



New Wine in Old Bottles

A redesign of Berry Bros. & Rudd's mobile app.

Berry Bros. & Rudd is Britain's oldest wine and spirit merchant, having traded from the same shop in London since 1698. Today, they serve an international community ranging from wine connoisseurs to savvy social drinkers. I set out to design an entirely new mobile app experience for them that meets their current needs while preserving their traditional charm.

All information in this case study is my own and does not necessarily reflect the views of Berry Bros. & Rudd.

The Challenge

The previous Berry Bros. & Rudd mobile app frustrated loyal customers and its slow performance made them lose trust in the brand and its services. The display did not evoke a personal connection or sense of pride in consumers for their purchases and sapped the very reason they bought the wine in the first place: its character.

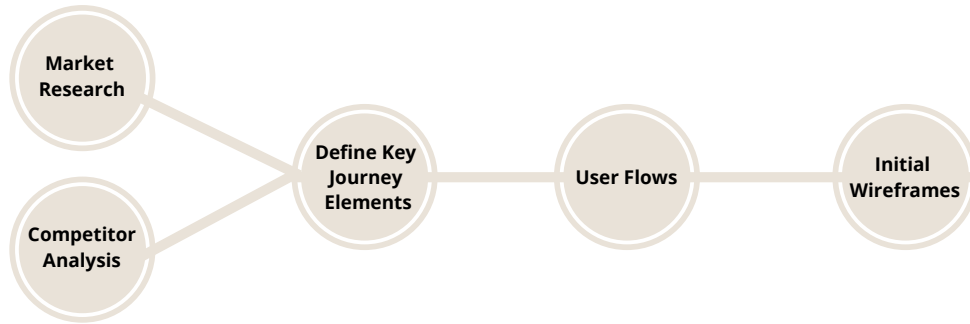
The fact that some consumers manually updated their own spreadsheets to keep track of the wine they stored at BB&R emphasised the unsatisfying user experience and reiterated the need for a seamless interface. My challenge was to design a new mobile app for BB&R that would provide customers with a personalised hub for understanding, managing and showcasing all their cellared wines.

My Role

As the Lead UX and Visual App Designer, my role on this project was to conceptualise and implement designs for BB&R's new mobile app. From researching user experiences and mapping out their journeys to outlying wireframes and developing prototypes, I was responsible for translating feedback from consumers into a user friendly app design. I also curated a colour palette and designed vector icons to match BB&R's well-established branding.

Just like a well-balanced wine is easy to drink, a well-designed app should be equally easy to use. Through meticulous research and trial and evaluation, I was able to visually map out an app experience for BB&R's customers that is easy to navigate and pleasing to the eye.

The Pressing Phase



Research

The wine industry is still a very niche sector and proper research into the modern landscape of wine consumers was crucial in executing this project. My research strategy was to gather market insight from consumers and to analyse competitors and then channel the respective information into defining the key journey elements of the app. From there, I could develop user flow maps that would ultimately pave the way for the first wireframes.

Market Research

Competitor Analysis

Market Research

Firstly, I spent an hour with 21 existing BB&R customers and 5 non-customers in the UK to understand why people engage with wine as well as with BB&R's and their competitors products and services. Additionally, I ran a rapid quantitative survey with over 200 respondents to understand why customers buy 'drinking wine' from BB&R.

On the basis of both the interviews and survey results, I was able to identify six customer personas, their respective needs and their preferred wines:

1. The **Obsessive Collector** collects the world's finest wines to build the ultimate cellar and buys fine wine to lay down.
2. The **Savvy Drinker** purchases good wine today to enjoy better wine in the future at a lower cost. Like the Obsessive Collector, the Savvy Drinker also buys fine wine to lay down.

3. The **Impatient Explorer** drinks the best fine wines in their prime - today! They buy special drinking wine of roughly £25 and over.
4. The **Convenient Consumer** aims to get quality drinking wine as easy as possible and buys everyday drinking wine of roughly £25 and under.
5. The **Keen Learner** wants to learn about wine to drink it better. Like the Convenient Consumer, the Keen Learner also buys everyday drinking wine of roughly £25 and under.
6. The **Gift Giver** likes to either treat themselves, make a good impression or just give a nice gift to someone else and will purchase a mix of everyday drinking wine, special drinking wine and fine wine.

