

PORTFOLIO · 2026

Earl Carlson

Product design leader



I lead design teams
on products people
use every day.

I give senior designers room to lead, I stay close to the product, and I push the work until it's excellent. Consumer products, connected hardware, platforms, trust and safety, and emerging technology.

MOST
RECENTLY

Senior Product
Design Manager,
Docker · 2024–
2026

12 people at
Docker: designers
and design
engineers

BASED

Ann Arbor, MI ·
remote

ALSO

Father, dog dad,
music production,
ceramics

I want the people on my teams
to do great work *they're proud of.*

I create trust within my teams. I raise the bar of quality. I create clarity of purpose.
And I bring a sense of joy.

HOW I THINK ABOUT DESIGN TEAMS

A group of people coming together to make products with a clarity of purpose. Where craft matters, trust is inherent, and we push each other to do great work.

01 · DOCKER DESIGN TEAM, 2024–2026

Bringing a whole design team into AI tooling

DOCKER DESIGN · SNAPSHOT

ROLE	Senior Product Design Manager
TEAM	12 people: 8 Staff designers, 2 senior designers, 2 design engineers
SURFACE	Docker Hub, Docker Desktop, agentic products, accounts & billing, the design system
CONTEXT	Engineering moved to Claude Code. The rules for design were changing every week.

STAND-IN

Real artifact here:
an agentic product screen or
the agent-ready design system

HOW THE TEAM MOVED, 2025-2026

STAND-IN

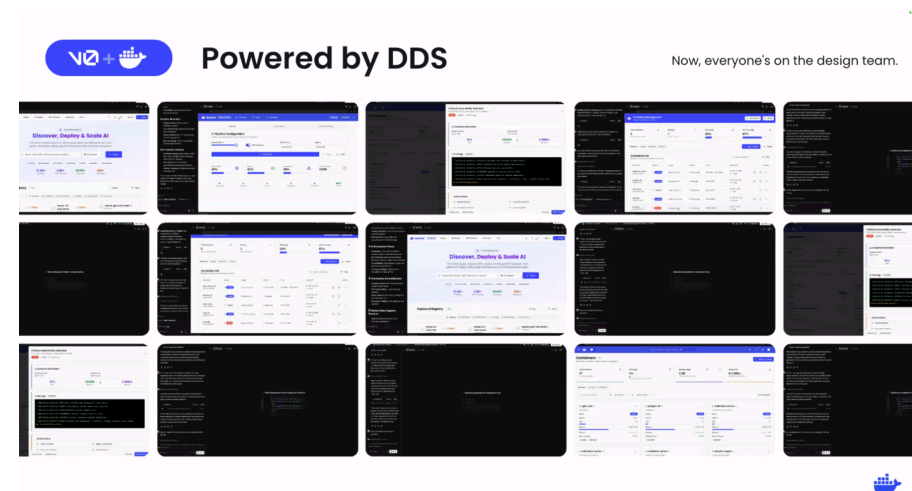
Earl is designing this one. His account (2026-10-07):

Summer 2025: engineers on Claude Code, still too technical for design → the excited few explore (hackathons; Figma Make, Claude Code, Codex) → clear the old design system's cruft, then rebuild it for agents → weekly show-and-tells → peers pair with slower starters → the new VP makes it the expectation → the whole team.

When AI tooling showed up, it was a real mixed bag.

A couple of people were super excited. A couple said, nope, I never want to touch this. Everyone in the middle found it interesting, but couldn't see how it fit their work.

Summer 2025. Claude Code was still really technical for designers.



WHAT I BROUGHT

I let the excited designers lead.

Not a mandate, at first: the tools were too early for design. The three or four already experimenting each took a different area, then showed the rest.

I gave the slower starters a peer, not pressure.

Gentler on-ramps, a peer as a coach, and a weekly check-in.

I made the learning weekly.

Show-and-tells where someone always showed what they were trying.

I held the bar on taste.

Engineering velocity went through the roof, so we pivoted to focus on our biggest wins.

