

Unity Next

R&D Report

Team of Unity Next | Apr, 2025





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Overview

1 - Product Introduction

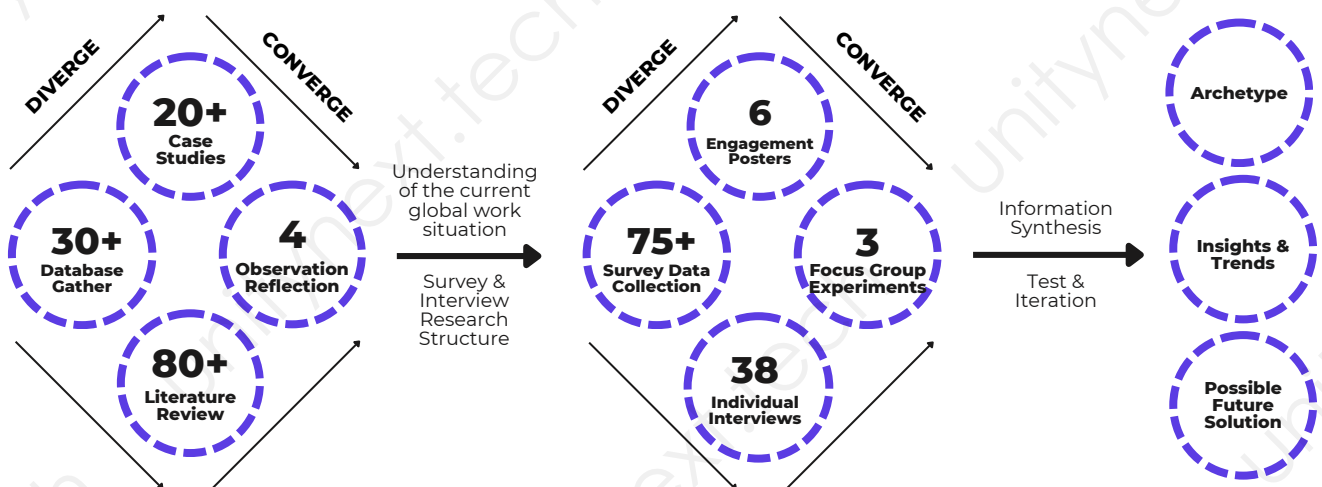
Unity Next is a SaaS plug-in application that aims to enhance distributed team collaboration and build a stronger team culture in a hybrid work context. We offer a virtual scenario for distributed colleagues to have continuous interaction as they grow themselves, contribute, and harvest in a gamified company scenario (virtual garden).

This product is continually evolving, it's currently in the engineering phase for the 1st round funding.

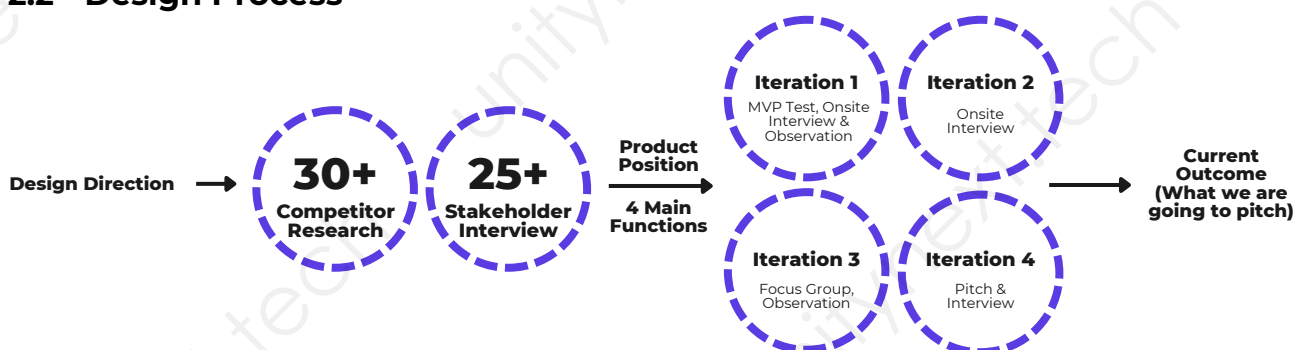
2 - Research & Design (R&D) Overview

Unity Next has been through a 1-year research and design process. The first half year focused on researching on the current landscape of work and predict trends, pain points, and opportunities for the future of work. The second half year focused on designing the product as the solution of one of the pain points, company culture weakness driven by hybrid work.