The previous app had 6685 new downloads and an average of 95 unique daily accesses, according to statistics from 2017. This indicated that the app was used by a small number of highly loyal customers. From this research, I established that the app will best serve the **Obsessive Collector** and **Savvy Drinker** who both prefer to buy fine wines to lay down.

Competitor Analysis

Alongside BB&R, I analysed 11 competitors in order to understand their offering in the cellar management and fine wine trading space. The competition included Vivino, Cellar Watch, Cellar Tracker, eSommelier, Cavex, Vinfolio, Livex, The Wine Curators, Wine Searcher, BI and Wine Owners.



Some of these companies offered cross-platform portfolio management and others operated trading platforms while the minority offered both. From the surveys conducted across these 12 companies, I concluded that:

1. **Mobile sophistication was low** because only 5 of the 12 companies had an app - of which 3 were iOS.
2. Whether aimed at a drinker or investor, there were no entry-level platforms and **most assumed a high level of prior knowledge.**
3. There was **no one size fits all solution** and enthusiasts had to use multiple platforms for different features.

4. Managing an entire collection on one platform is nearly impossible and customers needed to use multiple platforms to manage their wine.
5. The **user experience was complex** and the best features used graphics to illustrate the data-heavy field of cellar management and trading.
6. The **products may serve one outcome** of either platform management or trading, or it could offer both.
7. Some competitors like Vinfolio and Wine Owners offered **features that covered every part of the fine wine journey from end-to-end**.
8. The **user experience suffered when missions were mixed** and the end-to-end features became muddled together.

Defining the key journey elements

From the market research, I concluded that the app was going to best serve the Obsessive Collector and the Savvy Drinker. From the competitor analysis, however, I learnt that these two behavioural groups want different things.

The Savvy Drinker wants a portfolio management system while the Obsessive Collector wants a portfolio management system, a trading platform and an aggregated place to see all their wines no matter where it is stored.

The pressing question was: How do we strike the right balance in satisfying these needs?

Finding the perfect blend

After defining the new challenge, I was ready to find the perfect blend for BB&R's bespoke app. I established that I would need to design a personalised hub for understanding, managing and showcasing cellared wine. The three key milestones that I set out to achieve in the app were clearer cellar management, smarter trading and easier purchasing.

Ideation Workshop

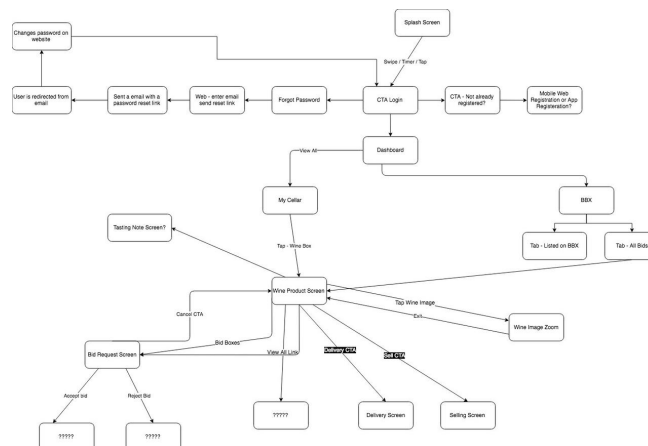
Team work makes the dream work and I found that an ideation workshop really helped me to channel my ideas into a tangible plan for BB&R's new app design. From charts and diagrams to brainstorming and discussions, these sessions fine-tuned my strategy for designing and developing the app. Bouncing ideas off colleagues and clients also helped me to find the balance between the app's three main objectives of being a portfolio management system, a trading platform and an aggregated cellar.



