



Defining NEW for the time-honored experience of Words With Friends.

Whitney Taylor

Lead UX Designer on Words With Friends, Zynga



SMARTPHONE & TABLET GAMES

SUMMIT

GAME DEVELOPERS CONFERENCE[®]

MOSCONE CENTER · SAN FRANCISCO, CA

MARCH 2-6, 2015 · EXPO: MARCH 4-6, 2015



MAY THE BEST FRIEND WIN.





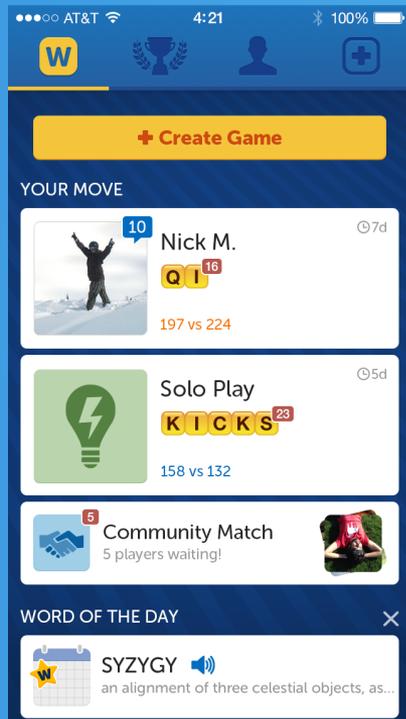
Words With Friends is a crossword based social puzzle. It's the number 1 free game in iPhone history, and is played by millions every day.

It's also cross platform and available on iPhone, iPad, Android devices, and Web.

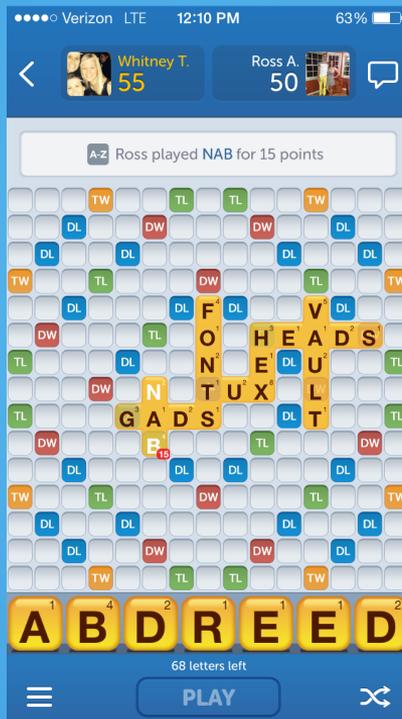




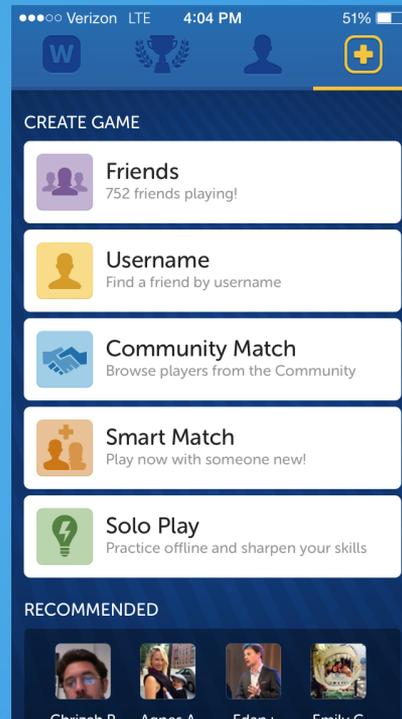
Core Components



Games List



Gameboard



Create Game



Brand Motivators



Mental
Challenge



Social
Connection



Competition



Escape



Consumer Needs



ESCAPIST

Play to relax and lightly challenge themselves.



CASUAL

Varied motivations for playing.



COMPETITOR

All about competition and mental challenge.



SOCIAL

Highly connected to others in the game.



Software

- Cross Platform solution
- Shared Gameboard tech using Cocos2d-x
- Native iOS and Android
- A/B testing





5 Year Anniversary

7.7 billion
games
played

More than 5x the amount
of smartphones
currently in the world



217 billion
letters
played

That many tiles would wrap
around the Earth 5.4 times



58 billion
words
played

Equivalent of more than 65,000 copies of
Shakespeare's complete works





Defining NEW for the time-honored
experience of Words With Friends.





Defining NEW

Player Love

More Social

Cross Platform

Results



Player Love



Colleen Glenn

@colleenglenn



I just played a 126-pt word on [#wordswithfriends](#) which means my life is now complete. [#madskillz](#)



User Needs

Friends to Play



keisha katr @klassykei 2012

I want to **play words with friends**, so somebody come **play** me

Ways to Play



candacejohn @sweetascari 2012

i've been playing **Words With Friends** all day . join me people !

Ways to Feel Smart



Christopher Bat @christopherm 2012

What new words have people learned from **Words with Friends**, and what do they mean?



Think back to 2012

- iOS 7
- Android Jelly Bean
- Windows 8 Metro
- Flat design replaces skeumorphic design
- Growing screen sizes
- Letterpress



Old UI Framework

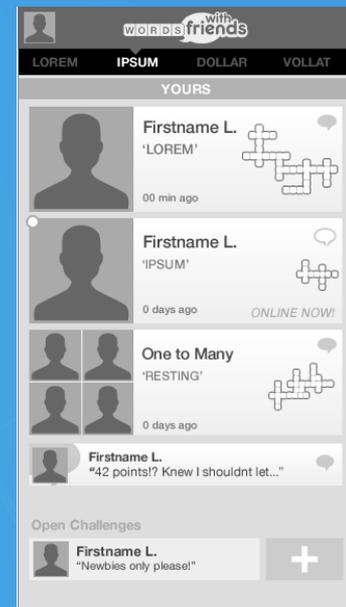
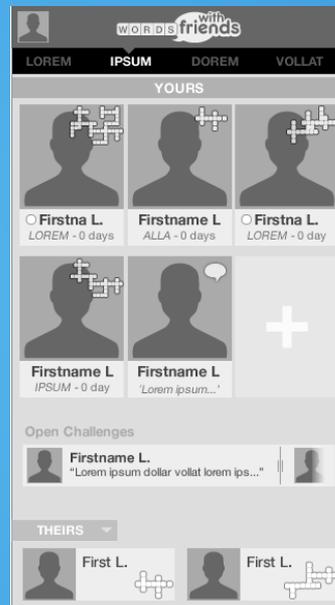
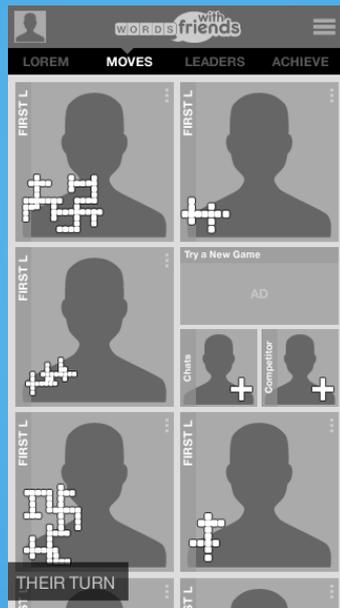
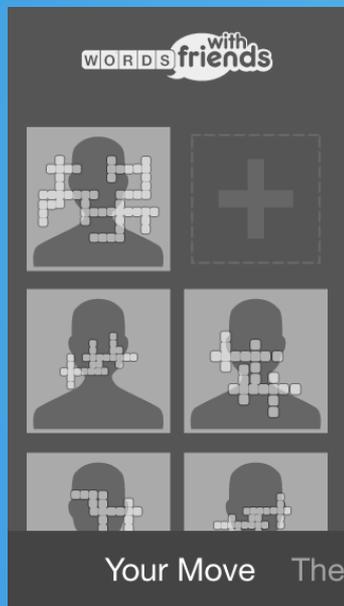
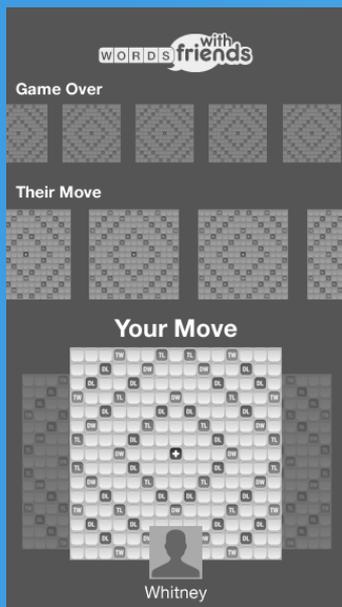
- Competing for real-estate
- No primary call to action
- Hidden side menu
- No communication channels
- Accessibility concerns
- iOS list view



