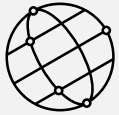# UX Design Case Study: LittleSeed Plants
A plant-shopping e-commerce website

Project requirements

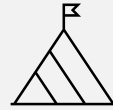- About LittleSeed Plants
- Challenges
- Goal

Project requirements

About LittleSeed Plants

An e-commerce website, LittleSeed Plants is dedicated to offering a wide variety of plants for plant enthusiasts and gardeners.

LittleSeed Plants not only enables its users to choose and buy from a wide range of plants, but also offers a platform for them to get gardening tips and interact with other plant enthusiasts and experts!

Challenges

While accessing the website, the users face the following challenges.

- **Complex navigation:** Plants come in various types and sizes and have varying care requirements. However, LittleSeed Plants' current navigation isn't intuitive enough for users. As the users are unable to easily find the right plants, they get frustrated quickly.

- **Imbalanced information:** On a plant's details page, LittleSeed Plants provides a lot of information, including its scientific name, which may not be relevant for all buyers. This makes it difficult for users to find key information.

- **Limited filtering and sorting options**: The current filtering and sorting options on the website are limited to basic options, such as plant type, size, and price range. This makes it difficult for users to find plants that suit their preferences, reducing potential sales.

Goal

To address the users' challenges, the goal of the project is to:

- Update the navigation system to make it easier for users to find the plants they're interested in

- Provide the right amount of information without overwhelming the users

- Redesign the filtering and sorting options so that users can narrow down their plant choices based on various criteria, such as by example, size, light requirements, and pet-friendliness

Research users
- Hypothesis
- Research methods and techniques
- Analysis results

Hypothesis

The following hypotheses were made during the user research stage for the LittleSeed Plants' website.
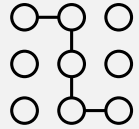
Hypothesis 1: *Reducing the steps in the checkout process from five to three will lead to a 20% decrease in cart abandonment rates over the course of two months.*

Explanation: This hypothesis focuses on simplifying the existing checkout process to reduce cart abandonment.

Hypothesis 2: *Adding customer reviews and ratings to product pages will result in a 15% increase in the average conversion rate within a 30-day period.*

Explanation: This hypothesis focuses on the impact of adding reviews and ratings from the buyers on the potential sales of a product.
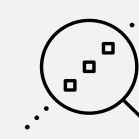
Hypothesis 3: *Providing a filtering and sorting feature will increase the conversion rate by 30% within a 30-day period.*

Explanation: The filtering and sorting feature is designed to enhance the user experience by allowing customers to quickly and easily narrow down their choices and find the plants that best match their preferences. Including this feature will result in efficient shopping journey for the users.

Research methods and techniques

To understand the user's behaviors, preferences, and pain points, the project employed the **qualitative** UX research method.

User interviews

The following are some examples of questions that the users answered:
- Can you describe your typical process when shopping for plants online?
- What factors influence your decision to purchase plants from an online platform?
- Can you share any specific challenges or frustrations you've encountered while shopping for plants on e-commerce websites?
- How important is detailed plant care information when considering a plant purchase online?
- What features do you find most appealing and user-friendly on other online plant shopping websites?

Focus groups

The following are some examples of questions that the users answered:
- How do you usually start your search for new plants to buy online?
- What emotions or concerns arise when making an online plant purchase?
- Can you provide examples of positive or negative experiences you've had while shopping for plants online?
- How do you determine the credibility and reliability of an e-commerce website when it comes to plant quality and care?
- What improvements would you suggest to enhance the online plant shopping experience?

User testing

The following are some examples of questions that the users answered:
- Can you walk us through the process of finding a specific type of indoor plant on the LittleSeed Plants website?
- How intuitive do you find the navigation and filtering options while exploring different plant categories?
- Can you add a plant to your wishlist and explain the steps you took?
- Did you face any challenges during the checkout process? If yes, what were they?

Analysis results

Based on the data gathered from user interviews, focus groups, and user testing, the hypotheses on the shorter checkout process, customer reviews/ratings, and filtering/sorting options were **proved**.

Research findings

Discovery and selection
- Users appreciate a wide variety of plant options and clear categorization.
- Beginners find it overwhelming to choose from a large selection without proper guidance.
- Plant care information is crucial for confident decision-making.

User interface and navigation
- Users prefer an intuitive and visually appealing interface.
- Users want clear and easily accessible filters to narrow down their choices.

Checkout and payment
- Users value a streamlined and secure checkout process.
- Providing multiple payment options is essential for a diverse user base.

Wishlist and account features
- Users find wishlist useful for saving items for future purchases.
- The ability to create accounts for personalized recommendations is appreciated.

