

Ikigai in online learning with Platzzi

How can purpose-finding help
Latin American students
maintain their motivation in
e-learning?



Master Thesis in
Strategic Product Design
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"The only way to be truly satisfied is to do what you believe is great work, and the only way to do great work is to love what you do. If you haven't found it yet, keep looking, and don't settle. As with all matters of the heart, you'll know when you find it. And like any great relationship, it just gets better and better as the years roll on. So keep looking, don't settle."

– Steve Jobs

Executive Summary

This thesis project explores how to maintain students' motivation to learn with the e-learning platform Platzi. Latin American EdTech company Platzi provides online courses related to jobs in the digital economy to a Spanish-speaking audience. Despite many new benefits of e-learning, like on-demand learning, it also comes with new challenges like isolation of learners, lack of community and lack of accountability, which leads to decreasing motivation for learning.

The focus is primarily on students who want to find their place in an ever-getting, more dynamic world and guide them to define what they want in life. Making big life decisions like what career to focus on, where one wants to be in ten years, or what one even wishes to do is extremely difficult for everyone. But especially for young students that learn isolated.

Despite Platzi's great work of forming a unity with their students, there is a significant shortage of guidance in online environments, and students often feel uninspired and without direction. Seeking a structured framework, the Japanese concept of Ikigai was identified as a starting point to help individuals develop clarity in life and increase their general well-being. This framework would enable students to learn how to use their skills best, allow them to follow their passions, and improve the lives of others while building a stable economic foundation.

A new adapted purpose-finding service was developed to help students set goals based on their responses and connect these goals to courses to make the path ahead as tangible as possible. After rounds of experimentation with different approaches, one concept emerged, considering the context and the interests of all stakeholders.

The work was partly executed in Colombia and part remotely in the Netherlands (collaboration with Platzi, user interviews, workshops, and user tests). User research was performed through interviews, surveys, and a workshop at all project stages.

The final solution of this graduation project is an app feature that integrates into the existing platform. It allows students to discover opportunities by taking a playful quiz that points out further self-improvement activities and suggests courses to achieve the identified goals. By utilizing the strengths of Ikigai and simplifying it to reach a broad audience, it engages users and makes Platzi a holistic e-learning provider to transform Latin America.

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Foreword

Imagine a future where everyone has equal access to educational and social opportunities. I have this personal interest in making education more accessible regarding demographic but also for each individual. I often felt that the traditional education system did not serve me well and that I could have learned better if it had not been "one size fits all".

Also, my dyslexia gave me a distinct perspective on the world and empathy for others. Recognizing the value of variety, I believe that designers can demonstrate it by rethinking the linear approach and creating accessibility for everyone resulting in a more inclusive environment where everyone can become the best version of themselves.

My interest in Colombia, education for emerging markets, purpose finding, technology, and UX design led me to this master's thesis. These are aspects in which I recognize my own Ikigai. I used the Ikigai framework a couple of years ago, leading me to do this master's at TU Delft and seek a career

in UX design. Now I'm excited to work on something that has the prospect of bringing this idea to more people.

It troubles me that we have technologies and the global wealth to provide for everyone equally. The fact that it is simply not fairly distributed makes me feel the urge to deliver to those who have not received equal opportunities.

This is why I approached Platzzi for collaboration with my graduation project. They are producing valuable content that reaches people who want to learn about an industry that shapes our future and provides opportunities that are not limited to demographics.

Even though in Latin America there are many problems to focus on, I believe that Platzzi provides an excellent approach to one of the most significant problem areas in the region.



Photo by Milo Miloezger on Unsplash

1.0 Introduction

- | 1.1 Context of the project
- | 1.2 Problem definition
- | 1.3 Aim of the project
- | 1.4 Project Approach



1.1 Context of the project

Education systems in Latin America suffer from low levels of learning, limited opportunities for the poor, demographic limitations, and bureaucratic immobilization (“E-learning in Higher Education in Latin America,” 2015). However, education plays a crucial role in building human capital, breaking the cycle of poverty, promoting economic productivity, and eliminating social inequities.

E-learning now has the opportunity to bring quality education to more people that have been at a disadvantage in accessibility (Dumford & Miller, 2018). Especially citizens of emerging economies now have the opportunity to compensate for the lack of access to good quality traditional education. Moreover, e-learning offers new possibilities like personalized learning through data collection, and due to the scalability of this technology, demographic disadvantages are being drastically reduced. Latin American countries like Colombia have great potential to adopt e-learning due to generally widespread internet access in the region (Figure 1) and great consumer acceptance of digital applications (Atlantico, 2021). That provides many new opportunities for students and flourishing prospects for online education companies alike.

Internet penetration in LatAm has surpassed that of China and India and is approaching that of developed economies

Internet penetration rate by year and region
Latin America, 2015-2021; Worldwide, 2021

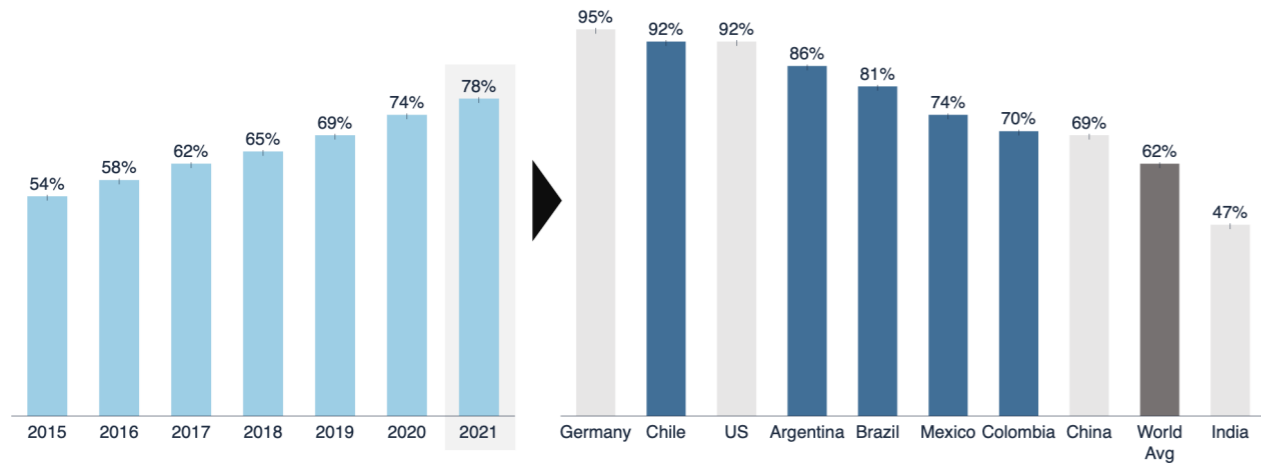


Figure 1: Internet penetration in Latin America



Partnering organization

Platzí, with three million students, is one of the largest EdTech companies in Latin America and specializes in providing online courses on jobs in the digital economy. The platform offers courses on software development, digital marketing, web design, artificial intelligence, cryptocurrencies, internet of things, start-up entrepreneurship, and more. These courses equip the students with the necessary knowledge to find jobs, switch careers or learn on the job. The classes are efficient and close to what the industry demands as they create them together with Spanish-speaking experts from the respective fields.

Online learning with Platzí allows students to access all the courses with one subscription. Choosing from an on-demand library of more than one thousand courses lets the students learn in their own rhythm.

Platzí offers people who are on the verge or below the poverty line the chance to find jobs that pay well three times the minimum salary per month. Platzí’s CEO, Freddy Vega, claims that 84% of alumni get a job that pays ten times more than their previous jobs after one year of studying with Platzí (Guillén, 2021). “Platzí’s mission is to break the cycle of poverty of millions of Latin Americans and ensure that the next generation of technology enthusiasts and entrepreneurs is here” Vega said in an interview with El País in 2021.



Figure 2: Platzí logo

Mission statement

Allow anyone with a device connected to the internet to have high-quality and easily accessible education that allows them to learn the skills that companies are demanding and thus transform their possibilities, their quality of life, their environment and the economy.

Translated from Spanish

Course path

Online course video



Figure 3: Platzí online course screenshot

Comment section

The differet Platzí schools



Figure 4: Platzí schools

1.2 Problem definition

The problem space of the project concerns learners in Latin America that want to acquire competencies demanded by the fast-evolving digital and technological industry. Motivation is a crucial factor in learning and influences what, when, and how we learn and is a significant performance factor (Schunk and Usher 2012). At the beginning of an online course, novelty and enthusiasm produce a high drive for the student, but it drops off sharply afterward. Students do not feel that they are progressing anymore, which leads to discouragement and results in them not completing a course.

The learning experience department within Platzi currently faces challenges like how to assess students' learning progress, and keeping them motivated to stay longer engaged. Especially after three months, Platzi sees a 20% dip in student engagement (Hoppenstedt, 2021).

As a starting point, this primary research question was defined:

- **How can the Platzi learning experience help students maintain their motivation to persist in engaging with the platform and eventually complete courses successfully?**

Secondary research questions:

- **How can the Ikigai concept foster purpose-inspired learning that helps students to understand themselves, their possibilities, and their environment better to motivate them to preside with a chosen path ultimately?**
- **How can this concept further support students in determining the most suitable and fulfilling careers for them?**

Aim of the project

Maintain students' motivation to study with Platzi through purpose-finding activities.

1.3 Aim of the project

Based on the given context, this project aimed to enhance the learning experience of Platzi and support the conceptualization of a new intervention by considering the needs of all the different stakeholders.

To tackle the problems mentioned above, this thesis will examine:

- **What impact does purpose-finding intervention have on students' motivation in online education?**
- **How can a purpose-finding intervention be integrated into the existing learning environment of Platzi?**

Hypothesis:

Fostering students' understanding of themselves and their capabilities can increase their motivation to succeed in completing courses.

Ikigai framework

As a starting point, the Japanese ideology Ikigai is chosen to find out if it can help Platzi students better understand themselves and their capabilities. The four-question Ikigai framework by Andrés Zuzunaga is inspired by the Japanese concept. The developed Venn diagram of purpose is a process that consolidates four aspects; **1) what they are good at; 2) what they love; 3) what the world needs, and; 4) what they can get paid for**. It is supposed to give direction in life and supports opportunities that can lead to self-fulfillment. In the next step, **students should be directed to identify the most suitable career path and define concrete goals to work towards during their learning journey.**



Figure 5: Ikigai ven diagram by Andrés Zuzunaga



Problem space:

- *students are learning isolated from their peers*
- *students lose their motivation to study after a while*
- *students don't know what makes them happy*

1.4 Project Approach

Research Methodology

This thesis is carried out using the Design Thinking methodology's double-diamond process (Brown, 2008). This is a problem-solving method that includes diverging and converging phases and provides support for completing a complex, strategic project. Another method called "research through design" is used in the research phase, which means that prototypes were developed and tested with participants from an early stage (Stappers, 2017). Using this method permits to generate insights and iterate on them quickly.

Design Thinking

Discover, define, develop, and deliver are the four principal phases of Design Thinking, a creative and systematic approach to problem-solving (Brown, 2008). The process from the initial research assignment to the final project delivery in this thesis follows these stages.

Double Diamond

When breaking down the double-diamond process, the first diamond aims to ensure that the right problem is addressed. Therefore, after the assignment was formulated, a diverging phase, 'discover', started in which research is conducted in various ways. Sanders & Stappers (2013) suggest that a combination of generative design techniques should be especially used in the fuzzy front end of an innovation project. The research is then converged (the define phase) and synthesized into the most important findings. Based on these findings, a design

emphasis is established to pursue further. This is the beginning of the second diamond, whose purpose is to solve the problem right. There was a first stage of diverging again (the develop stage), during which more detailed information was gathered to build a concept, and the first solution prototypes were tested. This was followed by the deliver stage, during which the concept was fine-tuned into the final design and validated for implementation. The double-diamond technique is depicted in Figure 6. In addition, the diagram shows which chapter of this thesis relates to which phase.

Research through Design

Next to the double diamond process, a method called research through design (RtD) was used. This is the process of gathering insights about a specific problem by testing a hypothesis in the form of prototypes with the audience. In RtD, design skills are used in combination with tools like surveys, for instance. This method can be applied to basically any field to create physical, digital, or hypothetical answers to issues. It is a fast way to generate insights and interact with the audience from an early stage (Stappers & Giaccardi 2017). Knowledge is gained by observing the interaction of the participant with the prototype.

At an early stage, prototypes were used, and instead of refining and communicating abstract ideas, they were tested. Sometimes with small groups, individuals, or large groups, whatever was appropriate and provided sufficient insights to iterate ideas, hypotheses or concepts.

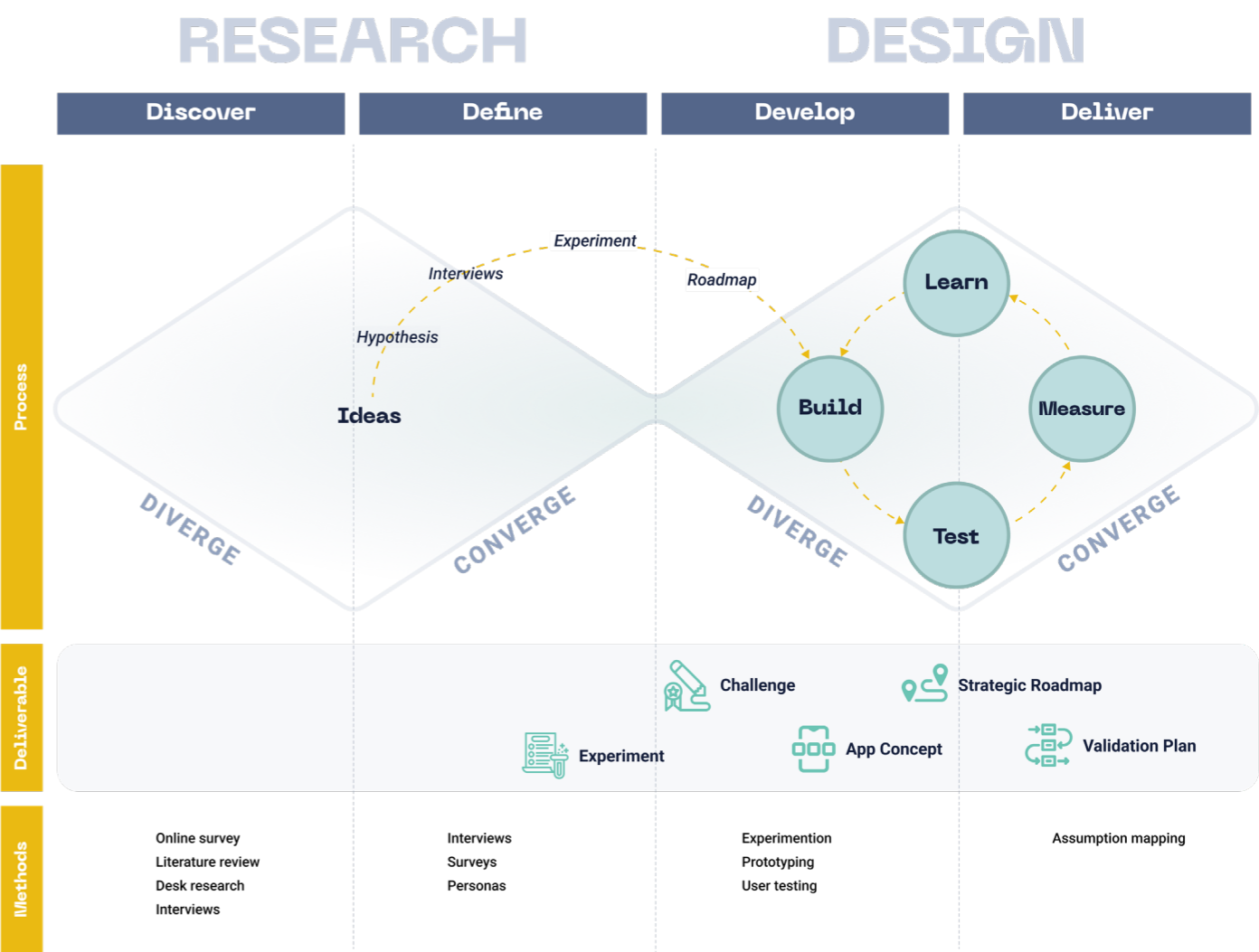
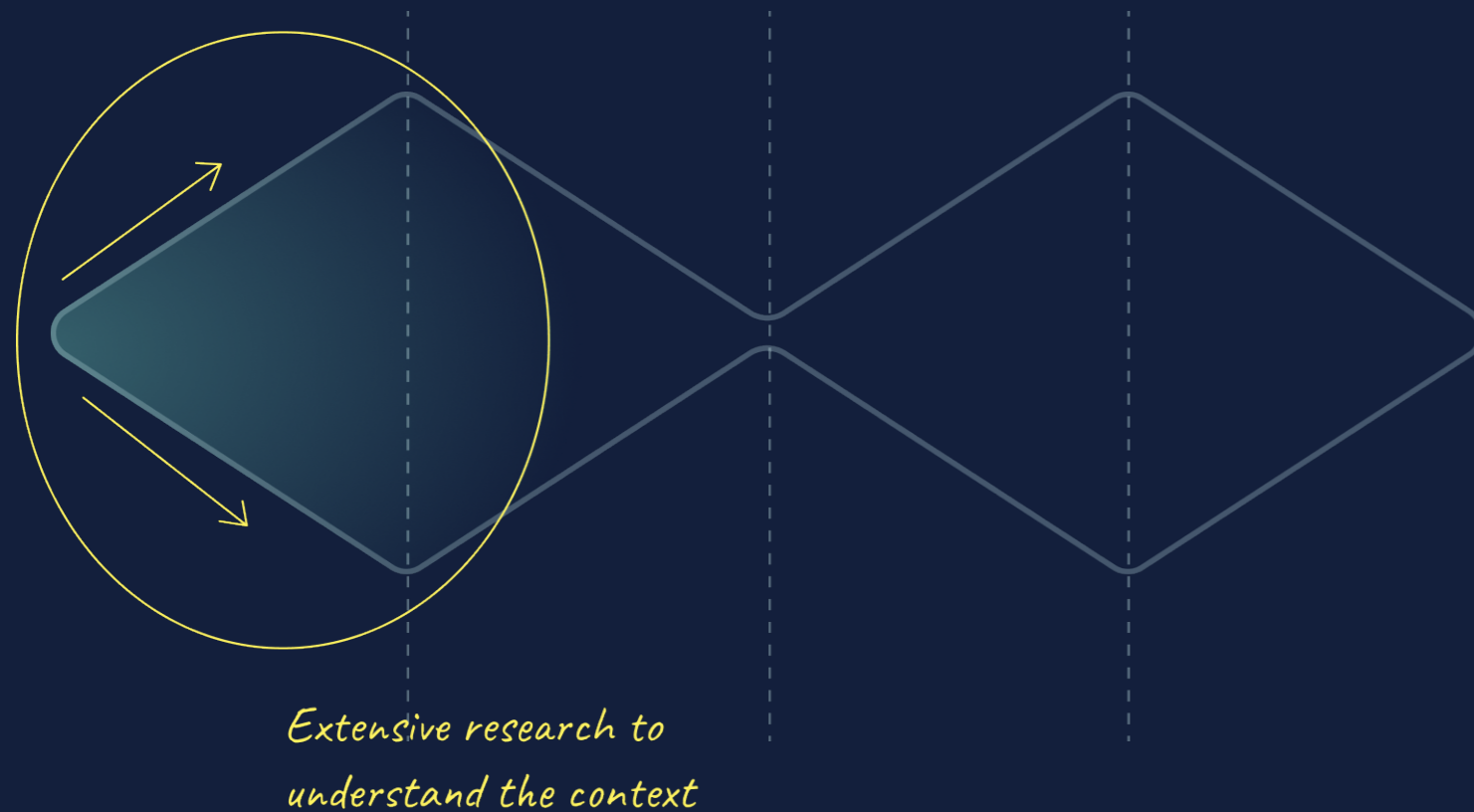


Figure 6: Visualization of the process

2.0 Discovery — getting to know the context

The purpose of the discovery phase was to conduct broad research on the context of education in Latin America, the partnering organization Platzi, students' motivation, particularities of online learning, literature review, and how other services and interventions create purpose-driven goals. Furthermore, the target audience was outlined, Ikigai interventions in education were reviewed, and best practices on purpose-finding were tested.

- | 2.1 LATAM context
- | 2.2 More about Platzi
- | 2.3 Target audience
- | 2.4 Literature review
- | 2.5 Purpose finding with Ikigai
- | 2.6 Existing tools & services



2.1 Education in LATAM

Even though more people have gained access to higher education in Latin America (LATAM) in recent years, many inequalities remain in the population. Factors such as income, educational and family background, geographical location, or ethnic origin seem to explain much of the divergences across different segments of the population (ECLAC, 2010). Primarily enrolment rates differ significantly across income groups.

The 2015 OECD report by the Development Centre states that access to higher education is expanding rapidly. From 2000 to 2010, the access doubled but often at the expense of quality. Due to factors like income, educational attainment, family history, location, or ethnicity, there are significant inequalities in access and performance. When compared internationally, the quality of higher education remains low, and Latin American universities still perform inadequately (“E-learning in Higher Education in Latin America,” 2015). The challenge is to bring quality higher education to a broader target audience.



Photo by Kobby Mendez on Unsplash

2.2 Context of Platzi

Before conceptualizing solutions, it is crucial to understand the context in which the partnering organization interacts.

