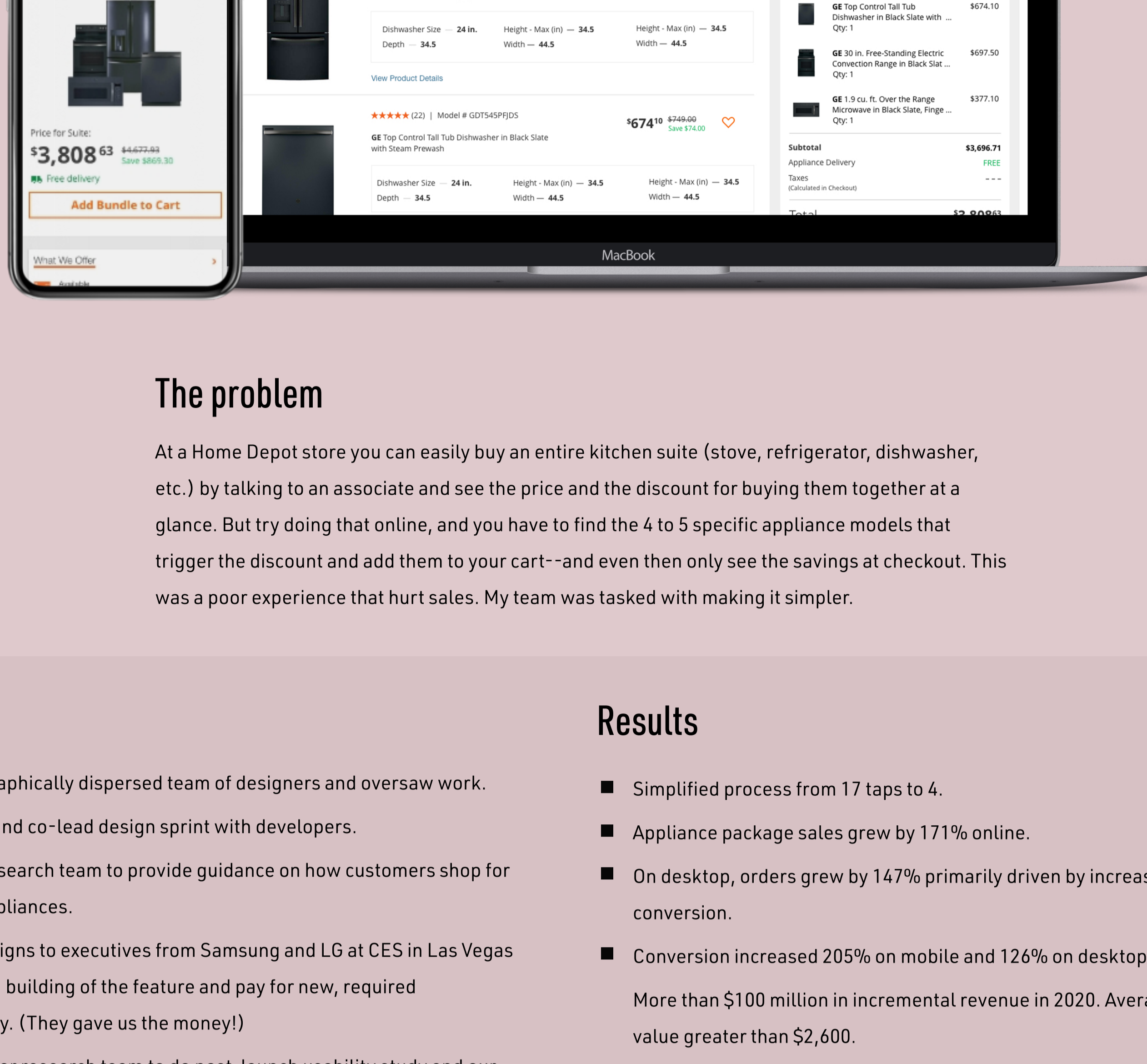


# Buy your kitchen in 4 taps

Improved the kitchen-suite buying experience from 17 taps to 4, leading to \$100 million in incremental sales.



## The problem

At a Home Depot store you can easily buy an entire kitchen suite (stove, refrigerator, dishwasher, etc.) by talking to an associate and see the price and the discount for buying them together at a glance. But trying that online, and you have to find the 4 to 5 specific appliance models that trigger the discount and add them to your cart--and even then only see the savings at checkout. This was a poor experience that hurt sales. My team was tasked with making it simpler.

## My role

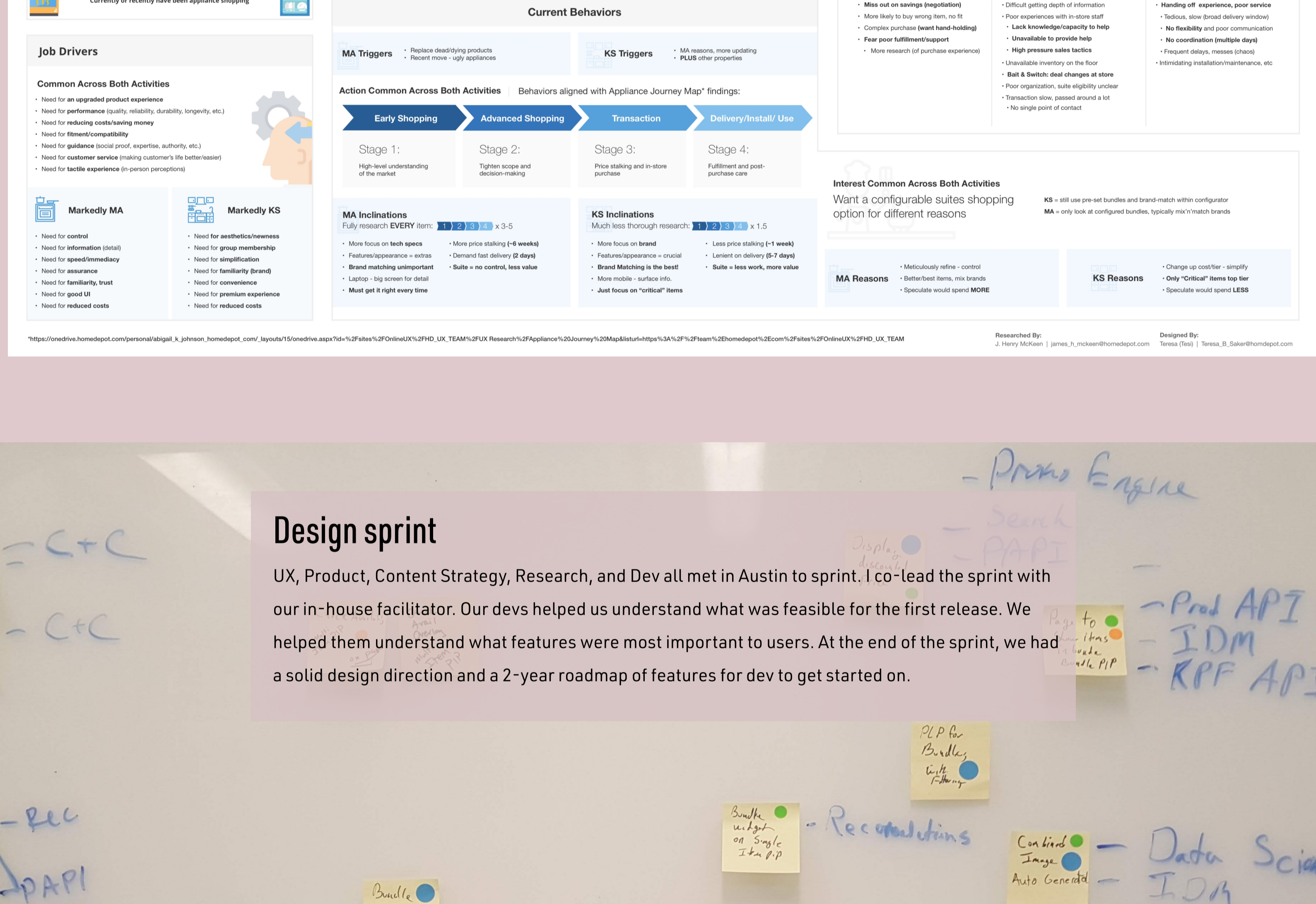
- Lead geographically dispersed team of designers and oversaw work.
- Organized and co-lead design sprint with developers.
- Engaged research team to provide guidance on how customers shop for multiple appliances.
- Pitched designs to executives from Samsung and LG at CES in Las Vegas to help fund building of the feature and pay for new, required photography. (They gave us the money!)
- Engaged user research team to do post-launch usability study and our analytics company in Israel to perform a post-launch evaluation to guide our roadmap for version 2.

## Results

- Simplified process from 17 taps to 4.
- Appliance package sales grew by 171% online.
- On desktop, orders grew by 147% primarily driven by increase in conversion.
- Conversion increased 205% on mobile and 126% on desktop.
- More than \$100 million in incremental revenue in 2020. Average order value greater than \$2,600.
- Items per order for all major appliances sales rose over 3%.

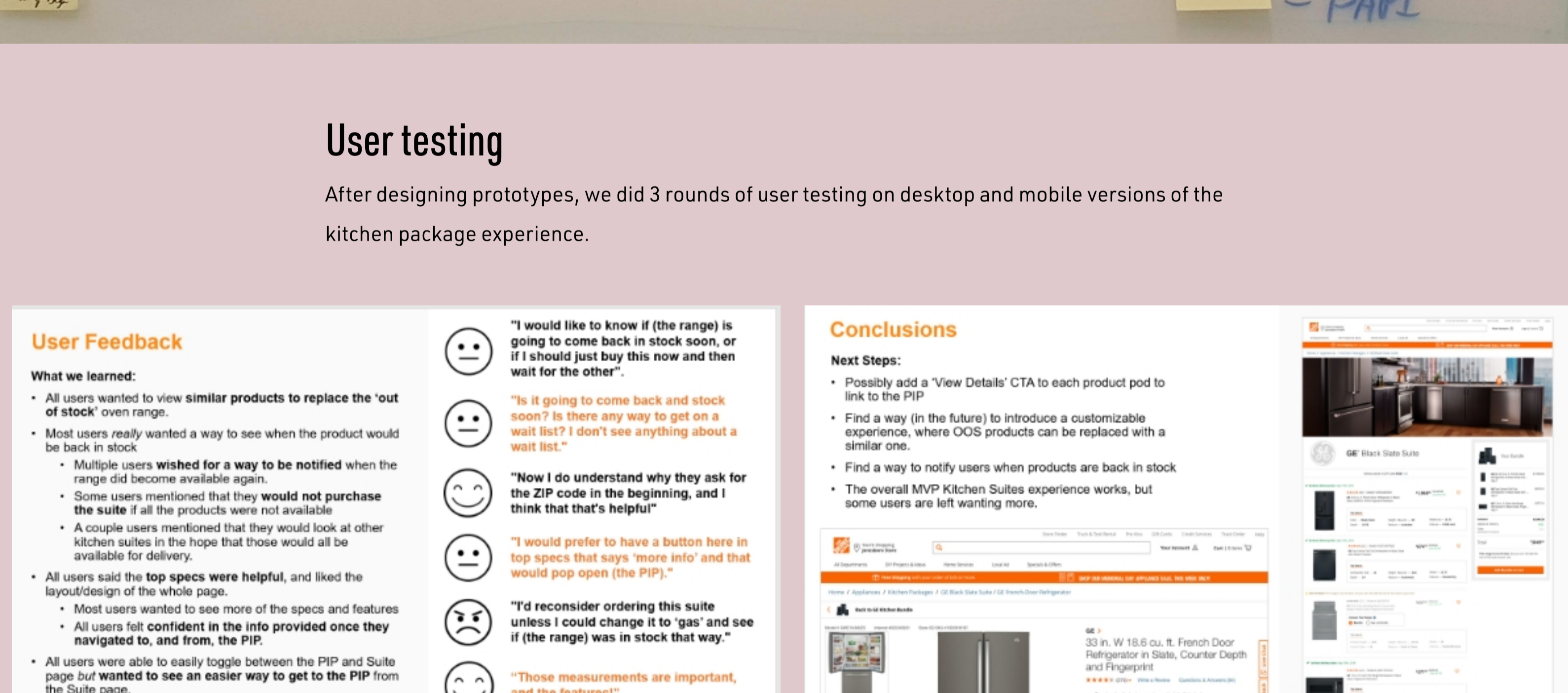
## Research

15 contextual inquiries with people who recently bought appliances. Conducted by internal research team, with my team and myself taking notes.



