



Reimagine your journey



CASE STUDY: Arta – The Travel Companion

by Danny R. Baker

MUXD 5300 UX Capstone Development & Presentation · Fall 2025

Family Travel Then

“ Don't make me turn
this car around!
– Every mom or dad



Family Travel Now

“ Don't make me turn
this car around!
– Every mom or dad



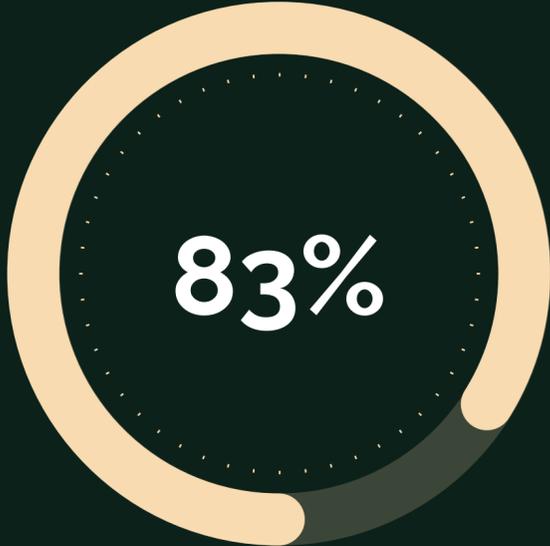
LEARNING

Early Research Revealed Clear Patterns to Focus On



All

used a minimal 4-7 apps
to plan trips



83%

feel solely responsible for
decisions and logistics

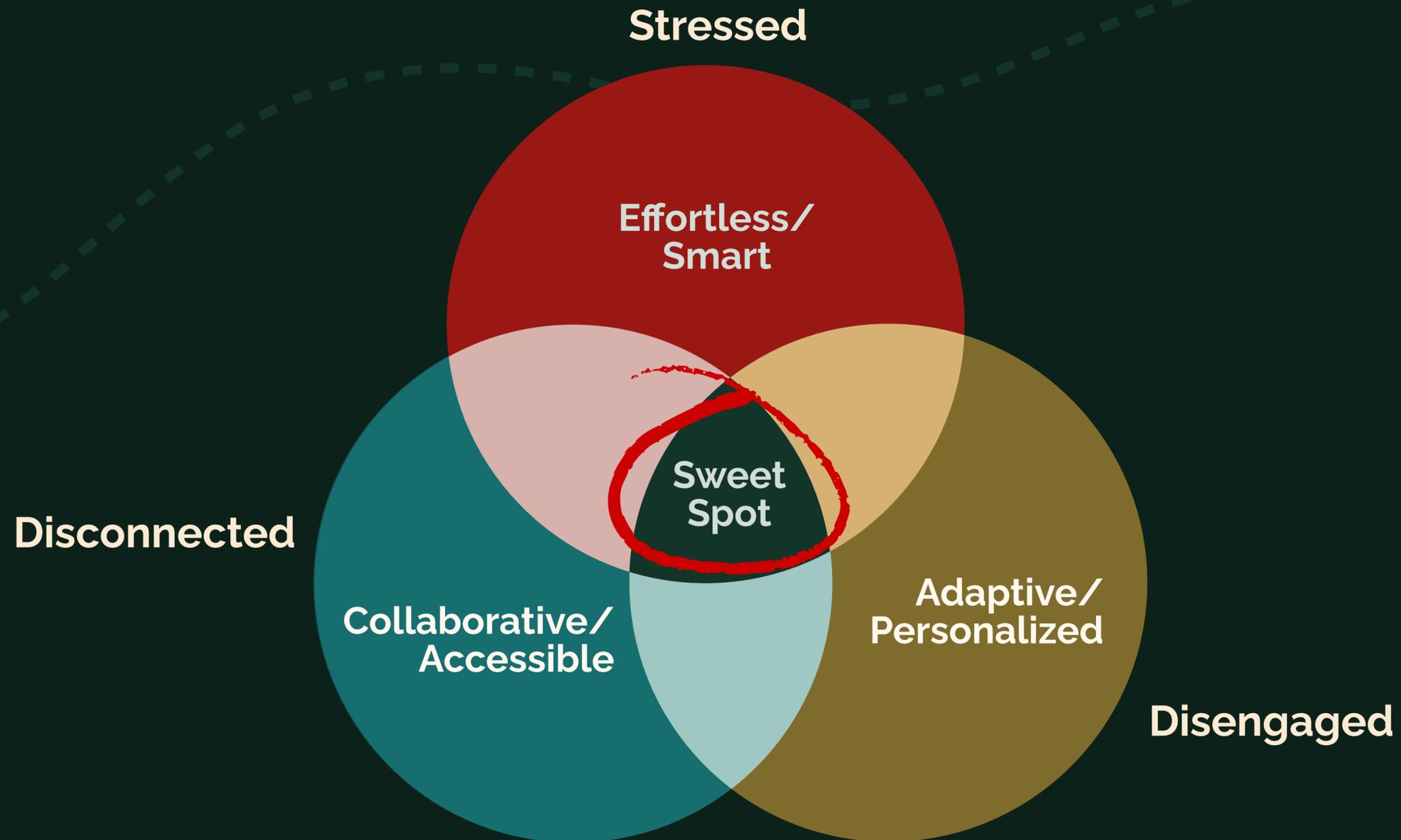


All

kids engage best through
mixed content

HYPOTHESIS

The Fork in the Road



PROJECT TIMELINE

Project Phases

01 Discover

Competitive landscape, surveys,
user interviews

02 Define

Personas, user stories, journey maps,
requirements

03 Design

Flows, low-fi concepts, mid-fi prototypes,
usability testing, Design iteration

04 Deliver

Final designs, impact assessment,
reflection

STARTING WITH DISCOVER

Grounding the Project in Evidence and User Insight

Feeling the strain of modern travel, discovery helped uncover why and where to take things.

DISCOVER → DEFINE → DESIGN → DELIVER



01 Discover

Understanding the Problem,
the People, and the Opportunities

“ Family vacations
aren't always
a vacation everyone.”

THE PROBLEM

From Potholes to Cruise Control

Families on road trips often struggle to coordinate plans, make shared decisions, and keep kids genuinely engaged, which can create stress and disconnect them from the experience.