User Flow Map

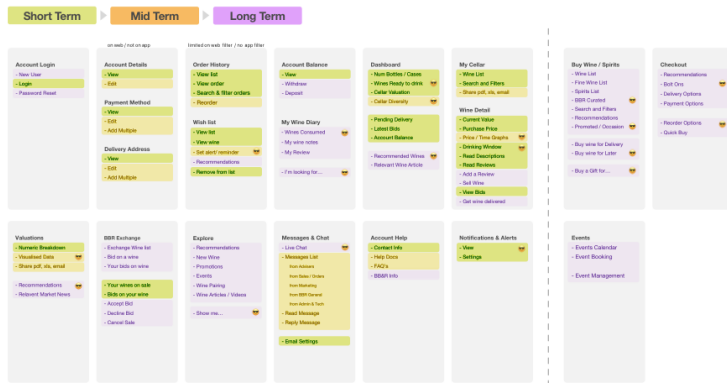
In order for me to understand the way users would navigate through the app, I created a user flow map by drawing the various paths users could potentially take to achieve a certain objective within the mobile app.

The user path I mapped out enabled me to determine key user journeys which could evolve into more complex flows. Creating a user flow map gave me the ability to foresee how users would journey through BB&R's app before actually building the product.



The main departure points of the app were going to be the home dashboard, the cellar management platform, the BBX trading platform, a valuation summary and a general account information section. From here on out, users would be able to move around to get the information they needed in each respective section.

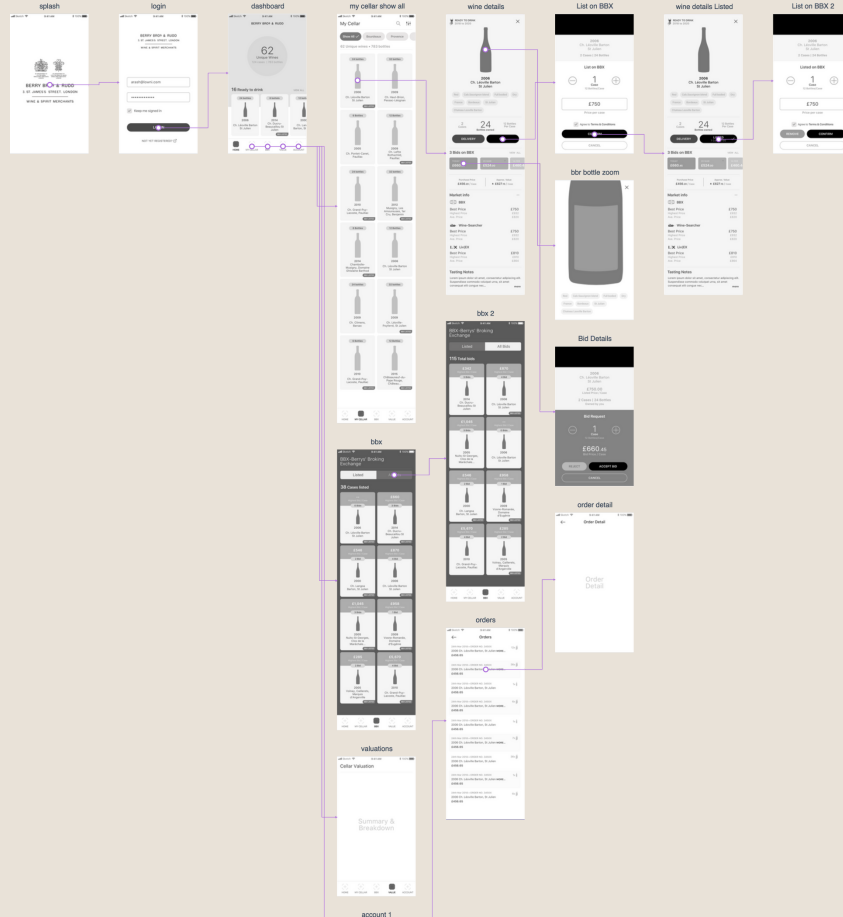
Berry Bros & Rudd - App Roadmap



Each journey also needed various functionalities that would require different screen designs. For this reason, I set out short, medium and long term goals for each of these functionalities and designed the screens for them accordingly. For example, the home screen dashboard needed to showcase the number of wines in the cellar, the cellar valuation, wines that were ready to drink, pending deliveries, the account balance and the latest bids from the get-go. In the medium term, I would introduce cellar diversity and only at the latest stage recommended wines and articles.

