

Wheel of Fortune Slots - Re-Design

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Overview

Wheel of Fortune Slots is a slots app based on the Wheel of Fortune brand. The player can play multiple slots themed around the brand, and interact with meta game experiences centered around the show.

The main meta game is the Wheel of Fortune Wheel, which can be upgraded as the player levels up, and enhanced with “Boost Tags” which the player earns from leveling up. Aside from rewarding credits, the wheel can trigger the meta game bonus round which will award the player one of the four Progressive Jackpots that persist as a “carrot” for the player in both the lobby and in-game.





Project Scope

The deadline of the project requires that the re-design, development and launch be accomplished in 5.5 months. This is a hard deadline that must be met regardless of circumstances.

Problem Statement

While analytics and player reviews indicate that the slots resonate well with player, there are a number of major issues with the product:

Design & User Experience Issues

The user experience of launching the app and getting into a slots game involves two lobbies; one that shows a glimpse of the slots, the wheel meta game, and two marketing panels, and the second that's a close up view of just the slots. This redundancy requires multiple taps for the player launch a slot game and does not serve a beneficial purpose to drive any KPIs.

When the player levels up, the rewards can include a wheel upgrade, boost tags, and always a wheel spin, which requires the player to leave the slots experience in order to spin the wheel. This creates a negative experience for a player that is in the app to play slots, especially since the wheel does not offer valuable enough rewards for payers. The wheel landing on the jackpot wedge to trigger the meta game bonus is such a rare event that the feature also fails to entice players. This design puts emphasis on the brand 1st, the meta game 2nd, and slots 3rd, which is the opposite of what the desired player is looking for in the experience.

Technical Issues

In addition to the meta game design and user experience issues, the app is plagued by many technical issues resulting in long loading times, which makes for a large drop off top of funnel. Constant crashes force people to abandon the app, which lowers retention and makes players worried about spending in an unreliable app, which negatively affects monetization.

Solution Statement

The new design of the app will focus on slots 1st, meta game 2nd, and brand 3rd to create an experience that appeals to different types of slots players. To achieve this, the meta game experience will be re-designed to compliment the slots and encourage more slot play, rather than take the player out of the slots experience. The new design will feature a single lobby allowing the player to play slots quicker, and the slots will be presented in rooms where multiple slots will be unlocked and available to play, insuring that different types of slots players find content that they enjoy.

User Persona

Based on the app's analytics, player reviews, and service tickets, as well as research of competitor slots apps and other GSN slots apps, there are three types of players that will interact with Wheel of Fortune Slots:

Type 1 (Hardcore Slot Player) - These are individuals who have played slots for many years and generally play multiple apps in search for the type of slot that most appeals to them. These players will engage with meta game experiences so long as they allow them to play their preferred slot, and will for the most part stick to playing a small selection of favorite slots.

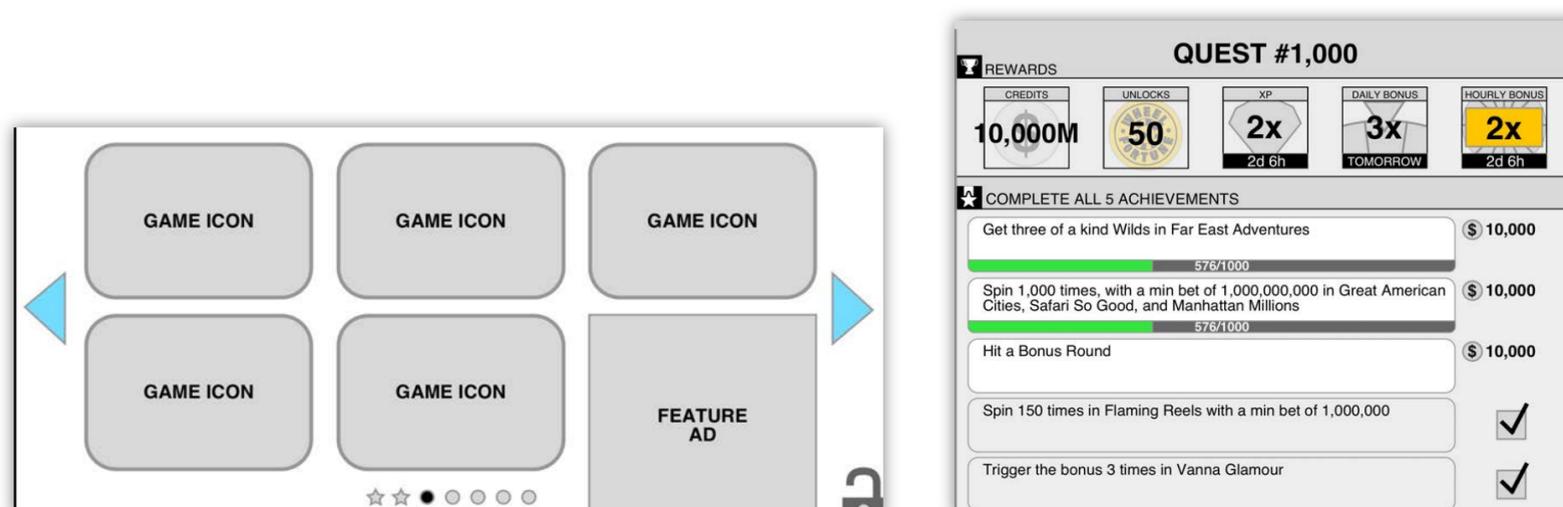
Type 2 (Casual Slot Player) - These players have looser preferences towards specific slots, and tend to play more different slots and interact more with meta game experiences. Their interest will not be sustained with just a single slot experience, so layered meta game features can be very appealing.

Type 3 (Non Slot Player) - These are individuals that generally come from organic traffic searching for the brand and expecting a game where the mechanic is based on the show. These types of players are difficult to retain and generally drop off on Day 1. Strong meta game features and brand is the best bet for retaining these players, but they are the most likely to churn.

New Design

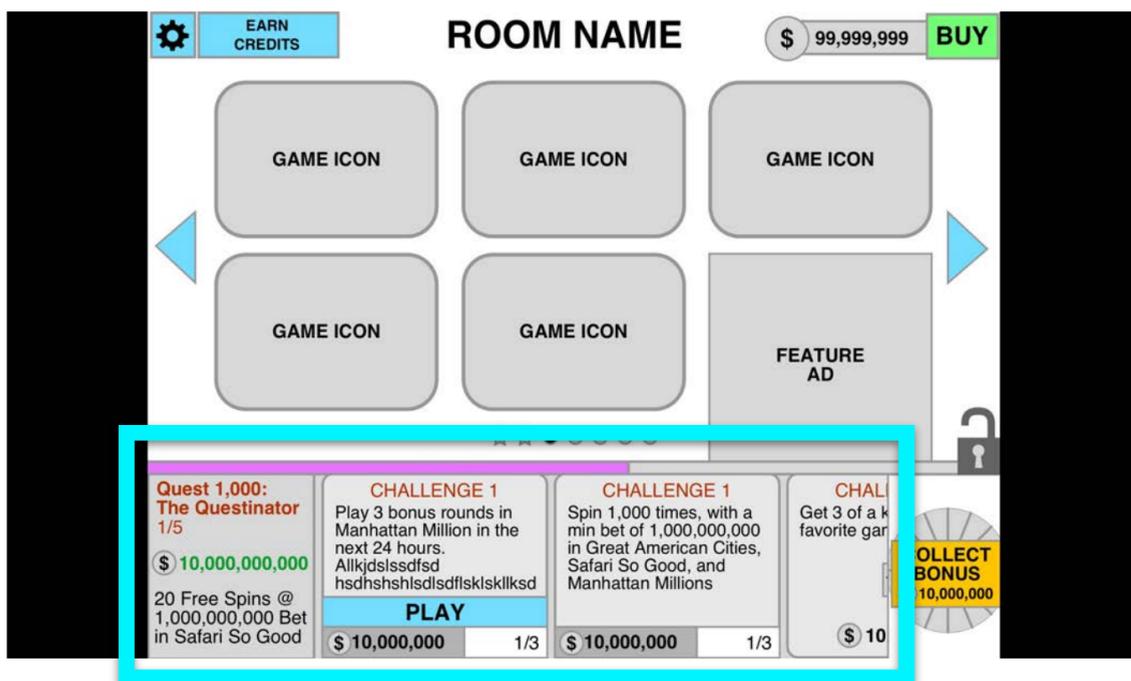
Rooms - The lobby will feature scrollable rooms full of slots. The first room will have all of the content unlocked except for the last slot on the right, which is the “bonus quest slot”. This game can only be unlocked through the new quest meta game, which replaces the upgradable Wheel of Fortune wheel. When the player levels up, the next room will unlock, giving more content to the players, insuring that no matter the slot preference, there is content to satisfy every type of player.

