

BarCade Case Study

Ben Zautner

Project overview



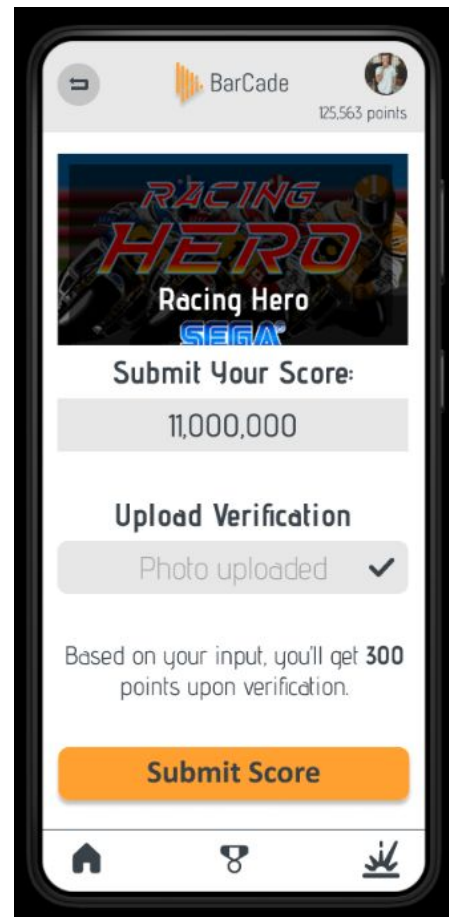
The product:

BarCade is looking to build a High Score Tracking app to build a social media based on their business.



Project duration:

December 2021 - May 2022



Project overview



The problem:

BarCade is looking to have a high score tracking application. They are also hoping to have a social media aspect to their design.



The goal:

Build an experience that fosters a need to use rewards points and share your rewards with your friends.

Project overview



My role:

Identify your role in the project - e.g., lead UX designer, UX researcher, etc.



Responsibilities:

List the responsibilities you had throughout the project - e.g., user research, wireframing, prototyping, etc.

Understanding the user

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

User research: summary



I went into the research thinking about competitors - How does Dave & Busters reward their customers? How do arcade enthusiasts keep track of their own scores? I wanted to check out what my competition does with their own applications, whether they are hosted by the business themselves or a third party solution. Going in, I assumed that there would not be much interest in a score tracking system like this, but as I was searching for competition I found quite a few score tracking applications, mainly for pinball machines.

User research: pain points

1

No rewards for scores

Many arcades have some kind of rewards applications, but all rewards were about visits or playing specific games. We wanted to make sure that scores were a significant part of this apps draw.

2

Built in Search

Some applications just listed games out without any way to search for specific titles. I wanted to make sure that this application had a clear search functionality that was easy to use.

3

Ease of use

The other applications I used that did have score tracking were not very user friendly, and I struggled to figure out how to post a score, I wanted to ensure that the score posting was very simple.

Persona: Joel Smith

Problem statement:

Joel is a competitive gaming enthusiast who needs to have a way to compete at the arcade because he wants to prove that he is the best.



Joel Smith

Age: 21

Education: In college, 3rd year

Hometown: Albany, NY

Family: Lives with Parents and siblings

Occupation: Office Clerk

“I want to be the one at the top of the charts!”

Goals

- Wants to compete with others to have the highest score
- Is looking to make new friends to have more reasons to get out of the house

Frustrations

- “It’s hard to find time for all of my friends to play games together.”
- “There should be some rewards for spending money at the barcade!”

Jamie is a college student living at home with his family as he finishes up his degree in Marketing. Their schedule can be a bit all over the place so it can be hard to find time to play games with their current friends. He also looks for more opportunities to spend time out of the house.

Persona: Audrey Jones

Problem statement:

Audrey is a busy working mother who wants to give her son a fun night out with the family because she normally cannot afford to.



Audrey Jones

Age: 33

Education: High School
Diploma

Hometown: Troy, NY

Family: Husband and Son

Occupation: Medical Data Entry

“If it’s free, it’s for me!”

Goals

- Is looking for ways to save money from time to time
- Inclusive challenges that are not score based

Frustrations

- “It can be way too expensive to go out and enjoy the arcade.”
- “My son wants to take part in challenges but is not very good at games.”

