

PROJECT

ENTERPRISE NOTIFICATION & PRODUCTIVITY APPLICATION

CLIENT

SEKWEL

ROLE

PRODUCT DESIGN LEAD

PROBLEM

Increasing use of different modes of communication across different channels **fragments our attention & consumes valuable time:**

Their **notifications** constantly **interrupt** us, further decreasing our productivity.

This is especially problematic in the workplace, where we must integrate the time to manage this constant flow of information into our busy **schedules**.

PROPOSED SOLUTION

Sekwel helps employees stay focused on work by **consolidating all notifications and schedule information in a single area, outside the main work space** on a dedicated tablet device running a custom Android OS.

It also encourages focus by providing an easily activated Do Not Disturb (DND) mode, which temporarily suspends ALL notifications.

PROJECT GOALS

INCREASE EMPLOYEE PRODUCTIVITY BY **REDUCING DISTRACTIONS:**

- ✓ **MAKING NOTIFICATIONS & REMINDERS LESS INTRUSIVE AND EASIER TO MANAGE**
- ✓ **ENCOURAGING USE OF “DO NOT DISTURB” MODE**



RESEARCH

STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS: Clarified business objectives & vision

BRANDING RESEARCH: Learned the **essence** of Sekwel's brand message, tone and guidelines, in order to reflect & remain true to them

USER RESEARCH:

- **Designed & conducted user interviews:** with a focus on how users interacted with their current systems (& why), frustrations they had with their current workflows, and their habits re: communication and notification checking.
- **Contextual user observation:** I spent a day observing how users (volunteers from our pilot program) interacted with their systems, focusing on workflow habits re: communication, notification use, and calendar use.

KEY TAKEAWAY: As I had suspected, many users—almost all in fact—**were extremely anxious & hesitant to use DND mode**, for fear of missing out on their messages. However, further dialogue revealed potential solutions to help mitigate the issue, which were incorporated into the design (as will be noted).

COMPETITIVE ANALYSIS: Dug deep to find the good, bad, and the ugly of what's out there now; test drove similar products; collected inspiration

TECH RESEARCH: Interviewed engineers to learn what the software could & couldn't do:

It would function similarly to the notification centers on iOS & Android devices, referring "heavy lifting" tasks back to the app that triggered the notification (e.g., tapping "respond" on an email notification opens the user's email program on his computer, in the appropriate state to take his response).



SEKWEL BRAND LOGO

“ *How long can you go without checking your messages without feeling uncomfortable?*

I would only feel comfortable using DND mode for short periods of time.

do you ever “manually” enter DND by turning off your own notifications? Why or why not?

Is that time based on a fear of missing messages in general, or just messages from a few important senders?

I usually keep my calendar open on my desktop throughout the day.

How do you usually monitor for your new messages? For example, by keeping the windows to your messaging applications open and in view, through periodic checking, desktop notifications, etc.?

How long do you generally leave yourself to to respond to a non-emergency email/call...?

How often do you find yourself getting distracted by desktop notifications that relatively unimportant to you?



UX STRATEGY RECOMMENDATIONS

After *digesting* the research, I identified several key UX issues, which I presented to the team with recommended strategies for addressing them, explaining my rationale for each.

We then worked closely together to **clarify & prioritize** a plan of action. My recommendations centered around 3 themes:

1. MAKING TASKS AS QUICK & EASY TO DO AS POSSIBLE:

User workflows die hard. Using this app effectively forces users to change their established workflows & *HABITS*—a very uphill battle—and unlikely to be a welcome change...even a minor area of ambiguity or extra step in a task flow would likely be seen a major annoyance.

2. EXPLOITING THE APP'S UNIQUE STRENGTH: INTEGRATION:

Creating useful features that were previously *not possible*, including:

- Ability to respond to notifications in any medium—not just the one in which the notification was received—with a single tap; e.g., responding to an I.M. with a phone call.
- Ability to mark notifications as “important”, save them to a dedicated area to act on later, and even temporarily hide them until they have the time to catch up on communications.

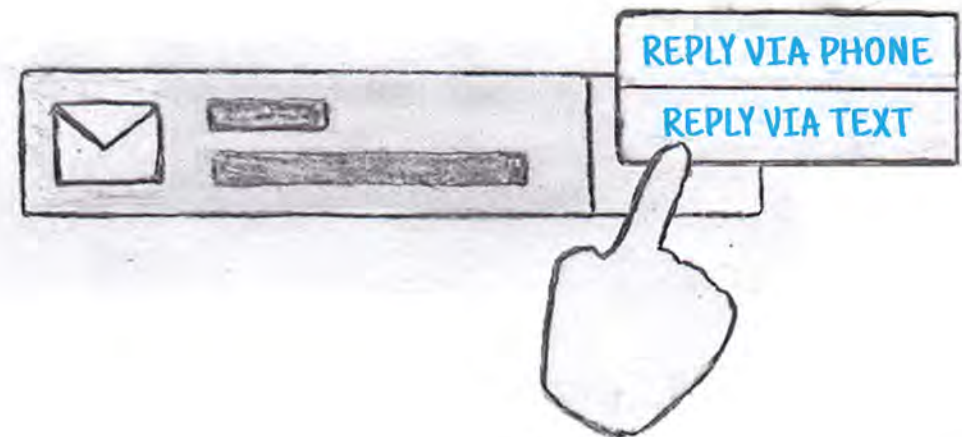
3. REMOVING USERS' ANXIETY ABOUT ENTERING DND:

Implementations included:

- Ability to define “VIP” senders, allowing all notifications from them to “break through” DND mode & be delivered immediately
- Ability to pre-set short time limits on DND mode, enabling users to try a temporary distraction-free environment, if only for a short time



