

Apartment Wizard Website

L. Guseynova

Project overview



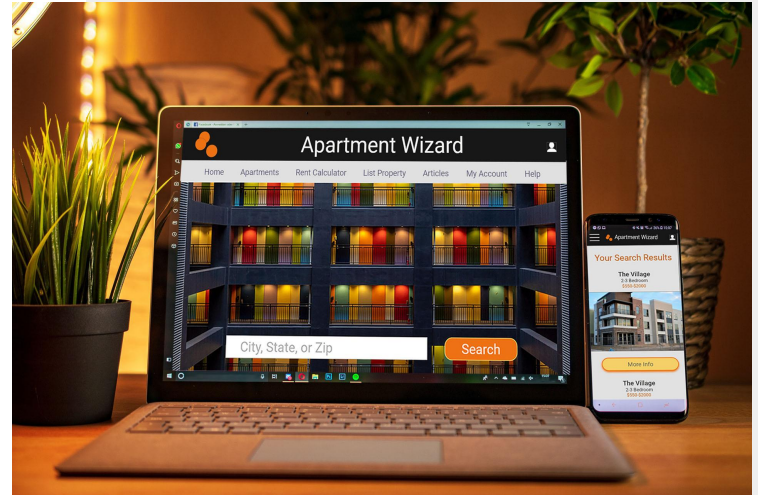
The product:

Apartment Wizard is an apartment for rent search website. Typical users are 19-60 years old working adults. The site's goal is to make apartment search easy and help prepare users for the renting experience.



Project duration:

May-June 2023



Project overview



The problem:

Some apartment search websites have cluttered, overwhelming designs and don't offer saved searches option.



The goal:

Design Apartment Wizard site to be clean, user friendly, and inviting.

Project overview



My role:

Lead UX designer



Responsibilities:

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

Understanding the user

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

User research: summary



After user interviews, I created empathy maps to better understand the users' needs. I found that user experience heavily depends on the user's situation: thinking about moving and looking around vs need to move, often in the near future.

For the latter especially, a cluttered site is adding to the stress of having to find a new place to live rather quickly.

User research: pain points

1

Navigation

Users can be confused by many starting points for their search.

2

Interaction

Users need to have a saved searches as well as saved apartments on their profile.

3

Experience

Users feel that rent websites lack personal engagement, such as helpful articles.

Persona: Randy

Problem statement:

Randy is an engineer who needs to find an apartment in a new area because she is starting a new job.



Randy

Age: 26

Education: Bachelor's Degree in Engineering

Hometown: Livonia, MI

Family: Single

Occupation: Engineer

"Starting a new job in a new city, I want to find a new place to live quickly and with confidence."

Goals

- To find a perfect place to rent
- To make sure I know all of my options

Frustrations

- Finding places online I might consider, and forgetting what they were
- Feeling anxious about all the unexpected details that come with moving

Chris is an engineer who was just got a new job. She welcomes new experiences but realizes that even exciting change brings stress. She has only moved twice before and remembers that no matter how well she planned the move, there were always unexpected delays and mishaps. She feels that she will welcome any helpful information about a move.

