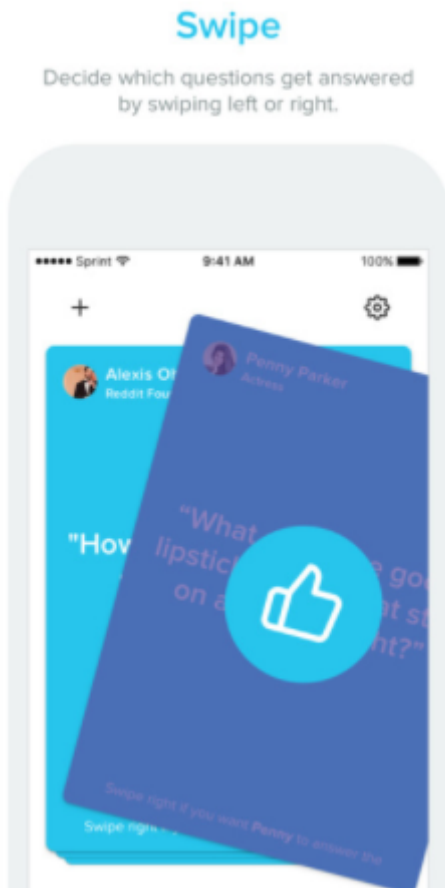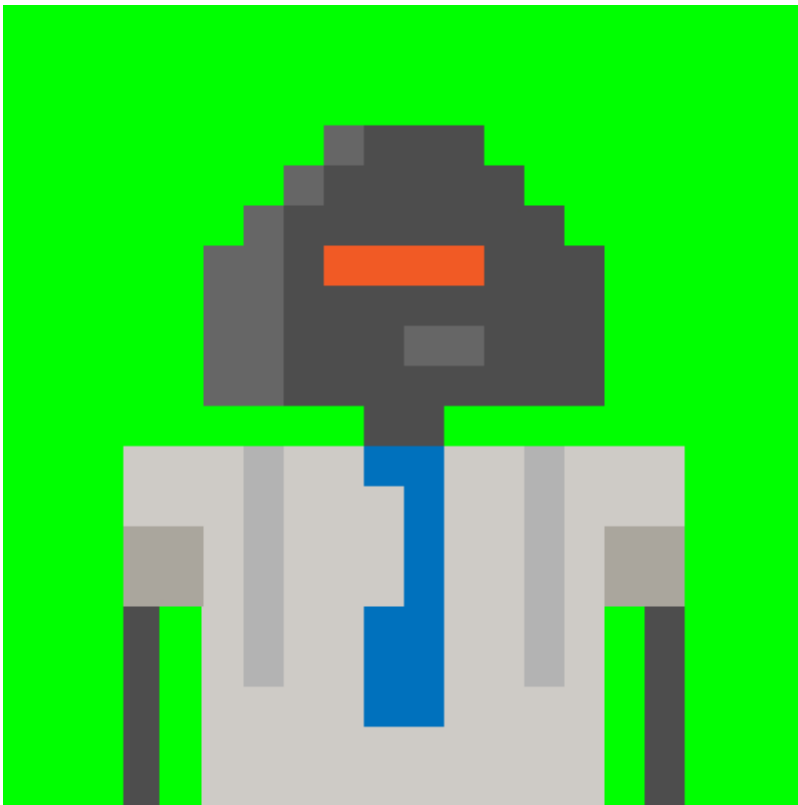# Whale 2.0: How I'd Reinvent the Product | Hacker Noon

