



KIN+CARTA

App Review & Heuristics Evaluation

Prepared for Ulta Beauty

May 2024

Contents

Executive Summary

Heuristics Evaluation

UX Strategy

Next Steps

Appendix

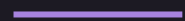
Data Accelerators

Assessment Plan

About K+C

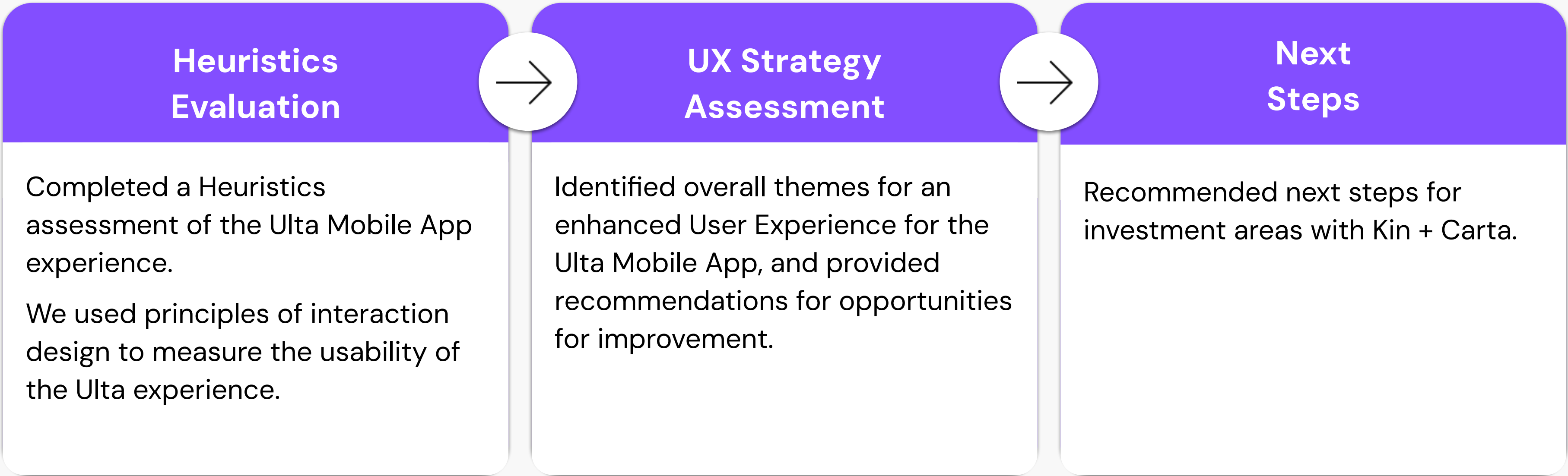
Executive Summary

Summary of Activities & Findings



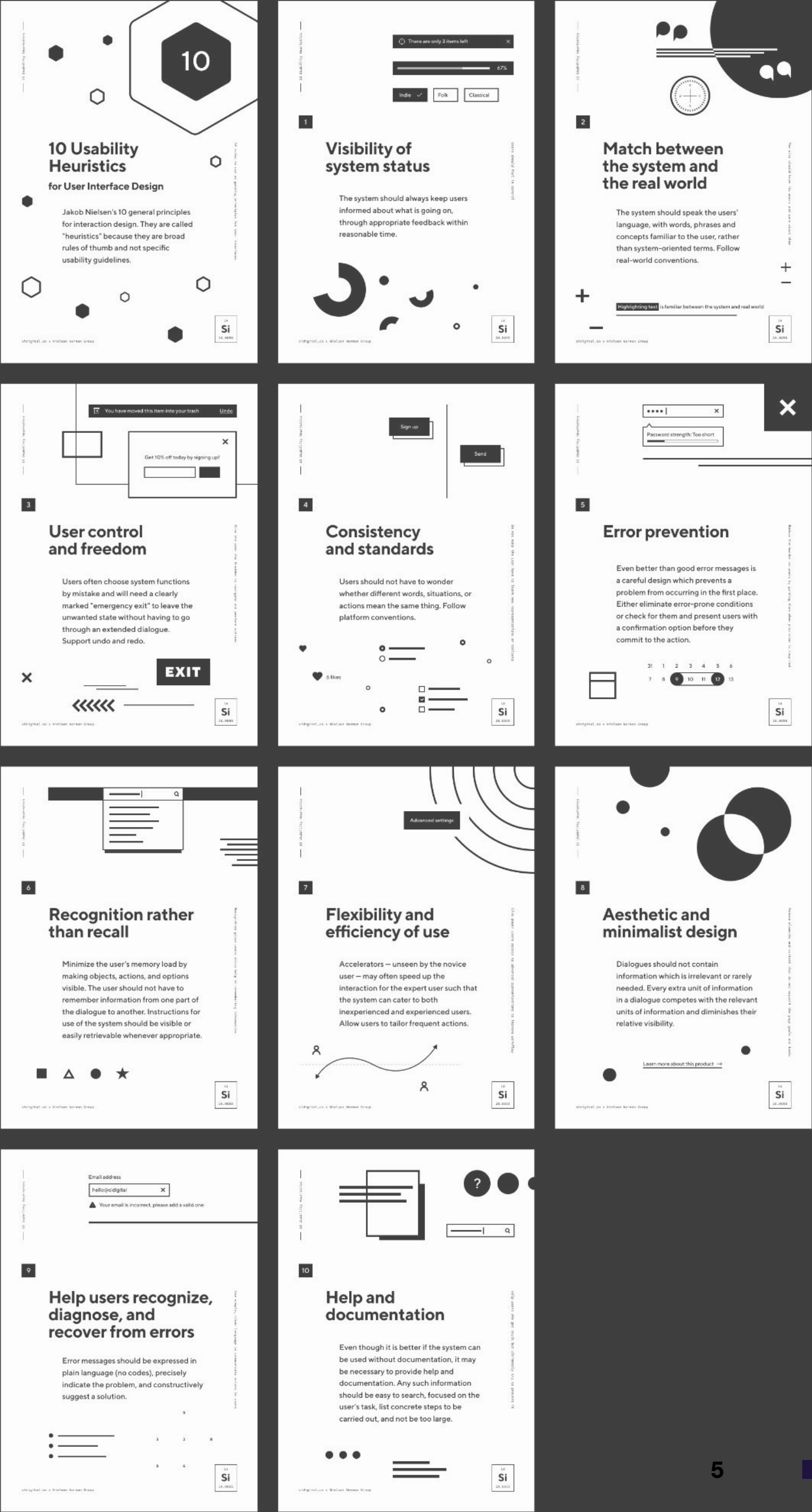
Summary of Activities

These activities were completed over the course of 4 weeks, with frequent check-ins with Ulta stakeholders each week



What is a Heuristic Evaluation?

Heuristic evaluation is a process where we use principles of interaction design to measure the usability of an interface and identify potential stumbling blocks and opportunities for improvement in key user flows.



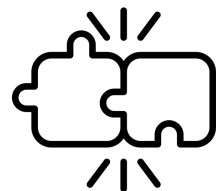
Nielsen’s 10 Usability Heuristics

While there are many lists of heuristics out there, we used [this classic set of usability guidelines](#) developed in 1994 by one of the key founders of the modern UX movement, Jakob Nielsen.

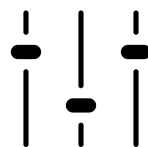
While technology has grown exponentially since this list was developed, its core truths have stood the test of time and continue to offer relevant feedback on the utility and ease of an interface.



Visibility of **system status**



Match between system and the **real world**



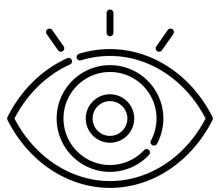
User control and **freedom**



Consistency and standards



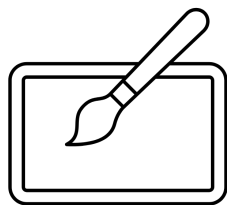
Error **prevention**



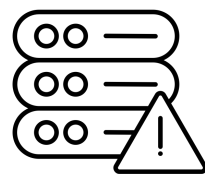
Recognition rather than recall



Flexibility and efficiency of use



Aesthetic and **minimalist design**



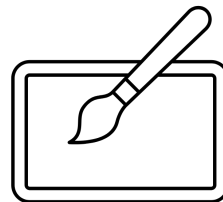
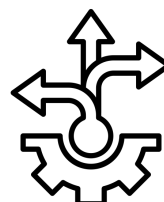
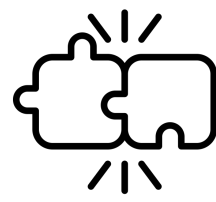
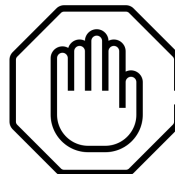
Help users recognize, diagnose and **recover from errors**



Help and documentation

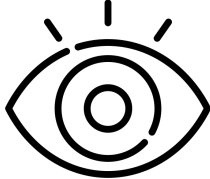
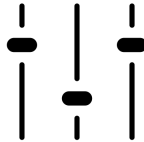
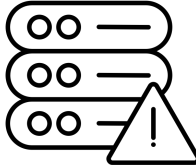


Heuristics Rating: In order by score [1 of 2]

29 – 49 Poor		49 – 69 Moderate							
	Aesthetic and minimalist design		Flexibility and efficiency of use		Match between system and the real world		Consistency and standards		Error prevention
46%		51%		58%		58%		60%	
There is an inconsistent pattern for common elements, with a complex, content heavy entry screen (homepage).		The app does not give users the ability to identify their needs nor tailor it for a more personalized experience.		While the homepage provides the user with lots of information, it is complex, with no clear direction on where the user should focus their attention.		The app uses recognizable navigation patterns; however, each landing page has a different view, layout and style.		While errors are called out clearly, confirmation before destructive actions and use of appropriate keyboards could prevent more errors from occurring.	
Best in Class: Abercrombie & Fitch		SEPHORA		Lemonade		TARGET.		amazon	

Each of the ten heuristics we used were broken down into anywhere from **5–28 sub-heuristics**, and each sub-heuristic is **scored on a scale from 0–5**.

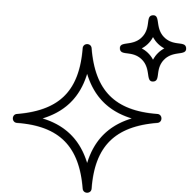
Heuristics Rating: In order by score [2 of 2]

49 – 69 Moderate			69 – 89 Good	
 Recognition rather than recall 60% While the system allows for easy editing, there is not a focus on building personalization or encouraging users down a more tailored shopping experience.	 Visibility of system status 63% While the app keeps users informed, success messages, errors and directions of what's next do not have a consistent appearance and placement.	 Help and documentation 68% Help is accessible, but users have to actively seek it out when needed.	 User control and freedom 70% Users have full access to search whenever they need it, but there is an opportunity to use enhanced search options, such as by using photos of their products.	 Help users recognize, diagnose & recover from errors 70% Error messages in forms are efficiently expressed, but error prevention should be considered.
Best in Class: SEPHORA			amazon	IKEA
			TARGET.	TARGET.

Key Experience Opportunities

The heuristics helped us identify key opportunities that would increase usability and overall customer experience.

We also saw value in identifying overall themes of opportunity areas for the Ulta Mobile App.



Elevated Branding & UX Principles

Ulta’s app branding should be considered to reflect the prestige brands carried.

UX principles should be established as fundamental pieces of advice to ensure all team members make appropriate product decisions.



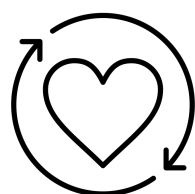
Seamless Checkout

The worst place to lose a customer is at checkout. The checkout should be an extension of the overall experience, feeling personalized, flexible and seamless.



Smoother Authentication

Users dislike remembering passwords, so by introducing simpler ways to authenticate, such as biometrics or google, it makes for a better overall experience.



Loyalty & Offers

Loyalty points and offers keep users coming back to make more purchases.

It’s important to provide readily available benefits to your customers so they want to purchase from Ulta, rather than the brands directly or Amazon.



Tailored Experience

Personalization makes a user feel seen, heard and special.

Anticipating what a user may be most interested in will create a bespoke customer experience, resulting in a more loyal and confident user.



Integration with In Store

The full customer experience doesn’t start and end with the mobile app, so it’s important to think holistically about how the mobile app can work hand in hand, or even enhance, the in-store experience.

Why invest in a better UX?

The Ulta Mobile App is the window into the entire Ulta experience, so investing in the app will enhance the brand perception.

Flexibility in the market

A user-centered design approach allows companies to **adapt more quickly to changing market conditions and user preferences**. By listening to user feedback and iterating on designs based on real-world usage, companies can stay agile and responsive in a dynamic marketplace.

Companies that **prioritize UX design are 3.6 times more likely to have a competitive advantage** in digital transformation efforts. *(PricewaterhouseCoopers)*

Retention + Loyalty

Fosters loyalty and **encourages users to return to a product or service**. It reduces churn rates and increases customer retention. User experience **shapes how users perceive a brand. A positive UX can reinforce a brand's image** as innovative, reliable, and customer-centric, while a poor UX can damage reputation and trust.

Revenue can grow by 15% to 25% from customers who engage in a loyalty program, due to increased frequency of shopping and average order value uplift *(McKinsey's 2021 report)*

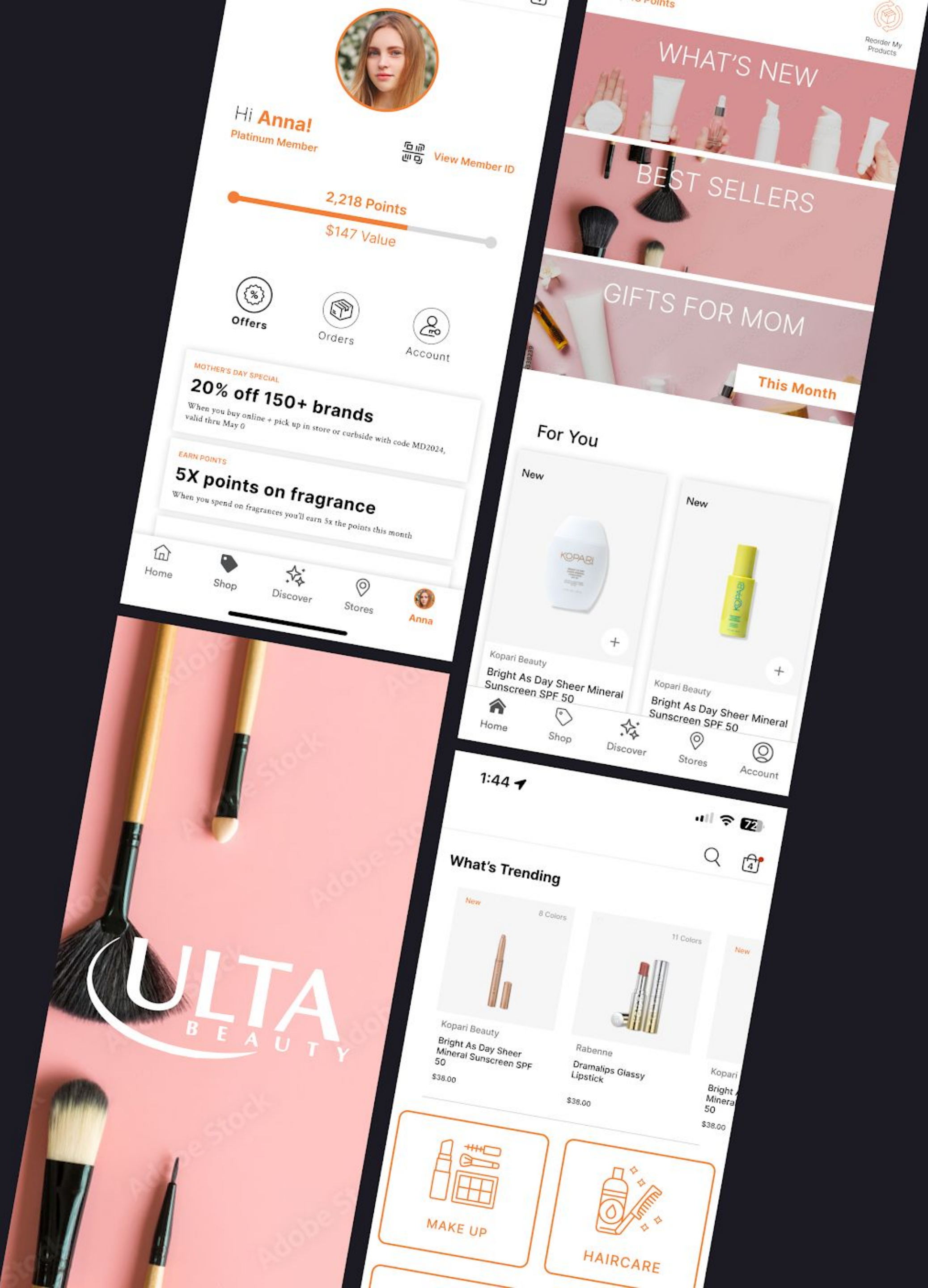
Cost savings + Net new revenue

Investing in UX research and design upfront can **save costs in the long run by reducing the need for extensive redesigns or fixes** after a product launch. By optimizing the user journey and reducing friction points, **you can increase sales without additional marketing spend**.

Using design systems experience a **33% decrease in development costs** *(Design Management Institute)*

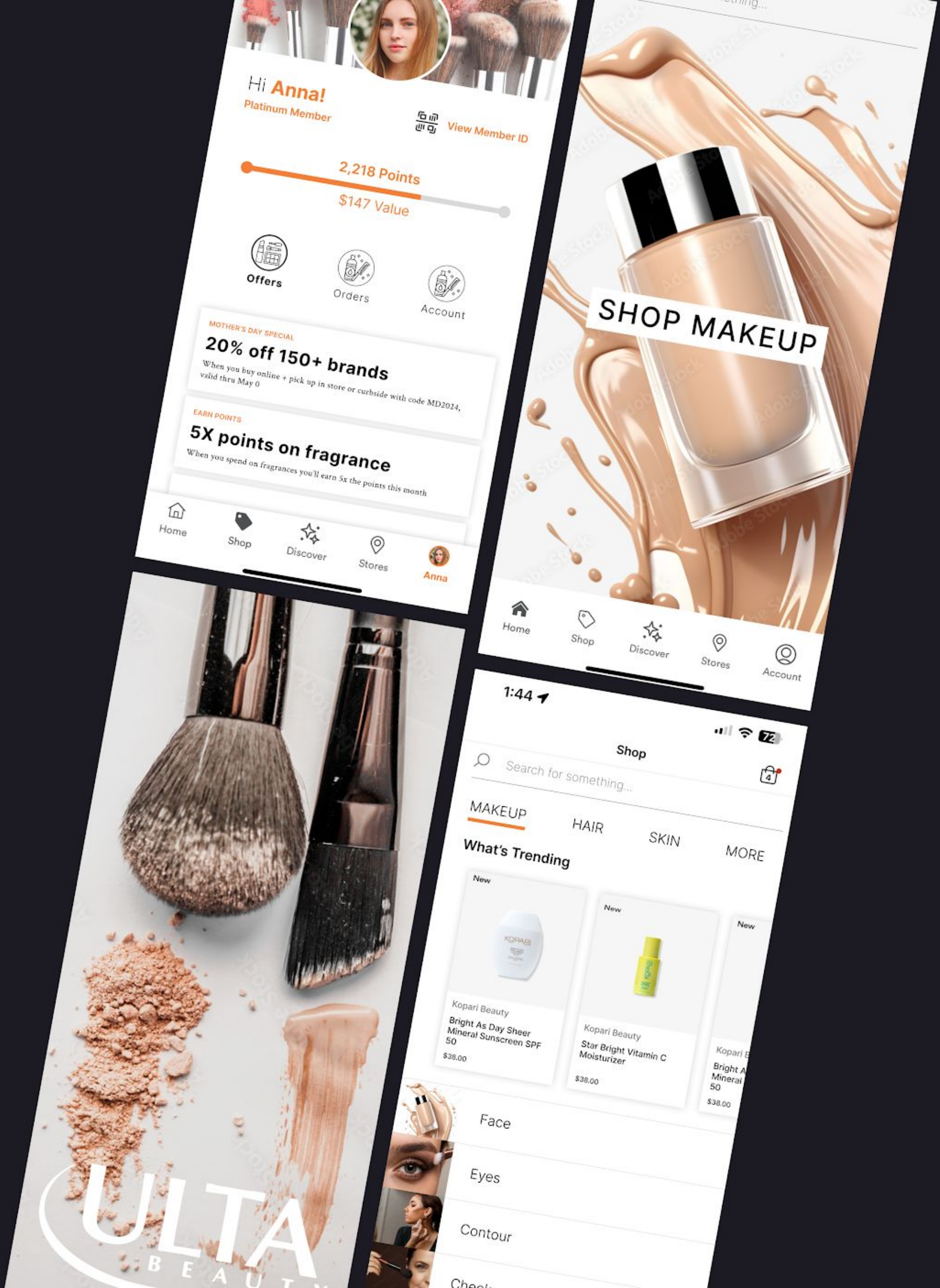
App Refresh

Visual Teaser



App Refresh

Visual Teaser



App Refresh

Killer Opportunity

Approximately only 25% of Ulta Loyalty customers use the mobile app. Bringing loyalty to the forefront of the app should increase usage significantly.

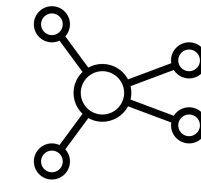
Our hypothesis is one of the biggest opportunity areas revolves around the Loyalty program

 Elevated Branding & UX Principles Ulta's app branding should be considered to reflect the prestige brands carried. UX principles should be established as fundamental pieces of advice to ensure all team members make appropriate product decisions.	 Seamless Checkout The worst place to lose a customer is at checkout. The checkout should be an extension of the overall experience, feeling personalized, flexible and seamless.
 Smoother Authentication Users dislike remembering passwords, so by introducing simpler ways to authenticate, such as biometrics or google, it makes for a better overall experience.	 Loyalty & Offers Loyalty points and offers keep users coming back to make more purchases. It's important to provide readily available benefits to your customers so they want to purchase from Ulta, rather than the brands directly or Amazon.
 Tailored Experience Personalization makes a user feel seen, heard and special. Anticipating what a user may be most interested in will create a bespoke customer experience, resulting in a more loyal and confident user.	 Integration with In Store The full customer experience doesn't start and end with the mobile app, so it's important to think holistically about how the mobile app can work hand in hand, or even enhance, the in-store experience.

- By bringing loyalty to the forefront of the mobile experience, it can be extremely effective in building customer retention.
- A 'MyUlta' with a mobile wallet and quick access to loyalty, orders, stores, etc.
- By enhancing the loyalty program, Ulta can gather valuable data that can then be used to personalize marketing efforts to individuals and create a uniquely direct relationship with their customers.
- Personalization can come into play by offering additional points for repeat purchases or by suggestions on restocking previously purchased items.

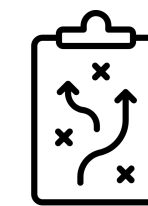
What's Next?

Various opportunity areas have been shared, so where should Ulta get started:



Executive Deck Sharing

- This executive summary deck is intended to be shared and discussed with the Ulta leadership team to obtain UX investment opportunities



Strategy Engagement

- Validation of the heuristics and UX assessment with data and user research
- Clickable prototype of opportunity areas
- Prioritization and roadmapping of the collective opportunity areas

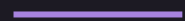


Data and Personalization

- Deeper conversation to further understand data, personalization and loyalty goals for Ulta
- Consider connecting data to better understand customers and create deeper personalization

Heuristics Evaluation

Ulta & Competitor Examples



Sub-heuristics & Scoring

Each of the ten heuristics we used were broken down into anywhere from **5–28 sub-heuristics**; these subcategories capture the details and nuance within each broader experience guideline.