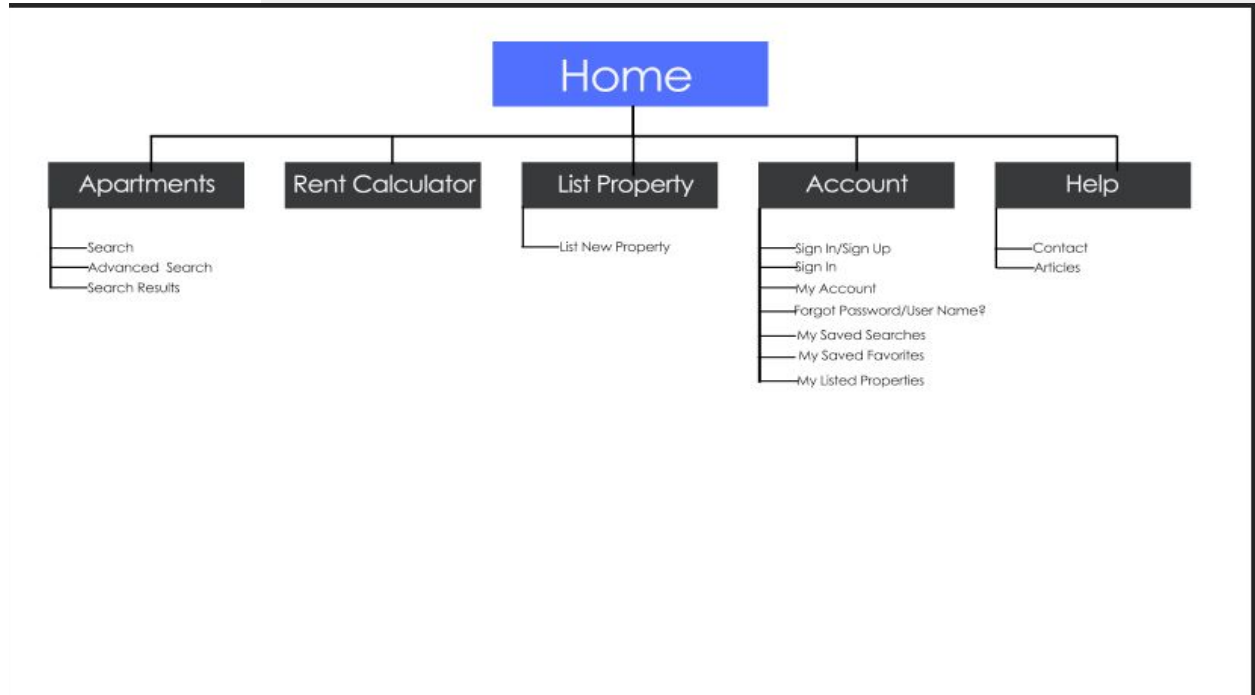
User journey map

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

Persona: Randy					
Goal: Find a new apartment					
ACTION	Choose an apartment search website	Start search	Save possible matches and save search	Create account	View details of the place that matched most preferences
TASK LIST	Tasks A. Search for apartment rent websites B. Pick the site that has an inviting and uncluttered interface	Tasks A. Type in preferences B. View search results	Tasks A. Click "like" symbol for places she liked B. Look for a "save search" button	Tasks A. Create a user account to save matches and "likes"	Tasks A. Go to user account B. Click on "likes" C. View details of the chosen apartment
EMOTIONS	User emotions Excited Anxious	User emotions Hopeful	User emotions Excited about found matches Frustrated searching for "save search" button	User emotions Calm and feeling a sense of accomplishment	User emotions Slightly nervous Hopeful
IMPROVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES	Area to improve - Provide clear and concise home page - Add links to helpful articles	Area to improve - Provide important search criteria with an option to add more	Area to improve - Provide a clearly visible "save search" button	Area to improve - Provide an easy sign up process	Area to improve - Provide a link to user reviews

