

Rethinking the Review System

Altering the way freelancers are evaluated, highlighting the user journey of working with a freelancer and encouraging clients to provide a fair and balanced assessment of their work.

Team CHAR ★

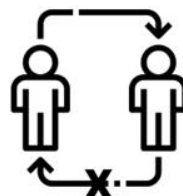
Chloe Chen, Harsheil Arora, Anam Nasim and Rohan Pant

Our Process

Understanding the current rating systems

From the literature review, two perspectives to describe a rating system grabbed our attention.

- The first perspective focuses on who should give ratings. Based on this dimension, a unilateral rating system is distinguished from a bilateral rating system.
- The other perspective refers to what scale should be used, which discusses qualitative and quantitative feedback. The quantitative feedback system includes the 5 star rating system and the binary rating scale (like-dislike). The qualitative systems include open reviews and word tags.



Unilateral rating
Only Client rates the
Freelancer



Bilateral rating
Both of them rate each
other



Quantitative Rating
Systems



Reviews and Word
Tags

Analyzing Existing Platforms

We did a comparative analysis of 4 platforms to understand the pros and cons of each system and what one might do better than the other. We also tried to find patterns that might be responsible for common issues in rating systems.

fiverr.



99designs



upwork



freelancer



Analyzing Existing Platforms

Identifying Common Patterns

1

All platforms highlight and prioritize the 5 star rating system



2

Clients are less likely to read through paragraphs when looking for freelancers



3

All platforms showcase the total number of reviews left



4

Most of the Platforms showcase number of projects done by the freelancer

456
Projects

Finding Out **What** Clients and Freelancers Think

We conducted user interviews with 5 freelancers and 1 'client' who all had experience with one or more of the freelancing platforms and had worked on at least 2 projects. Our questions revolved around how ratings / reviews affect freelancers and client hiring as well as clients' process for leaving reviews.

