

Reverie Community Theatre

Volunteer App & Responsive Website

Kelsey Thomas

Project overview



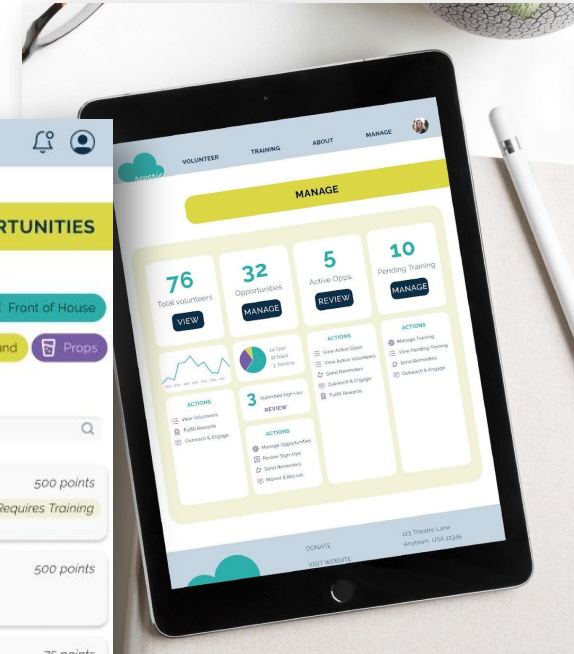
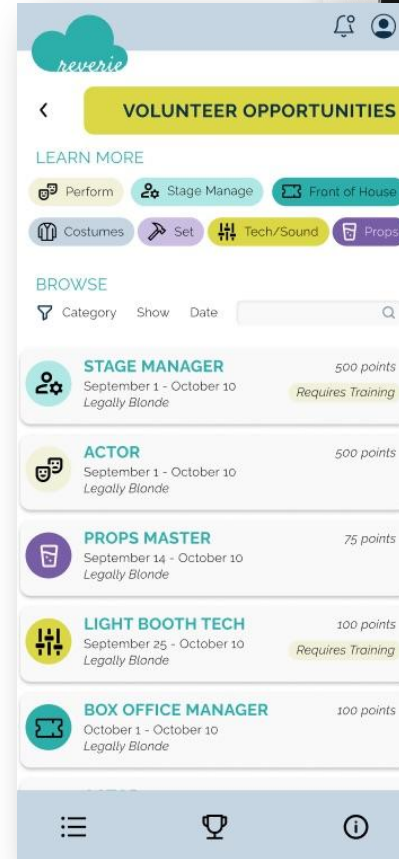
The product:

The Reverie Community Theatre volunteer portal is an app and responsive website designed to connect volunteers to opportunities at the local community theatre.



Project duration:

August – September 2022



Project overview



The problem:

Reverie Community Theatre has been struggling to recruit and engage volunteers. Volunteers are at the heart of community theatre programming so the theatre is looking for ways to improve their volunteer base.



The goal:

Develop an app and responsive website that connects volunteers to opportunities at the theatre and helps the theatre manage and promote an engaging, inclusive, and rewarding volunteer experience.

Project overview



My role:

Lead UX Researcher & Designer



Responsibilities:

User Research

Wireframing

Mock-Ups

Prototyping

Usability Testing

Understanding the user

- User research
- Personas
- Problem statements
- Competitive audit
- Ideation

User research: summary



I conducted most of my user research via formal and informal discussions with volunteers and theatre personnel. I have a strong connection with the theatre community in my local town, so I was able to have many conversations that led to defining the general sentiment around the current state of our theatre's volunteer programming overall. Research was conducted over various face to face interactions both one on one and in small groups. User ages ranged from mid 20s to mid 70s and spanned both volunteers and staff.

Persona 1: Ezra Elliott

Problem statement:

Ezra is a college student, majoring in theatre, who needs a way to easily find volunteer activities at the local community theatre that fit his busy schedule because he needs to build his resume, work on his craft, and network with other actors in the area.



Ezra Elliott

Age: 22

Education: Current student

Hometown: Norman, OK

Family: Lives alone

Occupation: Student (theatre major)

“I love theatre and want to get involved in my local community theatre program, but it’s often really difficult to find any volunteer opportunities that open, interesting to me, and fit my college schedule.”

Goals

- Find ways to apply real life experiences to college theatre program
- Volunteer in the community to build resume
- Meet other students with similar interests
- Find volunteer opportunities that allow for a flexible schedule
- Track volunteer hours

Frustrations

- Lack of volunteer opportunities of interest
- Many volunteer positions require set and frequent hours on an ongoing basis
- Hard to break into local community theatre circle
- New ideas for theatre volunteer opportunities met with opposition

Ezra is a college student majoring in theatre who plans to graduate within the next year. He has been searching for ways to get involved in community theatre outside of school to build his resume, network with other actors, give back to his community, and do what he loves in his free time. Ezra has found it challenging to find volunteer or internship opportunities in his area. The community theatre’s volunteer positions are rarely posted on social media and he’s unsure where to find opportunities that fit his schedule and interests. Ezra would love a way to quickly identify opportunities and get more involved in his community theatre.

