Foster Pet App and Responsive Website

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July - August 2022

Google

Project Overview

The product:

Solano County Friends of Animals (SCFOA) is a nonprofit organization focused on the care of animals, including spay/neuter services and medical expenses. The organization needs a tool that helps people learn about foster, adoption, and donation opportunities. SCFOA's primary target users include those who are concerned with the amount of feral animals in need and would like to learn more about what they can do to provide care.

Project duration:

July 2022 to August 2022

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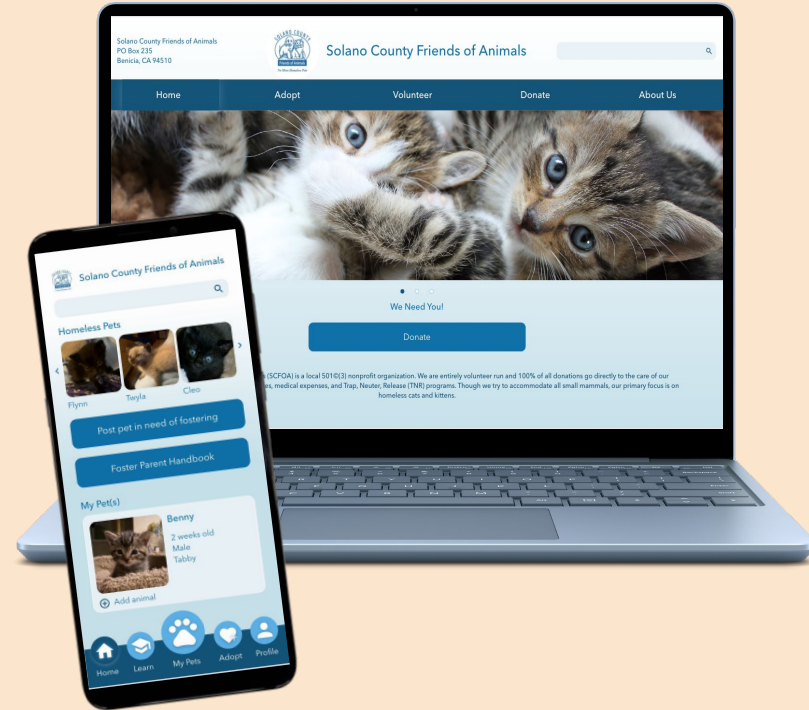
Project Overview

The problem:

SCFOA are always in needs of fosters and desperately needs volunteers. Members of SCFOA have identified a lack of general knowledge about fostering and limited understanding about how to rescue and rehabilitate community cats in particular.

The goal:

Design an app that will improve education on the topic of foster responsibilities and help animal parents provide the proper nurturing needed to put those animals in new homes.

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Project Overview

My role:

UX researcher and designer who lead the app and responsive website design from conception to delivery.

Responsibilities:

Conducted interviews, created paper and digital wireframes, low and high-fidelity prototypes, conducted usability studies, accounted for accessibility, iterated on designs, determined information architecture, and responsive design.

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Understanding the User

- User Research
- Personas
- Problem Statements
- Competitive Audit
- Ideation

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User Research: Summary

I used the information on SCFOA's website and social media to develop interview questions, which were then used to conduct user interviews. Most interview participants reported feeling lost about where to go to to look for contacts especially for medications or authorizations, in addition to finding answers to general foster questions. The feedback received through research made it very clear that users would be open and willing to work towards rescuing animals if they had access to an easy-to-use tool to help guide them.

Persona 1: **Abigail**

Abigail is a working mom who needs an easy way to keep track of animals' health information because she needs to stay on top of the vaccinations and medications her foster pets need.

"With the right help any feral cat can be saved, but you just need to know how."

Goals
- Help feed feral colonies
- Nurture sick animals back to health
- Make fostering easier on herself

Frustrations
- Not knowing medical information like over the counter meds, flea medication, and who is dispensing it.

Abigail

Age: 59
Education: BS in Biology
Hometown: Green Valley, CA
Family: 3 sons
Occupation: Clinic Nurse

Abigail is a clinic nurse working towards finally retiring in a few years. She lives with her wife and one of her sons who has a knack for finding abandoned kittens. Abigail helps care for as many as she can through the SCFOA organization and tends to use her laptop to search for animal medications information and get the necessary foster and adoption forms.

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Persona 2: **Neha**

Problem statement:

Neha is a potential foster provider who needs animal advice compiled in one place, because she's new to fostering and wants to follow SCFOA's humane practices.

