

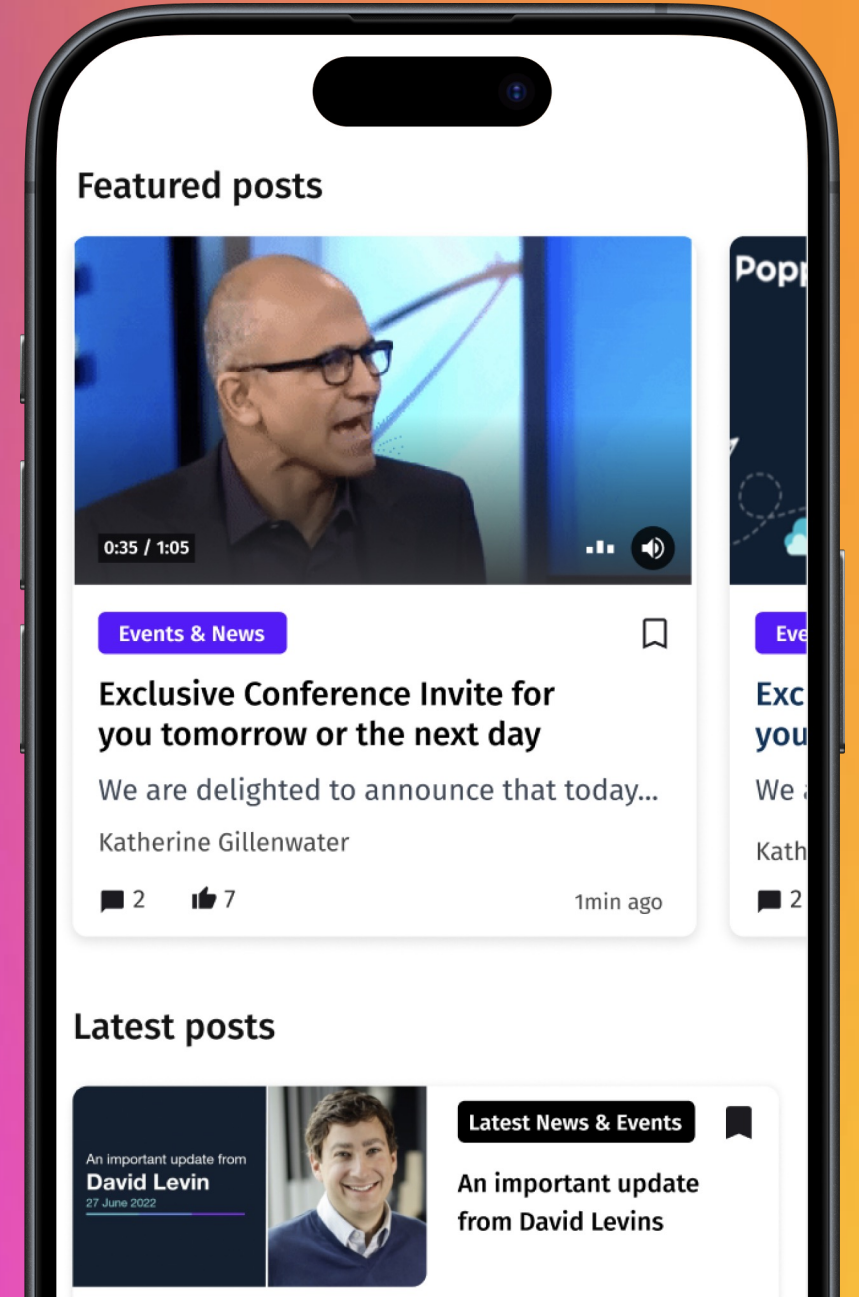


Poppulo Internal communications app case study

Poppulo

Onboarding & Adoption

Page - 01 / 40





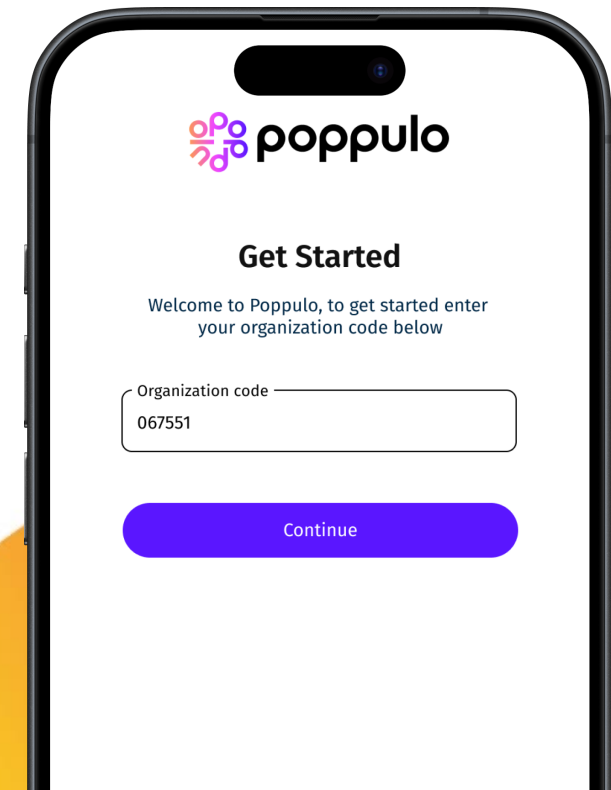
CONTEXT

What is Poppulo
My Role
In the beginning



What is Poppulo?

The Poppulo Internal Comms App is a platform designed to help organizations improve their internal communication that ensure employees stay informed, engaged, and connected.

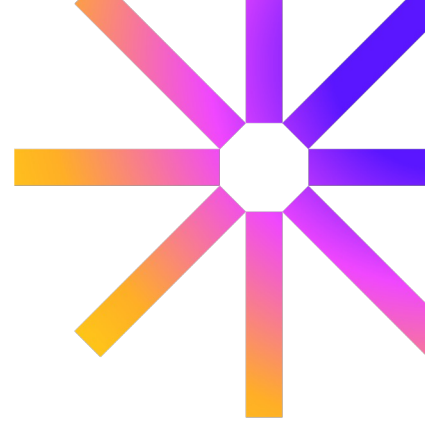




My Role

Lead Product / Snr UX Designer on the mobile team

- Hands on UX and UI Design & Refinement and solutions
- Drive user research efforts, including tests and interviews
- Taking a holistic view of the product combined with multiple different Poppulo platforms
- Evolve and enhance the design system through multiple teams
- Collaborate with product owners to define roadmap strategies and business needs
- Identify mobile specific opportunities in collaboration with cross-functional teams
- Taking a “3 in a box” approach to design thinking workshops and delivery
- Ensuring AA accessibility standards are met and maintained





In the beginning..

Four Winds Interactive take over Poppulo

What I started at Poppulo it went from “Successful Irish tech” company to “Unicorn” when Four Winds Interactive took over, this marked a culture change and a lot of uncertainty around a way of working.

Under new ownership they had their own ideas, focusing on the internal comms app, they wanted higher rates of engagement whilst driving adoption.

Engagement, Adoption and Business needs

Engagement and Adoption was two BIG problems. Four Winds proposed completely redesign the app and making it “Feature Rich”

But without any real evidence that this approach would work I needed to dig deeper and apply fundamental but common Ux practices to earn buy in and move away from this “revolution over evolution” approach.





DESIGN PROCESS

Challenging the “Redesign” Idea

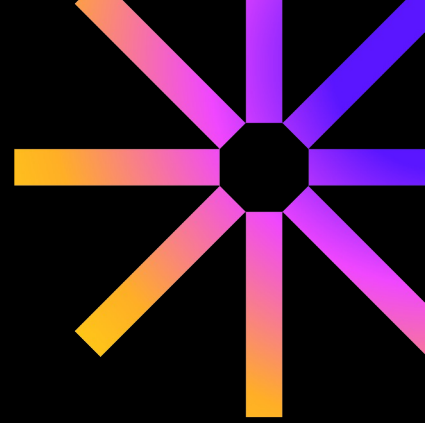
Understanding the problem

Forming a problem statement with 3IAB method

Workshop (Empathy, Define, Ideate, S.C.A.M.P.E.R)



