



flok
travel. together.

mobile app case study
james alafriz | UX designer

[Case study folder](#)

problem

In the post-pandemic world, people are encountering a number of pain points while planning travel.



solution

Develop a mobile app that offers the user exploration, chat and polling features to help make their next trip more of a cohesive experience

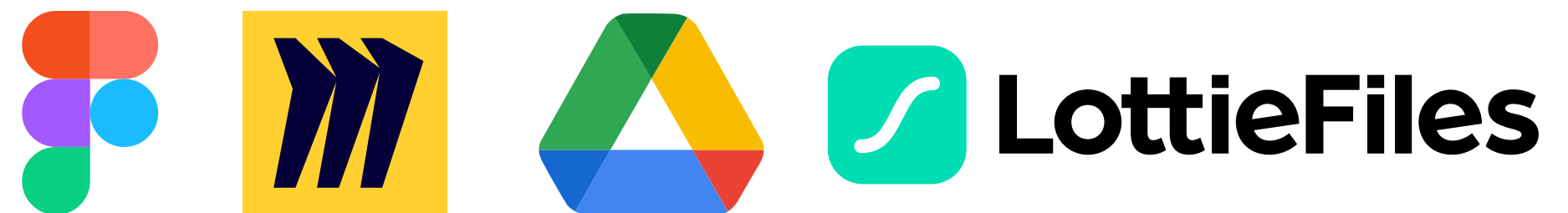




role

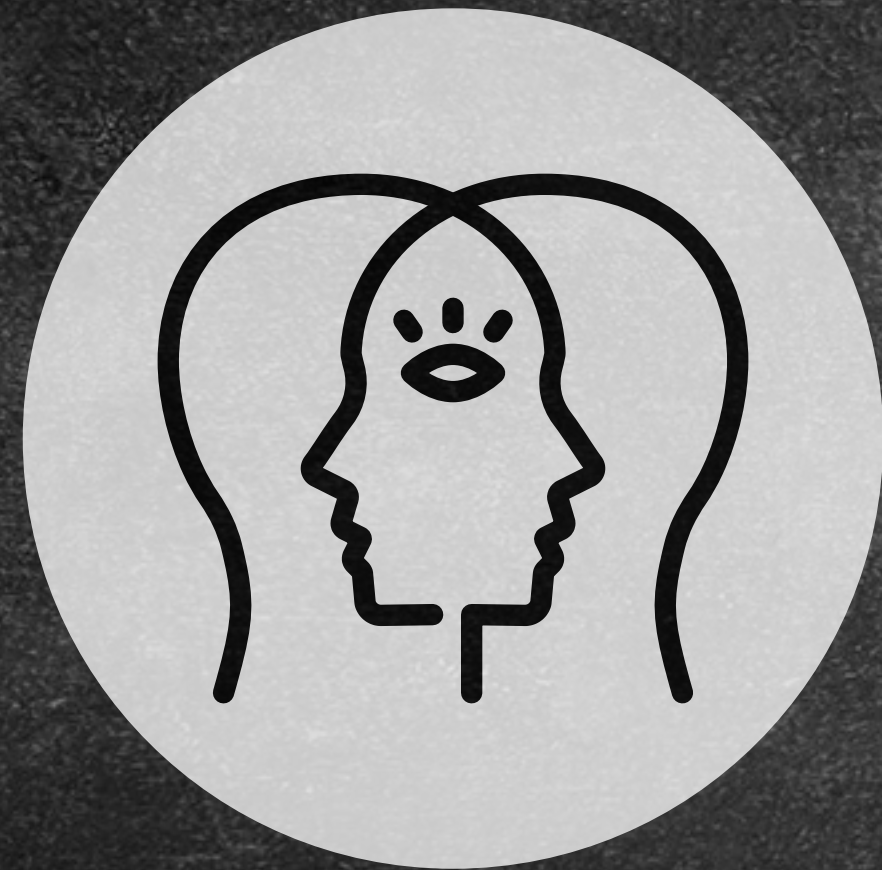
UX Research
UX Design
UI Design
Art Direction & Design

tools

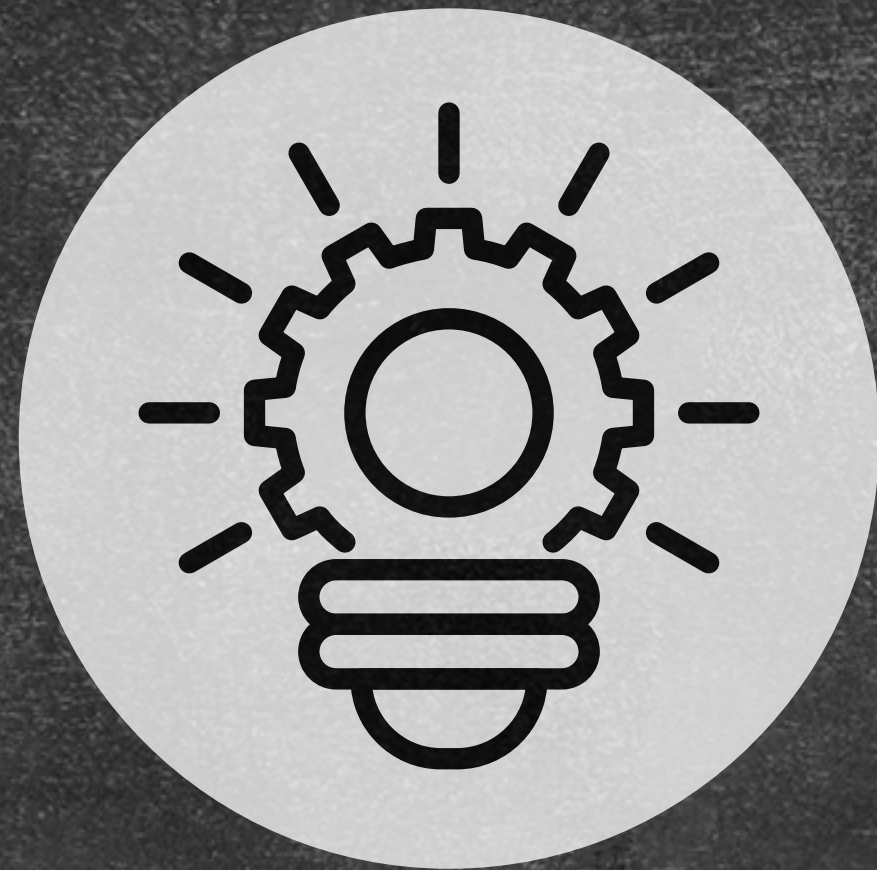


ux methodology

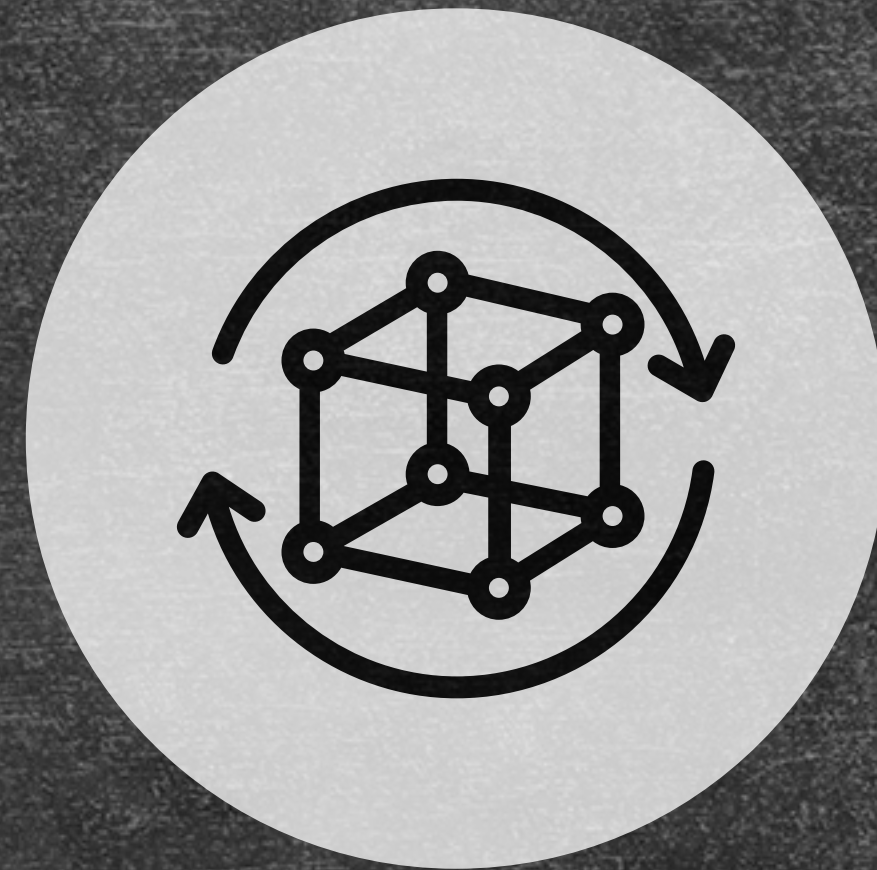
the plan



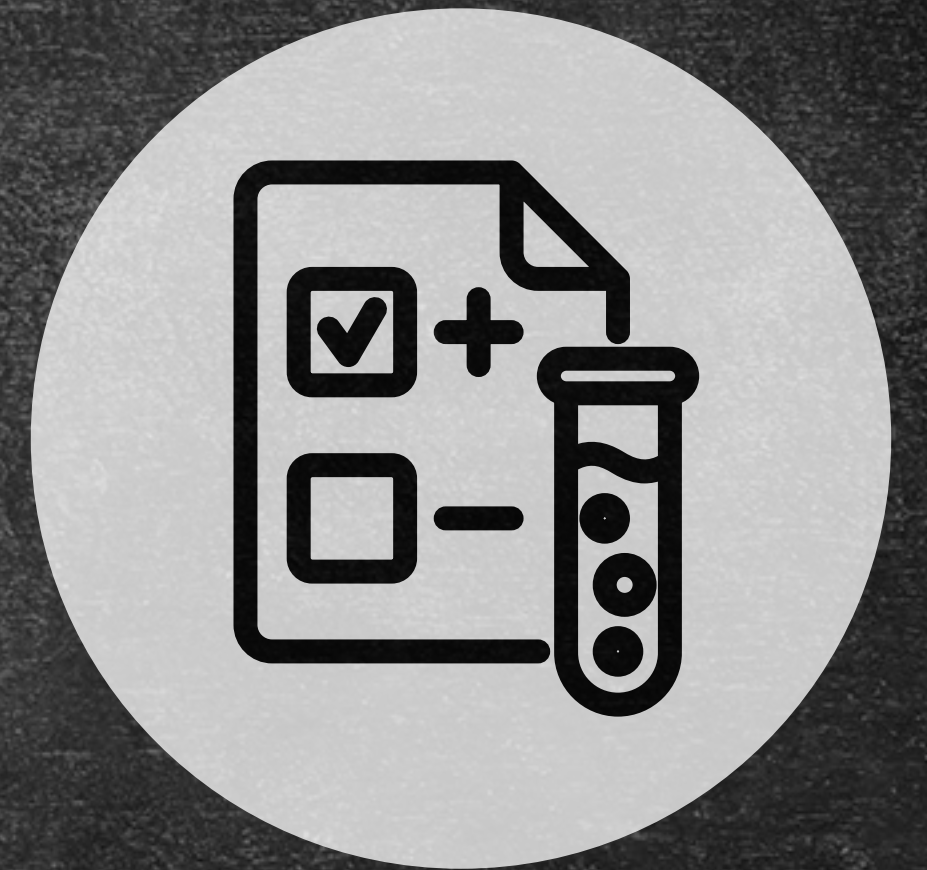
EMPATHIZE



**DEFINE
+ IDEATE**



PROTOTYPE



**TEST +
ITERATE**

empathize with users

interview plan

Research Plan

Interview Notes

Interview Transcripts



METHODOLOGY

- User interviews conducted
- Qualitative data from participants

IDEAL PARTICIPANTS

- People who travel with family, friends or both
- Looked to understand the mindset and motivations behind their decision-making process
- Looked to understand traveling pain points
- Looked to understand positive aspects of their travel

affinity diagram

Data gleaned from the research interviews resulted in some interesting patterns that were grouped & categorized.

Patterns included group travel, budgeting, exploration & planning.

Ideation process

Ideation drafts

COMPARISON AND SEARCH

"For my best planning I love to deep dive, research and compare details"



GROUP TRAVEL

"I find group travelling can be frustrating getting everyone on the same page."



