

# Sean Blanton

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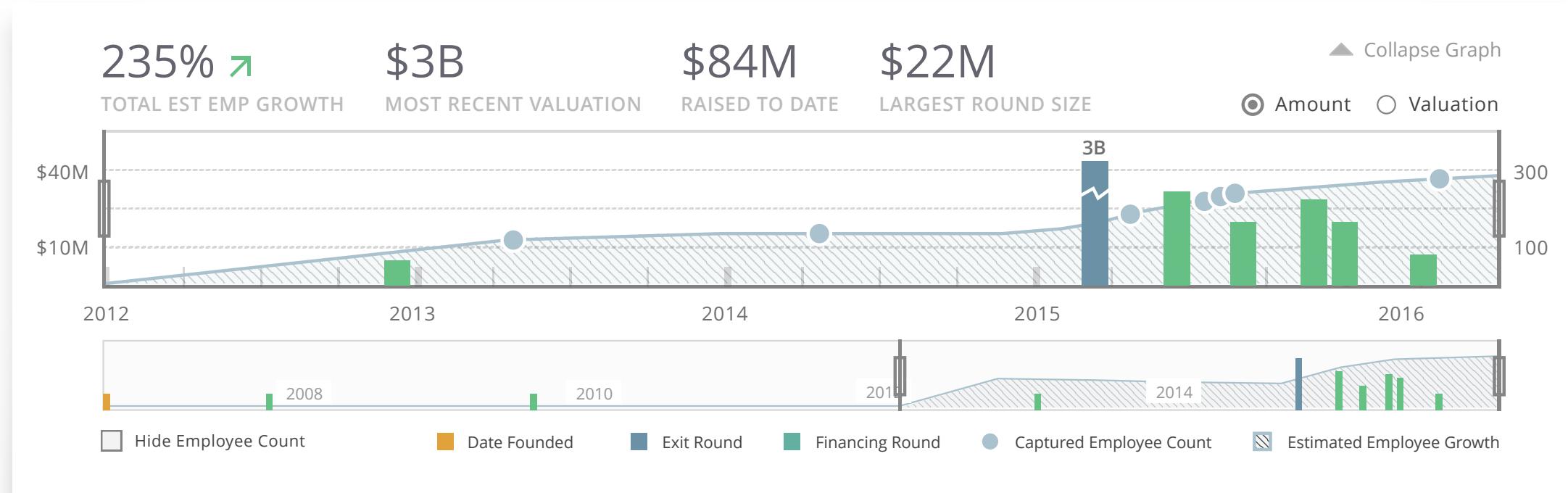
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# Deal History Timeline

PitchBook Data

Interaction Design, Visual Design



# Business Goals

Most companies in PitchBook Data feature a timeline at the top of their profile. The timeline shows financial events and employee count over time.

The existing timeline was wrought with usability issues that needed to be addressed sooner rather than later. Initial conversations with users after launch revealed that the current timeline took up too much of their screen real estate and was too hard to read to gain any meaningful insights.

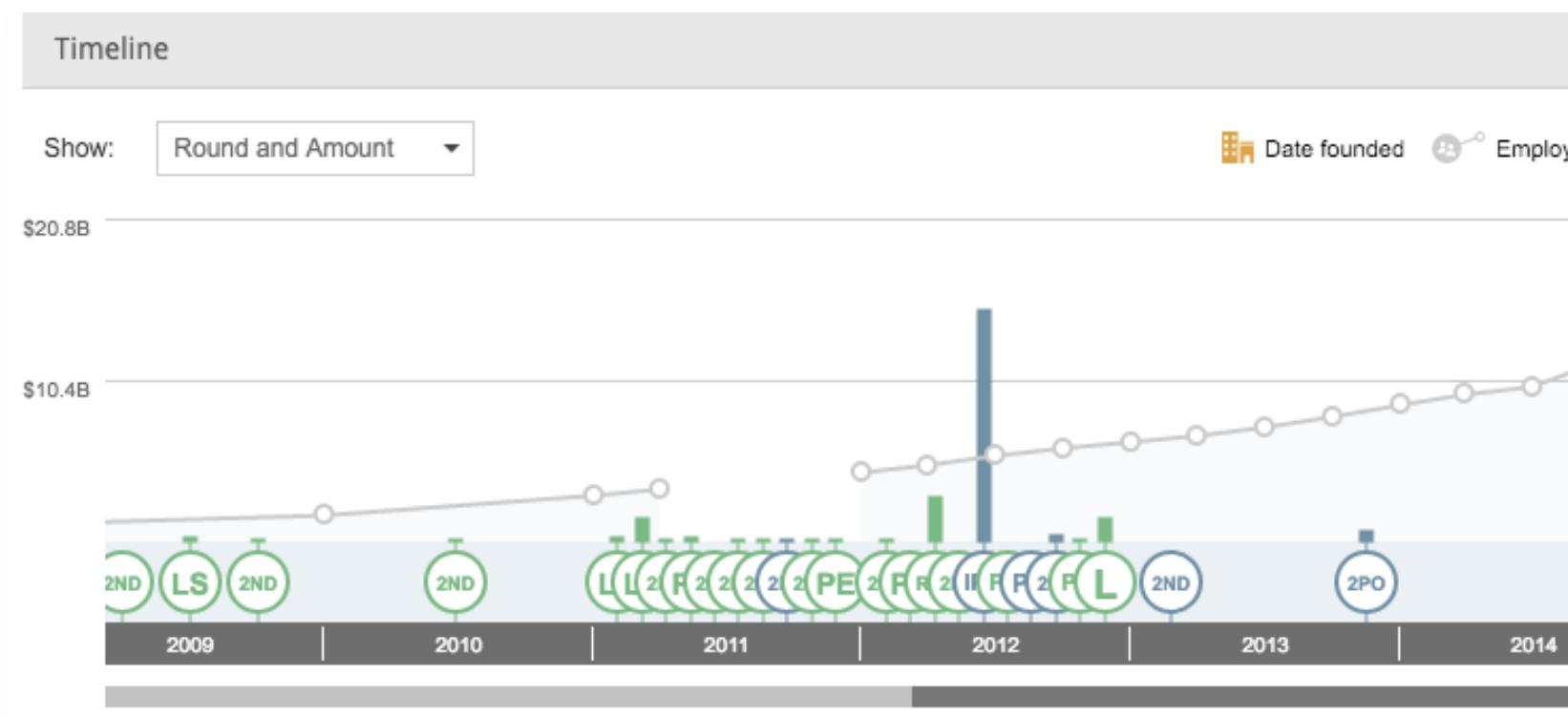
I was placed on this one week project to revamp the timeline to be more glanceable and insightful while taking up less vertical space on the profile at the same time.

# The Problem

Employee dates were confusing. It was unclear what was reported or scraped data versus what was an interpolated estimation.

The timeline was difficult to navigate back and forth across time. The bars representing rounds of financing were difficult to compare in relative size, especially in edge cases with very large rounds that skewed the graph's min and max ranges.

Users couldn't see deal codes when they overlapped. This happened any time multiple deals happened in the same quarter. Even when users could see deal codes, users couldn't remember what the deal code abbreviations stood for.

