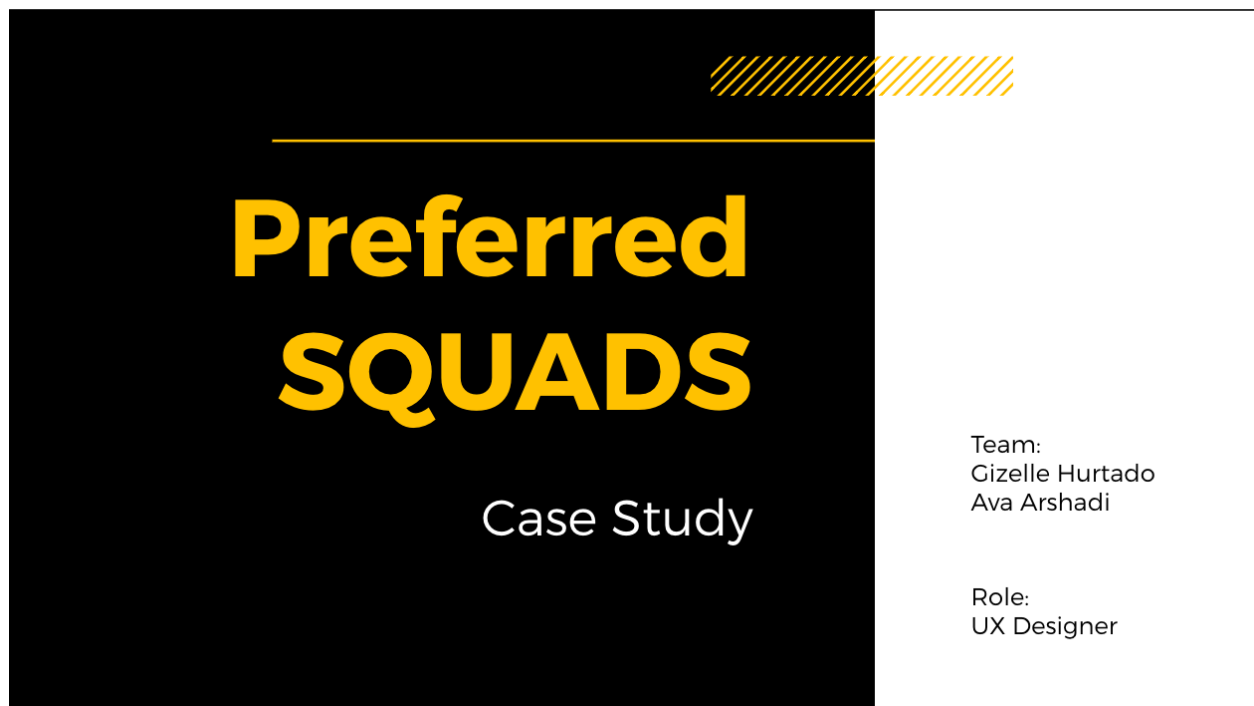




# Activision Midterm Case Study



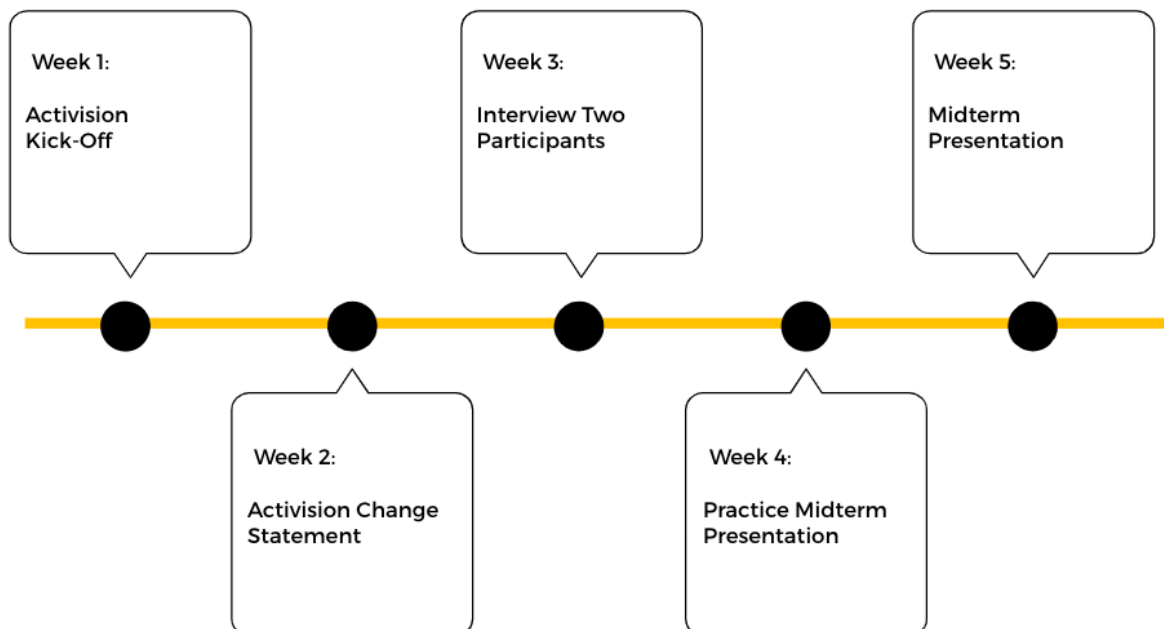
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## Timeline



