Bachelor Thesis

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Commercial Sciences and Management

Bachelor in Informatics

Universitat Politécnica de Valéncia

Vives campus Kortrijk

year 2019 - 2020

mentor: J. Linares

LinkedIn and User Experience

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Preface

I'm Chloé Geldhof, an Erasmus student from Belgium. I'm in my last year of Informatics and have studied Graphic Studies before this in high school. I always knew I wanted to interconnect these in my later job and when I first heard of User Experience Design, it opended a whole new world for me. This subject is the perfect match between graphics and informatics, while also combining so much more like psychology, personal experiences and cultural differences.
When I got told I had to pick a subject to show that I can evolve and learn on my own, I knew I wanted to further specialize myself in the User Experience and Interface design. I only had a couple of small experiences with this beforehand and decided to do a research paper and practical assignment.
Next up was the subject and goal: I decided to reform an existing application and soon found the perfect application to do so: LinkedIn. I myself never liked working with this service, although it's a very useful one. Once I asked others, I noticed the same general experience and online the consensus was the same. My goal is to get to know why people have the experience they have and how I can make the interface more pleasant to work with.

I wish you a pleasant reading experience.

Chloé Geldhof 3APP
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wednesday the 23th of october
year 2019 - 2020

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Introduction

Everyone knows the feeling: you download an application from the app-store to immediately delete it afterwards; the company you work for requires you to work with a site, application or service which makes you frustrated in using it. You can't find what you need effectively, keep losing that one tool you use so much and in general don't like the way information is presented on your screen.

This all is an example of a bad user experience. User Experience in general can be applied to everything: from the appliances in your house, to the applications on your phone, to reading the paper. This term mainly refers to how people experience a service, product or thing. In this thesis I try to explain what exactly User Experience is, how the process of bettering a user's experience and the fundamental aspects. I further explain this term by adding a real example: LinkedIn. I start to analyze why users don't like their service and how their current User Experience process works.
Next I make the first steps to make an interface. These first steps are called the information analysis and is very important to center the user in the process and to keep the user in mind at all stages. Once I knew who my user is, I analyzed what LinkedIn already provides and what is good and bad according to the terms and strategies we already analyzed before.
The phase after the information analysis is the design phase, which consisted of making a paper and online prototype and evaluation of such.

1. General information about UX

UX is an umbrella-term for everything that has to do with how a customer experiences your application. Since this is a very large concept, I will not go into great detail here, but explain the general picture through the different aspects and fundamental consistencies in this profession.

UX: an umbrella term

User Experience is about how the user experiences your application or service. The user is therefore central to the entire design process, which is why people sometimes refer to the User Centered Development. By ensuring that attention is paid to the user and its experience at every stage of the development process, you can make your application more successful and liked by your clients. The more users like your application, the more often they will use it. Donald Norman explains this in the further quotation.

Usabilidad

> In general terms, the person-computer interaction could be defined as a discipline that studies how to exchange information between a machine and a person through a software product.

> Man-computer interaction can also be defined as the study of how people interact with computers and to what extent they are or have not been developed to have a successful interaction with human beings

But how can you ensure that a user has a good experience by using your services? This is exactly what UX is about. User Experience is an umbrella term for a number of points that your service must meet and a number of techniques to make the application more attractive to its customer.

2. The general UX-process

2.1 Analysis of the profile of the target group

Fig 1 Example of a persona profile created by Amelia Staff

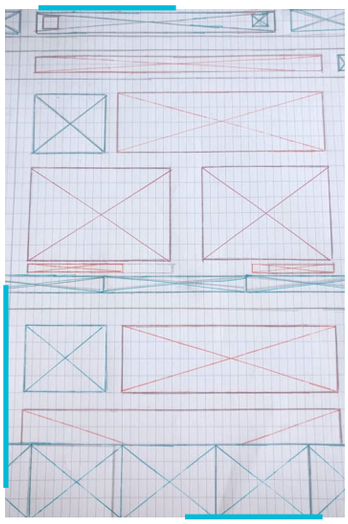
For whom is the application developed? It is very important to take into account the type of user that will later make use of your application. To sketch a better picture of this often diverse target audience, you can start by creating various so called 'user profiles' or 'personas' and analysing them further. User profiles are examples of the primary and secondary users of the application. By visualizing this, you can better respond to the wishes and needs of the target group. By conducting further analysis, you can also respond to their experiences, common characteristics and patterns.

2.2 Analysis of wishes, needs and functionality

Fig 2 Example of a Scrum board. The functions are groad per phase and importance. Source from Alexander Sergeev.

In the next step, a list is often made of what the application actually entails. In a lot of IT-teams this is often done on the basis of an interactive task list in which the various functionalities that need to be elaborated can be structured in a hierarchical form, based on the necessary time, development phase and importance. This list is dynamic and is used for various purposes during the development process. During the planning phase it can be used to plan what is implemented by who first, in what time and at what cost. During the implementation and design phase you can use this as a visual representation of what needs to be implemented. And most importantly, this list also gets used during the test phase. This is the final step to evaluating if the finished part or project actually achieves the goals the team set up in the beginning. These lists are often made with software, but can also be made using post-its.

2.3 Design phase



In the next phase we shape, structure and give form to what needs to be implemented. This design is, just like the list of wishes mentioned above, very iterative and is also adjusted in every phase of the development. Developers often start with a very conceptual design where only the content of the page can be seen. The "form" is not important here, since the focus of the development phase is primarily on the functional design of the application. In this way both the developer and the stakeholders have a good view of which functionalities will be incorporated in the application.

Fig 3 Example of a conceptual design that I made

In the next phase, the conceptual design is transformed into a visual design. Here a number of elements such as the arrangement of the application are well represented. However, this design is still a sketch and gives no idea about what the application will look like digitally or when finished. Subsequently, the navigational part of the application is also taken into account by the use of prototyping. Prototypes are sloppy models of what the application will look like, what content will be displayed where, the function of the application and how the navigational design will be designed.

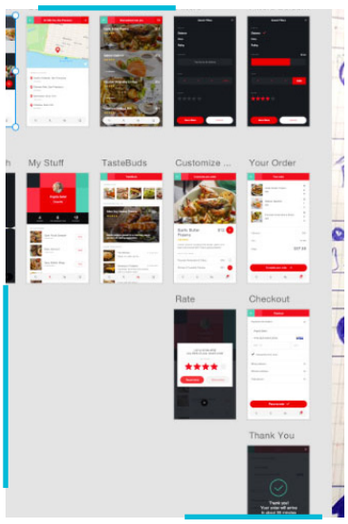


Fig 4 Software design made by Andrew Shorten

Fig 5 Sketch design made by myself

2.3.1 The importance of prototypes

Prototypes can also be used at any stage of the development process, but are more often worked out at the end of the process. Types of prototypes are very diverse and range from simple, paper models, to perfectly elaborate, digital mock-ups of what the finished product will look like.
Prototypes can be used by the developers to get a visual picture of what exactly they need to develop, but they are mainly used to show stakeholders in an interactive way, what exactly has been or will be developed or to test persons' functionality, experience or have navigational design tested.

2.4 Evaluation

After the prototypes have been made or after something has been implemented, it is always very important to evaluate the work. The first step is research. This is testing the prototypes and collecting data in connection with the User Experience. Once you have collected this data, you must check whether this data is reliable and extensive enough. You can then analyse the data and evaluate the delivered work.
Evaluation is important and must take a centred role in every part of the development process. During the planning phase, an assessment must be made as to whether the planning and the set goals are feasible. During the development phase, tests are constantly performed and based on these tests, it is evaluated whether the work delivered meets the expectations of the user. The proposed list of goals is also often tested against the work done. During the design phase, prototypes are often made that are shared with stakeholders and test persons and the design is built up in an iterative manner. This means that something is developed, this test and then evaluated.

3. Features of a good user experience design

2.1 Useful

Your application must fulfil a need. A good example of a useful app is that of the Belgian railway system (NMBS). They are known for having a lot of delayed and cancelled busses and trains. There used to be a site where users could submit when a train was delayed. By making an application themselves that not only gives you the option of planning your next route, but also displaying delays they perfectly played into what their clients need.

2.2 User friendly

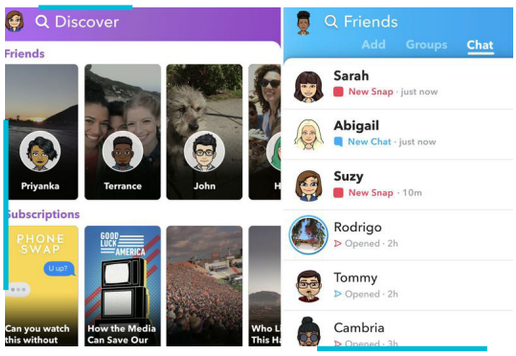


Fig 6 Example of the old and new interface of Snapchat

An application must be easy to use. Snapchat and its demise are a good example of how ease of use influences the labour market. In 2016-2017 Snapchat was thé social media application, everyone used it, talked about it and all major influencers and celebrities loved it. They came on the market with "stories" and face filters and this was a great success. In 2018, there was an update that changed the entire user interface and navigational design and the information architecture of the application, and in a few months, Snapchat lost a large number of its users.

2.3 Wanted

Branding in general also has a major influence on how users experience your service. The identity, the emotions it generates and the entire image of a service influences who will use your product and what your target audience will be. Apple is a good example of this. Even without their iconic logo, you can immediately see which computer is an Apple and which is not. Their brand is more then just a nice package, their brand expects it's customers to like high end things and people who have Apple products are often seen as wealthy.

2.4 Logical

An application must be logically structured. If users have to search and navigate through the application to find basic information, something is wrong with the logical structure of your site, service or application. Logical structured applications make sure the user can do basic and complicated tasks with as little time, effort and error as possible.

2.5 Accessible

We are all different and this must also be taken into account. People who are blind must be able to easily navigate through the application, people who cannot see well, need more contrast and so on. The KBC application uses a filter, so that you can adjust the user interface colours should this be necessary. Another example on their website: when you open their site, a video starts playing, but you can also pause it. This helps people who get over censored easily.

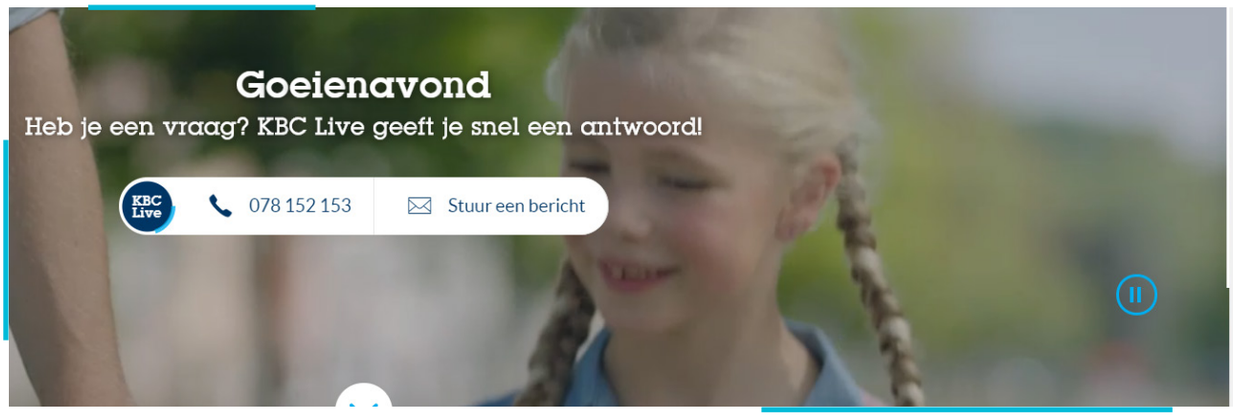


Fig 7 Example of a usability option: the user gets an option to pause the autoplaying video when enetering the Belgian KCB banking site

2.6 Reliable

Users must trust your application and the information that they can consult. An example of how unreliability can damage your image is Facebook that sold their user data to a company in 2018. Reliability goes further then only this literal sense. Reliability also has to do with downtime and if your application actually does what you expect it to do. If you, for example download a calculator, you expect it to actually be an application with a calculate function, the results are correct and it should work faster.

3. User Experience techniques

3.1 Project Management

As UX has to be considered during every phase of the development process. This means management is also very closely involved with User Experience, supporting and implementing it. Management examines how the development process will proceed and how and when the experience, wishes and needs of the users are taken into account.

3.2 User Research

Fig 8 Example of color psychology and greatly recognized logos, found on a blog by Lindsey Winsemius

To be able to respond well to the experience, wishes and needs of the users, you must of course know the users. To influence people and to guarantee the best possible experience, you must know how people think, how they experience and how you can respond best to this. A general example of user research and experience is colour psychology. McDonalds has a yellow logo because yellow induces hunger. If you want to make an application that gives people peace of mind, you can use green to unconsciously make the user calmer and more focused.

3.3 Evaluation

The development team must be able to evaluate themselves in a good way to make a better product. This can be done on the basis of software tests such as test batteries, compilers and benchmarks, but also by using test persons. Once a component is functional or has an interface, you can have the user test it. The earlier you can process the user's feedback in the process, the more time and costs you save.

3.4 User Interface Design

This term is often used together with User Experience, but actually refers to two different techniques. User Interface Design is designing the interface, the canvas itself. The main aim is to respond to the needs of the user and to ensure that everything is easy to understand, navigate and use. A good example of this is an "add" button is most easily located on the right side of the screen.

3.5 Interaction Design

This is term refers to how interactive systems respond and how these responses can best be adjusted to human behaviour. Interaction Design plays a major role in how natural the application falls in its use. Interaction Design in a GPS, for example, is how the voice speaks: in Belgium this is usually a woman with a Flemish accent, while in the Netherlands this is usually a man with a Dutch accent. This is a good example of how an application can be designed for its goal: navigating the way, with a good interaction design: not only with the option Dutch, but with familiar accents according to the country.

3.6 Visual Design

This mainly concerns the presentation of the information and the attractive offering of the technology on the basis of fonts, images, colour, and so on. Very often visual design will also coincide with the image and the feeling that the enterprise behind the application wants to evoke with the user. For example, a modern enterprise would like to use a sleek, modern site.

3.7 Content Strategy

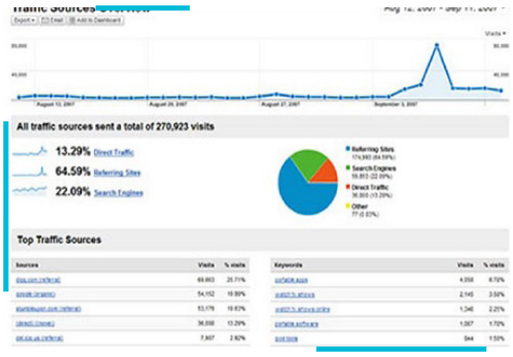


Fig 9 Example of Google Analytics

The focus in this facet of User Experience is on how we can offer useful services and how we will develop them. People start by defining the goal and content: what tone do we use and who is our target group? Quality is then guaranteed: structure in the content of the application, that is; a logical structure in how content is displayed and what is prioritized.

3.8 Web Analytics

This term actually coincides a bit with user research, since you analyse data to better respond to the wishes and needs of your users. The data can be retrieved from a database or generated yourself. For example, you can see on which page the most users leave the application or which page is used the most. For example, you can also do research into where the best place is to place your logo and what is visually more attractive to the user.

4. LinkedIn

Fig 10 Logo of LinkedIn

LinkedIn will be further discussed in this thesis and serve as an example in further research. LinkedIn is a social media application that works like Facebook or Instagram. The fundamental difference, however, is the fact that LinkedIn is aimed at the professional side of their target audience. In general; you can build a network of colleagues and thus broaden your professional network. This can lead to new jobs, you can find information about companies and who exactly works, view job offers and expand your skill set. There are a lot more functions built in, which we will further discuss in this thesis.

4.1 LinkedIn evaluated through features of a good User Experience

4.1.1 Useful

LinkedIn is certainly useful, which is why it is so popular. LinkedIn is also trying to expand more and more to offer a platform that provides all the tools for that person that wants to work on its professional skill set. LinkedIn is clearly trying to increase its usefulness for a larger target group, by providing tools for every layer of the professional population.

4.1.1.1 Examples of it's useful tools

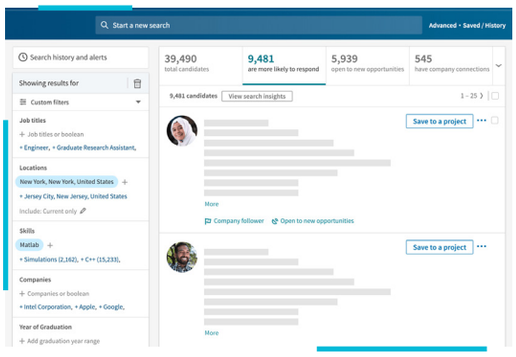
for students

On their site you can find a number of videos that are considered tips and tricks for getting a job. There are also manuals on how to fine tune your LinkedIn profile. LinkedIn also tries to respond to the social aspect of the application. They push many notifications so that users would use the application more and also recommend responding to your messages as quickly as possible.

For companies

For companies there are also a number of options available on LinkedIn. One is LinkedIn Recruiter that links the profiles of LinkedIn users to a database in which companies can place job offers and look up people based on their skill set. People also try to respond to the social media aspect of your business by recommending that you attract better job seekers by blasting your profile page. They also give companies the option to advertise on LinkedIn.

For companies, there are a number of other tools on LinkedIn's site to learn new skills and to better understand your customers and thus respond better to them. We leave



this out of consideration, since it has nothing to do with the LinkedIn mobile application which is the main subject of this thesis. We will also leave out the paid version and tools of the service, as well as notifications and other advertisements referring to buying this version.

Fig 11 Example of LinkedIn Business.

Conclusion

LinkedIn tries to increase its usefulness as much as possible by building a relationship between companies and their employees and customers. By ensuring that both companies and employees are engaged, LinkedIn can provide a better service and bring more people with the same skill set into contact with each other. It's kind of like a scale where the recruiters, job seekers and companies can support each other and thus make a better service for itself and each other.

4.1.2 User-friendly

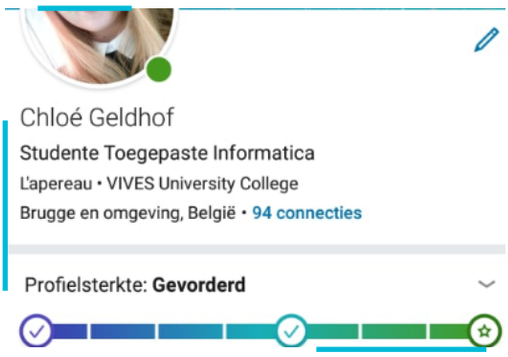


Fig 12 Progressbar under the profile information when a users opens its profile. This shows how strong your profile is.

Getting started to build your LinkedIn profile is fairly simple, since there is a tutorial that explains step by step what the different functions are. For new members it's a lot of work to add new people because they don't have any synchronization options with other platforms available. Altering your data afterwards is also fairly simple, but sometimes the user has to search for the option to undo some changes, like removing a certain title from their page when they have stopped working all together. I often caught myself looking for where I can find my profile or read my messages. I also think that these icons do not stand out enough in the blue bar, for people who cannot see well or for older people, this could be a problem. Navigating through the application itself makes sense, since there is a navigation bar at the bottom of the application. I also liked the many ways in which LinkedIn tries to motivate the user to further better their profile.

Conclusion

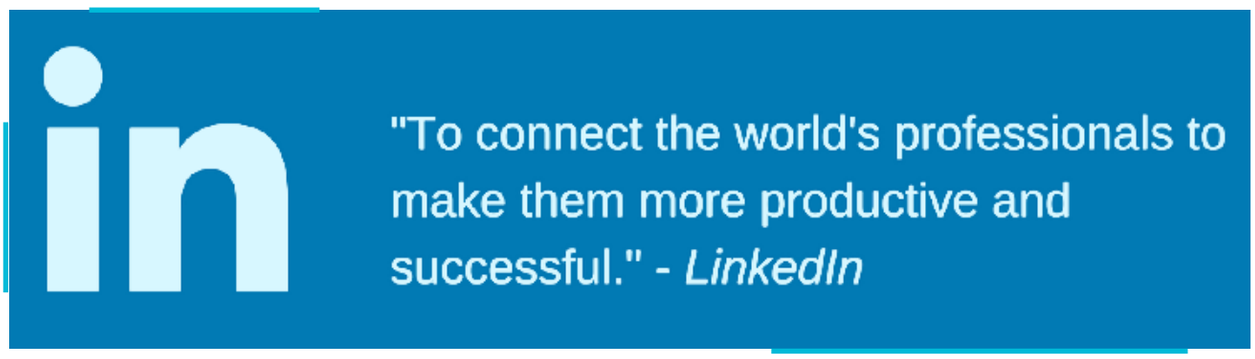
The application is relatively user-friendly, but it takes a while before a user is completely familiar with all the options. After following the tutorial, everything is clear, but there are many options and tools that are discussed at the same time. There is also no help forum for basic tasks anywhere in the application itself. Indicating the profile strength together with a number of tips to make the profile even stronger is a very good idea, because it helps people to use the application.
If you have not used LinkedIn for some time and then open it again, you may have to search again where everything is and take some time to get used to the application.

4.1.3 Wanted

LinkedIn is certainly wanted. It's maybe not the most popular social media that everyone talks about, but it is used by most working or job seekers. What I notice from many of my fellow students is that it is not liked to be used, but the usefulness is so great that the effect of the service is highly sought after. Everyone knows how difficult and stressful the job search is, so a social media that can make this process easier is certainly valued.

4.1.4 Logical

The LinkedIn application is not logically structured. People are used to using their mobile phones and use different applications from day to day. This builds certain habits to which LinkedIn has not responded. I could not find my profile and message box and after not using the application for a while, I had to search again for exactly where all of this is. This is because most popular applications place their profile and message box on the right. With LinkedIn, the profile is on the left and the message box on the right is at the top in the blue bar. The icons do not stand out enough with the blue background.
What I also do not understand is how the purpose of the application is not reflected



in the logical structure of the application. On their site they mainly focus on networking, building relationships, sending messages and meeting new professionals. When you

open the application, the first thing you see is the feed from your colleagues. There is also a plus icon at the centre of the lower navigation bar which creates a new message for your feed. To meet new people or send messages you have to open another page.

