

Product strategy & research: Scheduling app redesign

CLIENT

Culture Shock Dance Center

PROJECT SUMMARY

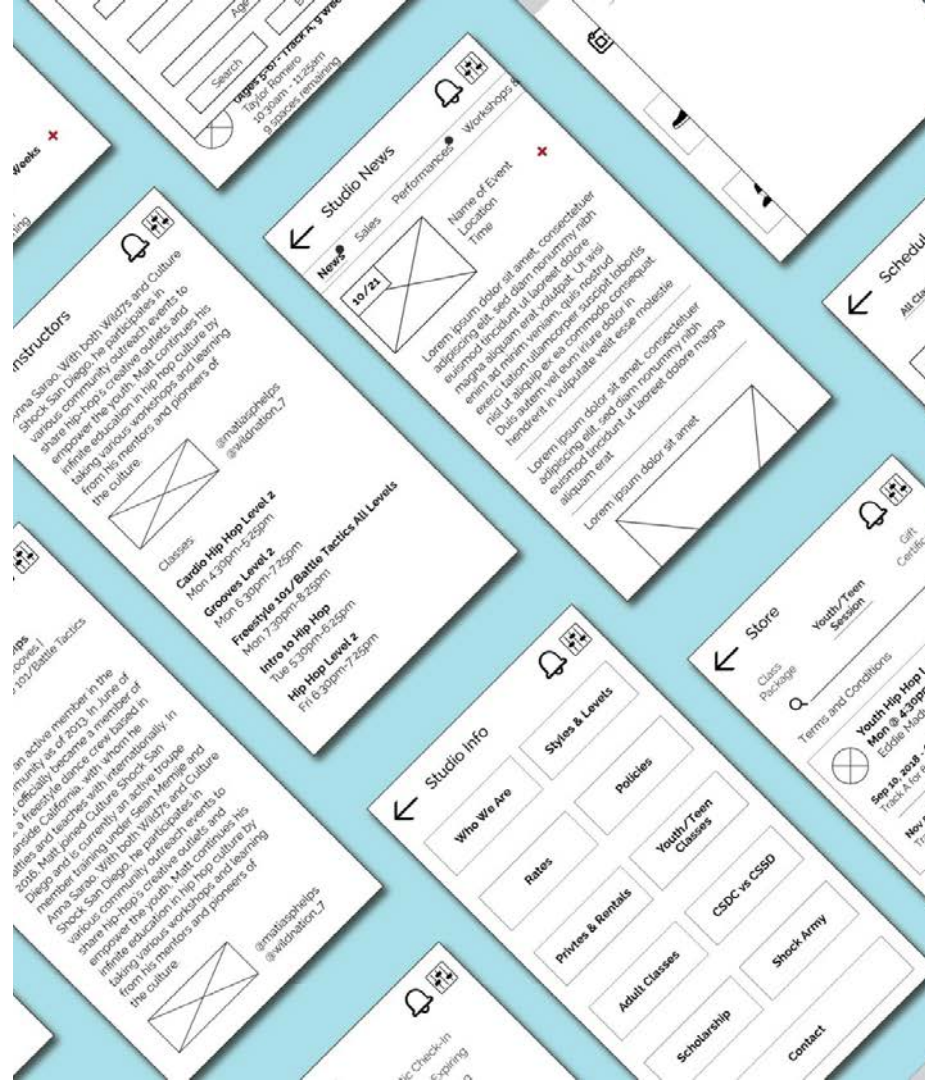
- Did qualitative company and user research to find possible enhancements
- Improved usability for clients, which made the staff's job easier and the in-person experience more welcoming
- Delivered a prototype only, due to budget constraints

TIMELINE & TEAM

- 10 weeks
- I was the sole designer and researcher

RESULTS

- Automatic check-in reduced wait times for classes
- Registration and payment improvements removed student dependency on staff
- Inclusion of class, studio, and account information allowed students to find information on their own time





Company Overview

Culture Shock Dance Center was a hip hop dance training facility with over 100 classes for students of all ages and experience levels.

On an average day there would be 600 students and parents coming through the doors to take classes and get information.

Problem

“Save time and skip the line!”

The studio released a scheduling app for students to pre-register for classes in order to reduce long lines in the lobby for checking in, and for more easily purchasing classes.

The app failed to do either of these things.

Students still had to check in on kiosks in the lobby, and over half of the students couldn't make purchases without staff assistance.



TL; DR

PROBLEM	SOLUTION	IMPACT
Students can register for class but not sign in	Added automatic check-in	Students can skip long check-in lines
The many discounted purchases had to be done by staff	Tied discount codes to “account types”	All students can make purchases at any time, staff is available for other tasks
Difficult to search 120 classes, and only half could be found on the app	Added youth/teen classes and improved filters	Increased attendance, staff is available for other tasks
Conflicting studio information between staff, the website, and the app	Added an FAQ	Students can get reliable information at any time

I completed this 10-week project from research through prototype and user testing.

WEEKS 1-3

RESEARCH & DISCOVERY

Determined **business, staff, and customer goals**, and how a redesigned scheduling app would benefit everyone.

Completed an **audit of the current app**, as well as **competitive analysis** of other dance and yoga studio apps.

Compiled data gathered via **contextual inquiry and observations** during my 3 years of desk shifts.

PRODUCT STRATEGY

Identified and **prioritized 4 features** that would resolve the largest pain points for students and staff members.

Created a site map to include the capabilities of the website that would be crucial for the app redesign.

WEEKS 4-6

EXPERIENCE DESIGN

Created wireframes for 70 screens of the app.

Added or adjusted systems for a smoother sign-in process, finding classes and information, inclusive payment, and instructor/student contact.

WEEKS 7-10

PROTOTYPE & TESTING

Created an **interactive prototype** using Figma.

Conducted **usability testing with 5 participants** and noted parts of the user flow to update in future iterations.

The goal for staff and management was to provide quality service to the dancers that increased business to the studio.



THE STUDIO

- Provide high-quality dance training and education.
- Increase the number of new students and convert them to regulars.



DESK STAFF

- Efficiently and accurately process sign-ins and financial transactions.
- Be available to answer customer questions and solve problems.
- Build client relationships.



DANCERS

- Easily sign up for and pay for classes.
- Learning choreography and getting a good workout.

What was standing in the way of “Save time and skip the line”?

Everyone had to check in at the front desk, whether or not they used the app to pre-register.

