Problem framing and Prioritisation

Group 29:

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Project Brief:

- Imagine you're a PM at YouTube Shorts tasked with increasing social interaction on short form videos posted by creators.
    - Engagement = Like/Share/Comment on videos

- Interview ~20 YouTube users across different age groups :
    - Conduct secondary research online
    - Build a quick questionnaire
    - Conduct direct interviews (use minor incentives if needed)
    - Analyze interview notes

- Your goal is to turn your research & understanding about the space to:
    - Figure the top 6 most effective ways to increase engagement across YouTube shorts – force yourself to think of 3 low-effort ideas and 3 high-effort but massive impact ideas.
    - Make sure to justify each idea with a clear rationale coming from user research and/or product strategy

- Prioritize the ideas using the **RICE framework** – use the same template as used for the live exercise.

Task Breakdown:

Research Phase:

1. Questionnaire:
2. Interviews:
   - Interview ~20 YouTube users across age range to gain diverse perspectives.
3. Secondary Research:
4. Analysis:
   - Analyze interview notes to identify common pain points and problem statements.

Solution Development:

1. Low-Effort, High Impact Ideas:
2. High-Effort, High-Impact Ideas:

Prioritization:

Using RICE Framework:

- Reach: How many users will benefit from the solution?

- Impact: What effect will the solution have on increasing engagements?

- Confidence: How certain are we that this solution will work?

- Effort: How much time and resources are required to implement the solution?

- Using the RICE framework to assign scores to each solution and prioritize accordingly.
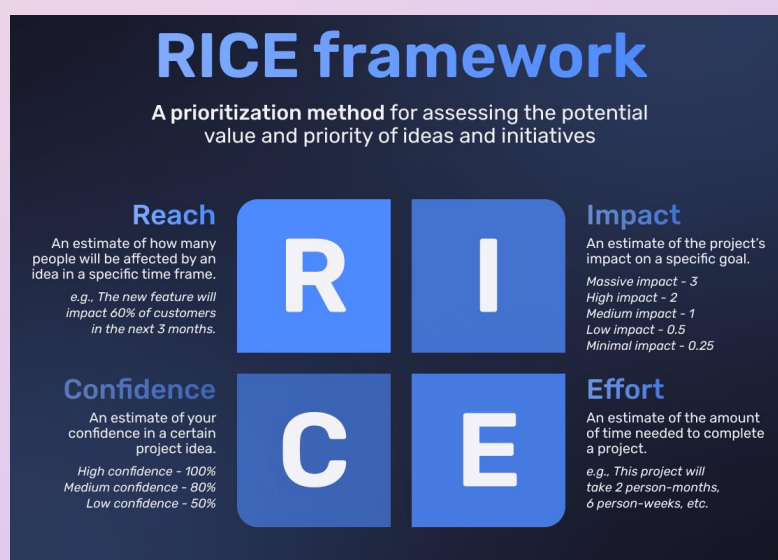
Primary Research:

Questionnaire:

Here are some key questions we asked in the questionnaire to understand how the user interacts with YouTube Shorts :

1. How long have you been using YouTube shorts for?
2. Could you describe how long you typically spend watching videos on YouTube each day?
3. How often do you find yourself scrolling through YouTube Shorts?
4. What do you find appealing about YouTube Shorts compared to longer videos?
5. What types of YouTube Shorts do you typically engage with (e.g., educational, entertaining, personal)?
6. How likely are you to share a Short with friends or family if you find it particularly engaging or relatable?
7. What new features or innovations would you like to see introduced in YouTube Shorts that makes YouTube Shorts more engaging to you?
8. Are there any problems or frustrations you've experienced when trying to engage with YouTube Shorts?
9. How often do you discover new creators or channels through the YouTube Shorts feed?
10. How likely are you to interact with a Short based on your liking? (Liking, commenting, sharing or subscribing)
11. Do you feel a collaboration opportunity with your favorite creator can help you engage with YouTube shorts?
12. How important are notifications for YouTube shorts in prompting you to engage with new content?

