Case study

LockTalk App

Duration: Aug 2025 - Oct 2025

Yadandla Shruthi

UX Designer

Overview

LockTalk: Modernizing Secure Messaging

LockTalk is a conceptual messaging app designed to address key user frustrations with existing platforms. This case study explores the end-to-end UX/UI design process, focusing on delivering a seamless, user-controlled experience through features like customizable privacy settings and a streamlined interface.

My role and responsibilities

End-to-end UX/UI Designer

- User Research & Pain Point Analysis
- Paper & Digital Wireframing
- Low & High-Fidelity Prototyping
- Usability Testing & Iteration
- Accessibility Considerations

Problem

Users of current messaging apps often face a trade-off between functionality and control. Common frustrations include a lack of customization, intrusive ads, slow performance, and all-or-nothing privacy settings that don't reflect how we communicate in different contexts.

Goal

To design a messaging app that prioritizes user control, performance, and a fresh aesthetic. The solution needed to offer granular privacy features, a distinct and modern UI, and a seamless user experience to reduce friction and rebuild user trust.

Understanding the User

Regarding: User research, Pain points, Personas and User journey

User Research

Summary

I conducted an online survey to validate assumptions and identify core user pain points. The research confirmed that users feel frustrated by the lack of customization and control in existing apps, with a strong desire for features that adapt to their social needs rather than forcing universal settings.

Pain Points

- No option for message scheduling limits communication across different time zones.
- A repetitive and uniform UI across all apps lacks visual distinction and customizability.
- Slow loading times waste user time and break concentration.
- No control over read receipts for specific chats forces an all-or-nothing approach to privacy.
- A lack of robust anti-spam features leads to cluttered inboxes.

Personas

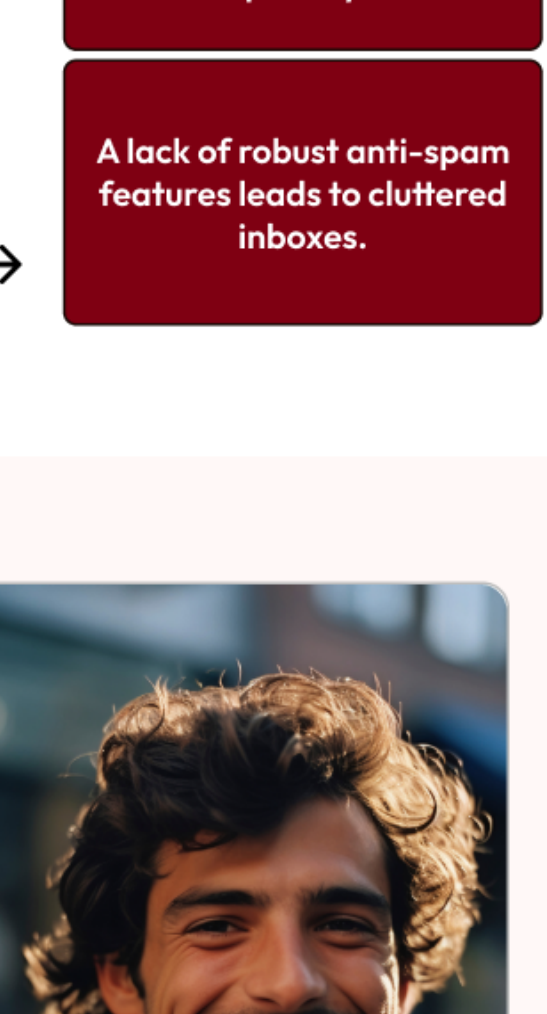
"Darshan, a software developer, relies heavily on Telegram but faces constant frustrations. The app's slow loading speeds waste his time, intrusive ads disrupt his workflow in public channels, and the lack of anti-spam features leaves him bombarded with unwanted messages. He needs a faster, ad-free messaging app with robust spam filtering to maintain productivity and focus."

