

# INK TANK

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## OVERVIEW

This was a project I completed as part of the certified UX Immersion course for Career Foundry.

**Role:** Lead UX/UI Designer - research, design and test all UX related to the project

**Duration:** Aug 2018 – Mar 2019.

As a result, I have learned new softwares: Sketch and InVision; and how to present my UX process and design skills.

## ABOUT

Ink Tank is a responsive web application not only for people that want to get a tattoo and are looking for the right tattoo design and tattoo artist, but also for tattoo artists to show their portfolio; helping people to make well-informed decisions.

Ink Tank offers a bespoke connection between people looking for a tattoo style and local tattoo artists based on that style.

## THE REAL CHALLENGE

My goal was to enable Ink Tank users to find the right design and tattoo artist, because getting a tattoo is a personal and emotional experience that the users want to avoid regret in the future.

I will know this to be true when I see users frequently using the web-app, instead of other services and leaving positive feedback and recommendations.

### Initial Potential Solutions

- Provide easy contact with tattoo artists for direct questions and building a more close relationship between artist-user;
- The user would be able to book video calls, first consultation appointments or live chats;
- Clear organisation of tattoo artists and their portfolio by: profile, style, health and safety protocols, ink brands, sustainable practice and location;
- Simple, intuitive and clean designed platform.

## THE GROWTH OF THE PROJECT

To find solutions, I decided to explore the subject and as well do market research aiming to gather information on the competition and understand the market.

I performed an analysis to direct competitors, such as InkHunter and Tattoodo. For these, I built a competitor profile, a competitor feature matrix, a SWOT Analysis and a UX Analysis.

### INKHUNTER - "Try before you ink"

#### SWOT PROFILE

##### Strengths

- Augmented reality technology;
- High quality UX/UI;
- Compatible for Android and Apple;
- "Best of 2017" and number 2 product of the day for Product Hunt

##### Weaknesses

It's not connected to all tattoo artists or studios and their location yet

##### Opportunities

- Improve UX in relation to try the tattoo design;
- Users are able to book appointments with studios;
- Large tattoo database available;
- Articles and videos available related to the tattoo culture and lifestyle;
- Community platform.

##### Threats

- Other apps like Tattoodo and Inkstinct are more active in the community, attending conferences and publishing articles;

- TrueArtists offers a range of tattoo artists that work according to strict health and safety protocols.

### TATTOODO - "The world's largest tattoo community"

#### SWOT PROFILE

##### Strengths

- High profile tattoo artists and personalities associated with the app;
- Users are able to book appointments with studios;
- Large tattoo database available;
- Articles and videos available related to the tattoo culture and lifestyle;
- Community platform.

##### Weaknesses

- More focused in the USA than the rest of the world

##### Opportunities

- Organized platform searchable by artist, style and location for more non USA artists;
- Ability to edit, resize and try a tattoo design.

