

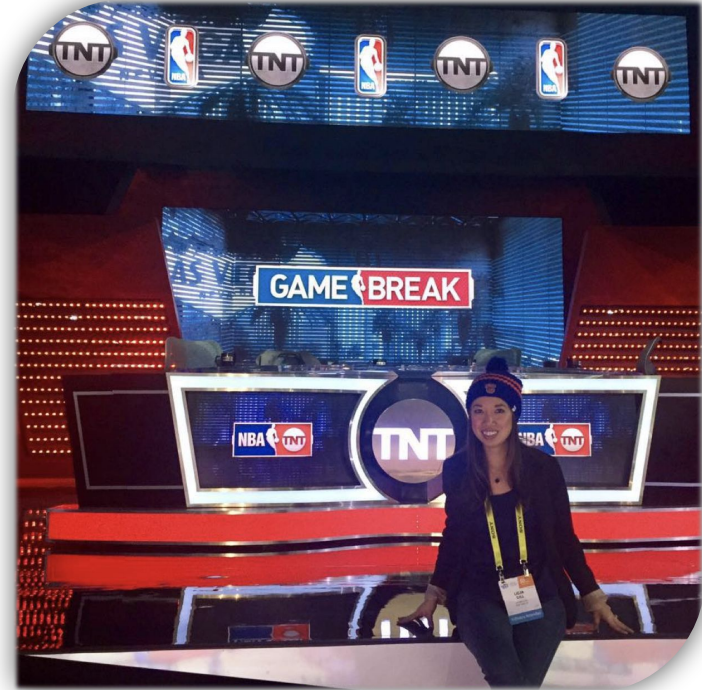


The *Guts and Glory* of UX Research in Sports Media

Ligja Gill
September 30, 2021

The Playbook

- Who are you?
- What are you talking about?
 - What is UXR like in Sports Media?
 - Why are UXR roles in Sports Media so rare?
 - How do I shoot my shot?



Your Coach

**WARNER
MEDIA**

Senior Manager, UX Research

Turner Sports Data Science & Insights
June 2017 - Present

Professional Experience

AnswerLab

UX Strategy Manager, June 2016 – June 2017
Senior UX Researcher, March 2015 – May 2016
UX Researcher, March 2013 – February 2015

Sachs Insights

Research Consultant, January 2013 – March 2013
Research Associate, May 2011 – December 2012

The Archer Group

Associate Experience Strategist, August 2008 – April 2011

Industry Leadership

NYC UXPA

President, September 2013 – August 2015
Mentorship Program Director, March 2014 – January 2018
Volunteer, May 2011 – January 2018

Education

Rutgers University

B.A. Psychology (Cognitive Science), 2008

WarnerMedia



HBO

tbs



truTV



[adult swim]



