

Product Systems & UX Architecture

Mark Young

Senior Product Designer - Focused on complex systems, workflow architecture, and revenue-critical products

A selection of case studies demonstrating mobile and product design leadership in revenue-critical environments.

These projects emphasize strategic information architecture, lifecycle-driven UX, and cognitive load reduction to improve decision-making in complex systems.

1: ATHLINK

0-1 Product Architecture for a Curated Athlete Network

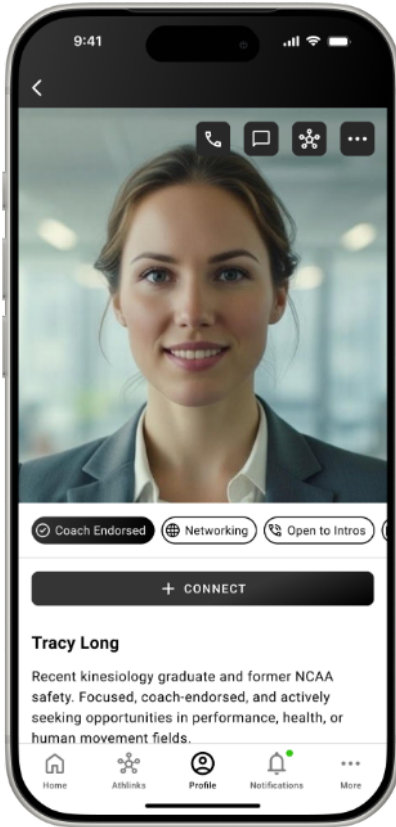
2: CARRIER 360

Lifecycle-Driven Mobile UX for a Revenue-Critical Logistics Marketplace

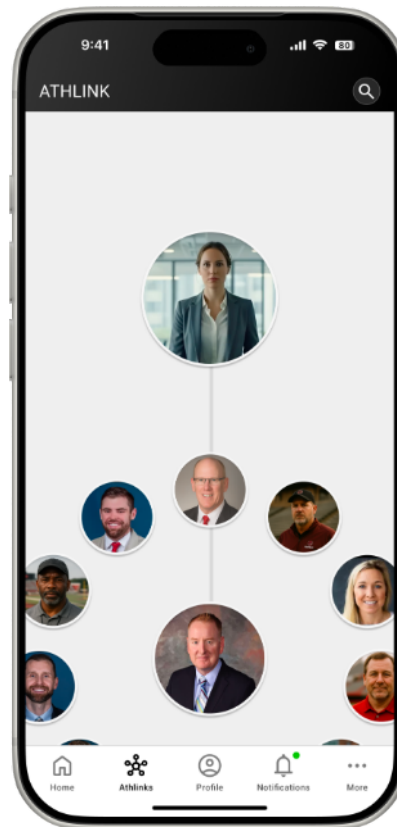
ATHLINK

0-1 Product Architecture for a Curated Athlete Network

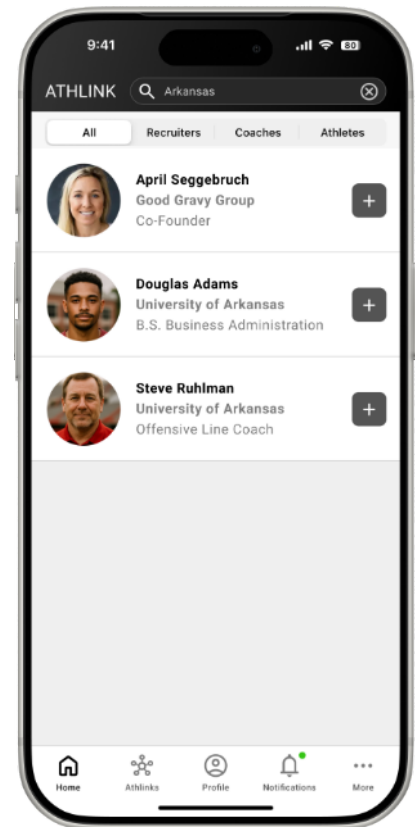
Prepared by Mark Young



Curated Profile



Legacy Tree



Advanced Filtering

Overview

AthLink is a pre-seed platform connecting former collegiate athletes with coaches, mentors, recruiters, and career opportunities in a high-trust, invite-only environment. By leveraging shared athletic legacies, it enables endorsements that carry real weight and opportunities that feel earned—not algorithmic.




As independent consultant in the earliest phase, I collaborated with the founder to define the core architecture, ensuring scalability while preserving exclusivity. This positioned the product for efficient engineering handoff and long-term governance.

