



CASE STUDY

How Rec Room accelerates learning and serves gamers in production

Rec Room wanted to ship features and close the loop on building, measuring and learning. Statsig lets them learn by doing - measuring KPI impact from product changes.



Rec Room is a social app you play like a video game. It is a virtual reality game with over 29m active users (Q1 '22) with millions of player-created rooms. It has been described as "VR's killer app", is growing at 640% year over year on mobile and is available on most platforms, from phones to VR headsets.



The Problem



“Learning whether a new feature helped or hurt gamers was incredibly difficult & time-consuming”
 — Joel Witten, Head of Data at Rec Room

This was a challenge he set out to fix. He believed that empowering teams building features to measure the direct impact on KPIs would accelerate their learning and improve the experience for its users.



The Solution

Using Statsig Feature Gates to release new features

To solve these challenges & speed up release cycles, Rec Room started using Statsig Feature Gates to rollout new features. When a feature is rolled out to a subset of users, Statsig computes impact on metrics by comparing users who have access to the feature with those who do not (A vs B).

The image shows two screenshots of the Statsig interface. The left screenshot displays the 'Rules' configuration page with three rules: 'Employees only', 'Early Access Users', and 'United States and Canada'. The right screenshot shows the 'United States and Canada (90% rollout)' results, including a cumulative exposure graph and a table of metric lifts.

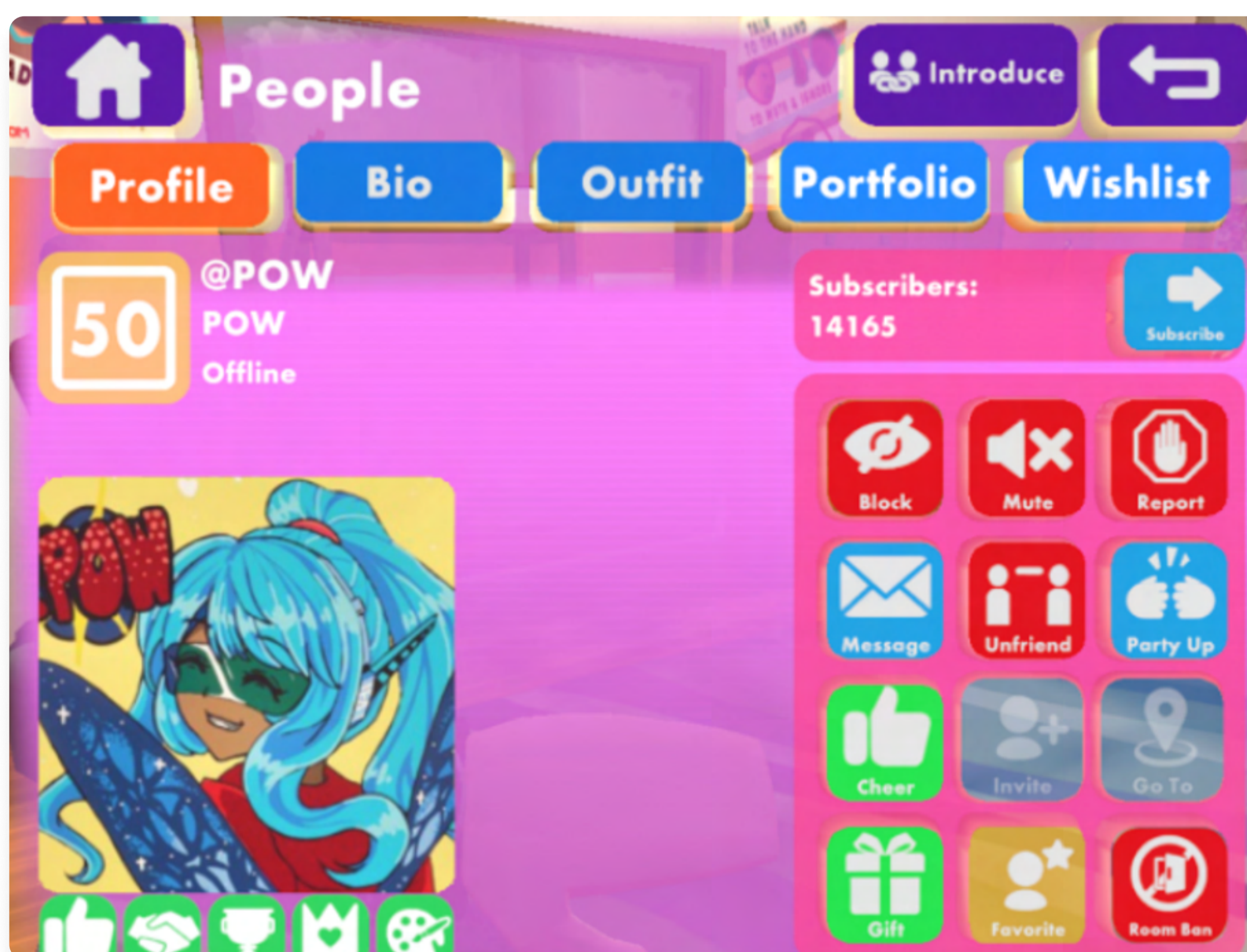
Group	Total Exposures	%
Fail	483.89K	10.01%
Pass	4.35M	89.99%
Total	4.83M	100%

