Huddle: Social Event Discovery

Huddle Team

Mike Weingert
Developer

Nadav Lidor
Manager

Joe Polin
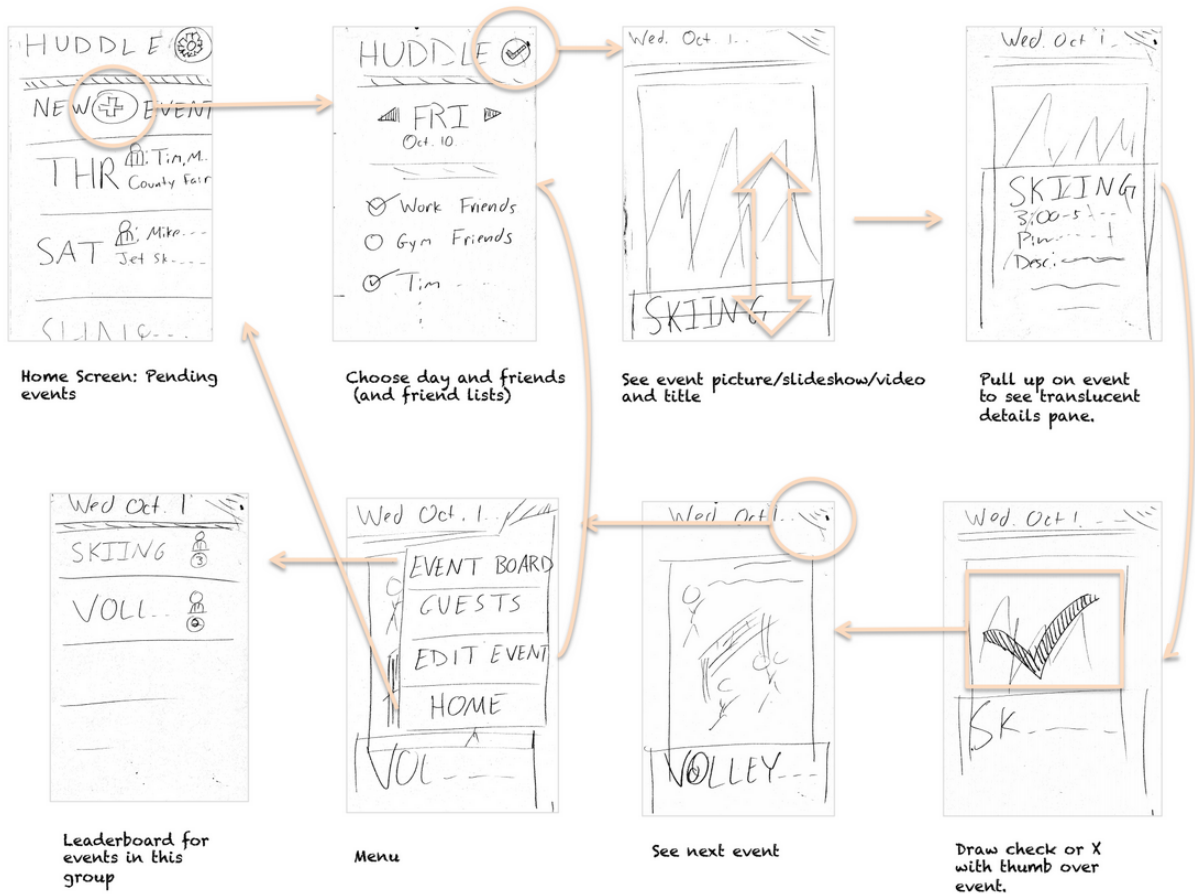User Testing /
Documentation

Brandon Evans
Design

Problem and Solution Overview

People get stuck in familiar routines because familiarity is comforting. As a result, they miss out on discovering new possibilities that may enrich their lives. This problem is compounded by the pains of planning and organizing. Scheduling friends, finding common availabilities, and booking reservations are just a few of the headaches that dissuade people from exploring and discovering new things. **Huddle** eliminates many of these headaches by proposing events based on a user's preferences and seamlessly organizing and scheduling outings with friends. The hassle of communicating with multiple friends and trying to get everyone to agree on one event becomes quick and painless because Huddle acts as a third party mediator of sorts. It guides everyone to a common decision through a structured and fair voting process.

