Galo A. **Vargas**

Portfolio

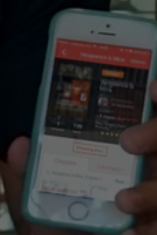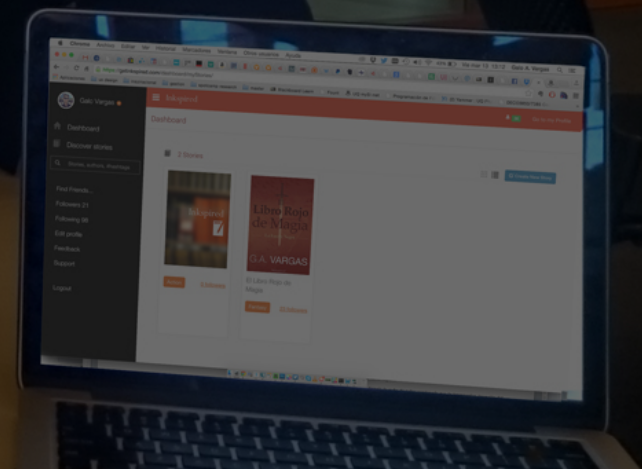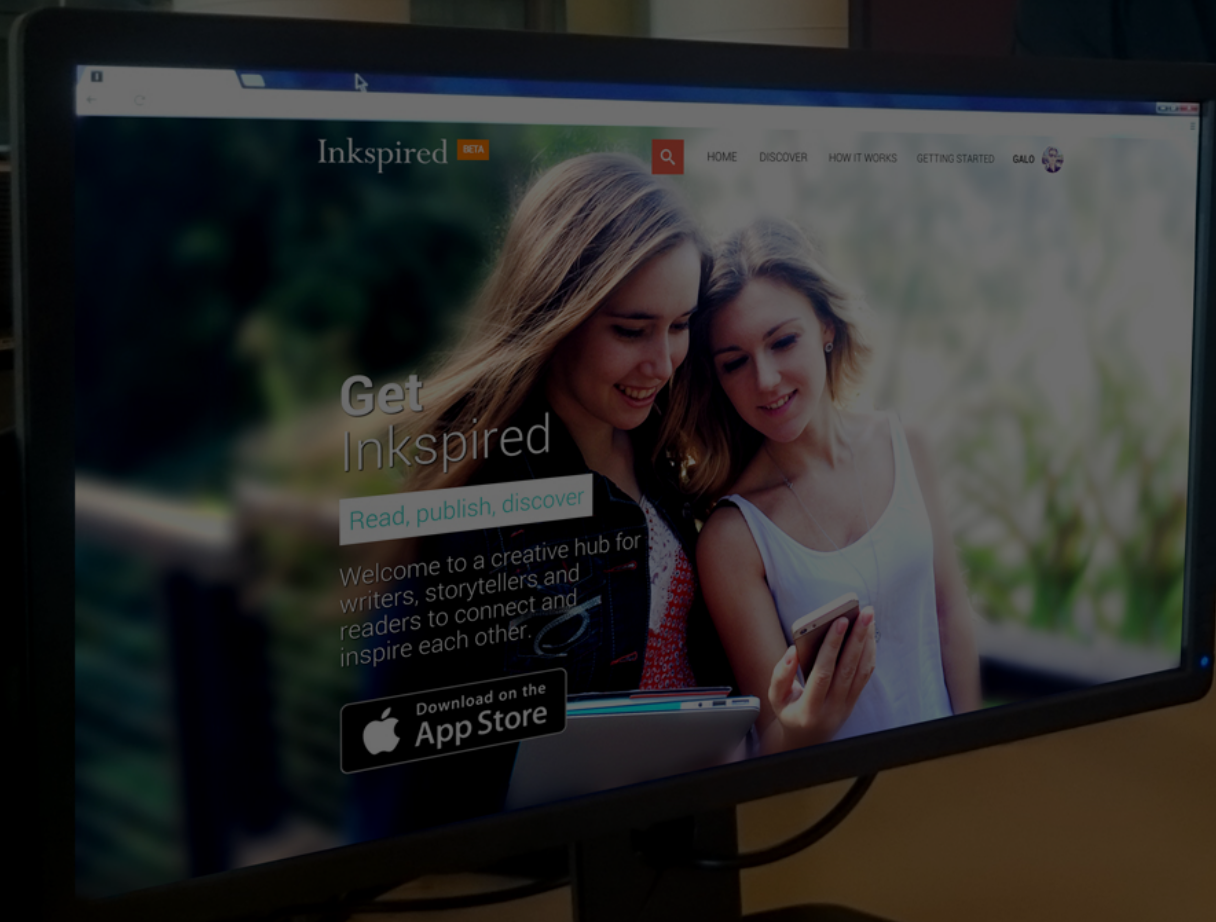# Table of contents

Hi, I'm Galo.

I'm a maker. I take on roles as a Product Designer, Full-Stack developer or digital strategist to **create, build and design** easy-to-use products, aimed to meet business goals with enjoyable user experiences.

Qualifications

Bsc Business Informatics Engineering
(Universidad Técnica Federico Santa María, Ecuador/Chile)

2004 - 2009

Master in Interaction Design - UX
(The University of Queensland, Australia)

2014 - 2015

Cloud Computing Certificate
(Escuela Organización Industrial, España - Google)

2015

What **I do** best

❖ I create and design products from scratch: researching, taking ideas into action, creating its user experience, and planning a go-to-market strategy.

❖ I have experience **Designing and coding UIs** for nearly all kinds of software: web platforms, corporate sites, online stores, enterprise systems, mobile apps (iOS and Android), and even desktop apps for Win & Mac.

❖ My understanding of the design and engineering worlds, helps me act smoothly as a bridge throughout the software development cycle, and bring value to any product team.

Design & Tech Skills

Design

❖ Holistic UX strategy.

❖ UI Design for
Web, Mobile & Desktop apps.

❖ Personas, sketching, user flows, wire flows,
wireframes, prototyping and use cases.

❖ Usability testing.

❖ Responsive design.

❖ Graphic design tools:
Adobe Photoshop, Illustrator, InDesign, Figma,
Sketch, Zeplin, Balsamiq.

❖ Video editing.

❖ Specialization in designing for content.

Engineering

❖ Full-stack development

❖ Python / PHP

❖ HTML 5 / CSS 3 / JavaScript

❖ React JS / React Native / jQuery

❖ Django / Symfony / Wordpress

❖ MySQL / SQL Lite / PostgreSQL

❖ API development & integrations with
AWS/Stripe/Paypal, etc...

❖ Basic server-side performance
optimization and setup (devOps)

❖ GIT

Product Skills

Management

- Defining product goals, project scopes, creating roadmaps.

- Go-to-market strategies, and follow up on metrics & KPIs to take decisions.

- Experience executing online business models such as SaaS, Subscription, Freemium, e-commerce in marketplaces.

- Content strategy, with specialization on multi-sided platforms and media.

- Requirements gathering and convert them into technical specs.

- Project management throughout the software development cycle (SCRUM)

- User/content acquisition strategies to create online communities.

- Data-driven decision maker.

- Experience coordinating teams of up to 40 members.

- Tech projects negotiations directly with clients since 2007 (Digital agencies)

- Remote work experience since 2013.

- Award-winning speaker*

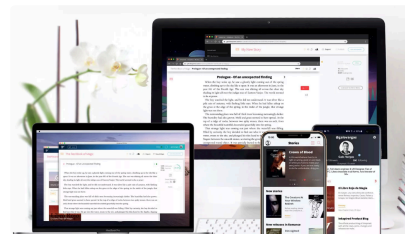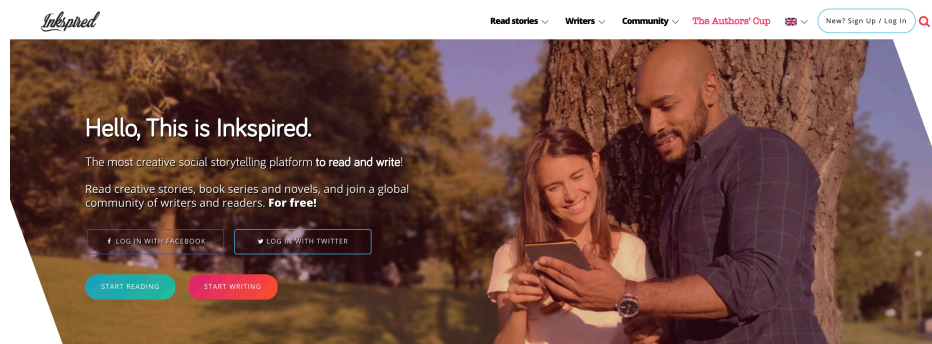*1st place winner on the Inter-American Development Bank's "Demands Solutions" pitch competition event. Miami, FL, 2017. Prize of $30k.

Featured projects

Inkspired

Inkspired is a platform that connects readers and writers, where they can discover, write and publish creative stories and book series.
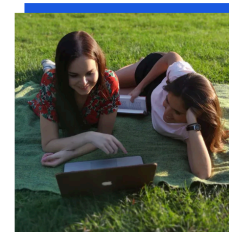
As its creator, I have seeing myself as the product designer, project manager, backend engineer, front-end developer and the UI designer across all different web, mobile and desktop apps.

As a result, I have been sitting in the intersection of all aspects of the product: the business, the tech, and the customer, while building the overall User Experience and growing a community that, as of early 2021, has over 500,000 users.

Get started

Writing Contests
Participate in writing contests, competitions, events and challenges, and get awards, prizes and benefits.
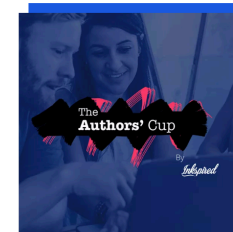
The Authors' Cup
The Authors' Cup is an annual creative writing competition made by authors for all authors. Join the competition and get the chance to win up to US $1,000!
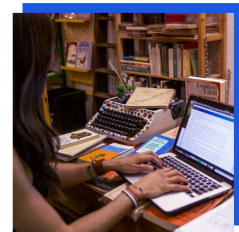
Writing tips (Blog)
Get inspired by our posts about hacking writing and tips to find your storytelling style.

Get professional
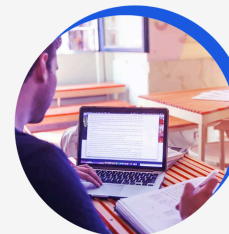
Self-publishing services
We help aspiring authors to access resources and tools to increase the quality, the potential, and the chances of their stories to become the next bestseller.
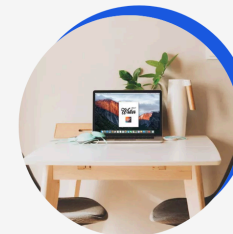
Inkspired Writer app
A tool for fiction authors, to write better fiction and publish in multiple digital platforms. Write offline.

Make money with your stories
Try different approaches to monetize your readership according to what better suits your needs.

Inkspired

Welcome home, Galo

⊞ Personalize your homepage

The Authors' Cup 2020 By Inkspired

📖 My Stories →
🔖 Pocket library →
👤 View Profile →
⚙ Settings →
💬 Share update

Featured this week   Promote your stories

Wedding plans
By Ignacia Rodríguez
Romance

Autumn in my heart
By Kimberly García
Drama

Story Of Sammy Alle
By Amber Kestner
Memoir & Life Stories

A Princess For Keeps Vol. 3
By Amber Kestner
Fantasy

Recommended authors, from the Top 15 of The Authors' Cup 2020 →

Gabriel Mazzaro
Alguien más...

1	+71	17	21
Ranking	Points	Challenges	Stories

Andy P French
Mis amigos me presentan como la más geek de sus amigas. Mis amigas dicen que soy una caja de Pand...

2	+70	17	18
Ranking	Points	Challenges	Stories

Kimberly García
¡Bienvenidos! Amante de los libros por supuesto que sí, las series, los animes, los mangas y los ...

3	+70	17	14
Ranking	Points	Challenges	Stories

Asteria Bridget
¿Hastiado de la rutina? En este espacio, encontrarás diversos mundos que te transportarán a lugar...

4	+56	13	21
Ranking	Points	Challenges	Stories

One of the greatest challenges of designing for a platform like Inkspired is to design for content and for engagement.

Interactive content and they way it's presented to users, in multiple ways, is key to increase engagement metrics and drive growth.

Inkspired's website is fully available in English, Spanish, Portuguese, French, German, Russian, and Turkish.
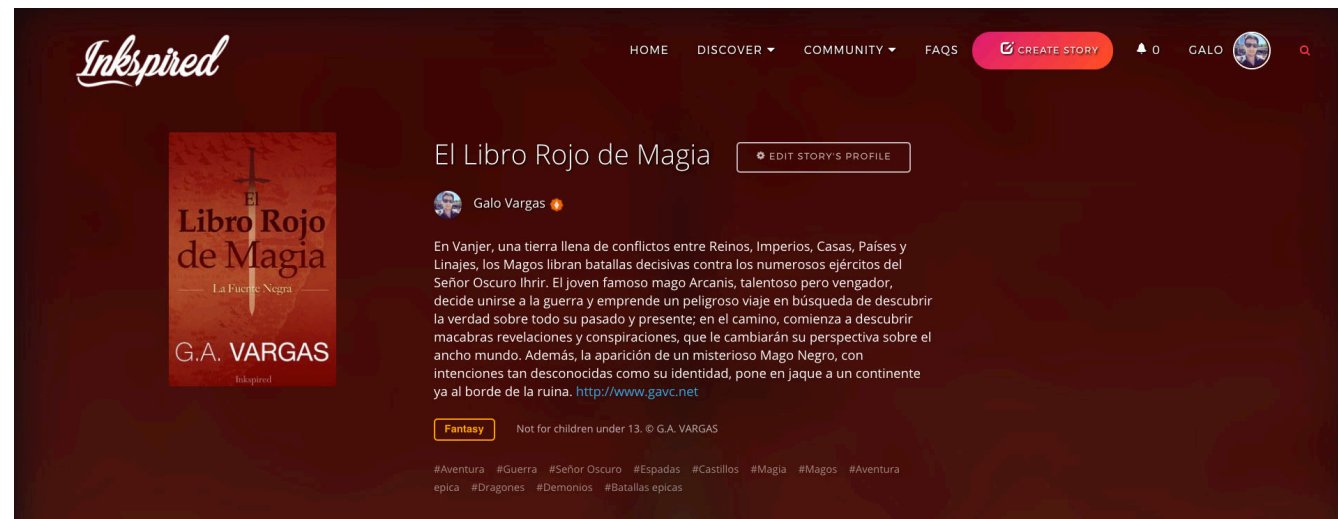
Inkspired

Designing a single interface for reading and following the progress of a story, has been regarded as one of the most appreciated achievements in our site by our community; which, in conjunction with the overall experience as a user-friendly and visually delightful site, has kept the brand as a very high positioned platform for our authors.

