

UX/UI Case Study

LifeCafe Recipe Organizer App

This recipe organizer app will help you, kitchen & cafe leaders or team members

- search and find recipes quickly & easily
- learn new menus easily
- make coffee, tea & smoothies quickly

to provide the best customer experience at any LifeCafe locations in the nation!

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[Low-Fidelity Digital Wireframes](#)

[Design System & Components/UI Elements](#)

[High-Fidelity Prototype for User Testing](#)



PROJECT OVERVIEW



Product

LifeCafe is a national cafe establishment in the health clubs whose target customers are health-conscious, fitness enthusiastic members who are too busy to prepare meals for themselves and their family. Typically located in the near suburbs of a metropolitan area, LifeCafe strives to offer superior quality healthy meals made to order or prepped-meals such as Grab-n-Go & Meals-to-Go for customers who have less time to wait at cafe, healthy smoothies & protein shakes, and specialty cold & hot coffee drinks including cold brew, latte, cappuccino to the health club members who find convenience to stop by at the cafe after workout to grab some nutritious meals and drinks. LifeCafe focuses on high-quality fresh ingredients, a variety of nutritious meal & drink options and fast and quality services. LifeCafe highlights health-conscious options, such as lower-carb meals made to order, smoothie & protein options and gluten-free substitution abilities as well as healthy sides and dressings. They are able to offer a wide spectrum of competitive pricing, depending on options chosen by the customer.



Project Duration

December 2022 to March 2023





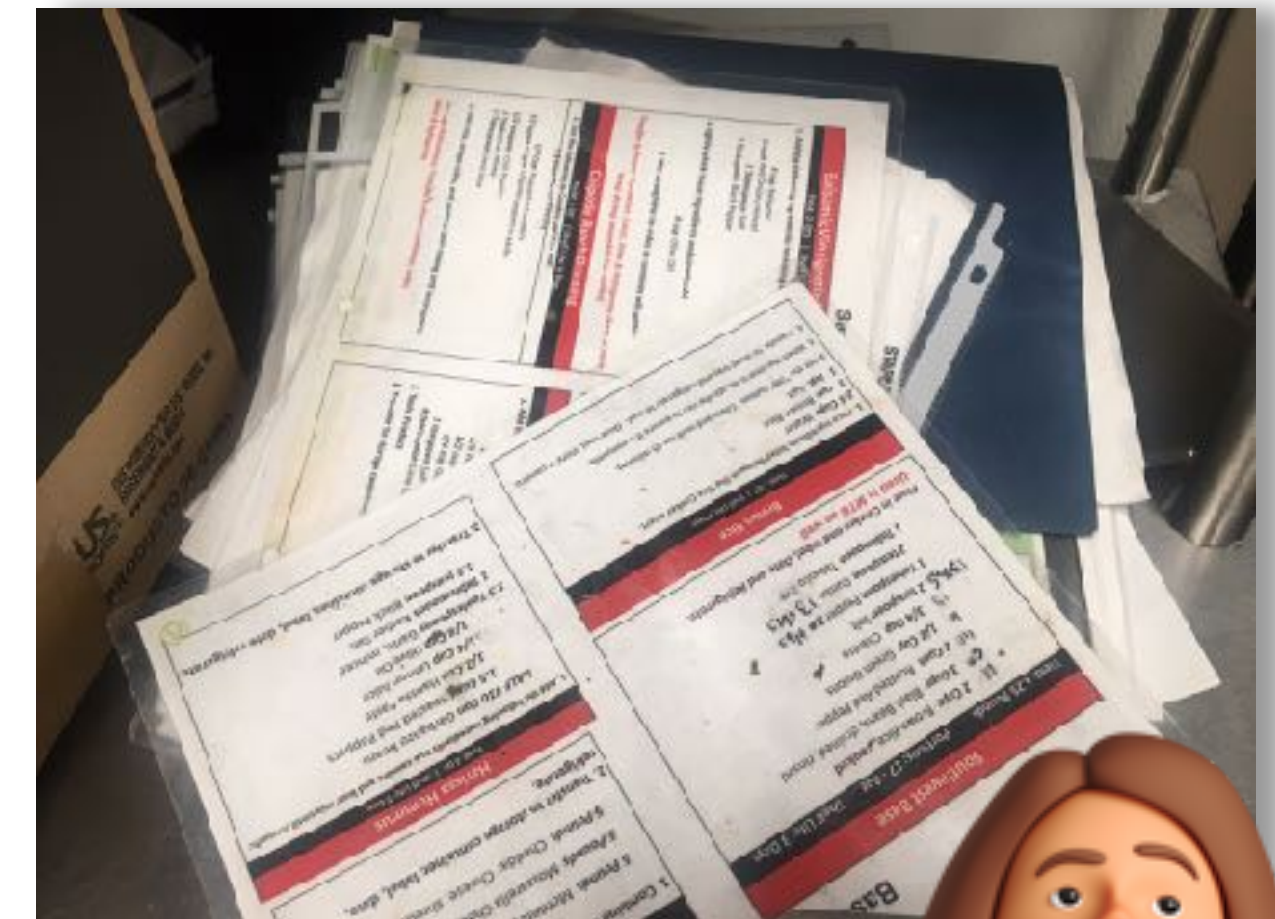
PROJECT OVERVIEW



Problem

“The cookbook is a mess! We can throw out the messy paper recipe book and try the best recipe management app to find and organize recipes instead.”

LifeCafe has been struggling to provide the best practices due to the labor shortage of staffing to offer fast customer services to health club members who are patiently waiting to dine at cafe. As a User Experience (UX) team hired by LifeCafe, we conducted staff surveys and interviews to find out main problems to solve together. As a result, we have defined that LifeCafe needs a recipe organizer app for staff to be able to locate each recipe in order to prep and cook each meal made to order as soon as members order at the register at cafe or advance order via mobile app.



Goal

Design a recipe organizer for LifeCafe recipe that will help their kitchen & cafe leaders or team members search and find recipes quickly & easily, learn new menus easily, make coffee, tea & smoothies quickly to provide the best customer experience at any LifeCafe locations in the nation! This app will especially affect the line cooks & other kitchen staff by allowing them to search & find the correct recipes for each menu — ready to order in-store, or order in advance via mobile app as well as learn to cook new menus correctly by watching the videos created by a corporate chef to keep the company’s brand integrity.



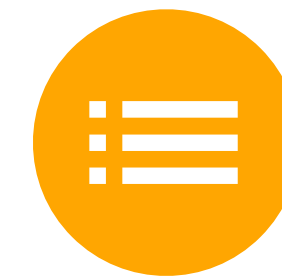


PROJECT OVERVIEW



My Role

UX Designer designing a recipe organizer app for LifeCafe from conception to delivery.



Responsibilities

Conducting interviews & researches, running competitor audits, sketching storyboards, creating paper & digital wireframes and low and high-fidelity prototypes, conducting usability studies, accounting for accessibility, and iterating on designs.

USER RESEARCH



Understanding the User

- User Research
- Personas
- Problem Statements
- User Journey Maps





USER RESEARCH



Summary – User Research to Ideation

I conducted interviews and created empathy maps to understand the users I'm designing for and their needs. A primary user group identified through research was the line cooks and other cafe & kitchen staff at LifeCafe who needed the app that would help them search and find recipes quickly & easily as well as learn how to cook each menu correctly.

LifeCafe has been struggling to provide the best practices due to the labor shortage of staffing to offer fast customer services to health club members who are patiently waiting to dine at cafe. As a User Experience (UX) team hired by LifeCafe, we conducted staff surveys and interviews to find out main problems to solve together. As a result, we have defined that LifeCafe needed a recipe organizer app for staff to be able to locate each recipe in order to prep and cook each meal made to order as soon as members order at the register at cafe or advance order via mobile app.





USER RESEARCH



Pain Points

1 Unreliable

The line cooks and other cafe & kitchen staff don't seem to put the hardcopy recipes back into the recipe organizer system binder each time they use them because they are in a hurry to finish prepping and cooking.

