Popcorn Preview App Design
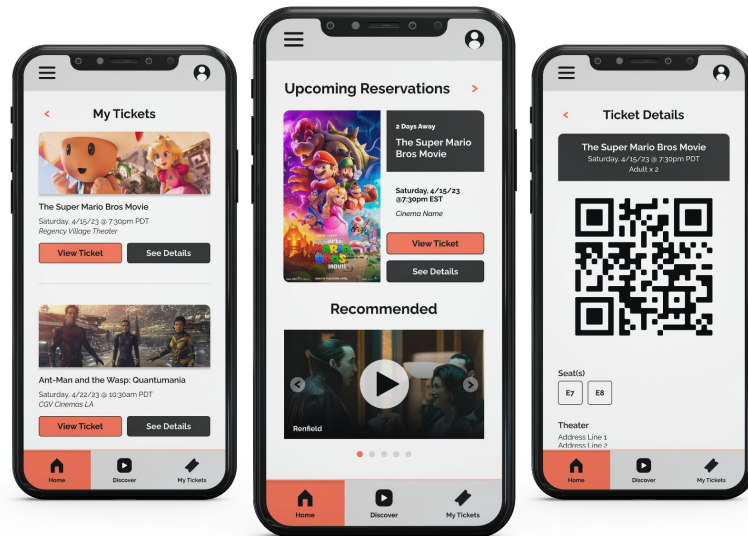
Austin Li

Project overview

The product:

Popcorn Preview is a new app designed to streamline the movie-going experience and to reinvigorate the movie industry.

Project duration:

February 2023 – April 2023

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Project overview

The problem:

Busy families and individuals need easy-to-access, streamlined solutions for quality time and bonding social experiences.

The goal:

Design an app that helps to reinvigorate the movie-going experience, and make it easier for families and individuals to plan social events.

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Project overview

My role:

UX Researcher & Designer

Responsibilities:

User research, conceptualizing, wireframing, prototyping, and conducting usability studies

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Understanding the user

- User research
- Personas
- Problem statements
- User journey maps

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User research: summary

The primary user group identified through research and provided personas was busy families and young adults who want more choices for social events and affordable entertainment options.

Through usability testing, I was able to observe more about user preferences for movie outings, including patterns and general criteria around how they find movies, as well as the preference to get or to go without snacks.

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User research: pain points

1

Streamlining

There are multiple parts to the movie-going experience; how do we centralize it in one process flow?

2

Ease of Access

Booking movies online can be overly-complicated. Simplify the language and options, while keeping it easy for users to customize their movie booking.
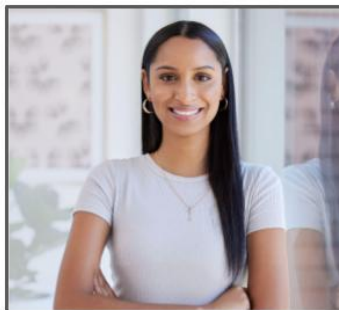
3

Discovery

Finding new movies can be a tricky process. How do we build curation and discovery around the user?

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Persona: **Amrita**

Problem statement:

Amrita is a young college student who needs access to streamlined and easy-to-manage social entertainment options because she wants to nurture her existing friendships with new and shared experiences.

"I want to make more friends, but I don't like going to college parties…"

Goals
- Find more time to forge new friendships
- Diversify social events with new and shared experiences

Frustrations
- Hard to manage details of social events with friends

Amrita Thomas

Age: 19
Education: University
Hometown: Fremont, CA
Family: Older sister
Occupation: Student

Amrita is starting her junior year at university. She will have a lighter course load this year and wants to rebalance her schedule to include more time for social events. However, her friend group usually resorts to college parties. Amrita would like a streamlined social experience to form tenable connections before the end of her college experience.

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User journey map

Outlining Amrita's user journey highlighted the various facets of the movie-going experience.