Wireframes and Sketches

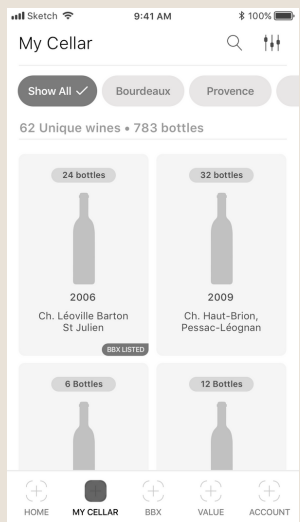
After mapping out the user flow, I was able to start work on the wireframes and prototypes. I created a wireframe map of the user flow journey by sketching each app screen and illustrating the journey required to fulfil certain user objectives. This allowed everyone to get an holistic view of the app's flow and see where and when users would be prompted or redirected.





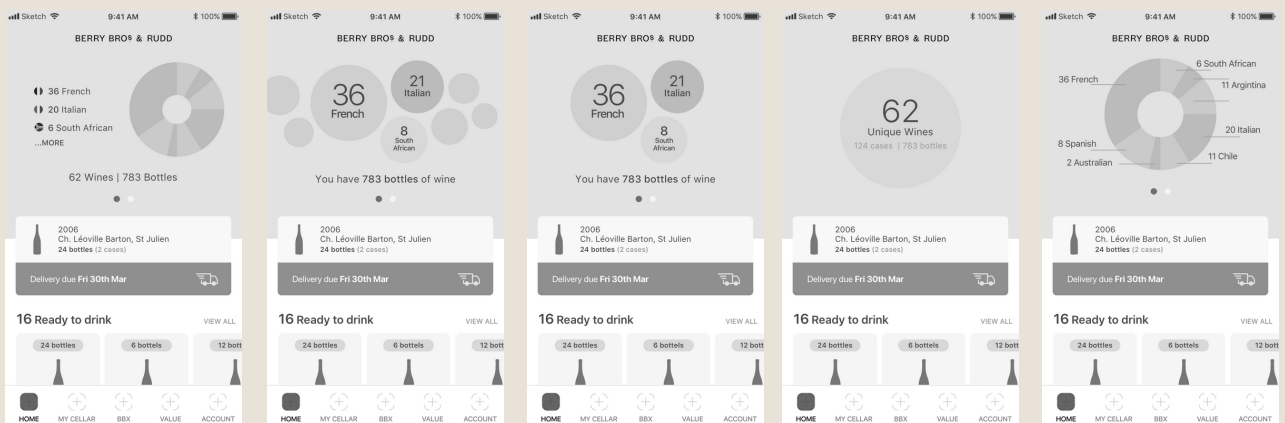
In the example, a user goes through the classic steps of logging into the app and then lands on their dashboard.

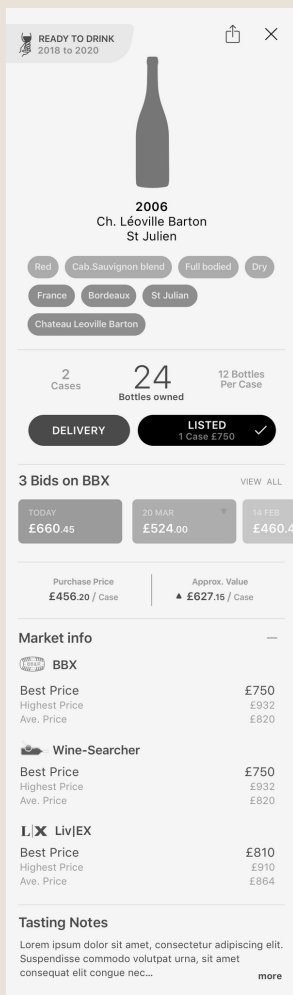
Here they can find a navigation bar at the bottom of their dashboard that allows them to view their cellar, their account, the BBX marketplace, their cellar valuation or return to their dashboard at anytime through the 'home' button.



If they move onto their personalised cellar to view their entire collection, they will be met with a gallery view of their wine portfolio. Each tile has a picture of the respective wine bottle with general details like its name, year and the quantity in the cellar. The filter feature allows users to easily find wines according to region, type, year etc.