2 Unorganized

The line cooks and other cafe & kitchen staff can't find a right recipe because hardcopy recipes were often missing and not organized in the paper recipe organizer system binder.

3 Inconsistent

Because of the lack of the correct recipes found, the line cooks and other cafe & kitchen staff often had to guess how to cook and prep the menus without the recipes, which resulted in inconsistent flavors and presentation of the menus, therefore affecting the company's brand integrity.





PERSONA



Persona 1 - Hailey Fern

Problem Statement

Hailey is a busy senior college student, working also as a part-time Line Cook, who needs to find a right recipe from the recipe organizer binder to prep and cook because she wants to learn new skills to add onto her resume.



Hailey

Age: 21
Education: Senior College Student
Hometown: Minneapolis, Minnesota
Family: Mother, and lives in the dorm
Occupation: Part-time Line Cook

*"I'm almost done with my college; so excited!
I love hanging out with my sorority friends
when I'm not working."*

Goals

- want to work more efficiently
- want to learn new skills to add on my resume
- interested in mentoring younger coworkers how to cook

Frustrations

- "It's so difficult to learn new recipes because I can't find them in the kitchen."
- "I feel so frustrated to find the right recipe from the messy binder to prepare some sauces that I need to use on the line to cook with."

Hailey is about to complete her senior year in college. She is excited about earning extra money to save up for her dorm life expenses and spending time with her sorority friends. She loves cooking and preparing food as a part-time line cook at LifeCafe, but she feels frustrated that every time she wants to tackle her prep lists for cooking for the line, she cannot find a right recipe because the recipe organizer system in the kitchen is messed up; her coworkers don't seem to put them back together when they use the recipes. She is hoping for a better way to get her job done and can feel more efficient at work right before she goes back to her college classes.



PERSONA



Persona 2 - Justin Ray

Problem Statement

Justin is a busy MBA student, working also as a LifeCafe Assistant Manager, who needs to find a right recipe to help team members prep and cook correctly and efficiently because he wants to increase his ability to mentor them and learn new skills to advance his career.



Justin

Age: 32
Education: BA - Business Admin
Hometown: Chicago, Illinois
Family: Lives with Partner
Occupation: Assistant Manager

"I'm not so good at cooking but interested in a managing position. I want to become a General Manager someday after finishing my MBA."

Goals

- increase my ability to mentor my team
- learn more about each position's responsibilities
- want to become a servant-heart leader

Frustrations

- "I want to teach new team members how to prep and cook for the line, but I don't know where to begin because I'm also a new Assistant Manager."
- "I feel so frustrated everyday when I come to work because our recipe organizer is all messed up from the night shift crew who didn't put them back after they are done last night!"

Justin Ray is a compassionate businessman who wants to become a General Manager someday after finishing his MBA. He also wants to become a servant-heart leader who can lead his team and build the healthy workplace with a high-standard morale. He is eager to help and mentor his fellow team members, however his lack of knowledge in order to help the line cooks due to his fairly recent employment slows him down to earn team members' trust to become a better leader. So he wants to improve the work environment however it takes!



USER JOURNEY MAP



Persona 1 - Hailey Fern

Mapping Hailey's user journey revealed how helpful it would be for users to have access to a Recipe Organizer App.



User Journey Map

Persona 1 - Hailey Fern | User Story | Goal

"As a busy senior college student working also as a part-time Line Cook, I want to find a right recipe from the recipe organizer binder to prep and cook, so that I can learn new skills to add onto my resume, mentor younger coworkers, and feel more efficient at work right before I go back to my college classes."

ACTION	Determine the list	Find the recipe	Find the ingredients	Complete the prep	Label the prep date	Store in the cooler
Task List	Tasks A. Find the manager or assistant manager B. Ask him/her about the prep list C. Determine the priority of prep items	Tasks A. Find the recipe binder B. Find the right recipe C. Determine how much to make	Tasks A. Go to the cooler to find each ingredients B. Prepare each seasoning that's required C. Wash produce	Tasks A. Cut the ingredients B. Add ingredients C. Mix them all D. Portion it into the right container	Tasks A. Find out how many days the prep will last B. Determine the date that will expire C. Place a label with all the info required	Tasks A. Go to the walk-in cooler B. Place it in order C. Check the next prep list to accomplish
Feeling Adjective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Excited Eager Reliable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anxious Frustrated Confused 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anxious Hopeful Ready 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Satisfied Happy Calm Content 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Happy Accomplished Satisfied 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Excited Glad Satisfied
Improvement Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better prep listing notification in advance, so team members won't need the manager or assistant manager Better prioritized list 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better recipe system with accessibility such as a recipe organizer app featuring Spoken Content, Zoom, Audio, Voice Control, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better cooler shelf organizing system Better labeling system Better labeling system to make sure each prep is not expired 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better way to figure out the right measurement of each ingredients Better organized cooking utensil system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better labeling system Use digital printing instead of handwriting to label each prep item for better accessibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better labeled cooler Better shelf system Better cleaning system



USER JOURNEY MAP



Persona 2 - Justin Ray

Mapping Justin's user journey revealed how helpful it would be for users to have access to a Recipe Organizer App.

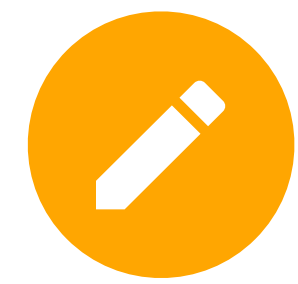


User Journey Map

Persona 2 - Justin Ray | User Story | Goal

"As an Assistant Manager, I want to find the right recipe to help team members prep and cook correctly and efficiently, so that I can increase my ability to mentor them and learn new skills that will help me to become a General Manager after finishing my MBA."

ACTION	Determine the list	Find the recipe	Find the ingredients	Complete the prep	Label the prep date	Store in the cooler
Task List	Tasks A. Talk to Line Cook about immediate prep needs B. Create the prep list C. Determine the priority of prep items	Tasks A. Assign the task B. Determine who is available C. Explain which one needs to be done immediately	Tasks A. Help find the recipe binder B. Help find the right recipe C. Help find the right ingredients	Tasks A. Help find each ingredients in the cooler B. Give some advice for prepping if necessary C. Help find the right cooking utensils	Tasks A. Check if the prep was made correctly B. Check the label if the expiration date was included C. Check how many portions were made	Tasks A. Reorganize the list B. Reprioritize the list C. Assign tasks to team members or coach
Feeling Adjective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Friendly • Confident • Accountable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Courteous • Grateful • Hopeful 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nervous • Frustrated • Helpless 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eager • Helpful • Glad 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calm • Grateful • Satisfied 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Happy • Content • Accomplished
Improvement Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better prep listing notification in advance, so team members won't need the manager or assistant manager • Better prioritized list 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better assigning tool that shows who is and how long each team member is available 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better recipe system with accessibility such as a recipe organizer app featuring Spoken Content, Zoom, Audio, Voice Control, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better knives • Better cutting boards • Reliable equipment • Better organized cooking utensil system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better way to figure out the right measurement of each ingredients 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better labeling system • Use digital printing instead of handwriting to label each prep item for better accessibility



Starting the Design

- UX Design Storyboards
- Paper Wireframes
- Digital Wireframes
- Low-Fidelity Prototype
- Usability Studies





STORYBOARD



UX Design Storyboard Big Picture

LifeCafe Recipe Organizer App

Scenario: An app that allows users to search and find the recipes more easily and quickly, and help them learn to cook new menus and feel more efficient and professional.



UX Design Storyboard - Big Picture

LifeCafe Recipe Organizer App

Scenario: An app that allows users to search and find the recipes more quickly and easily, and help them learn to cook new menus and feel more efficient and professional.



Justin has been assigned to train Line Cooks to prep and cook faster as an assistant manager, so that LifeCafe customers won't have to wait too long. He found out the kitchen staff can not find recipes in the binder.



The company just launched the LifeCafe recipe organizer app, so that the recently-hired employee Justin could install it on the mobile devices in the kitchen.