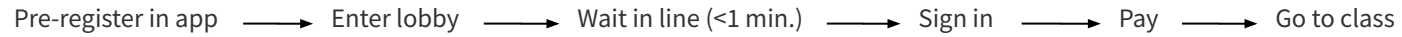
There was a **huge burden on the 1 desk staff member** to oversee check-in and run transactions for up to 150 people in a 20-minute period.

Culture Shock wanted to keep the same number of staff per shift but **make the check-in process more accurate and efficient.**

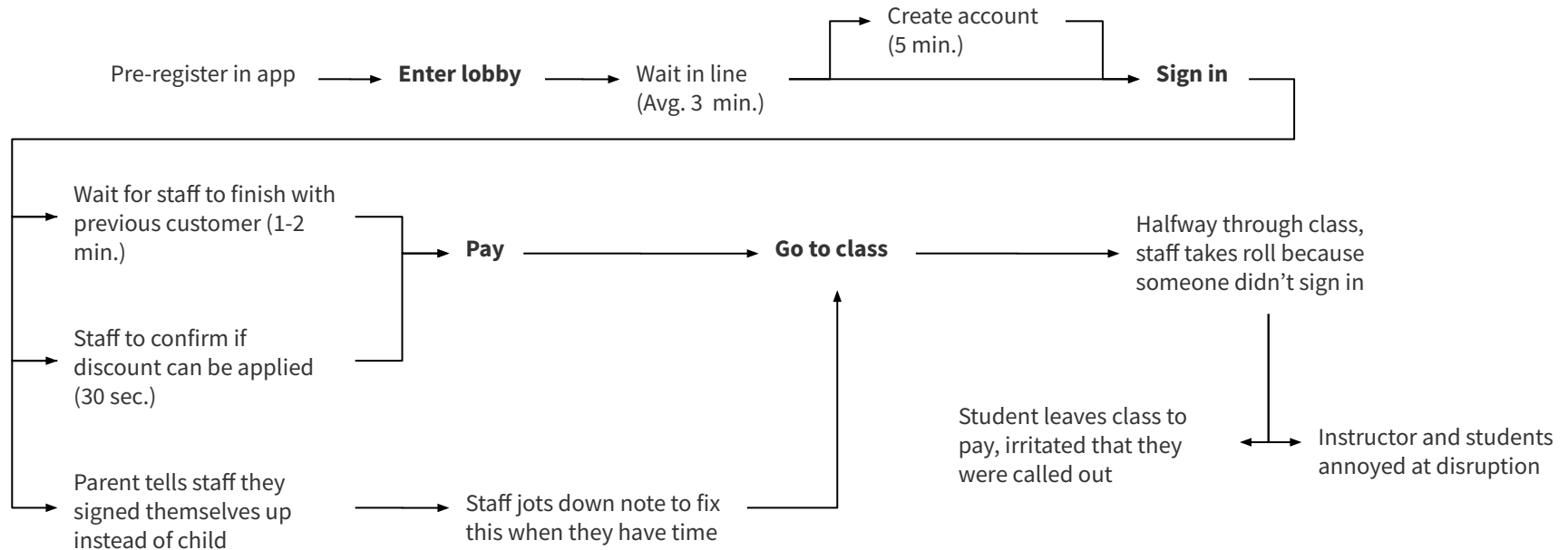
If more customers were able to use the app for registration and payment:

- Staff would spend less time per customer.
- Class interruptions due to missed sign-ins would be reduced.
- Staff would become available for other customer needs.

The ideal check-in process would take **less than one minute** for most students.



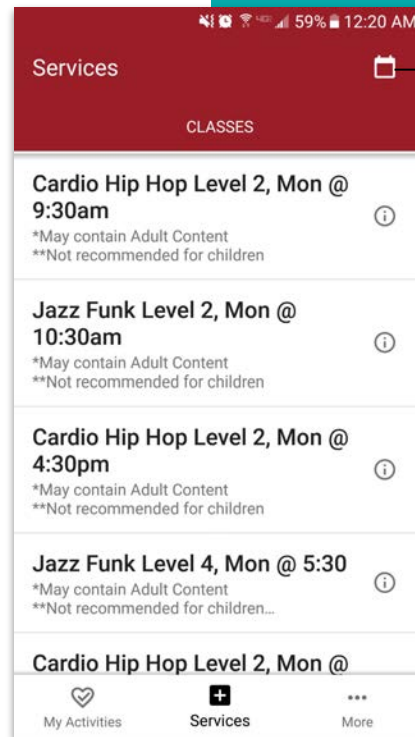
The actual check-in process could take over 10 minutes.



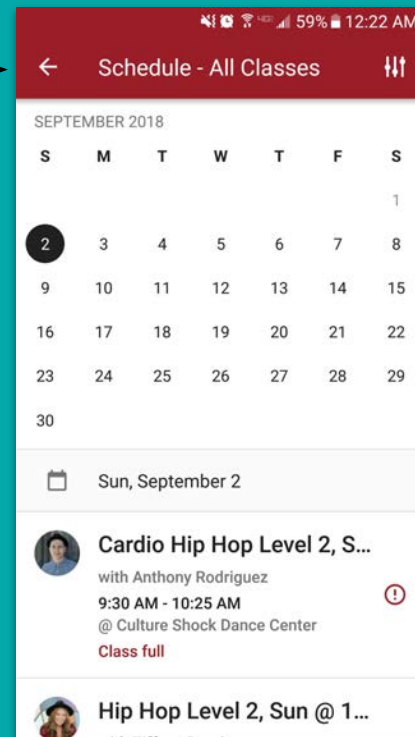
I audited the current app, and did competitive analysis of other dance and yoga studio apps.

Audit: Advance registration guaranteed a spot in class but didn't allow students to "Save time and skip the line!"

- The default schedule view was a massive list. It took me months to discover calendar view.
- Only adult classes could be booked in advance - about half of classes offered.



