Jay Mollet

Senior Designer

Prior Work – Yammer Case Study

Presenting my past work

Yammer

Feed Ordering

Yammer

Feed Ordering
Q1 – Q4 FY21

My Role
Senior UX Designer
(Contractor – Kforce Inc)

My Team
Product Manager II
Senior Content Designer
Senior Software Engineer
Principal Software Engineer
Principal Designer
Principal Design Manager

Project Goal
Make the community feed more consumable by giving users options like sort and/or filter (i.e., sort by timestamp of thread starter), so they can structure their feed according to their unique workstream and personal preferences.

Partner with internal Yammer teams – Communities, Live Events, Q&A, Native Mobile (iOS and Android).

Company Goal
Successful integration and embed experience with Microsoft 365 product suite – SharePoint, Outlook, Teams, LinkedIn.

User Goal
"As a Yammer user, I want to be able to sort my feed so that the newest posts show up first."

Target Users
All Yammer/M365 users (web, mobile, desktop) within an organization, including guests, attendees, employees, influencers, admins, managers and executives.

"Because posts are not chronologically displayed, it is almost impossible to stay informed of the latest & most relevant posts ... I find I am not seeing new information because my feed prioritizes old 'popular' posts."
– enterprise user

The Problem

Posts with recent comments are displayed first, at the top of the Yammer feed, by default.

The post could be irrelevant or read out of context, as the conversation progresses over time.

It can make the feed feel stale when older content is being displayed first.

It's a problem with live events, town halls and Q&A sessions, when many posts are being made all at once, in real-time.

Users wanted the ability to order their feed with new posts at the top, regardless of whether people commented or liked it.

The new post from an hour ago got bumped because recent comments were made to an old post from January.

Jay Mollet (KFORCE INC)
Jan 15

Seen by 5

[Test]

👍 Like   💬 Comment   ↪ Share ⌄   👍 You

Show 12 previous comments

Jay Mollet (KFORCE INC) 14m ago
Recent Comment

👍 💬 ↪ ⌄   ...

Jay Mollet (KFORCE INC) 14m ago
Recent Comment

👍 💬 ↪ ⌄   ...

Write a comment

Jay Mollet (KFORCE INC)
1h ago

I'm starting a new thread here.

👍 Like   💬 Comment   ↪ Share ⌄   Be the first to like this

Write a comment

All Conversations vs. New Conversations

Feed ordering is further complicated by Yammer's unique productivity offering – unseen conversations are collected as New Conversations and separated from All Conversations – where users can scroll through New Conversations until they are 'All caught up'.

Additionally, users can filter by post types like All Questions and Unanswered Questions.

Essentially, three filters are available – defaulting to New Conversations (if there are any).

The new solution requires a more robust and intuitive sort and filter functionality.

Discovery Process

I began to analyze other products in the M365 suite, hoping to align with established Fluent UI patterns.

Wanting to exceed user expectations, I studied similar social media products for functionality that might be emulated or otherwise improved.

Planning to provide a scalable solution, I sought to better understand the constraints of Yammer CoreUI components and shared initial concept sketches to gauge interest and estimate feasibility.

