

Zoë Fortune

Product Design Portfolio



“We believe that The Times has an opportunity to be home to the world’s best audio journalism”

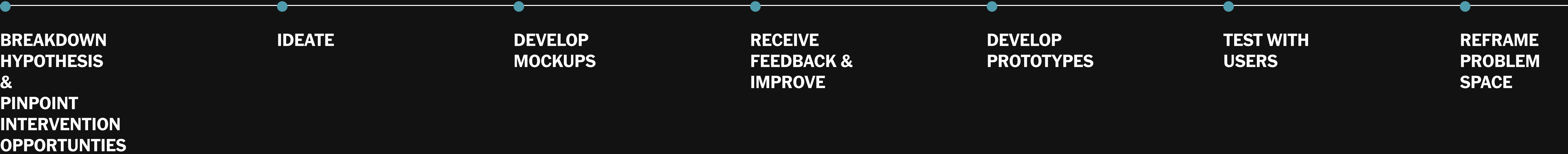
New York Times Standalone app

Currently in Beta, with expectation to launch early 2023.

Have been working with the product for just over 6 months.

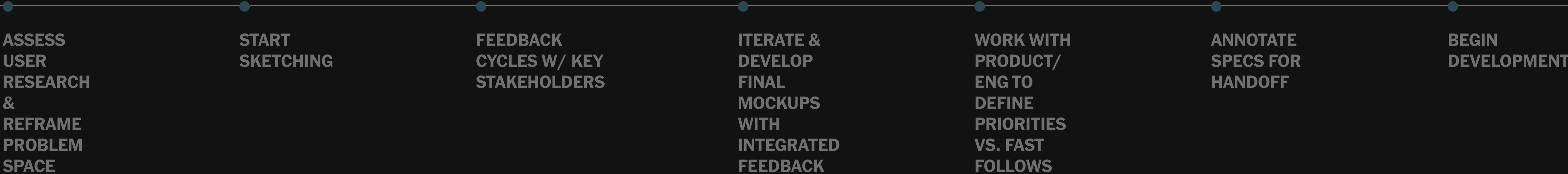
Design & Research

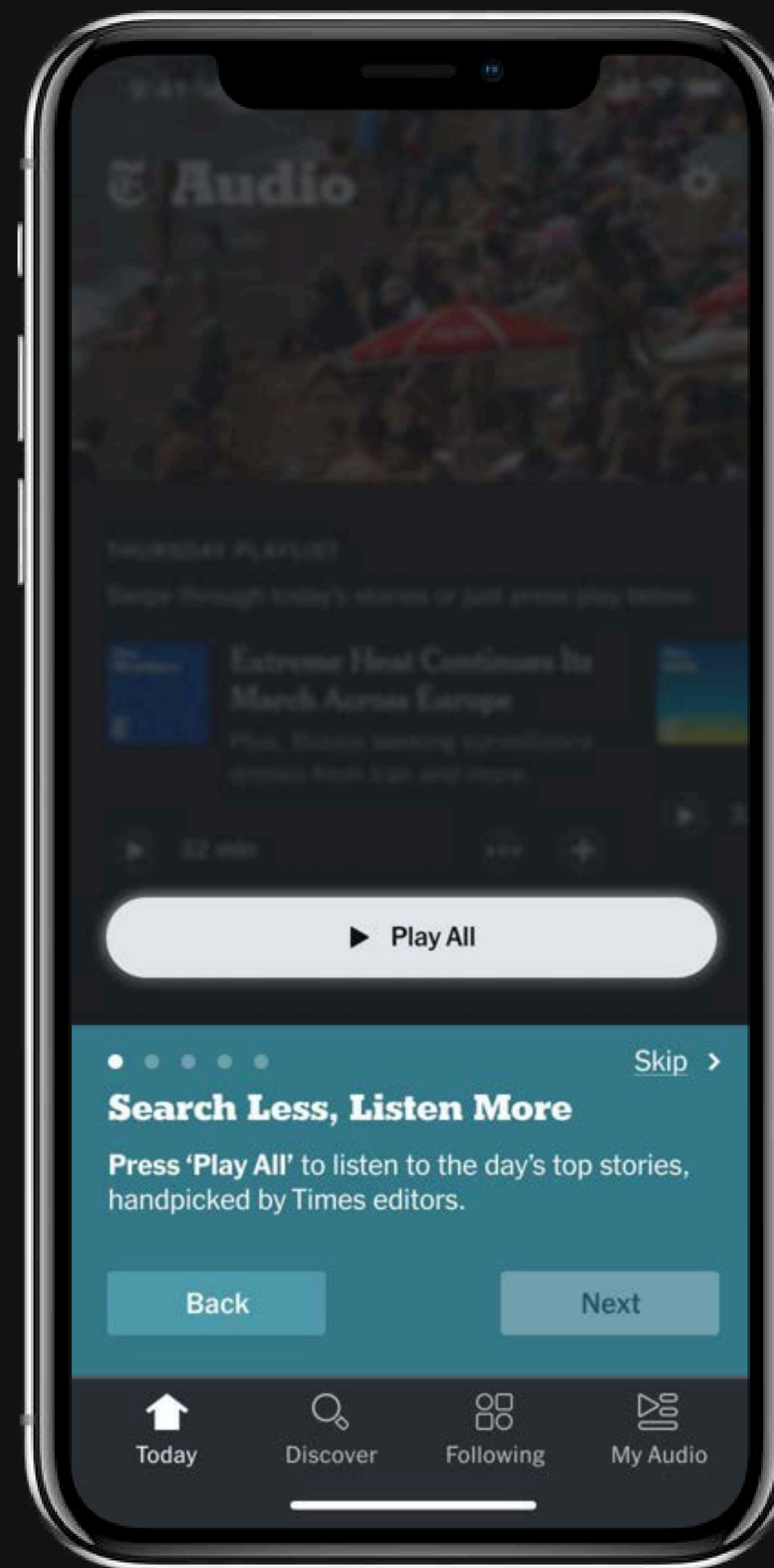
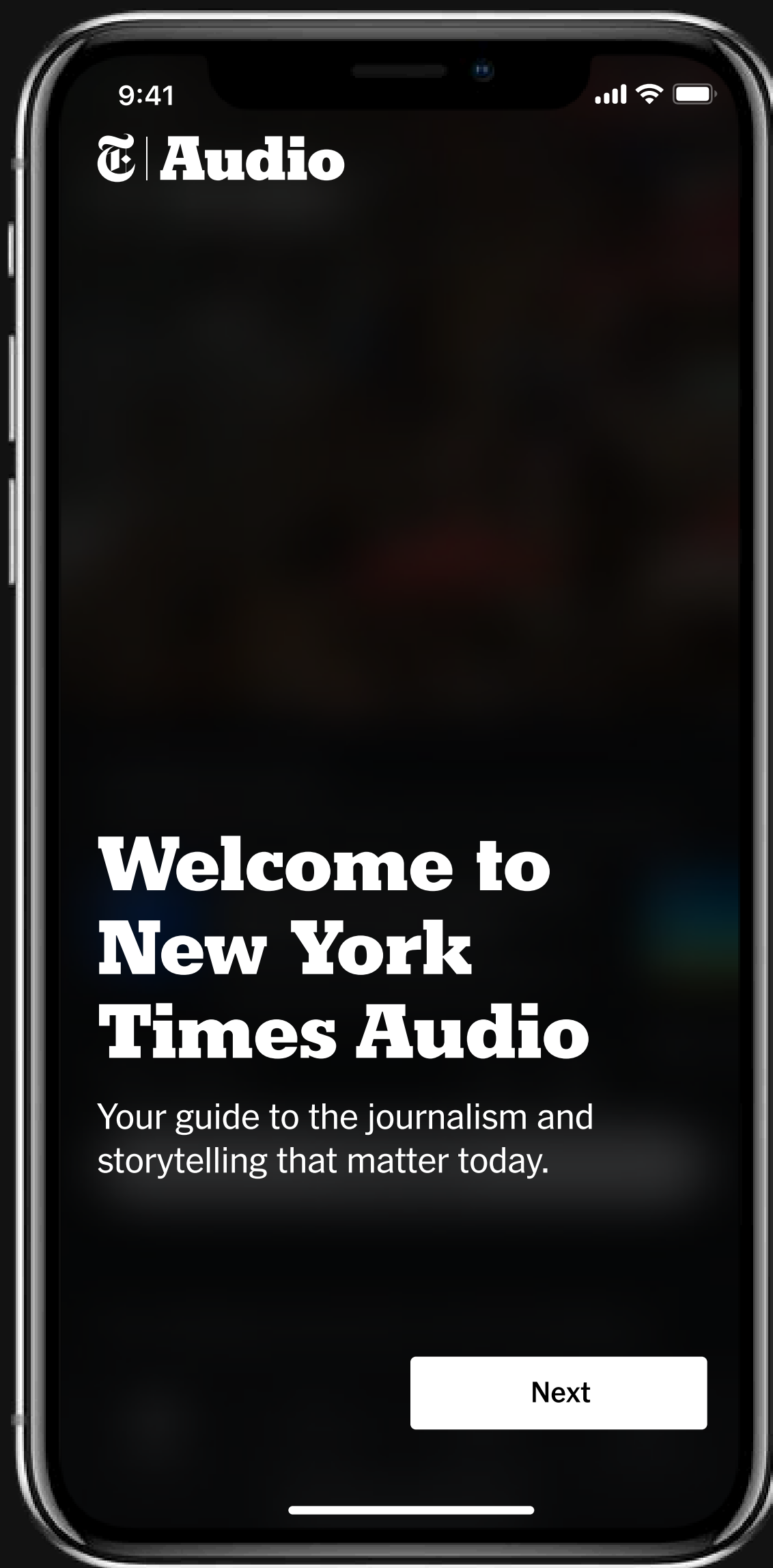
NYT Audio Onboarding



+ Product, Engineering & Brand

NYT Audio Today Optimizations





Defining & Designing Two Onboarding Flows for a User Feedback Sprint...in 4 days

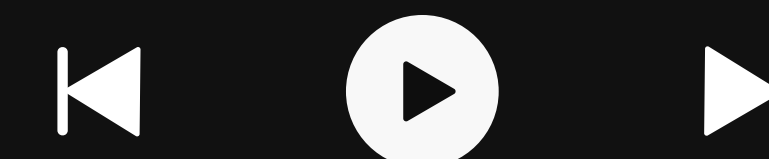
NYT Audio Onboarding

Up Next

The Problem Space

NYT Audio Onboarding

Reframing & Defining Opportunity



We hypothesize that getting:

Users to listen to more items in their first week with the app

&

Users to use the app for multiple different use cases (i.e news updates, content discovery)

will improve long term retention.

The Problem Space

NYT Audio Designing for Retention

Up Next

Reframing & Defining Opportunity

NYT Audio Onboarding

Pinpointing the Intervention



HMW get people to listen to more things in their first week?

HMW help people discover and use underutilized features (queue, following, discover)?

HMW help people discover and try out different types of listening (varied content, listening time & duration)

Interactive Onboarding



Ask users preferences during onboarding + allow users to opt in to notifications/ follow based on those

but make explicit this won't affect today tab offerings

Fortune, Zoe

When app is launched ask a series of questions to gauge users types of interests in order to give them targeted listening suggestions

Krzanich, Jamee

Make onboarding an audio experience and layout the same as content: "Collection"= Getting Acquainted with the app. "Podcasts" = Using discover, following, etc.

Fortune, Zoe

onboarding playlist — giving users a welcome message and some recommended listens

Villasenor, Rimar

Onboarding 2.0:

- approach onboarding in a way that allows us to educate people about the app in the context of using it vs. all up front.
- engage them in a way that builds an engagement loop where it makes sense (follow your fave shows right on Today! etc.)
- Build in a way where we can easily try different kinds of contextual messaging to "onboarding" becomes more of a platform for experimentation than a statis thing.

Rainert, Alex

In onboarding synch breadcrumbs with navigation icons to familiarize users with what action matches what nav/tab

Fortune, Zoe

Dedicated First week screen with board mix of content

Weber, Bryan

First time screen with categories of content that the user can choose from, resulting in a suggested first listen

Champion, Bon

This makes me think of giving people a "quiz" that they take that then generates a recommended piece of content

Olesund, Erik

Today tab:

Week 1 "checklist" of items to listen to to get introduced to the app

Olesund, Erik

Build Your Onboarding Queue:

During onboarding, go through three screens (news listens screen, light listens screen, etc) where we invite users to add to their queue. Now they are exposed to different content types and are invested in the content they've put in there.

Pavlich, Nina

Make the last step in onboarding pressing play on the Essentials package (a guaranteed listen!)

LaRosa, Grace

Could we get MB to narrate an onboarding intro on how to use the App and different features?

Parker, Tom

Step by step walk through navigation when app is first launched after downloading

Krzanich, Jamee

Teach users about key functionality so they can navigate & play with confidence

LaRosa, Grace

Onboarding 2.0 of screen, which involves "tap to test" so that we can make sure people use the actions and don't just skip it. Can we also keep up some FAQ somewhere in our app?

Sinha, Shreeya

Reframing & Defining Opportunity

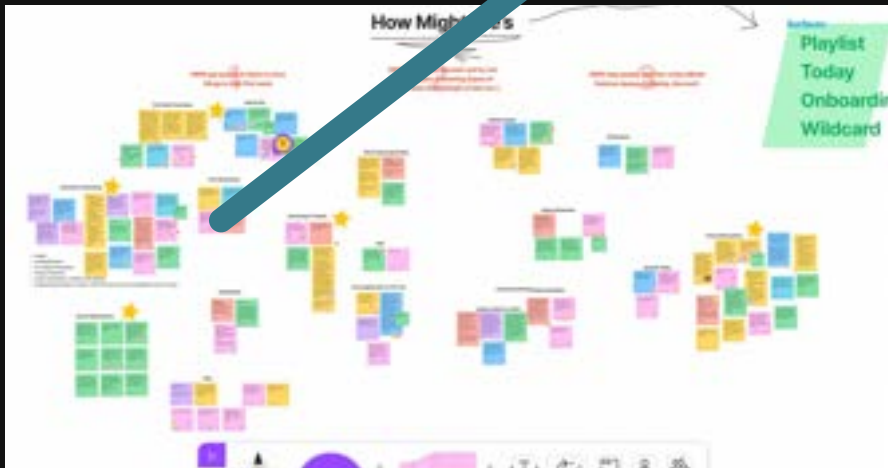
NYT Audio Onboarding

Up Next

Pinpointing the Intervention

NYT Audio Onboarding

Competitive Analysis

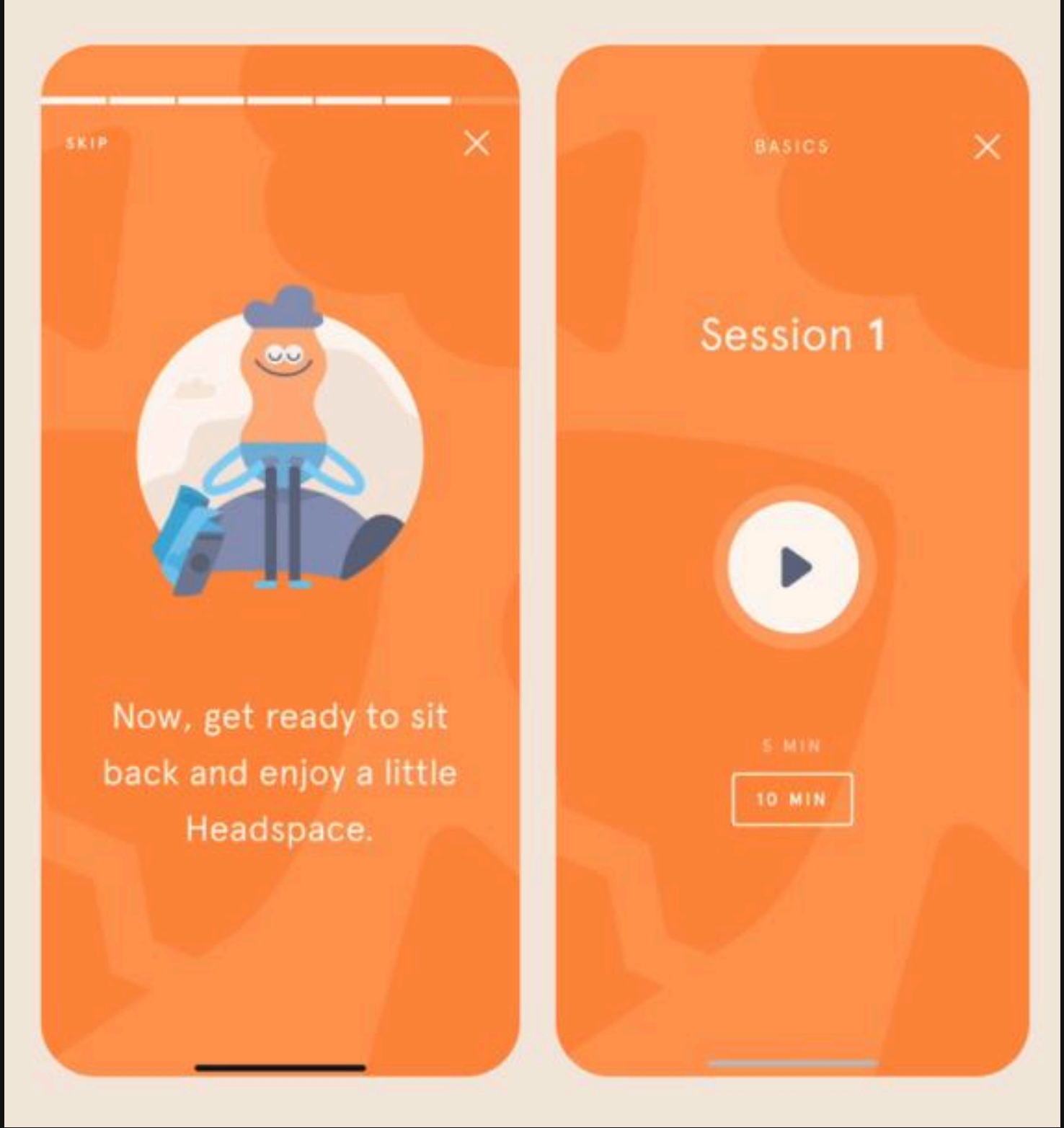


The fastest way to activate your users and teach them the basic functionalities of your app is to have them carry out at least one action, or all main actions of the app. These actions should be broken down into quick and easy steps. An example might be making them follow other users or save images they like.

