# YouMap Post Flow

PRODUCT DESIGN CASE STUDY

by Trevor Baum

What Is YouMap?

YouMap is a social mapping tool, currently in development for iOS. Like a social network on a map, it allows users to create and share personalized maps of their favorite places, form communities around places, and share information in real time.
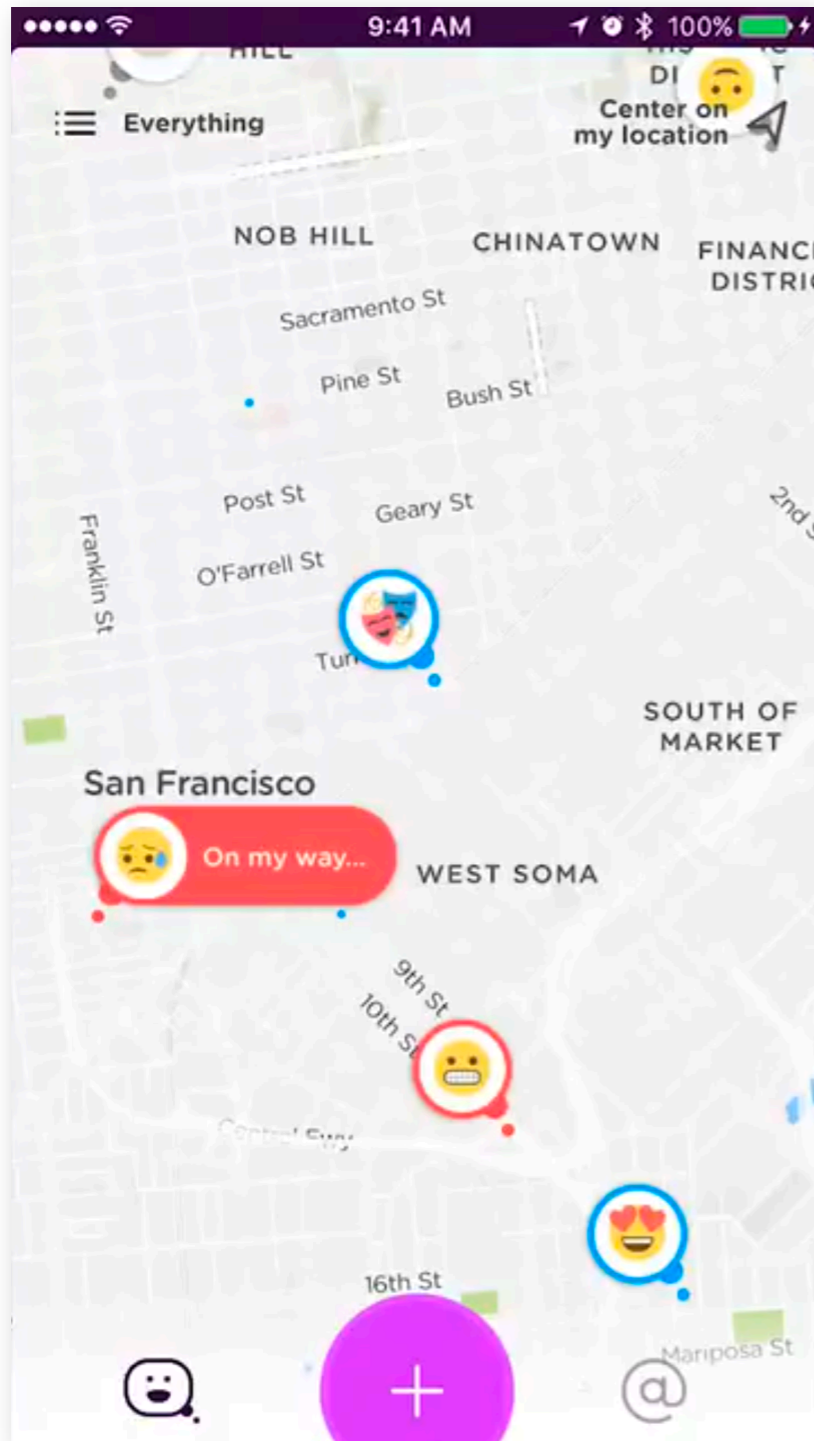
Background

When I arrived at YouMap in March 2018, I was the first in-house design hire. The product had been handed off from an agency and was in an unfinished state, with multiple conflicting style guides, and big usability issues.
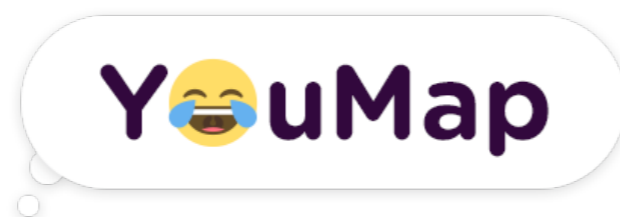
YouMap Logo

Original App Icon

Major Confusion

The product was centered around creating maps, and then creating posts on those maps, but after watching user testing videos, it was clear that new users weren't understanding basic things.

- Didn't understand the purpose of the product (e.g. "why would I use this app?)
- Didn't understand what map they were currently viewing or posting to
- Didn't understand the relationship between maps and posts
- Found the post flow to be overly linear and too many steps

User Testing Videos

One of the first things I did in approaching this problem was to watch videos of new users using the app for the first time, and attempting to create a post. This data informed my process and the product roadmap in making usability enhancements.
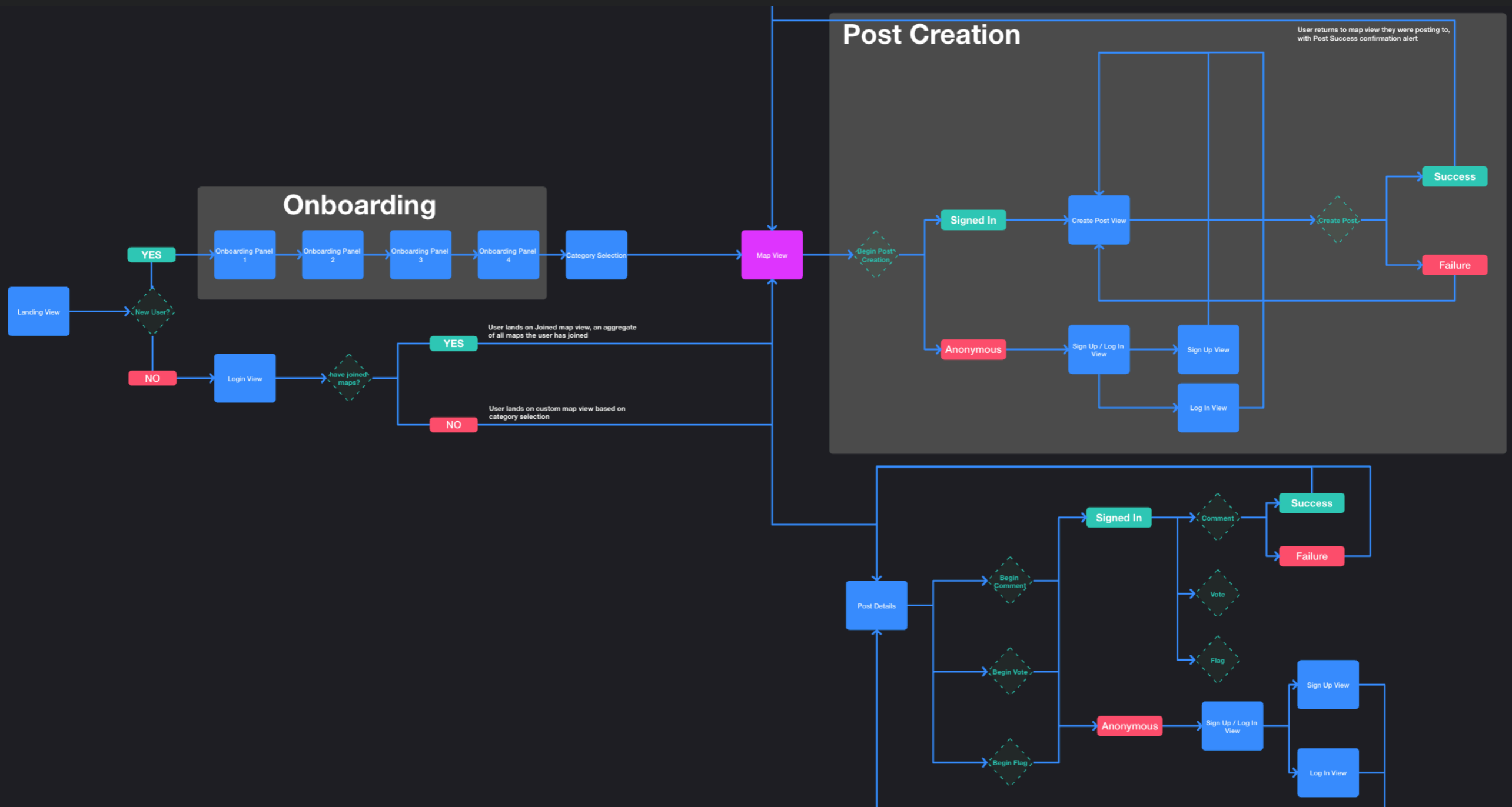
Founder Discussion

Spoke in depth with the founder about his vision for the product, its purpose, what posting should feel like, and the value of modularity and simplicity to create structured data.

Documentation

The product did not have an existing site map or other key documents. I wanted to get a better sense of the architecture and how the post model fits in to other areas of the app.

I created a product map in order to understand the scope and structure of YouMap.
it helped the whole team figure out how things fit together, and what was missing.

After discussing with the founder, I documented what we knew about the structure and components that made up Posts, Maps, tags, and other relevant metadata. We were aiming to create a nested system like a folder structure, that allowed for discovery and was not overly siloed.

Everything is an aggregation of all posts and maps on YouMap. Users cannot post in Everything, as they must select a category Atlas.

