



Designing a Curology Mobile App Experience

with Inspiration from the Current Desktop &
Mobile Web Experience

By: Christina Vandenoever

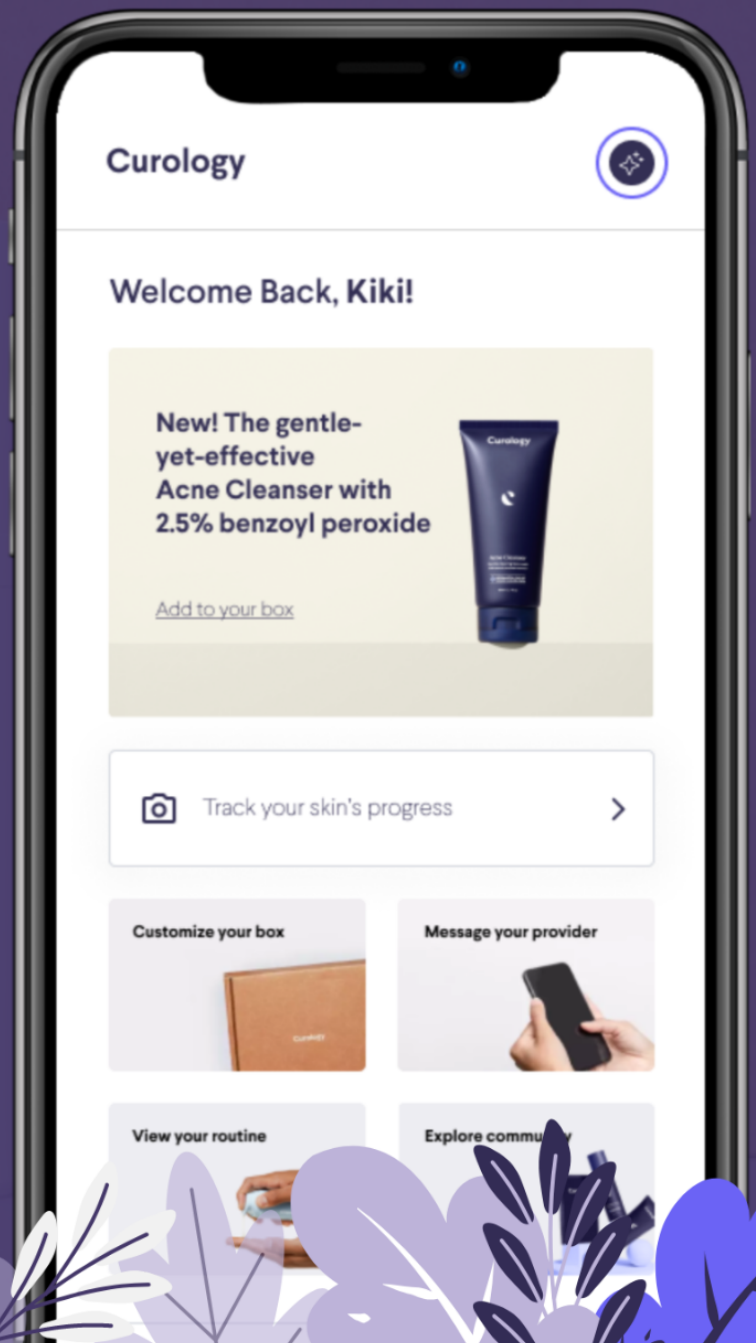


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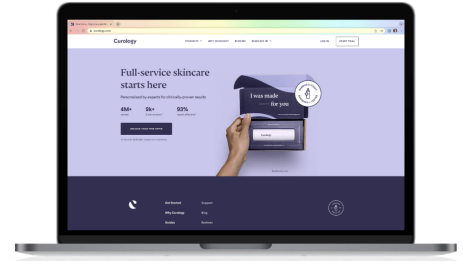
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Who and What is Curology?

Curology is a subscription-based skincare experience that has support from registered dermatologists.

User Journey for starting Curology:

- 01 Access the website
- 02 Explore what Curology has to offer
- 03 Take the survey to find the right products
- 04 Dermatologist reaches out with treatment plan
- 05 User starts with the free trial
- 06 If free trial is a success, continue with subscription



As a user continues with their subscription, they have the opportunity to manage their subscription, track their progress, and explore research guides on the website.

Project Overview

Title

Designing a Curology Mobile App Experience with Inspiration from the Current Desktop & Mobile Web Experience

Goal

To design an app experience that allows for easier access for users and also enhances engagement in the app.

Why would Curology benefit from an App?

As a long-term Curology subscriber, I have found that the website experience is sometimes **inaccessible**. Curology has many resources that **are not being utilized** that could be **highlighted in an app experience**. A few features that Curology has but users do not utilize are shown below:

- 01 Skincare Guides
- 02 Progress (collage templates + community sharing)
- 03 Exploring new products or different products

After conducting my evaluation of the current website, I found that these resources are very beneficial to understanding one's skin/skincare but are lost in the experience. Curology has an opportunity to support these resources through making them more accessible.

Deliverables

Interactive Hi-fi Prototype

01

Every screen interaction created with the design system

Design Documentation

02

Showing my process (goals, research, and ideation)

Design System (Figma)

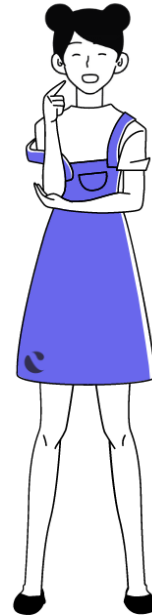
03

Based on the current Curology design system

Defining the Pain Points

This is Kiki...

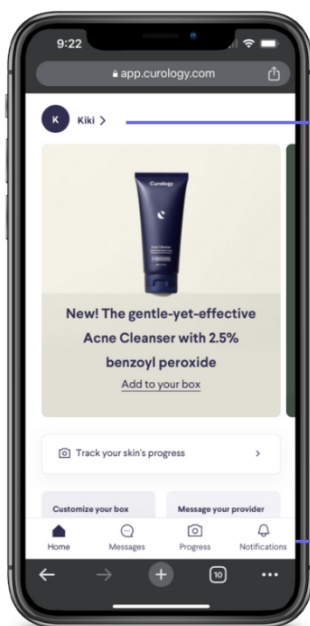
- She has been a **Curology subscriber for 3 months** now and has loved the results of her free trial!
- As she has been managing her subscription for her next order, she has struggled to navigate the mobile website experience.



Her Pain Points

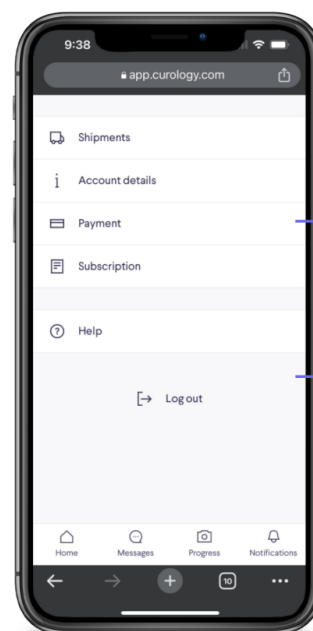
- She wants quick access to her Curology Account
- She struggles to navigate through the web experience
- Would like to track her progress + sense of accomplishment

Current Struggles



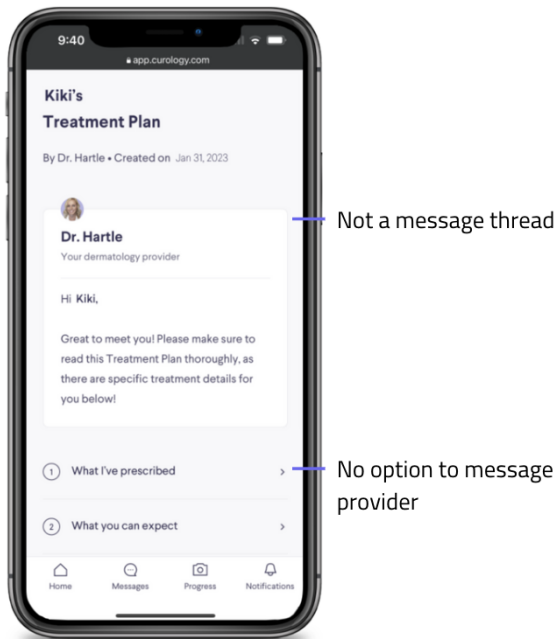
Only has access to profile on the homepage

No access through navigation bar



Confused on how the options are arranged

Expected to find her skincare routine here



Generalization

- She is only able to access the profile through the homepage.
- Her profile page is unorganized and misses important information.
- Kiki does not know how to get into direct contact with her dermatologist provider because the message thread is just a treatment plan.

These pain points were identified throughout my research and ideation. The following design addresses them.

Final Design

Goal

Redesign the current mobile website experience to adapt it to an app experience while enhancing engagement with **a creative component**.

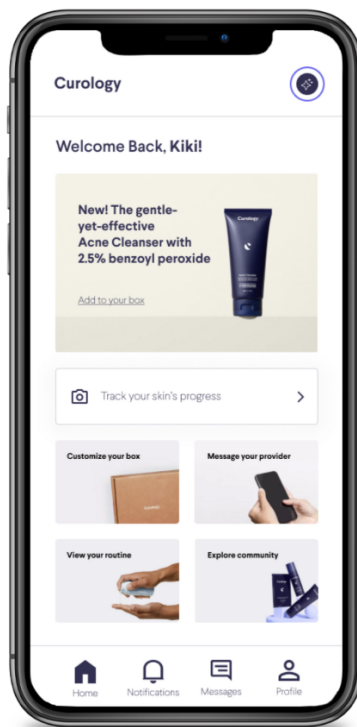
High Fidelity Prototypes

Explained through Kiki's experience with the prototypes.