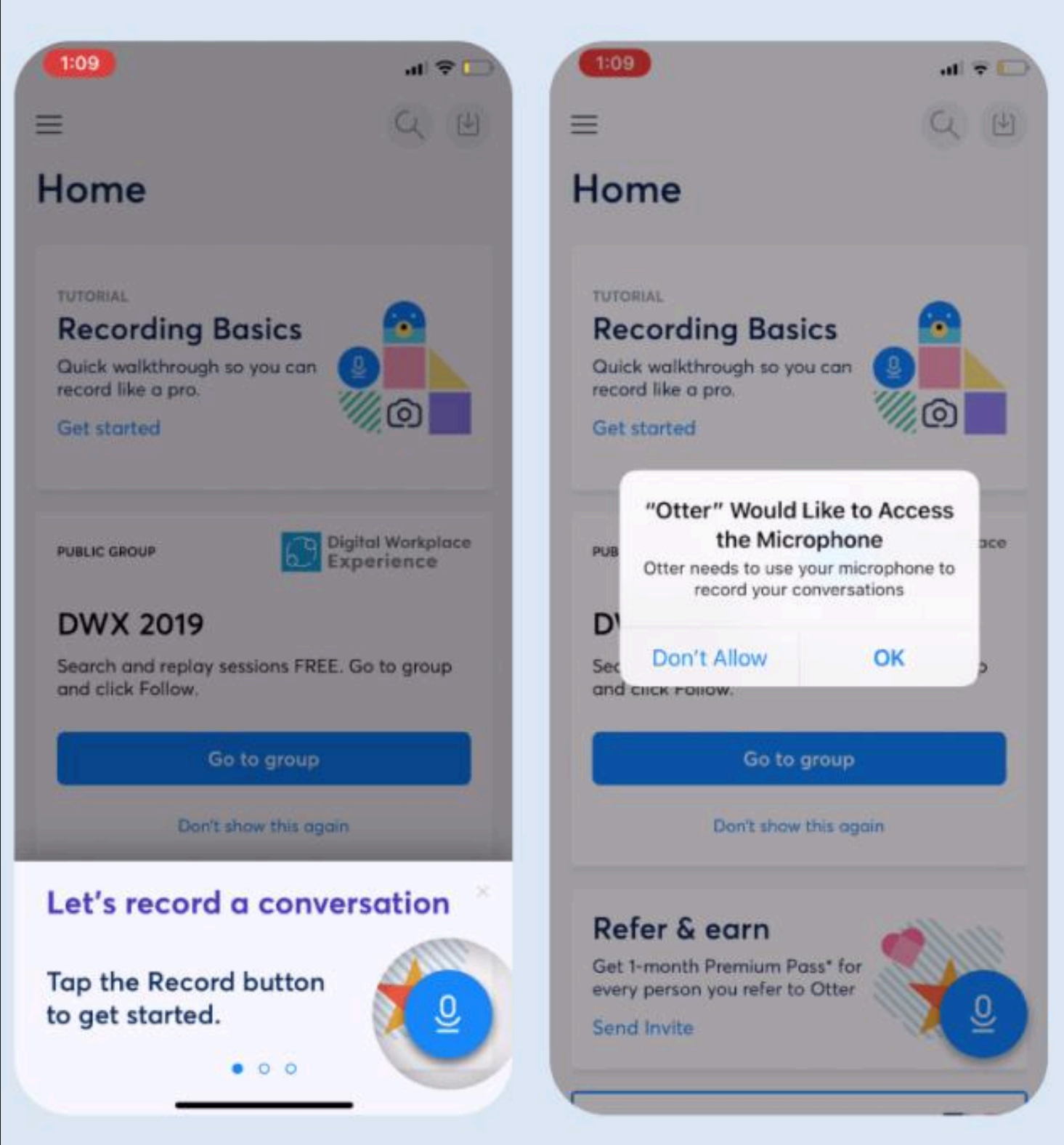
Excerpt from JustinMind UX Blog

Personalization keeps users engaged, creates deeper relationships with customers, and increases activation and retention rates. And improving activation—which takes place when users first experience the value you promised—by just 25% can result in a 34.30% lift in monthly recurring revenue (MRR).

Excerpt from Appsflyer UX Blog



Onboarding Screenshots from Headspace



Onboarding Screenshots from Otter

Competitive Analysis

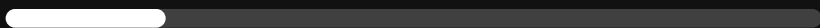
NYT Audio Onboarding

Up Next

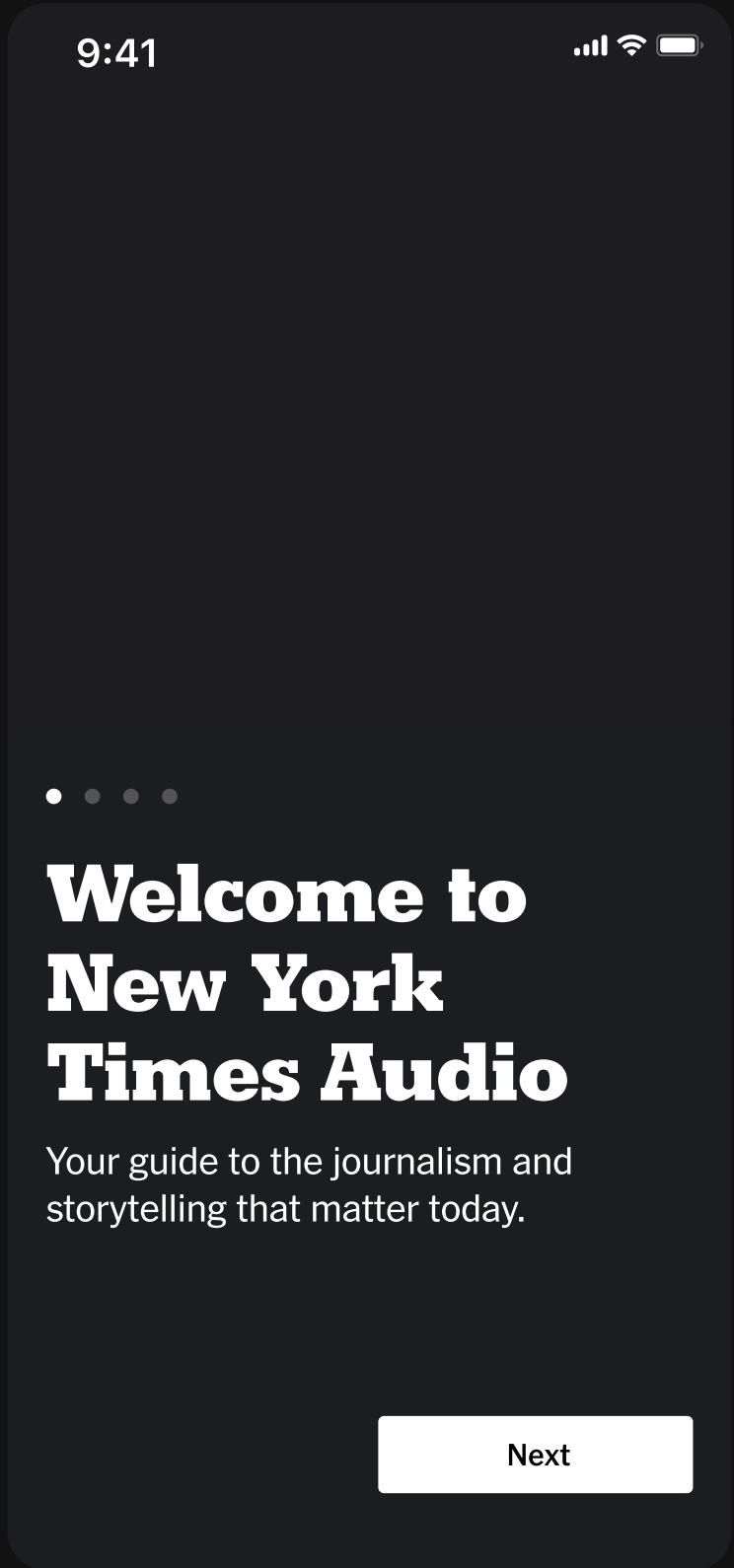
Refining Further

NYT Audio Onboarding

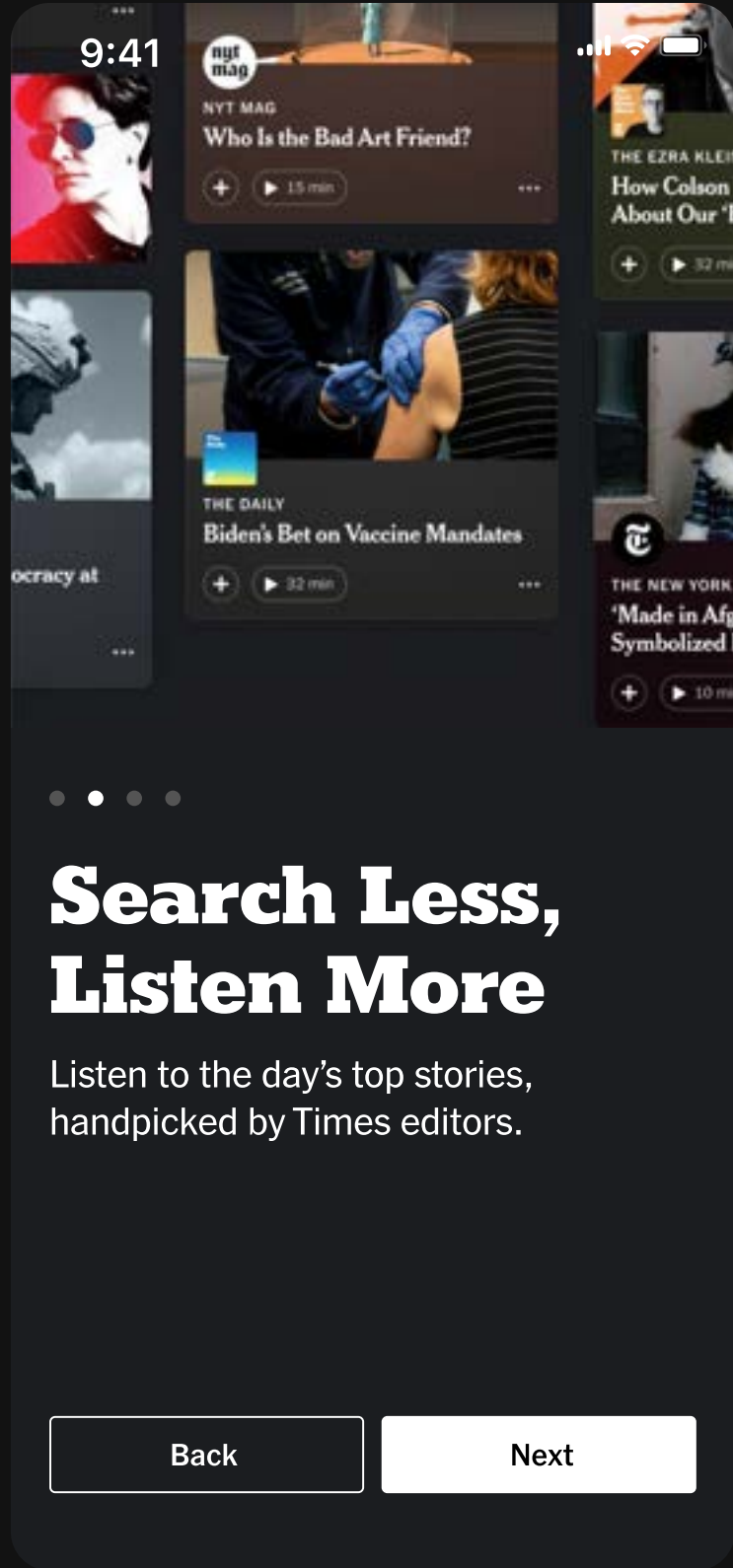
Ideation



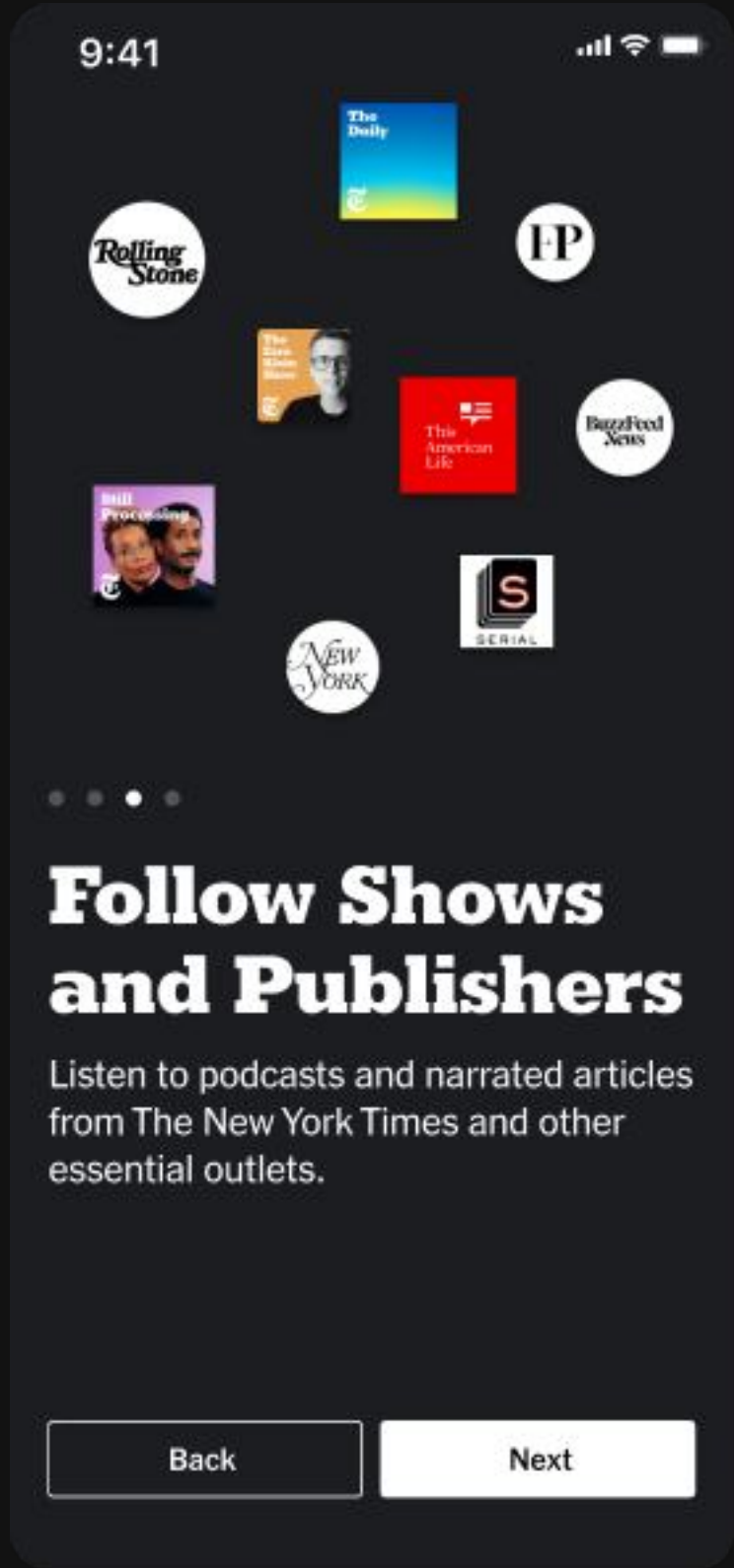
1
Welcome



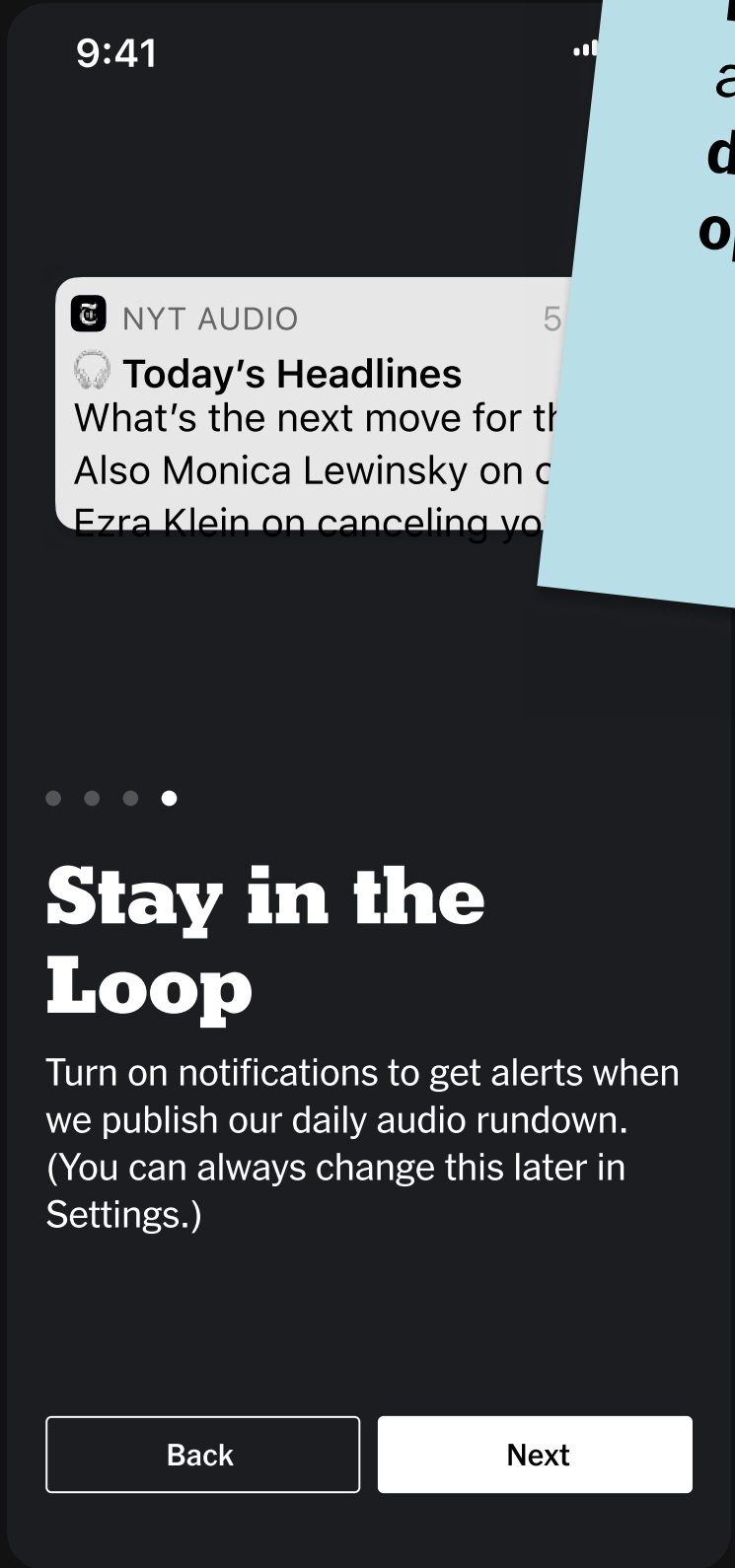
2
Search Less, Listen More



3
Follow Shows and Publishers



4
Notifications



HMW make onboarding an **interactive experience** that **educates** users about the **functionalities of the app** and communicates the **diverse, editorially curated options it offers**