"I wish there was a kind of foster parent handbook to get prepped."

Neha

Age: 26
Education: BS in Literature
Hometown: Suisun City, CA
Family: Single
Occupation: Office Assistant

Goals
- Help with adoption events
- Learn how to care for animals
- Adopt her own cat one day

Frustrations
- Out of touch with knowing when to go to a vet
- Not knowing who to contact and get authorization quickly

Neha is an office assistant who works closely with people who volunteer for Solano County Friends of Animals. Though she's never owned a cat, she describes herself as a big cat lover and is interested in volunteering with the organization in any way she can. Neha mainly uses a mobile device to get on the internet and is looking into foster care.
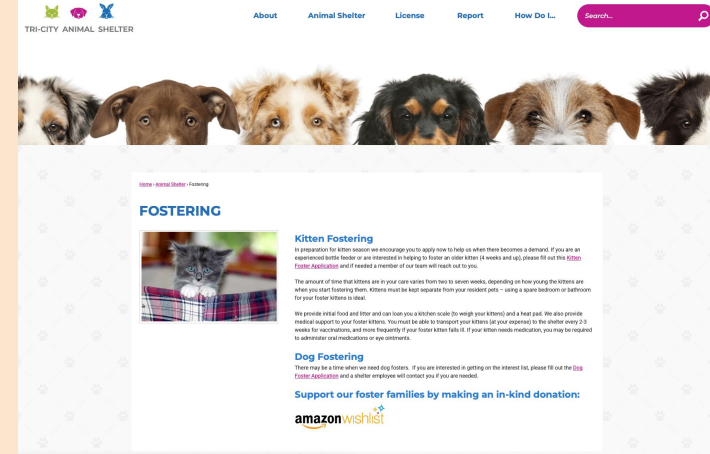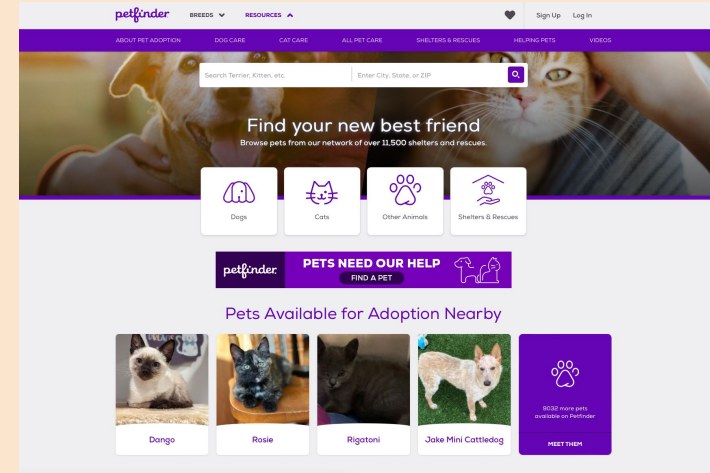
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Competitive Audit