Justin added all the kitchen staff as a team on the app and assigned them to learn about the existing recipes and new menus by reading or watching the videos.



Justin assigned the kitchen staff to rate each recipe with 1-5 stars and comment their feedback and questions for the company to review and revise for future updates.



The line cooks and the rest of the kitchen staff were so excited to be able to search & find the recipes and learn new menus more quickly and easily.



Justin is now happier to be able to train team members, knowing they are happier AND the customers are happier to be able to pick up their orders and dine faster.

Problem Statement: Justin is a busy MBA student working also as a LifeCafe Assistant manager who needs to find the right recipes to help team members prep and cook correctly and efficiently because he wants to increase his ability to mentor them and learn new skills to advance his career.

Goal Statement: Our LifeCafe recipe organizer app will let users find recipes more quickly & easily and learn to cook new menus which will affect Line Cooks & the rest of the kitchen staff by allowing them to search & find the correct recipes for each menu ready to order in-store or order in advance via mobile app as well as learn to cook new menus correctly by watching the videos created by a corporate chef to keep the company's brand integrity.



STORYBOARD



UX Design Storyboard Close-Up

LifeCafe Recipe Organizer App

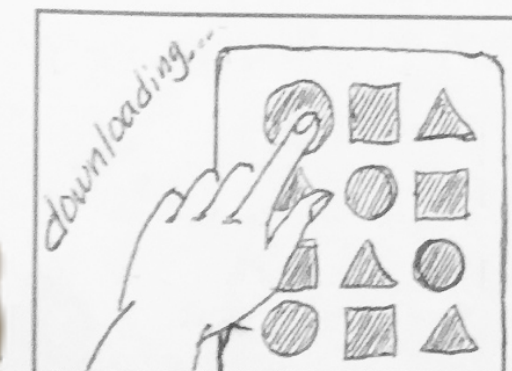
Scenario: An app that allows users to search and find the recipes more easily and quickly, and help them learn to cook new menus and feel more efficient and professional.



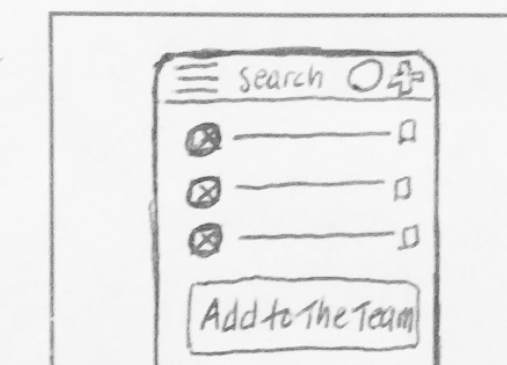
UX Design Storyboard - Close-up

LifeCafe Recipe Organizer App

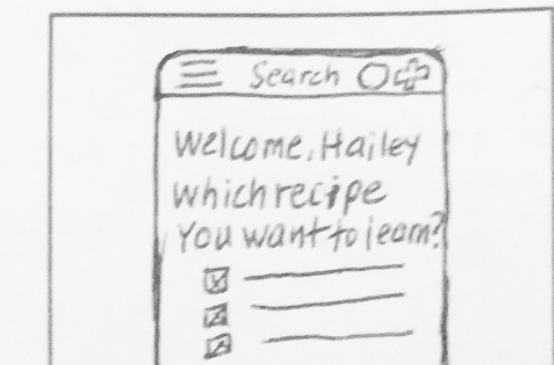
Scenario: An app that allows users to search and find the recipes more quickly and easily, and help them learn to cook new menus and feel more efficient and professional.



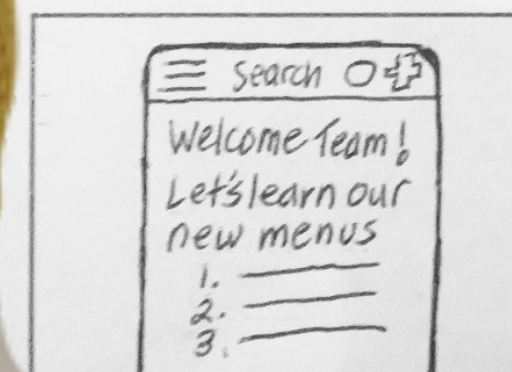
Justin downloads the LifeCafe Recipe Organizer App and logs in.



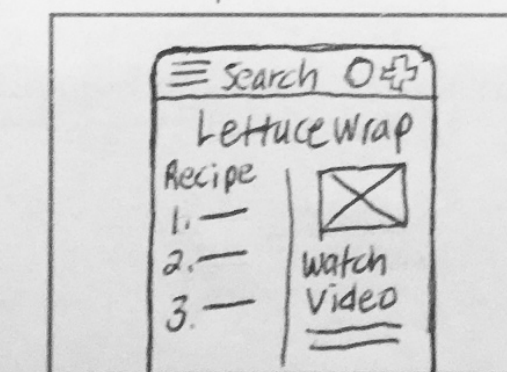
Justin adds all the kitchen staff as a team on the app and tags them, so that they will get notifications.



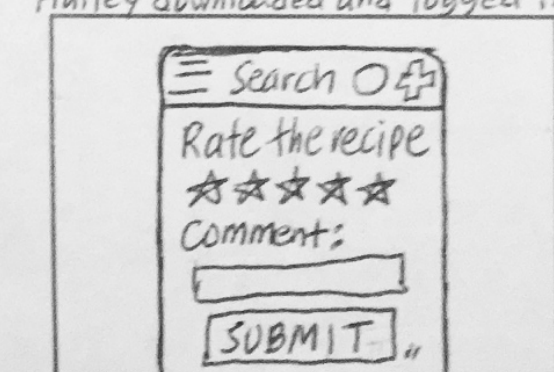
The team members who were tagged are assigned to learn new menus. The line cooks are the 1st group to learn. Hailey downloaded and logged in.



The kitchen staff can use the company's mobile device (ex. tablet/large-screen display) and log in to their account to learn new recipe, corporate chef to master their skills, or search & find the recipes.

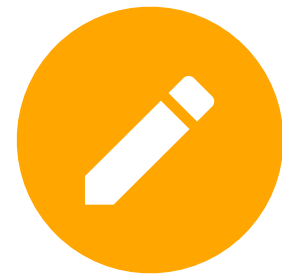


They can search & find the recipes and watch the video created by a



After reviewing them, each staff is able to submit the comments and questions with 1-5 star rating.

