

radhika dutt

Designing reward program using behavioural science

By Radhika Dutt



Highly manual incentive setup & unclear payout system

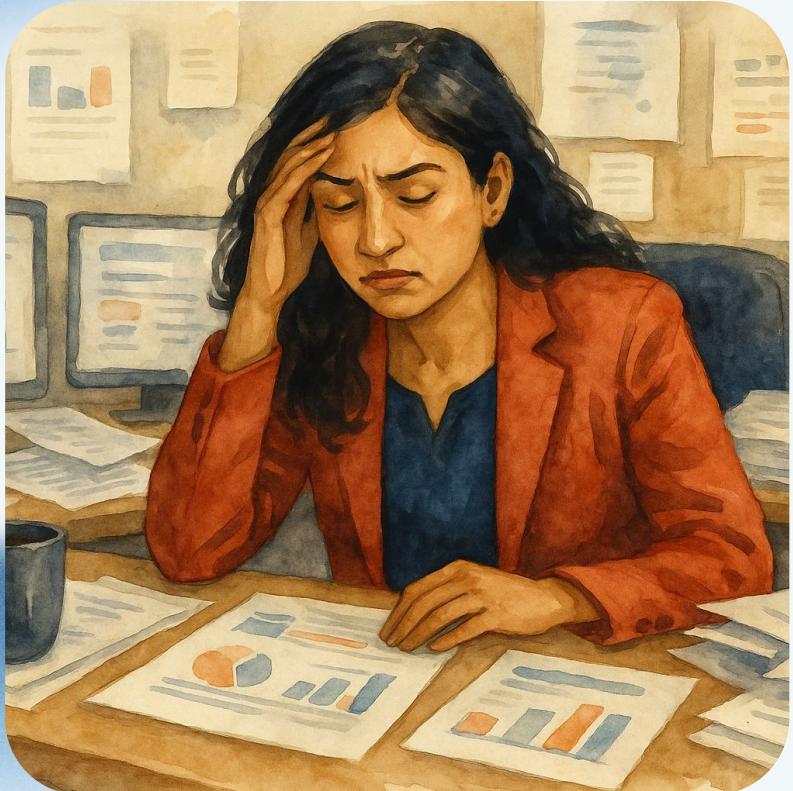
Problem statement

Porter, a logistic company

Porter struggled to engage and retain drivers due to a lack of a structured, scalable, and transparent incentive system.

Manual processes—like spreadsheets and call center-driven communication—made campaigns slow, confusing, and limited in reach. Drivers lacked visibility into rewards and didn't trust the system.

To solve this, Porter needed a behaviorally informed solution that could build trust, scale efficiently, and influence key driver actions in real-time.



Highly manual incentive setup & unclear payout system

Driver-Side Challenge

No reward system

Porter drivers had no clear or consistent way to track or understand incentives.

Without in-app visibility, they couldn't see their progress or earnings, making the reward system feel vague and unreliable.

This led to confusion, low motivation, and a lack of trust.



Highly manual incentive setup & unclear payout system

Target Behavior

More trips, less cancellations

Porter aimed to increase the number of incentivized trips completed by drivers within a 3-week launch window across multiple Indian cities.

The goal was to influence key driver behaviors—like trip completion and reduced order cancellations—directly impacting fulfillment and partner performance metrics.



Results & Impact

Behavioral interventions drive critical business outcomes

Measurable Impact

75% more campaigns

(200 → 350)

Payout time: 48 hrs → 24 hrs

90 workdays saved

177K+ drivers accessed new UI



How I actually inculcated behavioural design

Behavioral Design in action



Identify Key Behavior

Identify the behavior to change



Behavioral Mapping

Map out every step to get to the key behavior



Diagnose Biases

Identify the most important psychologies at play



Solution Design

Generate ideas for behaviorally-informed interventions



Test and Learn

Test key assumptions with quant or qual research

Identify the key behaviour

The key behavior is for the existing users to complete more incentivised trips within two weeks of launching the incentive program which is efficient in communicating the rules to the users and users also will be able to retrieve and act on their earning reports.



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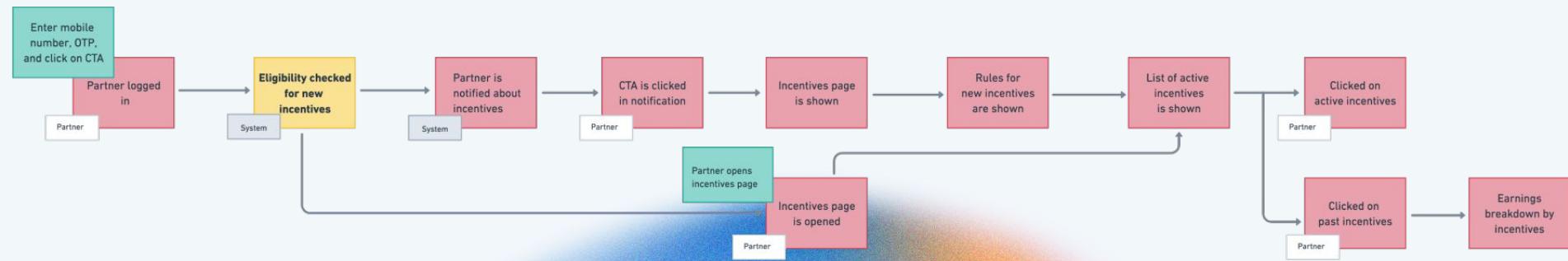