An audit of a few competitor's products provided direction on gaps and opportunities to address with the SCFOA app and website.
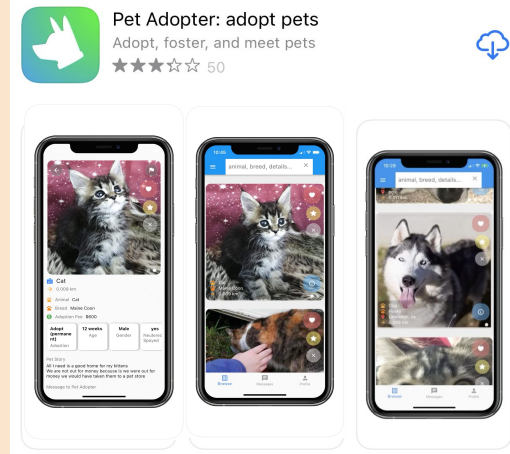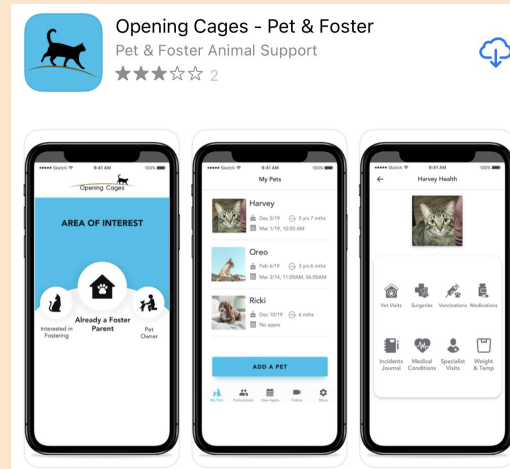
Ideation
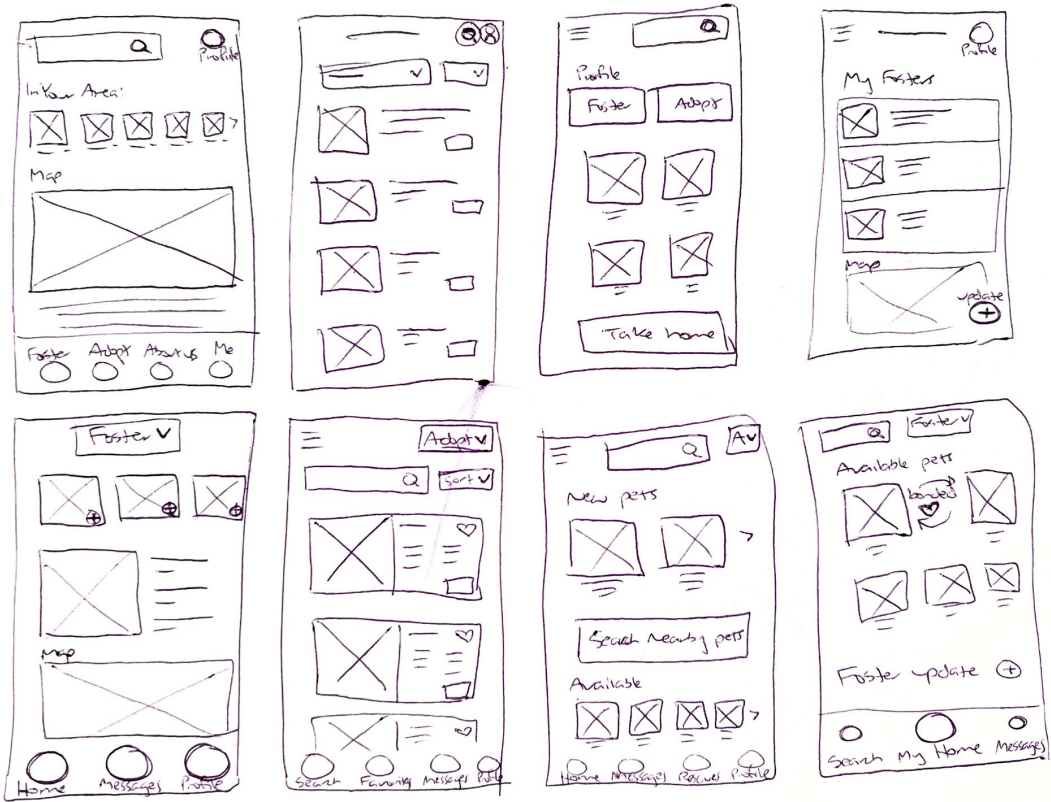
I did a quick ideation exercise to come up with ideas for how to address gaps identified in the competitive audit. My focus was specifically on **posting about available animals and simple logging / tracking features.**

Starting the Design

- Digital Wireframes
- Low-Fidelity Prototype
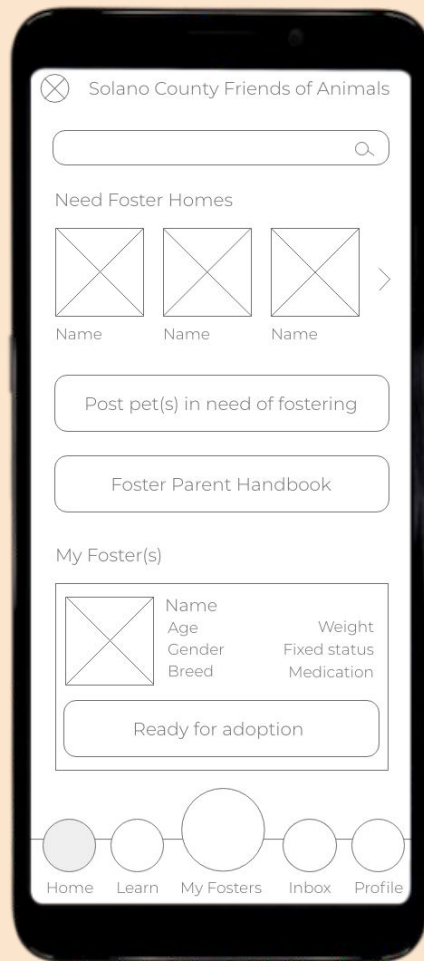- Usability Studies

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Digital Wireframes

After ideating and drafting some paper wireframes, I created the initial designs for the SCFOA app. These designs focused on delivering personalized guidance for users to log about their animals or those in need.