After combing through key tasks in the experience, **we assigned each sub-heuristic a score based on its adherence to the guideline, taking into account frequency and severity of any violations.**

Each sub-heuristic is scored on a scale from 0–5

- 5** - Adheres to the principle
- 4** - Minimal violation
- 3** - Moderate violation
- 2** - Significant violation
- 1** - Severe violation
- 0** - Disregards the principle

Calculation for the total score of each heuristic:

- <29** - Very Poor
- 29–49** - Poor
- 49–69** - Moderate
- 69–89** - Good
- 89+** - Excellent

$(\text{points scored} / \text{possible points}) \times 100 = \%$

Example: $(53 \text{ scored} / 90 \text{ possible}) \times 100 = 58.5$, rounded to a total score of 59%

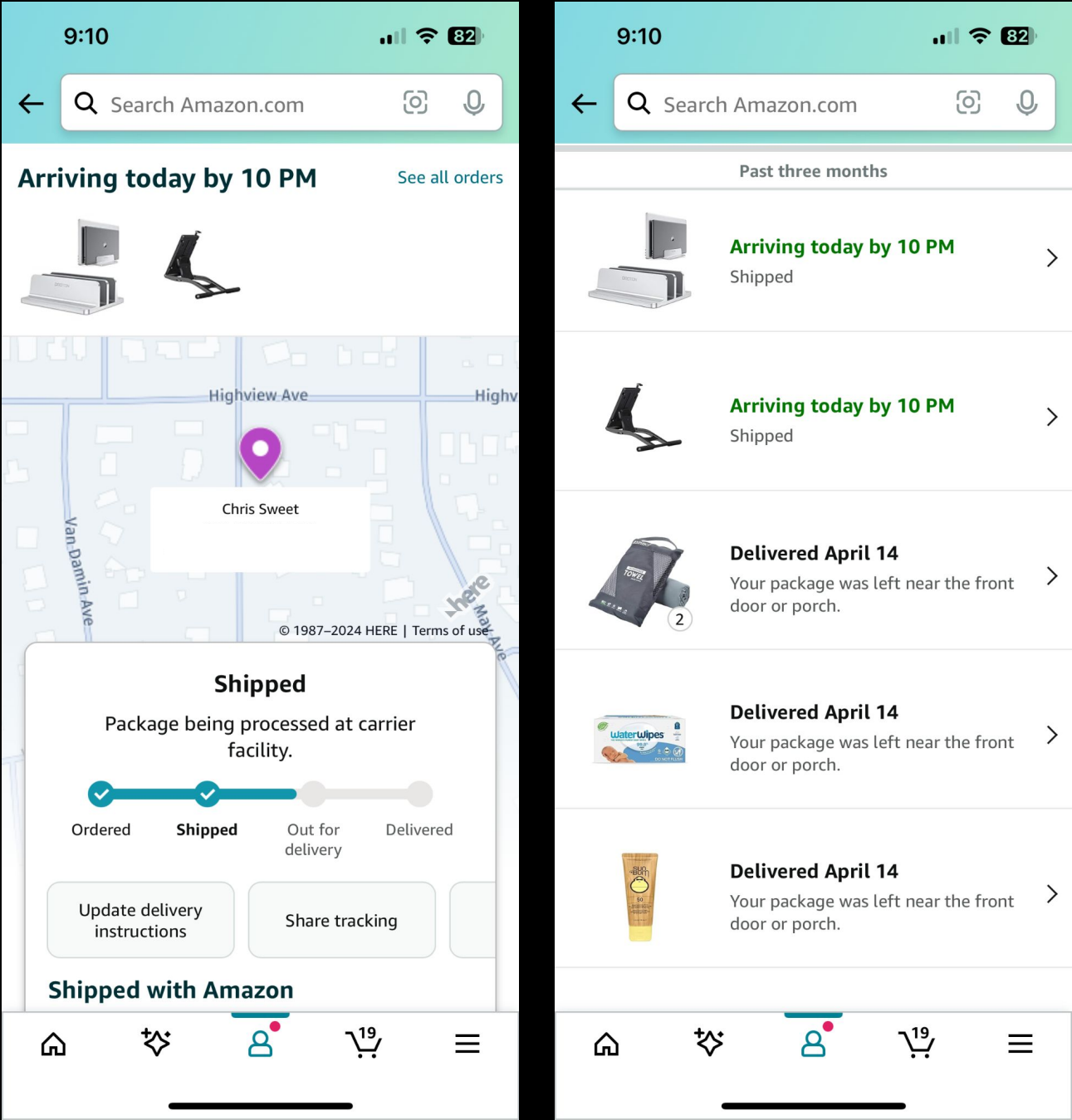


Principle #1
Visibility of system status

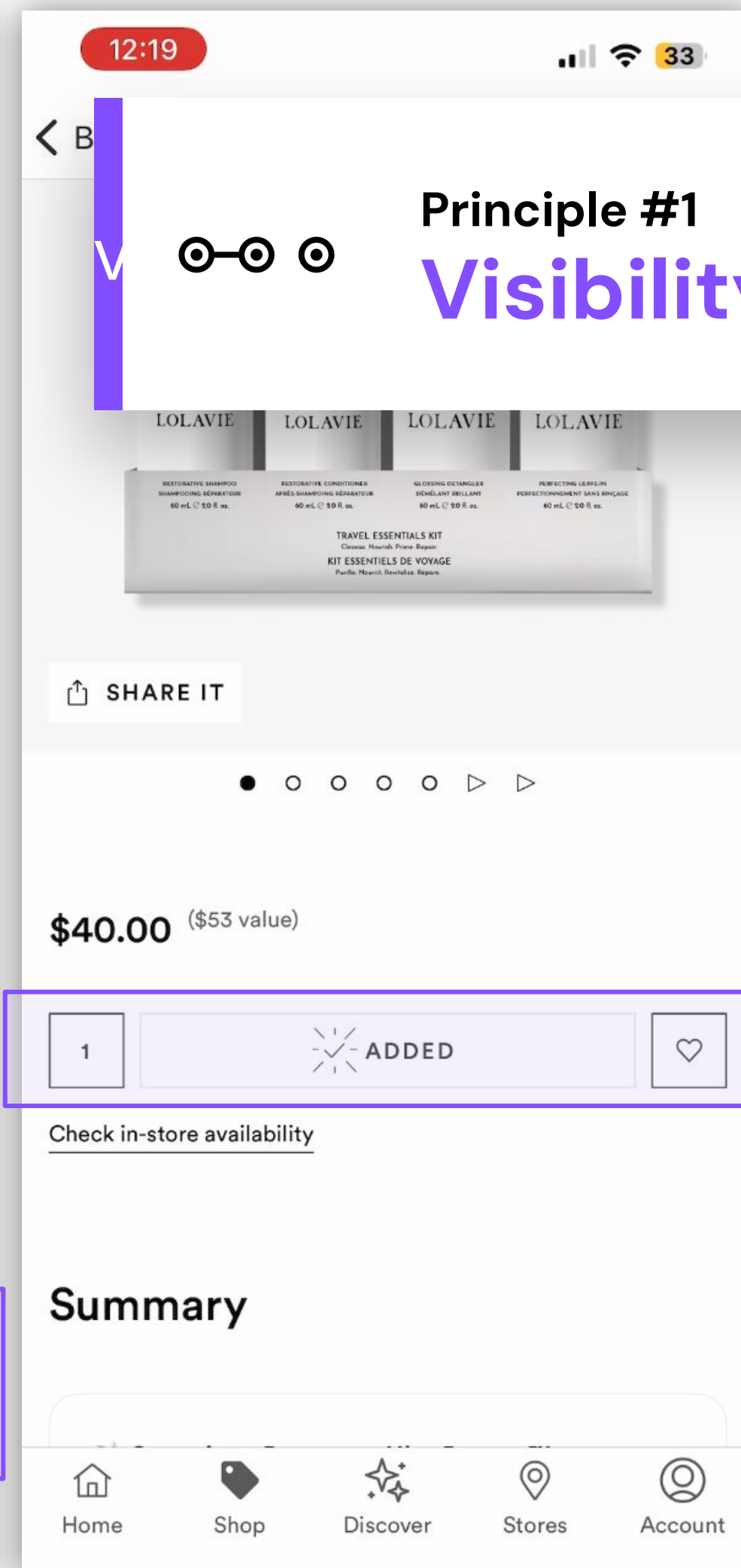
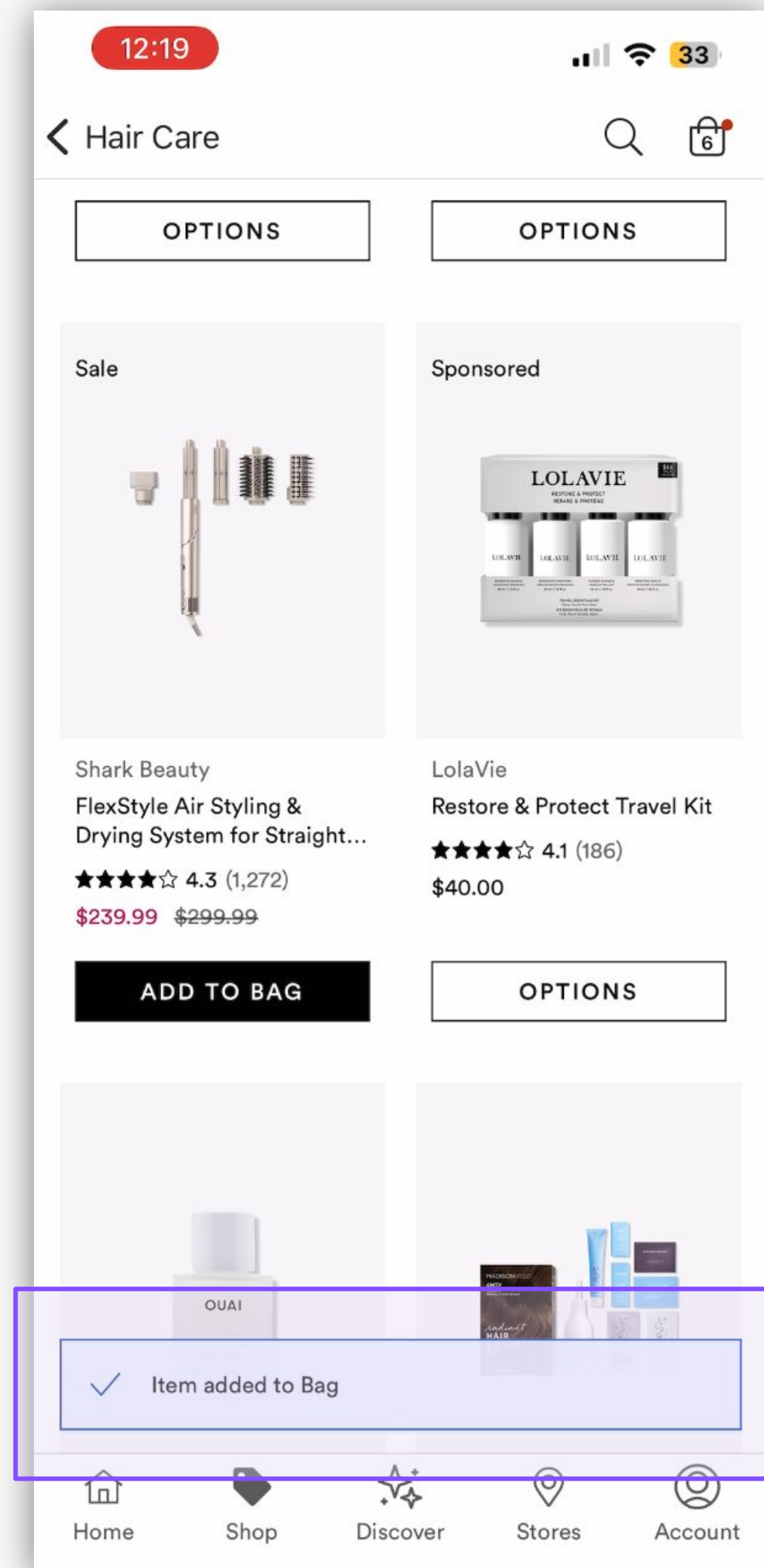
A well-designed system keeps users informed about what is going on, through appropriate feedback within a reasonable time. Status of fields, inputs, and controls don't confuse, and they have affordances for performed actions.

The visibility of system status is a basic tenet of a great user experience.

- Open and continuous communication is fundamental to all relationships and builds trust.
- Users informed about the system's current status can decide what to do next in order to accomplish their goals.
- Yet, they can figure out if their actions were effective or if they made a mistake.



Amazon:
When it comes to knowing the status of your order, Amazon is always transparent. Their open and continuous communication, even when a package is delayed, makes it a company and product that users trust and rely on.



Principle #1 Visibility of system status

25 / 40 = 63%
Moderate

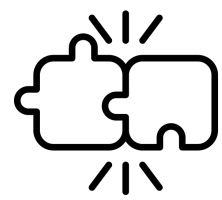


Challenges

- Inconsistent back button, sometimes 'Back', but sometimes it states where the user is going back to (i.e. Hair Care)
- Actions appear clickable, but are inconsistent (Buttons, Icon, Icon+text, Hyperlink)
- Confirmations / feedback appears, but inconsistent
- Out of Stock isn't always known at first glance and inconsistent messaging when it is (i.e. check store or email)

Opportunities

- Communication of success, errors and tasks should have a consistent appearance and placement, so users get accustomed to the feedback
- Similar to Amazon tracking or the Dominos pizza tracker, Ulta could have transparency and visibility into the Salon Booking process



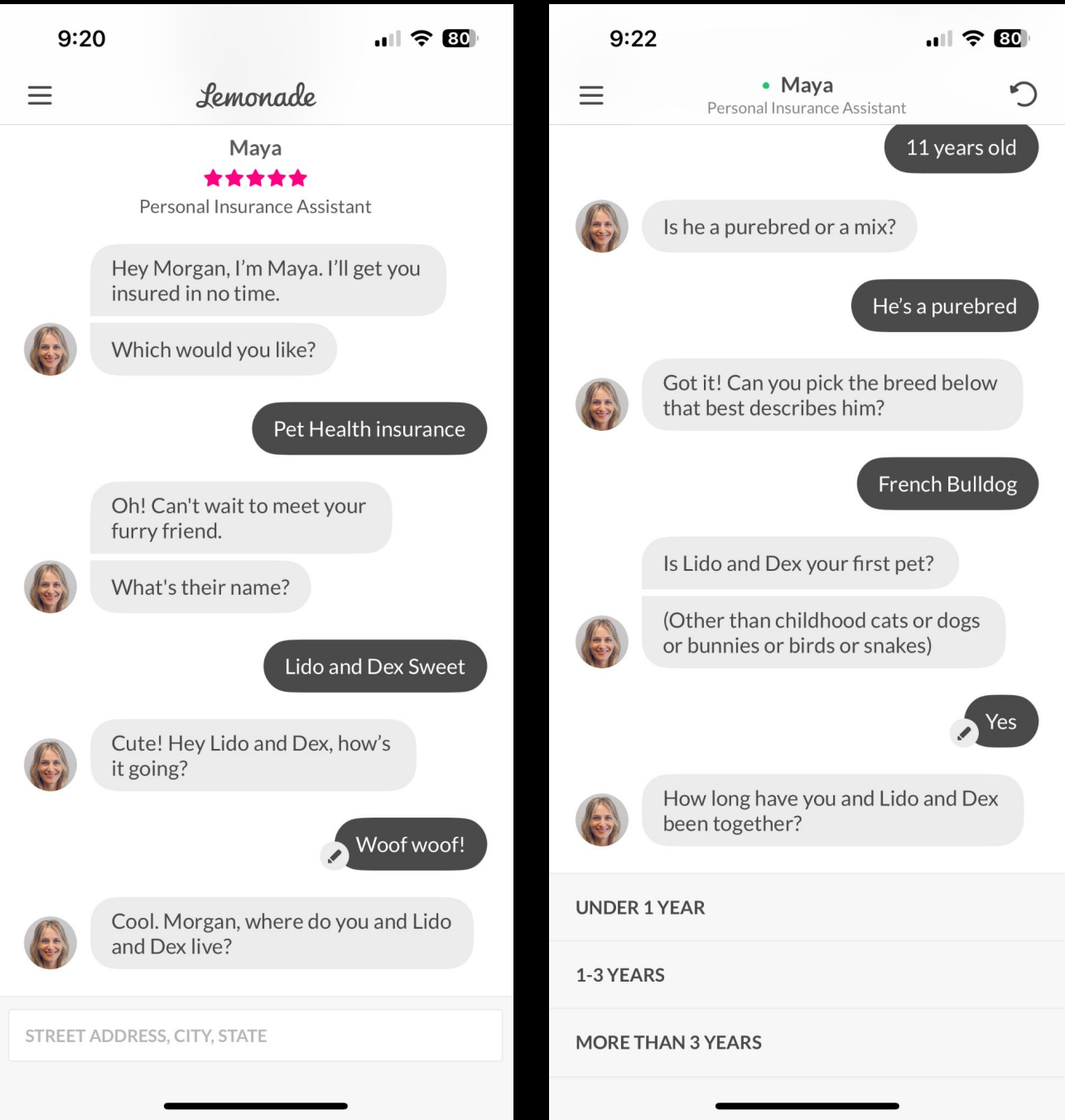
Principle #2

Match between system and the real world

The system should behave as a conscientious human. It should speak the users’ language, with words, phrases, and concepts familiar to a user, rather than system-oriented terms. It also should follow the user's expectations derived from previous real-life experience.

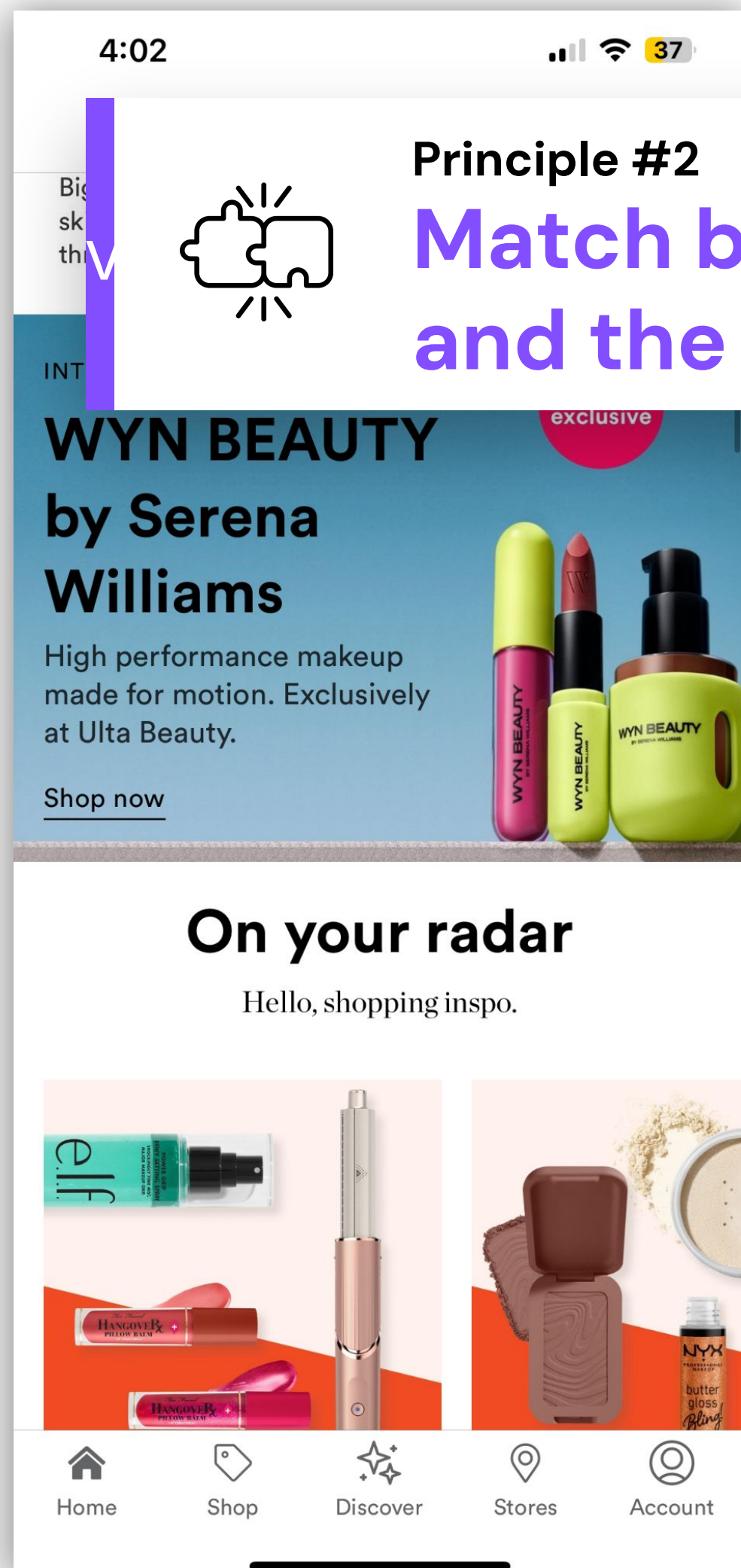
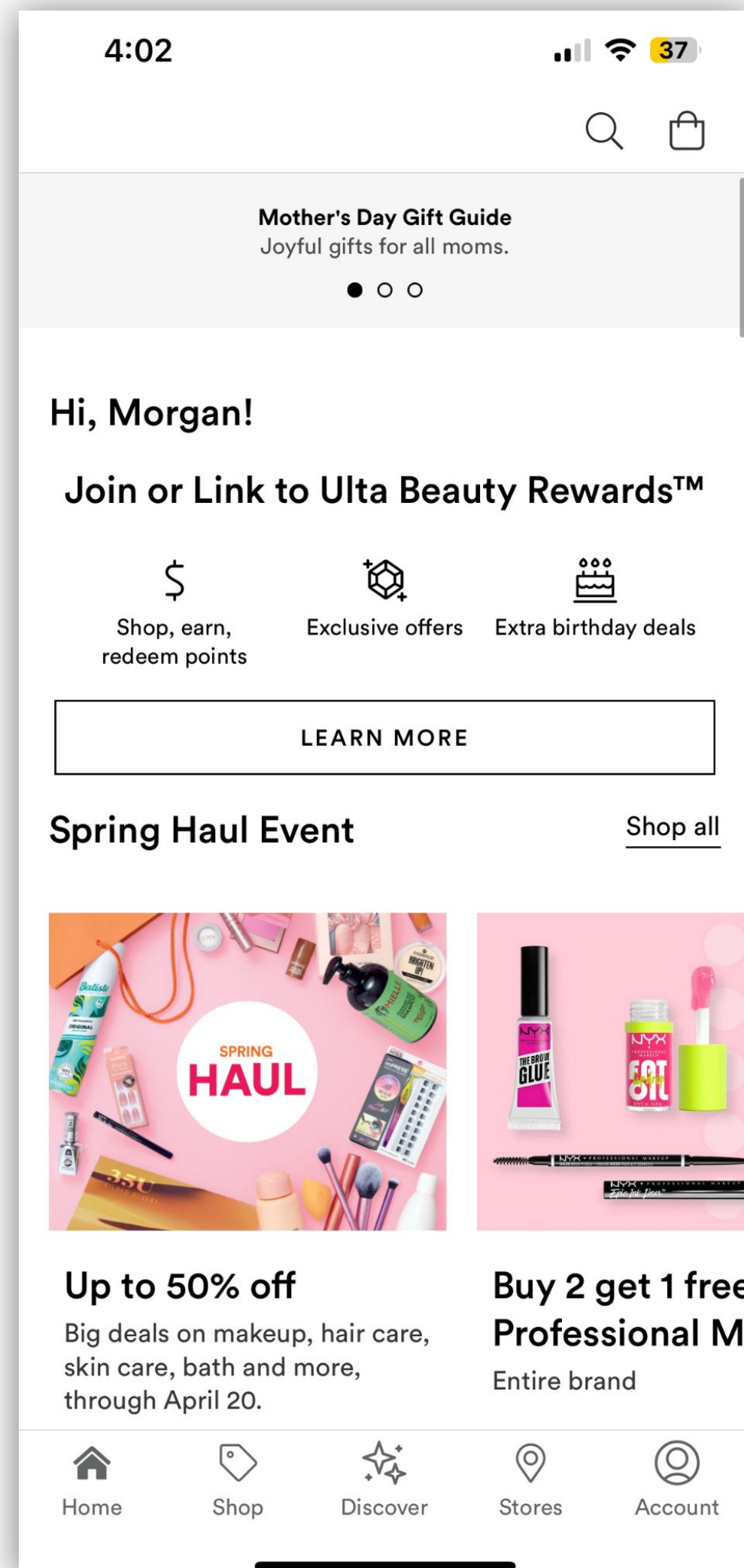
If the system behaves like the user expects it to behave, then the system is intuitive, natural, and familiar to the user. If not, they may commit errors and break their flow.