2.1 - Research Process



2.2 - Design Process





Research

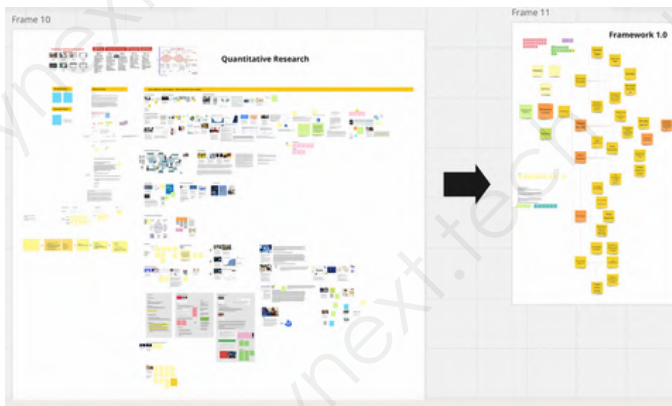
1 - Research Overview

Unity Next has been through a **6-month exploratory research process**, including **20+ case studies**, **30+ database gatherings**, and **80+ literature reviews** in secondary research; **4 engagement poster activities**, **1 digital survey**, **38 individual interviews**, and **3 focus groups** research in primary research. The research **outcome was synthesized into 4 archetypes and 3 key findings** that identified pain points, predicted future trends and provided insights regarding “future of work” to support future design.

2 - Secondary Research

Secondary research aims to understand:

- The history, evolving patterns and percentage of different work modes;
- The adaptivity, pos and cons of hybrid work mode;
- The general factors that affect people's choice of work mode.



Secondary Research Process

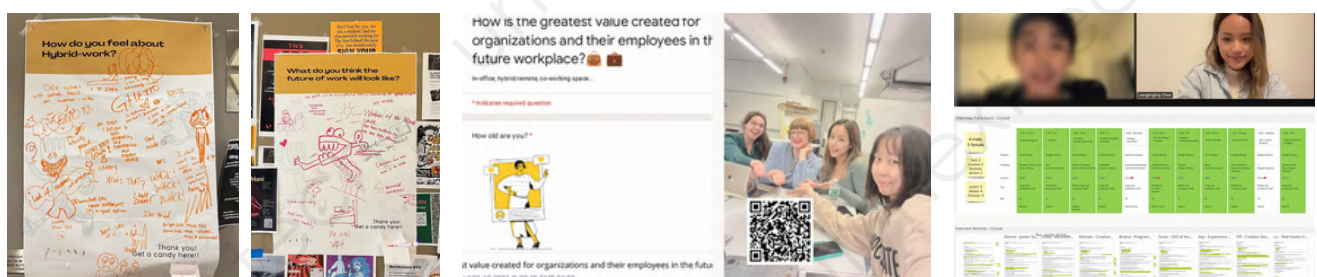
2.1 - Key Takeaways

- 40.8% of full-time employees in the US are operating at home or embracing hybrid work.
- While enjoying the flexibility, concerns about loneliness, productivity, and management arose.
- Different companies have different work mode policies based on their industry, culture, etc factors.
- Different individuals have different work mode preferences based on their job responsibility, life stage, personality, etc factors.

3 - Primary Research

Primary research aims to understand:

- Standpoints on hybrid mode from different job roles' perspectives.
- Detailed factors that affect organizations' & individuals' choice of work mode, and the relation in between.



