

Q1 2017

American Express Design System

Summary The American Express Design System is an open source framework for web and mobile. Rooted in the American Express Brand Guidelines, this system comprises code, design tools and resources and human interface guidelines.

- Contribution**
- Design strategy and research
 - UX and UI design
 - Prototyping
 - Governance and collaboration guidelines

Duration 11 Months

- Platform**
- iOS
 - Android
 - Web

01

Problem

The lack of a centralized design system at American Express led to fragmented user experiences across their digital products, weakening the brand identity and causing user frustration due to inconsistent interfaces and interactions across various platforms.

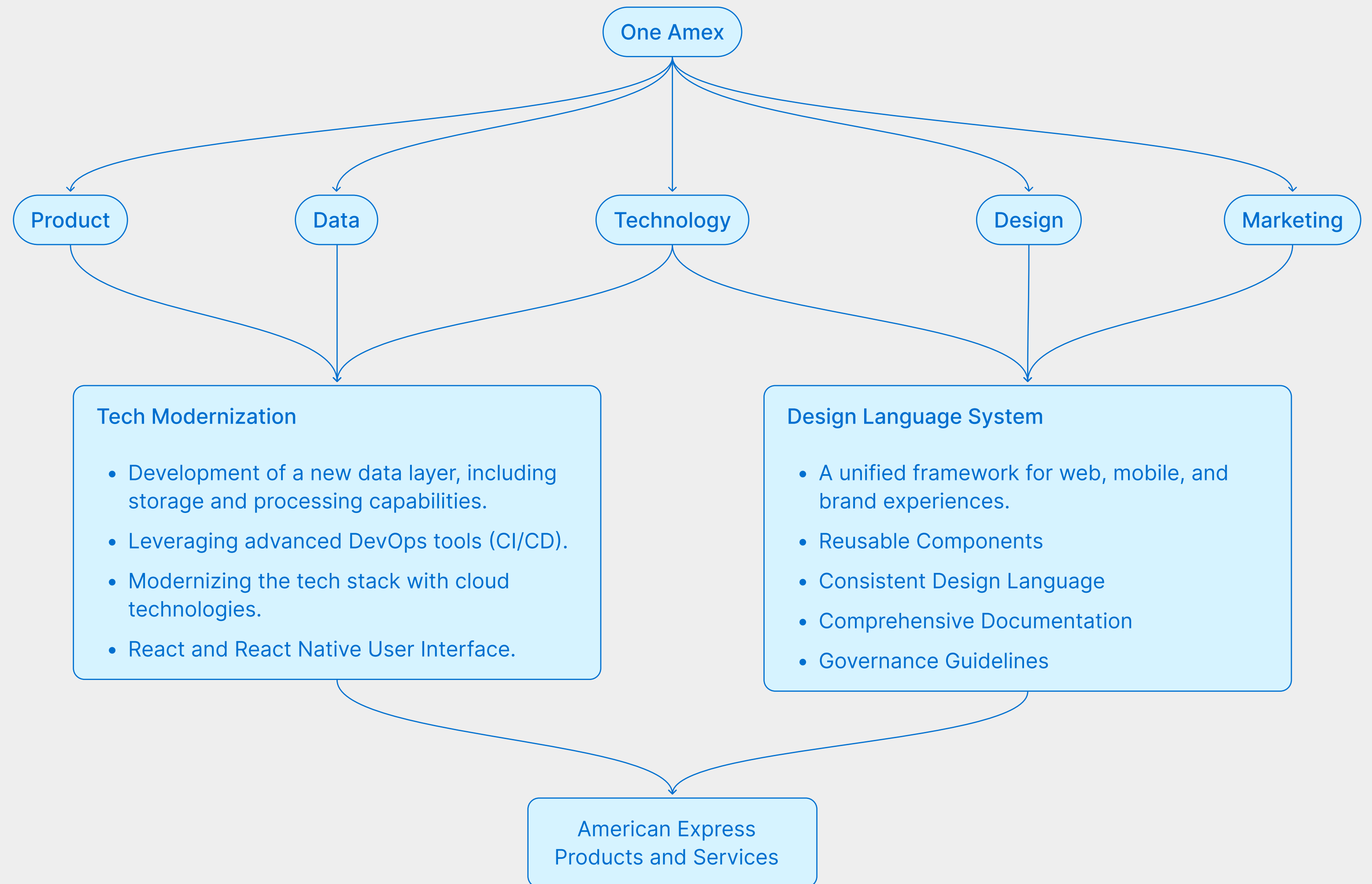
02

American Express Design System

Wagner De Paula

Vision

The vision of the One Amex initiative was to create a unified system that would not only standardize our digital products but also enhance the overall user experience, improve processes and collaboration, drive customer satisfaction, reinforcing brand loyalty across all touch points.