- Writing, style, and interaction design demonstrates that the system knows its users and cares about them, and it decides how a digital experience makes users feel.
- Familiarity is what makes these experiences enjoyable and accessible.

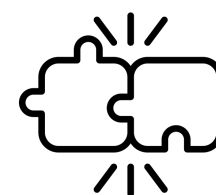


Lemonade:

Lemonade makes a not-so-fun task of signing up for insurance simple and seamless, by using natural language, simple prompts and other human like interactions.



Principle #2



Match between system and the real world

29 / 50 = 58%
Moderate

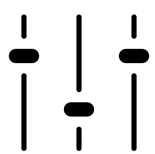


Challenges

- Homepage can be overwhelming to the user, with limited focus on what the user should be directed to
- Homepage requires significant scrolling, with little white space between content
- Bottom navigation is great to reset, but you can get pretty deep going from product to product

Opportunities

- Reduce complexity of homepage, with more clear, natural language and focus on the most important information
- Use consistent treatment for alike information so a user becomes familiar with the expected behavior



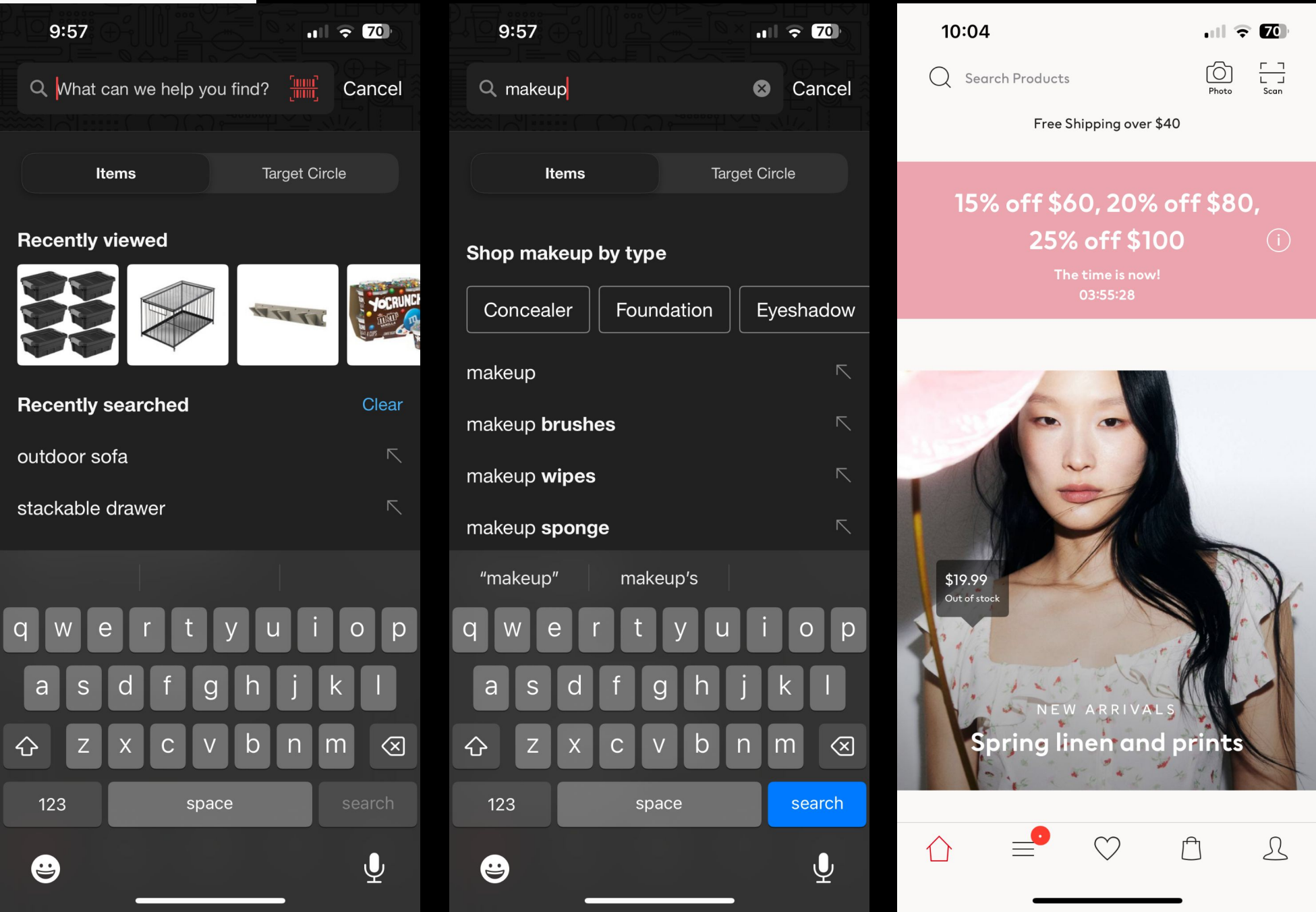
Principle #3

User control and freedom

The system provides clear messages about consequences and allows “emergency exits” in case of user mistakes and misclicking. It clearly names functions, explaining their results and consequences.

Users feel confident to “try out” unknown features if they are sure they will be able to reverse changes. Users are not stopped in their flow by wondering what should be the next step. Allowing users to recover, the system encourages self-education. Users are assisted by an attentive and forgiving system.

Search is readily available at all times so users are able to navigate and find things with ease. Search results are relevant, comprehensive, precise, and well displayed.

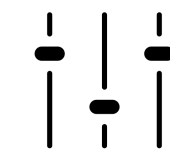
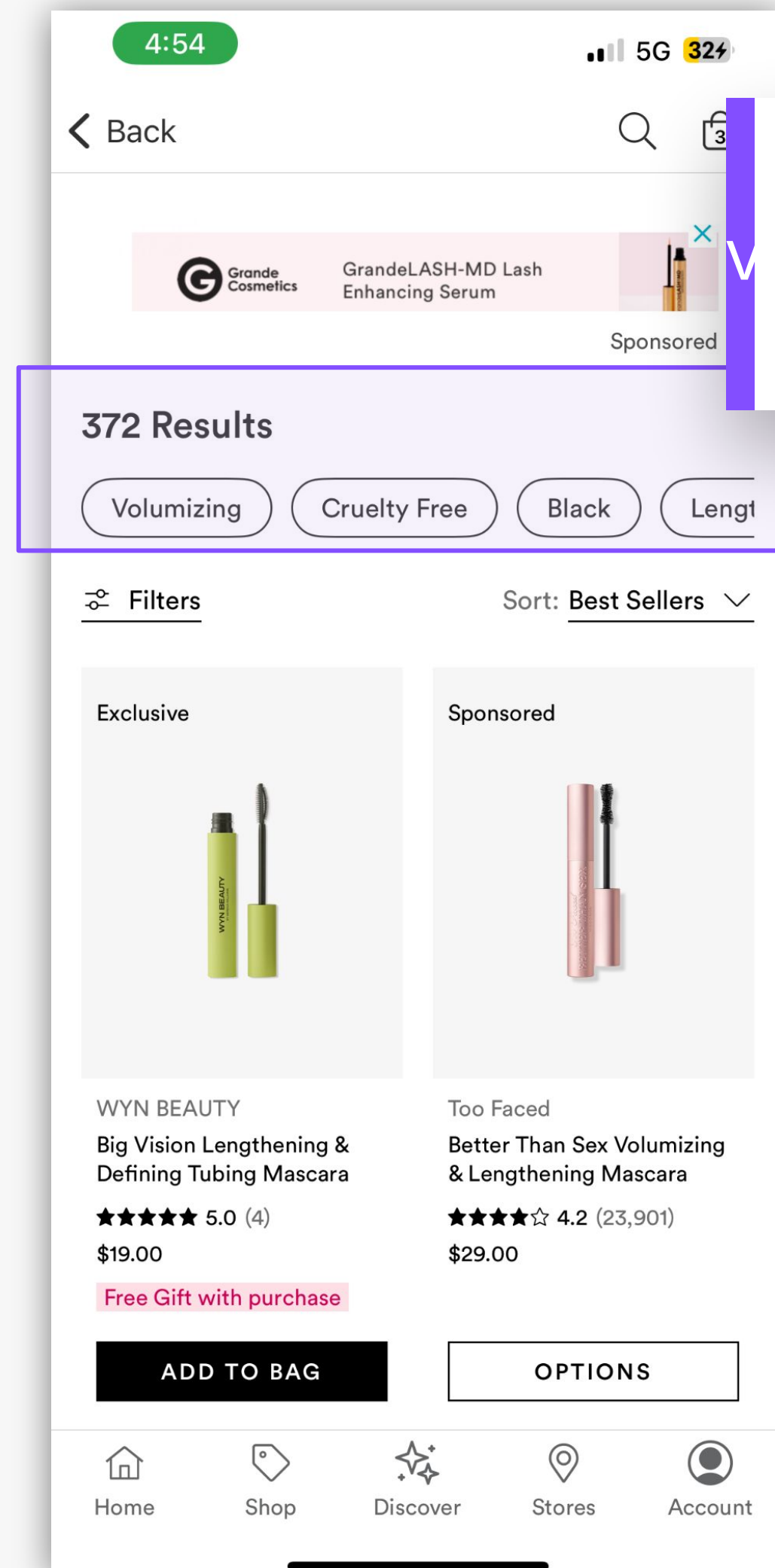


Target:

Target allows multiple ways to search with text and barcodes, while reminding users of recently viewed or searched items. Additionally, further filtering is available before search results.

H&M:

Allows visual search with product images and barcodes.



Principle #3

User control and freedom

28 / 40 = 70%
Good

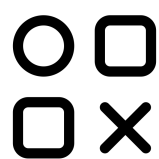


Challenges

- Search criteria is not displayed after search takes place
- Inconsistent display of current location, so users have to learn how to back out of pages
 - Bottom nav is always highlighted (good for resetting)
 - Breadcrumbs sometimes are displayed, but unclear if that's a web page, given that's more of a web pattern
- A few instances where a button says Continue, but it is actually a submission or final action

Opportunities

- Revamp search by using enhanced options, such as searching through visuals and photos of products.
- Bring consistency into how a user can navigate between pages (back vs. breadcrumb)

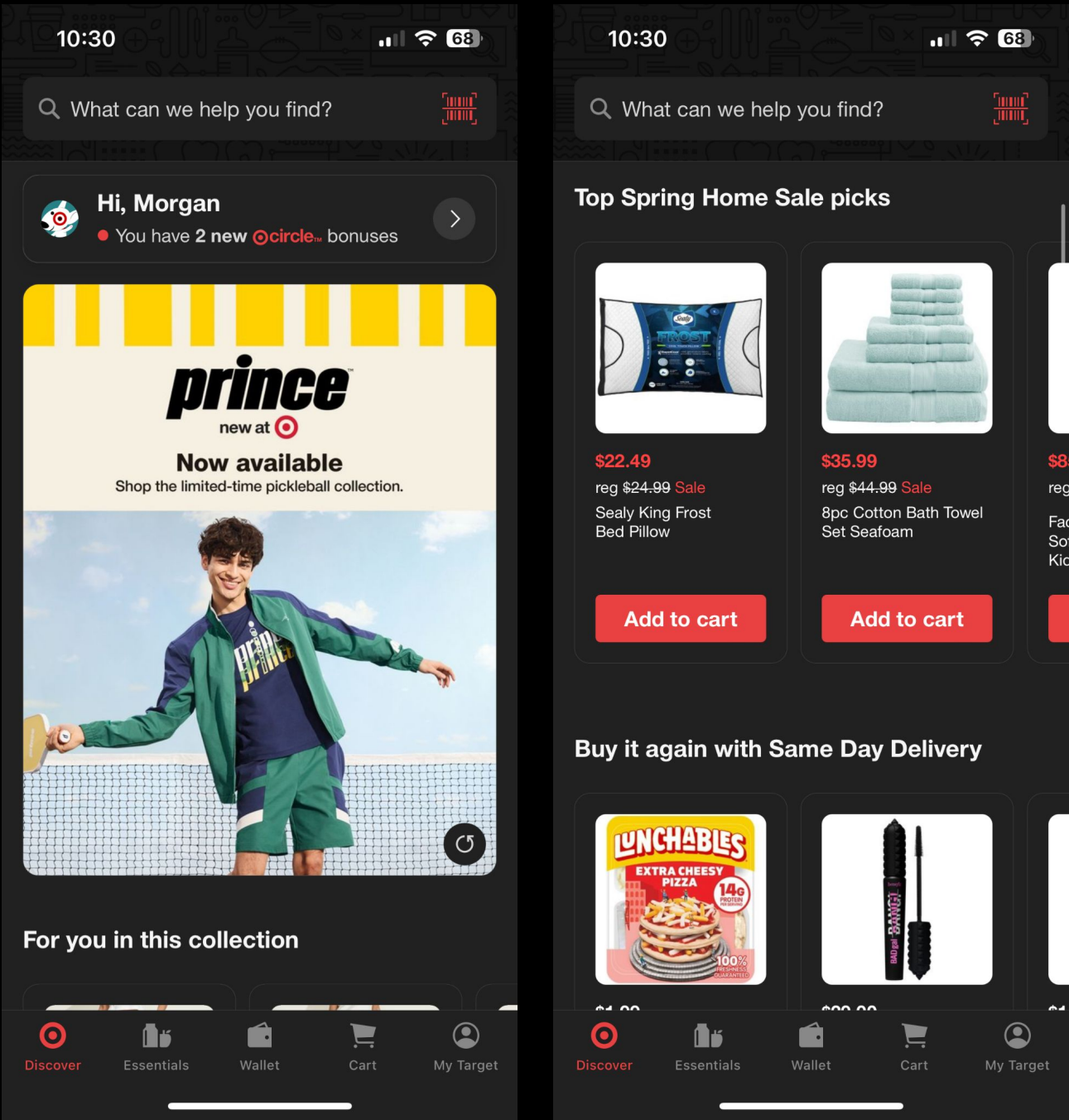


Principle #4

Consistency and standards

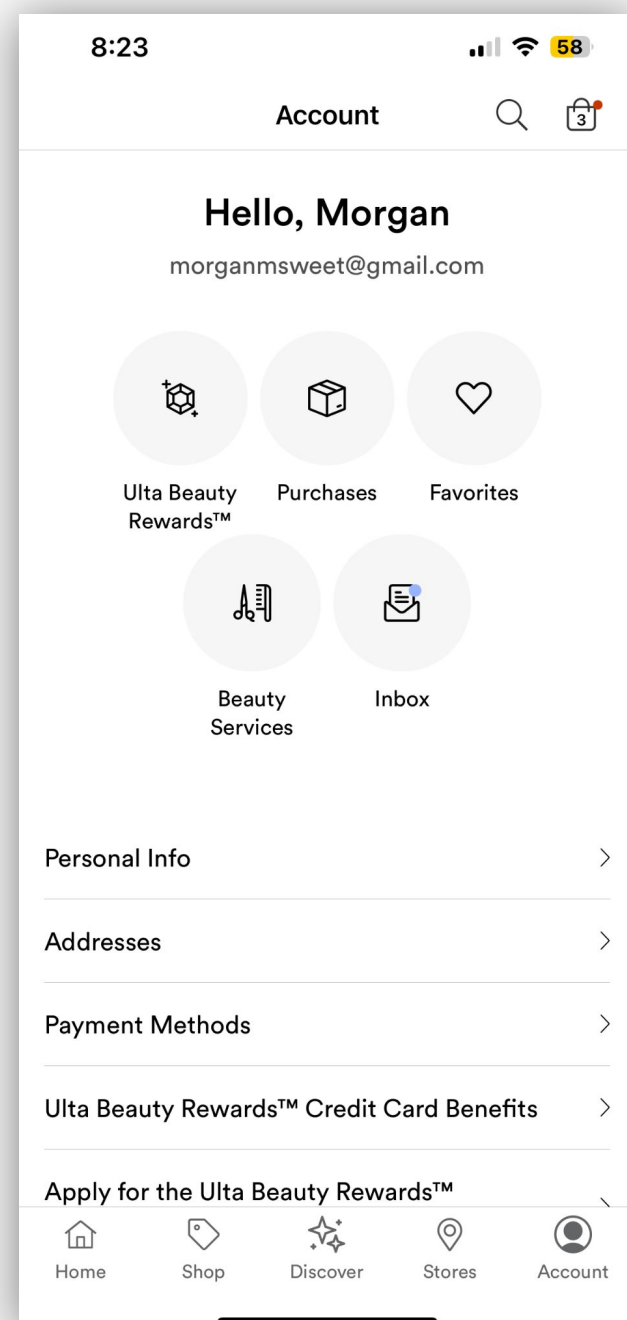
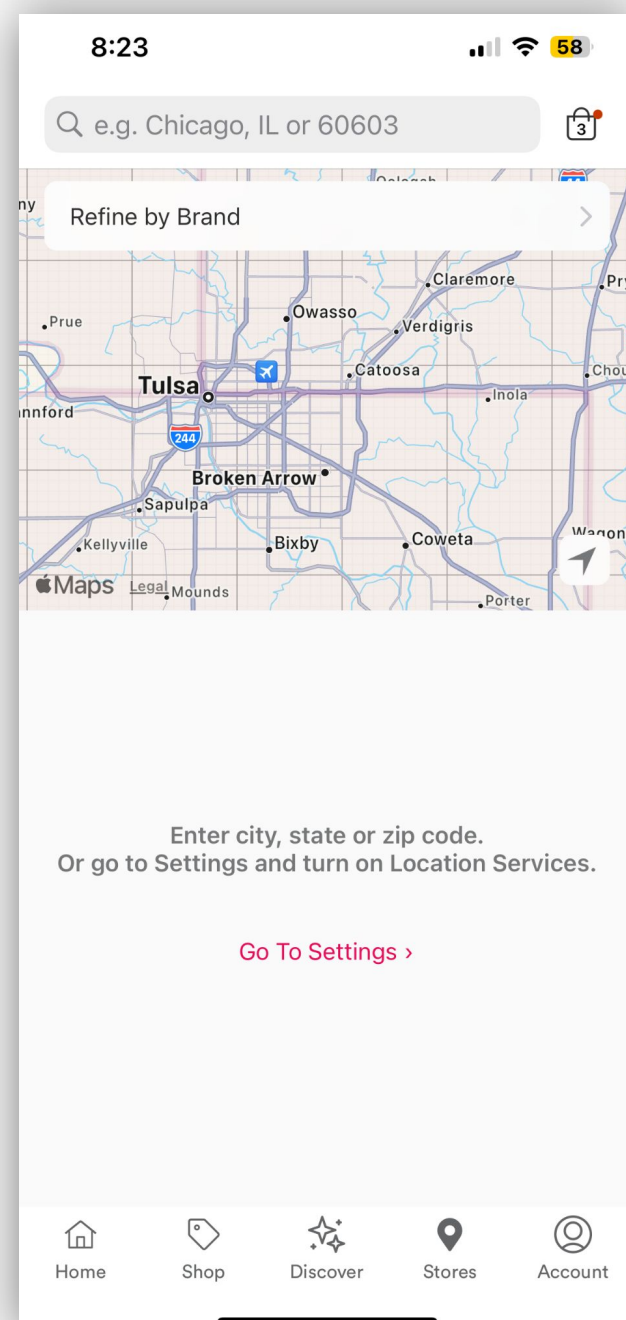
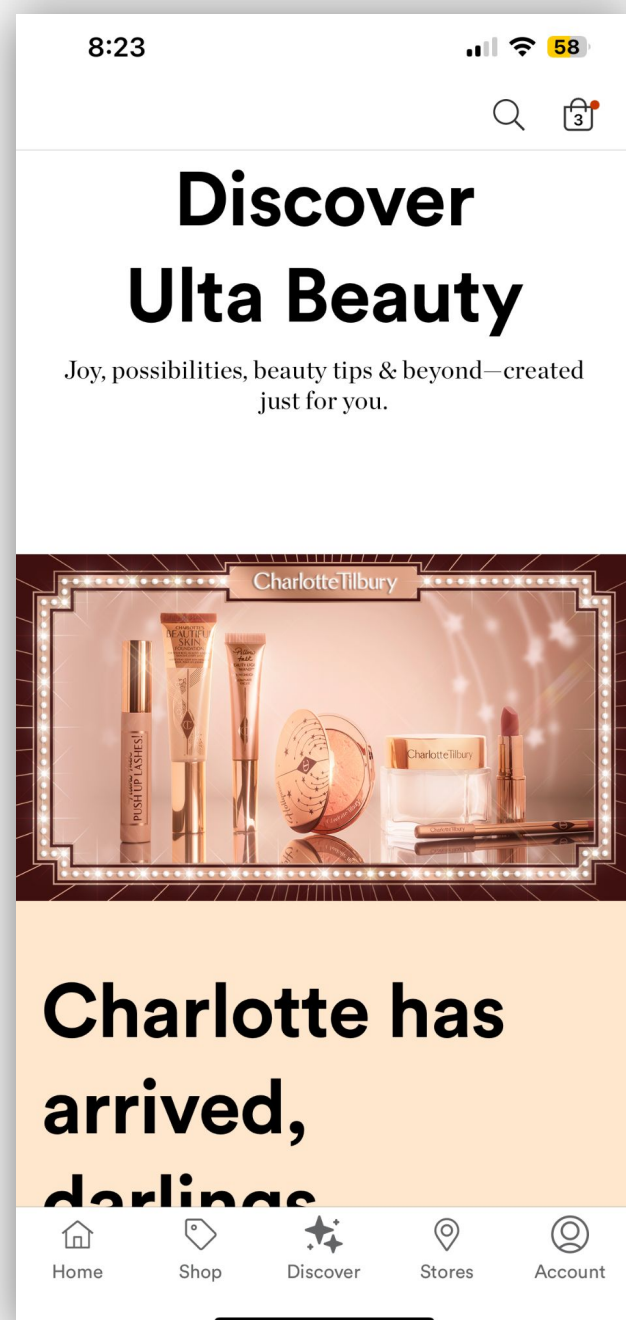
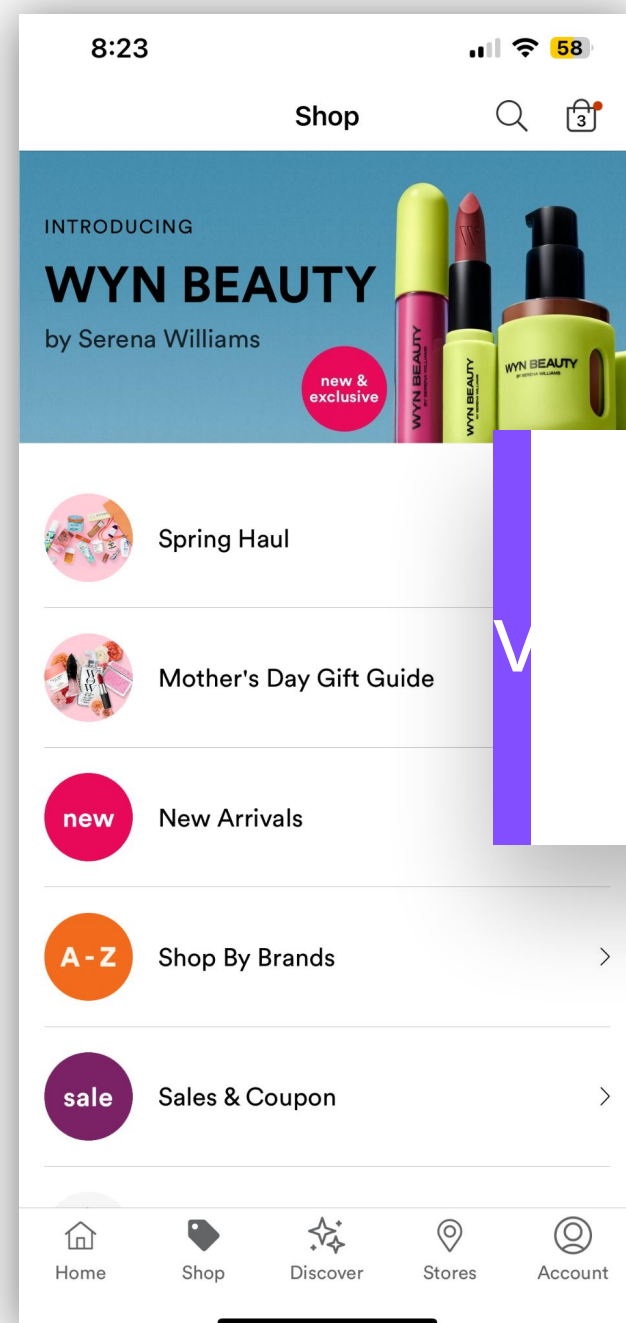
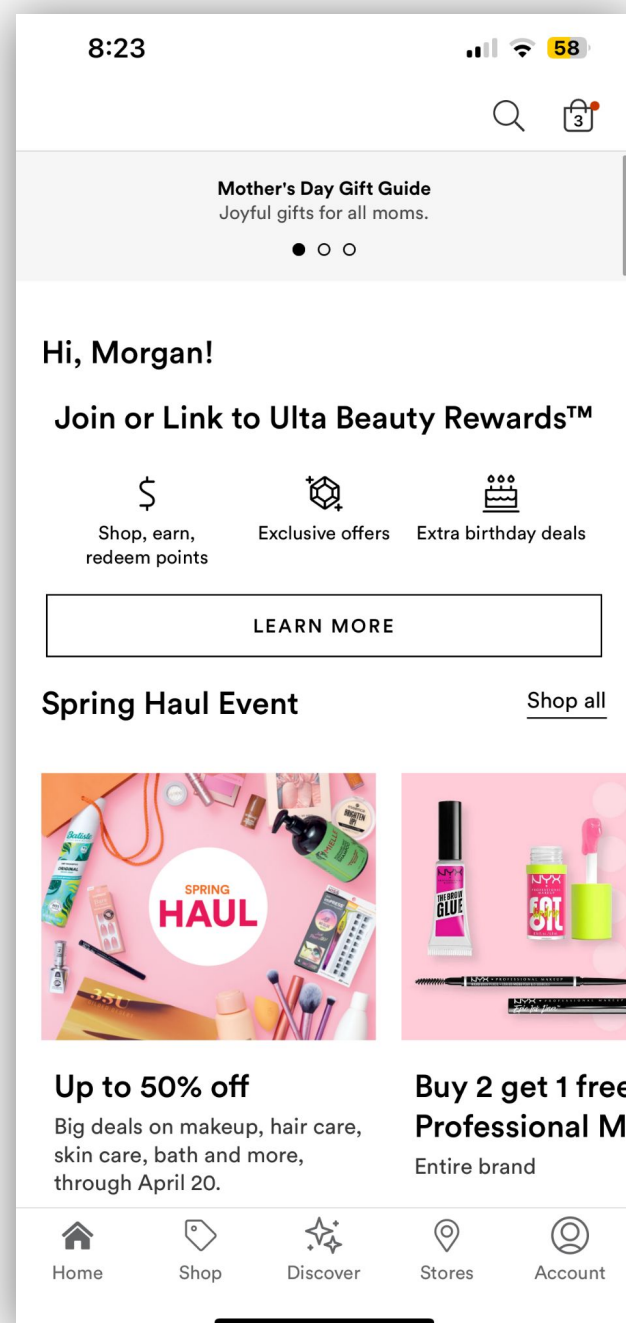
The system allows the user to learn features by placing them in the same place and providing the right affordance for possible actions, follows existing standards, so that users know what to expect and how to operate the interface. It always shows precisely where the user is in the flow and what the steps ahead and behind are. It facilitates the user flow with consistent layouts and consequent naming.