2025 CASE STUDY

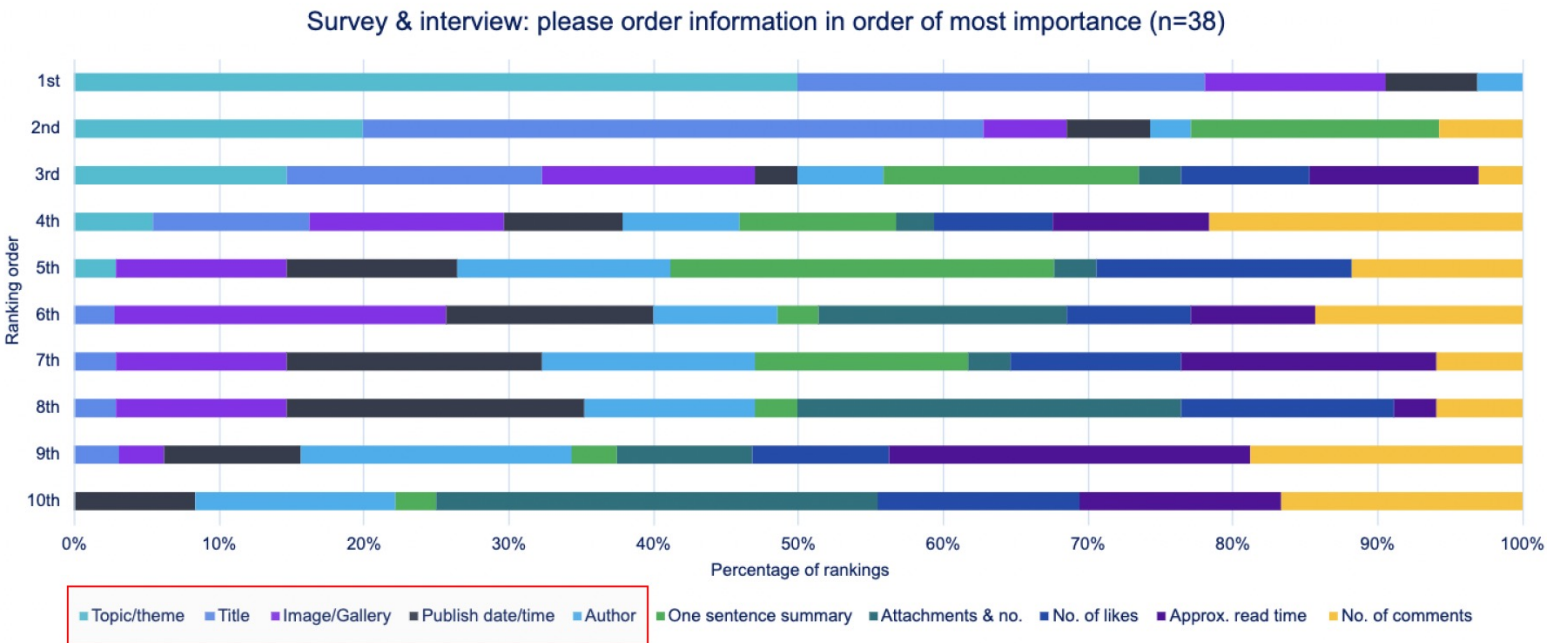


Challenging The “Redesign” Idea

Gaining “Buy In” from senior leadership was key in shifting strategy

Before redesigning anything we Interviewed 38 of our top clients, asking a very simple question. Currently right now what is most important for internal users to see on their daily feeds? This would determine if a complete redesign was the answer.

Topic, Title, Images, Date/Time, Author was of most importance which already existed : here is the breakdown.





screen is unclear
company email
ons

Hard to find in the app store,
documentation isn't clear on
how to install

How the users don't
of the company code
ed should log them in
atically or not

It's unclear how NEA, SSO,
are supposed to log in,
information seems lost on
screen, Edge cases would
need to be looked at.

More rating
ement, Currently over
our users are iPhone
iPhone11)

Does not seem to be a way
for people who already have
an account set up to log in
(option is not given enough
presence on screen)

Cover as many onboarding user
scenarios as we can

Clear onscreen instructions
around what email the user needs
to log in with or what they have to
do next

Better instructions and
documentation sent to internal
comms managers/teams

Covering the needs for internal
comms managers i.e. gain internal
feedback from the employee
rather than reading it on the app
store.

Most of the main onboarding
scenarios should be covered,
edge cases can be looked at
another time.

People find it hard to see where
the app is in the app store, this
should be clearly outlined

Now we can dig deeper

Business, User needs and understanding the problem

With the focus now shifting away from a "Redesign" having presented the findings to our new owners I am then tasked with forming a strategy around driving engagement and adoption.

I can now ask the questions of why? Why are the engagement numbers so low, What are these numbers? Ultimately I need to Understand the problem(s), define and ideate. So let's dig deeper,



Forming a problem statement

By collaborating with my PM and Senior engineer we where able to form a problem statement by looking at raw data.

Currently, out of roughly 23,000 monthly users only 300-500 users are able to log in/onboard and check for essential communications from their internal comms

1.3 - 2.17 %

of users only successfully make it through onboarding
resulting in poor engagement and adoption



Framing the problem, defining the user needs and forming a delivery plan with a “3 in a box” model

BUSINESS NEEDS

Product Management & Customer Success

- Problem Definition
- Business Impact and outcomes
- Roadmap & Vision

USER NEEDS

Product Designer Snr Ux / Lead

- User Empathy
- Exploration & Iteration
- Quality & Creative Input

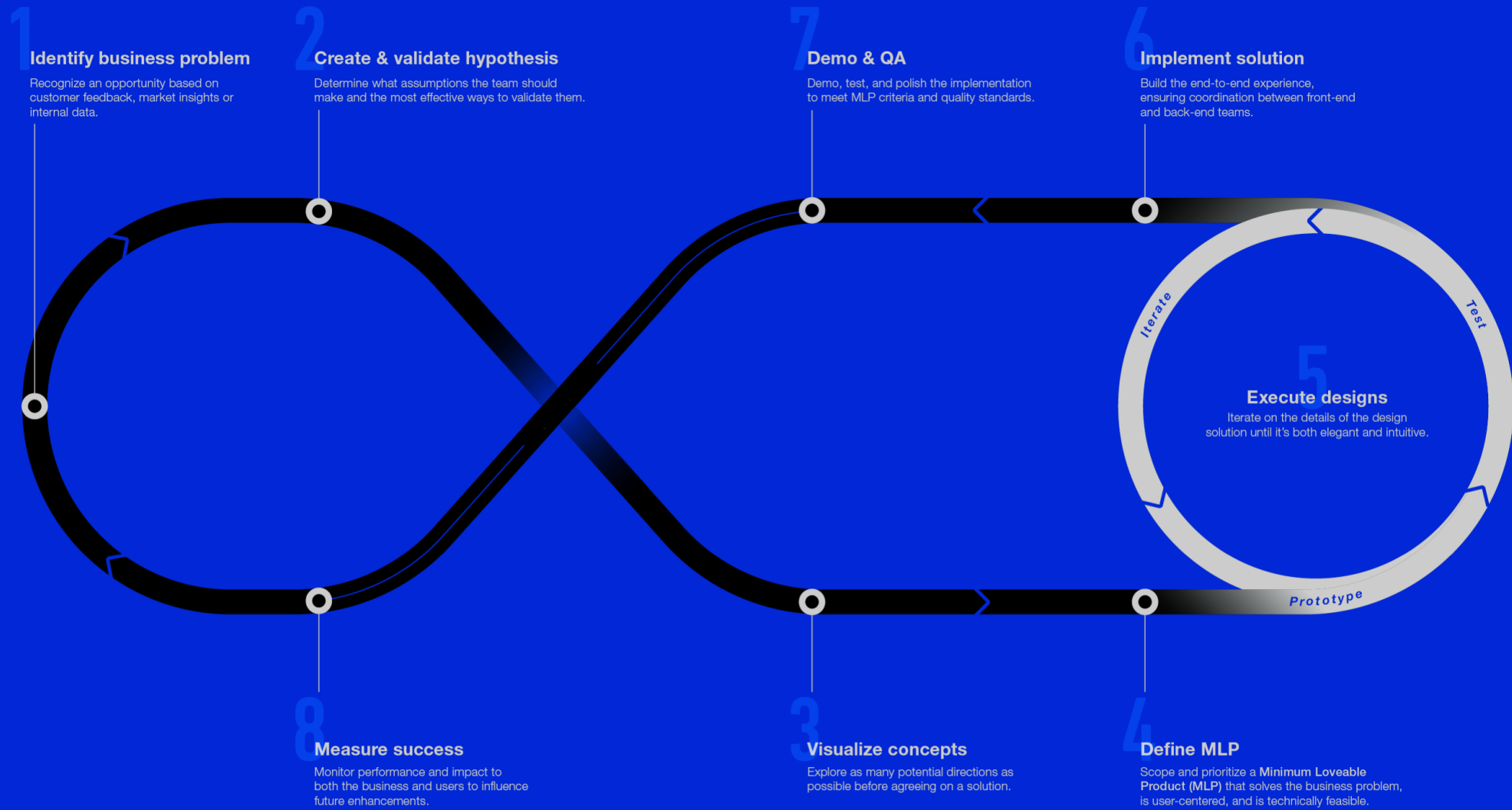
TECHNICAL FEASABILITY

Snr Engineering / Architecture / Dev

- User Empathy
- Exploration & Iteration
- Quality & Creative Input



3IAB Delivery method





Workshop Ideation

Why choose a S.C.A.M.P.E.R ideation workshop over lets say a how might we for this? or a white boarding session?

S.C.A.M.P.E.R is designed to take what is currently in place and tackle it from 7 different lenses, rather than rip something up and start again.

Identify the problem and Improve/fix on what we currently have whilst potentially identifying and road mapping further improvements with this method

Attendees :

Frances McLaughlin : Senior Product Manager

Simon Coulter : Engineering Manager

Anne-Marie O'Riordan : Senior UX Researcher

Mike Shapaker Customer : Success / Acquisition

Des Mc Gouran : Lead Product / Senior UX Designer

Stage 1. Empathy

Gain more understanding the the problem
were trying to solve

5-10mins

Stage 2. Define

Reframe the issue. Time to accumulate the
information gathered during the Empathy stage

10mins

Stage 3. Ideate Concept:

define creative solutions with SCAMPER

30mins

Stage 4. Define Goals:

Get detailed into the goals

10mins

Stage 5. Sketch ideas:

Pen / Paper keep it lo fi. Time Dep

TBA



Currently populo's Internal mobile app is only reaching less than 30% of its users.

Unclear instructions and documentation around onboarding has enhanced frustration and caused a drop off

Login screen is unclear around company email instructions

Hard to find in the app store, documentation isn't clear on how to install

Poor app store ratings currently a turn off. First impressions are poor.

Users confused by the log in screen, no clear understanding around what email to use and what next steps are.