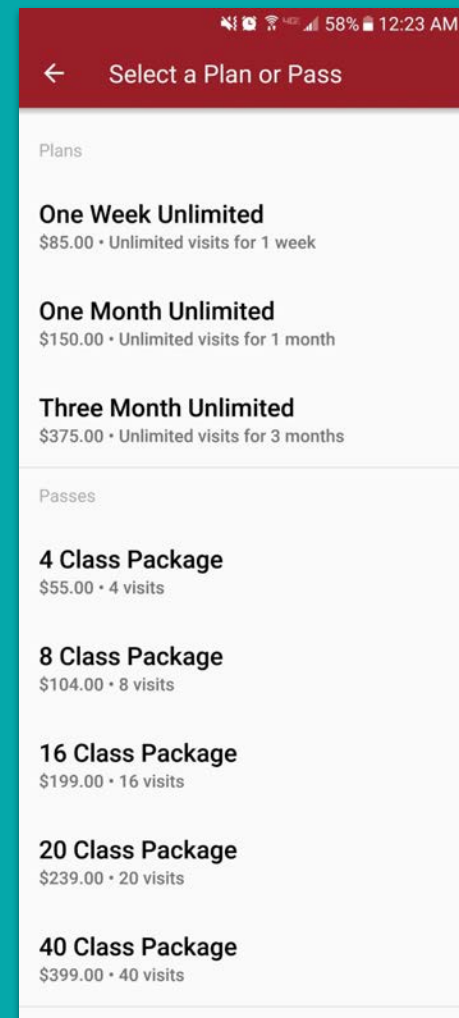
Default view



Calendar view

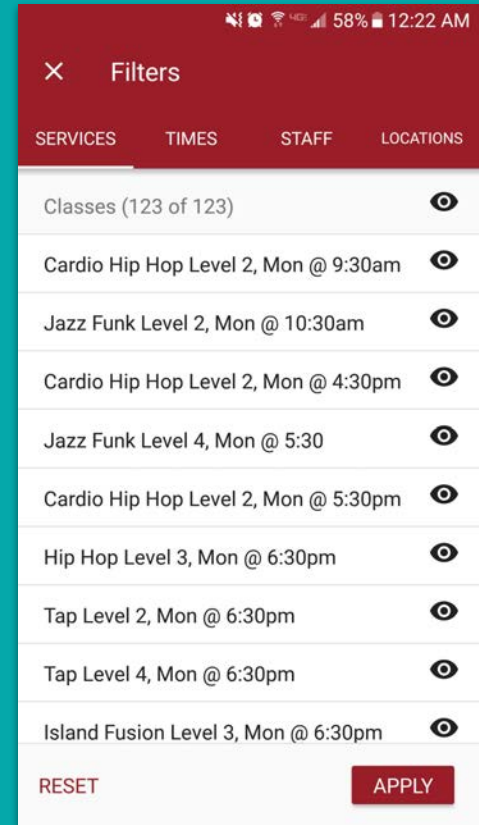
Audit: App purchases were limited to adults and discounts couldn't be applied.

- No youth/teen sessions available, only adult classes and packages.
- Discounts could only be applied by staff members.



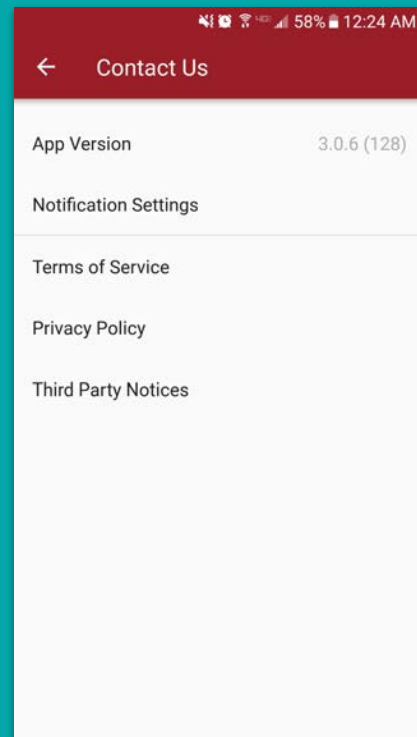
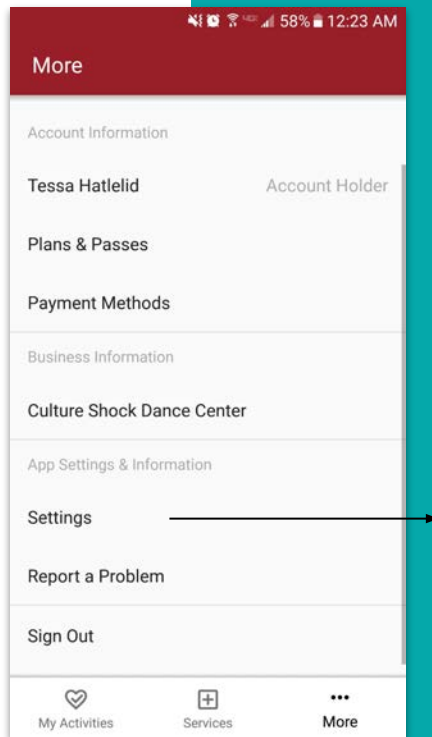
Audit: The class filter function was ineffective and lacked many services.

- Inefficient filtering system - users must scroll through a long list.
- Only adult classes listed - about half of classes offered.
- List included classes no longer offered.



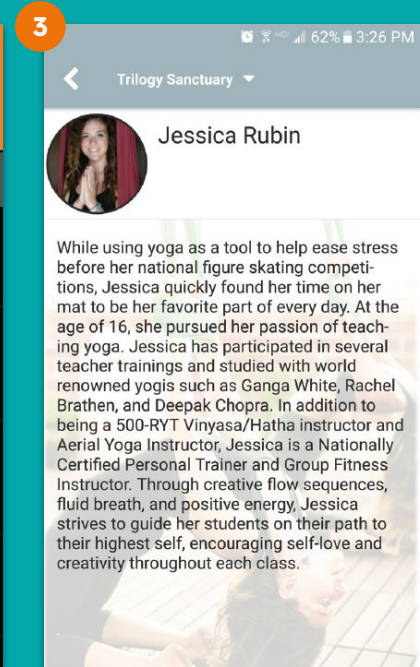
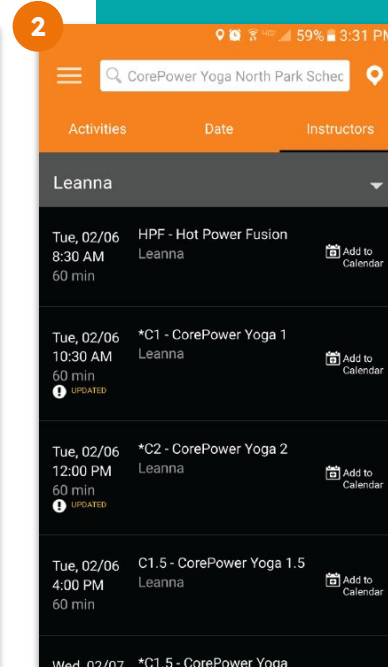
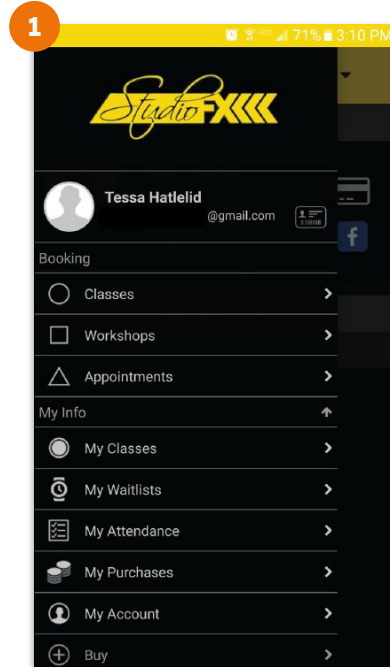
Audit: Students had to rely on staff's limited availability for a large portion of account, class, and studio information.