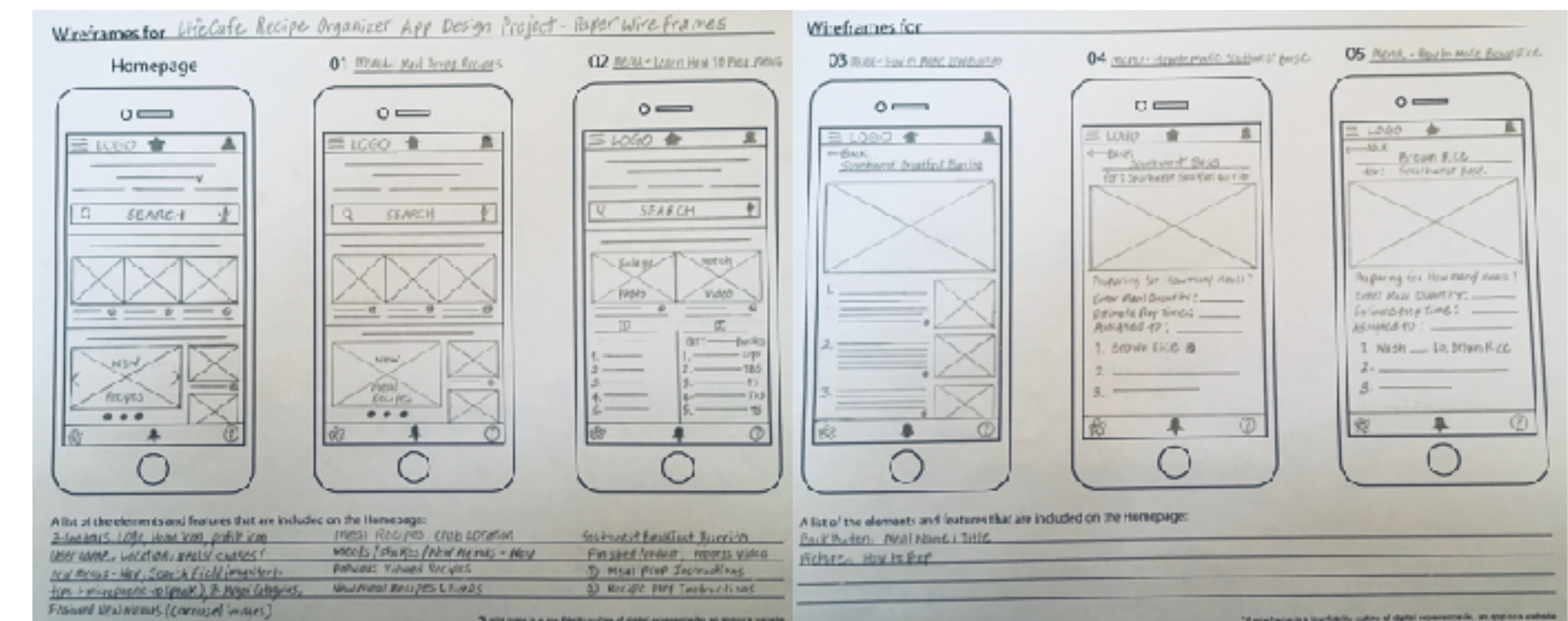
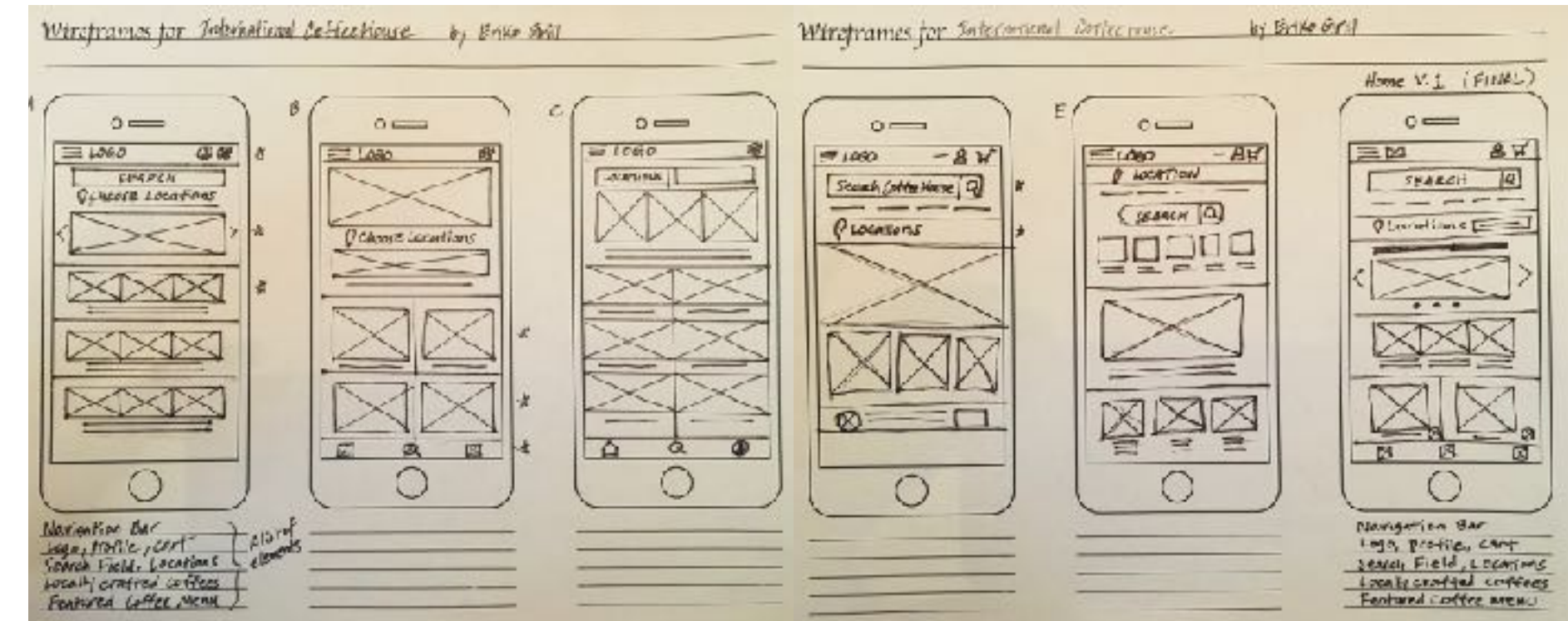
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Paper Wireframes

LifeCafe Recipe Organizer App

Taking the time to draft iterations for each screen of the app on paper ensured that the elements that made it to digital wireframes would be well-suited to address user pain points.





WIREFRAME



Digital Wireframes

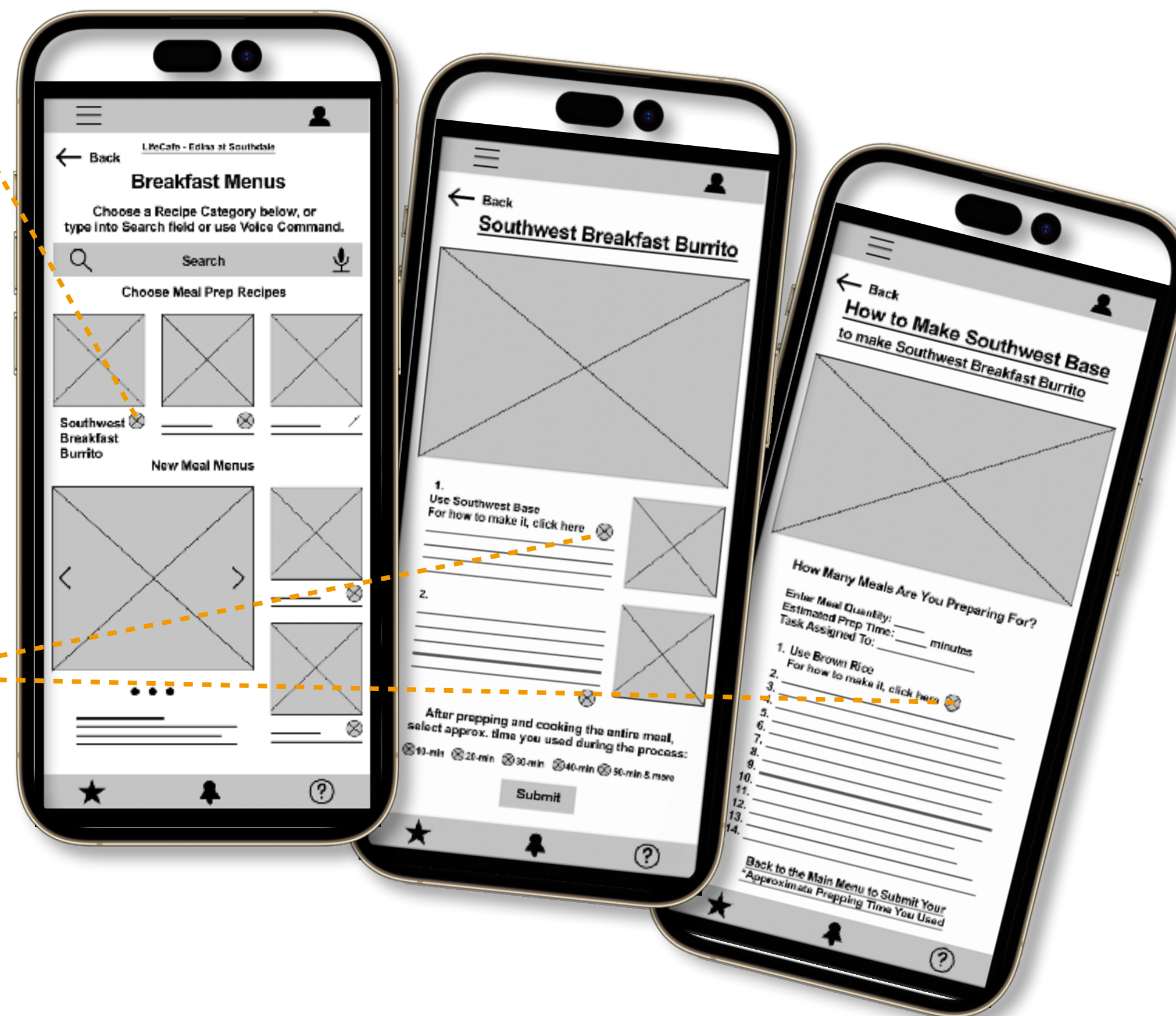
LifeCafe Recipe Organizer App

As the initial design phase continued, I made sure to base screen designs on feedback and findings from the user research.