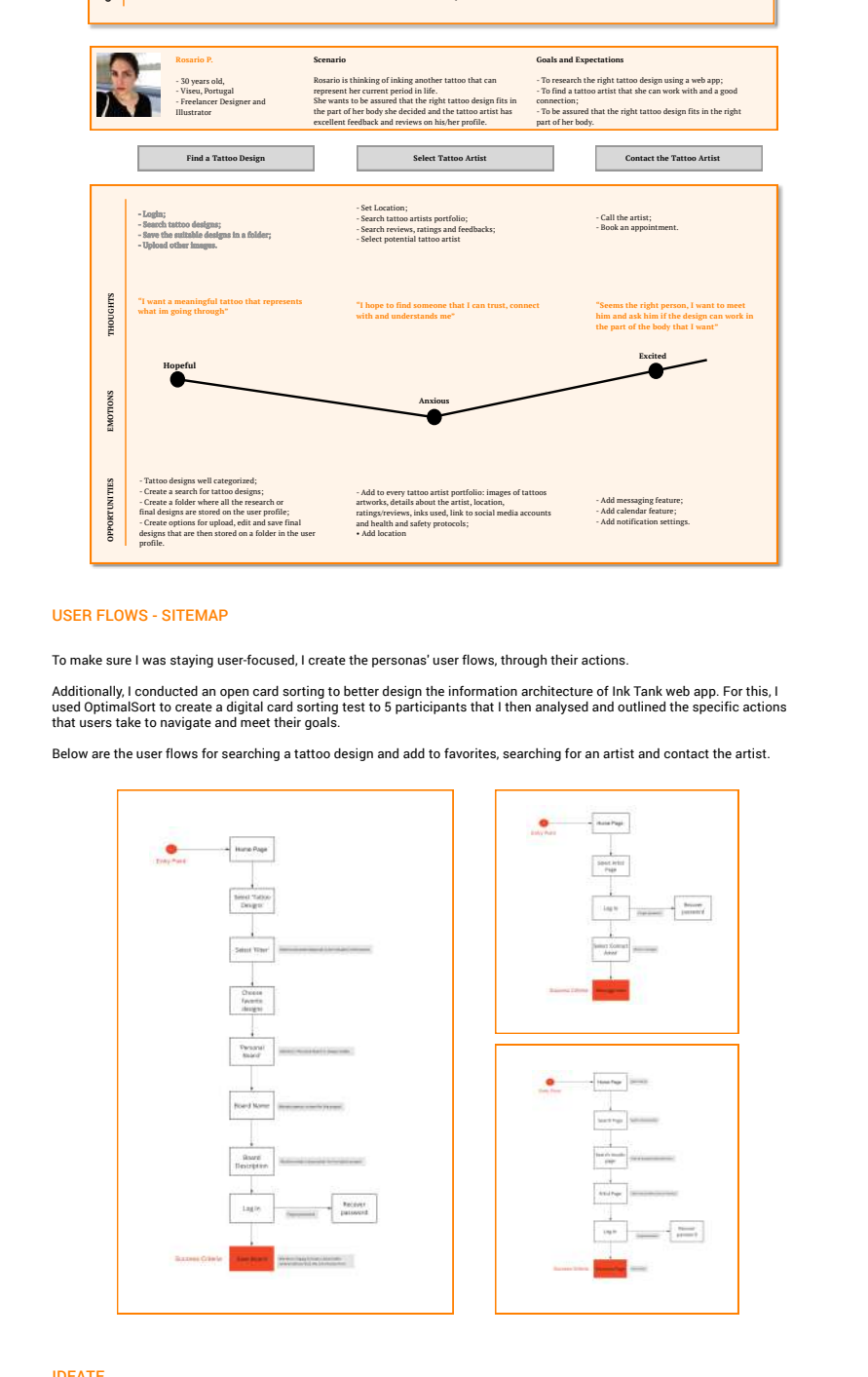
##### Threats

InkHunter has augmented reality technology and TrueArtists offers a Tattoo Certification Association that could be competitors features against Tattoodo

- The competitors are mainly focused in the tattoo culture and lifestyle;

#### Key Points

- I believe that by facilitating the user to discover their favorite tattoo style within a personalised enjoyable search experience, I would be able to connect the user to the artist that resonates its visual aesthetics and emotional values in its own location.
- Combine the features that make the major competitor apps stand out and adding others: as book appointments, artists profile containing additional information: health and safety protocols, ink brands and sustainable practice.



## INTERVIEWS

In order to gather qualitative data and gain insight from my potential users on how Ink Tank web app will be used, I carried out 3 interviews using a guerrilla approach. All interviews were recorded with participant consent.

The participants interviewed range from having tattoos and intend to continue going through the process of getting another tattoo; to don't have tattoos, but would like to have one. All the participants never used a tattoo app, only word of mouth or research on facebook and instagram.

Unfortunately during my interviews I was not able to interview any tattoo artist due to constant refusal of doing so; therefore, I was not able to build its persona or journey map.

Interviews results were organised utilizing an affinity mapping, in order to identify behaviours, goals and attitudes.

- Tattoos hold meaning;

- Users want to be able to personalize their tattoo: by editing and previewing their designs;

- Artists have clear information regarding their portfolio, reviews, testimonials and safety;

- The user can book appointments with the artist through the app;

- Good research is synonym of right tattoo design;

- Social media and word of mouth is the most common ways to make a decision on a tattoo design and tattoo artist.