Top half of home screen provides quick navigation to important features

Bottom half of home screen provides quick view of the users' foster information

Easy access to app features from global navigation

Solano County Friends of Animals

Need Foster Homes

Name   Name   Name

Post pet(s) in need of fostering

Foster Parent Handbook

My Foster(s)

Name   Weight
Age   Fixed status
Gender   Medication
Breed

Ready for adoption

Home   Learn   My Fosters   Inbox   Profile

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Low-Fidelity Prototype

To prepare for usability testing, I created a low-fidelity prototype that connected the user flow of posting about found animals and logging dose information for the users' foster pet medications.

View SCOFA's low-fidelity prototype

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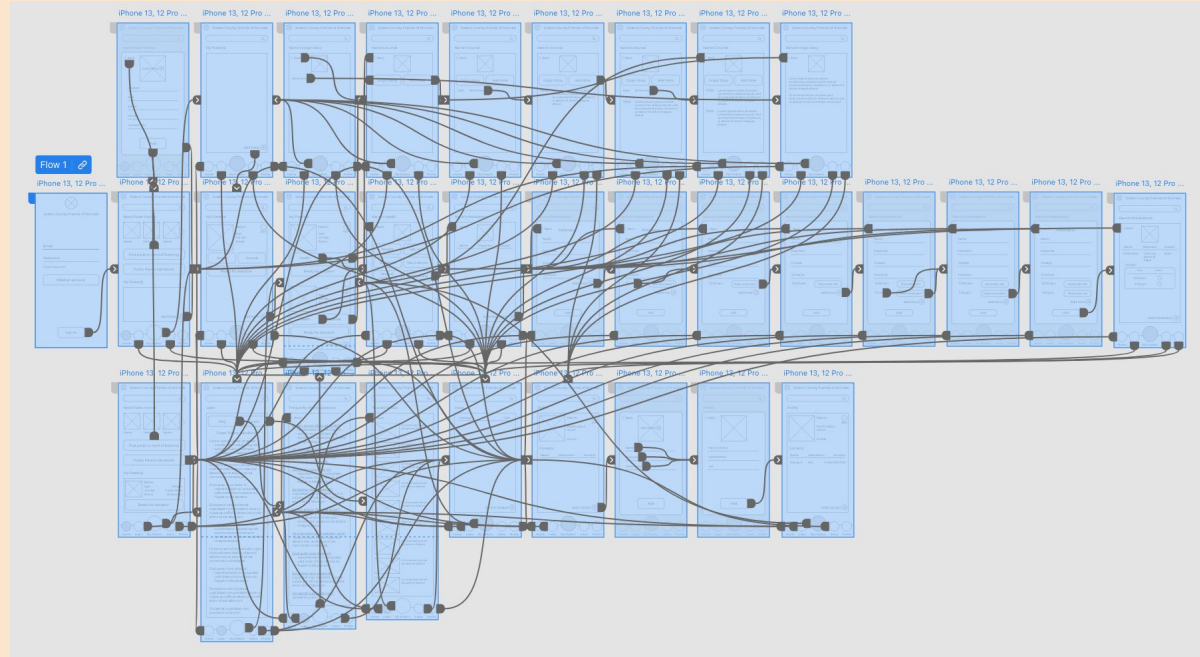
Usability Study: Parameters

Study Type:

Unmoderated usability study

Location:

United States, remote

Participants:

5 participants

Length:

15-25 minutes

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Usability Study: Findings

These were the main findings uncovered by the usability study:

1
Profile Distinction

People want My Fosters and Profile to be combined or differentiated better for clarity, in addition to removing profile changes for fostering or adopting accounts.
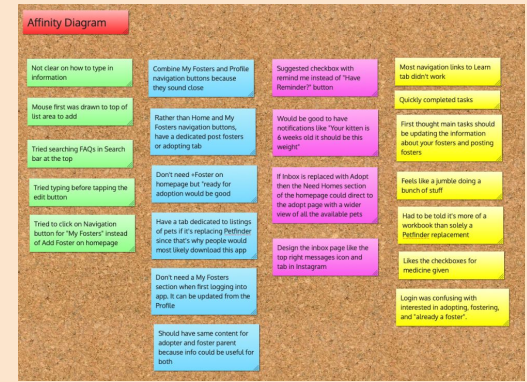
2
Notifications

People would like personalized notifications about important dates for their animals and visual indicators of notifications in the app.

