

PRODUCT

CutieBoard® - iOS Game

PRODUCT TYPE

Charcuterie Simulator

PROBLEM STATEMENT

As a casual gamer, I want an activity that helps me relax while expressing my creativity, so I can enjoy personal downtime and share meaningful creative experiences with friends and family.

PLATFORM

iOS Mobile & Tablet Game (Published)

USER BASE

Casual Gamers

TIMELINE

May 2021 - June 2021

ABOUT

CutieBoard® is the first charcuterie board simulator game for iOS, designed to let users create custom board designs and recipes by selecting and arranging a variety of foods on a digital board. It appeals to users seeking a relaxing, creative experience as well as those planning real charcuterie boards for parties or events.



My Roles & Contributions

iOS Application Developer

- Conducted Market Gap Analysis
- Developed Unique Gameplay Functionality
- Released to iOS Production Environments

UX Designer

- Designed & built user interfaces
- Designed Product Branding & assets
- Planned & Conducted user-base Testing

Social Media Marketing

- Developed Launch Strategy
- Designed Marketing assets
- Led Targeted marketing Campaigns

Key Decision Factors

ORGANIZATIONAL NEEDS

Users want an easy way to visually plan a charcuterie board, and also like to relax and play low-pressure games that encourage creative expression.

USER CONSIDERATIONS

Designing with empathy and without bias. Planning & conducting user research, interviews, & surveys. Synthesizing & diagramming interview & usability study data to form insights.

CONSTRAINTS & PARAMETERS

Working adults seek leisure activities, and are often too busy to plan party food for events, Platforms for leisure games are not equipped with many assistive technologies, Text-heavy charcuterie planning blogs are often difficult to read and plan from.

MEASURES OF SUCCESS

Design a mobile app that allows users to easily play with food images to create customized charcuterie boards.

PRODUCT CORE FEATURES OVERVIEW



The Product:

CutieBoard® is the first Charcuterie Board simulator game for iOS. It is designed to allow users to build their own charcuterie board designs & recipes by choosing images of different foods and placing them on a digital board.

CutieBoard® targets users who are looking for a leisurely creative game, or looking to plan an actual charcuterie board for a party or event.



∞ End-to-End Workflow

EVALUATE BUSINESS NEEDS

Validated the target audience and core value: relaxing creativity with optional real-world planning.

DEFINE SCOPE & EXPECTATIONS

Defined scope for core creation tools and content library while keeping the experience lightweight.

CONDUCT USER RESEARCH & PROBLEM DISCOVERY

Reviewed user expectations and competitive references for mobile creative games.

EVALUATE USER NEEDS & PAIN POINTS

Identified friction points: precision placement, content discovery, and feeling “stuck” creatively.

