# **SELECT CASE STUDIES**

# CHRISTOPHER PALLÉ

Design-Led Strategist | UX Leader | Advocate for Business-Aligned, Human-Centered Solutions

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# **UX LEADERSHIP IN ACTION:** ALIGNED WITH ENTERPRISE, SAAS, AND REGULATED DOMAINS

Over two decades of UX leadership, I've designed digital experiences that connect user insight to measurable business outcomes. From early-stage startups to Fortune 100 enterprises, including mission-driven nonprofits and enterprise SaaS leaders, I bring a cross-functional approach to solving complex product and service challenges. I get both the bootstrappers *and* the powers that be — and I help them build with clarity and purpose.

This case study selection highlights work that bridges strategy, innovation, and execution:

### metaMe (Fintech + Blockchain + Data Privacy & Al)

Led UX and product design for a blockchain-based data sovereignty platform. Helped secure \$1M+ in funding and land a pilot with IBM HR by delivering compelling prototypes that balanced AI innovation with compliance and trust-centric UX.

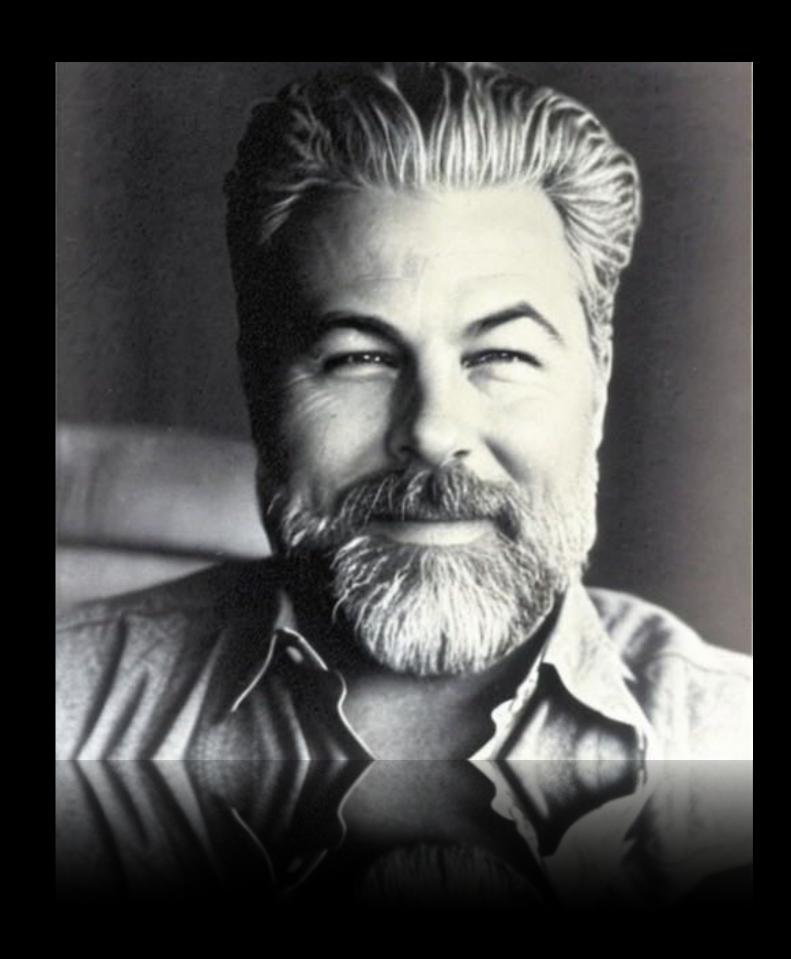
### JA MyWay<sup>™</sup> (EdTech + Financial Literacy + CRM-inspired UX)

Redesigned a national career-readiness platform into a modular, student-friendly experience that drove +150% growth in Monthly Active Users (MAUs) and over \$1M in new revenue. Sponsored and co-developed with leading partners including OneMain Financial, Microsoft, Citibank, The Hartford, PMI, and more.

### **IEEE (Complex Discovery Tool + Enterprise UX)**

Led UX research and heuristic evaluation for a machine learning-based research engine. Worked closely with product managers and data scientists to recommend interface innovations and secure further investment in the product.

In each case, I've operated as a player/coach — driving insight through research, shaping product direction, and leading teams to design outcomes that matter. The throughline across my work: human-centered systems that serve both users and the business.





# A FEW BRANDS THAT I'VE HELPED SUCCEED

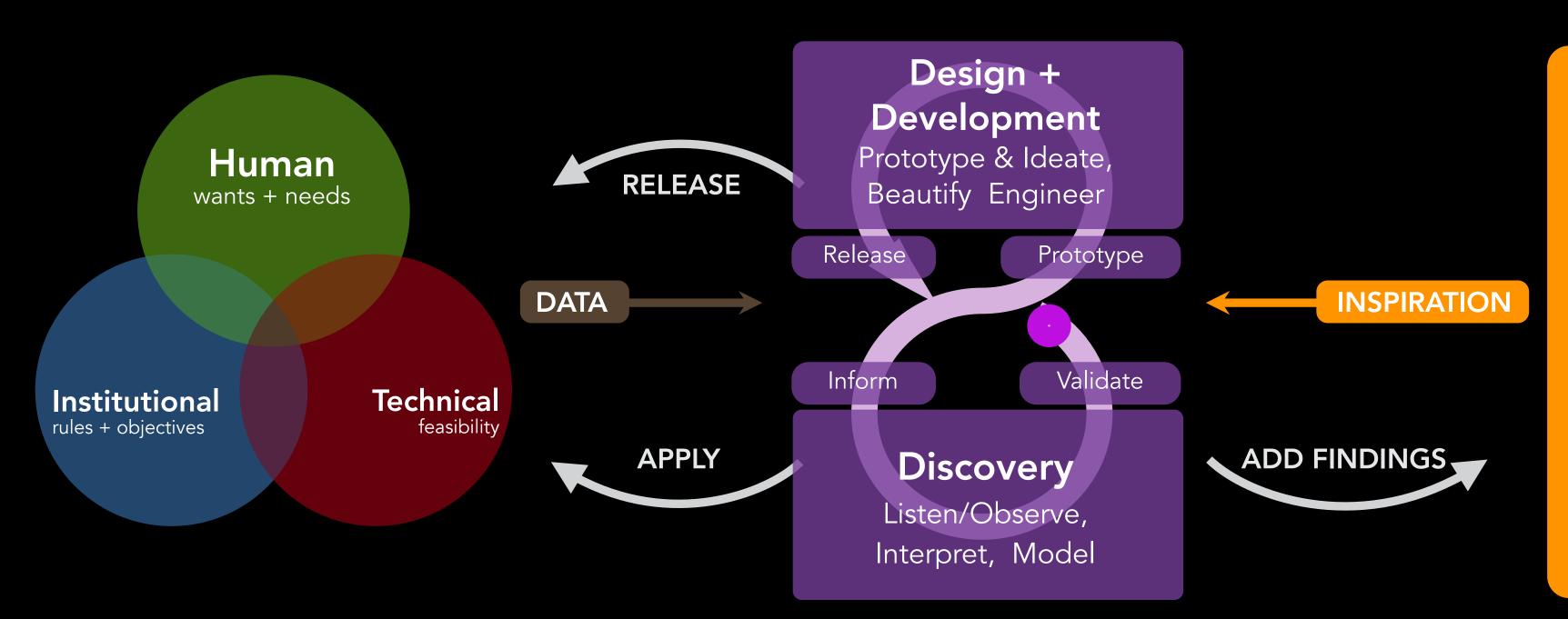






# **MY PROCESS: DESIGN RESEARCH FRAMEWORK**





## **DISCOVERY + DESIGN**

## WELL-INFORMED SPACE

User Insights Observations Scenarios + User Journeys **Problem Articulations KPI Reporting Against ROI** Multi-Sensory Artifacts **Design Principles and Patterns Recommendations + Proposals Ethical and Inclusive Considerations** 

and more!





# UX for Data Sovereignty: Navigating Privacy, Compliance, and Al in Fintech

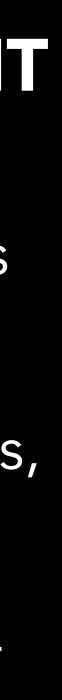


# SELF-SOVEREIGNTY OVER PERSONAL DATA IS A HUMAN RIGHT

In today's digital ecosystem, data isn't just information — it's power. metaMe is a blockchain-based platform designed to return that power to individuals, giving users control over how their personal data is accessed, shared, and monetized.

At the core of the product is a **personal AI agent**, tailored to the user's unique needs, helping streamline digital experiences while preserving privacy and autonomy.

When it came time to bring this vision to life, I was brought in to lead UX strategy — creating clear, testable product prototypes that translated a complex protocol into a trusted, human-centered experience.





# **MY ROLE**

As Lead UX Strategist for metaMe, I translated a complex blockchain protocol into a human-centered product experience — guiding design from concept through MVP.

- Applied Lean UX methods to rapidly prototype and test user flows using Sketch and Adobe XD
- Developed proof-of-concept products that demonstrated the protocol's value through real-world utility and trust-centered onboarding
- Facilitated design thinking workshops with cross-functional stakeholders, aligning business goals and user needs
- Sourced and led front-end engineering partners to deliver a functional MVP that supported product validation and enterprise engagement.

# **OUTCOMES**

Strategic design and clear UX storytelling played a central role in achieving key business milestones:

- Secured \$1M+ in venture funding by translating a complex protocol into a compelling, user-centered product vision
- Won a pilot with IBM's HR division, validating both the product and design approach through trusted enterprise engagement
- Selected for a competitive accelerator program (1 of 10 companies out of 120), co-sponsored by IBM and Columbia University recognized for innovation and design leadership
- Accepted into Rutgers I-Corps (NSF-funded) accelerator, gaining structured support to explore commercialization pathways and strengthen our go-to-market strategy

# **PROTOTYPING FOR TRUST & ADOPTION**

A key challenge for metaMe was designing onboarding experiences that build trust helping users understand and adopt a novel personal data protocol.

I led a two-track prototyping approach to address this:

First, by designing familiar, **high-utility user** flows to ground trust in everyday tasks

Then, by developing and testing lean prototypes through structured workshops and real-world scenarios

We prioritized two initial experiences — a personalized news feed reader and a secure social login — chosen for their relevance, clarity, and ability to demonstrate immediate user value. These flows became the foundation for a scalable MVP and helped unlock early traction with enterprise partners, including IBM.

