

PRODUCT

Northstar - Reporting Dashboard

PRODUCT TYPE

Enterprise Reporting Dashboard

PROBLEM STATEMENT

As a governance stakeholder in a software factory, I want a standardized progress and reporting dashboard, so I can ensure delivery transparency, audit readiness, and adherence to organizational processes.

PLATFORM

Web-based Desktop & Tablet App

USER BASE

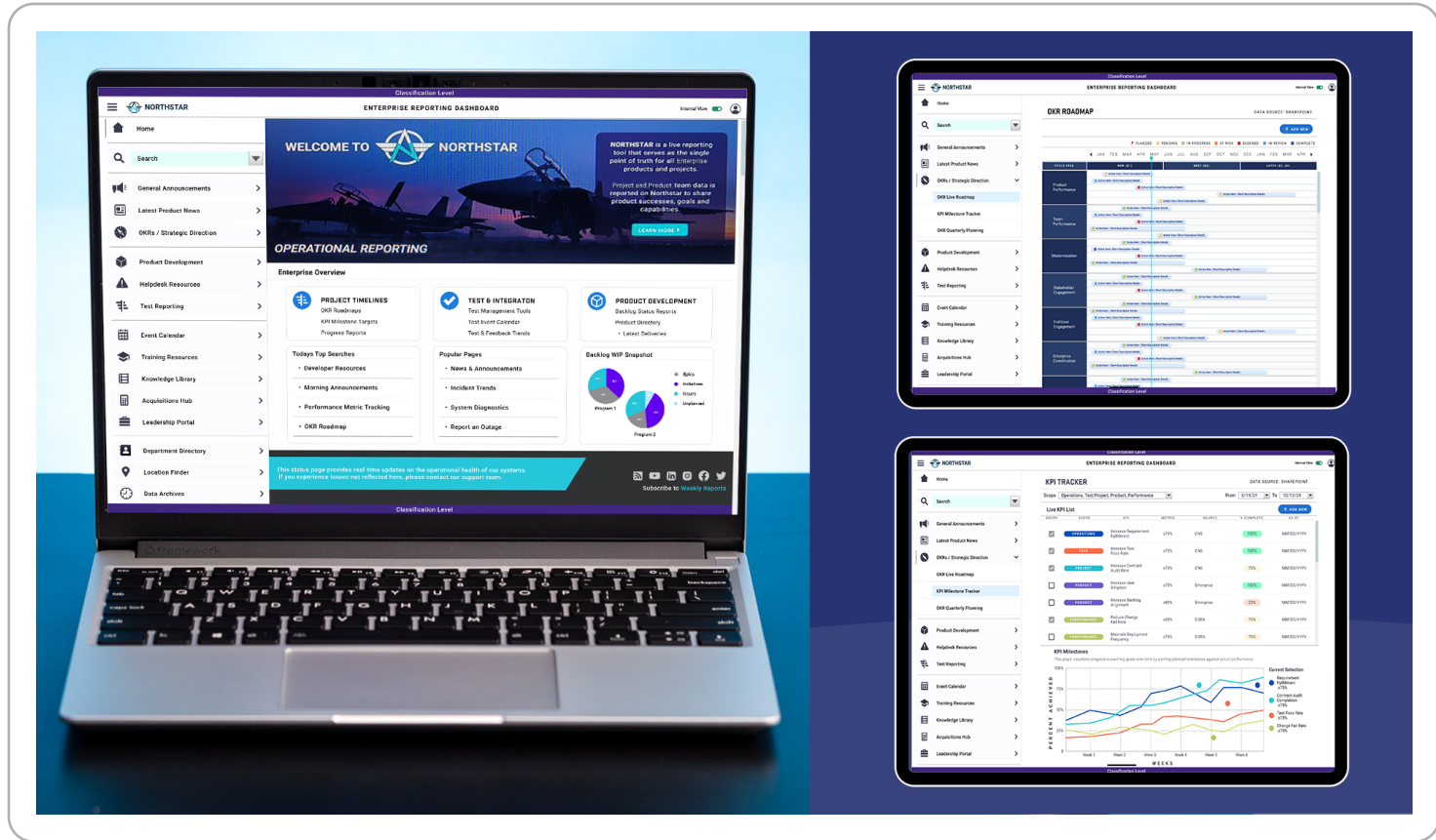
Enterprise Product Teams & Stakeholders

TIMELINE

Nov 2021 - May 2023

ABOUT

Northstar is a suite of enterprise reporting tools that provides a wide variety of users with context on product development activity & allows them to view dynamic reports related to system updates & release statuses. It tracks product releases & enterprise plans to allow for wide collaboration with versatile groups of clients & external stakeholders.



My Roles & Contributions

Product Manager

- Directed product vision
- Wrote & prioritized user stories
- Led & aligned cross-functional teams

UX Designer

- Designed & built user interfaces
- Optimized product data architecture
- Established key data sources

QA / Test Planner

- Contributed to QA strategy
- Planned test execution cycles
- Ensured overall product quality

✓ Key Decision Factors

ORGANIZATIONAL NEEDS

Org needed better alignment, improved efficiency, and for stakeholders to agree on which outcomes to measure. Teams required clear visibility into progress, reliable data to support decision-making, and solutions that scale while operating within resource, security, and regulatory constraints.

