

Evaluating the Usability of a Super App

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April 2022

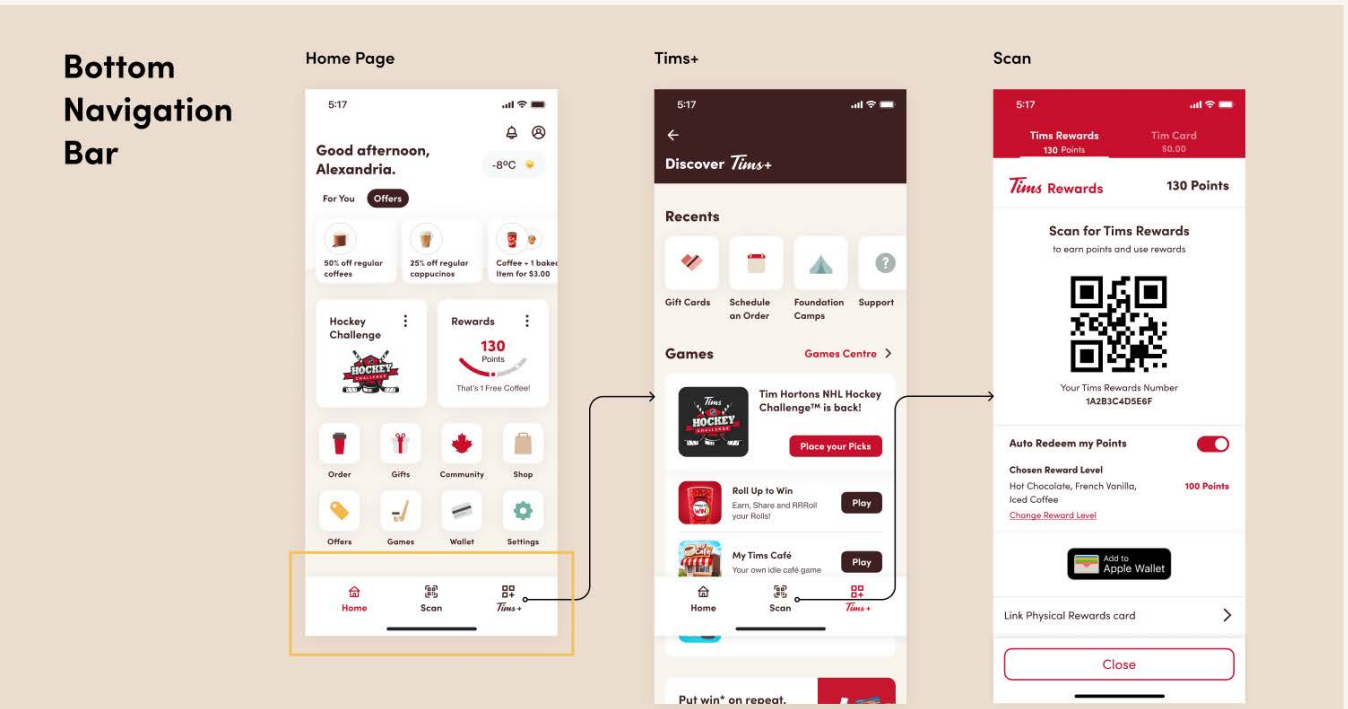


Problem Statement

Tim Horton's was undergoing a rebranding and relaunch of their popular mobile app. They wanted to understand how customers would respond to such a drastic change in look, feel and function.

Context & Goals

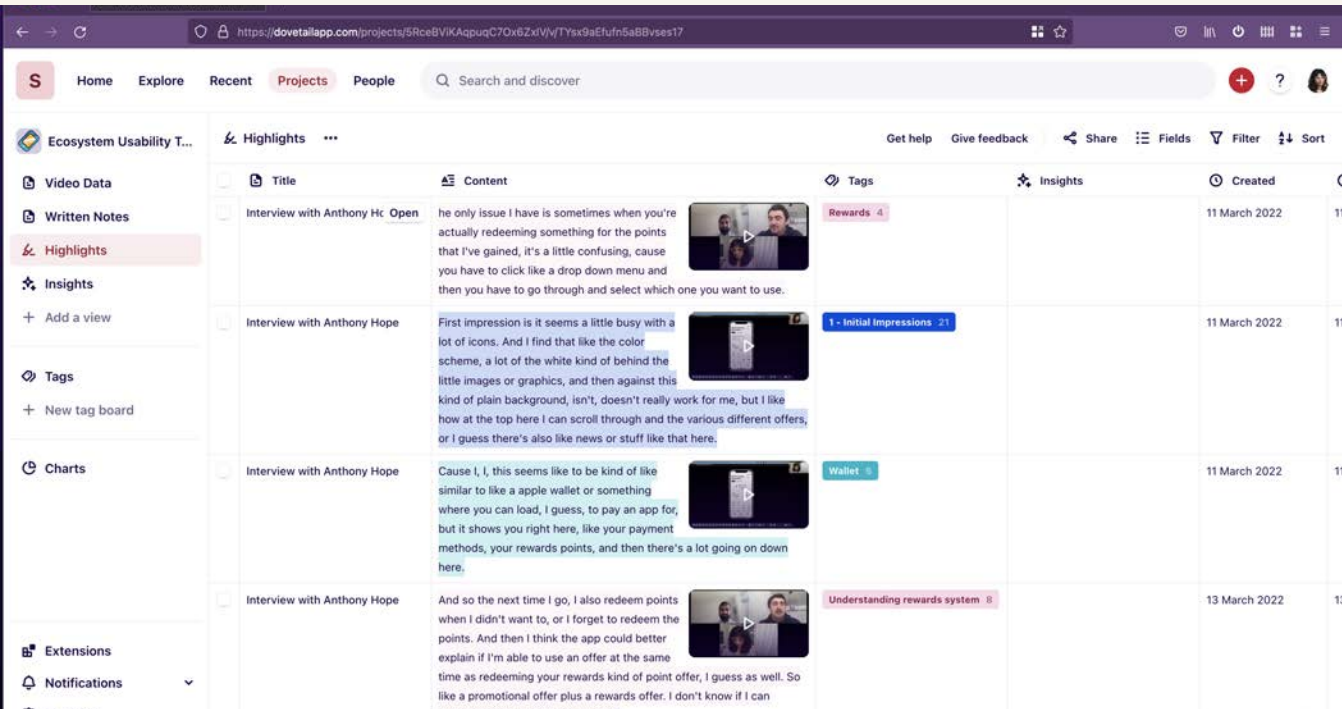
Tim Horton's had decided to revamp their popular app to add additional features outside of mobile order and delivery. Over the course of two months, my project team and I did the following:



Conducted moderated usability testing to see how customers would navigate and complete key tasks on the new app



Conducted unmoderated usability testing to understand preferences in terms of certain UI patterns and concepts



Synthesized and presented results for further project approval to relevant stakeholders

Research Overview

My Role

UX Research Lead

- Participant recruitment
- **Mentoring & collaborating** with a junior researcher
- Prototype creation
- **Research planning**
- **Conducting interviews**
- Synthesizing key insights
- Presenting to stakeholders

Project Team

A cross functional team that included the following:

- 1 Design Manager
- 1 UX Research Lead (me)
- 1 Junior Researcher
- 5 Product Managers

Methods & Tools

Two rounds of **remote usability testing on User Testing:**

- 1st Round – **Moderated** usability testing, 1 hour per session
- 2nd Round – **Unmoderated** usability testing, 30-40 minutes per session
- **Six weeks** of research

Participants

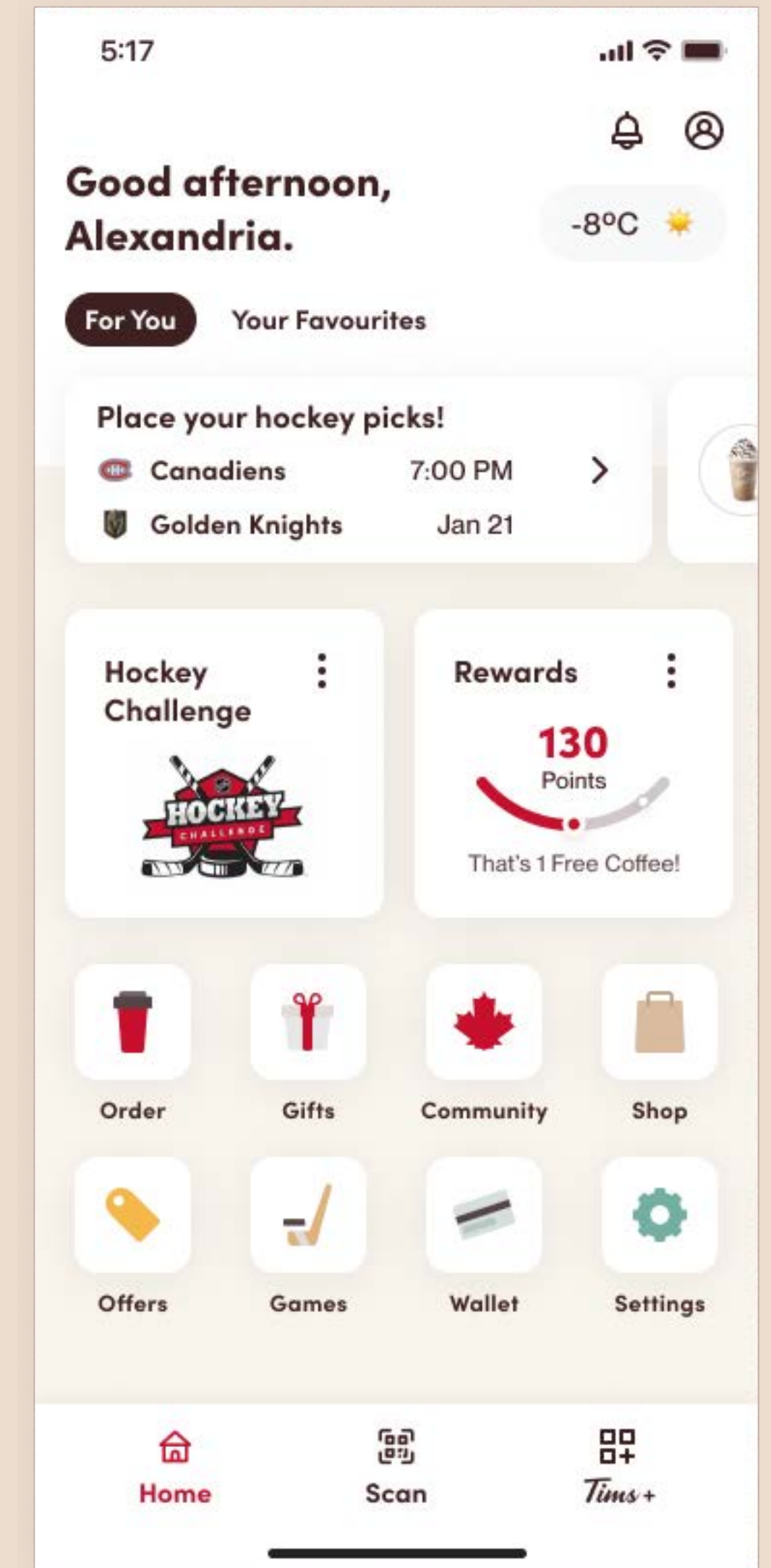
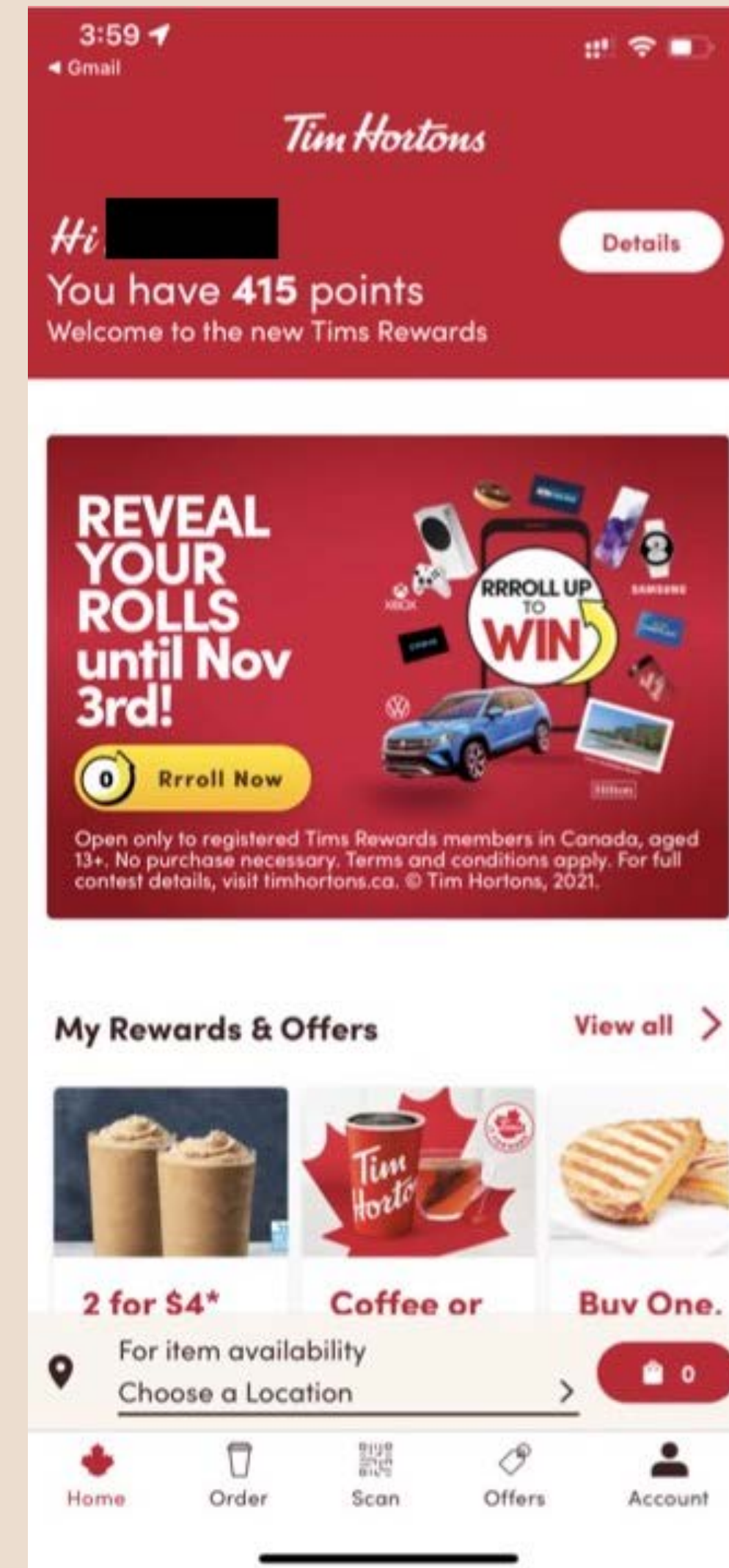
- **25 participants** from all across Canada (urban & rural)
- Ages: 18 to 60
- Students, full-time & part-time employees