Quests - The meta game feature is geared towards the more casual player giving them a layer of game play beyond the slots themselves. Each room will have quests that pertain to the slots in that room. They are made up of multiple achievements that reward credits, and when all achievements are completed, the quest rewards will include credits, multipliers for the daily bonus, hourly bonus, and XP, as well as unlock tokens to unlock the bonus quest game in the room. Most importantly, quests do not take the players out of the slots experience, but instead encourage more slot play.

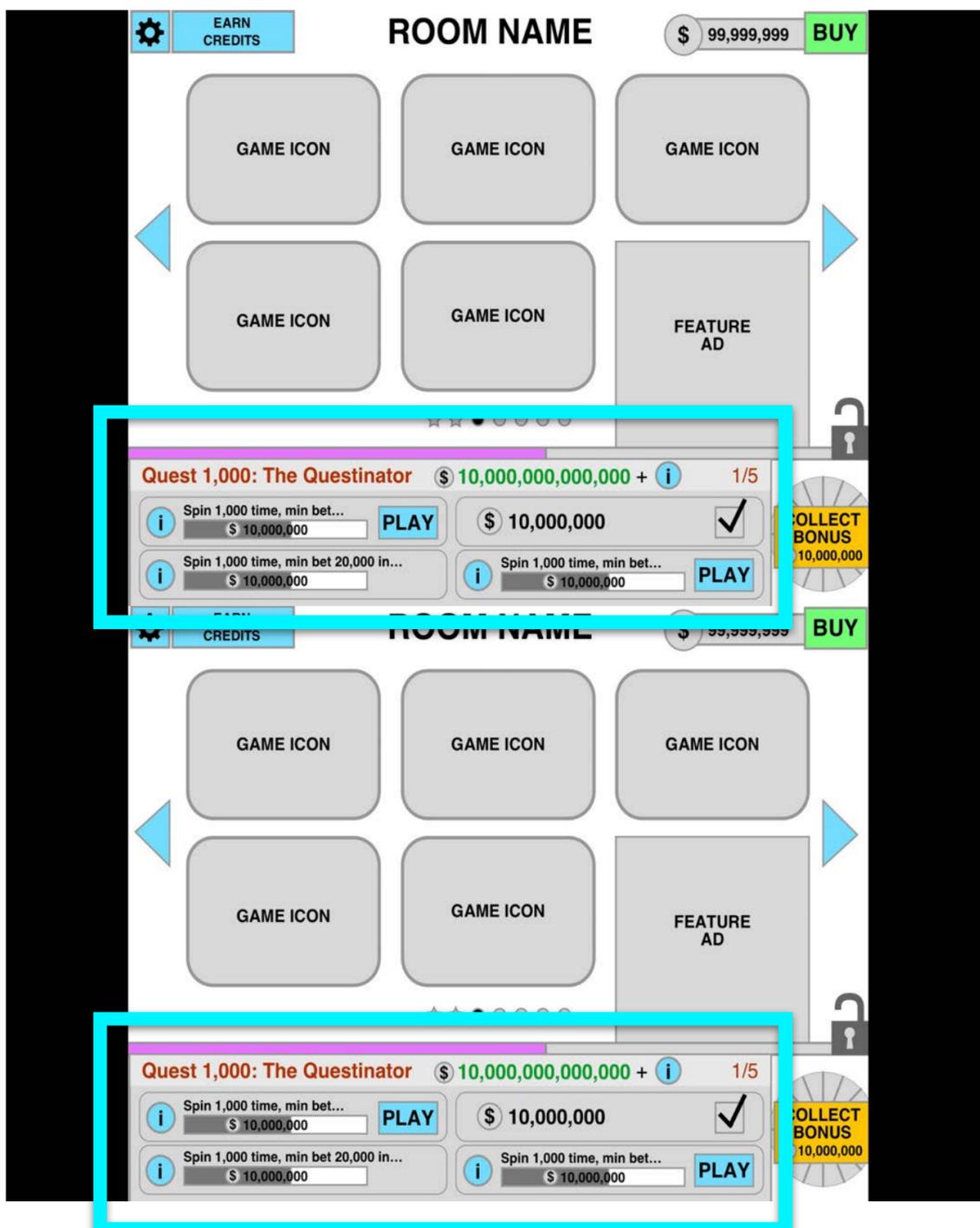


Initial Mockups

Given that the two major elements of the re-design are the slots and quests, early mockups devoted the majority of the screen real-estate to both features, and explored how much information can be included.

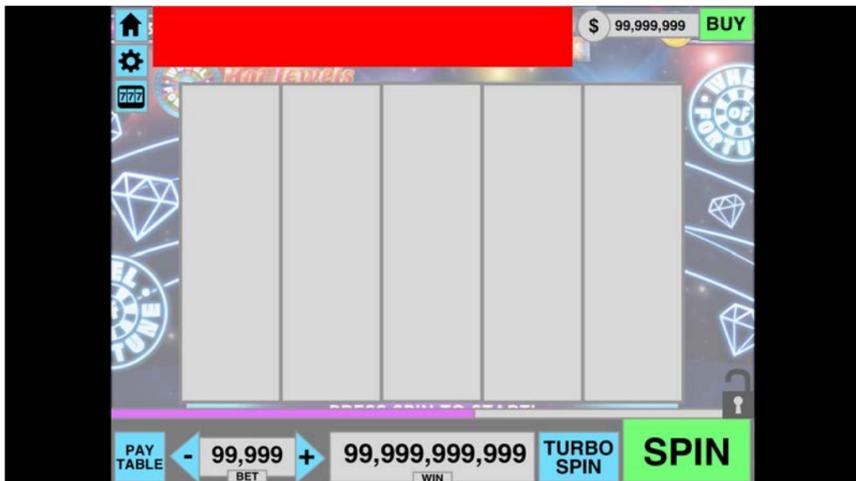


Big bold icons of the slots towards the center of the screen make it simple and clear for the player to access the content, but attempting to put all the information required by the quests feature in the lobby screen creates a very busy UI that can overwhelm the player.



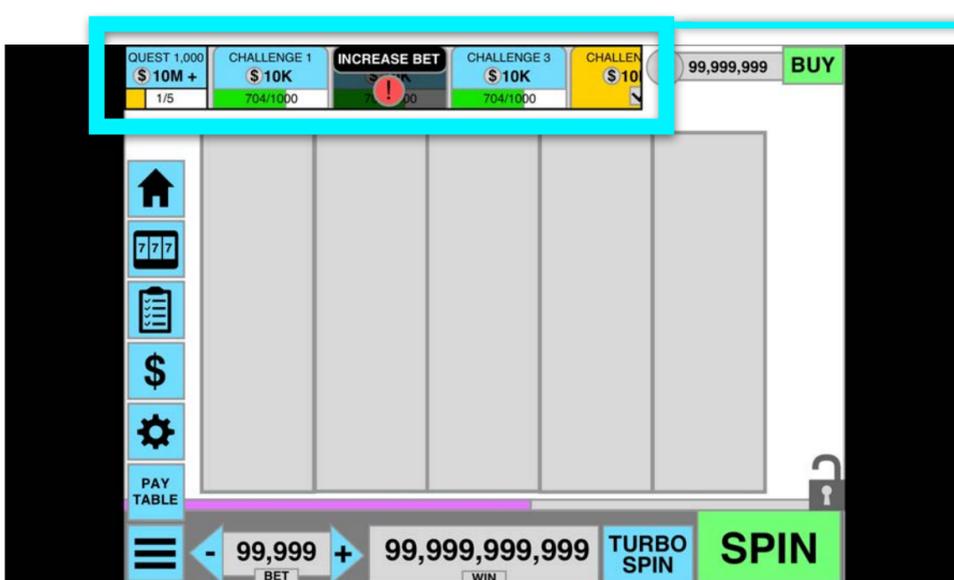
Even simplifying the information makes for a busy lobby and requires multiple taps for players to get all the information of the quests feature.