USER CONSIDERATIONS

Focused on supporting efficiency and clarity. With limited time and high cognitive load, the experience was designed to surface critical information quickly and reduce unnecessary complexity. Offline availability and role-based permissions provided users access only to the data and actions relevant to their responsibilities.

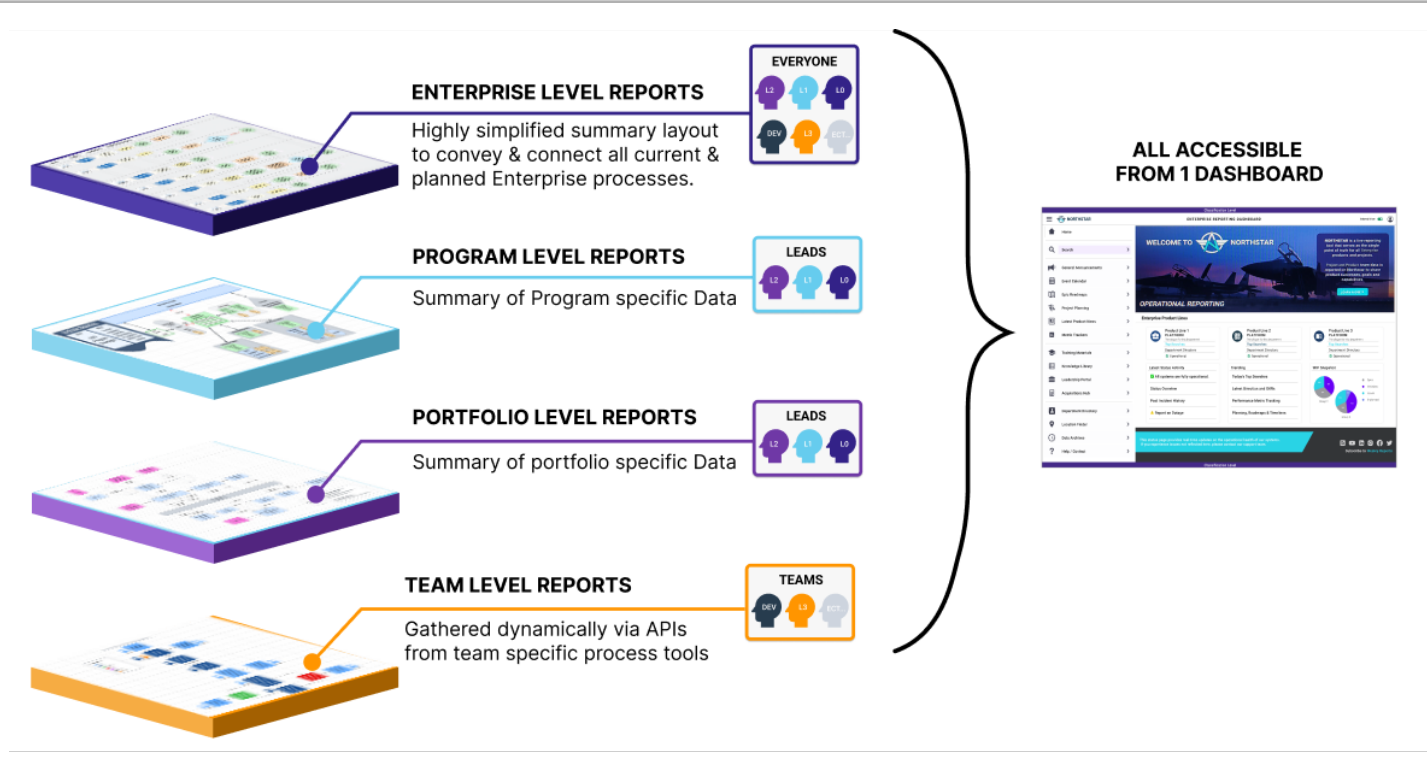
CONSTRAINTS & PARAMETERS

Operational constraints required solutions to integrate with existing workflows and limited resources, compatibility with legacy systems and approved technology stacks. Regulatory requirements and high-security environment demanded rigorous access controls, data protection, and risk mitigation at every stage of development.

MEASURES OF SUCCESS

Measures of success were defined by how effectively the product supported users with minimal friction. Success meant the interface felt intuitive with little to no training required, and workflows closely matched real-world needs, reducing frustration and enabling users to complete tasks quickly and confidently.

PRODUCT CORE FEATURES OVERVIEW



∞ End-to-End Workflow

EVALUATE BUSINESS NEEDS

Service map Current State and Future State of Organization, including tools, key tasks and critical functionality. Review Product history, initial needs reasoning, and previous business goals. Define levels of stakeholders and highlight promoters.

DEFINE SCOPE & EXPECTATIONS

Establish expected results, and set parameters to scope. Determine ownership of tasks and build out OKR planning roadmap. Help achieve better roadmap coordination & reporting transparency.