THE EXPERIMENTS

STAND-IN

Screenshot from the
agentic
product work

The agentic product
surface

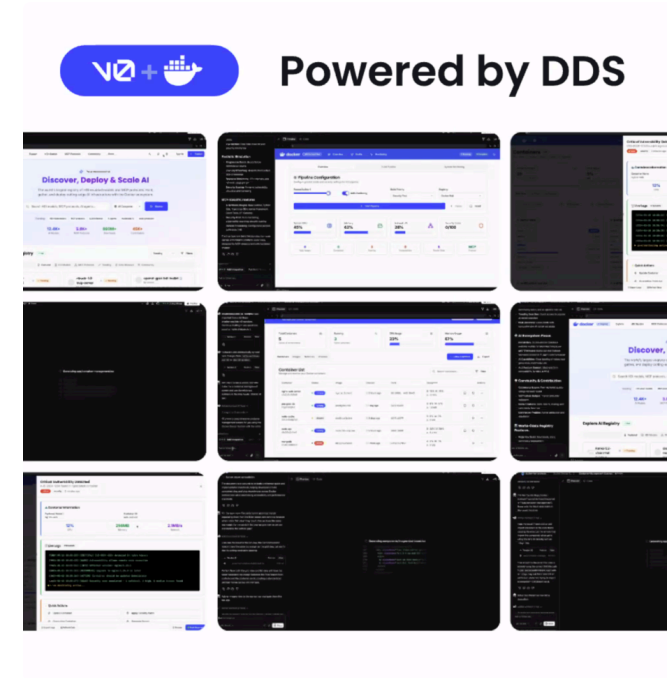
One designer, on the product
itself

STAND-IN

The design system,
in code

A design system built for
agents

One designer moved to the
system and proposed building it
with AI, to be read by agents



Fast trials

Others tried Figma Make,
Claude, Claude Code, and v0 to
see what held up



THE ROOM

Every week,
someone showed
what they were
trying.

Ideas felt real much faster, so we
could test them much sooner.

What worked was when one of our senior designers started having opinions about which agent and harness *were useful for her.*

Figma Make didn't design well or help our designers. She found that working in code was a lot better.

WHAT SHIPPED · THE DESIGN SYSTEM

STAND-IN

Real screens: the agent-ready design system
(a component in code, the docs an agent reads, a screen built from it)

WHAT SHIPPED · AGENTIC PRODUCTS

STAND-IN

Delegation and approvals

STAND-IN

Sandboxes, staying in control

WHAT CHANGED

~0 → all

designers working primarily in agent tools, in about a year

76%

fewer theme overrides after rebuilding the design-system foundation

2

design engineers joined; an agent-ready design system shipped

[stat]

[a tooling stat]

WHAT I WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR

Docker Hub

Modernizing it for a world of agents

Docker Desktop

[one line]

Agentic products

Delegation, approvals, sandboxes, staying in control

Accounts & billing

\$13.6M net-new ARR · 75K+ migrated subscriptions

Design system

Rebuilt to be read by agents

The team

12 people: 8 Staff designers, 2 senior designers, 2 design engineers [how it was organized]

ACCOUNTS & BILLING

\$13.6M

net-new ARR from revenue and
retention work

75K+

subscriptions migrated

\$3.5M

in enterprise churn risk
reduced

Sign-in, accounts, teams, checkout, and billing. [one decision design made here]

"It's not about catching up. It's about shifting the way design works so that *the impact of design remains true.*"

Reimagining what developers need in a world of AI agents and tooling

CLARITY OF PURPOSE

Who is this for?

What are we trying to do?

Why is it needed?

ROLE

Design manager for Hub
Vision

TEAM

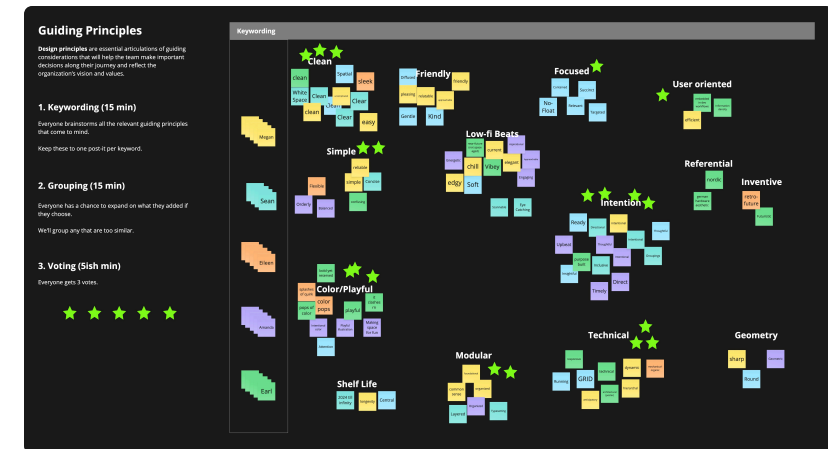
Sean Brady (Staff designer),
2 PMs, 3 engineering teams,
and the VP of Hub

SURFACES

The homepage and image
pages, the journey from a
Google search to an image
page, discovery, and agent
journeys

CONTEXT

A product badly in need of
an update, with no major
redesign in more than five
years



THE REAL PROBLEM

The user journeys were stale.
We were imagining Hub *inside
the box it was already in.*

My job was getting Sean to expand his scope, and to pitch the updated designs to our executive team.