TOOLS & FAVOURITES

"I like having helpful tools and will research based on favourites and past experiences"



BUDGETING

"I'm always hunting for the best value"



CUSTOMER SERVICE

"I need fast, reliable help and don't want my vacation ruined"



EMPATHY MAP

SAY

“Let’s see what I can discover today!”
“I need an easier way to plan.”
“I like to be organized.”
“This site is way to complicated.”

“I’m busy and need to get this trip planned.”
“Why is everything so expensive these days?!”
“Traveling let’s me see the world.”
“Can’t live without my phone.”

THINK

DO

Google searches
Reads reviews
Compare options to get the best value
Plans with friends

Impatient: comparing multiple sites
Frustrated: coordinating groups
Happy: finding a good deal
Anxious: trying to find time to plan

FEEL

PAIN

Bad customer service
Group planning
Lack of filtering options
High costs

Travel is relaxing and fun
Lots of good tools to help plan
Deals help save money
Learning about new places, food & culture

GAIN

user persona

Research synthesis & an empathy map were leveraged into a user persona that gave me additional insight into the mindset and traits of a typical user personality.





ALWAYS DOWN TO EXPERIENCE NEW & EXCITING PLACES!

AGE: 35

LOCATION: VANCOUVER, BC

EDUCATION: BA ECONOMICS

JOB: ANALYST

FAMILY: MARRIED WITH ONE CHILD

ELIZABETH SIMONA

GOALS

- Compare and curate options to get the best value
- Have fun and unwind
- Get friends and family on the same page
- Learn about new things (locations/food/culture)

NEEDS

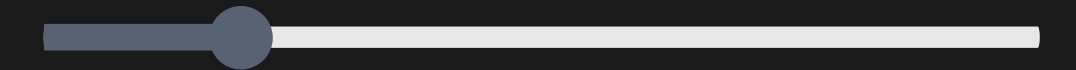
- Don't break the bank
- Lots of booking options
- Stress-free and accurate travel booking
- Easy way to coordinate with friends and family
- Research tools with filtering options
- Trusted reviews and suggestions
- Itinerary and travel details organized

PAIN POINTS

- Everything is pricey
- Lack of filtering options
- Disagreements about group travel plans
- Poor customer service
- Hard to use sites & tools

PERSONALITY TRAITS

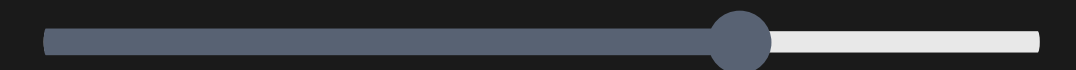
PATIENCE



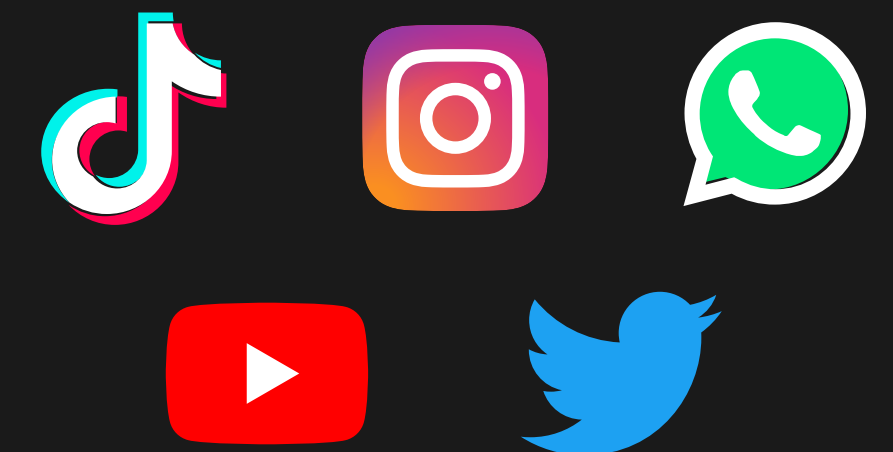
FLEXIBILITY



PROBLEM SOLVING



SOCIAL



TRUSTED BRANDS



definition + ideation

Empowered by the empathizing with the user, I moved towards defining the problem which would in turn, drive an ideation process.



definition

user insights

A busy member of a traveling group needs to **agree on plans with other members of a diverse traveling group** because **they want a fun, efficient and easy way to agree on how to spend their well-earned down time.**

During the course of our **qualitative interviews**, we discovered that **users would benefit from an app that allows friends and family to join and share ideas as they plan for an upcoming group trip.**

Therefore, I believe that group travellers would benefit from an app that has a **social component** that allows them to **chat, organize and agree on trip details in real-time.**

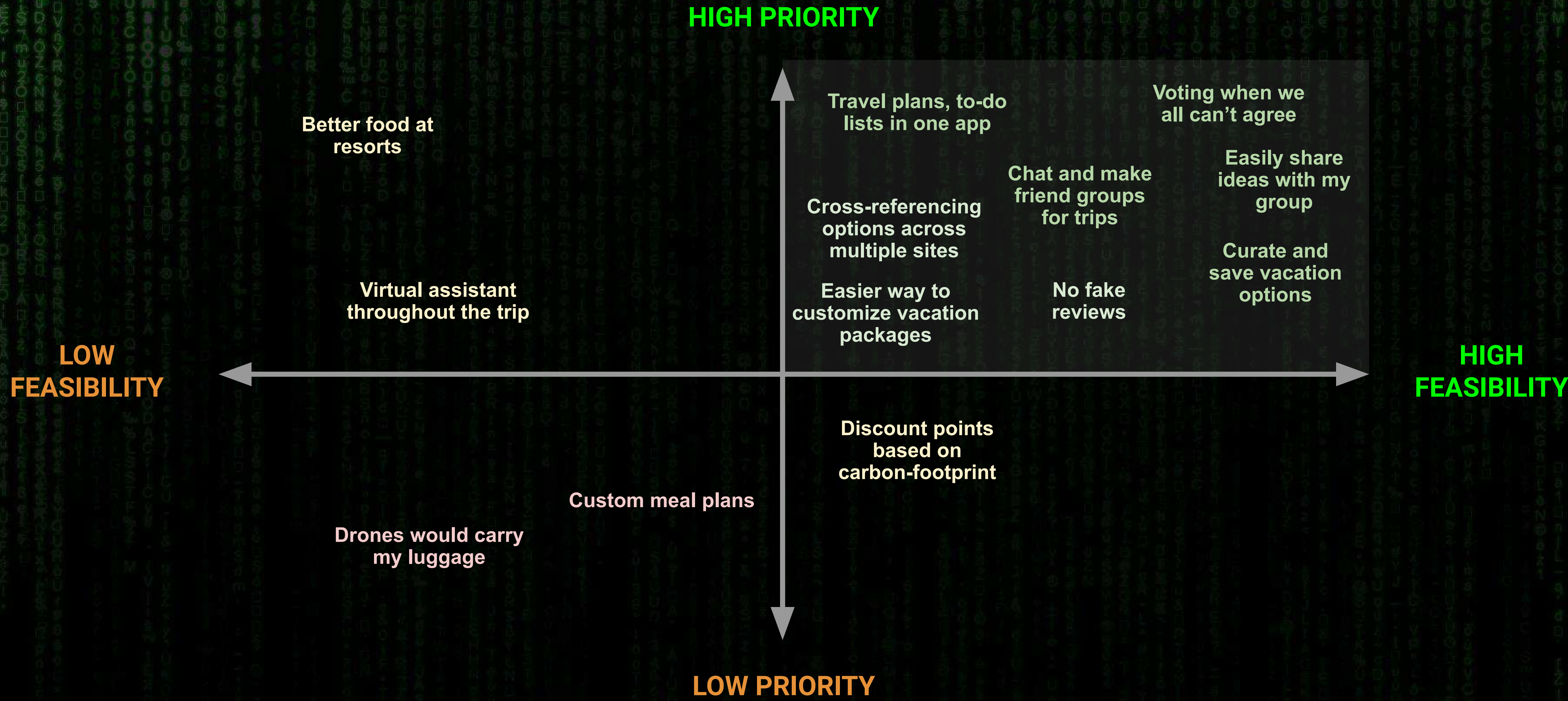




definition problem statement

It can be frustrating trying to organize group trips. Currently, travel apps don't offer a way to connect users and make the group decision-making process efficient so that they can enjoy their well-earned down time. How might we create a platform to help a busy group of travellers to improve their experience by making trip planning fun, social and easy?

ideation feature prioritization



value proposition

PLAN NEW MEMORIES. TOGETHER.

flok helps busy travellers with better planning options. Your group can chat, organize, and find all of the places you'll love on your next trip. Do more by checking less.

ideation storyboard

Using our user persona, Elizabeth, I put myself in her mindset through a storyboarding exercise enabling me to visualize a user problem and solution using the app as a guidepost.

User problem experience



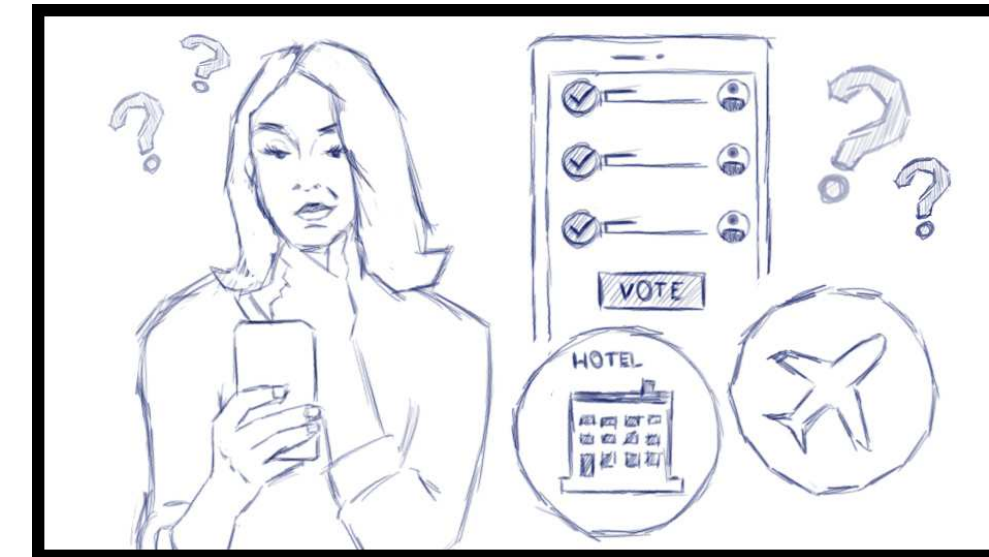
Elizabeth is busy and stressed about planning a trip with 4 friends. She needs to get everyone involved.

User looks for solution in product



Elizabeth opens up **flok** to let the group know via chat.

User experiencing product



She then sets up a vote for location and possible hotels.

User experiencing feedback in product



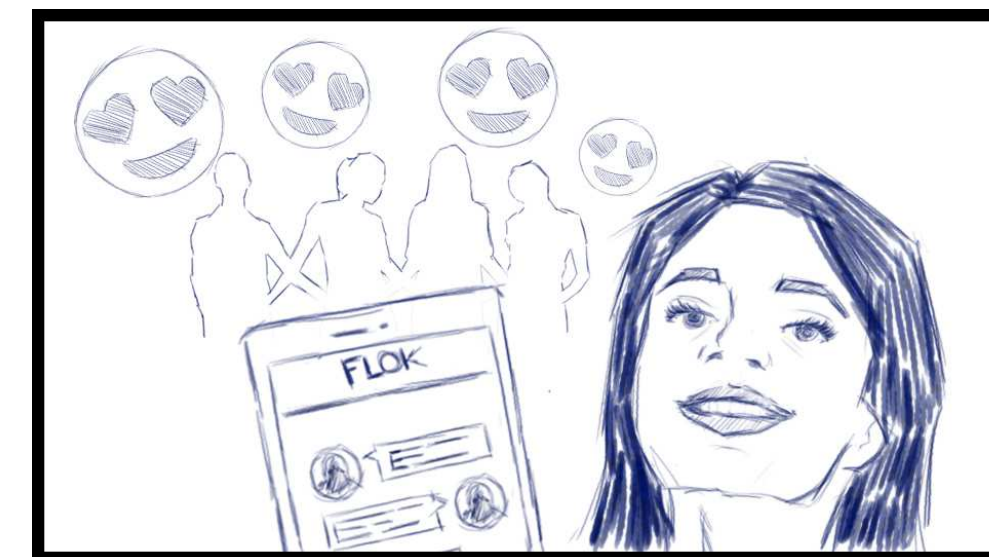
Voting results are in.