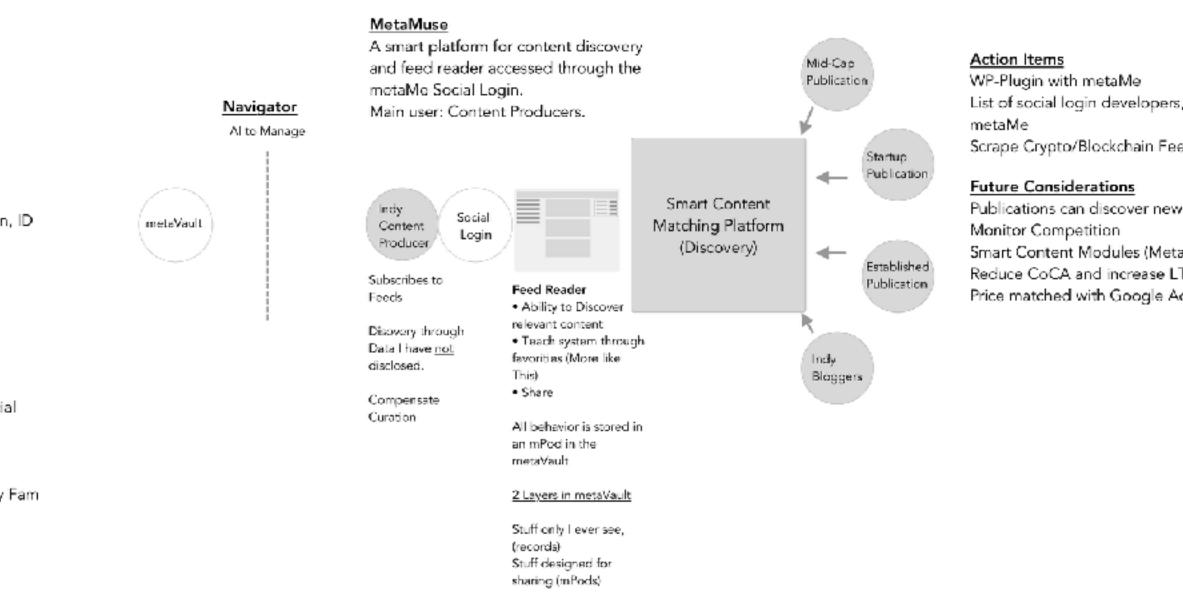


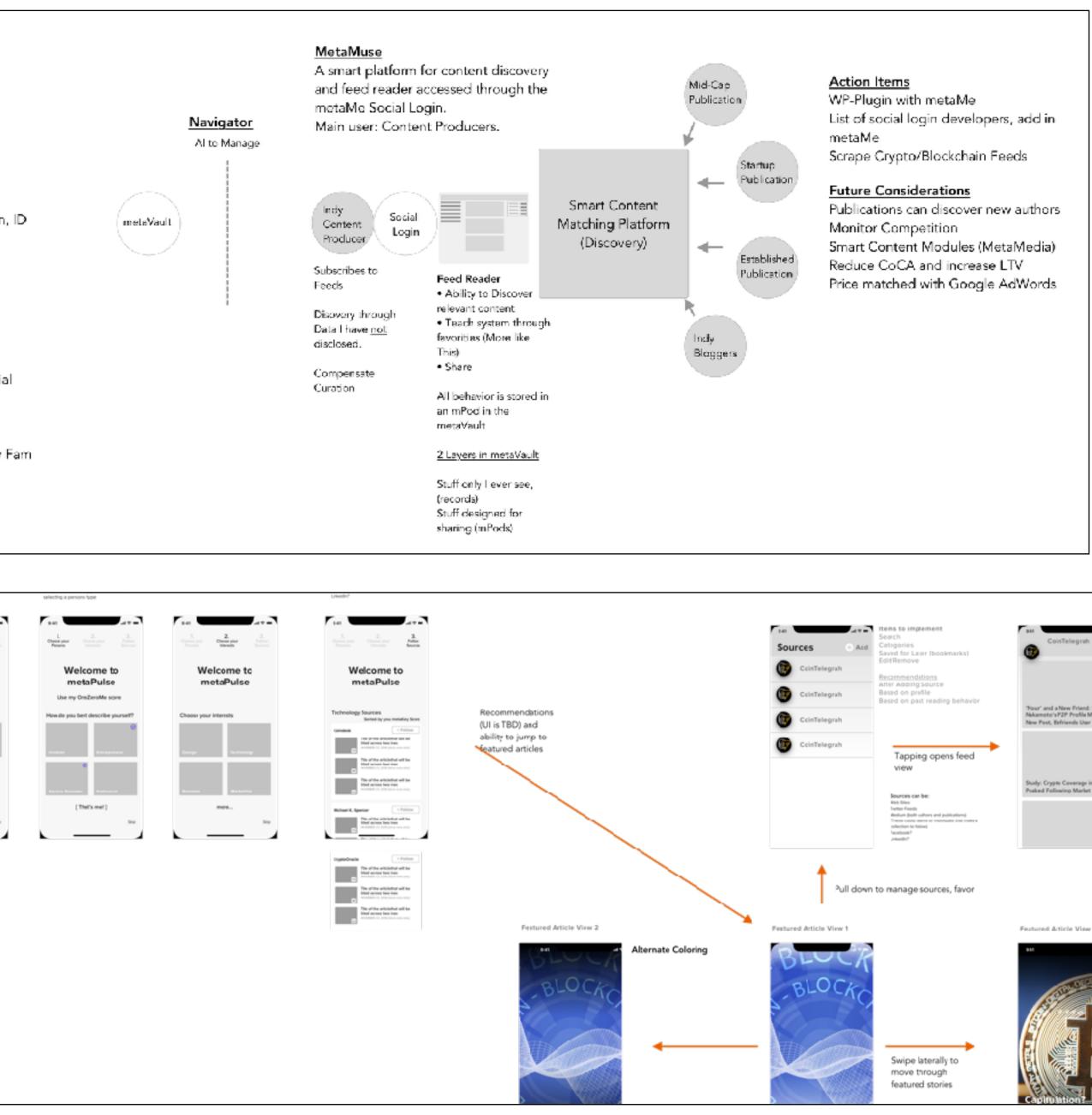
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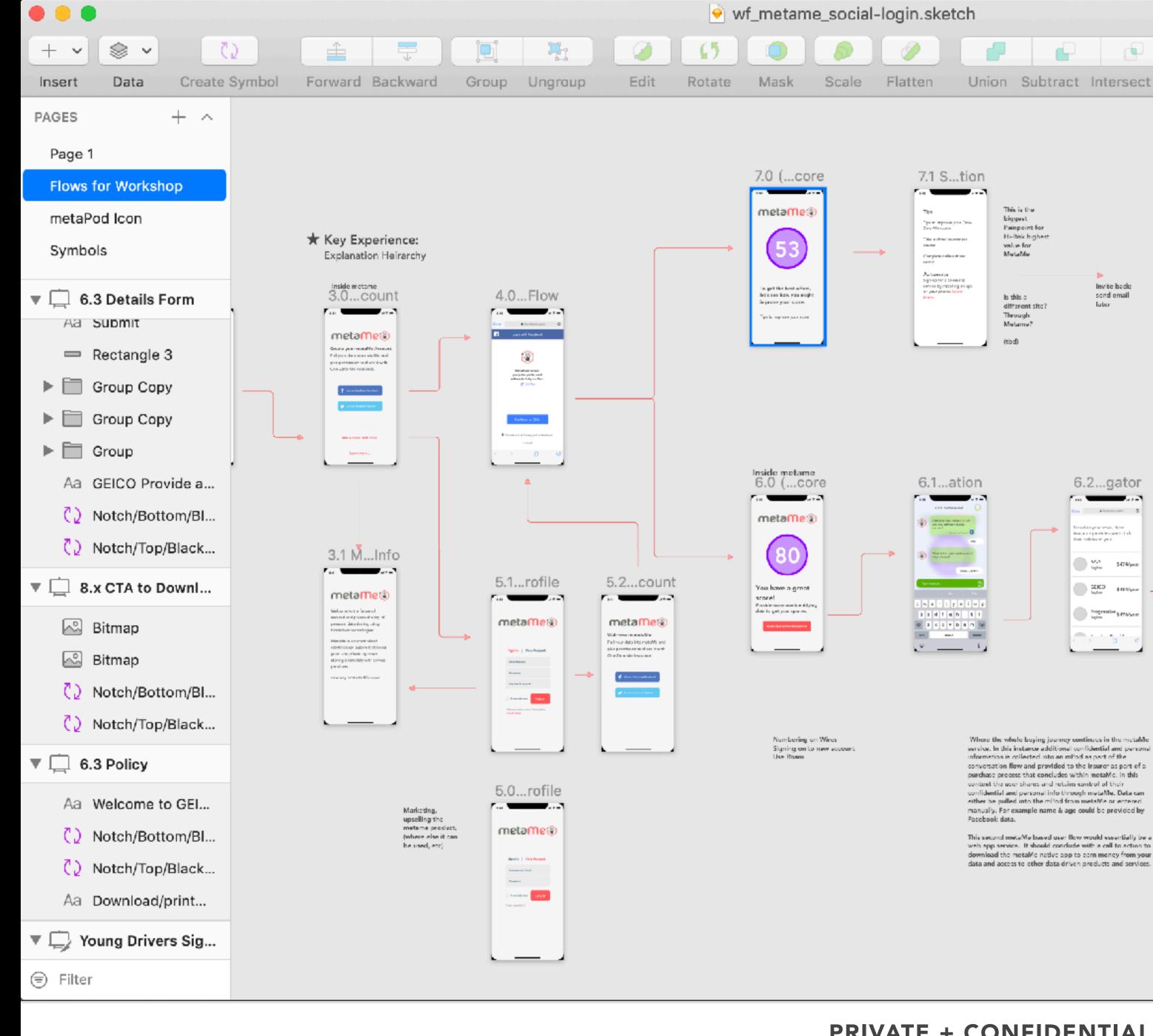


# **DESIGNING CLEAR**, **TRUST-READY FLOWS**

To ensure clarity across product, design, and engineering, I create structured flow documentation that maps out the complete user journey — especially critical in onboarding and authentication experiences where trust, security, and ease of use must align.

This example shows a **wire-flow for metaMe's** secure login experience, built in Sketch. It captures not just screen progression, but interaction logic and system dependencies enabling better handoff, fewer implementation gaps, and faster iteration across teams.





**PRIVATE + CONFIDENTIAL** 

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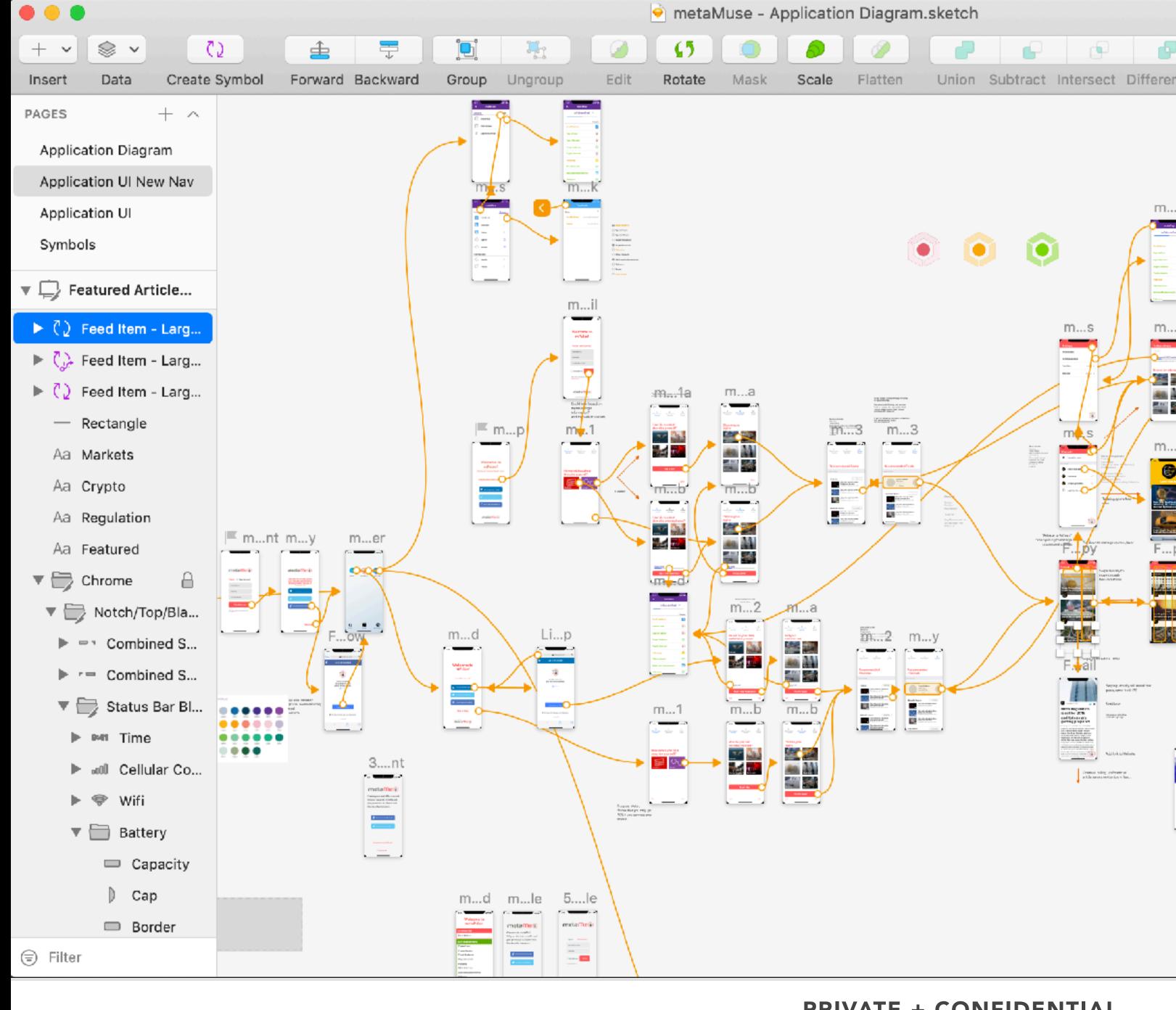


# **PROTOTYPING FOR SPEED & ALIGNMENT**

To improve design velocity and stakeholder alignment, I led the migration to a better prototyping tool — enabling faster iteration and more realistic, interactive prototypes.

This upgrade streamlined how we modeled transition states, micro-interactions, and navigation logic — all essential for communicating design intent to engineering and reinforcing trust during stakeholder reviews. The improved fidelity and speed of delivery helped reduce feedback loops and sharpen decisionmaking across teams.





