

I have always wanted to solve onboarding problems faced by accountants while using accounting software. So I designed SkillMaster.

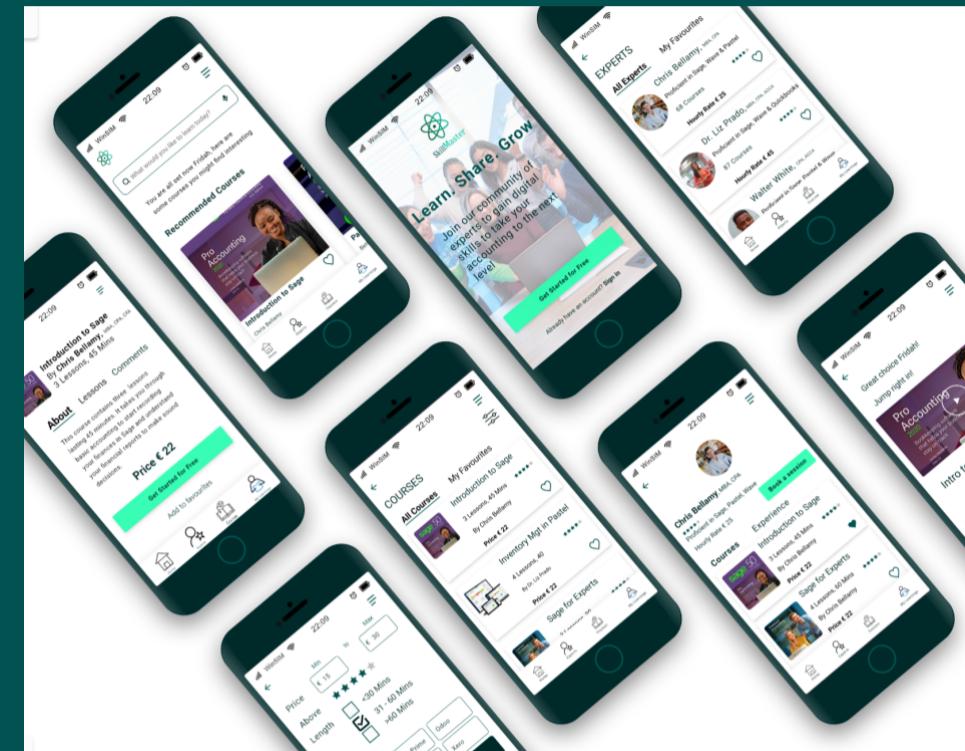
SkillMaster

An online learning platform that gives accountants an opportunity to learn, share and grow their digital accounting skills.

Role: Sole UX Designer

Timeline: 2.5 Months

Tools: Adobe XD, Photoshop, Usabilityhub, Optimal Workshop



The problem

List of frustrations

a) Limited platforms where accountants can access learning content.

b) Generic manuals limited to four or five languages only.

c) Some accounting tasks are country specific and need experts.

d) Lack of a platform where accountants can compare solutions.

Potential solution

An online learning platform that reaches thousands of accountants across the globe with digital learning content of a vast collection of courses.

The problem statement & Hypothesis

Problem statement

Our users need a platform where they can access learning material to improve their knowledge on how to use certain accounting software.

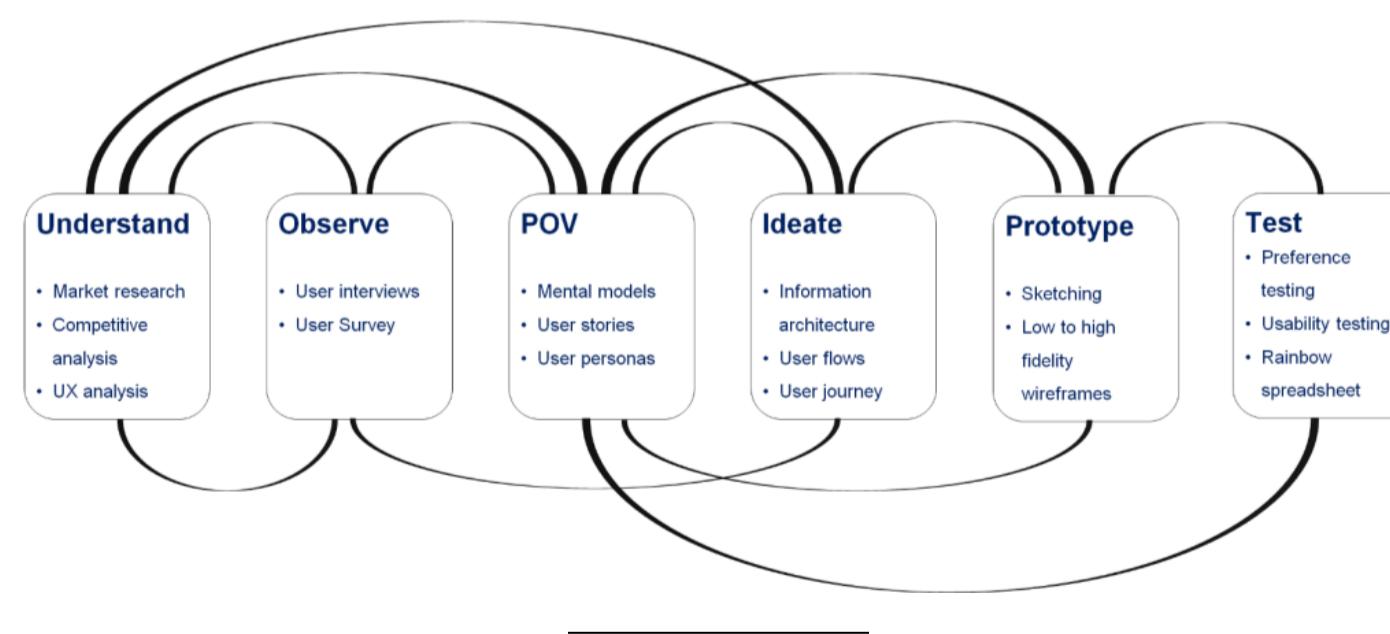
Hypothesis

We believe that by creating an online learning platform for accountants we will achieve having more than 1,000 accountants within 6 months across the globe signing up to the app to find courses.

We will know this to be true when we see more than 1,000 users within 6 months signing up to SkillMaster to find courses for their preferred accounting software.

The Process

Design thinking Process



Understand



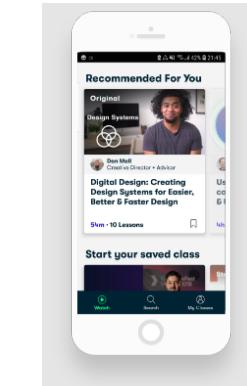
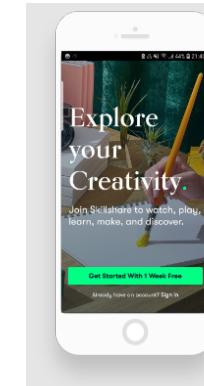
Who are my potential Competitors?

I looked at several learning platforms that could pose a competition challenge to SkillMaster and found Skillshare, LinkedIn Learning, Udemy, Alison that were a close match. I conducted competitor analysis for two platforms that came very close:

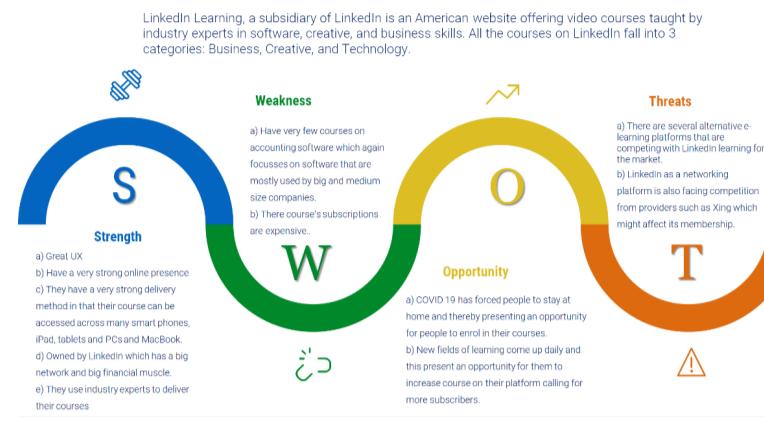
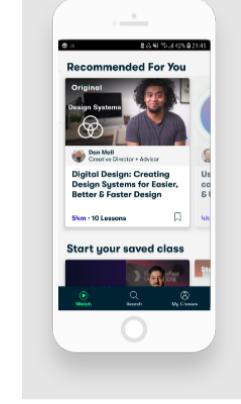
- Skillshare
- LinkedIn Learning

SWOT analysis Skillshare

This is an American online learning community for people who want to learn from educational videos. The courses, which are not accredited, are available through subscription.



SWOT analysis LinkedIn Learning



UX Analysis



Navigation Structure

On a smartphone, at the top on the dashboard you see the category of the course you can take. When you select a category, all the courses in that category show up so you can swipe to see the details of the course and the instructor.

Compatibility

App is designed for all types of operating systems i.e. Android and iOS and can be used for all screen sizes i.e. iPad, iPhone, PCs.

Differentiation

By including famous individuals such as James Franco and Sophia Chang known for specific skills offering lessons, gave the company credibility and also acts as free publicity.