- The system is predictable and learnable; the user relies on the interface to determine which elements are actionable.
- The user's existing expectations for how things act are fulfilled.
- Every time the product forces them to learn something new, it is adding to the user's cognitive load. It should be done only if absolutely necessary.



Target:

Target has a clear and distinct pattern for ads versus products, making the homepage easy to navigate and predict what actions will be taking place.



Principle #4

Consistency and standards

$38 / 65 = 58\%$
 Moderate

Challenges

- Bottom navigation has the appropriate number of items; however, nested items for 'Shop' run pretty deep.
- Each bottom navigation landing page has a different view, with different title placements
- Inconsistent layouts, CTAs and card treatments
- Lists are introduced with text, but not consistently.
 - I.e. After going through the product selection menu, the selection isn't displayed at the top of the list. (i.e. Skincare > Suncare > Sunscreen has 'Suncare' displayed)
- Clickable patterns inconsistent (i.e. in top banner)

Opportunities

- Allow 'Offers' or 'Loyalty' to be more accessible in bottom navigation
- Create a more distinct, simple pattern to distinguish between types of content

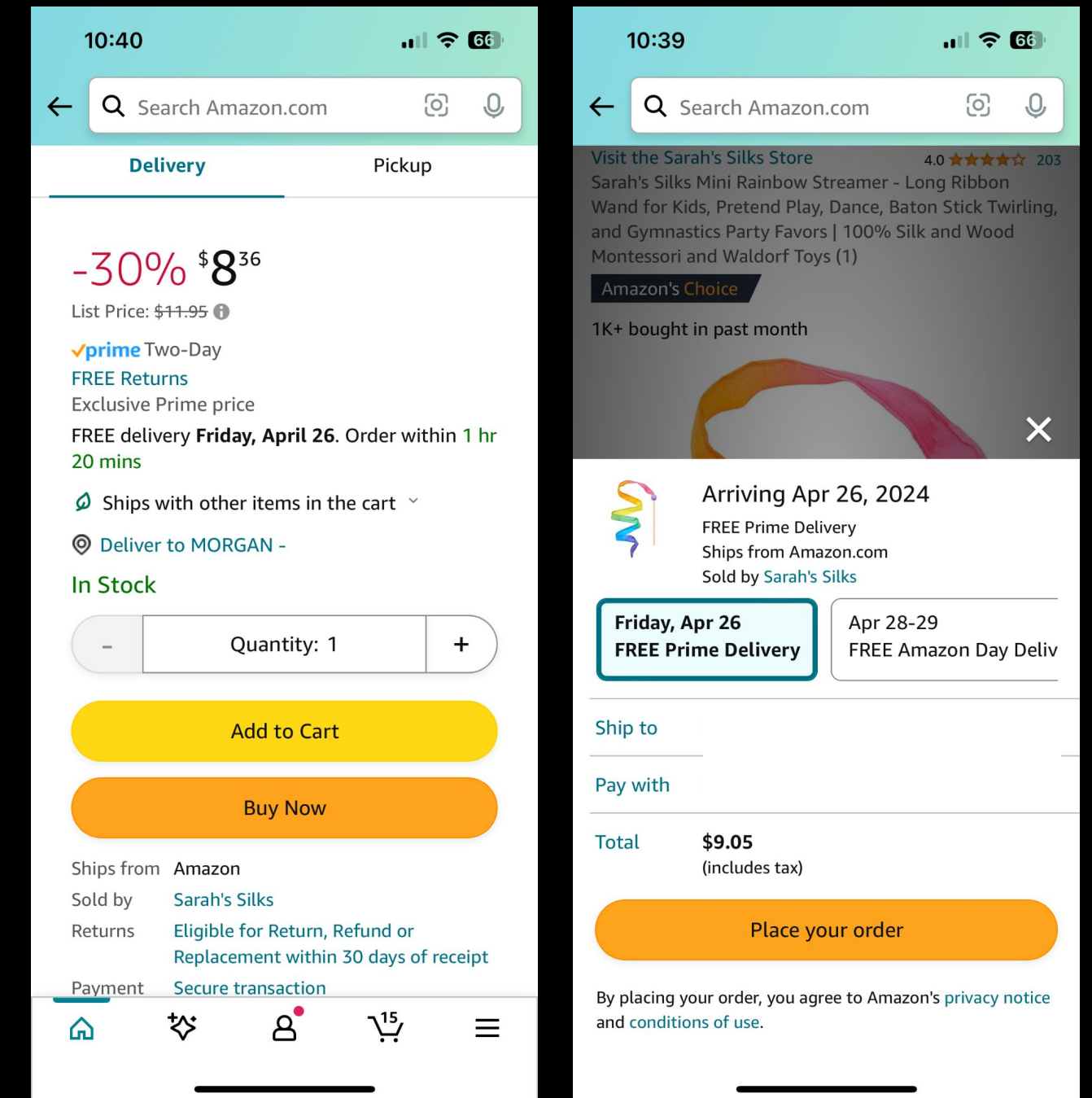


Principle #5 Error prevention

Users are often distracted from the task at hand, so the system should prevent unconscious errors by offering suggestions, utilizing constraints, and being flexible. Thoughtful design is transparent and easy to understand, provides a preview, and helps users easily correct their errors. The system's ingenuity should minimize user effort by suggesting and allowing for future changes rather than forbidding and requiring all inputs filled in at once.

There are two kinds of errors that the system should comply with:

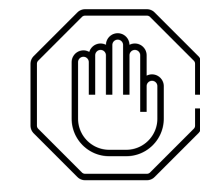
- Slips occur when users intend to perform one action, but end up doing another – often similar – action.
- Mistakes resulting generally from incomplete or incorrect information about the task, and user developing a mental model that doesn't match how the interface actually works.



Amazon:

Although Amazon has the 'Buy Now' CTA, they still provide some friction with the preview to ensure the user has the correct item, shipping and payment information.

The screenshot shows a mobile app interface for adding a new card. The form has four fields: City, State, Zip code, and Mobile number. The State field is a dropdown menu. The Zip code field contains 'Gvf' and has a red error message 'Enter a valid postal code'. The Mobile number field contains 'Ggj-jjh' and has a red error message 'Enter a valid mobile number'. A 'SAVE' button is at the bottom. A keyboard is visible at the bottom of the screen.



Principle #5 Error prevention

27 / 45 = 60%
Moderate

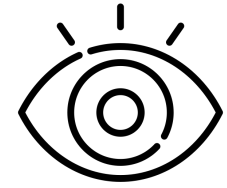


Challenges

- No confirmation before logging out of the application
- Keyboards do not reflect what is being input (i.e. alpha keyboard when it's a phone number input)
- Forms don't often distinguish between required or not required fields

Opportunities

- Create more friction with destructive actions, such as logout
- Use appropriate keyboards so the user can seamlessly enter the correction information



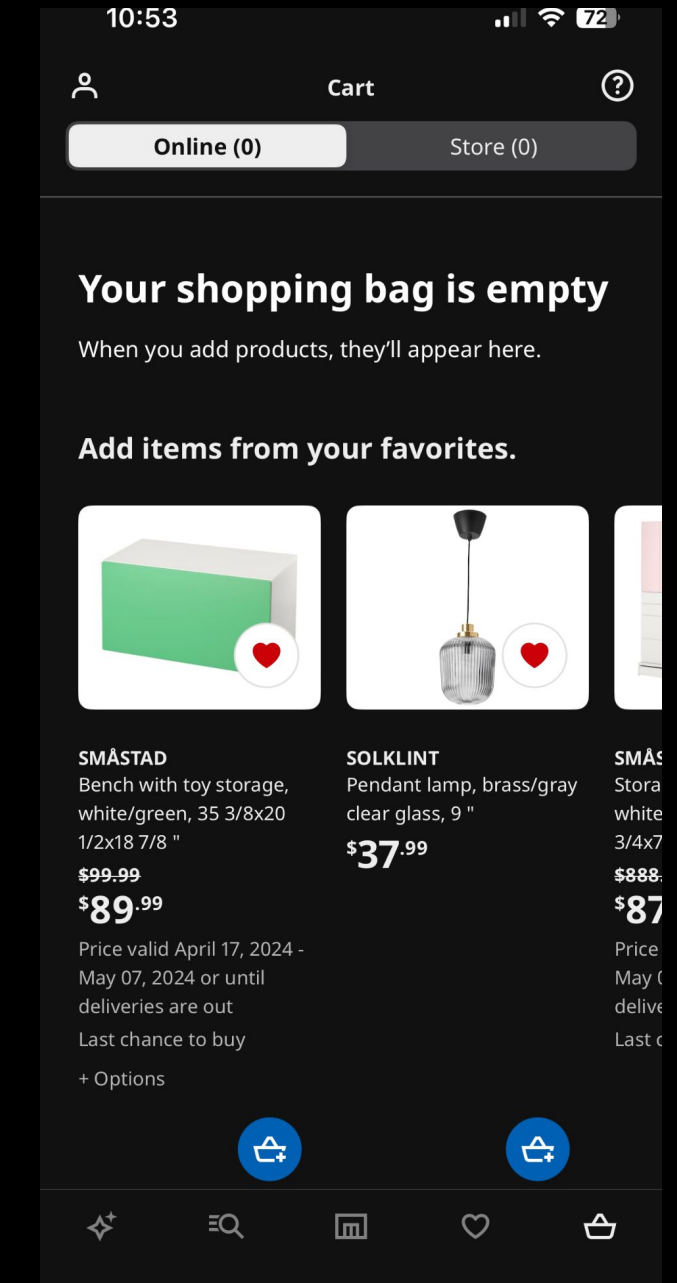
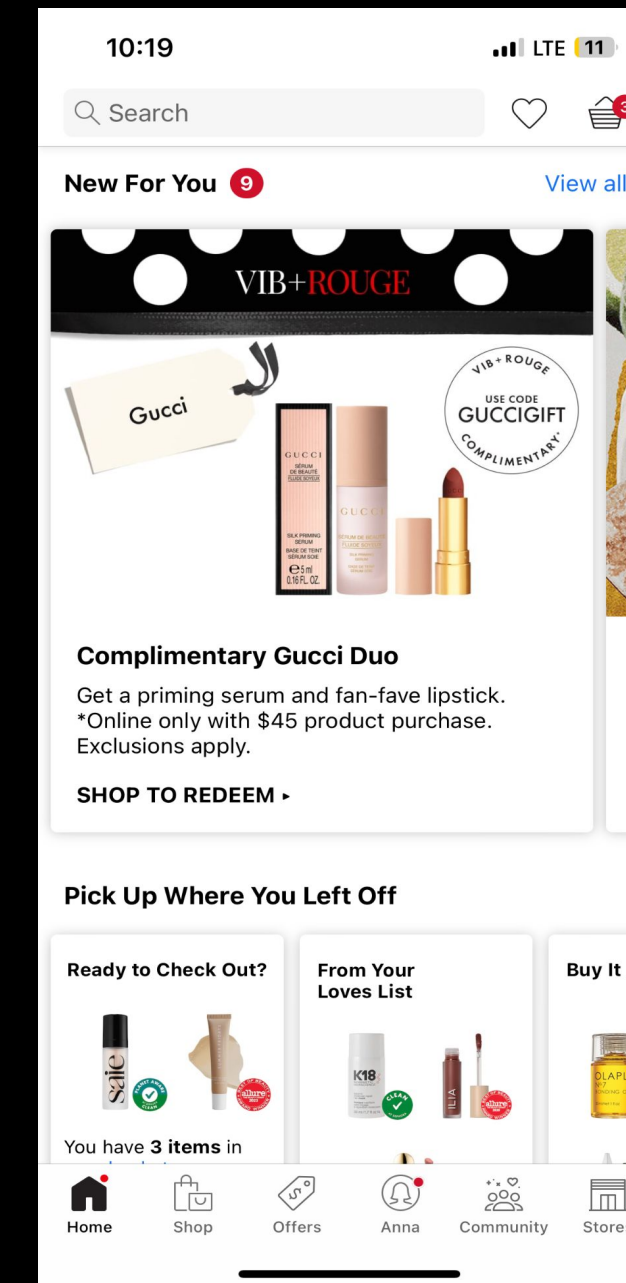
Principle #6

Recognition rather than recall

Showing users things they recognize improves usability over needing to recall items from memory. A well-designed system minimizes the user's memory load, displays information where it is meaningful, and facilitates making changes where information is displayed.

A system should remove conditions that require users to keep information in their memory, display contextual information that users need to complete a task, and make information and interface functions visible and easily accessible. It should also:

- Support user history and previously visited content.
- Suggest rather than teach users how to use a system. Use tips that are tailored to the page that the user is visiting rather than prompting users with a tutorial.
- Display information in the right context, in groups or thematic clusters.
- Allow for direct manipulation rather than remembering data, navigating to another screen, and then recalling to modify it.

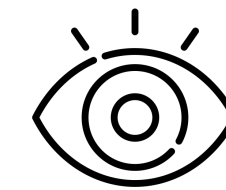
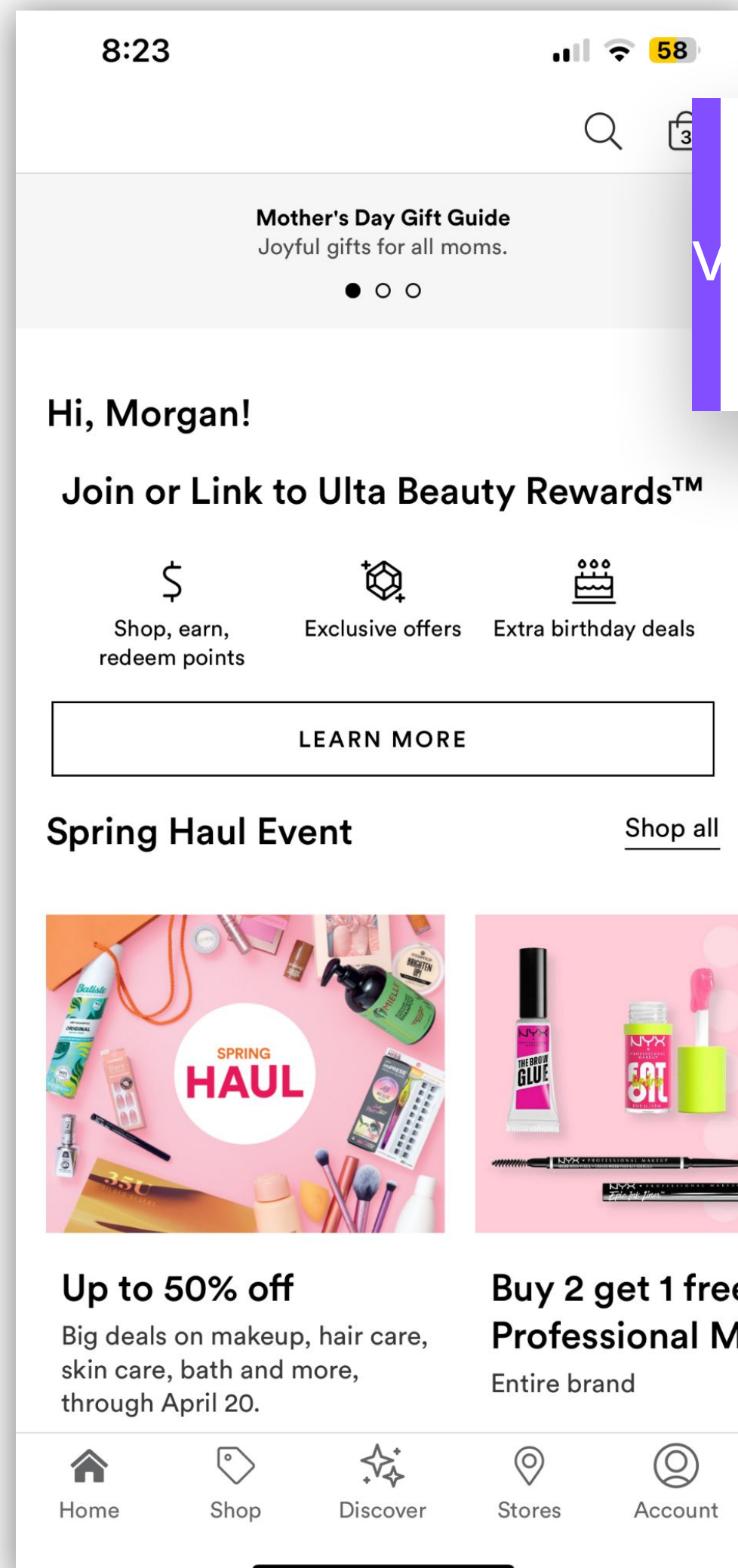


Sephora:

Sephora focuses their homepage on personalized recommendations, including news, previous shopping, frequently ordered products, etc. It ensures it is focusing on supporting the user in continued engagement.

Ikea:

Ikea displays recently viewed or favorited items in cart when cart is empty.



