Artisan Center - Virtual Tour

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Project overview

The product:

The NWTC Artisan Center offers classes and studio space for ceramics, woodturning, metal and glass working, and long arm sewing. The Artisan Center strives to provide creative and technical training for local craft artisans as well as promoting the arts in the local community.

Project duration:

March 2022 to August 2022
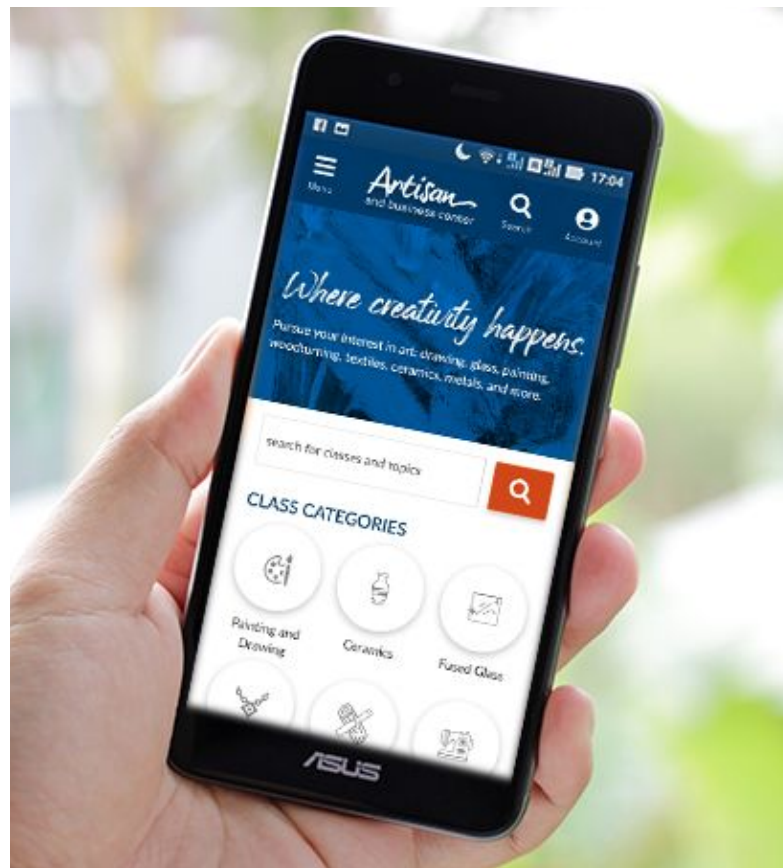
Project overview

The problem:

Local craft artisans want to take art classes to improve their skills. They also want to see the space and equipment available before the day of the class.

The goal:

Design an app for the Artisan Center that allows users to sign themselves up for classes as well as tour studio spaces.

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Project overview

My role:

UX Research and Design

From concept to delivery

Responsibilities:

Conducting interviews, wireframing, prototyping, conducting usability testing, ensuring accessibility compliance, design phase iteration

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Understanding the user

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

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User research: summary

I conducted interviews with 6 real-life customers to help us understand their motivations and needs when taking art related classes at the center. We identified two distinct groups of customers: Retired persons (55-75) looking to take classes with their friends, and working adults (25-55) who wanted to improve their skills so they could create or sustain an artisan business.

Both user groups expressed interest in viewing the space and equipment prior to the class, but had different motivations for doing so. Both user groups expressed the need for easy class sign up and flexible scheduling. The retired group expressed more interest in the ability to bring a friend since their motivation for taking the class was often social.

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User research: pain points

1

Ease of use

Artisan class takers wanted to know for sure when they were successfully signed up and expressed concern for being able to find the right class.

2

View the space

Both groups expressed interest in seeing the space beforehand. Motivations ranged from accessibility needs to the ability to justify the cost.

3

Register with friends

Retirees stressed the importance of classes as social activities and wanted to sign themselves up with their friends so they would be guaranteed seats together.

4

Flexible scheduling

Both groups expressed the need for class offerings in the evenings and on weekends.

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Persona: **Janette**

Problem statement:

Janette is a retired course taker who uses a wheelchair. She needs to see the space in which she will be learning and the equipment she will be using because she wants to make sure there is enough space around her and that she will be able to reach the controls.

"It is important that the space be clean and neat, and that there are enough machines to meet the needs of multiple students."

