Design a website for finding rental homes
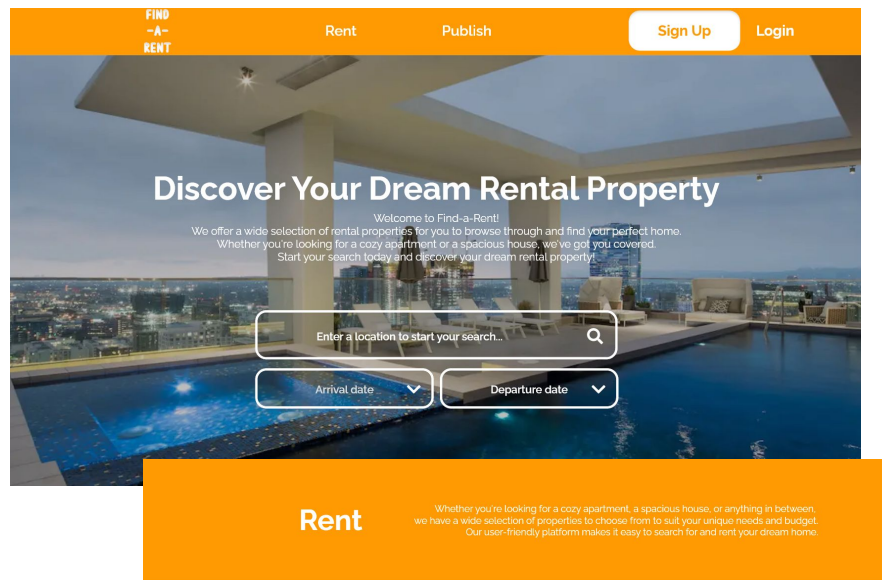
Luca Lago

Project overview

The product:

Find-a-Rent is a website for finding rental properties online. It allows users to both search and publish properties. Find-a-Rent goal is to make the purpose of finding rental homes online modern, intuitive and easy for all users.

Project duration:

March 2023 - April 2023

Google

Project overview

The problem:

The renting a home online process feels awkward and outdated in most of the websites.

The goal:

Design a Find-a-Rent website to be user friendly by providing easy user flow, a simplified process with clear steps all along the journey.

Google

Project overview

My role:

UX Designer leading the Find-a-Rent website design

Responsibilities:

Conducting interviews, paper and digital wireframing, low and high-fidelity prototyping, conducting usability studies, accounting on accessibility, iterating on designs and responsive design.

Google

Understanding the user

- User research
- Personas
- Problem statements
- User journey maps

Google

User research: summary

I conducted user interviews, which I then turned into empathy maps to better understand the target user and their needs. I discovered that users from different ages and contexts use rental homes websites, but most of those sites are overwhelming and confusing to navigate, which can cause a pain point for these users. Also, the publish feature also is misunderstood, causing that most of users who work of it get a frustrating experience when trying to publish their properties online.

Google

User research: pain points

1 Navigation

Rental homes website designs are often busy, which results in confusing navigation.

2 Process

The rental process could be a bit awkward and outdated, causing users to don't feel so engaged with it.
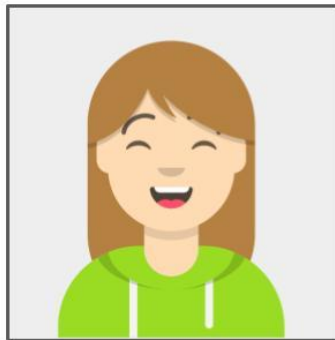
3 Publish feature

The publish a property process is not very detailed and this may cause a problem for users who work of it, resulting in leaving the website without achieving their goal or losing potential clients.

Google

Persona: **Kayla**

Problem statement:

Kayla is a nomad college student who needs to have the option of checking user reviews before renting a home online because that way she can save a lot of time and money, while also having a more modern way of completing the rent-a-home online process.