Test and Learn

Test key assumptions with quant or qual research

Behavioral system map

Assess what we know about the opportunity space, Review available data like funnel/drops, past tests, research by having creative workshops with stakeholders, & come up with different Behavioral Hypotheses, Evidence, & Examples



Identify high impact places to intervene

Broke down the steps across products and compared to zero in on key drop-off points

Step 1: Behavior Map 🧠

- 1 User logged in, ability to see the new incentive card on home page.

Step 2: Biggest Barriers 🚫

- Incentive banner on homepage or notifications missed by users, low click through rates.

Step 3: Strategies to Remove Barrier💡

Alter the salience: make it stand out visually, make it surprising, or make it prominent to drive attention. Use 'new' tag and give a prominent real state on homepage.

- 2 System will do a eligibility check for new incentives.

- System checks are not properly optimised.

Use a default: user are more likely to stick to the default because they infer that this is the choice endorsed by the company and it's easier to do.

- 3 System will initiate in-app notification (either temporary or full screen popup) and user will be notified about incentives.

- Notifications schedules are not properly planned, or not mapped correctly to its respective actionable screen.

Reminder at the right time: despite intention, user may forget to do something. Specific, actionable, and timely reminders refocus and prioritize tasks for user.

- 4 Notification is acknowledged & main button is clicked by user.

- User mistakenly clicks outside of the modal or skips in hurry.

Make it feel less like a choice: Make the infomative modal or onboarding more necessary than like a choice.

Behavioral Design in action



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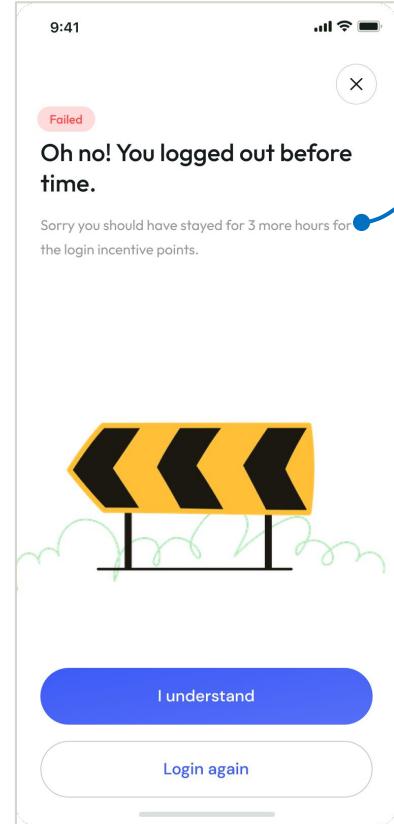
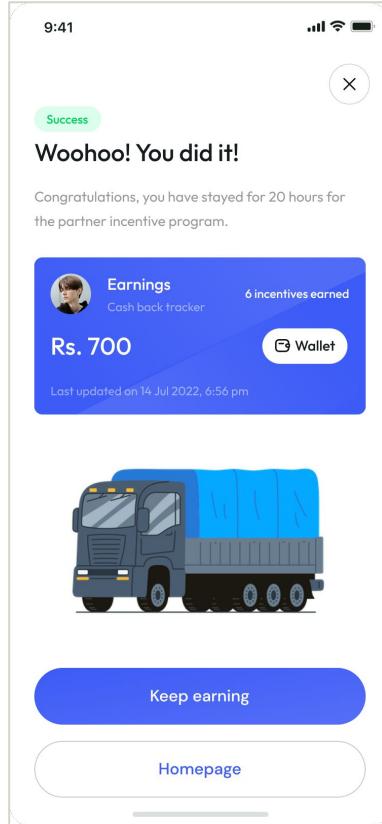


Test and Learn

Test key assumptions with quant or qual research

Diagnose or be aware of behavioral barriers on each screen

First version with key psychologies in mind while prototyping



Information Bias

Explanation of user action or inaction at the right step is one way to inculcate context and knowledge.

