

PROBLEM

Technology gives us the power to spend money at the tap of a button.

Because of this, money has become so intangible that its causing serious debt problems.

SOLUTION

Create an app that's got your back.

One that can give you razor sharp foresight into your spending habits & help you make better decisions when you are in the trenches.

THE USER



Meet Daniel.

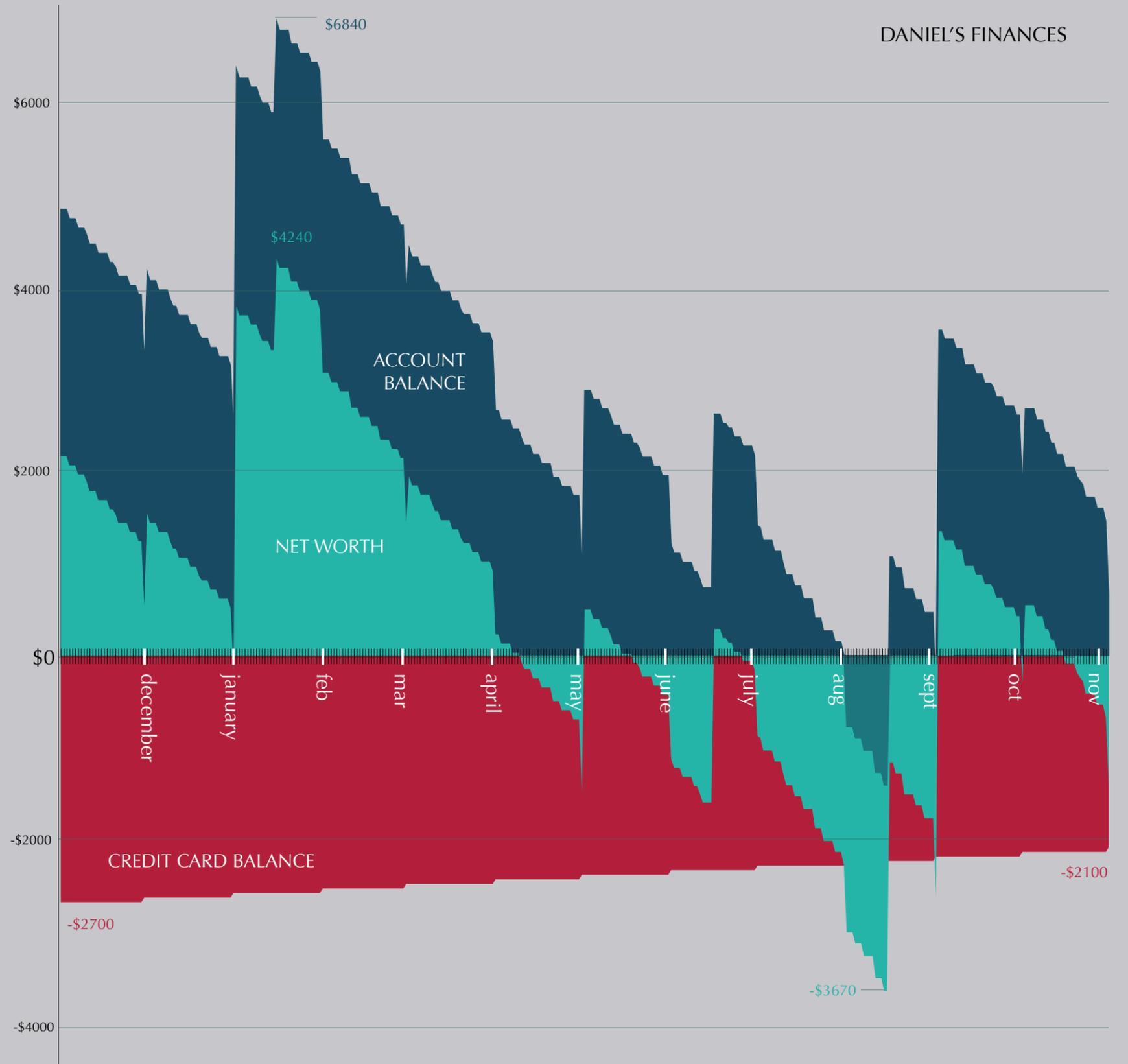
Daniel is 22, getting his BFA in Visual Communication at the School of the Art Institute in Chicago. He is financially independent, no longer receiving regular support from his family, so he works as a freelance graphic designer while in school. This helps to bridge the gap between his expenses and his student loans.

Daniel tries to keep his financial situation in check but is not one that the banks give much love to since he does not have a regular income. In fact, one could make the claim that banks prey on him, seeing him as not so financially savvy, and hoping he screws up so they can profit from late fees and overdraft charges. Not cool. Let's show Daniel the light.

D's Finances

Daniel gives himself a weekly budget to regulate spending but his freelance income varies so he has trouble making sure his financial aid lasts through dry spells.

By tracking Daniel's inputs and outputs over the past year, we are able to spot trouble areas for him and begin to build tools that give him time to make the best decisions.



THE STRATEGY

CHANGE how people view their funds and expenses beyond the current moment they live in by thinking by focusing on

- > Time [their past, present & future selves]
- > Control [flexibility vs. fixed spending]
- > Forward Thinking [planned vs. unplanned]
- > Reward Financial Planning

TIME

PAST SELF

Financial planners typically gain insight from looking at someone's past financial history so a portion of our app will be dedicated to cataloguing the past to spot trends in income and spending

PRESENT SELF

How you spend money every day adds up to where you and your funds will be tomorrow. Our app will help you recognize the kinds of inputs and outputs you have so you can make better spending choices in the moment.

FUTURE SELF

Being able to project how your financial situation will be and recognizing future needs to save for help influence your choices today for a better tomorrow. Our app will help visualize what that future looks like and personifies it so you can think of how your actions today help your future self.

FIXED VS. FLEXIBLE

Many people try to make budgets but have a tough time understanding where they have wiggle room. Our app will help them divide up the kind of transactions they have into fixed or flexible transactions.



FIXED EXPENSE

An expense that happens at regular intervals for a set amount, possibly from an external party, like rent. Visually we show this as a solid red triangle.



FLEXIBLE EXPENSE

An expense that has some flexibility, either on when it happens or for an amount that can change, such as a weekly food budget or weekend stipend. Visually we show this as an open red triangle.



FIXED INCOME

An example of fixed income would be a set amount at a fixed date, such as when Daniel receives his student loan check. He doesn't have control over how much or when he gets it. Visually we show this as a solid green triangle.



FLEXIBLE INCOME

Flexible income includes Daniel's freelance checks. He doesn't know exactly when he'll get them or for how much they will be, but knowing estimations of when they happen, based on past records, can help motivate Daniel to wait for them to make an unplanned purchase. Visually we show this as an open green triangle.

FIXED VS FLEXIBLE

The idea of Fixed vs Flexible carries over into how you categorize the kind of things you budget for as well. By being able to designate what items are things you can't live without, it is easier to see what things you can.



FIXED CATEGORY

A good example of this would be paying for housing or tuition. If he doesn't have the funds for these things, there are serious or financial consequences, like getting evicted or being charged a penalty. Visually locking these categories helps Daniel prioritize where his funds should go.



FLEXIBLE CATEGORY

A flexible category is one that has wiggle room or does not have consequences if not met, such as if Daniel doesn't have funds to get his hair cut one month, he won't be charged by his barber. Visually these categories appear open.

PLANNED VS. UNPLANNED

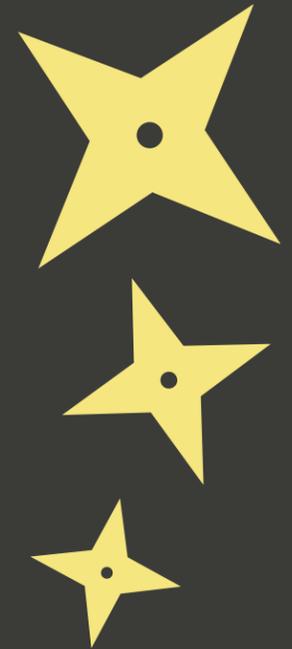
The app will help users recognize if the purchases they make are planned or unplanned when categorizing transactions. This will help identify kinds of spending trends and if categories should be adjusted to accommodate them.

The app will also facilitate planning for future expense by calculating savings plans when savings targets are created.

Financial Planning Interactions = Rewards

As a way to incentivize our users to engage in their financial planning, our app will give away a \$1 lotto ticket for every 100 points accumulated or give away discounts. Activities that earn points are:

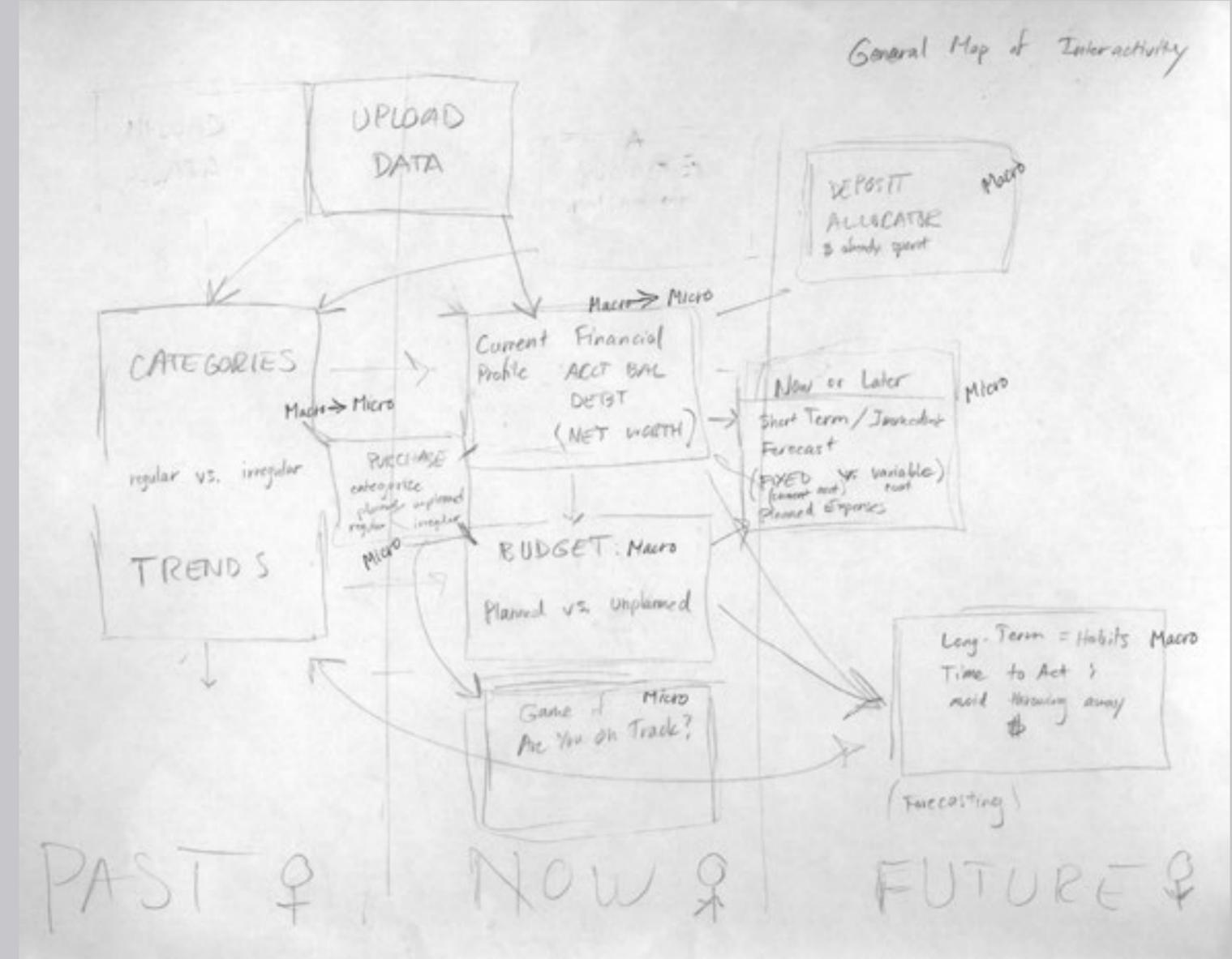
- > Consulting the app before making a purchase [\[buy now or later\]](#)
- > Categorizing spending after purchases
- > Engaging with future planning scenarios



THE PLANNING

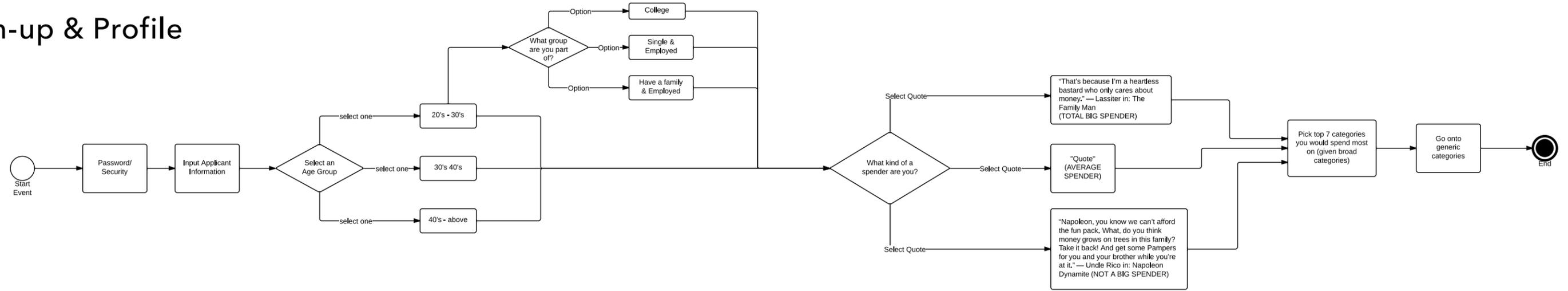
CONTENT LISTS & FLOW CHART

Typical College Student			
Other: 15%			
Tuition: 19%			
Room & Board: 26%			
Discretionary: 40%	Coffee: \$100/month		
	Beer: \$50/month		
	Groceries: 44% of food		
	Dining out: 26% of food		
	Convenience: 18% of food		
	Alcohol: 12% of food		
	Entertainment: \$25/week (football, festivals, bars)		
	Textbooks:		
Daniel's Spendings			
My Pad	Rent: \$700/month		
	Elect: \$30/ every 10th each month		
	Gas: \$20/every 20th in month		
	decor (nice to have)		
	cleaning (more essential)		
My Grub: \$90/week	Late night munchies	for unplanned expenses that accumulate over time >	convenience store impulse buys (unplanned)?
	Deliveries		
	Groceries		
	convenience		
My Tech (\$50/every 10th)	cell (\$50/every 10th)	Data Plan	
		Text	
	gadgets		
	Internet: \$30/every 20th in month		
My Route (\$10/week)	Bus		
	Train		
My Fun (\$100/week)	My Booze		
	Concerts		
	movies		
My Style	clothes		
	haircuts		
My Smarts	school supplies		
	books		