"The renting a home online process feels awkward and outdated"

Goals
- To have wide options for renting homes in a same site
- To have the option to check-in in the site with different payment options
- To have the option of reading and leaving reviews of the homes

Frustrations
- "I would love to have variety while looking for a rent"
- "Why most pages doesn't offer customer reviews for rental homes?"
- "It should be clearly especificated which homes are pet-friendly"

Kayla

Age: 22
Education: College Student
Hometown: Orlando, FL
Family: Her little dog
Occupation: Student

Kayla is a young woman who studies and lives alone with her dog. She enjoys having the freedom of moving around different places and discovering different cities to live, so she moves between different rental homes easily. However she found very frustrating the way the process of renting a home online is set-up nowadays.

Google

User journey map

I created a user journey map of Kayla's experience using the site to help identify possible pain points and improvement opportunities.
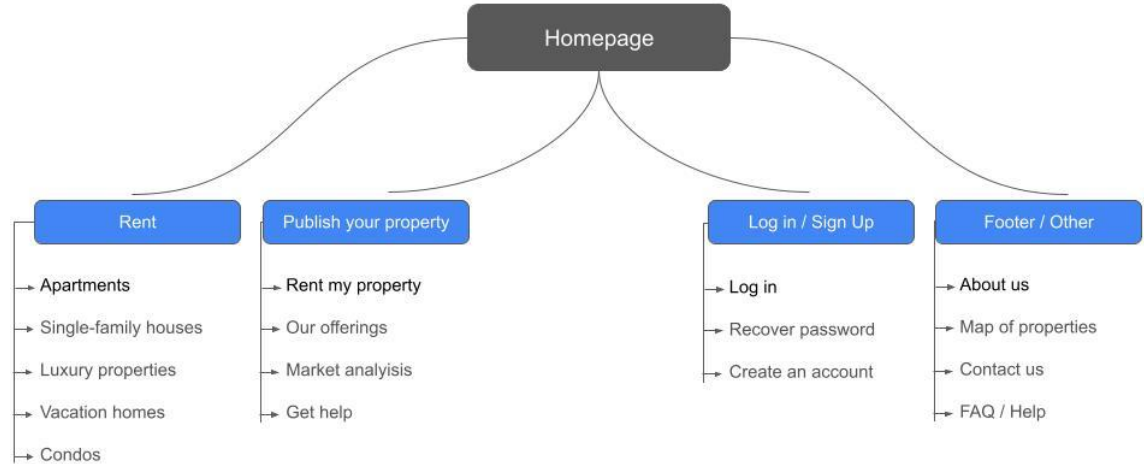
Persona: Kayla

Goal: check reviews of a home to rent before scheduling a visit appointment

ACTION	Choose a website of rental homes	Search for properties in the desired location	Choose a property	Check user reviews for that property	Schedule a visit appointment
TASK LIST	Tasks A. Search for real estate websites B. Choose a website that looks noticeable and has available properties in the desired location	Tasks A. Search an specific location where want to rent a property	Tasks A. Navigate through the different results of properties in that location B. Choose a property that fulfill all your requirements	Tasks A. Check the reviews users had left for that property B. Analyze if it's convenient to proceed with the rent of that property based on the reviews	Tasks A. Provide contact info to get called by the owner B. Select a day for the appointment
FEELING ADJECTIVE	Excited to rent a home online	Intrigued about the properties that could be in that location	Amazed to see so many different results A bit overwhelmed by the variety of properties available	Happy to have the option of checking user reviews Satisfied with the comments about the property she's chosen	Excited about her property election
IMPROVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES	Create an online website for rental homes with an appealing look	Simplify the process for location searching	Make the results section look clear and the properties look striking	Highlight different user reviews, point out good and bad attributes of the property based on those reviews	Offer different options to get in touch with the owner of the property. Simplify the process of scheduling a visit appointment

Google

Starting the design

- Sitemap
- Paper wireframes
- Digital wireframes
- Low-fidelity prototype
- Usability studies

Google

Sitemap

A primary point for users was the complexity of the process of rental homes, so I tried to start simplifying it starting from the navigation.

