Exercise 1.4_Creating a Case Study for Your Portfolio

One of the most interesting and challenging elements of the Career Foundry course was Achievement 3 and more specifically, Task 3.2: Prototyping & Testing and this will be the topic of my case study.

The focus for this task was to set some prototype goals, build a lo-fi prototype, and test it with 5 users.

Before drilling into the task, I needed to think about the users I was going to recruit to test on. For this I decided I would use my friends and family as they offered a diverse range of careers and experiences but also I could carry out my research at a time that suited all of us.

Part 1

Part 1 of the task was to revisit our PRD from earlier in the course and set some goals to measure the success of the prototype. Next I needed to create a prototype for a new feature within the photosharing app, Apurture.

The directions for this first section were to complete the Problem Statement, Hypothesis & Approach and Product Goals based on a short synopsis of the current state of the Apurture application.
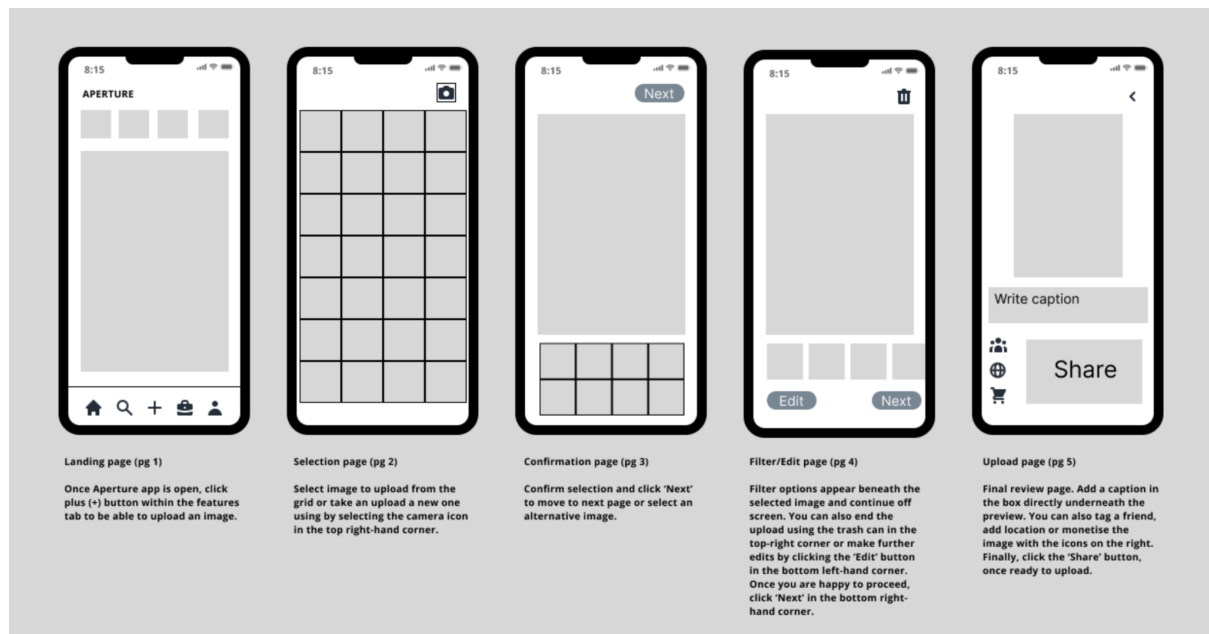
The problem statement was straightforward enough, the app was experiencing a decline in users among the key demographic of 18-24 year olds, with those users unhappy with the apps lack of features. This was pretty much a case of understanding the issue and translating that into language the team would understand.

The Hypothesis & Approach was again translating the current state of the product into a digestible one liner that would be used by the team further down the line. Neither if these were too difficult but a good exercise for what was to come.

Now for the prototype. Pen & paper were acceptable but using a design tool was preferred and we were given access to Figma as part of the course. I like the idea of using Figma for 2 reasons: firstly, I would learn how to use a tool that is at the fore front of the design world.

Secondly, design tools are there to make out lives easier. Rather than drawing 3-5 smartphone outlines, I could create one, copy & paste and iterate further on the copy. I was also able to find editable templates online of a smartphone and icons, so all I needed to do was upload the template into Figma and add my elements on top.

Referencing my own knowledge of photosharing apps including instagram I was able to come up with the following prototype which addressed the issues our users were having.

Landing page (pg 1)

Once Aperture app is open, click plus (+) button within the features tab to be able to upload an image.

