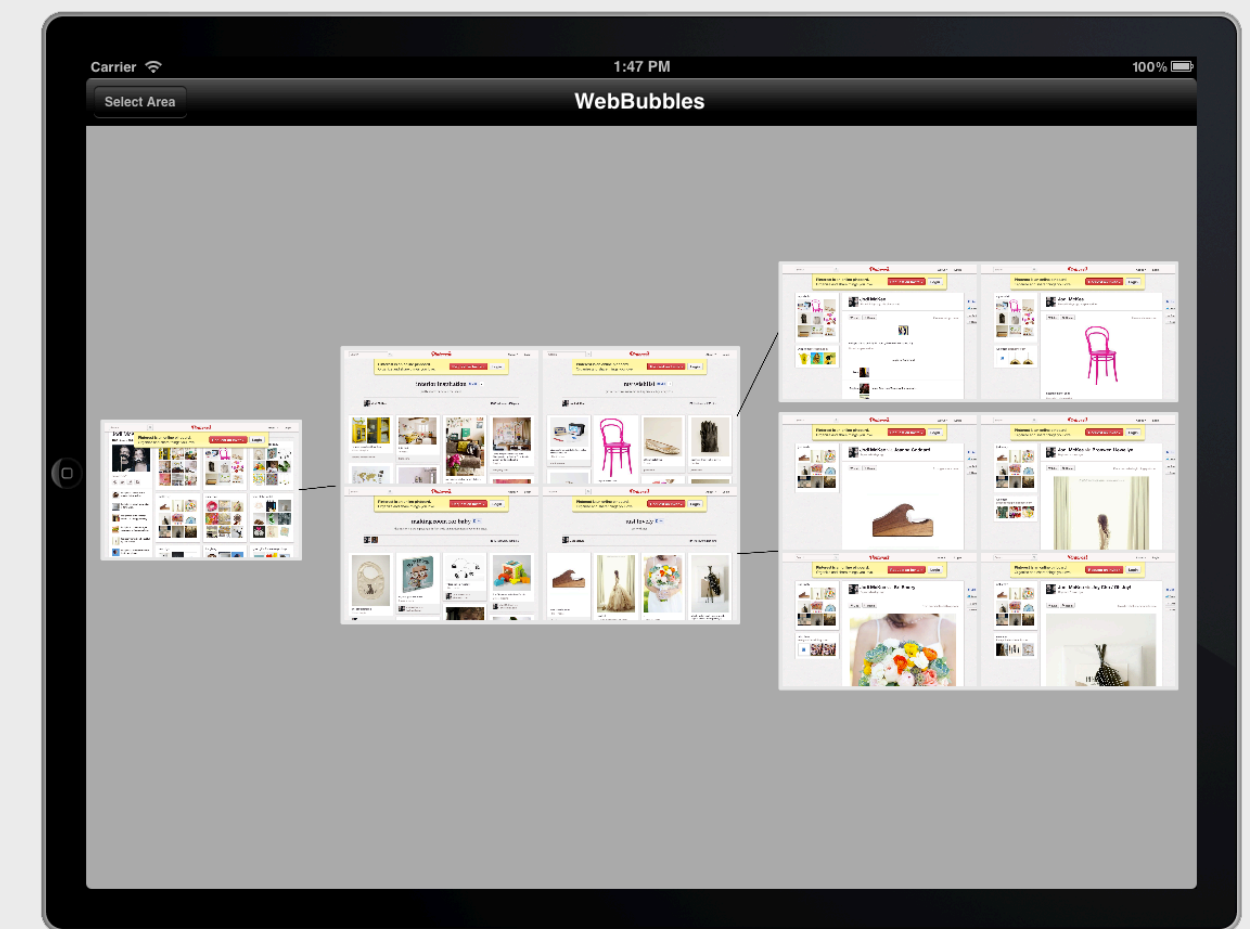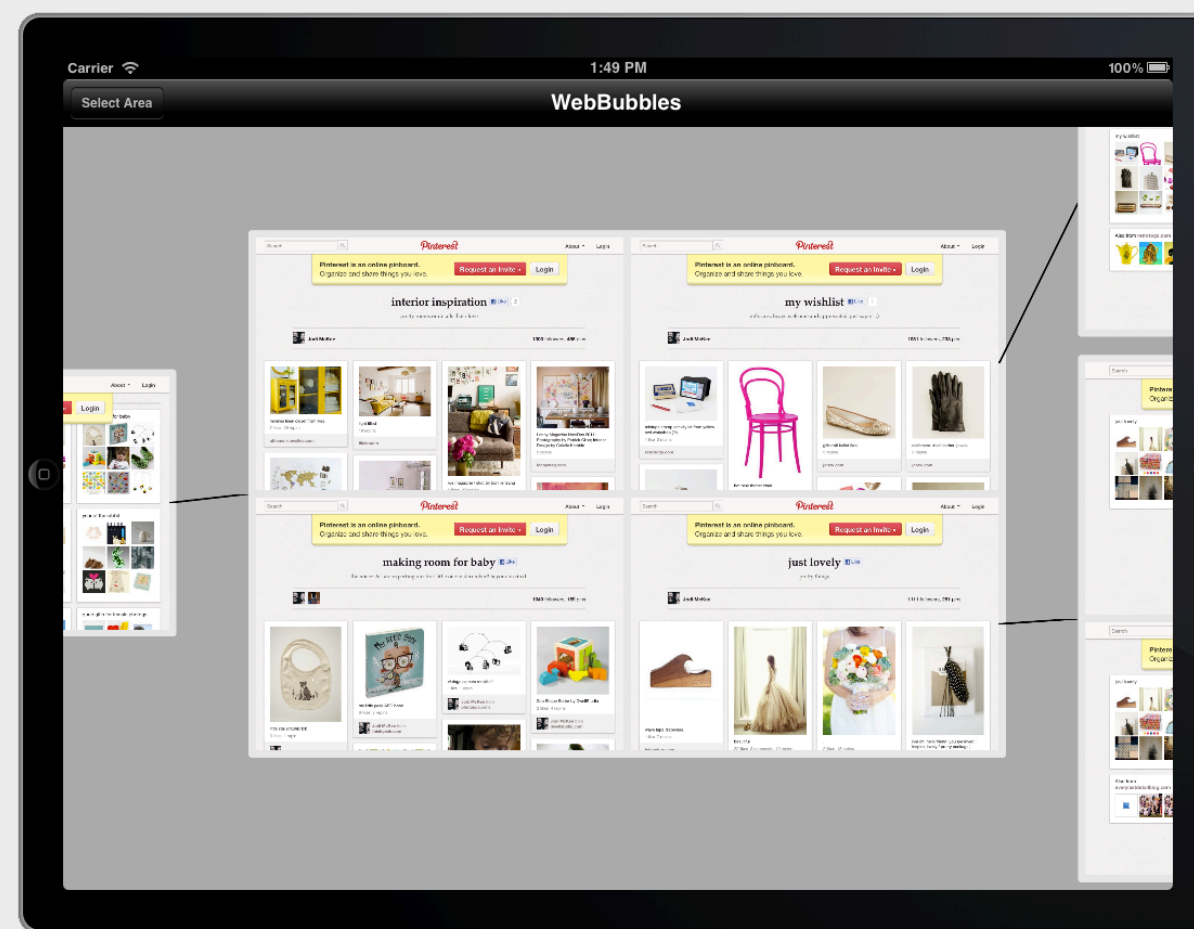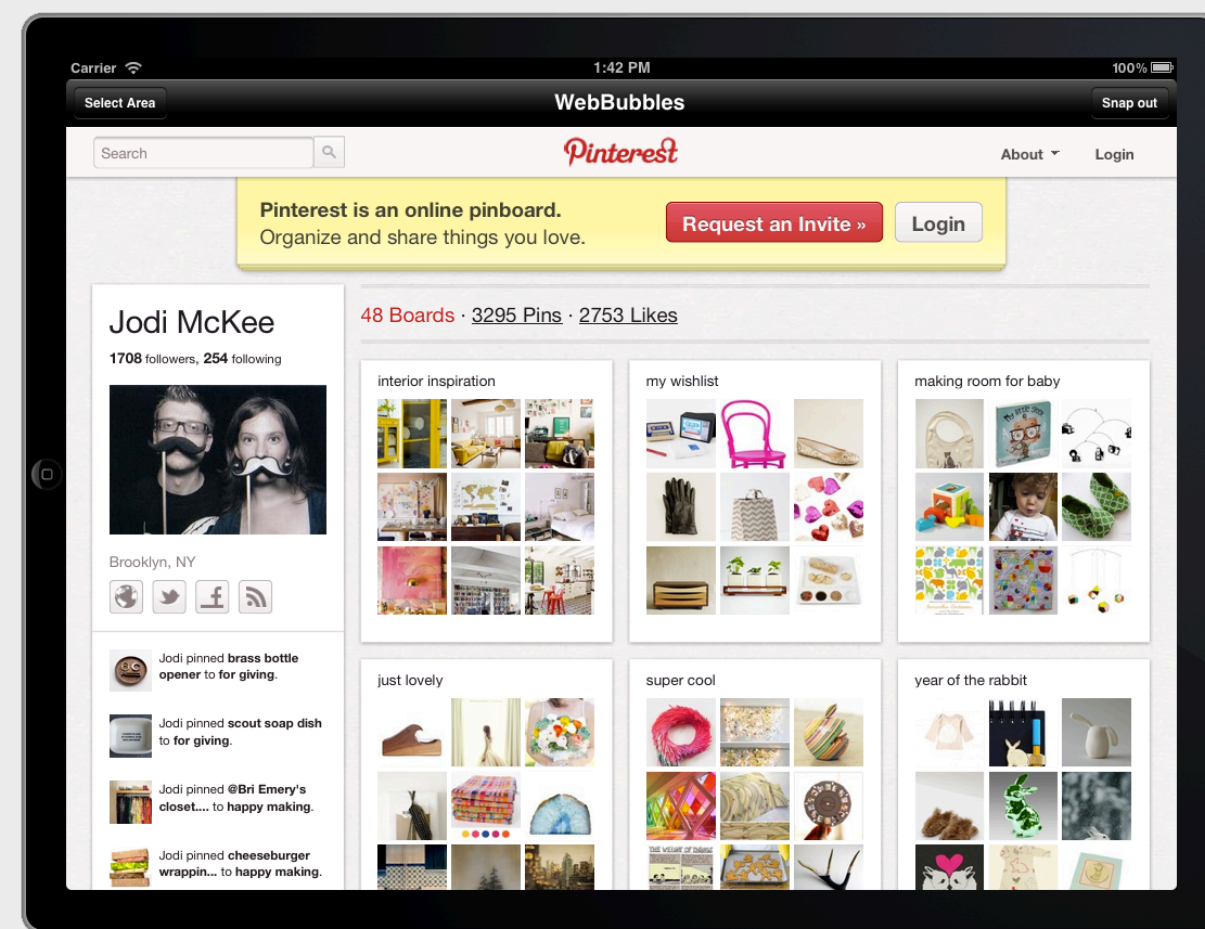# WebBubbles

A multi-touch browsing experience

Problem

Everyday we are faced with multiple links we'd like to follow on the same webpage. Opening links in new tabs involves a very cumbersome process in iOS; for each link users have to do a long-touch, select the new-tab option and then switch to the new tab. There is no good way to glance through linked pages, or find the original collection of out-links a tab belonged to.

Motivation

Today, the hub-spoke style is a very common browsing pattern. Hub-spoke browsing is assisted on PCs with one-click opening of out-links in new tabs, and out-link previews on websites like Google Search. Upon recent popularization of touch screen devices, the browser UI has been carried directly to tablet devices; however these features aren't supported and the touch features are not yet utilized.

Approach

WebBubbles is a browser with a touch-based zooming user interface for the iPad. It allows multiple link selection using taps or drawing selection boxes, and visualizes selected out-links in a hierarchy of clusters based on their in-linking pages. Users can pan through pages or snap into a page by to interact with it. WebBubbles dynamically converts between images and interactive renderings of webpages to conserve memory.

Future Work

Before WebBubbles is ready to launch on the App Store, there are some additional features it could benefit from. We would like to integrate different levels of visual summaries of webpages at different zoom levels. We would also like to get more user testing to see what the common usage flows are and how we can optimize the interface to better support them.

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