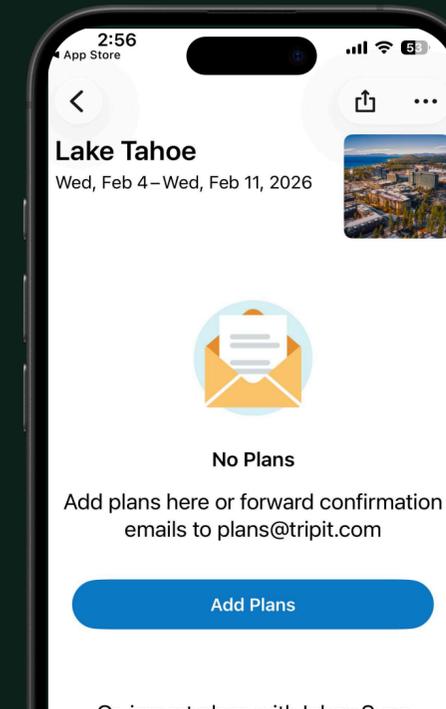
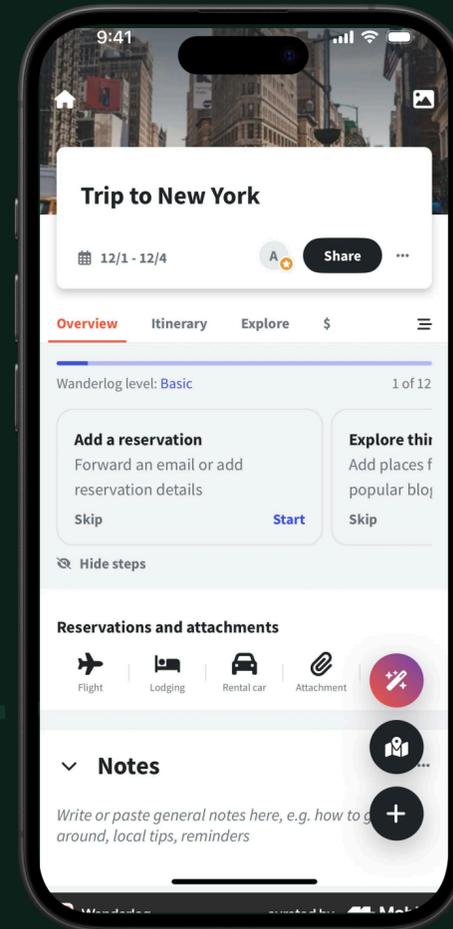
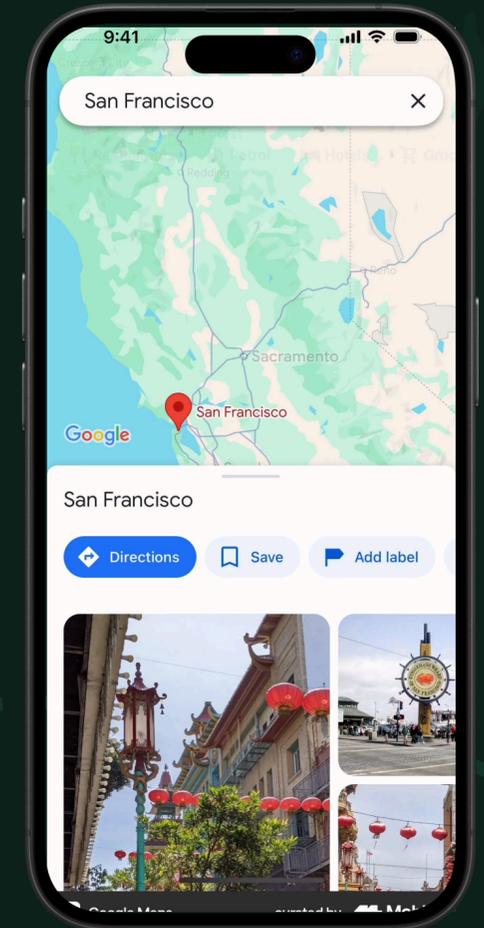
By easing logistics and supporting collaborative, meaningful engagement, we can turn travel time into smoother journeys, richer learning moments, and stronger family bonds—at a time when road trips are becoming a growing staple of family travel.

COMPETITIVE LANDSCAPE

The Competition

Navigation

“It does one thing really well, but I still have to manage everything else myself.”



SURVEYS & INTERVIEWS

The Breaking Point

- App switching
- Missed stops or lost opportunities
- No relaxing
- Fragmented time



MOVING INTO DEFINE

From Insights to Structure

Insights revealed clear patterns giving foundation to define personas, risks, and journeys that would guide ARTA's direction.

DISCOVER → **DEFINE** → DESIGN → DELIVER

02 Define

Understanding the Road Trip Experience

THE PROBLEM

Methods

- 6 in-depth parent interviews
- 2x2 Risk & Unknowns
- Task-based journey mapping
- Low-fi → mid-fi → hi-fi prototype evaluation
- 6 usability test sessions with adults + 2 with a children
- Thematic clustering & affinity analysis
- Iterative prototype evaluations

