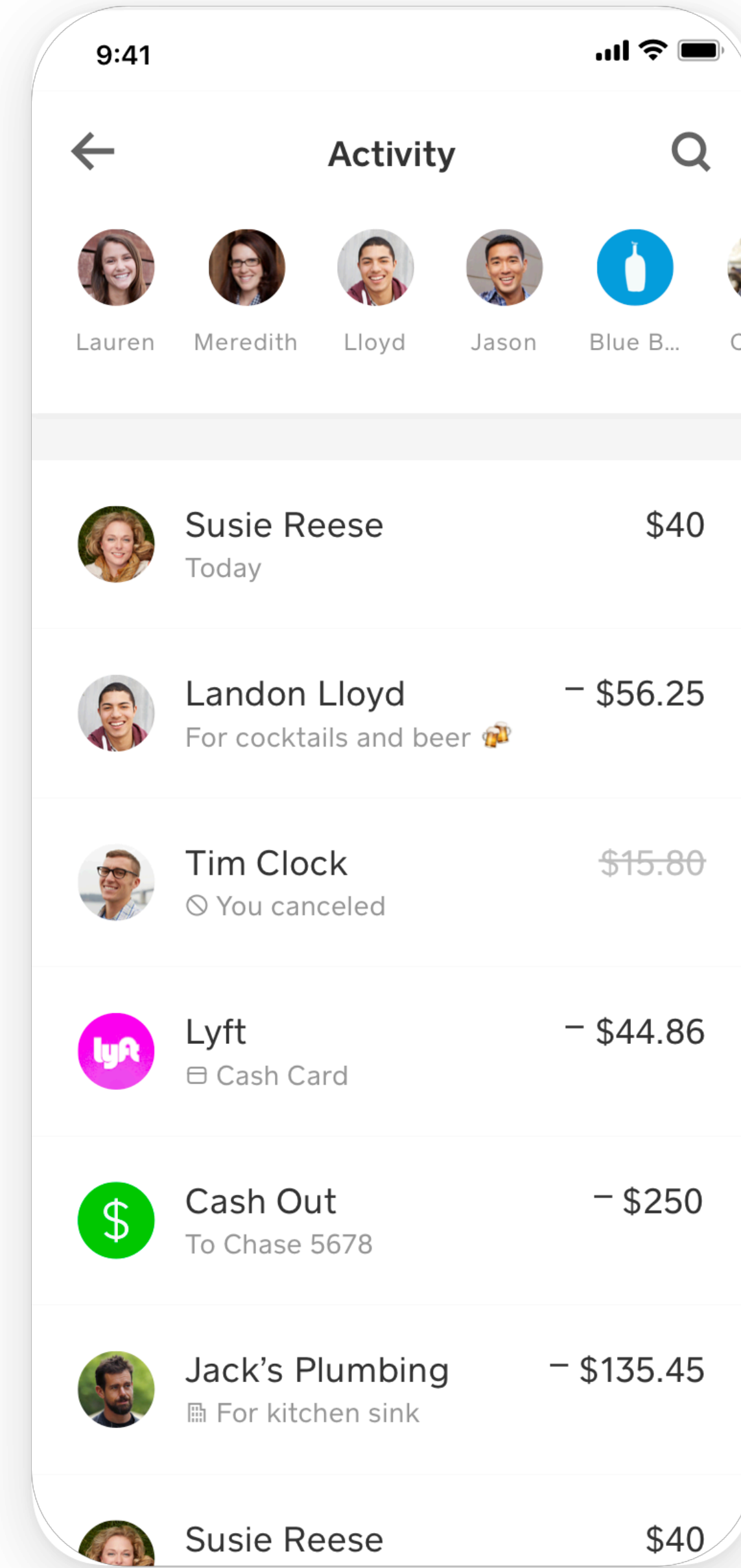