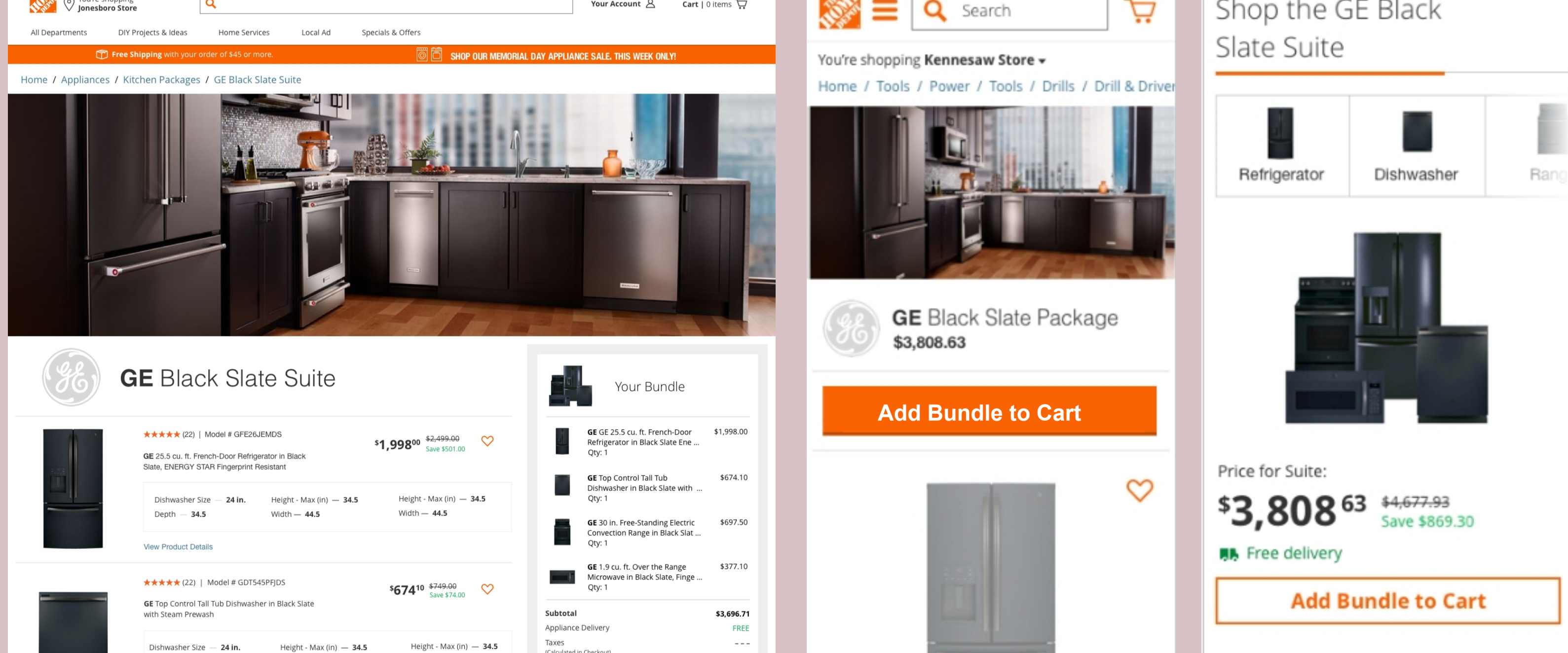
## Design sprint

UX, Product, Content Strategy, Research, and Dev all met in Austin to sprint. I co-lead the sprint with our in-house facilitator. Our devs helped us understand what was feasible for the first release. We helped them understand what features were most important to users. At the end of the sprint, we had a solid design direction and a 2-year roadmap of features for dev to get started on.

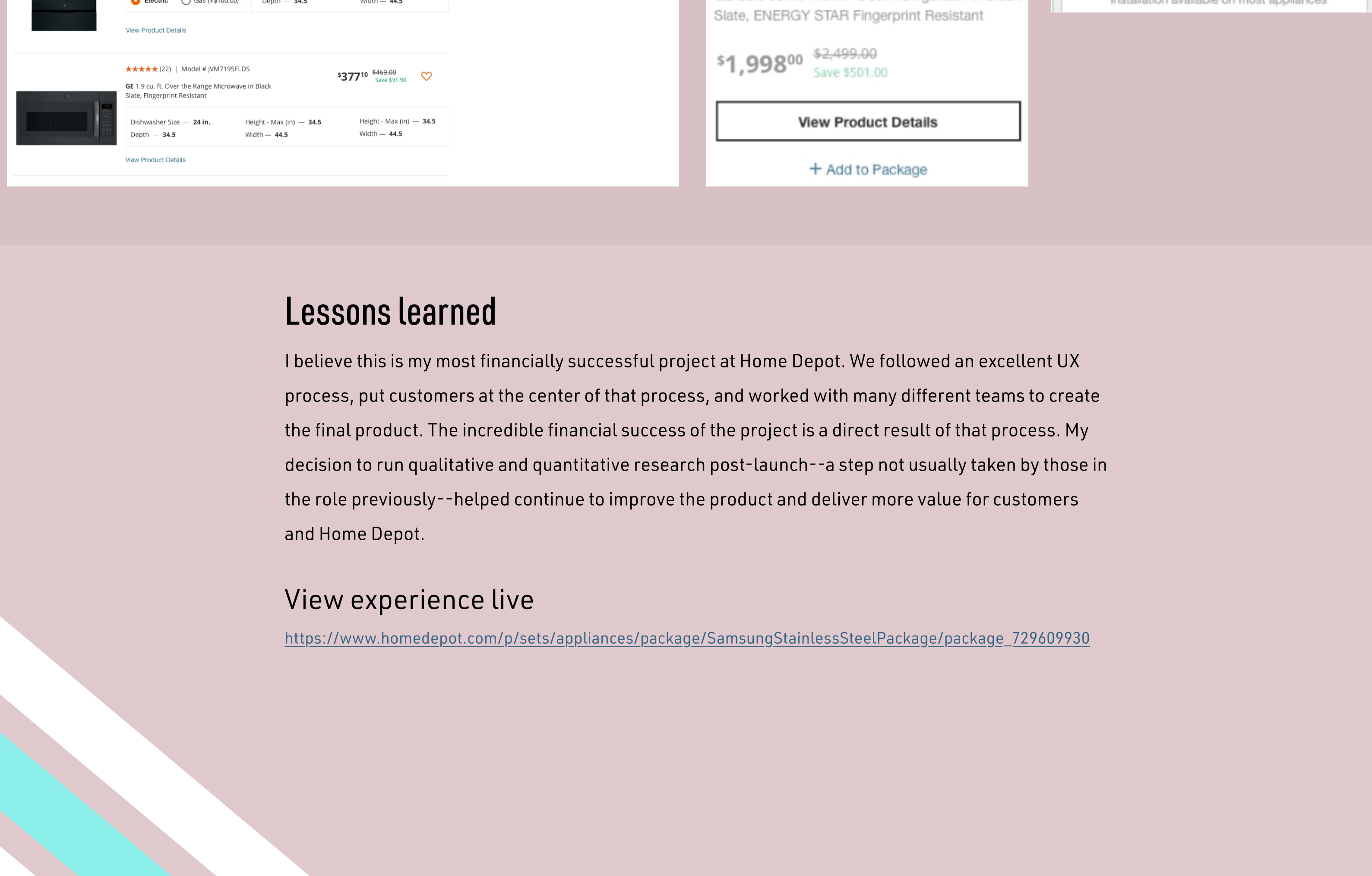


## User testing

After designing prototypes, we did 3 rounds of user testing on desktop and mobile versions of the kitchen package experience.



## Final designs



## Lessons learned

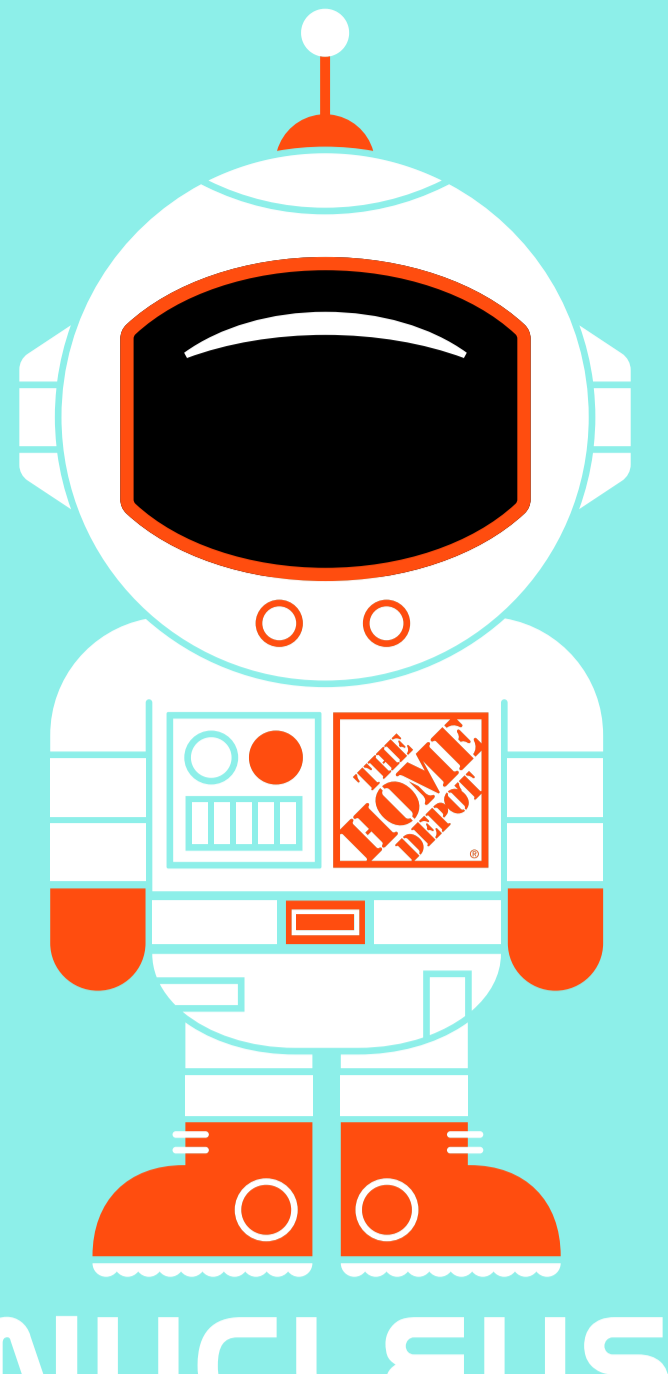
I believe this is my most financially successful project at Home Depot. With an excellent UX process, put customers at the center of that process, and worked with many different teams to create the final product. The incredible financial success of the project is a direct result of that process. My decision to run qualitative and quantitative research post-launch--a step not usually taken by those in the role previously--helped continue to improve the product and deliver more value for customers and Home Depot.

## View experience live

[https://www.homedepot.com/p/sets/appliances/package/SamsungStainlessSteel\(Package/package\\_729609930](https://www.homedepot.com/p/sets/appliances/package/SamsungStainlessSteel(Package/package_729609930)

# The nucleus design system

Combine, consolidate and update Home Depot's design standards.



