Episode

A New Way to Watch TV

Jeriel Ng

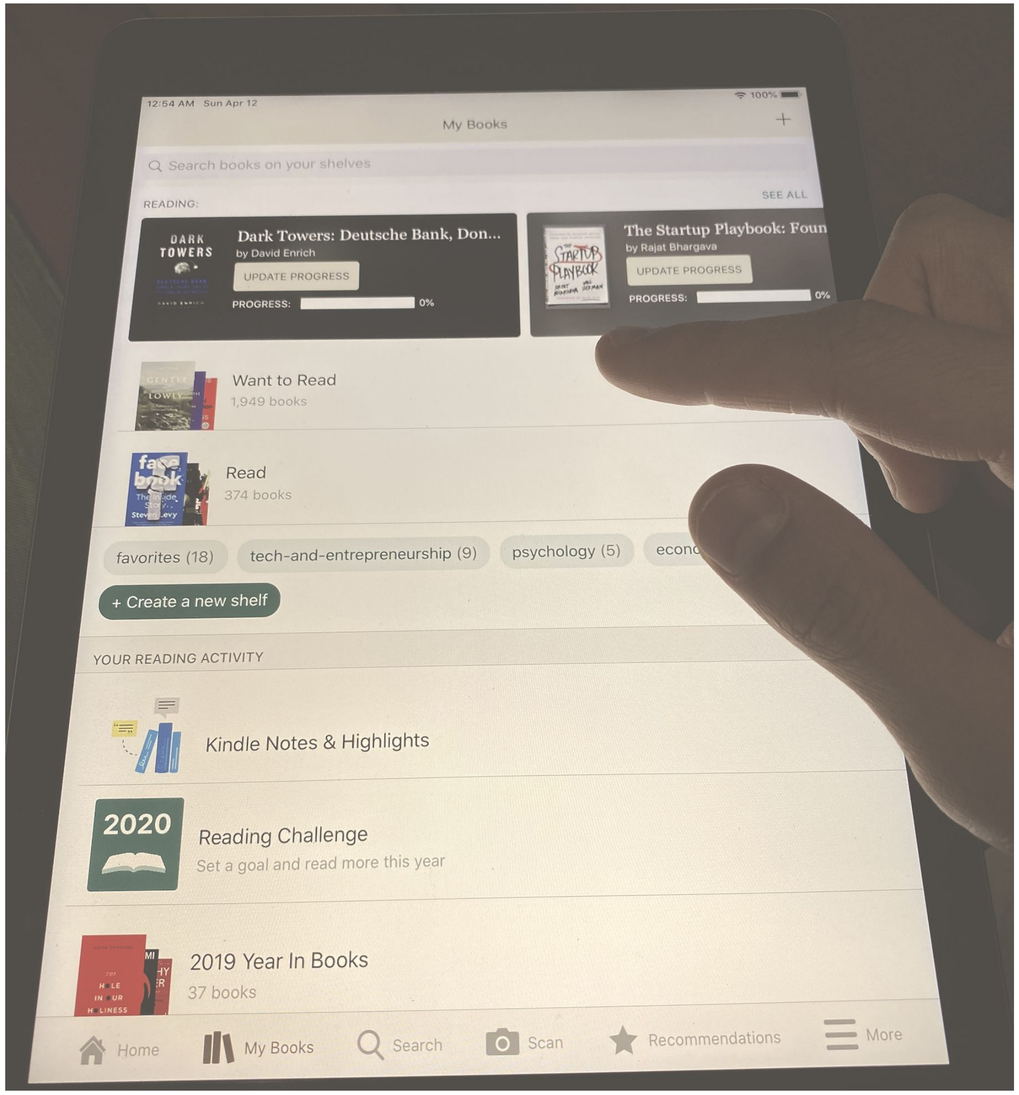
April 2020

Figma, Miro, Lookback, Zeplin

Problem Overview

With apps like Goodreads and Letterboxd, there are many ways for users to log their media consumption activity, such as books they've read or movies they've watched. As I've shopped around, there are similar applications for television series but none that really capture the mobile experience I had in mind.

As a result, I looked into designing a product that would integrate existing features users are accustomed to, as well as introducing new ones they might find exciting.