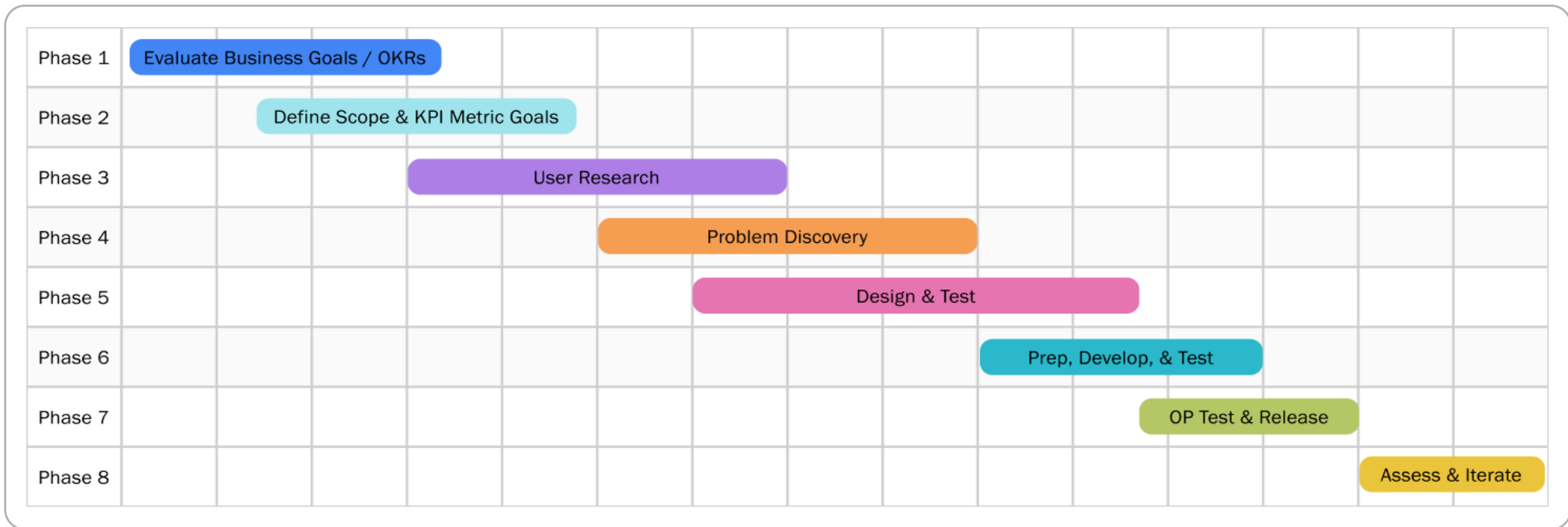
CONFIGURE CONTENT & DEVELOP SOLUTION APPROACHES

Designed simple creation controls, templates, and content categories to keep flow enjoyable.

MEASURE OUTCOMES & ITERATE

Measured engagement and completion rates, iterating controls and content variety.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT WORKFLOW PHASES



Design Decision Highlights

KEY DESIGN CHOICES

The app's design is inspired by café chalkboards, so I designed art assets and chose colors that leaned toward a "gourmet cafe" aesthetic.

WHY I MADE THESE CHOICES

A main sans-serif font was chosen for instructional text, I also included one script font for accents.

WHAT I INTENTIONALLY OMITTED

Overly complex editing features that would reduce approachability and performance.

WHY THESE CHOICES MATTERED

Easier creation increased engagement, sharing, and repeat play.

KEY DESIGN COMPONENTS

Logo & Slogan:



Fonts:



Colors:



Graphics & Icons:



Design Process Elements

USER RESEARCH



"I like playing puzzle games when I need some me time."

Goals

- Find ways to relax when she gets some time to herself.
- Find activities that she can share with her friends and kids.
- Learn new ways to cook and learn about new foods.

Frustrations

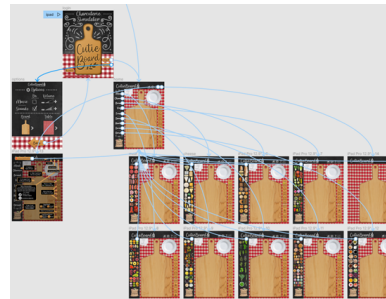
- "I find that most mobile games are too competitive."
- "Sometimes I just want to zone out and not have to think about much."
- "I like puzzles because I enjoy a challenge but I don't want my relaxation time to feel like work."

Mary Moss

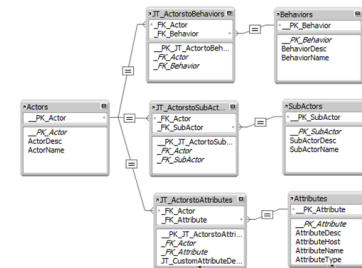
Age: 39
Education: Bachelors
Hometown: Quincy, MA
Family: Husband 40, 2 daughters (13, 10)
Occupation: Sales Manager

Mary has been a Sales Manager at a department store for 6 years and works 40+ hours a week. She works hard along with her husband to provide for her family. She is looking forward to going on vacation with her family and is looking for activities to keep her and her kids occupied while they travel. She also enjoys cooking and finding out about new recipes.