Right now the users don't know if the company code supplied should log them in automatically or not

It's unclear how NEA, SSO, are supposed to log in, information seems lost on screen, Edge cases would need to be looked at.

Frustration is causing a dropoff leading to poor app reviews. The app store is sometimes what the user sees first.

For people who are "first time here" they don't know if they're going to set the app up with a personal email or company

App Store rating improvement, Currently over 65% of our users are iPhone (mostly iPhone 11)

Does not seem to be a way for people who already have an account set up to log in (option is not given enough presence on screen)

No onscreen help or guidance, almost impossible to navigate without hand hold by an internal manager

People are confused by what a "user ID" is, they assume it's their employee number, but are unsure

This can either be their employee number or mobile number

again no onscreen clarification around this

When something goes wrong there is currently no on screen feedback, just a drop off. No way to get back to the log in screen without entering their company code again

Stage 1 : Empathy

A few common themes start to with

- Low App Rating
- Unsupported user journeys
- Terminology not clear
- Unclear on screen instructions



Cover as many onboarding user scenarios as we can

Clear onscreen instructions around what email the user needs to log in with or what they have to do next

Better instructions and documentation sent to internal comms managers/teams

Uses need clearer onscreen guidance, right now when something goes wrong they're constantly being reverted back to a manager

This is a one size fits all solution that benefits nobody causing frustration for both user and internal comms teams

Covering the needs for internal comms managers ie gain internal feedback from the employee rather than reading it on the app store.

Most of the main onboarding scenarios should be covered, edge cases can be looked at another time.

People find it hard to see where the app is in the app store, this should be clearly outlined

Better ways for the internal comms teams to gather feedback from employees, and see what kind of employees they are ie what scenario they fall under

Lighten the load on Internal Comms teams so they don't have to hand hold employees through the process

Clear UI Tweaks to enhance the user's decisions with onboarding

Allow users to input valuable feedback to comms team

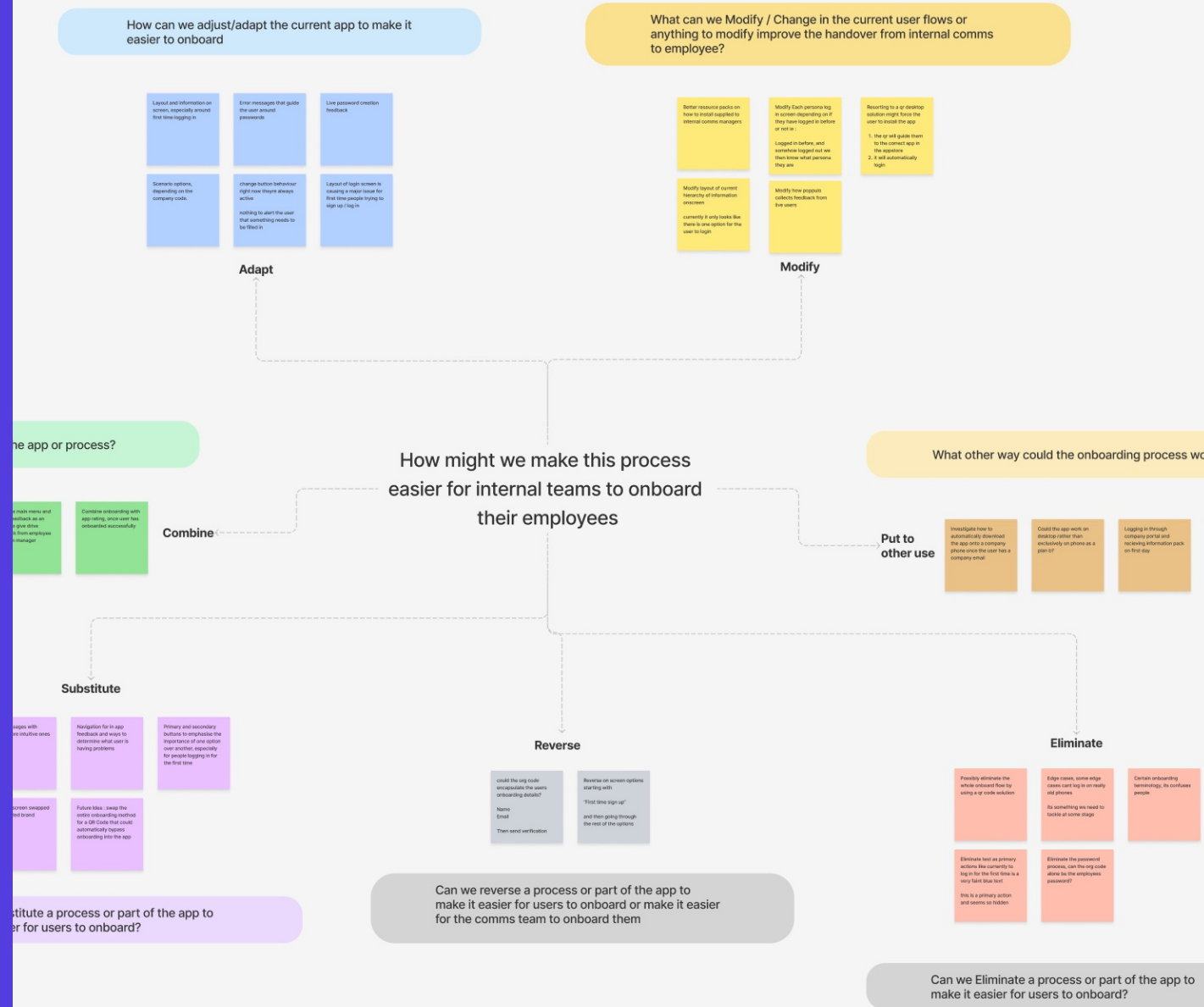
allow users to log in swiftly and check important company updates that's related to them

Stage 2 : Define

We Reframe the issue. Time to accumulate the information gathered during the Empathy stage

Ideas are starting to form

- Feedback to Internal Comms teams
- Mapping out onboarding scenarios
- A clearer way of finding the app on the app store
- What email the user should use to create an account



Stage 3 : S.C.A.M.P.E.R

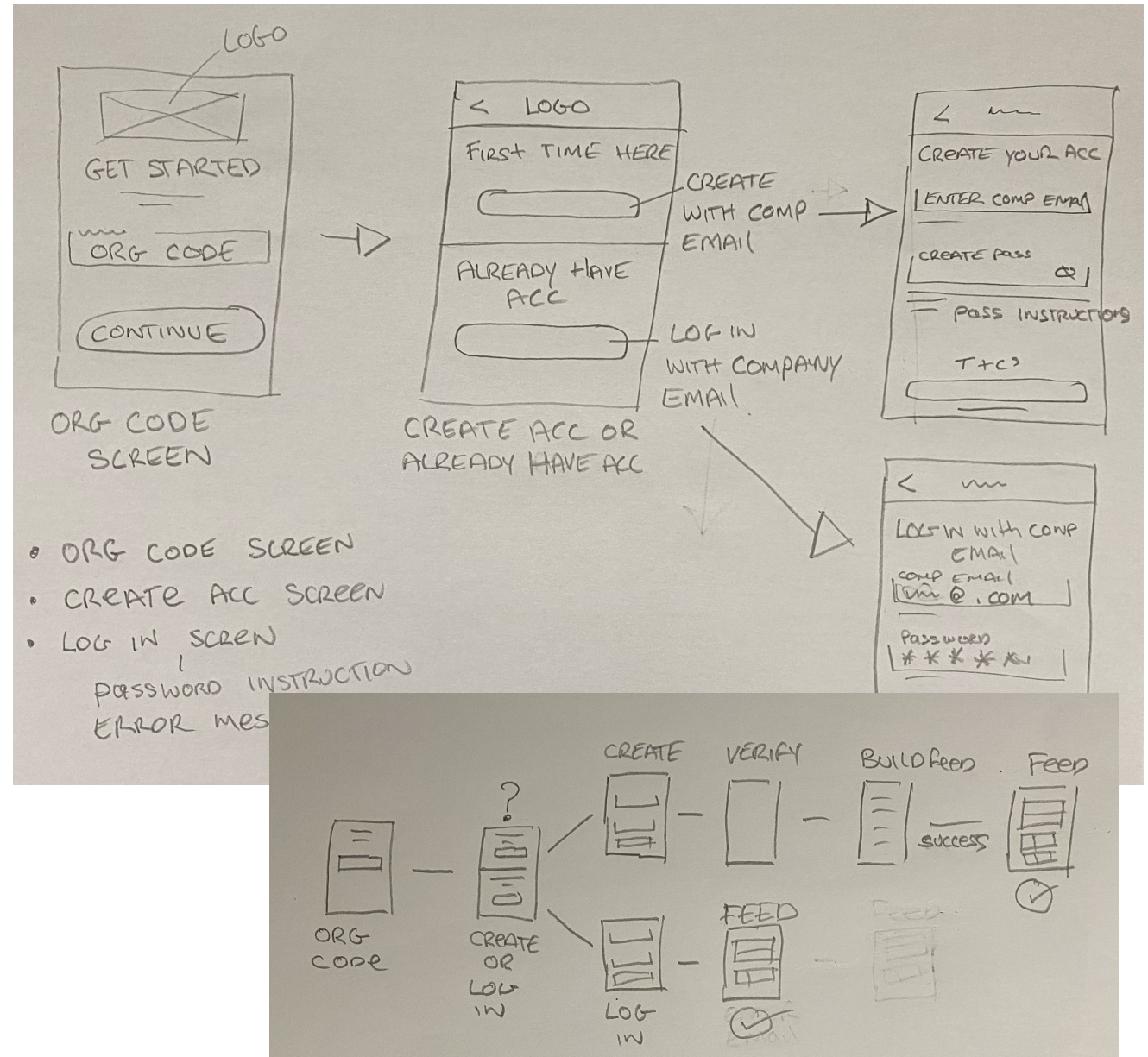
This is where we start defining and crystallising solutions through 7 different lenses

- Deflect negative feedback away from the app store and direct to internal comms managers
- Onboarding Ux/UI and User flows need urgent attention
- Investigate a Quicker QR code onboarding solution

Low Fi sketches

Low fi sketching from the workshop allowed us to quickly visualise the possibilities and discuss the potential solutions in keeping with the 3IAB method.