Issues for Freelancers New to the Platform



Importance of Reviews to Freelancers for Future Opportunities



The Kind of Feedback Freelancers Want



Clients Just Look at Stars



The Kind of Feedback Clients Give



Stars don't Always Work



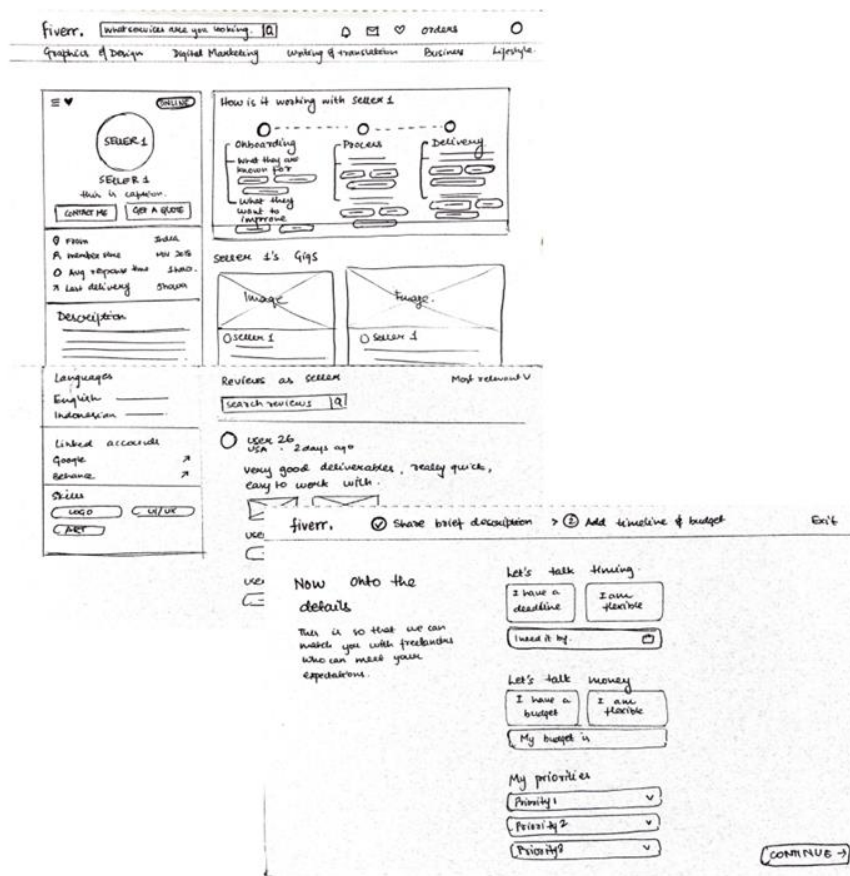
Narrowing down the Problem Frame

1. Freelancers don't get actionable feedback they can use to improve
2. Clients cannot find the right freelancer sometimes because of the amount of emphasis on numerical ratings which steers them away from what it's actually like working with a freelancer and their portfolios
3. It is hard to differentiate between freelancers with similar ratings.
4. Ratings tend to be skewed because some clients may leave the same star rating for everyone regardless of performance, out of convenience or habit
5. Qualitative reviews

Our Ideation

With our problem frame in mind, we brainstormed and sketched ways to address the issues through rating systems. We chose to go with the three that are ticked here - as they addressed the 3 questions from our prompt.

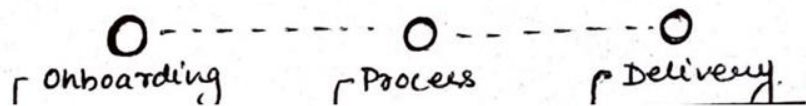
- Changing the reviews from just ratings to constructive feedback
- Leaving reviews throughout the process as opposed to just at the end
- Matching Clients with freelancers based on their expectations and priorities



Progressive reviews

This idea proposes the client leaving feedback throughout the process as opposed to just at the end. There are 3 key points that are a part of every freelancing project regardless of the type or size of project:

How is it working with seller 1



- **Onboarding:** After the contract has been signed and first meeting done
- **Process:** At a milestone or time mark around 75% completion
- **Delivery/Closing:** At the end after the client receives the deliverables
-

Clients give feedback in these 3 stages and it is also presented on the freelancer's profile in these 3 stages.

How this helps?

Accurate Journey & Reviews Depicted to Clients:

Clients are often unaware of what the journey of working with a freelancer is like and reviews that are at the end are often an inaccurate generalization of the entire journey.

Contributes in Finding the Right Freelancer

Clients vary in what they want from a freelancer and different projects call for different kinds of freelancers.

More Specific Feedback for Freelancers to Improve

Freelancers can often get vague reviews which can be hard to decipher which part of the project they may be referring to.

Progressive reviews

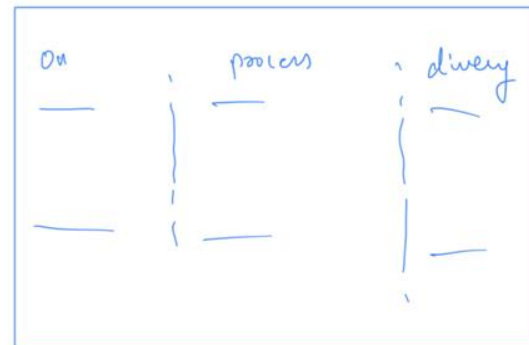
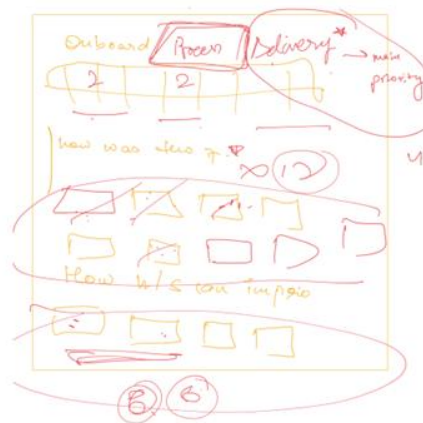
How did we come to this idea?

From our brainstorming and ideation sessions, we thought of the discrepancy between freelancing projects being a process while being reviewed as products. We started sketching ways to depict the process.

Much like a user journey map can be used to depict touch points. We thought of a sort of journey map to show to the client where different parts of the journey of working with them can be shown to clients.

This brought up the question: What are the different points there should be feedback for?