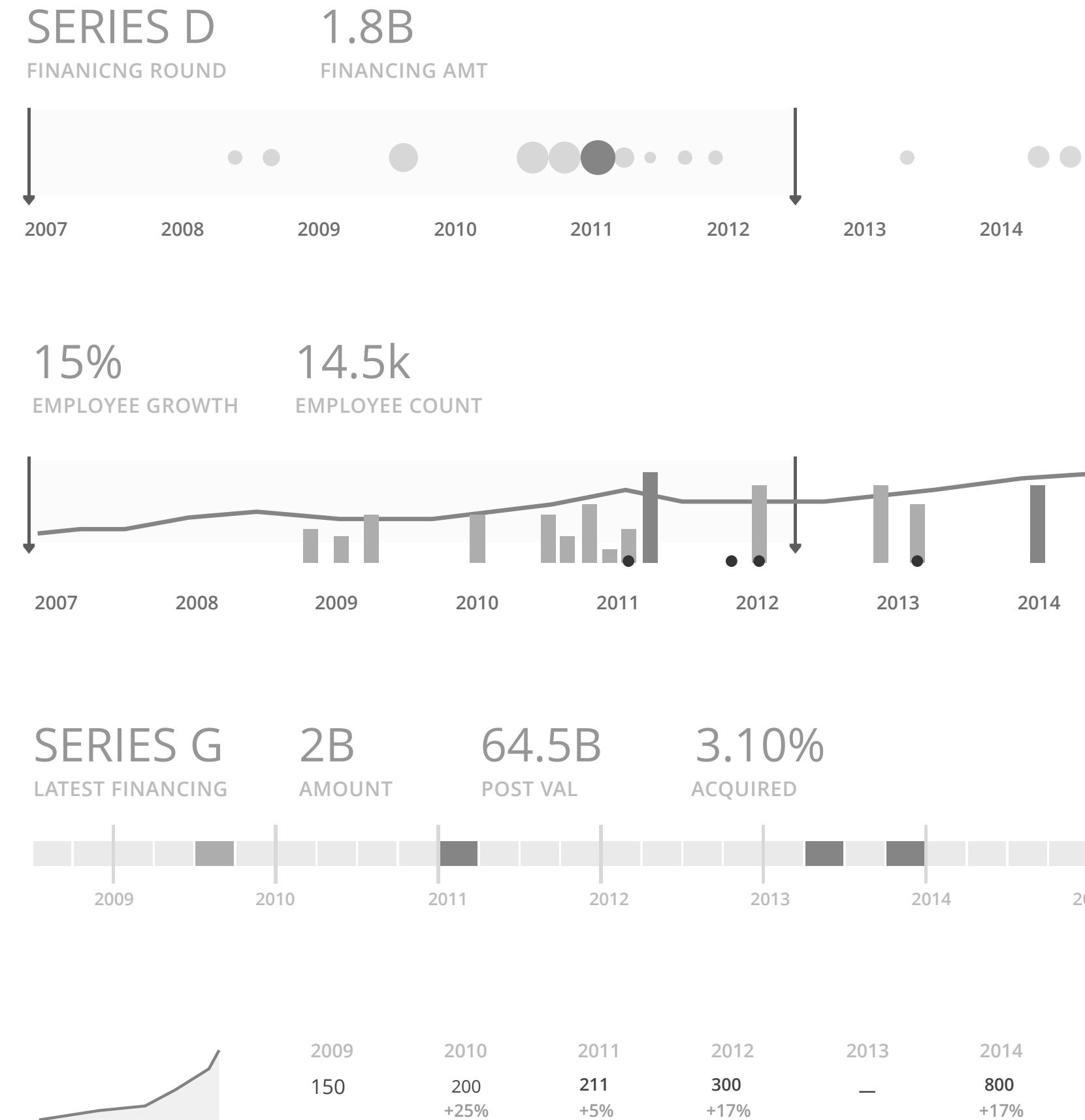


# Ideation

These early wireframes were attempts to tease out the major issues identified in research. Data points most valued by users were collected and stack ranked by priority. We used these data to find callouts to present to the user to make these overwhelming charts more digestible.

I also experimented with new ways to visualize the data. While it was good to explore other options, user interviews revealed that bar and line graphs were the visualizations they could digest most easily.

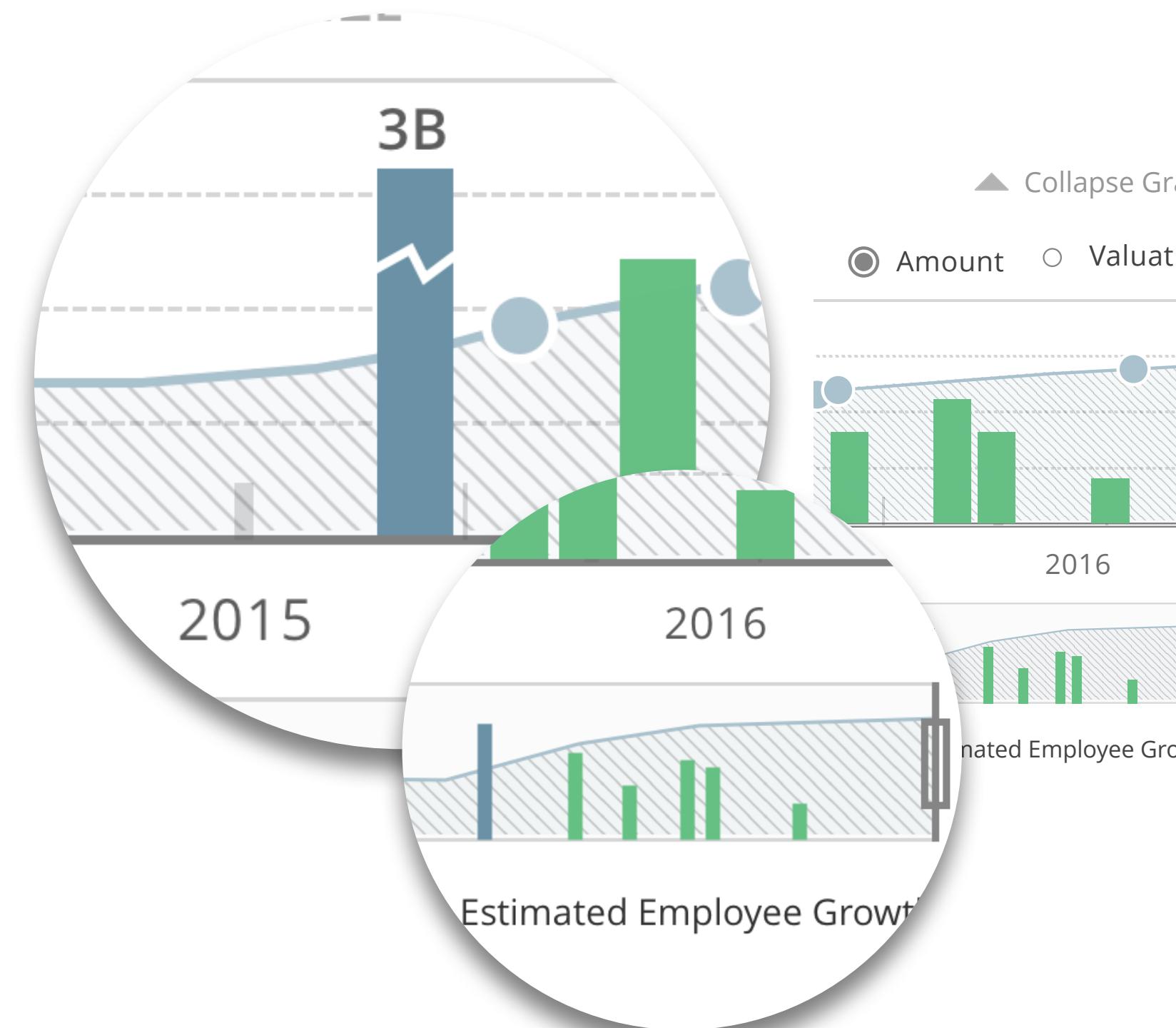
Keeping bars and lines also made the visualizations more useful in the future, should we add functionality to export these graphs to excel for a user to place in a presentation.



# Solutions

To solve the problem of outliers skewing data visualizations, I introduced the concepts of broken bars. Broken bars allow for data outside of a set standard deviation to be vertically truncated. Outliers have their value represented directly above the bar instead of on the axis.