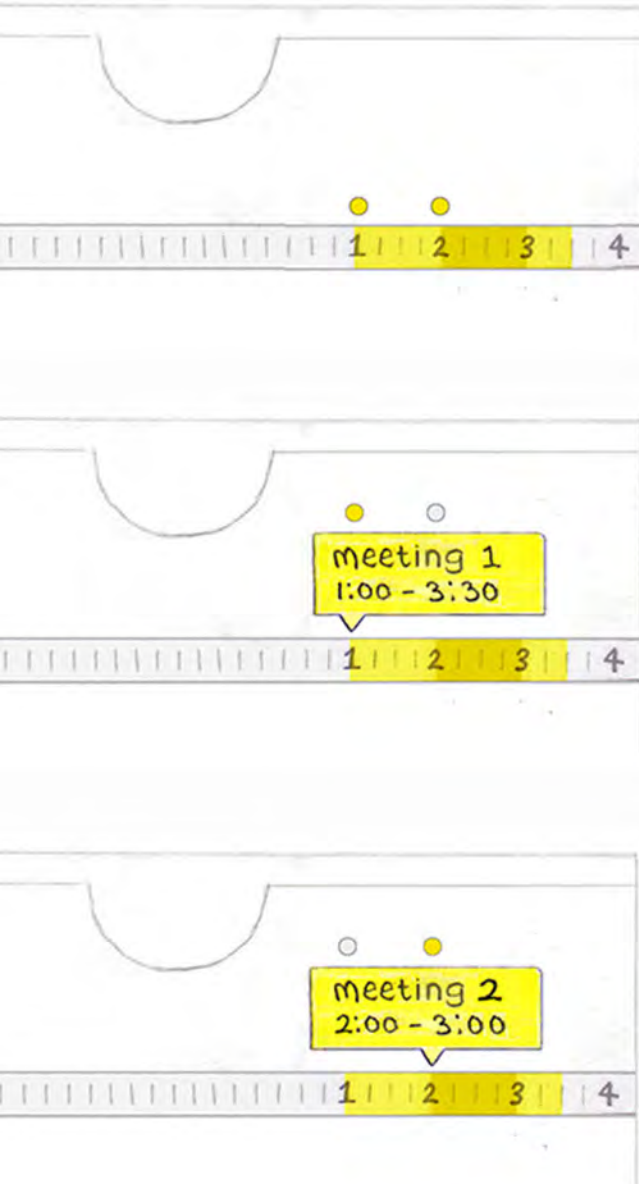
A LONG PRESS ON THE NOTIFICATION'S BODY INVOKES A CONTEXT MENU WITH OPTIONS TO MARK EITHER THE SENDER AS A VIP, OR THE NOTIFICATION AS IMPORTANT.



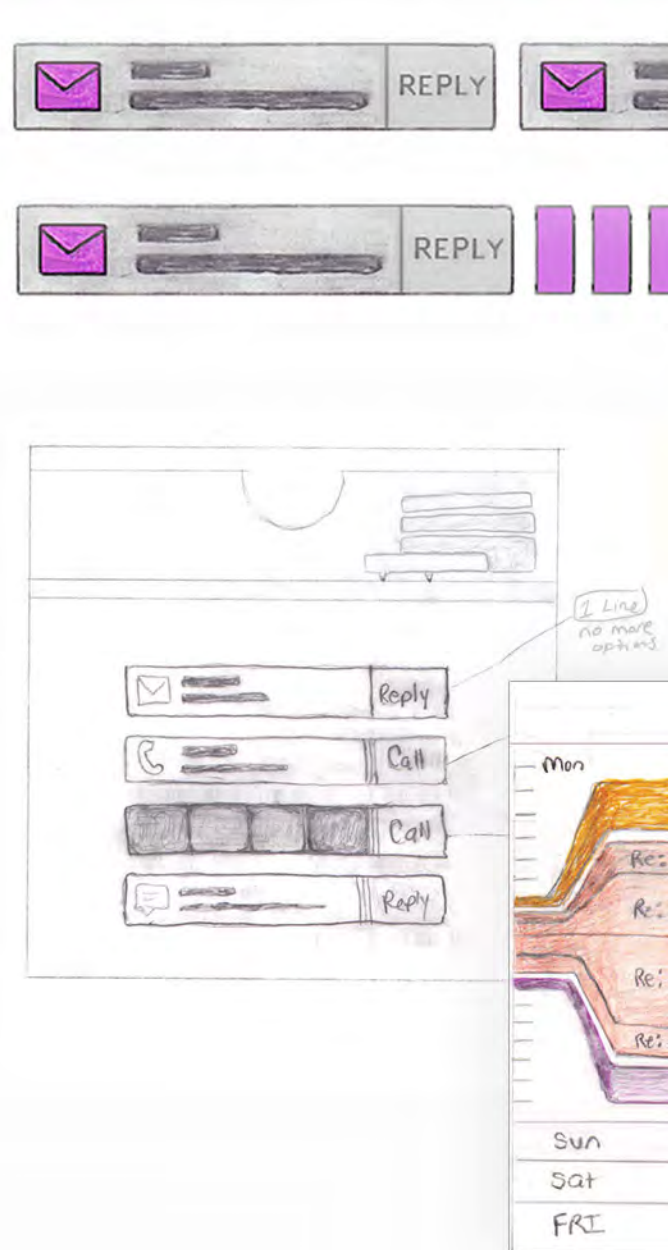
A LONG PRESS ON A NOTIFICATION'S CALL TO ACTION (E.G., “RESPOND”) INVOKES A CONTEXT MENU WITH OPTIONS TO RESPOND USING AN ALTERNATE MEDIUM.

