



DESIGNSYNC:

A Mobile App for Designers
and Creative Entrepreneurs

DesignSync: A mobile app

PROJECT 2:
UI DESIGN &
WIREFRAMES

DesignSync: a mobile app

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1. DesignSync Mobile app

Type of Interface: A mobile app that helps freelance designers and small creative entrepreneurs to manage projects, communicate with clients, and showcase their portfolio in one place.

Description: The app, DesignSync, will combine project management tools, client communication, and personal branding features. It will be tailored for independent designers, freelancers, and small creative businesses who need a centralized hub for both productivity and self-promotion.

Goals of Interface:

- ◀ Allow users to **manage active projects** (track deadlines, upload files, share progress).
- ◀ Provide a **client portal for feedback**, approvals, and messaging.
- ◀ Showcase a **designer's portfolio** in a visually engaging way.
- ◀ Enable quick **invoice creation and tracking**.
- ◀ Deliver a **streamlined user experience** that combines creativity and business in one tool.

2. Research

Current Trends in UI/UX for Creative Tools:

- ◀ **Integrated client portals are now table-stakes**
Creative-services tools increasingly ship branded client portals that centralize files, messages, approvals, and payments. This reduces email chaos and improves client transparency, exactly the gap DesignSync is solving. Mobile-first project management tools.
- ◀ **White-labeling / brand control matters for trust**
Freelancers want their portal to look like their brand (logo, colors). “White-label” controls are a differentiator you should include in MVP. Dark/light mode toggle (popular with creative users who often work at night).
- ◀ **Card-based task views (Kanban) remain the mental model for quick status scanning** Boards → lists → cards is still the

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most legible way to show many small jobs with attachments, checklists, labels, dates, and comments, great for a designer juggling many clients.

◀ **Mobile-first interactions + actionable notifications**

On-the-go workflows rely on push actions (reply/react from a notification), inline image handling, and quick uploads. Prioritize “approve / comment” from notifications and one-tap file upload.

◀ **Portfolio patterns emphasize case-study storytelling** (cover → details → process), Creative buyers expect a grid → project page with hero media, role, tools, problem/solution, and outcome. Mirror that structure in DesignSync’s “Portfolio” tab.

◀ **Perceived-performance patterns (skeleton screens) beat spinners:** Use skeleton loaders for feed, project lists, and file viewers to make the app feel faster while content loads.

◀ **Modern navigation = adaptive bottom navigation.** Use bottom navigation with 3–5 primary destinations on phones and adapt as screens grow (Navigation Bar → Navigation Rail). This keeps key actions one thumb away.

◀ **Accessibility updates (WCAG 2.2) change details of touch targets & focus.** Bake in: Target Size (Minimum), Dragging Movements alternatives, Redundant Entry, and Accessible Authentication. These directly affect button sizes, gesture alternatives, and login flows.

◀ **Visual review/approval borrowed from pro tools**

Anchored comments, drawings/markup, and versioned assets shorten feedback cycles, great inspiration for DesignSync’s “Approve” flow.

PROS & CONS of existing apps:

HoneyBook (client management)



What it nails: Clean client portal with messages, files, invoices, and payments in one place; recent upgrades focused on a more branded, cohesive client experience.

Gaps/opportunities: Heavy business ops; less “visual-first” review for design assets.

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Add anchored comments and visual approvals in DesignSync.

◀ Bonsai (freelance suite)



What it nails: Centralizes contracts, invoices, and a white-label client portal.

Gaps/opportunities: Portal isn't optimized for creative asset review.

DesignSync can outshine with asset galleries, compare versions, and markup.

◀ Trello (Project Tracking)



What it nails: Lightweight Kanban, attachments, labels, checklists; solid mobile quality-of-life like replying from push notifications.

Gaps/opportunities: Not a client portal; lacks portfolio/storytelling and design-specific approvals. Borrow board patterns + actionable notifications for DesignSync

◀ Behance (portfolio showcase)



What it nails: Case-study presentation and discovery; strong visual hierarchy for creative work.

Gaps/opportunities: No project ops or approvals. Use its case-study layout as the model for DesignSync's Portfolio tab.

◀ Frame.io (visual review & approval)



What it nails: Anchored comments, drawings, versioning, and fast iOS app

for precise review; V4 adds metadata tagging/collections that feel like lightweight workflow mgmt.