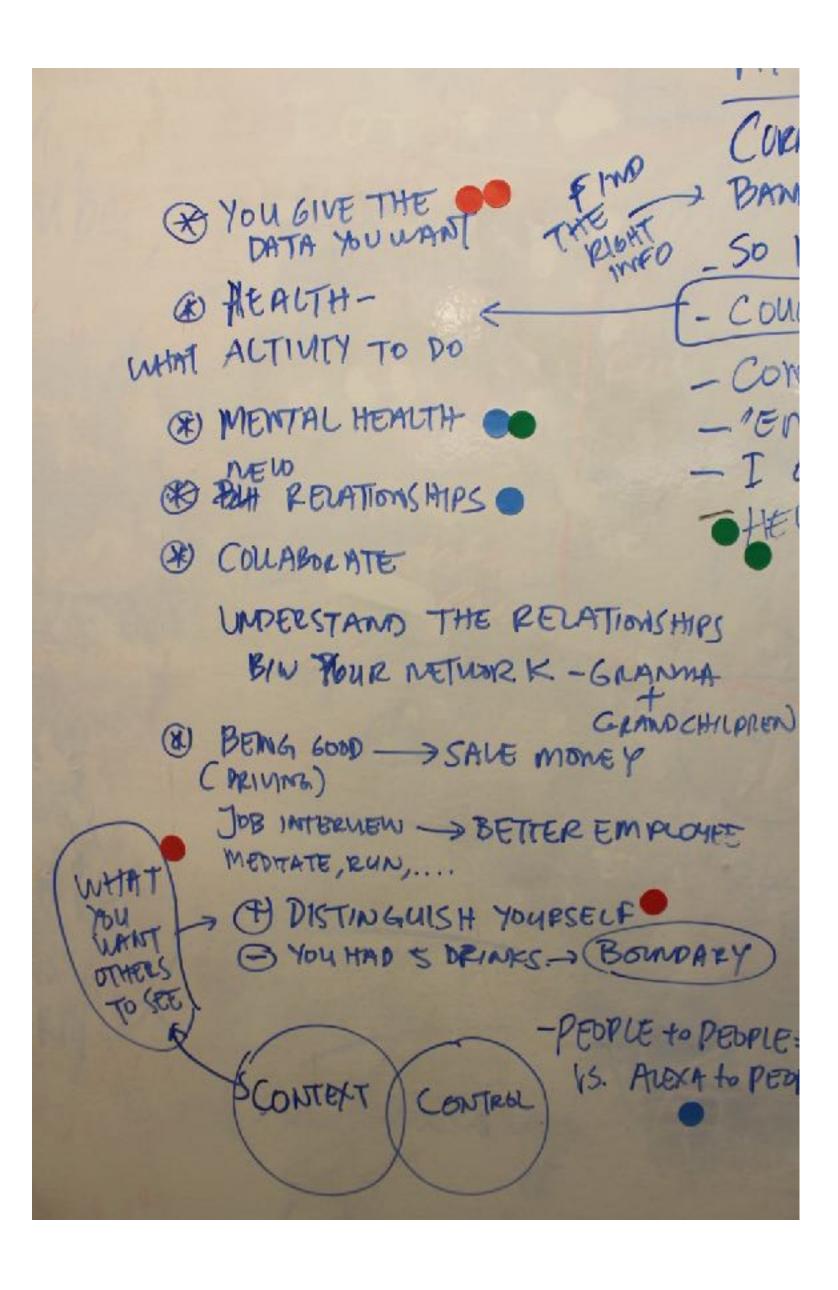
# **CO-CREATING WITH USERS**

To validate assumptions around data privacy and trust, I facilitated user research that uncovered how real people feel about sharing personal data — particularly in the context of emerging technologies like AI and blockchain.

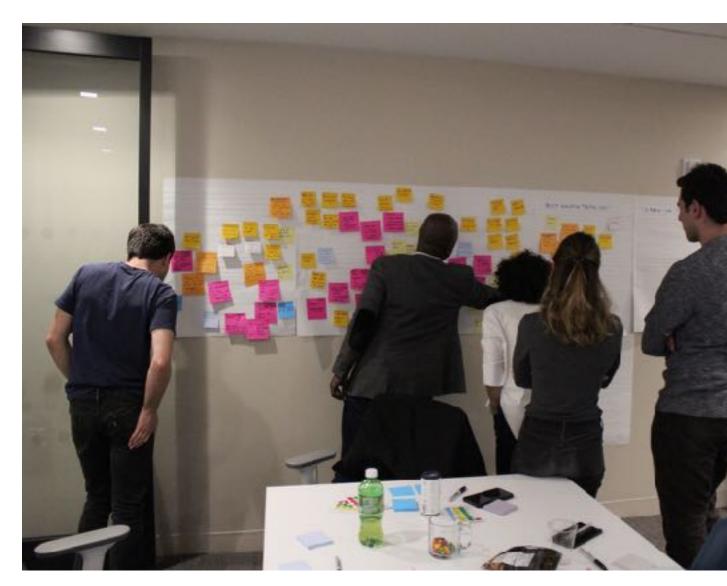
I brought in award-winning design thinker Seda Evis to help lead qualitative sessions, combining structured interviews, empathy mapping, and collaborative analysis. These sessions gave us deep insight into users' emotional and behavioral friction points — especially around transparency, control, and perceived risk.

This research directly shaped product decisions and allowed us to **refine onboarding flows**, strengthen trust signals, and guide the development roadmap with confidence.





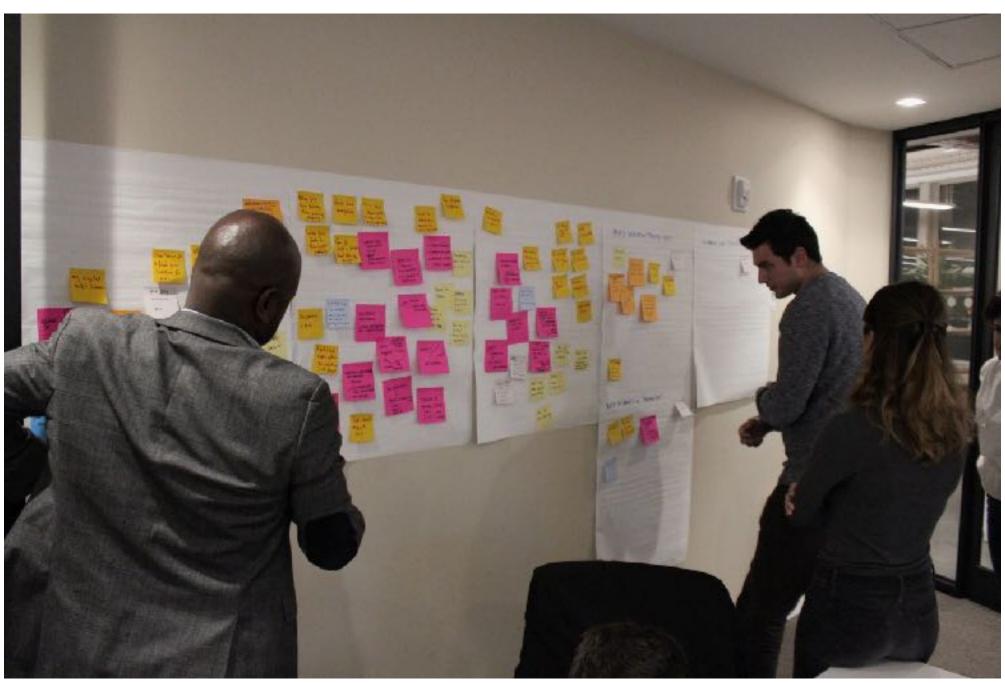




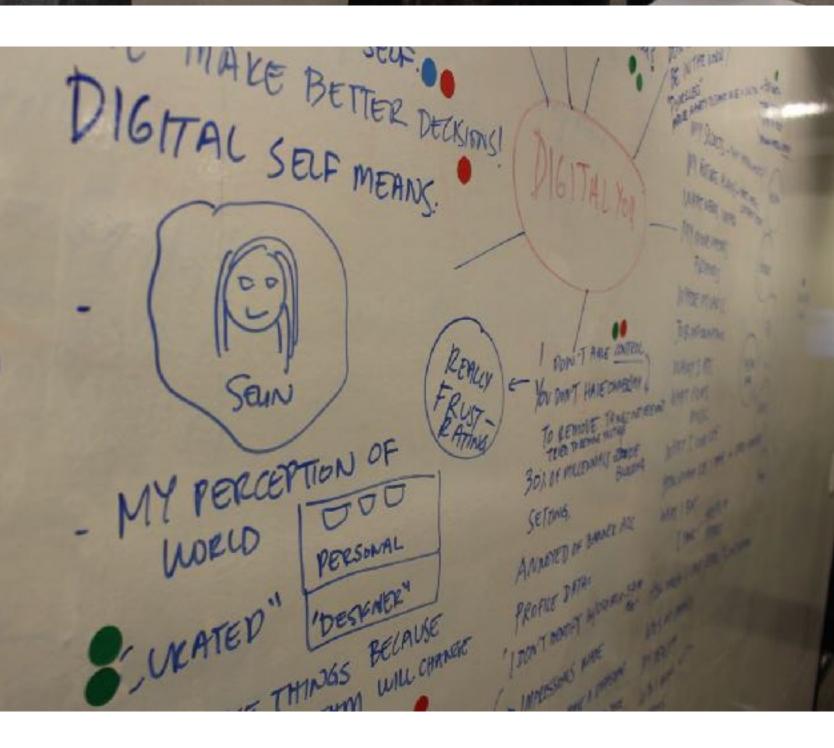




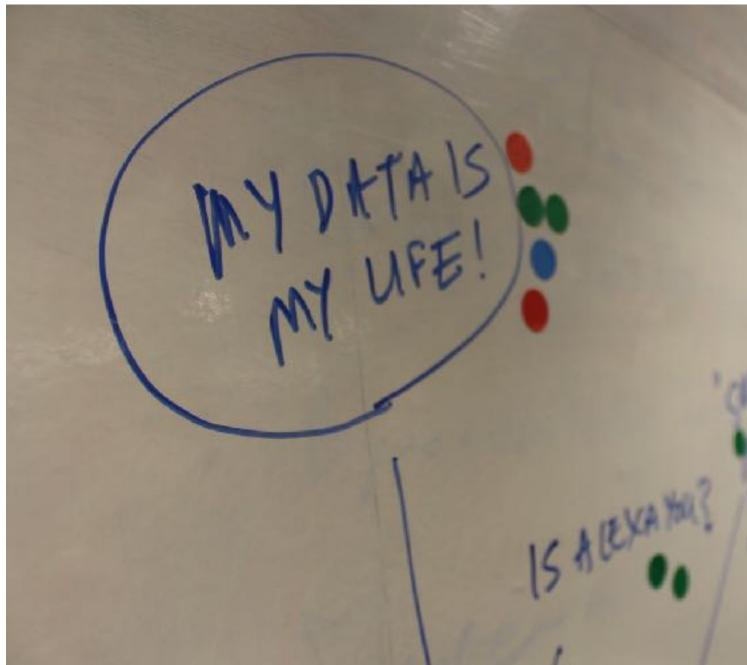
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# DESIGNING FOR TRUST & TRACTION

Grounded in user insight, I led development of modular prototypes that addressed product goals and trust concerns across onboarding and engagement flows.

The following examples illustrate how we applied UX strategy to solve for **clarity**, **privacy**, and **everyday utility** — all critical to building confidence in sensitive digital experiences:

**Media Feed Reader** – Delivered personalized content while demonstrating the value of controlled data sharing

**Crypto Wallet** – Simplified asset management with a focus on onboarding transparency and security

**Wellness & Stress Management Tool** – Encouraged daily engagement through lifestyle relevance and emotional alignment

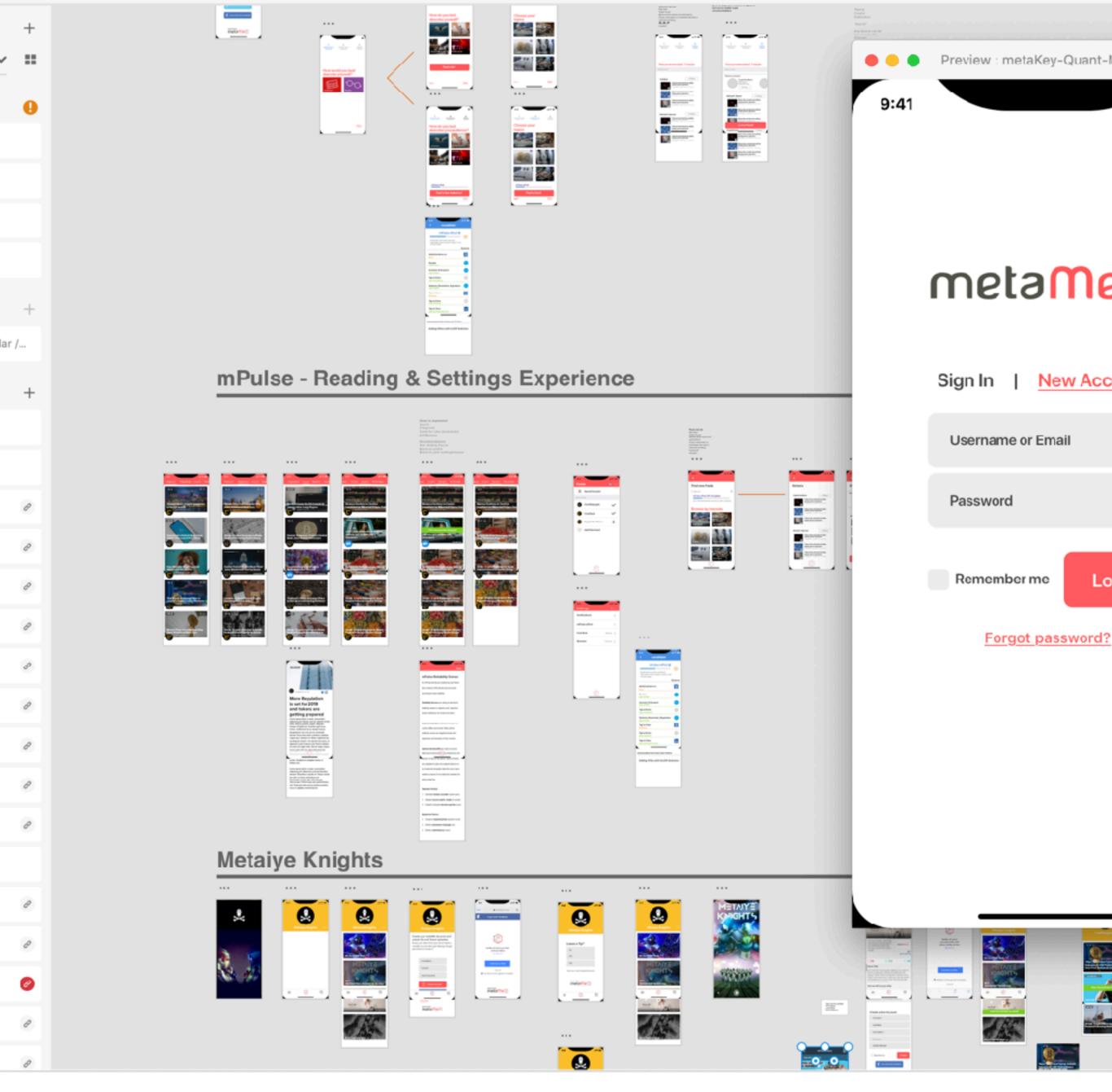
These prototypes accelerated stakeholder confidence and shaped the MVP roadmap by validating user-aligned, high-impact concepts.