Multiple iterations, usability tests, active feedback and data analysis were required to achieve this; along with user research and a deep understanding of how users get their tasks done.

More at https://getinkspired.com/en/testimonials/

El Libro Rojo de Magia

EDIT STORY'S PROFILE

Galo Vargas

En Vanjer, una tierra llena de conflictos entre Reinos, Imperios, Casas, Países y Linajes, los Magos libran batallas decisivas contra los numerosos ejércitos del Señor Oscuro Ihrir. El joven famoso mago Arcanis, talentoso pero vengador, decide unirse a la guerra y emprende un peligroso viaje en búsqueda de descubrir la verdad sobre todo su pasado y presente; en el camino, comienza a descubrir macabras revelaciones y conspiraciones, que le cambiarán su perspectiva sobre el ancho mundo. Además, la aparición de un misterioso Mago Negro, con intenciones tan desconocidas como su identidad, pone en jaque a un continente ya al borde de la ruina. http://www.gavc.net

Fantasy   Not for children under 13. © G.A. VARGAS

#Aventura #Guerra #Señor Oscuro #Espadas #Castillos #Magia #Magos #Aventura epica #Dragones #Demonios #Batallas epicas

17 / 25 chapters   54 followers   13805 views   In progress - new chapter every 30 days   ★★★★★ 6 reviews   Share

Prólogo - De un hallazgo imprevisto

Cuando el niño despertó, vio una luz espectral levantarse como una lanza desde el agua del manantial. Era una media tarde de Junio, del año 931 de la Cuarta Edad. El sol brillaba radiante sobre el cielo despejado y sobre los maravillosos mares añiles del Este de Vanjer. El mundo parecía estar en quietud.

El niño contemplaba la luz, y no entendía. Era plateada como la cortina de una llovizna otoñal, pero destellaba con rayitos. Cuando se había quedado dormido en la hierba a la orilla del manantial, en medio de aquella selva inhóspita, esa extraña luz no había estado ahi.

El lugar circundante estaba lleno de árboles de tupido que cada vez se volvían más oscuros. La humedad también había crecido. El moho y la hierba parecieron haberse extendido. En la cumbre de una cresta de rocas, entre dos picos de piedra erizados que

Designing the Inkspired experience has not been a simple task. It required designing for multiple aspects of a product: how content is read and accessed, how content can be found, and how content will be produced.

In order to achieve a great user experience for both readers and writers, I had to research their habits, needs, and goals; as well as to get to know our audience's profile very well. The beauty of a good design approach is to keep things as lean as possible and hide any sort of complex functionality. The editor screen looks clean, but the algorithms behind it could not be more complex.
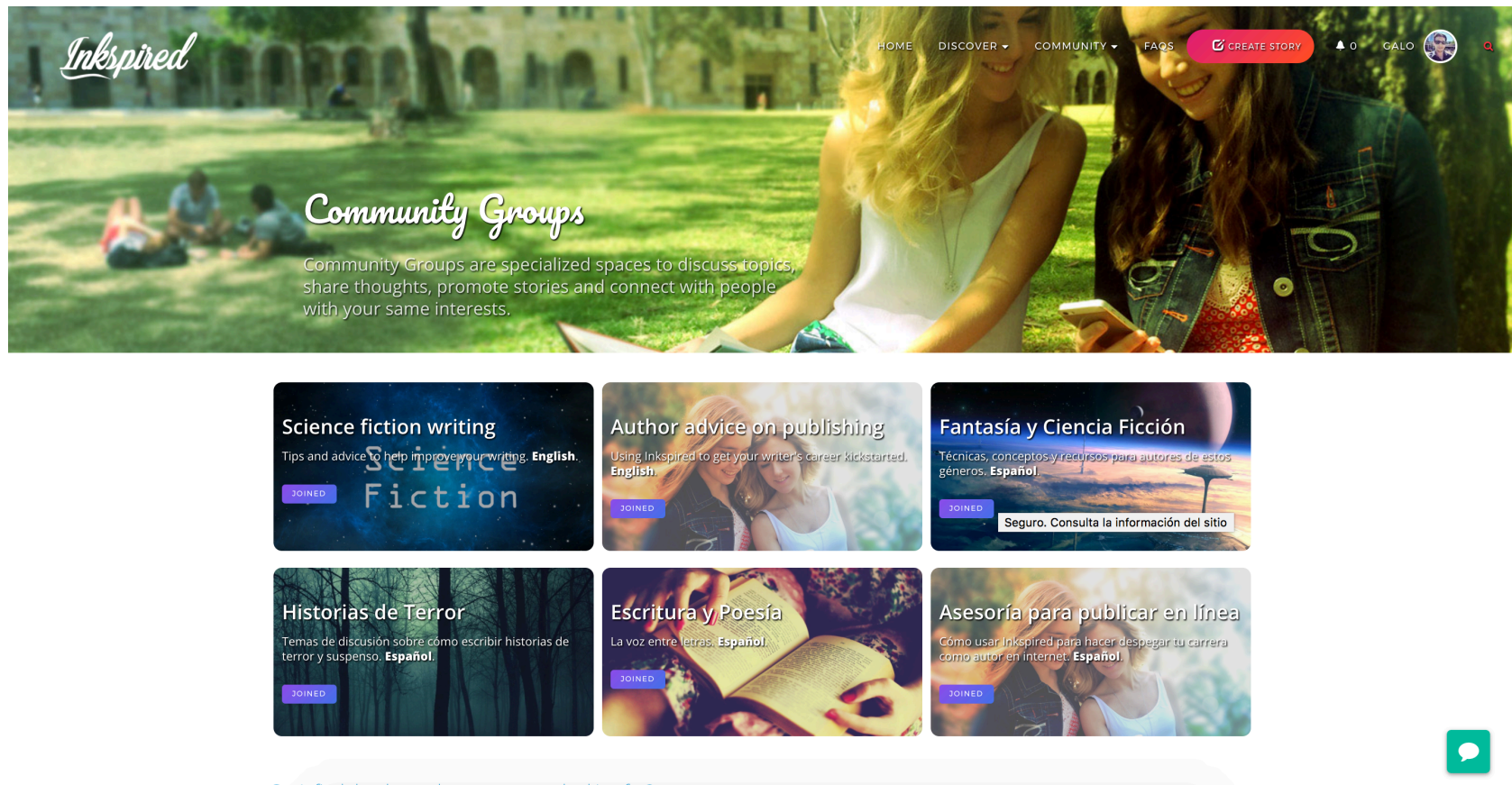
Among the other aspects that had to be taken into account when designing a multi-sided platform, is to design for interaction and engagement, where the primary actions should prompt communications between both sides of the community. This goes beyond "likes" and "comments", but to proper functionalities on the right space, that entices users to sign up for a conversation.
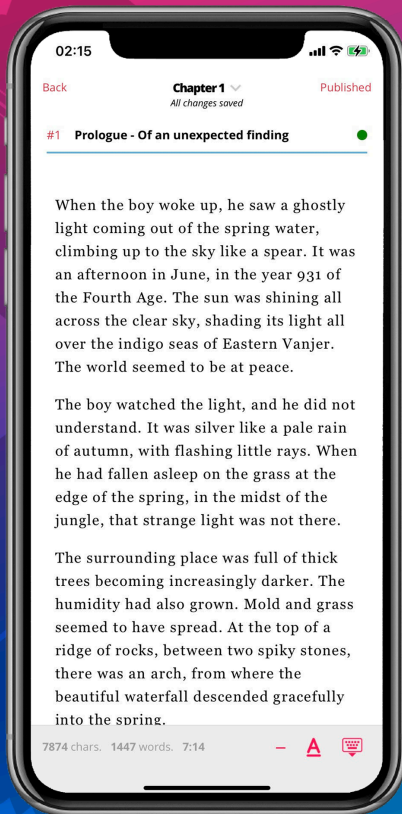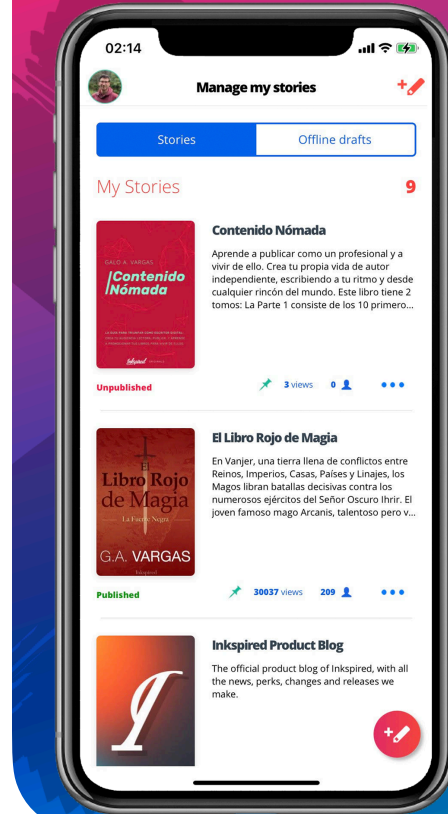
Inkspired

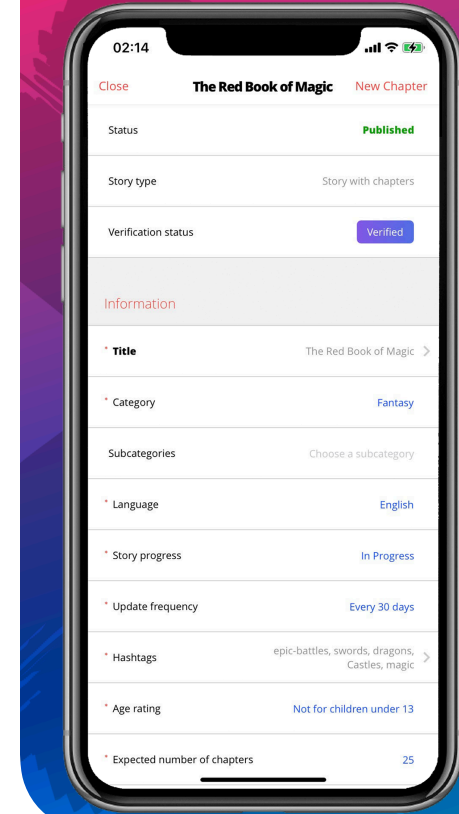## Inkspired **Writer Mobile (iOS / Android)**

https://www.getinkspired.com/mobile/

Inkspired

Write.

02:15

Back Chapter 1 ∨ Published
All changes saved

#1 **Prologue - Of an unexpected finding** ●

When the boy woke up, he saw a ghostly light coming out of the spring water, climbing up to the sky like a spear. It was an afternoon in June, in the year 931 of the Fourth Age. The sun was shining all across the clear sky, shading its light all over the indigo seas of Eastern Vanjer. The world seemed to be at peace.

The boy watched the light, and he did not understand. It was silver like a pale rain of autumn, with flashing little rays. When he had fallen asleep on the grass at the edge of the spring, in the midst of the jungle, that strange light was not there.

The surrounding place was full of thick trees becoming increasingly darker. The humidity had also grown. Mold and grass seemed to have spread. At the top of a ridge of rocks, between two spiky stones, there was an arch, from where the beautiful waterfall descended gracefully into the spring.

7874 chars. 1447 words. 7:14 — A ⌨

Inkspired

Publish.

02:14

Manage my stories ✎+

| Stories | Offline drafts |

My Stories 9

Contenido Nómada
Aprende a publicar como un profesional y a vivir de ello. Crea tu propia vida de autor independiente, escribiendo a tu ritmo y desde cualquier rincón del mundo. Este libro tiene 2 tomos: La Parte 1 consiste de los 10 primero...

Unpublished 📌 3 views 0 👤 •••

El Libro Rojo de Magia
En Vanjer, una tierra llena de conflictos entre Reinos, Imperios, Casas, Países y Linajes, los Magos libran batallas decisivas contra los numerosos ejércitos del Señor Oscuro Ihrir. El joven famoso mago Arcanis, talentoso pero v...

Published 📌 30037 views 209 👤 •••

Inkspired Product Blog
The official product blog of Inkspired, with all the news, perks, changes and releases we make.

Inkspired

Manage.

02:14

Close **The Red Book of Magic** New Chapter

Status **Published**

Story type Story with chapters

Verification status Verified

Information

* Title The Red Book of Magic ›

* Category Fantasy

Subcategories Choose a subcategory

* Language English

* Story progress In Progress

* Update frequency Every 30 days

* Hashtags epic-battles, swords, dragons, Castles, magic ›

* Age rating Not for children under 13

* Expected number of chapters 25

Inkspired

Inkspired **Writer Mobile (iOS / Android)**

https://www.getinkspired.com/mobile/

Write.

Inkspired Writer Mobile is an ambitious project that **I participated as a product designer, project manager and co-developer** using **React Native** as a technology.

The app is available (with massive great reviews) in the **Apple App Store (iOS)** and **Google Play Store (Android)**, and its possible to install in your **phone or tablet.**

The Inkspired Writer app's goal is to bring a super-fast and reliable experience for writing and publishing your stories directly from your smartphone, while allowing you to have full control of your content, its information, and your account preferences. The editor has a state of the art engineering supporting different data types, formatting and syncing across devices. Also, one of the key features of the app involves offline writing, handling all possible scenarios in case of lack of internet connection.

The app is fully available in English, Spanish, Portuguese, French and German.

