

Case Study

Showloom

| A portfolio builder for creative professionals

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| 12.16.2025

| RESEARCHER | DESIGNER

| Agenda

- 01 Outline [03]**
- 02 Scope & Role [10]**
- 03 Research & Validation [12]**
- 04 Defining the solution [19]**
- 05 Highlighted Features [34]**
- 06 Designs & Prototypes [39]**
- 07 What's Next & Learnings [50]**

01

Project Outline

Project Overview

Showloom is a *portfolio* builder designed for creative professionals who struggle to keep their portfolios updated, organized, and presentation-ready.

Why This Problem Matters

Creatives shape brands and experiences every day — yet consistently struggle to showcase their own work effectively.

Portfolios directly impact:

- Hiring processes
- Career mobility
- Confidence during interviews

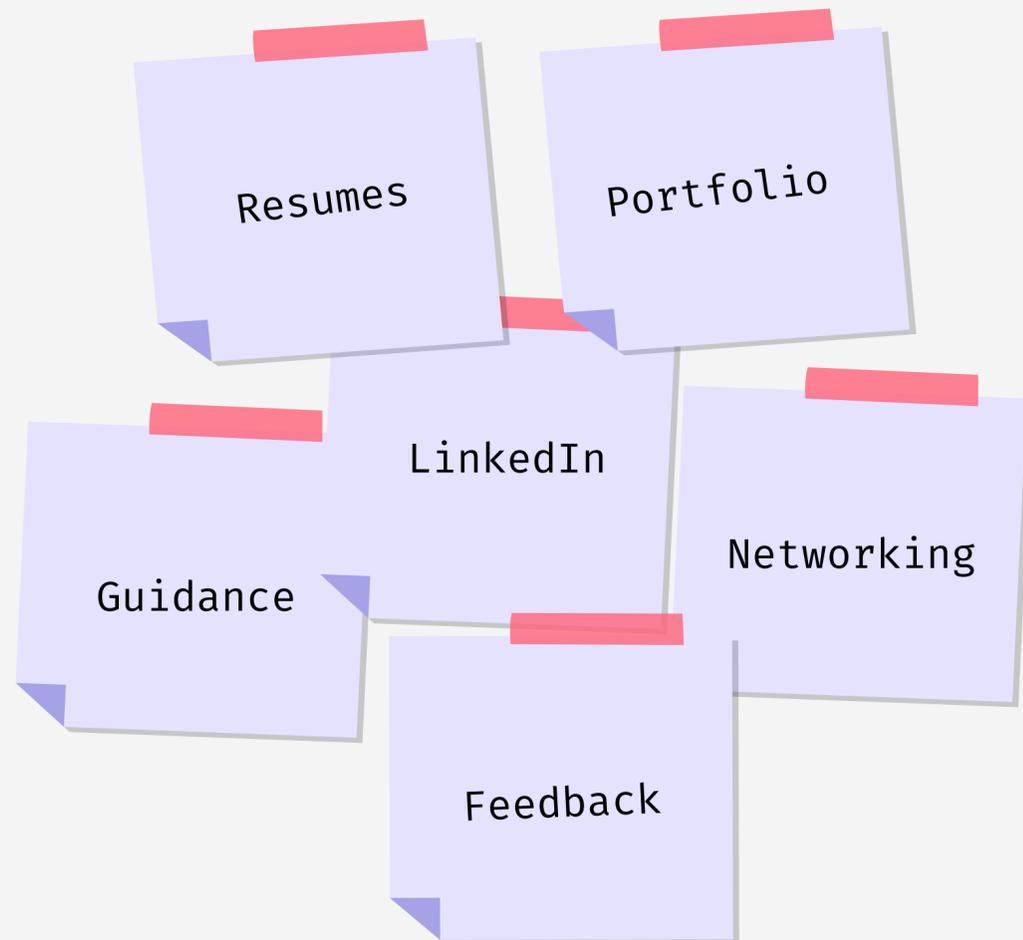
Problem Origin

What I observed

- Creatives struggle with resumes, LinkedIn, and portfolio upkeep
- Updates happen only during job stress
- Results in rushed work and missed opportunities

My own experience

- Last-minute updates
- Rewriting portfolios for every role
- Emotional resistance to self-promotion



Is it worth building?

Portfolio platforms
experience high churn
because users treat
them as one-time tools.

*85% of creatives hadn't updated their portfolios in
over a year (interviews + surveys).*

*Outdated portfolios reduce trust and relevance in hiring
processes. ([BLOG](#))*

Primary User Group



Mid-level creative professionals with 8–15 years.



Why this group?

They have strong portfolios but limited time. They juggle increased responsibilities and often delay updates, carrying both emotional and cognitive load around self-presentation.

Target Users



VISUAL DESIGNER



PHOTOGRAPHER



COPYWRITER



CREATIVE DIRECTOR



MOTION DESIGNER



ILLUSTRATOR

02

Scope & Role

Timeline

16 weeks project

Role: Full stack UI/UX Designer



Zoom
(Interviews)



Google Form
(Surveys)



Dovetail
(Summary)



MS Word
(Notes)



Figma/Figjam
(Solution/Design)

PHASE 1 | RESEARCH

- WEEK 1-2**
- Problem statement
 - Research objectives

- WEEK 3-4**
- User Research
 - Desk Research
 - Competitive Analysis

PHASE 2 | SYNTHESIS

- WEEK 5-6**
- Research Analysis
 - Narrowing down problem

- WEEK 7-8**
- Journey Mapping
 - Persona Development

PHASE 3 | CONCEPT

- WEEK 9**
- Ideation
 - Prioritize feature list
 - Initial concept

PHASE 4 | DESIGN

- WEEK 10-11**
- Low-fidelity prototypes
 - Validation of designs

- WEEK 12-13**
- High-fidelity prototypes
 - Design System

PHASE 5 | TESTING

- WEEK 14**
- Usability Testing
 - Refinements

PHASE 6 | FINAL PROTOTYPES

- WEEK 15-16**
- Iterations
 - Final prototypes
 - Presentation and hand-off

03

Research & Validation

Research Methods

To understand career preparation challenges, I conducted a multi-method research approach



User Interviews:

4 in-depth interviews with:

1. Creative Director
2. Art Directors
3. Head of Copy
4. Hiring Manager



Surveys:

2 surveys conducted:

1. Screener to identify habits + select participants
2. Post-interview survey to validate insights quantitatively



Competitive Analysis:

Reviewed platforms to understand market gaps:

1. Wix
2. Webflow
3. Behance
4. Framer



Desk Research:

Explored articles and community discussions on portfolio struggles:

1. Medium
2. Reddit
3. LinkedIn
4. Google

User Interviews

4 Participants



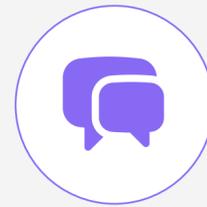
“It feels overwhelming to gather all the material and design it. Uploading its easier than anything.”

**CREATIVE
DIRECTOR**



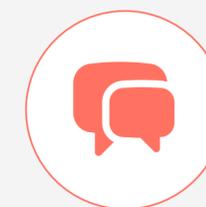
“For different countries, they also want to see your ability to adapt and start producing work that’s effective for their market”

**ART
DIRECTOR**



“Collecting all work is a big task. Also, packaging is hard because writers aren’t designers.”

**HEAD
OF COPY**



“I don’t focus on resumes or LinkedIn profiles, I look at the actual work showcase that tells me much more about the candidate”

**HIRING
MANAGER**

Surveys

To validate interview insights in quantifiable data I did the survey with more participants.

The need to
update portfolios

75%
Participants

What is
stopping them?



47.7%

Lack of time

33.3%

Emotionally Draining

20%

Feels like a task

Observed Behaviors



When users update portfolios

Before job applications

After major projects

After awards/recognitions

For conferences & networking



When they have last updated?

Avg: 1 year since last update

“ Complete overhaul after losing my job.

“ Redesign to pivot careers.

“ Added new work during job hunt.

Key Insights

01

**Keeping portfolio
up-to-date is hard**

Collecting, organizing,
and maintaining
projects is
overwhelming and
time-consuming

02

**Skill gaps
increase effort**

Non-designers struggle
with layout.
Writers struggle with
visuals.

03

**Emotional load
prevents
consistency**

Guilt, pressure, and
perfectionism cause
avoidance.

04

**Users want
fast, light-
weight updates**

LinkedIn/Instagram
feels easier — but
lacks professional
depth.

Competitive Analysis

- ✓ Strengths
- ✗ Weakness
- 💡 Opportunity

WIX

✓ Easy to use, wide template library, large market share

✗ Generic templates, heavy manual uploads

💡 Personalized templates for creative roles + quicker updates

Webflow

✓ High customization, powerful features, AI template generation

✗ Steep learning curve, requires technical skills

💡 Simple, familiar UI for non-designers & storytellers

Bēhance

✓ Strong creative community, standardized project layouts

✗ Limited customization, not a full portfolio website

💡 Combine Behance ease with customizable personal branding

04

Defining the Solution

Stakeholder Needs & Success Criteria



Users

- Easy, low-effort updates
- Visually polished, flexible presentation
- **Reduced emotional and cognitive load**



Business

- Increased engagement beyond initial setup
- **Higher retention and subscription value**



Recruiters

(Secondary)

- Clear storytelling behind work
- **Up-to-date, trustworthy portfolios**

| Market Gap

What's Working

- Easy website creation
- Templates and hosting

What's Missing

- Designed for ongoing creative updates
- Easy reorganization as work evolves
- High re-engagement after publishing

Opportunity

- A living portfolio that stays current with minimal manual effort.

Problem Statement

Creative professionals struggle to collect, design, and maintain their portfolio websites, leading to guilt, reduced confidence, and missed professional opportunities.