The quest feature requires that the player be able to interact with it both in-game and in the lobby, insuring that the player's slots experience is uninterrupted. While the app outside of the slots will undergo a complete overhaul, the slots themselves have game UI that cannot change, leaving limited screen real-estate for the quest feature. Given the location and size of the limited available space in-game, the initial designs of the quest feature in the lobby would, even if successfully applied in-game, would make for a disjointed experience.



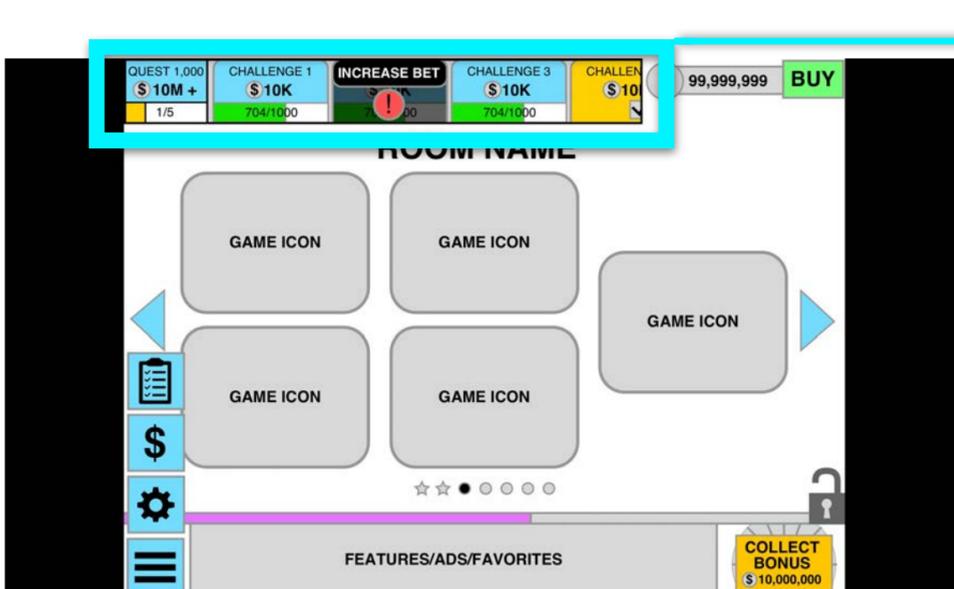
Screen Realestate Limitation

The Quest info will need to be further limited to just progress and rewards. Tapping the given challenge or quest UI will bring up the full information.



In-Game

Challenge Details



Lobby

Challenge Details

While this design addresses UI consistency issues between the lobby and in-game, it requires multiple taps for the player to get all the quest information and hides a lot of the other features like Daily Challenges (Engagement feature), Watch & Earn (Ad revenue), and Scratcher (Sponsorship opportunities).

Final Mockups

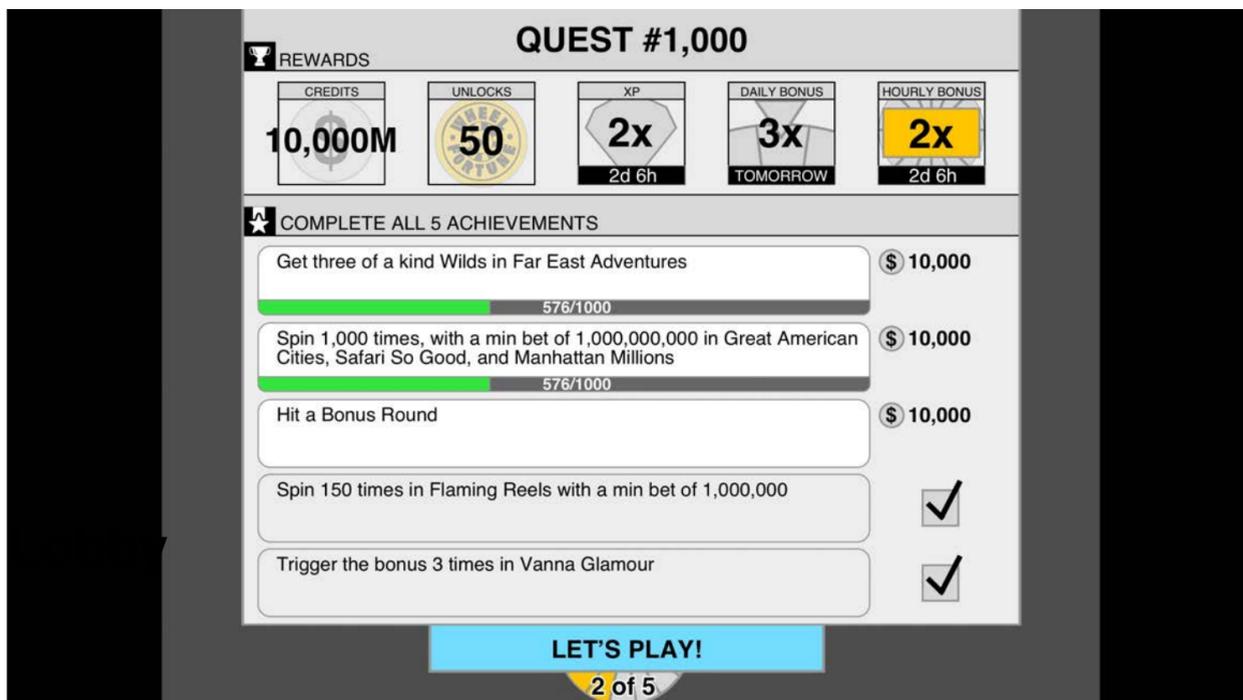
Lobby

The final design consolidates the quest feature into a single button that shows the quest number, prize, and how many challenges have been completed. This approach also allows us to feature the Daily Challenges, Watch & Earn, and Scratcher more prominently in the lobby. All of the UI stays consistent throughout the experience, making it possible to access almost every feature during slot play, which is where we want the player to be spending their time.