CINEMAX

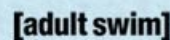


B-R

ROOSTER  TEETH



HBOmax

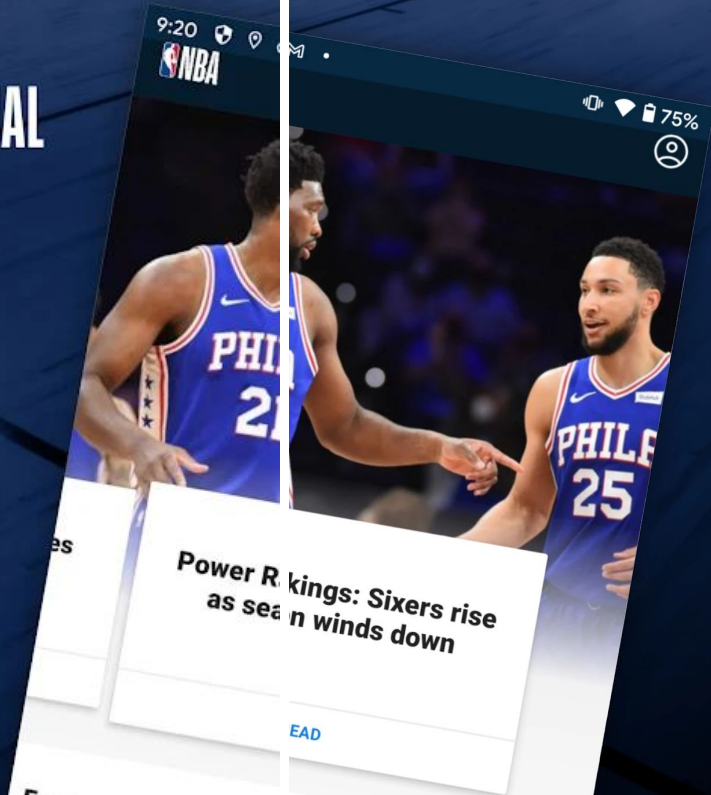




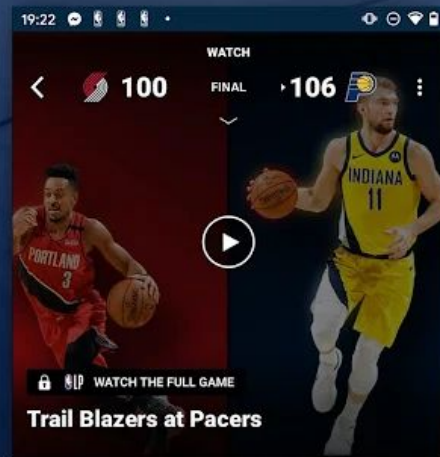


FFICIAL
APP

FOLLOW YOUR FAVORITE
TEAMS & PLAYERS



WATCH GAMES LIVE OR
ON DEMAND



NBA League Pass

FEATURED

LANGUAGES

CONDENSED

English

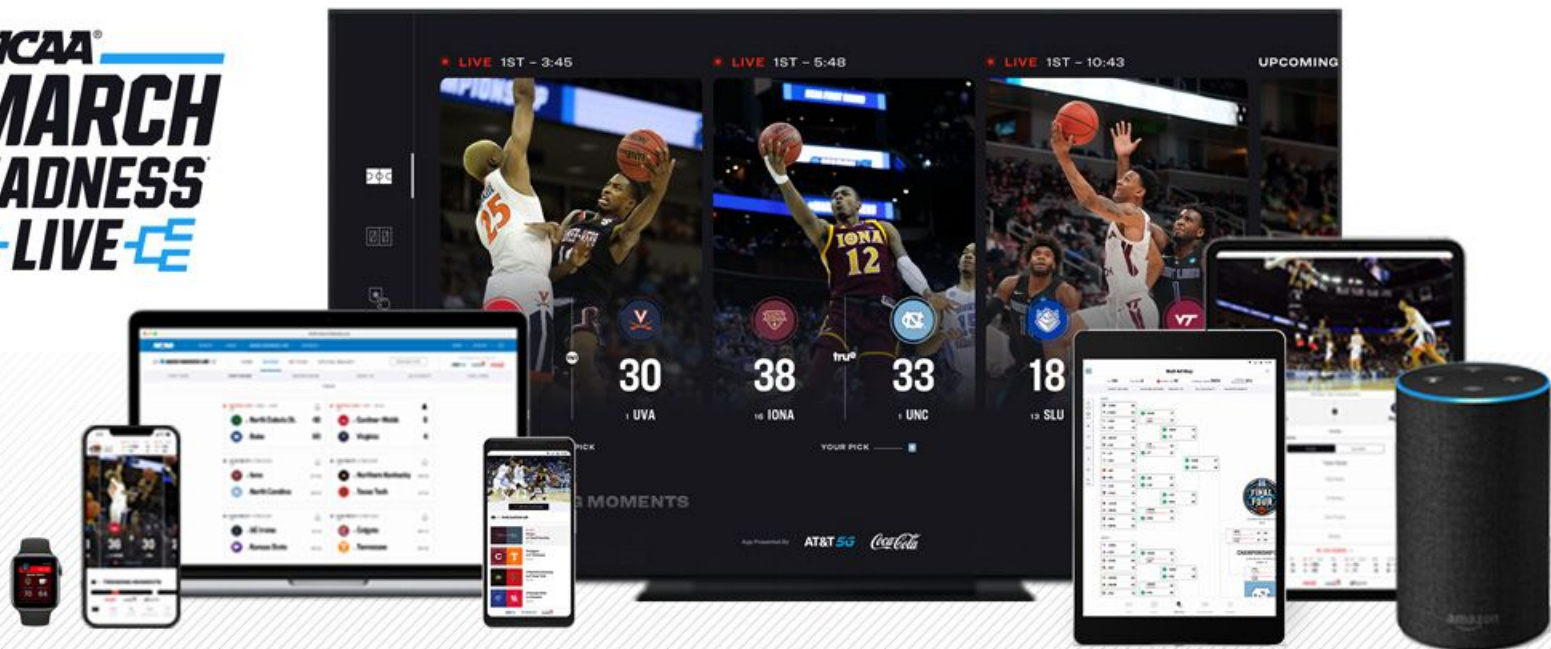
Mobile View (Preferred)
OPTIMIZED FOR MOBILE

