

STEP 1: Problem Statement:

Users sometimes open messages on WhatsApp while they are busy to quickly check the content but cannot reply immediately. Once the message is marked as read, there is no clear signal that a response is still pending, which can result in forgotten or delayed replies in conversations.

Brainstorm solutions against each root cause.

Solution	Short Description	Key Assumption	Category
Move messages to reply Later tab	Users can mark a specific message as "Reply Later". The conversation appears in a Needs Reply section until the user responds.	Users currently rely on unread messages as reminders. Providing a dedicated place to track pending replies will help users remember conversations they intended to respond to.	High
Notification Action: Reply Later	Users can mark a message as "Reply Later" directly from the notification without opening the chat.	Many users avoid opening chats while busy, so giving them a quick action from notifications may help them track messages earlier.	High
Remind Me Later (Time-based reminder)	Users can set a reminder for a message (for example later today or tomorrow) and WhatsApp sends a notification reminding them to reply.	Some users prefer time-based reminders when they know they will respond later but cannot reply immediately.	Medium
Automatic Reply Reminder	If a message remains unanswered for a long time, WhatsApp automatically shows a reminder like "You received a message from X days ago."	Users sometimes forget unintentionally, and a passive reminder could help recover missed conversations.	Low-Medium

Will Reply Later Acknowledgement	Users can send a quick acknowledgement like “Seen • Will reply later” so the sender knows they will respond later.	Communicating intent may reduce uncertainty and social pressure between users.	Low-Medium
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STEP 2: Prioritize Idea:

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Why Reply Later?

Among the explored solutions, **Move messages to Reply Later tab** is prioritized as the primary solution because it directly addresses the root cause identified during user research: users lose track of conversations once messages are marked as read and the unread reminder disappears.

The Reply Later tab restores this reminder by allowing users to intentionally mark messages that require a response. These conversations remain visible in a dedicated section until the user replies, ensuring that important conversations are not forgotten.

Compared to other solutions such as **Remind Me Later** or **Visual Reminder notifications**, this approach provides a more reliable and user-controlled way of tracking pending conversations.

Key Reasons for Prioritization

1. Solves the root cause of the problem

User research revealed that people often rely on the unread badge as a reminder to reply later. Once a message is opened, that reminder disappears. The Reply Later tab restores this reminder mechanism by allowing users to manually mark messages that require a response.

2. Aligns with existing user behavior

Many users intentionally keep messages unread to remind themselves to reply later. The Reply Later tab formalizes this behavior in a structured way without forcing users to change their habits.

3. Avoids dependency on time-based notifications

Reminder notifications depend on users being available at a specific time. If the user is driving, offline, or busy when the reminder appears, the notification may be missed. The Reply Later tab instead provides a persistent reminder that remains visible until the user completes the conversation.

4. Reduces notification fatigue

Unlike reminder-based solutions, this approach does not introduce additional notifications. Instead, it uses a passive visual system inside the product interface.

5. Keeps the WhatsApp interface simple

The solution integrates naturally with the chat list through a dedicated section or filter, maintaining WhatsApp's design philosophy of simplicity and minimal distractions.

Edge Cases Considered

To ensure the solution remains useful without creating new usability problems, several potential edge cases were considered.