4.1.5 Accessibility

The application in itself is relatively accessible. You can easily make up a profile, you have plenty of information and tutorials available and LinkedIn tries to teach you how to build up a successful profile. You can fine tune your profile into what you want to achieve with the application.
To the general public LinkedIn is very accessible, but the application isn't very much so to people with disabilities. For example, people with vision problems, will not be able to see the content displayed in most of the field, let alone see the icon to change the profile. In the settings there are no available options for people with disabilities. People with sensory problems, sensitivity problems or concentration problems will also have trouble structuring and defining the different parts of the application.

> Blind people search jobs too!

4.1.6 Reliable

LinkedIn is generally a reliable application. It has not encountered any scandals in connection with the leaking of sensitive information or other privacy issues. There are many bugs and down times, though. When you google LinkedIn with 'not accessible' or 'bugs' you find plenty of questions on forums or articles written about it.

4.2 Closer look at LinkedIn through techniques of User Experience

4.2.1 Project Management

Since LinkedIn has become a large company with a wide range of different tools, platforms, videos and information. This means the company must do some form of project management. A very large group of people works separately on the various components that later have to come together into one large entity, which ensures a lot of planning and organization. The timetables and tasks must be organized. During the various phases of the development process it is very good to involve the stakeholders as much as possible, wherever possible.

4.2.1.1 Stakeholders

Stakeholders are all people who can benefit from developing a service or application. The leader of the project is the largest stakeholder, as it has the most to gain or lose in developing this process. Subsequently, investors are also closely involved in the development process. Towards the end of the process, you can assemble a group of potential users who test components and give their feedback. The earlier you involve this group in the development process, the sooner you have feedback on the logical structure of the application, user-friendliness and experience in general. This can also save you a lot of cost, since it becomes more expensive to adjust things or to redevelop the further a process approaches the final measurement.

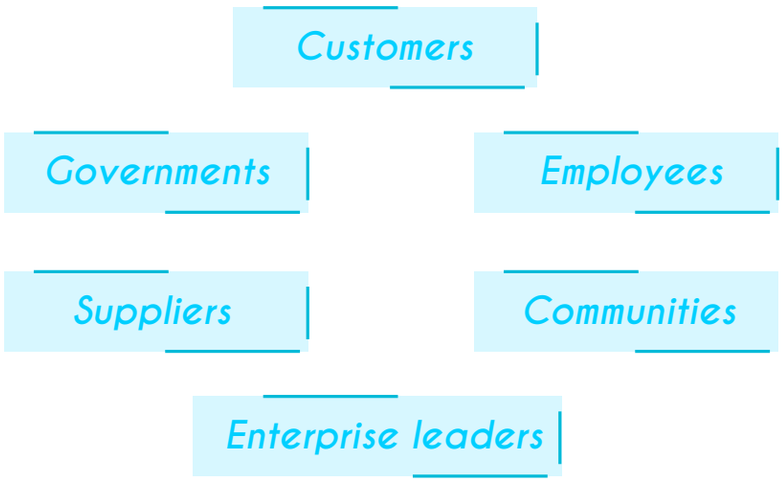


Fig 12 Schema of stakeholders, adapted from the Corporate Finance Institute

4.2.2 User Research

Fig 13 Picture of LinkedIn's Lab where all research and User Experience take place. Picture by Tony Chung

LinkedIn uses various techniques to conduct user research. It ensures that user researchers work together with other employees, to ensure that there is enough communication between the users and what the company, sales and designers want and can do. This ensures that the experience of the users can be tailored to the purpose and image of the company. They also try to use a number of different techniques to find out more about their users.

4.2.2.1 The LinkedIn user research process

The researchers at LinkedIn prepare a plan of approach. This is closely related to the aforementioned project management. People often start with an analysis of requirements, needs in function of time and possibilities. A meeting is then planned with the stakeholders, project leaders and developers. The requirements, timeline, expectations and goals of the research are further discussed in this meeting. At the end of the meeting a contract is drawn up that will be further adjusted further in the process. Then the team chooses a method of research. There are a number of research methods here. As an example, we discuss Formative Research.

Formative research

This technique is often used to give the stakeholders a general idea about how the application will work and look. During the development process, these are often very general sketches on paper. You have general prototypes that do not entail much detail and the prototypes that are much clearer, whereby the test battery can actually see how the navigation works. These sketches are often digital during the design phase. Designers oftentimes use Sketch, Adobe XD and Flutter for this. These digital prototypes are often extended to code that will later be used for the user interface.
Research at LinkedIn is done both in The Lab and outside the building. This is very important to guarantee an authentic experience in research. The data are then further analysed. The size, clarity and reliability of the data are taken into account. Subsequently, further research is done into new patterns in user experiences, but at the same time small details and other perspectives are taken into account.
After the research is completed, it is always very important to ensure that the findings, patterns and experiences are shared with everyone involved in the research and the rest of the development team.

4.2.3 Evaluation

As mentioned earlier, evaluation is very important during the development of an application, component or new feature. Evaluation can take many forms, such as the improvement of a certain tool, updates and patches, as a result of research or as a result of a new marketing plan.
LinkedIn performs evaluation in different ways. As mentioned above, LinkedIn does user research, which means that they use the feedback from the user and from within the company and in this way evaluate and possibly improve their product. Their developers must also ensure that there are no more bugs in the software, so they must evaluate their own work for each new update or patch. When pushing a patch that modifies fundamental parts of the application, navigation, user interface or operation of the service or a new tool, LinkedIn first tries this out on a defined group of its users. This definition is usually based on geographic area or language. By ensuring that a

new feature is first tested on a large number of users, you can easily detect software or hardware problems without disappointing to many of your customers.

4.2.4 Interaction Design

The sight of LinkedIn and LinkedIn Learning are a good example of good interaction design. The user interface is simple and easy to navigate, you can easily find the information you need. The application on the other hand does not have a good interaction design.
Interaction design refers to words, visual representations, physical objects, time and usage patterns. The use of LinkedIn as an example is very professional: people use 'interesting' instead of 'likes' and generally use professional, clear and simple language. On the other hand, I find the visual representation not well represented, since it often consist of only text and icons are often very small. For example, LinkedIn uses different types of messages on the timeline that are displayed in the same way, which means that the user often loses the overview of his timeline.
LinkedIn also responds to the different devices on which users can visit LinkedIn. They have a site, additional learning tools, software for companies and the LinkedIn app. A way of combining all these services would be useful.
The time aspect is supported by the progress bar on the user's profile that indicates how strong the profile is. One tries to respond to user behaviour by offering different tools that have been specially developed for the different personas in their target group, such as the videos for starting employees and the tools available for companies.

An example of this is the types of advertisements: in the pictures below you have two types of posts: one is from a company that pays for advertisements on LinkedIn, but the second is a company where a former colleague works. Both look like advertisements made by companies. These are sometimes difficult to navigate through.

Fig 14 Example of an advertisement on Linkedin

Fig 15 Example of a post of a company on Linkedin

What is particularly striking is how their mission and interface do not match. They say they want to bring professionals into contact with each other in order to make their target group more successful and productive. However, this is not reflected in their design: their message box and new connection box have been moved backwards in the structure of their navigation section. Their central place in the application was replaced by the social media aspect of the reports and timelines.

4.2.5 Visual Design

Fig 16 LinkedIn versus Facebook, found on a blog by Tristan Elosogui

LinkedIn's Visual Design reminds many users of Facebook's interfaces. Here you can see how the "steal like an artist" technique can sometimes be a good idea. A large part of the population knows Facebook and has an account. This ensures that a large part of LinkedIn's target group can navigate through the application and the site more easily and it gives a familiar feeling. The typical blue of Facebook, the way messages are arranged in the timeline and the entire timeline is something that everyone knows and is clearly very popular.

The overall Visual Design is called boring by some of its users. This can be both good and bad. LinkedIn has a diverse target group and they have a professional image. The "boring" nature of LinkedIn therefore ensures that this supports their professional image.

4.2.6 Content Strategy

LinkedIn scores very well in certain areas of their Content Strategy: their professional image is supported by their choice of fonts, colour, choice of words and the overall user interface. They also try to respond to as many layers of the labour market as possible by offering tools that have been specially developed for each group of users. These techniques and tools are therefore split into various software and applications that can be used on a computer, tablet or mobile phone. They also try to build and adjust their Content Strategy in a very iterative and collaborative manner, as reflected in the many updates and patches. The newer site is clearly also aimed at a younger target group, since it is built with a lot of icons, videos and images.
If we only focus on the application, there are a few problems with the Content Strategy. As previously reported, the first page that you open is a timeline and is not in a straight line with their mission. There are many icons and especially the message box and profile is unclear.

5. For whom exactly do we make the application?

The user experience process is an iterative process that can be used in every phase of the development process and deployment phase. In this process, we get a picture of who the people using our service are. Often the focus lies on a good implementation of what the service will do, instead of the user making use of the product.

> The problem lies in the development of the product, in the emphasis of technology instead of the user: the person for which the device is made.
>
> Donald Norman
> The invisible Computer

The process consists of a number of phases:

1.Research phase
2. Determining personas
3. Determining requirements
4. Write out scenarios

5.1 Research Phase

First, we need to know for whom exactly we develop the application. Often the focus is on the implementation of the product instead of the end user, the person for whom the product is made. This ensures that you can design a very useful product that is not usable. Research can be done through interviews, observation, questionnaires, workshops and interest groups and tests.

5.2 Interviews

To ensure that the information you get from the interview is qualitative and reliable, you must ensure that your test subjects are varied in nature. LinkedIn wants to collect data about professional users and the professional market is very diverse.

Our test persons:

Demy Geldhof, 27, looking for work after studies.

Iïn Zwertvaegher, student, job seeker for job student.
Janny Geldhof, 51, recently found a job after working on an independent basis.
Kris Cathenis, 49, has been working in a company since 2015.

5.2.1 Interview with Demy

A. Are you looking for a job? If so, where do you encounter difficulties?
I am looking for a job, but I am experiencing great difficulty. When I see job openings, they always ask for years of experience. Because I just graduated, I don't have any experience yet.

B. Where do you look for job offers?
I look at LinkedIn and VDAB. VDAB is a government funded website from Belgium, where a lot of job offers are posted. I also search for job offers on Google so that I come across websites such as Stepstone or Selor for vacancies in the government.

C. Are you interested in learning about applying?
You learn a lot by applying for a job and going through that process, but it always doesn't hurt to learn more

If so, which method do you prefer?
The do and don'ts and maybe a practice interview before the actual application.

D. What steps do you take when preparing for an application?
I try to find out as much as possible about the company through their website, which companies often find important. Then thoroughly study the job offer to know if I really want to apply for that job. I look at the company and always make a pro's and con's list of working there. After I know for sure I'm interested in the company, I make sure I have all the knowledge required before applying for the job.

5.2.2 Interview with Iïn

A. Are you looking for a job? If so, where do you encounter difficulties?
No, I'm not looking for a job.

B. Where are you looking for job offers?
I go to the VDAB website. It's a Belgian company that helps you get a job and has a site full of people who put out offers.

C. Are you interested in learning about applying?
I don't have interest in learning how to apply for a job.

D. What steps do you take when preparing for an application?
I google the company and make sure I know what their goal and methods are. If I can, I also like to get to know the people behind the company. I also update my CV and make sure it's up to standards.

5.2.3 Interview with Janny

A. How do you maintain your professional network?
I go to a business that I think could be investing for trucks. I make a list of the running park and take all the businesses who have trucks that 4 years of age or older. Those people are most likely investing. Then I look who controls the running park or who is the CEO or president. You can do that through LinkedIn or DropBox. I go into business and make contact through the reception. I make sure I know their name.
Once I get to the buyer or CEO I make a small talk. Try to find out if he is investing in a running park. If he is I tell him I want to make an offer and compete. If he is not investing I try to find out when and I tell him I will come back. I put everything in CRM. This is a platform where you can put all the data in and he reminds you when the customers is buying.

B. Are you interested in another job or position?
I always monitor for other jobs. I am on LinkedIn and other websites. A lot of companies also have my resume. I am interested in any other job that is very versatile, like marketing or sales. I want to be on the road and over a desk, at the same time; so that I am on the road, but also have a home base.

C. Are there career opportunities in your job? Are you interested in this?
I am a sales consultant in trucks. I do B2B. I make contracts for the garage. I make lease contracts. Renting Sales. I only have the owner or the garage above me. We have 8 people with the same job. In each garage one light for the light vehicles and one for the heavy trucks.

D. How is communication within the company?
We communicate via email and CRM. We also have a platform called EPL. It is a platform where we build the vehicles compliant to the customer's mission; what does he transport?, where does he transport it to? and how does he transport? That's how we make the trucks. Our sales colleges can see how the vehicles are built. We can see all the vehicles or Iveco around the world.
Any made IVECO truck has a number. We put it in and can see the configuration of the truck, all parts of it.
We have phones for internal use. We can take calls on our cell phones or push them forward. We also have a website, a kind of platform to put our stock on where people can pray. We have social media profiles as a company on LinkedIn and Facebook.

5.2.4 Interview with Kris

A. How do you maintain your professional network?
Via network meetings, company receptions, sector training,

B. Are you interested in another job or position?
No, I'm not interested in anything other then my current position.

C. Are there career opportunities in your job? Are you interested in this?
Yes, I am interested in the job itself. I like my job a lot.

- If so, how do you expect to continue to grow?
I am trying to take on more responsibility.

D. How is communication within the company?
The communication inside the company can be better, I work in a medium-sized company in full expansion. There is little room to distance yourself from the daily operational follow-up and to think fundamentally about how to complete the job.

5.3 Determining personas

In this example, we will convert our test battery to a persona. LinkedIn has been developed for a large number of users: job seekers and working people, people who want to improve their skills, look for career opportunities or simply want to stay up to date with their colleagues. That is why it is so important to get to know our target group better. Their experiences, behaviour and needs must be investigated and supported as well as possible during every phase of the further process. These first steps are therefore very important.
Personas are very loosely based on our test battery, all have their own experience and wishes. Their background is shown in the first block. The second professional background block shows what our personas have done on a professional level. The requirements, last but not least, are the most important aspect of this entire study. What do they expect and want from a product? Or to put it differently, what can we offer them to satisfy them?We can also group our personas such as primary, secondary and negative. The primary personas are the ones we mainly develop the service for. Their goals should be achieved, if possible. The secondary personas aren't as important as the primary, though. Their goals are an extension of the primary. If these goals can be with, they are. If they are contradictory to the ones or the primary person, they get disregarded.
The negative person on the other hand is the person we explicitly don't design for a service for.

• Jane Doe

1st

- 22 years old
- is in her last year of bachelors degree and is starting to look for a job
- likes the environment, going out with her friends, going on hikes with her dog.
- is introverted and likes being in her house, likes calm and quiet places

Professional Background

Jane is in her last year of a bachelors degree in Informatics. Because she lives in Belgium and the professional market is looking for a lot of IT women. She never really thought about having to look for a job and apply to companies. She is interested in learning as much as possible about applying for jobs before she graduates. She would like to know what people her age are up to, where they work and where they are in their professional career. Jane has made a lot of professional connections, without even knowing it and would like to have a platform to talk to these people, make new connections and connect to new professional minds like her.

Requirements

Jane is a real rookie when it comes to the professional world. She has worked as a job student, but has never even thought about what she wants to do as a career. She could be helped by a manual, service or tool that learns her the basics of learning what kind of job is right for you and how to apply for that job. She also needs to know what kind of jobs are out there, so a job browsing tool could also benefit her.

She loves the social aspect of professional networking. She likes it so much that she already networks a lot, without even knowing it. She could benefit off a social platform that gives her the opportunity to make new connections and sustain the ones she already has. A service where she can connect her other social media platforms to a professional one.

Because Jane loves a calm atmosphere, a clean and simple user interface could help her focus on the task of finding a new job.

• Jack Walker

2nd

- 26 years old
- graduated as a lawyer, took a gapyear traveling and working as a server and is now looking for a job
- loves travelling and adventure, is very sporty and loves wall climbing and partying
- is extraverted but likes time alone, doesn't like it when people take life to seriously

Professional Background

John graduated as a lawyer a year ago. He needed a break of the stress and isolation of studying and took a gap year of travelling the world and working as a server.
He could easily find jobs abroad as servers are working in a zoo, but after his travels, he has trouble finding a job as a lawyer. He is also applying for different jobs, because he likes a challenge. He is lost in the application world and is always very nervous when he has to go through that process.

Requirements

John has been working for a year and has had some experience, replicating for a job. He finds trouble in finding a job in his home country, though. Ideally, he would like to have a job in the sector, he graduated in, but he is also failing at looking for other, randomly selected jobs.
John could really benefit from a tool where he can manage his job offers, fine tuning and classifying them as he wants. He can also benefit from information about replicating for a job and instructional videos on this often difficult process..
John could also benefit from the social aspect of our service: if he can get in contact with other students who have recently graduated and are looking for a job, he can assess himself better and know if the problem is the market, or his strategy in applying for certain jobs.

• Jolene Decker

1st

- 45 years old
- works as a hairdresser, but is looking for another job or another place to work at
- loves chatting with her friends and connecting with people, but doesn't know what to do with her new found time

Professional Background

Jolene has been working as a hairdresser in the same place for over 15 years, but wants a change. A lot of new hairdressers have taken over the workplace and she feels like she's the only mature person around. She wants to either try a different job or find work as a hairdresser somewhere else, but is afraid she is too old or too mature to do this profession, looking at her current place of work.

Requirements

Jolene is a little lost in her professional world and could benefit from a service that gives her an overview of the job options based on her previous work history and other skills. She could also benefit from a social platform where she can meet other people with the same function and the same age. This can give her confidence and a better overview of the age in her profession: not all hairdressers are young and everyone can go into this business if skilled enough.

A service that both has the option to display job offers in her section and job offers not relating to her job profession could be really useful, as well as a managing system that can keep track of the jobs she likes and the jobs she doesn't like.

• John Weller

-0

- 37 years old
- works as a salesman of computers, but would like to be a manager
- likes watching television and going out to dinner and wine tastings with his girlfriend
- likes being social but is introverted

Professional Background

Jack has been working as a salesman for around ten years now. When he graduated high school, he wanted to live alone, so he needed a job. He worked as a salesman and never changed jobs. He likes the structure and knowing what he has to do for the day. Even though he likes the structure of his job, he is bored at his job and wants to move up in his career. He wants to be a manager. Even though he has no managing skills, he thinks he might be good at it, because his love for structure.

Requirements

Jack is our negative persona, because he will be affected by our service, as he is a working man and wants to change positions. He could possibly even purchase our product as long as he isn't familiar with another service like ours. Jack doesn't like change very much and would only purchase one product or service helping him better his managing skills.

Jack is keen on staying in the same company, so he could benefit from a social network where he can connect with the higher layer of the business. He could possibly connect with the current managers and ask what skills he should learn to display his interest in managing, if they also are making use of our service.

6. Determining what we have

The next step is to design a low level prototype that I will later convert into a more detailed, digital version. A prototype is a representation of what the product looks like. To be able to do this I will start by determining what LinkedIn already offers me. What is the information architecture? This we will represent in descriptive form and in usecases. By analysing what I am exactly trying to represent in my user interface, I hope to improve clarity not only for the user in the end, but also for myself in the process.
Once when I have described and collected the data that LinkedIn already offers us, I will analyse which elements are good and bad per screen. By trying to work out what elements are good and bad, I know what elements we should keep and what elements I should avoid in my new design. I want to state right now that I don't want to make a new LinkedIn; my goal is to make an interface that has the same image and feel, but offers a better user experience and is more transparent in its use.
The phases in the information analysis:

1. Analyze what LinkedIn already offers per category
2. Drawing out use cases per category
3. Analyse what is good and bad per category
4. Define which information will be displayed per category in the new architecture
5. Drawing out new use cases per category (included in next segment)

6.1. Analyze what LinkedIn already offers per category

What are we exactly working with? We have to know what LinkedIn offers us now and what their current informational architecture is. This architecture are the basic categories in which the tools and information are structured, these categories represent screens in our example.

- Feed
- Network
- New Post
- Notifications
- Job Offers
- Profile
- Messages

6.1.1 Feed

The feed is the first screen that a user sees when opening the application and is central to the architecture of the application. Here the user will find everything that has to do with the social aspect of LinkedIn and is viewed most often by most daily users. Our primary personas in particular will use this page as they want to expand their platform. In the feed, we find messages with text, video and photos that are posted by

both companies and the users connections. Messages from both first, second and third generation connections can be displayed on this screen.
These messages are posted or shared, have to do with what your connections find interesting and follow and are messages from companies that their connections interact with. Advertisements from sponsored companies are also posted on this feed.
The user can respond to all these different types of messages and the interaction of the user depends on the type of message. The user can find all posts interesting and share and respond to them; from advertising to a shared post.
If a connection has updates its profile or added a new function, the user can also send this person a congratulations.
The posts aren't displayed in a chronological order; some posts don't even get a date. The ones that do get displayed in a non-chronological order.

6.1.2 Network

The networking aspect is the page on which a user can generally make new connections. LinkedIn searches for people they might know based on where they have worked and studied and who your current connections are.
At the top you can their your current network, which takes them to another page where they can delete connections, unfollow pages and send connections a message. Below this bar is a field with invitations that shows all invitations potential connections sent them. If there is none, there are suggestions for new connections. Next to the invitations tab, the user gets the option to manage your invitations. This leads it to another screen where they can see all your invitations, ordered by category: sent and received and with each additional categories of everything, users, events and pages.

If a user scrolls further it gets a list of connections they might know based on their history, location and people who work in the same functions as they do. Under these connection suggestions, there are suggestions for popular pages and hashtags.
Under this there are more suggestions for either persons or pages.

6.1.3 New Post

This screen is the most simple screen in LinkedIn. In the middle the user sees the profile they are currently logged into. Under this they get the option of changing the privacy of your posts. LinkedIn also posts messages to secondary and tertian connections. Here a user can adjust how many people will see their post. To all posts they can add a description, video and a new or already stored picture.
Next, LinkedIn gives you the option to congratulate a colleague for being in your team or for an accomplishment through a post. In this screen a user can also search for people in your professional network to help them with problems and attach a document.
When a user starts typing, the interface changes and the options that were displayed at the bottom of the page change to an interactive interface where a user can type and add a picture in the middle of the sentence. The find an expert button

is changed to text at the top of the keyboard next to add a hashtag. Under this bar, there is another one where icons are placed to add a new or stored picture, or a video. A user can also add a hashtag to tag another user into the post, or go back to the normal layout.