Trust and customer reviews
- Positive customer reviews and ratings influence users' purchasing decisions.
- Users trust detailed and authentic plant care reviews from other buyers

Insights

Pain points
Based on the findings from the research, the following can be concluded:
- **Lack of plant knowledge:** Users might **lack knowledge** about different plant types, care requirements, and suitable plants for their specific environments.
- **Complex plant care:** Users might find plant care **instructions overwhelming or confusing**, especially if they're new to gardening.
- **Limited space and light:** Users with **limited outdoor space** might struggle to find plants that thrive in indoor or small balcony environments.

Create user personas
- User persona 1: Gardener Grace
- User persona 2: Urban gardener Alex
- User persona 3: Gift shopper Sarah

User persona 1: Gardener Grace

Image source: Photo by Artem Beliaikin on Unsplash

Personal background

Age: 28 years
Status: Married
Education: Masters degree in Elementary education

Professional background

Occupation: Elementary school teacher
Earning potential: $70K per year
Location: Neighbourhood school
Lifestyle: Prefers a classy and extravagant lifestyle

"With every plant and flower that I care for, I find the strength in me to care for life."

Goals and motivations

- Discover new and unique plant varieties to enhance the beauty and diversity of her garden.
- Expand her gardening knowledge and skills through workshops and informative content.
- Connect with a community of fellow garden enthusiasts to share experiences and seek advice.
- Create a peaceful and visually appealing outdoor space that serves as a retreat from her busy work life.

Needs and pain points

- **Plant selection:** Seeking a wide variety of plant options, from flowering plants to perennials, to create a balanced garden ecosystem
- **Plant care guidance:** Needs detailed and reliable plant care instructions specific to each plant's needs
- **Community engagement:** Wants a platform that fosters engagement with like-minded individuals who can offer insights and solutions to her gardening challenges
- **Convenience:** Looking for a convenient way to access gardening tips, workshops, and purchase plants online

Behaviors and preferences

- Grace spends considerable time researching plants online before making a purchase decision.
- She values plants with natural beauty, preferring those that attract butterflies and bees.
- Grace is open to trying new gardening techniques and experimenting with different planting arrangements.
- She enjoys participating in online gardening forums and attending local workshops to expand her knowledge.
- Grace prefers a user-friendly and visually appealing website with clear navigation and a comprehensive plant directory.

Key characteristics

- Passionate about gardening and nature
- Curious and eager to learn new gardening techniques
- Enjoys outdoor activities and spending time in her garden
- Values sustainability and organic gardening practices
- Seeks a balance between her teaching career and her love for gardening

User persona 2: Urban gardener Alex

Image source: Photo by Jamie Fenn on Unsplash

Personal background

Age: 34 years
Status: Married, father of two sons
Education: Professional degree in Photography

Professional background

Occupation: Freelance photographer
Earning potential: $100K per year
Location: Home studio
Lifestyle: Prefers an aesthetical and artistic lifestyle

"In this bustling city, I want to have peace by building my own nature landscape."

Goals and motivations

- Transform his city apartment's balcony into a lush and peaceful oasis.
- Enhance the aesthetic appeal of his living space by decorating it with low-maintenance indoor plants that can thrive in his apartment's conditions.
- Establish a stronger connection with nature despite his city environment.

Needs and pain points

- **Plant selection:** Needs a variety of indoor plants that can thrive in a small balcony garden and complement his apartment's décor due to limited space and light
- **Plant care guidance:** Requires simplified and brief plant care instructions that are specific to urban living conditions without getting overwhelmed
- **Convenience:** Seeks a user-friendly platform that simplifies the process of browsing, selecting, and purchasing plants online
- **Visual appeal:** Values visually appealing plant images that showcase the plants' size, color, and overall appearance

Behaviors and preferences

- Alex often researches plants using his smartphone during breaks from his photography work.
- He prefers plants with unique foliage patterns and those that can add a touch of nature to his urban environment.
- Alex often seeks out blog posts and articles on urban gardening tips and creative ways to maximize small spaces.
- He appreciates platforms that provide personalized recommendations based on his apartment's conditions.

Key characteristics

- Urban and creative lifestyle as a freelance photographer
- Values aesthetics and seeks to incorporate beauty into his living space
- Appreciates the therapeutic and visual benefits of indoor plants
- Eager to learn about plant care and maintenance in an urban setting
- Seeks a balance between his passion for photography and his love for plants

"With every plant I choose, I'm not just giving a gift; I'm gifting a piece of nature's beauty to the people I care about."