## The problem

HomeDepot.com's pages were built by different teams, in different programming languages, and-- horrors of horrors--some, in the year 2020, were still not responsive. Often teams would develop entirely new versions of these pages just for their specific products. These teams often interpreted design standards liberally, leading to a disjointed and inconsistent experience. When our dev team decided to rebuild the site in React, I lead the effort to consolidate our design standards and create a unified experience for customers.

## My role

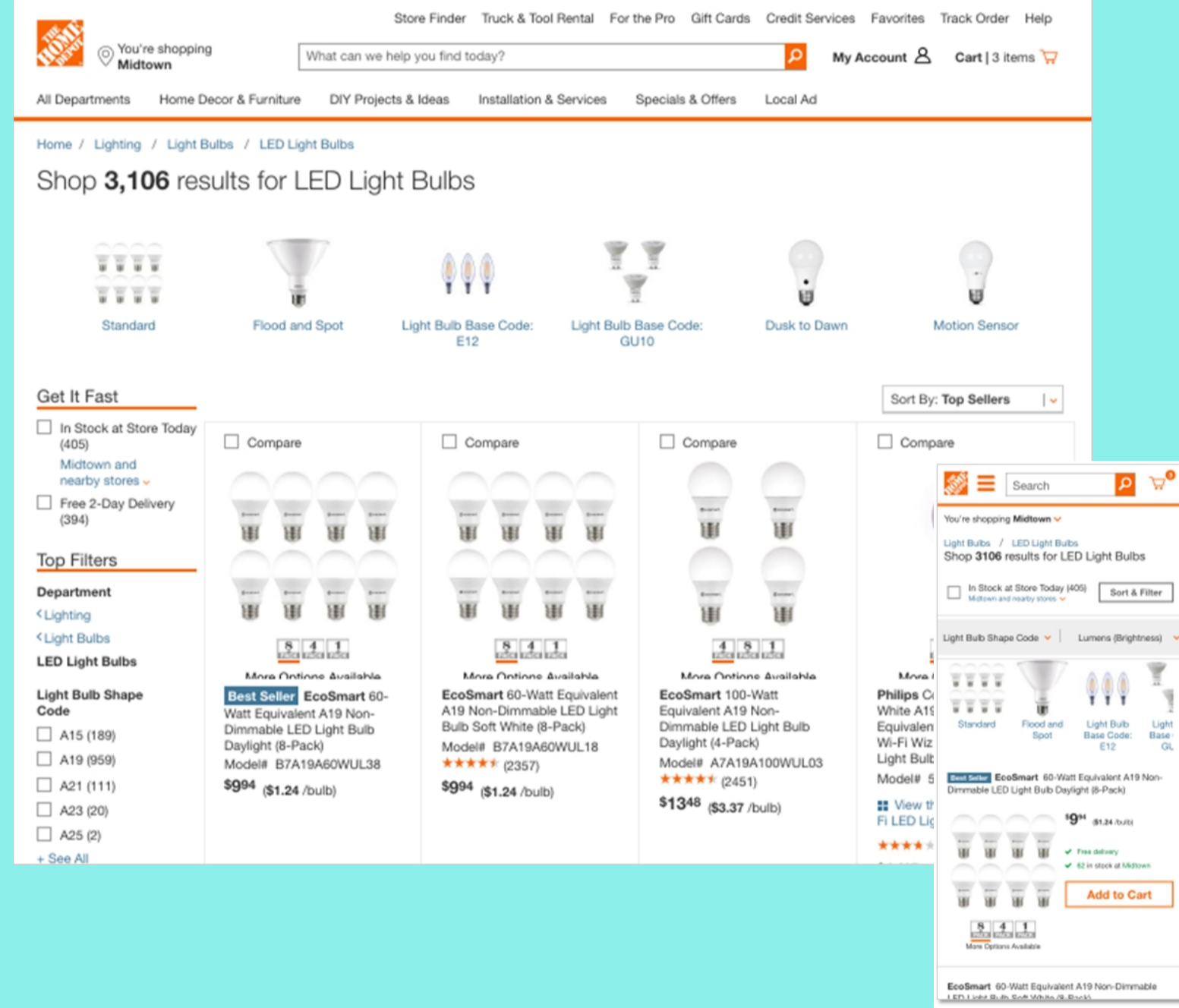
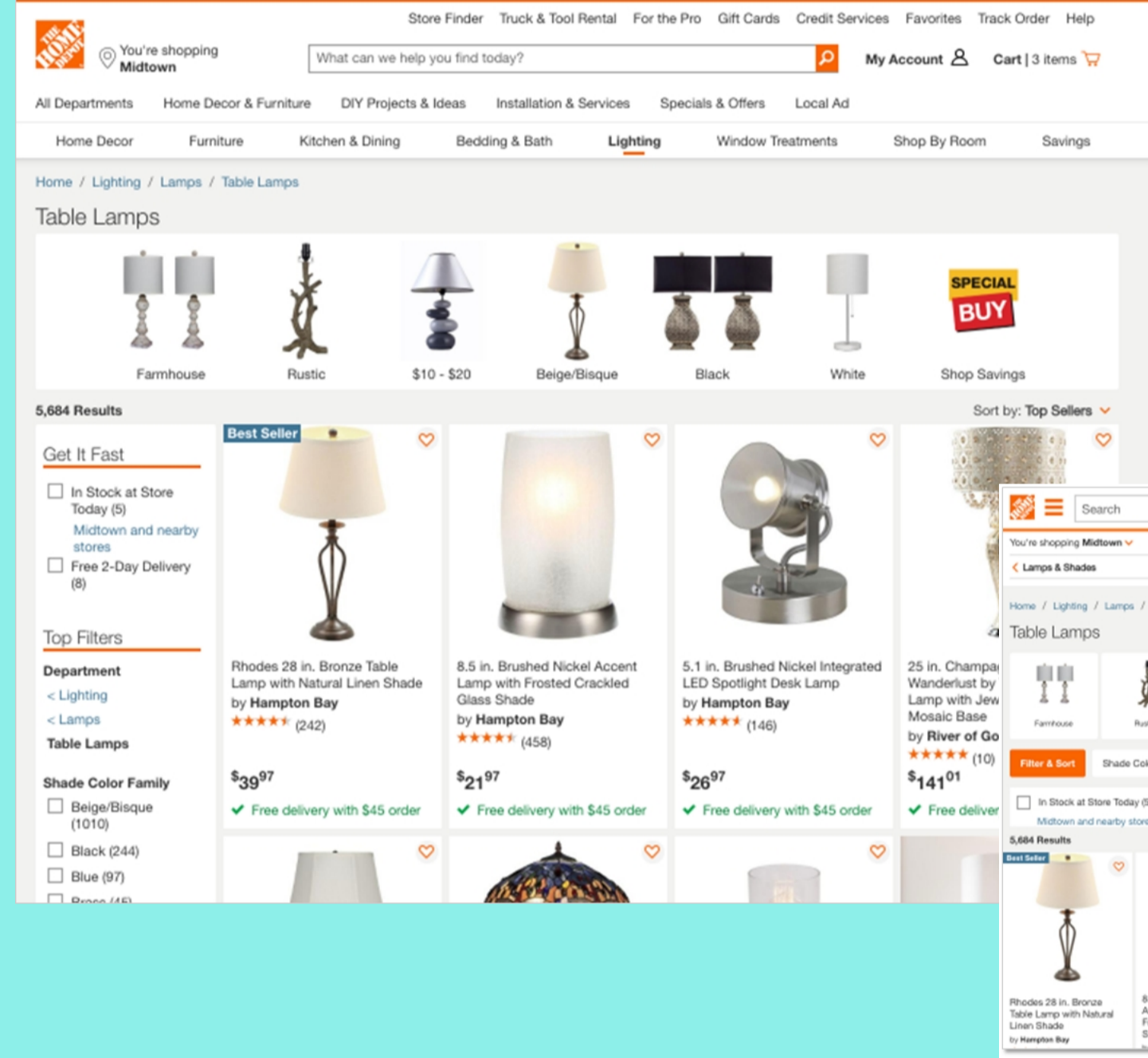
- Lead a team of 8 of designers working quickly to craft a unified design language.
- Brought stakeholders from different teams together to build consensus and support for the single design system my team created.
- Became the unofficial spokesperson for the re-platforming effort; Doing several road shows for executives, merchants, marketing, and other teams to inform them about the technical and design changes to the site.
- Organized and lead training sessions for the full 50-member UX team in using the new design system.
- Helped define a permanent role for a design operations manager, which was filled via promotion by a member of my team.
- Worked closely with the developers implementing design changes, including pair programming and signing off on stories for UX.
- Helped develop an internal component library site where all team members could view any component, in all states, with live data.

## Results

- During a highly challenging year, my team delivered the new system on time, and in time for it to be operational for our peak holiday shopping period. The redesigned and recoded pages ran flawlessly.
- Our work continues: In 2020, we rebuilt the product and search results pages using the new system. In 2021, we continue to migrate areas of the site, gradually creating a consistent experience for customers.
- Successfully handed off ownership of design system to newly created design ops team.
- Fostered career development for my direct reports: Two were promoted because of their work on this project.
- Despite significant design changes, we saw no dip in key site metrics. However, we greatly increased the use of favorites by our customers.
- Saved millions in operations costs by no longer needing to maintain multiple versions of a page, each with their own features, look and feel.
- Each re-platformed page is now entirely responsive, saving money by not needing to maintain code for both desktop and mobile.