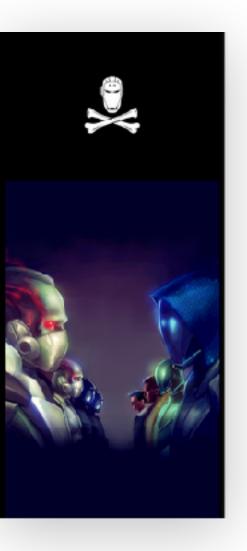


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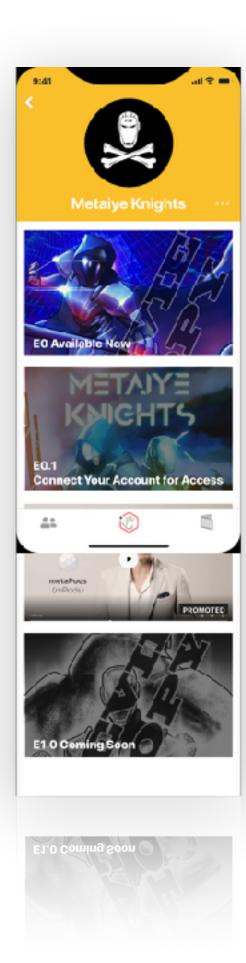
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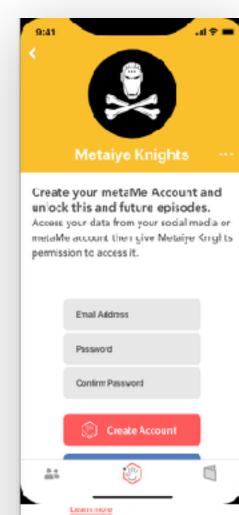
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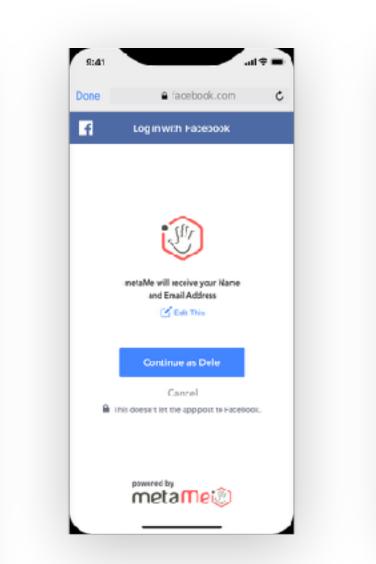




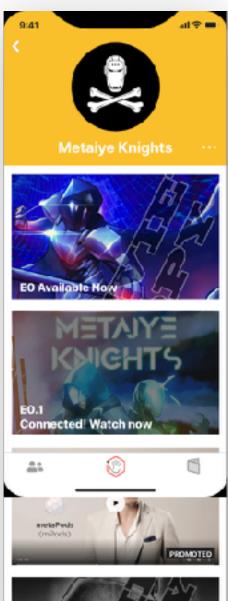


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# MEDIA FEED READER







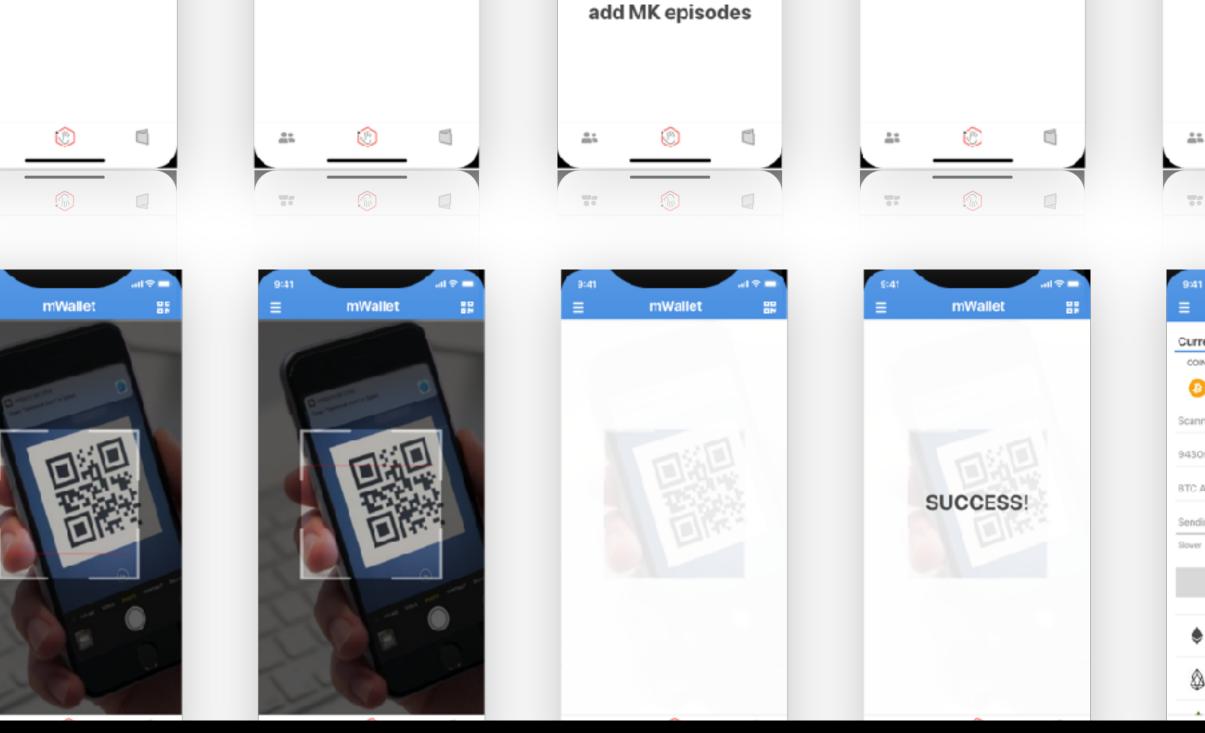








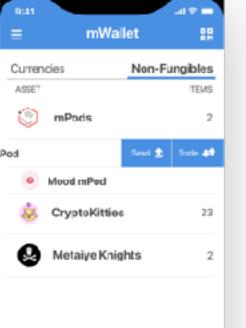
# **CRYPTO WALLET**



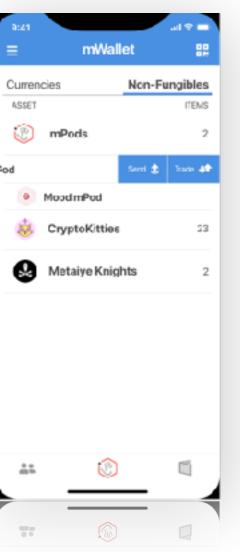
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EOS	253.7332	\$731.17
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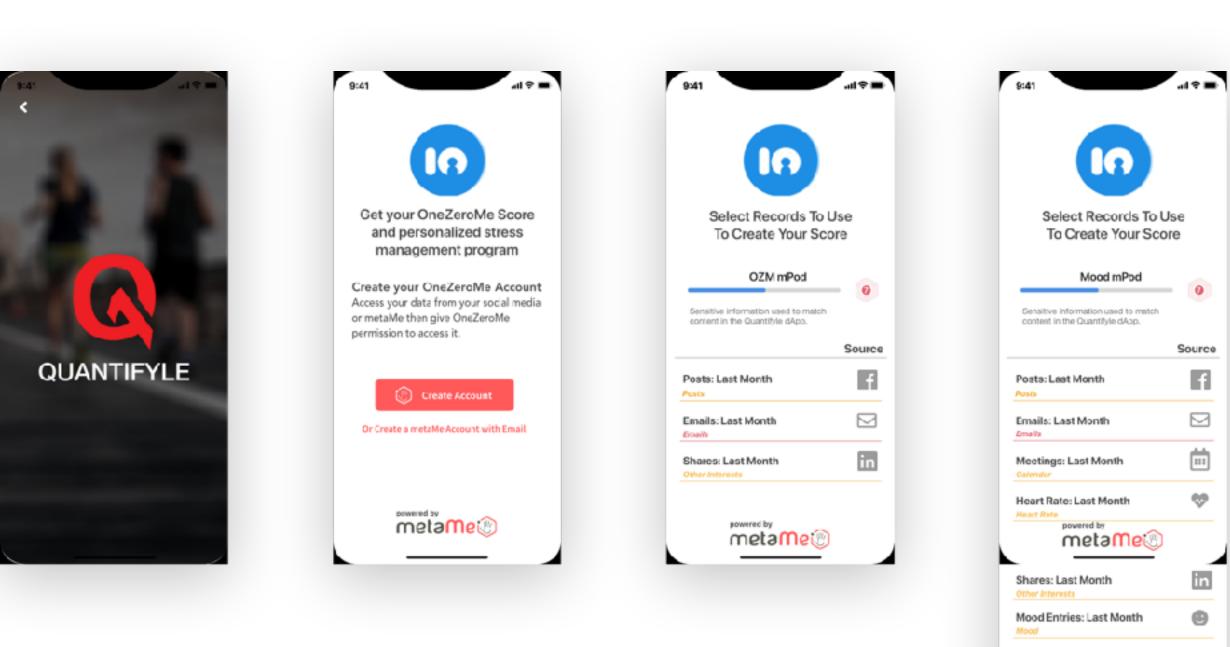
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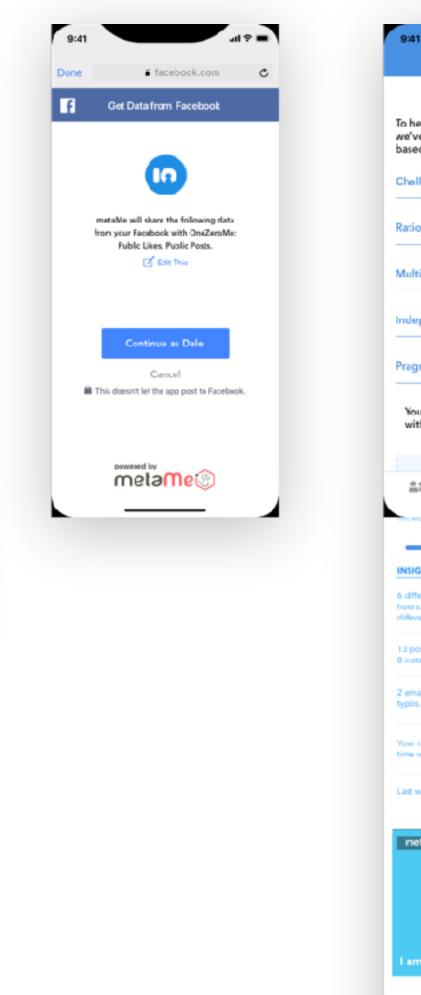
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# WELLNESS AND STRESS MANAGEMENT



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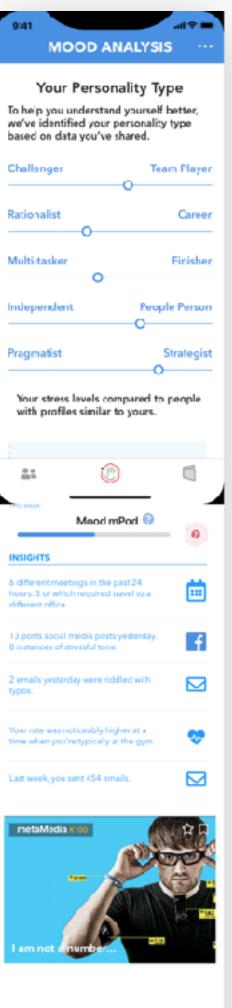
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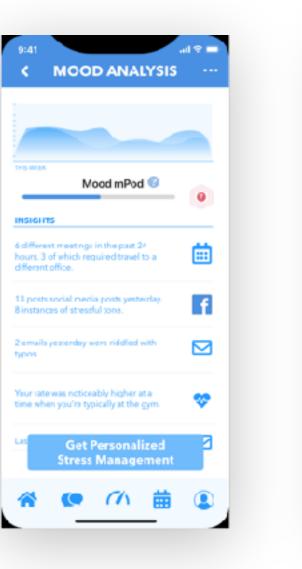
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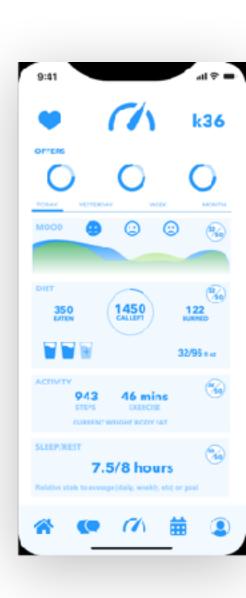
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# **IBM PILOT SECURED**

Leveraging the strength of our prototypes and strategic relationships, metaMe secured a pilot engagement with IBM's HR division.

This opportunity validated both the product vision and UX approach — demonstrating how usercentered design, combined with clear business messaging, could drive enterprise interest in a highly regulated and trust-sensitive environment.