Primary Research Process



4 - Information Synthesis

Information synthesis tries to conclude factors that affect individuals' choice of work mode.



Information Synthesis Process

4.1 - Key Findings

Finding 1

Passion level of work affects individual's choice of working model.

Employees with a higher passion to their work are more likely to step in the office and start interaction with their colleagues and the surrounding world.

Finding 2

Work & position conditions affect individual's choice of working model.

- Employees whose work involves large systematic complexity and high volume of conversation prefer to work in person more.
- Employees whose positions involve strategic decision-making and team management are more willing to have face-to-face interaction.

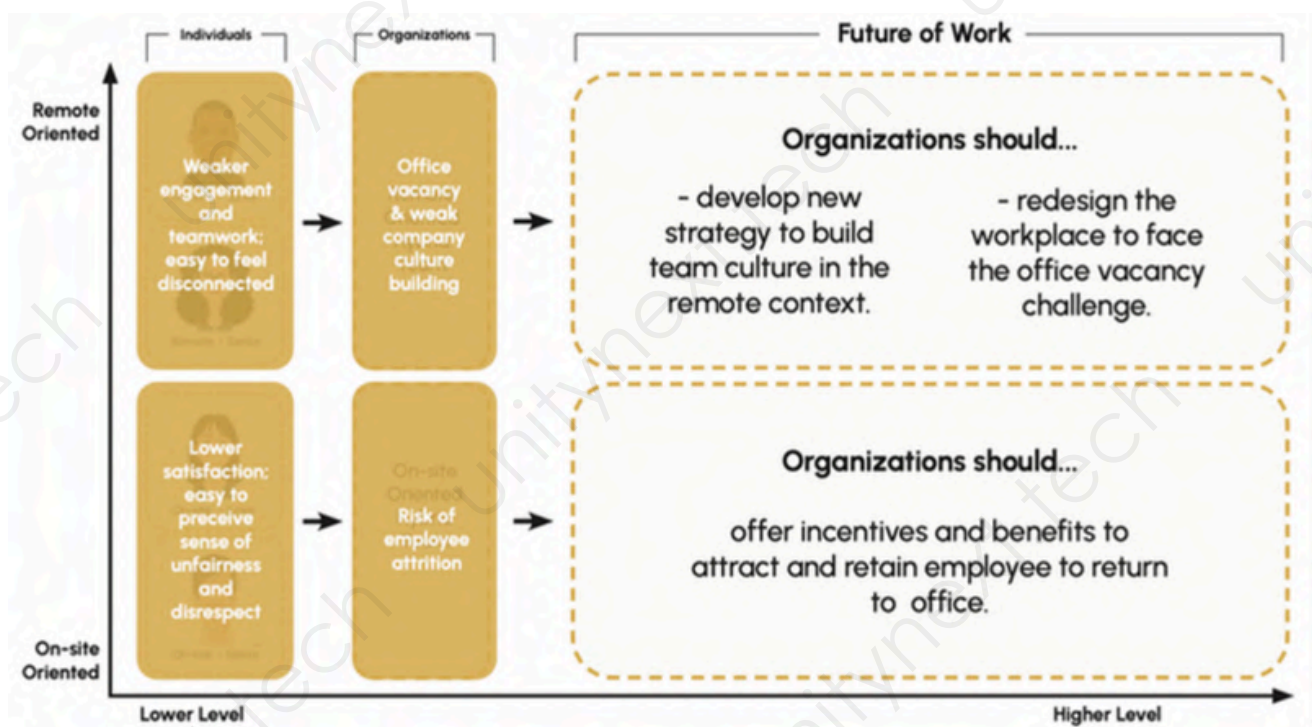
Finding 3

Life & relationship value affects individual's choice of working model.