content type → post type → post category

CONVERSATIONS — ALL / NEW / RECENT → DISCUSSIONS, QUESTION, PRAISE, POLL
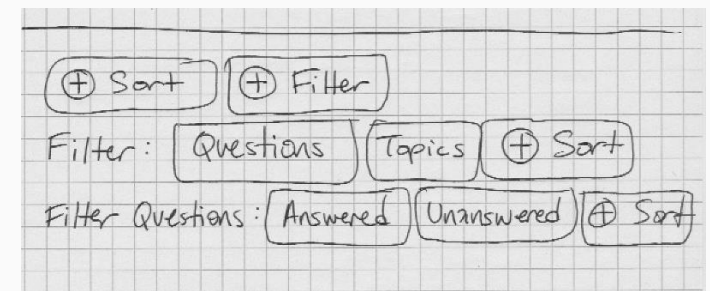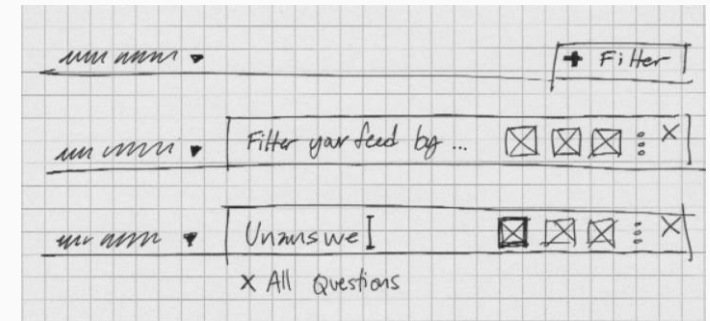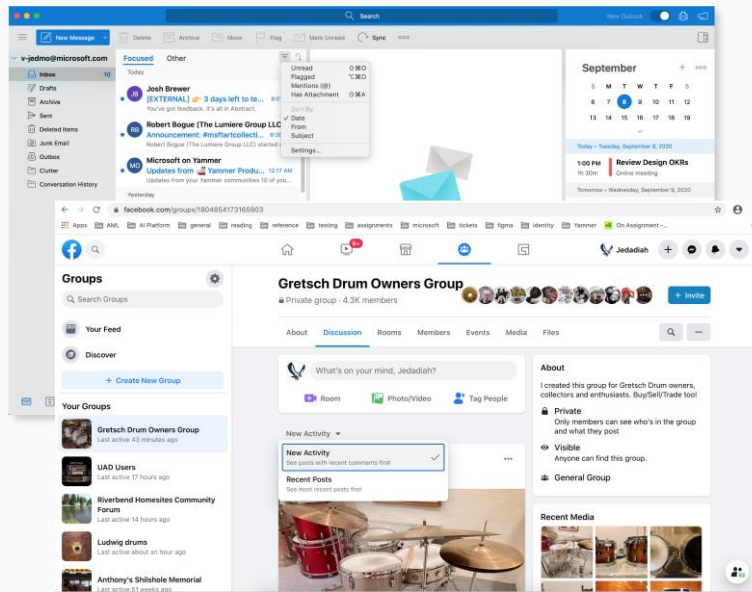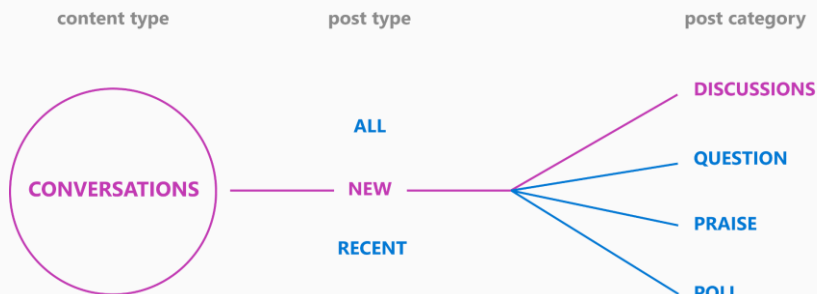
Design Iteration

The content designer and I began to address nuance in the use of product terms like *New* and *Recent*, as well as *Conversations, Discussions, Comments and Posts*.

Some early concepts centered around a progressive disclosure or dynamic interaction model, as well as a conventional labelled dropdown menu.

Concise subtext helps define the slightly ambiguous sort menu options. We struggled to present titles and phrases that were explicit and familiar to users.

The labelled pill toggle, intended for two mutually exclusive options, provides additional continuity between Yammer native mobile and desktop web experience.

Scaling within the product, additional filters for Praise and Poll post types should be considered.

Seeking to repurpose React framework components from Microsoft Fluent controls, the pill toggle and filter icon were proposed.

A single point of ingress for both sort and filter functionality, where users could simply disable New Comments First as the default logic.

New Activity

| Filter ⊕ | Questions ✕ | Answered | Unanswered |
| Filter ⊕ | Polls | Praises | Topics |

Sort: Recent Activity ⌄   Filter: Unread ⌄

✓ **Recent Activity**
New comments first

Recent Posts
New posts first

Recent | New   ▽   16 Unread conversations

Share an article, photo, video or idea

New | All   Refine ▽

☑ New Comments First

All Questions

Unanswered Questions

Cecil Folk
Sept 25, 2020. 12:30pm

Fantastic new products that we announced for the holiday sea... #mycontoso. Also, Inside the offices there is flexibility, but so... wheels so that they can be reconfigured by the teams, and ad... added. The teams can work directly with the facilities.