Homepage

Rent
→ Apartments
→ Single-family houses
→ Luxury properties
→ Vacation homes
→ Condos

Publish your property
→ Rent my property
→ Our offerings
→ Market analyisis
→ Get help

Log in / Sign Up
→ Log in
→ Recover password
→ Create an account

Footer / Other
→ About us
→ Map of properties
→ Contact us
→ FAQ / Help

Paper wireframes

Next, I sketched out paper wireframes for each screen in my app, keeping the user pain points about navigation, browsing, and checkout flow in mind.
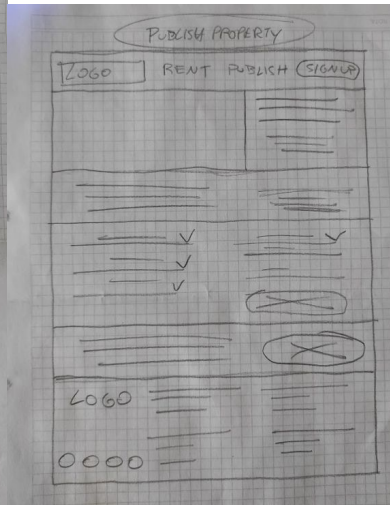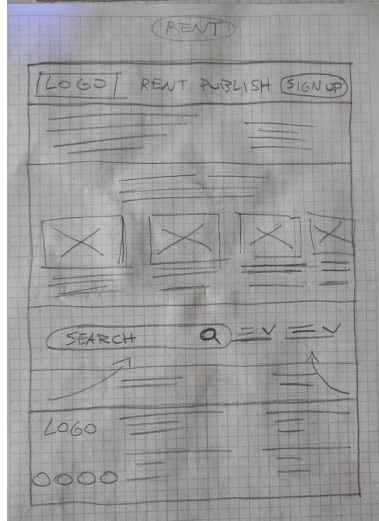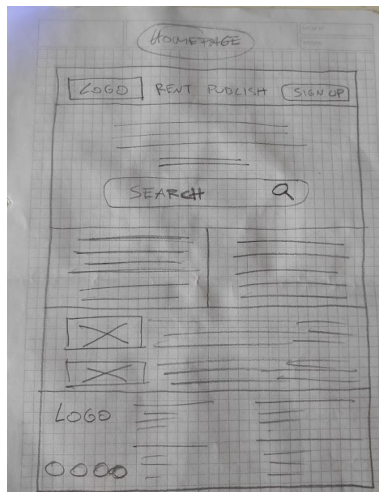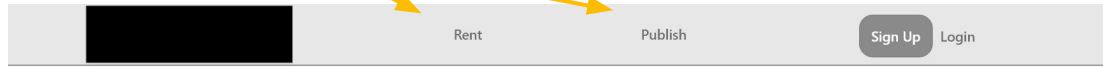
Paper wireframe screen size variation(s)

Because Find-a-Rent'
customers access the site
on a variety of different
devices, I started to work on
designs for additional
screen sizes to make sure
the site would be fully
responsive.

Google
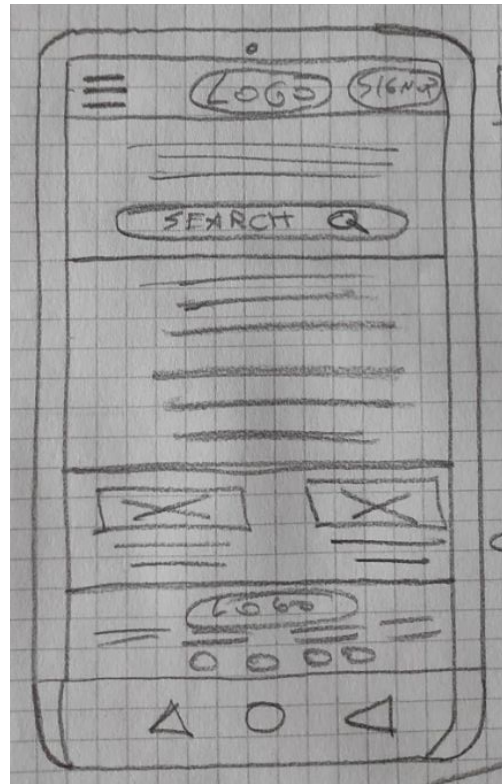
Digital wireframes

As the initial design phase continued, I made sure to base screen designs on feedback and findings from the user research. Prioritizing useful button locations and visual element placement on the home page was a key part of my strategy.