Atlasses are preset categories created by YouMap. Users are required to select an Atlas when creating a post, map, or question

Maps, Posts, and **Questions** are filtered up to the chosen category **Atlas** (e.g. Food), as well as up to **Everything**

Tags allow users to create communites around more granular topics than Atlas. Tags are added by users at the in the Post/Map/Question creation process (or can be added later)

EVERYTHING

Food Atlas

Food Maps

Posts within Food Maps

Food Posts not in Maps
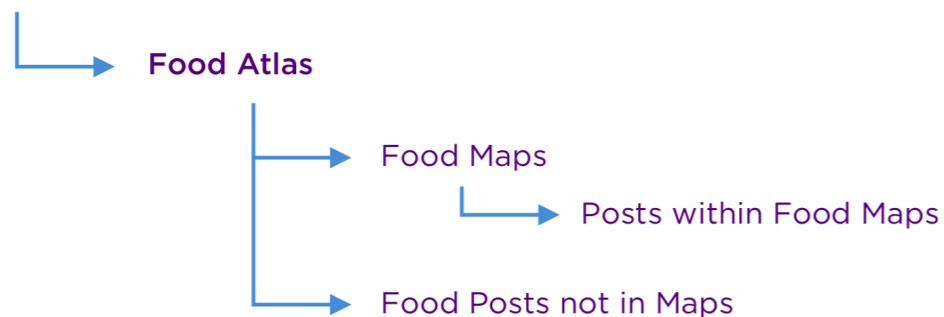
Use Cases

A Breather or AirBnB model app - properties with set attributes on a map

A parking product — an app that sells parking spots in realtime

Informational location-based product like Sit or Squat

Social crowd-based reporting product like Citizen and Waze

Social couponing - location aware deal suggestions

Questions

How do you design a system that enables users to browse categories and the maps within them

How do we fully bake the ideas of quick actions, limitations to customization

Atlas Switcher - Like Netflix? Appears on search

How do you visualize Atlases? People get the concept, but it needs to be visual and intuitive

Feedback

Post Info Components:

Channel
Emoji
Photo Attachment
Description
Share to Networks
Add to Map

Move away from Facebook posting model

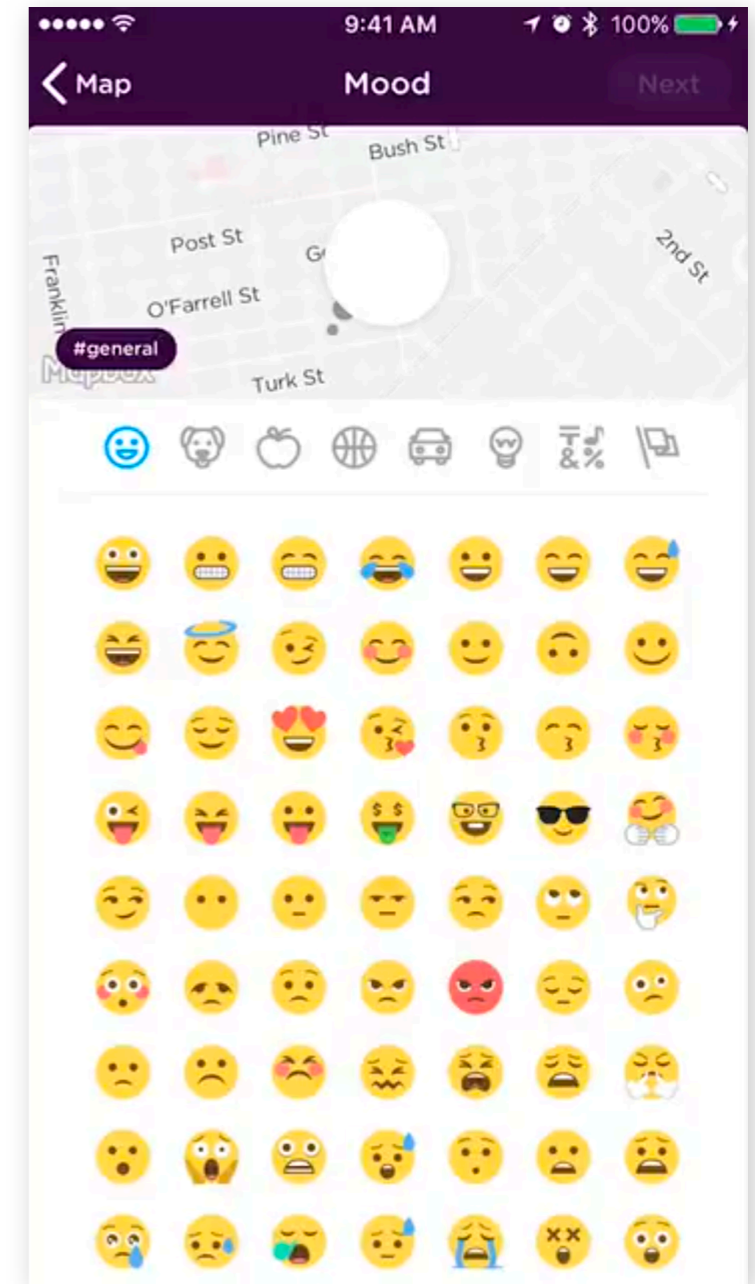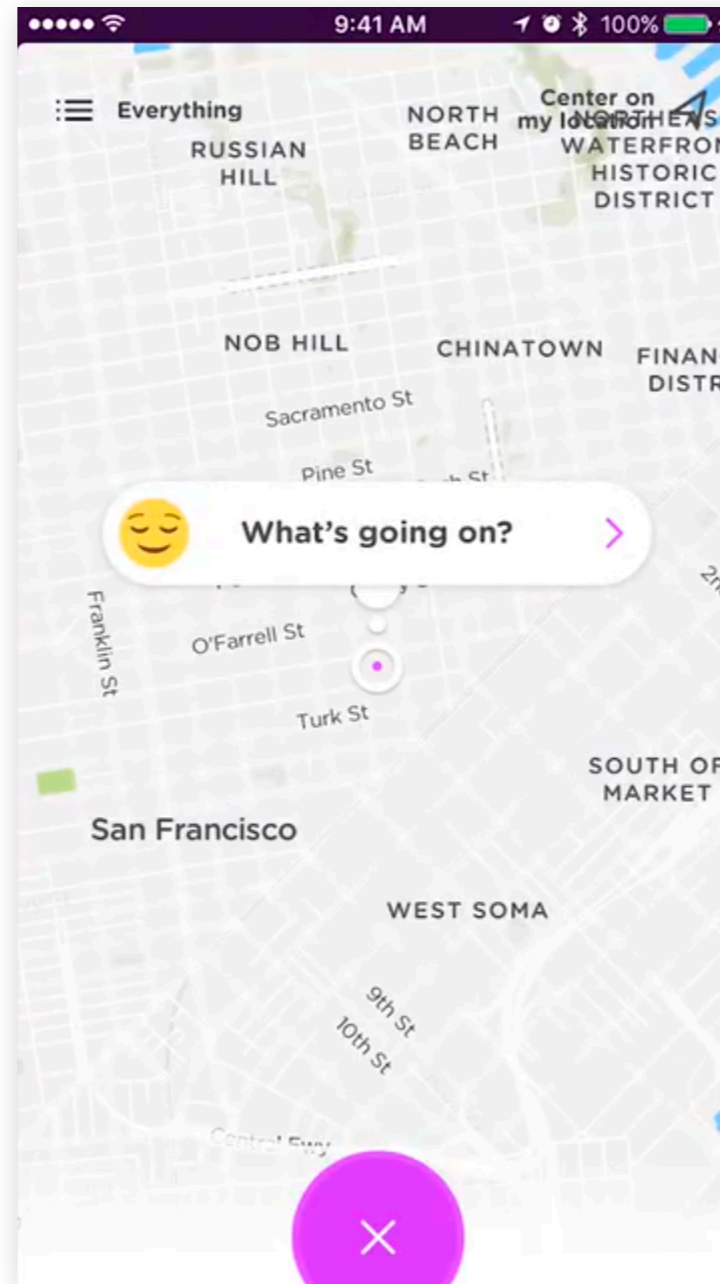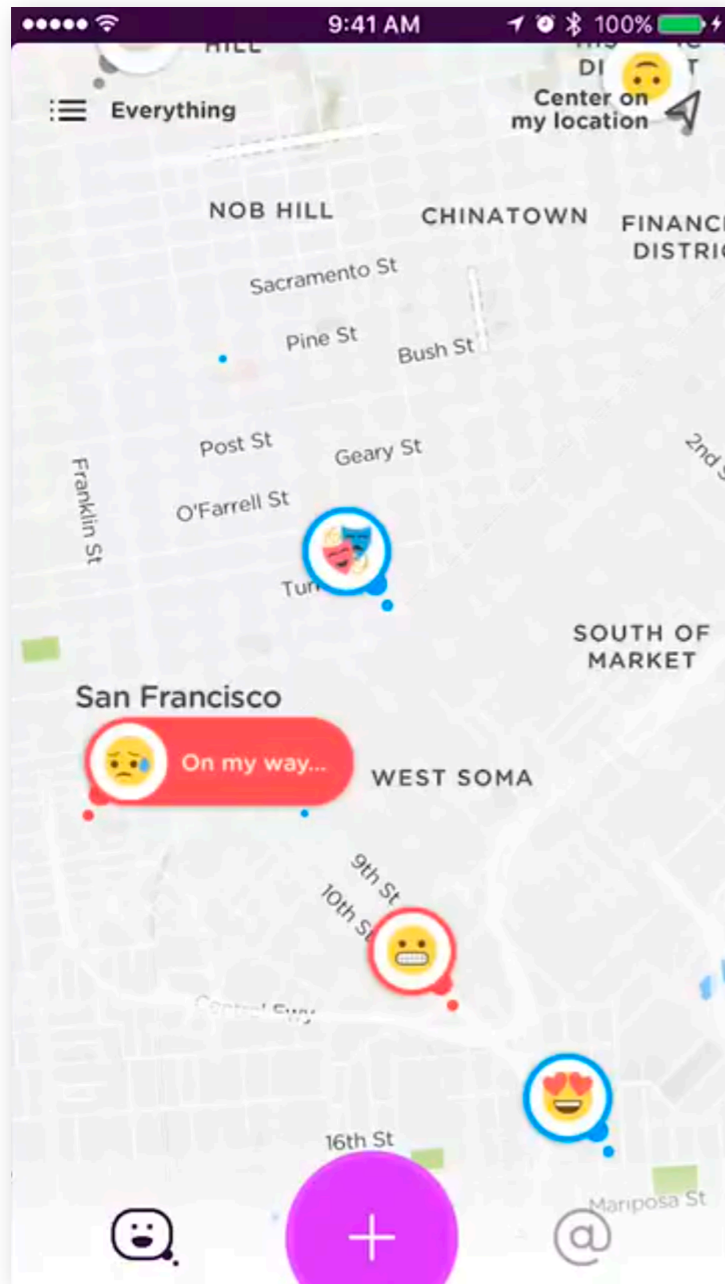Keep multimedia (photo/stream) early and immediate

Maybe move towards text over image (e.g. Stories)

Create Map should be different

Posting should be fun

How do we be flexible without being overwhelming?

