

# BarterUp!

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# Project overview



## The product:

BarterUp! targets adults from diverse backgrounds, occupations, and income levels. It revolutionizes the way people connect and exchange skills and resources. This unique app provides a platform for effortless bartering of services. It facilitates collaboration and sustainability while combatting inflation.



## Project duration:

May 2023 - July 2023



# Project overview



## The problem:

BarterUp! addresses the challenge of connecting individuals who want to exchange goods and services in a simple and efficient manner, overcoming the limitations of traditional bartering methods.



## The goal:

The goal of BarterUp! is to facilitate seamless and mutually beneficial exchanges by providing a user-friendly platform that cultivates trust, convenience, and community engagement, all while combating inflation and promoting a sustainable and equitable economy.

# Project overview



## My role:

I was responsible for the end-to-end design of BarterUp!, covering user experience, research, interaction design, visual design, and information architecture.



## Responsibilities:

- Conducting competitive analysis
- Creating user personas
- Developing information architecture & wireframes
- Designing user interfaces
- Prototyping
- Conducting usability testing
- Iterating on designs based on feedback

# Understanding the user

- User research
- Personas
- Problem statements
- User journey maps

# User research: summary



In my user research, I conducted a competitive analysis as a starting point to understand the existing landscape of bartering options. Initially, I assumed that there were limited options available for bartering. However, through my research, I discovered that there are indeed existing platforms and services that facilitate bartering. This revelation prompted me to dig deeper and identify areas where I could improve upon existing ideas. By analyzing the strengths and weaknesses of the competitors, I gained valuable insights into what is currently working well and what can be enhanced in the bartering space. This research process helped me refine my understanding of the market and informed my decisions for creating a more robust and user-centered solution with BarterUp!.

# User research: pain points

1

## Lack of Reliability

The BarterUp! app addresses the issue of reliability by implementing a robust user verification system and incorporating user ratings and reviews to ensure trustworthy and reliable barter partners.

2

## Finding Barter Partners

With its extensive user base and advanced search functionality, the BarterUp! app makes it easy to find compatible barter partners based on location, skills, and preferences, expanding the opportunities for successful exchanges.

3

## Limited Platform Options

Unlike traditional bartering methods, the BarterUp! app offers a wide range of platform options, including in-app messaging, and a comprehensive listing system, providing users with diverse and convenient options.

4

## Inefficiency of Traditional Methods

BarterUp! revolutionizes traditional bartering methods by digitizing the process. Users can swiftly connect, discuss, and finalize barter agreements, saving time and improving overall efficiency.

# Persona: Emily

## Problem statement:

Emily is a widowed homemaker who needs home repairs done because she no longer has a husband to complete those tasks.



Emily

**Age:** 35

**Education:** High School

**Hometown:** Greensboro, NC

**Family:** Widow, 4 children

**Occupation:** Homemaker

*"I didn't just lose my partner, I lost my handyman"*

## Goals

- Get home repairs completed
- Make lasting connections for future exchanges
- Be of service to someone else in need

## Frustrations

- Lack of trust and safety with allowing someone in/around her home
- Safety going into someone else's home

Emily, a young widow with 4 children, lost her husband 2 years ago. Juggling part-time work and full-time parenting, she struggles with a growing list of home repairs. Money is tight, but she excels in domestic skills like cooking, cleaning, and babysitting, which she can offer for barter on the platform.



# Persona: Edward

## Problem statement:

Edward is a student and single parent who needs help balancing his many responsibilities because he lacks support from family members.



**Edward**

**Age:** 40

**Education:** Associate Degree

**Hometown:** Winston-Salem, NC

**Family:** Single Parent of 1

**Occupation:** Student

*“Parenting alone is hard.”*

## Goals

- Find reliable childcare
- Make healthier food choices for both him and his daughter
- Be of service to someone else in need

## Frustrations

- Balancing responsibilities
- Lack of support from family
- Financial difficulties

Edward, a single father and full-time student, faces challenges with childcare and tight finances due to school loans. He worries about relying on fast food for his 7-year-old daughter. Additionally, he finds stress relief and a creative outlet through engaging in DIY projects during breaks from school.

# User journey map

## Goals:

Empower Emily by designing an intuitive and user-friendly interface that maximizes her ability to exchange her skills for services needed.