WHAT WE LEARNED FIRST

Most people never see the homepage. They land on an image page, straight from search.

Hub is the most used Docker product. Its homepage was a catalog of everything, which made it useful to no one.

93K

sidebar clicks a month

57K

same-session continuations

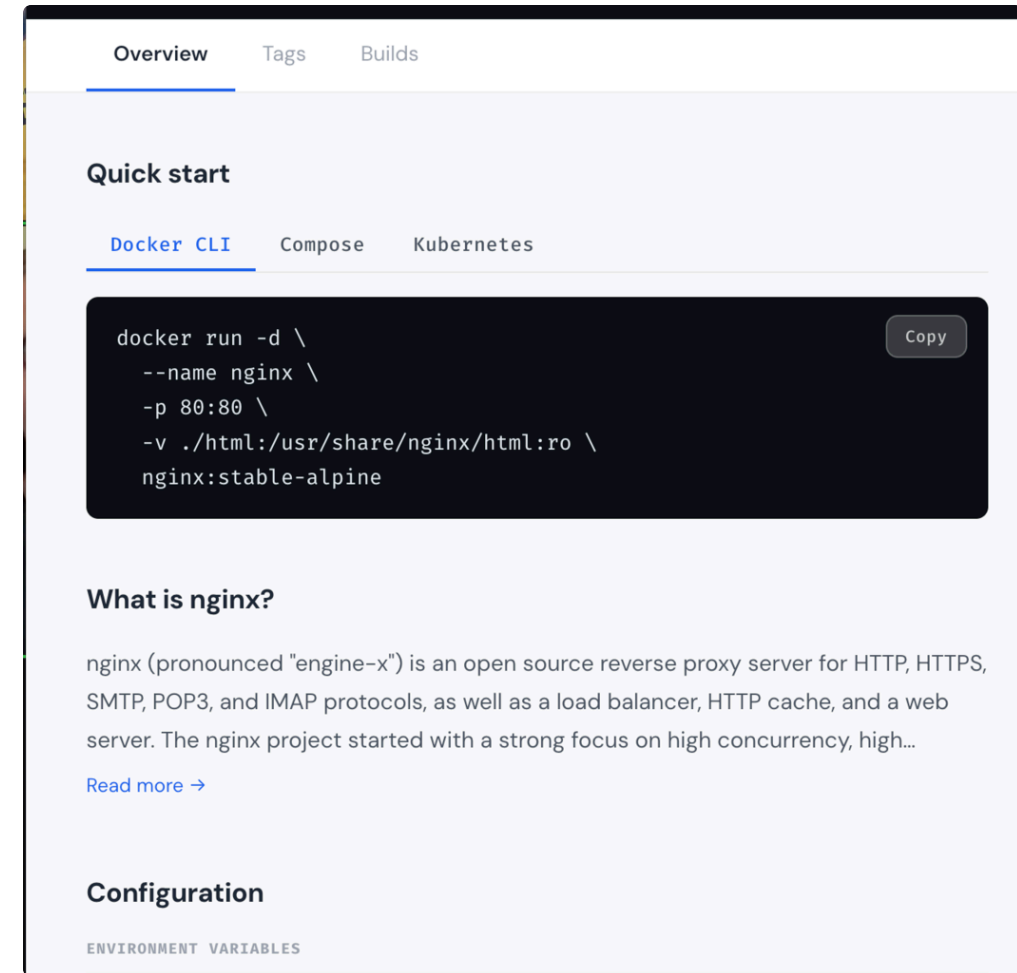
THE PROCESS

- 1 Re-skin what's there
- 2 Start from how people arrive, and restructure the information to meet them there ← I came in here
- 3 Establish the best-case user journeys
- 4 Design for people and agents

