

Ed Tech Product Revitalization

Case Study

Website

Before

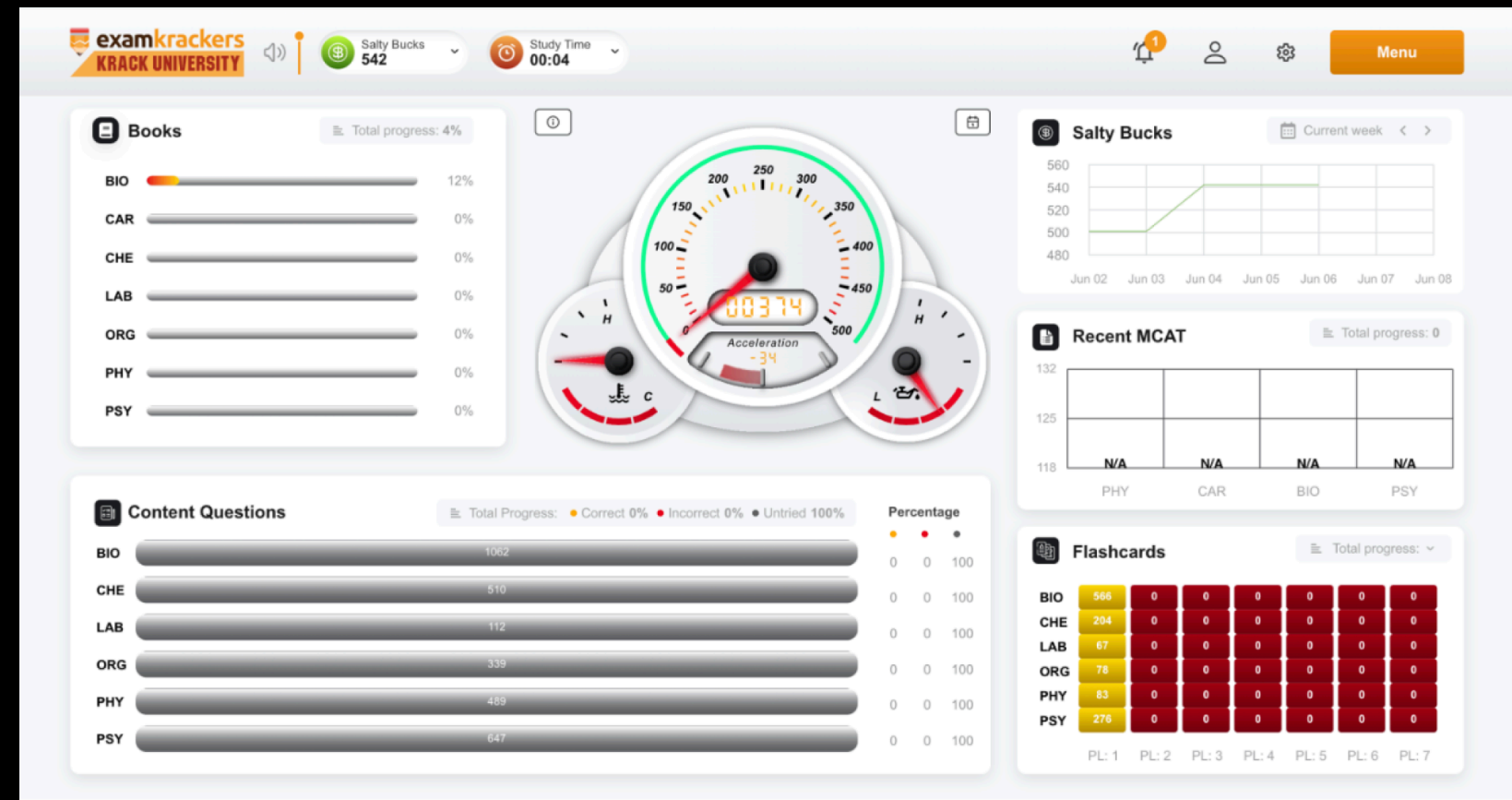
The 'Before' screenshot shows a cluttered website layout. At the top, a navigation bar includes 'examcrackers', 'MCAT Courses', 'MCAT Books', 'About the MCAT', 'Free Stuff', 'Reviews', 'Log In', and 'Sign Up'. Below this is a large orange banner with the text 'Introducing the Krack University MCAT Prep Platform!'. The main content area is divided into two columns: 'KrackU' and 'MCAT Live Online'. Each column features a small video player, a 'What it is...' section, and a 'Learn More' button. Below this is a section titled 'The Examcrackers Difference' with four icons representing: 'Over 300,000 successful students', '9-star reviewed MCAT prep for 25 years', 'Chosen by top university premed programs', and 'Teaching MCAT test prep since 1997'. A sign-up form is located on the left, and a 'Stay Up-To-Date' section with a chatbot icon is on the right. At the bottom, there are two video review thumbnails for 'Examcrackers Reviews'.