Before

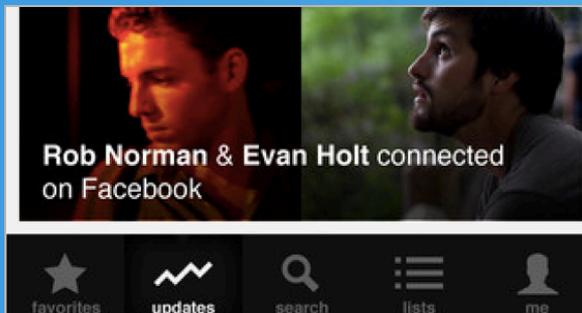


Early Explorations

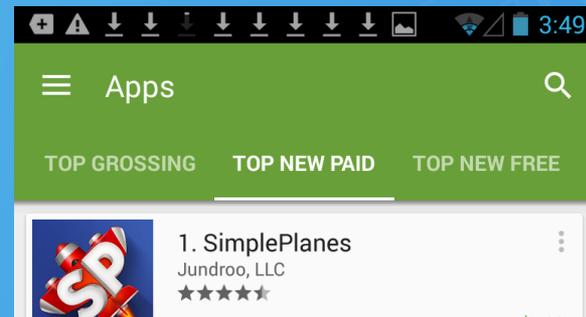




Early Research



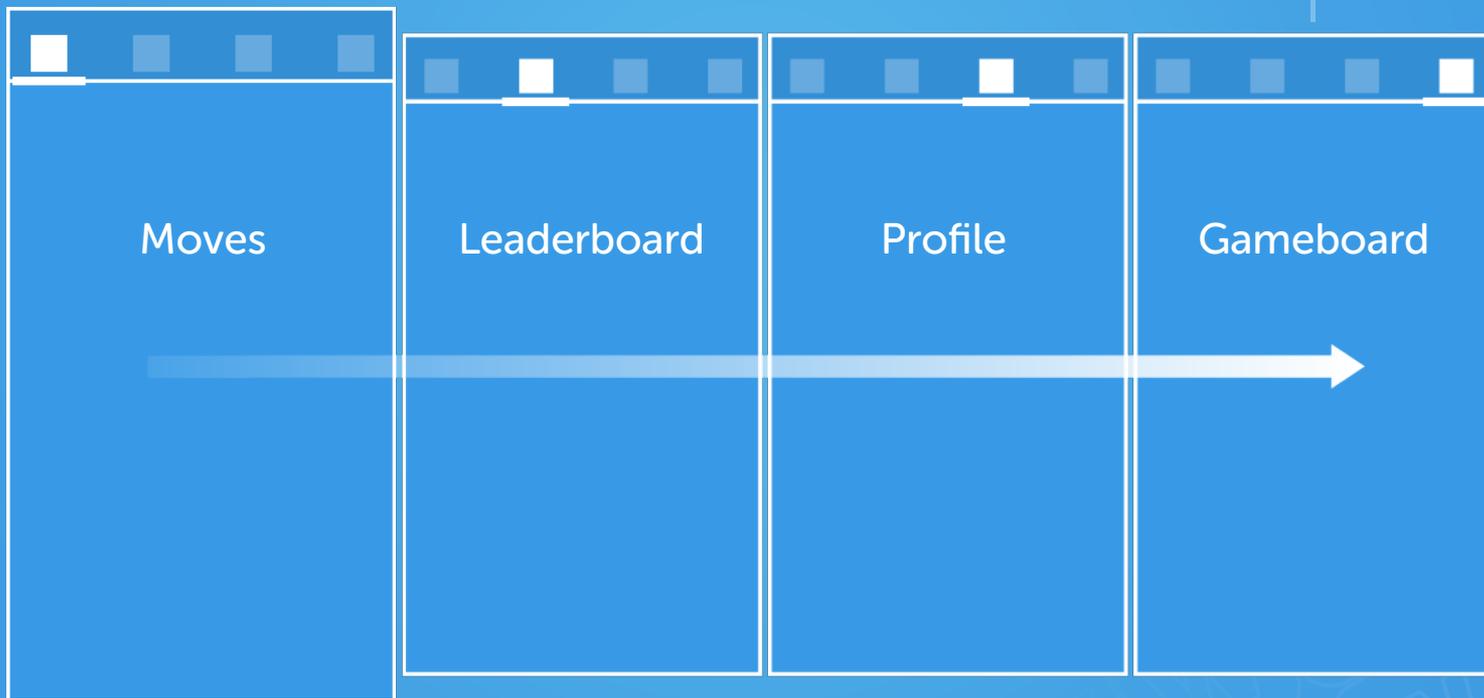
Tab Bars



Sliders



New UI Framework

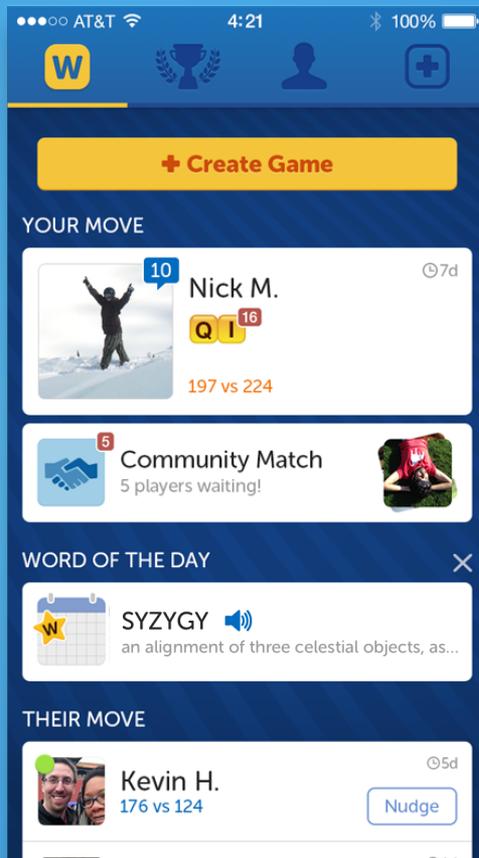




Visual Weight

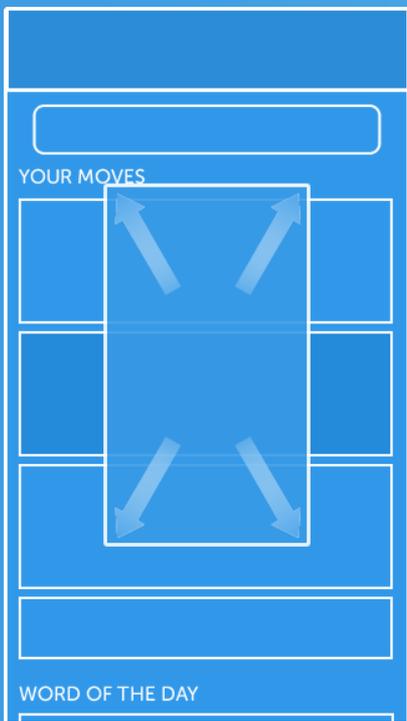
PROFILE IMAGE SIZE
90 POINTS

45 POINTS

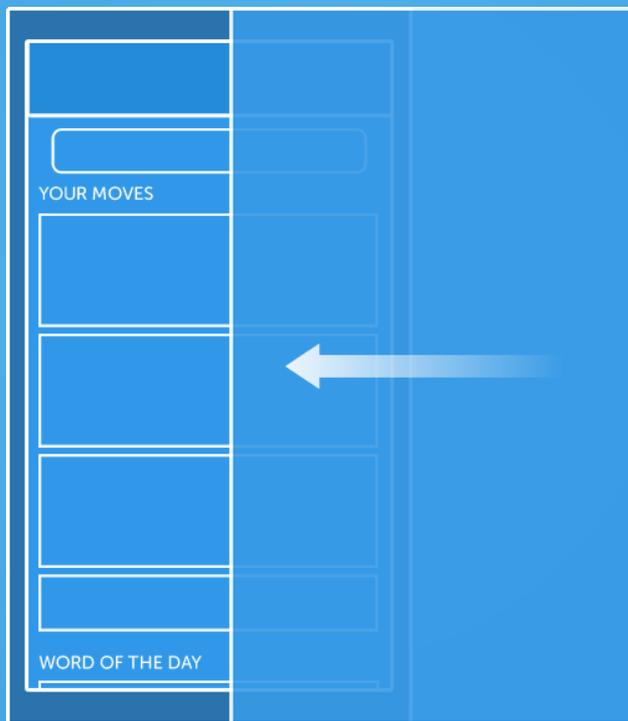




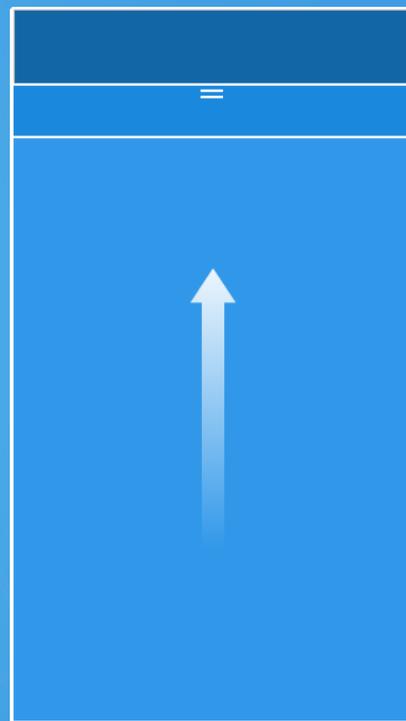
Interaction Scheme



Gameboard



Secondary Screens



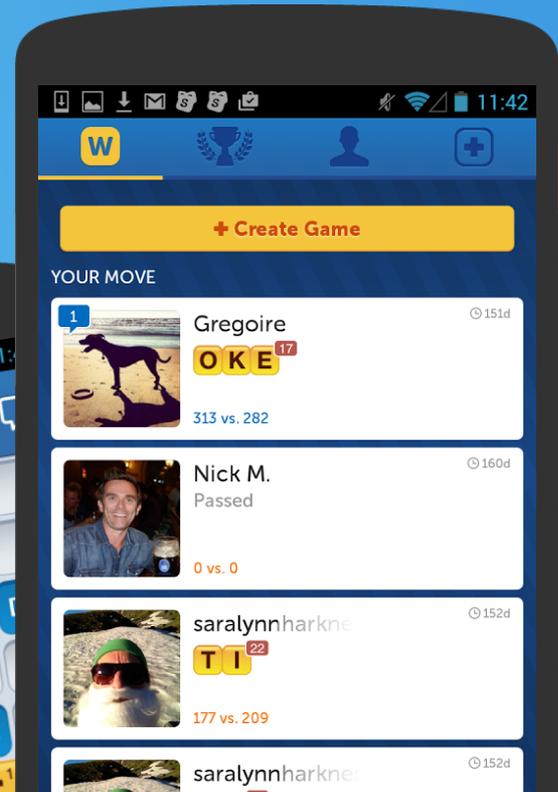
Specialty Content



Cross Platform Solution

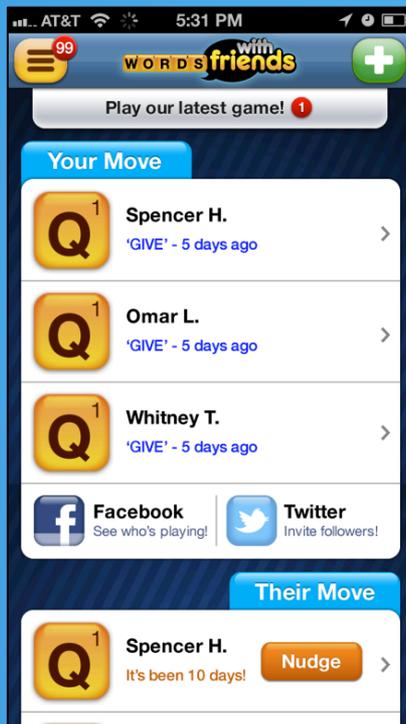
"This new version is absolutely amazing. It's like Zynga finally realized how to build a game on Android."

- Android Central

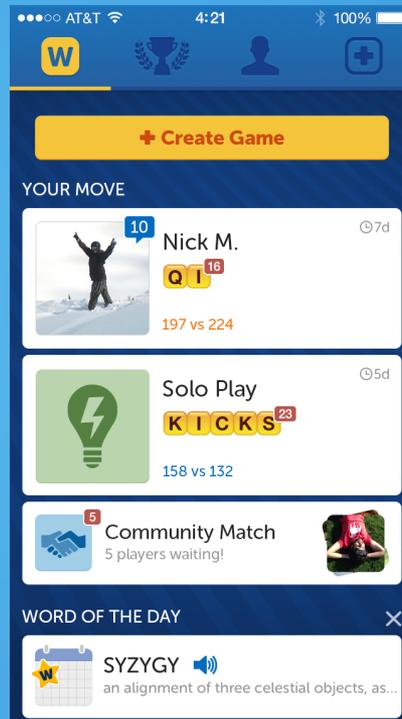




New UI Framework



Before



After



Original Gameboard

- All buttons exposed at once
- No primary call to action
- Confusing game menu
- Designed for short phones



Before



Simplified Game Actions

Original



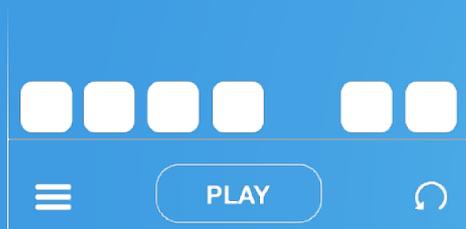
New



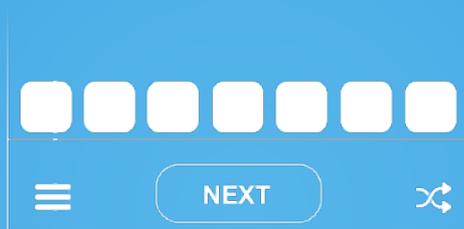


Simplified Game Actions

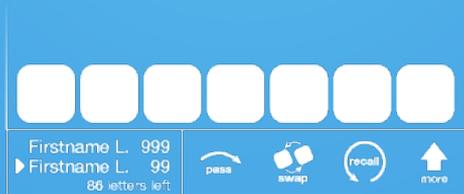
New



Surface Contextually



Original



Primary Call to Action

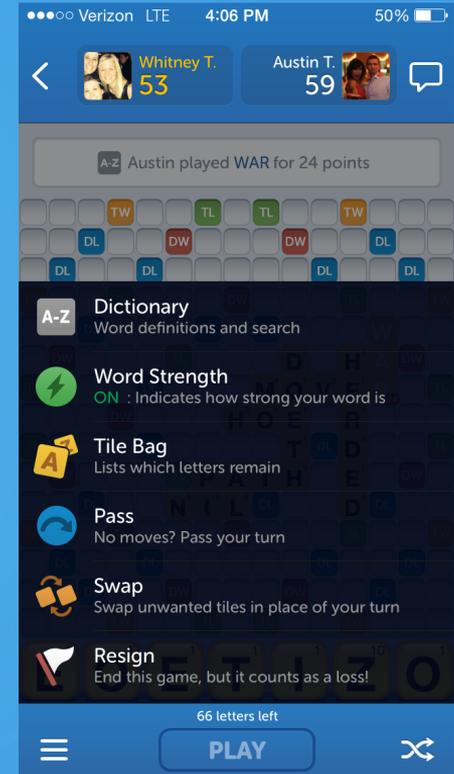