Inkspired

Inkspired **Reader Mobile (iOS / Android)**
https://www.getinkspired.com/mobile/
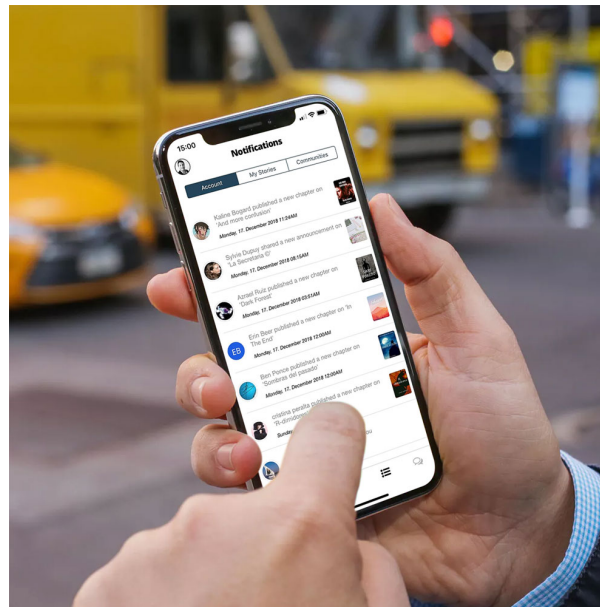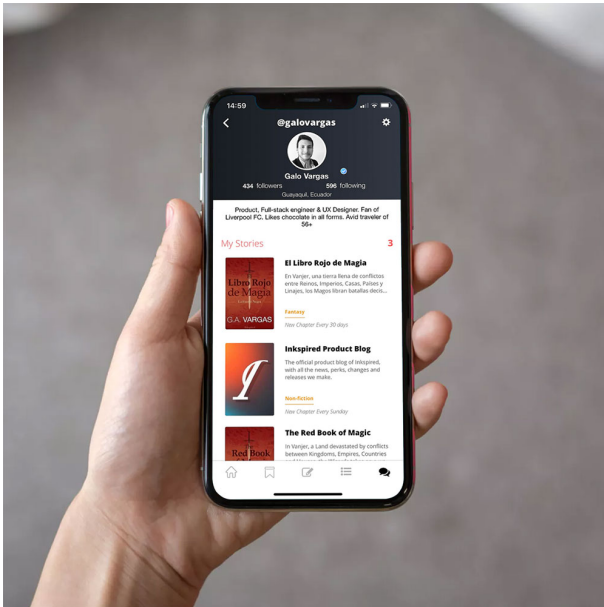
As part of the Inkspired platform, **I designed and launched** an iOS and an Android app fully focused on the reading experience of stories and microfictions. The Inkspired Reader app (in contrast to the Inkspired Writer app built on React Native) were coded in their own native language (Objective-C and Java). We plan to integrate these apps in the future to one single code base in its sister React Native app.

I acted not only as a product designer, but also as the **product/project manager** handling the scope and deliverables with external developers. As the **designer**, I took care of the UX, the visual layout, the product interactions. I also had **full hands-on the backend development for the rest API** that the apps needs to connect with.

Inkspired

Inkspired **Reader Mobile (iOS / Android)**
https://www.getinkspired.com/mobile/
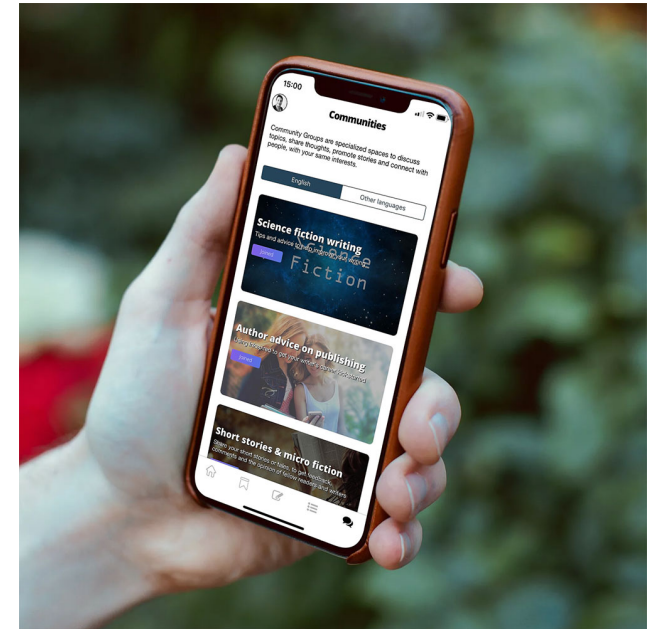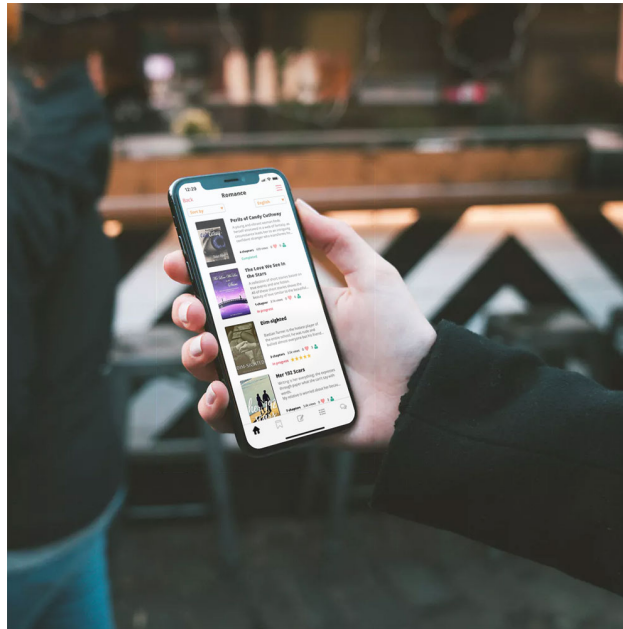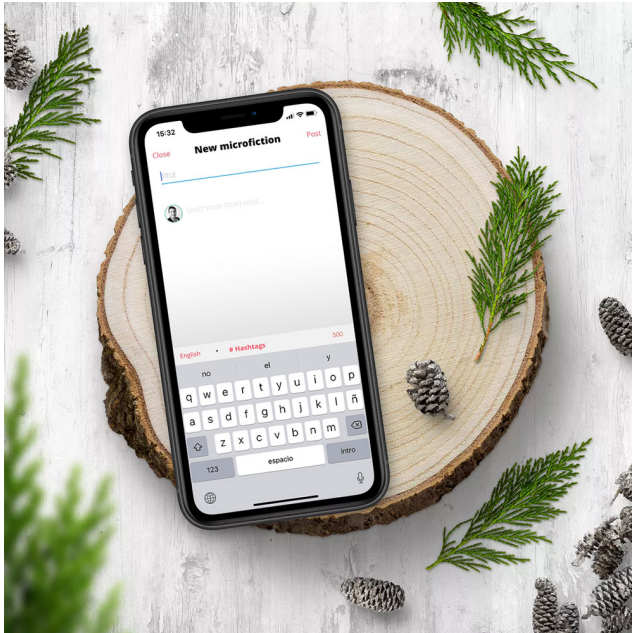
As previously stated, these mobile apps are **designed specifically around reading and finding content**, but with the exception writing **microfictions**, which are mini-stories of 500 characters (similar to Tweets in Twitter feed).

This constriction has earned the platform a lot of fans who appreciated the higher quality of stories being published. But as the platform started to grow in user base and functionalities, the demands grew as well. With better resources and technological foundations in the API, we were able to produce a complementary app for writing.

The app is fully available in English, Spanish and Portuguese, and is not receiving further updates as we are migrating the code base to React Native.

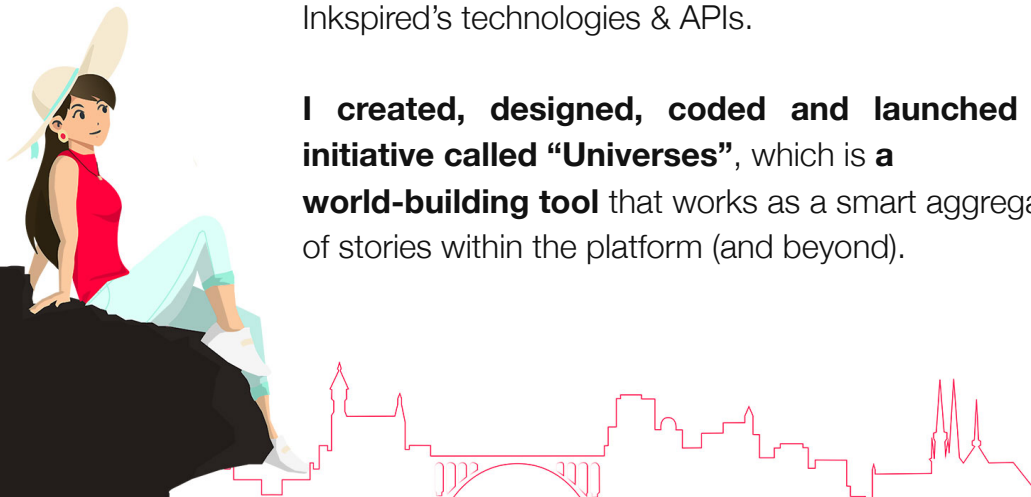## Inkspired

UNIVERSES

The art of worldbuilding.

I participated as a sole creator in a new tool using Inkspired's technologies & APIs.

I created, designed, coded and launched an initiative called "Universes", which is **a world-building tool** that works as a smart aggregator of stories within the platform (and beyond).

"Universes" helps users to organize and connect their ideas of any fictional storytelling work, as you can create Glossaries for Characters, Places, Events, Cultures, Societies, Items, Vehicles, Organizations, etc…, make relationships between each other, and then show visual maps to your readers to help them navigate throughout your fictional world in a super-easy way, allowing you to even full-customize your universe's page just like Wix.

"Universes" is a powerful tool that allows, basically, to create your own Wikipedia for your stories. Over 1200 "universes" were created within 48 hours of its launch.

Inkspired
UNIVERSES

Back to Inko, Inka & Katze   Published   Smart Glossaries

Inko

0   0   Public   26 views

0 mentions. Mention this Glossary in your chapters.

Manage: Characters (3)

Inka
Inko
Katze

You can **mention** any of these Glossaries on the Editor Screen to include them in the chapters of the stories linked to this Universe.

Alternatively, you can do it from the 'mentions' option' when editing an individual Glossary on this page.

Edit Characters : Inko

* Name
Inko

Upload avatar image
Choose File   No file chosen

Title

Tagline

Character type
Protagonist

Gender
Male

Birth date
2000-03-01

Death date

Role
Introduce you to the Inkspired world

Age
21

Fictional race

Occupation

Abilities

Aliases

+ Belonging

Back to Inko, Inka & Katze

Smart Glossaries

3 Characters
All characters in the stories of your world or universe: Protagonists, villains, secondary characters, extras etc...

1 Places
Continents, Countries, Regions, Cities, Kingdoms, Locations.

Events
Key moments in your Universe associated with Characters, Places, History and Storylines.

Items
Instruments, Special objects, Potions, Collectibles, Devices.

Storylines
The stories you want to tell. Link up your Glossaries together with your Stories.

Techniques and Magic
Special skills, Superpowers, Spells, Tactics.

Weapons and Gear
Swords, Shields, Guns, Wearables, Armors.

Creatures
Animals, Plants, Species, Monsters, Aliens.

Culture
Customs, Traditions, Civilizations, Folklore, Religions, Lore.

Organizations
Institutions, corporations, tribes, clans, guilds, groups.

Society
Social structure, Goverment, Politics, Commerce, Fictional races.

Vehicles
Cars, Bikes, Planes, Boats, Spaceships.

Technology
Technological devices, Electronics, Discoveries, Gadgets.

Historical entry
World backstories, Ages, Myths, Legends.

Cartography and Geography
Maps, Weather.

Inkspired **Writer Desktop (MacOS / Windows)**

https://getinkspired.com/writer/
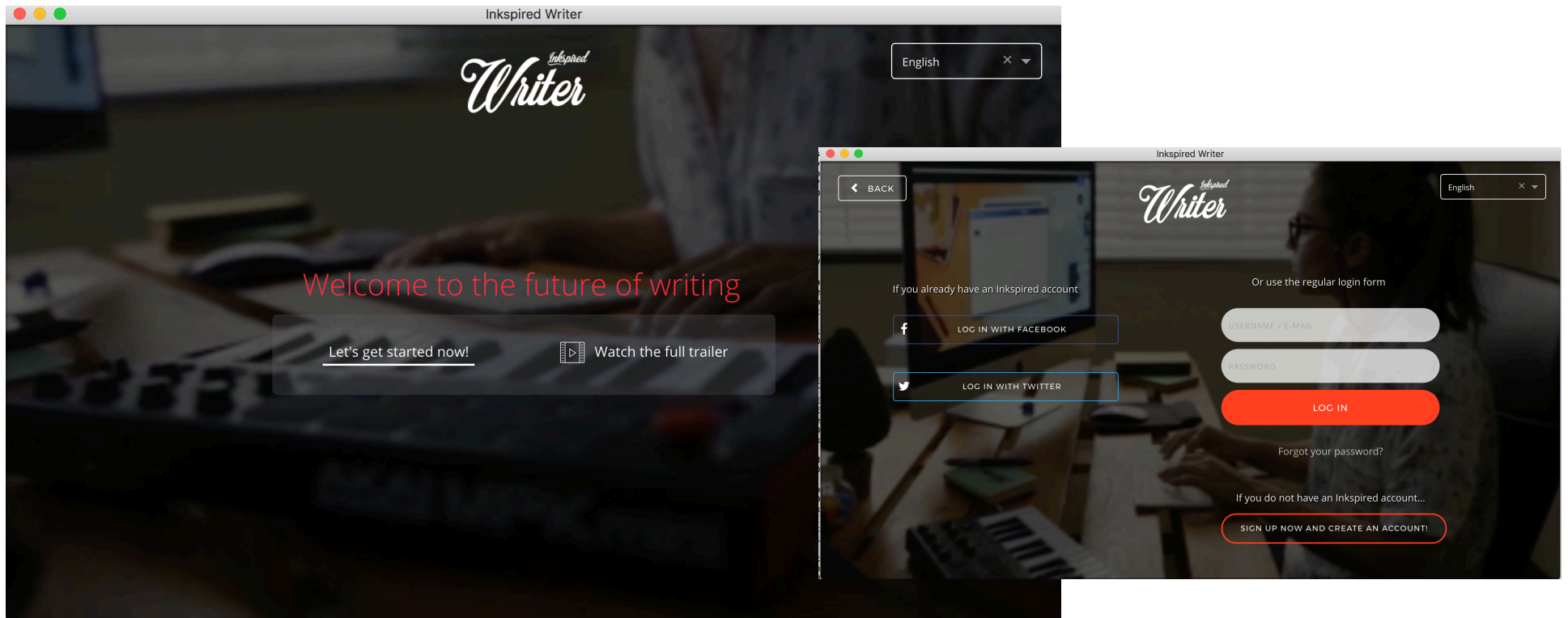
As part of the Inkspired platform, I acted as a Product Designer of an ambitious Smart Editor for fiction authoring. I designed the UI/UX of this Desktop App for Mac & Windows, while also working on its front-end code and the API that linked the app with our web platform.