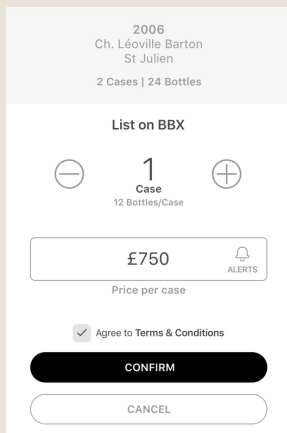
As one of the more data-heavy sections of the app, I also explored different ways to visually present the cellar diversity. Here are a few examples where I used pie and donut charts to illustrate the different types of wine in the cellar. It was worth investing more time into getting this section perfect as our target market of Obsessive Collectors were likely to spend a lot of time on this part of the app.



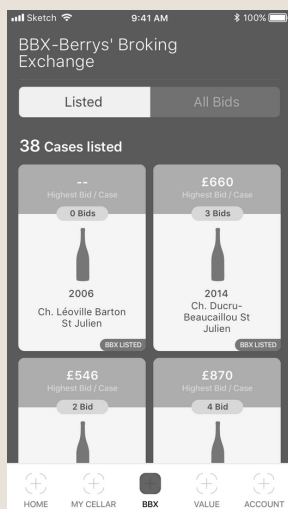


By clicking on an individual tile, users will be navigated to the respective wine's finer details. This includes the wine's features, tasting notes and how many bottles a user has in their cellar.

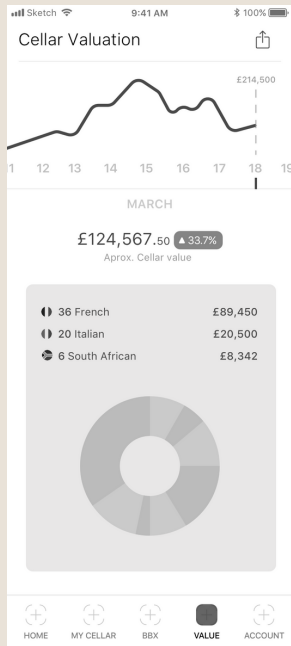
Alongside these details, market values of the respective wine and their BBX listing will also appear on this page as well as any bids on this wine.



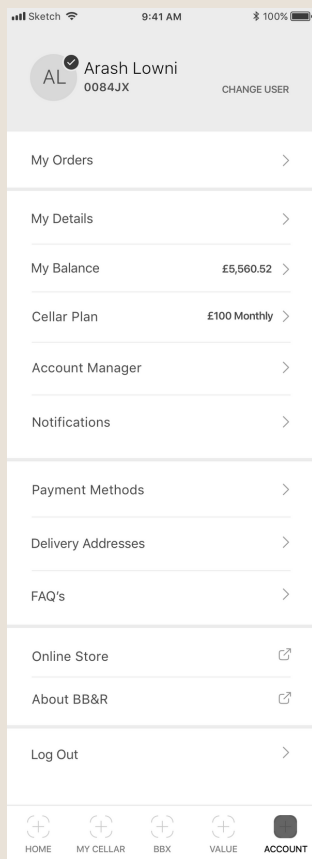
Users can click-out from the wine details to manage bids on the respective bottle.



If a user lands on the BBX page, they will be met with another graphic gallery view of all their listed wines. Alongside the general information, details on these tiles include the highest bid per case as well as the amount of bids on that case. Users are also able to change the view of their BBX dashboard from 'listed' to 'all bids'.

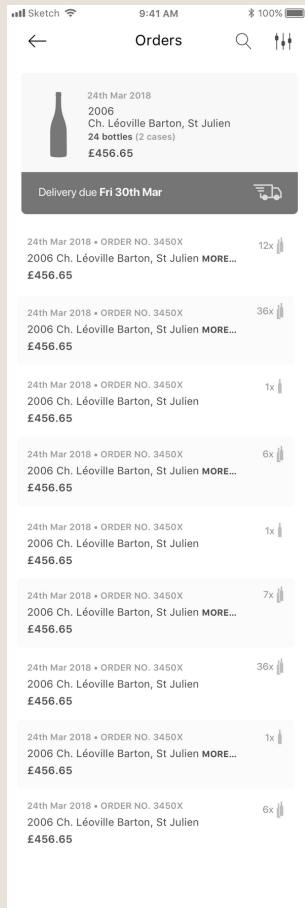


The valuation dashboard aims to be exactly what it says: a simple summary and breakdown of the cellar valuation. I included growth graphs in later versions as seen in the example.