Easy access to each feature page of the website

Rent   Publish   Sign Up   Login

WELCOME TITLE
Lorem Ipsum

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BRIEF DESCRIPTION

SEARCH BOX

Homepage is optimized for easy search of available rental properties

Google

# Digital wireframe screen size variation(s)

Always prioritizing the responsiveness and access to the website from different devices, the key here was to adapt all the resources placed on the homepage to each different screen size.

WELCOME TITLE

Lorem Ipsum

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

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SEARCH BOX 🔍

Google

Low-fidelity prototype

To create a low-fidelity prototype, I connected all of the screens involved in the primary user flow of looking for a rental property.
At this point, I received feedback on my designs from members of my team about things like placement of buttons and page organizations. I made sure to listen to their feedback, and I implemented several suggestions in places that addressed user pain points.

Google
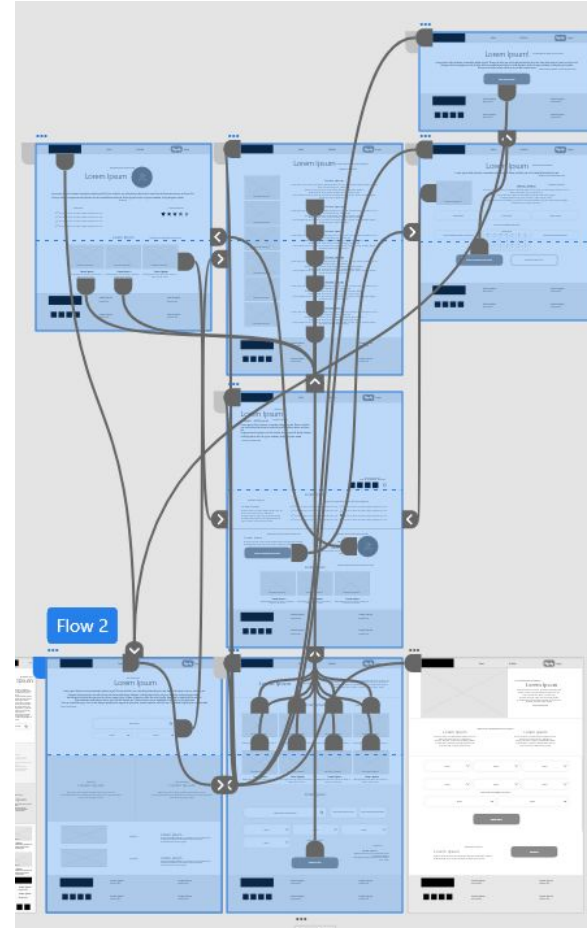
Usability study: parameters

Study type:

Unmoderated usability study

Location:

Argentina, remote

Participants:

4 participants

Length:

20-30 minutes

Google

Usability study: findings

These were the main findings uncovered by the usability study

1

Booking an appointment

For most of the users, the structure of the inputs isn't working well neither providing simpleness to them.

2

Homepage search bar

The search bar from the opening on the homepage is not that appealing for everyone.

3

Property search results

Not everyone agreed on the way we are showing the property search results.

Google

Refining the design

- Mockups
- High-fidelity prototype
- Accessibility

Google

Mockups

Based on the insights from the usability study, I made changes to improve the site's rent flow. One of the changes I made was adding more options on the search box on the homepage opening. This allows users to customize a bit more their searches from this screen.