The original designs made the action of creating a post into a linear, 6-7 step process, which made communicating realtime information difficult for users.
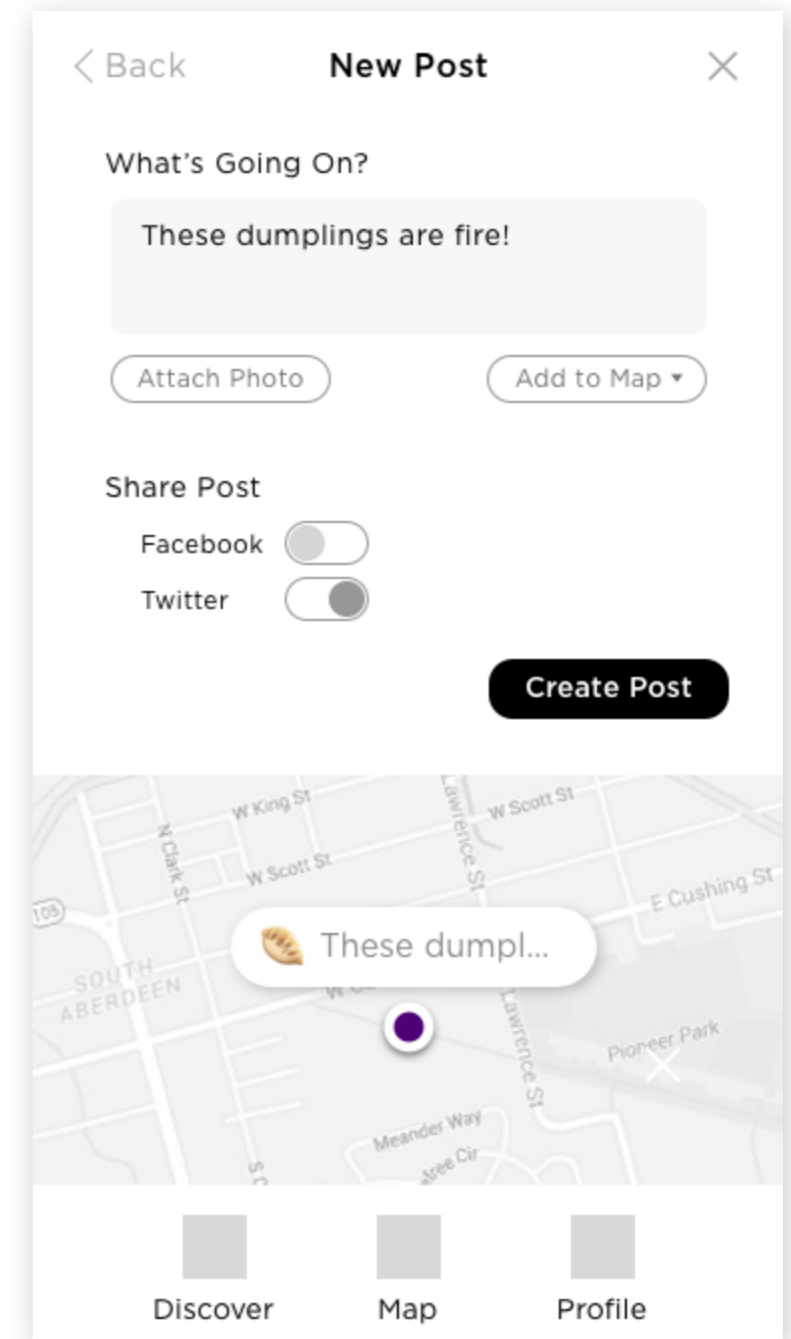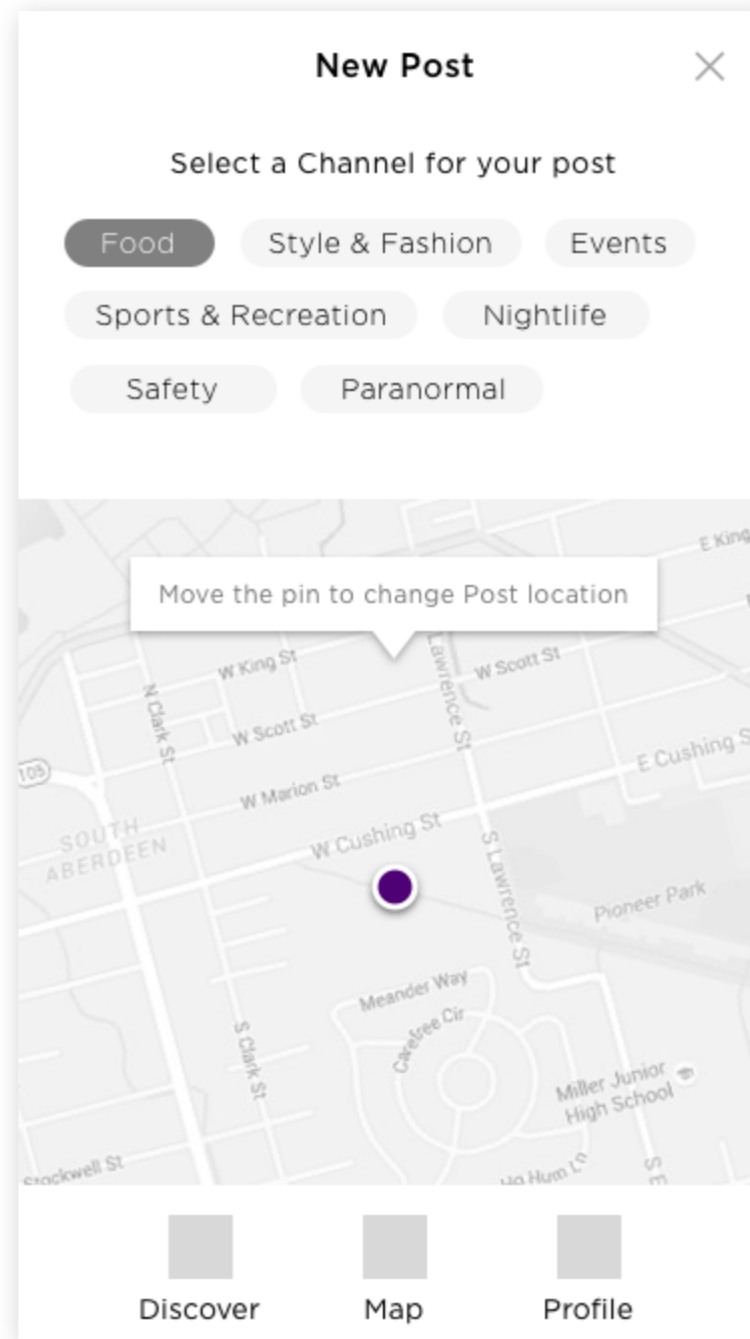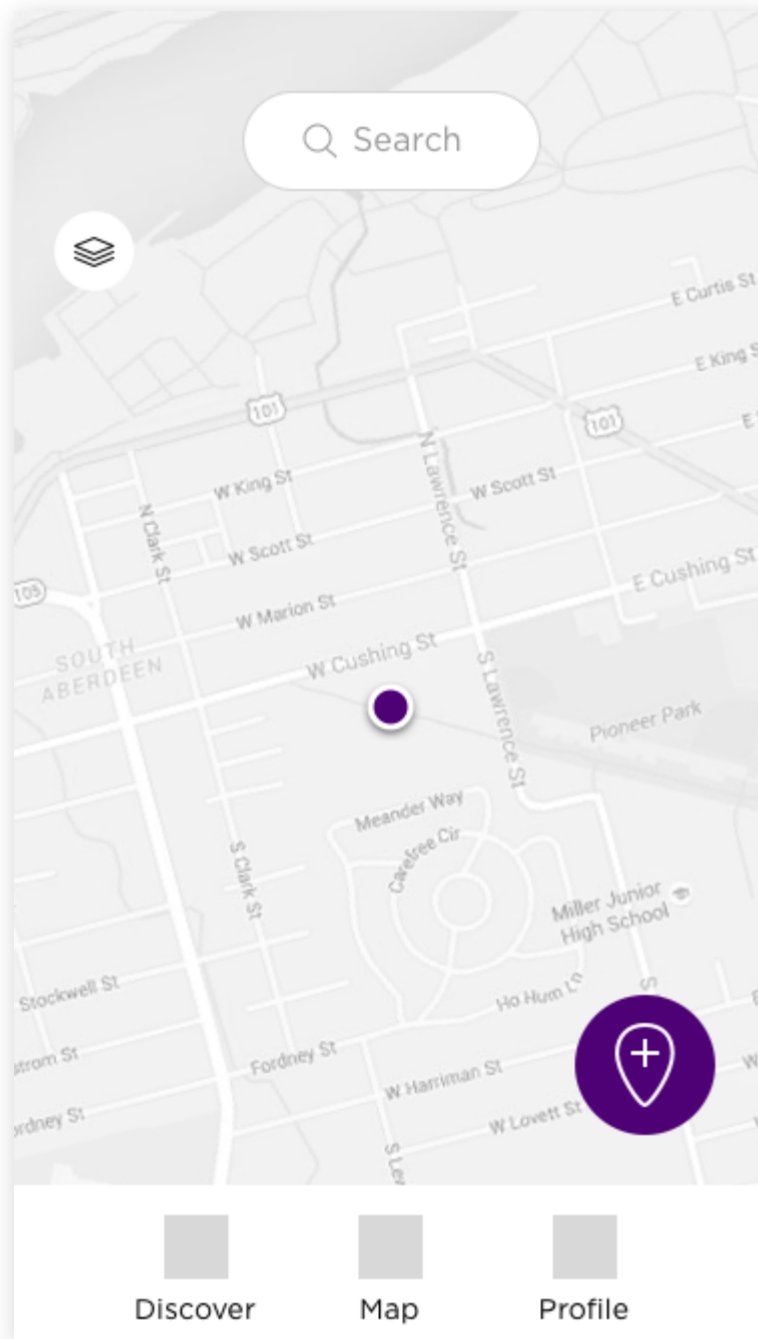
Users were frustrated by the number of steps it took to create a post, and confused about what map they were posting to.