Moderated Usability Testing

There were substantial changes made to the client's app, as witnessed by the before and after screens showcased on the right.

In particular, there were major changes made to the navigation as the bottom navigation bar went from having five options to just three. Moderated usability testing was undertaken to understand:

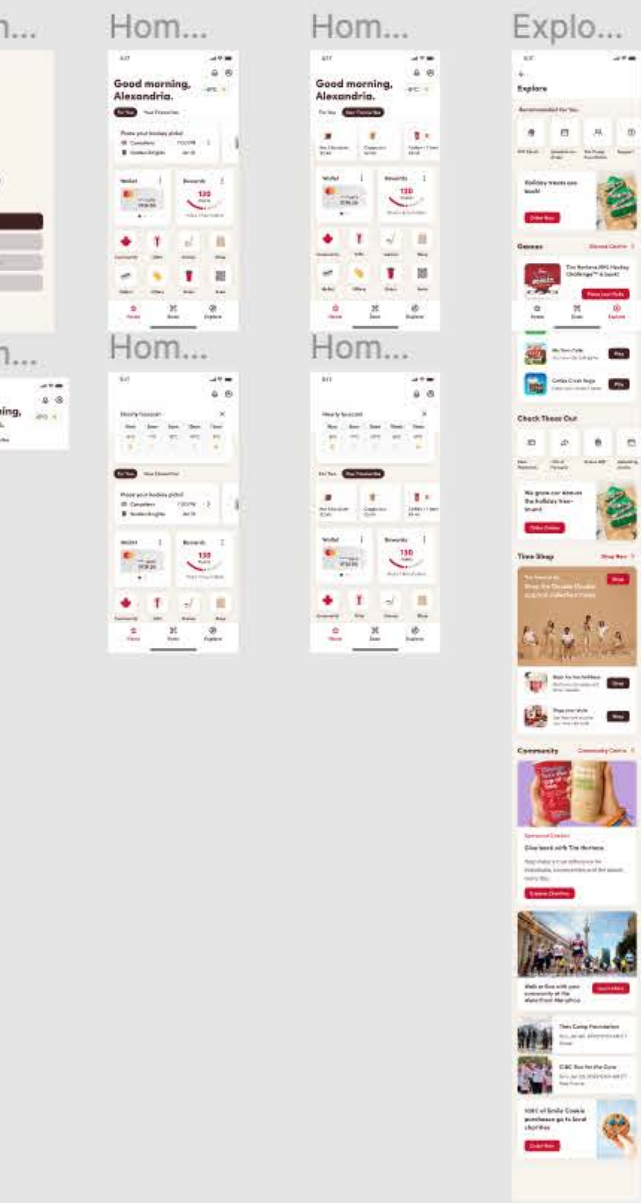
- Would customers still be able to complete key tasks in this new app?
- What was the general perception of this bold shift?



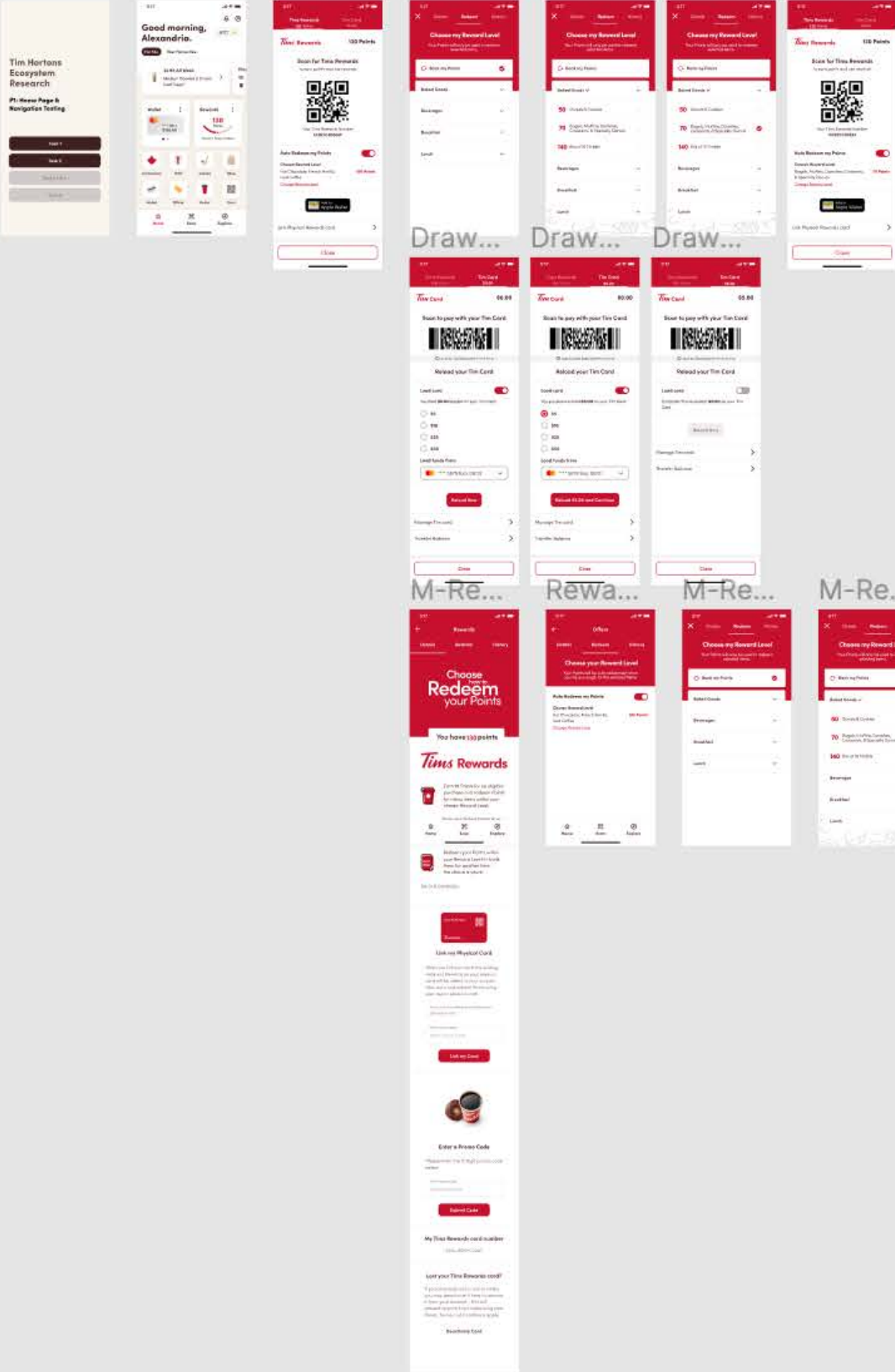
Participant Overview & Prototype

- Recruit 1
 - 5 participants
 - Age range: 18-34
 - 2 male, 3 female
 - Based in Canada
 - Active app users
- Recruit 2
 - 4 participants
 - Age range: 18-34
 - 3 male, 1 female
 - Based in Canada
 - Non-app users
- Prototype
 - You can view the prototype below.