6.1.4 Notifications

Notifications is a screen that's is chronologically based and gives you an overview of all notifications. The notifications vary from how many people entered your name into the search bar, how many people looked at your profile and how many job offers you have had.
Next to these contributions to your professional network, you also get a schematic overview of the interaction with the service your connections have: when a connection achieves a new professional achievement or has an anniversary of an achievement, when it's a birthday or when people start following you. You can interact with these messages by congratulating your connections with their achievements.

6.1.5 Job offers

This screen is the central part of the application for the job seeker. A bar above indicates how many vacancies you have viewed and for how many jobs you have applicated. You can also put yourself on a list of job seekers in this bar. Next there is a list of vacancies that have been selected based on your profile.

6.1.6 Profile

In the profile category the user sees an example of what people see when they view its profile, where a user can change and tune their profile to what they want other users to see. LinkedIn shows the user its profile and cover picture next to its name, title and other history. Next the user sees a progress bar where they can see how strong their profile is. If the user clicks on the icon next to the progress bar, the user gets information on how to better their profile. Under this progress bar there is a text paragraph with changing content varying from tips for the users to offers of quizzes. This is private for the user, other connection can't see this.
Next there is a public info paragraph other connections can see. The user can change this tell people why they are using LinkedIn and what they are looking for.
Under this there is again a private dashboard where the user sees how many people visited their profile, how many posts the user has posted and how many users have searched for their name. The user also gets the option to put their name on a list of users looking for a job, balance their income to that of their connections and look at jobs they saved.
If the users scrolls further, it sees a public section where all of their school and work history is displayed. There is also an extra button that gets added while the user

scrolls past this section. The user gets encouraged to add new jobs they have done or schools they went to.
Under their history, they can also add skills and do quizzes to ensure their skills are what they should be. Other connections can also interact with this.
The user can change their contact details and add new interests and connections.

6.2 Analysis of what is good and bad per screen

6.2.1 Feed

Good

The first thing everyone thinks when opening LinkedIn is that the user interface is very similar to that of Facebook. The blue of LinkedIn is a similar, just as the entire structure of the post and interface. It's as if you're looking at a professional version of Facebook. This increases clarity for a large group of users, since a large number of users know how Facebook's way of working is and how it will respond to their actions. A couple of people online were very disappointed with this interface, as the new interface redesign was much anticipated.
What is also very good about LinkedIn's interface is that they display various messages: promoted advertisements as well as the interaction and milestones of connections, as well as messages from new connections and messages from the pages and companies can be displayed on this, making this the central point has become the application, the first screen that you will see when opening the application.
What is also very good is the structure of a message. At the top you sometimes see "John Doe finds this interesting", which clearly explains why you get to see this message. The interest and congratulations underneath are also clearly visible. Interaction is further stimulated by a large bar underneath with clearly the three buttons: interest, comment and sharing. The word choice is also very professional.

Bad

LinkedIn has a large number of messages in its feed, which makes this the central part to their application. After all, their goal is to support a professional network and make new connections. This is influenced in the feed by displaying messages from second and third connections.
Since a large number of different types of messages are displayed, LinkedIn tries to display this by modifying small things: a check mark next to a name, an extra frame, a square logo instead of the round, promoted and so on. This makes it very difficult to know why you see a certain message. Am I seeing this post because it's advertising, or have I liked this page? Is this post a connection for me, or a person I can still add?
The aforementioned Facebook is a good example of displaying information in a clear way. They also post different types of messages: advertisements, posts of people and pages that you follow and posts of messages that you may like. All messages are displayed in conformity, but here the line between pages and people is blurred: posts are the same. With a more recent update, Facebook has split the entertainment and endor-

sed channels from the normal posts.
The posts on LinkedIn are therefore very numerous, displayed in a format that is relatively different per message. There is very little white space between messages and the font itself is very small in the messages themselves. With each connection displayed, it is indicated which rank, which title and when it was posted. The privacy setting is also displayed. This is visually very nice, but is a lot of information that is displayed next to the name. You see the post itself, whereby the photos or videos that go with it were not adapted to the message. Some photos are large, others are small. Some posts receive three lines of text, others receive five. This ensures that each message differs even more and does not form a whole.
It is as if LinkedIn tries to mimic the interface of Facebook, but doesn't quite achieve its goal. Facebook also has pages, users and profile pages; but these pages emit the same posts. On LinkedIn you have so many different posts, that it simply can't use the easy design Facebook uses. Facebook has one type of post: you see the user name, time of the post and the content. LinkedIn changes so many small things that the user doesn't know what to expect of the messages.

6.2.2 Network

Good

The Network tab is the central part for people who want to make new connections and is also the second tab on the navigation section at the bottom of the screen. Here you get notifications for creating new connections, proposals for pages that you might like, people you might know and for managing connections. It is very good that all these tools are nicely collected under this tab and provides a clear information architecture.
Again the network page consists of a number of different tools. On this page it is very easy to see the difference between the different functions, but again, there is not much white space between the different parts. You can further promote the delimitation of information by using lines, colour or another format. This format was clearly used by LinkedIn, because the difference between the page section, as an example, and new connections are clearly indicated by the circles and squares. Since the focus is on the photo of the page or connection, the difference between the two is very clear.
When you first see the screen, new connection requests are very clear due to the dark blue background. If you have no notifications, this is also clearly stated.
Connection requests are also very clear to look at. All subjects are divided in the same way and subdivided based on where you might know these people. These sections are then interrupted once by proposals of pages that you might find interesting. This ensures that people remain committed and interactive with information that you provide.
Managing your network has also been included here in a separate screen. At the top there is a tab with "Manage my network". If you click on this, you get to see another screen with "My Pages" and "My Connections". Navigate further and you can follow or unfollow pages and people. The messaging part is also further highlighted by adding a messaging icon next to the delete button.

Bad

This page is very well structured and, apart from the limited white space, there is not much to criticize. Managing your network is very clearly indicated, but can't easily be viewed. It would be a good idea to replace this navigation section with an icon so that people can see at a glance that they can adjust things there. This would also further enhance the clarity, simplicity and tranquillity of the interface.

6.2.3 New post

Good

This page is very clean and simple. At the top you can clearly see your profile photo, so that the user is reminded on which profile they post this message. Especially for users who manage both a page and a profile, this can help them a lot to keep an overview. Users will then immediately be given the option to adjust the privacy of their post: who exactly will see the post you're making? Privacy is very important when posting on LinkedIn, as some messages can be seen through connections that can go up to third rank. Adjusting privacy is central to the design of the posting, which is very easy to use for its users.

The interface changing is a very good move from LinkedIn. Whenever the user is typing they don't only get a reminder to make their post professional, they also can easily attach all the elements they want. The normal layout, the screen the user sees when opening the New Post screen, is very simple and it's clear what the use and goal is. Since there is not much to see on the page, the attachment and other options are the most obvious and these components are therefore central.

Bad

This page is very clear and clean. This ensures that the focus is on adding a video, image or new photo. The second part that is central is adding a document, congratulating a colleague or finding an expert. The mix of text and symbols provides a clear line between the two groups of interactions: adding data or interact with connections. The way, adding a document is grouped into interacting with connections is non-conform. They should have added it by attaching a picture or video.

Find an expert doesn't fit here either. Find an expert is to look for a career coach in your existing network to find a new job, or if you need help with a graphic design, or even if you have problems with a tax return. What does this have to do with preparing a new message? According to our information architecture, this should be in our network category, since this has to do with your network.

LinkedIn also tries to give the screen extra interaction here by adapting the icons to the keyboard bar that appears when you start compiling your message. This is very interactive and easy to work with, since you can immediately start adding images, videos or files, even if you are typing something. They also try to ensure that you can easily go back to the first layout without the keyboard bar. You can do this by clicking on the three dots. However, this icon is not clear, since it is often used for "more options". Changing the icon to another icon that has more to do with removing the keyboard bar would be a good idea.

Additionally, you get the option to add a hashtag in a textual way. In the same bar it says that you can make sure the right people see your message, but if you click on it, nothing happens. This ensures that people get to see additional information. In the bar below you can also add an @ with an entry to a connection. This would be better placed next to the hashtag, to promote interaction again.

6.2.4 Notifications

Good

Knowing LinkedIn, there are again a lot of different types of notifications. You receive notifications of both connections and vacancies. You can congratulate connections on with their achievements, support a connection that starts a new career and view who has viewed your profile. This ensures that you have a good idea of how popular your profile is and how many people add you as a connection after a visit to your profile. If a user clicks on the vacancies, they will be directed to the vacancies.
With each report, the text shows exactly what can be done with the message, can you support or congratulate someone, as an example. This results in a relatively easy interaction: the options are always clear and the reason why you get a certain message is also clear.
You will also receive many of these notifications on your mobile, which means that people will open the application more. The notification section is where you stay informed of what others are doing in their professional career and where you can encourage and congratulate people. The notifications are actually a simplified version of the feed, only without videos and images. LinkedIn automatically creates all of these posts for you that your connections can interact with.
It is also very easy that the reports are divided according to date. So a user has a clear overview at any time about what their connections adapt to their profile and achieve in their career. Sending a congratulations is an easy and formal way to start a conversation. It is also always nice to receive a congratulation if you achieve something in your professional world.

Bad

Again the information architecture is not completely correct. A lot of these notifications are actually just a way for LinkedIn to let users navigate to the job openings page or to pay for a premium account, which in itself is nothing wrong with, but this again provides additional information that is not needed. LinkedIn tries in various ways to encourage their users to interact with the application. One of the ways to do this is to place references to another category in certain categories. This will ensure that users make more use of the different parts, but also ensures that there are many different ways to perform a function. An example of this is on our network page: you get the option to send a message to all connections, while a full screen is dedicated to sending and receiving messages. This ensures that we have an extra button for every user and this is also the case with the display of vacancies. In this page this also happens: you get notifications about job openings and from your profile.

The various options are also shown with a textual button. This makes the layout look very professional, but these buttons also take up a large space and constantly draw the user's eye to it. This is clearly done intentionally, but it ensures a busy interface and also ensures that people always have to read to know what action is linked to this button. A mix of a short text and a symbol could be appropriate.

6.2.5 Job offers

Good

At the top of the screen we have a bar that indicates a user's process. We see the number of saved vacancies, and the number of applications. We also see the user's career interests. This ensures that users have a good overview of how many jobs they find interesting and how many application processes they have started. If you stick a number on it, people can better assess themselves and get encouraged to make these numbers higher and collect more. For example, if you see that you have done a lot of applications, but you are not yet in a job, it may be a good idea to take lessons or adjust your application procedure. This also ensures that people have an easy overview of their vacancies.

A user then sees the number of job vacancies. These job offers are displayed based on your profile. Everything you enter in LinkedIn is therefore analysed and based on that vacancies are displayed. For each vacancy you see the name of the company, what the position is, where the position is, how many of your connections have applied, whether you are the first to apply and whether you can apply via LinkedIn.

Again a lot of information has been displayed, but the interface is very simple. All messages are the same size and only information that is useful is displayed. Also indicating how many applicants, there are given a good boost, since you are quick to respond to this. Applying for a job is encouraged even more by making it available through LinkedIn.

This interface is very easy on the eye and is easy to navigate through. The option to indicate whether a job is for you or not, can also give LinkedIn a lot of information about the types of jobs that a user finds interesting and saving job openings makes it easy for the user to keep an overview of his job openings.

Bad

Applying is placed central to this interface. This is very clear from the different ways in which LinkedIn indicates that you can apply. The number of applicants and applying via LinkedIn are displayed as the centre of the design. Once again there is nothing wrong with that, but this ensures that the tracking and selection of vacancies are placed in the background. The user must first click on a button to save or delete a vacancy. The user must also take an extra step to go to the vacancies they like, by first scrolling up and then being directed to another page by clicking on saved vacancies. The process can be made much easier by introducing a swipe system such as Instagram. We will discuss this further later on the basis of our prototypes.

6.2.6 Profile

Good

The profile is a tool for our user to attract new connections, so tune their profile properly is a must. The user can change their profile photo and cover photo, their name, title, school and location are then displayed.
Then a number of tips are given to improve the profile. There is a process bar that shows how strong the profile is. If the user then clicks on this progress bar, an additional sunscreen will appear with tips to improve the profile. Below the user will see an extra screen with tips on how to update their header. This ensures that the user is given many tools to make its profile stronger. LinkedIn tries to offer a user a lot of tools to achieve the professional goals through their platform.
At the bottom of the page, the user sees an example of what a recruiter or other person sees when they view the profile: an overview of experiences and a school history. This ensures that a user has an example of his profile and can adjust it so that recruiters would find them interesting.
LinkedIn has dedicated an entire section on their site to how you can make your profile interesting. There is also a similar page dedicated to how companies can tune their page to what users can find interesting and how best to respond to their wishes. All of this is possible because LinkedIn collects its own data, analyses it and then makes decisions from it. These decisions are then communicated to users. It is as if users can learn through their own behaviour and thus broaden and improve their professional network.
The general settings can also be found in the profile, which is a very good idea. The profile is the least used after you have used the service for a while. Users fine tune the profile during the start of use. Once their profile is set up, it's time to post and make new connections. The profile is only adjusted if the user has reached a milestone, such as recruiting a new job.
This is the same for institutions. When opening the application, many users will fine-tune the settings once and then do not or rarely use them. Grouping the profile and all settings can therefore be a good idea.

Bad

The profile is a tool for users to get to know their new connections and to make their own profile as attractive as possible. As mentioned above, LinkedIn tries to offer its user as many tools as possible to make its profile better and stronger. On the profile screen one displays a dashboard of how many users view your profile and a number indicating how much activity you have on their platform. Then they also give the user a lot of tips to make your profile better and stronger. This is all very good, but the way LinkedIn does this is very chaotic. The profile is a representation of what other users will see when they view your profile and the tips overshadow this.
The first thing you see is a presentation of your profile photo and cover photo, but then you see how strong your profile is, with the option to see more tips. Then there is again a screen with tips. Then you see an info box. This is a box in which the user can write a text. For example, if it is looking for a job, it can write here what function that user is looking for.

The next info box is again an information box, with information that is private to the user. The layout is so unclear that LinkedIn must indicate that an info box is private to you. Are you still folowing in what is private and what is public? Neither am I..
The problem with the profile is that LinkedIn wants to give you an idea of how popular and strong your profile is and at the same time you want to give an example of your profile. People are used to working with services such as Facebook and Instagram. You have a profile on which you can change some basic things. Facebook and Instagram do not show you how to tune your profile.
A good idea could be to give the user a separate representation of his profile. Here he or she can only change the elements on his profile. On another tab, the user receives tips and information about how he or she can improve his profile.
In the picture, the different sections that are private are marked blue, the ones that are public are unmarked. This is to give you an idea how unclear the private and public is to a user making use of the application for the first time.

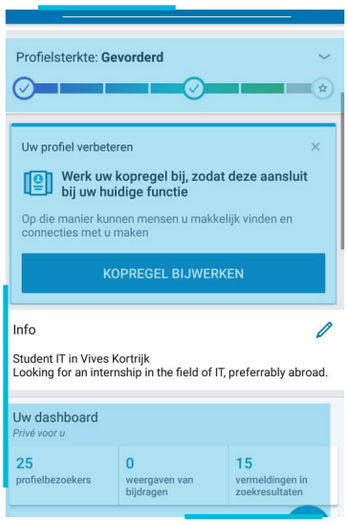


Fig 11 Example of the public and private parts of the profile section in LinkedIn

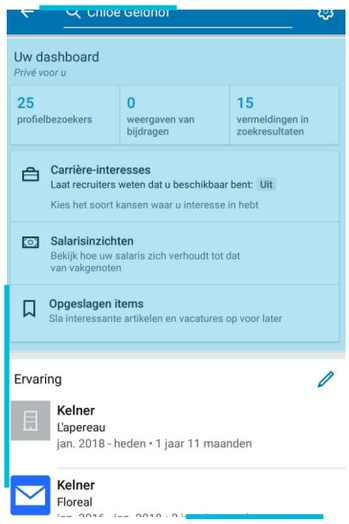


Fig 12 Example of the public and private parts of the profile section in LinkedIn

Conclusion

LinkedIn generally has a pleasant interface. Small and clean fonts are used. The colours are sober and the image is professional.
LinkedIn tries to give the user a set of tools and to make the categories of the software blend into each other. If you are scrolling through the notifications you can go to job offers; when modifying your professional network, you can go to messages and so on. This encourages the user to let the various functions of the application be used, but the user doesn't have a good overview over their task and the navigation.
If a user is performing a certain task, it is better to let the user decide when this task ends. You can indicate to the user where all functions are at the start and then let him decide for himself when to use them.

LinkedIn therefore has a problem displaying too much information. It also doesn't help that many of their buttons are filled with text and a few symbols are present. And even if there are symbols, they are not applied consistently.
Conformity, focus and transparency is what LinkedIn has provided for a vertical service that is adapted to every type of user. LinkedIn always tries to guide user interaction by offering them a range of tools. The categories merge with each other and as a user, you easily get lost between the different tools and services that LinkedIn offers. For example, a person like Jolene might be fine-tuning her profile and easily distracted by the quizzes and other tips that are displayed on it. Before Jolene knows it, she could end up on the vacancy page through her dashboard.

User Control

Since LinkedIn often tries to steer the user in its behaviour and try to weave the categories together, the user loses control of his task. Users cannot concentrate on one task and can also fulfil a task in different ways. Sending a message, for example, can be done via the message screen, but also via the network screen.
The user loses control of his tasks. Control is a very important term in User Experience, since the user always needs to feel like it's in control over the application, not the application or service having control over it. The user chooses when he starts a task and it ends.
A textbook example of giving a user no control over a game is hiding the clock: the user no longer has a clue about how long it has actually been using the service. Once you give the user a clock, it can choose when to start and stop playing the game. If you set up your game attractive enough, the user will choose to play the game longer, regardless of whether the clock is displayed or not.
An application or service must, as it were, be set up as a platform with which the user can fulfil his goals in his own way and according to exactly how they want it. This means that we can give the user the option to do what they want, but also the option to get rid of what they want. For example, if a user removes a vacancy, they must be able to post it again if he or she is interested in it later.

6.3. Define which information will be displayed per category or screen

Normally I would first determine which categories I will use to structure the information in. Since LinkedIn has already done this for me, I could skip this step. These categories can be seen as a kind of delimitation of information. The user knows that it will only, find similar information in this part of the navigation section. These categories can be arranged according to functions, theme or logically grouped tasks. In the case of LinkedIn, the categories are based on function.
Users who want to be social can use the network and feed function, users who want to maintain their network can use the notification section, and so on. The information is therefore limited and classified based on the category. First, we describe which tools we will display in the various screens on the basis of text and then we proceed to writing

out use cases per screen. These use cases are a schematic representation of our information architecture.

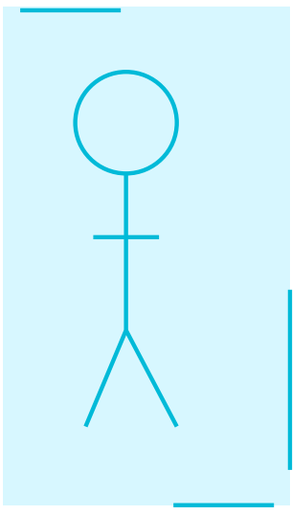
6.3.1 Card Sorting

The technique we use in this thesis is card sorting. I started by writing down all the possible functions of LinkedIn on different cards. I then had a number of people subdivide these cards into the aforementioned categories. The results are summarized in our description.

6.4 Description of change in the functionality

6.4.1 Feed

The information architecture in feed won't be changed. All posts and interactions are logically displayed here. This became clear out of our Card Sorting method. All test subjects choose to put the interactions 'displaying of posts' and 'interacting with posts' with the feed category.
The interactions they didn't sort with the feed category was 'following pages' and 'adding new connections'. These features are also included in the feed category, because



Display posts with
- -> what connections find interesting
- -> what connections post
- -> what connections follow
- -> what connections share
- -> what connections change in their profile
- -> what connections interact with
- -> advertisements

Interact with posts:
- -> find interesting
- -> comment
- -> share content

Follow pages

Go to the profile of a connection

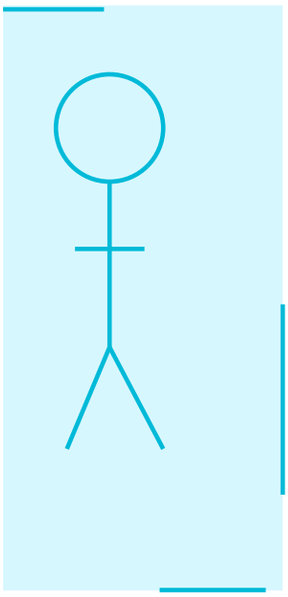
Add new connections

Fig 13 Use case for the feed with changes

it makes it easier for the user to add new connections or pages. Other people did sort these last two interactions with the feed category.

6.4.2 Network

The same goes for the information architecture from network, it won't be adapted at all. Most of the people who didn't sort 'follow new pages' or 'follow new hashtags' with the network category, paired these interactions with the feed category. We will only alter the way we present these different types of interactions. The current way of present connections, pages, hashtags and then again connections is illogical and could be split up into multiple screens.



Manage network:

-> delete connections

-> message connections

->unfollow pages

Accept or decline new connections

Add new connections on base of

-> history

-> same functions

-> location

Follow new, popular pages

Follow new hashtags

Display extra suggestions for new connections

Find and expert

Giving a tool to compare their income with others

Fig 14 Use case of the network screen with changes

6.4.3 New Post

The features of the new post category will be adapted, though. A lot of people put the congratulating of a colleague in the feed or notification category and this is currently already heavily advertised in these categories. We will only include the option to congratulate someone on the interface if this is possible and can be done in a way that is transparent, clean and conform; otherwise we will only offer this feature in the network category.
Find an expert to help is also a feature that clearly belongs in the network category and nearly all our test subjects also classified it like this. One person thought find an expert had more to do with messaging and didn't even include it in our information architecture.