CONDUCT USER RESEARCH & PROBLEM DISCOVERY

Interview Users, Collect Pain Points, Analyze Research. teams identified where products fell short and where the greatest opportunities for improvement existed.

EVALUATE USER NEEDS & PAIN POINTS

Analyze feedback, usage patterns, and validate assumptions with real users. Synthesize User research to develop insights. Prioritize solving for the pain points with the greatest perceived value.

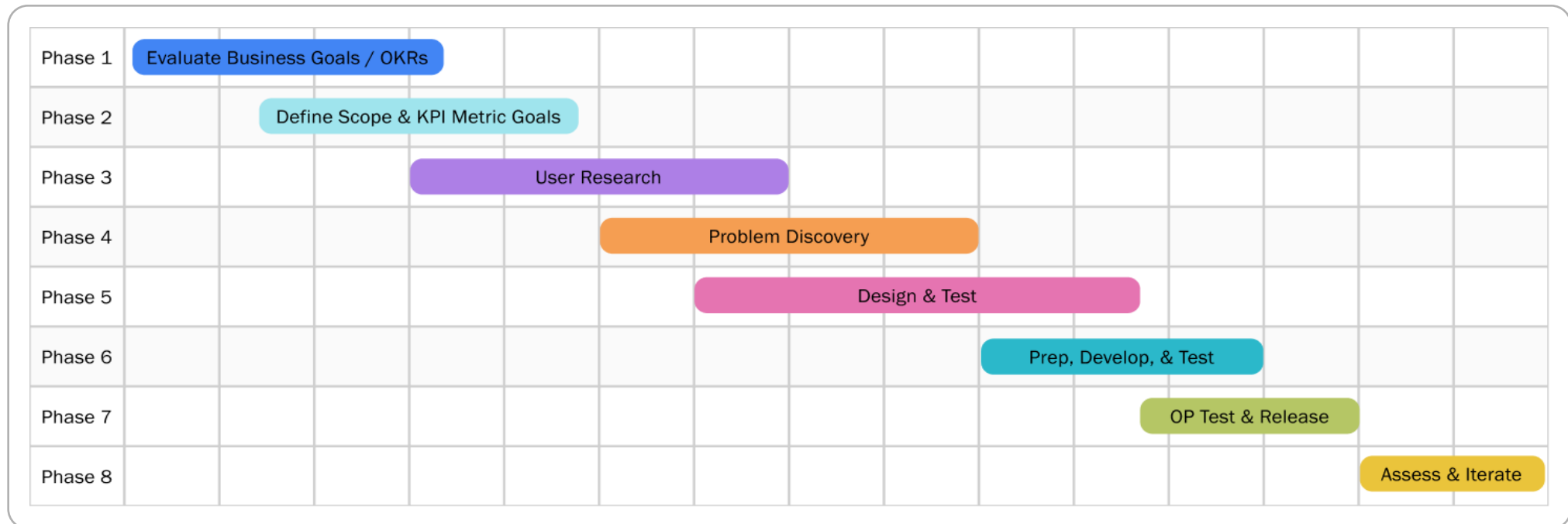
CONFIGURE CONTENT & DEVELOP SOLUTION APPROACHES

Determine Information Architecture, User Flows, and UI Components. Design prototypes to conduct usability studies. Promote designs to action items once validated. Write problem statements, code, and release to operational environments.

MEASURE OUTCOMES & ITERATE

Compare released results with set expectations, review user and performance metrics. Track product performance availability, and reliability. Survey users for quantifiable feedback.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT WORKFLOW PHASES



 Design Decision Highlights

KEY DESIGN CHOICES

The design of the enterprise reporting dashboard for the government software factory emphasizes clarity, accessibility, and trust.

WHY I MADE THESE CHOICES

This minimalist, structured design supports quick data interpretation, reduces cognitive load, and reflects the precision and reliability expected in a mission-critical environment.

WHAT I INTENTIONALLY OMITTED

Un-validated User or Stakeholder Feature Requests, Rigid Timelines, Team Performance (as opposed to product performance) Metrics.

WHY THESE CHOICES MATTERED

Actually Reduced Manual Data Entry, Enabled Cross-Team Collaboration & Reporting

KEY DESIGN COMPONENTS

BRANDING



GRAPHICS & ICONS



FONTS

STRATUM No2
Roboto Regular
 Roboto Condensed

COLORS



STATUS INDICATORS



COMPONENT EXAMPLES

MANAGE ATTACHMENTS

[ATTACH FILE](#) [ATTACH LINK](#)

Link Name	Link Description	https://hyperlink.url	<input type="checkbox"/>
File Name	File Description	image2.png	<input type="checkbox"/>
File Name	File Description	image1.png	<input type="checkbox"/>

[CLOSE](#)

CONFIRM REGISTRATION
 Register for this Event?