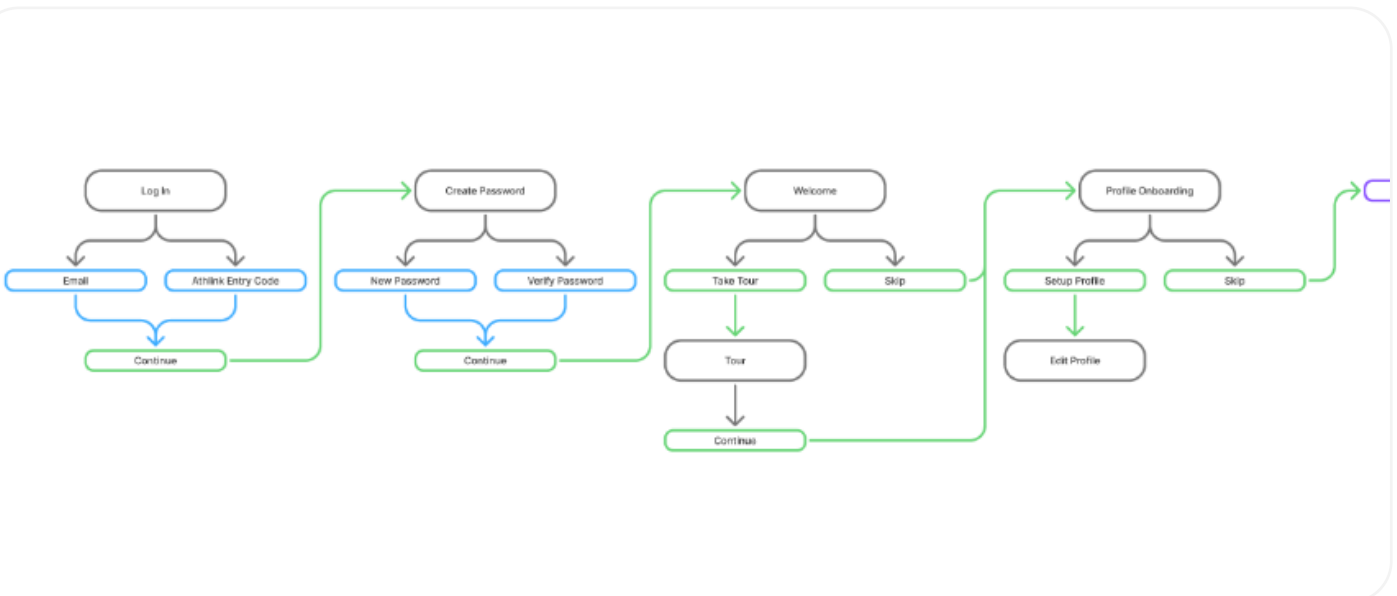
Problem

Early strategy sessions revealed the core tension: Balancing network growth with trust. Unlike open platforms, AthLink's value hinges on verified, curated connections—preventing dilution while avoiding stagnation.

From founder sessions, I identified risks: Users like athletes (seeking fair shots without begging), coaches (extending legacies without friction), and recruiters (needing character signals over noise) demand intent-driven flows rooted in real credibility.