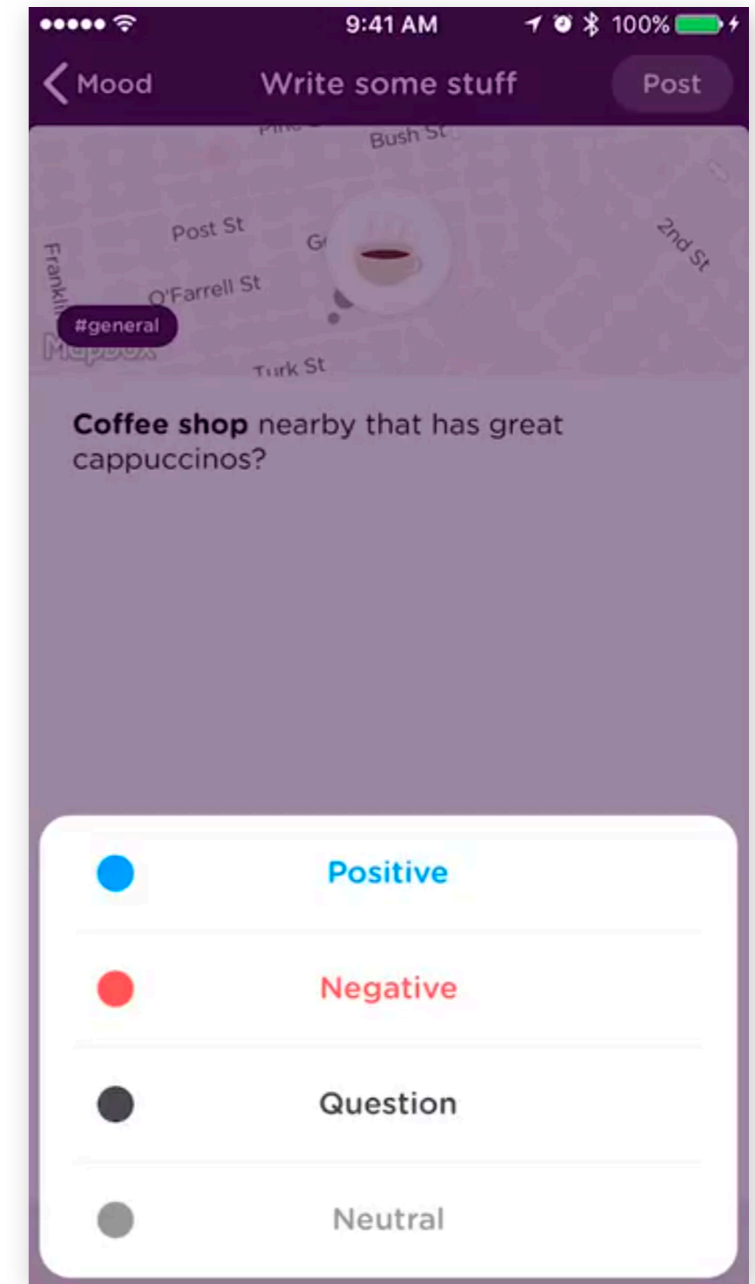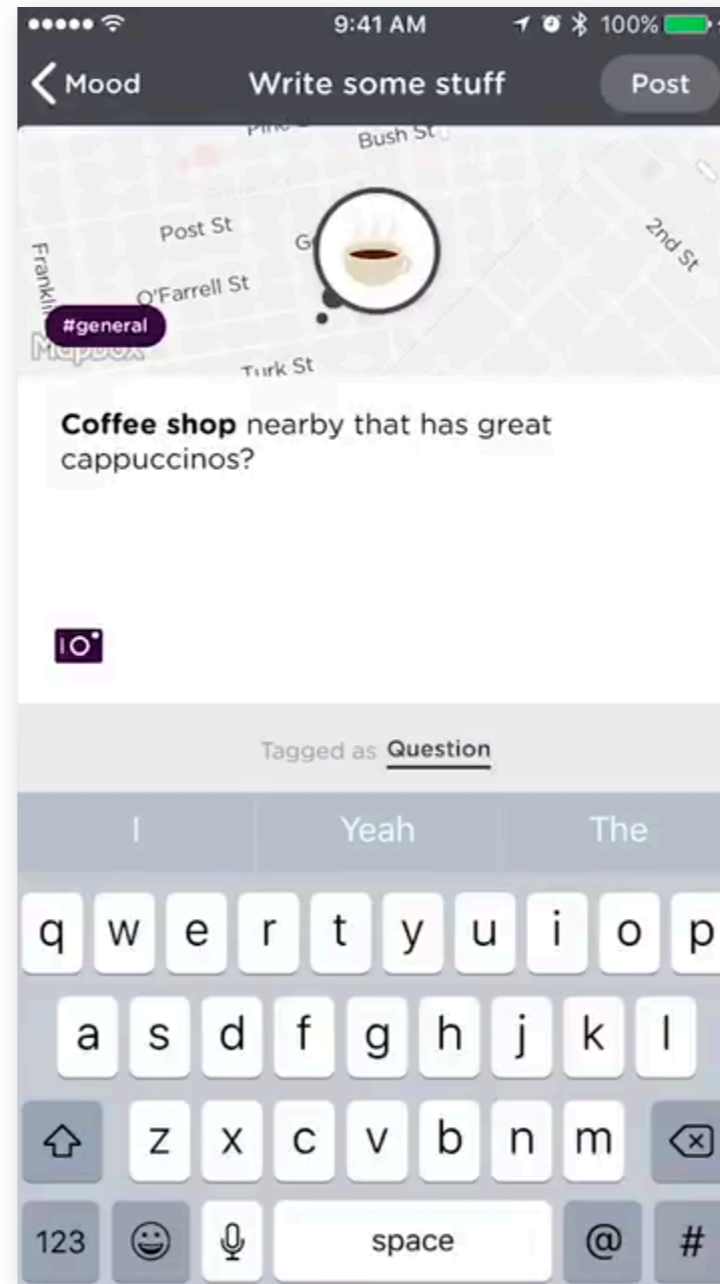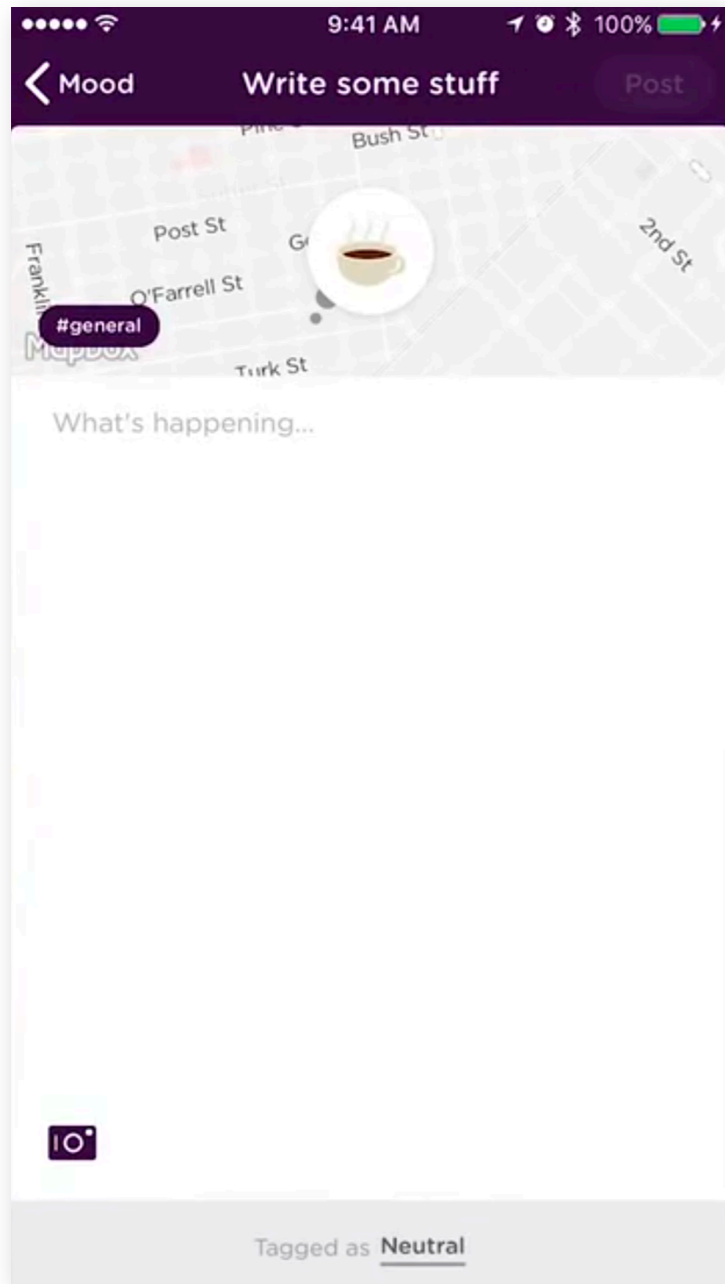
In our discussions, the founder stressed the importance of simplicity, modularity, and speed with the posting experience. Initially he put more of an emphasis on media, so the early designs reflect this.

