

INSTAGRAM REDESIGN

CASE STUDY



Timeline

June 2024 (1 week)

Skills

User Research, Wireframing, Prototyping

Project Context

What is the case study objective?

Instagram is a popular photo and video social media app. Analyze the current Instagram app and develop a refreshed design.

The Process

1. Empathize

Primary and secondary research, heuristic evaluation, problem statement.

2. Conceptualize

Wireframing low-fidelity sketches and user flow.

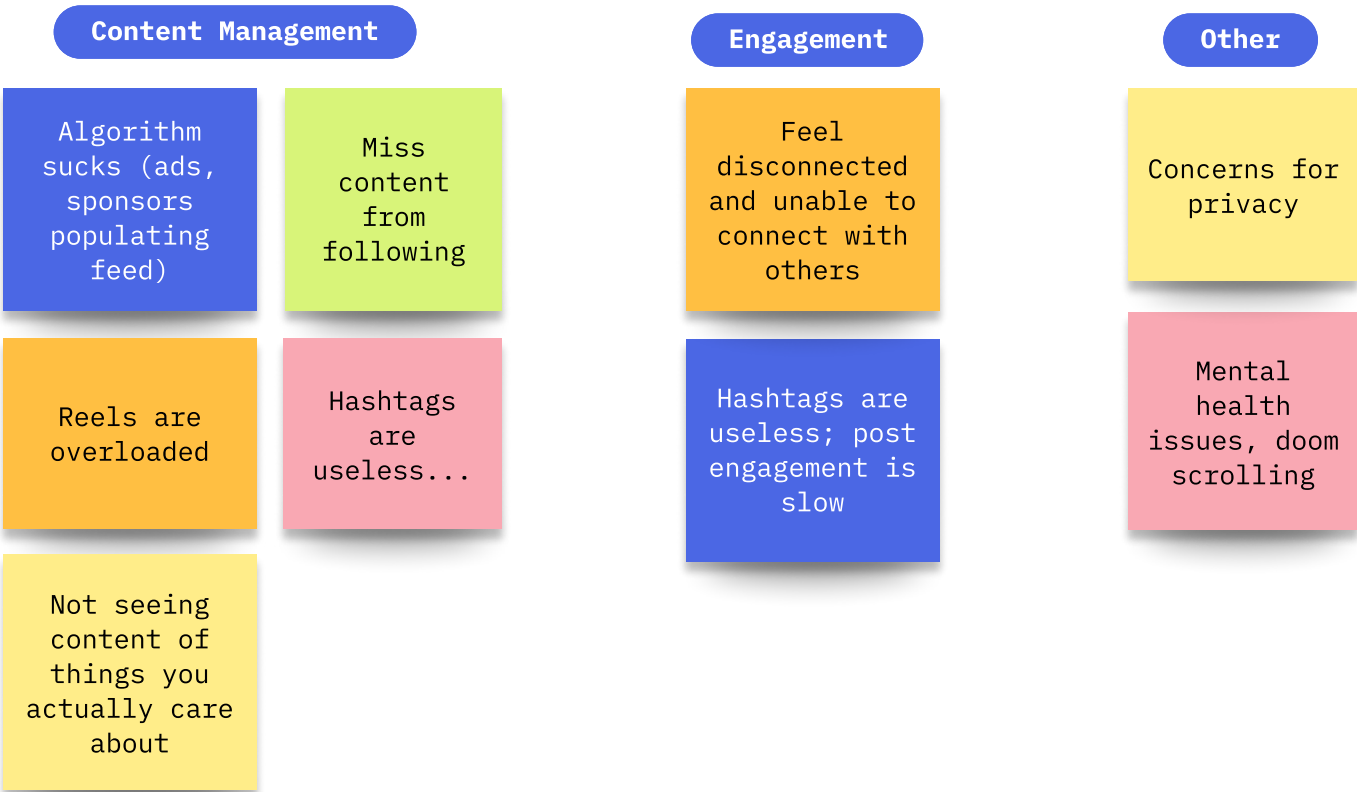
3. Prototype

Prototyping on Figma and getting user feedback.

Being a daily Instagram user I had sufficient knowledge about the technology. From this, I wanted to gain a deeper understanding of other users' pain points and frustrations with the app.