Design Hypothesis

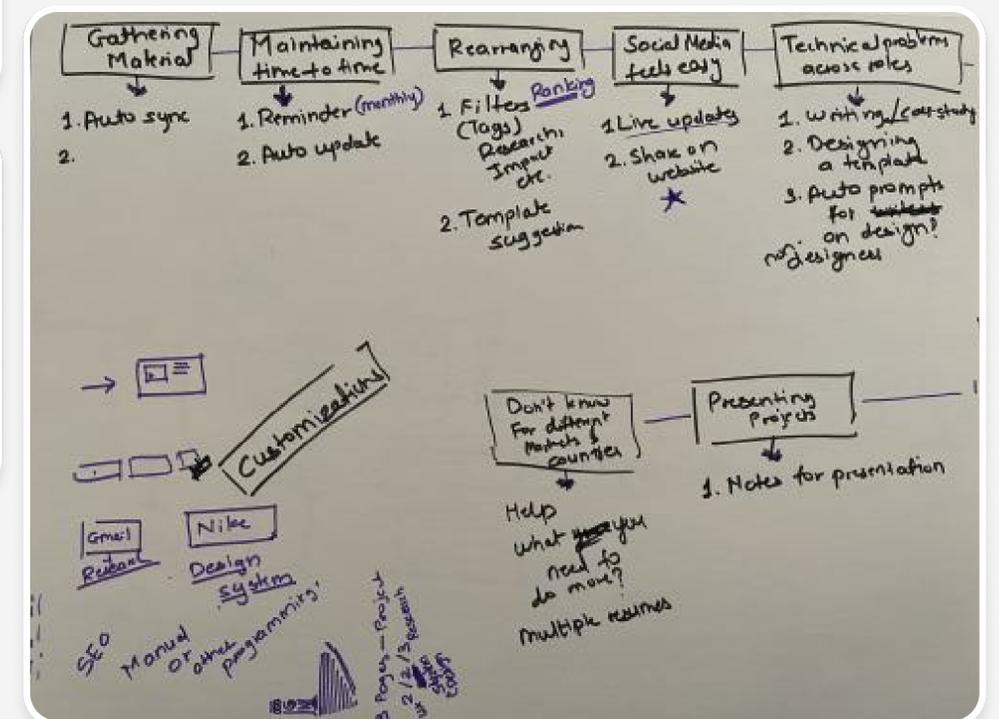
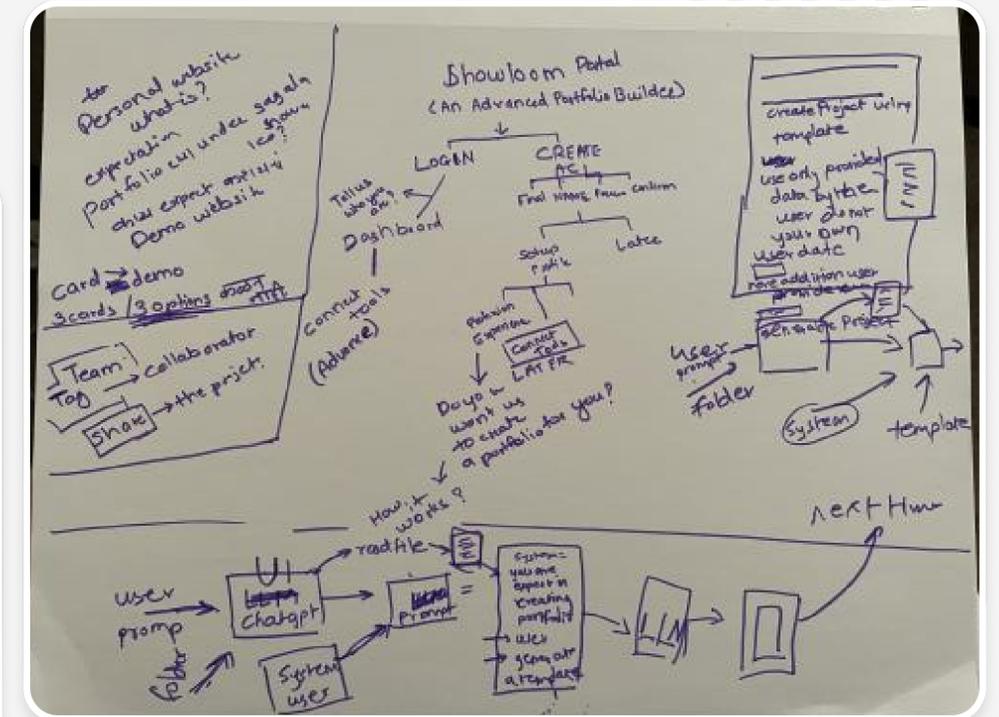
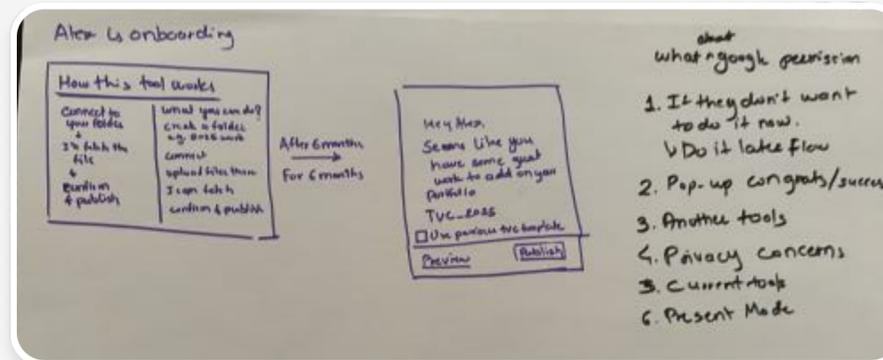
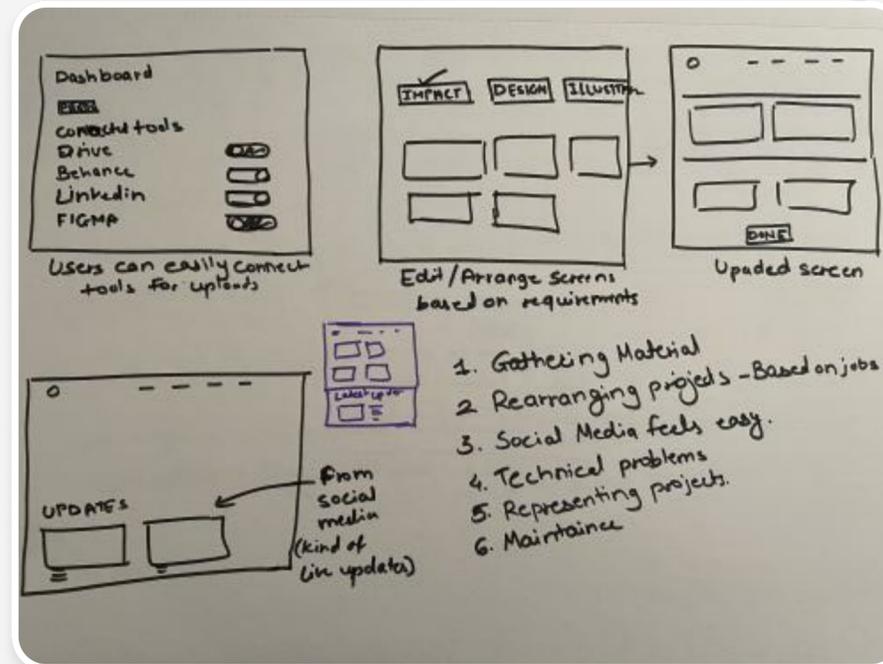


What if creatives had a tool that made portfolio maintenance continuous and low-effort?

Rough Sketches & Thoughts

Design Principles:

- Reduce friction
- Support ongoing updates
- Respect users' limited time
- Prioritize clarity over customization



Prioritize Features

MUST-HAVES

P0

Easy data gathering

P1

Simple project uploads

P1

Quick rearranging

SHOULD-HAVES

P2

Personalized auto-generated templates

P2

Presenter notes

P3

AI-assisted writing

NICE-TO-HAVES

P4

Analytics

P5

Multi-format export

P5

Team collaboration

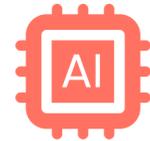
Technical Feasibility & Constraints



Built on existing APIs

(Drive, Figma, Dropbox, Adobe Cloud)

Leveraging existing integrations rather than custom infrastructure, which makes the product feasible to build and easier to scale.



AI used for structured assistance, not opaque automation

AI supports users by filling structured fields, but users stay in control of what gets published.



Template-based layouts reduce engineering complexity

Templates balance creative freedom with technical simplicity, making the system easier to maintain and scale.

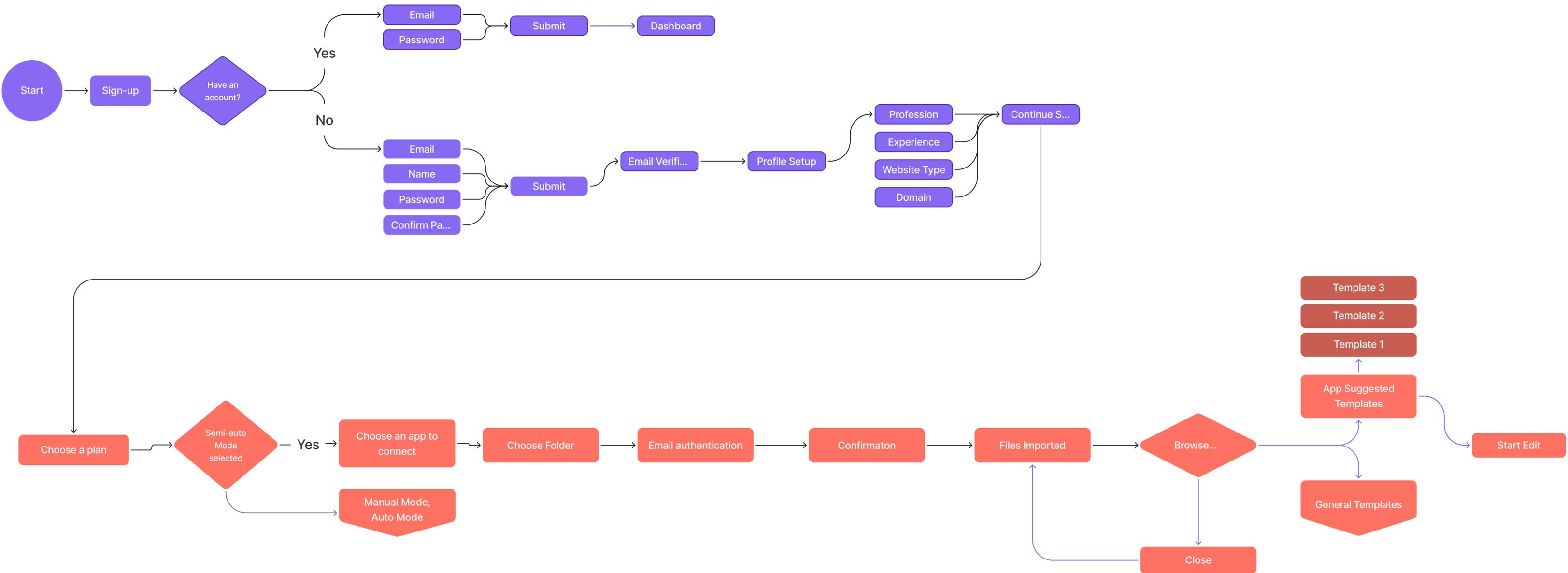


Designed for scalability and realistic build constraints

Every design decision was made with long-term scalability and real-world development constraints in mind.

User Flow

Onboarding



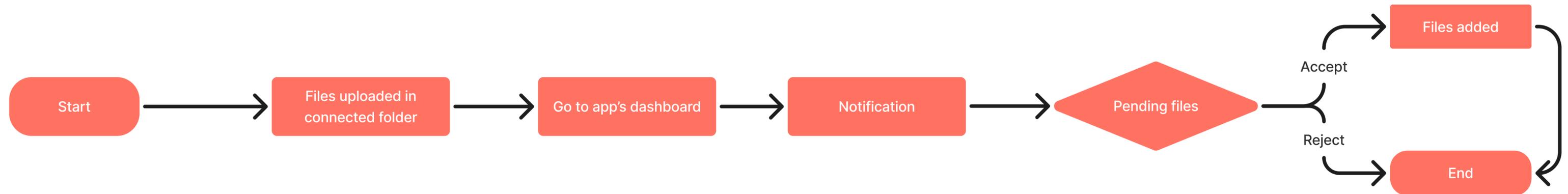
User Flow

New files detected

User 1 - New Files [Permission Given]

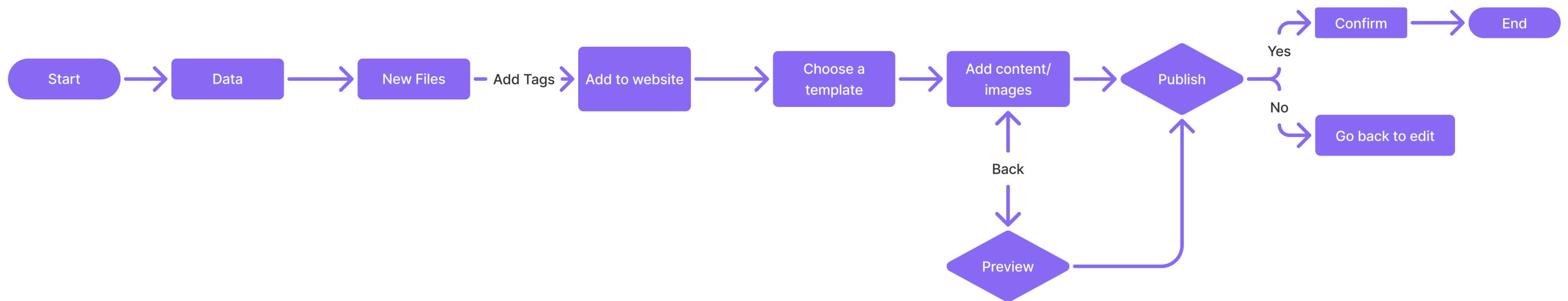


User 2 - New Files [Permission Needed]