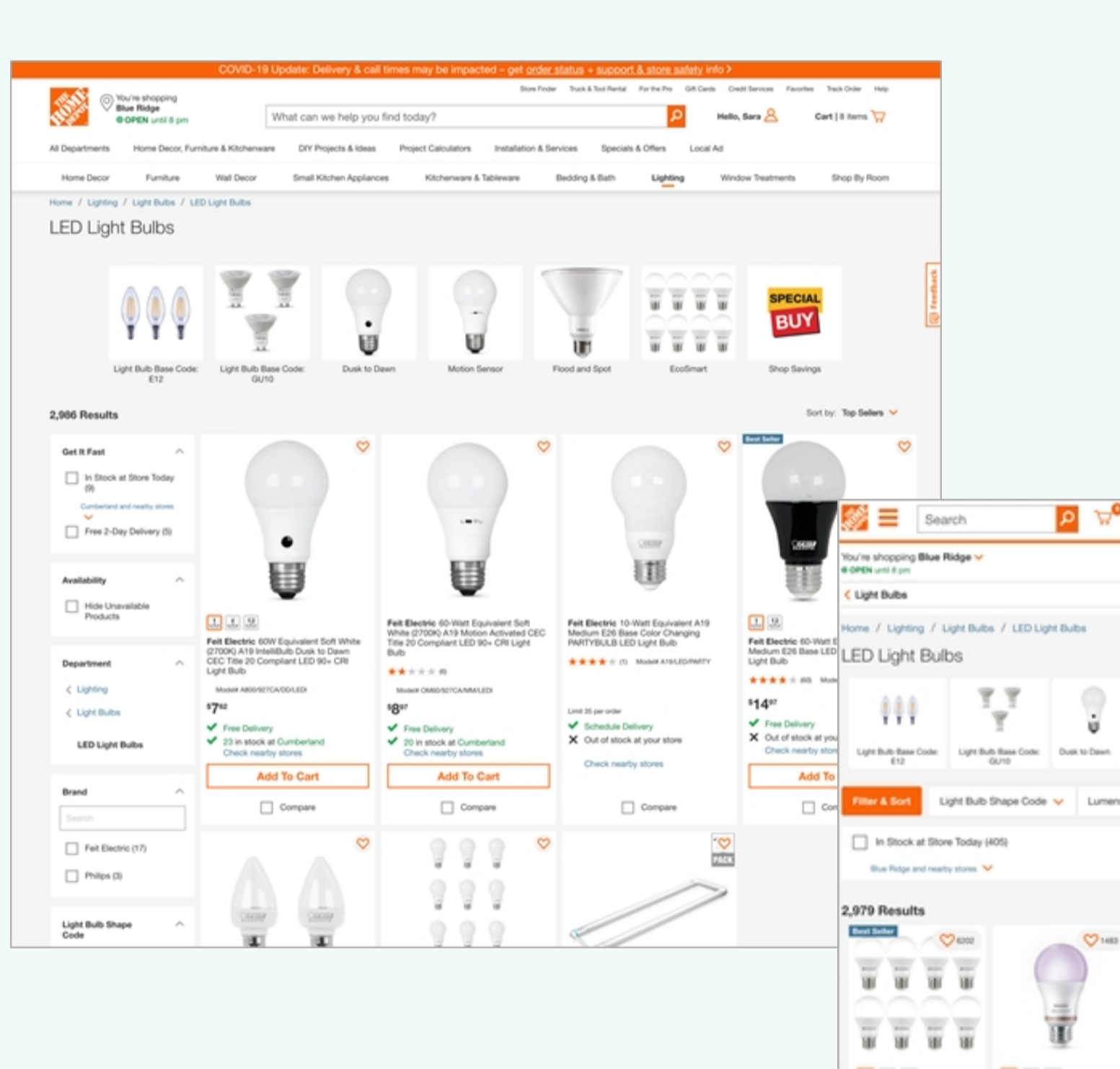
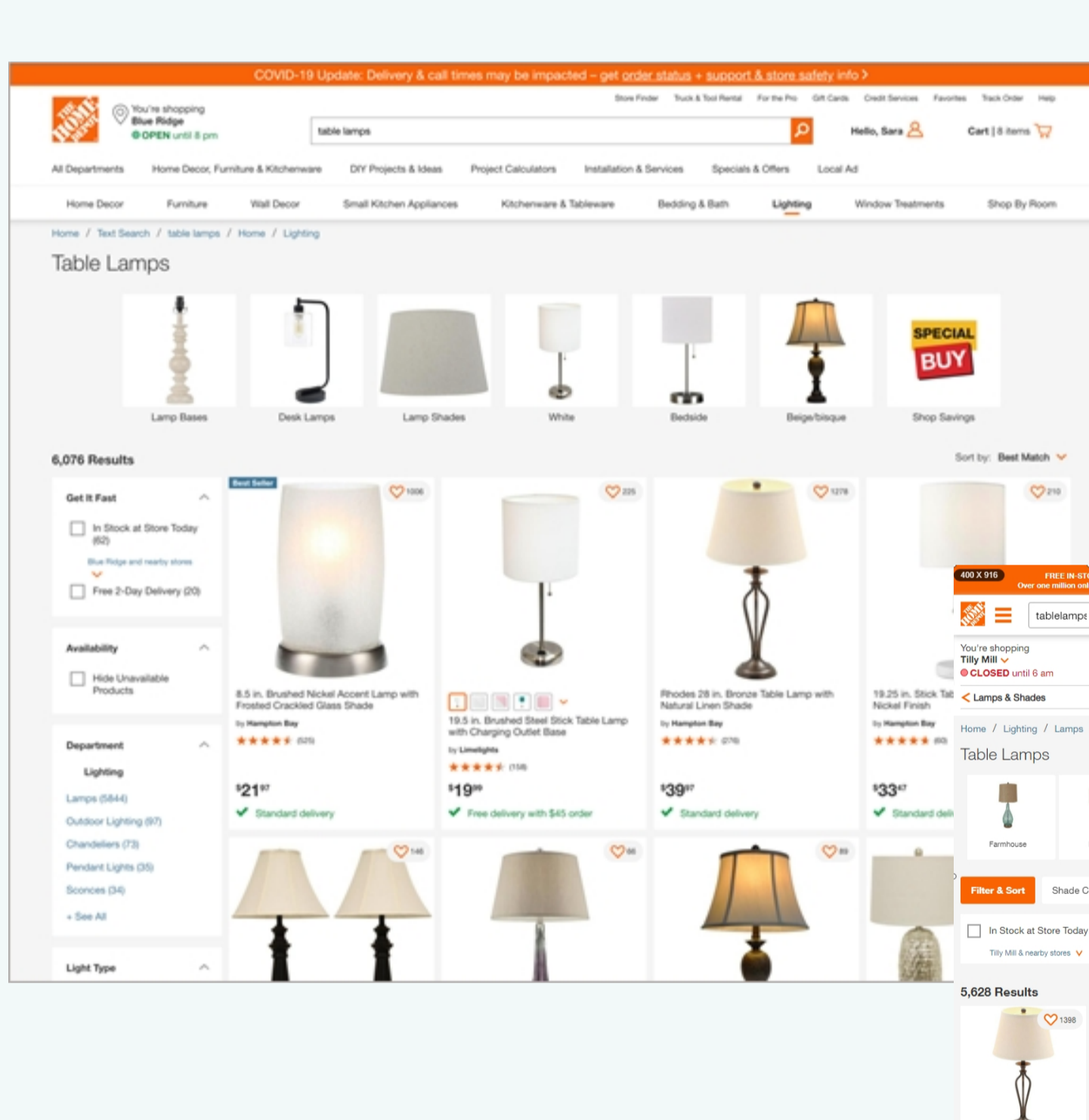
## HomeDepot.com 2019

Shoppers looking for a lamp might also be in the market for some light bulbs. However, these experiences were designed by different teams, and were very inconsistent.



## HomeDepot.com 2020

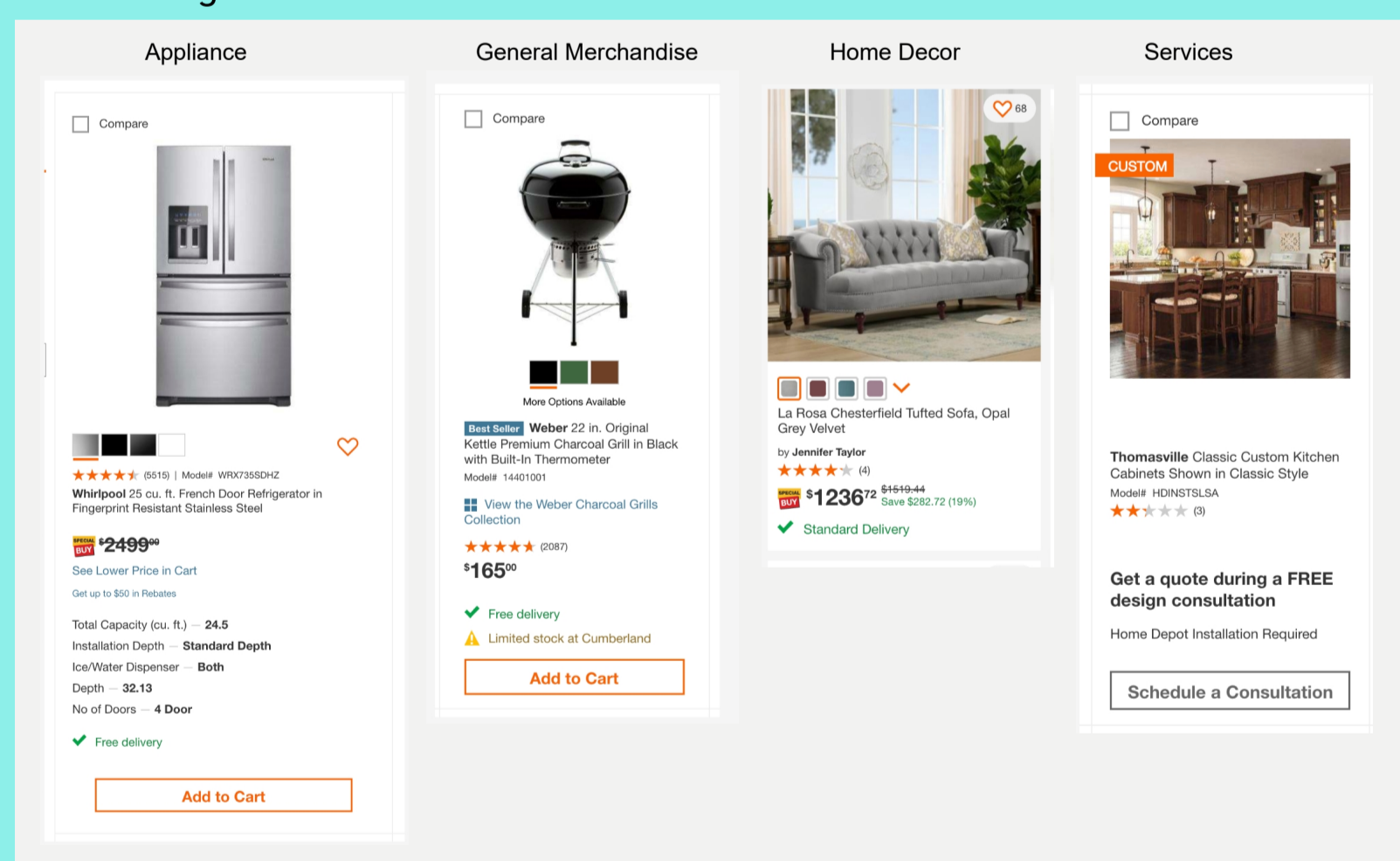
These experiences are now aligned and use the same design system. If a customer buys a lamp and then searches for a lightbulb, they will have a consistent experience.



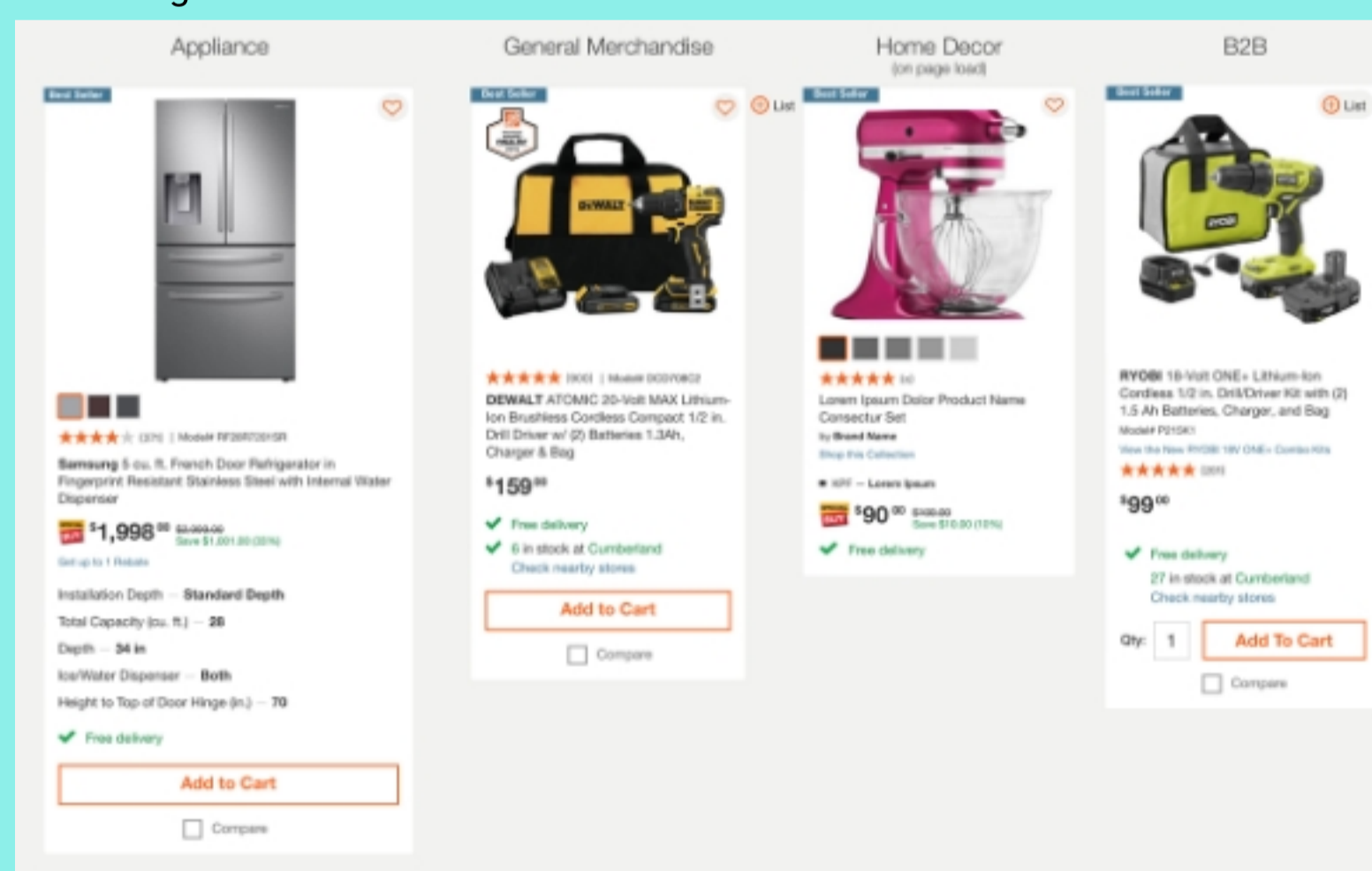
## Alignment

Six designers. One me. Three weeks. One conference room. Each designer took a different part of the site. We re-created the most common variations of pages and widgets that had been designed so differently by our teams (décor, appliances, B2B, app, and general merchandise). We aligned the design of the site and the app drawing from the best of our existing system, drafted an initial version of a new, unified system. Then, my team brought stakeholders together and, over the course of many conversations, negotiated an agreement to align.