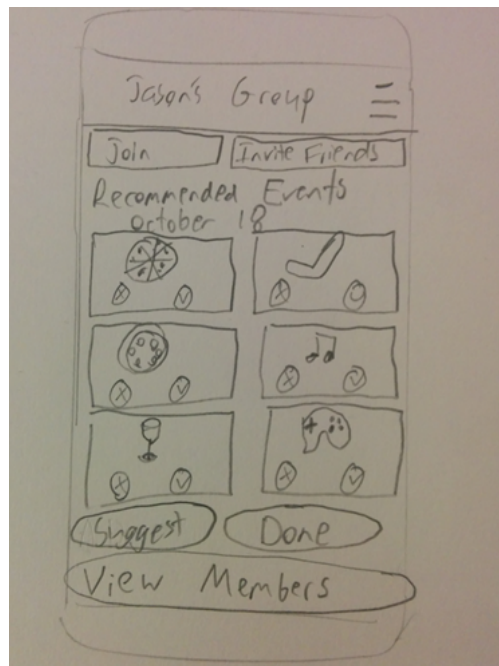# UI Sketches for Two Different Interface Designs

Interface Design #1.

Home Screen: Pending events

Choose day and friends (and friend lists)

See event picture/slideshow/video and title

Pull up on event to see translucent details pane.

Leaderboard for events in this group

Menu

See next event

Draw check or X with thumb over event.

Interface Design #2.

Group Selection Screen

Event Recommendations and Voting for Selected Group

Voting Results ≡

Dance Club ☆ ⊗1 ⊙17
Movie ⊗5 ⊙12
Pub ⊗8 ⊙7
Video Games ⊗15 ⊙2
Are You Going?

(X)   (V)

Who's Going?
(Jason) (Aaron) (Sean)
(Roger) (John) (11 others)

Voting Results for Group Event

Three Reasons We Chose Interface Design #1.

Reason #1. Ability to Plan Out Multiple Events Throughout the Week

Design #1 structures the app around a home screen that shows a calendar of upcoming free time and scheduled events. The need for busy people to schedule events in order to fit things into their busy schedules was a recurring theme in our contextual inquiry interviews. Design #2, due to its lack of a structured way of planning out multiple outings, would be useful for impulsive, standalone event planning but would not allow our target audience the ability to plan out their week. Many of our interviewees had fairly structured approaches to their current weekly event planning routines. They would make lists of events and coordinate with friends ahead of time to figure out scheduling and logistics. An interface that lacked the basic ability to plan ahead of time would likely clash too much with the pre-existing workflow of our target audience for them to adopt it. In addition, multiple interviewees (mainly the ones who live in expensive city apartments) indicated that they felt the need to go to as many different events as possible to justify the cost of living in the city. The calendar-based interface allows these people to ensure that they have events scheduled for as many open blocks of free time as possible.
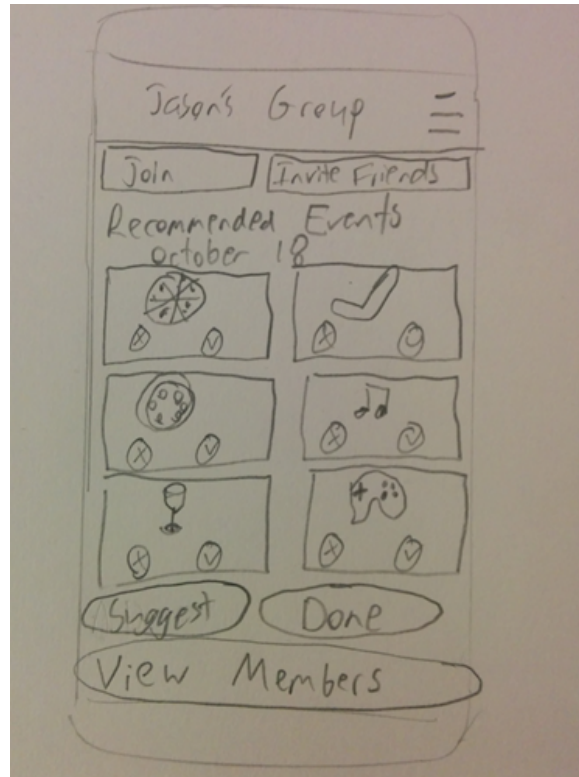
Reason #2. Ability to Go on a Solo Event