Problem alleviated



Everyone loves the location and chimes in with additional hotel options.

Beneficial outcome



Elizabeth's group trip plans are coming together nicely. Everyone is happy and involved!



JOURNEY MAP

ELIZABETH SIMONA, 35 | LOCATION: VANCOUVER, BC | EDUCATION: BA ECONOMICS | JOB: ANALYST

UX SCENARIO

Elizabeth is planning a long overdue trip with 4 of her oldest friends. Everyone has a busy schedule and they all need to efficiently decide on the details. She wants the planning to be as stress-free as possible.

They will need to decide on a city and accommodations to get the ball rolling.

GOALS

- make a group chat and add members
- create a group vote for the destination and hotels options
- get feedback from the group
- come to consensus on initial trip details
- start thinking about the next steps for the trip

ACTIONS & EXPERIENCE

BOOKS TIME OFF FOR A TRIP WITH FRIENDS

SHE NEEDS TO FIND A DESTINATION FOR THE GROUP

NOT SURE WHERE EVERYONE WANTS TO GO

DECIDES TO SUGGEST NYC

OPENS FLOK APP & SETS UP AN IN-APP SURVEY FOR LOCATION SUGGESTIONS

SETS UP AN IN-APP SURVEY FOR POSSIBLE HOTELS

CREATES GROUP CHAT. SENDS A MESSAGE AND VOTING POLLS TO THE GROUP

SURVEY RESULTS ARE IN. EVERYONE WANT TO GO TO NYC!

MESSAGES FROM THE GROUP ARE COMING IN WITH ALTERNATE HOTEL SUGGESTIONS

TIME FOR ANOTHER VOTE ABOUT HOTELS?

THE BALL IS ROLLING FOR TRIP PLANS!!



OPPORTUNITIES

- draw users into the app ecosystem
- integrate with Google search & maps (familiarity)
- platform to bring together social, organizing, calendar & search features
- elements to engage user such as social (chat, tag) and gameification (polls, voting)
- interactions to create bonds vs. adversarial conflict resolution
- engagement via positive feedback loop
- create achievements to create user engagement (gameification)
- itinerary features to make app travel companion

competitor analysis

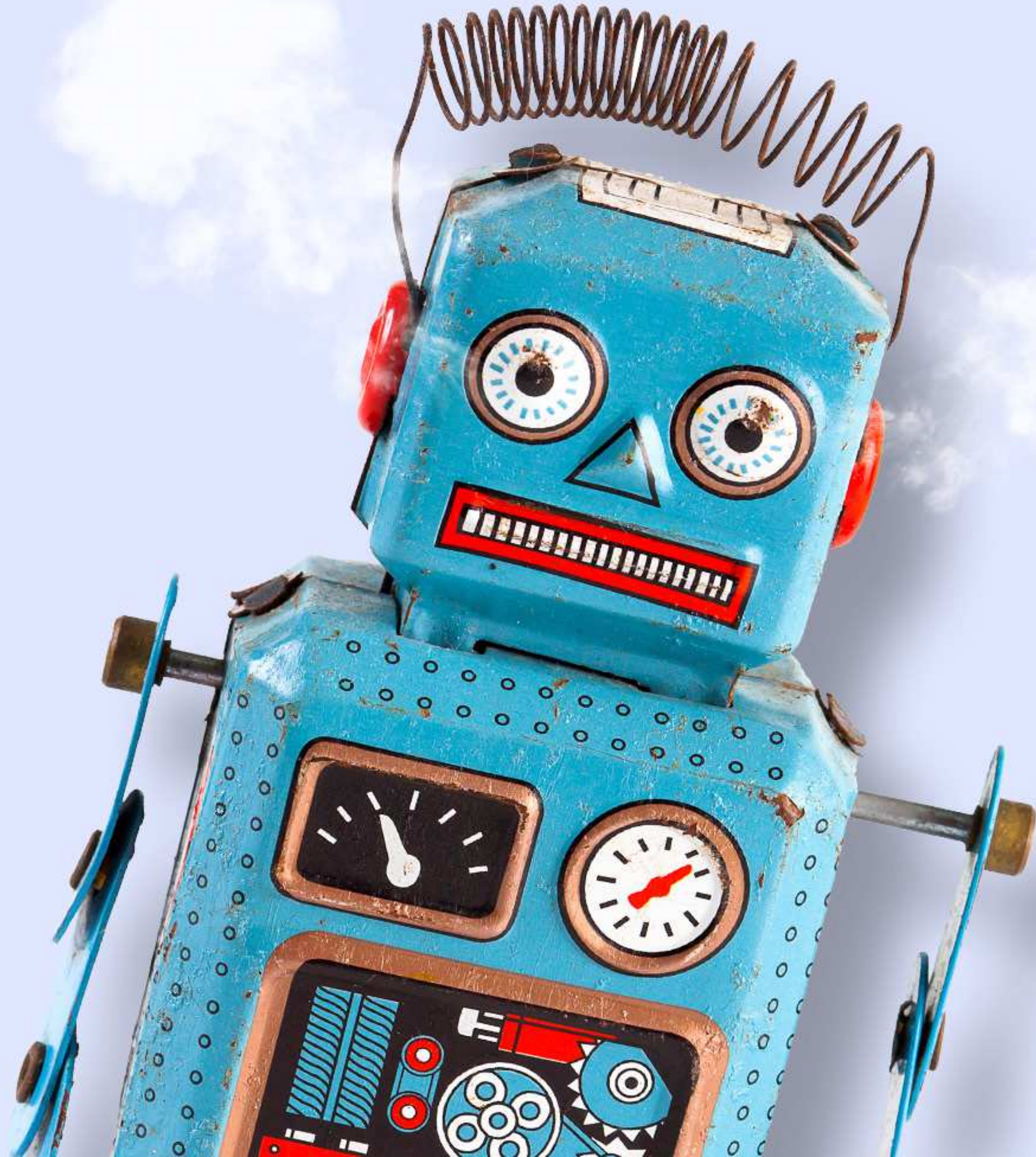
full competitive analysis

DIRECT COMPETITIORS



INDIRECT COMPETITIORS



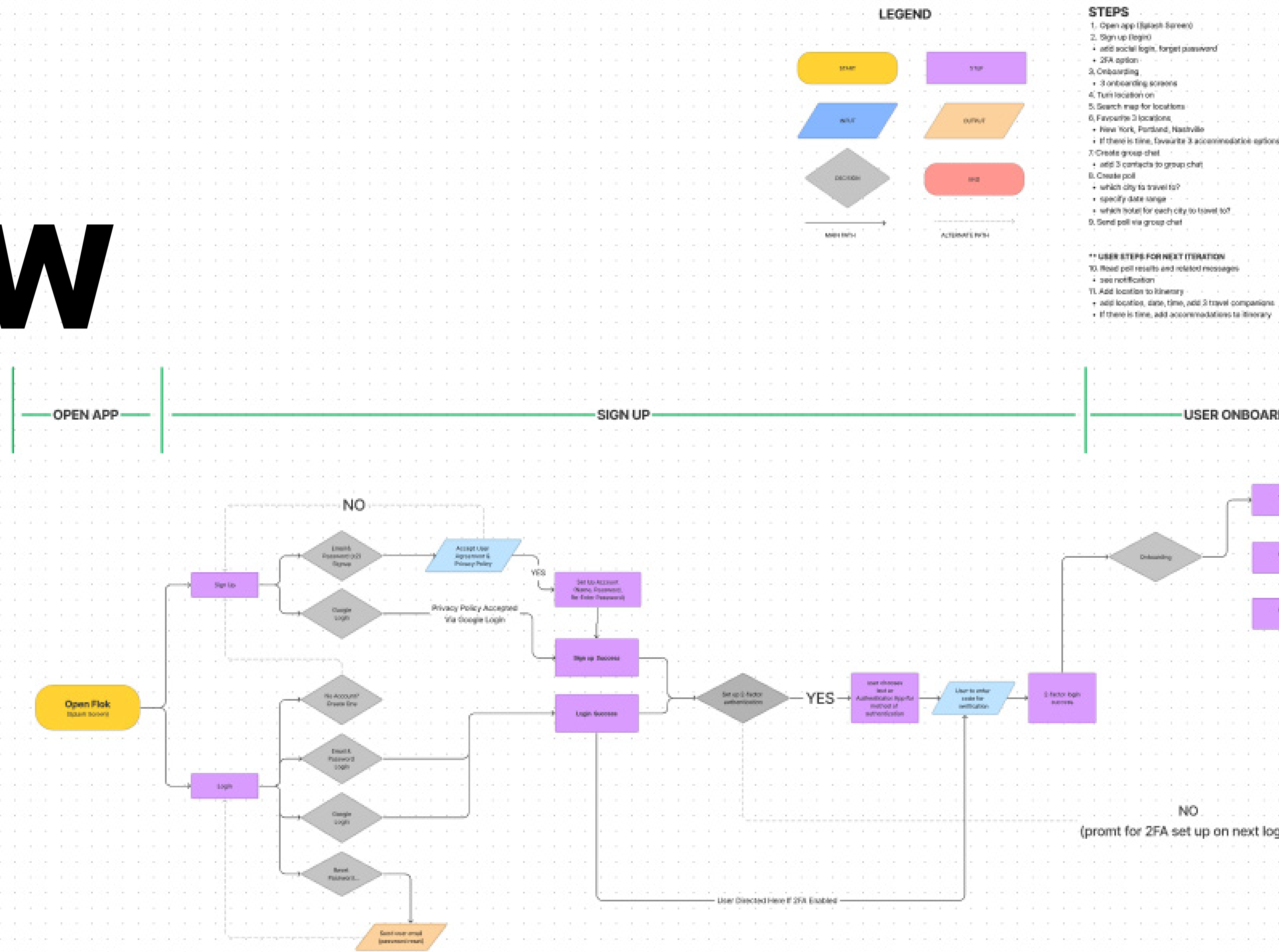


prototyping

prototyping task + user flow

A series of tasks were developed leveraging our user persona, Elizabeth which kept me anchored to the empathy component as a user flow was put together to establish potential user pathways.

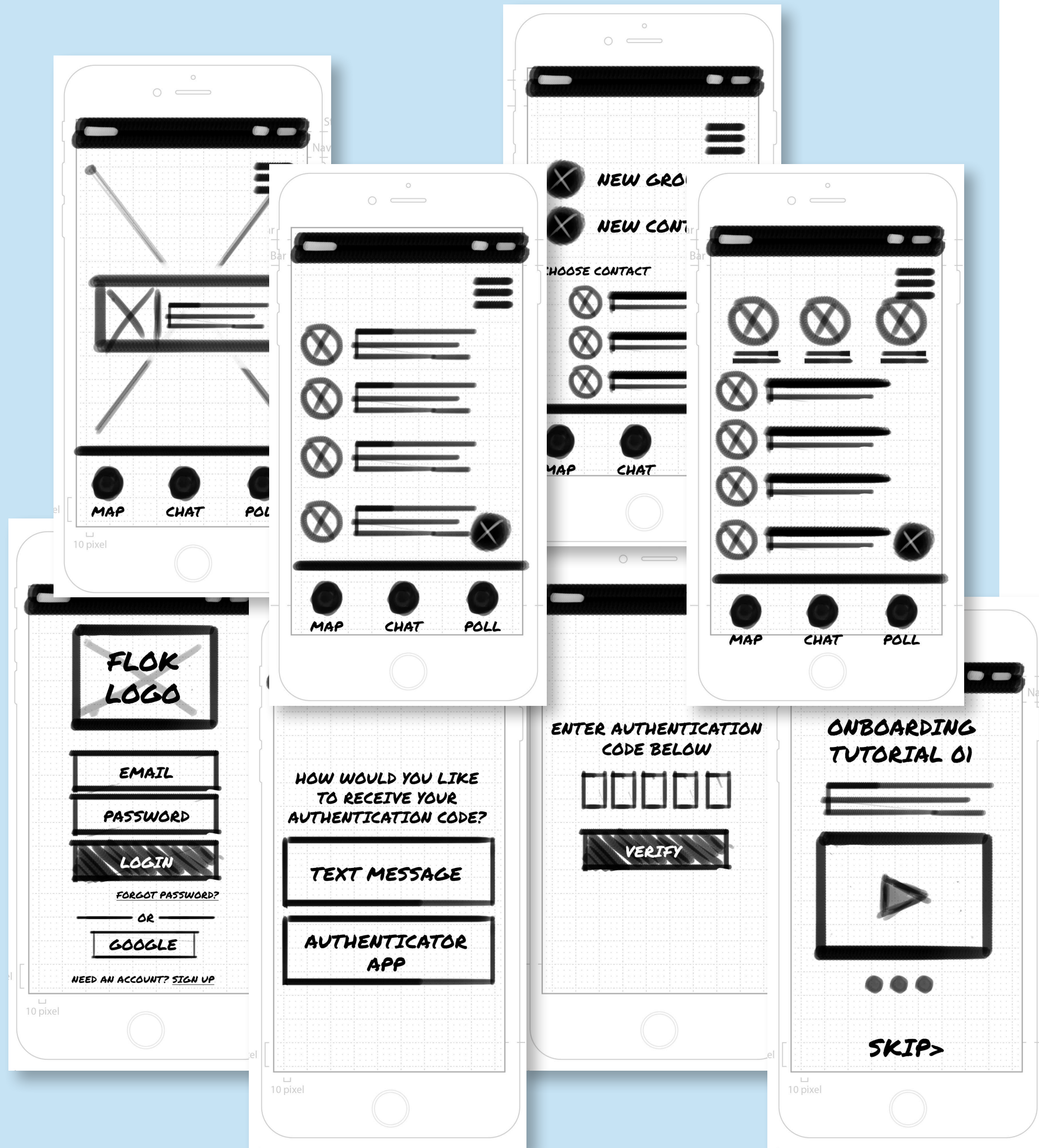
Full task & user flow



prototyping sketched wireframes

Leveraging tasks & user flow previously created, quick sketched wireframes were produced and iterated to start bringing the project to life.