Selection page (pg 2)

Select image to upload from the grid or take an upload a new one using by selecting the camera icon in the top right-hand corner.

Confirmation page (pg 3)

Confirm selection and click 'Next' to move to next page or select an alternative image.

Filter/Edit page (pg 4)

Filter options appear beneath the selected image and continue off screen. You can also end the upload using the trash can in the top-right corner or make further edits by clicking the 'Edit' button in the bottom left-hand corner. Once you are happy to proceed, click 'Next' in the bottom right-hand corner.

Upload page (pg 5)

Final review page. Add a caption in the box directly underneath the preview. You can also tag a friend, add location or monetise the image with the icons on the right. Finally, click the 'Share' button, once ready to upload.

I tried to keep everything as simple as possible as even in this day and age when apps are ubiquitous, overly complicated design still puts users off.

Part 2

The second part of this task was to test my prototype on some users, logging their experience and then analysing the data to come up with an action plan of next steps.

First, I had to create a testing plan with specific information about the features I intended to test using a minimum of 3 tasks. I went with 4 as I needed to run the test with 5 users and I didn't want to take up too much of their time but also not get bogged down in too much data. The 4 tasks were as follows:

Tasks	Upload a photo to Aperture	Make edits to photo	Apply a filter	Add photo location

Next, I had to run the test with my users. I enjoyed this much more than expected and really felt like I was part of an important project. My users were also super engaged with the process, giving up a good proportion of their time and being very supportive with what I was trying to do. The data gathered is highlighted below using green, amber and red to clearly show positive and less positive results:

Tasks	Upload a photo to Aperture	Make edits to photo	Apply a filter	Add photo location
User 1: 34, Female, Copywriter	Found pg 3 confusing but managed to upload	Made edit successfully	Added a filter easily	Couldn't find location button option
User 2: 37, Male, Engineer	Uploaded a photo succesfully	Made edit successfully	Added a filter easily	Couldn't find location button option
User 3: 35, Male, Consultant	Uploaded a photo succesfully	Found button with help	Added a filter easily	Couldn't find location button option
User 4: Female, 33, Head of product	Found pg 3 confusing but managed to upload	Made edit successfully	Added a filter easily	Couldn't find location button option
User 5: Male, 34, Teacher	Uploaded a photo succesfully	Unsure of request but found button with help	Added a filter easily	Added location easily

After completing each round of testing, I added some additional suggestions and once all the testing was complete I was able to add a summary to each task, as the image below indicates:

Tasks	Upload a photo to Aperture	Make edits to photo	Apply a filter	Add photo location	Suggestions
User 1: 34, Female, Copywriter	Found pg 3 confusing but managed to upload	Made edit successfully	Added a filter easily	Couldn't find location button option	Pg 3 maybe unnecessary, change location button image
User 2: 37, Male, Engineer	Uploaded a photo succesfully	Made edit successfully	Added a filter easily	Couldn't find location button option	Location button needs a clearer image
User 3: 35, Male, Consultant	Uploaded a photo succesfully	Found button with help	Added a filter easily	Couldn't find location button option	Create a new page for photo edits
User 4: Female, 33, Head of product	Found pg 3 confusing but managed to upload	Made edit successfully	Added a filter easily	Couldn't find location button option	Remove pg 3 and change location button image
User 5: Male, 34, Teacher	Uploaded a photo succesfully	Unsure of request but found button with help	Added a filter easily	Added location easily	Create a new page for photo edits
Summary	Pg 3 appears unnecessary, remove	Create a separate page for editing	No issues, filter options are simple	Replace the location button with an alternative	

Finally, after analysing the data I was able to easily identify problems with the prototype and create a plan to modify and ultimately find solutions all through the process of creating a prototype and testing it with users and those results are below:

Problem	Solution
Editing page unclear	Create a separate page for editing images
Location button unclear	Replace the location button with a new image

Conclusion

This project was the first time I was working with my own product and it all felt a lot less theoretical. The previous projects in the course felt like I was shadowing someone but now I was the product manager and I wanted to take the opportunity and responsibility seriously.

I was uncomfortable eith the design element of this achievement but the information provided in the lesson and ultimately remembering what my role as a Product Manager is helped me to focus on what I needed to do.

I was initially nervous showing my concepts and designs to friends and family but I felt that if I could run these ideas past people who mean a lot to me then working with strangers in the future should be a breeze.

In summary, I really enjoyed this entire project. It was the first time I felt I had what it takes to make a career in Product Management and I look forward to working on products whether they be digital or physical.