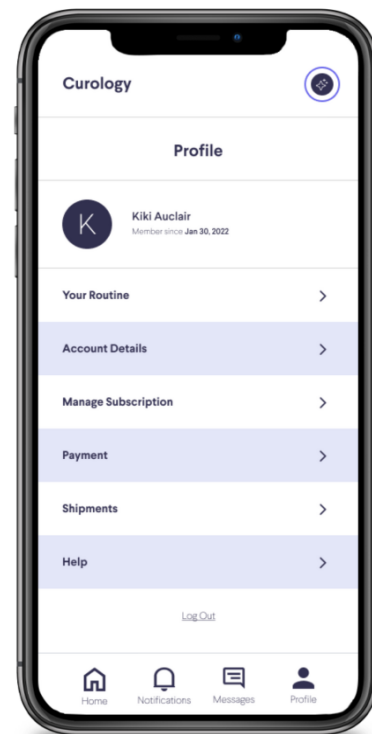
1

Kiki logs into the Curology app and immediately sees that she can access her profile from the navigation bar!



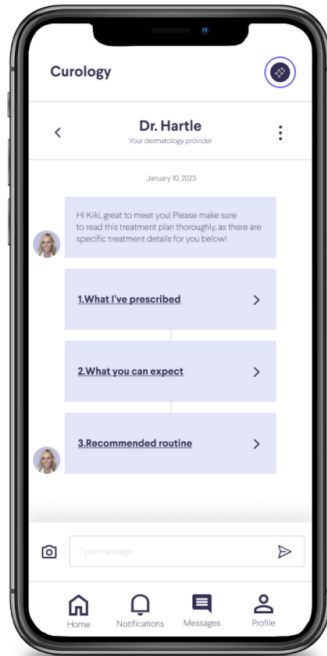
2

When she navigates to her profile, she sees that she can now access her routine and everything is organized by importance!



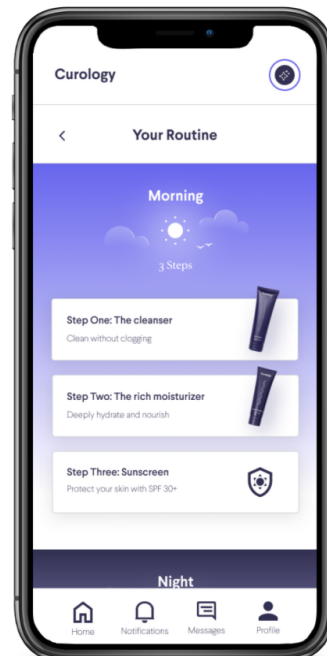
3

Kiki can also now directly message her dermatologist while still accessing the treatment plan posted.



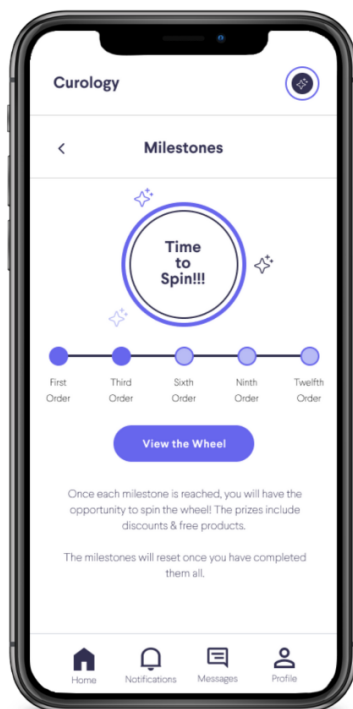
4

She also realized that her routine is now accessible through three different spots in the app.



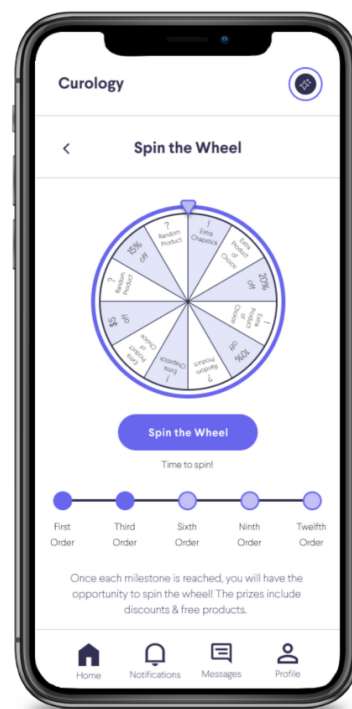
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She discovers the new feature of the milestone rewards system!



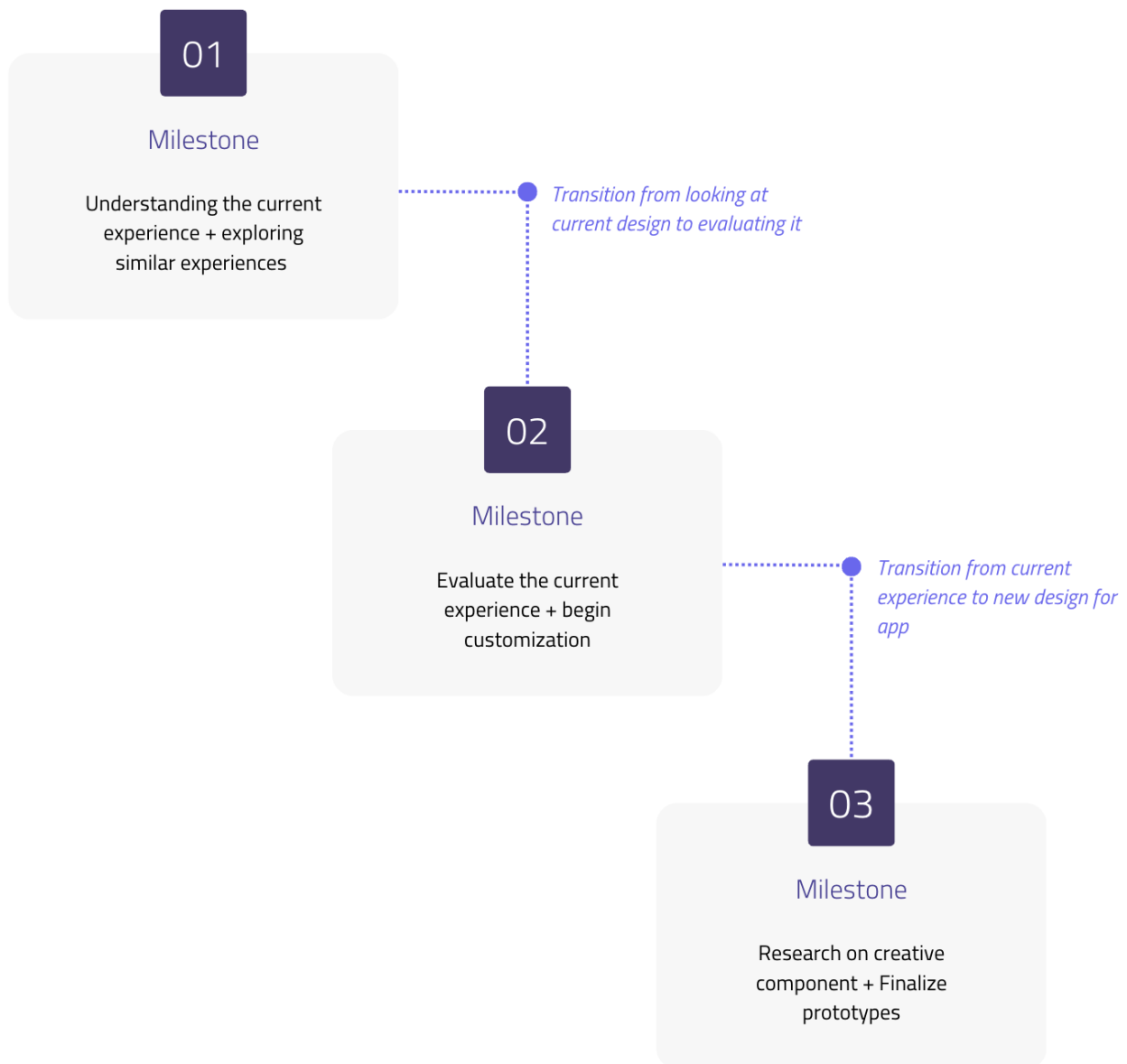
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Now she can engage more with her subscription + explore new products!



My Process

In order to understand the current Curology experience and expand it to an **engaging mobile app experience**, I conducted research and ideation. Each activity informed the next which allowed for a well-structured design. My process was broken up into **three milestones** which are as followed:



Each of these milestones will be explained in further detail below.

Milestone One

Understanding the current experience +
exploring similar experiences



Milestone One

Goal

During this milestone, I wanted to understand the space through a designer viewer rather than as a user. As an avid user of Curology, I have explored the website and have found inconsistencies and wanted to look into these further.

Approach

- 01 Conducted a heuristic evaluation on web experience
- 02 Conducted a competitive analysis on skincare apps
- 03 Sketching based on insights from research

Each of these activities revealed design opportunities and possible ideas to consider in my later ideation stages.

In the following pages, the activities above will be discussed in detail.

Heuristic Evaluation + Cognitive Walkthrough

Goal

Identify inconsistencies, navigation issues, and/or features that need to be highlighted more.

Approach

In order to identify these inconsistencies, I decided to conduct a heuristic evaluation while **a new user** navigates through the website.. Using **Nielsen's Ten Heuristics**, I mapped out a **cognitive walkthrough** that addressed each section of the website and evaluated the user's experience.

Walkthrough based on highlighted features/steps:

1. Setting up the free trial

- a. Creating an Account
- b. Taking the survey about current skin state
- c. Purchasing free trial

2. Managing Subscription

- a. Change what comes in the box
- b. Change payment method
- c. Canceling subscription

3. Community Aspect

- a. Viewing other users' journey
- b. Create Postcard

4. Tracking personal progress

- a. Viewing past progress
- b. Updating your current progress

5. Contacting dermatology provider

- a. Messages from provider
- b. User to dermatology provider

6. Using resources provided by Curology

- a. Research about diet
- b. Research about skin & routine

I conducted the walkthrough with two new users of the Curology website and evaluated their experience while taking notes on a table for Nielsen's Ten Heuristics.