Usability

Skillshare has if not anything done a great job in their UX and how they have designed and placed their courses on their platform

Layout

On the same screen of the course a user is taking are also the projects for that course where the user can upload some and discussion forum for the course. This makes it possible for the user to feel like they have a bird's eye view of the entire course since all relevant information is on the screen.



Navigation Structure

On the dashboard is the category of the course you want to take. When you select a category then all the courses in that category shows up and all you have to do is swipe left to see the details of the course and the instructor.

Compatibility

Their app is designed for all types of operating systems i.e. Android and iOS and can be used for all screen sizes i.e. iPad, iPhone, PCs.

Differentiation

Riding on its parent platform's name LinkedIn learning positions itself as a platform that offers courses by industry experts which is believable LinkedIn's reputation

Usability

They have a very lean UX that makes the course material appear structured. A user can save their top pick courses to review later with a possibility of casting a course from a mobile device to a larger screen like TV or monitor.

Layout

Courses are categorised by popular, top picks for the user, and trending and for each category a user has to swipe left to peruse through and select the one they would prefer since they are presented in flashcards.

Research Conclusion

There is an opportunity to offer a competitive e-learning platform to our users that focuses on offering training of use of accounting software to our users. The main objective should be to offer high quality and personalized courses delivered by industry experts and fellow accountants who use these software on a daily basis.

Observe



What are my potential users saying?

I sampled, screened and interviewed three accountants from various industry and experience levels to get a better overview of what they think and what they would expect from such a platform. Below were my research goals.

Research Goals

- a) To understand if accountants would appreciate the help of an expert to learn using a software.
- b) To understand if accountants would appreciate a platform where they can learn using a software from experts.
- c) To understand what type of experts would fellow accountants be looking to learn from
- d) Find out if accountants would be willing to pay for training sessions and how long should one session last.

Participants' Answers

Key Insights

- a) Accountants learn the use of a software mostly from work making it easy to apply
b) Most accountants are cost conscious and would like to save unless the cost is totally unavoidable.
c) Since it's a software it makes sense to use videos and screen sharing since it's a visual content session.
d) Everyone ones to learn from the best in the industry or industry leader
e) People want to have intuitive apps that is with them all the time during their learning journey.

How might we?

Refining the problem

How might we come up with a platform **for** accountants **so that** they can find all the relevant learning content to improve their digital skills?

How might we provide high quality content in the platform **for** accountants **so that** they can meet their learning goals?

POV

Who are my target users?

I converted the three interview participants to personas to understand who I am designing for. Throughout this process, I considered to understand user motivation and goals were their thoughts and observations.

Participants' Profiles

Below are the profile of the participants (*these are not their real names*) who later transition to be the three personas considered throughout this project.



Fridah K

"The independent accountant"



Daniel P

"The busy accountant"

Esther C

"The working class mom"

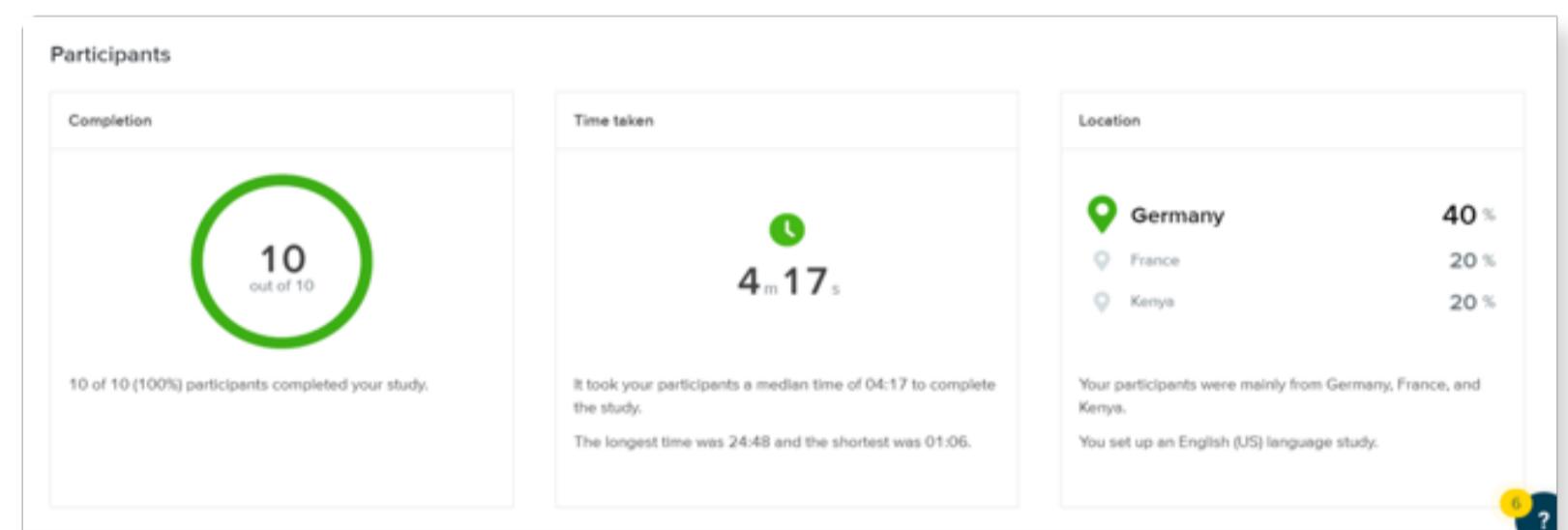
How are they thinking?

Through the help of user journey maps I was able as a designer to visualize what goes through a users mind as they try to accomplish a task. With this I was able to empathise with the user and understand how to narrow the gap between what a user wants to achieve and what the app will offer.

User Journeys

User flows

Fundamental Design



To test the initial idea of how the architecture would look, I performed card sorting using Optimal Workshop. I went for hybrid card sorting to allow the participants to create new categories if they did not deem it fit to place a card in any of the categories I had created. Most of my participants came from Germany, France, United Kingdom and Kenya. It took them about 4 mins 17 seconds to complete.

Standardization grid

Name	Chats	Experts P...	My Profile	Notificati...	Search	Software ...	Not standardized
Book Workshop	3	3			1		3
Settings		1	7				2
Log Out			7				2
Workshops	1	4	1		3		1
Software Categories	1		1	1		6	1
Search	1	2		1	5		1
Notification	1	1		6			1
My Sessions	1	2	4	1			1
My Profile		1	6	1	1		1
Book Session	2	3	1		2		1
Software Page	2		2			6	
Search Results	2		1	1	6		
Filtered Software Page		1	1	1	2	5	
Filtered Experts Page	1	5		1	1	2	
Experts Page	1	7	1				1
Expert Profile		5	4	1			
Chats	4	1	2	1	2		