Persona 2: Imogen Isaacs

Problem statement:

Imogen is a community theatre director who needs a better way to recruit and engage volunteers because she wants to build a more inclusive, engaging, and rewarding volunteer experience to maintain a strong volunteer base for theatre programming.



Imogen Isaacs

Age: 55

Education: Master's Degree

Hometown: Manhattan, KS

Family: Empty nester

Occupation: Volunteer Director

"We used to be able to attract volunteers by word of mouth in the theatre community, but times have changed - it's been challenging lately to recruit and maintain a strong volunteer base for our theatre and the program is struggling as a result."

Goals

- Recruit new volunteers to the theatre
- Maintain current volunteers with positive experiences
- Quickly answer questions and share details with volunteers about opportunities
- Maintain volunteer database with efficiency

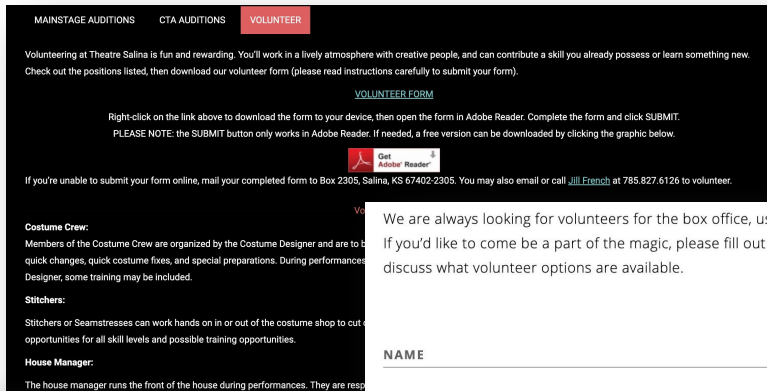
Frustrations

- Volunteers often don't come back after 1-2 times of volunteering
- We hear from many people that they don't know opportunities even exist
- We have lots of gaps in open volunteer opportunities that are very difficult to fill

Imogen is the Volunteer Director at a local community theatre. She is in charge of recruiting and maintaining the theatre's volunteer base. Over the last decade, she's noticed volunteers don't seem as interested in their opportunities and it has become increasingly difficult to find new volunteers for the theatre. Many existing volunteers have stopped showing up, so there are large gaps in opportunities needing to be filled. Imogen understands that times are changing, and she wants to help the theatre keep up with new generations of volunteers and do more outreach to connect to those who are passionate about supporting theatre programming.

Competitive audit

I conducted a competitive audit of various local and regional community theatres both in and out of the area. My main focus was finding how other theatres recruited and promoted their volunteer opportunities. I found that even smaller theatres did a good job of advertising general volunteer expectations, but did not make it clear which volunteers they were in need of at any given time.




MAINSTAGE AUDITIONS CTA AUDITIONS **VOLUNTEER**

Volunteering at Theatre Salina is fun and rewarding. You'll work in a lively atmosphere with creative people, and can contribute a skill you already possess or learn something new. Check out the positions listed, then download our volunteer form (please read instructions carefully to submit your form).

[VOLUNTEER FORM](#)

Right-click on the link above to download the form to your device, then open the form in Adobe Reader. Complete the form and click SUBMIT.
PLEASE NOTE: the SUBMIT button only works in Adobe Reader. If needed, a free version can be downloaded by clicking the graphic below.

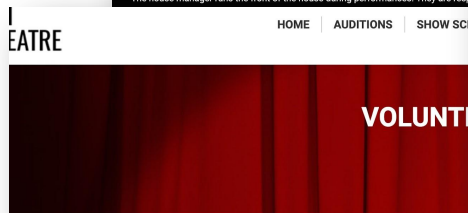
 Get Adobe Reader

If you're unable to submit your form online, mail your completed form to Box 2305, Salina, KS 67402-2305. You may also email or call [jill.french](mailto:jill.french@theatresalina.com) at 785.827.6126 to volunteer.

Costume Crew:
Members of the Costume Crew are organized by the Costume Designer and are to be expected to make quick changes, quick costume fixes, and special preparations. During performances the Costume Designer, some training may be included.

Stitchers:
Stitchers or Seamstresses can work hands on in or out of the costume shop to cut and sew costumes. Opportunities for all skill levels and possible training opportunities.