Image source: Photo by Christina @ wocintechchat.com on Unsplash

Personal background

Age: 44 years
Status: Married, mother of two teenage daughters
Education: Masters degree in Business Administration

Professional background

Occupation: Marketing director
Earning potential: $180K per year
Location: Downtown office
Lifestyle: Prefers a simple and elegant lifestyle

Goals and motivations

- Select and find thoughtful and memorable gifts based on the receiver's personality and interests.
- Bring joy and happiness to the receiver.
- Create lasting memories through thoughtful gifts.
- Make occasions special and memorable.
- Simplify the gift-giving process through curated collections and convenience.

Behaviors and preferences

- Sarah frequently shops online for gifts during her breaks from work.
- She appreciates plants with meaningful symbolism or unique features that resonate with the receiver's interests.
- Sarah often reads customer reviews and ratings to ensure the quality and reliability of the plant and the shopping experience.
- She prefers plant gifts that come with clear care instructions, ensuring the receiver can enjoy the gift for a long time.

Needs and pain points

- **Curated gift selection:** Needs a curated collection of plant options suitable for different occasions, from birthdays to housewarmings, to make her gift-giving process easier
- **Visual appeal:** Requires clear images of plants and their packaging to ensure that the gift presentation matches the significance of the occasion
- **Personalization:** Seeks the ability to add personal touches, such as custom gift messages, to make the plant gift feel more special
- **Convenient shopping:** Values a seamless and convenient online shopping experience, from selecting plants to placing orders and tracking deliveries

Key characteristics

- Thoughtful and attentive gift giver
- Values making occasions special through carefully chosen presents
- Balances a busy career with her role as a considerate friend and family member
- Enjoys exploring creative and unique gift options
- Seeks convenience and efficiency in her online shopping experience

Research the competition
- Competitors
- SWOT analysis

Competitors

Based on the research, the LittleSeed Plants website has primarily **two main competitors**: **Botany World** and **Paradise Glee**.

The following table provides an overview of how the LittleSeed Plants website compares with other competitors on various important parameters.

Parameters	LittleSeed Plants	Botany World	Paradise Glee
Plant variety	Wide variety of unique and rare plants	Limited plant variety	Focus on urban gardening solutions
Plant care information	Detailed care instructions provided	Some care guides for limited plants	Online guides for small-space gardens
Website design	User-friendly interface	Complex website layout	Sleek and modern design
Filtering options	Limited filtering options	Robust filtering for plant selection	Limited search functionality
Customer reviews	Limited customer reviews	Available customer reviews	Lack of customer reviews
Checkout process	Could be more streamlined	User-friendly checkout	Could be more streamlined
Community engagement	Engaging blog section with gardening tips	No community engagement features	Social media integration
Unique selling points	Wide variety of unique plants and detailed care instructions	Personalized plant recommendations and responsive service	Focus on urban gardening solutions and social integration
Delivery and shipping	Delivery and shipping information provided	Transparent shipping information	Limited information on shipping

SWOT analysis

The LittleSeed Plants website gained the following insights from their SWOT analysis.

S
Strengths

- Wide variety of unique and rare plants
- Detailed care instructions
- Delivery and shipping information provided
- Engaging blog section with gardening tips

W
Weaknesses

- Limited filtering options
- Limited customer reviews

O
Opportunities

- Checkout process could be more streamlined
- Sleek and modern design
- Improving filtering options
- Adding a customer reviews section

T
Threats

- Higher costs and limited availability for seasonal plants
- Complicating the simplified interface while creating a sleek and modern design