Pinpointing the Intervention

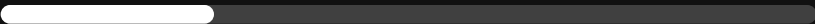
NYT Audio Onboarding

Up Next

Competitive Analysis

NYT Audio Onboarding

Refining Further



Onboarding screens in use prior to UFS

HMW make onboarding an **interactive experience** that **educates** users about the **functionalities of the app** and communicates the **diverse, editorially curated options** it offers

A. Onboarding as Education

B. Onboarding as Discovery

Refining Further

NYT Audio Onboarding

Up Next

Ideation

NYT Audio Onboarding

Getting Into Specifics



A. Onboarding as Education

Emphasizes

Understanding of **the app’s core functions**

Benefits

Increased awareness of each tab and its core functions could increase usage of said tabs

Assumes

Users want to know how the app works and what functions they are able to use to support their experience, before they begin using the app

Users are not currently using these functions because they cannot find them, not because they do not care to use them

Risks

NYT’s breadth of content could get lost in initial interaction with app which could in turn result in a lack of awareness in NYT Audio’s value prop > other podcast platforms’

Getting into Specifics

NYT Audio Onboarding

Up Next

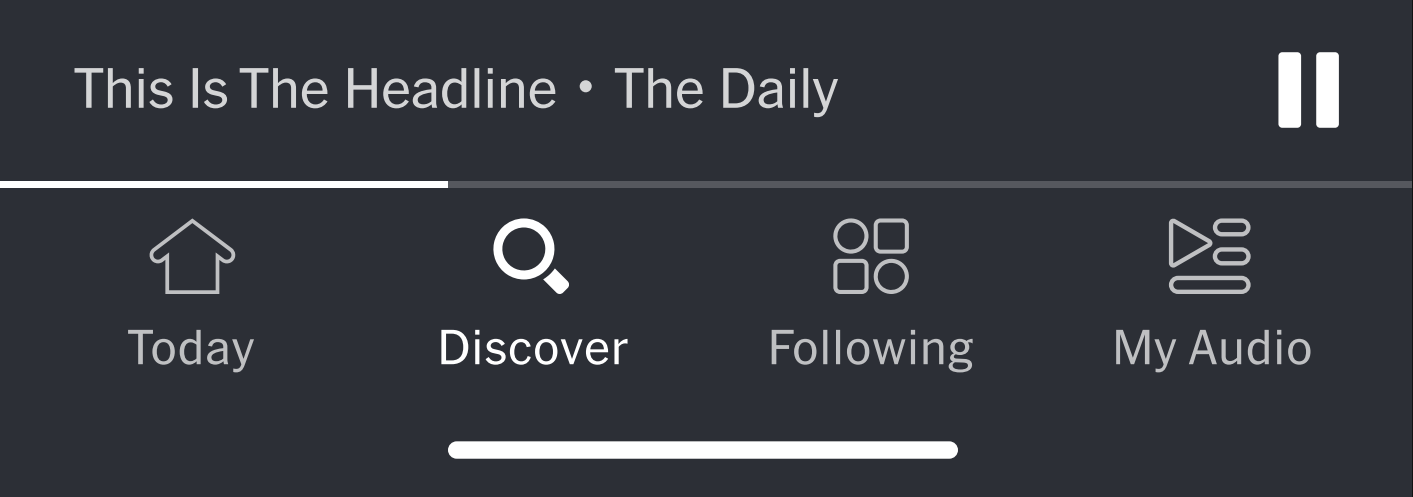
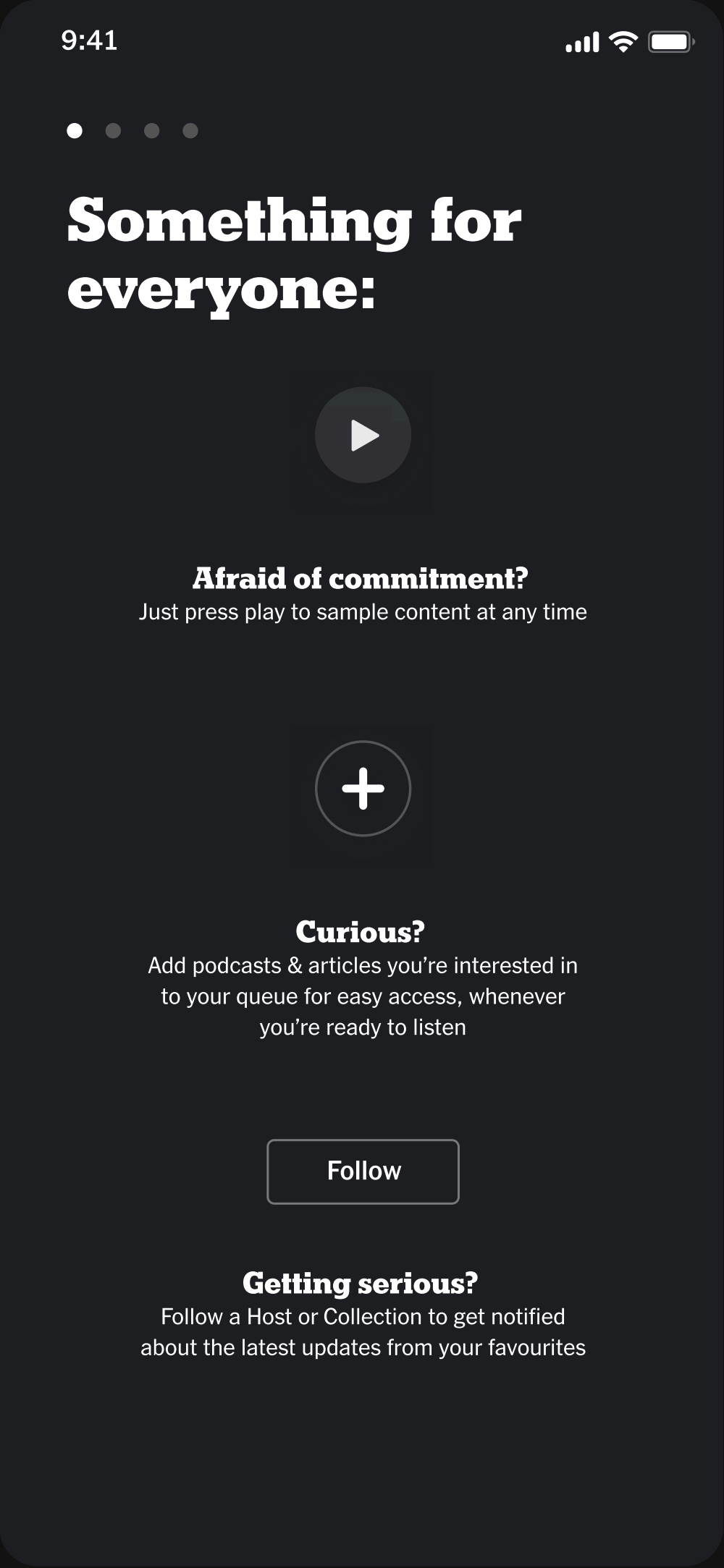
What Users Tested

NYT Audio Onboarding

A Learning Moment



A. Onboarding as Education



NYT Audio App Navigation Bar

Ideation

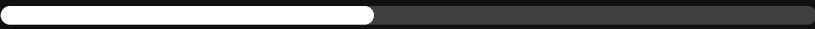
NYT Audio Onboarding

Up Next

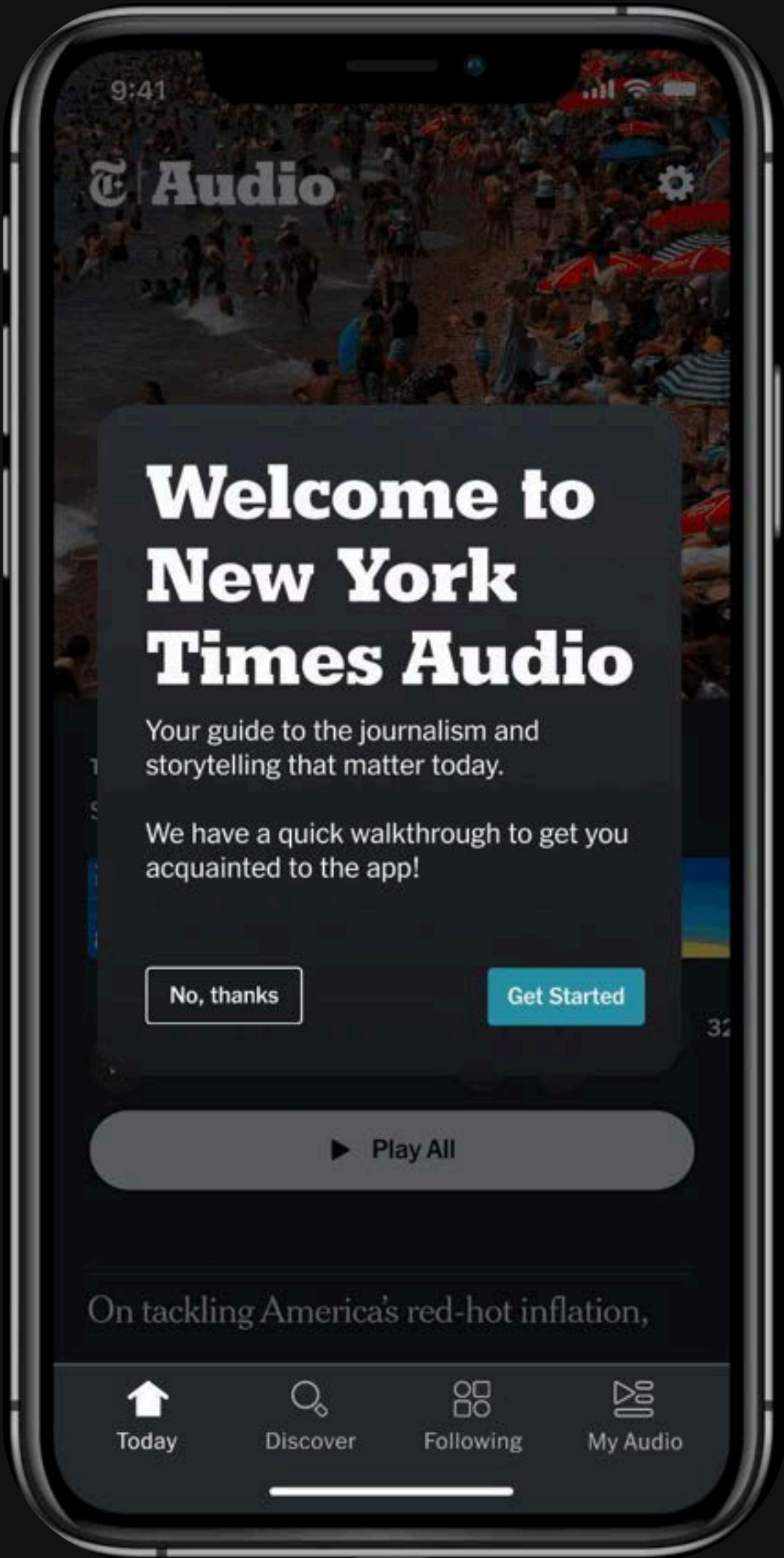
Getting Into Specifics

NYT Audio Onboarding

What Users Tested



A. Onboarding as Education



A fairly laborious flow that not only asked, but required users to take action to move through the app, which did help highlight certain components of the app but also felt clunky & unnecessary to many

What Users Tested

NYT Audio Onboarding

Up Next

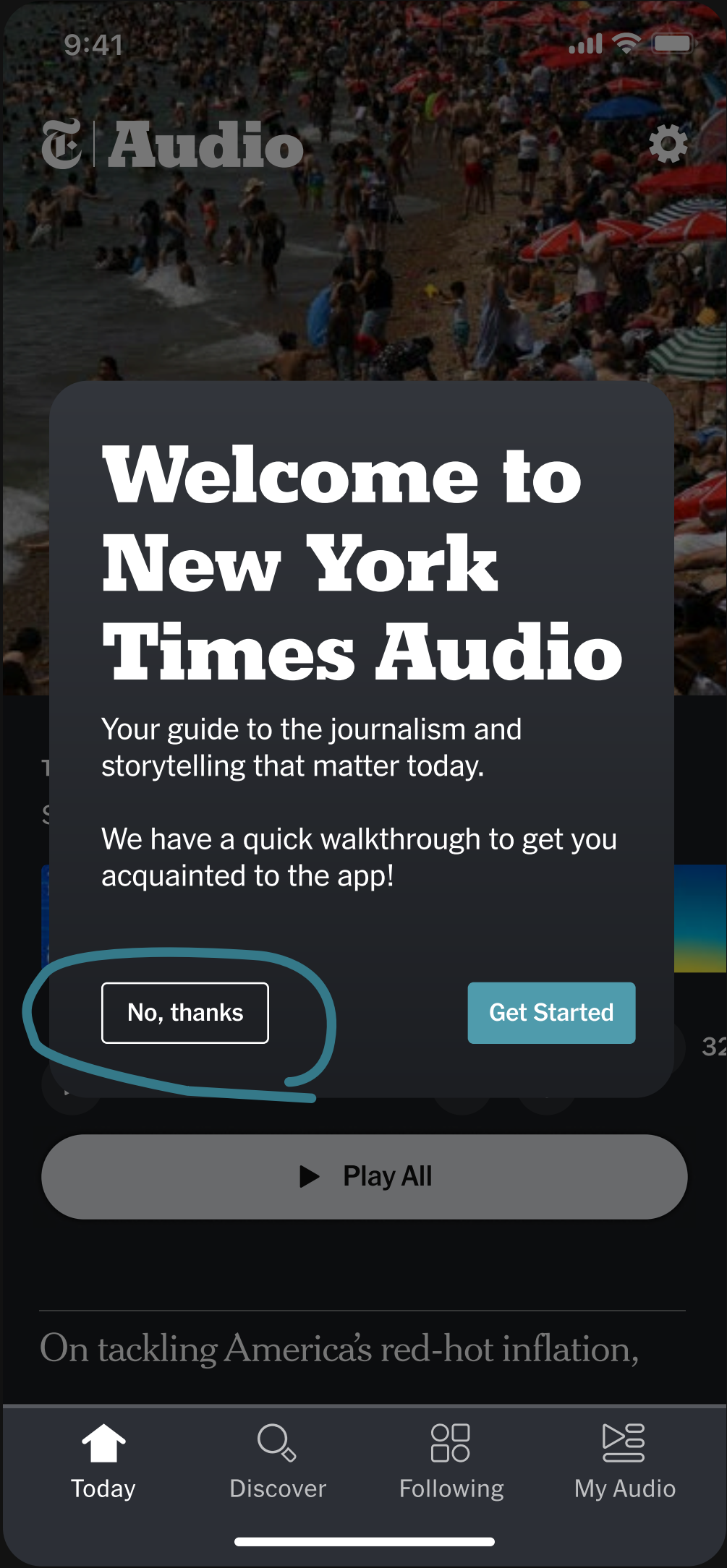
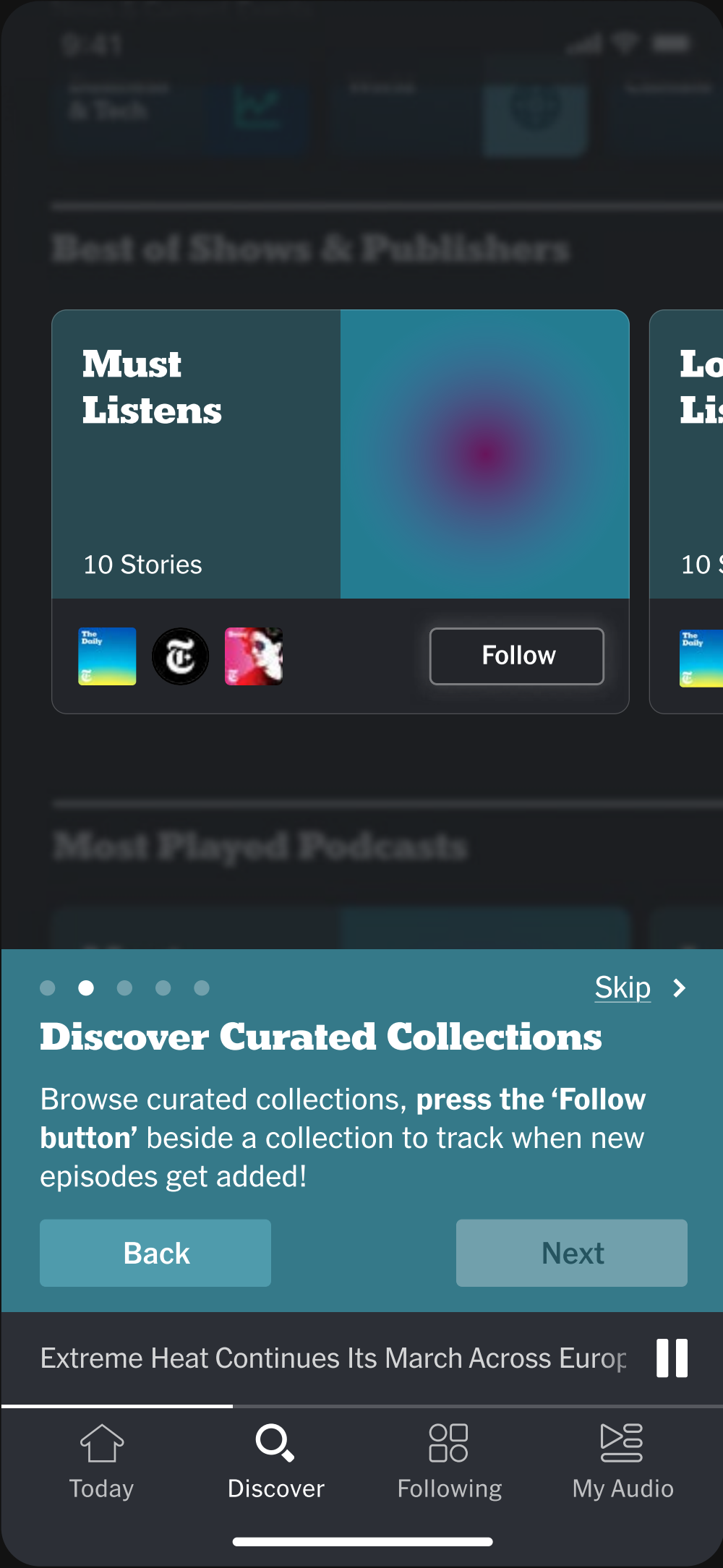
A Learning Moment