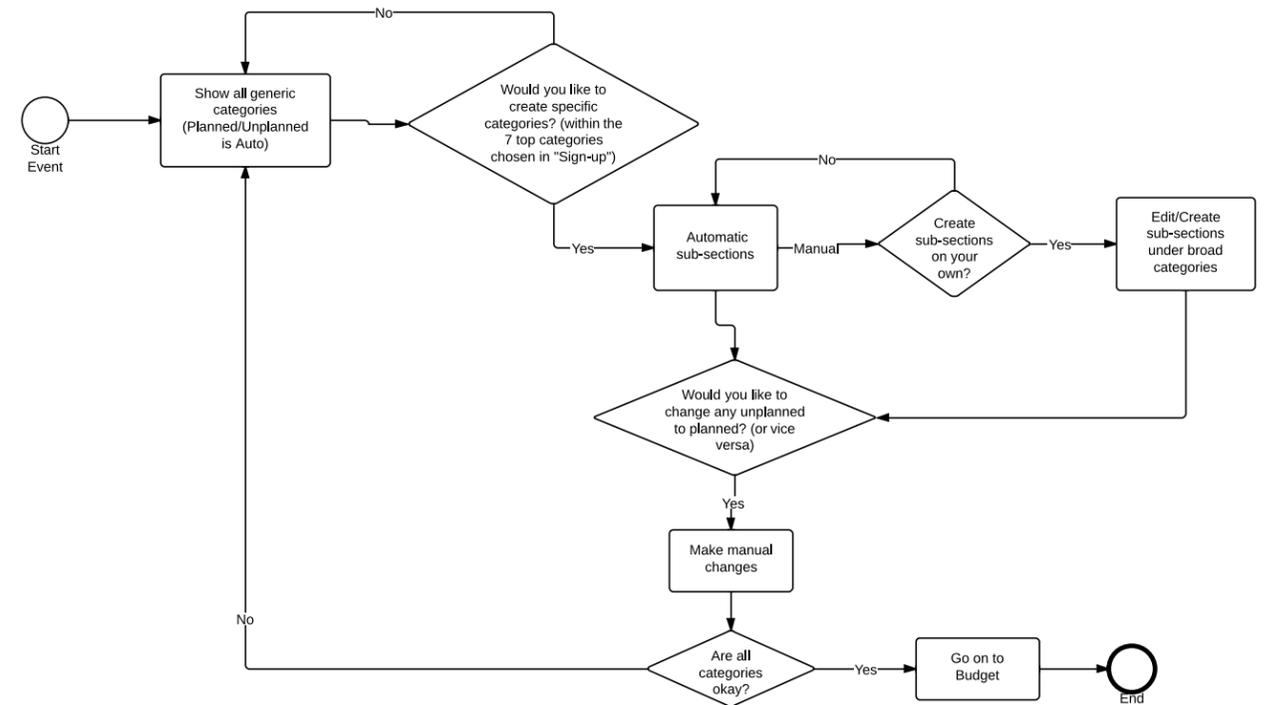


ACTIVITY DIAGRAMS: STARTING THE APP

Sign-up & Profile

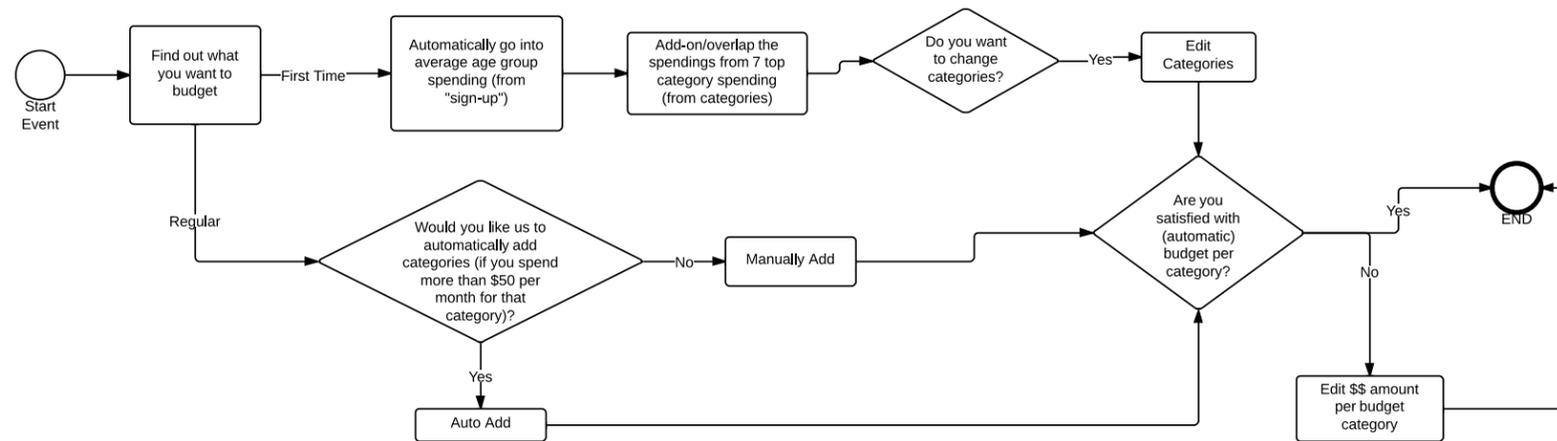


Making Initial Categories

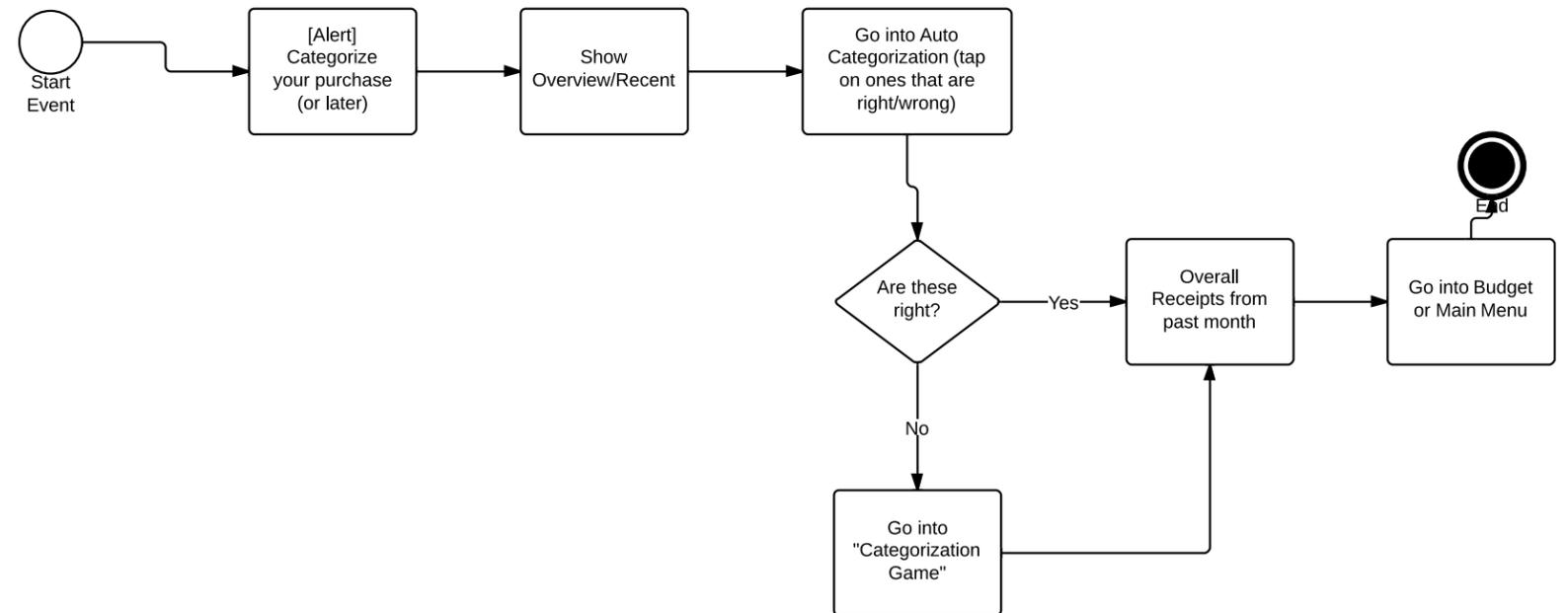


ACTIVITY DIAGRAMS: CATALOGING THE PAST

Make a Budget

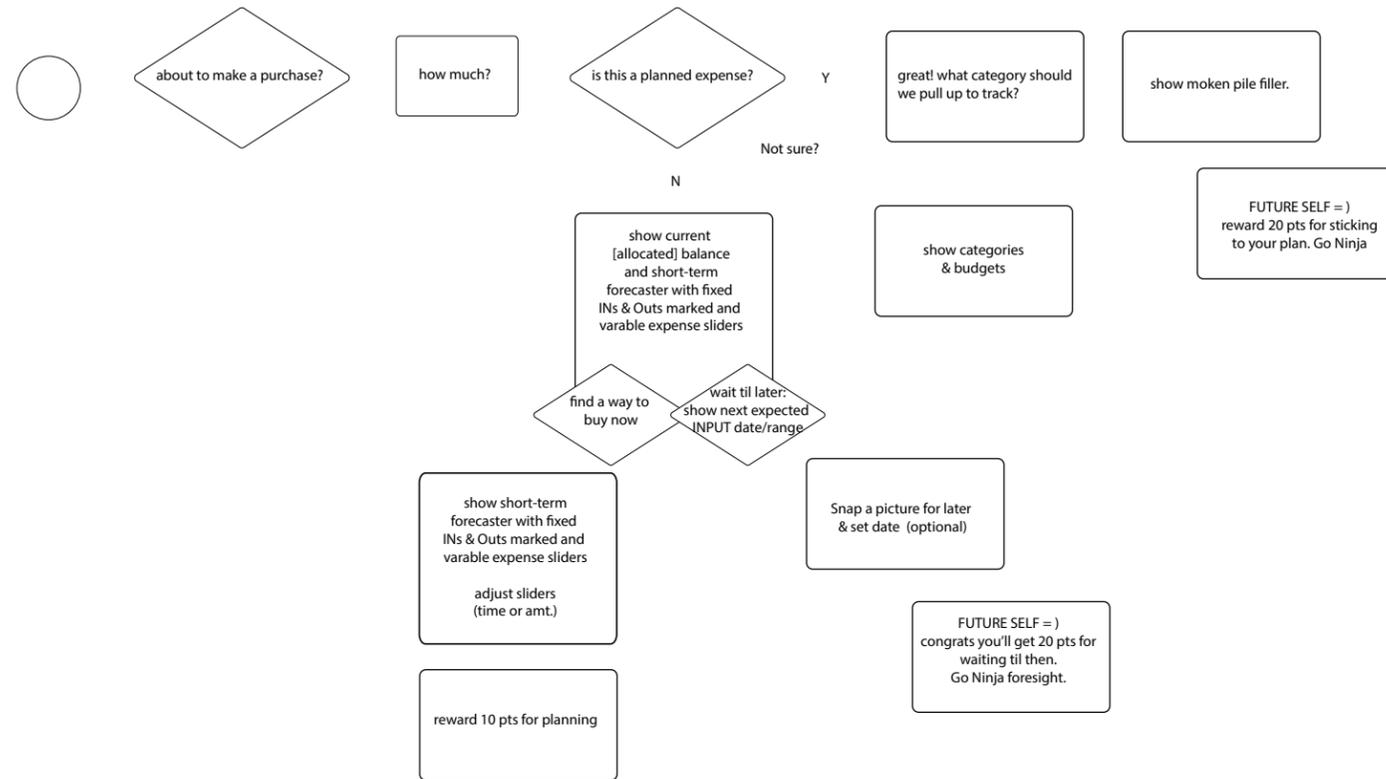


Categorize Spending

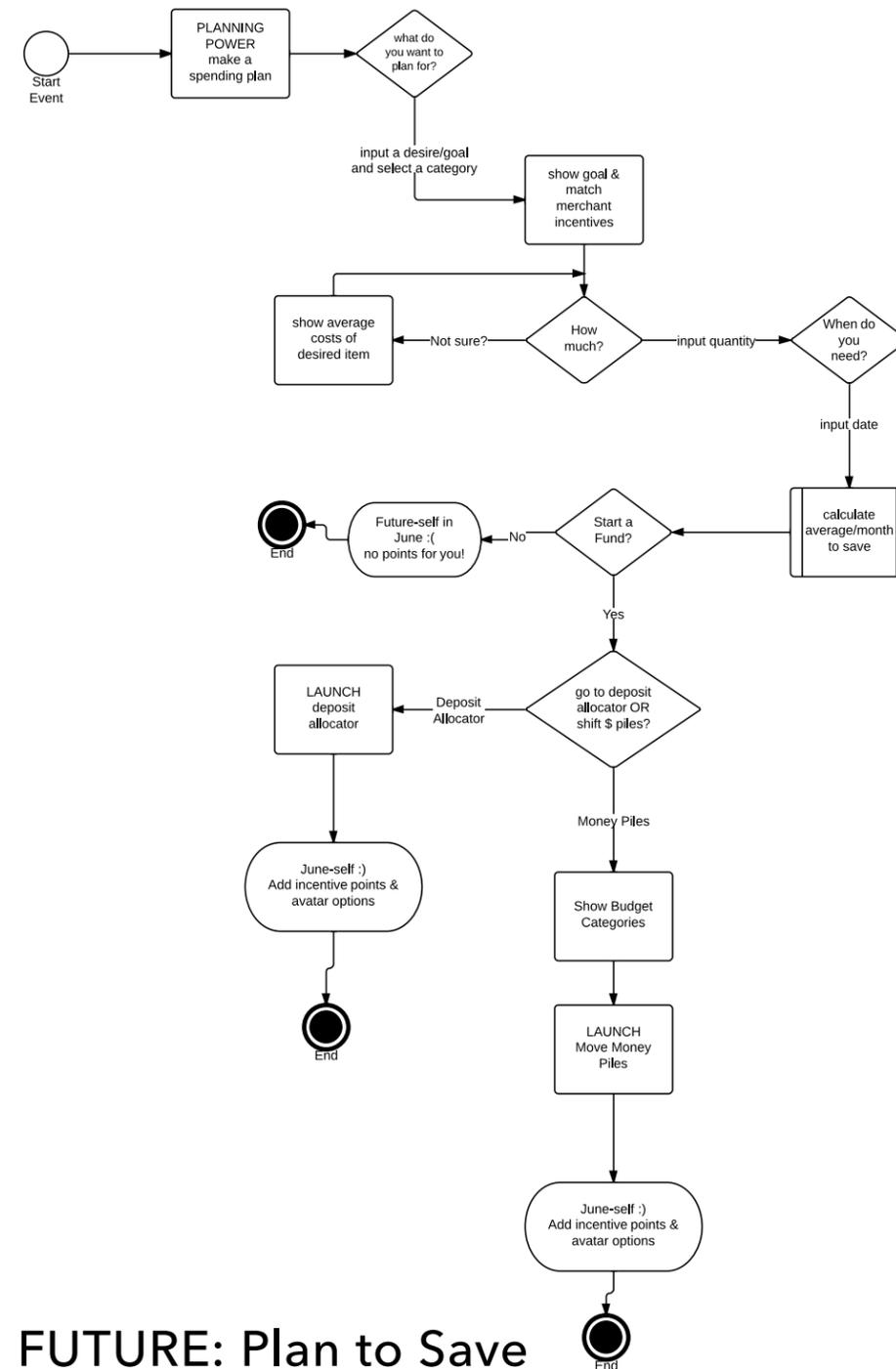


ACTIVITY DIAGRAMS: FORECASTING THE FUTURE

BUY NOW OR LATER: Immediate Purchase



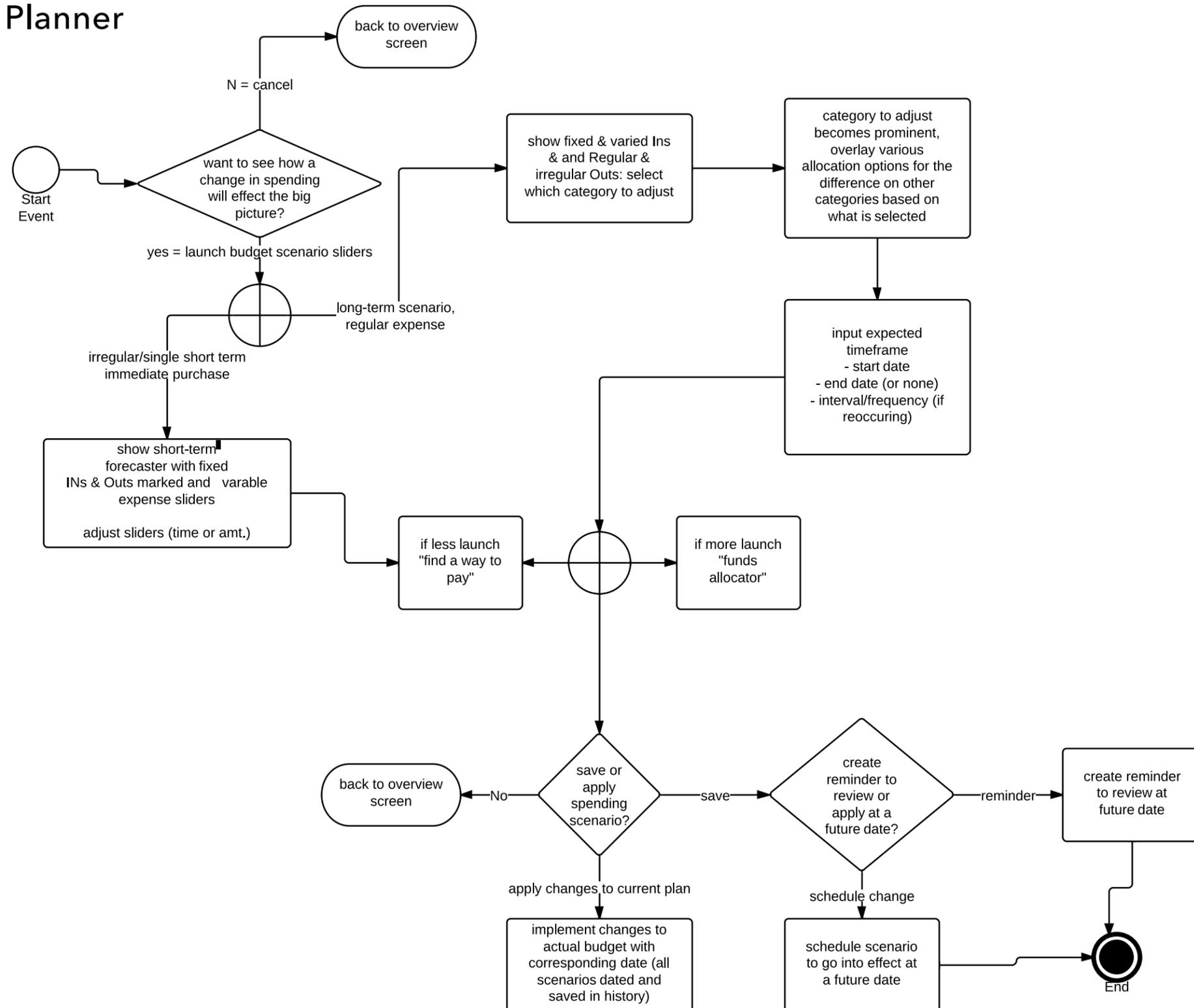
Making a Plan to save: predicting an irregular spending scenario \$500 plane tix in June



FUTURE: Plan to Save

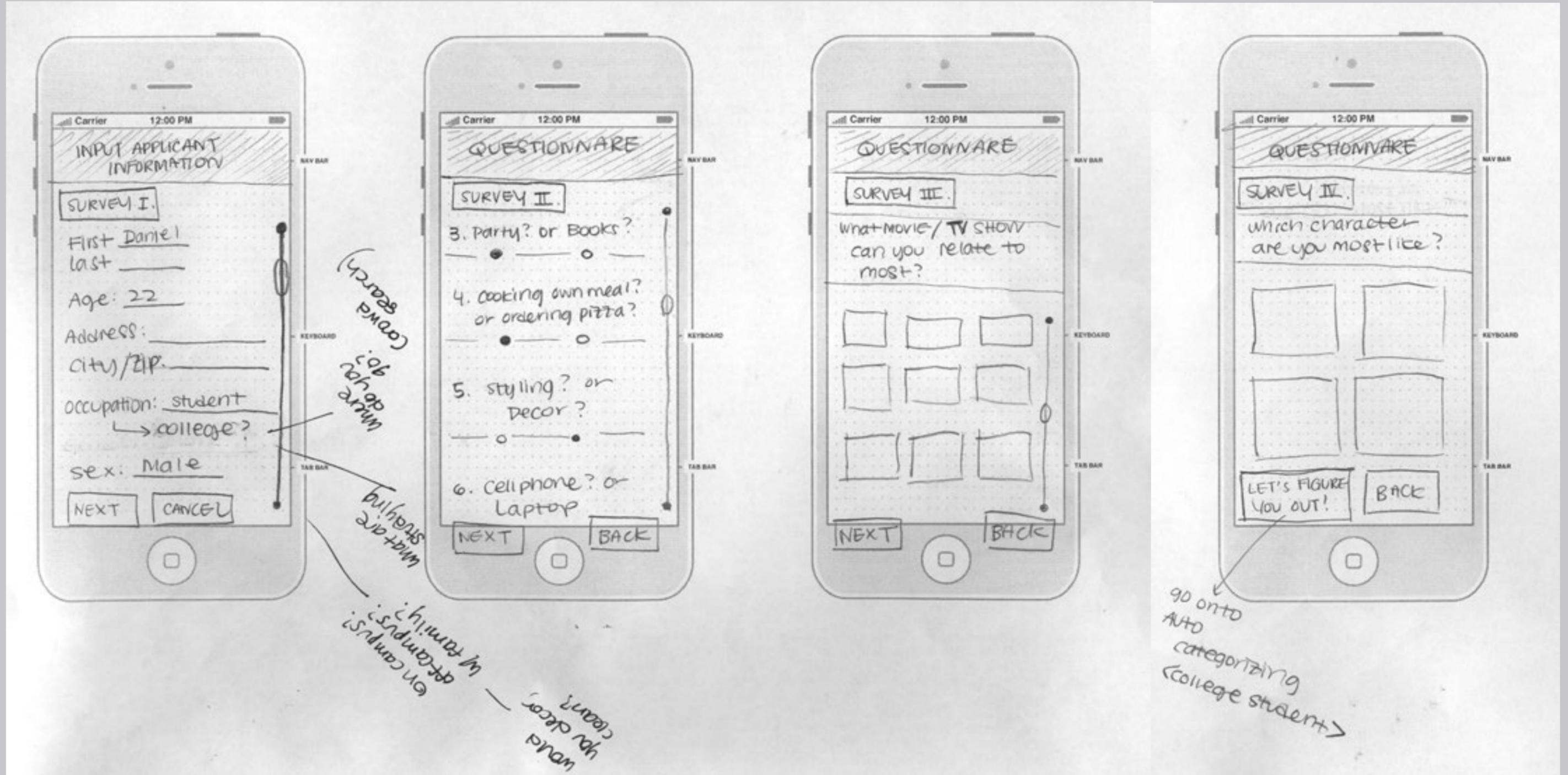
ACTIVITY DIAGRAMS: FORECASTING THE FUTURE