### Before alignment



### After alignment

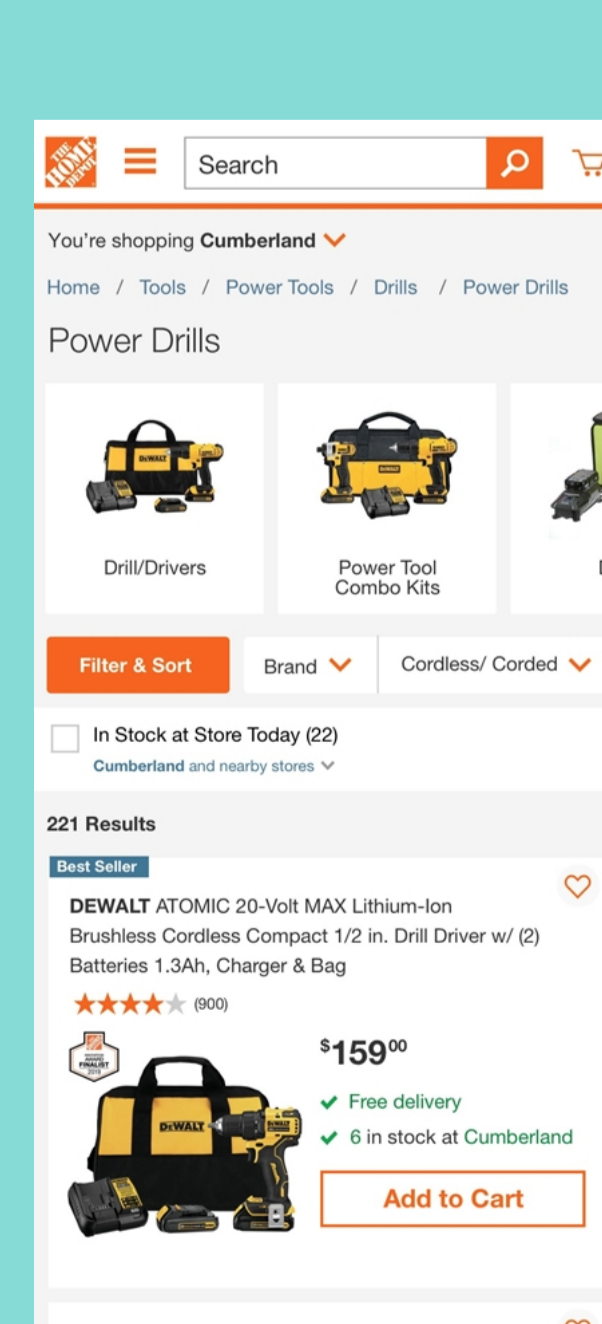
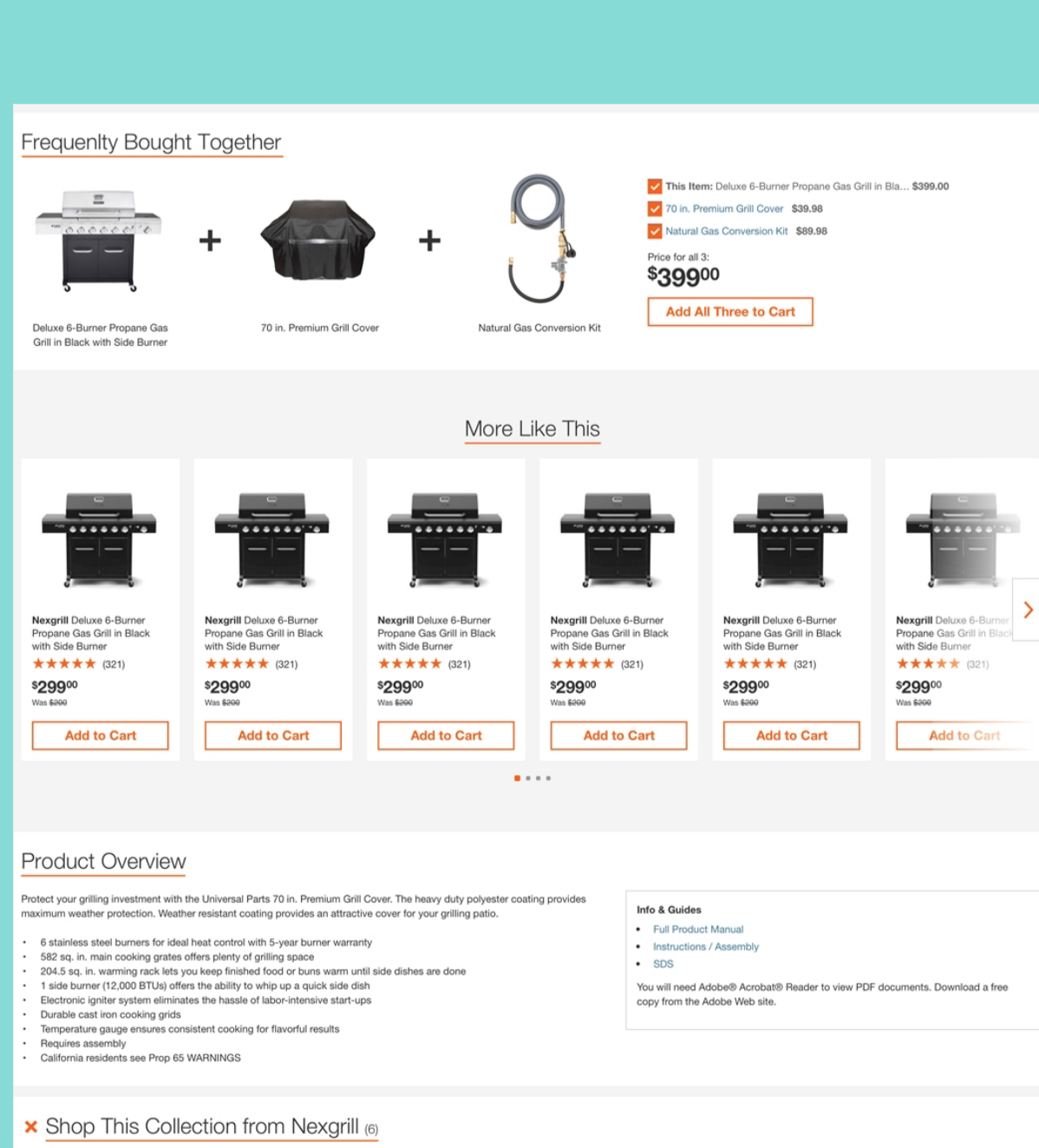
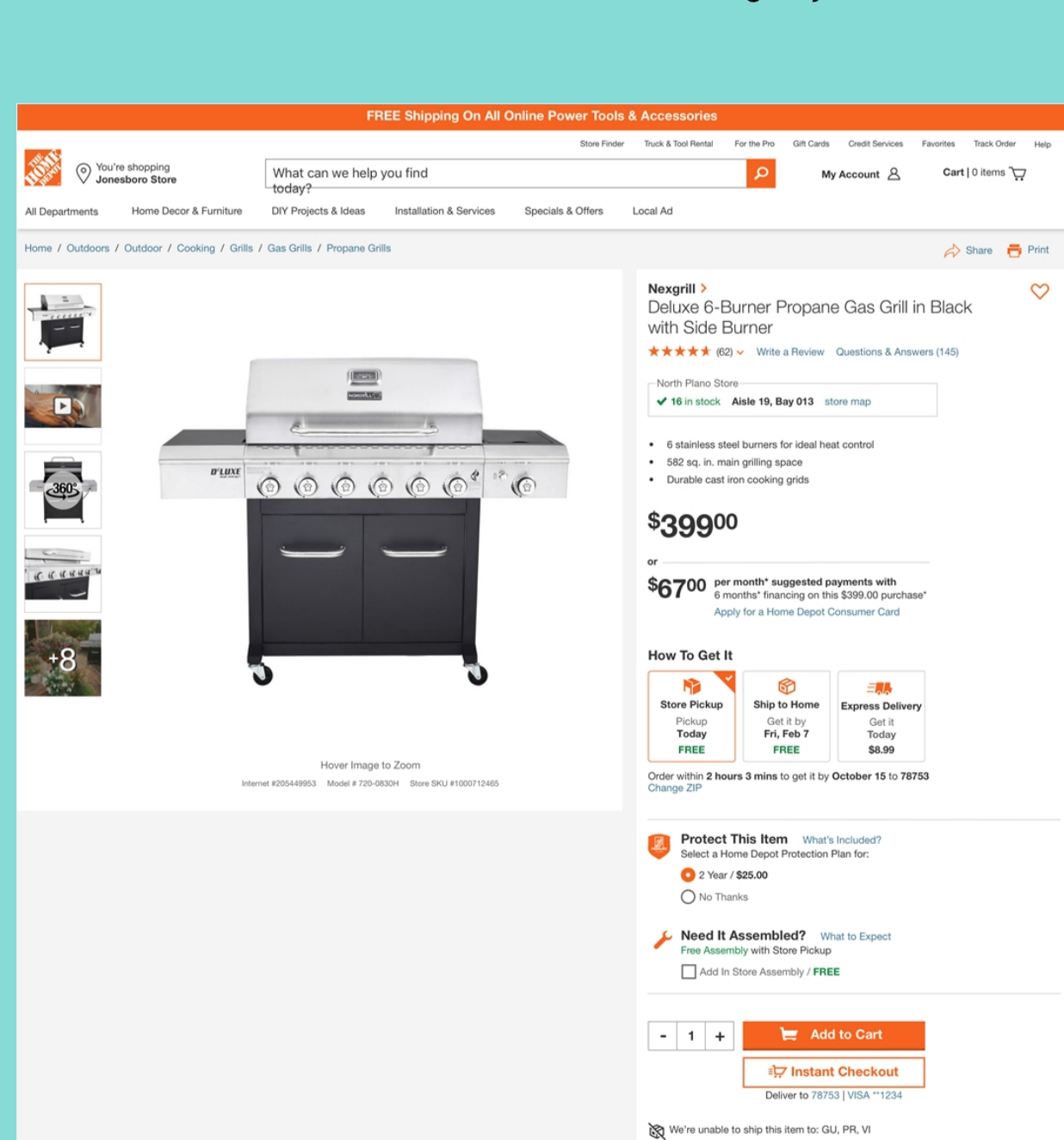


### Desktop product pod alignment

HomeDepot.com has more than 30 variations on our basic product pod. In some versions brand name is bold and on a separate line, in others it's in our smallest font below the description. Some have a compare option, others don't, pro's need to be able to add large quantities quickly. In aligning these pods, we convinced all the teams to use the same layout for almost all common elements, allowing us to use a single consistent widget for all products. My team did exercises like this for every widget on the site in 6 weeks.