IDEATION : WIREFRAMES

TREATMENT EXPLORATIONS FOR OVERLAPPING MEETINGS



TREATMENT EXPLORATIONS FOR GROUPED CONVERSATIONS



EARLIER EXPLORATIONS

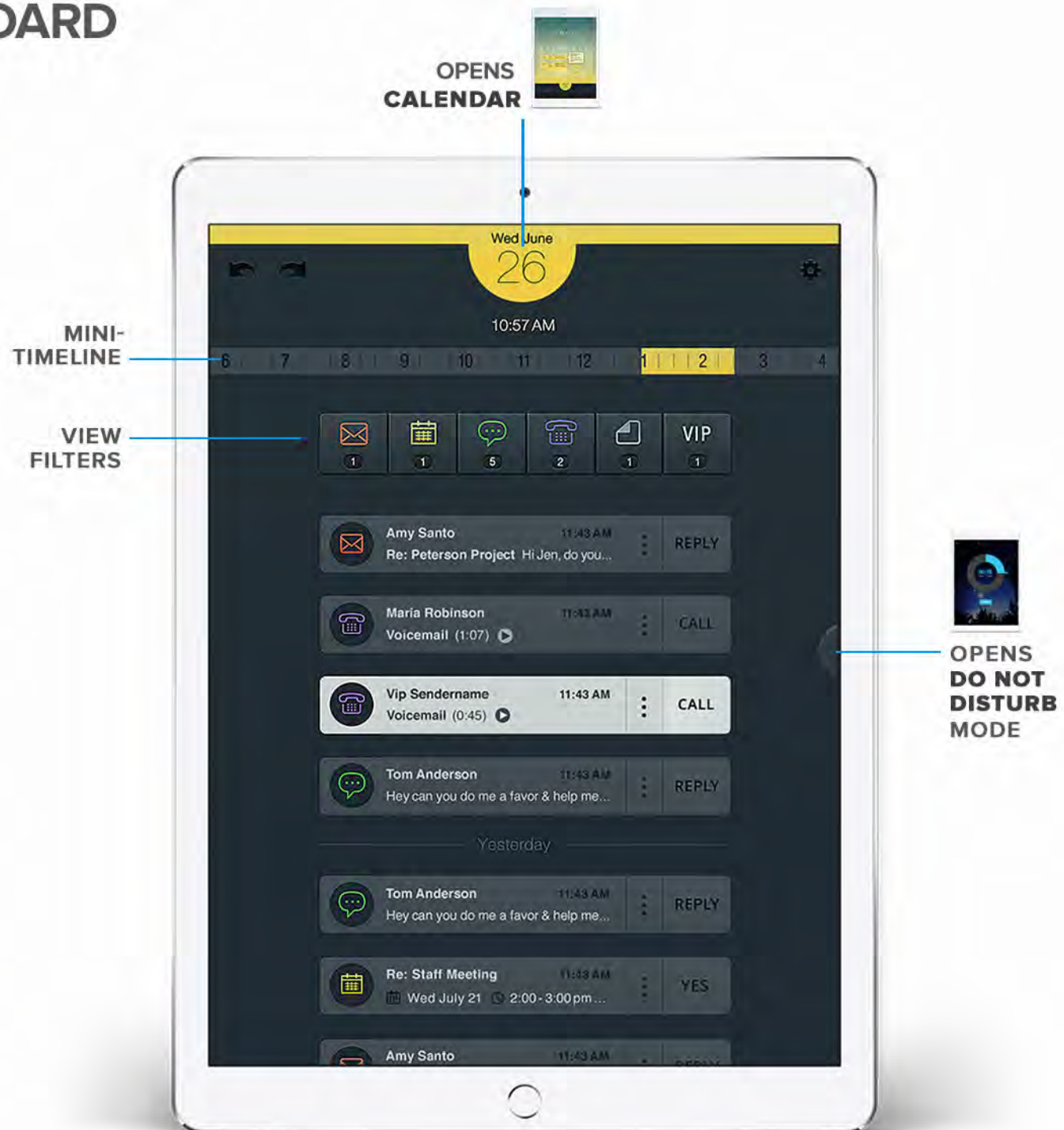


MAIN SCREEN: THE DASHBOARD

Two main **priorities**:

1: **PROVIDE MAXIMUM RELEVANT INFORMATION AS QUICKLY — AND WITH AS LITTLE EFFORT — AS POSSIBLE, BY:**

- **Mini-Timeline** of the user's day was added to the main app view to keep the most critical daily information—upcoming meetings—**“a glance away” at all times**
 - **Notification View Filters** allow users to quickly show or hide any combination of notification types.
 - **CHUNKING**: to help quickly process & group related data, I “cunked” similar information:
 - **NOTIFICATION types** were distinguished using graphic, color coded icons
-
- **CALENDAR events** were all colored using Sekwel's signature brand yellow, highlighting their importance, and allowing users to quickly spot time-sensitive information
 - **AFFORDANCES to expose app navigation** & keep the users oriented in the app w/o effort.