Create user stories and solution sketches

- User stories: Gardener Grace
- User journey: Gardener Grace
- User flow: Gardener Grace
- Solution sketches
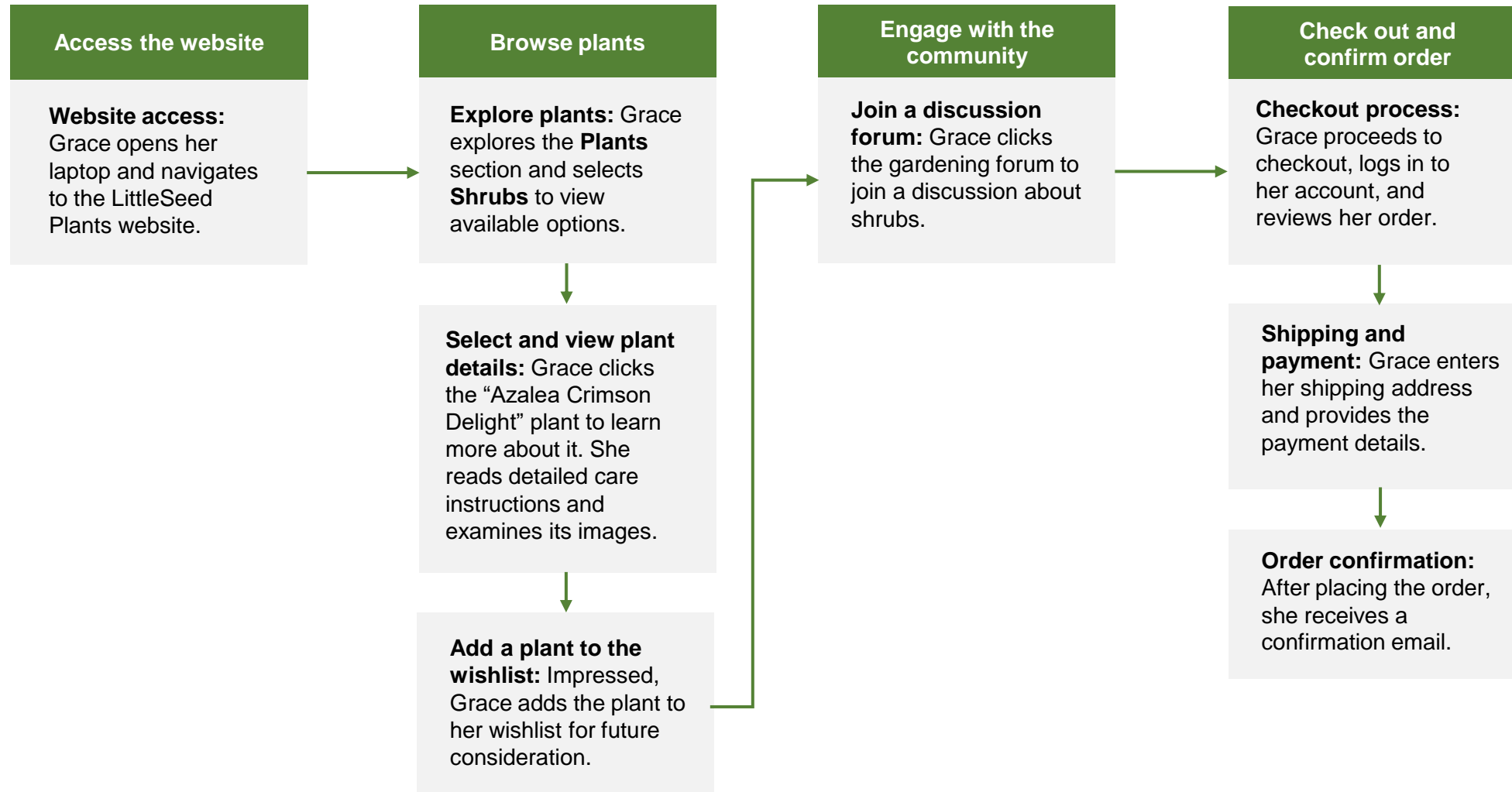
User stories: Gardener Grace

Focusing on the Gardener Grace user persona, the following are various user stories for such users that provide insights into their needs and requirements.

Discovering new plants	Engaging with the gardening community	Saving favorites for future purchase	Viewing customer reviews	Getting personalized plant recommendations
As a gardening enthusiast, I want to easily filter and browse through the selection of perennial plants native to my region that can help me choose suitable options for my garden.	As a passionate gardener, I want to receive notifications about upcoming gardening workshops and events so I can continue developing my gardening skills.	As a frequent buyer, I want the ability to save plants I like to a wishlist so I can easily find and consider them for future purchases.	As an informed customer, I want to read reviews and ratings from other customers so I'm aware of the plant quality and the overall shopping experience.	As an avid gardener, I want to receive recommendations for plant varieties that thrive in my specific climate and garden conditions, helping me make informed choices.

User flow: Gardener Grace

This user flow provides a step-by-step overview of Gardener Grace's interactions and actions as she engages with the LittleSeed Plants website, from initial exploration to the successful conversion.

Access the website	Browse plants	Engage with the community	Check out and confirm order
Website access: Grace opens her laptop and navigates to the LittleSeed Plants website.	**Explore plants:** Grace explores the **Plants** section and selects **Shrubs** to view available options.	**Join a discussion forum:** Grace clicks the gardening forum to join a discussion about shrubs.	**Checkout process:** Grace proceeds to checkout, logs in to her account, and reviews her order.
	Select and view plant details: Grace clicks the "Azalea Crimson Delight" plant to learn more about it. She reads detailed care instructions and examines its images.		**Shipping and payment:** Grace enters her shipping address and provides the payment details.
	Add a plant to the wishlist: Impressed, Grace adds the plant to her wishlist for future consideration.		**Order confirmation:** After placing the order, she receives a confirmation email.

User journey: Gardener Grace

Gardener Grace's goal: To save plants that I like by adding them to my wishlist for future purchases.