[View all sketches](#)

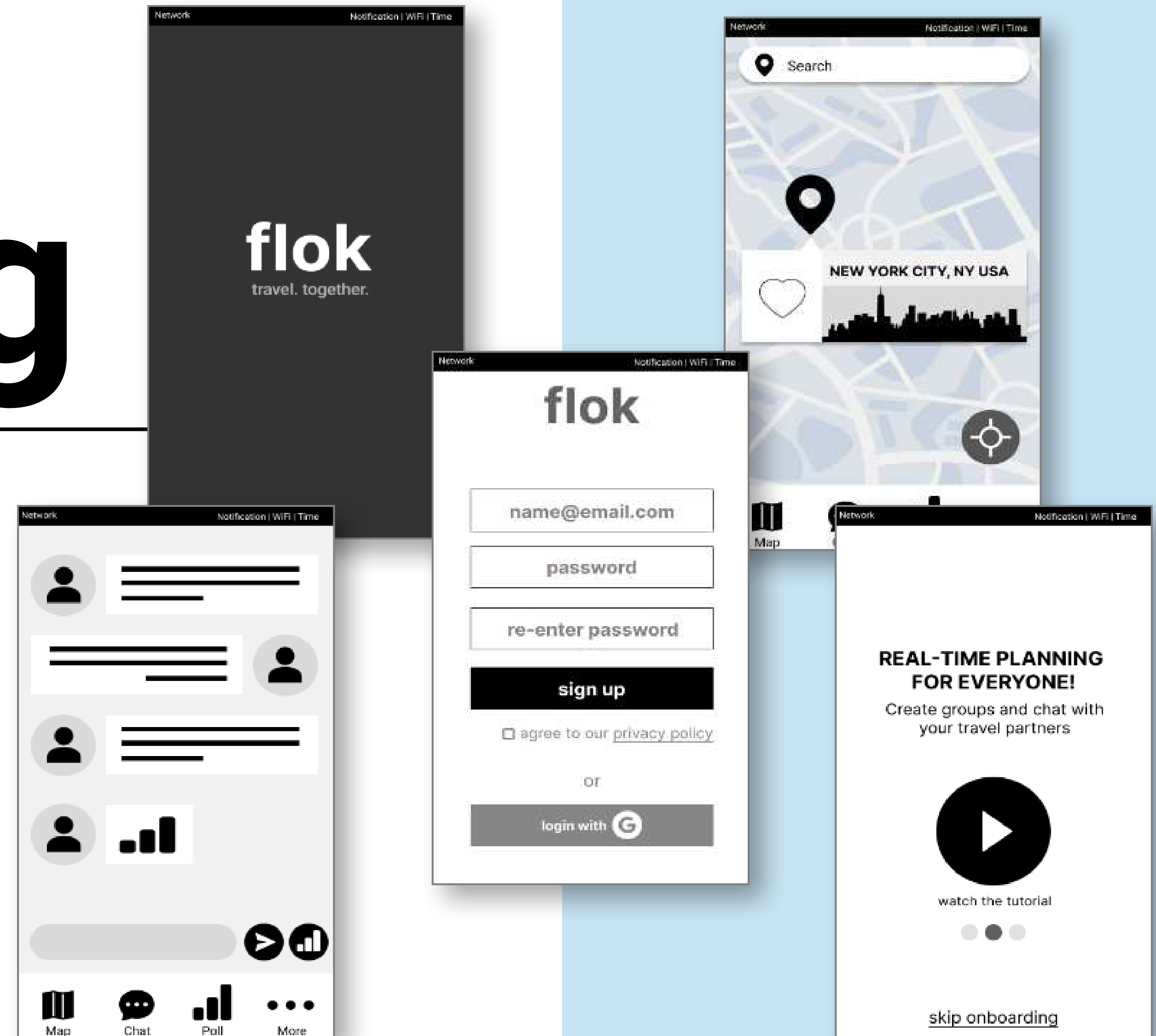


prototyping lo-fi wireframing

Quick digital wireframes were developed in Figma to enable quick testing of the user flow and some basic interactions

Digital wireframes

Prototype & flows



user testing



user testing testing plan



A testing plan, objectives & user tasks were formulated to determine the useability of flok's features & user flow

User testing plan

User testing notes

Test useability of the sign in & sign up process, map favourite, chat & polling features

Look for opportunities to reduce user friction

Define priorities for future iterations & feature development

user testing

user tasks



Sign up & 2-factor authentication process

[Go to Task 01](#)

Onboarding process

[Go to Task 02](#)

Enabling location preference

[Go to Task 03](#)

Creating group messages

[Go to Task 04](#)

Favouriting map location feature

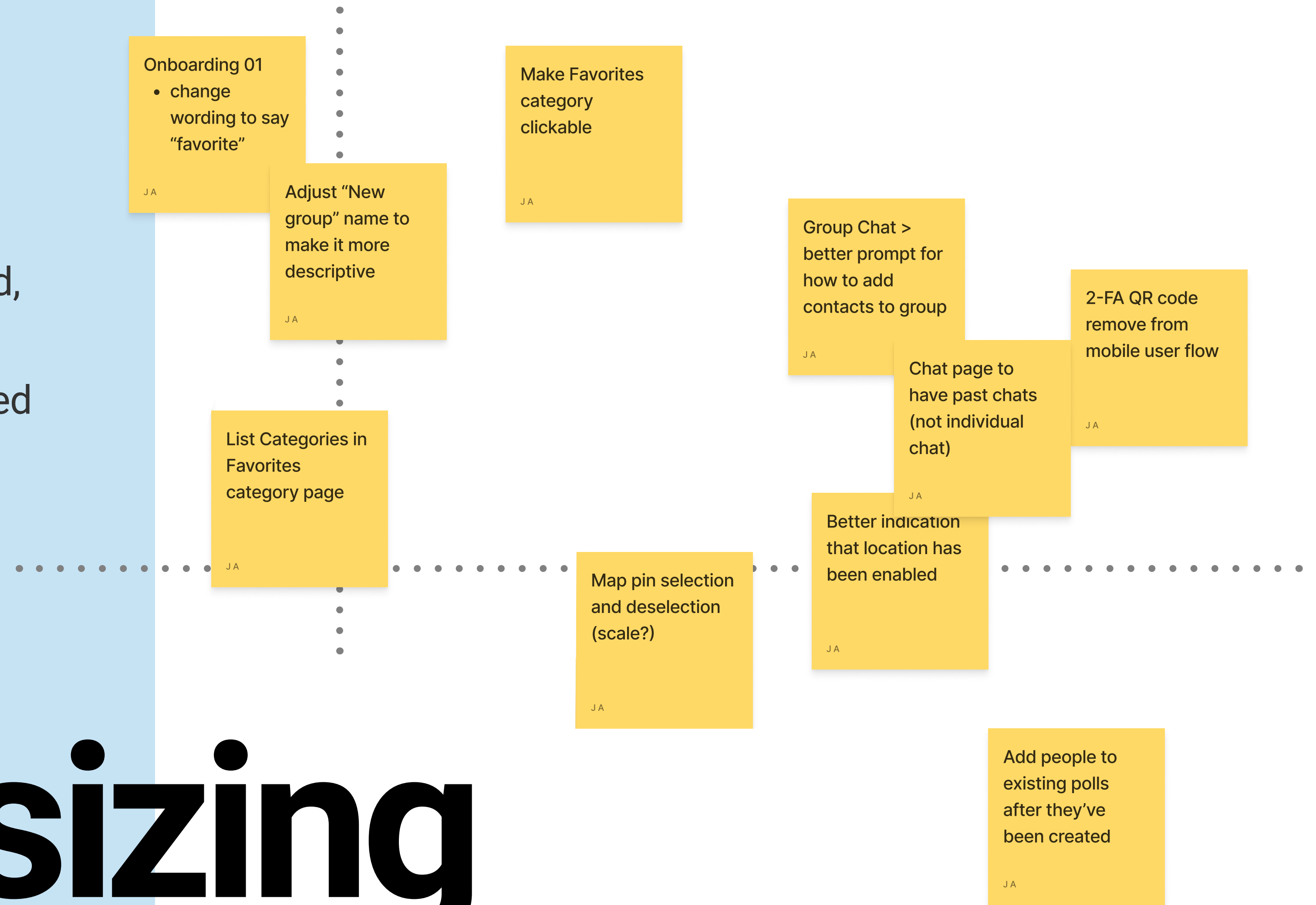
[Go to Task 05](#)

Creating polls within the chat feature

[Go to Task 06](#)

The user test yielded a number of great insights.

Results of the user tests were logged, analyzed & prioritized. Feature and user flow adjustments were prioritized by balancing priority & time required for implementation.



user testing

synthesizing testing results

Test plan & notes

Synthesis of test results

A group of stylized, glowing blue and green robots in a dark, foggy environment. The robots are composed of various mechanical parts, some with glowing eyes and lights. They are standing in a line, facing forward. The background is a dark, misty landscape with some bare trees and a few flying insects. The overall mood is mysterious and futuristic.

user testing iterating the prototype

Iterations to a mid-fi prototype were applied using Material Design elements, patterns & guidelines.

Iterations included adjustments to UX copy, adding interstitial screens to give user better feedback on their choices and adjustments to the user flow where necessary.