After

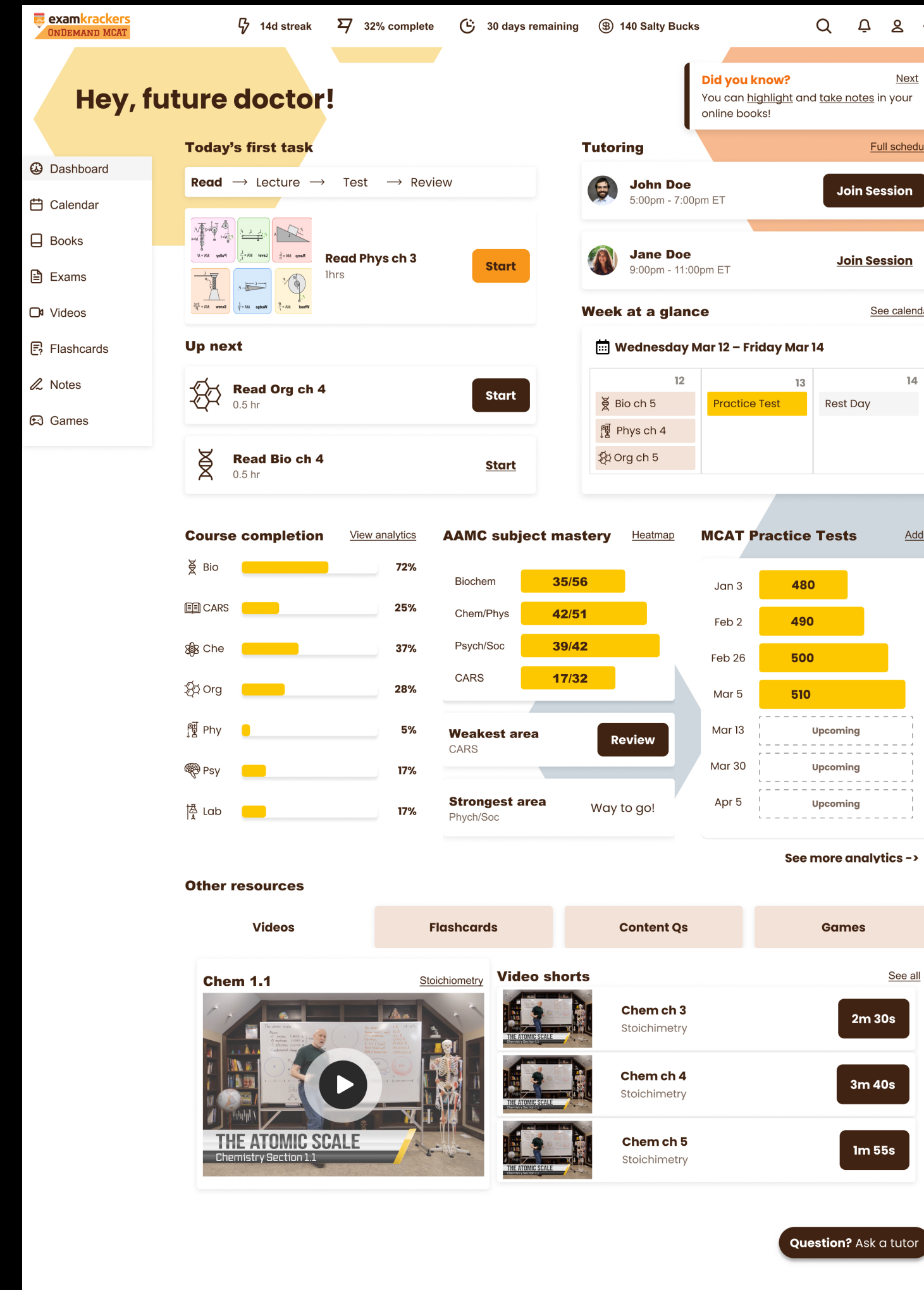
The 'After' screenshot shows a clean, modern website layout. The top navigation bar is dark with 'examcrackers', 'MCAT Courses', 'MCAT Books', 'About the MCAT', 'Free Resources', 'Reviews', 'Log In', and 'Order your set'. A large hero section features the headline 'Trusted MCAT test prep for over 25 years.' and a sub-headline: 'For 25 years, Examcrackers has helped 300,000 future doctors get their highest score on the MCAT. With digital courses, books, live classes, practice exams, and tutoring, Examcrackers has the right resource for you to get your best and highest score on the MCAT.' A 'Explore Our Products' button and a cartoon character are also present. Below the hero is a large image of three students studying at a table with laptops. The main content area is titled 'Choose between flexible coursework or live, interactive lectures.' and features three product cards: 1) 'KrackU \$495/90 days' described as 'A self paced, online course with everything you need to prepare for MCAT.'; 2) 'MCAT Live Online \$2,696-\$1,895/full year' described as 'A full year of live online courses and KrackU.'; and 3) 'Examcrackers MCAT Complete Study Package \$289' described as 'New edition of our best-'. Each card includes a 'Learn more about' button and a 'View plans' link.

Product

Before



After (Proposed)



The setting: *Characters*





- Senior UX Designer (me!)
- Development team
- Product manager
- Client

The setting: *The problem*

Successful textbook editor has launched MCAT prep e-learning platform and is failing to generate revenue. To change this, both his website and product are in need of investigation.

The rising action: *UX investigation*

In order to identify the root cause, myself & team performed the following:

-  **Customer journey map**
-  **Heuristic analysis**
-  **User interviews**
-  **Competitive analysis**

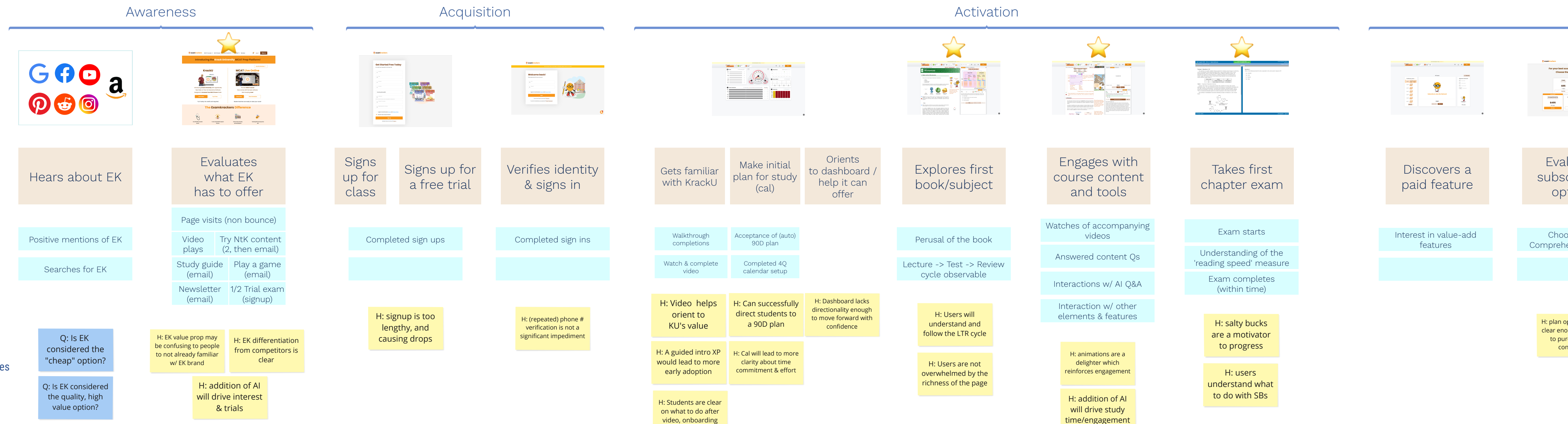
 *Customer journey map*

The rising action: *Customer journey map*

What we did: Mapped the flow, intention, and steps taken from Awareness —> Activation and beyond

Essential User Journey

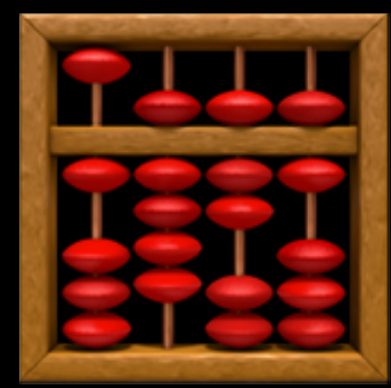
★ = user receives value



The rising action: *Customer journey map*

 **What we found:** Sign up, Home, and View Plans pages were most important to get right as they determined top of funnel growth