Audrey has a work from home job, entering data into a database for a medical company. Audrey and her husband are saving up to buy a home, so they rarely go out for dinner, especially with their young son. They want to go out and enjoy places like the barcade, without breaking the bank.

User journey map

Mapping out Joel's user journey helped create the step by step guideline for the user flow of submitting a score.

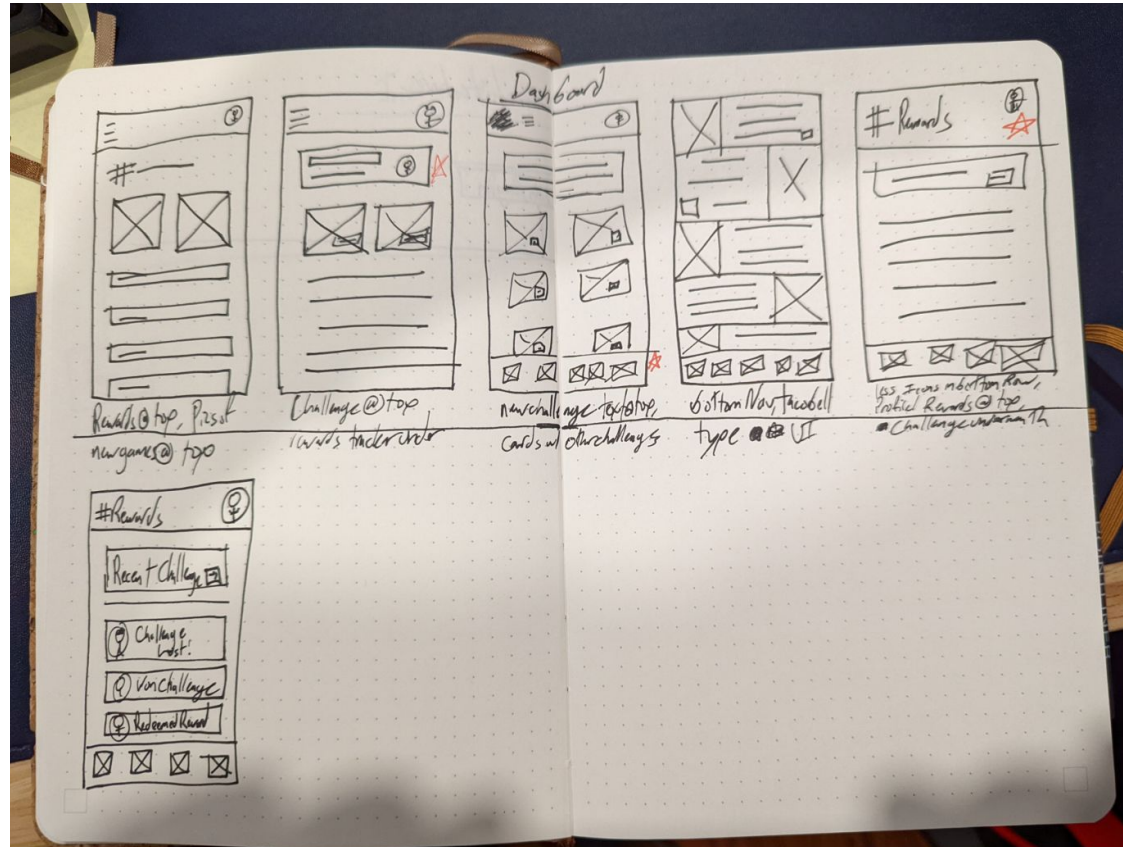
Persona: Joel

Goal: A quick way to input a new high score for a specific game

ACTION	Select Game	Choose Challenge	Submit & Verify Score	Score Updated in App
TASK LIST	A. Search list of games in barcade B. Select game to input score	A. Search list of challenges for specific game B: Select challenge to input new score	A. Input user score B. Upload picture of score for verification C: Submit materials	A. Receive confirmation that score has been submitted properly B. Go to games Challenges C: See Submitted score
FEELING ADJECTIVE	Overwhelmed by the number of game options available	Surprised by the amount of challenges per game Irritated that he can't just choose "high score"	Excited to prove to others his abilities Annoyed at verification requirements	Happy to see their name in the leaderboard
IMPROVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES	"Frequently Searched Games/ Previously Searched Games" option to return to games quickly Include logos for the games	Search filters for challenges Breaking up challenges into two sections for high score and challenges	Extra points in rewards program for verifying other scores on machine No need to verify after X amount of submissions?	See rewards program number increase when submission has been confirmed

