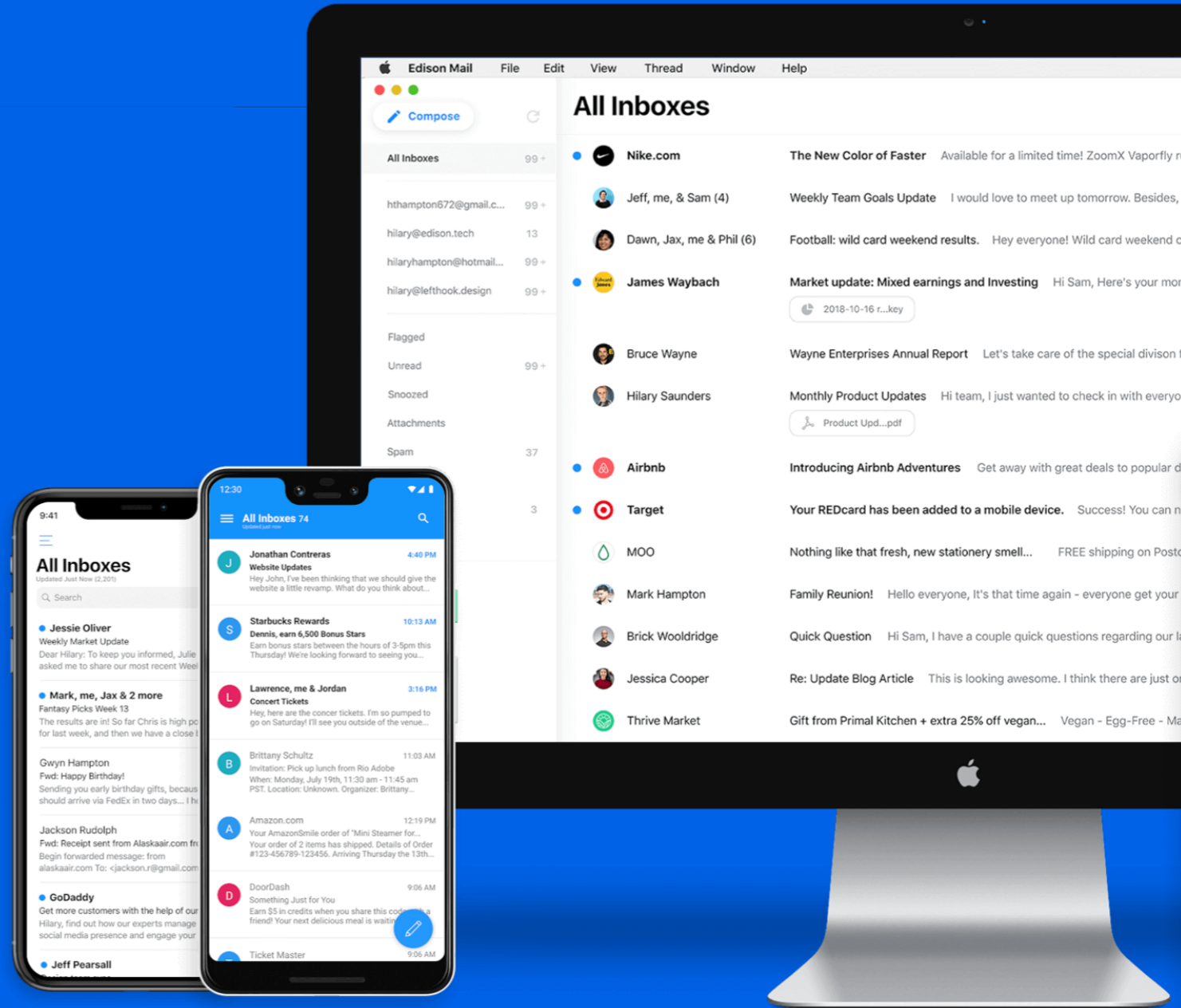


Edison Mail

Design prompt: A busy freelancer doesn't take time to clean up their messy email inbox and it's becoming unmanageable. Create a strategy and flow that would help them get rid of unwanted emails.

- TEAM Solo project
- ROLE UX/UI Designer
- TIMELINE May 2022 (1 month)
- TYPE App Design
- TOOLS Adobe XD, Photoshop



Experience email that works

Edison mail is an email app that lets users manage all their different email accounts in one place. They customers easy email management with snooze messages, Custom Swipe interactions and one-tap unsubscribe. Edison also offers innovative email sorting which sorts user's emails in business, travel, receipts and entertainment categories. It is the #1 independent mail app on the Apple App Store and is recognized as one of the top productivity apps on the market.

It was my challenge to help the company come up with thoughtful UX solutions to assist users in further organization of their inboxes.

Identify



Quick turnaround

This design challenge was given to me to solve over the course of one week. Primary weeks were dedicated to market and brand research.



Solo project

This design challenge was given to me to test my skills and independent strategic thinking. Designs were not implemented on the current app, but it tested my solo abilities as a designer.



Established competitors

Mail apps are not unique to the market. From Gmail, to iOS mail, it was important to come up with unique solutions that would help the brand stand out.

Project constraints

There were several challenges to identify and consider before beginning my solo project. It was important to organize my thoughts and identify these problems in order to establish time management before beginning.

Identify

Simplicity

Make it simple and easy to organize emails with as little steps as possible from cluttered to organized.

Customization

Create design features that allow for customization and personalized experiences.

Effective

Curate a meaningful experience. Create an interface that supports artificial intelligence for automatic organizing to save users' time.

Design Goals

There were three principles that I identified as being important goals I wanted to focus on during my design brainstorming and iterations.