A couple of our interviewees indicated that they even though they enjoy going out with friends they often prefer to do things alone. Even the most extroverted interviewees who primarily do things in groups of friends would likely enjoy the freedom to go to events alone. Design #2 assumes that every planning session is centered on a particular group. While this encourages the user to be social, it also lacks the flexibility a user needs for it to meet the user's needs. Users who prefer solo outings are unlikely to make Huddle a part of their regular routine. Design #1 allows the user to plan a group event by checking some of the invite boxes in the day-by-day planning interface or to plan a solo event by proceeding without inviting anyone.
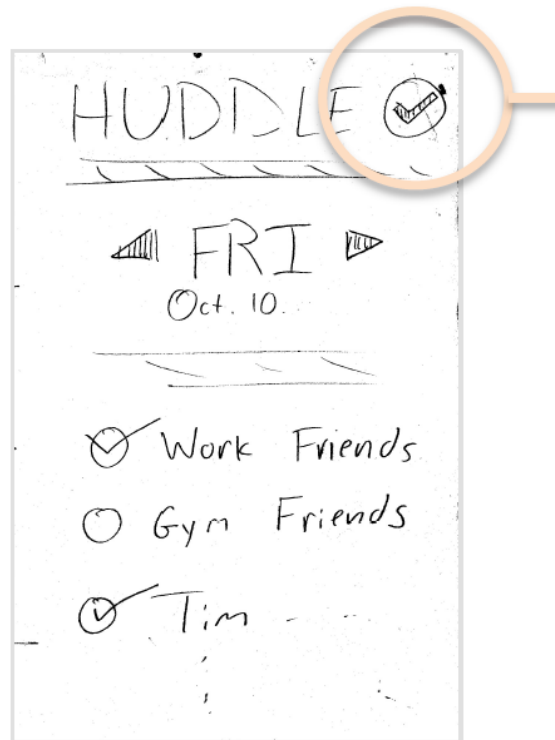
Choose day and friends
(and friend lists)

Reason #3. Reduction of Information Overload

Information overload was a recurring theme across our contextual inquiry interviews. The one-at-a-time event recommendation interface in Design #1 does a better job of reducing information overload by guiding the user across a series of events given in an algorithmically determined order that factors in the user's preferences and logistical constraints.

Design #2. User votes on events all listed on same page

See event picture/slideshow/video and title

Pull up on event to see translucent details pane.
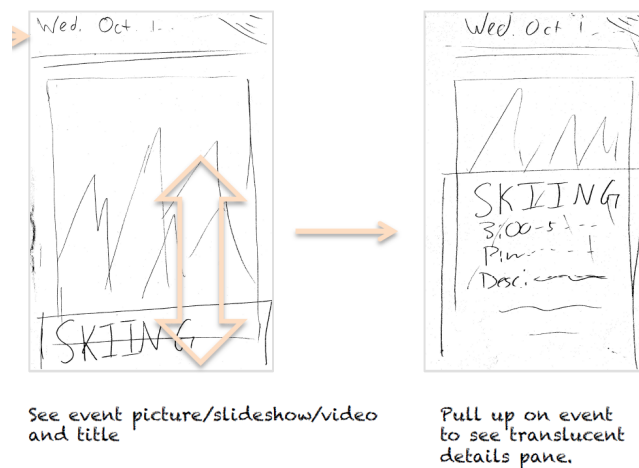
Design #1. User sees event recommendations one at a time