Paper wireframes

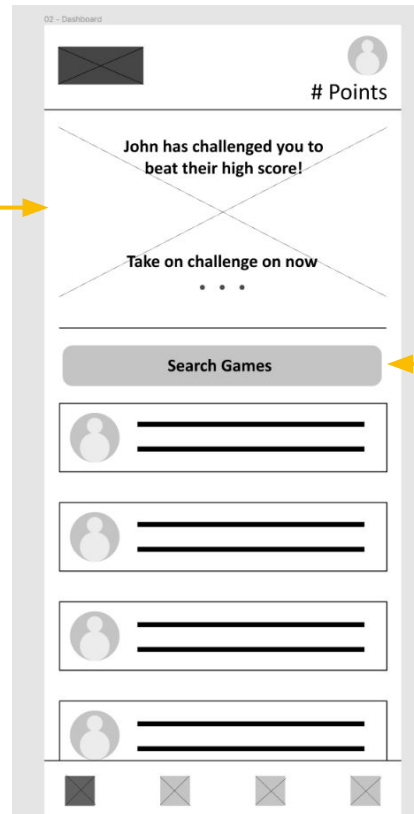
As I started drawing, it became clear that a more “feed” like dashboard would be more in line with what the user would expect. It would draw on biases that users have to treat this new app like they currently treat applications like Facebook or Instagram.



Digital wireframes

I wanted to make sure the search was front and center, and wanted to create a carousel to put latest news total.

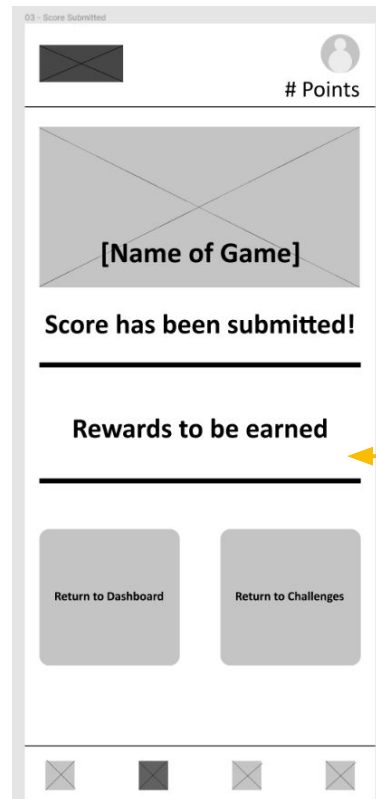
Latest news goes here, BarCade can rotate new rewards programs as they are implemented



Search front and center, easy for users to find the search function

Digital wireframes

When submitting a score I wanted it to be immediately clear what the user would get in reward points.