Severity Rating:
0 = I don't agree that this is a usability problem at all
1 = Cosmetic problem only; fix if time is available
2 = Minor usability problem; fixing this should be given low priority
3 = Major usability problems: important to fix, given high priority
4 = Usability catastrophe; fix this before product can be released

Heuristics	Violation	Recommendation	Severity
1. Visibility of system status Always keep users informed about what is going on, through appropriate feedback within reasonable time.	1. Setting up free trial - No progress bar	1. Setting up free trial - Add progress bar	2
2. Match between system & the real world Follow real-world conventions, making information appear in natural and logical order.	-----	-----	-----
3. User Control & Freedom Users should leave the unwanted state without having to go through an extended dialogue, undo and redo	1. Setting up free trial - Users are unable to get out of the survey without knowing if their progress will be lost.	1. Setting up free trial - Add feedback that shows the progress is being saved.	2
4. Consistency & Standards Users should not have to wonder whether different words, situations or	3. Community Aspect - When clicking on the meatball menu	3. Community Aspect - Change the meatball menu into a simple	

Table for Heuristic Evaluation

Takeaways

There were inconsistencies found in the follow sections:

1. **Recognition rather than recall** – certain buttons and features were hidden on pages that did not correlate with their purpose.
2. **Consistency & Standards** – the message thread was not a way to communicate with the dermatologist provider rather it was just a treatment plan submitted by the provider.

Recommendations based on inconsistencies:

1. Change icons to match their intended purpose
2. Either redesign the message thread to allow for the user to contact their provider or design it in a way that does not misdirect the user's intuition.

Competitive Analysis

Goal

Evaluate other subscription/topical skincare apps in order to find inspiration for the Curology app. (seeing what works and what does not).

Approach

- Created a Miro board frame with a table (apps names and features)
- Features: setting up the app experience, managing subscription/account, communicating with customer service, browsing the app, creative components, inefficient or unused things, and extra features
- App Names: Ipsy, Ulta, Lush, & FabFitFun

	Ipsy	Ulta
Setting up App Exp.		
Managing Subscription /Account		
Communicating with customer service		

Screenshot from Miro Board

Takeaways

- One creative component option **would be a points system** + tracking the points.
- Making sure the users can contact Curology support in the app and not be redirect to the website.
- **Allowing the users to explore the app** without immediately requiring them to create an account or subscribe.
- Making the “create an account” system quick and easy. (allowing for further setup later)

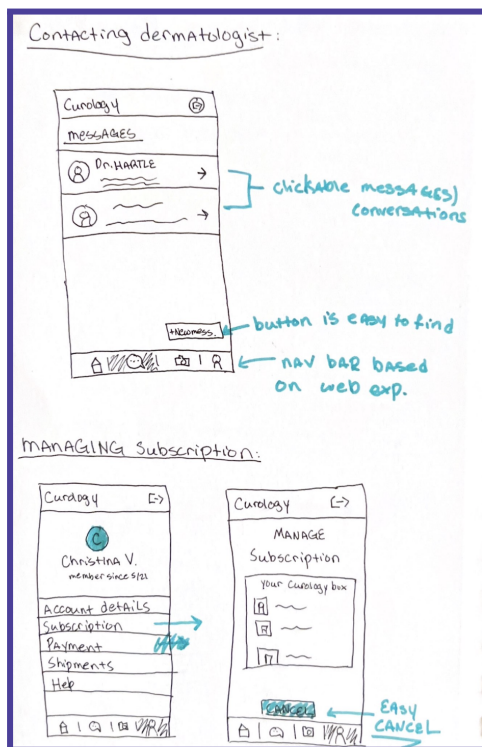
With the findings of the heuristic evaluation and competitive analysis, I decided to visualize these findings through sketching.

Sketching

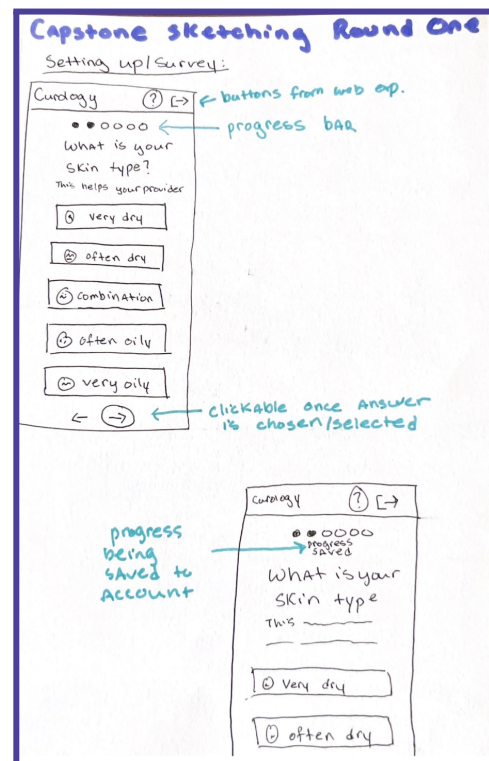
Goal

To visualize the findings from the previous research.

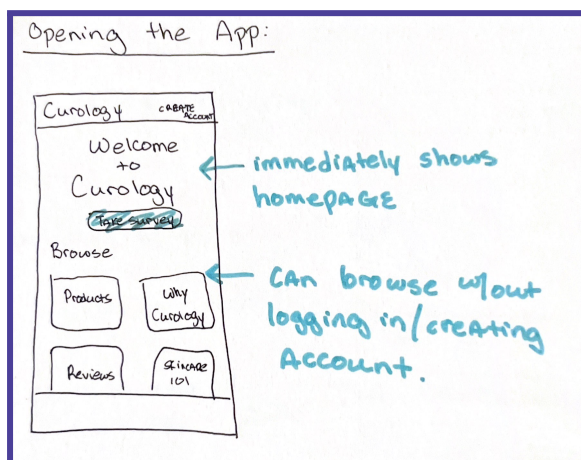
Sketches



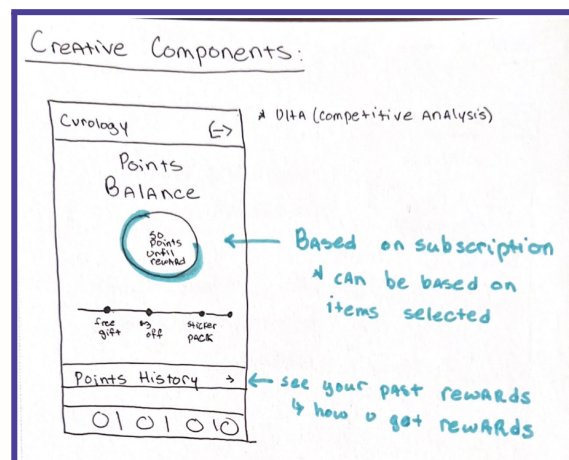
Ensuring that icons and buttons were intuitive.



Iterating upon the survey to give the user more feedback.



Allowing the user to explore the app before creating an account.



Possibly making a points system for the creative component.

Narrowing my Scope

During my research in Milestone One, I found that there were too many inconsistencies in both the “before creating an account” and “after creating an account”. These **two different views were just as complex as the other**, which led me to reevaluating.

Two Options:

- 01 Focusing on "before creating an account"
- 02 Focusing on "account view"

Considering that my focus was originally on enhancing engagement within the app and including a creative component, I decided to **focus on the account view**. The “before creating an account” focus would require me to give the user incentive to create an account and that was not my original intention for this app.

This would allow me to:

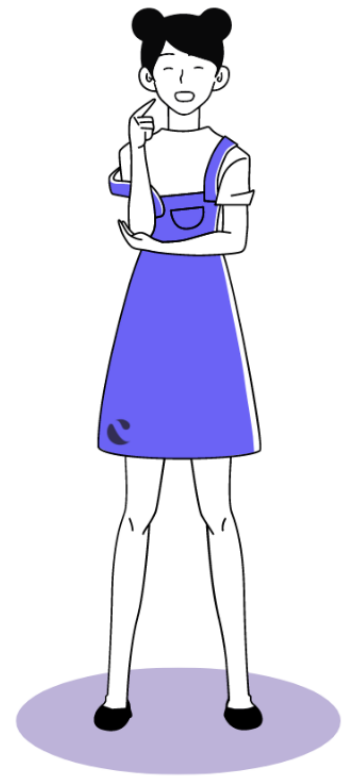


I also decided to **move away from the points system** because it did not fit with the subscription service that Curology provides. Due to this idea falling through, I decided to focus on the current experience still and to research the creative component in **milestone three** once the overall app design was established.

With my focus on after creating an account, I moved into my next milestone to evaluate that experience and make iterations based on testing.

Milestone Two

Evaluate the current experience + begin customization



Milestone Two

Goal

In this milestone I decided to focus on evaluating the current web experience. I aimed to design screens that replicated the current mobile web experience in order to **evaluate the experience**. The takeaways from the test would inform the final design to ensure a seamless experience.

Approach

- 01 Sketching the mobile web experience
- 02 Transitioning to mid-fidelity mockups
- 03 Conduct concept testing + make iterations

This ideation process led to a mobile web redesign and transition into a mobile app experience.

In the following pages, the activities above will be discussed in detail.

Sketching the Current Experience

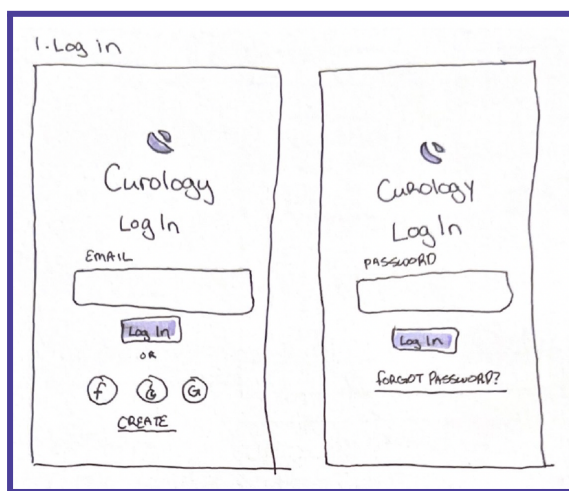
Goal

Adapting the mobile web experience to an app experience.