We used ReactJS for the front-end along with Electron as a framework.

![Inkspired Writer logo]

Inkspired **Writer Desktop (MacOS / Windows)**

https://getinkspired.com/writer/
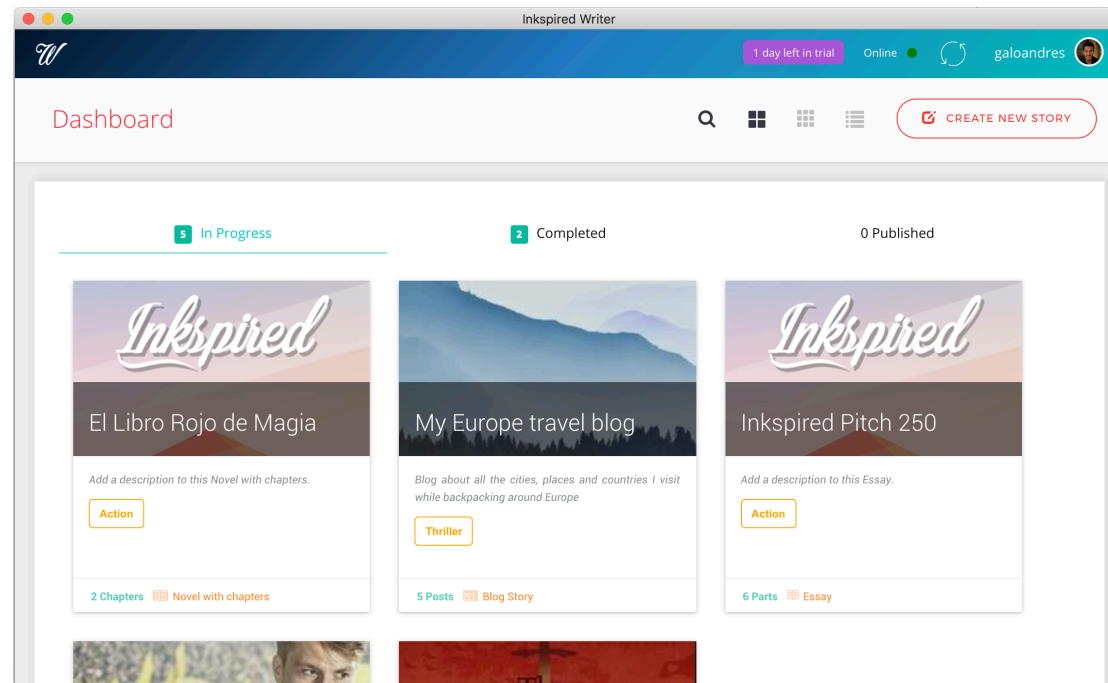
Designing for a Desktop app involves different approaches than designing for a Web or Mobile app, as we aimed for fluidity, optimal interactions, great performance and responsiveness. We used web technologies to build a similar UI that the one I implemented on the Inkspired's Web Dashboard. However, I took advantage of the native perks of a desktop app to maximize its utility, and aimed to make the product work without requiring internet connection.

Inspired Writer Desktop (MacOS / Windows)

https://getinkspired.com/writer/
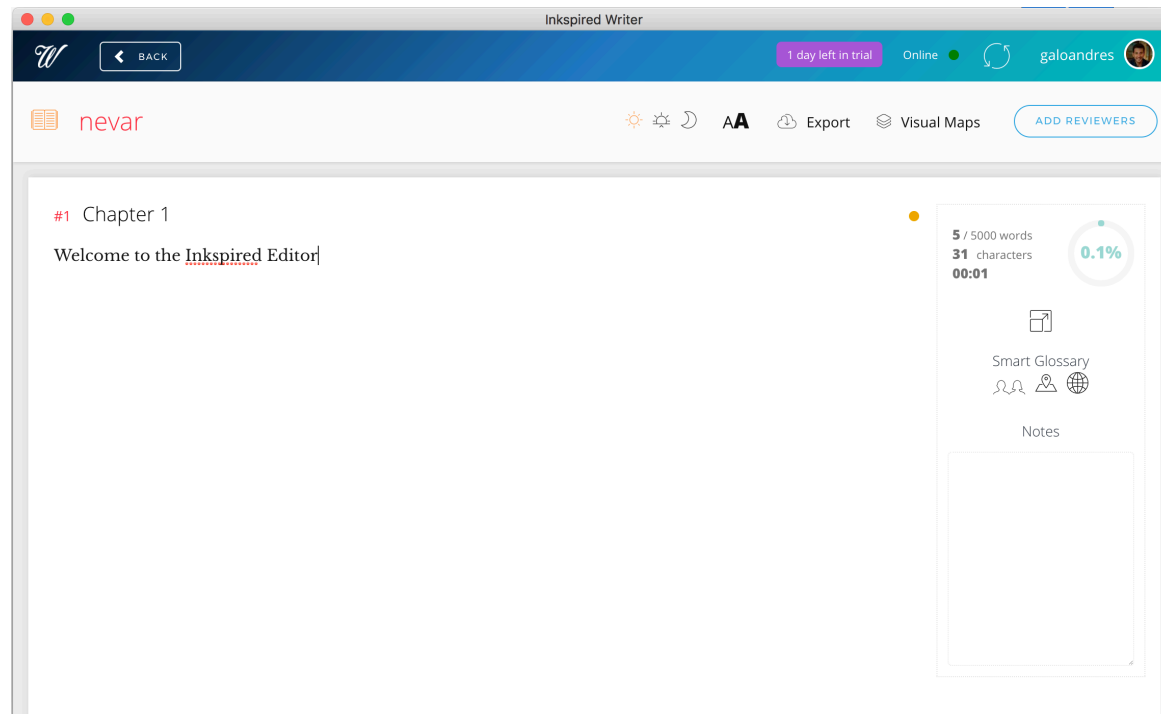
I designed the editor for simplicity, responsiveness and customization. Users are able to customize their own writing experience, while keeping it clean, distraction-free, and writing-centered. The editor was not designed only in terms of visual appealing but also on functionality, with a permanent auto-save, and a AI that analyzes words input that identifies characters, events and places in the story. It is also possible to switch chapters in real-time without loosing content and reloading.

Inspired **Writer Desktop (MacOS / Windows)**

https://getinkspired.com/writer/
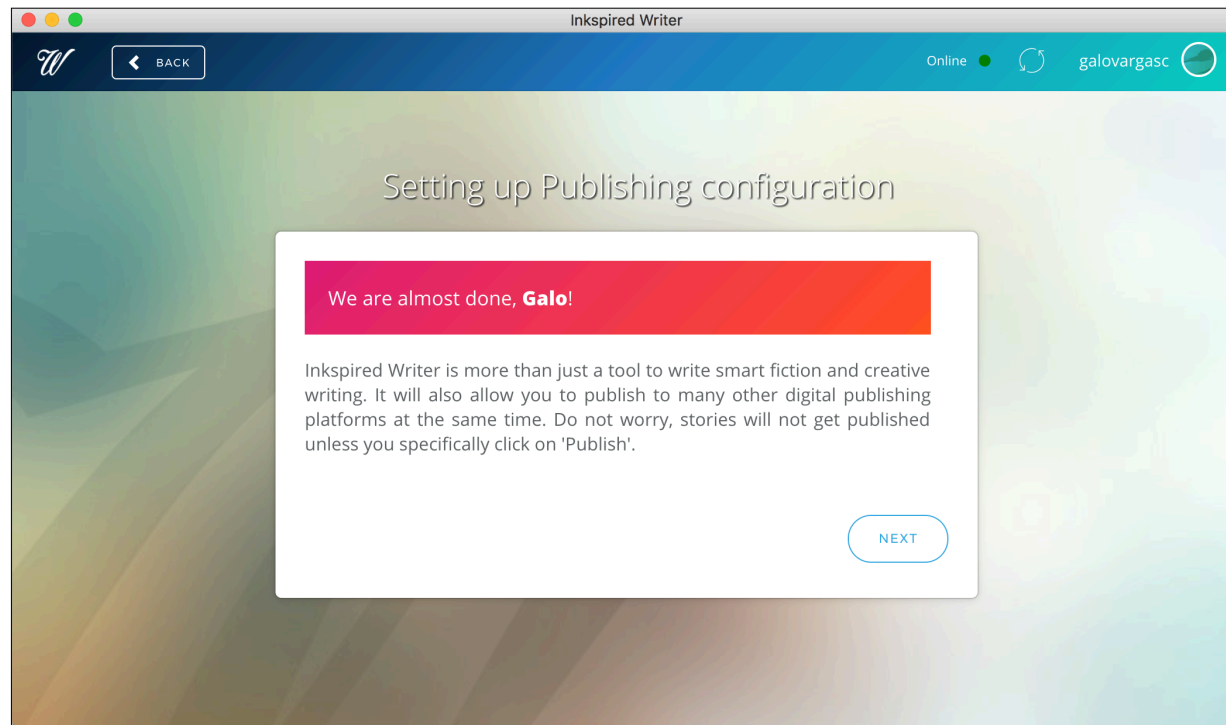
Designing the walkthrough was both, fun and functional. It is the way the product introduces the user to its capacities. Inkspired Writer has been designed to be as easy-to-use, intuitive and simple as possible. Although, as a designer, I felt the need to introduce a small initial walkthrough with the mission of not to explain how it works, but what the tool can potentially do for you as a user.

![Inkspired Writer logo]

Promo video

Welcome to the future of writing.
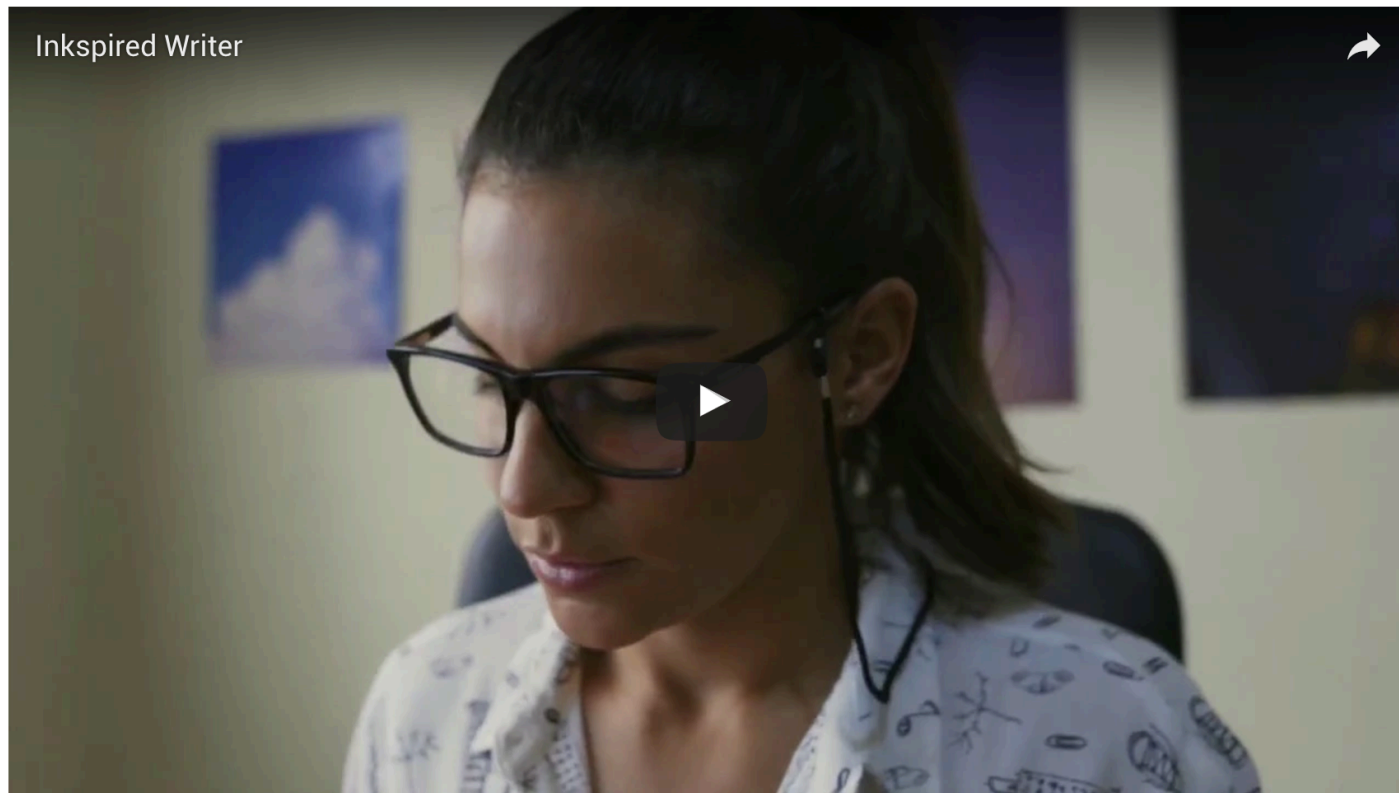
Inkspired Writer

As a manager of the product who worked also on its business model and go-to-market strategies, I also co-created the Inkspired Writer's promo video. I directed the scenes, created the script and crafted the concept according to the product's vision, while the video filming/editing itself was done by another team member.