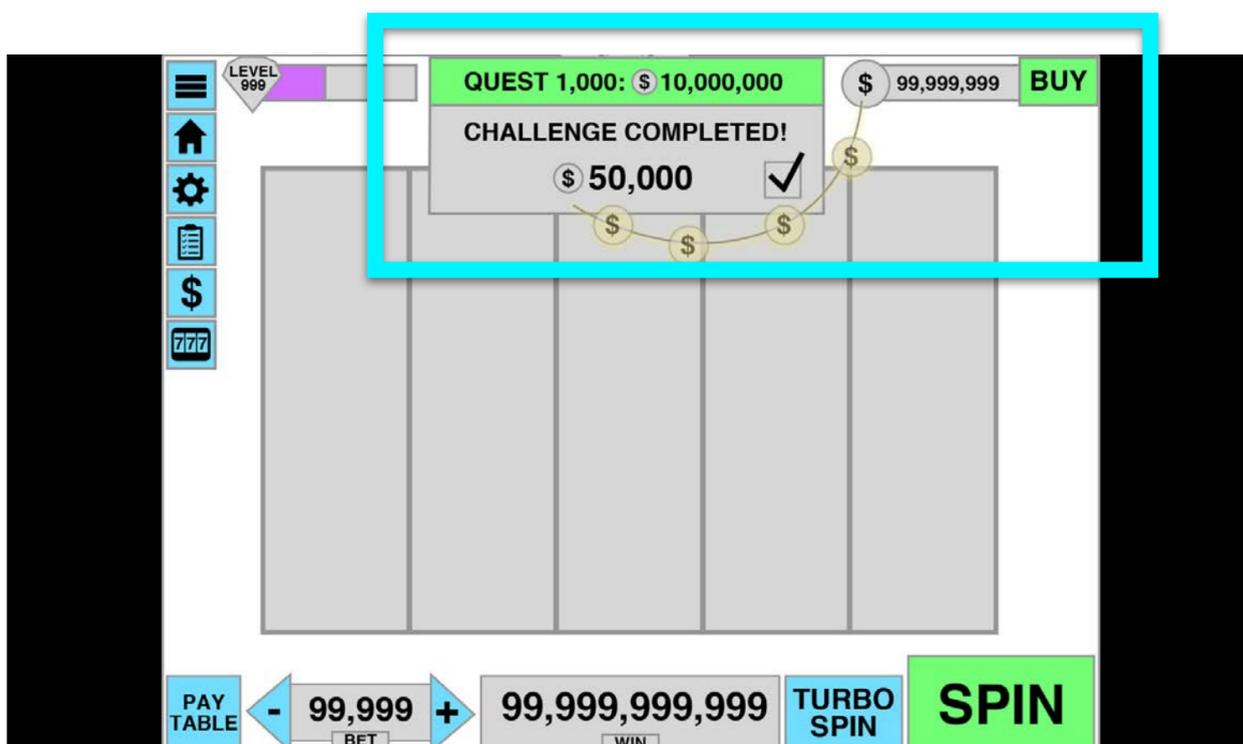


Quests

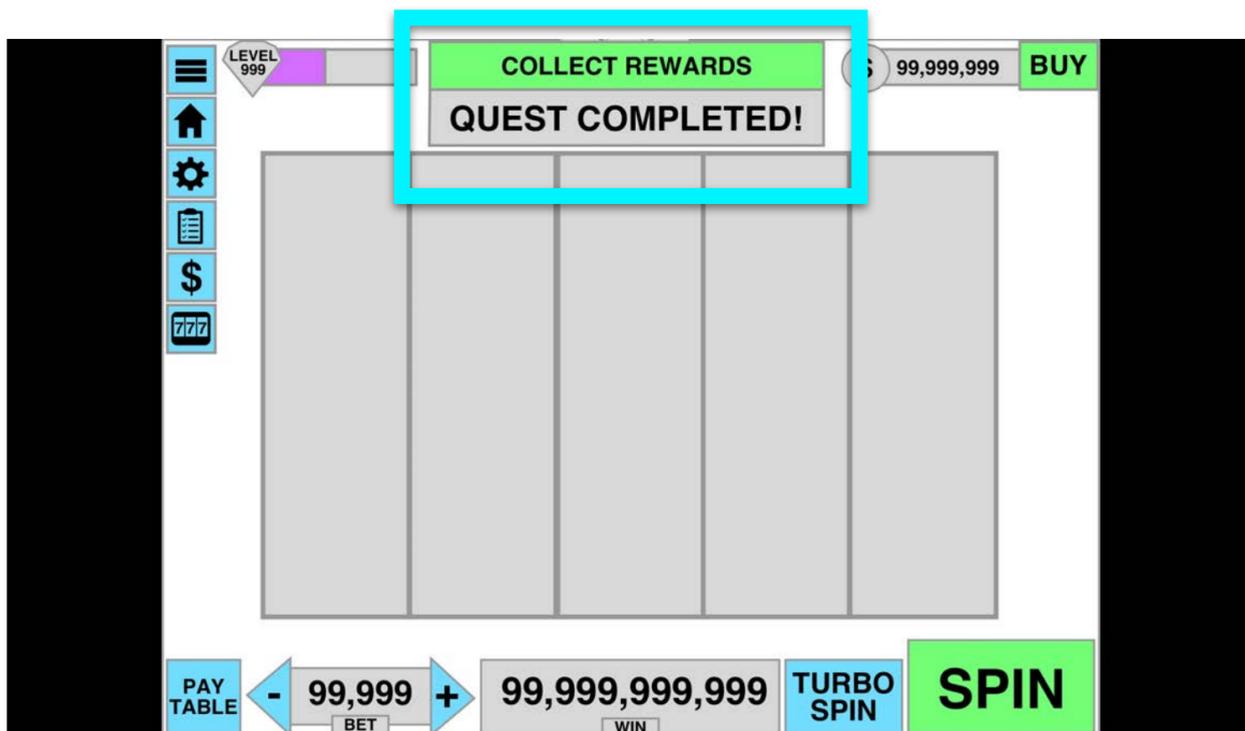
When the player taps the quest button in the middle of the HUD, the quest menu will open. The player can see the different challenge descriptions, which challenges have been completed, what progress they have made on specific challenges, what the reward is for each challenge, and what the rewards are for completing the entire quest.



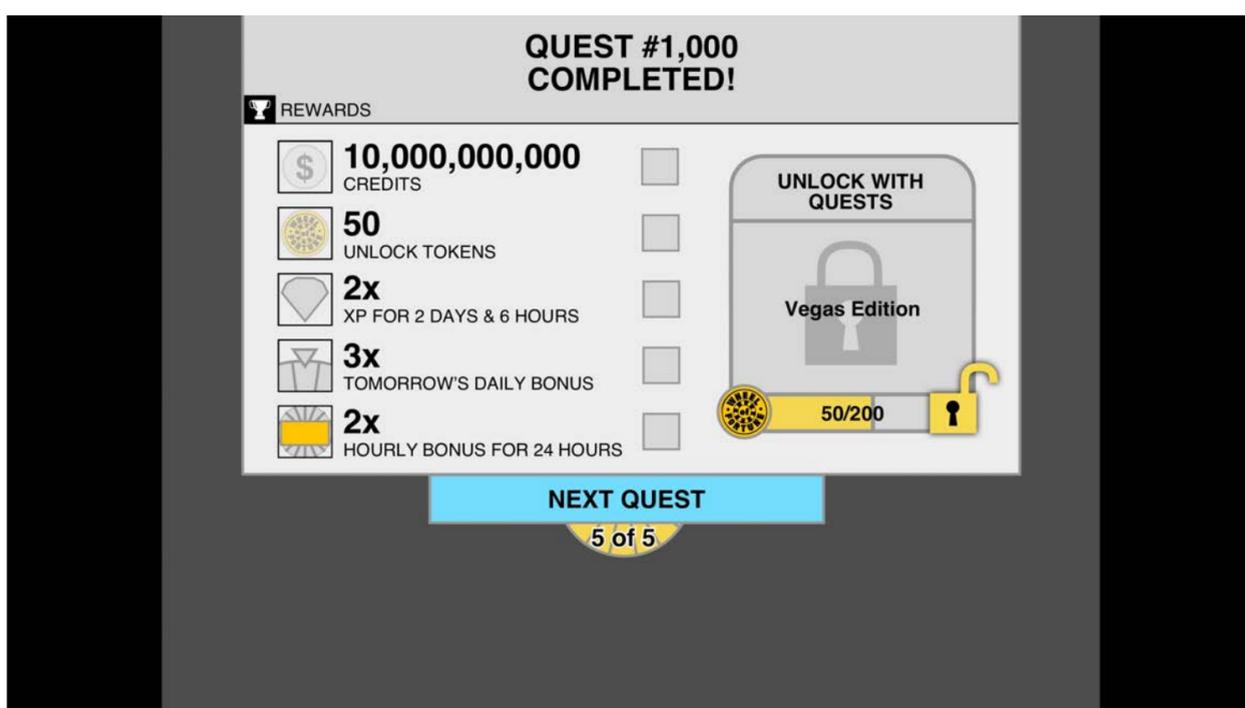
All challenges require the player to play slots, which is in line with having the meta game feature encourage more slots play rather than take the player out of the experience. When the player completes a challenge through their slot play, a notification will animate under the Quest button.