HUMAN CENTERED

User Personas

Jordan

The Overwhelmed Planner



Age: late 30s-40s

About: a detail-oriented parent

Ethan

The Bored Backseat Explorer

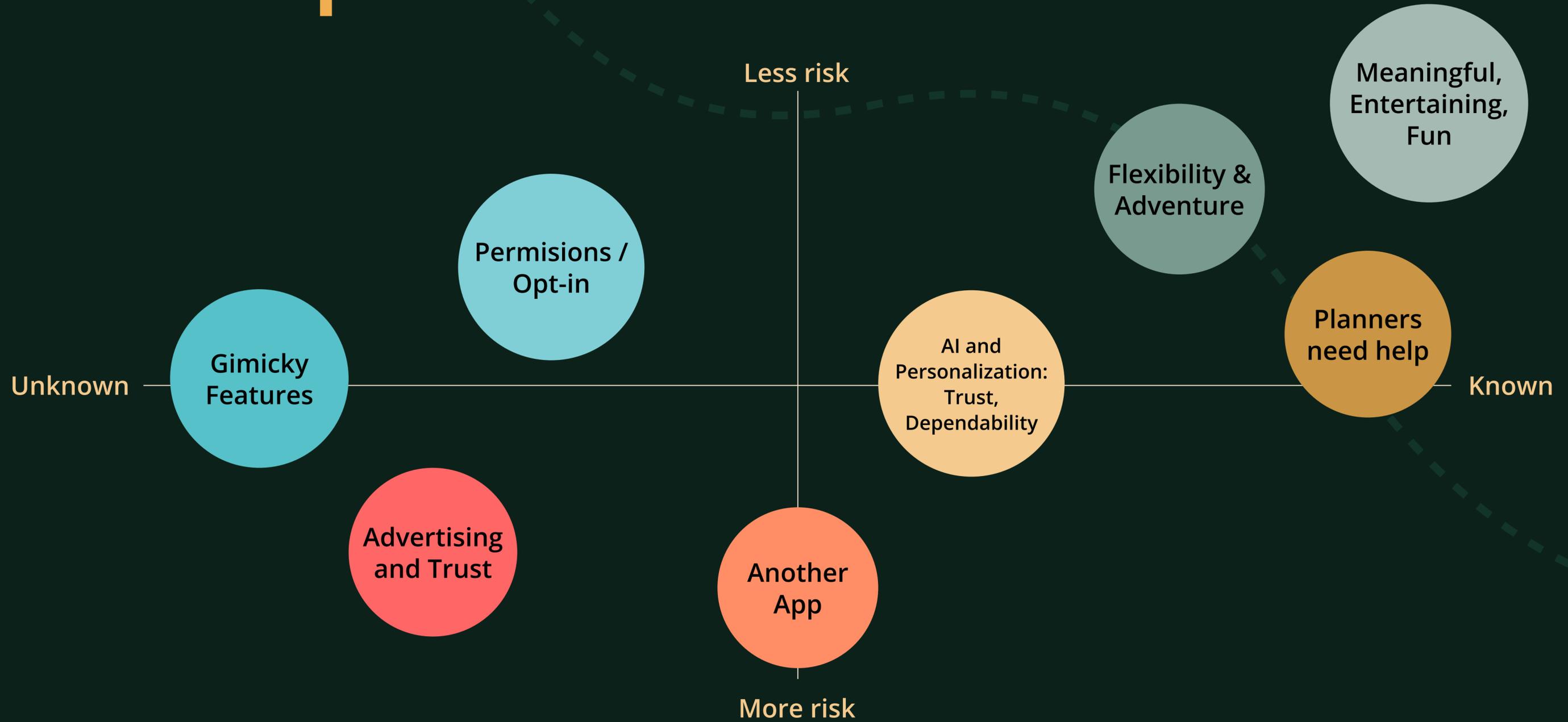


Age: 8 - 10 year old

About: traveling with siblings in a multi-age family

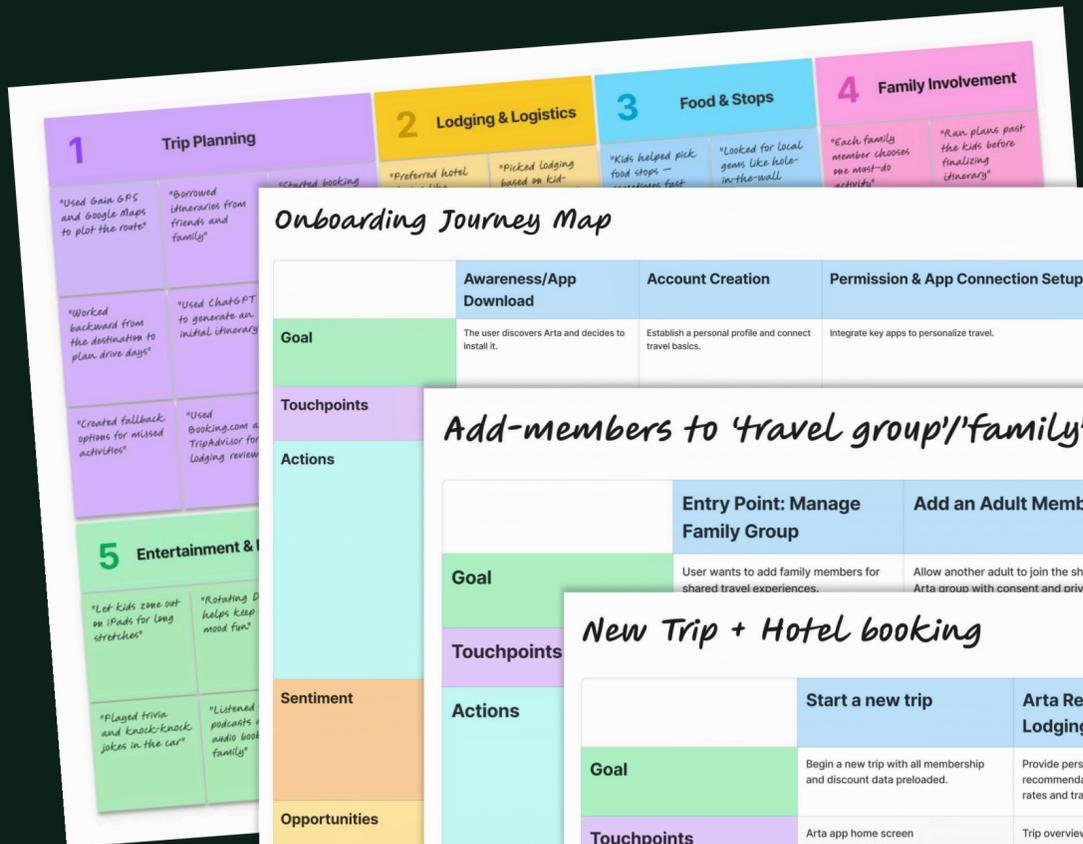
RISK & UNKNOWNNS

Blind Spots Ahead



AFFINITY MAPS, JOURNEY MAPS & FLOWS

Mapping the Adventures



Onboarding Journey Map

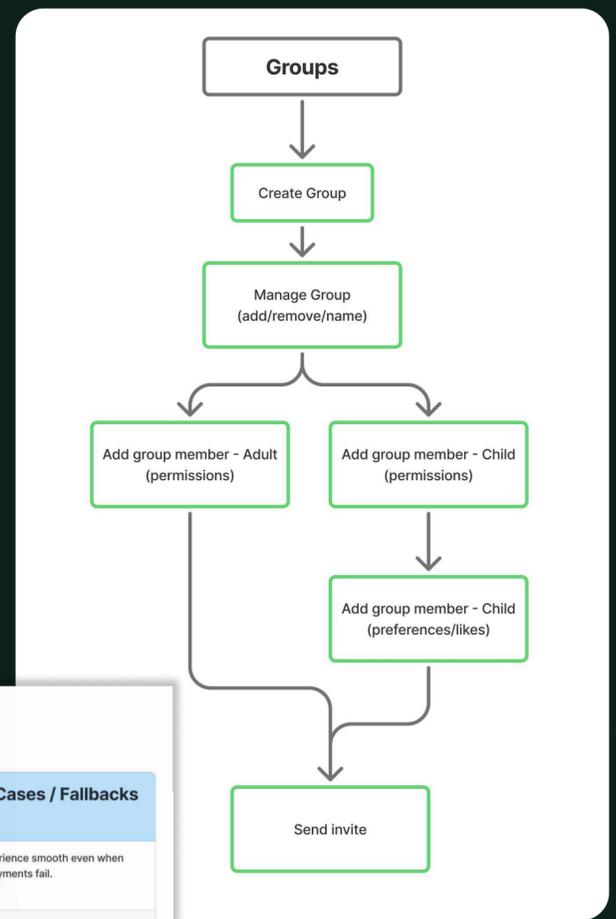
	Awareness/App Download	Account Creation	Permission & App Connection Setup	Adding Marriott and AAA	Privacy Policy & Consent	Personalization & Sync	Welcome & Guided Tour	Subscription / Upsell Moment
Goal	The user discovers Arta and decides to install it.	Establish a personal profile and connect travel basics.	Integrate key apps to personalize travel.	Set up loyalty programs and verify eligibility for discounts before trip creation. Trigger: User opens the app for the first time, or Arta detects no connected memberships.	Ensure trust and compliance.	Pull and interpret user data to create first smart trip dashboard.	Orient the user to Arta's core functions.	Transition free users to premium features or Trip Packs.
Touchpoints								
Actions								

Add-members to 'travel group'/'family'

	Entry Point: Manage Family Group	Add an Adult Member	Add a Child Member (Under 18)	Configure Group Settings	Confirmation & Welcome	Edge Cases / Compliance Flows
Goal	User wants to add family members for shared travel experiences.	Allow another adult to join the shared Arta group with consent and privacy.	Include children with appropriate content controls and compliance safeguards.	Manage collective trip experiences and visibility preferences.	Final confirmation and next-step engagement.	
Touchpoints						
Actions						

New Trip + Hotel booking

	Start a new trip	Arta Recommends Lodging	Choose a Hotel	Confirm Room & Rate	Payment & Booking	Post-Booking Summary	Edge Cases / Fallbacks
Goal	Begin a new trip with all membership and discount data preloaded.	Provide personalized hotel recommendations based on membership rates and traveler context.	Let the user compare and select the best option.	Let user verify all booking details before purchase.	Complete the booking using a fast, secure payment process.	Present confirmation and integrate booking into the trip.	Keep experience smooth even when APIs or payments fail.
Touchpoints	Arta app home screen "Plan a Trip" CTA AI suggestion card ("Planning another Tahoe escape?")	Trip overview screen -> "Recommended Stays" section Personalized hotel cards carousel	Comparison screen or interactive carousel CTA buttons: "Select This Stay" or "Compare Options"	Room detail screen Rate selection modal	Payment screen (Apple Pay modal) Confirmation overlay	Trip dashboard (hotel card) shows AI generated name for the trip (edit button) Email and push confirmation	Error modals, retry prompts, in-app chat support
Actions	User Actions: 1. Logs in (Bonvoy + AAA already synced). 2. Taps Plan a Trip. 3. Enters start (Home), destination (South Lake Tahoe), dates (Mar 14-18, 2026), travelers (2 adults + 2 kids). System Actions: 1. Pulls Bonvoy + AAA data from profile. 2. Maps route and trip details. 3. Pre-applies AAA rate filter for hotels.	User Actions: • Sees two recommended hotels: • Marriott Grand Residence Club — Double Room — \$201 AAA rate • Marriott's Timber Lodge — Standard Room — \$127 AAA rate • Views both cards (images, ratings, perks, AAA discount tags). System Actions: • Calls Bonvoy API for partner properties near destination. • Applies AAA discount logic. • Filters for family-friendly options (based on 2A+2K traveler profile).	User Actions: • Compares the two hotels. • Selects Marriott's Timber Lodge (\$127 AAA rate). System Actions: • Loads detailed room info, AAA discount, and Bonvoy points estimate. • Syncs chosen hotel to trip draft.	User Actions: • Reviews room type (2 Queen Beds, 4 guests). • Confirms AAA rate applied. • Checks estimated Bonvoy points. System Actions: • Retrieves live room data from Marriott API. • Verifies AAA eligibility. • Calculates total (with tax + fees).	User Actions: • Confirms AAA rate and taps Apple Pay -> Confirm. System Actions: • Submits booking via Marriott API. • Processes Apple Pay. • Returns confirmation number and syncs reservation to trip itinerary.	User Actions: • Reviews confirmation, location, and perks. • Edits stay if needed. System Actions: • Syncs reservation data to trip timeline. • Sends push notification: "Pack your AAA ID for check-in." • Updates Bonvoy points tracker.	Scenarios: • Marriott API timeout -> Retry or "Book directly." • Apple Pay error -> fallback to manual card. • AAA rate unavailable -> show next best rate.
Sentiment	😊 Relaxed, confident. "It remembers my memberships — no logging in again! Finally."	😊 Delighted, impressed. "It already found my best Marriott options — even with AAA savings. That's slick."	😊 Confident, satisfied. "Same perks, lower rate — I'll take Timber Lodge."	😊 Reassured, ready. "Everything checks out — and the discount actually applied."	😊 Relieved, accomplished. "Two taps and done. That's smoother than a hotel check-in espresso."	😊 Content, confident. "Everything's confirmed — no more juggling apps."	😊 Brief frustration -> reassurance. "Good thing it explained what happened — that's way less stressful."
Opportunities							