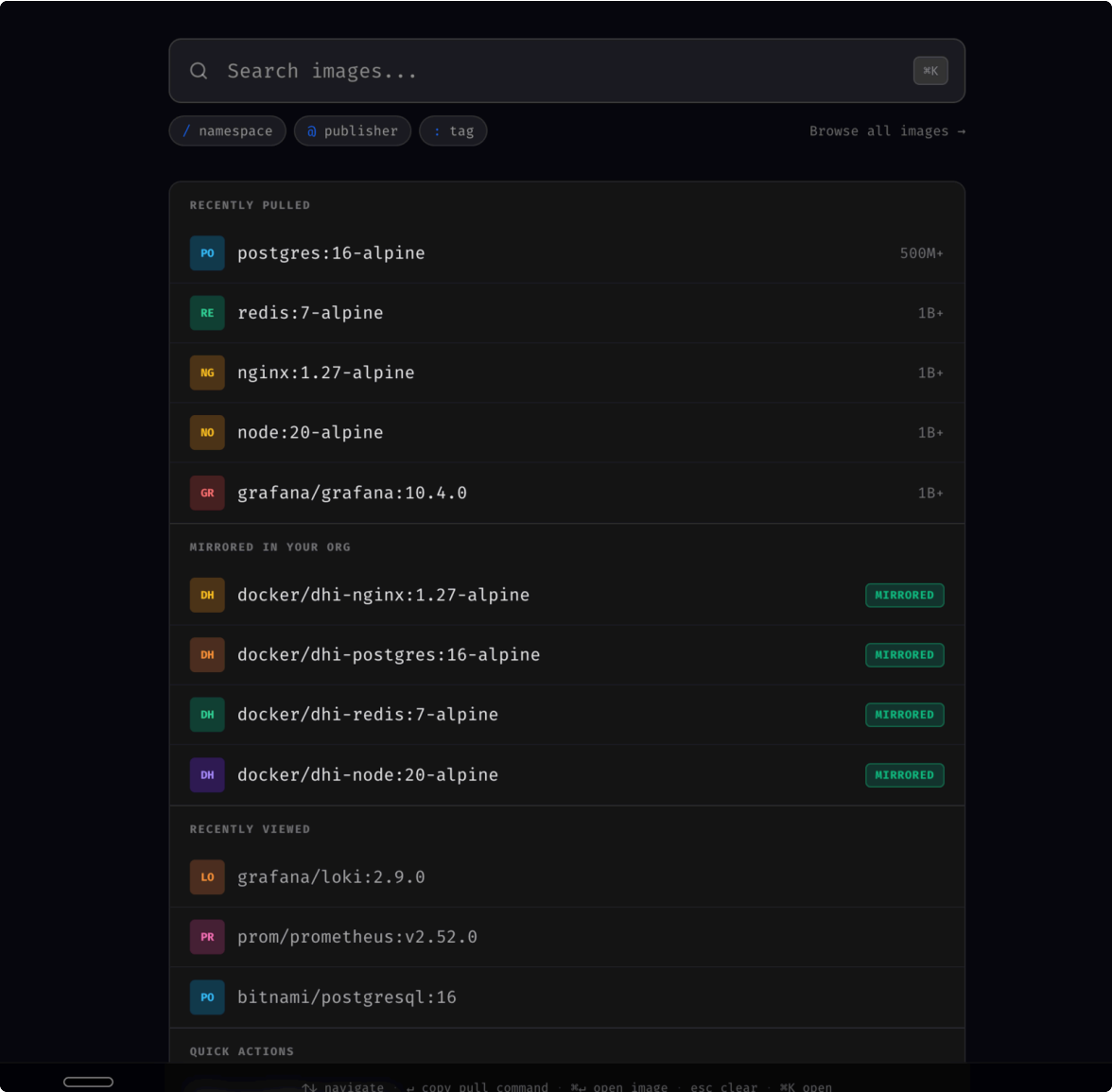
BEFORE



AFTER



PAGE DESIGNS



STAND-IN

Homepage

STAND-IN

Hub for agents

WHAT'S CHANGING

STAND-IN

From a Google search
to an image page

STAND-IN

Discovery

STAND-IN

An agent using Hub

WHAT CHANGED FOR THE DESIGNER

Sean started as the person who knew Hub. By the end, he remembered that design has the power to make real change.

Not just the pixels: he owned the whole surface, and the responsibility that comes with that.