Gardner Grace's journey: This user journey provides insight into Gardener Grace's experience as a frequent buyer who wants to save her favorite plants for future consideration. It highlights her interaction with the wishlist feature so she can make well-informed purchasing decisions.

| Exploration and discovery	Plant selection and wishlist	Community engagement	Purchase and checkout	Payment and order confirmation
1 Gardener Grace opens her laptop and visits the LittleSeed Plants website.	**3** The "Azalea Crimson Delight" plant, a shrub, catches her eye due to its vibrant red flowers.	**7** She notices an ongoing conversation about "Azalea Crimson Delight" and finds out that they're evergreens and can be paired along with other evergreens in the garden.	**8** After exploring, Grace decides that "Azalea Crimson Delight" would be a perfect addition to her garden's color scheme.	**11** She enters her shipping address and selects a convenient shipping option.
2 Grace is intrigued by the vibrant images on the home page and clicks the **Plants** section in the navigation menu.	**4** Curious to learn more, Grace clicks the plant's name to access its information page.		**9** She goes back to her wishlist and adds the plant to her cart.	**12** Grace securely provides her payment details to complete the purchase.
	5 On the plant's information page, she reads its detailed care instructions, discovering that "Azalea Crimson Delight" thrives in partial shade and well-draining soil.		**10** Grace proceeds to checkout, where she logs in to her account and reviews her order details.	**13** After placing the order, she receives an order confirmation email that includes details about her purchase and estimated delivery date.
	6 Satisfied with the plant's vibrant colors and care requirements, she adds it to her wishlist for future consideration.			

