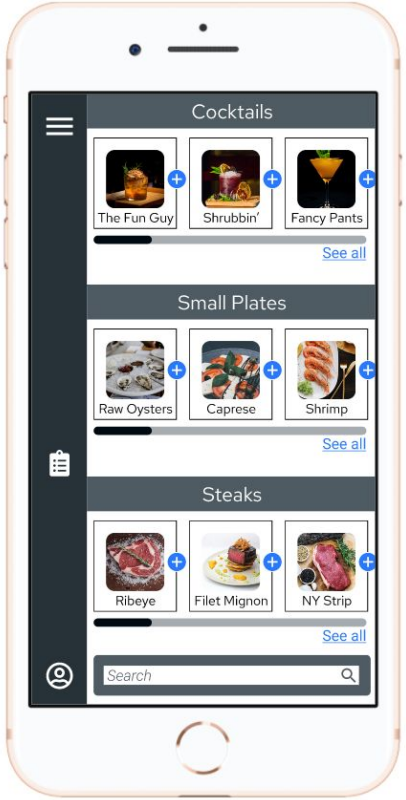
Beefy’s Steakhouse Menu App

Ryan Nagle

Project overview

The product:

Beefy's is a single-location steakhouse located in the suburbs of a metropolitan area in the United States. They offer classic steakhouse dishes and innovative cocktails. Their target markets are people with disposable income who dine out regularly, and those looking to celebrate a special occasion.



Project duration:

March 2021 to August 2021

Project overview

The problem:

Beefy’s uses a significant amount of paper printing their current menus.

The goal:

Design an app for Beefy’s that seamlessly replaces the paper menus.

Project overview

My role:

UX designer designing an app for Beefy's from conception to delivery.

Responsibilities:

Competitive audits, paper and digital wireframing, low and high-fidelity prototyping, conducting usability studies, accessibility considerations, iterating on designs based on user feedback.

Understanding the user

- User research
- Personas
- Problem statements
- User journey maps

User research: summary

I performed a competitive audit to see what existing steakhouse apps do well/poorly. With this information in mind, I conducted interviews and created empathy maps to understand the users' needs. A primary user group identified through research and firsthand restaurant experience was retirees with discretionary funds who like to dine out frequently.

This user group confirmed some initial assumptions about Beefy's customers, but also found areas where an app could exceed the limited functionality of a paper menu.

User research: pain points

1

Change

Customers are used to paper menus.

2

Size

Phone screens are typically much smaller than printed menus.