FUTURE: Spending Scenario Planner



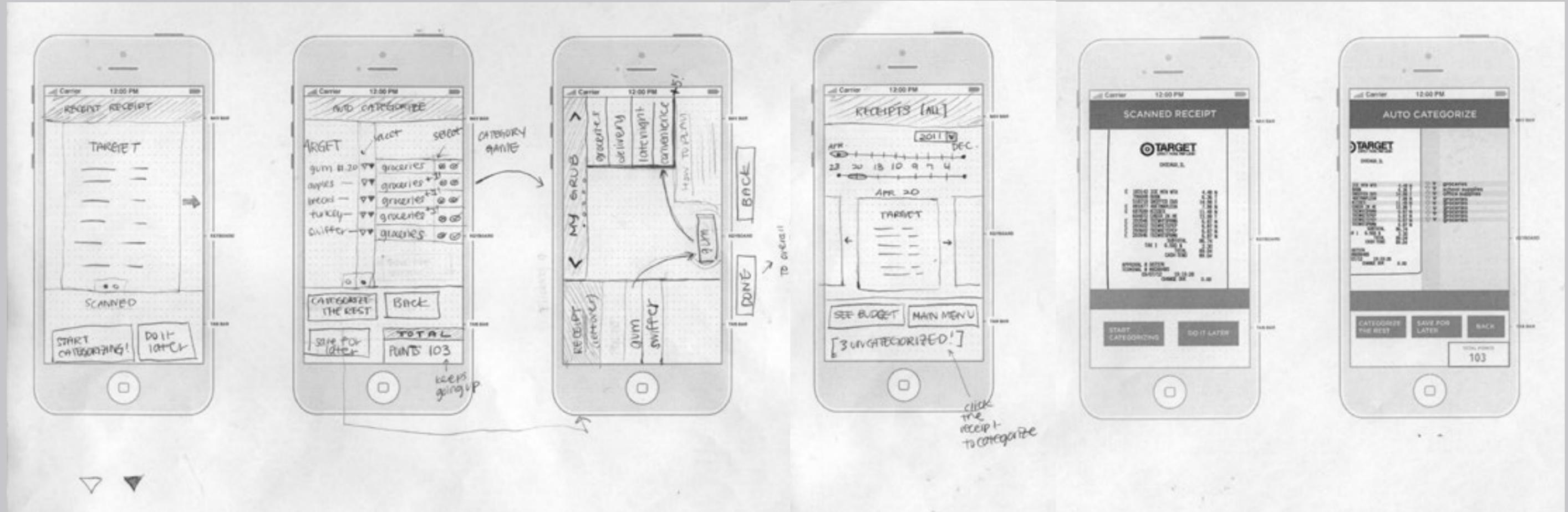
WIREFRAMES: CATALOGING THE PAST

Sign-up/Setup Profile



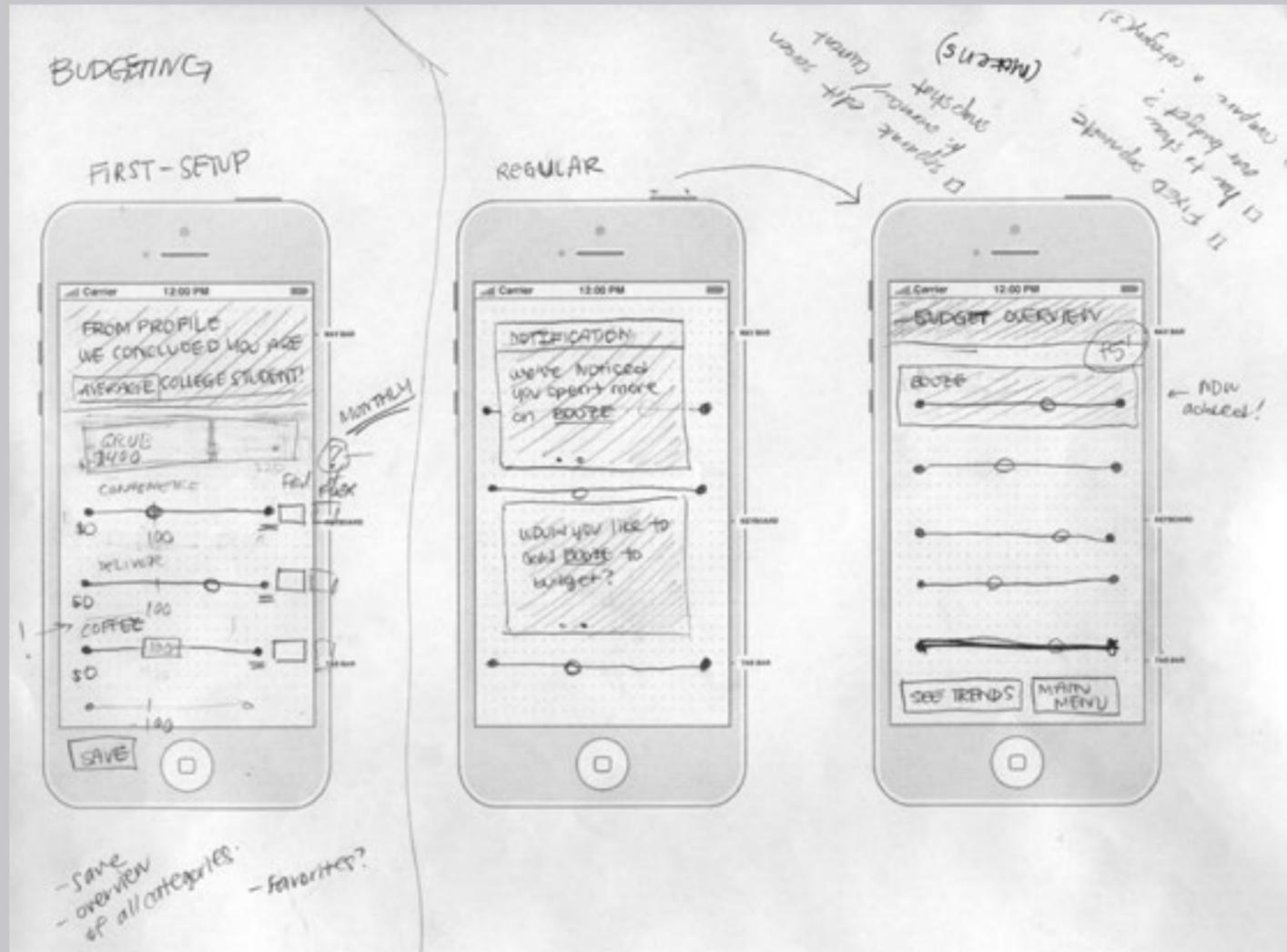
WIREFRAMES: CATALOGING THE PAST

Categorizing a Receipt

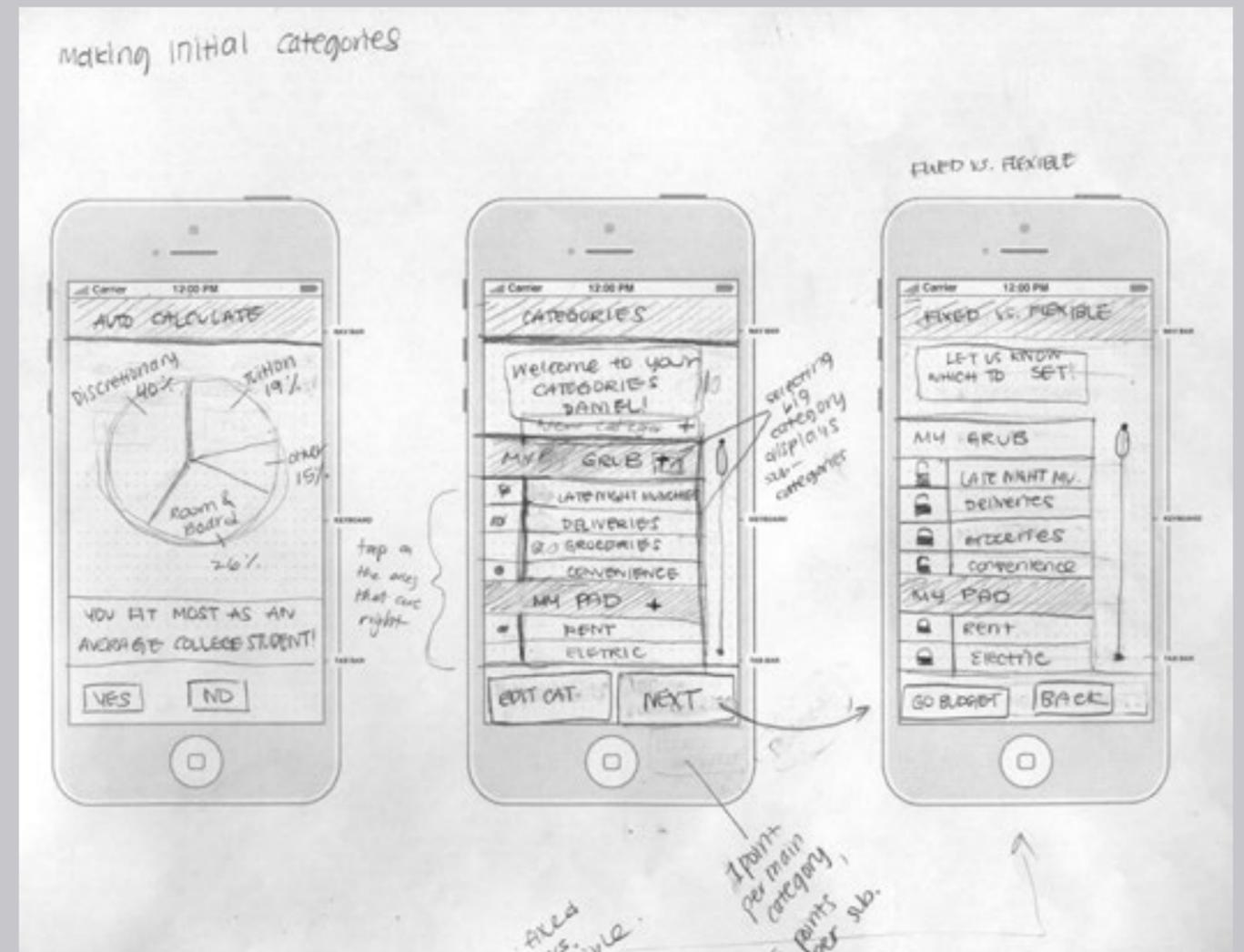


WIREFRAMES: CATALOGING THE PAST

Budgeting

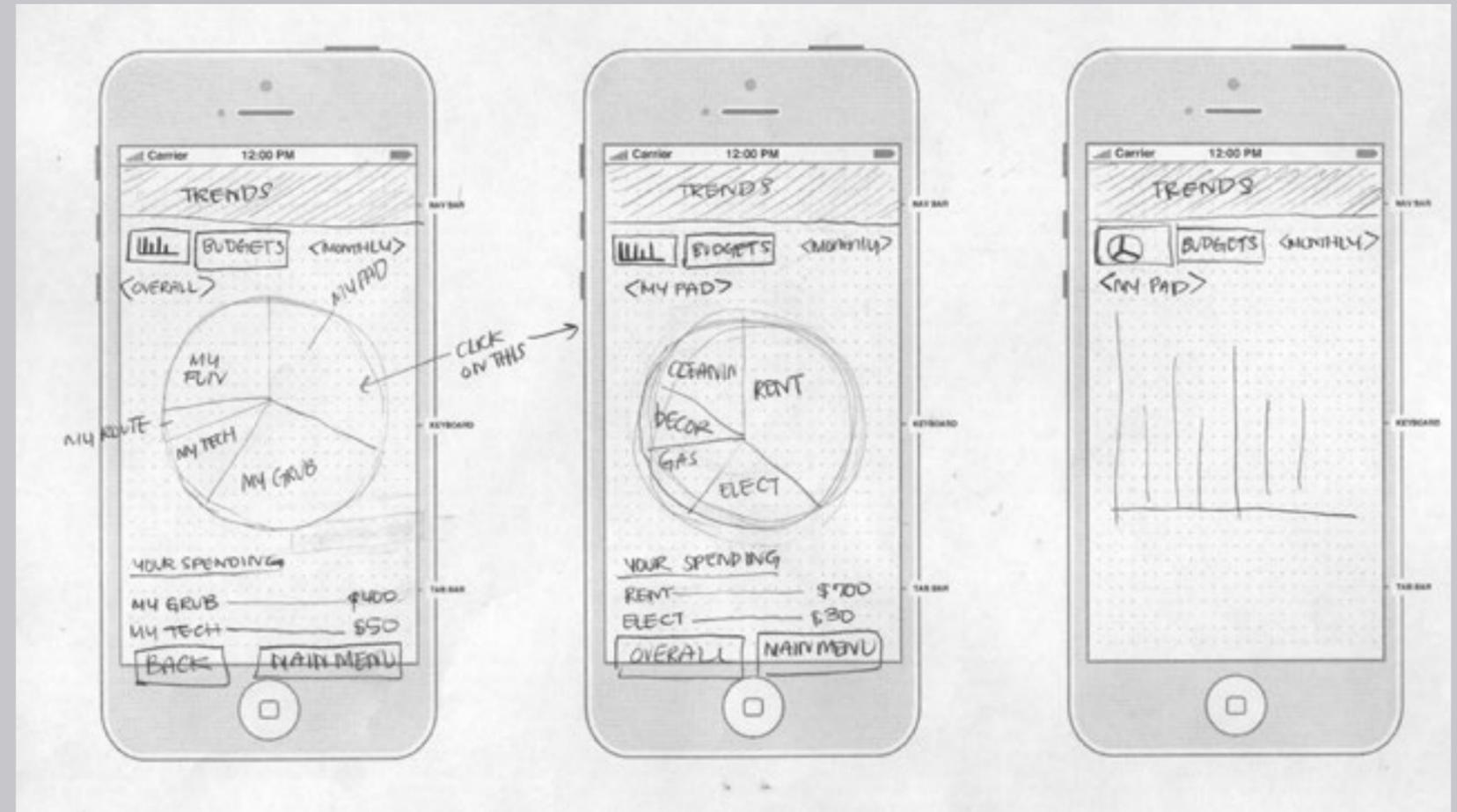
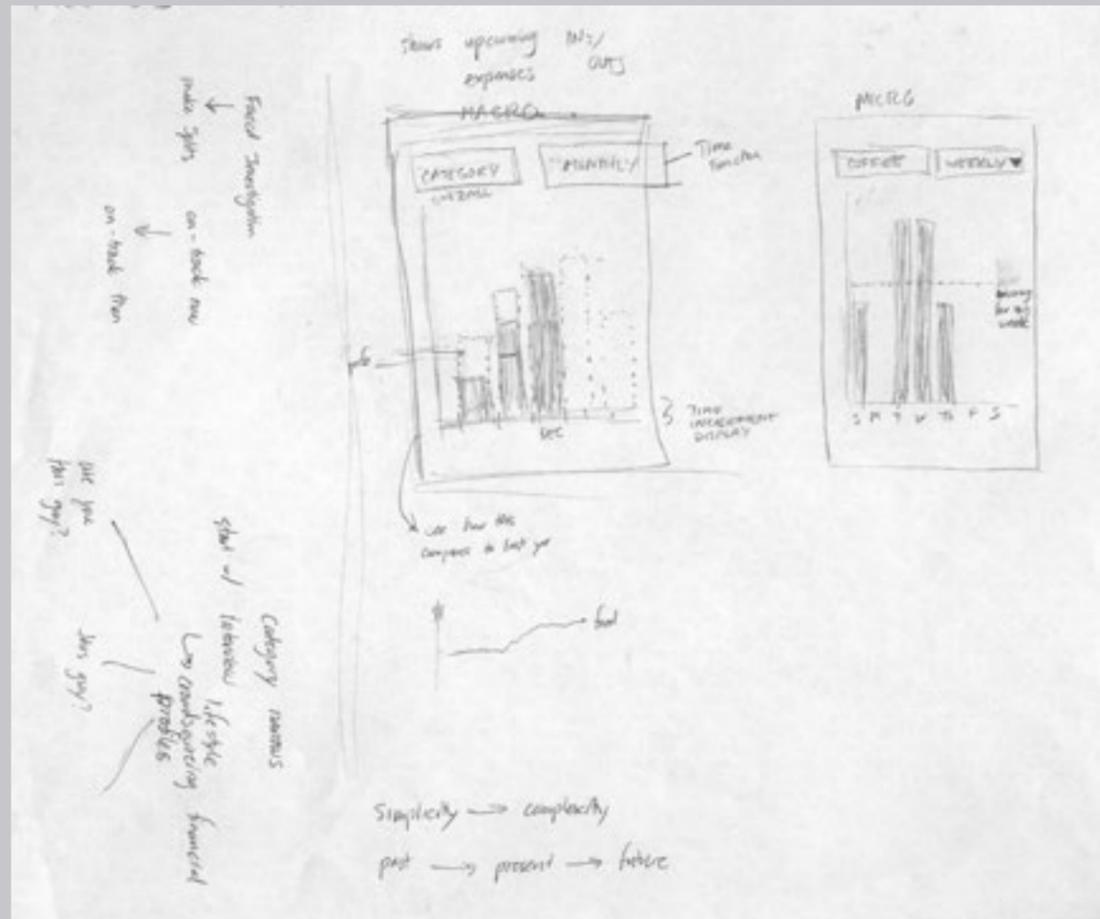


