

Reimagining a Flagship Mobile Experience

Transforming a Legacy Application into a Modern Digital Platform

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“The biggest product transformations begin with changing how an organization thinks, not how an interface looks.”

At a Glance

600+ Screens Redesigned	\$21M Revenue & Savings, Next Quarter, Post-Launch	3 Product Designers Led	Accolades VP’s Award for Project’s Enterprise Impact
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Executive Summary

Enterprise applications rarely become difficult because they were poorly designed. They become difficult because they succeed.

As products mature, they accumulate new capabilities, evolving customer expectations, organizational priorities, and years of thoughtful but independent decision making. Eventually, complexity begins to outpace cohesion.

When I assumed responsibility for the company's flagship mobile application in 2014, the challenge was not adoption but evolution. Millions of customers relied on the app every day, yet it had become increasingly difficult to extend without adding complexity.

Working alongside three product designers and partnering closely with Product Management and Engineering, I led an enterprise transformation spanning more than 600 screens. The effort modernized experience architecture, introduced reusable interaction patterns, and created a stronger foundation for future innovation.

The redesigned application generated approximately \$21 million in revenue and operational savings during the first quarter following launch and earned recognition through the company's Vice President Award. More importantly, it changed how I think about enterprise product design.

The Story

Setting the Stage

When I assumed responsibility for the company's flagship mobile application in 2014, it wasn't a struggling product.

It was one of the organization's most valuable digital assets.

Millions of customers relied on it every day to manage nearly every aspect of their relationship with the company. Whether they were paying a bill, purchasing a new device, upgrading a wireless plan, troubleshooting an issue, or simply checking account information, the application had become the primary gateway between the business and its customers. For many people, it wasn't just another mobile app. It was the company.

That level of success carried its own unique challenges.

The application hadn't become complex because anyone had made poor design decisions. Quite the opposite. It had become complex because it had been remarkably successful. Over the years, new products were introduced, customer expectations evolved, business priorities shifted, and dozens of teams solved legitimate problems within their own areas of responsibility. Each release made sense in the context of the moment. Each feature addressed a real customer or business need.

Collectively, however, those independent decisions gradually produced an experience that was increasingly difficult to navigate, maintain, and extend.

The product had evolved into an ecosystem.

“What began as a redesign evolved into one of the largest product transformation initiatives undertaken within the organization's flagship mobile experience, at the time.”

Hundreds of customer journeys had grown alongside one another. Navigation reflected different eras of product thinking. Similar interactions behaved differently depending on where customers were inside the application. Information architecture often reflected internal ownership rather than customer expectations. Every new feature increased the challenge of keeping the overall experience cohesive.

This wasn't a redesign problem.

It was an organizational design problem expressed through software.

The challenge wasn't fixing something that had failed.

The challenge was ensuring something that had succeeded could continue evolving without collapsing under the weight of its own complexity.

That distinction changed everything.

Rather than asking how we could modernize the interface, we began asking how we could modernize the product itself.

Reframing the Problem

Most redesign efforts begin by identifying what customers dislike.

We intentionally began somewhere else.

Instead of cataloging visual inconsistencies or isolated usability problems, we stepped back and asked a broader question: how should customers experience the application as a whole?

Once we stopped thinking in terms of screens, problems that appeared unrelated often traced back to the same underlying issue. Navigation inconsistencies, duplicated interactions, fragmented customer journeys, and disconnected product experiences all reflected an application that had outgrown its original experience architecture.

Incremental optimization would no longer be enough.

The next phase of the application's evolution required systems thinking. Rather than redesigning isolated interfaces, we began designing the relationships between them. Every conversation became an opportunity to simplify not just one workflow, but the ecosystem surrounding it. Instead of asking whether a screen looked modern, we asked whether it strengthened the overall experience.

Building a Shared Vision

One of the greatest challenges of enterprise product development is that every team sees the product through a different lens. Engineering focuses on implementation. Product Management focuses on priorities. Business stakeholders focus on outcomes. Design focuses on customers.

Before meaningful design work could begin, alignment had to exist around a shared vision for the future of the product. That required collaborative workshops, architecture reviews, design critiques, and continuous conversation. Over time, discussions became less about defending organizational priorities and more about improving the customer experience.

Designing an Ecosystem Instead of an Application

As the redesign progressed, the sheer scale of the effort became increasingly apparent. The initiative ultimately spanned more than 600 individual screens across virtually every major area of the application.

Every interaction pattern established expectations elsewhere. Every navigation decision influenced discoverability. Every architectural change affected future development. We weren't simply designing interfaces. We were designing the rules that governed how the product behaved.

The redesign wasn't measured by the number of screens we completed. It was measured by how cohesively those screens worked together.

Balancing Leadership with Delivery

Although I was responsible for leading the initiative, I intentionally remained deeply involved in the design work. Working alongside three talented product designers while partnering daily with Product Management and Engineering allowed me to connect high-level strategy with implementation realities.

Leadership didn't happen separately from design. It happened through design reviews, architecture discussions, implementation planning, and constant collaboration.

Establishing a Foundation for Growth

Our objective extended beyond launch. We established reusable interaction patterns, stronger information architecture, and shared design principles that future teams could build upon. Rather than leaving behind another redesign, we left behind a scalable framework capable of supporting years of future product evolution. This foundation ensured that each new feature or update could be seamlessly integrated, preserving a cohesive user experience across the platform. By prioritizing adaptability and consistency, we empowered future teams to innovate with confidence, knowing they were building on a robust and thoughtfully designed ecosystem.

Delivering Transformation at Enterprise Scale

As implementation accelerated, hundreds of design decisions converged into a single, cohesive customer experience. What began as an effort to unify fragmented journeys evolved into a transformation that aligned product, design, engineering, and business teams around a shared vision. Yet despite the scope and complexity of the work, the guiding objective remained simple and unwavering: one application, one experience, one customer story. Every decision, from platform architecture to interface details, was measured against that principle, ensuring the final product felt unified, intuitive, and customer-centered.

Measuring Success Beyond the Interface

The redesign generated approximately \$21 million in revenue and operational savings during the following quarter. More importantly, it left the organization with a scalable product foundation instead of another collection of disconnected features. The work established a shared framework that teams could build upon, reducing fragmentation and improving consistency across future initiatives. It also created greater alignment between business objectives, technology investments, and customer needs, enabling the organization to move faster and make more confident product decisions over time.

Recognition

The initiative was recognized with the company's Vice Presidential Award for the project's enterprise impact. While meaningful, the recognition reflected the collaborative work of exceptional designers, engineers, product managers, and business partners.

Why This Project Matters

This project fundamentally changed how I think about enterprise product design. I stopped viewing products as collections of screens and began seeing them as living systems whose long-term success depends on clarity, consistency, and organizational alignment. It showed me that great design is not just about solving individual user problems, but about creating a cohesive framework that can scale across teams, features, and business goals. I gained a deeper appreciation for the role of design systems, governance, and cross-functional collaboration in shaping sustainable user experiences. Most importantly, I learned that lasting product impact comes from aligning people around a shared vision as much as from designing exceptional interfaces.

Closing Thoughts

The most important work happened long before the first screen was finalized. It happened through conversations, workshops, architecture reviews, and the deliberate process of building shared understanding across teams. Those moments created the alignment needed to make better decisions at every stage of the project. Great products emerge when organizations align around the customer before they design the interface. When teams share a common vision, design becomes more than a collection of features and interactions. It becomes a strategic tool for delivering consistent experiences, reducing complexity, and creating lasting value for both customers and the business.

“Great products don't become great because every screen is perfect. They become great because every decision works together toward the same customer outcome.”