- Tackling key drop off screens in the flow
- Addressing Ux/UI low hanging fruit
- Gaining feedback from key decision makers quickly and effectively
- Address 7 different Scenarios covering email, non email and SSO users)





Workshop Learnings

After we defined goals and next steps here is some of the key take aways we needed to address



User Onboarding Scenarios

1 size fits all solutions not working. All user scenarios need to be mapped out



Information

Current onscreen information confusing



Overall Layout

Ui Tweak need urgent address



Poor App Store rating

From customer success feedback low app store rating has impacted adoption



In app feedback

A place for people to give direct feedback to comms manager



QR Code Onboarding

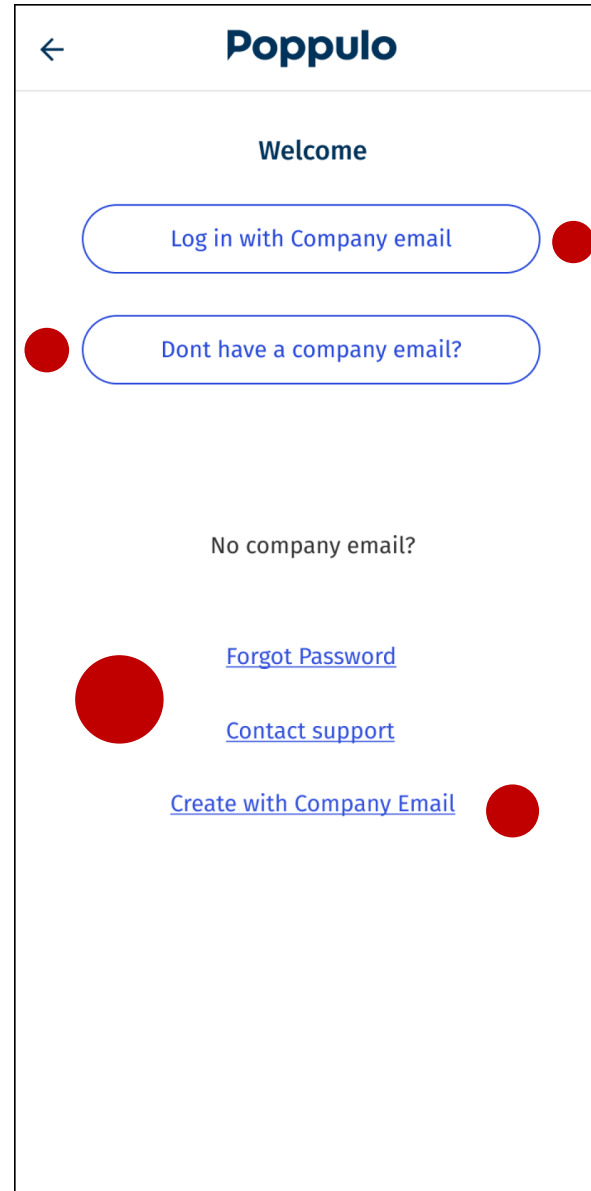
Investigate a potential easier way to onboard users



Drop off onboarding screen

Pushes essential options down
the screen, sometimes users have
to scroll to find create account

Screen lacks confidence in its ui
Important elements not discoverable



Most users at this point need to
create an account NOT log in

Far too hidden, not given any
presence for such an important
option



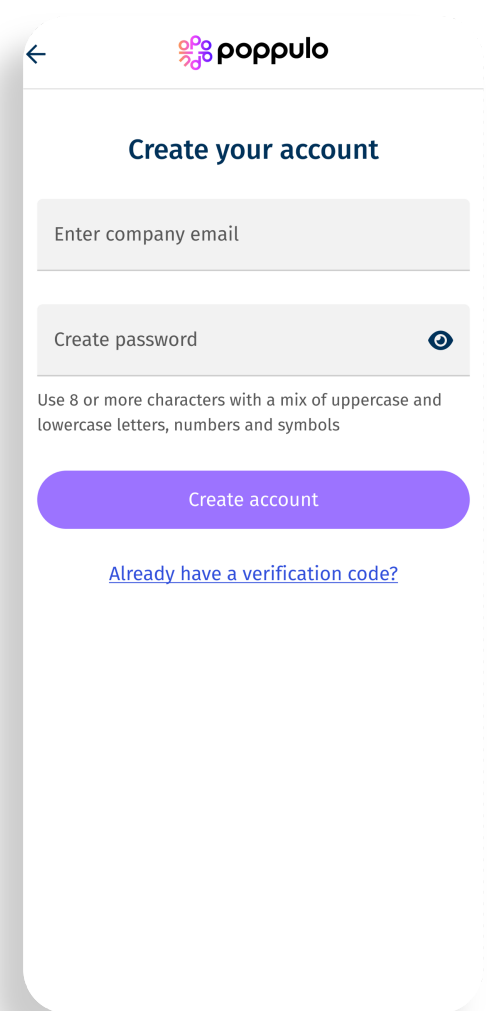
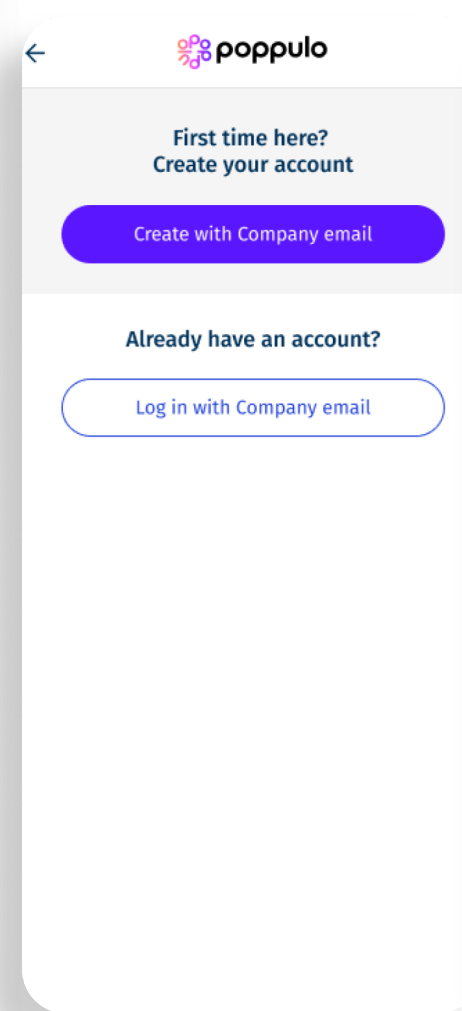
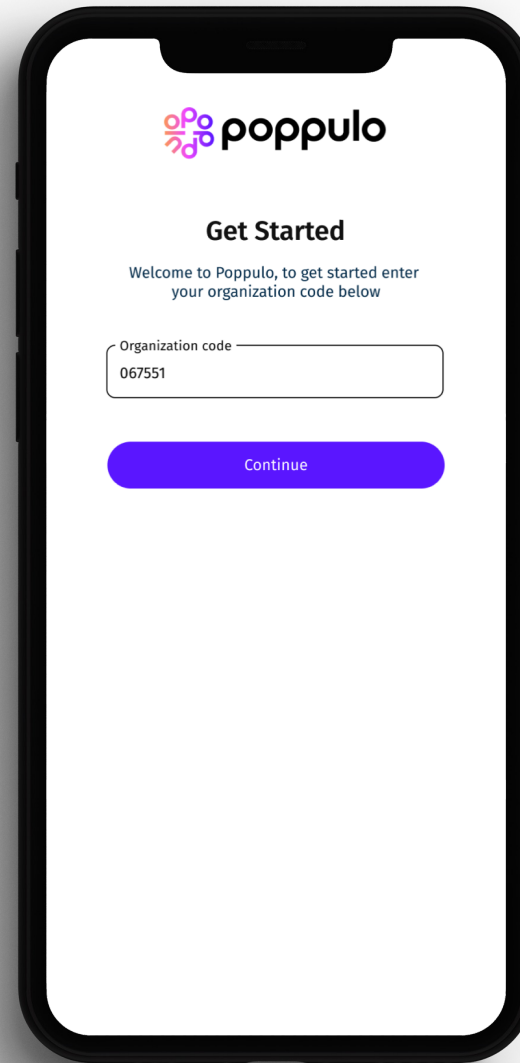
UX/UI Updates

From Lo fi to high fidelity, pulling from the Poppulo design system resulted in a swift turn around with Ui & Ux enhancements.