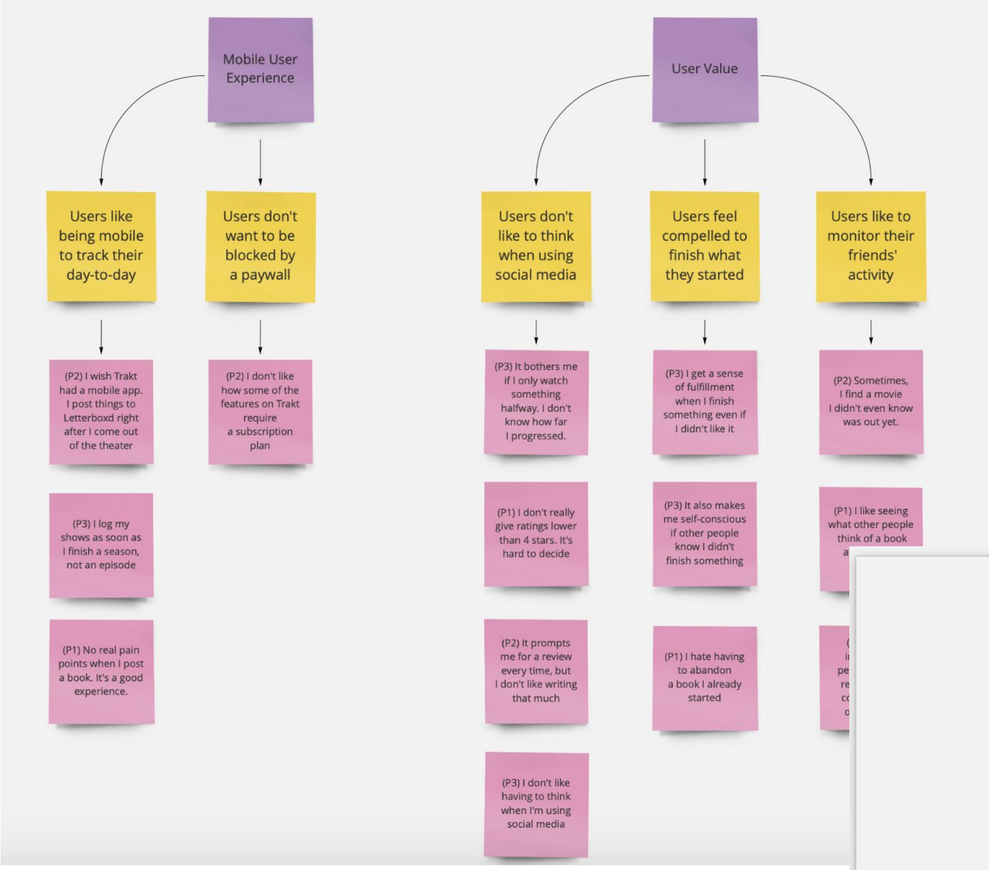
A sample of my research notes, color-coded by participant

Discovery: Research & Analysis

To start off, I went about conducting research to gather some early ideas. Before starting off on high-fidelity work, it is critical to get a feel for the market and its wants and needs.

By conducting individual interviews, I was able to gather some qualitative data from users of similar apps, which I later confirmed with a broader scope through the use of surveys.