#### Key Points

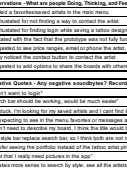
- "I wanted something that would represent me as an individual and as a human being"
- (Barbara S., 23 years old, Lisbon, Portugal)

## PERSONAS

After gathering all the information using the interview results, I created 2 personas - The Novice and The Experienced.

They embodied the traits of the targeted audience and helped me to understand our users, their goals and their frustrations. Having these personas also aided me in knowing what problems I was trying to solve.

### MARTINA B. the novice



- 29 years old;
- Rigaite, United Kingdom
- Full Time Exhibition Designer
- Single
- No Tattoos

"I see them as superficial incisions of my life"

#### GOALS/NEEDS

- To work together with a local tattoo artist that is experienced, honest, creative, solution driven and safe;
- To find the right design through research on social media, personal drawings and with the tattoo artist that she relates to;
- To see the tattoo artist portfolio by style, prices, health and safety protocols and location;
- To be able to book an appointment with the artist that fits her schedule.

#### MOTIVATIONS

- Its exciting the idea of getting the skin inked.

#### FRUSTATIONS

- Long and confusing process that takes very long time to get to a decision on the right tattoo design;
- Artists portfolio are not in a chronological order.

#### ACTIVITIES

- Loves to read a good novel;
- Does gardening in her spare time;
- Is a community supporter of sustainable living and promotes the creation of green areas in urban spaces;
- Hosts local artists exhibitions in her living room;
- Extremely busy working and social schedules

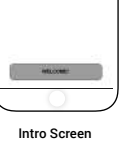
#### SOCIAL MEDIA USED

- Instagram

#### DEVICES USED

- Smartphone
- Desktop
- Tablet
- Laptop
- Apple Watch

### ROSARIO P. the experienced



- 30 years old,
- Viseso, Portugal
- Freelance Designer and Illustrator
- In a relationship
- Several tattoos

"Tattoo for me are a memory, they are also in I never forget who I am"

#### GOALS/NEEDS

- To be assured that the right tattoo fits in the right part of her body;
- Inspirational, easy and searchable library to find the right design;
- Personalized attention and to feel supported throughout the process by the right tattoo artist;
- To be aided by an artist that she can trust, reviews and feedbacks on the artists are crucial.

#### MOTIVATIONS

- It makes Rosario happy when she sees the final result;
- Tattoos are meaningful and unique.

#### FRUSTATIONS

- Lack of detailed information on the tattoo artist, such as updated booking calendar, ratings, links used, social media accounts, reviews, etc.

#### ACTIVITIES

- Travels a lot abroad with her boyfriend;
- Frequently visits art galleries and sculptural gardens;
- Frequently visits her sister as a representation of herself as individual and as a human being.

#### SOCIAL MEDIA USED

- Facebook
- Instagram

#### DEVICES USED

- Smartphone
- Desktop
- Tablet
- Laptop

## JOURNEY MAPS

Once I had a better understanding of my personas, I created their individual journey maps.

The intention was to emphasise with their particular experience through hypothetical scenarios.

### Martina B.



- 29 years old,
- Rigaite, United Kingdom
- Full Time Exhibition Designer
- Single
- No Tattoos

Martina wants to find the right tattoo design that represents her current persona in life and something that she can trust, reviews and feedbacks on the artists are crucial.

- To research the right tattoo design using a web app;
- To find a tattoo artist that she can work with and a good connection;
- To book an appointment with the tattoo artist.

#### Find a Tattoo Design

#### Select Tattoo Artist

#### Contact the Tattoo Artist

### THOUGHTS

- Logical;
- Search tattoo designs;
- Save the suitable designs in a folder;
- "I want to find a meaningful tattoo"

### EMOTIONS

- Hopeful

### EXPERIENCES

- "I want a meaningful tattoo that represents what I'm going through"

- "I hope to find someone that I can connect with and understand me"

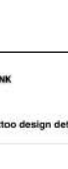
- "Seems the right person, I hope we can work well together"

- "Tattoo designs will categorised including create a search for tattoo designs;
- Create a folder where all the research or final designs are stored on the user profile.