Sitemap

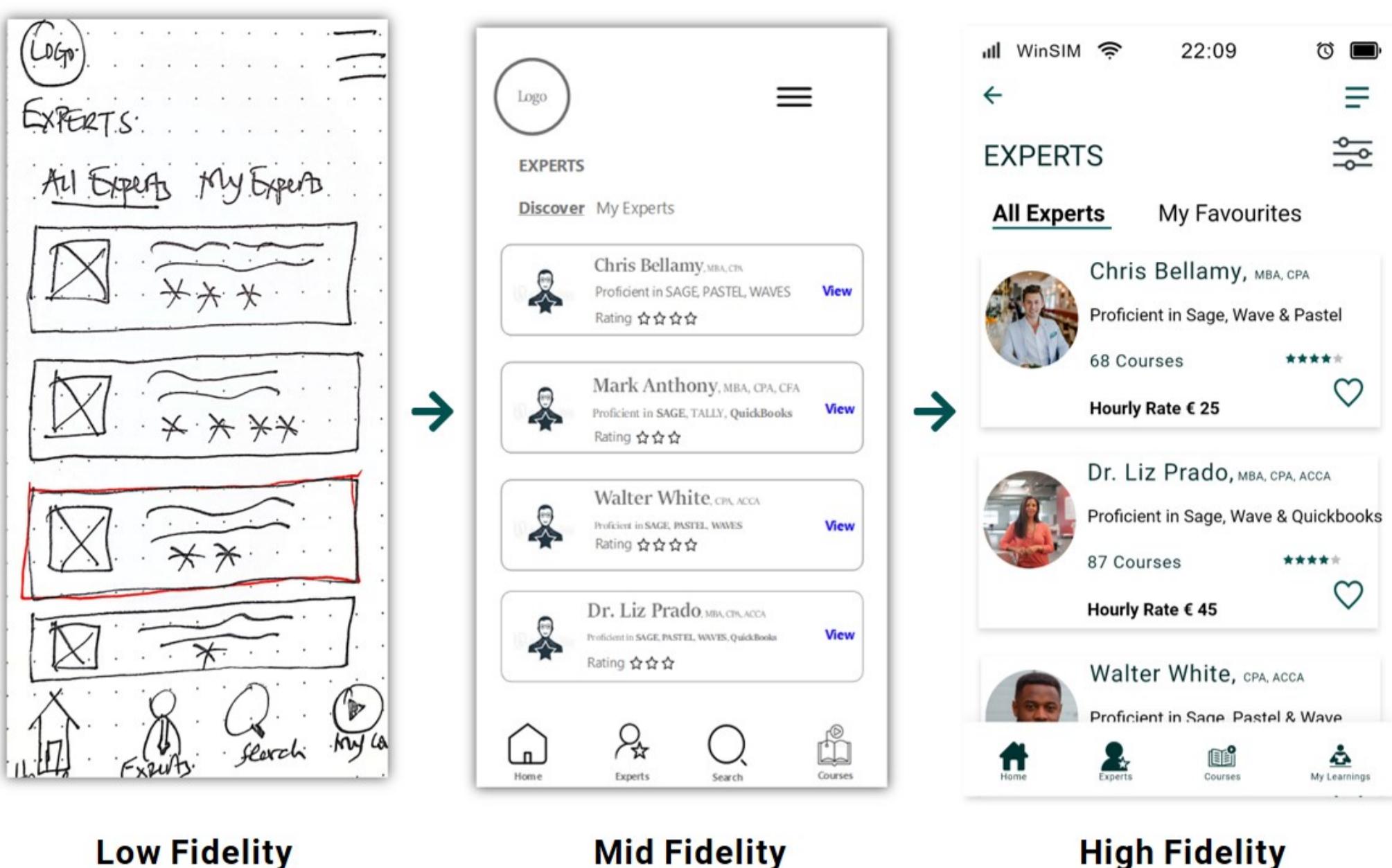
Prototype

Home Page

Courses Page

Course profile Page

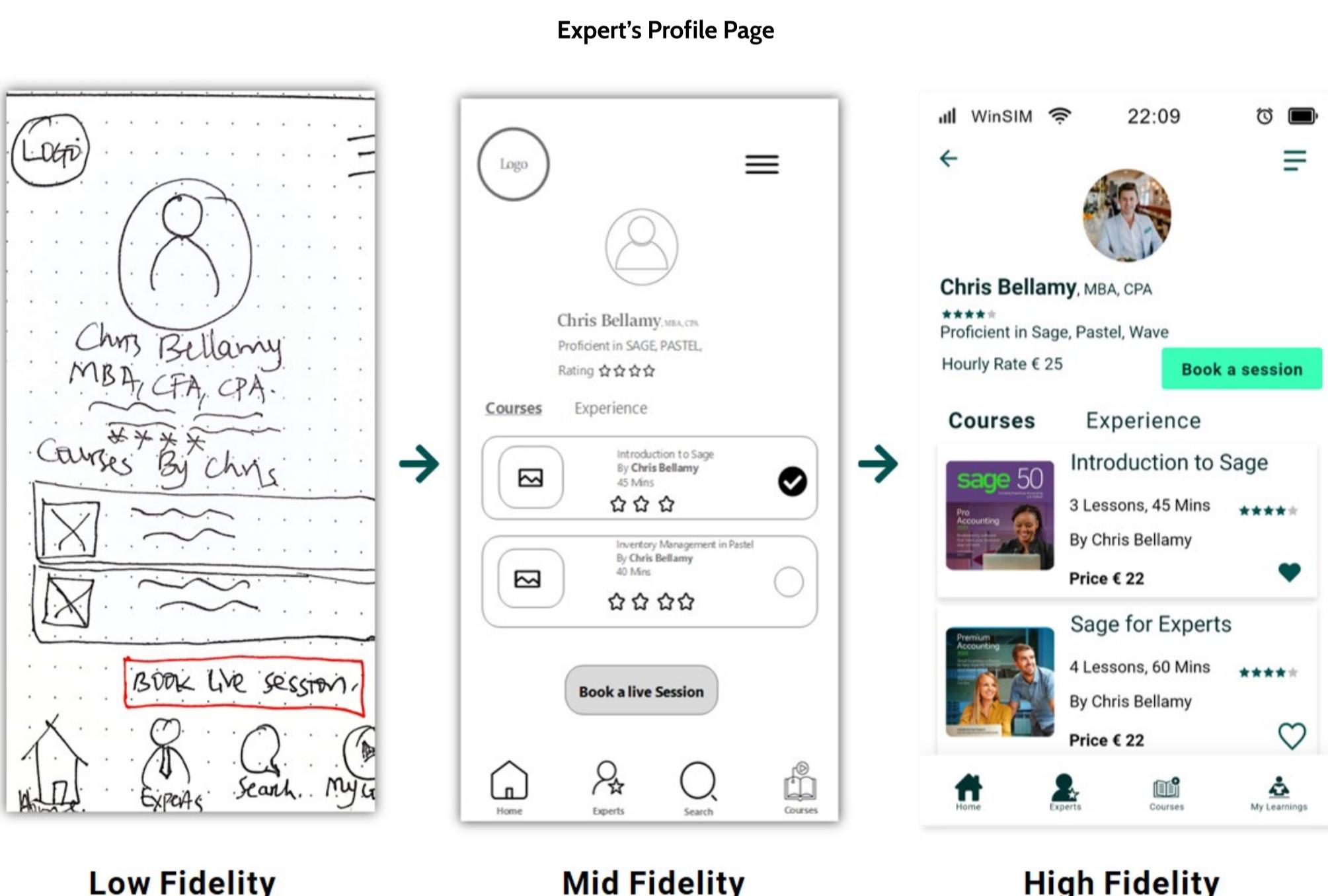
All Experts' Page



Low Fidelity

Mid Fidelity

High Fidelity



Low Fidelity

Mid Fidelity

High Fidelity

Test

Test Details and Participant recruitment

Test Objectives:

- a) Determine if a user can log in, find a course, save to Wishlist, start learning and book a session with an expert if they have follow-up questions.
- b) Observe the users' behaviour as they perform these tasks to see if they can perform these tasks successfully without much struggle.

Test Details:

The main aim of the study was to test how user interact with SkillMaster on for the first time they see it. The study sought to determine how user perceive the app and whether they could perform the basic tasks of the core functionalities of the app outlined below. The study was tested with 6 objective participants 4 of whom were accountants of varied experience recruited from my network.

Core Functionality

Participants' Profiles Summary

Name	Age Bracket	Gender	Location	Industry	Position	Similar Platforms used before	Colour Coding
Rachael	26-35	Female	Nairobi, Kenya	Fintech	Accountant	Cousera	
Hareth	26-35	Male	Braunschweig, Germany	Production	Accountant	Udemy	
Rebecca	26-35	Female	Nairobi, Kenya	Audit	Auditor	LinkedIn Learning	
Deborah	26-35	Female	Kampala, Uganda	E-Commerce	Customer relations	None	D
Sergio	36-50	Male	Barcelona, Spain	IT	Web Developer		
Charles	26-35	Male	Nairobi, Kenya	Banking	Procurement Manager	LinkedIn Learning, Persipio Learning	

Feedback

Observations

On signing up went straight to log in with social P6	Went straight for sign in without signing up first indicating a returning user P5	Looking for filter button to filter the courses P2, P3	
Clicking everywhere looking for my courses P1, P2	Clicked hamburger menu after a task to locate Wishlist P2, P6	On booking live session started typing message before putting in skype details P1, P3, P6	
Very high confidence clicking through the app P2, P3, P5, P6	Clicked on logo to go to home page P2	Looking to save more than one course at the same time to the Wishlist. P2, P6	Skipped onboarding P2, P5, P6

Positive Quotes

Purchasing was relatively very easy. P2, P5, P6	Using the app is generally very easy P1, P2, P3, P5, P6
The experience is good and I recognise the menu icons P5, P6	It's normal for me to log in with google P6
The platform is a good ideal that will help many accountants P2, P4, P5, P6	

Negative Quotes

Why cant I find an expert myself instead of having an expert preselected for me? P3	What is Wishlist? I don't know what it is. P2	I want to tap on the course flashcard to save to Wishlist. P2, P3
Where is the calendar when selecting slot with expert? P5, P6	Information on about the course page is too long thus taking to long for a user to go through. P4, P6	I want to see prices of the course on the flashcard before I click further. P4, P6
I want subscription payment instead of paying every time for a course. P2, P6		Must I book a session with the same expert? P3, P4

Errors

On booking live session payment screen did not come up instead it allowed booking without payment P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6
Went straight to sign up with google. P2, P6