## Card system

With a rendering system based on components, we needed to create a design language that could easily integrate new widgets in any order on any page. Given these constraints, we chose a card-based design system.



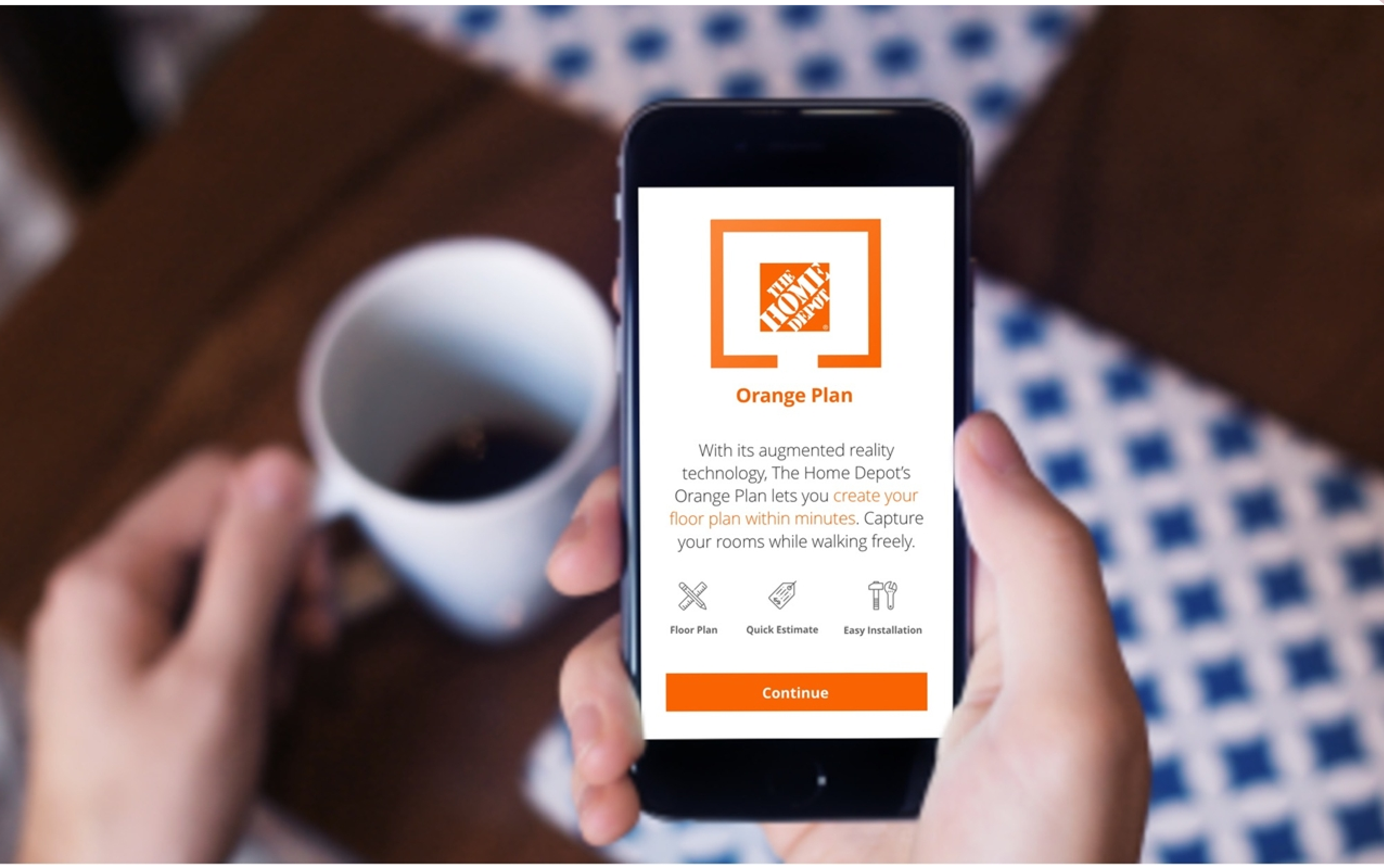
## Lessons learned

Going into this project, I expect getting consensus among people and teams would be the most difficult part. However, the deep relations I built over my time at Home Depot made this go quite smoothly. In fact there was a great appetite for more consistency.

What I learned instead was a greater appreciation of how complex it is to make a change at this scale. Getting changes made in a timely fashion was the true challenge. A \$25 billion website has a great deal of complexity because so many external and internal systems are helping to render content. All of these needed to change to support the new design system. Because of this complexity if we didn't unify the design system the re-platforming effort would have taken three times as long. Home Depot is still years away from the entire site using the new design system, but they'll get there.

# Tap for service

A stretch project for my team, and a C-suite pitch for me

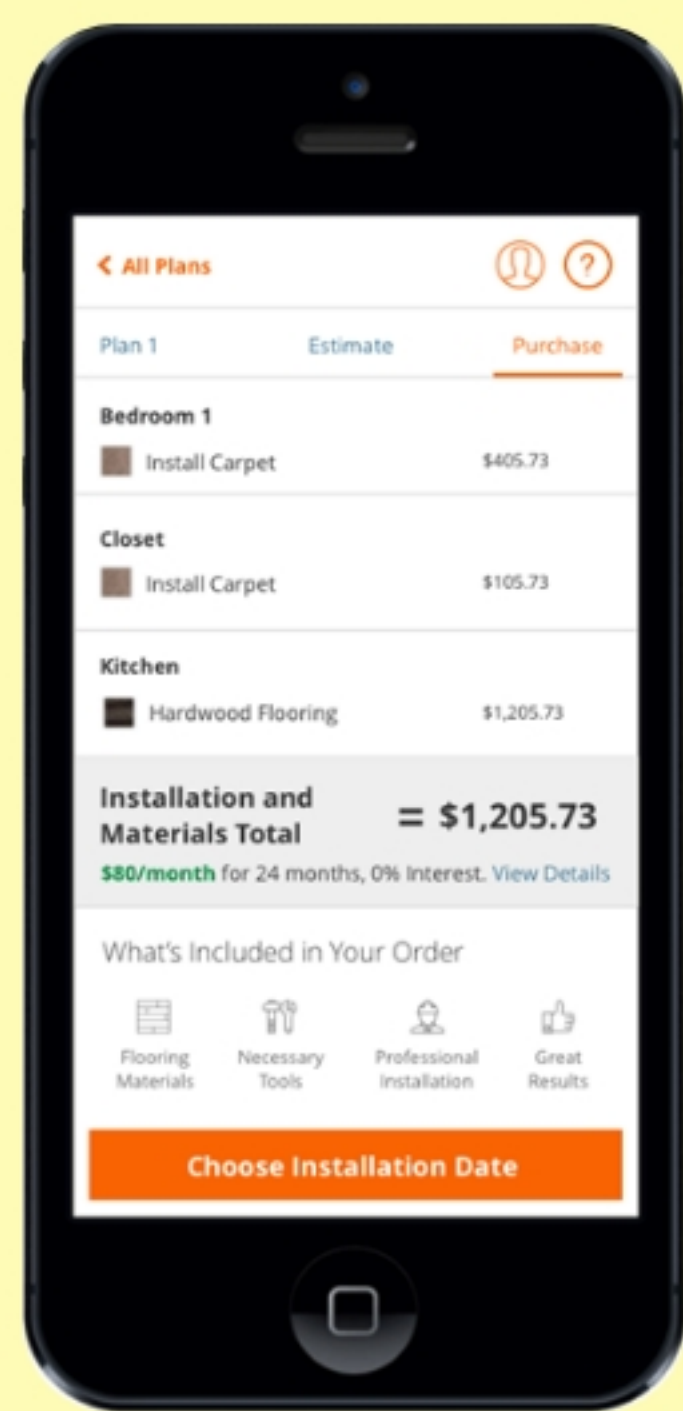


## Leading toward the future

As a leader it's important to give your team opportunities to build their skills by working on stretch projects. If those projects are forward looking, visioning exercises, you can give your team a chance to be creative and get inspired. As a product designer myself, I love working on visioning projects, defining the future by designing the future. Imaging the future has been a core part of how I've influenced the companies I've worked with.