Gaps/opportunities: Focused on media review, not client billing/PM. For DesignSync, combine Frame-style reviews with HoneyBook-style client ops in one place.

3. User Analysis & Personas

◀ Primary User Population

The user interface of DesignSync will primarily serve:

- ◀ Freelance designers and creative entrepreneurs who need a hub for project management, portfolio display, and client collaboration.
- ◀ Small business clients who hire designers for branding, websites, and marketing collateral. Both groups share the need for clarity, easy communication, and trust in the design process.



Persona 1:
The Freelance Designer
Name: Jordan Alvarez



Persona 2:
The Small Business Owner (Client)
Name: Luther McNeil



Persona 1: The Freelance Designer

Name: Jordan Alvarez

Age: 29

Occupation: Freelance Graphic & Web Designer

Location: Austin, TX

Tech Proficiency: High (daily use of Adobe Creative Cloud, Figma, Wix, Slack)

Devices: iPhone 15 Pro, MacBook Pro

Backstory: Jordan left a mid-size marketing agency two years ago to freelance full-time. They specialize in branding and web design for small businesses. While Jordan loves the flexibility of freelancing, they struggle with staying organized, managing clients across multiple platforms (email, Dropbox, Slack, Trello) is messy and time-consuming. Jordan often finds themselves missing client messages or digging through long email chains to find the latest version of a file.

Goals:

- Streamline projects into one platform.
- Easily share drafts and receive client approvals.
- Maintain a professional portfolio to attract new clients.

Frustrations/Pain Points:

- Clients sending feedback via text, email, or even social media DMs.
- Forgetting to update project statuses across tools.
- Spending too much time on admin tasks instead of design.

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Persona 2: The Small Business Owner (Client)

Name: Luther McNeil

Age: 45

Occupation:

President, Majestic Building Maintenance, Inc.

Location: Baltimore, MD

Tech Proficiency: Medium (confident with email and Zoom, less so with design tools)

Devices: Samsung Galaxy S24, Windows desktop

Backstory:

Luther runs a family-owned cleaning and maintenance business. He hired a freelance designer to create a new website and marketing materials. While Luther is experienced in running his company, he finds creative projects overwhelming. He doesn't like using multiple tools just to view designs and prefers simple, mobile-friendly communication. He's lost time in the past when designs were misplaced in email attachments or feedback was ignored.

Goals:

- Review design drafts quickly and give approvals without confusion.
- Track progress without needing to micromanage.
- Feel confident that his branding is being handled professionally.

Frustrations/Pain Points:

- Confusion with multiple file versions.
- Wasting time searching through emails for updates.
- Uncertainty about where projects stand.

4. Task Analysis

Task 1: Uploading a design draft for client feedback

1. Log in.
2. Select project.
3. Tap “Upload New Draft.”
4. Drag/drop or select file.
5. Notify client.

Task 2: Approving a client project milestone

1. Client logs in.
2. Views notification “New Draft Available.”
3. Opens file viewer.
4. Adds comments OR taps “Approve.”
5. Designer notified automatically.

Task 3: Viewing portfolio

1. Tap “Portfolio” tab.
2. Scroll through organized projects (grid view).
3. Tap project for full details (images, description).
4. Option to share via link.

5. Problem Scenario Analysis

Task 1: Uploading a design draft for client feedback:

Jordan, a freelance designer, has just finished a new mockup for Luther’s website redesign. Instead of digging through multiple tools, Jordan opens the DesignSync app on their phone, taps into “Project B,” and selects Upload File. Within seconds, the PDF and image files are uploaded and a notification is sent to Luther. Jordan adds a quick note, “Here’s the updated homepage layout, let me know what you think” and knows Luther will be able to view, comment, and approve directly in the app.

Task 2: Approving a client project milestone:

Luther, the small business owner, receives a push notification while on-site at a job: “New draft uploaded for Project B.” Curious, he opens DesignSync, taps into the project, and sees Jordan’s latest mockup displayed clearly. Instead of scrolling through an email thread or downloading attachments, Luther reviews the file

directly on his phone. He adds a short comment for clarification and then taps Approve. The project status updates automatically, letting both Luther and Jordan know progress has officially moved forward.