NYT Audio Onboarding

Core Takeaway



A. Onboarding as Education



Spent majority of my time building a complex flow to test if our users appreciated guidance through the app, and while it did provide that insight: —*Onboarding as Education* succeeded at teaching participants about the app’s features, but it’s not clear they actually want to be taught—

“**These are not revolutionary features. The idea of having to learn to drag and drop... I just want to get to the next screen ... Unless there is a new feature, many of the platforms are similar.**”

So did the first 10 seconds of the session: —5/6 users chose to opt out of the onboarding flow in the first pass.

A Learning Moment

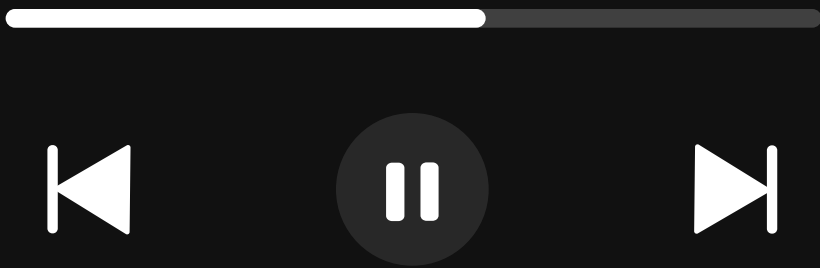
NYT Audio Onboarding

Up Next

Core Takeaway

NYT Audio Onboarding

Ideation



Especially when working under such harsh time constraints (4 days) when designing for research sessions:

Work to identify the simplest way of uncovering useful information as opposed to getting caught up in details of the interaction. Focus on the MVP.

Core Takeaway

NYT Audio Onboarding

Up Next

Ideation

NYT Audio Onboarding

The Details, Round B.



B. Onboarding as Discovery

Emphasizes

Understanding of **breadth of audio offerings in a personalized way**

Benefits

Highlights NYT’s unique offering of editorial curated content upfront.

Assumes

Users want guidance and curation in making listening decisions but also want to feel in control

Building a queue upfront gives users a reason to return to the app at a later time

Risks

Could result in less use of Today tab since route encourages use of queue functionality

Some users could be frustrated by needing to put in this ‘work’ upfront

The Details, Round B.

NYT Audio Onboarding

Up Next

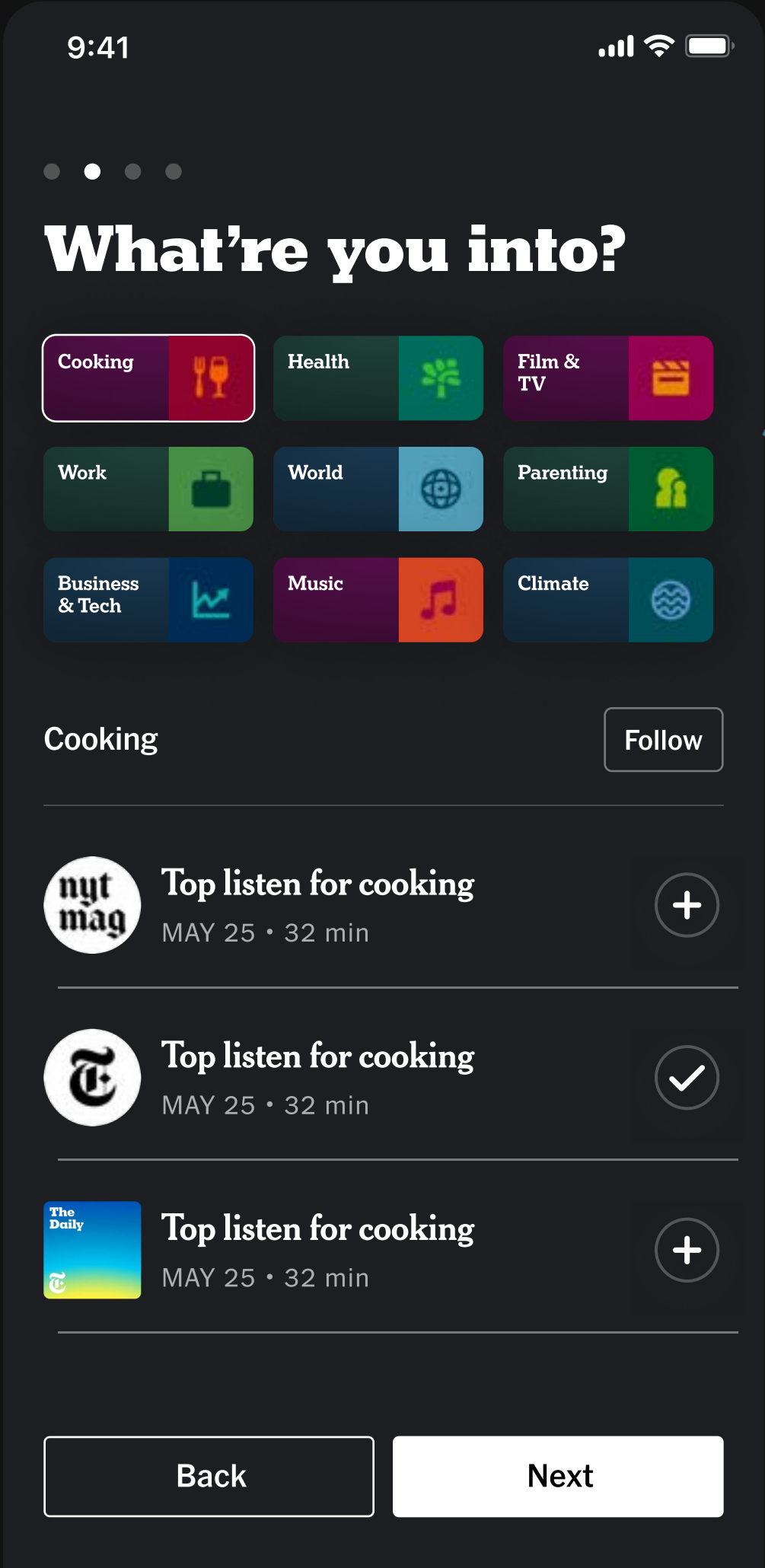
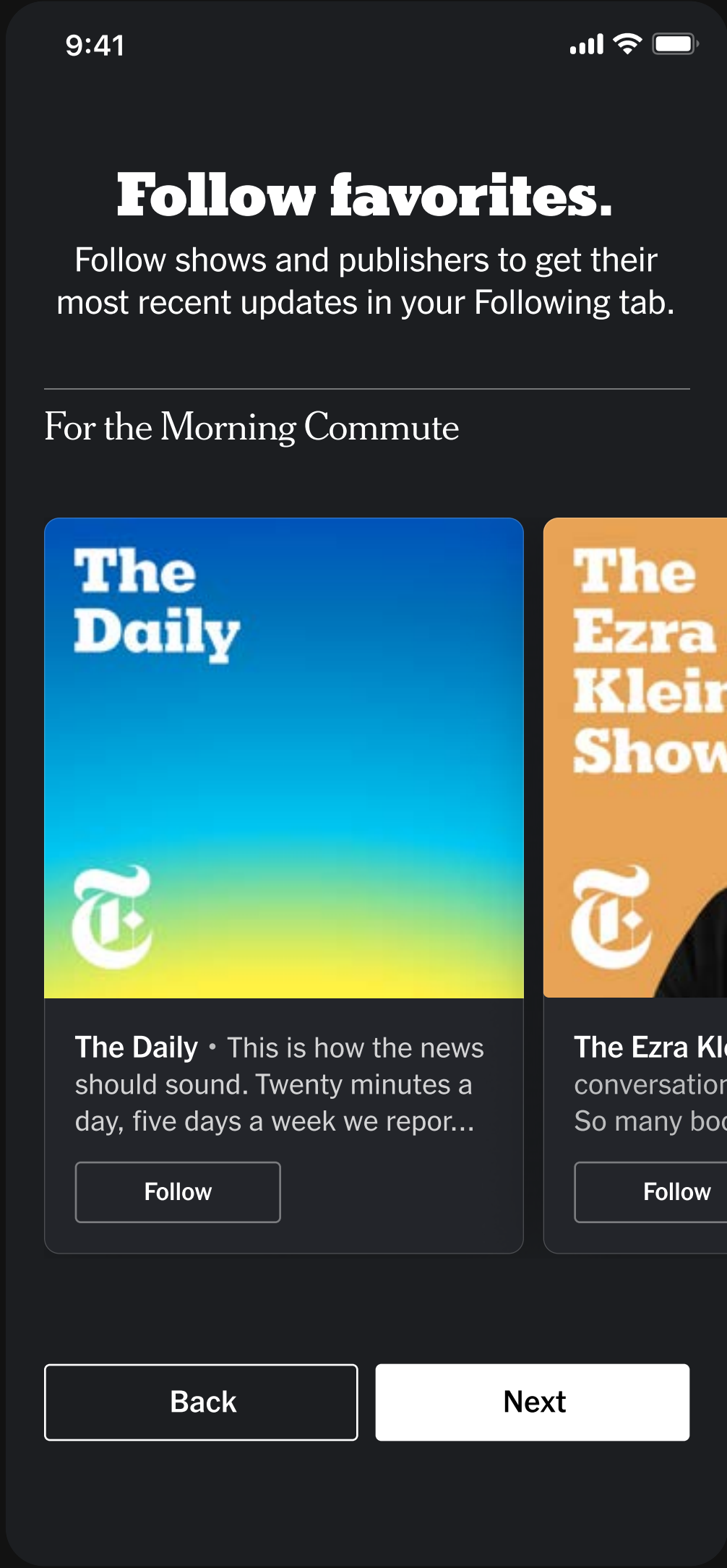
Ideation

NYT Audio Onboarding

What Users Tested



B. Onboarding as Discovery



'Cooking with...' Added to Queue



NYT Audio App Discover Tab

Ideation
NYT Audio Onboarding

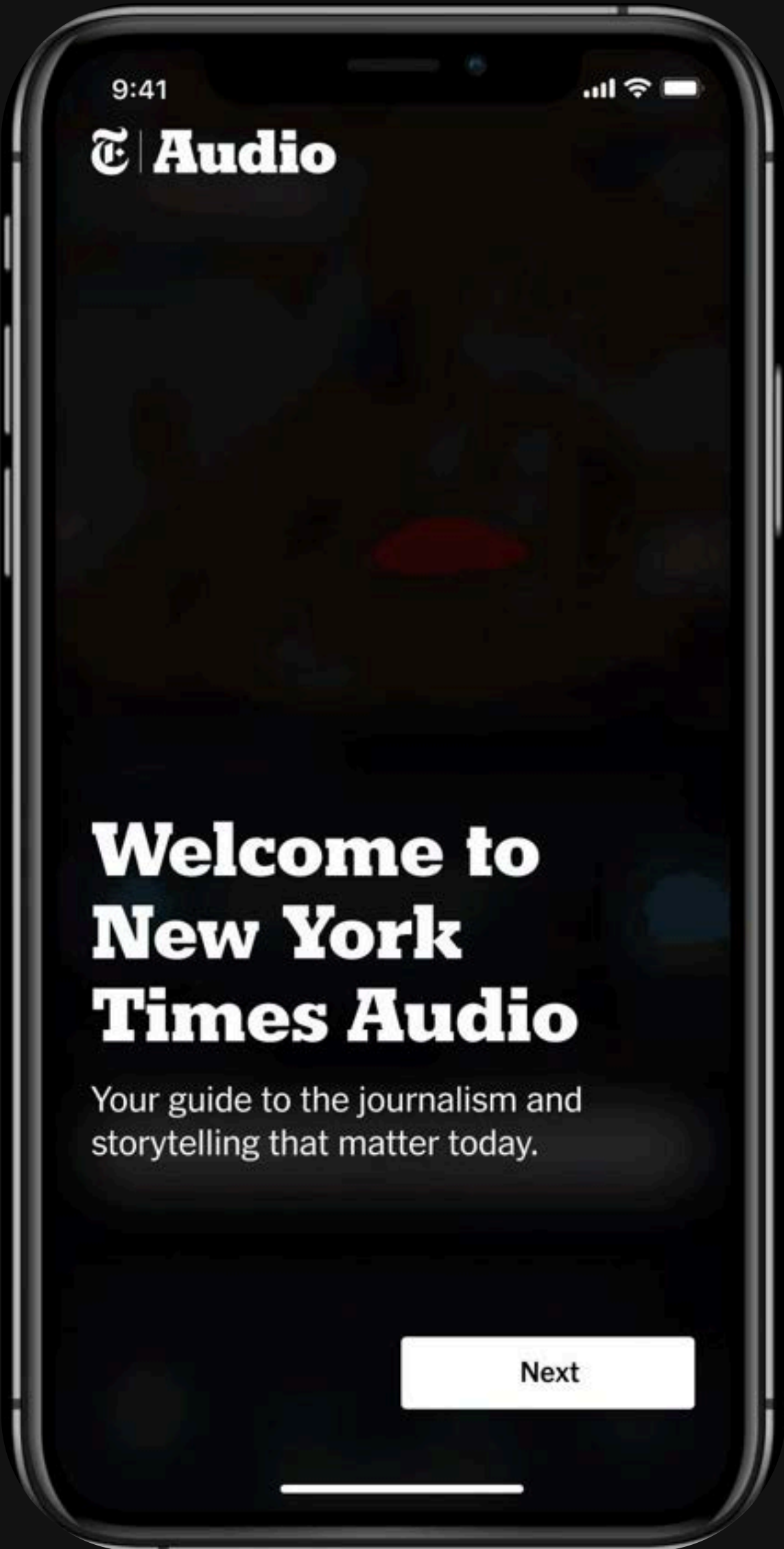
Up Next

What Users Tested
NYT Audio Onboarding

Research Findings



B. Onboarding as **Discovery**



A highly customizable experience that worked well at highlighting the different types of content offerings in the app.