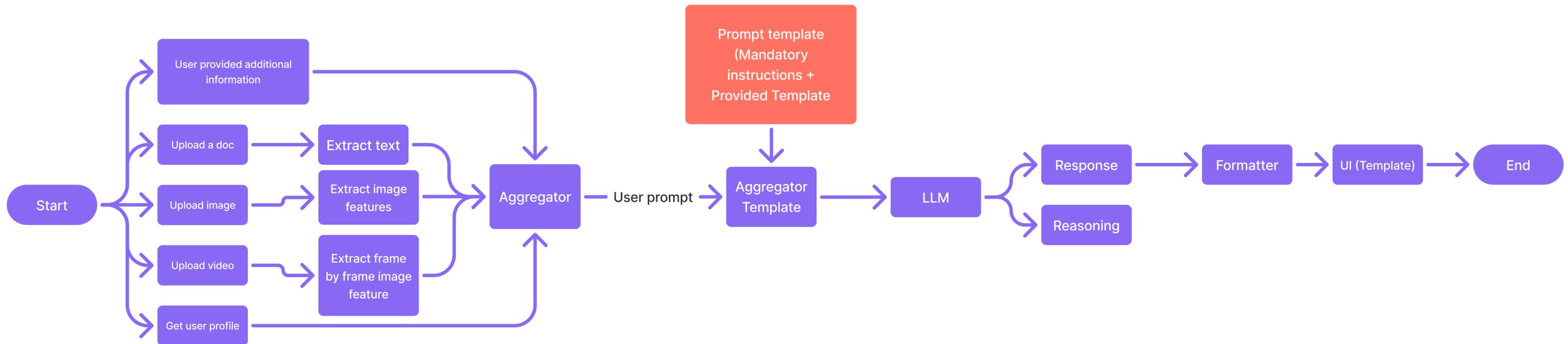
User Flow

Adding a new project



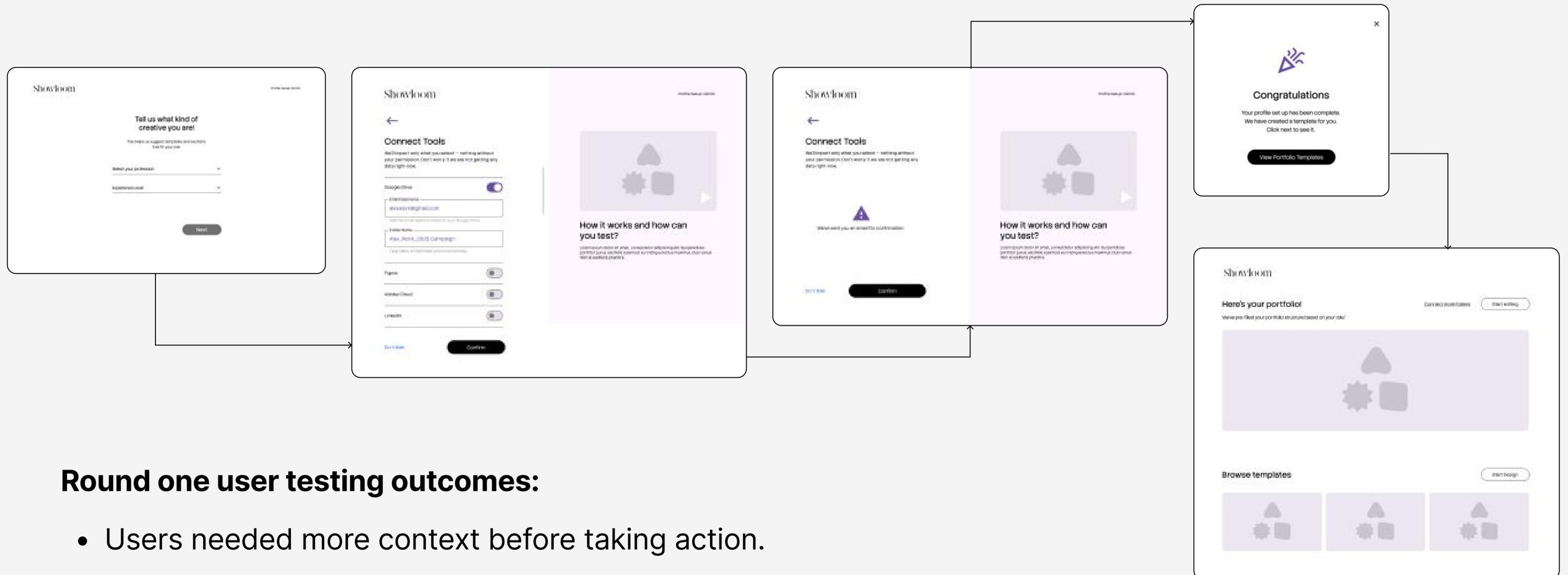
Technical Flow

Generate a template



Low-fidelity Wireframes

Onboarding Flow

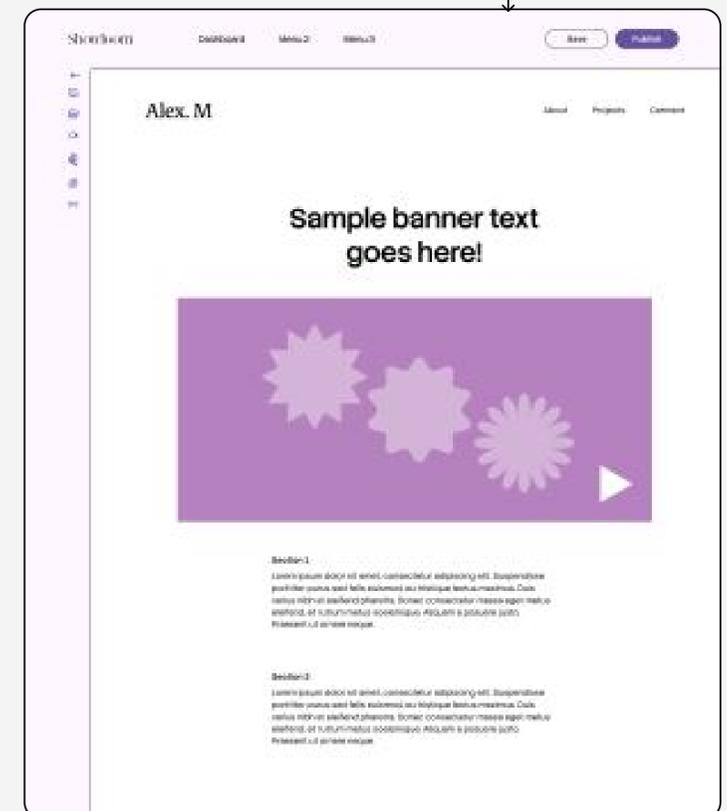
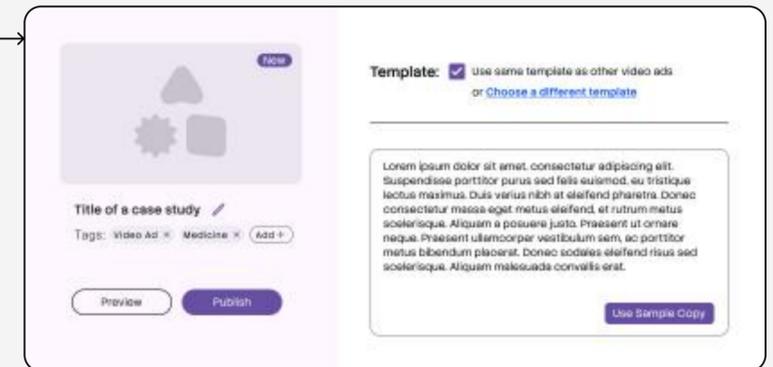
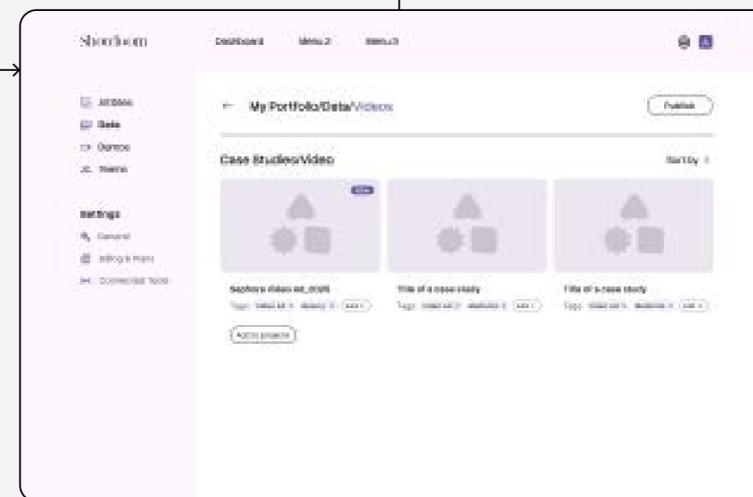
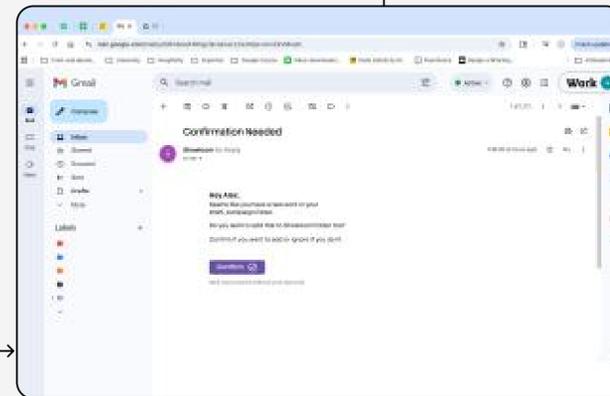
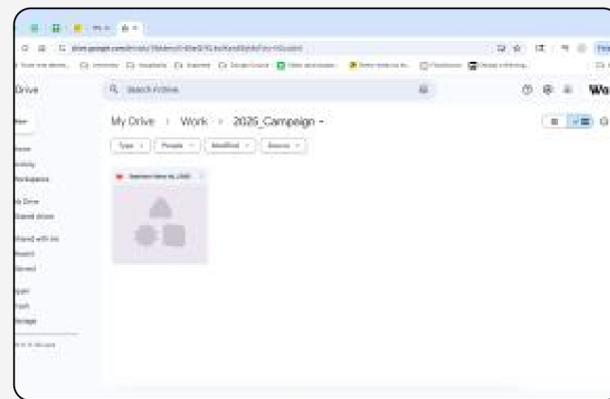


Round one user testing outcomes:

- Users needed more context before taking action.
- Connecting tools too early created hesitation.

Low-fidelity Wireframes

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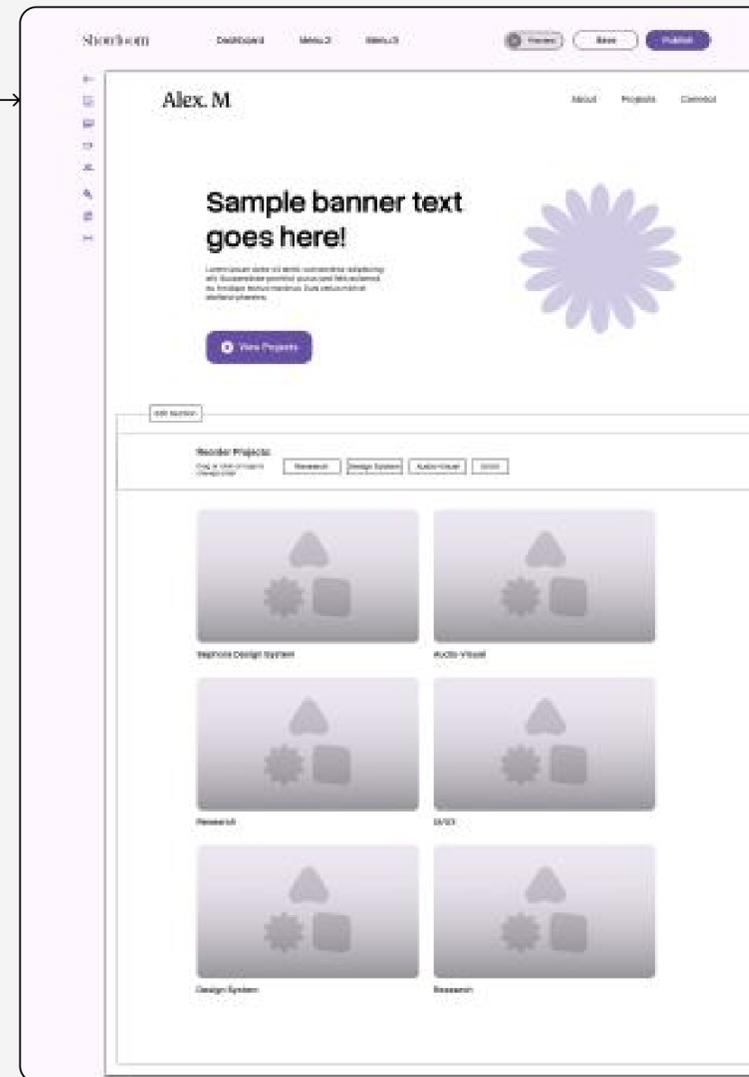
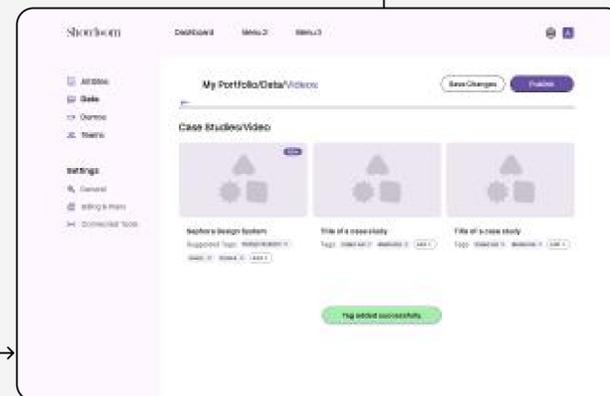
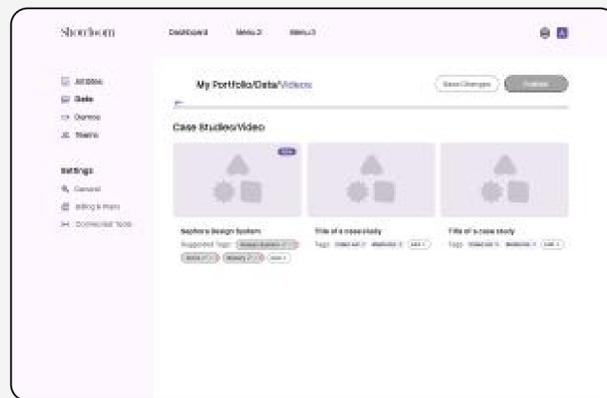


Round one user testing outcomes:

- Users liked reduced effort and template suggestions.
- Email-based confirmations felt noisy and unnecessary.