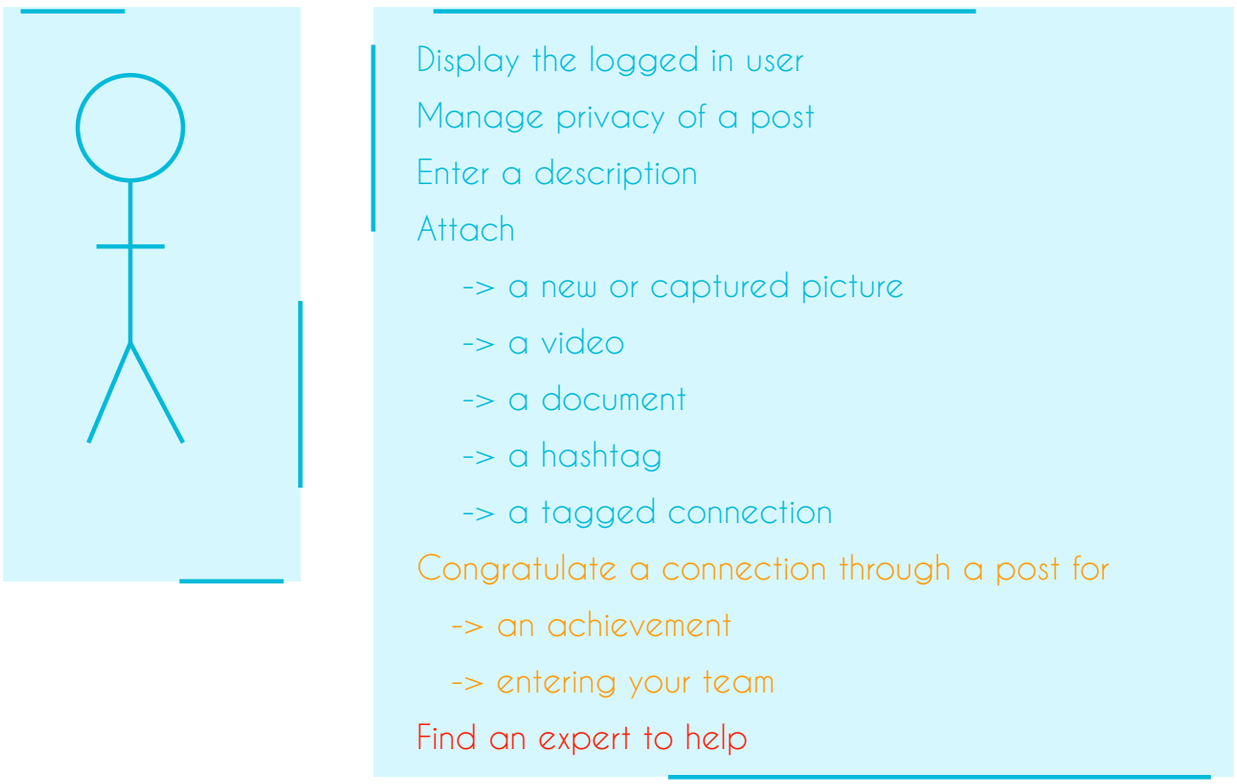


Fig 15 Use case of new post screen with changes

6.4.4 Notifications

The notification part of LinkedIn is a kind of mix of notifications about all the categories:

- From the feed we get messages about our connections
- From the job offers we get messages about new job offers
- From the network we get messages about new connections
- From the profile we get messages about how often people interact with your profile

We will make sure the notification part gets a little more focus. Because this page is supposed to keep you updated on all other categories, the focus is gone. The user gets to see a list with so many different notifications, information and different interactions that the eye gets overloaded on it. It takes a user a while to get to know what each message means and what the possibilities are as far as the interactions are. Our users also took a while in reading all the different cards concerning the tools and notifications.
A lot of these notifications are used to keep user informed about activity with the profile, but could easily be replaced by the already existing functions in the different categories. The number of new job offers is also displayed in the job offer category. By removing all notifications from profile and job offers, we focus the user on the connection part of LinkedIn. All these messages are about achievements and congratulating people in these achievements. In our interaction design the user is able to congratulate another by going to the notification page and these posts are displayed in the feed.

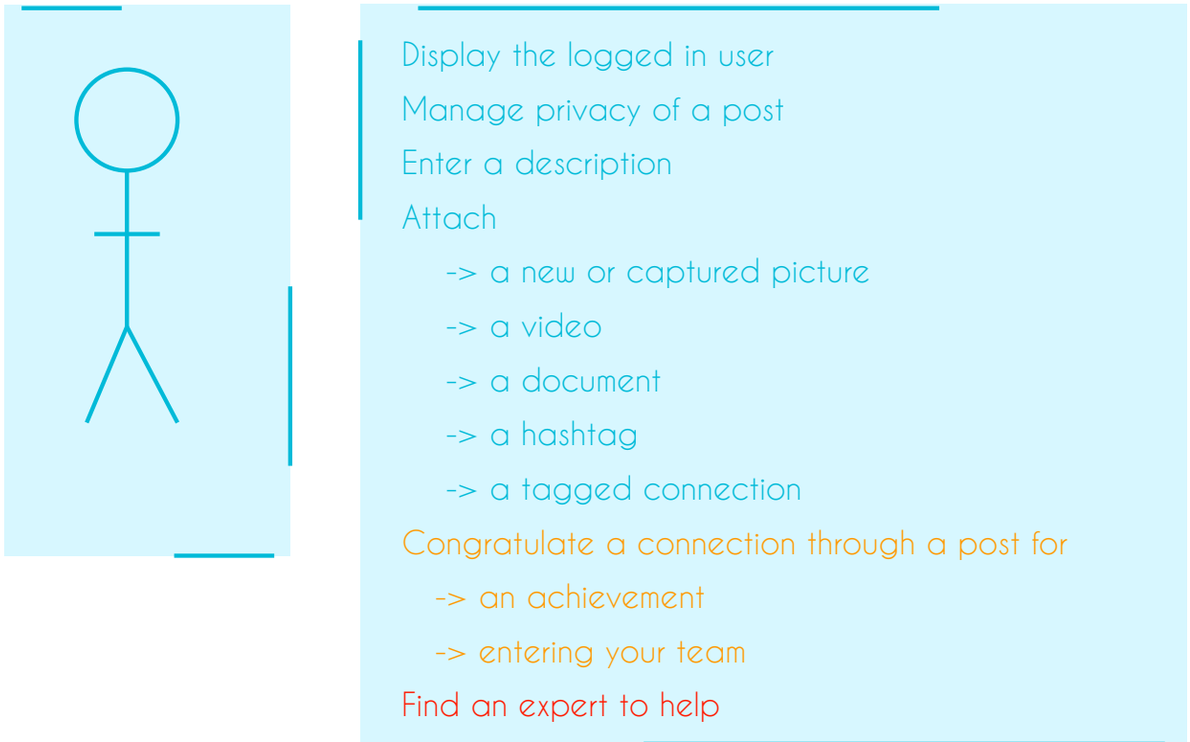


Fig 16 Use case of notification screen with changes

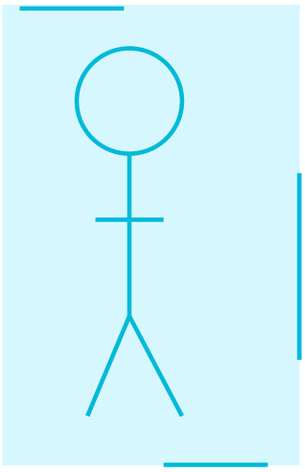
6.4.5 Job offers

This category we won't change at all. We will only change the way icons are displayed to make sure managing is easier.

Fig 17 Use case of job offer screen with changes

6.4.6 Profile

This category is the one we are going to change a lot. Because this is also a central part of the interface, this category is at the moment the most chaotic and important one. When our user opens this screen, the first thing the user will see is a page full of new posts and information about LinkedIn, tips and tricks and settings. If the user then scrolls to the next screen, it sees a representation of the information on their profile and can add achievements. Everything that has to do with changing the information and tuning the interface is going to be with the representation of the profile. The achievements and interests will also be displayed here.
The service to compare your income with that of connections got put in the job offers or network category by our test subjects. I think it goes perfectly with the network category.
Managing job offers and articles and adding new connections will be scrapped from the interaction design, because it serves no purpose other than to confuse the user.



Changing public information of a profile
Giving tools to better their profile
Giving general tips and information
Changing the settings
Displaying the users profile
Displaying
-> how many users search for the name
-> how many users look at the profile
-> how many the users has posted
Giving a tool to compare their income with others
Managing saved job offers and articles
Adding
-> achievements
-> interests
-> connections

Fig 18 Use case of profile screen with changes

7. Drawing out first low level paper prototype

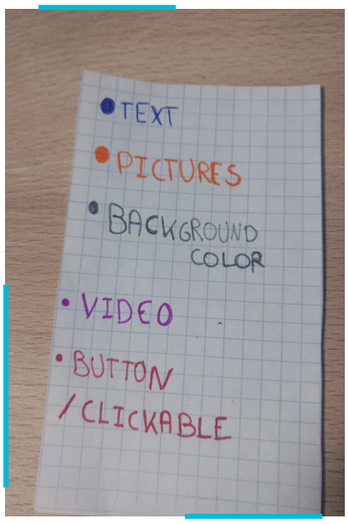


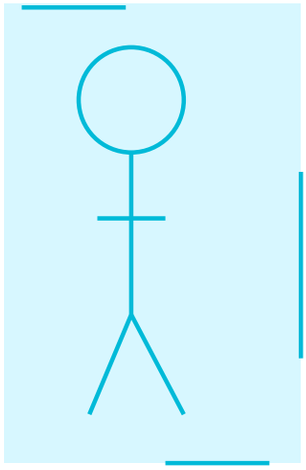
Fig 19 Note I made with the colors of all elements incorporated into the paper prototype

The next step in our process is the processing of all information in a paper prototype. As mentioned before, there are different types of prototypes. In our example, I make a low-level prototype. This means that we only take into account the way in which we display the information and we do not further think about graphic elements. This gives us the freedom to ensure that the prototypes are easy to navigate and that we have not made any mistakes when creating use cases. Once we have finished these prototypes, we can use these to do a first walkthrough with our customers, in this example my mentor. For the walkthrough I also made an extra legend with all colours and what their meaning is.

7.1 Description of paper prototype per screen

A paper prototype is an interactive drawing or sketch of what the end result will look like. A lot of the elements I drew out were different pieces of paper, so that I could interact with a test user during the walk-through. For example, if a user saves a job offer, the counter has to change, etc.

7.1.2 Notification screen



Displaying notifications from connections that:

-> achieve a new goal

-> have a birthday

-> have an anniversay of achievement

Fig 20 New use case describing the notification screen

I started compiling the notification screen. This was a deliberate choice, since this is the simplest screen to set up, but it already has a number of elements such as buttons and photos. So here we can focus on how we will display information without having to take into account many different types of information and functions. The use case seemed also the simplest for notifications. In the original category all notifications were included and this part was seen as the place where a user can see all notifications from the other categories.
I shifted the focus to notifications related to congratulations. This means that the congratulation function is removed from the "new post" category and the messages with congratulation options from the feed are also moved completely to this category. This gives the user a clear overview of all milestones that reach connections in their professional world.
In the first version I largely kept the version of LinkedIn, but I replace the textual buttons with icons. If I can't find clear icons, I can always add text. To create extra white space between all the different information, we float the interactive buttons over the background of the message.
The text on the buttons is related to the icon and can be clearly aligned. Since all icons are aligned below each other, this gives a structured and calm image.

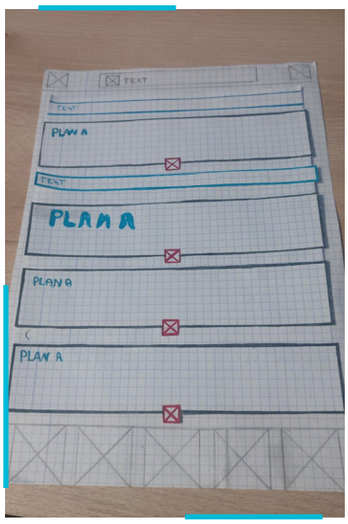


Fig 21 Vertical version of the notification screen

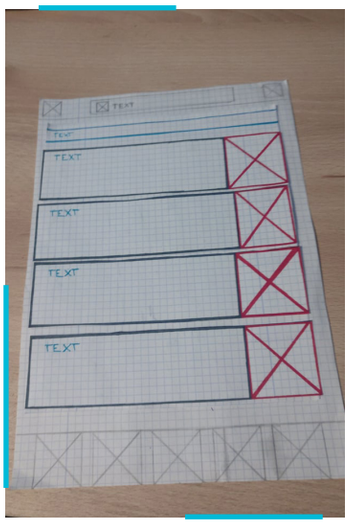


Fig 22 Horizotal version of the notification screen

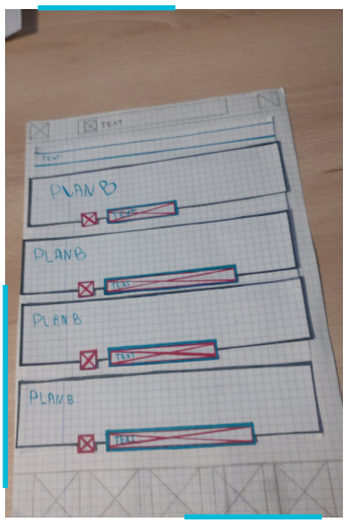


Fig 23 Vertical version of the notification screen

In the next version I made a horizontal version: the text and any photos are aligned on the left and a large icon with the possible interaction is aligned with the other. This ensures that the button is very clear and also catches the eye. This also encourages the user to use this button more.
A possible problem with this layout might be that I have too little room to display the different types of information on the left. We have to remain consistent in our layout: if I choose this view in the notifications, I must extend this throughout the applica-

tion. Especially with the feed where I have to display a lot of information, this can be a problem in some situations. I may have to display multiple buttons and this can make for an inconsistent design.

7.1.2 New Post screen

The next worked-out screen was of course the new post screen, since it is the simplest.

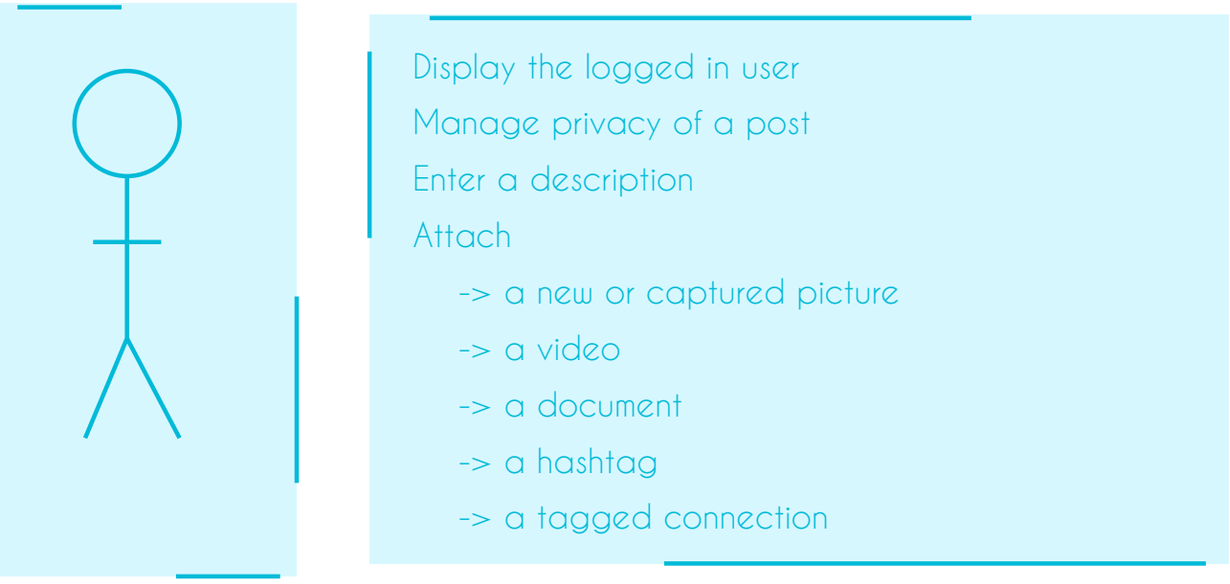


Fig 24 New use case of new post screen

We will not change much here either, except to omit some things and simply move some elements.
In the first version we have four buttons, where the user can add something to a post: a video, a new photo or a photo from a gallery and a document. In the original layout, LinkedIn had other options, but we moved those. In the second version, the method of adding photos is changed to 1 button. If the users click on this, they will be given the choice between taking a new photo or adding an already taken photo. This is a default option for most applications, so even though this is adding a step more to the process, most users are already used to this way of adding pictures.
The second version also displays the tag and hashtag option when opening the screen.

When the user starts typing, they see two bars appear above his keyboard, exactly as he sees in the current LinkedIn layout. In the top bar the user sees the options for hashtags and tagging connections. In the bar below, they can easily add extra things to his post. The number of buttons here depends on the chosen version mentioned above. If the user then clicks on one of the buttons in the bottom bar, his keyboard is

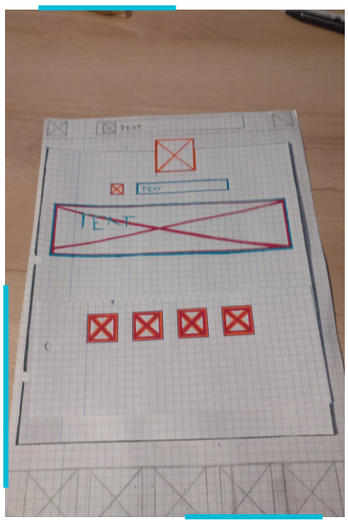


Fig 25 Prototype of the new post screen with four buttons

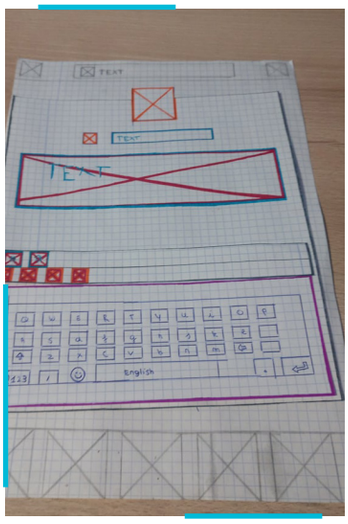


Fig 26 Prototype of new post screen with keyboard

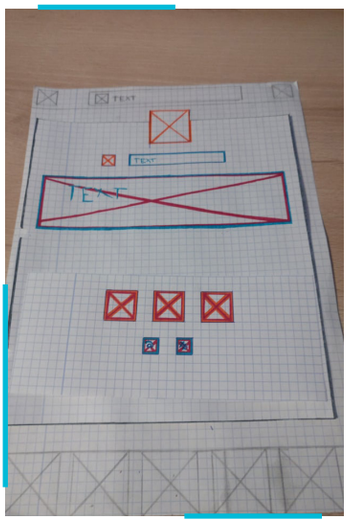
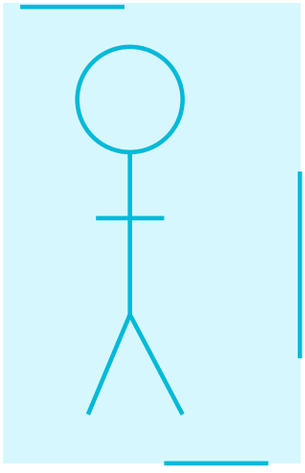


Fig 27 Prototype of the new post screen with three buttons

hidden again and ends up on the first page. This icon can be aligned on the right for extra clarity. In this way the user clearly sees a difference between the buttons that have to do with adding extra media and the button to hide his keyboard. This element was not included in the paper prototype.

7.1.3 Job Offer screen



Displaying and managing
-> job offers
-> applications for jobs
Putting the users on a list for recruiters
Displaying job offers on base of
-> relevency
-> non relevency
Letting a user apply for a job

Fig 28 New use case of the job offer screen

The purpose of the Job Offer screen is to meet the needs of the job-seeking user. This means that these offers are to be managed and viewed. In this screen I have omitted

a lot of information that has nothing to do with the job offers. The focus is also placed even more on organizing and applying for jobs.
When the user first opens this screen, the user gets to see job offers, ranked by how well they match the profile and how recent they are. There are two bars at the top of the page. I will from now on call the top one a circle navigation. This bar indicates whether we are on the new job offer page or if we are on the management page. Below it is a bar with three counters: jobs that a user likes, jobs for which a user has applied and recruiters who have contacted the user. If the user clicks on this, the circle navigation changes and the user can start managing his job offers. Managing job offers is not included in my paper prototype.

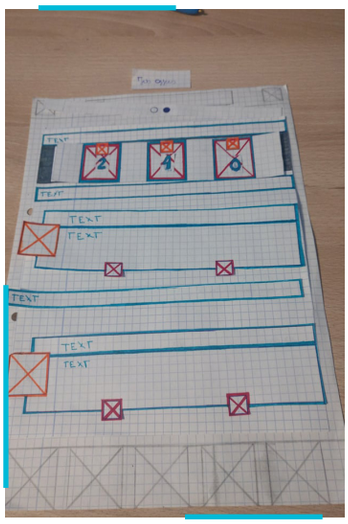


Fig 29 Prototype of the job offer screen with floating buttons and counters with numbers at the top

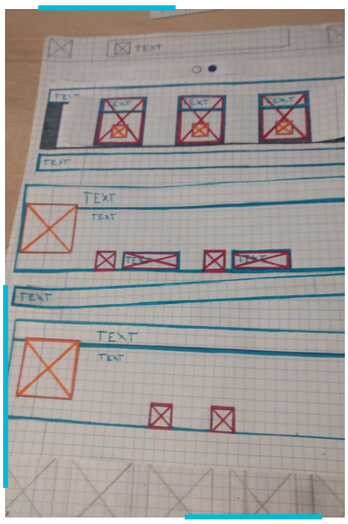


Fig 30 Prototype of the job offer screen with icons and text as buttons

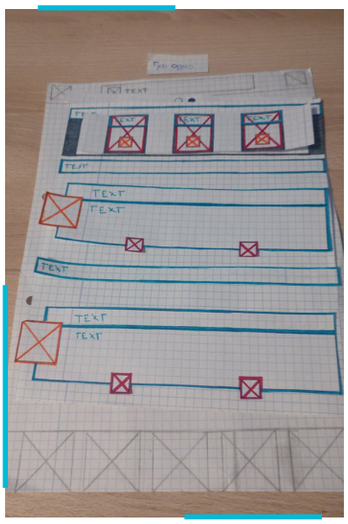


Fig 31 Prototype of the job offer screen with floating icons for buttons and floating images, icons at the top of the counter

The first time a user opens this page, they will also receive a message explaining how they can easily save job offers. The two buttons on the screen indicate the application option: if the user uses both LinkedIn and the normal way, there are two buttons. If the user swings an application to the right, it is stored under interesting job offers. When the user slides the job offer, it either saves the job offer or deletes the job offer. In settings the user can always display the deleted job offers in case they made a mistake or changed their mind on a job offer.