## Thought Process:

To cater to Emily's vulnerability, it is crucial to facilitate a trustworthy environment where she can feel safe and empowered to connect with like-minded individuals, share her skills and services, and establish mutually beneficial barter agreements. This will enable her to pursue her goal of finding creative ways to afford staying at home with her children after the loss of her husband.

### Persona: Emily

Goal: Find creative ways to afford staying at home with her children

ACTION	Download App	Creates Profile	Lists skill she possesses that she is willing to barter	Lists services she could benefit from	Scrolls for relaxation
TASK LIST	A. See's a social media influencer talking about home much the app has simplified her life. B. Downloads the app C. Submits Background Check D. Completes references with contact information to be verified prior to adding to profile.	A. Adds a public picture and Bio B. Completes a private judgement-free questionnaire about her preferences and criteria for families she would like to offer her services to. C. Completes private questionnaire on family preferences for services	A. Makes a list of skills she possesses to barter with. B. Pays for subscription C. Specifies her availability about her preferences and criteria for families she has made, houses she has cleaned, and subjects in which she can provide tutoring.	A. Makes a list of nonurgent projects she needs help with around her home B. Sets the criteria for users who can respond C. Adds pictures of users who don't possess the necessary skills	A. Opens apps to check for new listings after putting her kids to bed B. Reads other users reviews C. Checks to see if she has new messages D. Interacts without clear purpose
FEELING ADJECTIVE	Secure at the extra security measures taken  Impatient with how much time it takes to start using the app	Curious if her information will be used in ways she doesn't approve	Concerned these services will not be of value to others  Proud to have already saved her family money by paying for a year subscription up front	Concerned about opening her home to a stranger  Hopeful to finally complete some projects that have been untouched for quite some time.	Anticipatory expectation of future prospects  Relaxed by the action of scrolling
IMPROVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES	Develop a "Search Only Mode" that conceals specific user information in listings, catering to individuals who wish to quickly explore the app to determine its suitability for their needs.	Continually explore questionnaires to improve compatibility, much like that in a dating website  Secure data  Reassure users their data will not be sold.	Self-promotion advertising of success stories from classic and uniquely skilled users alike	Create system to recognize users who frequently use our app to encourage friendly competition  Link rating to visibility to promote higher rated, less risky users	Explore a scrolling mode visually similar to that of a social media app for those that enjoy mindless scrolling  Add a "Save for Later" option  Add a "Share" option

# User journey map

## Goals:

Provide Edward with an efficient and time-saving solution that allows him to easily find and vet reliable services within his busy schedule, enabling him to delegate tasks and responsibilities effectively.

## Thought Process:

Understanding Edward's roles and schedule, it was crucial to create a seamless UX that streamlines searching, vetting, and making trustworthy connections. By optimizing the platform's features and accessibility, he can efficiently find reliable services, freeing up his time to focus on various responsibilities in his home, school, and work life all while taking into consideration his limited finances.

### Persona: Edward

Goal: Find Reliable Childcare For His Daughter While He Does School Work From Home

ACTION	Download App	Search for Childcare	Read Reviews	Contact Selection	Begin Utilizing Services
TASK LIST	A. Make a selection B. Download the app C. Submit Background Check D. Create profile	A. Utilizes advanced search features to find potential candidates B. Consider what candidates want to barter C. Narrow down choices	A. Read users ratings B. Make a selection	A. Contact selection B. Conduct video interview within the app C. Discuss specifics including a start date	A. Create a service contract within the app B. Begin utilizing services
FEELING ADJECTIVE	Overwhelmed by choices Excited to try his selection	Hopeful to have found a good fit for childcare	Optimistic he has found the right person for his family	Apprehensive about his selection  Comforted with video interview	Happy with his choice  Supported by his selection
IMPROVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES	Paid advertisement to get the app name out  Seek out social media influencers to use the app to increase ratings	Always increasing the number of users to create the most possible results	Incentive system for reviewing users  Follow up with claims of users suspected of ill intent	Continually improving video platform  Exploring alternative interview options	Encourage open communication channels  Create system to recognize users who frequently use our app to encourage friendly competition



# Paper wireframes

## Goals:

Draft a user-centric paper wireframes for the BarterUp! App that meet the needs of a diverse group of users, including Emily, Edward, and others.

## Thought Process:

By considering the requirements and pain points of users like Emily and Edward, as well as other potential users, the paper wireframes were tailored to address reliability, partner finding, platform options, and traditional method inefficiencies. The aim was to create a visually impactful representation that communicates the app's features and guides future design iterations.