Making Initial Categories



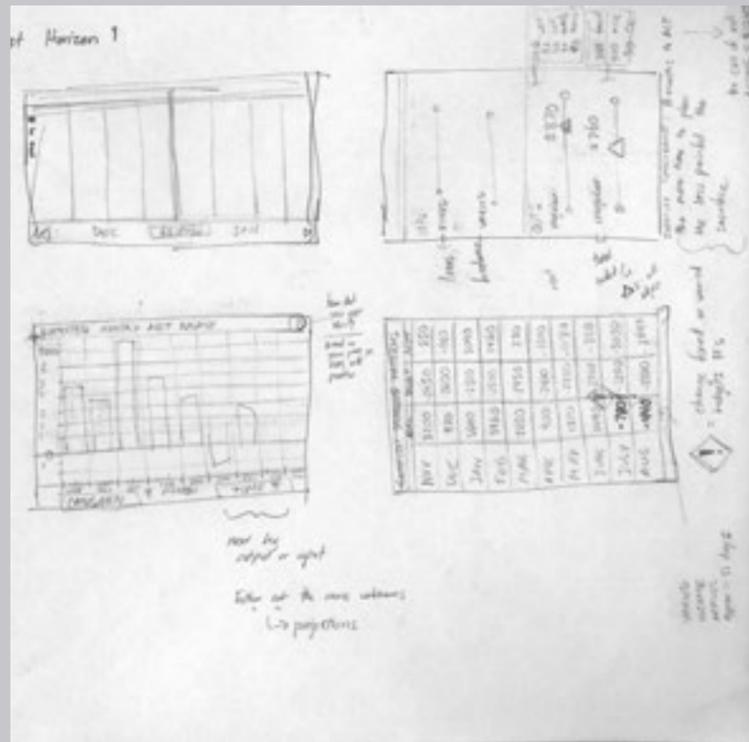
WIREFRAMES: CATALOGING THE PAST

Trends

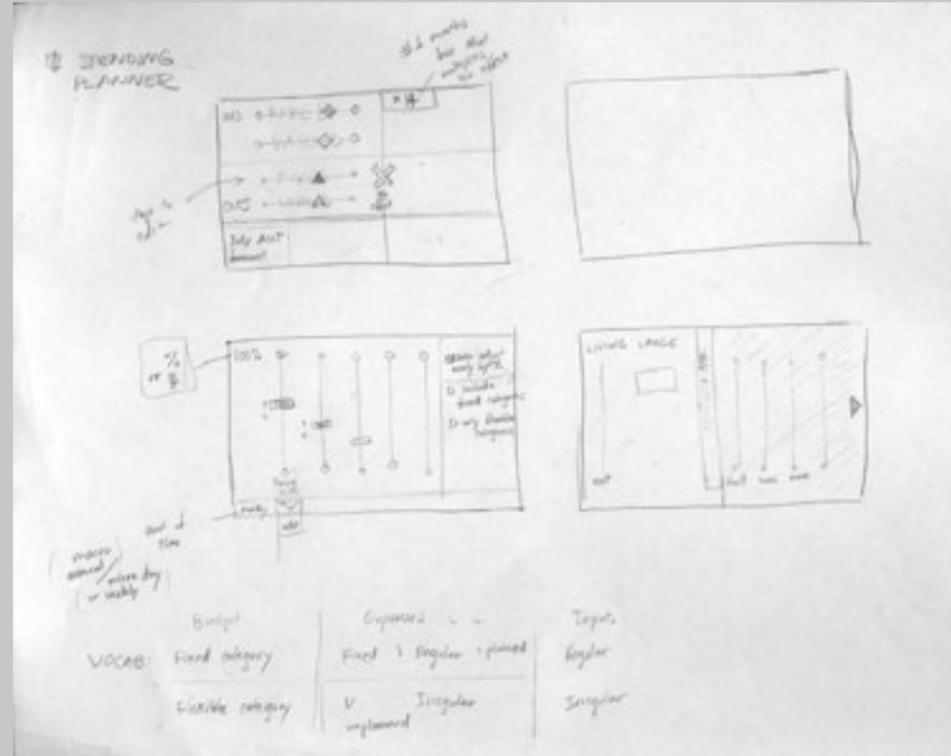


WIREFRAMES: FORECASTING THE FUTURE

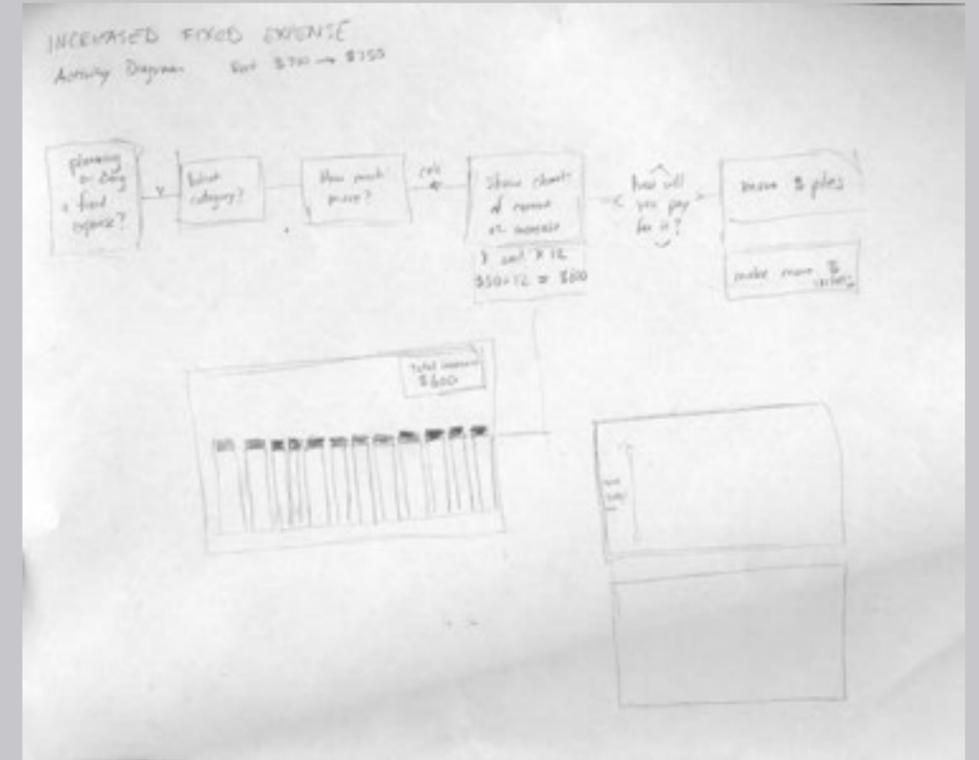
Forecast Horizon



Spending Planner

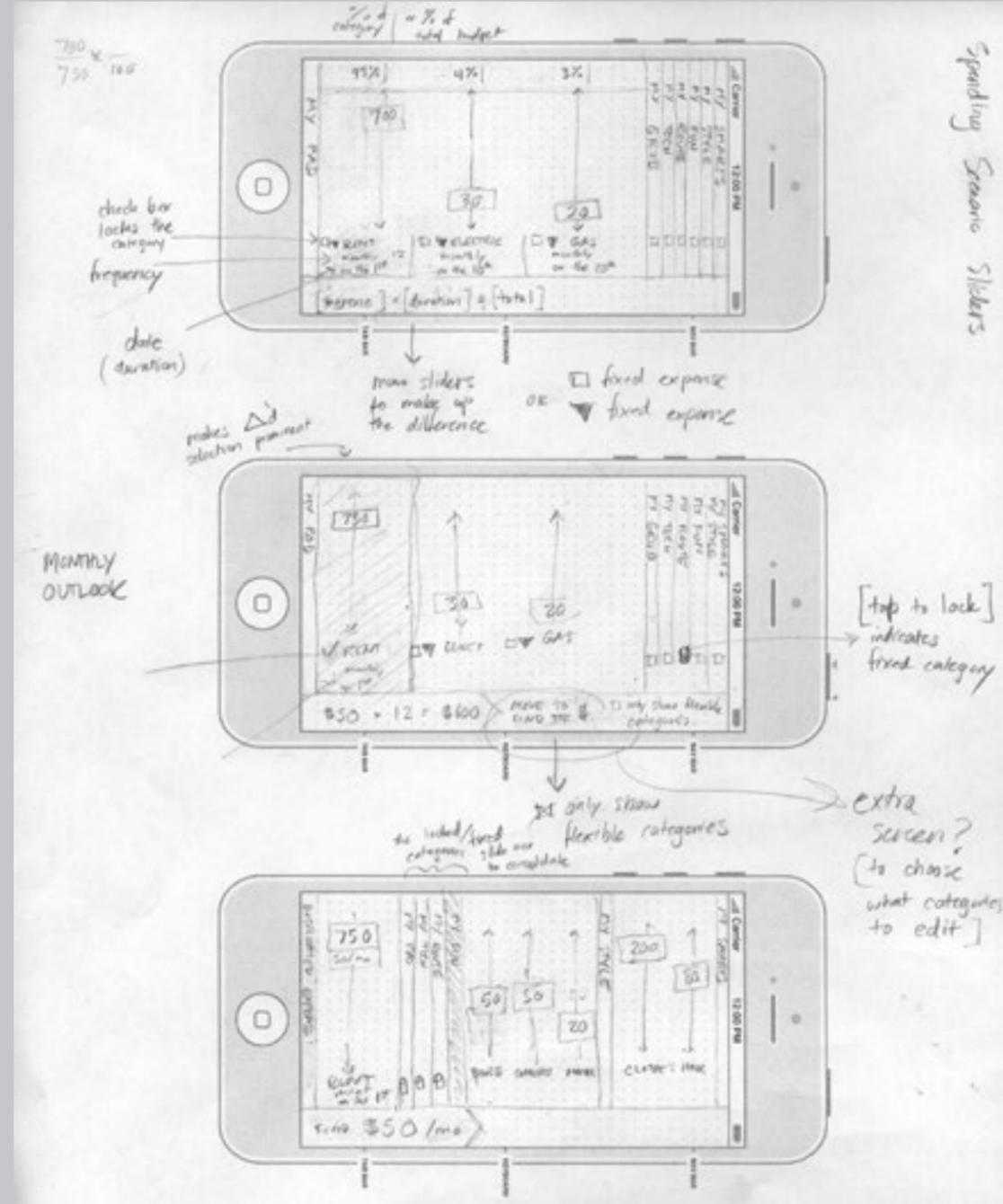


Increased Fixed Expense



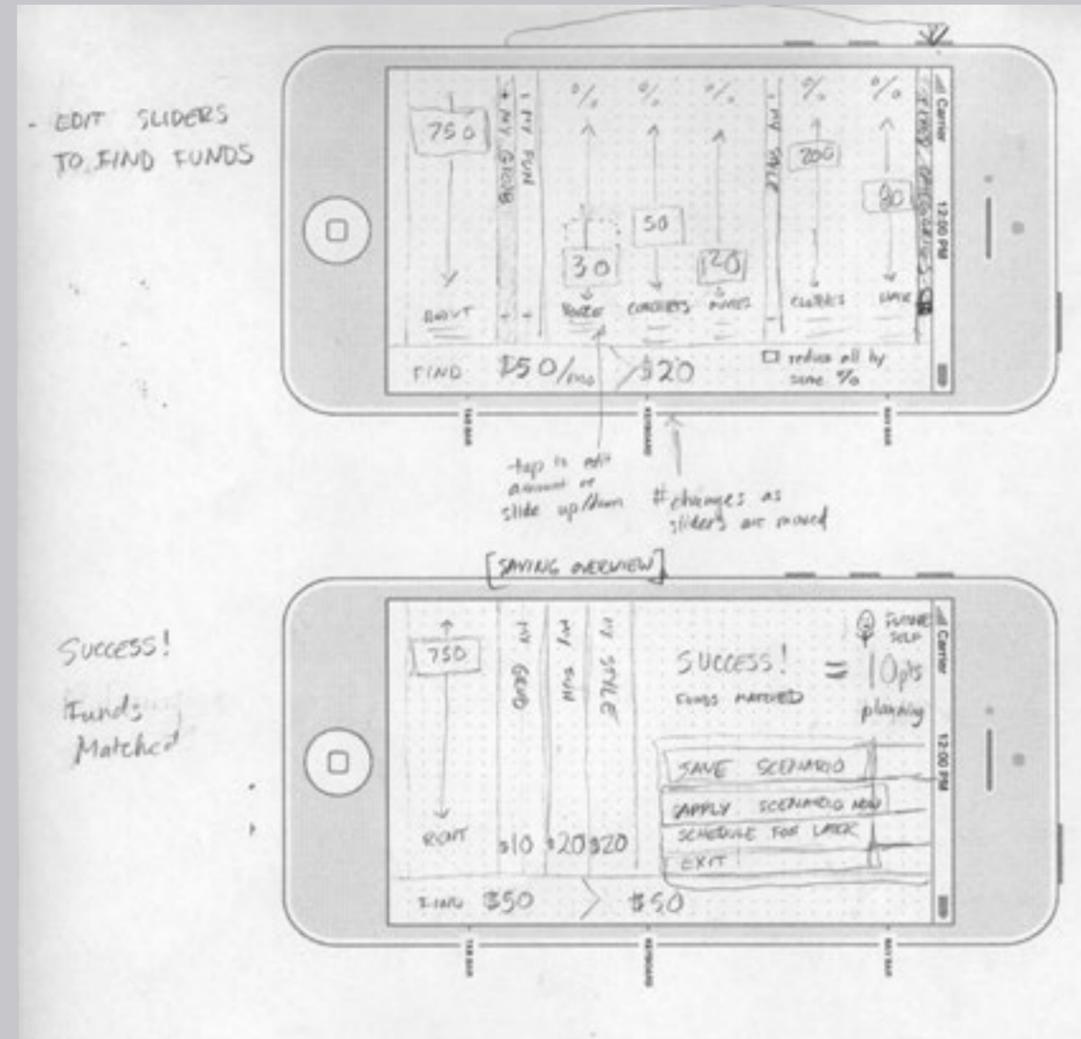
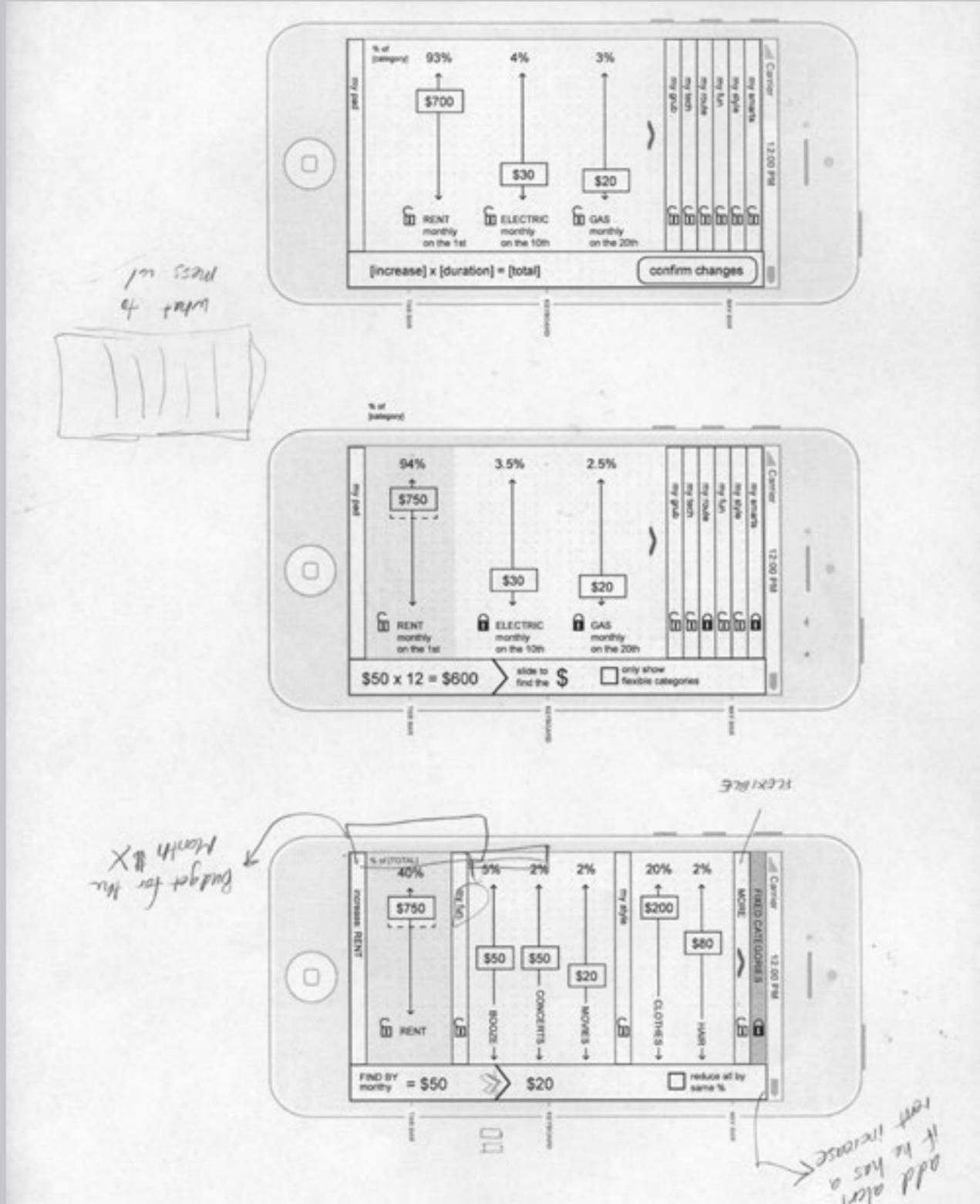
WIREFRAMES: FORECASTING THE FUTURE

Spending Scenario Planner: Fixed Expense



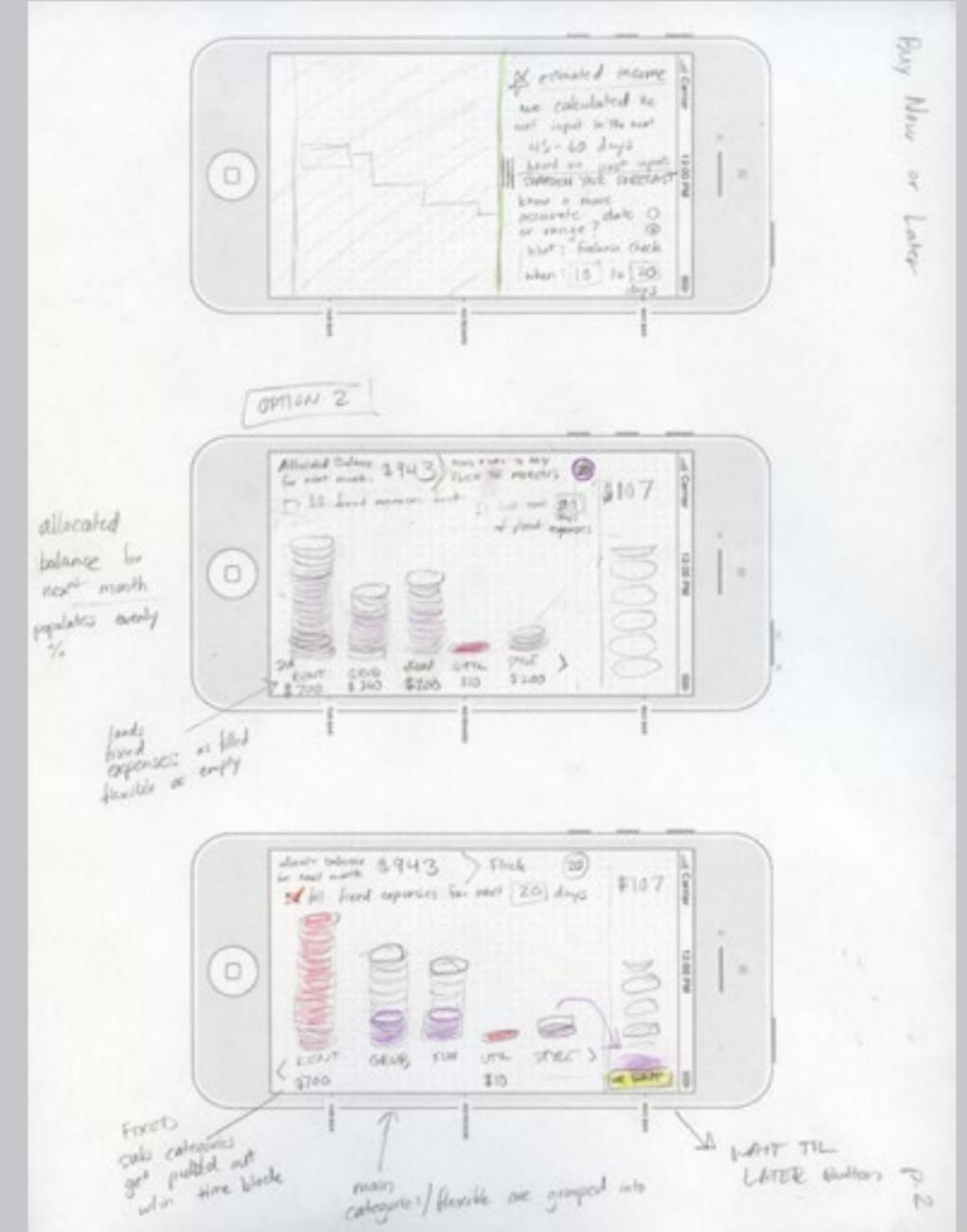
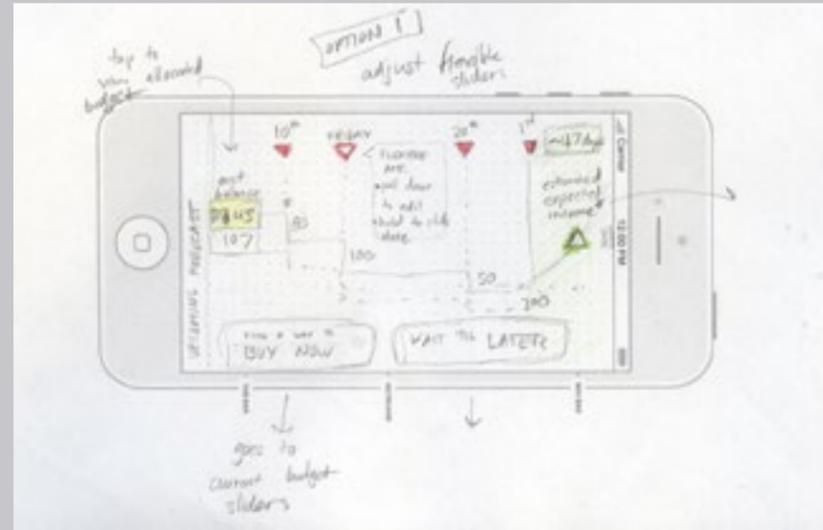
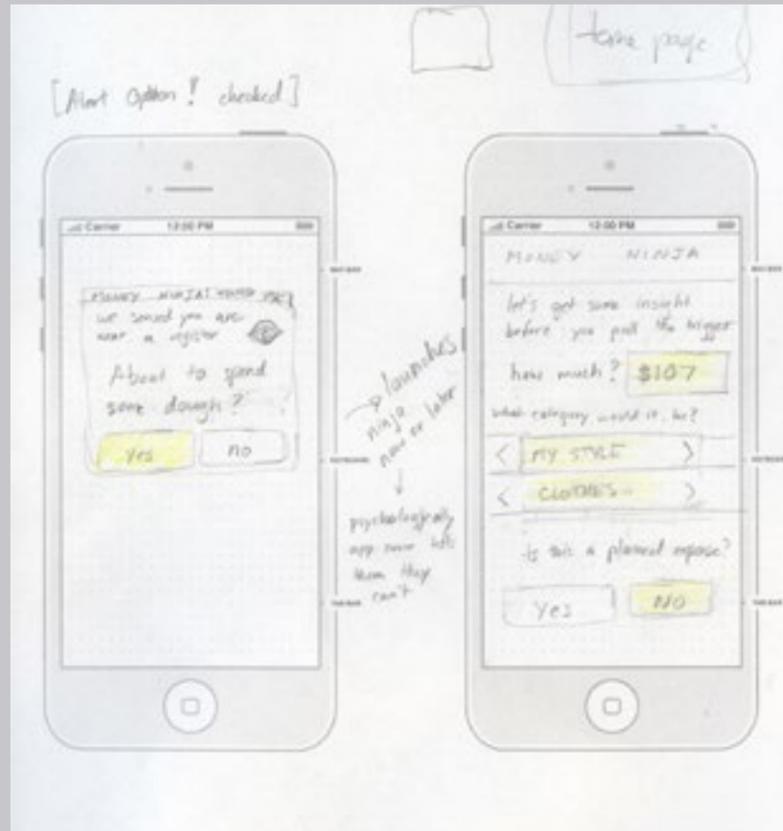
WIREFRAMES: FORECASTING THE FUTURE

Spending Scenario Planner: Fixed Expense



WIREFRAMES: FORECASTING THE FUTURE

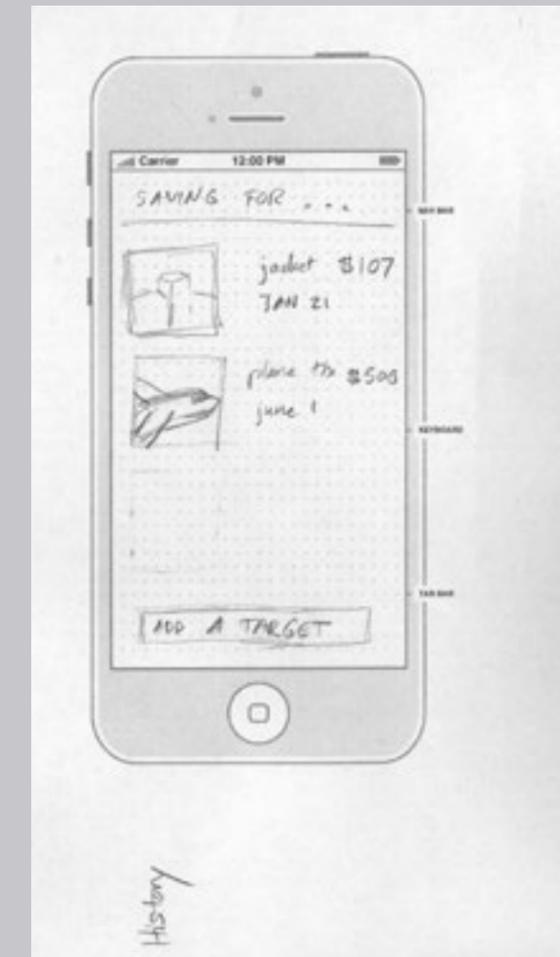
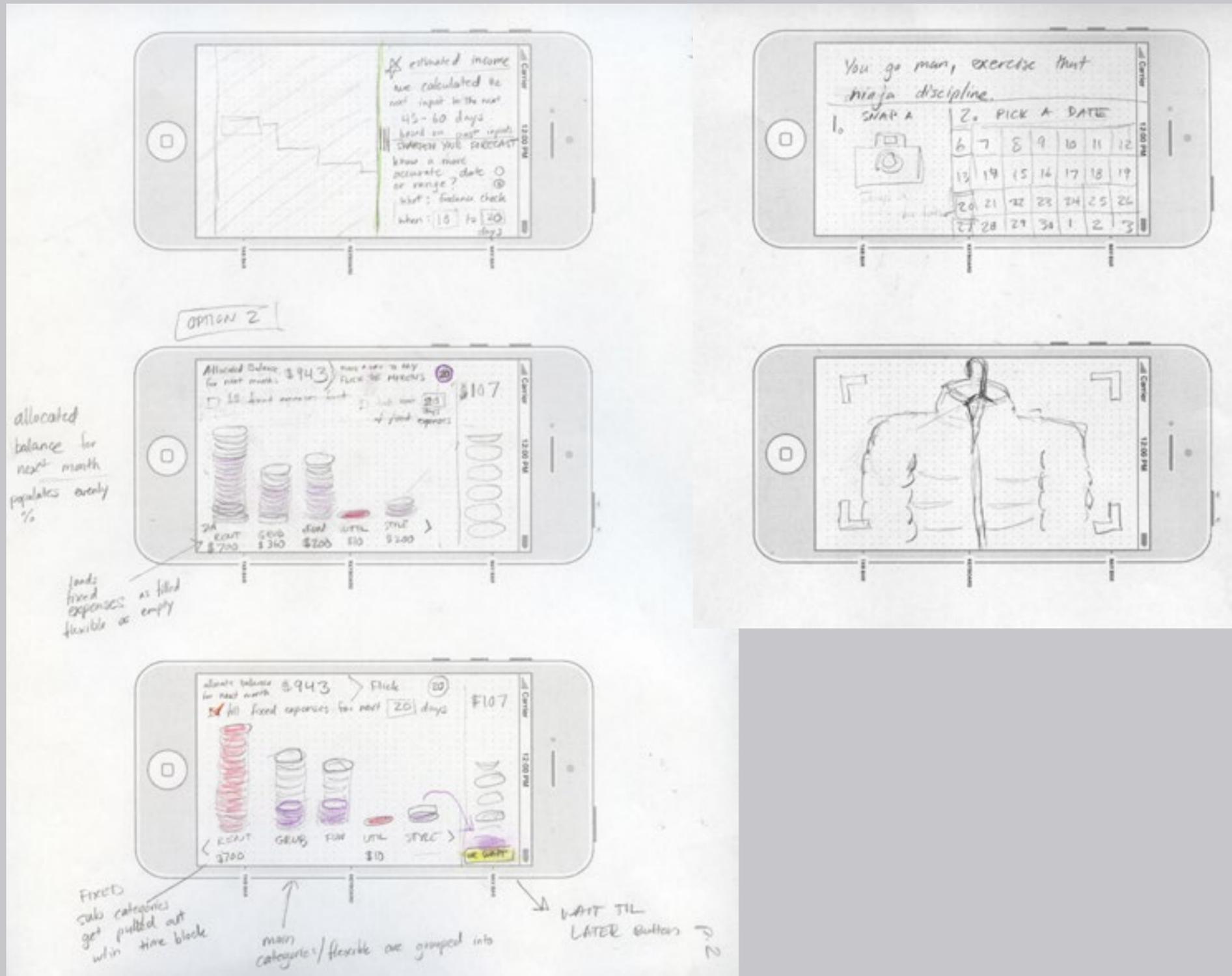
Spending Scenario (short-term) "Buy Now or Later?"



WIREFRAMES: FORECASTING THE FUTURE

Spending Scenario (short-term) "Buy Now or Later?"

FUTURE: Plan to Save

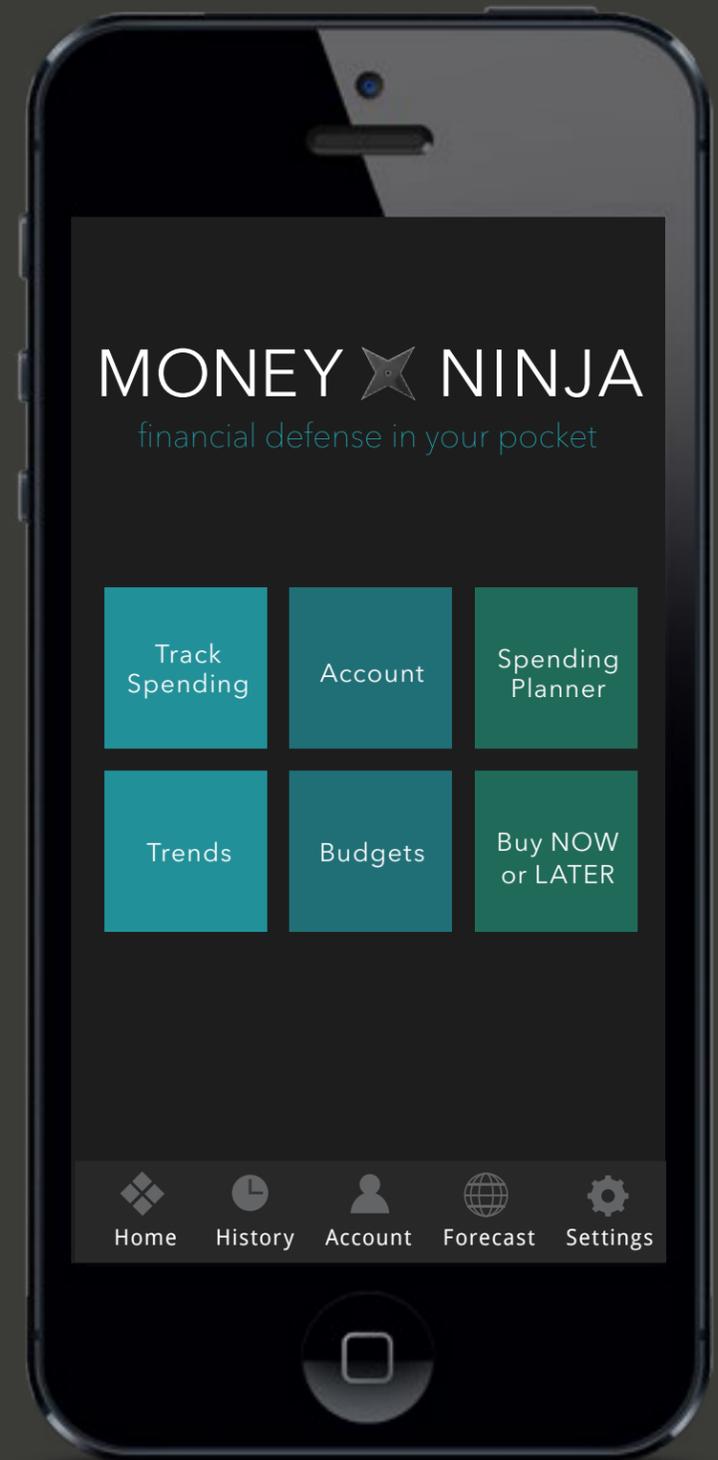
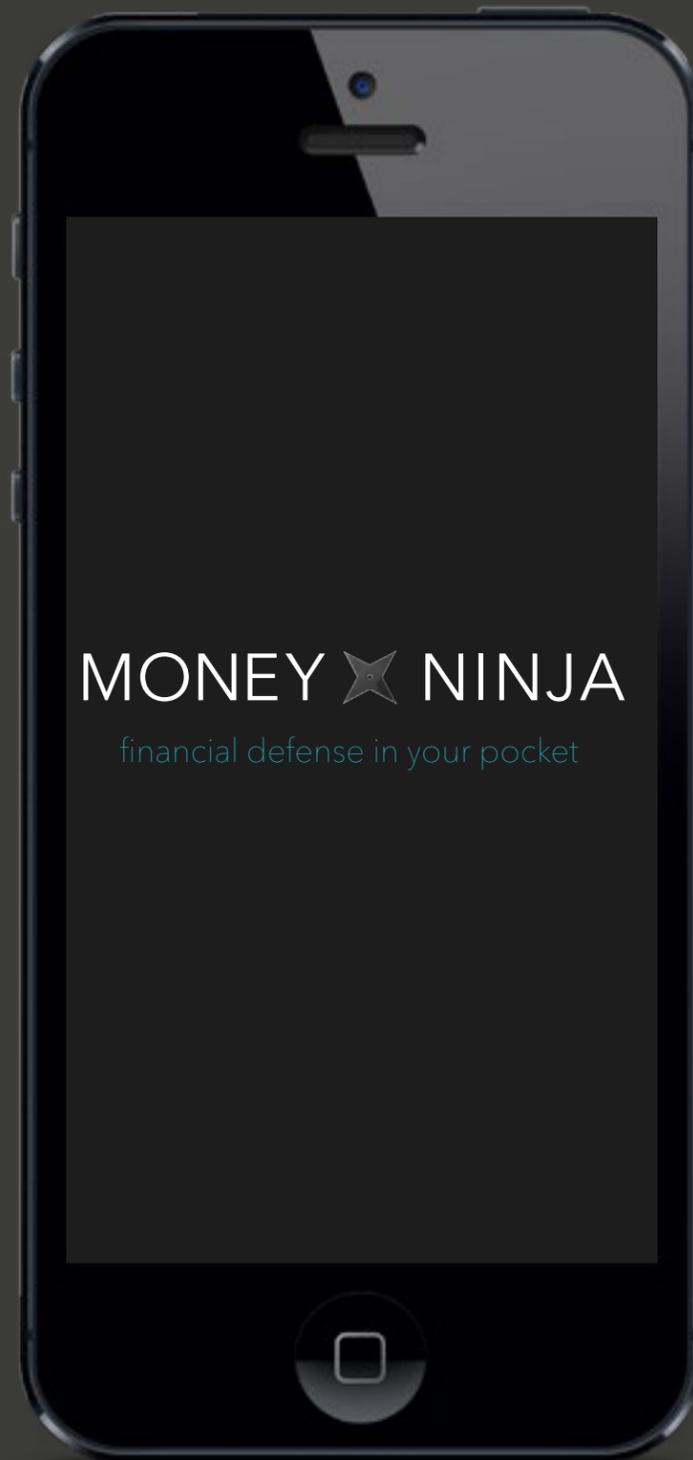


THE EXPERIENCE

MONEY ✖ NINJA

financial defense in your pocket

LOGO / MAIN MENU



SETUP

Questionnaire= Lifestyle spending profile & categories

← LET'S GET STARTED

I. SURVEY

Please input your information. This will help determine your age group.