Principle #6

Recognition rather than recall

18 / 30 = 60%
Moderate

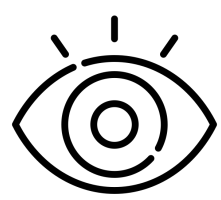


Challenges

- Limited white space on the homepage, which prevents the eye from being lead down a particular path
- It appears the homepage does not provide recommendations based on a user's past views
- Inconsistent headings are used between zones and groupings of content

Opportunities

- Focus on building personalization and encourage user to create an account and provide their data to allow for a more tailored shopping experience
- On cart, display recently viewed or favorited items to easily be added



Principle #7

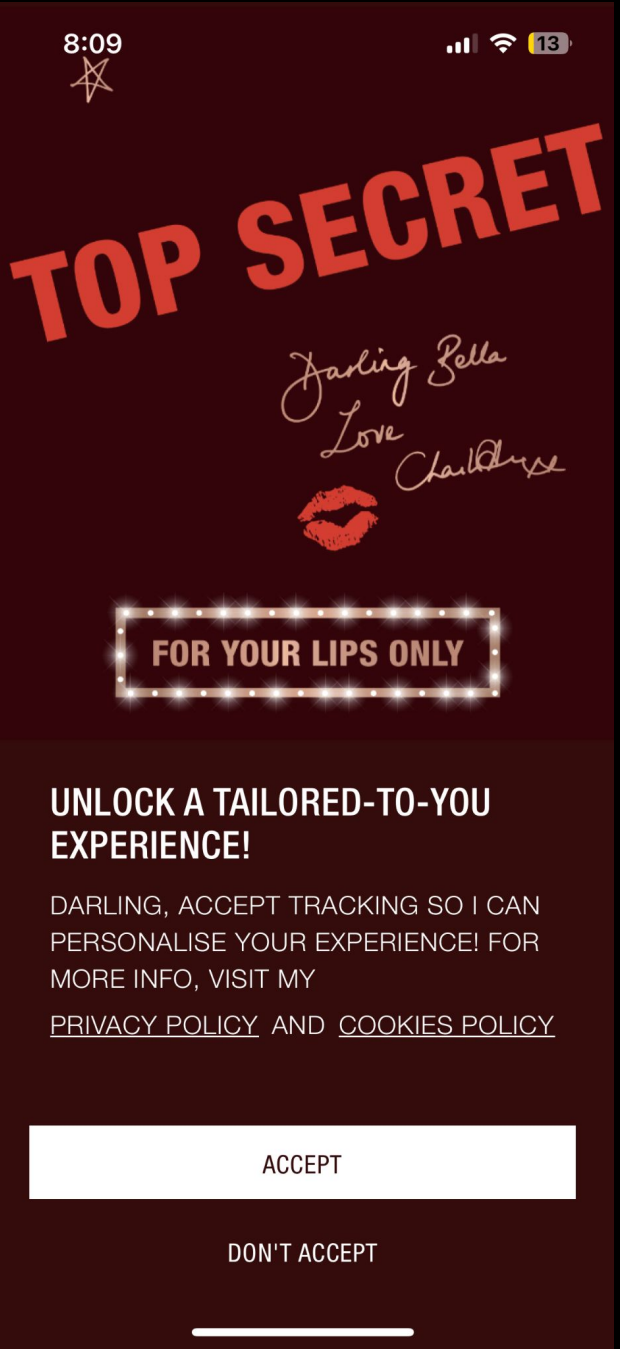
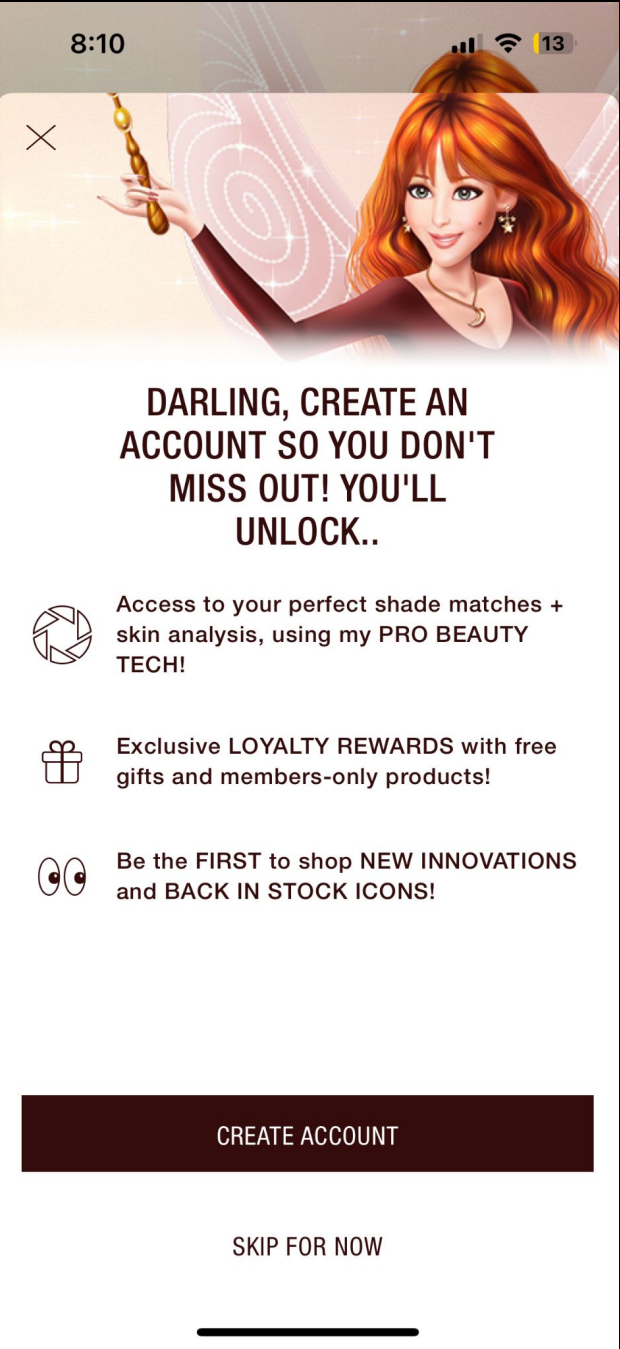
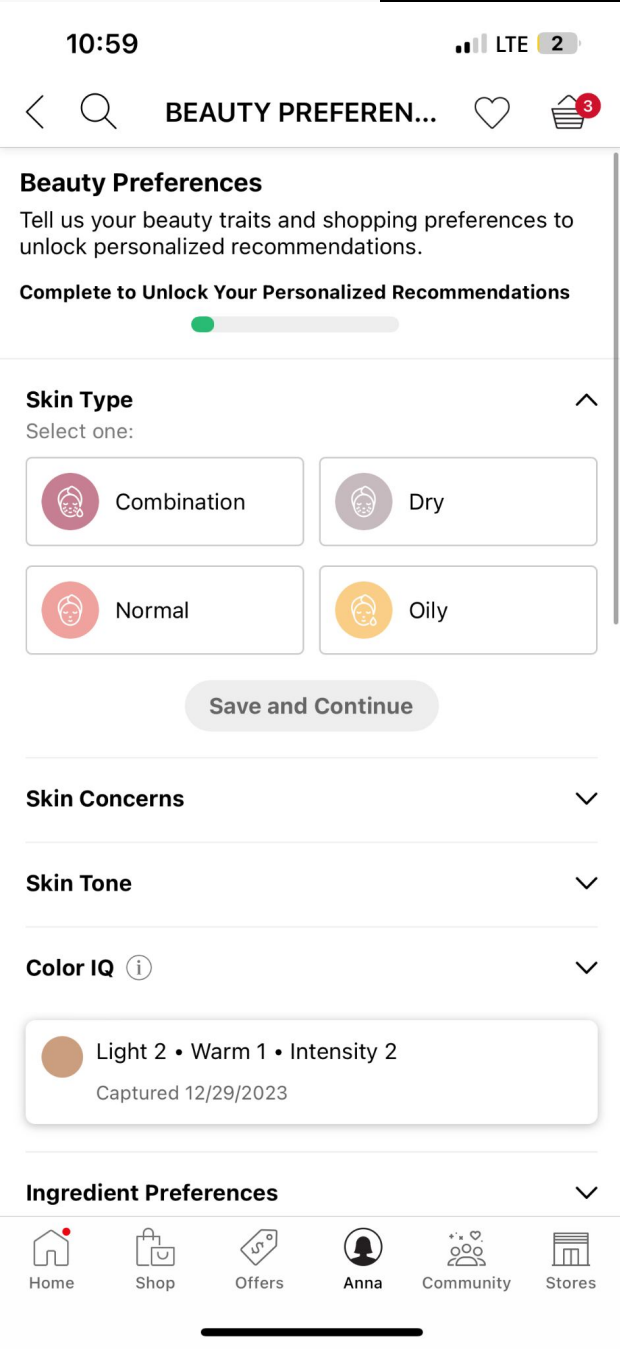
Flexibility and efficiency of use

The system is designed for beginners, supports perpetual intermediates, and appreciates pro users. Its focus is to hasten user flows and successful task completion. It supports learning rather than admonishing, hides advanced features from the beginner, and allows for shortcuts for professionals. It prioritizes probable features rather than all possible features.

Furthermore, it provides information gradually, facilitates discovering and logic linkage, and doesn't overwhelm newbies with information, abbreviations and various controls.

A flexible and efficient system will:

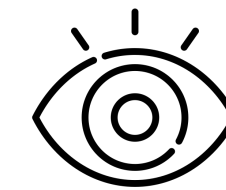
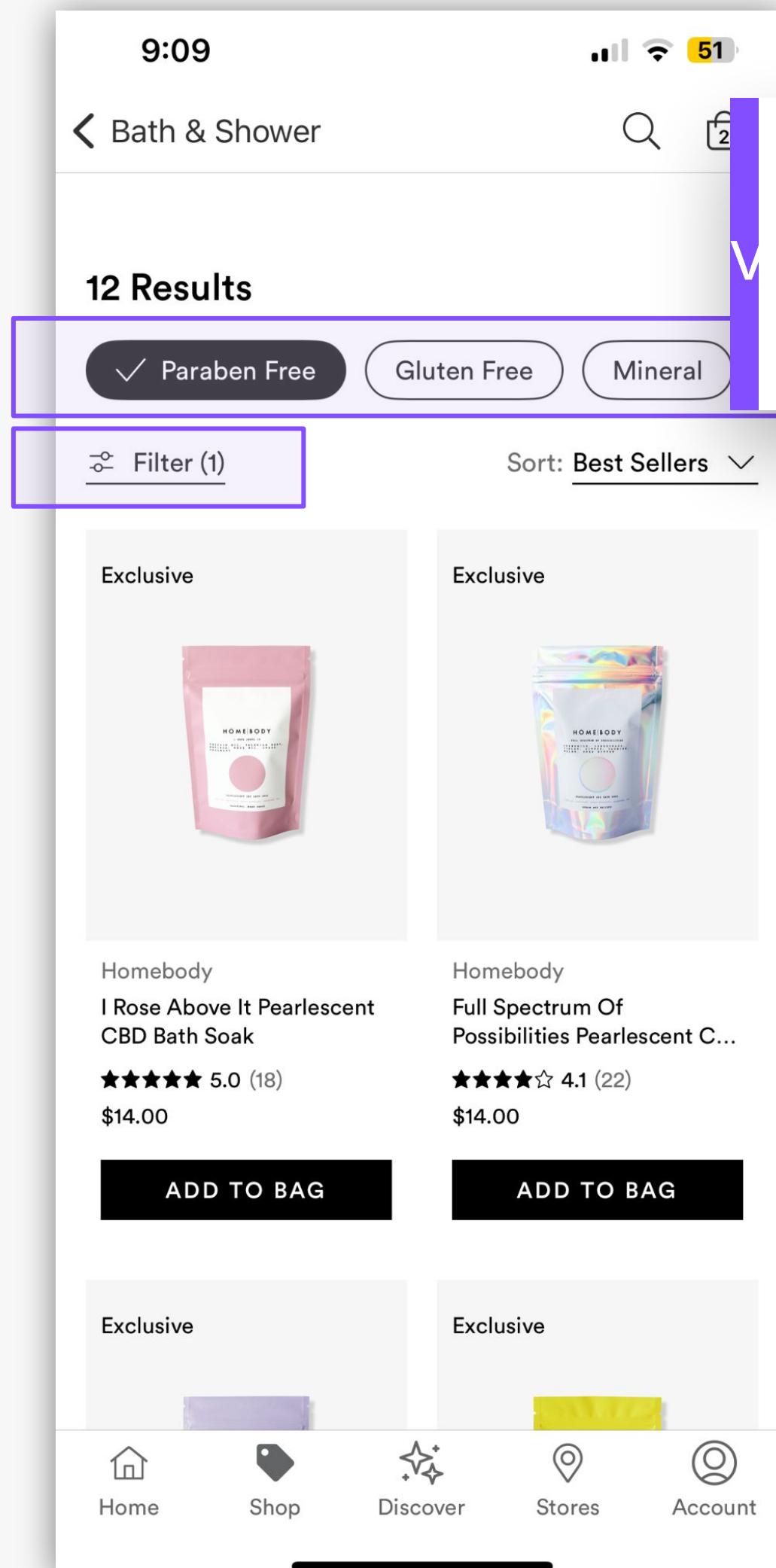
- Speed up interactions for expert users.
- Support numerous ways of accomplishing an action, and allow the user to choose their way of interacting.



Sephora:

Sephora focuses on giving the opportunity for someone to really customize their entire experience.

They highlight the benefits of having an account and allowing tracking of certain actions to help users understand that they can have more personalized options.



Principle #7

Flexibility and efficiency of use

33 / 65 = 51%
Moderate

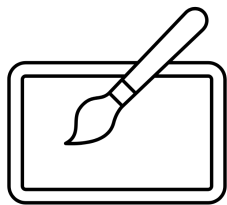


Challenges

- Little personalization occurs within the experience
- Product filtering is good with 'easy filters', but the additional filters don't display after turned on
- Toast messages are used when an action is completed, but then there is no indication that the current product is already in your cart

Opportunities

- Give more opportunities for users to identify their needs in products and tailor it for a personalized experience
 - If they do not have an account, use the opportunity to highlight the benefits of making an account

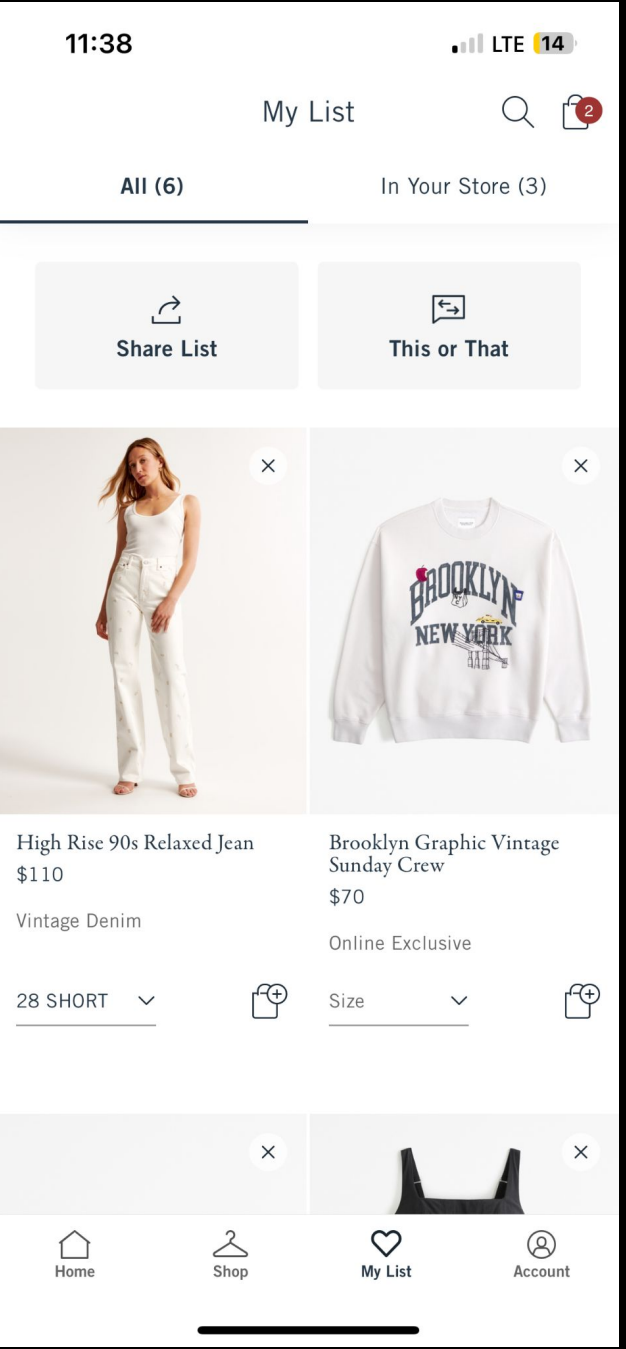
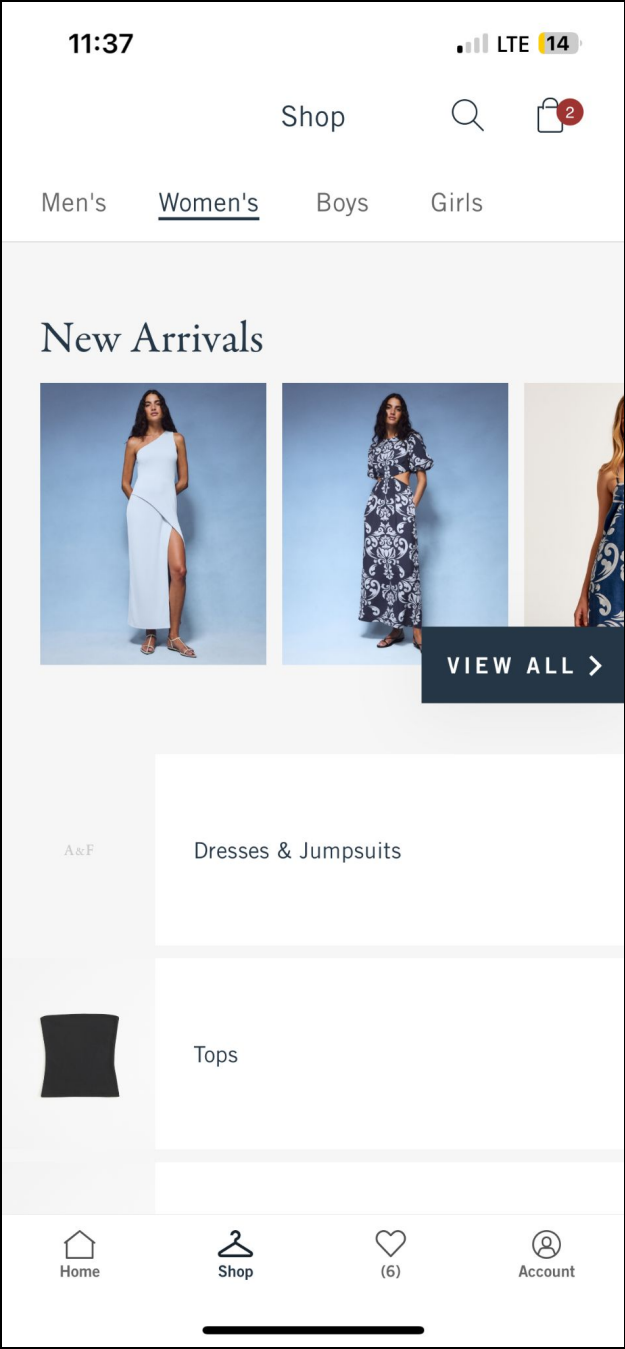


Principle #8

Aesthetic and minimalist design

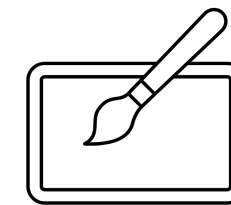
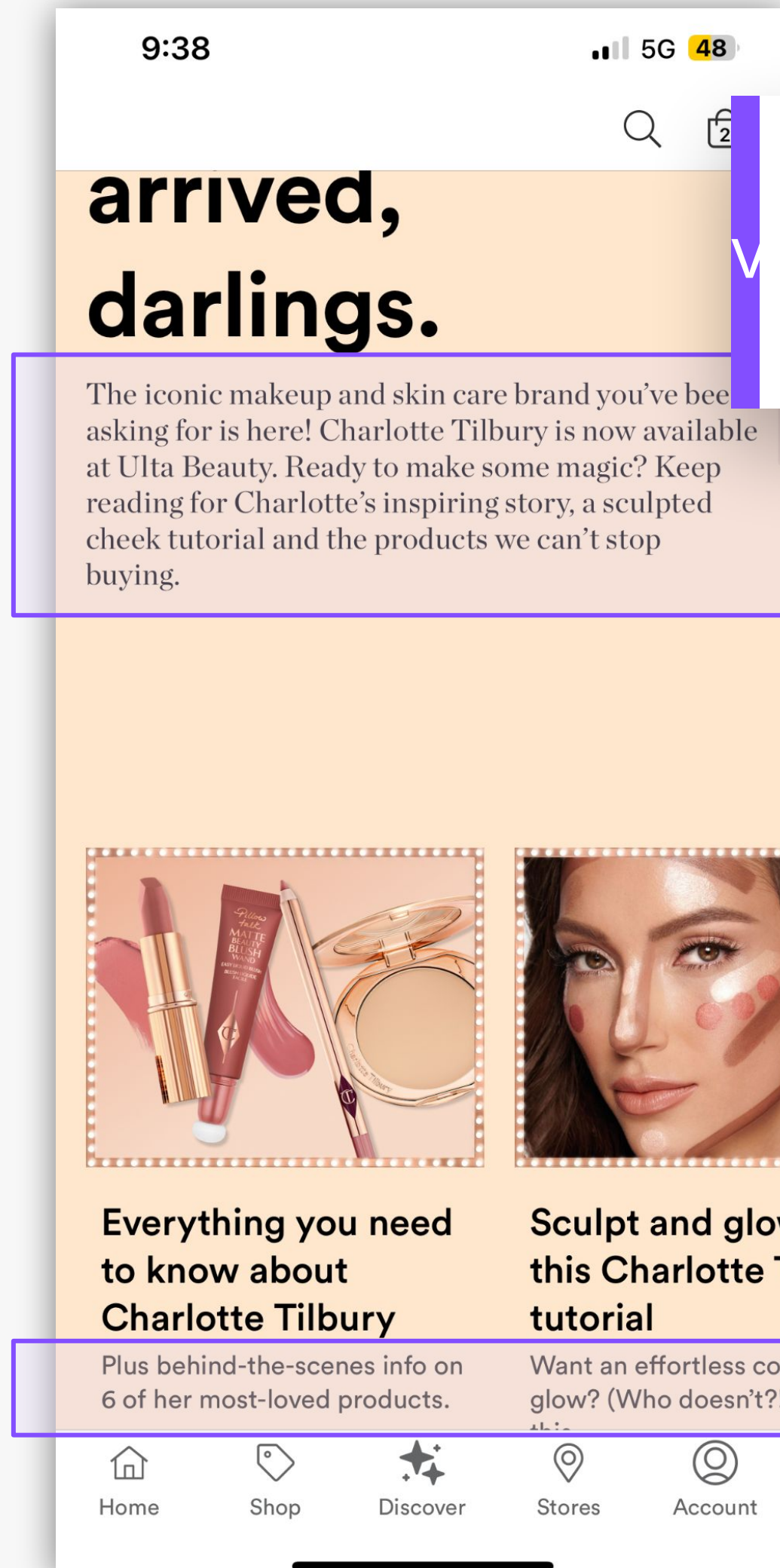
The system provides the user with the exact information that is needed and in the right place. Every extra piece of information in a dialogue competes with the relevant units of information, diminishes their relative visibility and is simply distracting noise.

- Decorations don't add anything to accomplishing of user goals.
- Information should be hierarchized and distractor-free.



Abercrombie:

Abercrombie focuses on simplicity, using color only for CTAs and highlighted sections. The focus is on simple and minimalist presentation to make it easy to see products, as well as make actions as quick and efficient as possible



Principle #8

Aesthetic and minimalist design

30 / 65 = 46%
Poor

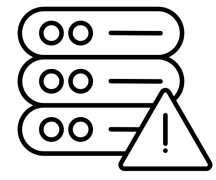


Challenges

- Various fonts are used throughout; with an inconsistent title/header size for content pages
- Use of differing colored backgrounds take away from the products themselves, while adding unnecessary noise.
- There are various styles for articles vs. products vs. ads.
- Icon style is inconsistent; some have grey backgrounds, some are contained, some are orange
- Homepage is content heavy, and the inconsistent styling adds to the overwhelming nature

Opportunities

- Style audit to determine desired styles for typefaces, cards (products vs. ads), icons, etc.
- Remove some noise by decreasing colored backgrounds that distract from products.



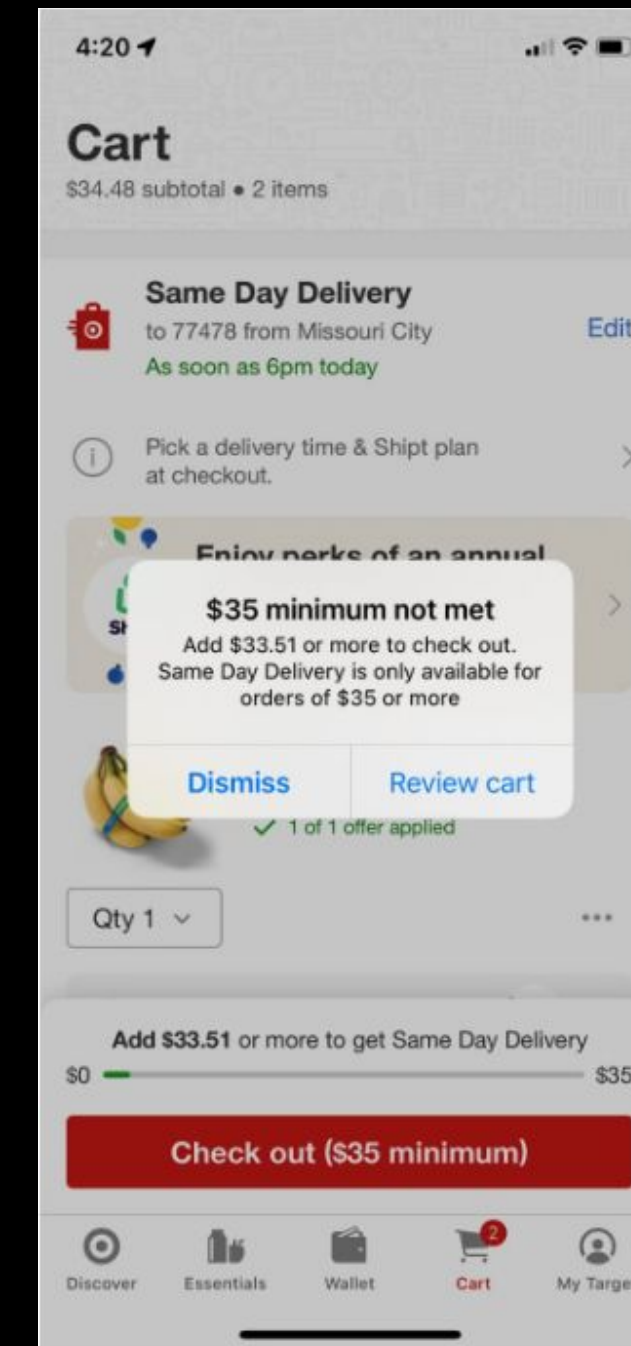
Principle #9

Recognize, diagnose and recover from errors

If the design fails, and the user is about to commit an error, the last instance to prevent it is an error message. The error message is efficiently expressed in plain language (no codes or jargon), precisely indicates the problem, and constructively suggests the solution.