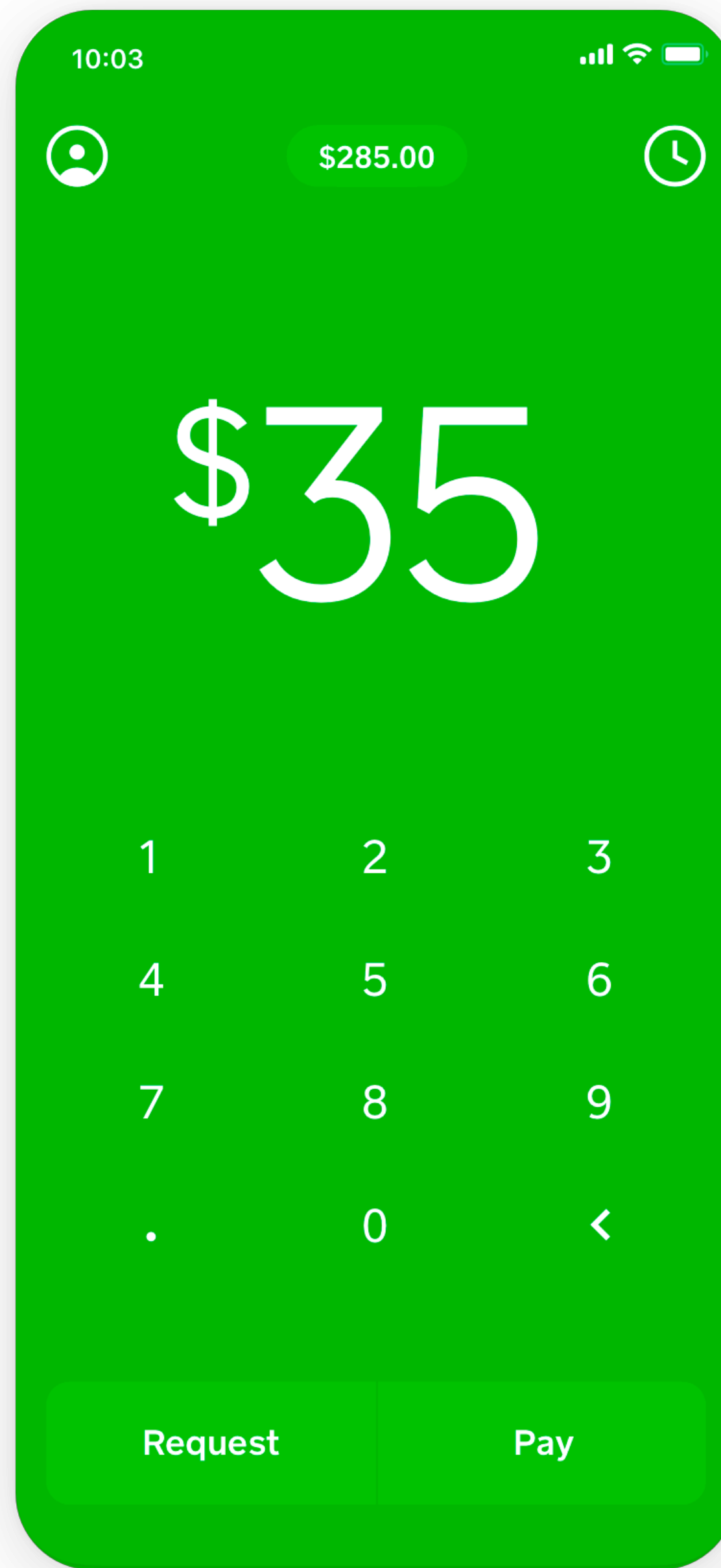