Picture: My team at a VR arcade in 2018

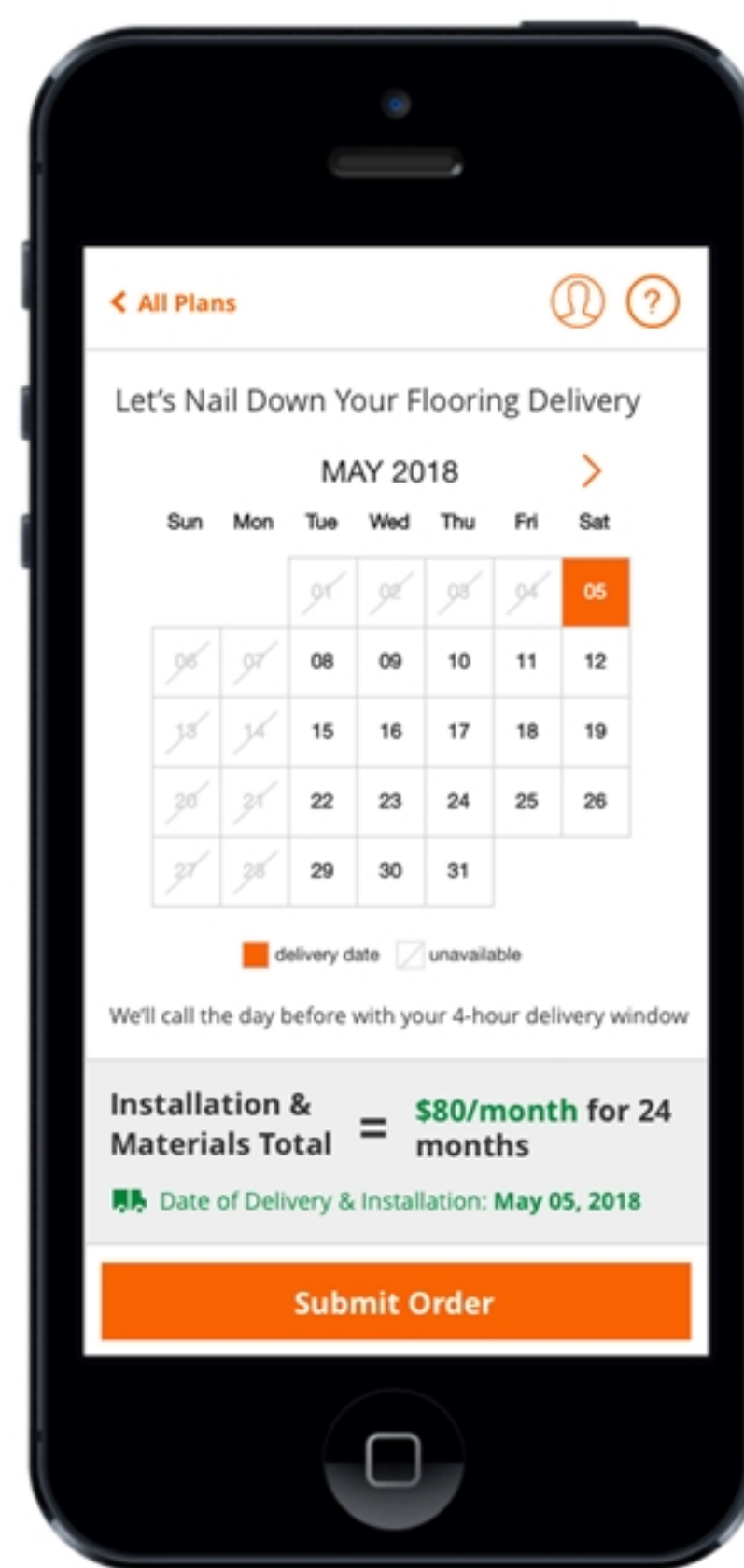
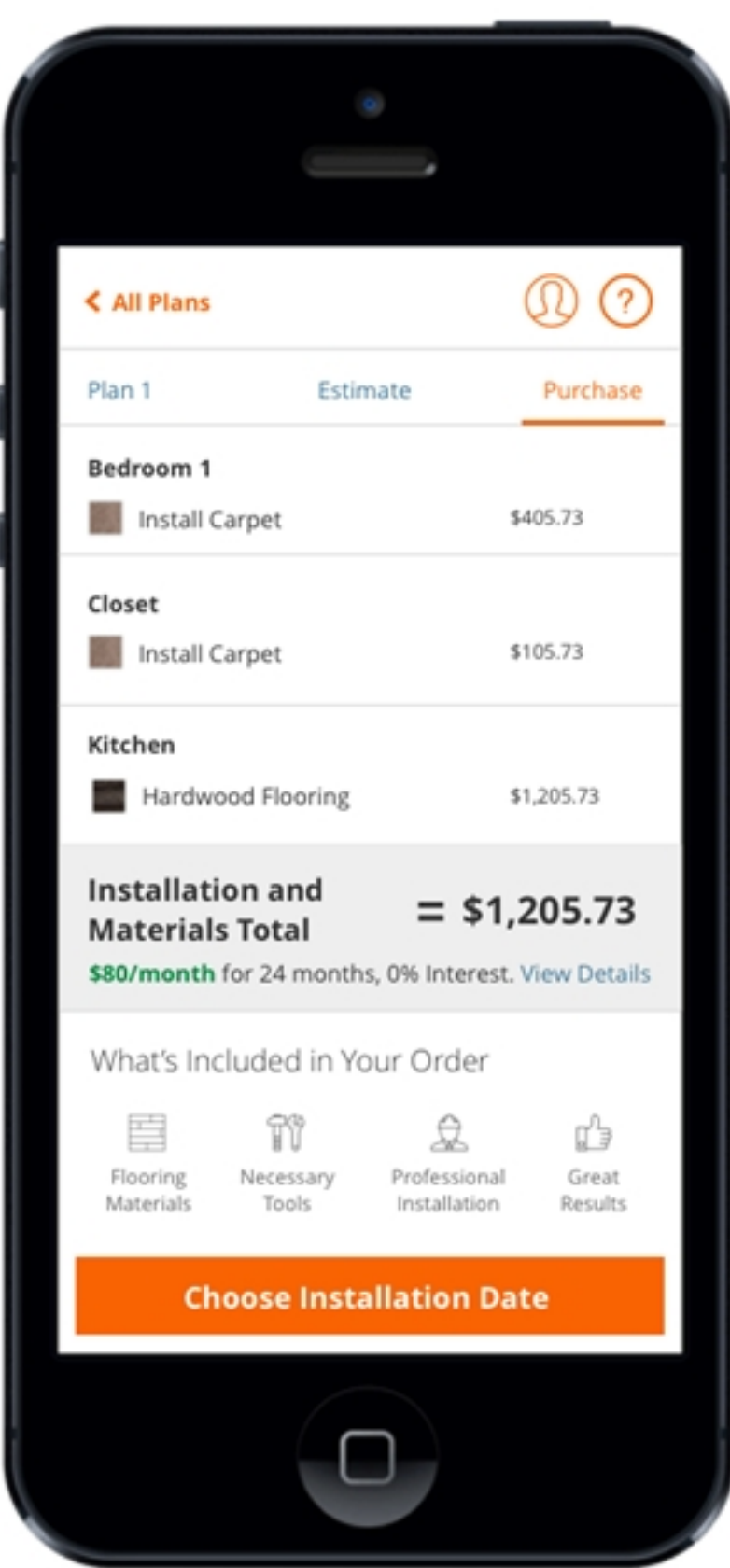
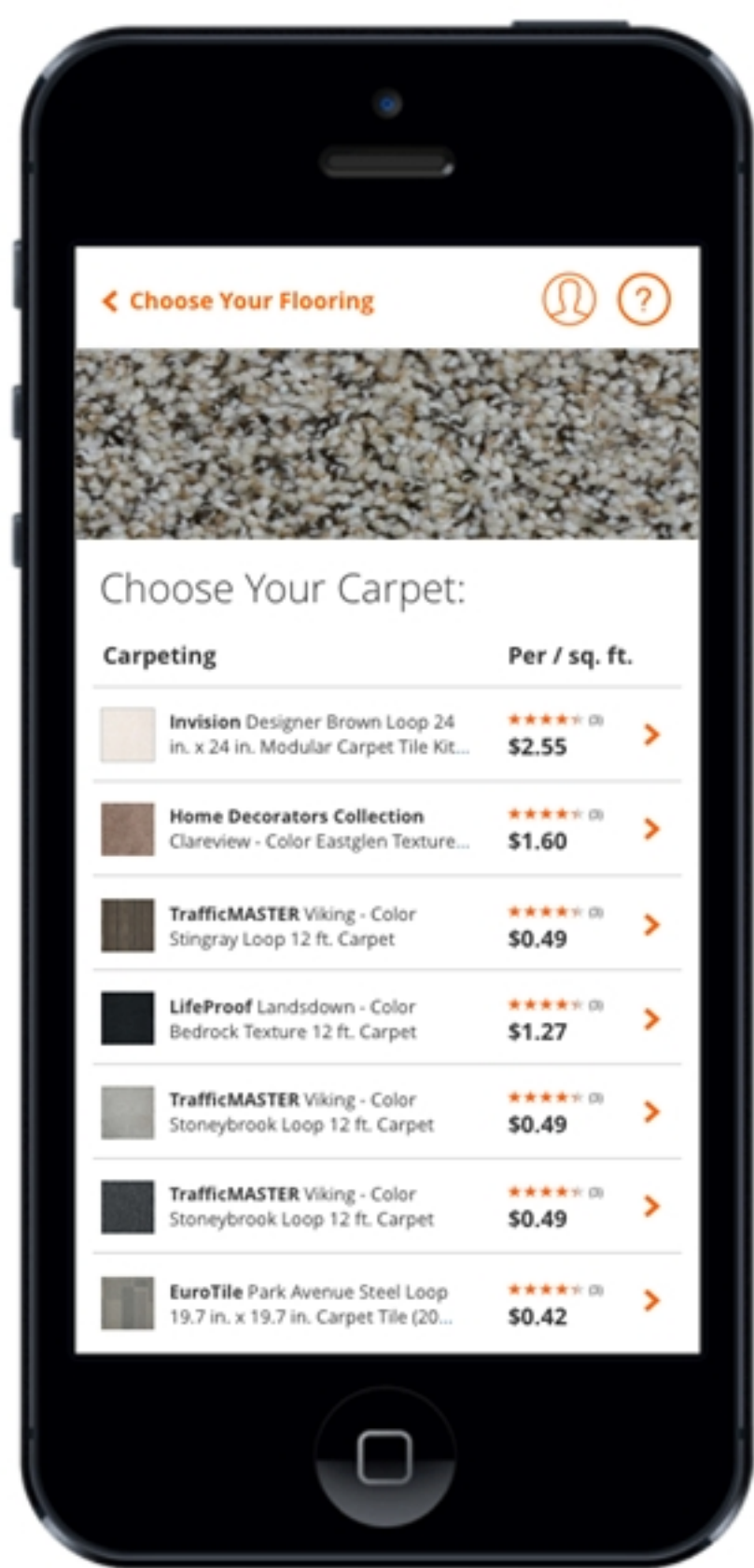
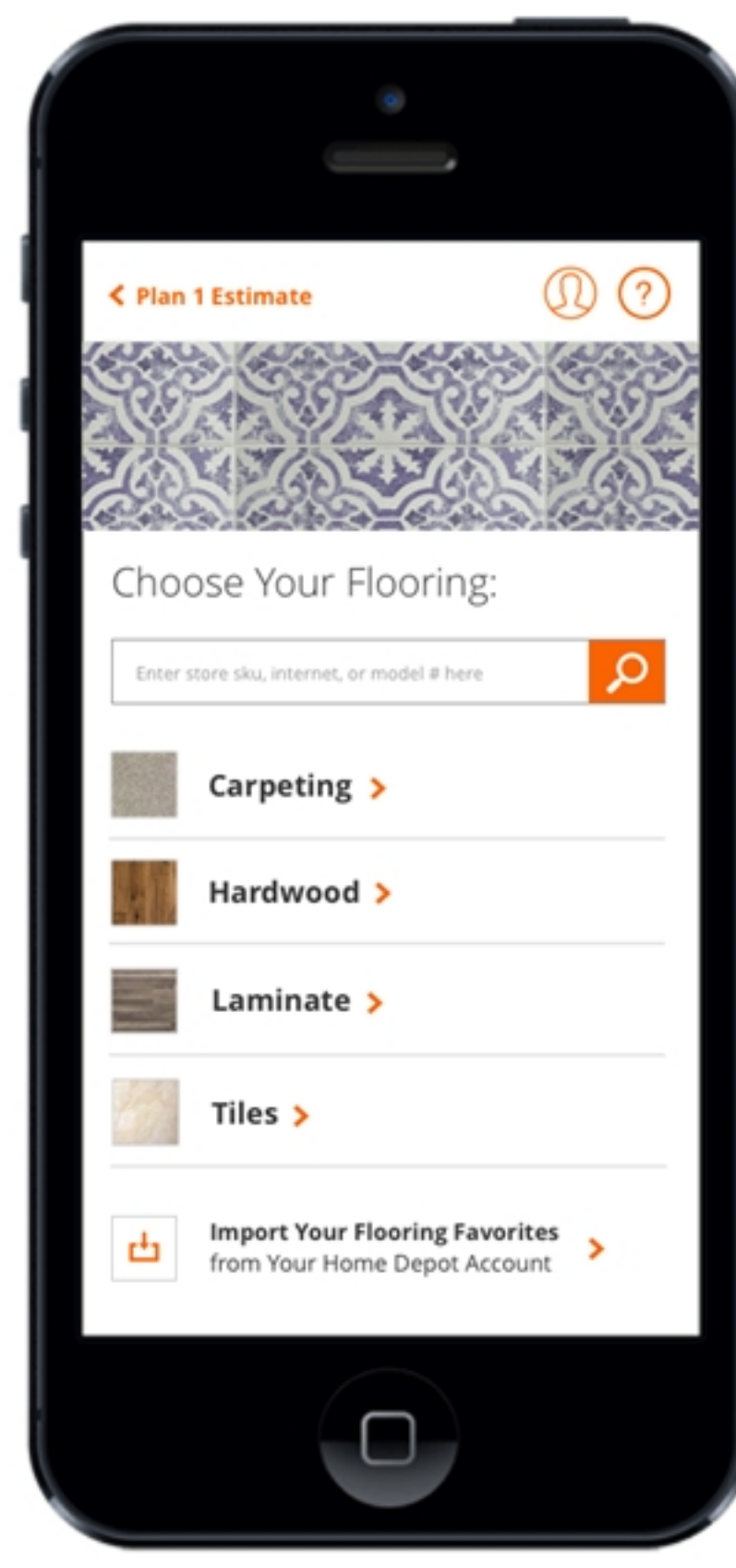
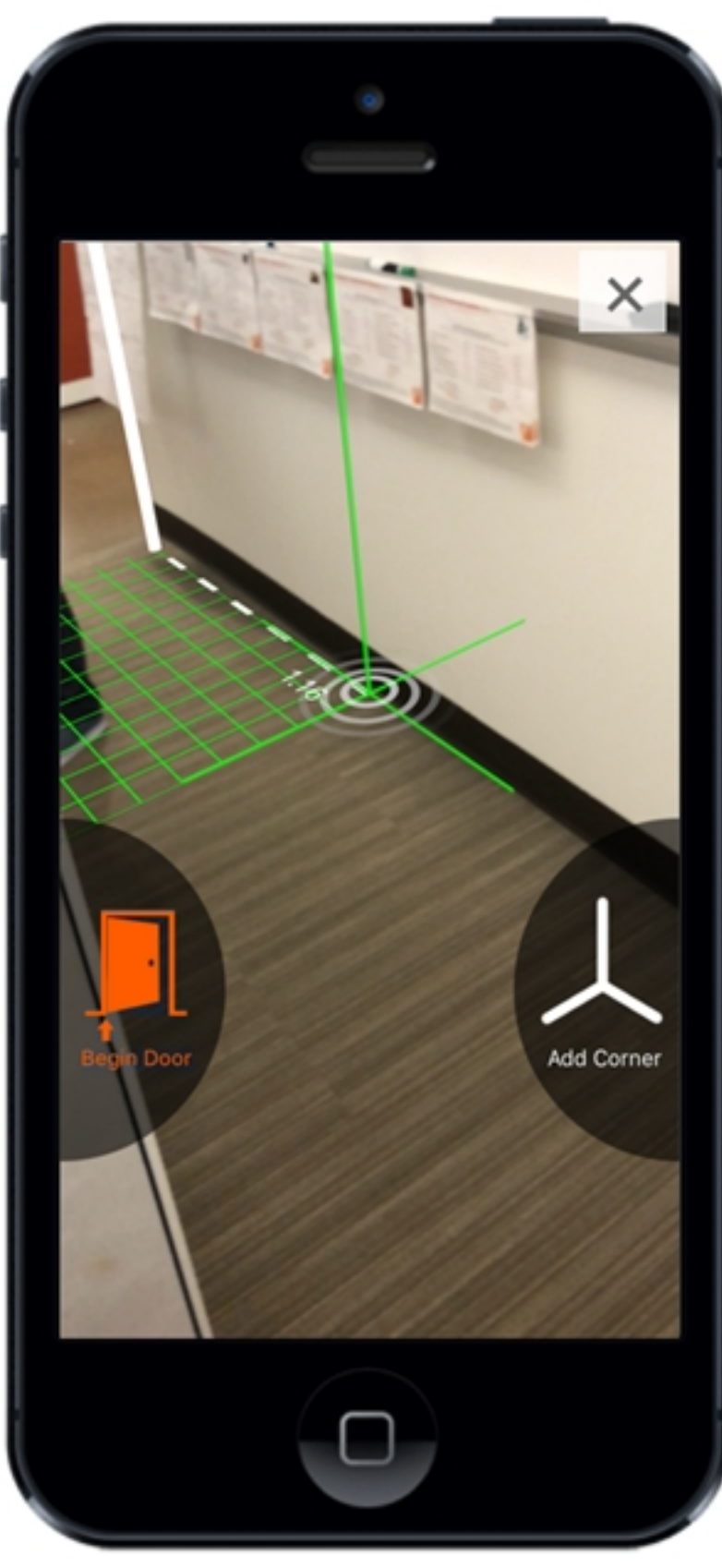
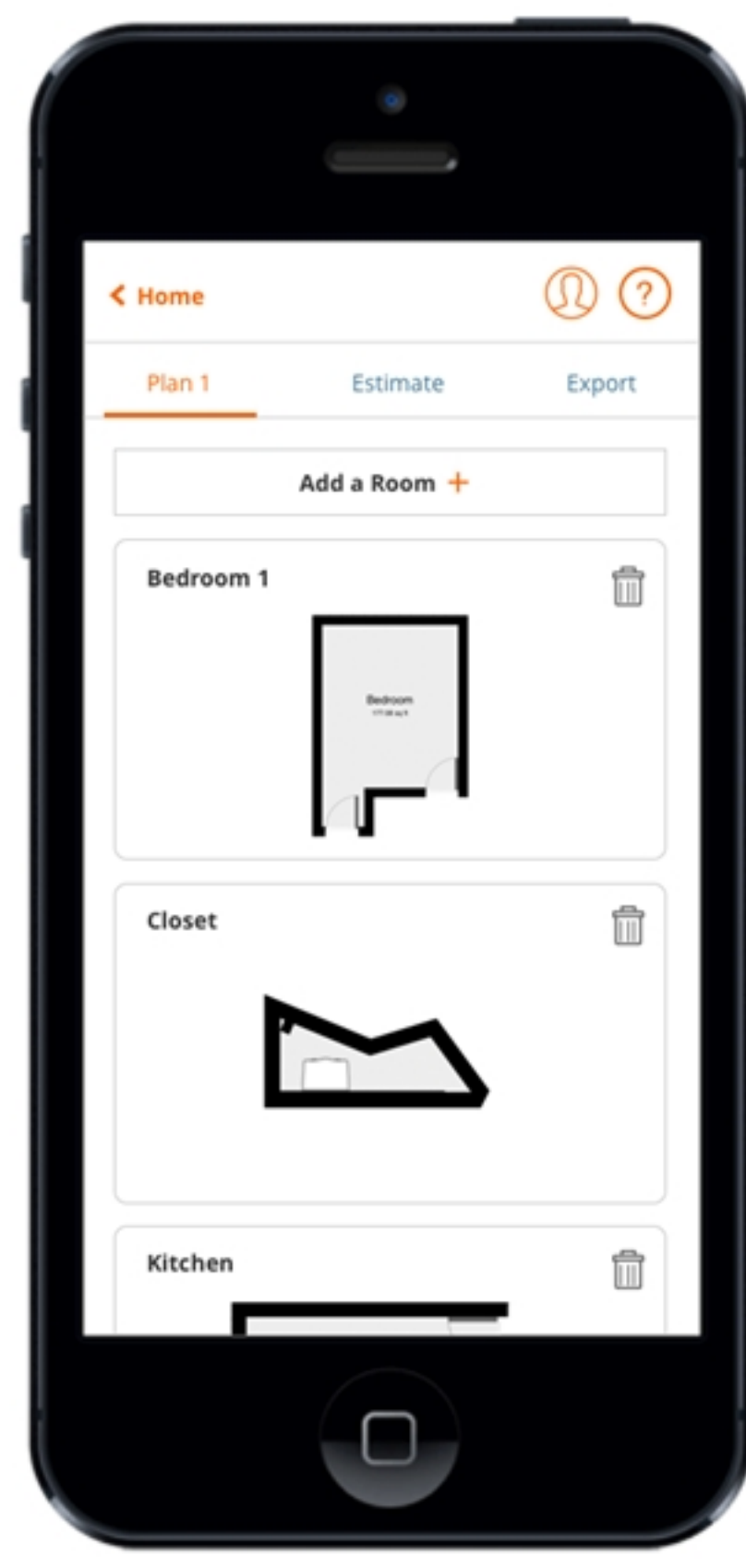