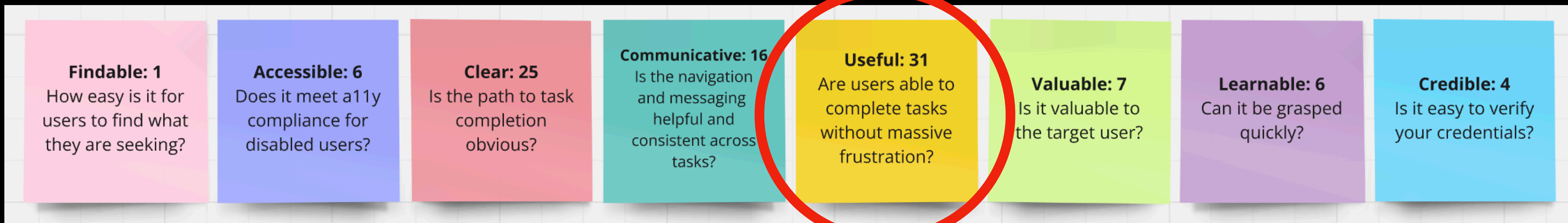
PIRATE METRICS	MEANING IN OUR BUSINESS	POSSIBLE GROWTH DRIVERS	OUR SUCCESS MEASURES	RESULTS	CONVERSIONS
The 6 steps of the Pirate Funnel form the typical journey of a customer. Of course, the Funnel will look different for every business, so adjust it as needed by adding/changing/reordering the steps!	What do the metrics mean to us?	How can success be measured?	With which metrics do we measure success? (Our key measure is highlighted in bold)	How many users are we currently getting?	What is our current conversion rate between the steps?
A Awareness How many people do we reach with our marketing? How do we get people to visit us? Which channels are they using?	How many people have our JTBD and how efficient are we in reaching those people?	SEO and SEM, social media, blog, e-mail, PR, affiliates, BizDev, apps and widgets, TV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Unique visitors of our website(s) › Social media reach › Ad impressions & reception › New blog readers 	100,000	20%
A Acquisition How do we define an acquired user? Do they have to sign-up & leave personal info?	Users need to go through our channels to become a customer. We are currently lacking partner channels	Ratings & reviews, paid advertising, digital/traditional marketing, channels, cohort behavior, keyword ranking, CACs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › % signing up › Downloads & installs › Customer Acquisition Costs (CAC) 	20,000	25%
A Activation What is our WOW Moment (i.e., the first great user experience)? What do we consider an active user?	People will only buy if they have a great first-time experience with us that is superior to their current alternative	One-step registration with email or FB, customer on-boarding, newsletter sign-up, brochure download, meeting requests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Number of times a customer reads key blog posts › Session length › Screens per session › Time between engagements 	5,000	10% <i>This is your main bottleneck!</i>
R Revenue How many people actually become customers and how much do they spend? What are we doing to sell, upsell and cross-sell?	We need to get to \$5 million in revenue by end of year	Sales & promotions, downloadable content, personalization, frequent updates, ads, lead generation, BizDev, subscription	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Number of new customers › Average Revenue Per User (ARPU) › Cust. Lifetime Value (CLV) › % subscriptions & upgrading 	500	40%
R Retention How many customers are sticking with us? What are we doing to ensure that users come back?	Customers are only becoming net positive after 14 months – so retention is key in our business	Proactive communication, push notifications, re-engagements ads, e-mails & alerts, time-based features, blogs, content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Monthly active users (MAU) › N-day retention › Session frequency 	200	25%
R Referral How many customers promote us? What are we doing to encourage virality?	Recommendations are key in our business. We get close to 50% of our business from there	Campaigns, contests, emails, widgets, recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Net promoter score > 8.5 › Peer recommendations sent 	50	



Heuristic analysis

The rising action: 🧮 *Heuristic analysis*

💡 **What I found:** Users were potentially **unable** to complete tasks without massive frustration in 31 situations.



 *User interviews*

The rising action: 🦻 *User interviews*

What I did: Conducted 4 rounds of interviews with dozens of current & prospective students in order to find key pain points.

The collage features several key insights from user interviews, each accompanied by a small video thumbnail of a participant. The insights are:

- Unsure about how to describe KrackU** (Dalton): Describe offer: Live on line and then you have KrackU, doesn't specify what KrackU is but guessing Krack University
- "I'm not sure what KrackU is."** (Bianca)
- Closed both popups** (Bianca)
- Immediately closes pop-up** (Dalton)
- Eliminate distraction** (Black)
- Exited out the live online popup** (Alaa)
- It's not too overwhelming** (Bianca)
- Looks at both sides of the screen, but I'm not sure what they are** (Bianca)
- Homepage was most confusing** (Bianca)
- MCAT Live Online gives you live classes I guess?** (Bianca)
- Looking for social proof (externally)** (Black): would look at the reviews on the... would go to Reddit to...
- Remembers the next steps: Nav > courses, click around, Free Stuff** (Dalton)
- to be equal** (Black)

The background of the collage shows a portion of a website with a search bar (Name, Last, Email Address) and a 'Stay' button. Video thumbnails show participants like Jamal Abercrombia, Ed.D. (Associate Director, Student Leadership, USC Viterbi School of Engineering) and other students.

The rising action: 🦻 *User interviews*

💡 **What I found:**

- The product description was unclear
- The price point was great (and possibly too low!)
- Students had FOMO about needing to use a variety of resources
- There were critical usability issues on the sign up form and flow



Competitive analysis

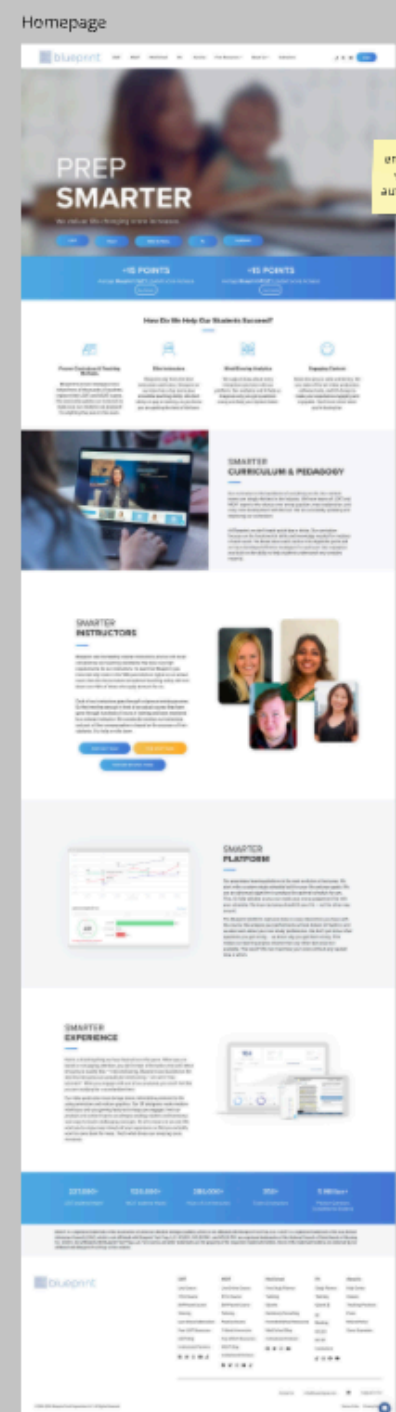
The rising action: 📁 *Competitive analysis*

