

Too Many Answers, Not Enough Clarity: Enhancing Q&A Thread Usability

Challenge: Users struggled to easily digest and locate relevant information in Q&A threads containing multiple accepted answers, leading to confusion and inefficiency when trying to identify the most helpful response.

Method



Concept Testing

- To tackle this challenge of understanding which design would help alleviate some of these known pain points, I decided to conduct a concept test with 12 participants using three different prototypes.

Key Findings

- Design-wise users preferred a blend of the three designs selecting specific features from each one they'd like to have in a future version.
- Having more than five accepted or recommended answers in a thread leads users to doubt the effectiveness of the provided answers.
- Users depend on clear visual indicators—like who endorsed an answer and how helpful others found it—to decide which response to trust. This information needs to be consistently visible to guide decision-making.

Outcome

- While not all design recommendations were implemented, a key update—adding labels like Accepted by Author and Recommended by Moderator—was successfully rolled out.

What worked well

- Collaboration with the designer was seamless—she welcomed feedback grounded in user research I had conducted earlier.

What I learned

- I learned the importance of aligning early with engineering—several recommendations were dropped due to backend constraints I hadn't anticipated. With that insight upfront, I would've adjusted my user questions and focused more on low-effort solutions.

"I'm looking for their accepted answer first and foremost, and then I'm looking, in addition to that, then I'm looking for these recommendations, which are from the moderator."