Persona: Amrita Thomas

Goal: Schedule a movie outing with friends

PROMPT: MOVIE APP

ACTION	Choose a movie	Purchase tickets	Share details with friends	Navigate to movie theater	Enjoy the movie!
TASK LIST	Tasks A. See trailers and movie reviews B. Ask friends for input C. Select movie and showing	Tasks A. Select seats (if reserved seating) B. Pay for tickets C. Receive order confirmation	Tasks A. Forward details to friends B. Share ticket / ticket code C. Confirm rendezvous	Tasks A. Drive to movie theater and park B. Meet with friends C. Distribute tickets if necessary and enter theater	Tasks A. Locate correct theater room and seats B. Purchase snacks
FEELING ADJECTIVE	• Overwhelmed • Anxious	• Excited • Confused (if bad website / app)	• Overwhelmed • Excited	• Rushed • Impatient	• Confused • Lost • Rushed
IMPROVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES	• Dedicated mobile application • Customized recommendations based on preferences	• Allow user to specify disabilities (i.e. wheelchair accessible or hearing impairment)	• Shareable link via text or email	• Directions to theater in application or link to Google Maps	• Allow snack preorder • Utilize AR mapping to locate seats

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Starting the design

- Paper wireframes
- Digital wireframes
- Low-fidelity prototype
- Usability studies
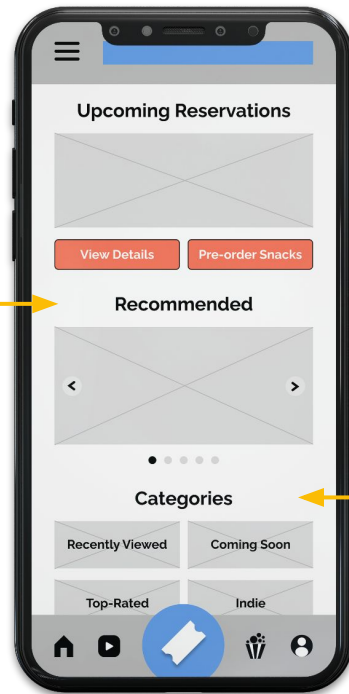
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Paper wireframes

I played around with a variety of elements to include on the home screen, including a trailer focus, filters, categories, etc.

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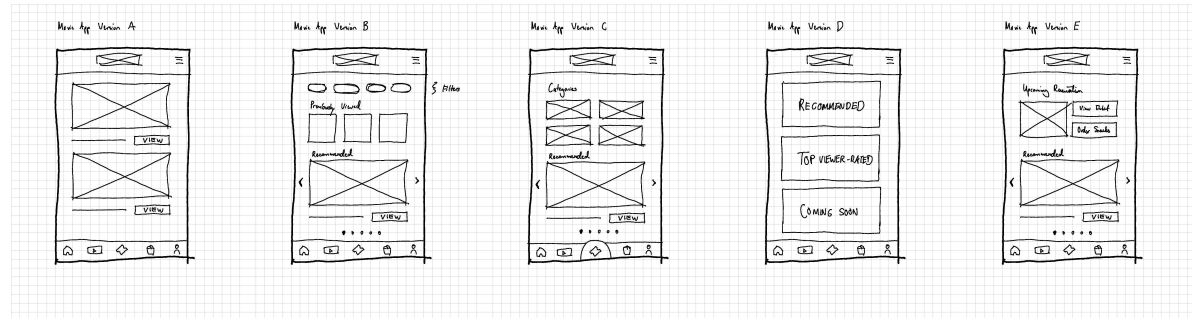
Digital wireframes

Targeting the pain point of movie discovery, the approach was to provide users with various paths to find movies: to empower natural and algorithmic discovery.

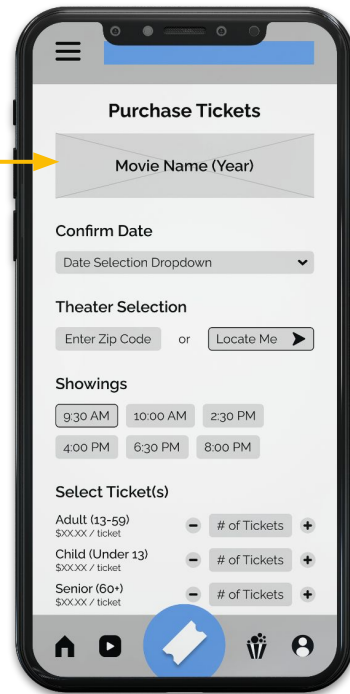This recommended section would contain movies based on previously ordered tickets and user reviews.

The categories allow users an alternate path to discover movies.

Upcoming Reservations

View Details   Pre-order Snacks

Recommended

Categories

Recently Viewed   Coming Soon

Top-Rated   Indie

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Digital wireframes

To streamline the process, customization and options were centralized and later tested in usability testing to ensure it followed a seamless, logical flow.