What we did: Analyzed what other companies were doing well

Blueprint - Website

first impression very similar to Kaplan

very much as though we're getting a good quality of content



Blueprint - Offers



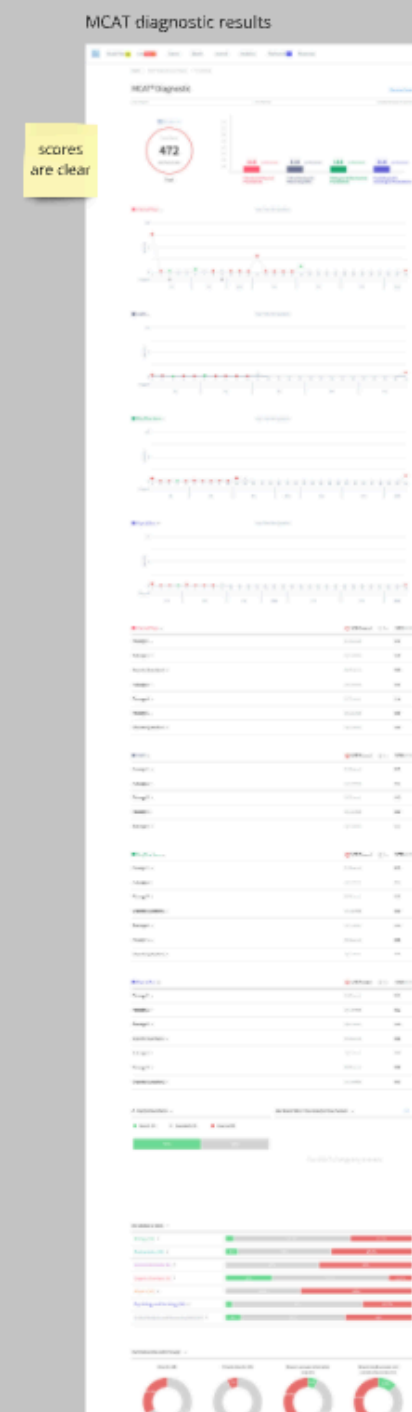
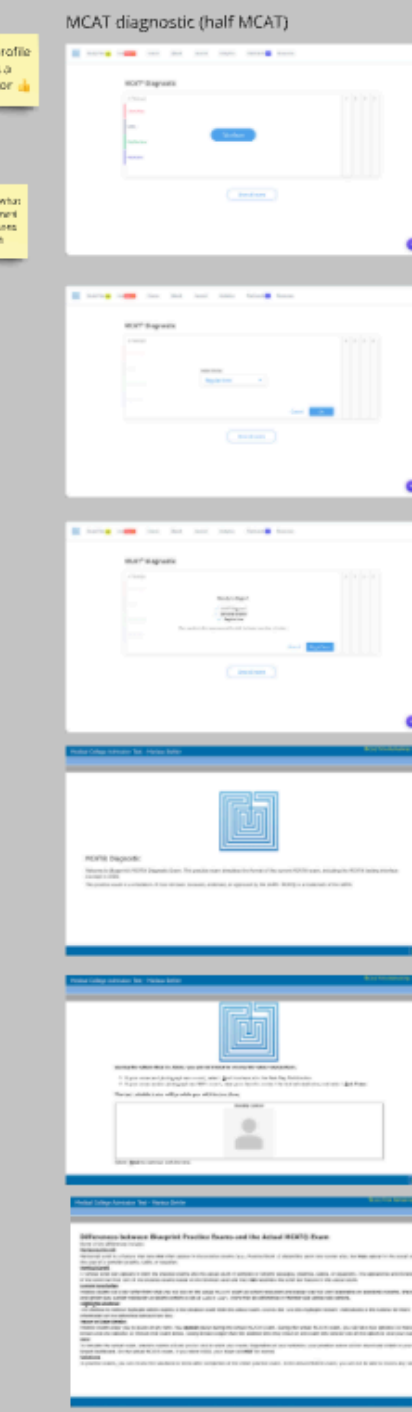
Blueprint - Product

tons of emails

no books

not sure what's going on with this

write good features but not as much as it



The rising action: 📁 *Competitive analysis*

💡 **What I found:** The client's product offered way more resources than their competitors for a better price.

This indicated that students **didn't need more features, they needed better access to existing features.**

The rising action: *Summary of findings*

- 📌 **Customer journey map** —> Top of funnel is key for acquisition
- 🧮 **Heuristic analysis** —> User frustration in simple tasks
- 👂 **User interviews** —> Users don't understand offer, are frustrated
- 📁 **Competitive analysis** —> We don't need *new* features, just clearer features

The conflict: *Next steps*

1. Reduce how frustrating it is to sign in and pay
2. Make the offer clearer
3. Make the main product easier to use (and try to resist adding *new* features!)

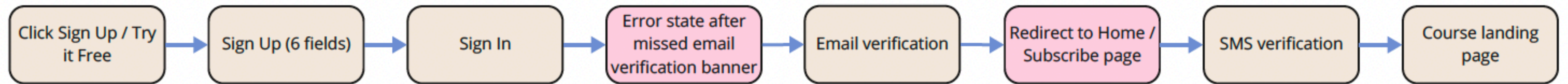
1.

*Reduce how frustrating
it is to sign in & pay*

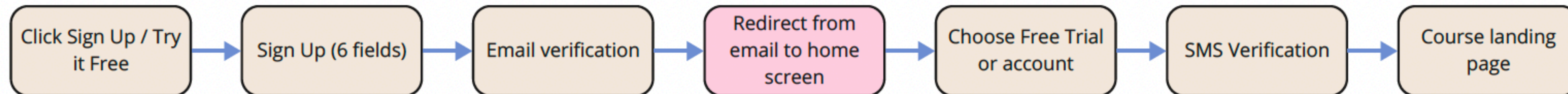
The conflict: *Reduce frustration*

Sign-in: Major pain point eliminated

Before



After



The conflict: *Reduce frustration*

Sign-in: Improved accessibility and form field interactions

Before

examcrackers

Get Started Free Today

No credit card required for the free trial

Username

Email

First name

Last name

Country phone prefix

Cell Phone #

Enter the number correctly. It will not be possible to change it later.


Password 8+ characters

Repeat password 8+ characters

I agree to Examcrackers [Terms](#) and [Privacy Policy](#)

Receive news and promotions.

Sign Up



After

examcrackers

Create your account

No credit card required.