DESIGN SYSTEM

Signs, Symbols and Systems

brand 1 Primary Surface / UI: Slate Sage - Clean, cool-neutral base for UI backgrounds and nav				brand 2 Secondary Surface: Warm Sand - Soft, light background for cards, feed, popups				brand 5: Neon Coral - Buttons & key actions			
20%		06110D	900	25%		3C2C14	900	25%		401718	900
40%		0D221A	800	45%		6C4F24	800	45%		73292B	800
60%		133428	700	65%		9B7235	700	65%		A63B3E	700
80%		1A4535	600	85%		CB9545	600	85%		D94D51	600
100%		5D6E63	500/default	100%		EAE3D2	500/default	100%		AEA377	500/default
80%		4D7868	400	85%		F1BB6B	400	85%		FF7377	400
60%		799A8E	300	65%		F5CB8E	300	65%		FF9497	300
40%		A6BBB3	200	45%		F8DBB1	200	45%		FFB5B7	200
20%		D2DDD9	100	25%		FBEBD3	100	25%		FFD6D7	100

Header font: **Raleway**

Desktop

H1 Hello everyone lorem ipsum is the standard text of the type.

H2 Hello everyone lorem ipsum is the standard text of the type.

H3 Hello everyone lorem ipsum is the standard text of the type.

H4 Hello everyone lorem ipsum is the standard text of the type.

H5 Hello everyone lorem ipsum is the standard text of the type.

H6 Hello everyone lorem ipsum is the standard text of the type.

Body Font: **Open Sans**

Body Xs Hello everyone lorem ipsum is the standard text of the type.

Body Sm Hello everyone lorem ipsum is the standard text of the type.

Body Md Hello everyone lorem ipsum is the standard text of the type.

Body Lg Hello everyone lorem ipsum is the standard text of the type.

Body Xl Hello everyone lorem ipsum is the standard text of the type.

Body links Hello everyone lorem ipsum is the standard text of the type.

Body semibold Hello everyone lorem ipsum is the standard text of the type.

Mobile

Header font: **Raleway**

Desktop

H1 Hello everyone lorem ipsum is the standard text of the type.

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	Default	Hover	Disabled	Focus
Primary				
Transparent				
Outline				

MOVING INTO DESIGN

With a Clear Direction, I Could Begin Designing ARTA

With the human at the center and a structure taking shape, it was time to dive into the experience and iterative design.

DISCOVER → DEFINE → **DESIGN** → DELIVER



03 Design

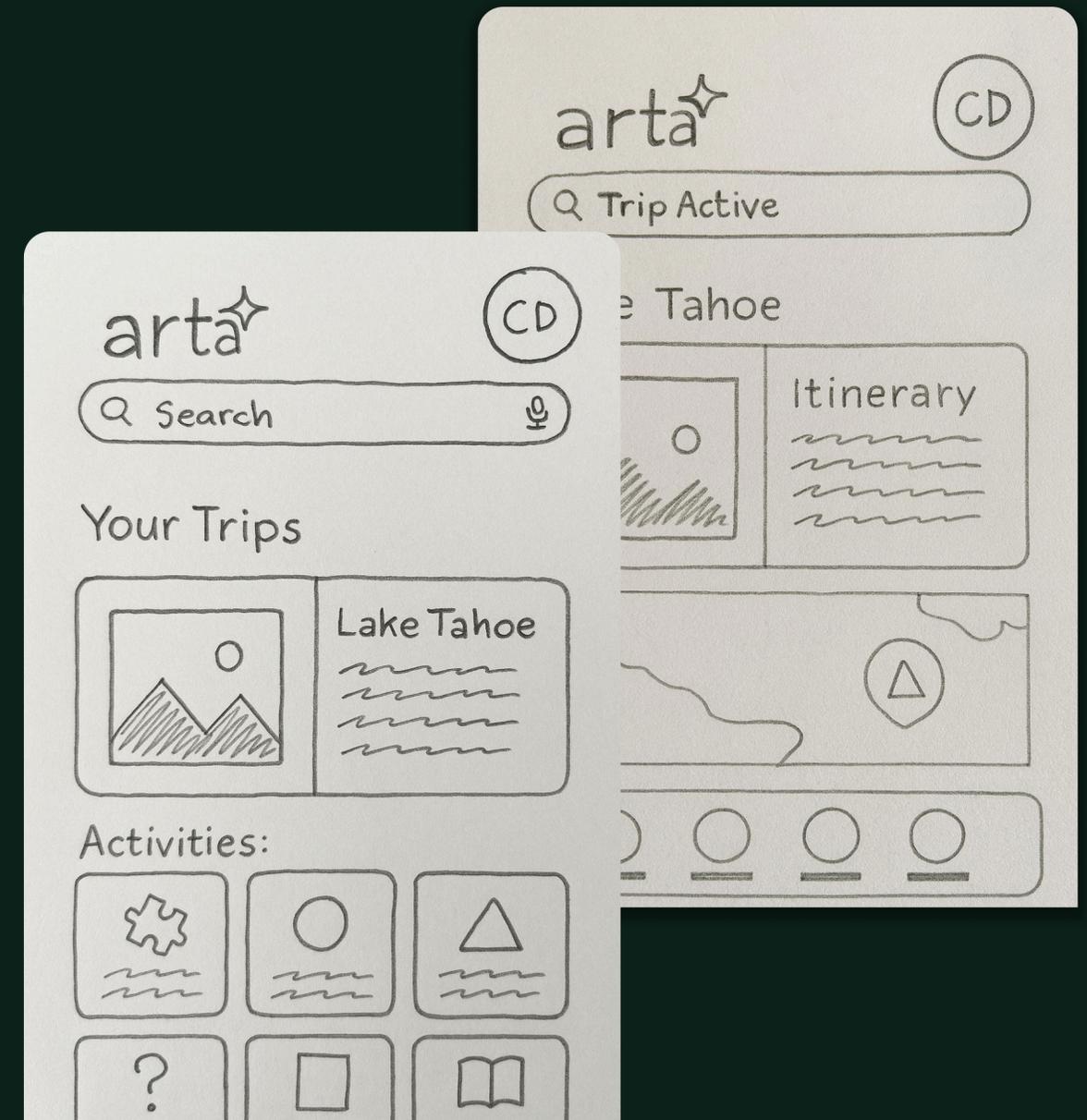
Translating Research Into a Usable,
Delightful System