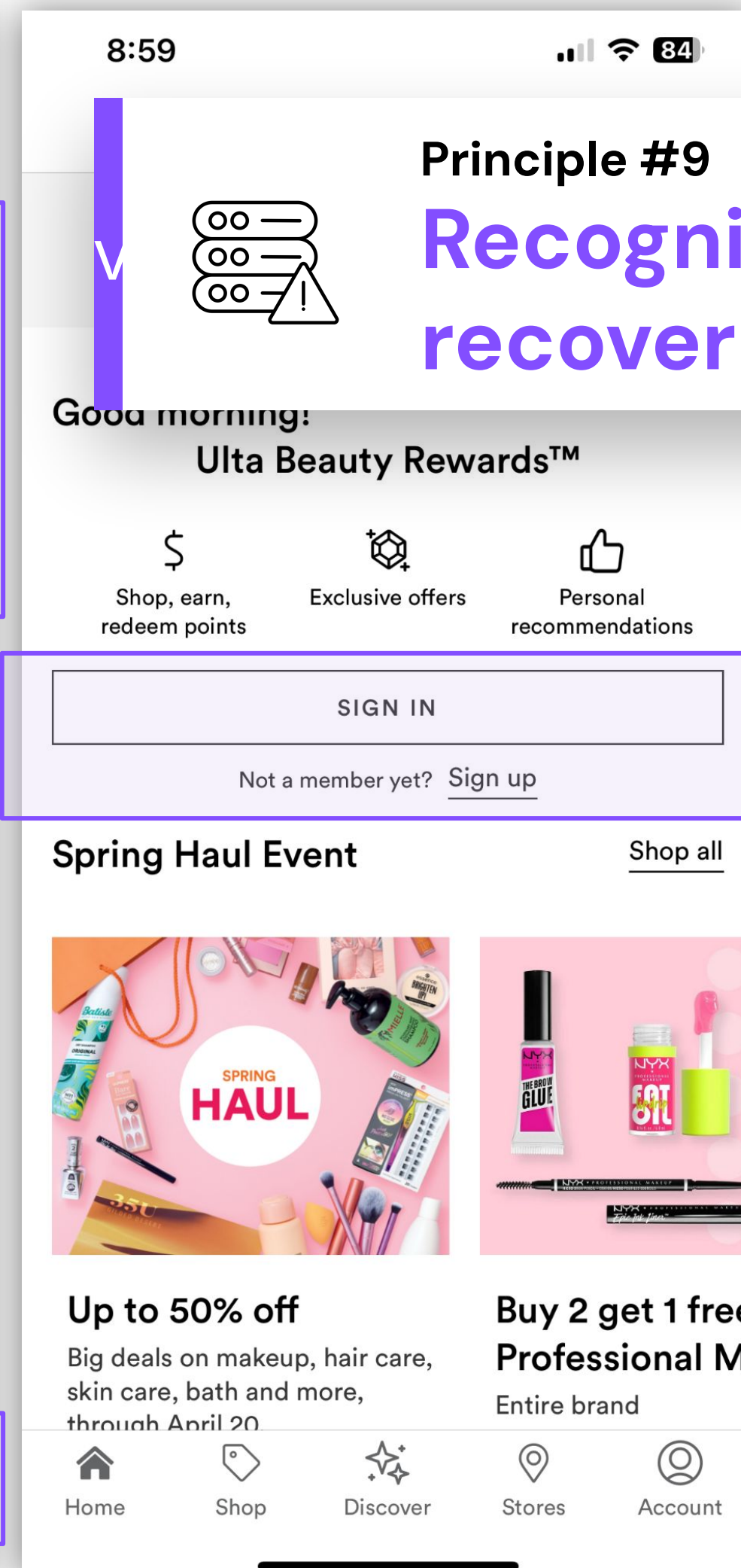
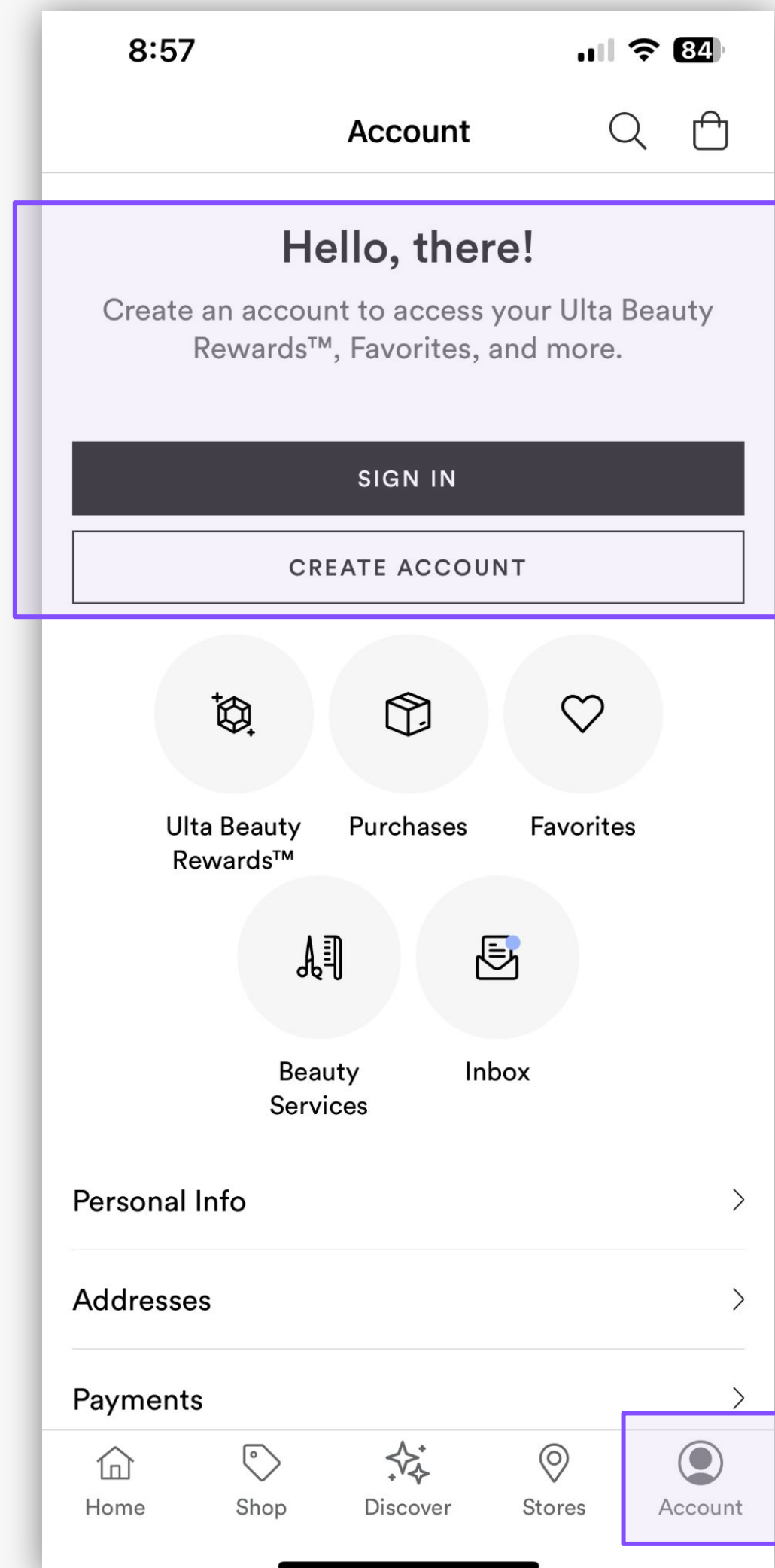
A good error message:

- Diligently leads the user to the cause of the error.
- Suggests solutions and directs the user to the appropriate place.
- Allows for fixing the error directly in the location it occurred.
- Makes sure errors are corrected before proceeding.
- Provides an undo feature.

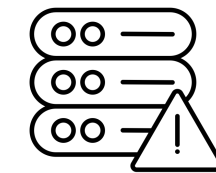


Target:

Target gives clear feedback that users must spend more to qualify for same-day shipping. Note how the message avoids blaming the user for not purchasing enough and focuses instead on the threshold.



V



Principle #9

Recognize, diagnose and recover from errors

14 / 20 = 70%
Good



Challenges

- Reliability issues; users get logged out without reason as to why

Opportunities

- It isn't clear that a user has been logged out. Provide more clear messaging, while adding personalization, such as name/profile picture in navigation to indicate if you are logged in/out.

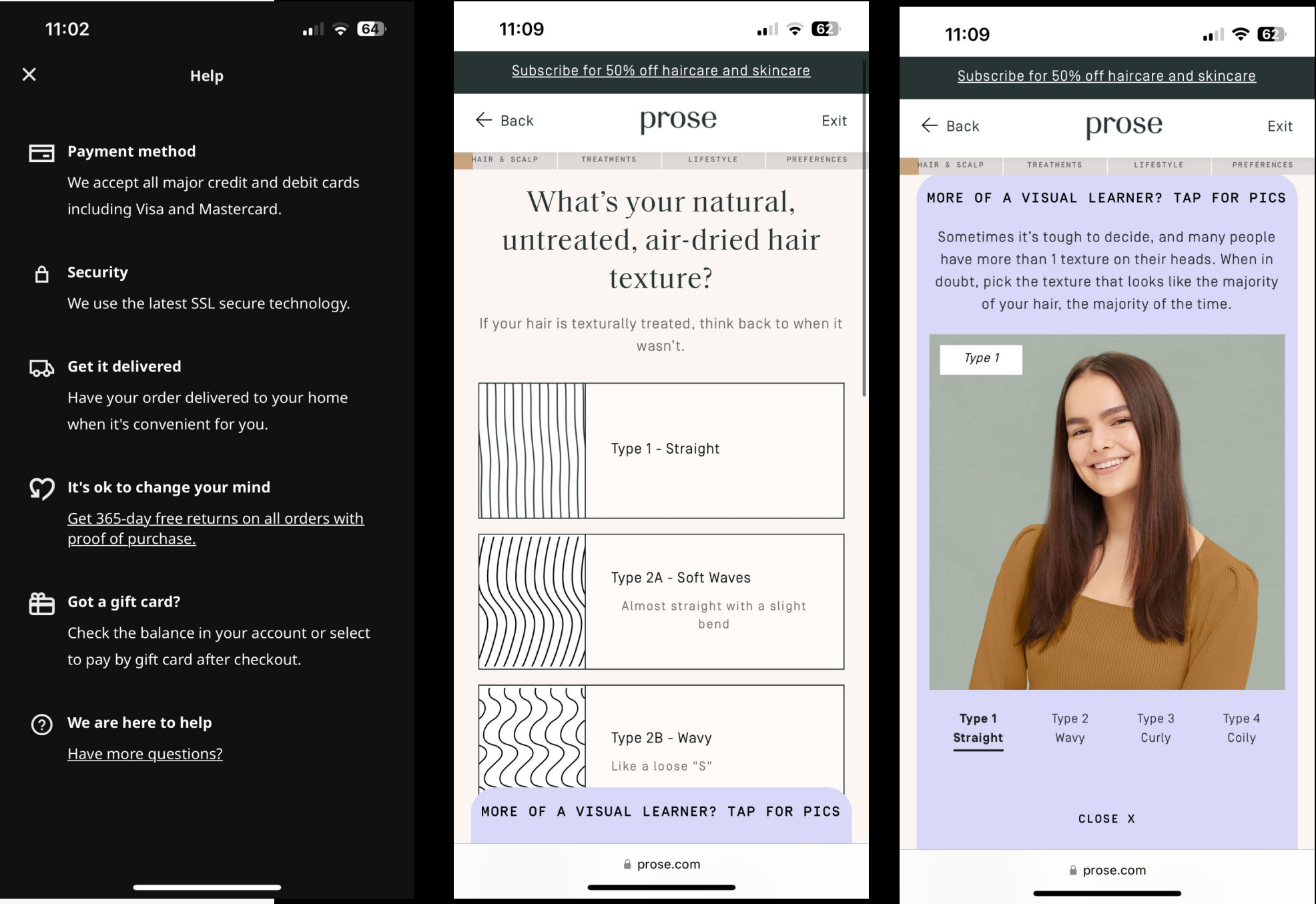


Principle #10

Help and documentation

User assistance is presented at appropriate times in the interaction, focused on the user's task, lists concrete steps to be carried out, and not too large in volume. The user should be aware where to search for helpful information and efficiently find the answer.

- Help should focus on problem solving, not on user introduction.

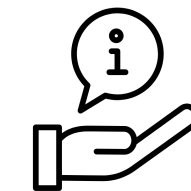
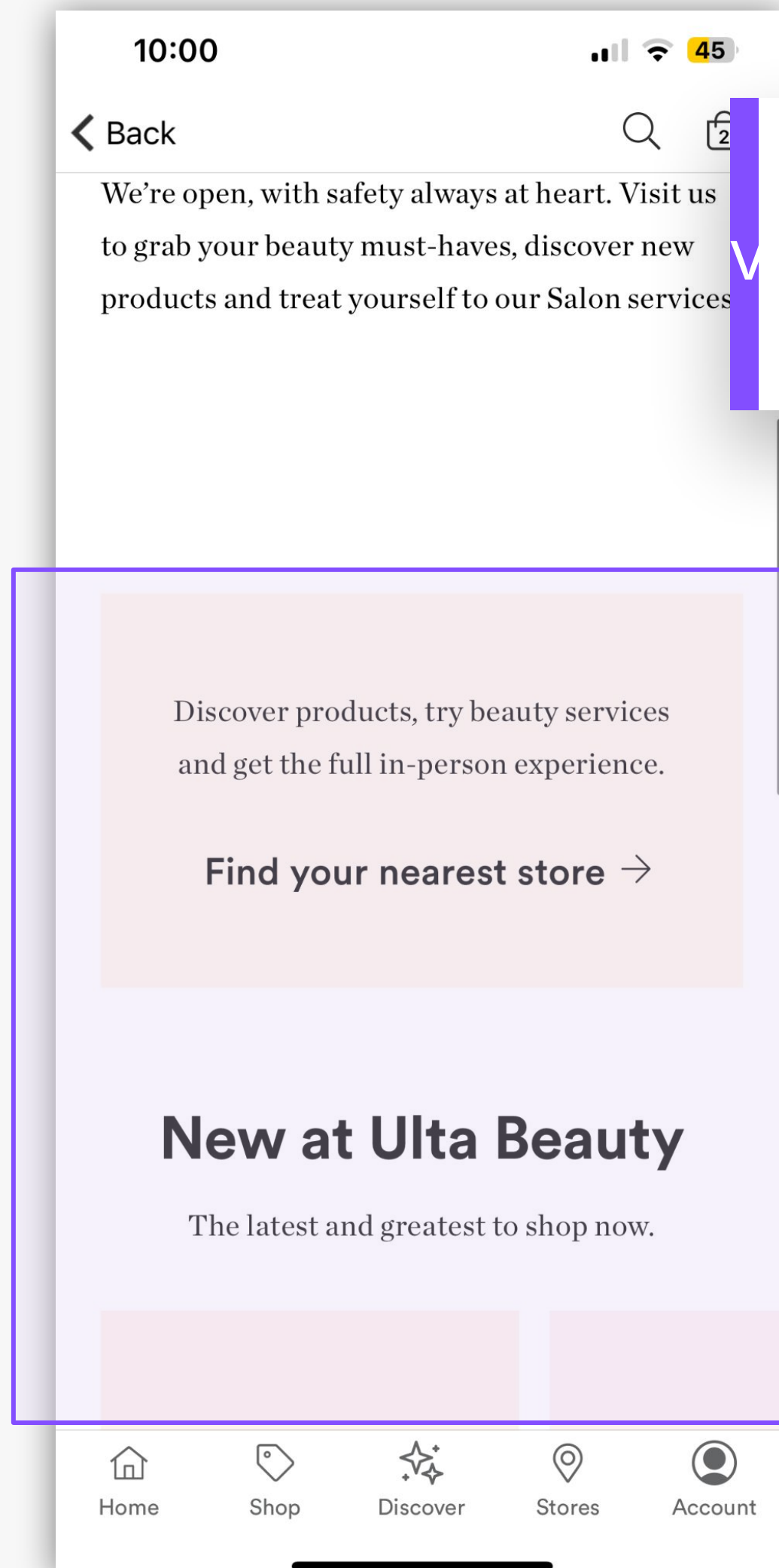


Ikea:

Ikea provides quick access to help when users may need it most, such as making a purchase during checkout.

Prose:

While filling out a hair quiz, Prose provides more helpful, detailed information about the question if a user needs help answering.



Principle #10

Help and documentation

17 / 25 = 68%
Moderate



Challenges

- Users can go back to where they were before they needed help, but some help pages aren't focused solely on the problem. There are ads and other distracting info included.

Opportunities

- Provide more opportunities for users to get access to help or more information, such as talking/contacting someone about a product or with quick access to FAQs during checkout.

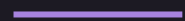
Summary of Heuristics Evaluation

2 / 10 usability heuristics categories rated **Good**, while 7 / 10 usability rated **Moderate**, and 1 / 10 was rated as **Poor**

Principle	< 29 <i>Very Poor</i>	29 – 49 <i>Poor</i>	49 – 69 <i>Moderate</i>	69–89 <i>Good</i>	89+ <i>Excellent</i>	Score
Visibility of System Status	63%					25 / 40
Match between system and the real world	58%					29 / 50
User Control and Freedom	70%					28 / 40
Consistency and Standards	58%					38 / 65
Error Prevention	60%					27 / 45
Recognition rather than Recall	60%					18 / 30
Flexibility and Efficiency of Use	51%					33 / 65
Aesthetic and Minimalist Design	46%					30 / 65
Help users recognize, diagnose, and recover from errors	70%					14 / 20
Help and documentation	68%					17 / 25

UX Strategy

In addition to evaluating the Heuristic principles, we also saw value in identifying overall themes of opportunity areas to enhance the User Experience for the Ulta Mobile App.



Elevated Branding & Experience Principles

Importance

Recommendations

Best in Class

The app branding decisions and elements set the tone for what a user can expect throughout their entire experience with Ulta. **Ulta’s app branding should be considered to reflect the prestige brands carried.**

Experience Principles are a set of considerations that form the basis and strategy of any good product. **UX principles are fundamental pieces of advice for your team to make easy-to-use, pleasing experiences.**



Strategize what the ultimate brand perception goal is for Ulta, including authentic voice, brand identity and **unique** identity. The key to presenting an elevated brand is highly thought out design.

- Less is more approach, with more white space, enhanced imagery and videos

Establish what ‘Good UX’ looks like for Ulta, and make all teams aware so everyone is working towards a common understanding of the experience.

NORDSTROM

SEPHORA

Medium

Sephora feels like it’s own brand. It appears to be viewed more as a brand that has various branded products, but still maintains its own brand and voice

Smoother Authentication

Importance

Users are constantly overloaded with various passwords to remember.

A faster, more seamless way to authenticate will prevent user frustration, while allowing them to easily utilize their Ulta rewards and benefits.



Recommendations

Biometrics or Social login support for a smoother login experience

Let a user know they aren't logged in prior to getting to checkout to prevent any disruptions while purchasing products. This can be done through a clear indicator of logged in vs. not logged in.

Best in Class



SEPHORA

Tailored Experience (Personalization)

Importance

Personalization makes a user feel seen and heard.

By anticipating what a user may be most interested in, it provides a more tailored, bespoke customer experience, resulting in a more confident and loyal user.



Recommendations

Anticipate a users needs by recommending when it's time to re-stock previously purchased items

Homepage should be tailored to what is known about the user, to prevent unnecessary noise and overwhelm

Allow for wishlists or shopping lists

Allow groupings of favorites and the ability to mark a purchase as a gift to keep recommendations personalized to user

Best in Class



Seamless Checkout

Importance

A smooth and hassle-free checkout process is key in boosting conversions. It's important users don't abandon the checkout because of frustrations that could easily be avoided. By simplifying product purchasing, customers become more loyal.



Recommendations

Provide suggestions on checkout page with saved, past viewed, past purchased or items that pair well with products.

If cart is empty, provide previously viewed items that could easily be added to cart.

Allow for customers to select items (split cart) within cart to purchase. This will avoid items remaining in cart for next time, without being lost in a 'saved for later' list

Best in Class



Loyalty & Offers

Importance

Loyalty points and offers keep users coming back to make more purchases. Increasing the customer lifetime value is important for business goals. With a company such as Ulta, it's important to provide benefits to your customers that enable them to purchase from you, than the brands directly or Amazon.



Recommendations

- Make offers more readily available (i.e. homepage, checkout & product pages), and promote and remind customers of the benefits of the loyalty program.
- Create smart offers, with highly targeted promotion plans based on the specific user and geo location services
- 'MyUlta' for a mobile wallet, rewards, etc.
- Evaluate current loyalty program CX of the omnichannel experience

Best in Class



Integration with In Store Experience

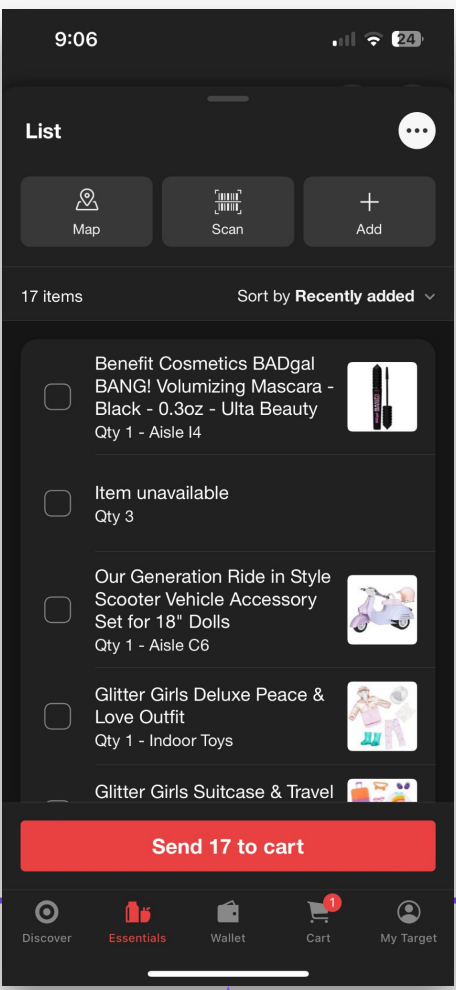
Importance

The full customer experience doesn't start and end with the mobile app, so **it's important to think holistically about the entire experience, both digitally and physically.** It's imperative that both experiences mesh well, and work hand in hand with each other.