## Project Challenge and Description

Activision tasked us with redesigning their Call of Duty companion app in order to attract current and new players and to create a sense of community through the app.

My teammate and I decided to focus on the Call of Duty female audience. From our observation and research, we came to the conclusion that for female gamers the gaming community is not a very welcoming environment for them especially in the Call of Duty community that is known for its toxic players. So we thought how might we be able to use the companion app to create a more inclusive environment for female gamers and to help them find a community they feel safe with.

## Change Statement



**How might we create an enjoyable,  
nontoxic, inclusive space for female Call of  
Duty players using the companion app?**



## Stakeholder Interview

We interviewed Activision stakeholders that worked on the companion app.



## Activision Kick-Off Notes

### Stakeholders:

#### Mark Burmeister

Mark has been working at Activision for 9 years and is the lead director for the design of not only the companion app but also marketing websites and the MyCOD site.

#### Drew Gallo

Drew has been working for Activision for the past 2 and a half years as a Senior UX Designer and was one of the lead designers of the companion app.

#### Alex BenBassa

Alex has been working as the lead UI Designer for Activision and the Call of Duty franchise for the past 3 years.

### Quotes:

#### **"It doesn't matter if you're not good because you're with your friends."**

This is definitely something important to keep in mind since most people don't usually play first-person shooter games for the become the best at the game. A big part of it is the social aspect of the game.

#### **"Women are less likely to play with random players."**

As a women gamer, I can relate to this quote. Especially in a game like COD that is dominated by the male audience, it can be intimidating for women to be randomly placed in a team with men.

#### **"We are focused on retaining our existing players"**

It's smart to stick to your current audience since those are the people you can easily attract, but at the moment Activision's audience is a majority male and I think more effort can be put into attracting other genders.

### Future Considerations:

#### **How can we make Call of Duty WarZone a more inviting environment for women?**

I think that this is something that can be looked into further. I want to erase the stigma that women chose not to play COD because of the violence since most of the time that isn't the case.