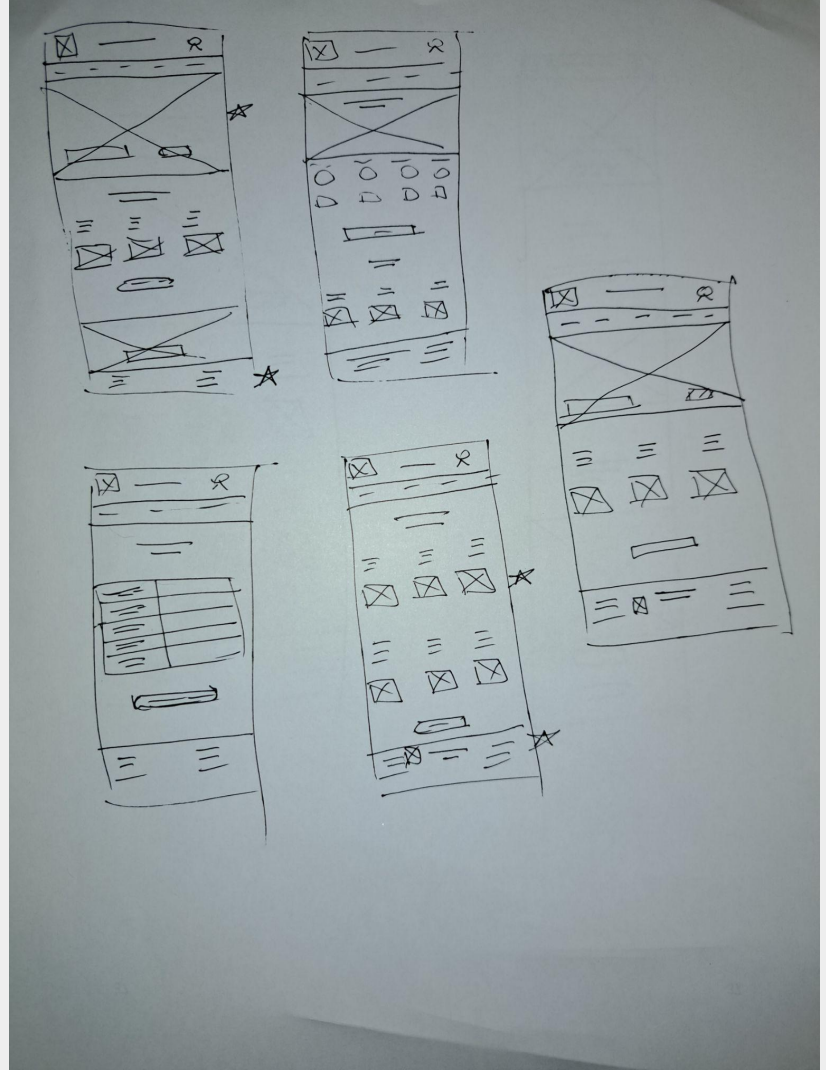
Sitemap

The confusing site navigation was one of the pain points mentioned by users, as well as the absence or difficulty finding the “my searches” page. I designed the site map accordingly.



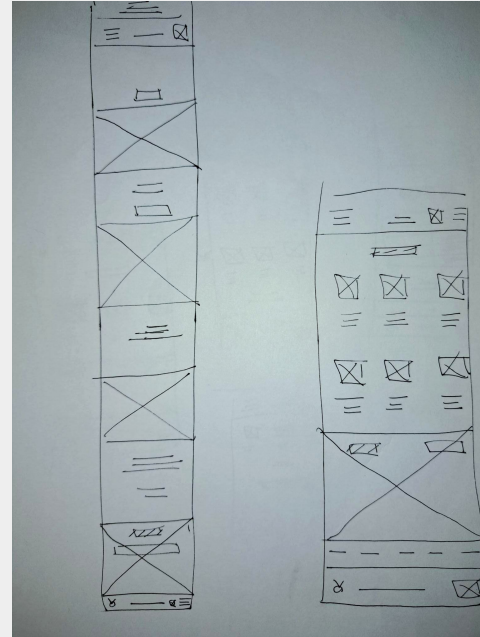
Paper wireframes

The paper wireframes were made with the user pain points about navigation in mind.



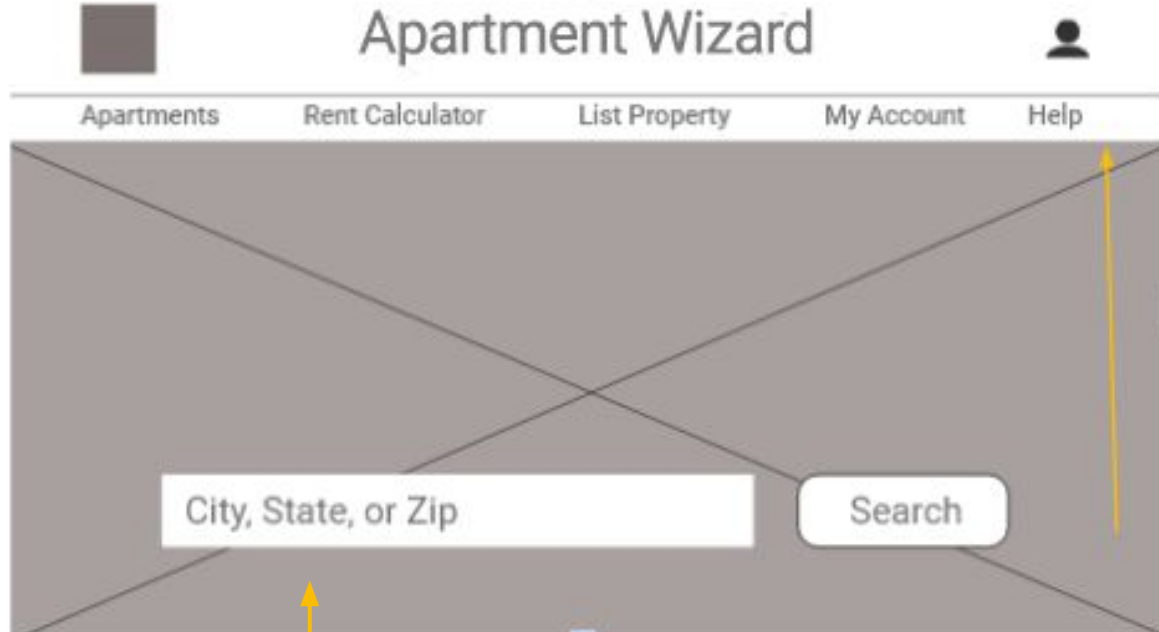
Paper wireframe screen size variation(s)

For the truly responsive site, I added the phone screen wireframe.