3

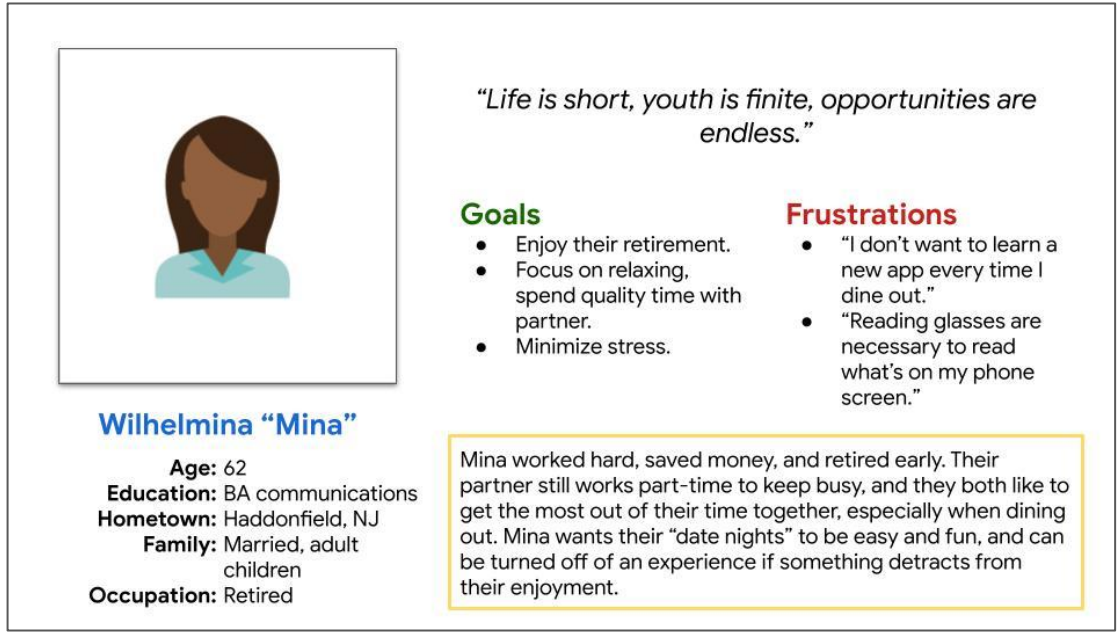
Accessibility

Both paper and app menus lack equitable design for different levels of ability.

Persona: **Mina**

Problem statement:

Mina is a retired restaurant patron who needs a seamless experience because if she does not enjoy herself she probably won't return to the restaurant.



User journey map

Persona: Mina

Goal: An easy way to decide where to eat, and what to order once at the restaurant.

Mapping Mina's user journey revealed many areas where a dedicated Beefy's app would be helpful for users.

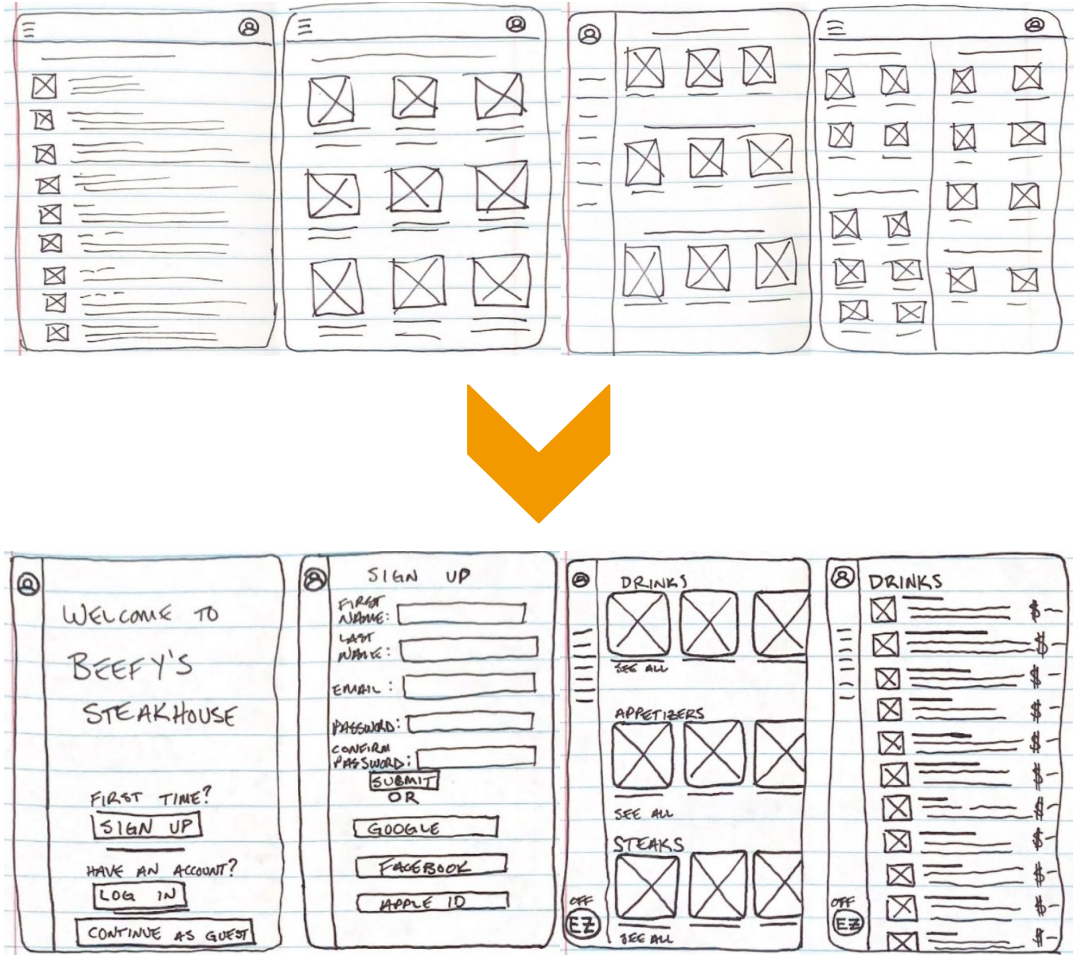
ACTION	Select restaurant	Go to restaurant	View menu	Select menu items	Place order
TASK LIST	A. Decide on type of cuisine B. Search nearby restaurants online C. Select a restaurant	A. Make reservation B. Get restaurant address/directions C. Drive to restaurant	A. Listen to server explain menu app B. Browse menu in app	A. Ask questions about dishes on menu B. Review appetizers/main courses	A. Tell server what dishes you'd like B. Confirm order is correct
FEELING ADJECTIVE	Excited about date night Hopes she picks a quality restaurant	Annoyed with reservation process Unsure where to park before arriving	Confused by lack of printed physical menus Annoyed by having to use her phone; the screen is small and she uses large text setting	Excited about menu items she thinks she'll enjoy	Looking forward to her meal Hopes server gets order correct
IMPROVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES	Include link to reviews from verified guests of the restaurant	Incorporate reservations and menu into dedicated mobile app for restaurant	Dedicate in-restaurant tablets for menu app, avoid putting burden on user (their phone) Include images of food items to reduce amount of text on screen	Include "more" option for in-depth descriptions of menu items	Order in the app to confirm order before checking out