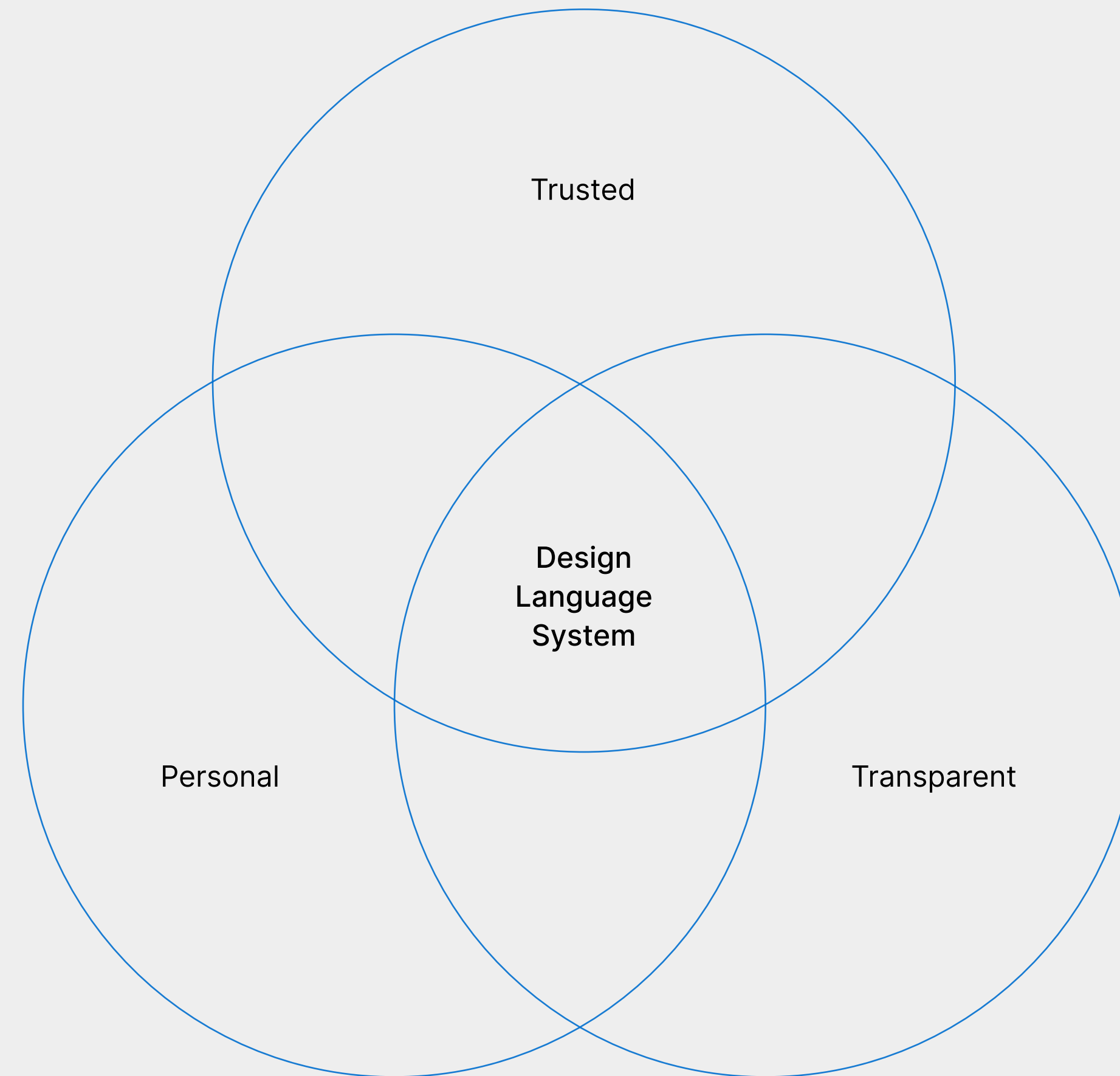


03

Goals

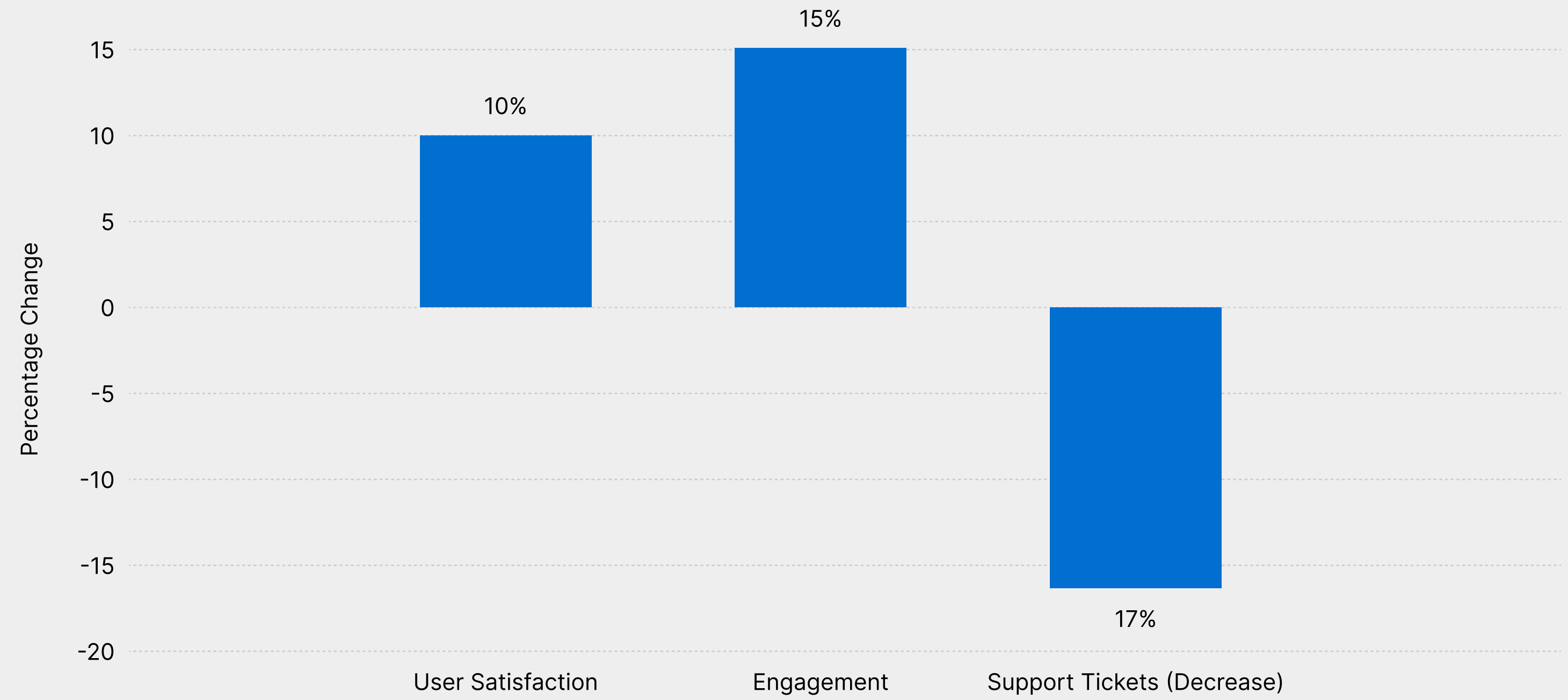
Before developing the design system, core principles were established to guide the process:

- **Trusted**
Design that inspires confidence through clarity and transparency.
- **Personal**
Anticipating and addressing the needs of Card Members.
- **Transparent**
Clear communication that promotes trust and understanding.



Enhance user trust by 10% increase in user satisfaction scores, personalize experiences to drive a 15% increase in engagement, and promote transparency by reducing user confusion, aiming for a 17% decrease in support tickets related to navigation issues.

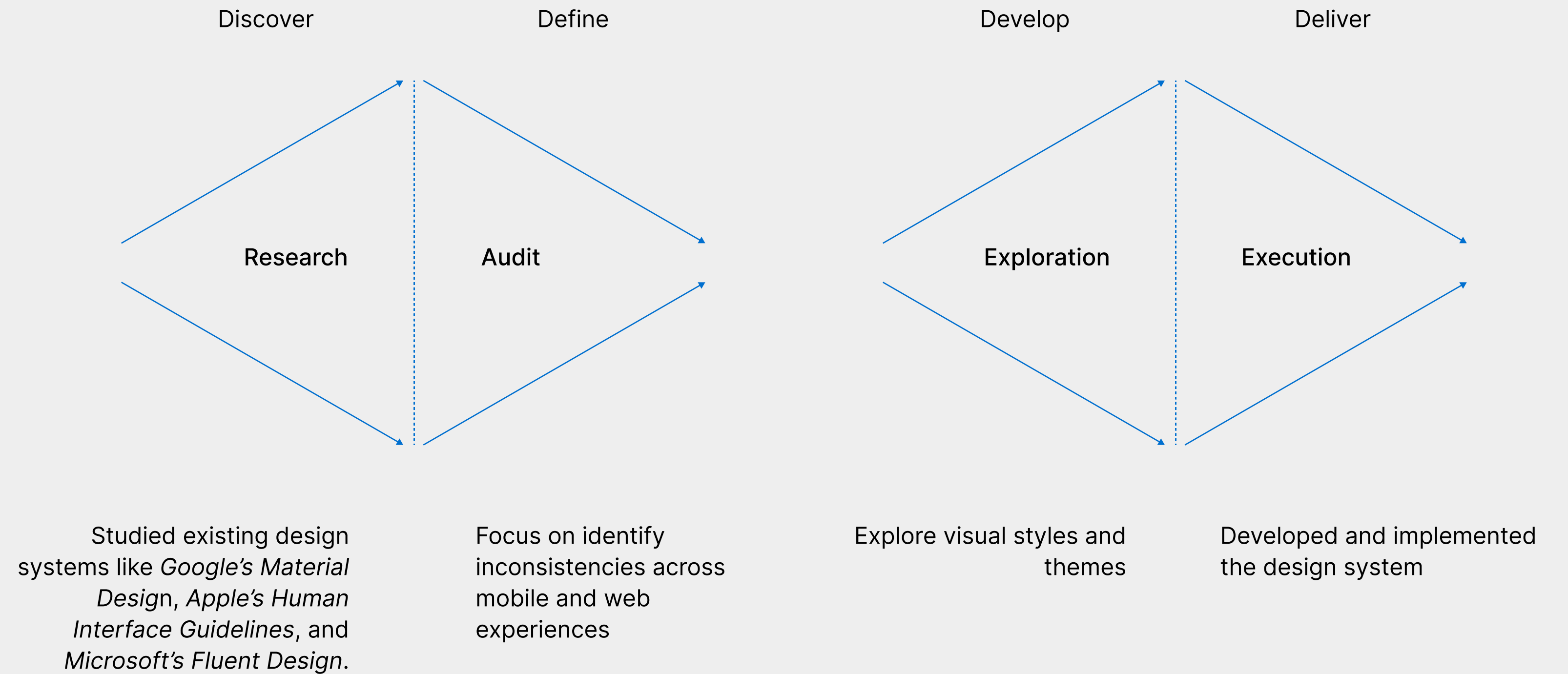
Impact of Strategic Goals on User Experience Metrics



Note: Data extracted from project management tools where feature deployment timelines, user satisfaction scores, engagement metrics, and scrum team performance are tracked. Data through 11/21/2017.
Source: JIRA, Asana, and/or Trello

Activities & Collaboration

I orchestrated weekly workshops with product, engineering, and marketing teams, ensuring alignment on design principles and resolving conflicts between usability and technical constraints. This collaborative approach was pivotal in securing buy-in and accelerating the adoption of the design system.



1. Strategy

Partnered with tech, product, and marketing teams to develop a cohesive vision for the DLS.

2. Design Work

Conducted low-fidelity designs to outline the basic structure and components of the system.