Task 3: Viewing portfolio

Later that week, Jordan is meeting with a potential new client at a coffee shop. The client asks to see examples of past branding work. Instead of pulling up a laptop, Jordan opens DesignSync, navigates to the Portfolio tab, and scrolls through a clean grid of recent projects. Each project opens into a detailed view with images, descriptions, and outcomes. The client is impressed, and Jordan quickly uses the Share Portfolio option to send a link directly to the client's email, demonstrating professionalism and readiness on the spot.

6. Usability Requirements

Usability Table Requirements Table

Usability Goal	Metric	Success Criteria	Rationale
Task Efficiency	Time to complete file upload & send	≥85% of users upload and send a file in ≤3 taps and within 90 seconds	Ensures workflow is fast and streamlined for busy freelancers
User Satisfaction	Post-task usability survey (1-7 scale)	Average rating ≥4.5	Measures ease-of-use and enjoyment, key for adoption
Error Rate	Errors during core tasks (upload, approve, view portfolio)	≤5% critical errors across all sessions	Reduces frustration and increases trust in the app
Learnability	Time to complete 3 core tasks without help	New users complete upload, approval, and portfolio view within 5 minutes	Confirms app is intuitive for both designers and clients

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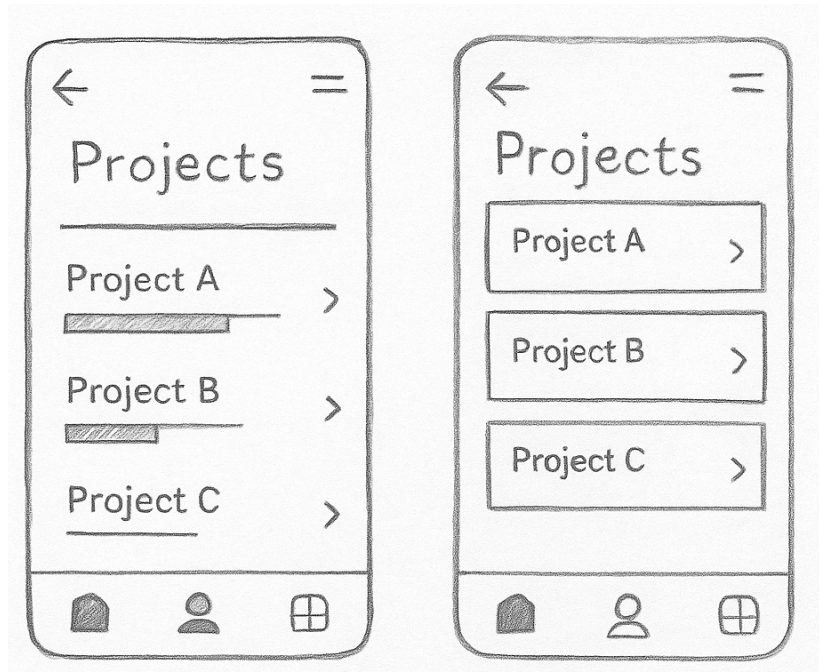
Mobile App Site Map



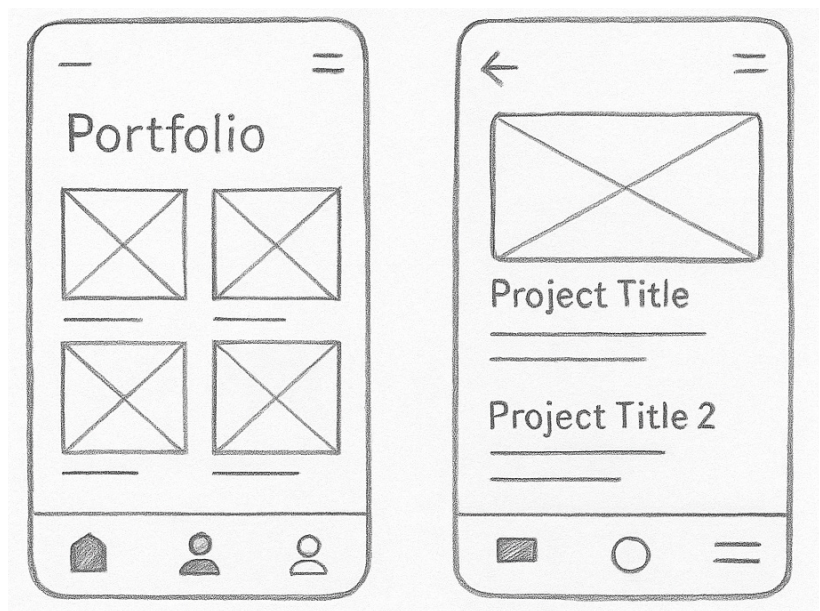
COLOR KEY

- Work flows/Task Management
- People/Business Relationships
- Creative Showcase
- Communication Alerts
- Personalization/Control
- Overview / Starting Point

Sketches



Design Decision: The list view provides better efficiency for freelancers managing multiple clients, so it informed the final wireframe structure.