Interviews:

Based on the questionnaire, we interviewed some Users. The detailed Transcript of the interviews can be found here : User Interviews
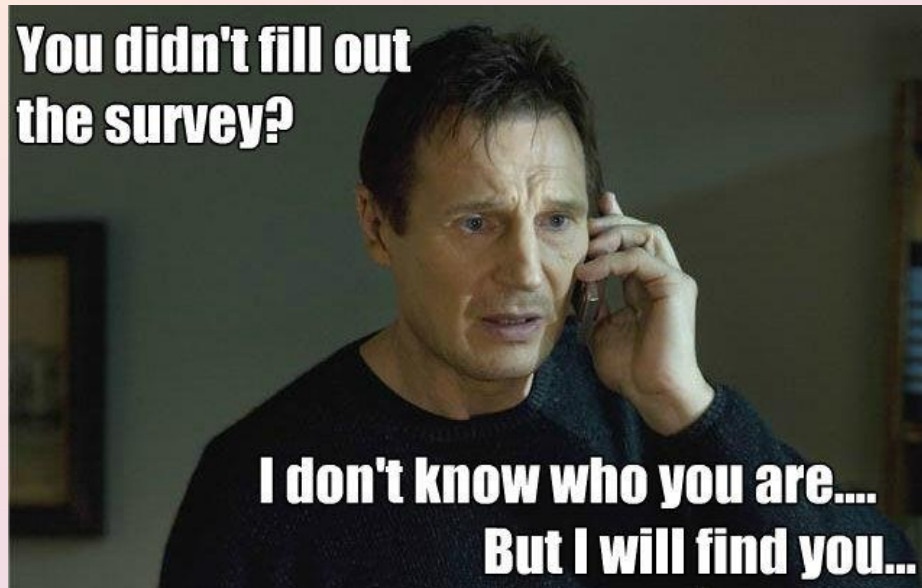

Key Insights from our User Interviews:

1. Generation Z (Ages 20-24)

- **Frequency**: Regular users who consume short-form content daily or multiple times a week.
- **Content Preferences**: Trendy, humorous, and relatable content. Interested in challenges, dance videos, tutorials, and content that reflects their cultural interests.
- **Engagement Habits**: Likely to like, comment, and share videos. Active participants in community-driven trends and challenges.
- **Device Usage**: Predominantly mobile users, often accessing content through smart phones.

2. Millennials (Ages 25-40)

- **Frequency**: Regular users who use YouTube for entertainment, learning, and news updates.
- **Content Preferences**: Diverse interests including lifestyle, travel, tech reviews, and educational content. Prefer concise, informative shorts that fit into their busy schedules.
- **Engagement Habits**: Engage with content that resonates emotionally or intellectually. More likely to comment thoughtfully and share informative or thought-provoking shorts.
- **Device Usage**: Primarily mobile but also frequent users of tablets and desktops for extended viewing.
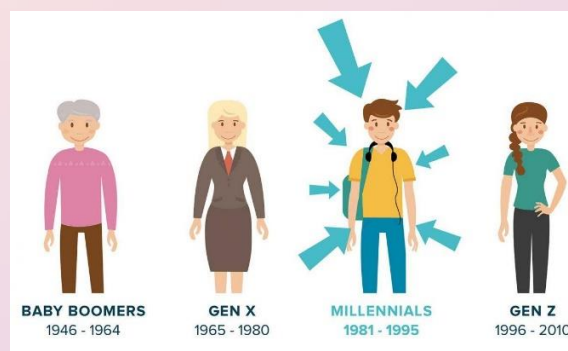

3. Generation X (Ages 41-56)

- **Frequency**: Regular users who watch YouTube for entertainment and learning purposes but less frequent compared to younger demographics.
- **Content Preferences**: Interested in practical tips, nostalgic content, and news updates. Prefer informative and engaging shorts that provide value.
- **Engagement Habits**: Moderate engagement through likes and occasional comments. Share content of personal interest with their networks.
- **Device Usage**: Mix of mobile devices and desktops/laptops for viewing, depending on content length and time availability.

4. **Boomers and Beyond (Ages 57+)**

- **Frequency**: Occasional users who watch YouTube for entertainment, tutorials, and family-related content.

- **Content Preferences**: Prefer straightforward and instructional content, health tips, music, and family-related videos. Value content that is easy to understand and relevant to their interests.

- **Engagement Habits**: Limited engagement with likes and occasional comments. Share content within smaller, close-knit social circles.