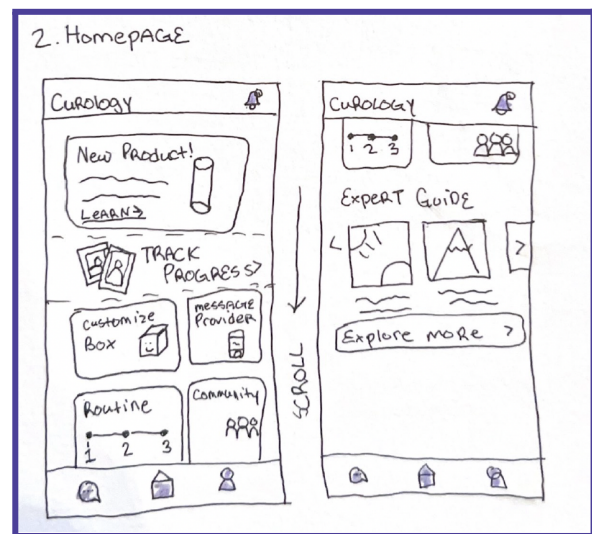
Sketches

I started by sketching out the mobile web experience and adding a few features based on the desktop web experience.

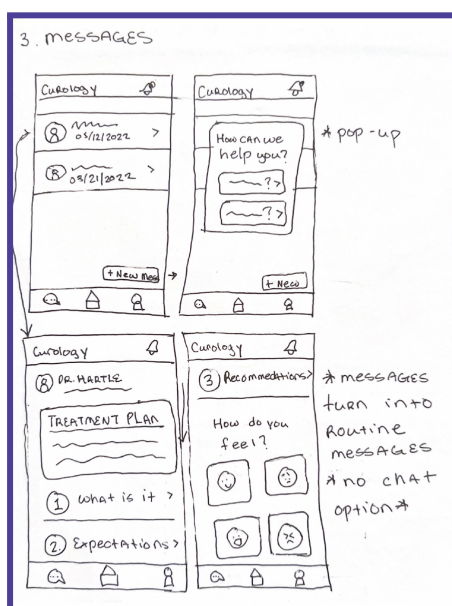
1. Login Page



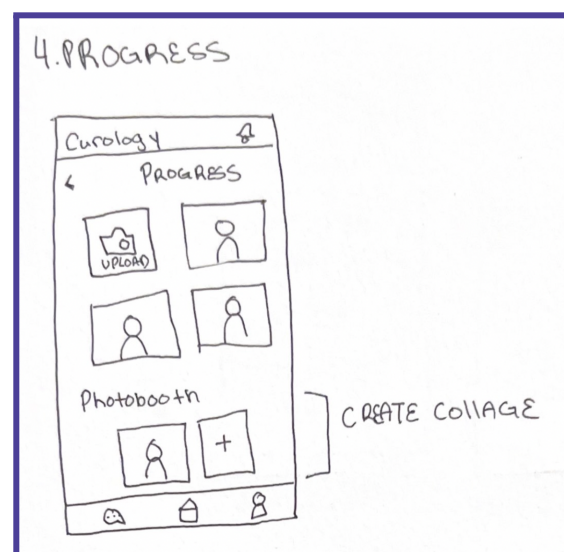
2. Homepage



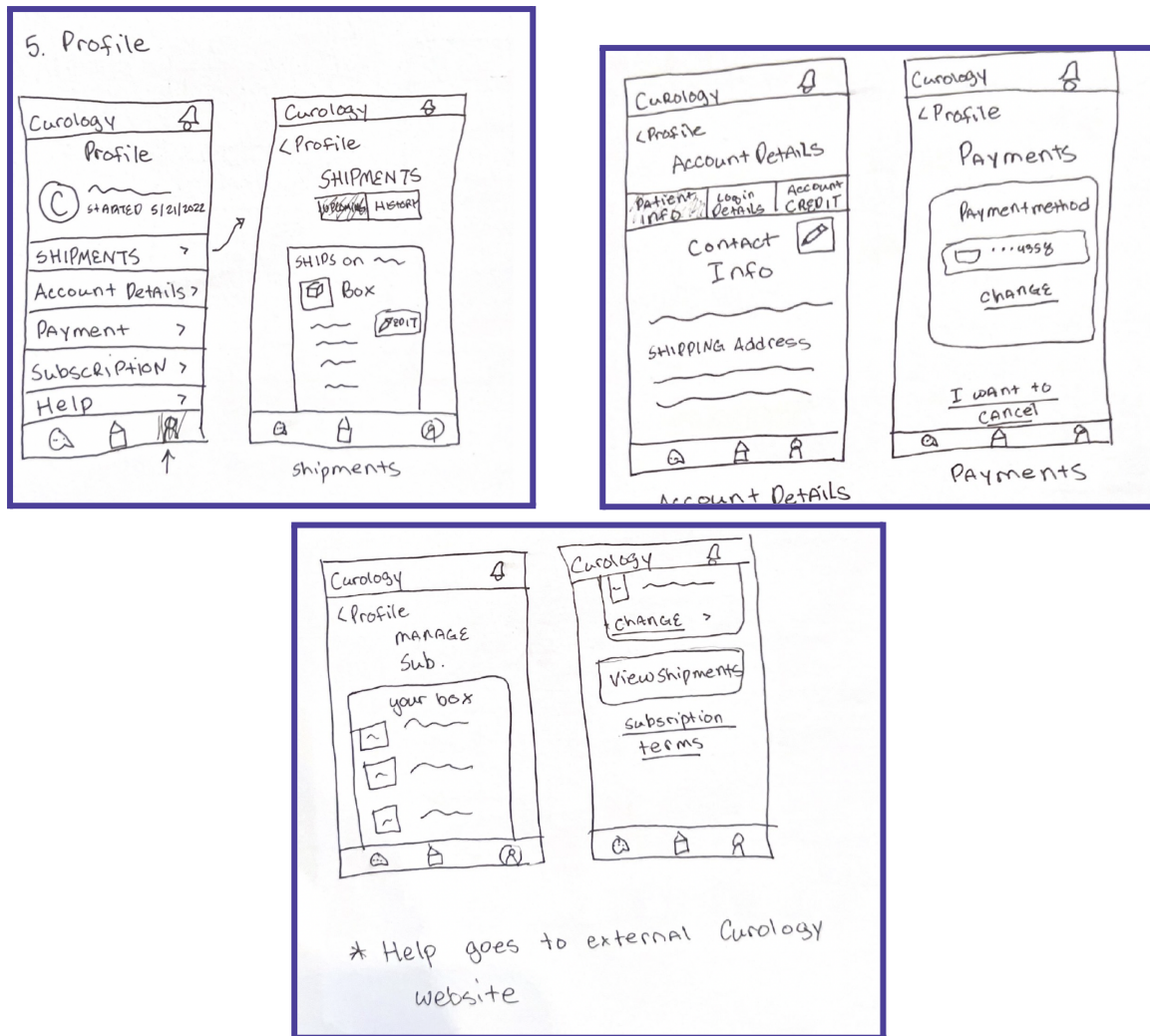
3. Messages



4. Progress



5. Profile



With these sketches, I moved into Whimsical to adapt them to mid-fidelity in order to test with them.

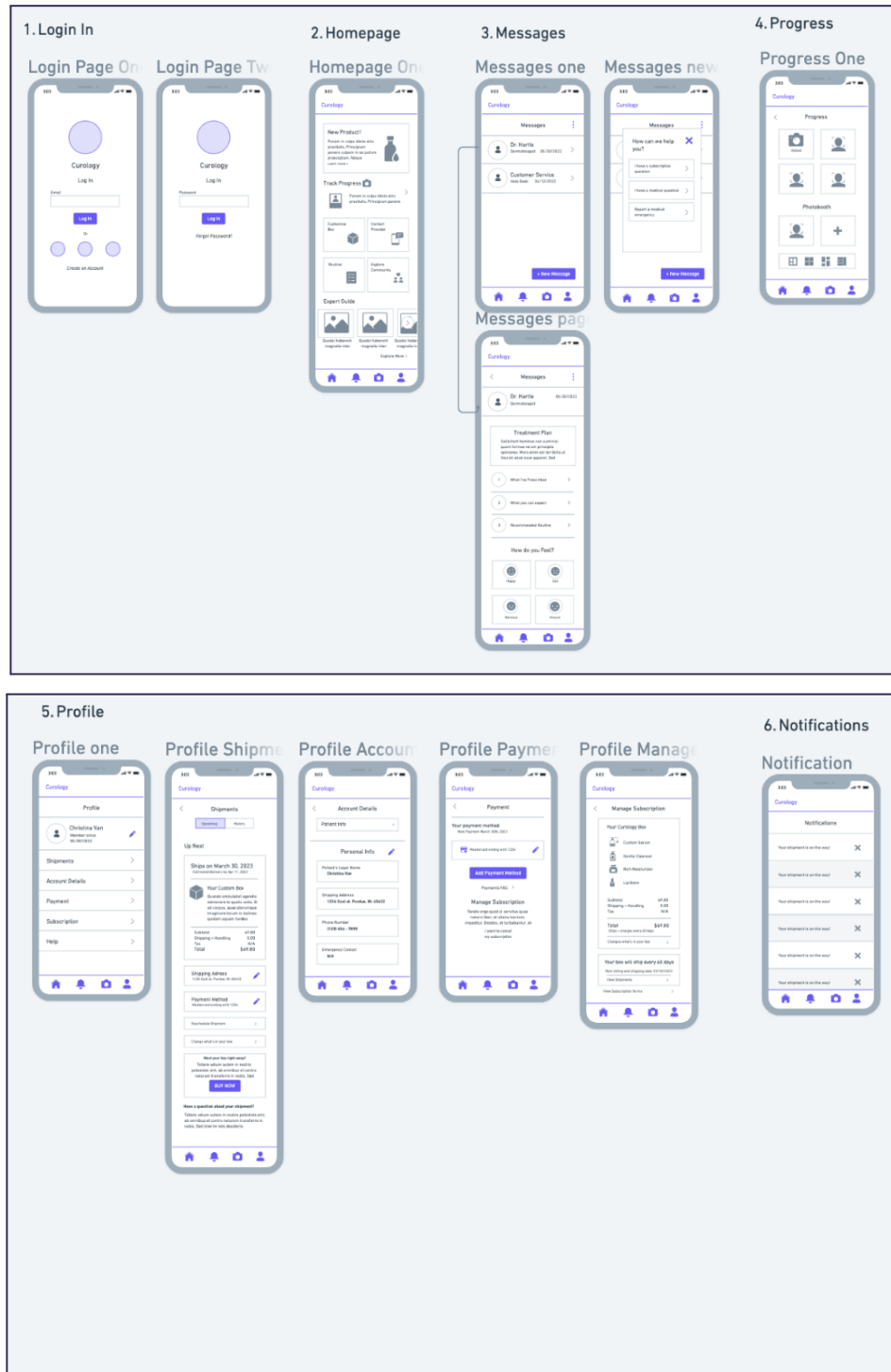
Moving to Mid-fis

Goal

To add more detail to the sketches in order to conduct efficient concept testing.