Improved Game Menu

- Clear ON/OFF states
- Room for expansion
- Consistent iconography
- Includes secondary actions



Before



After



Gameboard



Before



After



Features

- Feature parity
- Community Match
- Solo Play (Offline)
- Dictionary & Word of the Day
- Profiles + Competitive Stats
- Unlimited Word Strength & Tile Bag





Dictionary & WOTD

Verizon LTE 4:06 PM 50%

Whitney T. 53 Austin T. 59

Played Definition

WAR

war /wɔr/

ADJECTIVE

1. of, belonging to, used in, or due to war: war preparations; war hysteria.

NOUN

1. a conflict carried on by force of arms, as between nations or between parties within a nation; warfare, as by land, sea, or air.
2. a state or period of armed hostility or active military operations: The two nations

WORD RARITY

Very Common Very Rare

Verizon LTE 4:06 PM 50%

Whitney T. 53 Austin T. 59

Played Definition

WAR²⁴

HA

MOVER

NIL¹⁵

PI

AL

PATH⁹

Verizon LTE 4:05 PM 50%

W Word of the Day

BORAX

bo-rax /'bɔræks, -æks, 'bɔʊr-/

NOUN [PLURAL BO-RAX-ES, BO-RA-CES]

1. a white, water-soluble powder or crystals, hydrated sodium borate, Na₂B₄O₇·10H₂O, occurring naturally or obtained from naturally occurring borates; tincal: used as a flux, cleansing agent, in the manufacture of glass, porcelain, and enamel, and in tanning.