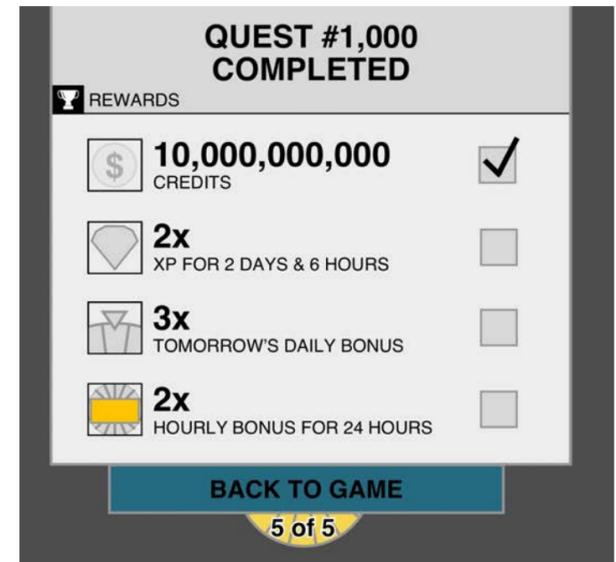
Similarly, when a Quest is completed, the Quest button will change states to indicate that the player has rewards to collect. Unlike the previous version of the app, we don't want to force the players out of the slots experience, and so all notifications are passive, requiring the player to initiate any collections like the Quest rewards in this instance.



When the player does tap to collect the quest rewards, the quest menu will open showing the reward sequence. The rewards of the completed quest will be displayed, as well as the bonus quest game, unless it has already been unlocked, in which case, the quest reward menu will only have the rewards.

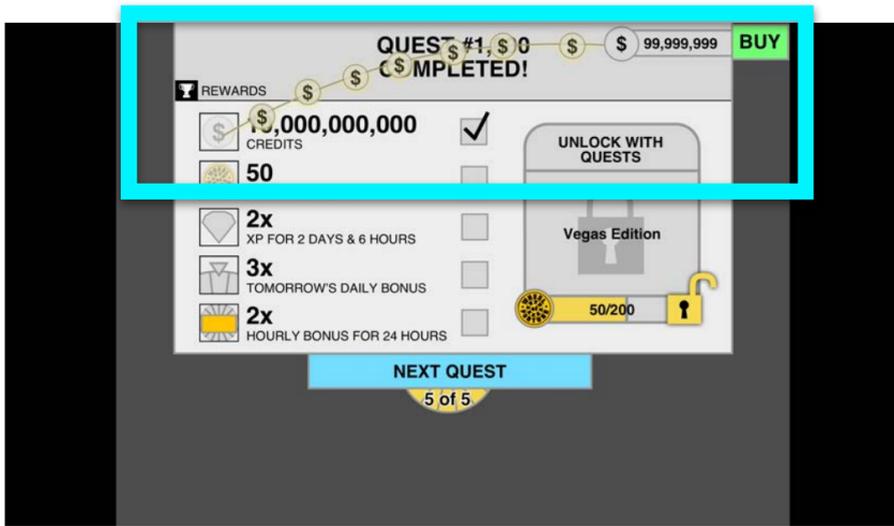


Quest Game Already Unlocked

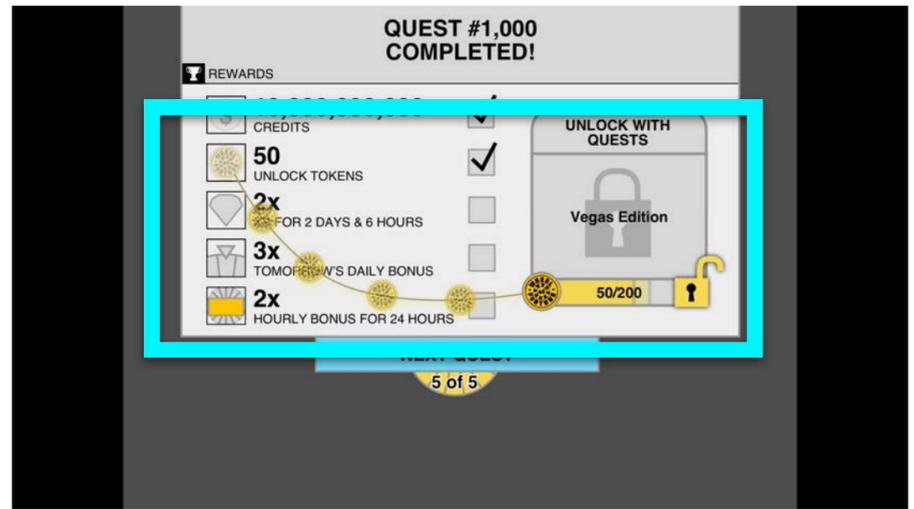


As each reward is awarded, the UI associated with it will animate on-screen, a checkmark will appear next to the reward, and the icons will fly from the reward to the UI. When the sequence is over, the player will need to tap the “NEXT QUEST” button to see the challenges of the next Quest. This allows the player the marvel at their rewards before continuing on.

