



Social interactions in Kindle

Role

IA, design, user research + testing

Tools

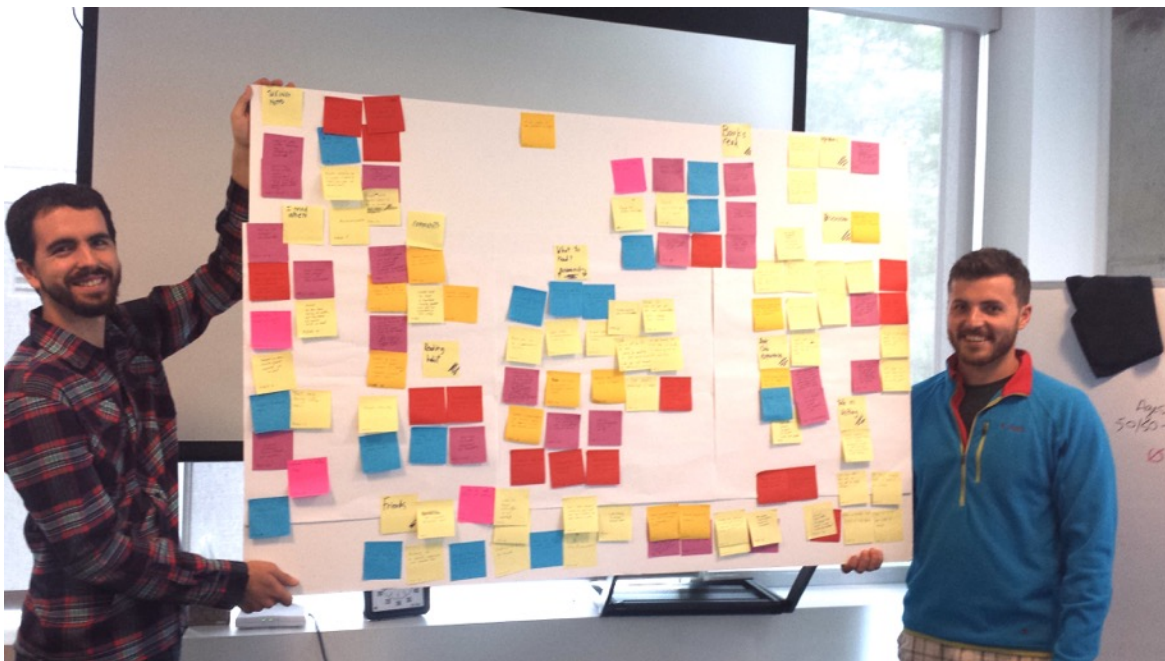
Sketch, Axure, iPad + Paper app

A team project where we defined the social interactions that could increase user engagement for the Kindle iPad app.

The Project

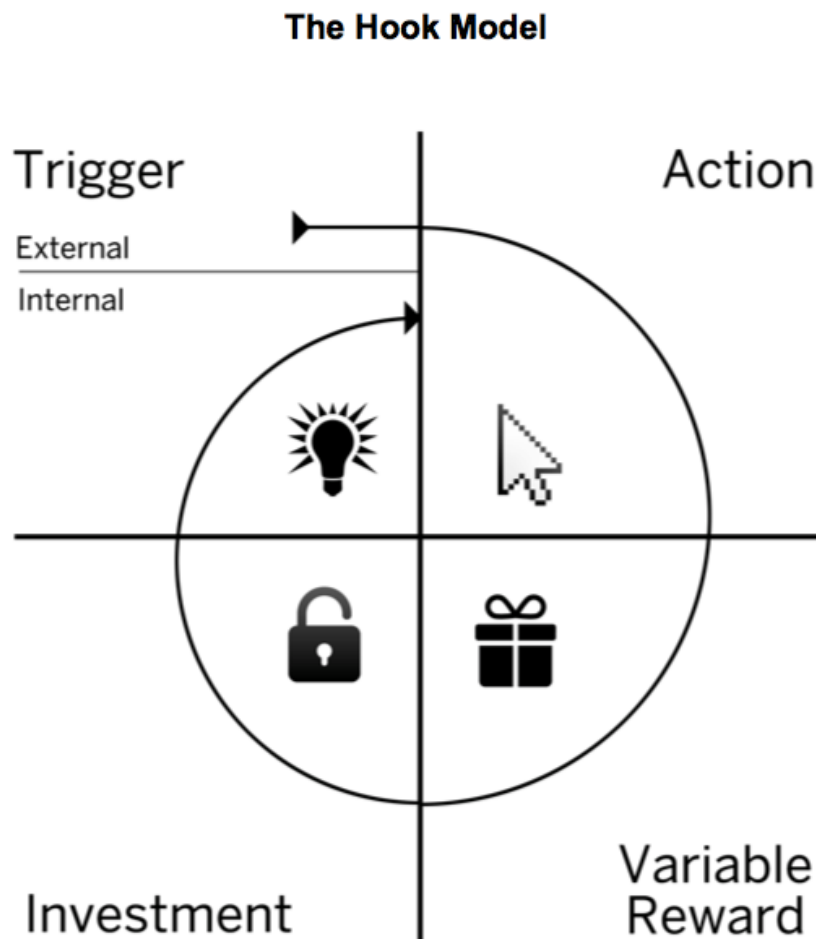
The main challenge this project presented was defining what kind of social interactions could add value to the Kindle iPad app. Plenty other apps already exist that allow talking with friends. What made sense (if anything) in this case?