- Add to every tattoo artist portfolio: images of tattoos artworks, details about the artist, location, ratings, reviews, links used, social media accounts and health and safety protocols;
- Add location;
- Create a folder to store the potential tattoo artist.

- Manage the artist;
- Book an appointment in the calendar.

### ROSARIO P.



- 30 years old,
- Viseso, Portugal
- Freelance Designer and Illustrator
- In a relationship
- Several tattoos

Rosario is thinking of finding another tattoo that can represent her current persona in life and something that she can trust, reviews and feedbacks on the artists are crucial.

- To research the right tattoo design using a web app;
- To find a tattoo artist that she can work with and a good connection;
- To book an appointment with the tattoo artist.

#### Find a Tattoo Design

#### Select Tattoo Artist

#### Contact the Tattoo Artist

### THOUGHTS

- Logical;
- Search tattoo designs;
- Save the suitable designs in a folder;
- "I want a meaningful tattoo that represents what I'm going through"

### EMOTIONS

- Hopeful

### EXPERIENCES

- "I want a meaningful tattoo that represents what I'm going through"

- "I hope to find someone that I can connect with and understand me"

- "Seems the right person, I want to meet her and ask him if the design can work in the part of the body that I want"

- "Tattoo designs will categorised including create a search for tattoo designs;
- Create a folder where all the research or final designs are stored on the user profile.

- Add to every tattoo artist portfolio: images of tattoos artworks, details about the artist, location, ratings, reviews, links used, social media accounts and health and safety protocols;
- Add location;
- Create a folder to store the potential tattoo artist.

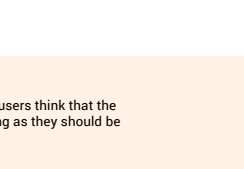
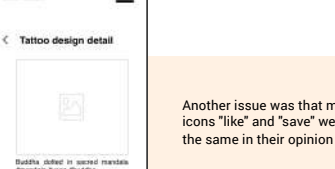
- Manage the artist;
- Book an appointment in the calendar.

## USER FLOWS - SITEMAP

To make sure I was staying user-focused, I create the personas' user flows, through their actions.

Additionally I conducted an open card sorting to better design the information architecture of Ink Tank web app. For this, I used OptimalSort to create a digital card sorting test to 5 participants that I then analysed and outlined the specific actions that users take to navigate and meet their goals.

Below are the user flows for searching a tattoo design and add to favorites, searching for an artist and contact the artist.