- **Device Usage**: Increasing From the detailed user interviews we came up with the following categorization: Increasing use of smartphones and tablets for convenience but also desktops for larger screens and easier navigation.
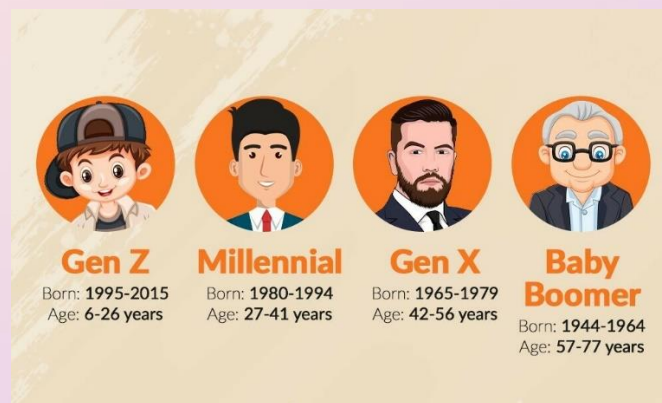
Meanwhile all Generations :

Secondary Research:

Here are some highlights of how YouTube shorts is doing in current Market:

- With a staggering average of 70 billion daily views worldwide, YouTube Shorts continues to surge in popularity in India. Its daily views have skyrocketed by over 120 per cent year-on-year (YoY) globally. This growth has transcended devices, with 88 per cent of Indian online users aged 18 to 44 consuming short-form video content on their television screens over the past year.

- YouTube Shorts has over 2.3 billion monthly active users globally, and it can be estimated that India contributes at least 25% of the total 2.3 billion monthly active YouTube Shorts users, which translates to around 575 million Indian users. YouTube Shorts has over 2.3 billion monthly active users globally, and it can be estimated that India contributes at least 25% of the total 2.3 billion monthly active YouTube Shorts users, which translates to around 575 million Indian users.

- India is the second largest source of YouTube Shorts traffic after the United States.

- About 96% of 18–44-year-olds in India use YouTube Shorts and About 25.6% of YouTube Shorts originated from India in 2020.

The following table displays the YouTube short's age demographics:

Age Group	Percentage of Viewers
18 to 24 years	15.5%
25 to 34 years	21.3%
35 to 44 years	17.5%
45 to 54 years	12.5%
55 to 64 years	9.2%
Over 65 years	9.2%

Note: The age demographics of YouTube Shorts are similar to that of YouTube.

- The short-form video segment in India saw an increase in active users from 2019 to 2021, reaching 290 million .
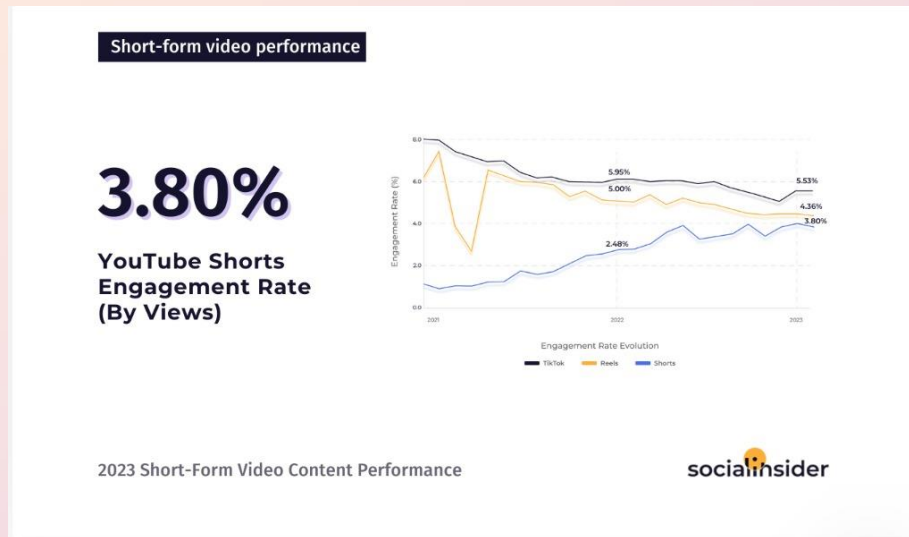
- YouTube has become the platform of choice for 4 out of 5 people online in India.
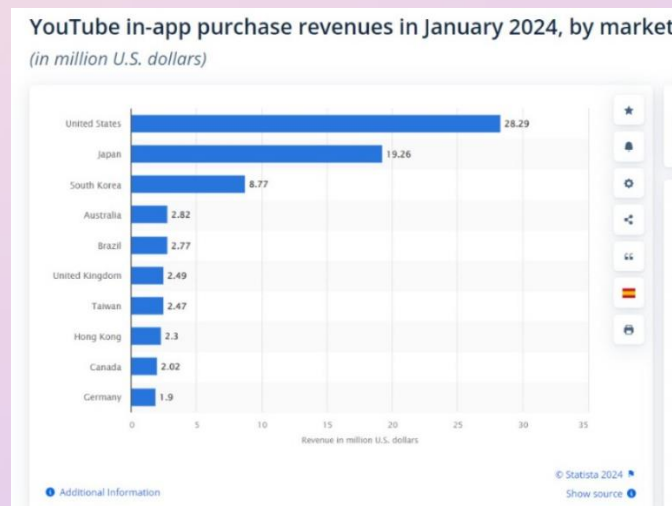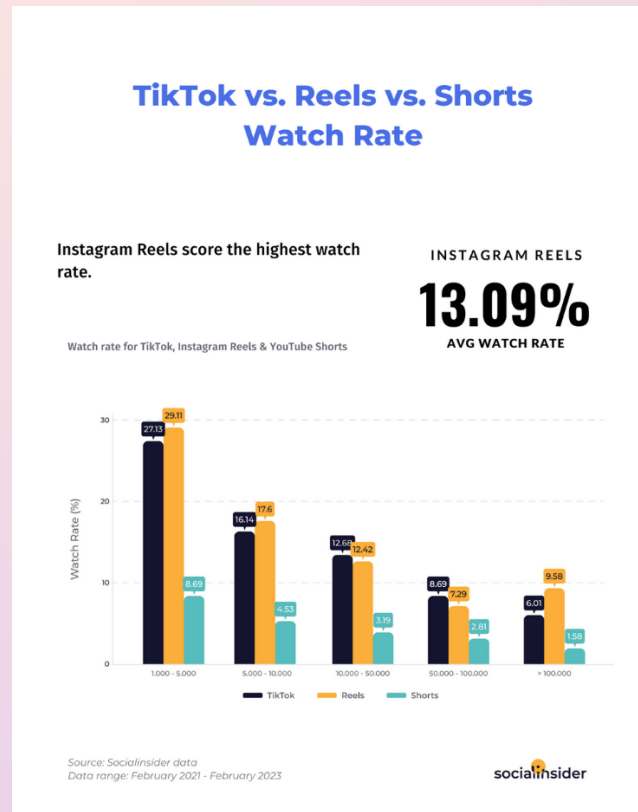
Key Market Players (Competitors)