PROTOTYPES



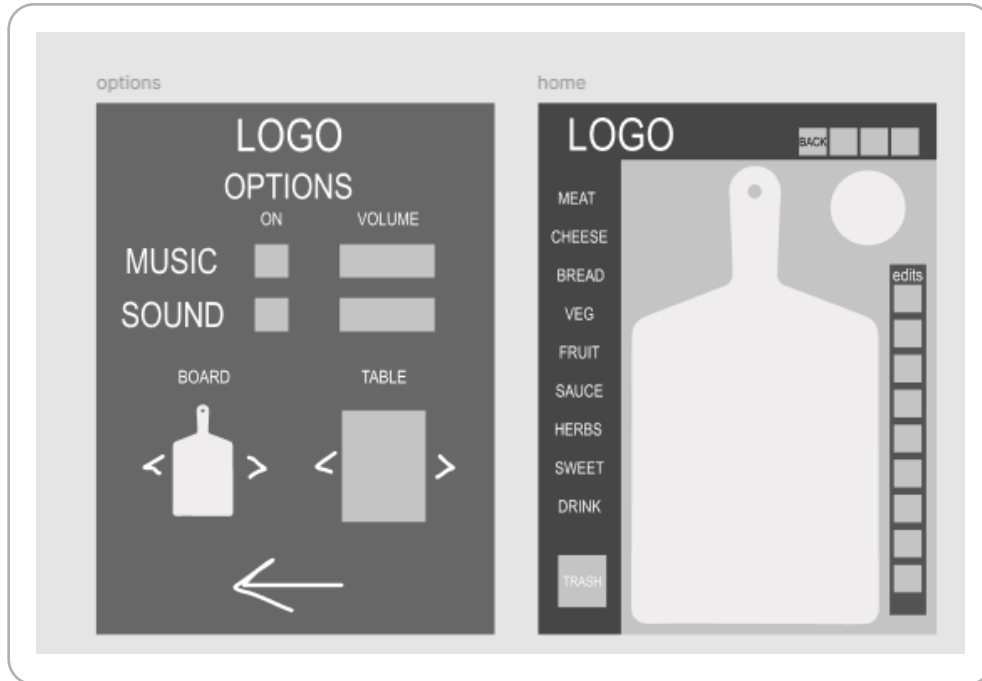
DATA ARCHITECTURE



Impact Snapshot

BEFORE REDESIGN

Early designs only allowed users to move forward from the login screen. Useability studies revealed that users wanted more of a journey through the app, so I added options to explore more app details.



AFTER REDESIGN

The second usability studies revealed the users frustration with no ability to reload the entire board. To address this issue and streamline the designing flow, I added clear and load buttons to the static toolbar. I also added a prompt screen to confirm item deletion.



END-USER QUOTES

BEFORE REDESIGN

"I want to play something cute without a lot of stress."
- User



AFTER REDESIGN

"It gives me so many ideas for quick healthy snacks!"
- User



AFTER REDESIGN

"My daughter loves to play this, and I love how it teaches her about different foods."
- User

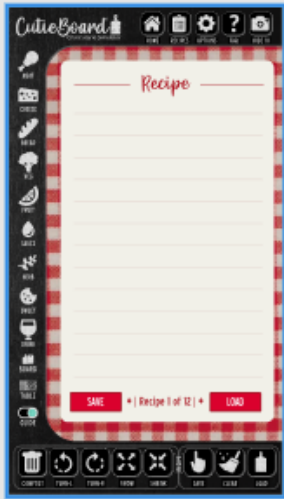


Key Mockups



Key Visual

iPhone 8 - 2



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

Users struggled with precision placement and finding items quickly.

AFTER USABILITY STUDIES

Improved snapping, added categories/search, and simplified placement controls with better feedback.

Before usability study

After usability study

Added more buttons and functions based on user feedback.