Each screen shows pictures of menu items for users to find a recipe find recipes quickly & easily as well as learn how to cook each menu correctly.

These buttons take users to access each ingredient that is required to complete the final product.





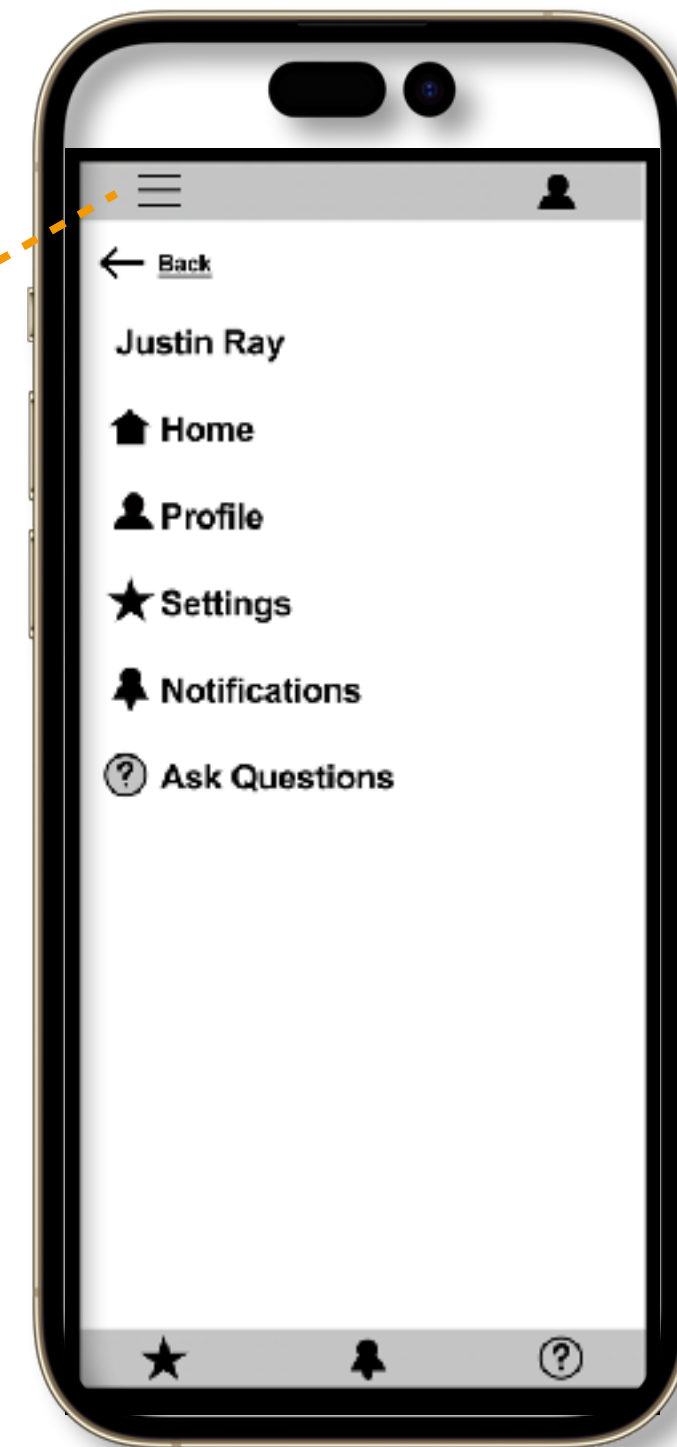
Digital Wireframes

LifeCafe Recipe Organizer App

Easy navigation was a key user need to address in the designs in addition to equipping the app to work with assistive technologies.



Easy access to navigation that's screen reader friendly.