Instagram Reels

TikTok

Reddit

Snapchat

Twitter Feeds

Telegram

For details refer to : https://www.socialinsider.io/blog/tiktok-vs-reels-vs-shorts/

References:

[1] https://storylab.ai/youtube-video-shorts-statistics/

[2] https://www.statista.com/statistics/1316993/india-short-video-active-users/

[3] https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/tech/technology/youtube-now-platform-of-choice-for-4-out-of-5-indians-online-shorts-usage-grows/articleshow/103990873.cms

[4] https://vidiq.com/youtube-stats/channel/UCboS9mb9D-1UvSfRDsc8xPQ/

[5] https://phototutorial.com/youtube-shorts-statistics/

[6] https://www.demandsage.com/youtube-shorts-statistics/

[7] https://www.socialinsider.io/blog/tiktok-vs-reels-vs-shorts/

Assumptions:

- We are considering the cities like Pune, Delhi, Patna for this interview.
- The scope of study covers only a single segment i.e., YouTube shorts, not YouTube as a whole.
- Community driven engagement includes likes, comments, shares.

Problem Analysis:

Based on our Interviews and Research, we describe various problems in the ecosystem that user faces while using YouTube Shorts:

User Interface:

- Whenever a user interacts with a short, usually the video gets cropped where if there is a written content, it gets cropped as well.
- The transition between vertical scrolling for Shorts and horizontal scrolling for regular videos can be confusing.
- The Shorts interface can become cluttered with too many on-screen elements (like, share, comment buttons).

Viewer Interaction:

- The user hesitates from interacting with the short as they fear it might disturb their algorithm or future recommendations.
- When trying to read long descriptions for a short, when user tries to expand (click on read more), the app either shifts them onto the next short or onto a long format video .

Algorithm :

- Users might find it difficult to track their engagement history with Shorts.
- The algorithm may not always recommend relevant Shorts, leading to irrelevant or repetitive content.
- While users encounter new creators occasionally, they express a desire for more diverse content discovery beyond their current preferences.
- The algorithm may prioritize the quantity of uploads over the quality of content. : Quality over quantity

Sharing Accessibility:

- Users find it inconvenient to share YouTube Shorts with friends and family due to the lack of a direct social connection feature.
- Users hesitate to share shorts since they have to share it via a different app altogether.
- Users can't tag their friends in comments to quickly share a short with them.

Monetization:

- As few content creators are users also, Shorts typically generate less ad revenue compared to longer videos due to their brief duration.
- Short-form content can make it harder to integrate sponsorships and brand deals effectively.