Design Iteration
Teams Q&A, Yammer Live Events
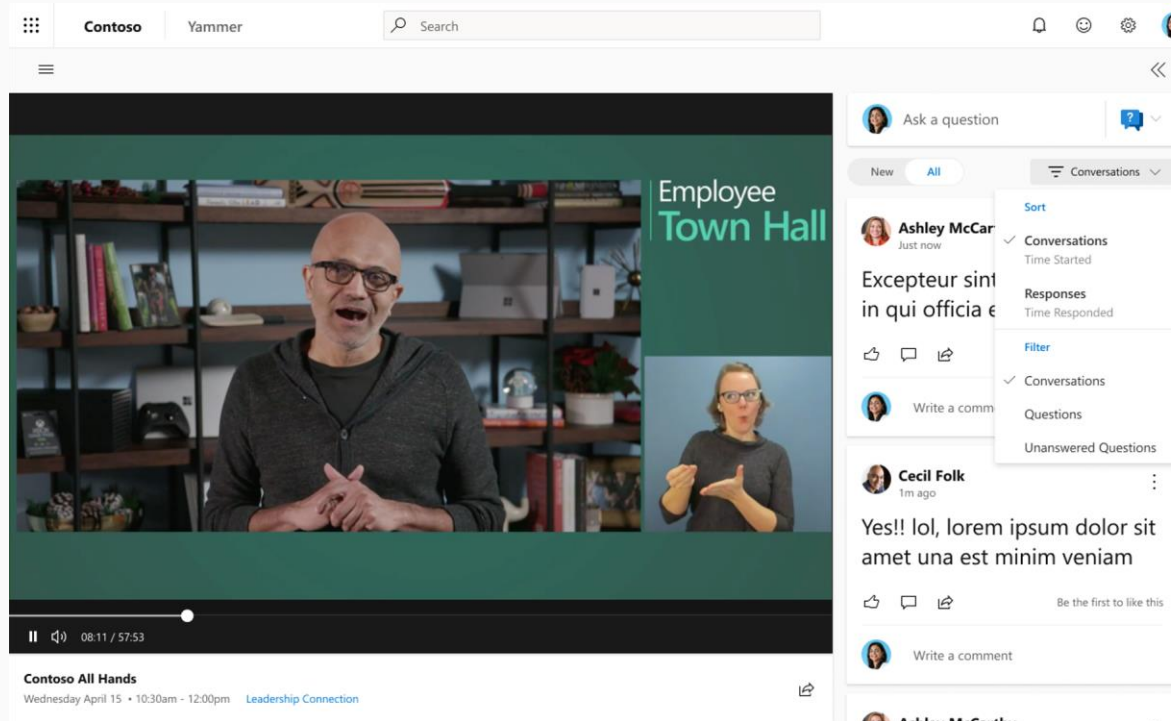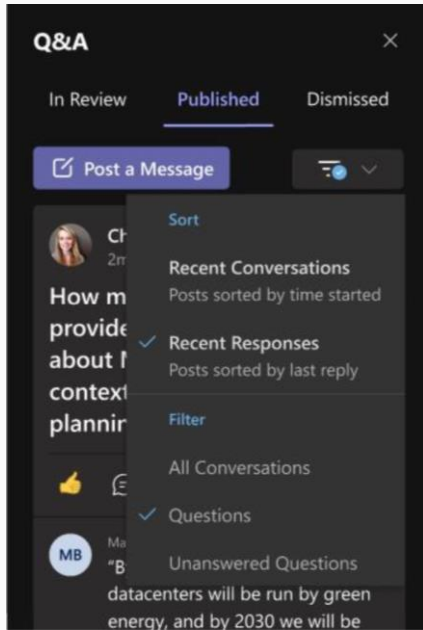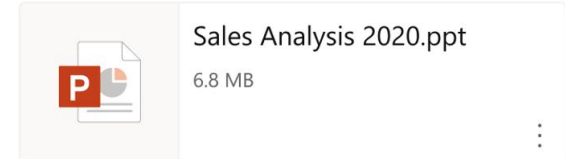
There was an urgent need to incorporate the feed ordering capability for Teams Q&A and Yammer Live Events, where the functionality was expected to vary somewhat. I proposed a custom Filter Added icon be displayed in the narrowest feeds.

"They feel like they could be consolidated … filter and sort are effectively accomplishing the same thing, just with different categories. So, I guess it feels a little redundant to have both."
– test user

Research

The goal was to validate our existing hypotheses with one moderated and two unmoderated tests on the UserTesting platform.

We sought to understand user perceptions and expectations – not only in the Yammer feed, but in the sort and filter experience they engaged with and relied on elsewhere.

I prepared static screens and clickable prototypes, shaped user tasks and questions, synthesized findings and presented insights to the larger team.

Research disproved some assumptions and confirmed others, but it gave way to new designs, refined the proposal and helped to simplify the solution.

Users preferred a model that allowed them to select more than one filter, confirming that users wanted more control over their feed.