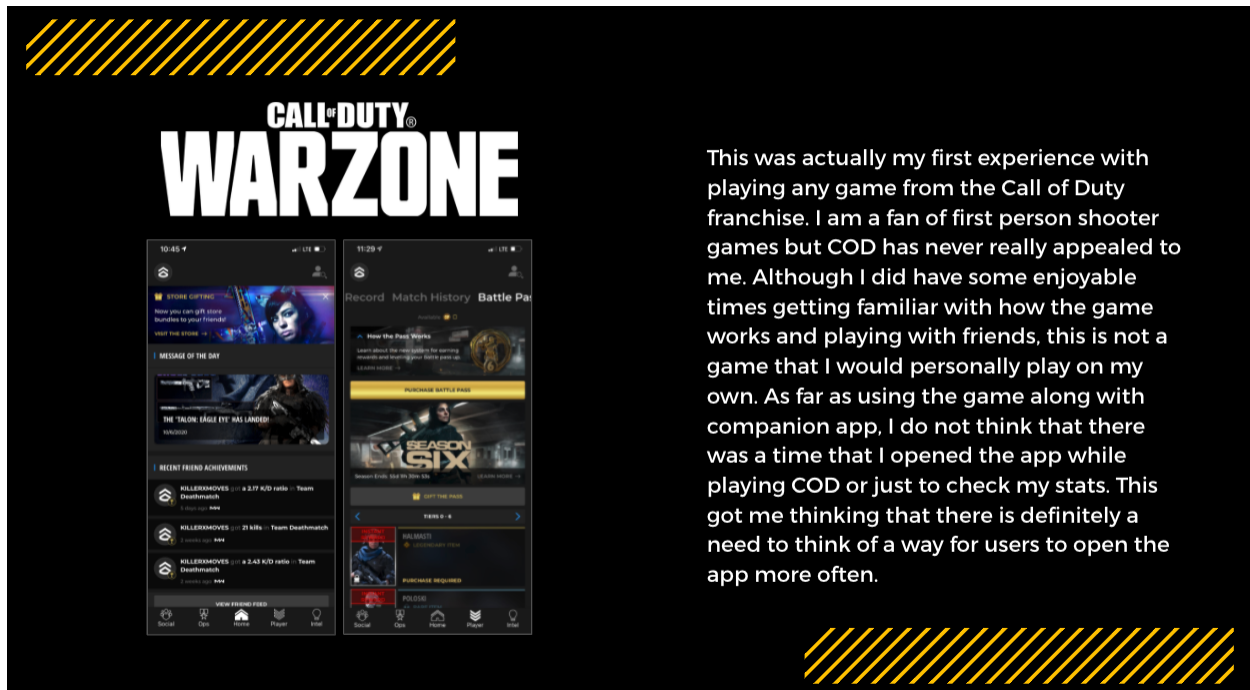
#### **Selecting your squads**

Since it is more fun to play with friends, I remember the stakeholders mentioning that you get places in random squads when opening the app and I think that you should be able to choose the squad you want to join. Similar to a guild.

#### **How to forums**

Forums in the app to get pointers from other COD players can create a big community.

## Product Review



This was actually my first experience with playing any game from the Call of Duty franchise. I am a fan of first person shooter games but COD has never really appealed to me. Although I did have some enjoyable times getting familiar with how the game works and playing with friends, this is not a game that I would personally play on my own. As far as using the game along with companion app, I do not think that there was a time that I opened the app while playing COD or just to check my stats. This got me thinking that there is definitely a need to think of a way for users to open the app more often.

## Secondary Research

My teammate and I conducted some secondary research. We both focused on looking up and reading articles on the experience of female gamers and on why gaming is so gendered.

[hurltado\\_gjzelle\\_seco  
ndary\\_research](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ffNnLEL6GELmPbNs9X8G6RQ83sFGcZEzu6zbVscnXyk/edit?usp=drivesdk)


## Competitive Analysis

My teammate then conducted a competitive analysis. She found that

there are many big gaming companies that also have a companion app that is open more often by their users. A big part of it is because a lot of these app give user some kind of incentive to open the app.

## Heuristic Evaluation


We then conducted a heuristic evaluation. I have laid out our main insights below.

 **Heuristic Evaluation** [https://docs.google.com/document/d/1LWoceAZEsrmhugJVzfQK3Wgm\\_\\_C-tNzFDxlrUGlleo/edit?usp=drivesdk](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1LWoceAZEsrmhugJVzfQK3Wgm__C-tNzFDxlrUGlleo/edit?usp=drivesdk)

<b>Homepage:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When looking at the home screen you know that this is an app connected to COD.</li> <li>The logo is only on the homepage if you keep the default profile picture on your account.</li> </ul>	<b>Navigation:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Primary nav is very straightforward.</li> <li>Too many sub nav menus to the point that it gets confusing and you can get lost.</li> </ul>	<b>Visual Design:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Follows the Call of Duty aesthetic well.</li> <li>Colors and styles are consistent except for on the homepage here the cards have different backgrounds and kind of break up the design.</li> </ul>
<b>Accessibility:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>User can access the Call of Duty companion app only if they have played a game from the COD franchise.</li> </ul>	<b>Content Quality:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Each card has a title that tells you exactly what content you are about to read/view.</li> <li>The tone the app gives off is a very call to action and military base tone.</li> </ul>	<b>Feature &amp; Functionality:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On the COD app there is an entire page dedicated to tutorials. Which is useful in itself for new players of COD.</li> </ul>

## Netography

On our netography, my teammate and I searched several forms in search of the exercise of female gamers will

 **Netography** <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1T1oxA89qTZluZewpqvpSB4ZjSLtU2u-0AeBH9-L07M/edit?usp=drivesdk>

playing Call of Duty. There was even some post that talked about what they are doing now to avoid the toxicity in gaming community.

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y.

## Domain Expert Interviews

We had a chance to interview domain experts Geoff Moore and Brandon Cating.

They laid out for us Call of Duty's main audience which is:

- The stereotype homophobic misogynists who are a vocal minority.
- The 30 plus year old guys who have been playing for a while and still play with their friends for the nostalgia.
- Younger kids that really should not be playing a war game.
- The small demographic that actually play because they enjoy online and first person shooter games. This group is a diverse group of people.