Janette

Age: 62
Education: Bachelor's degree
Hometown: Hobart, WI
Family: Divorced, grown children
Occupation: Retired LPN

Goals

- Learn new art skills and gain inspiration
- Socialize with other attendees
- Access equipment that is cost prohibitive to own

Frustrations

- Signing up online can be complicated
- Worried that the space and equipment will not suit her needs.

Janette is a recent retiree who wants to stay active, meet new people and learn new skills. She is very interested in sewing quilts but lacks the proper equipment to complete a large final product. She is not very comfortable with technology, but does sign up for classes online. When signing up for a new class she worries that the equipment and space will not suit her needs.

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Persona: **Aaron**

Problem statement:

Aaron is a busy working professional who takes ceramics courses. He needs to see the equipment and space he will be using because he wants to ensure that the cost of the class is a good investment.

Aaron

Age: 35
Education: Bachelor's degree
Hometown: Marinette, WI
Family: Married, 1 young child
Occupation: Account Executive

"The biggest challenge I have is working around my work schedule. I'd love to take the Raku class again with Keith, but it's only offered during the daytime now."

Goals
- Learn art skills I can use to build a business
- Gain inspiration to use on new pieces
- Gain access to equipment and tools

Frustrations
- Finding classes that meet when I'm available
- Worried about whether the investment in the class is worth it

Aaron is a busy account executive, but likes to unwind by participating in ceramics classes and activities in his local area. He dreams of one day opening his own business in Door County selling his unique pieces. When signing up for a class he worries that the cost may not be worth it and that he won't have access to kilns when he needs them.

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Problem Statements

Janette is a retired course taker who uses a wheelchair. She needs to see the space she will be taking classes in and the equipment she will be using so that she can ensure there is enough space around the equipment for her chair and she can reach the controls.

Aaron is a busy working professional who takes ceramics courses. He needs to see the equipment and space he will be learning in so that he wants to know the cost of the class is a good investment.

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User journey map

Mapping Janette's user journey revealed how helpful it would be for users to have access to a class signup and virtual tour app.

Persona: Janette (Retired quilter)

Goal: Sign up herself and 2 friends for a quilting class

ACTION	Determine which classes will fit within schedule	Choose the class	Register herself and friends	Complete Payment and Registration	Attend Class
TASK LIST	Tasks A. Poll friends for availability B. Determine price limitations for group C. Identify class topic of interest	Tasks A. Search online for long-arm quilting classes B. Find artisan center website. C. Review some classes of interest to determine date/time, capacity and environment	Tasks A. Add class to registration cart B. Log in C. Add her own contact details D. Add contact detail for friends	Tasks A. Select payment method B. Enter credit card number C. Complete order and confirm purchase	Tasks A. Arrive at Artisan Center B. Confirm purchase for three attendees C. Choose a place to set up in the classroom.
FEELING ADJECTIVE	• Overwhelmed by organizing the needs of other people • Excited to learn something new with friends	• Worried about the cost - Is it worth it? • Worried about the space - Will there be enough room for me? • Worried about the equipment - Will I be able to reach/maneuver around the machine?	• Overwhelmed by how much info they need on their friends to register • Hopeful that they selected the right class	• Worried about the cost • Confident that payment was completed due to messaging	• Anxious about the space - will there be enough room for me and my friends to sit near each other. • Anxious about equipment - will I be able to use the machine? • Inspired by the quilts on display
IMPROVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES	• Allow users to limit choices by availability (for example Wednesday mornings, Friday afternoons, etc.) • Clearly state the topic of the class in	• Clearly state topic of course in title. • Display tour/images of space and equipment on class description page. • Clearly disclose price for tuition and	• Allow users to re-use friends details if they have previously registered them • Allow users to re-use their own details • Clearly disclose the cost of the class	• Clearly disclose when payment is complete and successful • Email all attendees confirmation	• Ensure plenty of space between machines • Clearly instruct students on where to enter, how to provide proof of purchase, and where to set up

Starting the design

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

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Paper wireframes

I drafted five alternatives for each screen of the app to ensure that the layout would prioritize exactly what users needed to complete sign up. On the home page I prioritized class categories and search.

Stars are used to indicate the elements of each sketch that would be used in initial wireframes.