Initially, it was assumed sort and filter were two separate controls. However, the hybrid approach tested well, despite conflicting stakeholder input.
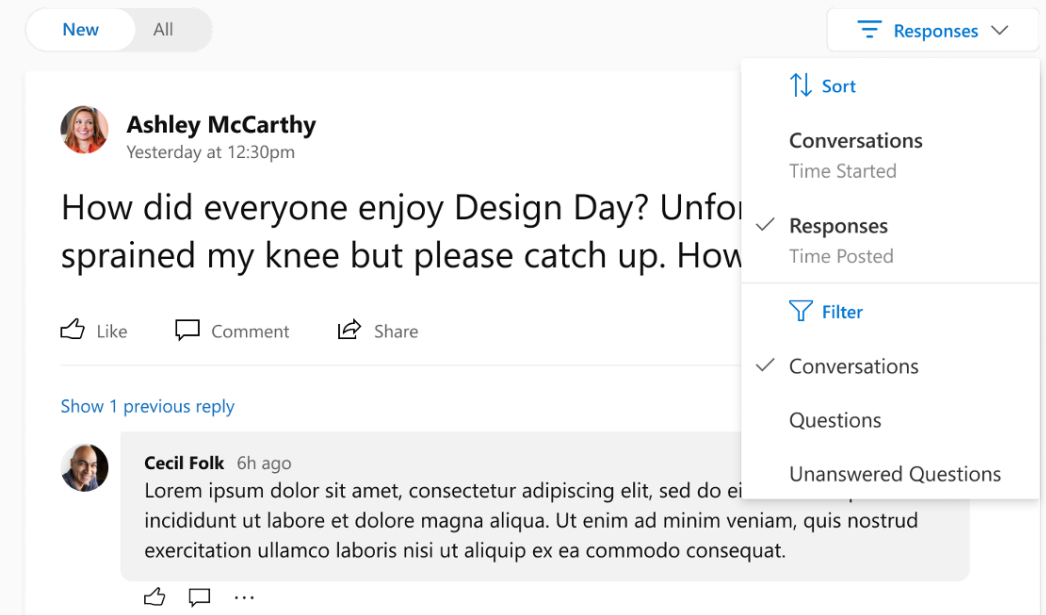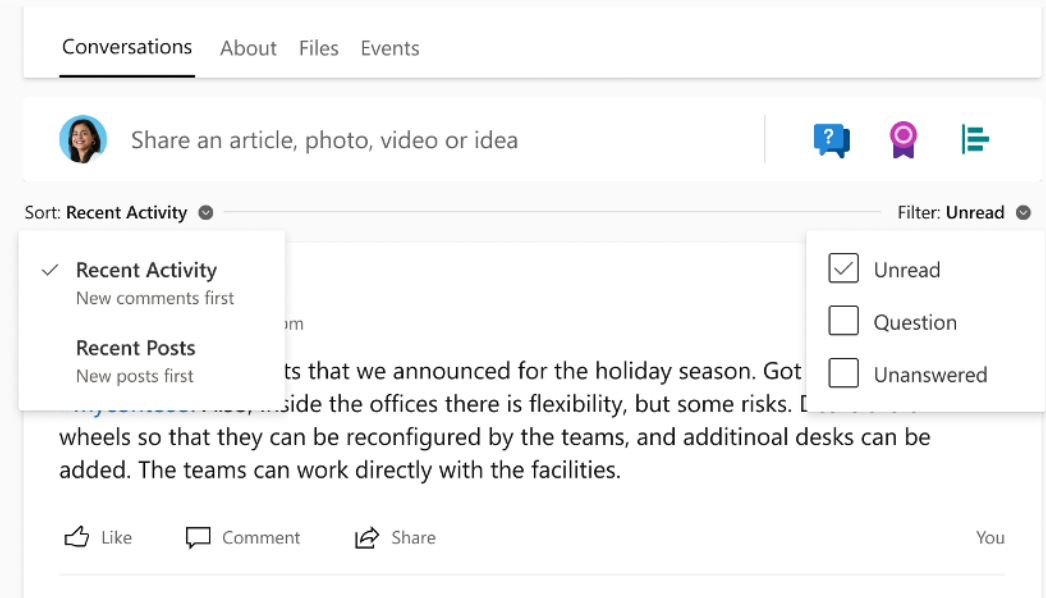
Design Iteration

Community Conversations

Prototypes

We wanted to test how users would react to both sort and filter in the same contextual menu. I proposed the term Refine be used as the button label and added recognizable iconography to imply purpose and functionality.

Test Prototype

Figma

Design Iteration

Toggle Animation

The Solution
Mobile Web

The contextual menu is part of the Fluent web controls library built on the React framework, allowing Yammer CoreUI engineers to utilize as building blocks, to then style and implement.