3. Development

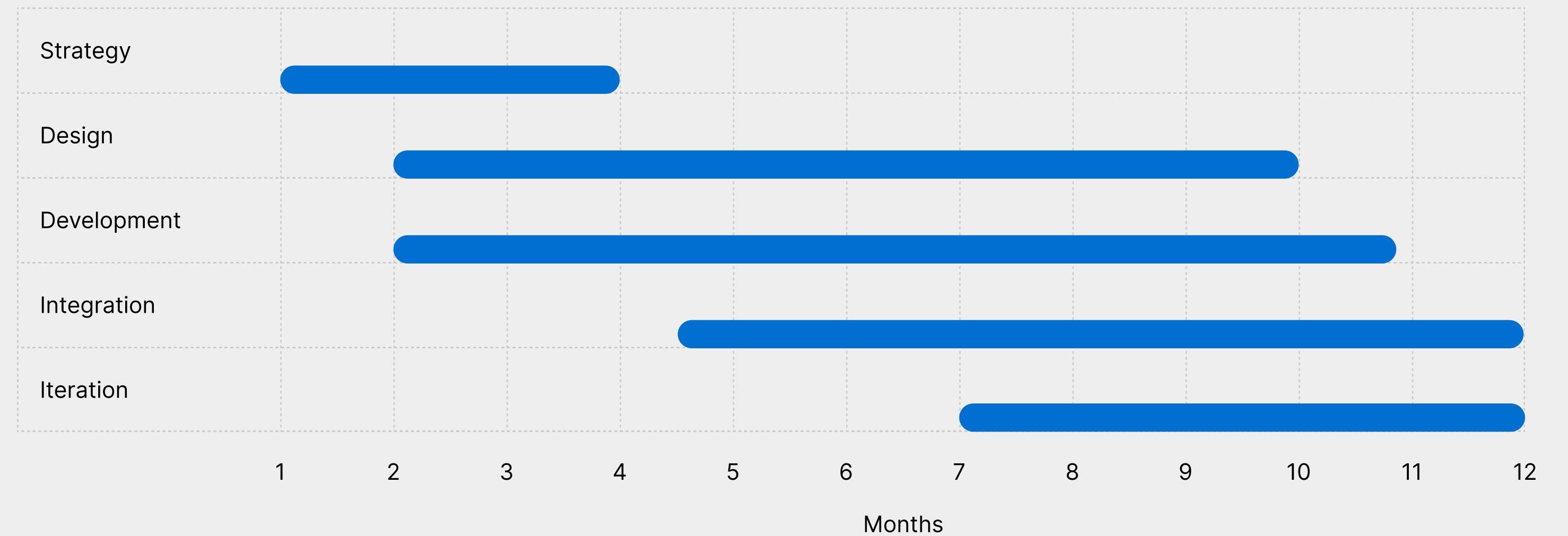
Progressed to high-fidelity designs, ensuring that every detail was meticulously crafted to meet the brand's standards.

4. Integration

Worked closely with engineering counterparts to ensure the design system was implementable and scalable.

5. Iteration

Continuously iterated based on feedback from cross-functional teams and user testing.



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Execution

The design system was divided into three core pillars:

1. Foundation

Includes the core design elements like colors, typography, and iconography, which define the visual identity and ensure consistency across platforms. These elements or design tokens serve as the base for creating a unified look and feel throughout all digital products.

2. Components

Are the reusable UI elements such as buttons, inputs, and labels that act as the building blocks of the design system. They provide a uniform structure, allowing for faster and more consistent interface, making it easier to maintain coherence across the all products.

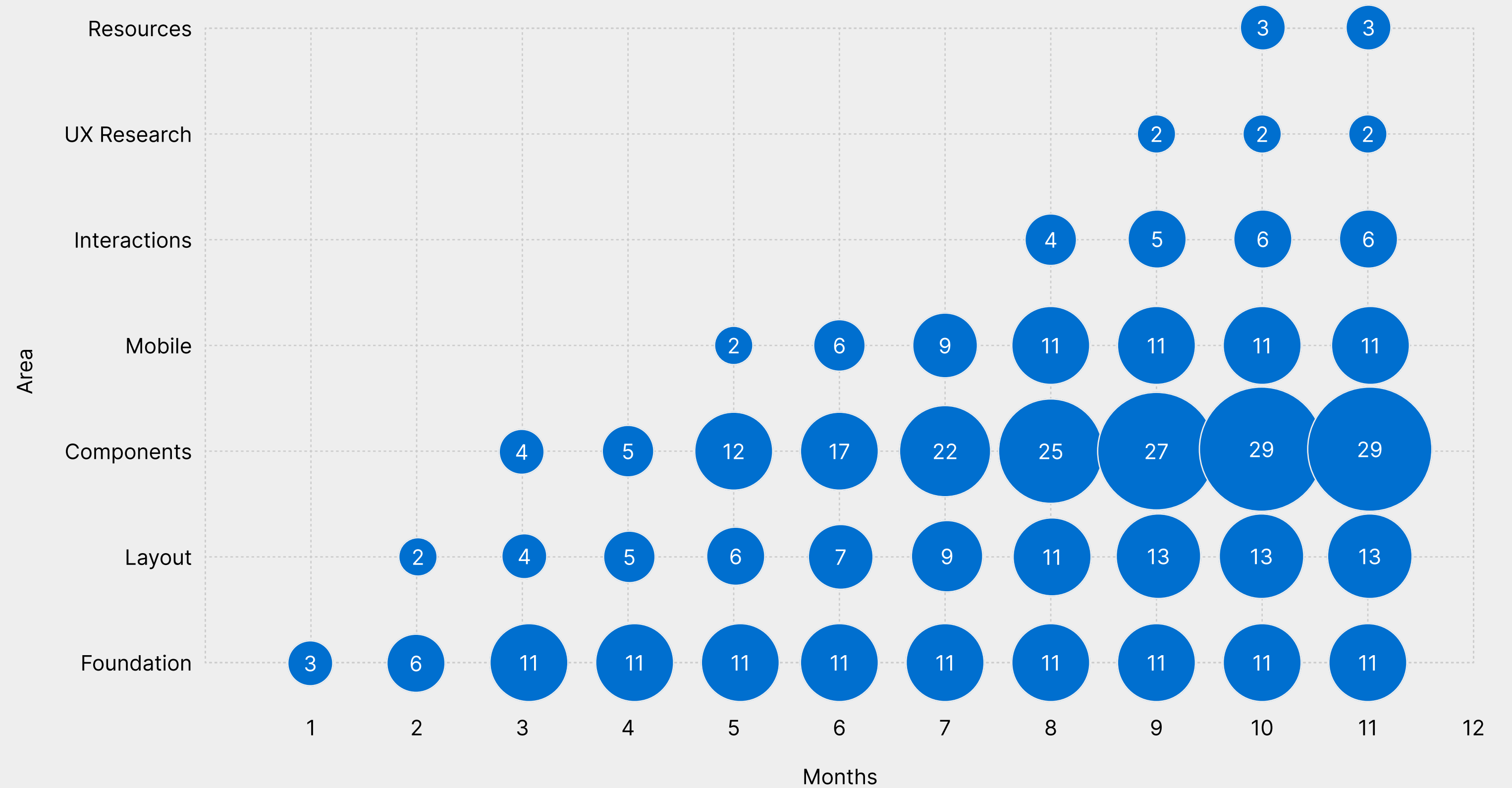
3. Patterns

Groups of components that work together to form functional units, like forms or navigation bars. They create consistent and predictable user experiences, ensuring that complex interactions are handled seamlessly and intuitively within the user interface.

Tracks the development progress of various component types over a 11-month period. Each bubble represents the number of components developed in categories such as Foundation, Layout, Components, Mobile, Interactions, UX Research, and Resources.

The increasing size of the bubbles over time highlights the accelerated pace of component creation, reflecting the growing maturity and expansion of the design system.

Design and Development Over Time



Note: Data extracted from project management tools where development timelines and task completions are tracked. Data through 11/21/2017.
Source: JIRA, Asana, and/or Trello



STYLE

Color

Typography

Icons and Glyphs

Logos

Graphics

Writing

Conversational UI

Utility Classes

LAYOUT

Units & Measurement

Breakpoints

Grid

Containers

Flexbox

Horizontal Rules

Style

Color

VISUAL UNIFICATION

Our color palette captures the rich diversity of American Express and our Card Members. The customized hues and values allow different business units to create distinctive color profiles while maintaining visual unity within American Express.

Palette

MEANINGFUL COLORS

Core Blue, our primary color, is an iconic identifier that conveys a sense of trust, strength, and security.

From subtle neutrals to vibrant brights, every hue in our palette was chosen to fit into the overall visual language and deliver a contemporary and dynamic Card Member experience.

Core Blue and Secondary White are used as part of both the standard brand palette and the Realise the Potential palette.

PRIMARY





STYLE

▼ Typography

Font Styles

Line Height

Line Length

Icons and Glyphs

Logos

Graphics

Writing

Conversational UI

Utility Classes

LAYOUT

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Typography

SIMPLICITY

Simplicity should be employed with fonts. Limit multiple type styles to maintain legibility and coherence.

The below variations were chosen to balance content density and reading comfort. Type sizes are specified with pixels and ems for responsive web design.

Font Styles

PRIMARY & SYSTEM FONTS

Our primary typeface is Benton Sans. When not available, acceptable fonts are Helvetica Neue (for Mac OS and iOS) or Helvetica (for other systems). If neither is available, please use Arial.

To learn more about usage, visit the [Text](#) section under Components.