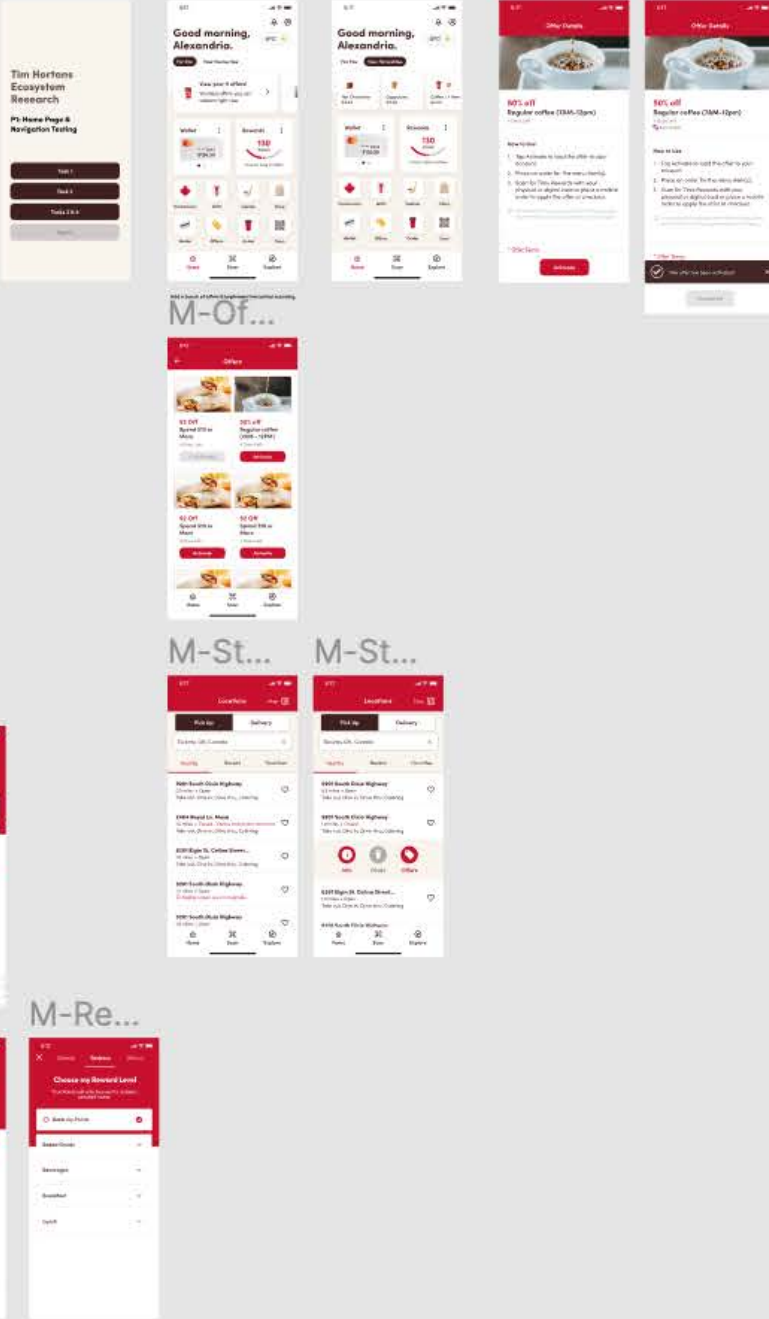
Task 1: Initial Impressions



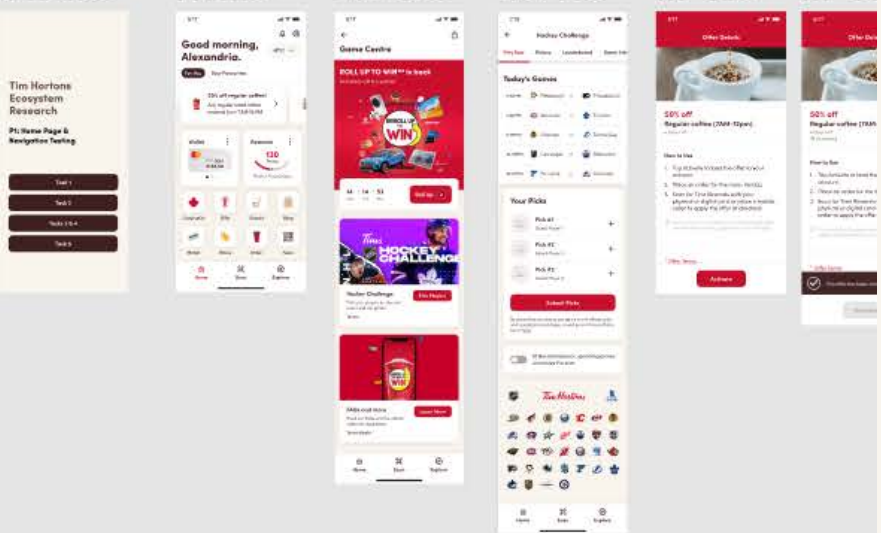
Task 2: Rewards



Task 3 & 4: Offers and MO&P



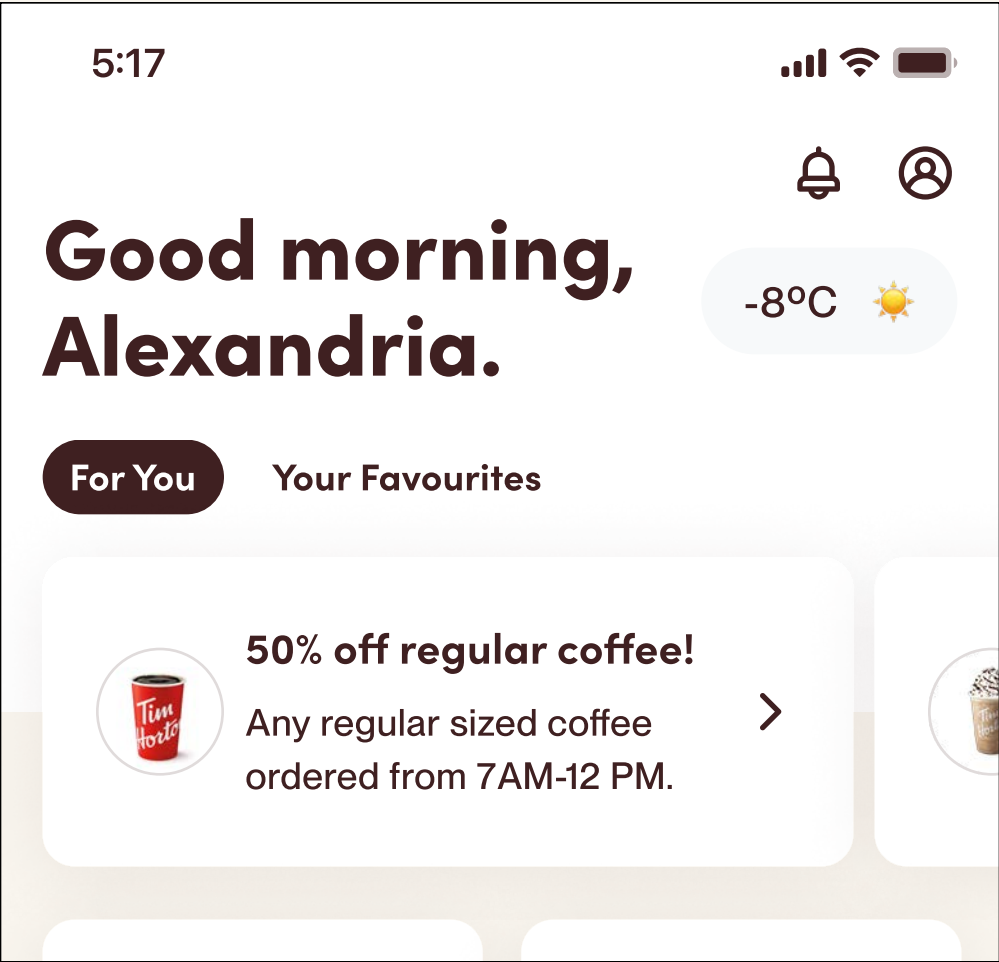
Task 5: Games Centre



Moderated Usability Testing Tasks

01 /

Initial Impressions of Home Page



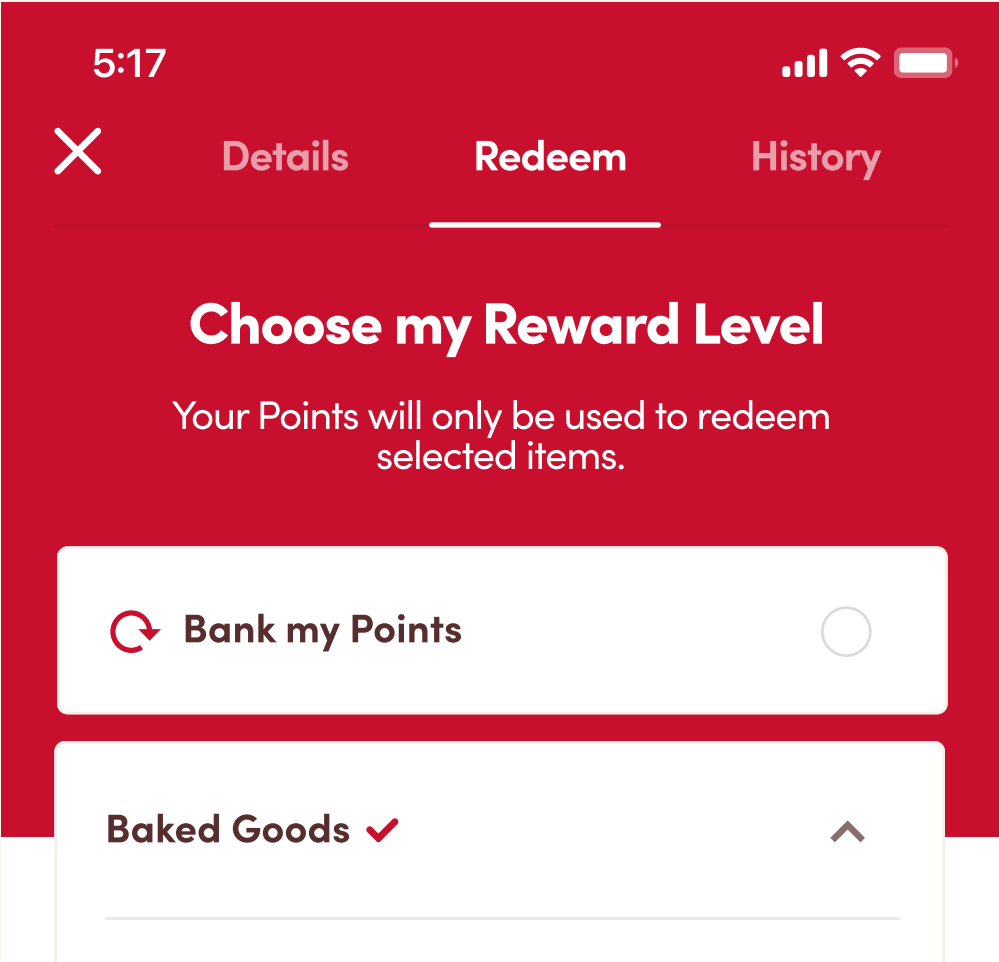
- Understand if participants can spot the differences between various widgets

Sample Task

“When you first open up the app, this is what you see. For this first task, I want you to explore and browse this page. Click on anything that you’re interested in and give us your first impressions”

02 /

Complete various rewards-related tasks



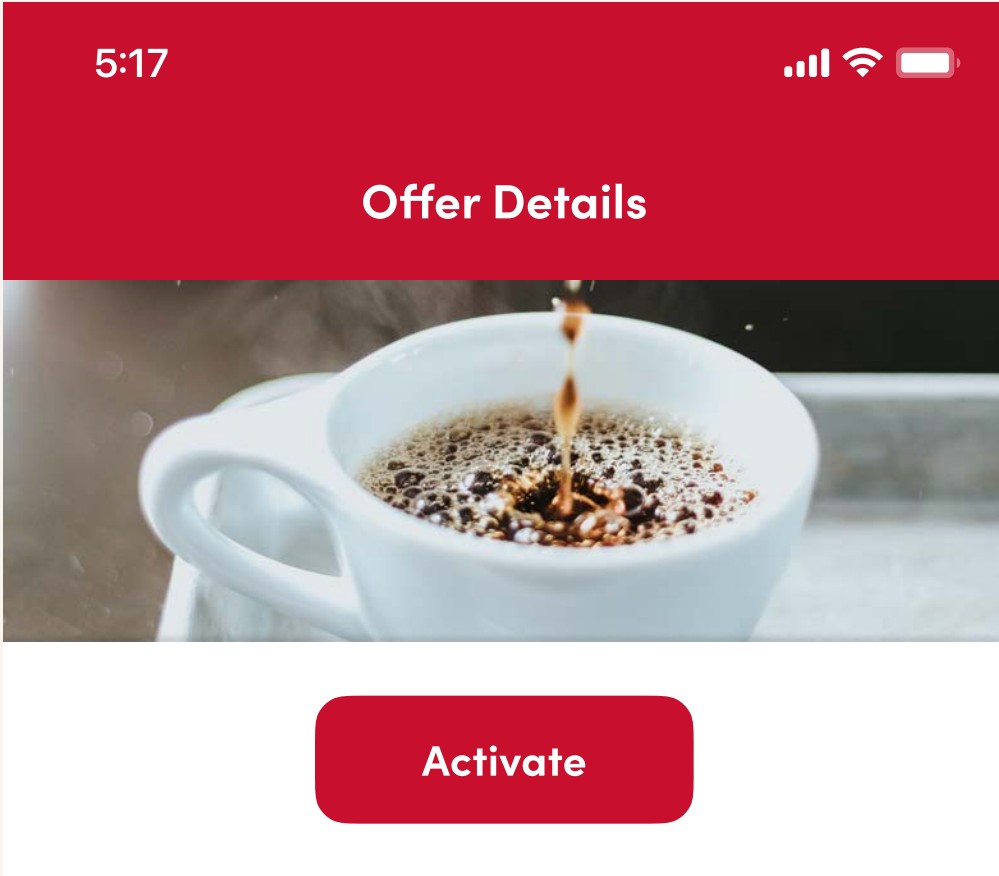
- Assess if participants can access their rewards card and view rewards balance

Sample Task

“Now that you’ve become acquainted with this initial home page of the app, I want you to imagine that you’re at a store and you need to quickly access your rewards card. Where would you go to do that?”