COPY UPDATE:
Recent Activity
Posts with recent updates first
Recent Posts
Most recent posts first
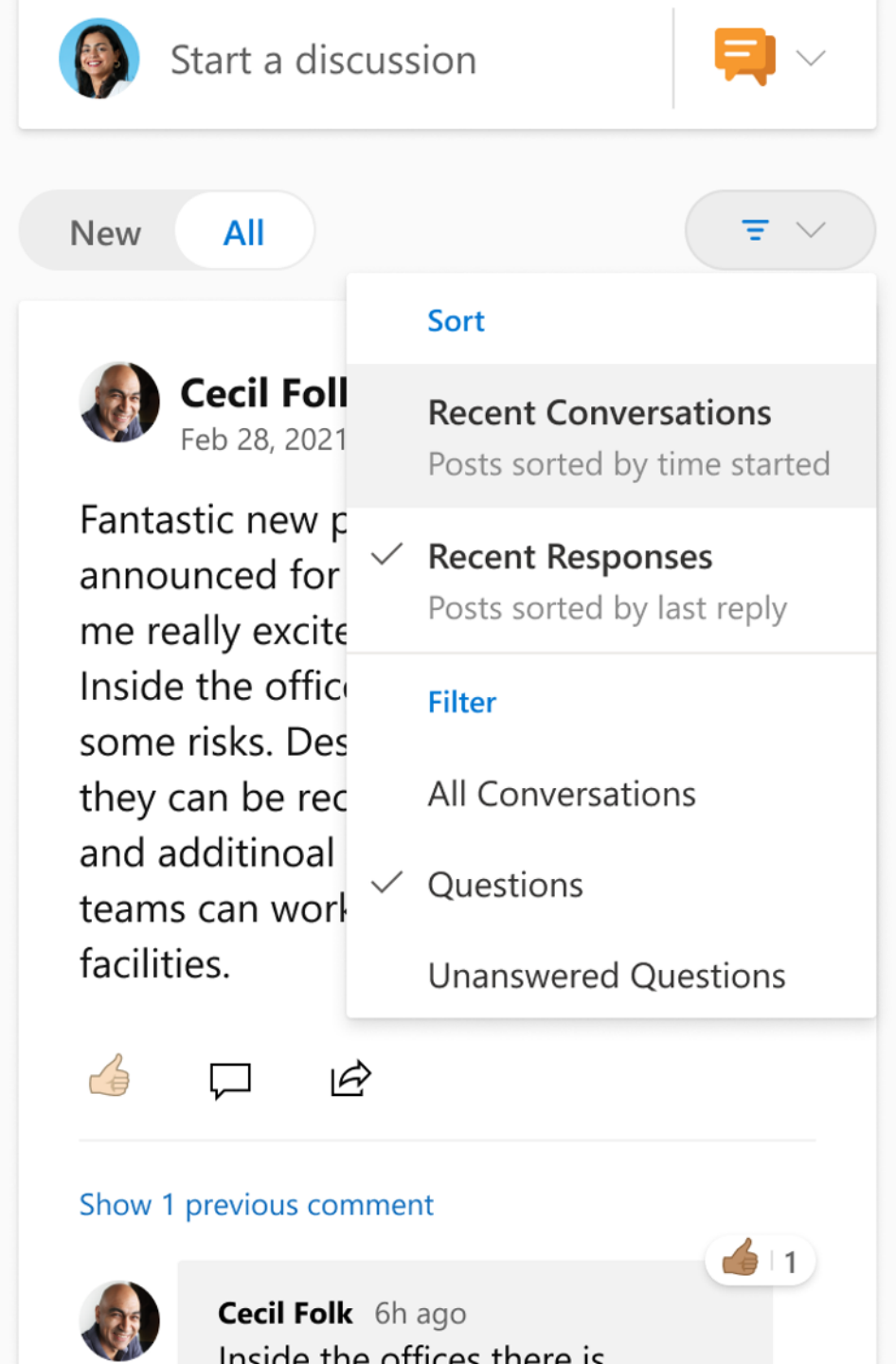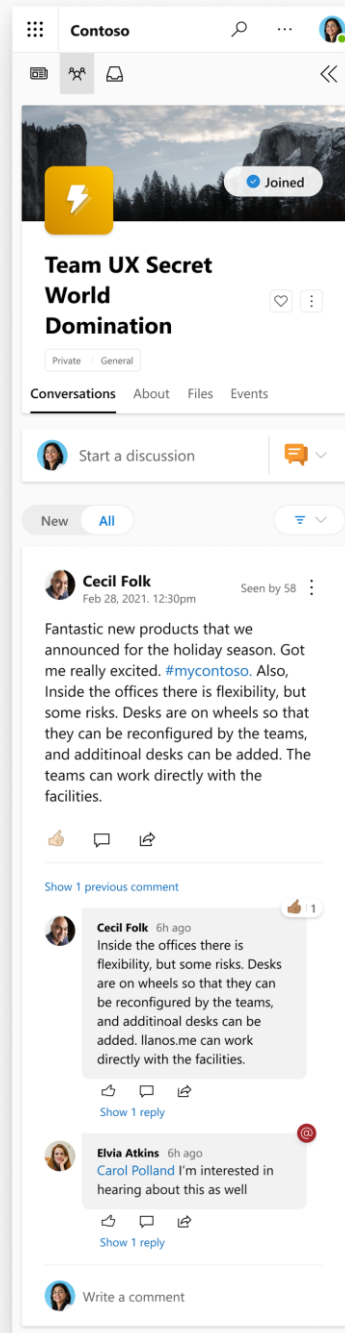
The Solution
Desktop Web
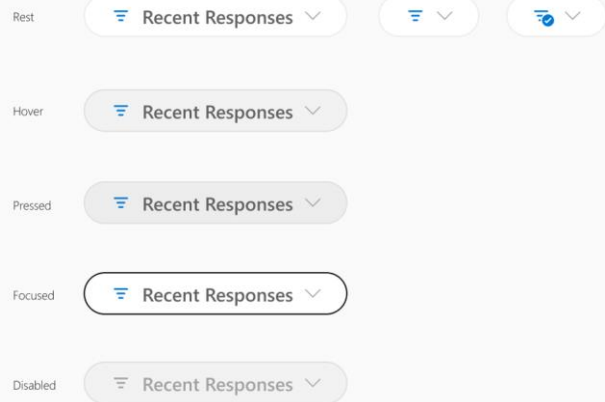