Information about Platzi was generated by the platform and courses itself, an annual impact report, a variety of Youtube videos, podcasts, in-depth interviews with students, and bi-weekly meetings with the company mentor.

Platzi works with more than 700 companies and government entities, which train their work teams with practical online courses from Platzi. This has manifested itself in organizations using Platzi to promote a culture of continuous learning (“Estado de impacto de Platzi 2021,” 2021).

When many schools closed during the pandemic, Platzi’s audience grew to more than three million users (Caparroso, 2021). During that time, Platzi reacted fast and launched new courses as part of the soft skills academy on anxiety management, emotional intelligence, and time management to deal with new challenges like the implicit loneliness distance education brings (Defillipe, 2021).

Platzi’s strengths are the ability to react quickly to events in the industry, notice behavioral changes and serve their community. The founders create a strong sense of unity by outlining opportunities regarding current developments in the tech industry. Furthermore, Platzi provides free quality content like YouTube videos and podcasts related to jobs in the digital economy this provides lots of value without purchasing a subscription for the platform.

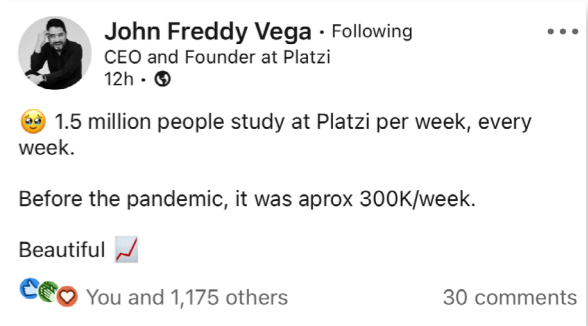


Figure 7: CEO LinkedIn post

2.3 Target audience

The target audience that can benefit the most from a purpose-finding intervention are the students that need orientation in life. The average Platzi user is between 18 and 28 years old. They have at least a high school degree even though many students are university students at the same time, but they often find themselves in a situation where they believe that the university is not preparing them sufficiently for the job, or they are simply curious to learn more about the industry. Many other students learn with Platzi at the job, where they can put learning directly into practice. In many cases, the employer is providing subscriptions (see Appendix B).

Platzi identified two crucial points in their user activity. Firstly, 20 % of students pay for a subscription but never start studying. Secondly, after three months an additional 20% stops using the platform. Students that never start using the platform are not eager to use the platform in the first place. There is not much to do about them. But the students who stop after three months initially did the courses they

Interview with Platzi student

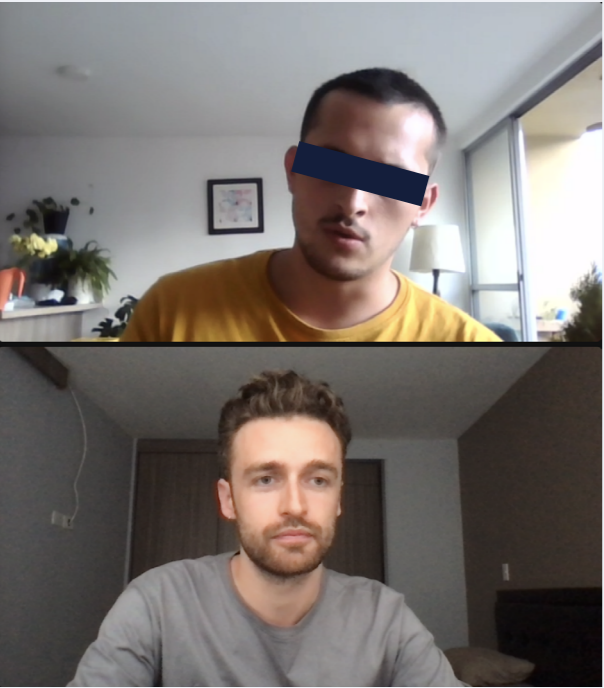


Figure 8: Interview with Platzi student
(Detailed information can be found in Appendix B)

The goal is to engage paying customers and retain users' activity after three months.

identified as attractive and did not know what else they could study. Therefore this **project focuses on retaining the users that stop after three months**. They proved that they want to learn, and due to the diverse course offering, it is unlikely that there is no more exciting or relevant content for them. Platzi currently offers 1000 courses on diverse subjects. The hypothesis is that they cannot find them because of an unpleasant discovery experience and an overwhelming selection of courses. Other target groups that can highly benefit from a purpose-finding intervention are **users who want to switch careers**. They want to gain clarity on opportunities. Furthermore, new users can be targeted during the onboarding process too.

"I left the university and started using Platzi a year ago"

Main insights

- "I didn't use the community chat a lot. I don't really like to talk to people there. I don't really see the sense of participating."
- "I really value having my freedom of time and choosing when I want to study."
- "My motivation is that I left the university for this, so I won't have a formal degree that means I need to be better at my things. I know that I don't have to study. I always do it for myself and no-one else."
- "My career goal is that I want to be a good and complete designer who knows programming"

2.4 Literature review: motivation in education

In order to influence motivation, we need first to understand what it is and what type of approaches exist.

Brophy (2010) defines motivation as "a theoretical construct to explain the initiation, direction, intensity, persistence, and quality of behavior, especially goal-directed behavior". Motivation is used as a term for "why" a person does something and refers back to the driving force of human action. It is an internal process where people want to change something and get energized towards action (Hagger, M. S., & 2007).

Motivation cannot be observed directly, it must be inferred from actions such as choice of tasks, persistence, effort and achievement, or from what individuals say about themselves (Schunk et al. 2014).

Motivation plays a crucial role in learning and can influence what, when, and how something is learned. It also greatly impacts performance by determining whether a learner persists in a course, the quality of work produced, and the level of achievement attained. (Schunk and Usher 2012).

Value affirmation interventions

Values-affirmation interventions can have a substantial effect on students' motivation. It has been shown to improve the academic performances of negatively stereotyped ethnic minority students (Cohen et al., 2009). In a classroom context, values affirmation (VA) is an exercise that promotes students' emotions of integrity and self-worth. VA activities are supposed to protect students against the unpleasant emotions that stereotype threats can create. Students are asked to choose the two to three most important values from a list and write why they are essential to them.

Value affirmations can create strong effects on belonging and can motivate students to complete courses. The effect that value affirmation interventions of only a 15-minute activity can have is shown in multiple studies with minority students or students from less developed nations. A study focused on completion rates in MOOCs showed that learners from less developed nations had a completion rate of only 17% to 41% for students who finished the writing and reading assignments (R. Kizilcec et al., 2017).

Values affirmation and social belonging interventions are strategies for mitigating demotivating social factors, like stereotype threat, and closing the performance gap between majority represented and underrepresented students in higher education.

However, value affirmation proves that lightweight interventions of only a few minutes can affect students' motivation.

Motivation in online learning

The scope of this project is less about self-efficacy. Self-efficacy is believing in oneself and having self-confidence. It is also not about developing strategies on how to learn online, Platzi already provides a course on efficient online learning strategies.

User interviews, pointed out that the students are not afraid of the challenge, they are already motivated to take on that challenge. It is about maintaining this motivation and therefore they need to understand their "why" and need to develop detailed actionable goals on how to get to their outcome goal. The goal is that they develop discipline through routines and know at all times what actions they need to take to get closer to their goal.

2.5 Purpose finding with Ikigai

As many studies state, having a sense of purpose in life is a huge motivational factor, and it also increases mental health (Vanderheiden & Mayer, 2021). People with a sense of purpose know precisely why they are doing the things they are doing.

Ikigai means "worth living". It is also known as one's "reason for being." (Schippers, 2017) and "the sensation of being alive in the present moment, as well as the individual's understanding that inspires him or her to live."

Ikigai urges people to interact intensively and continually with various fundamental subjects. In general, Ikigai is mainly interpreted to provide psychological benefits. In the aspects to find meaning in life, identify their personal development prospects, achieve well-being, and live in harmony with themselves and others.

Several research studies, especially in the Asian culture, have looked into the role of Ikigai in educational contexts with adults (Urano, 2012; Bilash, 2019; Hikmawan et al., 2020). A study by Hikmawan used Ikigai to foster the intrinsic motivation of programmer students by applying it to teaching and learning activities. The findings verified that as students clarified their life objectives, their social and

technical abilities improved progressively (Hikmawan et al., 2019). These improvements can be significant as collaboration, communication, and creative problem-solving skills are increasingly demanding.

In a study analyzing the ethical judgments, mental health, motivation, and self-compassion of British business students, Kotera, Conway, and van Gordon postulated Ikigai as a highly motivating force (Kotera et al., 2018). Both Ikigai and transformative education use a holistic approach to learning, which means looking at people as full people with their own needs, abilities, desires, and resources.

According to multiple studies, Ikigai is a good predictor of both physical and mental health (García & Miralles, 2017). Unfortunately, Fido and colleagues (2019) report that the problem with many Ikigai studies is that they lack precise measurement. Moreover, if scoring is challenging, it is not easy to truly evaluate what, how, and why we are progressing. After all, Ikigai is a complex, composite construct; our interaction with it is unlikely to be as straightforward as presence or absence.

As a disclaimer the Ikigai concept that is referred to in this thesis is the "westernized" Venn diagram version by Andrés Zuzunaga (Figure 5).

"The best way to predict your future is to create it."
–Abraham Lincoln

2.6 Existing tools & services

Many existing tools and services focus exclusively on one part of the purpose-finding journey. They do not point out how users could reach the desired outcome and it is often effortful to interact with the tool. They often fail to lead users to action after an intervention.

Existing Ikigai apps lack a sense of guidance and the user is left alone on his or her path. This is uninspiring, requires high effort, and does not stimulate the user to interact continuously with this service.

Value and strengths assessment methods lead users to generate valuable insights that can inspire them to change something in their lives. However, they do not offer a framework to iterate or guidelines to follow and rely heavily on the user's intrinsic motivation to search for a sense of purpose.

A detailed collection of worksheets and existing tools can be found in Appendix H.

Chapter 2 KEY TAKEAWAYS

Lightweight interventions in education, like value affirmations, have proven that small interventions can substantially affect students' emotions of integrity and self-worth. Ikigai has not only proven to increase mental health and happiness, but it has also proven that reflecting on life goals optimizes students' performance.

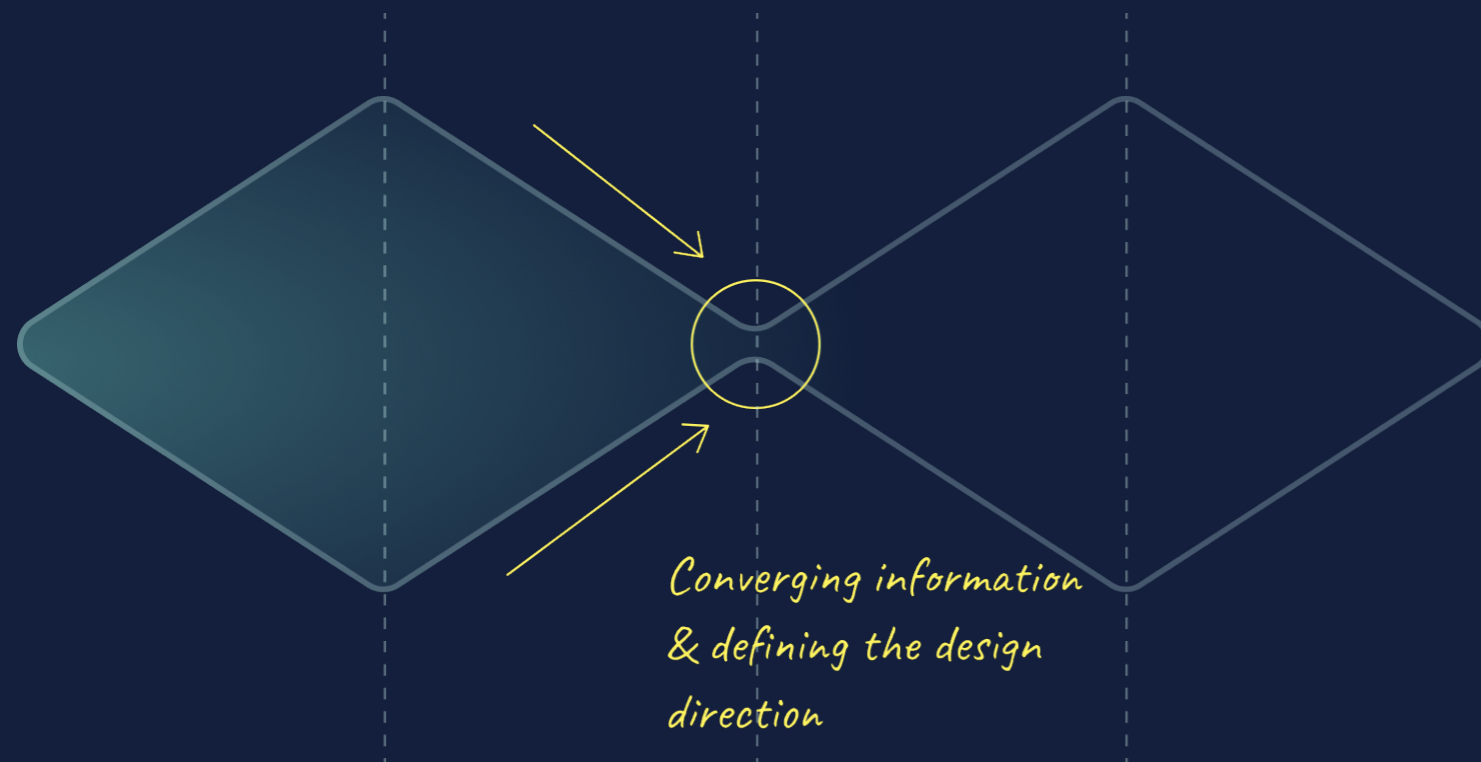
Literature suggested that defining a path with tangible steps and guidance along the way would increase the likelihood of achievement.

3.0 Defining the approach

After the findings from the discovery phase were synthesized, the primary challenges were formed in this stage. This phase converged the gathered insights with best practices to carry out an early experiment. Then the design direction was validated, and a design direction was defined.

At an early stage, user tests were prototyped in the form of surveys that helped to refine a survey that can be tested with Platzi students in quick iterative rounds. Extensive information was collected on students' desires and motivation.

- | 3.1 Combining best practices
- | 3.2 Early experiment
- | 3.3 Insights & analysis
- | 3.4 Design direction
- | 3.5 Ideation – different approaches



3.1 Combining best practices

To validate the assumptions that Platzi students actually desire purpose-finding activities, a survey was developed. Best practices were analyzed and combined into an easy-to-use and "complete" intervention that can stimulate students to think about what is fulfilling to them.

The main focus was to guide participants with questions that were built on top of each other and incentivize them to think creatively to generate strong responses. In the online learning environment, it is essential that exercises are self-explanatory and that students can manage them with ease.

Personal values assessment survey by Barrett values center

This simple survey takes a few minutes and is supposed to provide information about someone's values that explain why someone does what he does.

Value clarification worksheet by Therapist Aid

Values Clarification is a widespread therapeutic practice that can help individuals to become more conscious of their beliefs and if they live according to them.

Ikigai Venn diagram

Literature shows that to answer the Ikigai questions, one must know once values and values can change over time (Foad, 2021).

Understanding values

Understanding our values allows us to understand ourselves better and why we act or react as we do. If someone does not honor one of the values, for example, if one's value of "caring" was not respected by someone else it can cause one to feel upset. In the same way, if one makes a decision that goes against one's beliefs, one may feel uneasy or unsettled about it since the person is not being true to oneself. Developing awareness of ones values requires two steps for mastery: first, being aware of the emergent need, and second, developing the abilities required to meet that need.

It takes a lifetime to learn how to control our needs. Even after learning how to be the author of our own life, we will encounter situations in which we discover that we still have fear-based beliefs that keep us anchored in the lower realms of awareness - situations that frustrate us, make us uneasy, and bring up our anxieties. As a result, it is critical to gain a thorough awareness of oneself and learn the skills and practices to help one manage their life and discover personal fulfillment.

3.2 Early experiment

A survey was assembled with parts of best practices and built on top of each other to guide the participant smoothly in responding to profound questions.

The goal was to see Platzi students' reactions to purpose-finding activities, if they appreciate them, if they can define valuable responses, if students can summarize newly learned insights in a concise statement at the end, and how long an activity like this takes them.

The survey was provided in English and in Spanish and was posted by Eduardo Hoppenstedt in the following telegram groups of active Platzi students:

- 1. Community of Soft Skills
- 2. School of Data Science community
- 3. Designers community

About the groups:

After students subscribed, they had the chance to join a telegram group voluntarily. The groups often contain thousands of students. Assumingly the students that can be found in these groups possibly show a high growth mindset as they engage in communities with additional activities.

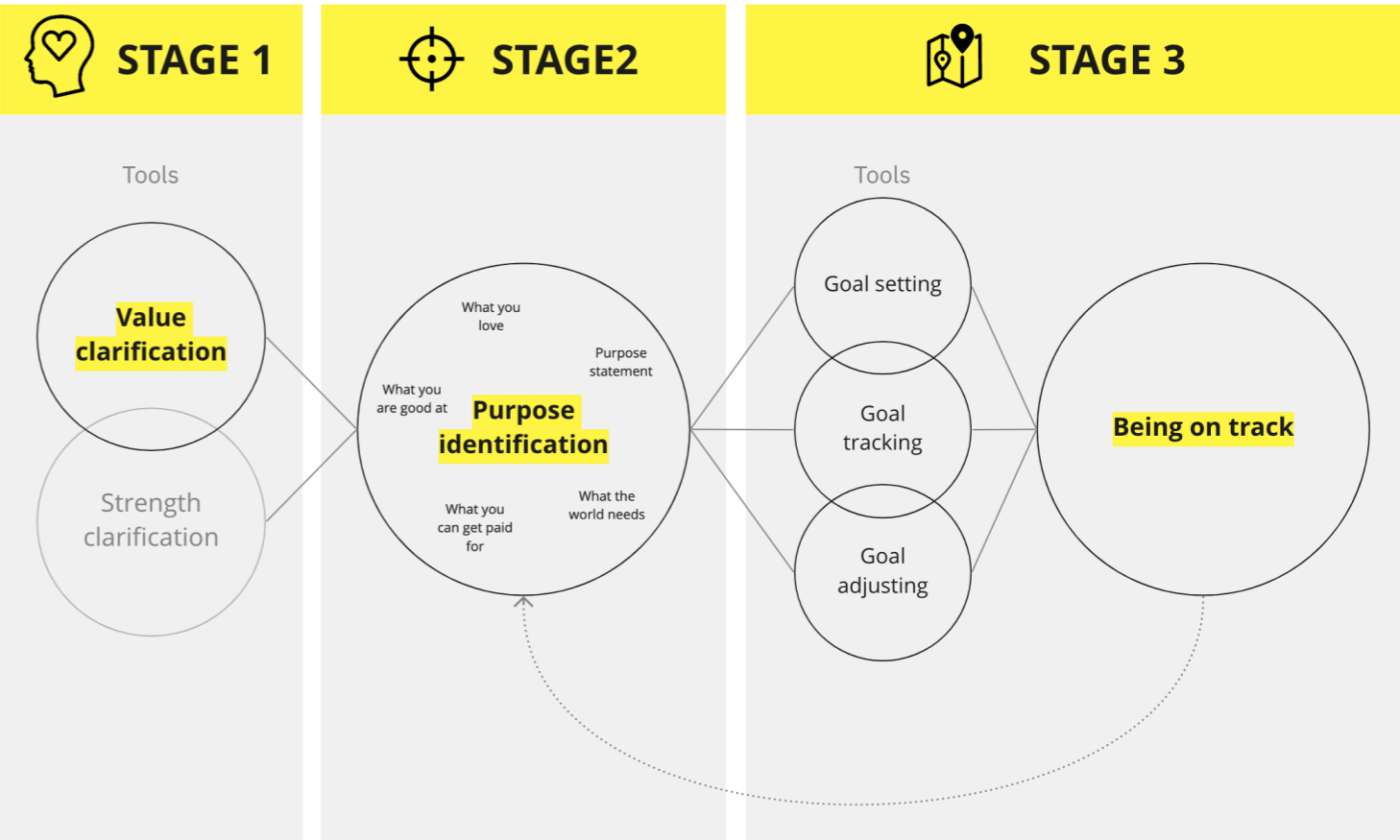


Figure 9: Intervention approach

3.3 Insights & analysis

Twenty participants successfully finished the survey and spent an average of 35 minutes on the survey. With the insights from student responses, a clearer picture of the target audience could be formed, which led to the creation of three different persona types.

Overall the test was positively received. 45% of participants agreed and 25% strongly agreed that clarifying values was helpful for them. 80% agreed or strongly agreed that they would recommend the test to others.

The categories where the test scored the lowest were if they think that taking the test makes them change something in their lives (with 5% strongly disagreeing and 15% disagreeing) and how enjoyable it was (10% rated it as fair and 20% as good). These results are still positive, but they stood out, which led to conclude that the test should be more enjoyable and incentivize more action.

The participants stated that the "what you can get paid for" category is the least important to them. This is surprising due to the fact that Platzi communication to recruit people is often the monetary benefit of working in the digital tech industry.

Students were asked in the evaluation survey how this test should be improved and what stood out was that many students wanted the survey to be more specific, but at the same time, others indicated that the length should be reduced. Three different persona types could be identified through clustering the survey insights and analyzing the student responses.

The first type must learn about herself before answering the questions from the purpose-finding part. The second type knows what she values in life but is on the search for what she would like to do. The third type already knows what he wants but could need help to reach his goals.