Behavioral Design in action



Identify Key Behavior

Identify the behavior to change



Behavioral Mapping

Map out every step to get to the key behavior



Diagnose Biases

Identify the most important psychologies at play



Solution Design

Generate ideas for behaviorally-informed interventions

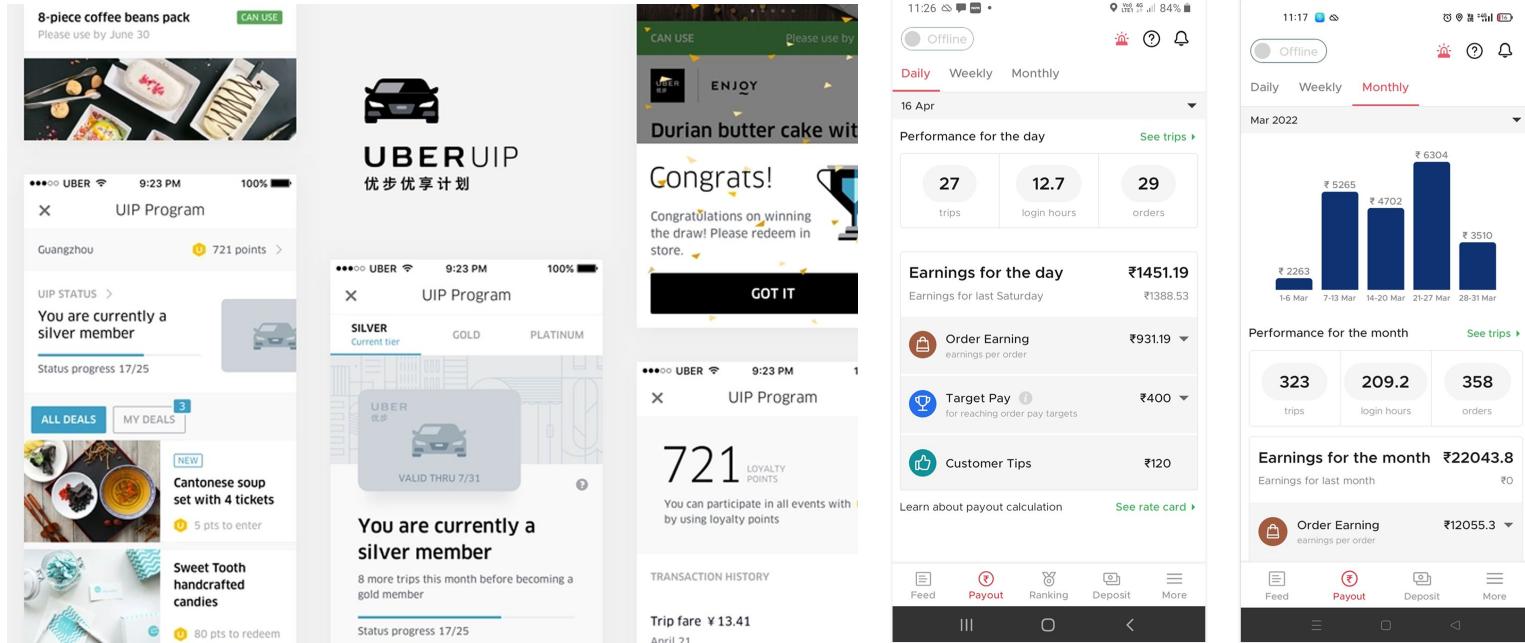


Test and Learn

Test key assumptions with quant or qual research

Look to best-in-class examples for design inspiration

We can start by collecting examples from competitors to show how concepts can be applied



Use academic findings to motivate intervention ideas

Resolve barriers by leveraging the psychology of human behaviour

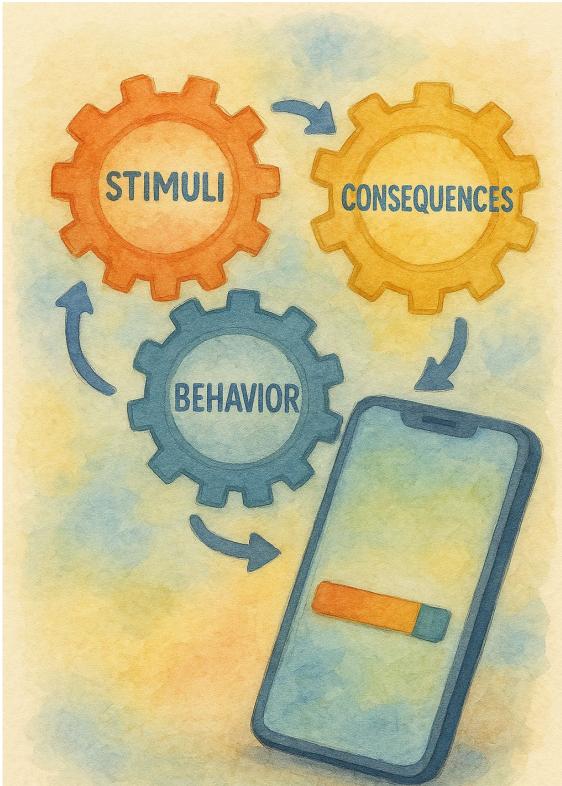
BOOK REFERENCE

Sarafino, E. P. (2012).
Applied behavior analysis:
Principles and procedures
for modifying behavior.
Wiley.

Summary

It's about managing the:

- +Stimuli (impressions)
- +Behaviour (understanding the persona) - Less cognitive load
- +Consequences.