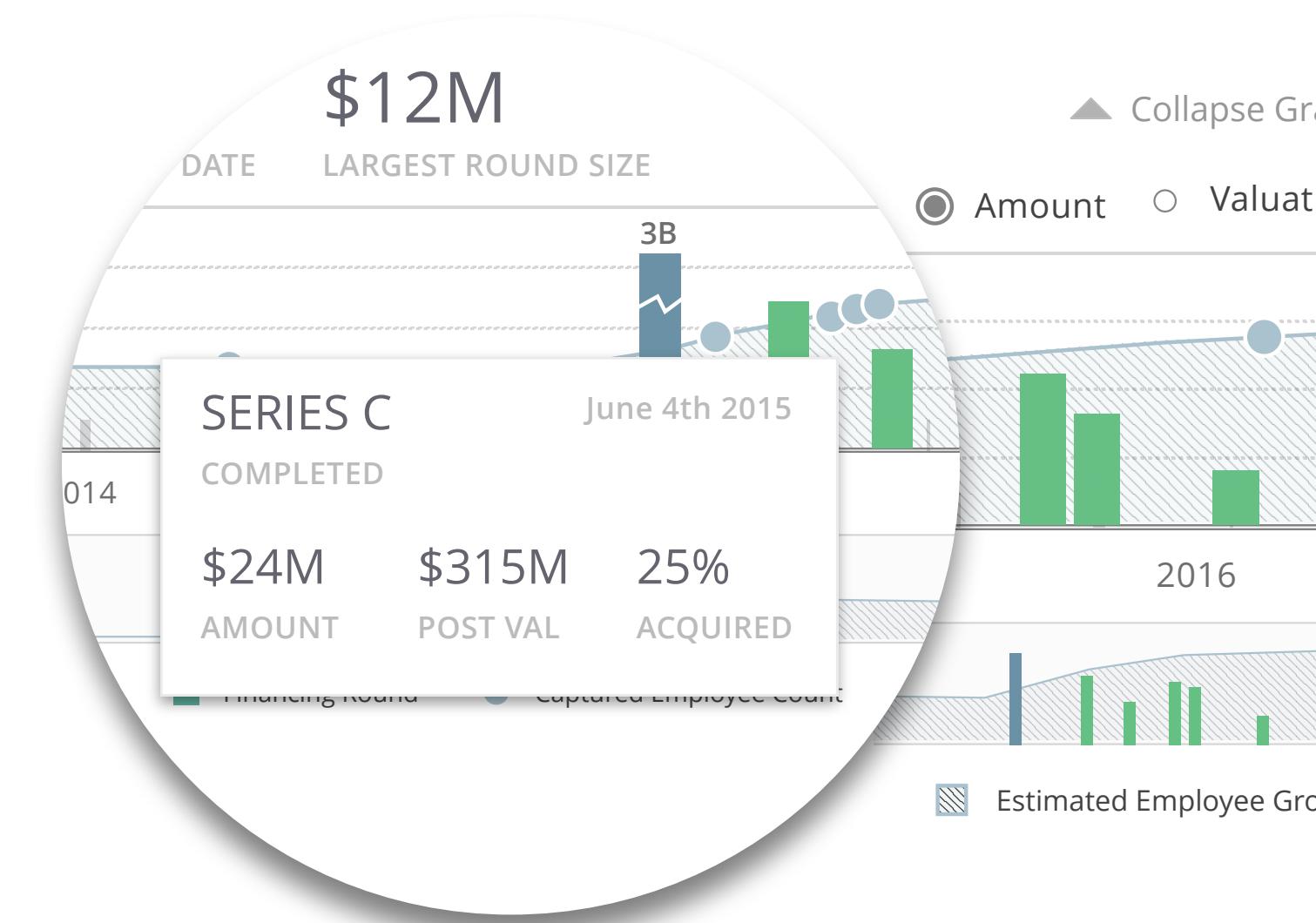
The graph scrubber solves for companies who have a large number of rounds in quick succession. Users can zoom into specific ranges. This also solves for the opposite problem: when a company has only a few data points spread apart over a long time period. In this case, we can default the timeline to only the most recent years, so the user isn't presented with a graph that is mostly white space.



# Taking It Further

We added hover states and the ability scrub between points in the timeline. This allowed a user to select areas of time that were important to them and see growth metrics for that time period. Users wouldn't need to export data to Excel to understand trends.

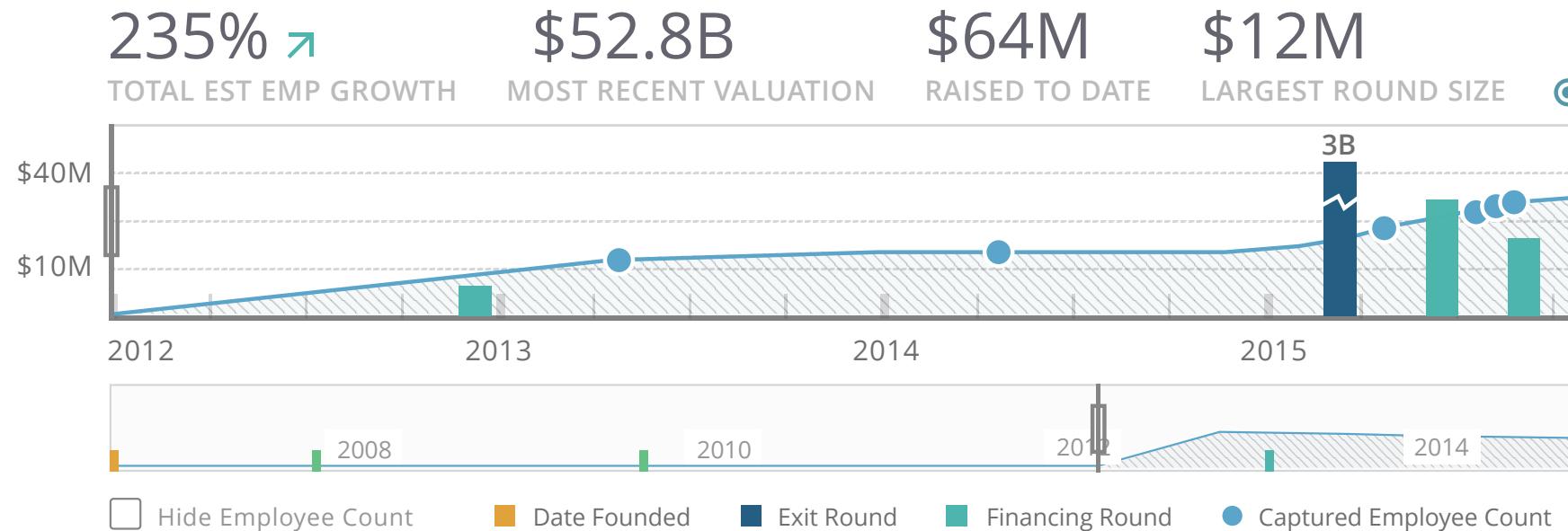
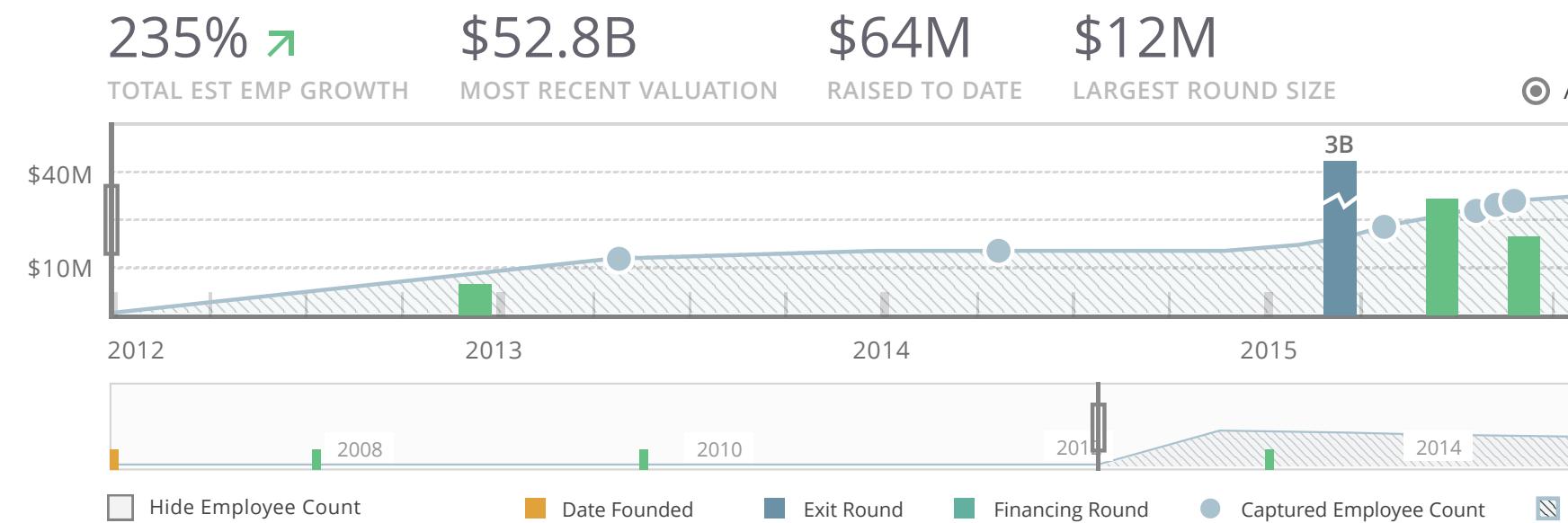
Allowing the graph to collapse made it easy for a user to reclaim vertical space in their browser. Collapsing the graph hides the deal trend and leaves only the scrubber and summary metrics in view. This is ideal for the user who wants to utilize the timeline to get a general visual understanding of activity, rather than analyze individual deals.