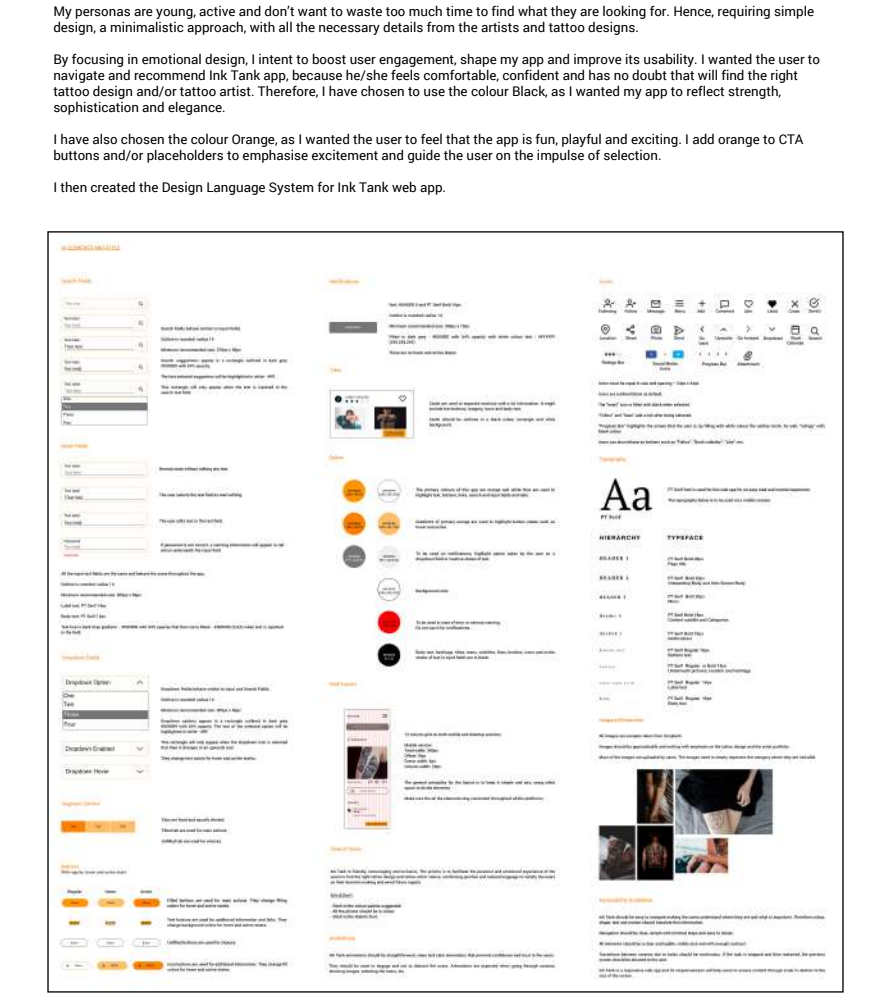
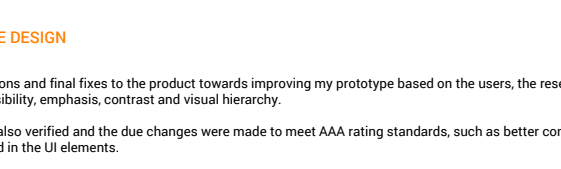
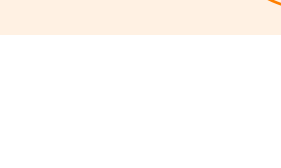
## IDEATE

I created wireframes, ranging from sketches to high-fidelity, throughout the design process.

Iterations were made as necessary based on the user goals from the flows.

I decided to choose a simple and clear design and a white colour background, so it would highlight the tattoo design images.

The images below are progressive examples of my iterative process.



## USABILITY TESTING

I put together a interactive prototype using InVision to start testing the usefulness of the app and to determine the level of usability. Additionally, I also intended to identify areas of improvement, pain points and how easily the user is able to navigate the app.

Four participants were recruited via email and social media on my professional and social network. The usability test was conducted as moderated in-person and remote tests. The test included a short briefing, task performance with Ink Tank app in a mobile and follow up with any questions or comments.

To interpret the information from the usability testing, I created an Affinity Map. The isolation of the information helped me to determine how it relates to each other and another, discovering unseen patterns and hierarchies.

Afterwards, the information was processed using a Rainbow Spreadsheet (below) that helped me to classify important observations and errors by presenting organised visual results (i.e. it creates visual patterns).

Observed Usability Issue	Severity	Frequency	Impact	Recommendation
1. Inconsistent button labels across different screens (e.g., 'CONTACT' vs 'CONTACT 1')	High	5	Confusion	Standardize button labels across all screens.
2. Lack of clear feedback when a user interacts with a button (e.g., no visual change or confirmation message).	Medium	3	Uncertainty	Implement visual feedback (e.g., button color change, loading spinner) and confirmation messages.
3. Overlapping text and elements, making it difficult to read and interact (e.g., text partially obscured by a button or image).	High	4	Usability Barrier	Improve layout and spacing to ensure clear separation of elements.
4. Confusing navigation structure and unclear flow between screens.	Medium	3	Navigation Issues	Simplify the navigation structure and use clear visual cues to guide the user.
5. Inconsistent font sizes and weights, affecting readability.	Low	2	Aesthetic Issues	Establish a consistent typographic system.
6. Lack of visual hierarchy, making it difficult to identify important information.	Medium	3	Information Overload	Use visual cues (e.g., bolding, color, size) to emphasize key information.
7. Limited use of white space, making the interface feel cluttered.	Medium	3	Aesthetic Issues	Increase white space to improve clarity and visual appeal.
8. Inconsistent iconography and symbols used throughout the app.	Low	2	Aesthetic Issues	Develop a consistent icon set and ensure they are easily recognizable.
9. Lack of clear error messages and handling for failed actions.	Medium	2	User Frustration	Implement clear and helpful error messages and recovery options.
10. Limited accessibility features (e.g., lack of alt text for images, poor contrast).	Medium	3	Accessibility Barrier	Implement accessibility best practices to ensure the app is usable by all.