- Account page didn't show class package expiration or class history
- Settings page (labeled Contact Us) provided few and unhelpful notification options.
- Basic information wasn't readily available.
- Students could only communicate with instructors between classes or on personal social media accounts.
- Terminology was inconsistent within the app and didn't reflect what was used by staff.



Competitive analysis: Other studios include account, studio, and class information, as well as effective filtering options.

- 1 Relevant account information and history
- 2 Filters are more effective and users can also search
- 3 Instructor bios



I collected data using contextual inquiry and observations during my desk shifts to understand the pain points of dancers and staff during peak times.

STUDENTS (CURRENT, POTENTIAL, AND PARENTS OF)

- No ability to register for youth/teen sessions on the app.
- Difficult to talk to staff because there was only 1 on shift at a time.
- Staff interrupting class to take someone's payment often ruined the vibe or embarrassed the student.
- Had questions for instructors but couldn't contact them.

DESK STAFF

- Were repeatedly asked the same questions about the studio, classes, and accounts.
- Made financial errors because they had to move so quickly.
- Difficulty keeping track of so many things by themselves.
- Class rosters didn't show if a student got a discount, slowing down service.

Based on the research, I focused on two types of customers most likely to use the studio's app.



MARINA: THE REGULAR

- Takes Cardio Hip Hop & Contemporary
- Dances for health and relaxation

Wants to

- Ensure she has a spot in class by pre-booking
- Skip the long check-in lines

Key insights

- Assumes that pre-booking a class is the same as signing in.
- Worries that she'll be called out in class for forgetting to pay. She's considered not going back into class if that happens.



NATHAN: THE DANCE DAD

- His 10 year old daughter takes Hip Hop
- Working professional

Wants to

- Search for youth classes for his daughter
- Register and pay for class during the workday

Key insights

- Expects youth/teen classes to be available on both the app and the website.
- Wants to get some of his questions answered when the studio isn't open.

Addressing 4 out of 6 categories of customer pain points would make the biggest difference for students and staff members.



REGISTRATION

Confusing processes in the app, website, and in-studio kiosk



PAYMENT

Discounts must be done through a staff member instead of online



FINDING CLASSES

Difficult to find what class styles and levels are offered to students of different ages



FINDING INFORMATION

Some information available on website, other information only by talking to staff



SIGN-IN KIOSK

Onboarding process is confusing, want to pay on tablet, sign up vs sign in

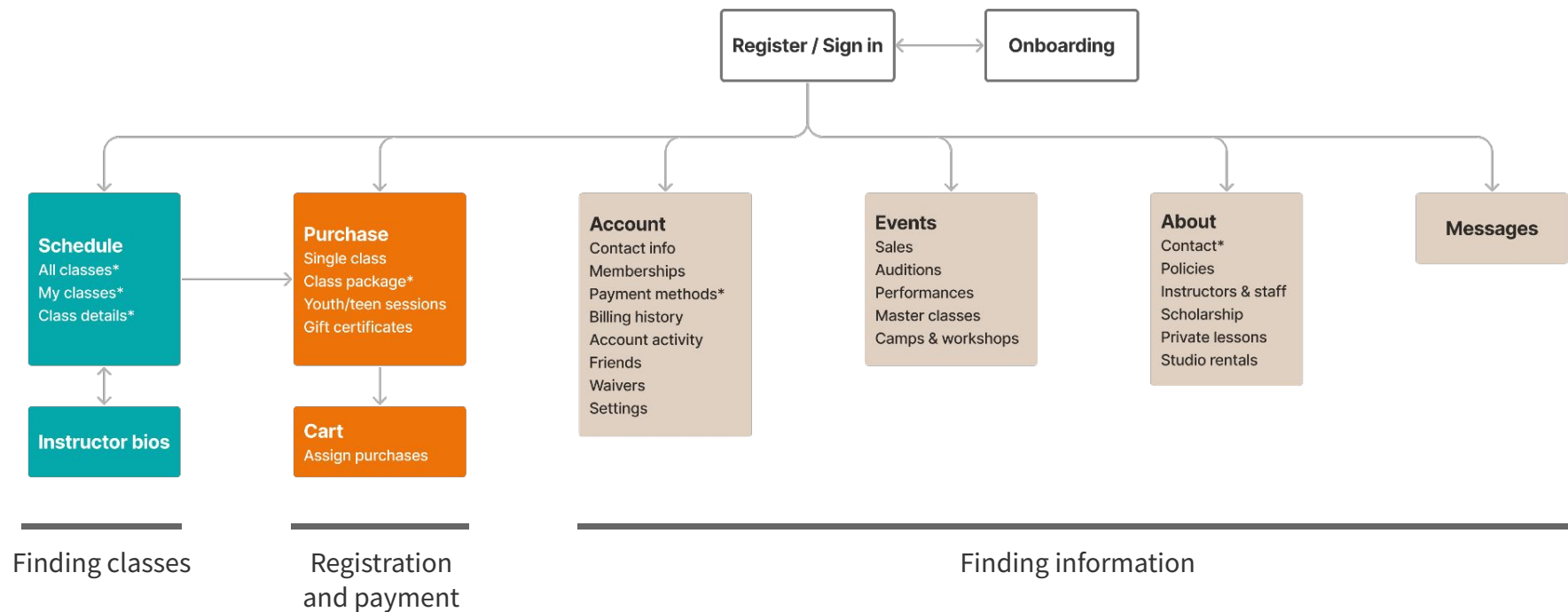


OTHER STUDIO ISSUES

More drop-in classes for youth, offer make-up classes, don't want to make account