HEADINGS

.heading-6

BentonSans Book 38px/44px

font-weight: 300;
font-size: 2.375rem;
line-height: 2.75rem;

.heading-5

BentonSans Book 30px/38px

AMERICAN EXPRESS | Design Language System v4.0.0 🔍

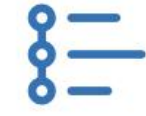








STYLE

- Icons and Glyphs
 - Creating Icons
 - Icon Library**
 - Creating Glyphs
 - Glyph Library
- Logos
- Graphics
- Writing
- Conversational UI
- Utility Classes










LAYOUT

- Units & Measurement
- Breakpoints
- Grid
- Containers

UNIVERSAL

 Activity ⓘ .dls-icon-activity	 Account ⓘ .dls-icon-account	 Home ⓘ .dls-icon-home	 Setting ⓘ .dls-icon-setting	 Time ⓘ .dls-icon-time	 Calendar ⓘ .dls-icon-calendar
 Print ⓘ .dls-icon-print	 Document ⓘ .dls-icon-document	 PDF ⓘ .dls-icon-pdf			

ACTIONS

 Edit ⓘ .dls-icon-edit	 Download ⓘ .dls-icon-download	 Upload ⓘ .dls-icon-upload	 Change ⓘ .dls-icon-change	 Thumbs Up ⓘ .dls-icon-thumbs-up	 Thumbs Down ⓘ .dls-icon-thumbs-down
 Lock ⓘ .dls-icon-lock	 Unlock ⓘ .dls-icon-unlock	 Account ⓘ .dls-icon-search			

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STYLE

- Logos
 - The Blue Box
 - The Logotype**
- Graphics
- Writing
- Conversational UI
- Utility Classes

LAYOUT

- Units & Measurement
- Breakpoints
- Grid
- Containers
- Flexbox
- Horizontal Rules

LARGE




Size = 420x20px
Class Name = .dls-logo-horizontal-lg

[</> Show Source](#)

SPECS - STACKED LOGOTYPE LEFT & RIGHT ALIGNED

Min Size = 78x16px
Max Size = 220x48px


X-SMALL



Size = 78x16px
Class Name = .dls-logo-stack-xs-l
Class Name = .dls-logo-stack-xs-r

[</> Show Source](#)

SMALL



Size = 100x22px
Class Name = .dls-logo-stack-sm-l



STYLE

Graphics

Why Imagery Is Important

Scale

Layout and Settings

Categories In Use

Card Art

Image Photo

Country Flags

Writing

Conversational UI

Utility Classes

LAYOUT

Units & Measurement

Breakpoints

Grid

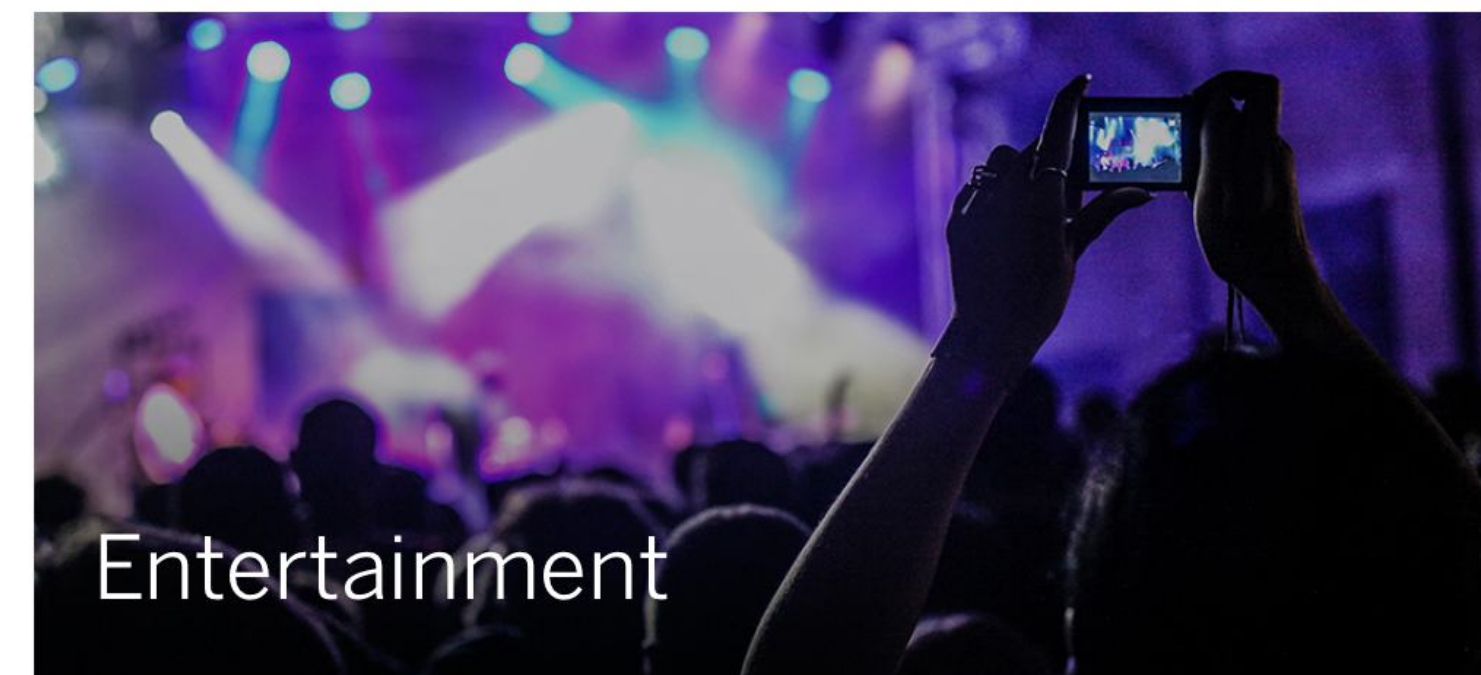
Why Imagery Is Important

Great imagery strengthens and differentiates our brand by establishing a connection between our brand values and the values of our Card Members.

Look for imagery that fulfills these requirements:

- Does it make the Card Member connect with our brand values?
- Does it show the benefits of our product?
- Does it reflect the standards of American Express?

EXAMPLE





STYLE

Graphics

Why Imagery Is Important

Scale

Layout and Settings

Categories In Use

Card Art

Image Photo

Country Flags

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Grid

EXAMPLE

CoBrand



Consumer



Corporate



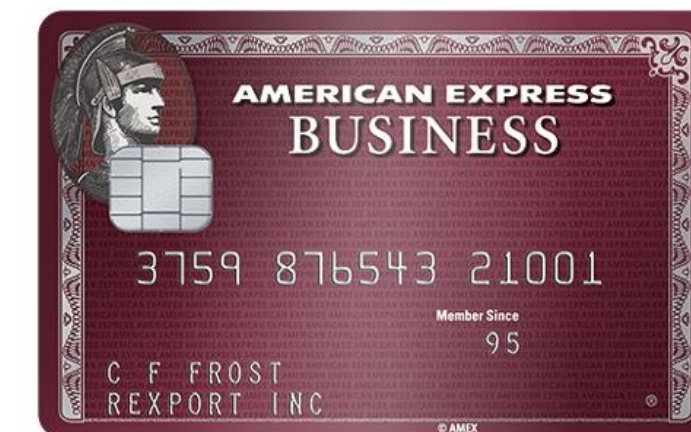
Generic



Prepaid



Small Business



[View Brand Site](#)

[</> Show Source](#)



LAYOUT

Breakpoints

Grid

Containers

Flexbox

Horizontal Rules

COMPONENTS

Buttons

Text Links

Tooltips

Tabs

Navigation

Inputs

Dropdowns

Checkboxes

Radio Buttons

Breakpoints

USAGE

To deliver a consistent experience across all devices, we place responsive web design at the forefront of our design process.

By using a fluid grid with breakpoints at key resolution widths, we can optimize the Card Member experience across device groups and always provide them with an interface that they recognize and are accustomed to.

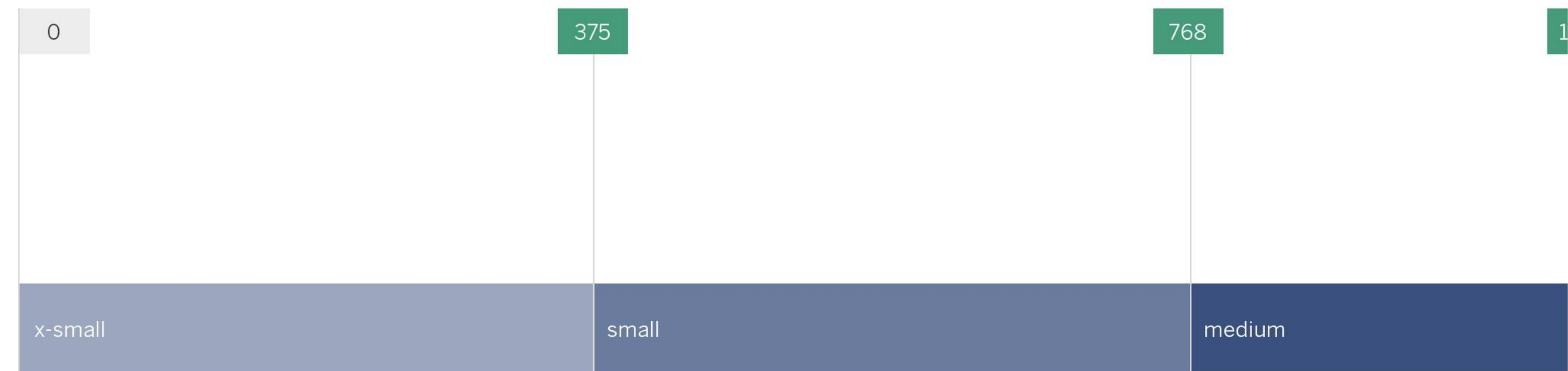
Our current breakpoints are defined at:

Small (mobile): 375px

Medium (tablet): 768px

Large (desktop): 1024px

EXAMPLE - VISUAL REFERENCE





LAYOUT

Containers

Spacing

Content Hierarchy

Types

Showcase

Flexbox

Horizontal Rules

COMPONENTS

Buttons

Text Links

Tooltips

Tabs

Navigation

Inputs

Dropdowns

Containers IN PROGRESS

USAGE

A container is the most common component in which to display content. Containers are responsive and always align to our standard 12-column grid, with a max width of 984px at our largest breakpoint 1024px. The container's width and how it responds in different form factors (i.e. placement, position, etc.) is defined by the designer.