# Digital wireframes

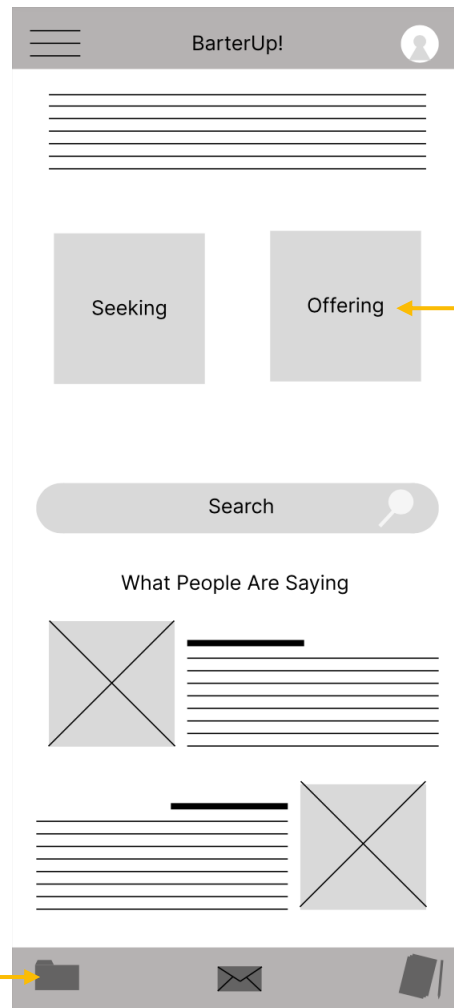
## Goals:

Emphasize the searchability of services being sought and services being offered, while emphasizing the ability for users to save profiles of prospective connections.

## Thought Process:

I wanted the design to optimize search capabilities, while enabling users to easily find and connect with desired services, and also providing the functionality to save profiles for future connections, enhancing the overall user experience on the BarterUp! platform.

Users can save profiles for future or past connections.



It was vital to prioritize the searchability of both services being sought and services being offered.

# Digital wireframes

## Goals:

Prioritize transparency, trust-building, and efficient matchmaking by incorporating a rating system, match indicators, introduction section and reporting function.

## Thought Process:

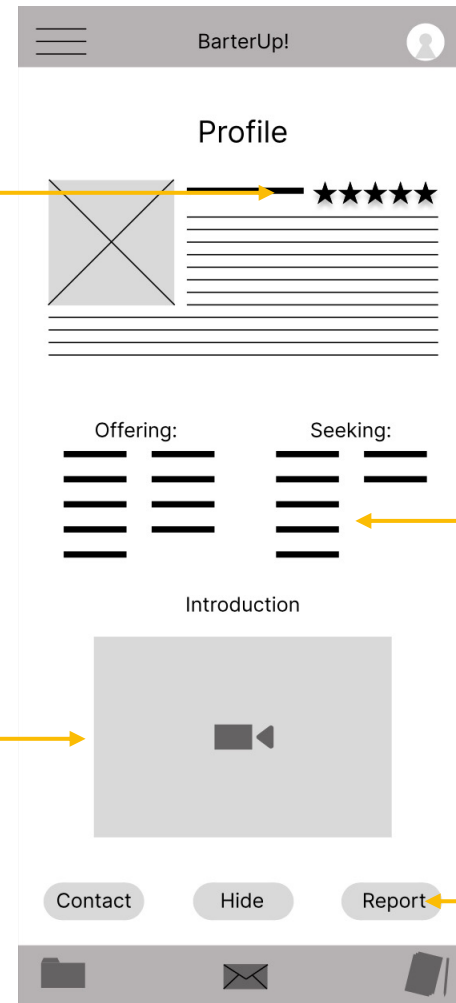
By considering the importance of transparency and trust, I focused on a user profile that integrates a rating system enabling users to view feedback of previous exchanges. Additionally, I implemented match indicators through bulleted lists, provided an introduction section to create a sense of connection, and incorporated a reporting function to ensure a safe and respectful environment.

### Rating System:

Users can provide and view ratings based on previous exchanges, ensuring transparency and building trust within the community.

### Introduction Section:

A designated area for users to introduce themselves fosters a sense of connection, making prospective connections feel more personal and enhancing safety.