Goals:

- Instant loading (<1 sec refresh) to save time.
- AI-powered anti-spam that auto-blocks suspicious accounts.

Frustrations:

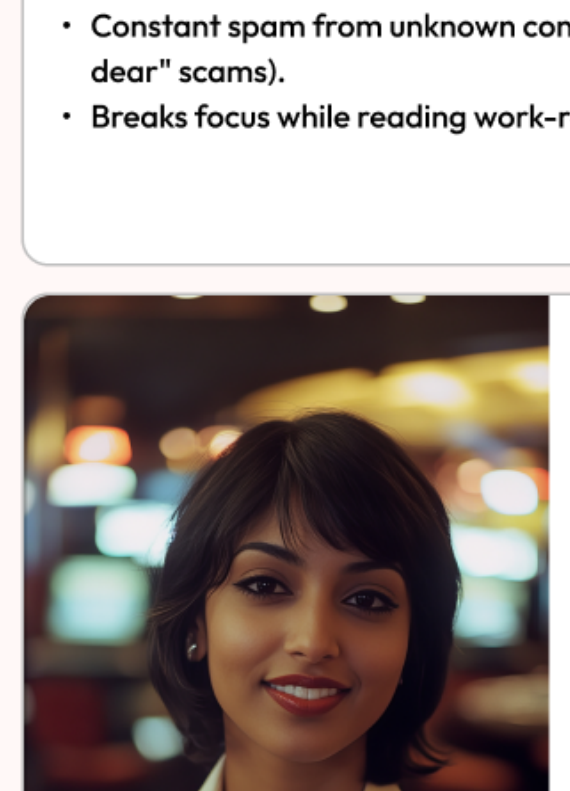
- Delays his communication during critical work.
- Constant spam from unknown contacts (e.g., "Hello dear" scams).
- Breaks focus while reading work-related updates.



Darshan

Age : 26
Education : Mechanical Engineer
Hometown : Maharashtra, India
Family : Parents
Occupation : Python Developer

"I just need a messaging app that gets out of my way and lets me focus."



Bhumika Singh

Age : 26
Education : BA Literature
Hometown : Hyderabad, India
Family : Parents
Occupation : Content Creator

"I need a platform that's as creative and customizable as my work."

"Bhumika needs a visually distinct app that keeps her professional and personal communications separate without sacrificing functionality."

Goals:

- Design a messaging app with a unique, modern interface to stand out from competitors.
- Enable per-chat read receipt controls for customizable user privacy.

Frustrations:

- Every messaging app feels the same, offering no visual innovation or customization.
- She needs per-chat read receipt control to separate her work and personal life seamlessly.

User Journey

Darshan's frustration with slow loading, ad distractions, and spam anxiety highlights key opportunities: instant performance, ad-free spaces, and AI-powered blocking can directly address his needs and transform his messaging experience.