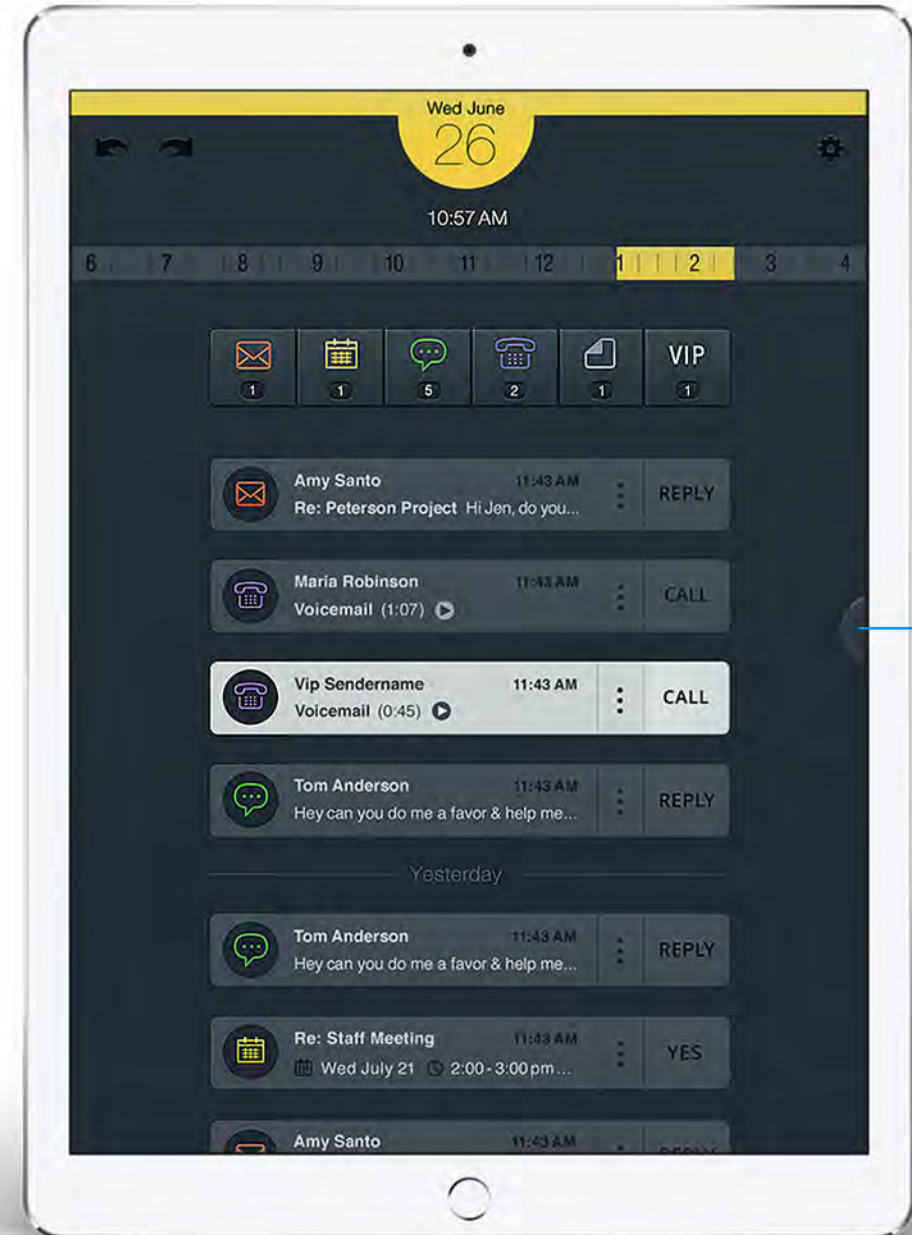


MAIN SCREEN: THE DASHBOARD

Two main **priorities**:

2: LESS DISTRACTING NOTIFICATIONS:

- **EASY, 1-SWIPE ACTIVATION OF DND MODE**
- **Dark, minimal color scheme** was used to help shield the user from excess visual stimulation coming from the extra screen —and extra “noise”— added to their environment
- **Graceful fade-in** the motion is still seen peripherally



TAP OR
SWIPE TO
ENTER
**DO NOT
DISTURB
MODE**

DASHBOARD DESIGN: FILTERS & MINI TIMELINE

MINI - TIMELINE:

Upcoming meetings are represented by the yellow bars, and **scroll into view along with the time.**

Tapping the bar reveals meeting information (as shown).

FILTERS

- **Can be combined to show or hide any combination of notification types** (set here to only view email notifications)
- **Use the same color-coded, graphic icons** as the notifications, for instant identification
- **“VIP” & “IMPORTANT”** filters are also included (far right of filter bar)
- **BADGES** track the number of unseen notifications of each type



Wed Sept

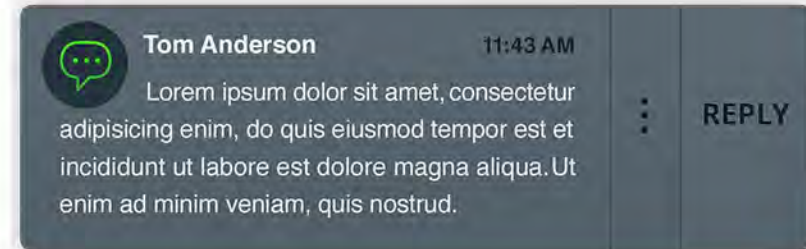
9



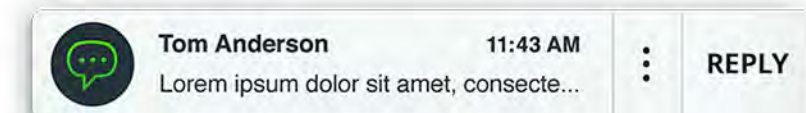
JOHN DOE XXX-XXX-XXXX Ext. XXX

NOTIFICATION DESIGN

- **DEFAULT NOTIFICATION STATE:** Swipe right to delete.
- **EXPANDED / COLLAPSED STATE:** Tap once on the notification body to expand it; when the notification is expanded, tapping again will collapse it back to its default height.
- **INITIATE CALL TO ACTION:** Swipe left, or tap on the “call to action” button
- **OVERFLOW BUTTON ACTIONS:** Further options to:
 - Mark notification as **“IMPORTANT”** (shown, bottom)
 - Tag sender as a **“VIP”** (shown, second from bottom)
 - Save to archive (hides notification without deleting it)