Download/Save:

- There's a request for features allowing easier saving or downloading of Shorts for future viewing, reflecting a need for more flexible content access.
- Saved content may not sync across multiple devices even if user is logging in via same ID.
- Saving a short is very complicated, only option is to save to playlist, not a direct save option.

Competitor's Edge:

- Majority users are of a younger age group and prefer engaging with Instagram Reels.
- Competitor's app provides ease of use that draws the user to interact with them.
- Connectivity with friends is easier and sharing content with them is simplistic.
- Highly addictive algorithm, strong community features, and innovative engagement tools.
- Integration with the broader Instagram ecosystem, strong visual editing tools, and established user base.

App Functionality:

- Most users do not prioritize notifications for YouTube Shorts due to their sporadic usage patterns or preference for browsing when convenient.
- The notifications from the app makes them not use the app at all.(Notifications from unsubscribed creators also pops-up time to time irrespective of relevancy with the user)
- Some users complained of the app glitching and changing aspect ratio when scrolling through shorts.

From our Problem Analysis, the table below summarizes the pain-points / problems, while sorting them according to their frequency and severity:

| Problems	Frequency	Severity	Priority
User Interface	Medium	Medium	P1
Viewer Interaction	**High**	**High**	**P0**
Algorithm	Medium	Medium	P1
Sharing Accessibility	**High**	**High**	**P0**
Monetization	Low	Low	P2
Download/Save	**Medium**	**High**	**P0**
Competitor's Edge	Medium	High	P2
App Functionality	Medium	High	P1

Solutions:

We will take solutions in order of priority from P0 to P2 (Where P0 is the highest priority and P2 is the lowest)

Enhance Viewer Interaction:

This solves the problem of Viewer Interaction:

- Enhanced Reactions: Introduce additional reaction options, such as emojis or quick reactions, to provide more ways for viewers to express themselves.
- Ask questions, run polls, or issue challenges within your Shorts to foster a sense of community and prompt viewers to engage.

EFFORT : LOW
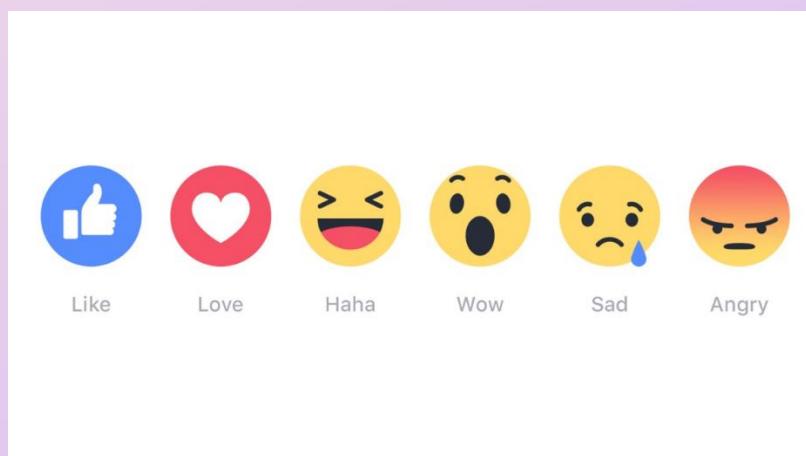
Enhancing Sharing Accessibility:

This solves the problem of Sharing Accessibility:

- Add one-click sharing options to shorts itself.
- Introduce easier sharing options within the YouTube app, such as direct sharing to social media platforms, messaging apps, or even email. This would encourage users to share engaging Shorts more frequently.
- Features to add friends like other competitors, so that it allows direct interaction like tagging or mentioning them in comments which will in-turn increase the interaction itself.

EFFORT : HIGH
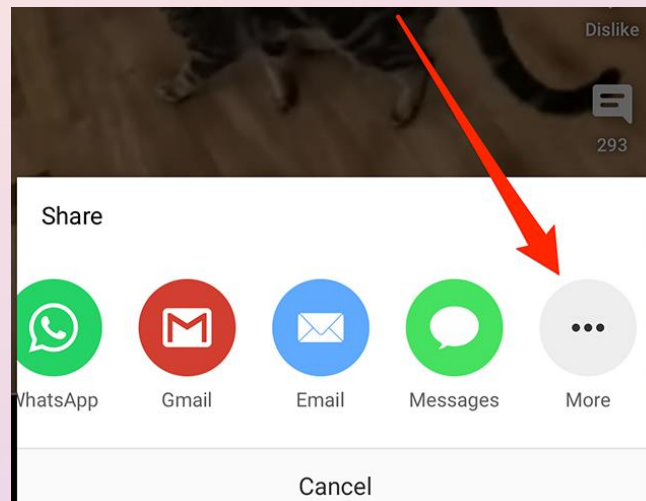
OBTD : One Button to Download