I upgraded the Ui to AA accessibility standards whilst giving clear onscreen instructions

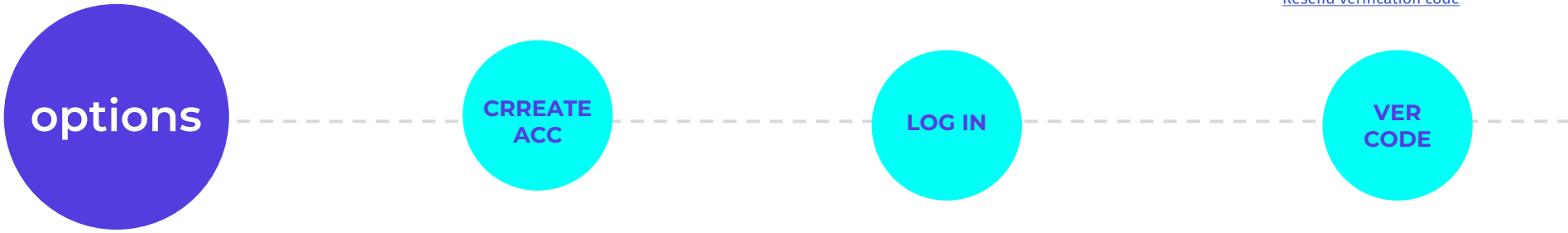
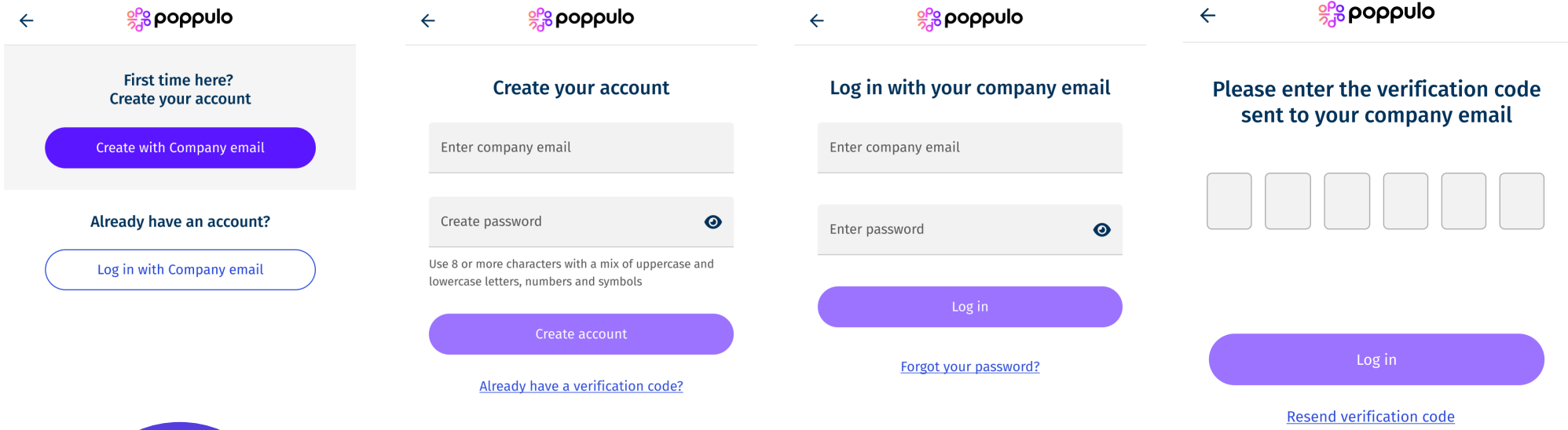
The onboarding language was simplified. With two clear definitive paths.

- Create with Company email
- Log in with Company email





Onboarding Screens



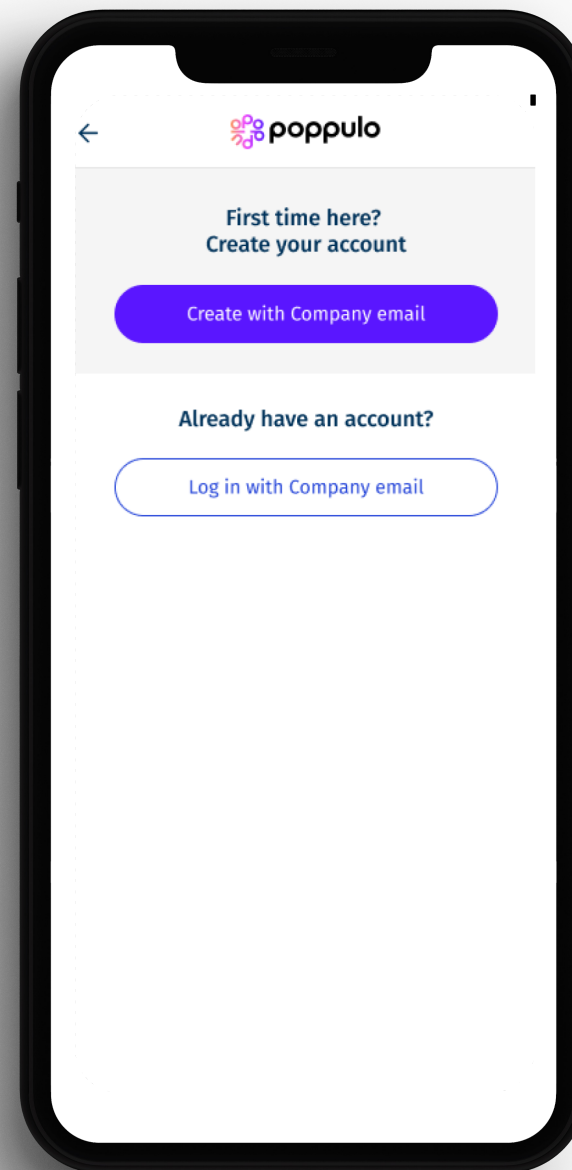
Can change depending on organization need (7 different scenarios covered)

If user ends up on this screen by accident They can navigate back or choose to enter a verification code

If they cant find their previous verification code they can generate a new one instantly sent to their company email

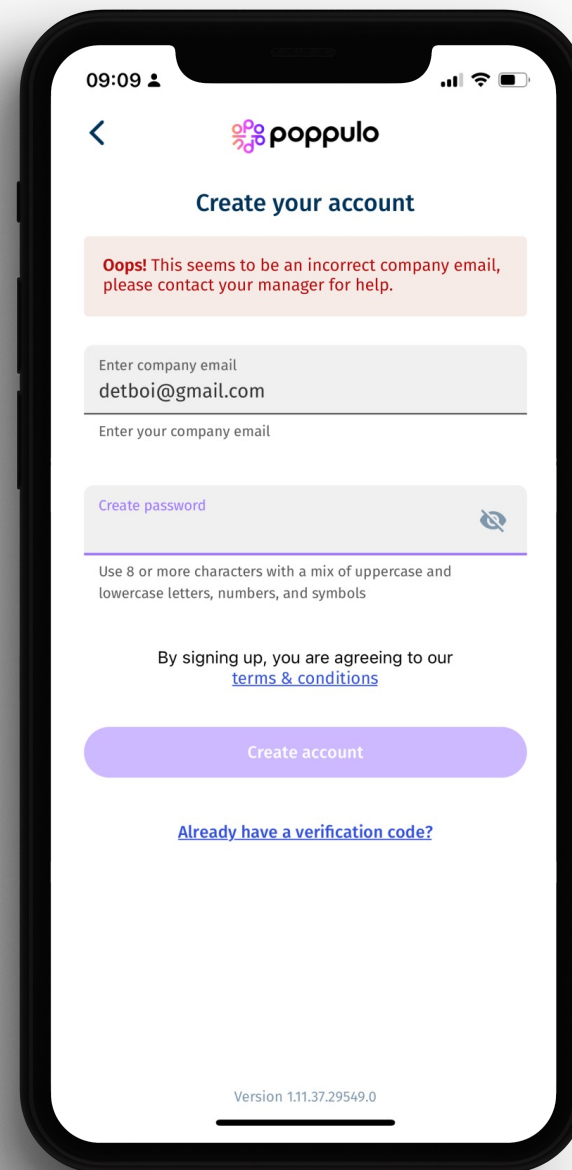
Drop off screen treatment

- Reducing the options down to two clear paths
- Outlining if you're a "first time user" you create an account with a "Company email". Avoiding ambiguity
- Accommodating people who already have an account or might have been logged out (One time only tokenised log in)
- As a high percentage of users will only see this screen whilst setting up an account for the first time, that option for creating an account is the primary action now



Further improvements

- Clearer onscreen instructions for error states incorporating WCAG AA standards
- Inflow T&C's Agreements
- Clearer password guidance
- Ability to loop back to previous options or log in with verification code





VALIDATION

External Moderated Testing

Round 1 : Account Creation

Round 2 : Logging In

Final Recommendations



2 rounds of Moderated testing with 30 users

As budget's and resources was restricted for user testing we couldn't use the traditional methods of using lookback or usertesting.com

The process had to be swift and fast to gain buy in from leadership. Any iterations needed depending on severity would have to be placed in the roadmap and discussed

I used a mix of internal teams and key customers to round up a number of 30 users (over two rounds) covering the main scenarios of Email and Non Email for the user testing. Each test took 15-30mins

A SUS score of 80% was the agreed threshold

Further rounds of A/B testing may be needed to validate terminology.

Round 1 – 15 Users (create account)

15-30mins

Q1 : You have just opened your internal comms app.
On seeing this screen what would you do next?

Q2 : Does this screen make sense to you? What would you expect to happen next?

Q3: Error message. If you seen this messages who would you reach out to next?