Before usability study
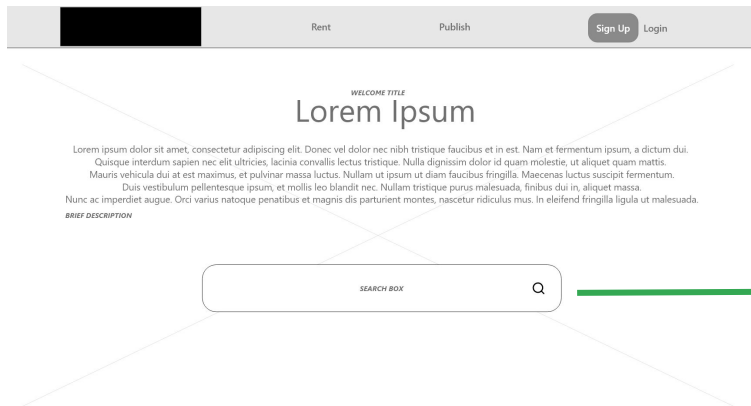
After usability study
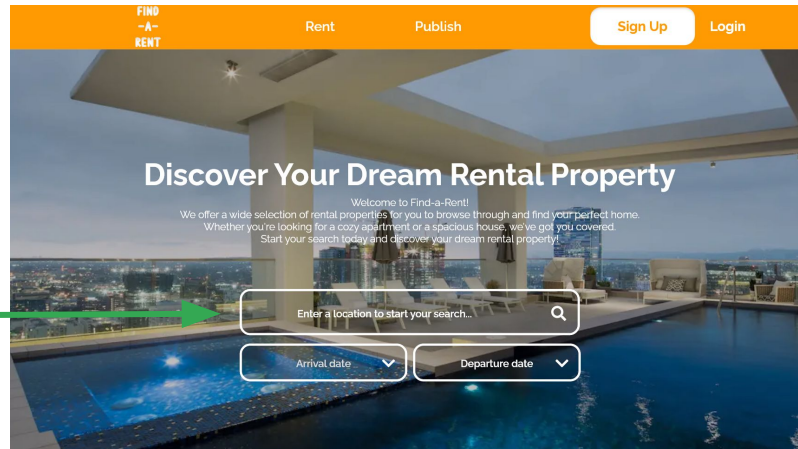
Mockups

To make the rent flow even easier for users, I added more custom inputs to personalize the book an appointment section.

Before usability study

After usability study

Book an Appointment

Easily schedule a visit to your dream rental property.

Selected Property

Address ABC123

A stunning and spacious apartment located in the heart of the city is the perfect choice for those seeking luxury living at its finest.
The apartment boasts breathtaking views of the surrounding cityscape, with floor-to-ceiling windows that let in plenty of natural light and create an airy, open feel.

Name

Email

Phone

Preferred form of contact

Average budget

Google

Mockups: Original screen size
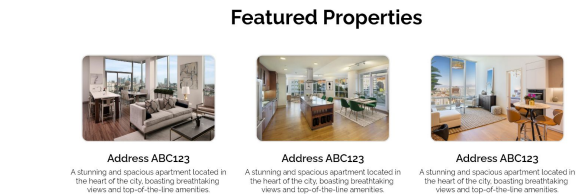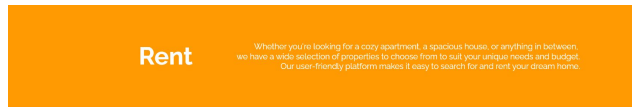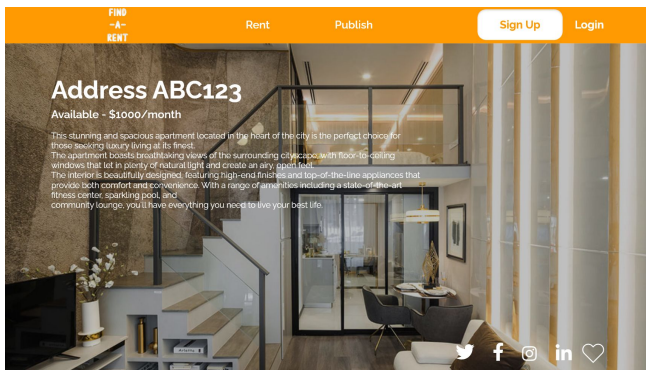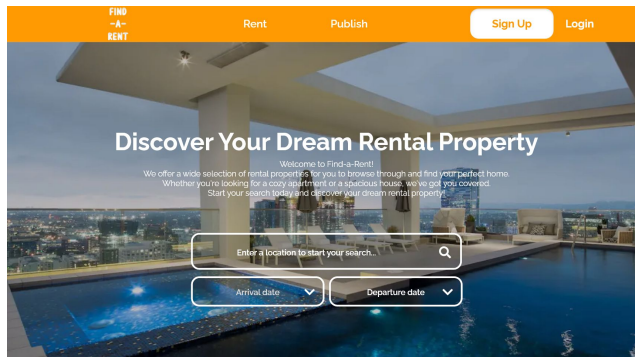
Mockups: Screen size variations