# Future Facing

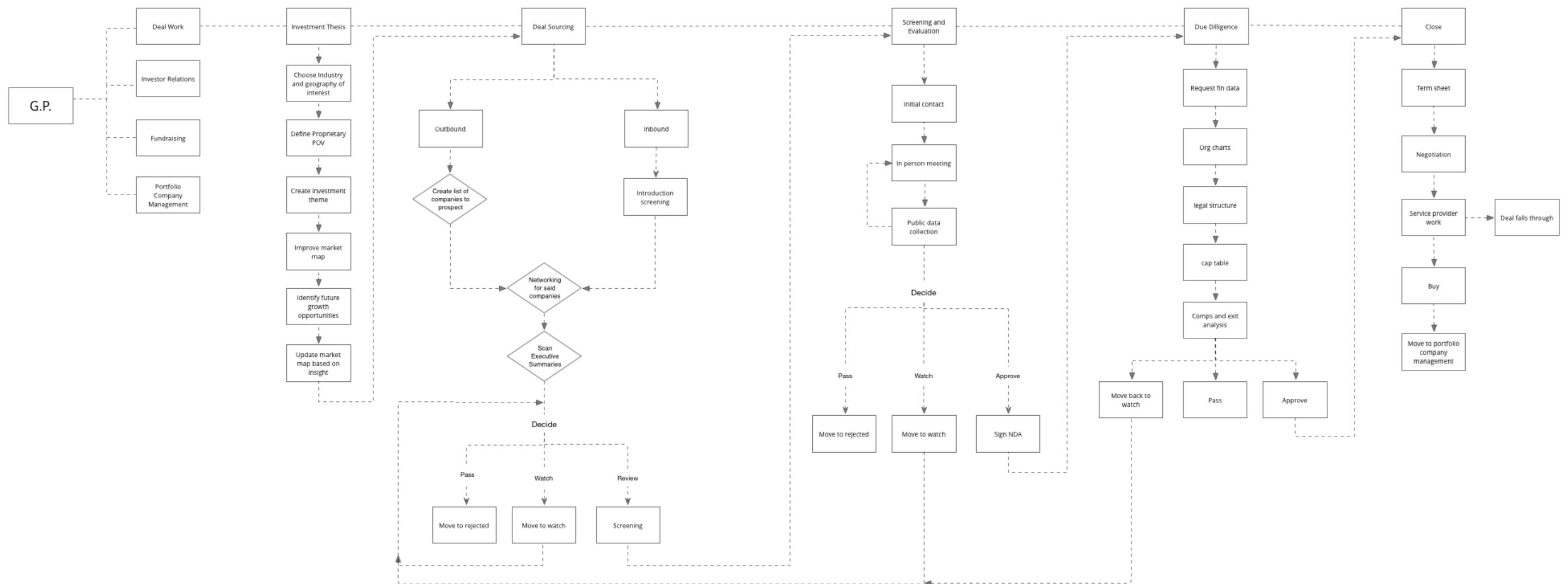
The new timeline would need to be released just prior to a platform redesign. When it came to visual design, I made sure to develop a visual language for the new timeline that could live in both the existing platform and the new release without the need to greatly alter the visual design.

The visual design feels like a natural progression from the existing timeline, yet still feels a part of the new design system, too. Only colors and text styles will need to be updated in the platform redesign.



# Deal Flow Management

PitchBook Data  
UX Design, Interaction Design



# Business Goals

PitchBook Data services a huge amount of clients who are using the platform to help them source new deals and conduct due diligence on potential investments.

My team was tasked with creating a system to better facilitate the process of deal sourcing within the platform.

# Existing Solutions

We reviewed eleven existing solutions to relationship management to understand the patterns being used to solve similar problems. We found that most systems made the user collect assets in a specific way. The ones that didn't required lengthy, complicated set up. Data inside these systems quickly became stale if users didn't constantly update them.

Pitchbook CRM Competitive Analysis		Date:	12/3/2015	Designer:		Sean Blanton	Microsoft Dynamics			Venture360					
CRITERIA		Salesforce IQ (Lightning System)			Salesforce (Classic)			Microsoft Dynamics							
	Score	Pros	Cons	Opportunities	Score	Pros	Cons	Opportunities	Score	Pros	Cons	Opportunities	Score	Pros	Cons
<b>Adding notes on profiles (contacts)</b>															
Format	4	Add as an "event" - comments, meetings, phone calls. Notes are NESTED, commentable, likable, and emails can be replied to inline.	No custom events. Can't assign users to comments, only to phone calls and meetings. Same comments not visible from account profile page	1	Title and body only. In separate page. Can relate to events, but chunks them here. Also have "cases" separately where specific people can be assigned	3	Facebook style wall format	3	Chat based. Ability to chat with a company directly and also ability to lock discussions as hidden from that company	3	Not sortable, searchable, exportable				
Tagging people involved	0		No tagging or ability to connect two people	2	Not tagging strictly in notes	2	No easy way to tag another user in a post or share a post	0		0	No				
Add files	0		No ability to attach files to an account	5	yes	0	No	0		0	No				
Date Stamped	4	Last modified stamped	Filterable, but not searchable	5	yes	5	Yes	5	Yes	5	Yes				
<b>Custom Fields on Entities and People</b>															
Custom Contact fields	0		No	5	Complete control	0	Unknown	0		0	Unknown				
Add relationships	3		Only by adding an opportunity	5	Complete control	3	Yes	0		0	Unknown				
Custom sections	0		None	5	Complete control	0	Unknown	0		0	Unknown				
Activity History	2		Only visible in opportunity	5	All logged	3	Yes	0		0	Unknown				
Create profiles not tracked by platform	3	Yes		5	Yes	3	Yes	0		0	Unknown				
<b>File Attachments</b>															
To a person	0		No	5	yes	3	Attach to a note	5	Relates to a deal	5	Relates to a deal				
To an account	0		No	5	yes	3	Attach to a note	3	Relates to a deal	3	Relates to a deal				
To an opportunity (deal)	0		No	5	yes	3	Attach to a note	3	Relates to a deal	3	Relates to a deal				
Signature Docs	0		No	0	No	0	No	0		5	Can be used in the deal close process				
<b>Task Management</b>															
To a person	4	yes	MUST be related to a contact	Recurring tasks	3	yes	0	No	0		0	Unknown			
To an account	4	yes			3	yes	0	No	0		0	Unknown			
To an opportunity	4	yes			3	yes	0	No	0		0	Unknown			
<b>Task Assignment</b>															