Darshan's User Journey Map table

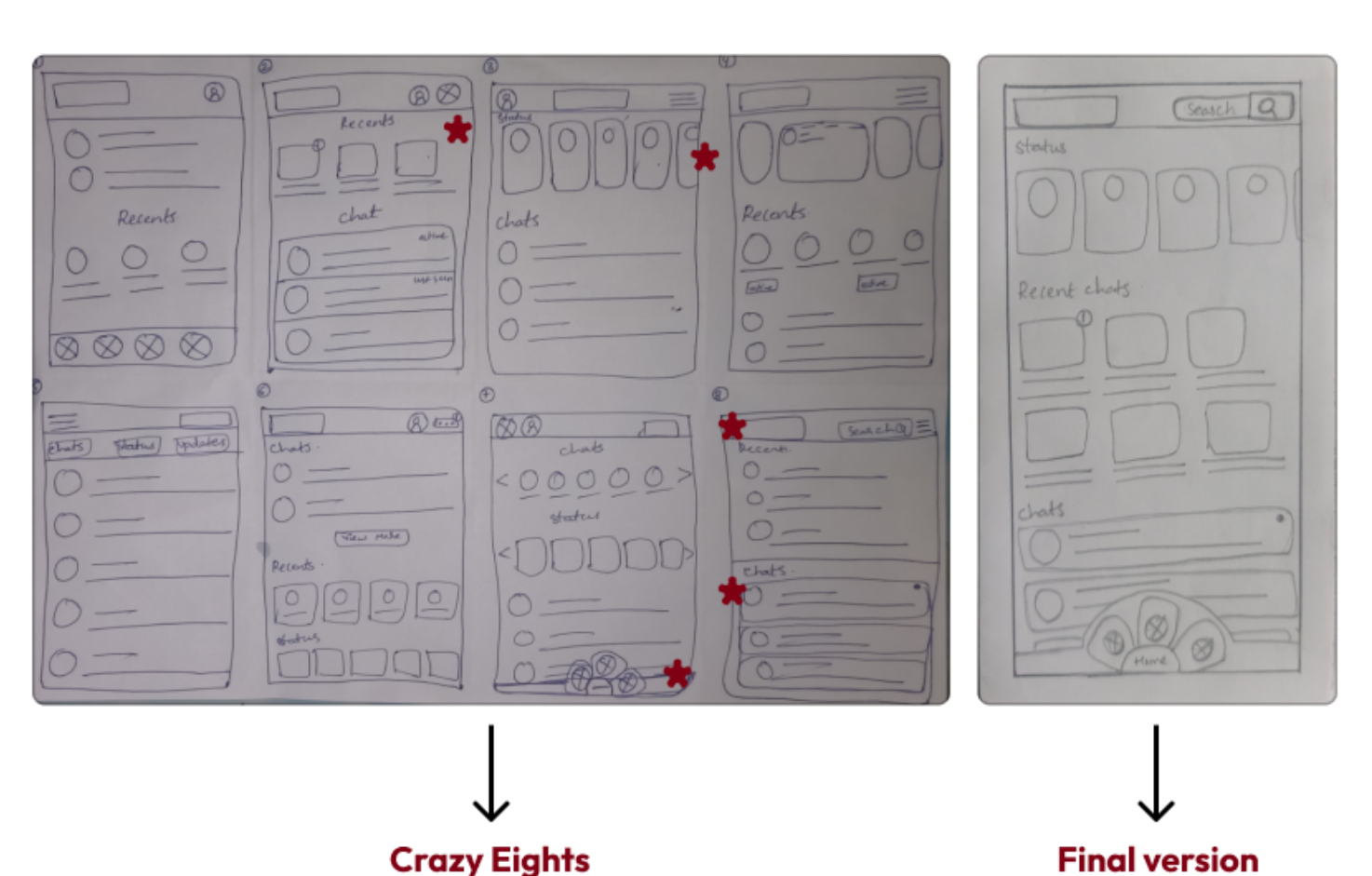
Stage	Action	Thoughts/ Emotion	Pain Point	Improvement Opportunity
Discovery	Searches for messaging apps	🤔 "Will this app solve my problems?"	Past trust issues with apps	Demo video comparing competitors
Onboarding	Creates account	😃 "Easy and smooth! No ads yet."	Fear of hidden limits	Instant load (<1 sec)
Exploration	Checks UI/ options	😊 "Clean UI, clear options. Fast!"	Telegram's cluttered/slow UI	Simple, intuitive design
Spam Encounter	Receives scam message	😎 "Auto-blocked? Perfect!"	Telegram's manual reporting	AI filters + blocklists