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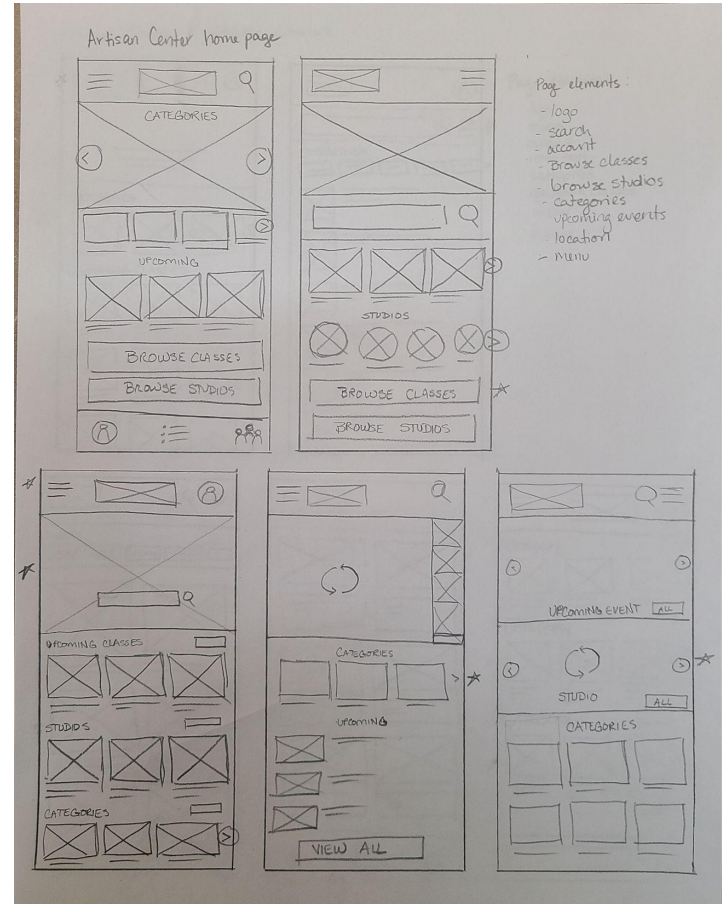
Digital wireframes

As the design phase continued I referred back to user feedback to prioritize items on the screen. On the course details page, I featured a large photo of the final product of the class, a large registration button and a way to tour the space in which the class is offered.

Large photo of final class project used to engage the viewer

Clear button to view the studio in which the class is delivered.

Large button to begin the registration process

Studio name

Tour the studio

Register

Related Classes

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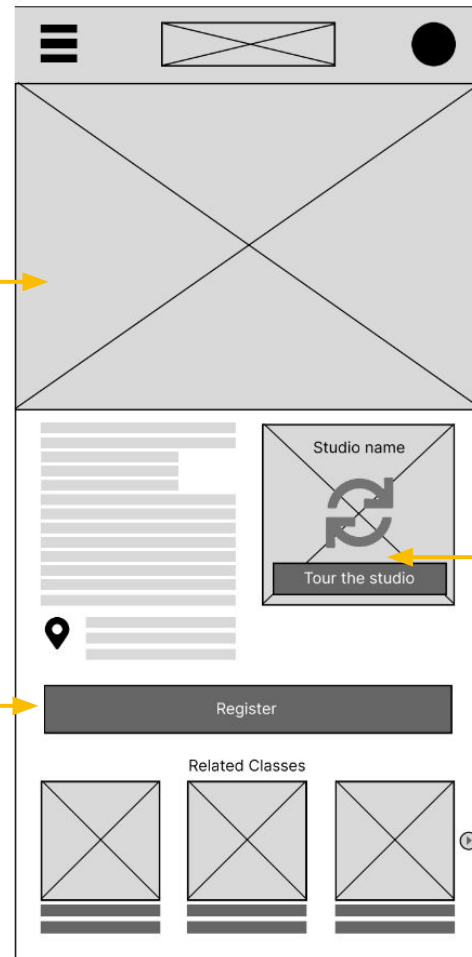
Digital wireframes

Within the cart I added a status indicator to show how many steps to anticipate, a clear callout for which class they are registering for and a large Add a friend button.