This solves the problem of Download/ Save:

- Saving option in shorts is quite complicated, it requires you to create a playlist. We can add a single button where only one click is enough to save the short.
- Add a feature that allows users to download or save Shorts directly within the YouTube app. This would cater to users who want to collect or re-watch informative or entertaining Shorts at their convenience.
- Allow users to be able to leverage cross device functionality for their saved content.

EFFORT : HIGH
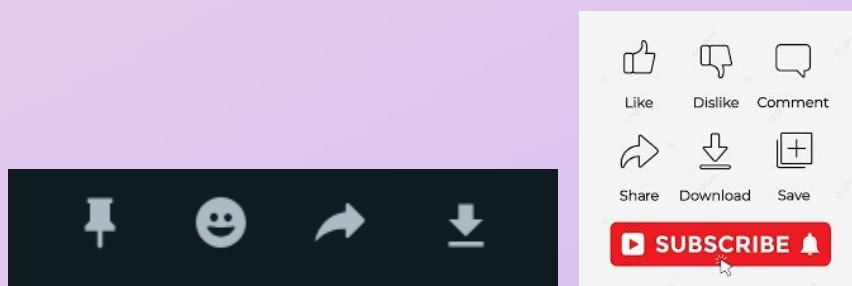
Optimize Metadata:

This solves the problem of [Algorithm](#):

- Implement separate algorithms for YouTube Shorts to maintain distinct recommendations and user preferences. This would allow users to engage more freely with Shorts without impacting their long-form video recommendations.
- Personalized Recommendations: Use advanced algorithms to provide more personalized and relevant Shorts recommendations.
- Diverse Content: Ensure a diverse range of content is recommended to avoid repetition and promote discovery.
- Integration with the broader YouTube ecosystem, strong visual feedbacks, like Q&A, improvement feedbacks etc.

EFFORT : HIGH
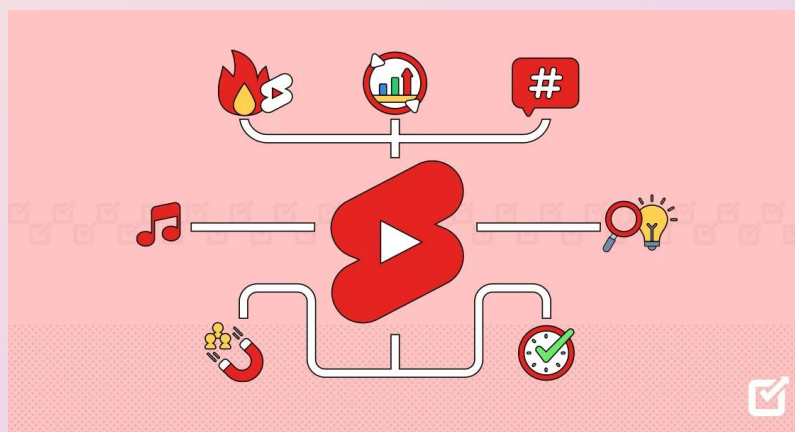
Building a more Robust App:

This solves the problem of [App Functionality](#):

- Provide users with more control over notification preferences specifically for YouTube Shorts.
- Allow them to customize notification settings based on their viewing habits, ensuring notifications are timely and relevant.
- Take in-app surveys on what problems the user is facing frequently with the app, fix the bugs if identified with those surveys.

EFFORT: LOW

Enhancing overall UI/UX:

This solves the problem of <u>User Interface</u>:

- Optimize the aspect ratio of Shorts videos to ensure both video content and text are fully visible without cropping.
- Clearly differentiate between Shorts and regular videos with distinct interface elements and visual cues to guide users seamlessly between vertical and horizontal scrolling modes.
- Streamline the Shorts interface by consolidating on-screen elements like like, share, and comment buttons into a user-friendly, less intrusive design that maintains focus on the video content.