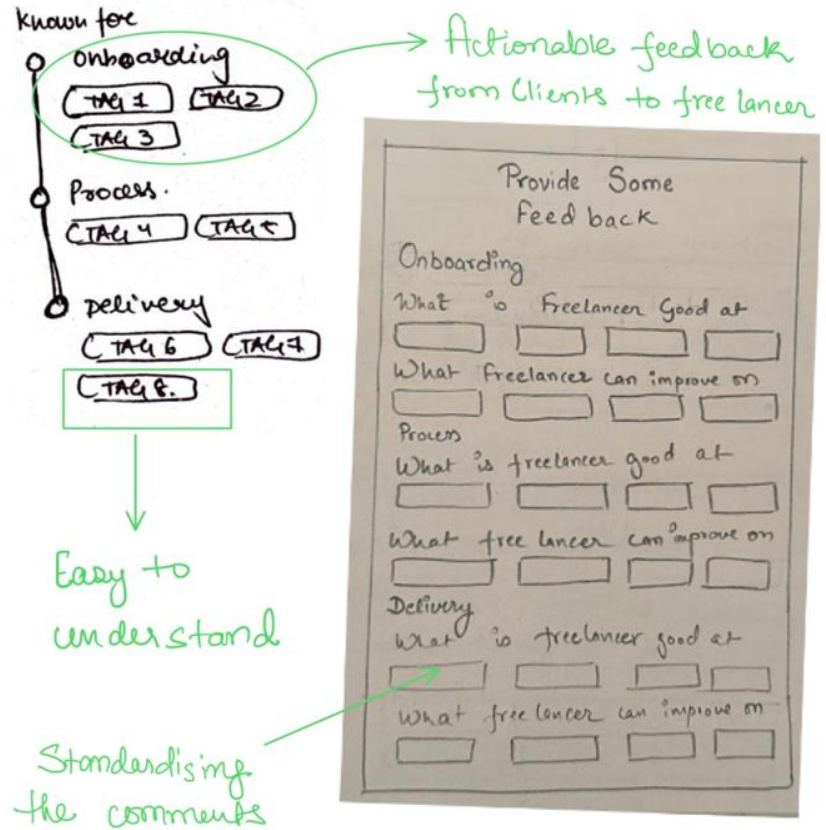
We sketched and came to the conclusion that every freelancing project has 3 main points: onboarding, process, and delivery. Since there are only 3 of these, they will be easily scannable and it limits the extra effort required from the client.



Word Tags and Reviews

This part of our solution proposes getting rid of the numerical star based system and replacing it with word tags; 1 to 3 words that describe different aspects of a freelancer. These word tags carry over the 3 stages of a project and are divided into them as well as into 2 separate sections:

- What the freelancer is good at or known for?
- What the freelancer needs to work on or improve in?



Word Tags and Reviews

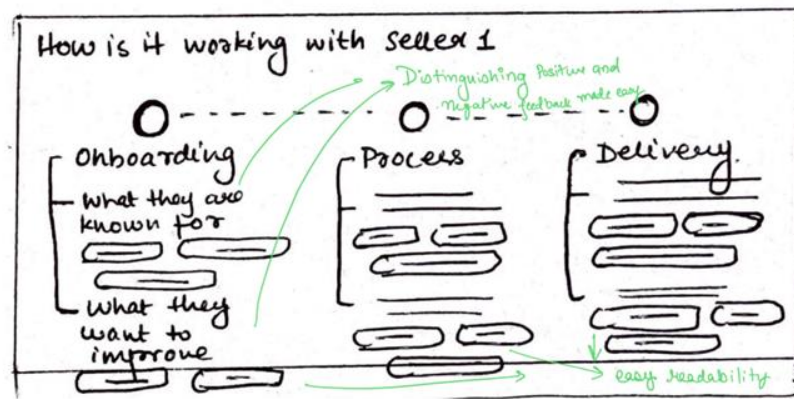
How did we come to this idea?

After we had divided the review process into 3 key stages the big question we were left with was: **What would the reviews divided in those stages look like?**

We knew we wanted to take away numerical ratings so that clients would give them less head and actually get an idea of the journey of working with a freelancer. Initially we ideated a word bank.