DANIE |

LAST NAME

AGE

ADDRESS

STATE ▾

CANCEL SAVE & NEXT

Daniel starts by putting in his information in the survey and the app starts syncing his account balance in order to automatically create accurate categories and budgets for his age group.

← TELL US ABOUT YOURSELF

II. SURVEY

OCCUPATION

← FREELANCER →

← STUDENT →

EDUCATION

← COLLEGE →

← UNDERGRADUATE →

COLLEGE ZIP CODE ▾

NAME OF UNIVERSITY ▾

CANCEL SAVE & NEXT

By using the sliders left and right, Daniel can scroll on the categories until he gets to the ones that will help the app determine his income, location, and other factors.

← TELL US ABOUT YOURSELF

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

← ON MY OWN →

← STUDENT LOANS →

LIVING SITUATION

← ON CAMPUS →

← ROOMMATES →

TRANSPORTATION

← BUS →

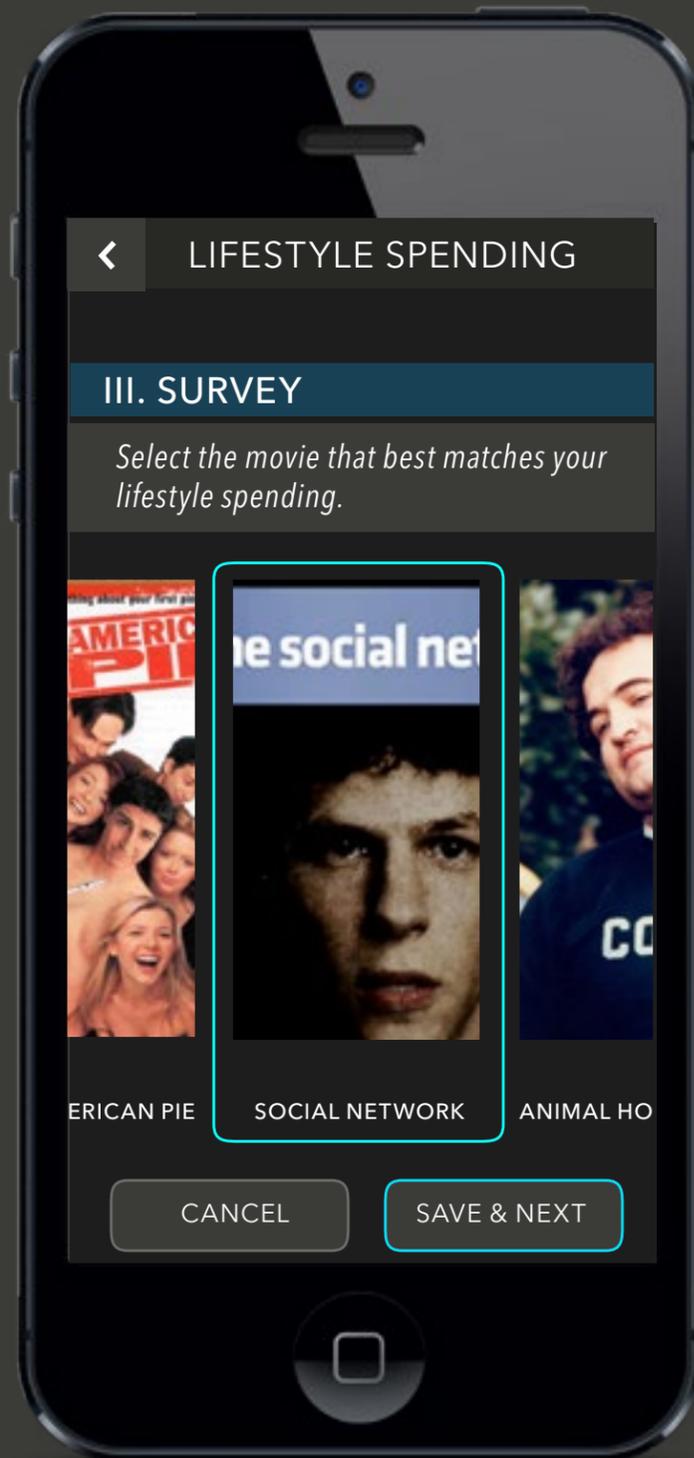
← BIKE →

CANCEL SAVE & NEXT

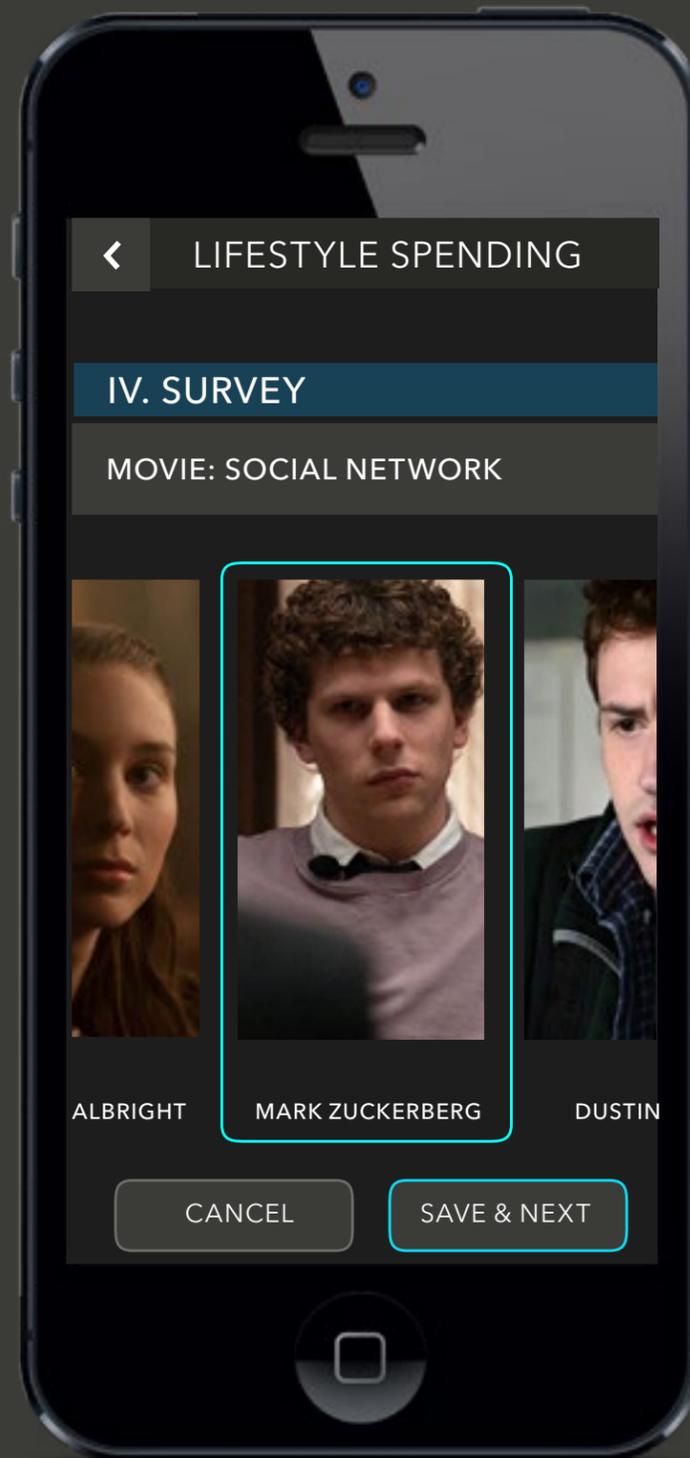
Daniel continues to use the sliders to help the app determine his financial spendings, particular housing situations, and other categories.

SETUP

questionnaire= lifestyle spending profile & categories
(continued)

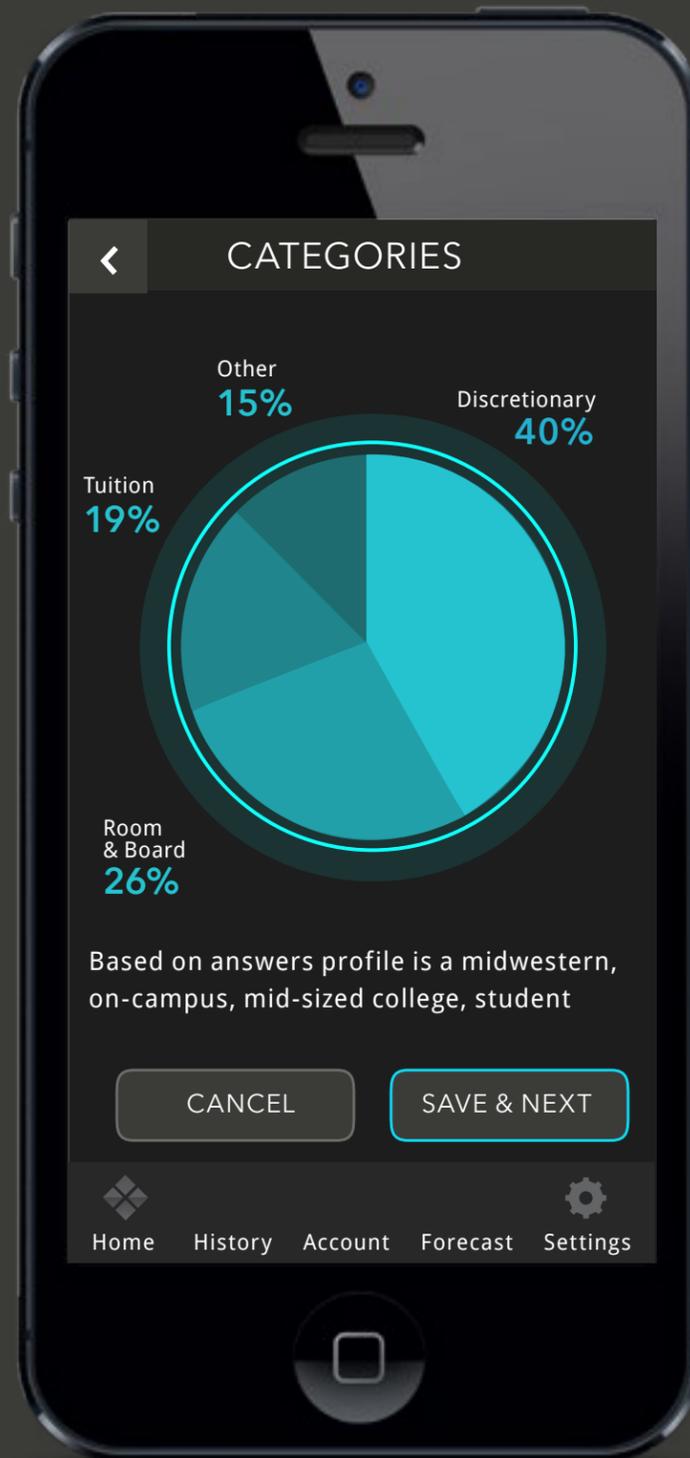


Daniel continues into a movie survey that helps us determine his overall habits as a person. At the same time, it is a way to entertain the user while accurately pinpointing his habits.

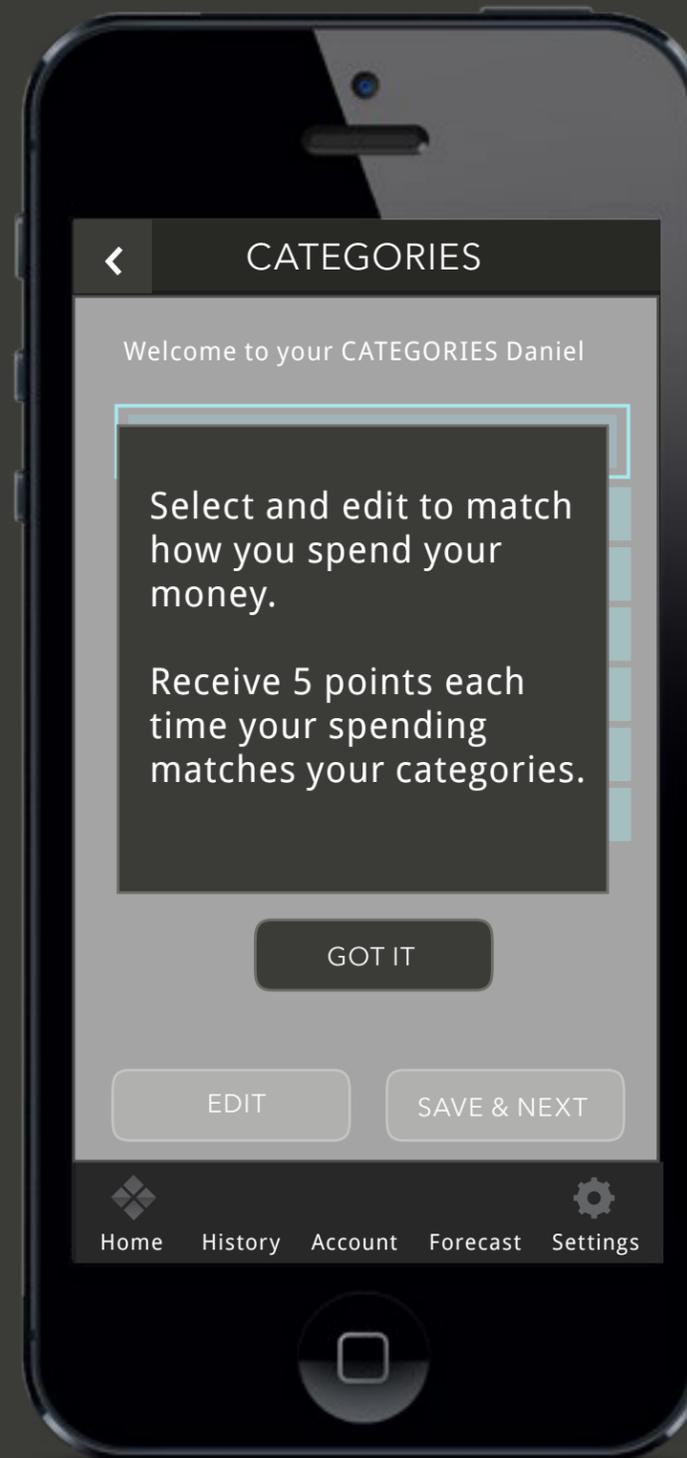


We finally get to the subcategory of the movie survey to narrow down his most relateable character's spending habits of the particular movie.

MAKING INITIAL CATEGORIES



Daniel lands on an overall piechart profile based on the answers from before. If this is correct, he will move on to categorization, but if not accurate, he will go back to the survey pages.



The more Daniel matches his spending with his categories he creates, he will receive more points towards a lotto ticket.

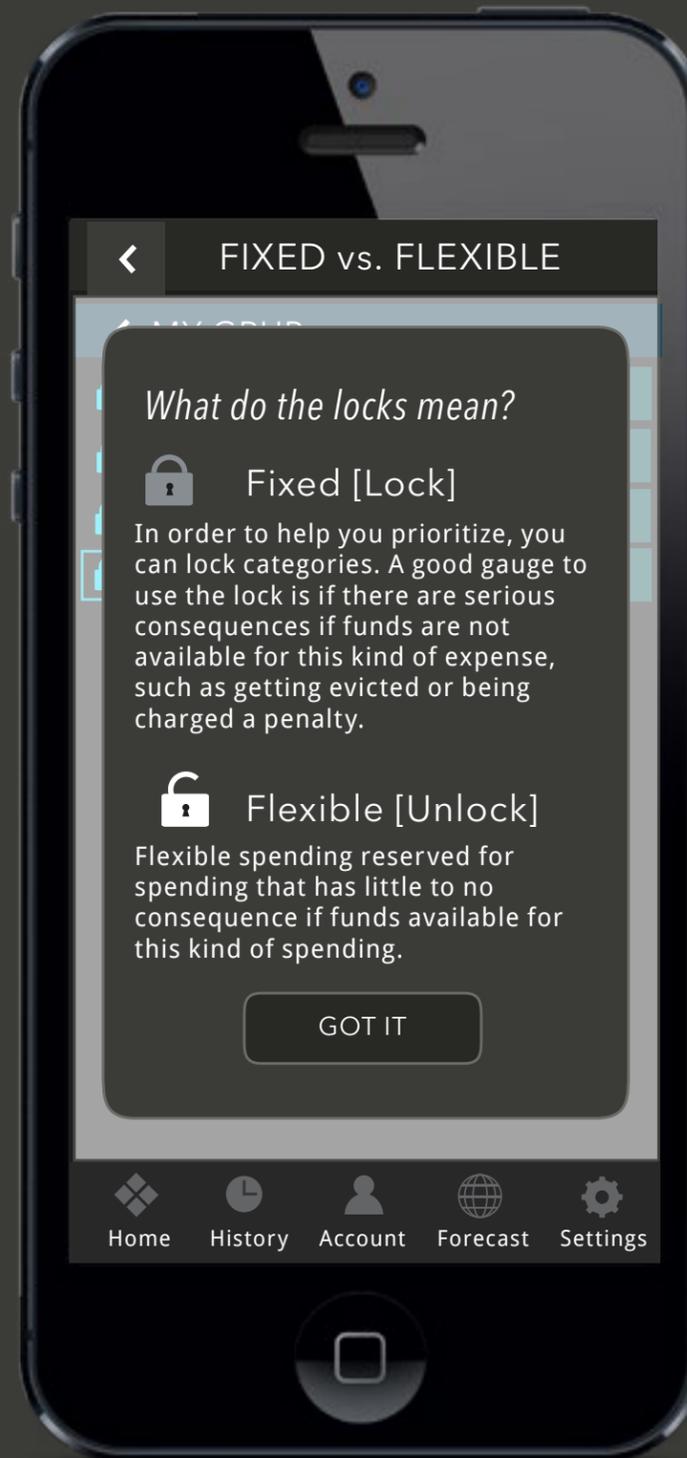


Automatically put into categories that reflects commonly used college terms, Daniel can easily edit his categories as well as his subcategories.

FIXED VS. FLEXIBLE CATEGORIES



Since Daniel usually spends a lot on things not too common to other people, he can edit and write terms fit for his use.

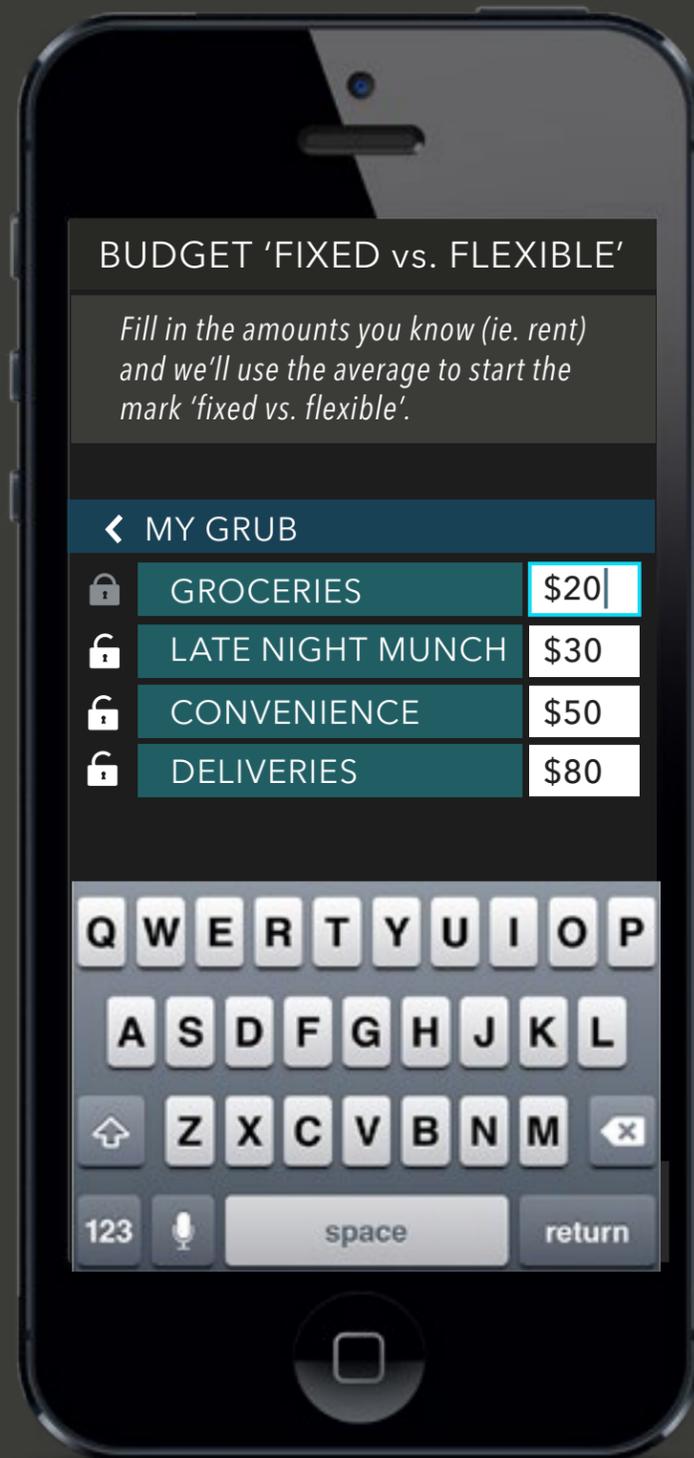


The fixed vs. flexible idea comes into play as he determines which categories he must have at certain times of the week compared to categories that are not as crucial to spend on.