WHAT SENIOR DESIGNERS NEED FROM ME

Room to explore, with guardrails.

So nobody builds a perfect solution in an ivory tower that can't be implemented.

Help getting it in front of executives.

Making the work make sense to them.
Sometimes, not being a bull in a china shop.

Pulling them back up for air.

Strong seniors go deep. Sometimes they solve every constraint and every case, and the design ends up with no opinion.

Sharing back to the team.

What one person learns in a deep problem should reach everyone else.

WHERE IT IS NOW

The team is
shipping it now,
one workstream at
a time.

In progress

Homepage search

Image details page

Agent-friendly Hub

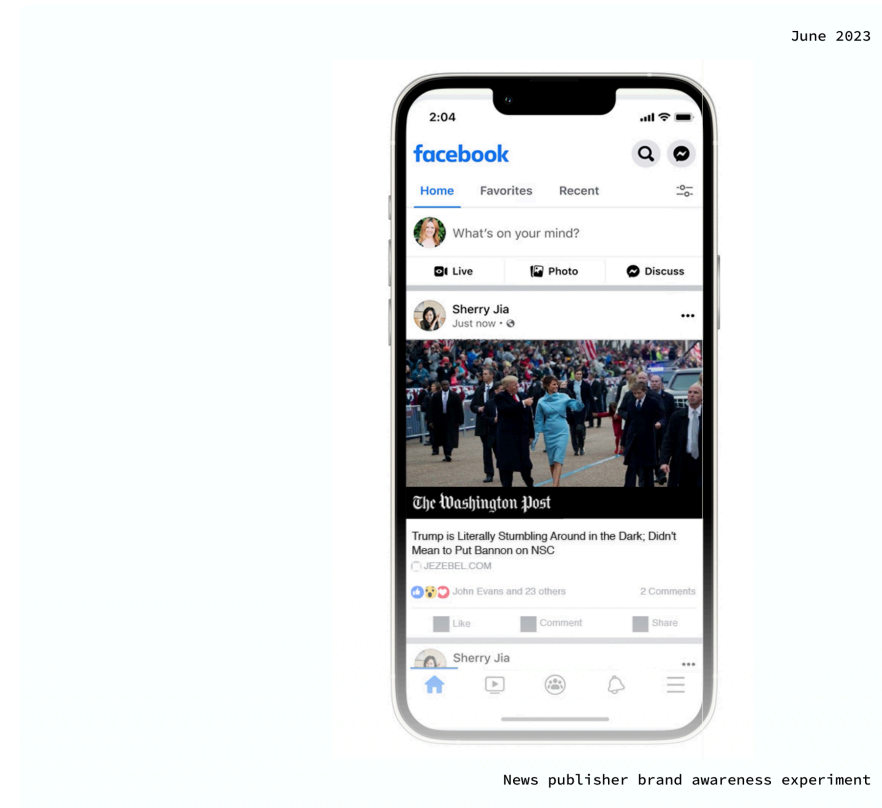
Visual refresh

03 · FACEBOOK, 2017–2018

Fighting misinformation on a feed of a billion people

NEWS CREDIBILITY · SNAPSHOT

ROLE	Lead Product Designer
TEAM	Me as the designer · 4 engineers · 1 researcher · 1 content strategist · 1 PM
SURFACE	News Feed · 1B+ monthly users · web, Android, iOS
CONTEXT	The news credibility work was brand new, as "fake news" became a global crisis



WHAT I BROUGHT

I designed the fact-checking tool.

Partners like Snopes rated stories, and a rating reduced a story's reach across Facebook.

I pushed for credibility signals.

Publisher logos and credibility indicators that landed across the product.

I brought publishers in.

I met the New York Times, CNN, and others to introduce the fact-checking and A/B testing tools.

I took the research global.

I condensed field research into product direction, and pushed that our fix was too US- and Euro-centric.