Username

Email

First name

Last name

Code

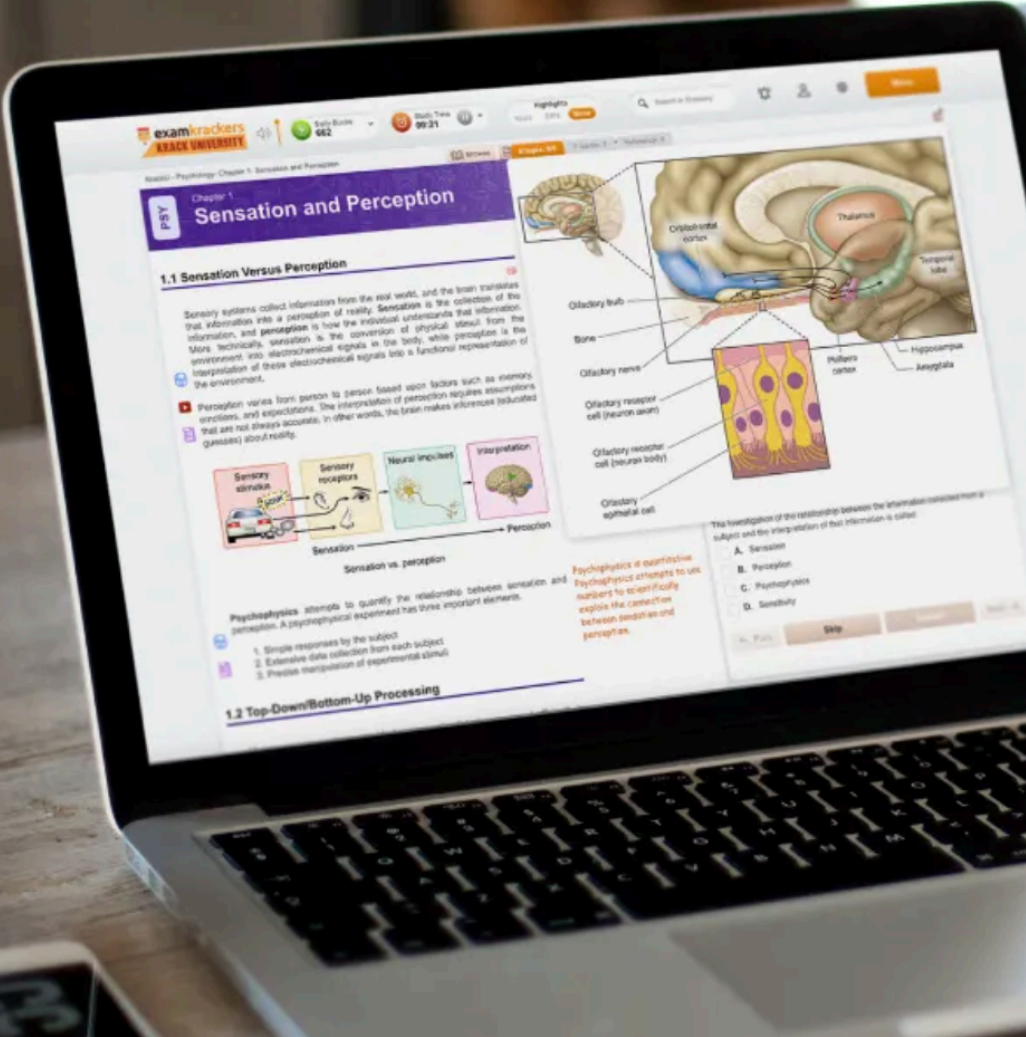
Cell phone (for authorization)

Password (must be 8+ characters)

Confirm password

I agree to Examcrackers [Terms](#) and [Privacy Policy](#)

Receive news and promotions.



The conflict: *Reduce frustration*

Payment flow

Before

- [Wanting to purchase] —> [seeing content] = 5 minutes
- 16 screens
- 3 forms
- Two verifications
- 1.5 minutes of loading
- 23 pain points

After

- [Wanting to purchase] —> [seeing content] = 3.5 minutes **(-1.5)**
- 12 screens **(-4)**
- 2 forms **(-1)**
- Two verifications
- Still 1.5 minutes of loading, but with communication of how long it will take
- 12 pain points removed **(-11)**

2.

Make the offer clearer

The conflict: *Make the offer clearer*

I exercised my marketing / UX writing muscles by exploring better value propositions & CTAs with my team.

Before

Introducing the Krack University MCAT Prep Platform!

- What is Krack University and why should I care?
- Doesn't pass accessibility standards

After

**Trusted MCAT test
prep for over 25 years.**

- 25 years communicates credibility
- Better color contrast

The conflict: *Make the offer clearer*

Before

KrackU

What if...

Introducing **Krack University** with Hyperbooks, New State-of-the-Art Interactive Software Designed to **Increase Your MCAT Score** faster.

[Learn More](#) [Try it Free](#)

Try it today. No credit card required.

MCAT Live Online

The best **MCAT** course

Now comes with the best software.

Start studying **now!**

[Learn More](#) [View Schedules](#)

Master teachers are ready to raise your score!

[Scroll to Reviews](#)

The names of the products are the headers. Unfortunately the names of the products don't mean anything to students yet.

After

Choose between flexible coursework or live, interactive lectures.

KrackU \$495/90 days

A self paced, online course with everything you need to prepare for MCAT.

Krack University is an on demand, online course that gives you access to digital books, bite-sized video lectures, 78 practice exams, 1000s of practice questions, study tools like flashcards, and live tutoring all in one place for less than \$500.

[Learn more about KrackU](#) [View plans](#)

MCAT Live Online \$2,595-\$1,895/full year

A full year of live online courses and KrackU.

MCAT Live Online is an interactive, live online course that includes one year of access to KrackU. Live classes meet twice per week for 2 hours over the course of 11 weeks. Come to class to ask your questions and get the help you need, then access

Here the value of the products are the headers, which directly address user needs.

The conflict: *Make the offer clearer*

Feedback after improvements

"If I saw this,
I wouldn't buy it
because it's
nothing special"

Ph1-r1-p3



Yeah, I like this
page. It gives you
everything you
need to know.

Ph2-R1-P2

The conflict: *Make the offer clearer*

Before

The original website layout is cluttered and lacks a clear hierarchy. It features three main sections, each with a list of bullet points and a 'View Plans' / 'Try It Free' button. The text is dense and uses vague terms like 'Comprehensive' and 'Innovative' to describe the product's value. The overall design is busy and difficult to navigate.

After

The redesigned website is clean and focused. It features a prominent headline: 'We did the research. Here's everything you need for a 515+ MCAT score.' Below this, it lists 'Seven unique ways to make your learning more effective' with specific, numerical benefits: 7 online books, 400 video lectures, nearly 100 MCAT practice exams, 3,000 content questions, 1,000+ flashcards, 3 games, and 6 days/week live tutoring. The layout is more spacious and easier to read, with a clear call to action and a testimonial from a student.

This page is supposed to outline all the features of the core product, but the value is hidden behind vague terms like "Comprehensive" and "Innovative"

In the redesign, I focused on tangible examples and numerical benefits (7 ways, etc.)

The conflict: *Make the offer clearer*

Feedback after improvements

"I'm not
sure what
KrackU is."

Ph1-R1-P2



Described KrackU as
"online asynchronous kind
of course, where you can
watch videos and read the
books and go over practice
questions and things that
seems useful."

Ph2-R1-P1

The conflict: *Make the offer clearer*

Before

examcrackers

For your best score, take the MCAT only once.
Choose the Comprehensive Plan

Free Trial Careful, if you try it, you will buy it \$0 7 days Try It Free	Cram Review a subject \$95 7 days Buy Now	Refresher Not enough for a full review \$275 30 days Buy Now
Recommended Comprehensive Well-paced, Methodical Approach \$495 90 days Buy Now	Juggling-too-much When 90 days is not feasible \$945 180 days Buy Now	Excessive study Way more time than you need \$1745 365 days Buy Now

The subscription tier descriptions were vague, mildly insulting, and the amount of tier options caused the products to cannibalize each other in pricing.

There was also no reinforcement of the value students would receive before purchasing.

After

examcrackers

Meet your new reliable study partner.

Krack University is available whenever you need, for as long as you need. The only difference between the plans is the subscription length. If you can devote the time each day, the 90 day plan produces the best results.