03 /

Redeem an offer to purchase an item



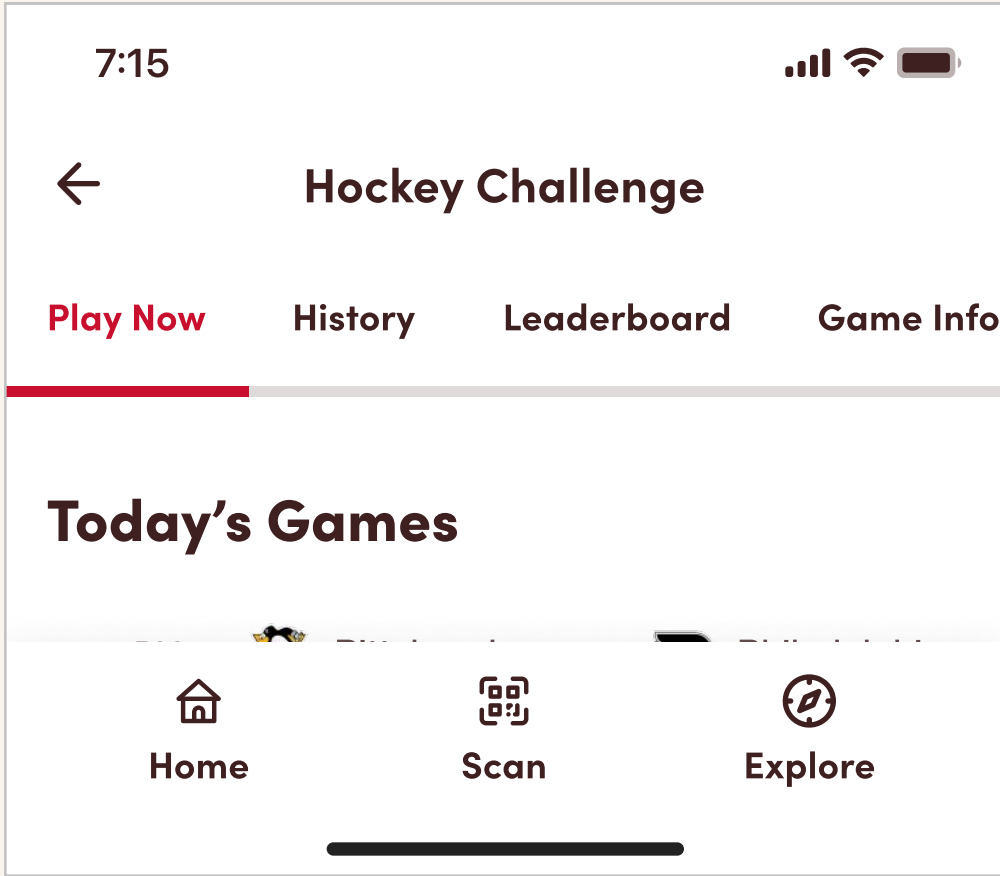
- Assess if participants can get to the “Offers” & “Order” pages

Sample Task

“For this task, I want you to show me where you could find a 50% discount off your morning coffee and how you’d redeem it.”

04 /

Participate in Hockey Challenge

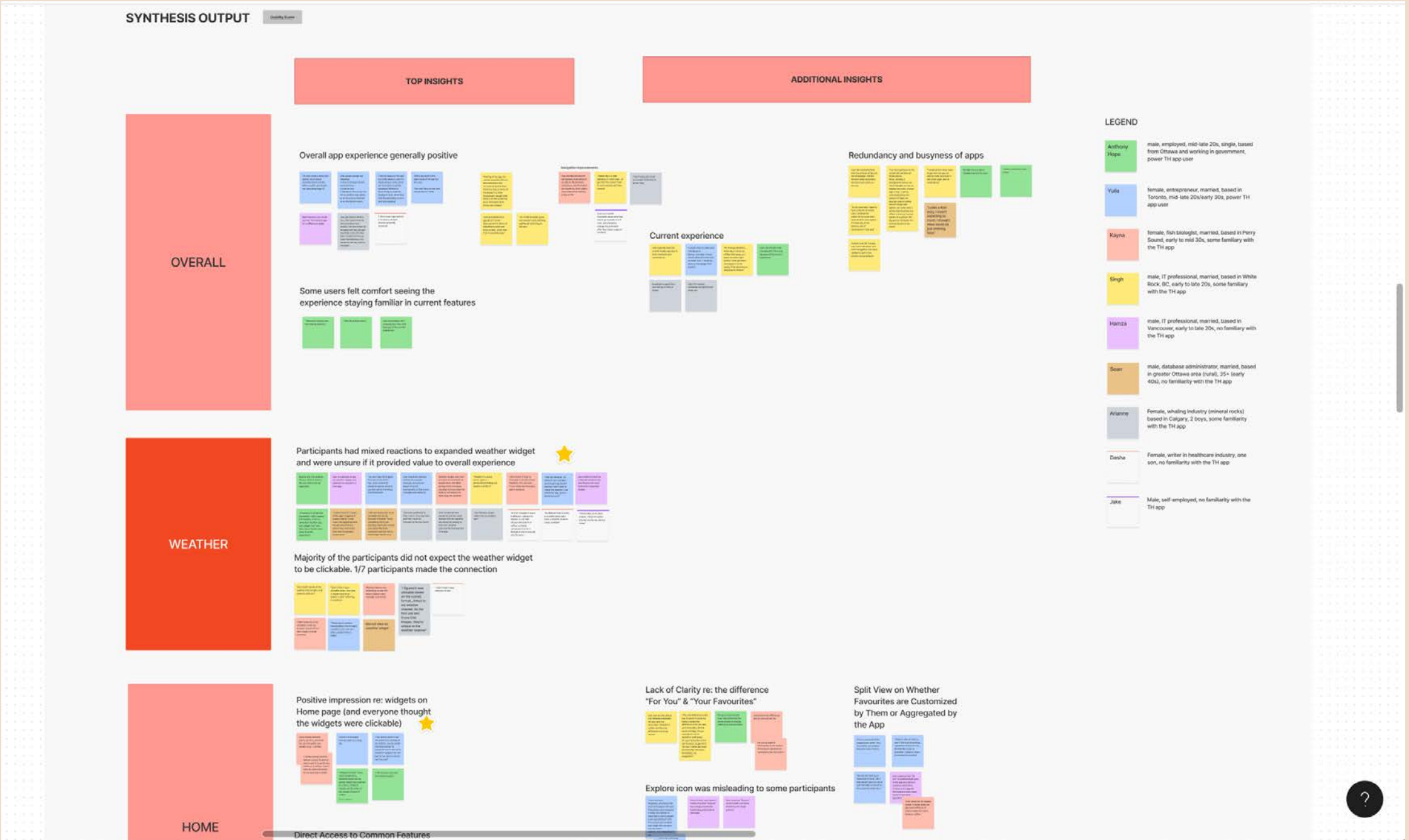


- Understand if participants can navigate to the Hockey Challenge page

Sample Task

“It’s game night and you want to access the Hockey Challenge right away. Show me where you would go to find the Hockey Challenge”

Task #	Description	Anthony	Yulia	Kanya	Singh	Hazma	Sean	Arianne	Dasha	Jake	Avg. Difficulty
2.1	Access Rewards Card	1	1	1	5	4	1	1	2	2	2
2.2	Reload Rewards Card	4	5	4	4	-	5	2	1	5	3.3
2.3	View Rewards Balance	2	6	2	5	3	2	1	2	3	5
3	Redeem Offer	1	2	1	1		1	1	1	2	1.25
4	Place Mobile Order	1	-	2	2	1	3	1	2	2	1.75
5.1	Find "Hockey Challenge" Page	1	1	3	1	-	1	1	-	2	1.42
5.2	Find Special Contests page	2	1	2	1	-	1	2	1	6	2.1



Synthesizing Results

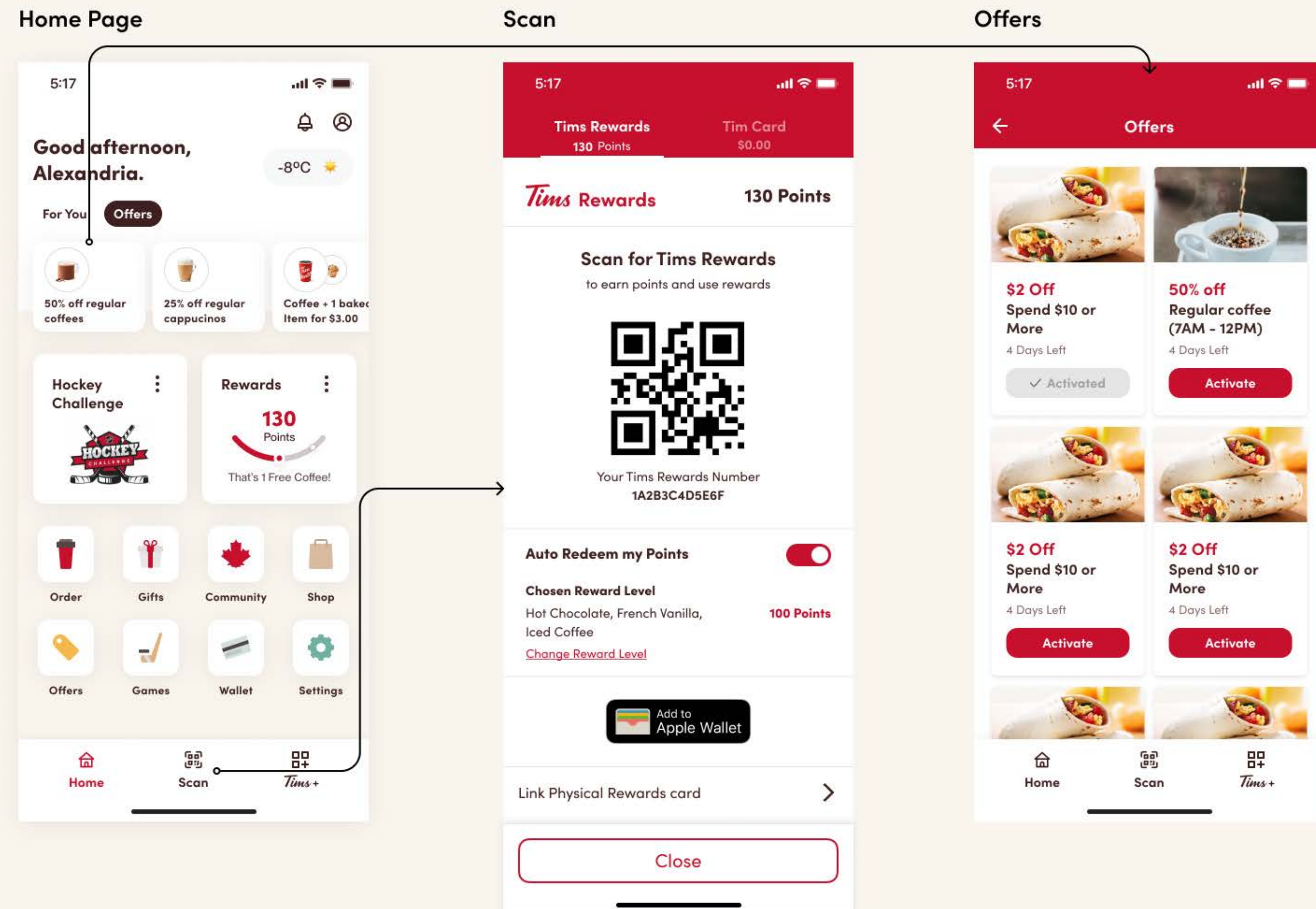
- Asked participants to **rate difficulty of each task from 1 to 7**
 - **Aggregated the ratings** and calculated the average
 - Assessed task debrief responses to further flesh out details