Mid-Fidelity Mockups before Evaluation

I designed the mid-fis by replicating the sketches.



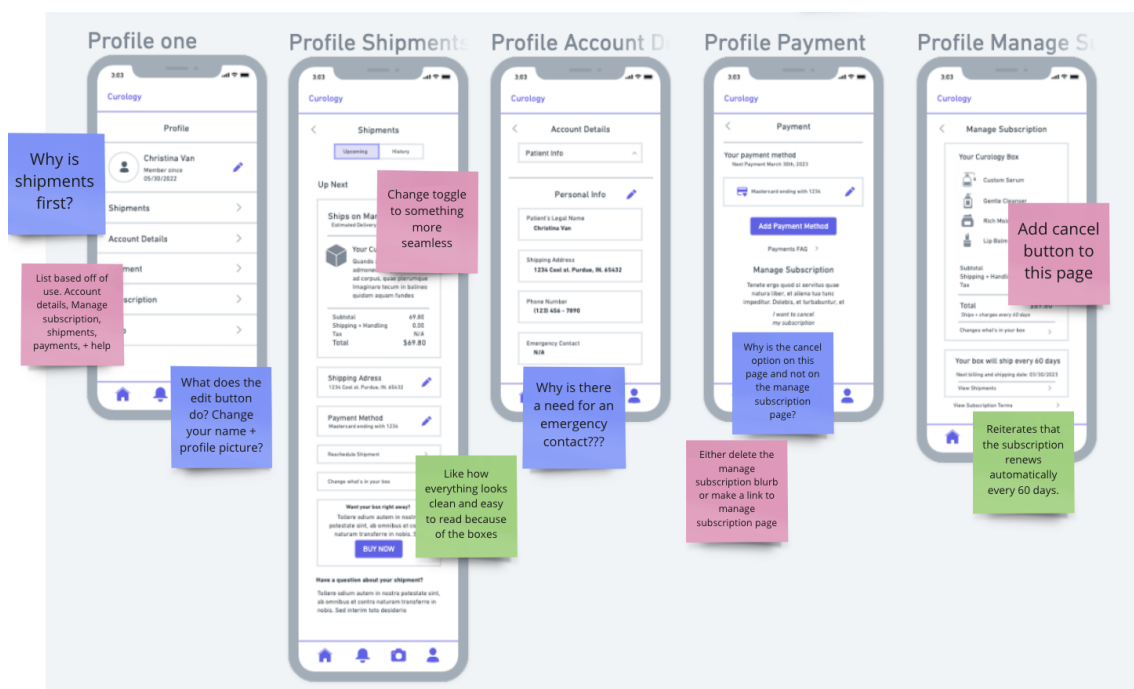
Concept Testing

Goal

To gain feedback on the current experience that will lead to a more seamless interaction with the later mobile app design.

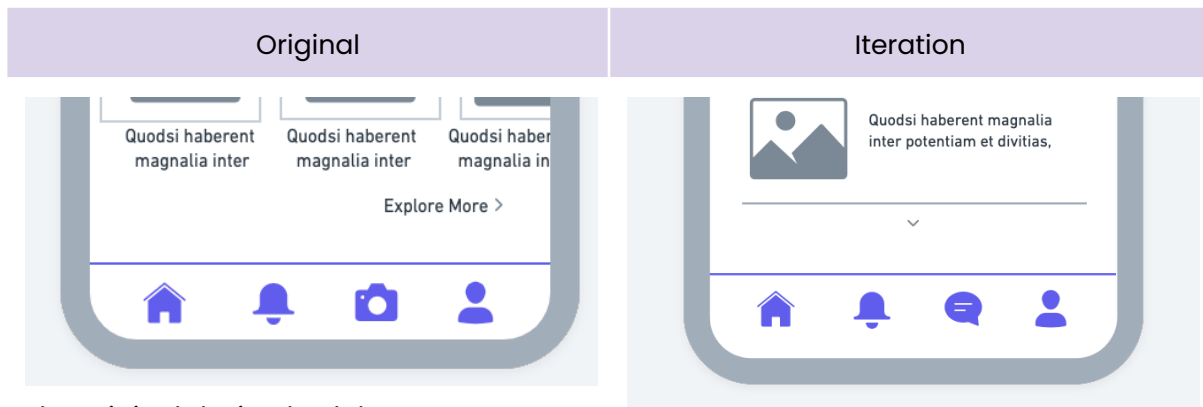
Approach

In order to understand the **user's wants and needs** of the app experience, I walked them through each screen. I allowed them to talk through each screen and **recorded any inconsistencies, compliments, questions, and suggestions**. These recordings were documented on Miro.



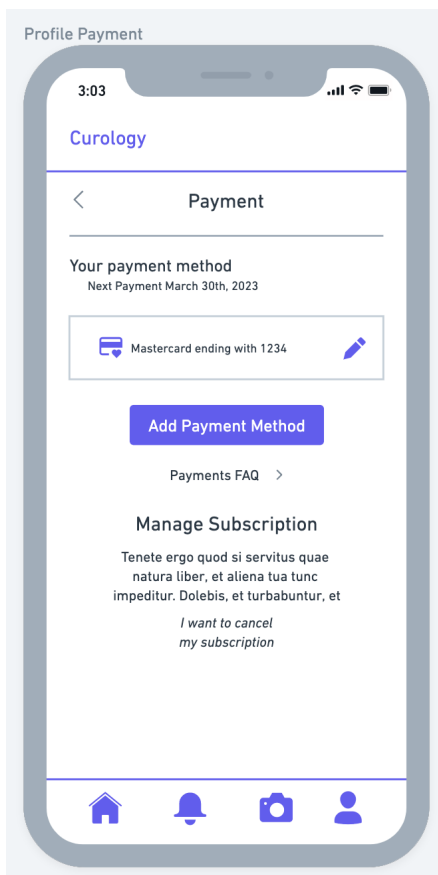
Takeaways/Iterations

After reviewing the takeaways from the evaluation, I made changes to the mid-fis. While not all of the questions were answerable and all of the suggestions could be utilized, I iterated based on the ones that could.

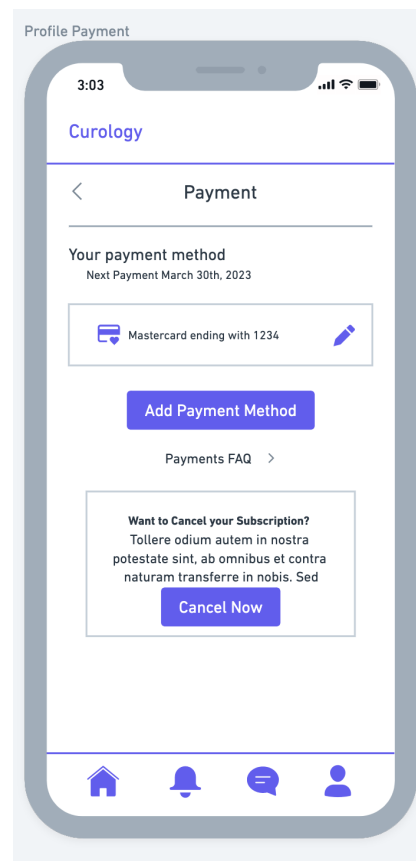


The original design had the progress page in the nav bar.

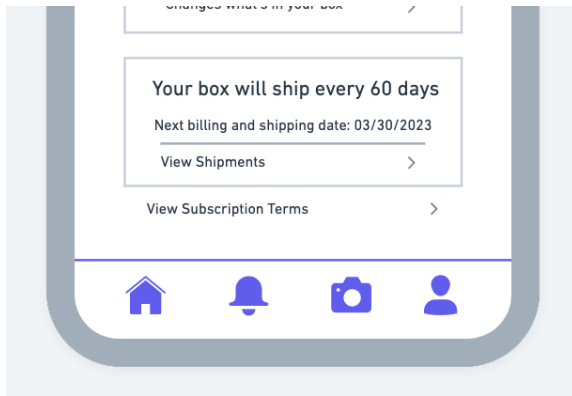
Many participants agreed that the messages function was more important than the progress page, so I replaced it.



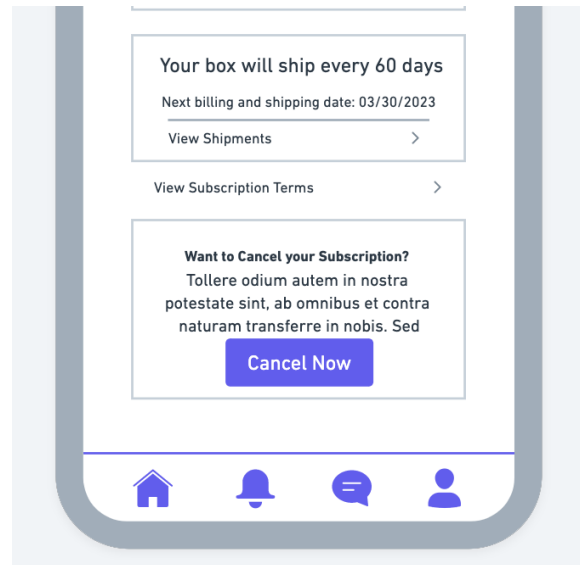
In the original mid-fi, "manage subscription" was a random blurb at the bottom of the payment page.