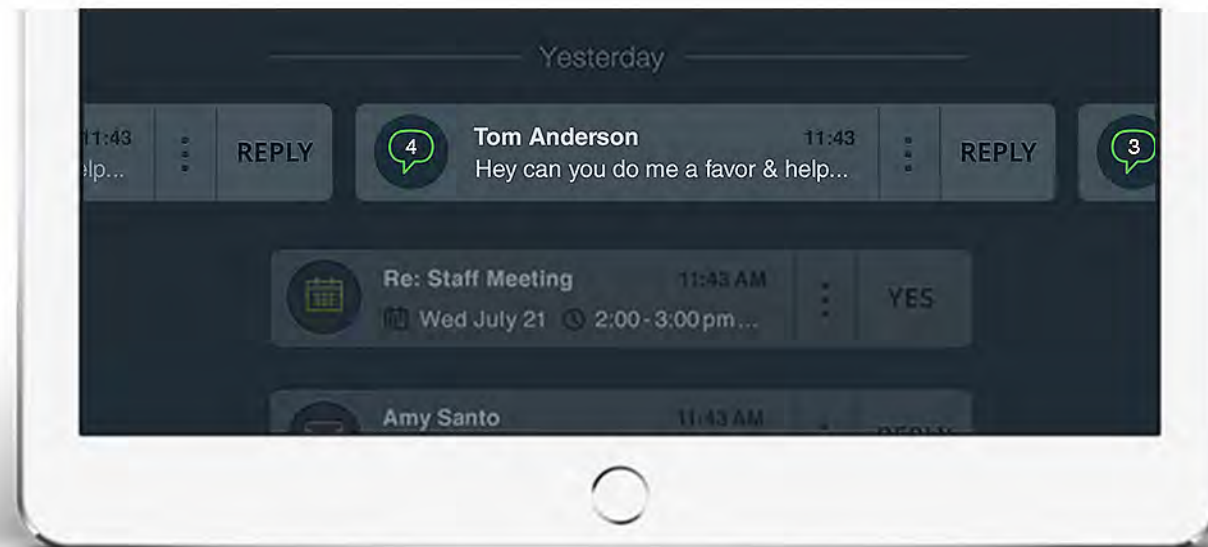
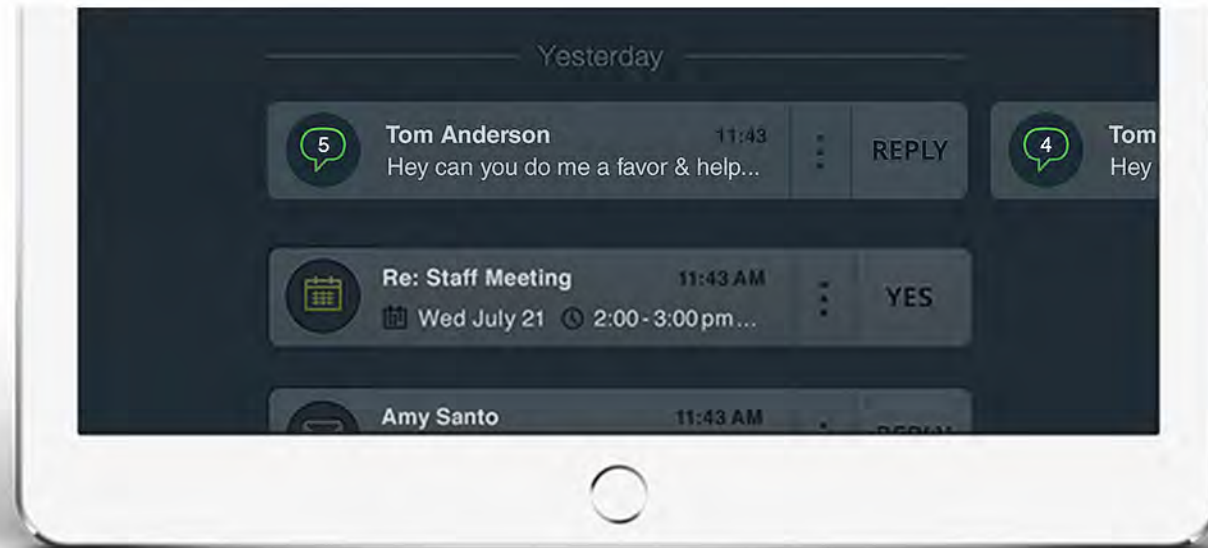


- **NOTIFICATIONS FROM VIP SENDERS:** Enhanced visual treatment; **circumvent DND** for instant delivery
- **NOTIFICATIONS MARKED AS IMPORTANT:** Elongated to be easy to spot in notification list; **do not “disappear”** when viewed in referring app; **can be invoked / hidden** on demand



DASHBOARD NOTIFICATION SOLUTION: GROUPED CONVERSATIONS

:



DO NOT DISTURB (DND) MODE

DND MODE ENTRY: Tap the “tab” on Dashboard’s right edge



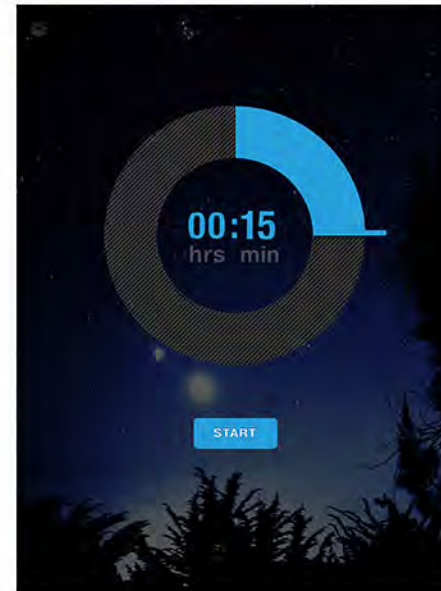
INITIAL “SET DND TIMER” PROMPT: Inspired by user feedback on anxiety of using DND. Further questions revealed many users were more receptive to DND use if limitable to short bursts of time

- The timer helps users feel more **SECURE**, as it *ensures* auto- exit of DND mode, and **more in CONTROL**, as it allows them to set DND for as short a time as they are comfortable
- The **DND Timer Prompt** can be **activated / deactivated** in settings; when activated, use of the timer is still optional.