Research



Mail App (iOS)

Competitor type: direct

- Option to unsubscribe from subscription senders right at the top of the email
- Bottom navigation bar when opening emails for quick actions
- Filter button on the bottom for fast filtering from each mailbox
- VIP people allows you to quickly add important people in one location
- Blue dots easily show user what emails have been opened or not
- Bottom nav icons are vague, add text to make them more clear
- Filter options are limited, should be able to sort by date
- Listing all inboxes on the side menu with all their options is a lot to look at at once
- User complaints about poor search functionality



Spark

Competitor type: direct

- Smart Inbox features sort mail into categories automatically
- Calendar feature automatically syncs events or meetings from emails
- Color coding different inboxes
- Bottom nav bar is nice when opening emails
- Accidentally archiving emails is easy to do, need verifying modal
- Smart filter needs refinement (eg. "People" shows emails from Venmo)
- Would be nice to see calendar feature extend to sorting emails based on date
- Color sorting are small bars, need more visual impact



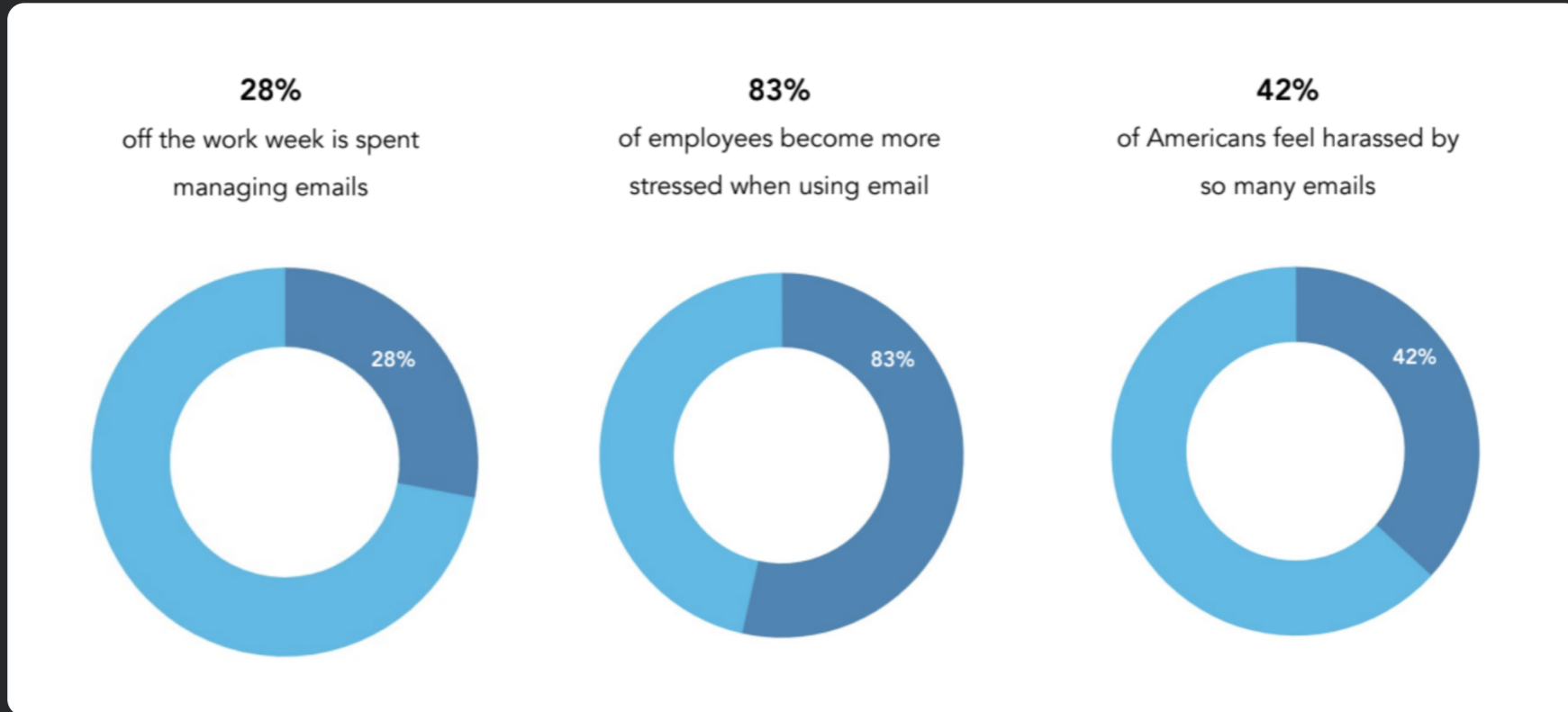
Gmail

Competitor type: direct

- Contact image next to email makes it easy to identify sender
- Create custom folders that you can add or move existing emails into
- Bottom nav makes it easy to switch between inbox and Google Meet
- Ability to star important emails right with a tap
- Would be nice to organize by date
- Doesn't have AI that sorts emails automatically
- Important emails can be deleted without a verification modal
- No clear indication as to what differentiates Top and Remaining Promotions