Calendar Event Name Placeholder to describe event

MM/DD/YY to MM/DD/YY

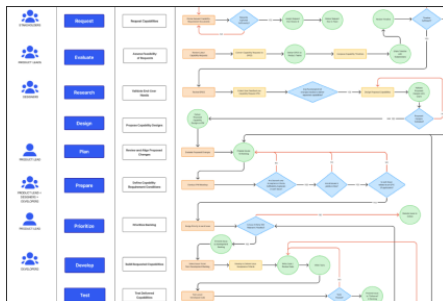
Virtual In Person

[Click Yes to Register](#)

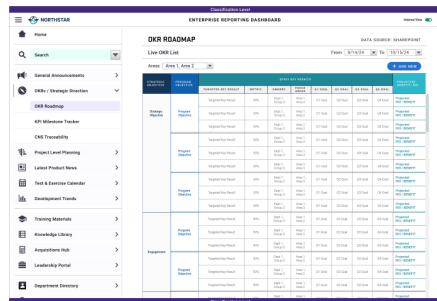
[CANCEL](#) [YES](#)

 Design Process Elements

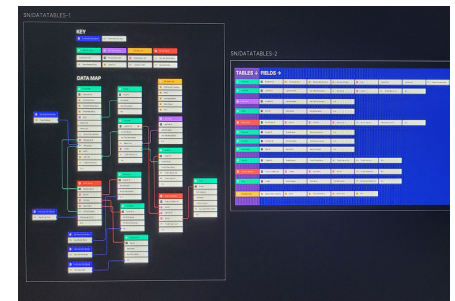
USER RESEARCH



PROTOTYPES



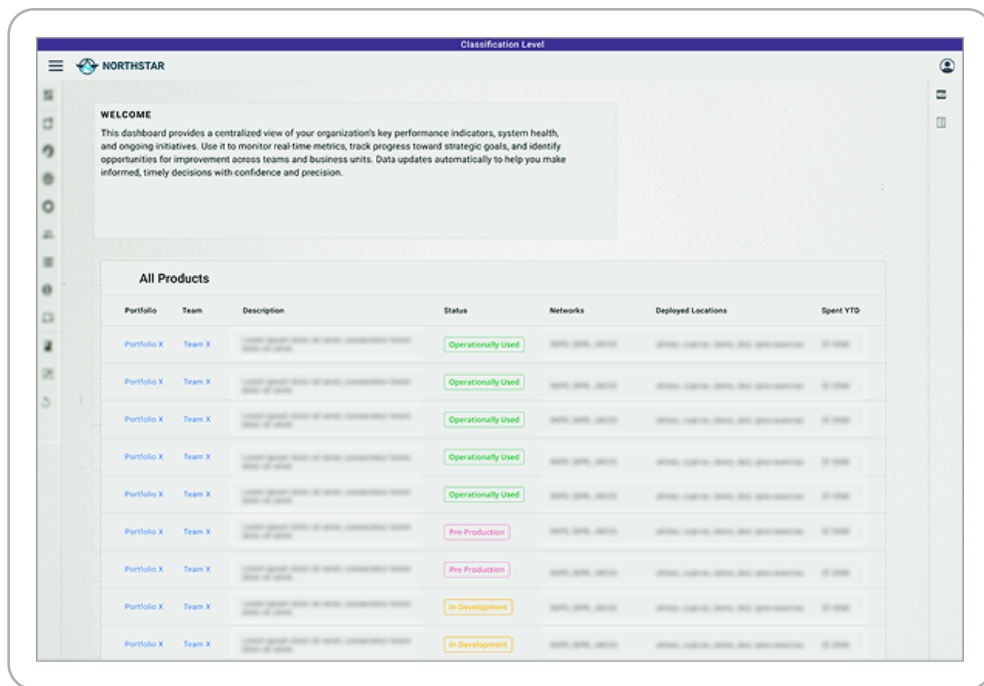
DATA ARCHITECTURE



Impact Snapshot

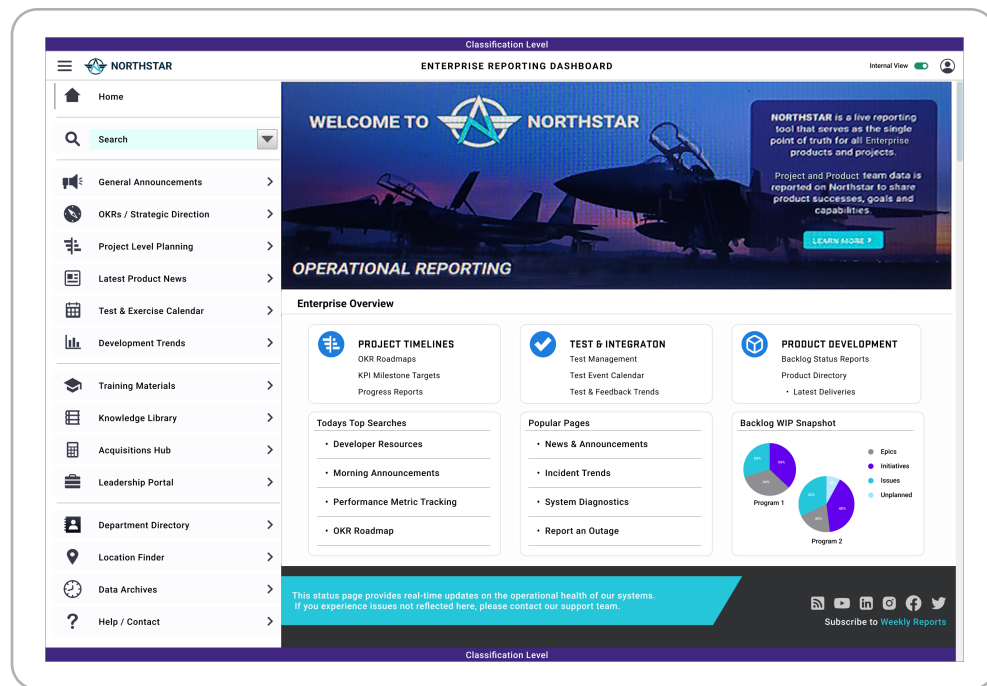
BEFORE REDESIGN

The enterprise dashboard was dated and difficult to use, relying on cluttered layouts, inconsistent visuals, and outdated interaction patterns. Information was spread across dense tables and static reports, making it hard for users to quickly identify key metrics or trends.



AFTER REDESIGN

The enterprise dashboard was transformed into a modern, intuitive experience that prioritized clarity and usability. Improved responsiveness and data visualization reduced cognitive load, accelerated decision-making, and significantly increased adoption and confidence in the platform.



END-USER QUOTES

BEFORE REDESIGN

“I spend too much time digging through different reports just to find what I need...”
- Program Stakeholder



AFTER REDESIGN

“The dashboard makes it easier to have productive conversations because everyone is looking at the same information...”
- Senior Leader



AFTER REDESIGN

“It’s much easier to understand progress across teams, and the consistency in how information is presented makes it easier to trust the data...”
- Product Manager



Classification Level

☰
NORTHSTAR

ENTERPRISE REPORTING DASHBOARD

Internal View

Home

Search

General Announcements >

Latest Product News >

OKRs / Strategic Direction >

Product Development >

Backlog Activity

Release Recap

Product Metrics

Capability Delivery

Helpdesk Resources >

Test Reporting >

Event Calendar >

Training Resources >

Knowledge Library >

Acquisitions Hub >

Leadership Portal >

RELEASE RECAP

DATA SOURCE: GITLAB

Program(s) Program 1, 2 From 8/29/24 To 01/16/24

Continuous Release Tracker

Month	Program 1 (Open Issues)	Program 2 (Open Issues)