Design Decision: The grid layout was chosen as the primary option because it balances speed and clarity, while still allowing detail when users tap on an individual project.

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Navigation Bar (bottom):

Provides quick access to Projects, Clients, and Portfolio. Always visible for consistency and easy navigation.

Back Arrow (top left):

“Allows users to return to the previous screen without confusion.

Timeline/Status Bars:

Allows users to keep track of the design/business process of their clients.

Dark Mode:

App supports both light and dark modes to improve accessibility and reduce eye strain.

Upload File Button:

Primary action on this screen large and centered for quick access.

File List (with timestamps):

Shows version history of uploaded files for easy reference.

Message Box:

Allows designers to add notes alongside file uploads, keeping feedback attached to deliverables.

Active / Archived Toggle:

Users can filter current vs. completed projects with one tap.

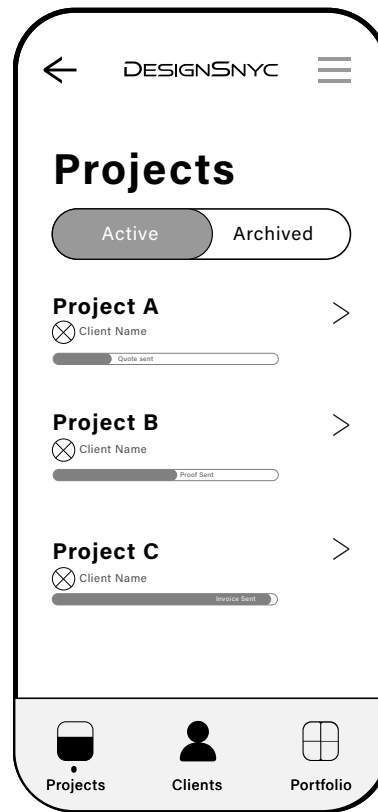
Progress Bar on Each Project:


Quick visual indicator of project completion status.

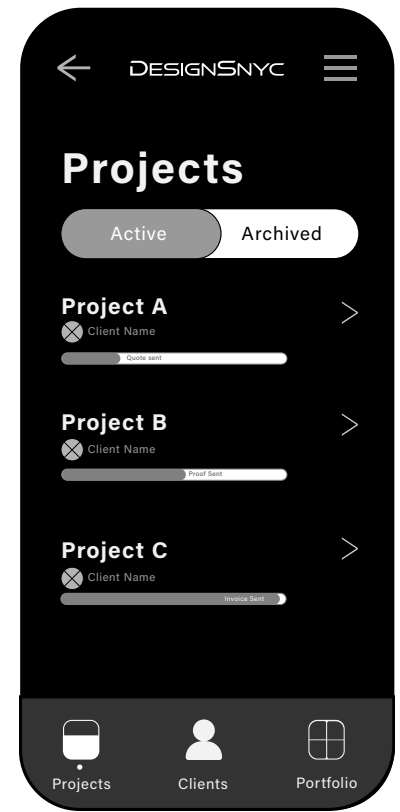
Project List:

Tap any project to open project details and files.