Athlink-Specific Connections

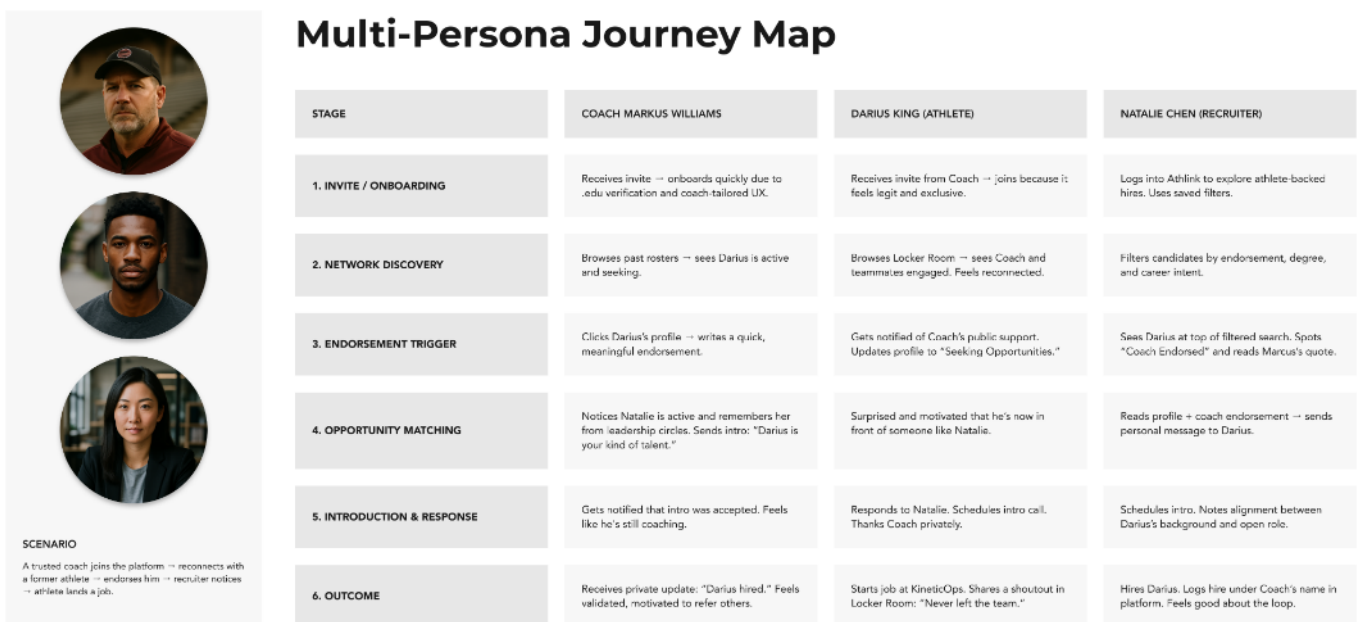
 <p>THE COACH - MARCUS WILLIAMS</p>	<p>COACH WILLIAMS</p>	<p>DARIUS KING</p> <p>Marcus coached Darius for 4 seasons and always saw him as dependable and quietly driven. When Darius appears in AthLink's "Scouting Opportunities" feed, Marcus addresses him immediately and creates a direct intro to Natalie.</p>	<p>NATALIE CHEN</p> <p>Marcus met Natalie years ago at a college site leadership summer. Though they rarely kept in touch, AthLink's recruiter tools prompt her to reach out after seeing Marcus's name attached to Darius's profile. Their connection is re-ignited through the platform.</p>	<p>FORMER ATHLETES</p> <p>AthLink's coach dashboard reveals that 6 of Marcus's former players are active on the platform—3 are marked as "Open to Opportunities." He chooses 2 of them and messages one directly to check in.</p>	<p>REPUTATION LOOP</p> <p>After Natalie hires Darius, Marcus is notified through AthLink's "Legacy Impact" module. He receives an in-app badge for "Successful Introduction," reinforcing his value to both the platform and his athletes.</p>
 <p>THE ATHLETE - DARIUS KING</p>	<p>COACH WILLIAMS</p> <p>Darius was invited by Coach Williams. Their former bond remains strong, and the platform gives Coach an easy path to endorse and re-engage his former athletes.</p>	<p>DARIUS KING</p>	<p>NATALIE CHEN</p> <p>Darius didn't know Natalie before joining. She found him through filters set to "Coach Endorsed," "Knowledge," and "Seeking." Their interest happened only because of AthLink's curated trust network.</p>	<p>FORMER TEAMMATES</p> <p>Through the Locker Room Feed, Darius reconnects with 2 former teammates (one now working in sports media, another starting a nonprofit). These reconections lead to meaningful backchannel intros and future opportunities.</p>	<p>HIDDEN PATHWAYS</p> <p>AthLink's visual "Coach Trust" shows Darius is 2 degrees away from a high profile recruiter he addresses another coach he trained with at a summer camp. This triggers him to message that coach for an intro.</p>
 <p>THE RECRUITER - NATALIE CHEN</p>	<p>COACH WILLIAMS</p> <p>Natalie recognizes Marcus from past AthLink leadership seminars. When browsing for new hires, she filters AthLink candidates by "Coach-Endorsed" and sees his name on Darius's profile. That single signal gives her confidence to reach out.</p>	<p>DARIUS KING</p> <p>Natalie never would have found Darius through LinkedIn or resume submission. AthLink surfaces him via smart matching tied to his Knowledge degree, seeking status, and Marcus's endorsement. After a quick convo, she hires him for a hybrid operations role at KineticOps.</p>	<p>NATALIE CHEN</p>	<p>VERIFIED ATHLETES</p> <p>Following Darius's success, Natalie bookmarks 3 more coach-endorsed athletes from the platform. She flags 2 for future roles and messages one about an internship opportunity at KineticOps.</p>	<p>FEEDBACK LOOP</p> <p>After hiring Darius, Natalie logs the hire in AthLink. This updates both Darius's and Marcus's dashboards. It also boosts Natalie's visibility as a trusted recruiter and triggers a system nudge to other coaches with eligible talent.</p>



Approach

I synthesized founder insights into a multi-role permission system, defining interactions across athletes, coaches, mentors, and recruiters. This emphasized invite-driven, relationship-based connections over open requests—e.g., endorsements as trust signals and "Legacy Trees" for coach impact tracking.

To inform this, I modeled key scenarios: A coach endorses an athlete, triggering recruiter visibility and hires. This guided UX decisions like one-click intros and smart filters, all prototyped mobile-first. Early design system foundations (components like badges and profile cards) ensured scalable iteration without rework.