Within the cart I made the class they are registering for clear by featuring it at the top
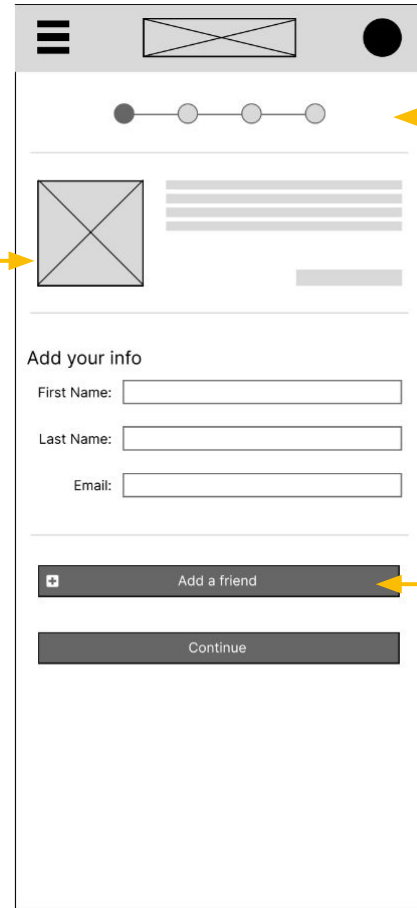
A status bar was used to indicate how far the viewer is in the checkout process

Add your info

First Name:

Last Name:

Email:

Add a friend

Continue

A large Add Friend button was added to make it clear how to add one.

Low-fidelity prototype

The low-fidelity prototype contained steps for choosing a class, touring a studio and the registration cart. I used the prototype in a usability study with end users to identify further pain points.

View the Artisan Center low-fidelity prototype.

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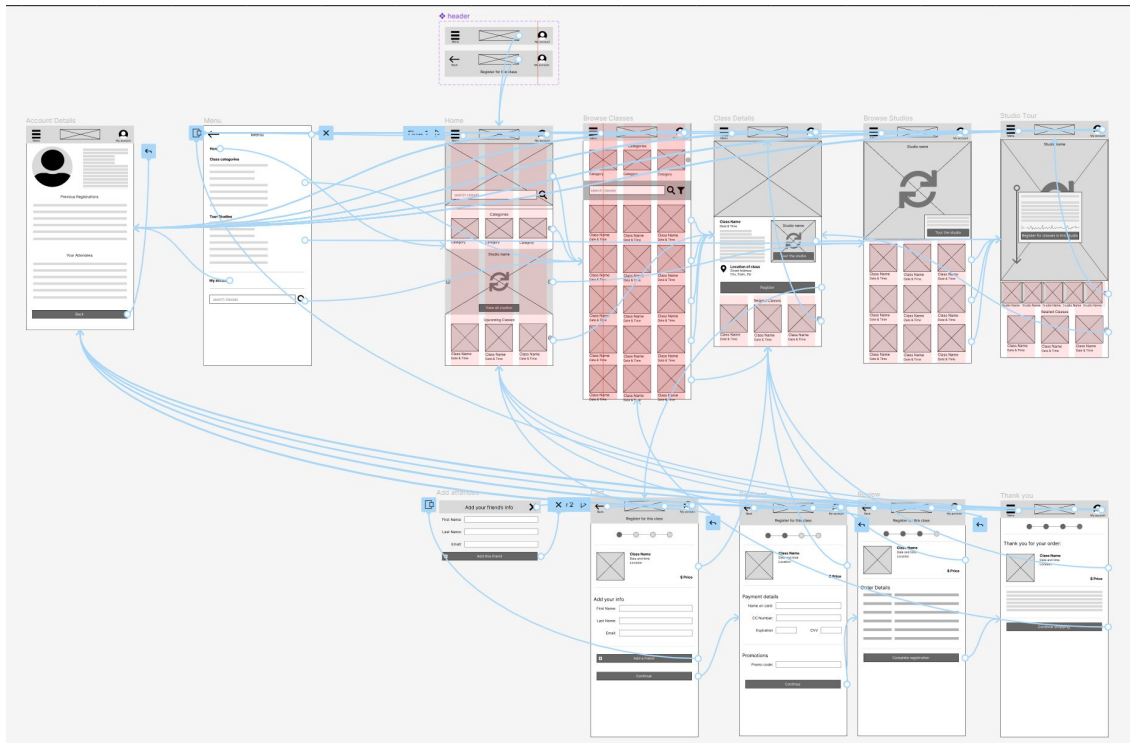
Usability study: findings

I conducted two rounds of usability studies. Findings from the first study helped guide the designs from wireframes to mockups. The second study used a high-fidelity prototype and revealed what aspects of the mockups needed refinement.