- Employees who want to establish strong relationship with their colleagues prefer to work in office more.
- * People with a higher position (mid-level or above) are more likely to value Team Management instead of Peer Relationship. These two factors share an inconvertible relationship in between.

5 - Research Outcome

The research outcome predicts trends for “Future of Work” with an Archetypes.



Archetype System + Research Finding Structure



Design

1 - Design Overview

Unity Next has been through **6+ months of design process** to solve one of the problems of future work identified from the researched phase: Disconnection and weak team engagement. The process includes **30+ competitor research**, **25+ target stakeholder(user) interviews**, and **4 rounds of product tests and iterations**. The final outcome is a SaaS application that helps distributed team strengthen culture and collaboration.

2 - Market Research & User Interview

Understand stakeholders' needs and the existing market solution (competitors) of the challenge by conducting 30+ competitor research and 25+ interviews.



Market Research & Target Stakeholder Interview Process

2.1 - Pain Points

Pain Point 1

Lack of shared work experience, weakens their sense of belonging.

Pain Point 2

Reduced communication and interaction, decrease passion and engagement in work.

Pain Point 3

Difficult network building to receive timely feedback and assistance from colleagues.



3 - Design Outcome

3.1 - Ideation (Solution)

Ideate solution directions through series of synthesis to solve the corresponding pain points above.



A gamified company virtual scenario



An incentive reward system to keep moving relationship forward



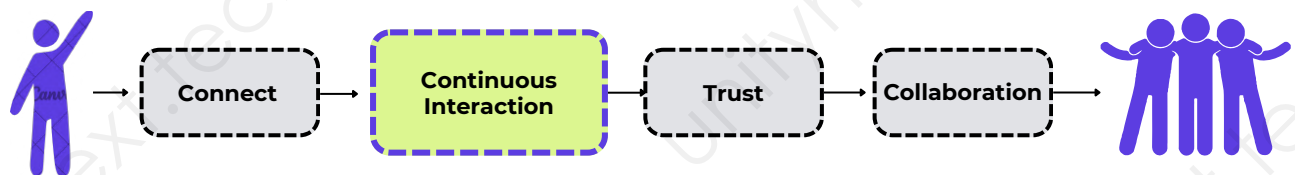
An internal coffee chat network system



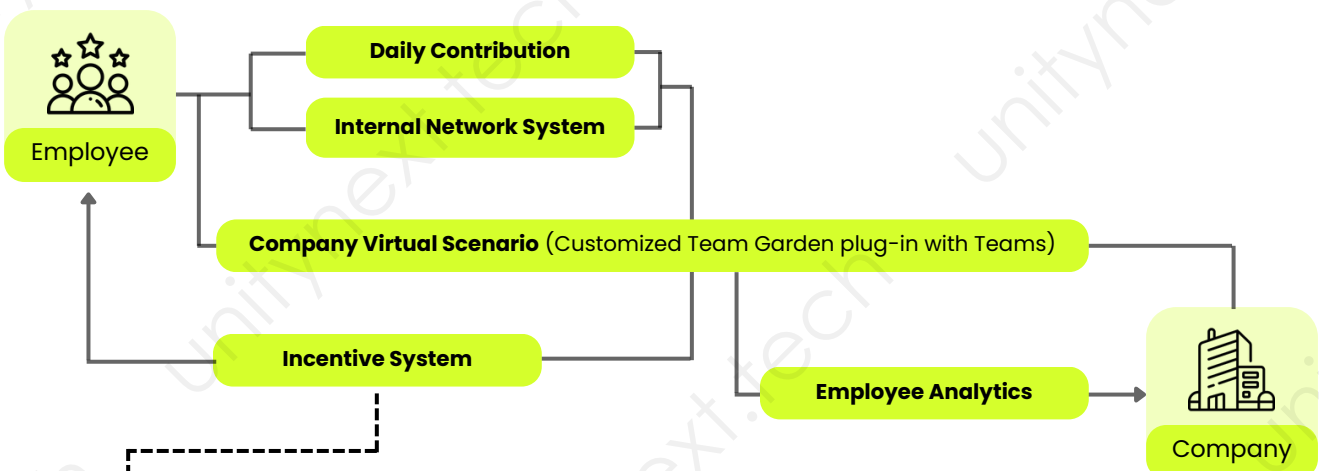
An employee analytics for evaluation

Create detailed product function tree grounded on a solid principle (logic base).