Solution sketches

The following pen and paper sketches are a visual representation of a potential solution to address Gardener Grace's requirement to add a plant to the wishlist for easier purchases. Zoom in to view the sketches in more detail.
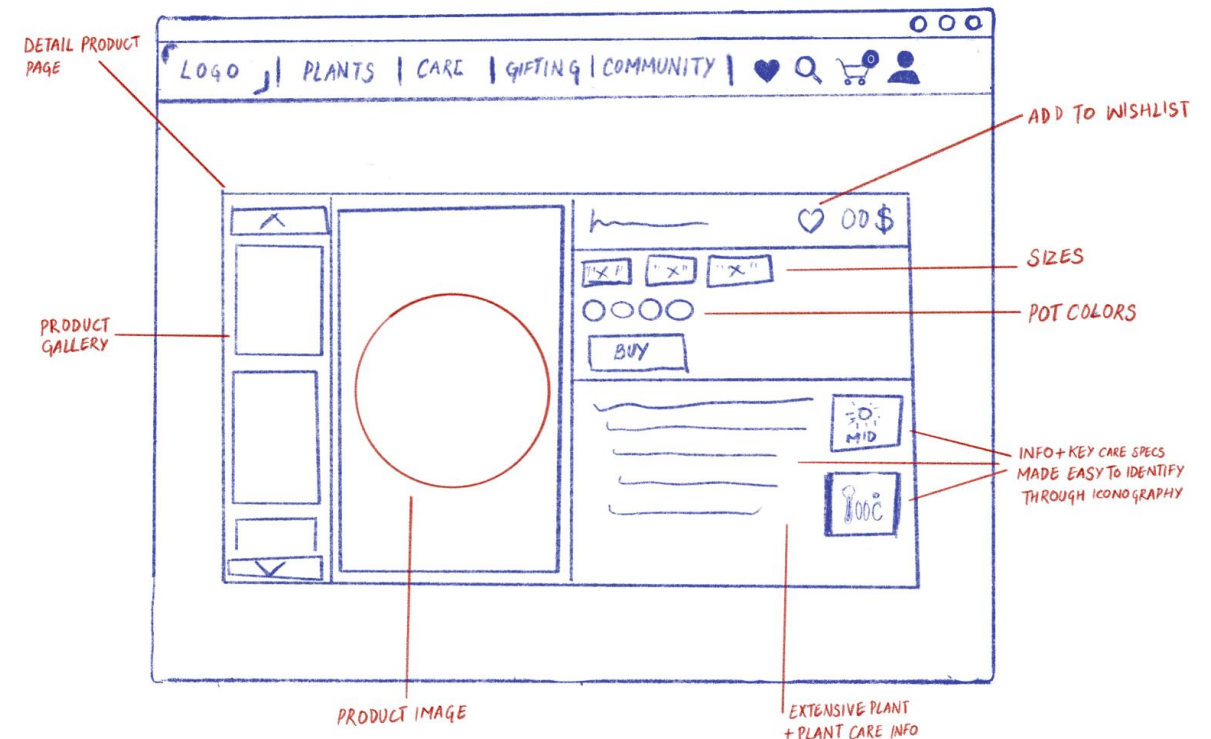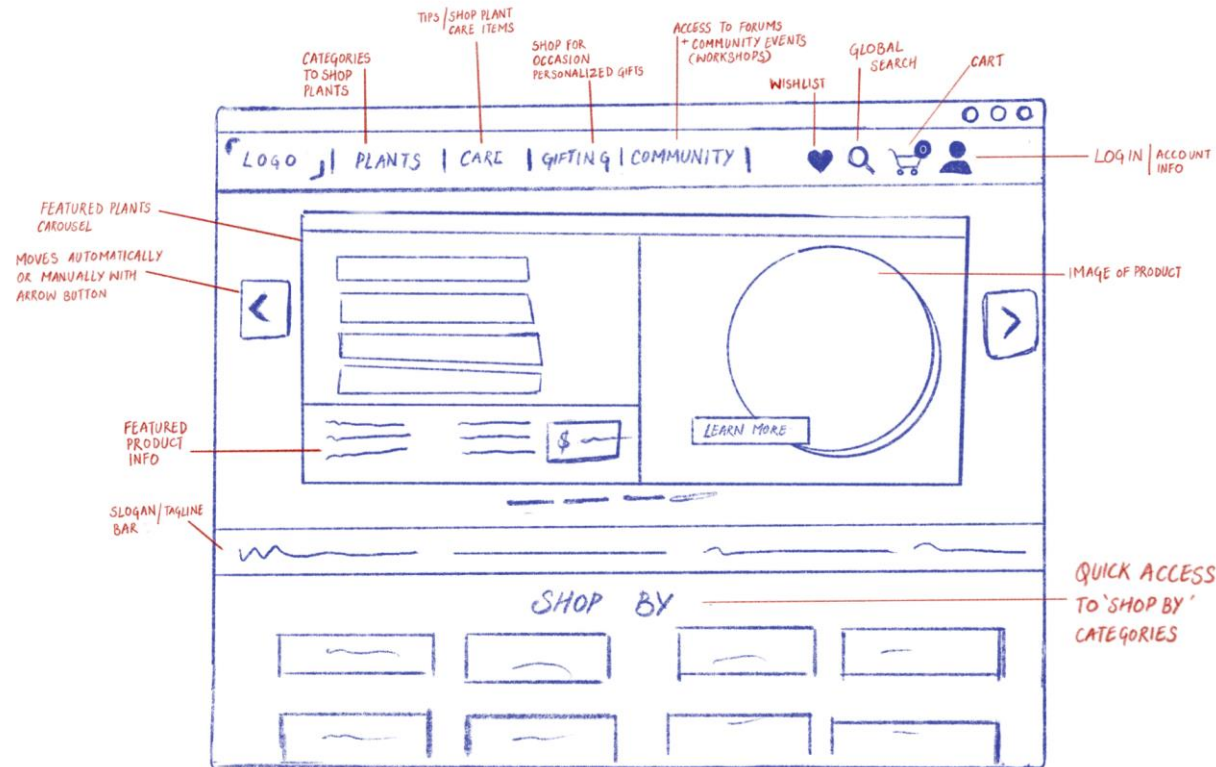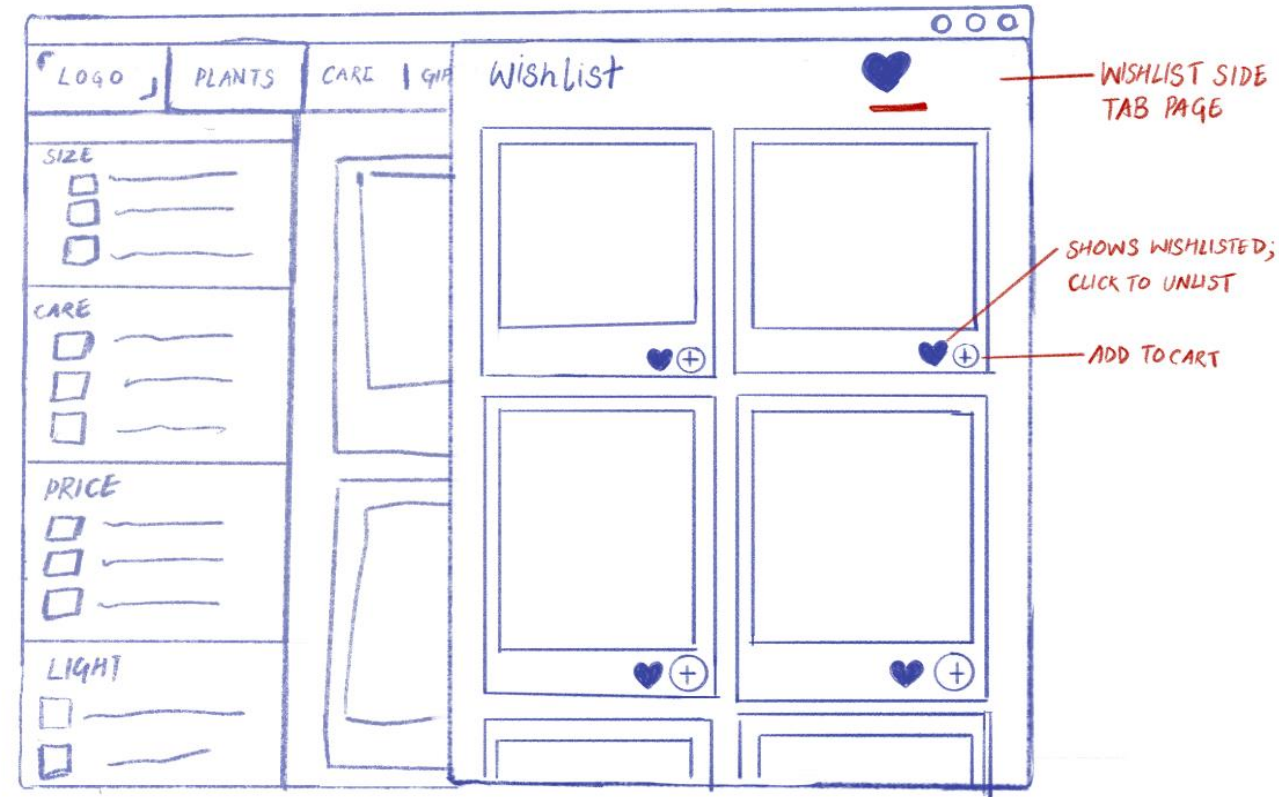