Rainbow Spreadsheet

MOBILE USABILITY TEST	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	TOTAL	POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS & NEXT STEPS	NOTES
Errors - Record and prioritize most critical errors based on your error classification.									
[Error Rating 4] On booking live session payment screen did not come up instead it allowed booking without payment	Red	Yellow	Green	Blue	Cyan	Blue	6	This needs immediate action since the platform is losing money from booking live sessions.	
[Error Rating 4] Side arrows on the home screen opened the course instead of scrolling.	Red	Yellow	Green	Blue	Cyan	Blue	6	Is not a usability problem as this will be activated in subsequent versions	
[Error Rating 0] Went straight to sign up with google	Red	Yellow	Green	Blue	Cyan	Blue	2	Is not a usability problem as this will be activated in subsequent versions	
Observations - What are people Doing, Thinking, and Feeling? Use active verbs.									
Observation 1: On signing up went straight to log in with social	Red	Yellow	Green	Blue	Cyan	Blue	1		
Observation 2: Went straight for sign in	Red	Yellow	Green	Blue	Cyan	Blue	1		
Observation 3: Looking for filter button to filter the courses	Red	Yellow	Green	Blue	Cyan	Blue	2	Add filter button	
Observation 4: On booking live session started typing message before putting in skype details	Red	Yellow	Green	Blue	Cyan	Blue	3	It would be better to rearrange the message expert screen.	Move Skype details below the message box
Observation 5: Skipped onboarding	Red	Yellow	Green	Blue	Cyan	Blue	2		
Observation 6: Clicking everywhere looking for my courses	Red	Yellow	Green	Blue	Cyan	Blue	2		
Observation 7: Clicked hamburger menu after a task to locate Wishlist	Red	Yellow	Green	Blue	Cyan	Blue	2		
Observation 8: Very high confidence clicking through the app	Red	Yellow	Green	Blue	Cyan	Blue	4		
Observation 9: Looking to save more than one course at the same time to the Wishlist.	Red	Yellow	Green	Blue	Cyan	Blue	2		
Observation 10: Clicked on logo to go to home page	Red	Yellow	Green	Blue	Cyan	Blue	1	Link logo to homepage	
Negative Quotes - Any negative soundbytes? Record them here.									
Negative Quote 1: "What is Wishlist? I don't know what it is."	Red	Yellow	Green	Blue	Cyan	Blue	1	Rename Wishlist to favourite	
Negative Quote 2: "Why can't I find an expert myself instead of having an expert preselected for me?"	Red	Yellow	Green	Blue	Cyan	Blue	1	Enable the search button to allow users search for experts	
Negative Quote 3: "Where is the calendar when selecting slot with expert?"	Red	Yellow	Green	Blue	Cyan	Blue	2	Add calendar option on booking slots	
Negative Quote 4: "Information on about the course page is too long thus taking to long for a user to go through."	Red	Yellow	Green	Blue	Cyan	Blue	2	Redo this page and cut down on unnecessary details	
Negative Quote 5: "I want to tap on the course flashcard to save to Wishlist."	Red	Yellow	Green	Blue	Cyan	Blue	2	Add a hearts button to allow saving to Wishlist	
Negative Quote 6: "I want subscription payment instead of paying every time for a course."	Red	Yellow	Green	Blue	Cyan	Blue	2	Add subscription method	
Negative Quote 7: "I want to see prices of the course on the flashcard before I click further."	Red	Yellow	Green	Blue	Cyan	Blue	1	Redo the flashcards and add prices on them.	
Negative Quote 8: "Must I book a session with the same expert?"	Red	Yellow	Green	Blue	Cyan	Blue	2	Give a user options of booking a like session with an expert of their choice.	Book Chris or more?
Positive Quotes - Any positive soundbytes? Record them here.									
Positive Quote 1: "Purchasing was very easy."	Red	Yellow	Green	Blue	Cyan	Blue	3		
Positive Quote 2: "Using the app is generally very easy."	Red	Yellow	Green	Blue	Cyan	Blue	5		
Positive Quote 3: "The platform is a good deal that will help many accountants."	Red	Yellow	Green	Blue	Cyan	Blue	4		
Positive Quote 4: "The experience is good and I recognise the menu icons."	Red	Yellow	Green	Blue	Cyan	Blue	2		
Positive Quote 5: "It's normal for me to log in with google."	Red	Yellow	Green	Blue	Cyan	Blue	1		

Feedback implementation

Based on the feedback received from usability testing I went through the iteration process and came up with the below mockups. Below are the issues implemented.

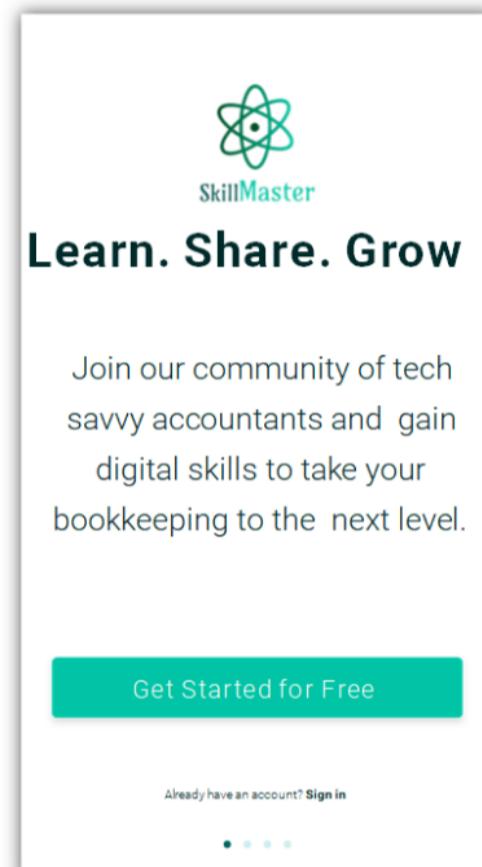
Feedback #1

Welcome Screen

- 1. I would align text left
- 2. The page is too plain
- 3. Call to action button is blunt

Implementation

- 1. Reduced the fonts
- 2. Aligned texts right
- 3. Added a background image
- 4. Changed the colour of call to action button



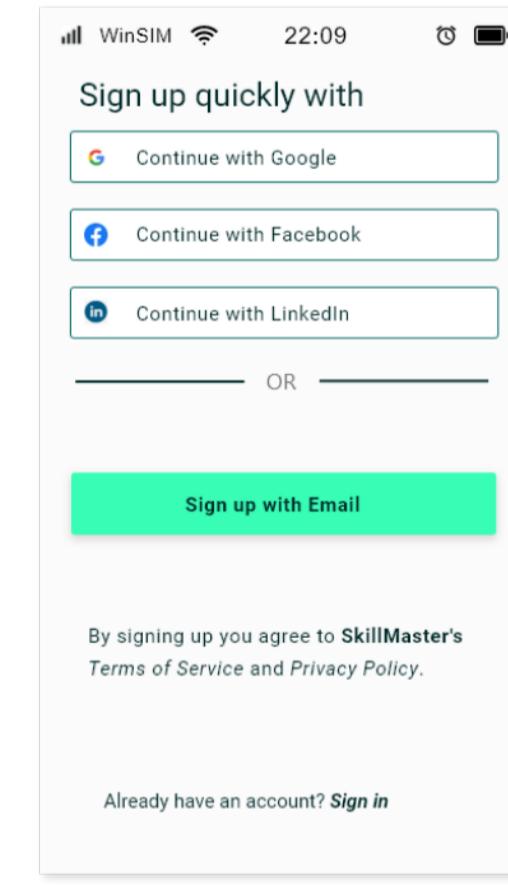
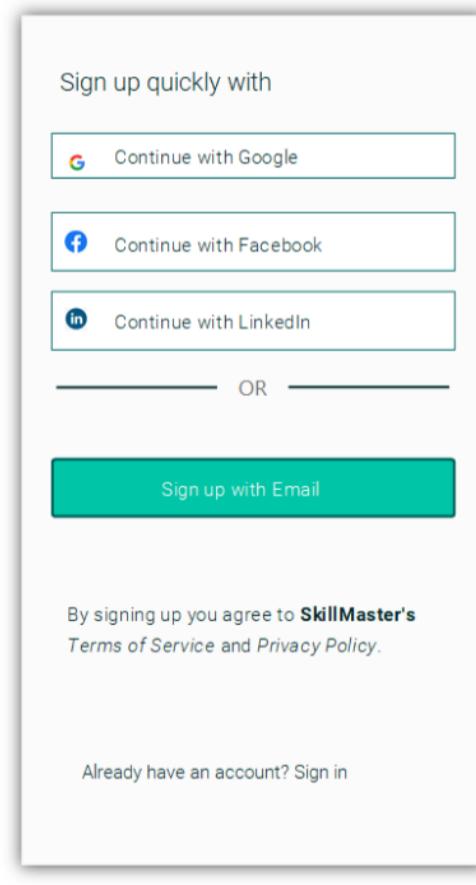
Feedback #2

Sign up quickly Screen

- 1. Round these buttons too.
- 2. Remove the border for 'sign up with email' and text align your google, Facebook and LinkedIn container. Great job so far!