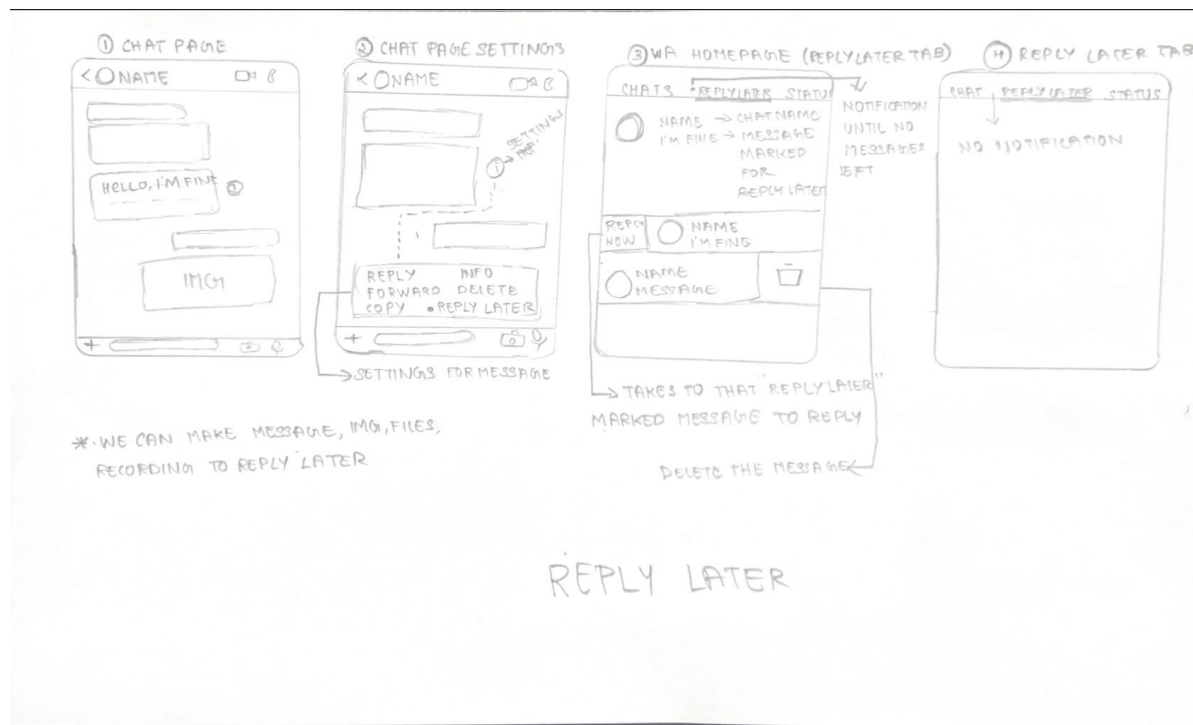
- **Users forgetting to mark messages as Reply Later:** Some users may still forget to manually mark messages. To reduce this risk, the feature can be supported by additional entry points such as notification actions or message long-press interactions.
- **Users adding too many conversations to the Reply Later tab:** If users mark too many messages, the tab could become cluttered. To manage this, the system can display a count of pending replies and sort messages based on time or priority.
- **Group conversations with many messages:** In active group chats, new messages may quickly bury the original message that required a reply. The system should highlight the specific message that was marked for reply to preserve context.
- **Users intentionally choosing not to reply:** In some cases, users may decide not to respond at all. The feature should allow users to remove or dismiss conversations from the Reply Later list.
- **Users replying from another device:** Since WhatsApp supports multiple devices, the system should automatically remove the conversation from the Reply Later tab once a reply is sent from any device.

Final Decision

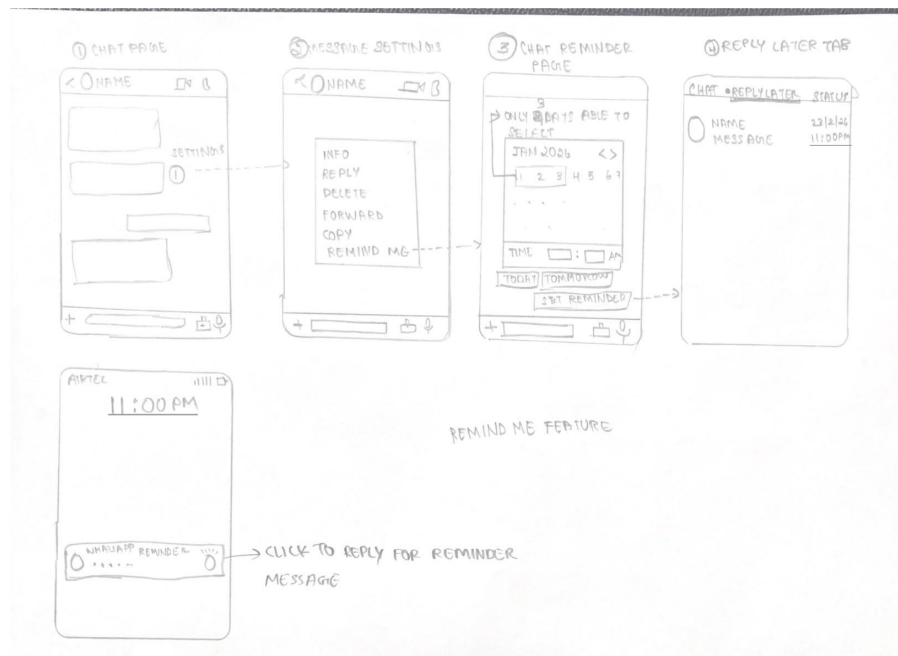
Considering the research insights, solution feasibility, and potential edge cases, **Reply Later tab** was selected as the primary solution. Supporting features such as notification shortcuts or reminders may be explored in later iterations to improve accessibility and usability.