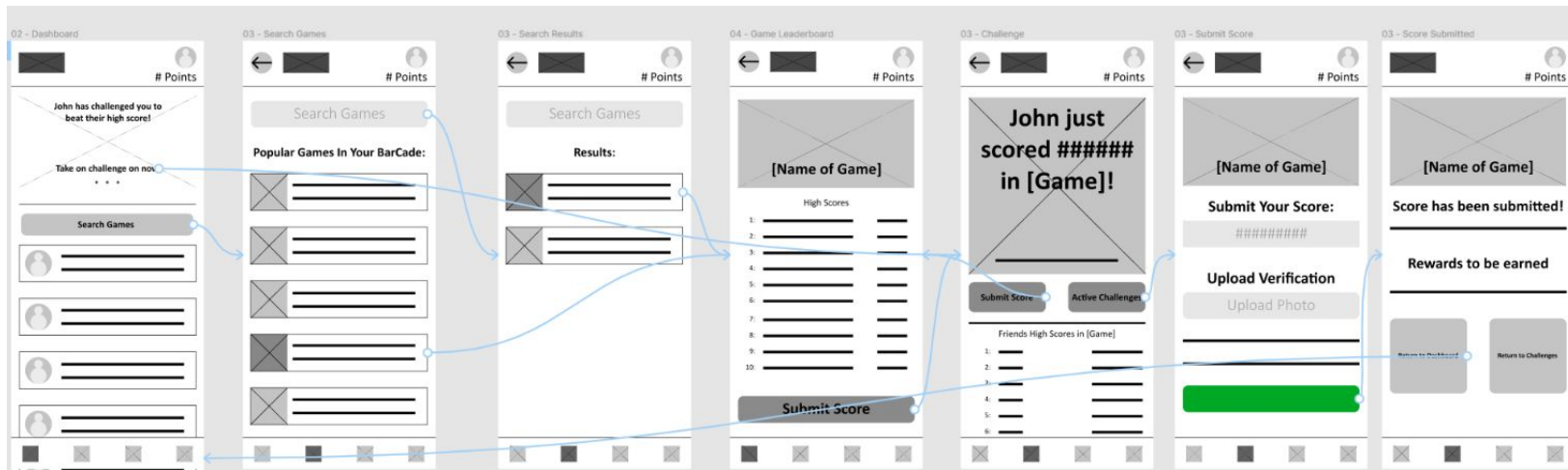


Once score is submitted, you see how many points you get once score is verified.

Low-fidelity prototype

Users can either search from the home page and find the “specific game” (aka the darker square) or go straight from the carousel to the challenge screen, where the user can submit their score/verification.

<https://www.figma.com/proto/n0N2UkyqbdOBpkxIBIT4eM/Barcode-Wireframes?node-id=11%3A318&scaling=scale-down&page-id=0%3A1&starting-point-node-id=11%3A318>



Usability study: findings

Write a short introduction to the usability studies you conducted and your findings.

I conducted one unmoderated usability study where I tested the wireframes, and found that my initial wording for key elements were unclear, my navigation needed cleaning up and came to the conclusion that the “popular” games navigation wasn’t being used, so it was removed in the jump to high-fidelity.

Findings

- 1 Many users got lost navigating the application
- 2 The wording on the button which leads to score page is misleading
- 3 Most users chose to search for games instead of browsing games

Refining the design

- Mockups
- High-fidelity prototype
- Accessibility

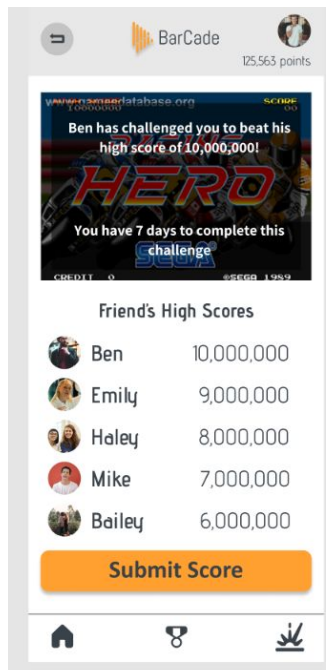
Mockups

Just changing the wording from “view challenges” to “submit score” made it much clearer for users to figure out how to submit their scores