Designs

Regarding: Paper wireframes, Digital wireframes

Paper Wireframes

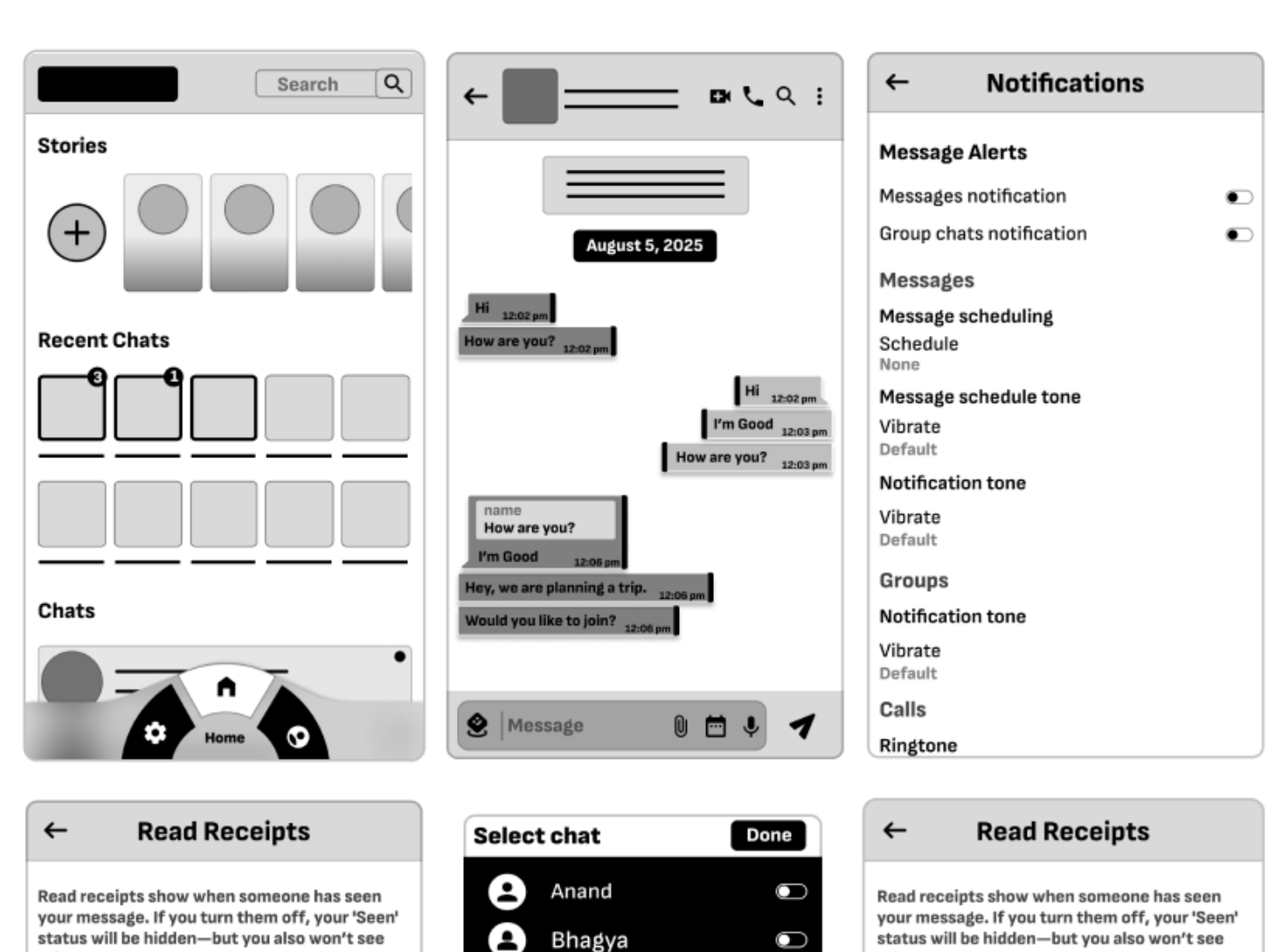
Using insights from research, I translated user needs into initial design concepts. The '**Crazy Eights**' exercise helped rapidly explore homepage layouts. The most promising ideas were synthesized into a paper wireframe to establish the core user flow before moving to digital wireframes for precise structural detailing.



Crazy Eights | Final version

Digital Wireframes

The digital wireframes focused on creating a clear hierarchy and layout for key screens, prioritizing intuitive navigation and the placement of new features like message scheduling and chat-specific settings.