I included considerations for additional screen sizes in my mockups based on my earlier wireframes. Because users search properties from a variety of devices, I felt it was important to optimize the browsing experience for a range of device sizes, such as mobile and tablet so users have the smoothest experience possible.
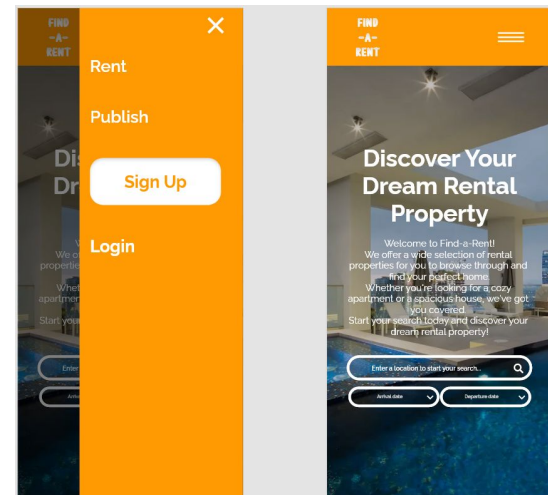
High-fidelity prototype

My hi-fi prototype followed the same user flow as the lo-fi prototype, and included the design changes made after the usability study, as well as several changes suggested by members of my team.

Link to [Find-a-Rent hi-fi prototype](#).

Google
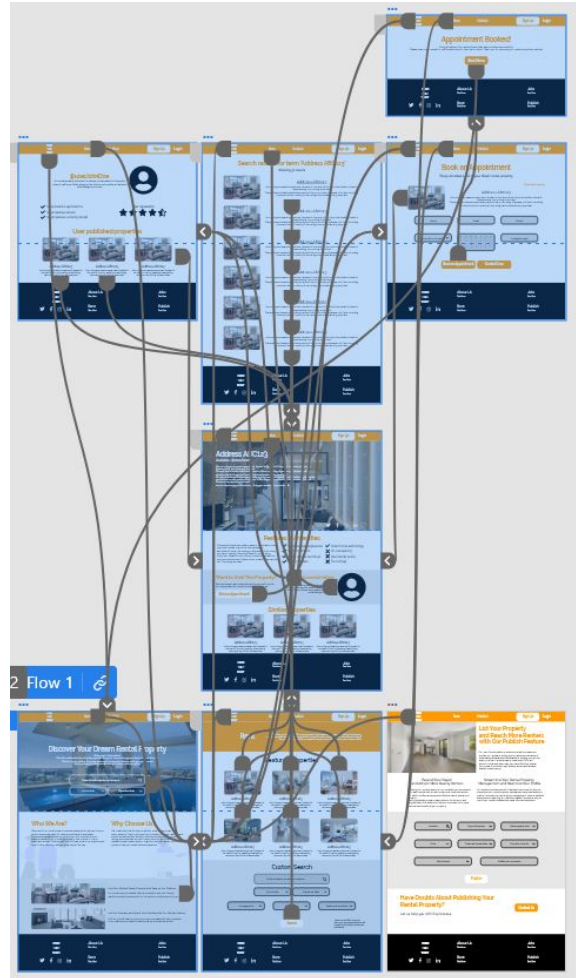
Accessibility considerations

1

I used headings with different sized text for clear visual hierarchy.

2

I used landmarks to help users navigate the site, including users who rely on assistive technologies.

3

I designed the site with alt text available on each page for smooth screen reader access.

Google

Going forward

- Takeaways
- Next steps

Google

Takeaways

Impact:

Our target users shared that the design was intuitive to navigate through, more engaging with the images, and demonstrated a clear visual hierarchy.

What I learned:

With the design of this project I've learned the how to create designs for a website using Adobe XD and all the features it has. The most important takeaway for me is to always focus on the real needs of the user when coming up with design ideas and solutions.

Next steps

1

Conduct follow-up usability testing on the new website.

2

Identify any additional areas of need and ideate on new features.

Google

Let's connect!

Thank you for taking the time of reviewing my work! Here is my information in case you would like to get in touch with me :)

Email: ll.lucalago@gmail.com

Google