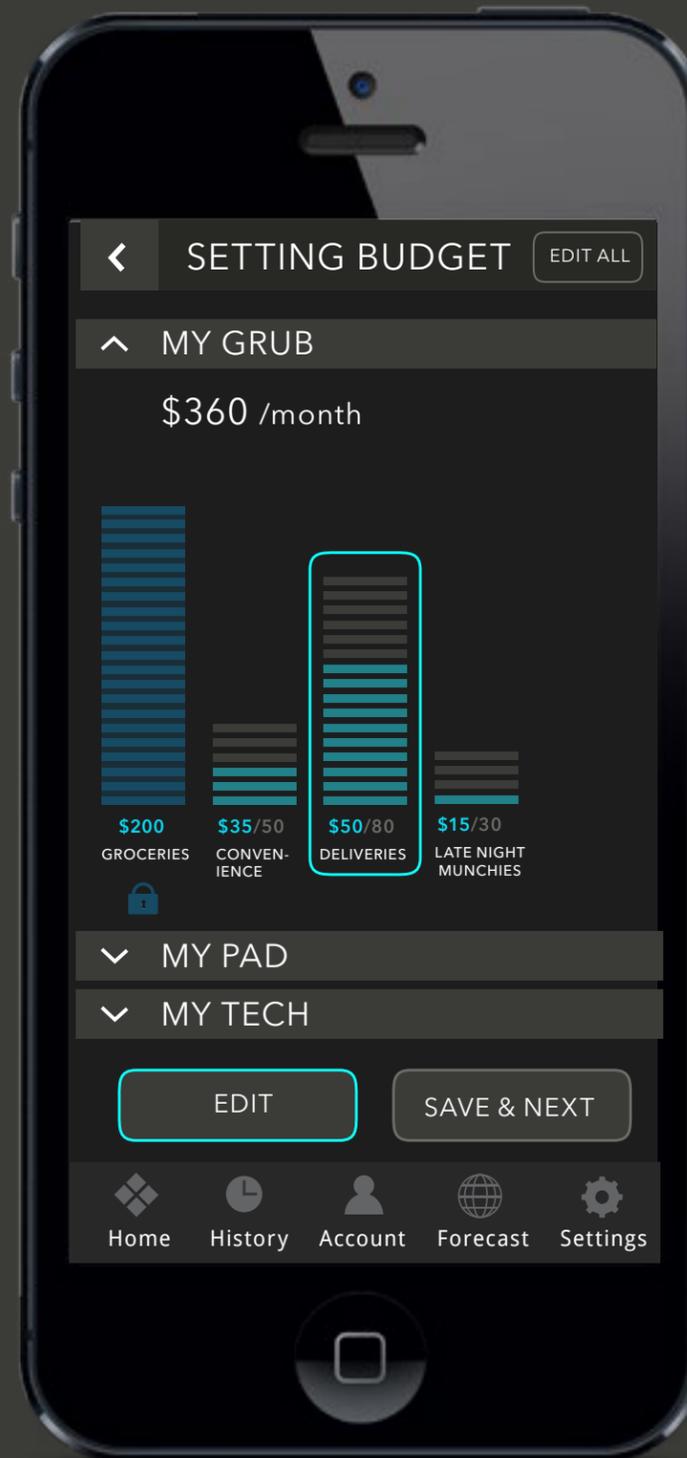


To further this idea, each subcategory has a lock that illustrates his fixed and flexible decisions, ultimately helping him prioritize the more essential spending in his life.

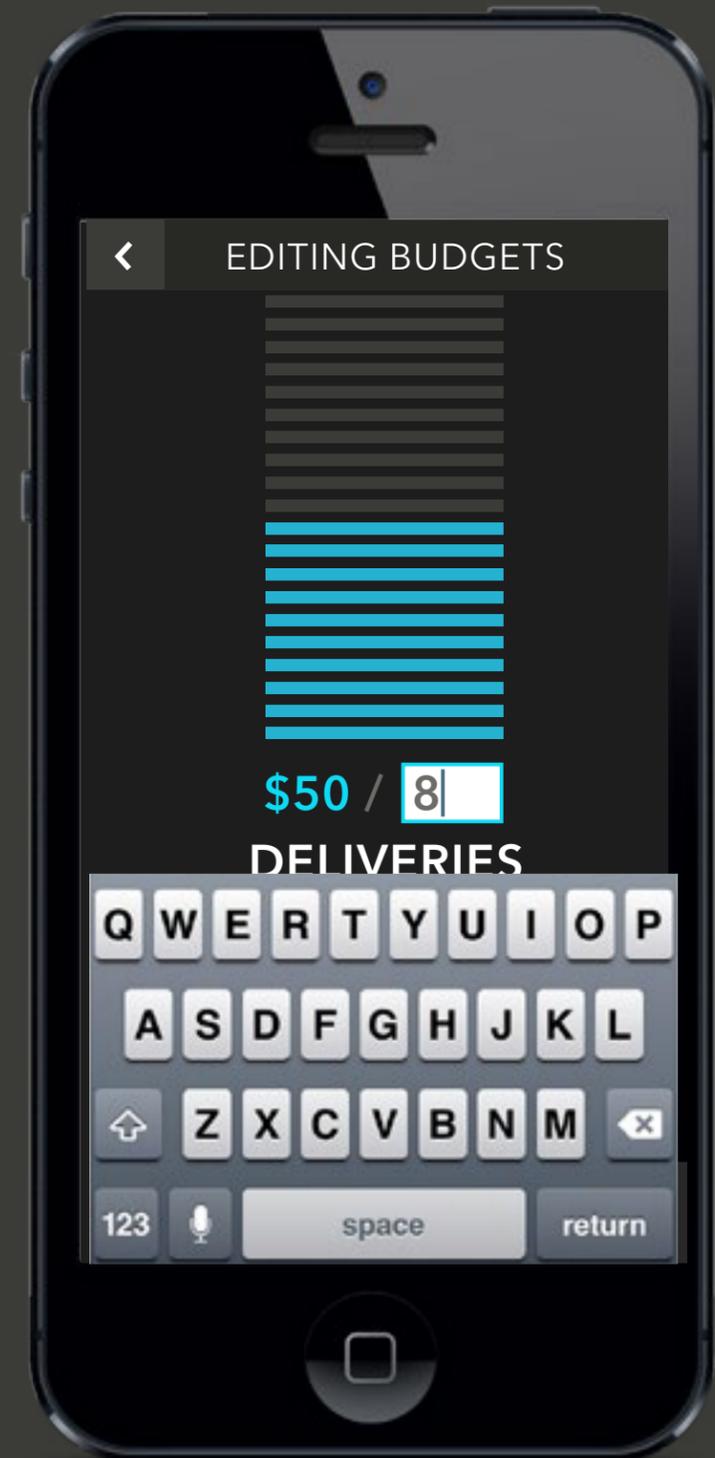
SETTING BUDGETS



Daniel has the ability to edit his budget and to determine if the category is fixed or flexible.

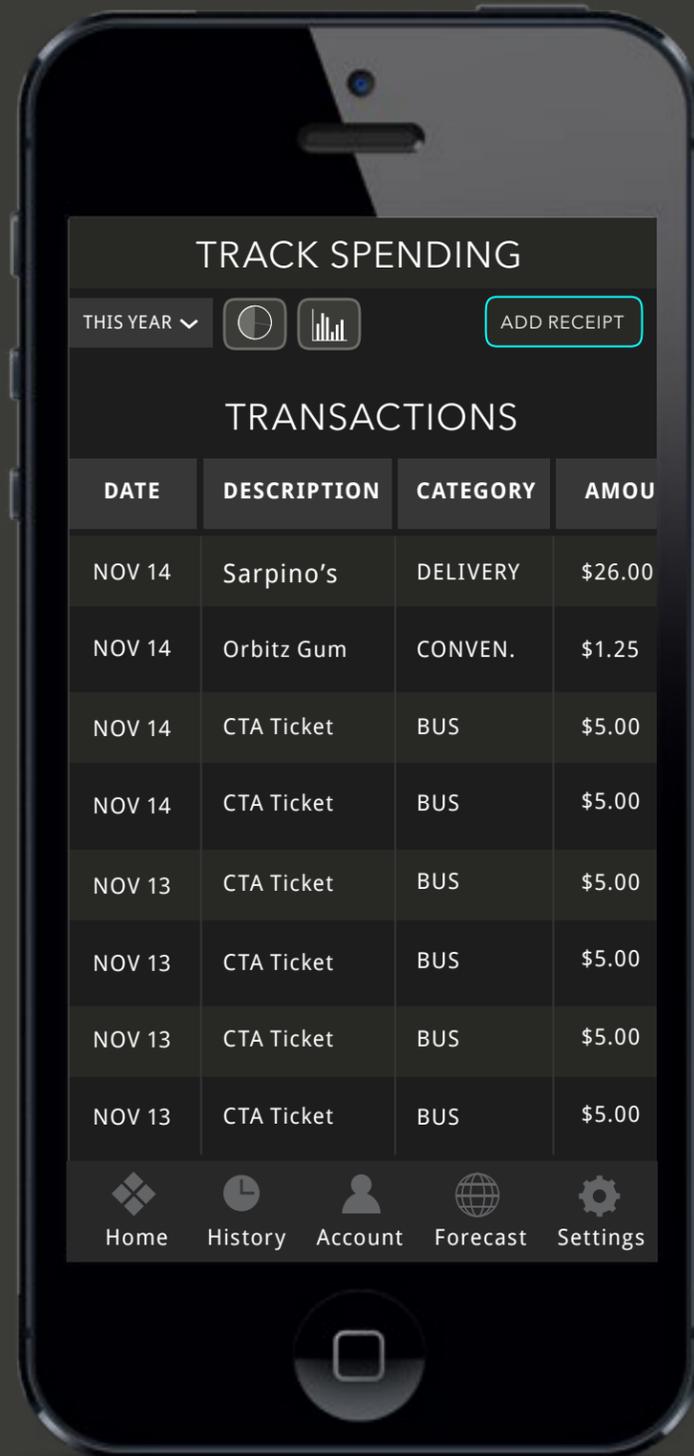


After inputs of budget values, we see a visual illustration to understand how much money he is allowed to use for each category and how much he has spent on it already. Fixed expenses remains locked as a maximized bar.

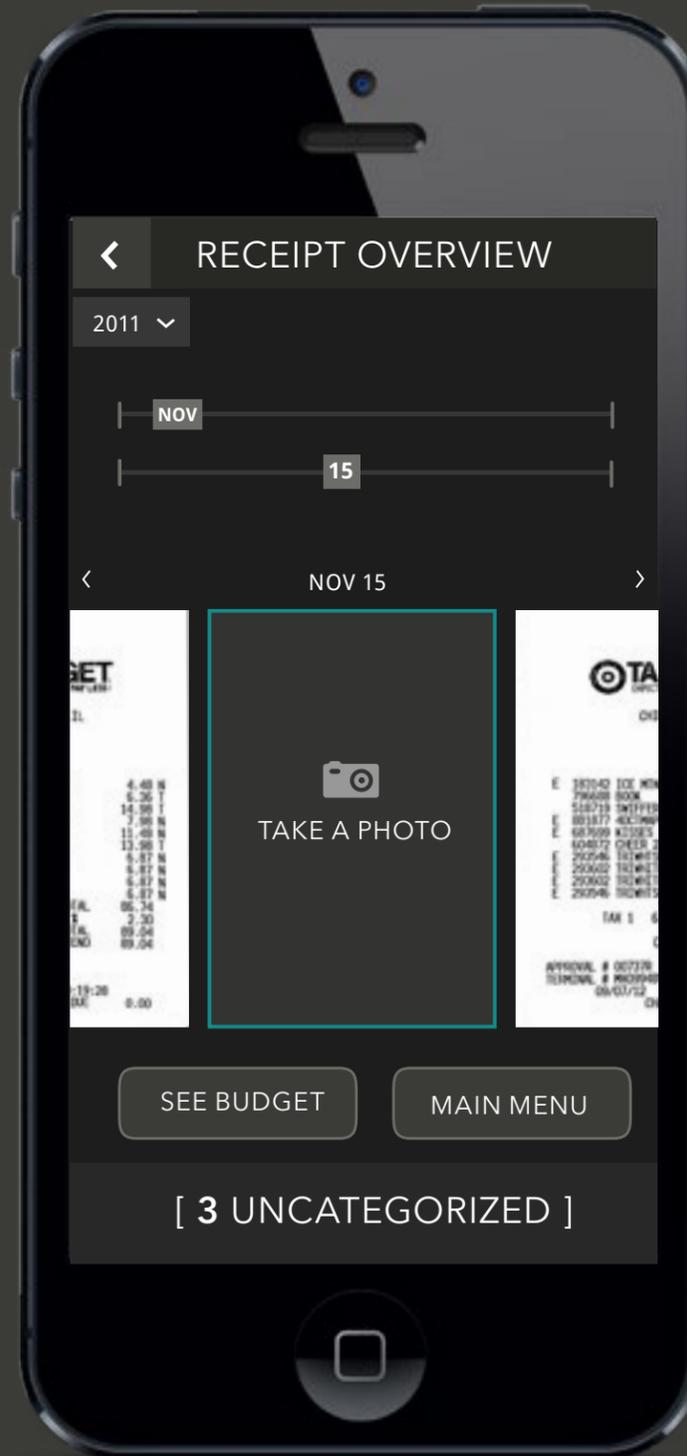


Daniel can select certain bars and edit his budget, which will increase or decrease the total number of gray bars.

CATEGORIZING RECEIPTS



Daniel can see his overall transactions in list form as well in the form of a piechart or graph through other button choices. He wants to categorize a receipt and presses add receipt.

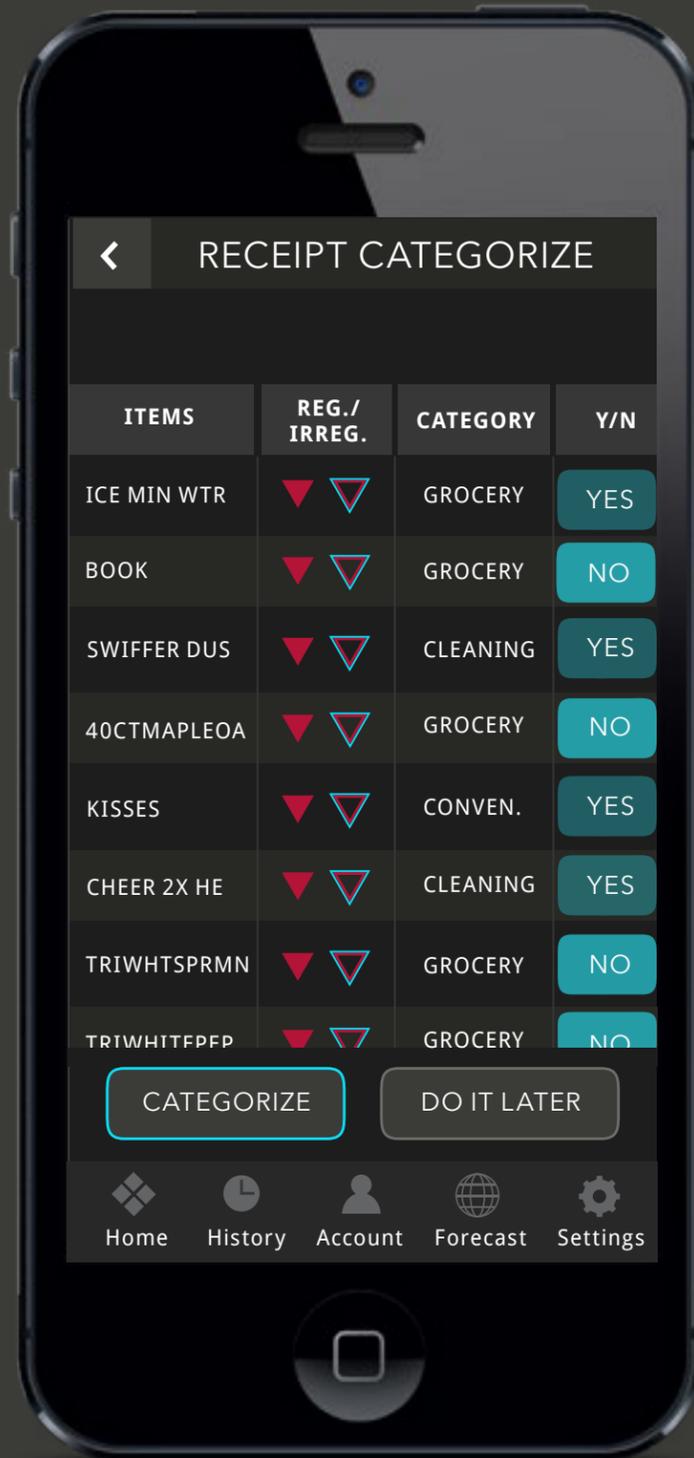


We can scroll through the month and dates as well as the various receipts he has added to his file. By being on a certain receipt, Daniel is notified that some have still not been categorized.

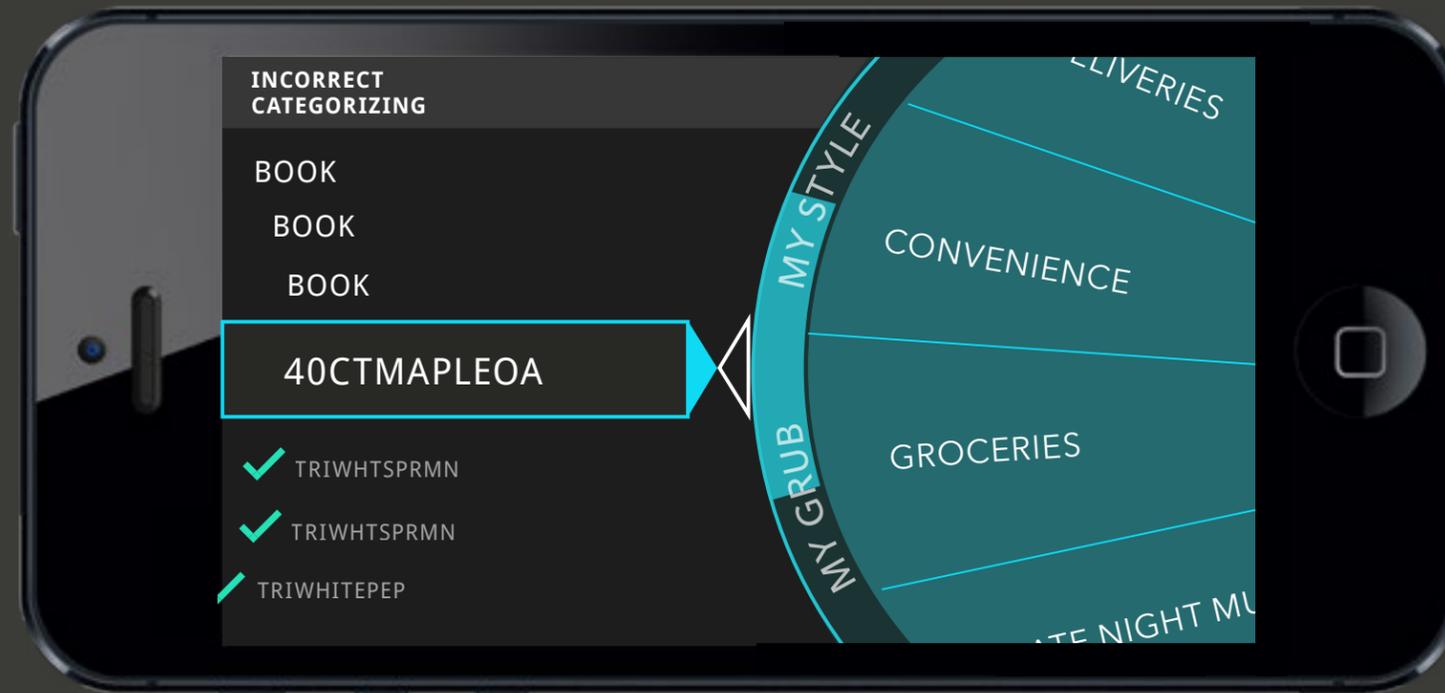


Daniel decides to take a photo of his receipt, but has the choice of emailing and scanning it to himself. He can categorize on the spot or have the chance later.

CATEGORIZING RECEIPTS



The app automatically copies the items from the receipt and creates its own list with automatic categorization. It is up to Daniel to determine if it is a regular/irregular expense, and if the auto categories are correct/incorrect.



(Upper)
You are taken to a horizontal screen where the incorrect categories from the previous page are matched into correct categories through the act of scrolling, and rewarded for each time you categorize.

(Lower)
By correctly matching categories with items in this mini game, Daniel can easily correct what the app has automatically categorized.