Metric	Control (Fail)	Test (Pass)	Delta %
purchase_event (event_dau)	483.89K	4.35M	4.0% ±0.4%
purchase_event (event_count)	0.05209	1.35M	4.1% ±0.3%
checkout_event (event_count)	0.05415	12.58M	1.3% ±0.3%
Purchase Conversion Funnel (L...)			3.9% ±0.2%
Purchase Conversion Funnel (L...)			4.0% ±0.2%

Player Profiles

Players within Rec Room can view another player and interact with them through their profile. They can initiate chats, learn more about the person or even block them.

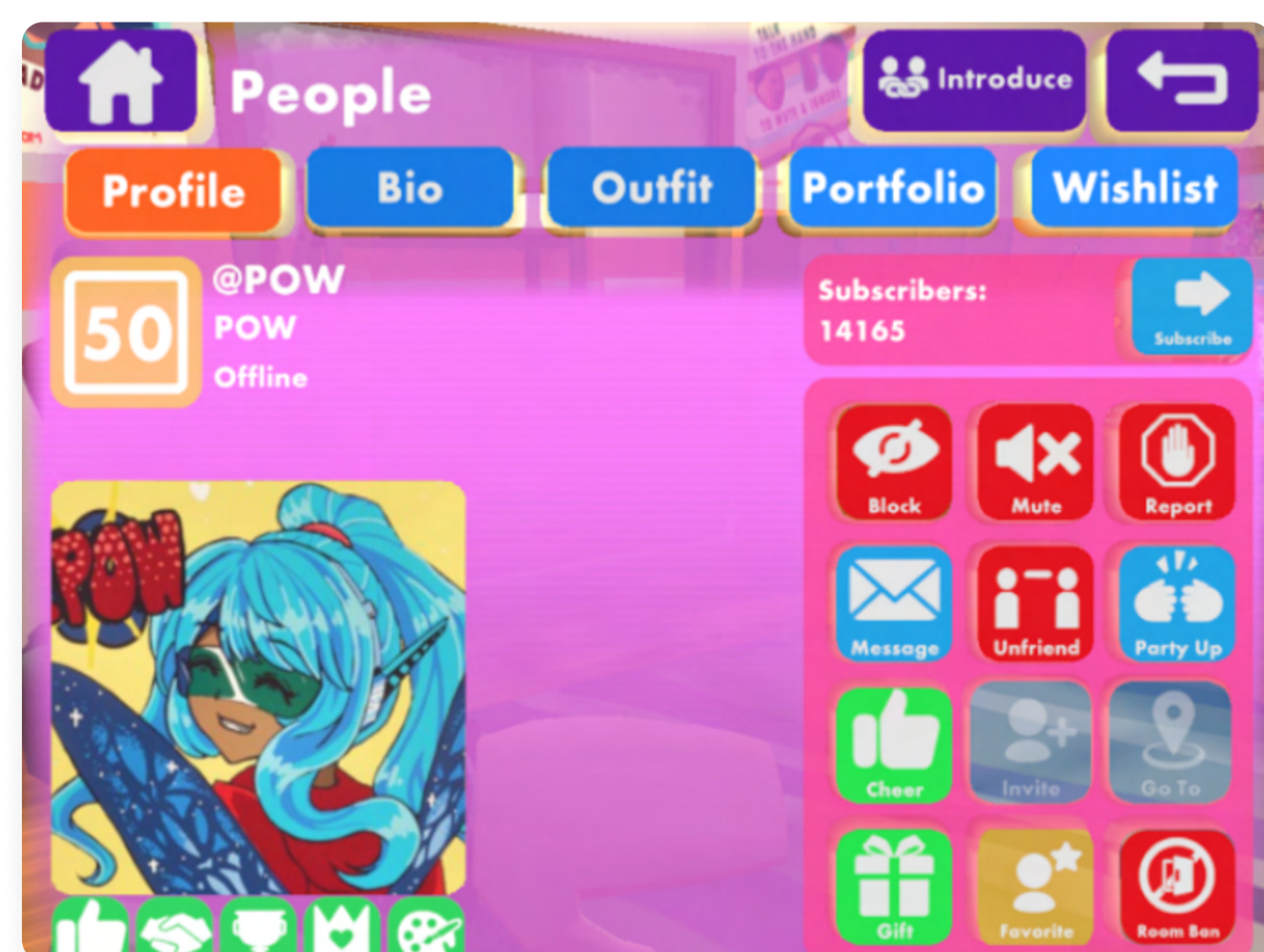
It hadn't been refreshed in a few years and the team decided to update the look and feel to make it more "current". Given that the goal was design consistency with the current aesthetic, this was not meant to be an experiment. The team was not looking to measure a bump in metrics from this change.