Round 1 findings

1. Users wanted confirmation that an added friend had changed the price of the class and a way to edit or remove them.

2. Users rely on both search and class categories to locate a class.

3. Users found it difficult to return to a class after they toured a studio.

Round 2 findings

1. Users expect the logo to link directly to the home screen

2. Users found the back button inconsistent if it didn't appear on every page except the home screen.

3. Most users expected that they could click on their order in My Account to add or remove friends from their order.

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Refining
the design

- Mockups
- High-fidelity prototype
- Accessibility

Mockups

In low-fidelity designs we featured the studio tour more prominently, but it was discovered during testing that users were less interested in a specific studio until they had chosen a class.
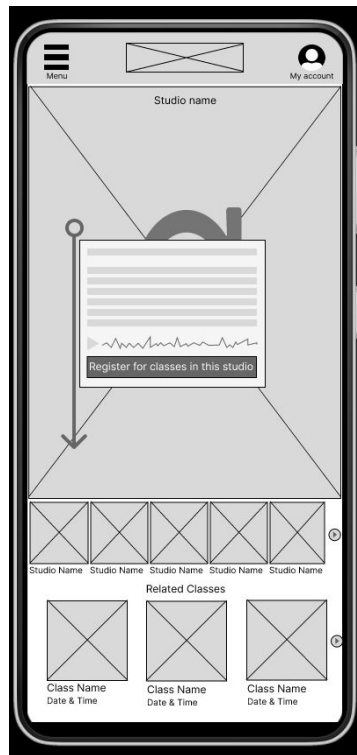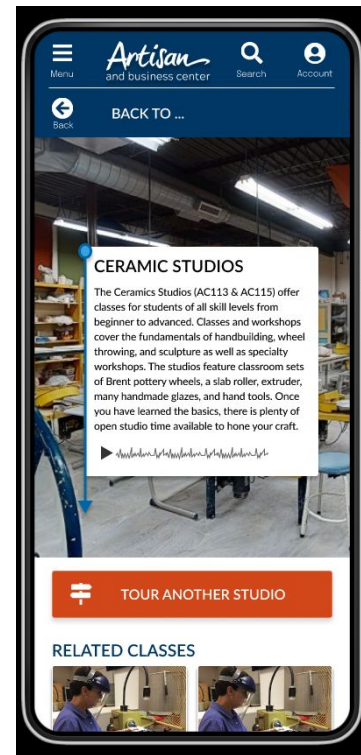
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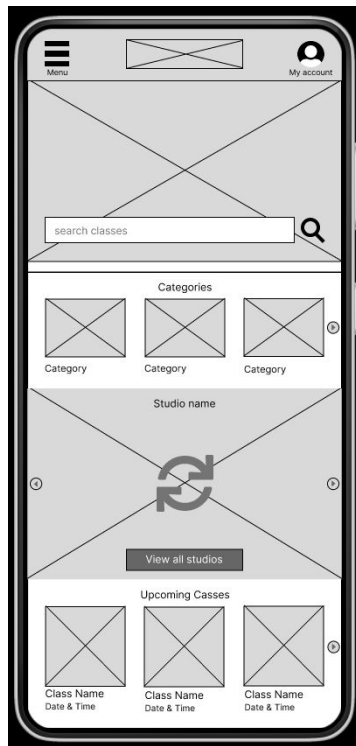
Mockups

Users found it difficult to get back to the class they were viewing after visiting the tour pages. We added a prominent back button to make their path clearer.
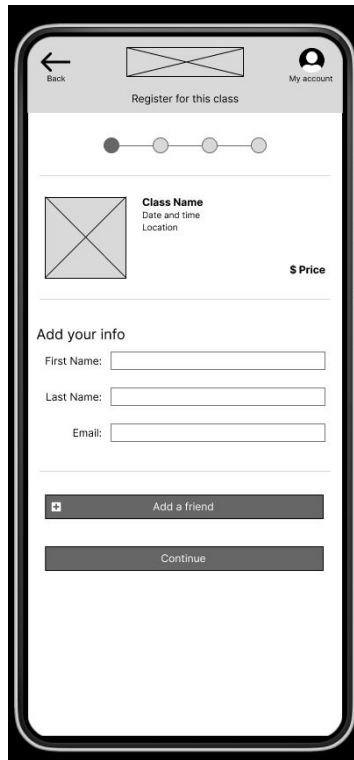
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Mockups