While it is a great visualization, it is difficult to scan for information. This brought us to the idea of tags:

- Tags are easier to scan + A limited number of tags can convey a decent amount of information
- They can easily be attributed to different concepts like our 3 stages



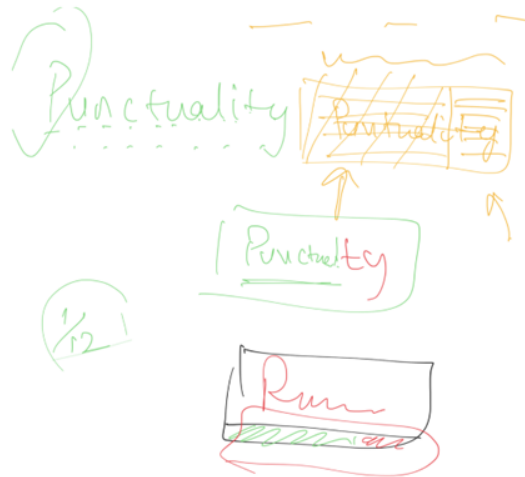
How can freelancers tell if they're improving?

Opportunity: Progress Tab

With the same tags being on positive and negative ends, freelancers have opportunities to track their progress with how those tags shift from negative to positive or vice versa.

Initially we thought of showing these percentages on the profile, but that could convey too much information making it unfair for the freelancer. It would be enough to convey that they simply need to improve in a certain field without saying how much. It would also be counter productive to getting rid of the numerical system. We did however want to show this kind of information to the freelancer so they could track their progress.

We started with ideas on splitting text into color, to represent how their improvement has changed over time. This however presented accessibility issues with color blind people.



What they are improving

Going above and beyond 70%

Technical Requirements 60%

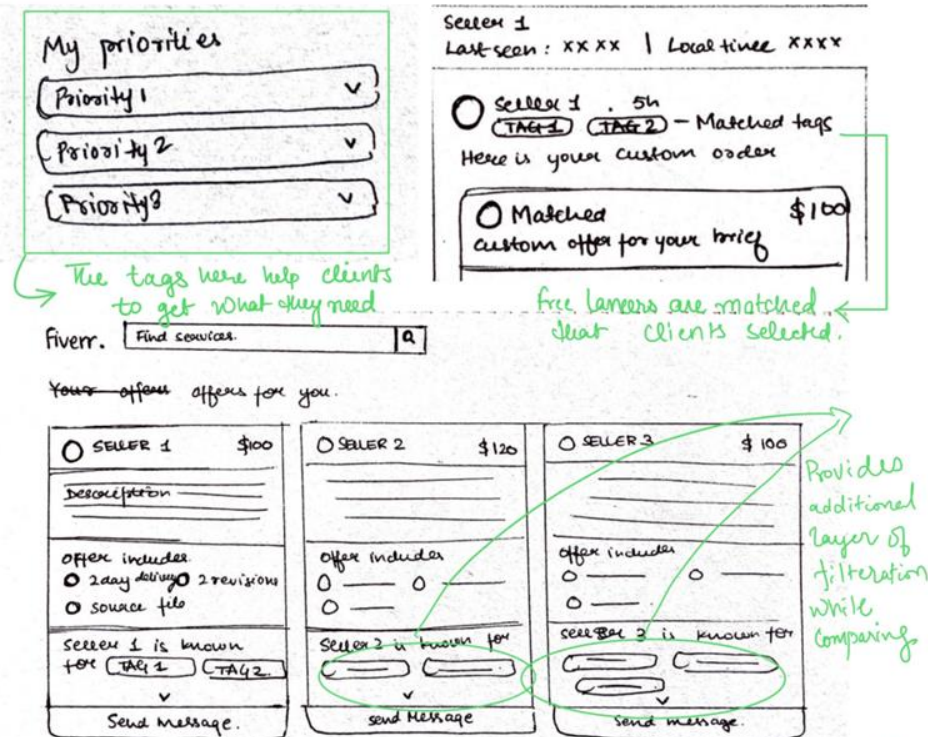
How do we match the right freelancer and client?