ACTIVELY DISCUSS IT WITH STAKEHOLDERS

Managing Stimuli: Alteration in the likelihood of the behaviour occurring. eg. using prompts/notifications.

Q. Were the prompts, or instructions used in the intervention (a) noticed by the target person and (b) effective?

Managing Behaviour: Teaching a response, eg interval reward, scratch cards

Q. Was the target behaviour clearly defined for the individuals implementing the program?

Managing Consequences: Changing the existing consequences, eg. getting feedback, if the partners maintains good behaviour keep getting the good feedback.

Q. Were some reinforcers provided immediately after appropriate behaviours, and were these rewards given frequently and in small amounts?

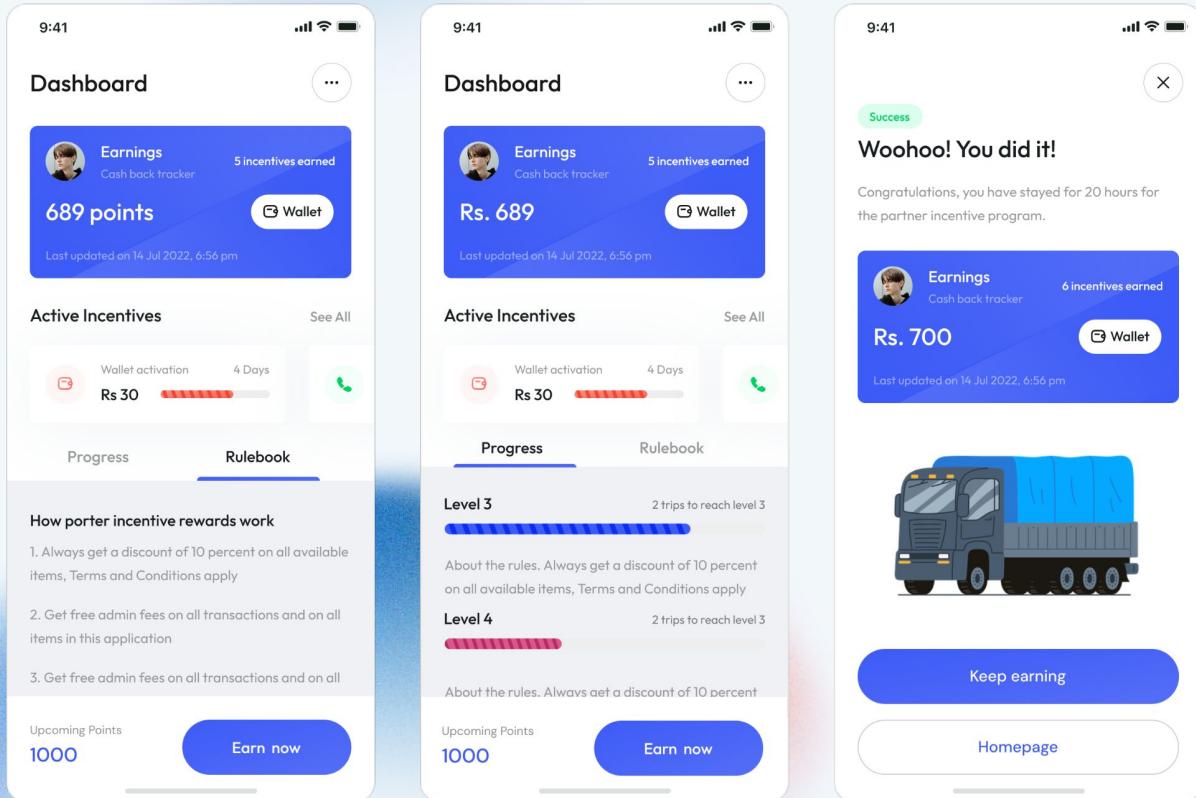
Design behaviorally-informed solutions to drive action

Version 1

No detailed data or exact answers? No worries

Quickly prototyping with available resources and narrative at the beginning.

Having main components in place helps during the stakeholder discussion of what is possible and what priorities to focus on.



Design behaviorally-informed solutions to drive action

Version 2

Focus on showing incentives

After one iteration, it was clear that the focus is on how drivers will interact with their active incentives.

Wallet, points, earnings all these nomenclature were discussed in align with user research findings.