Implementation

- 1. Removed the border
- 2. Rounded the google, Facebook and LinkedIn boxes



Initial Screen

Revised Screen

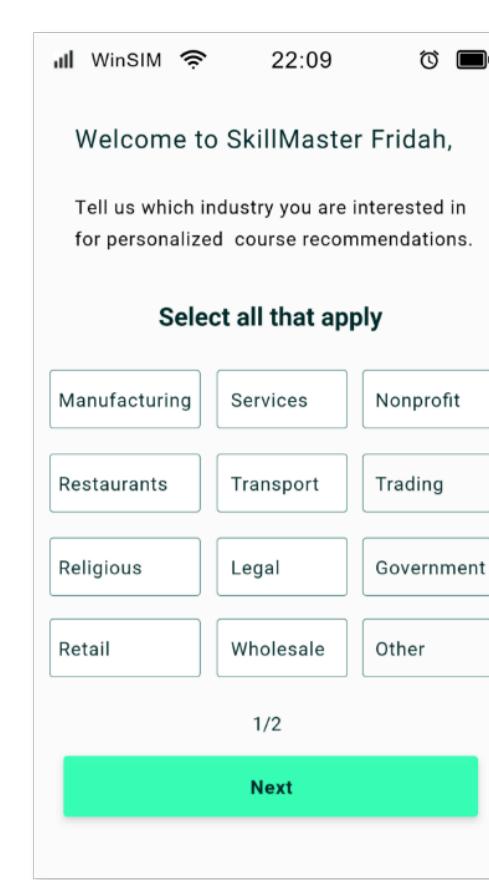
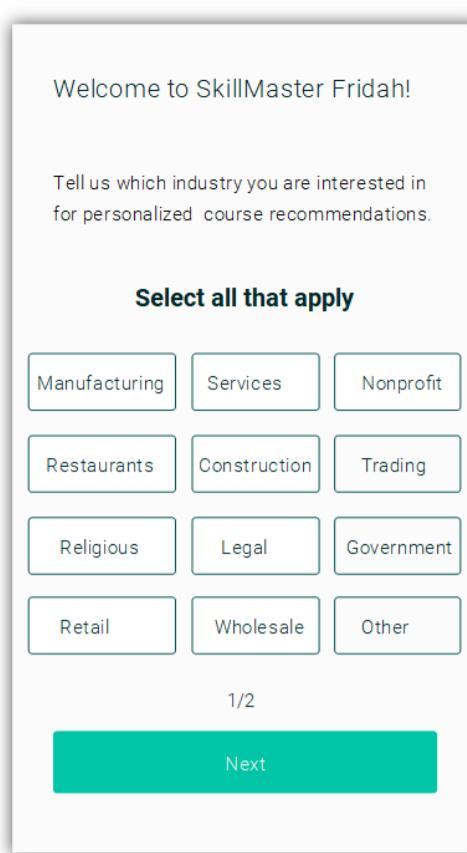
Feedback #3

Select Industry

Again here I would suggest text aligning with your containers. Also here you can see you have removed the border for the 'next' button which is good. Look for consistency for every page :)

Implementation

As suggested



Revised Screen

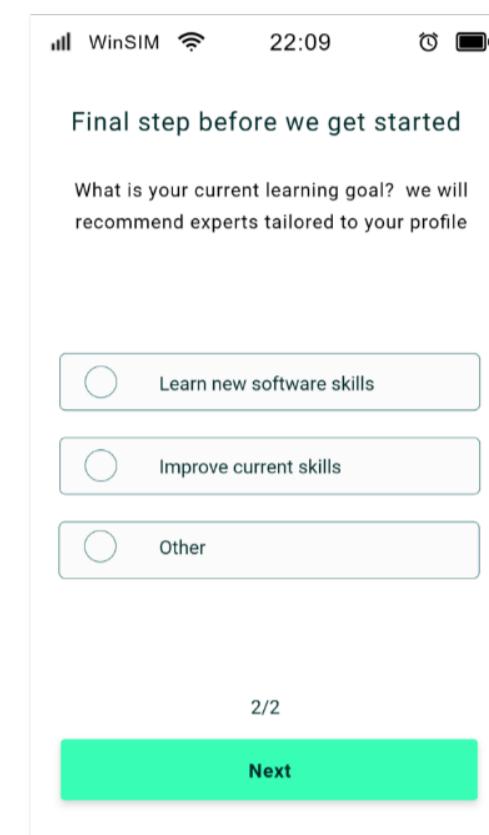
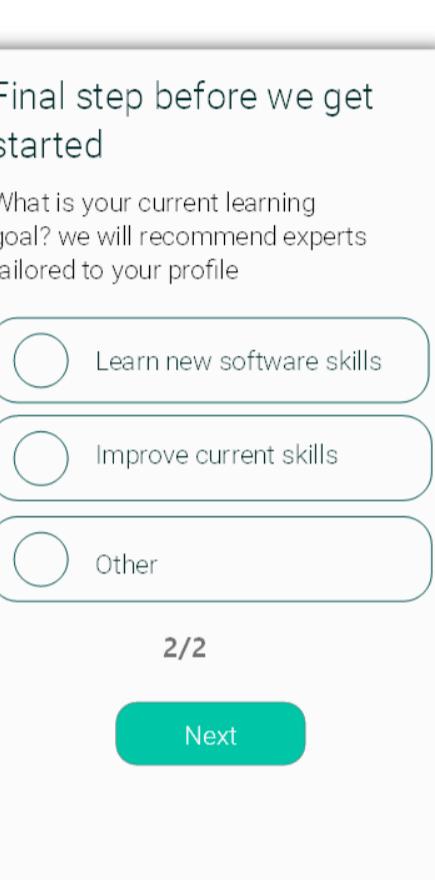
Feedback #4

Select Learning goal

I would reduce the size of the circles by a couple pixels, they look huge and increase the size of the call to action button.

Implementation

As suggested



Initial Screen

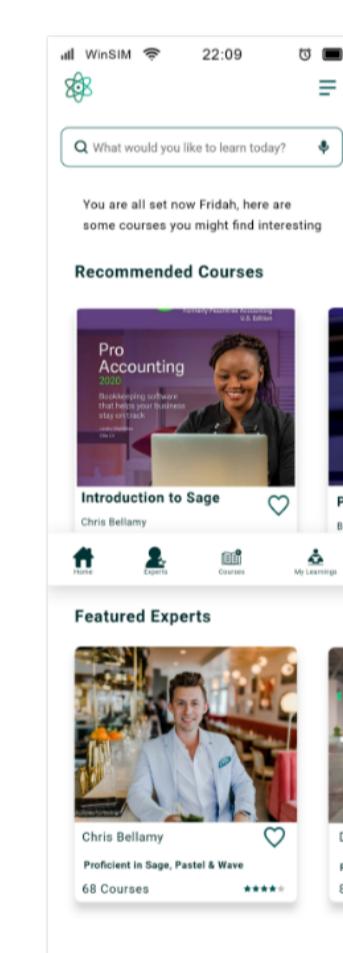
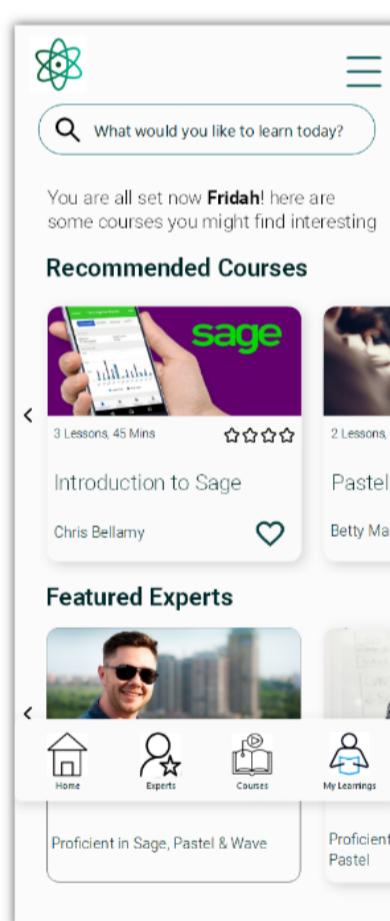
Feedback #5

Home screen

You can also improve on the text alignments. Maybe Recommended Courses can be a bit smaller and left indented. The images appears stretched

Implementation

As suggested



Initial Screen

Revised Screen

Feedback #6

Payment screens

I think it's a bit weird to have 2 sets of text inside the boxes, also having the label on the left. Maybe you can put the labels outside and keep the placeholders inside. Also check the alignments.

Implementation

Moved the labels outside the input box and reordered the whole screen.

The initial screen shows a 'Select Payment Option' form. It includes fields for 'Full Names' (placeholder 'CARDHOLDER NAME'), 'Card Number' (placeholder 'XXXX XXXX XXXX XXXX'), 'Expiry Date' (placeholder 'MM / YY' and 'EXPIRE DATE'), and 'CVV' (placeholder 'XXX'). Below these are sections for 'Order Details' (Intro to Sage, 3 Lessons, 45 Mins, By Chris Bellamy) and a 'Total Cost € 22'. A 'Pay Now' button is at the bottom.

The revised screen shows the same payment form but with improved alignment. The labels ('CARDHOLDER NAME', 'EXPIRE DATE', etc.) are now placed outside their respective input fields, and the overall layout is more balanced.