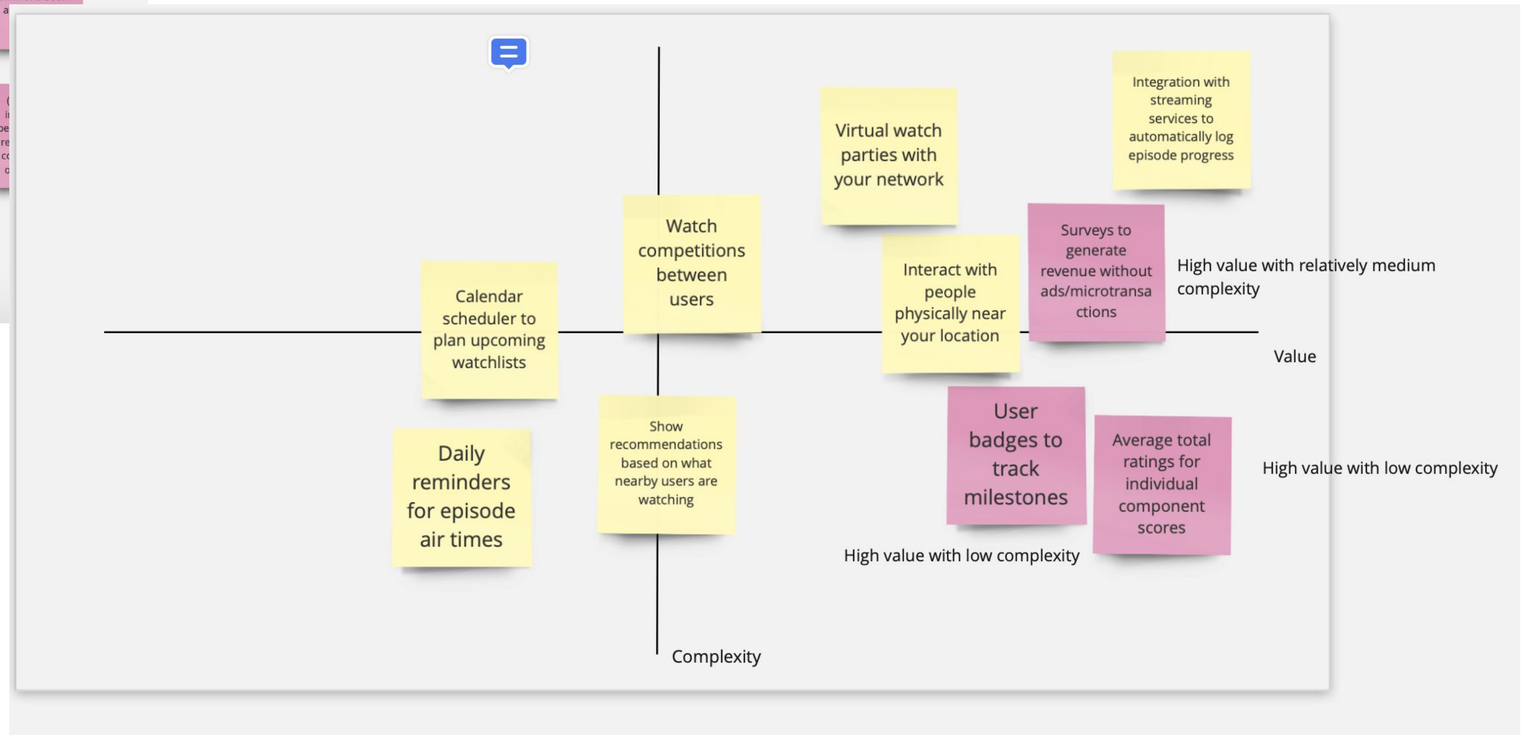
What I found, ultimately, was that users log their activity on these apps to find motivation to complete their activities and want to have the simplest experience possible--that is, they don’t like to think when doing their hobbies.



My affinity diagram

To further synthesize my research notes, I used Miro to consolidate my ideas and group them into aggregated chunks using affinity diagrams. Using such diagrams is extremely helpful in visualizing the identity of my future product.

Expanding on my research findings, I also prioritized which potential features would produce the most user value using a feature prioritization matrix, ranking items based on their value and complexity. Here, I was able to determine the best features to pursue early on.