Recommendations

- Allow for searching within the app to be completed by photo recognition
- Ability to create shopping lists within the app with in-store wayfinding, with the option to check items off as you go or add to your digital cart
- Create a social community within the experience to be able to ask questions, similar to an in store shopping experience.
- Track & edit the booking of salon appointments

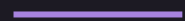


Best in Class



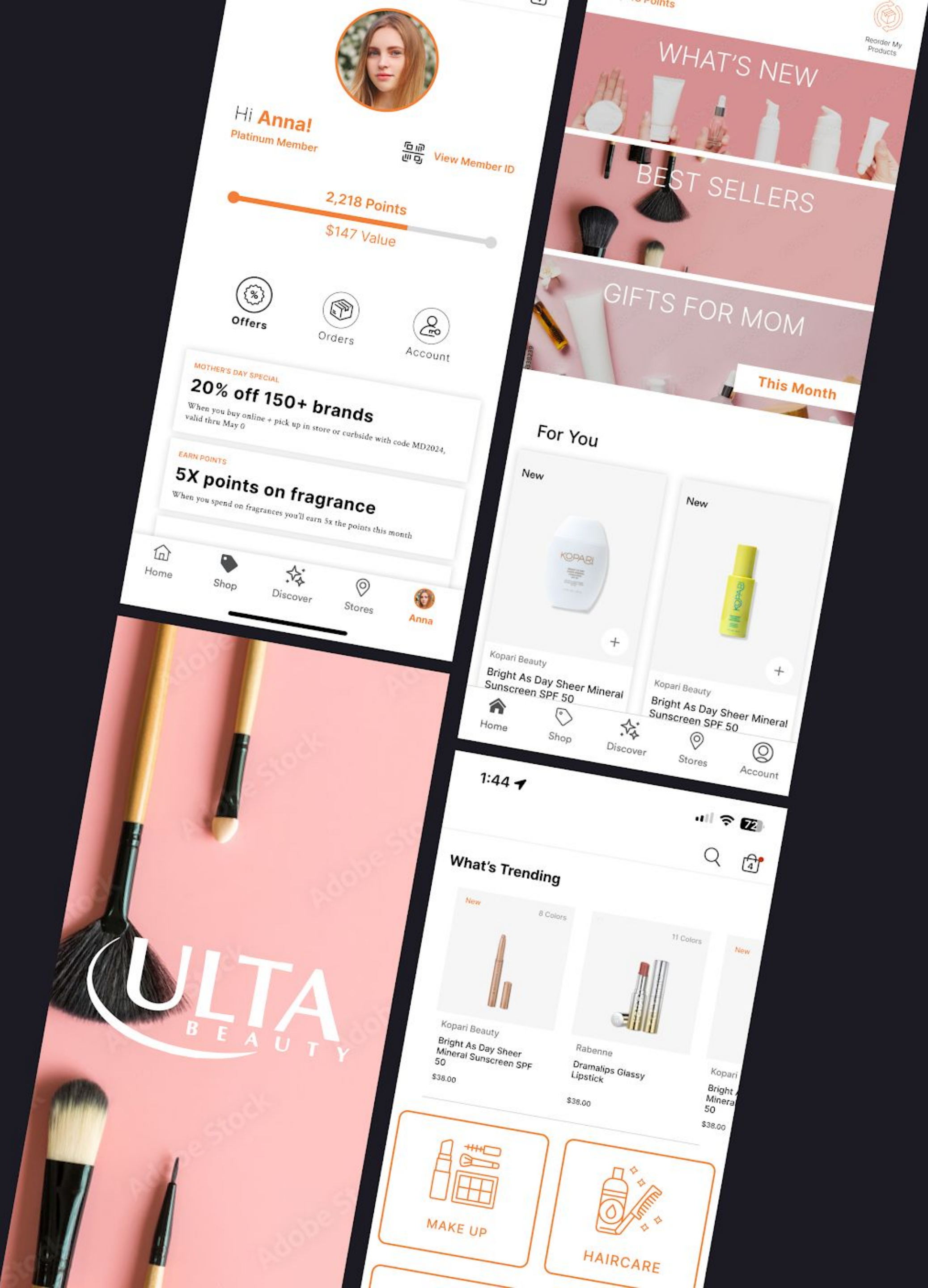
Next Steps

Various opportunity areas have been shared, so where should Ulta focus



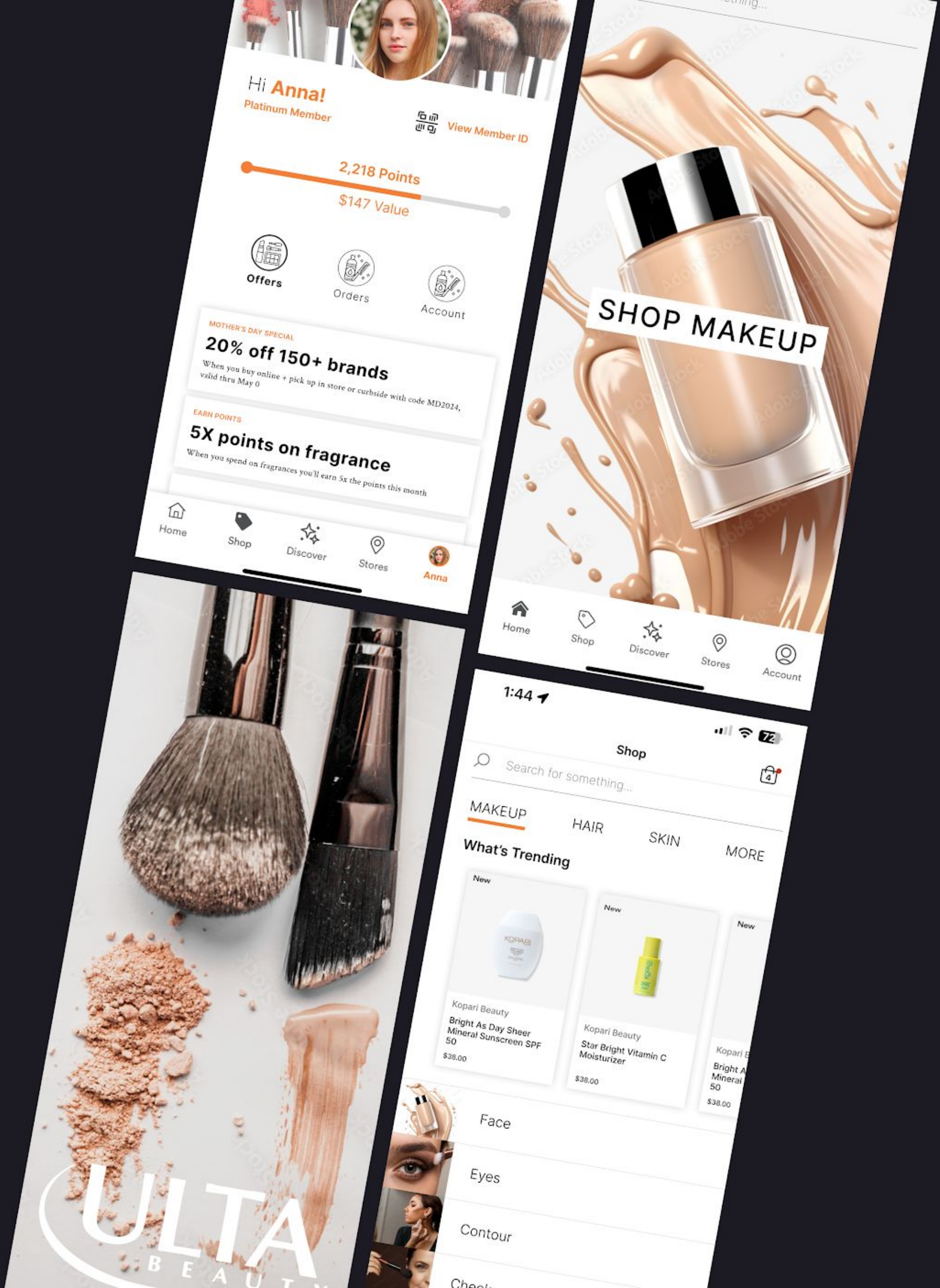
App Refresh

Visual Teaser



App Refresh

Visual Teaser



App Refresh

Killer Opportunity

Approximately only 25% of Ulta Loyalty customers use the mobile app. Bringing loyalty to the forefront of the app should increase usage significantly.

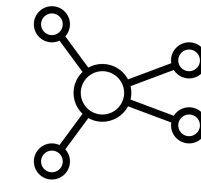
Our hypothesis is one of the biggest opportunity areas revolves around the Loyalty program

 Elevated Branding & UX Principles	Ulta's app branding should be considered to reflect the prestige brands carried. UX principles should be established as fundamental pieces of advice to ensure all team members make appropriate product decisions.	 Seamless Checkout	The worst place to lose a customer is at checkout. The checkout should be an extension of the overall experience, feeling personalized, flexible and seamless.
 Smoother Authentication	Users dislike remembering passwords, so by introducing simpler ways to authenticate, such as biometrics or google, it makes for a better overall experience.	 Loyalty & Offers	Loyalty points and offers keep users coming back to make more purchases. It's important to provide readily available benefits to your customers so they want to purchase from Ulta, rather than the brands directly or Amazon.
 Tailored Experience	Personalization makes a user feel seen, heard and special. Anticipating what a user may be most interested in will create a bespoke customer experience, resulting in a more loyal and confident user.	 Integration with In Store	The full customer experience doesn't start and end with the mobile app, so it's important to think holistically about how the mobile app can work hand in hand, or even enhance, the in-store experience.

- By bringing loyalty to the forefront of the mobile experience, it can be extremely effective in building customer retention.
- A 'MyUlta' with a mobile wallet and quick access to loyalty, orders, stores, etc.
- By enhancing the loyalty program, Ulta can gather valuable data that can then be used to personalize marketing efforts to individuals and create a uniquely direct relationship with their customers.
- Personalization can come into play by offering additional points for repeat purchases or by suggestions on restocking previously purchased items.

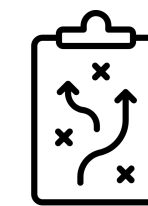
What's Next?

Various opportunity areas have been shared, so where should Ulta get started:



Executive Deck Sharing

- This executive summary deck is intended to be shared and discussed with the Ulta leadership team to obtain UX investment opportunities



Strategy Engagement

- Validation of the heuristics and UX assessment with data and user research
- Clickable prototype of opportunity areas
- Prioritization and roadmapping of the collective opportunity areas



Data and Personalization

- Deeper conversation to further understand data, personalization and loyalty goals for Ulta
- Consider connecting data to better understand customers and create deeper personalization

Strategy Sprint Estimate

In order to develop a multi-year app roadmap, we will conduct a 6–8 week UX strategy assessment

Sample Outputs:

- Stakeholder interviews to define success
- Review of current UX pattern libraries and standards
- Validation of the heuristics and UX assessment with data and user research
- Outline of key customer journeys to be supported for conversion experience optimization (up to 5)
- Discussion of personalization objectives and data to support
- Discussion of design systems and approaches to leverage more dynamic execution
- Clickable prototype (fidelity TBD) of opportunity areas
- Validation of prototype with user research
- Prioritization of the collective opportunity areas
- A detailed, 3-year roadmap for the vision, inclusive of team sizing, resource support, dependencies and timelines for implementation

Cost: \$250k – \$390k

Timeline: 6–8 weeks

5–7 practitioners will drive a vision for Ulta's app evolution. We will address current challenges, capitalize on the UX, performance, and business opportunities in the near term

Appendix

Data Accelerators, Assessment Plan, and Case Studies

Data Accelerators

Businesses that master data unification, activation and orchestration will stand the best chance of driving personalized experiences, customer loyalty and achieving market differentiation. How can we help get it done with your commerce data?

Summary

We've already announced the Integrated Commerce Network to provide a vision and roadmap to how our clients can embrace composable solutions on Google Cloud.

Our Integrated Commerce accelerator now enables our clients to modernize and create value with their data on Google Cloud with a pre-integrated solution.

The vision

KIN+CARTA

enabled by



+



+



powered by

Google Cloud

Many of our clients face the same challenges with their data

Data Management

“Data is not accessible to everyone, or we don’t trust it.”

- Data is **siloes**
- **Quality** issues and inconsistencies
- Lack of metadata makes **analysis difficult**

Data Usability

“We don’t have easy-to-find tools that everyone can use.”

- **No single source** to pull and analyze data
- Reliance on **tribal knowledge**
- Tools are **difficult** to use

Data Culture

“We don’t use data effectively enough in decision making.”

- **Culture** does not support **sharing** data
- **Lack of training** for data-driven **decisioning**
- **Missing** test-and-learn or **agile approach**
- Competitive **business structure** operates **against** the idea of **democratization**

In response, we developed a solution for commerce

Challenge

Personalized customer experiences depend on data. Yet today's data silos limit a businesses ability to enrich their data and innovate.



Business Impact

Businesses are thus struggling to meet the rising expectations of their customers. Without unifying their data, their ability to make decisions is sub-optimal.



Our Solution

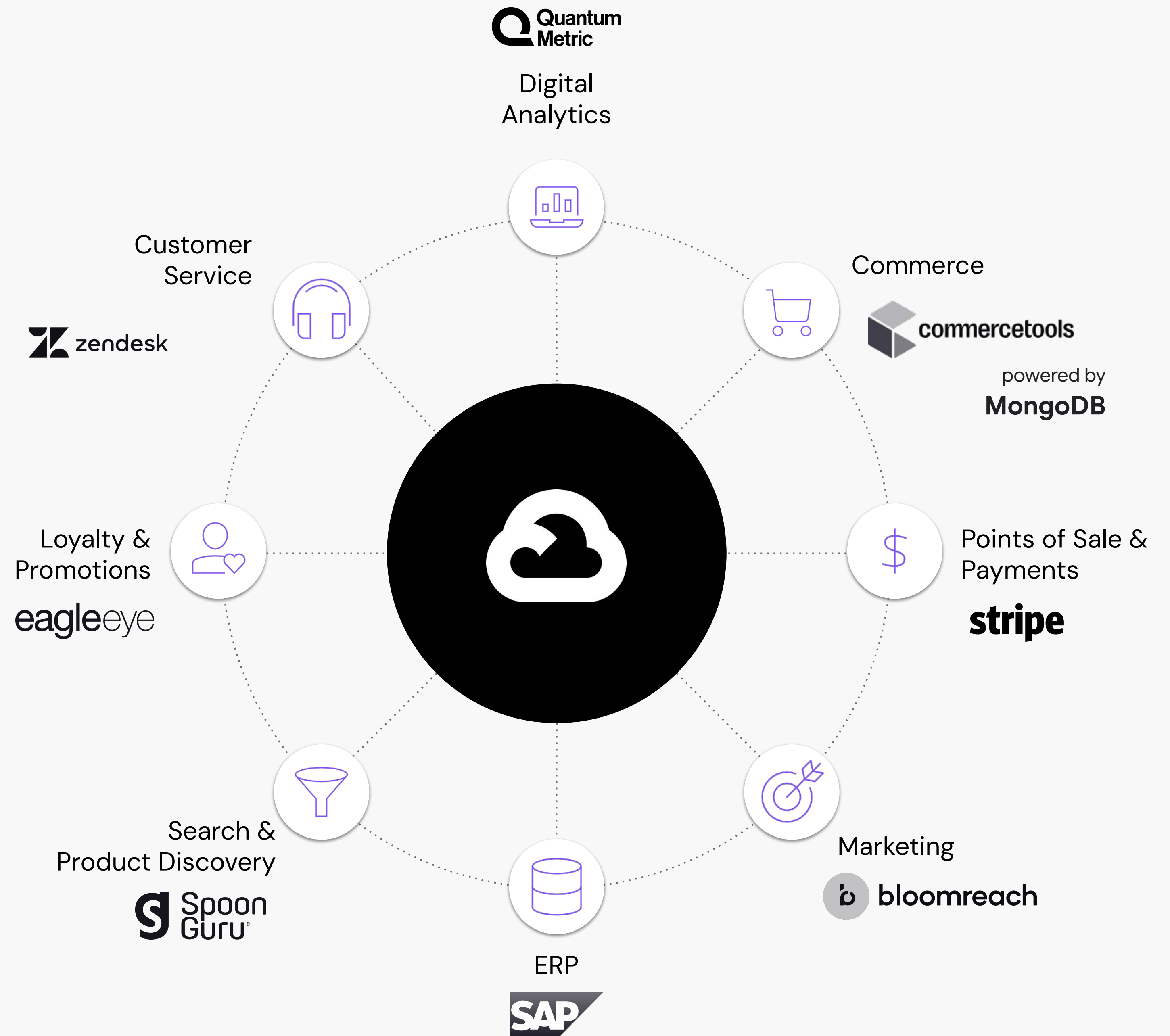
Unifies disparate data for better **enrichment**, unlocking **insights** to improve the **customer experience**, all powered by Google Cloud.

KIN+CARTA

Unify data with Google BigQuery

Our Accelerator enables clients to quickly ingest commerce data into Google BigQuery.

We will continue to include additional ISVs over time in order to reduce the manual overhead that our clients experience, thus allowing them to focus more on insights from their data and implementing AI.



Where next? Some AI use cases enabled by data

Product Recommendations

Deliver personalized product recommendations and increase sales.

Customer Sentiment Analysis

Leverage BigQuery and BigQuery ML to process and derive insights from customer feedback.

Campaign Optimization

Optimize your campaigns and boost conversion rates based on individual customer preferences.

Predict Customer Churn

Identify and address factors leading to attrition and deploy proactive measures to retain customers.

KEY PARTNER **bloomreach**

KEY PARTNER  Quantum
Metric

The foundations

New system of record providing all the transactional data that unlocks growth

KEY PARTNER  commercetools

Assessment Plan

What we used to get here

KIN+CARTA

What to expect in the assessment

Kin + Carta will be performing a UX assessment of the Ulta mobile application



UX Strategy Evaluation

Overall app review and recommendations



Identify Opportunity Areas

Focus on Loyalty and Personalization



High Level Heuristics

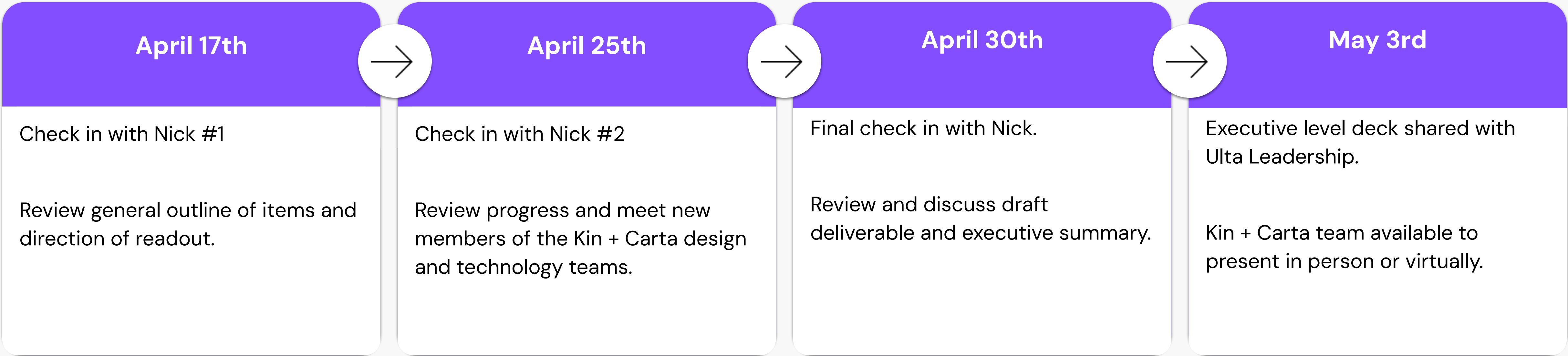
Scoring of current experience, with insights into competitors performing well in areas Ulta may be lacking



Business Case

Why Ulta should invest in these areas with Kin + Carta

Overall Timeline



KIN+CARA

About K+C

Who, what, how

—

A close-up photograph of various cosmetic products. In the foreground, there are several clear glass jars containing powders of different shades, from light beige to a more vibrant orange. A black mascara wand with a gold-colored band is positioned diagonally across the frame. Another black brush with dark bristles is visible in the upper right. The background is a solid, vibrant purple.

About Us

KIN+CARTA

We are a global digital transformation consultancy

We create intelligent experiences, powered by data, built in the cloud.



2023
Top 50 Consulting Firms



2023
Google Cloud Partner
of the Year



2022
Forrester Wave Modern
App Development

2,000+
employees

Chicago
Portland
Denver
New York City

Bogotá
Medellín
Buenos Aires

Pristina
Skopje
Sofia
North Macedonia
Kosovo
London

84%
Revenue from
repeat business



Technology

Platforms, products, & services that we build, deploy, and manage.

Data

Data flows through those systems & can be processed/ deployed in, more intelligent ways.

Experience

The human interactions that our data-driven technology can deliver.

Making the world work better And making the world better.

Certified



Corporation

Our values are what keep us committed to using **our organization as a force for good**.

Company wide, we strive to be deeply **connected**, always **courageous**, and instinctively **empathetic**, this is what keeps us devoted to driving innovative and impactful behaviors throughout our specialisms, with our clients, and inside our communities.

KIN+CARTA

We build intelligent experiences that...

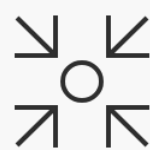
Unify the power of experience, technology and data.

- **Data** moves you from shooting in the dark to informed decision making.
- **Technology** executed in a way that is dynamic, frictionless and personalised.
- **Experiences** that not only meet expectations, but sets them.



Our Expertise

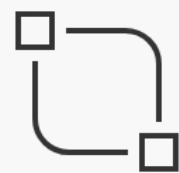
We have a deep understanding of the retail industry and our offerings span the breadth and depth of digital transformation



Strategy + Innovation

We break barriers and identify new opportunities.

We combine deep digital expertise with a culture of fast, focused experimentation. Our lean teams deliver value quickly and often, empowering businesses to improve decision-making and make smart technology investments.



Cloud + Platform

We enable organizational resilience through the cloud.

We bring together cloud and business goals, helping organizations to innovate for the future. Our consultants and engineers provide expert support from planning to delivery, bringing ambitious cloud strategies to life.



Experience + Product

We create effortless customer experiences.

We deliver intelligent experiences, powered by data and built in the cloud. Our cross-functional teams work closely with our clients, combining data expertise with sustainable design to build award-winning digital products and experiences that customers love.



Data + AI

We build lasting data foundations.

We empower organizations to own their technology and data future. Our pragmatic and forward-looking approach enables us to build data and AI products that accelerate business goals and transform user experiences.



Managed Services

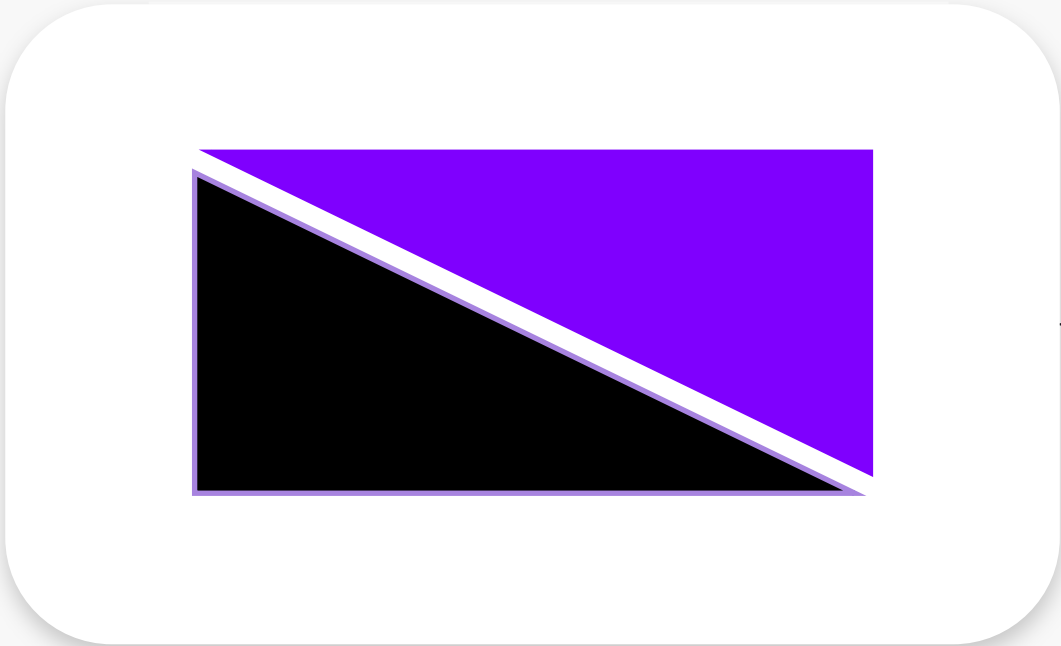
We support growth and optimization.