Opportunity: Matching Using Tags and Showcasing Portfolios

While a combination of tags and different stages are better than just stars, we found another opportunity for using tags. The tags could be used to bring the right freelancers to the client's needs or project's needs.

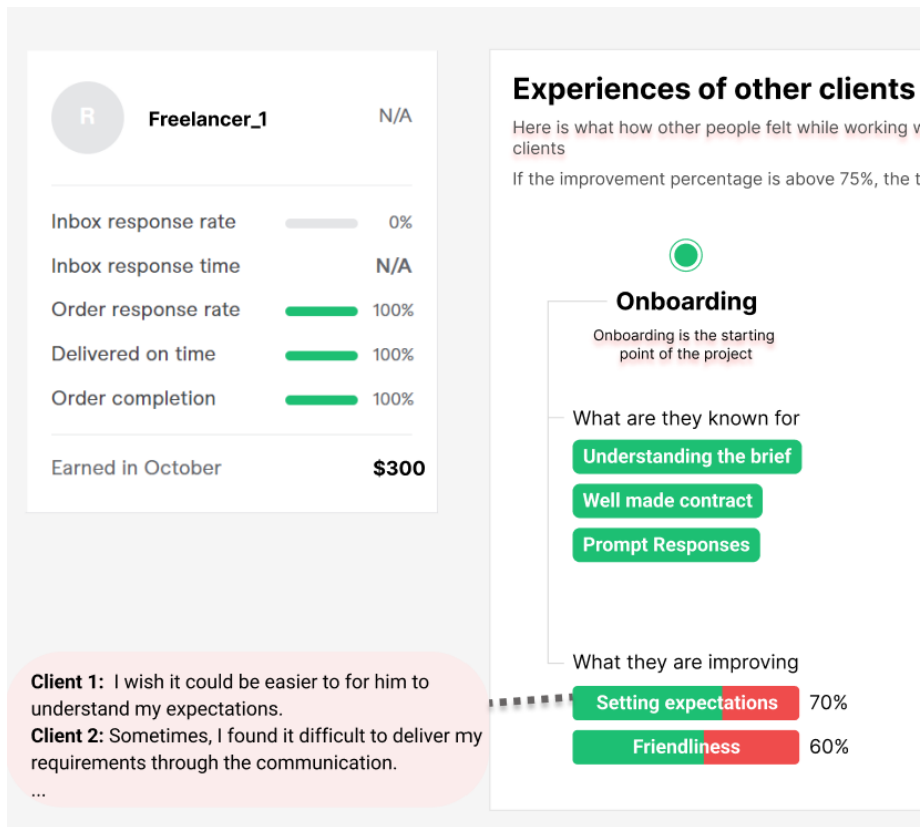
While posting a job, a client is given the opportunity to add tags that are important to them and prioritize them.

The freelancers they are matched with are based on the other information they provide like type of work, budget, timeline, etc. as well as these tags which function as another layer of filtering.



Scenario Based User Testing (insights)

1. Users don't understand our three stages (onboarding→process→delivery).
2. Clients were confused about the tags.
3. Clients want to see how many jobs the freelancer has done.
4. Clients want to add their own words to the tag system.
5. Freelancers felt tags are too general



Improving our ideas post testing

fiverr. Exit

Everything look good?

Submit your brief once you're ready and we'll start working our matching magic.

Brief summary

Your details
Student

Industry
Art & Design

Service
Website Design

Description
I am a Filmmaking Student and I would like my website to reflect this aspect. I'll have a lot of short films in there and a bit about myself. I'd also like to show my resume.

Original language
English

Extras
Source Files and Responsive Design

The type of website you prefer
Abstract Minimumism

What are you looking for in a freelancer
Timely Delivery Affordability Professionalism

Timeline & budget
Deliver by Oct 13, 2022 Budget \$10

Submit & get matched →

Tags that can be matched with the portfolios of freelancers.