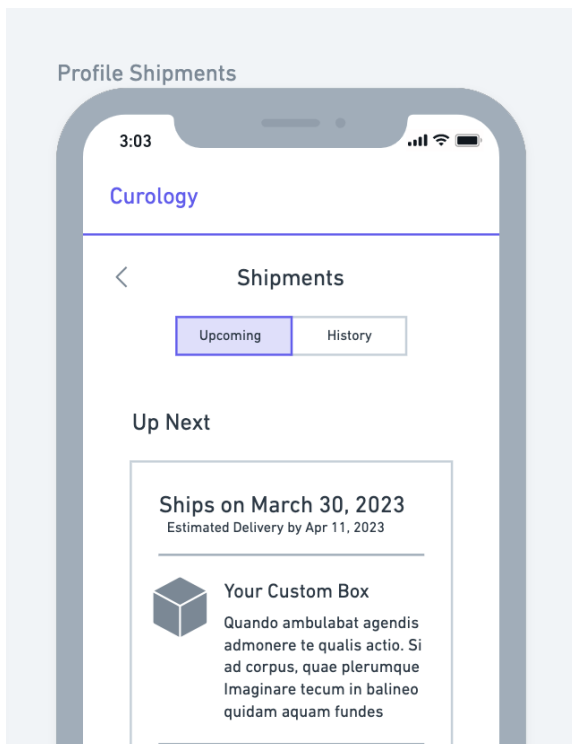
To make this more prominent and efficient, I iterated to make it more action based.



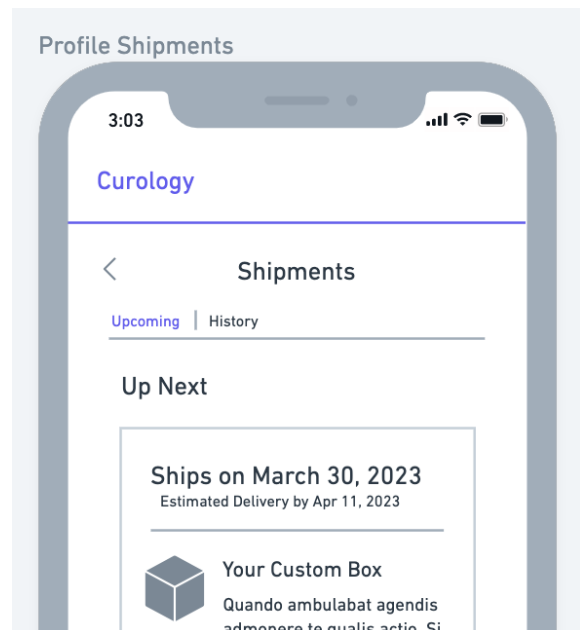
There was no way to cancel the subscription on the “manage subscription” page.



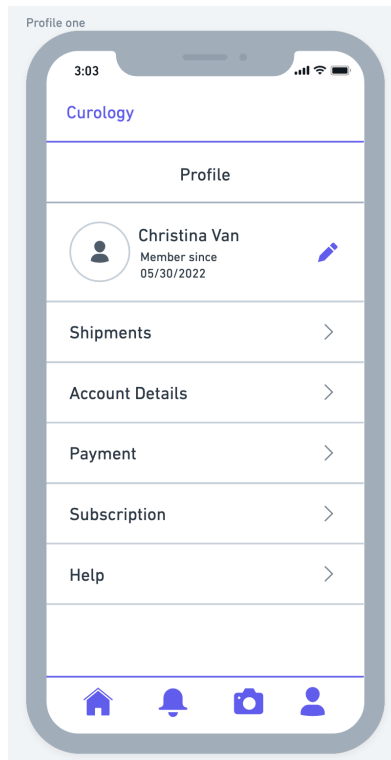
This was added to this page as well as the payment page.



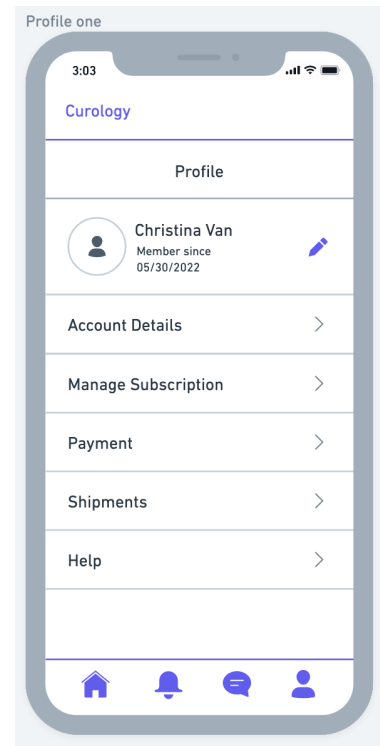
The toggle for the “upcoming” and “history” shipments was debated on by the participants.



I changed the design based on a recommendation that one participant explained. This will be tested on again with the hi-fi mockups.



The menu for the "profile" page was disorganized

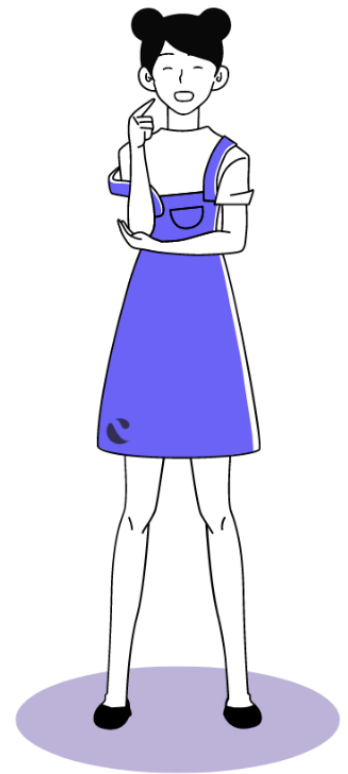


I reorganized it based on the use of each page (Information hierarchy).

With these iterations applied, my focus moved from the current experience to the new app experience. Making it more personalized and enhancing the user's engagement through a creative component.

Milestone Three

Research on creative component + Finalize prototypes



Milestone Three

Goal

In this milestone, my focus was on personalizing the mobile app to enhance the user's engagement.

Approach

- 01 Conducted research on gamification
- 02 Created design system + transitioned to hi-fi
- 03 Conducted usability testing + made iterations

The research led to implementing a creative component into the app and the design system allowed for proficient hi-fidelity designs. The usability test identified any lasting navigation issues and disconnections within the mobile app design.

In the following pages, the activities above will be discussed in detail.

Creative Component Research

Goal

To choose a gamification component that is recognizable and engaging to the user, but still benefits the company.

Approach

I conducted research by exploring which gamification components are most widely used through Medium Blogs. I wanted to ensure that the component I was going to choose **would not distract the users** of the true purpose of the app, which is to explore their personalized skincare.

“One of the best ways to avoid this scenario is to focus on how gamification can support your users as they move through your product, rather than merely providing them with unnecessary distractions for the sake of entertainment”

– Sofia Quintero (Medium Blogs)

Takeaways

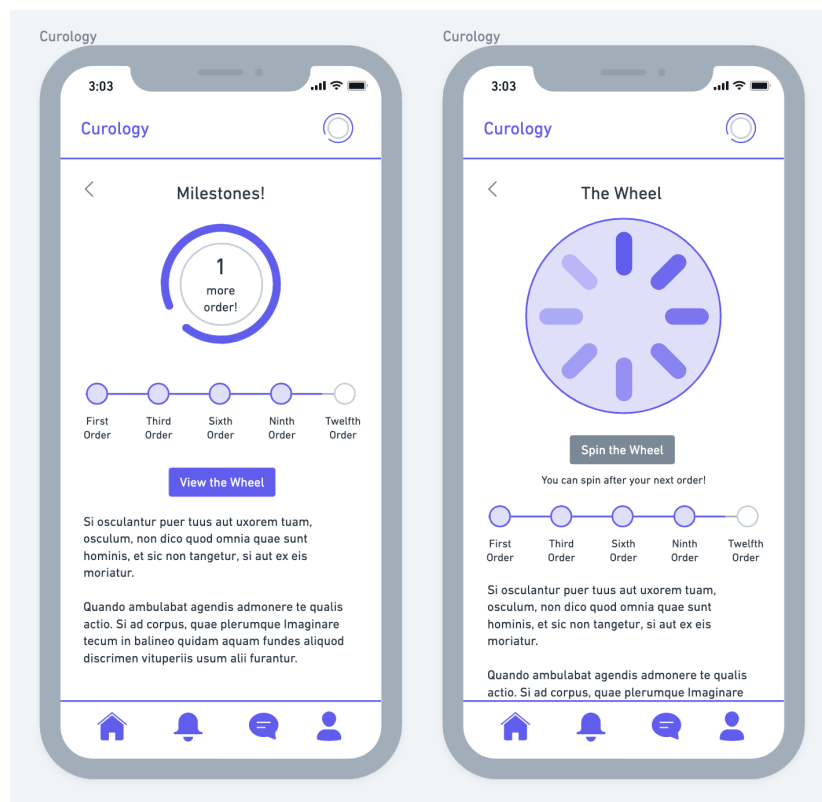
Throughout my research, I found a lot of ideas that all circled back to a points system. Looking back at my [competitive analysis](#), I remember finding that many cosmetic apps use the points system because they have multiple products. A customer is able to gain points through purchasing on their own time. I found that this would not work for Curology because **it is subscription based** and the points would only be distributed every two months. Then I found:

“Achievements are rewards that are given to users when they have completed a certain task or reached a specific level. Achievements can be used to encourage users to continue engaging with the platform and to strive to achieve more”.

– DesignGuru (Medium Blogs)

Considering that Curology could have something called “milestones” for the number of boxes (or how long the user has been using the subscription), I wanted to connect **rewards** along with them. I was able to ideate on the milestone idea along with **a wheel that could be spun once the user reached one of the**

milestones. There would be different kinds of “prizes” or “rewards” that the user could win.