## Above

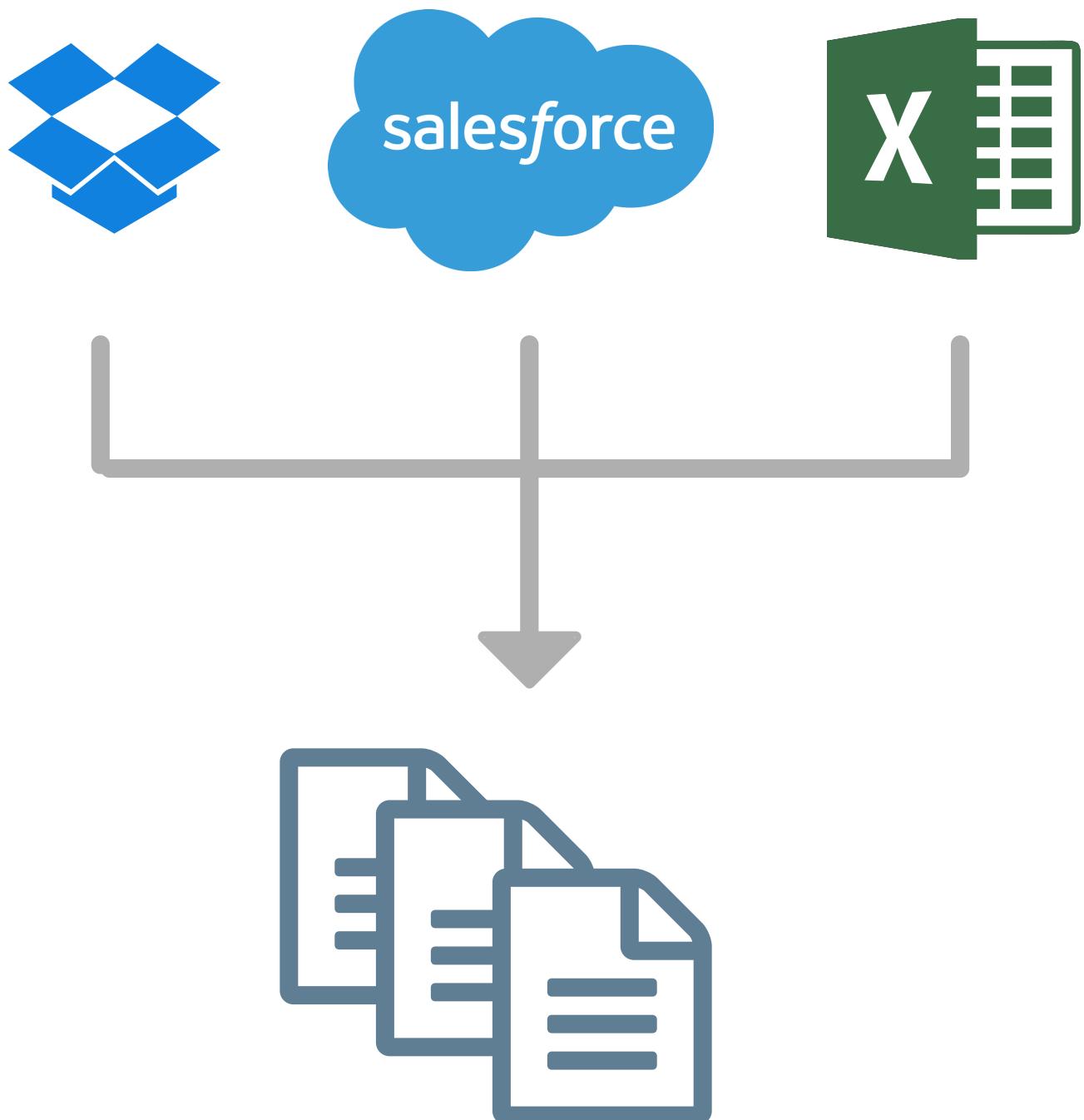
Excel doc comparing functionality between different competitor solutions to relationship management

# Prospecting

After we understood the existing solutions and previous attempts, we started user research. We spoke internally with sales and customer success to become more knowledgeable about user's general workflows before reaching out directly.

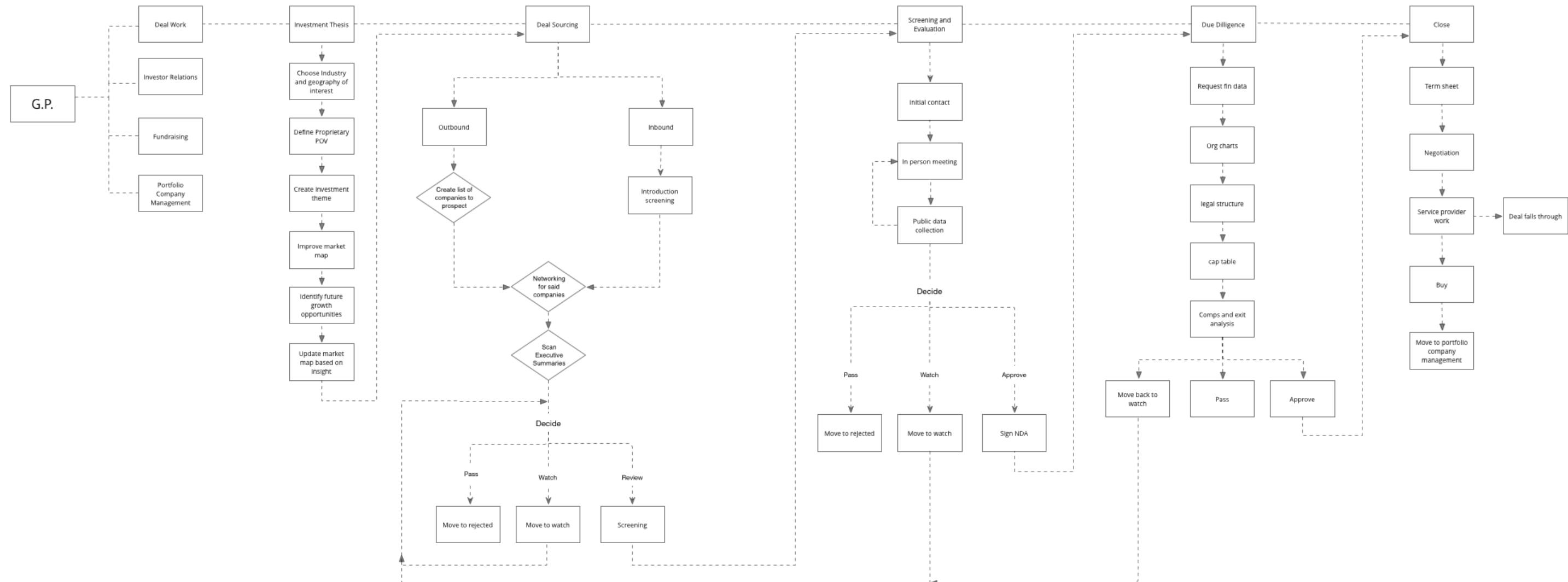
We contacted users in the venture capital, private equity, and investment banking space. We knew that analysts were the heaviest users of the platform, so we concentrated on speaking with them to understand what their current process was for sourcing a new deal.

What we found was that firms have a ton of different ways to organize their data. Some use Box or Dropbox, some use Excel and Outlook, some use Salesforce, some use Post-Its on their monitors even, but all of them feed back to a list they manage.



# Workflows

We created a user flow for the deal flow to understand the parts we could and couldn't solve based on our current product. This helped inform the strategy we would present to stakeholders. We needed to focus on a solution that would have the greatest impact over time and also scale into solving further needs of our users in later phases.



# Hard Problems, Simple Solutions

The big problem for users was that they had so many systems for capturing data that they spent as much time managing the systems as they did managing the data. Instead of providing yet another thing to manage, why not remove the user's obstructions?

Our system needed to be **either** a central phone book for users **or** a companion to other systems.

We need to help our users **capture** and **fascilitate** their findings.