BUY NOW OR LATER

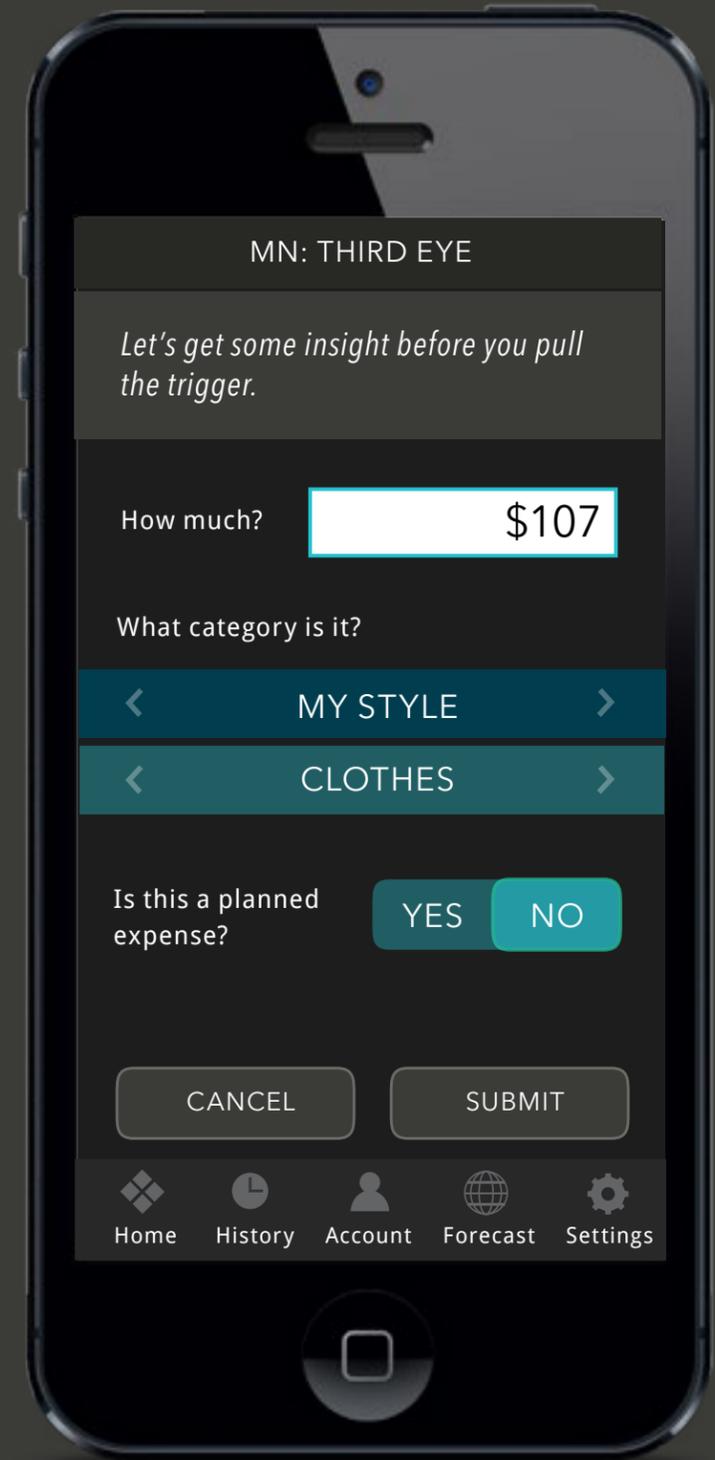
Money Ninja gives you financial insight right at the time you need it, like before making an unplanned purchase.



Money Ninja has a sensing feature called Third Eye that you can enable to help you remember to think before you spend.



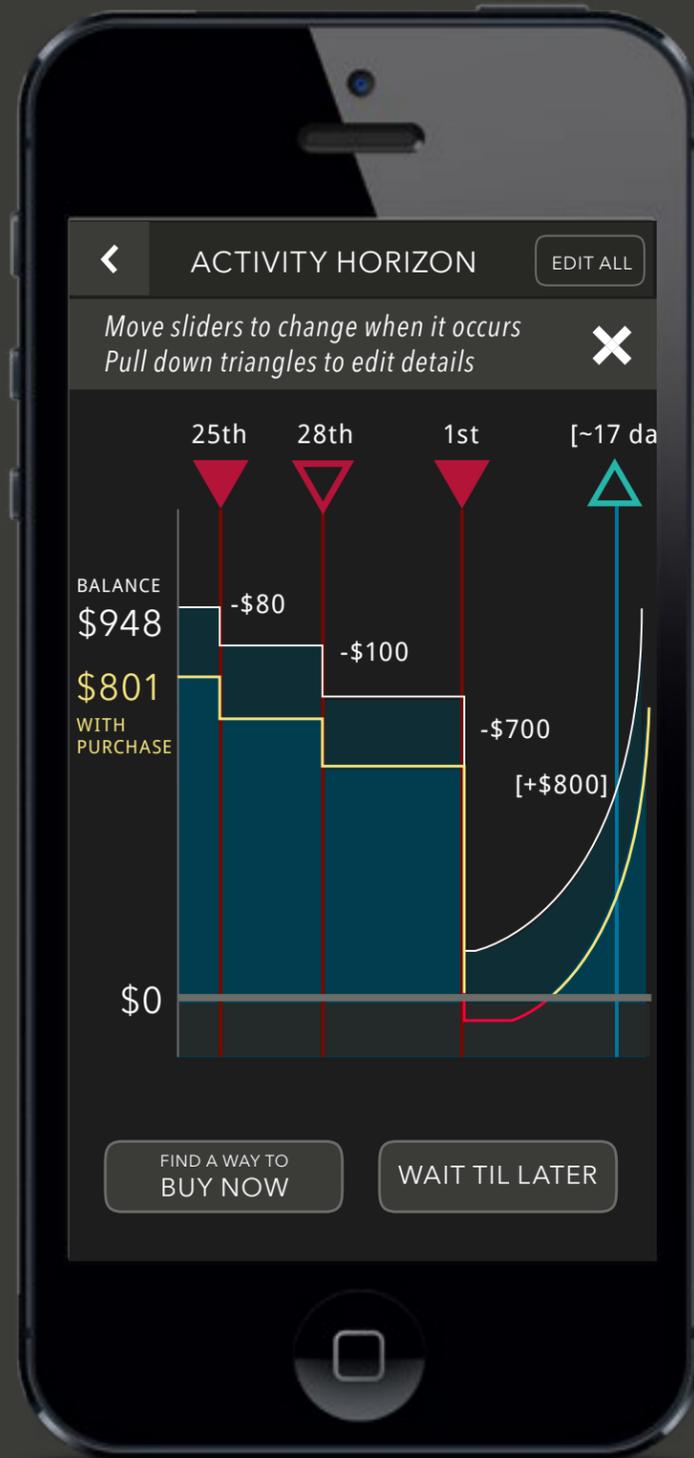
You can set it to alert you to check your finances before you make a purchase, such as when you are approaching a register.



It allows you to enter how much, think about what kind of spending it is and if you had planned to make this purchase.

BUY NOW OR LATER

Third Eye launches the Activity Horizon which allows you see what transactions you have coming up in the near future and prompts you to either FIND A WAY TO BUY NOW or WAIT TIL LATER



If you say the purchase is unplanned, the app pulls up your immediate activity horizon so you can see upcoming transactions and what it would look like if you make the purchase.

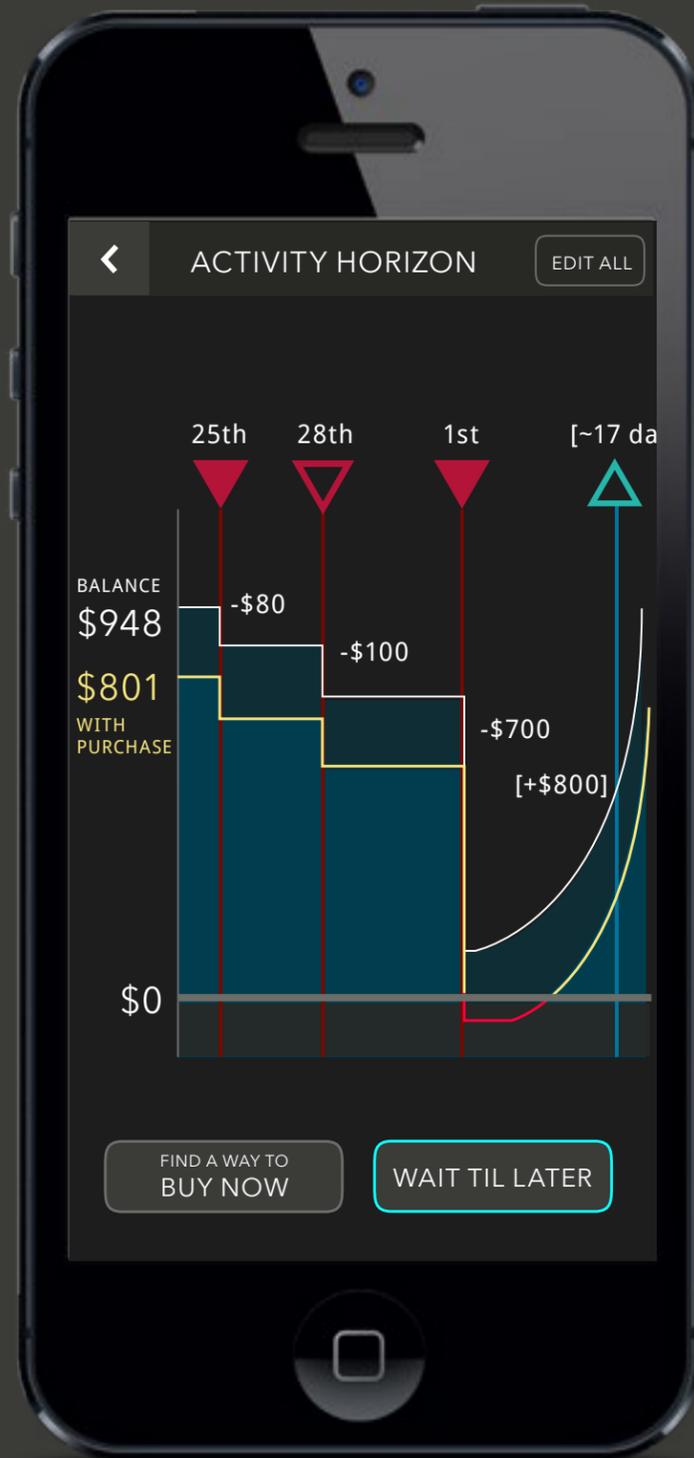
The screenshot shows the 'ACTIVITY HORIZON' screen with a modal overlay. The modal title is 'What do brackets mean?'. It contains a teal triangle icon followed by '[+\$800] = estimate'. The text explains: 'Based on your history you usually receive some irregular income (from freelancing) averaging about \$800 approximately every 46 days.' Below this, another section titled 'Know something we don't?' says: 'Sharpen your forecast by editing or adding an expected date and amount for income or expense'. At the bottom of the modal are two buttons: 'EDIT HORIZON' and 'CLOSE'.

Since Daniel's income is irregular some of the income points on the horizon are averaged estimates based on his past records. He has the ability to solidify these when he knows more about if and when he'll get paid.

The screenshot shows the 'EDIT HORIZON' screen. It has a title bar with a back arrow, 'EDIT HORIZON', and a plus icon. The screen lists several expense categories: '25th FIXED REGULAR EXPENSE: Electric (\$50) and Gas (\$30) are due on the 25th each month', '28th FLEXIBLE REGULAR EXPENSE: every Friday (dropdown menu), you've set aside \$100 for weekend spending', '1st FIXED REGULAR EXPENSE: Rent (\$700) is due on the 1st each month', and '~17 days [ESTIMATED INCOME] Based on past income trends you get an average of \$800 approximately every 46 days'. At the bottom, there are two buttons: 'CANCEL' and 'SAVE'.

For expenses that he has designated as flexible, he can change the amount and date to compensate for the purchase he wants to make.

BUY NOW OR LATER



After viewing your Activity Horizon, the app prompts you to either FIND A WAY TO BUY NOW or WAIT TIL LATER. If you want to buy it, the app will let you adjust your flexible expense amounts and when they happen.

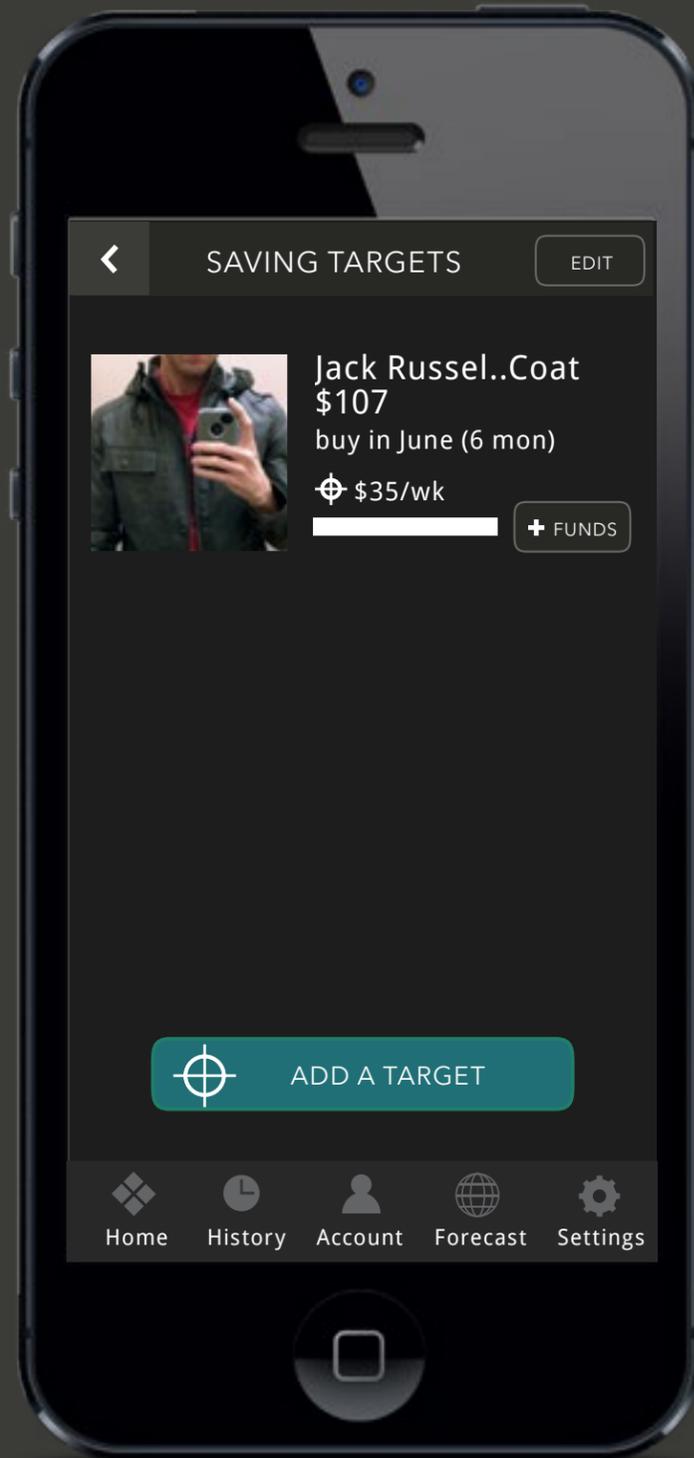
The 'WAIT TIL LATER' screen features a motivational message: "Way to exercise that Ninja discipline!" followed by a reward: "★ get +10 pts for setting target". Below this is a form to set a target: "Name what you are saving for" with the input "Jack Russell Winter Coat", and "When would you like it?" with a date picker set to "Jan 25 2013". There is an "ADD A PHOTO" button with a camera icon. At the bottom are "CANCEL" and "SAVE" buttons.

If you decide to wait, you are rewarded for your restraint with points towards your lotto ticket. The app also let's you create a target to save for and with a date.

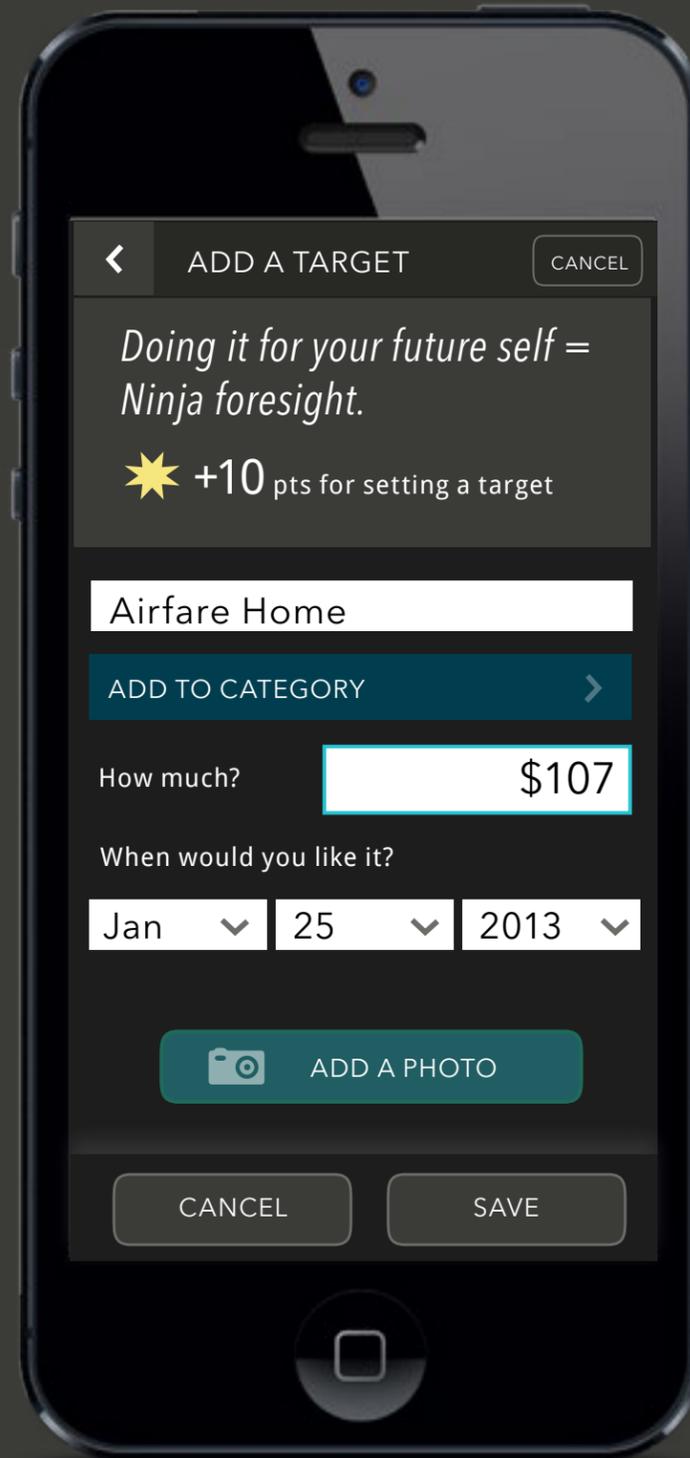


You can take a picture of the item to help keep you motivated to save for it.

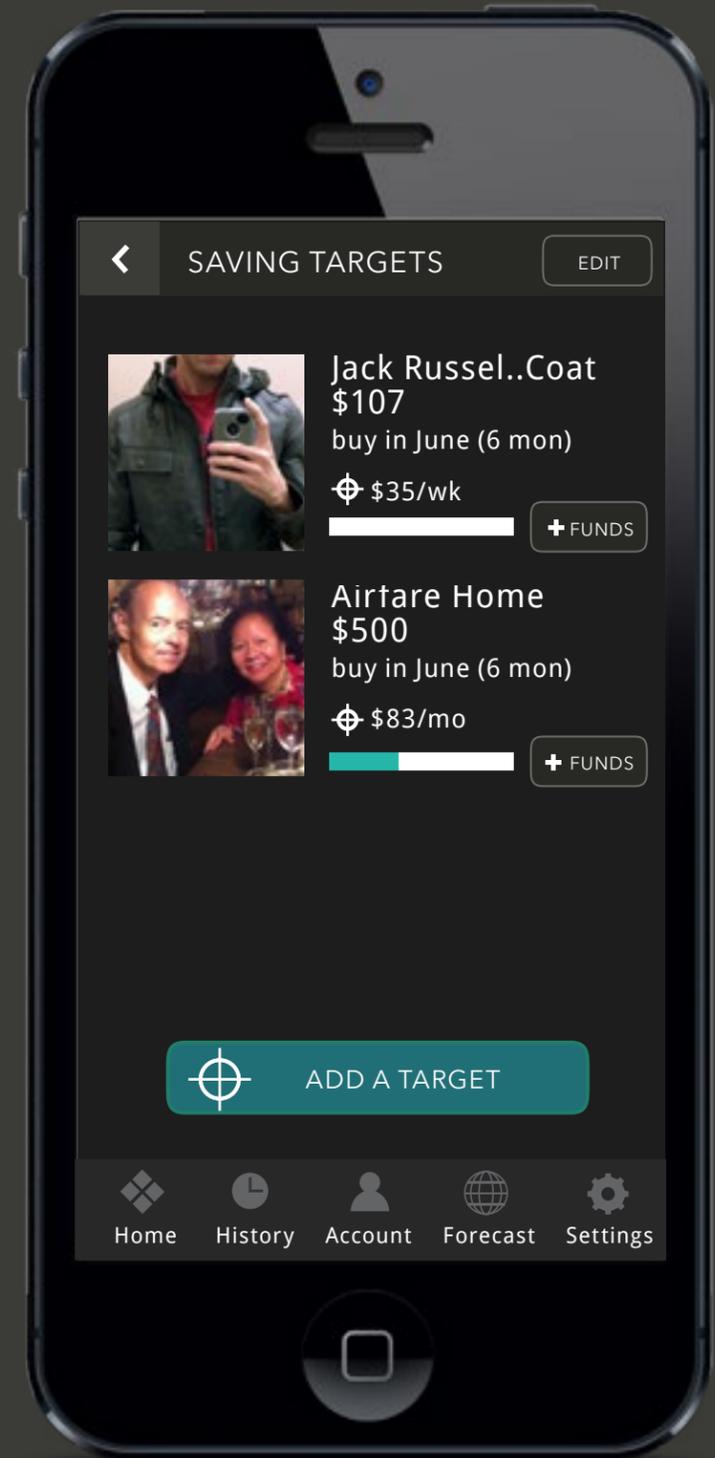
BUY NOW OR LATER



The app breaks down the price into a manageable amount to save each week. You can also create additional targets.



Adding a target gains you points as well since you are practicing future planning and looking out for your future self.