EARLY CONCEPTS

Exploring How ARTA Could Take Shape

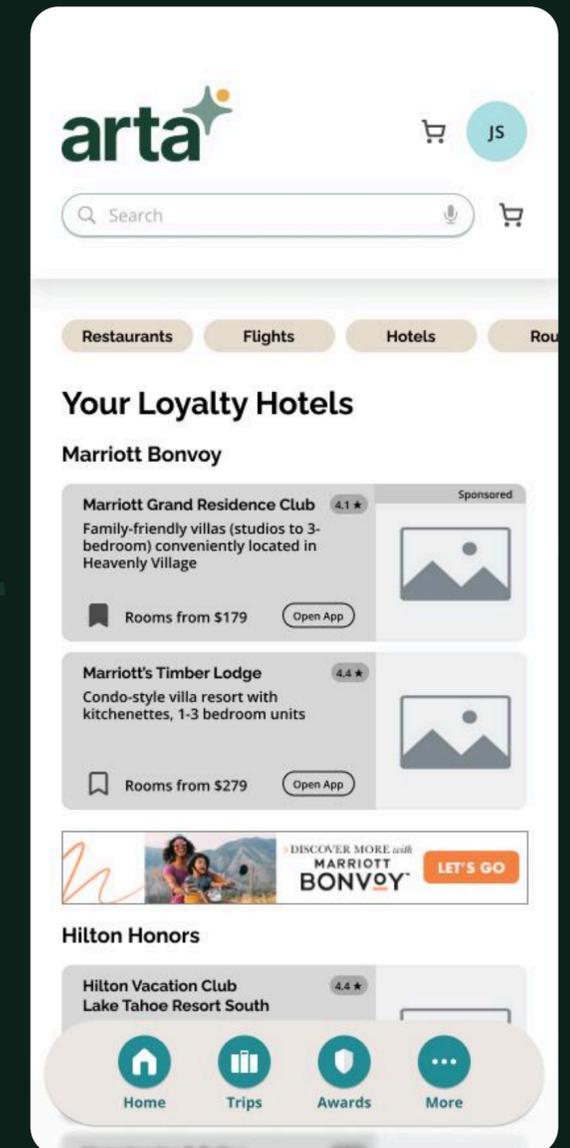
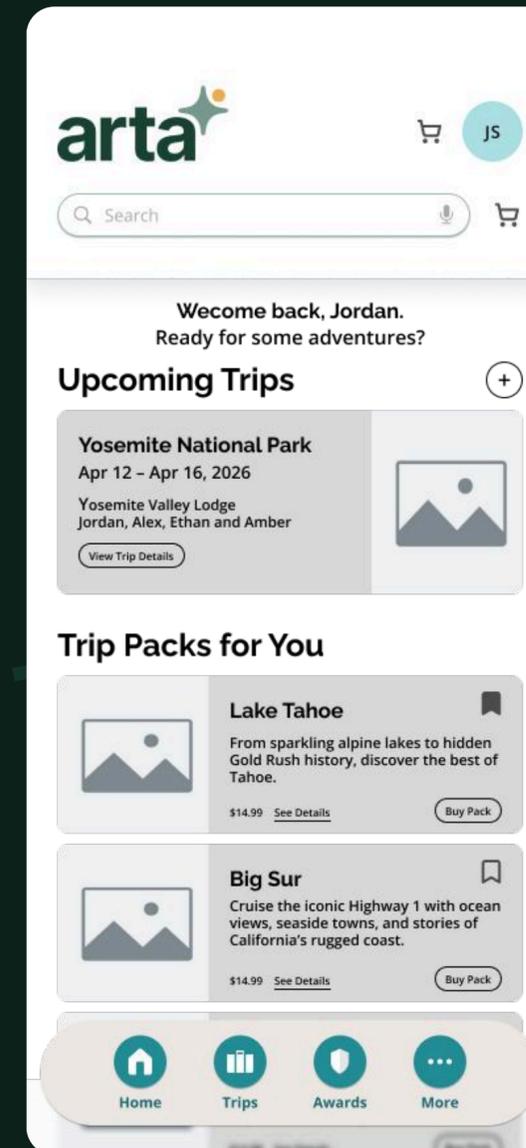
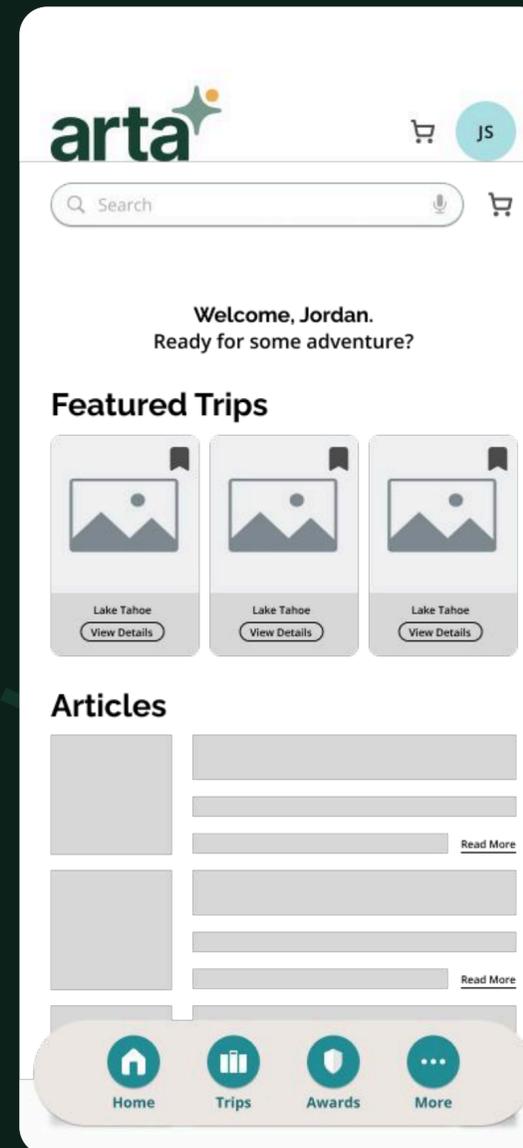
- Translating research and insights into early concepts
- Exploring structure, flows, and interaction patterns
- Testing assumptions before committing to a final direction



Designed & Refined

Early learnings

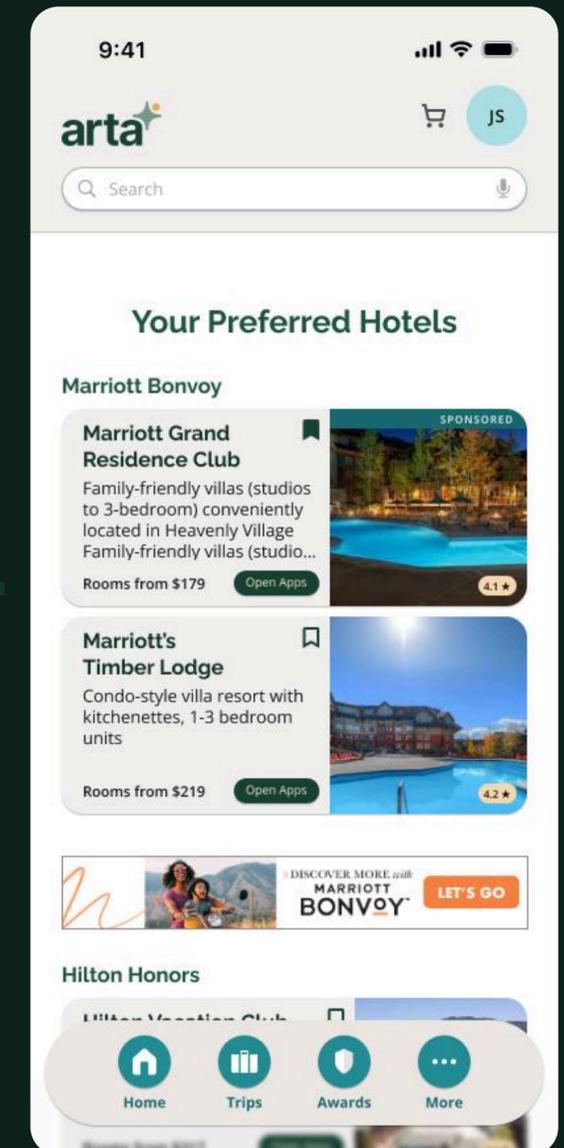
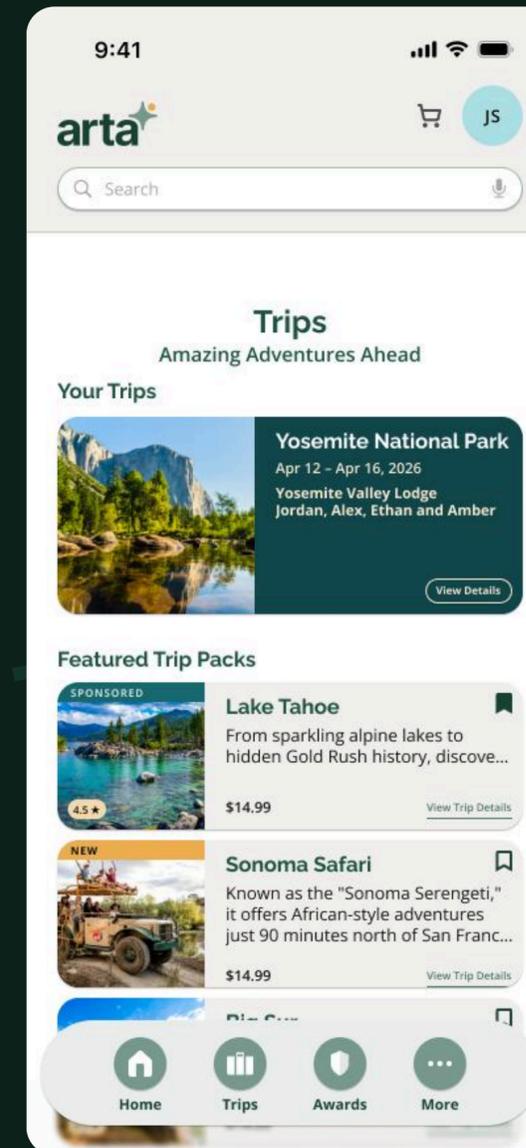
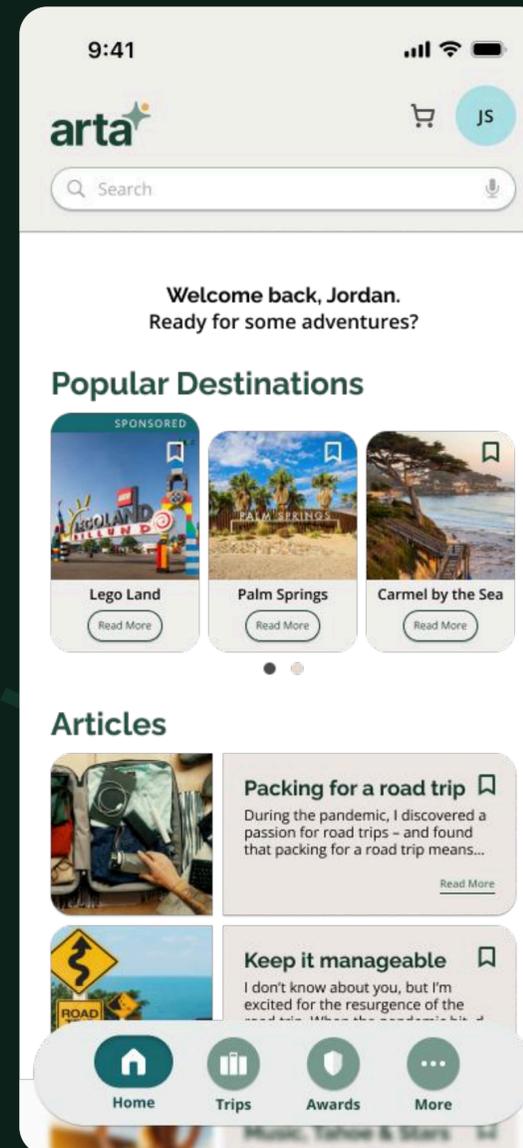
- Onboarding too long
- Language needed work
- Feels dense
- Flows were good
- Design/branding good