V0 Player Profile

"Player profiles are how players learn about. It's time for a redesign!"

In theory every product change should have a clear, measurable hypotheses and a measurable goal. In practice – creating good products is a combination of art and science. Most of what is shipped in good products happens outside of an experiment. Being able to measure the impact of these changes creates learning when something unexpected happens – instead of being blind to it.



V0 Player Profile



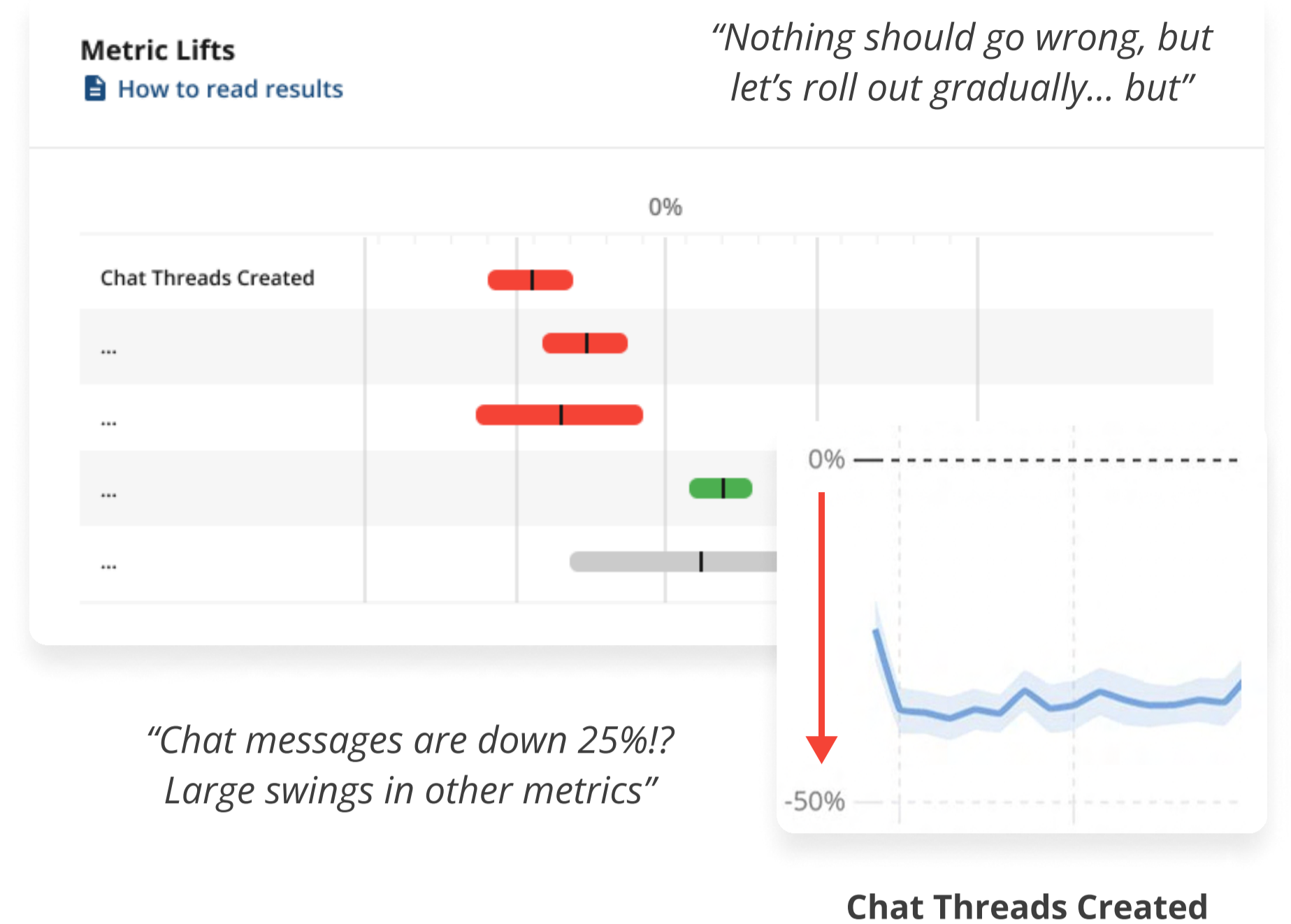
V1 Player Profile: UI Revamp

"The new design is so much better! People will love this!"

Surprising results

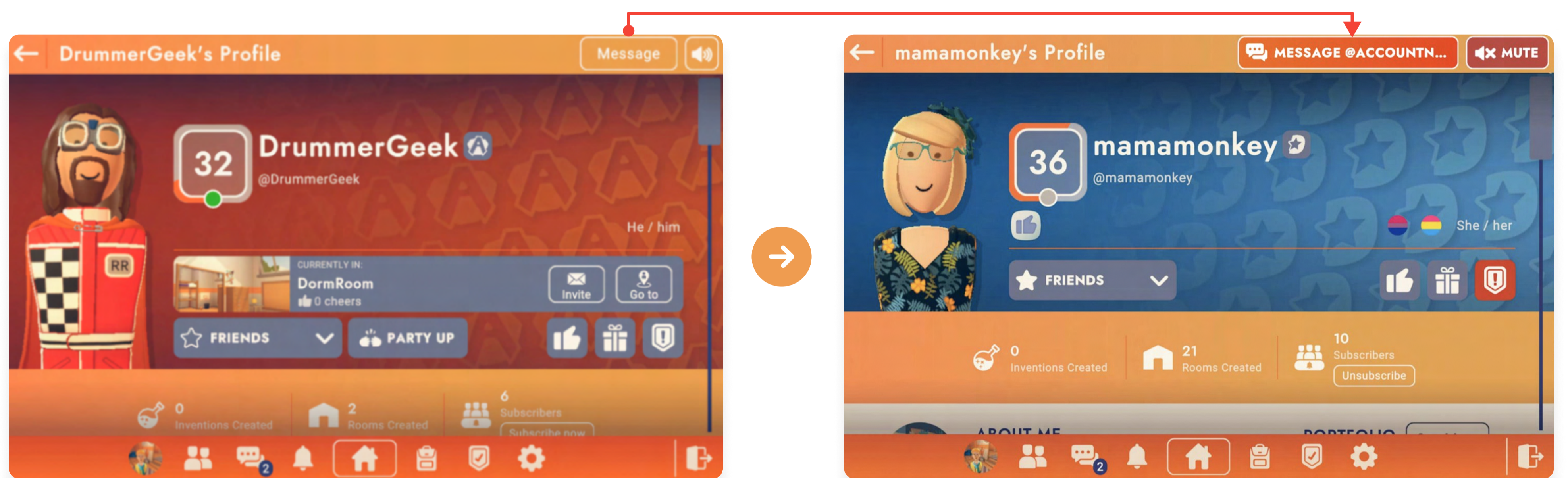
Rec Room built and shipped their new Player Profile. The new version felt cleaner, did not look dated and seemed easier to navigate. They shipped this behind a feature gate - and like with other changes - slowly ramped up rollout. What they saw next surprised them.