The image displays four mobile application screens arranged horizontally, illustrating the design of behaviorally-informed incentives:

- Leftmost Screen:** A modal window titled "About the program" featuring a yellow crown icon. Below it, a bold message reads "You are now eligible for a new incentive!". A note below states: "Onboarding screens to educate partner after clicking on the notification." At the bottom are two buttons: a blue "Claim your incentive program" button and a "Skip" button.
- Second Screen (Incentives):** A navigation bar with "Incentives" and "Past incentives". It shows the date "16 Apr" and a section titled "Performance for the day" with metrics: 27 trips, 12.7 login hours, and 27 orders. Below this is a section titled "Earnings for the day" showing "Rs 2984.19". It lists two rewards:
 - "Trip Incentive sign up reward + Rs 1,000.00* for claiming into incentive program"
 - "Login hours guarantee + Rs 1,984.19* min guaranteed pay for login hours"A link "See rulebook" is provided for learning about incentive calculation.
- Third Screen (Rulebook):** A title "How porter incentive rewards work" followed by "How trip incentive work?". It describes the trip incentive period from 02/07 to 05/07, requiring 3 orders to earn Rs 1000. A note states: "This is a description about the trip incentive. You are now eligible for a trip incentive from 02/07 to 05/07. Complete 3 orders to earn Rs 1000." It includes a "Your performance" section with the same 27, 12.7, 27 metrics, and a "Know more" link.
- Rightmost Screen (Incentives):** A navigation bar with "Active Incentives" and "Past Incentives". It shows a "Trip Incentive" entry with a reward of "+ Rs 1,000.00*". It includes a note: "You are now eligible for a trip incentive from 02/07 to 05/07. Complete 3 orders to earn Rs 1000." A note states: "*Terms & conditions apply". It also shows a "Login Incentive" entry with a reward of "+ Rs 1,000.00*". It includes a note: "You are now eligible for a trip incentive from 02/07 to 05/07. Stay logged in for 24 hours to earn Rs 1000." A note states: "*Terms & conditions apply". It features a "Dry run Incentive" entry with a reward of "+ Rs 1,000.00*". It includes a note: "You are now eligible for a dry run incentive from 02/07 to 05/07. Stay logged in for 24 hours to earn Rs 1000." A note states: "*Terms & conditions apply".

Design behaviorally-informed solutions to drive action

Version 3

Simplified detailed layout

Earnings Breakdown: Displays earnings from completed trips, login streak bonuses, and any active customer satisfaction rewards.

Progress Bar: Highlights real-time progress toward trip-based incentive targets, shown via a clear visual meter.

Negative Reinforcement: Missed trips, fraud flags, or low ratings that may disqualify the driver.

The image displays three mobile application screens for an 'Incentive Dashboard' across three different sections: 'Earnings of the day', 'Trip Incentives', and 'Customer satisfaction'. Each section includes a summary of earnings, a progress bar, and a call-to-action button.

- Earnings of the day:** Shows a total of Rs 2745.19 for 30 Aug. It includes a ribbon icon and a 'Welcome to incentive program!' message with a 'View rulebook' button.
- Trip Incentives:** Shows a total of Rs 1745.19 for 30 Aug. It includes a ribbon icon and two items: 'Trip incentive Rs 349.87 earned' and 'Trip incentive Rs 261.56 earned', each with a blue truck icon and a 'View' button.
- Login Incentives:** Shows a total of Rs 50 for 30 Aug. It includes a ribbon icon and one item: 'Login incentive Rs 50 earned', accompanied by a clock icon and a 'View' button.
- Customer satisfaction:** Shows a total of Rs 50 for 30 Aug. It includes a ribbon icon and one item: 'Missed order incentive loss Rs 50', accompanied by a sad face icon and a 'View' button.

Design behaviorally-informed solutions to drive action

Version 4

Spark conversations around creative ideas

The red zone or fouls idea was a creative way to signal penalties, and the team liked it because it had a strong metaphor. But I was worried that the icon might not be clear to users who didn't know football rules. Even though the concept was good, I thought using the foul icon could confuse some users.

After talking with the PM and engineering team, we decided to use a more common warning symbol and add clear text to explain the consequence. This change made sure all users understood the message, no matter if they knew the football metaphor or not.

The image displays three wireframe screens for a mobile application, illustrating the design evolution from Version 4 to a final state.

- Incentive Dashboard:** Shows an "Incentive program" section with three trip incentives: Trip incentive 1 (1st - 5th Sept, 13 trips), Trip incentive 2 (31st - 7th August, 21 trips), and Trip incentive 3 (6th - 3rd August, 23 trips). Below this is a "Red zone" section with two items: "Missed orders" (Foul 1) and "Bad behaviour" (Foul 2).
- Details:** A detailed view of an active trip incentive. It shows the period (1st - 5th Sept), the amount (500), the number of trips to be completed (5), the number of missed orders allowed (4), and the number of ABRTG allowed (2). It also displays "Your trip progress" (13 trips of 40 completed) and a progress bar.
- Dashboard:** A summary screen titled "Your Earnings" showing points reset on 30 Aug and current earnings (Rs 2745.19) out of a goal (Rs 5000). It includes sections for "Your progress" (13 trips of 40 completed with a progress bar) and "Your trips" (listing the three trip incentives). At the bottom, there is a "Red zone" section with "Missed orders" (Foul 1) and "Bad behaviour" (Foul 2).

Build medium-fidelity mockup for further discussions with colleagues

Version 5

Simplify simplify simplify

With this version, lot of text, concepts and active call to actions were reduced thus reducing the cognitive load. Information were concealed inside the tabs with first tab of the active ongoing progress always opened.