Digital wireframes

Placing the search tab on the home page on top of the main image will invite the user to start their search without any confusion.

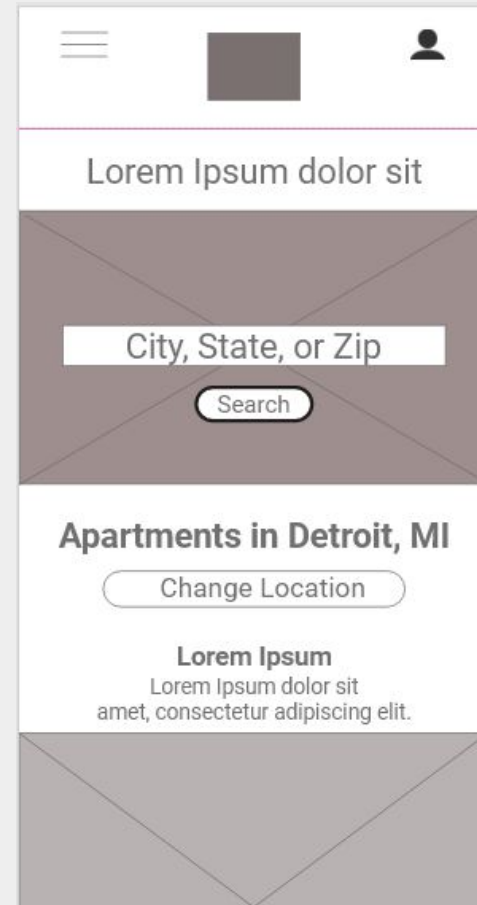


The user can start their search the moment they arrive at the website

Communication with help center, as well as helpful articles are easily accessible from navigation

Digital wireframe screen size variation(s)

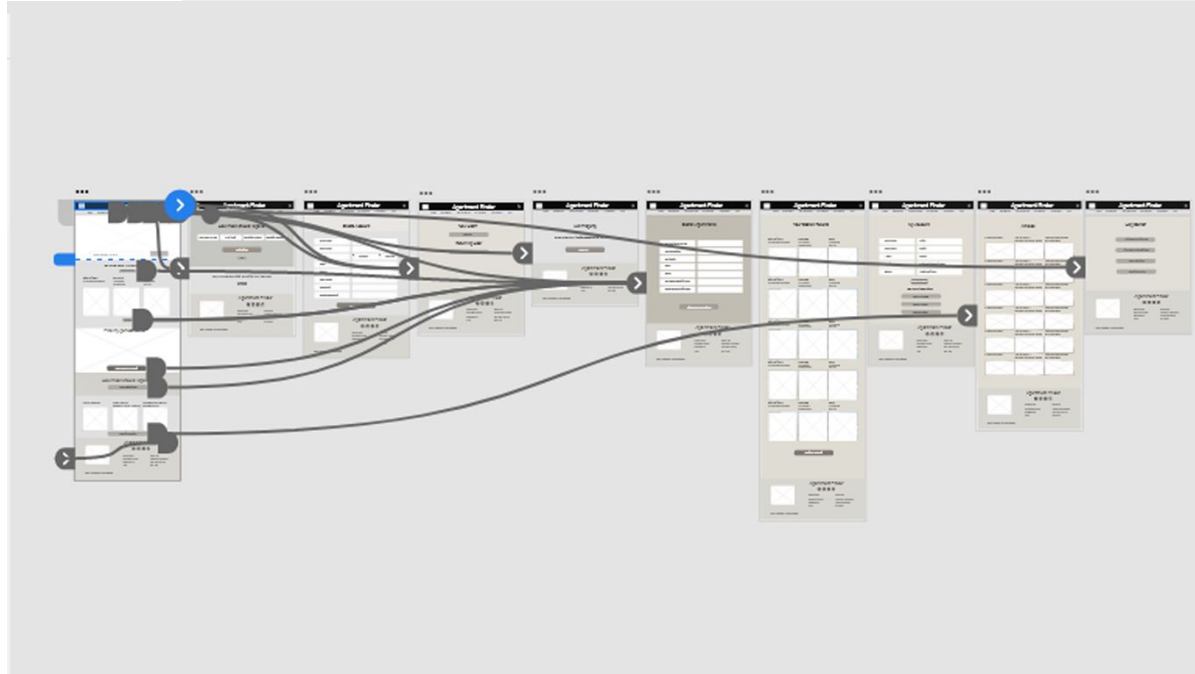
Ability to start search the moment user lands on the home page was the goal for phone screen size as well.