The goal was to maintain a no-hassle, straightforward design.

Purchase Tickets

Movie Name (Year)

Confirm Date

Date Selection Dropdown

Theater Selection

Enter Zip Code   or   Locate Me ▶

Showings

| 9:30 AM | 10:00 AM | 2:30 PM |
| 4:00 PM | 6:30 PM | 8:00 PM |

Select Ticket(s)

Adult (13-59)
$XXXX / ticket   ➖ # of Tickets ➕

Child (Under 13)
$XXXX / ticket   ➖ # of Tickets ➕

Senior (60+)
$XXXX / ticket   ➖ # of Tickets ➕

These buttons allow for easy access to all features from the app without needing to navigate complex menus.

Low-fidelity prototype

The low-fidelity prototype simulated the main user journey from movie discovery to booking completion.

View the Popcorn Preview low-fidelity prototype.

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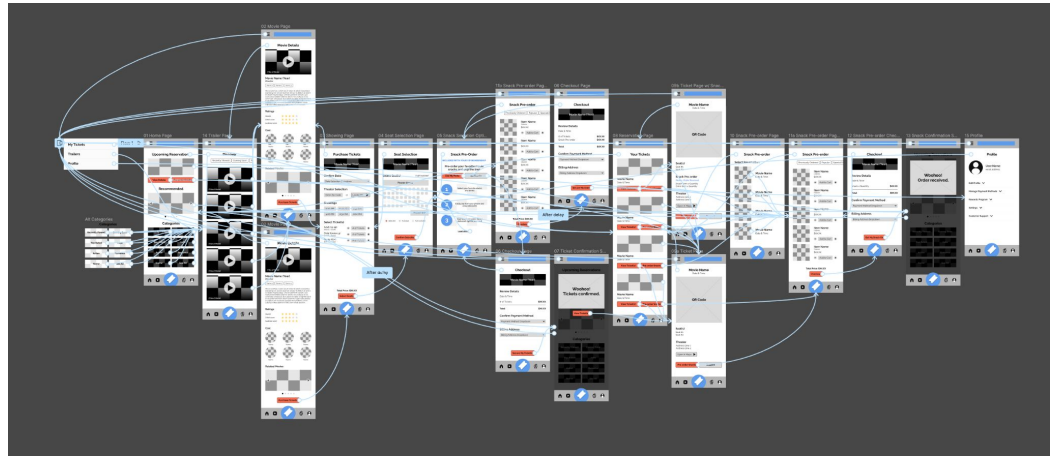
Usability study: findings

Two rounds of usability studies were conducted. The first study focused on the low-fidelity prototype and drove changes going into the high-fidelity prototype. The second study served as a follow-up to further refine the high-fidelity prototype.

Round 1 findings

1. Users want expounded details and instructions

2. Users want self-explanatory navigation

3. Users need clearer visual cues and intuitive color-coding

Round 2 findings

1. Some screens are extraneous to the user flow

2. The movie discovery process can be further refined and personalized

3. More information learned about movie ticket purchase habits

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Refining the design

- Mockups
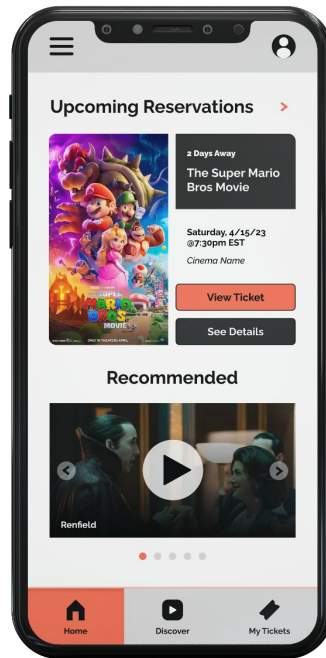- High-fidelity prototype
- Accessibility