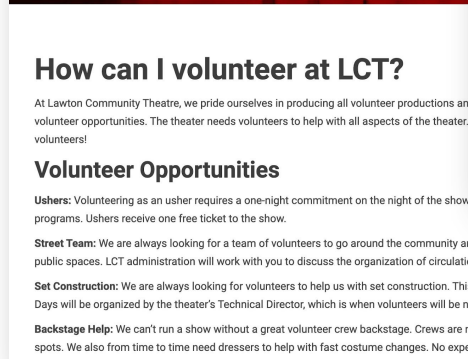
House Manager:
The house manager runs the front of the house during performances. They are responsible for the audience and the stage during performances.



THEATRE

HOME | AUDITIONS | SHOW SCHEDULE

VOLUNTEER



How can I volunteer at LCT?

At Lawton Community Theatre, we pride ourselves in producing all volunteer productions and we need your help. The theater needs volunteers to help with all aspects of the theater. We need your help!

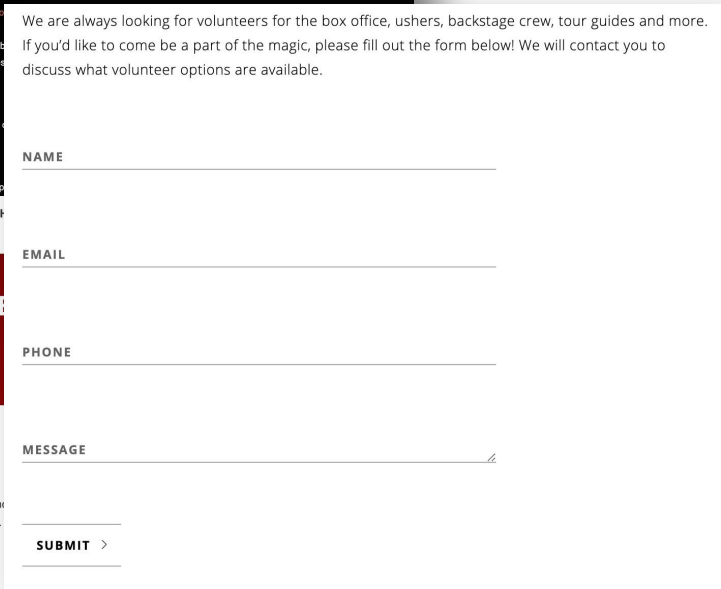
Volunteer Opportunities

Ushers: Volunteering as an usher requires a one-night commitment on the night of the show. You will help our patrons find their seats in the theater while distributing programs. Ushers receive one free ticket to the show.

Street Team: We are always looking for a team of volunteers to go around the community and hang up posters for our shows and pass them out to local businesses and public spaces. LCT administration will work with you to discuss the organization of circulation and specific roles.

Set Construction: We are always looking for volunteers to help us with set construction. This includes painting, carpentry, cleaning, etc. No experience is necessary. Work Days will be organized by the theater's Technical Director, which is when volunteers will be needed to help with sets.

Backstage Help: We can't run a show without a great volunteer crew backstage. Crews are needed to move and set scenery and props; to run lights, sound, or follow spots. We also from time to time need dressers to help with fast costume changes. No experience is necessary. Training will be provided if need be.



We are always looking for volunteers for the box office, ushers, backstage crew, tour guides and more. If you'd like to come be a part of the magic, please fill out the form below! We will contact you to discuss what volunteer options are available.

NAME

EMAIL

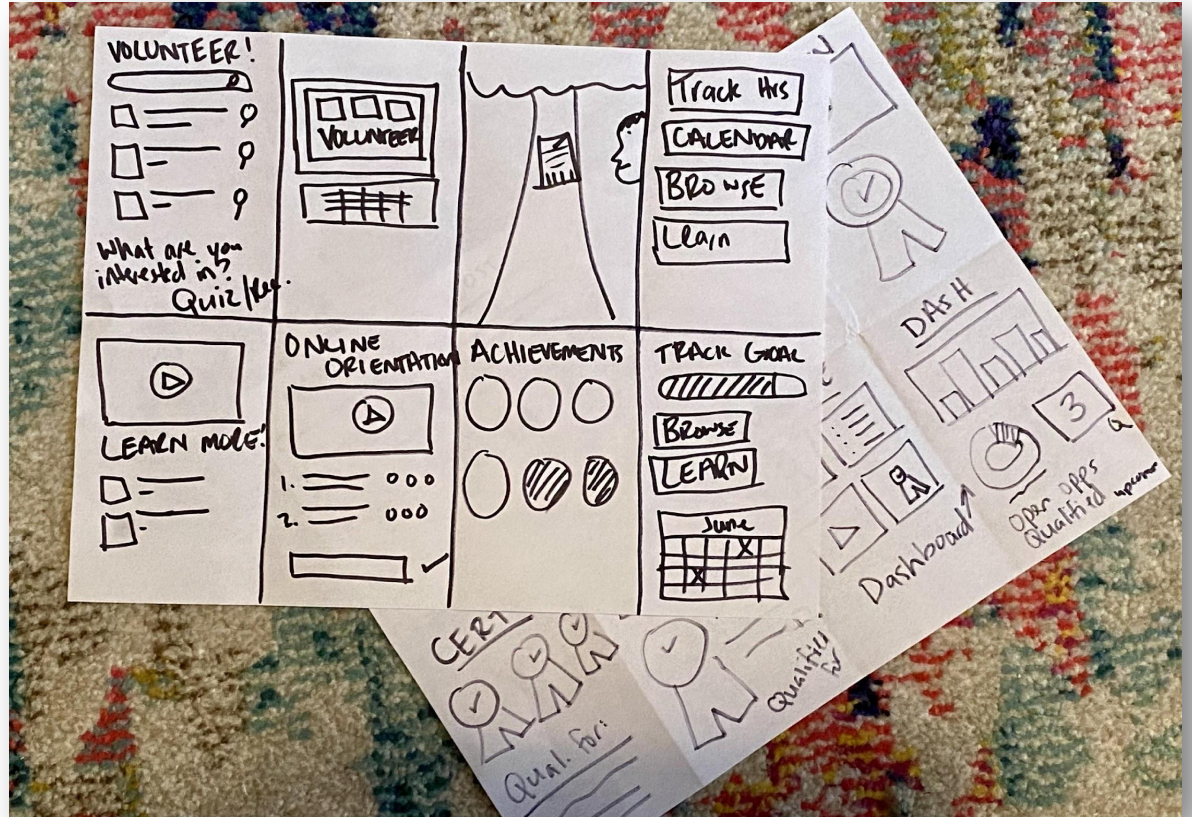
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MESSAGE