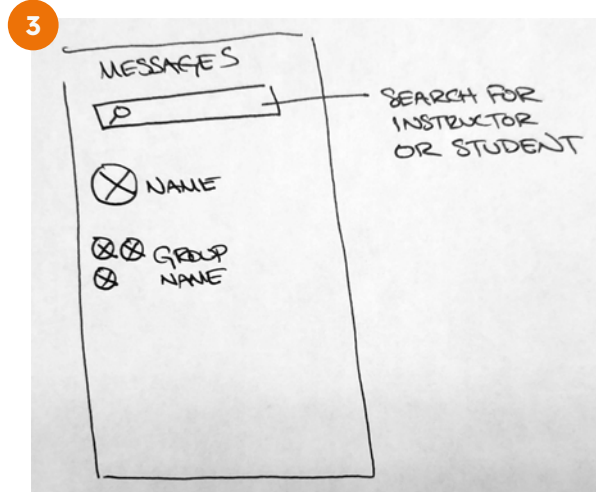
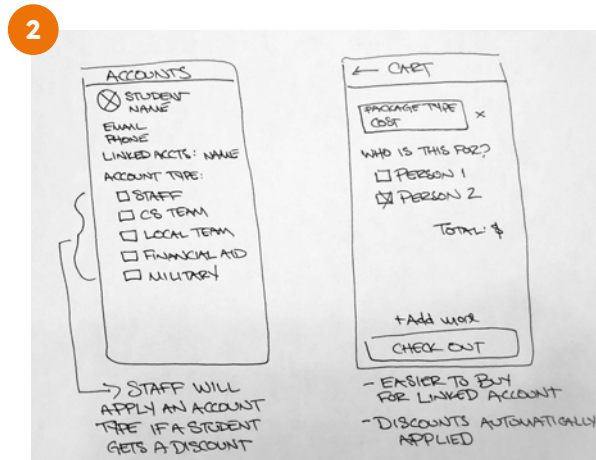
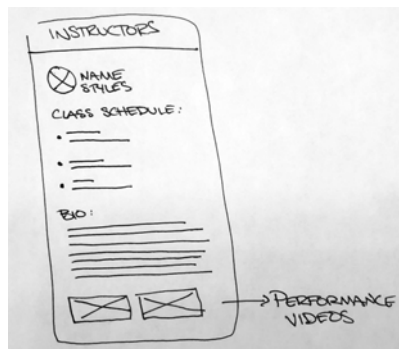
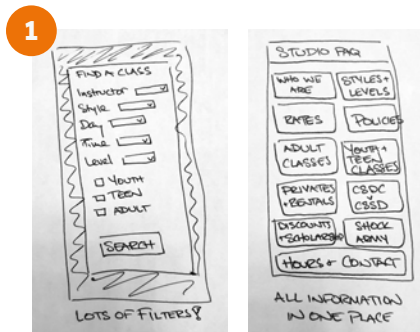
I mapped out necessary functions for the reimagined app.

Items with asterisks were part of the original app.



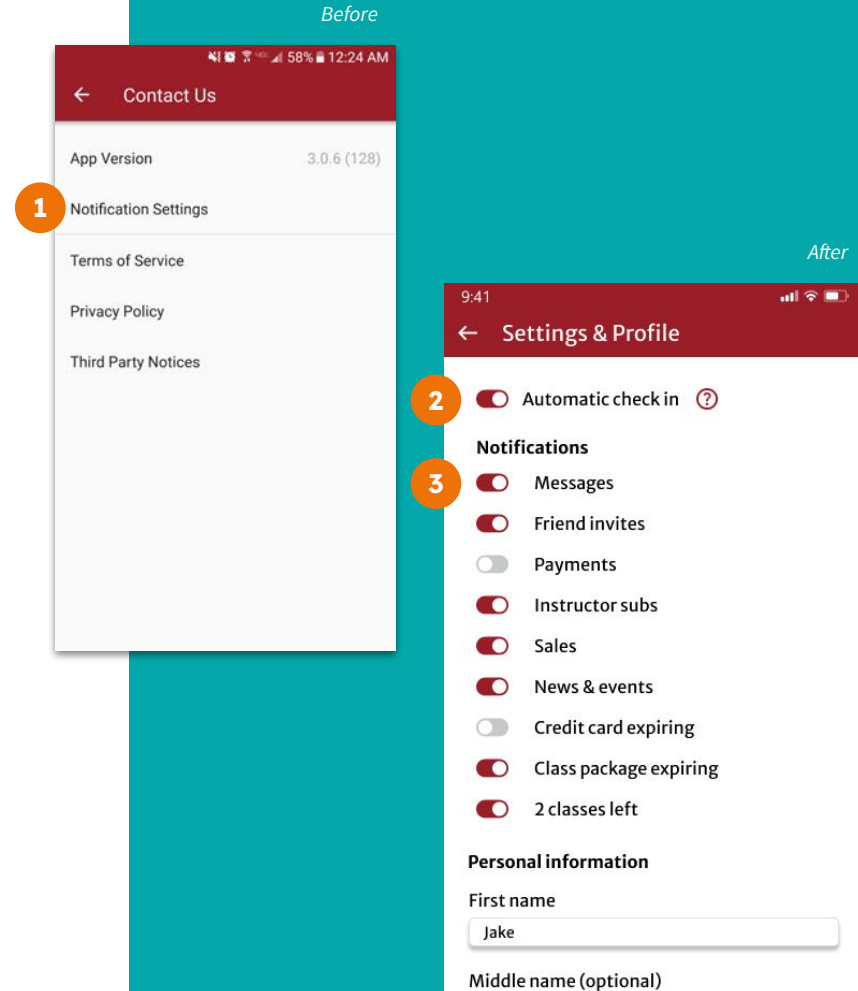
Next, I added or adjusted features that make tasks easier for customers and reduce stress on staff:

- 1 Effective filters, FAQs, and instructor bios would let students find classes and information outside business hours
- 2 Linking discounts to “account types” would automatically apply discounts
- 3 Messaging would allow students to communicate with instructors and other students without having to search personal social media