Before usability study



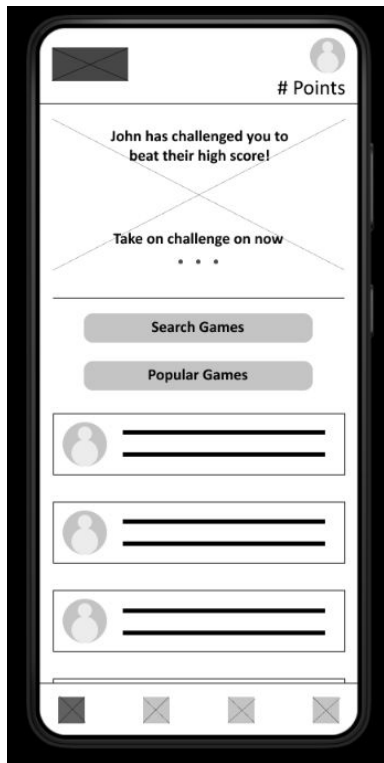
After usability study



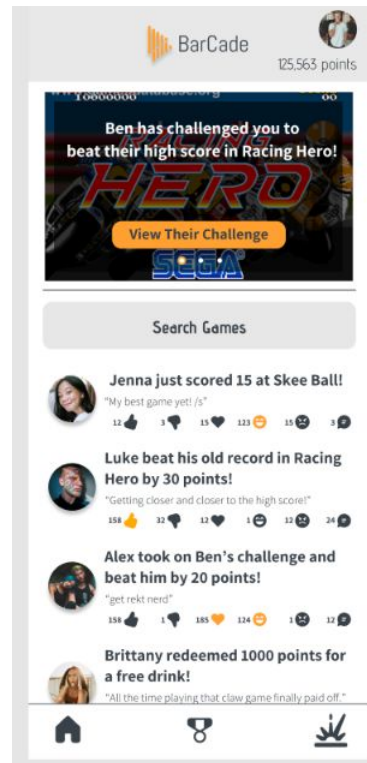
Mockups

Removing the “popular games” button gave some real estate back to the page, allowing me to fit more content before the fold.