Should a user navigate to their account, they will be met with familiar features of any app such as their personal details, settings and log out.

External links to BB&R's website include their about page, their online store and frequently asked questions. Unique to BB&R, they will also see a summary of their balance and a button to their orders.



The 'orders' dashboard takes a sleek listicle look where users can see the date they placed an ordered, the quantity of bottles and the type of wine. Clicking on each individual order tile will link through to a separate page with the order's details.

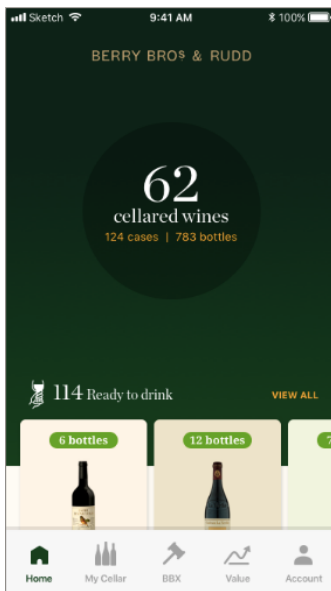


To give BB&R's app a bespoke quality, I played around with adding creative tweaks to little features on the app. The loading icon, for example, got some new life in the form of a wine bottle slowly filling up as a page loads.

Prototyping

After completing the wireframes of the user flow, I was confident to start design work on the app screens. The vector icons that were used on the navigation bar were inspired by the century old history of BB&R and includes sketches of oak wine barrels, a gavel and a cork screw among more modern, familiar icons.

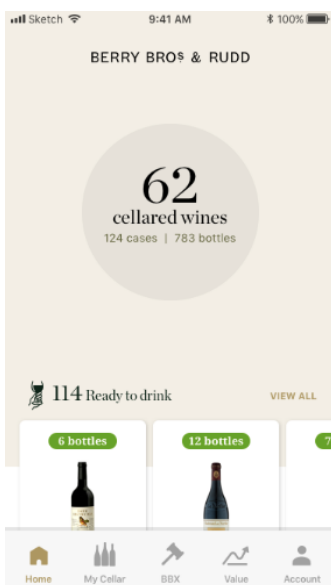




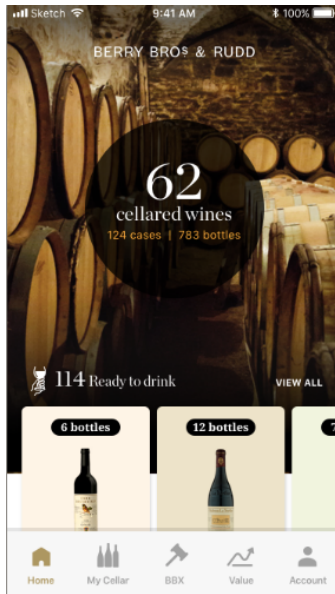
I curated the colour pallet by drawing inspiration from BB&R's well-established branding, the natural colours of the wine industry and the general vibrance of wine itself.

I explored using both dark and light backgrounds and combined imagery for a broad spectrum of options.

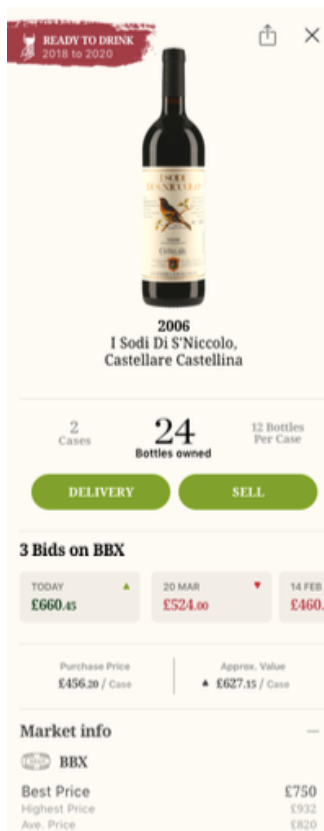
Using dark green and gold as primary colours contributed to the elegance associated with wine.