What Users Tested

NYT Audio Onboarding

Up Next

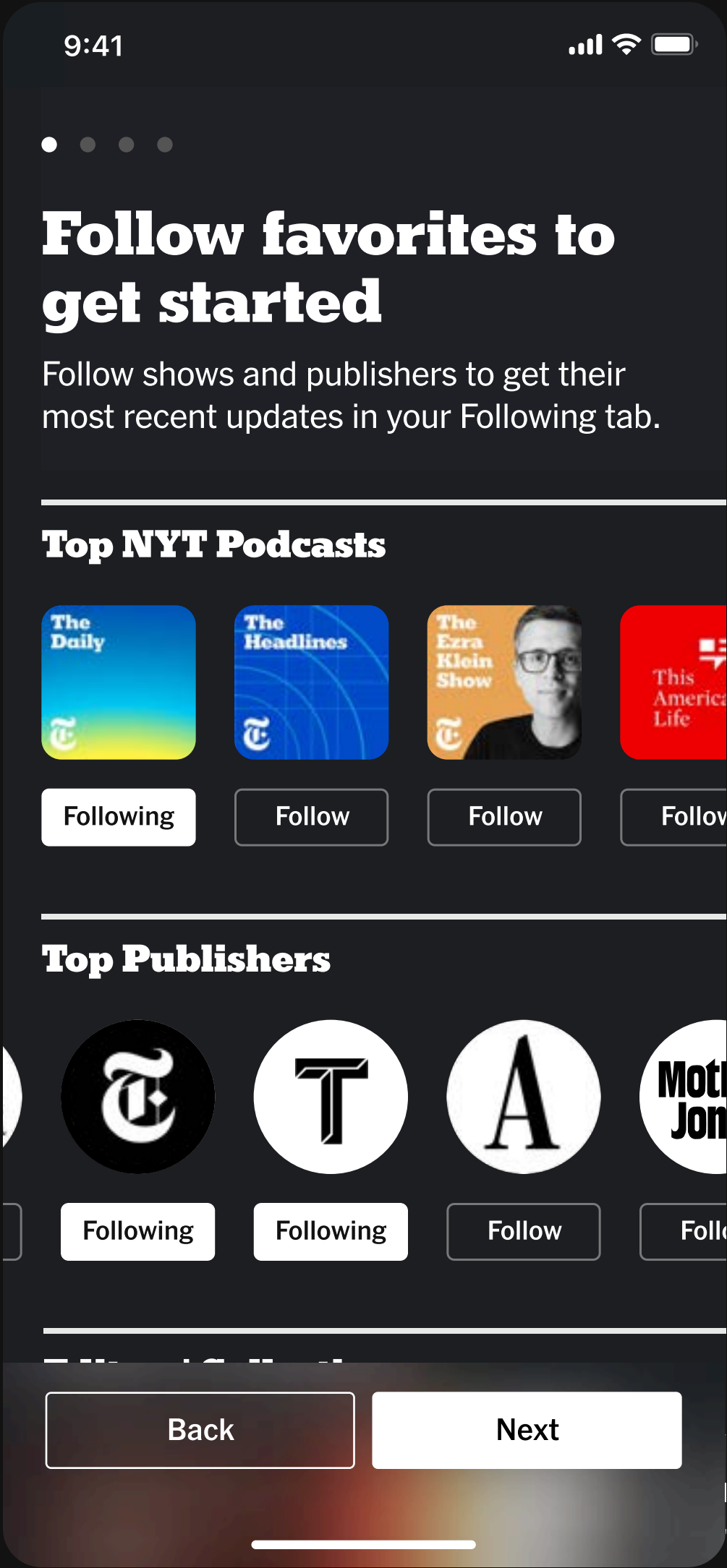
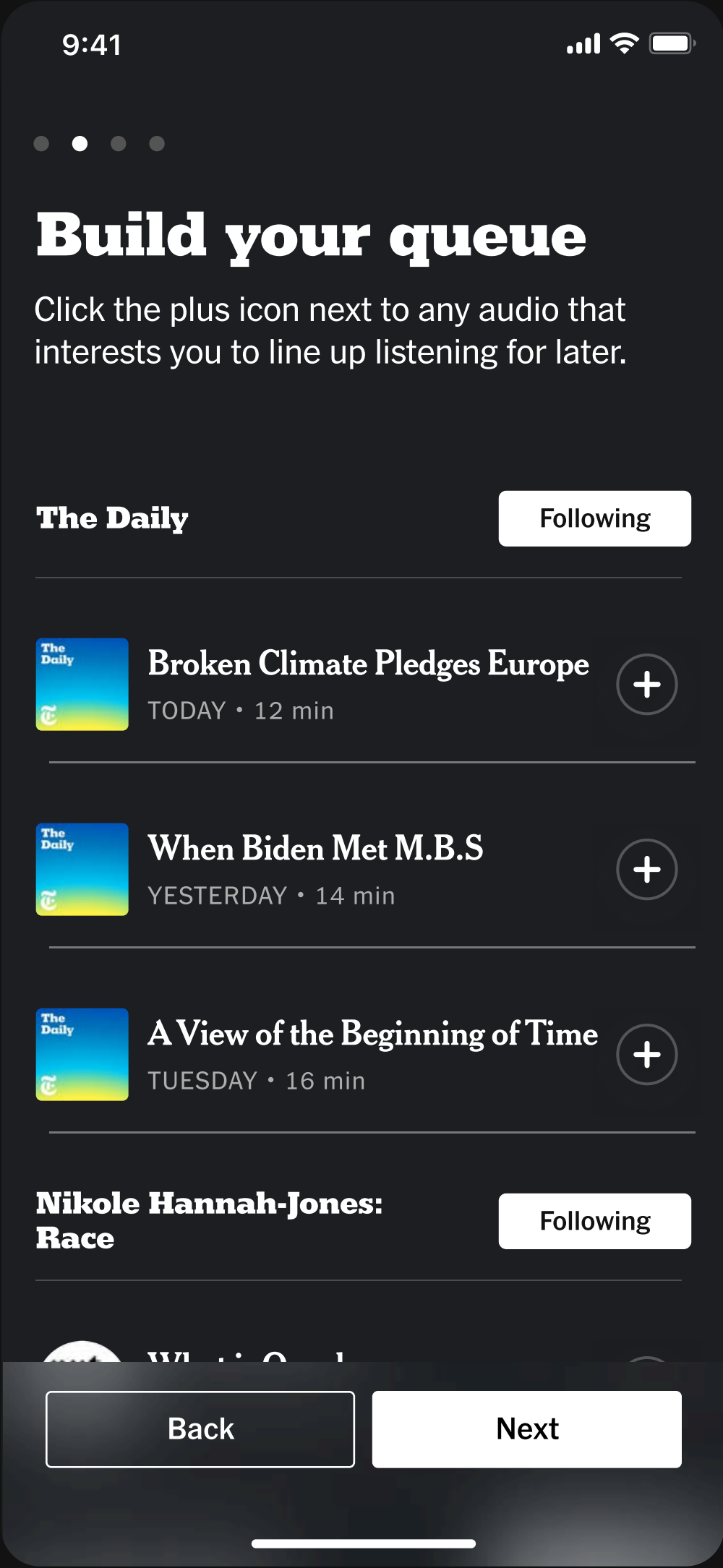
Research Findings

NYT Audio Onboarding

Overall Takeaways



B. Onboarding as Discovery



Here, upfront interaction became a big focus as a vessel for trying to get users to see the breadth of context that NYT curates, the result:

—*Onboarding as Discovery* succeeded at showcasing the breadth of our content offerings, but also created an expectation that the app will be personalized or customizable—

But, because of the highly customizable nature of the flow, the core value prop of the app—its curation—was completely lost. Some users even initially expressed deep interest in the value add, and *still* forgot about the feature once moving through the flow.

“It’s all curated by editors? That seems really interesting! I trust The Times for journalism. And understanding that they are putting in quality work like that... that fills a hole.”

Research Findings

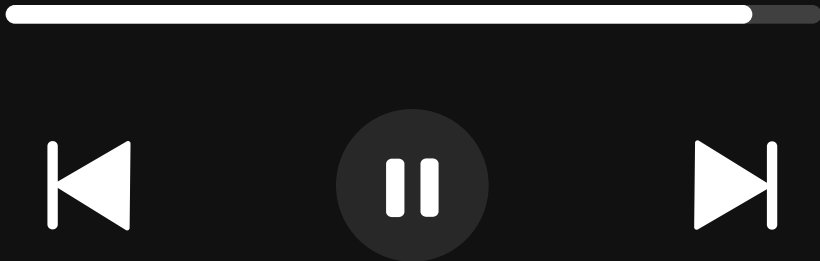
NYT Audio Onboarding

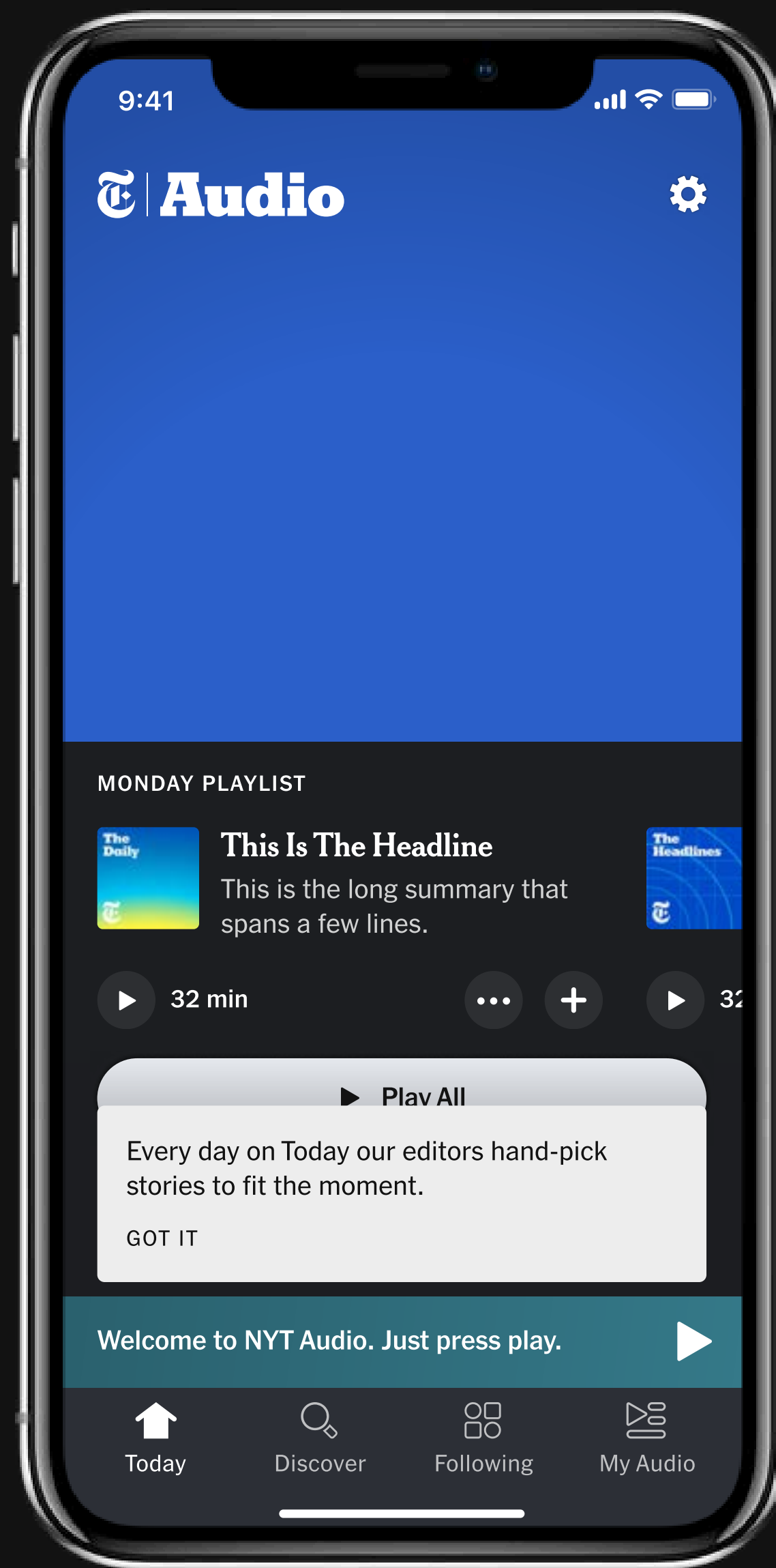
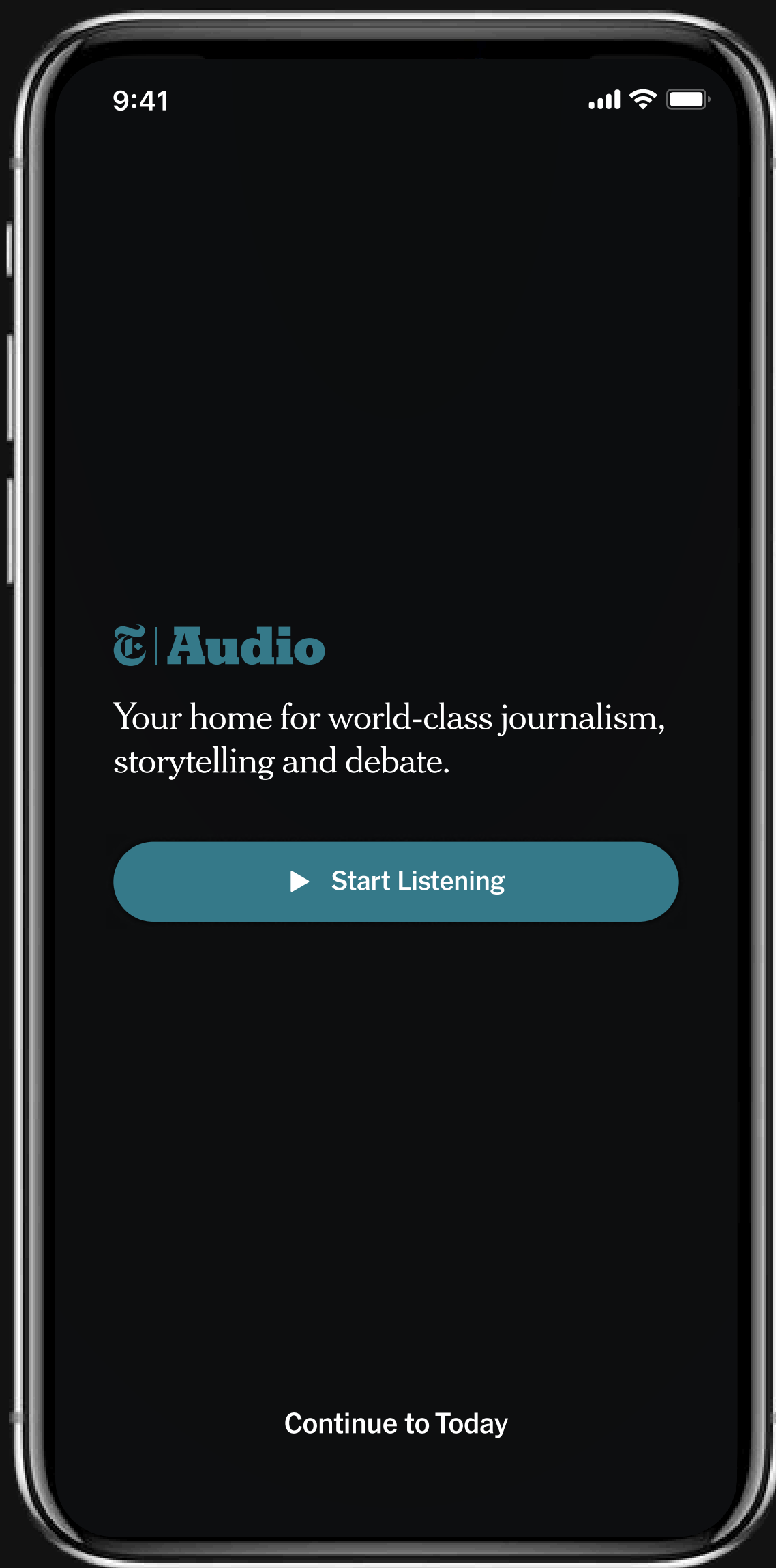
Up Next

Further Impact

NYT Audio Onboarding

Part 2





Further Impact

NYT Audio Onboarding

Up Next

Part 2

NYT Audio Today Optimizations



Design & Research

NYT Audio Onboarding

BREAKDOWN
HYPOTHESIS
&
PINPOINT
INTERVENTION
OPPORTUNTIES

IDEATE

DEVELOP
MOCKUPS

RECEIVE
FEEDBACK &
IMPROVE

DEVELOP
PROTOTYPES

TEST WITH
USERS

REFRAME
PROBLEM
SPACE

Design & Research + Product, Engineering & Brand

NYT Audio Today Optimizations

ASSESS
USER
RESEARCH
&
REFRAME
PROBLEM
SPACE

START
SKETCHING

FEEDBACK
CYCLES W/ KEY
STAKEHOLDERS

ITERATE &
DEVELOP
FINAL
MOCKUPS
WITH
INTEGRATED
FEEDBACK

WORK WITH
PRODUCT/
ENG TO
DEFINE
PRIORITIES
VS. FAST
FOLLOWS

ANNOTATE
SPECS FOR
HANDOFF

BEGIN
DEVELOPMENT

We hypothesize that getting:

Users to listen to more items in their first week with the app

&

Users to use the app for multiple difference use cases (i.e news updates, content discovery)

will improve long term retention.



We know that consumption and completion of multiple titles in a user's first week correlates positively to retention.