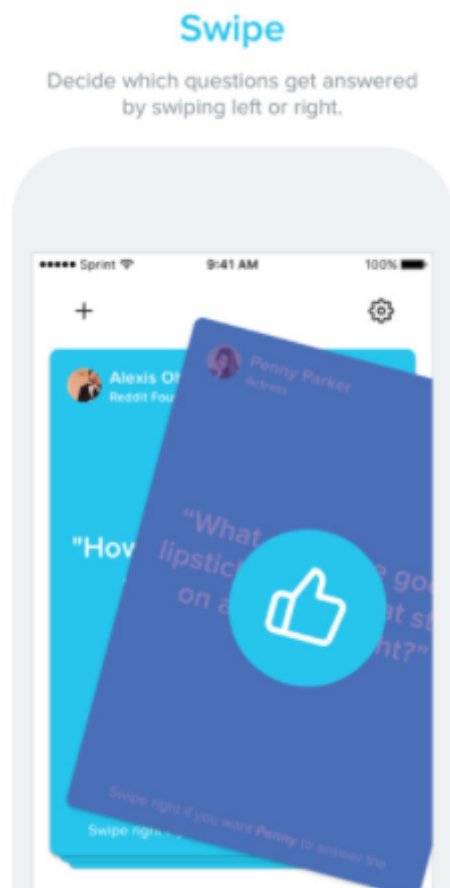*Originally published by Akshay Pruthi on*

6-8 minutes

For those of you who don't know, Whale is a Q&A app (currently only on iOS) that allows you to share knowledge and perspectives with influencers, celebrities and friends. Whale was started by Justin Kan with Ranidu Lankage leading the product as the CEO.

Whale App

Why am I doing this? Primarily for three reasons:

1. I absolutely loved the idea since I'm quite passionate about all things social. Hence, there's always some amount of curiosity on all-the-happenings at Whale.
2. I have a penchant for social-consumer-tech products and wanted to add value, even if it's to the slightest bit.
3. Eager to connect to Justin Kan to talk about the venture I, along with my co-founder Durgesh Kaushik are working on.

Short recap on Whale 1.0

The app consisted of 4 sections.

- **Home:** Where, as a consumer I was able to scroll through a lot of questions asked by different people. It urged me to up-vote the questions I, as a user, wanted an opinion on and also showed the video responses of the people who had answered those questions.

  Take: This was an interesting feed. I could browse through different questions and see what perspective do experts carry. The UI was a bit text-heavy considering it's more of a video platform. The feed could be more personalised but I understand that will happen with time.

- **Notifications:** Here I could browse through various categories of my interests, see popular Pods and follow a lot of people.

  Take: This is too much for 1.0 . I would want it to be just influencers I could follow and the category in which they have expertise

- **Communication:** Here all the answers I have asked or I have to answer were displayed.

  Take: UX was super complex.

- **Profile:** All my profile information was stored here

Whale 2.0

Explore: Tinder style swipes

➕   Explore   ⚙️

Justin Kan ✓
Tech Entrepreneur and Startup Investor

"What is something you know to be true but most of the world disagree with?"

Swipe right if you want **Justin** to answer this.

Explore   Watch   Answer

With Whale 2.0, the feed is a tinder style swipes of questions. You swipe right if you want the expert to answer this question and swipe left if you aren't interested in the question.

Take:

Well, when I was running Reach App and we were all set to do our first major revamp, we moved from a top to down scrollable feed to something like left to right scrollable feed (more or less tinder style). **Our discovery to transaction % largely dropped to 23% from 47%** and after talking to roughly 1000 users, I got to understand that people like to scroll fast and get to their interest-based content piece faster. Swiping by default is a slow game that doesn't mean it's not something you shouldn't try. So it all boils down to the type of content piece that is being populated on the platform.