Mid-fi mockup of the milestones feature

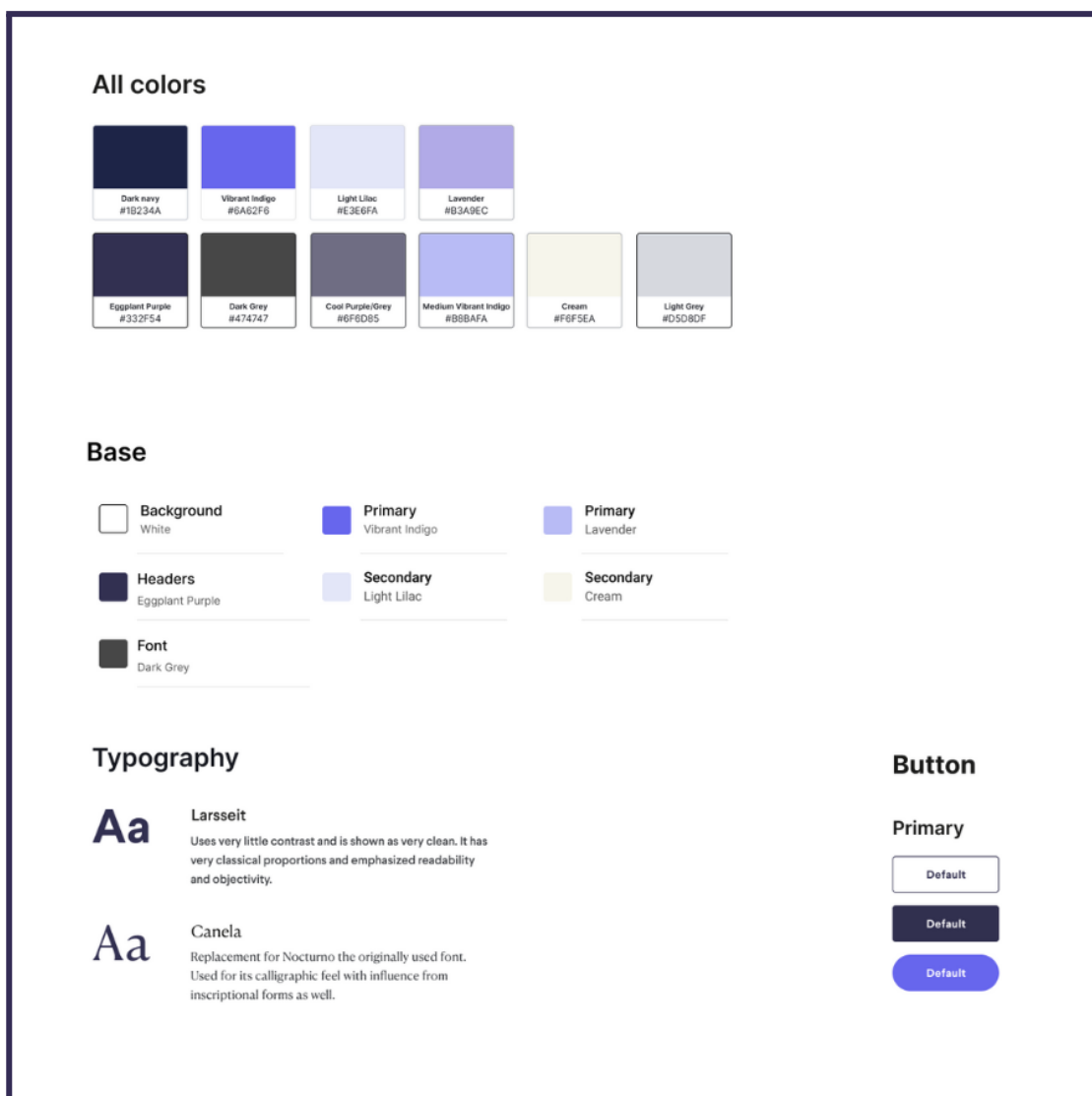
With each component of the app design in mid-fidelity, I moved into creating a design system that was inspired by the current Curology design system.

Design System

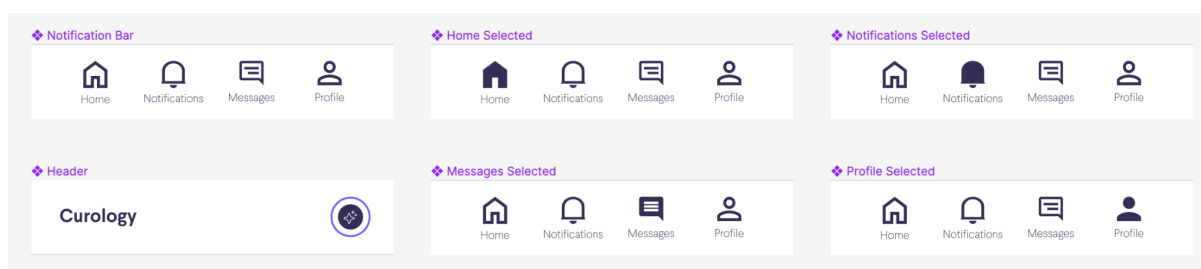
Goal

To make transitioning from mid-fidelity to hi-fidelity more efficient with the use of colors, font, and components.

Design System



Components



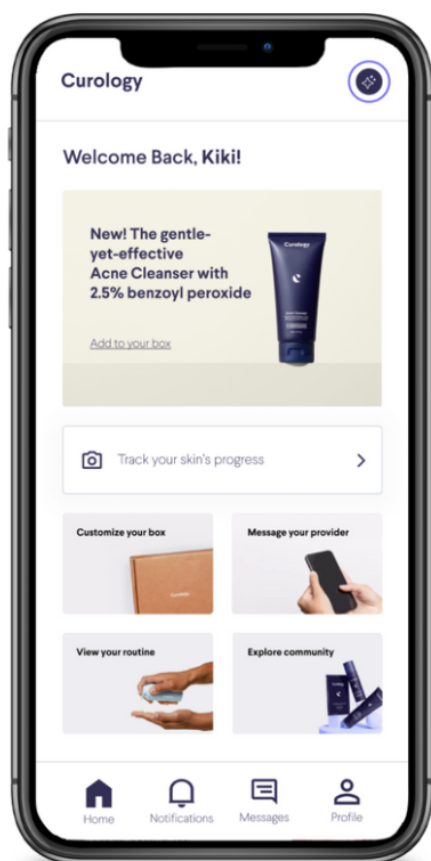
High Fidelity Designs

Goal

To enable users to visualize the changes made from the mobile web experience to the adapted mobile app.

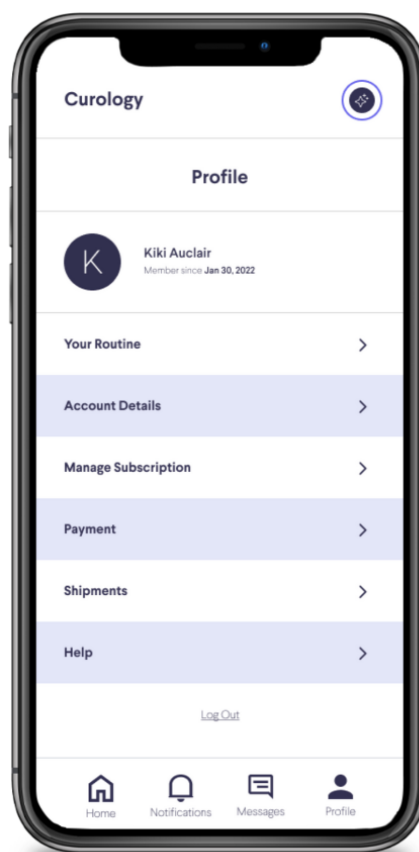
Hi-Fidelity Screens

These screens are the finalized designs and the iterations made from the usability test can be found [here](#).



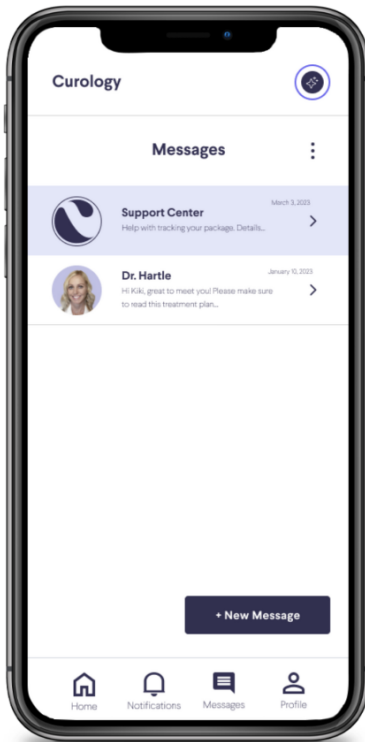
Homepage

Users can access their routine, milestones, contacting providers, etc.



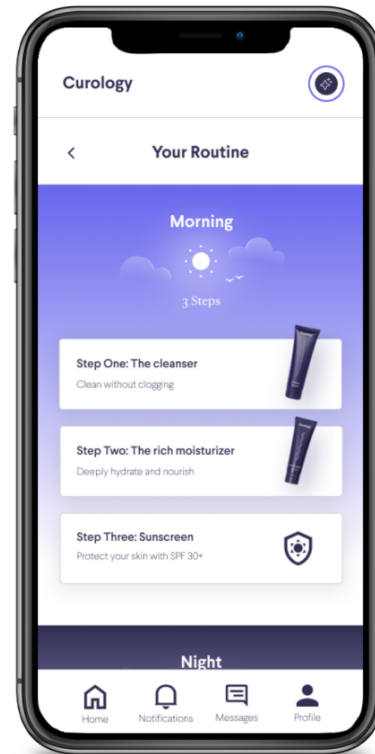
Profile

Users can access their routine, manage their subscription, etc.