The Problem Space

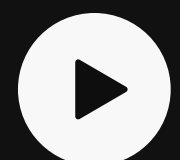
NYT Audio Today Optimizations

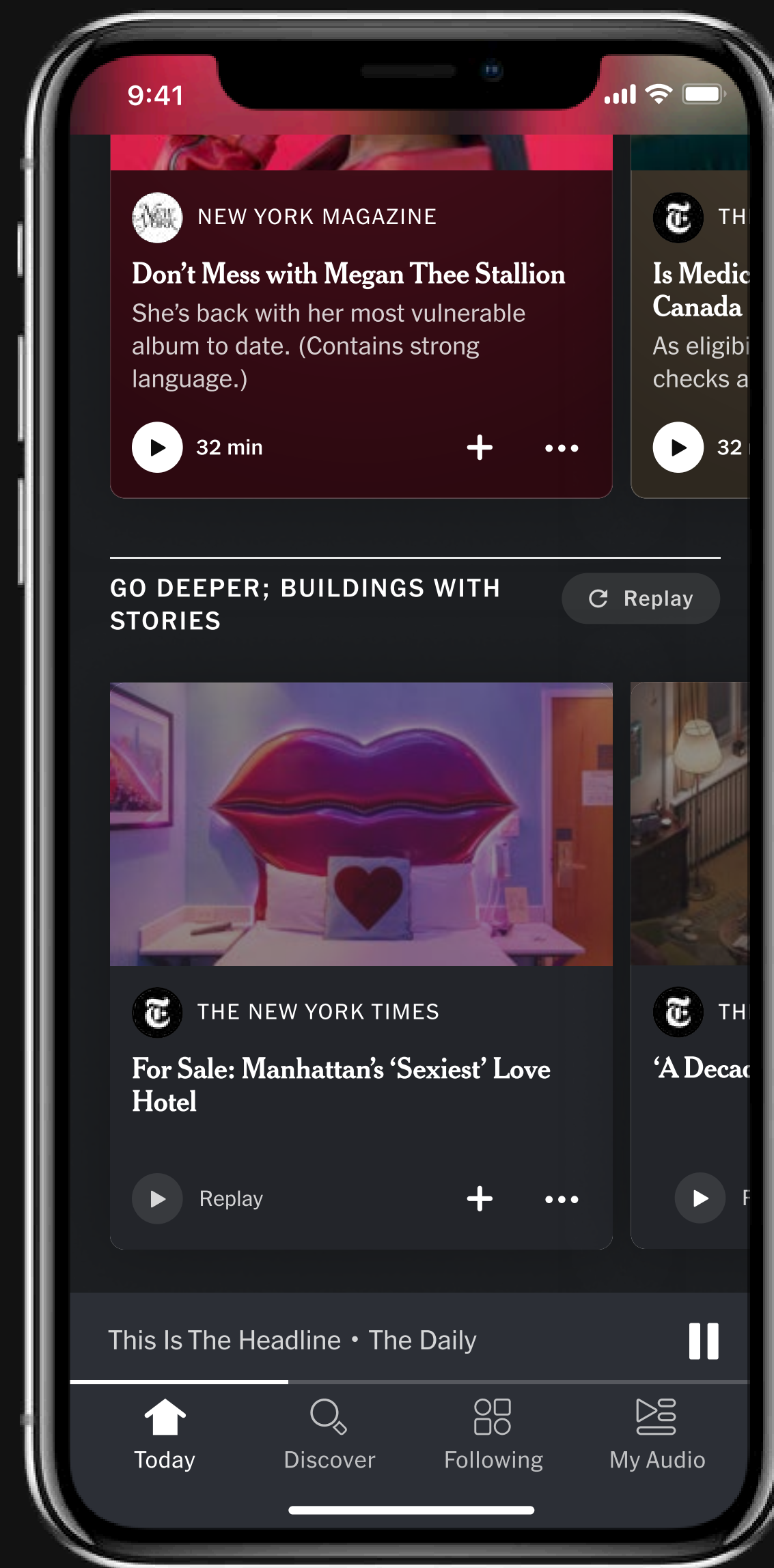
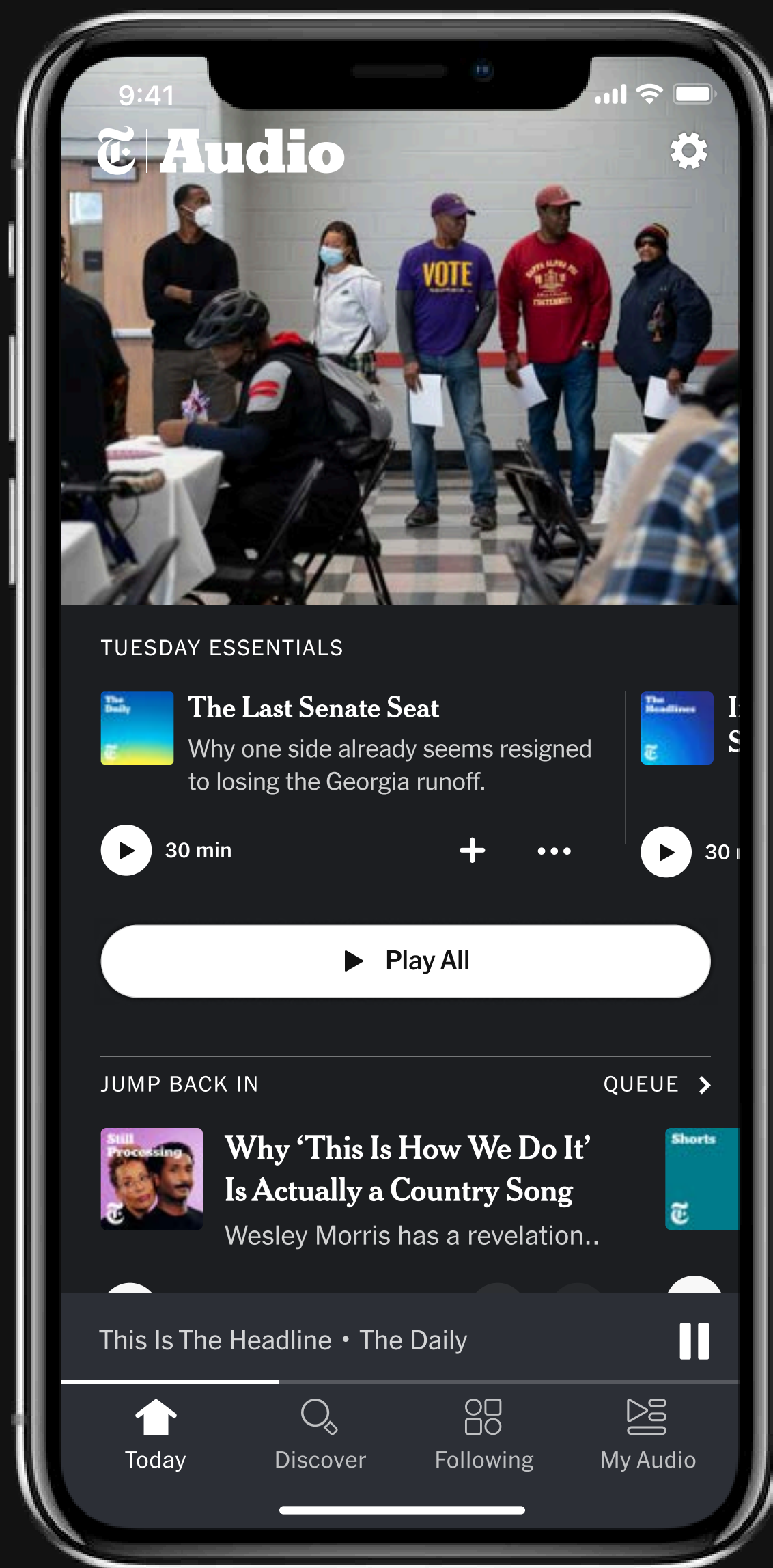
Up Next

The Project

Today Optimizations

Defining Core Opportunities





Optimizing an Audio App's Homescreen in Order to Increase Retention

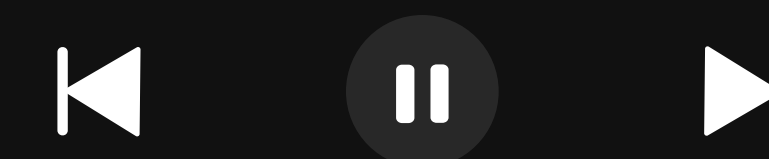
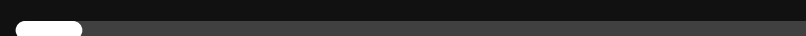
NYT Audio Today Optimizations

Up Next

Defining Core Opportunities

Today Optimizations

Narrow Touchpoints / Broad Explorations



HMW make it easy for users to find the titles they want to listen to on Today?



DISCOVERY



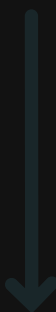
Tighten real estate to reveal more content upfront



Differentiate content that has already been listened to

Provide opportunities for personalization

HMW encourage a user to listen every time they open the app?



JUST PRESS PLAY



Improve play button hierarchy

Allow forms of content filtering

Incentivize listening

HMW encourage users to listen to more than one title per session?



CONTINUOUS LISTENING



Allow for adding full playlists to queue

Playlist everything approach

Auto populate new listening suggestions

Defining Core Opportunities

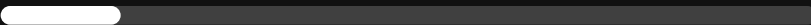
NYT Audio Today Optimizations

Up Next

Narrow Touchpoints/Broad Explorations

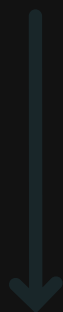
NYT Audio Today Optimizations

Problem Solving



- Research 🤝 Design 🤝 Product

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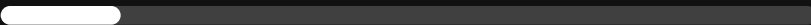
NYT Audio Today Optimizations

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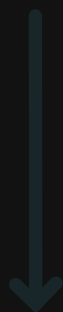
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CONTINUOUS LISTENING