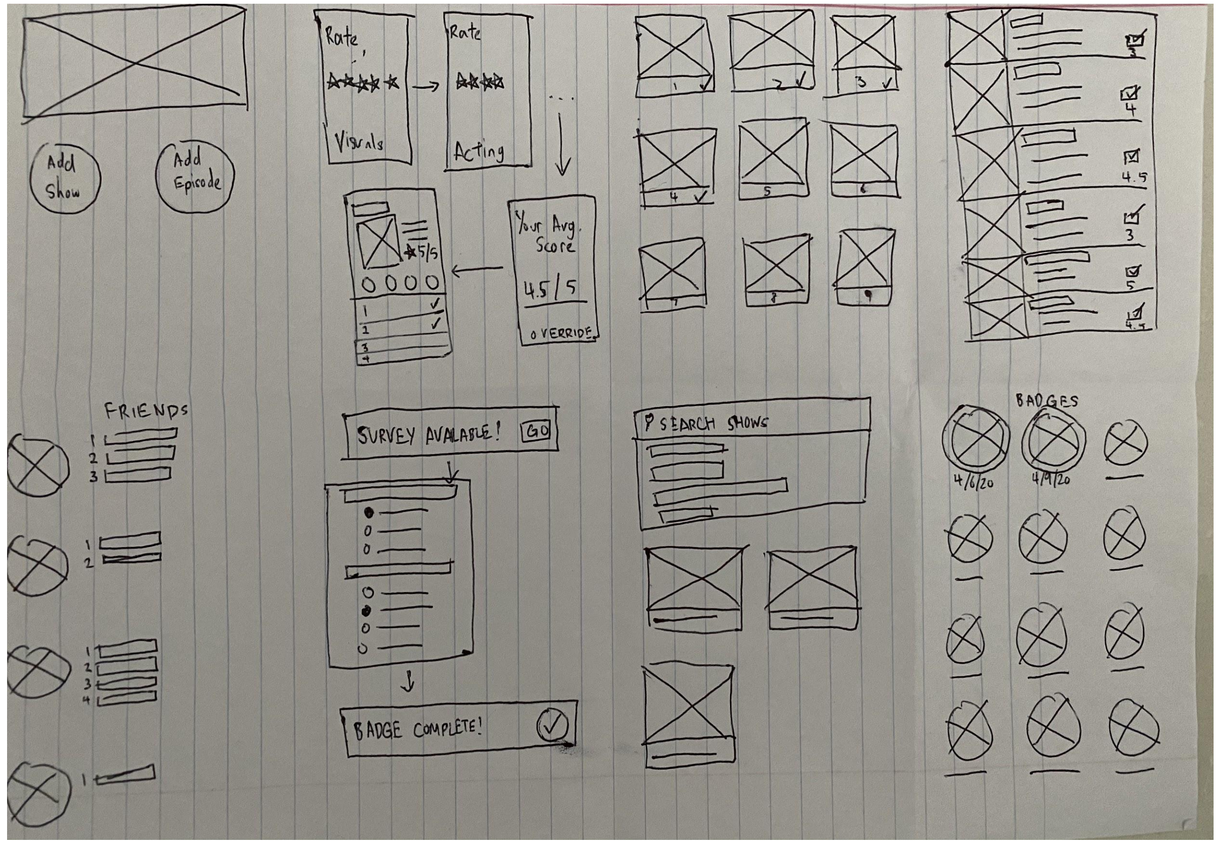


My feature prioritization matrix

Design: Concepts & Sketching

To get the creative juices flowing, I ran through a series of early sketches of what would become the final version of Episode.

Using techniques like Crazy-8's, I sketched out several of the possible features and their corresponding screens, such as what badges would look like or how adding a show to a user's account would flow.