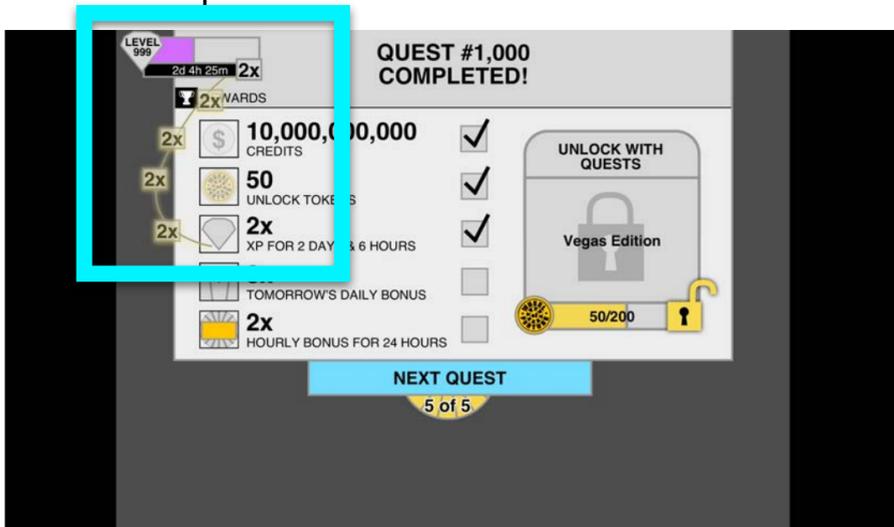
Credits



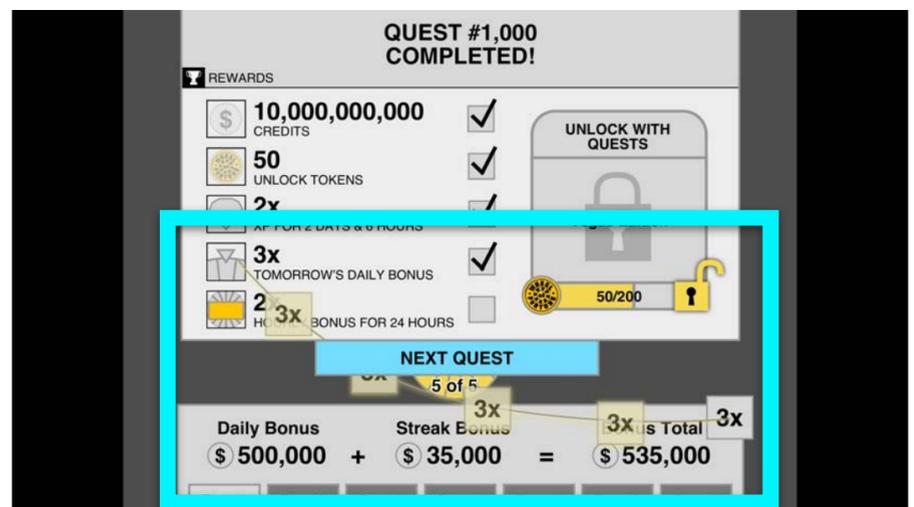
Bonus Slot Unlocks



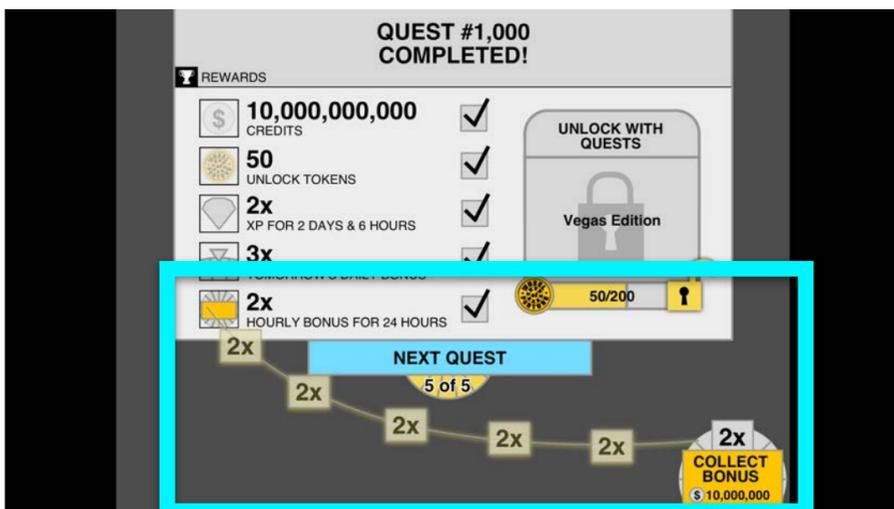
XP Multiplier



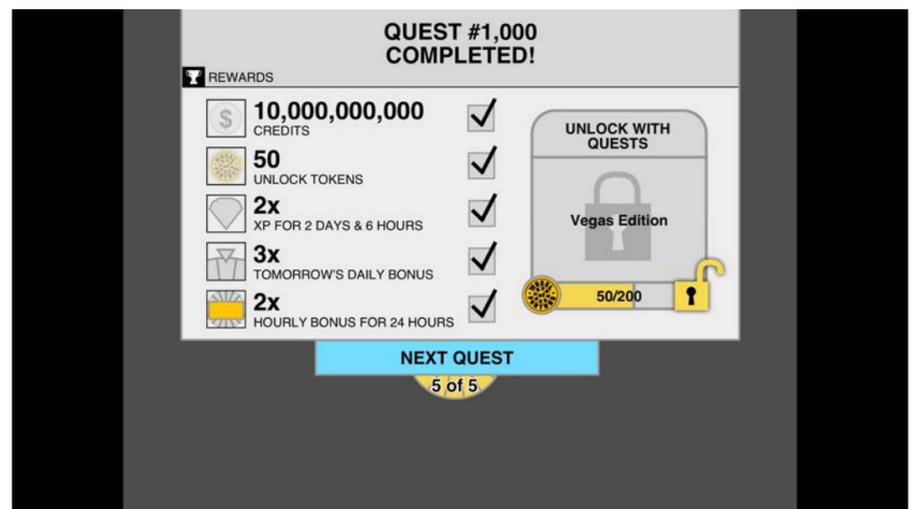
Daily Bonus Multiplier



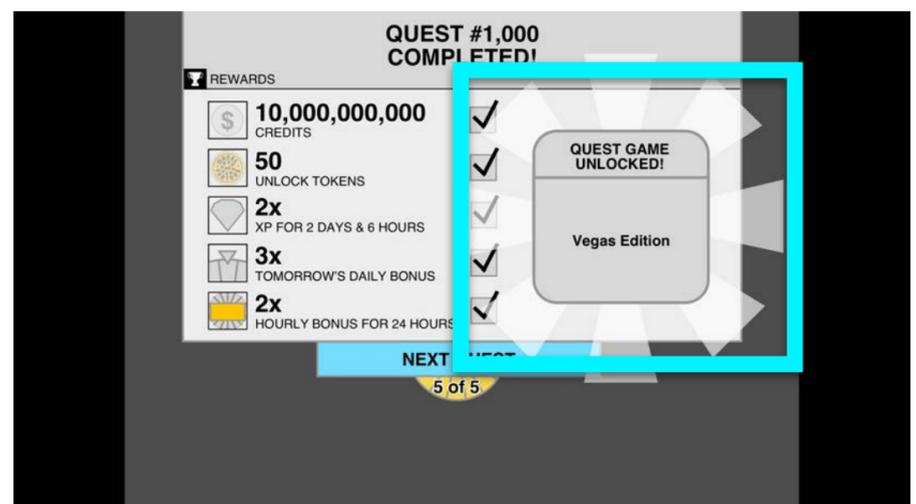
Hourly Bonus Multiplier



Completed Sequence

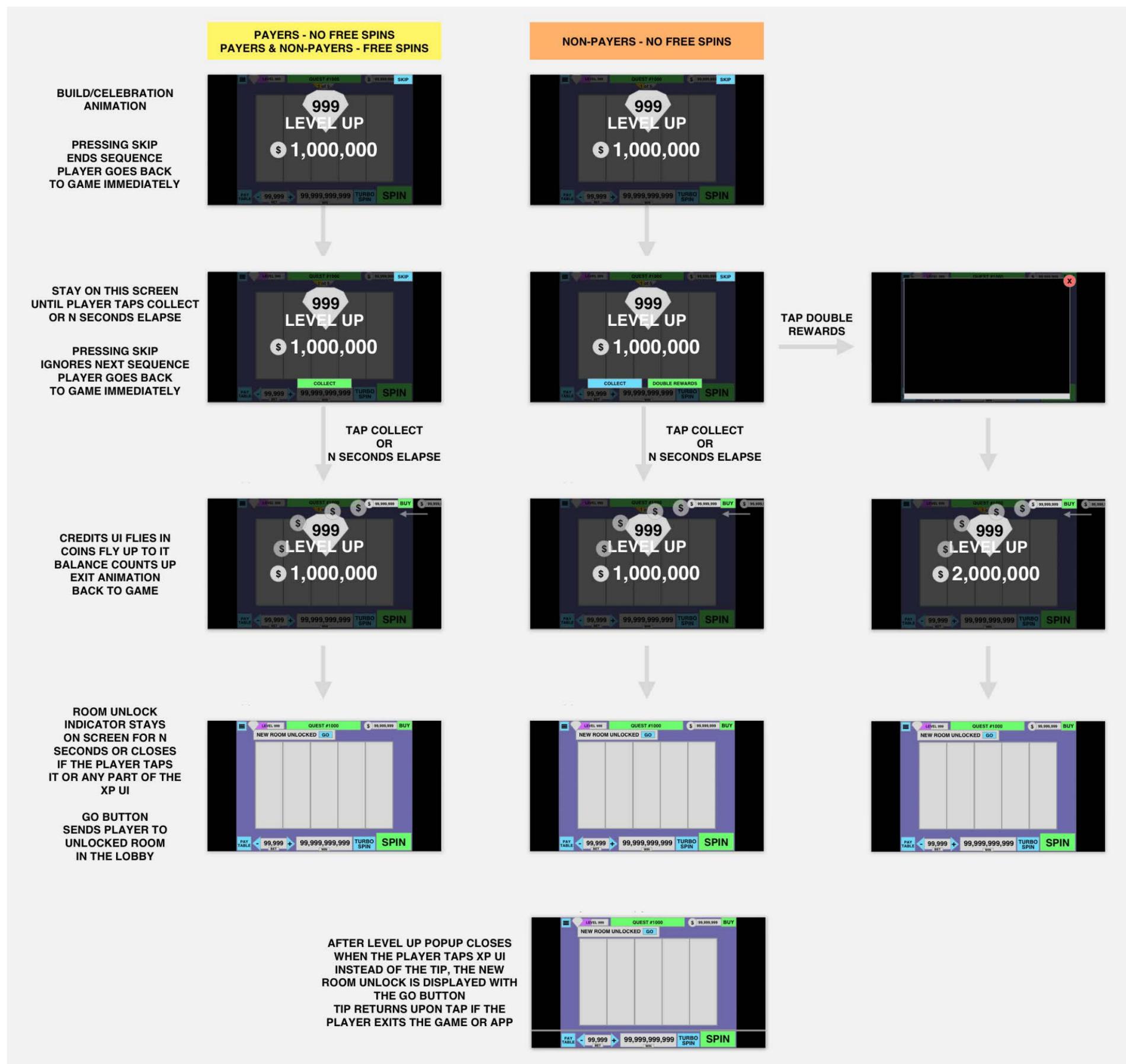


During the quest rewards sequence that unlocks the Bonus Game, when the unlocks