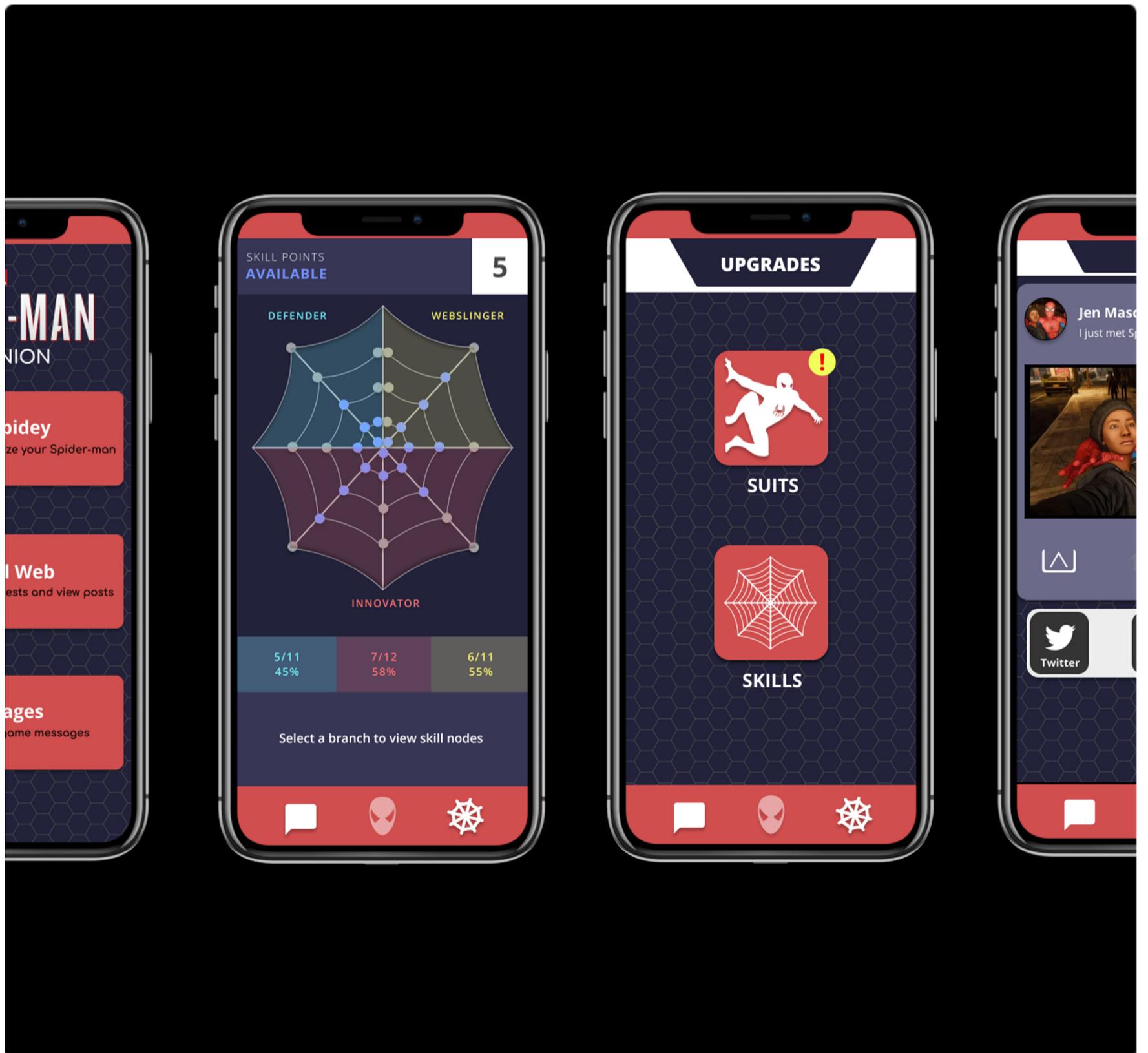


Ashwin Kamath

SpiderBuddy



Research and Ideation

I follow my design process religiously. The first step is always research and ideation. I started off by taking a look at some interesting systems present in the game. The ones that stood out were:

- Peter's friends often call him on his phone to let him know what's happening in the world
- The recurring J.Jonah Jameson's "Just the facts" radio channel where he tells people the breaking news
- Finding hidden backpacks in the world

The first 2 systems are elements that are primarily used to enhance the realism of the world. However I believe that it can be improved further by using a mechanic that would allow the player to use the information heard from calls/radio to complete a task.