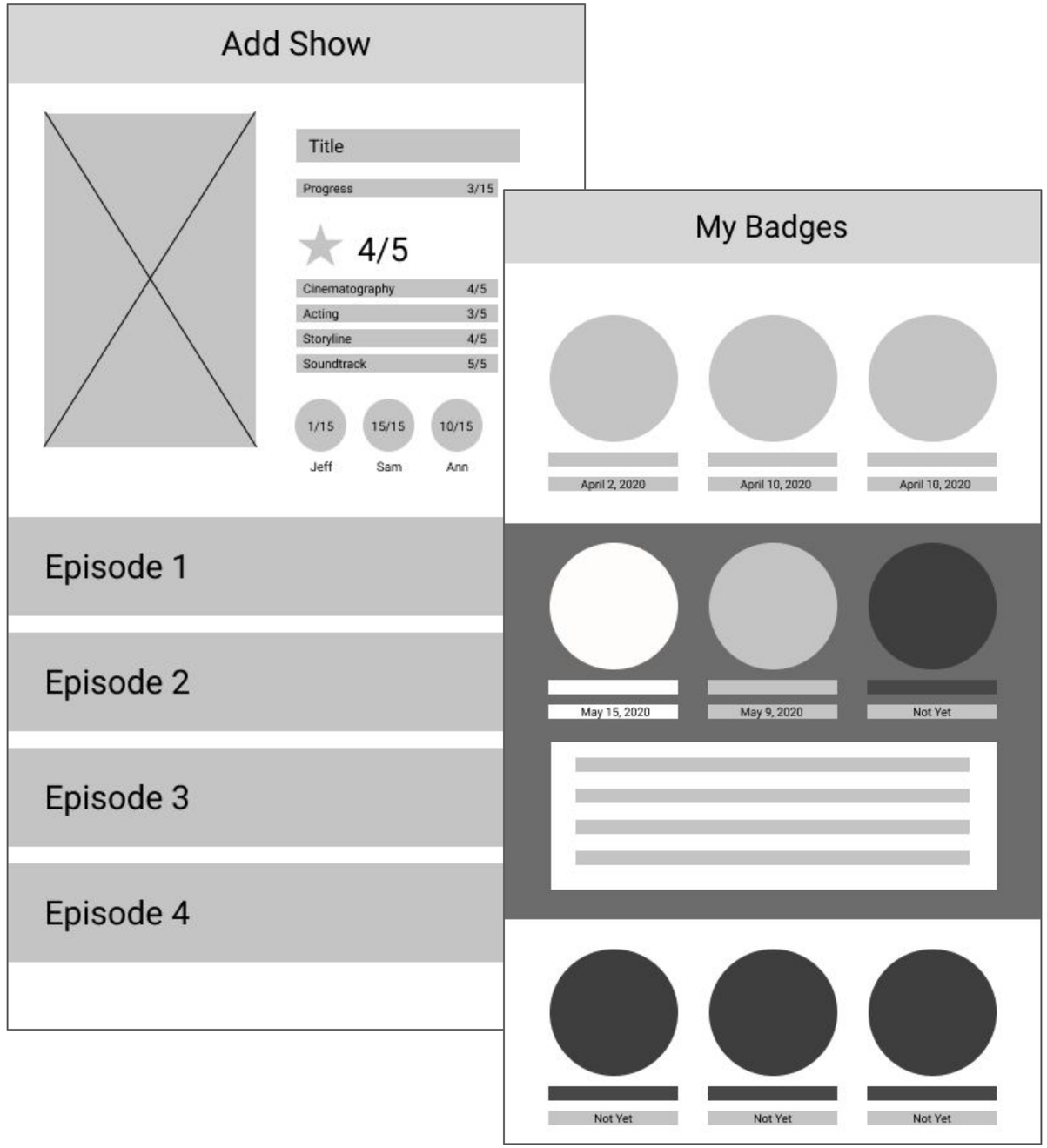
A Crazy-8's drawing from one of my drafts

Develop: Prototyping

In the early stages of the project, I worked on a few screens using low-fidelity designs created in Figma to get an idea of the layout and feel of the app. These designs would contain minimal text and images, showing only the layout and alignment of the individual views.

During these stages, working in a low-fidelity capacity made it much easier to swap out views and components to play around with the user experience.

You can access this low-fidelity prototype here.