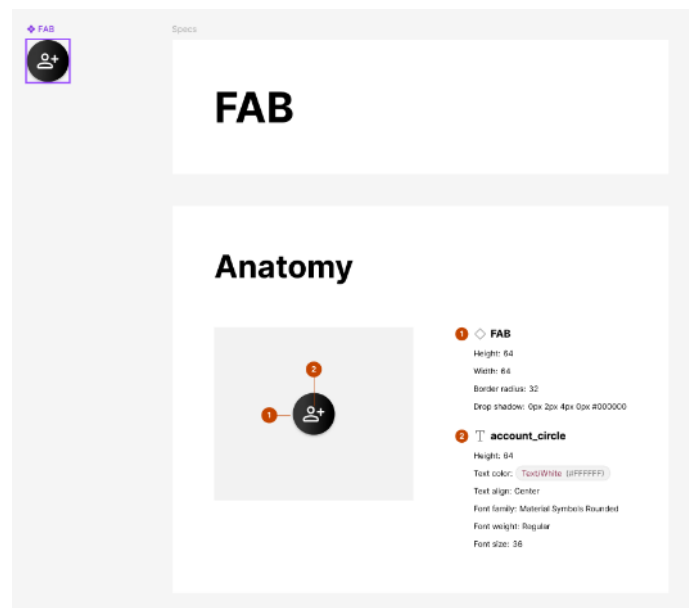
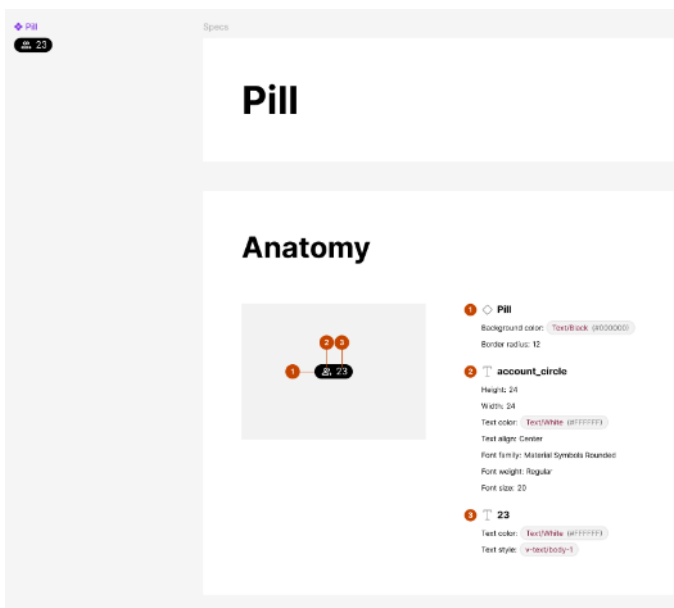
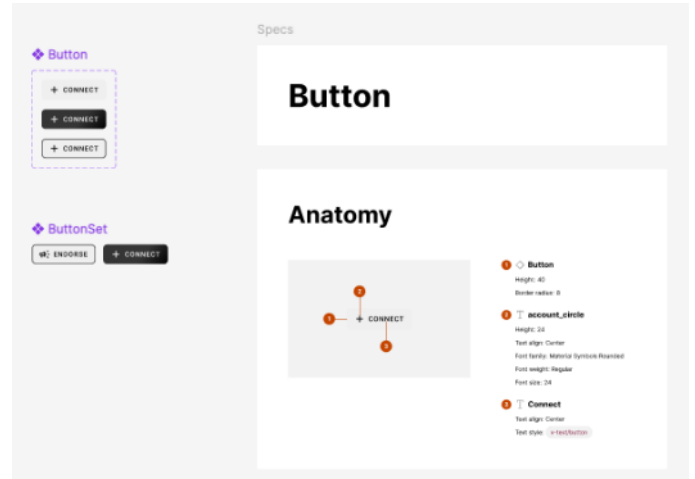
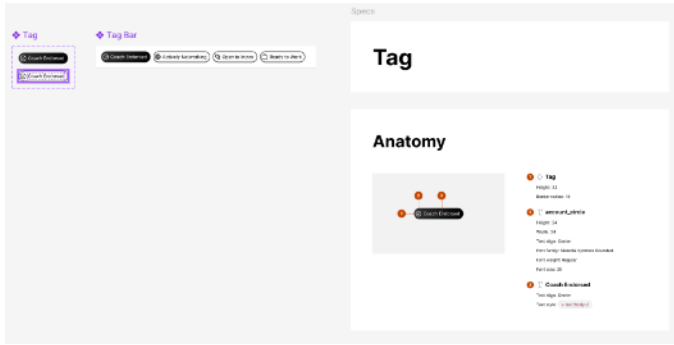
Custom Components

I built the app with custom components to ensure scalable, consistent UX from day one. A couple key examples include:

- Endorsement Badges: Coach-verified icons that surface trust signals on profiles, reducing open-network risks.
- Profile Cards: Modular cards with role-specific fields (e.g., athlete's major/endorsements, recruiter's hiring tags), enabling fast iteration.

These foundations allow branding overlays later while maintaining minimalism—the founder praised the approach for its focus on core functionality over aesthetics.

Component Examples



Outcome

The resulting architecture supports curated growth: Athletes gain validated pathways (e.g., "Never left the team" hires); coaches track legacy impacts via notifications; recruiters close loops efficiently with endorsed matches.

Primed for scaling, it de-risks the platform—permissions prevent open risks while enabling features like gamified badges. Designed for 80% faster intros per modeled flows and higher retention through trust signals. The founder gained a clear roadmap for engineering and pivots; full prototypes available upon request.

My Role

- Defined 0–1 product architecture as Independent Consultant.
- Modeled multi-role permissions for trust, exclusivity, and governance.
- Designed scenario-informed prototypes, including endorsement flows and visual trust cues.
- Established foundational design system for scalable development.
- Advised founder on strategy, translating insights into executable, business-aligned features.
- Full Figma prototypes upon request.



The Athlete

Darius King

ABOUT

Darius was a starting safety at a Power 5 school, known for his discipline, quiet leadership, and 8th-round pick. He graduated this past spring and, like many, didn't get a pro call. His degree was solid, but his connections are fading fast. He misses the structure and brotherhood of the locker room—and he's realizing that networking after sports is an entirely different game.

DEMOGRAPHICS

AGE 23
 GENDER Male
 ETHNICITY Black
 SPORTS Former Safety - UofA
 EDUCATION B.S. in Kinesiology
 OCCUPATION Part-Time Trainer + DoorDash
 INCOME <\$30K
 EXPERIENCE Internships

PERSONALITY

Introvert ————— Extrovert
 Analytical ————— Creative
 Data ————— Time rich
 Money ————— Open-ended
 Independent ————— Interdependent

HEALTHY DISCIPLINED QUIET STEADY
 RESILIENT OPEN

"I don't need a handout—I need a pass. Get me in the room and I'll show them who I am."