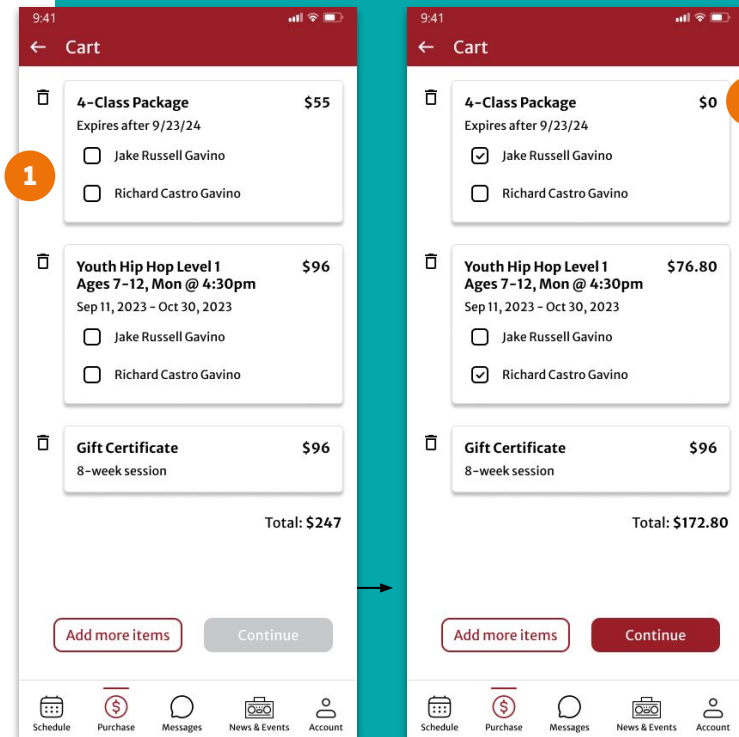
Usability testing with 5 participants revealed that a **more efficient registration and check-in process** was crucial to improving the in-studio experience.

- 1 The “Settings” page in the current app only had notifications for billing and scheduling.
- 2 Automatic check-in allowed students to skip the lobby lines and head straight into the studio.
- 3 Expanded notification options provided dancers information when they want it and freed up desk staff for other questions and tasks.



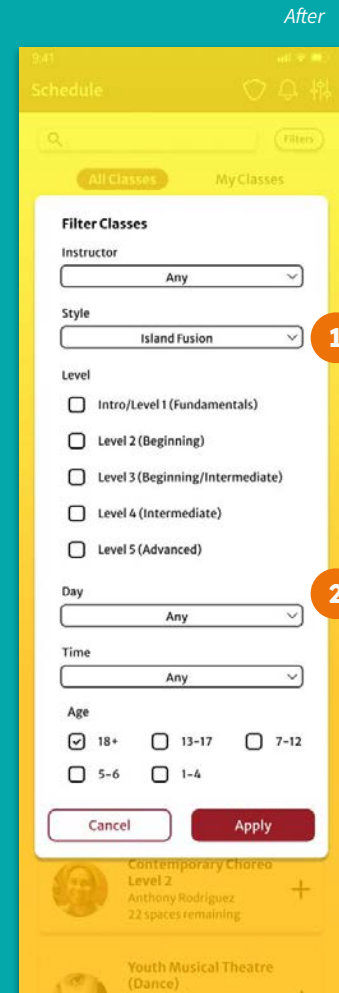
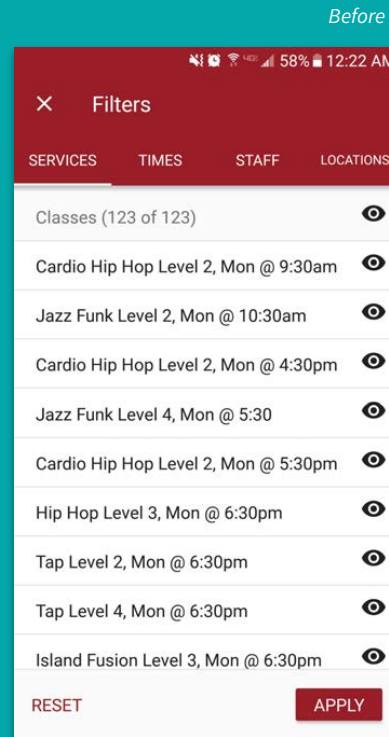
Allowing users to make all purchases, including discounts and youth/teen sessions, through the app **reduced financial errors and pressure on staff.**

- 1 Assigning purchases when there are multiple people on one account was clarified.
- 2 Reconfigured discounts allowed all students to make their own purchases and removed the need for staff to confirm discounts during check-in.



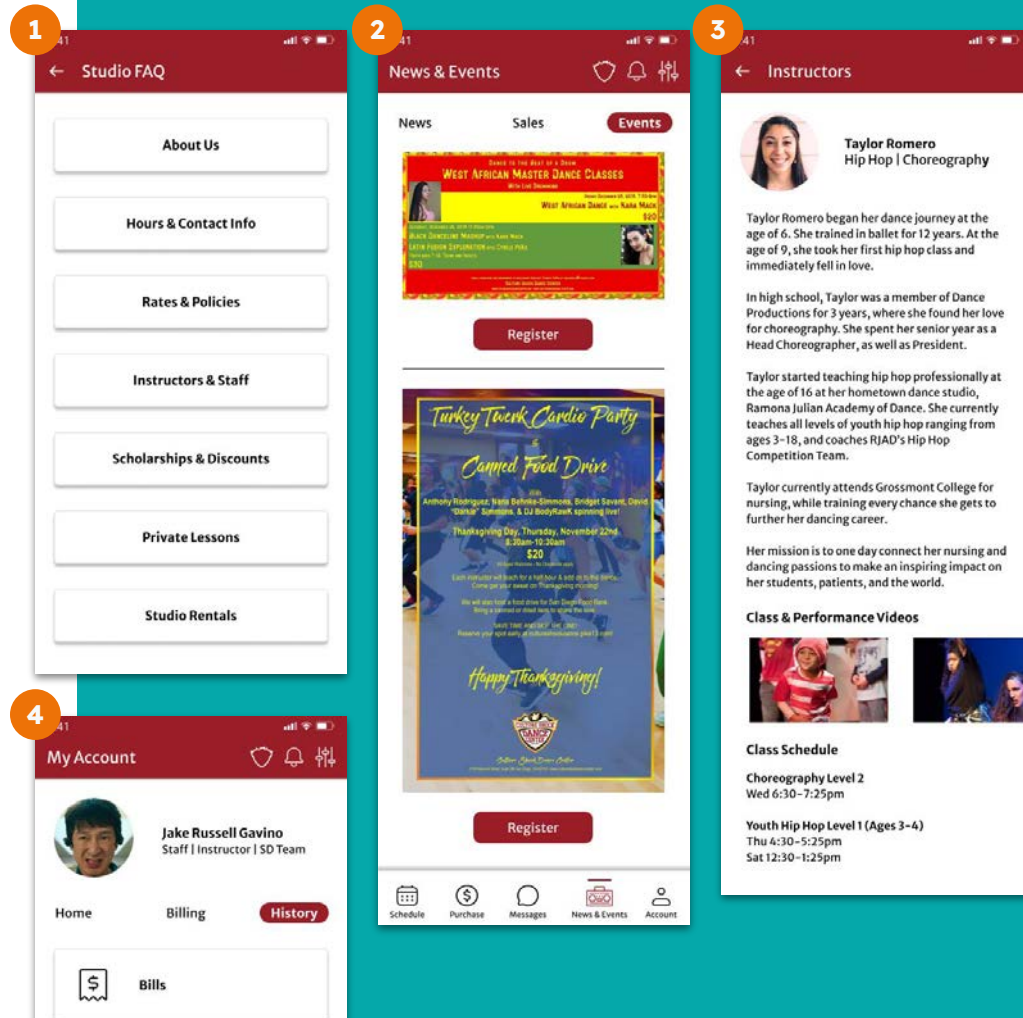
An **effective filtering system** for classes let students clearly see classes and styles offered, decreasing reliance on staff and increasing the studio's business.