We needed to marry the **content** to the **workflow**

**PROBLEM**



**OBSTRUCTIONS**

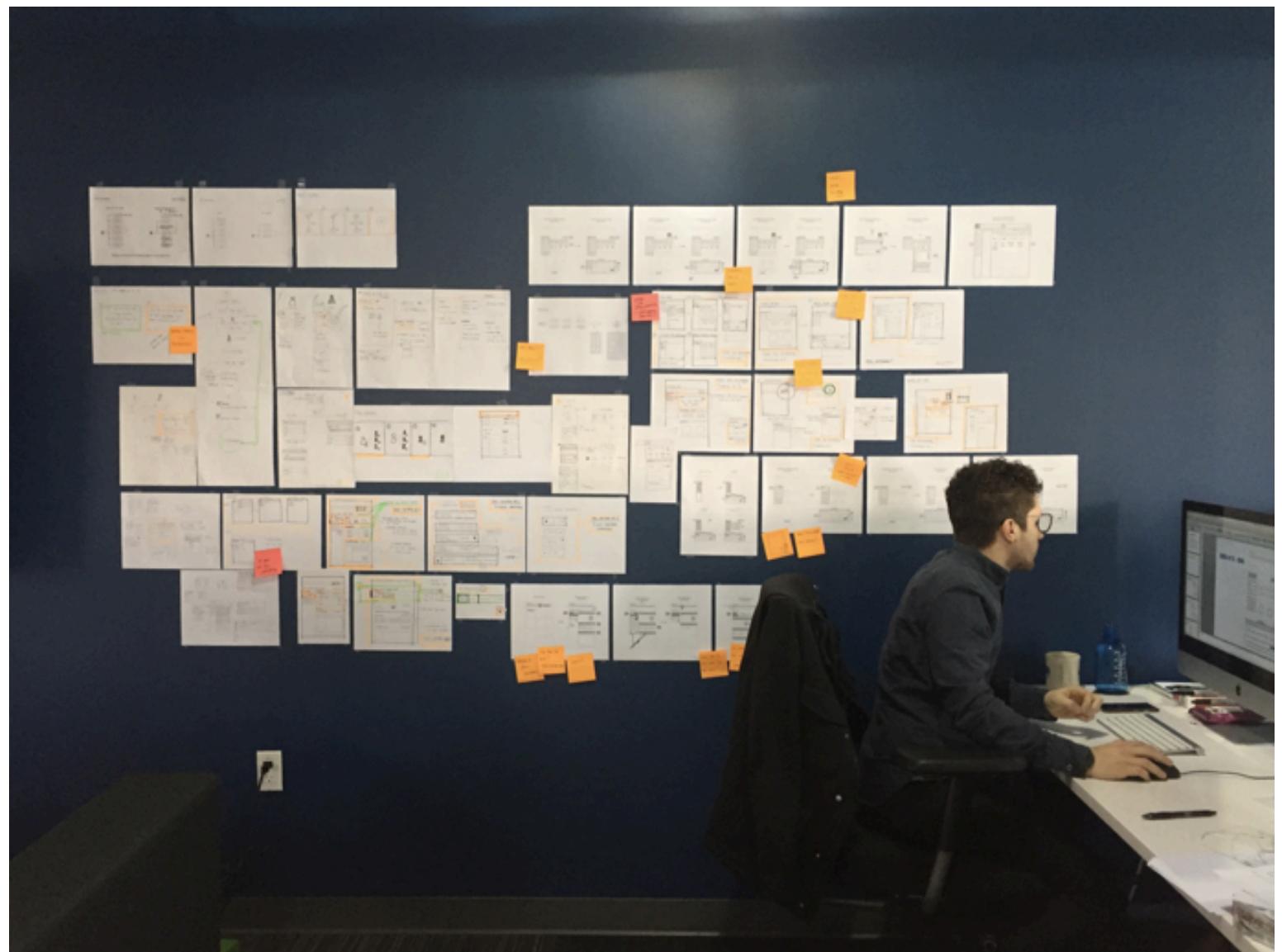
**END RESULT**

# Ideation

We started thinking about how we could marry content to workflow by a few days of sketching together and separate.

We came up with six different solutions to start to socialize with stakeholders. We explored options that were more integrated with the current system, but the solution that scaled the best sat on top of the existing system as a companion tool the user could call and dismiss as necessary.

Solutions centered around the ability for a user to add and manage lists and share them with others above and below them. Users could assign work to other users and specify levels of transparency at any level.



Above

We kept all of our best possible solutions on the wall for quick reference during these early stages.

# Ideation

We opted for a drawer solution that allowed the user to continually view information about an entity and simultaneously add notes and attachments related to due diligence about an entity without having to navigate away or have multiple tabs open at the same time.



Above

An early stage wireframe of our "drawer" solutions

# Converging Ideas

This solution started to merge together with other projects. We realized that the need for list management needed to happen at the platform-level to be truly useful for our users.

We started considering the ability for users to create lists in a directory structure, with lists that could nest inside other lists. We wanted to let users organize information in ways that were personally meaningful to them, rather than forcing them organize content in ways that might differ from existing workflows.

At this point we were collaborating heavily with another team focused on rebuilding dashboards inside the platform to ensure that lists could mesh seamlessly into dashboards.

The screenshot shows the PitchBook software interface. On the left is a dark sidebar menu with the PitchBook logo at the top. Below the logo are several items: 'Dashboard' (with a grid icon), 'Projects' (with a folder icon), '[Firm Name]' (with a document icon), '2016 - Investor W...' (with a folder icon), 'SaaS (31)' (with a bar chart icon), 'Clean Tech (47)' (with a bar chart icon), 'By Location' (with a folder icon), 'NYC (55)' (with a bar chart icon), 'San Fran (6)' (with a bar chart icon), a '+ Create New' button, 'Analytics' (with a pie chart icon), 'Library' (with a book icon), 'News' (with a newspaper icon), and 'Recently Viewed' (with a history icon). To the right of the sidebar is a search bar with the placeholder 'Search companies, firms, or people...'. Below the search bar is a navigation bar with four tabs: 'COMPANIES & DEALS', 'INVESTORS & BUYERS', 'FUNDS & IRR', and 'LIMITED PARTNERS'. The main content area shows a breadcrumb path 'Projects » [Firm Name] » 2016 - Investor Watch' followed by the title '2016 - Investor Watch'. The main content area is divided into sections: 'Details' (which is currently active and shows a list of assigned users with a '+' button to add more), 'Description' (which contains a box of text about business cards), and 'Priority'.

## Above

Directory structured list management for users as "Projects" with a contextual dashboard for each project

# Changing Tides

Sadly, shortly after this stage in the process, during the time when we were picking apart the details of how users could add and share notes, tasks, and attachments with each other about entities and lists, the project was placed on an indefinite hold.

A shifting set of priorities in the product roadmap made this project no longer the focus of the company's mission.

It's always difficult to see a project come to a halt uncompleted, but as we've moved onto new projects, we've kept this project as an active part of discussions because we know it will be back in the future. We've built a strategy around new product initiatives that include projects and list management as key components in later phases.

Tasks				
<a href="#">Add Task</a> <span style="float: right;">View By</span>				
	Name	Priority	Due Date	Description
<b>▼ Today</b>				
	Follow up with John Gabbert	Urgent	Jan 28	Enter a description about the task here
	Follow up with Nate Vail	Normal	Jan 28	Enter a description about the task here
	Follow up with That guy with th...	Normal	Jan 28	Enter a description about the task here
<b>▼ Tomorrow</b>				
	Follow up with John Gabbert	Urgent	Jan 29	Enter a description about the task here
	Follow up with Nate Vail	Normal	Jan 29	Enter a description about the task here
	Follow up with That guy with th...	Normal	Jan 29	Enter a description about the task here
<b>► Later</b>				

Above

An early wireframe for a tasks section of a project dashboard

# Platfrom Redesign

PitchBook Data  
UX Design, Visual Design

The screenshot displays the PitchBook Data platform's user interface for the company profile of Facebook (NYS: FB). The top navigation bar includes a search bar, advanced search options, and a user profile for Chester Wilkerson. The main content area shows the company name "Facebook (NYS: FB)" with a "Following" button. Below this, there are tabs for Profile, Public Comps, Private Comps, Financials, Signals, and LinkedIn. A warning message is present: "Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Etiam semper nisi at ultrices semper. Sed efficitur facilisis dolor eu egestas. Aliquam non lacus maximus, pulvinar leo in, pellentesque magna. Integer hendrerit nunc augue, nec ultricies urna dignissim". The left sidebar contains links for Dashboards, History, Following, Saved Searches, Saved Lists, Reports, News, and Plugins & Apps. The right side features a "Contents" section with links to Performance Summary, Financials Summary, Timeline, General Information, Signals, Stock Price History, Executives (184), Board Members (9), Deal History (42), Investors (87), Lenders on Deals (7), Service Providers, Lead Partners on Deals (27), Investments | Buy Side (85), Affiliates, and Financials. The "Performance Summary" section highlights a current value of 108.99 (up 1.64 or 1.48% as of 11-April-2016, Monday Closing). It also provides financial metrics like 52 WK RANGE (\$77.46 - \$116.14), MARKET CAP (TSO) (\$310.22B), EPS (\$1.31), PREV. CLOSE (\$110.63), and XPRICE % CHANGE 1WK (-3.16%). The "General Information" section includes a detailed description of the company's status as of 16-Nov-2016, mentioning Temasek Holdings, Andreessen Horowitz, and Mail.Ru as investors.