Mockups

The early design had too much visual homogeneity that made it difficult to identify the upcoming reservations as a unique section. This was made more prominent with a proper way to access all upcoming reservations.
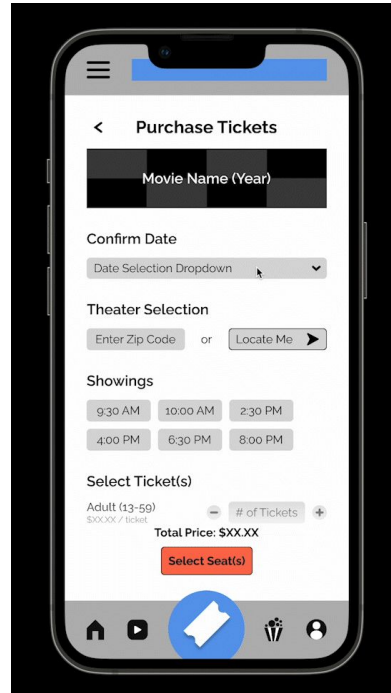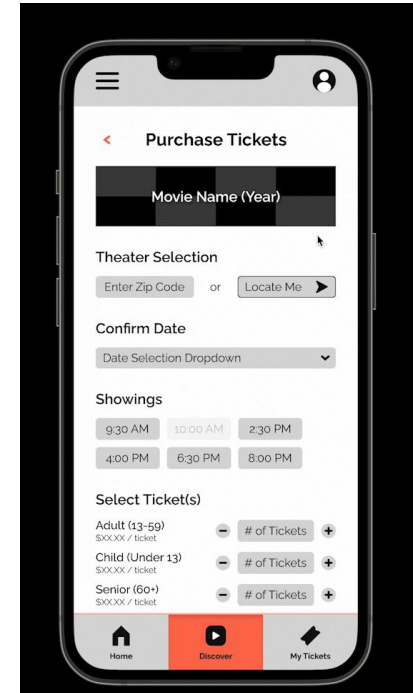
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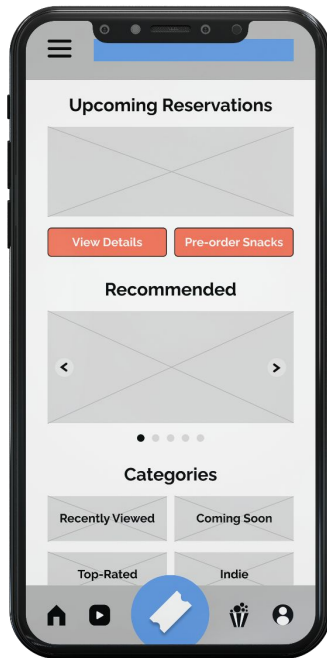
Mockups