For a full list of utility classes for card containers, visit [Utility Classes](#).

SPECS

Page Background Color = #EDEDED

Container Background Color = #FFFFFF

Corners = 90 degrees

Box Shadow = 0px 1px 1px 0px, rgba(0, 0, 0, 0.1)

Class Name = .card





LAYOUT

Containers

Spacing

Content Hierarchy

Types

Showcase

Flexbox

Horizontal Rules

COMPONENTS

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Text Links

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Tabs

Navigation

Inputs

Dropdowns

Spacing

RESPONSIVENESS

The gutters (vertical and horizontal space between each container) align with our gutter dimension outlined in [Grid](#). To view how the gutters change per breakpoint range, click on the View Example button below.



[View Example](#)

Content Hierarchy

USAGE



LAYOUT

Containers

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Types

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Text Links

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Tabs

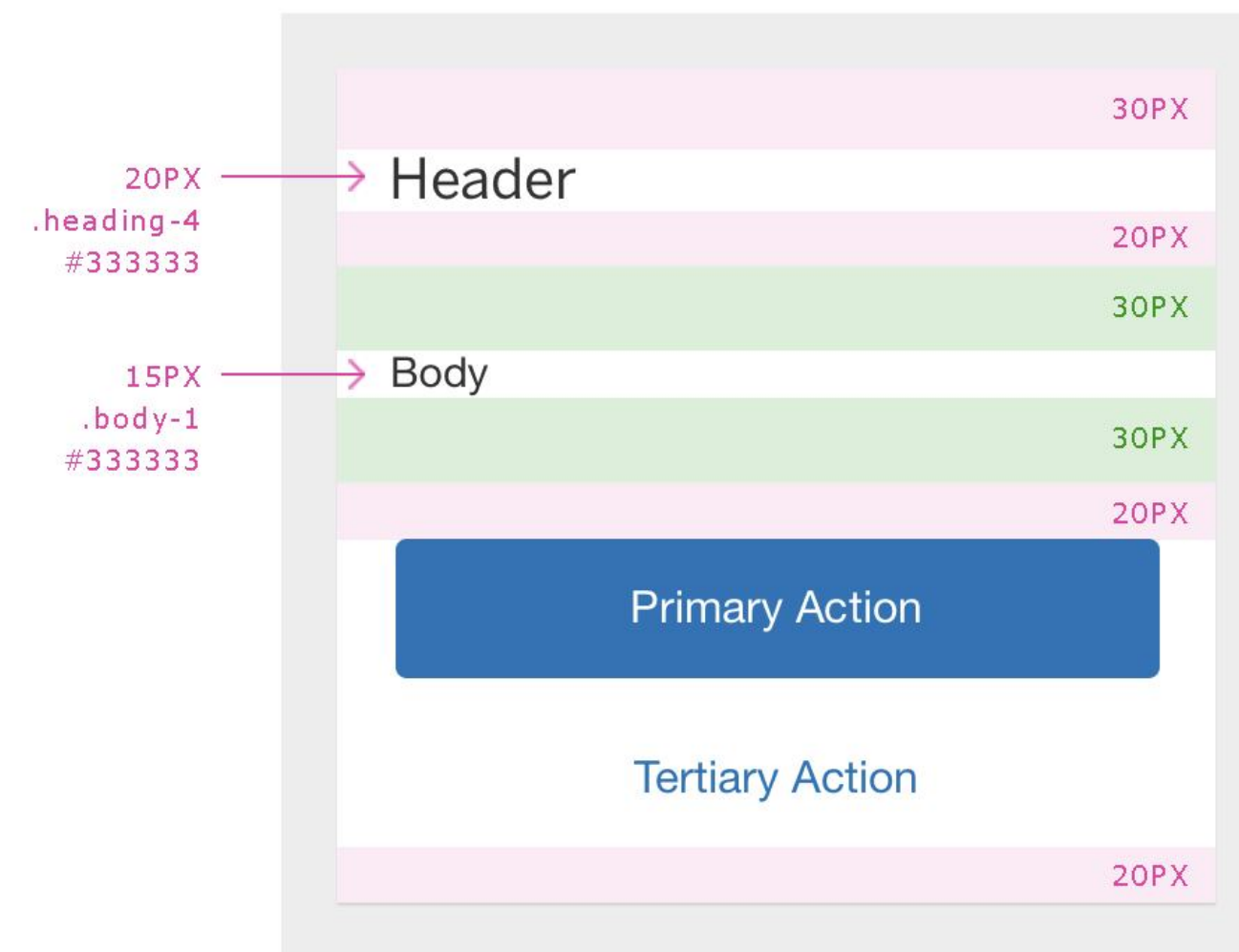
Navigation

Inputs

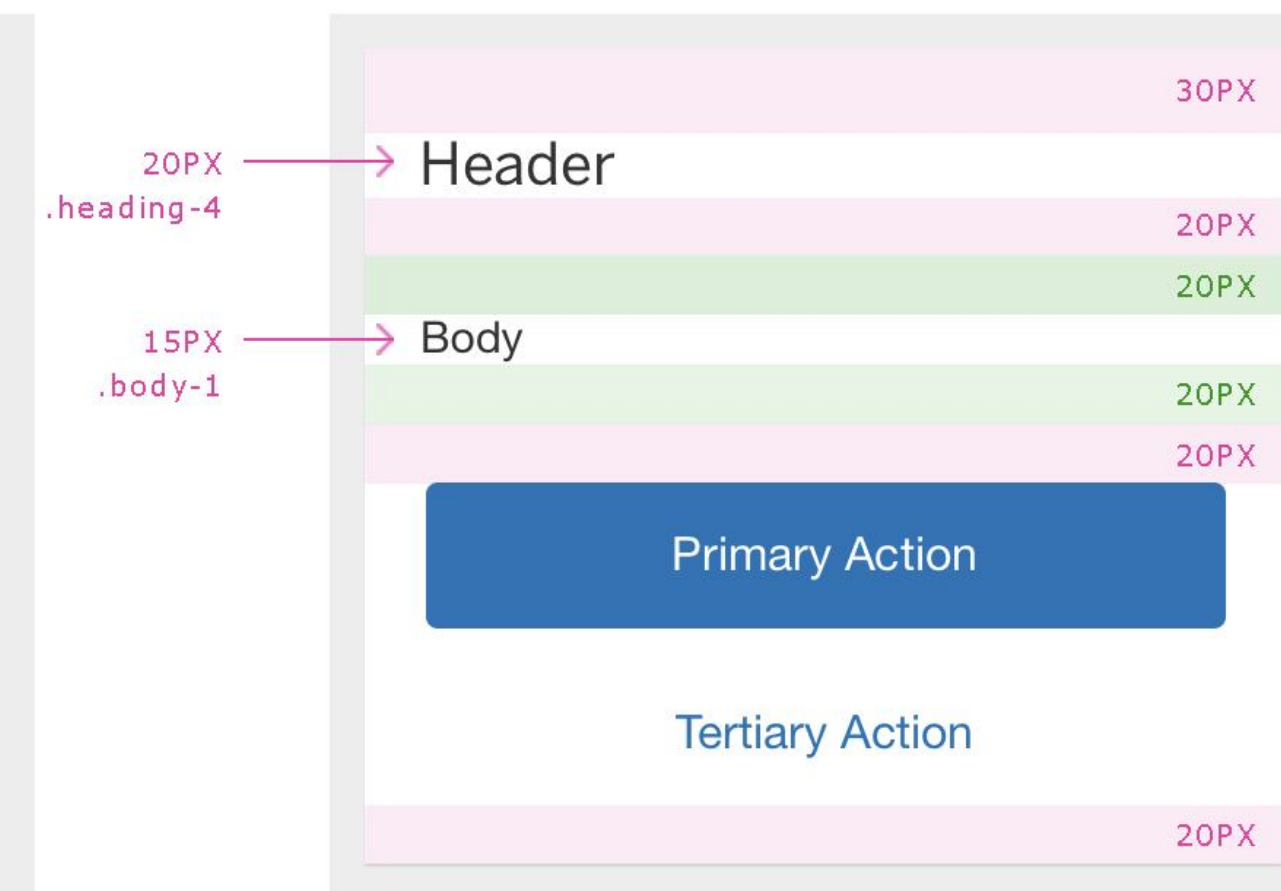
Dropdowns

SPECS - STANDARD

Medium & Large Breakpoints



Small & X-Small Breakpoints



Types

USAGE

There are two types of containers: standard (shown above) and special. Special containers center the content and are used when you need to differentiate it from other content on the page.