Month 1	25	15
Month 2	30	25
Month 3	55	40
Month 4	60	50
Month 5	45	65
Month 6	55	70

Major Version Releases

Product	Version	Release Date
CORE PLATFORM	v1.9	SEP 12
	v2.0	OCT 10
	v2.1	DEC 05
MOBILE APP	v3.3	SEP 12
	v3.4	OCT 10
	v3.5	NOV 21
ANALYTICS	v1.0	SEP 12
	v1.1	OCT 10
	v1.2	NOV 21
API GATEWAY	v5.5	SEP 12
	v5.6	OCT 10
	v5.7	NOV 21
ADMIN CONSOLE	v2.7	SEP 12
	v2.8	OCT 10
	v2.9	NOV 21

◆ Release date

Classification Level

Classification Level

☰
NORTHSTAR

ENTERPRISE REPORTING DASHBOARD

Internal View

Home

Search

General Announcements

Latest Product News

OKRs / Strategic Direction

Product Development

Backlog Activity

Release Recap

Product Metrics

Capability Delivery

Helpdesk Resources

Test Reporting

Event Calendar

Training Resources

Knowledge Library

Acquisitions Hub

DATA SOURCE: GITLAB

[+ ADD NEW](#)

REMAINING WEIGHT >100 >75 >50 >25 >10

Current Work in Progress

CNS ID	CAPABILITY	EPICS	ISSUE WEIGHT	OPEN	CLOSED	AS OF
##	PLATFORM MODERNIZATION	6	18	<div style="width: 40%; background-color: #4a5568;"></div> 40%	<div style="width: 60%; background-color: #2d3748;"></div> 60%	DD/MM/YYYY
##	REPORTING REVAMP	10	25	<div style="width: 80%; background-color: #4a5568;"></div> 80%	<div style="width: 20%; background-color: #2d3748;"></div> 20%	DD/MM/YYYY
##	SEARCH IMPROVEMENTS	35	43	<div style="width: 60%; background-color: #4a5568;"></div> 60%	<div style="width: 40%; background-color: #2d3748;"></div> 40%	DD/MM/YYYY
##	RELEASE HARDENING	6	18	<div style="width: 15%; background-color: #4a5568;"></div> 15%	<div style="width: 85%; background-color: #2d3748;"></div> 85%	DD/MM/YYYY
##	ROLE-BASED DASHBOARDS	6	18	<div style="width: 40%; background-color: #4a5568;"></div> 40%	<div style="width: 60%; background-color: #2d3748;"></div> 60%	DD/MM/YYYY
##	SECURITY BASELINE	6	18	<div style="width: 40%; background-color: #4a5568;"></div> 40%	<div style="width: 60%; background-color: #2d3748;"></div> 60%	DD/MM/YYYY
##	DATA PIPELINE RELIABILITY	6	18	<div style="width: 40%; background-color: #4a5568;"></div> 40%	<div style="width: 60%; background-color: #2d3748;"></div> 60%	DD/MM/YYYY