Designed & Refined

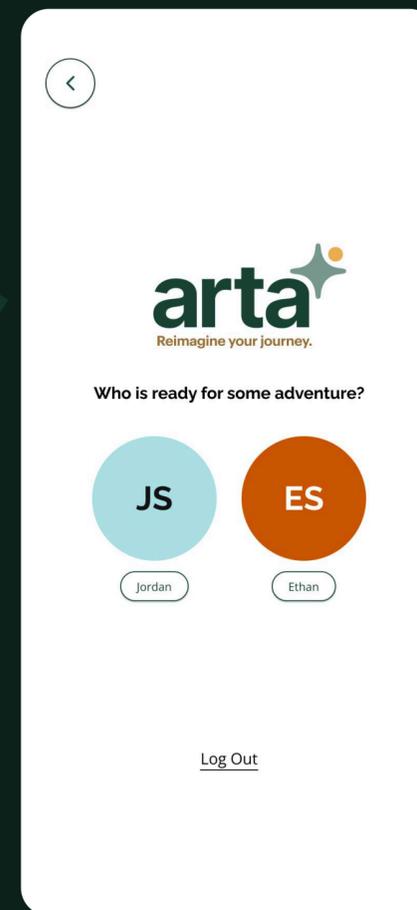
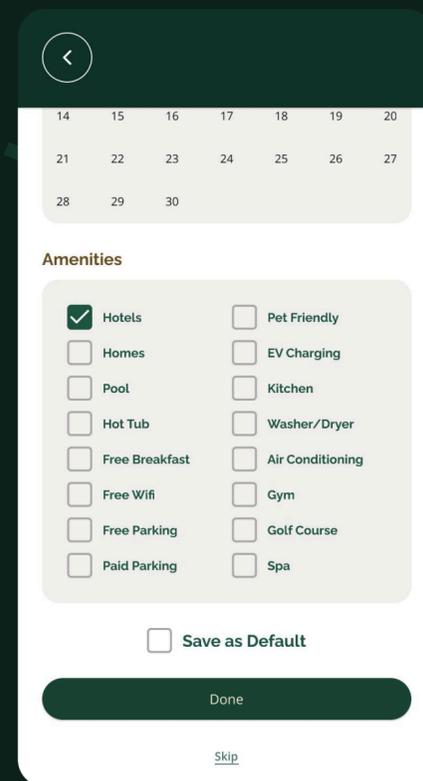
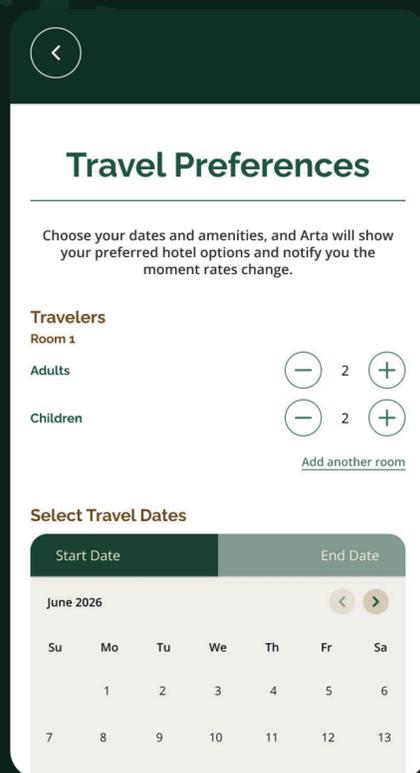
Early learnings

- Onboarding too long
- Language needed work
- Feels dense
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- Design/branding good



USABILITY TESTING ROUND 2

Designed & Refined



MOVING INTO DELIVER

From Design Decisions to a Working Prototype

With the structure defined, I built the end-to-end prototype to bring the flows and interactions together.

DISCOVER → DEFINE → DESIGN → **DELIVER**



04 Deliver

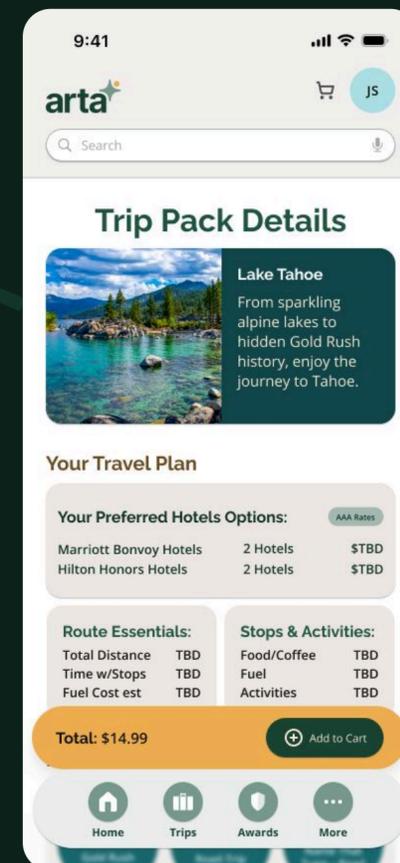
Solving Real Problems Through the Product