First, we talked with Kindle users about their reading habits who told us they enjoy discussing their books with friends, though it always happened spontaneously (i.e. not planned). Reading is also something they do on their own, with no interruptions.



Affinity diagram for user interviews

Based on user input and design work, we decided on book discussions as the social interaction we would include in the app. It also fit in the “Hook model” (by Nir Eyal), ergo it had the potential to generate user engagement. We called them “Book Chats”.



Hook Model by [Nir Eyal](#)

Throughout our design phase, we worked with 3 design constraints:

1. Don't interrupt the user
2. Hide the UI when reading
3. Socializing should be optional

2 personas helped us make sure we met these criteria: Jane, a book lover who enjoys discussing what she reads with friends and Bruce (our secondary persona), a more solitary reader who prefers to keep to himself.



Jane

Age: 45

Female

Works in public health

Loves books and loves reading while having some coffee or hot tea

"I like reading, but I don't want to talk about it."



Bruce

Age: 35

Male

Works as a project manager

Reads a lot of books, usually at home

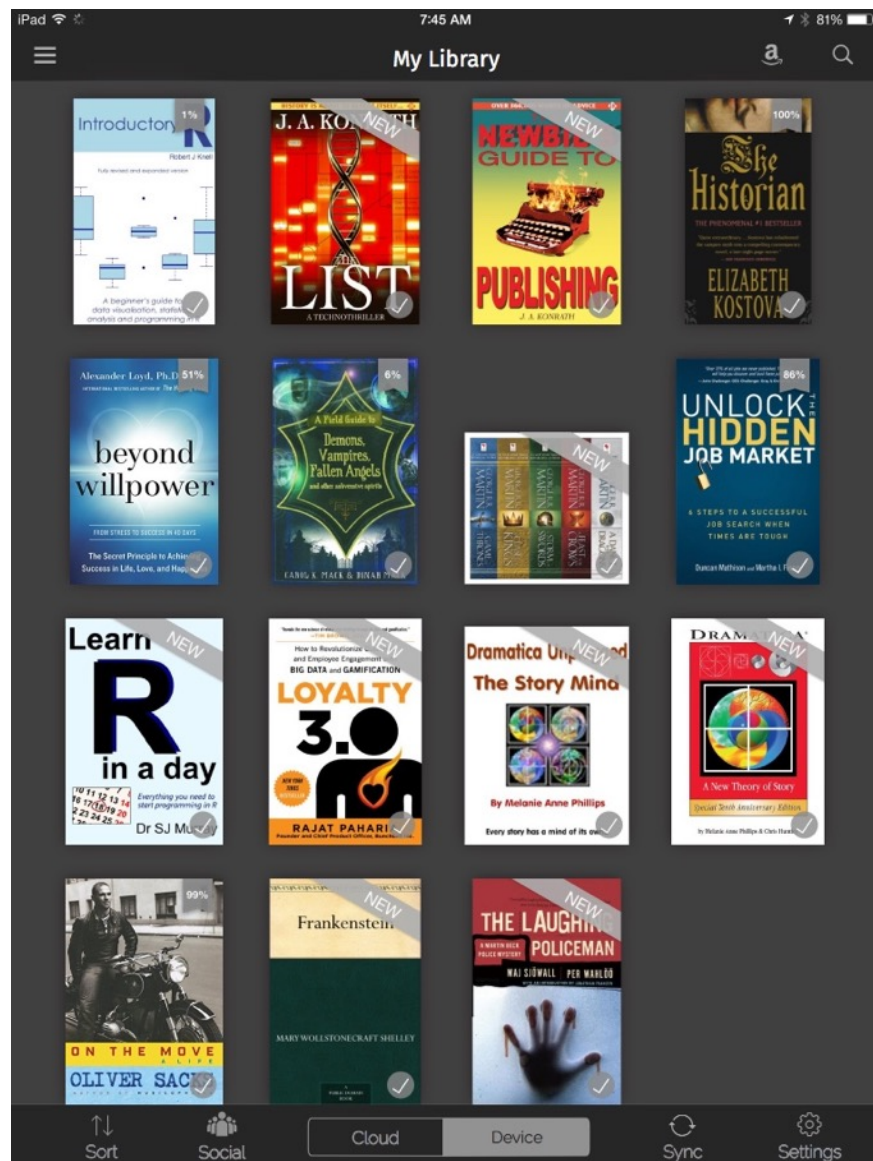
"I like reading, but I don't want to talk about it."