Chat messages between players dropped by over 25%. Metrics that measured healthy interaction between players dropped, which was surprising to the team. Their first instinct was that users were slow to adjust to the new experience - the novelty effect could hurt metrics in the short term, but stabilize over time. But the metrics did not improve as they waited for a few days.



Launching v2

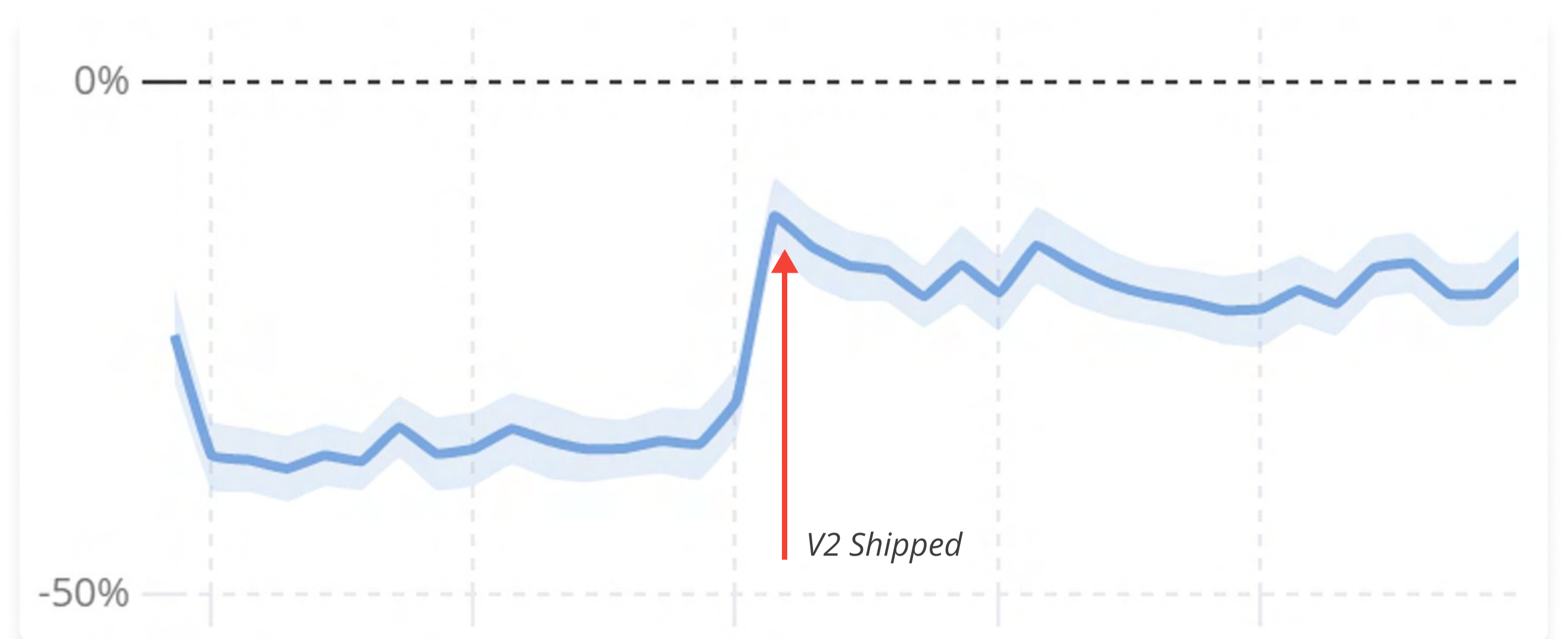
They carefully compared new and old experiences to explain what might be happening. They hypothesized that the "Message" button was buried in the header bar and ignored by users. They prepared a second revision of the Player Profile that made this button more visible.