ORIGIN

borax late 14c. from Anglo-Fr. boras, from

WORD RARITY

Very Common Very Rare



Defining NEW

Player Love

More Social

Cross Platform

Results



More Social



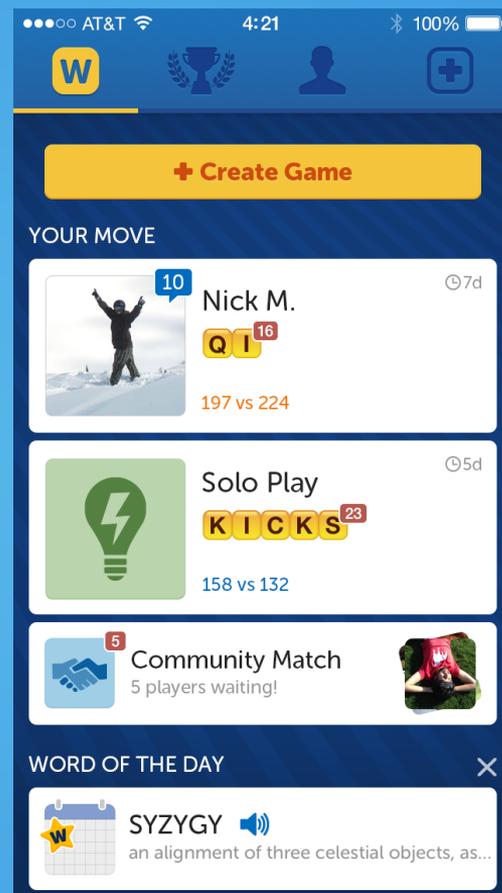
Savage @Bruning_15

You know it's real when she plays you back in **words with friends** before she texts you back



Visual Redesign

- Committed to quality
- Pixel perfect
- Respect the brand identity
- Balance social vs game UI
- Elegant typography
- Consistent iconography
- Rich animations

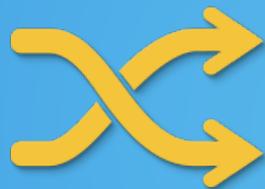




Approach



Modern



Simple



Beautiful



True to Brand



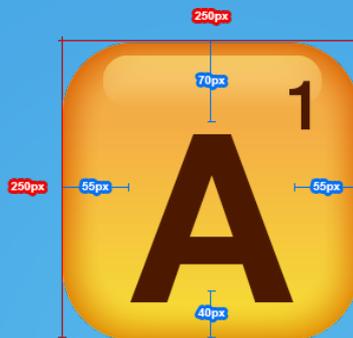
Logo

- Refreshed
- New tag
- Tilted tiles
- Removed gradients
- Speech bubble tail





Tiles



The most iconic piece of the Words brand is the tile.

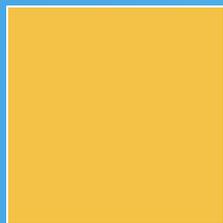




Color Palette

Primary

Background, Icons, Buttons and Call Outs.



Secondary

Typography, Backgrounds, Highlights.



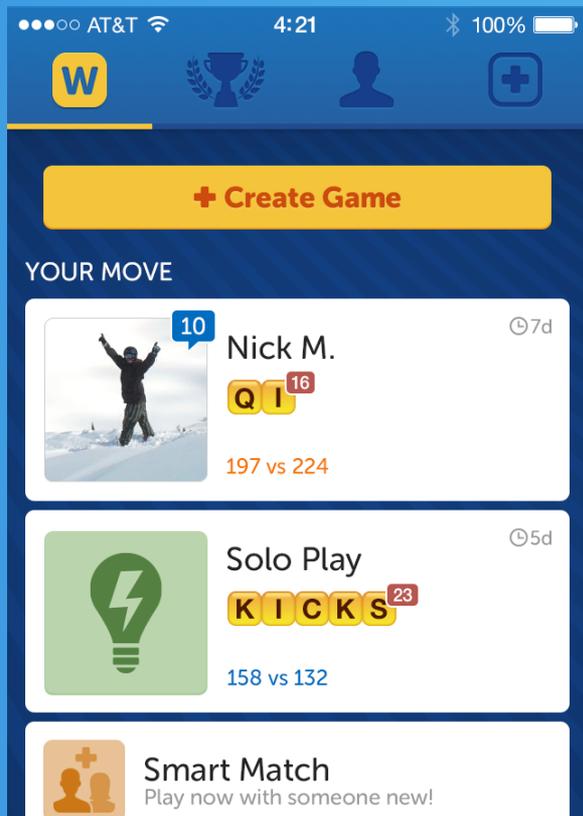
Accent

Icons, Win/Loss States/Game Play





Simple Typography



Body Names

Secondary

Headlines

Stats

Buttons



Consistent Iconography

- Same perceived size
- Flat, no perspective
- Rounded corners
- Simple and easy to identify
- Universally understood
- Negative space





Consistent Iconography

Main Nav



Create Game



Game Menu

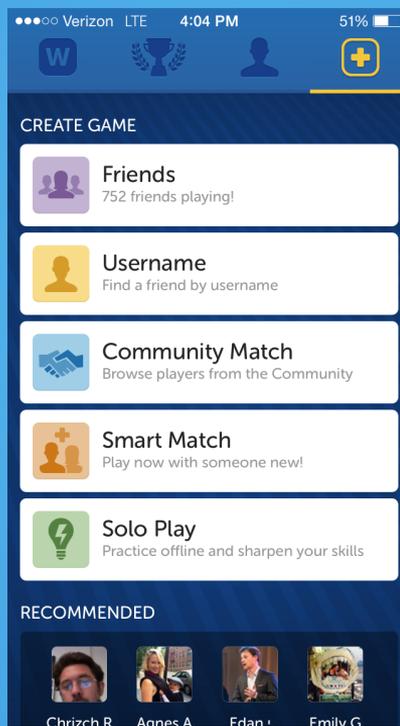
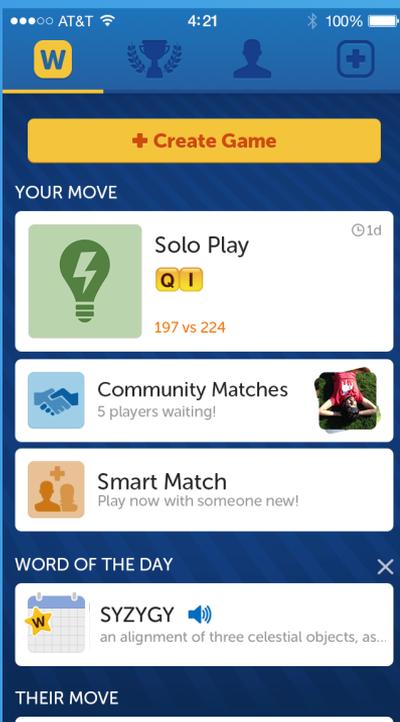


Gameboard





Iconography Usage



Navigation & Feature Icons

Game Icons



Learnings

- Constantly iterating on design
- New font and color on Tiles
- New font on Gameboard



Experiment



Original



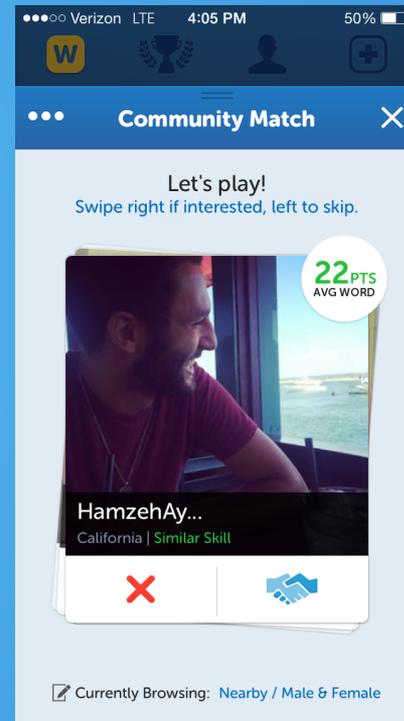
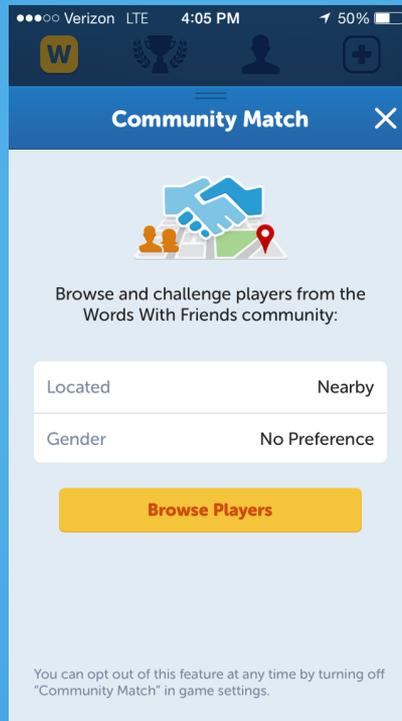
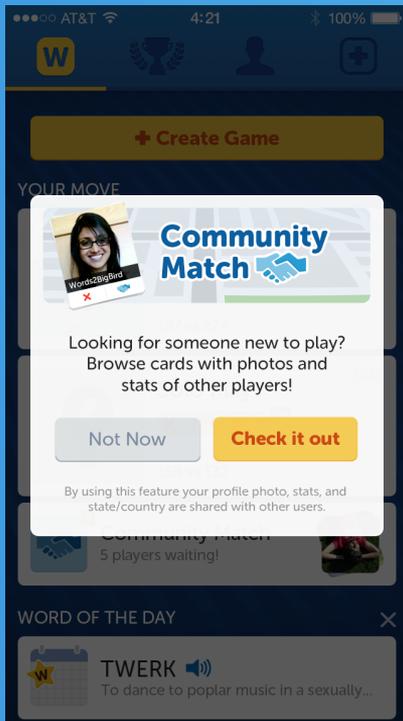
New Social Elements

- Presence (online indication)
- Community Match
- Profiles + Competitive Stats
- Improved Matchmaking Algorithm
- Rich Animations