Functionality Table

Feature	Description
Daily Plan View	Allows user to look at what event or events are planned for a day, and allows the user to add a planned event to that day.
Friend Invitation Menu	An interface allowing the user to invite friends or groups of friends to a planned event.
Event Recommender	Shows a visually rich screen highlighting an event through images or video. The user can accept or reject the event, moving on to the next recommended event. Huddle algorithmically factors in the user's preferences and logistical factors when recommending events.
Leaderboard	If the event is a group event, the leaderboard indicates which events are the most favorited events among the group.
Solo Events	The user can opt to plan an event for a solo outing, allowing the user to benefit from Huddle's recommendation engine without forcing the user to always go out with a group of friends.

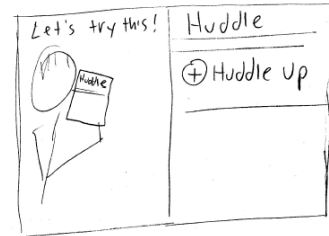# UI Storyboards for 3 Scenarios

Scenario 1: Plan event with friends.
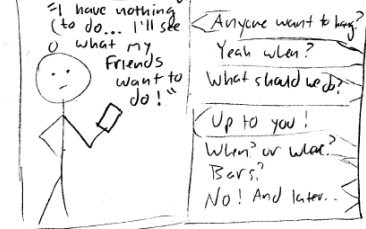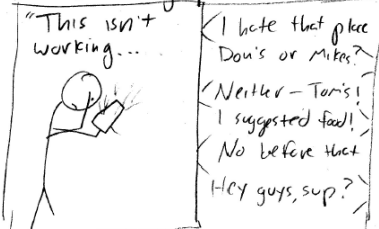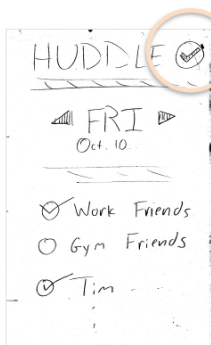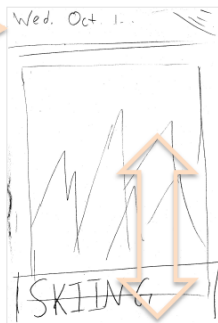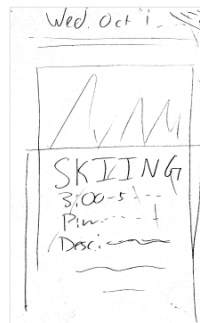

Choose day and friends (and friend lists)

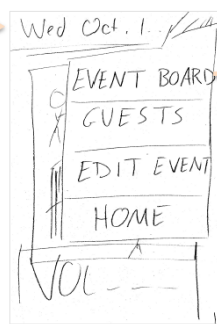See event picture/slideshow/video and title
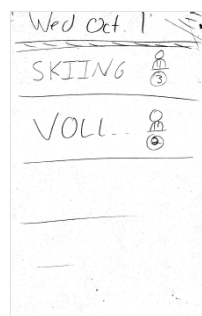
Pull up on event to see translucent details pane.