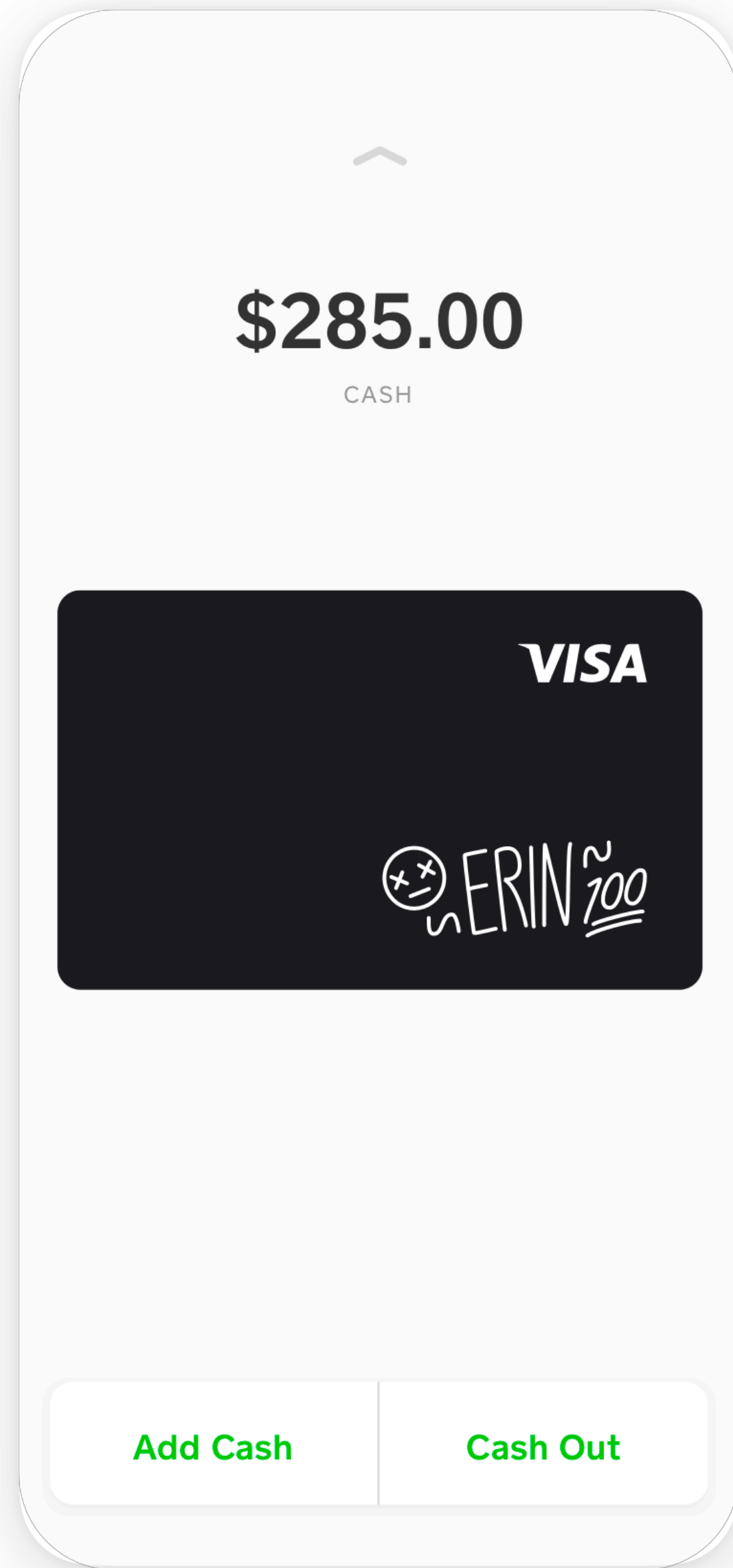