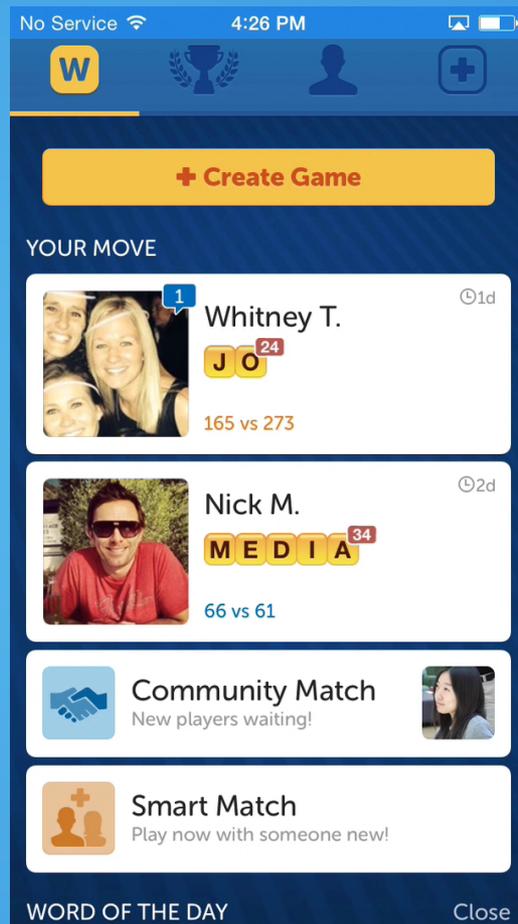
Community Match





Rich Animations

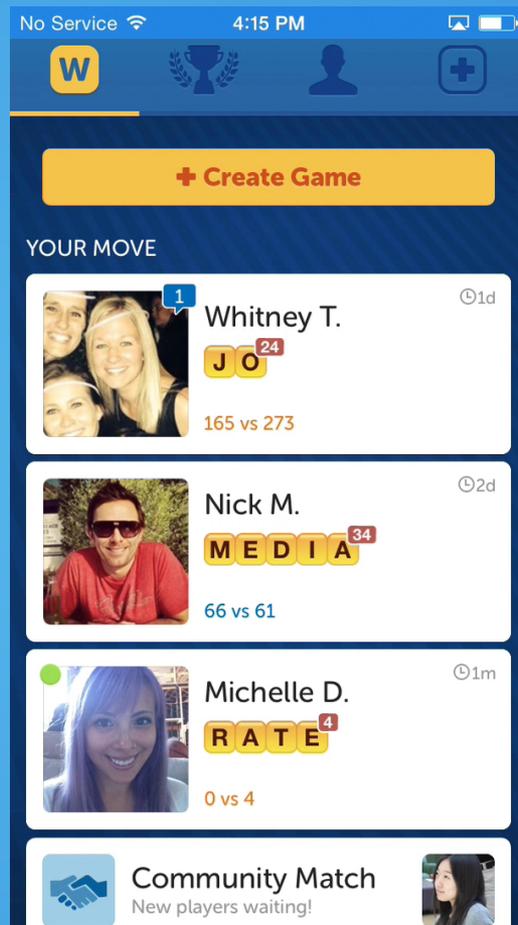
- Stats





Rich Animations

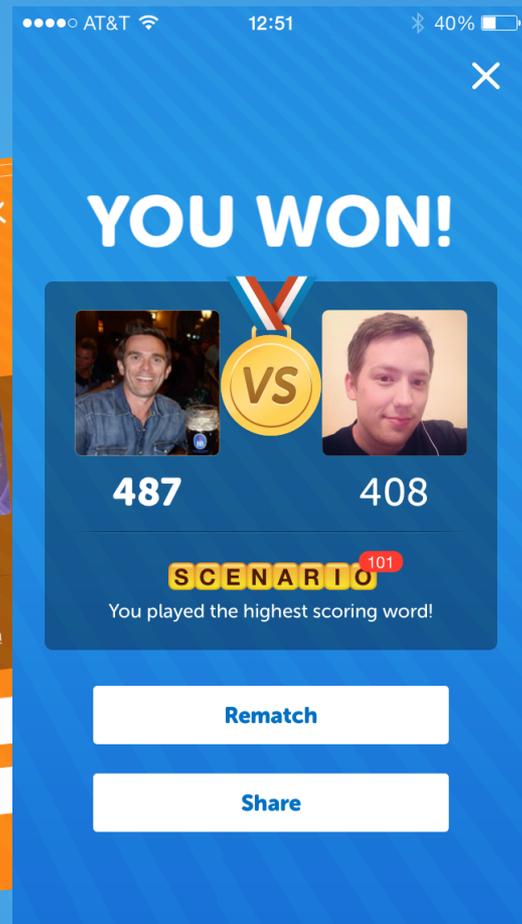
- Stats
- Matchup Screens





Rich Animations

- Stats
- Matchup Screens
- End of Game celebrations





Rich Animations

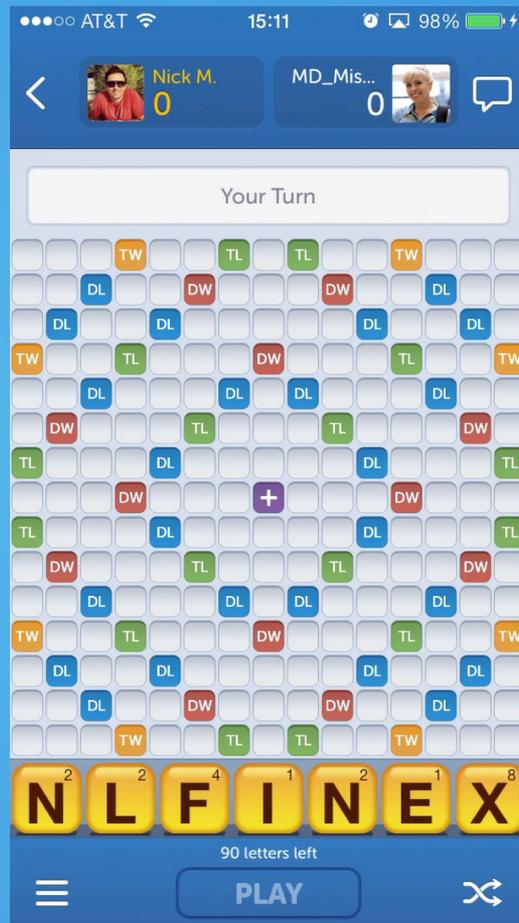
- Stats
- Matchup Screens
- End of Game celebrations
- Tiles





Rich Animations

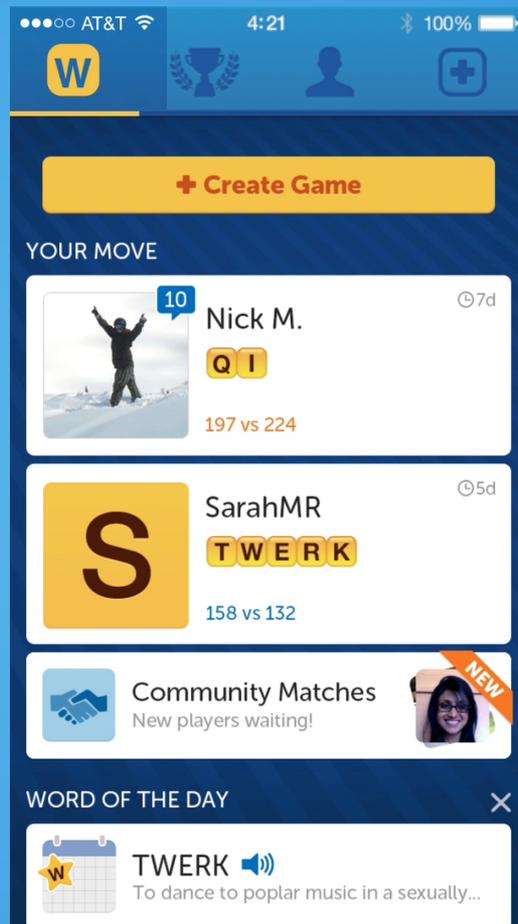
- Stats
- Matchup Screens
- End of Game celebrations
- Tiles
- Word Strength





Rich Animations

- Stats
- Matchup Screens
- End of Game celebrations
- Tiles
- Word Strength
- Pull to Refresh





Rich Animations

- Stats
- Matchup Screens
- End of Game celebrations
- Tiles
- Word Strength
- Pull to Refresh
- Loading



Loading...



Defining NEW

Player Love

More Social

Cross Platform

Results



Cross Platform



Laura Weis @Laura_Weis Jul 18

Need to step away from the **tablet**. @nyveloci just slammed me with a 114 point word in **Words with Friends**.