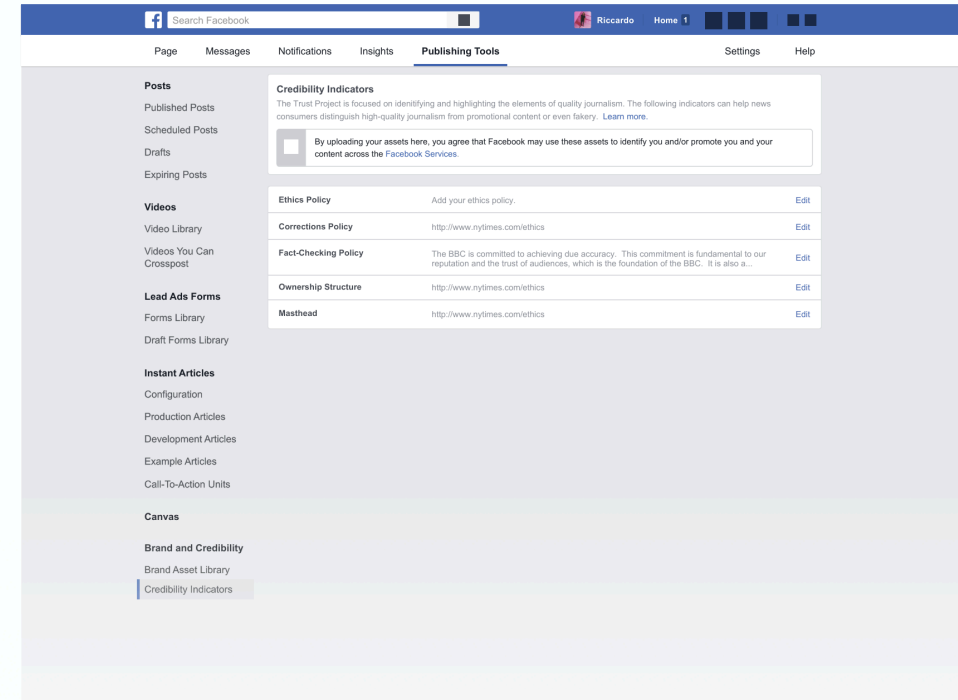
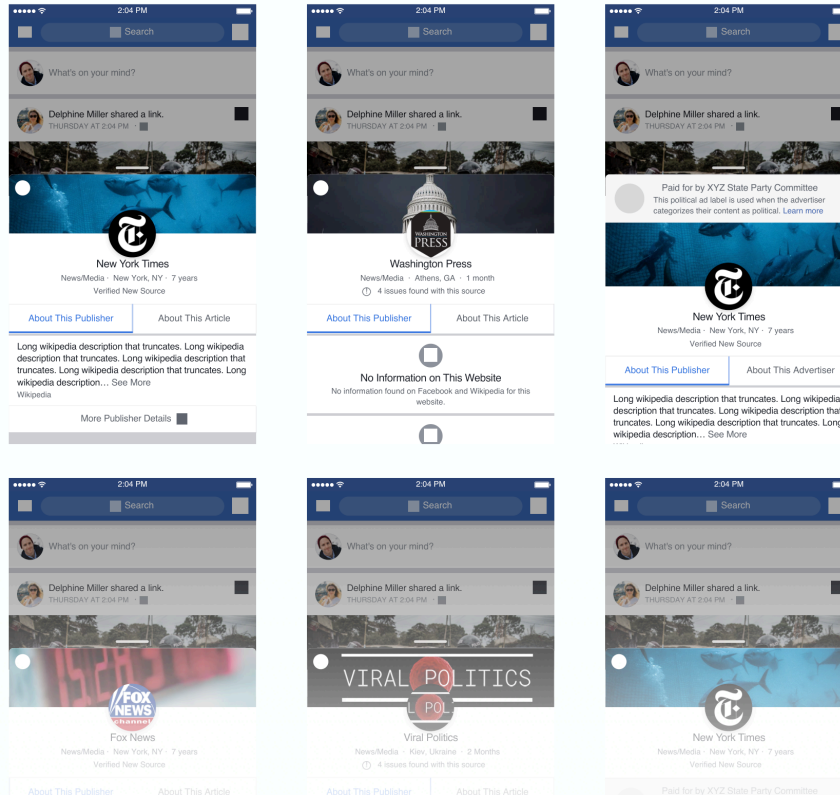
RESEARCH · INDIA

"Snopes isn't
covering stories in
Brazil or India."

Research in Hong Kong, Brazil, and India, where I
joined the team, showed the problem looked
completely different outside the US and Europe.
People got their news in group posts and
WhatsApp groups.

NEWS SIGNALS

June 2023



Reputable signals in the feed

Publisher logos, so the source travels with the story.

Credibility indicators

Ethics, corrections, and ownership, in publisher tools.