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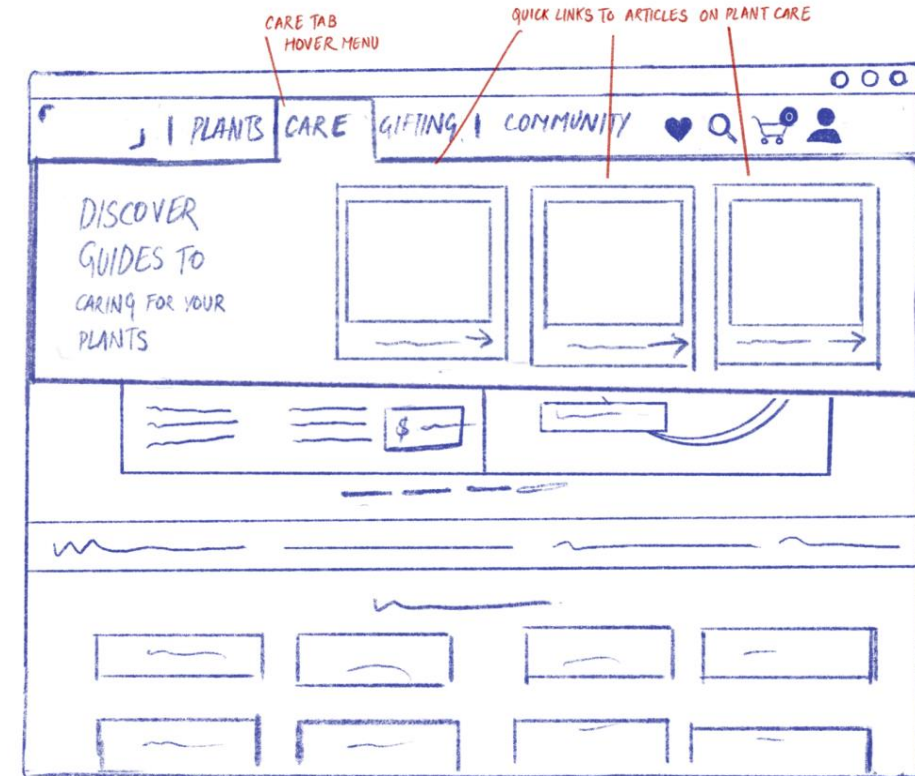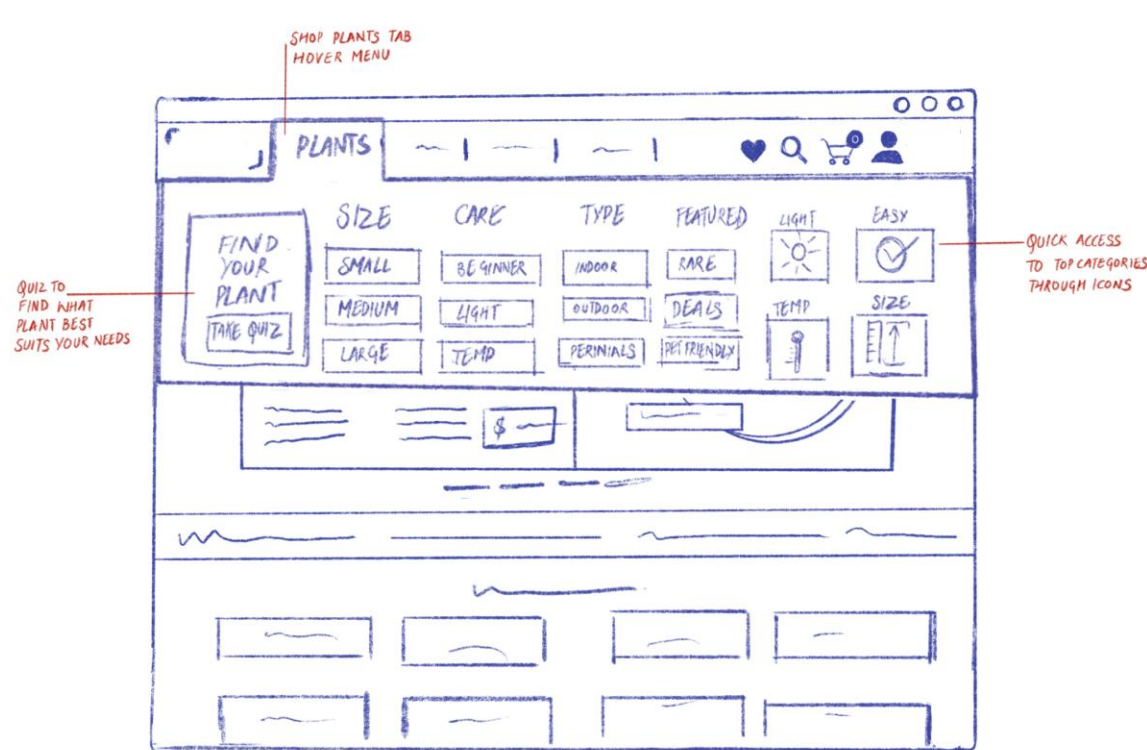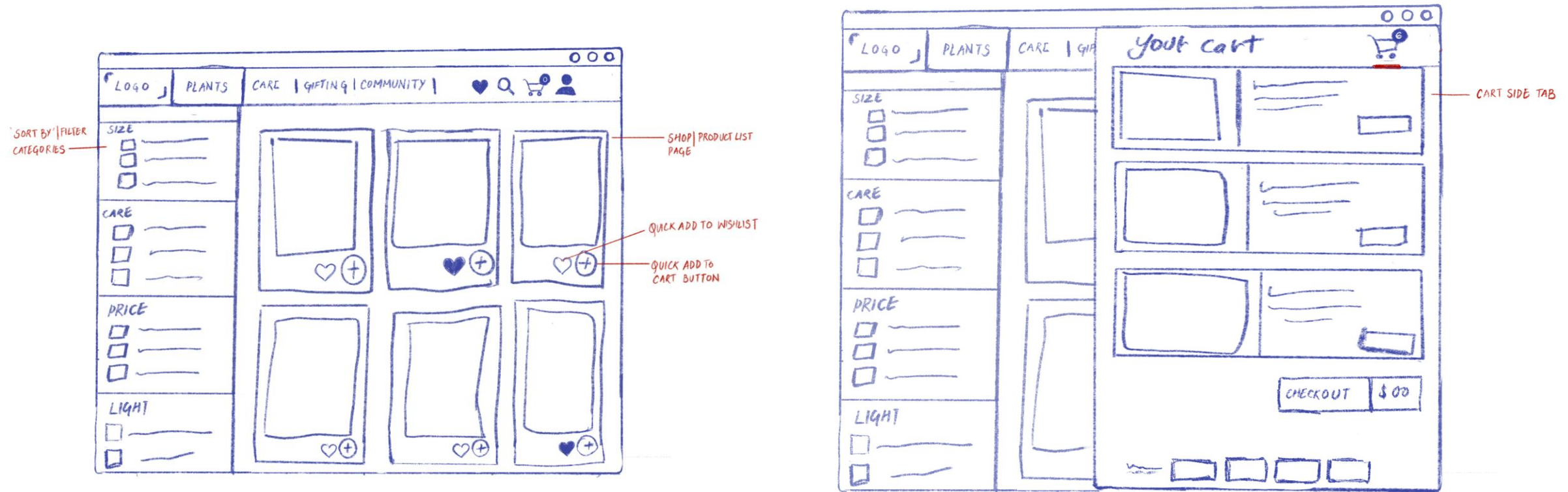
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