Responses from participants

These responses have been translated from Spanish to English. Detailed information can be found in Appendix F.

"The purpose of my life is to use my knowledge to build technological solutions for the Latin American society with programming."
- Participant 8

"The purpose of my life is to use my English skills to have an improvement in education efficiency for Latin American people with a equitable and efficient education."
- Participant 6

"adding links to courses that can help me develop these areas..."
- Participant 14

Clustered insights from questions 32 & 33

- How would you improve this guide?
- Is there anything else you would like to share with us?

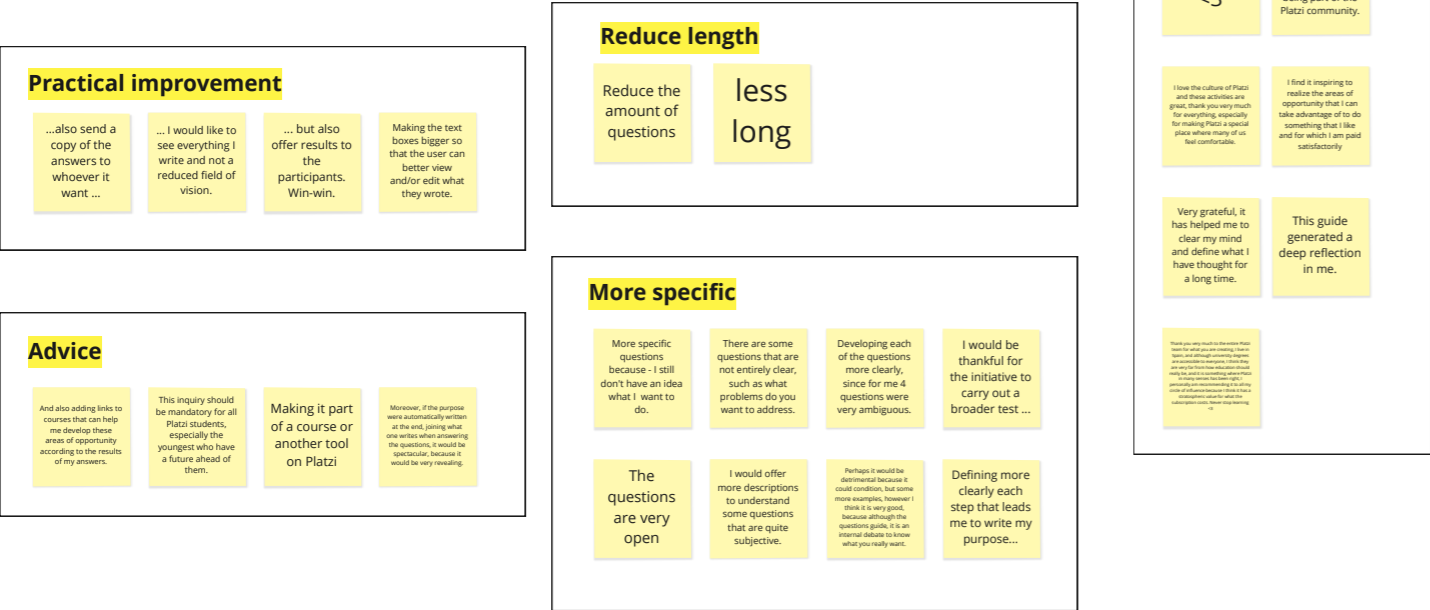


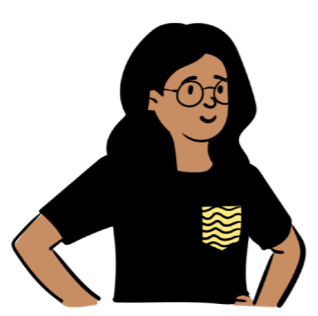
Figure 10: Clusters from open survey questions (Detailed information can be found in Appendix A)

"I HAVE NO IDEA
WHAT I WANT TO
DO."



Lina, 21

"I WANT TO IMPACT
PEOPLES LIVES IN A
MEANINGFUL WAY."



Ana, 26

"MY DREAM IS TO
INVITE MY FAMILY TO
TRAVEL TO EUROPE."



David, 25

Figure 11: 3 personas

Conclusion

As expressed by some participants the intervention should give feedback on the student’s values, what they are good at (strengths) and what they need to work on (limitations). Guide them to define strong statements and actionable steps to make them understand what their goal is and, more importantly, why it is the goal. The identified goals should be present, and invite the students to iterate them regularly.

It is evident that the best-performing students at Platzi show a pronounced growth mindset. They voluntarily join activities, participate in chat discussions and study diverse courses. So the question is, **how can we help more students to amplify their growth mindset?**

As a result of converging the insights, a new problem definition was defined that aligned all project stakeholders before moving into the next phase of developing solutions.

New problem definition:

How can an intervention create clarity for students on their objectives, and support them to continuously pursue and achieve them while increasing engagement with the platform?

Goal setting

Goal setting became part of the intervention approach to create a direction for students to start to nurture, together with purpose identification activities, a growth mindset for students. Value identification and purpose-finding activities alone do not lead to action; the goal is to guide students towards actively improving the status quo.

Another vital factor stated was how to bring value to Platzi. Connecting students’ goals to Platzi courses would create higher engagement for the client.

In an interview, a student mentioned that it is unpleasant to browse through the courses, and he does not really like to do that. That could explain why Platzi sees a drop in student activity after three months. The assumption is that the students did the three to four courses they initially identified as interesting, and after three months, they no longer know what to do.

**”Setting goals is the first step
in turning the invisible into the
visible.” – Tony Robbins**

3.4 Design direction

A design direction was defined that focuses on guiding students through experiences that adjust to their current needs in their journey to reach their life goals while manifesting the idea of becoming lifelong learners.

Design direction

Platzi guides students to learn about themselves playfully and enables them to discover new life opportunities to maintain their motivation to become lifelong learners.

The desired state:

Interacting with the intervention should feel fun and effortless for the students. Shortly after starting to use the tool, they will obtain a precise reflection of a desirable version of their life. This desired version will be an accelerator to motivate them toward learning. Students should be inspired to learn continually in their lives, and Platzi provides the tools to help them develop professionally and personally.

Hypothesis:

A combination of value clarification, purpose identification and goal setting increases engagement and improves learning performances for Platzi students.

By making the student understand why they are learning something (they have identified themselves that it will lead them to a better future or more fulfillment) they will be more emotionally invested. This focus can lead to optimized performances.

How might we...
create a pleasant experience that enables Platzi students to create valuable purpose responses and help them to create actionable goals to achieve them?

3.5 Different solution approaches

To get a better overview of how a future service could look like. Multiple possible intervention types were defined. Each type has unique advantages and disadvantages in different areas of an intervention concept.

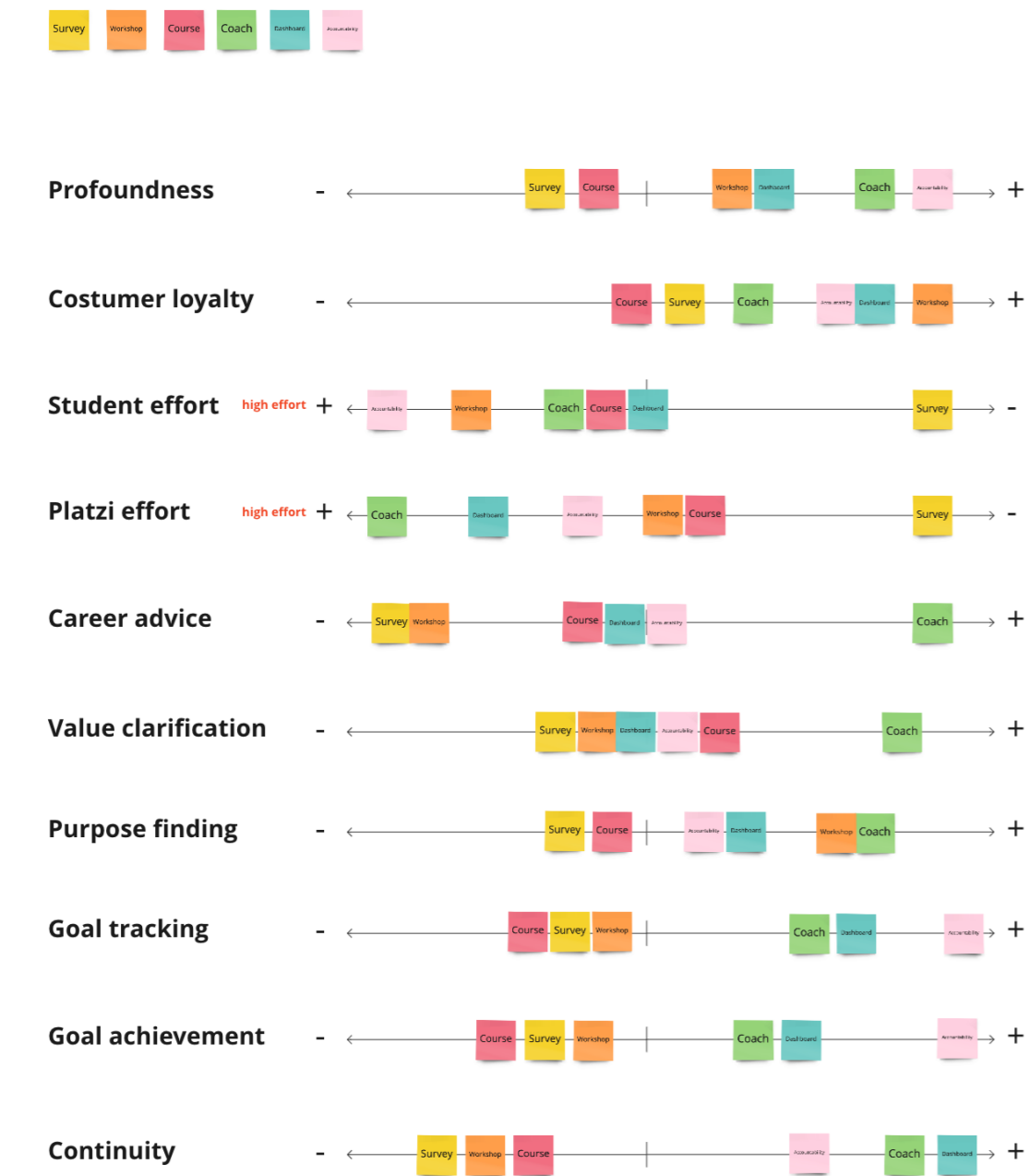


Figure 12: Strengths and weaknesses of intervention types



Figure 13: Intervention types pros & cons

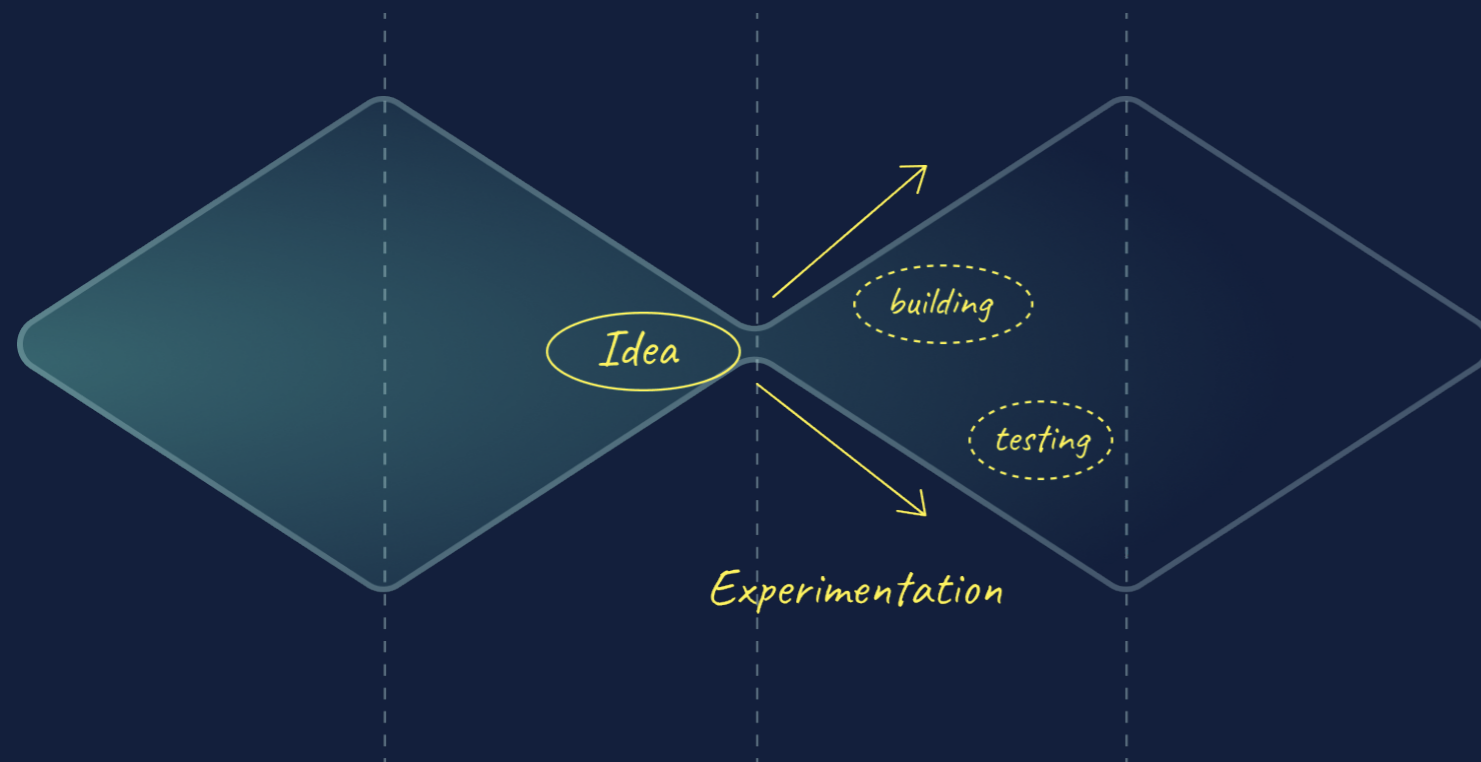
Chapter 3 KEY TAKEAWAYS

In the future, Platzi should guide students to discover unique life opportunities that motivate them to stay engaged with the learning platform. User tests suggested that students are at different stages of their journey to reach what they want in life. They should receive the tool that is most helpful for them at their current stage.

4.0 Experimentation

This chapter focuses on the planning, excursion and validation of an extensive experiment. The experiment aimed to provide a complete intervention experience that guides the participants from identifying their values to tracking their goals with an accountability partner.

- | 4.1 Intervention componants
- | 4.2 The experiment
- | 4.3 Findings
- | 4.4 Conclusion
- | 4.5 Ideation



4.1 Intervention components

After identifying various types of potential intervention approaches, the most promising components were combined to be validated in an extensive experiment with Platzzi students.

Goal-setting

Earlier experiments suggested that students enjoy value clarification and purpose-finding exercises. It gives them a clear orientation, but if that orientation is not further nurtured by realistic action, it will stay a dream. For this reason, a goal-setting activity was introduced in this experiment.

Goal-setting is an intervention that helps people to "be on track" by defining actions. It helps them make their distant life goals tangible by describing digestible efforts. The switch from abstract to concrete terms has been shown to offset the negative effects of temporal discouragement (Trope & Liberman, 2003). Inspired by the SMART goals model (Doran, 1981) a worksheet is developed that leads students to define two types of goals. Outcome goals describe realistic future state and process goals break it down into actionable steps.

Accountability partners

Another factor tested in the experiment was the idea of connecting two students with similar interests to make them accountability partners. These students are supposed to give each other feedback on their responses during the workshop and plan meetings in which they track the progress of achieving goals. An interpersonal experience in combination with goal-setting contains various positive attributes on the results of the intervention. It can be inspiring to have an exchange, hear what others responded and just by speaking it out loud it can be an incentive to refine one's answers. Furthermore, regularly revisiting the goals with another person increases the accountability and therefore the likelihood of achievement of these goals.

4.2 The experiment

This chapter describes the intentions and considerations that went into the experiment. The experiment consisted of various qualitative user tests and was conducted with 22 Platzzi students.

Hypothesis

The following hypothesis made in the process of defining the solution were tested out during the experiment:

- H1:** A combination of value clarification, purpose-finding, and goal-setting activities increases students' motivation to engage with Platzzi.
- H2:** Defining actionable goals can lead students to be more confident about achieving their goals, and it motivates them to change/improve something in their lives.
- H3:** Defining outcome goals and actionable process goals creates clarity for students on what they must do to achieve their goals.
- H4:** Students define more achievable and realistic goals when they discuss them with their peers.

Goals of the experiment

The purpose of the experimentation was to improve the student results and as a consequence the effectiveness of different intervention components.

The experiment aimed to validate the effectiveness of particular intervention parts and provide learnings on how they could be implemented in a concept. Other objectives were to find out what are the most challenging aspects, what brings the most joy, what support might be required, and where are the biggest pains and gains. This allowed students to refine their objectives to make them more feasible in interpersonal activities.

Assumptions:

- students indicate that they are more motivated after the experiment than before
- students spend more time on the platform after the experiment
- students indicate that taking part in the experiment clarified for them what they want to achieve
- students are able to connect their goals to Platzzi courses
- Students will have more achievable and realistic goals when they talk with their peers about them and give each other feedback

Experiment parts

(Figure 14)

Part 1: Purpose finding guide

In the first part, students answered questions about their values and what is fulfilling to them in life through an online survey. After that, they received a report summarizing their responses, and they could iterate on it or show it to others.

Part 2: Goal-setting workshop

In the second part, the students were invited to a goal-setting workshop where they were introduced to their accountability partners.

Part 3: Accountability partner meetings

This part focused on tracking and adjusting the goals with the accountability partners they met in the workshop. Students received a framework of questions and were encouraged to coordinate meetings with their accountability partners.

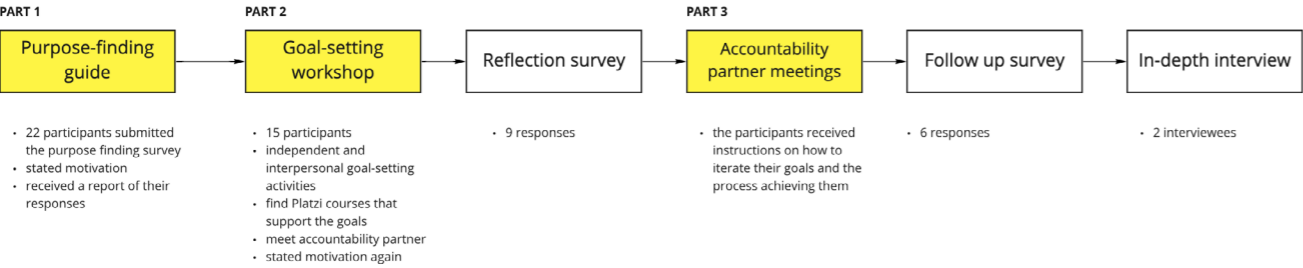


Figure 14: Experiment key events

Part 1

YOUR VALUES

Your 10 values

Our values reflect what is important to us. They are a shorthand way of describing our individual motivations. Together with our beliefs, they are the most factors that drive our decision-making. There are positive values and limiting values. Personal mastery involves uncovering or elevating our five-based beliefs. The level of growth and development of an individual depends on their ability to satisfy different needs. The most successful individuals are those who balance common goals and self-interest.

Morals Knowledge Creativity Caring Courage
Respect Responsibility Honesty Personal growth Fairness

Your top values

Reflect upon the results and to think about what role those values play in your life. The successful mastery of business involves two stages first, becoming aware of the emergent needs, and second developing the skills that are necessary to satisfy that need. It is really important, therefore, to develop a deep understanding of yourself and to learn the skills and techniques that allow you to manage your life and not to that you can find personal fulfillment.

Personal Grow, Responsibility, Creativity

WHY
I want to learn something new about. I like challenging myself to grow as my personal life and knowledge. So, finding things that I like present or things that inspire every day.

Your top 3 values you want to live more fully

These are the values you might want to develop or grow, and become master of:

Mentoring, Entrepreneurship, Ambition

STOP DOING THIS
Stop superior syndrome and stop procrastination.

START DOING THIS
Believe in myself, establish my time and share more time to family.

Part 2

YOUR PURPOSE

Intender to identify your purpose you have answered questions regarding the topic categories. Remember that purpose finding is a creative process and we advise you to resist your answers after some time again and only you would responsible to come. Every thing in your life are in constant change, our surroundings change us at all times and this is why our values change too. Reflecting and refining your responses permits us to make our purpose in life even clearer.

What you love

What you are good at

What the world needs

What you can get paid for

MISSION

PROFESSION

VOCATION

PURPOSE

Satisfaction but feeling of no positive impact on the world

Delight in my talents but without any

Excitement but feeling of uncertainty

Comfortable but feeling of emptiness

Your Ikigai

WHAT I LOVE

What did you love doing or feeling about when you were a kid or in your early adult years?
I thought learning was things: Getting a University Certificate and get a good to job to earn money. I wanted to learn about Japanese Electronics. I studied.

What specific activities make you happy?
Chasing because it allows me to utilize knowledge to do something that represent a process, or reduce the time to do something. So the other hand, using my own happy doing things to share with her, and doing things to make her feel happy.

When my dream is bigger, what would you do?
Start around the world and try the know of my dream to be together with my family.

When do you have complete track of time?
When I remember knowledge or facts that I can apply easily to my job or my life.