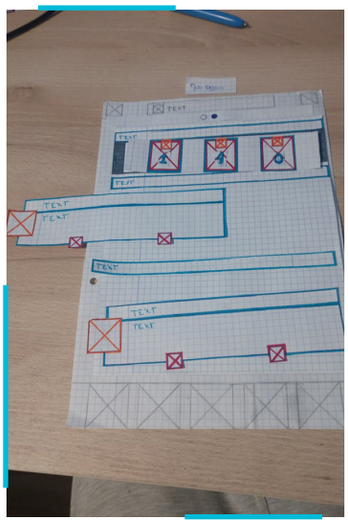


Fig 32 Prototype of the job offer screen with interaction

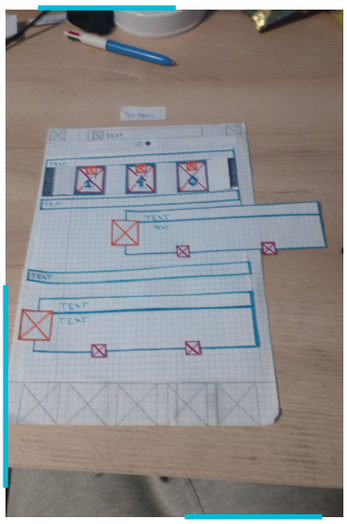
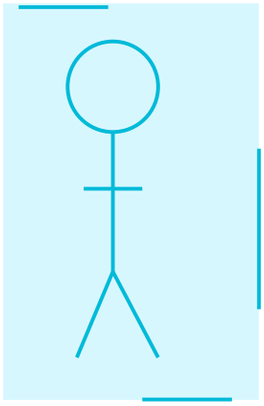


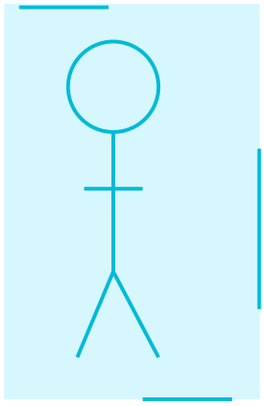
Fig 33 Prototype of the job offer screen with interaction

7.1.4 Profile screen



Giving tools to better their profile
Giving general tips and information
Changing the settings
Displaying
-> how many users search for the name
-> how many users look at the profile
-> how many the users has posted

Fig 34 New use case of profile part one



Changing public information of a profile
Displaying the users profile
Adding
-> achievements
-> interests

Fig 35 New use case of profile part two

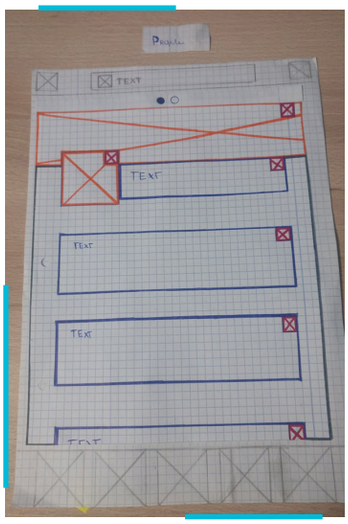


Fig 36 Prototype of what the example of a profile would look like

The profile was the biggest mystery in LinkedIn. There was so much information that has nothing to do with the profile. This meant that the designer who made this screen no longer knew how it could create clarity between what was personal and what was not. I have solved this by again introducing a circle navigation.
When the user opens this page, they will see an example of their profile. All this information can also be seen by others and here too the user can add a milestone. This is not included in the paper prototype, since this would work in the same way as LinkedIn has now implemented: with a floating button.

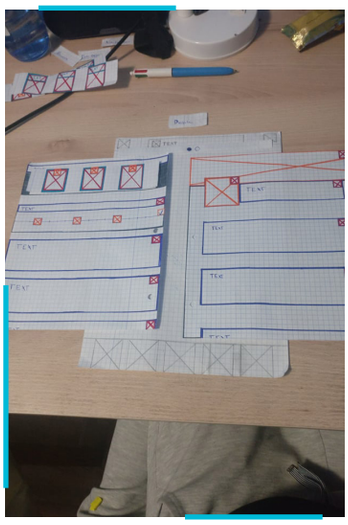


Fig 37 Porototype showing interaction of profile section

If the user swipes to the right or clicks on a button, it will be directed to the other page. I do not yet know which page will be displayed first: the profile page or the management page. Both pages are very important. I will have to pay a lot of attention to this during the next phase.

On this page we find all the tips that LinkedIn first displayed with the profile. During the research phase I noticed that LinkedIn has a site with a number of tips and tricks to build a better LinkedIn profile, based on what type of user you are. A number of videos and manuals can be found on their site. It might be a good idea to include these tips and tricks on this page. This way, all LinkedIn users can immediately find tips, instead of having to search for their site.

The progress bar can also be displayed here, along with a counter with the num-

ber of people who visit your profile, people who visit you and views of contributions. I also changed a lot about the top navigational bars.

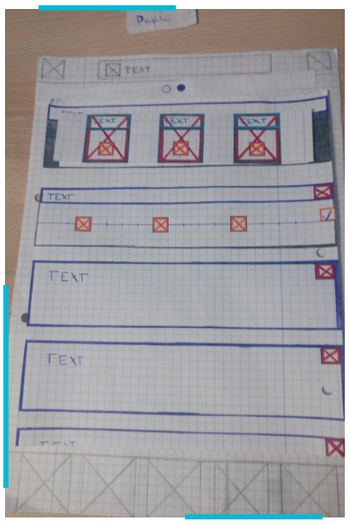


Fig 38 Prototype of the second part of the profile with progressbar and counters with text and symbols

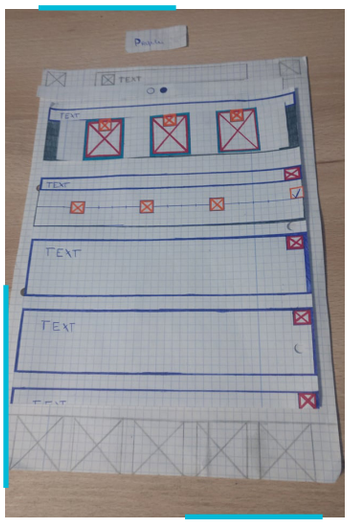


Fig 39 Prototype of the second part of the profile with progressbar and counters with only symbols

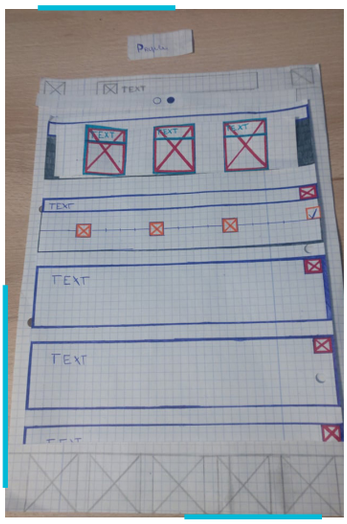
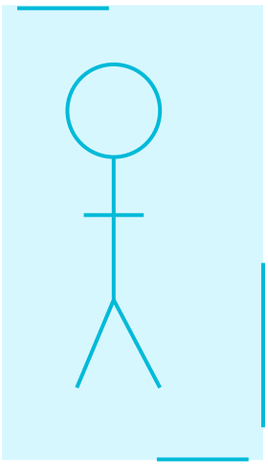


Fig 40 Prototype of the second part of the profile with progressbar and counters with only text

7.1.5 Feed screen



Display posts with
- -> what connections find interesting
- -> what connections post
- -> what connections follow
- -> what connections share
- -> what connections change in their profile
- -> what connections interact with
- -> advertisements

Interact with posts:
- -> find interesting
- -> comment
- -> share content

Follow pages

Go to the profile of a connection

Add new connections

Fig 41 New use case for the feed screen

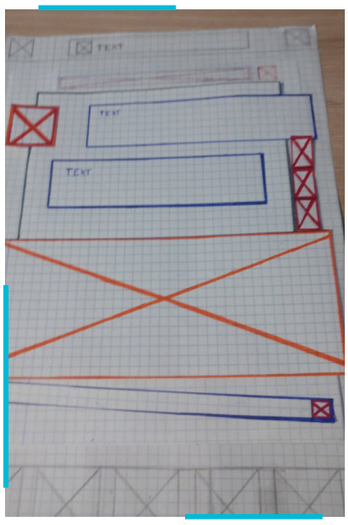
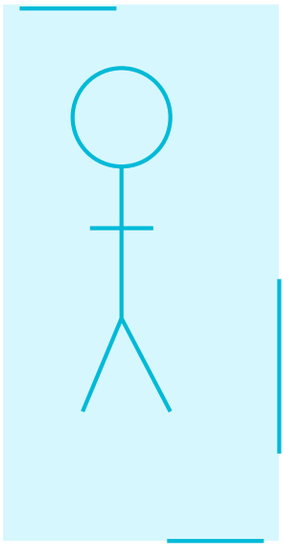


Fig 42 Prototype for feed element

Since the feed screen has a large number of different types of messages, I chose to display one message per screen. A big problem with LinkedIn with the feed is that some messages are small, others are large, with some you have to scroll to see everything and with others the videos are so large that you have to click on them before you can see the full screen. By ensuring that each message is the same size and occupies the entire screen, the focus is maintained with that message and the user can more easily recognize the different types of messages. If the user swipes upwards, they can see the following message.
I also tried to play around with the "interesting - comment - share" bar that I will now call the sharebar. I tried to place it on the side, but on closer inspection this is clearer at the bottom of the page.

7.1.6 Network screen



Manage network:
- -> delete connections
- -> message connections
- ->unfollow pages

Accept or decline new connections

Add new connections on base of
- -> history
- -> same functions
- -> location

Follow new, popular pages

Follow new hashtags

Display extra suggestions for new connections

Find and expert

Fig 43 New use case for the network screen

When a user opens the network screen, these two sections are shown: one of these is new connection requests and the following are examples of new people (or pages) that you might know. Again, I made three versions, each with a different format for the new friend request.

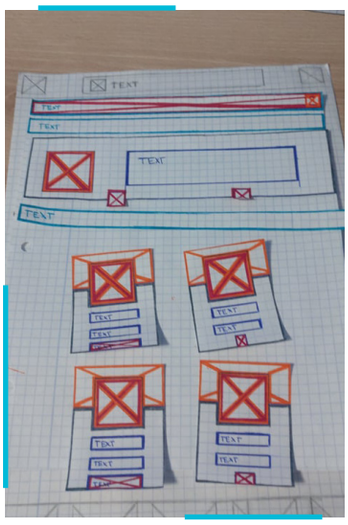


Fig 44 Prototype of network screen with a new connection offer with floating buttons

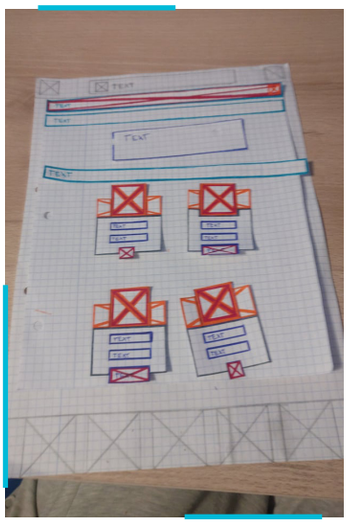


Fig 45 Prototype of network screen without new connection requests and floating images

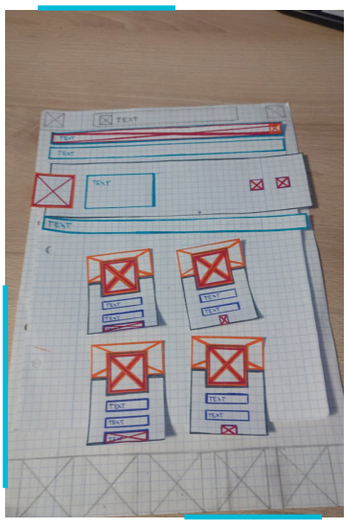


Fig 46 Prototype of network screen with a different new connection request

If the user has no new connection requests, a text will appear. Again I have made two layouts for the proposed pages or requests: one of them has a larger cover photo, while the next one has more white space.

7.2 Evaluation of paper prototype

The next step in our process is to evaluate these paper prototypes. We make prototypes not only to get a better picture of the design, the information architecture and possible problems with layout, but also to involve the user in the structure of the interface at an early process. One of the most important elements in User Centered Development is an early evaluation of the functionality and usability of the interface.
In my case, I had a short walkthrough and a discussion with one of my mentors. I have shown him all my designs and discussed them further. He told me that everything was very clear, but that I had put too much effort into designing my prototype. Prototypes can be very useful, but they can also take a lot of time. This is something I noticed and also the reason why I did not include certain elements in the prototype.

8. Development of a software prototype.

The next step is to create a neat, software-based prototype. A software prototype is often a very clear design that is graphically very well developed. If a user uses this prototype for the first time, he or she might think that the application is finished. The interface often looks finished, but if the user clicks on a certain button, nothing will happen. These prototypes have been developed to ensure that the developer can involve users in the structure of the interface and give everyone a clear picture of what the finished product will look like.
During the walkthrough in the evaluation we discussed a number of different ways in which I can make this prototype. A number of software tools are available on the market to design prototypes, such as Adobe XD and Flutter. In this project we will disregard all these software tools and focus on Figma.

8.1 Working out the notification screen

Again, I started my work on the simple screens. This gives me the chance to get to know the software better and to develop a basic corporate identity. I knew in advance that I would stay in the same style as LinkedIn. Their two navigation bars at the top and bottom of the page remain exactly the same. I also knew that a sans serif letter would be a very good fit, so that they are easier to read and provide a calmer image.
The background of the various messages is light grey and additional navigation bars are a slightly darker shade. The letters also get a grey colour, so that everything forms a beautiful whole.

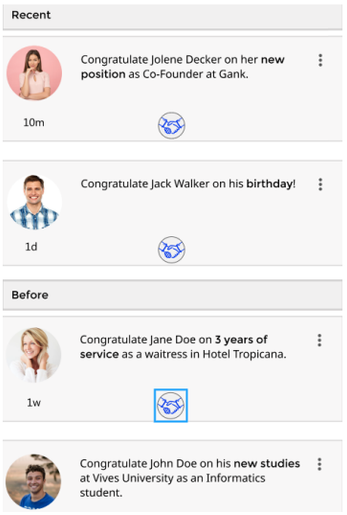


Fig 46 Example of the interface with black text

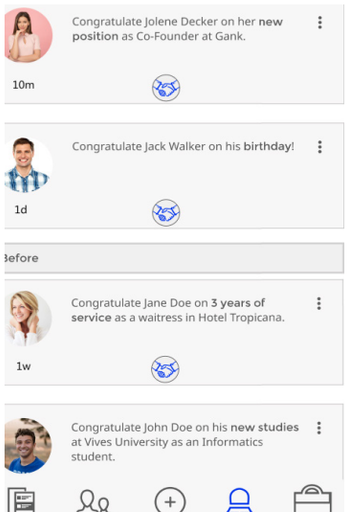


Fig 47 Example of the interface with gray text

Two versions were developed that can serve as an example during a subsequent walkthrough with the customer. In the first version, the buttons are fully included

in the background of the notification. In the second version, the buttons float over the edge of the notification. This ensures that we can place the different notifications closer together, but the user still sees a lot of white space.

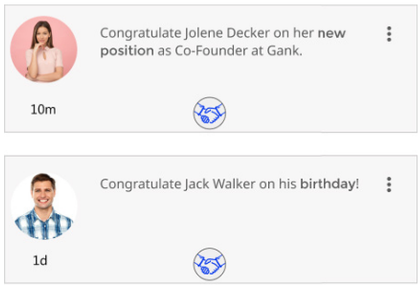


Fig 48 First version without floating buttons

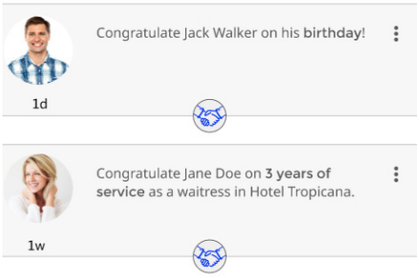


Fig 49 Second version with floating buttons

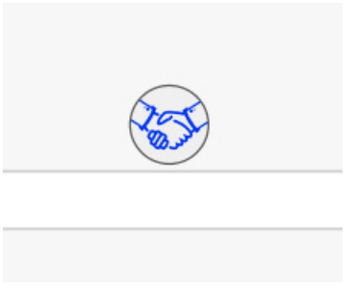


Fig 50 Congratulations button with shaking hands

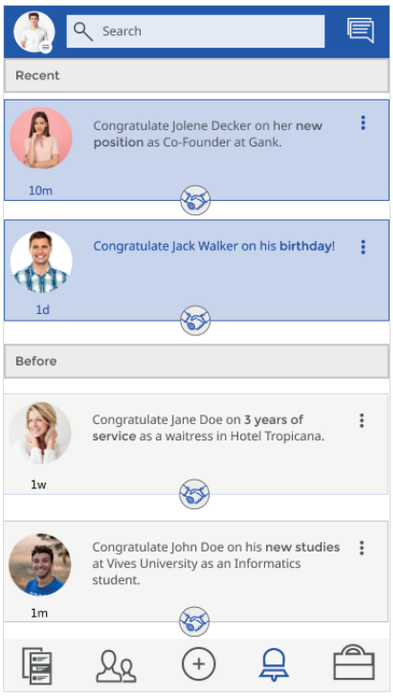
The next challenge was to congratulate the connections for their various milestones in their professional world. This was a challenge since I found it difficult to display "congratulations" in a professional manner. I have therefore made several buttons for this. The "handshake" was the best for me, because when I saw the result of my icon, I could immediately see two businessmen congratulating each other by shaking hands.

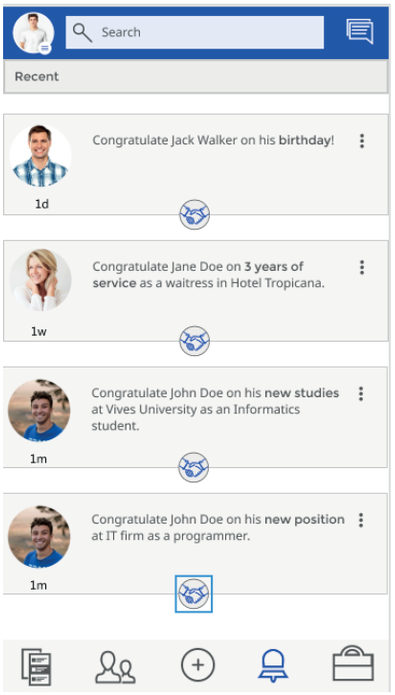
The final step was to add "interaction". In the case of the notifications, this meant adding unread notifications, navigation bars indicating history and an extra page that is displayed if the user wishes to congratulate a connection.
In my version, the focus is entirely on congratulating your connections. Vacancies, recent searches and reports regarding vacancies are completely disregarded.

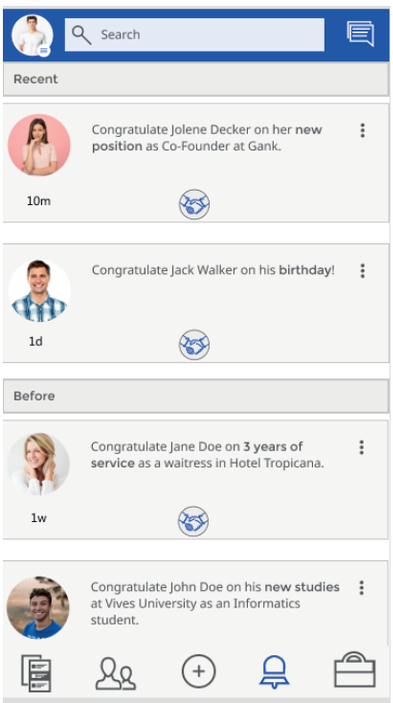
Notifications

Original

Endresult

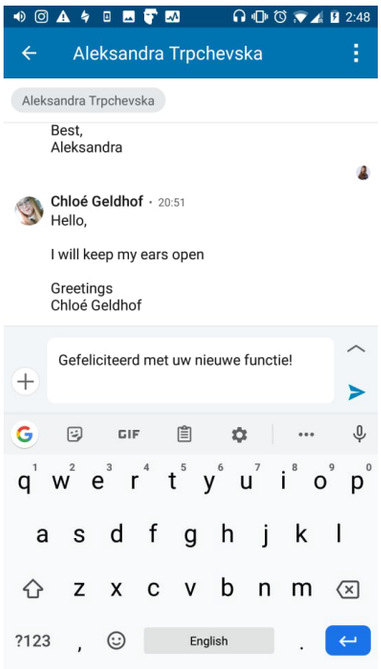




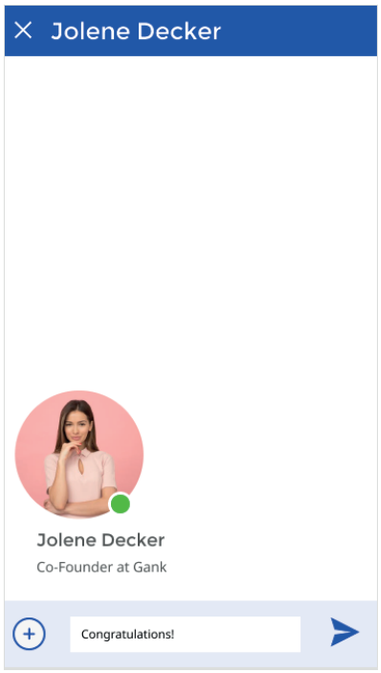


Notifications

Original



Endresult



8.2 Working out of New Postscreen

As in the paper prototype, I made two types: the first has three buttons, instead of four. In the first version, the user is therefore given the option to immediately take a photo and add it, while in the second version the user must first click on the picture button before being given the choice to take a new photo or add an existing photo.