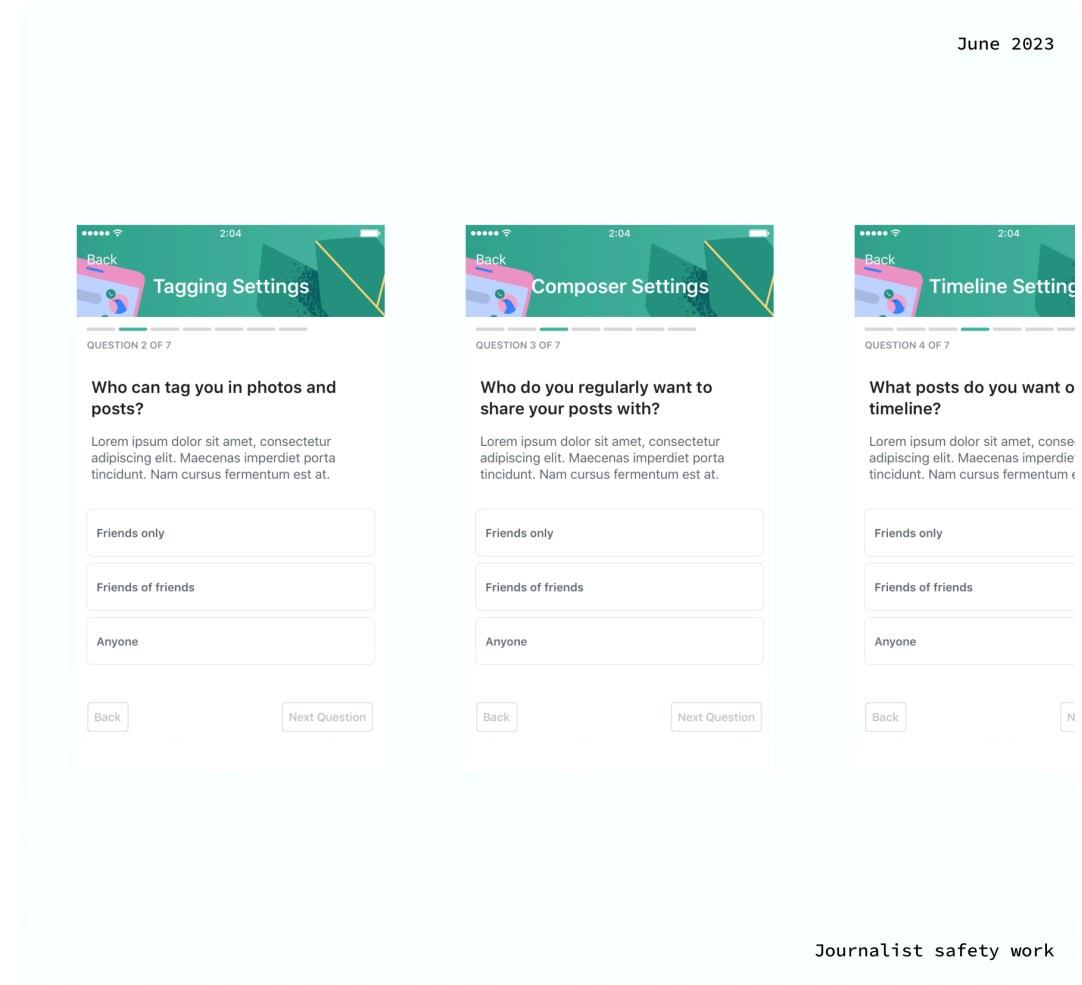
Fact-checking

Partners like Snopes rated stories. A false rating dropped a story in the feed.

JOURNALIST SAFETY

A journalist told us Facebook wasn't safe for journalists to post on.

Cat Audi and I pushed for it, and the team started building safety tools: who can tag you, who sees your posts, what reaches your timeline.



RESULTS

~80%

drop in views once an article was rated as
containing misinformation

25

fact-checking
partners across
14 countries

Shipped

publisher logos, About This
Publisher, and Trust Project
credibility indicators

WHAT MY DESIGNERS SAY

*[Testimonial: request from
a designer]*

Name · Staff Product Designer,
Docker

*[Testimonial: request from
a designer]*

Name · Designer, DigitalOcean

*[Testimonial: request from
a peer or partner]*

Name · Role

I want good people to do great work
they're proud of.

Let's *talk.*

Earl Carlson · theearlcarlson@gmail.com · Ann Arbor, MI (remote)