## Target Audience Interviews

My teammate and I interviewed several female gamers that play Call of Duty and other first person shooter games. These were some of their responses on their experience playing with other players.

*"Being a female gamer is not for the faint of heart"*

**Brenna M.**

Competitive CS:GO  
female gamer and  
active COD player.



*"There's a point where you can talk trash were its fun and then there a point where they take it too far where they keep harassing you every single day."*

**Jasmine V.**

Active COD player.



*"I just have fun playing with my group of friends because when you're playing Counter-Strike or Call of Duty you don't have to deal with toxic talking from strangers."*

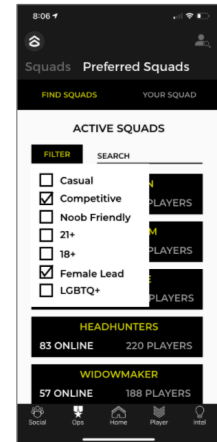
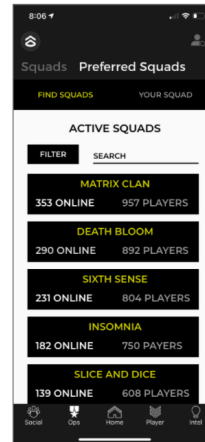
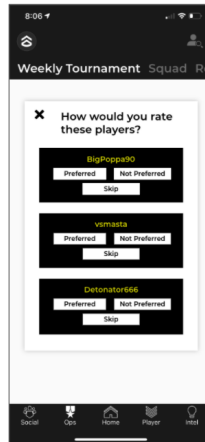
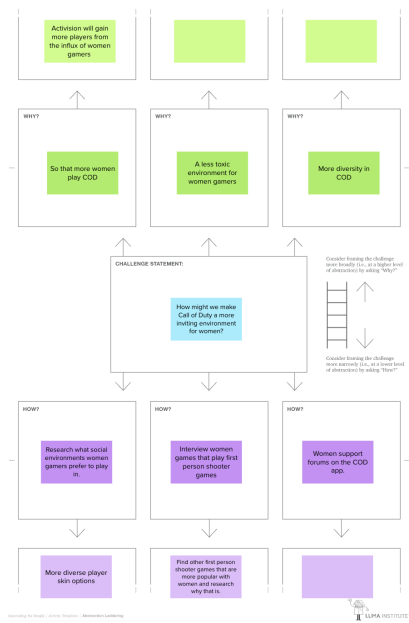
**Kassandra M.**

Active COD player and participant in Esports.



## Concept Development

Using abstract laddering and other concept developing methods we came up with our low fidelity prototype of the preferred squads interface on the app.



## Midterm Presentation

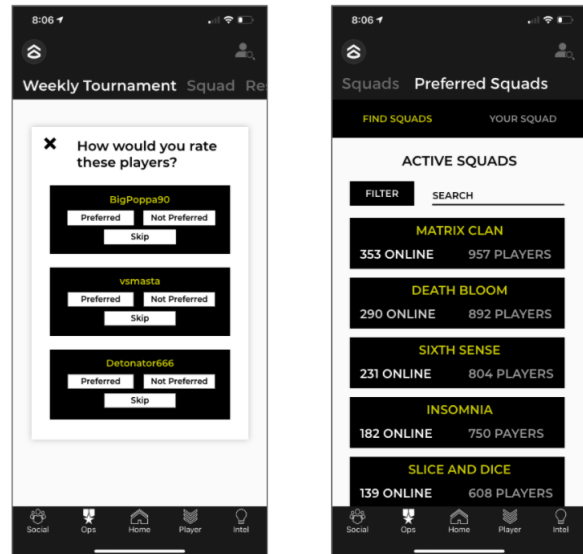
Our midterm presentation on our concept, Preferred SQUADS, that we presented to the Activision stakeholders.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AVcuoUVGokU&feature=youtu.be&ab\\_cchannel=GizelleHurtado](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AVcuoUVGokU&feature=youtu.be&ab_cchannel=GizelleHurtado)

## Results

We presented our concept screens for Preferred SQUADS and got feedback from the Activision stakeholders. We

will be implementing those suggestion and feedback in our next iteration.



## Reflections

What worked?

Our tone and how we presented our work was very well received. The stakeholder do believe that this concept is something that can be implemented into the app.

What didn't work?

Our concept did not take into consideration new players and that's something the stakeholders want to see.

What will you do next time?

For next time we will be looking into what we could do as an incentive to have players use the rating system. We will also be looking into how we can mix new players in our concept.

# Appendix