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Defining Core Opportunities

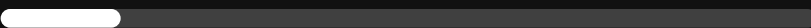
NYT Audio Today Optimizations

Up Next

Narrow Touchpoints/Broad Explorations

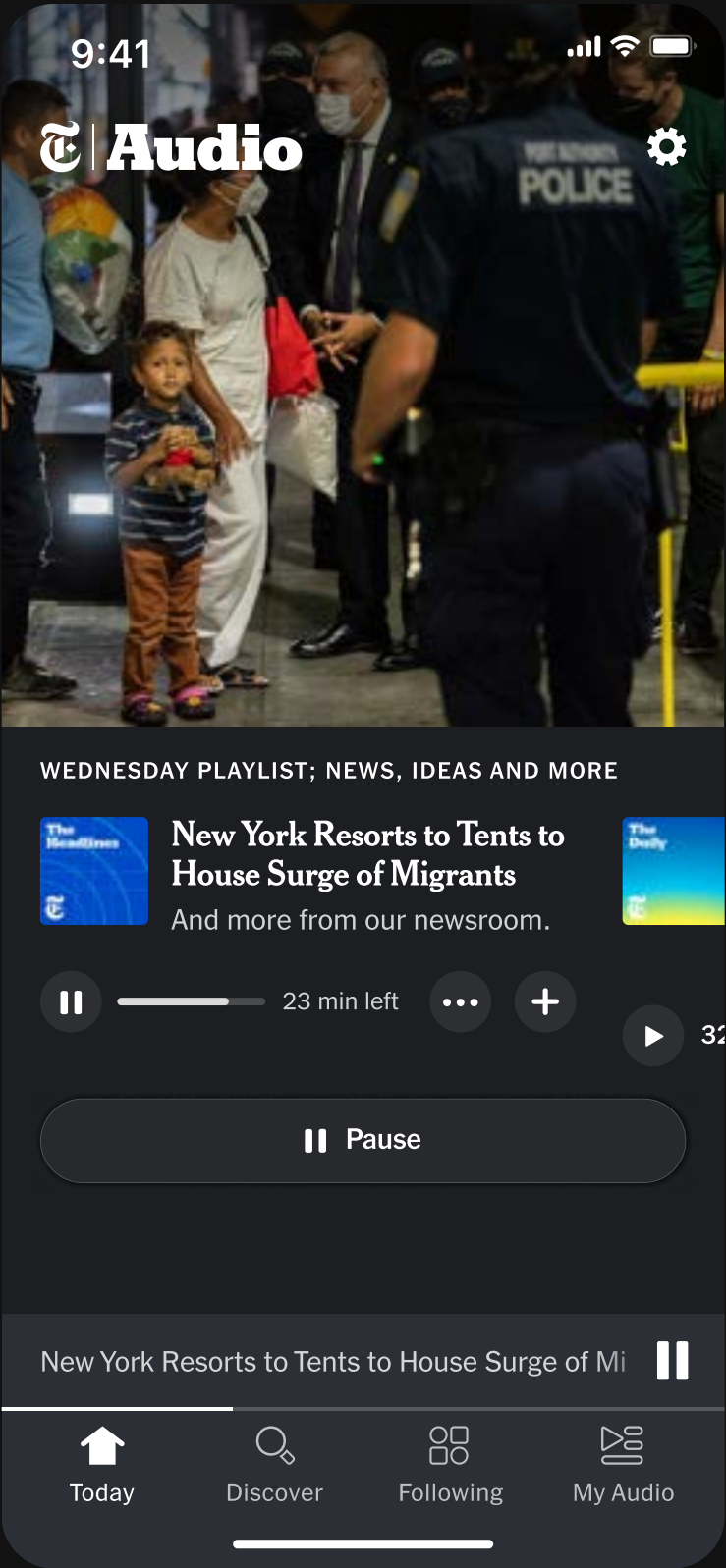
NYT Audio Today Optimizations

Problem Solving

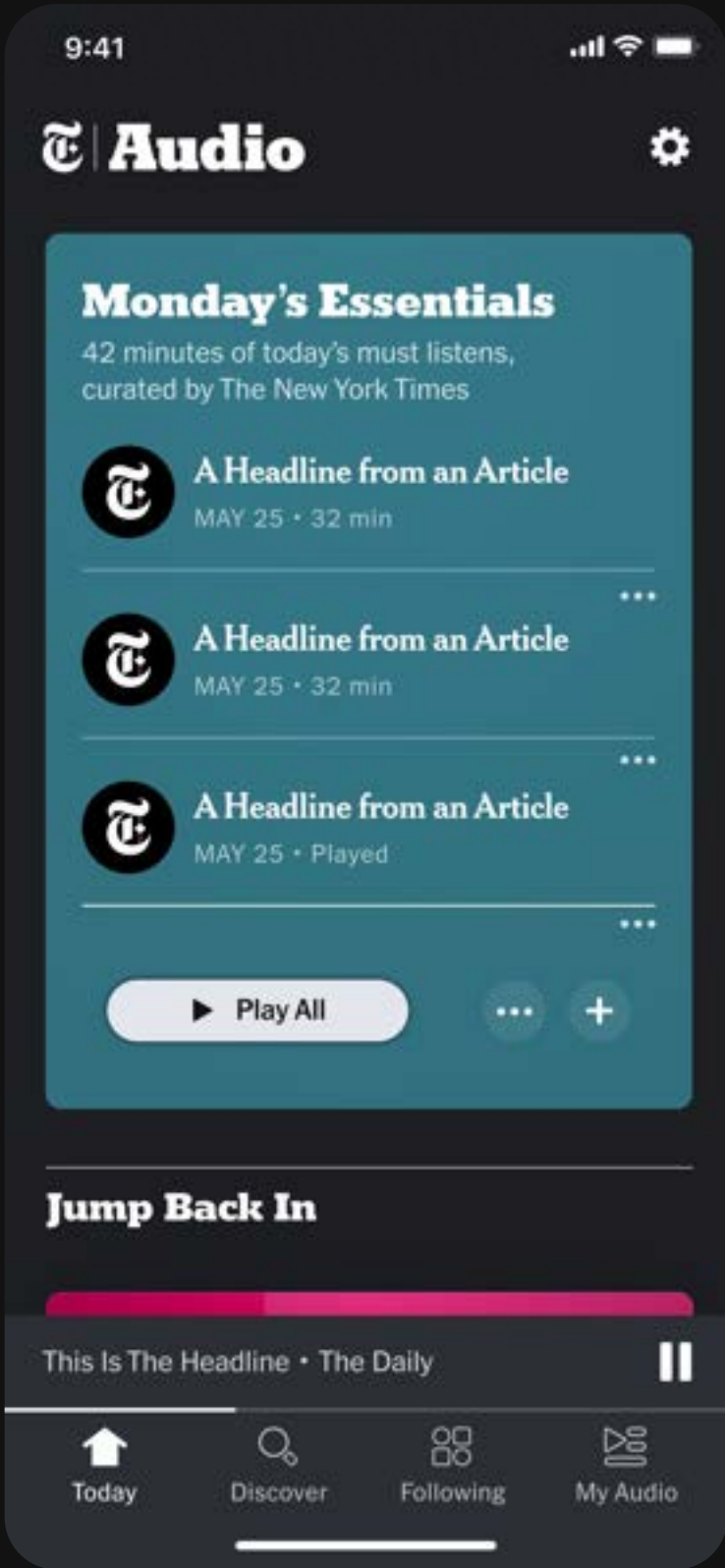


- Research 🤝 Design 🤝 Product

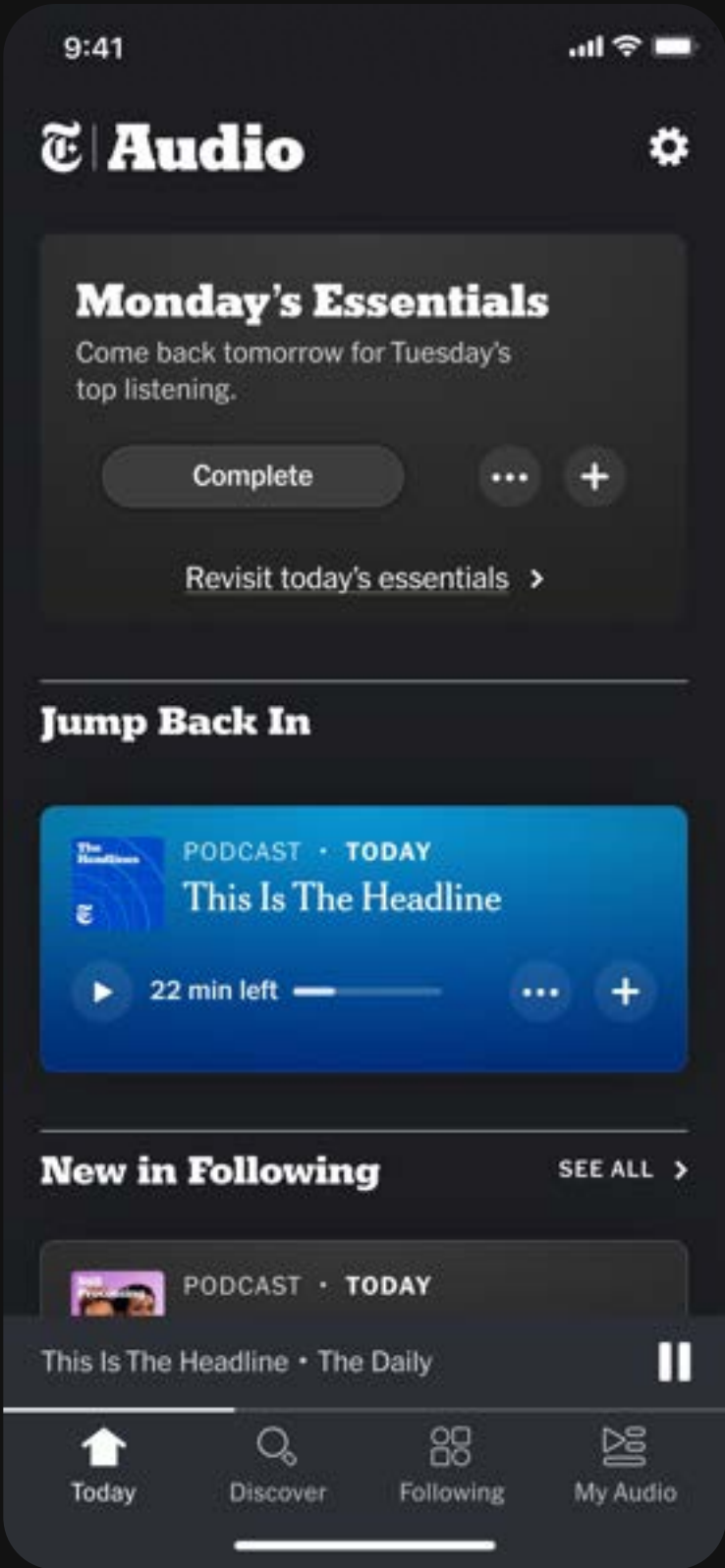
 Tighten real estate to reveal more content upfront +  Differentiate content that has already been listened to +  Playlist everything approach = Use layout and type styling updates to tighten the real estate the essentials package covers in order to get users to scroll beyond the fold and interact with more content



Essentials package at the time



Essentials package explorations



Narrow Touchpoints w/ Broad Explorations

NYT Audio Today Optimizations

Up Next

Problem Solving
NYT Audio Today Optimizations

Handing Off



 Tighten real estate to reveal more content upfront

+

 Differentiate content that has already been listened to

+

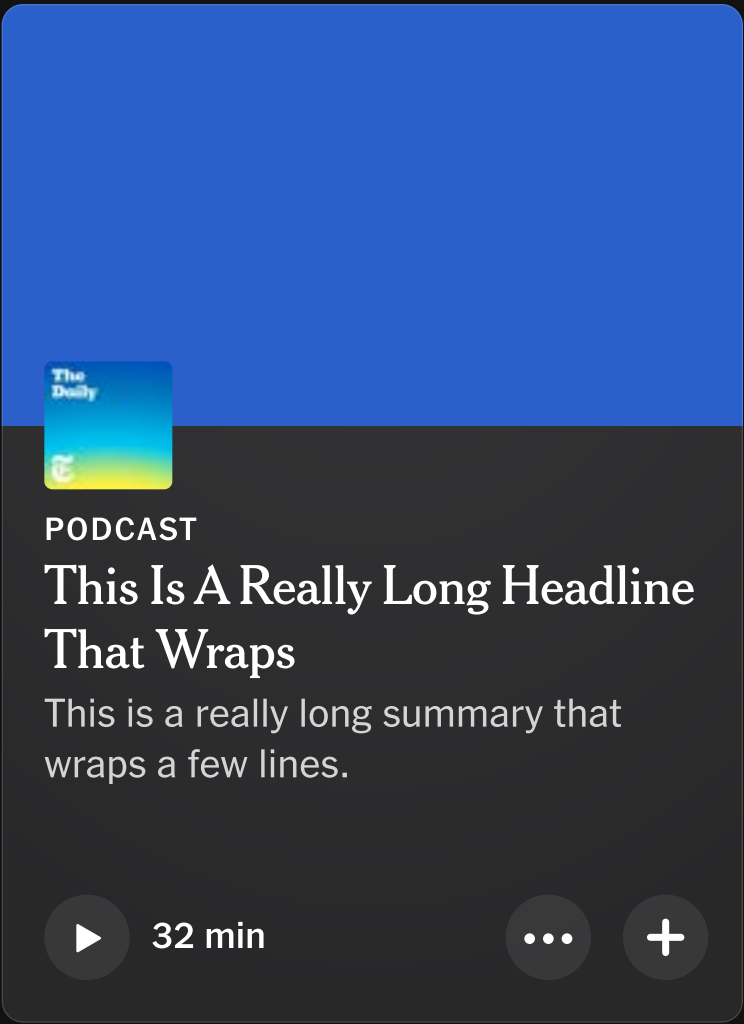
 Playlist everything approach

=

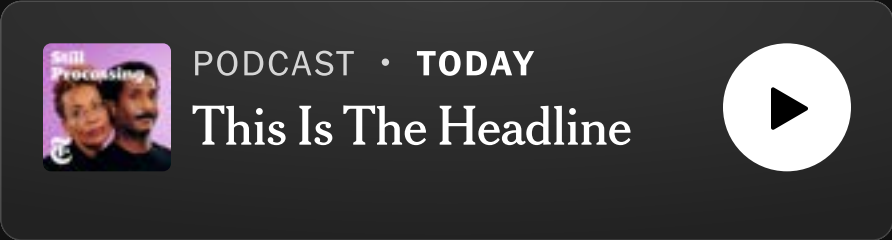
Update the layout, styling and information architecture of cards and carousels to support users' interaction habits

UFS RESEARCH

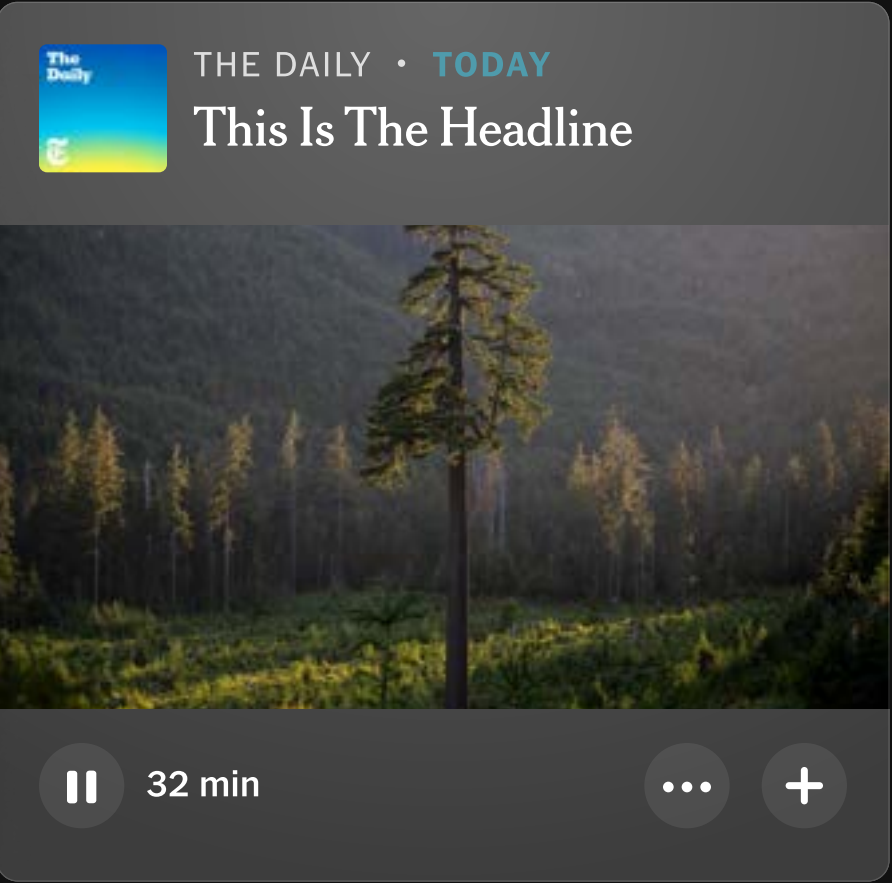
Order, visual hierarchy, and the use of imagery all contributed to shifting users behaviors towards scrolling and exploring the Today tab



Card designs at the time



Card design explorations

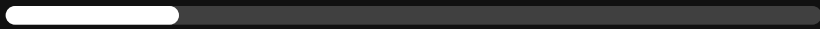


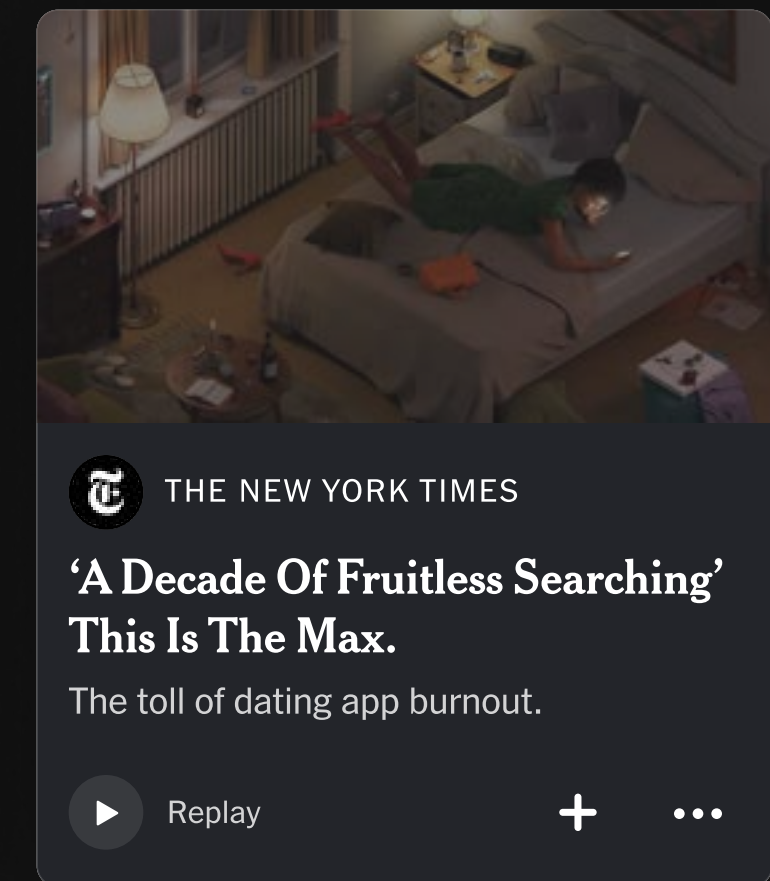
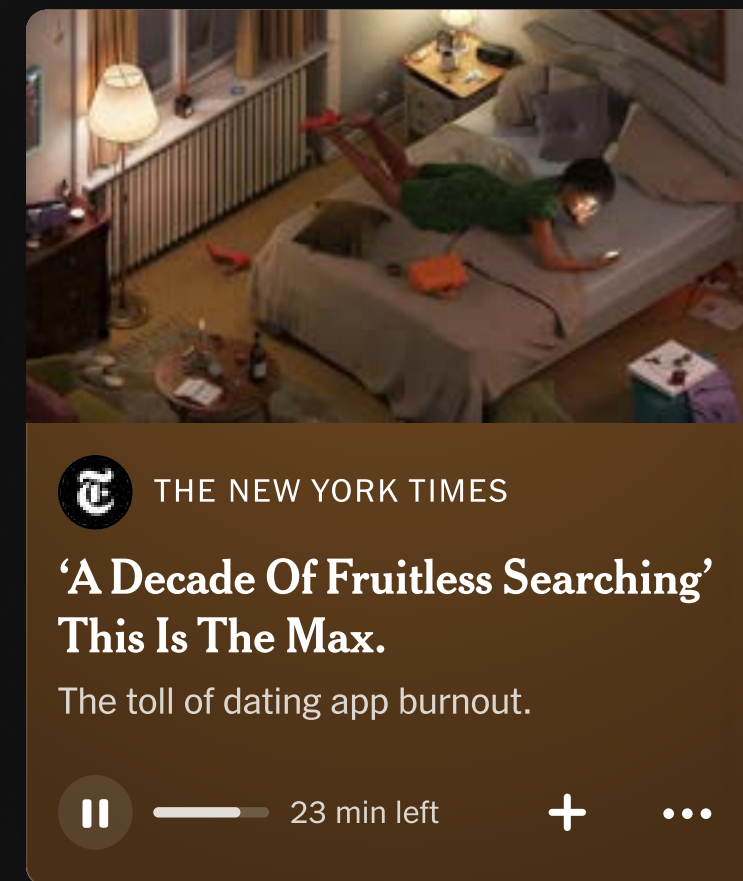
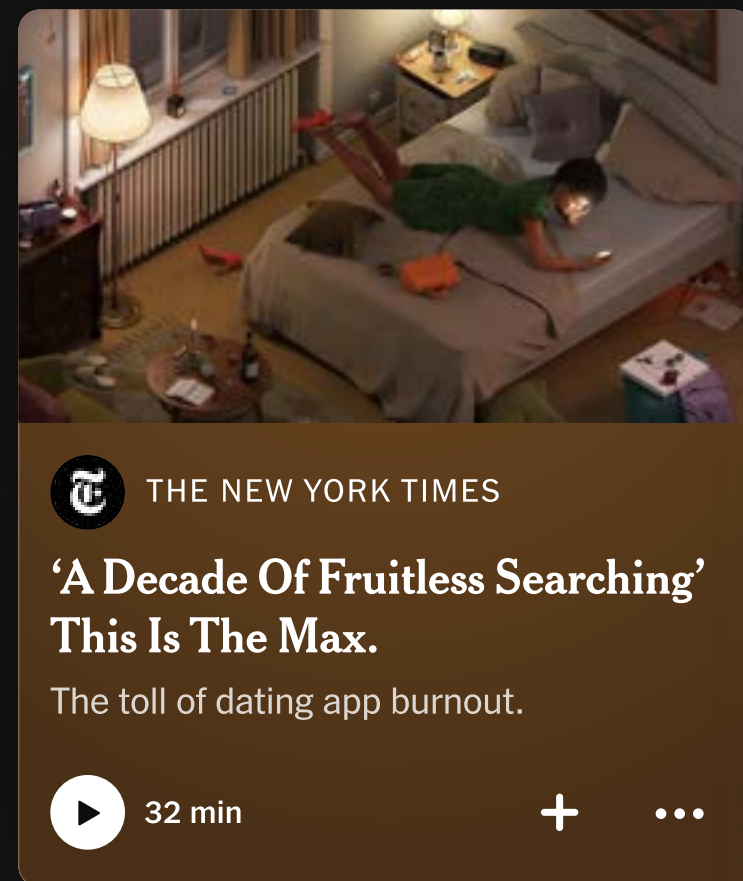
Narrow Touchpoints w/ Broad Explorations

NYT Audio Today Optimizations

Up Next

Collaborating with Stakeholders
NYT Audio Today Optimizations
Handing Off





“Feels too drastic”

- Brand

“Is this starting to look like a sandwich?”

- Me (Design)

“Feels like the drastic change we need to see an impact on the numbers”

- Product

“The image on top feels much better”

- Brand

“This feels right”

- Me (Design)

“I can see how these other updates provide a new experience that could impact the numbers”

- Product

- Brand 🤝 Design 🤝 Product

Collaborating with Stakeholders

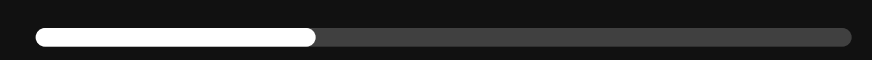
Today NYT Audio Today Optimizations

Up Next

Handing Off

NYT Audio Today Optimizations


Refining Handoff Materials




CARD SPECS - Dimensions

341pt

1



1

 THE NEW YORK TIMES

'A Decade Of Fruitless Searching'

This Is The Max.

The toll of dating app burnout. This is the max limit for characters.

32 min

+

...

(10 columns, 276pt)

Max Height

1


Max

Cards will follow dynamic logic outlined below, but will have a max height. if the amount of text given exceeds this space, truncate remaining text.


Max height is based on showing two lines of headline and two lines of summary text max.

CARD SPECS - Spacing

1



12 pt

 THE NEW YORK TIMES

8 pt

'A Decade Of Fruitless Searching'

Long Titles

4 pt

The toll of dating app burnout. This is extra text

16pt


32 min

+


...

12 pt

2



12pt

 THE NEW YORK TIMES

'A Decade Of Fruitless Searching'

Long Titles

The toll of dating app burnout. This is extra text

32 min

+

...

Content Card Spacing

1

Vertical card spacing

Vertical space on cards is as specified and is the same for both the single and carousel large cards.