If you only had 6 months to live, how would you spend your time?
So that every others were there with my family and why not, study hard to write a book with my life and how I did thing to be the best.

WHAT I BELIEVE THE WORLD

What kind of world do you want to help create?
A world that be more, more, where the justice will be happened. Where people need, others.

What makes you proud or frustrated?
Someday that there are many things that I would like to learn, and there aren't enough time to learn everything. However, I'm aware about it.

What kind of problems do you want to address? Name 3 problems areas.
Distance including, supply chain and cost reduction.

How do you hope to personally contribute to the world?
Sharing knowledge, sharing insights or leading a group of people for a common benefit.

WHAT I'M GOOD AT

What are you good at?
Analyzing data, solving problem, to make problems, leading people better, and utilizing resources.

What do you want to develop or improve?
I would like to be a good decisionist that can make up new solution being able to make well in response using data and explore the process to make decision.

What do people who you to help them with or what do they value from you?
Because I'm empathic with them. Forthable I try to understand the problem, then I try to finding for the best solution for their problem. (especially in my job). So, allow to support people always.

WHAT I COULD GET PAID FOR

What product or service could you sell?
One of my skills is speaking in public and I could be a good teacher.

What job could you do?
Could be project manager or business analyst.

What kind of people or organizations do you want to work with?
I would like to work in a company with a good culture of teamwork, where all of the time is thinking to make the same objective.

STATEMENT

Write about your values again and this time you can be more assertive. Can you align them to express your purpose statement?
The purpose of my life is to use my savings, my creativity, and my public speaking skills, to solving problems through data analytics for small companies that are looking for strategies to improve process efficiency.

Explore yourself, and explore new things. After all, life is a constant search for who we are.

Figure 15: Generated report

Purpose-finding report

This is an example of the participants' report after part 1 of the experiment. More details can be found in Appendix C.

Your values

What you want to improve

Ikigai Ven Diagram

What you love doing?

What the world needs?

What you are good at?

What you can get paid for?

Purpose statement

Think about your values again and the questions you just answered. Can you align them to express your purpose statement?

"The purpose of my life is to use my teaching skills to have a better lifestyle for woman that have kids with online tool's I want to create a community that can be independent doing the things they love and earn money without leaving their children and it can be possible in their own time."

- Participant 4

"The purpose of my life is to use my courage, my creativity, and my public speaking skills, to solving problems through data analytics for small companies that are looking for strategies to improve process efficiency."

- Participant 11

"The purpose of my life is apply the knowledge I've acquired in construction and sustainability, as well in coding and data analysis, to create environmental friendly houses and energy efficient buildings in Norte de Santander Colombia, in order to reduce the carbon footprint and helps the world to be lasting for future generations."

- Participant 17

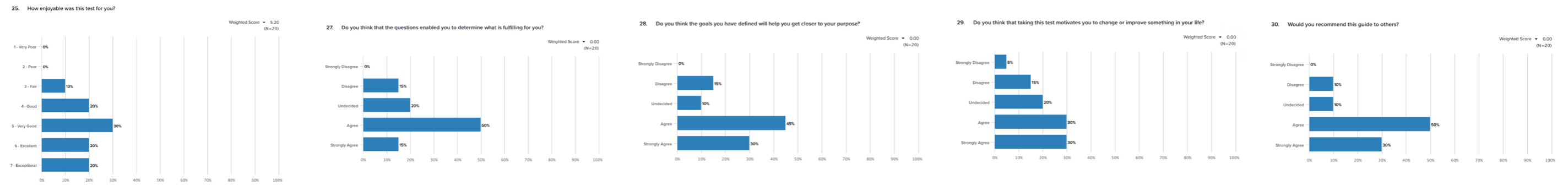


Figure 16: Experiment reflection (Detailed information can be found in Appendix A and D)

4.3 Findings

Not every participant who clicked on the survey link completed it. 22 students completed the purpose finding guide, 15 joined the workshop, 9 answered the reflections survey, 6 responded to the follow-up survey, and 2 participants were interviewed. Detailed insights can be found in Appendix D.

- Students rated their motivation higher after part 2 than before part 1 of the experiment. Before part 1: 7.4/10 on average and after part 2: 9.6/10 on average.
- In comparison to the earlier surveys conducted, participants rated every category higher.
 - more students specified they would recommend the second intervention to others
 - more students specified that taking the test motivates them to change or improve something in their lives.
 - more students specified that the defined goals would help them to get to their purpose
 - more students specified the questions from the purpose-finding guide helped them to define what is fulfilling to them

- more students indicated that clarifying their values was helpful to them
- more students indicated that the test was enjoyable for them
- Noticeably only a small number of students remained until the last activity
- Participants were undecided how helpful it was to get a buddy assigned
- They indicated that it was quite a high effort to work with their buddy
- Some students want to connect with others who have similar interests
- Once students defined outcome goals and process goals it was not challenging to find five courses that relate to their goals
- Feedback provided by the purpose report was not really helpful to all students (22.2% Disagree)
- 88.9% of the participants strongly agreed that going through the courses and selecting five was helpful to them
- The majority of students said that they are motivated to change or improve something in their lives. (33.3% Agree and 66.7% Strongly Agree)

- In interviews, participants stated that they did not meet their accountability partner even though they were interested in meeting and received instructions on how to iterate goals with their partners, but the drawbacks were still too significant to meet again.
- Highly engaged students do not have issues discovering new courses. They regularly view the list of courses and select the ones that appear attractive to them.

It confirmed that adding goal-setting activities to the purpose and value part increased students' motivation to engage with Platz! and to improve something in their lives to get closer to their purpose.

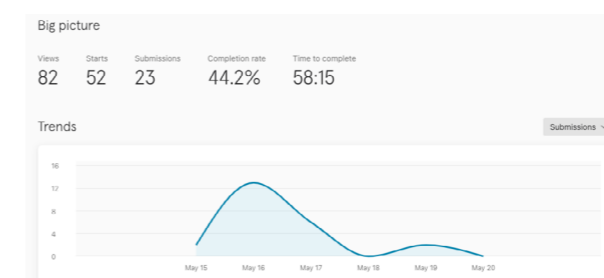


Figure 17: Screenshot of survey performance

Goal-setting activity

STEP 1

20 minutes

OUTCOME GOAL

Define an outcome goal for yourself. An outcome goal describes the end result you'd like to achieve i.e. "I want to finish my first project as a Front End Developer in the next 4 months".

I want to achieve a good score on a standardized English test

WHY IS ACCOMPLISHING THIS GOAL IMPORTANT TO YOU?

It's important to me because is the first step, I think, to find a good scholarship to study a master out of Colombia

LET'S GO DEEPER, WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT TO YOU?

It's important to me to achieve a good score because I want to probe myself that I am capable of accomplish my goals. That's because I feel something inactive since I finished my undergraduate career.

AND WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

This is important to me because I feel the need to increase my objectives and to grow up more and more

WHERE ARE YOU NOW IN THE RELATION TO YOUR GOAL?

I think I am advancing, practicing more every day, but I'm not in the way to achieve this because I'm postponing this goal by work on other ones, that I believe are important too, but that are not close to be completed either.

ACTIONABLE STEPS

What needs to be done to achieve your outcome goal? Be as specific as possible. Come up with 5 process goals that describe actionable steps. Think about whatever can help you getting closer to your outcome goal. It can be something like "reading the first 10 pages of my book" or "research companies in my area I would like to work for".

PROCESS GOALS	DEADLINE
Make an exercise of writing, of at least 3 paragraphs at least two times a week	June 15
Make an exercise of listening, solving workshops of 30 minutes at least two times a week	June 15
Join to a conversational club and assist to one session per week	May 23 to June 15
Make an exercise of reading, solving workshops of 30 minutes at least two times a week	June 15
To finish the book I started past week, my first one in english	June 20

Figure 18: Goal setting activity (Detailed information can be found in Appendix C)

Participant feedback

"Well, for me it's so difficult to organize my time and to get focused to develop my tasks and in consequence, achieve my goals, so if Platzi can give me advice and guidance regarding to these, it would be amazing for me."
- Participant x

"Platzi has everything I need to achieve my goals."
- Participant x

"... I think the design of a learning route related with my specific goals will help me to grow ..."
- Participant x

4.4 Conclusion

The chosen environments require high student effort and persistence. It revealed that the goal-setting activity should be part of the intervention to stimulate students to discover courses.

A minority welcomed the option to get in contact with like-minded peers, but the majority was undecided about its helpfulness. Working with a buddy also required much effort for most participants. In conclusion, working with an accountability partner does not prove worth it to most participants.

Even though it was the intention to measure the engagement rate of the participants after the workshop. To validate if the participants that stayed until the end are more engaged than the others. Unfortunately, this data could not be provided by Platzi.

In summary, the feedback ratings improved compared to earlier experimentation, the participants gave quality responses, and a unique opportunity was provided that they usually do not have (meeting like-minded peers). However, in the end, this approach would only reach the already highly engaged students, and Platzi expressed interest in large-scale solutions. Therefore the approach needed to pivot.

New design direction

Design an intervention that is easily accessible to many students, is pleasant to use, is iterative, and provides direction and actionable steps on the goals they want to achieve while pointing out the related Platzi courses.

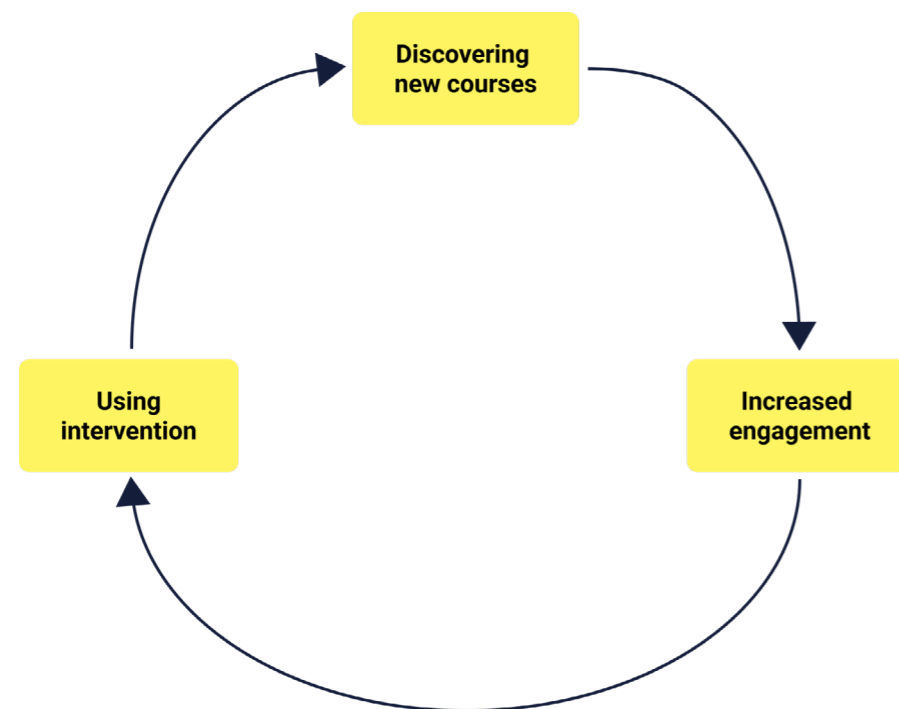


Figure 19: Reinforcement cycle

4.5 Ideation

Figure 19 shows the reinforcing relationship between the different components and how they reinforce each other.

One of the most significant disadvantages of goal tracking and purpose-finding services is that users are not recurring. In the best case scenario, they do the exercise once, identify something they would like to improve but do not return to iterate on what they have achieved, and may change their values and goals. It is vital to reevaluate and track the identified goals to progress. When goals are not revisited, they become less prompted and eventually disappear (Meadows, 2018).

Platzi's most significant advantage over self-development tools and services that are stand-alone is that Platzi can be this centralized entity that provides learners with a complete service proposition. As mentioned by a Platzi student, "Platzi has everything I need." This statement implies that the platform has courses on everything this student wants to learn. Still, a lack of motivation and unpleasant discovery experience prevents the students from staying engaged to a prosperous extent.

Starting with the Ikigai activity that allows students to identify what is fulfilling to them, followed by the goal-setting part where they concretize their purpose-inspired outcome desires into actionable steps, which are eventually completed by the Platzi course offerings. Through continuously using the app, students will be encouraged to revisit their Ikigai and continue adding to it, reinforcing the whole circle again.

This generated value proposition canvas (Figure 20) gives a better understanding of the values, pains, and gains of the previously outlined personas.

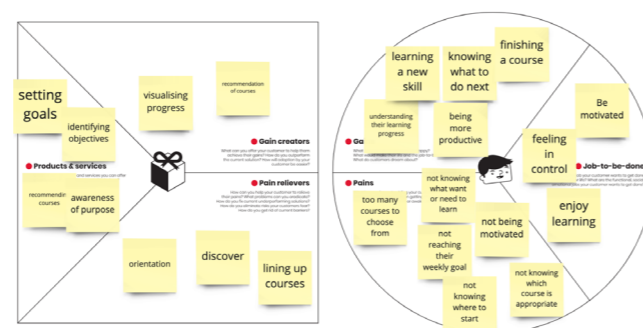


Figure 20: Value proposition canvas

Platzi emphasized that they are deeply interested in solutions that hold the potential of reaching one million students within a year.

How might we...
create a pleasant
experience that
engages one million
students to interact
continuously with their
life goals?

Chapter 4

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Combining surveys and interpersonal workshops generated value for the participants and led to quality results. The experiment showed that goal-setting activities could be the necessary piece to tie students' purpose results to the platform offers. At first, the focus was to enable the students to define robust purpose responses and goals, but providing a scalable intervention became equally important. Therefore a new objective was defined:

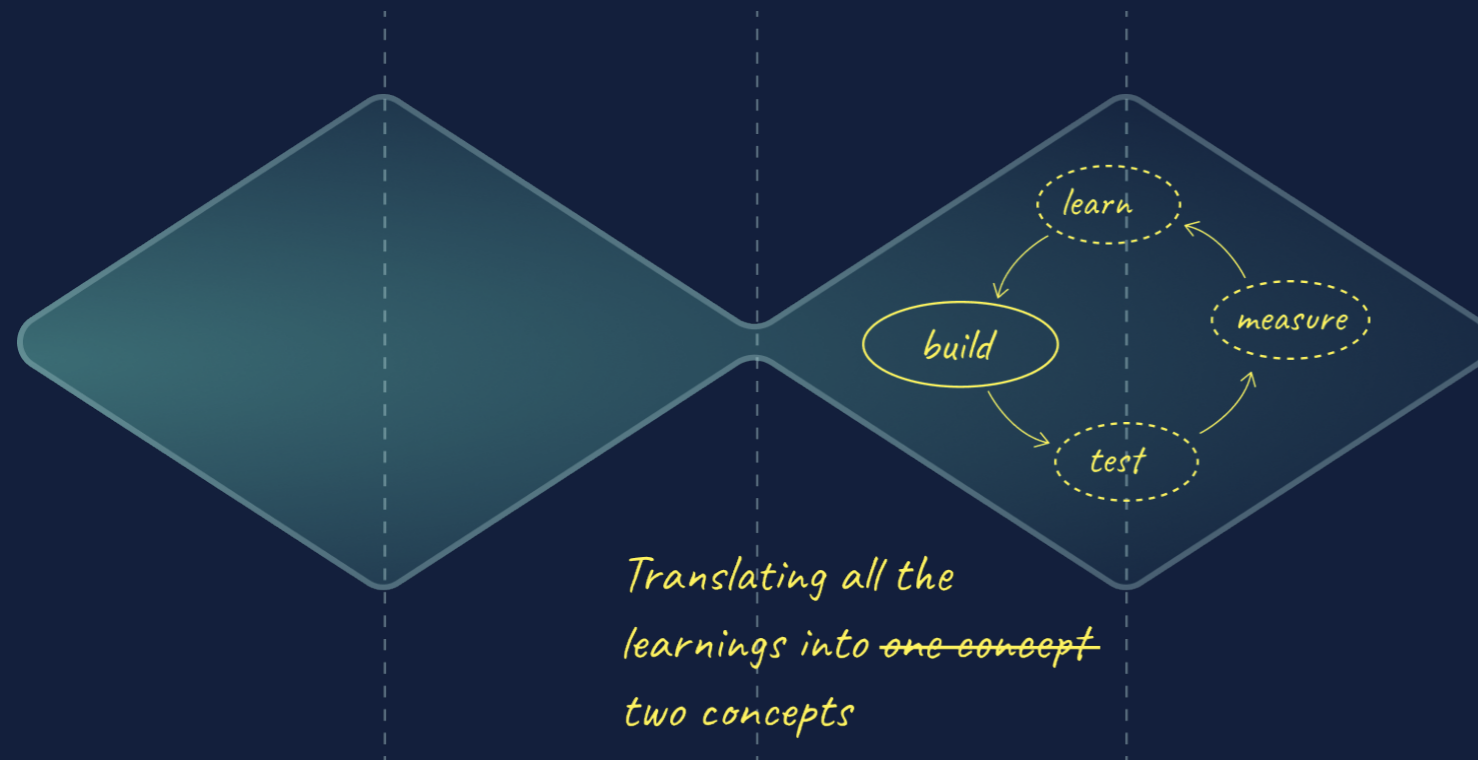
take the generated learnings and design a pleasant experience that could engage one million students to interact continuously with their life goals.

The presented intervention approaches proved to be desirable for the users. The following steps will stress creating a concept that proposes a feasible and viable solution for Platzzi at scale.

5.0 Design & Develop

After evaluating the insights, two solution concepts were developed. First, a Platzi Challenge which provides students with the opportunity to develop their best Ikigai responses and have an interpersonal collaboration to achieve their goals. Second, an app feature that is scalable to reach a large audience and adapts to their requirements.

- | 5.1 Concept A: Platzi challenge
- | 5.2 Concept B: App Feature
- | 5.3 Conceptualization
- | 5.4 Design & prototyping



5.1 Concept A: Platzi challenge

What is a Platzi challenge?

A Platzi challenge is an existing concept of a temporary program that consists of a combination of courses and other activities such as lectures, group workshops, etc. Students are required to finish specific courses in a specified time frame, and at the end, they receive a certificate that they completed the challenge.

Purpose finding and goal-setting challenge

The Platzi challenge concept would give students a complete experience with the earlier identified components of value clarification, purpose finding, goal-setting, and interpersonal accountability. The strong points are that students can define realistic and refined goals and it will allow them to meet peers with similar interests in social activities. This intervention targets the lead users that are curious about their life opportunities and are willing to make an effort to improve their current situation. This audience already shows high interest in self-development matters and is motivated to be part of a comprehensive program.

The environment of a Platzi challenge serves exceptionally well for the lead users willing to invest time and effort into discovering themselves. This challenge can further validate the proposed direction into self-development interventions for Platzi and its acceptance in practice.

The setup of the challenge

As a preparation, students should finish five existing Platzi courses that are related to the subject of self-development. However, students can finish the courses whenever they want within the challenge's deadline.

Like in all Platzi challenges, key activities are being held live on zoom or any other video conference platform.

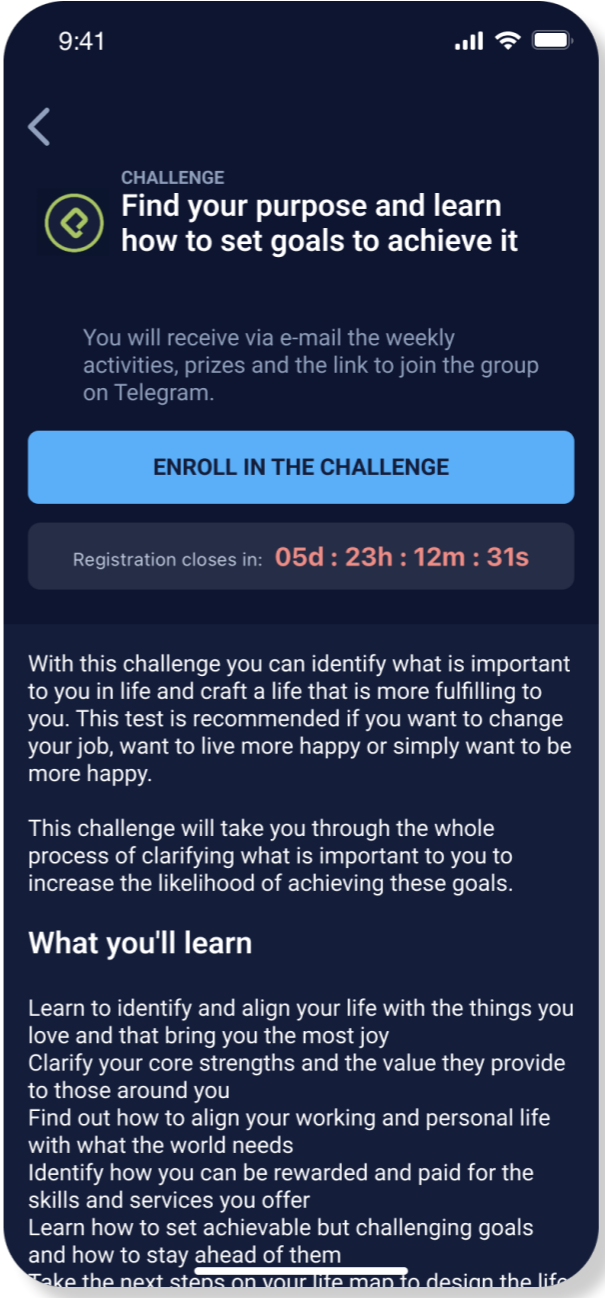
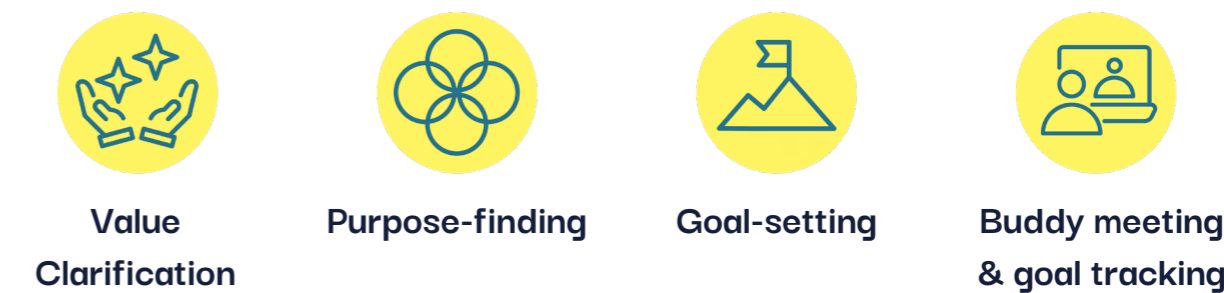
For a detailed description of the challenges content and introduction, see Figure 21 of a mockup mobile screenshot.