Short / Tall Phones



Before



After

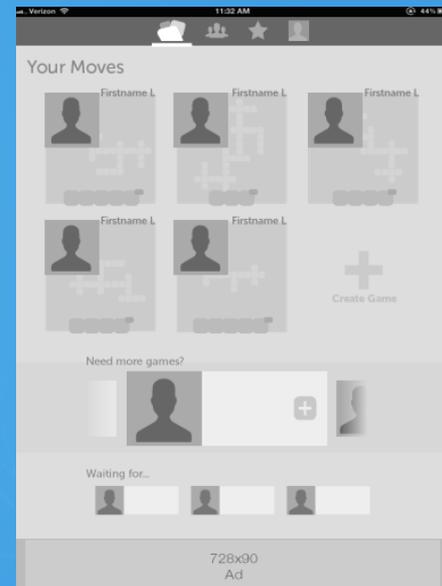
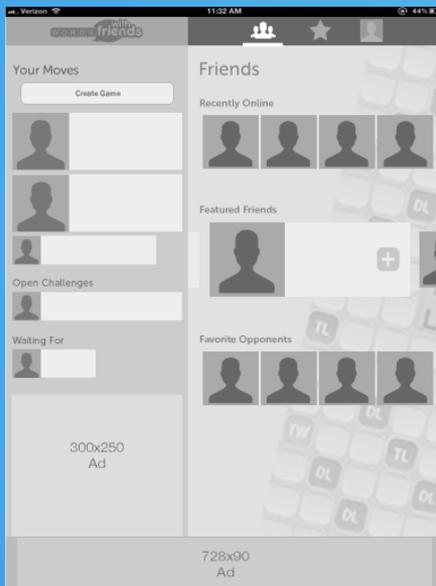
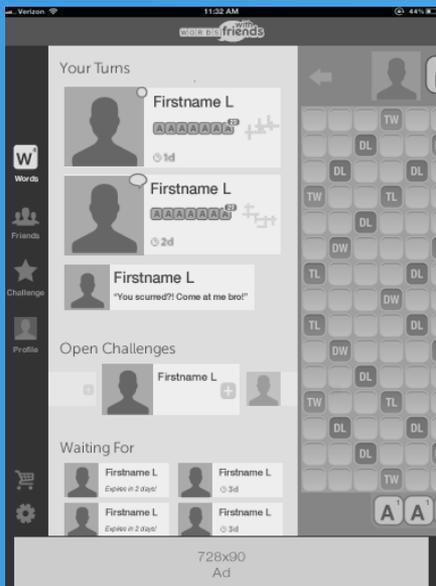


Tablet Specific Design





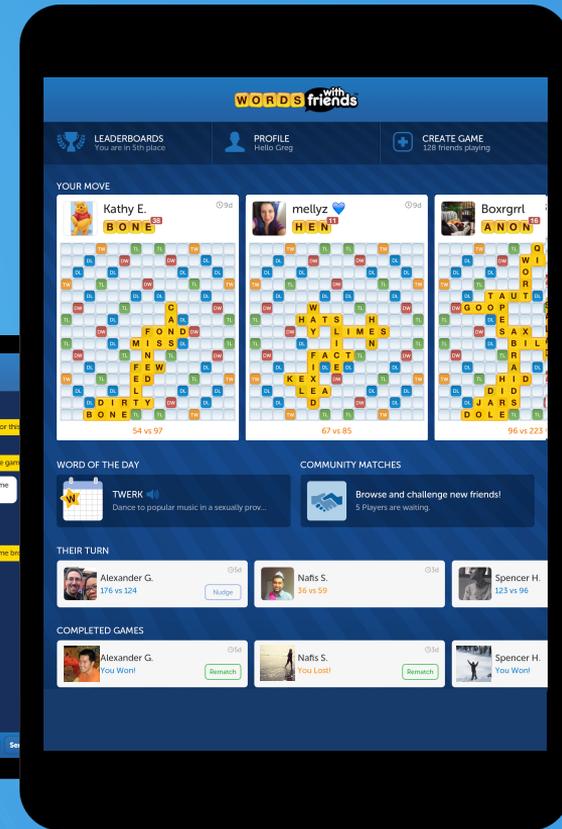
Early Explorations





Tablet Specific Design

- Consistent experience across all platforms
- One of a kind game board browsing
- Full use of real estate
- Portrait & landscape





Tablet Learnings

The screenshot shows a tablet game interface with a crossword puzzle and a dictionary entry for the word 'SPY'.

Game Interface:

- Top left: Whitney T. 72
- Top center: Michael played SPY for 32 points
- Top right: Michael B. 75
- Bottom left: 66 letters left
- Bottom center: APUHELE
- Bottom right: PLAY button

Dictionary Entry for SPY:

Definition | Played

SPY

spy /spat/

VERB (USED WITH OBJECT) [SPIED, SPY-ING.]

1. to catch sight of suddenly; esp. to discover or find out by observation or scrutiny (often followed by out).
2. to discover or find out by observation or scrutiny (often followed by out).
3. to observe (a person, place, enemy, etc.) secretly or furtively with hostile intent.
4. to inspect or examine or to search or

WORD RARITY

Very Common | SPY | Very Rare

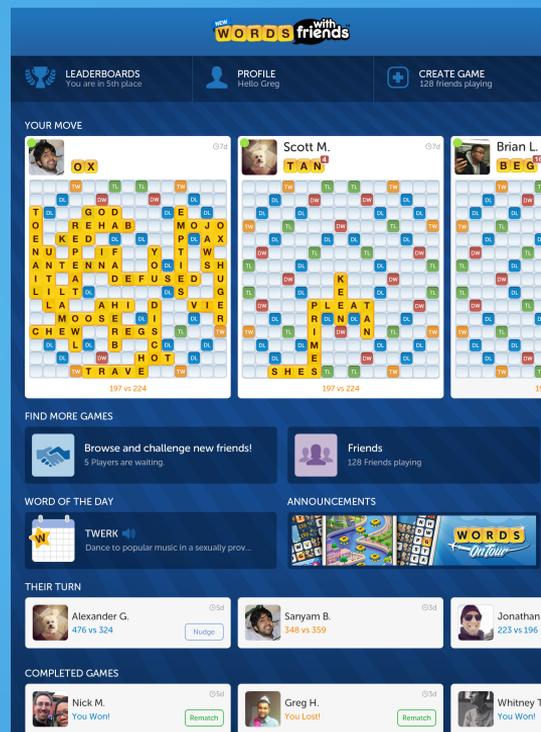
Dictionary.com



Tablet Lobby



Before



After



Tablet Gameboard



Before



After



Tablet Landscape



Before



After



Web Redesign





Web Redesign



Before



After



Defining NEW

Player Love

More Social

Cross Platform

Results



Results



Lisa Marie Iva @MissLM Oct 11

@WordsWFriends OMG. OMG. OMG. <3 y'all. & I'm #crazyinlove with the new app version!



Extended Soft-Launch Period



-  Crash Rates & Retention
-  Gain Vital Feedback
-  Add Key Features
-  Iterate on Design
-  Optimize Marketing Message



Geo Rollout

- Tracking, crashes, new look
- Stability, game health, retention
- Added Solo Play & Community Match
- iOS8 feature
- Migration
- Worldwide launch

Coming Soon!

NEW WORDS with friends™

Community Match

Let's play!
Swipe right to challenge, left to decline

33 PTS
AVG WORD

12 CURRENT WIN STREAK

47 TILES PLAYED

25% 2 LETTER WORDS PLAYED

73% 3 LETTER WORDS PLAYED

27 WORDS

MsWordsalot
California, USA | Tough Opponent

Currently Browsing: Nearby / Male & Female

Brand New Features!



Targeted Communications



Game-Centric imagery
Current Users

Download Now

New Words With Friends is here!

Rediscover why millions of people continue to play Words With Friends. Come back to find your best opponent with Community Match, use offline Solo Play to practice anytime and anywhere, and expand your vocabulary with an in-game Dictionary and Word of the Day.

Install now, and don't worry, your games, stats, friends, and profile will carry over to the new game.

May the best friend win!
New Words With Friends

f Follow us.

Don't want to receive email notifications? [Unsubscribe here](#) or [Adjust Your Message Settings](#)
© 2014, Zynga Inc. 699 8th Street San Francisco, CA 94103 [Privacy Policy](#)

Download Now

Join The Fun!

Join New Words With Friends, the fun, free social word game where your word skills are tested by friends, family, and millions of fellow players.

And now New Words With Friends is better than ever with Community Match, Solo Play, an in-game Dictionary, and detailed Stats that track your highest game score, average move score, longest word and more.

There's always a game to play with a friend or someone new!

May the best friend win!
New Words With Friends

f Follow us.

Don't want to receive email notifications? [Unsubscribe here](#) or [Adjust Your Message Settings](#)
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Scene-Centric imagery
Lapsed Users



Migration

- Fully backwards compatible
- No change to gameplay
- Opponents carry over
- Historical stats preserved
- Purchases grandfathered
- Soft gates, no hard gate
- Old SKUs still functional

NEW
WORDS with friends™

Brand New Features!
Plus All Your Games, Stats
& Friends Carry Over

Next Up!