EFFORT: LOW
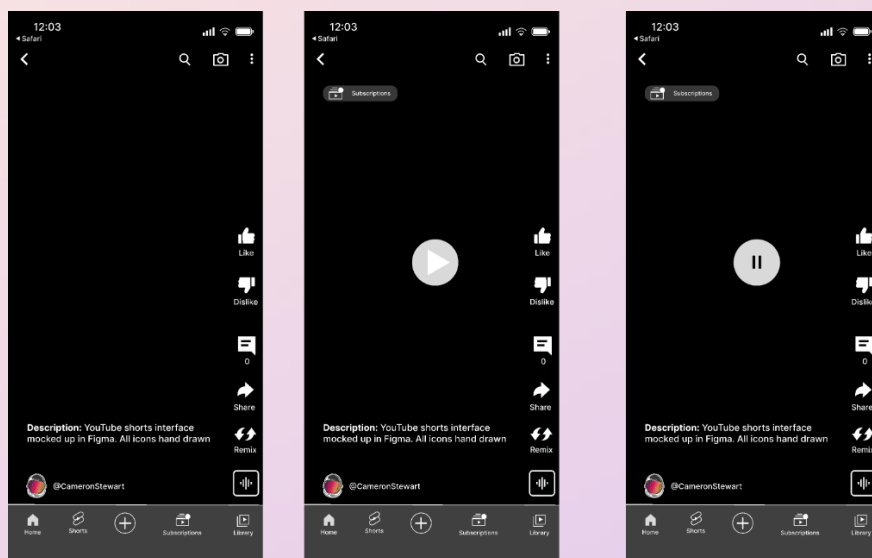
Implement a Loyalty Program :

This solves the problem of <u>Monetization</u>:

- Eligibility criteria for monetization can include smaller or newer creators and incentive policies can be modified a bit to help encourage creators to put out more content.
- Facilitate easier interaction between users and creators through features like collaborative videos or Q&A sessions within Shorts. This could encourage more engagement and loyalty among viewers.

EFFORT: LOW

Leverage Cross-Promotion: (MOONSHOT SOLUTION)

This solves the problem of Competitors:

- Encourage the creators to put in content that can draw out the younger target audience to the platform.
- All of the solutions proposed above like : Ease of sharing, functionality to add friends, tagging them in comment section and download/ save option can help Shorts compete with competitors out there.
- As suggested above, improving the metadata and algorithm, adding interactivity tools in the short, churning out more relatable user content can all contribute to bring users to the platform.
- Rewarding loyalty : Incentivizing a small user base that shows loyalty to the platform (only at first), to create a sense of belief that the users are being looked after, being taken care of and are being heard.

EFFORT : EXTREMELY HIGH

POV Product Managers :

RICE Prioritization

YouTube Shorts Total Users Reached: 2 billion (as of 2023)

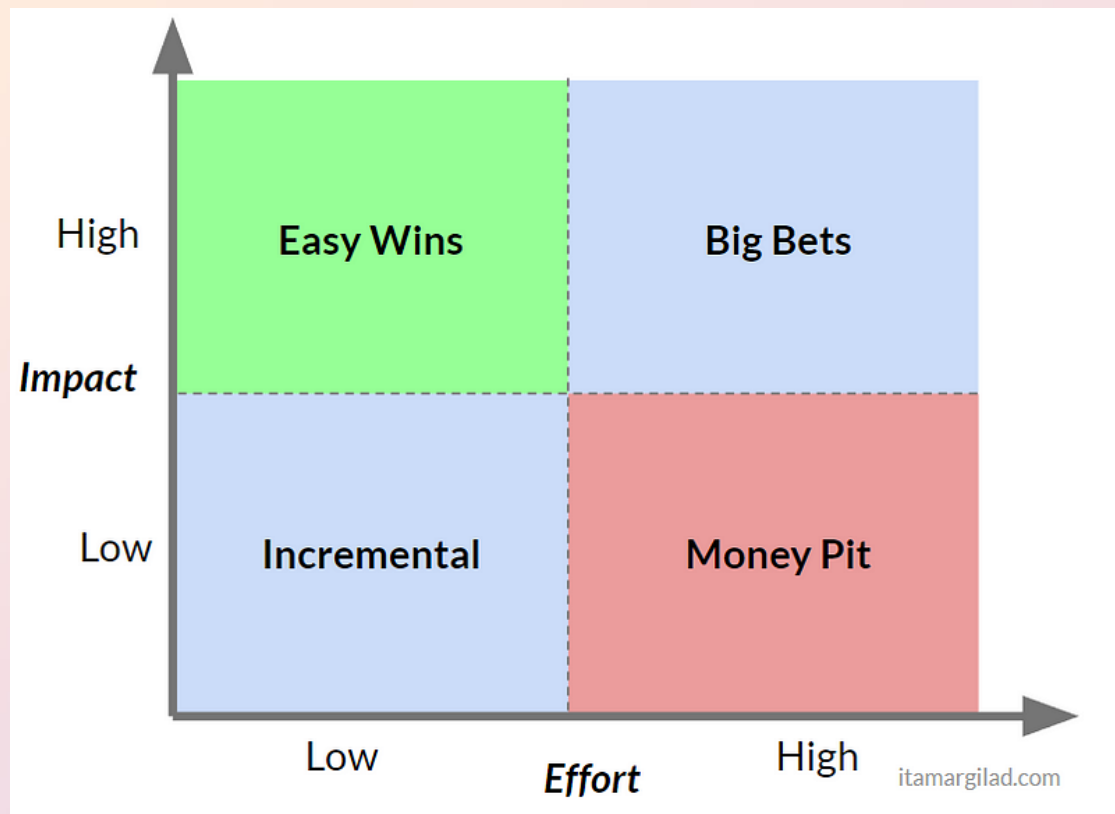| ⚡ Shorts							
Idea	**Reach %**	**Impact**	**Confidence**	**Effort**	**RICE score**	**Priority**	**Effort vs Impact**
Enhance Viewer Interaction	75	3	75%	1	169	P0	LE, HI
Enhancing Sharing Accessibility	100	4	100%	3	133	P0	HE, HI
OBTD : One Button to Download	100	4	100%	3	133	P0	HE, HI
Optimize Metadata	100	4	100%	4	100	P1	HE, HI
Building a more Robust App	75	3	50%	2	56.25	P1	LE, HI
Enhancing overall UI/UX	50	3	75%	2	56.25	P1	LE, HI
Implement a Loyalty Program	25	1	75%	1	18.75	P2	LE,LI
Leverage Cross-Promotion	75	4	75%	4	56.25	P2	HE, HI
Scale							
S	25	1	25%	1			
M	50	2	50%	2			
L	75	3	75%	3			
XL	100	4	100%	4			