Low-fidelity Wireframes

Rearrange projects with tags



Round one user testing outcomes:

- Users found the flexibility useful but felt overwhelmed by too many options.

05

Highlighted Features

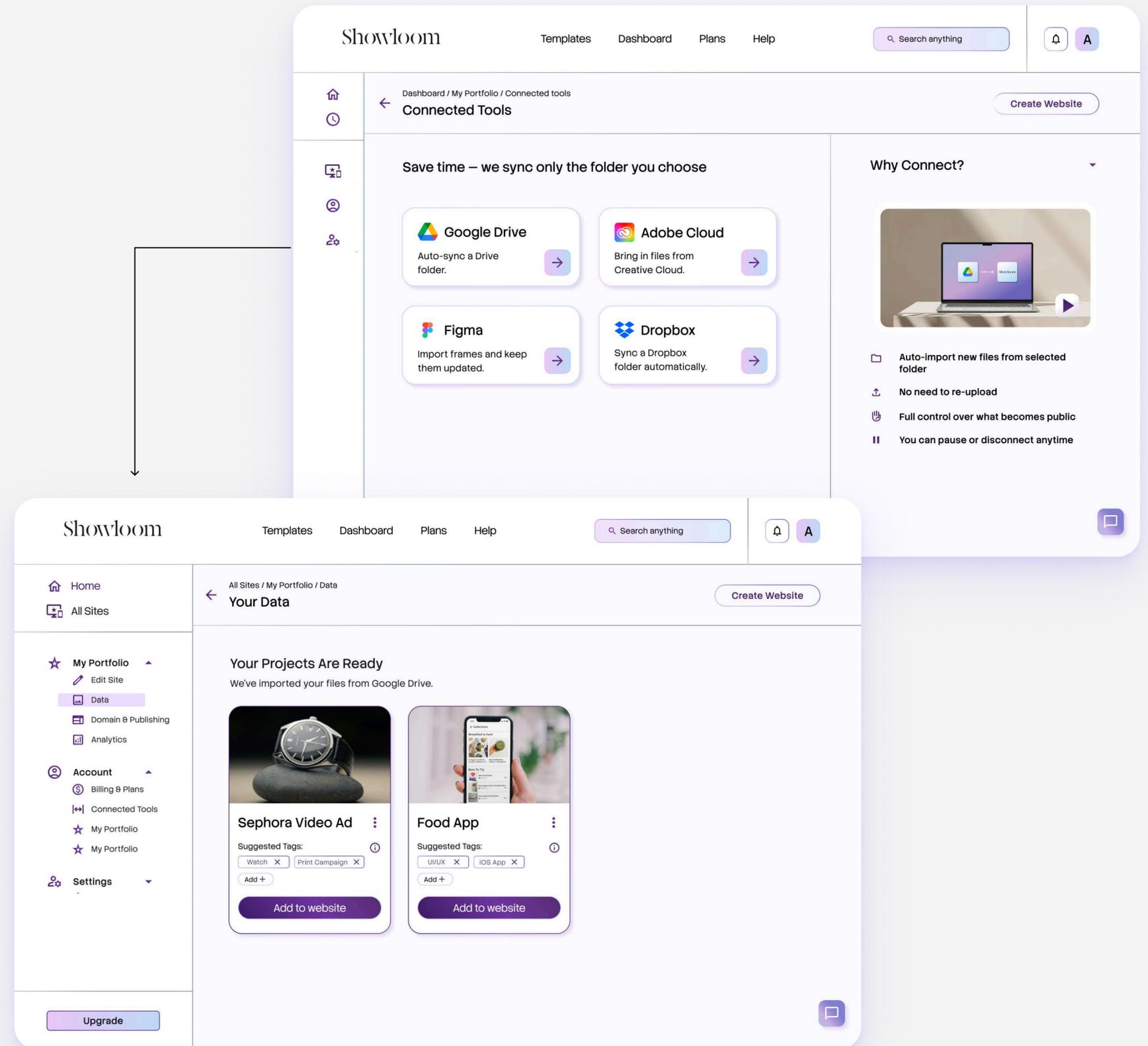
Why These Features

01 Connect Your Folders

Easily pull work from Google Drive, Figma, Dropbox, Adobe Cloud.

SOLVES:

“I procrastinate because gathering data is exhausting.”



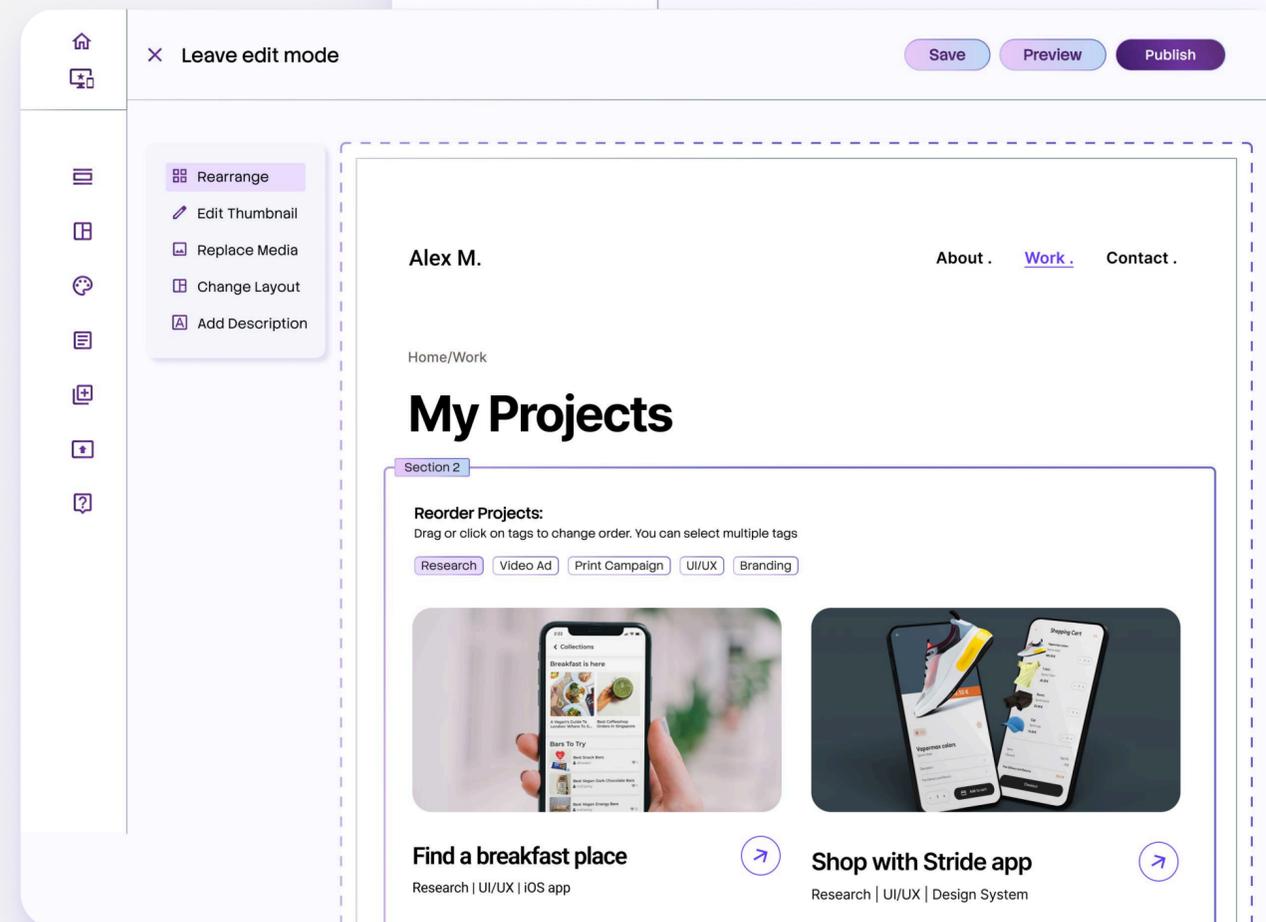
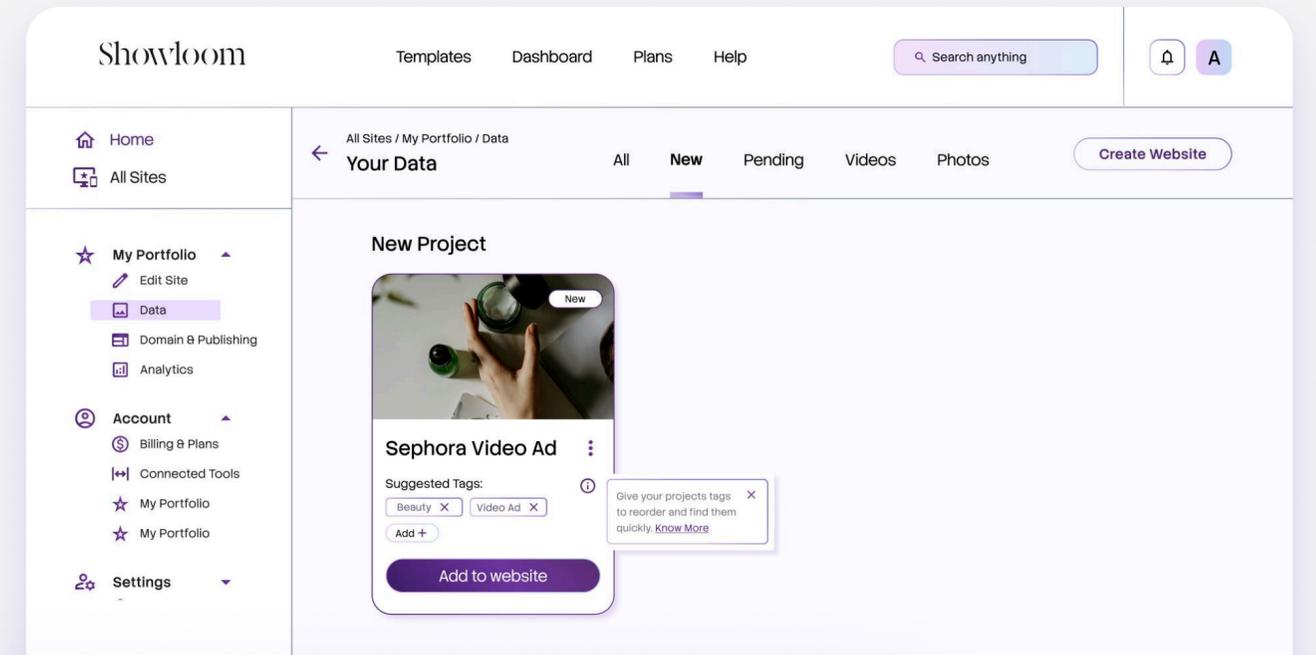
Why These Features

02 Tags & Rearranging Projects

Reorder projects for different roles and contexts.