PROTOTYPE

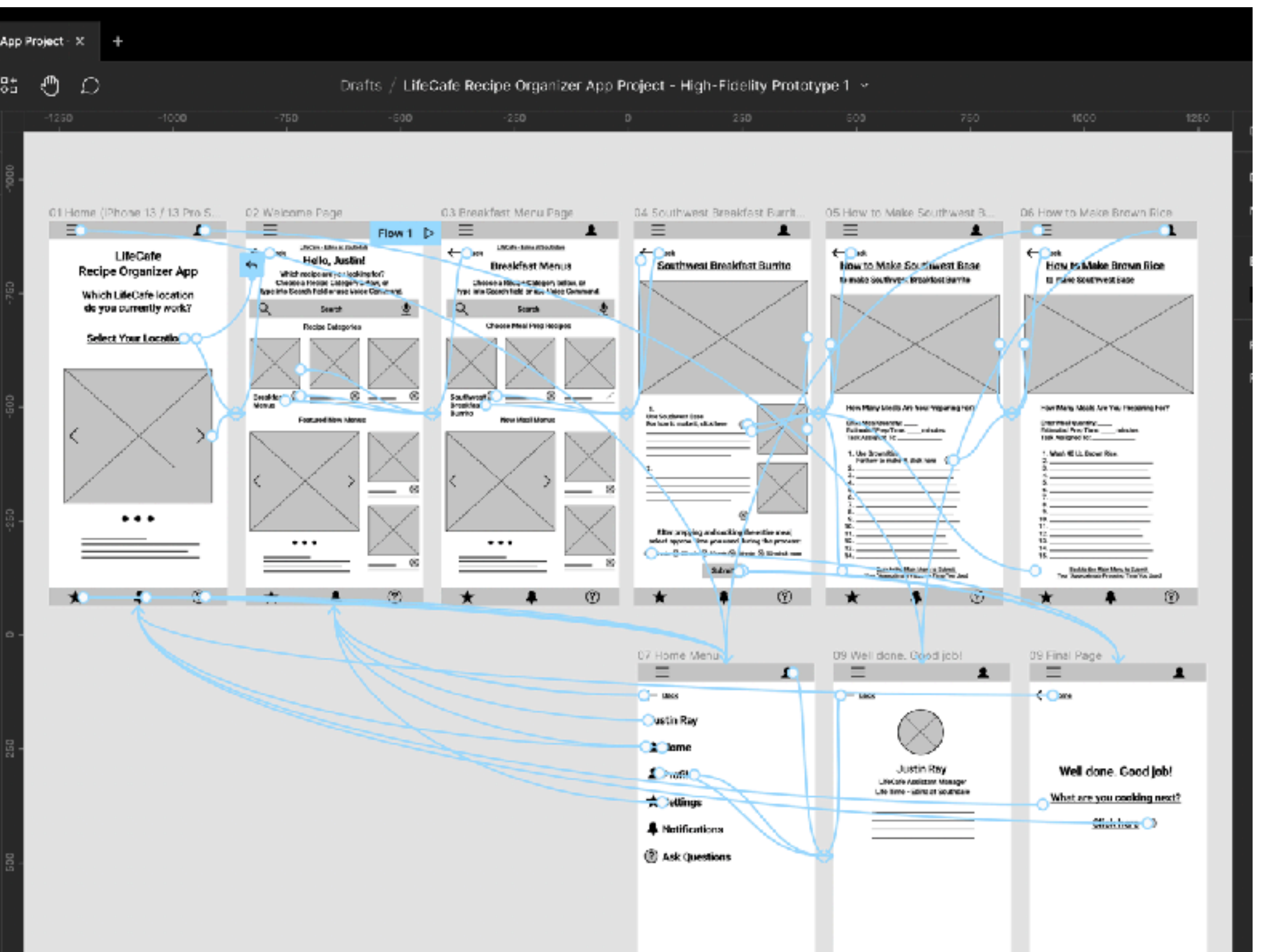


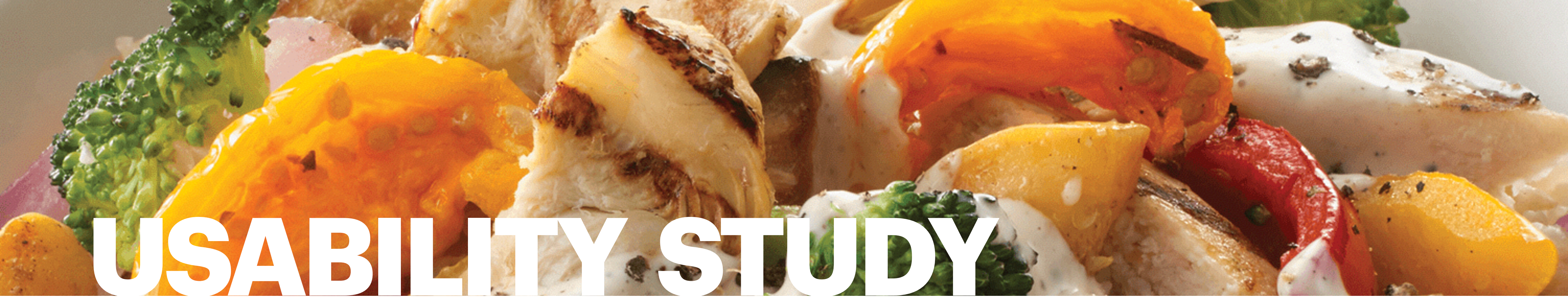
Low-Fidelity Prototype

LifeCafe Recipe Organizer App

Using the completed set of digital wireframes, I created a low-fidelity prototype. The primary user flow I connected was showing how to find a main recipe guide of Southwest Breakfast Burrito, and in order to make it, a line cook has to find a sub-recipe of Southwest Base & other ingredients, so the prototype could be used in a usability study.

[View the LifeCafe Recipe Organizer App](#)
[Low-Fidelity Prototype](#)





USABILITY STUDY



Findings

LifeCafe Recipe Organizer App

I conducted two rounds of usability studies. Findings from the first study helped guide the designs from wireframes to mockups. The second study used a high-fidelity prototype and revealed what aspects of the mockups needed refining.



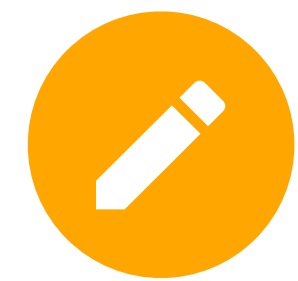
Round 1 Findings

1. Users want to search and find recipes quickly & easily
2. Users want to learn how to cook each menu correctly
3. Users want to prep and cook each meal made to order as soon as members order at the register at cafe or advance order via mobile app



Round 2 Findings

1. New Meal Menus feature confused users, so they are now included in the main menu category to help the app look clean.
2. Users want to learn new menus by watching the professional chef's videos



Refining the Design

- Mockups
- High-Fidelity Prototype
- Accessibility





DESIGN



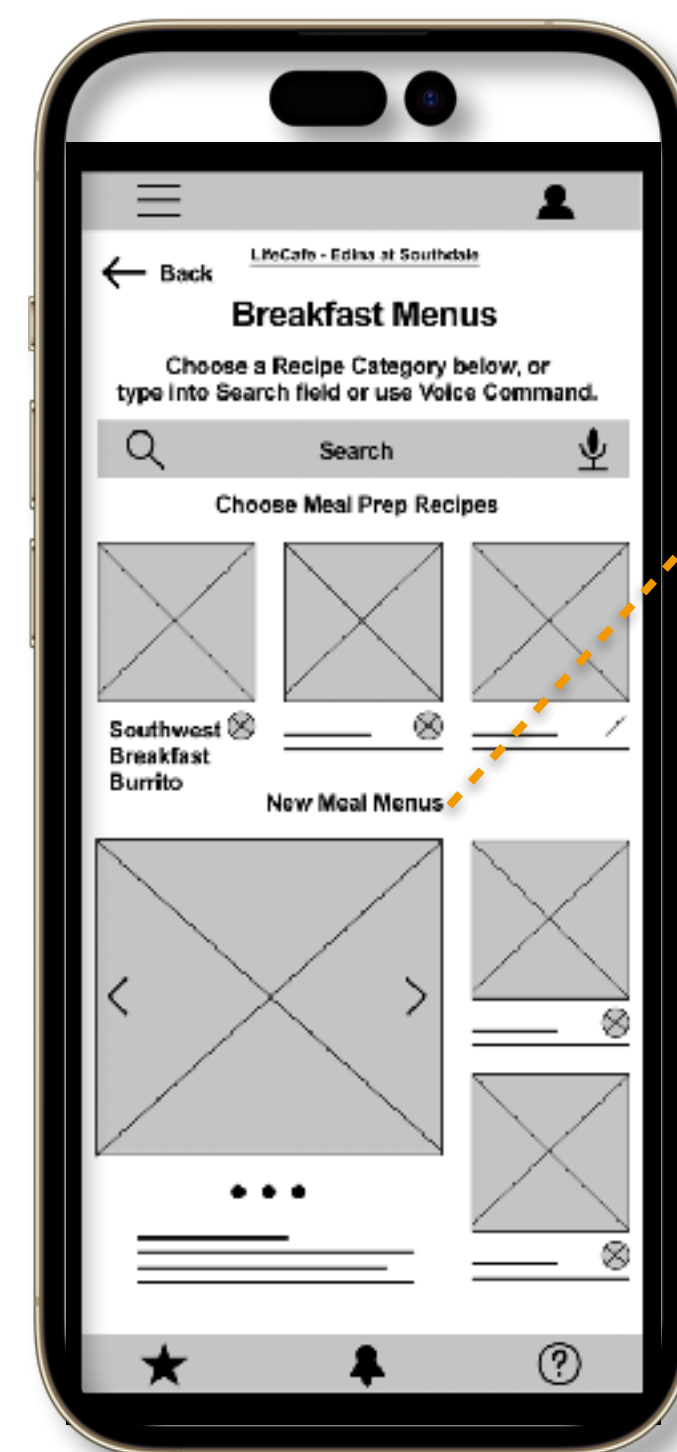
Mockups

LifeCafe Recipe Organizer App

Early usability studies revealed the frustration of feeling lost when users visited the “Breakfast Menus” page, so in order to streamline this flow, I consolidated the “New Meal Menus” and “Choose Meal Prep Recipes” into one “**Breakfast Menus –Select a Recipe –**” as a single direction to execute a simple user flow.