- Utilized FigJam to do most of the synthesis
 - Generated notes from each interview
 - **Held an affinity mapping exercise to group notes into themes**
 - Generated insights from the grouped notes

Participants could easily navigate the app and found comfort in key features remaining consistent.

Those less familiar with the app found the home page quite busy but were still able to navigate to key pages.

“You get used to what you know, so this would become second nature very quickly. I do find it easy to navigate and any hiccups would be a one off. I would not have an issue transitioning [from current app to ecosystem app]– this would not be very hard to navigate.”



Additional Insights

Initial Impressions

There was confusion over the inclusion of a “Weather” widget. Participants felt it was out of place for an app focused on a restaurant.

Find Rewards Card

Those less familiar with the app believed a “Wallet” widget on the home page was the right place to go to access their rewards card.

Redeem Offer

Some participants expressed wanting more visibility for offers on the home page, as this was a key reason for them to use the app.

Mobile Order & Pay

There were mixed reactions about navigating to the Order page to place an order. Some participants disliked that there was no direct access to the Order page in the sticky bottom navigation bar.

Hockey Challenge

There was a very positive reaction to the Hockey Challenge, especially for those who weren’t familiar with it from before. It gave them a reason to download the app in the future.

Special Contests

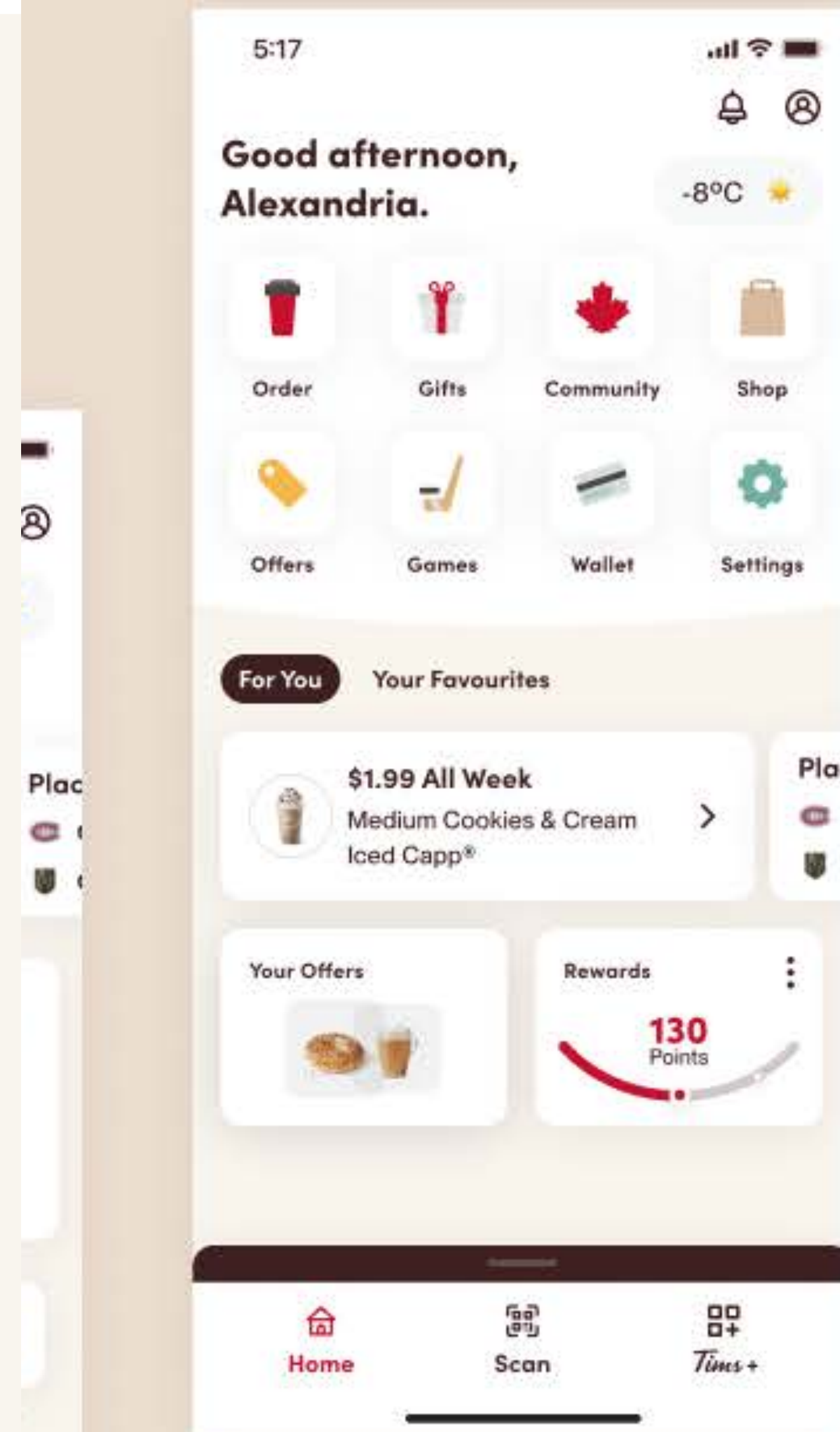
Many participants accessed special contests and giveaways through the home page and disliked having to navigate to a “Games” section to participate.

Unmoderated Usability Testing

There were four versions of a home page that had been created by the product designers. The main difference has to do with a **Tims+ drawer**, as Concepts B & D have a drawer/modal that the participant swipes up to reveal in full.

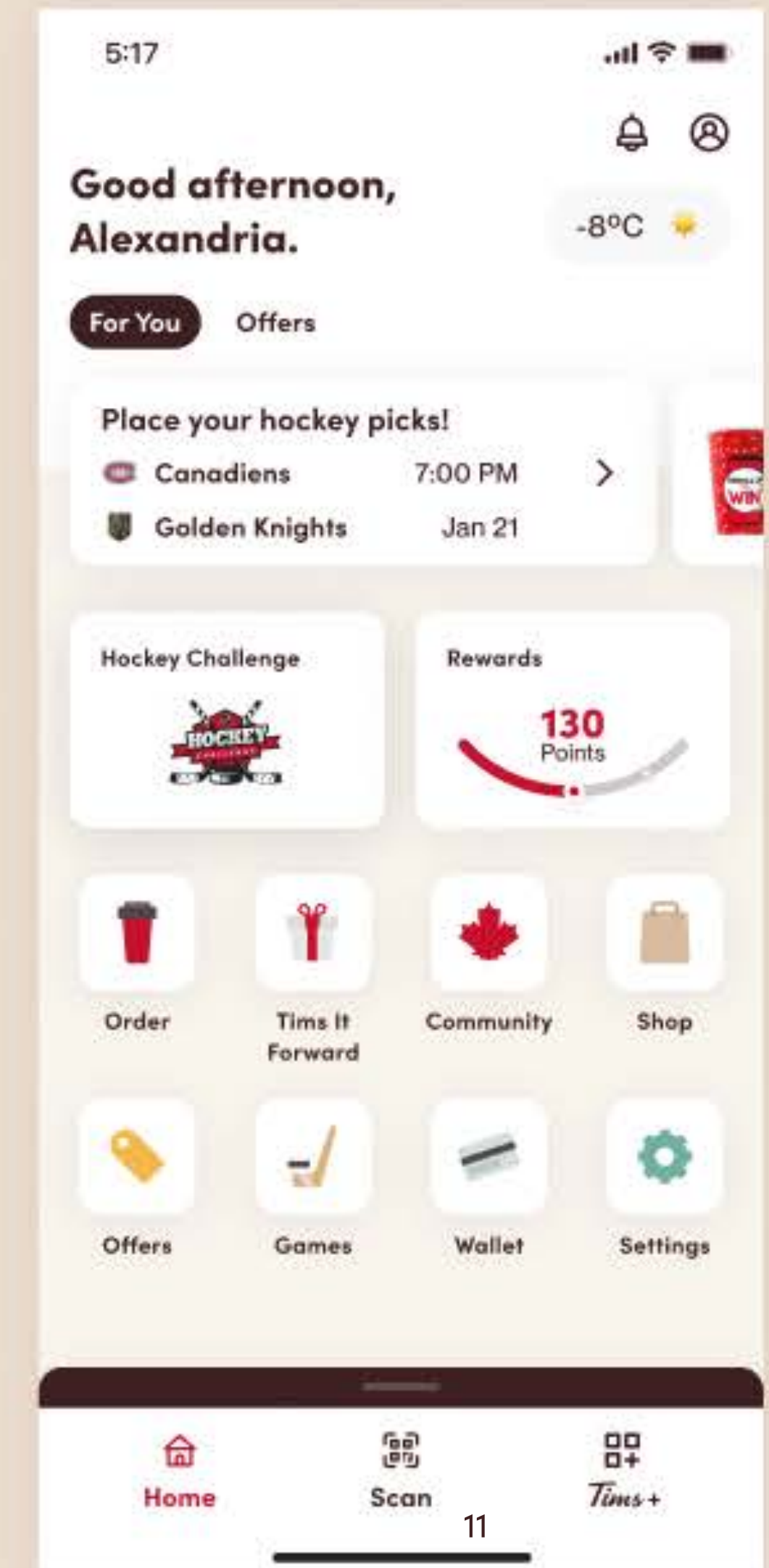
Key Questions

- Which home page concept do the participants prefer?
- How do participants feel about the drawer interaction?
- Does a Tims+ page make sense to customers?