post testing iteration UX copy

1

User Problem

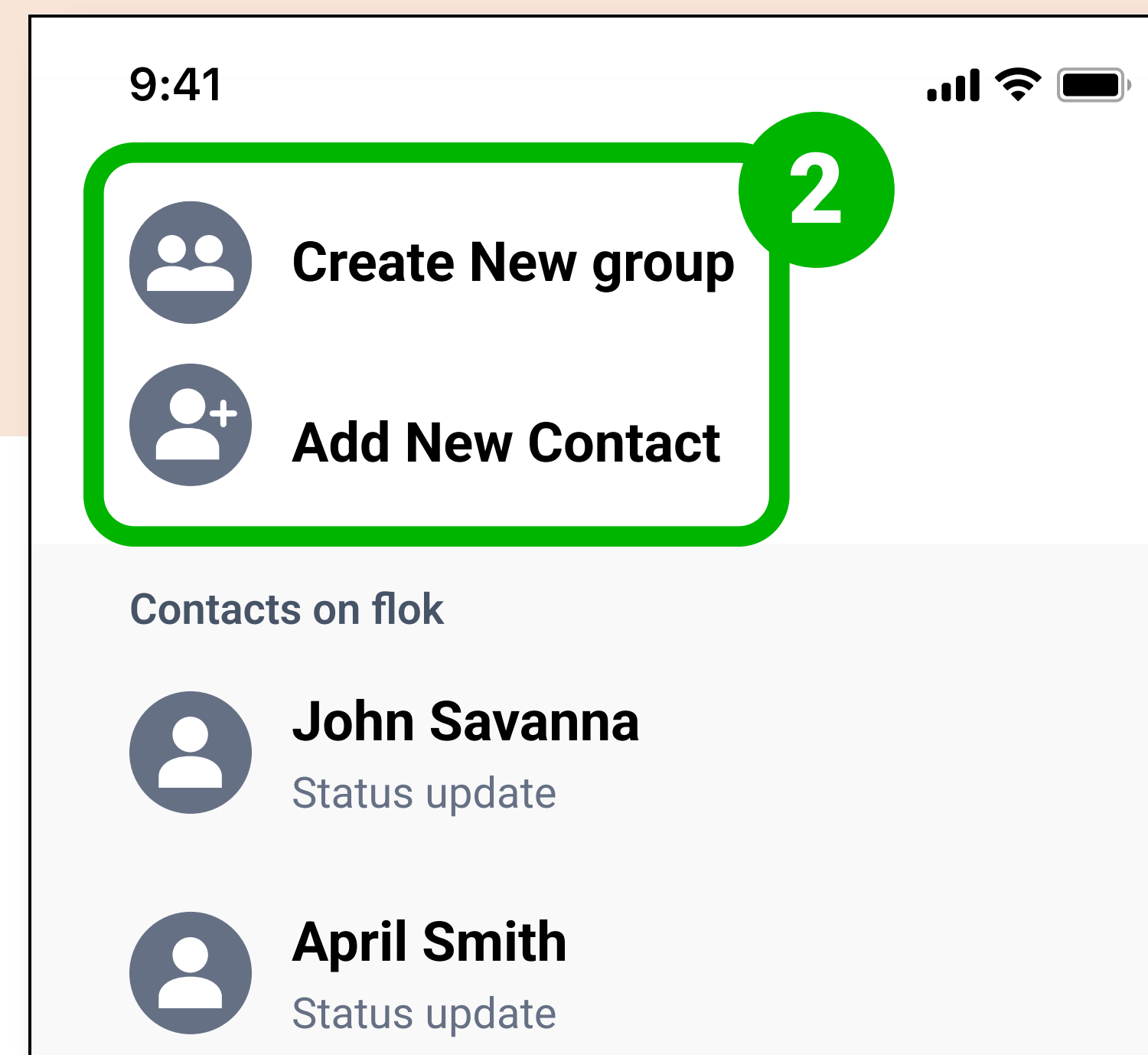
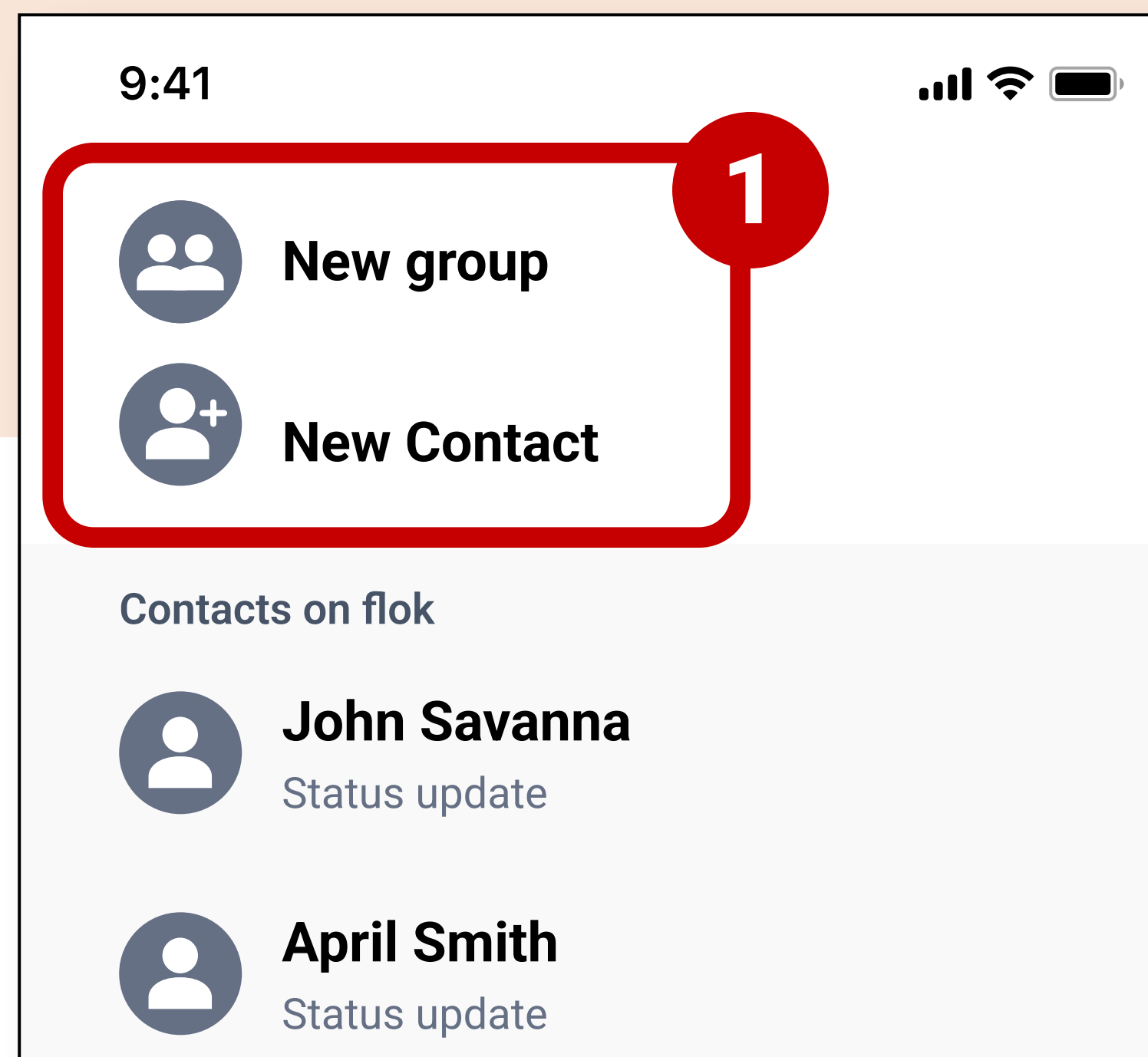
Some users found that the it was a bit unclear how to create a new group chat

2

UX Solution

Usability copy was adjusted to more descriptive to help guide the user

Try this post-iteration Task



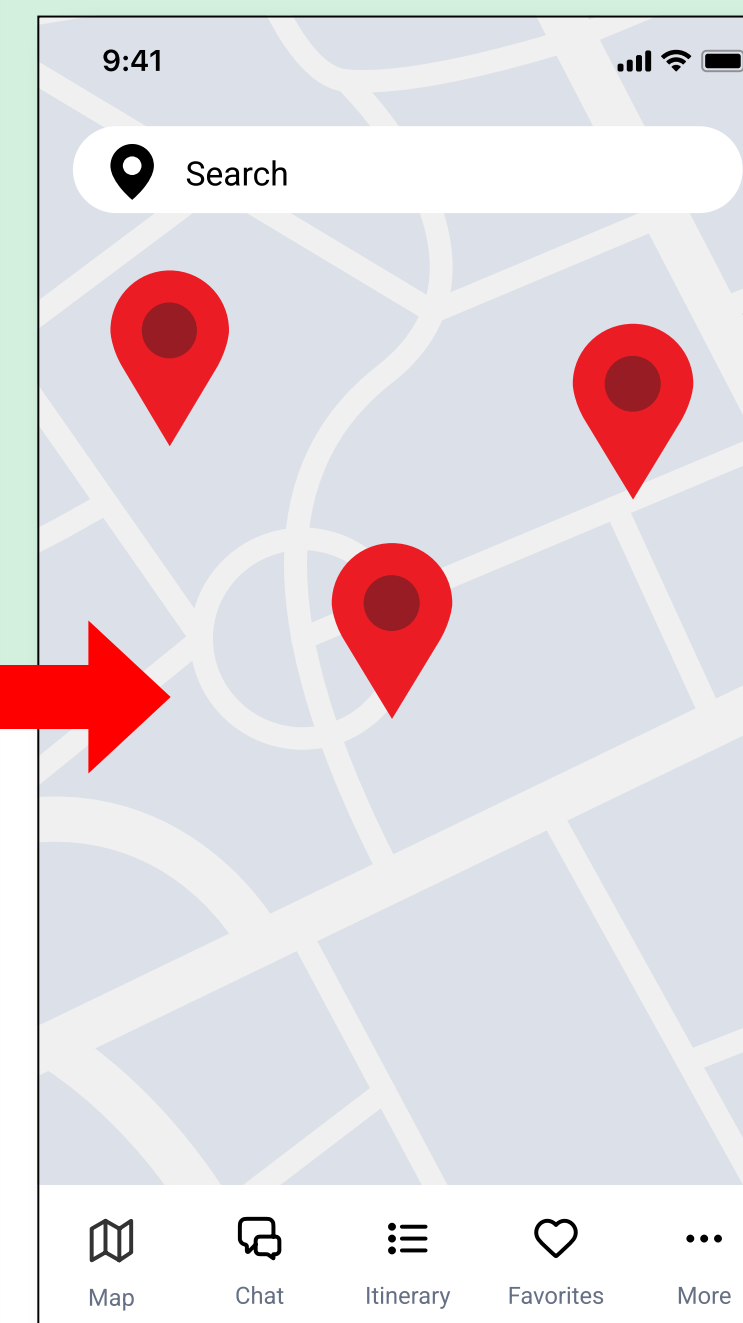
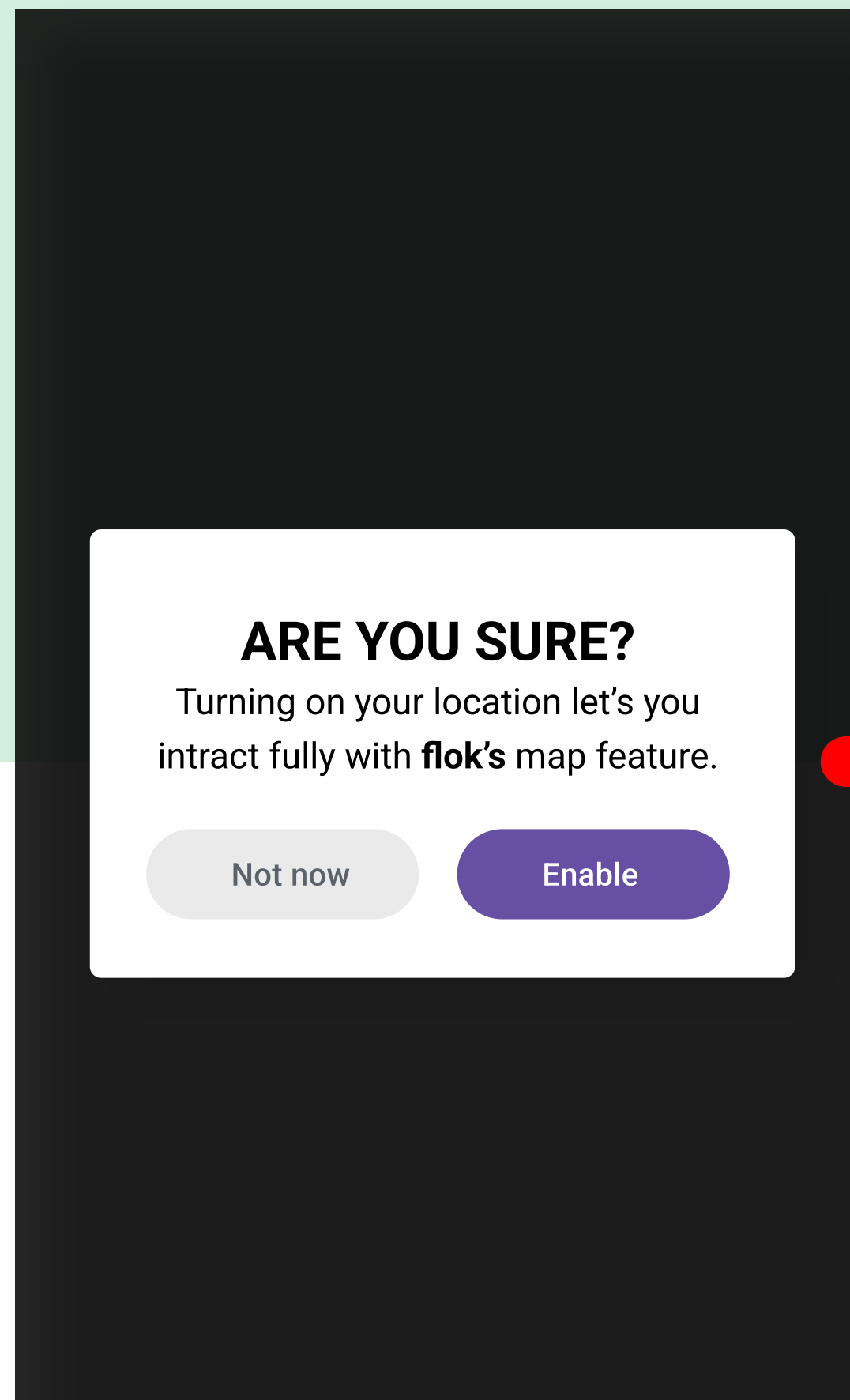
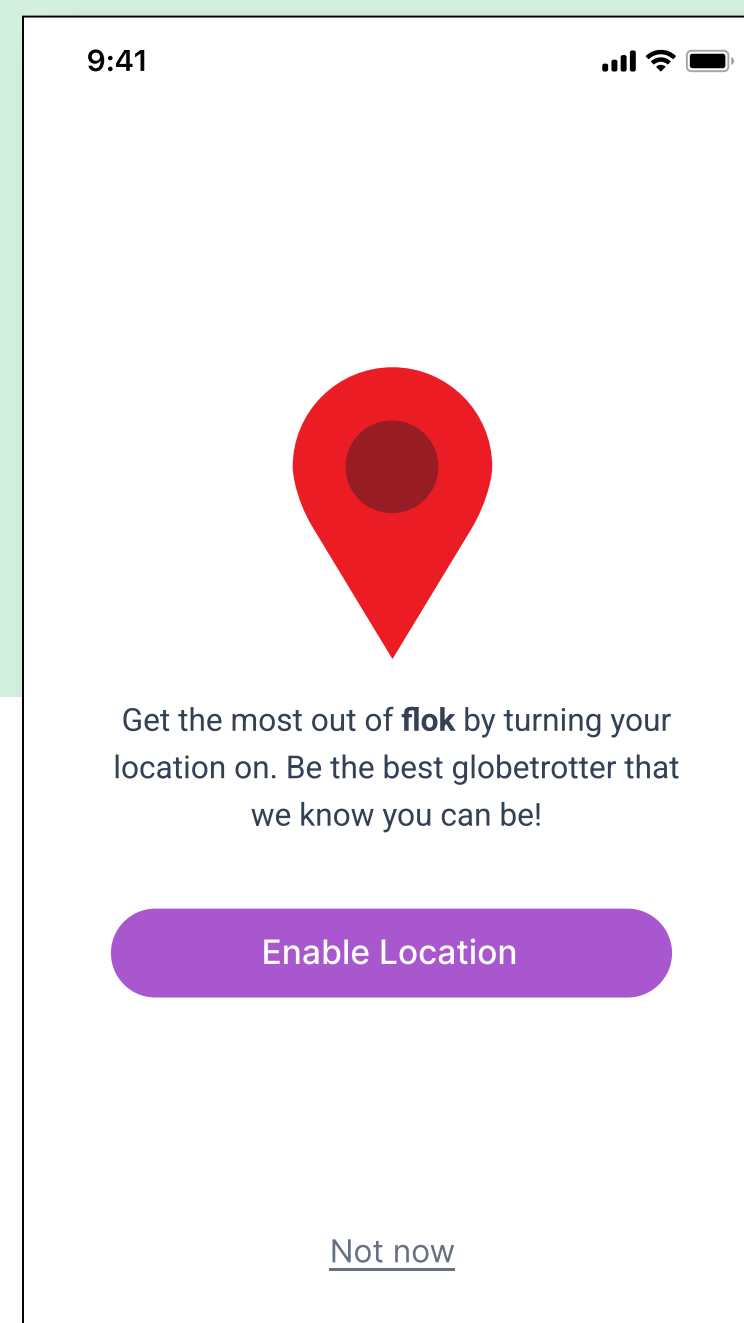
post testing iteration