ARCHETYPE

"The Proving Ground"
 He's done with the applause. Now he's building the next win—off the field.

GOALS & NEEDS

- Get connected to job opportunities that value his athlete mindset (discipline, leadership, grit).
- Stay connected to teammates, coaches, and other athletes who "get it."
- Build a personal brand post-sports.
- Get real, actionable referrals—not just empty recruiter emails.

BEHAVIORS & ATTITUDES

- Uses LinkedIn but feels disconnected from it ("not built for us").
- Posts occasionally on Instagram about training or motivation.
- Loyal to people who've helped him—values mentorship and team-first mentalities.
- Doesn't want handouts—just a fair shot.

PAIN POINTS

- No career center understands athletes.
- Feels isolated post-graduation.
- Frustrated by platforms that emphasize followers' count over actual merit.
- Tired of people assuming he has no professional skills beyond sports.

PREFERRED TOOLS & CHANNELS

- Mobile-first user.
- Comfortable with DMs, group chats, short-form content.
- Email for formality, but rarely initiates contact that way.
- Has used fitness or sports apps like Hudl, Nike Training Club, and GroupMe.

ENVIRONMENT & CONTEXT OF USE

- Often on the go: working, training, commuting.
- Most likely to engage with Athink during late evenings or weekend mornings.
- May use it while job-hunting or sharing a highlight moment from his past.



The Coach

Marcus Williams

ABOUT

Coach Williams earned his stripes the hard way—he wasn't a star athlete, but a grinder who worked his way into coaching and spent decades shaping players like Darius King. He's coached dozens who went pro and hundreds who didn't. He stays in touch with his athletes long after the final whistle, helping them with resumes, job referrals, or sometimes just a pep talk. He sees Athink as a way to extend the sideline—to keep coaching even after the game ends.

DEMOGRAPHICS

AGE 54
 GENDER Male
 ETHNICITY White
 SPORTS Former D-Back Coach - UofA
 EDUCATION B.S. in Education
 OCCUPATION Sometime
 INCOME \$10K
 EXPERIENCE 25+ years in college coaching

PERSONALITY

Introvert ————— Extrovert
 Analytical ————— Creative
 Data ————— Time rich
 Money ————— Open-ended
 Independent ————— Interdependent

LOWL DISCIPLINED PRAGMATIC PROTECTIVE
 RESPECTED TRUSTED MENTOR

"I didn't coach these kids just to win games. I coached them to win long after the scoreboard shut off."

ARCHETYPE

"The Builder"
 He's not here for credit—he's here to see his players win the next chapter.

GOALS & NEEDS

- Maintains connection with past athletes to help them transition into real careers.
- Quickly and credibly vouch for the character and discipline of former players.
- Build a trusted digital "coaching tree" that reflects the legacy he's built.
- Reduce reliance on spreadsheets, texts, and email chains for alumni tracking.

BEHAVIORS & ATTITUDES

- Straight shooter. Doesn't sugarcoat anything.
- Respected in the coaching community for integrity and development-focused approach.
- Slow to adopt new tech, but once he's in, he's loyal.
- Finds pride in quietly watching former players thrive in life after football.

PAIN POINTS

- Constantly asked to introduce players to recruiters, job contacts, or alumni—but has no clear workflow.
- Doesn't trust most recruiting platforms—they're built for talent acquisition, not personal development.
- Feels guilty when a handworking athlete like Darius gets left behind because they weren't "ready."

PREFERRED TOOLS & CHANNELS

- Uses email regularly and iPhone for calls/texts.
- Checks social media passively but doesn't post much.
- Familiar with Hudl, GroupMe, and Google Sheets for team management.
- Hates tools that don't waste his time—he's got "coach brain."

ENVIRONMENT & CONTEXT OF USE

- At home off-coach, between calls, or while attending alumni games.
- Uses Athink during downtime to check in on athletes or respond to requests.
- Needs mobile-first UX.

Carrier 360

Lifecycle-Driven Mobile UX for a Revenue-Critical Logistics Marketplace

Prepared by Mark Young

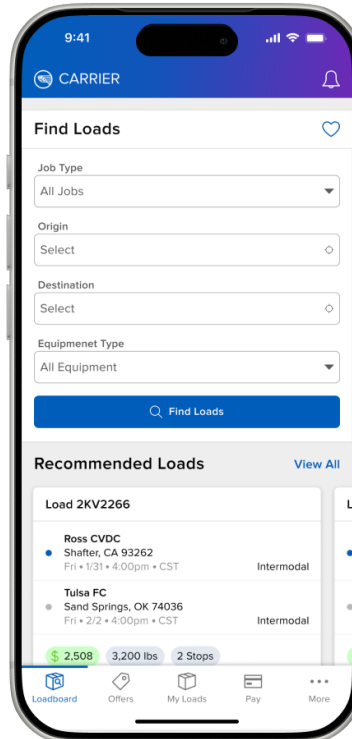
Overview

Carrier 360 is J.B. Hunt's core mobile marketplace connecting shippers and carriers across North America.