The image displays two wireframe mockups of a mobile application interface. The left mockup is titled 'Dashboard' and lists three 'Trip incentive' cards. The first card, 'Trip incentive 1' (1st - 5th Sept, 13 trips), is expanded, showing a progress bar for 'Your progress' (13 trips of 40 completed). The second card, 'Trip incentive 2' (28th Aug - 31st Aug, 13 trips), and the third card, 'Trip incentive 3' (15th Aug - 27th Aug, 13 trips), are collapsed. The right mockup is titled 'Details' and shows the expanded view of 'Trip incentive 1'. It includes sections for 'Your progress' (2 trips completed, target 2), '3 missed orders' (threshold: No missed orders), and '98 % acceptance rate' (target: 100%). A blue button at the bottom right of the right mockup says 'Go to dashboard'.

← Dashboard

Your active incentives

Trip incentive 1
1st - 5th Sept
13 trips

Your progress
13 trips of 40 completed

Trip incentive 2
28th Aug - 31st Aug
13 trips

Trip incentive 3
15th Aug - 27th Aug
13 trips

← Details

Your progress for incentive trip

You are now eligible for a trip incentive from 2nd Sept to 7th Sept. You can earn upto Rs 6000 if you complete this incentive.

Your Performance

2 trips completed
Target: 2

3 missed orders
Threshold: No missed orders

98 % acceptance rate
Target: 100%

Go to dashboard

Build medium-fidelity mockup for further discussions with colleagues

Version 6

Introduction of color codes

Introduced colors and its respective error messages to have a universal understanding.

Using minimal icons here as compared to graphic heavy colourful animated icons used before.

The image displays three mobile application screens illustrating the 'Your active incentives' feature across different states: 'Completed', 'Disqualified', and 'In progress'. Each screen includes a summary bar at the top, a badge icon, and a detailed performance section below.

Completed: Shows a green summary bar for 'Completed' trips (28th Aug - 31st Aug) with a value of ₹200. Below, a green badge indicates success with the message: "Nice! You have sucessfully completed all incentivized trips!" and a note: "You have sucessfully completed all incentivized trips! Please contact customer support." A blue 'Go to dashboard' button is at the bottom.

Disqualified: Shows a red summary bar for 'Disqualified' trips (28th Aug - 31st Aug) with a value of 0 trips. Below, a red badge indicates disqualification with the message: "Oh no! You have been disqualified from this incentivized trips." and a note: "You are now disqualified for a trip incentive due to missed order threshold crossed." A blue 'Go to dashboard' button is at the bottom.

In progress: Shows a grey summary bar for 'In progress' trips (28th Aug - 31st Aug) with a value of 5 trips. Below, a grey badge indicates progress with the message: "Your performance" and a note: "2 trips completed Target: 2". It also shows 0 missed orders (Threshold: No missed orders) and 100% acceptance rate (Target: 100%). A blue 'Go to dashboard' button is at the bottom.

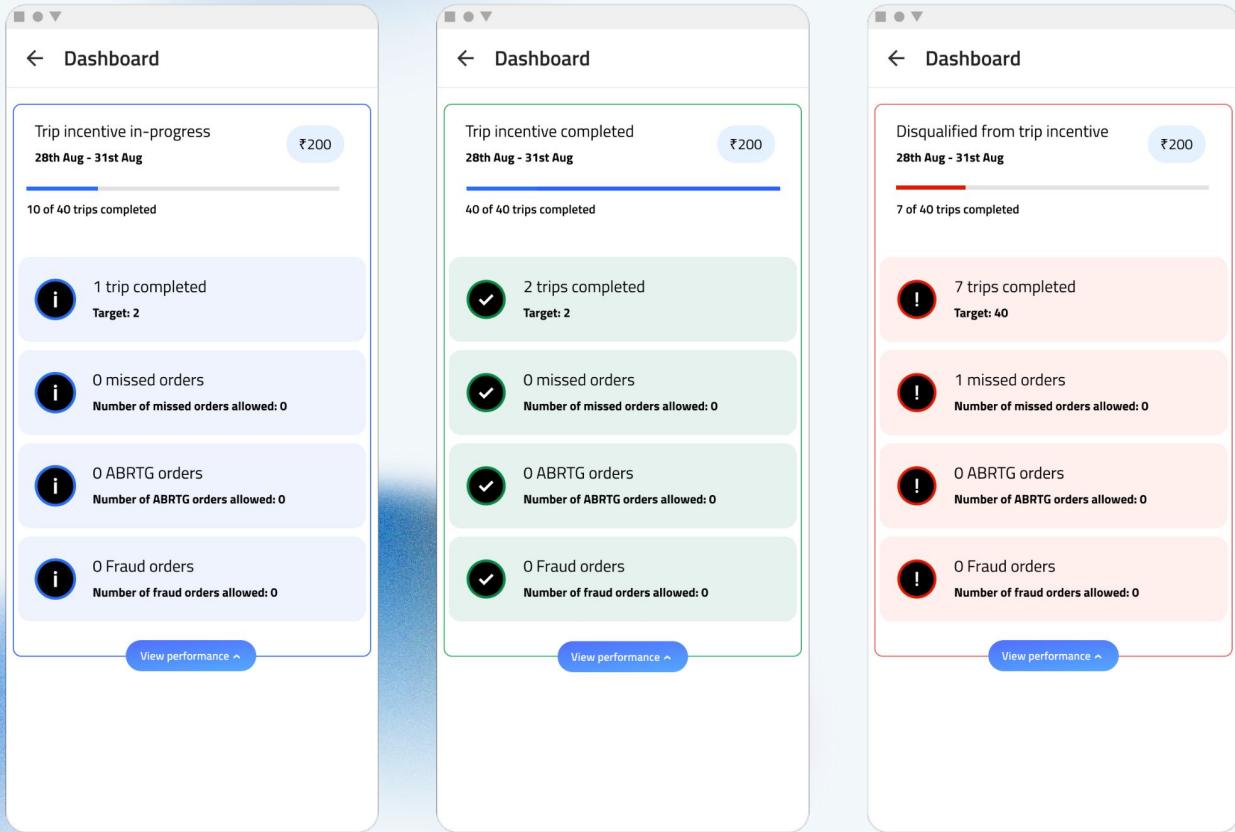
Build high-fidelity mockup for quick implementation