Initial Screen

Revised Screen

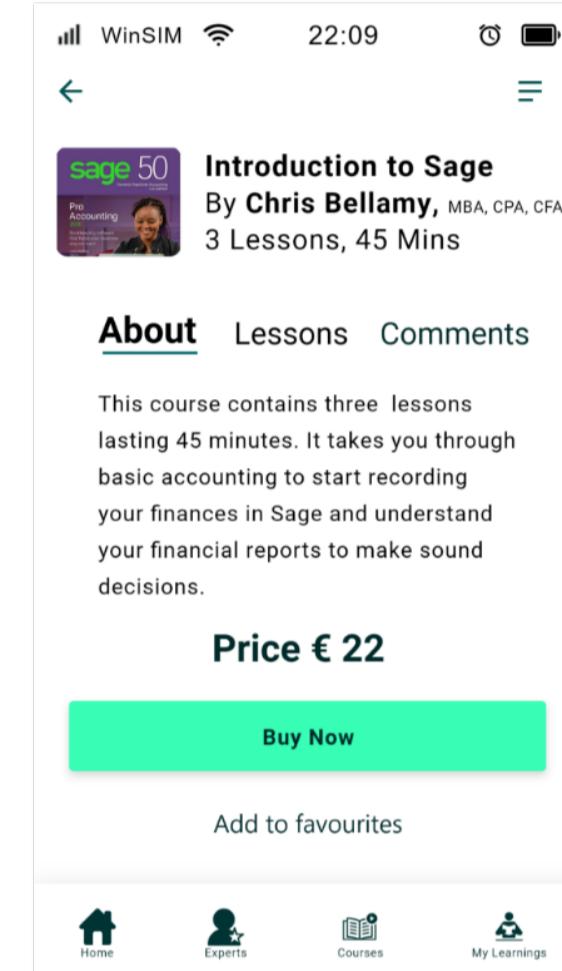
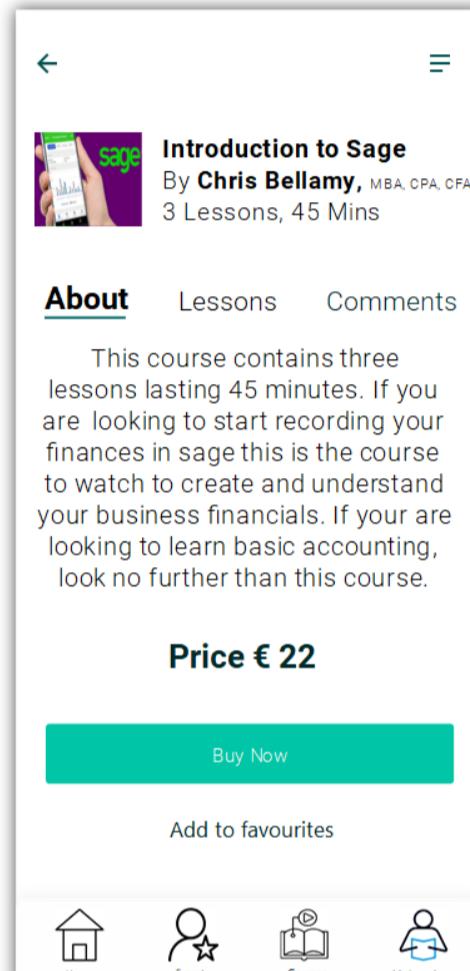
Feedback #7

Course Detail page

I think there's room for improvement in how the paragraph is aligned here. Also the image appears stretched

Implementation

Reduced the texts,
Aligned left to make it easy
to read and changed the
image



Initial Screen

Revised Screen

Design Language System

1. COLOUR

The color palette is professional while at the same time trying to be relaxed. The application of color is amenable and in tune with finance, learning and growth.

2. TYPOGRAPHY

SkillMaster uses Roboto font in bold or regular weight. The letter spacing guidelines is placed at a wider 40px and 25px line spacing to aid readability and reflect branding.

TITLE

Font	Weight	Size	Letter Spacing
Roboto	Bold	35	40px

BUTTON

Font	Weight	Size	Letter Spacing
Roboto	Regular	20	40px

HEADING 1

Font	Weight	Size	Letter Spacing
Roboto	Bold	45	40px

Heading 2

Font	Weight	Size	Letter Spacing
Roboto	Bold	35	40px

Body 1

Font	Weight	Size	Letter Spacing
Roboto	Regular	30	40px

Body 2

Font	Weight	Size	Letter Spacing
Roboto	Regular	25	40px

Body 3

Font	Weight	Size	Letter Spacing
Roboto	Regular	20	40px

3. UI COMPONENTS

Common UI components used by SkillMaster has different forms of buttons, input fields, pickers, and other components that are uniformly applied and signifies a specific action or indicator in the design.

Button

Primary Call to Action [CTA] buttons are used for the onboarding, signup and login process. Buttons are contained in **#00C5A6** color, rectangular with 4dp round corners and shadowing: x0, y3, B6.

Continue with Facebook

Secondary CTA inviting input of additional data. Buttons have borders in **#015250** colour, rectangular with 4dp rounded corners and shadowing (x0, y3, B6).

Navigation Bar

Navigation Bar contains, home, Experts, Courses and My Learnings pages after login by users.



Confirmation tick of size 45px by 45px button in **#015250** color on selection pages signifying that input data is undertaken.

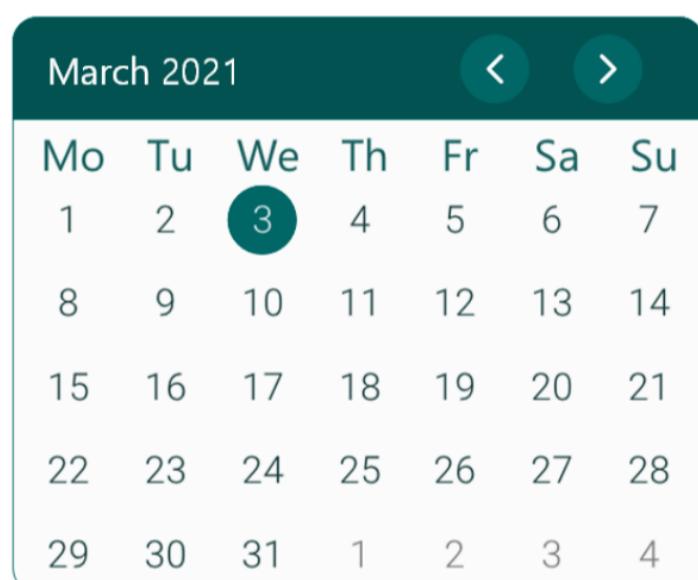
Fridah Knight

Text fields have a transparent rectangular container with corner radius of 4dp. A label text is included with the option of a leading icon.

What would you like to learn today?

Search fields use a rectangular outlined container with border colour of #002929. Radius corners of 30dp.

PICKERS

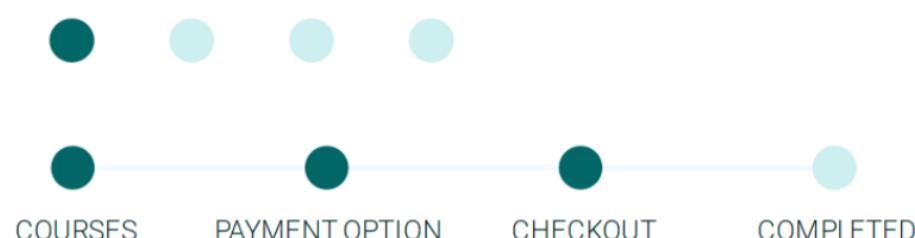


15:30

16:45

18:15

PAGINATION & PROGRESS BAR



Indicators for paging or progress applies the primary variant color for contrast. Pagination uses circles with a fill-in circle indicating current page within the sequence. The progress bar is linear with stop points filled with #006666 color indicating the ongoing progress position.

Date pickers are used to aid users input a date in relation to other dates. Monthly controls of back and forwards arrows are included to navigate past time frames. Time pickers are used to aid user's input a specific time and should be in 24 hour format.

4. LOGO

SkillMaster's logos is of three oval shapes signifying a community. At the centre of the intersection is a dot indicating the point of intersection of the interest between the learning accountant and the teaching expert. The logo fades going right signifying movement and transfer of knowledge from one person to another within the community. The logo is made up of two colours from the apps colour palette. Version one shows the logo icon with the app name at the bottom, Version 2 shows the logo icon on the left and the name on the right while Version 3 is only the icon. Depending on the page size, the logos will be used differently. For example, Version 1 will be used on the splash screen, Version 2 in onboarding screens while Version 3 on the homepage.