Fig 51 The four buttons with instant picture and already saved pictures directly displayed on the first screen

Fig 53 Three buttons where the user gets another option when clicking on the add-pciture button

If the user then starts to type a text, they will again see the two bars of options above the keyboard. This gives the user the option to add extra media while typing. The only thing that changes here is the button that ensures that the keyboard is gone and the user navigates to the first page. This was in the original design three dots, as you often see at buttons for "more options". I also made sure this button is the only one that is placed on the other side of the bar, indicating that this is a cancellation.

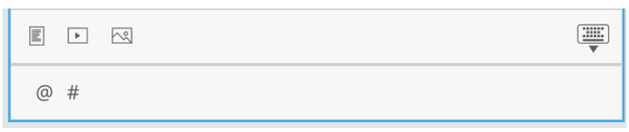


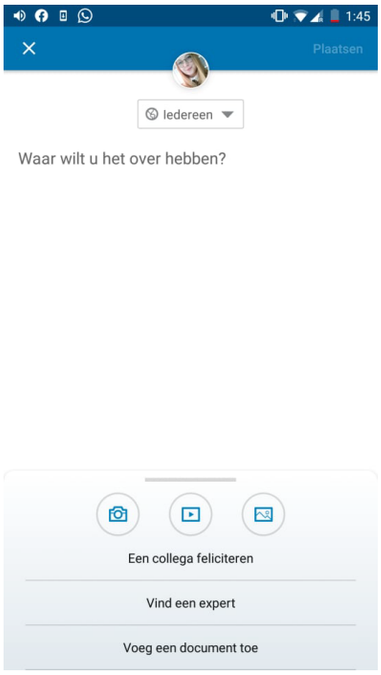
Fig 54 Extra bar with three buttons that's shown when the user is typing

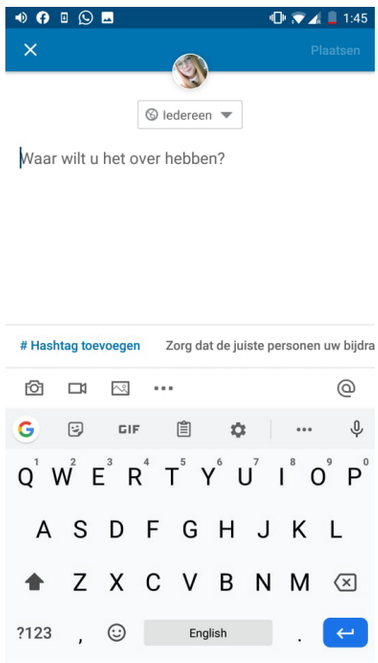
Fig 55 Extra bar with four buttons that's shown when the user is typing

I have followed the example of LinkedIn and also omitted the search option and profile option from this screen and replaced it with a blue bar with the profile photo of the user in the centre. His privacy can also be seen below. This is a very good element that LinkedIn uses and we will keep it.

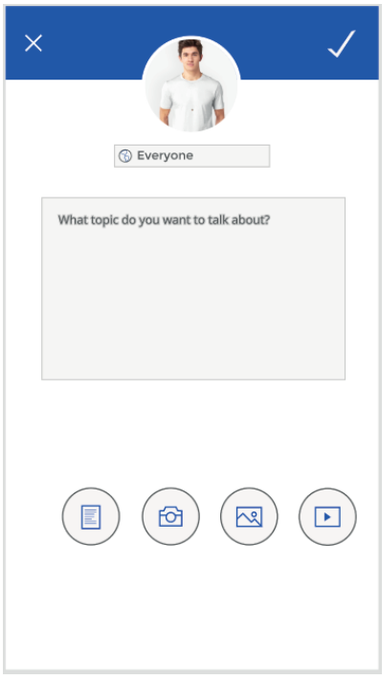
New Post

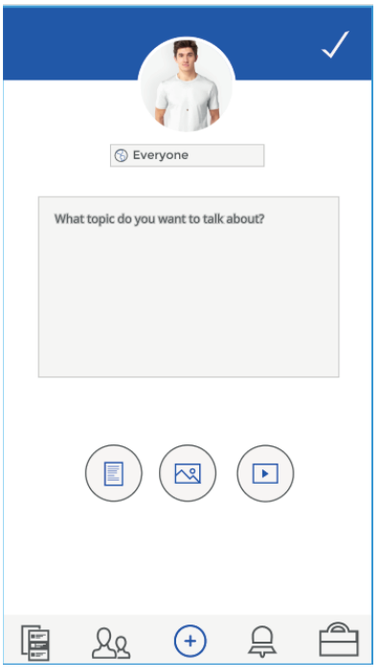
Original

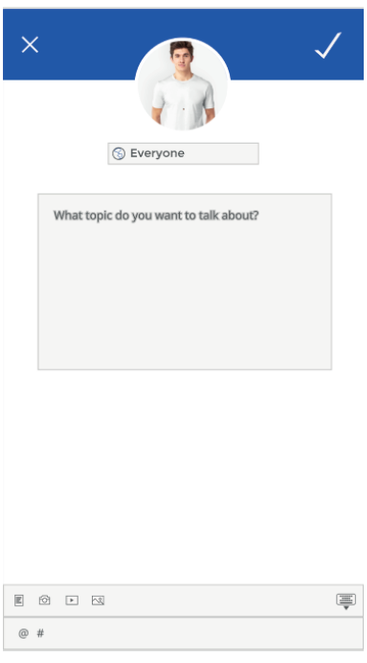


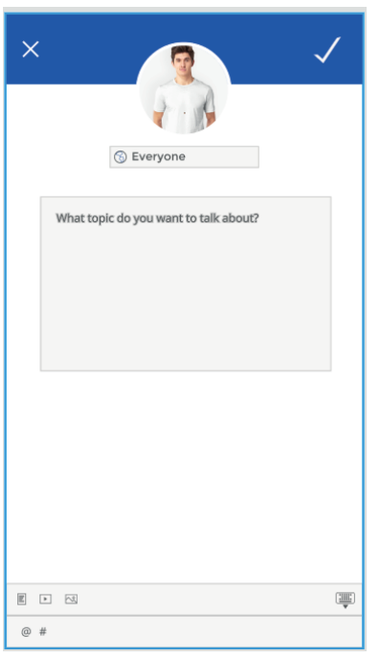


Endresult









8.3 Working out the job offer screen

The next page is the job offer screen. We start with a circle navigation bar at the top that indicates whether the user sees new job offers or is managing his current saved job offers. Next we see a navigation bar that is almost the same as that of LinkedIn, with a few minor adjustments. In LinkedIn's original design we had a navigation bar with three categories: saved job offers, job offers for which the user applied (each with his own counter) and then a tab with options for recruiters. I have adjusted this to three tabs, each with a counter. In the third tab, the user also receives notifications about the number of recruiters who have viewed his profile. In the original design of LinkedIn this was all represented by text, while in my design I adjusted all this to symbols. To be sure, I have made two extra versions of this bar, so that I can easily adjust this element, should this be necessary.

Fig 56 Top bar of job offer screen unselected

Fig 57 Top bar of job offer screen when selected

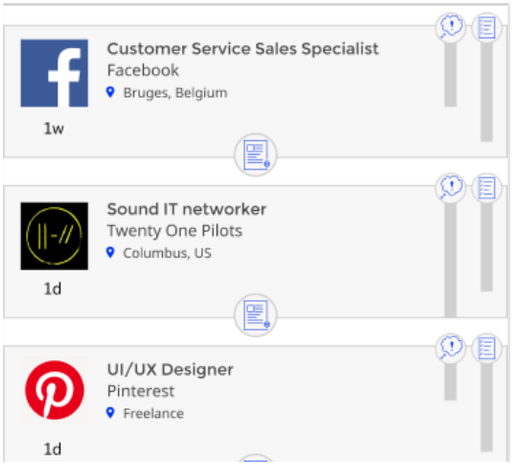


Fig 58 Job offers themselves

Then we see the job offers themselves. On the side you see the photo of the page, with a description of the job itself next to it. First the position, then the company, the place and the time at which this was posted. In LinkedIn's original design, job offers are displayed based on the relevance and history of a user, which I have converted into two symbols: interest and history. Interest is based on the interaction of the user, while history is based on what the user has entered on his profile in terms of experience.
At the bottom of every job offer we have one button that ensures that a user can apply for that job.
In our paper prototype, the user could "swipe" on the various elements to save or reject them. Unfortunately, we cannot include this interaction in our prototype in Figma. We will therefore have to ignore this.

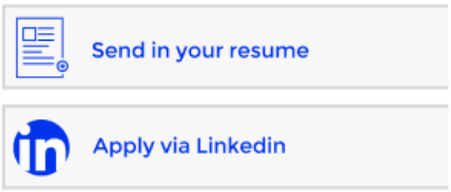


Fig 59 When a user wants to apply for a job, this is what they see

If the user applies for a job, it is directed to a new screen where it gives the choice to apply via LinkedIn or in the "normal" way. Further steps are not taken into account in our prototype. In some cases it is not possible for the person to be able to apply via LinkedIn, in this case the user will not see this option and will be redirected directly to the application.

If the user clicks on the second navigation bar, the circle navigation bar changes and the user are directed to a "management" tab. The top bar is adjusted with the title of the administration tab and the option to return to new vacancies. The colour in the navigation tab also indicates which job offers we are viewing.

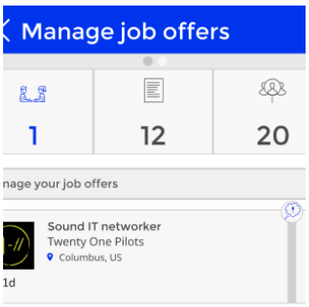


Fig 60 The first screen of the manage job offers

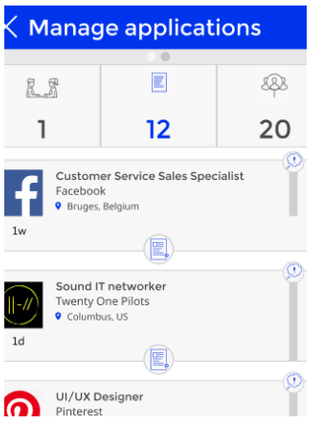


Fig 61 The second screen of the manage job offers

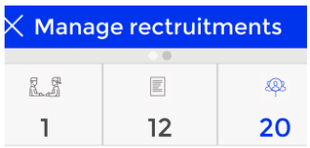


Fig 62 The third, not worked out, screen of manage job offers

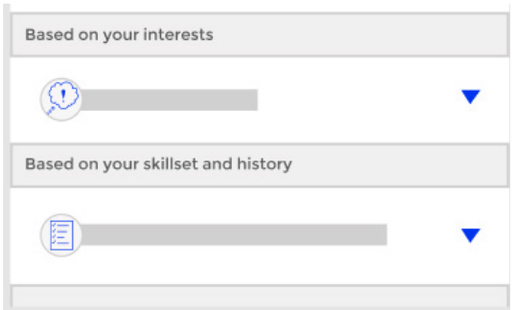
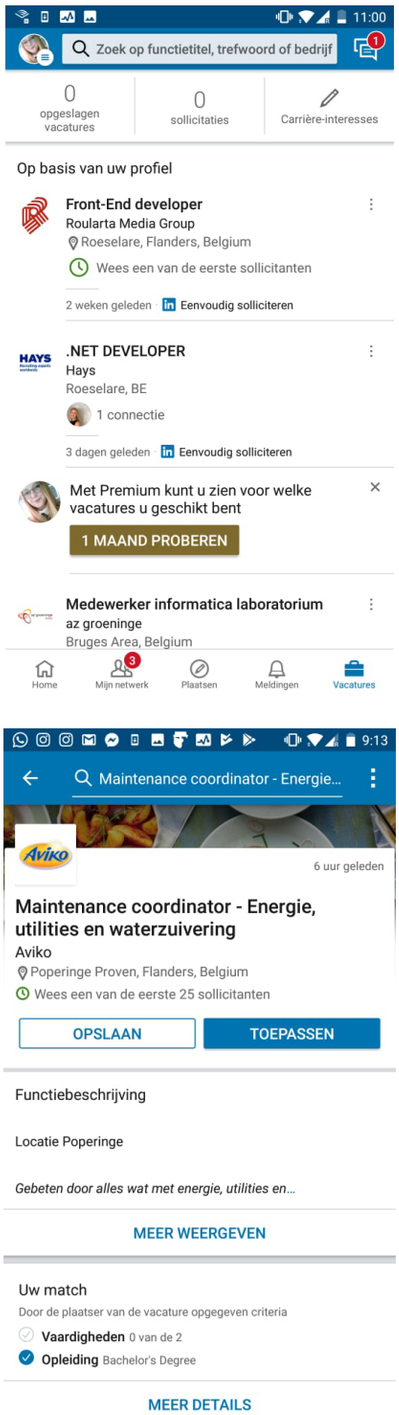


Fig 63 History and interest bar, displayed with the job offers

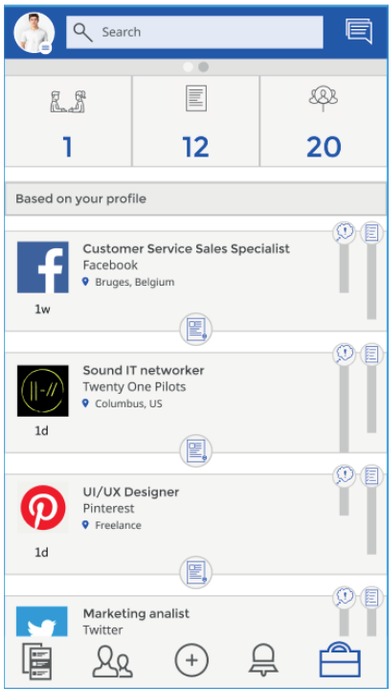
The recruiters tab was not taken into consideration, because I could not find an example of this online. If the user clicks on the profile of the company or on the job offer itself, it will see the full description of the job offer. Hereby I also display our two reworked bars and this function can possibly later also show on the basis of which information these bars are prepared. The company can store all its information in this application. The user is given the option to apply for the job in this screen. If the user is one of the first to apply, this will also be displayed.

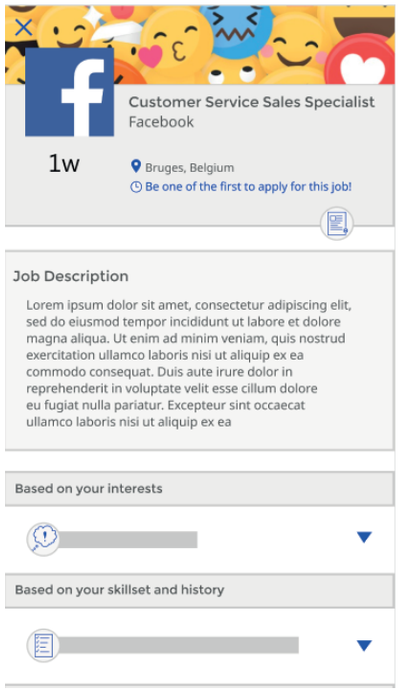
Job Offers

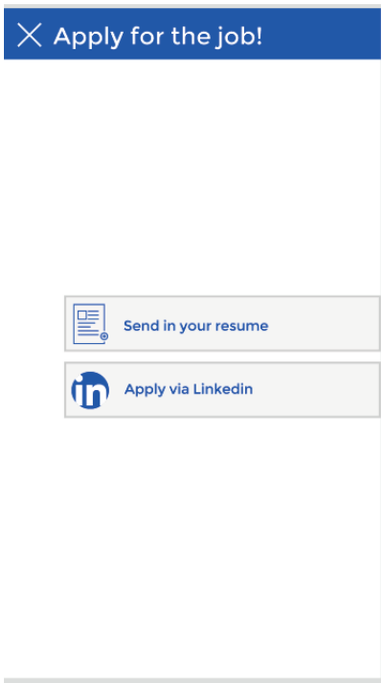
Original



Endresult

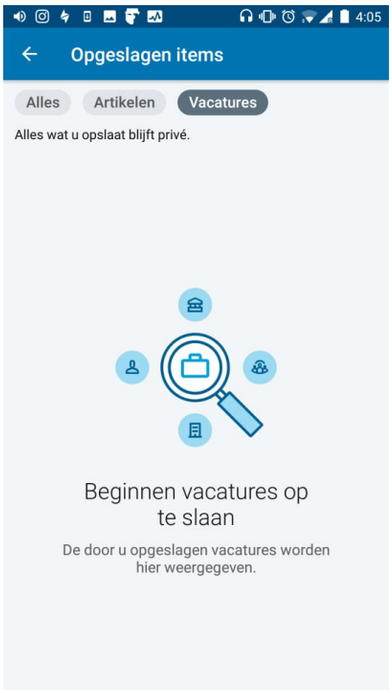






Job Offers

Original



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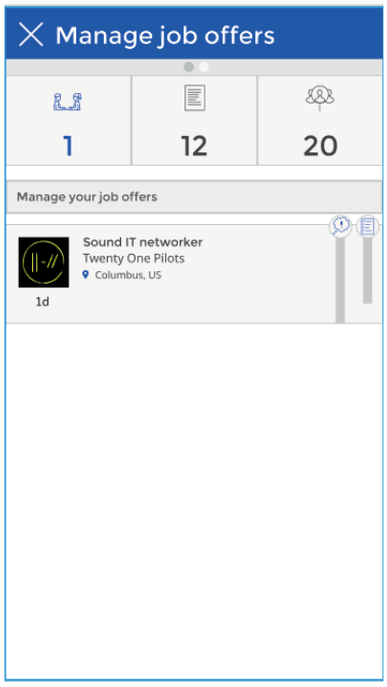
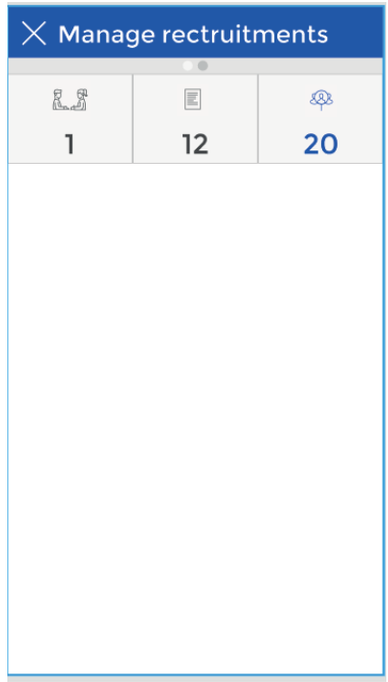
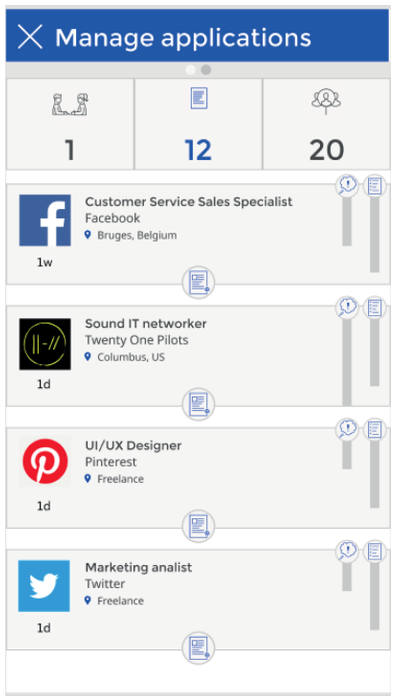






8.4 Working out the network screen

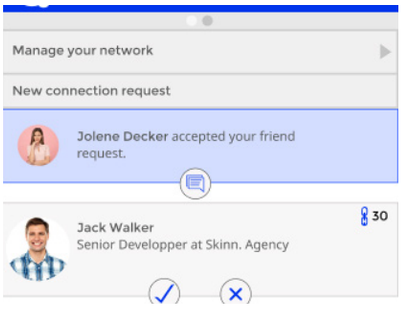


Fig 64 The new connections tab

When the user opens the network screen, they see a circle navigation tab from the top, indicating the difference between new connections and managing current connections. The user is then given the option to manage his network. Immediately below, the user sees a tab with sent and accepted connection requests. If the user has no new connection requests, they will be notified.

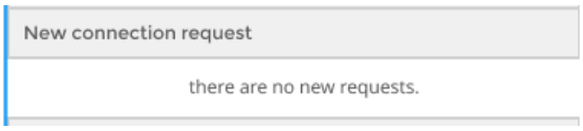


Fig 65 When a user has no new connections, this will be displayed

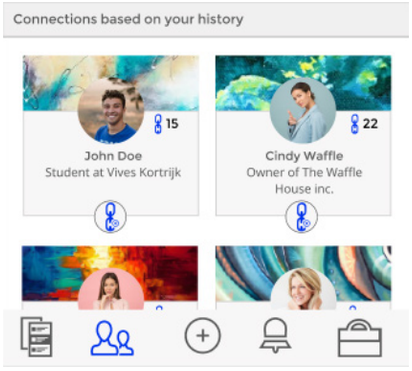


Fig 66 Example of what connection proposals look like

Under the new connection box, the user sees a number of proposals for new connections. This was not further included in the prototype, but pages can also be displayed here. The cover and profile photo of the user or page is displayed, along with the function of the user or page and the number of connections that the user or page has. The user is then given the option to follow the page or add the connection using two different buttons.

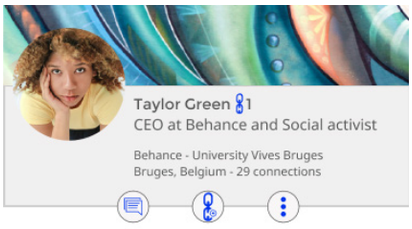


Fig 67 Example of what a user will see when they open another connection's profile

If the user clicks on a user's profile, he or she will end up on a page that looks a bit like the profile page that we will elaborate further in our prototype. The profile and cover photo of the connection is displayed, together with the function, training and location of the user and how many connections they have in total. A number of buttons can be seen below: you can send a message to the potential new connection, add it or view additional options for this connection. Extra options are not included in our prototype. Under the general info block we find an extra info block where this connection can write

something about itself and reason for use. The connection can also add a portfolio here. Portfolios are not discussed further.
If the user views the profile of a connection that has already added it, the add-connection button is not displayed.