Low-fidelity prototype

To create a low-fidelity prototype, I connected all of the screens involved in the primary user flow of searching for an apartment, creating profile, and accessing profile.

[Here's](#) a link to low-fidelity prototype.



Usability study: parameters



Study type:

Unmoderated usability study



Location:

United States, remote



Participants:

5 participants



Length:

20-30 minutes

Usability study: findings

These were the findings:

1

User Account

Users weren't able to easily find saved searches and "liked" places.

2

Sign In

Users weren't provided with a "sign up successful" confirmation message page.

3

Navigation

It wasn't obvious that the articles page is under Help.

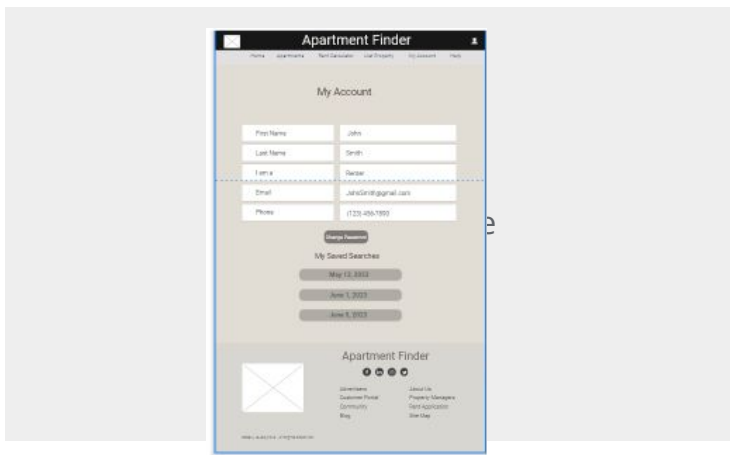
Refining the design

- Mockups
- High-fidelity prototype
- Accessibility

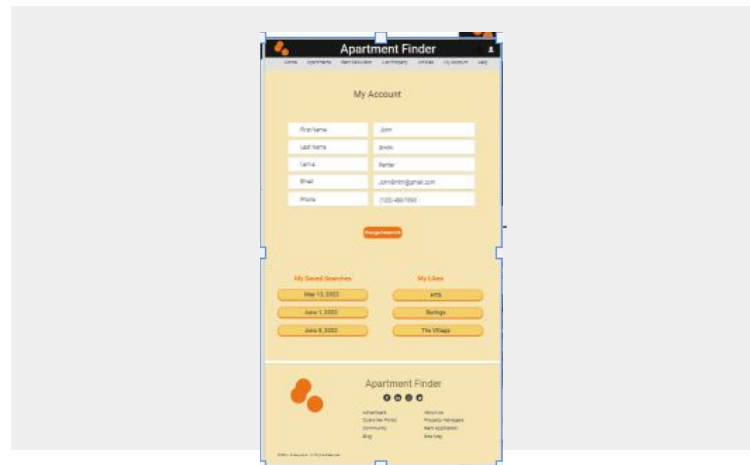
Mockups

I added “My Likes” to the account page.