Before

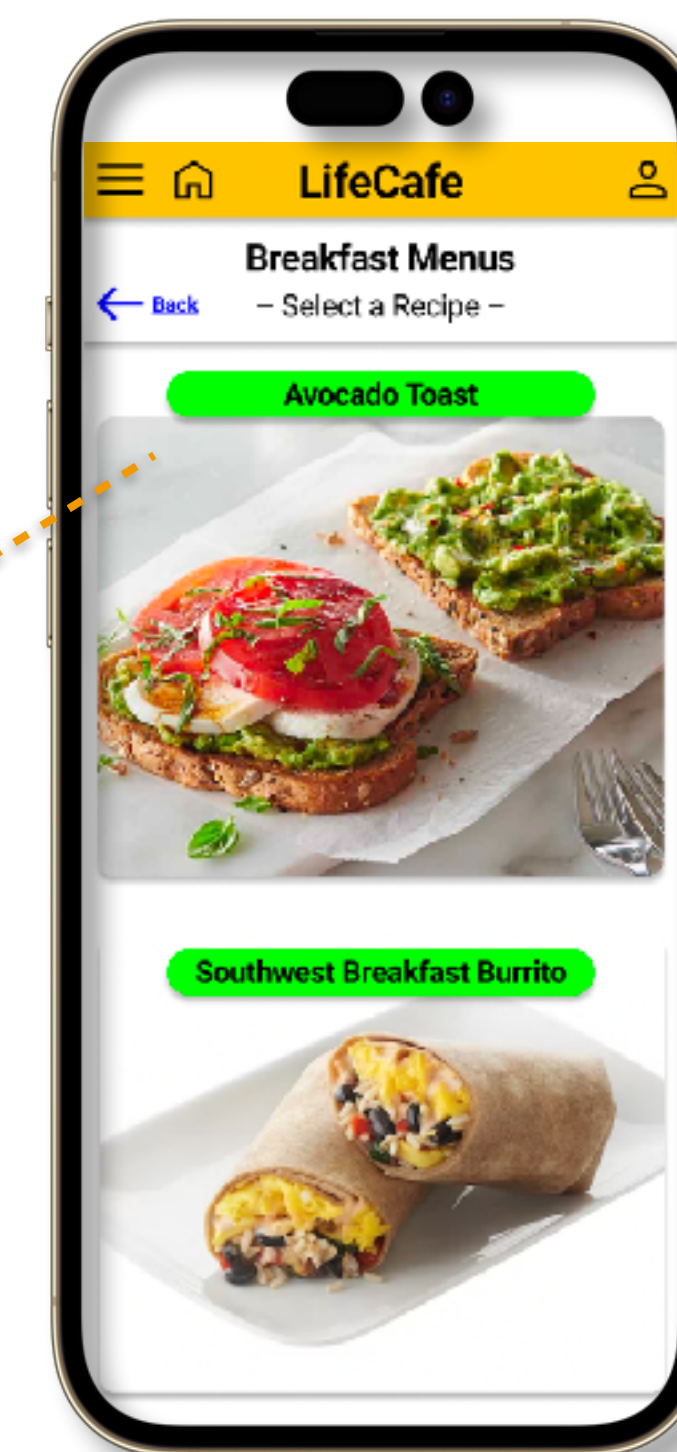


Before & After Usability Studies

This **New Meal Menus** category confused users **before usability study.**

The solution **after usability study** shows that the **New Meal Menus** are part of the main category, so there is no destruction for users to feel lost and feel more confident to go on to the tasks that they came for.

After





DESIGN

Before Usability Study 2

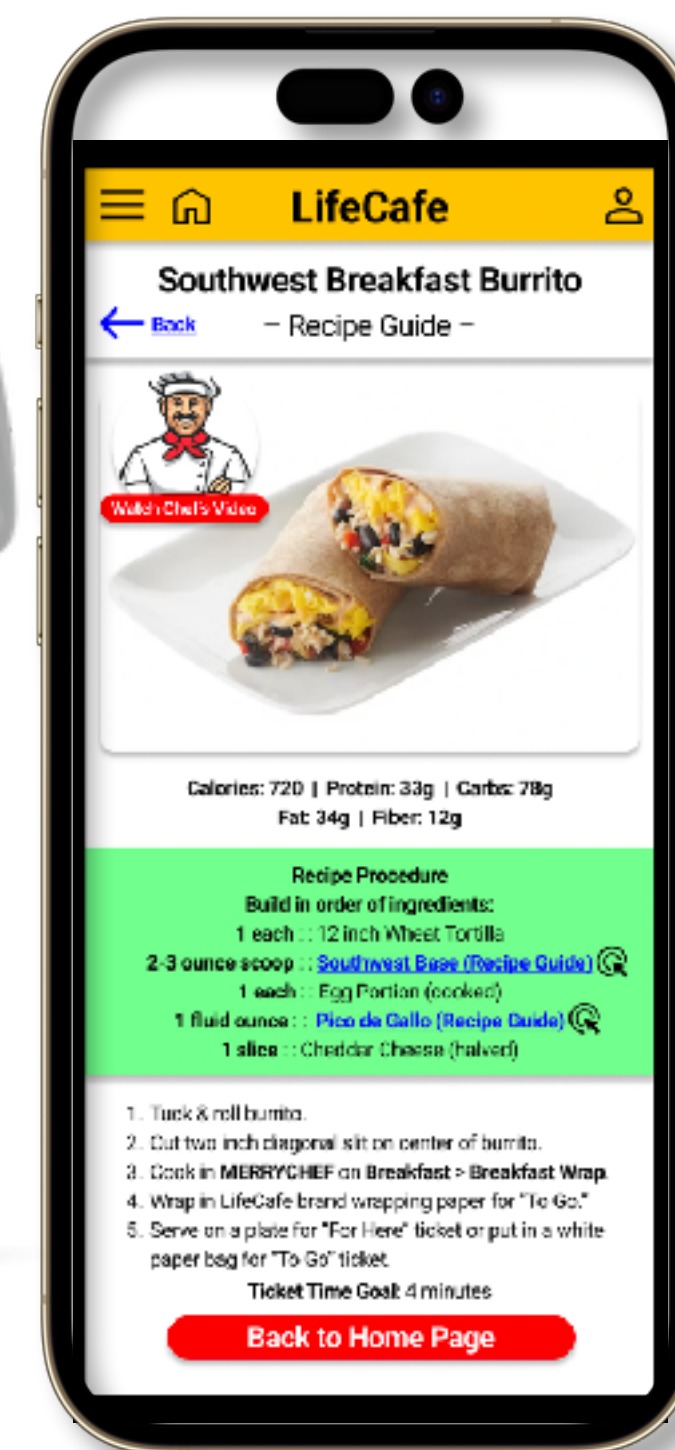
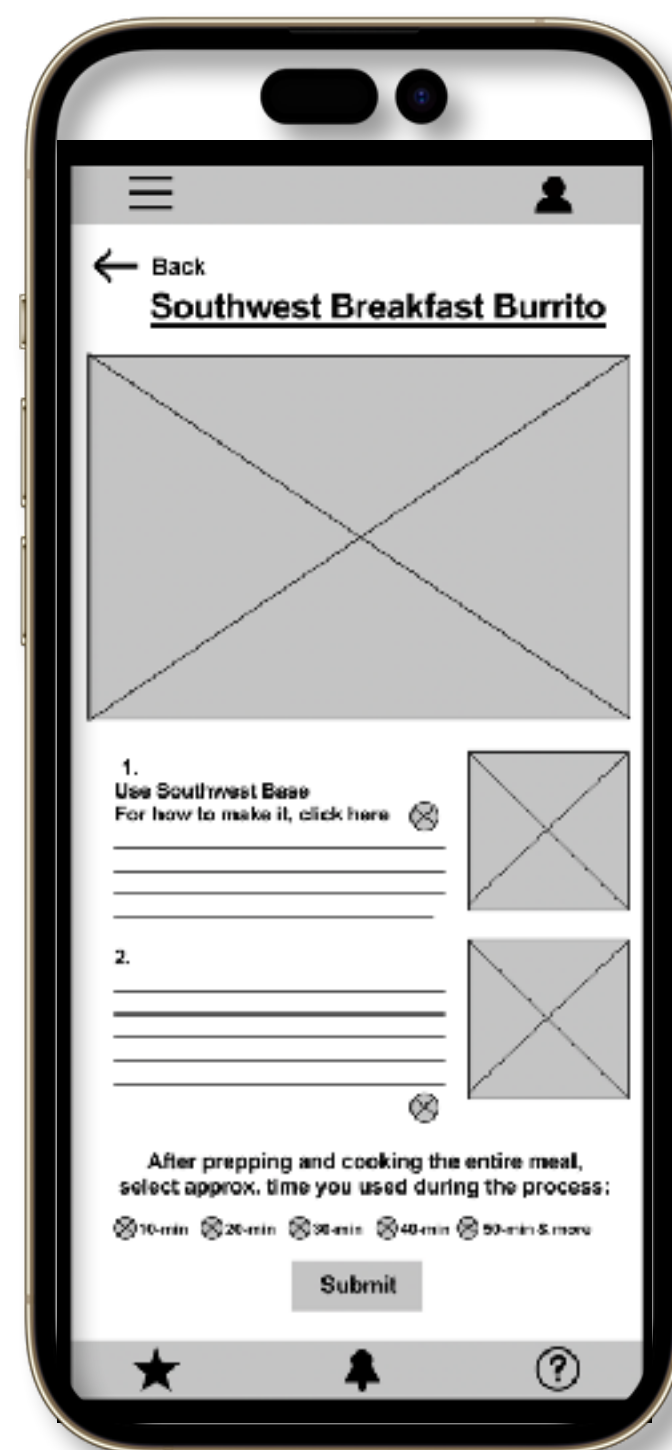
After Usability Study 2