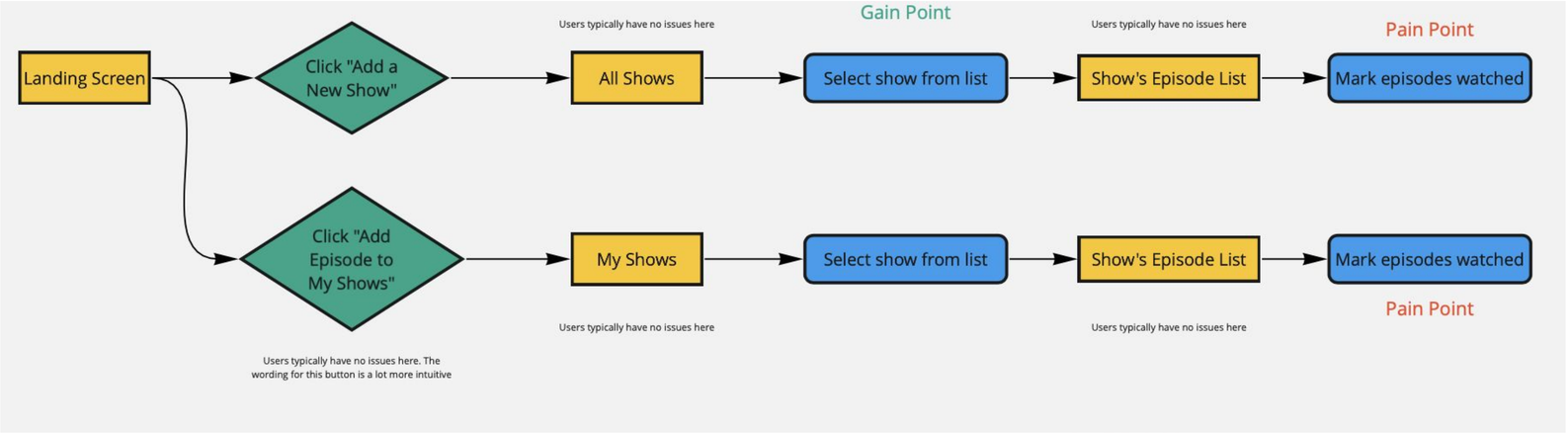


Test: Validation, Usability, Feedback

Throughout the different phases of the project, I employed a variety of user testing techniques to gain feedback.

With my early prototypes, I conducted usability tests to have users run through the app and observing their behavior. Doing so gave me an idea of how potential users would interact with a live version of the app and where they would struggle. For example, in the usability flow diagram below, I discovered that users were experiencing confusion at the end of the task after marking all episodes as watched. I would take this finding to add improvements in my iterations.

In the final stages of the designs, I used UX analytics tools like Lookback to gather smarter usability insights. Based on these insights, I was able to iterate on my product further to increase task success rate.

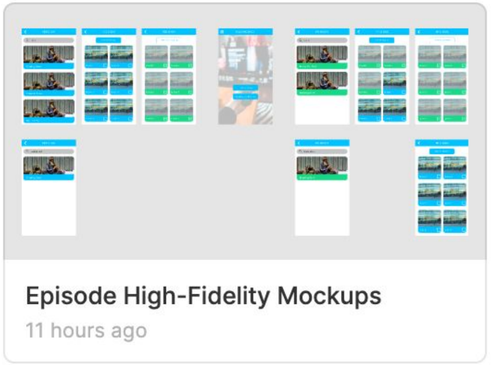


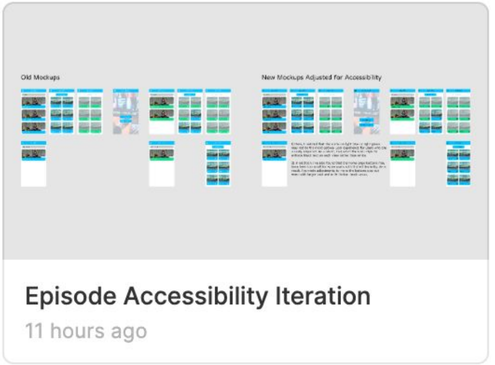
Usability flow with pain points and gain points

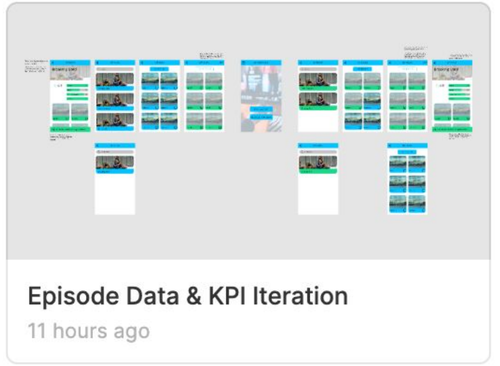
Design: Iteration

One aspect of focus was accessibility. In one of my early designs, I found that ways to optimize the user experience with just simple changes such as changing contrasting colors and making buttons bigger to be more accessible to users who are visually impaired or have limited dexterity.

Through my Lookback tests, I also determined that users were struggling with the end of my usability flow for adding a new show. I iterated further on this design to produce a final screen with a snackbar message giving feedback to notify the user of their success.