Designing book discussions

We defined 2 ways to access book discussions:

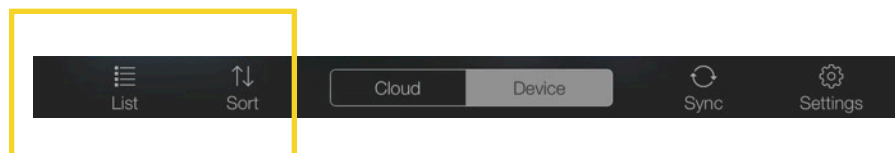
From the library

By combining “List” and “Sort” from the bottom menu, we accommodated a spot for “Social”, where Jane can view all her books with discussions, while Bruce’s experience won’t be altered (any features moved are no more levels deeper in the menu than they already were).



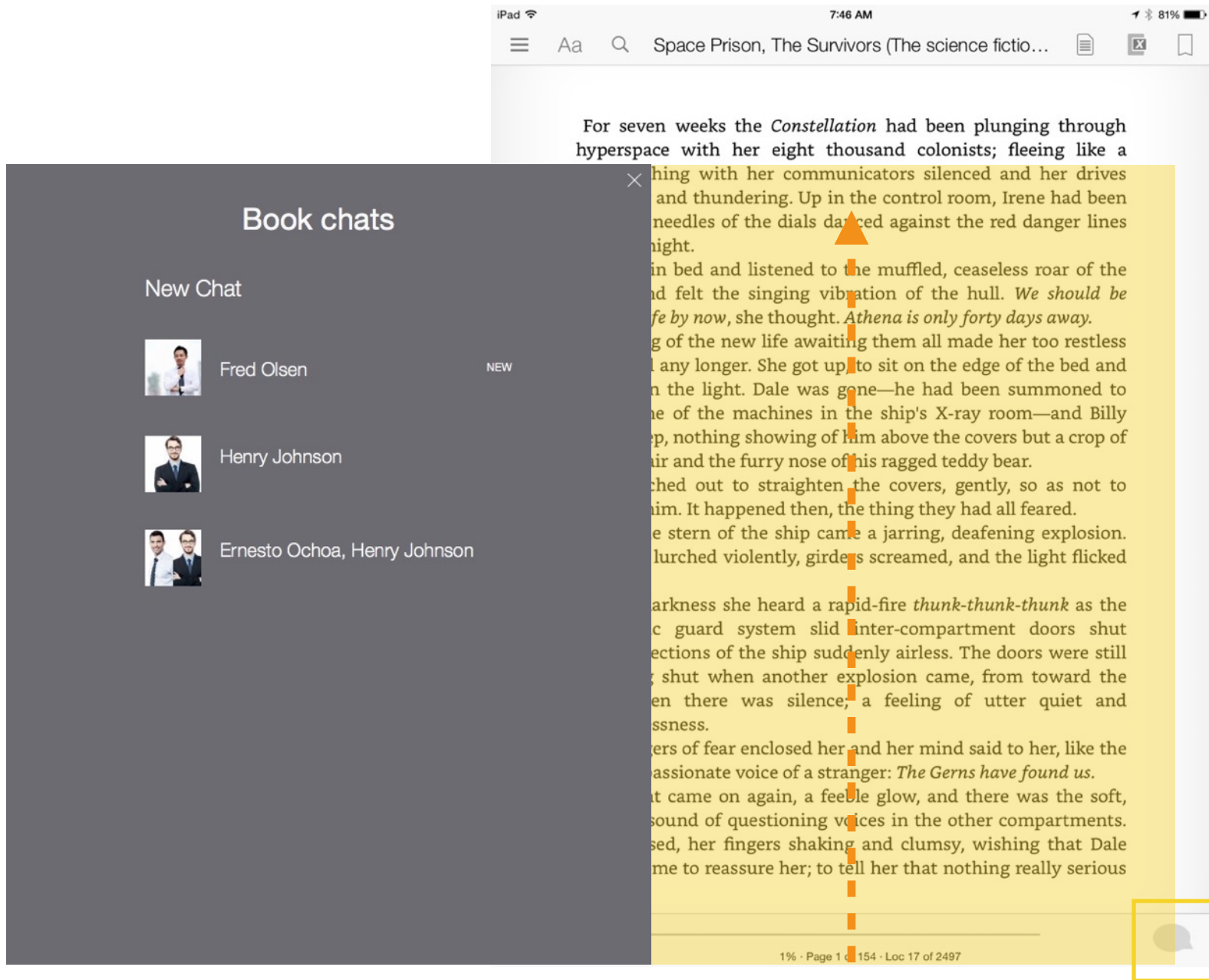
New Library screen

Original menu



Within a book

Here, discussions for the book (Book chats) currently being read are shown and discussions from other books are purposefully not accessible to help the user focus on just the book he is reading. This solution is as convenient for Jane as it is irrelevant for Bruce.



Book discussions within a book are slide up when tapping on highlighted icon

Testing and Next Steps

When tested with users, use of book discussions went smoothly save for some confusion with the “Friends libraries” list. Users thought they could access chat with them from there. We modified this for the final version.

Next steps are adding functionality related to sharing and commenting highlights (mentioned during interviews), reviewing and recommending books and continuing to explore book discussions, as more testing is required, specially real use of this function (not a 10 minute session, but days of it).