Classification Level

Usability Studies

STUDIES CONDUCTED



MODERATED

- Scripted Interviews
- Prototype Walkthroughs
- Heuristic Evaluations



A / B TESTS

- Product Variant Comparisons
- Time on Task Tracking
- Engagement Experiments



UNMODERATED

- Email Surveys
- Task-Based Testing via Prototype
- Field Studies

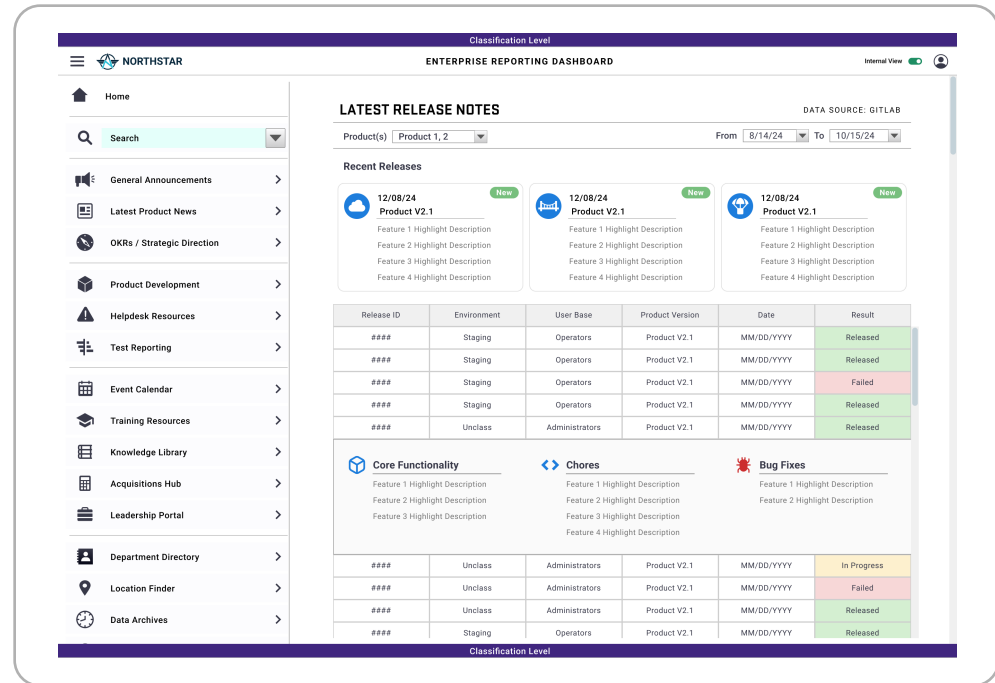
BEFORE USABILITY STUDIES

Many features were designed around system capabilities rather than user workflows. Interfaces were cluttered, navigation paths were unclear, and key actions required unnecessary steps, leading to confusion and inefficiency. As a result, users struggled to use the product effectively.



AFTER USABILITY STUDIES

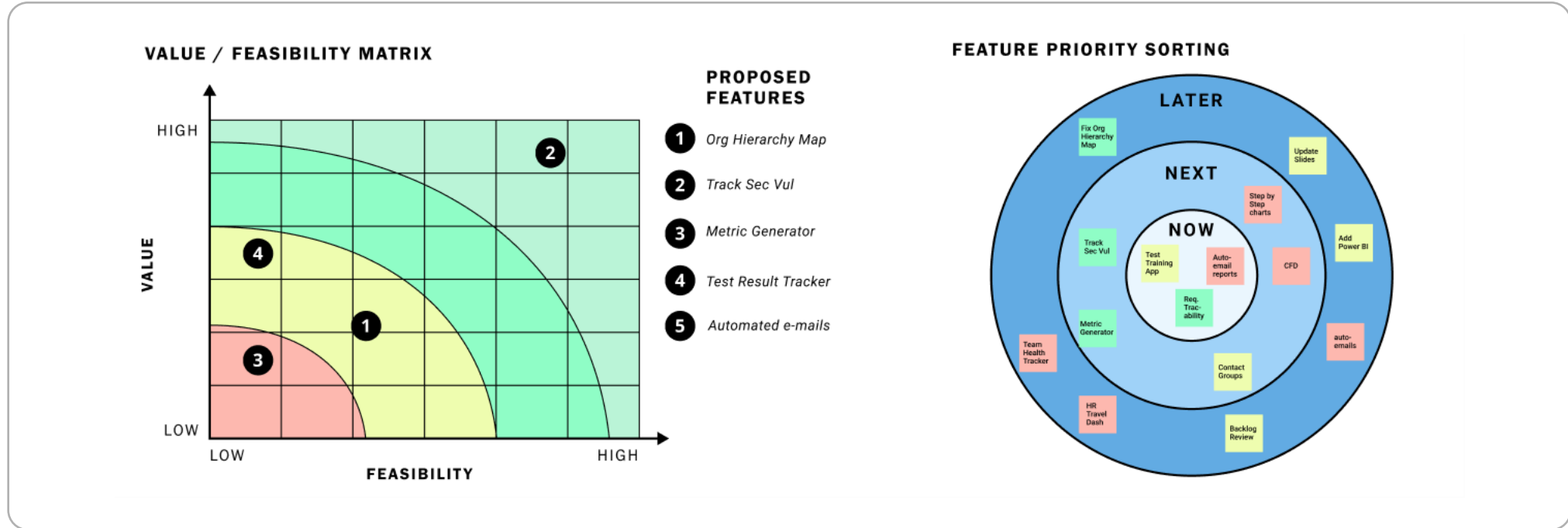
User feedback was directly applied to refine and simplify the experience. Features were redesigned to align with real user behaviors. These improvements reduced friction, improved task completion rates, and created a more efficient, user-centered product that better supported daily work.