TEAM 1: IBM EN TEAM 2: SERVI TEAM 3: IBM HP **KEY INSIGHTS 5 BIG STEPS** 

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#### mela<mark>Me</mark> IBM



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### Introduction:

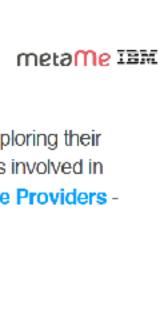
IBM Design Thinking focuses on empathizing with stakeholder personas and exploring their needs. To do this we use a number of exercises to understand the key stakeholders involved in delivering wellness experiences - Employees, HR Benefits Managers and Service Providers and the challenges they face.



A holistic take on wellness experience: Looking at Employee, Employer and Provider perspectives

PERSONA 1: MAGGIE - IBM EMPLOYEE

#### melaWe IBM





# Reimagining the JA Student Center into JA MyWay<sup>TM</sup>



# **CRAFTING JA MyWay<sup>TM</sup> A USER-CENTRIC EVOLUTION OF JA'S STUDENT CENTER**

Junior Achievement USA (JA) stands at the forefront of K-12 education, fostering entrepreneurship, financial literacy, and college/career readiness in the nation's youth. The engagement was less than satisfactory, prompting a crucial need to redefine and reimagine.

- Despite their invaluable mission, JA identified a pressing issue their Student Center, a hub
- for career path exploration, wasn't resonating with its target audience of high school students.





# **MY ROLE:** LEAD UX/PRODUCT DESIGNER

### **STRATEGY & DESIGN**

Led product design and interaction strategy in line with JA's objectives and audience needs.

## **TEAM COORDINATION**

Managed a 4-member design team and collaborated with multiple vendors on content, research, and module development.

### **RESEARCH**:

Directed generative research on a national and regional scale, engaging JA staff, sponsors, and students.

### **DESIGN EXECUTION**

Developed wireframes and prototypes with Sketch and Adobe XD, and steered user research to align designs with user needs.

# **ACHIEVEMENTS & OUTCOMES**

A modular design facilitating comprehensive career cluster research.

Sponsor-driven Content: Leveraging robust partnerships, including Microsoft, RobertHalf International, PMI, and The Hartford, to provide authoritative and insightful content.

An intuitive, student-friendly user interface, ensuring ease of navigation and engagement.

## **IMPACT & RESULTS:**

Introduced monetization via new sponsorship opportunities.

Achieved a +150% surge in Monthly Active Users (MAUs).

Generated \$1M in new revenue over 3 years.

Strengthened data-driven engagement.



# THE BLUEPRINT: DESIGN THINKING WORKSHOPS

Together with the acclaimed design studio, Motivate Design, we sought the voice and insights of both students and administrators to lay the foundation. The outcome was a vision that aimed to redefine the way students interact with JA's content.



### COMMON THEMES

As the Studio progressed, several common themes arose that were to help guide the direction that the Student Center should take.

### The Student Center should let students:

program-oriented basis

development

MOTIVATE 💴 D E S I G N



A project plan was proposed that would enable Junior Achievement students to make money, help their community and figure out their future.

GOALS:

SHORT TERM:

- Portfolio
- Virtual Volunteer



- SUSTAIN: allow students, parents and mentors to create and foster long term relationships with Junior Achievement, not just on a
- **SUPPORT:** support students throughout their lives
- **CONNECT:** put students in touch with teachers, other students, employers, local groups, etc.
- **DEVELOP:** include resources that will foster personal skill
- **EARN:** disseminate rewards, badges and certifications as a result of involvement and accomplishments with Junior Achievement

JUNIOR ACHIEVEMENT | WHAT IF STUDIO | DECEMBER 2014 | PAGE: 3

### "WHAT IF" STATEME

#### The statement that received the most v Center Into a revenue generator for Jur

What if the student center could be a revenue generator for . Achievement?

What if I could use Junior Achievement as a pipeline for findi emploveesi

What if Junior Achievement could provide incentives, like gift certificates or charitable contributions?

What if my parents got better insurance rates or free checkin

What if Junior Achievement made a reality show?

What if I could track my expertise in relation to my jobs?

What if we could follow a student throughout their life?

What if there were rewards for good grades/performance?

What if there was a Junior Achievement membership badge?

What if we could design a customizable and localizable stude

\* The statements included on this slide are only th MOTIVATE 💴 D E S I G N

### THE WINNING IDEA

#### MID TERM:

LinkedIn

 Badges/Certifications Resume

Rewards

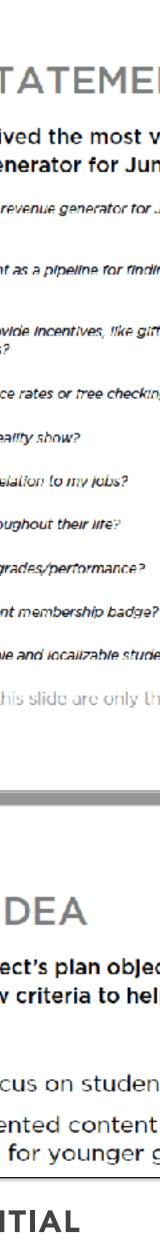
#### LONG TERM:

- Internships
- Localization

### **REFINE THE IDEA**

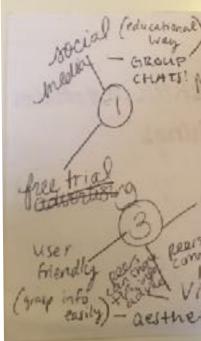
To help achieve the project's plan object proposed, as well as new criteria to hel

- In the short term, focus on studen
- Focus on career-oriented content interests/inspiration for younger g

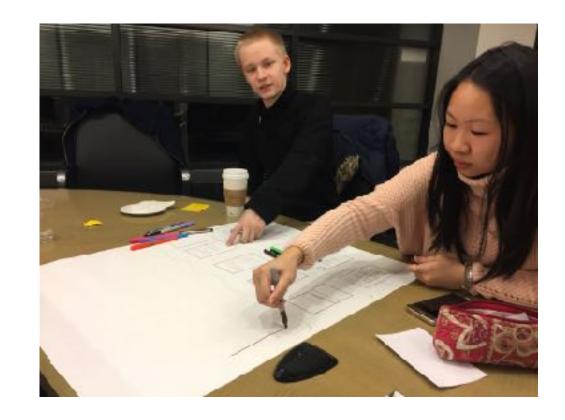


# **CO-CREATION: BREEDING IDEAS THROUGH COLLABORATION**

By bridging the gap between the design team and students, the co-creation design studios cultivated a collaborative environment. Ideageneration games, sketching, design presentations, and usability studies became the staple of these sessions.

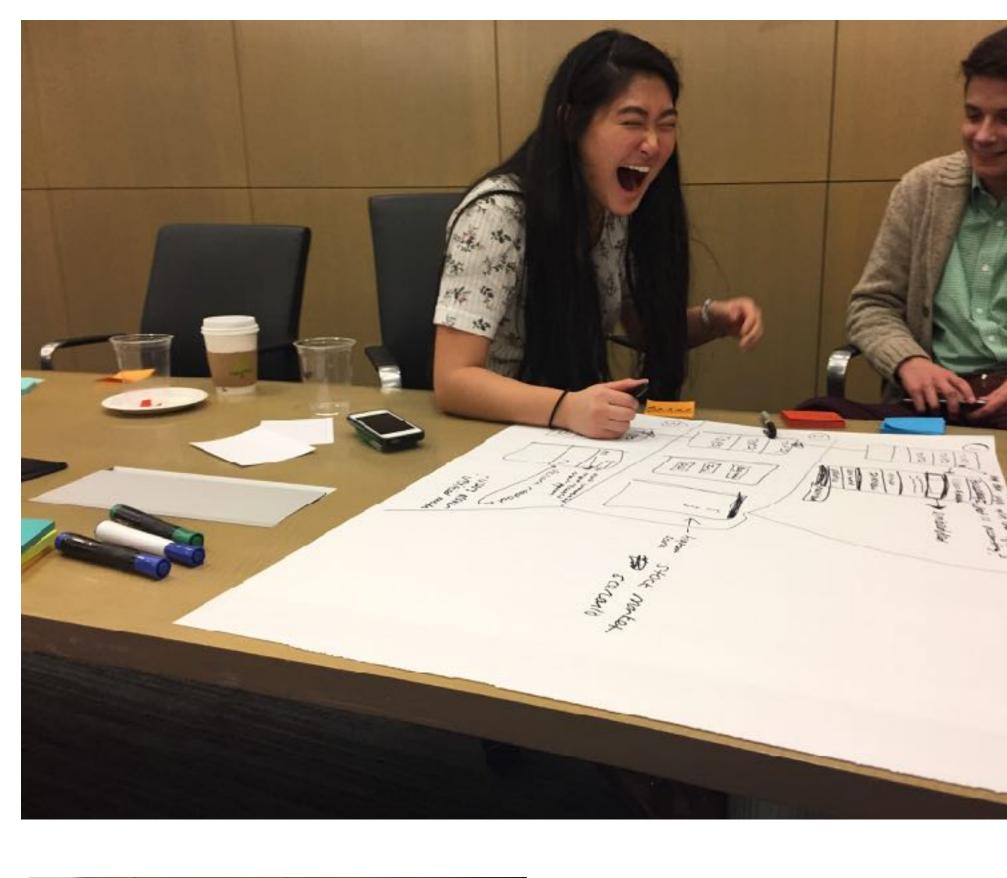




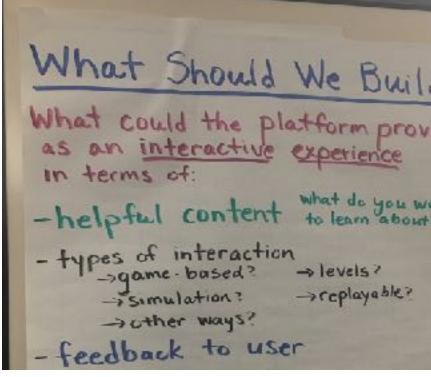




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# CONSTRUCTING THE FRAMEWORK: WIREFRAMING AND PROTOTYPING

Our relentless commitment to a solid, usercentered solution led us through numerous design iterations. Using tools like Adobe XD and Sketch, we ensured that every module would resonate with the students and serve its primary purpose.



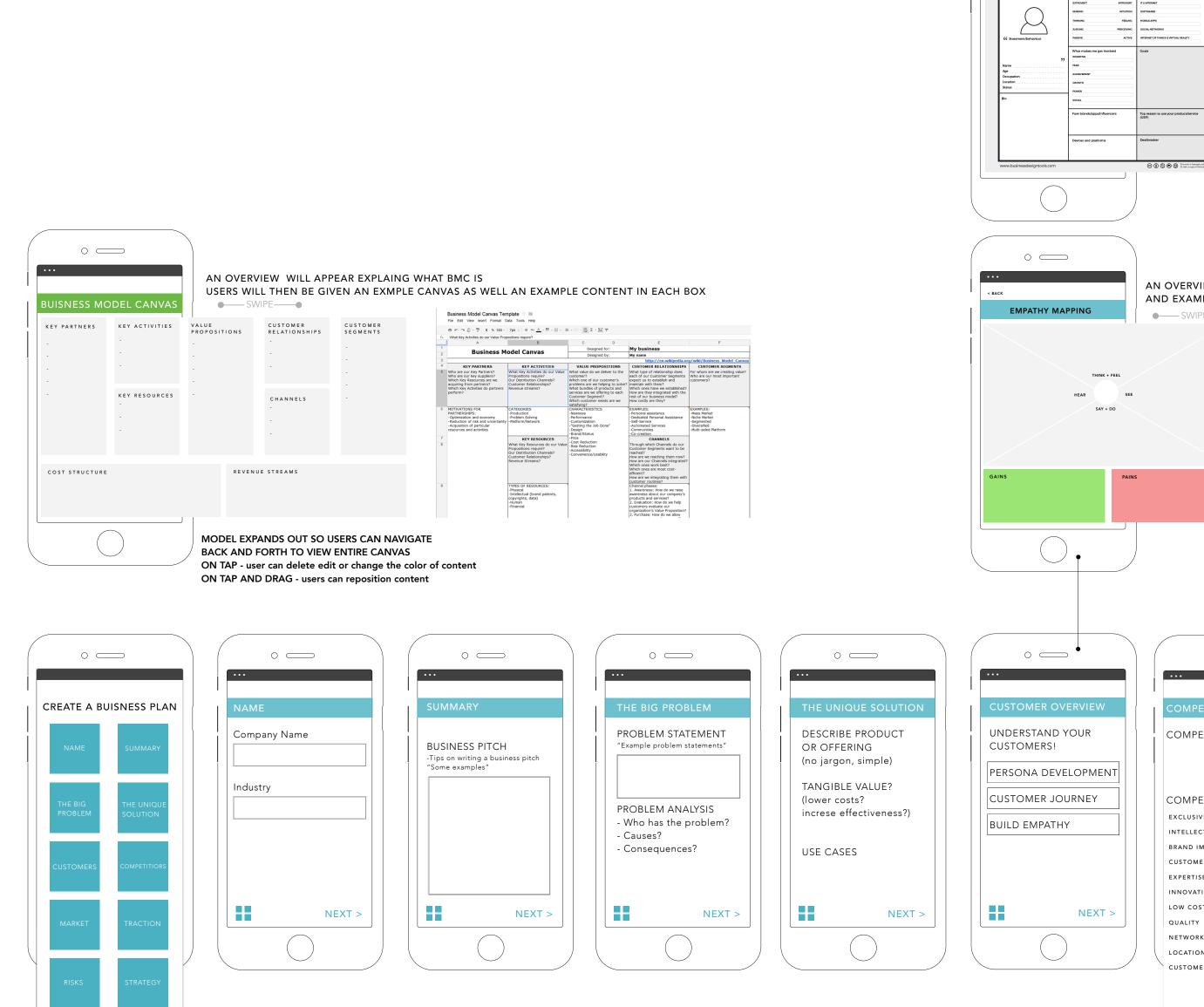
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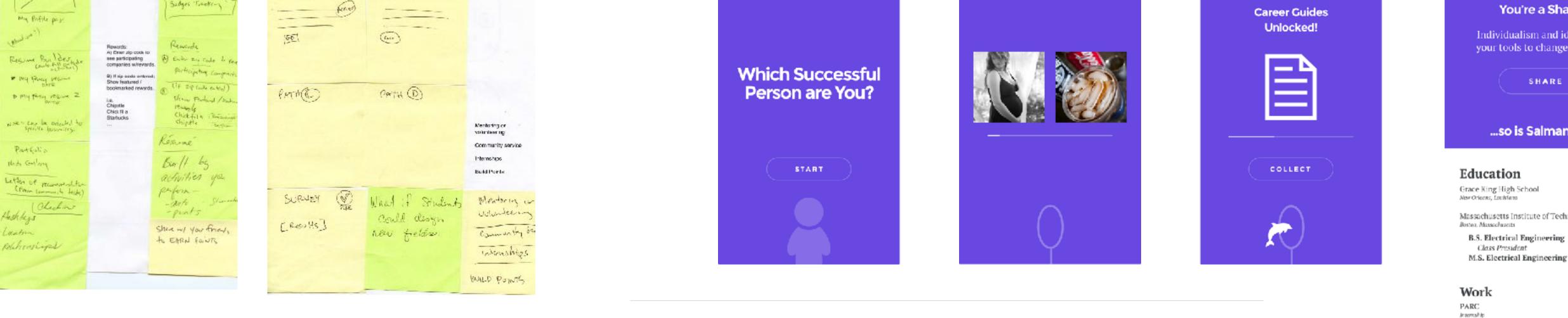
CREATE A MODEL