Before usability study



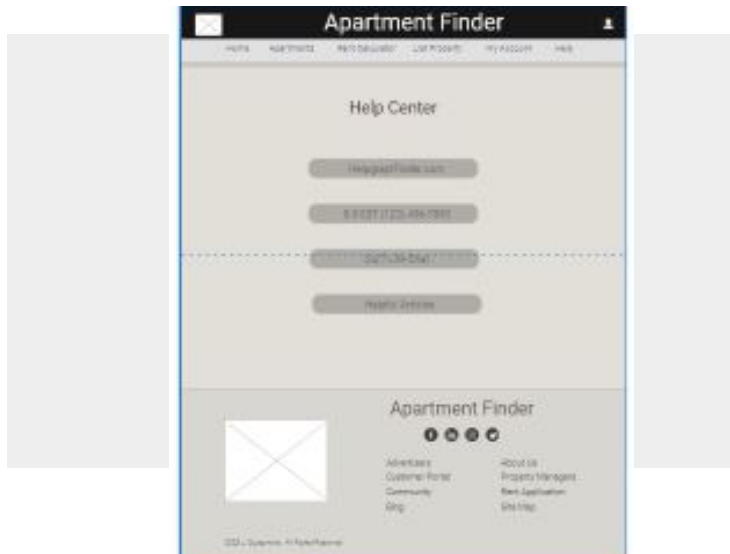
After usability study



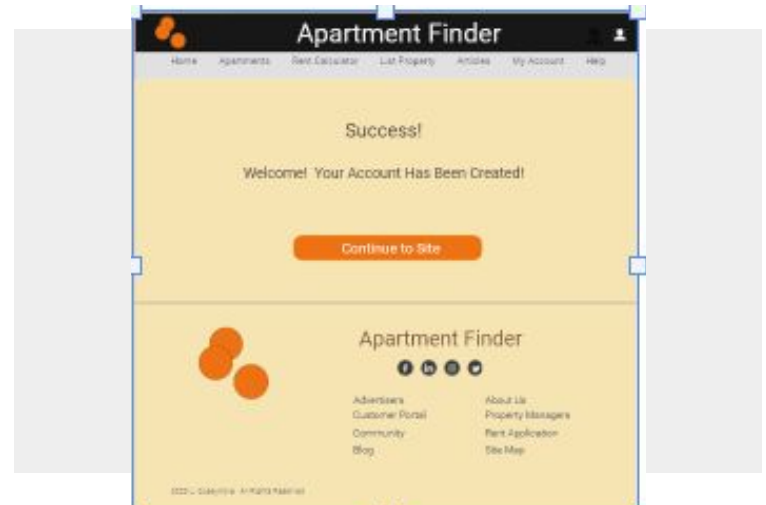
Mockups

I added “Sign Up Successful” page and added a link to the “Articles” page to the navigation instead of linking to it on the “Help” page.

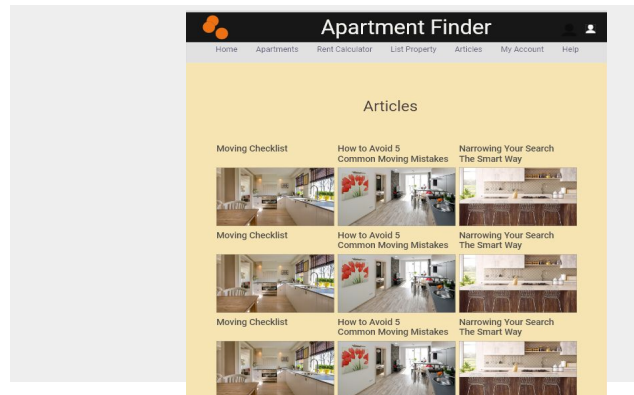
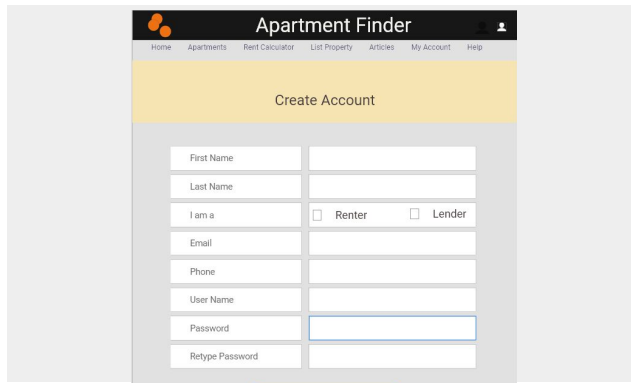
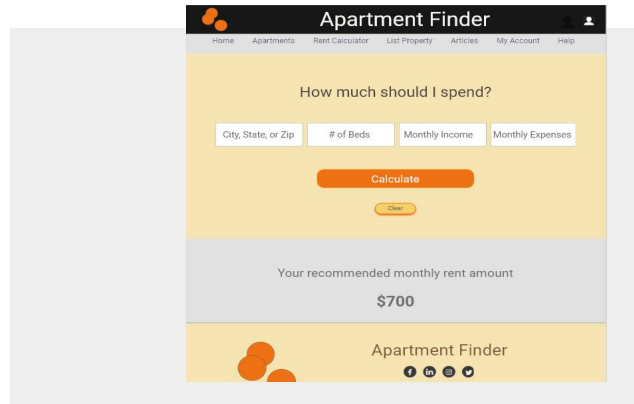
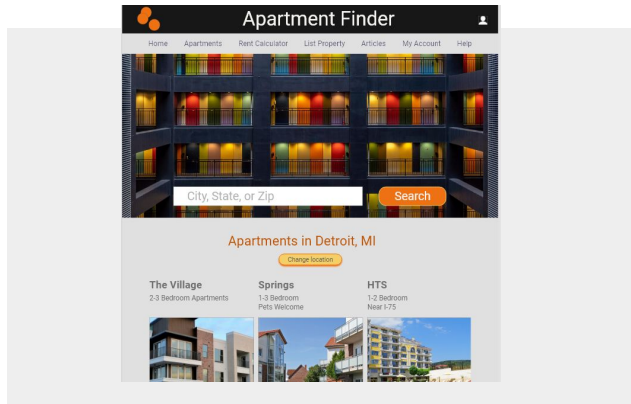
Before usability study