An example of special containers are the balance, payment and loyalty containers located on the MYCA hub.

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the American Express Design System documentation. The top navigation bar is blue with the American Express logo and the text "Design Language System v4.0.0". A search icon is in the top right. A left sidebar contains a table of contents with categories like "STYLE", "LAYOUT", "BREAKPOINTS", and "COMPONENTS". The "Conversational UI" item is highlighted. The main content area has a heading "Conversational UI" followed by a definition, a section on "GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND KEY INSIGHTS", and several key principles with their descriptions.



STYLE

Conversational UI

Utility Classes

LAYOUT

Units & Measurement

Breakpoints

Grid

Containers

Flexbox

Horizontal Rules

COMPONENTS

Buttons

Text Links

Tooltips

Tabs

Conversational UI

WHAT IS A CONVERSATIONAL USER INTERFACE (CUI)?

With CUI, interaction happens primarily through conversation, rather than a graphical user interface (GUI); e.g., mobile messaging/live chat, a messaging app/chatbot, or with a voice assistant.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND KEY INSIGHTS

Be conversational

The experience should feel no different than conversing with one of our Customer Care Professionals.

Be colloquial

We don't speak the way that we write, so it's acceptable to be more informal. Try to limit the use of jargon, disclaimers, or using copy written specifically for the web.

Efficiency is key

Keep responses brief. Long messages are overwhelming and might be an indication that that particular journey doesn't belong on a messaging platform.

Respond appropriately

Be empathetic, especially in a potentially frustrating situation. Ease customer frustration and respond to urgency instantly.

Ensure transparency of the experience

Set clear expectations up front. If the functionality of the chatbot is limited at this time, make clear what the Card Member can and can't do.

Confirm understanding before acting

There is no Back button in CUI. When necessary, confirm that the Card Member wants to perform an action before completing it.

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American Express Design System

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Documentation

A comprehensive documentation site was created to ensure clear communication and ease of use:

- **Centralized Repository:**
Detailed documentation on components, themes, and principles.
- **React Native Support:**
A dedicated site for React Native components, promoting consistency and reusability across platforms.

The screenshot shows the documentation for the Button component in the American Express React Native Component Library v1.0. The page is divided into three main sections: a navigation sidebar, a main content area, and a code example.

Navigation Sidebar: Lists various components under 'General Components', including Introduction, Accent, AsyncImage, BlankScene, Button (highlighted), Card, CardStack, Carousel, CheckBox, ImageOcrDigits, ImageOcrDigit, InputCurrencySymbol, Label, Loader, NavigationButton, Navigation, and Pagination.

Main Content Area:

- Button**: Display a button. Typical customization is done via `look` and `size` props.
- Returns:** `TouchableHighlight`
- Children:** Passed unmodified into `Animated.Text`
- Author:** Sylvain Reucherand
- Props Table:**

PROP / TYPE	DESCRIPTION
<code>disabled</code> <code>bool</code>	Set to true to disable the button and style it accordingly. Default: <code>false</code>
<code>loading</code> <code>bool</code>	If true, a spinning loader will be shown (ie. turn it into a loading button). Default: <code>false</code>
<code>submit</code> <code>bool</code>	Used with Form component. <code>true</code> will cause the button to be activated when user presses the submit button on the keyboard.
<code>look</code> <code>("primary" "secondary" "tertiary")</code>	Color scheme of the button. Default: <code>primary</code>
<code>size</code>	Height and font size of the button

Code Example:

```
import {Button} from './components';

render() {
  return (
    <Button
      submit
      look="primary"
      size="medium"
      onPress={this.onPress}
      style={{marginBottom: 10}}>
      Make a Payment
    </Button>
  );
}
```

07

Governance

Clear governance and collaboration were crucial to ensuring the system's success across multiple teams and stakeholders. We adopted the RACI matrix to clarify roles and responsibilities, ensuring that everyone involved had a well-defined understanding of their part in the project.

R

Responsible

The design and development teams were tasked with executing the components and modules.

A

Accountable

Design directors and managers, were accountable for the overall success and timely delivery of the design system, ensuring alignment with the One Amex initiative's goals.

C

Consulted

Key stakeholders, including product managers and engineering leads, were consulted to provide insights and feedback, ensuring that the system met the needs of all involved.