CUSTOM DND IMAGE UPLOAD Gives users the ability to upload their own photos to personalize their experience.

- Alternatively, I included a variety of “tranquil” images for users to select from for their “DND mode” background

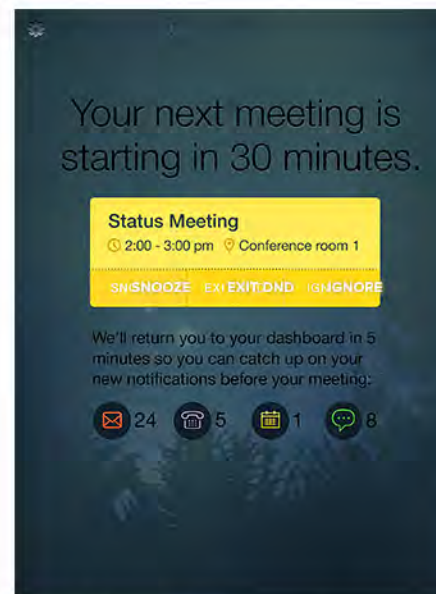
VIP MESSAGE BREAKTHROUGH (bottom rt.): Notifications from VIP senders “break through” DND mode so the user won’t miss them.



DND ENTRY SCREEN



DND ACTIVE



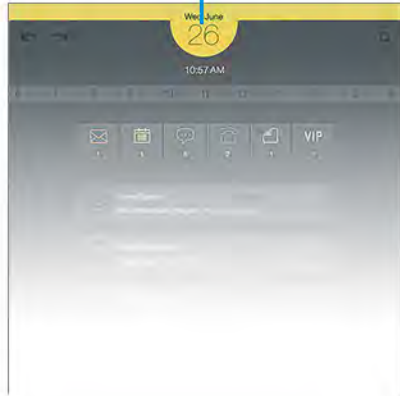
UPCOMING MEETING ALERT
(includes options to “SNOOZE”, “EXIT DND” or “DISMISS” the alert)



VIP MESSAGE BREAKTHROUGH

CALENDAR DESIGN: OVERVIEW

THE CALENDAR IS OPENED by tapping on the yellow date / bar on top of the dashboard screen.



When triggered, the calendar slides down, "on top" of the dashboard.

The "slide down" interaction helps users orient themselves quickly as screen content changes, while also providing context.

TOGGLE MONTHLY CALENDAR VIEW

Users can toggle 2 calendar views (shown left) via "monthly view" icons at top left of the screen



OPEN MONTHLY VIEW



CLOSE MONTHLY VIEW

COLOR SCHEME: based on Sekwel's signature brand yellow. It was applied to calendar events to reflect their high priority importance with a corresponding high-priority in the visual hierarchy. Also used at bottom of gradient

THE CALENDAR IS CLOSED by simply tapping on the same yellow date area used to open the screen, now found at screen bottom.

FULL-PAGE CALENDAR STATE



"MONTHLY VIEW" STATE



CALENDAR DESIGN: USAGE & FEATURES

TWO MAIN UX DESIGN PRIORITIES DROVE THE DESIGN:

DESIGN TASK FLOWS AS INTUITIVE, SIMPLE & QUICK (USING AS FEW STEPS) AS POSSIBLE: Easy adoption is critical, as the app's goal is to increase user productivity

Methods included use of familiar design patterns, and competitive analysis / testing of other calendar apps to see what works & what doesn't:

- **Swipe horizontally on main calendar** for successive weeks
- **Swipe vertically on main calendar** through hours of the day
- **Swipe monthly calendars** to quickly view future months
- **Tap a column (day) on main calendar** to expand the day
- **Tap a meeting** to view popup with more information
-   **Icons** signify ability to “**Jump to today's date**” (left) and “**open in external app**” (right; used to open native calendar app)
- To help user orientation, tapping a day/week in monthly calendar highlights it in main calendar (& vice versa).