3
Pet Listings Page

People would like a tab/page dedicated to a full size view of all the animal listings rather than a scrollable sing-line list.

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Refining the Design

- Mockups

- High-Fidelity Prototype
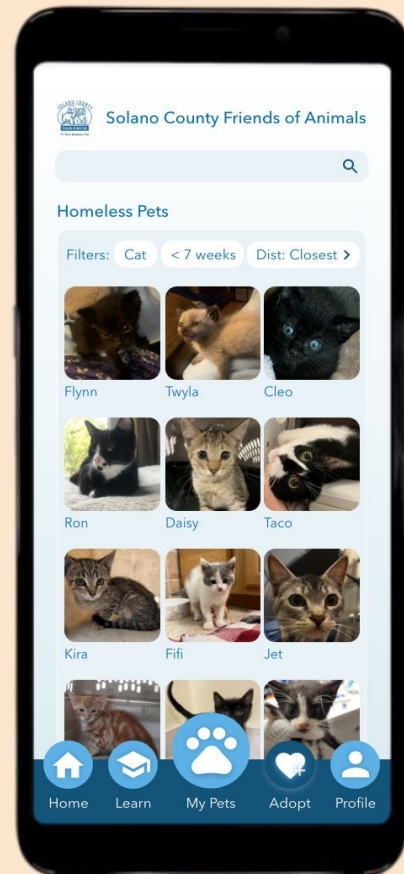
- Accessibility

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Mockups

Based on the insights from the usability studies, I applied design changes like replacing an unnecessary inbox to a clear section to browse adoptable pets from the home screen and navigation bar.

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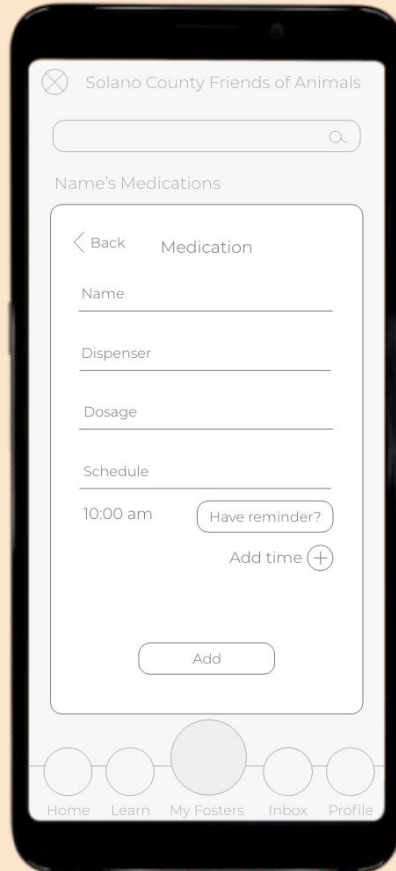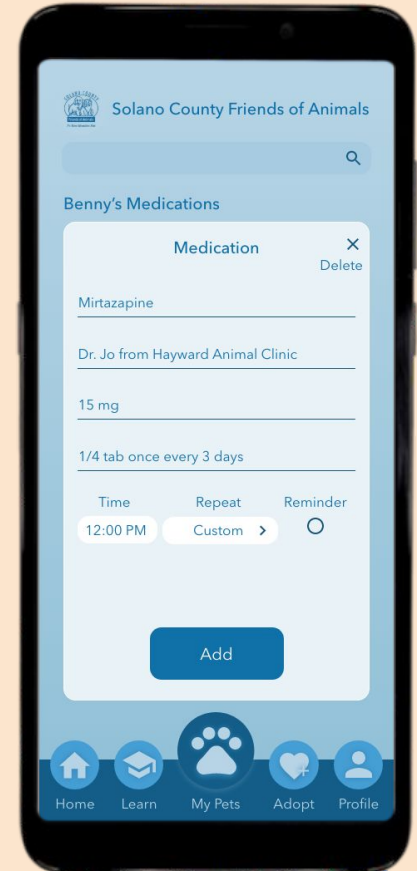
Mockups