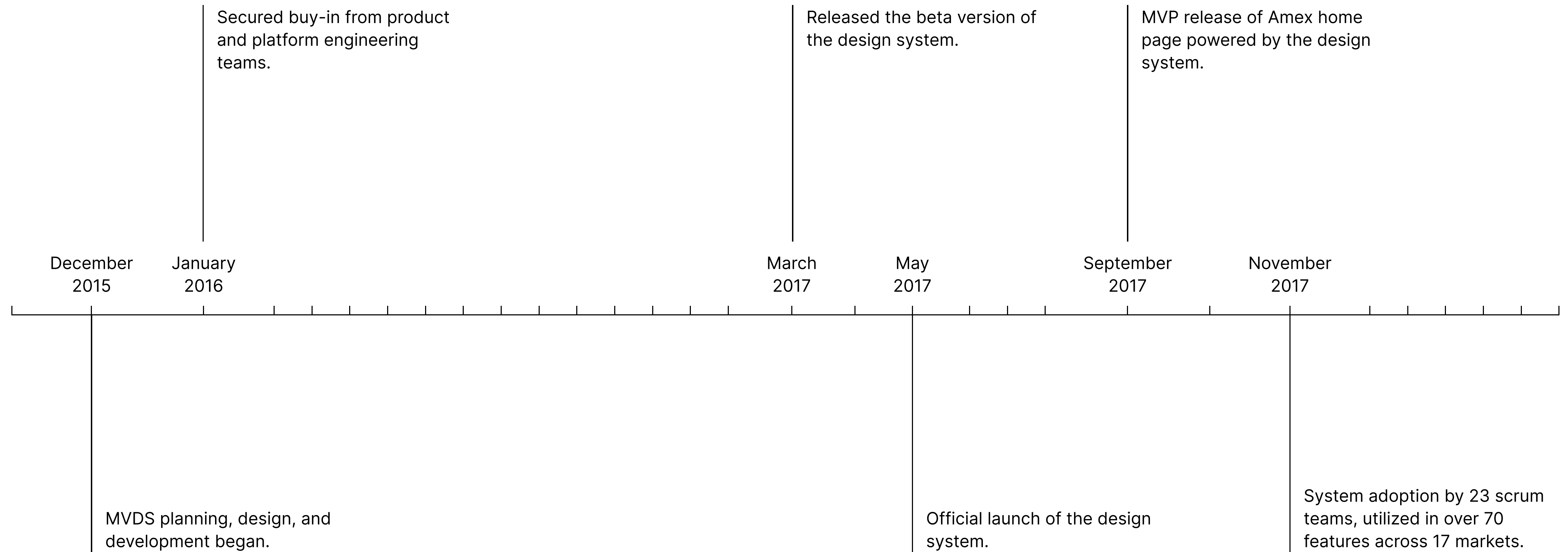
I

Informed

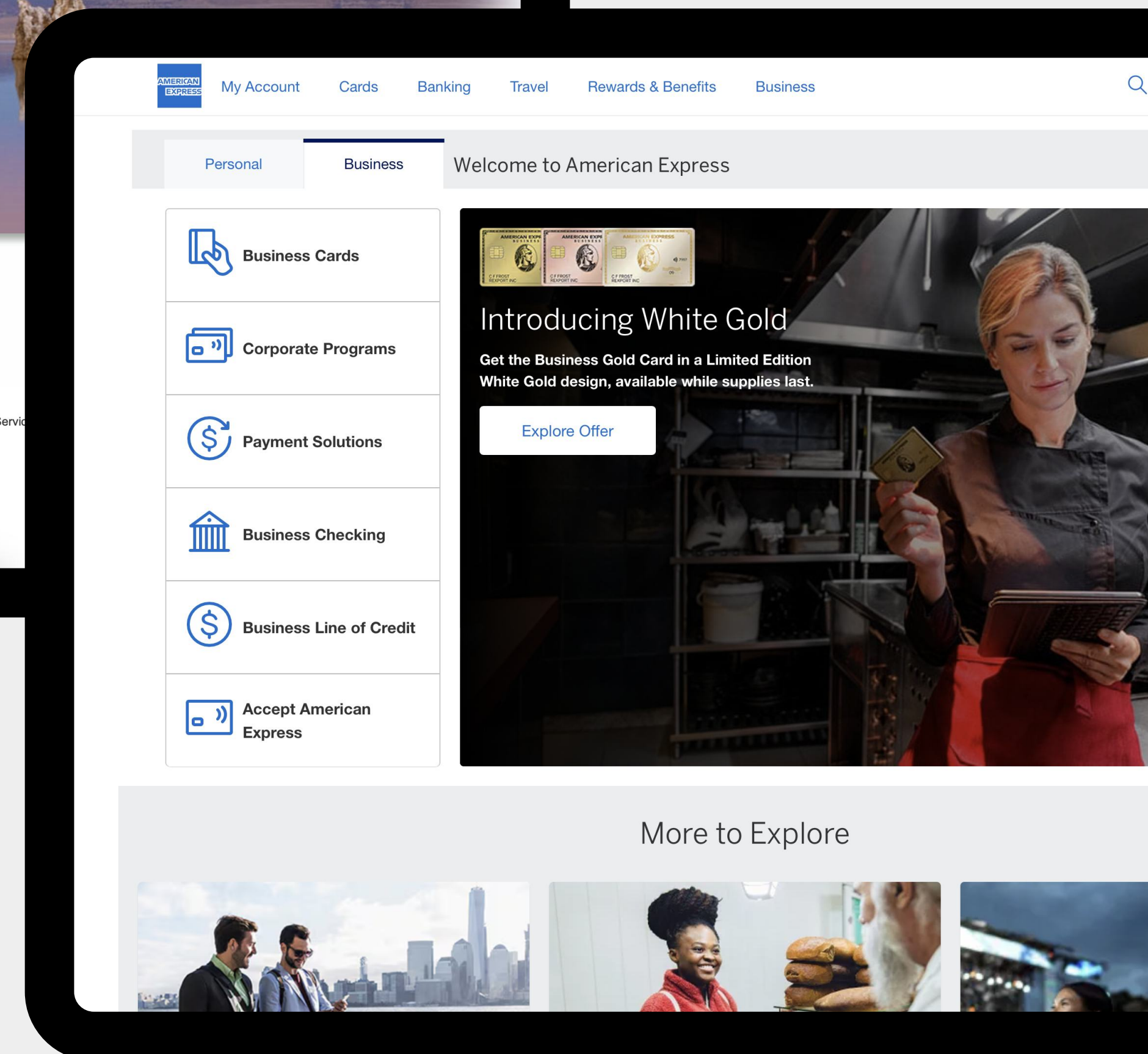
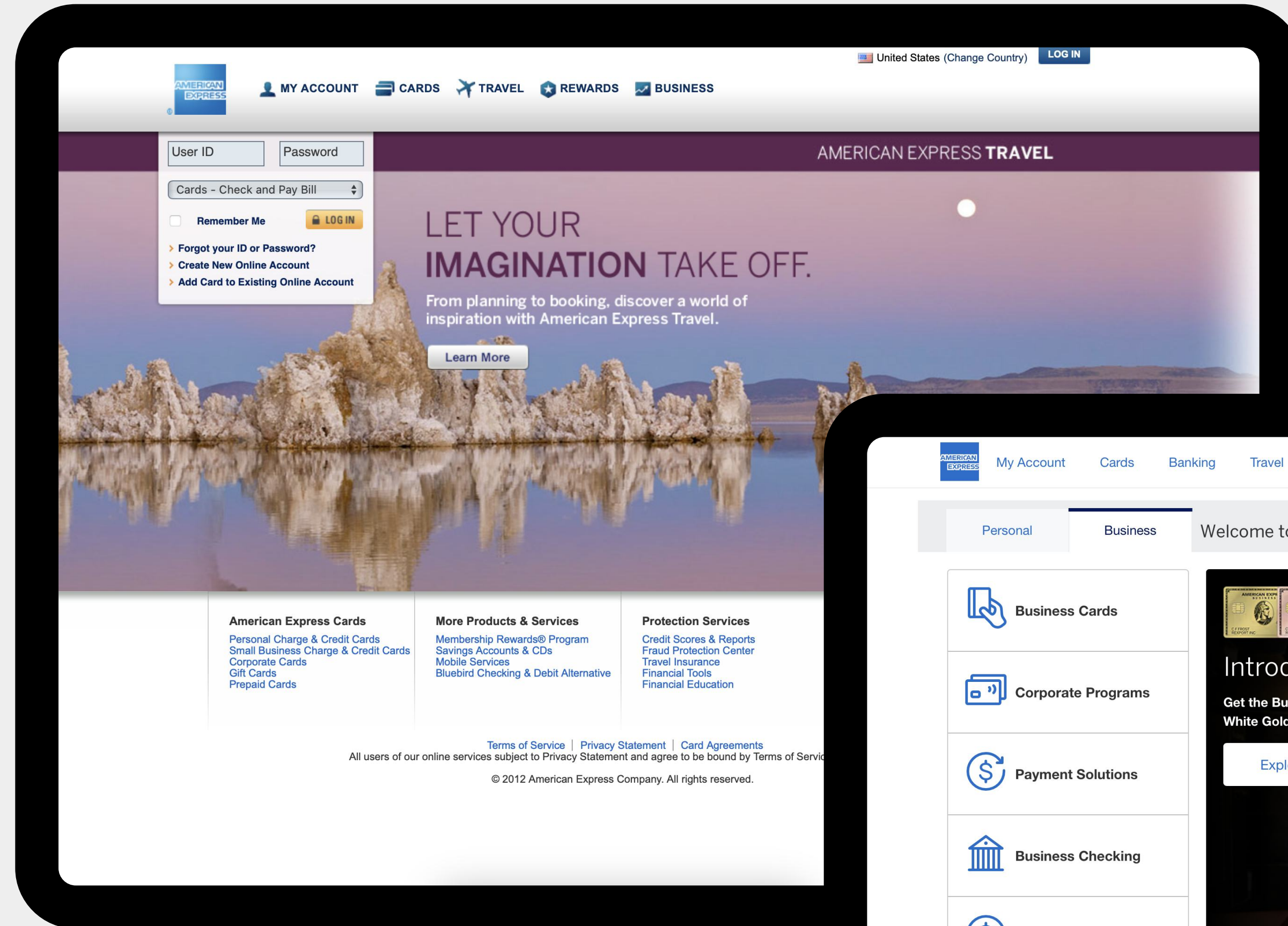
Senior leadership and other teams were kept informed about progress and key decisions, fostering transparency and alignment across the organization.

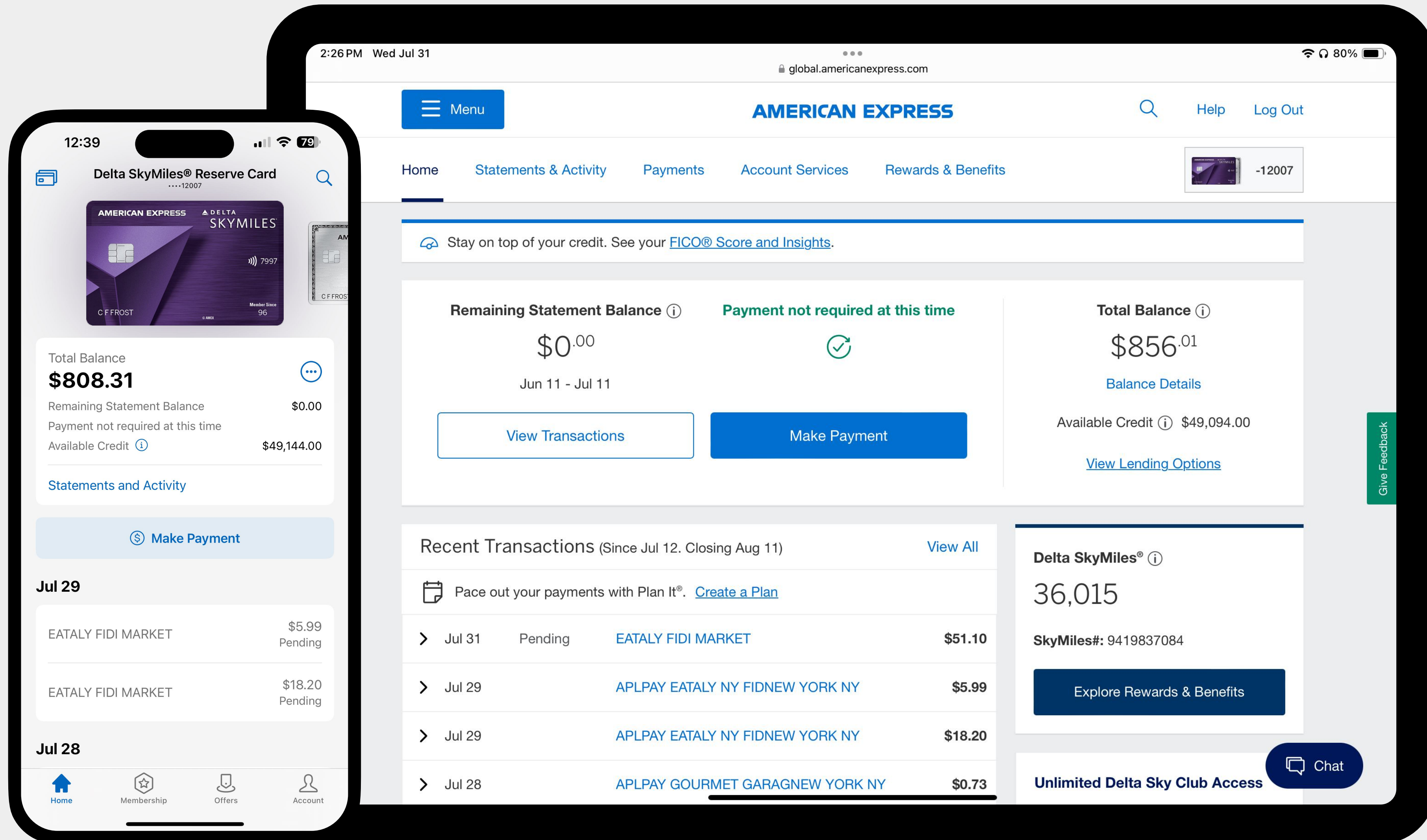
Timeline & Outcomes





By applying the *trusted, personal* and *transparent* principles, we redesigned our homepage to clearly display Personal and Business products, resulting in a 25% increase in card product acquisitions.