After usability study



Mockups: Original screen size



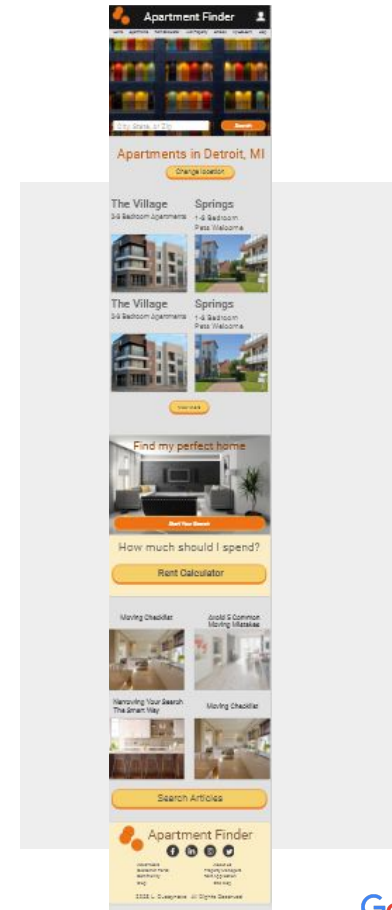
Mockups: Screen size variations

I created versions for different screen sizes: mobile phone and tablet.

Phone



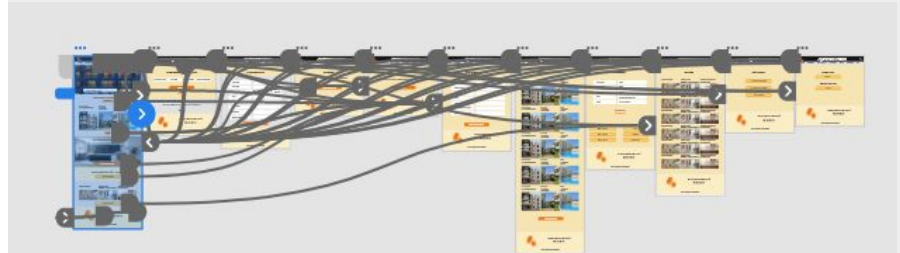
Tablet



High-fidelity prototype

High-fidelity prototype has the same flow as the low-fidelity prototype with the exception of a separate link to articles in the navigation.

Here's a [link](#) to high-fidelity prototype.



Accessibility considerations

1

The font sizes for headings and text are resized according to the different screen sizes.

2

Images have an alternative text.

Going forward

- Takeaways
- Next steps

Takeaways



Impact:

The users found the site easy to navigate, uncluttered, and visually pleasing.



What I learned:

I learned that what seems clear for me, as a designer, might be confusing for me (and anyone else), as a user.

The testing help to find these mishaps and improve my design.

Next steps

1

Conduct more usability studies.

2

Consider improving the existing features and adding new ones.

Let's connect!



Thank you for reviewing my work on the Apartment Wizard app!

If you'd like to see more, or would like to get in touch, my contact information is provided below:

Email: myWebGraphic@gmail.com

Website: myWebGraphic.com