Competitive Audit

Research



Users feel frustrated and overwhelmed by emails

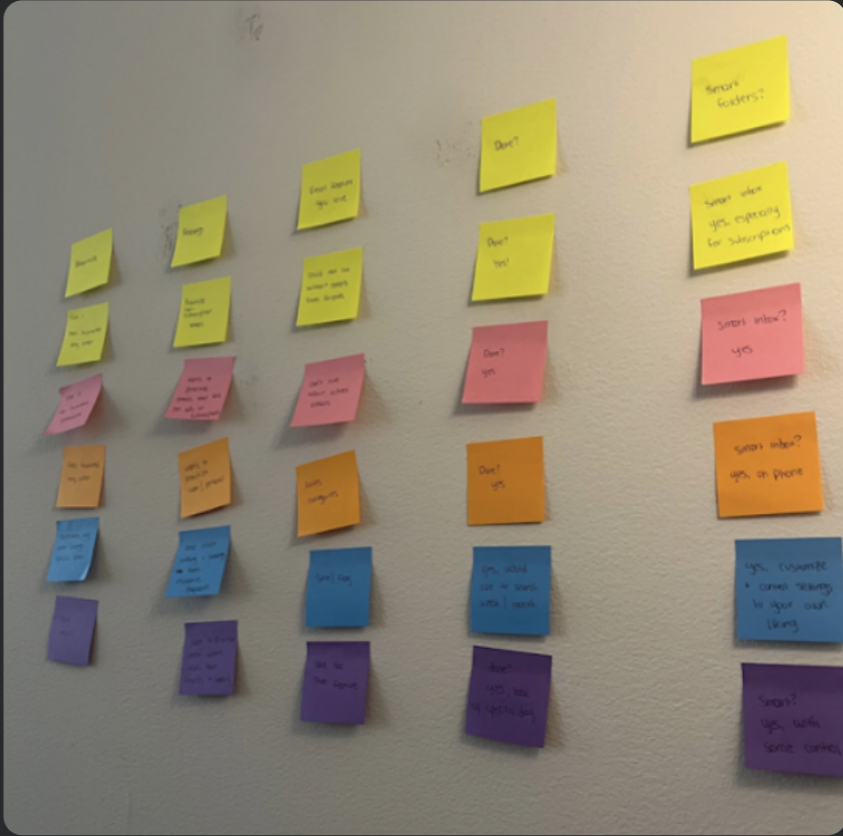
Through reading credible research, I was able to spot some key statistics and patterns between email users. I found a pattern of frustration in not being able to find important emails which lead to some detrimental situations like being unprepared for meetings, losing important documents, and losing precious working hours sifting through large inboxes.

Research phase 2

- Do you currently feel frustrated when trying to organize your email inbox?
Always Very Often Sometimes Rarely Never
- What emails do you like to prioritize or keep in your inbox?
subscription emails
- What email features could you not live with?
subscription emails
- Please state your agreement with the following: seeing my emails organized by date would make my job easier.
yes
- Please state your agreement with the following: having a smart inbox that automatically organizes my emails by category would make my job easier.
yes

- Do you currently feel frustrated when trying to organize your email inbox?
Always Very Often Sometimes Rarely Never
- What emails do you like to prioritize or keep in your inbox?
work/personal categories
- What features in your preferred app do you use the most to organize your emails?
subscription emails
- Please state your agreement with the following: seeing my emails organized by date would make my job easier.
yes
- Please state your agreement with the following: having a smart inbox that automatically organizes my emails by category would make my job easier.
yes (on phone)

1. Do you currently feel frustrated when trying to organize your email inbox?
2. What emails do you like to prioritize or keep in your inbox?
3. What email features could you not live with?
4. Please state your agreement with the following: seeing my emails organized by date would make my job easier
5. Please state your agreement with the following: having a smart inbox that automatically organizes my emails by category would make my job easier.




Investigating user insights and behavioral patterns

For further research, I interviewed 8 users between the ages of 18 - 59. These users used email everyday for school, work or personal reasons. The goal was to find patterns of user wants and needs and highlight frustrations they faced when searching for and organizing emails. Each user had an email app that they used everyday. This helped me understand what their email experience is like and get insights into how they would like to see it improve in the future.

Empathize

Jenny Chen



Age: 27
Pronouns: She/Her
Occupation: Freelancer
Location: Toronto

Feels:

- Annoyed
- Tired
- Stressed

Bio:
Anna is a graphic design freelancer with 5 years of experience. Anna works from home. Her typical routine is to wake up around 8am and complete her morning routine. Afterwards, she is filled with dread as she looks at her inbox full of 100+ unread emails from the night and morning before. Her inbox consists of emails from potential and existing clients, restaurant reservations, movie tickets, online shopping receipts/tracking information and many subscriptions she doesn't need anymore. Anna has two accounts, one for work and one personal.

Interests:

- Movies
- Trying new restaurants
- Watching shows on streaming services
- Online shopping


User Goals

- Get rid of spam and subscription emails
- Remind herself to reply to client emails
- Separating work and online shopping

Pain Points

- Cluttered inbox, 100+ emails to go through
- No time

Mark Smith



Age: 71
Pronouns: He/Him
Occupation: Writer
Location: Upstate New York

Feels:

- Overwhelmed
- Confused
- Annoyed

Bio:
Mark is retired from his job as an English professor and currently works as a freelance writer and editor to fill his spare time. He receives emails from his clients, former students and journal subscriptions. However, Mark is not an expert when it comes to technology and struggles finding important emails or attachments. Mark's favorite activity is to read a weekly blog subscription that notifies him whenever they publish a new post.

Interests:

- Reading
- Listening to radio podcasts
- Golfing
- Cooking for wife

User Goals

- Notifications when there is new blog
- Find emails from former students
- Wants app to be easier to navigate

Pain Points

- Subscribes to emails he doesn't remember
- Not tech savvy

Creating personas

After organizing my data from user interviews and article research, I created two personas that would help me further understand potential users. Adding realistic traits and stories to each persona makes the users tangible subjects that I can empathize with.

Empathize



Problem Statement: Jenny

Anna is a 27-year-old Freelance Graphic Designer who needs an easy way to organize her cluttered inbox because she doesn't have time to go through her email manually everyday.



Problem Statement: Mark

Mark is a 71-year-old Retired Freelance Writer who needs a notification to reply to emails because his memory isn't that good, and he doesn't want to forget to respond to clients or former students.