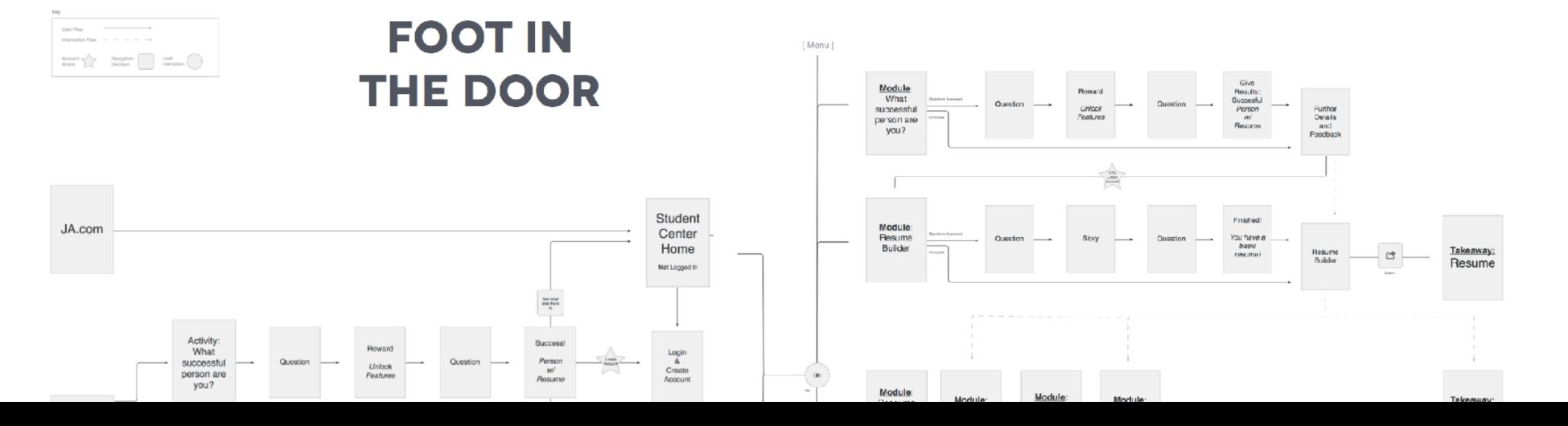
### CREATE A PLAN

COVER SUMMARY THE BIG PROBLEM THE UNIQUE SOLUTION MARKET CUSTOMERS COMPETITIORS TRACTION RISKS STRATEGY MILESTONE MARKETING SALES FINANCIALS

BIZPLAN.COM







## OUTCOMES

### **CRAFTING RELEVANT SOLUTIONS**

Balancing ease-of-use with sophistication, we explored diverse concepts - from personal web pages to money management tools. The platform was designed to empower students, making them feel mature yet not overwhelmed.

Wohl Capital Management Fund Analyst Khan Academy

Youtube Channel KhanAcademy.com

#### Hobbies

Volunteering Basketball Teaching

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CREATE ACCOUNT

### **Stage\* Promotions** 1. Staff

#### **Rounds: Managing Financials\***

1. Review Money Market Account

Core Loop 1. Earn & Merge \$



2. Manage Outgoings (Debt, Giving, Savings, Living

3. Learn about retirement concepts\* 2. See Progress towards goals

#### 2. Manager

### End State

After 3 Stages, there is summary screen. Meet your goals?

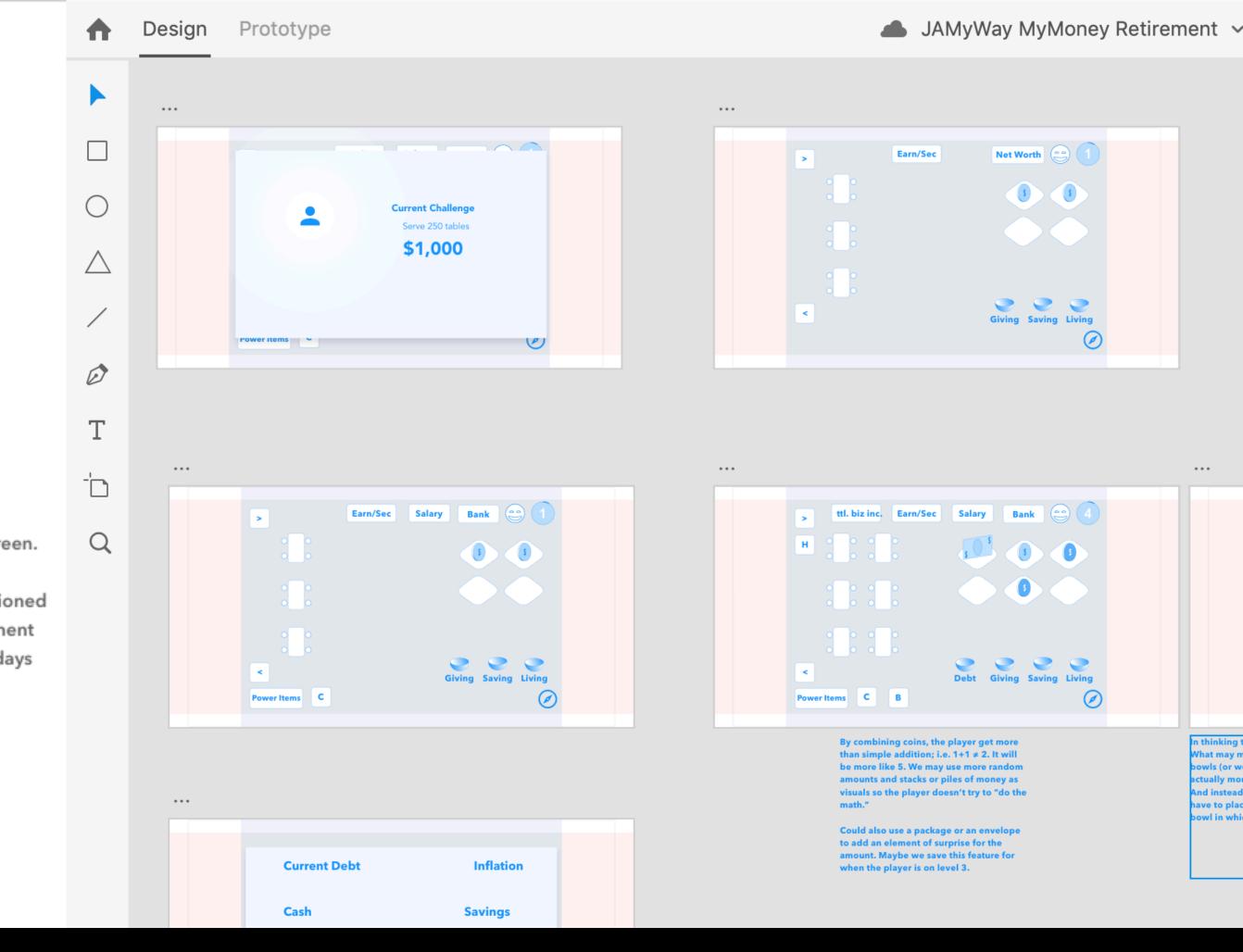
Assessment: Students will be questioned again on their knowledge of retirement concepts. This could be sent a few days later.

Could play the game again without educational content

## OUTCOMES

### **A CONSISTENT DESIGN APPROACH**

While the tools may vary, my design process stays unwavering. Rapid iterations, user-centric mockups, followed by valuable feedback were crucial in our journey to creating an impactful user experience.





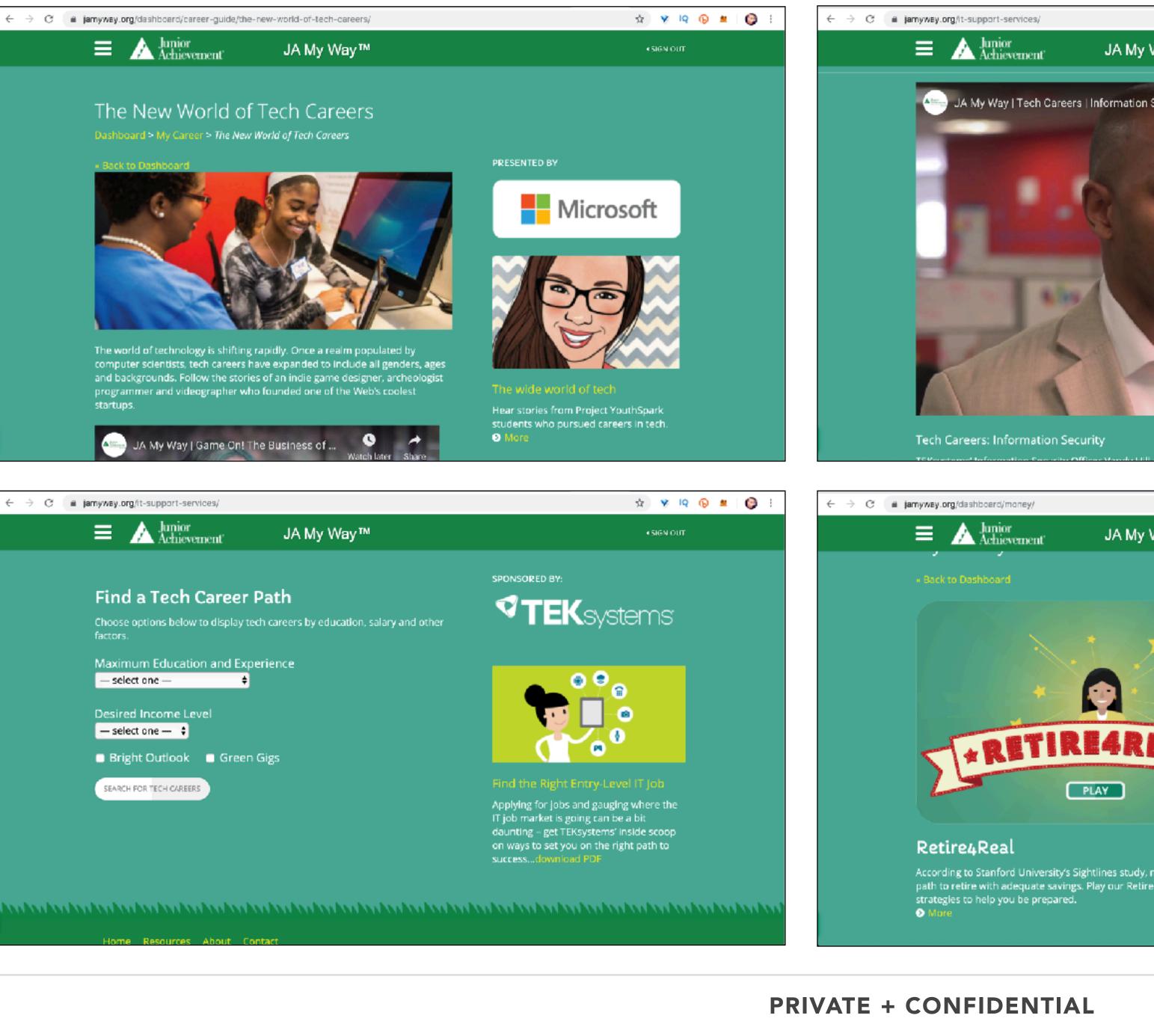




# **ENRICHING CONTENT:** THE MULTIMEDIA RESOURCE

JA MyWay<sup>™</sup> was transformed into an engaging multimedia hub filled with interactive content – calculators, resume builders, games, videos, and quizzes – ensuring relevancy and engagement.