location enabled

1

User Problem

Some users found that they were unclear if the location feature was activated after clicking the "Enable" button



post testing iteration

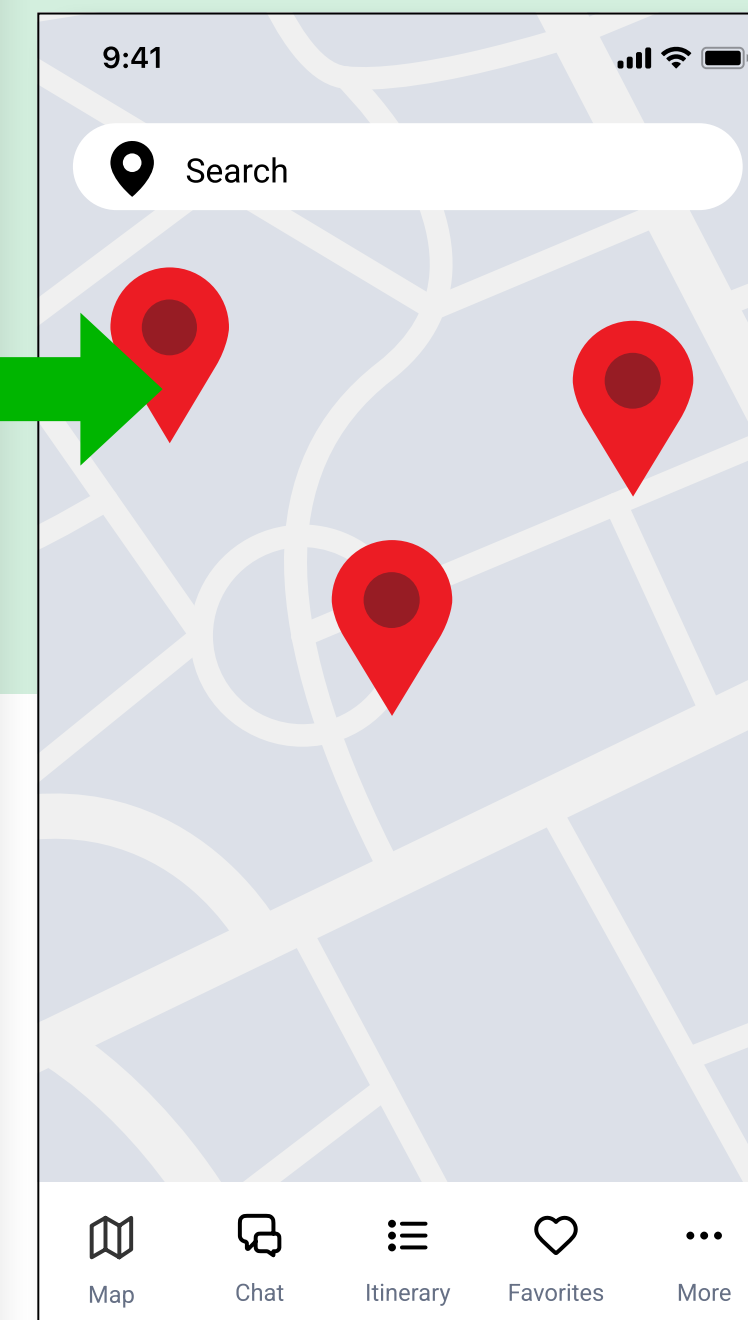
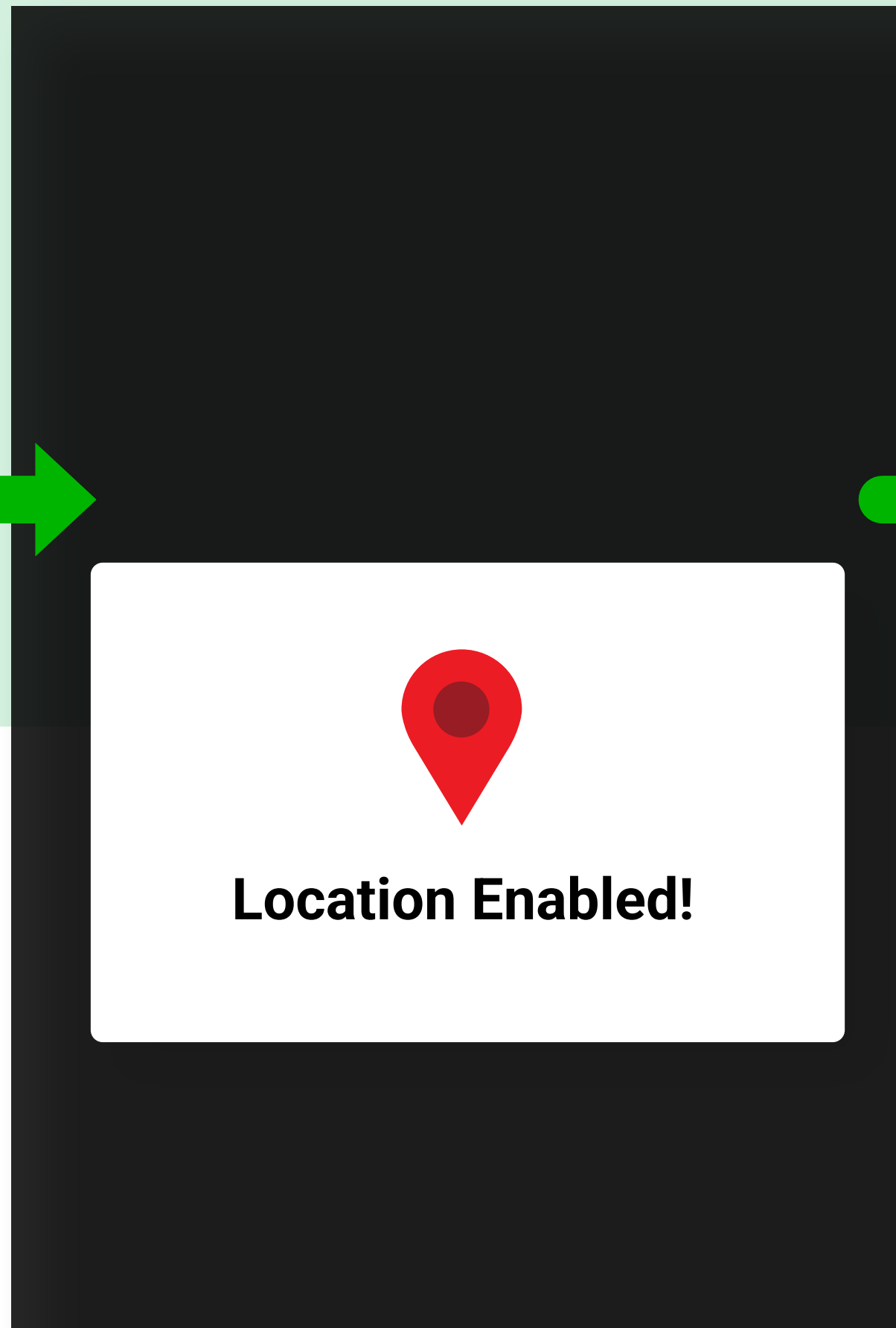
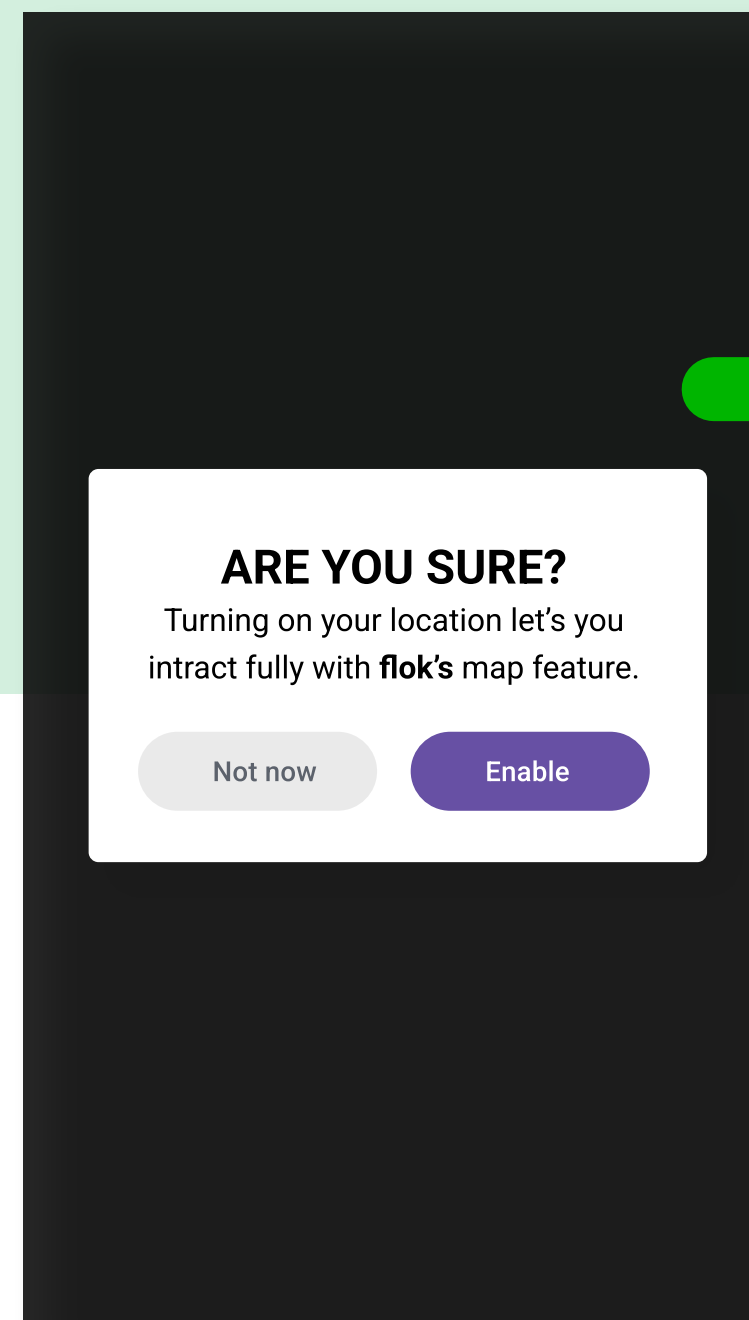
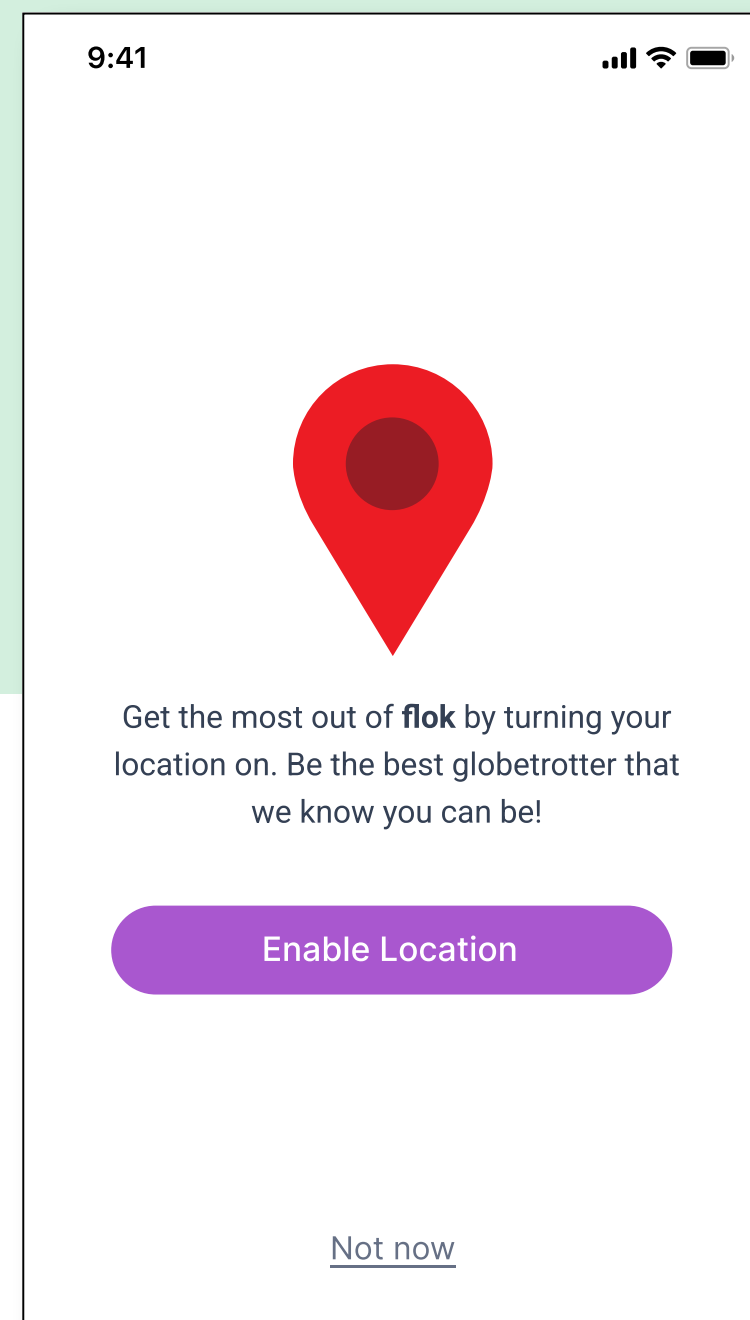
location enabled