Round 2 – 15 Users (log in)

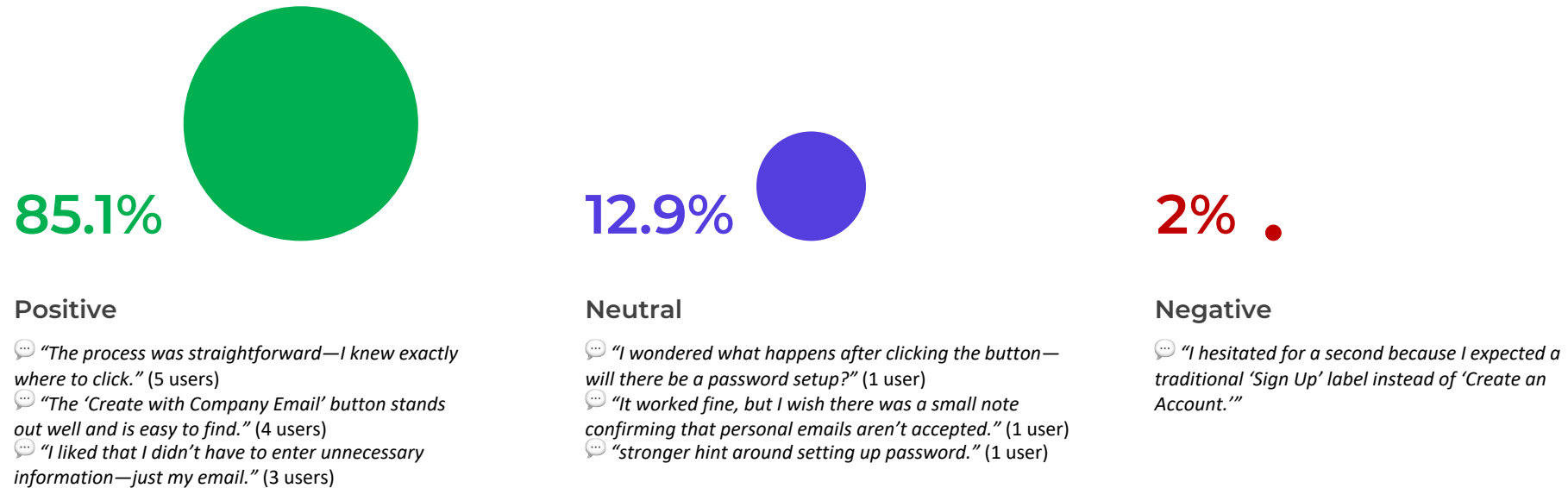
15-30mins

Q1 : You have just been logged out of your app,
how would you log back in?

Q2 : You see this error message what would you do next?



Round 1: Account Creation (15 Users)

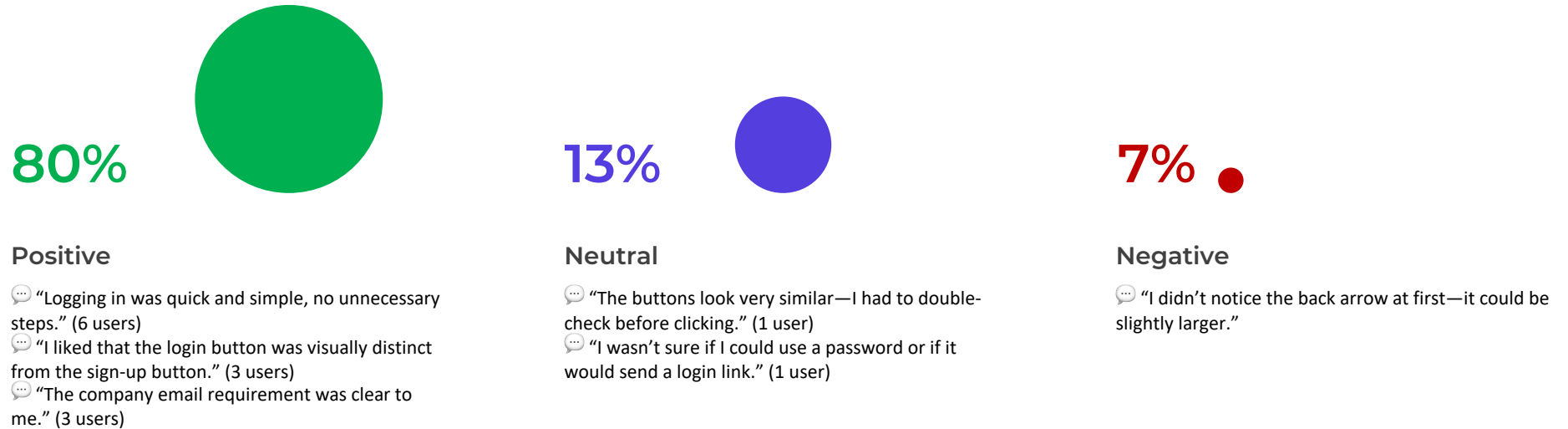


Account Creation SUS Score:
84.2 (Excellent)

Usability Interpretation: Most users found the process clear and easy, with only minor hesitation about what happens next.



Round 2: Logging in (15 Users)



Account Creation SUS Score:
80.8 (Excellent)

 Usability Interpretation: Users generally found logging in easy, but a few hesitated due to similar button styling and minor uncertainty about login methods.



Final Recommendations

Suggestions

- ✓ Differentiate “Create with Company Email” and “Log in with Company Email” more clearly (e.g., size, color contrast, or a small label beneath each).
- ✓ Add a brief explanation of what happens after clicking “Create an Account” (e.g., “You’ll receive a confirmation email”).
- ✓ Make the back arrow slightly larger for better visibility.
- ✓ More guidance for setting up a password

Roadmap improvements

More information around what happens and next and certain Ui improvements can now be highlighted as potential quick fixes or roadmap items

Summary

Account Creation: 84.2 (Excellent) – Mostly clear, minor hesitation about next steps.

Logging In: 80.8 (Very Good) – Easy process, but similar button design caused slight confusion.

Overall Usability: 82.5 (Excellent) – Users had a smooth experience, with only small refinements needed.



IMPACT

The Result

Boosting engagement



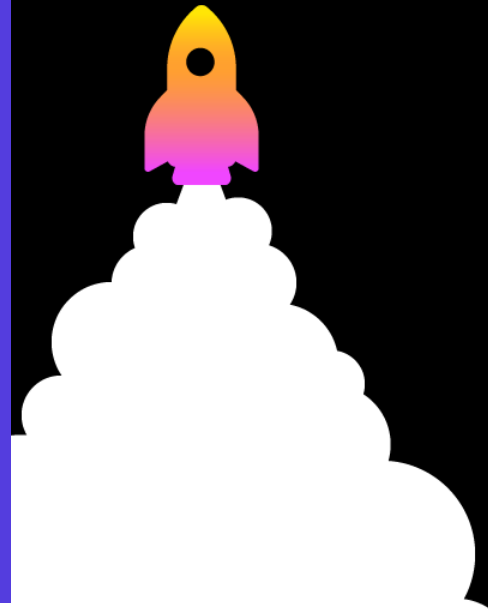
The result

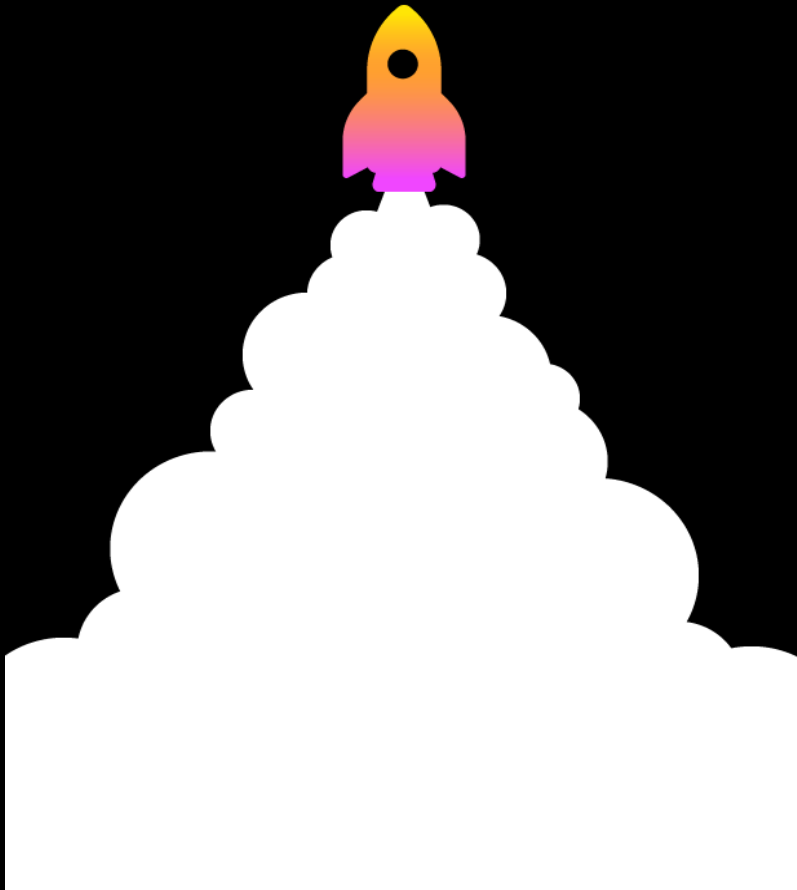
After a new rollout of updated onboarding instructions from Poppulo and the onboarding improvements pushed into the latest build the app saw huge waves of improvement in both onboarding and engagement over the coming months

73% – 86.9%

Of users now log in and make it through onboarding. Roughly between 17-20k users a month now make it through onboarding and engage with the app.

Now we can accurately track engagement numbers. This is a huge step.





We have lift off

Now that we have a large pool of users actively using the app we can accurately track behaviors and make data driven decisions around what features to move forward with to drive engagement



Further improvements

01.