\$275 30 Days Some content included in every plan: 3,000+ content questions 7 interactive hyperbooks 1,000+ flashcards 500+ videos 79 practice exams 6d/wk tutoring Option to add hard copy books Add to cart	Recommended \$495 90 Days Some content included in every plan: 3,000+ content questions 7 interactive hyperbooks 1,000+ flashcards 500+ videos 79 practice exams 6d/wk tutoring Option to add hard copy books Add to cart	\$945 180 Days Some content included in every plan: 3,000+ content questions 7 interactive hyperbooks 1,000+ flashcards 500+ videos 79 practice exams 6d/wk tutoring Option to add hard copy books Add to cart
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Interested in live lectures with top instructors? Check out our [Live Online MCAT prep course](#)

How we compare

Every KrackU plan is all inclusive and comes with access to 7 Hyperbooks, 500+ videos, 3,000+ content questions, 1,000+ flashcards, 79 practice exams, and live office hours with real tutors. With Examcrackers, you get more and you pay less.

Examcrackers KrackU vs. other on-demand MCAT prep courses

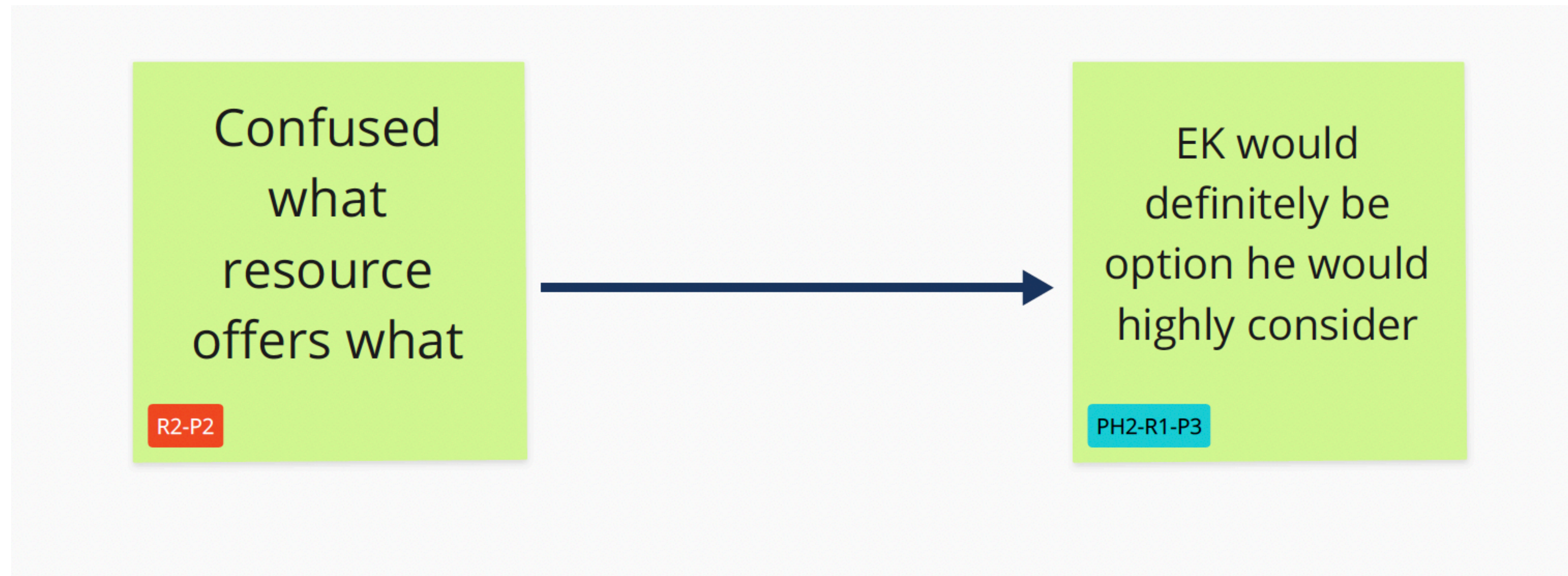
	examcrackers BRACE UNIVERSITY	Kaplan	Princeton Review	Blueprint
90 day access Proven best results	\$495	×	×	×
180 day access	\$945	\$1,799	\$1,599	\$1,699
Interactive hyperbooks Highlight & take notes	✓	×	×	×
Online books	✓	✓	✓	✓
Short, engaging videos	550+	×	×	×
Really long videos	×	390	500	160
Tutoring	20hrs/wk	×	×	12hrs/wk
Original Full MCATs	11.5*	11**	10**	10**
Content Qs	3,000+	3,000	1,000	4,000
Flashcards	1,000+	×	×	1,600
Custom calendar	Coming soon	×	×	✓
Games	✓	✓	×	×

*Examcrackers MCAT Live Online includes 11.5 full length MCATs, 24 sectional MCATs and 44 30-minute MCATs.
**In order to make an accurate comparison, AACM exams sold at an additional price have been subtracted from these numbers.

*Here the options are reduced and a competitor matrix is added to show clear numerical stats and product advantage compared to other options. **This idea came directly from user testing.***

The conflict: *Make the offer clearer*

Feedback after improvements



3.

*Make the product
easier to use*

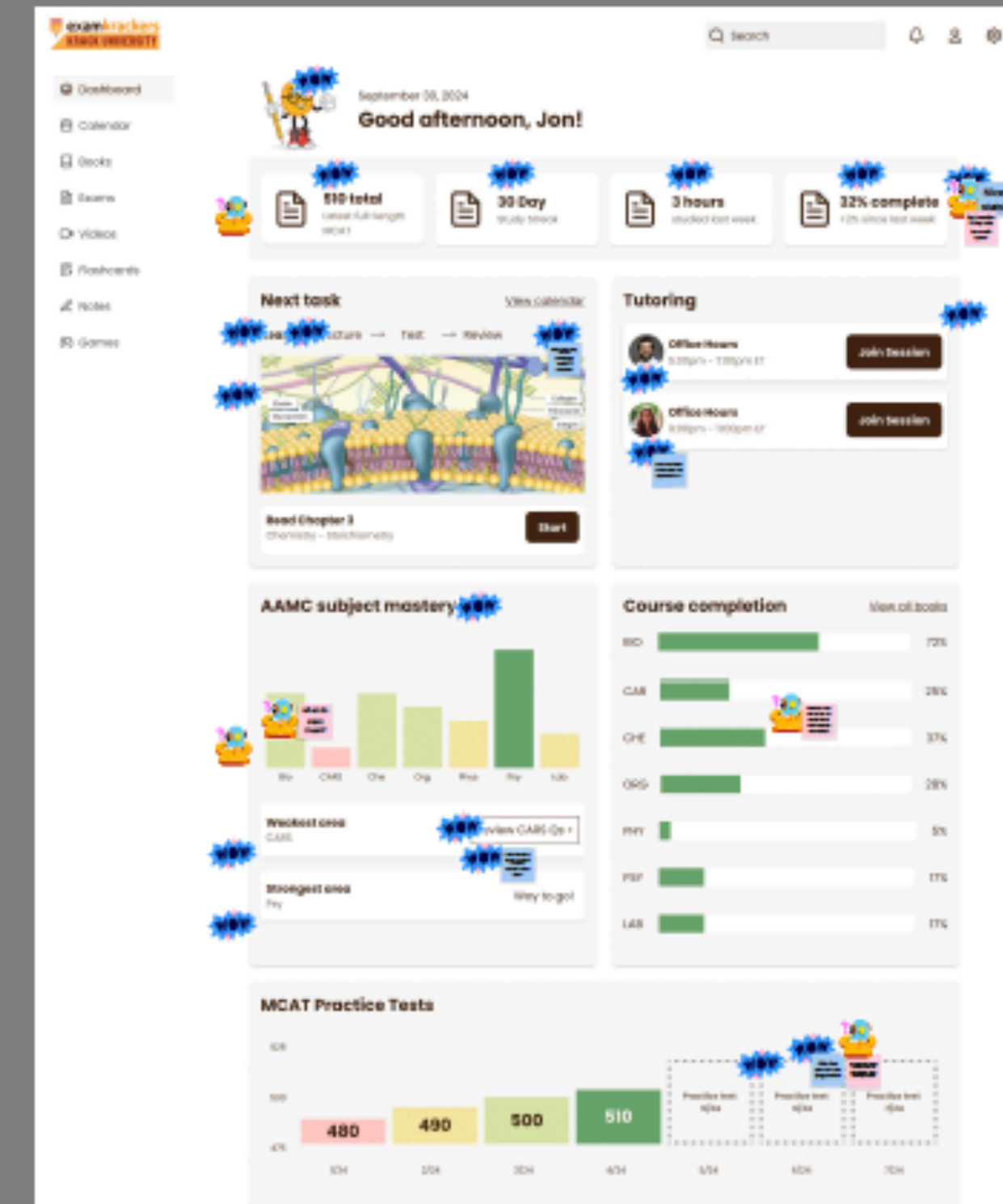
The conflict: *Make the product easier to use*