For example, the player can use the information broadcasted on the **radio** to go to a certain place in the city and **activate** a side **mission** that wouldn't have a mission marker attached to it.

Since the game is set in the modern day, it would also be interesting to add a **social network** feature to it. Instead of exploring the city to find a hidden backpack, what if one of the NPCs clicked a picture of the backpack and posted it on social media? It certainly would've been an easier way to find it and would've contributed to the immersion by making the NPCs feel like they actually "live" in the world.

We also looked at other companion apps such as **Fallout's Pip-boy app** and **Red Dead Redemption 2's** mobile app to see what features developers usually reserve for companion apps.

Design

I collaborated with my teammates to come up with a list of main features we would like to see in our app. These included:

- A social media feature where the player can access quests organically
- A section where the player can upgrade skills or manage suits
- A messaging tab where Peter's friends and family can contact him (and even lead him to some side quests)

Once we had this, we moved on to create a wireframe for the pages that would be included in our app.

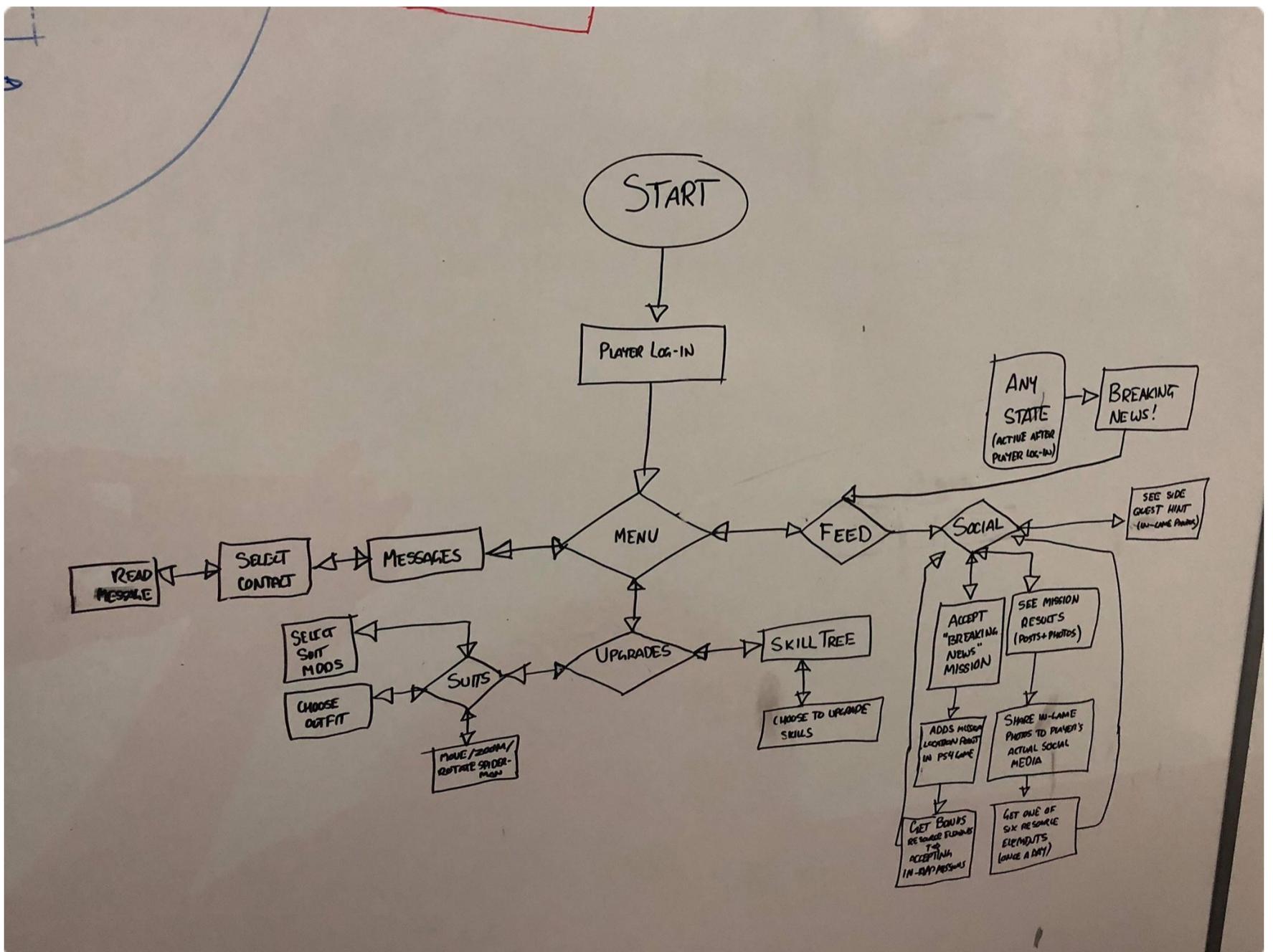


Image: A complex wireframe we made

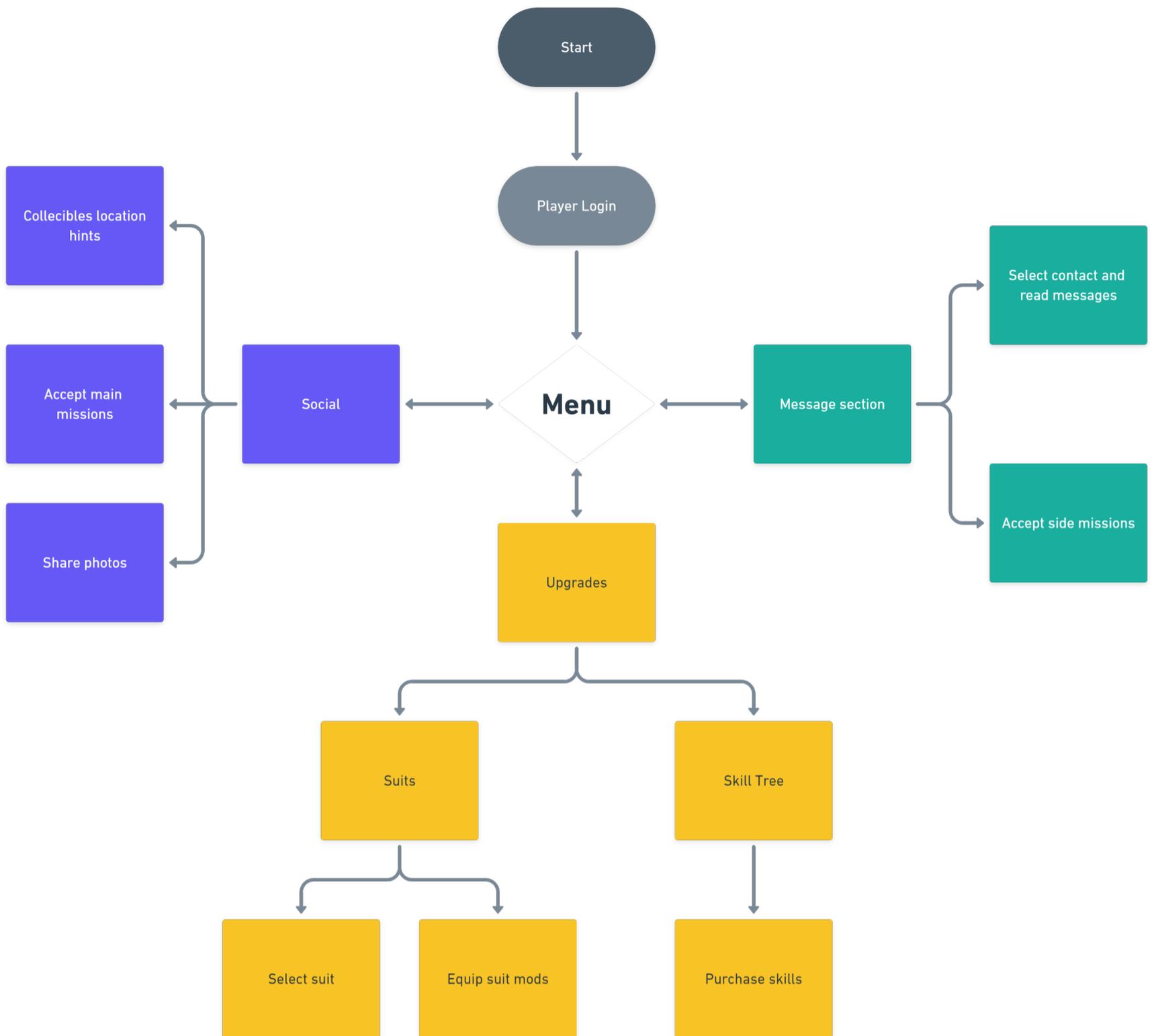


Image: A simplified version of the wireframe showing all pages and their uses

From our ideation phase, we noticed that most developers include some sort of **game map** in their companion apps. However, we wanted to use this idea in a more unique way. So, we tied this to the social media feature where the player can see the "social feed". Some of the posts in the feed are **Breaking News** and clicking on this will enable the player to access the map and add waypoints.

NPCs always post stuff in the social feed just to make the world feel more alive. Some of these posts include pictures of Spider-Man swinging through the city or taking selfies with strangers. The player has the ability to share these posts on their real social media accounts to gain a random in-game token that they can use to upgrade abilities or suits.

The NPCs also share pictures of things they see around them. Since there are side missions in the game where the player has to collect **backpacks** and other items, I came up with the idea that the **NPCs** sometimes **share pictures** of these items and this would help the player locate them in a more organic (exploratory) way instead of just putting a marker on them.

The upgrade section is very similar to the one in the game and lets the player select suits, equip suit mods and upgrade skills.

Finally, in the messaging section, the player gets messages from Peter's friends and family and they too can sometimes give Peter side missions that the player can complete for tokens and experience. I wanted conversations in the game to have some meaning, instead of just being an audio piece and I believe that implementing a **messaging section** where the player can actually converse with Peter's friends could help **improve** the **immersion**.

With the prototype, I physically created a mobile "screen" where I could move the elements around using tweezers (ha!)



Image: My physical prototype setup

Next, we experimented with the UX of the app in Figma and laid out all the pages and subpages and messed around with the placement of buttons. We **tested** our designs with **2 groups of 5 people** to ensure that we create the best possible experience.

Using the information from the testing sessions, we made some minor changes to the way information is presented and added some microinteractions to the prototype before moving on to the visual design.