Mockups

LifeCafe Recipe Organizer App

The second usability study revealed the frustration of feeling not adequate to complete the whole cooking & prepping process for newcomers, so I added a new feature **“Watch Chef’s Video”** with the professional look of a chef icon, so the cafe leaders, line cooks and other cafe & kitchen staff can vwatch how the pro chefs prep, cook and present the final menu. I also added **“Ticket Time Goal”** to increase their productivity and feeling a good challenge.



DESIGN



Key Mockups

LifeCafe Recipe Organizer App

Featuring the “**Watch Chef’s Video**” with the professional look of a chef icon, so the leaders, line cooks and other cafe & kitchen staff can watch how the pro chefs prep, cook and present the final menu. I also added “**Ticket Time Goal**” to increase their productivity and help them feel a sense of good challenge and pride.





PROTOTYPE



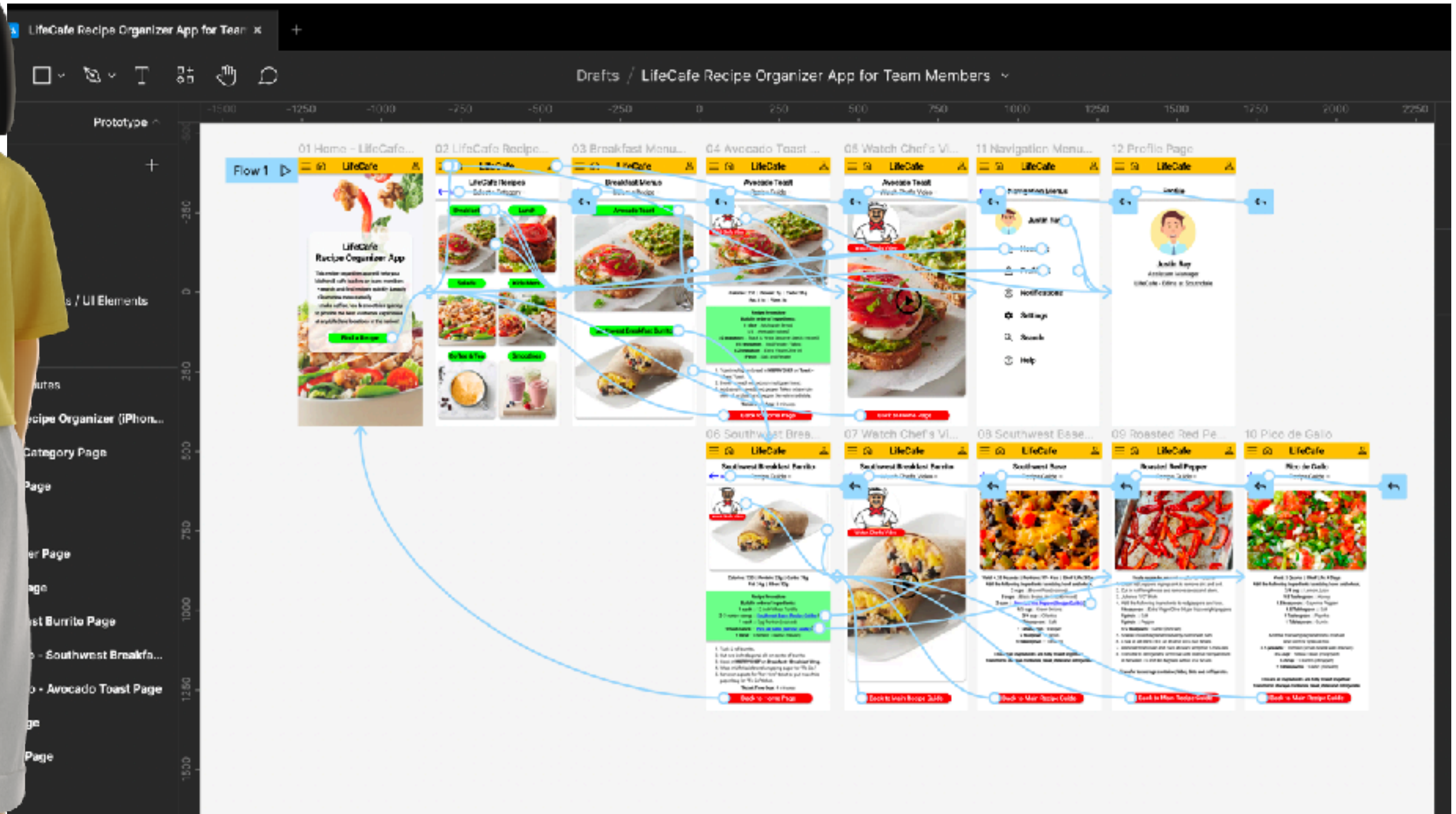
High-Fidelity Prototype

LifeCafe Recipe Organizer App

The final high-fidelity prototype presented cleaner user flows for cafe & kitchen leaders, other team members and newcomers to feel more confident to complete the whole process of cooking, prepping & the final presentation of the food, and learning new menus.

View the LifeCafe Recipe Organizer App

 [High Fidelity Prototype](#)





Accessibility Consideration

- Provided **“Watch Chef’s Video”** feature for cafe & kitchen leaders, other staff and newcomers who are hearing and vision impaired with opportunities to watch and/or listen to the pro tips how to start and finish the entire process recorded by a chef.
- Showcased the presentation of the final products that a professional chef made, and used detailed images to cover how to prep and cook the individual recipes that would be required to finish the main recipe of each menu at a glance.
- Used icons to help make navigation easier.





FINAL OVERVIEW



Going Forward

- Takeaways
- Next Steps





TAKEAWAYS



Impact

The app makes users feel like the LifeCafe Recipe Organizer App really thinks about how to meet their needs and help them feel not just adequate but confident from start to finish through the entire process of making foods.

Some feedback from the cafe & kitchen staff:
“Now, I can find a right recipe right away without going through a messy recipe system binder with unsorted papers everyday!”
“I can find all the ingredients’ recipes easily to finish my tasks so much faster than before that makes me feel more professional.”



What I Learned

The more I conducted the usability studies, I found out that clean designs and simple direct user flows helped users to move smoothly from one page to another that improved the interactive user experience overall.

While designing the LifeCafe Recipe Organizer App, I learned that the first ideas for the app are just a beginning of the process. Usability studies and peer feedback influenced each iteration of the app’s designs.



Next Steps

- Add more accessible features such as adding **Closed Captions** to the “**Watch Chef’s Video**” features for hearing and visual impaired users.
- Add more language options for users consider English as a second language.
- Conduct another round of usability studies to validate whether the pain points users experienced have been effectively addressed.
- Conduct more user research to determine any new areas of need.



Thank you!

Final Thoughts

While designing the LifeCafe Recipe Organizer App, I learned that the first ideas for the app are just a beginning of the process. Usability studies and feedback influenced each iteration of the app designs.

Thank you for your time reviewing my work on the LifeCafe Recipe Organizer App! If you would like to see more or get in touch, my contact information is provided below.

Eriko Grill

UX Designer, UX Researcher,
Visual Designer & Web/Graphic Designer

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