Other options included a version that opened straight to a camera, for a more immediate media-based reporting direction. This early prototype also showed the bottom tray pattern that ended up becoming the final design.
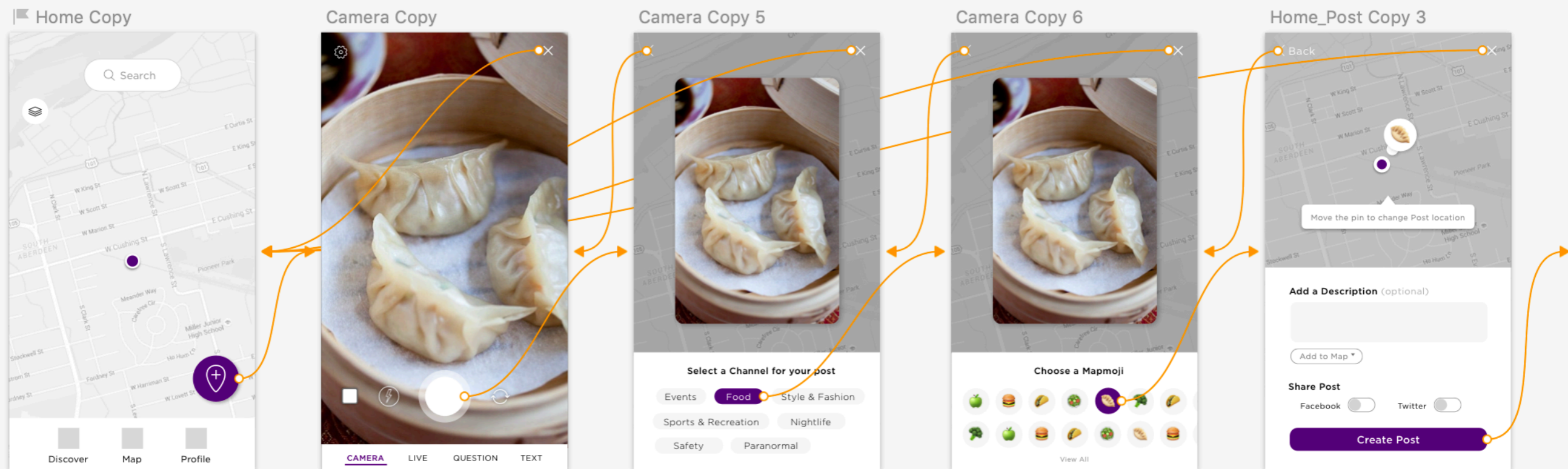
Addressing user confusion around posting was of utmost important. The Map Switcher is one of the first features I designed, which helped