Users wanted confirmation that the price had changed and a way to edit their friend's info after they added them. We added another screen to illustrate what this would look like to a user.
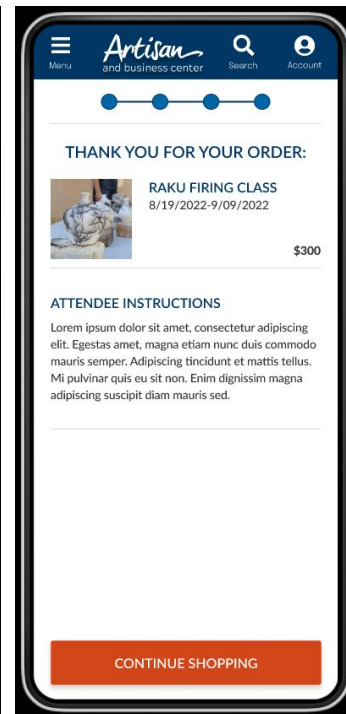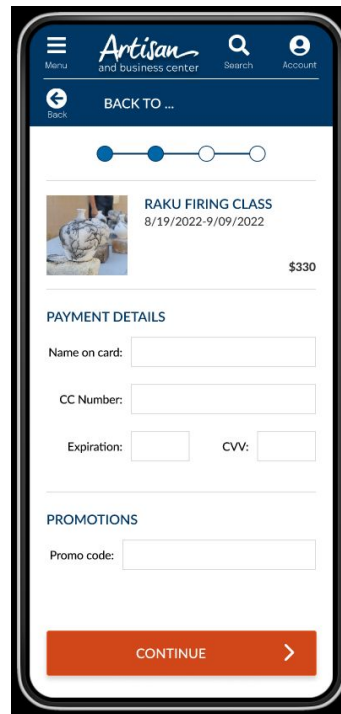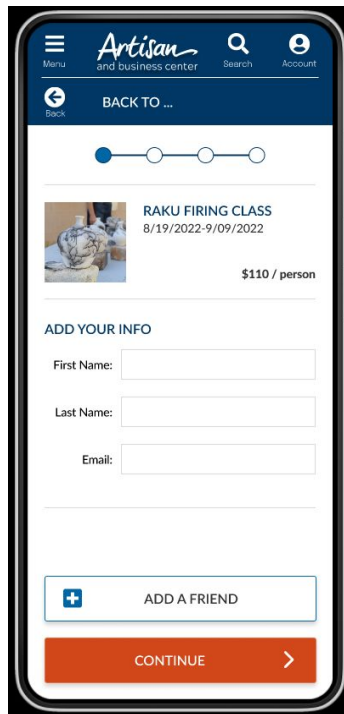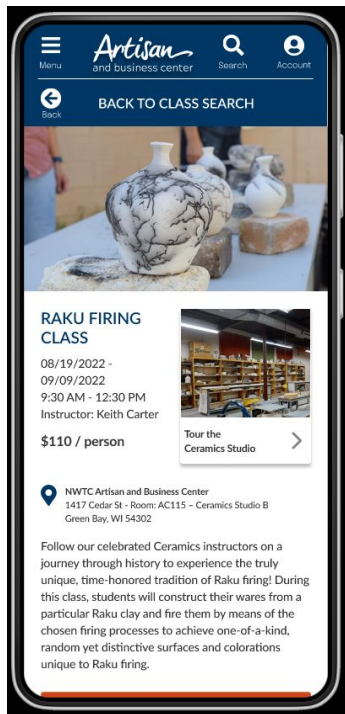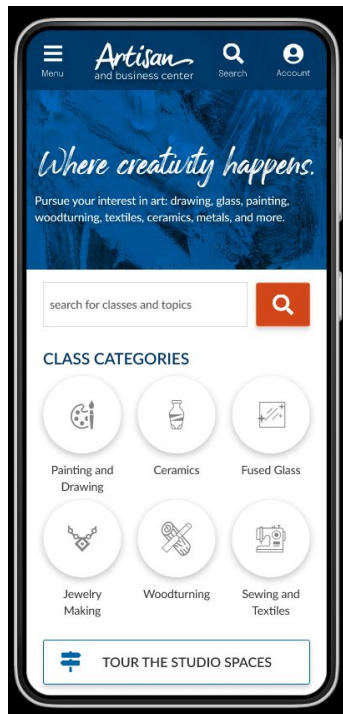
Before usability study

