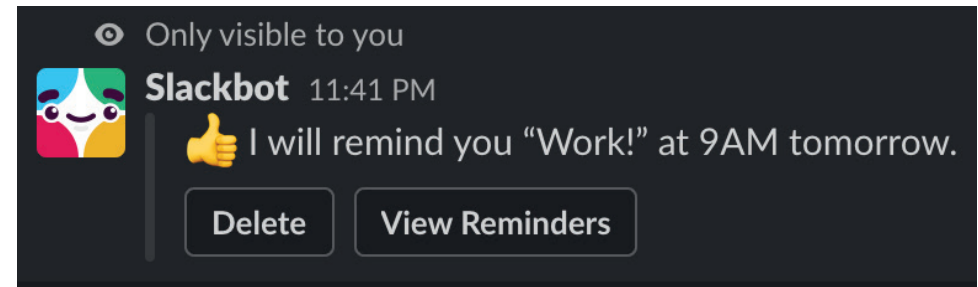
Additional Features

Reminders

The ability to set reminders makes me **FEEL ORGANIZED** and **INVOLVED** because my **NEED** for **NEATNESS** and **CLARITY** is being met. In theory, these reminders will come in handy for keeping up with projects and due dates while being in the app.

👁 Only visible to you

Slackbot 11:41 PM
👍 I will remind you "Work!" at 9AM tomorrow.

Delete | View Reminders

Chat Formatting

The chat formatting features make me **FEEL CONTENT** and **VALUED** because my **NEED** for **ORGANIZATION** and **EXPRESSION** is being met. What makes Slack superior to Discord, in my opinion, is that I can format the typeface similarly to Word or Google Docs, whereas in Discord one would have to learn the code for specific formatting options. Overall, it is much more user-friendly.
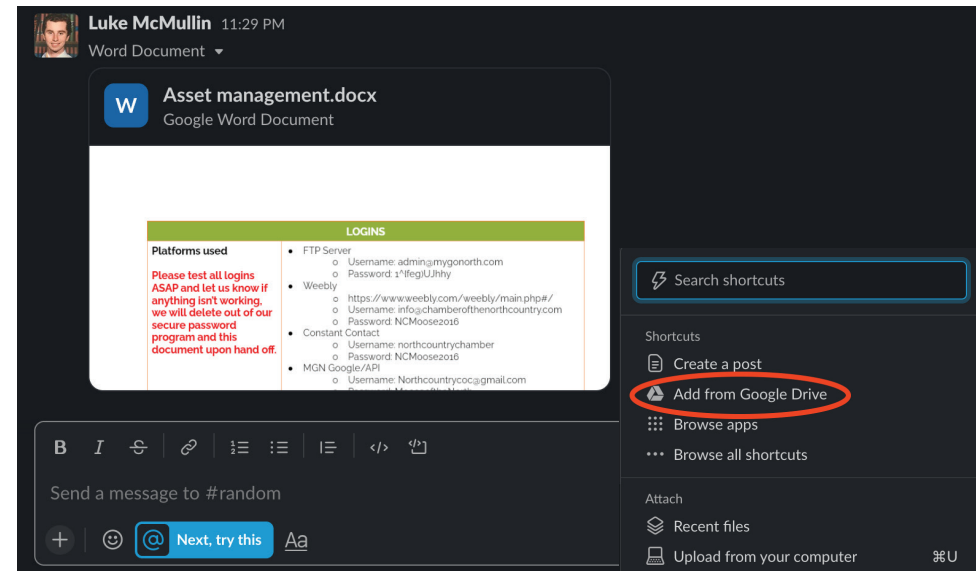
- One
- *Two*
- **Three**
- ~~Four~~
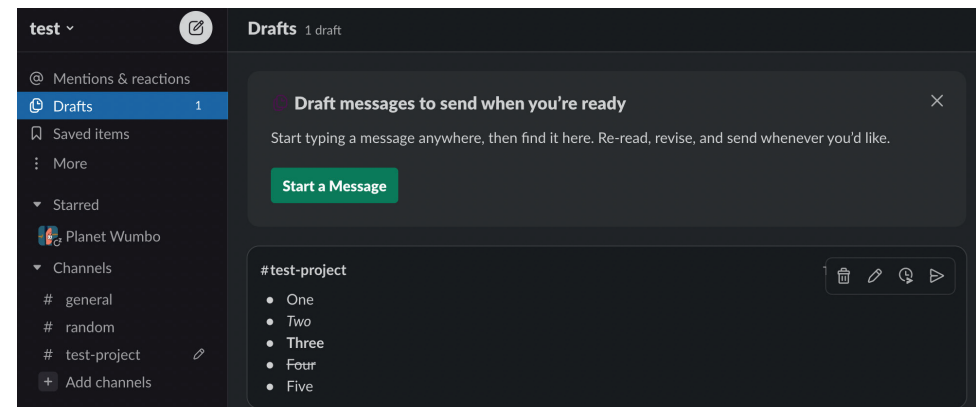- Five

Slack

Additional Features

App Integration

The ability to integrate apps makes me **FEEL INNOVATIVE** and **ORGANIZED** because my **NEED** for **MANAGEMENT** and **ENGAGEMENT** is being met. To test, I integrated the Google Drive plugin, which allowed me to easily attach files from my Drive into the chat without having to go into my account on a browser.

Drafts

The draft feature makes me **FEEL RESPECTED** and **RELIEVED** because my **NEED** for **INTEGRITY** and **ASSURANCE** is being met. Unlike Discord, I can save multiple drafts of posts in Slack before I submit them. Being able to do this saves me the headache of having to edit something AFTER posting it, and it allows me to think things through before sending.

In a Nutshell

Knowing Your Audience is Key

Discord and Slack are both popular communication applications, but their target audiences differ as shown throughout this analysis. Based on the judgment of my first use, I definitely find Slack more user-friendly than Discord. However, I find Discord more enjoyable due to its large array of customization features (and the more fun environment, of course). Slack feels more professional and business-oriented while Discord feels more expressive and friend group/creative-oriented, given that gamers and artists primarily use it. Finally, both applications have comfortable aesthetics and organization tools—it just might take the user a little more time to get used to Discord.