Concept D

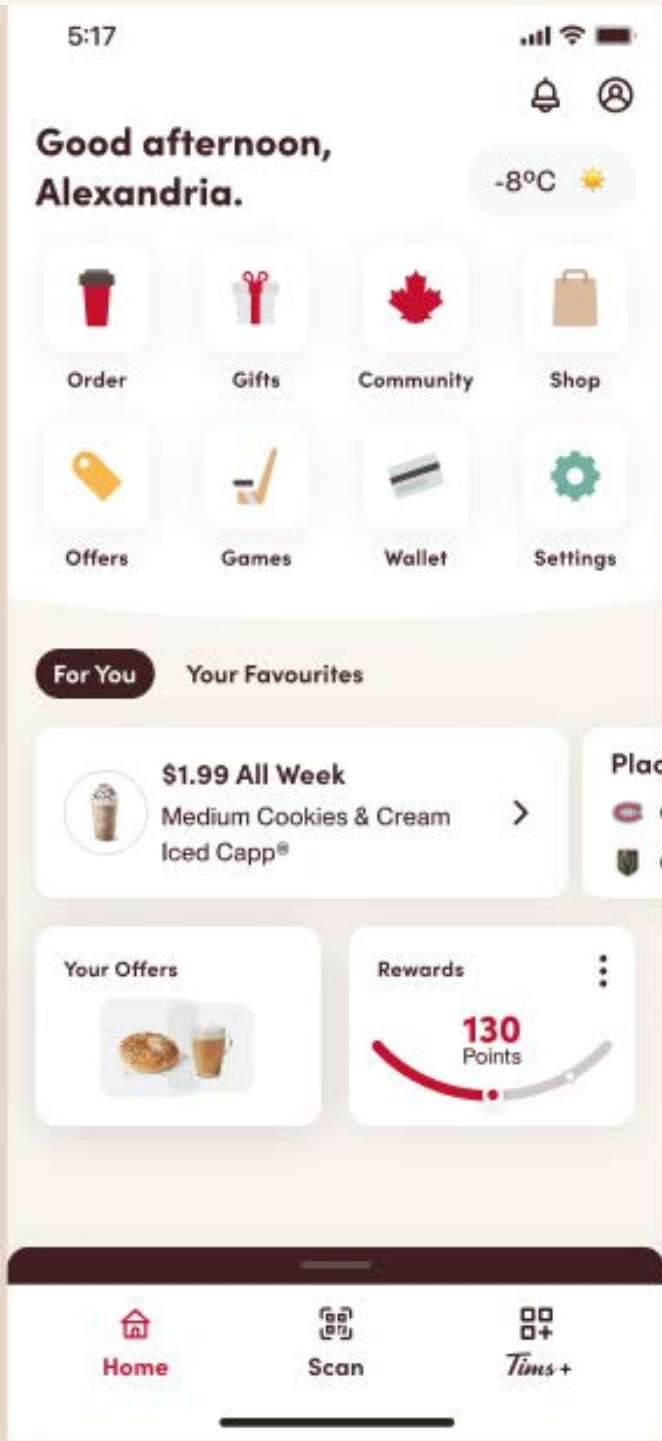
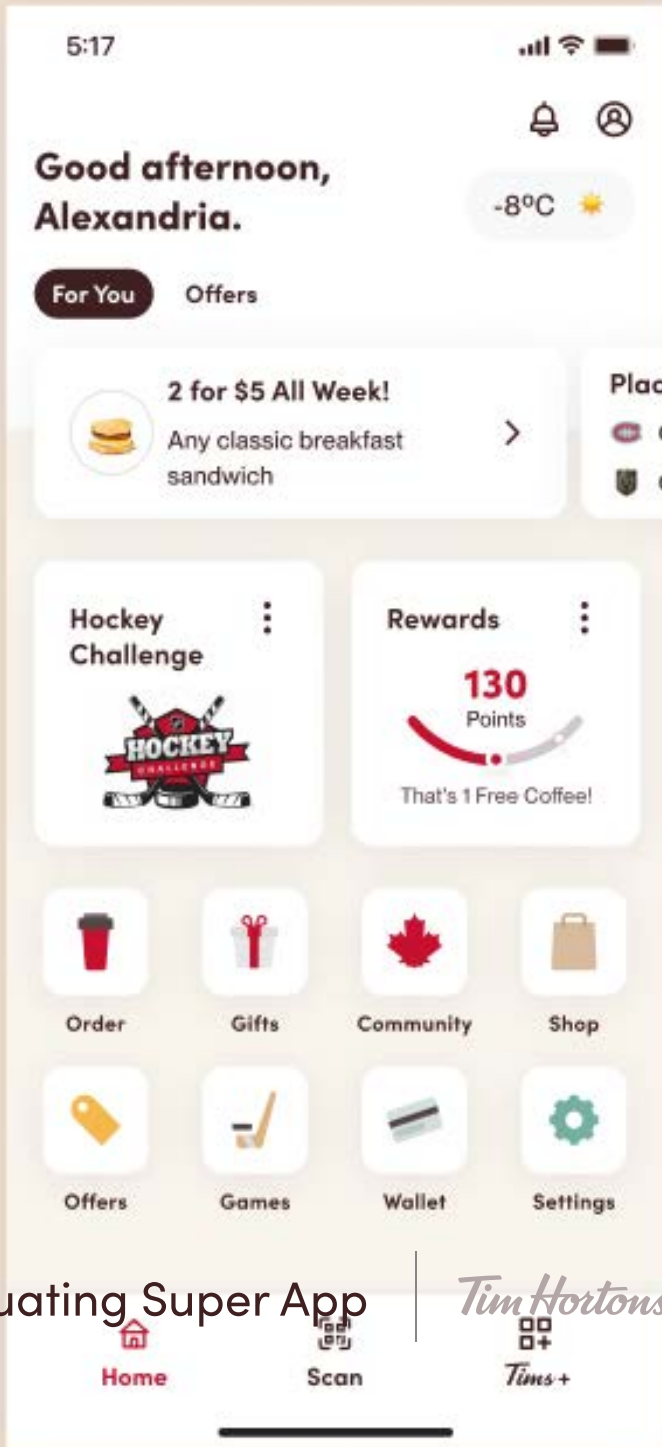
Concept B



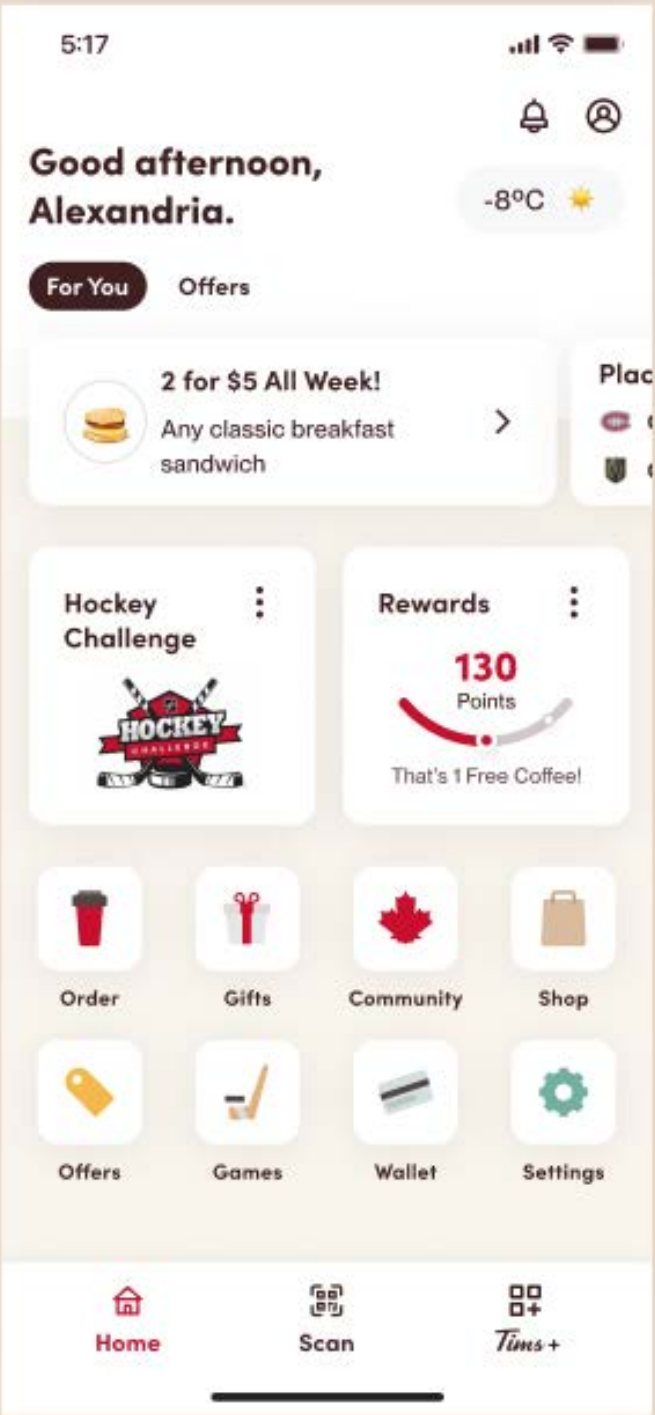
Testing Overview

- Test 1
 - Concepts A & D
 - 8 participants
 - 4 app power users, 4 app non-users
- Test 2
 - Concepts B & C
 - 8 participants
 - 4 app power users, 4 app non-users