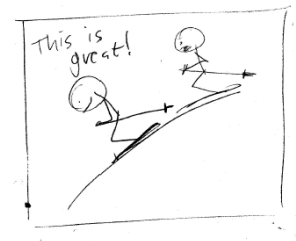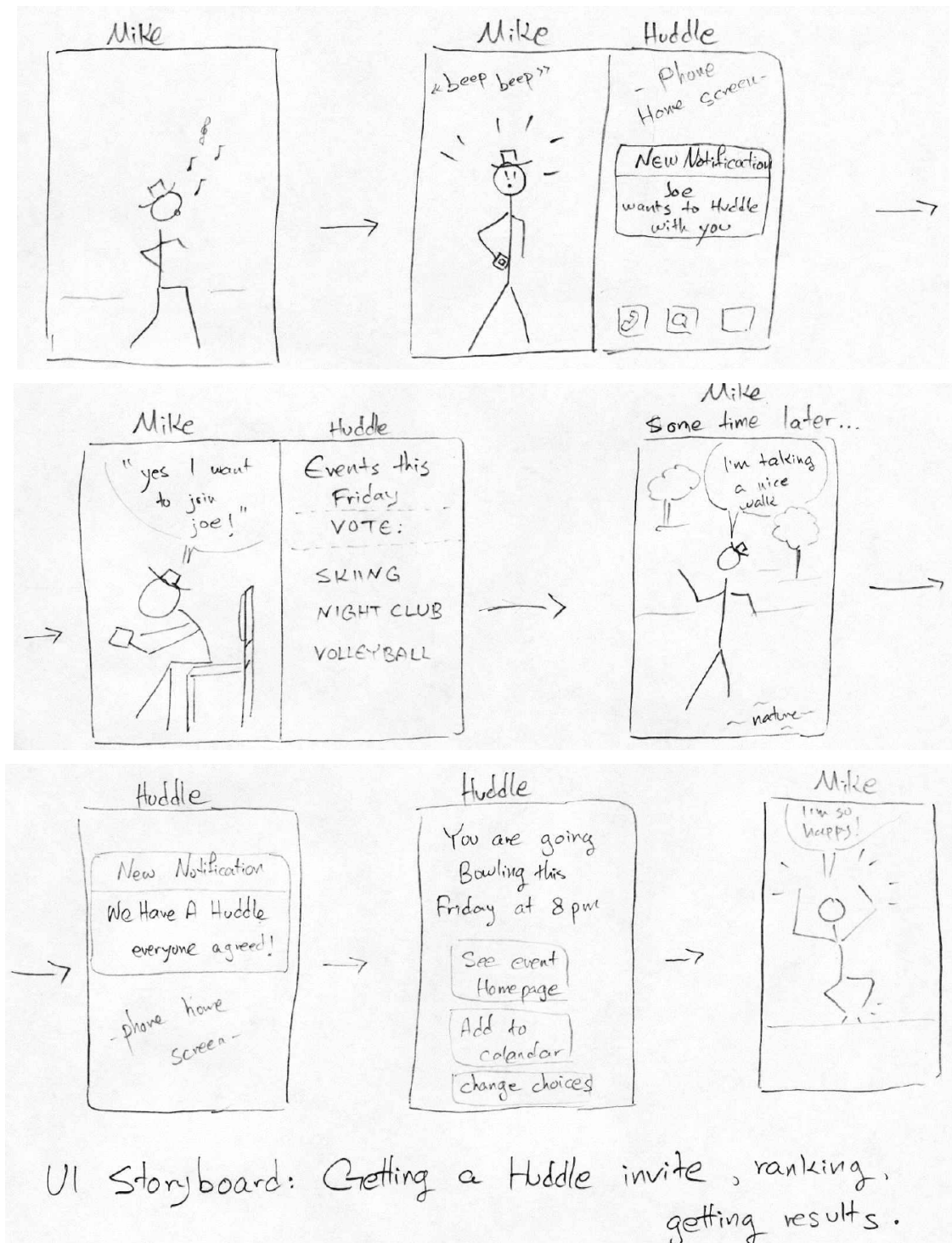Draw check or X with thumb over event.