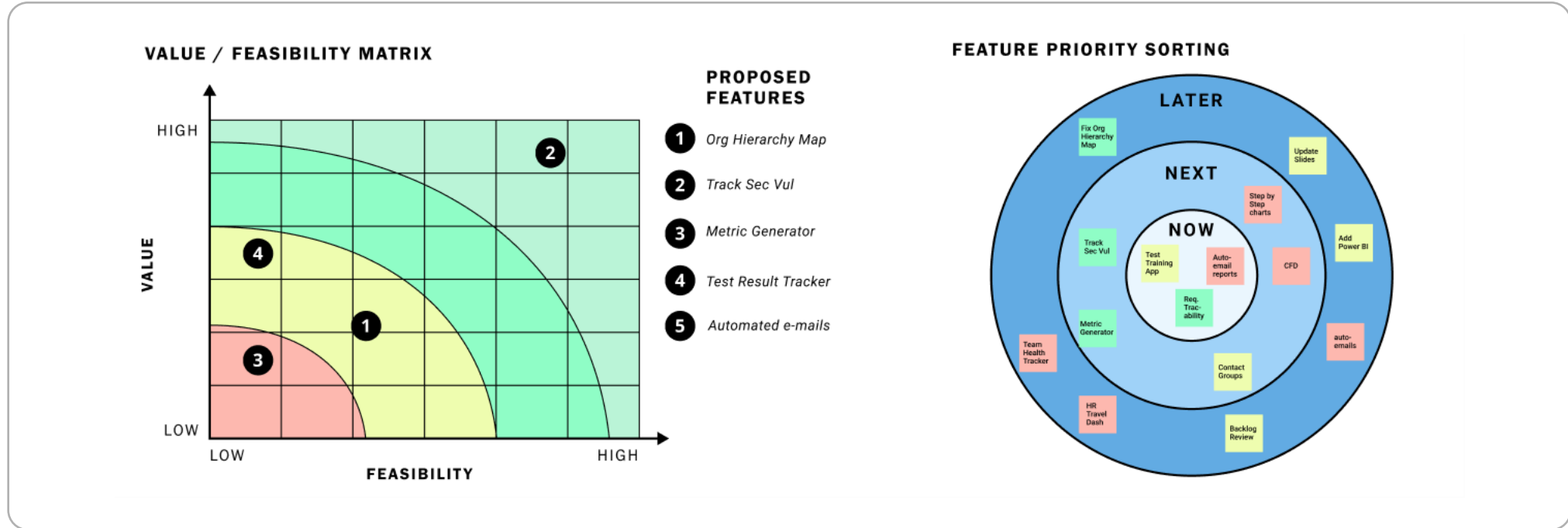
Before usability study

After usability study

★ Feature Prioritization

DETERMINING PRIORITY

Prioritized improvements that reduced frustration: controls, discovery, and quick-start templates. The app at it's core was for fun and relaxation, so anything that would increase the relaxation element was prioritized.



A Navigating Challenges

USABILITY

Creative Flow

Challenge: Keeping the creation experience playful and intuitive while supporting detailed placement and

Approach: Used detailed imagery for food items to help all users better understand the flow and allow them to better review custom designs.

COMMUNICATION

Feature Priority

Challenge: Stakeholders differed on whether the experience was 'game' or 'planner,' creating ambiguous

Approach: Used icons to help make navigation easier, and a chronological numbering system for step by step guidance through the instructions.

ACCESSIBILITY

Touch Targets

Challenge: Small controls made interaction difficult for some users, especially on mobile.

Approach: Increase target sizes, support zoom, and provide d alternative input methods where possible.

Key Insights & Outcomes

USER INSIGHTS

Users wanted relaxed play and quick wins, not complex creation tooling. They longed for a simple relaxing experience that was also potentially a practical application.

WORKFLOW INSIGHTS

Most sessions started with a template or category browse, then customization. The more templates were available the more interest piqued.