Search for a company  Advanced Search

Help Chester Wilkerson

COMPANIES & DEALS

Facebook (NYS: FB) Public Company Following

Profile Public Comps Private Comps Financials Signals LinkedIn

History Following

Saved Searches

Saved Lists

Reports

News

Plugins & Apps

Contents

Performance Summary

**108.99 ↗ 1.64 (1.48%)**

As of 11-April-2016 (Monday Closing)

52 WK RANGE	MARKET CAP (TSO)	EPS	PREV. CLOSE	XPRICE % CHANGE 1WK
\$77.46 - \$116.14	\$310.22B	\$1.31	\$110.63	-3.16%

AVERAGE VOLUME	SHARES	P/E	BETA	PRICE % CHANGE 4WKS
35.6M	2.85B	84.75	0.79	-0.82%

April 2013 April 2014 April 2015 April 2016

General Information

313233

Company Status as of 16-Nov-2016

Temasek Holdings, Andreessen Horowitz and Mail.Ru sold their stake of the company's (NASDAQ: FB) common stock raising \$634.28 million on November 16, 2013. Aeon funds invested in the

Description

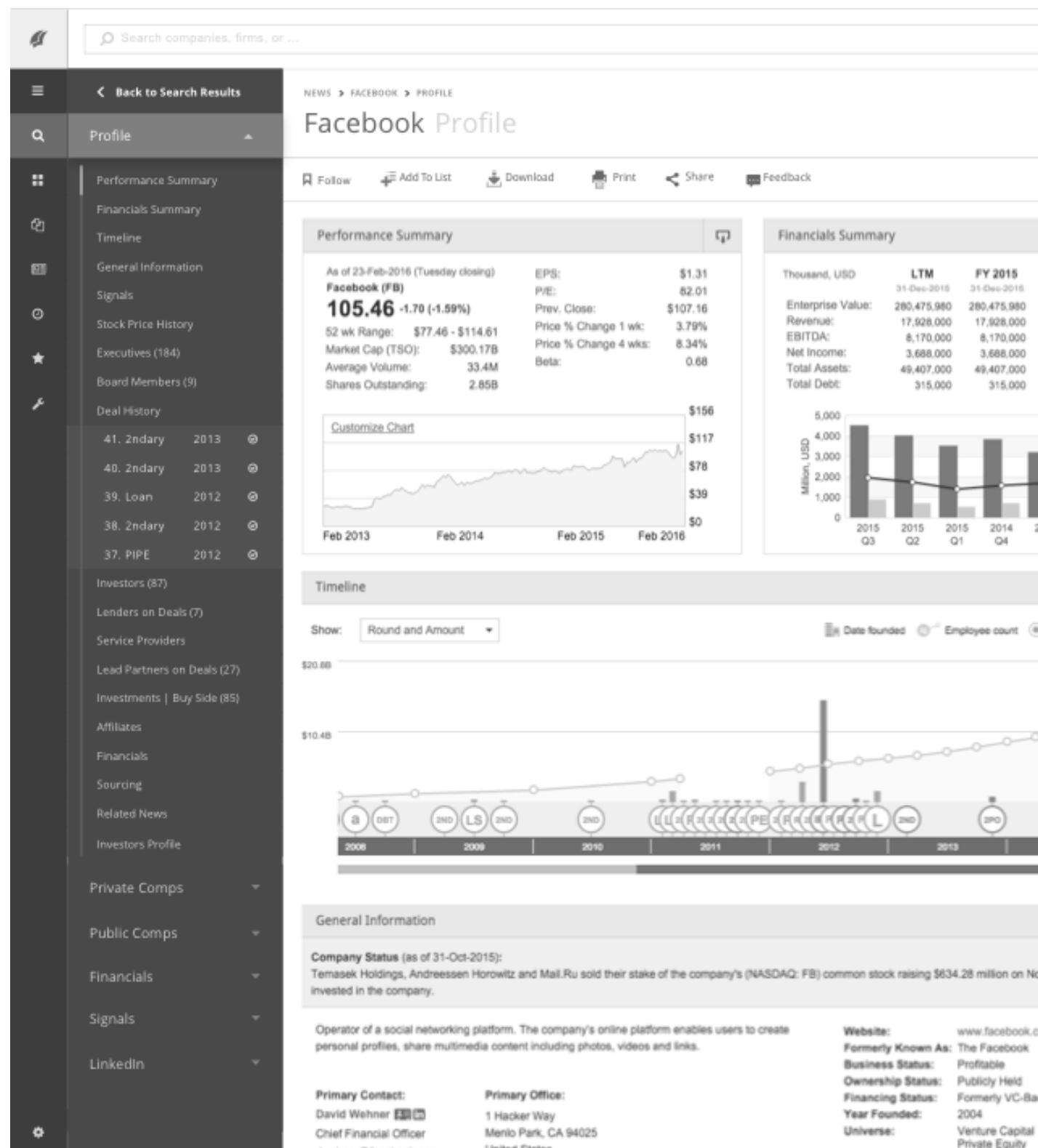
Operator of a social networking platform. The company's online platform enables users to create personal profiles, share multimedia content including photos, videos and links.

# Product Meets Purpose

Our team considered not just the user experience aspects of the problem we were tasked to solve, but also the product a whole.

We thought about what Pitchbook Data started out as (a data provider) and what it aimed to be in the future (a collaborative business tool with an integrated data set) and examined those larger product goals against what our current constraints were and what types of solutions were currently being asked of us.

After weeks of unpacking what it was our users truly needed and matching this up to the future business goals of the company, we proposed a solution that sought to align the platform toward its future self. We proposed a revised information architecture that set the product up to scale nicely into projects already slated for the second half of the year and a revised interface that was fluid and responsive so we could expose more data at larger screen sizes.



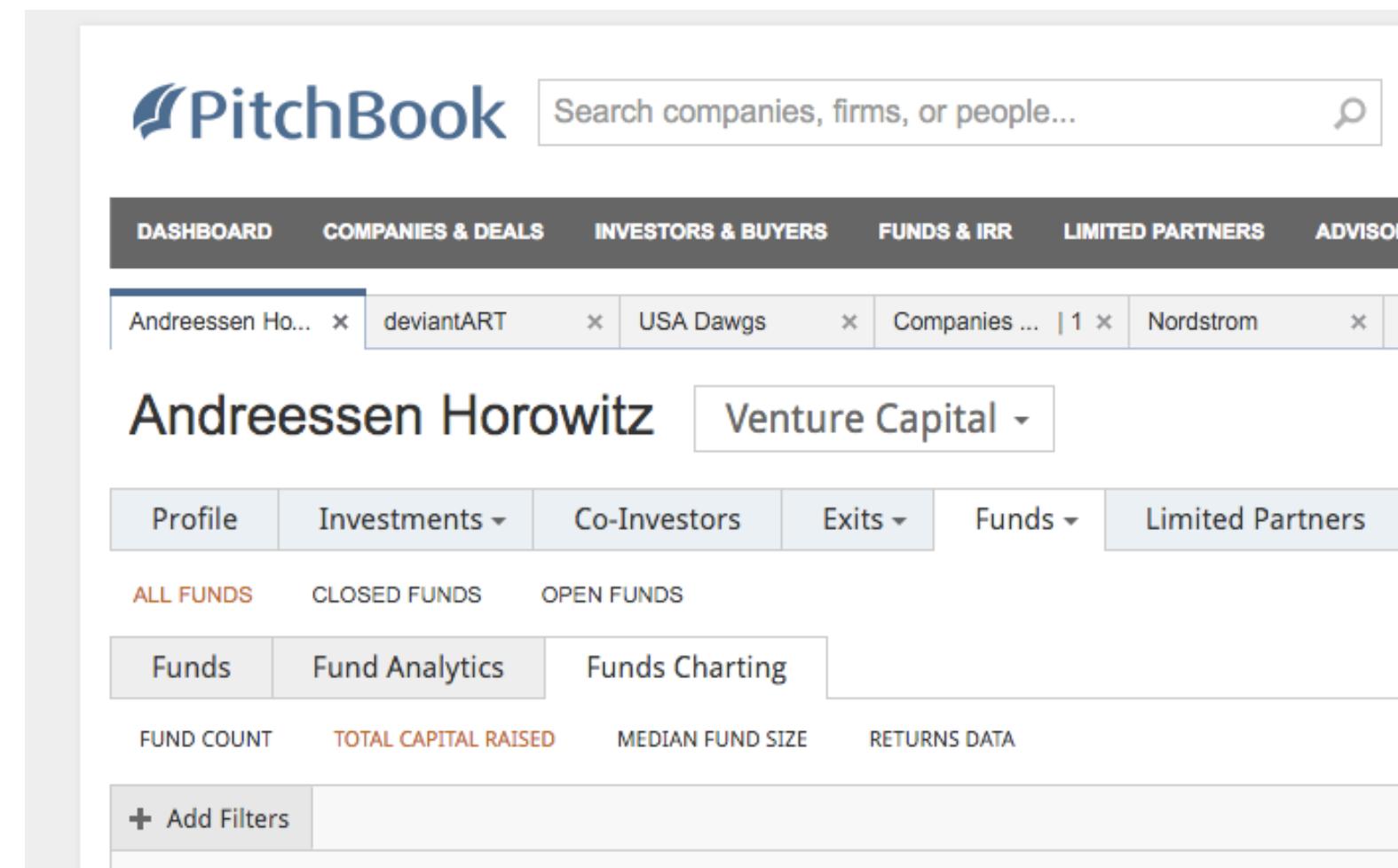
Above

A very early wireframe used to propose a new architecture to various business stakeholders.