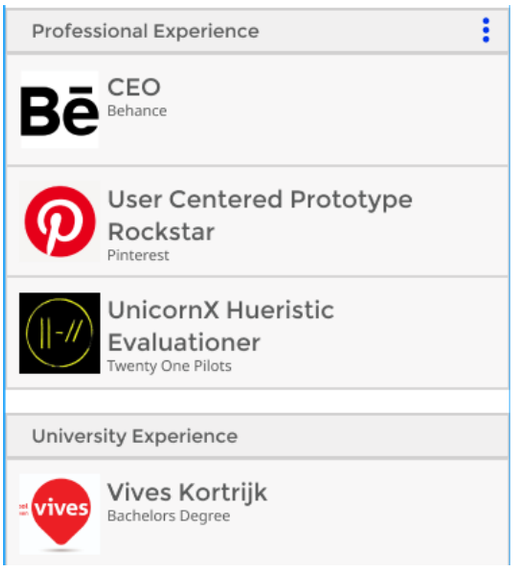


Fig 68 Extra information about a connection is displayed on it's profile

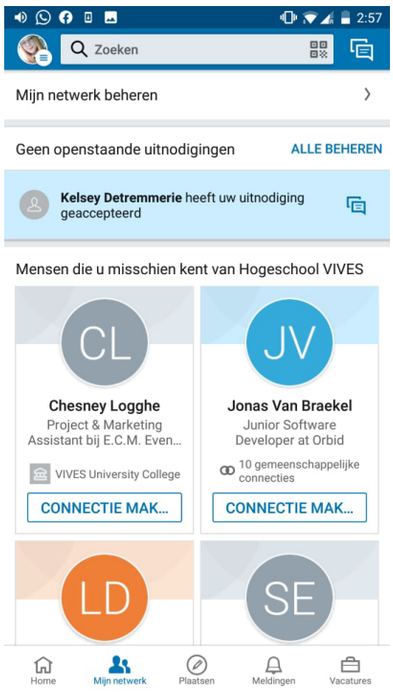
The user then sees the history of the potential connection. This is divided into two sections: university and professional experience. On the profile of potential new connections and current connections, these sections are limited to three fields and the user can view more history by clicking on the three-dots button, if the connection has more than three experiences.
If the user is viewing additional history of a person, dates are also displayed about when that person reached this in his professional milestone.

The last box that a user sees on the profile page of a potential connection or current friend is a contact box, which displays contact information about the connection. The connection can adjust the privacy of this, so this box may be hidden with some connections. There is also a section that displays the different skills a user has, elaborated by other users that have worked with that connection.

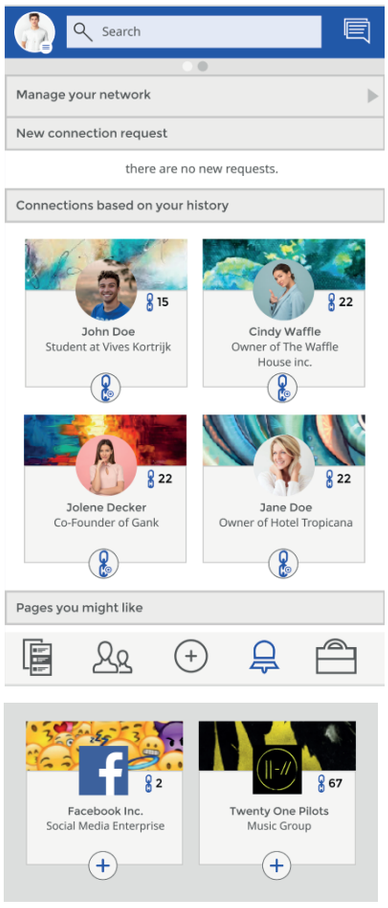
If the user clicks on the management network bar, it is taken to a new page where it can manage added pages or connections. This is the same as with LinkedIn, but I have omitted the button to send a message to your connections when managing the network.
The page profile the user will see, is the same as LinkedIn, only changed to fit our lay out and with an extra navigational bar.

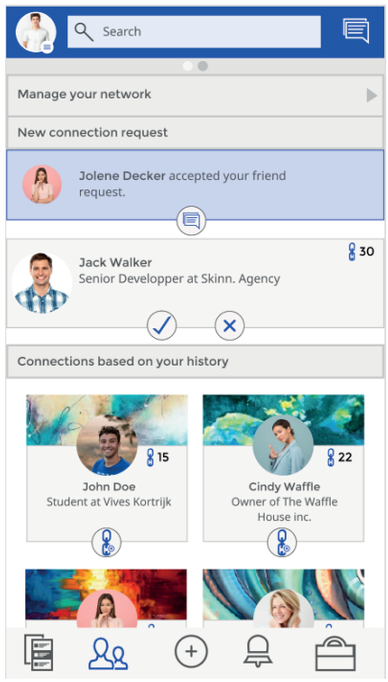
Network

Original



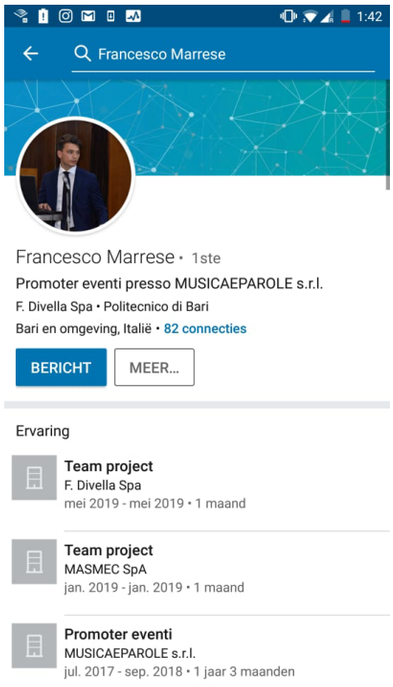
Endresult





Network

Original



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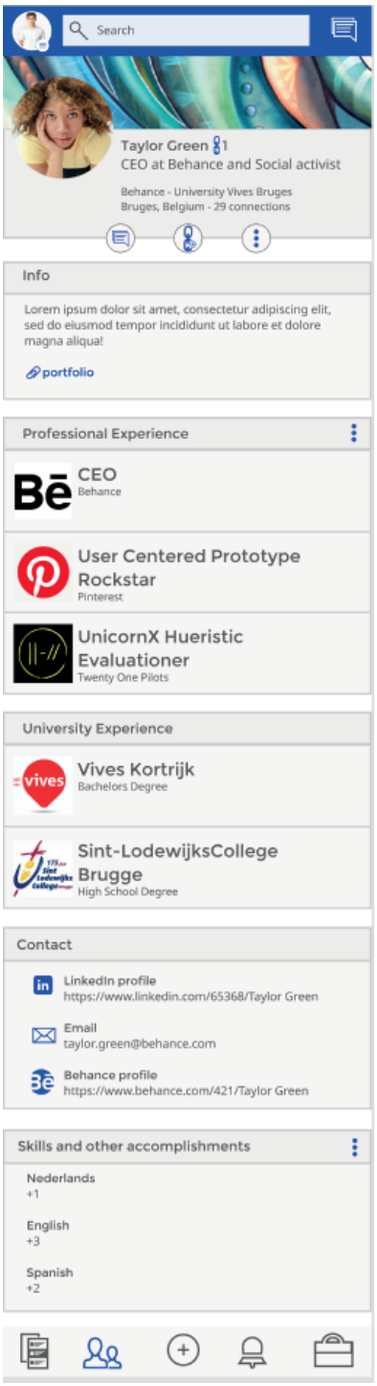
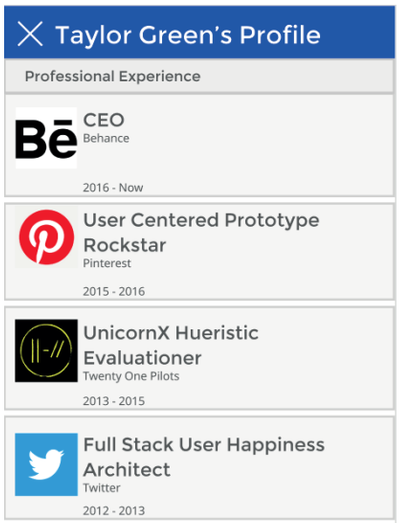
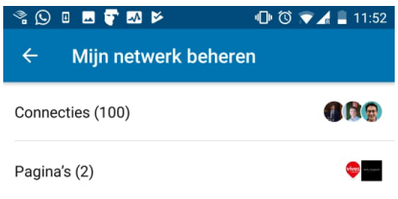
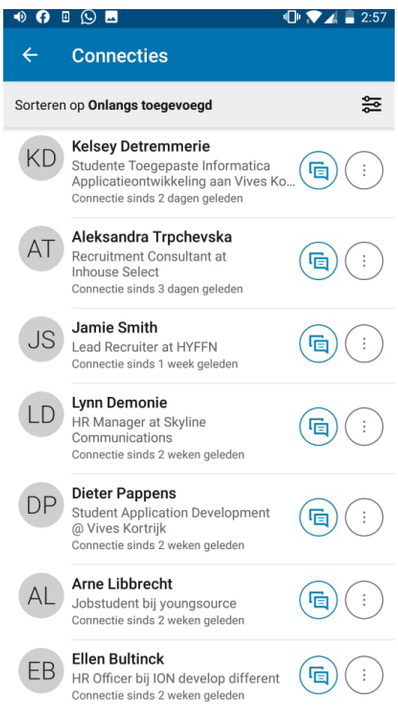




Network

Original





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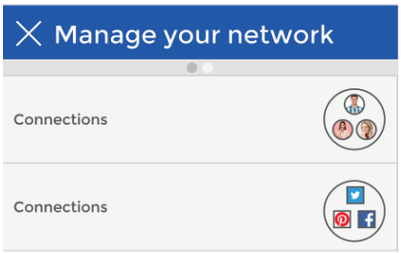
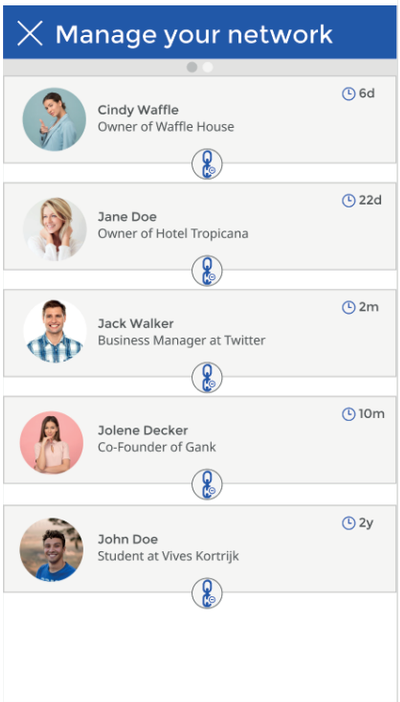
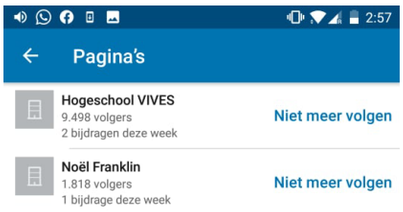
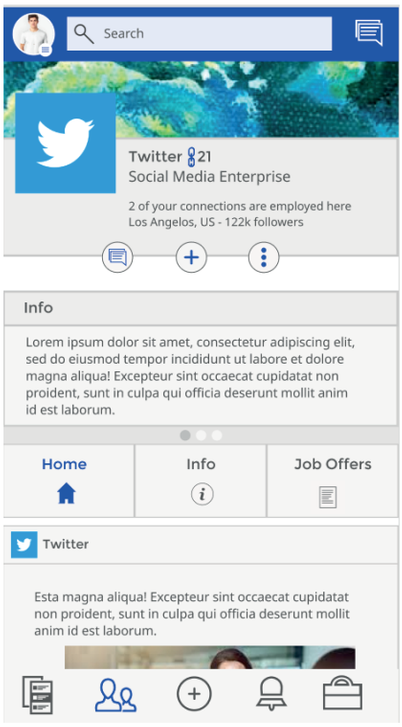




Network

Original





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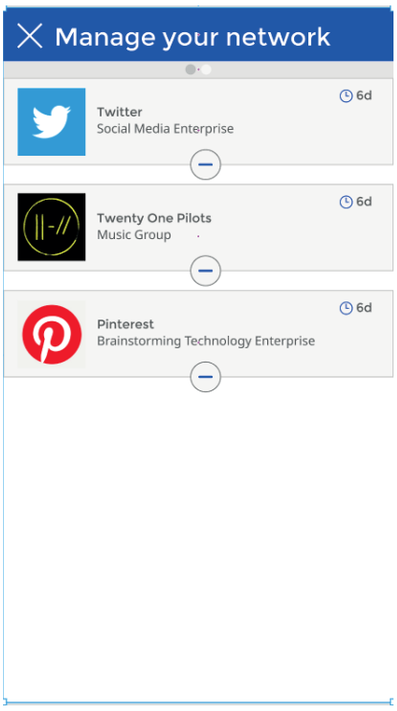
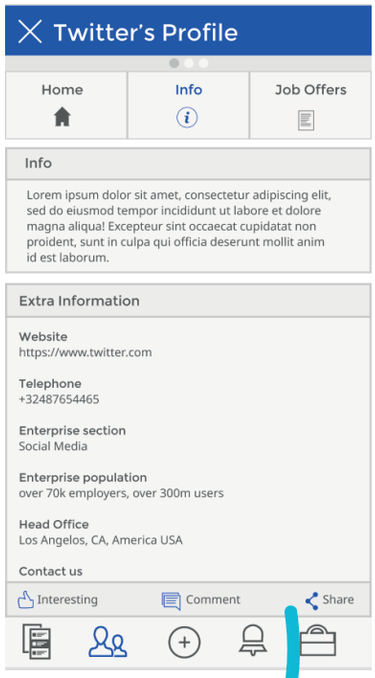
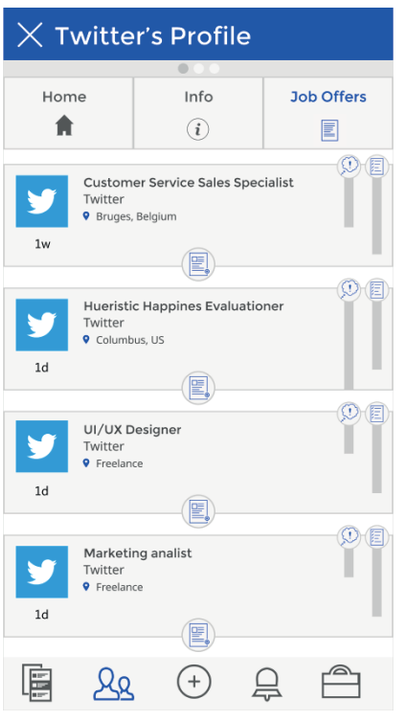






8.5 Working out the feed screen

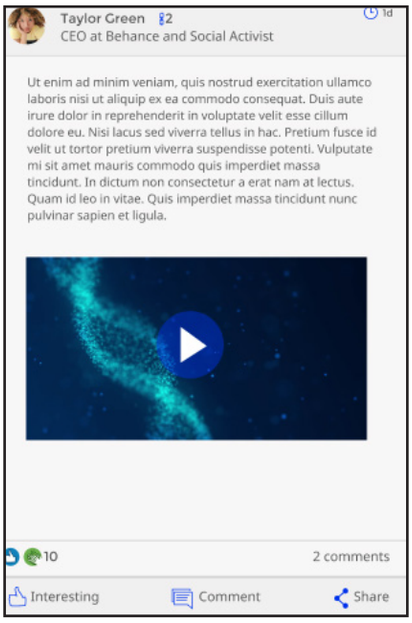


Fig 69 Example of a post directly posted by a second connection

The problem with the original design, as demonstrated by our information analysis in the first phase, was that the different feed elements were very different. The difference between an advertisement and a company page was not clear and the content in the messages was not delineated, with some videos or photos you had to scroll to view the entire photo. I solved this by ensuring that every feed element takes up the full screen. The user that compiles the post can use a lot of photos and text without this being a problem for the interface. The user can then swipe down or up to see the next or previous post respectively. Congratulating colleagues on their milestones is hereby omitted. This function is fully taken over by the notification screen.

In the first example of a feed post, the user at the top sees the information of the connection that has made the post. The name, rank of connection, function and time of the post are displayed.
The user then sees the content that the user has posted, along with the number of interactions and comments from other users.

In the second example of a feed post, the user first sees a navigation bar that indicates why it is shown this, this may be because a connection has shared this post, works at this company, likes this page, and so on. You will then see more information about the page or user who posted the original message. In this example, we do not see a time indication, since the page has sponsored this post. This is therefore indicated with its own symbol. Below that the user again sees the content with the number of interactions and comments.

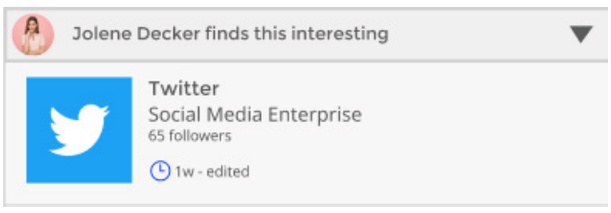


Fig 70 Example of a shared post

The third example would be shown to the user if a connection finds a post interesting. The information from the page is displayed again. Please note that a time display was indicated here instead of an icon with promoting addition. In this example of a post, the page has added multiple photos. The user can click on the post and will then navigate to a new page with all the photos of the post.

The last example of a feed post is that of a connection that shares a post and with that post, writes its own message. The user first sees a grey navigation bar with the text "user has shared a post". Below he sees the text that the user has typed, with the original post that was shared underneath.

Fig 71Example of a shared post with an extra text

Underneath each post is an interaction bar with buttons with which the user can find a post interesting, comment or share a post. If the user hopes for interest, this will get extra options. Since this is not possible in Figma, this was not further elaborated, just like sharing a post.

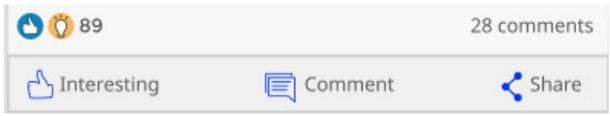


Fig 72 Bar under each post

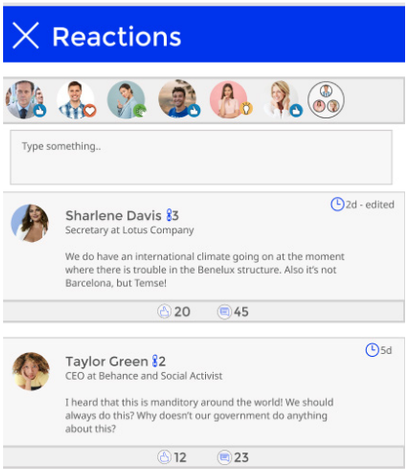


Fig 73 Reactions of a post

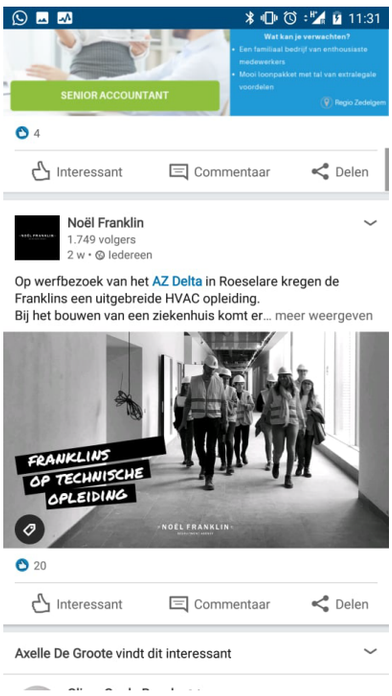
If the user clicks on a comment, he or she navigates to a new page where they can see all comments. The user first sees a blue navigation bar with reactions and a bar with all users who have interacted with a particular post. This ends with a button on which the user would see a list of all interactions and others, which will not be further elaborated in this prototype. The user is then given the option to type a comment. Adding comments are also left out of consideration.

The user then sees all comments. In the original design of LinkedIn, the user is shown a comment, with per comment the comments that were given on that comment. This causes the user to lose overview of the comment section. I solved this by displaying only the primary comments in the comment section, sorted by how many interests I have received. For each comment, the name and rank of connection are shown, along with the interests and comments that were given on the comment. Additional responses are not possible. If the user then clicks on respond, they will be taken to another page where they can see all the comments that were given on a comment, along with the option to post a comment.

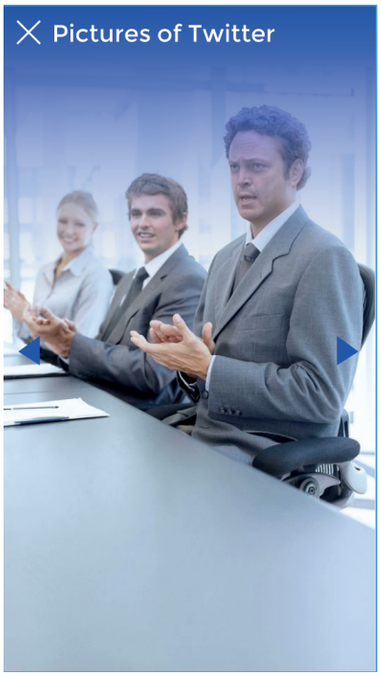
The user also gets the option to see the full post if the user or page has posted multiple pictures in one post. If the user clicks on a picture, the picture gets displayed on the full screen so the user can see it more clearly.