Building distributed engineering teams

Tom Adams



Metrics

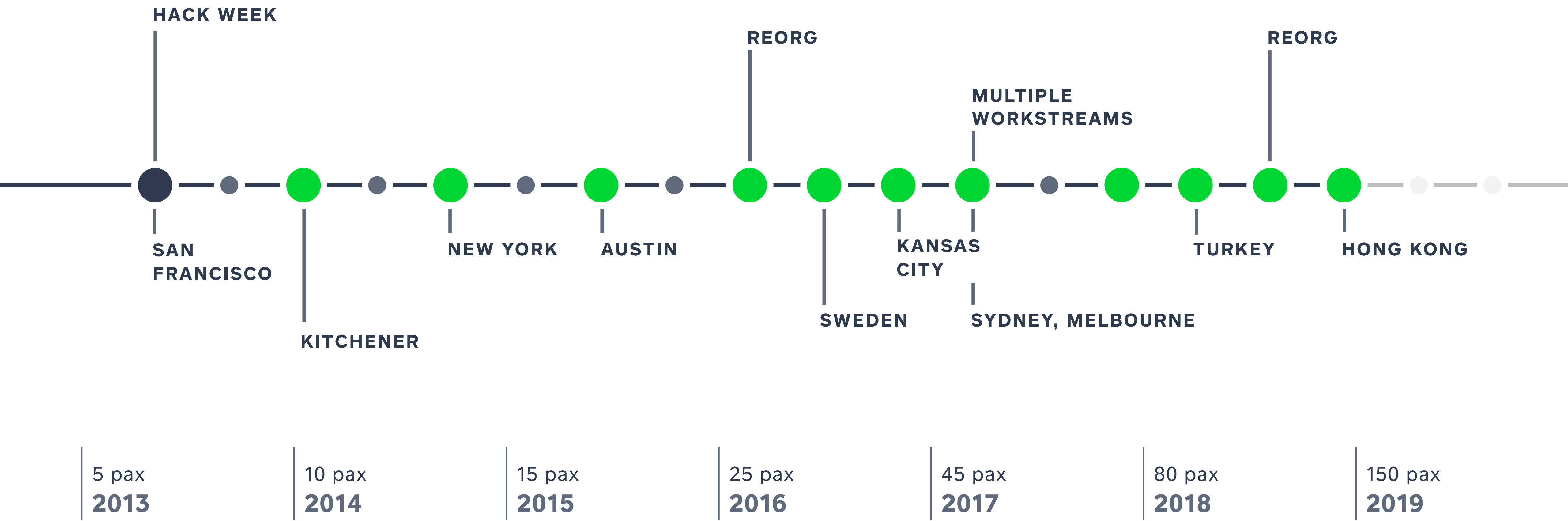
- 7m MAU (201712)
- US \$250m card transactions (201807)
- #5 in the App Store
 - #1 in Finance (US)
 - #8 in Finance (UK)
- Tens of millions of cumulative downloads
- People love us so much they write songs about us!!
- We are growing... fast...

Team

- Cash is a business unit within Square
- 12 locations
- > 100 engineers & data scientists
- > 25 designers & product managers
- > 15 product workstreams
- Many timezones...