We then identified 4 core guiding statements to inform our new designs:

1. Help me know what to do
2. Help me to do it
3. Show me my progress
4. Make it fun

The conflict: *Make the product easier to use*

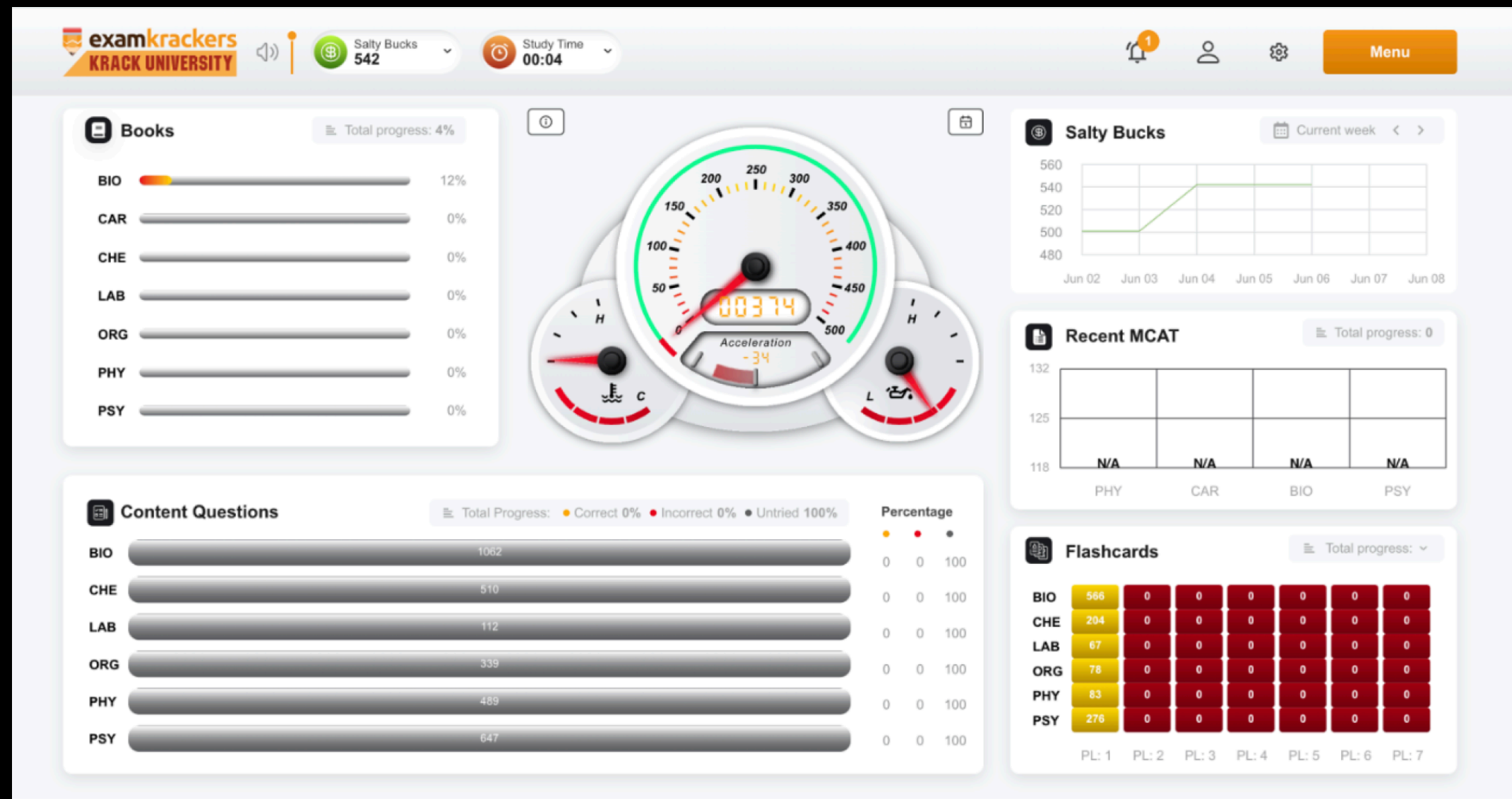
Using those insights, we each came up with a redesign then voted on what was most valuable.