Although the menu button is designed with Yammer Web Styles, i.e., rounded corners, it is aligned to the rest of the product suite and Fluent Web styles in most other aspects, including typography, spacing and overall dimensions.

The Solution
Mobile Android and iOS

User interactions for mobile Android and iOS were intended to mirror the desktop experience, except where native guidelines and device patterns dictated otherwise. i.e., iOS sheet component for sort and filter options.
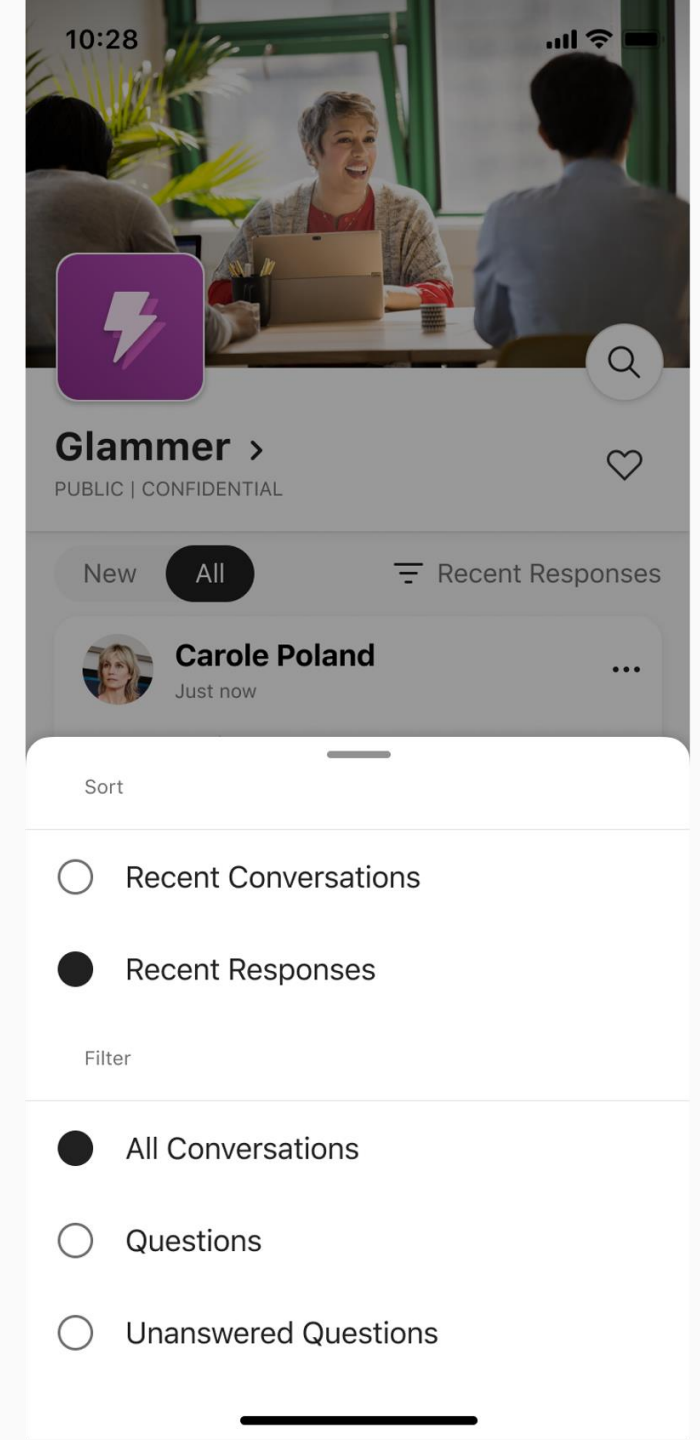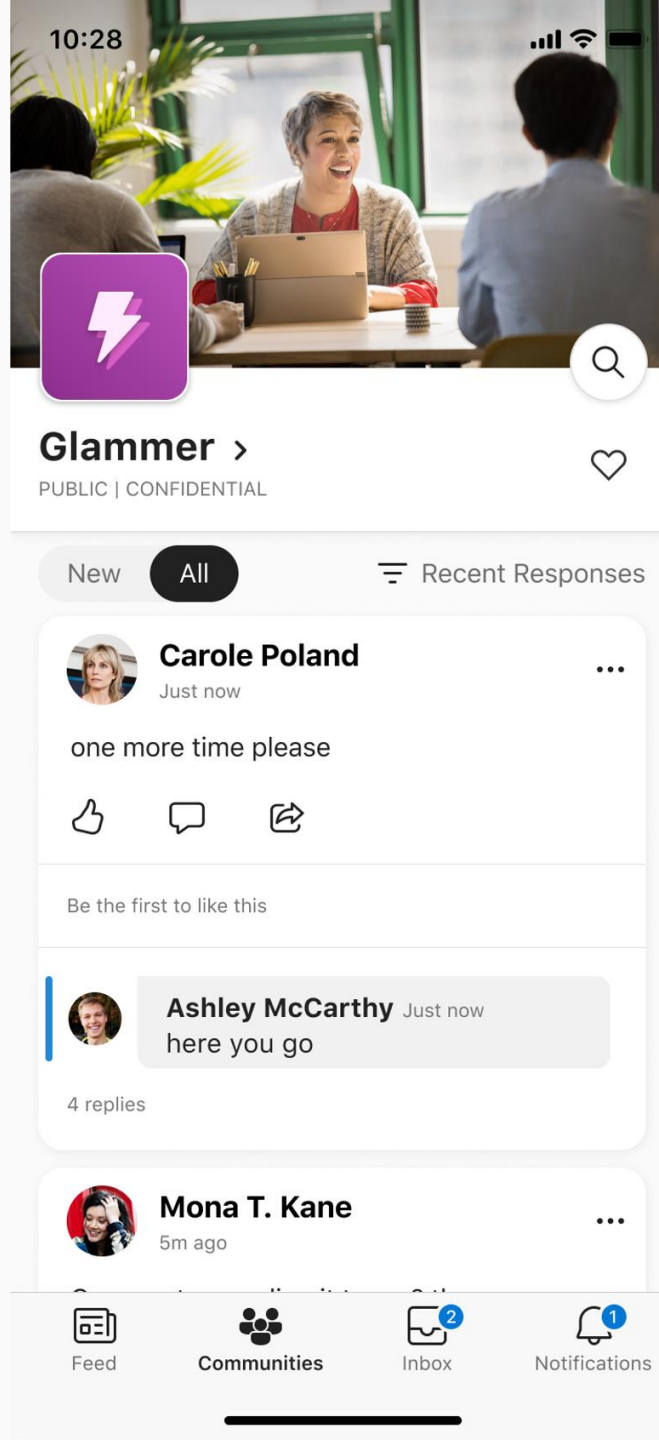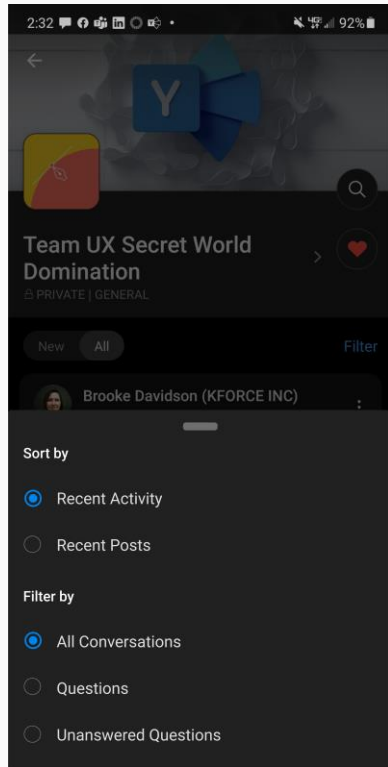
The Solution
Dark Theme