users easily tell what map they were viewing and posting to at any time, and provided a fast way to switch maps.
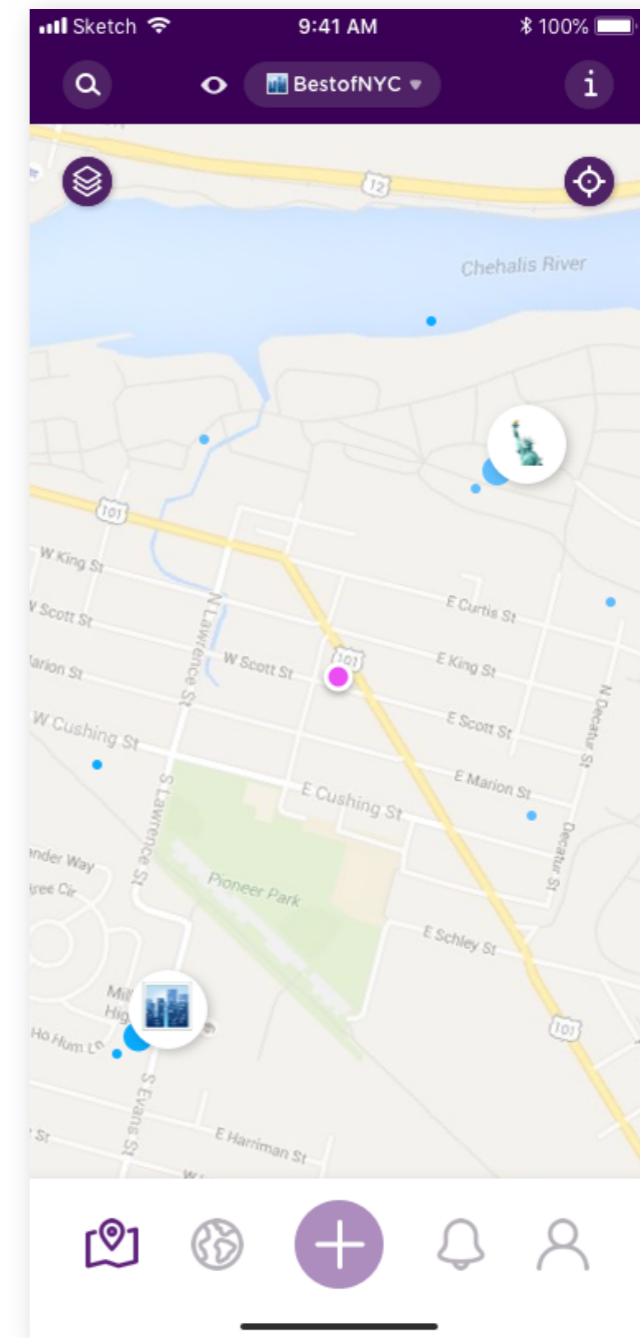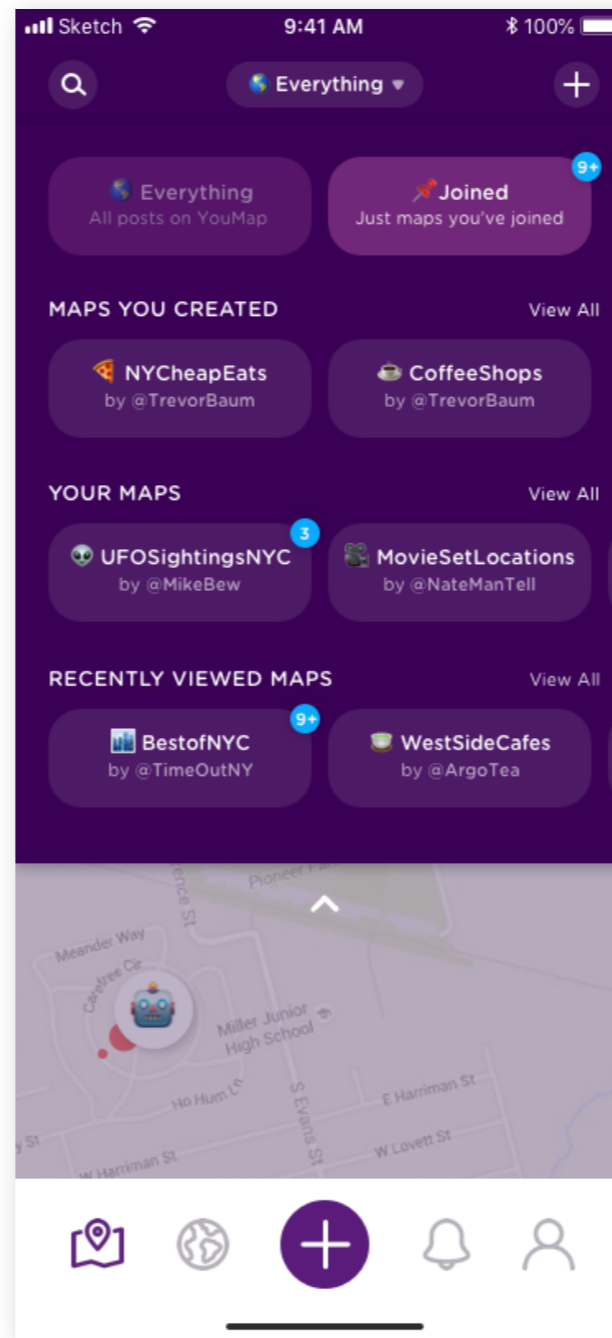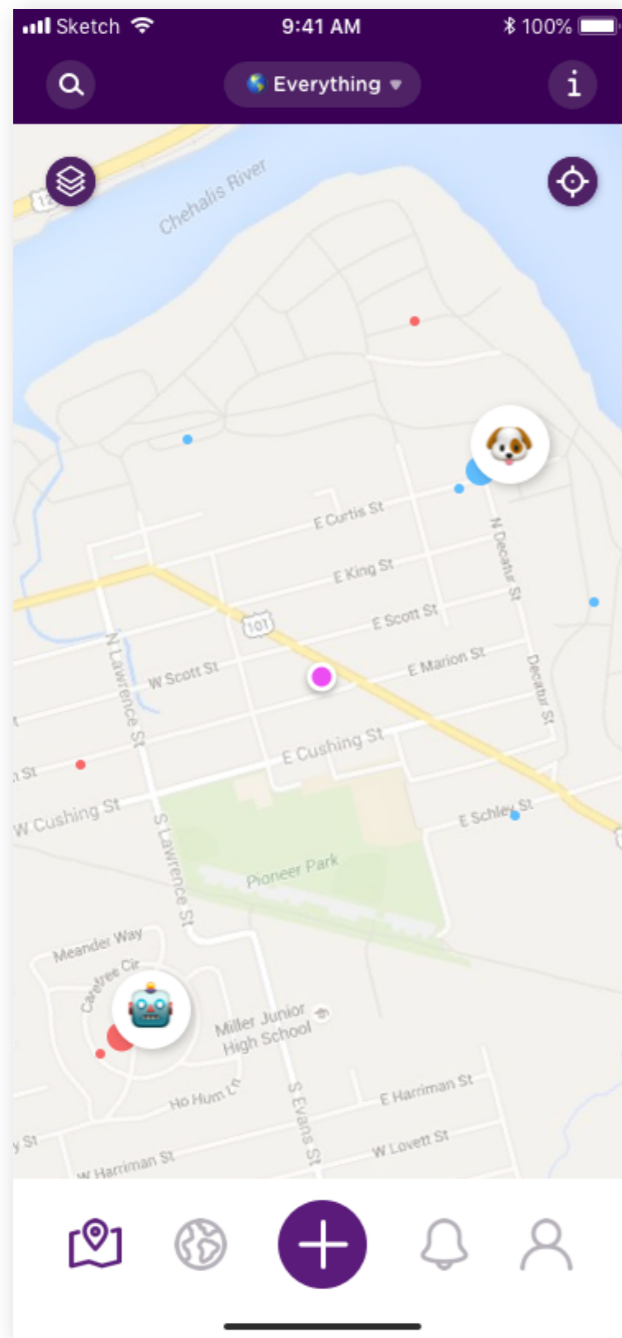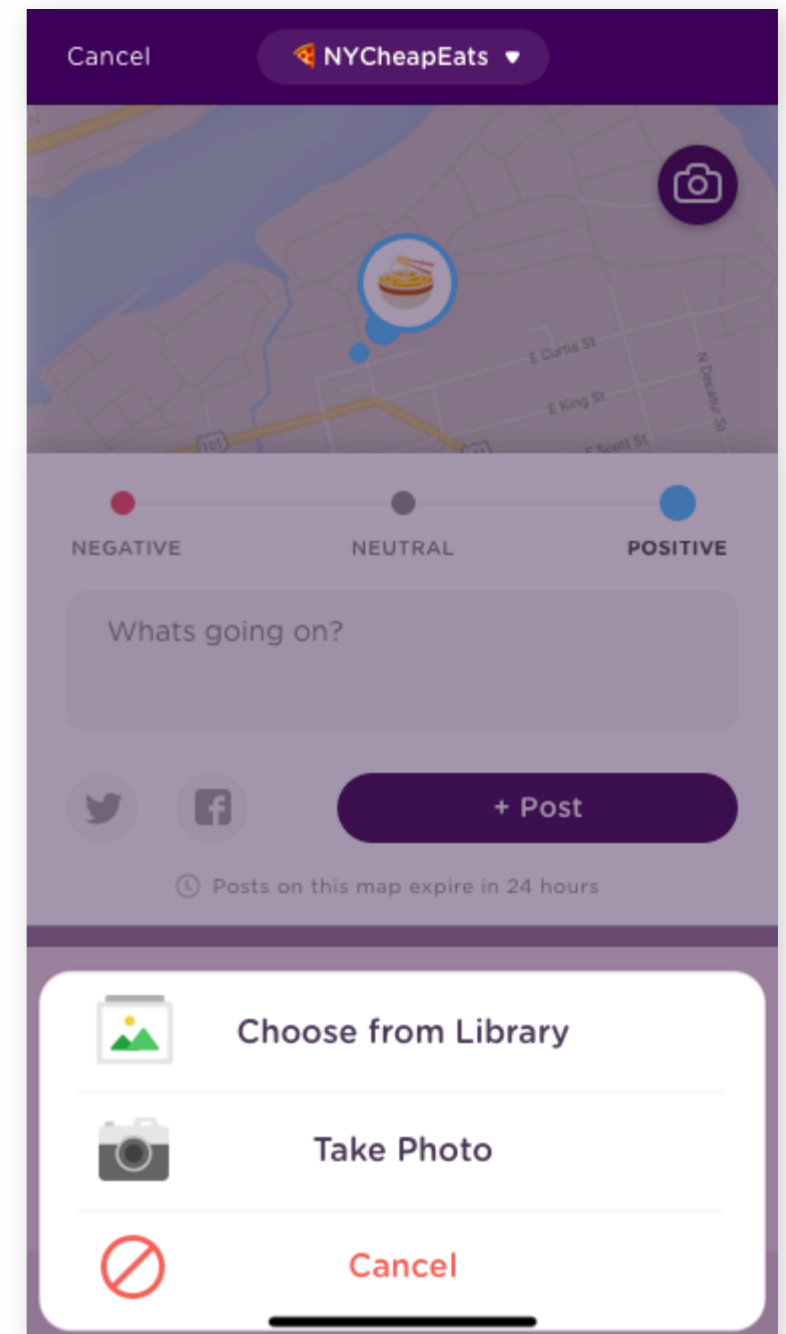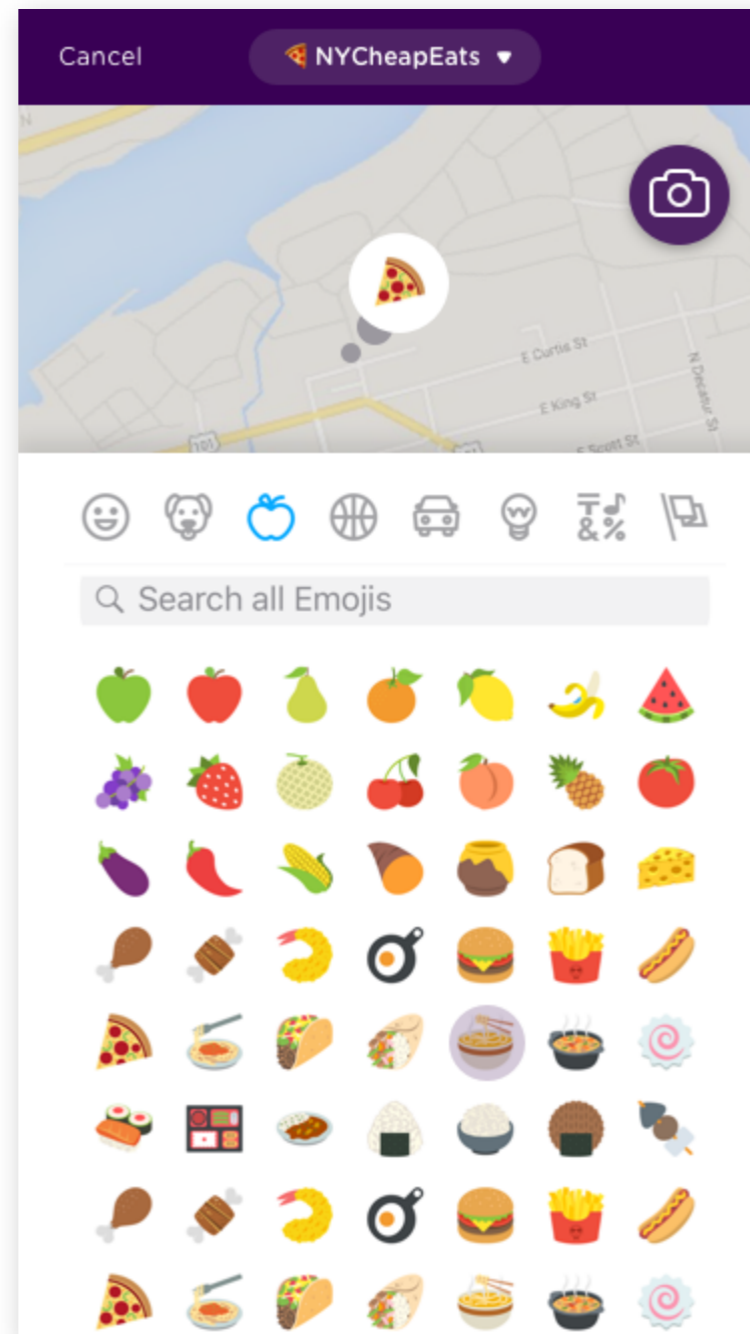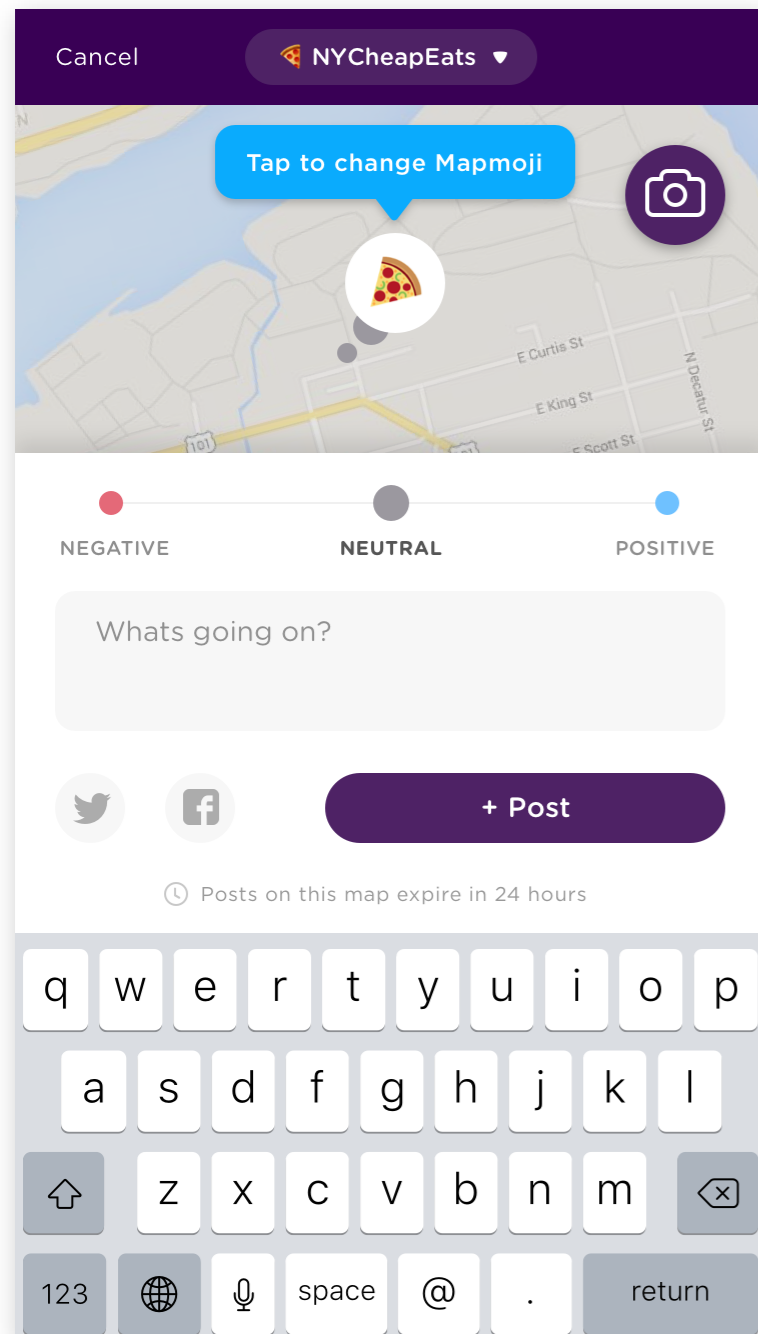