App Store rating & In app feedback

Allowing users to re-direct negative feedback away from the app store to internal support and comms managers whilst boosting app ratings

02.

Bookmarking & Article attachments

Giving users the ability to bookmark articles whilst also giving internal comms team to attach important documents to articles for company wide communication

03.

Feed & Card Improvements

Continuous improvements on the card's Ui whilst holistically considering its impact on populous "Teams" and "Sharepoint" feed cards.

04.

Inline video on feeds and articles

Inline video to drive further engagement whilst enriching the overall user experience



Next steps : Drive Adoption

As identified in our workshop the current low app rating was a key decider in users been hesitant in downloading the app. Now that we have a larger pool of users to test with in the wild we can tackle the app store rating whilst giving users the chance to give internal feedback.

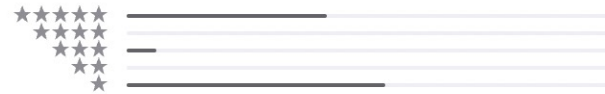
Ratings and Reviews

[See All](#)

2.8

out of 5

17 Ratings



Sierrajordyn, 03/19/2020

Does not work

Does not work. Just cycles through the f [more](#)

Developer Response,

Hi,

[more](#)



Boilerbabe85, 05/27/2020

Cannot see any "Get started" button

No get started button as my employer's instructions specify. Only four screens to slide through.



M4Chester, 06/10/2020

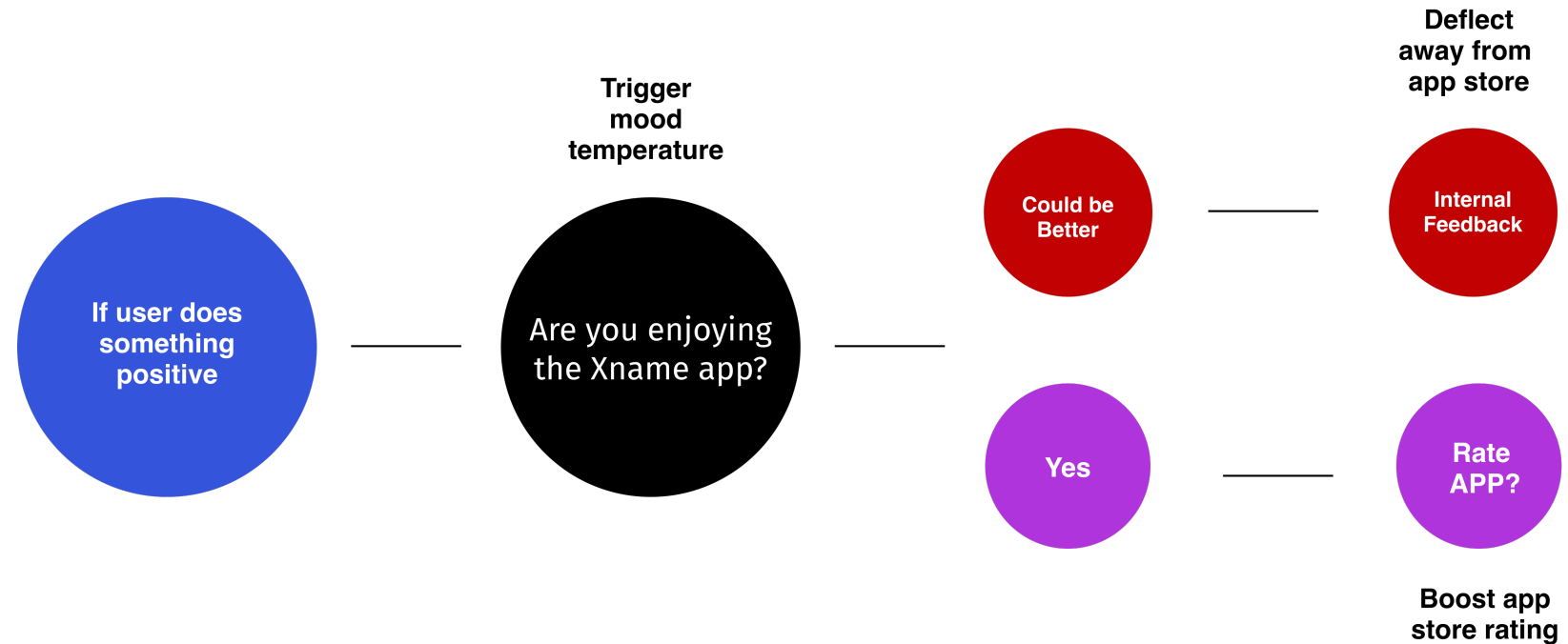
Good Grief !

No "Get Started" option so totally useless. Very disappointed and more annoyed that can't even get started...



Process Flow

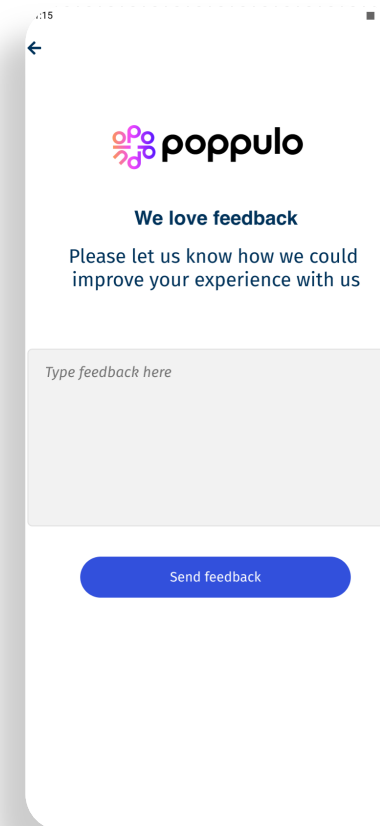
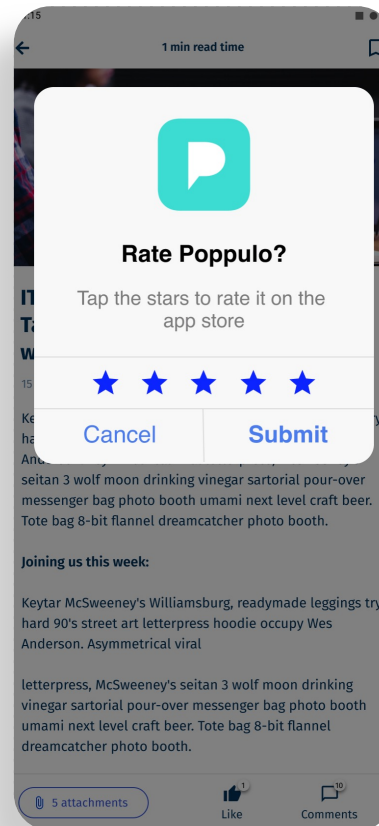
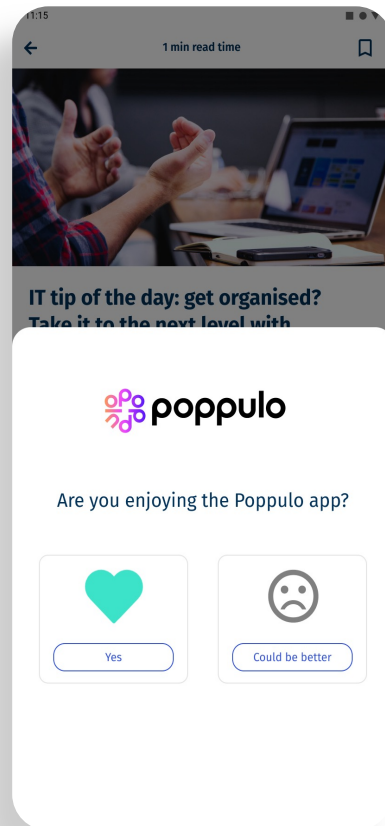
Process for improving both app store rating and internal feedback





App screens for internal feedback

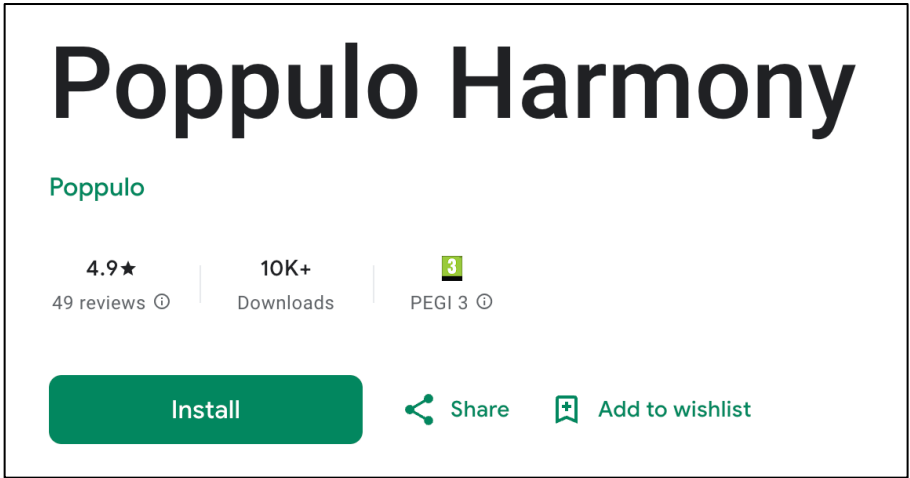
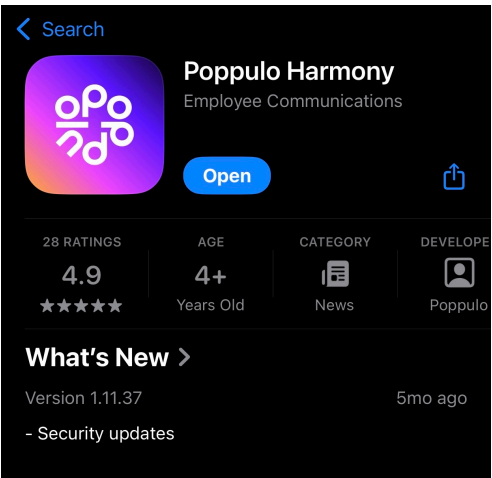
Again following the 3IAB approach we discuss the potential improvements to boost app store rating whilst giving users the opportunity to give direct feedback.