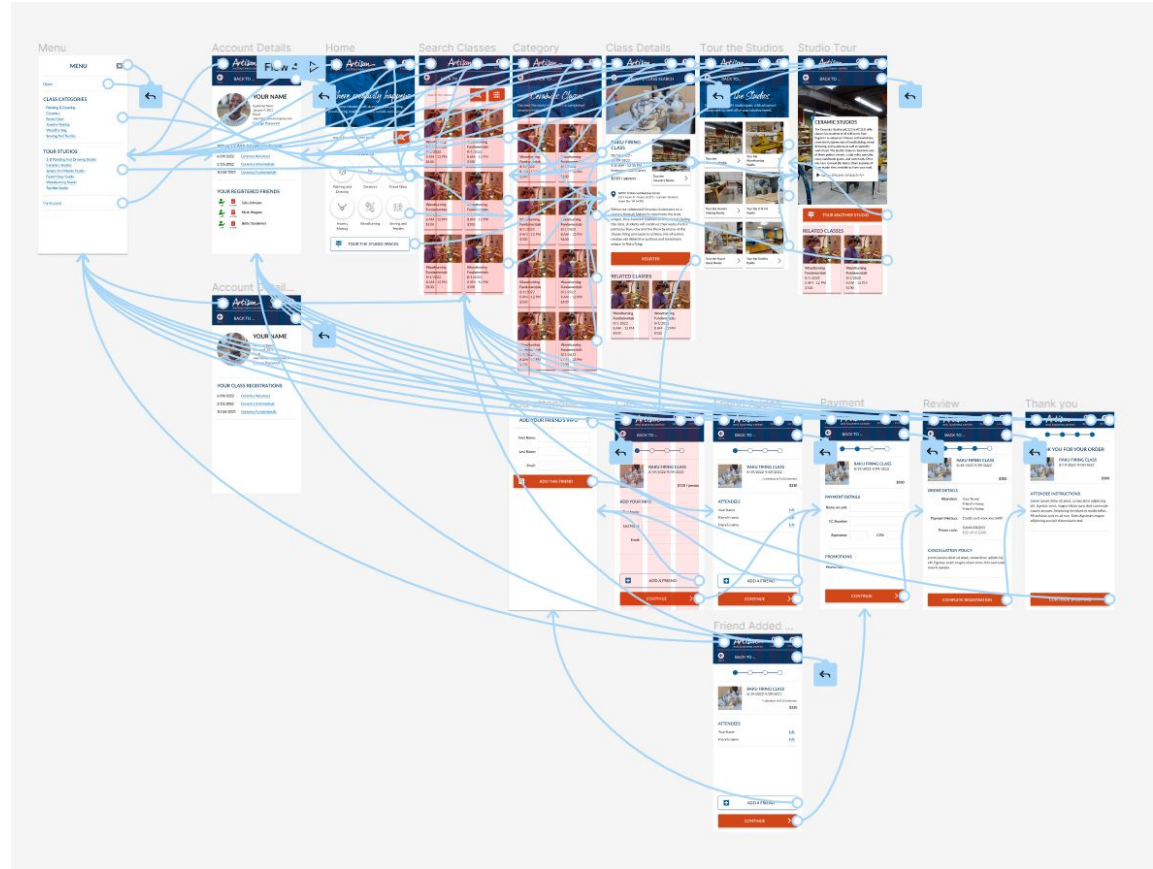After usability study

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Mockups

High-fidelity prototype

The final high-fidelity prototype presented a more engaging while still easy-to-use interface for class registration and touring studios.

View the Artisan Center high-fidelity prototype.

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Accessibility considerations

1

Analyzed contrast between text and backgrounds to ensure visibility for low-vision and color blindness.

2

Used visual representations of class final projects and studios as well as icons to simplify navigation and rely less on text.

3

Included alt text of all visual elements for vision impaired users utilizing screen readers.

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Going forward

- Takeaways
- Next steps

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Takeaways

Impact:

The app makes students at the Artisan Center feel confident in the registration process, the space in which they will learn, and the cost of the class.

What I learned:

While designing the app for the Artisan Center I learned that the areas where I assumed users would look for information were not always correct. This made the importance of usability studies very apparent in that my own thinking was not always in line with what students wanted in reality.

Next steps

1

Conduct another round of usability studies to validate whether the pain points users experienced have been effectively addressed.

2

Develop prototypes for login, create an account and orders areas of the app.

3

Conduct more user research to determine any new areas of need.

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Let's connect!

Thank you for your time reviewing my work for the Artisan Center app. If you have questions or would like to connect, my contact info is listed below:

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