fill the meter completely, there will be an animation turning the game icon from black & white to full color indicating that it's now unlocked.



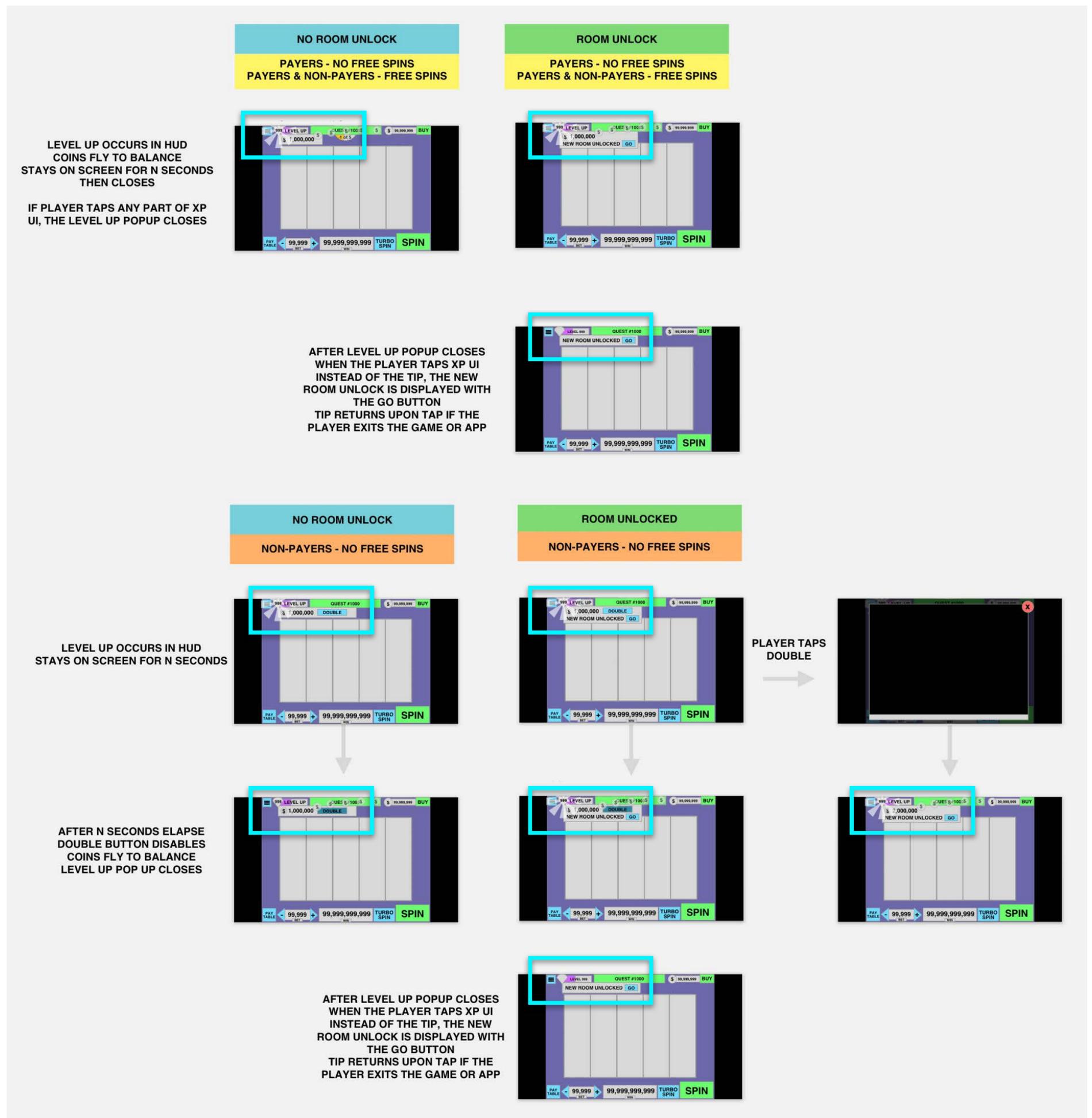
Leveling Up (Full Screen Approach)

A full screen celebration of leveling up is very common. This explores two flows, one of which is centered on trying to monetize non-payers by giving them the option to double their level up reward by watching a video ad.