SUBMIT >

Ideation

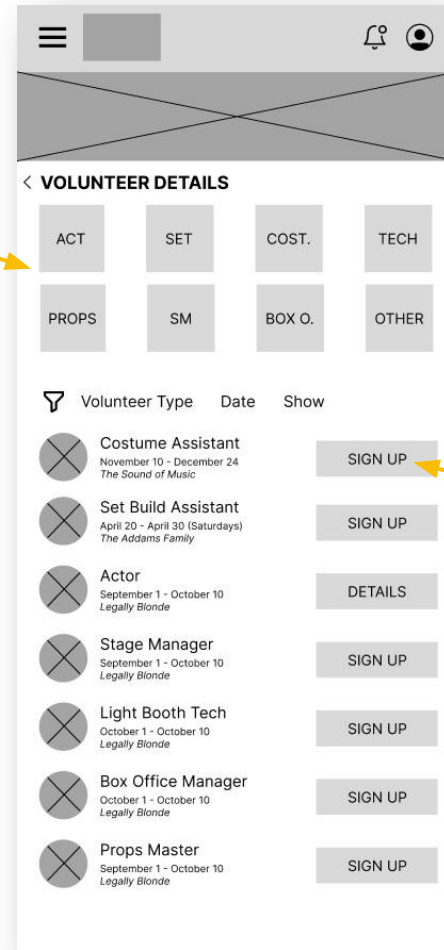
Ideation for this project focused on the goal to bring greater awareness of volunteer opportunities to the community. I used the Crazy Eights ideation exercise along with paper wireframes to begin brainstorming solutions for both the volunteer and theatre director personas.



Digital wireframes – mobile app

The mobile app is intended to be used on the go, mostly by the volunteer persona. I focused wireframes on the main user flow of finding and signing up for new volunteer opportunities with the theatre.

Since there are so many different types of community theatre volunteering, it was important for users to get an understanding of general responsibilities without looking at a specific volunteer opportunity posting