Problem statements

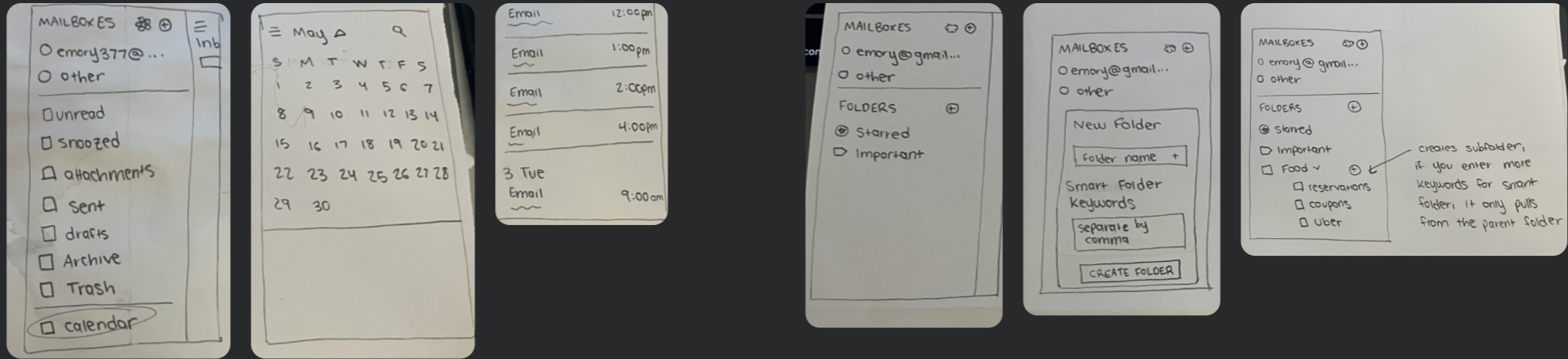
From my personas, I was able to identify clear problem statements to keep in mind as I went forward with design strategies and explorations.

Brainstorming session

The next step was to have a brainstorming session where I could write my thoughts down and strategize on potential solutions. I then picked 3 top solutions to further explore and refine.

- **Notifications**
 - Make sure some emails aren't deleted
 - Categorize, or notify if some people email you or if some emails in categories are sent to you
- **Folders**
 - Let people create their own categories or folders
 - Folder keywords with AI, or add your own, if keyword is found in email, automatically adds it to folder
- **Message interface**
 - Redesign interface like messages where you first see senders and then you can click and see the emails, they have sent you
 - Color coded by inbox
- **Sort by date**
 - Like photo app, date by scroll
 - Headline each section with date
 - Add calendar feature that organizes meetings (like google calendar) and includes all emails sent and received that day

Explore

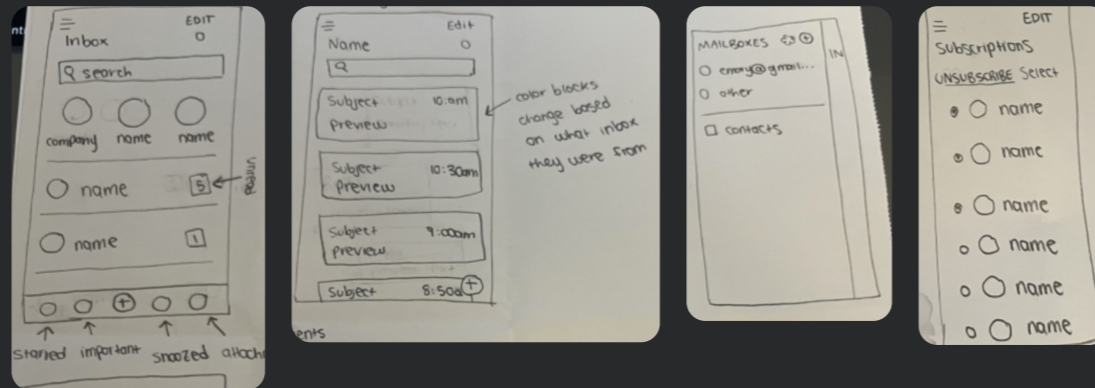


Idea 1 - Organize by date

The first idea I wireframed was to have emails organized by date. I noticed that current apps do not have an easy date filter, and often searching the date in the search bar leads to inaccurate results. This is useful for people who receive hundreds of new emails a day.

Idea 2 - Customizable folders

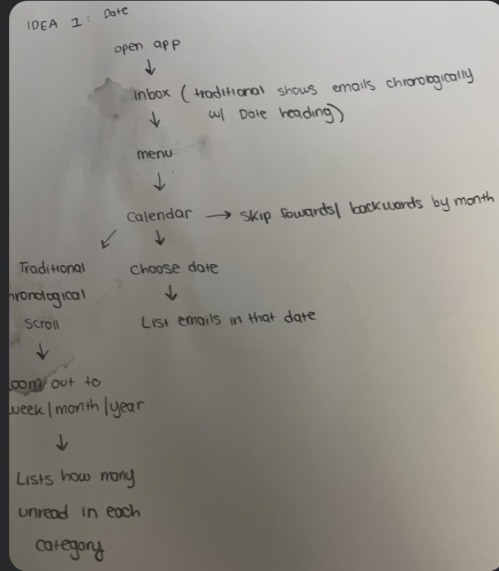
The first idea I wireframed was to add a feature that allowed users to create custom folders for personal organizational purposes. These folders would also include the option to add keywords. Keywords would be picked up by artificial intelligence and emails would automatically be added to the created folder.