★ Feature Prioritization

DETERMINING PRIORITY

Product features were prioritized based on a number of factors. first addressing regulatory requirements, then focusing on the features that delivered the greatest value to the largest number of users. This ensured the solution remained compliant while maximizing impact and usability across stakeholder roles.



▲ Navigating Challenges

USABILITY

Chain of Connectivity

Challenge: Users lose connectivity at certain points which breaks the chain of information

Approach: Designed an export/import system via power automate to maintain data consistency.

COMMUNICATION

Dark Mode Issues

Challenge: Dark mode inconsistent/not working on legacy systems (pages looked blank)

Approach: Standardized design system for light mode

ACCESSIBILITY

Data Entry Groups

Challenge: Some user groups were data entry & some were read only

Approach: created separate "states" linked to role-based profiles (internal /external view)

Key Insights & Outcomes

USER INSIGHTS

Users gained insights from revealing their team patterns, Training and more detailed release announcements increased engagement.

WORKFLOW INSIGHTS

Many features were superfluous and could be scaled down without diminishing value delivered. Users were hesitant to adopt until they perceived the value delivered.

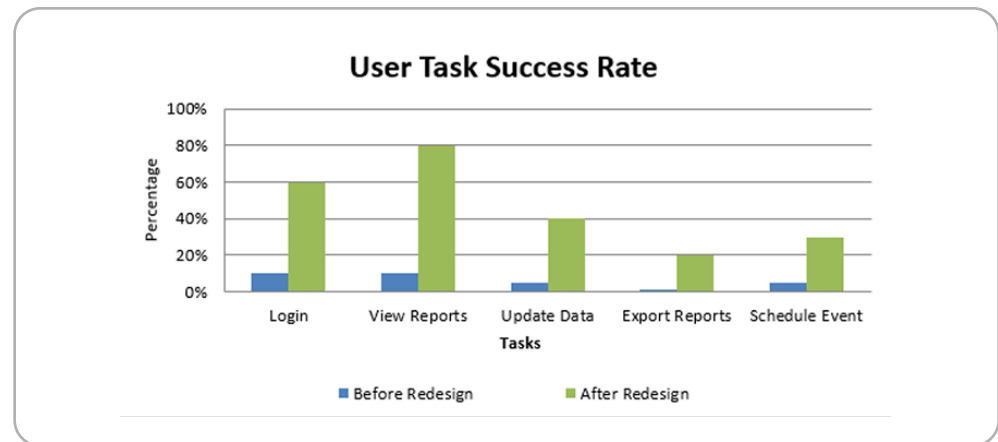
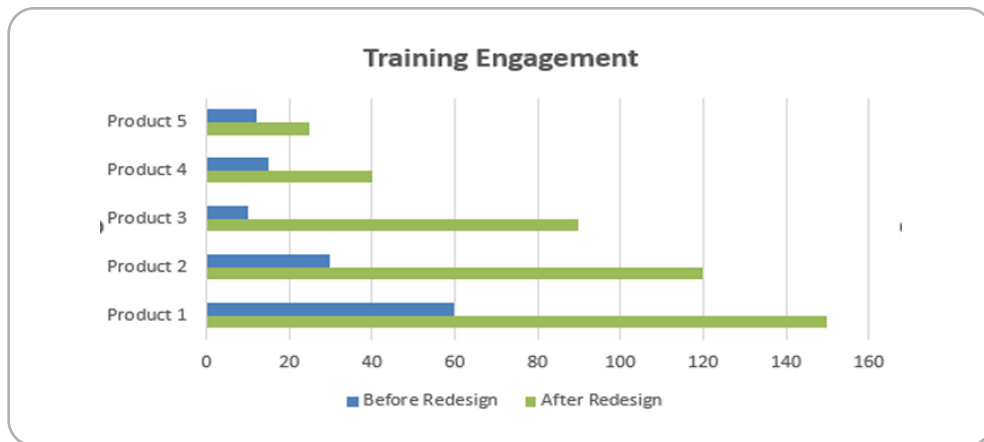
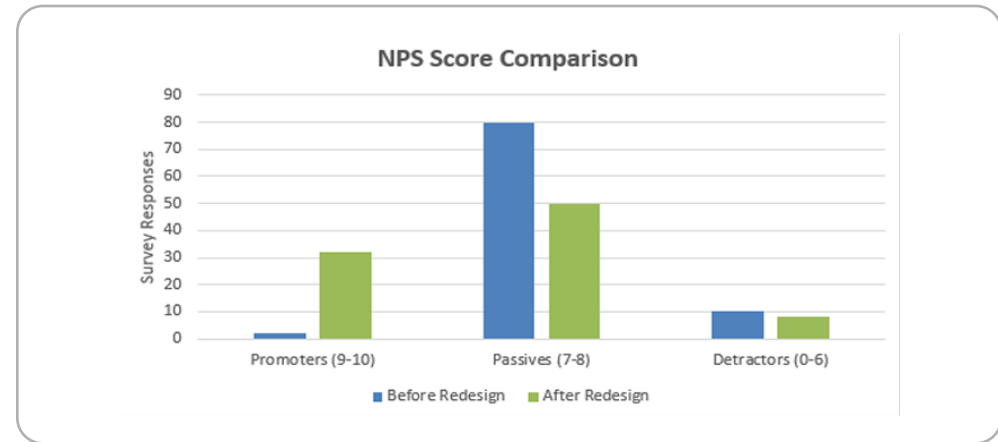
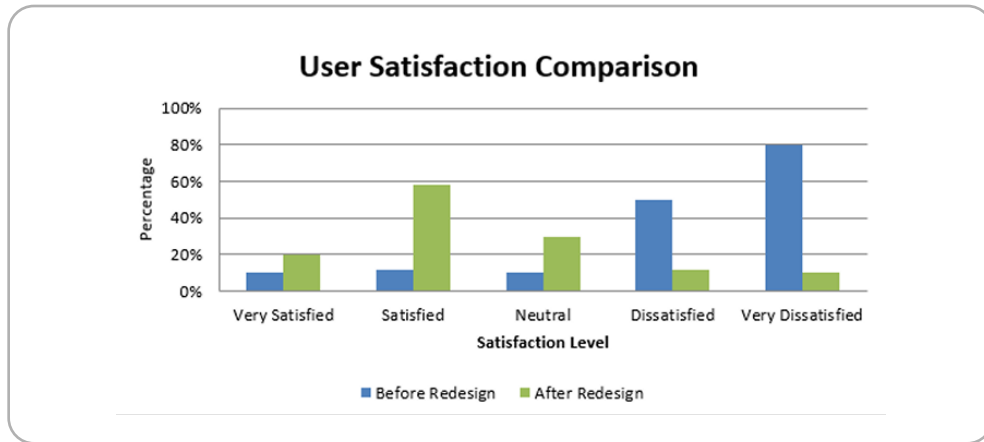
FEATURE INSIGHTS