Usability Studies

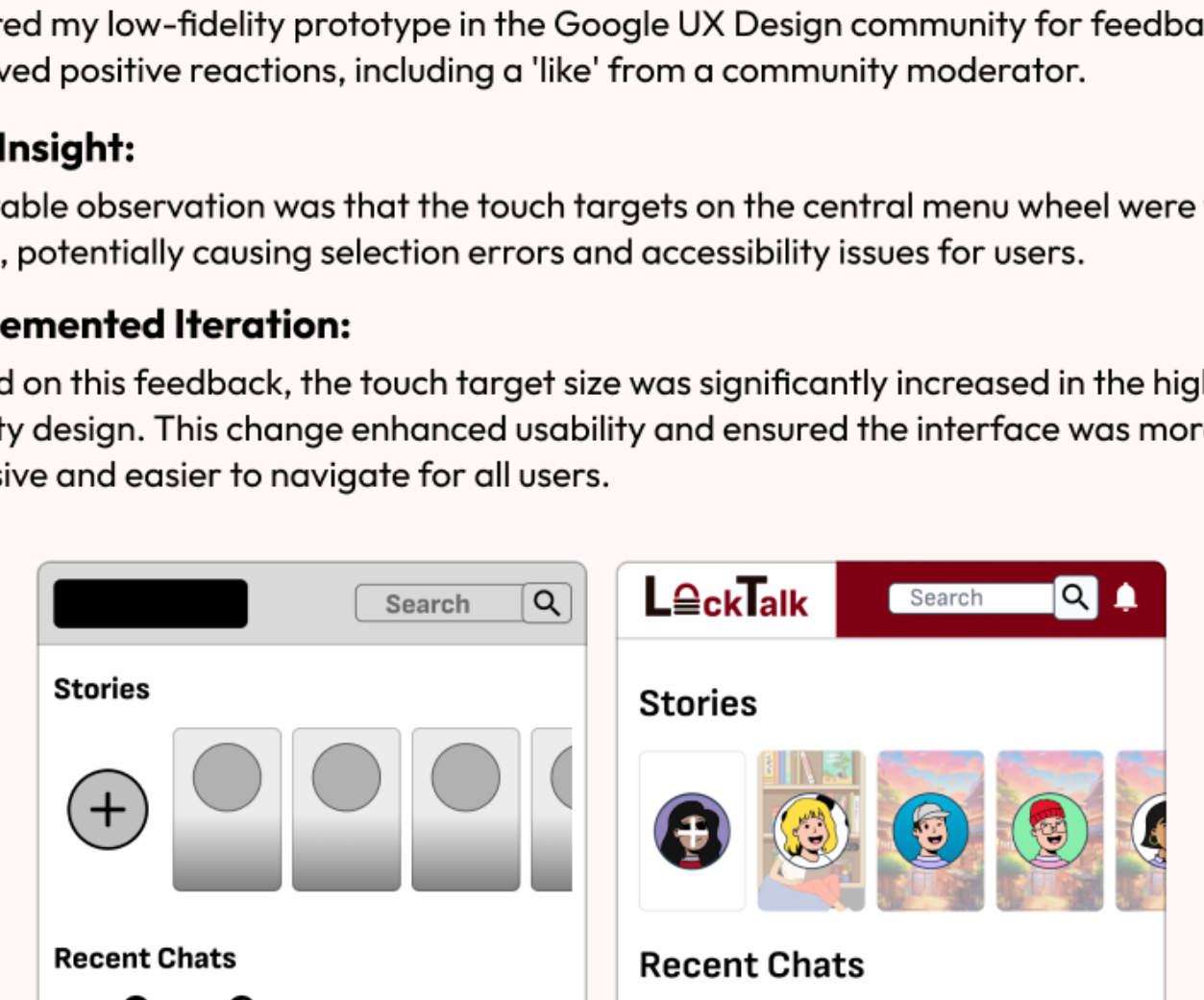
I shared my low-fidelity prototype in the Google UX Design community for feedback. It received positive reactions, including a 'like' from a community moderator.