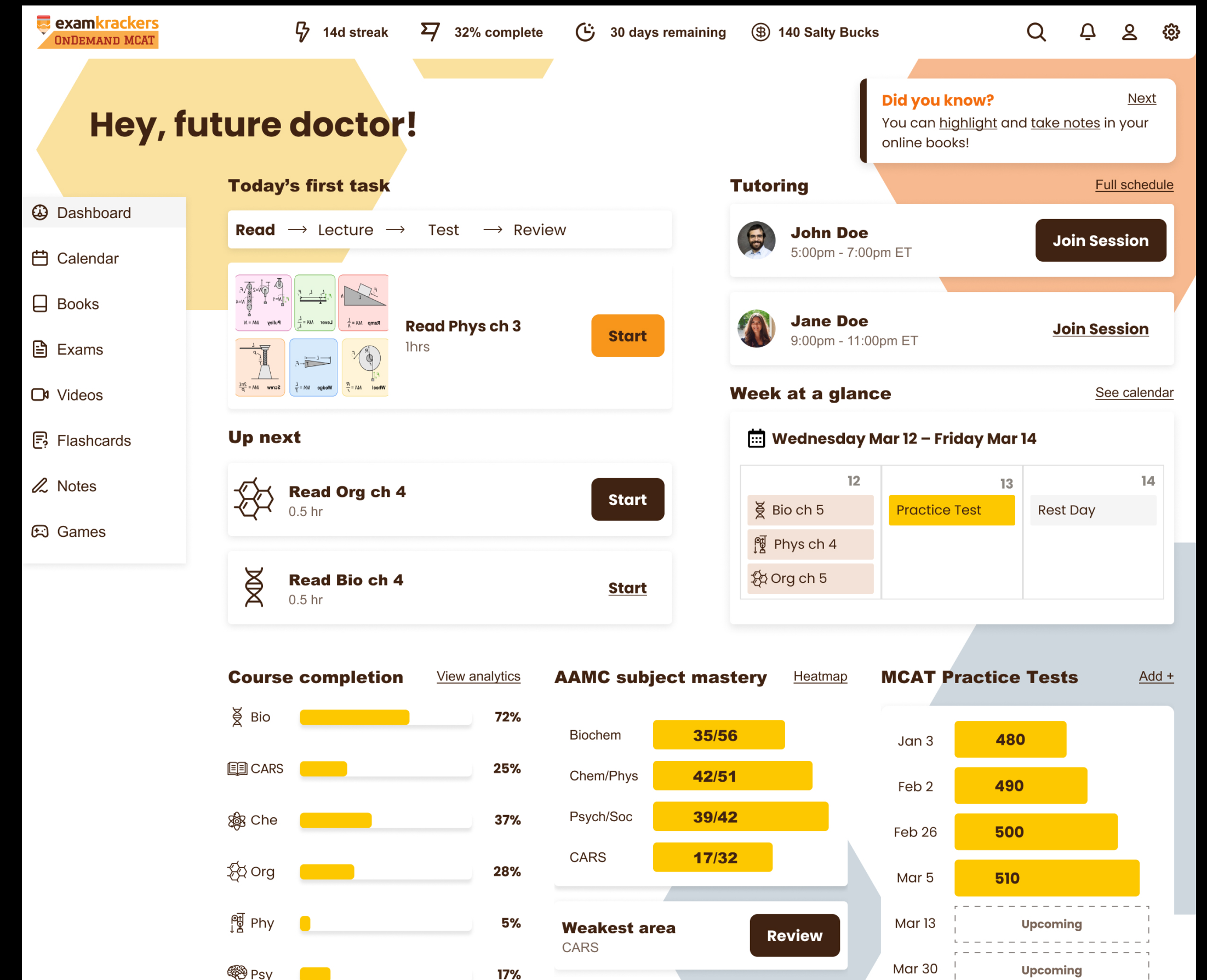
The conflict: *Make the product easier to use*

I combined all four designs into a refined, high-fidelity prototype that we tested with users.

Before

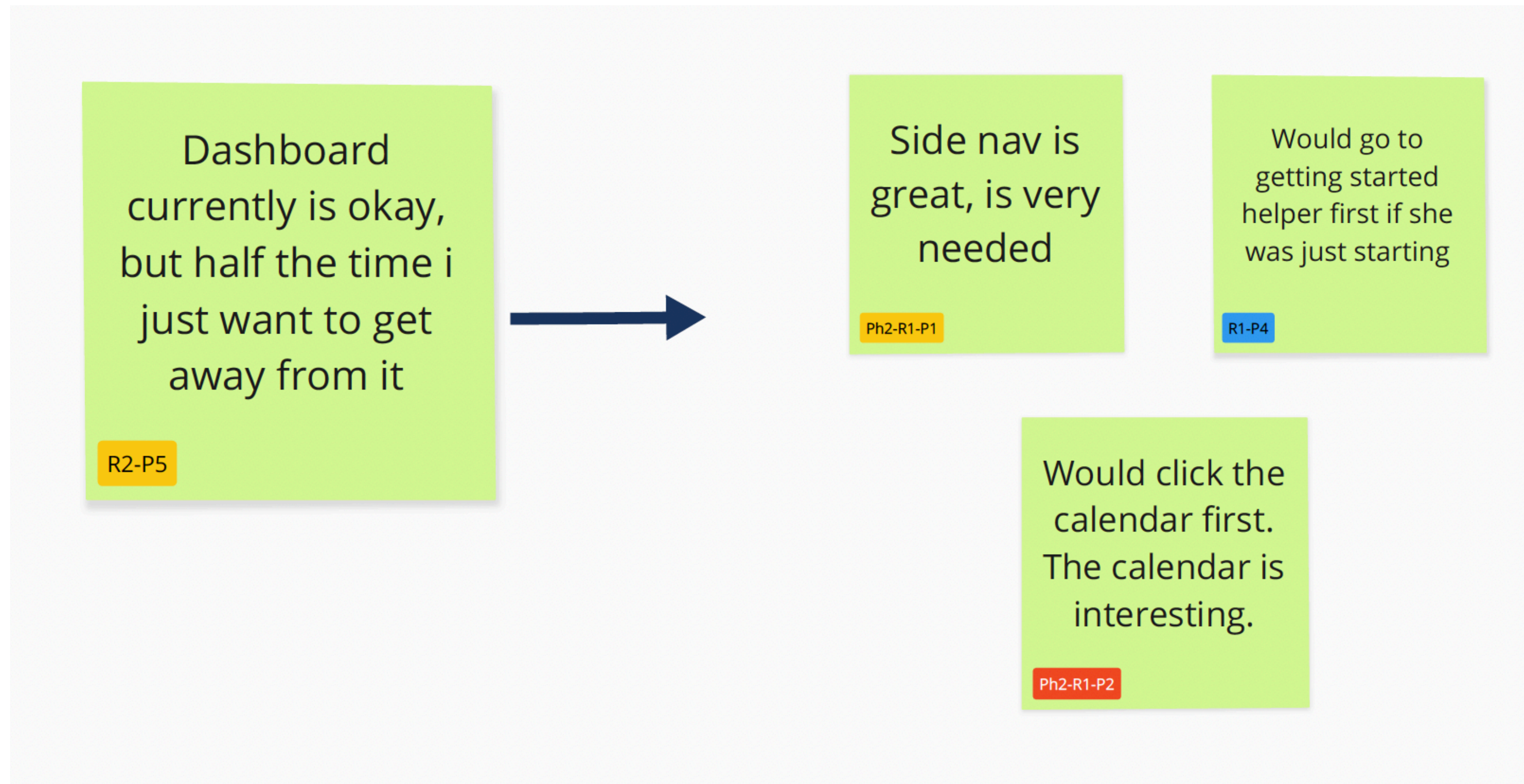


After



The conflict: *Make the product easier to use*

Feedback after improvements



Results & learnings

The resolution: *Results & learnings*

Website engagement
increased by

3%

14 surveyed users
said they would pay

2x more

For the redesigned
product

14 surveyed users
said they would rank
the redesigned
product

3x higher

against competitor
products.

The resolution: *Results & learnings*

What about revenue?

Although brand reputation and engagement improved, revenue has not significantly increased at the time of writing. This actually makes a lot of sense, since the designs released by development so far focused on top of funnel metrics only (flows & website screens).

The redesigns for the product itself are currently being developed, and while my involvement on this project is finished, it is expected that the work I completed will lead to a revitalized product once officially released.

The resolution: *Results & learnings*

Learnings

- Just as thorough design leads to quicker development, thorough UX investigation leads to quicker and more effective design.
- Listen to your users! They will supply almost all the design inspiration you need.
- Increasing customer interest was not a matter of adding new products, but refining existing ones.