### Match Indicator:

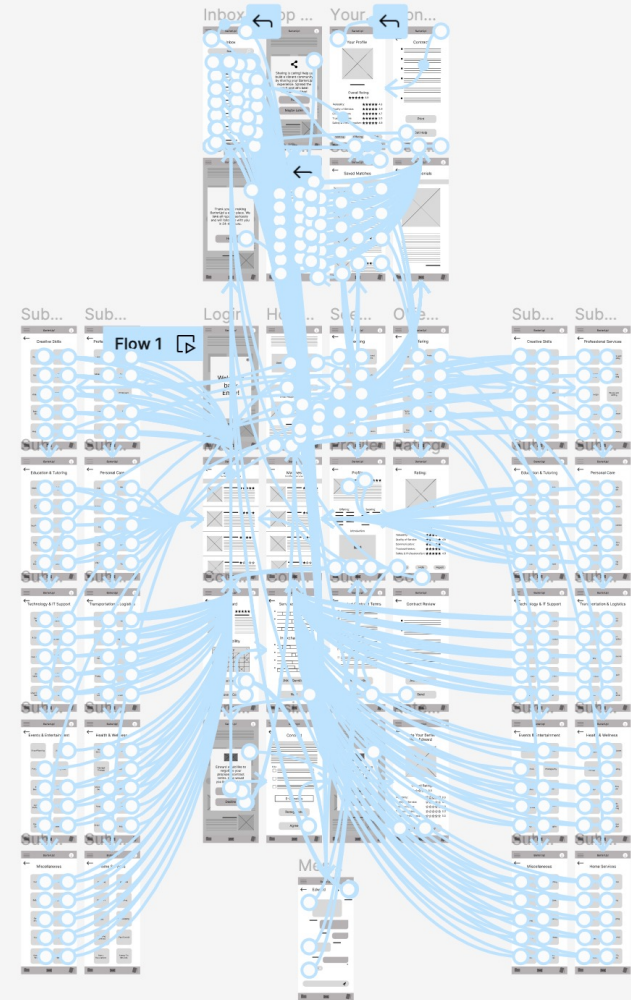
Clear and concise bullet lists showcase the services users are seeking and offering, enabling quick identification of potential matches.

### Reporting Functionality:

Users can report profiles that violate community guidelines, allowing prompt action and investigations to maintain a safe and respectful environment.

## Low-fidelity prototype

## BarterUp! App





# Usability study: findings

The usability studies provided key insights and actionable recommendations that enhanced the overall usability and user satisfaction of BarterUp!

## Round 1 findings

- 1 Approval of reporting ability and in-app communication design
- 2 Need for confirmation pop-up's
- 3 Broken frame connections

## Round 2 findings

- 1 Effective user interface
- 2 Need for increased font size
- 3 Expressed layout improvements to category pages

## Refining the design

- Mockups
- High-fidelity prototype
- Accessibility

# Mockups

In an effort to combat the issue of font size I created a scrollable profile with sections such as Introduction, Skills and Expertise, Experience, and Showcase.

## Before usability study

### Profile



**Edward M.** ★★★★★

With a wide range of skills and a passion for quality work, I offer comprehensive services to meet your needs. As a skilled handyman, I excel in resolving household repairs with precision and efficiency. From fixing leaky faucets to tackling automotive issues and carpentry projects, I approach each task with careful attention to detail.

My expertise extends to plumbing, where I ensure reliable installations and optimal functionality. When it comes to carpentry, I bring creativity and craftsmanship to transform ideas into beautiful creations. Additionally, I take pride in providing exceptional lawn care, nurturing vibrant and well-maintained outdoor spaces.

Moreover, as a talented videographer, I capture cherished moments and create compelling visual narratives. With an eye for composition and technical expertise, I turn ordinary scenes into unforgettable stories.

I am dedicated to professionalism, reliability, and customer satisfaction. Clear communication and exceeding expectations are at the forefront of my service. When you choose me, you can expect exceptional workmanship, attention to detail, and a friendly approach.

Whether you need a skilled handyman, reliable plumbing services, expert carpentry, meticulous lawn care, or captivating videography, I am here to bring your projects to life.