Product Logic Base - Relationship Building Process



Detailed Function Tree



Incentive System (Mechanism)



Water Drop



Flower



Honey



Rewards

- From company, certain amount monthly / yearly;
- Can **only use on other's flowers**, a way to show appreciation.
- **12 levels**, level up by **time contribution / watering from others**;
- the higher level the more honey.
- Convert from flower level when project ends;
- Accumulated by scheduling coffee chat.
- **Team-oriented benefits** that would **strengthen the engagement team relationship**



Iteration

1 - Iteration Overview

Unity Next has been through **4 rounds of product tests and iterations** through **on-site interviews, survey feedback, and focus group observation**. The **objectives** includes:

- Test concept viability and function comprehensiveness;
- Test user journey and experience;
- Test business model;
- Test reward system's rationale and effectiveness.

2 - Iteration Process & Details



Iteration 1

Test the product concept's viability by observing and interviewing target users in real work situations.



Iteration 2

Test the user journey from both user side and management side.



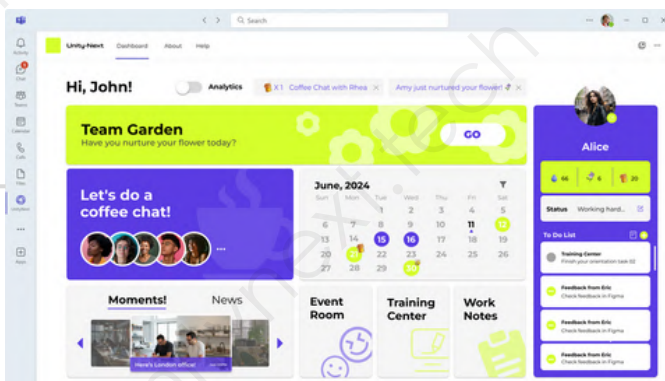
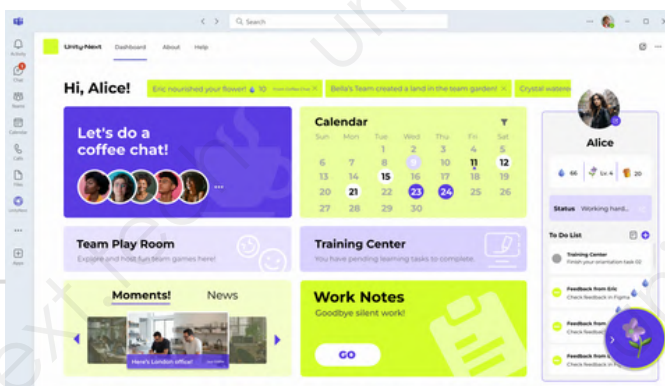
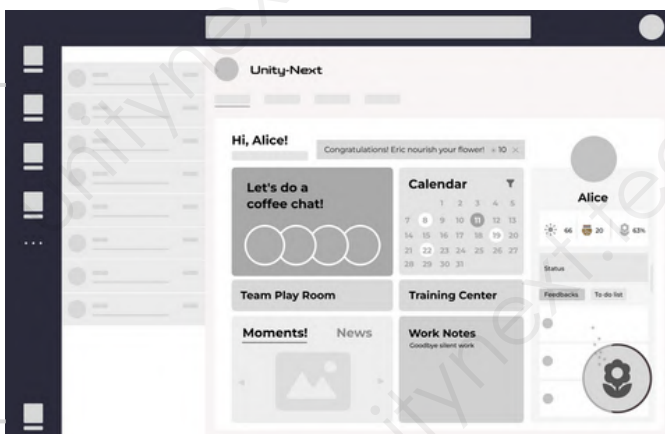
Iteration 3

Test the user journey again, assess the business model and technical feasibility.