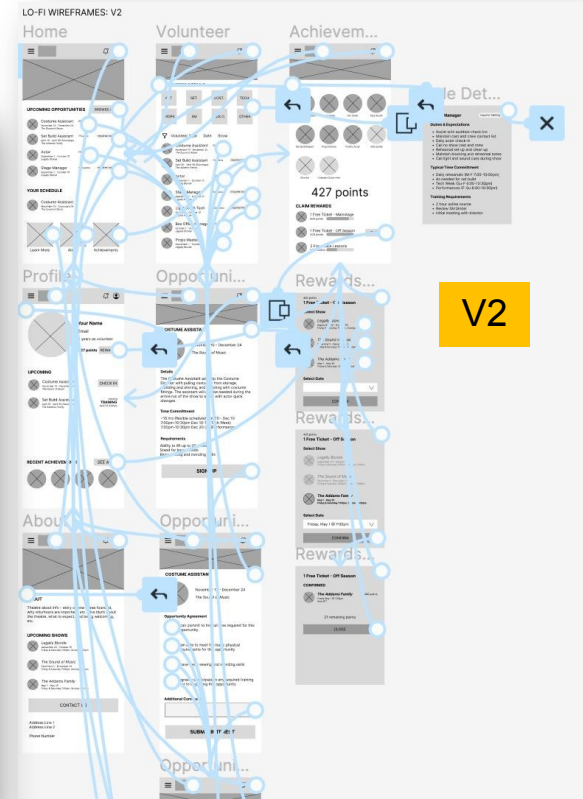
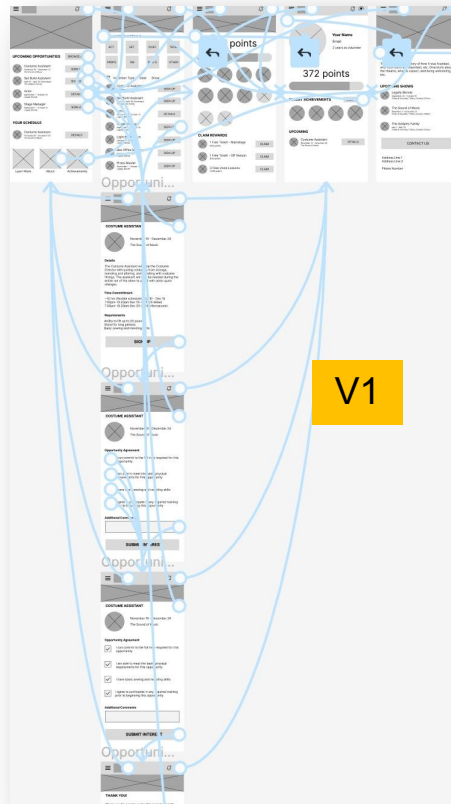
Each opportunity gives a clear signal that sign-up is needed to continue the process

Low-fidelity prototype

The initial main user flow for this prototype includes searching for, viewing, and signing up for a volunteer opportunity. Secondary flows included checking achievements and incentive rewards. Since there was confusion in usability testing on the sign-up flow and rewards/achievements, I focused efforts on cleaning up these flows in the low-fidelity phase before moving forward.

[Low-fidelity prototype link V1](#)

[Low-fidelity prototype link V2](#)



V2

Usability study: parameters



Study type:

Moderated usability study



Location:

Remote



Participants:

5 participants



Length:

15 minutes

Usability study: findings

All users responded very positively to the overall concept of the app and were excited about the possibilities it introduced, but had some basic user flow concerns that needed to be addressed.

1

Sign-Up Process Not Intuitive

The majority of participants found that the volunteer sign-up process felt clunky and needed to be streamlined.

2

Need More Role Information

Some participants wanted to see generalized information about volunteer roles, not just specific opportunity details.

3

Rewards & Achievements Confusion

Though all participants liked the idea of having some sort of reward system, they found it confusing and thought it lacked clarity.

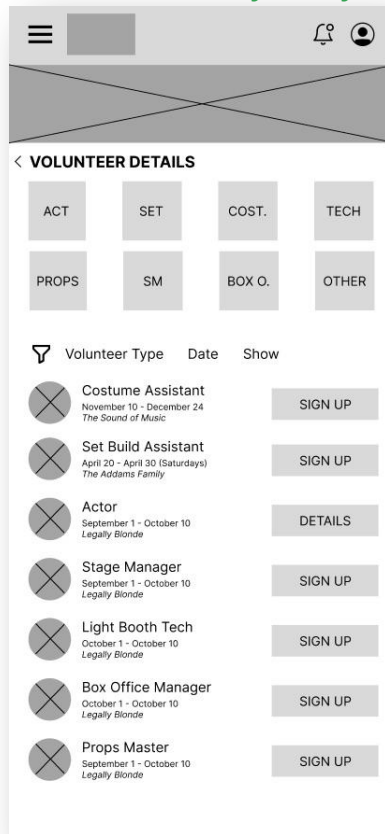
Refining the design

- Mockups
- High-fidelity prototype
- Accessibility

Mockups

I focused my high-fidelity mockups on cleaning up the main user flow (volunteer sign-up process). I wanted to create a clean and consistent way to easily browse and progressively discover details about an opportunity in a more intuitive way.