We provide our clients with the certainty they need to grow—managing their digital assets and constantly seeking new ways to improve and optimize performance. Our value focus helps organizations to identify gaps and build on new opportunities.



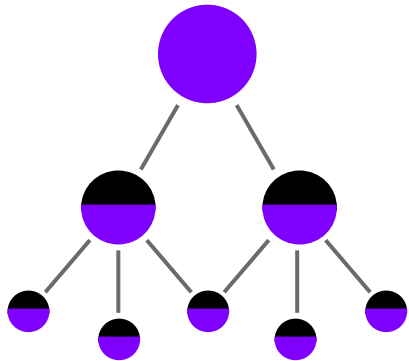
We exist to build a world that works better for everyone.
Triple bottom line focus on profit, people and planet

We adapt team structures to meet you where you are



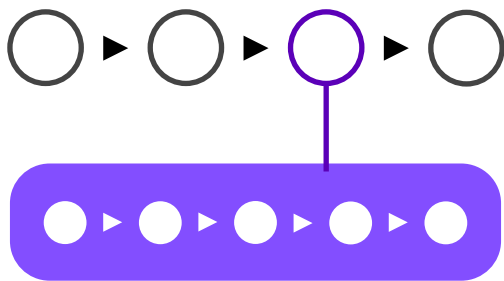
All Vendor Integration

Rapid ramp-up with other vendors incorporated on the team



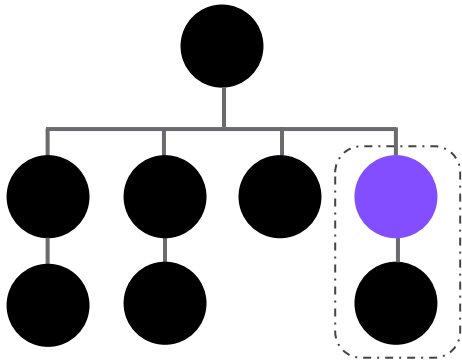
Blended Teams

Creating team structures that align counterparts between client and K+C



Parallel Team Collaboration

K+C teams that are devoted to specific solutions, with planned collaboration with Pampered Chef.



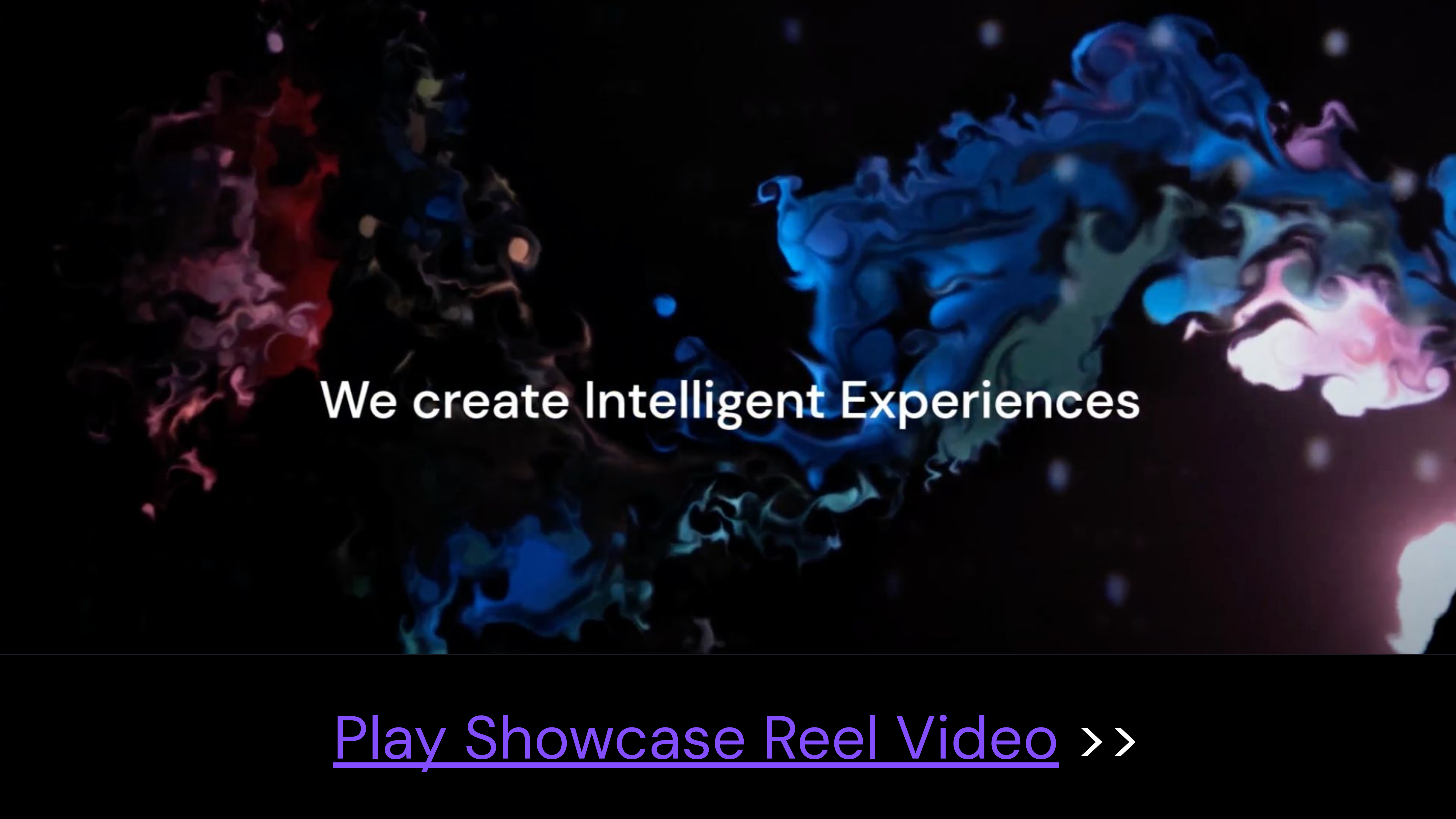
Paired Teaming

Bringing additional rigor to existing teams by pairing disciplines with internal and Pampered Chef team.



Purposeful Enablement

Transparency on process and skills in order to ensure that Pampered Chef is able to fully own the enablement long-term.

The background is a dark, textured composition featuring swirling patterns of deep red, vibrant blue, and soft pink. Scattered throughout are numerous out-of-focus light points, or bokeh, in white and light blue, creating a sense of depth and movement.

We create Intelligent Experiences

[Play Showcase Reel Video](#) >>

A close-up photograph of various makeup products. In the foreground, there are several open clear plastic compacts containing light-colored powders. A black mascara wand with a gold-colored band is positioned diagonally across the frame. A black makeup brush with dark bristles is also visible. The background is a solid purple color.

Client Examples

KIN+CARTA

Neiman Marcus

Reimagining mobile experience to drive engagement with a critical customer segment

Neiman Marcus Group (NMG) is an iconic 113 year old luxury retailer headquartered in Dallas, TX. Like many businesses, COVID-19 took its toll on NMG. Under new ownership and with a plan to restructure, NMG has emerged from the pandemic, poised to rebound by making digital a central focus in their strategy moving forward.

THE CHALLENGE

Neiman Marcus Group sought to maximize customer value by helping customers climb the value ladder, increasing engagement, and optimizing touch points around the high-value clients who are most profitable.

NMG views a new, relationship-forward mobile experience as the centerpiece of a total engagement platform with customers. NMG's new ownership and executive leadership identified a significant gap in NMG digital touch-points. Their current mobile app was not driving the outcomes that their business needs. This was especially true considering the most important NMG customer segment — the top 20% of customers. This created an urgency for a partnership to help reimagine the mobile experience to drive engagement with this critical customer segment.

With tight deadlines and a need to quickly iterate on mobile strategy, we aligned on hitting rapid speed-to-value. The mobile experience had to be seamless, elegant, and even exciting — something that NMG's best clients want to use.

To meet these goals, we collaborated closely to leverage NMG's customer insights, and augment with behavioral and user research, to quickly deliver an actionable mobile strategy.

THE OUTCOMES

1. Engaging mobile client experience designed to facilitate relationship building with high-value clients
2. Personalization engine to power 1:1 relevant content, recommendations, and offers in any customer experience
3. Marketing automation and testing platform to target + deliver personalized messaging across all experiences



Burberry

Exploring new growth opportunities in beauty

K+C supported the brand with a market and consumer evaluation of a potential opportunity to enter a beauty category with the brand

- **Market understanding**
Insight into Burberry brand perceptions and perceived market positioning
- **Lean user research**
Understanding of how the target consumer shops for the product category, and to what extent the current product offer aligned with consumer behavior
- **Benchmarking**
An evaluation of the current product offer and its presence and presentation in the market, and how it benchmarked against competitors



Global Footwear Brand

Loyalty Program Valuation

THE CHALLENGE

A global retail brand launched their loyalty program and needed a partner to design an end-to-end framework to assess growth and performance during the critical first months of the program's rollout.

We needed to ensure bias-free evaluation enabling accurate assessment of incremental lift. The program encompassed all previous members and new customers and did not have a control population to leverage for lift calculations.

THE OUTCOME

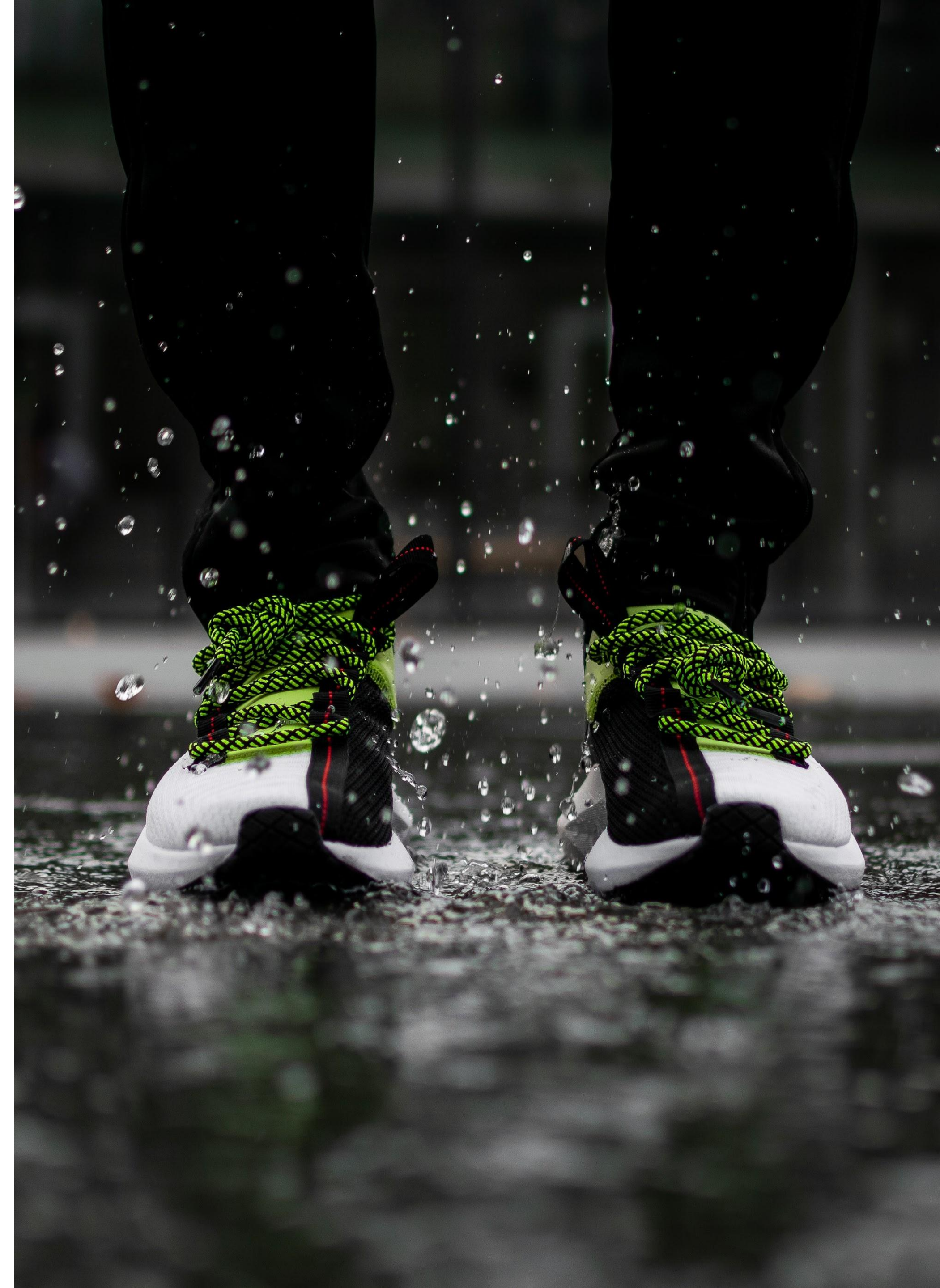
The analysis attributed millions in incremental lift from the loyalty program, exceeding their initial year targets.

As an extension, we delivered a packaged tool to maintain a consistent measurement methodology and streamline future analyses.

THE RESULTS

We adapted robust methods from adjacent industries to illustrate to top-level executives a bias-free lift valuation from the program, including data visualization and reporting of top-level actionable KPIs to executives.

A statistical model was developed leveraging coarsened exact matching to measure incremental spend in the absence of a control population. We developed the measurement strategy and self-managed our execution allowing stakeholders to focus on results rather than implementation.



Mars Pedigree

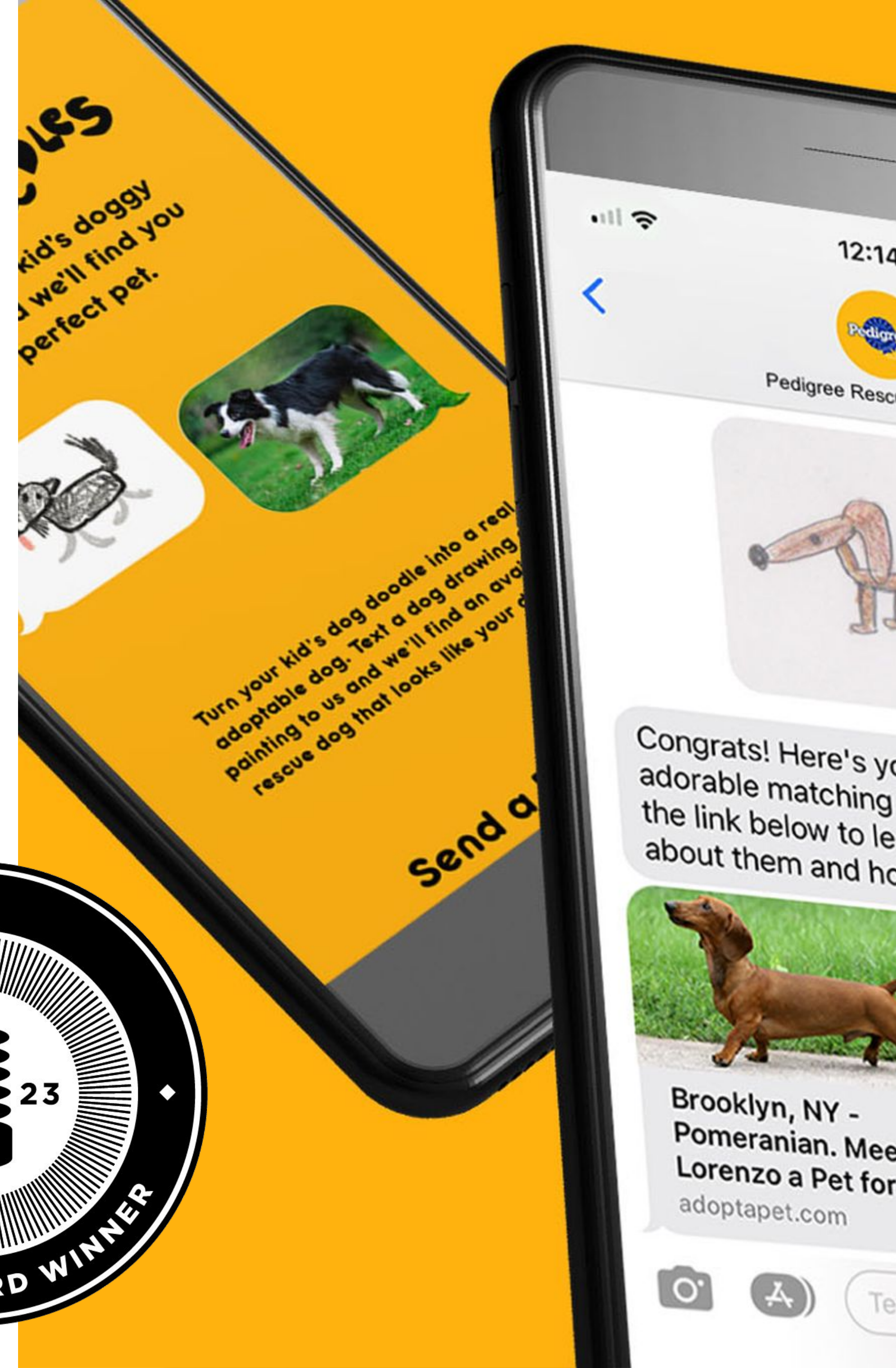
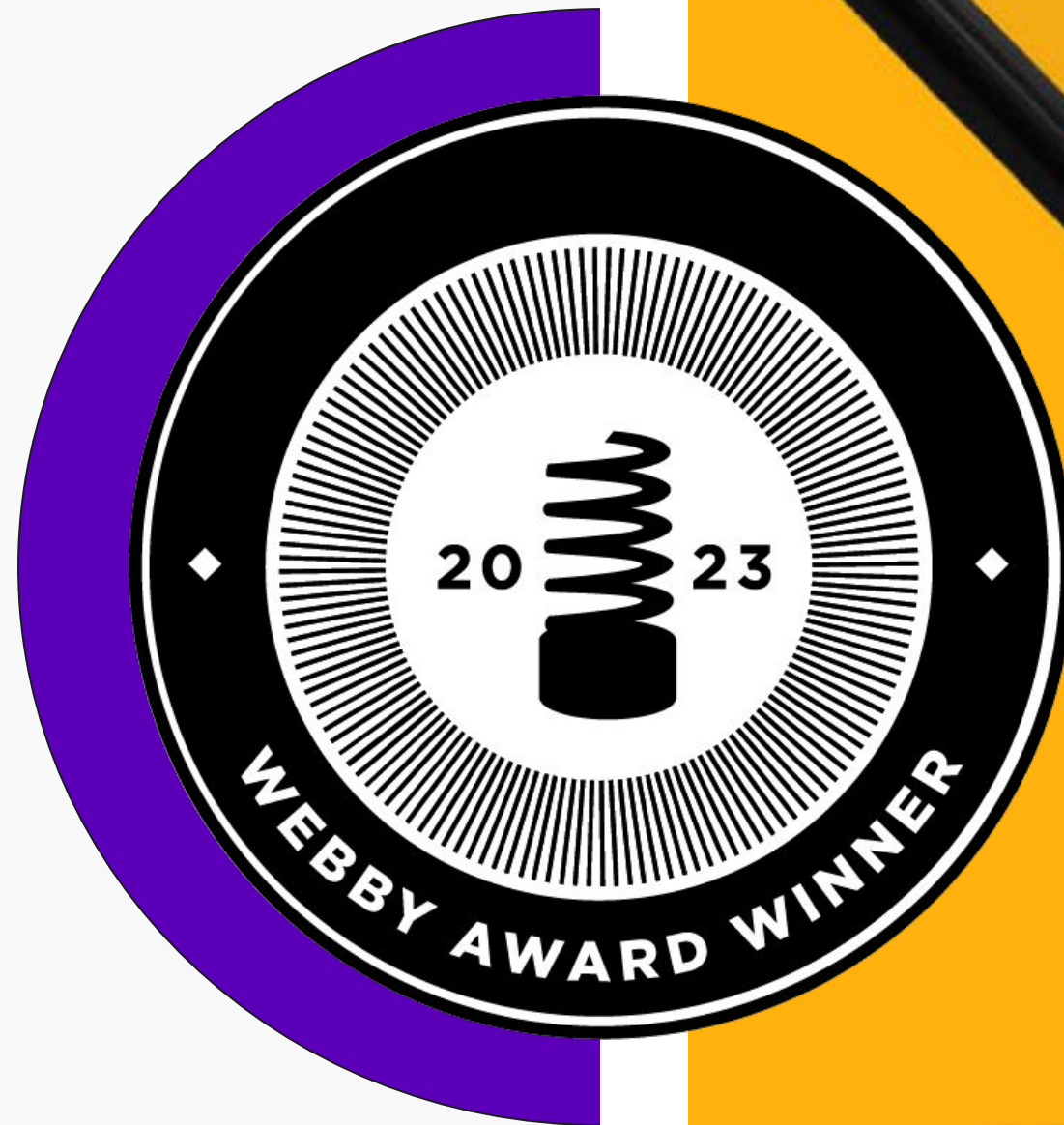
Bringing adoptable dogs and families together with Rescue Doodles

Pedigree wanted to create a magical experience for consumers and kids that would create brand awareness and get pets adopted. Through a hyper-personalized campaign, they set out to collect pipeline of new customers through self opt-in program. The mission: find a way to turn kids' doggy doodles into real family pets.

Kin + Carta created a program allows users to text Pedigree a drawing of a dog and matches them with an adoptable pet in their area. Using an attribute extraction model, we created an API to use those attributes to match with an image. In partnership with Pedigree, our team overcame challenges with location pulling and image quality.

Our team loved the opportunity to show off computer vision capabilities, all while helping pets get adopted.

[Watch the video](#)



Making sustainable living commonplace. Every U Does Good Campaign

We worked with the third largest consumer goods company in the world, They have operations in 190 different countries.



THE CHALLENGE

Making sustainable living commonplace is the company purpose and at the heart of everything they do. The EUDG campaign is an expression of this purpose, it's job was too: Get millennials to buy their products by helping them realise they can have a positive impact through their everyday purchase choices. The Millennial target audience are notoriously choosy and sceptical about any brand seeming to push a 'good' agenda into the feeds and channels they habitually use. We needed to ensure the campaign unstereotypical the company so it would be supported amongst the audience. The campaign had to be universally understood, in a multitude of languages and territories, each with their subtle differences



THE STRATEGY

We kicked off with a workshop to understand the good that comes from using the company's products, the best ones became the main pillars of the campaign. We went into Discovery defining a global creative route and content strategy. We created CMS editable branded animations, ensuring we kept design simple, interactive, stylish, fresh and fun. We met a tight deadline for the first market roll-out launch for South Africa with x5 subsequent markets within 5 months.

The digital hub was redeveloped by transforming the landing, Quiz and sub-page which included 12 personalised and editable branded animations. We created rapid prototypes to help fast track to the best and right solution. That allowed the animations to be presented quickly and directly on mobile view in the form of a prototype. This approach gave the company the ability to get a feel for the design and the look and feel and allowed for buy in from stakeholders throughout the business.



THE OUTCOME

A 'post live analysis' of the work enabled the teams to exceed expectations and optimise the work in the future. So far, the results are impressive:

70% of users continued to engage with brand stories of Every U Does Good beyond the Quiz

59% of Quiz respondents clicked further to find out their own nickname reveal and subsequently their Everyday Good Impact

KIN+CARTA

Thank you



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KIN+ CARTA

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