MARIA ISABEL FUENTES
ARQUITECTOS

Todos   Proyectos   Obras Realizadas   Arquitectura Temporal   Arquitectura Interior

Nosotros

Proyectos

Servicios

Publicaciones

Contacto

I worked as a full-stack developer and a visual design for the Chilean/Ecuadorian architecture firm Mari Isabel Fuentes, designing a visual portfolio of her vast work in creating private projects.

p v r a °
one breath at a time

p v r a °
one breath at a time

products   about pvra   blog   0

blown glass crafted by real artisans

shop

→
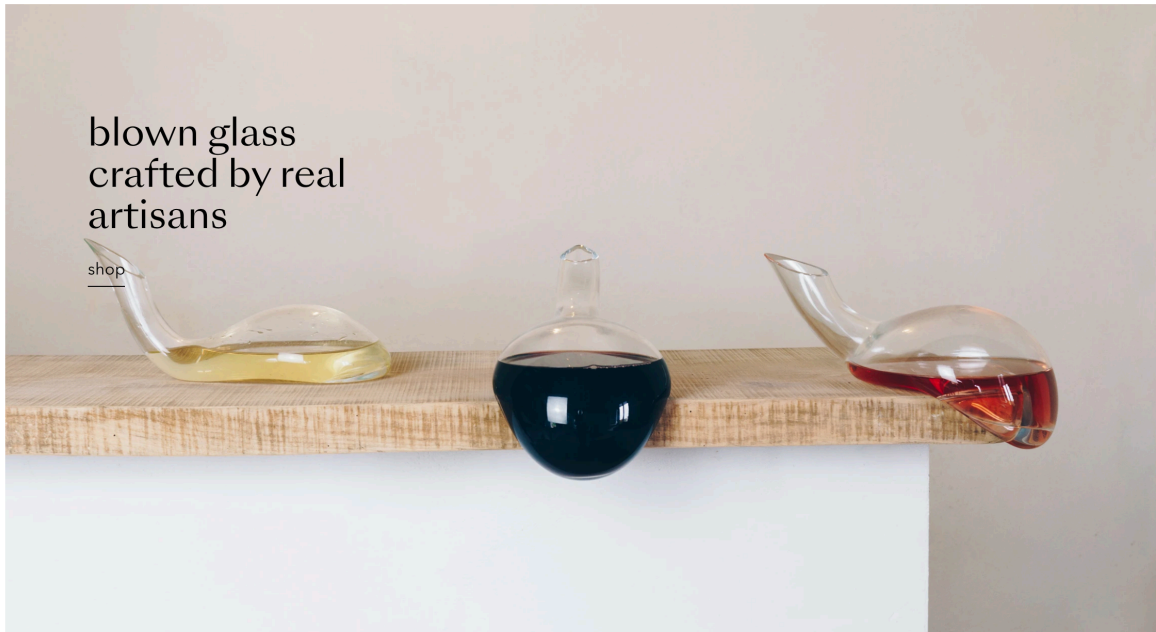
I worked as a full-stack developer for PVRA, a glass company in Portugal, to develop a pixel-perfect template for its Shopify Online Store, and be able to sell their high-end catalog of shaped glasses.

I worked as a full-stack developer for Playdate Australia's website: a community of parents who wants to meet other parents, within Australia.

Playdate Australia allowed parents to create events, groups, and contact other parents nearby to meet up and hang out with their children.

I specifically worked on:

- Improving the User Experience by fixing usability issues.

- Coded new front-end UI to support new back-end features.

- Worked in server tuning, crons, and process optimization.

- Mobile responsiveness

Current status: After operating between 2013 - 2016, the website has been paused.

EL UNIVERSO

eluniverso.com is the most important and visited website in Ecuador. I acted as the Project manager for its 2013 redesign.

I created, designed and led the project, which included building a new CMS, redesign the UI of the entire site, refocus the brand's digital use, and optimize the process of content creation in the journalism department.

I had to coordinate different teams of engineering, design, journalism, advertising, digital marketing, and IT, while dealing directly with stakeholders, directors and managers, and convince them about my vision and make sure the new user experience met all the business goals, and the journalists had a faster way to create and publish news articles.

EL UNIVERSO   Mobile & iPhone app

Worked as the project manager and the UI designer of a standalone web version of the main website of eluniverso.com - the most visited news media site in Ecuador.

The objective was to provide a new optimized experience that could maximize the readability and findability of news media content on mobile devices, since until that moment the company's site did not had any support for it.

The challenge was to convert the vast information from the website, to a simplified experience - and coordinate the different areas involved (external providers, stakeholders, journalists and engineers) to work together on what needed to be donde to make the project work.

The outcome was great as the site got optimized to render perfectly in every screen size and mobile device.

Alchemy **CMS**

Built and designed a multi-functional CMS with a flexible API, specialized in managing digital content for publishers.

Alchemy is the technology I built to support Inkspired's core, acting as it's first client.

Currently, it's being used by a couple of ecuadorian and chilean publishers to handle, create, publish and distribute content internally within their organizations.

Fackellauf app

●●●○○ BELL 📶 4:21 PM ✳ 22% 🔋

FACKELLAUF²⁰¹⁴

🚶 311 h
1,510 km

○ Schönstatt-Wallfahrt

⊙ Pompei NA

🗺 Fackellauf Route

🖼 Photo gallery

✉ Intentions

★ Sponsors

Admin

GAVC Studio
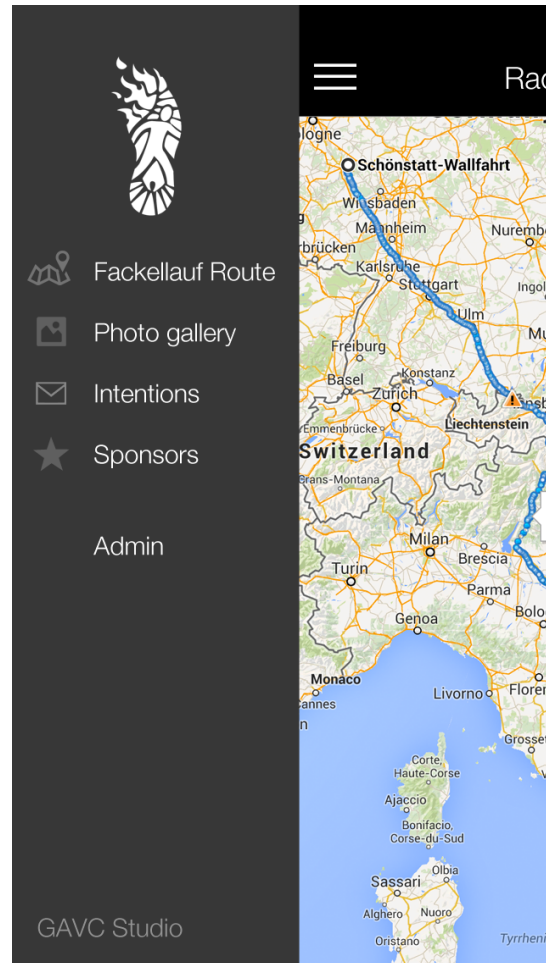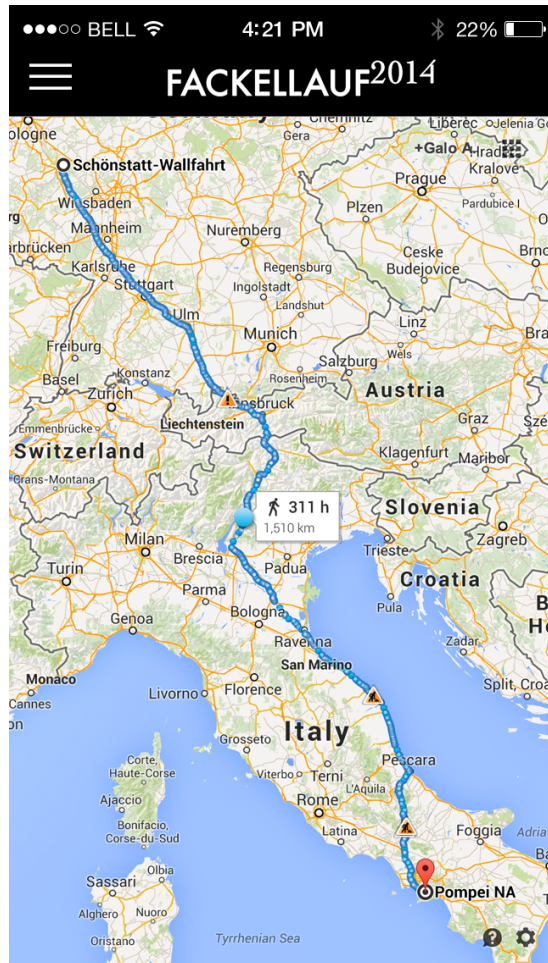
Fackellauf, was a seasonal mobile project designed and built for a 10-day marathon between Italy, Switzerland and Germany. The apps were launched in late 2014, and its objective was to keep track of the progress of all the runners in the race every 10 km, while sharing their experience and letting users around the world support them with messages.

I coordinated the work with a mobile engineer, while I designed the UI and built the API using a Django framework.

The app was available for iOS and Android from 2014 to 2016.

Spotcamp

Spotcamp was a mobile-only ambitious app that, using AI, made tailored recommendations of events and places to users, depending on what they like, in the city they were traveling to.

I worked as the Product and UI Designer, designing for data and user interaction, with multiple levels of gamification. I assembled a team of 2 engineers, and directed the execution of the technology, while taking charge the direction and the user experience of the product.

We launched the app after 6 months of development, and it was on the market for a year and a half until we decided to shut it down.

Ecuavisa

As full-stack developer and a designer, I got to work with the most prominent and popular TV channel in the country, in a project that involved several departments, and high level management.

I gathered all the requirements direct form the client, coded and designed functionalities to support those requirements. At the same time, I was in charge of handling all the communications and doing the project management alongside the client. Coordinated the connection between the website and their databases using APIs, and provided support for the official launch.

The project was large considering the amount of requirements and personnel involved, the amount of users on the site, and the high level eye for detail.

UX design process*
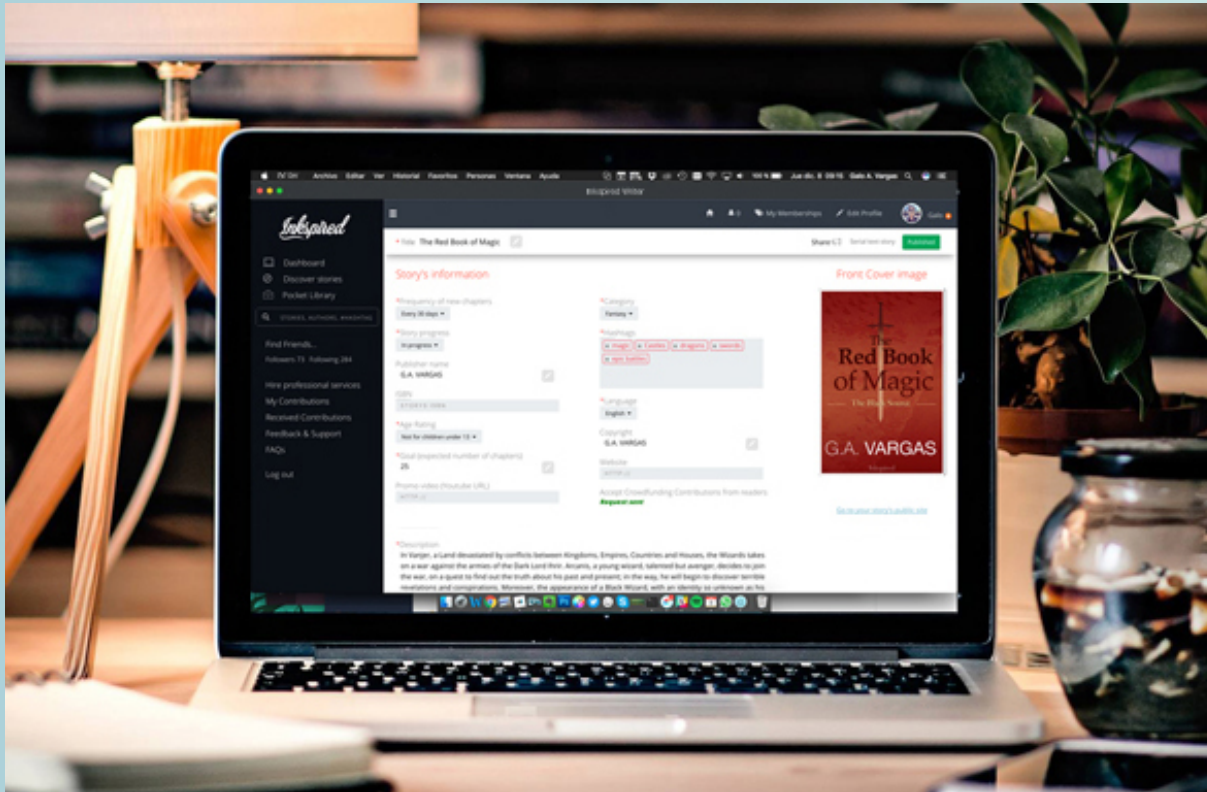
*Limited info and media availability due to NDAs on past projects

Creating the **User Experience of** *Inkspired*

The journey

1 Identifying the problem

2 Understanding the user by creating personas

3 Brainstorming possible solutions

4 Sketching, Wire-framing, user flows

5 Prototyping solutions and testing

6 User Interface

7 The "voice" and the brand

1 Identifying the problem

It all started as a personal problem.

My experience of writing a fiction book over the years without any feedback from readers, and struggling to get it published once it was done, appeared as a major obstacle in my intent of getting my story read by people. It just felt as the entire approach to writing a book was wrong.

I was not alone. Within a few days, I realized that dozens and hundreds of people I started talking to, and thousands around the world, shared the same pain.

The **experience of writing and getting published** was *bad, slow, often unfair and limited* to a selected few.

To identify this problem, and understand all the context behind the interactions between each party and process of publishing, I used a UX technique called "framing", which focuses on "observing" the problem from different perspectives.

In this scenario, I considered the *needs, feelings, and goals* of the writers, the book publishers, and the readers.

Identifying the problem

The findings were surprising.

Emerging writers felt the need to be read. That was their ultimate goal even more important than monetizing their work.

Because of this, writers wanted to connect with an audience, and create followers: a fanbase; ultimately, they just wanted to write.

Book publishers, on the other hand, feel the risk that emerging writers represents for their business. They understand that the process of editing, distribution, marketing, illustration, represents a big investment that, sometimes, is not worth to take. But the problem with book publishers is not only the process of publishing itself but finding the right talent to connect with.

Finally, **readers** had an interesting need. They needed a reliable source to find new stories to read even if that meant to take on serials that were in progress. Readers needed a new challenge for reading stories beyond the traditional spectrum but narrowed it down to what they felt was of their interest.

We understood that there was a notable gap between the needs of all of these personas: there was space to create a value proposition.

To fully understand the context of the problem, and the dynamics of how it evolves over time is key to get a clear insight about the people who you are designing for, which will ultimately lead to design the right solution.

Understanding the user by creating personas

The only way to understand the users I was about to design a solution for, was by **talking to them** about the pain that they were having and observing how they were trying to solve it at that time.

Focus groups, interviews, and observation were great tools to research how they were working and the process they had, as I personally ran at least 15 sessions initially with different groups of people with different backgrounds and experiences, not only limited to a location, but also with people in other parts of the world.

I often mixed groups of established authors and emerging writers with readers and people from the publishing industry.

The notes that I took were used to create narratives their profiles and their experiences.

I used these narratives to create cards of fictional people, based on the profiles of the people I encountered in my field research, called "Persona". I even added names to each one.

The importance of creating a "Persona", is to finally have a **defined "model" with a clear "problem" and "role"** to design for. These were my pillars for creating a design that was user-centered aimed to solve a real problem.

Is important to note that until this day, on every major iteration of our work, due to the product's evolution, I need to re-think the model of the "Personas" I'm designing for.

3 Brainstorming possible solutions

One of my favorite parts of the design process, as it lets me explore many different creative ideas to tackle problems of the "Personas".

At Inkspired, we had a concept map for each one, and we created **storyboards of "user journeys"** for each Persona, to figure out what would be the ideal solution for each one, and how the users on a multi-sided platform would "interact" with each other.

Sessions lasted a few weeks as we came out with 3 different approaches that could lead to a potential solution.

The end-goal of brainstorming was not to come out with a solution right away, but to explore possibilities. In our case, it was the testing of these 3 possible solutions alongside with the potential users and customers which defined the "right solution" that I chose.

Even the name "Inkspired", came out of several brainstorming sessions where we considered several names related to books, novels, fiction. At the end, we chose Inkspired because it was an interesting combination of "Ink" (the source of writing) and inspiration.

4 Sketching, Wire-framing, user flows

Inkspired

The mission was to test our approaches "on the cheap", as I remember me and a colleague creating paper prototypes of a website and a mobile app, and testing the possible interactions with our target user: in our case, we started with an emerging writer and an avid reader.

The results gave me a clear insight on where to start refining the sketches. With that at hand, I finally proceed to sketch out what could be a possible solution.

I sketched a series of wireframes with their own "page flows" and navigation, in the middle of collaborative sessions with a colleague and a few writers. I remember having 2 different information architectures for the same screen.

The purpose was to choose the best experience with a "less is more" approach.

At the end, I was left with a small batch of wireframes for an initial mobile app that was aimed for readers, while I designed a web experience specifically for writing on a minimalist editor.

Sketching and wire-framing possible solutions were the product of a series of sessions and iterations that started on paper and then were translated into digital assets. Balsamiq was the preferred tool. However, no solution was created yet (at least not one that I thought of) as I needed to prototype them first and observe the user's behaviors with the current proposals.
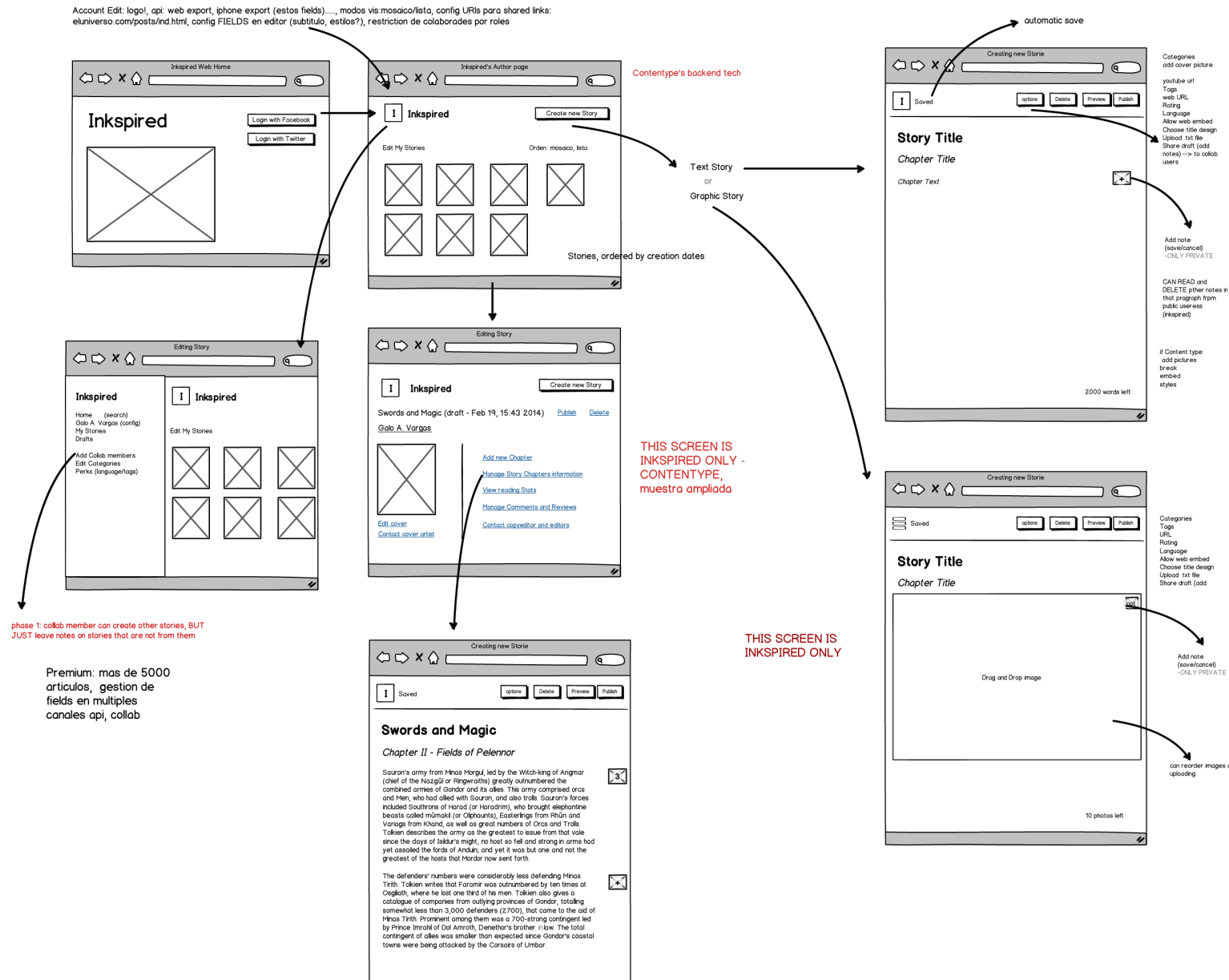
4

Sketching, Wire-framing, user flows

Inkspired

Example of an **Initial wire flow of the user journey** on the web: the scenario was a writer that wants to write and publish a story for the first time.
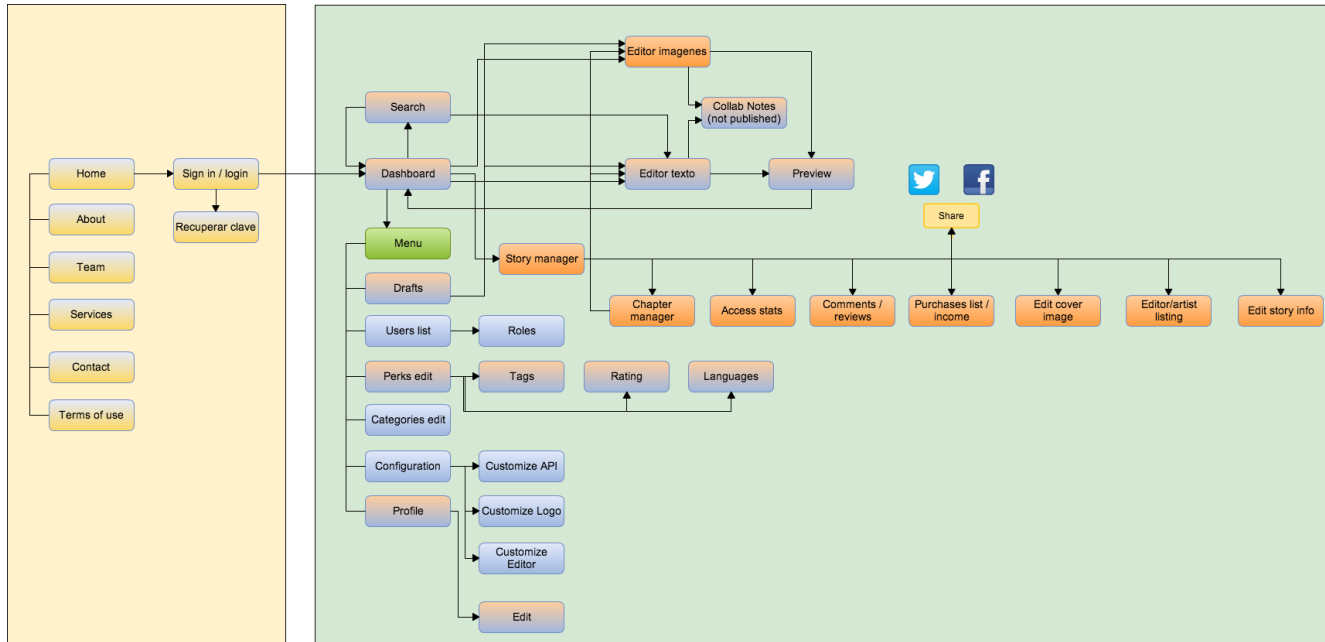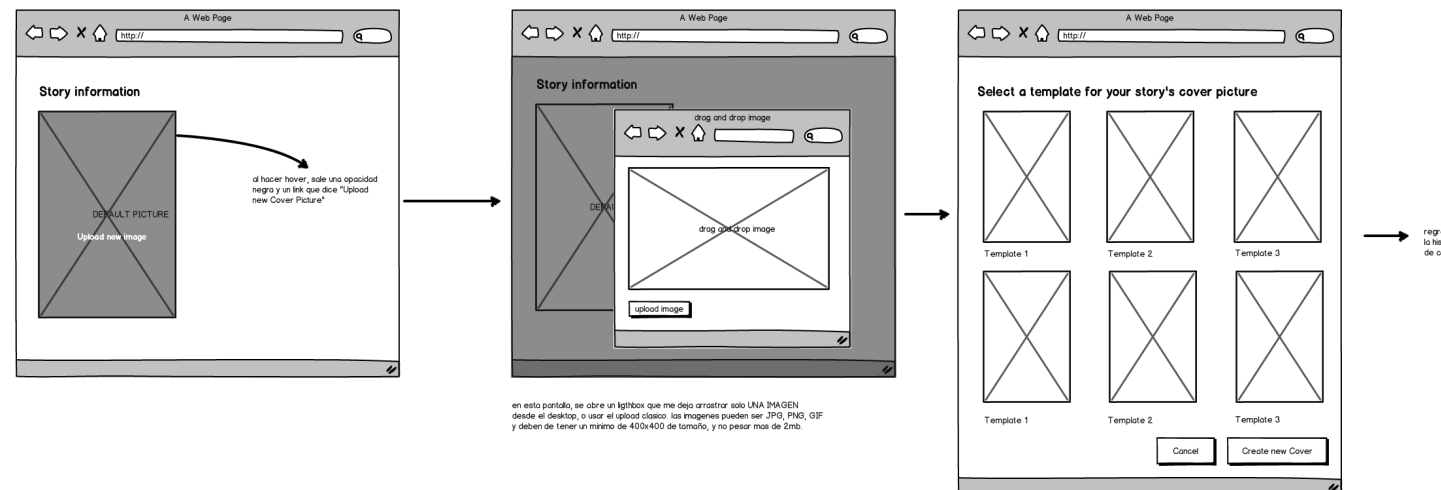
We tested multiple iterations of this journey.

Account Edit: logo!, api: web export, iphone export (estos fields)....., modos vis:mosaico/lista, config URIs para shared links: eluniverso.com/posts/ind.html, config FIELDS en editor (subtitulo, estilos?), restriction de colaborades por roles

automatic save

Inkspired Web Home

Inkspired

Login with Facebook
Login with Twitter

Inkspired's Author page

I Inkspired

Create new Story

Edit My Stories   Orden: mosaico, lista

Stories, ordered by creation dates

Contentype's backend tech

Text Story
or
Graphic Story

Creating new Storie

I Saved   options Delete Preview Publish

Story Title

Chapter Title

Chapter Text

Categories
add cover picture

youtube url
Tags
web URL
Rating
Language
Allow web embed
Choose title design
Upload .txt file
Share draft (add notes) --> to collab users

Add note
(save/cancel)
-ONLY PRIVATE

CAN READ and DELETE pther notes in that pragraph frpm public useeress (Inkspired)

if Content type:
add pictures
break
embed
styles

2000 words left

Editing Story

Inkspired

Home   (search)
Galo A. Vargas (config)
My Stories
Drafts

Add Collab members
Edit Categories
Perks (language/tags)

I Inkspired

Edit My Stories

Editing Story

I Inkspired   Create new Story

Swords and Magic (draft - Feb 19, 15:43 2014)   Publish   Delete

Galo A. Vargas

Add new Chapter
Manage Story Chapters information
View reading Stats
Manage Comments and Reviews
Contact copyeditor and editors

Edit cover
Contact cover artist

THIS SCREEN IS INKSPIRED ONLY - CONTENTYPE, muestra ampliada

Creating new Storie

I Saved   options Delete Preview Publish

Story Title

Chapter Title

Drag and Drop image

Categories
Tags
URL
Rating
Language
Allow web embed
Choose title design
Upload .txt file
Share draft (add

Add note
(save/cancel)
-ONLY PRIVATE

can reorder images after uploading

10 photos left

phase 1: collab member can create other stories, BUT JUST leave notes on stories that are not from them

Premium: mas de 5000 articulos, gestion de fields en multiples canales api, collab

THIS SCREEN IS INKSPIRED ONLY

Creating new Storie

I Saved   options Delete Preview Publish

Swords and Magic

Chapter II - Fields of Pelennor

Sauron's army from Minas Morgul, led by the Witch-king of Angmar (chief of the Nazgûl or Ringwraiths) greatly outnumbered the combined armies of Gondor and its allies. This army comprised orcs and Men, who had allied with Sauron, and also trolls. Sauron's forces included Southrons of Harad (or Haradrim), who brought elephantine beasts called mûmakil (or Oliphaunts), Easterlings from Rhûn and Variags from Khand, as well as great numbers of Orcs and Trolls Tolkien describes the army as the greatest to issue from that vale since the days of Isildur's might, no host so fell and strong in arms had yet assailed the fords of Anduin; and yet it was but one and not the greatest of the hosts that Mordor now sent forth.

The defenders' numbers were considerably less defending Minos Tirith. Tolkien writes that Faramir was outnumbered by ten times at Osgiliath, where he lost a third of his men. Tolkien also gives a catalogue of companies from outlying provinces of Gondor, totaling somewhat less than 3,000 defenders (2700), that came to the aid of Minas Tirith. Prominent among them was a 700-strong contingent led by Prince Imrahil of Dol Amroth, Denethor's brother in law. The total contingent of allies was smaller than expected since Gondor's coastal towns were being attacked by the Corsairs of Umbar.

1742 words left

Sketching, Wire-framing, user flows

Inkspired

Initial draft of the website's information architecture, which was later changed as we prototyped solutions.

Diagram labels:
- Home
- Sign in / login
- Recuperar clave
- About
- Team
- Services
- Contact
- Terms of use
- Search
- Dashboard
- Menu
- Drafts
- Users list — Roles
- Perks edit — Tags
- Categories edit
- Configuration — Customize API
- Profile — Customize Logo
- Customize Editor
- Edit
- Editor imagenes
- Collab Notes (not published)
- Editor texto
- Preview
- Share
- Story manager
- Rating
- Languages
- Chapter manager
- Access stats
- Comments / reviews
- Purchases list / income
- Edit cover image
- Editor/artist listing
- Edit story info

Initial wire flow of how a writer will upload a cover picture to his/her stories, and choose templates.

Story information
DEFAULT PICTURE
Upload new image
al hacer hover, sale una opacidad negra y un link que dice "Upload new Cover Picture"

Story information
drag and drop image
upload image
en esta pantalla, se abre un ligthbox que me deja arrastrar solo UNA IMAGEN desde el desktop, o usar el upload clasico. las imagenes pueden ser JPG, PNG, GIF y deben de tener un minimo de 400x400 de tamaño, y no pesar mas de 2mb.

Select a template for your story's cover picture
Template 1 Template 2 Template 3
Template 1 Template 2 Template 3
Cancel Create new Cover

Prototyping solutions and testing

With the wireframes of a possible solution at hand, we used **prototyping tools** such as POP and MARVEL, to create interactive apps that a user could use on their phones. This low **fidelity prototype** was not fancy. The screens were far from a sketch but way less than an actual eye-candy user interface. It was good enough for the user to see the **content and navigate** through all the screens using interactive clicks. I remember only using colors to highlight primary and secondary actions. That was our main interest.

The prototype itself was the entire experience of the app without even laying out a single line of code. It worked, without being built. We made it on the cheap, and fast, to see if the possible solution we were offering was actually solving our user's pain.

Testing my solution with real potential users gave me a great level of feedback. I was close to creating something that was valuable to them and designed specifically for their needs, but it would still take the process of *prototyping - testing - iterating* a few more times until I got a more refined prototype with real results.

Back in those days, I even used these prototypes to get some initial funding and colleagues on board. The idea was not just an idea anymore: it was quite tangible and apparently useful to those who were using it.

With notes taken, now it was time to decide what should be an **MVP**. I decided to go for a **mobile-first** approach since it was a clearer focus on content-on-the-go, and a narrower scope to work with for an initial release.

Prototyping solutions and testing

Inkspired

Then I created the initial scope of the project based on the prototype results. The screens highlighted with blue were what was defined as the MVP for the iOS mobile app, whilst the ones highlighted on yellow was our "Phase 2" which to date has already been accomplished.

Inkspired App's Screen Chart
- Not features-
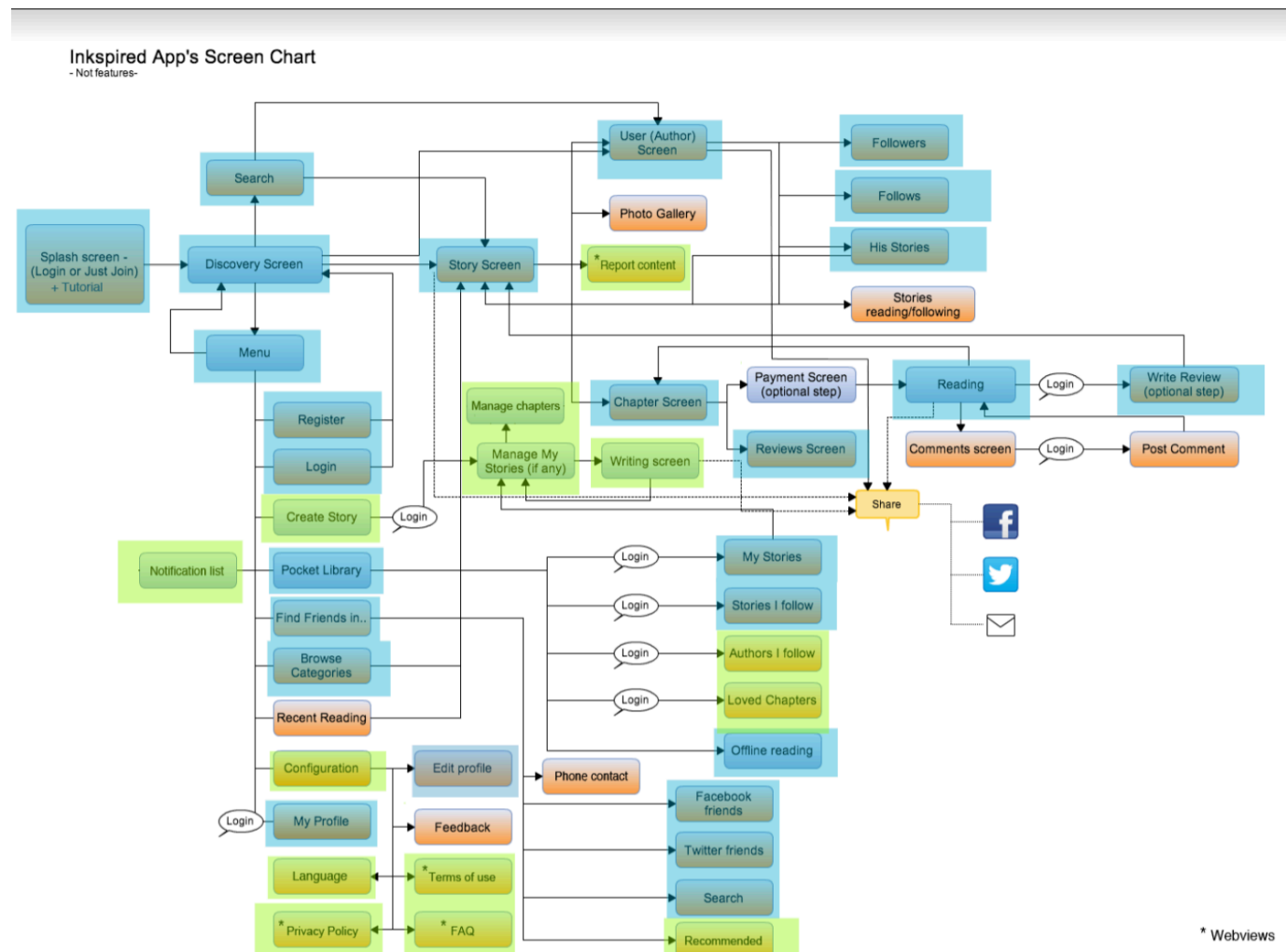
6 User Interface

The results of the prototyping sessions were promising, and I knew what I had to change, what I had to add, and what was not necessary at all (not for an initial version anyway).

Based on this, I decided to write detailed design specifications (that will later become engineering functionalities specs) along with **visual design guidelines**. I tend to write rules for a specific design piece depending for what and whom I'm designing for.

In the case of Inkspired, the design rule was to always minimize the noise and **maximize the content**: *its readability and find-ability*. The color scheme was also very important to support this and to guide the user's path.

I started by laying out a possible set of color schemes that could support the experience of writing and reading.

In the writing spectrum, since Inkspired was meant to be focused on fiction, I needed a *color scheme centered in sparking creativity*, whilst on the reading experience side, I needed a color scheme free from distractions.

Using **common conventions** for all the interactions was also key to make an introductory product and an **easy-to-use (and easy-to-learn) interface**. After all, the beauty of a design is the ability to hide complex patterns and make them as usable as possible.

6

User Interface
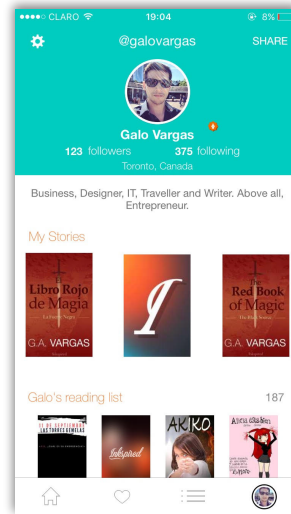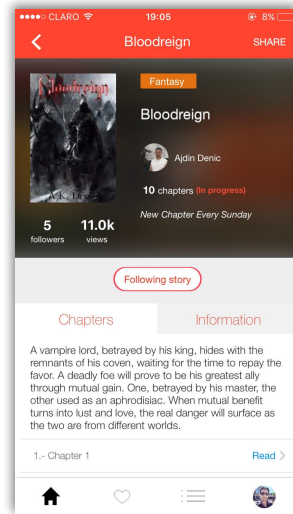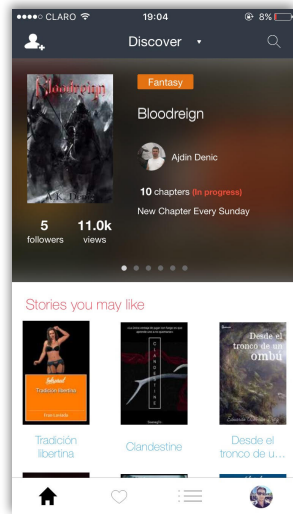
Inkspired

Some of the **first designs** (MVP, BETA v1) that I made for the Inkspired's iOS app back in 2014.

A great user-centered design from the very beginning, easy to navigate and access content proved to be worthwhile over the time, since we have not seen the need to entirely revamp the App's main information architecture; only update it with incremental changes.
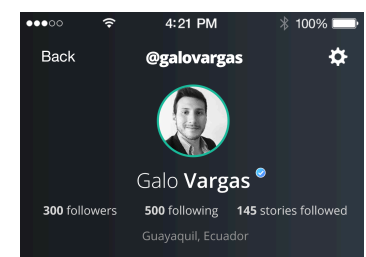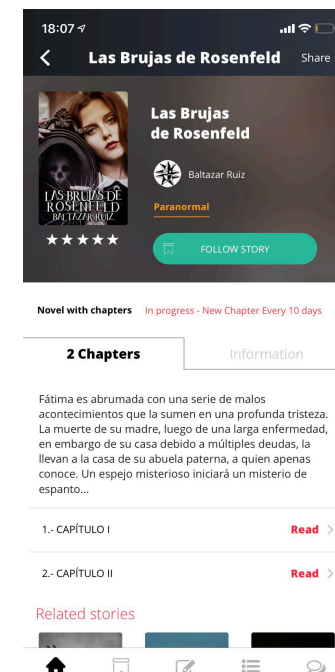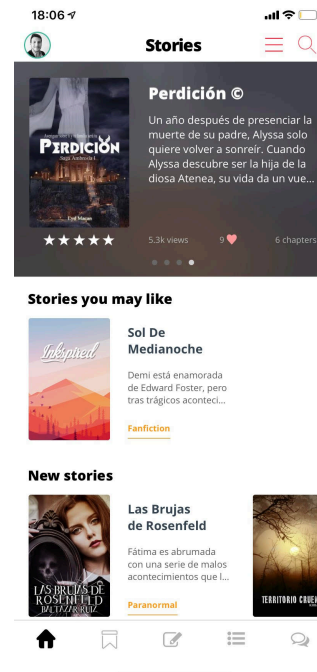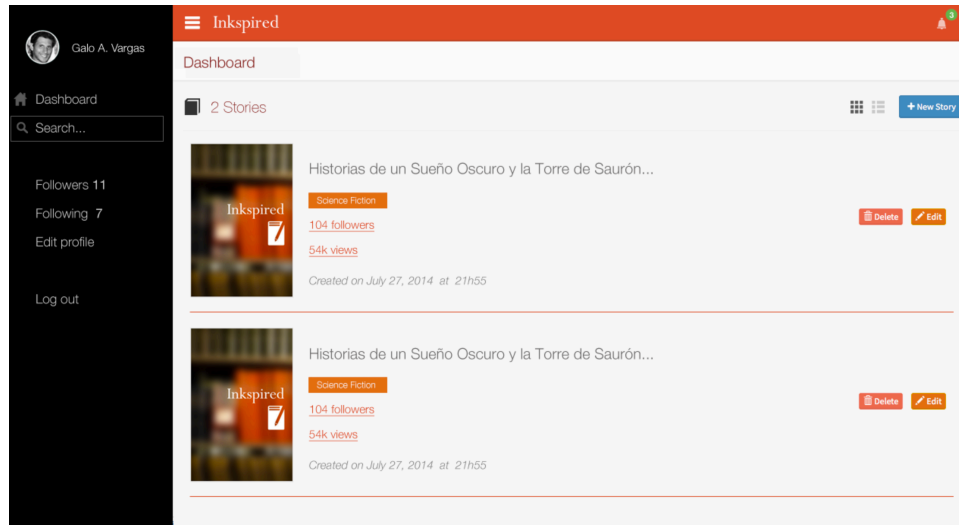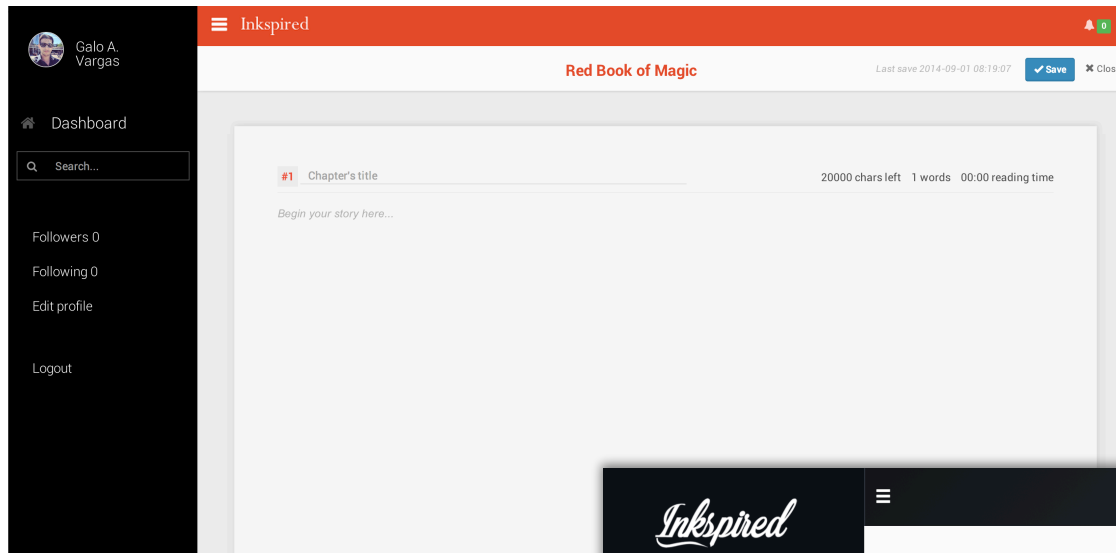
6 User Interface

Inkspired

First UI design of the site's Dashboard back in 2015 versus the current Dashboard's design on late 2017.

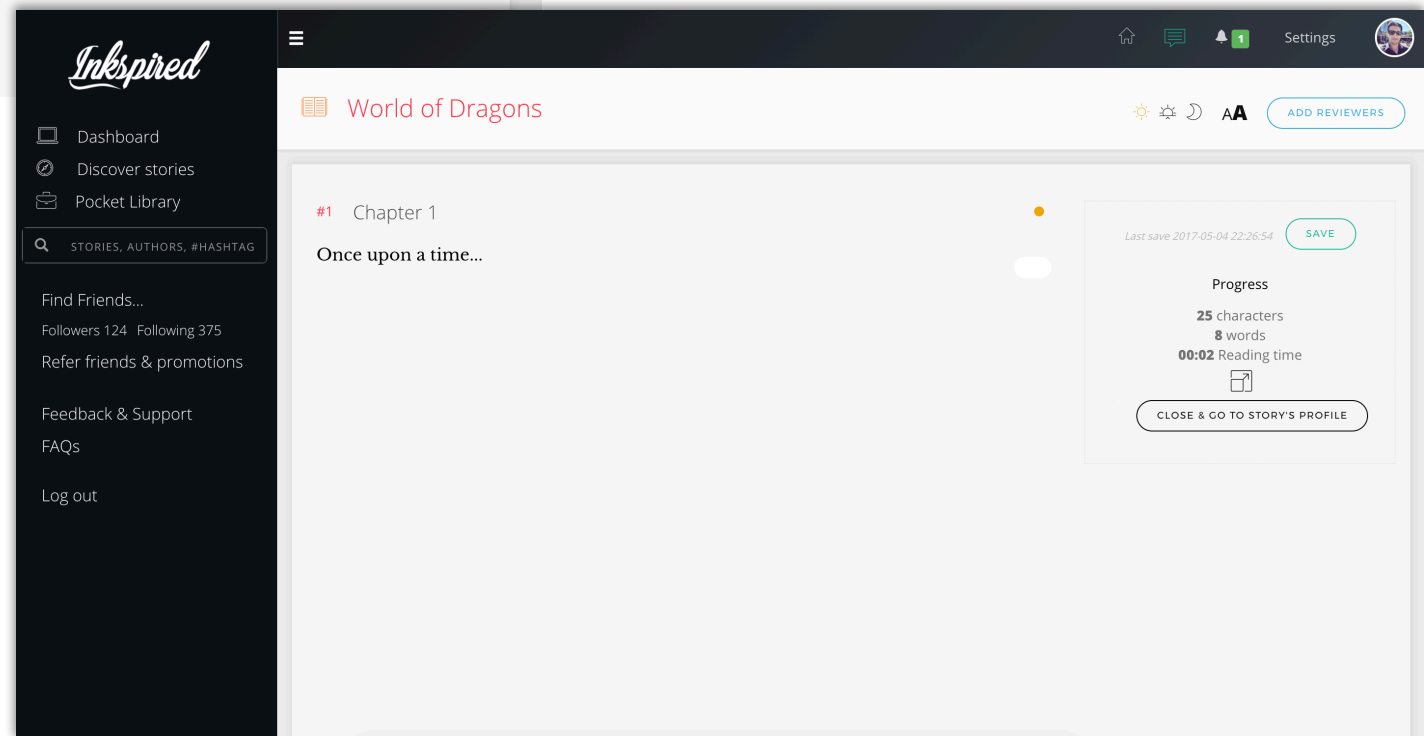The current's approach is more centered in organizing the writer's work.
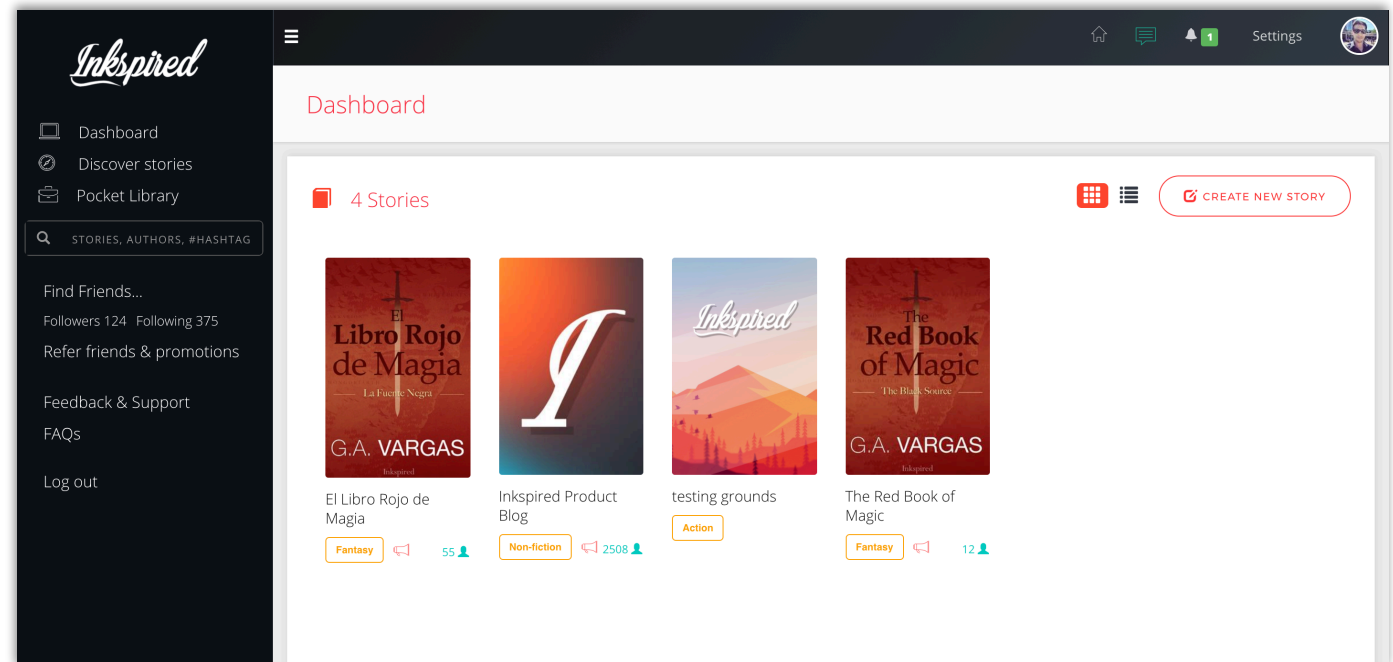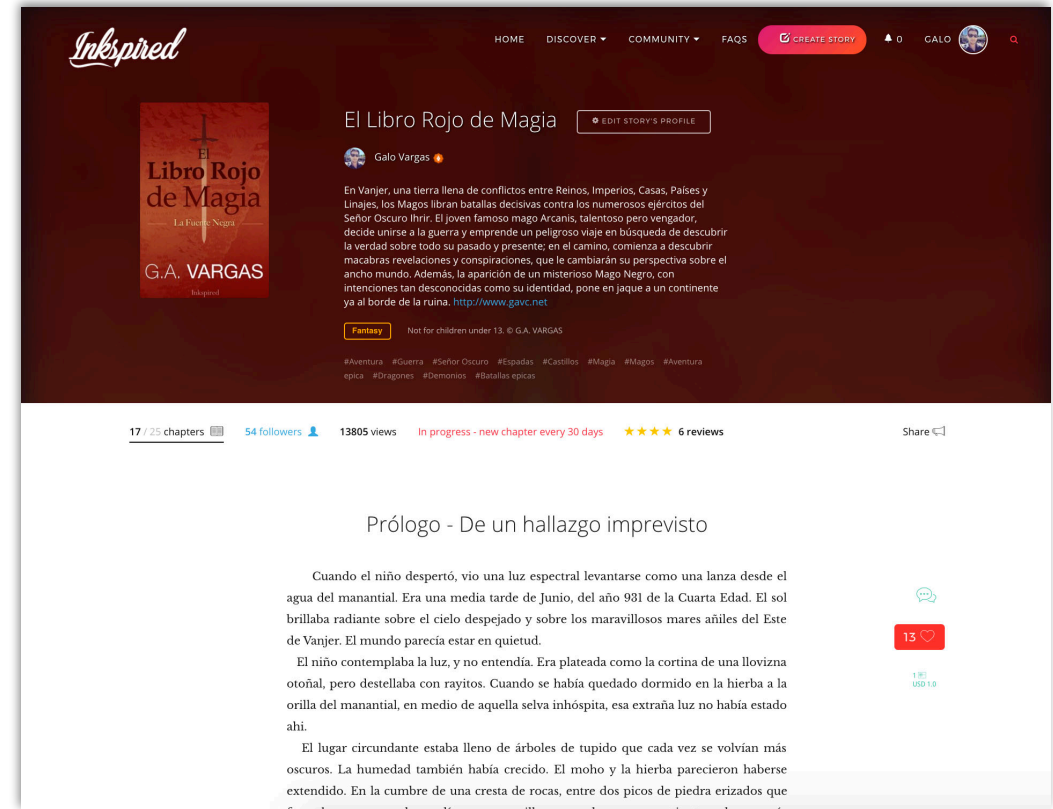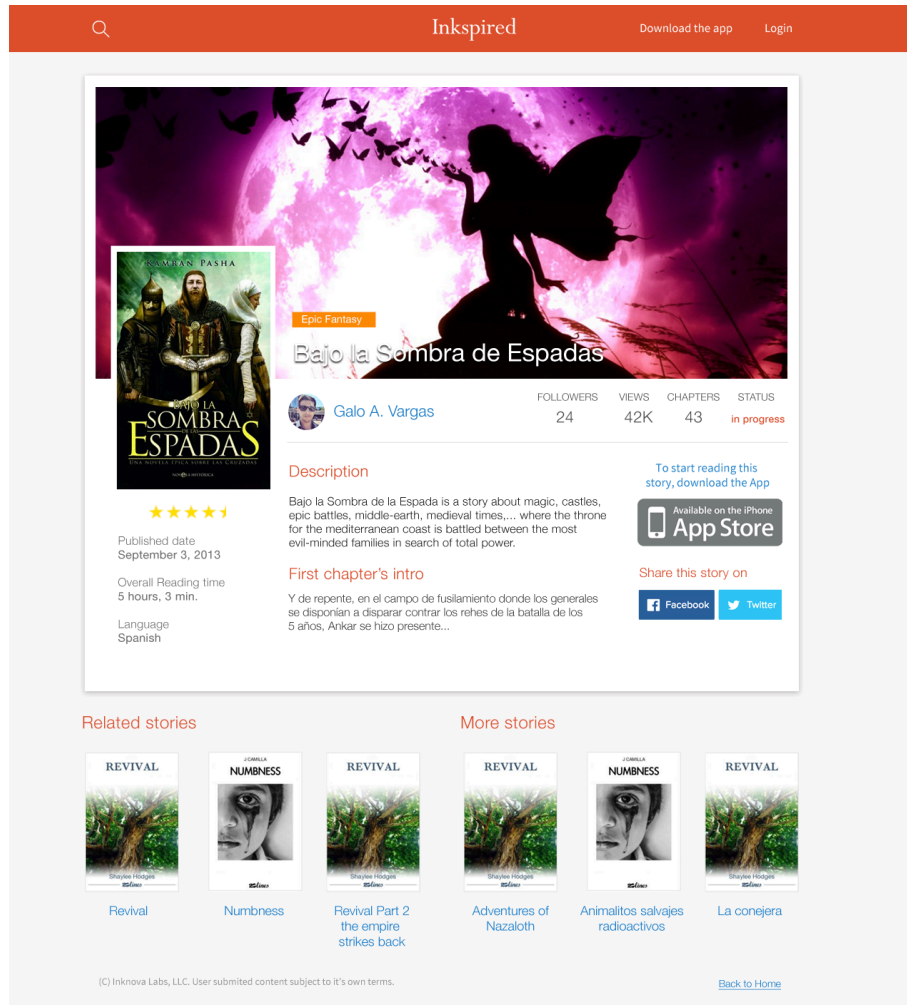
6 User Interface

First UI design of the site's Editor back in 2015 versus the current Editor's design on late 2017.

Note how simplicity remains as the main focus on the writing experience.

6 User Interface

Inkspired

First UI design of the story's profile back in 2015 versus the current story's profile design on late 2017. Note how the content changed from being limited to mobile access only to be displayed in a one-pager.

The "voice" and the brand

Inkspired

The **storytelling** on the site is as important as everything else. It's "the voice" guiding you as a user and the personality that you want the brand to have towards you. It's the attitude, it's the experience.

The site is translated in 4 languages until now, and each one approaches the communication in different ways. In Spanish, for example, where usually the language tends to be more formal on websites, we took the approach of being direct, young and informal; this kind of attitude has been well received by our younger/millennial users, as they can relate more to the brand than the typical grey-ish / serious sites speaking to non-humans.

All of these small details, in combination with the *color scheme, usability, feedback on actions, and performance, creates the holistic user experience* that makes Inkspired today a great product to use.

The lesson is that creating user experiences is not just a phase during project management; it's a lifetime cycle, always evolving, and forever present in every single day of the product's life.

The "voice" and the brand

This is the evolution of the brand, based on a study of the product's perception and the projection of what we wanted to portray. We migrated from communicating a message of bold serious print, to creative art and be able to explore different ways of storytelling.

I

Inkspired

Inkspired

The "voice" and the brand

Inkspired

Devoted to strengthening the brand's presence, I developed a brief story and characters that act as introducers to the "Inkspired" world and all the benefits of the platform, through nice and easy-to-understand storytelling.

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