STEP 3: Wireframe

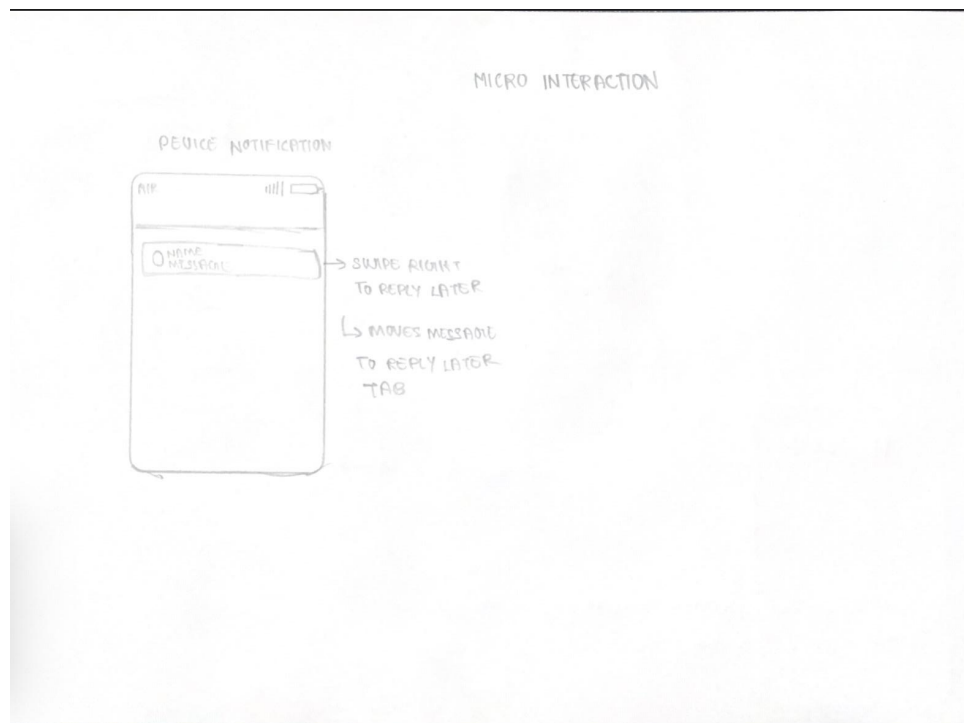
Reply Later:



Remind me to reply later:



Micro Interaction Notification:



STEP 4: Success Metrics:

Goal: Increase the percentage of read messages that receive a reply within **24 hours** by **20% within 6 months** among active WhatsApp users.

Key Metric:

Metric Type	Metric Name	Definition	Why it matters
Key Metric	Reply Completion Rate (Read Messages)	% of read messages that receive a reply within 24 hours	Directly measures whether the feature helps users complete conversations
Secondary Metric	Reply Later Feature Adoption Rate	% of users who mark at least one message as Reply Later	Indicates whether users discover and adopt the feature
Secondary Metric	Average Reply Time (Marked Messages)	Time taken to reply to messages marked as Reply Later	Shows if the feature helps users respond faster
Guardrail Metric	Reply Later Abandonment Rate	% of messages marked Reply Later that never receive a reply	Ensures users are not using the feature to postpone conversations indefinitely

STEP 5: Pitfalls & Mitigations

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STEP 6: PRD

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