Discover

📊 🔔 ⚙

⬇

🛍 App

PAC-MAN

Arcade

★★★★☆

👤 Akshay
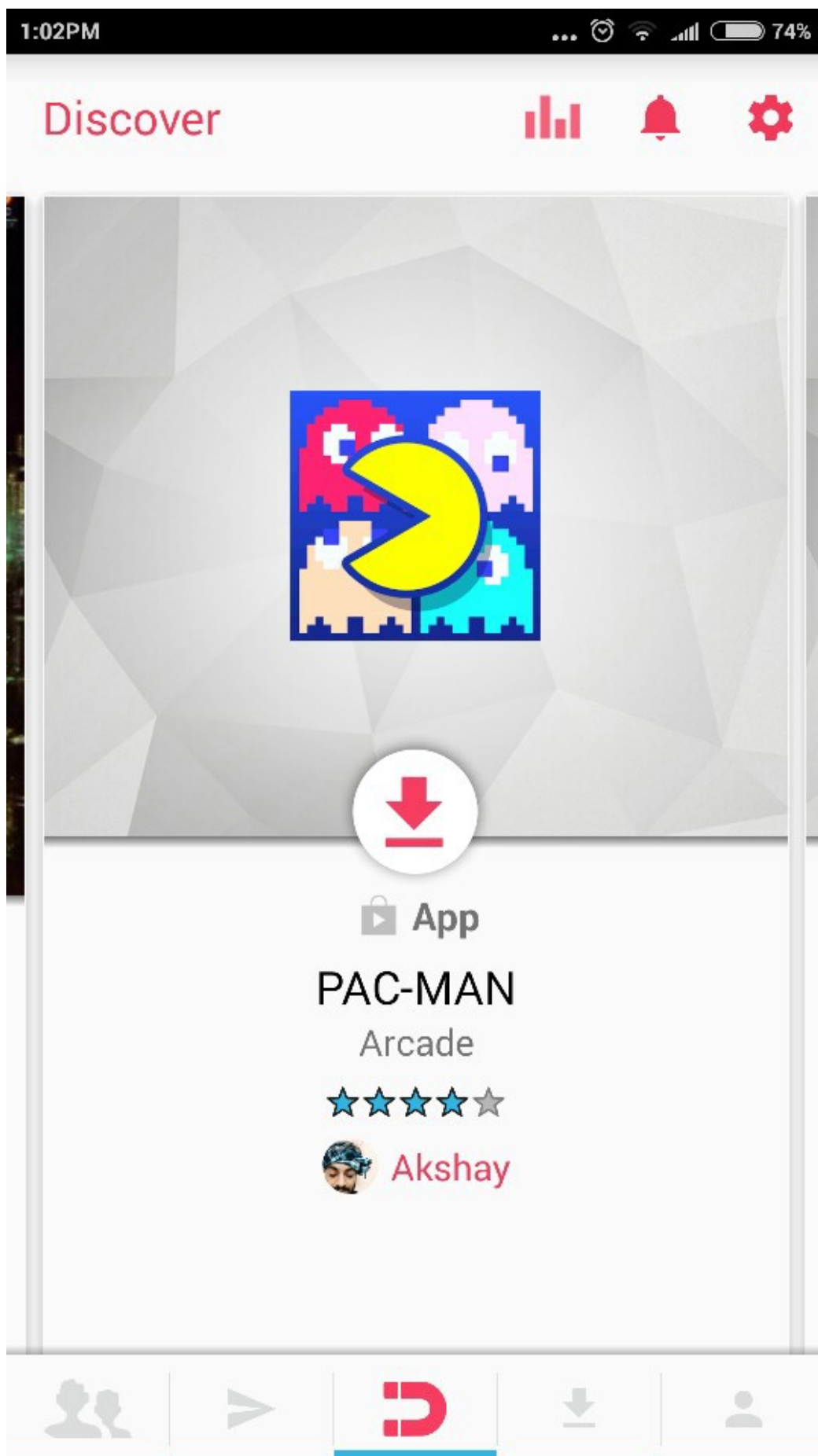
Reach app (Left to right scrollable screen)

Also, on the screen, give credits to the person who asked the question. Right now, s/he is nowhere to be seen. As a user coming to consume the content, I might not be interested in that person but as a business it's important for me to save this data and eventually use this data to build a solid collaborative filtering influenced recommendation engine.

At Reach, using similar analysis, we were able to increase the network strength inside the platform by 63%

Experiments on Home screen

**Experiment 1:** How about encouraging users to ask questions in video format?

Experiment 2: Suggestions for a user to follow more profiles.

Experiment 3: Most of the people don't really know whom to ask questions that have been popping up their mind for years? Who is that one person that could change his perspective? A lot of people don't know who Gary Vaynerchuk is but once they see his content, they are addicted and strongly influenced by him. Now the question is, how do Whale help me connect with those people?