Concept A

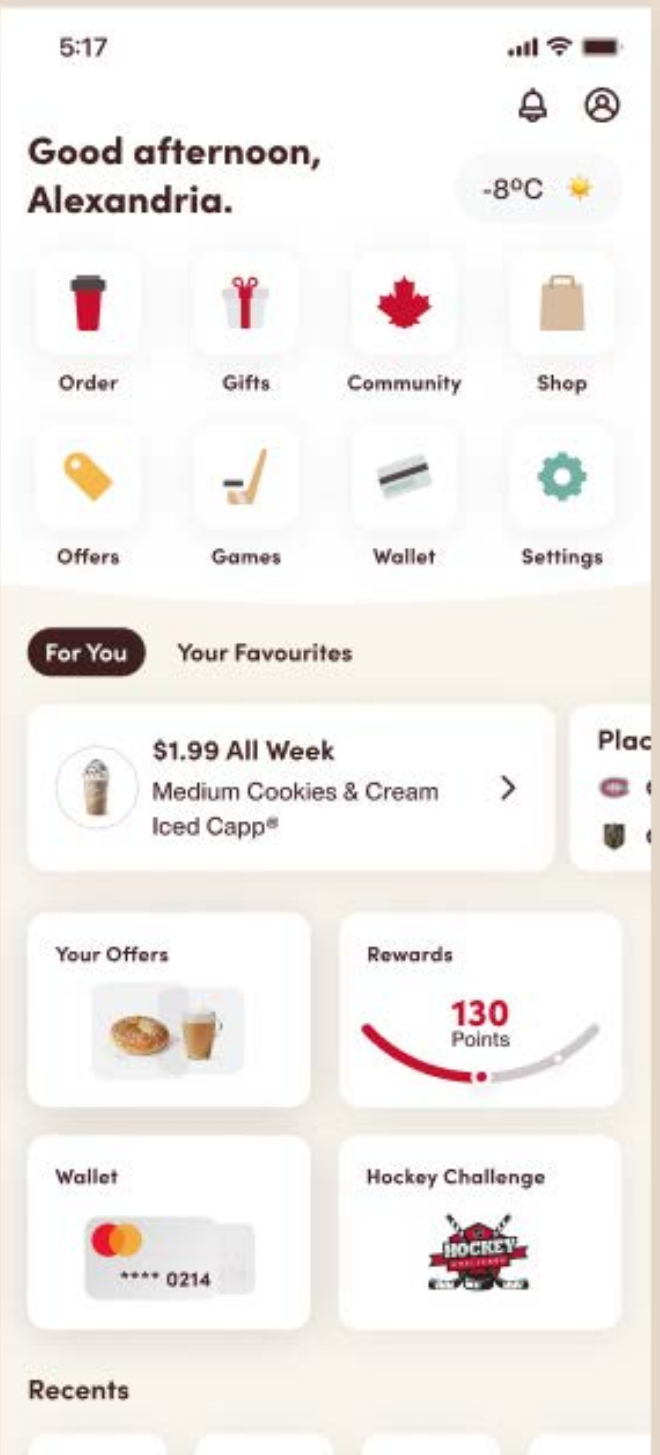


Concept D



Concept B

Concept C



Themes	Features	Observations	Pain points	Tasks	Miscellaneous Notes
test	Homepage 1	Rewards Widget: Viewed poin... 1	Tims+: wants quick shortcuts 1	App usage details: non-user 10	Preferred offers in action tray 1
Home page: expects dynamic ... 1	Navigation 2	Layout: Tiles on top preferred 1	Having to scroll 1	Demographic Details 9	Would have Tims+ as seperat... 1
Offers widget: assumes perso... 1	Gifts 3	Rewards widget: did not unde... 5	Navigation to offers 3	1. Initial Impressions 56	Went to Scan to learn more ab... 1
Tims+: unsure of what to exp... 3	Weather 4	Tims+ Drawer: Dragged down ... 1	Wants option to "Activate All" 1	2. Find Tims+ 39	Only going to use the app whe... 1
Preference: C over B 13	Rewards 21	Tims+ Drawer: Clicked nav ba... 5	Sticky on scroll interaction 3	3. Find offers 57	Unsure of the difference betw... 1
Preference: B over C 7	Your Favourites 5	Tims+: clicked on drawer over... 4	Wants to see location informa... 5	4. Find Rewards Balance 52	Associating 'Your favourite' w... 1
Layout: C over B 10	For You 5	Tims+ Uninterested in section 10	Seeing more info on each offe... 1	5. What Can Be Redeemed 37	Felt Tims menu was missing o... 1
Layout: B over C	Search	Tims+ Uninterested in market... 8	Doesn't show what items can ... 1	6. Which feature would you e... 21	Initial impression was that the... 1
Offers could be more visible 2	Permissions	Tims+: Engage if surfaced 5	View all offers missing on acti... 1	7. Concept Preference 28	Direct access to most used fe... 9
Meaningful Differences: able... 14	Gravatar	Tims+: Not engage even if sur... 8	Usability	+ New tag	Thinks she can redeem rewar... 1
Impressions: Home Page 64	Explore	Rewards Widget: Overlook text 1	Onboarding		Associated Scan with gift card 1
Positive impressions: Home... 19	Bottom navigation	Rewards Widget: Understood ... 5	Navigation		Unaware of offers on the app 1

Synthesizing Results

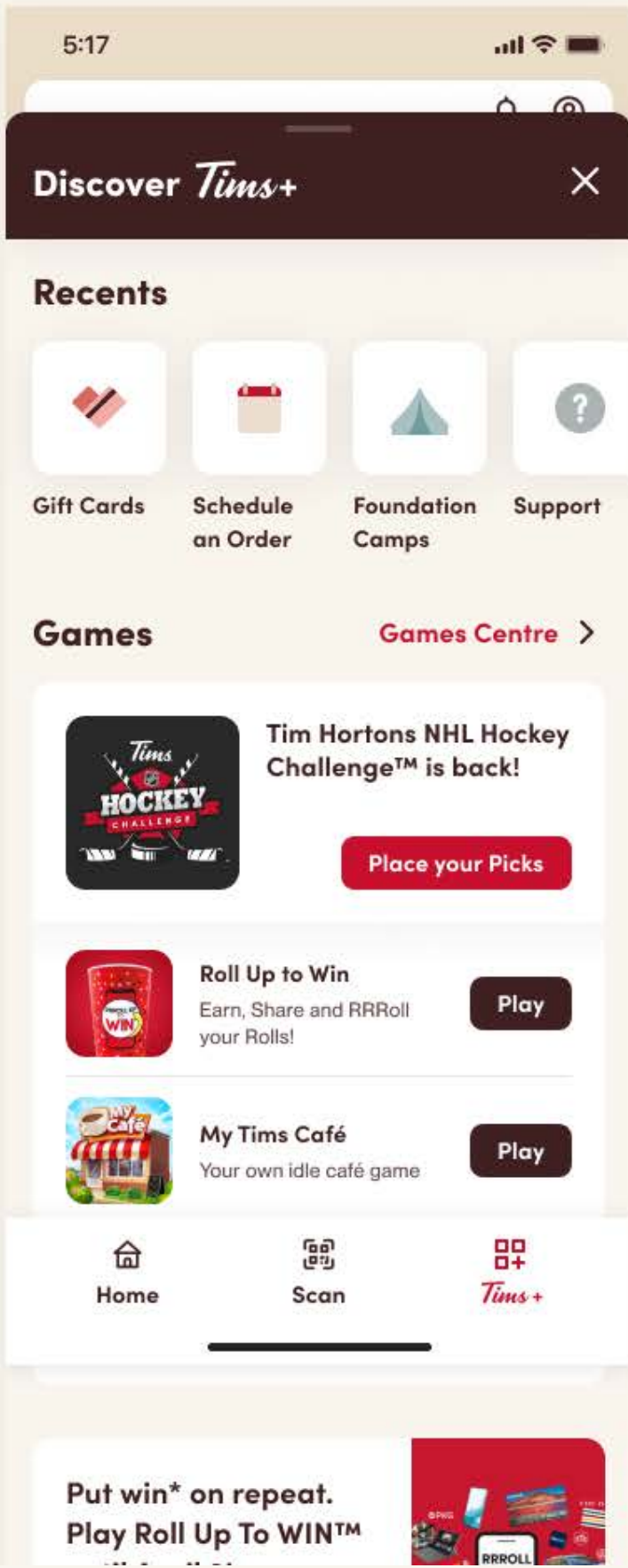
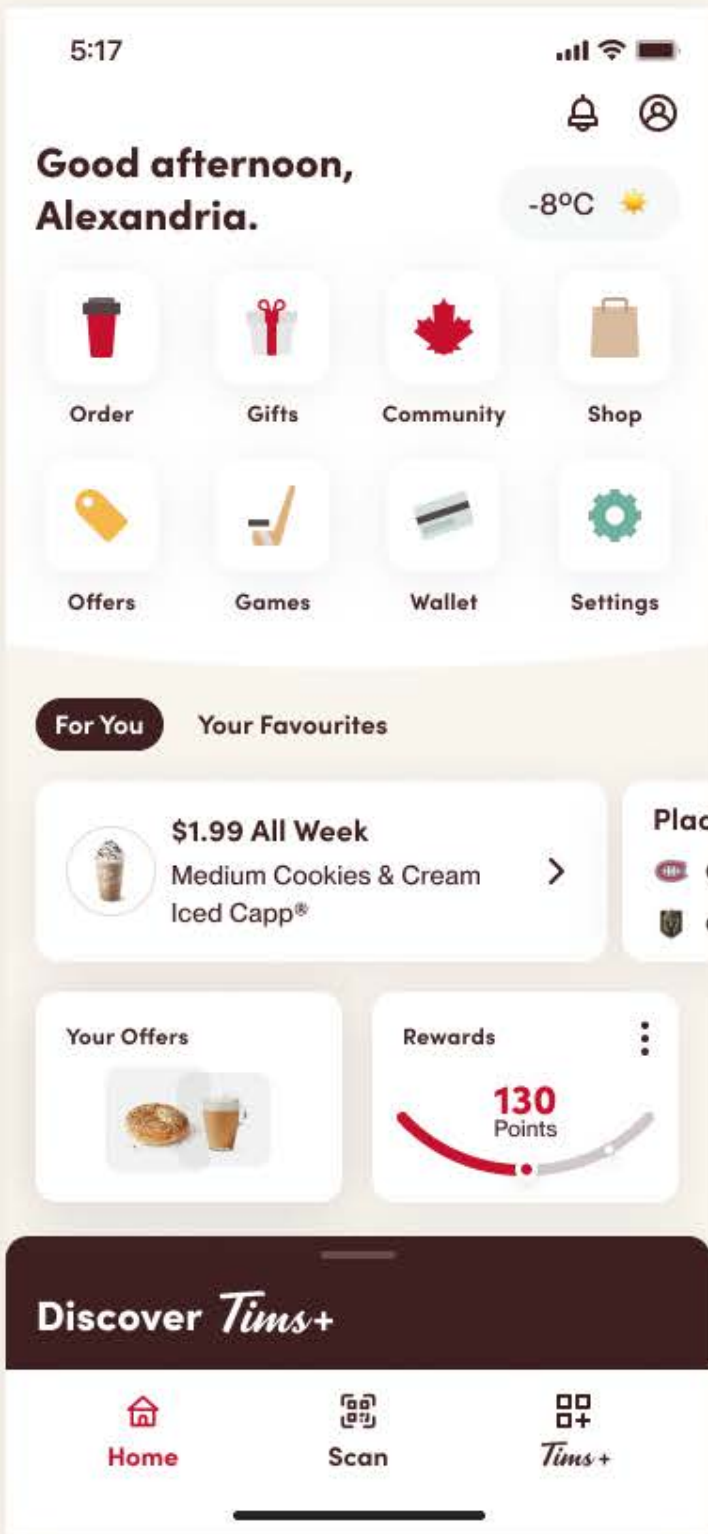
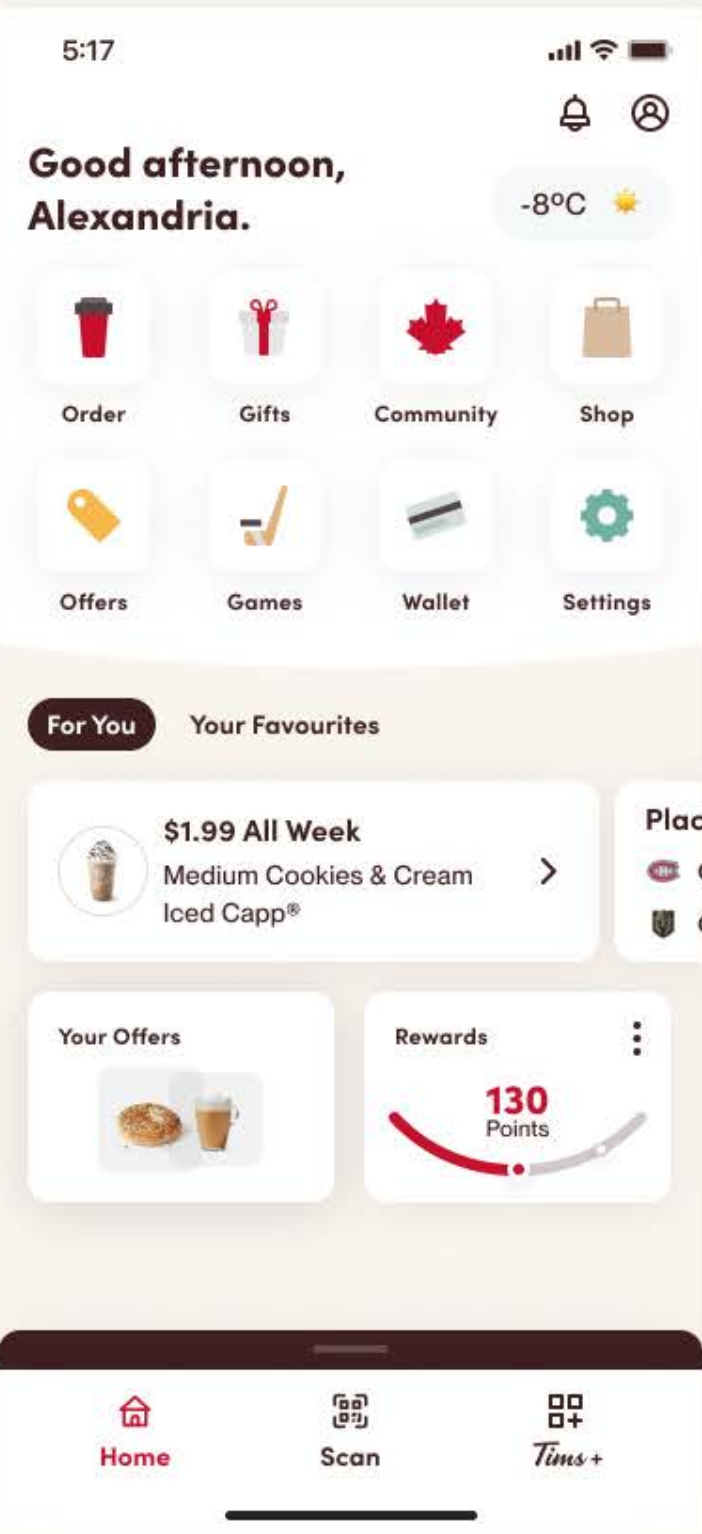
- Took a different approach to synthesis and used a research insights platform called Dovetail
- Dovetail is a web software application that provides AI-generated transcription, as well as the ability to tag interviews for key quotes
- **Uploaded testing videos to Dovetail**
 - Transcribed the interviews
 - **Tagged key quotes and pain points** in each interview
 - Utilized tags to come up with **key themes**

Participants were deeply confused about the “swipe up to reveal” interaction for the Tims+ page.