Starting the design

- Paper wireframes
- Digital wireframes
- Low-fidelity prototype
- Usability studies

Paper wireframes

Experimenting with various different layouts helped visualize what organization of elements would work best for **conveying information without crowding the screen**.



Digital wireframes

Initial designs flowed from improving on existing apps seen in the competition audit.

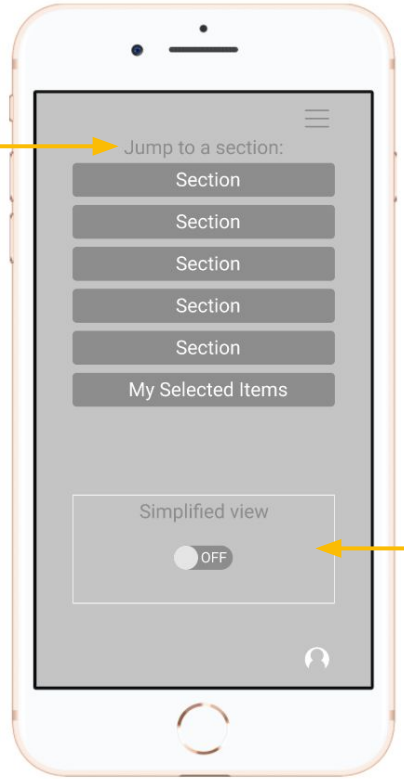
Overview shows images of items and items' names only to reduce on-screen text.

Menu sections prominently named to facilitate browsing items by category.

Digital wireframes

Browsing a paperless menu should be effortless and quick, in addition to being widely accessible. Situational disability (dim light, loud ambient noise) is a common issue in restaurants.