Teams felt they reduced risk by implementing standards. That allowed them to feel more informed, which helped make decisions faster.

PERFORMANCE INSIGHTS

External users appear to have gained more benefit than internal, but External user base were more likely to give feedback.

METRICS TRACKED



Takeaways

HOW DID FEEDBACK INFLUENCE DECISIONS?

User feedback influenced all phases of design decisions by highlighting real pain points, validating priorities, and revealing where assumptions did not match actual needs.

HOW DID THESE CHOICES INCREASE VALUE?

My design choices increased value by reducing friction and cognitive load, enabling higher adoption, greater efficiency, and more meaningful outcomes for both users and the business.

HOW DID THE OUTCOMES ALIGN WITH BUSINESS GOALS

Each initiative was evaluated against strategic objectives, ensuring that the work not only addressed user needs but also contributed to broader organizational priorities and long-term value.

WHAT ELSE WOULD I CHANGE?

Design a fully online solution with multiple instance backups. Update the UI, Simplify Navigation, Establish Dynamic Data Sources.

WHAT NEEDS FURTHER EXPLORATION?

Conduct Further Usability Testing, Track User Activity per Page, Users were also more reluctant to adopt features with no training assets.

WHAT I LEARNED

How well assumptions about user needs, scope, and timelines aligned with reality. Which features delivered the most value, where trade-offs were necessary, and how effectively the team's navigated constraints.

Next Steps



FOR THE BUSINESS

Update Documentation & Backlog

Finalize release notes to clearly communicate delivered features, fixes, and known limitations, update technical and user docs, and refine the backlog using lessons learned and feedback to effectively inform the next development cycle.



FOR THE TEAM

Conduct a Release Reviews and Retros


Validate delivered features against documented requirements to ensure they meet expected functionality and quality standards, to identify what worked well, and where improvements could be needed.



FOR THE USERS

Analyze Metrics and User Feedback

Review performance data, quality metrics, and user input to understand how the product performed in real-world use. Analyzing these signals helps measure overall impact, delivered value.

 Let's Connect!



Thanks for Reading!

If you'd like to further discuss my work, talk about product strategy, UX design, or building productivity tools, I'd love to connect. Hope to hear from you!

-Hill

EMAIL

hillmcl@outlook.com



LINKEDIN

[in/hillmcl](https://www.linkedin.com/in/hillmcl)



RESUME

hillarymclaughlin.com