Idea 3 - Messaging interface

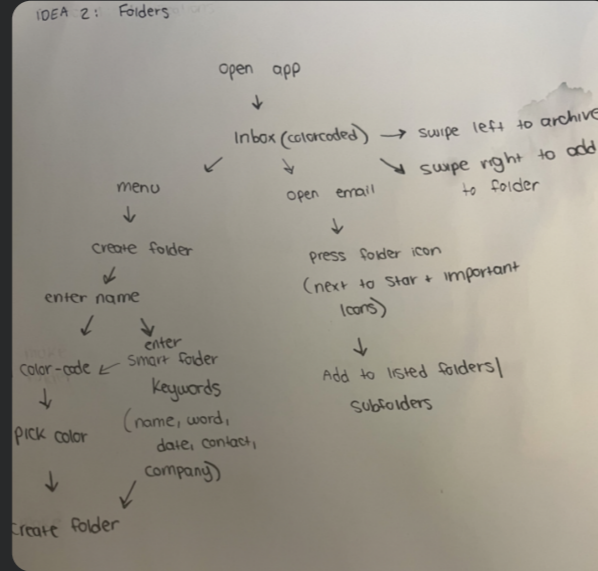
The third idea I wireframed was to change the interface of the homepage to reflect a messaging app. Changing it to an interface that people are most comfortable with would make the inbox less overwhelming to users. Users can click on an email “conversation” to see all exchanges with the contact in one place. This also includes a feature of seeing your contacts or subscriptions where you can unsubscribe to multiple emails at once.

Explore



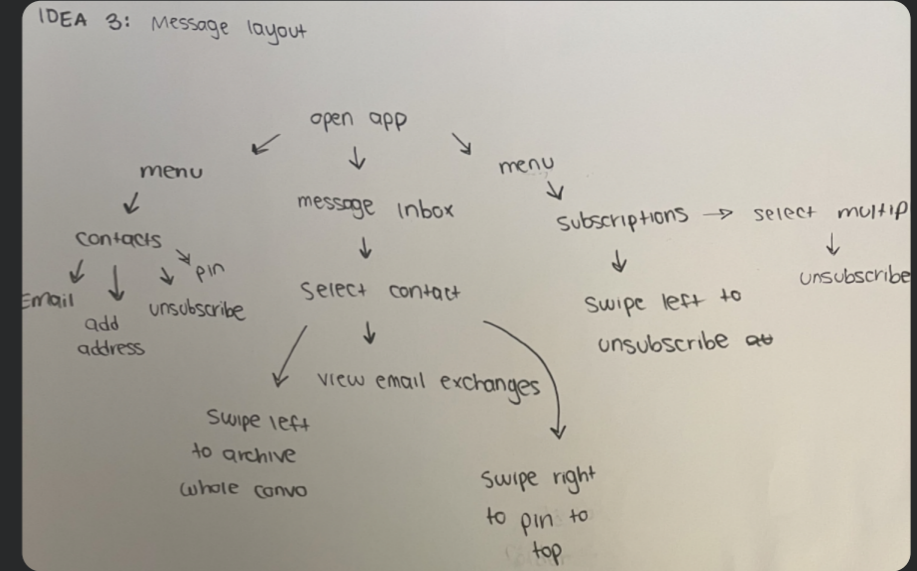
Idea 1

Organize by date



Idea 2

Customizable folders



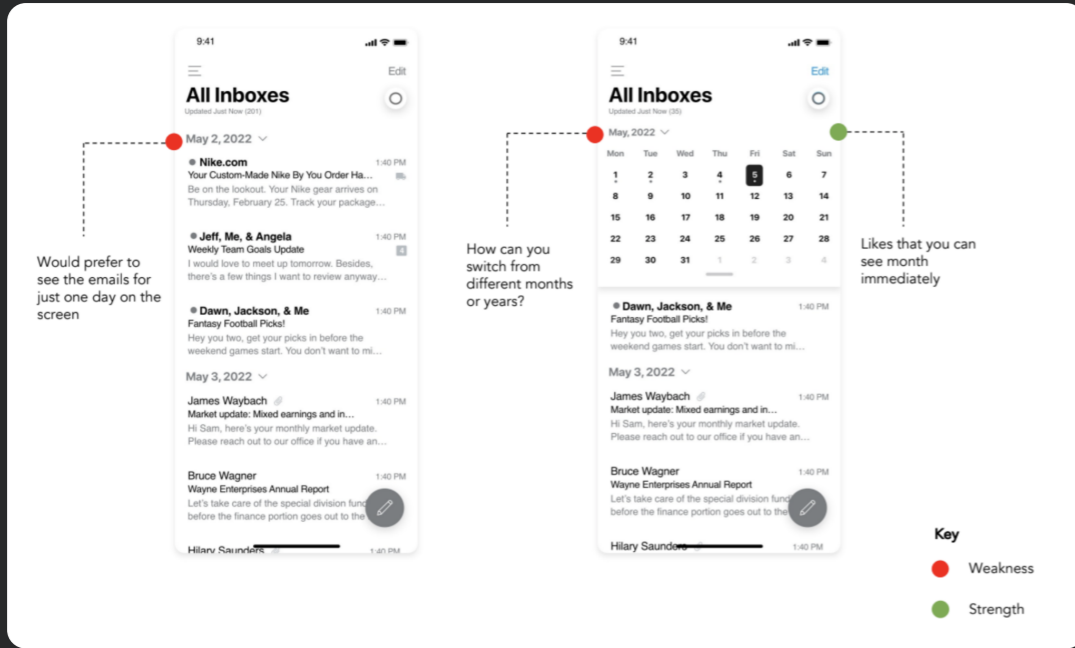
Idea 3

Messaging interface

Sketching user journeys

I created user journeys for each idea to ensure that entry points and added menu heirarchy made sense.