Client's expectations of freelancer's qualities.

fiverr. Find Services Search Fiverr Pro Messages Saved Orders

All Conversations

Seller_1
Here is your custom offer

Seller_2
Here is your custom offer

Seller_3
Here is your custom offer

Seller_1
Last seen: Just now | Local time Oct 16, 10:08 pm

We have your back
For added safety and your protection, keep payments and communications within Fiverr. [Learn more](#)

Seller_1 - 5 h ago
Here is your custom offer

Matched for **Abstract** **Timely Delivery** **Minimumism** **+2 more** \$50

Custom offer for your brief

Here's my offer for your project. Feel free to reach out if you want to make any changes. Looking forward to working with you!

Your offer includes
3 Days Delivery ✓ Source file
2 Revisions

Compare Offers Reject Offer Accept Offer

Send

About Seller_1

From: Germany
On Fiverr Since: 2017
Projects Completed: 120
Domain: Website Design
English: Fluent

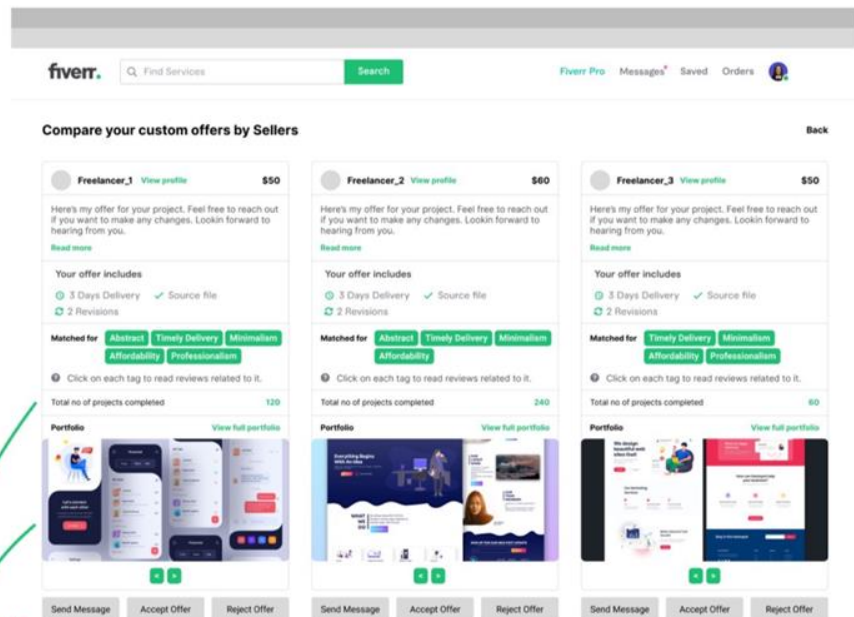
What Seller_1 is known for

Here is what how other people felt while working with this freelancer

- Onboarding
 - Understanding Brief
 - Well made Contract
 - Prompt Response
- Process
 - Regular Communication
 - Creative Problem Solving
- Delivery
 - Quality of work
 - Affordability
 - Timely Delivery

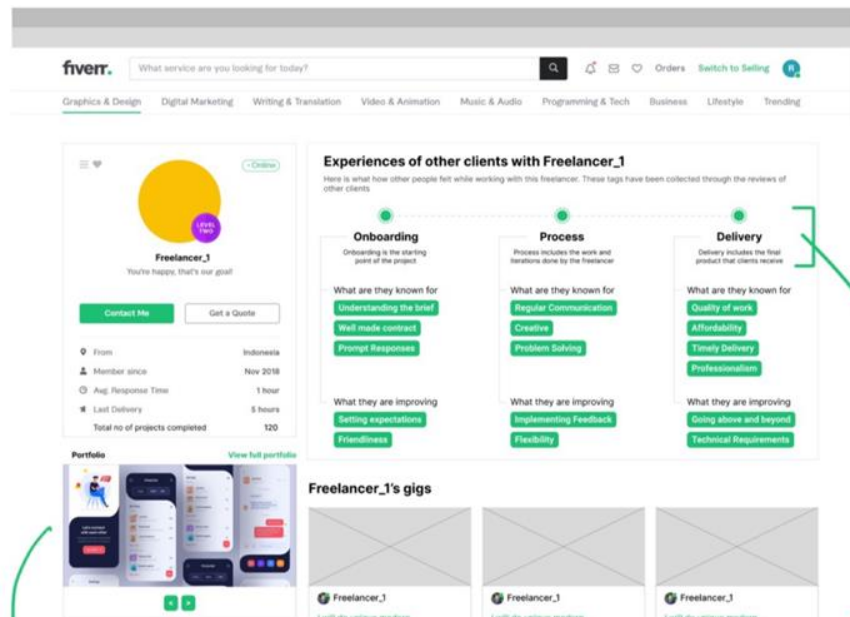
These tags are matched ones. The client wanted these qualities and this freelancer is known for these.