Before usability study



After usability study

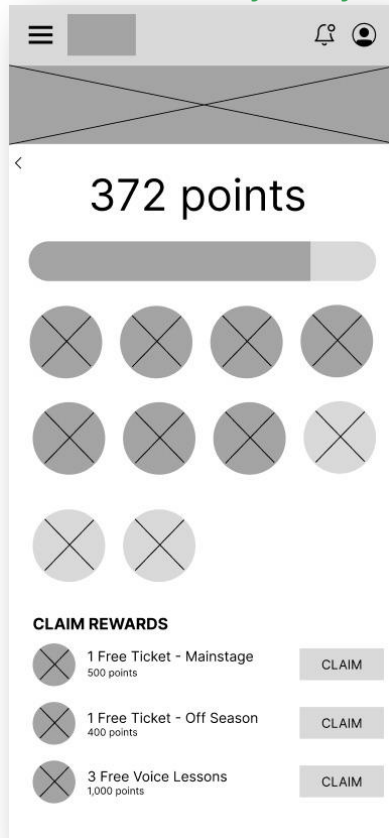


Mockups

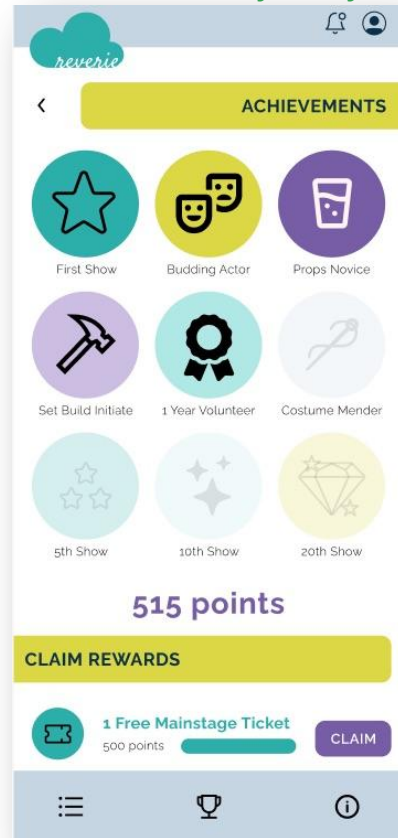
The secondary user flow of earning rewards and achievements was another big point of confusion in low-fidelity usability studies.

Cleaning up this process with the “points” system helped bring clarity to the possibilities of volunteer incentives.

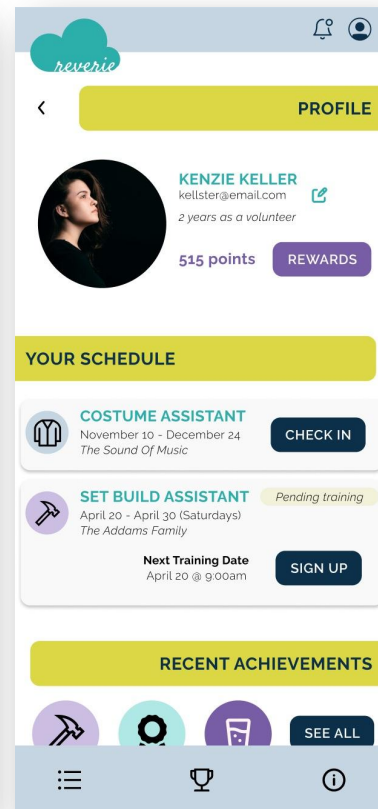
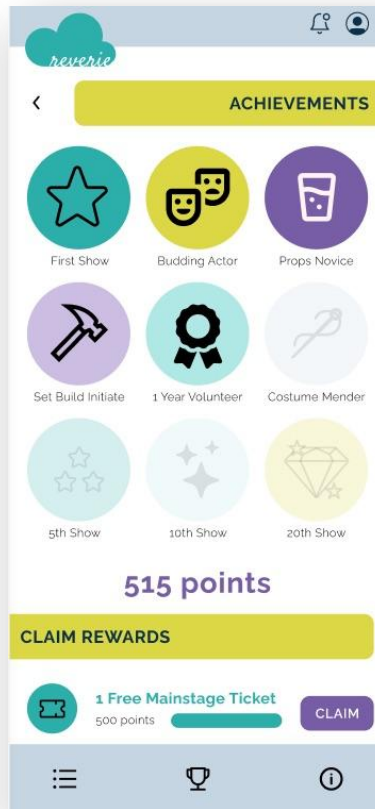
Before usability study



After usability study



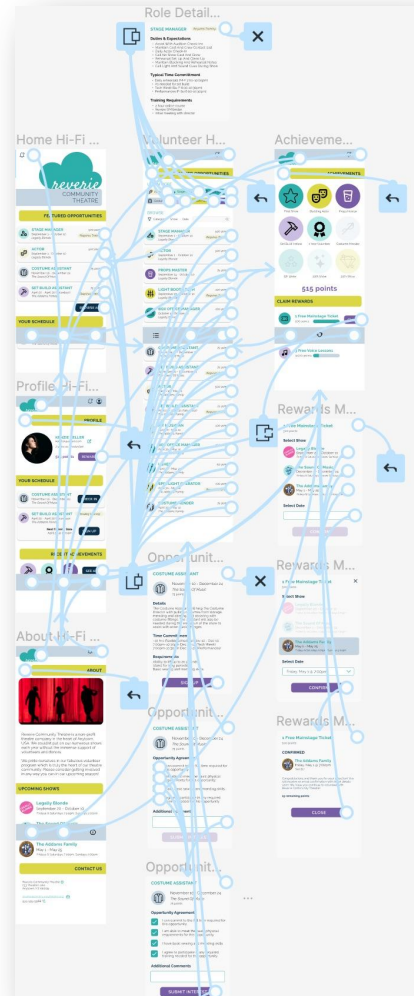
Mockups



High-fidelity prototype

The high-fidelity prototype focused on the main and secondary user flows. Based on user feedback, I introduced a modal-based sign-up and rewards claim system which made these flows more intuitive and streamlined.