SOLVES:

“I rearrange my portfolio for some application.”



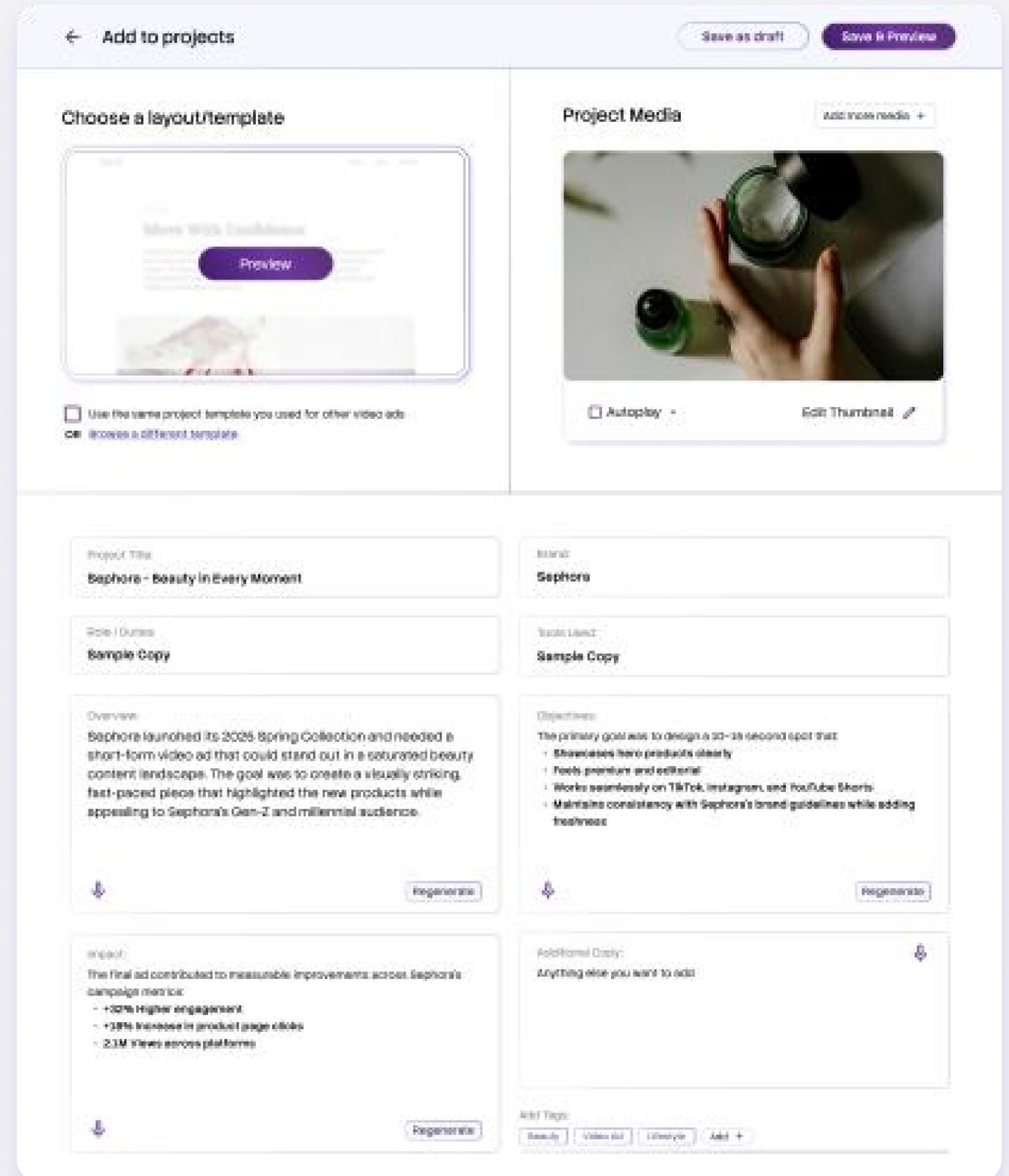
Why These Features

03 Quick Project Addition

Auto-generated layouts + content.

SOLVES:

“Updating my portfolio is too time-consuming.”



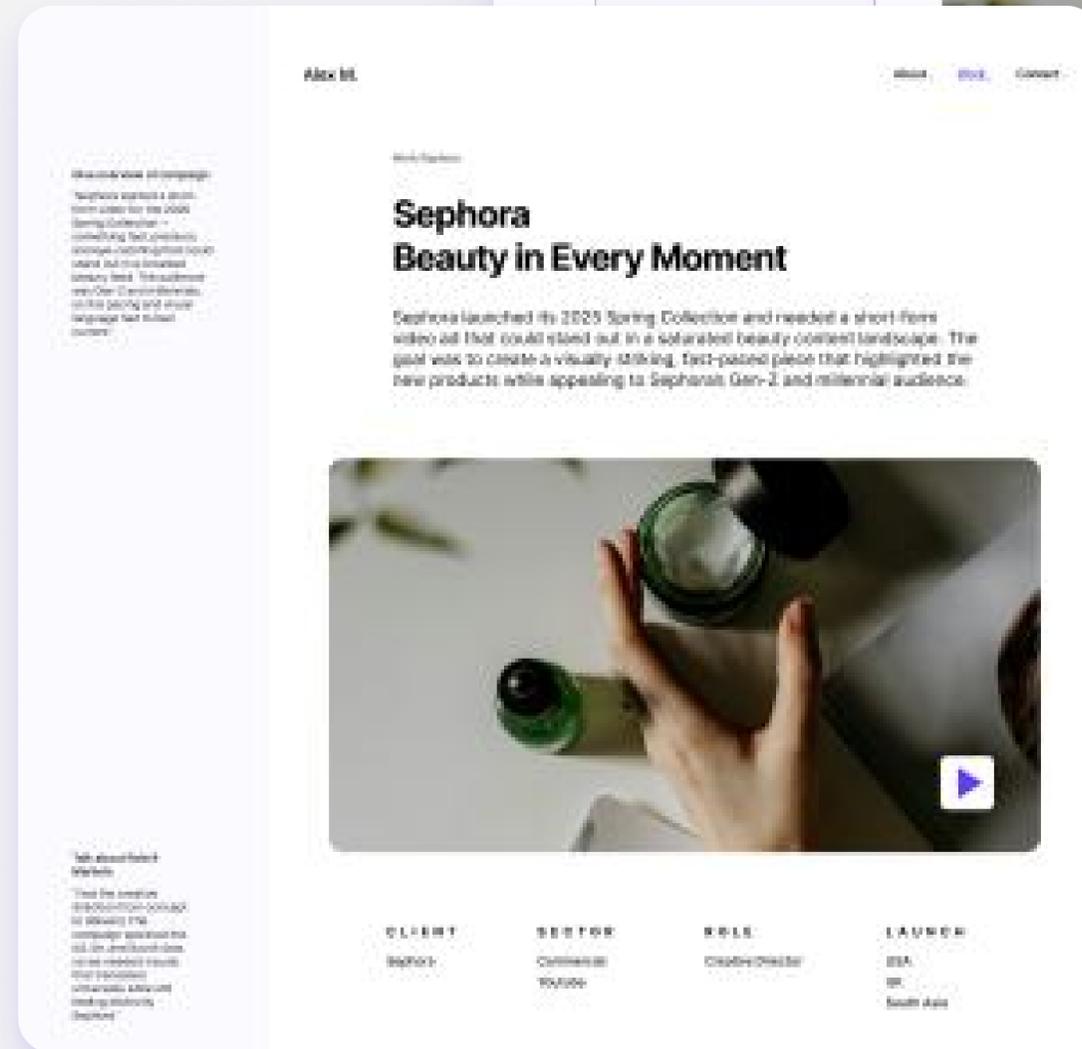
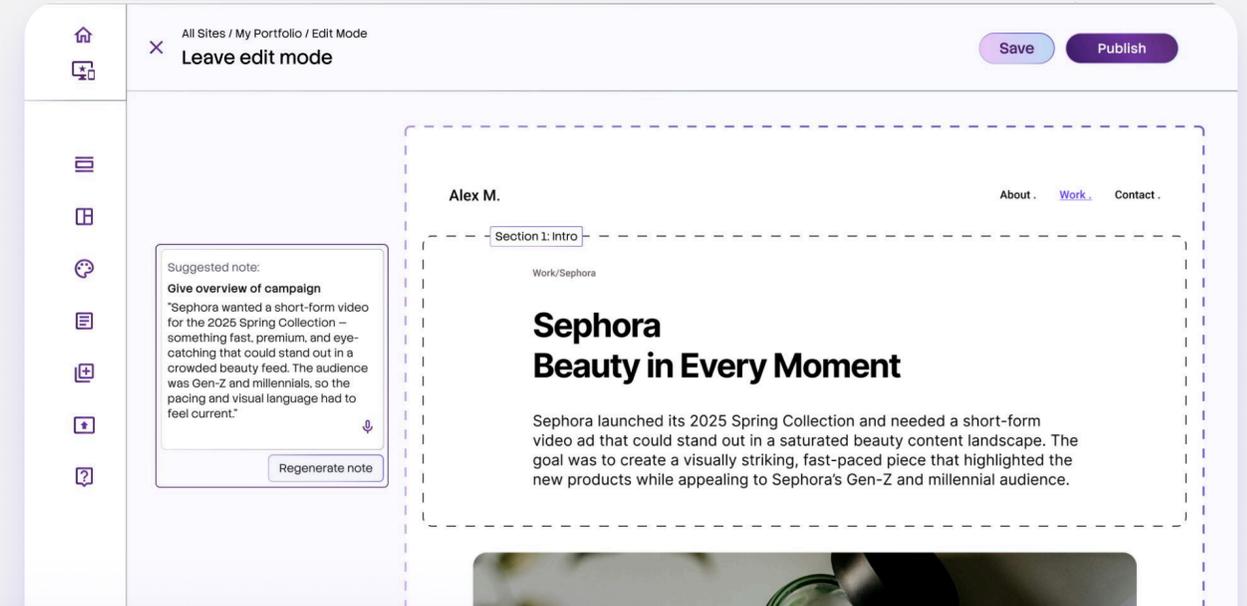
Why These Features

04 Presenter Notes

Built-in storytelling layer for interviews and reviews.

SOLVES:

“I want candidates to explain their thinking clearly.”



06

Designs & prototypes

Design System

Showloom

An elegant, stencil-inspired typeface to communicate transparency, trust, and adaptability.

Primary



Gradients



Alerts



Minimal black and white for clarity, with a subtle purple gradient to add personality without competing with user portfolio content.



Edit



Action



Special



Material Design icons were used for familiarity and consistency, reducing cognitive load and avoiding unexpected interactions.

- All Sites
 - My Portfolio
 - Photography
 - Saved Templates
- Account
 - Plan & Storage
 - Billing & Plans
 - Connected Tools



(i) New files detected

Your files need attention. Review if you'd like to add to your Projects.

Review Files



(i) New files detected

Your files need attention. Review if you'd like to add to your Projects.

Review Files



Email/Username

Default

Email/Username

Sample Text

Active

Search

Search

Assisted Mode

Import & Build Faster

Your connected tools help organize your projects.

- Connect your tools
- Import with permission
- No manual effort

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Suggested Tags:

Beauty X Beauty X

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Where ART Meets Function

DESIGN WITH PURPOSE, CREATE WITH PASSION

Home Page

Highlighting your strengths

Preview

Google Drive

Auto-sync a Drive folder.