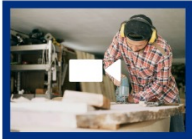
#### Offering:

- Handyman Services
- Automotive Repairs
- Plumbing
- Carpentry
- Lawn Care
- Videography

#### Seeking:




- Laundry Services
- Child Transportation
- Childcare
- Tutoring
- Meal Prep

### Introduction



[Contact](#)[Hide](#)[Report](#)

## After usability study



### Profile:



**Edward M.**

Overall Rating: ★★★★★ 4.8

### Seeking:

[Laundry Services](#)[Personal Shopper](#)[Childcare](#)[Meal Prep](#)[Study Partner](#)[Tutoring](#)

### Experience:

I have over 10 years of experience completing household projects in my own home. I have a proven track record of resolving repairs with precision and efficiency, ensuring long-lasting solutions. From minor fixes to complex renovations, I have the expertise to handle various tasks. Over the past year, I have gained a reputation for delivering exceptional workmanship and exceeding the expectations of Bartleby exchanges. Satisfaction is always my top priority.

I am dedicated to professionalism, reliability, and customer satisfaction. Clear communication and exceeding expectations are at the forefront of my service. When you choose me, you can expect exceptional workmanship, attention to detail, and a friendly approach.

Whether you need a skilled handyman, reliable plumbing services, expert carpentry, meticulous lawn care, or captivating videography, I am here to bring your projects to life. Feel free to reach out to discuss your specific requirements and let's turn your vision into reality while creating a mutually beneficial partnership in the process.

### Offering:

[Handyman Services](#)[Automotive Repairs](#)[Plumbing](#)[Carpentry](#)[Lawn Care](#)[Videography](#)

### Skills and Expertise:

As a handyman, I excel in various areas of household work. I have extensive experience in resolving

### Showcase:

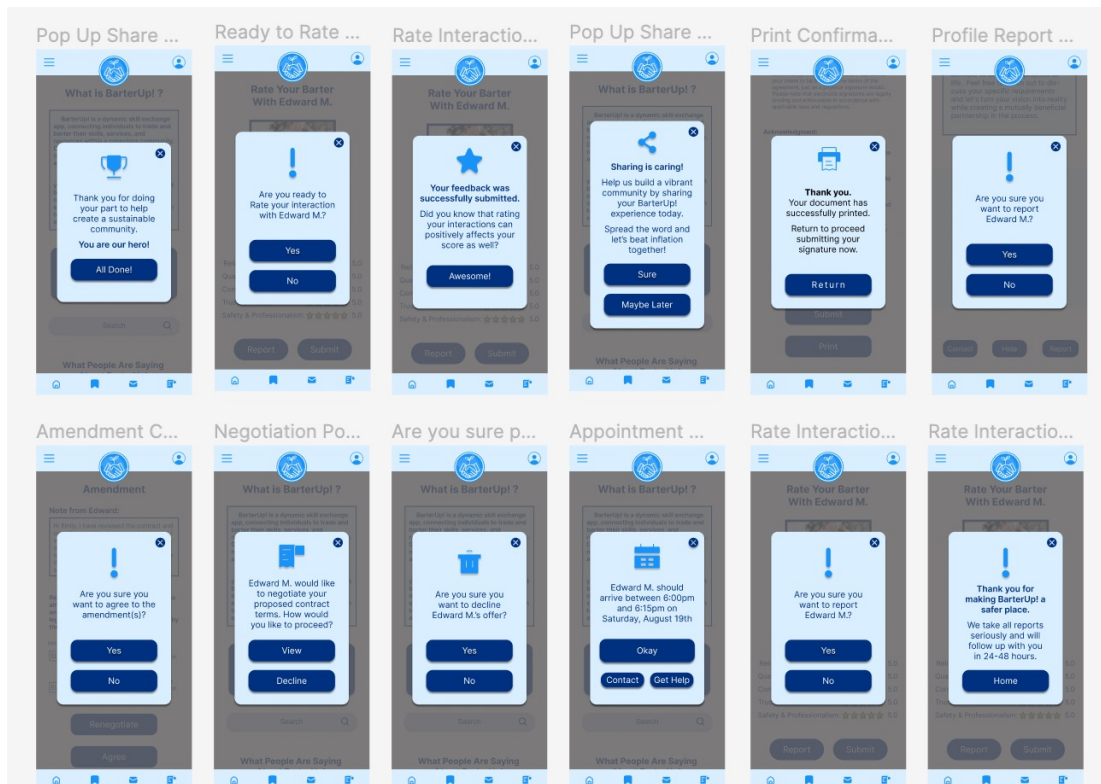


[Contact](#)[Hide](#)[Report](#)