Improving our ideas post testing



Total no. of projects

Portfolio for comparison of work quality was added.



Portfolio is also visible on the profile

we made this section more descriptive.

Improving our ideas post testing

fiverr. What service are you looking for today?

Graphics & Design Digital Marketing Writing & Translation Video & Animation Music & Audio Programming & Tech Business Lifestyle Trending

You have finished onboarding Freelancer_1! It's time to review them

Fiverr

It would mean a lot to Freelancer_1 if you review their project Onboarding. This would form part of their review and will be displayed on their profile.

What did you like? Choose from the list or add your own.

Prompt Responses Friendliness Well made contract Setting expectations Understanding the brief Type your own

What can they improve? Choose from the list or add your own.

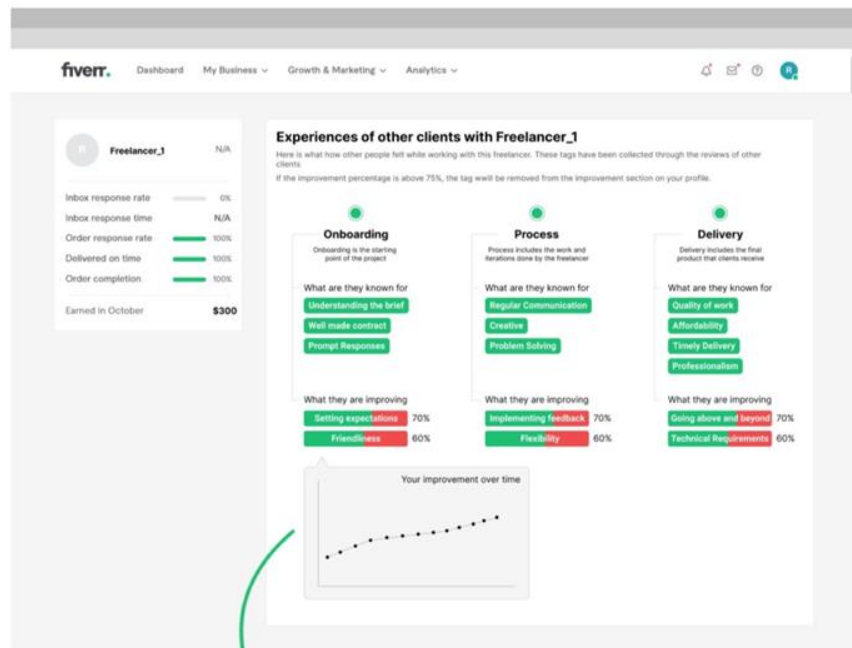
Prompt Responses Friendliness Well made contract Setting expectations Understanding the brief Type your own

Have something more to say? Write a review for them

Submit Review

Writing the reviews in paragraphs to support the tags is also an option

we gave the clients the option to suggest their own tags.



We added a graph which gives a more detailed view of how the freelancer is improving.

Limitations and Next Steps

We encountered limitations in our design that impacted our research and testing of our designs:

- During our interview process, we had to be extremely lenient on our inclusion and exclusion criteria considering we had a difficult time finding freelancers and clients. One of our users did not even have experience using freelancing platforms.
- Our usability testing was scenario based and while we got insights into how we could improve our designs, we could have had deeper assessments from our intended user groups, i.e. clients and freelancers

We evaluated our prototypes and solutions and we identified limitations in that as well:

- Numeric based ratings are valuable to users and our solution takes that away. Completely getting rid of numeric systems can reduce trust in the rating system at least with users' mental models about rating systems today
- Our rating system requires more effort from the client which makes them less likely to leave reviews.
- This system does not make sense for extremely short projects as the the 3 stages of a project blend into one.