The designs were also prepared in a dark theme for web, mobile and desktop using Yammer Web Styles, which in turn were translated to CoreUI values for engineering to implement.
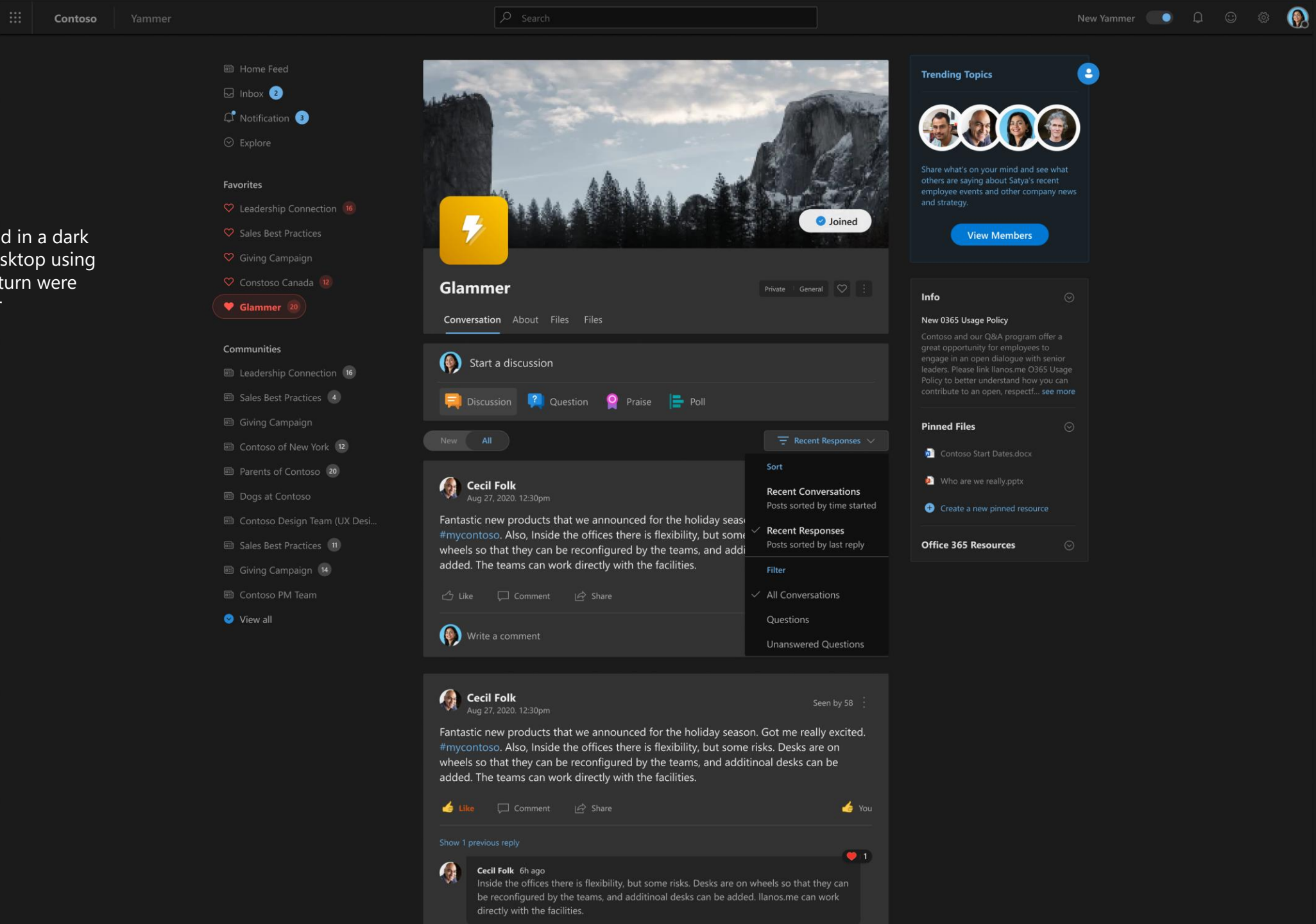
The Outcome

Yammer users will be able to order their feed by Recent Responses and Recent Conversations in Q1-Q2 FY22.

We plan to follow-up with customers who requested the functionality and process their feedback, in order to adjust the designs and improve the experience.

Success can be measured by tracking the usage of sort and filter, as well as any drop that might occur in filtering for questions.

Reflections

Early in the project there was some churn, and I should have done more to drive clarity and objectivity through the designs, rather than wait for alignment to occur amongst others.

There are some design patterns in digital product design, like sort and filter, that we take for granted. Everyone assumes it will just work, but you need to account for all the permutations and edge cases.

Implementation of the toggle switch was delayed, as it was not a preexisting component in the Yammer CoreUI library and engineers had to build it from scratch.

The interim solution will simply utilize the contextual drop menu, until the toggle switch can be constructed.

Thank You

Jay Mollet – Senior Designer