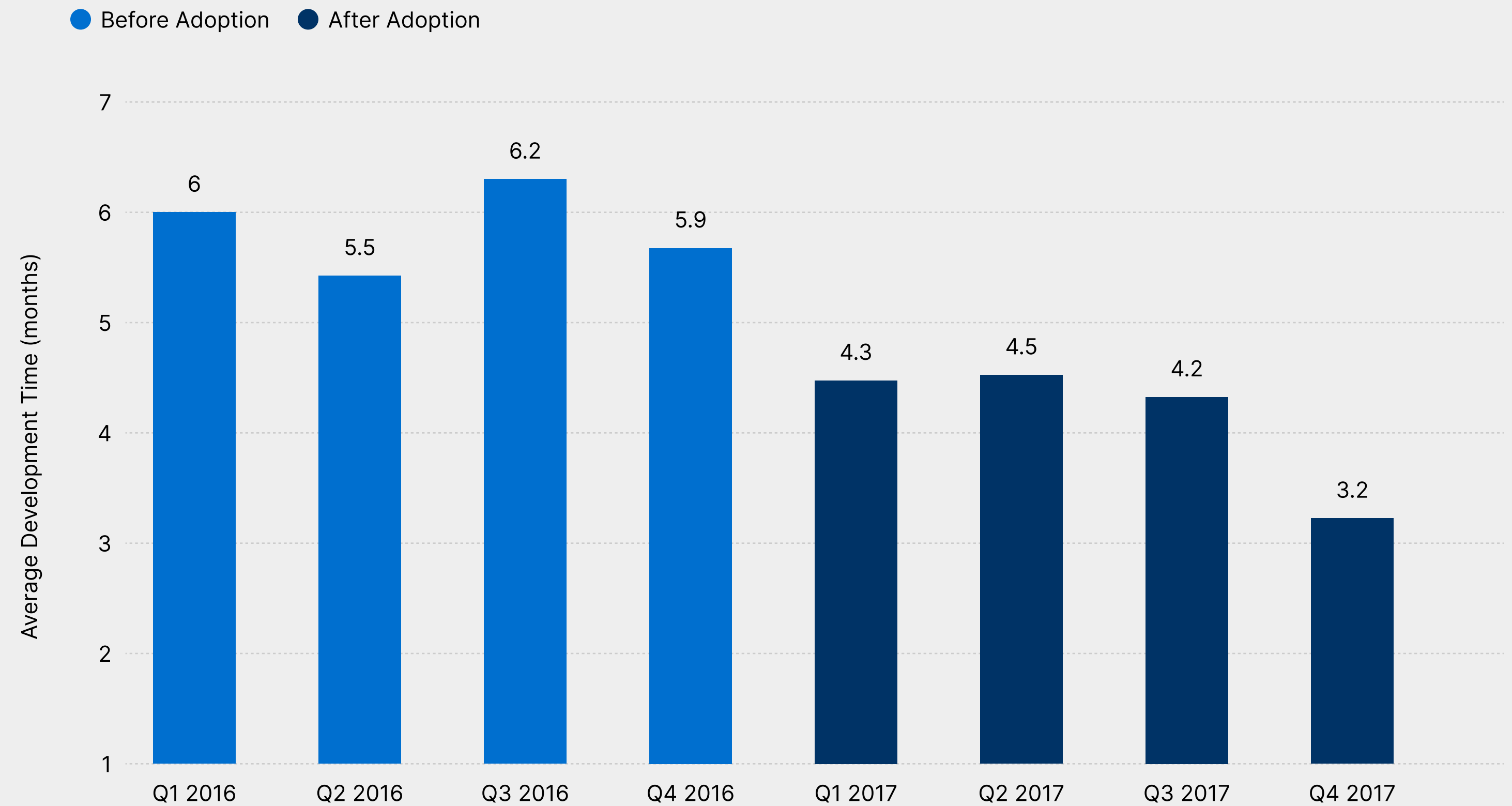




Key Insights

- **Before Adoption**
The average development time ranged from 5.5 to 6.2 months.
- **After Adoption**
The average development time significantly decreased to a range of 3.2 to 4.5 months.

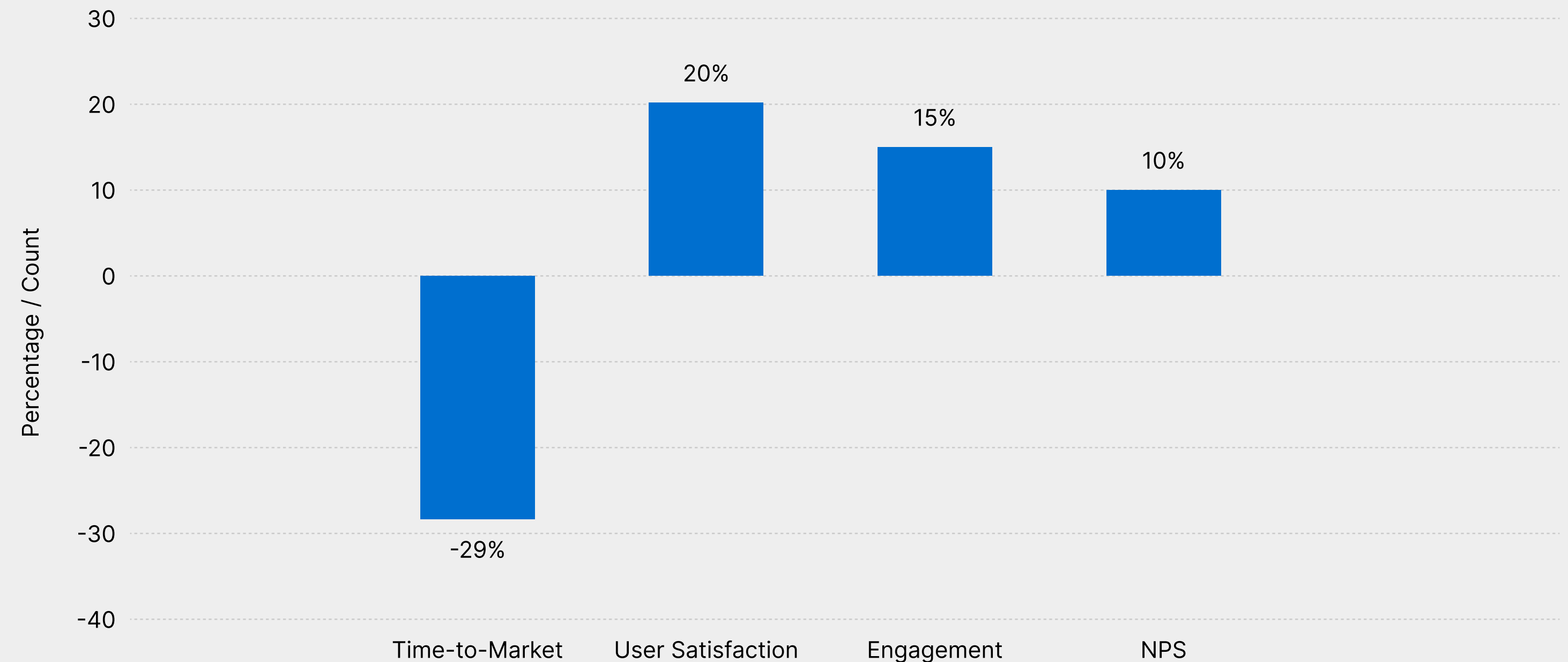
Reduction in Development Time for New Features



Note: Data extracted from project management tools where development timelines and task completions are tracked. Data through 11/21/2017.
Source: JIRA, Asana, and/or Trello

After adoption, we observed a 29% reduction in time-to-market for new features, a 20% increase in user satisfaction scores, a 15% boost in engagement across our digital products, and a 10% increase in Net Promoter Score (NPS).

Impact of Post-Adoption on Key Metrics



Note: Data extracted from project management tools where feature deployment timelines, user satisfaction scores, engagement metrics, and scrum team performance are tracked. Data through 11/21/2017.

Source: JIRA, Asana, and/or Trello