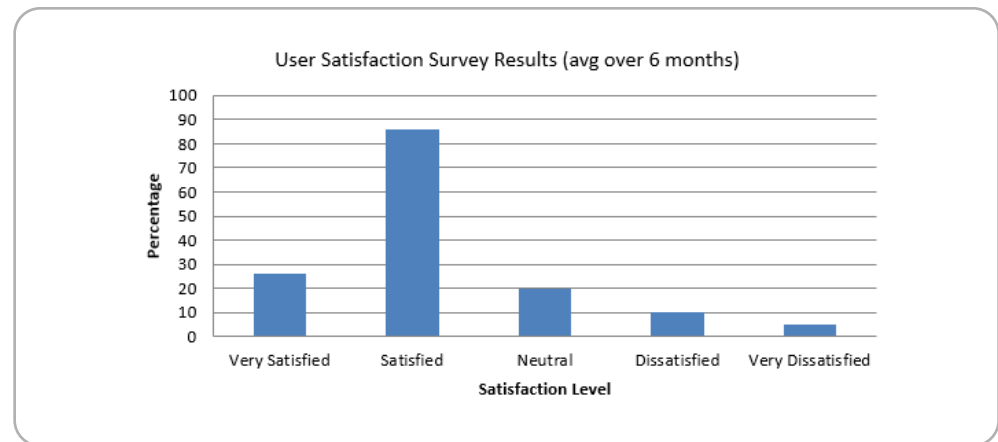
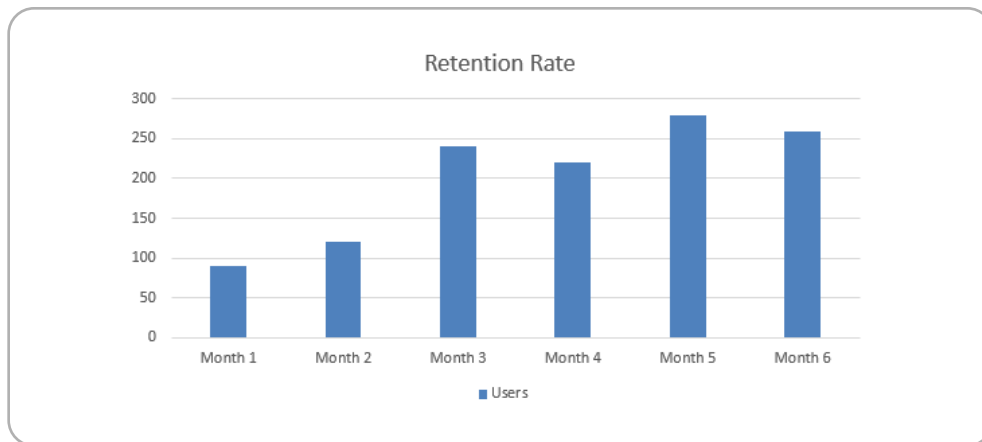
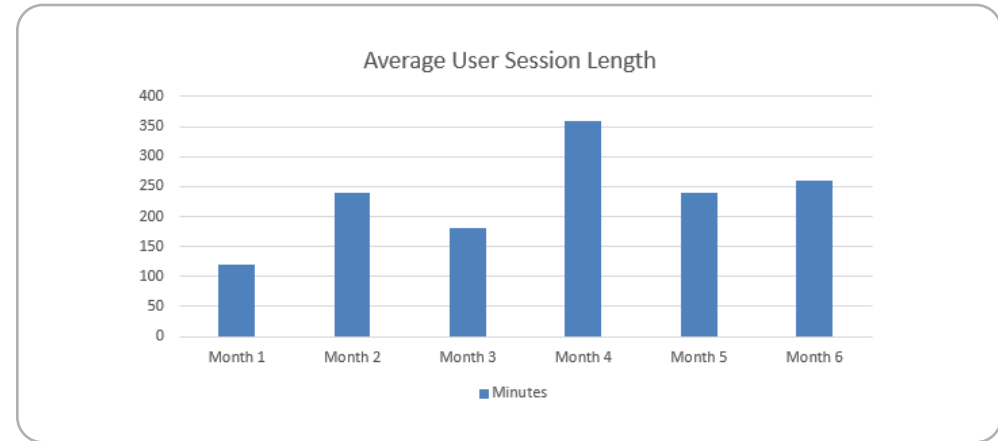
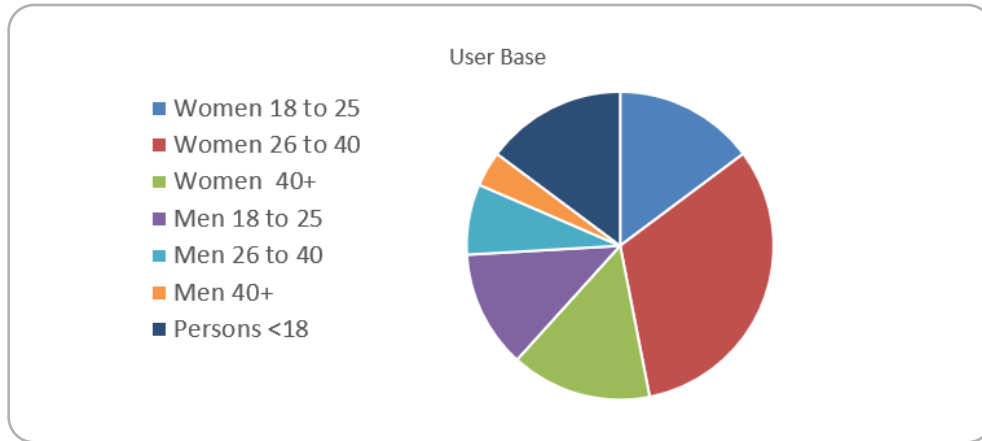
FEATURE INSIGHTS

Undo/redo, snapping, and templates delivered outsized value. Generalized foods were more popular.

PERFORMANCE INSIGHTS

Faster load times for assets improved flow and reduced drop-off. Saving multiple states was eventually added.

METRICS TRACKED



 Takeaways

HOW DID FEEDBACK INFLUENCE DECISIONS?

Usability studies and peer feedback influenced each iteration of the app’s designs.

HOW DID THESE CHOICES INCREASE VALUE?

Reduced friction increased session satisfaction, repeat usage, and shareability.

HOW DID THE OUTCOMES ALIGN WITH BUSINESS GOALS

The experience supported engagement goals through smoother creation and higher completion rates.

WHAT ELSE WOULD I CHANGE?

When adding new content packs, new creation tools, or supporting larger devices.

WHAT NEEDS FURTHER EXPLORATION?

Social sharing features, themed challenges, and seasonal content packs.

WHAT I LEARNED

Speed to first creation mattered most for retention in a casual creative game.

 Next Steps



FOR THE BUSINESS

Grow engagement loops

Conduct another round of usability studies to validate whether the pain points users experienced have been effectively addressed.



FOR THE TEAM

Expand content pipeline


I plan to continue testing the app and add features for users to save multiple versions of boards.



FOR THE USERS

Add guided inspiration

Conduct more user research to determine what features to add to the app, should the board styles expand to different cultural foods, like leaf platters and bento boxes?

 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

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RESUME

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