Additional design changes included redesigning the medication edit page by providing a clearer indication of how to edit the time with customizable options for any repeat schedules or desired reminders.
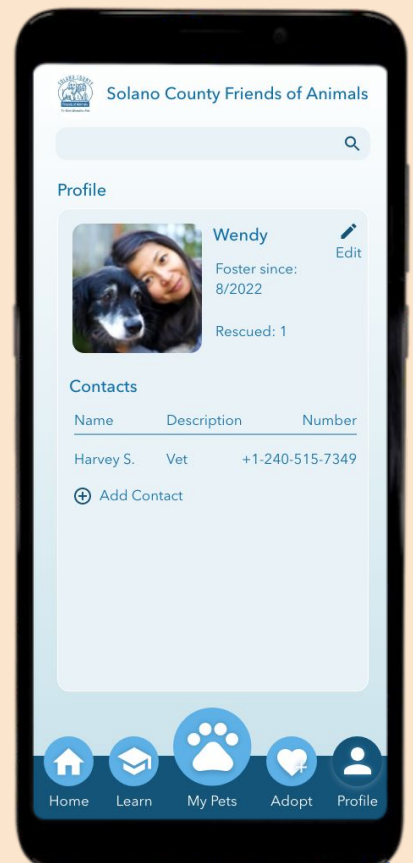
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Mockups

Solano County Friends of Animals
No More Homeless Pets

Solano County Friends of Animals

Email

Password

Forgot Password?

Make an account

Sign In

Solano County Friends of Animals

Homeless Pets

Flynn   Twyla   Cleo

Post pet in need of fostering

Foster Parent Handbook

My Pet(s)

Benny
2 weeks old
Male
Tabby

Add animal

Home   Learn   My Pets   Adopt   Profile

Solano County Friends of Animals

Youtube Videos

Back

Kitten Foster Training 101

How to Set Up Space for Foster Kittens

Learn how Baby Kittens Grow: 0-8 Weeks!

How to Foster a Feral Mama and Kittens

How to Socialize Feral Kittens

Home   Learn   My Pets   Adopt   Profile

Solano County Friends of Animals

Profile

Wendy
Foster since: 8/2022
Rescued: 1

Edit

Contacts

Name	Description	Number
Harvey S.	Vet	+1-240-515-7349

Add Contact

Home   Learn   My Pets   Adopt   Profile

Google

High-Fidelity Prototype
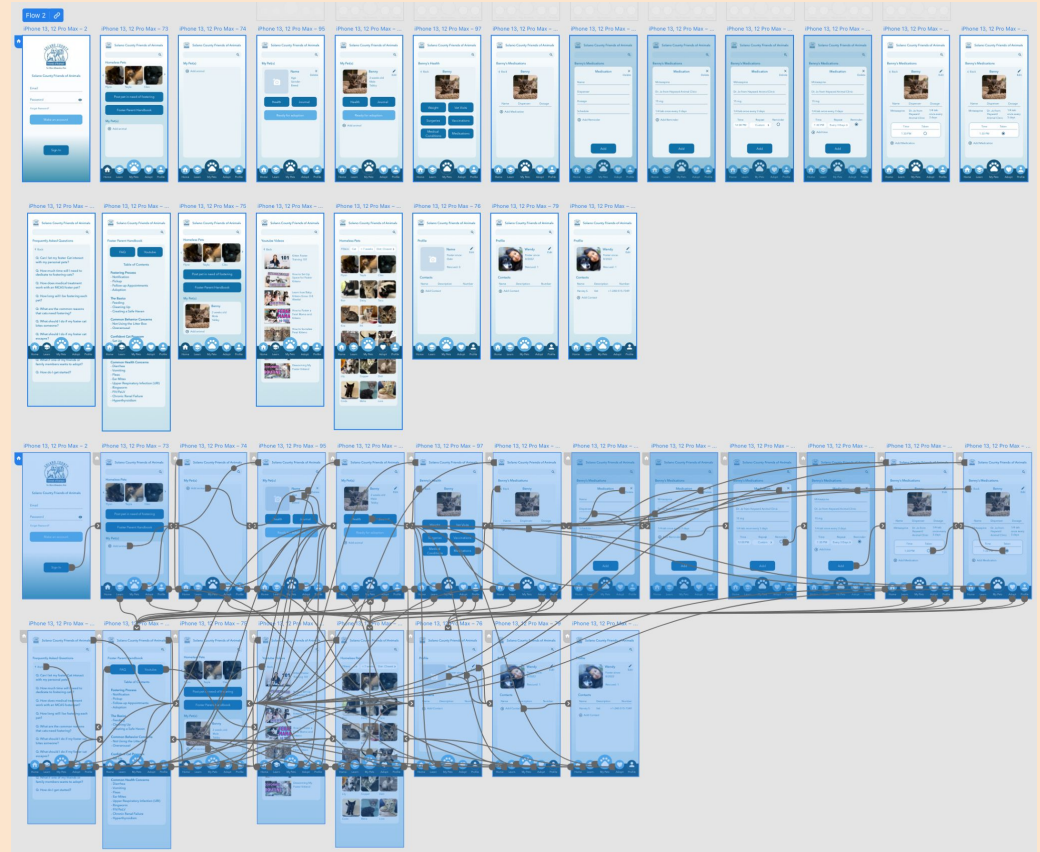
The high-fidelity prototype follows the user flow of making a profile, adding a foster, and editing the pet's medications, which include design changes made after the usability study.