2

Horizontal card spacing

There is 12pt padding on both sides of the card that affects all content on card except the image, the image spans the entire width of the the card for both the single and carousel large cards

Handing Off

Today NYT Audio Today Optimizations

Up Next

Refining Handoff Materials

NYT Audio Today Optimizations

Communicating Impact

Large Cards

Changes are the same across the single and carousel versions, except large cards have no max height

Large Card Specific

- ☐ Move source logo off the image into the kicker line
- ☐ Cards support 2 headlines and two summaries max, truncate text if it extends beyond this height
- ☐ Played state reflected in card color (changes from color to grey, image fades)

Across all cards

- ☐ Changes to font size/color/weight for kicker, headline and summary
- ☐ New action bar
- ☐ Now playing icon on currently playing content

Completed 0 of 6

1 THIS IS THE KICKER STYLING

2 This Is The Header Styling

3 This is the summary styling

Universal Text Styles

1 KICKER

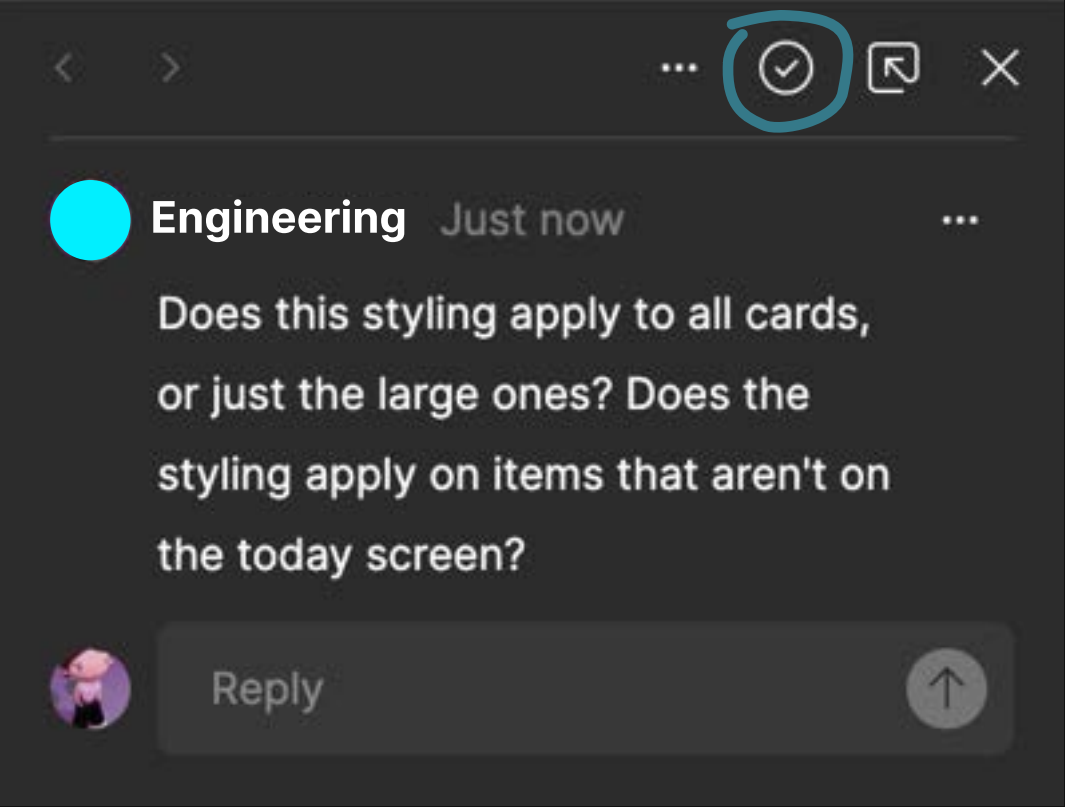
Kicker is 8px away from the logo
NYT Franklin
Medium
12pt
Line-Height: 125%
Letter-Spacing 8%
#FFFFFF

2 HEADER

NYTFranklin
Medium
14pt
Line-Height: 130%
Letter-Spacing: 0
#FFFFFF 80% [Content Secondary]

3 SUMMARY

NYTFranklin
Medium
14pt
Line-Height: 130%
Letter-Spacing: 0
#FFFFFF 80% [Content Secondary]



Refining Handoff Materials

Today NYT Audio Today Optimizations

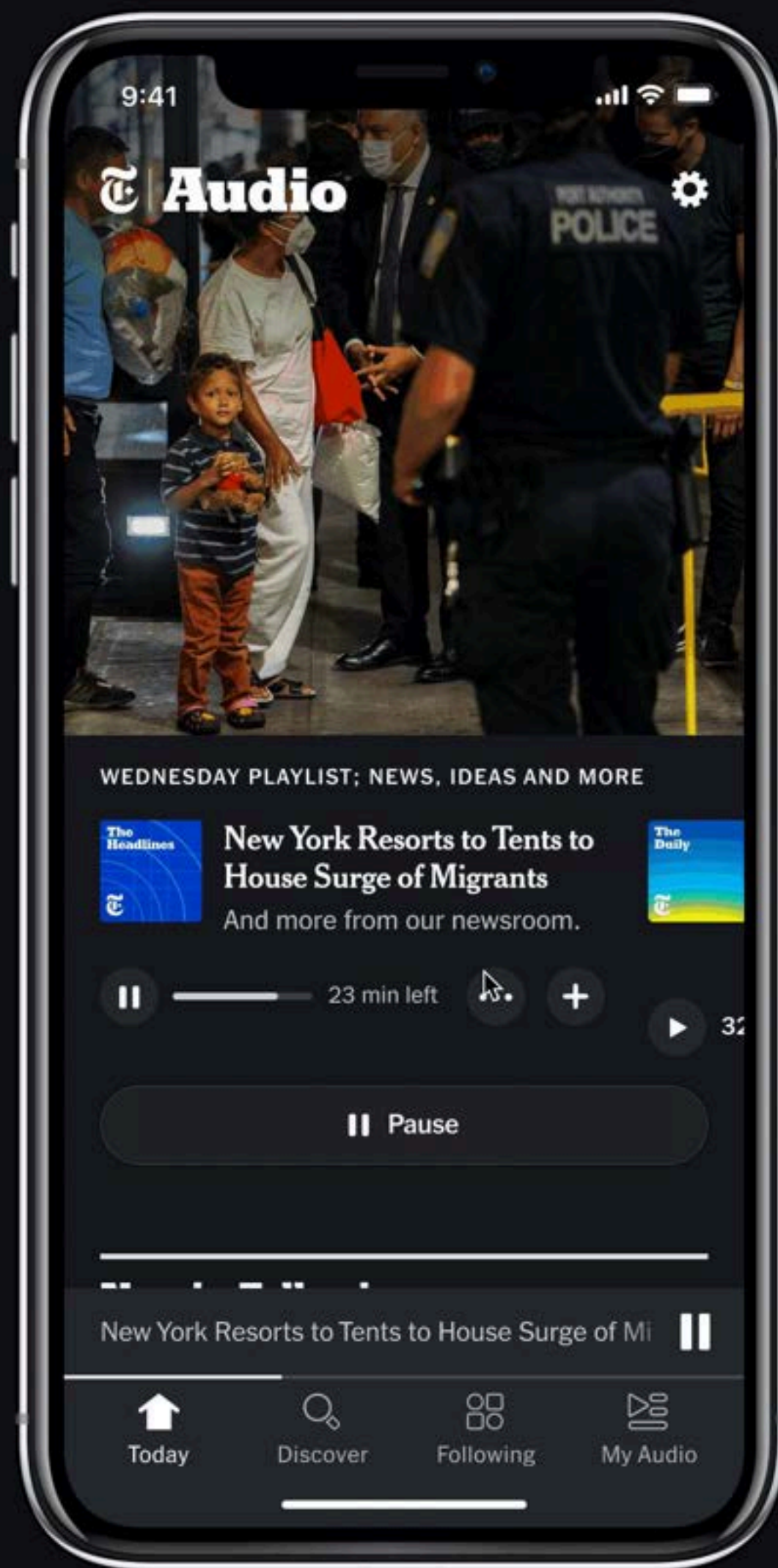
Up Next

Communicating Impact

NYT Audio Today Optimizations

Let Tools Work For You





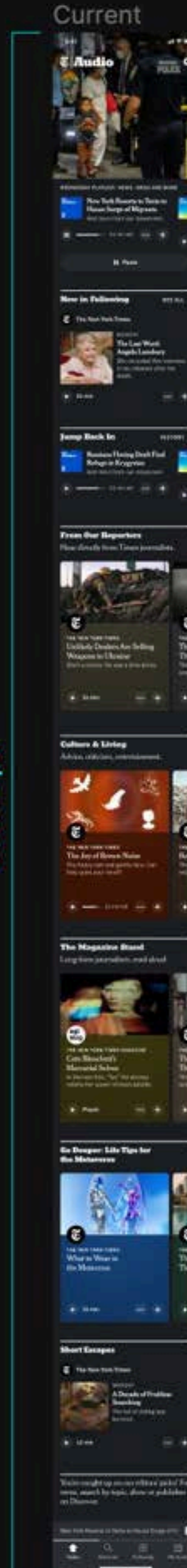
Today Tab without Optimizations



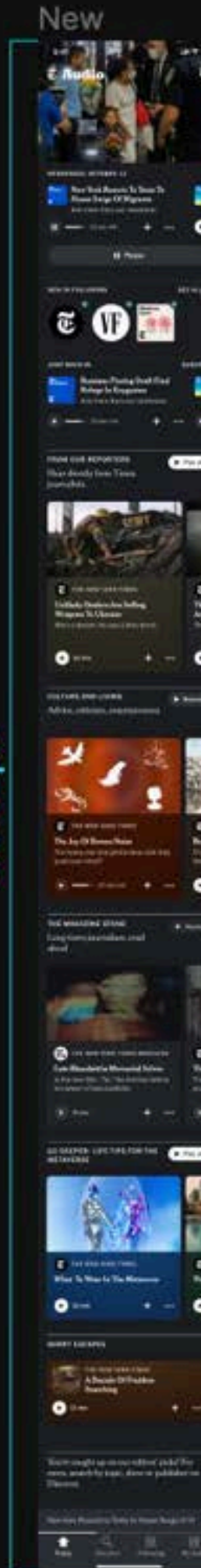
Today Tab with Optimizations



3995px



3148px



Communicating Impact

NYT Audio Today Optimizations

Up Next

Let Tools Work For You

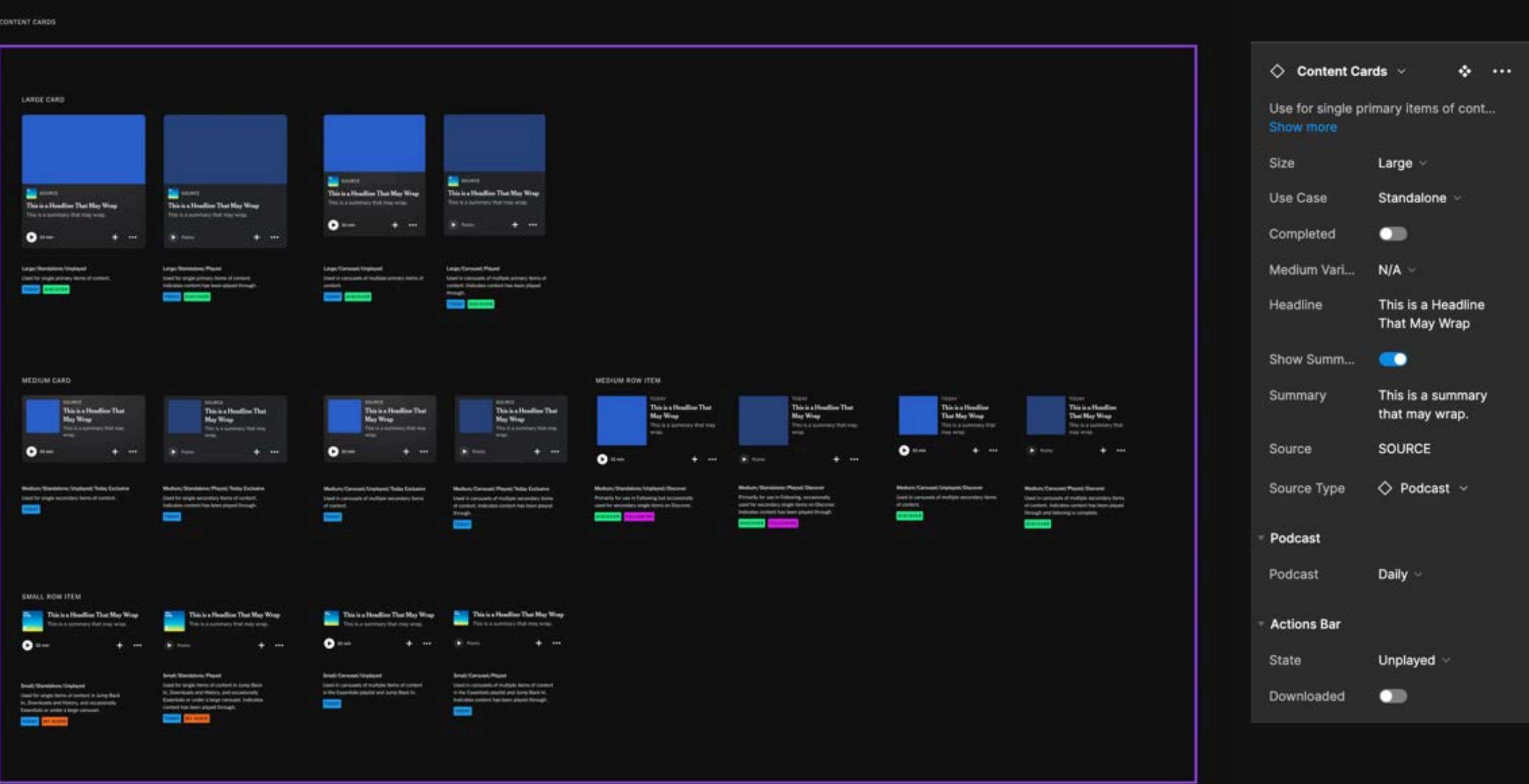
NYT Audio Today Optimizations

Final Thoughts



Especially when working with complex, interconnected designs:

Start to develop components as soon designs start to become finalized.



Complex component variants editable from the top level that I developed... **after** shipping full screen mockups that had to be individually updated each time a card was changed

Let Tools Work
for You

NYT Audio Today Optimizations

Up Next

Final Thoughts
NYT Audio

Wrapping up



It is so important to have consistent and transparent communication across different functions (i.e research, engineering, product, editorial, brand) in as many steps of the design process as possible

&

Developing/building spaces for these interactions, and clearly specifying who the most relevant point people are early on is very valuable for creating a more seamless design process.

Final Thoughts

NYT Audio

Up Next

Wrapping up


Questions and Comments




Thank You!


Questions/Comments


CULTURE & LIVING


 MODERN LOVE


How to Feel Yourself
She's 83, blind, and looking for help at the sex shop.




 Replay








 THE NEW YORK TIMES


'A Decade of Fruitless Searching'
The toll of dating app burnout.



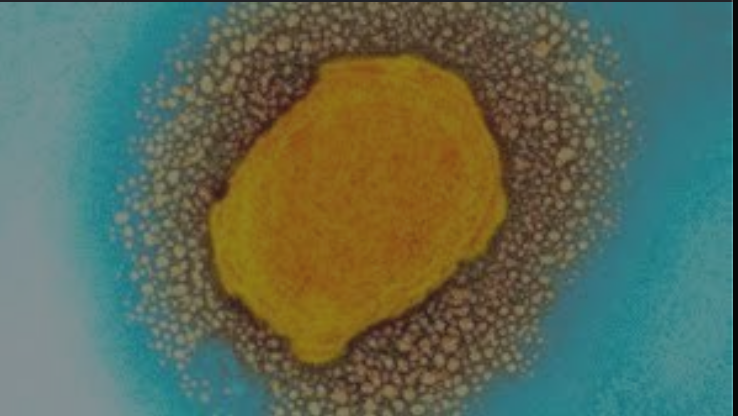
 Replay






 THE NEW YORK TIMES


Why Poorer Nations Get Little Help




 Replay








 MODERN LOVE

How to Feel Yourself
She's 83, blind, and looking for help at the sex shop.




 Replay







 THE NEW YORK TIMES


'A Decade of Fruitless Searching'
The toll of dating app burnout.



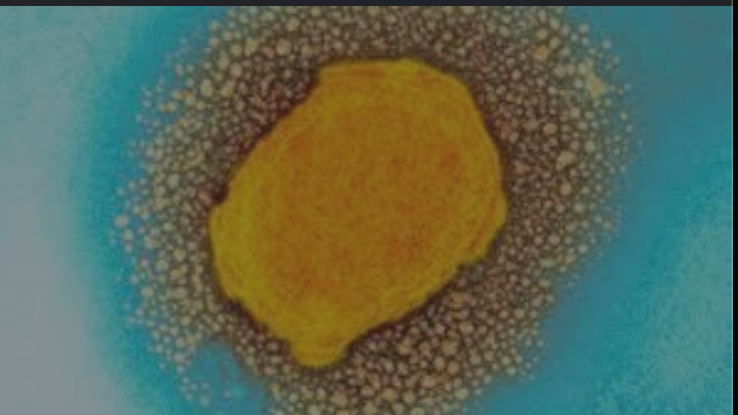
 Replay








 THE NEW YORK TIMES

Why Poorer Nations Get Little Help



 Replay







Editorial text combination
recommendations for cards based on
max height of 351px:

(4 lines total)

- 1 line header, up to 3 lines of summary
- 2 line header, up to 2 lines of summary
- 3 line header, up to 1 line of summary
- 4 line header, no summary

Text combinations that fall outside of
these suggestions will be truncated.

Dynamic Card sizing based on content, originally deemed feasible by engineering team

- Design 🤝 Engineering 🤝 Editorial

Appendix -
Problem Solving