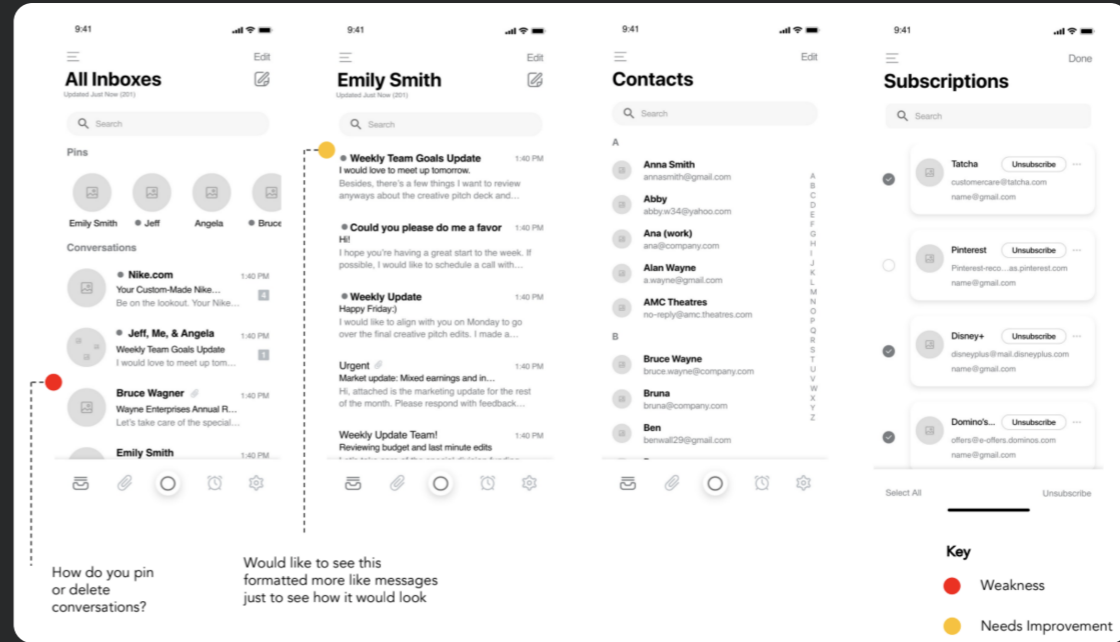
Explore



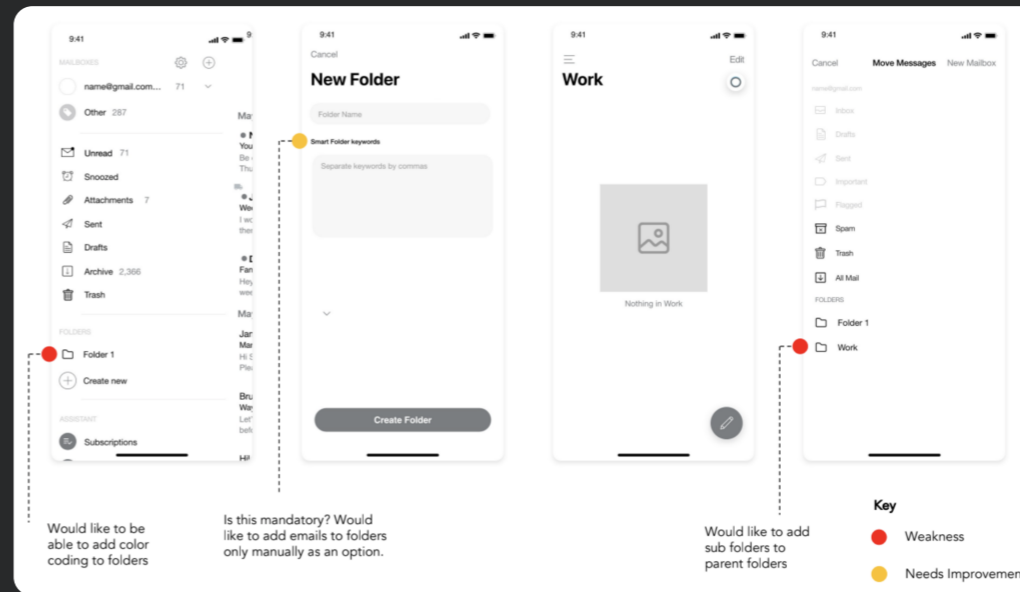
Idea 1

Testing lo-fidelity prototypes

Here are low fidelity prototypes I created for each idea. Key screens were tested through potential interviews with a series of interviews. Users that I interviewed at the beginning of the challenge were asked about potential pain points and advantages that they liked on each screen.