Key Insight:

A notable observation was that the touch targets on the central menu wheel were too small, potentially causing selection errors and accessibility issues for users.

Implemented Iteration:

Based on this feedback, the touch target size was significantly increased in the high-fidelity design. This change enhanced usability and ensured the interface was more inclusive and easier to navigate for all users.

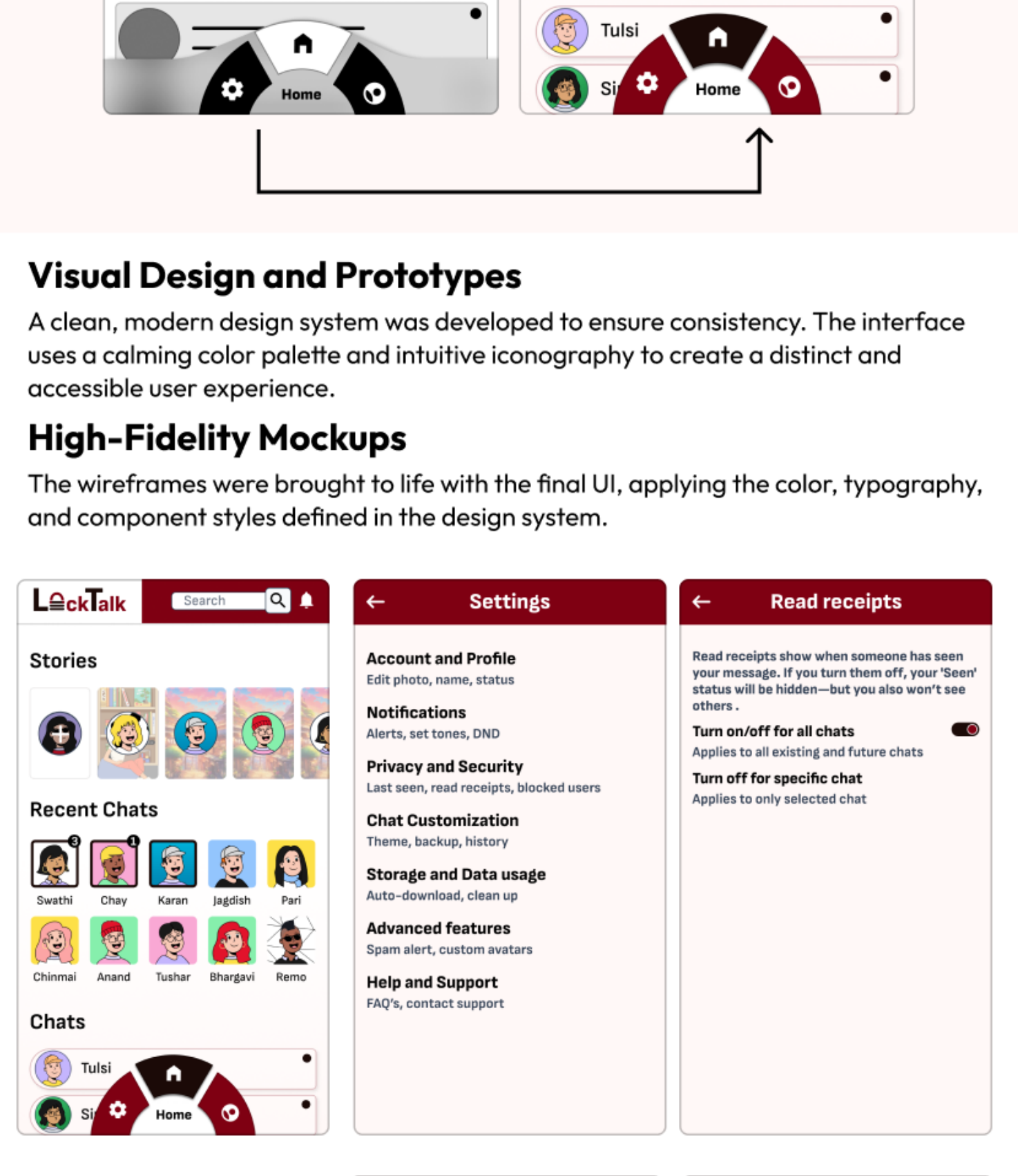


Visual Design and Prototypes

A clean, modern design system was developed to ensure consistency. The interface uses a calming color palette and intuitive iconography to create a distinct and accessible user experience.

High-Fidelity Mockups

The wireframes were brought to life with the final UI, applying the color, typography, and component styles defined in the design system.