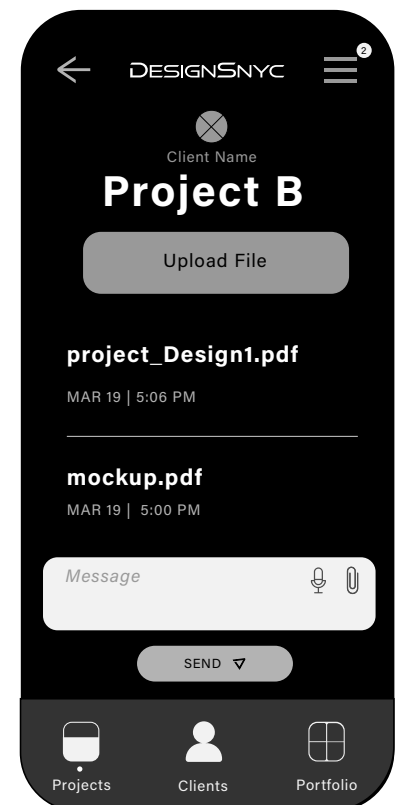
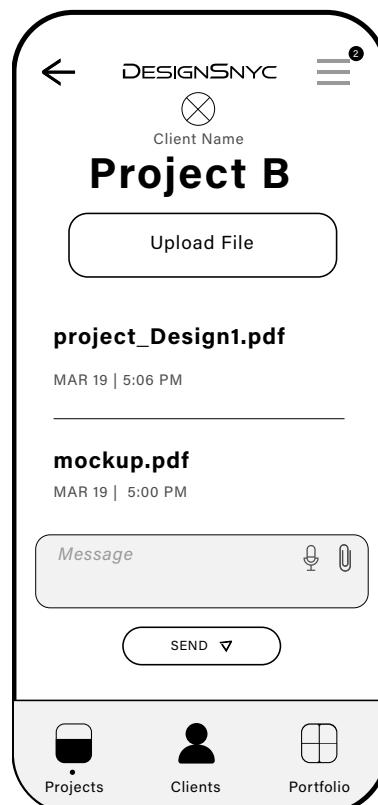
Wireframes



 Day Mode



 Dark Mode



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Chat Bubbles:

Displays real-time client–designer communication with time stamps for context.

File Upload Confirmation Bubble:

Automatically generated system message to confirm uploads.

Send Button:

One-tap sending of messages, ensuring fast collaboration.

Grid Layout of Projects:

Visual-first design lets potential clients too look at portfolio samples.

Project Thumbnails:

Each project tile opens into a detailed case study with description, tools used, and outcomes.

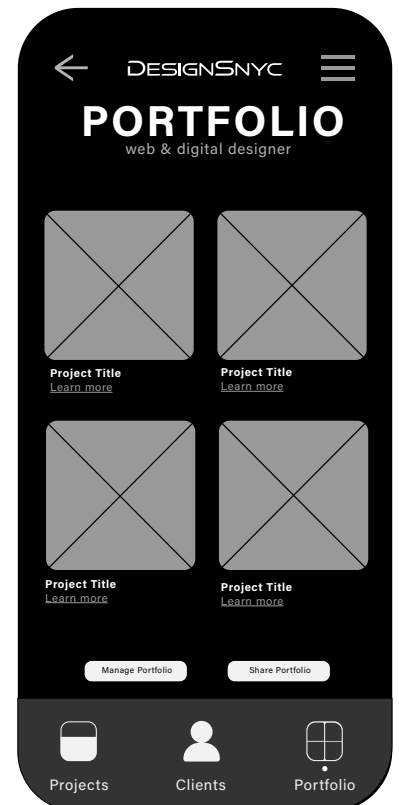
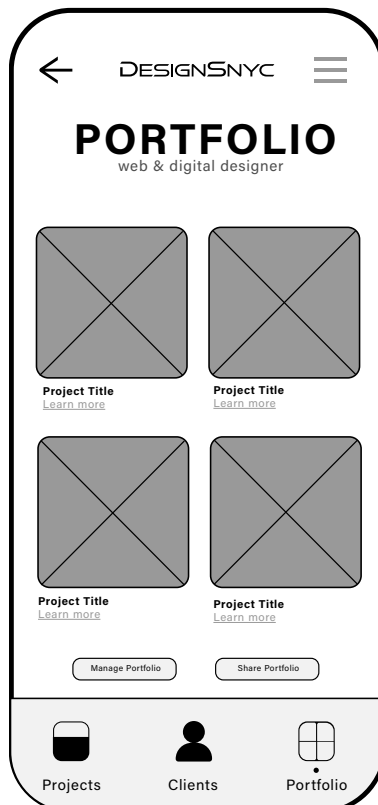
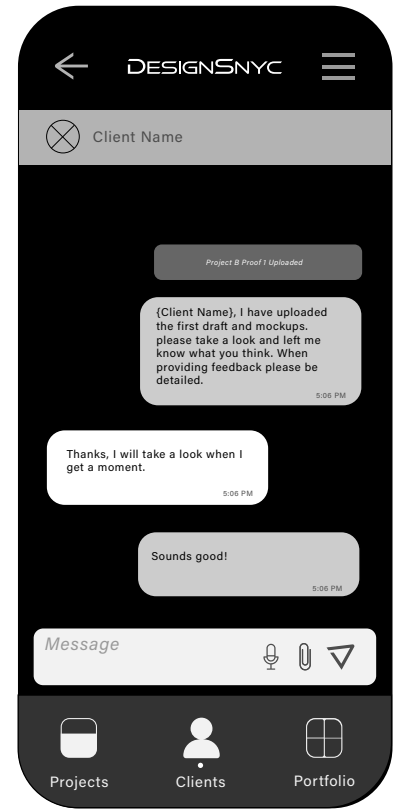
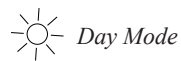
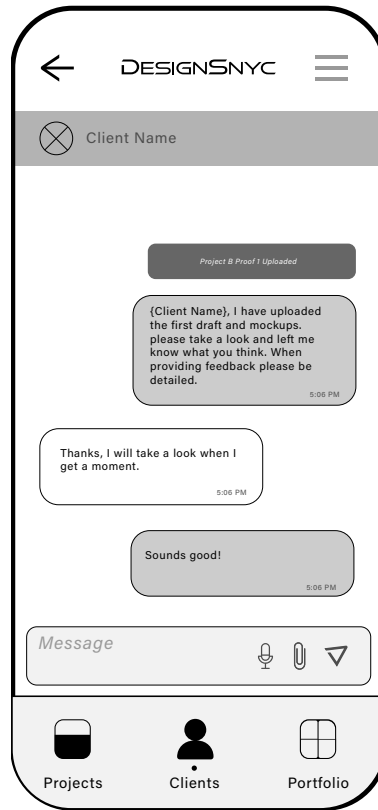
Share Portfolio:

Allows designer to share via social or link.

Manage Portfolio Button:

Gives the designer full control to update, edit, or remove projects.

Wireframes



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Storyboards

Uploading a design draft for client feedback.



Jordan is in the middle of a client project when she needs to step out. Without her laptop, she turns to DesignSync App, accessing her files directly from the cloud to quickly upload the client's mockup.



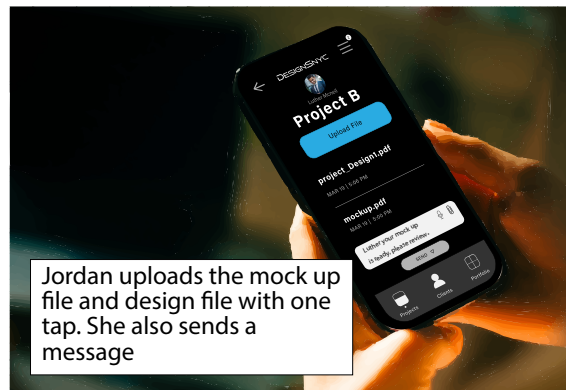
Jordan opens the DesignSync App.



Jordan goes to clients then Projects Tab. Phone screen shows "Projects A, B, C." with all her clients names listed



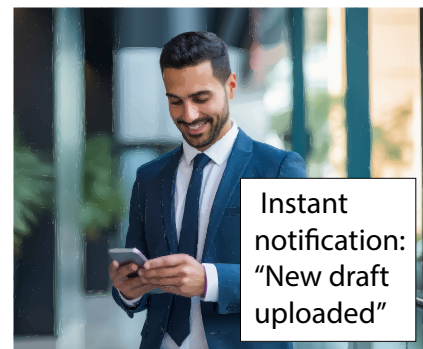
Jordan taps on project B, Luther McNeil



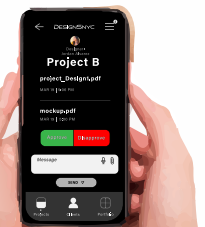
Jordan uploads the mock up file and design file with one tap. She also sends a message



"Luther" gets a push notification on his phone.



Instant notification: "New draft uploaded"



Luther, must approve or disapprove of the design, by tapping approve or disapprove



"Project B, Approved." Both designer, Jordan and client, Luther, see the project status/feedback.