Note: Solutions that have a High Impact, and an overall high RICE Score, are taken forward as our proposed ideas.

Link to our RICE Prioritization:

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1Gsva6F59zk0e1SJv6AMh3XWpmXTbeWYK/edit?usp=sharing&ouid=110327647937835806299&rtpof=true&sd=true

Suggesting our **top ideas** from RICE Prioritization:

<u>Low Effort High Impact Solutions:</u>

1. Enhance Viewer Interactions:

Reach: 75, Impact:3, Confidence: 75, Effort: 1 – RICE SCORE: 169

To increase viewer engagement in Shorts, introduce emojis and quick reactions for diverse expressions, and utilize polls, questions, or challenges to build community interaction and prompt viewer engagement.

2. Building a more Robust App:

Reach: 75, Impact:3, Confidence: 50, Effort: 2 – RICE SCORE: 56.25

To enhance user experience by offering customizable notification preferences for Shorts, enabling viewers to receive timely updates aligned with their preferences. Additionally, implementing in-app surveys to address common user issues and swiftly resolve any identified bugs for improved functionality.

3. Enhancing overall UI/UX:

Reach: 50, Impact:3, Confidence: 75, Effort: 2 – RICE SCORE: 56.25

Enhancing Shorts by optimizing aspect ratios for full visibility, distinguishing them clearly from regular videos with intuitive interface elements, and streamlining on-screen features for a focused viewing experience.

High Effort High Impact Solutions:

1. Enhancing Sharing Accessibility:

Reach: 100, Impact:4, Confidence: 100, Effort: 3 – RICE SCORE: 133

To enhance Shorts by adding one-click sharing directly from the Shorts interface and introducing streamlined sharing options across social media, messaging apps, and email. Additionally, to foster user interaction by implementing features for adding friends and facilitating direct interaction like tagging and mentioning in comments.

2. One Button to Download (OBTD):

Reach: 100, Impact:4, Confidence: 100, Effort: 3 – RICE SCORE: 133

To simplify saving Shorts by implementing a single-click save button and enabling direct downloading or saving of Shorts within the app. Also, to enhance user convenience by integrating cross-device functionality for accessing saved content seamlessly across devices.

3. Optimize Metadata:

Reach: 100, Impact:4, Confidence: 100, Effort: 4 – RICE SCORE: 100

To enhance Shorts by implementing separate algorithms for recommendations to preserve distinct user preferences from long-form videos, while offering personalized and diverse content recommendations. Also, to integrate Shorts more seamlessly with the broader YouTube ecosystem by incorporating visual feedback mechanisms like Q&A and improvement feedback loops.