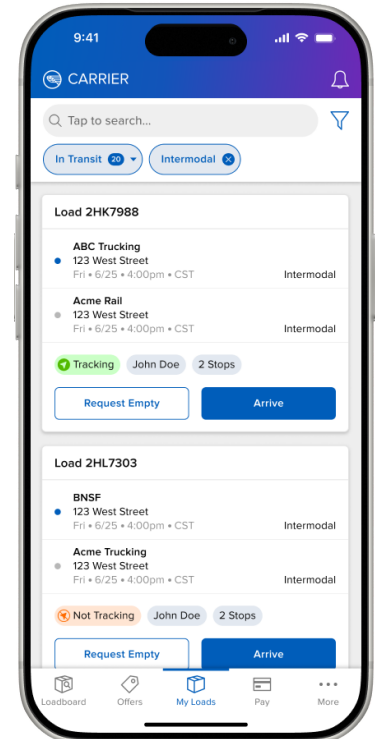
It serves as the primary operational tool for tens of thousands of drivers handling real-time load discovery, booking, execution, and payment. Supporting 175,000+ carriers and high-volume daily usage, the app demands fast, reliable decision-making in demanding on-the-road conditions.

As Senior UX Designer leading mobile product design, I evolved the experience to reduce friction in high-density workflows.

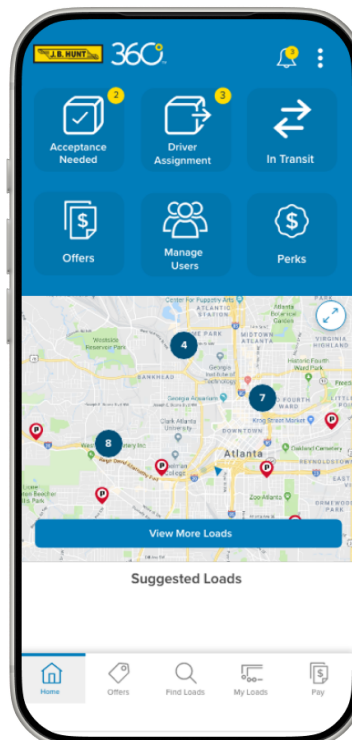
Moving the load board from secondary navigation to the primary home screen aligned the experience to the user's core intent: finding and evaluating loads.



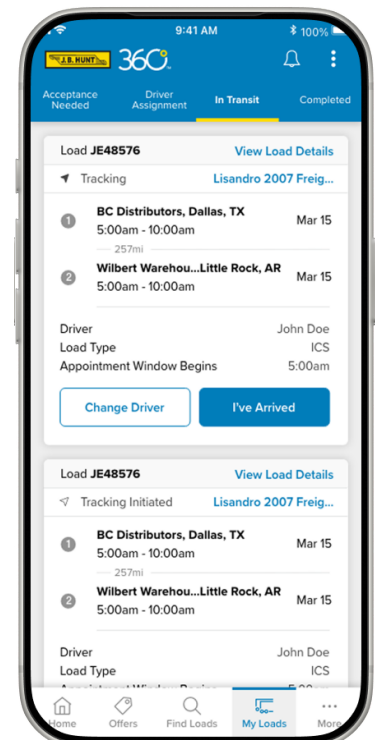
New Load Board



New Load Cards & Filtering



Old Load Board

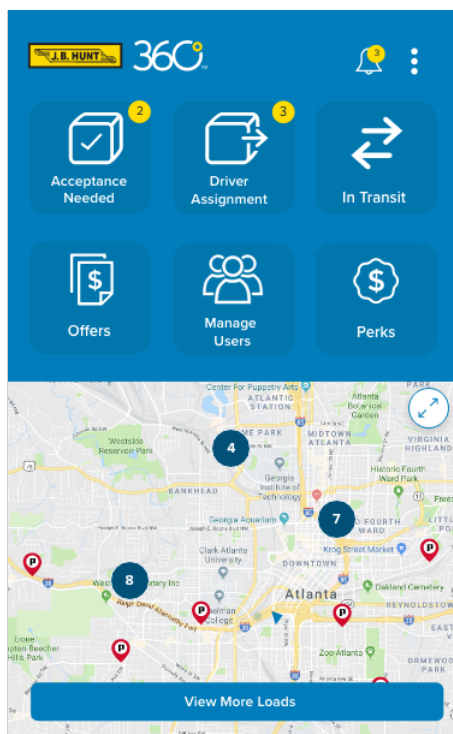


Old Load Cards & Tabs

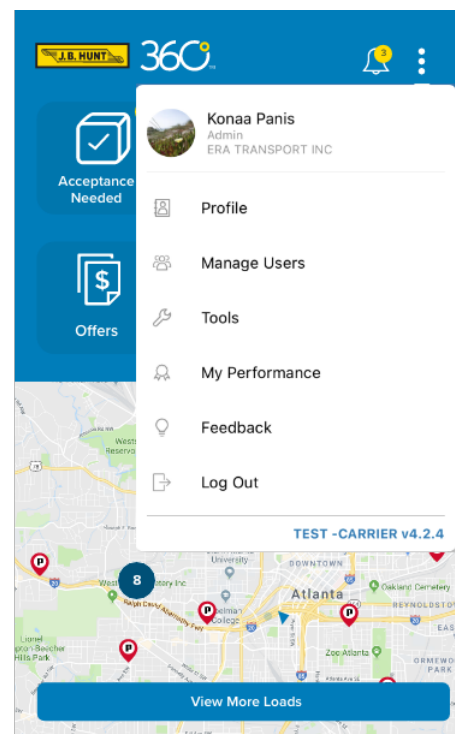
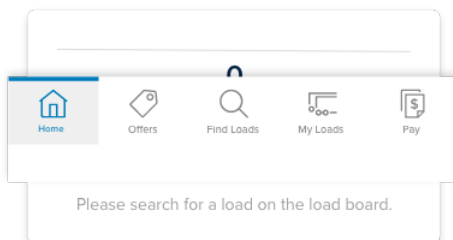
Problem

Organic growth led to fragmented information architecture and inconsistent patterns. Drivers navigated multiple screens to track a load's full lifecycle (discovery – booking – execution – payment), increasing cognitive load during time-sensitive decisions.