Additional functionality was added to theater selection for the mockup and the calendar was reimagined for date selection. This was inspired by feedback from users saying they usually will not buy tickets too far in advance.
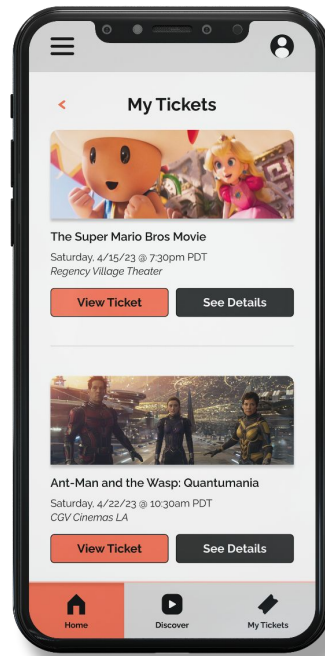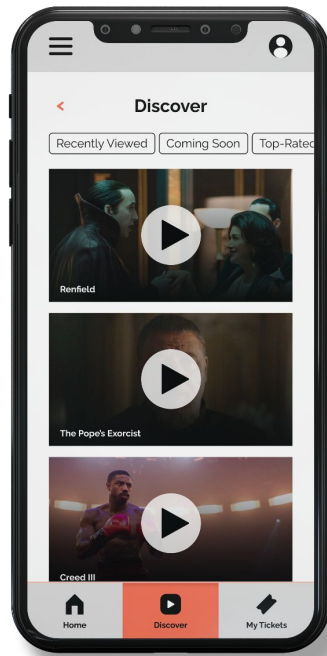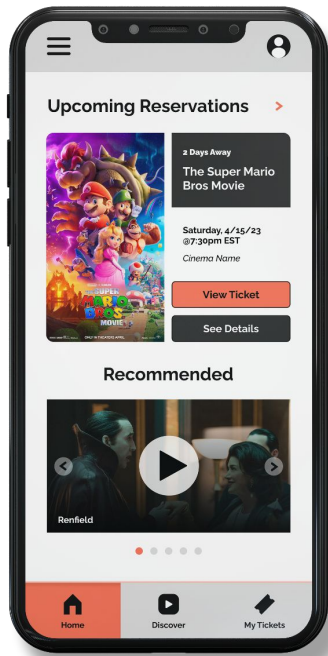
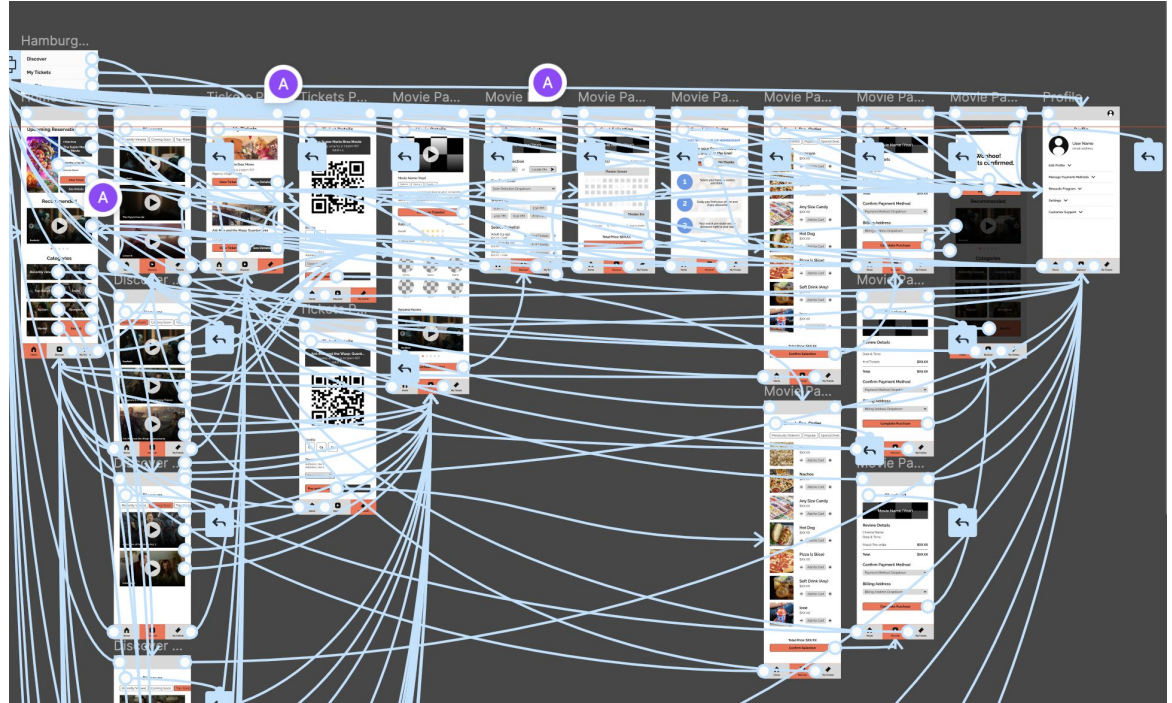Before usability study

After usability study

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Mockups

High-fidelity prototype

This updated high-fidelity prototype reflects feedback and insight generated from usability studies, streamlining user flows and improving various visual elements.

[View the Popcorn Preview high-fidelity prototype.](#)

Accessibility considerations

1

Colors and contrast were checked against Web Content Accessibility Guidelines.

2

Icons and text labels used in navigation to help guide navigation, while also addressing accessibility with screen readers.

3

Animations and design were kept fairly minimal to avoid needless distractions while using the accent color in tappable items and CTA buttons.

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Going forward

- Takeaways
- Next steps

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Takeaways

Impact:

Based on feedback from participants, the app is visually impactful while simultaneously simplifying and streamlining the movie-going experience.

What I learned:

I've loved getting to work on this application from conception to design and iteration. I've learned just how important it is to mind the user in designs and seeing firsthand the synergy from working with users to develop and design an application.

Next steps

1

The snack pre-order functionality needs to be built-out further to ensure it is a value-added feature to users. All participants in the usability study added snacks, so it is likely that this will be a vital part of the main user flow.

2

Currently, the high-fidelity prototype lacks search functionality for all lists (i.e. movies, snacks). I would like to develop this along with filters.

3

Another key differentiator highlighted during ideation that I would love to add to the mobile application is a social aspect: sharing tickets or planning movie outing with a group.

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Let's connect!

Thank you for taking the time to review the Popcorn Preview project! If you have any questions or you would like to get in touch, you can contact me via the information below.

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