Teams

GET IN-GAME HIGHLIGHTS
AND INTERACTIVE STATS



NCAA[®] MARCH MADNESS[™] LIVE



AVAILABLE ON



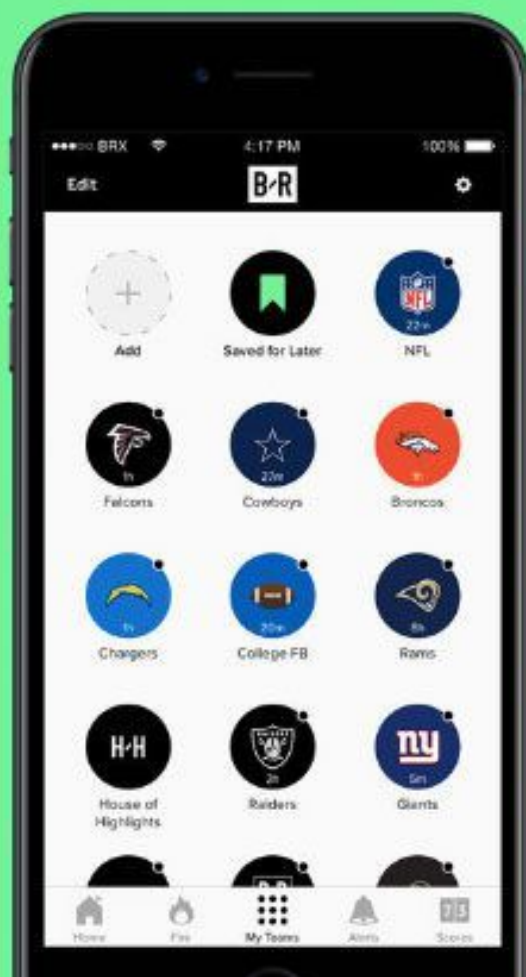
Roku



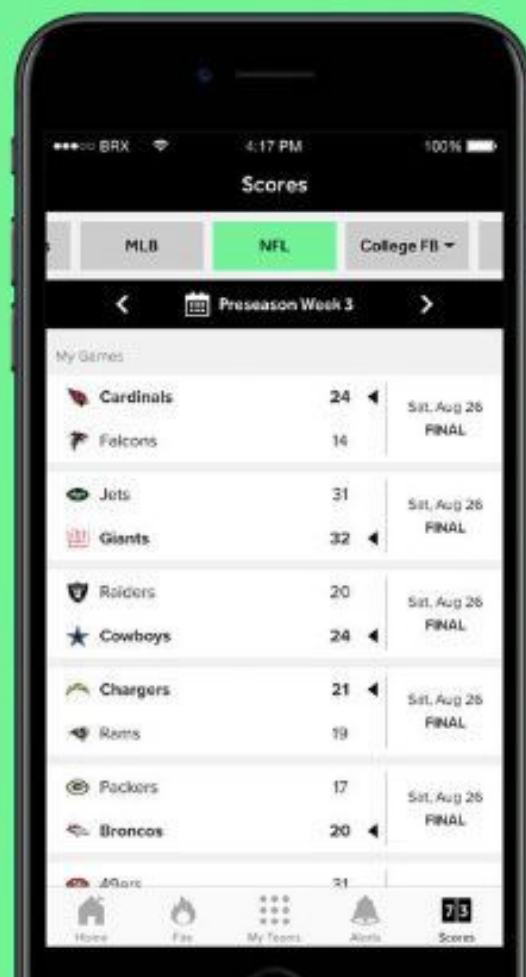
HOTTEST VIDEOS.