A severity errors rating scale from Jakob Nielsen was also applied aiming to categorise and rank the severity of errors.

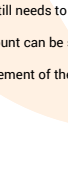
Overall, all the participants agreed that the app was easy to use giving scores between 5-9 for each task (according to Single Ease Question - satisfactory measurement scale).

Issue severity scale: High, Medium and Low.

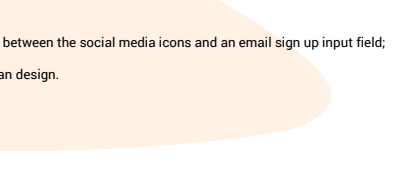
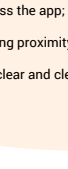
A round of preference test was also carried out on the introductory screen where I highlighted the start of onboarding.

10 participants took part in the testing, 7 participants preferred "Intro screen 2" and 3 participants "Intro Screen 1" instead.

### Intro Screen



### Intro Screen 2



## SPECIFIC PROBLEMS

Usability Testing clearly marked out some areas which needed to be looked at:

- The participants feedback emphasised issues with the visual design, the mobile interactive elements and the completion of the tasks;
- The optimisation of these elements aims to meet my persona needs while increasing a usability of the app and user engagement;
- Majority of the participants preferred a more optional, clearer and more direct way of entering in the app.



One of the issues that came up during the tests was that, when a user was asked to contact the artist, they missed or couldn't find the option to select the contact button (1).

The reason that this might happen is because the button is on the bottom of the page and some users need to scroll the screen down.



This was solved by replacing contact button for the options follow book appointment and message as icons and make them more visible by relocating them to the top of the artist profile page (2).



Another issue was that most of the users think that the icons "like" and "save" were confusing as they should be the same in their opinion (3).

This has been solved by replacing the icon "save" to a button "Save as Favorite" (4), so users can save their tattoo design.



## POLISHING THE DESIGN

I then made iterations and final fixes to the product towards improving my prototype based on the users, the research I conducted, accessibility, emphasis, contrast and visual hierarchy.

Accessibility was also verified and the due changes were made to meet AAA rating standards, such as better contrast between image and text and in the UI elements.

My personas are young, active and don't want to waste too much time to find what they are looking for. Hence, requiring simple design, a minimalist approach, with all the necessary details from the artists and tattoo designs.

By focusing in emotional design, I intent to boost user engagement, shape my app and improve its usability. I wanted the user to navigate and recommend Ink Tank app, because he/she feels comfortable confident and has no doubt that will find the right tattoo design and/or tattoo artist. Therefore, I have chosen to use the colour Black, as I wanted my app to reflect strength, sophistication and elegance.

I have also chosen the colour Orange, as I wanted the user to feel that the app is fun, playful and exciting. I add orange to CTA buttons and/or placeholders to emphasise excitement and guide the user on the impulse of selection.

I then created the Design Language System for Ink Tank web app.



## FINAL THOUGHTS

- I'm more knowledgeable of the tattoo culture and lifestyle, the use of tattoo apps and that tattoos are an emotional experience not just a ink drawing;

- It is important to not get lost into details too early;

- I would take in consideration much earlier accessibility guidelines into this design project;

- I gained valuable experience going through the usability testing;

- Iteration through continuous testing and peer feedback are the ways forward to improve design over time.

## FUTURE IMPROVEMENTS

- Onboarding can be improved in regards to accessibility and simple explanation of how the app works;

- As well the flow to follow a tattoo artist and where this information is located;

- Accessibility still needs to be improved across the app;

- Create an account can be simplified by creating proximity between the social media icons and an email sign up input field;

- Overall improvement of the UI elements to a clear and clean design.