V1 Player Profile

V2 Player Profile: Make Message Button Pop
"Let's test the hypothesis by making the message button pop"

They shipped this experience and promptly saw their metrics recover partially. Messaging was still not happening as often as it was with the original Player Profile, but they were convinced they were on the right track with what was happening to user behavior.



Chat messaging between players
"It worked! (somewhat)"

Third time's the charm

The team considered the learning they had and revved their design again. They moved buttons out of the header bar where users seemed to miss them. They added labels for key tasks so users unfamiliar with icons didn't miss them. They prominently colored the buttons they wanted to emphasize so these stood out.



V2 Player Profile



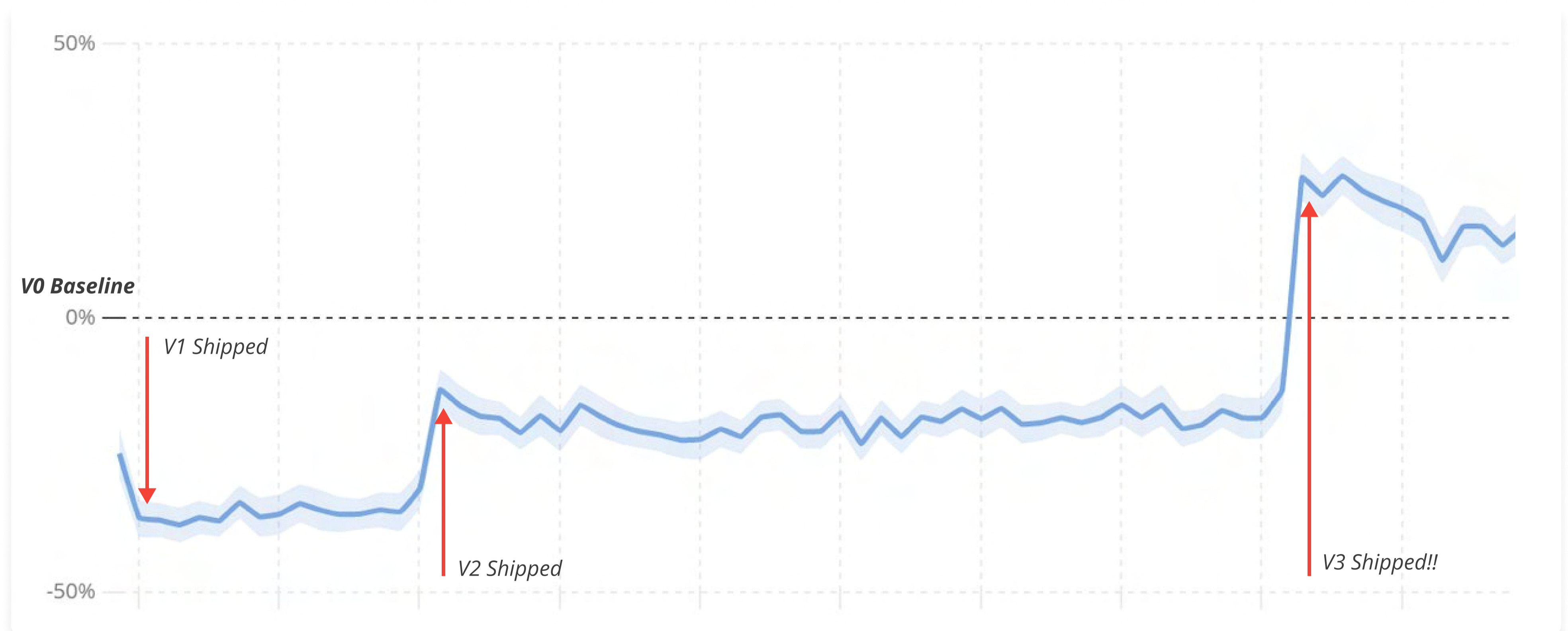
V3 Player Profile: Move Button where Users Expect