FINAL DESIGN

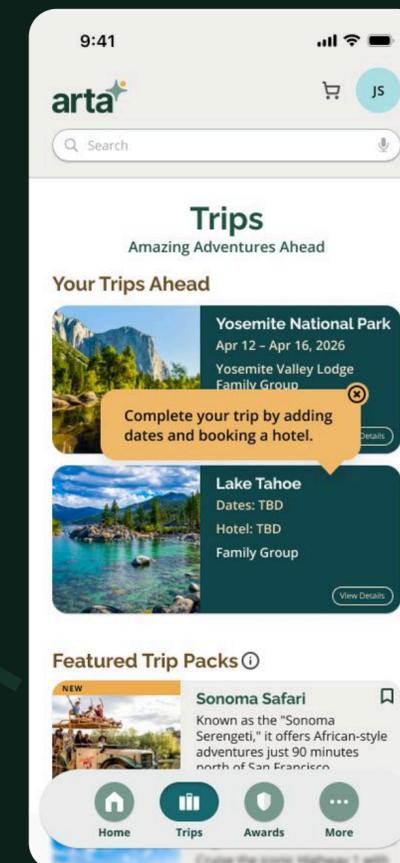
ARTA in Practice

- ARTA solves the core problems
- Key moments across planning, booking, and life on the road
- Reduces stress and stronger family connection

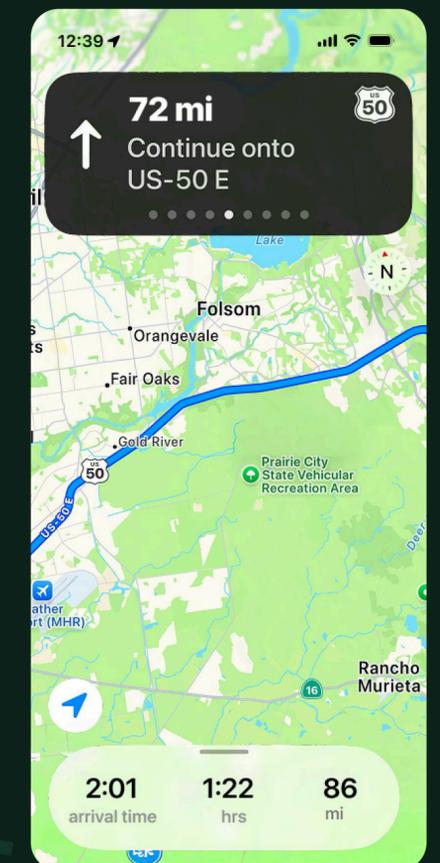
Plan with Ease



All-in One App

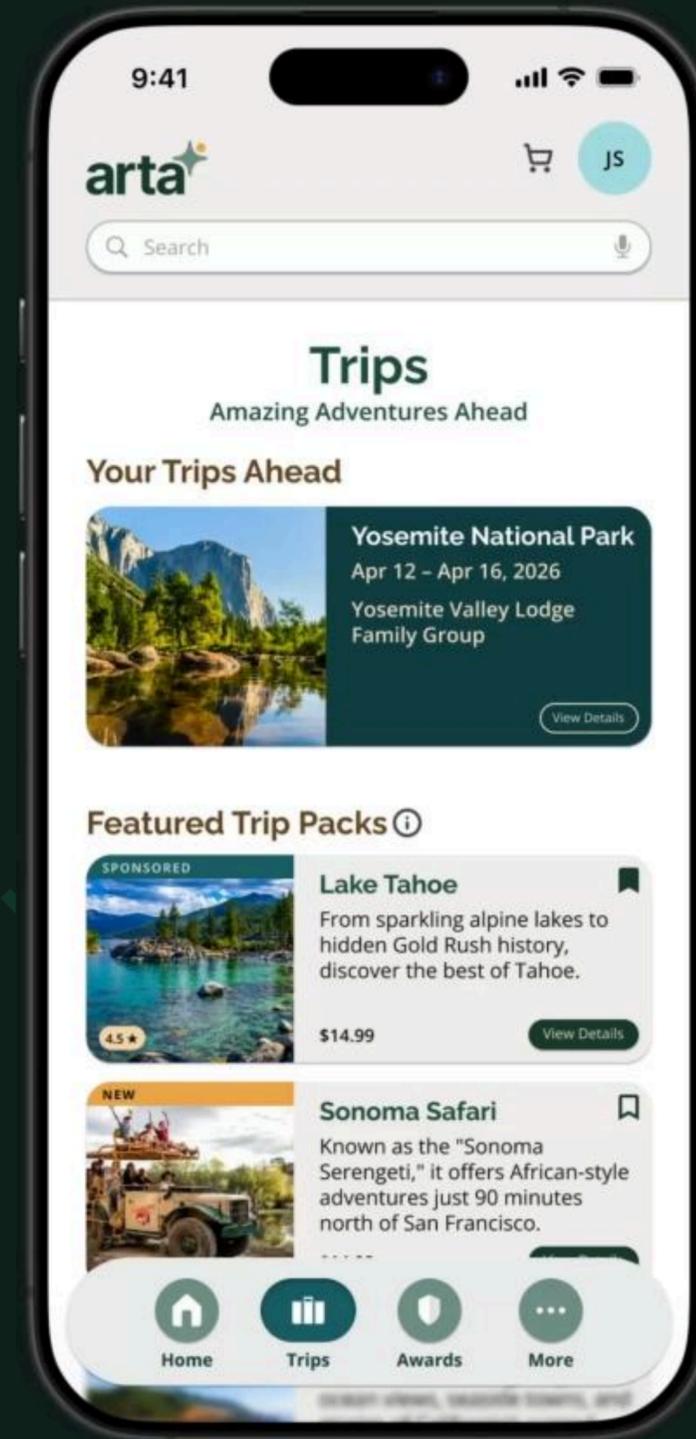


Engage on the Journey



REDUCING LOGISTICAL OVERLOAD

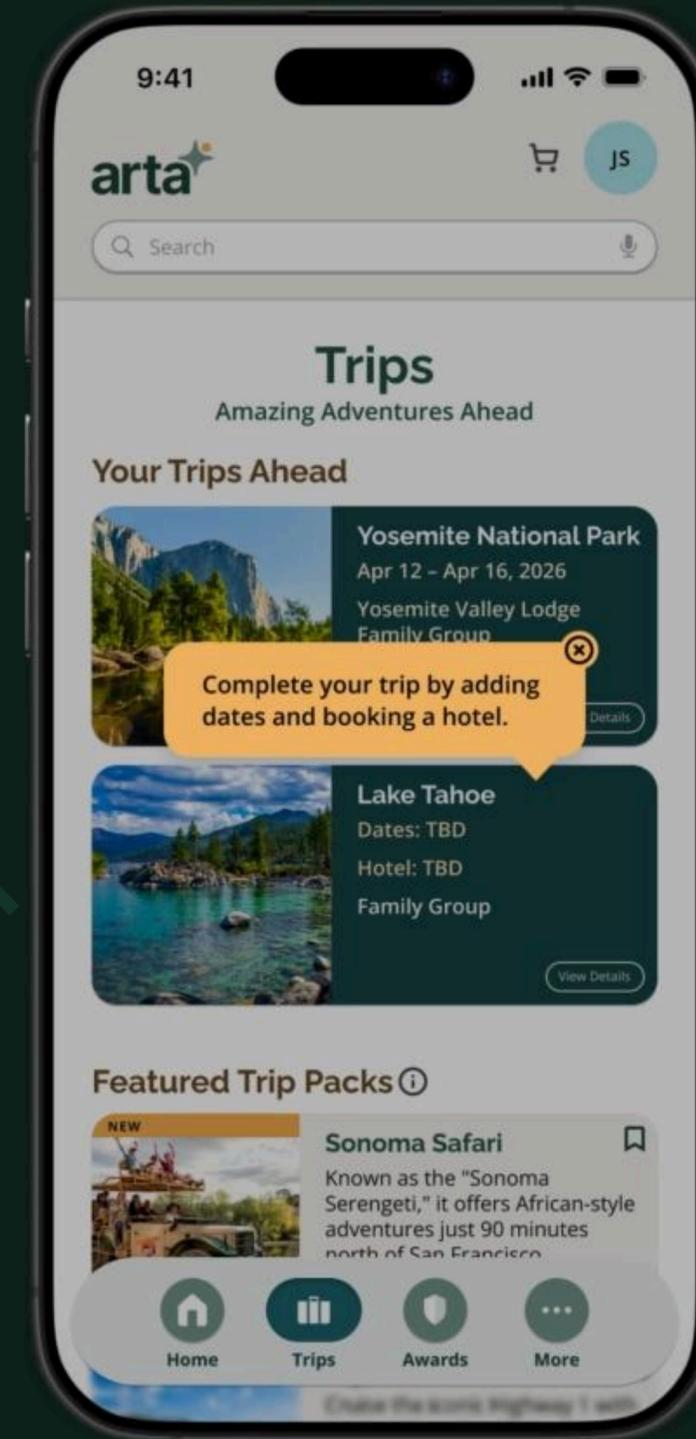
Simplifying How Families Plan and Choose