- 1 Every style offered is listed.
- 2 Filter options are more effective.



Including **all class, studio, and account information** in one location allowed students to access this information at any time.

- 1 Easily searchable FAQs
- 2 All upcoming events and important news
- 3 Instructor bios, including teaching schedule and links to performance videos
- 4 Account information and history

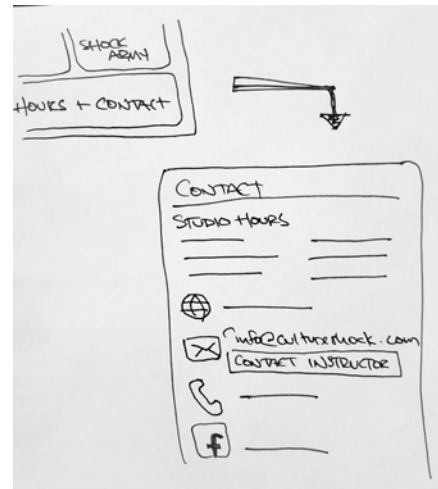
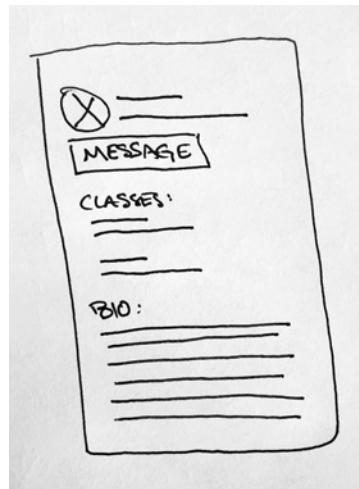


The direct messaging feature for **instructor and student contact** was seen as **unnecessary** at best and a **security risk** at worst.

“

I don't need another messaging app... and I especially worry about who would be able to contact my daughter. I don't want strangers able to talk to her that easily.

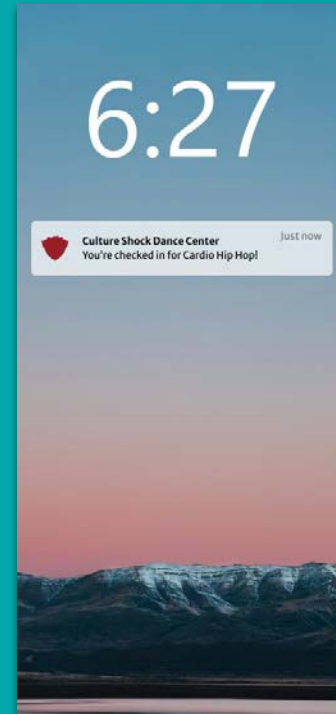
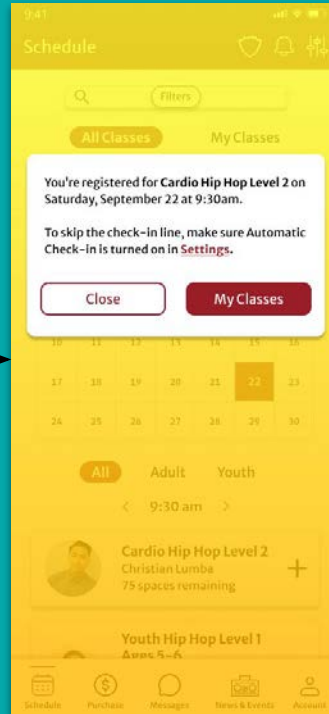
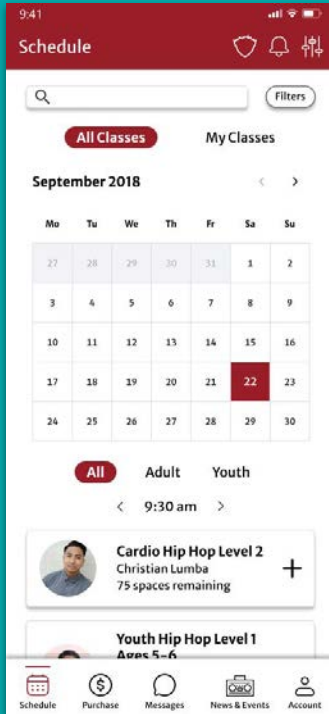
- Usability testing participant,
dancer and parent of a dancer



Possible locations for instructor-only contact: Within bio (left), studio contact page (right)