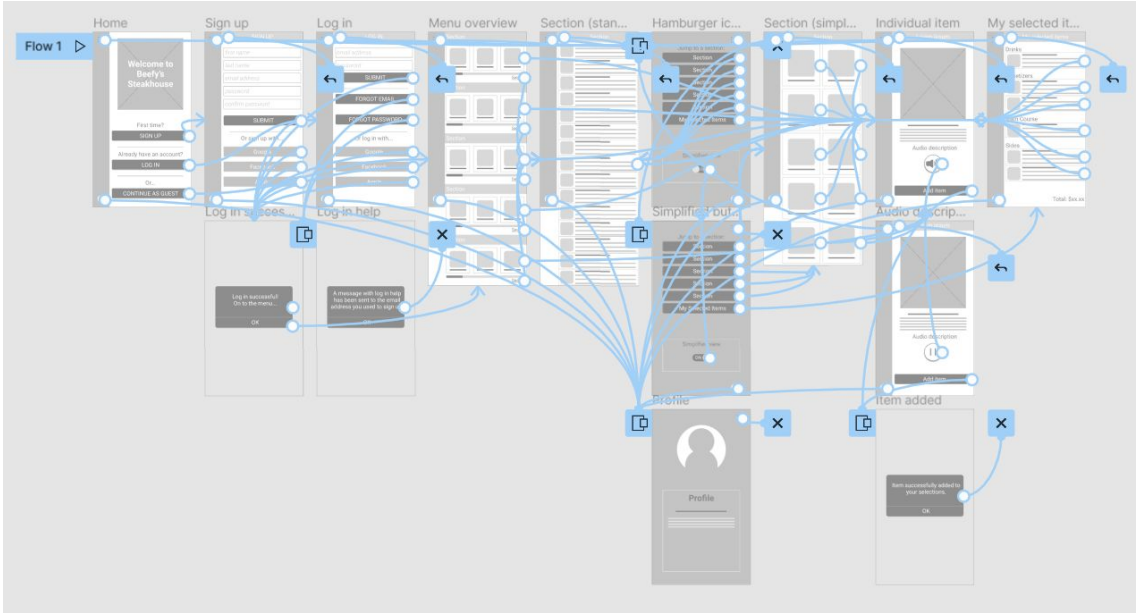
Hamburger icon opens overlay for quick navigation links that are screen-reader friendly.



Simplified view can be toggled on to, when applicable, reduce/remove unnecessary text and increase size of images.

Low-fidelity prototype

The initial digital wireframes were used to create a low-fidelity prototype for usability testing. The user flow portrays logging in/creating an account, browsing and selecting items, then reviewing their selections.



View the low-fidelity prototype here.

Usability study: findings

I conducted two rounds of unmoderated usability studies. The first study helped steer the design of the wireframes into mockups, and the second round used a high-fidelity prototype to show what aspects needed improvement.

Round 1 findings

1. Users had difficulty finding “simplified view” toggle
2. Users want a search bar
3. Users need better cues on how to add an item to their selections

Round 2 findings

1. Color scheme appeared differently on screens with blue-light reduction; changed for accessibility improvement
2. Added icon for quick navigation to selected items screen

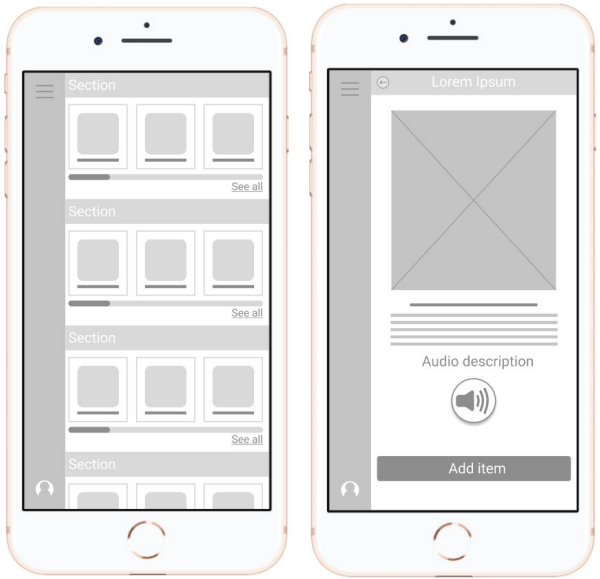
Refining the design

- Mockups
- High-fidelity prototype
- Accessibility

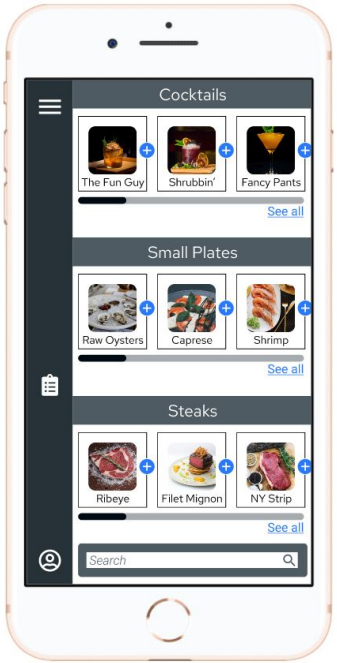
Mockups

Initially, the user could only add an item to their selections when viewing an individual item. This caused problems for many participants in the usability study. **Plus-sign buttons were added** to overview pages, creating **better visual cues** and **allowing items to be added with less navigation.**