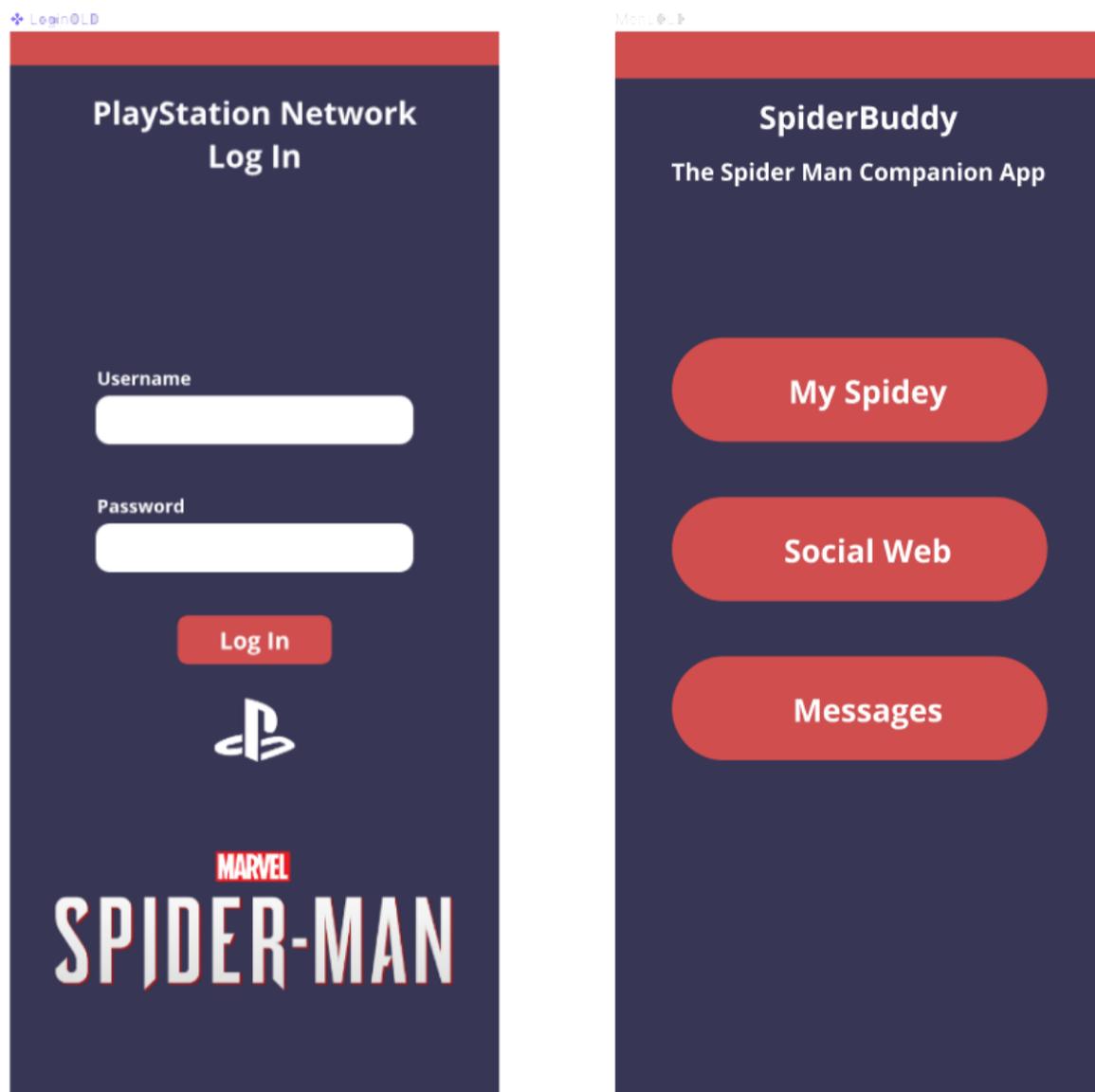


Image: The basic UX prototype we created

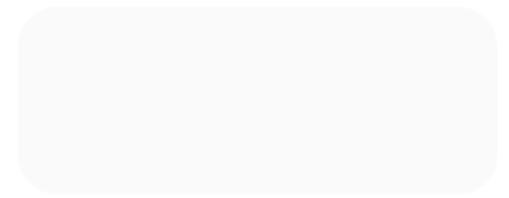
For the visuals, we looked at Spider-Man himself and the various suits he has worn over the years. For the purpose of testing we decided to stick to his newest suit. The main elements that stood out were the web pattern on red surface and the white spider on his chest. For our app, we decided to flip this and use a blue background with the web pattern as the colors would help differentiate it from the actual game. For the final prototype we decided to go with the color palette shown below.



Background



Interactive elements



Aesthetics

Outcome

Our final prototype was very successful in conveying our ideas about a possible companion app for this wonderful game. We presented it to a room full of people and received very positive responses.