Development ready final version: Version 7a

AHA moments

During prototyping, I realized we could simplify the design by using universal colors instead of lots of text. This made the interface easier to use and understand for everyone. It was a big change that improved usability and matched the team's vision and business goal of clarity and quick action.

This decision was backed by all and went into production.

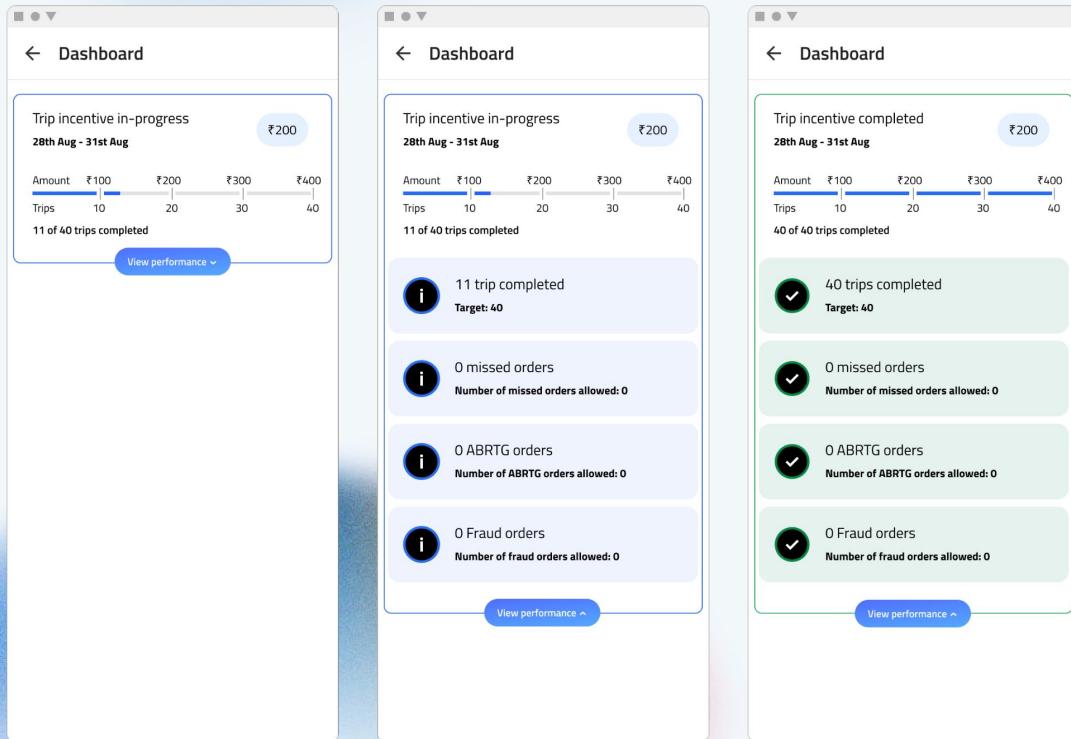


Test and Iterate

Development ready final version: Version 7b

Different style of progress bar

Different step ladder style progress bar was also designed for experimenting purposes and to know which one was widely adopted by users.