Version 1



Version 2



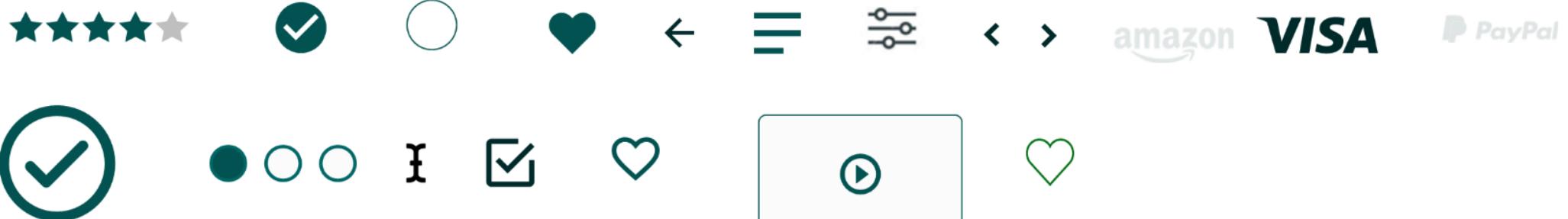
Version 3



Version 4

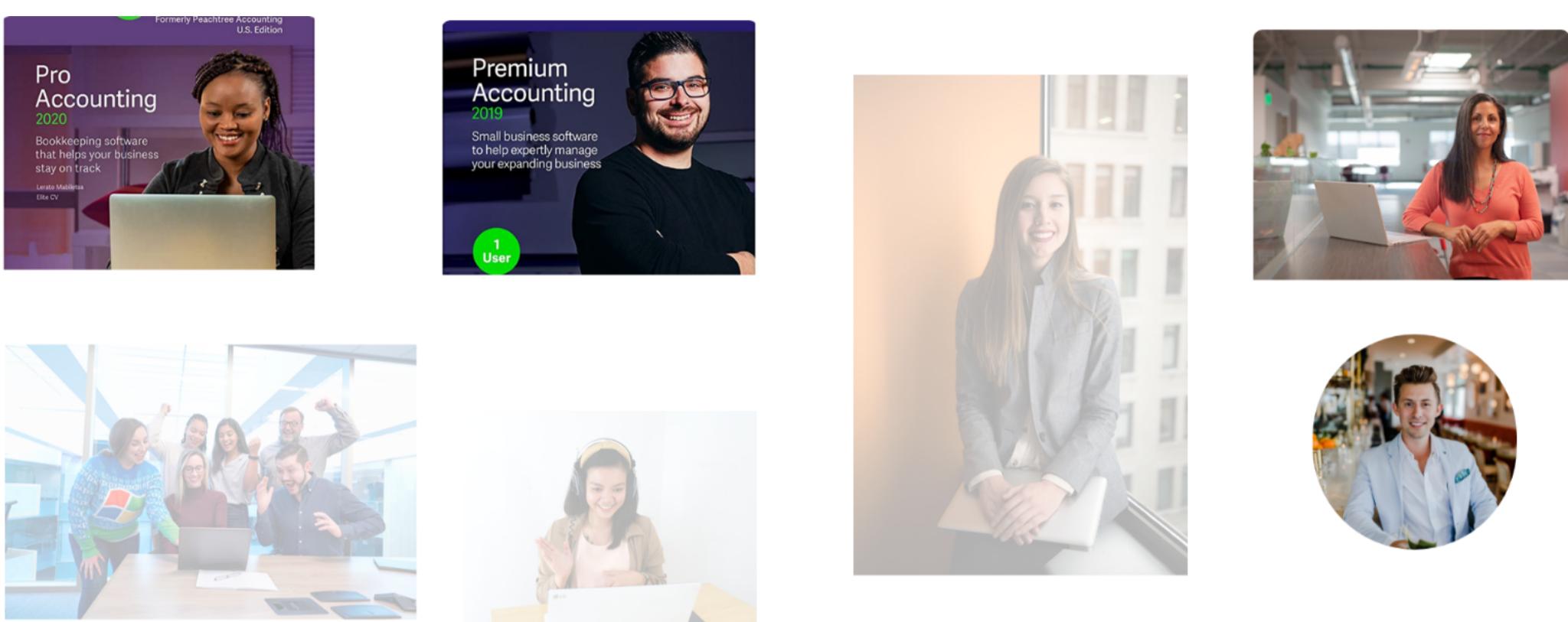
5. ICONOGRAPHY

The icons used symbolizes navigational and functional actions and elements. The icons are minimal and simply designed and expresses essential characteristics. Icons are to be consistently sized according to buttons and other components.



6. IMAGERY/ILLUSTRATIONS

Experts profile pictures have been downloaded from unsplash.com to avoid copyright related restrictions. Courses pages pictures have been sourced from the individual software company pages.

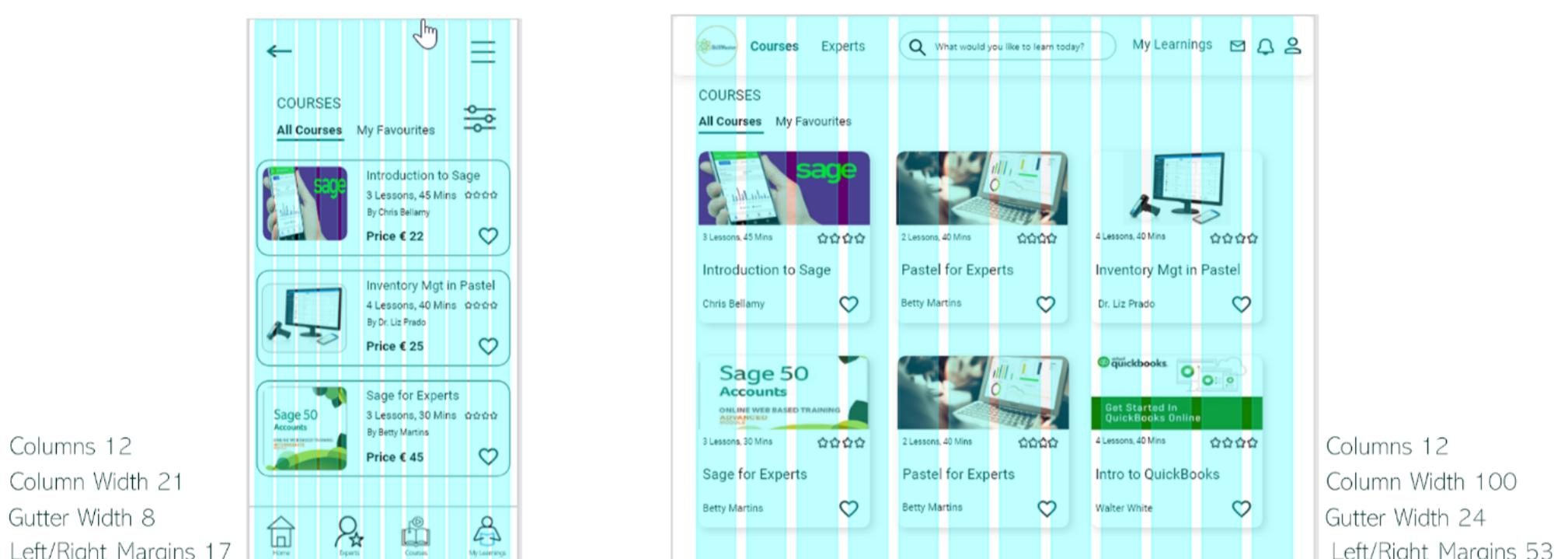


7. LANGUAGE & TONE

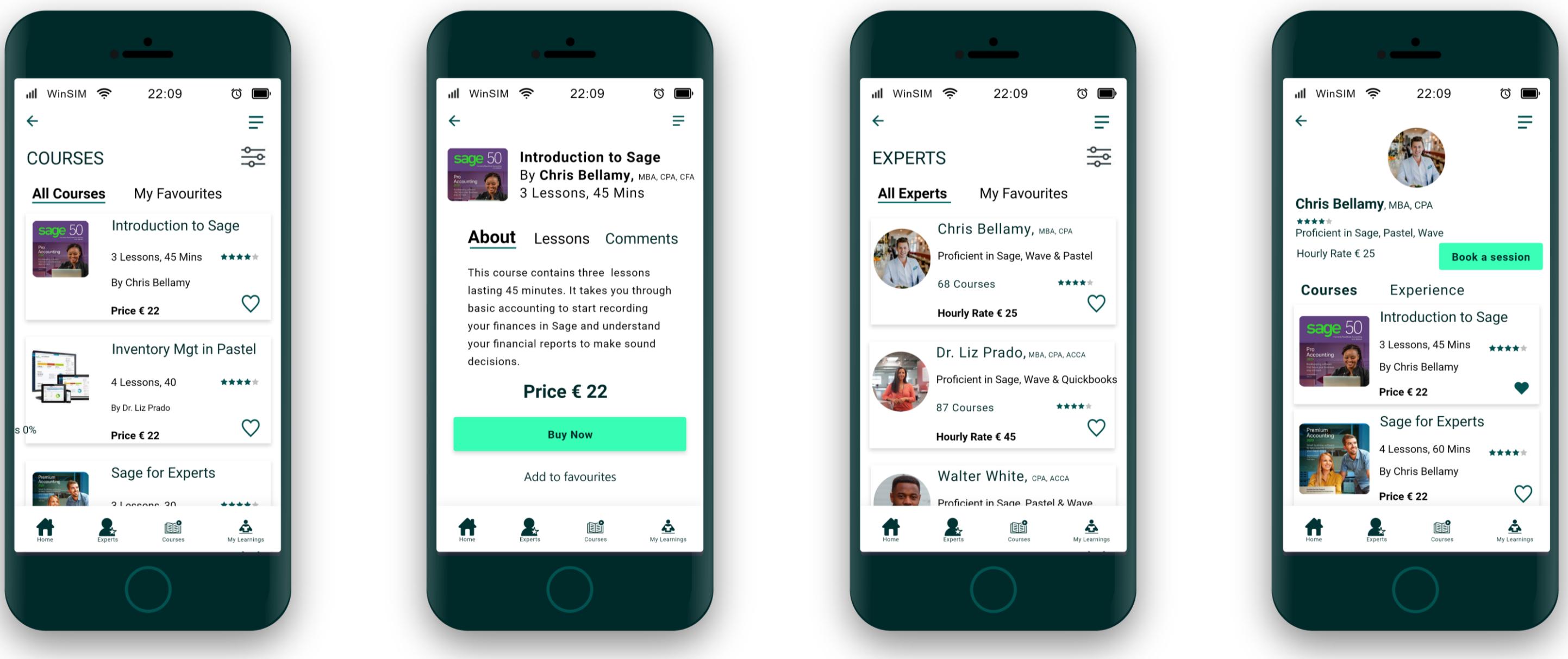
SkillMaster's language is friendly and professional given that the target group are professionals most of whom belong to a professional body. The language should always be simple, conversational, straightforward and respectful to the user. If there's an error, the message should be written in an emphatic, human-centred way and provide a solution or direction to the users to be able to correct the error.