Initial Research

Before I started defining my problem I researched online on various platforms to see common pain points for Instagram users including Quora, Reddit, blogs, etc. Most feedback I saw led back to a common issue that Instagram's **content is not filtered well**:



Heuristic Evaluation

Regarding the interface design, I conducted a heuristic evaluation based on Jakob Nielsen's principles. Instagram performed poorly on:

a) Consistency and standards

- Certain icons are redundant and the same icon can be used for different functions

b) Flexibility and efficiency

- Users are limited in what they can do during the process of posting and editing posted content

From the previous steps, the defined problem statement for this design project is:

Users find it challenging to explore content they are interested in and feel disconnected on the current Instagram app with the interface lacking flexibility and efficiency, this leads to decreased engagement and user satisfaction.

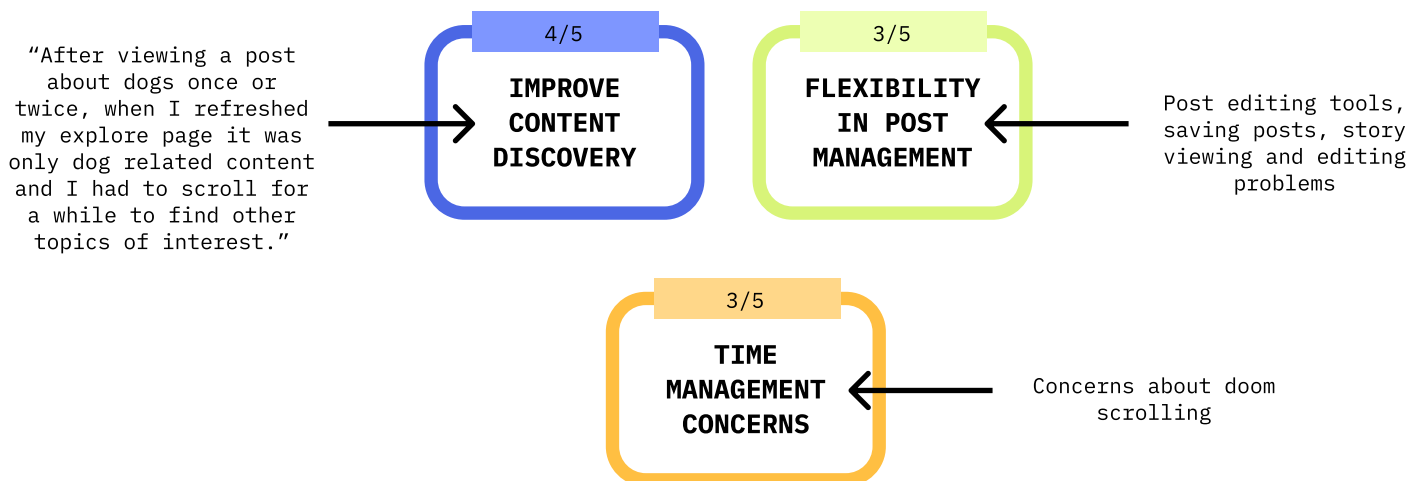
At this point I have compiled some redesign aspects, however, I want to confirm and further explore user pain points through user research.

User Research

What was the interview method?

I carried out a semi-structured interview approach to be able to gather both specific answers that I could extrapolate into data, as well as dive into their own thoughts about the app through open-ended discussions. I conducted 1-on-1 informal interviews with 5 Instagram users aged 18-20, with an average daily usage of 1.8 hours.

Interview Takeways (x/5 mentioned)



- Enhance the algorithm for content recommendations such as interest-based channels or curated collections.
- Integrate more advanced photo and video editing features directly into the app.
- Integrate more easy to use modes/features that help users manage their screen time, such as usage summaries, time limits, and gentle reminders to take breaks.

Personas

It should be noted that these user personas were developed based on research and interviews conducted which focuses on the **age group 18-24**, thus, my personas also fall in this demographic in order for an accurate depiction. For future iteration of this project the interviewee selection would account for other age demographics to ensure that the design is reflective of the majority of users.

The Passive Consumer

Motivation:

- Keep up to date with accounts they follow (friends, family, influencers, creators), see things about various topics they enjoy, pass time
- Mainly for viewing content (posts, stories, reels)

Frustrations:

- Instagram feed is very repetitive and not accurate for all their interests, making it hard to explore new content and causing them to revert back to scrolling on reels

The Messenger

Motivation:

- Remain connected with friends and family, use mostly as a messaging app and to see others' life updates
- Consciously tries to limit their time on the app to prevent "doom scrolling" as that happens occasionally

Frustrations:

- Easy to get distracted by the app when using, and sometimes miss posts from friends and family when not scrolling all the time

The Creator

Motivation:

- Markets her small bakery by posting stories, reels, posts on the bakery account (while still using her own account daily) and actively engages with followers/commenters.