ALL OF YOUR TEAMS.



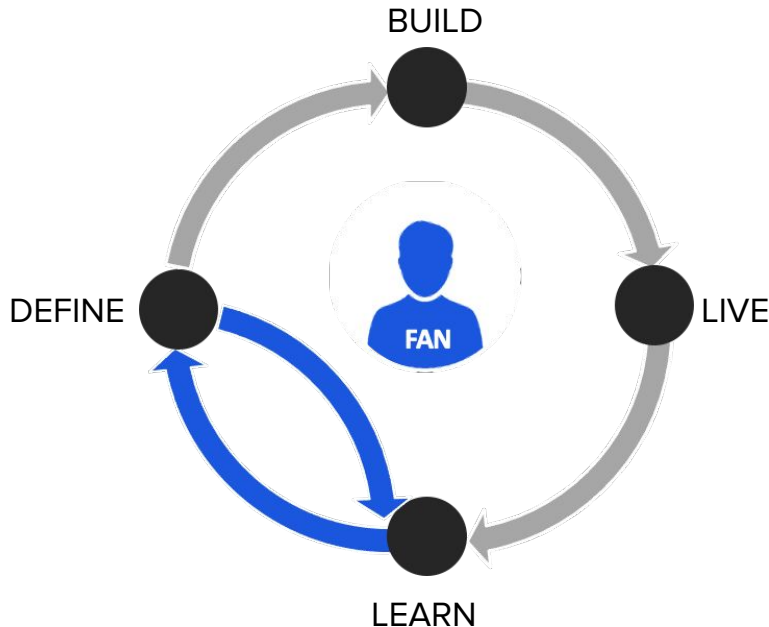
LIVE SCORES.



**What is UXR like
in Sports Media?**

Fan Experience Research Mission:

Develop the best understanding of sports fans and use data driven insights to deliver exceptional and innovative fan experiences



- Advocate for our sports fans
- Instill confidence that we are building the right things
- Improve efficiency for our end users *and* our team

What are we trying to learn?

Business Objective	Audience Impact: Growth, Engagement, Consumption			
Behavior What fans are doing	Media and Online Consumption	Non-Sports Content	News, Movies, Shows, Gaming, Social, etc.	
		Game Content	Live Consumption (fan control, time shifting) Traditional Broadcast, Streaming, Social	
		Non-Game Content	Documentaries, Interviews, Special Features, etc.	
	Other Fan Activities	Sports-related gaming, fantasy, betting, gear, communities, etc.		
Fan Mindset How fans show up	Attitudes & Sentiment Feelings towards leagues, brands, events	Drivers & Motivation Why fans engage	Priorities Downtime, sports, life	Awareness
Environment and Landscape External factors that impact fandom	Technology Cord cutting, streaming, 5G	Current Events Elections, social justice, pandemic	Socioeconomic Occupation, education, income, location	Seasonality Time of year



Fans are a Moving Target

Fan behaviors and mindset can be impacted by:

- Level of Affinity
 - Game Day vs. Non-Game Day
 - Concurrence with Other Events
 - Event Match-Up
 - Difficulty of Schedule
 - Time of Season
 - Team Performance
 - Player Performance
-

Fielding Challenges

Show your UXR Guts!

- Timing fielding according to game schedules
- Specificity in scenarios and prompts
- Minimizing distractions with “accurate” placeholders
- “Off-season” research