Future challenges regarding the acceptance and student interest in this intervention can be planned. This format could be offered regularly as it does not consist of high efforts from Platzi's side. After each time running this challenge, the impact can be evaluated. This can be achieved by sending an evaluating survey to participants to estimate if the results were worth their time.

Platzi challenges are usually extremely low effort for the company as it refers to existing courses and utilizes materials that are being provided as part of this graduation project. Only little new content or resources are required to implement it. The concept is scalable to a large audience too as students can facilitate the activities to each other.

The part that could be labor-intense is matching students with similar interests with each other. It is recommended to invest this time as it provides great value for the users. If it should become a recurring intervention this could be automated as well.

This type of intervention is recommended to Platzi as it aligns with their mission to improve their students lives and the insights from this research showed that students highly appreciated this format of intervention.



1. [Course to Find your Life Purpose](#)
2. [Online Learning Strategies Course](#)
3. [Audio workshop to Change your Professional Career](#)
4. [Tools for Personal Growth Course](#)
5. [Improvisation for Life Course](#)

Dates:
Start of challenge: 23/07/2022
End of the challenge: 12/09/2022
Graduation: 19/09/2022

Key activities:
Introduction and starting survey
Workshop "How to set great goals"
Peer meetings - update your buddy on how the process is going.

Figure 21: Mockup of Platzi challenge in app

5.2 Concept B: App Feature

Led by research insights and client demands, the primary concept solution of this graduation project is the proposal of a new feature that integrates seamlessly into the existing application to reach casual learners. In the case of Platzi, they aim to be a mobile-first online learning provider as smartphone accessibility is more significant in the region than desktop computers or laptops.

Design Goals

Design a user experience that reaches students who feel uninspired and do not know what to learn or where they want to go. This concept should be **enjoyable and reach casual learners as well as highly engaged students while staying true to Platzi's core values of efficient communication and short interventions**. The solution will help students to **feel more comfortable, confident, and aware of their desires and maximize their strengths** while

being conscious of their limitations to sustain their engagement to become lifelong learners.

One of the biggest challenges was **reducing the concept to be suitable for a mobile application in the Platzi design language while ensuring the framework of the intervention did not lose its essence due to simplification**.

Find the right balance of **letting users choose what activities** are most helpful to them while **still guiding and incentivizing them**. The experience should not be linear. Early experimentation has shown that students have different needs and find different tasks and tools more or less helpful.

Include gamification principles like visualization of the progress or opportunities to unlock levels to continually stimulate students to engage with the service.

Design goals:

1. The concept aligns with the Platzi brand identity.
2. The concept reduces the intervention to make it achievable within 15 minutes without losing its effectiveness.
3. The concept is an enjoyable, lightweight intervention that helps students to create awareness about their desires.
4. The concept incentivizes the students to connect their goals with courses.
5. The concept reaches a large audience of Platzi students.
6. The concept offers guidance while letting the students decide themselves what they need most.
7. The concept stimulates students to interact continuously with the intervention.

A centralized approach

To not lose the essence of the framework and provide the user only with what he/she needs most - a new intervention approach was needed. The linear approach used in the challenge does not apply to a large audience; therefore, a centralized approach was introduced (Figure 22).

As earlier experimentation has shown (3 personas) students are not equally interested in each part of the intervention. When providing a linear approach which is recommended for best participant responses, too many students would stop due to unexpected high effort. Platzi usually provides learning experiences that can be achieved within a few minutes, and the experimentation showed that a linear intervention could last easily one hour.

It should be achievable to answer the questions and define a mission statement within 15 minutes - that aligns with Platzi's efficient way of teaching.

This is why the experience became centered around the purpose-finding part. The intervention needs to communicate its value effectively to appeal to the Platzi audience otherwise, many users would drop out. Students will be empowered to choose for themselves how extensively they want to use this feature

Create action

It was the goal to create an action that ties back to the platform offerings.

As stated in earlier experimentation, an optimal user experience would be if they would receive an automatically generated list of recommended courses they need to do to achieve their goals. Students would know what to do, and Platzi can expect increased engagement.

However this desired outcome is not feasible for a few reasons. Student purpose responses can be extremely diverse, and even though Platzi has courses on many different subjects, they do not have everything. There is no existing database that connects students' responses with certain classes that are related. This is something that grows over time. It is not feasible to deploy this technology in the first instance, especially before this feature has proven its value. To find an alternative that still provides adequate value to the user, they need to be engaged in another way.

Platzi already has this button "create your learning path" that leads users to create a selection of courses.

While browsing through the courses, they can find new and interesting content. In interviews with students, it became evident that the highly engaged

students discover interesting courses by regularly looking at the course offerings. Also, during the experimentation, users mentioned how surprised they were by the diversity of Platzi courses when looking closely at the list.

[I encountered myself in the same situation, I didn't know what courses to take after three months. I thought I had finished all the interesting courses. But in preparation for a user test, I went through the list of courses and discovered many new and exciting courses that I hadn't seen before.]

In order to stimulate the students to look at the list of course offerings, they need to have a clear objective first. Which can be their mission statement and defined goals. Therefore the button was integrated at the end of the mission statement and goal-setting flow. This opened the possibility also to measure how many students were stimulated through the intervention to click on the "create a learning path" button.

How can we persuade users to use this button more frequently and manually select the courses?

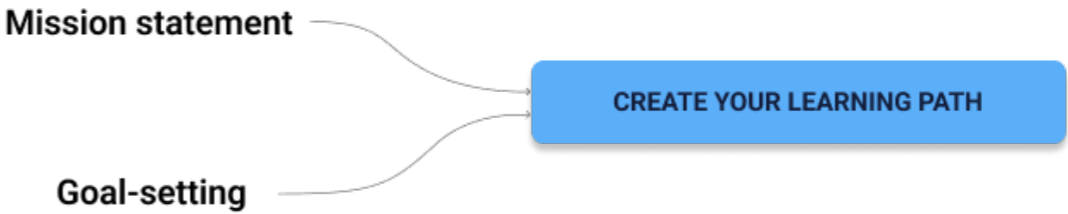
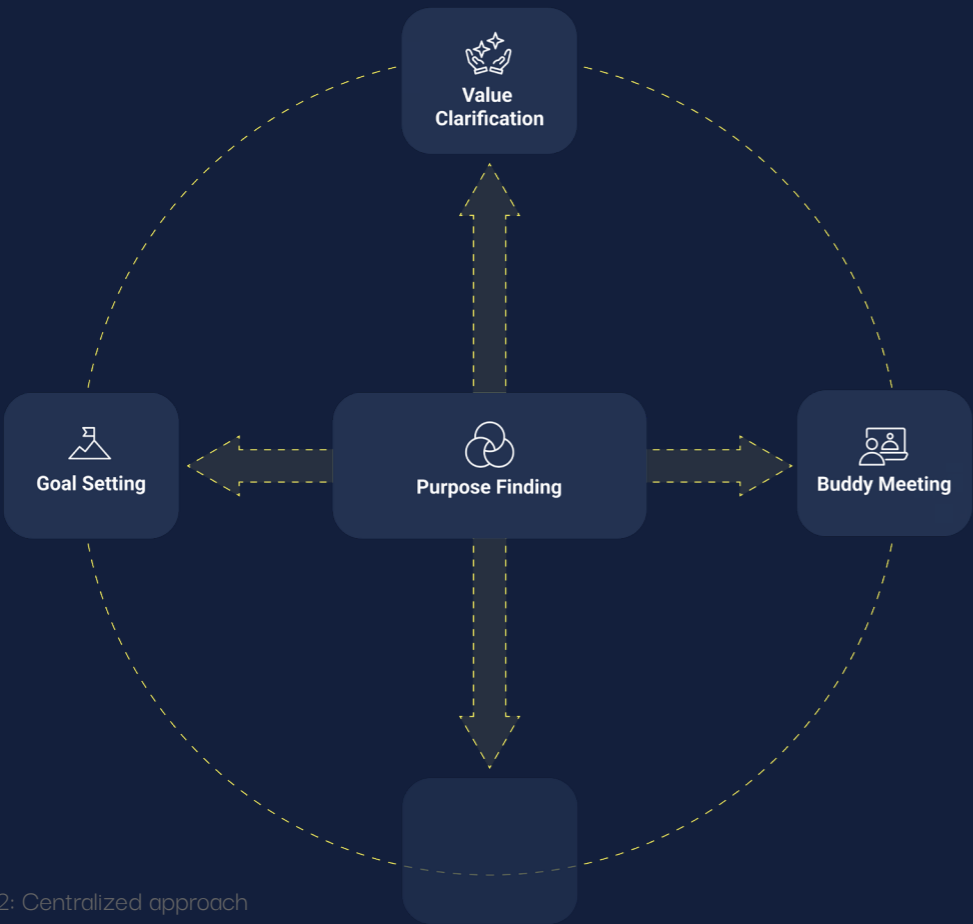


Figure 23: Call to action button

Figure 22: Centralized approach

5.3 Conceptualization

After the most effective parts of the intervention were identified, a concept was constructed that could be integrated into the existing Platzi application. First, wireframes were designed to visualize the flows and interactions a user has to make to interact with this intervention. The goal was to deliver a minimal viable product (MVP) as a concept that could then be iterated by Platzi.

The experience should create value for students in different stages of their journey and feel rewarding to someone who only has little time to spare. Even if a student only has a few minutes, the experience should be appealing and rewarding at once. In the end, exploring opportunities in life should stimulate them to discover more relevant courses from different fields for themselves.

In the wireframing stage, the company’s branding guidelines were ignored to emphasize the user’s interactions. In the prototyping state it became a crucial component.

Adapting Ikigai

In order to simplify the intervention, the category of “what you can get paid for ”from the Ikigai framework was removed from this concept. In the first survey with Platzi students they ranked this category the least important out of the four. Other experimentation insights suggested that responses in that category are plain compared to the other categories. Students often respond by simply naming a job title. It became evident that the other main categories could achieve the intended results. Supportive questions like “What product or service could you sell?” could be added to the category of “what are you good at.” That question intends to make users think about suitable professions with good economic perspectives. As Platzi focuses exclusively on jobs within the digital economy and tech industry, which are comparatively well paid jobs, this category has already become less relevant.



Removing this category helped to simplify the intervention flow further and to differentiate it from the original framework. Additionally, the category names were adapted to “Passion,” “Skills,” and “World needs” to simplify it and alienate from the original framework.

Supportive questions

The main questions are supported by supportive, more detailed questions within the domain of the main question, e.g., “What do you love doing.” Users should be inspired to come up with more quality responses, and the most obvious ones might not be the best ones, or at least they do not help the student learn about themselves. Whenever they cannot think about more responses to one of the main questions, they can tap on the “inspiration” button to see questions that lead them to think unrestricted.

At the same time, we want to allow the students to decide how much time they want to spend on the intervention. Later, they should be invited to revisit and add more answers.

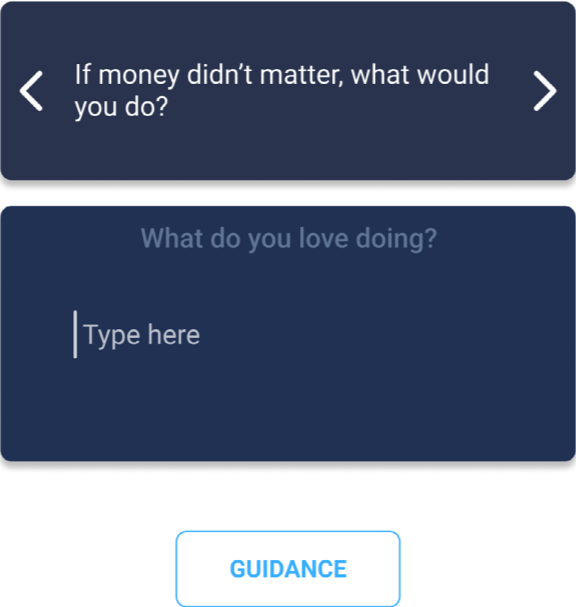


Figure 24: Question UI components

Wireframes

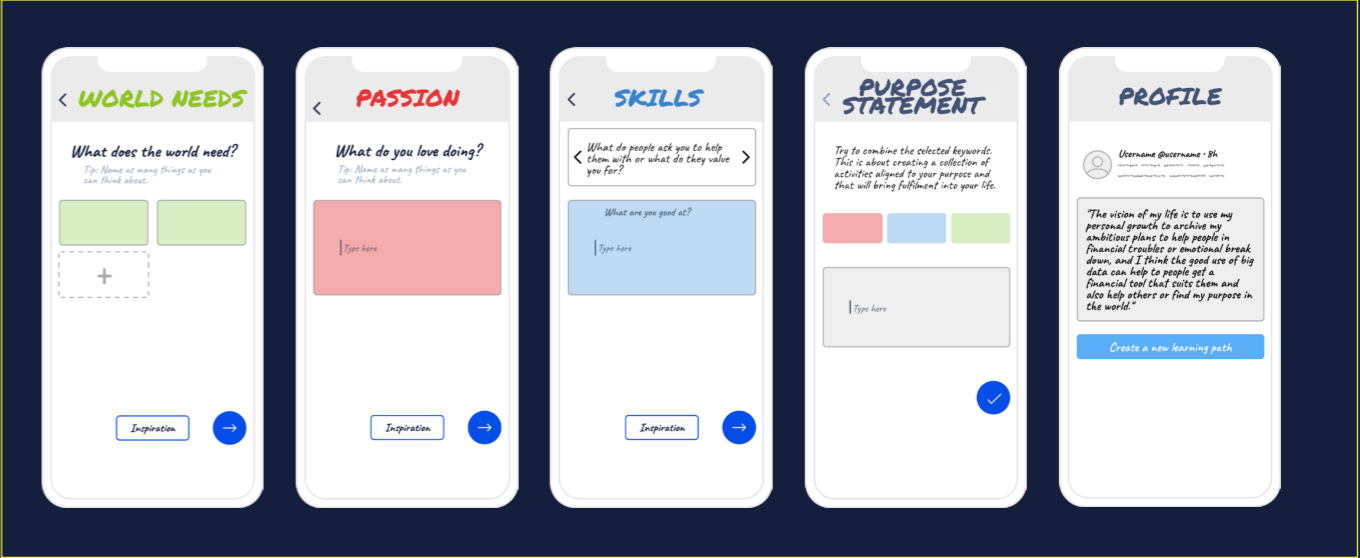


Figure 26: Inicial wireframes

Supportive questions



Figure 25: Supportive questions

Value clarification

The presented values in the selection are the most common ones that have been identified in the surveys. Students can also add more by clicking on "other" and adding their own value. In Figure 27 you can see the insights from the responses of 45 Platzi students.

The goal was to reduce the initial 47 possible value responses to a maximum of 30, not to overwhelm the user while keeping the option to type their own response. This was done by clustering and removing values from similar categories to still keep diversity. By combining similar values, the selection stayed strong and diverse at the same time.

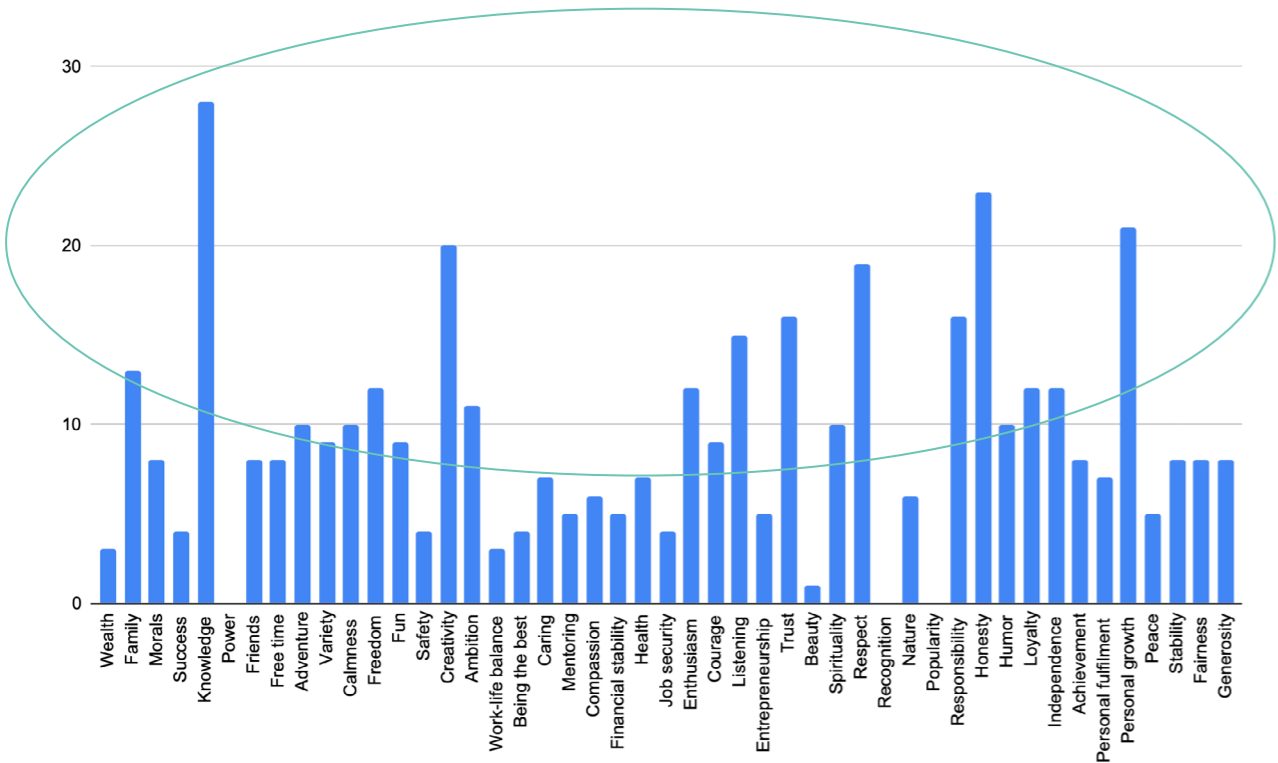


Figure 27: Values from user tests with Platzi students

Gamification

The potential of gamification was explored to engage users continually.

In essence, gamification takes enjoyable or engaging principles from games and applies them in other environments. Often gamification rewards users for taking specific actions by providing them with perks and benefits that are not available to everyone (Ellis & Brown, 2017). These activities often have challenging elements and result in missions, and new levels can be achieved by collecting points by the user. A key component here is that the rewards need to offer value to the user. If that is not given, gamification feels strange and out of place for the user and can also over complicate simple tasks. By altering how rewards are earned, delight and surprise can be created, making them more meaningful to the user.

Quantified overview of replies

1 replies 3 replies 2 replies



Circles fill up with more replies



+10 pts

Earning Platzi points for answering question

Figure 29: Gamification elements

Jane McGonigal states in her book Reality is broken that to finish work satisfactorily, we must be able to see the results of our efforts as directly, immediately, and vividly as possible. Visible outcomes are satisfying because they reflect a positive sense of our capabilities. People appreciate productive work because it makes them feel they are developing their personal resources (McGonigal, 2011).

Accountability

Students can publish their favorite mission statement or the one that represents themselves the best or the one they are currently focused on and make it visible to others on their profile page. People want to ensure that whatever they make public is well defined and represents their ideology. Publishing a mission statement increases the accountability towards achieving and refining this mission. Accountability is knowing that there are external risks or consequences to one's statement if there are no actions (Cambridge Dictionary, 2022).

Adding a social component to the feature has the potential to also connect people with similar interests.