Before usability study



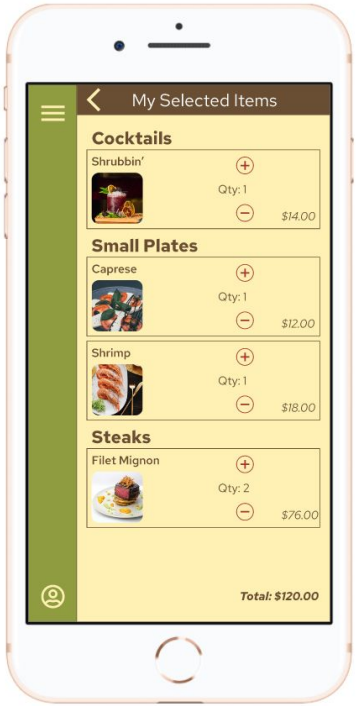
After usability study



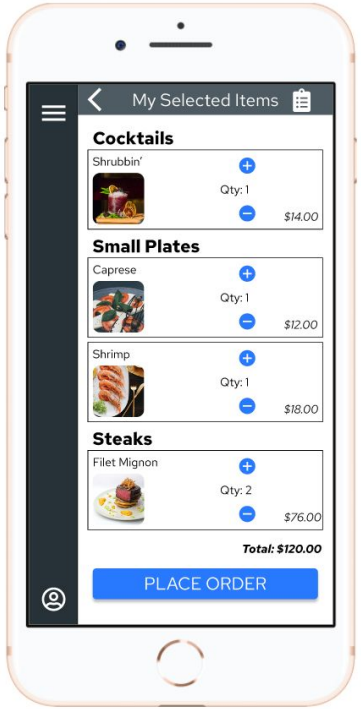
Mockups

The original color scheme presented differently on screens with blue-light reduction. While it met the minimum contrast standards for accessibility, this felt like an area for improvement. Utilizing Material Design's color tool, I created a new color palette that **drastically increased readability.**