Frustrations:

- Inflexible post/stories editing feature after they are posted, sometimes the app crashes and she loses her stories halfway through making the post

Wireframing

I created many **low-fidelity sketches** for the pages and the features I wanted to change or implement. Through tracking the **user flow** I identified the pages involved for the redesign regarding the project objectives. Due to time constraints, I focused on completing two out of the three objectives.

1

CATEGORIZING THE EXPLORE CONTENT DISCOVERY/DISPLAY

1

ADDING POST EDITING FEATURES

1. Categorizing the Explore Content Discovery/Display

I took inspiration from other apps such as Pinterest, Reddit, Twitter, that would ask you to select topics of interests to show you on your feed. With **users starting on the explore page**, I drew three designs, settling on **C** as it was the most straightforward/efficient layout which made it visually appealing due to its simplicity.

Design Decision: Explore Page

EXPLORE PAGE

A

✗ Takes up too much space

EXPLORE PAGE - 1

B

✓ Open and close bar saves space

✗ Requires users to do extra step

EXPLORE PAGE - 2

C

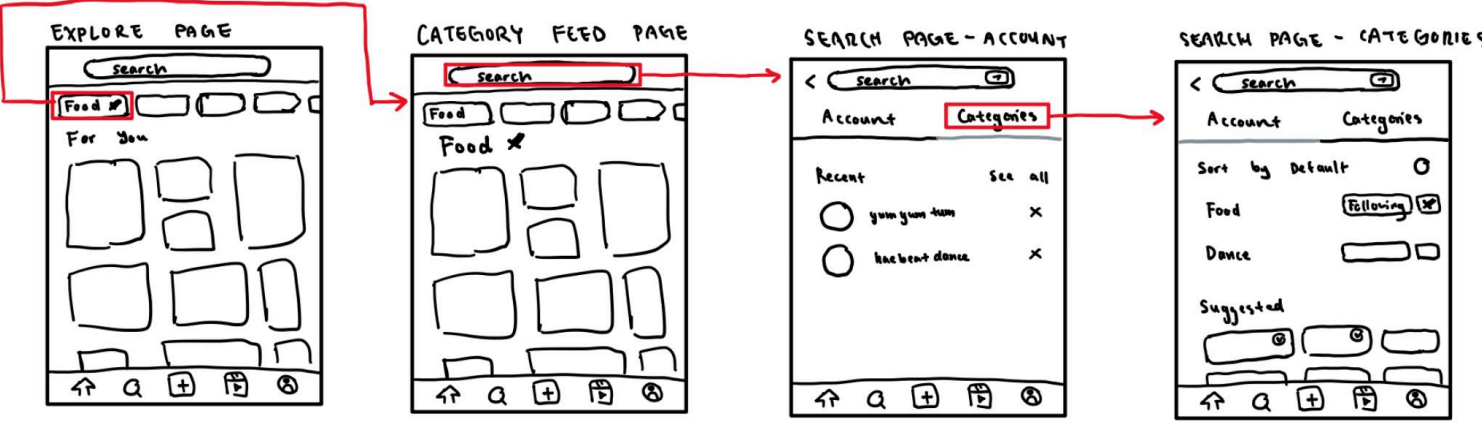
✓ Channels are space efficient

✓ Less steps compared to B

User Flow

How to see/change a user's category feed page?

After the user clicks on a category bubble it brings them to that category feed page. To add a new category, click the search bar at the top. This opens up a page split up between account and categories. The account side operates the same as the current Instagram search bar. The categories side will let users to see the categories they are following and pinned (pinned ones appear on the top of the category feed page).



2. Adding Post Editing Features

Starting from the current Instagram’s New Post Page, I added an additional feature: A preview button.