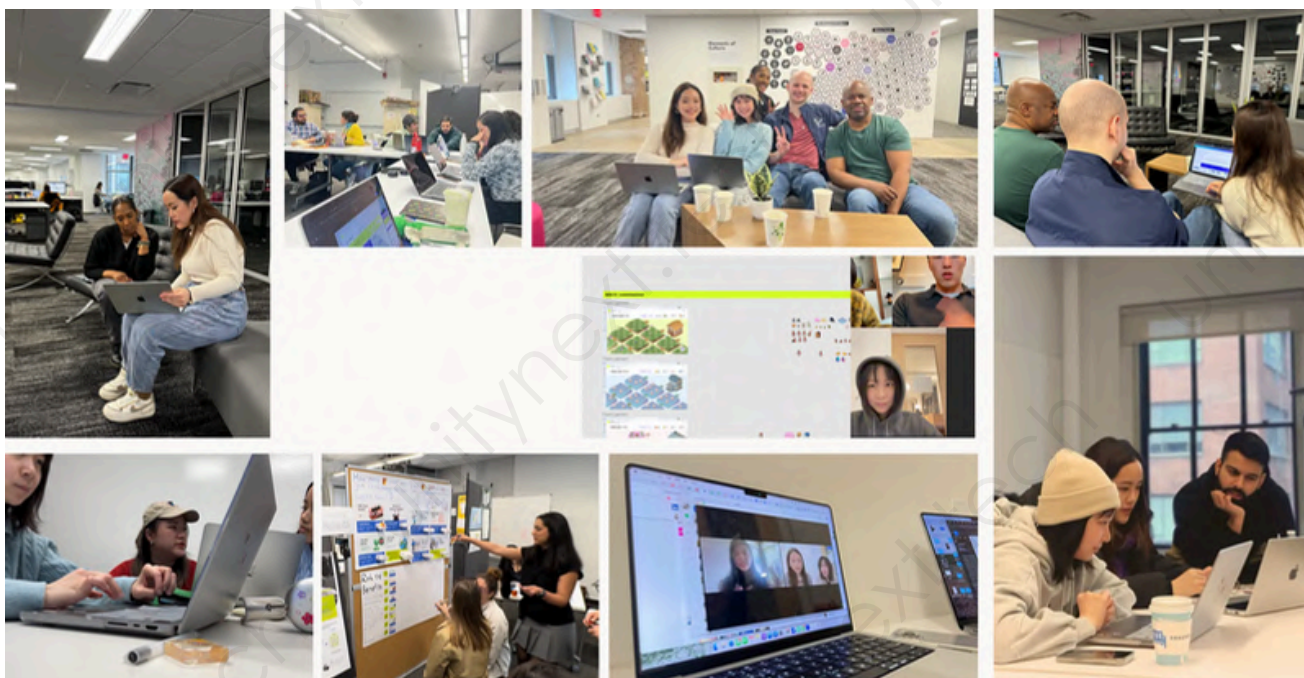
Iteration 4

Test the rationale and acceptance of the incentive system.





Testing & Iteration Process



Summary

1 - Final Outcome

The 4 submission images reflect the final outcome (features, interfaces, etc) of the current product version. The product is currently under the engineering phase. Please refer to the images for more info.

2 - Reflection + Next Step

This product has been through a comprehensive and detailed process from Research, Design, and Engineering with a streamlined team structure. **It offers us a profound understanding of North American workplace culture and a solid practical experience in SaaS product development.**

Product development is a continually evolving process. Moving forward, we will continue iterate our product based on real user data, refine the engineering process, invest in marketing, and prepare materials for future fundings.



Unity Next

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