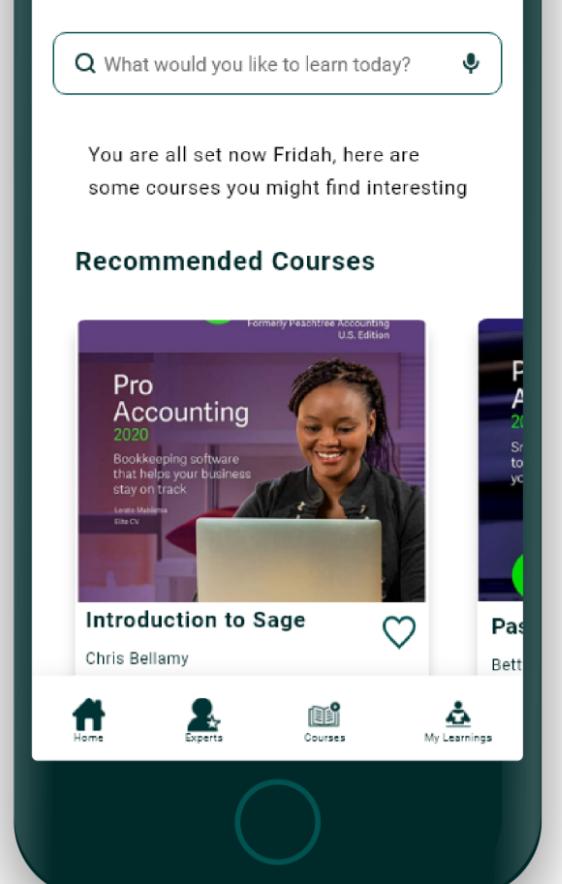
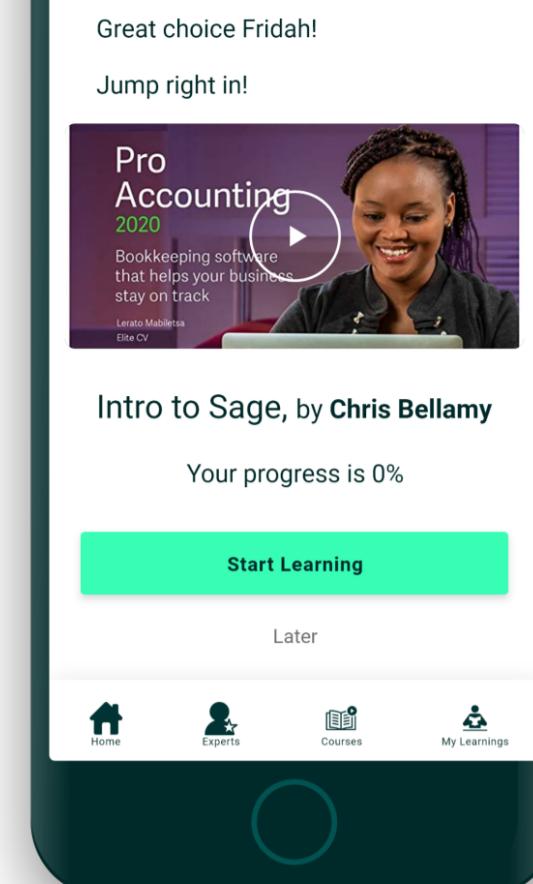
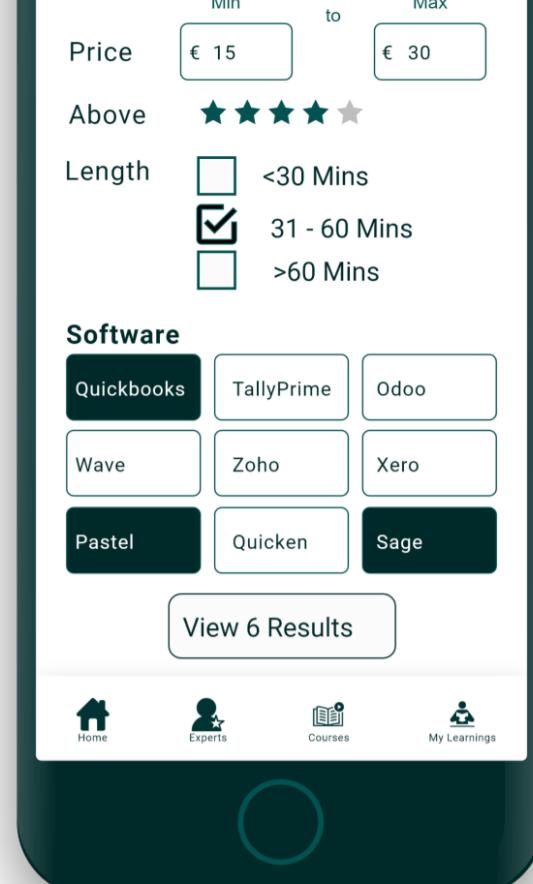
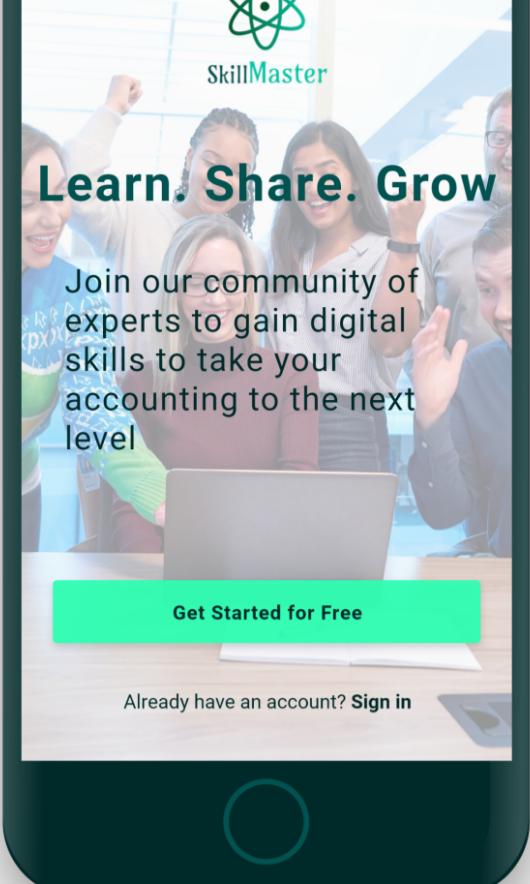
9. GRIDS & LAYOUT

A 2-times column grid is applied to the design, which allows columns to be divided evenly by two. This allows for a responsive layout design. The mobile grid consists of 12 columns at 41dp, 8dp, gutter width, and 15dp, margins. The desktop grids involve 12-columns at 100, 24 gutter width, and 53 margins.



10. Final Mockups





Learnings and challenges

In designing SkillMaster, I've learned the following:

- a) It is important to engage the user throughout the process from user research to usability testing, since it provides a clear directions for the design.
- b) Personas, user journey maps, and user flows bring a lot of benefits.
- c) Doing competitor analysis helped me take a glance at what is in the market and what to do and what not to do.

The biggest challenge was meeting the divergent needs of the users. One user would request for one feature while another user would request for a totally opposite feature. This made striking the balance between what users needed, what the business requirements are and what I as a designer is able to deliver quite difficult. This was a very delicate balancing act.

Conclusions and Future plans

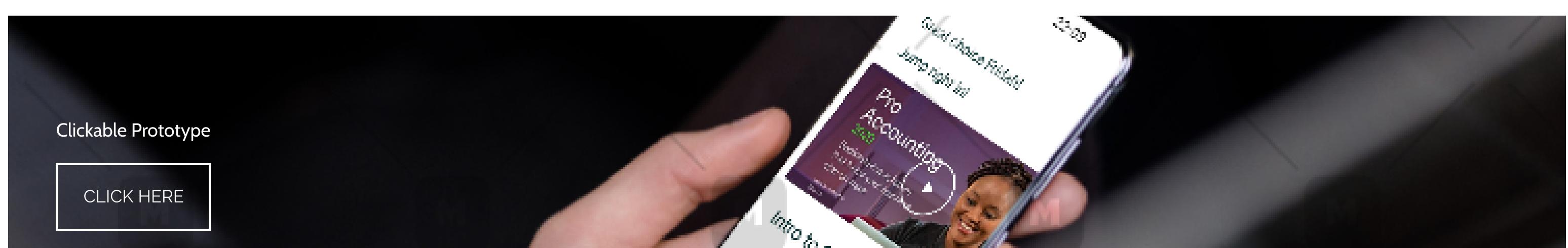
Currently, most of the core features of SkillMaster have been designed. In the next phase, I focus more on usability testing with other functions, such as designing an in-app chat and video conferencing function to facilitate communication between the expert and the learner.

Video presentation of core functionalities

20210329 Task 6 6 Video Presentation v02



Clickable Prototype





Thank you for reading and watching. I hope you enjoyed as I enjoyed working on it.

See my other projects

Word Guru

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