View the SCFOA high-fidelity prototype

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Accessibility Considerations

1

Use of Colour

I specified important information by using a combination of text, colour or graphical objects. This will benefit users with partial sight or limited colour vision, colour-blindness and users who use text-only, limited colour, or monochrome display screens.

2

Consistent Navigation

I ensured that repeated components occur in the same order on each page of a site. This will be helpful for users with cognitive limitations, low vision and intellectual disabilities as it becomes easier to predict where they can find things on each page.

3

Use of Headings

I used descriptive and informative page titles. This can help users with limited short-term memory, low vision or difficulty reading text — they can see only few words at a time and know the purpose of each section.
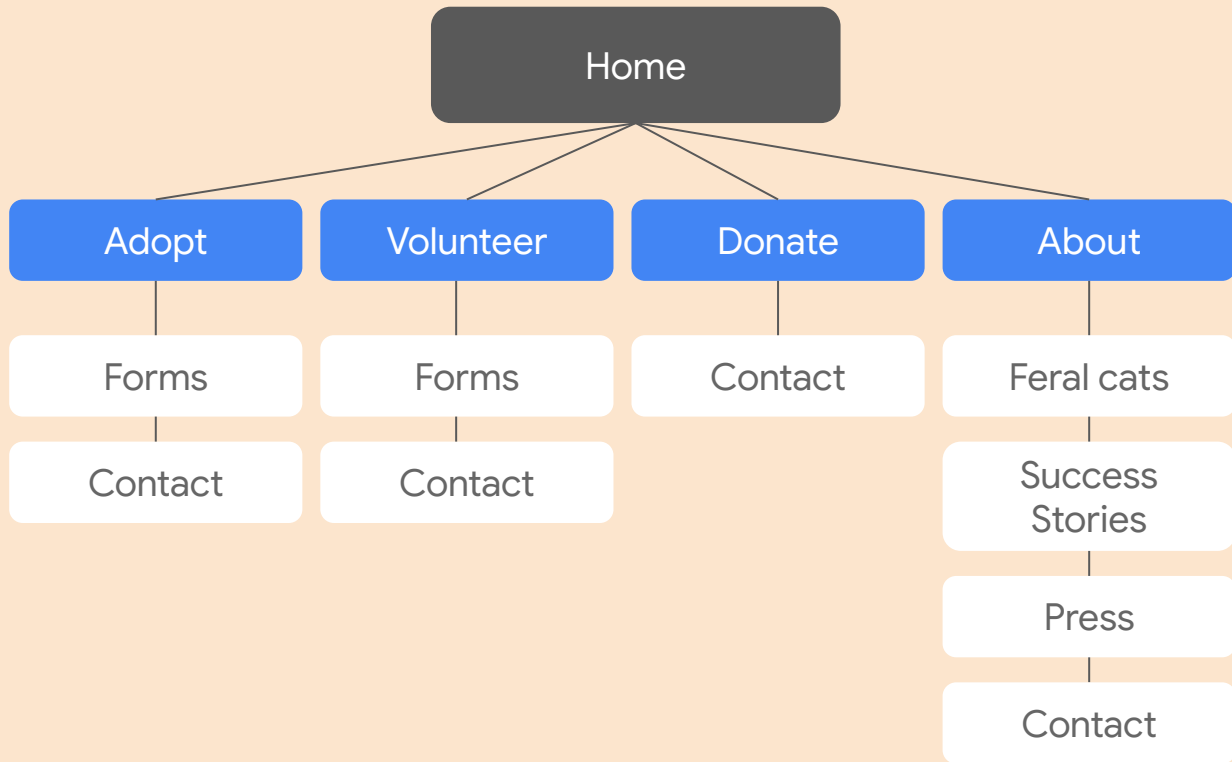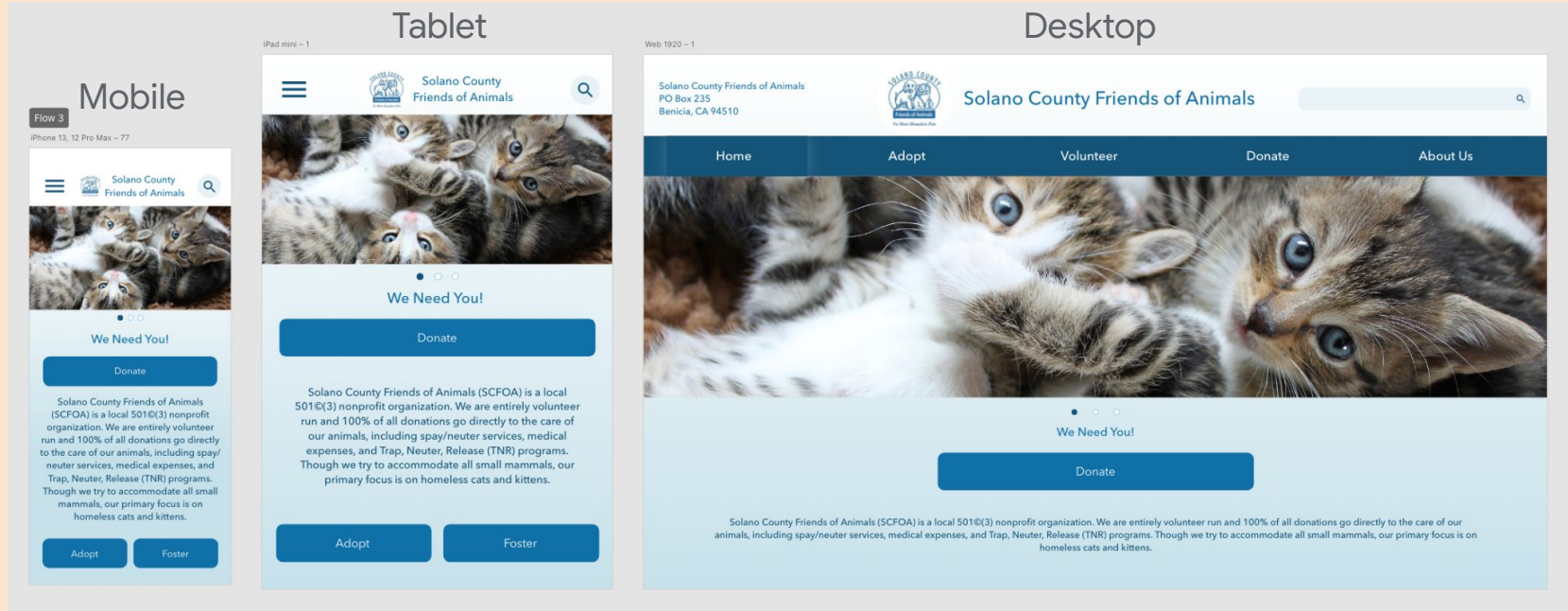
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Responsive Design