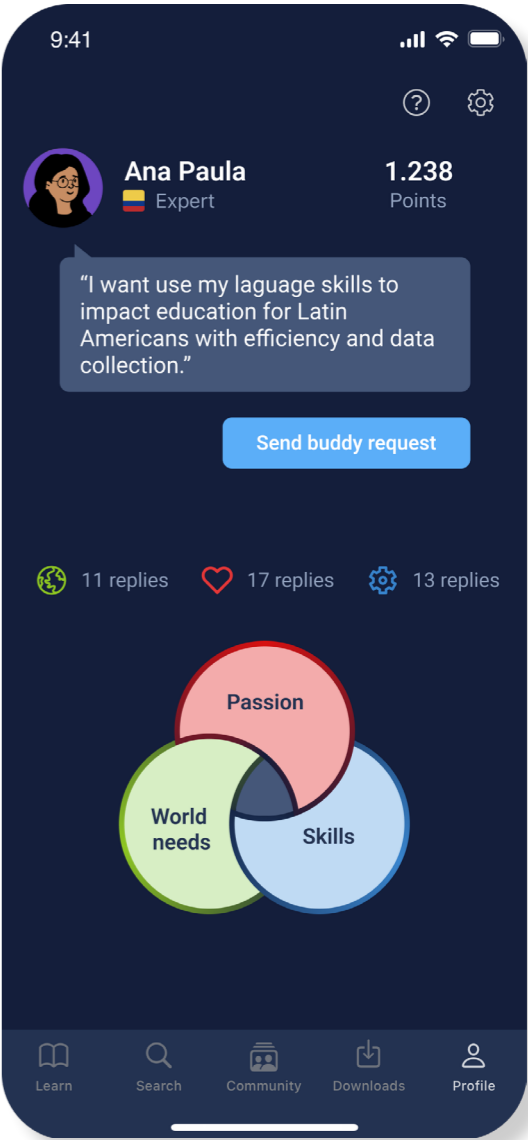


Figure 28: Published mission statement

5.4 Design & prototyping

After developing design ideas, a clickable prototype was developed with Figma. The clickable prototypes were tested as qualitative studies with participants. The design process was divided into three main iterations, during which the user flow was tested, improved, and evaluated with TU Delft students.

Assumption mapping

Before testing the prototype, an assumptions map was created to identify the most crucial assumptions to the product's success.

To identify assumptions, the story map tool (Figure 30) was used in which each step is mapped out that has to be taken by an end-user to get value from the product. Furthermore, it helps to group the assumptions into different categories. In this story map, desirability assumption, usability assumption, feasibility assumption, and outcome assumption has been chosen. This list of assumptions helps to assess and prioritize which assumptions need further testing (Torres, 2021).

To identify the crucial assumptions that contain the most risk and need more testing, the method assumption mapping (Figure 31), designed by David J. Bland, was used. The position of the assumptions is based on earlier qualitative research and testing.

The goal was to move the assumptions with weak evidence and high importance to the left side of the matrix by collecting more evidence. To collect reliable data, it was essential to collect data on how people actually interact with the prototype and not just what they think or say they do (Torres, 2021)

As this method is like a living organism, it changed over time a few times. Missing and new assumptions were added, and others were moved on the axis after evaluating new data from the user tests.

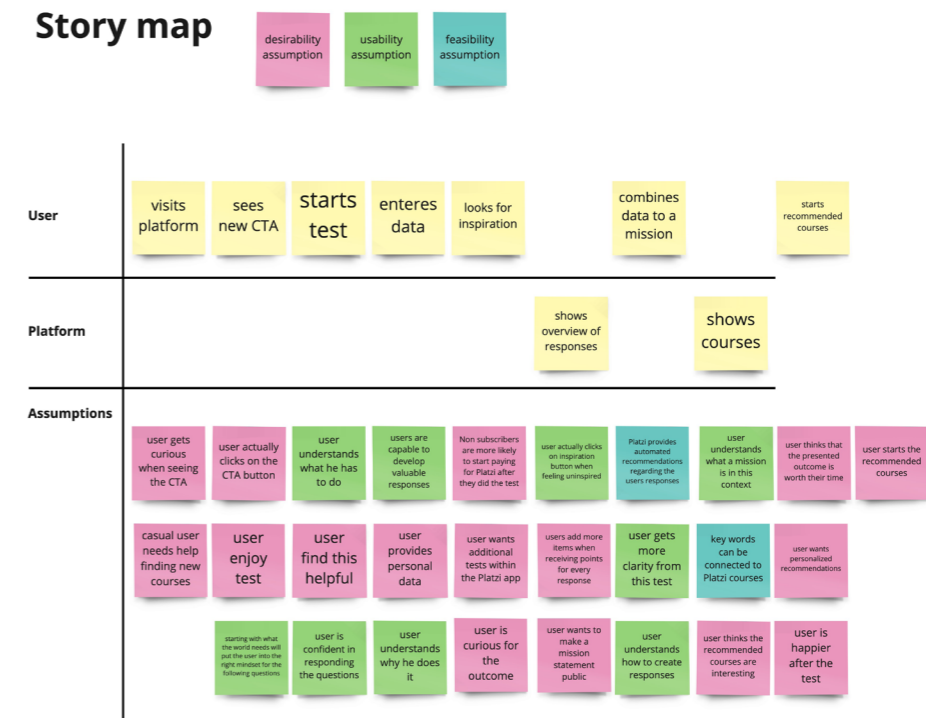


Figure 30: Story map

Assumption mapping

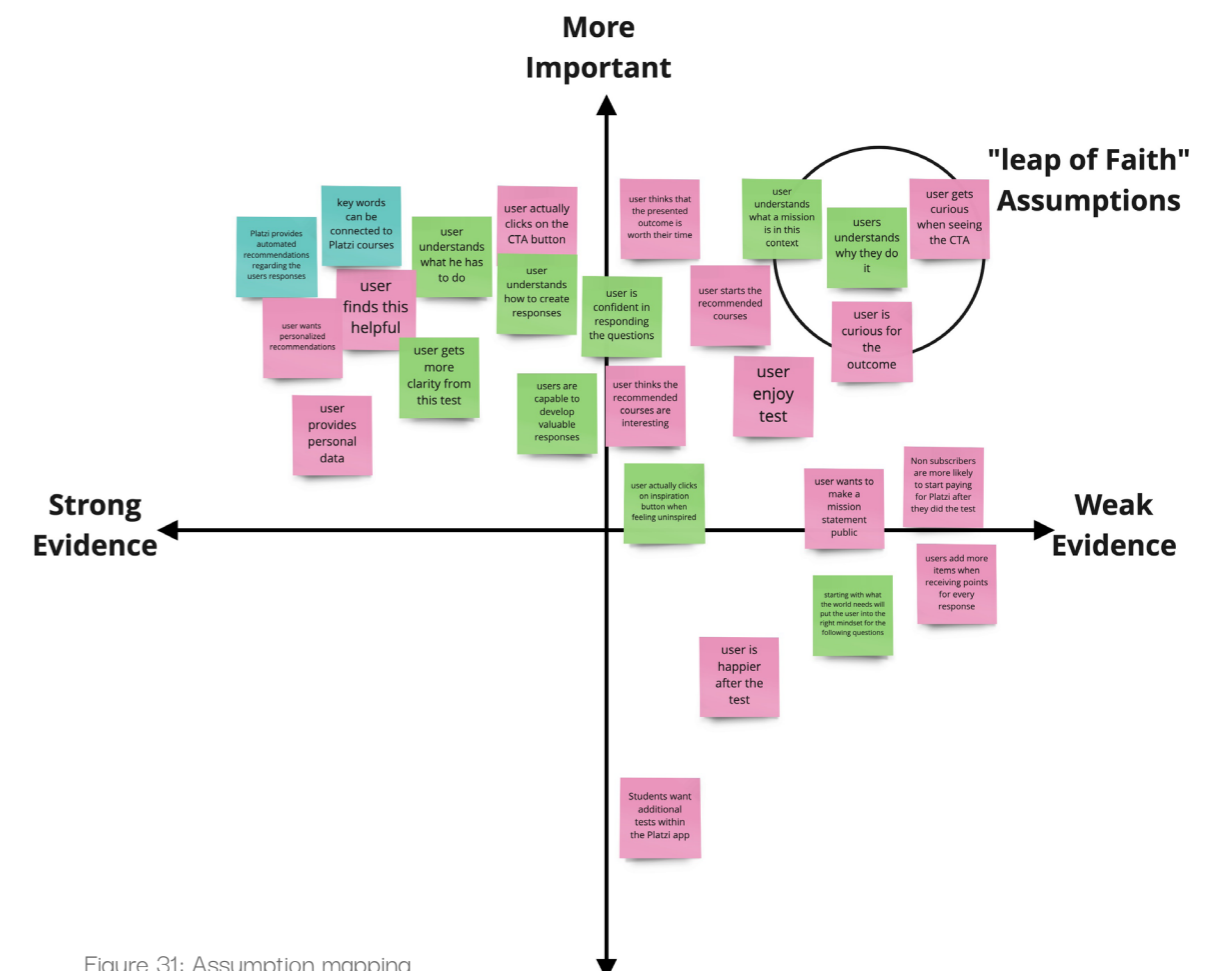


Figure 31: Assumption mapping

Usability

The usability tests always simulated the intervention experience from beginning to end. Nevertheless, distinct emphasis was put on assumptions regarding their current relevance to iterate them.

Iteration 1

The first iteration focused on the app feature’s usability with the goal of reducing the concept to its core intention. At this stage high fidelity mockups in the visual style of the Platzi application were used.

Value clarification flow was removed as the first part of the intervention. Even though it is a valuable preparation for the purpose-finding part, at this stage, capturing the user’s interest from the start was more important. To enable the user to reach the centerpiece of the intervention within a short time and with little effort. The Venn diagram clarifies visually what the goal is, provides an overview, and suggests what is still about to come. If that would not be the case, it would not appeal to the Platzi audience and would not align with their approach to communicating content efficiently.

Making the “matching” user flow intuitive where users select responses to combine them was especially crucial at this stage. In order to create a good overview of all responses while selecting the preferences, multiple mockup versions were generated.

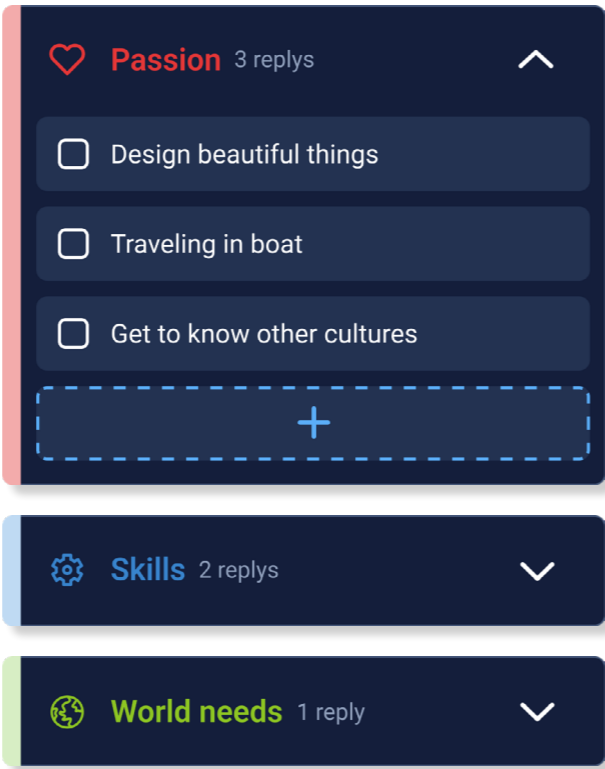


Figure 32: Matching responses UI

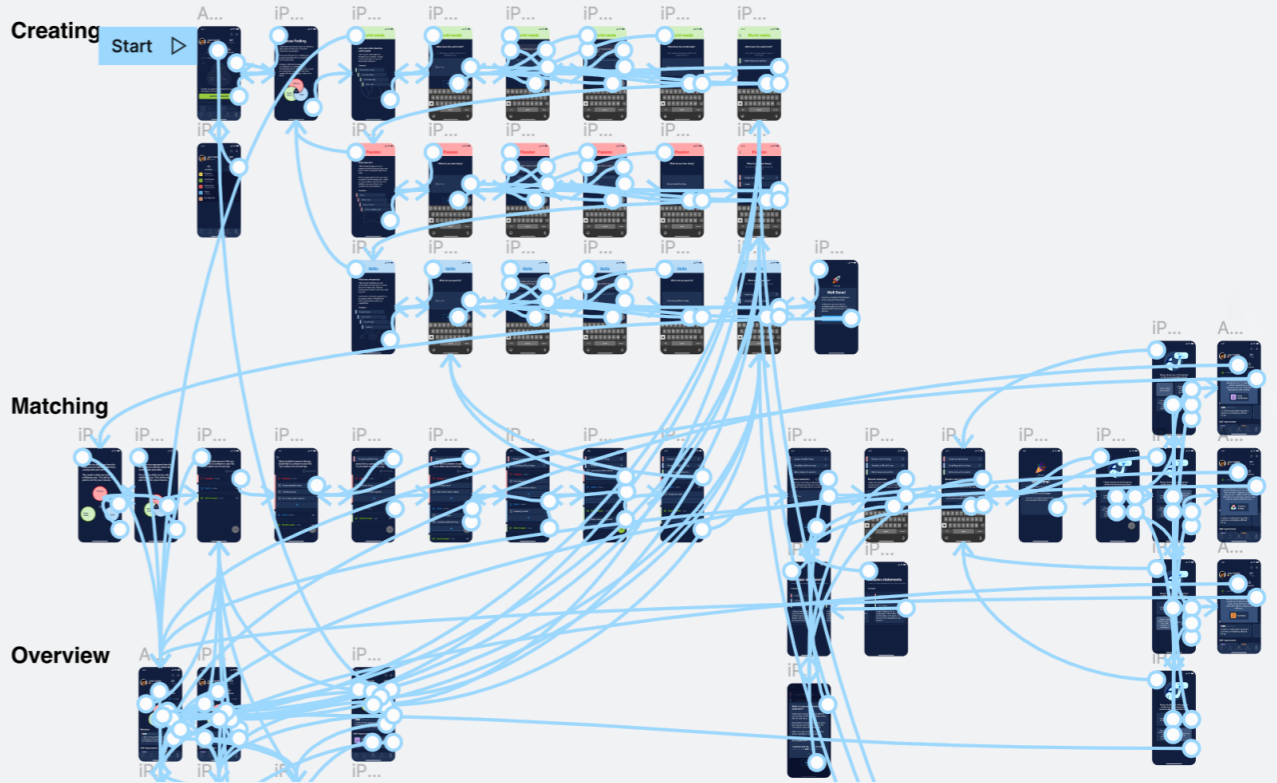


Figure 33: Purpose-finding flow prototype

Iteration 2

In this round, it became clear that student expectations differ from intentions. More emphasis was put on precise explanation and expectation management to avoid disappointed users.

Changes after this round of iteration:

- More robust clarification of why they should write responses and combine them into a mission statement
- Building expectations by telling them what they will get out of it at the end
- Adding a surprising factor by showing the user they receive points for everything they complete. Here the established point system from Platzi is used as rewards for responses and mission statements to incentivize students
- To clearly communicate the intention of the intervention, the word “purpose” was introduced again in the beginning as it resonates strongly with most people and sets the stage. Using a powerful word like purpose is crucial to managing user expectations. They will not find their life’s purpose after taking the test once. Communicate that it is a long process, like becoming a lifelong learner

Iteration 3

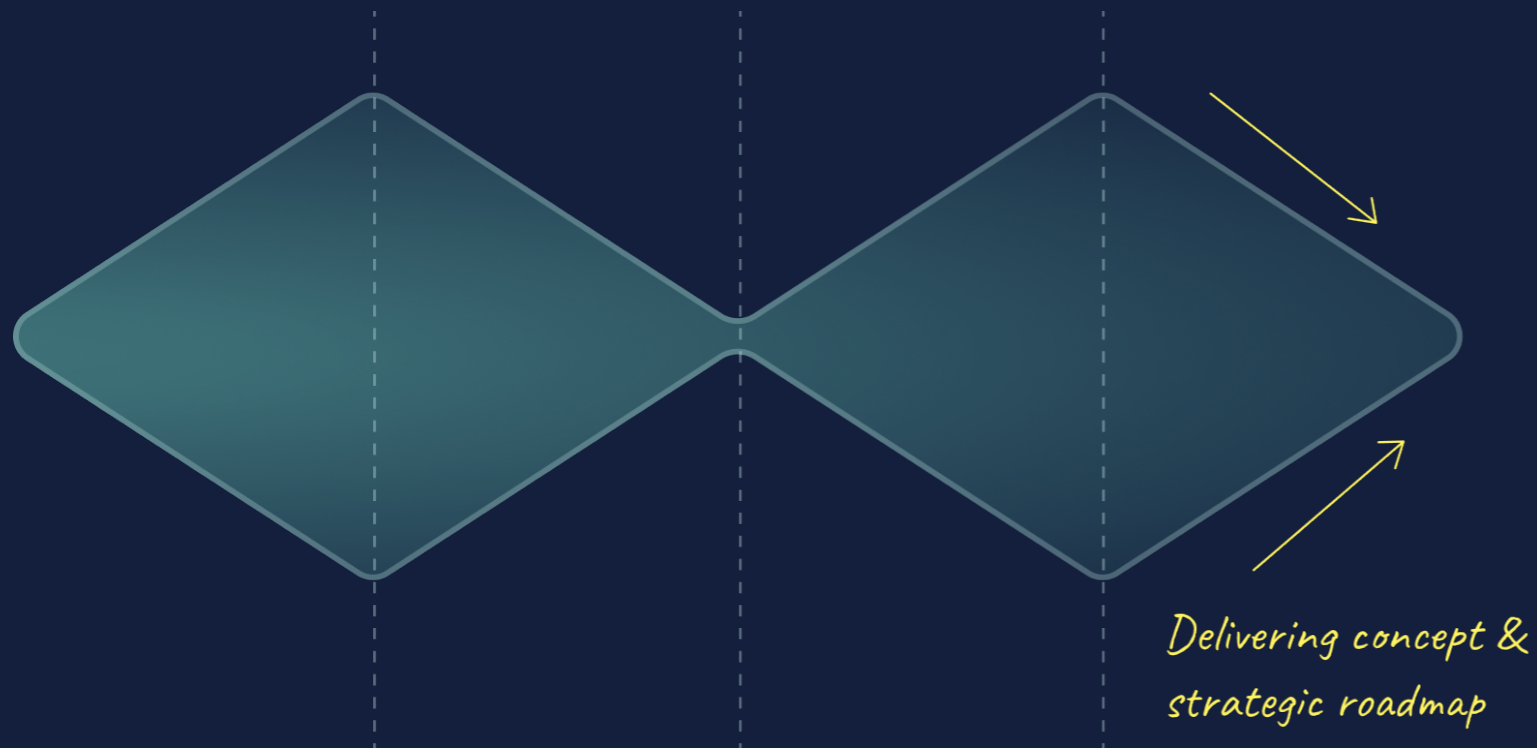
The third round of iteration focused on creating visual excitement, incentivizing the customers to use the feature continuously, and integrating it into the existing Platzi learning experience.

- Adding the value clarification flow to be voluntary
- To show the results of the student’s efforts directly, the responses were quantified regarding their category
- Icons represent categories in addition to the color indication to make it more vivid and uniform
- To visualize progress, the circle outline indicates how many responses students wrote. With ten responses, the circle outline is fully colored.
- Calling it a quiz to emphasize the playful component of it
- Greyed out values and goal paths to show that more activities can be “unlocked.”
- Publish the mission statement
- Notifications were integrated into the concept that invites users at critical stages to use the service or to continue finding one’s path

6.0 Deliver

This is the final concept proposal, the MVP, for this graduation project. It is important to highlight that the concept is intended to keep involving. The presented MVP is only the starting point that will be launched in one demographic first.

- | 6.1 Final concept
- | 6.2 Strategic Roadmap
- | 6.3 Generated values for Platzi



6.1 Final concept

This chapter presents the final designs of the concept.

My Cosmos

The name "My Cosmos" was chosen as it suggests an intimate space where the user can express their thoughts freely and deep dive into their inner universe to find answers to existential questions. The answers to happiness and fulfillment can only be found within oneself. It proposes to be their secret space where they can cultivate desires and develop strategies to accomplish their inner goals. Furthermore, it also refers to Platzi's ambitions to launch a satellite and the rocket emoji that has been part of their URL since the beginning.

The intervention should be integrated into the user's profile page in the application as it is the ideal place where someone would expect an intervention like this. Moreover, it provides room for improvement as it is plain with little information or functionality.

The final concept prototype can be found [here](#).



Figure 34: My cosmos profile page

My Cosmos main flows



Figure 35: Main concept flows

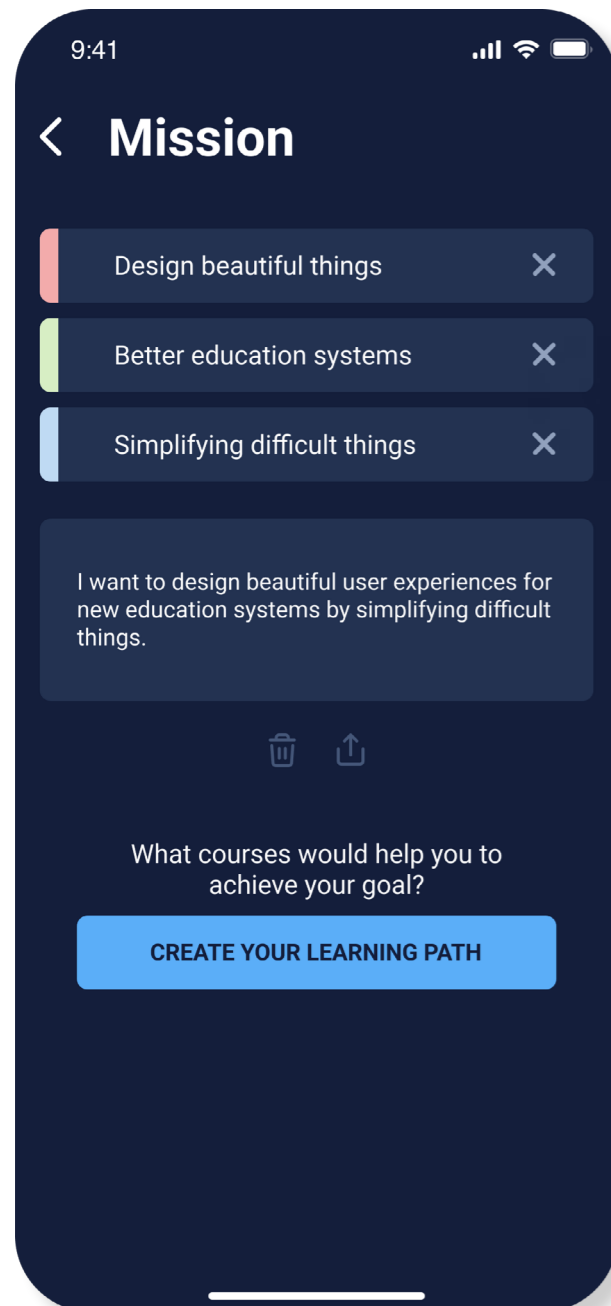


Figure 36: Mission statement screen

Mission statement

The mission statement is the combination of responses from the different parts that indicates a high level of fulfillment to the user. This mission functions as a north star that should be achieved. Students are incentivized to generate multiple missions. They can be a carefully tailored combination of intentions or a fun mix of random responses to discover disguised opportunities.