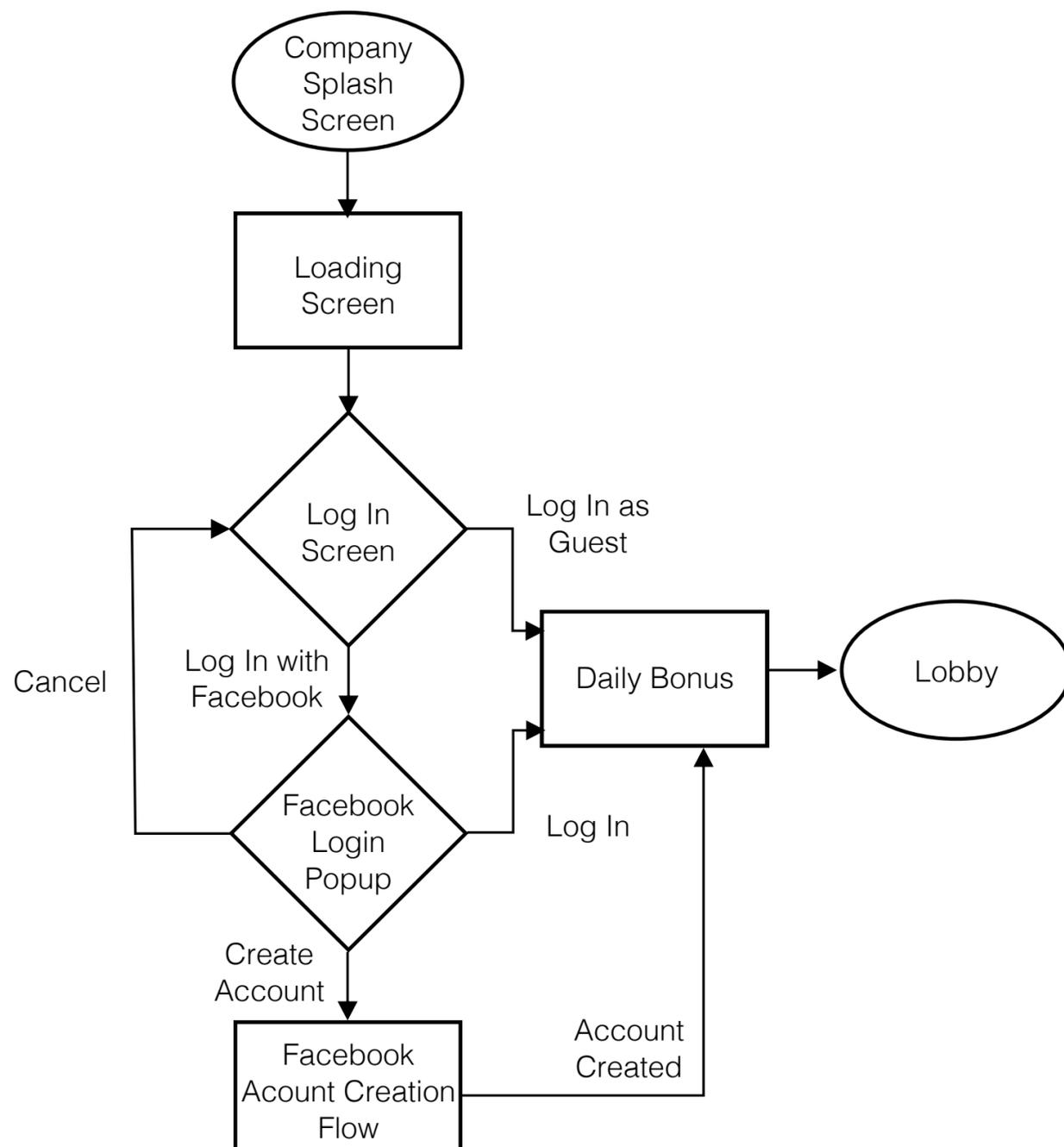
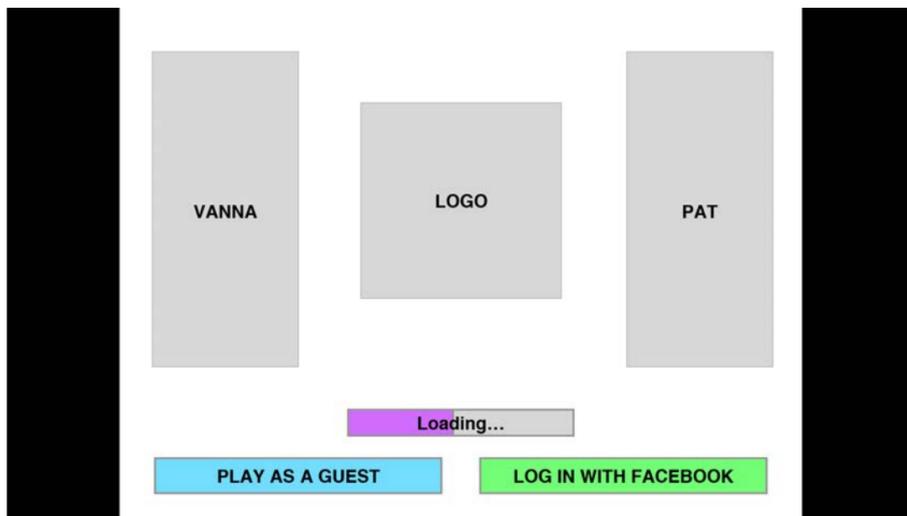
Leveling Up (Passive Approach)

Part of the design philosophy with the new app is to not interfere with the gameplay. As such, a full screen take over during a level up isn't ideal, and a more passive approach with a smaller celebration over the XP Level in the HUD is what the following explores.

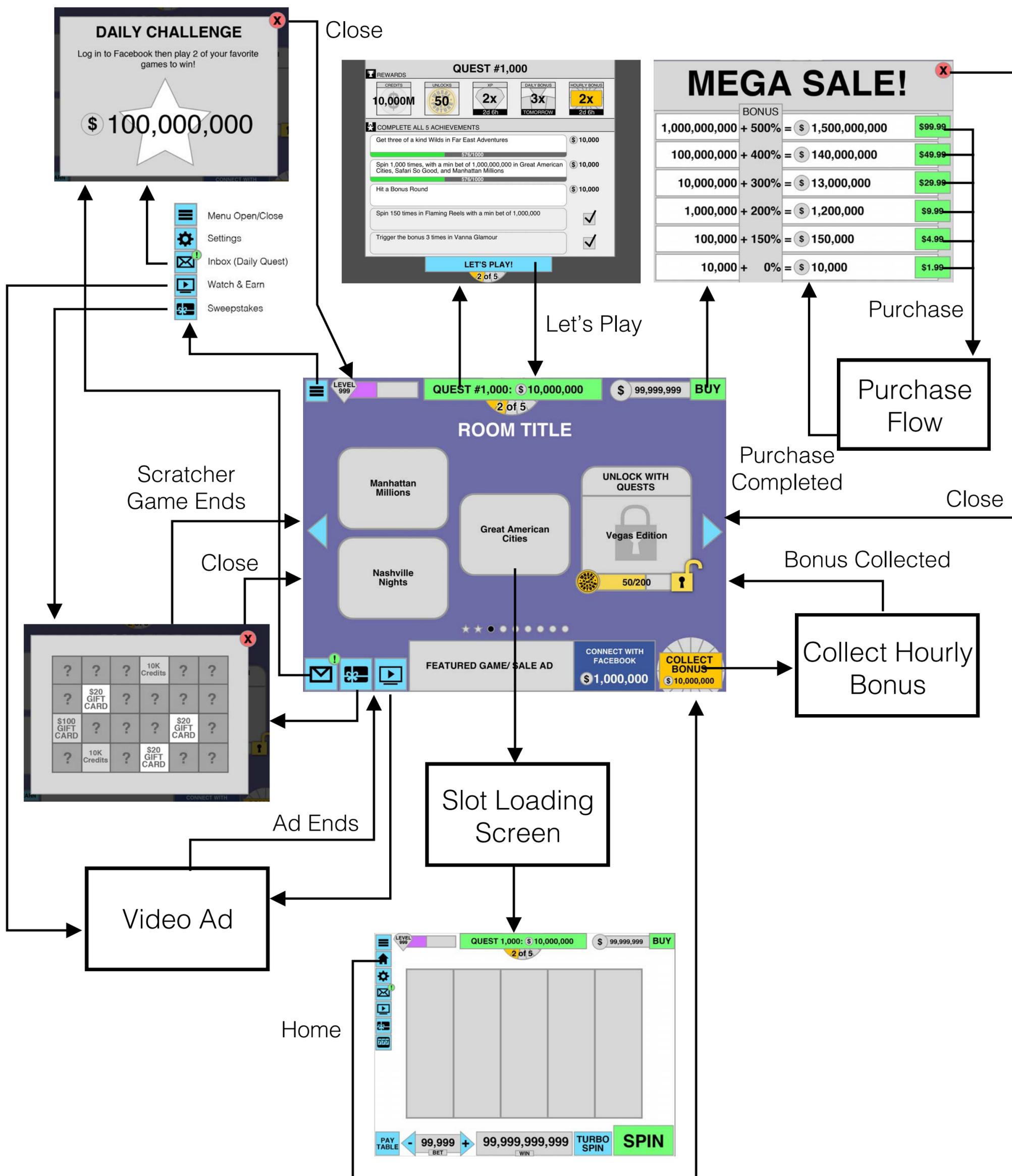


User Flow

When the player launches the app, they will be greeted with the login screen where they can choose to log in with Facebook or play as a guest. As they enter the lobby, the Daily Bonus will go through its sequence of spinning the Wheel of Fortune wheel and rewarding the player credits, as well as showing that there is a streak bonus for coming back every day. This sequence can be skipped by the player at any point to get them to playing slots faster.



After the Daily Challenge spin animates off screen, the player will be in the lobby where they can navigate to different parts of the app.



Product Launch

The product re-design launched on time on December 18th, 2017. The more intuitive user experience and design centered around emphasizing the slots experience resulted in higher retention and an influx of positive reviews bringing the app rating to 4.6 stars in the app store.

Login Screen



Daily Bonus



Lobby



In-Game



Quest Menu



Quest Rewarding



Store



Daily Challenge



Leveling Up



Key Takeaways

It was critical to approach the re-design of the app from the player's point of view. Understanding what slots players want drove the overall design, meta game experience, and future feature development. An intuitive UI allowed players to jump into the slots experience right away and enjoy a variety of available content, which ultimately drove an increase in retention and monetization.