Multiple Sports
All Year Round



2,460 Games
October-June



77 Games in
4 Weeks

March Madness 2019 Research

20 Days

5 Studies

5 Markets
(+ National Sample)

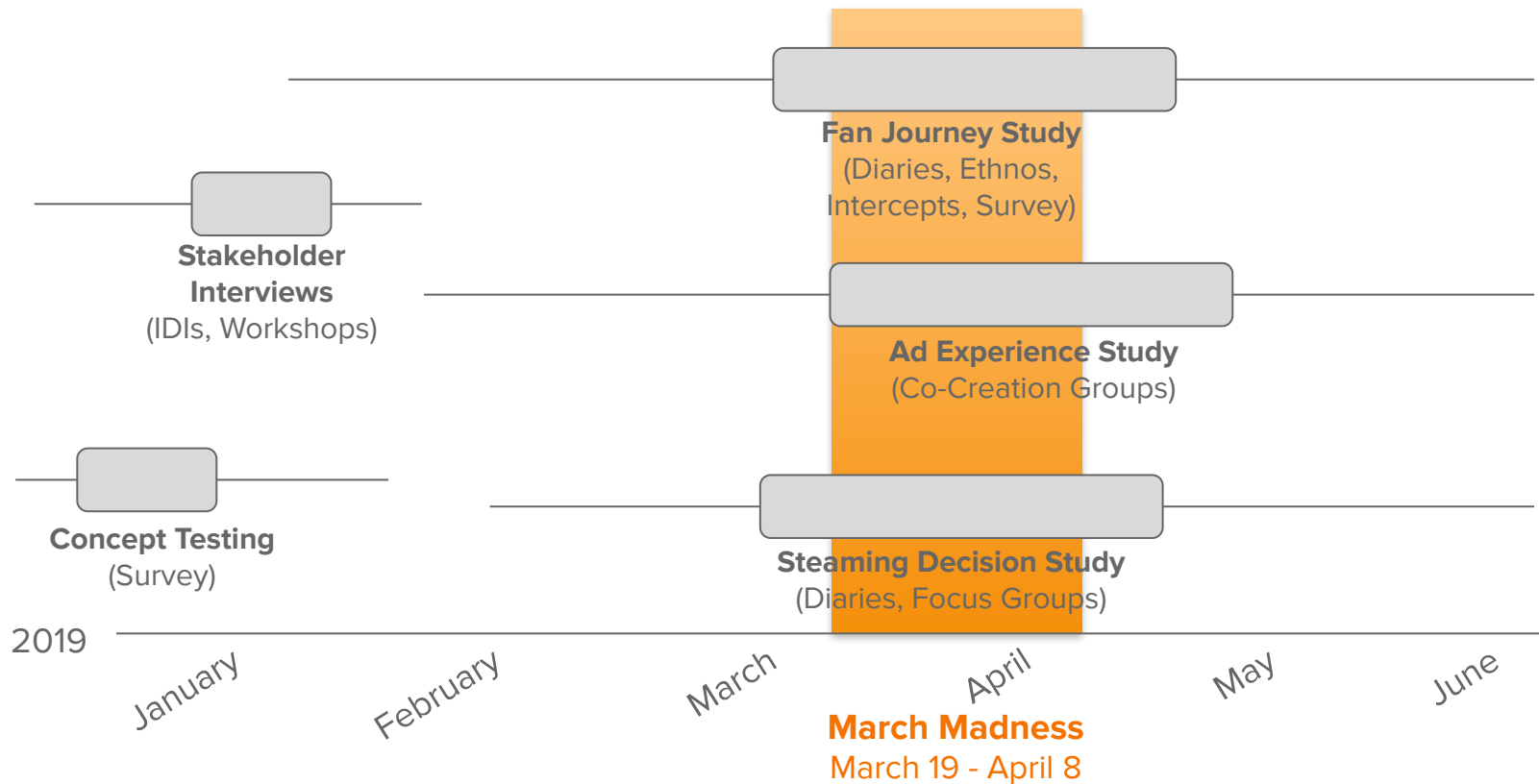
2,500 Fans

1,500 Hours of Recordings

2,000 Diary Entries

2,000 Surveys

Research Timeline for March Madness 2019



2020: March Madness to Sports Hiatus Research in <1 week

Content Journey Diary + IDIs

Explore patterns of content consumption throughout the tournament

Market: Nationwide (remote)

Sample: 36

Dates: March 12 – April 10

Strategy IDIs

Understand how source of entry influences experience expectations

Market: Atlanta, GA

Sample: 12

Dates: March 19-20

Usability IDIs

Uncover user behavior and pain points during live game windows

Market: Atlanta, GA

Sample: 12

Dates: March 21-22



Exploratory IDIs

Explore fan mindset in absence of live sports

Market: Atlanta, GA (remote)

Sample: 12

Dates: March 19-20

Sports Content Diary + IDIs

Understand how fans are consuming sports content in absence of live sports

Market: Nationwide (remote)

Sample: 32

Dates: April 1 – May 12

ORIGINAL PLAN

SPORTS CANCELLED!