2

UX Solution

An interstitial modal was inserted after the user clicks “Enable” or “Not now” to give the user feedback on their preference selection

Try this post-iteration Task



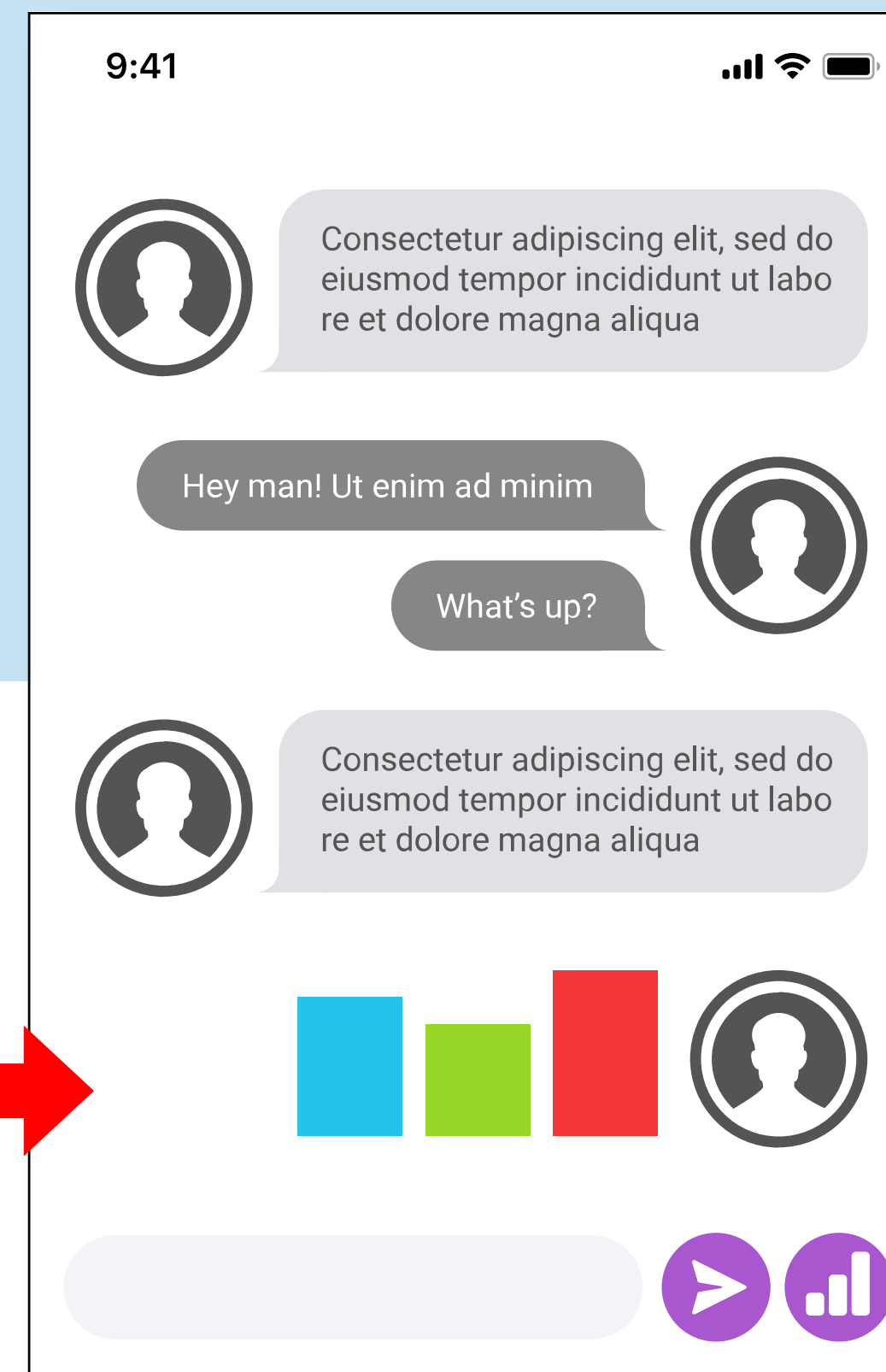
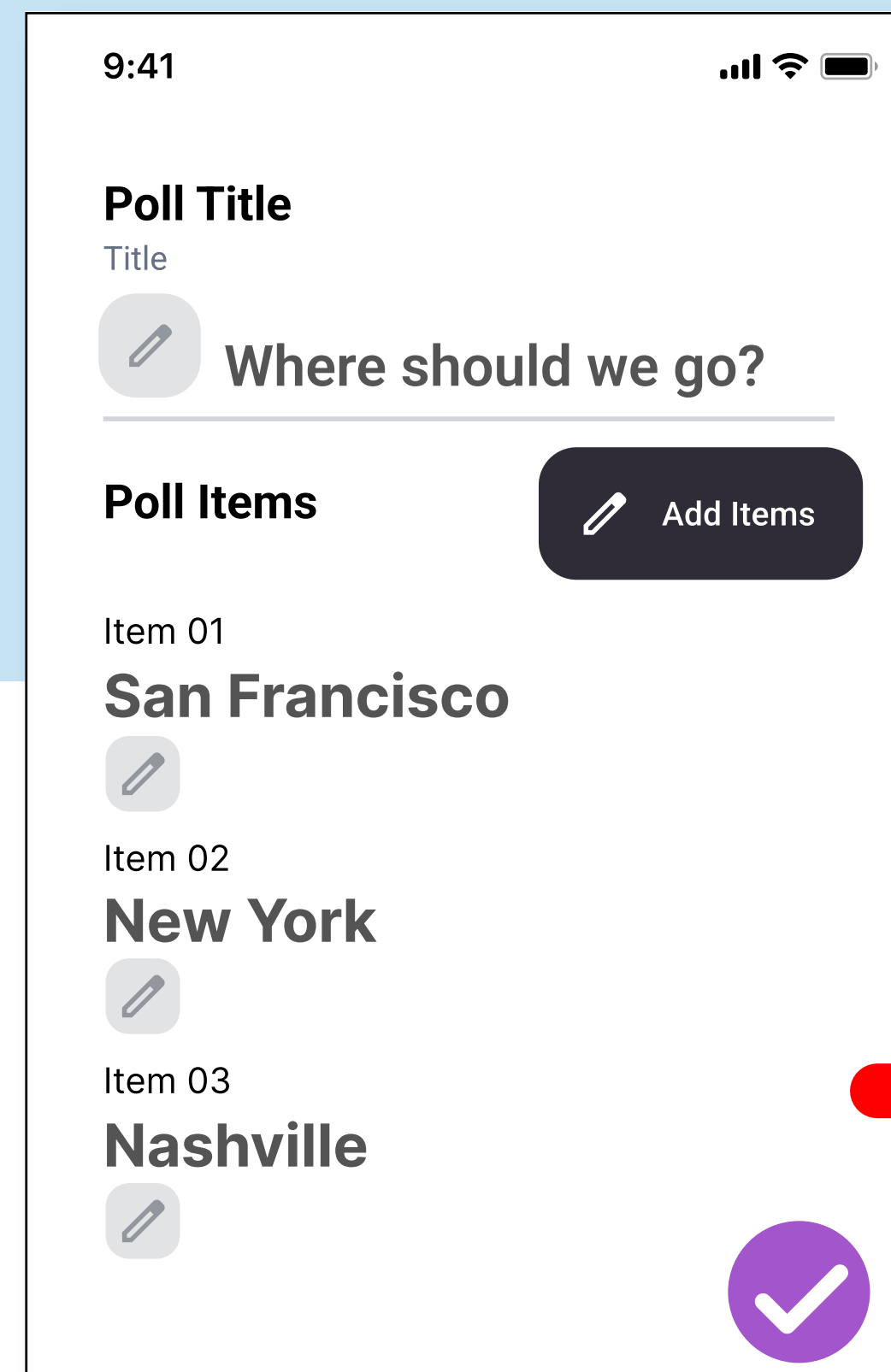
post testing iteration

polling feature

1

User Problem

Some users found that adding a poll to a group chat was missing a step and it wasn't clear if they were adding the poll to their chat