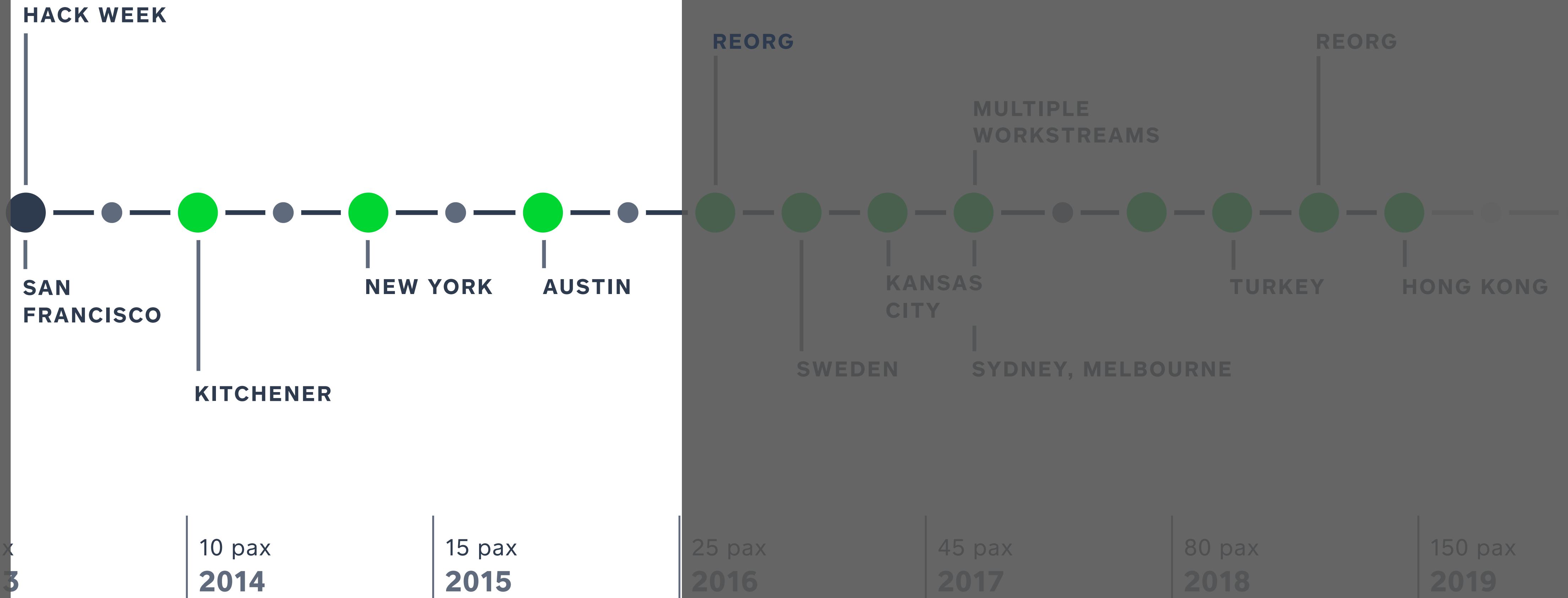
Team growth



Hack week

2013-2015

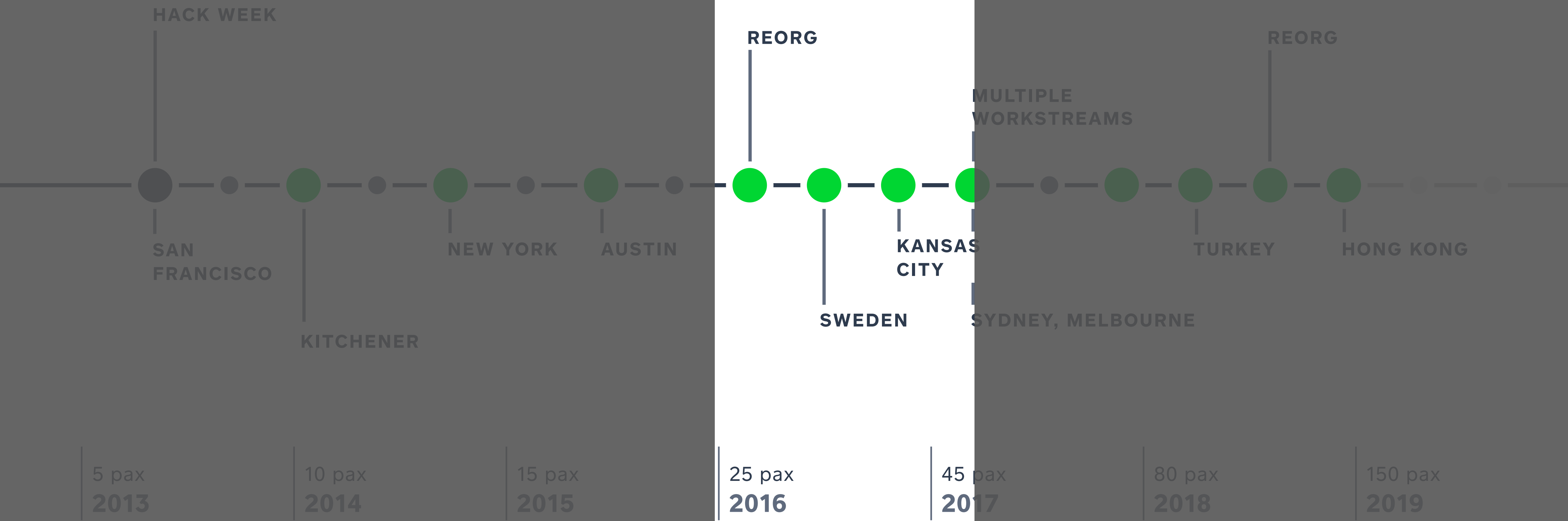
Team growth



Scale

2016-2017

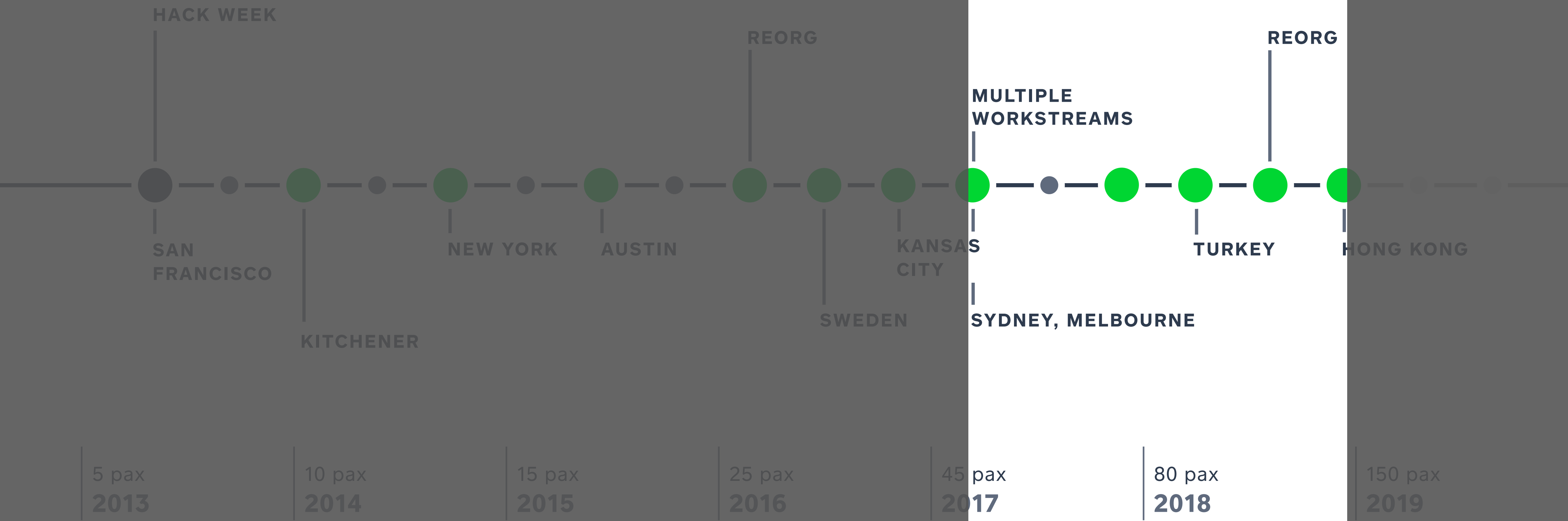
Team growth



Hire all the people!

2017-

Team growth



Ready, fire, aim!

Why distribute

- Go where the people are
- Cheaper?
- Parallel hiring pipelines
- De-risk single location growth
- Follow the sun oncall schedule
- Stay small for longer
- New locations allow experimentation

Drawbacks

- Waiting for someone to wake up
- Work-life balance
- Office politics
- Staffing becomes more complex

Maintaining culture

- Invest in onboarding
- Build a family
- Travel early & often
- Travel as teams
- Full team offsite
- Tell stories

Communication & alignment

- Over communicate
- Use multiple channels – slack, email, docs, presentations, videos, etc.
- Develop different methods to gather & disseminate information
 - Town halls / all hands; single location, overlapping timezones & cross-location, etc.
 - Vertical vs. horizontal checkins
 - Functional groupings

Communication tools

- Invest in VC
- Use shared collaboration tools – GSuite, Bitbucket/Github, Jira, Trello, etc.
- Establish urgency – Page > SMS > Slack > email
- Slack
 - Turn off notifications – low signal to noise
 - Turn on snooze / OOO (people will ping you when you sleep)

Make travel easy

- Corporate cards
- Easy way to book (on a corporate policy)
- Don't let people be out of pocket for long

Calendar

- Working hours
- Lunch markers
- Multiple timezones
- Batch meetings with other timezones
- Let people set their own schedule
- Meeting free Mondays!

How to get started

- Start offices around people, not people around offices
- Start with someone you know well & trust
- Start senior
- First few hires are the hardest, take the time to get these right
- Use coworking spaces

Integration into existing teams

- Contract to hire
- Adapt to local norms
- Education
- Patience

New locations

- Anchor
- Access to talent
- Strategic work

Team structure

- Cross functional teams
- Local manager
- No IC-manager reporting across sites
- Don't split across timezones
- Don't split across more than two timezones

Recruiting

- Lean on your anchor's networks
- Take your time on initial hires
- Hire a local recruiter in each hub
- Your anchor should drive local recruiting

Wrap up

- Distribution is hard
- Go in with your eyes open
- Top tips
 - Start senior
 - Make travel easy
 - Empower your teams
 - Treat people like adults

Q&A



cash.app