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## INTRODUCTION

Apostrophe challenges the long-standing "starving artist" stereotype by offering solutions designed to streamline business operations and unlock new opportunities for artists. Our collaboration with Apostrophe to develop a new iOS app that equips artists with tools to easily professionalize their practice. The app includes features such as individual and bulk art uploads, the creation of online viewing room links and individual artwork links with integrated payment options, and a database for managing client and gallery contacts.

## PROBLEM SPACE

The artist community faces significant challenges in inventory management, payment processing, and customer relationship management.

## GOAL

The aim is to create an iOS app that allows artists to efficiently upload and manage their inventory, showcase and sell their work, receive payments, and maintain a database of galleries and clients.

## OPPORTUNITY

Apostrophe seeks to simplify the professionalization process for artists, enabling them to focus more on their art. Unlike competitors that predominantly cater to galleries and rely on outdated desktop systems, Apostrophe's app provides a modern, mobile-first solution tailored to artists' needs. With its elegant yet unpretentious interface and updated functionality, Apostrophe is positioned to become a leading choice for artist-centric business tools.

## OUTCOME

The first iteration of Apostrophe's iOS app has been launched following two rounds of testing on core features. This app is designed to support the artist community by addressing inventory management, payment processing, and client relationship needs. Future updates will include integrations with Affirm, Stripe Connect, Arta, and more, expanding the app's offerings to artists worldwide.

# EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW

## TAKEAWAYS

Artists see a clear need for inventory management but are often constrained by time and the lack of art-specific tools. Portfolios or catalogs are crucial for clients and galleries interested in examining or purchasing art. Art presentation and client interaction are important to artists. Artists need to accept various payment methods. Common issues include delayed payments and the need to chase down clients. Networking is vital for artists as it builds trust and creates opportunities.

## DESIGN PROPOSAL

An efficient upload process that includes relevant and art-specific details and descriptors. Simplified inventory management through filtering, sorting, and editing options. Manual or bulk upload via PDFs with OCR technology. Quick generation of customizable online viewing rooms (OVRs). Clear availability labels and purchasing options to present accurate information to potential clients. Options for clients to purchase art through OVRs, individual art links, or app-generated invoices.

## CONCEPT OVERVIEW

The app was developed to revolutionize how artists manage their professional activities. It features a range of integrated tools to streamline business operations.

Artwork Management
Artists can upload and organize their artwork with detailed descriptions, making it easier to keep track of their portfolio.

Virtual Galleries
The app allows artists to create virtual galleries, enhancing the visibility of their work and reaching a broader audience.

Transaction Links
Shareable links with built-in payment options streamline transactions, making it easier for artists to collect payments directly from their audience.

Client Database
A comprehensive database to manage relationships with clients and galleries, helping artists keep track of important contacts and interactions.

## RESEARCH INSIGHTS

The development process began with extensive research into the art business landscape and the specific challenges faced by artists. This research included using a Business Model Canvas and Competitive Matrix to identify gaps in existing solutions and tools.

User interviews revealed several key issues: difficulties in managing artwork inventory, problems with delayed payments and manual follow-ups, and challenges in maintaining a comprehensive client and gallery database. These insights guided the creation of the app, ensuring it addresses these specific problems and improves the efficiency of artists' business practices.

The research phase continued with a contextual inquiry, where we studied art galleries to design an app that replicates the bright, spacious atmosphere of these spaces. We incorporated clean whites and soft tones to highlight artworks and provide an immersive experience reminiscent of a gallery. Affinity mapping was used to analyze how artists interact with the app, helping us identify their main needs, challenges, and preferred features. This understanding guided our design process.

Our target artist, Giulia, was central to our research. Her feedback was crucial in shaping the app's features and user experience. We focused on addressing the specific needs and challenges faced by artists like her. Giulia's journey revealed common issues such as managing inventory and dealing with unpaid invoices. Our solution offers tools for easy art uploads, customizable viewing links, and reliable payment systems to address these challenges and allow artists to focus on their creative work.


## USER EXPERIENCE & NAVIGATION

The app was designed to deliver an intuitive user experience, inspired by the minimalist aesthetics of art galleries. It focuses on providing simple navigation, making core functions such as artwork management and client details easily accessible.

The design emphasizes streamlined processes, enabling effortless uploads and integrated payment handling. Interactive features enhance engagement, making business tasks simpler and more effective. The overall goal was to simplify the digital management of artists' businesses.

## PROBLEM STATEMENT

**HOW MIGHT WE CREATE AN ARTIST TAILORED SOLUTION FOR MANAGING ART FOR ARTISTS?**

Artists face challenges with complex tools for managing their portfolios and engaging with audiences. They need a simple, personalized solution tailored to their needs. Apostrophe aims to create an easy-to-use platform that helps artists showcase their work and connect with their fans more effectively.

## DESIGN & DEVELOPMENT

The design objective was to recreate the art gallery experience within the app, making it a familiar and comfortable space for artists. We focused on aesthetics and functionality to enhance the user interaction with the platform. Prototypes were developed and tested to refine both the look and usability of the app.

## TESTING WITH USERS

During the initial testing phase, artists performed various tasks on the app, and their feedback highlighted issues like difficult navigation and visual clutter. We used this feedback to make targeted improvements, such as enhancing button visibility, simplifying navigation, and clarifying feature functionalities.

A second round of testing confirmed that these updates addressed the initial issues and improved the overall user experience. This iterative process ensured that the final app design was both visually appealing and functionally effective.

## USABILITY TESTING

Testing revealed significant improvements in user navigation. Participants found that the app provided a more straightforward and efficient experience due to its clear and intuitive layout. This led to reduced navigation times and an overall improved ease of use. Key insights from usability testing included:

Users had trouble finding the upload button and navigating through scrolling and checkboxes, so we improved button visibility and simplified the process.

Confusion with checkboxes and icon hit areas led to better visibility and clearer interactive elements. Issues with artwork availability and selection prompted us to add text indicators and make selection areas more intuitive.

## ARTIST FEEDBACK

Artists provided positive feedback on key features such as inventory tracking and integrated payment options. They appreciated these tools for their effectiveness in managing their work and suggested further improvements to streamline their workflow.

## GALLERY FEEDBACK

Art gallery employees offered valuable insights, recommending tools for better managing client relationships. They also suggested incorporating features for exclusive content and early access to new works to enhance customer service and operational efficiency.

## FUTURE ITERATIONS

The feedback pointed to several opportunities for future updates, including advanced personalization options and improved client management tools. These updates are designed to make the app even more engaging and better suited to the needs of both artists and art galleries.

## OVERALL

Testing is an ongoing process, consistently providing insights to ensure the app evolves into the best possible version for artists. By incorporating continuous feedback from artists and art gallery employees, Apostrophe remains dedicated to refining and enhancing the app to meet the dynamic needs of the art community.

## CONCLUSION

The newly launched app marks a significant step forward in how artists manage their business operations. With its modern, mobile-first design, it effectively addresses key challenges in inventory management, client interactions, and payments.

The company, now rebranded as Link to Art, is actively integrating these new designs into the platform. The app is live on their website and is being developed with ongoing input from artists and designers.

As the app continues to evolve based on user feedback, it will strengthen its role as an essential tool for artists. Link to Art remains committed to enhancing the app and supporting the professional growth of artists.