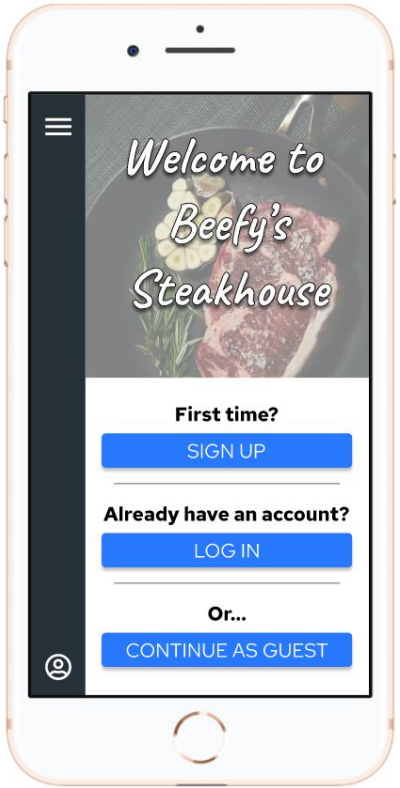
Before usability study

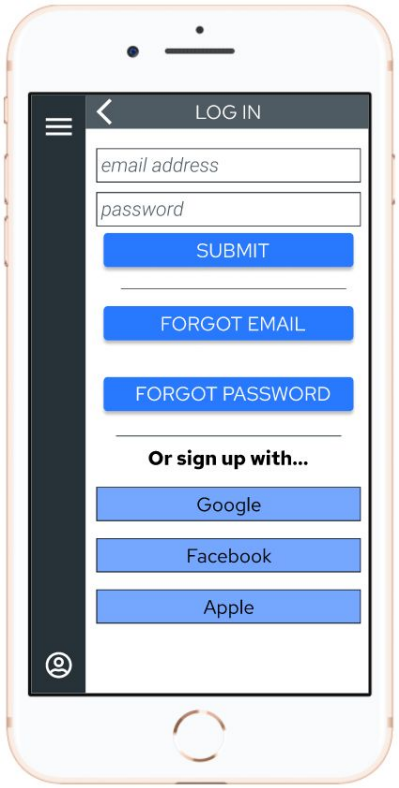


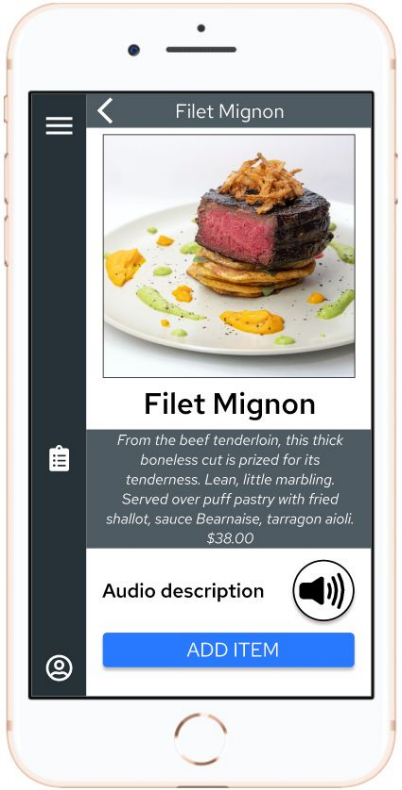
After usability study

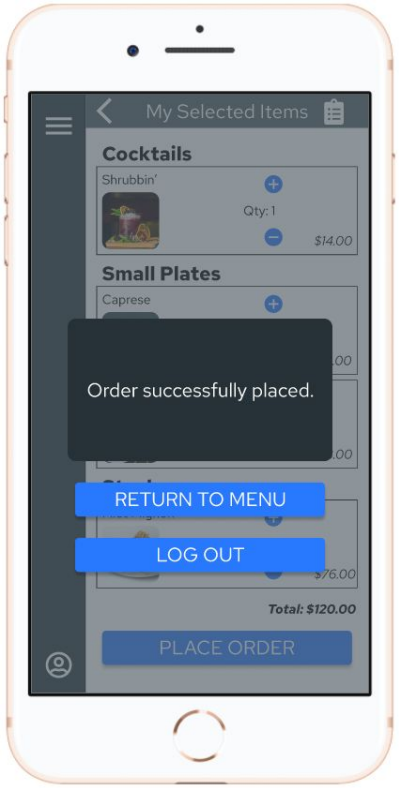


Key Mockups


Welcome to Beefy's Steakhouse
First time?
SIGN UP
Already have an account?
LOG IN
Or...
CONTINUE AS GUEST


LOG IN
email address
password
SUBMIT
FORGOT EMAIL
FORGOT PASSWORD
Or sign up with...
Google
Facebook
Apple