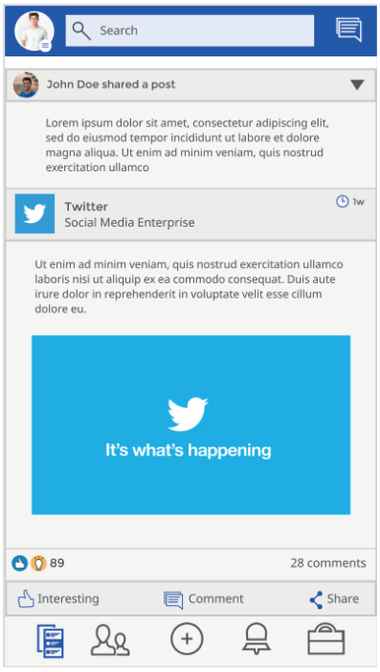
Feed

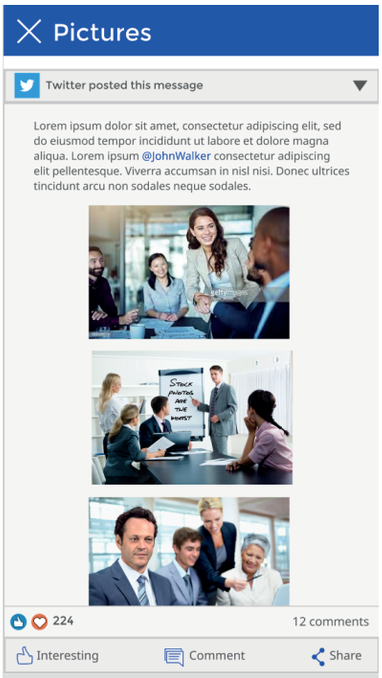
Original



Endresult

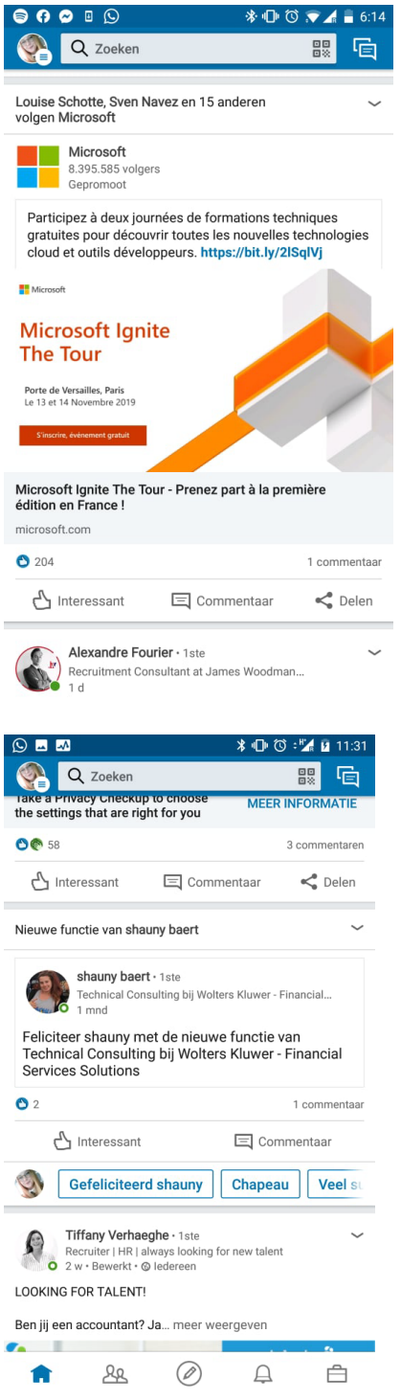




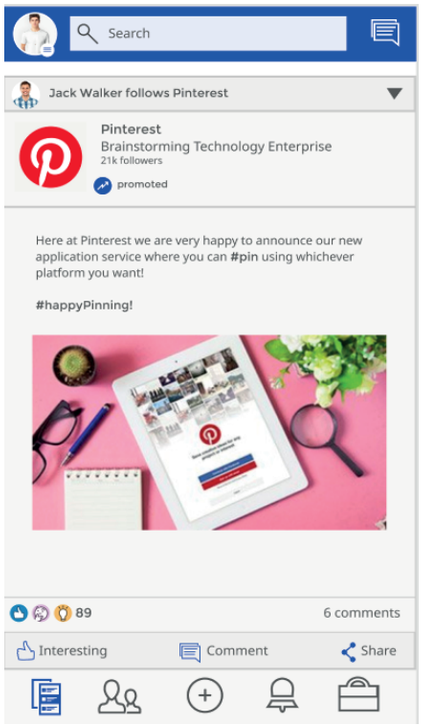


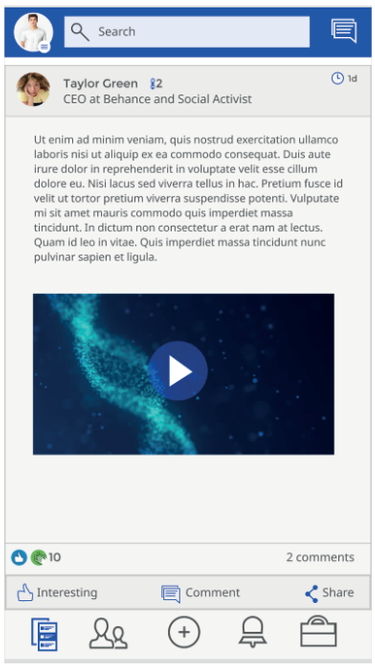
Feed

Original



Endresult

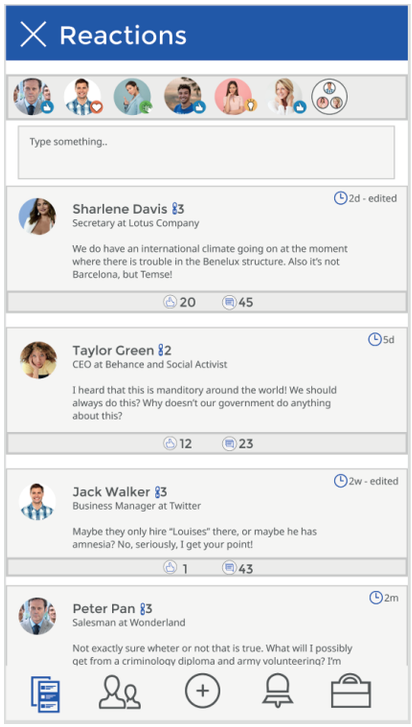




Feed

Original

Endresult



8.6 Working out the profile screen

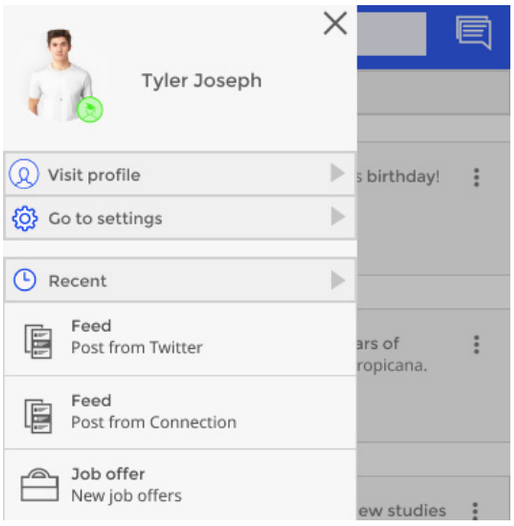


Fig 74 Navigational drawer with settiongs, option to go to profile and recent places

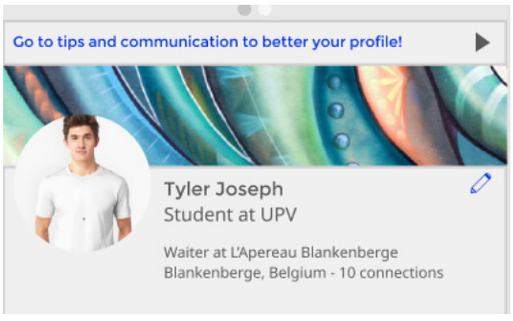


Fig 74 The example a user sees of its own profile

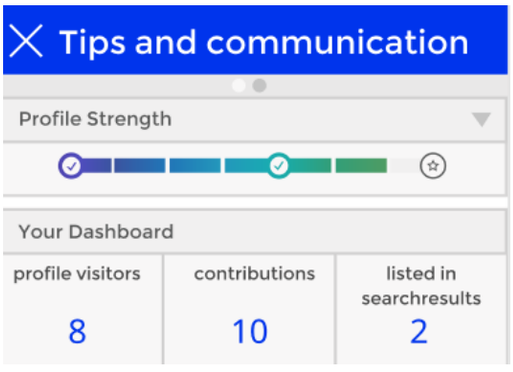


Fig 75 Tips and communcation tab with option to bridge with other sites

When the user clicks on the profile-icon on the op navigational bar, it gets to see a navigational drawer. This is the same as the one in LinkedIn, but I added some extra options. The user sees its profile, with its profile-type. The user can visit it's profile, go to settings or see recent pages it has navigated to. The settings aren't being discussed in this thesis, but it could be a good idea to add elements to these settings for people with disabilities or other problems. Our layout has been adapted in many ways to be more transparent and clearer in its display, but there can always be other options added to make the design even better for all people, indifferent of the context of use or their personal limitations. An example of this, is adding a feature in settings for people who have trouble seeing where the icons are displayed in a bigger format than usual. You can also add options for the user to adjust the contrast of the application to be able to see everything better.

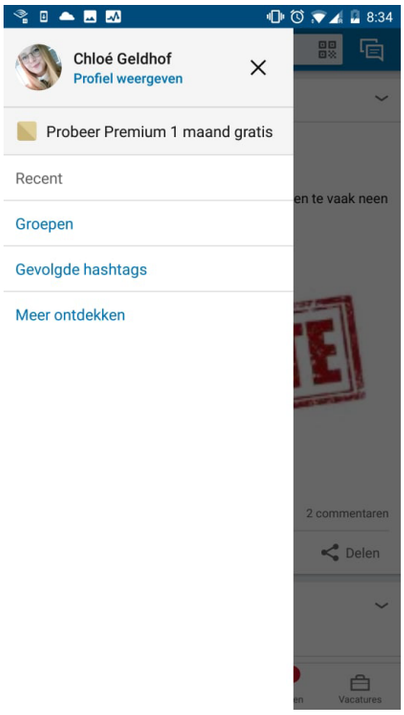
If the user further navigates to their profile, they see an example of their profile. They can adjust all of these elements by clicking on the pen-icon. Editing of the different information isn't further elaborated in this thesis. The user can also add new milestones like a new career or a finished degree.

If the user clicks on the top navigational bar, it navigates to the 'tips and communication' screen where LinkedIn displays tips and tricks to better tune your profile, but also videos to further better your professional skills. Some elements of this screen currently don't exist, but some elements I added that do like the progressbar. LinkedIn can fuse their site with their application through this screen and the 'find an expert'-function from the original new post screen can also be added here. I also added some extra information about

the selected profile and the option to change this profile. These profiles determine what the user will see when it opens the service. This means that a user looking for a job, will see the job offer screen instead of the feed when it opens the screen.

Feed

Original



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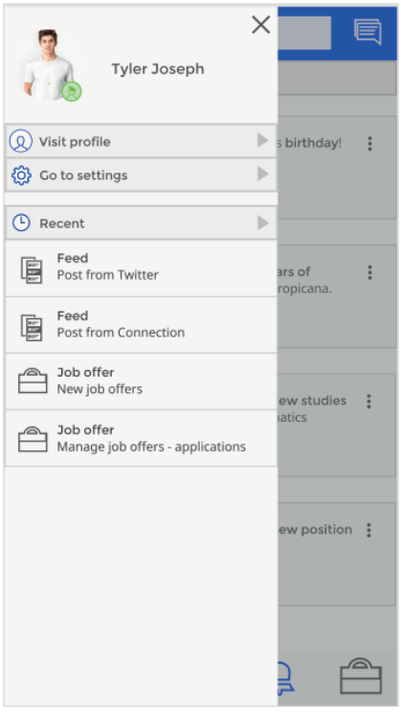

Feed

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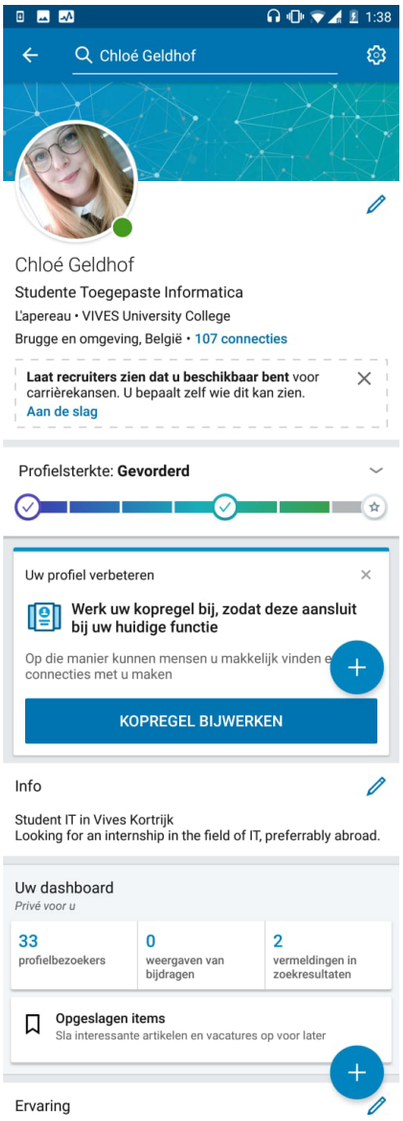

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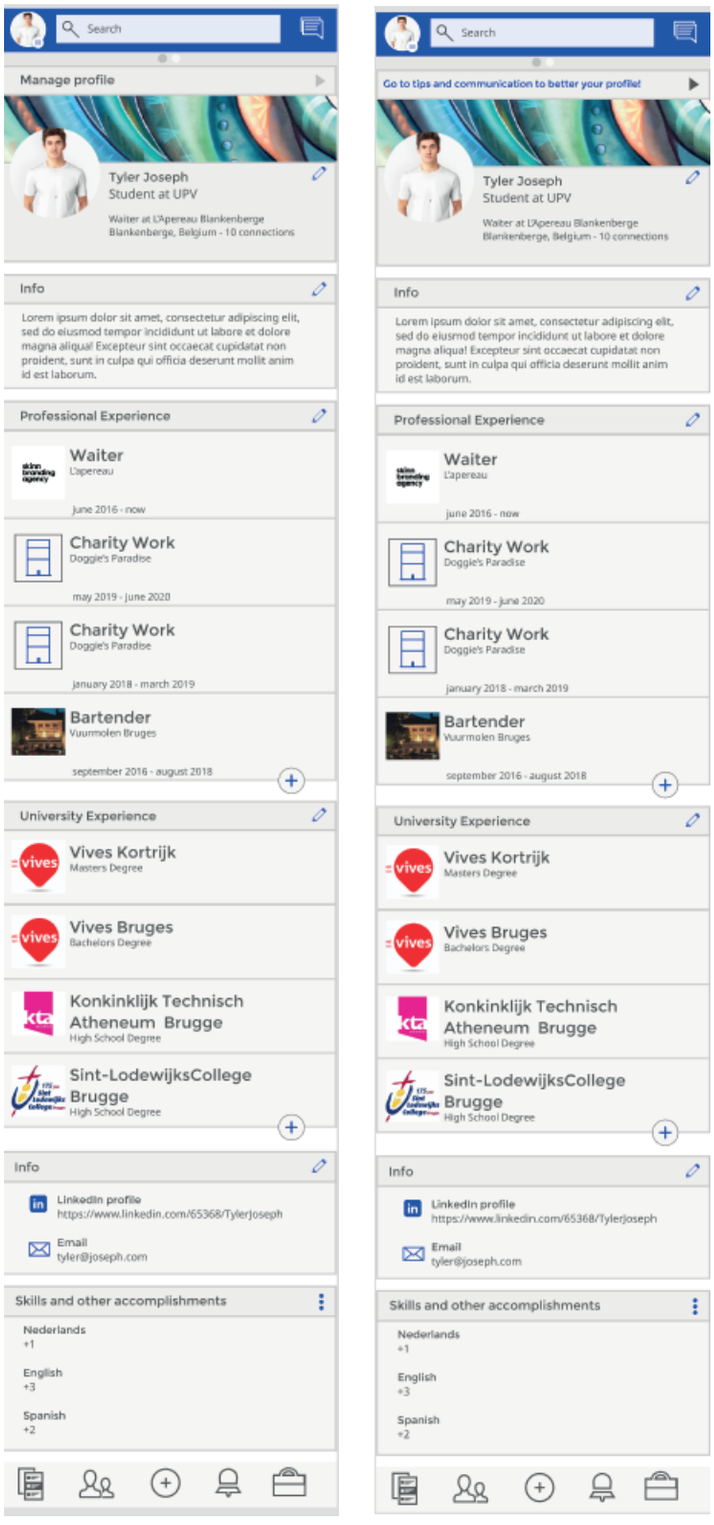

Feed

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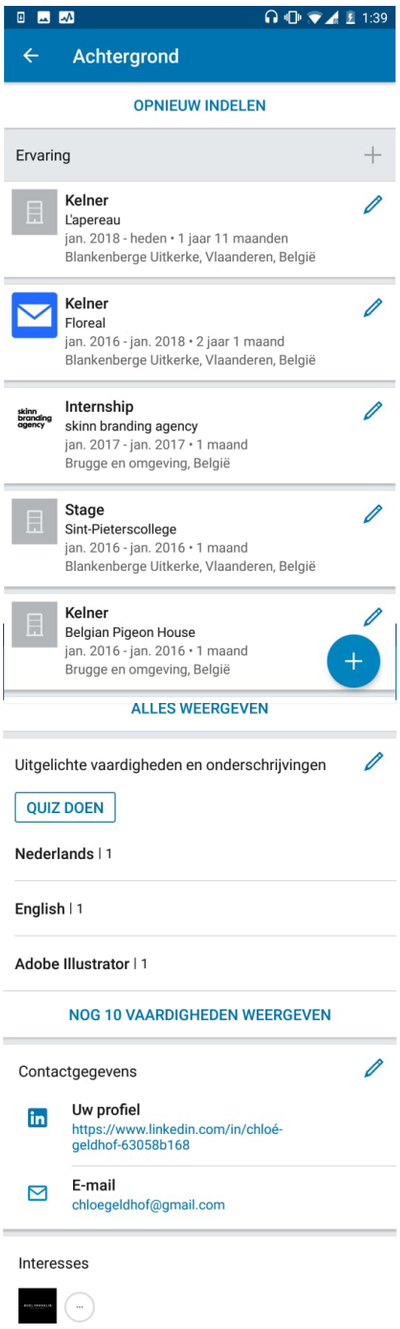

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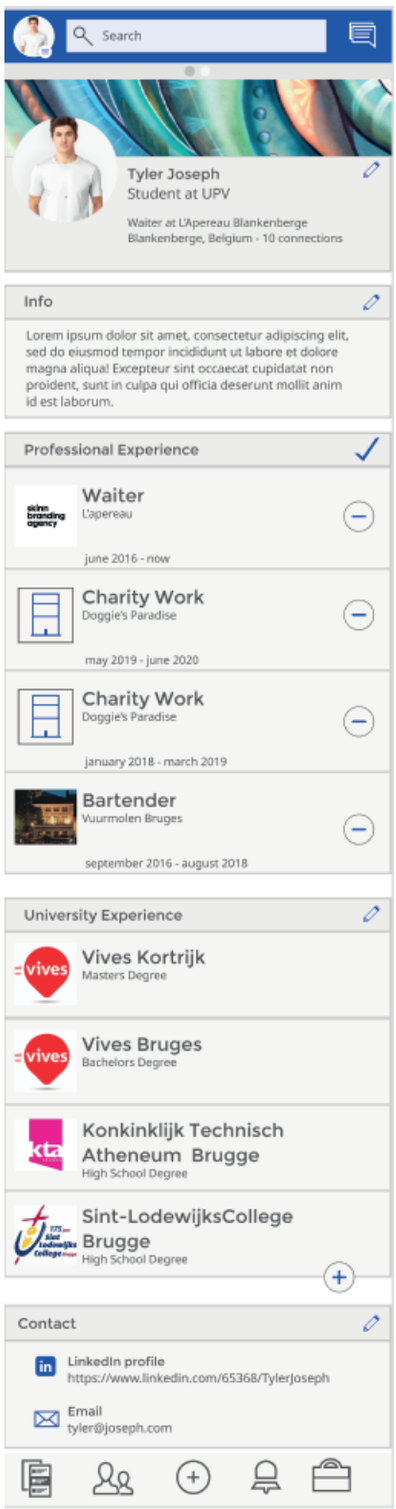

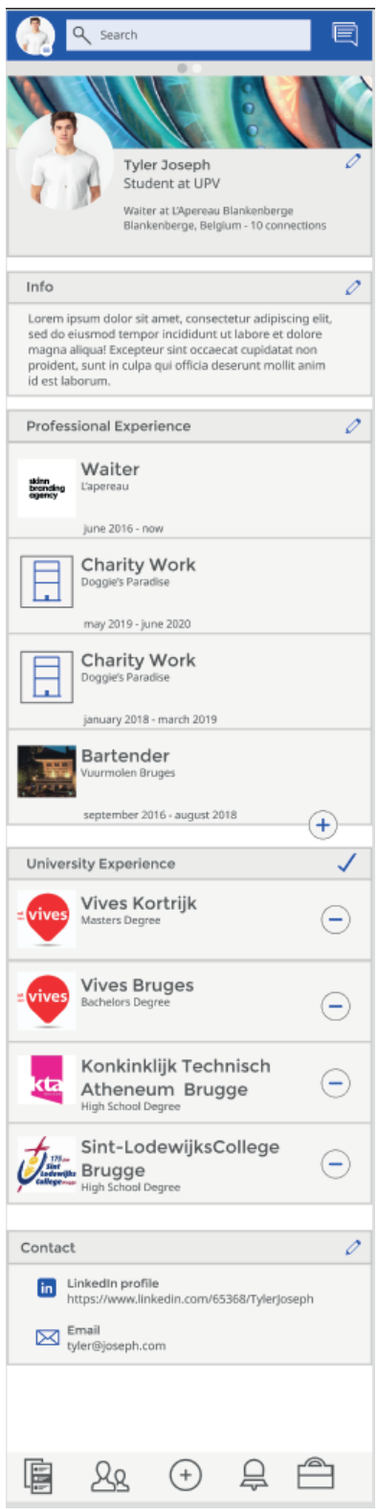

Feed

Original

Endresult

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