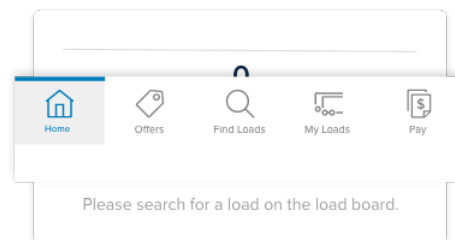
The load board's primary discovery surface lacked effective filtering and prioritization, slowing relevant load identification. Additionally, the load board was buried behind navigation, creating unnecessary friction in accessing the platform's core revenue-generating functionality.



Suggested Loads



Suggested Loads



Old Flow: Home – Menu – Load Board – Filters – Results

New Flow: Load Board (direct access)

With nearly a dozen primary menu options and redundancies, cognitive overload obscured the signals users needed to make fast decisions.

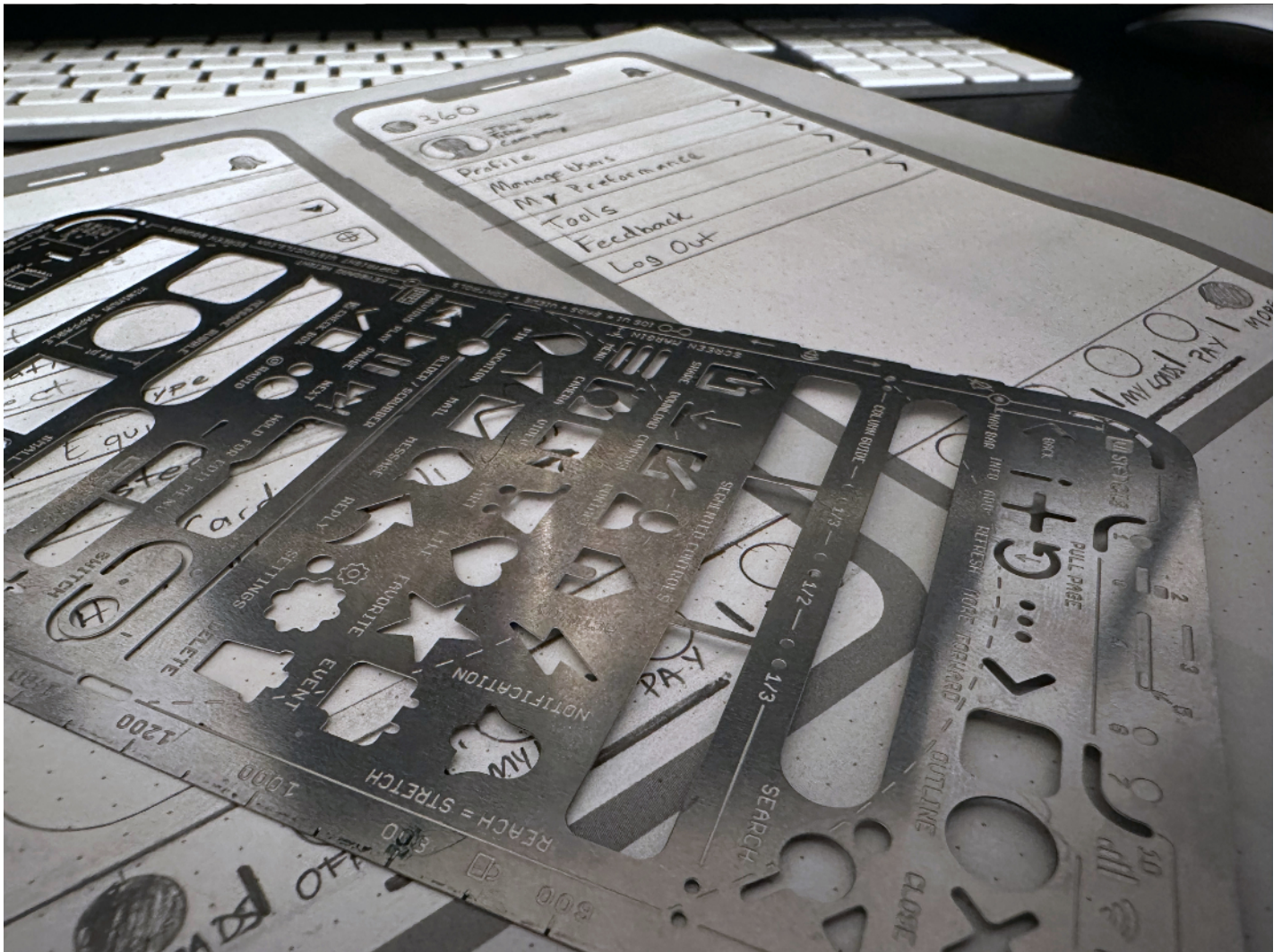
Approach

A key product decision was repositioning the load board as the primary home screen experience. Previously, drivers had to navigate into load discovery, adding steps before reaching the most important surface. Elevating the load board eliminated that overhead and aligned the app directly with user intent: quickly finding and evaluating loads.