"Let's make it pop more!"

The Results

When Player Profile v3 shipped, the number of chat interactions skyrocketed. They stabilized at almost a 25% bump up from the baseline. This was a dramatic recovery from the 25% drop the Player Profile v1 experience caused.

The team originally expected to ship a design refresh that improved how the product felt, with no expectation to impact near term metrics. Having product observability helped them realize that the changes regressed user engagement. Learning from this helped refine their new UI patterns and ultimately ship a better product.

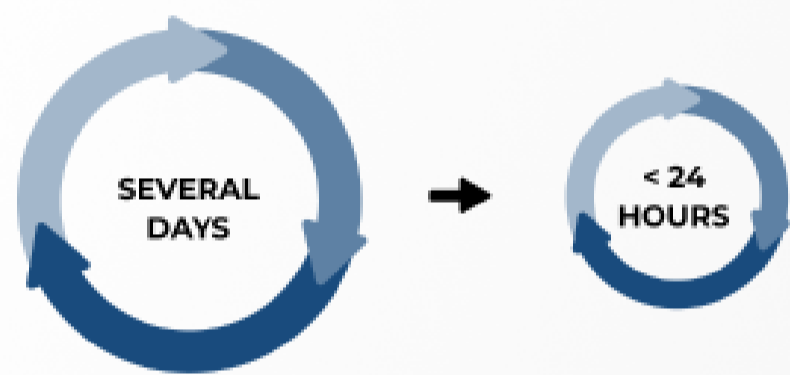


Chat messaging between players

"Nice! Better design, and dramatically happier users than when we started"

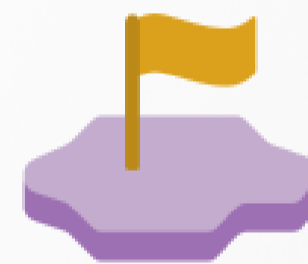
Product Observability

Product observability enables product teams to gain insight into how users react to changes. Closing the loop with immediate feedback to product changes helps teams refine their product intuition and understanding of what works with users. Over time, the insights your organization accumulates compound—creating a more effective team, and a better product.



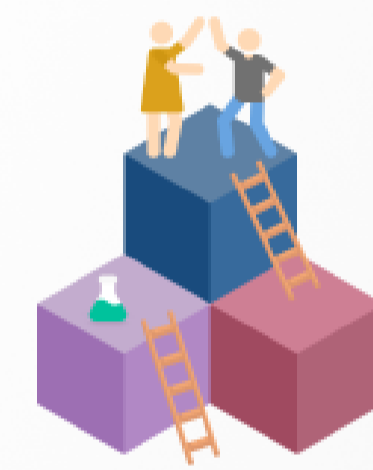
Learn faster, Build faster

Customer-obsessed teams continuously **learn and adapt** to their customers. They build to delight, not throw darts in the dark.



Get Definitive Answers

Fast moving teams navigate through uncertain territory with **fast and definitive answers** about the unknowns at each step.



Be Relentless about Growth

Ambitious teams set audacious goals and experiment relentlessly to achieve growth. While others fly blind, they **play to win**.