[Link to high-fidelity prototype](#)



Accessibility considerations

1

Header, sub-header, and body text sizes differentiated for ease of use with screen readers.

2

Color palette chosen with high contrast ratios.

3

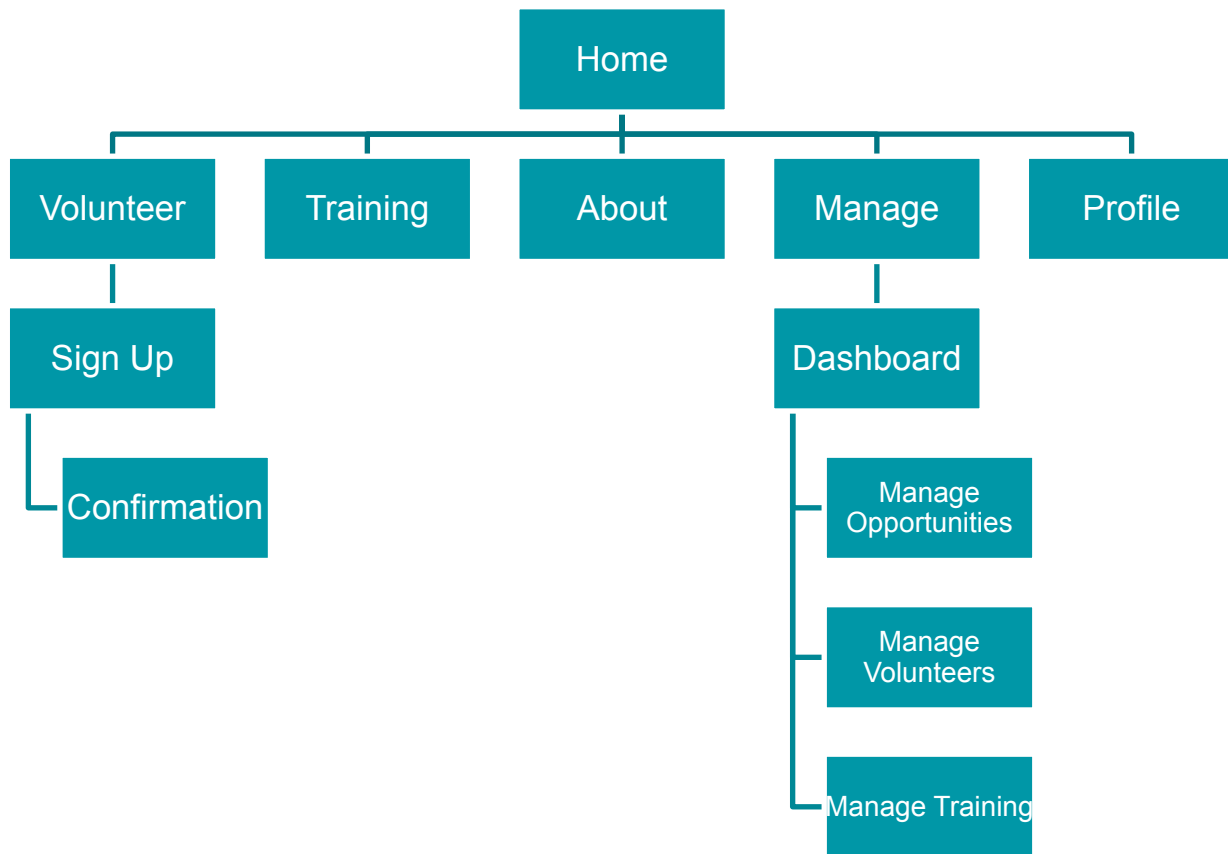
Clickable elements such as icons and volunteer opportunity cards large enough to be optimized for touch screen.