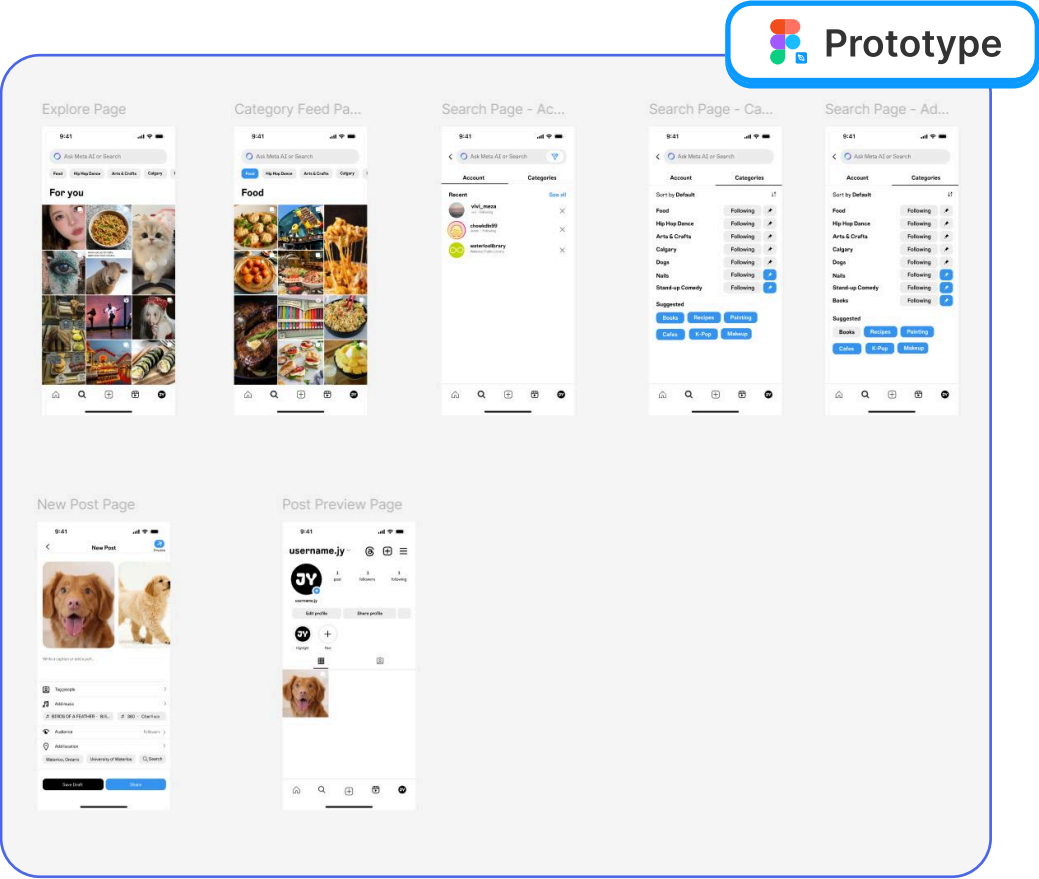
User Flow

How to preview post?

The preview button is at the top of the New Post bar. The button is placed at the top and near the photo carousel based on design heuristic of placing related elements close together. It avoids being placed at the bottom to prevent users from accidentally clicking the “Share” button when trying to preview.

Prototype

I used Figma to prototype the design including the two user flows.



Typography, Colour Palette

Following UI/UX standards for a consistent and cohesive interface, I used the same typography and colour palette from the the current Instagram app. Additionally, I did not make any additional design changes to styles as during user research all users rated the current interface high. Stemming from this point, the new designed features utilized **rounded buttons** and interactive components for **clicking** and **horizontal swiping**.

Local styles

+

Color styles

+

Text styles

Ag Small text · 12/Auto

Ag Large heading · 30/Auto

Ag Subinfo · 10/Auto

Ag Search font · 17/Auto

Ag General font · 17/Auto

Ag Medium text · 13/22

Buttons (general)

Buttons (selection)

Accents

Base colour 1

Base colour 2

Usability Testing

What was the interview method?

I instructed 5 users to carry out a certain task and asked them to narrate their thoughts and actions. I recorded these and noticed any areas of struggle as well as feedback on the new incorporated functions.

Here is where challenges arose. Due to the time constraints, I only provided them with a Figma prototype, however, sometimes the user would be confused on what they press, or if they didn't press directly on the button nothing would happen. In these instances I had to provide some clarification and choose to categorize this challenge as either a Figma challenge or as a redesign challenge to not skew my results.

Testing Takeaways

- The interest-based channel following system works well, and is something users expected to have
- It was unclear to users that the category bubble can be pressed again to bring use back to the Explore page
- The preview button function was rated favourably

Overall, the design was able to address a few user pain points including content overload, and posting features.