I then mapped the complete load lifecycle and restructured around four key stages:

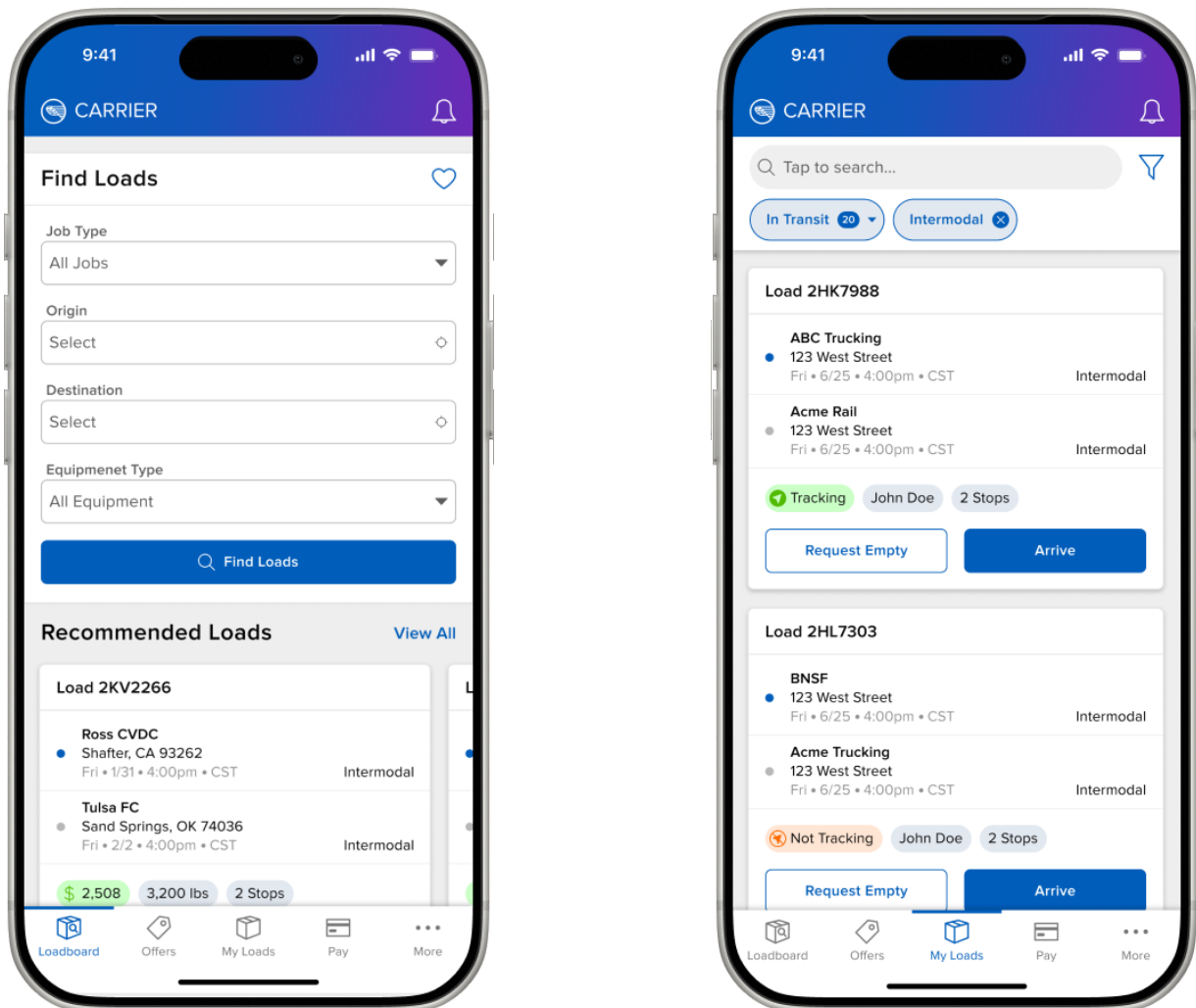
- Load discovery
- Booking & confirmation
- Shipment execution
- Delivery & payment

This informed a redesigned load card architecture that surfaced contextual, stage-relevant information upfront. Concurrently, I redesigned the search and filtering system on the load board for better operational matching (location, timing, route constraints). All changes rolled out incrementally to align with engineering timelines and executive roadmap priorities.



Outcome

The lifecycle-based load cards delivered clearer workflow visibility, enabling faster status comprehension and decision-making. The enhanced search/filtering accelerated discovery on the platform's primary revenue-generating surface. Repositioning the load board as the home screen further reduced navigation overhead and improved operational efficiency across a massive-scale platform without disrupting stability.



My Role

- Led mobile UX for Carrier 360 as Senior UX Designer
- Repositioned the load board as the primary home screen to eliminate navigation friction
- Re-architected lifecycle-informed load cards to reduce cognitive load
- Designed scalable search/filtering architecture for faster, relevant load matching
- Collaborated with product and engineering on incremental delivery aligned to executive priorities