ABILITY TO CONSUME THE MOST RELEVANT INFORMATION WITH THE LEAST EFFORT & STEPS

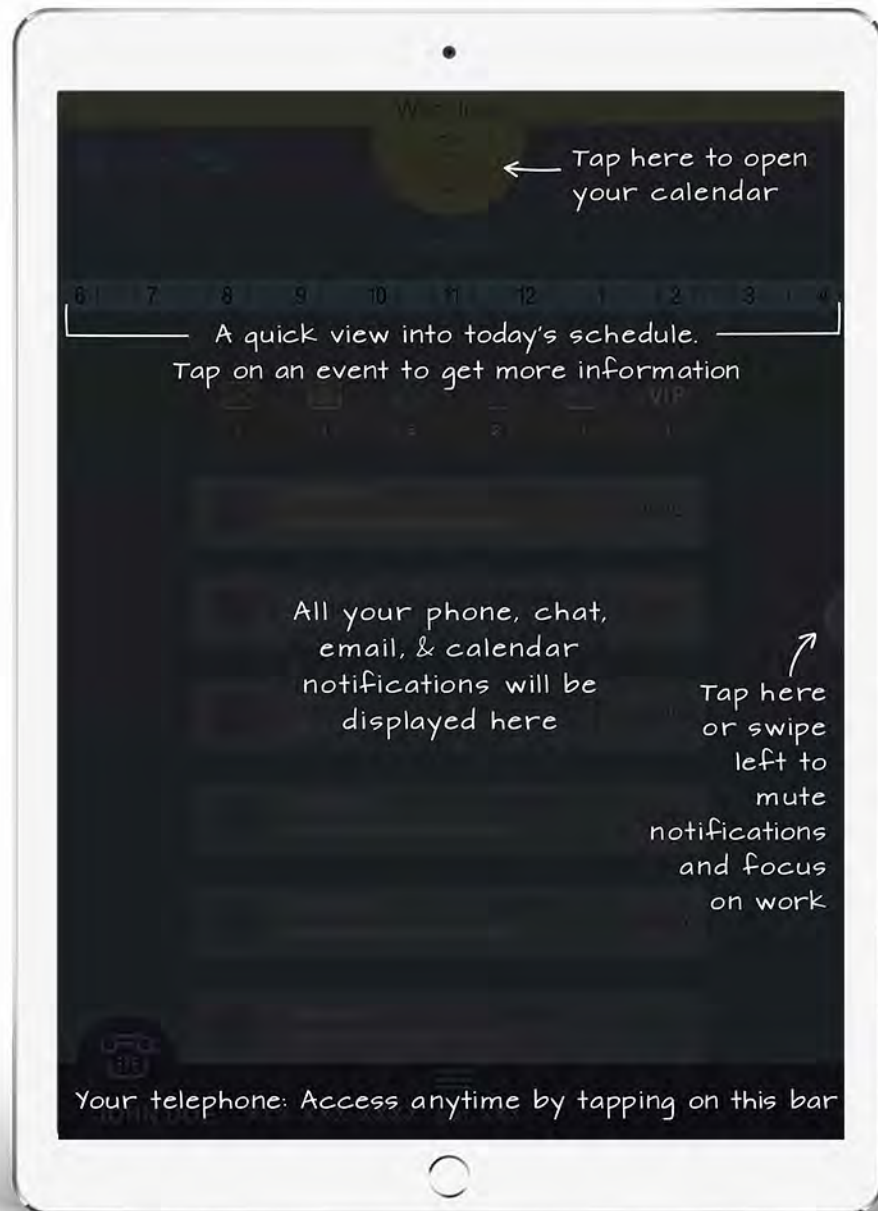
- **Use of expandable columns** give users an overall snapshot of their meetings for the week without overwhelming them with too much information.

More information is seen in expanded columns / current days, **and complete meeting information** (for any meeting) is seen via popover when tapped.

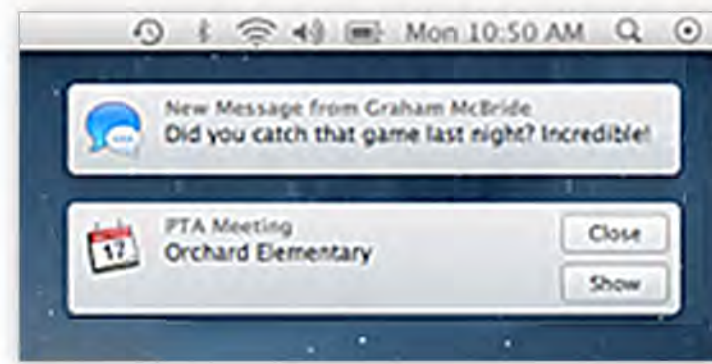
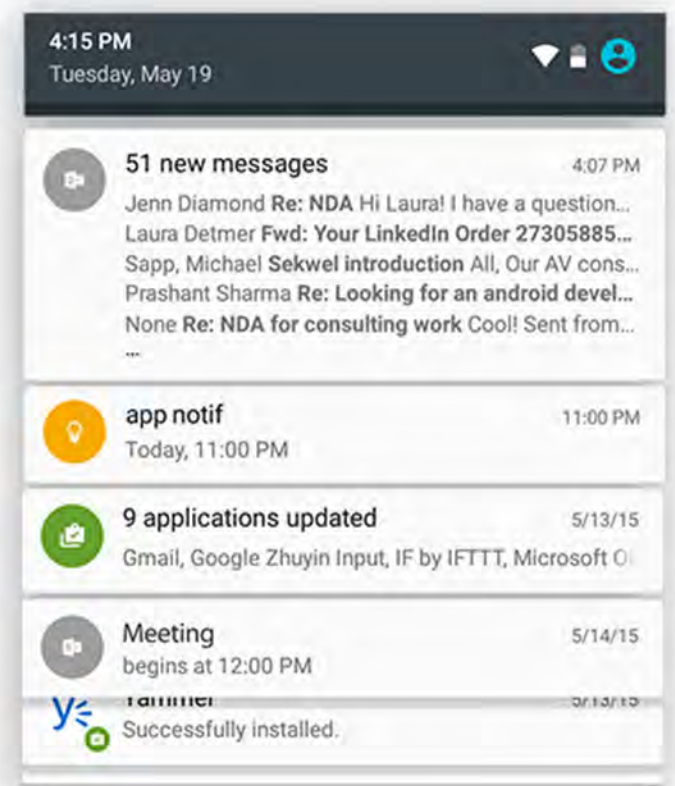
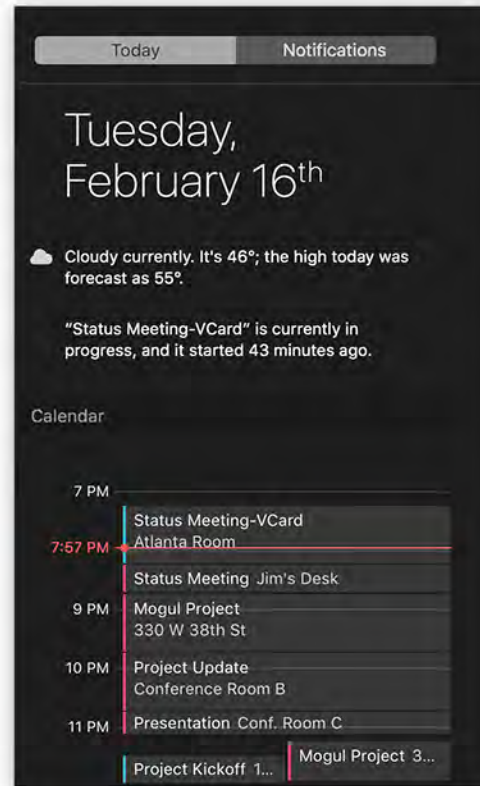
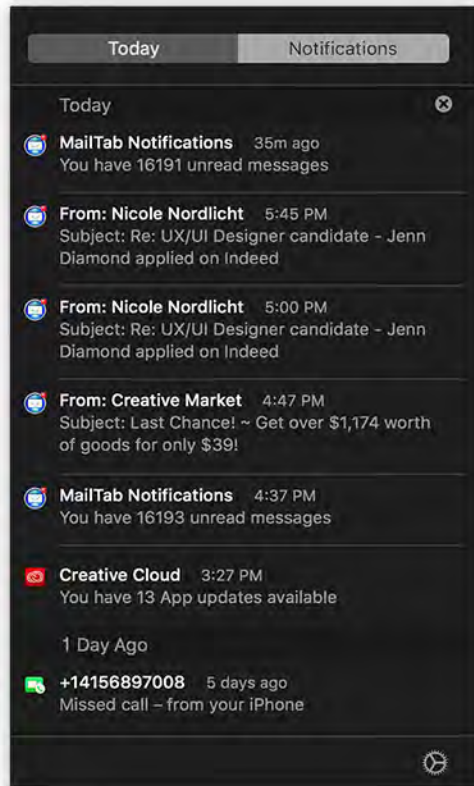