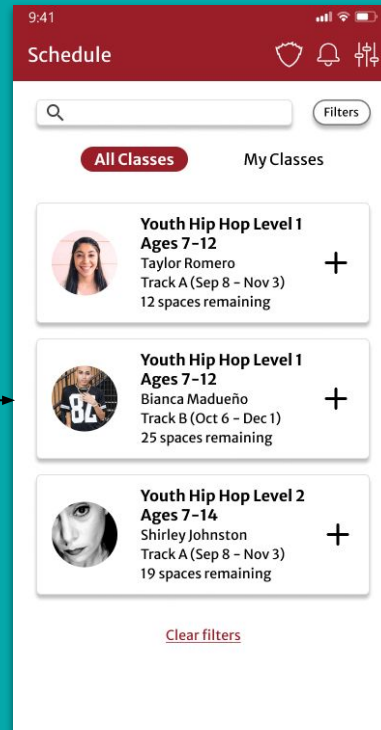
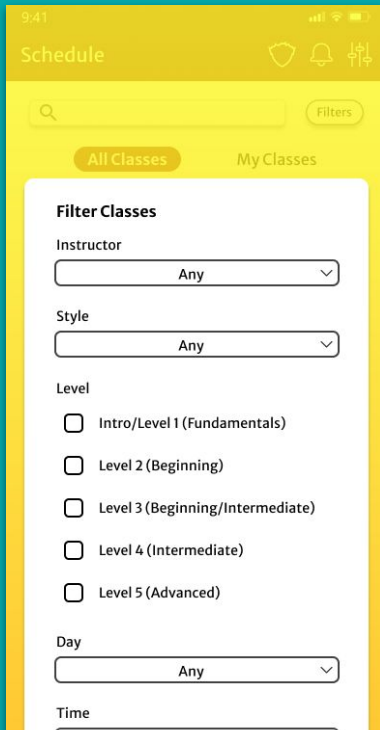


Marina, The Regular, registers for class in advance and no longer needs to wait in a huge line to get in.





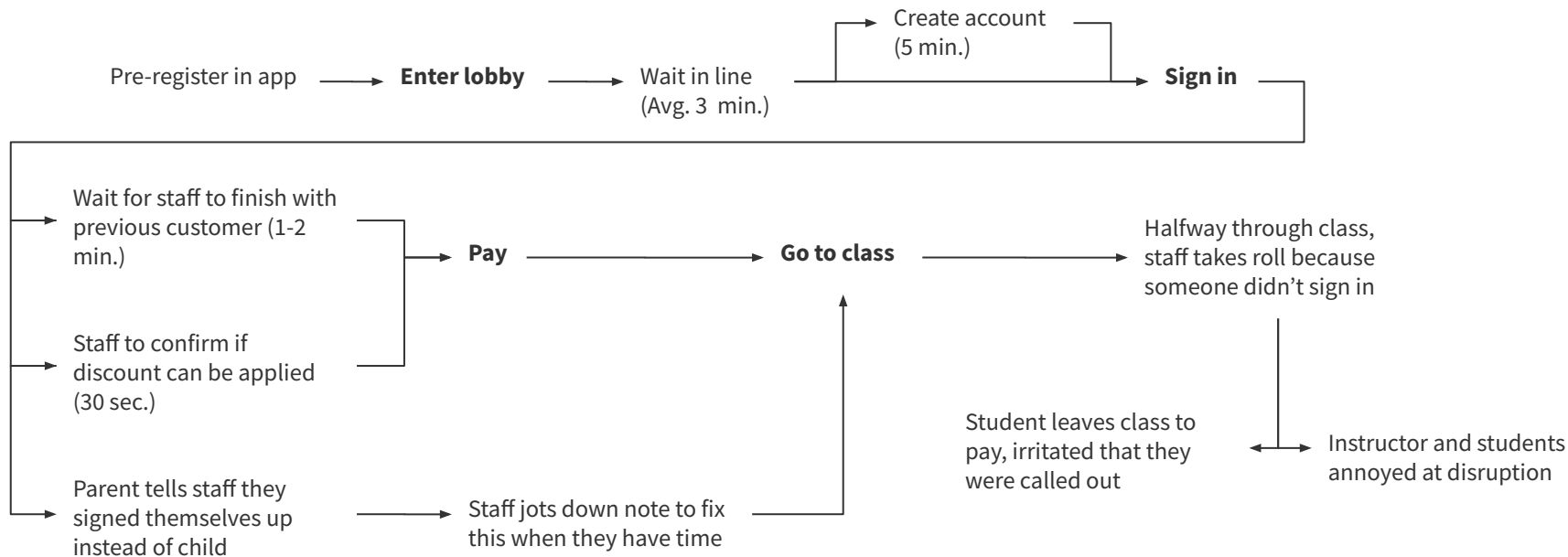
Nathan, The Dance Dad, registers his daughter for class on his own time instead of racing to the studio to stand in line.



“Save time and skip the line” works!

Enabling customers to make more of their own purchases would remove a lot of burden from staff, allow staff to develop stronger relationships with students, and build customer confidence in the business.

Current flow



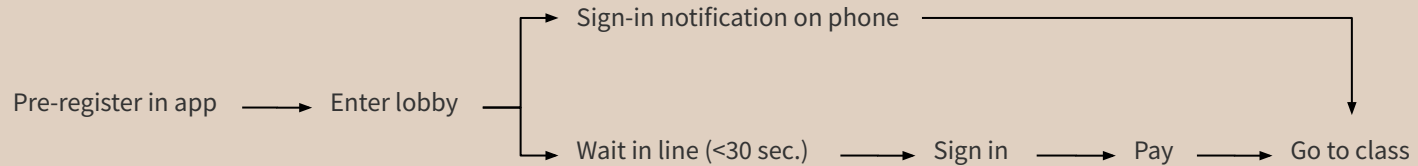
“Save time and skip the line” works!

Enabling customers to make more of their own purchases would remove a large burden from staff, allow staff to develop stronger relationships with students, and build customer confidence in the business.

Original goal



Final flow



Prioritizing fewer features would have produced a more effective app.

HOW I WOULD MEASURE SUCCESS

- Customer feedback
- Studio atmosphere - Lobbies less crowded, classes interrupted less, shifts less stressful for staff
- Financial - Fewer staff mistakes with money, more students enrolling, more classes purchased

QUESTIONS FOR NEXT ITERATION

- Are instructors okay with students being able to contact them?
- Would the Studio FAQ and News & Events sections be too much work for staff to update, or would it be better to link to the website?

WHAT I LEARNED

- If I had prioritized fewer features, the first prototype would have been more effective.
- Doing more user research before designing would have saved time on creating features that will be removed from the next iteration.