NEW PLAN

A large crowd of fans is gathered around a basketball player, reaching out to touch him. The player is wearing a purple jersey with the name 'JAMES' and the number '23' on the back. The fans are holding up their phones to take pictures. In the background, a blue banner with the 'PayPerView' logo is visible.

PayPerView

**Sports Brings
People Together**



The Upside

The “Glory” of UXR in Sports Media

- **UNIVERSAL** - Large population to recruit from
 - **PASSION** - Enthusiastic study participation (lower no-show, attrition rates)
 - **FUN** - Enjoyable and productive fielding
 - **COMMUNITY** - Making sports more inclusive and accessible
-

**Why are UXR
roles in Sports
Media so rare?**

**Content is
(still) King**

- Bill Gates, 1996



IF YOU BUILD IT,
THEY WILL COME.



What's the hold up?

Why UXR gets dunked on
in traditional media
(compared to tech and other sections)

- **EXCLUSIVITY** - Fans tolerate poor UX when content access is limited
 - **INERTIA** - Deep industry history with established standards and metrics (viewership ratings, advertiser revenue, etc.)
 - **UNKNOWN** - Low organizational UX maturity requires education and buy-in
-

Looking Ahead...



Manager, (Lead) UX Research, Player Experiences - HBO Max

WarnerMedia
Seattle, WA



UX Researcher

Sling TV
Englewood, CO



UX Researcher

FanDuel
Atlanta, GA



UX Researcher

CNN
New York, NY



Sr. UX Researcher

Disney Streaming
San Francisco, CA



Manager, UX Research and Insights, NBC News Group

NBCUniversal
New York, NY



UX Researcher

PlayStation
San Francisco, CA



UX Researcher, Studio Production Product

Netflix
Los Gatos, CA



User Experience Researcher - Fandango

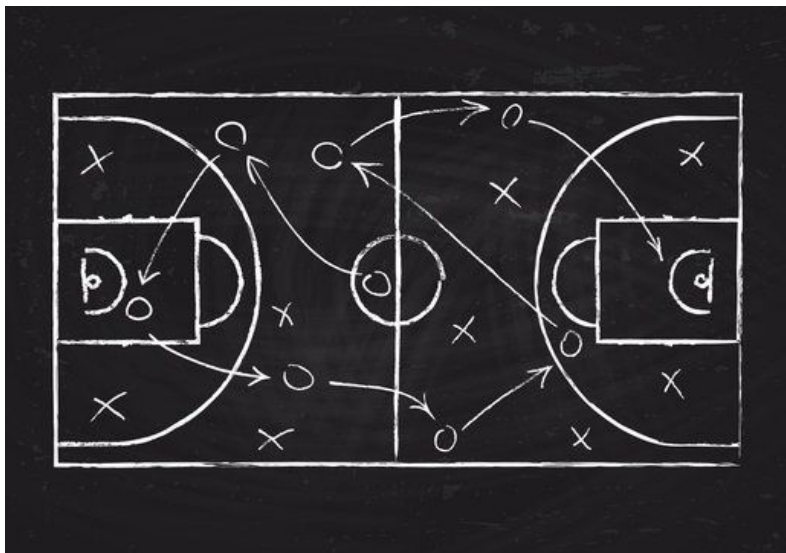
Fandango
Beverly Hills, CA



Senior UX Researcher, Advertising Experience

Roku Inc.
New York, NY

**How do I
shoot my shot?**



Your Game Plan

- **Follow industry news** - sports, media, entertainment, tech, etc.
 - **Network within industry** - informational interviews.
 - **Explore other types of insight roles** - analytics, market research, consumer insights, ad sales research.
 - **Observe fellow sports fans** - cull your own informal insights.
 - **Stay alert** - watch the market for new leads.
-



WSJ.com, 2018

Gotta Work On Your...

- **COVER LETTER** - make your case, draw parallels from past experience
 - **WORK EXAMPLES** - articulate the objectives, approach and your contributions
 - **STAKEHOLDERS** - understand their goals and how you can help
 - **TEAMMATES** - understand the mission and how to work together
-

Questions?

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