This next iteration crucially incorporated the Map Switcher in both the home and post screens, as well as a home screen redesign. Also shows UI evolution.
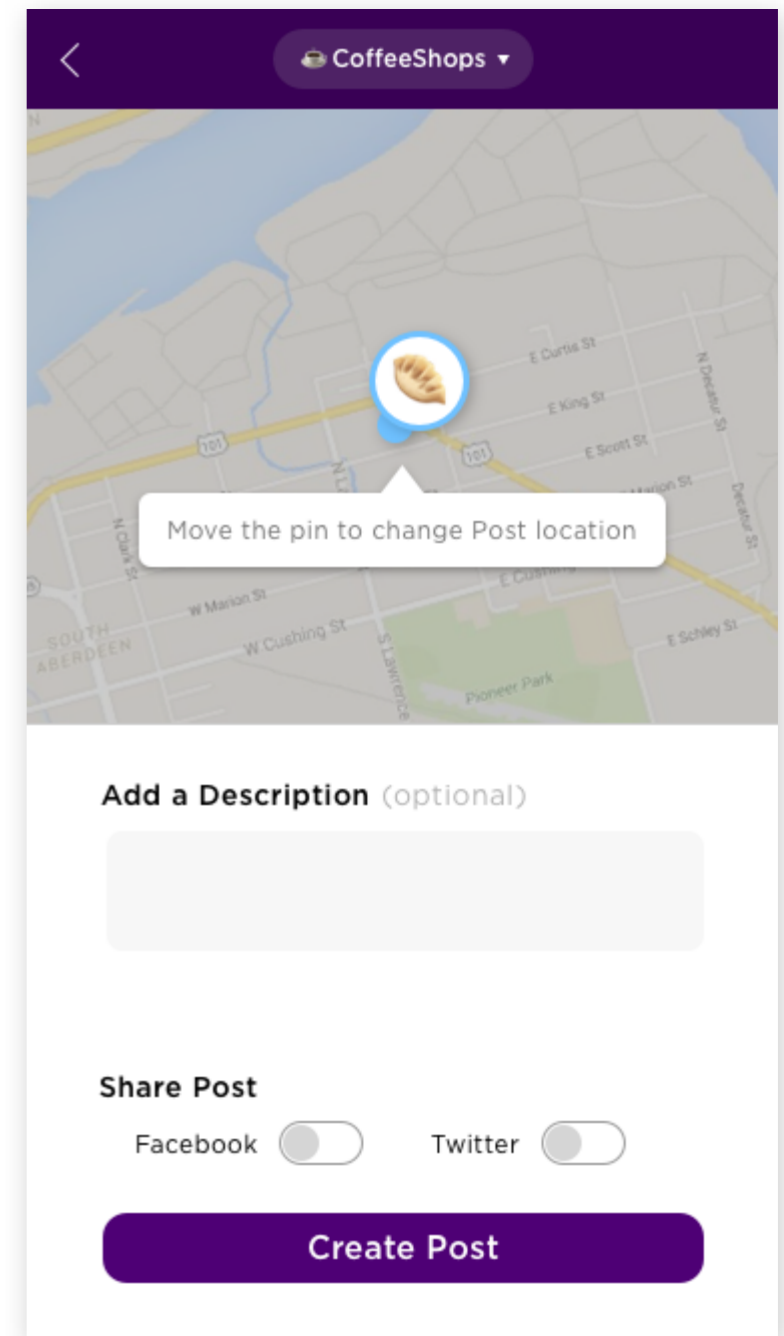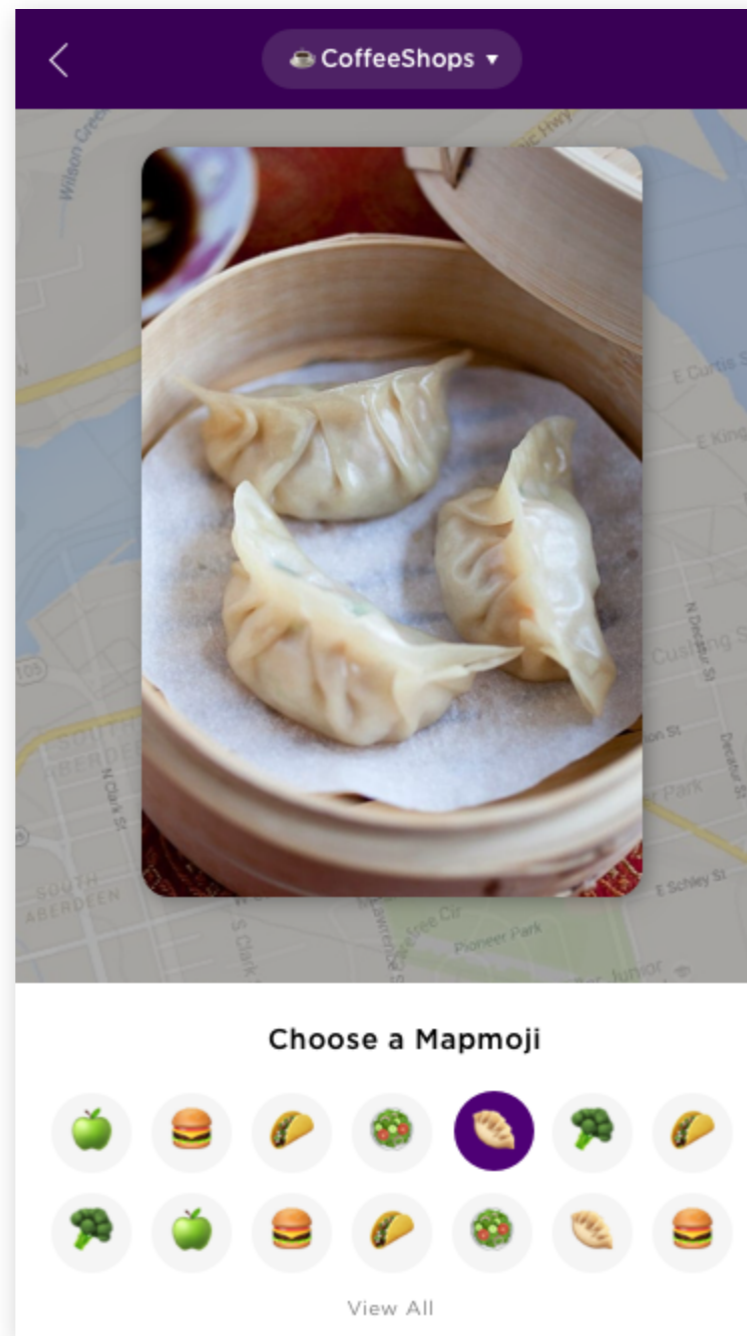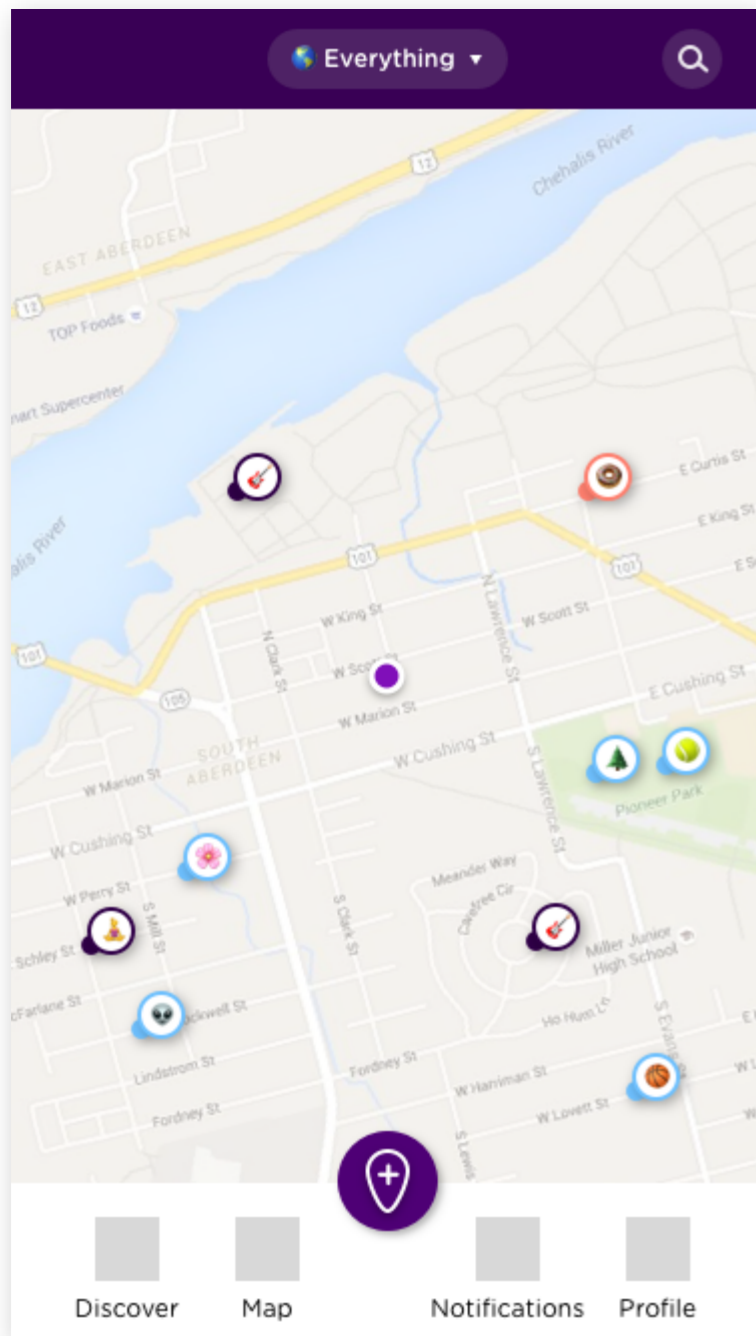
This evolved to become the final version of the Post Flow, which was released. I created a single screen experience that drastically simplified the posting process.