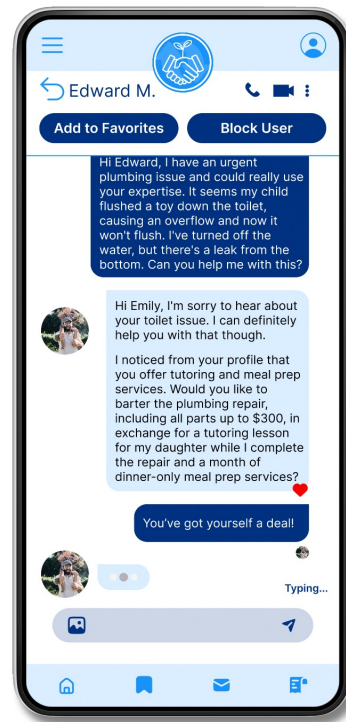
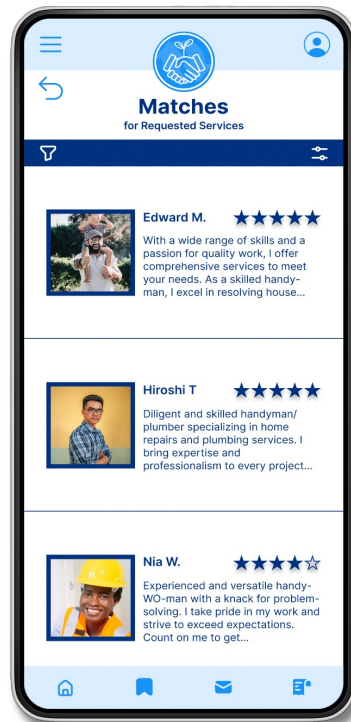
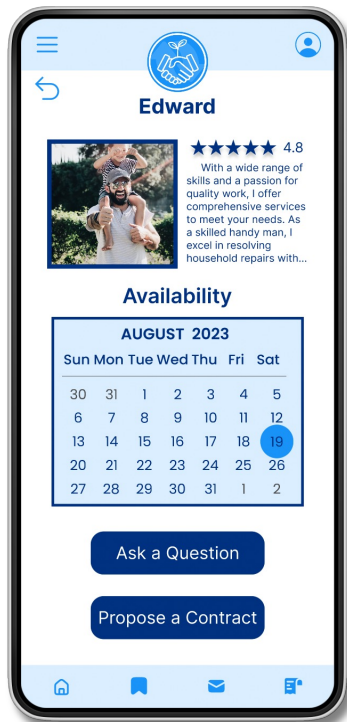
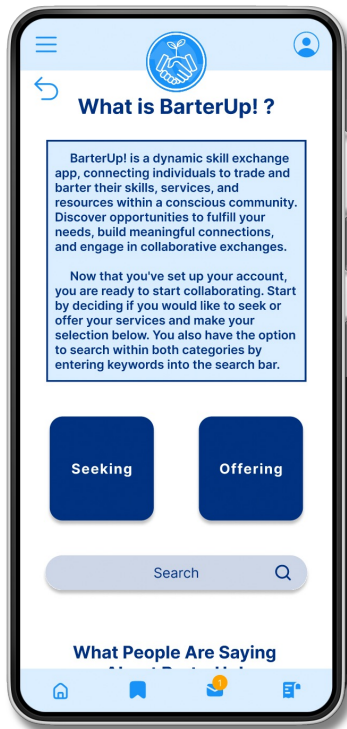
# Mockups

In response to feedback regarding the possibility of users making unintended selections, I implemented several pop-up notifications to enhance the user-friendliness of the app. Prior to the usability study, there were no such notifications in place.