Whitney T. VS Solo Play

Let's play!
Swipe right to challenge. Left to decline

33 pts awarded

MeWordsalot
California, USA | Tough Opponent

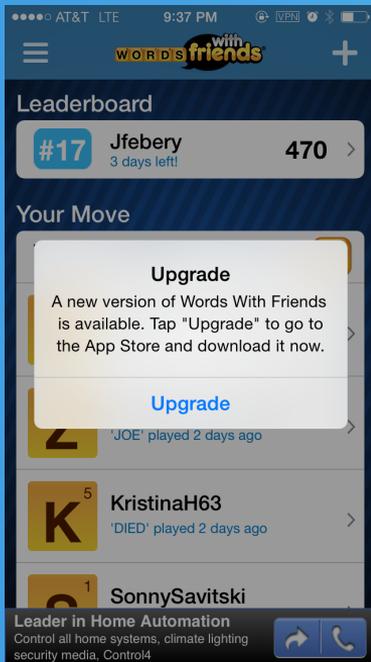
Update Now!



Migration Channels

*Total DAU interaction by channel

#1



Upgrade Dialog
Most Effective (3x)



Webview Cell
2nd most effective (2x)



Gameboard Banner
Least Impact



Launch

- Oct 2014
- Worldwide launch on all platforms
- Top 5 chart positions
- 4.0+ star ratings
- Grew audience 35%
- Crash rates < 2%

NEW
WORDS with friends™



Brand New Features!
Plus All Your Games, Stats
& Friends Carry Over

[Update Now!](#)



Key Stats and Specific Outcomes

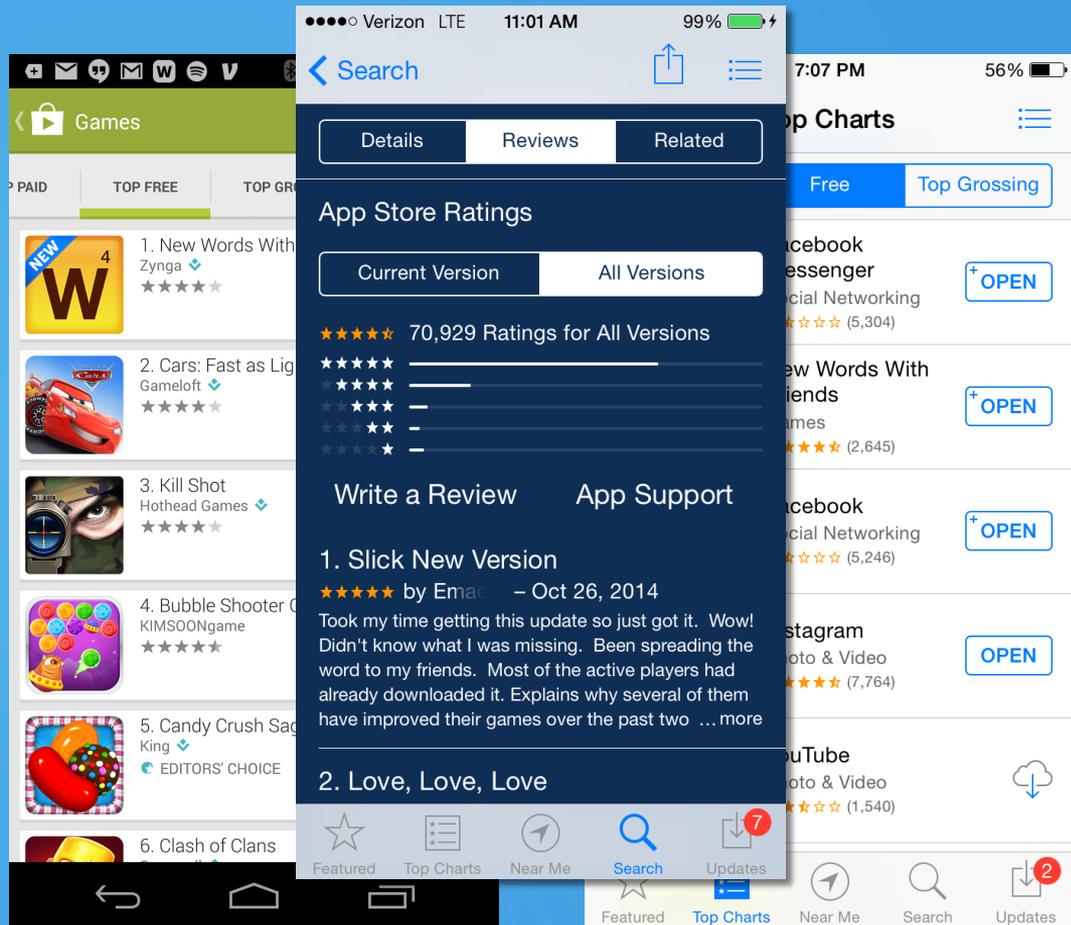
- Engagement – days played per week up 15%
- Retention – up for all user types
- Game creates
- Moves per day
- Reviews & Ratings – maintained 4.0+ rating
- Revenue





Chart Positions

- #1 on Google Play
 - 42 days
- #2 in the App Store
 - iPhone – 49 days
 - iPad – 43 days
- 4.0+ star ratings





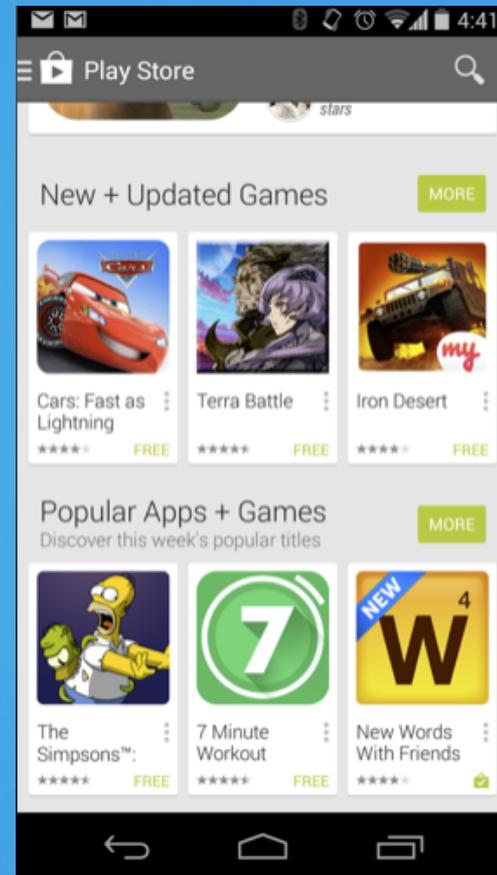
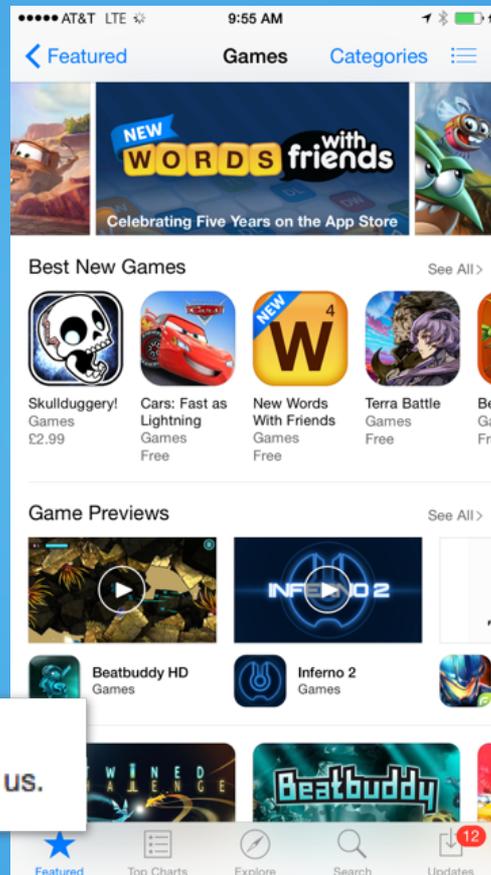
Featuring