post testing iteration

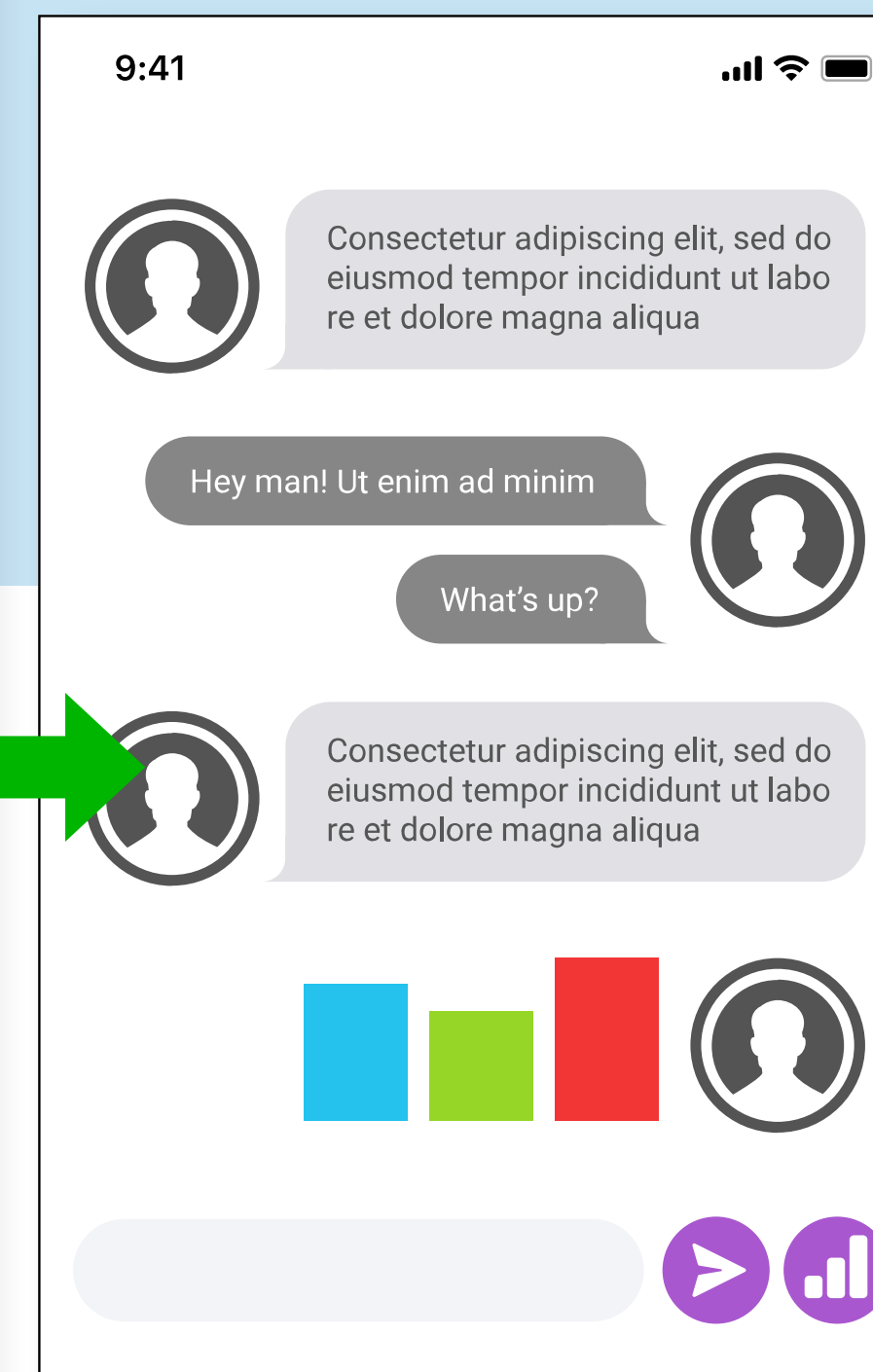
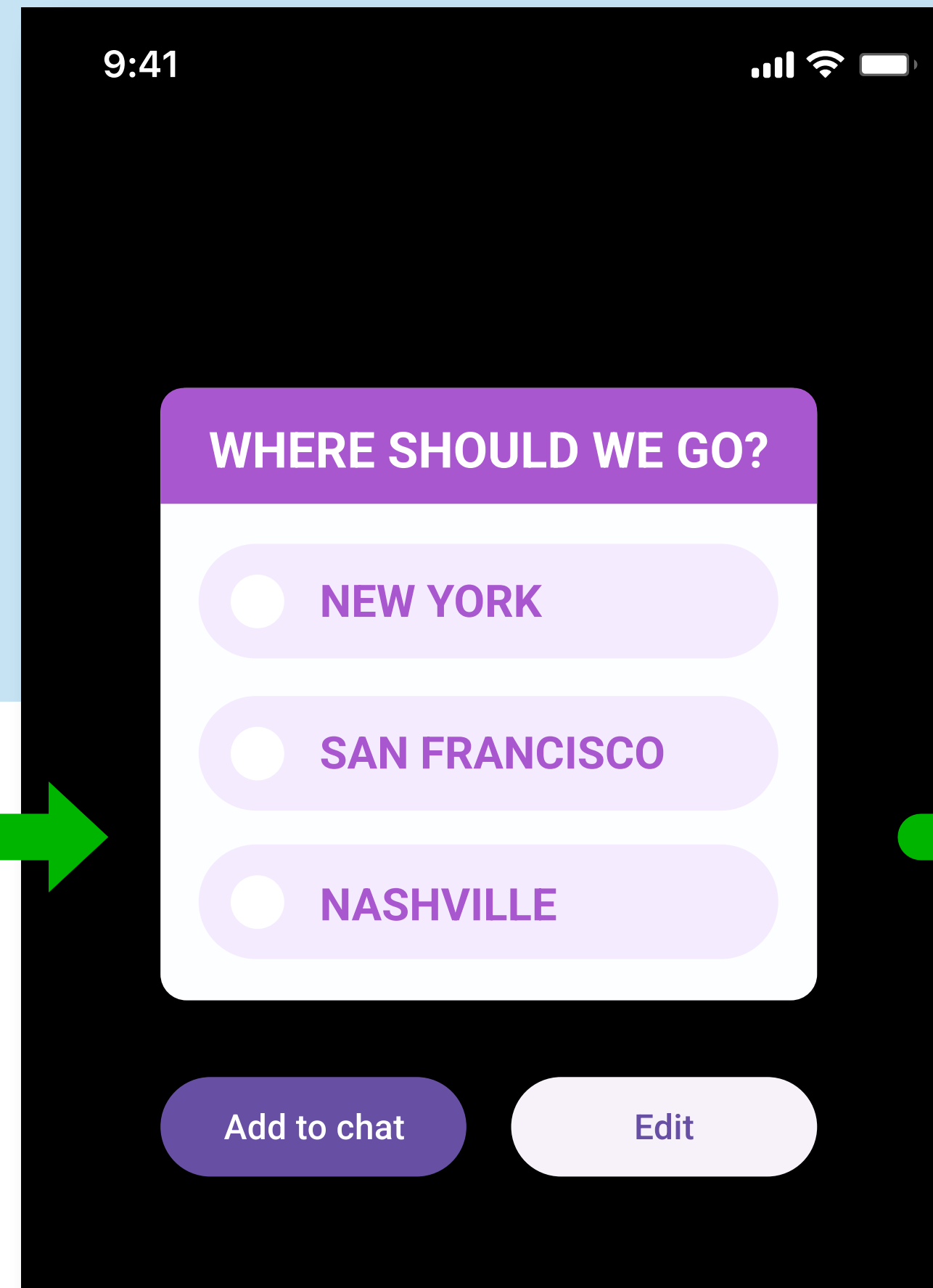
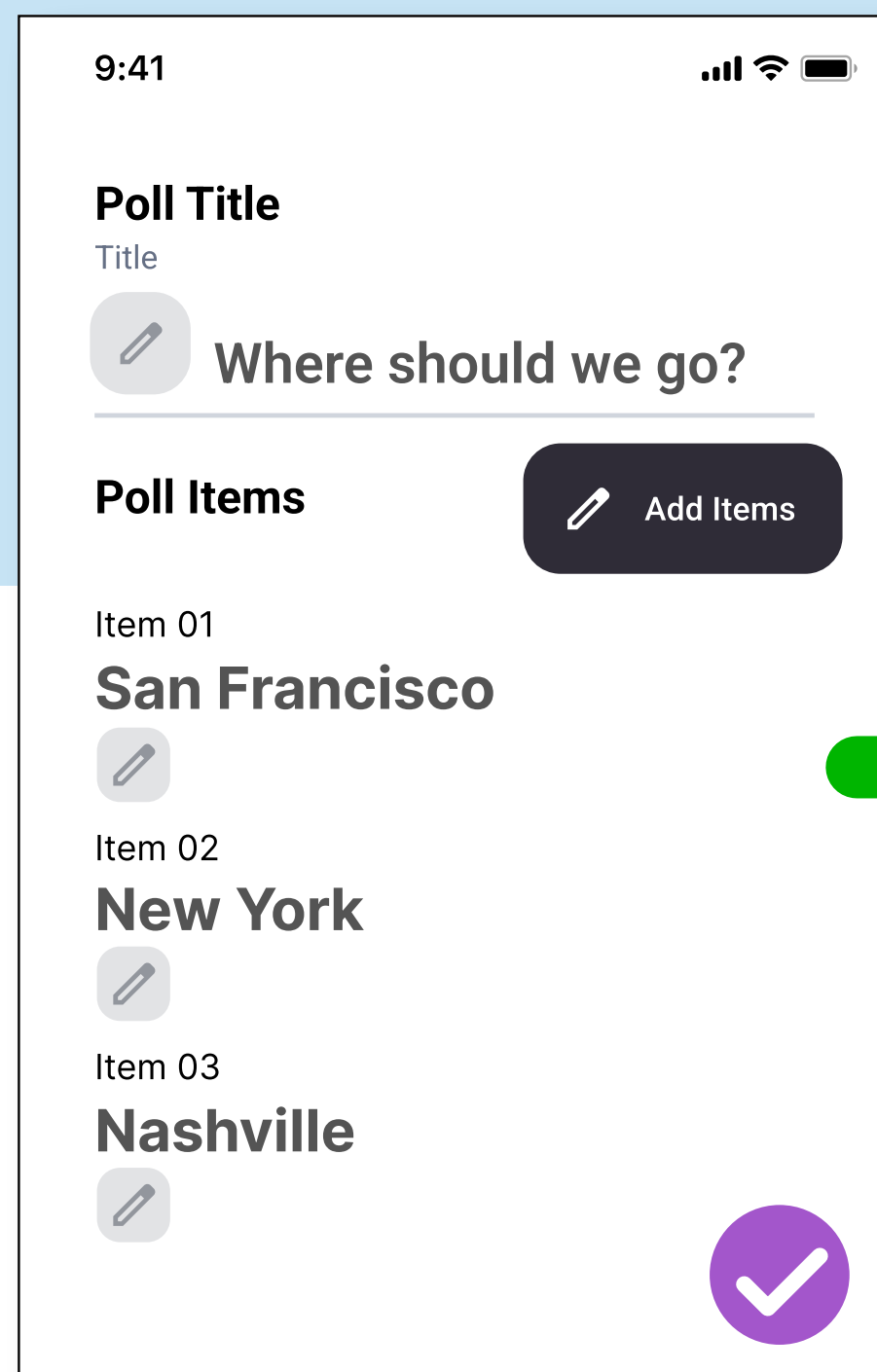
polling feature

2

UX Solution

An interstitial modal was added after the user clicked to proceed with a composed poll which gives the option to “send” the poll in the group chat or “edit”

Try this post-iteration Task



prototype iteration

user tasks



Sign up & 2-factor authentication process

Go to Task 01

Onboarding process

Go to Task 02

Enabling location preference

Go to Task 03

Creating group messages

Go to Task 04

Favouriting map location feature

Go to Task 05

Creating polls within the chat feature

Go to Task 06

looking forward

There could be an interesting set of ideas here for an app in the travel space. However, the market is somewhat crowded with other mature travel apps such as Wanderlog that are deep with features. In addition, there are other well-established apps in the chat and social spaces that have loyal followings.

Each iteration had provided discoveries in not only opportunities within the app's current features, but in the travel market as a whole. That being said, further development, testing and research would be required for flock to become a minimum viable product.

Features to consider in future sprints as discovered during user testing include developing and testing the itinerary, favourite, polling features along with Google Maps integration.