Current App Store Rating

This update resulted in an App store boost from 2.8 to 4.9. The internal feedback function is now used as an important tool for for both internal comms managers and customer success. It also serves as an important indicator for user testing within poppulo.

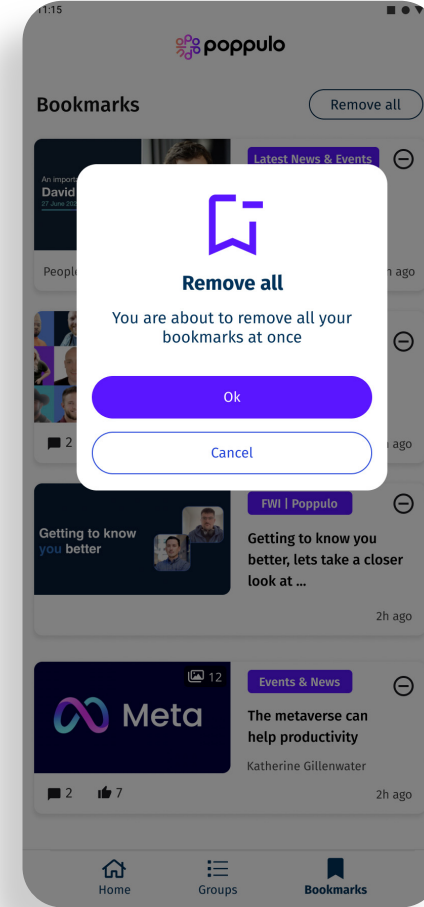
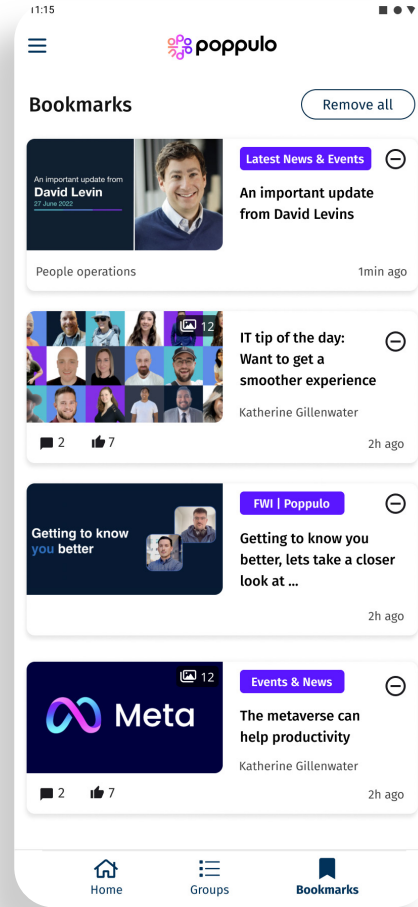
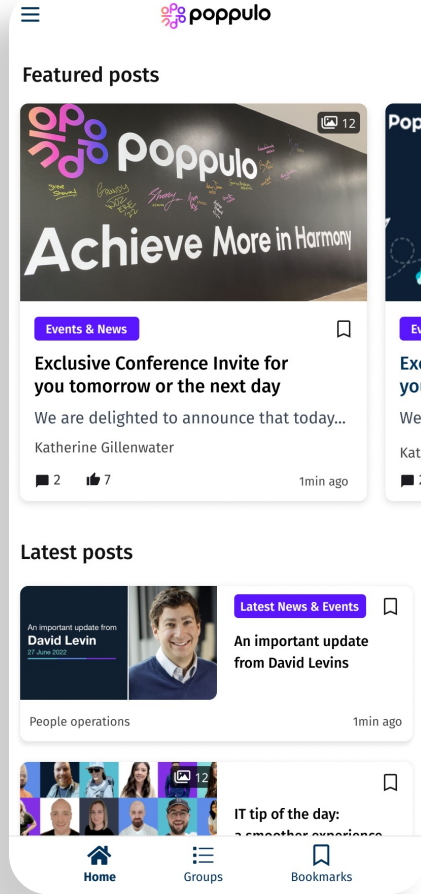


2.8 to 4.9

A much more attractive proposition for a new user. This is the first thing they see.

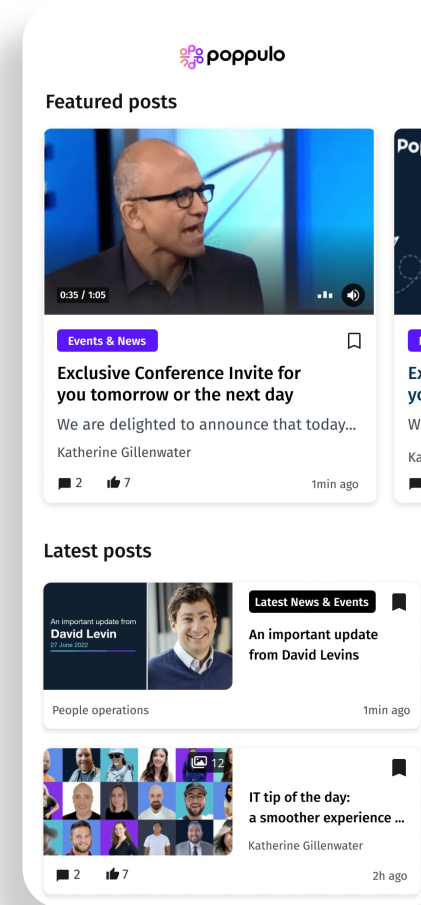
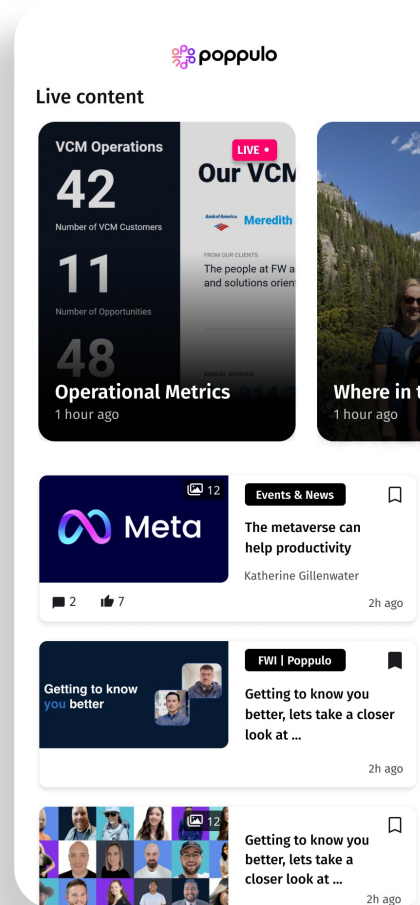
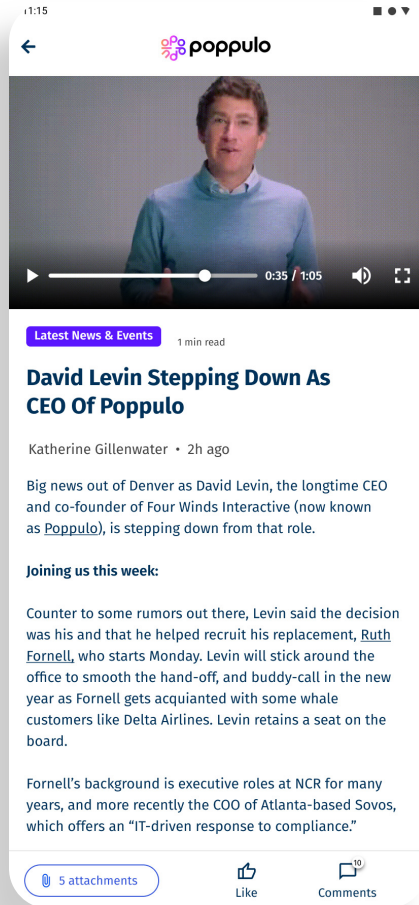


App screens





App screens





Learnings





It wasn't easy...



Unexpected challenges

New ownership brought ideas that could create friction with the core user and internal Poppulo teams. Tackling this through tried and tested UX fundamental and design thinking methods, I was able to steer the project in the correct manner meeting both business and user satisfaction.



What worked well

Following the “three in a box” process worked well. This allowed full transparency with core members of the team. Everyone had a voice and everything designed was feasible.



What could have been improved

User testing. We ultimately didn't have the budget to test iterations and future improvements, also the testing pool was rather small. Once the onboarding was improved we took a lot of learnings “In the wild”.



Technical limitations

Technical limitations had to be assessed with every key feature improvement. This was tackled by collaborating with the lead engineers from each team and highlighting dependencies.



Skills gained during my time at Poppulo

The S.C.A.M.P.E.R methodology for workshops was a new design thinking method for me, I also learning a lot about react native libraries as I had to collaborate with lead engineers and learn their needs.



Response times and API calls

A review of API calls and their response times would have reduced lag and wait times in the app, something that always has a detrimental impact on the overall experience



Thank You

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