[Play Video >](#)

CLARITY & CONSOLIDATION

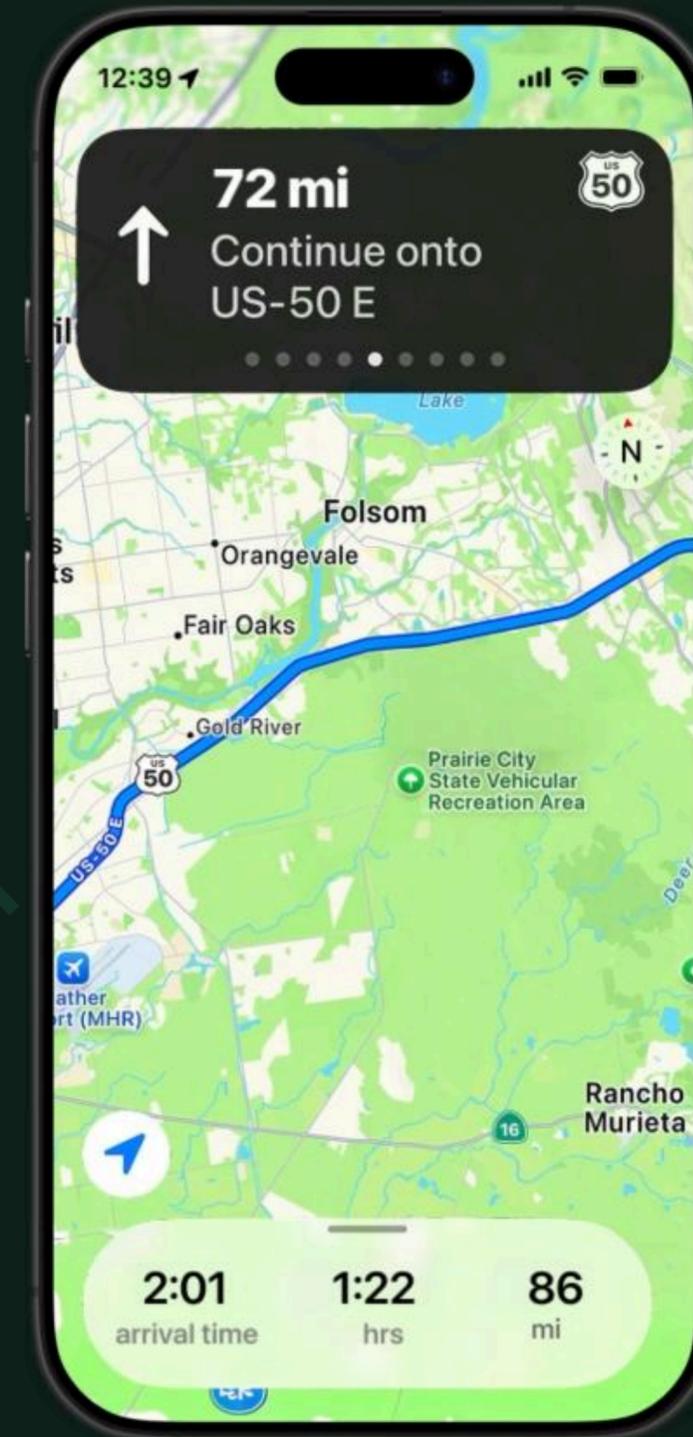
Bringing Hotel Booking Into One Clear, Guided Flow



[Play Video >](#)

LIFE ON THE ROAD

Supporting the Whole Family, Moment by Moment



[Play Video >](#)

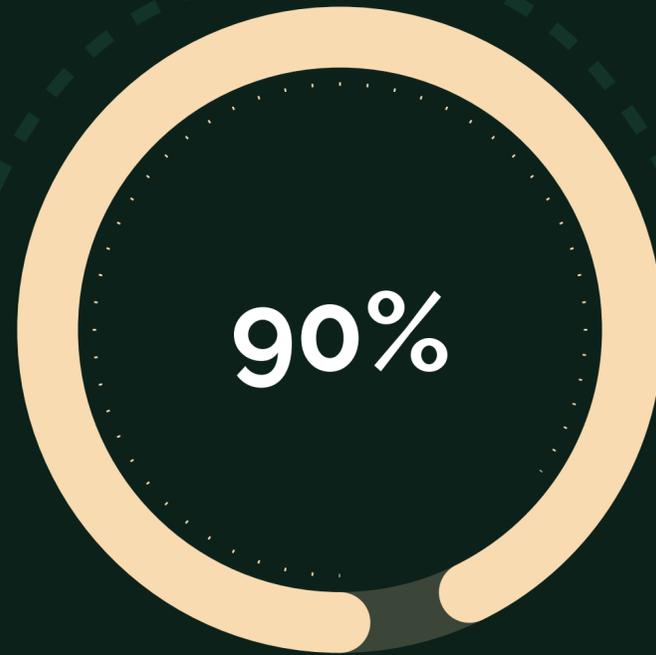
IMPACT

Successes



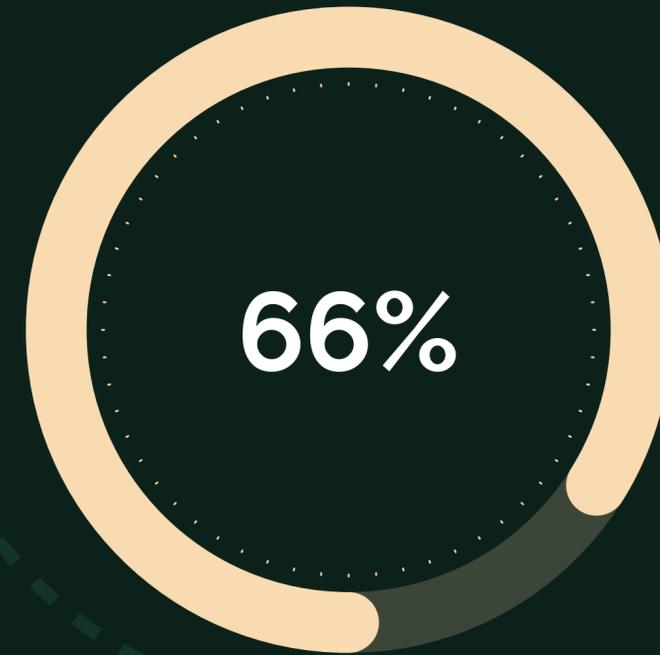
said ARTA reduced
planning effort

(6/6 in usability testing)



felt ARTA supported real
family connection across
the trip

(9 out of 10 adults across interviews + testing)



said personalization
increased trust &
usefulness

(4/6 in usability; 4/6 in interviews echoed it)

IMPACT

Opportunities



Would like to see in-app booking in the future



Want clearer permission language/UI



Want more control over personalization

This is still evolving — and that's a good thing

NEXT STEPS

The Road Ahead

ARTA can grow through:

- Voice interface (“Hey Arta...”)
- AR overlays (learning through the window)
- Avatar creation for kids
- Family stop voting
- Offline mode
- AI auto-generated trip recaps

REFLECTIONS

What a Trip!

This project taught me:

- **Families are complex, emotional systems**
- **Designing for kids requires empathy + guardrails**
- **Reducing cognitive load is an act of care**
- **Clear language builds trust**
- **UX evolves through iteration, not assumption**

What a Trip!

This project taught me:

- Families are complex, emotional systems
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- Clear language builds trust
- UX evolves through iteration, not assumption

**ARTA reimagines the journey —
and creating it reimagined mine too.**



arta



Reimagine your journey.

Thank you!