iOS

- 3rd in Best New Games
- Titled banner

Android

- New + Updated Games



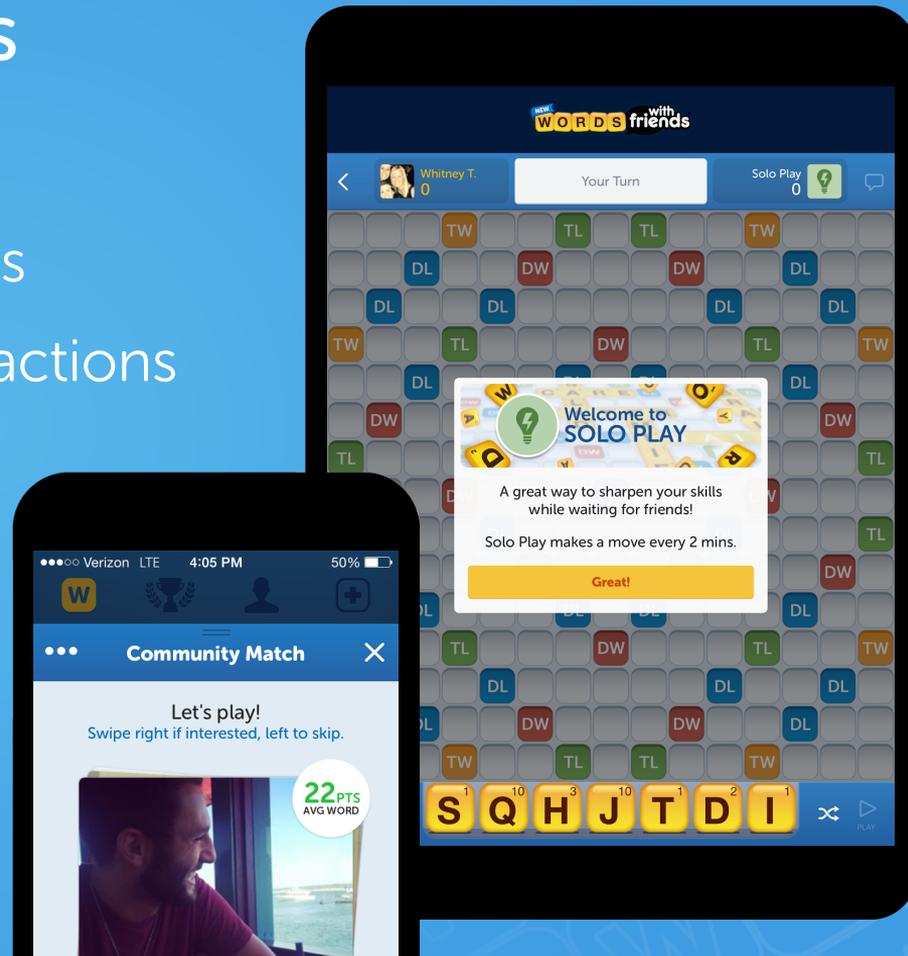
Google Play @GooglePlay · 2m

@WordsWFriends Spells A-W-E-S-O-M-E to us.



Platform Specific Results

- Solo Play did best on iPad
- Community did best on Phones
- Next Turn UX improved game actions





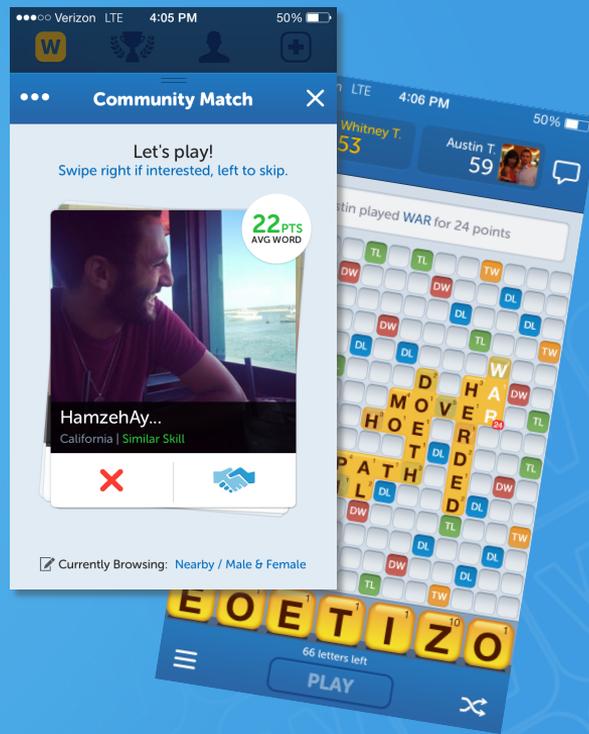
Feature Specific Results

Community Match

- 9.3% increase in game creates
- 7% in moves played
- 2.7% of DAU create a new Community Match each day

Next Turn UX

- 21% click 'NEXT'
- 7% click 'CREATE GAME'



**Measured impact over 10/8 - 11/24*



Feature Specific Results

Profiles & Stats

- 12% of our DAU view their own Profile
- 6% view opponents Profile

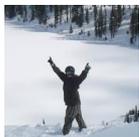
Word Strength

- 13% of DAU use Word Strength each day





Defining NEW Post Launch



Shane Dholan @SDholand

Why study for finals when I can play **words with friends** and get just as smart



Post Launch

- Hindsight – smarter
- Chat 2.0 – more social
- Community 2.0 – more social
- Colleges
- Social Sharing
- International Markets



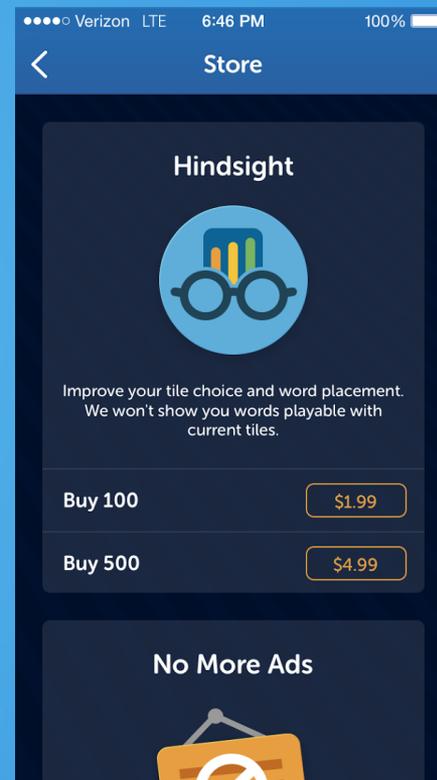


Hindsight



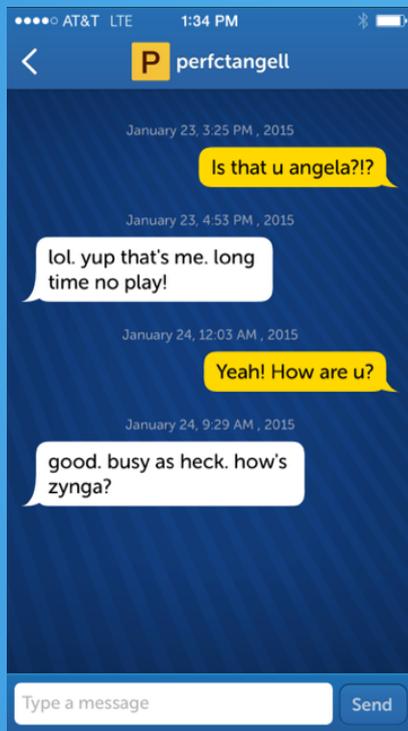


Hindsight

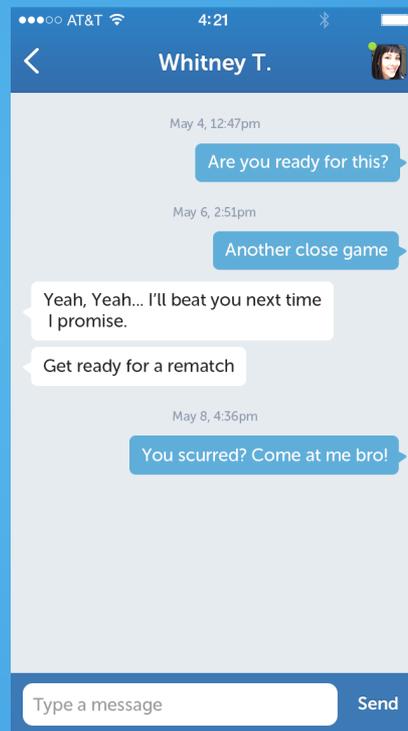




Chat 2.0



Before



After



Chat 2.0

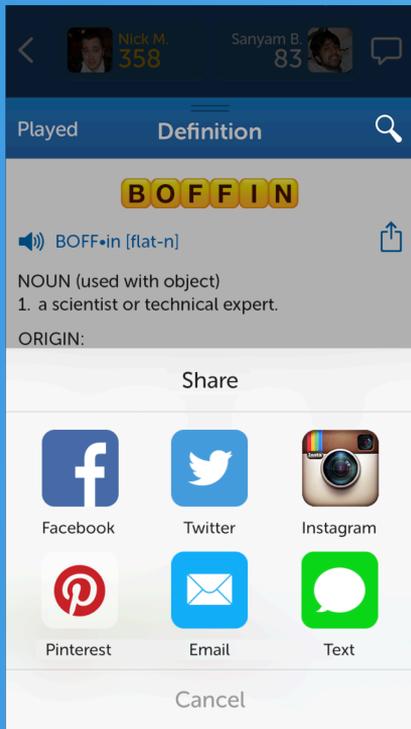
Nick M. 424 Jason played WE for 23 points Jason F. 370
 February 1, 4:59 PM, 2015
 Damn! Thought you might do that
 Nice play
 February 1, 5:28 PM, 2015
 Haha, felt cruel to do it but I couldn't help myself :)
 Haha, Thought you might have an S
 Good one

Before

Nick M. 424 Jason played WE for 23 points Jason F. 370
 May 4, 12:47pm
 Are you ready for this?
 May 6, 2:51pm
 Another close game
 Yeah, Yeah... I'll beat you next time. I promise.
 Get ready for a rematch
 May 8, 4:36pm
 You scored? Come at me bro!

After

Social Sharing





MAY THE BEST FRIEND WIN.





Defining NEW for the time-honored
experience of Words With Friends.

Q & A

More Questions?

Wrap-Up Room, West 2002

Whitney Taylor

@wtaylordesign