The bottom tray encompassed every component, and still allowed for a persistent map switcher, multimedia options, and a redesigned sentiment slider.
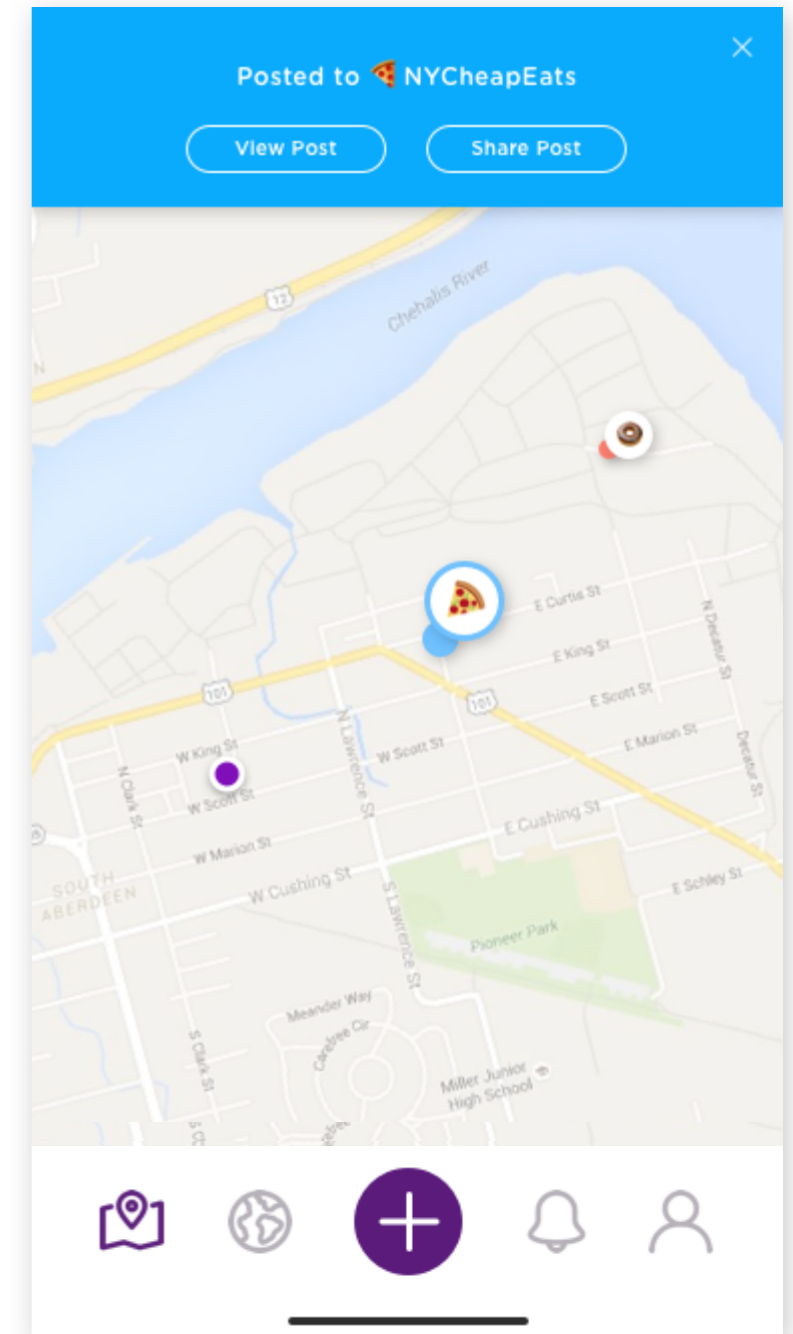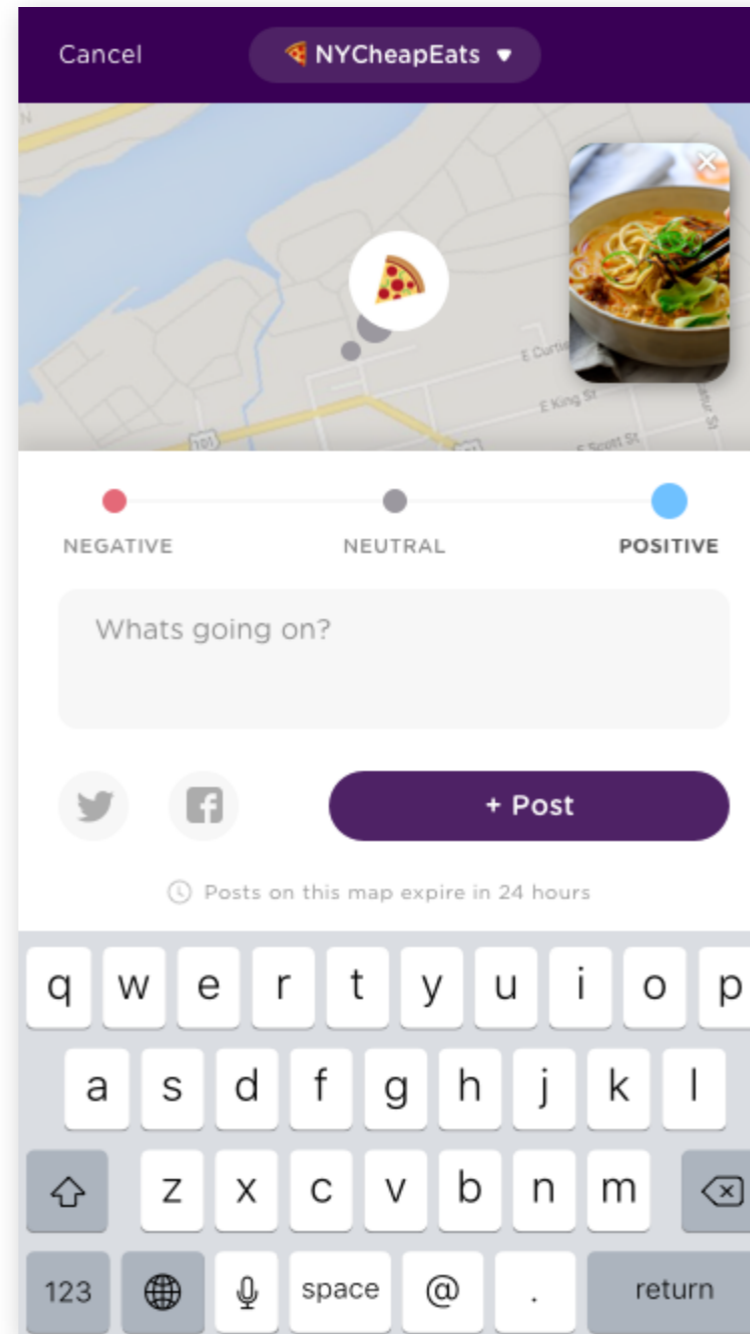
Another important part of my work at YouMap was overseeing the brand redesign. The original icon felt generic and made YouMap seem like a messaging app.
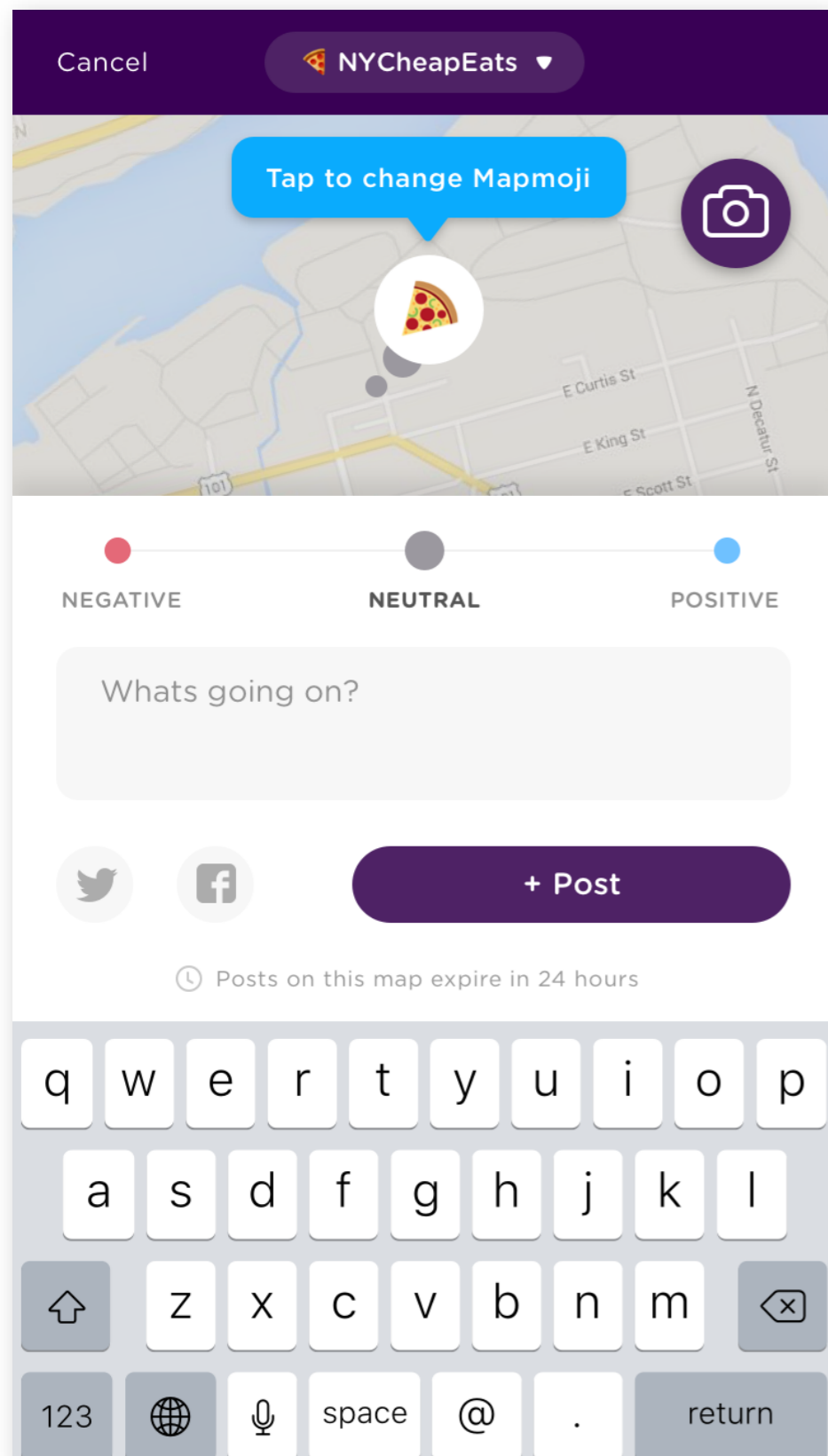

Original App Icon

Redesigned App Icon

I created an illustrated Mappy character to help convey the human component that made YouMap fun and special.

After inheriting an unfinished and disorganized product with a confusing posting process, I created a solution that addressed multiple usability issues.

- Conceptualized and designed a persistent Map Switcher to reduce user confusion around posting and maps

- Reduced a 7 step posting process to a single screen, drastically reducing the time it takes to create a post

- Created a flexible, modular system that was able to integrate successfully with new features and functionalities

Thanks very much!

Trevor Baum

trevorbaum.com

hello@trevorbaum.com