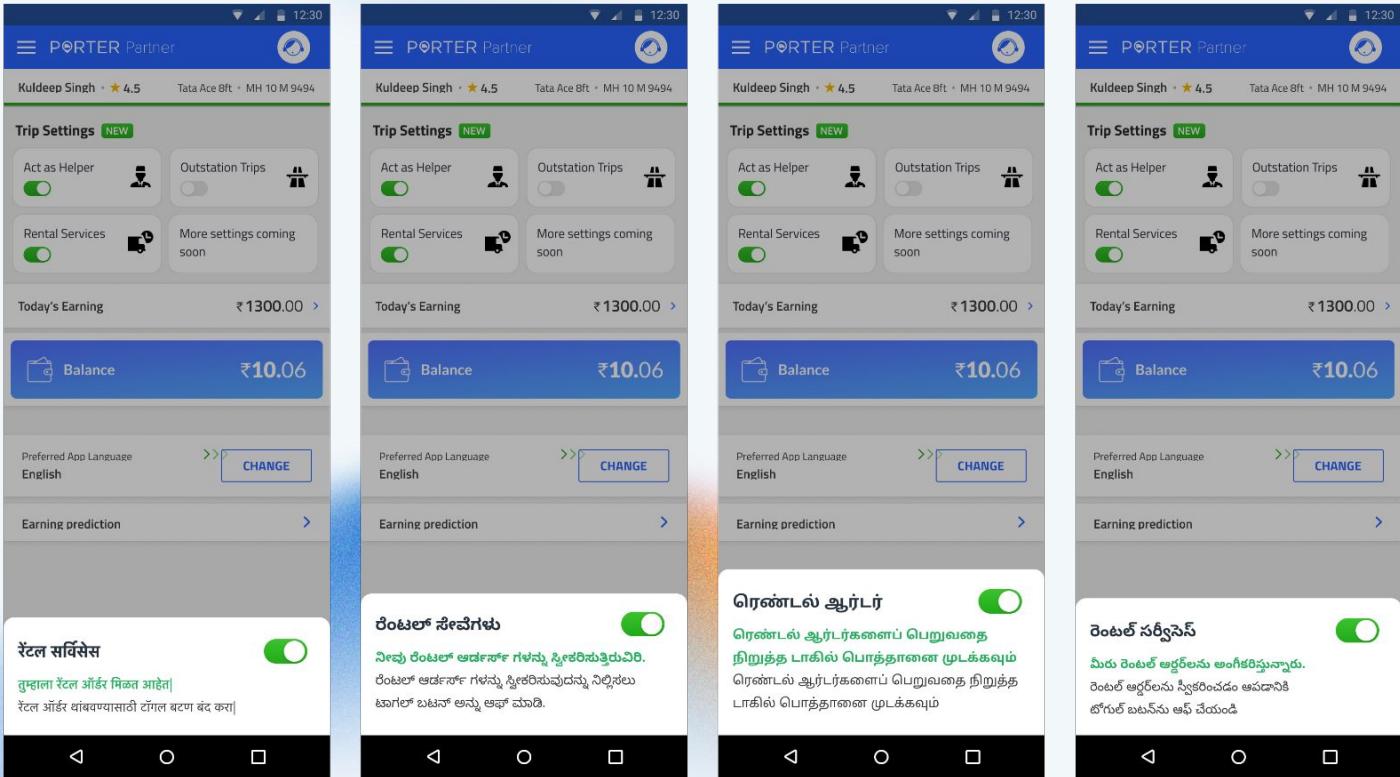


Designed for scalability

Scaled this rewards logic across 10+ cities in India

Made sure the language fits the local users

Using universal colors, simple text and support in different local language helps communicate messages effectively.



Implemented design in actual app

Behavioral interventions drive critical business outcomes

Measurable Impact

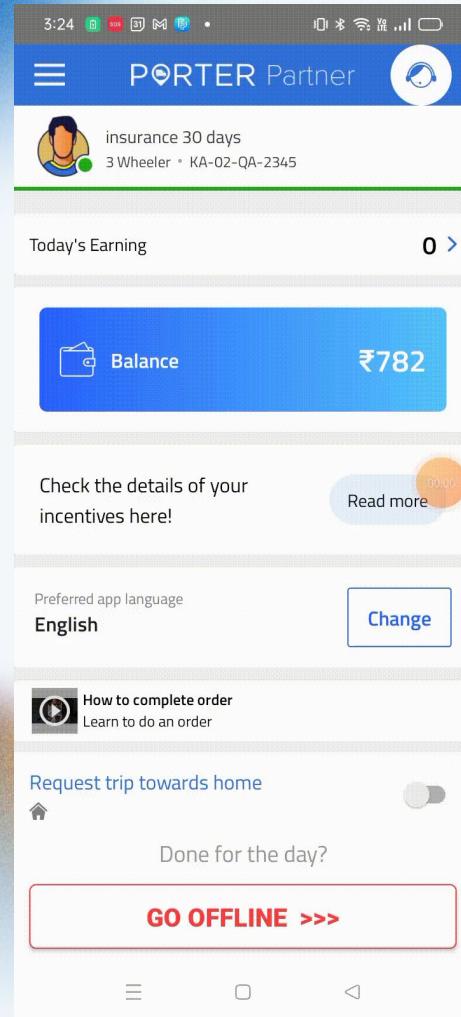
75% more campaigns

(200 → 350)

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Thank you!

Questions?

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