See next event

Menu

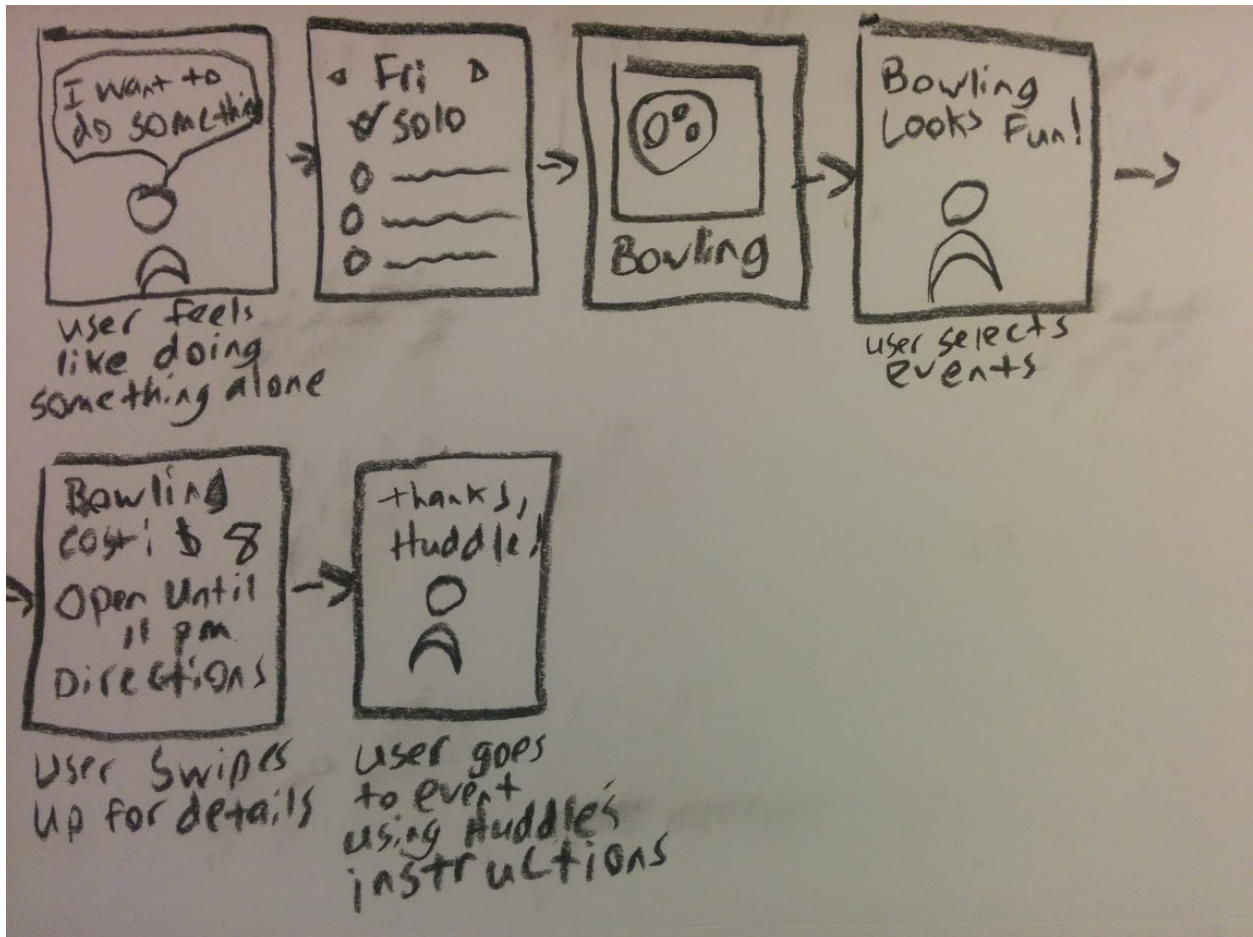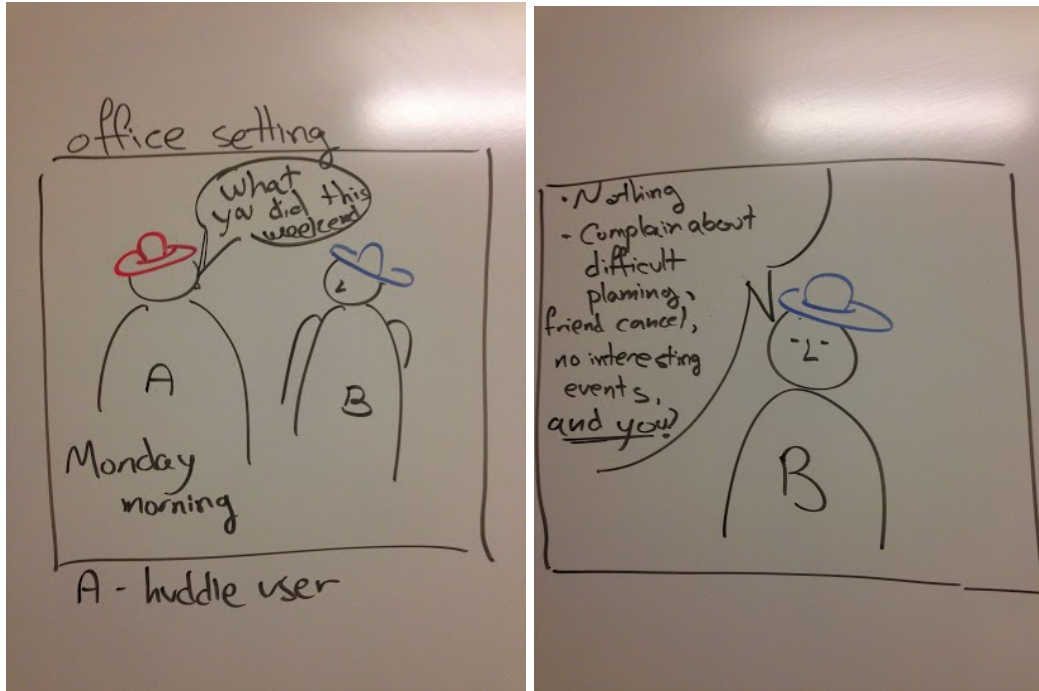Leaderboard for events in this group