Messaging

Users can contact their provider + Curology support through this page



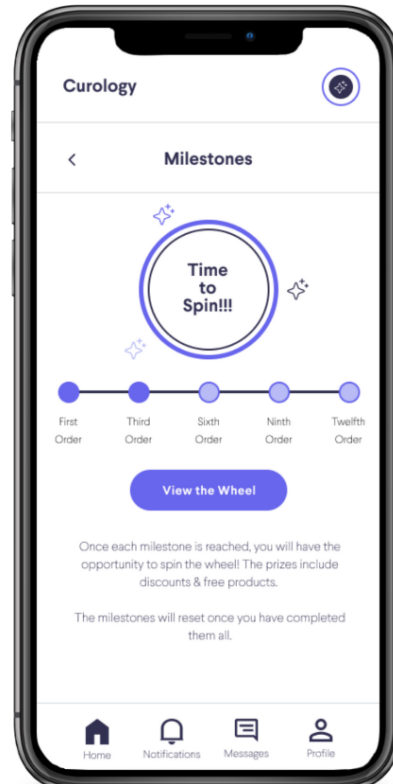
Routine

Users can access their routine through the messages tab, homepage, + profile tab



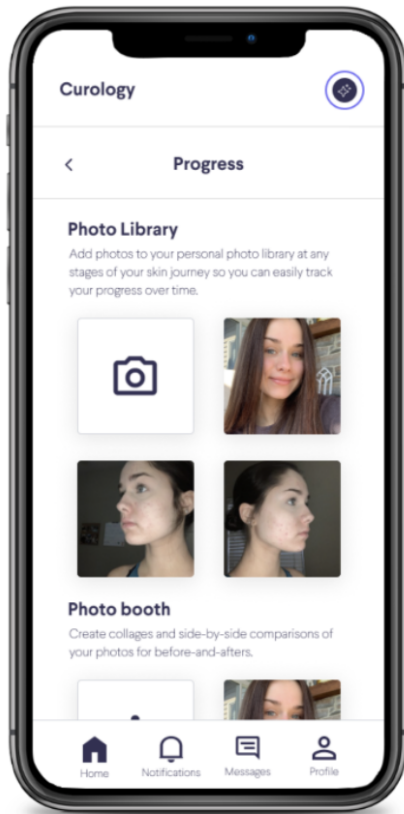
Milestone

Users can track their progress on their milestones



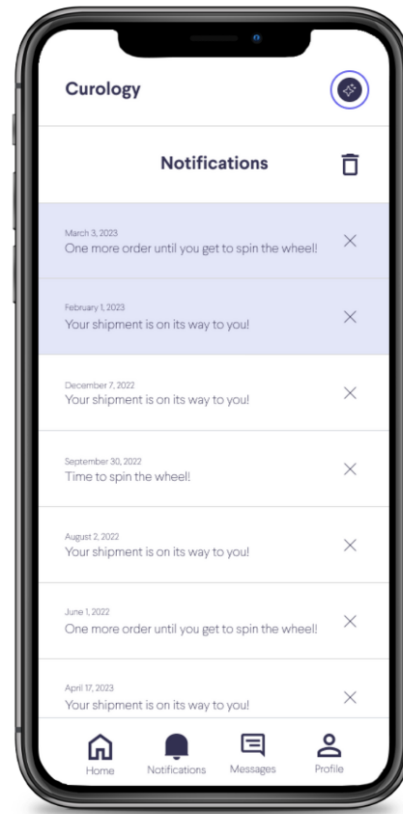
Spin the Wheel

Users can get rewards once they have completed a milestone.



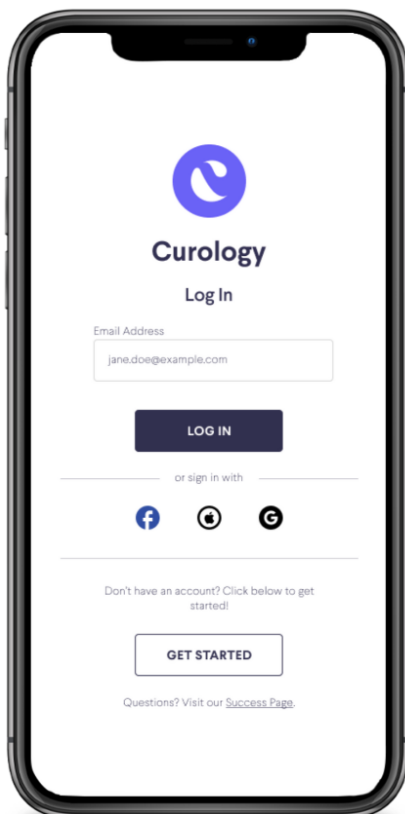
Progress

The user is able to track their skincare progress



Notifications

User can access and manage all of their notifications



Login Page

First screen once the app is downloaded

Usability Testing

Goal

Ensure that the hi-fi mockups are intuitive and all interactivity is consistent.

Approach

I conducted usability testing with the Figma interactive prototype with both designers and users of the Curology subscription. The test consisted of the following tasks they need to complete:

- 01 Navigating through the homepage
- 02 Locating and evaluating the notifications page
- 03 Locating the messages tab and creating a new message
- 04 Navigating to their recommended routine
- 05 Looking through the profile tab
- 06 Finding where to cancel their subscription
- 07 Finishing with comments about experience

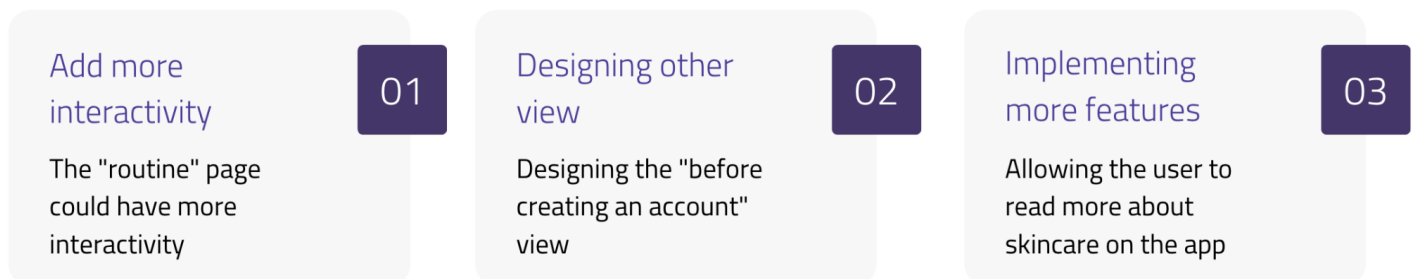
Takeaways

- Add another screen where the user can see their **skincare routine**.
- Make the homepage more interactive (connect more features with interactivity)
- **Redesign the notification page** to give more feedback to the user. (add a few more features, like deleting and showing when a notification has been read already).
- Add a logout button to the profile page.

Once these iterations were applied, the design was at its final design. Iterations may be made in the future based on future purpose.

Next Steps

Considering the time constraint and my abilities with Figma, there are a few iterations that I would like to make in the future. These are as shown below:



Reflection

This semester was one of the most defining times for my understanding of UX Design and also how I approach design. Not only was I able to focus on things that I found most interesting, but I also got to test my knowledge on design. I learned so much during the process and my peers and professor were very supportive. While my initial project plan was changed multiple times throughout the semester, I found that this was more beneficial than it was destructive. I was able to identify my design strategies and how I perform under my own supervision. One of the most defining parts of this project was when I had a pivot point after my first milestone. I was forced to [narrow my scope](#) because there were too many things I could address in my project but I couldn't because of time and my design abilities. Moving away from designing both the "before creating an account" and "after creating an account" and just focusing on the "after", allowed me to really focus on the necessary parts. I knew that if I tried to take on both of them, I wouldn't be able to address every issue. The design wouldn't have been evaluated enough and I would've wanted to strive for more. Overall, I am really proud of the work I did this semester and cannot wait to do more personal projects in the future.

Appendix

[Resources](#)

[Heuristic Evaluation](#)

[Competitive Analysis](#)

[Concept Testing Protocol](#)

[Usability Testing Protocol](#)

[Addition Hi-fi Screens](#)

Resources

Gamification Research APA Works Cited

- DesignGuru. (2023, January 30). *Integrating gamification techniques in UX design*. Medium. Retrieved April 13, 2023, from <https://bootcamp.uxdesign.cc/integrating-gamification-techniques-in-ux-design-83cee4258a32>
- Quintero, S. (2018, November 8). *How-and when-to use gamification in your UX*. Medium . Retrieved April 13, 2023, from <https://medium.com/enjoyhq/how-and-when-to-use-gamification-in-your-ux-5453834332e>

Concept Testing Protocol

Conductor	Christina Vandenoever
Website	Whimsical Link
Goal	Identify the inconsistencies within the current mobile web experience through the mid-fi mockups on Whimsical

Hi, I want to start off by saying a big thank you for joining me today for this test. To give you a brief understanding of why I contacted you, I am currently working on a project centered on transitioning the Curology web experience into a mobile experience. Not only do I want to carry over the features that are provided on the website, I am also striving to add a more creative/gamified aspect to the mobile app experience. I have reached out to you to get your input and view of the current adaption from the mobile web experience in these mid-fidelity mockups.

Today I will just be showing you each of the screens on the Whimsical mockup website and as we walk through feel free to ask questions and make comments!

Agenda

1. Start with homepage
 - a. Allow participant to “tap” on different buttons and get their input as they do so
2. Move to Profile
 - a. Ask them what they expect to be on the profile page
 - b. Ask for any inconsistencies
3. Navigate to Messages screen
 - a. Is there anything confusing about this screen?
 - b. Any expectations that weren’t met?
4. Ask them what they expect to be on the progress page
 - a. Is this necessary to be in the navigation bar?
 - b. Would you use this feature?
 - c. What would you use this feature for and is there anything that you would like to see on this page?
5. Any general comments do they have?

Thank you for participating! If you have any more comments feel free to tell me!

Usability Testing Protocol

Conductor	Christina Vandenoever
Website	Figma Link
Goal	Identify the inconsistencies, disconnections, navigation issues, with the hi-fidelity designs.

Hi, I want to start off by saying a big thank you for joining me today for this test. To give you a brief understanding of why I contacted you, I am currently working on a project centered on transitioning the Curology web experience into a mobile experience. Not only do I want to carry over the features that are provided on the website, I am also striving to add a more creative/gamified aspect to the mobile app experience. I have reached out to you to evaluate my current high fidelity design.

As a user of Curology, I would like you to tap through this prototype and identify any confusion or inconsistencies that you find. Let me know if you have any questions!

Agenda

1. Make sure the participant goes to each page
 - a. Homepage
 - b. Profile
 - c. Messages
 - d. Notifications
 - e. Milestones + Spinning the Wheel
2. Some tasks that can get them to each page
 - a. How would you go about managing your subscription?
 - b. What would you do if you had a question about your current treatment plan?
 - c. You have just reached your first milestone and want to spin the wheel! How would you go about doing so?
 - d. How would you navigate to your shipments? How would you look at your past shipments?
3. Ask for general inconsistencies or questions they had while tapping through the prototype.