→

All Sites / My Portfolio / Data



Your Data

All

New

Pending

Videos

Photos

Create Website

Stack Sans Headline

Title

Heading 1

Heading 2

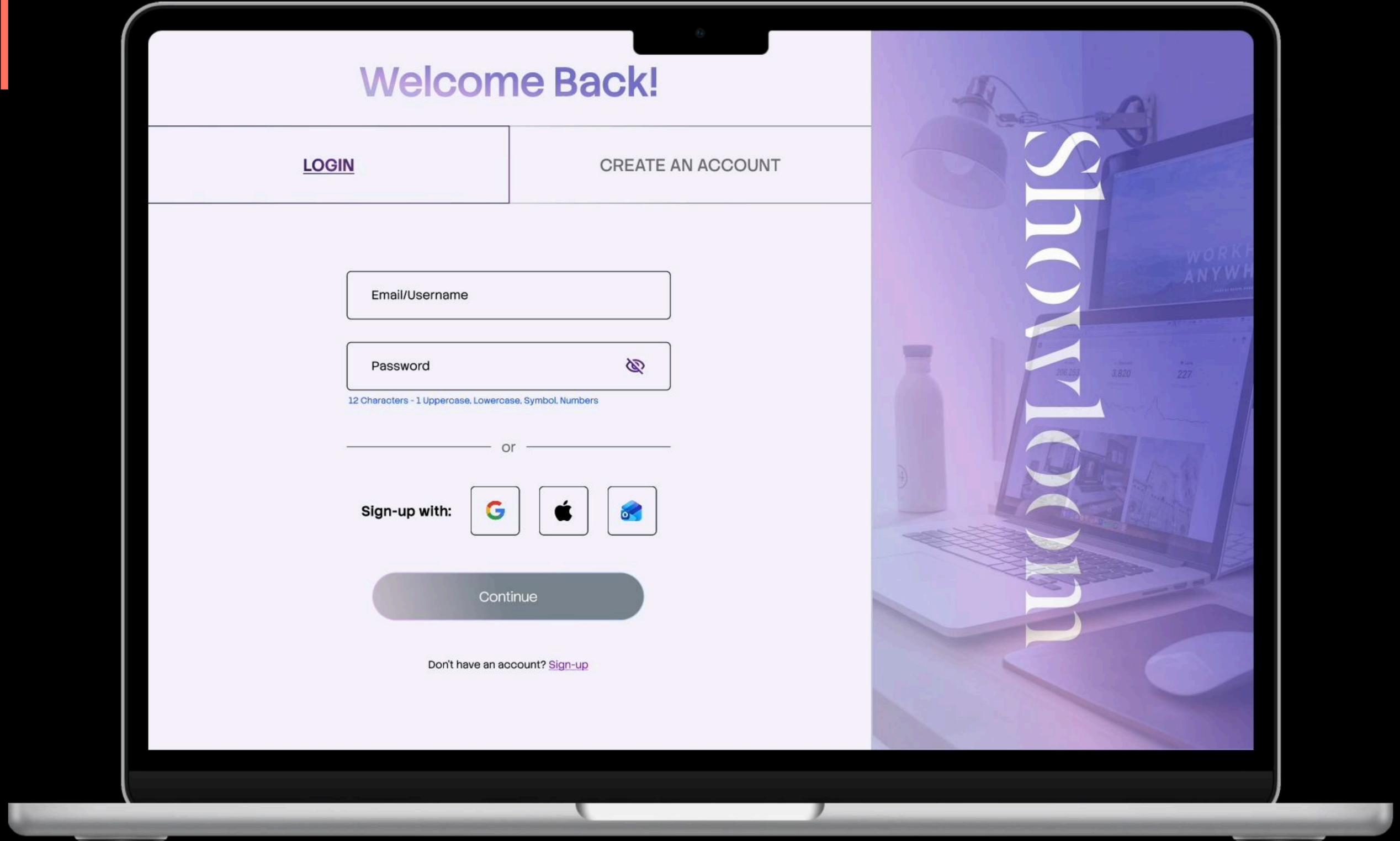
Sub-header

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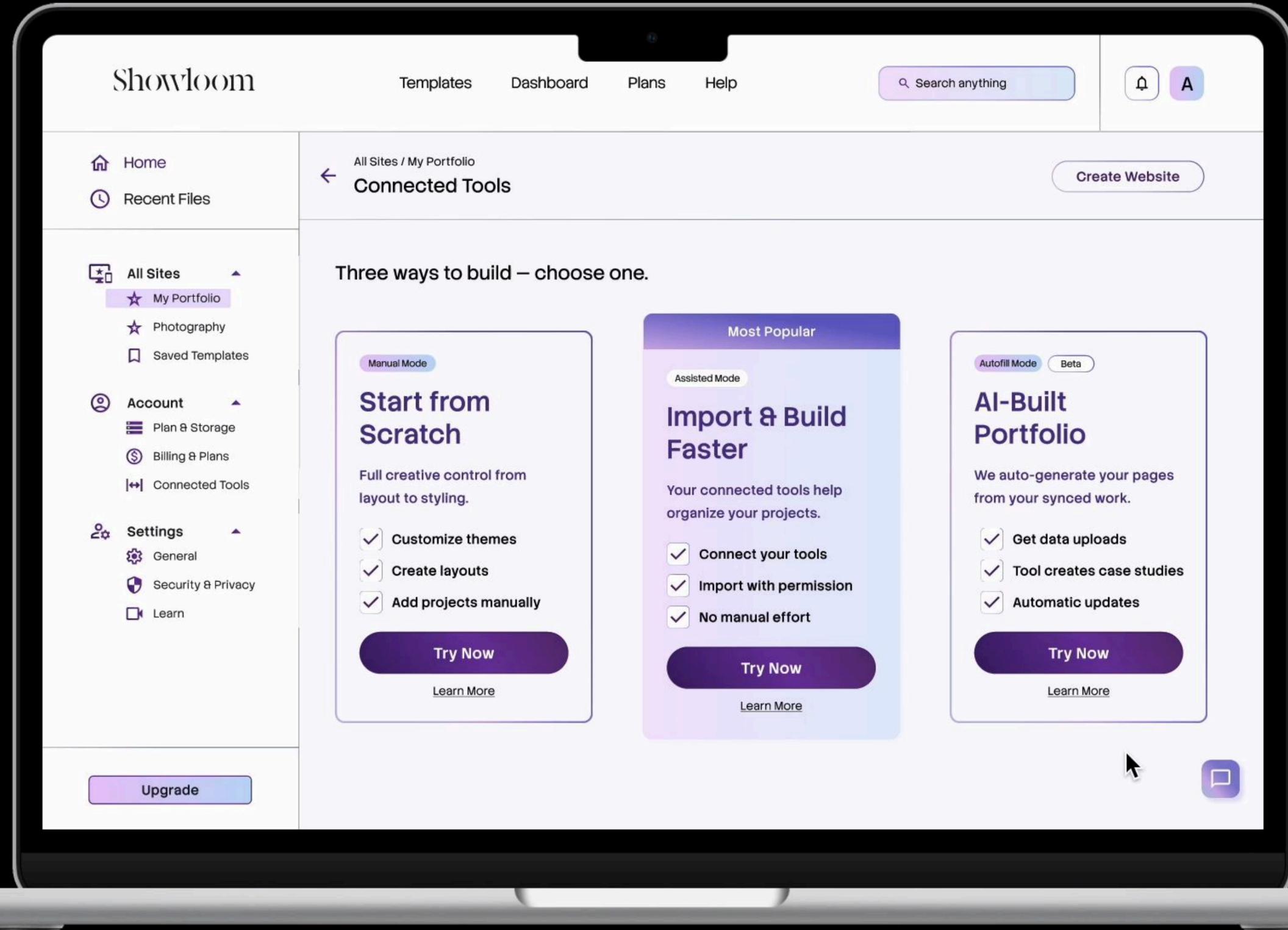
Flow 1

Prototype Link:
[Onboarding](#)



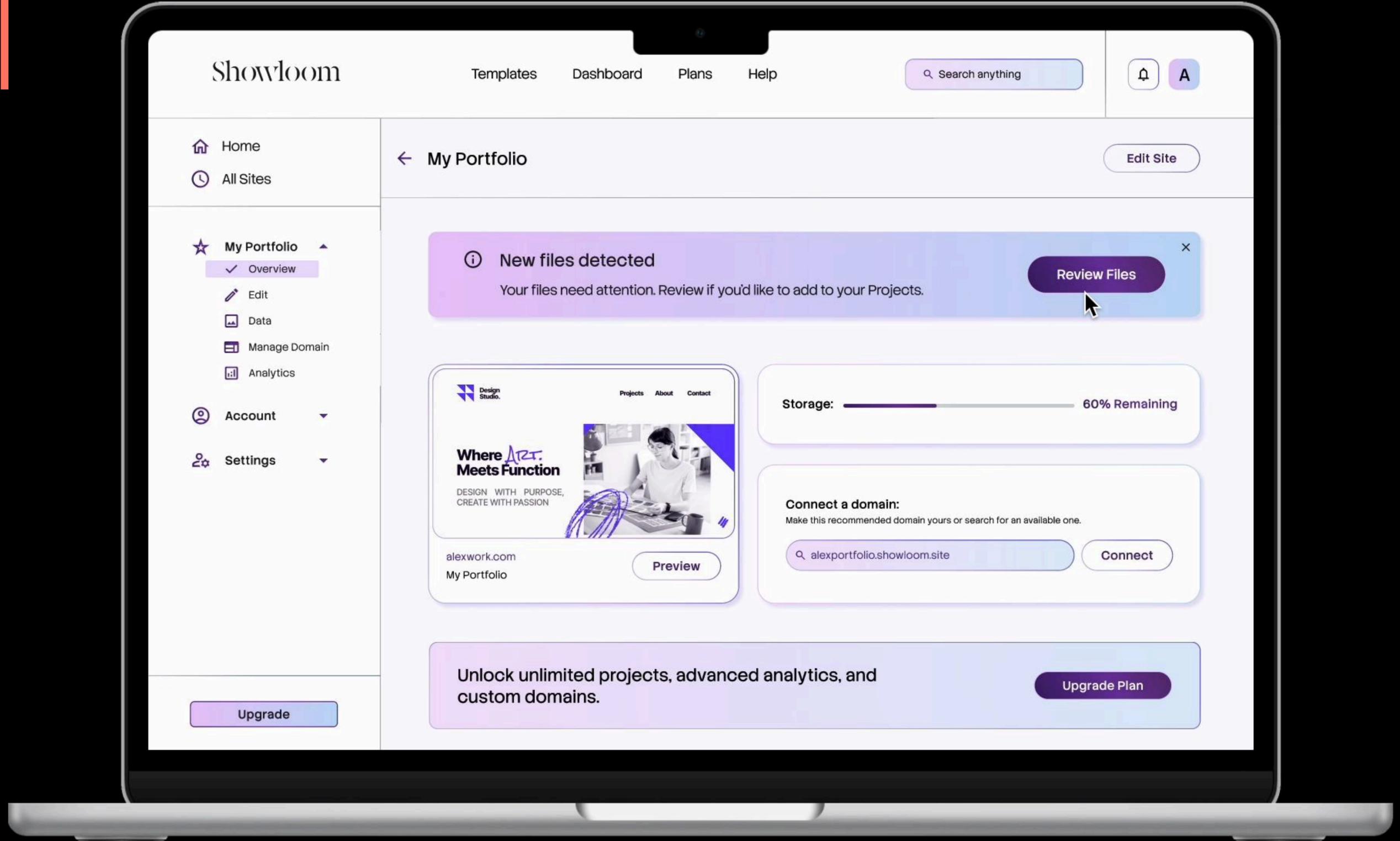
Flow 2

Prototype Link:
[Create a website](#)