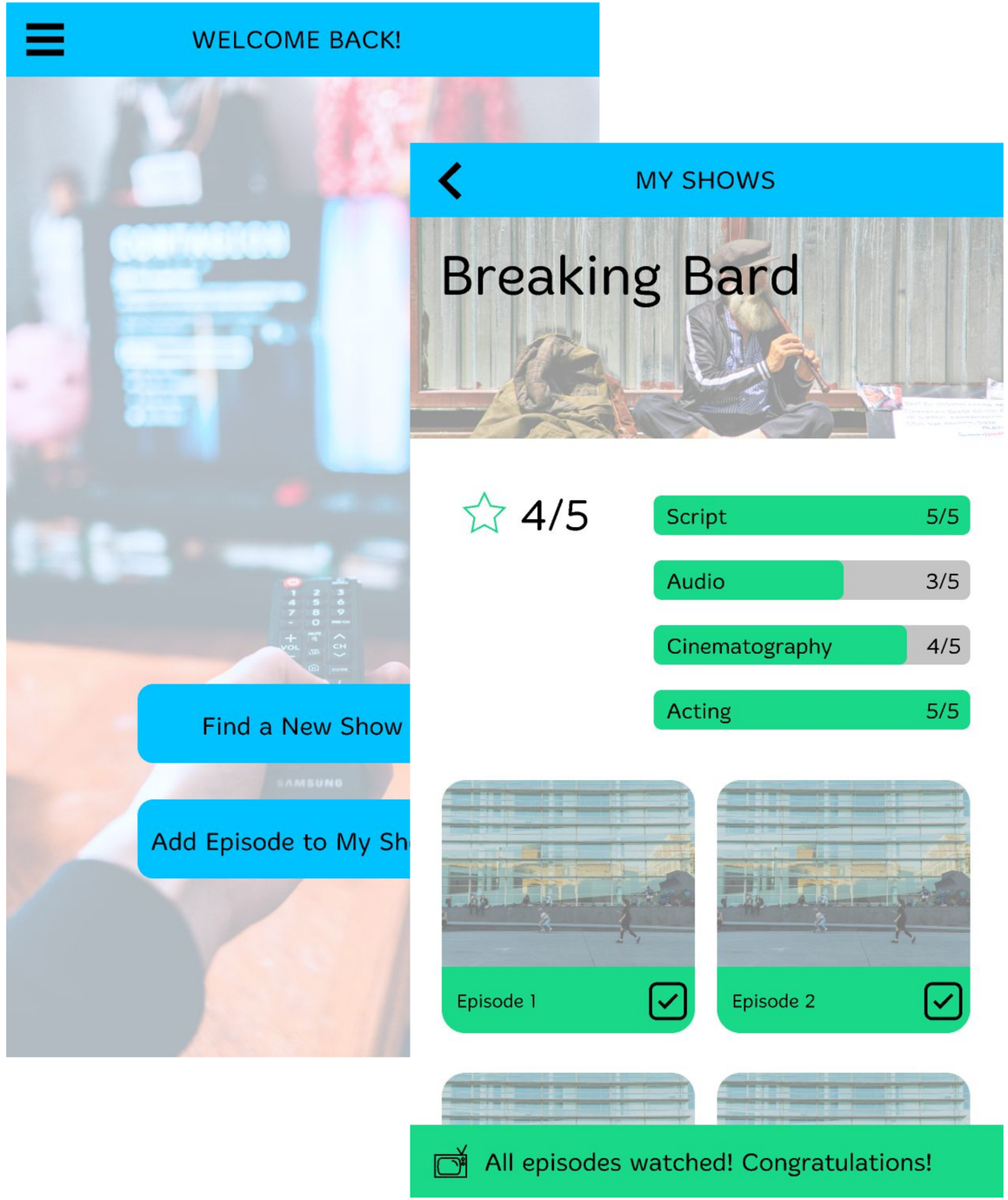
A series of different iterations in Figma

Solution & Impact Overview

At the end of it all, we've come up with a final prototype that walks through the flow of adding a show and its corresponding episodes to the user's account. Ultimately, we will be able to hand these off using Zeplin for its implementation into a fully-featured app.

You can access this final high-fidelity prototype here.

I've also built a companion style guide and a pattern library to reference when building additional screens. Using these documents will help developers and designers on this project keep their implementations compliant with the overarching look and feel of Episode.



About Jeriel

Hi, there! I graduated in computer science from Auburn University and now work as a software engineer, developing mobile apps for both iOS and Android. As such, I like to consider all steps of a product's development cycle, from its design to its implementation. Although my background is mostly technical, I believe a clean user experience is critical in creating human-centered products--it's the key to making something feel whole.