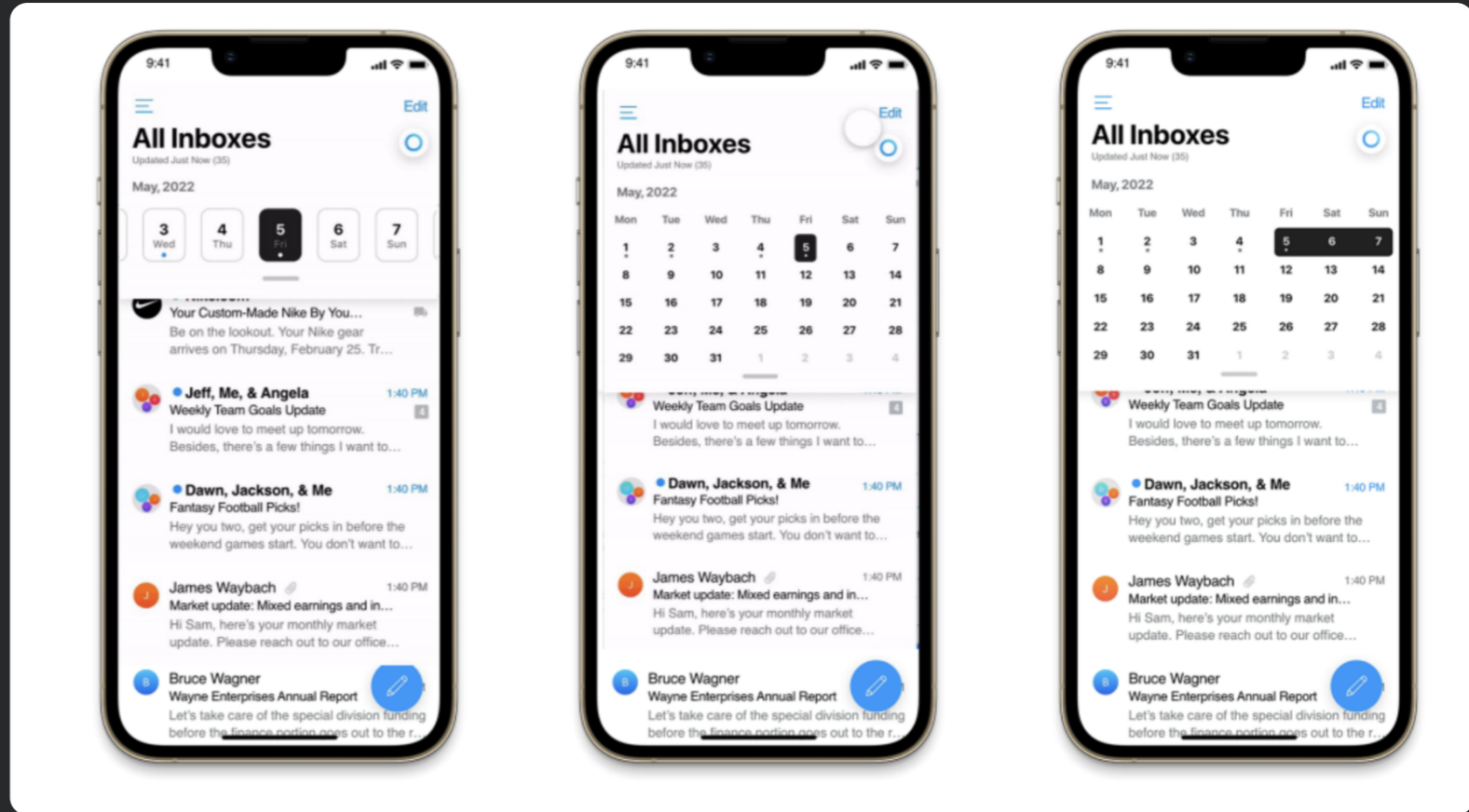


Idea 2



Idea 3

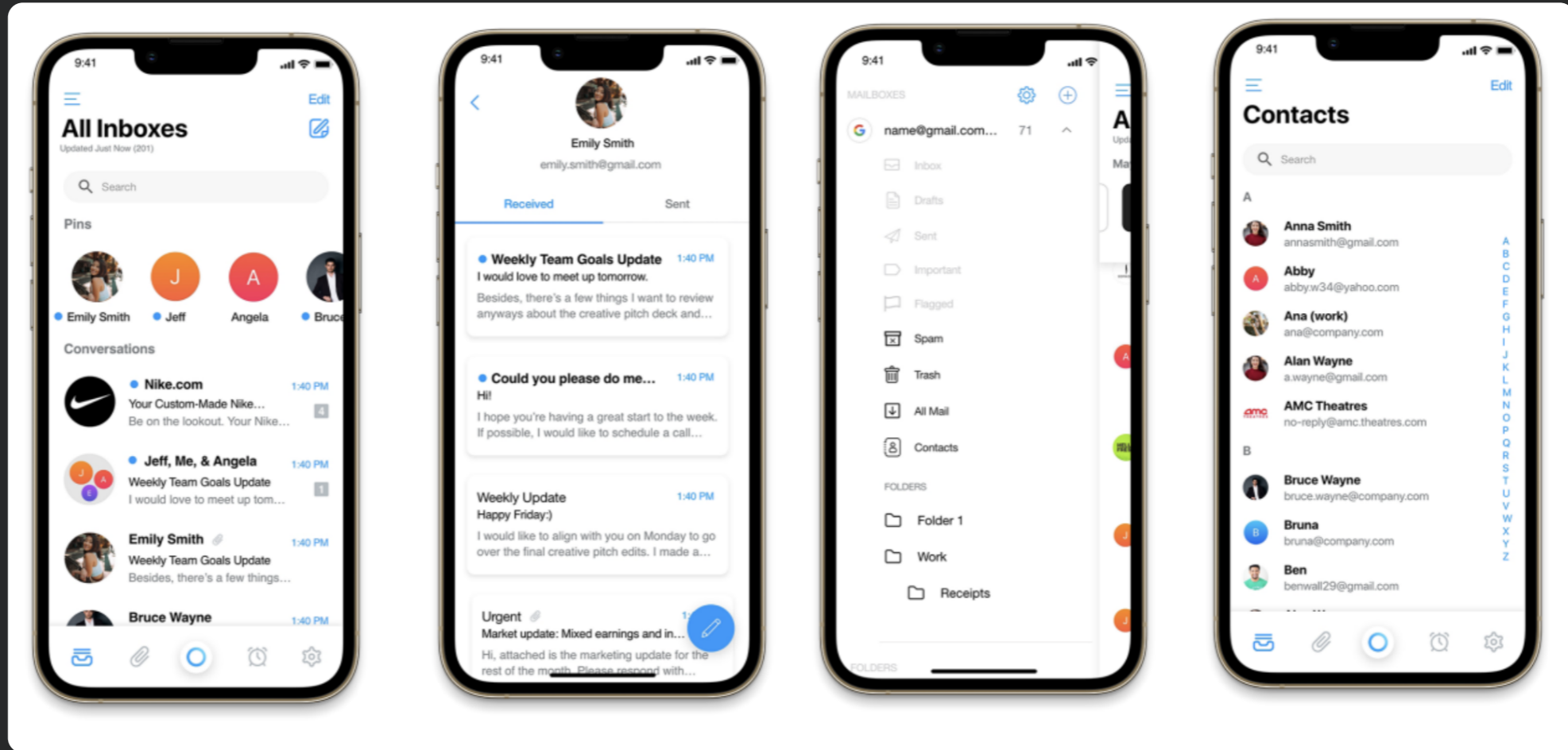
Refine



1. Organize by date

After analyzing strengths and weaknesses, I created an easy top swipe menu featuring the individual day or monthly view. Months can be changed by swiping left or right. Date ranges can be chosen by pressing and holding down on dates. Contact avatars were also added for easy visualization.

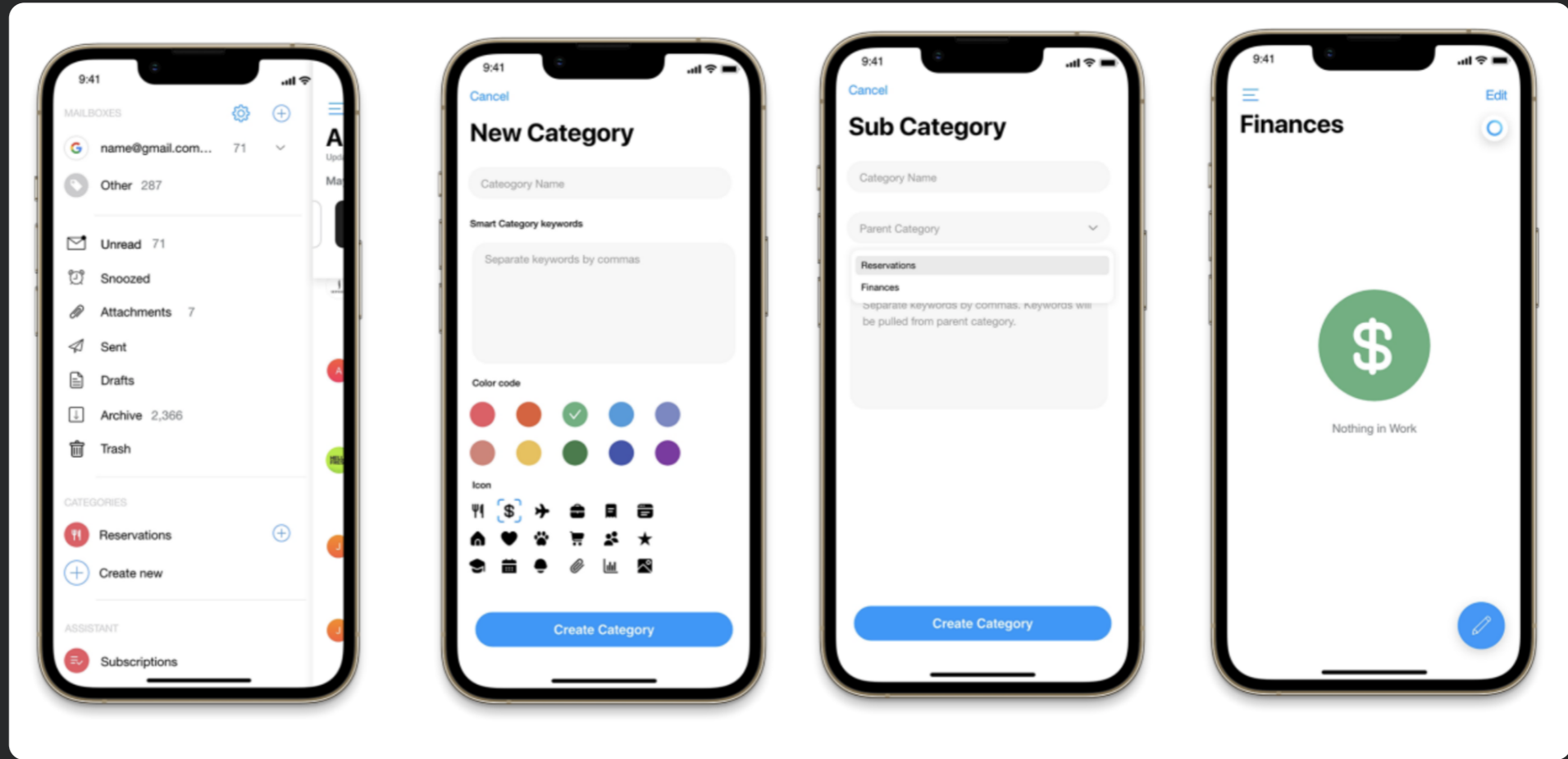
Refine



2. Messaging interface

I created an inbox for each contact that was more traditional to the messaging interface look but being careful not to stray too far from email formatting.

Refine



3. Customizable folders

I created the option to customize categories by adding colors and icons to make the categories more visually appealing and easy to spot. Verbatim was also changed from “folders” to “categories” so users would feel less limited.

Reflect

Future goals & reflection

- I learned that more users than I thought struggle with email organization.
- I appreciate the work that goes into creating design features that make our lives easier everyday. I am excited to learn more and apply innovative solutions to help people alleviate their stress and improve their work environment.
- I would like to test my final prototypes with more users in a high stress work environment to gather more realistic feedback and further improve my designs.



Current user testimonials makes me excited to explore how design can improve people's everyday lives