## The idea

After using Magic Plan, an app that uses your phone's camera to create floorplans, to measure a room in my own home, it occurred to me that there was no reason Home Depot needed to send a service technician to measure rooms any more. We have the technology! Applying this to the floor buying experience, we could make things much easier for customers. Instead of getting quotes from different companies, having each one come out and measure your room, and finally getting estimates. Home Depot could give customers an app that does it all instantly. We are national, provide financing, and probably the only

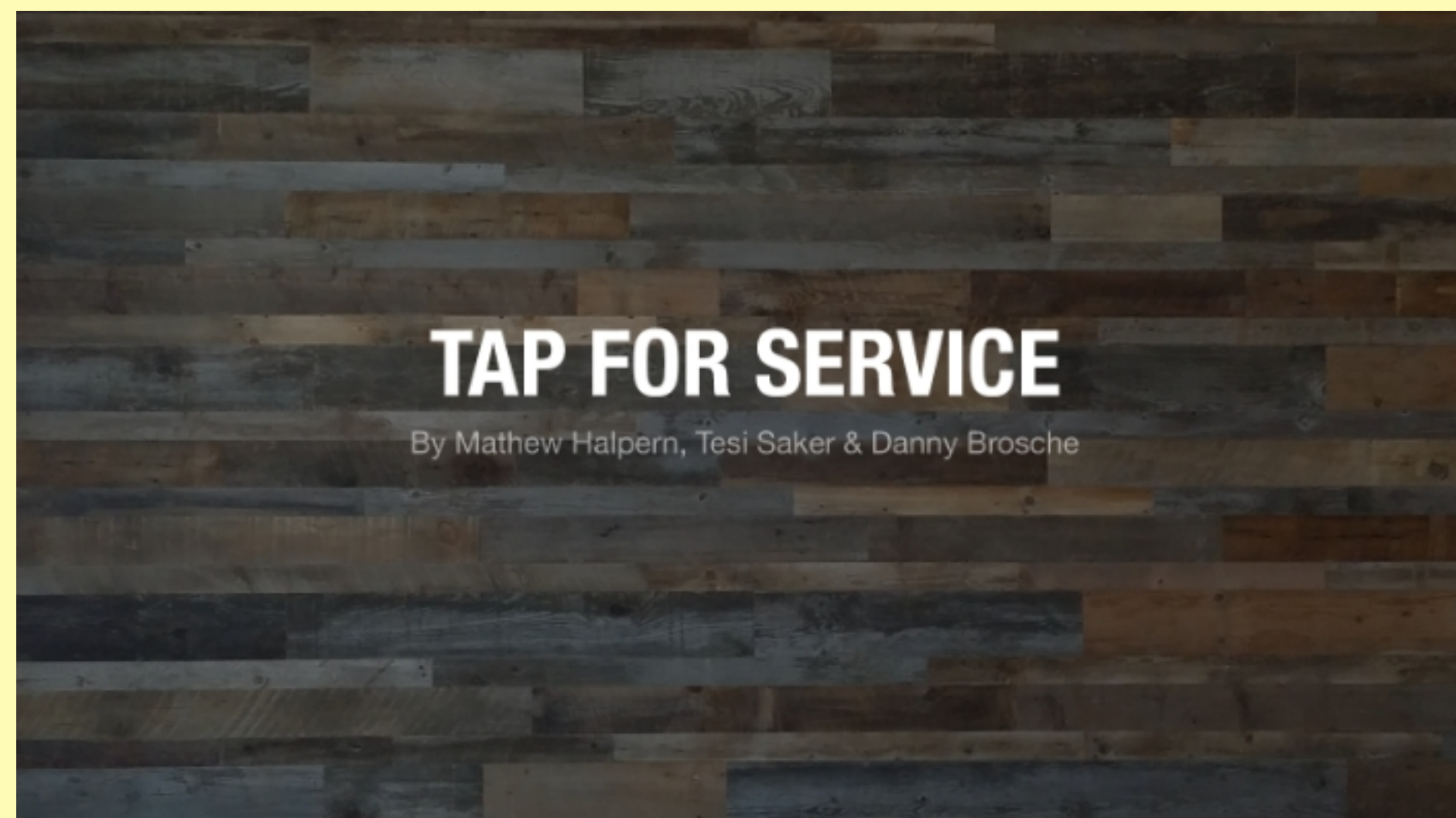
## Creating the project

I recruited two members of my team who I knew from our ongoing career conversations were interested in stretch projects. One was a lead designer looking to get promoted to manager; the other was a junior designer seeking more app and mobile experience. We all worked on the concept between other projects. Together we sketched out an app. With my guidance, my teammates worked on the experience. I worked on the pitch deck.



## The pitch

After six weeks of work, I developed our deck and pitched our concept to the online directors. They helped me tighten the pitch. At their suggestion, I pitched the idea to the VP of product. The VP of Product had me pitch it to Home Depot's chief marketing officer. The CMO had me pitch my deck to the CEO of another company we owned.



View the deck: <http://matthalpern.org/casestudies/floorsdeck.pdf>

Note: I've removed confidential business information from this presentation.

## What happened?

In the end, my proposal had much in common with another project, and its features would be bundled together. That project is under NDA.

After the final pitch, my Atlanta-based team and I flew to Houston to do a design sprint with the team building that project. During the design sprint, we did user testing with customers and realtors, and received strongly positive feedback on both our initial concept and the new combined app.

My design lead was promoted to manager based on his work leading the design sprint in Houston. Stretch projects work!

Finally I saw a working prototype of the new app at a leadership retreat in early March 2020, but since the pandemic I'm not sure if work has continued.