The interaction was atypical and not something they often saw with other consumer-facing apps. Many expressed an annoyance when they accidentally clicked on the drawer.

“I think it might be frustrating to see it [the drawer] roll up when they meant to click on “Scan” instead”

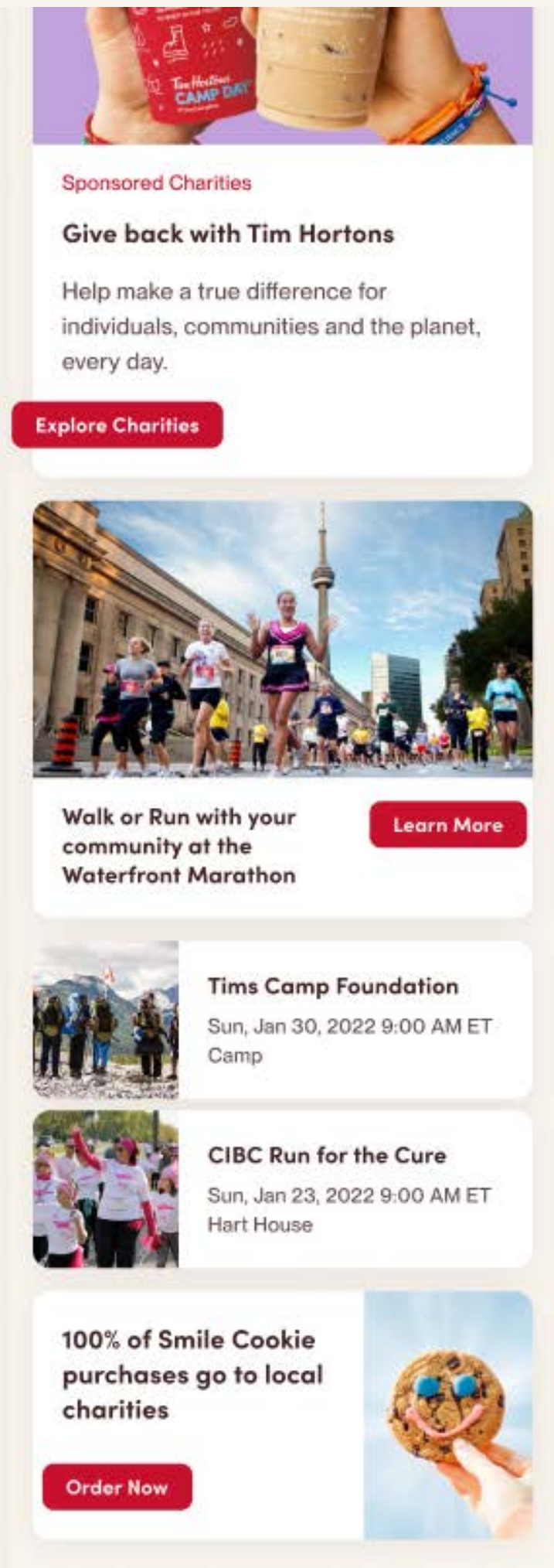
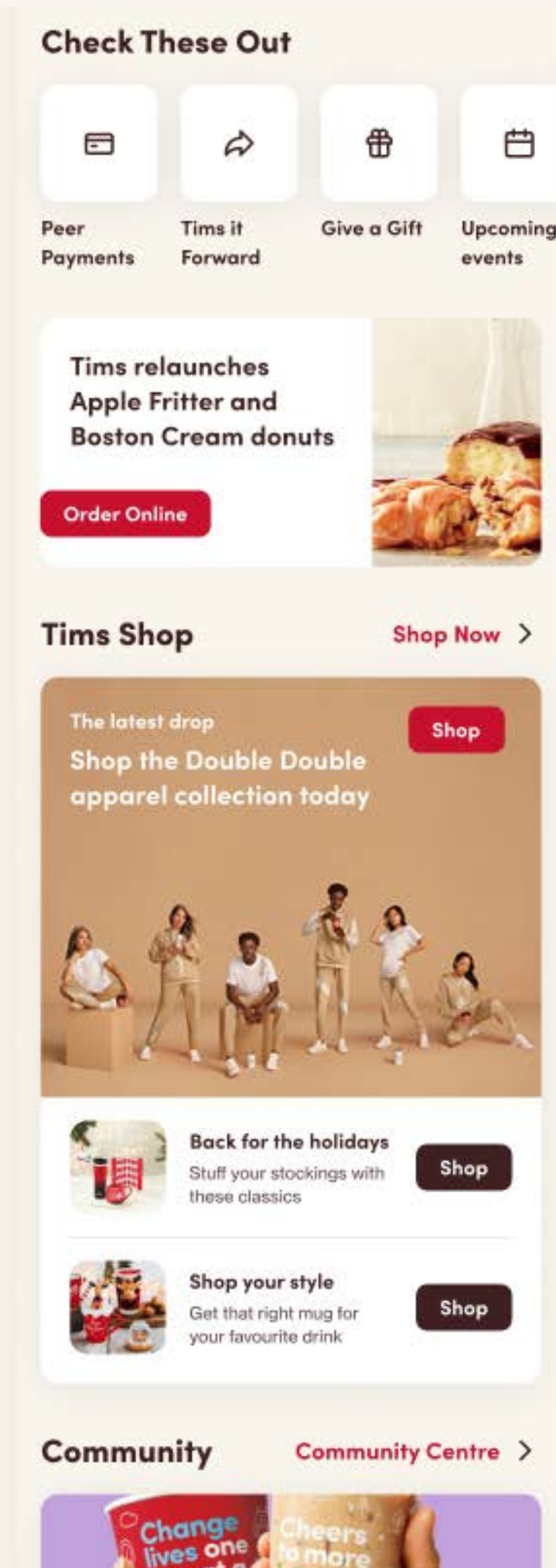
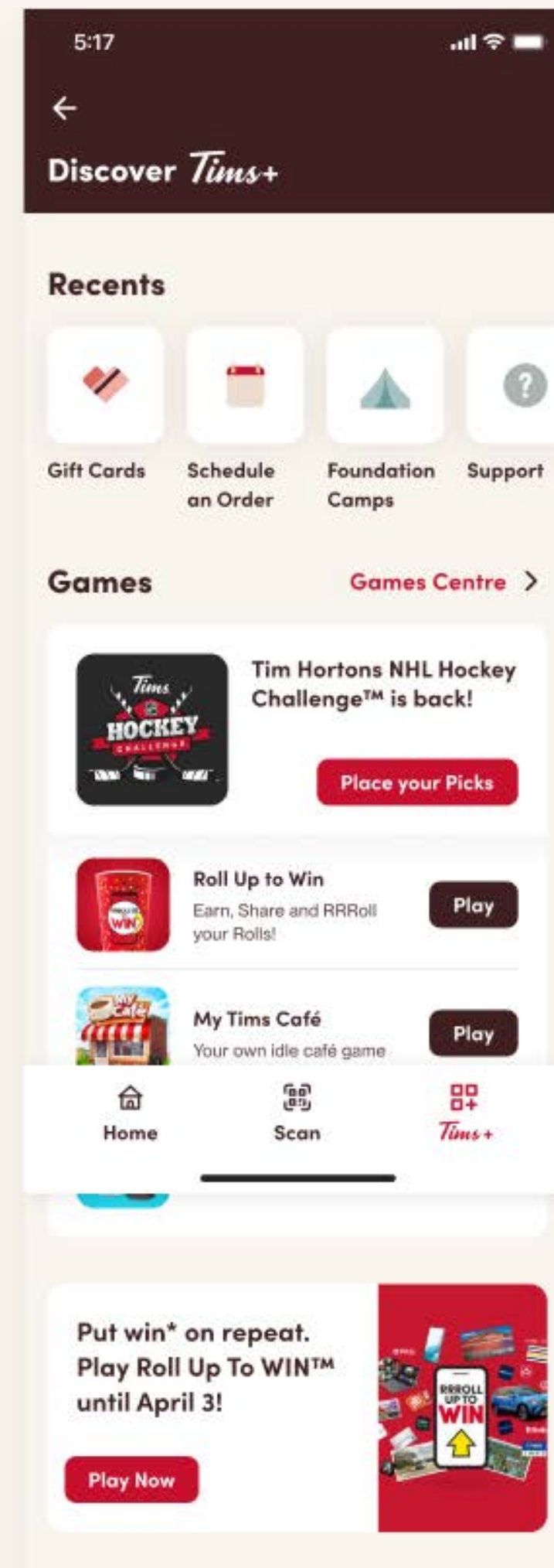
Drawer Interaction



Participants were mostly neutral on the Tims+ page and did not find it engaging.

They found it hard to find value and many had difficulty thinking of reasons to come back. Much of this was because the Tims+ page did not have common features/actions that they would use the app for.

“I feel like this is a mishmash of all sorts of stuff. It doesn’t feel consistent at all.”



Additional Insights

Initial Impressions

First impressions of the home page still remained fairly positive across both moderated and unmoderated tests.

Navigation

Participants still found the app fairly easy to navigate, regardless of the style of home page they were presented with.

Rewards

Participants found it fairly easy to navigate to the rewards section from the home page. However, they experienced challenges when it came to the sub-level pages and finding more information about their points.

Plain & Simple

Most participants preferred a simplistic home page where they could scroll to see special offers and campaigns.

Bottom navigation

When participants were stuck or confused, they often used the sticky bottom navigation bar to retrace their steps in the app.

Feature Conflation

Some participants thought the menu could be accessed from the “Shop” page (for merchandise), or from the “Offers” page.

Impact

Approval for MVP Build

Based on the generally positive impressions of the navigation and home page, the project was approved to move into an MVP Build phase to bring the designs to life.

15+ Key UI Changes

- Adopted more popular version of home page based on concept testing
- Abandoned unpopular concepts like Weather & the Tims+ drawer/page for the MVP launch
- Abandoned certain widgets that confused participants, such as a “Wallet” widget
- Additional small changes to copy & interaction flows

10+ Process Changes

- Provided 10+ process improvements/changes for key product teams, such as Rewards
- Items added to the backlog for further refinement by product teams

Lessons Learned

Invest in the right tools

Having the opportunity to use a dedicated insights platform like Dovetail for the second iteration of testing improved many aspects of the synthesis experience.

Additionally, it allowed for a dedicated repository of research data that researchers, managers and designers can reference and search that was previously not possible with Figma and Notion.

Research for Discovery

Insights like the lack of usefulness and enthusiasm for the Tims+ page and the Weather widget were necessary and helped pivot the product in the right direction. It would have been even better had there been more discovery work about customers' interests prior to the app being built.

Research is Iterative

The moderated usability testing helped refine and address many major concerns with the initial prototype.

The unmoderated usability testing provided an opportunity to review the navigation flows again to ensure further research validity.