The intention is to have fun and generate diverse ideas. By adding more mission statements, students receive rewards in the form of points. Platzi point is already an existing system that rewards students for the number of courses they have watched.

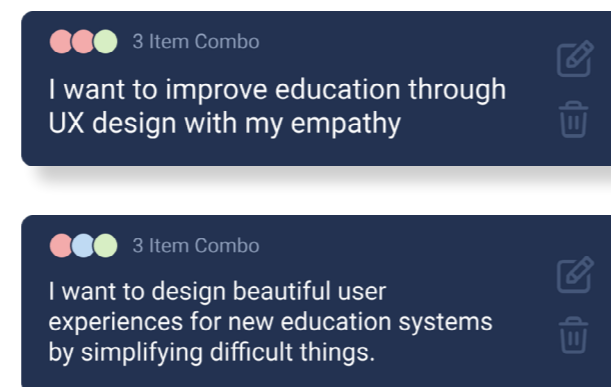


Figure 37: Phone view with notifications

Notifications

Notifications are essential for keeping the students engaged. They can remind students to evaluate if they are on track to achieving their mission, iterate their goals, or invite them to add more responses to their personal cosmos.

To target students most effectively with advice and recommendations, we need to know at what stage of their journey they are. They could place themselves in the according group by answering a simple question at the end of the mission statement flow. The groups are the ones identified by the three personas: 1) getting to know oneself, 2) searching for fulfillment, and 3) staying on track.

6.2 Strategic Roadmap

At this stage a strategic roadmap (Figure 38) was provided to present the concept’s extension into the self-development domain. The three phases introduce the strategy on how Platzi will attain the earlier stated design goals to maintain students’ motivation.

Product vision:

For Platzi users, who are uninspired, "My Cosmos" is a tool that leads them to discover what happiness means to them personally and provides guidance towards that within the same application.

Horizon 1: Testing

The first horizon focuses on validating the concept in qualitative and quantitative user tests with a diverse group of students as preparation for launching it in the first demographic in H2.

Design goals 1-4:

- The concept aligns with the Platzi brand identity
- The concept is a reduces the intervention to make it achievable within 15 minutes without losing its effectiveness
- The concept is an enjoyable, lightweight intervention that helps students to create awareness about their desires.
- The concept incentivizes the students to connect their goals with courses

Horizon 2: Launch

In the second horizon, the intervention will be introduced to 50% of mobile users in Colombia. Colombia contains a large and diverse user group and will give a good picture of the intervention’s effectiveness.

Data will be collected on the number of courses started, user engagement rate, and the number of dropouts by students with and without the intervention.

Measuring will determine if this feature can incentivize students to start new courses. Especially interesting would be to see how many students start courses apart from their regular study path. And if freemium users become paying customers after using the feature.

Creating a database to connect courses with student interests for future course recommendations starts.

Insights will determine the concept’s current limitations and whether the feature should be iterated or rolled out in other demographics.

Horizon 3: Scale

The third horizon aims to bring the feature to more students and eventually show its impact on the retention rate.

New service features will be released that allow students to meet like-minded peers in the community space that have similar interests and goals. The course finding experience could be enhanced by introducing a quiz functionality to preselect exciting courses.

With the growing database, Platzi can give precise course recommendations built on the courses that students have done with similar interests. Furthermore, the insights from collected user data will help Platzi to better emphasize with their audience, which can encourage the conceptualization of new services.

	H1	H2	H3
	2022	2023	2023
	Testing	Launch	Scale
Description	<div></div> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Platzi challenge launch• Large prototype test• "Fake door" test	<div></div> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Intervention roll out in Colombia• Large scale A/B test	<div></div> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Expantion in more demographics• UI optimizing A/B tests
Goal	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Concept validation• Determine why students drop out	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Validate assumptions at large scale• Data collection• Measure engagement of user with intervention vs engagement of user without	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reach large audience• Increase retention and acquisition rate• Connecting like-minded peers• Students diversity their interests
Reach	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1000 students	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 20.000 successful interactions 1Q in Colombia	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 400.000 successful interactions by end of 2023
Features	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Purpose finding• Value clarification• Goal setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Share mission statement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Course recommendations• Buddy meeting in community space• Option to do intervention during onboarding

Figure 38: Strategic roadmap

6.3 Generated values for Platzzi

More engagement

Increased user engagement inevitably leads to user retention, leading to an increase in revenue and growth.

Stronger bond with the students

Create a stronger bond with the audience that leads to loyalty. Platzzi shows that they care about their student's well-being and become their best version. Being asked personal questions like this forged a deeper personal connection between the student and Platzzi. "It conveys to the users that the company is interested in them as individuals and in providing the best service for them you can (Ellis, 2017).

A key caution here is that it needs to be clearly communicated to the user what their personal data is being used for. It should only serve to their advantage and Platzzi is not selling private data to third parties.

Competitive advantage

Guidance to discover new opportunities in students' lives. It is often overlooked in traditional education and can be a strong competitive advantage.

Alignment with strategy

It supports one of Platzzi's core ideas, enabling people to start a promising career regardless of their demographic or background. With this service, the students can better identify what they would like to focus their professional life on. Extending Platzzi's product portfolio into self-development aligns with the mission to improve student's quality of life and further reinforces the extension into the soft skill sector.

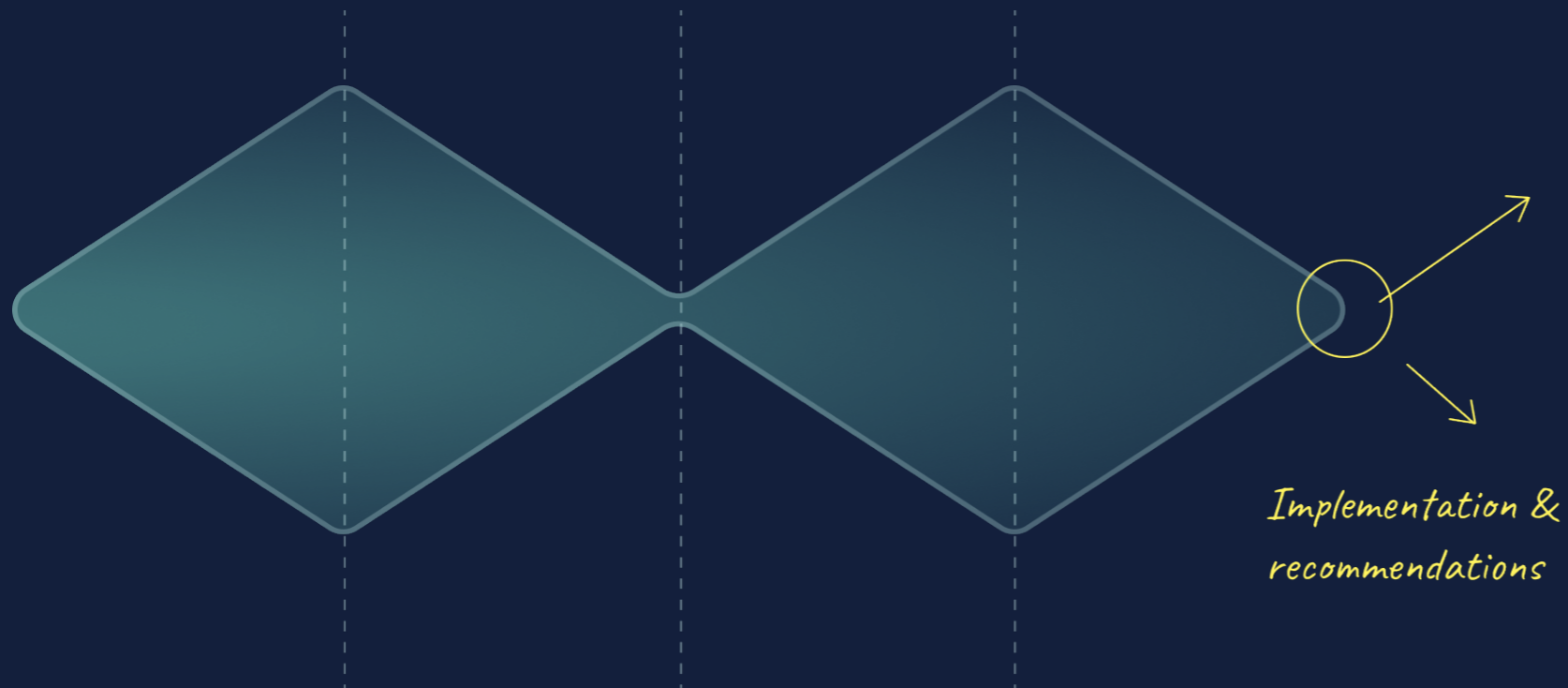


Figure 39: Happy e-learning students

7.0 Validation & next steps

This phase focuses on validating the final concept of "My cosmos" and provides instructions on how it should be further validated after the project ends. A pilot test generated qualitative data on the concepts prototype and laid the foundation for planning a large-scale user test. As a next step, a validation plan gives recommendations on how to move from the MVP concept to a working solution.

- | 7.1 Pilot test
- | 7.2 Validation plan
- | 7.3 Feasibility
- | 7.4 Potential impact & recommendations



7.1 Pilot test

This user test serves as a pilot to attain qualitative insights of participants interacting with the concept and validate its effectiveness regarding its medium. These insights led to final changes before recommending to validate the intervention’s effectiveness on students’ motivation on a large scale.

After iterating the prototype’s usability and look & feel, this qualitative test focused on evaluating how well the intervention’s simplification worked. However, this test acted within the constraints of a small-scale qualitative evaluation. Its goal was to evaluate to what extent the defined design goals (beginning of chapter 5.2) have been fulfilled and point out crucial parts for product success.

Objectives

- Find out the current limitations of its success to give Platzzi recommendations
- Does it make students feel more confident and aware of their desires and maximize their strengths?

- How well did the simplification of the intervention work?
- Evaluate if users are incentivized to find courses related to their goals
- Does the participant feel stimulated to connect his/her goals to courses from the Platform

Design goals 1, 2, 3 & 4

1. The concept aligns with the Platzzi brand identity.
2. The concept reduces the intervention to make it achievable within 15 minutes without losing its effectiveness.
3. The concept is an enjoyable, lightweight intervention that helps students to create awareness about their desires.
4. The concept incentivizes the students to connect their goals with courses.

Setup

The pilot was tested with one Platzzi student that joined the extensive experiment earlier (Chapter 4) to get his perspective on the quality of the simplified intervention. The other six participants have not been in contact with the intervention before and had diverse nationalities. They provided an unbiased perspective on the concept’s effectiveness.

The pilot test was set up online on zoom and lasted around one hour. The clickable prototype of the concept was shared via a Figma link with the participants. To capture the participants’ responses, a google document link was shared to mimic the functionality of filling in the answers to the intervention. During the user test, the participants were asked to share and split their screen so that the prototype and the google document were visible (Figure 40). The user was asked to navigate through the flow and fill in the answers in the google document to get the realistic experience of doing the intervention with actual data input.

The user was given the following task:
Define a mission statement and choose one more activity of your choice.

After completing the task, the participants were asked a few questions and could give feedback on the experience and quality of the concept.

At the end of the interviews, the participants were asked to complete a survey that focused on measuring the intervention’s success.

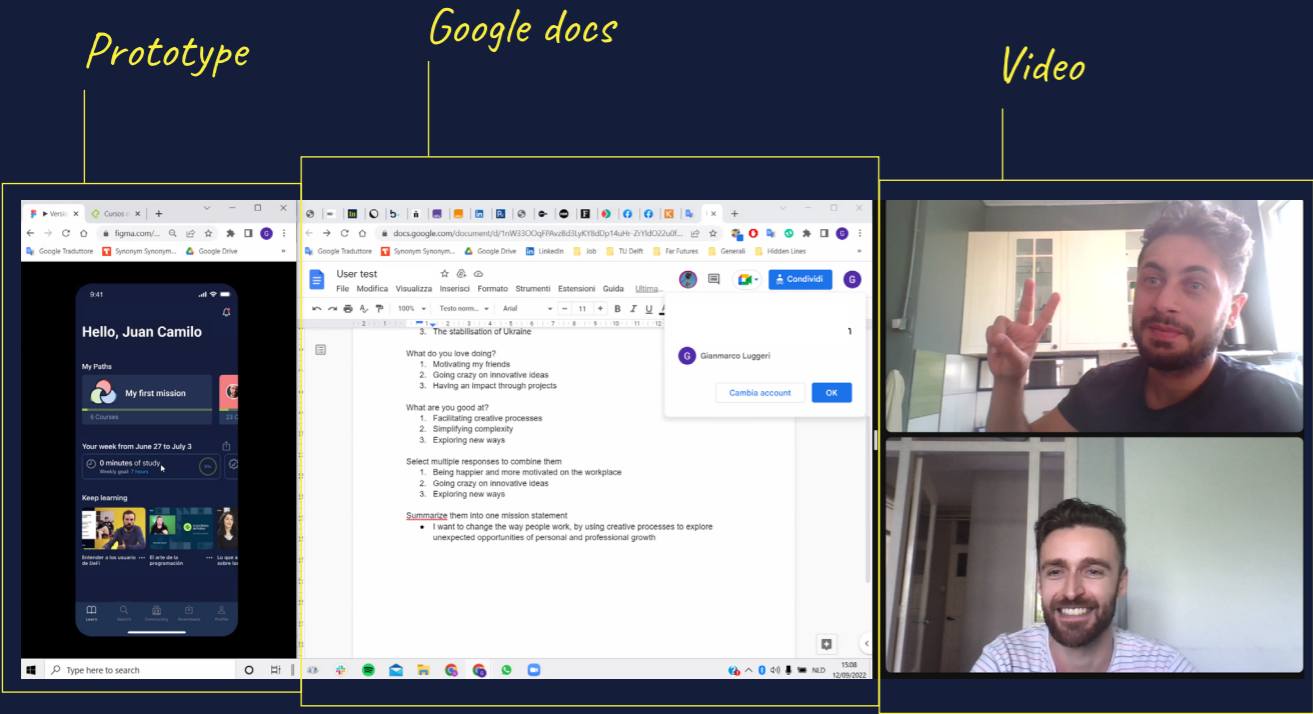
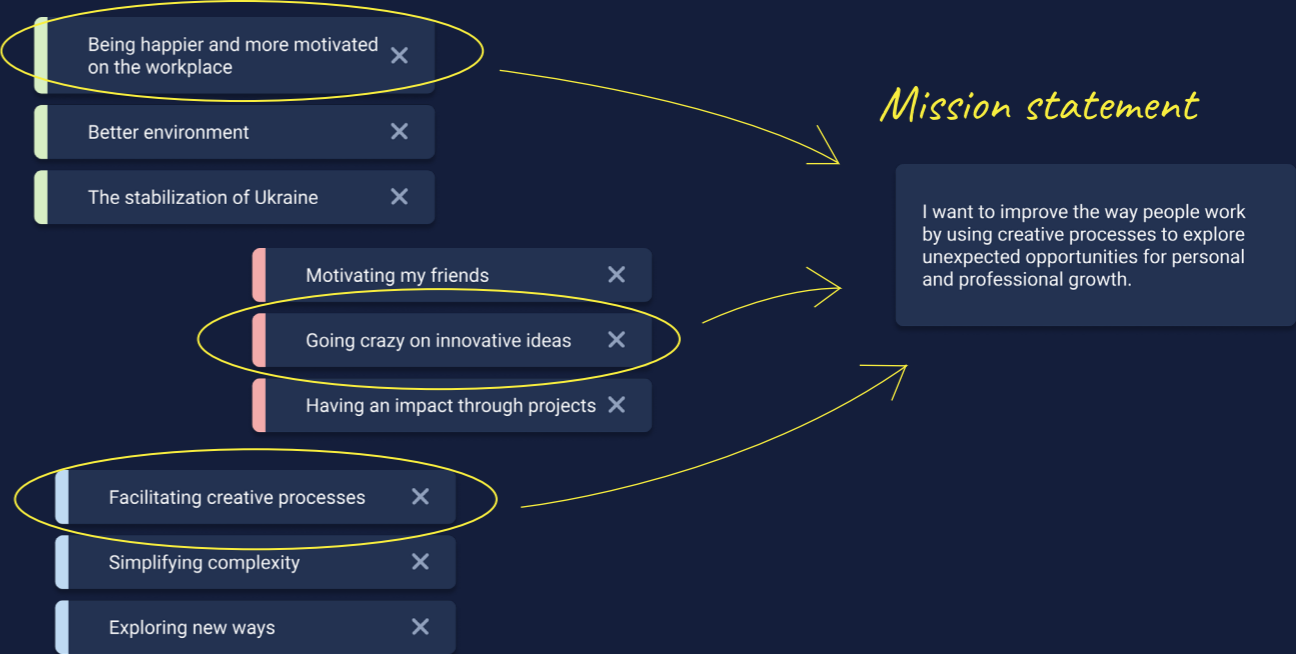


Figure 40: Pilot test interview setup



Findings

- Participants spend between 10 and 30 minutes to complete the task
- Participants had different approaches to the mission statement. Some were really constructive at first and others simply combined their responses in an order that sounded natural for them.
- Participants appreciated having the freedom to choose activities but it was essential to give them a recommendation to start with.
- The flow was intuitive and the participants had no issues navigating it.
- In comparison to earlier interventions the participants rated their motivation towards changing something in their lives lower but under consideration of the simplifications of the intervention that was expected.
- High agreement rating on time well spent and encouragement to find courses.
- Participants expected automated results on their mission statement or on course recommendations.

Changes that were made

- Recommend the users the activity that they should do next regarding their response
- Emphasize that it should be a concise mission statement

Next steps

An onboarding video should efficiently communicate the value of the intervention to the user and show a preview of how it works to avoid reading all the instructions and communicating its value powerfully. Further testing has to **evaluate how well notification can incentivize users** to return and continue using the feature. In addition to that, they could define how often they want to interact with "My cosmos" themselves.

This test with only a few students points out that participants feel **incentivized to find courses that align with their goals**. However the course finding experience itself is not pleasant. Platzi should **improve the course finding experience on mobile**. This aspect of the concept’s success depends on it.

"The goal-setting is really what I want to do after the first test"

- Participant 2

"Why have I been asked these questions before?"