# **ENRICHING CONTENT:** THE MULTIMEDIA RESOURCE

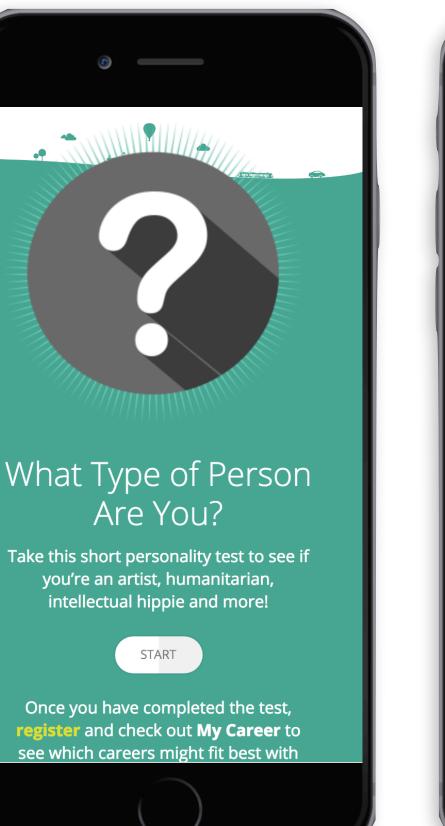
This interactive feature captures the unique essence of each student, delivering content aligned to their interests. And as a cherry on top, a personality plaque on their dashboard further amplifies their understanding of their strengths.

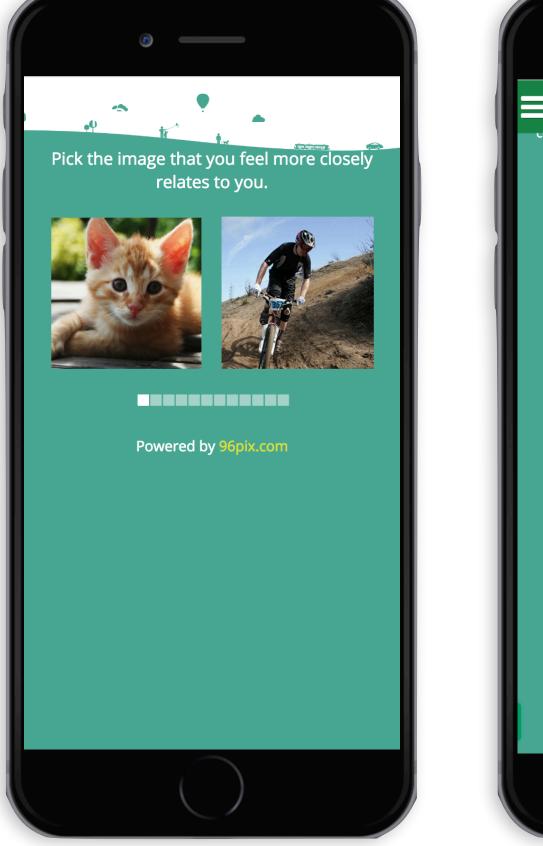
This contributes to enriching their profile and learning experience.

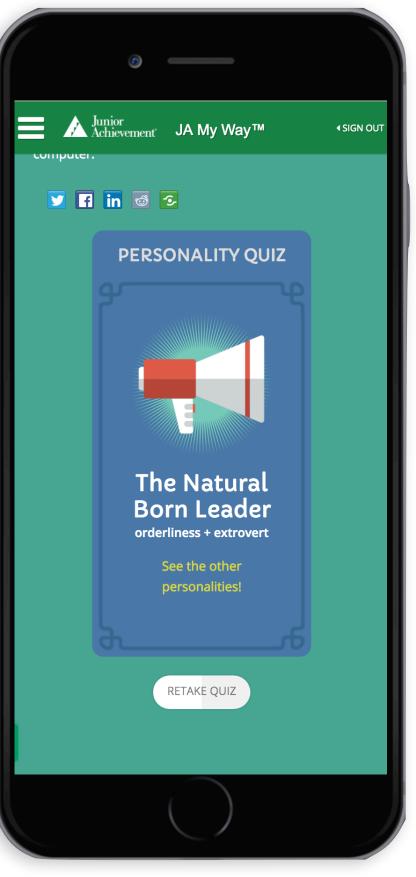


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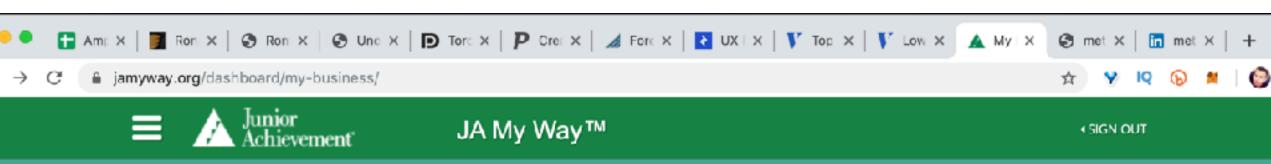
# **ENTREPRENEURSHIP AT HEART: JAMyBusiness MODULE**

This interactive feature captures the unique essence of each student, delivering content aligned to their interests. And as a cherry on top, a personality plaque on their dashboard further amplifies their understanding of their strengths.

This contributes to enriching their profile and learning experience.







### My Business

#### « Back to Dashboard

Starting a business can be a creative and rewarding experience, but it's extremely important to plan, prepare and invest the time and money needed. in order to make it a success.



### **Tools to Create Pitches and Business Plans**

Have a great idea for a startup or want to launch your own business? Use our fun and easy tools, including valuable tips from The Hartford's business. playbook...> More

See how these Young Entrepreneur Council (YEC) members started their businesses!

#### DID YOU KNOW?

One of the top reasons that a small business fails is a lack of demand for the product or service at a price that won't generate a profit.

Source: New York Times

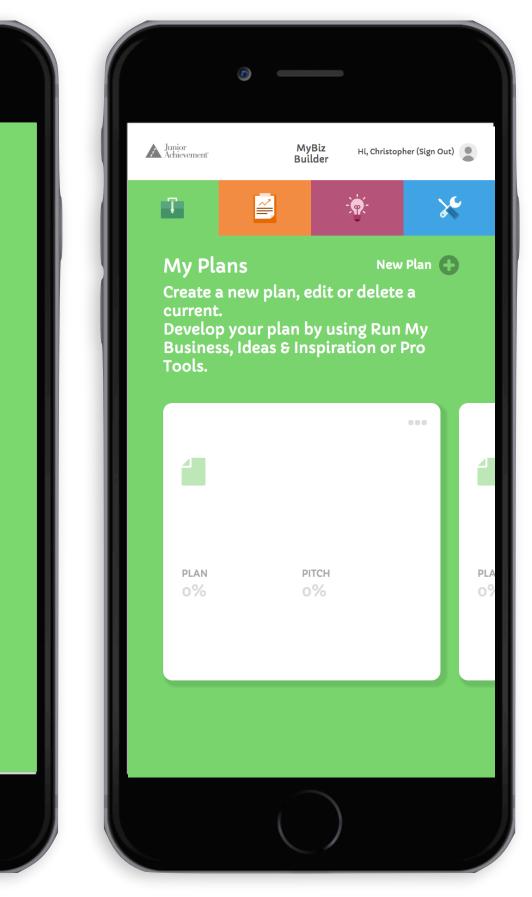




# MAD LIBS-STYLE PITCH CREATOR

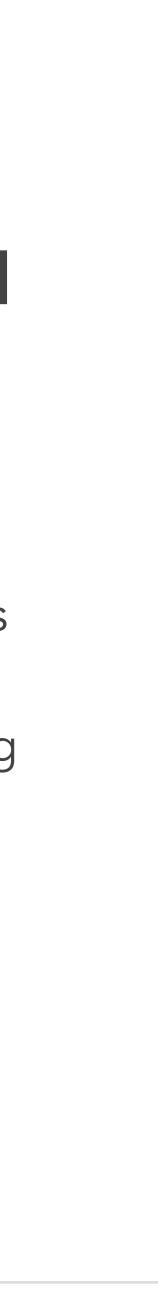
A card-stack interface allows students to customize their business concepts. The endgame? A crisp, cogent elevator pitch.





# BUSINESS PLAN BUILDER

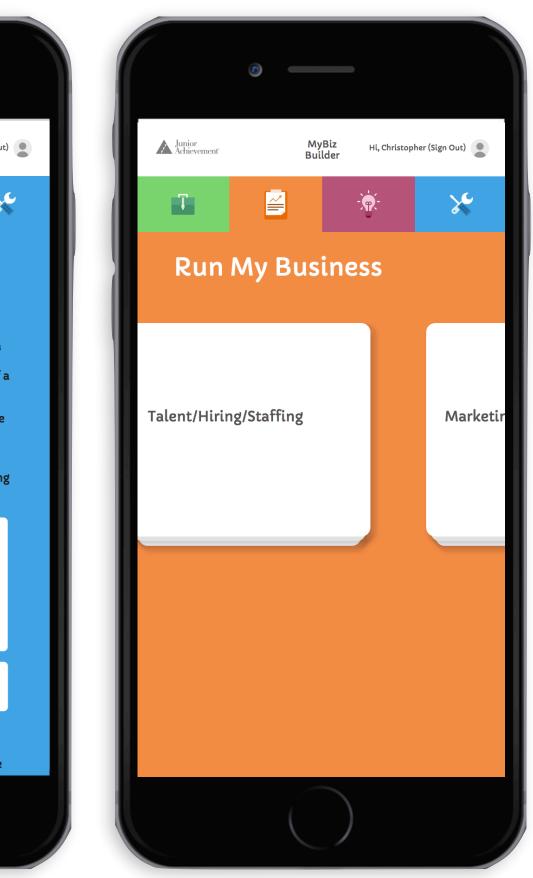
Post ideation, students are nudged towards consolidating their business plans, using the previously crafted pitch as a grounding element.



### Junior Achievement MyBiz Builder Hi, Christopher (Sign Out) 📃 🗲 📟 Business Model Canvas The Business Model Canvas can help you think about the elements necessary for a business to be successful. It can be used to map out a model for a business that you want to build or one that you want to analyze. This tool can help tell the story of a business plan and show how it is organized. Components of the Business Model Canvas include details about customers, offerings, infrastructure, and finances. There are nine blocks that help describe the essential parts of a business and how they work together. Learn more about each building block in this section. Customer Segments Who are your customers? What group(s) of people

# **TOOLS AND** RESOURCES

With inspirations from renowned frameworks like Lean Startup<sup>™</sup>, we introduced tools pivotal to the student's entrepreneurial journey, including Business Model Canvas, Empathy Maps, and more.



# **RUN MY BUSINESS**

By simulating real-world business scenarios, we arm students with practical insights into the intricacies of running their venture.



# **REDEFINING STUDENT ENGAGEMENT:** TAILORING JA MyWay<sup>TM</sup> FOR TOMORROW'S LEADERS

module, was crafted keeping in mind the dynamic and evolving needs of our young audience.

With this comprehensive approach, we not only reimagined JA MyWay™ but also reinvented the way students perceived and interacted with career-focused content. Every element, every







Designing Clarity in Complexity: UX Strategy for IEEE's Next-Gen Research Platform



# **RE-IMAGINING AN E-DISCOVERY PLATFORM TO INNOVATION SEARCH ENGINE**

IEEE, known globally as the custodian of critical technical standards like WiFi and Firewire, recognized a pressing need. With an extensive library of over 2 million technical documents, the challenge was to streamline the search process for its specialized members. To achieve this, IEEE partnered with an industry leader in machine-learning-based e-discovery platforms. The objective? Adapt and repurpose this technology, tailoring the experience to IEEE's unique audience.







# **MY ROLE**

# STRATEGIC DESIGN RESEARCHER

## **KEY RESPONSIBILITIES:**

Conducted heuristic evaluations (Nielsen Group's standards) and forwarded actionable recommendations.

Fostered collaboration with a diverse team: from data scientists to product managers.

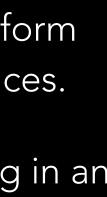
Designed wireframes and prototypes, envisioning an optimal product experience within the partner technology's constraints.

# **ACHIEVEMENTS & OUTCOMES**

Played a pivotal role in strategizing the next-gen research engine, navigating the challenges of tight resources and demanding deadlines.

Successfully bridged the expertise gap with the e-discovery platform partner, introducing novel interaction paradigms and best practices.

- Identified and presented valuable UX improvements, culminating in an extensive report replete with detailed recommendations.



# **DISCOVERY & RESEARCH HEURISTIC EVALUATION**

## GOAL

To swiftly pinpoint IEEE's focus areas.

## APPROACH

Incorporated dual indicators to prioritize based on severity- Importance and Effort. This empowered IEEE to prioritize their collaboration with the development



### **Brainspace User Interface** Heuristic Review & Recommendations

Updated November 29th, 2018

Prepared by Chris Pallé Director, User Experience

### **General Observations**

The Brianspace technology brings a dramatic new way to find information and concepts within a collection of documents.

That said, overall, some items in the UI seem superfluous and not completely clear . Which makes the product difficult to pick up and find results quickly. Many "gotchas" may be remedied by simple interface re-tooling, but to really amp up the intuitiveness of the guery-build/search/browse experience, more substantial modifications would be needed.

There are many ways to do this, but the most cost-effective would be approaches that bridge the old paradigm to the new. Consider leveraging some concepts that are typical in everyday searching/browsing in Google and Xplore and either gradually introduce the unconventional or keep them set aside for specific approaches.

#### **General Observations**

#### Other Notes

Tool appears to have originally been built for professional searchers and data scientists. Customizations will be needed to make it more accessible.

<u>instantiate a result set</u>

"Help" is generally difficult to find



....

...

### Heuristics in Consideration

Effort Level Importance 

These dot indicators are used throughout the document and are samply estimates. More discovery and stakeholder discussion is required for more accuracy

**∲IEEE** 

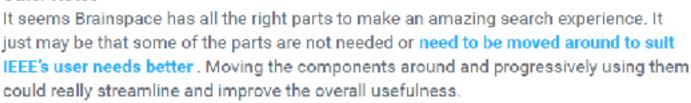
### Visibility of system status Match between system and the real world User control and freedom Consistency and standards Recognition rather than recall Flexibility and efficiency of use Aesthetic and minimalist design Firor prevention & recovery Help and documentation

#### General Observations

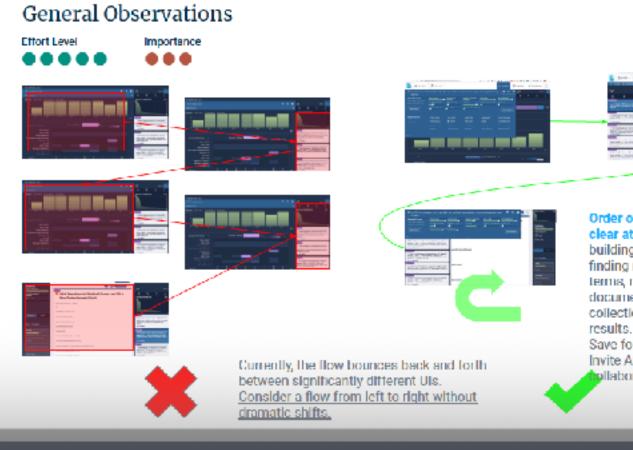
#### Collaboration

As noted in the other research exercises, this has potential value. Collaboration will be highly contextually dependent; that is, the utility of the Notebooks and other collaborative tools would be on a case-by-case basis because every environment has its specific way of collaborating and the "publicly shareable" may not be suitable for all organizations Learnability

Knowing what to do first and how to drill into results would have been difficult were it not for the assignments. This is a concern because if the system is primarily used during design and exploratory phases and not used frequently with every day research, then users may need to constantly relearn the system. Bridging with current mental models will help, but if the new, unconventional approach is genuinely going to make some research situations more effective, let's inventory those items and make available when it's most appropriate.



Real-time results will sometimes confuse users. Consider using submit buttons to



# Dashboard/Analytics

finding new concepts and terms, refine relevancy with focument set then make collections out of the results. Add to notebook? Save for later? Saved Focus? Invite Authors to pllaborate? etc.



nent count UI makes it difficult to ration (on 15" laptop)





#### Navigating Segments

Effort Level Importance

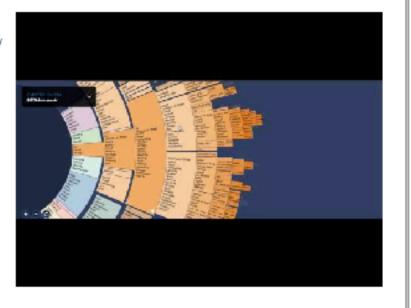
This clip is from Brainspace Version 5. The segments are visually "clustered" into "buckets" and the borders for the "parents" are more clearly defined since the "child" borders are aligned with the parents.

Additionally, the color pallette is a bit easier to read. Black on white is generally easier to read in normal business settings while white on black is better in dark, or low light settings. The new version has text that is technically dark on light inside the segment, but the darker colored segments tend to lade to the background.



#### Segments Importance

ver version requires that the user er circle to understand the hierarchy ill becomes confusing after a use the colorization changes from



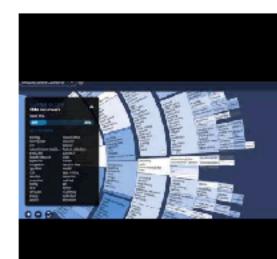
#### Navigating Segments



This video does a better job of demonstrating the confusion.

Adding concept query terms defaults to highlighting the wheel, but it is unclear from where users should start exploring the wheel.

Even if just selecting a segment to explore, as the wheel orientates, it's unclear what happens to the other segments and then the hierarchy is no longer. apparent. "All Monochromatic" does make it more difficult because clusters are even less differentiated. At least with the colors, it's easier to see which clusters are adjacent sibling segments.

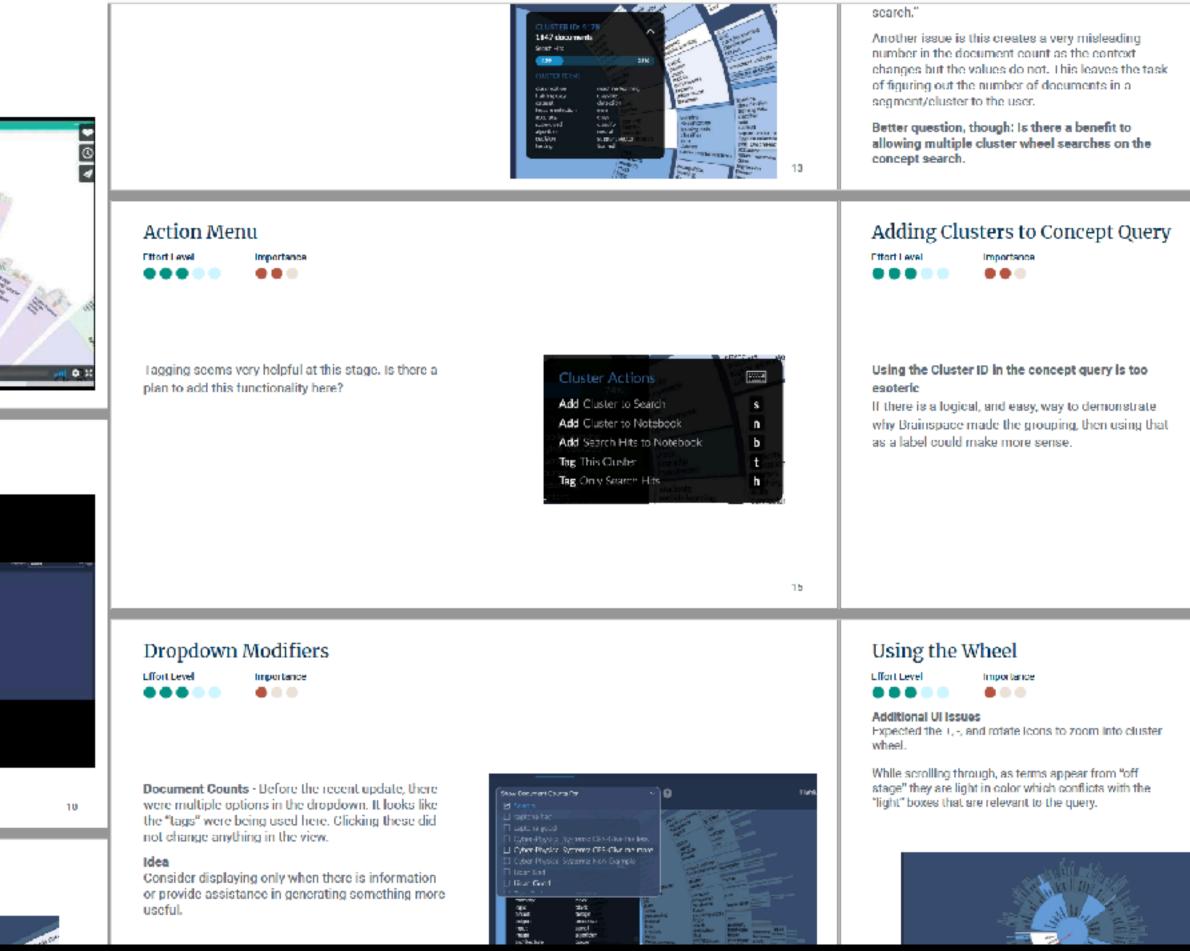


Segments Importance ...

Navigating Segments Cluster ID and Terms Panel

## **THOROUGH EVALUATIONS**

Undertook two comprehensive evaluations, resulting in two substantial reports (20-30 pages each). These detailed numerous improvement opportunities. The merit of these evaluations? They played a crucial role in securing added funding for the reimagined search product.







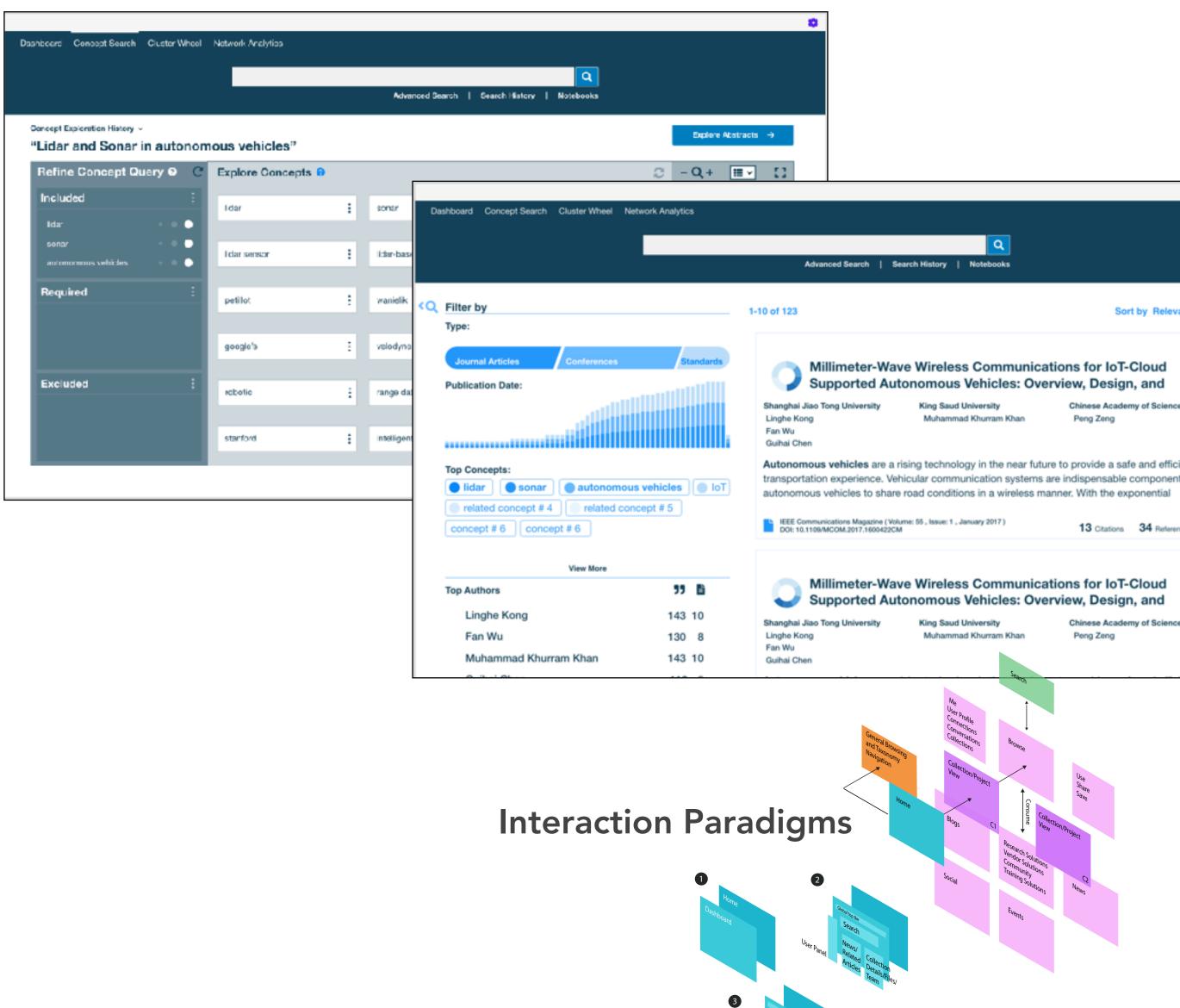




# **SOLUTION: INNOVATION SEARCH**

## **CHALLENGE:**

Given technology constraints, the ambition was to integrate two primary paradigms seamlessly into the IEEE member's mental model: Concept Searching and Insight Gathering.





**Interface Modules** 

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## OUTCOMES

### **E-DISCOVERY FOR CONCEPT TERMS**

Introduced users to a novel exploration of related Concept Terms. This entailed crafting a new mental model for the workflow, achieved through close collaboration with SMEs and data scientists.

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## **OUTCOMES (CONT)**

### **GATHER DOCUMENT INSIGHTS**

Post Concept Search, users transitioned to sifting through returned documents. This interface showcased valuable insights: from publication dates to author collaborations, offering a glimpse into the author's influence.

#### Document List – Item Expanded State

#### Document List – Author Hover State





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Thank You!