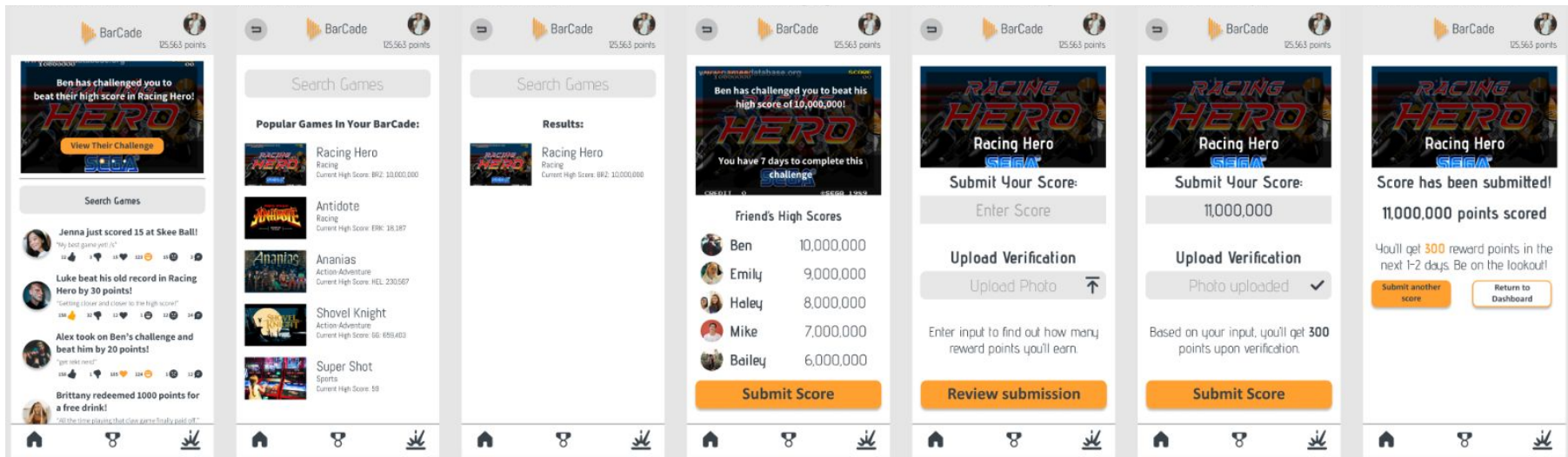
Before usability study



After usability study

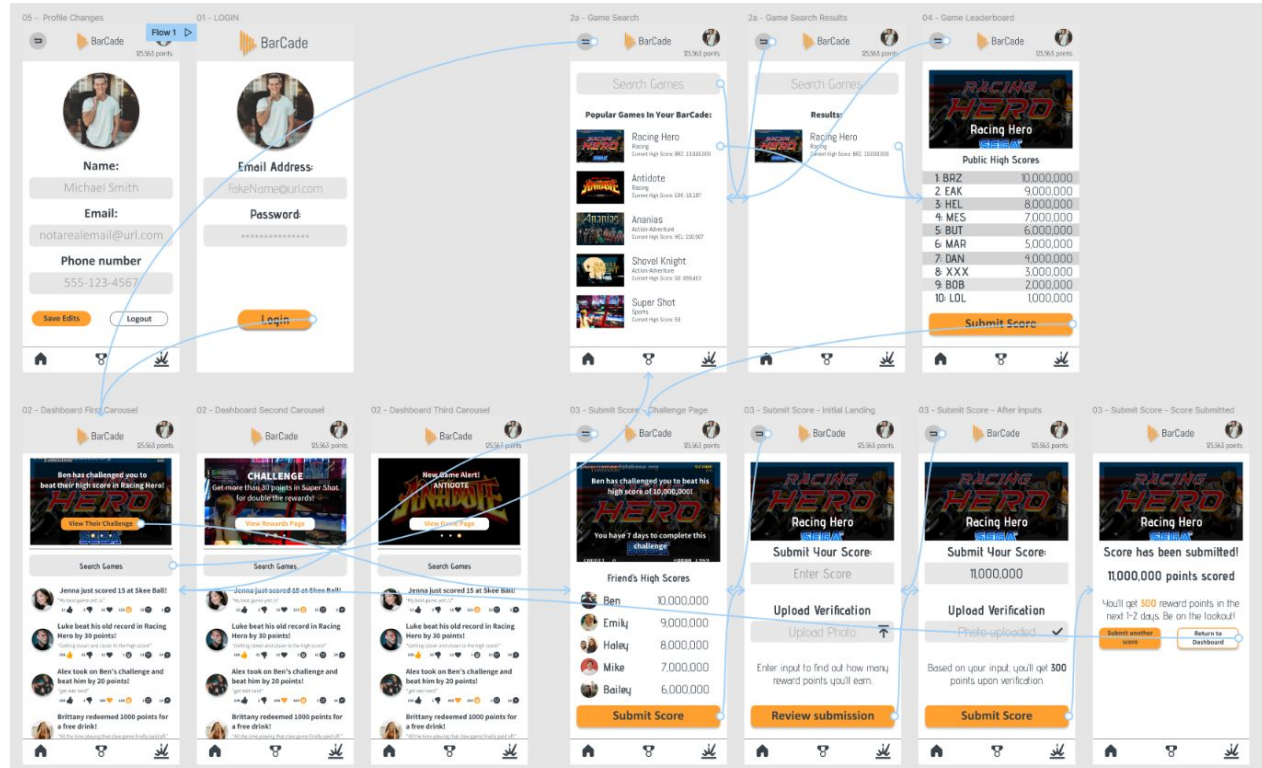


Mockups



High-fidelity prototype

<https://www.figma.com/proto/n0N2UkyqbdOBpklBIT4eM/Barcode-Wireframes?node-id=225%3A726&scaling=scale-down&page-id=201%3A2&starting-point-node-id=225%3A726>



Accessibility considerations

1

Made sure to follow color accessibility guidelines

2

Made sure all buttons/links have clear copy to not confuse the user

3

Kept navigation consistent throughout application to assist user in using app

Going forward

- Takeaways
- Next steps

Takeaways



Impact:

I think there is a definite spot in the app store for high score tracking applications like this for Arcades in general, as it really could tap into the competitive natures of some friend groups. For example, one of my users for my usability test mentioned that they were excited to “destroy my friends” in different games.



What I learned:

I underestimated how difficult it can be to write good copy. Multiple times within my wireframing/lo-fi types I wrote what was a clear indication of what a page should do but my users in testing had issues with the wording.

Next steps

1

First, I would start implementing the rewards section of the app. This would round out the applications basic features, and finish the entire apps experience.

2

I would take another usability test and iterate at least one more time, dialing in the flow of the score submitting process. I would want to make sure that at this stage the flow works properly and there's no confusion.

3

From there I would iterate once more based on the usability test results, and deliver the results of that iteration to the engineers.

Let's connect!



Thanks so much for taking a look at my Case Study! You can reach me by emailing br11zaut@gmail.com, or see more of my work (UX or otherwise) on www.benzautner.net.