- Participant 1

"I expected that the app would give me the answers"

- Participant 7

"I would use it again when I want to organize myself to achieve a big goal"

- Participant 3

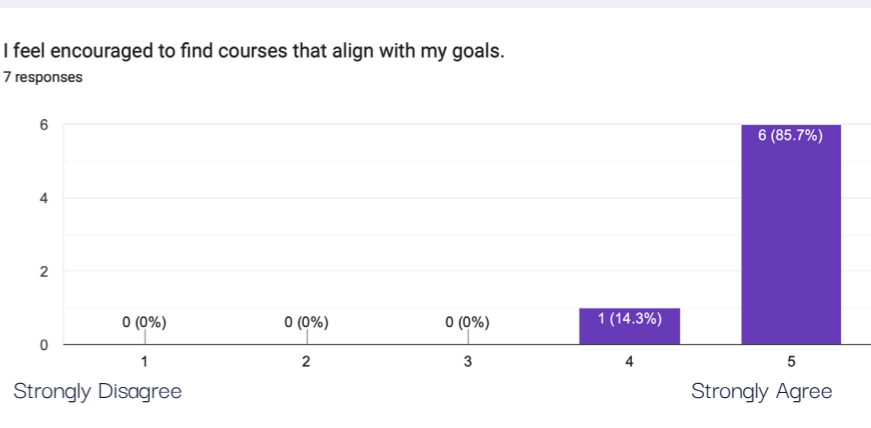
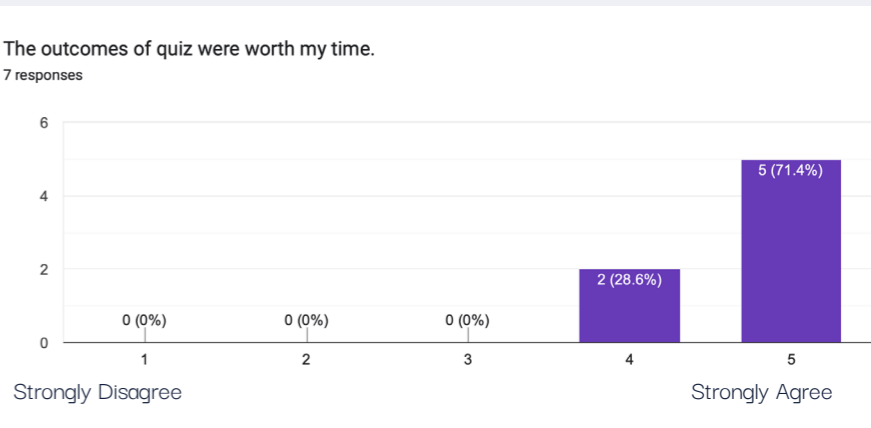
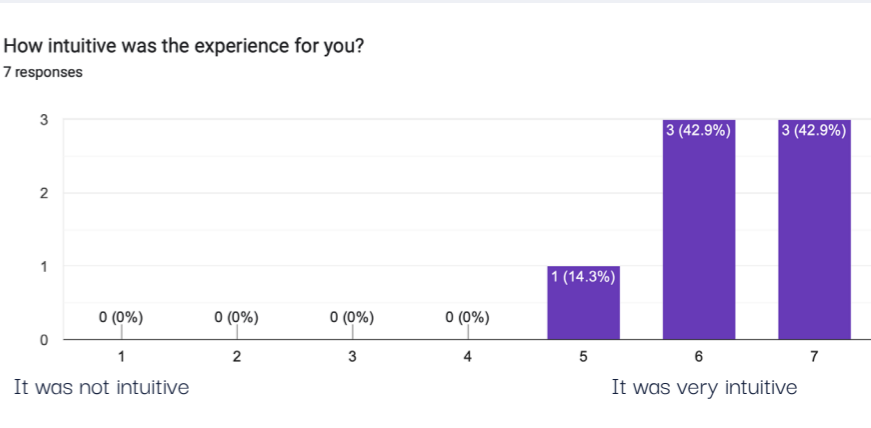
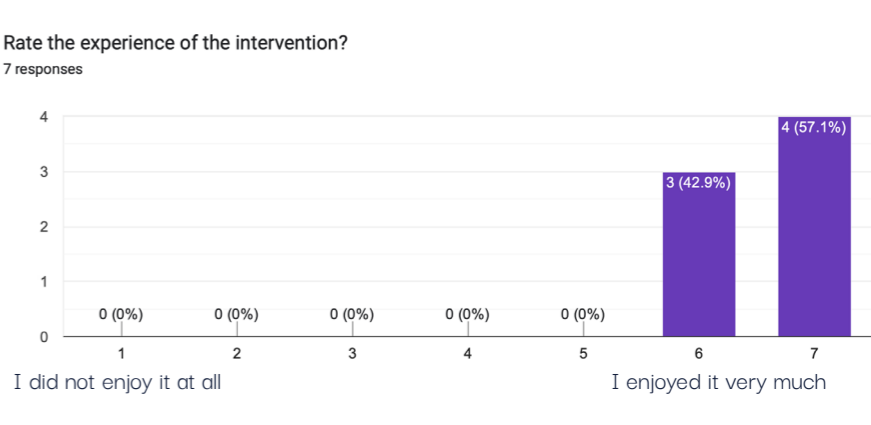


Figure 41: Pilot test evaluation (Detailed information can be found in Appendix G)

7.2 Validation plan

The validation plan advises how Platzi should further validate the presented concept. The plan identifies crucial moments that need validation to implement the concept. Moreover, it suggests the goals and, more importantly, under what criteria to evaluate the generated data.

The following recommendations are based on generated assumptions. This planning considers that each phase’s results will affect the implementation and testing in the next phase.

To understand whether the concept fulfills the goal, these main topics need to be validated:

- Reach - how many people will start using it and finish it?
- Does it lead to higher engagement rates?
- Does it prevent students from stopping engaging at the three-month mark?
- Does it lead students to do courses from other schools?

Phase 1
Start: Q4 of 2022

Evaluate potential

This phase aims to evaluate the potential of the concept with two tests on a large scale. The first is a large-scale prototype test (like the pilot test), and the second one aims to determine if students click the CTA button when it appears in the app.

Design goals 5,6 and 7

5. The concept reaches a large audience of Platzi students.
6. The concept offers guidance while letting the students decide themselves what they need most.
7. The concept stimulates students to interact continuously with the intervention.

Large prototype test

A quantitative test should be run with at least 100 Platzi students testing the prototype. For testing the prototype, the tool Maze can be used, as it provides the opportunity for participants to use the prototype with its simulated functionality and gives the chance to ask questions before and after the prototype. This test aims to generate a rough metric to determine how many courses students are likely to take after taking the test. This can further help to decide on engagement and eventually retention objectives.

”Fake door“ test

To verify if students get curious for a purpose finding quiz, Platzi should implement a ”fake door“ button to only 1000 students that leads to a side that simply ”says thank you for your interest, we are working on such a feature“ or it could provide a simple purpose finding survey like one that has been tested earlier in the project. The evaluation criteria is to have 100 out of the 1000 students to click the button.

Objectives:

- Find out if users would start the quiz and if they can find courses that align with their defined goals.
- Identify a benchmark of how many courses they are likely to do after the intervention.

Assignments for Q4 of 2022 are:

- Determine the reasons why students stop engaging after three months
- Find out how many users use the ”create your learning path“ button
- Are users overwhelmed by the course offerings?
- Are the students that create their own learning paths more engaged than others?

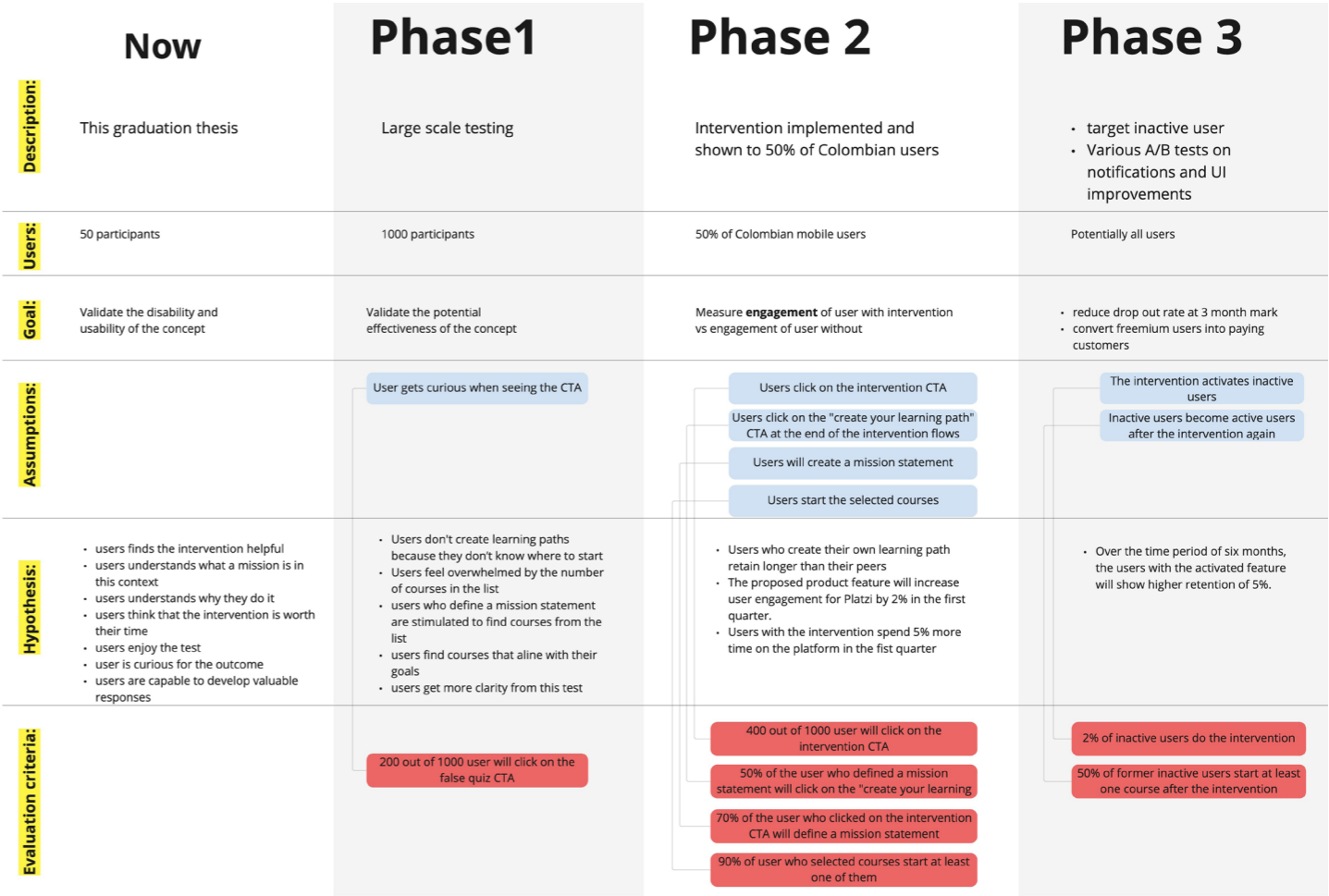


Figure 42: Implementation plan

Hypothesis:

Users are stimulated to find courses that relate to their goals but the current experience of finding the courses on mobile makes it frustrating and less successful for them.

If the end of this phase determines that students can find related courses from the list but the discovery experience is unpleasant, then this should be improved.

Phase 2
Start: Q1 of 2023

Measuring impact

In this phase the concept will be implemented in the app and activated for 50% of the active mobile using Colombian audience.

Objectives:

- Generate data that could indicate that students who used the intervention successfully engage more with the platform.
- Measure how students react to the incentivizing notification to interact continuously with the intervention.

Large scale A/B test in Colombia

1. Amongst the 50% of students that are shown that button, how many students complete the process of purpose-finding?
2. How many of those students click the button to create a new learning path?
3. Amongst the students who have continued to select the courses, how many retain longer on the platform? And how many don't?
4. How much longer do they retain on the platform?

- Assumption that need to be tested:
- Users click on the intervention CTA
 - Users click on the "create your learning path" CTA at the end of the intervention flows
 - Users will create a mission statement
 - Users start the selected courses

- For each assumption a evaluation criteria is defined:
- 100 out of 1000 user will click on the intervention CTA
 - 50% of the user who defined a mission statement will click on the "create your learning path" CTA
 - 70% of the user who clicked on the intervention CTA will define a mission statement
 - 90% of user who selected courses start at least one of them

- With the criteria in mind this is what should be measured:
- Amongst the users that are shown the intervention...
- # of user who click on the intervention CTA
 - # of user who complete the purpose-finding flow
 - # of user who combine responses to a mission statement
 - # of user who click on the "create your learning path" CTA
 - # of user "drop out" in Q1
 - # of user start at least one of the courses that have been selected
 - # of finished courses by users who did the intervention
 - engagement rate of user
 - time to finish the flow

Hypothesis:
Users with the intervention spend 2% more time on the platform in the first quarter than the users who do not have the intervention activated.

Phase 3
Start: Q3 of 2023

Scale

- Objectives:**
- Bringing the "My Cosmos" intervention to more demographics
 - Regional A/B tests to optimize UI
 - Target inactive and freemium users

After evaluating if the previous phase and the data suggests an effect on students' learning experience, it can be extended to other demographics. Further evaluations can determine improvements to the user experience through A/B testing UI versions.

After the product feature has been refined and is mature, it is recommended to reactivate inactive users by sending them an email inviting them to test the new intervention. An inactive user is defined as someone who hasn't logged in within 90 days, paying or not paying customers (Croll & Yoskovitz, 2013). The same thing can be done for freemium users to convert them into paying customers.

- Hypotheses**
- Drop out rate at the three month mark goes down from 20% to 18% after the first year.
 - 5% of freemium users converted into paying customers.
 - Students who do the intervention retain 5% longer than their peers.

7.3 Feasibility

I provided the validation plan and crucial KPIs to focus on to my best knowledge so that Platzi could validate the critical assumptions. As many events can influence one another, the most crucial assumptions should be iterated after each phase. Yet, it should not be assumed that everything needs to be validated by measuring KPIs. As the company mentor stated, Platzi is not only interested in increased user engagement, but also the student's quality of life is essential. This is why the perspective of improving consumers' overall learning experience and brand loyalty towards Platzi can be critical aspects. In the end, the potential reach of the feature will probably be the deciding factor.

As the proposed solution is a relatively low-tech concept, the company mentor (Hoppenstedt, 2022) stated that it would be feasible to develop it within three months for a small product team consisting of one front-end developer, one back-end developer,

one product owner or one product designer. Platzi has the skills and resources to develop an intervention of that size as long as it provides sufficient desirability and leads to retaining customers.

However, the perspective of giving automated course recommendations regarding students' responses, which is the goal eventually, can increase the team size and, therefore, the required resources drastically. It would take more time and a team of data scientists to build a machine learning model that gives sophisticated recommendations. But starting with basic suggestions would already solve 60% of all use cases (Hoppenstedt, 2022). These course suggestions can be provided on the overall collected insights on a student profile and give general advice without relating it to specific responses like mission statements. Before starting phase three, the course recommendation functionality should be reevaluated.

*The the Platzi CEO
shares a thank you
message from a student
that used the
My Cosmos feature*

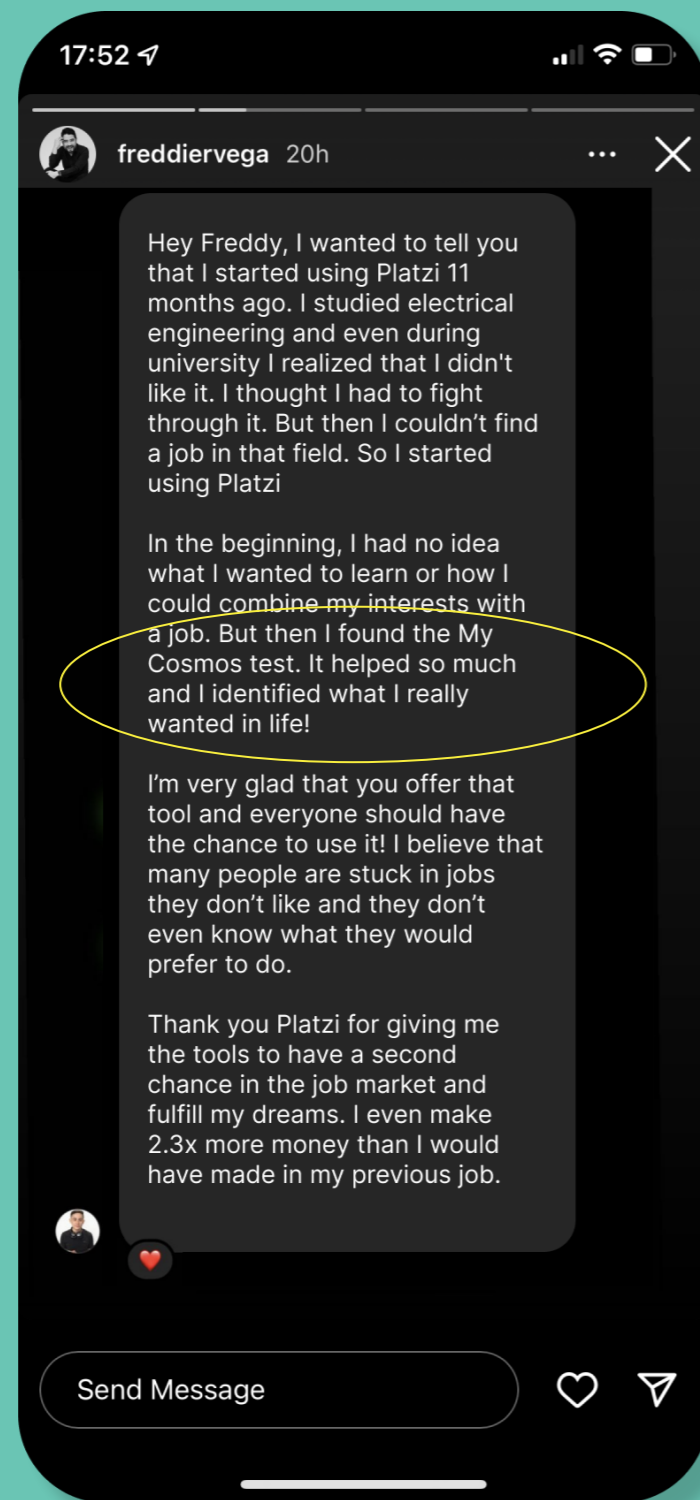


Figure 43: Instagram DM to Platzi CEO mockup

7.4 Potential impact & recommendations

This intervention is just the start for Platzi guiding their students to fulfill their capabilities to become their personal best version and grow personally while creating a stable foundation professionally.

The limitations encountered in design for mobile can have a limiting effect. The possibility of a web-based version of the concept could be explored too. It would contain more options for an extensive intervention.

The solution aims to retain everyone on the platform. However, the target audiences where the most significant effect can be expected are the students at the three-month mark and non-subscribers. Therefore they should be especially incentivized by notifications.

To improve further the discoverability of Platzi courses, a simple quiz functionality as solution can be explored. Where user will be presented with multiple questions and they can playfully choose between two possible options per question. A quiz flow like this has an extremely low threshold for users and can provide valuable outcomes for the user.

New features and tools can be added continually to the concept, for instance, building communities, connecting students to Platzi alums, and users' responses relating to a Platzi podcast episode of a similar mission.

The intervention could foster further startup entrepreneurship by linking people with similar or significantly compatible objectives and skills with each other.

The concept of "My cosmos" could be part of the onboarding process of new students too. Students would have the option to choose between doing the personality test or going directly to the courses.

The concept can potentially acquire new customers by itself, as it is a complete, easy-to-use, and competitive self-development tool that can promote solutions simultaneously. Therefore it can be promoted by itself in new environments. The potential demand for an easy-to-use service that can provide answers to existential questions is enormous in all demographics.

8.0 Conclusion & reflections

- | 8.1 Conclusion
- | 8.2 Personal reflection



8.1 Conclusion

This project successfully created a concept that would allow Platzi students to identify opportunities for their professional and private life. By involving them from an early stage in the project to understand their motivation to use the platform, it was identified how to adapt aspects of the existing framework to its target audience and add new components that are unique to the context.

The goal at the beginning of the project was to maintain students' motivation, but the final concept has the potential of a considerably more significant impact. It allows the company to strengthen a new value proposition for its audience and helps them to identify life objectives. This concept can increase customer acquisition, improve the course finding experience and retain longer relationships with students to truly make them lifelong learners.

The strong focus on the concept's desirability and usability, combined with identifying how it would fit in the company's strategy, highlights the value design thinking brought to the project.

To provide a result that could be part of Platzi's roadmap, it was crucial to work within the limits of technical feasibility and resources available. Therefore, a low-tech version was explored that could still provide significant value for the user and Platzi alike. However, letting users align courses to their goals manually pointed out the bottleneck of the course finding experience that needs improvement.

Even though the priority was to create a scalable solution, it should not be neglected that the Platzi challenge can provide significant value to a smaller target audience.

Platzi has been disruptive in the industry with the solid foundational principles of providing quality content efficiently to an emerging audience. They have created strong user connections, and while being in Colombia, I noticed how highly positive many feel about the company. Now that they have reached a mature size where they need to innovate constantly to stay relevant, they need to come up with new features to improve the experience and continue to engage their audience. For instance, improving the discovery experience to find the relevant courses in an ever-growing library. Focusing on more customer needs becomes inevitable. This is why this proposed feature can provide not only increased engagement, it can also help to understand the audience and their needs even better to continue innovating.

As entrepreneurship is often crucial for many Latinos to make a living. This tool gives the opportunity to further boost these abilities by creating increased motivation through the alignment of passions, skills, and world needs.

Limitations

Even though I could test with actual Platzi students, which generated accurate results and it made my project feel relevant by receiving mainly extremely appreciative feedback, it was challenging to get a representative sample of an average student. Platzi has a solid user base, and their way of recruiting is to gather volunteers from telegram groups to evaluate new concept ideas. These students represent an already highly engaged audience with a strong growth mindset. Not the casual learner who is in danger of dropping out. Therefore, Platzi should conduct further user tests with a diverse target audience sample.

The project depended on Platzi for student recruitment and also to communicate with participants, which led to delays at times.

To prove the viability of the concept, large-scale user tests over a couple of months are required to measure what impact it first has on users' engagement and, importantly, on their retention over time. However, the evaluation criteria is provided as part of this project.

But as Platzi values its student's well-being, quality of life, and improved learning outcomes, this project direction proves to be valuable for the company. Platzi stated as long as desirability by the students is given, there will be room for further developments, and resources can be arranged.

8.2 Personal reflection

My graduation project started because I believe not enough people reflect sufficiently on where they want to go in life and want they actually want. They often make decisions that are led by their environments and not themselves. My learning path around this project allowed me to understand how critical it is to reflect on your life to find out what you like and don't like. This tool provides help to more people to learn about themselves, discover opportunities and achieve their goals.

Following my interests, I involved Platzi as a partner company to build a project to stress my passion for improving education through technology in emerging economies.

Reflecting on this project, I explored UX design practices, a subject I want to continue building my career in. It helped me to design compassionate concepts for others to reflect, set goals, and make drastic life changes.

I am grateful to be able to work with Edoardo Hoppenstedt and with an organization like Platzi, which has my full admiration.

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