Watch : The questions that have been answered

+　　Watch　　⚙️
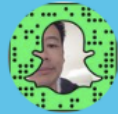
Justin Kan ☑️
Tech Entrepreneur and Startup Investor

✕

"Hi Justin, I watch a video recently saying that you prefer being an entrepreneur rather than an investor. Could you please explain why? Pls be detailed! Thanks!"
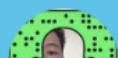
Tap to watch **Justin**'s video.

ranidu ☑️
CEO of whale 🐳 and Sri Lankan artist/dj

✕

"What is the 10% of things you've done that has lead to the most growth for 🐳"

Tap to watch **ranidu**'s video.

Justin Kan ☑️

⌄

Explore　　▶️ Watch　　🎥 Answer

Take:

Loved the interface. I can see this is potentially a good UX when you have thousands of questions answered by different people and eventually becomes very resourceful and informational consumable feed which is super interesting.

Experiment 1: Why not incline the UI towards more of a video-oriented UI. Instead of only question, you have Justin's video answer coming on your mobile screen. The UX could be of something like Facebook videos. A search bar can be put at the top for people to directly search a question they've asked. This might turn out to be more engaging.

Experiment 2: Whale 1.0 used to take me to second video after first video is finished. This was a great hack as most of the consumers are sitting on the platform just to consume good content not knowing what exactly they wish to consume. An automatic scroll of videos with all the questions that have been answered shall help increase engagement.

Follow people

✕   **Choose Someone to Ask**   🔍

People You Follow

Justin Kan ✔️
Tech Entrepreneur and Startup Investor

Y Combinator

DAVE MORIN ✔️
Entrepreneur. Investor. Photographer.

ranidu ✔️
CEO of whale 🐋 and Sri Lankan artist/dj

Everette Taylor ✔️
Beats, Rhymes & Startups

Ivan Kirigin
Founder at YesGraph. Dropbox, FB, & YC

Take:

Now this needs a lot of improvement

Choose someone to ask: As a consumer, I don't know whom to ask. There will always be a limited set of people I know. Hence as a platform, you are limiting my connections if you aren't giving me suggestions

People you follow: Could be just one tab and that too secondary. Primary tab should be "People you should follow"

The search bar doesn't give me suggestions. inspiration can be taken from Instagram search bar. With the bar at the top, at the bottom you could have top influencers world is following (Category wise maybe)

Answer: Questions that I ought to answer

You're out of questions. Tell your friends to ask you some!

Explore

Watch

Take:

With this kind of app, the ratio of consumers vs influencers/experts will always be high. Which means that this section will remain empty for most of the consumers. Positioning of the app is majorly around experts and celebs and the app doesn't support friends to put their opinions on the questions asked. Hence we can clearly conclude that there will be very less % of people asking questions to their friends.

In a nutshell, there will be very less activity in this space and I'm not sure if giving this much real estate to this category is helpful.

Experiment: Moving whale concept from many-to-one to many-to-many. In the explore section, there could be a secondary CTA of 'answer'. So that a user can answer these questions. In the watch section, along with expert's answer, there could be a small secondary CTA '3 answers from people'. In the answers category, all your answers could pop up.

Overall, it's a much needed revamp. Much simpler UX and clean interface. Though they could have retained few things from the earlier update.

What I personally believe is, Whale could potentially become a huge platform for people to share knowledge and opinions. Q&A is something that comes naturally to human beings and if cracked, this could explode!!

Tags
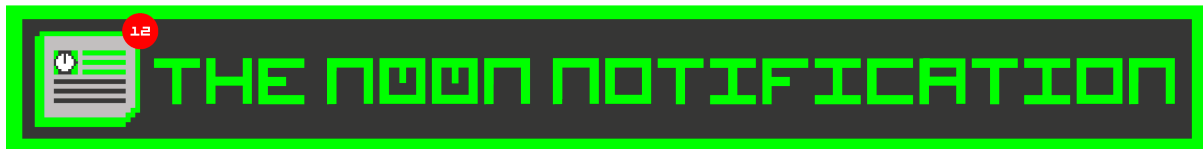
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