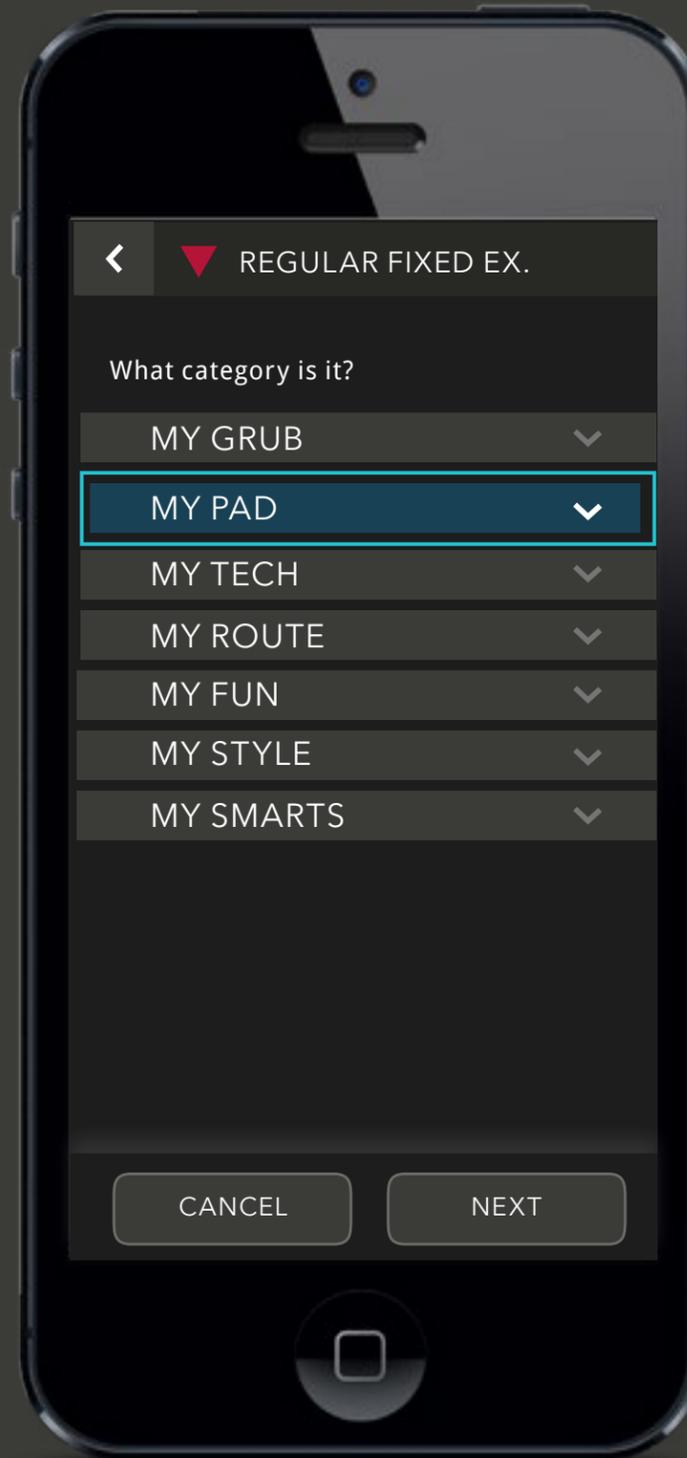
Instead of generic images, you can upload pictures from your library that accurately reflect why you want to save – in Daniel's case, it's so he can see his parents.

SPENDING SCENARIOS

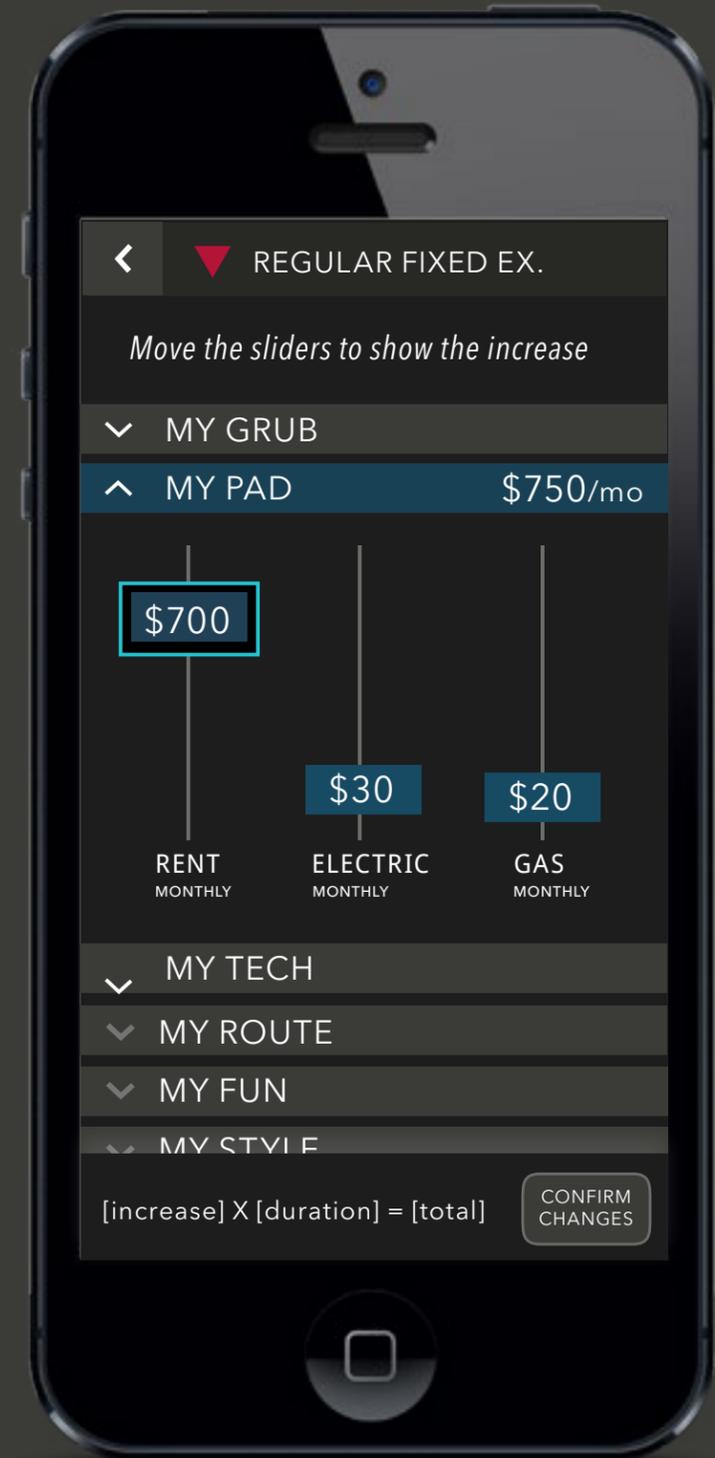
Spending Scenarios help give a glance into the future on how a change would impact your current situation. In this situation Daniel wants to know what happens if his rent goes up by \$50.



The app makes you first decide what kind of change: REGULAR/REOCCURRING change or IRREGULAR/SINGLE change, to help guide how you think about your income and expenses.

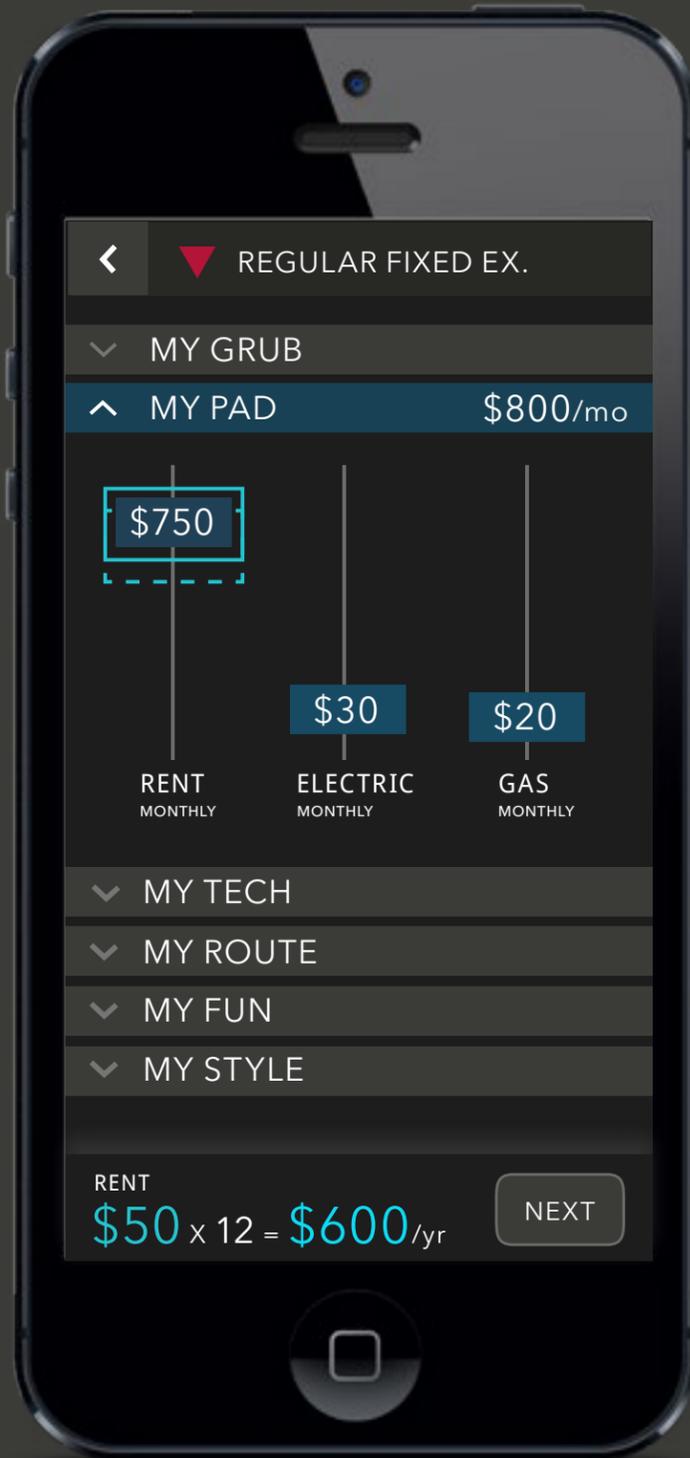


If it's an expense, you decide what part of your budget this change would fall under.

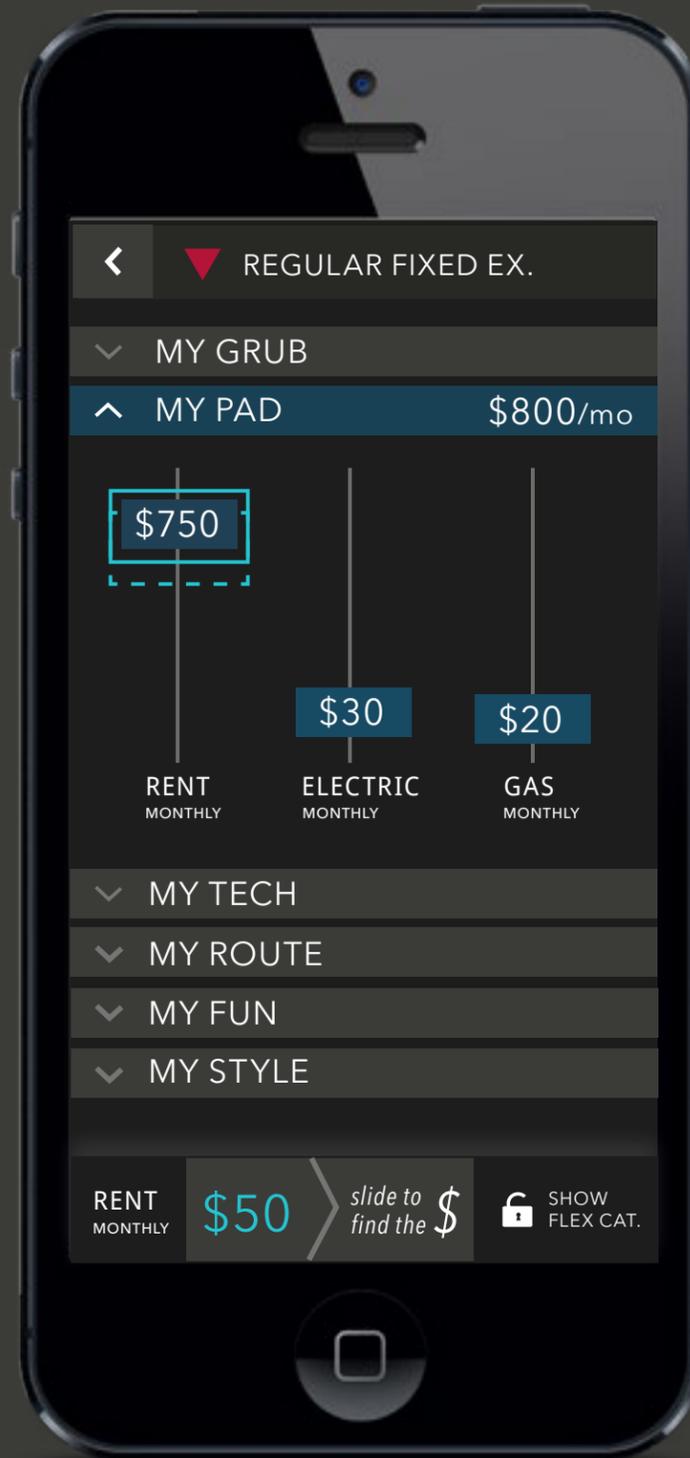


The budget categories pop open and Daniel can slide the amount or tap on it and use his number pad to enter an exact amount.

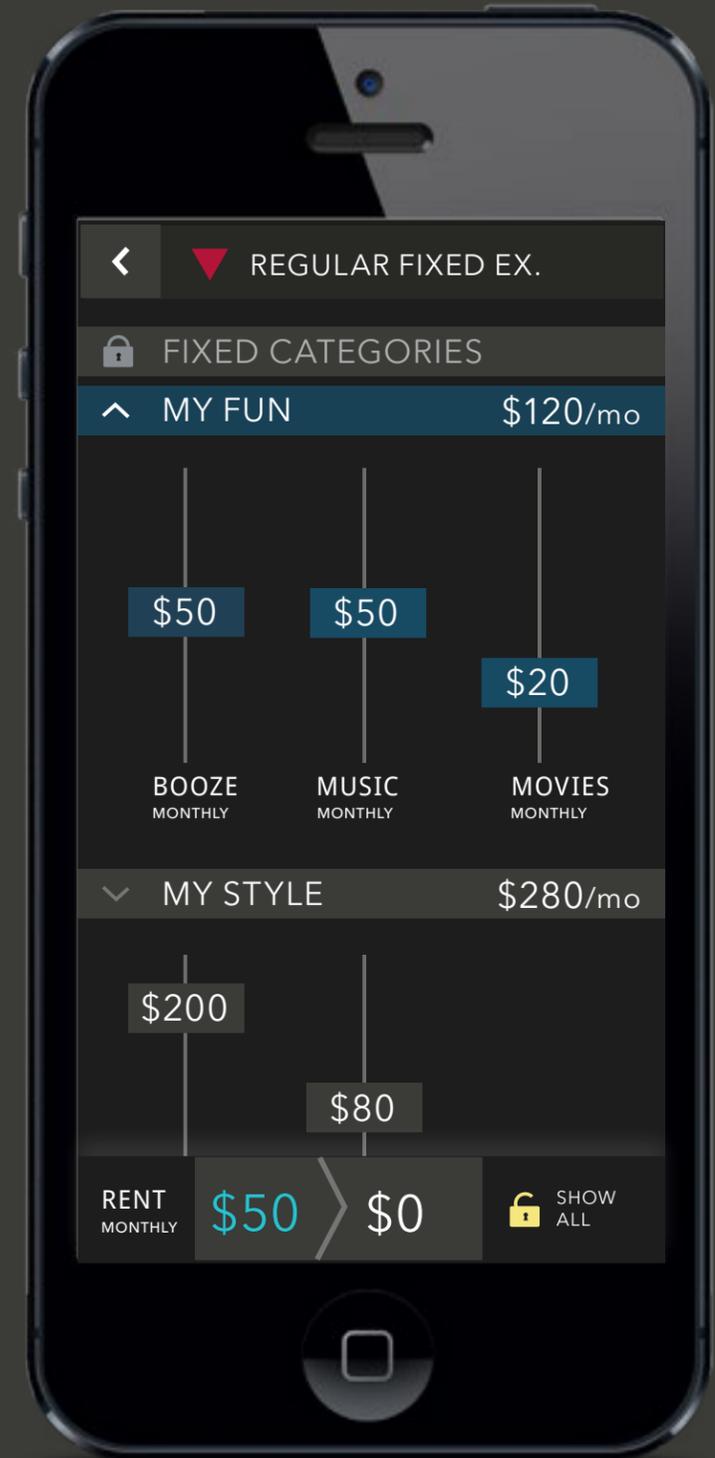
SPENDING SCENARIOS



The app multiplies the increase by its set duration and calculates the overall amount so Daniel can see how much more it is.

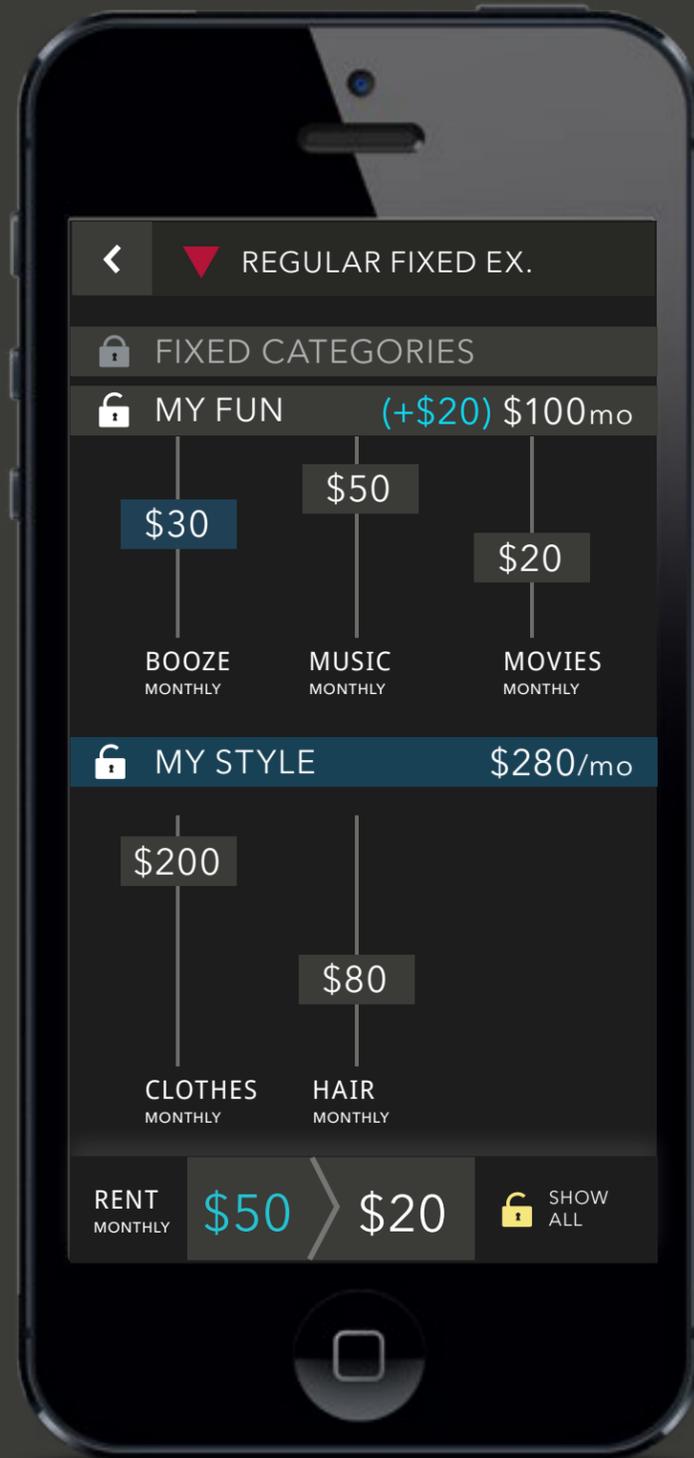


Working with your current budget, the app prompts you to SLIDE TO FIND THE MONEY.

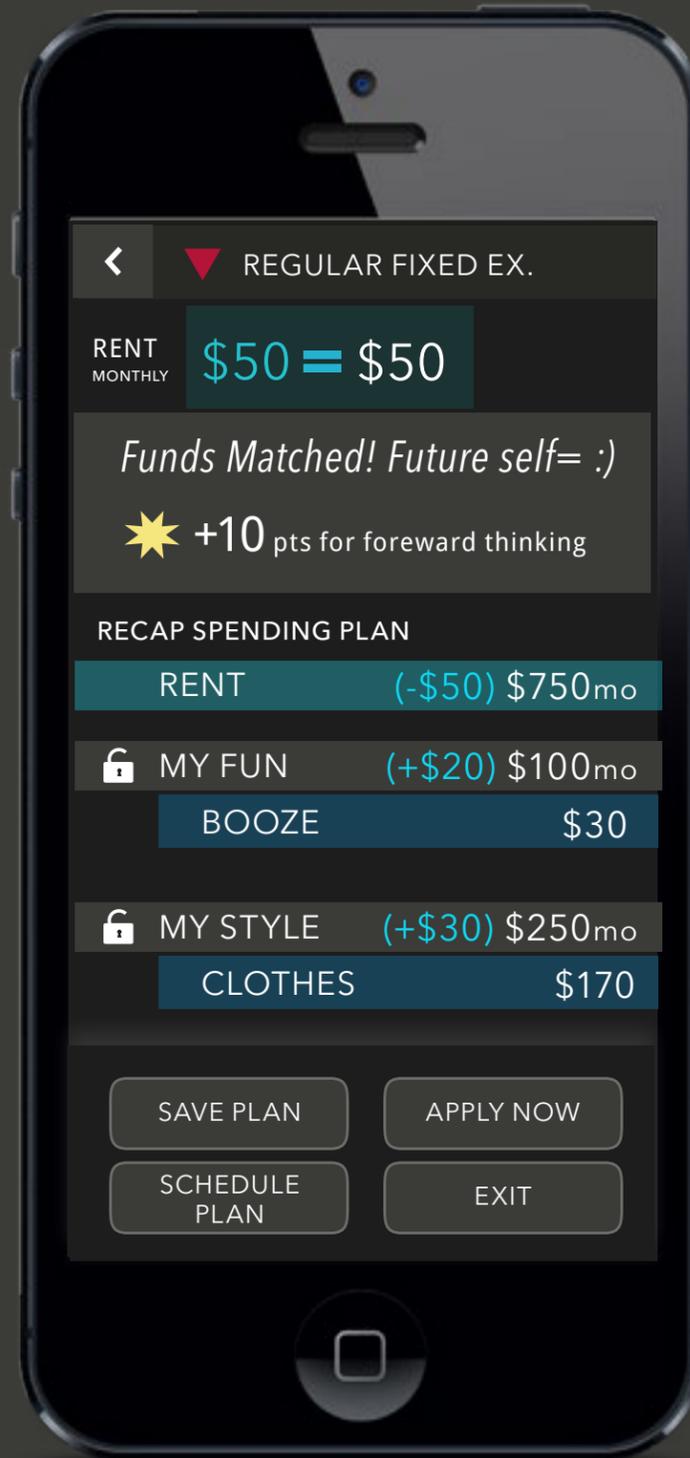


You can move all your budgets or just focus on the categories that you have marked as flexible categories.

SPENDING SCENARIOS



Daniel is able to decide what areas he can cut back on to make the sacrifice for a more expensive place.



When you have matched the amount needed you are rewarded with points for future planning. You have the option to SAVE your plan, APPLY it to your current budge or SCHEDULE it for a later date.