Responsive Design

- Information architecture
- Responsive design

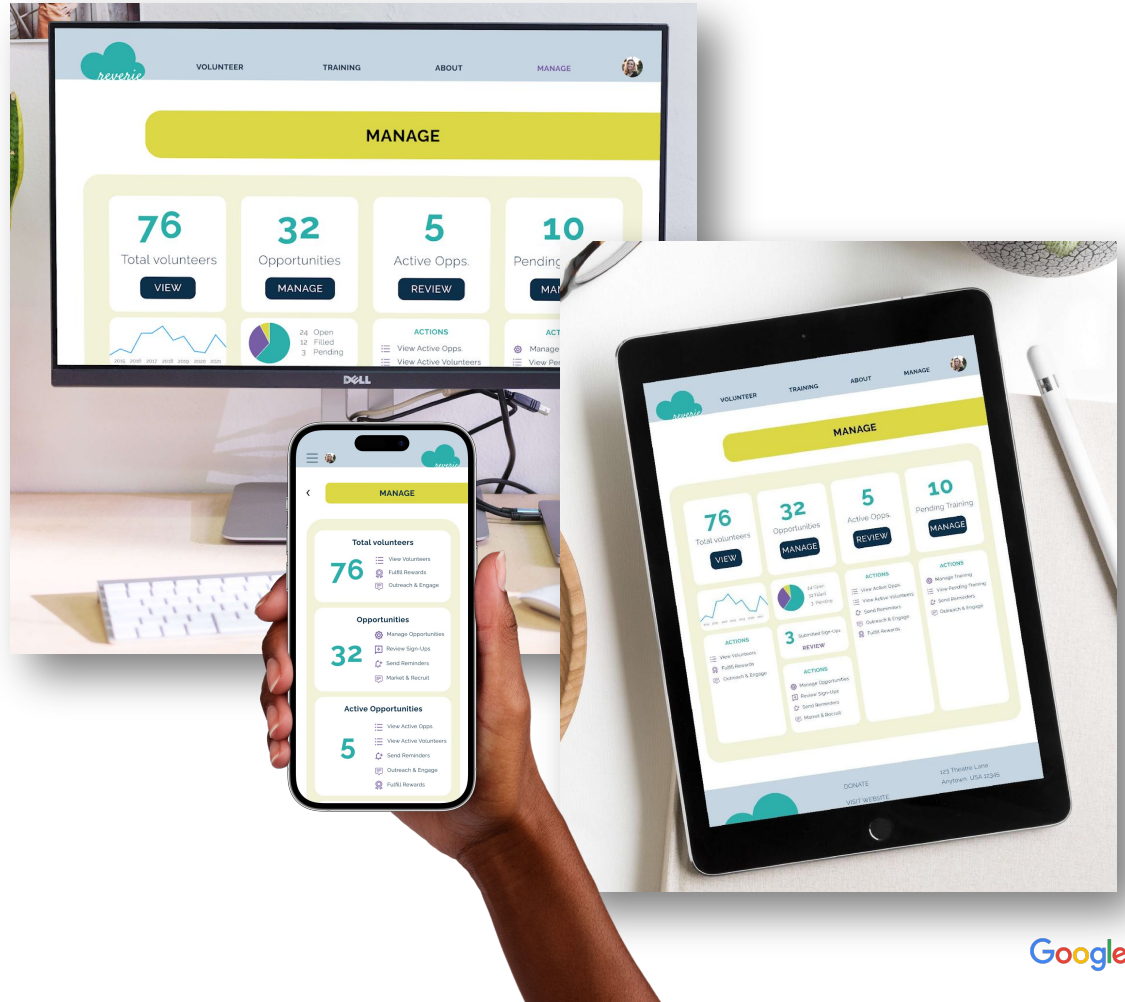
Sitemap

Moving this project from a mobile app to a responsive website introduced the need to focus more on the theatre director persona – users who need to manage the volunteer program. Though the sitemap matched much of the mobile app’s functionality, I added a new section to manage volunteer opportunities for these user types.



Responsive designs

My goal with developing a responsive website to complement the mobile app was to add detail and context (such as training for volunteer opportunities) and focus efforts on building more for the theatre director persona.



Going forward

- Takeaways
- Next steps

Takeaways



Impact:

During the course of this project, I had the opportunity to sit into some future vision master planning sessions with a real local community theatre, similar to the fictional one from this project. In those sessions, one of the biggest challenges brought forward to address was the need to develop ways to engage and recruit volunteers and manage quality volunteer programming. This type of project could be a game changer with real world application.



What I learned:

This project was the culmination of everything I have learned so far both on the job as a Product Manager and during the Google UX Design certification course through Coursera. Putting together all the pieces between user-focused research, app design, and responsive web design was a challenging and rewarding experience. I learned that good design takes empathy, critical thinking, being open to new ideas, and a solid foundation in design elements to bring everything together.

Next steps

1

Present design concepts to the board and staff at Reverie Community Theatre with suggested next steps to implement. Use feedback from theatre staff to further iterate designs for this persona.

2

Partner with a web developer to build and publish the app and responsive website, including any future iterations based on feedback and analytics.

3

Work with theatre staff to strategize a plan to promote and implement the new volunteer portal process including training, marketing, and ongoing improvements to grow their users and volunteer base.

Let's connect!



Thank you for reviewing my case study for the Reverie Community Theatre volunteer portal app and responsive website!

If you'd like to see more of my work or chat about my experiences on product teams, please contact me at:

Email: kelsey.thomas@gmail.com

Website: