my "UX Team of one" challenge

Final project at Experience Haus: a real client with a real UX problem to be solved.

CLIENT

E P H E M E R A L . A I

Who they are

A software startup company (SaaS) based in London that helps brands track influencers' Instagram stories performance of content produced in collaboration with those influencers.

How they do it

The tool gets access to the data once influencers authenticate with it via Facebook. It mines and presents the metrics on a dashboard, making it easier for clients to track the content's performance.

BRIEF

A way of making influencers authenticate with the platform organically.

Goal

To build a digital platform with a database of influencers from which clients (brands) could pick them faster.

MY ROLE

As a "team of one", I was supposed to plan and conduct research, design strategy, build prototype, test and iterate, and finally design a mock up within 6 weeks without resources.
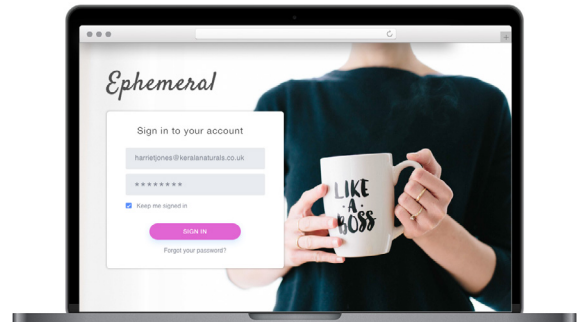
PROCESS CHOSEN

Double-diamond Design Process, a research-driven iterative method thought to generate business value.

RESEARCH TACTICS USED

- Communication Audit
- Secondary Research
- Unstructured Interviews
- Competitors & Market Analysis
- Affinity Map
- Persona
- Customer Journey Map
- Skecthing
- Paper Wireframing
- Digital Wirefaming

TOOLS USED

- Hand drawing
- Sketch
- Figma
- InVision

1

DISCOVER

Search for opportunities

1. Stakeholder interview
2. Competitors Analysis
3. User Research
4. Summary

2

DEFINE

Design for strategy

1. Opportunity
2. Customer Segment Target
3. Competitive Advantages
4. Customer Segment Target

3

DESIGN

Sketch, test, iterate

1. User flow
2. Context/ Storyboarding
3. Prototyping
4. Product Roadmap

DISCOVER

Search for opportunities

1. Stakeholder interview

2. Competitors Analysis

3. User Research

4. Summary

Stakeholder Interview

Goal

I met with Ephemeral.ai's CEO. Our first meeting was a 60 minute interview. My goal was to understand their business strategy, resources, constraints, possible assumptions about the market and audience, and how they got to that brief.

Insights

• Their main goal is help clients save time.

• They have limited human resources. The ones they have as well as some assets are not being leveraged. Ephemeral.ai's CEO is a data scientist and they have access to extensive amount of users' data that is not been used.

• There is a lot of room for research and strategy. They are in the early stages of business, and they want to explore and possibly develop new solutions/tools, or target a new customer segments.

Competitors Analysis

Goal

At this stage I only researched tools/businesses in the Influencer Marketing market. My goal was to get insights on possible opportunities by understanding the problems competitors were solving; the customer segments they were catering for; and types technologies/ digital solutions they had developed.

Insights

• The market is saturated with tools trying to solve the problem Ephemeral.ai is trying to solve, in a similar way: a platform that helps brands discover, manage campaigns and track metrics; and influencers to showcase their work and be contacted by brands.

• Most tools target brands and influencers but give them different journeys. Branding and Communication is conflicting, at most of them.

• The tools that target either brands or influencers seem more consistent.

Goal

I interviewed both influencers and brands sides: 4 influencers and 4 marketing managers, marketing freelancers and business owners taking care of their marketing. They were friends of friends, influencers I reached out on Instagram, and Marketing managers and business owners I knew from previous work and that colleagues put me in contact with. My goal was to understand which audience most needed our help, and to search for opportunities to develop a digital solution with the resources Ephemeral.ai offers.

Insights

Influencers

• None of them tried or would try a "marketplace platform". They grew their fan base organically and because of that, brands approach them - not the other way around.

• They only promote brands they relate to or admire. Remaining authentic to their audience is the most important thing to them.

• They consider themselves "creative". They are on Instagram to express themselves and inspire others - not to make a life out of it.

• They prefer to be approached via email. They ay it feels "professional".

• They reply to brands they know or have a quick feeling they are aligned with their style, due to the huge amount of email they get daily.

Brands

• The ones that have tried such tools, didn't like it. They didn't finding influencers they wanted on it, and said the tool didn't help them communicate, so they switched to email/ text after the "discover" phase.

• Most struggle on getting replies from influencers.

• Most have struggle communicating their ideas to influencers.

• Most were disappointed with metrics of their campaigns.

• They don't set up campaign goals before contacting influencers.

Insights to Strategy

• Brands want to work with influencers that produce authentic content, that will generate organic engagment with their audience.

• Those influencers are not willing to compromise their authenticity for products or money: they will partner with brands they identify with.

• Those influencers receive tons of emails daily and it is hard for brands to get those influencers' attention.

• Brands need help planning and communicating a campaign well before contacting influencers so they get more compliance from them.

Affinity Mapping

Choosing whom to work with

Influencers

Marketing managers & business owners

P6

I'm extremely aware of not annoying followers with branded content.

P3

Instagram is different from other social media. It's a world where everything looks pretty and people are happy.

P2

A big number of followers is not everything. To generate engagement I go for the authentic content creators.

P5

My main thing here is not money. It's not cost-effective to me. So it has to be the brand getting in touch.

P3

My instagram is very personal. I'm really careful about what I post and how. I'd only partner with brands that are aligned with my world there.

P1

My business is very niche so I prefer to choose influencers that have my audience's attention.

P5

The brands I follow up are the ones I'd like to use or use myself already, or like them.

P3

I use Instagram to post important events in my life, it's like a public but personal habit of collecting good memories and sharing them with people.

P3

Any content I post has to be related to my page. Anyone is a photographer these days. We get eails on a daily basis.

P4

I'm usually concerned if the brand tests their products on animals, that kind of stuff I don't want to be associated with.

P6

It's a saturated market. So, honestly, the time-cost of finding worthwile brand is pretty high too.

Getting in touch

P3

I know people that send emails by the bucketload - and it works! But I don't know if I'd like to do that. Or where to start, how…

P4

I prefer to be contacted via email, definitely. It's more professional. Although, I awful at following up.

P4

I get a bunch of emails everyday. Most of them I don't read. It's hard to go through them all. I read the ones from brands I know.

P1

I never call them. It was always through Instagram. I think that slows down the process a bit.

P2

In the end this is a relationship. So if you already know a influencer is easier. I just send them a text or call them.

Managing relationships

P6

Once I had to correct a post and that was really annoying. They have to be clear before we post anything.

P1

Sometimes I have to ask them to delete a post that is already online, and make it again, because it's not aligned with the brand.

P2

I'm amazed how some brands pay them upfront before they produce the content. Of course it doesn't work.

P1

I lost track of that they were doing and how, but then it was too late. And maybe I wasn't clear enough?

P3

My manager will usually deal with the bureaucracy, contracts, but I have to deal with content.

P7

Most of the times I have to remind them to post. Otherwise, I feel they'll just get the product and don't do it.

P2

Sometimes they don't reply because they are working with a competitor or are busy, but mostly they turn down because the offer is not good.

P8

It was hard to keep track of conversations, and how to come to an agreement of what content should they post exactly.

P8

Looking back, I think I wasn't clear on the brief. I didn't really know how to do it, what to ask, what to offer.

P2

They have to be free to create, they usually hate to have a rigid brief. But at the same time you want to give some guidance.

P7

I see influencers producing a bunch of content and only sending back to brands the best ones. That's really bad for brands.

P1

I have had some Marketing freelancers contacting influeners on Instagram DM. But it was messy. They didn't communicate well.

◄ *It was crucial to start by inter-viewing both segments: influencers and brands. Influenc-ers had a lot to say about who/ how they choose whom work with, and brands on how to manage the relationship - which is already very insightful on how the market works.*

DEFINE

Design for strategy

Opportunity

Clients that most need help are business owners and marketing managers with planning and communicating their brands and campaigns better, so influencers they want to work with will reply to them.

Customer Segment Target

"Brand-side": marketing professionals or anyone performing marketing activities for a business - from marketing managers or influencer marketing freelancers to small business owners.

New Product Concept

A tool to help clients set the right campaign goals, assist them on how to search for the right influencers on Instagram, and how to pitch their campaign to them via email.

Competitive Advantages

• It targets the "brand-side", a wide audience with a range of subsegments: from startup owners to marketing managers, that fit the business model of subscriptions that Ephemeral.ai already has.

• The tool is tailored to adress issues that all subsegments claimed to have in the first steps an influencer marketing campaign, hoping to help clients solve problems by at its roots.

• It follows a "blue ocean strategy": its innovative approach sets Ephemeral.ai apart from competitors.

• Ultimately, it makes influencers that matter to our clients authenticate with the platform.

Customer Journey Mapping

PERSONA

Does-it-all Start up owner

Harriet Jones, 30

ABOUT

Harriet opened a homemade beauty products startup 3 years ago and struggles to manage her time between a full-time consulting job and her company. She's currently a permanent employee at a consultancy agency in the Healthcare industry. She is single and financially autonomous but still unfulfilled at her 9 to 5 and she is passionate the work at her startup.

SCENARIO

Harriet runs the startup by herself, as well as all its marketing activities. Sales are not going well, thus she decided to start an Instagram Story campaign to get in front of her audience in order to increase her sales online. She does not have the knowledge on how to do it and her budget is very limited.
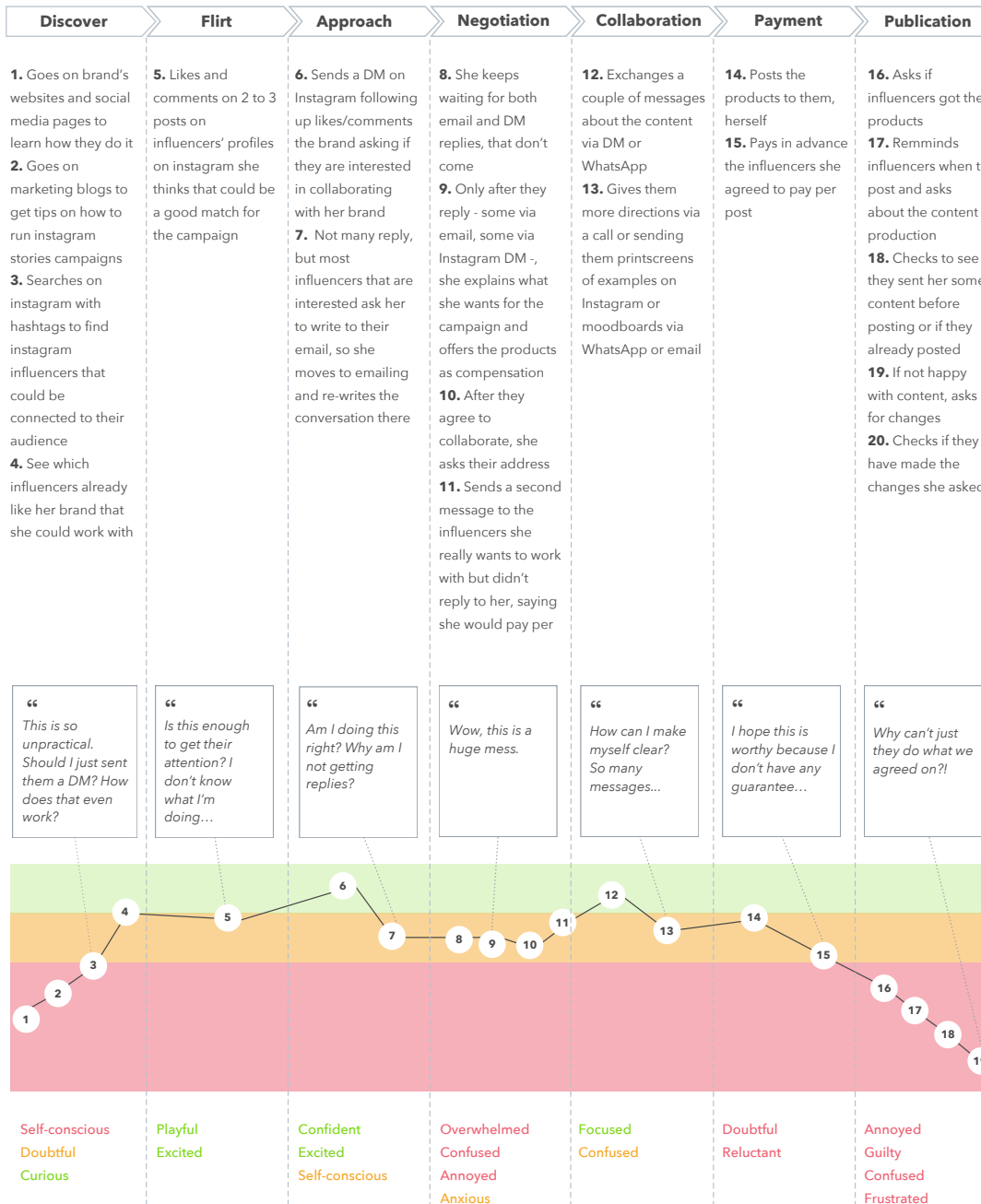
GOALS

- Increase sales online
- Reach the right audience
- Expand contacts with influencers
- Increase brand awareness

OBSTACLES

- Has a limited budget
- Lacks Marketing knowledge
- Lacks time to properly manage it

Using data collected during my interviews I designed a possible journey on how Harriet would go about "running an influencer campaign on Instagram stories".
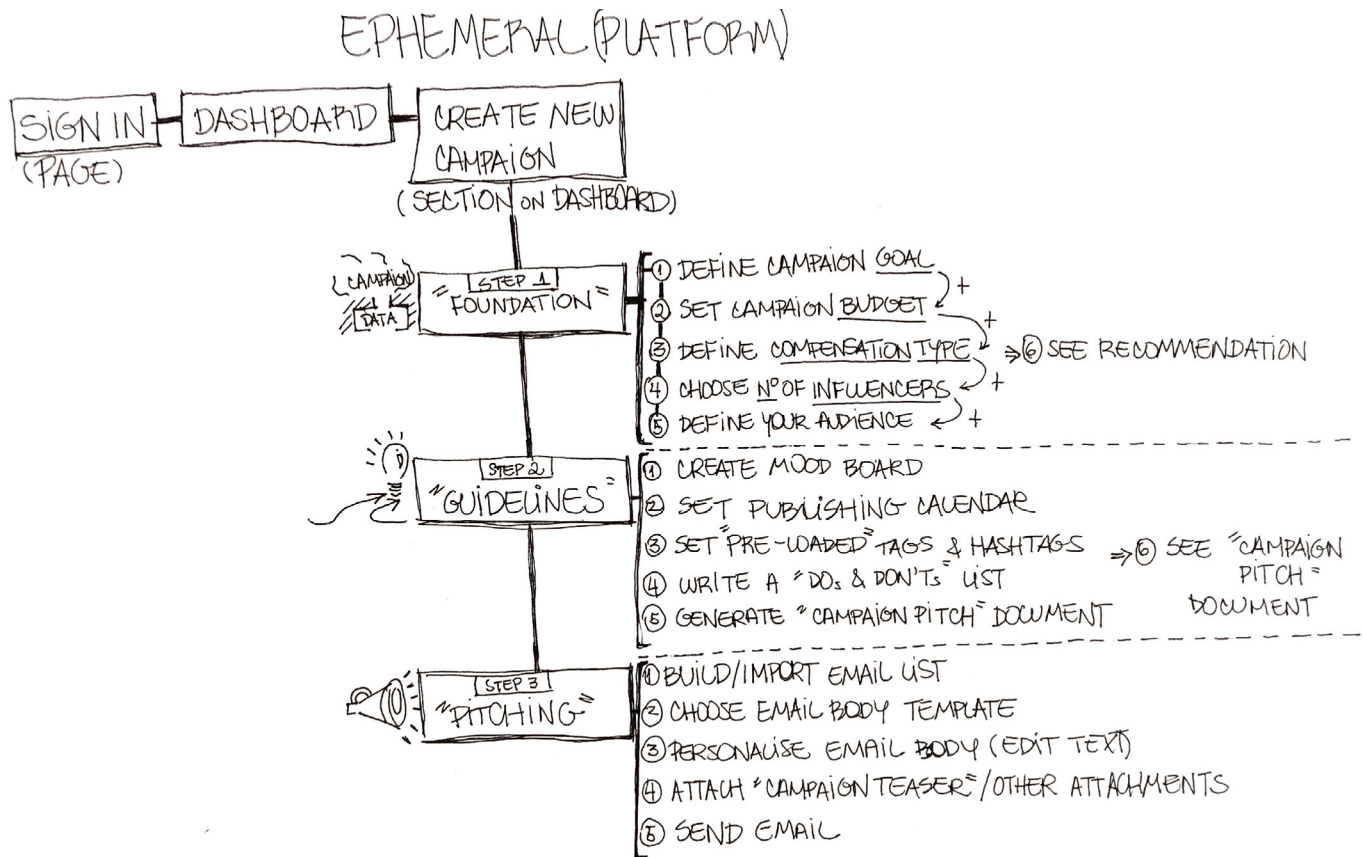
Discover	Flirt	Approach	Negotiation	Collaboration	Payment	Publication
1. Goes on brand's websites and social media pages to learn how they do it **2.** Goes on marketing blogs to get tips on how to run instagram stories campaigns **3.** Searches on instagram with hashtags to find instagram influencers that could be connected to their audience **4.** See which influencers already like her brand that she could work with	**5.** Likes and comments on 2 to 3 posts on influencers' profiles on instagram she thinks that could be a good match for the campaign	**6.** Sends a DM on Instagram following up likes/comments the brand asking if they are interested in collaborating with her brand **7.** Not many reply, but most influencers that are interested ask her to write to their email, so she moves to emailing and re-writes the conversation there	**8.** She keeps waiting for both email and DM replies, that don't come **9.** Only after they reply - some via email, some via Instagram DM -, she explains what she wants for the campaign and offers the products as compensation **10.** After they agree to collaborate, she asks their address **11.** Sends a second message to the influencers she really wants to work with but didn't reply to her, saying she would pay per	**12.** Exchanges a couple of messages about the content via DM or WhatsApp **13.** Gives them more directions via a call or sending them printscreens of examples on Instagram or moodboards via WhatsApp or email	**14.** Posts the products to them, herself **15.** Pays in advance the influencers she agreed to pay per post	**16.** Asks if influencers got the products **17.** Remminds influencers when to post and asks about the content production **18.** Checks to see if they sent her some content before posting or if they already posted **19.** If not happy with content, asks for changes **20.** Checks if they have made the changes she asked

Thoughts

" *This is so unpractical. Should I just sent them a DM? How does that even work?*	" *Is this enough to get their attention? I don't know what I'm doing…*	" *Am I doing this right? Why am I not getting replies?*	" *Wow, this is a huge mess.*	" *How can I make myself clear? So many messages…*	" *I hope this is worthy because I don't have any guarantee…*	" *Why can't just they do what we agreed on?!*

Emotional Journey

Feelings

Self-conscious Doubtful Curious	Playful Excited	Confident Excited Self-conscious	Overwhelmed Confused Annoyed Anxious	Focused Confused	Doubtful Reluctant	Annoyed Guilty Confused Frustrated

DESIGN

Sketch, test, iterate

1. User flow
2. Context/ Storyboarding
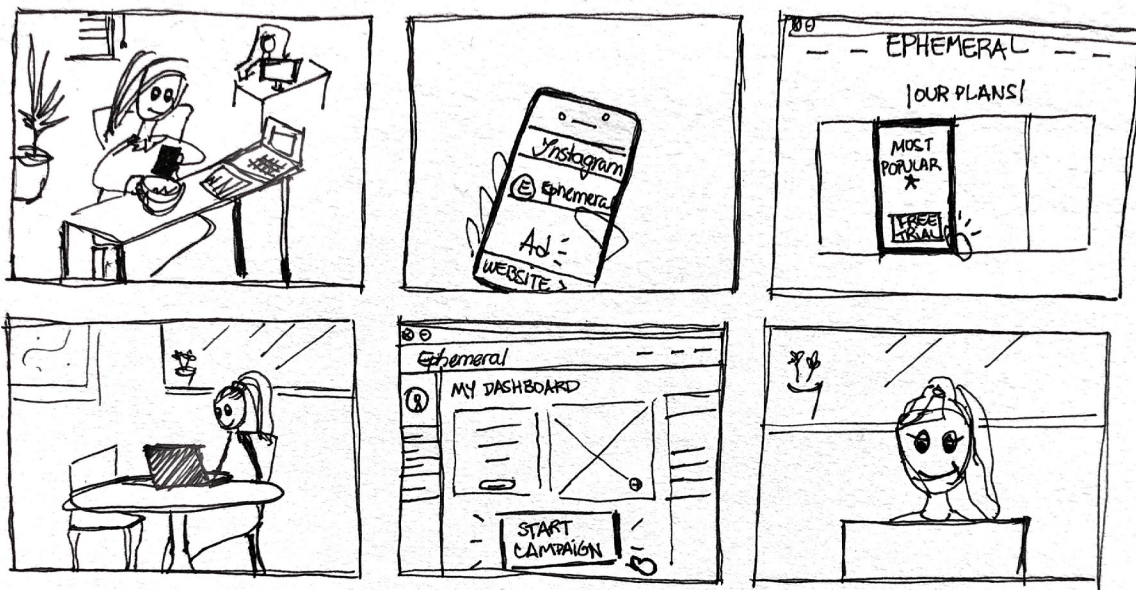**3.** Prototyping
4. Product Roadmap

User flow

Based on the customer journey mapping and secondary research on Influencer Marketing best practices, I drafted a user flow for the "start new campaign" task.

INT. HARRIET'S CUBICULE AT WORK - LUNCHTIME

Harriet eats out of a vegan bowl at her desk with one hand, while she scrolls on her phone with the other. She is on Instagram, trying to find influencers to work with.

She looks tired. It has been 2 days she is doing research on Influencer Marketing, while having extra work preparing a presentation for her job at the consultancy agency.

Scrolling on Instagram's discovery section, she bumps into Ephemeral's sponsored post (Instagram Ads). She clicks on it.

She is redirected to Ephemeral's website. On the landing page, she watches the video demo.

She clicks on "prices" and finds a "one campaign free trial" plan that suits her.

She subscribes to the plan.

She looks at the time and goes back to work.

INT. TUBE STATION - 5PM - TRAVELING

Harriet checks her email inbox and finds Ephemeral's the confirmation email asking her to sign up and personalise her account.

She clicks on it, signs up and creates both her personal and her company profile.

The next step is to create a campaign. She locks her phone and puts it back on her back-pack.

INT. HARRIET'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

She goes on Ephemeral's website, signs in, goes on her dashboard clicks on "start new cam-paign.

Paper Wireframing
Task: "Create New Campaign"
Device: Desktop

One of the main insights from interviews was from an experienced influencer marketing manager that said there is a need for educating professionals on how to run a campaign. Most don't know what they are doing and don't get the results they expect. Because of that, this first section helps you to set the campaign "basics" before you create the campaign content guidelines and pitch your idea to influencers.

Users have to input a good amount of data to set up the campaign basics. So, to reduce friction, I designed a dynamic journey, in which every question was a new page. Also, I wrote the copy in a warm tone, trying to create a virtual dialogue with the user.
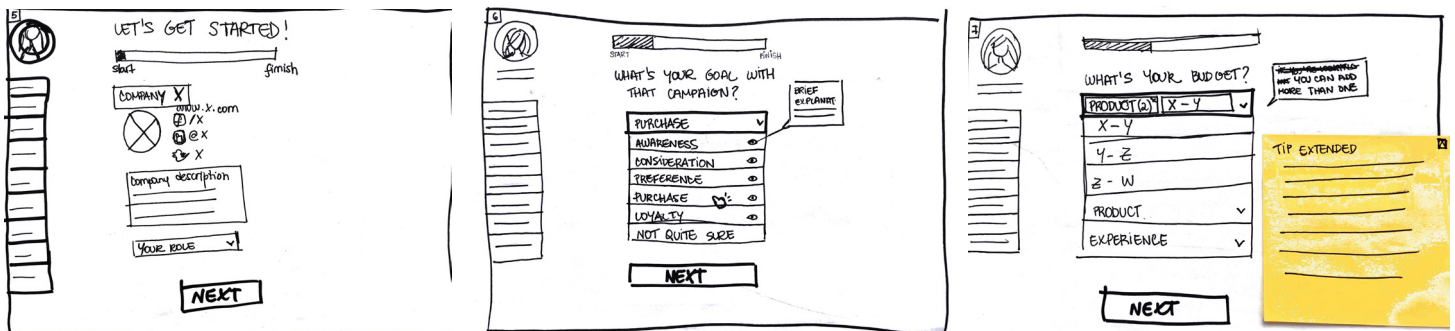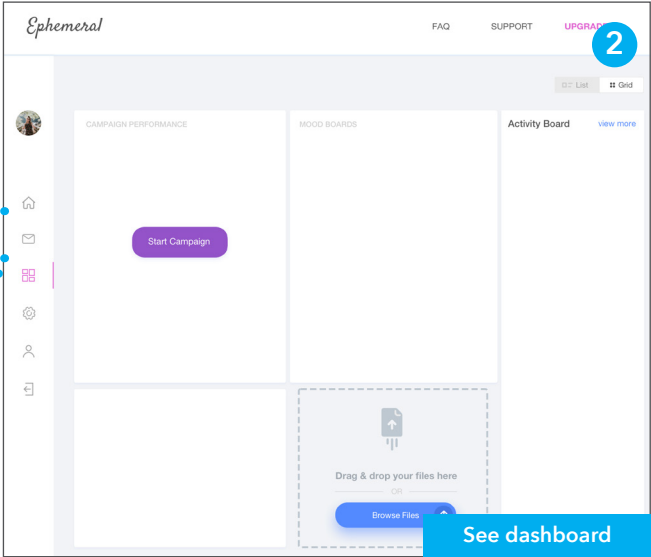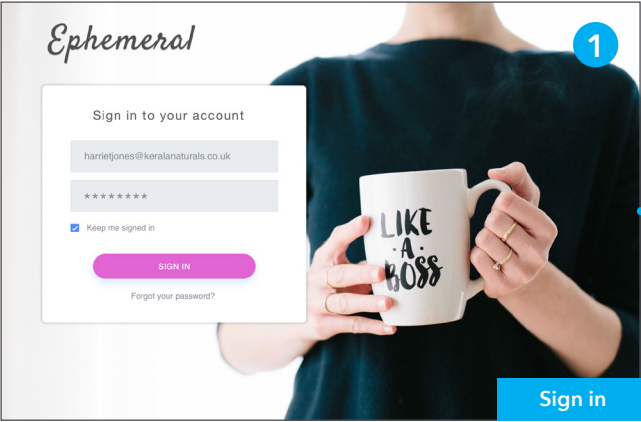

During interviews, both influencers and experienced marketing managers said that one of the main reasons influencers do not reply to brands was that compensation type and rates did not feel fair. When users define their "campaign goal" and "budget", the system suggests how you should compensate the influencer, and how much, and also with how many influencers users should work with for the campaign.
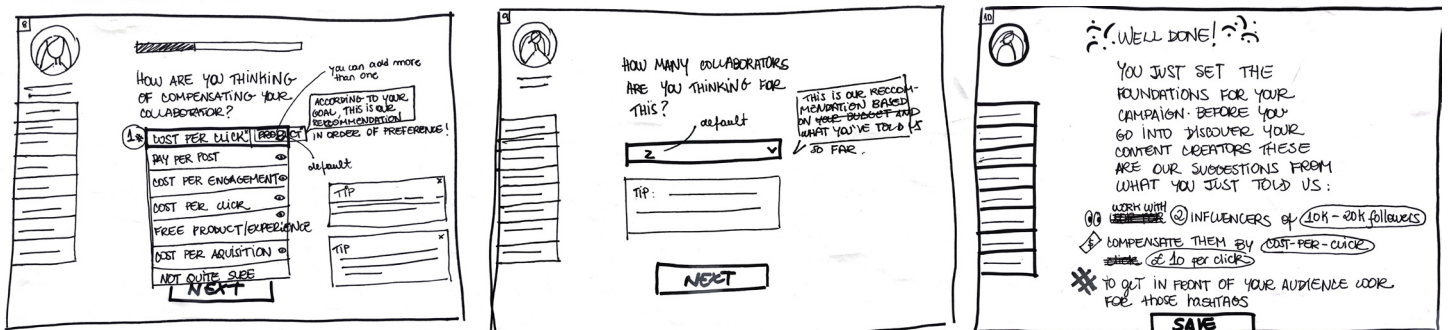
I ran 5 usability tests with colleagues and possible users. I got negative feedback on navigation and positive feedback on the tone. I iterated the design and quickly moved into high-fidelity prototyping and testing, as you can see next. There I explain my design decisions in details in the "Highlights" section.

High-fidelity Wireframing

Sign in

See dashboard

Review profiles

Define Branding aspects

Choose Campaign Settings

See Results
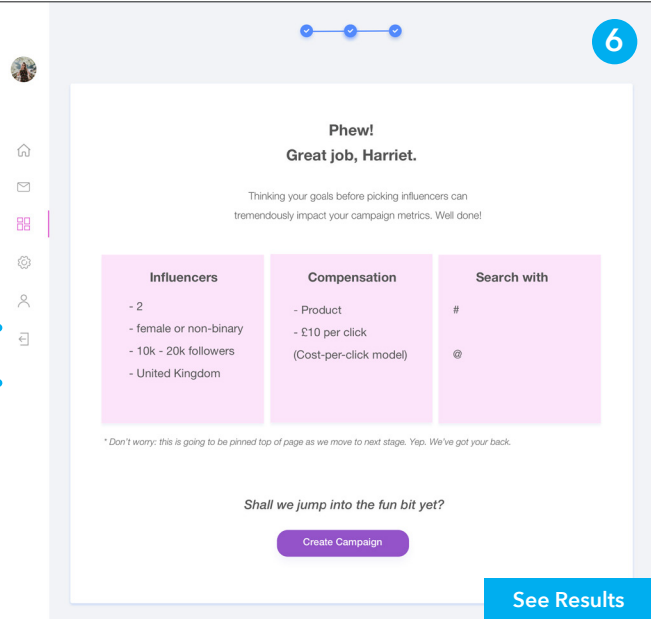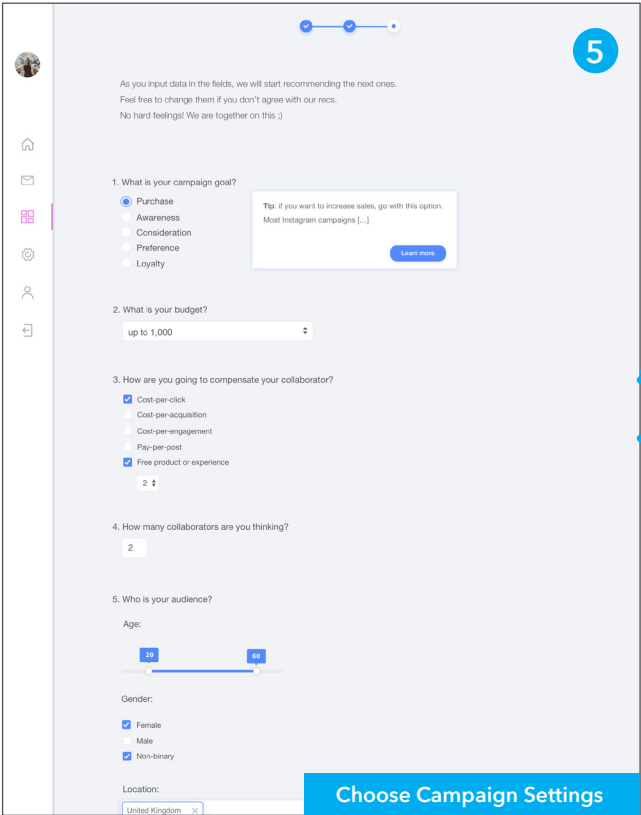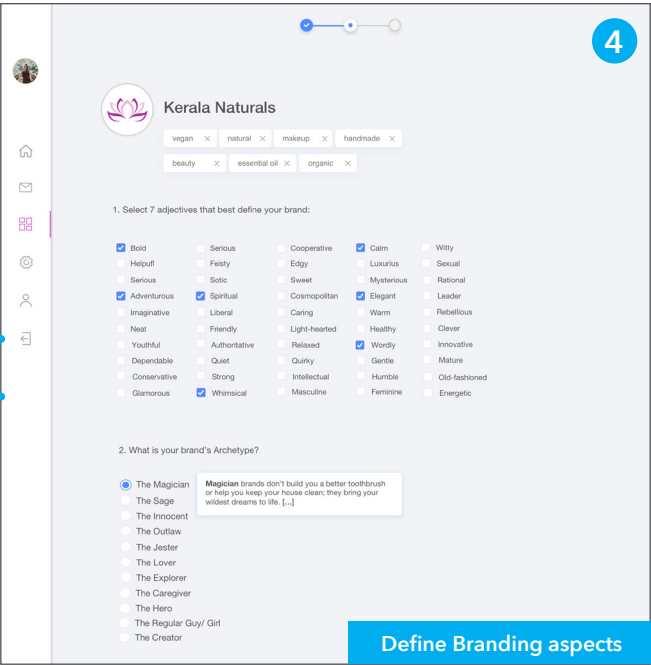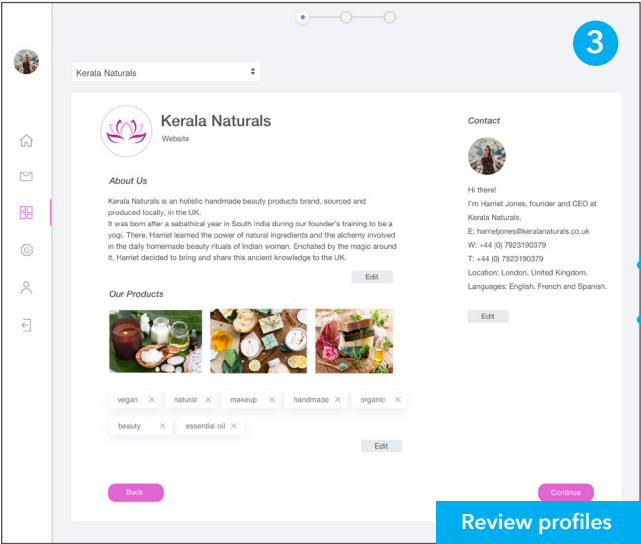
Ephemeral

FAQ   SUPPORT   UPGRADE

Brief

Journey into the unknown

A series of small healing moments throughout the day where women stop what they are doing to perform small rituals using Kerala Naturals products.

Edit

Publishing Clendar

‹ MARCH 2019 ›

SUN MON TUE WED. THU FRI SAT

					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31	1	2	3			

Edit

Specs

Pre-loaded tags

@keralanaturals @london @uk [...]

#keralanaturals #handmade #holistic [...]

Call-to-action text on post

"Swipe up to see offers" ⌄

Other

Add to Highlights ☑

1 week

Edit

Mood Board

Open

Upload file

Back   Save   Continue

Complete Guidelines

Ephemeral

FAQ   SUPPORT   UPGRADE

T
TEXT

□
SHAPE

▢
TEMPLATE

↑
UPLOADS

Mood Board

New message:
Maybe you can start by unwrapping the products, what do you think?
Reply

New message:
I love the idea of having you engaged in a holistic activity such as yoga...
Reply

I love this atmosphere in case you are thinking of making a video with...
Seen
Reply

Back   Save

Build Mood Board

Wow.
Check you out, Harriet!

This is what your influencers are going to see attached
on your email pitch. Looking pretty good, uhn?

Kerala Naturals
Website

Contact

Hi there!
I'm Harriet Jones, founder and CEO at Kerala Naturals.
E: harrietjones@keralanaturals.co.uk
W: +44 (0) 7923190379
T: +44 (0) 7923190379
Location: London, United Kingdom.
Languages: English, French and Spanish.

About Us

Kerala Naturals is an holistic handmade beauty products brand, sourced and produced locally, in the UK.
It was born after a sabathical year in South India during our founder's training to be a yogi. There, Harriet learned the power of natural ingredients and the alchemy involved in the daily homemade beauty rituals of Indian woman. Enchated by the magic around it, Harriet decided to bring and share this ancient knowledge to the UK.

Our Products

vegan ✕   natural ✕   makeup ✕   handmade ✕   organic ✕

beauty ✕   essential oil ✕

Our Brand

bold ✕   spiritual ✕   whimsical ✕   elegant ✕   calm ✕

worldly ✕   adventurous ✕

The Campaign

Brief   Publishing Calendar   Mood Board

Learn more about what we are thinking here

See campaign

Review Campaign Teaser

**Next Step: Send Email Pitch to Influencers**

Highlights
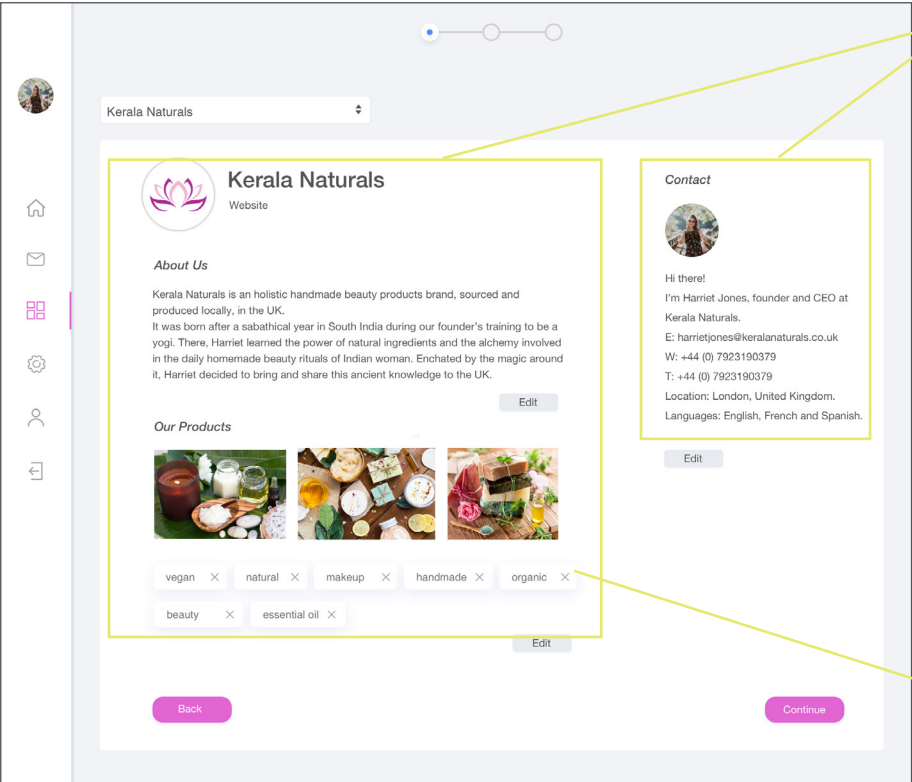
1. Personal profile and company profile

I opted for 2 levels of profiling for two reasons:

1. Many of our users are marketing managers or freelancers, which means they could be working for multiple brands/clients at the same time.
2. Both Influencers and marketing managers emphasized during interviews the importance of building a relationship with the other side of the partnership, and how this crucial for it to work and to happen again. Experienced marketing managers I interviewed said they like to work with influencers they have done good work with already: they know they will deliver, and have an easier time communicating with those.

I added "tags" so user can quickly communicate their brand's most important aspects/product features.
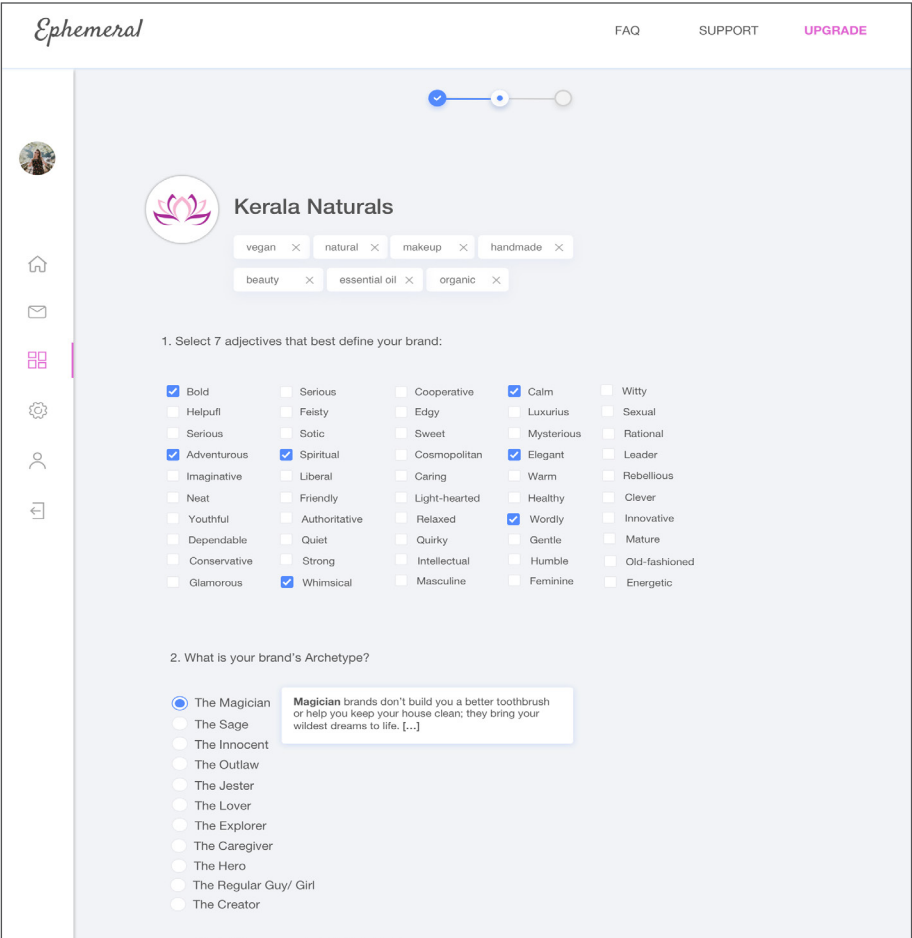
2. New section: Communicating the Brand

Because the "brand's personality" was something often mentioned by influencers during the interviews as one of the main factors for them to reply or not to a brand and accept partnerships, I added this section where brands can choose adjectives/archetypes to communicate the brand better and faster.

I did secondary research on Branding Communication and Marketing. To help users communicate their brand, I put a list of adjectives that would best describe their brand, so they can create a "Brand persona" that could resonate with influencers. On the next step, when brands send email pitches to influencers with campaign details, those tags would be displayed so influencers would know the brand's style and most important features right away.

3. Simplified "Form-like" Campaign Settings stage

During the first usability test (paper wireframe), most participants said that having a different screen for each question gave them the impression of having to do a lot of work - contrary to my first assumption: with different pages for every question, I intended to generate a sense of accomplishment in the user after finishing each task.

I then iterated the prototype: I reduced the pages to one "form-like". I tested it, and participants did not complain about the process of having to input data - positive response to the iteration.

By defining audience's profile and interests, we are setting up the right tags and hashtags that will help users on how use them to look for the right influencer on Instagram.

Screen content (form):

As you input data in the fields, we will start recommending the next ones.
Feel free to change them if you don't agree with our recs.
No hard feelings! We are together on this ;)

1. What is your campaign goal?
- (•) Purchase
- ( ) Awareness
- ( ) Consideration
- ( ) Preference
- ( ) Loyalty

Tip: if you want to increase sales, go with this option.
Most Instagram campaigns [...]

Learn more

2. What is your budget?
up to 1,000

3. How are you going to compensate your collaborator?
- [x] Cost-per-click
- [ ] Cost-per-acquisition
- [ ] Cost-per-engagement
- [ ] Pay-per-post
- [x] Free product or experience
- 2

4. How many collaborators are you thinking?
2

5. Who is your audience?
Age: 20 — 60
Gender:
- [x] Female
- [ ] Male
- [x] Non-binary
Location:
United Kingdom ×

6. What are they mainly interested in?
- [x] Travel   [ ] Family
- [ ] Art   [ ] Entertainment
- [ ] Fashion   [ ] Gaming
- [x] Causes   [x] Photography
- [ ] Animals   [ ] Style
- [ ] Food   [ ] Business
- [ ] News   [ ] Politics
- [ ] Sport   [ ] Education
- [ ] Comedy   [ ] Technology
- [x] Beauty   [x] Health

Different subsegments will have different knowledge depth levels on the concepts of marketing. Because of that, I created 2 levels of "more info guides": when you hoover on one of the options and a brief explanation box about the concept appears. If you want to learn more about how to set campaign goals, a new window will open with a full article about it.
I learned it from MailChimp's information architecture, which is great in providing users with different "layers of information" according to their needs.

Detail callout:

1. What is your campaign goal?
- (•) Purchase (1)
- ( ) Awareness
- ( ) Consideration
- ( ) Preference
- ( ) Loyalty

Tip: if you want to increase sales, go with this option.
Most Instagram campaigns [...] (2)

Learn more (3)
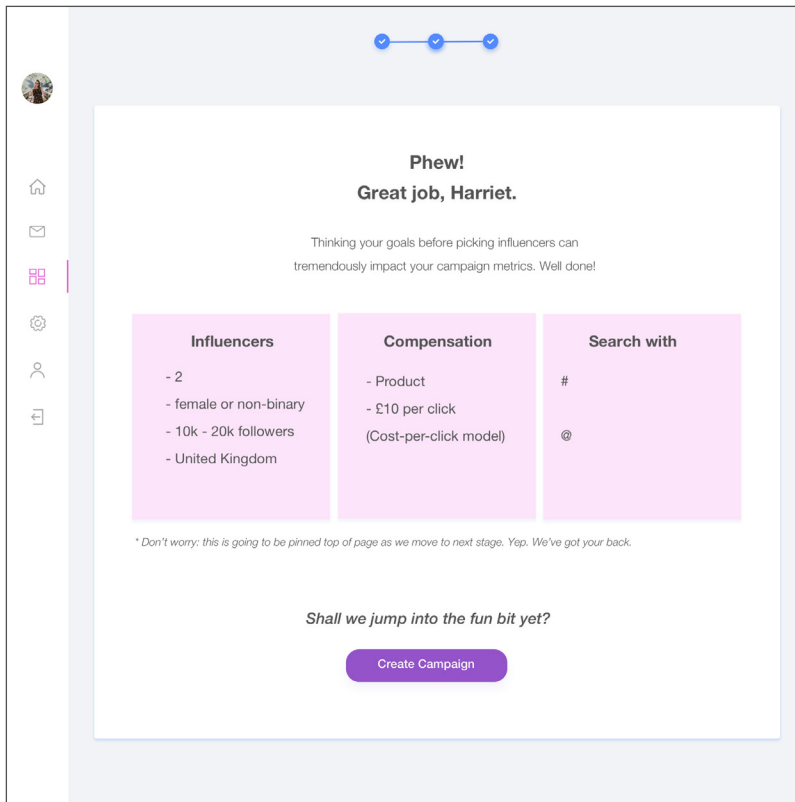
(1) **Action:** hoover on list element.

Reaction: on-page informational square appears.

(2) **Action:** click on "[...]"

Reaction: on-page info square expands with more info in it.

(3) **Action:** click on "learn more" button.

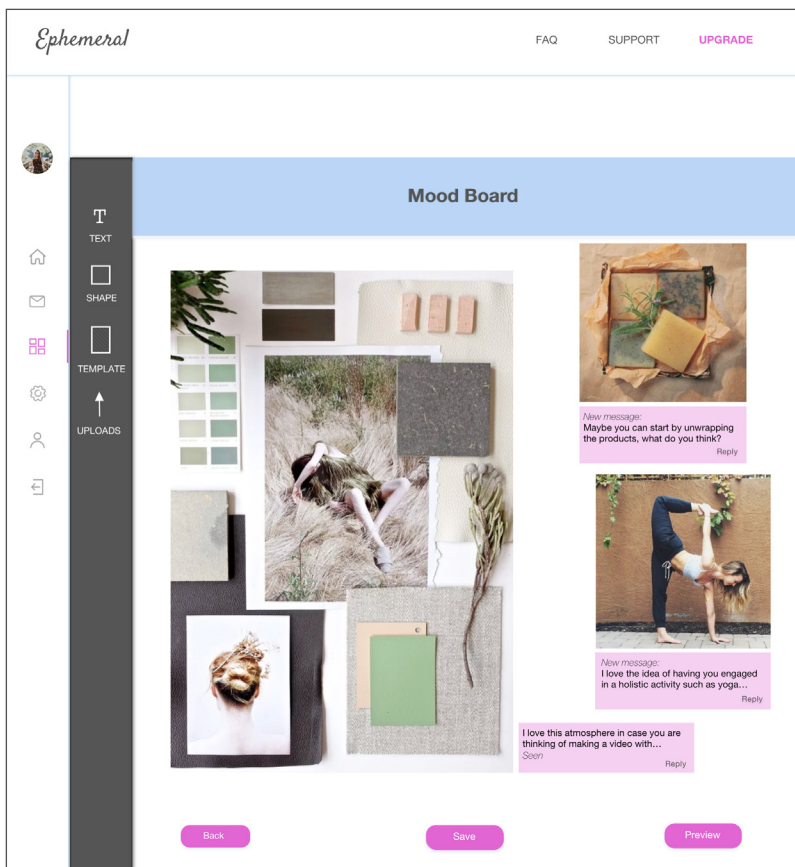**Reaction:** New window opens with an article about the oncept.

4. A hand on how to search for Influencers on Instagram

From interviews, I realised discover platforms where not satisfying user's needs because most influencers they want to work with are not on those platforms (because they don't need to be). Because of that, what users need is:
1. a hand on how to search for influencers on Instagram;
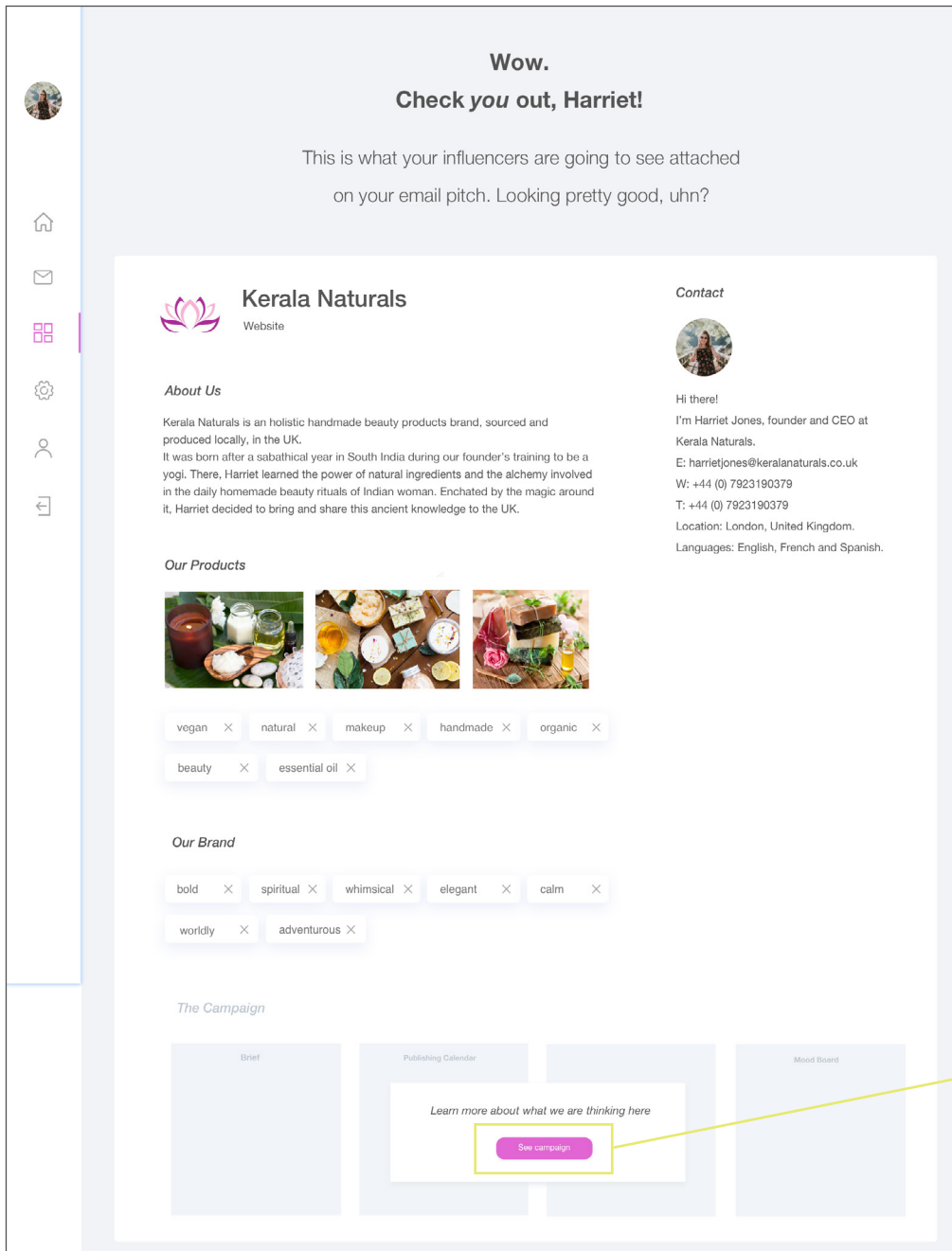*2. help in communicating their brands so they can get more replies.*

This page is the first: helping users search for the right influencers for their campaign, according to their campaign goals, budget and their audience.

Screen content:

Phew!
Great job, Harriet.

Thinking your goals before picking influencers can tremendously impact your campaign metrics. Well done!

Influencers	Compensation	Search with
- 2	- Product	#
- female or non-binary	- £10 per click	
- 10k - 20k followers	(Cost-per-click model)	@
- United Kingdom		

* Don't worry: this is going to be pinned top of page as we move to next stage. Yep. We've got your back.

Shall we jump into the fun bit yet?

Create Campaign

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5. Collaborative Mood Board feature

After setting the campaign basics, the next step is to create a guideline for the content to be produced by influencers. Marketing managers and businesses owners I interviewed said this stage can be messy and they are often unsatisfied with it. Although both influencers and markerting managers emphasized the importance of leaving space for influencers to be creative with it - after all, they were contacted because they produce interesting content that fits user's brand.

So, I decided to create a Mood Board feature, where brands and influencers can co-create, by sharing references and ideas for the content.

Screen content:

Ephemeral   FAQ   SUPPORT   UPGRADE

TEXT
SHAPE
TEMPLATE
UPLOADS

Mood Board

New message:
Maybe you can start by unwrapping the products, what do you think?
Reply

New message:
I love the idea of having you engaged in a holistic activity such as yoga...
Reply

I love this atmosphere in case you are thinking of making a video with...
Seen
Reply

Back   Save   Preview

Influencers will have to click on "See Campaign" to read the campaig specifics. By clicking, they will have to authenticate with the platform. Once they authenticate, the software will have access to their Instagram data. That way, Ephemeral can provide clients with each influencer's historic data, making it possible for the company to give clients a quick snapshot into the influencer's metrics before they close a partnership.

Product Roadmap
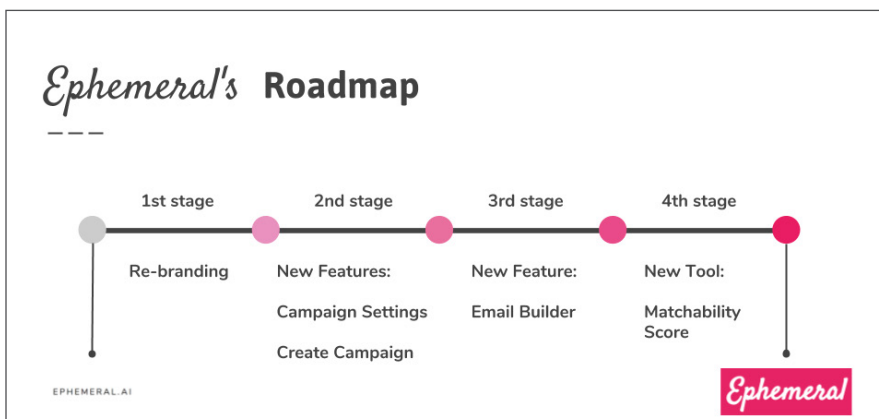
1st stage: I have worked on Branding changing the name from "Ephemeral.ai'" to only "Ephemeral". I also changed the typography and design guidelines.

2nd stage: I have designed prototypes and tested journeys for both "Campaign settings" and "Create campaign" features. More usability tests should be done to improve the UX before it goes into development.

3rd and 4th stages: The next step is to reach out to influencers via email. I thought of a tool that would help them build emails with templates/ email listing. Besides that, a "matchability score" can be finally designed from data collected from authenticated profiles - a data base of influencers clients want to work with.