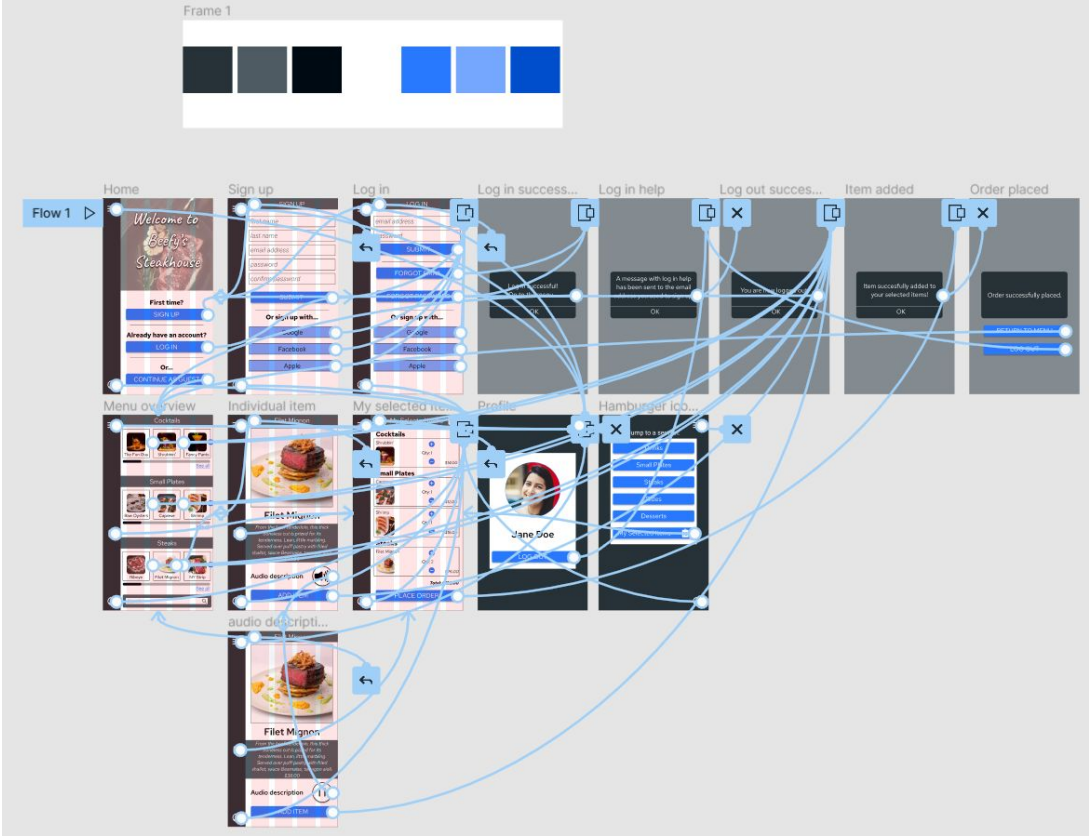

Filet Mignon
Filet Mignon
From the beef tenderloin, this thick boneless cut is prized for its tenderness. Lean, little marbling. Served over puff pastry with fried shallot, sauce Bearnaise, tarragon aioli.
$38.00
Audio description
ADD ITEM


My Selected Items
Cocktails
Shrubbin'
Qty: 1
$14.00
Small Plates
Caprese
Order successfully placed.
RETURN TO MENU
LOG OUT
Total: $120.00
PLACE ORDER

High-fidelity prototype

The high-fidelity prototype met user needs based on feedback from the usability studies, presenting a more organized information architecture and user flow. Accessibility improvements made for a more equitable design, with particular consideration to vision, hearing, and dyslexia.

View the high-fidelity prototype here.



Accessibility considerations

1

Included audio description button for users with dyslexia, visual disability.

2

“Simplified view” toggle increases size of images, reduces amount of text on screen.

3

Utilized images of menu dishes so non-English speakers can see exactly what item they are ordering.

Going forward

- Takeaways
- Next steps

Takeaways

Impact:

The app allows users of varying abilities to browse Beefy's menu through means that are not possible with a paper menu printed in-house daily.

What I learned:

Designing the Beefy's menu app showed me how valuable usability studies and peer critiques are. Iterative design based on this feedback created a more robust and cohesive design focused on users of varying levels of ability, whether permanent, temporary, or situational.

Next steps

1

Conduct a usability study focusing on an A/B comparison of different designs for Simplified View.

2

Conduct more user research to see how people navigate the app-based menu, paying particular attention to whether they prefer browsing via clicks/taps or using the search field.

3

Conduct user research to determine any new areas of need.

Let’s connect!

Thanks for taking the time to check out my design! While Beefy’s is not a real restaurant, my real-world experience in the service industry provided invaluable insight and research relevant to this project. If you’d like to discuss this app design or get in touch, my contact information is provided below.

Email: ryan@rnd-ux.com
Website: Ryan Nagle Designs

Thank you!

Photo credits:

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