- Information Architecture

- Responsive Design

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Sitemap

With the app designs completed, I started work on designing the responsive website. I used the SCFOA sitemap to guide the organizational structure of each screen's design to ensure a cohesive and consistent experience across devices.

```
                              Home
         ┌──────────┬──────────┴──────────┬──────────┐
       Adopt     Volunteer            Donate        About
         │           │                   │            │
       Forms       Forms              Contact     Feral cats
         │           │                                │
      Contact     Contact                          Success
                                                    Stories
                                                       │
                                                      Press
                                                       │
                                                    Contact
```

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Responsive Designs

The designs for screen size variation included mobile, tablet, and desktop. I optimized the designs to fit specific user needs of each device and screen size.

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Going forward

- Takeaways
- Next steps

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Takeaways

Impact:

Users shared that the app made fostering seem like something they could actually volunteer for. One quote from peer feedback was that "the SCFOA app helped educate me about the necessities of animal care in a way that's easy and engaging."

What I learned:

I learned that even though the problem I was trying to solve was a big one, it didn't mean I had to try to combine multiple solutions into one project because it overcomplicated the app. Diligently going through each step of the design process and aligning with specific user needs helped me come up with solutions that were truly useful.

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Next Steps

1

Conduct more research on how successful the app is in reaching the goal to increase feral animal awareness.

2

Add more educational resources for users to learn about humane animal care.

3

Provide rewards to users for successfully rescuing and sending animals to new homes.

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Let's Connect!

Thank you for your time reviewing my work on my SCFOA app! If you'd like to see more or get in touch, you may reach me through my contact info provided below:

Email: barbarahaggertywork@gmail.com
Website: barbarahaggerty.com