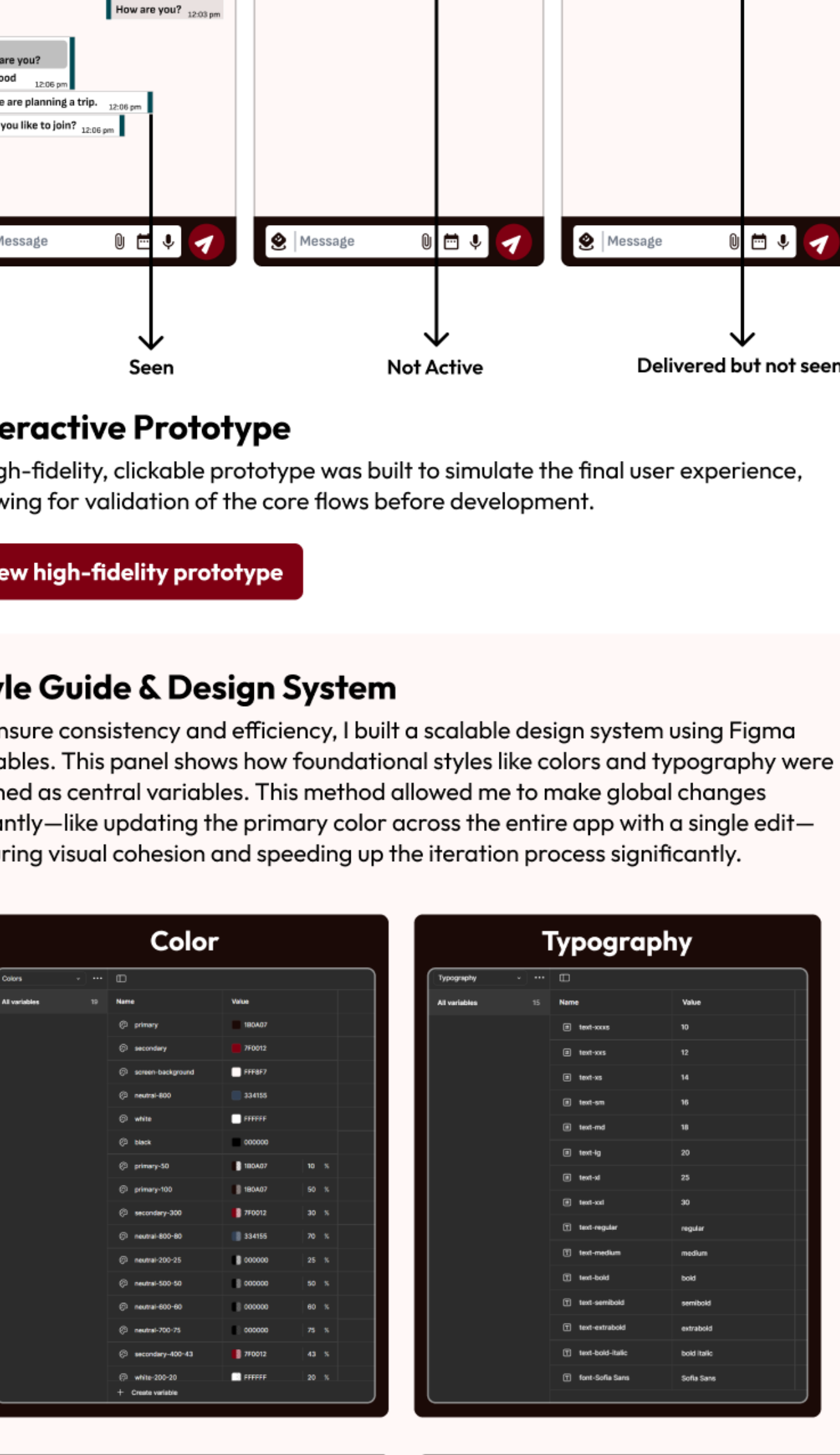
Interactive Prototype

A high-fidelity, clickable prototype was built to simulate the final user experience, allowing for validation of the core flows before development.

View high-fidelity prototype

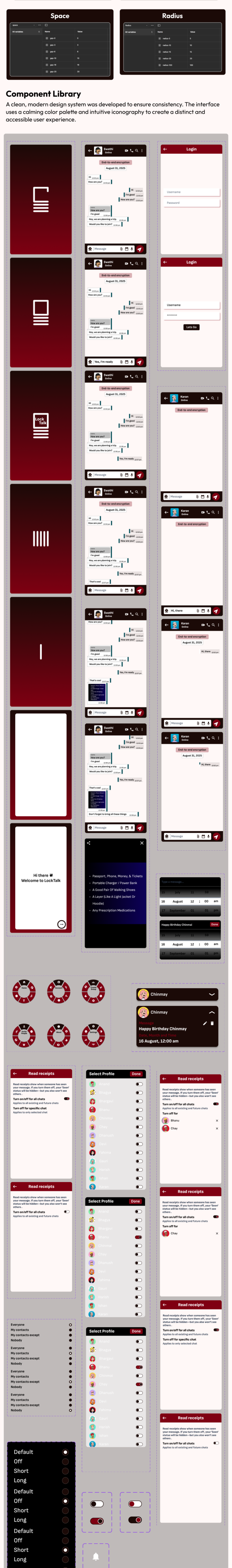
Style Guide & Design System

To ensure consistency and efficiency, I built a scalable design system using Figma variables. The panel shows how foundational styles like colors and typography were defined as central variables. This method allowed me to make global changes instantly—like updating the primary color across the entire app with a single edit—ensuring visual cohesion and speeding up the iteration process significantly.



Component Library

A clean, modern design system was developed to ensure consistency. The interface uses a calming color palette and intuitive iconography to create a distinct and accessible user experience.



Accessibility Considerations

Color Contrast

I applied high contrast color between text and background to ensure users with low vision or color blindness can view it more clearly.

Icons

Used familiar icons with clear descriptive labels for screen readers users and improve navigation clarity.

Screen Touch

Button and interactive design were designed with sufficient size and space to support users.

Takeaways

Impact

This project reinforced the principle that even small features, like per-chat read receipts, have a significant impact on the user experience. Conducting thorough user research early was crucial to validate assumptions and prioritize the right problems. Furthermore, establishing a component library early in the design process drastically improved consistency and sped up my workflow.

What I learned

I got to learn so much from my second project. Conducting user research was quite interesting knowing users needs and there frustrations.

Next steps

If I were to continue this project, the next steps would include:

1. Conducting another round of usability testing on the high-fidelity prototype to validate the new features.
2. Exploring the design of a dark mode theme to enhance accessibility and user preference.
3. Developing the onboarding flow to effectively introduce users to LockTalk's unique customization features.

Let's Connect

"Thank you for your time reviewing my work on **LockTalk**. I am passionate about creating user-centered digital experiences and am always open to new opportunities and discussions."

Feel free to reach out via email at **yadandlashruthi97@gmail.com** or connect with me on **Linkedin.**"

https://www.linkedin.com/in/yadandla-shruthi/