# Simplifying

We took this redesign as an opportunity to slim down the amount of navigation complexity in the platform. The existing platform consisted of a series of stacked tabs that pushed content far down the page and made navigation confusing.

By introducing global left navigation bar, we were able to flatten the architecture from what was 7 layers of navigation down to 3 (in the worst case).



## Above

One of the most extreme cases of the existing system's navigation problems.

# Consistency

This redesign cleared up large amounts of design debt accrued over the years, resulting in a new site that was easier to navigate, far more visually consistent, and took advantage of the latest web technologies to help our users get the data they need faster.

≡ Hide Sidebar

🔍 Advanced Search

dashboards Dashboards

COMPANIES &amp; DEALS

# Facebook (NYS: FB)

Public Company ▾

▶ Following
[Profile](#) [Public Comps](#) [Private Comps](#) [Financials](#) [Signals](#) [LinkedIn](#)

⌚ History

⚠ Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Etiam semper nisi at ultrices semper. Sed efficitur facilisis dolor eu egestas. Aliquam non lacus maximus, pulvinar leo in, pellentesque magna. Integer hendrerit nunc augue, nec ultricies urna dignissim.

👤 Following

≡ Saved Searches

## Contents

## Performance Summary

**108.99 ↗**

1.64 (1.48%)

As of 11-April-2016

(Monday Closing)

💾 Saved Lists

📄 Reports

📰 News

🔧 Plugins & Apps

52 WK RANGE

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\$310.22B

EPS

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PREV. CLOSE

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Signals

Stock Price History

Executives (184)

Board Members (9)

Deal History (42)

41. 2ndary - Open...

40. 2ndary - Privat...

39. Loan

38. 2ndary - Open...

37. PIPE

Investors (87)

Lenders on Deals (7)

Service Providers

Lead Partners on Deals (27)

Investments | Buy Side (85)

Affiliates

Financials

Sourcing

Related News

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**PitchBook**

Search for a company Advanced Search Help Chester Wilkerson

COMPANIES & DEALS

# Facebook (NYS: FB)

Public Company Following

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  - 38. 2ndary - Open... 2012
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- Sourcing
- Related News

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Contact Information

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dwehner@facebook.com		Menlo Park, CA	Seattle, WA 98101
<a href="#">VCARD</a>	<a href="#">LINKEDIN</a>	94025	United States
		United States	

\$1.9B  
\$1.4B  
\$1.0B

# On Bounding Design Systems

PitchBook Data

Visual Design

After years of developing without a style guide, the platform had accrued considerable technical and design debt that needed to be addressed.

Colors, typography, button styles, and page layouts were inconsistent from page-to-page, and designers were accustomed to introducing entirely new design patterns regularly.

In early 2016 I began working developing a style guide and design system for PitchBook that would redefine the way the product team collaborated and maintained consistency across designs.

The lead UX designer and I started auditing the current system to understand all the existing dependencies that needed to be accounted for. This audit eventually led to an entire platform overhaul and a new style guide.

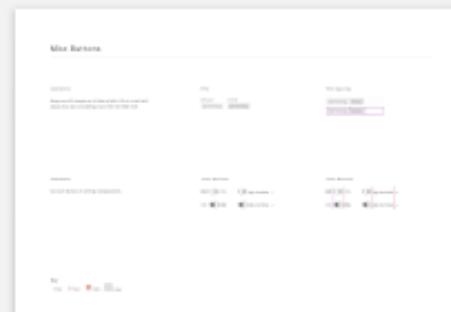
Primary Buttons



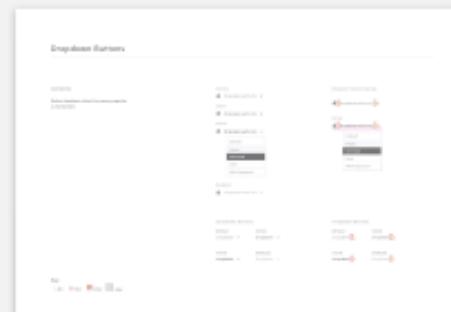
Text Fields



Buttons Cont



Button Dropdowns



Icon Buttons



Form Dropdowns



08 Radio button sand checkboxes



09 Tree Structures



# Start Small

## Atomic Design

I wanted the development of this style guide to be built on atomic design principles.

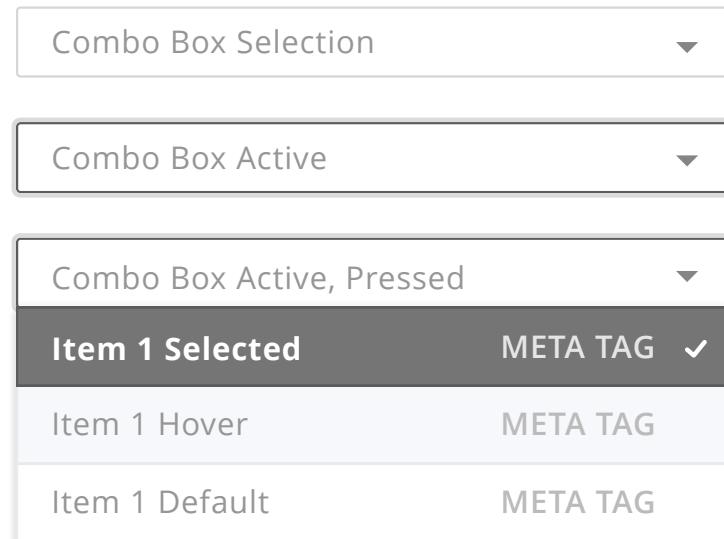
It was influenced by BassCSS and other f(css) fundamentals, and was aimed at creating a design system that provided our growing team of designers with a great toolkit to design quickly without losing creative freedom or consistency.

We started in grayscale so we could get a usable styleguide for wireframing out to the team quickly. We designed individual elements and their states first. We established global rules for typography, forms, and interactions that laid the groundwork for all content layout.

## Right

Examples from the grayscale version of the style guide

### Form Label



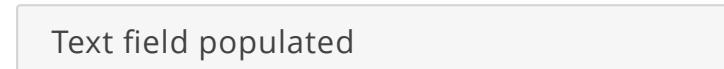
### Form Label



### Form Label



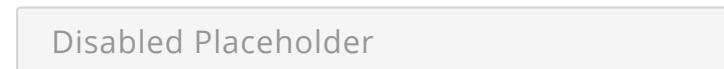
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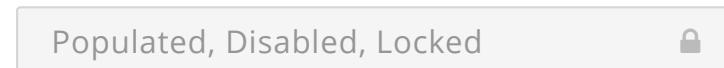
### Form Label



### Form Label



### Form Label



### Checkboxes

- Unchecked
- Unchecked, Focused
- Unchecked, Pressed
- Unchecked, Focused, Pressed

- Checked
- Checked, Focused
- Checked, Pressed
- Checked, Pressed, Focused

- 

- 

- Nested

- Disabled

### Radio

- Default
- Focused
- Selected
- Selected, Focused
- Disabled

# Grid Systems

We defined a set of baseline grid based on an 8pt system with a fluid 12 column layout for content pages.

Because the page content is both fluid and responsive, the column sizes are arbitrary. To ensure layouts were consistent in mockups, we created multiple versions of the grid at several breakpoints in the design to account for this. These served as template files for designers to use as starters when creating new designs.

We created four grids at two different breakpoints. This helped us communicate how content would move within the site without needed to build prototypes for every piece of content.

Details		ALSO KNOWN AS
WEBSITE	<a href="http://www.facebook.com">www.facebook.com</a>	The Facebook
OWNERSHIP STATUS	Publically Held	BUSINESS STATUS
UNIVERSE	Venture Capital	Profitable
Private Equity	Publicly Listed	PRIMARY INDUSTRY
Investors (95)		Social/Platform
NAME	INVESTOR TYPE	

# Thank You

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