I also explored using a different colour background for rosé, red and white wine tiles in the cellar gallery view inspired by the colours of the respective wines.

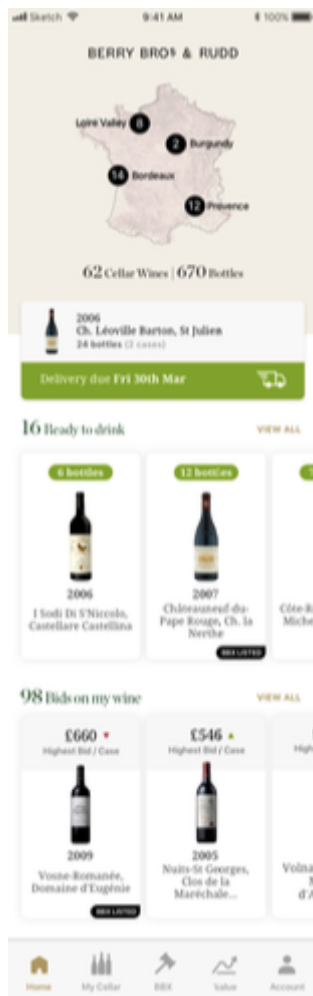


Visual imagery gave a strong foundation to my designs and really brought each section to life. The imagery of the specific wine regions, for example, aimed to transport users to the origin of their beloved wines and the imagery of century old barrels in the cellars brought warmth to data-driven sections.



From bottle to branding, the photos of the wine bottles also allowed users to know exactly what they were spending their money on.

I felt like these bottles further contributed to the pride users could feel when exploring their cellars knowing that each bottle represents a physical one.



Infographics sometimes have the ability to convey a message so much better than words and by including maps of different wine regions, I was able to say so much without a single word.

For our target market of Obsessive Collectors and Savvy Drinkers, wine regions are also particularly important and the maps helped to emphasise that information.

Tasting and testing

To see if I've found the perfect blend for BB&R's new app, I put the new designs to the test by conducting a qualitative user testing with 5 users from each of the 2 key personas - the Savvy Drinkers and Obsessive Collectors. The five key objectives of the testing were:

1. To enable feedback to be fed into the development of the current sprint and future sprints.
2. To test the new app design with customers who have used the current app and those who have not
3. To validate that customers can seamlessly navigate through the app and perform their habitual scenarios in the new app design
4. To better explore the target customer and their behaviours and expectations
5. To discuss issues and concerns with features included in the 1st app release

Through asking various structured questions, I was able to get very insightful feedback from the 10 users. Some of the general feedback included keeping icons consistent across the app, arranging information in order of priority and adjusting some information on the BBX platform. All in all, this feedback was extremely valuable and constructive and allowed me to finalise the designs for the final app release.

Raise a glass to the final product

At the start of this project, I was challenged to design a new mobile app for BB&R that would provide customers with a personalised hub for understanding, managing and showcasing all their cellared wines. In a market that had no existing blueprint to successfully manage an entire wine collection on one platform, I managed to create one.

The new and improved BB&R app now makes managing a cellar simple. Some of the app's functionalities include viewing purchases, bidding on wine, listing cases for sale, tracking the market value of a collection, seeing critics' notes and scores, and arranging delivery.

From a UX perspective, the platform is easy to navigate with a straightforward navigation bar that allows users to easily find their way across the site. A combination of graphics and icons balance text heavy sections and convey information clearly without overcrowding the app.

On the design front, a combination of serif fonts for headers and sans-serif fonts for body text gives the app a luxurious feel that aims to meet the consumer market of wine collectors and savvy drinkers. The combination of dark green and gold as primary colours on the app further contribute to a high-end finish.