After usability study

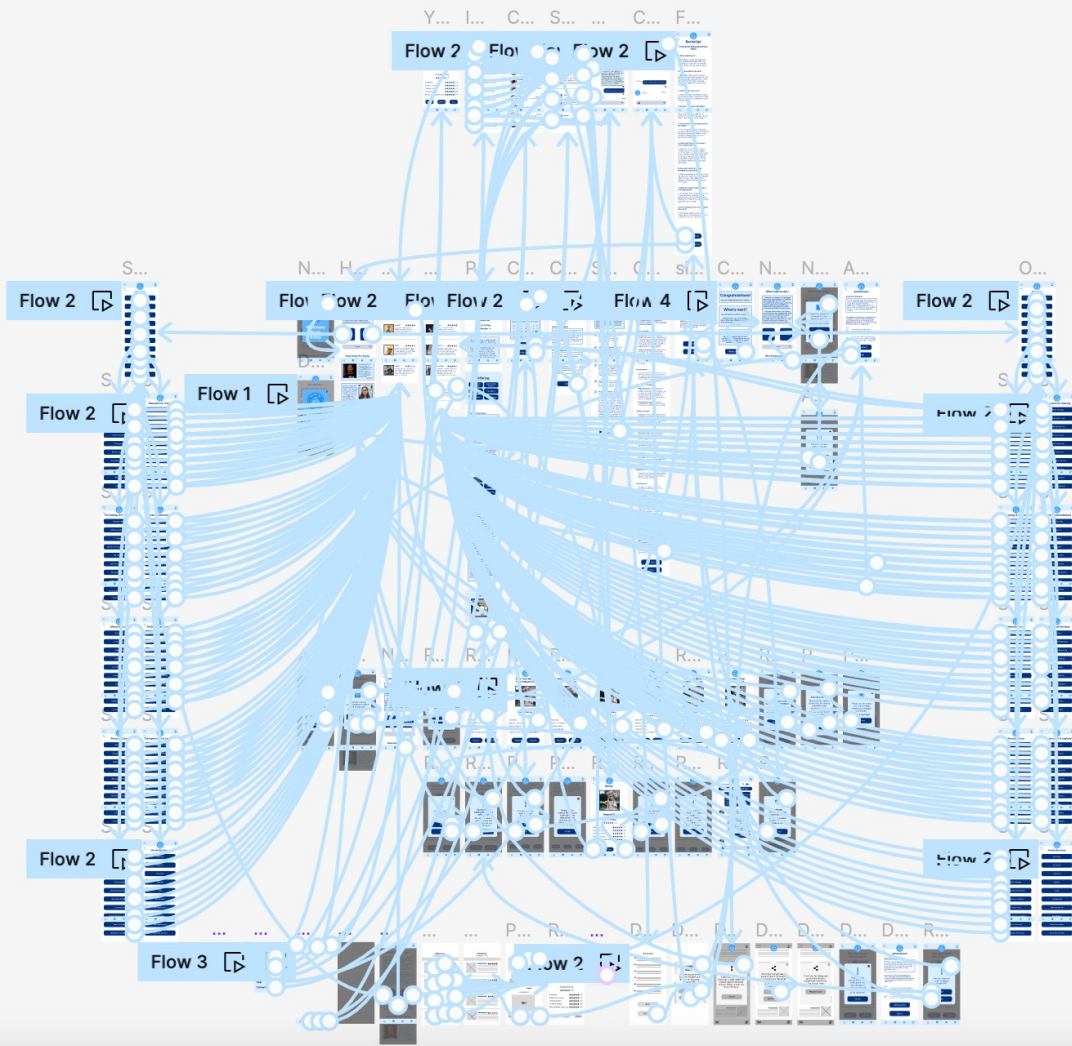


# Mockups



# High-fidelity prototype

[BarterUp! App](#)



# High-fidelity prototype

[BarterUp! App](#)



# Accessibility considerations

1

Considered text size to ensure readability for users of all abilities.

2

Color accessibility was a key focus in BaterUp!'s user interface design.

3

Provided users with easy navigation options, allowing them to move between screens and find their way back to the main interface.



# Going forward

## Takeaways:

- Accessibility considerations are top priority
- User safety is also very important

## Next Steps:

- Gather further user feedback
- Conduct additional usability testing
- Refine features based on findings

# Takeaways



## Impact:

The BarterUp! app has the potential to transform the way people engage in economic exchanges. It promotes sustainability, resourcefulness and equitable opportunities for individuals in their own local community.



## What I learned:

- I gained insight into the user-centered design process
- The importance of considering diverse user personas
- The role and value of usability testing

# Next steps

1

Continue usability testing to gather more feedback from a wider population.

2

Collaborate with other designers. I've learned the importance of this throughout this design and look forward to working on a team in the future.

3

Continue research and stay up-to-date on industry trends and best practice to ensure I am meeting the needs of the users.

# Let's connect!



Connect with me on [LinkedIn](#) to view my portfolio and learn more about my designs and other projects.

Thank you!