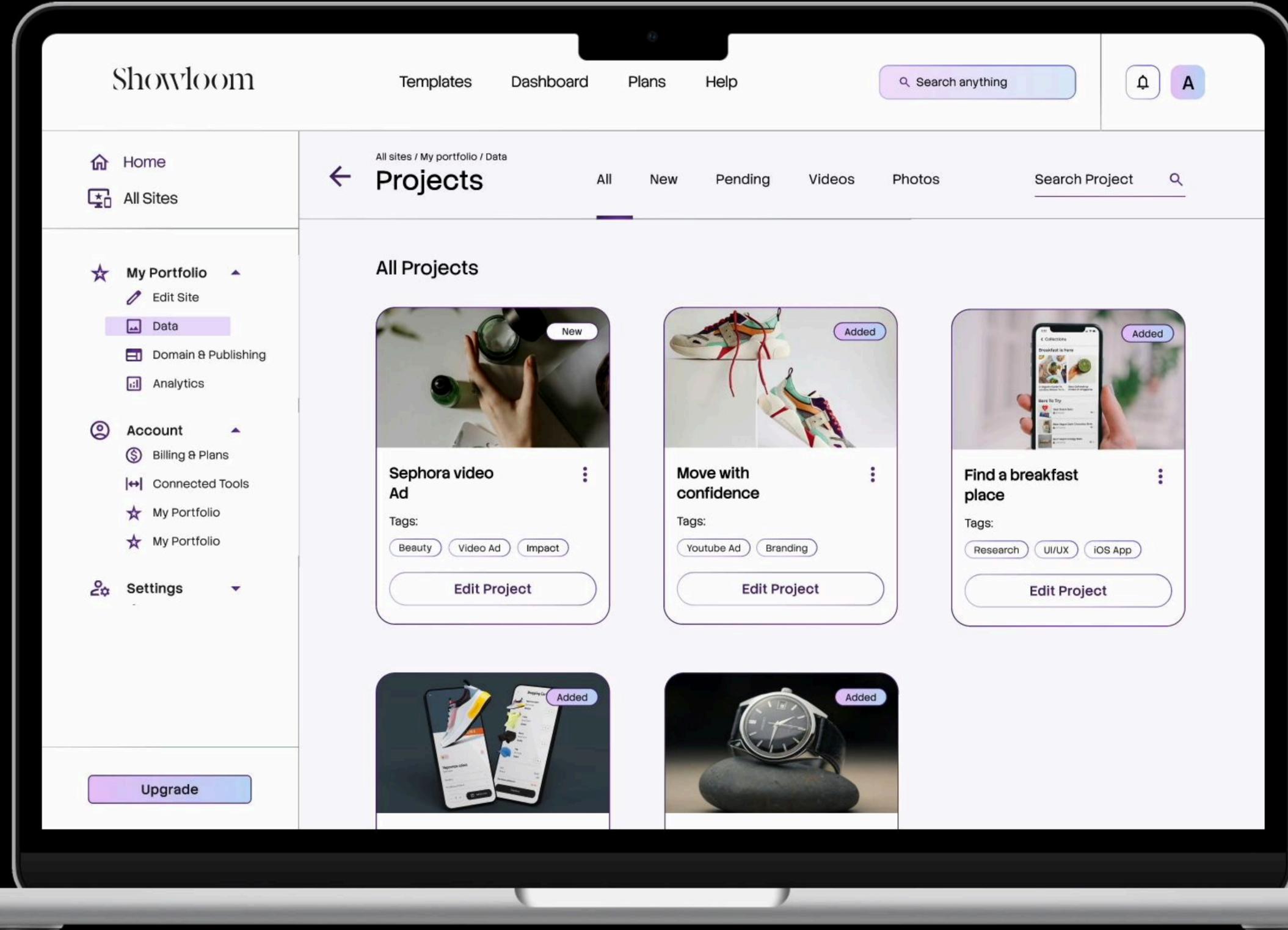
Flow 3

Prototype Link:
[Adding a project](#)



Flow 4

Prototype Link:
[Edit site](#)



Alternatives Explored

These explorations helped narrow the scope to solving portfolio maintenance — not career management as a whole.

01

Create a Hub / All-in-One Profile

A single profile containing resume, work history, case studies, hobbies, courses — even hiring-manager access.

02

Auto-Updating via LinkedIn / Instagram

Connect social accounts so portfolios update whenever users post something.

WHY NOT?

- Too broad in scope
- Overwhelming for users
- Doesn't address the core pain of updating portfolios.

WHY NOT?

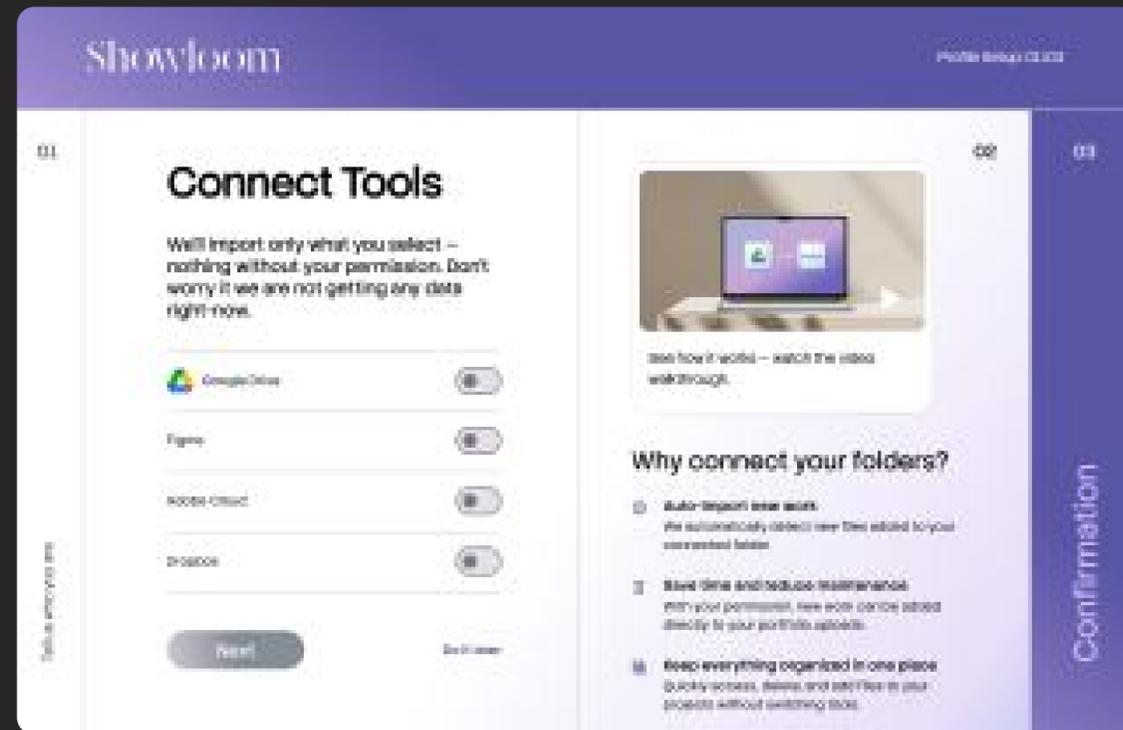
- The output becomes inconsistent
- Looks unprofessional
- Misaligned with portfolio standards.

User Testing

Simplified onboarding flow

Before:

Tool connections were required during onboarding.



Impact:

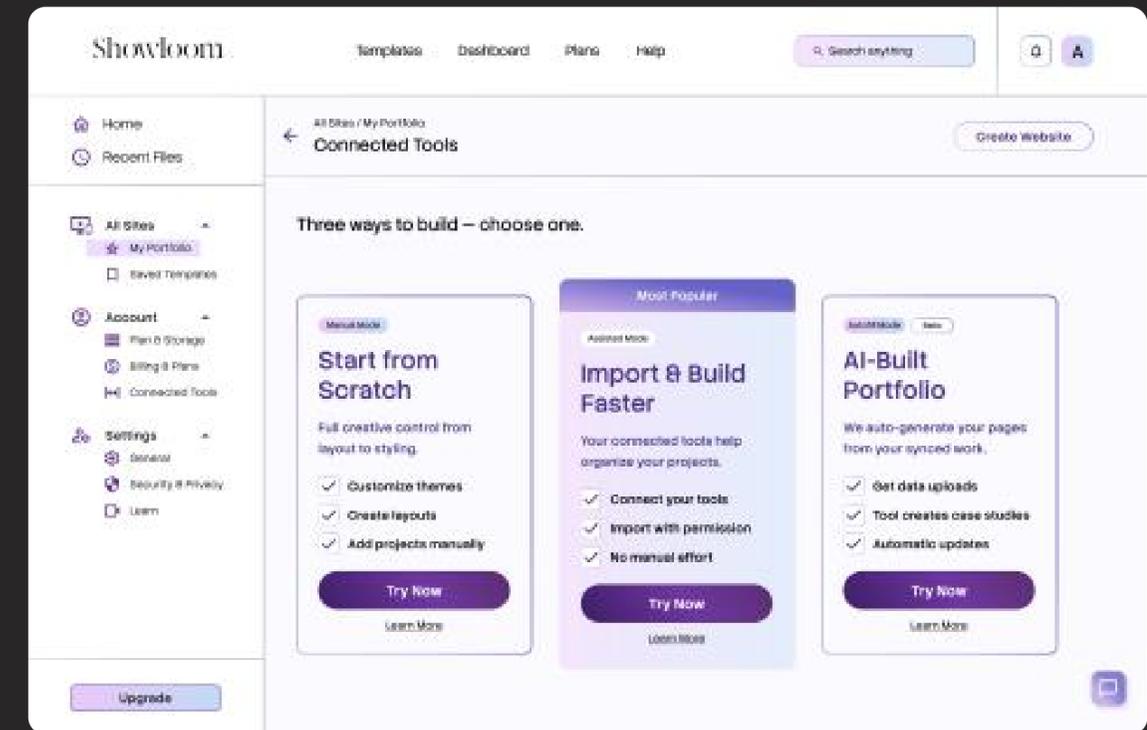


- Reduced anxiety
- Increased trust before permissions

After

Onboarding focused on product value first.

Connection options moved to "Ways to Use Showloom."