ONBOARDING: INSTRUCTIONAL OVERLAYS

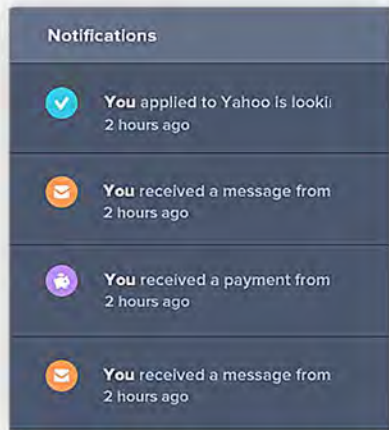
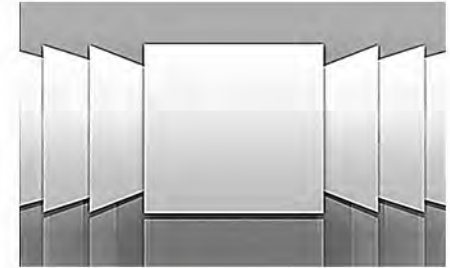
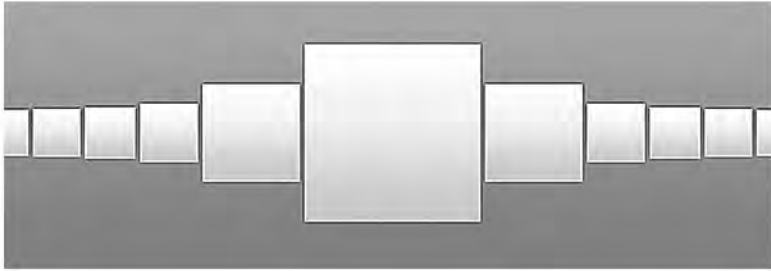
The overlays appear on first viewing and can be recalled at any time via the settings icon



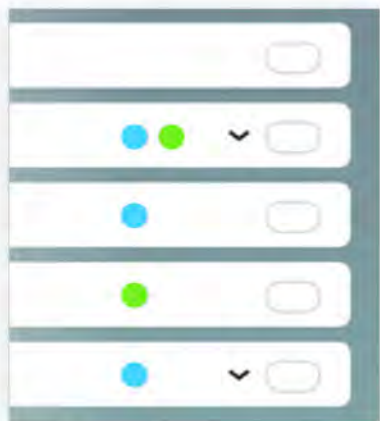
COMPETITIVE RESEARCH



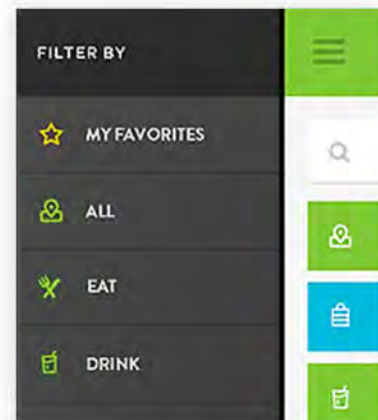
VISUAL RESEARCH



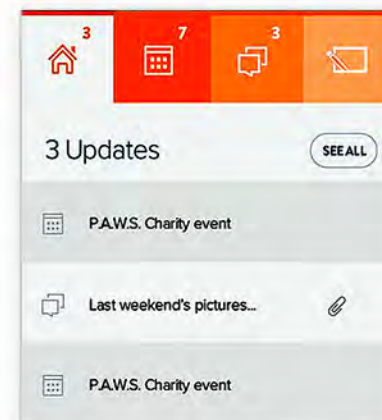
NOTIFICATION DISPLAY



TAGS



SIDE FILTER



TABS