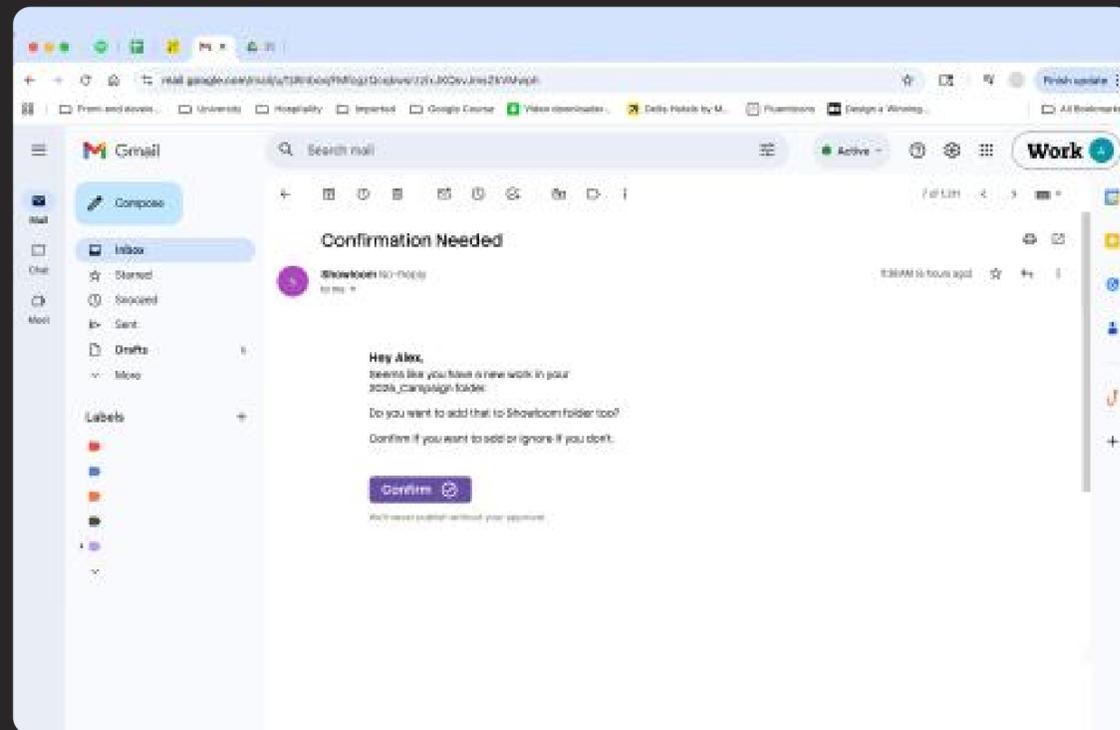


User Testing

Adding a new file

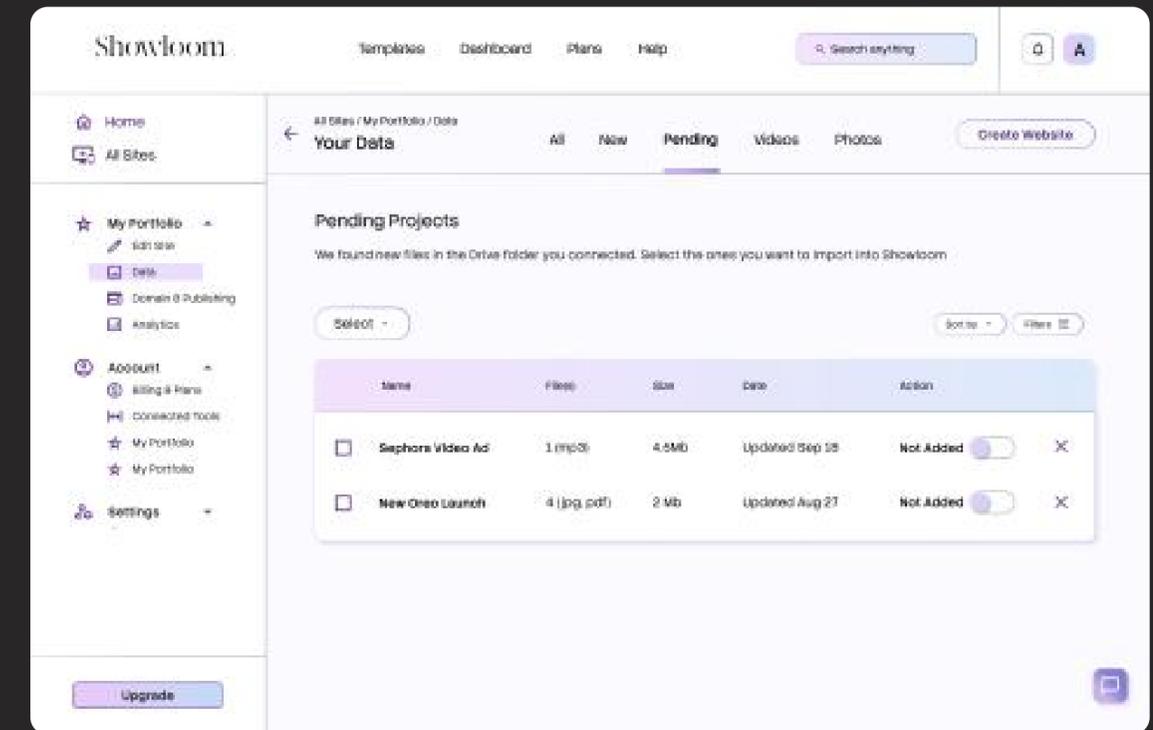
Before:

Email confirmations for file detection.



After

In-app detection with manual project selection.



Impact:



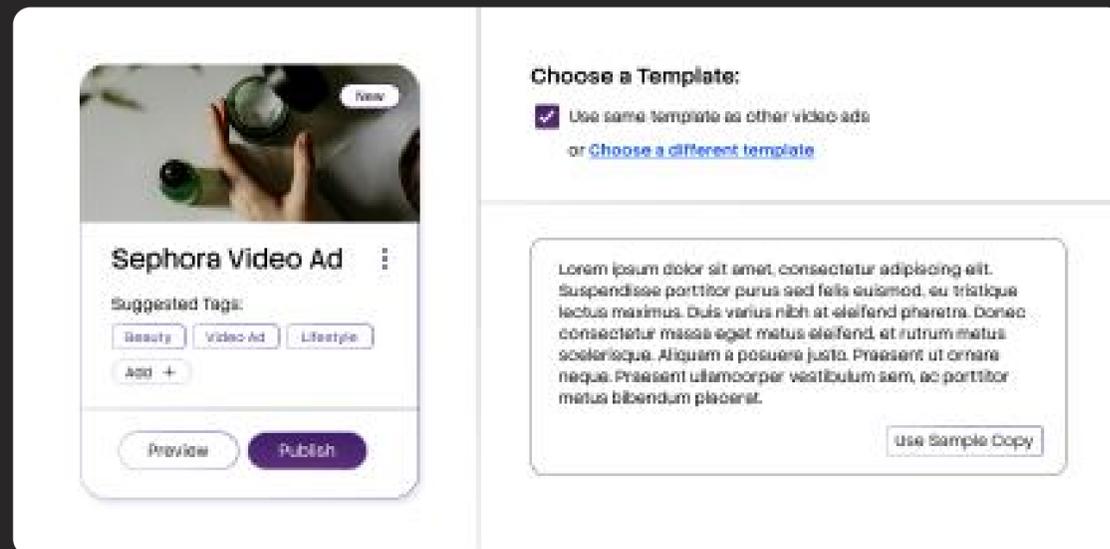
- More control
- Less clutter
- Clearer ownership

User Testing

Automation

Before:

Unclear how templates and text were generated.

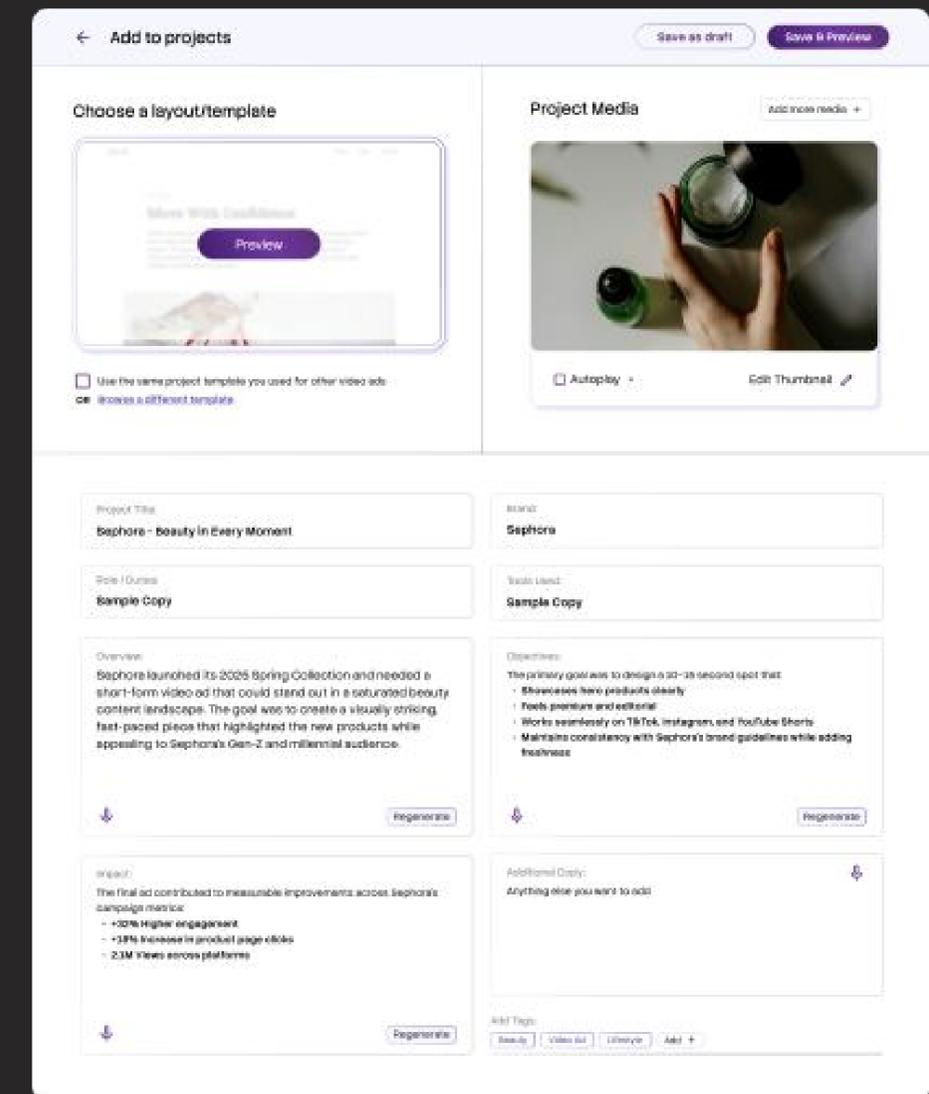


Impact:

- More transparency
- Better confidence in automation
- Technical testing confirmed strong LLM performance with videos

After

Template-based structure with editable fields and AI-assisted content.



07

What's next & learnings

Next Steps



Designing a mobile app

A mobile app for quicker updates and easier customization, allowing users to manage their portfolios on the go.



Resume Integrations

Create, customize, and update resumes directly within the platform.



Export Options

Convert individual case studies into PDFs.
Convert existing case studies into presentation-ready PDF formats.



Collaboration for teams

Enable collaboration features that allow teams to work together on projects and refine shared portfolio content.

| Learnings



Talk to people:

Conversations reveal real problems, new perspectives, and often lead to pivoting and refining the focus.



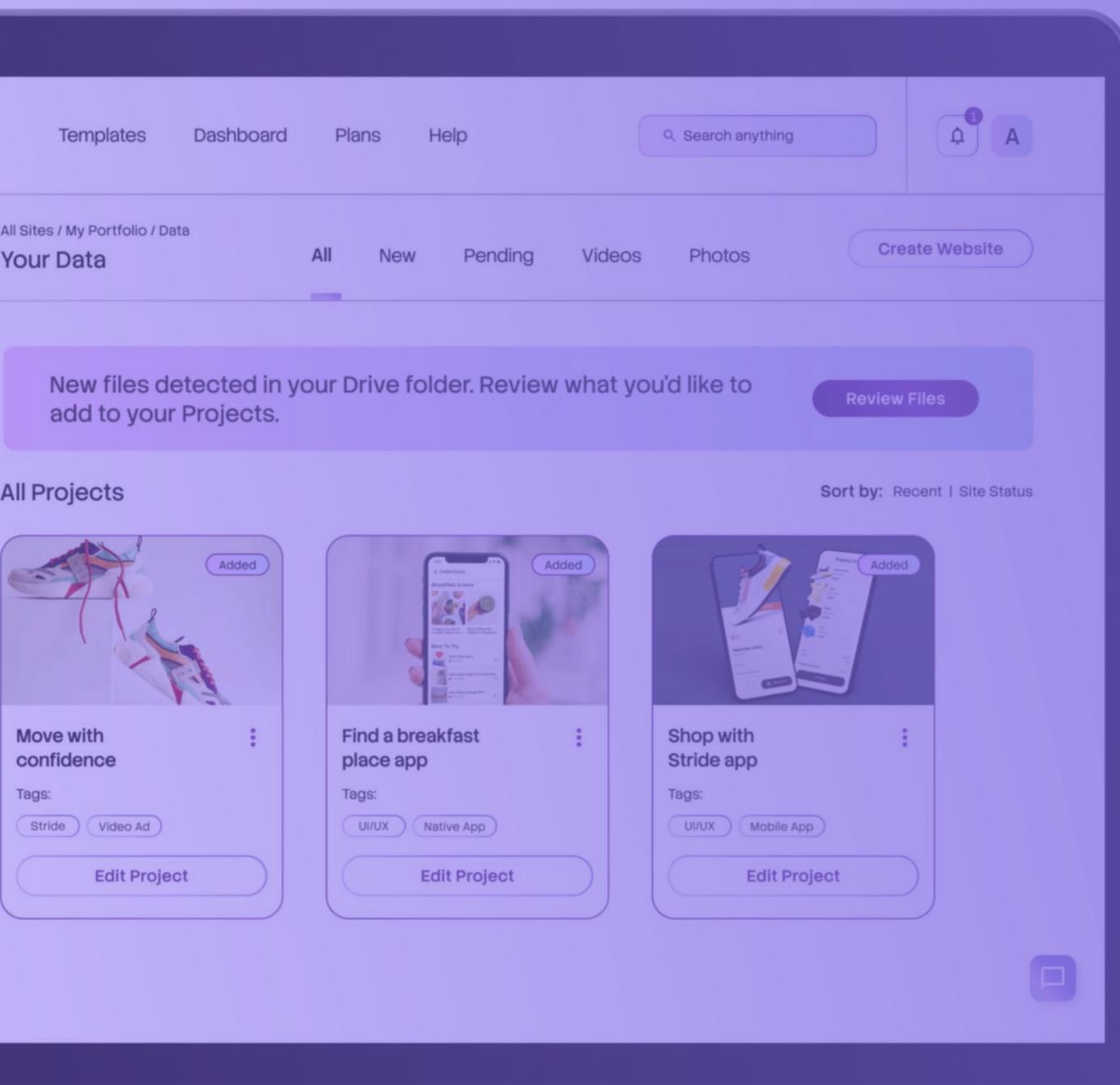
Test continuously:

Every stage of testing brings clarity, uncovers insights, and improves the product in unexpected ways.



Embrace the technical side:

Even partial technical understanding opens opportunities, inspires better solutions, and prevents stagnancy.



| Thank you!