Scenario 2: Get invited to an event.

UI Storyboard: Getting a Huddle invite, ranking, getting results.
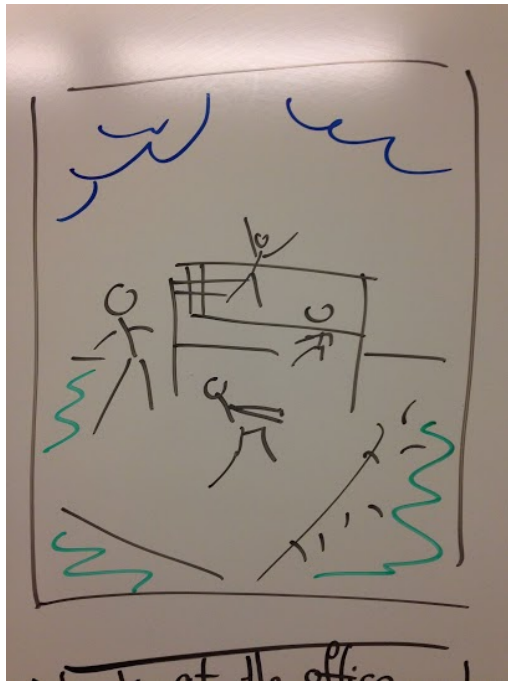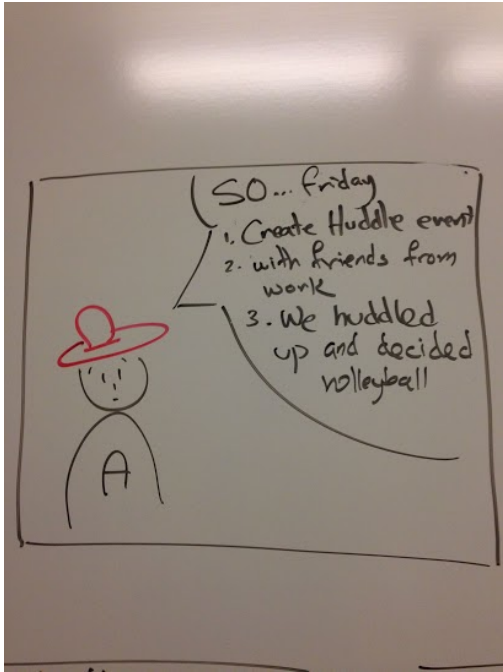
Scenario 3: Find an event to go to alone.

I Want to do something

user feels like doing something alone

◄ Fri ►
☑ solo
○ ——
○ ——
○ ——

0%
Bowling

Bowling Looks Fun!

user selects events

Bowling cost $8
Open Until 11 pm
Directions

user swipes up for details

thanks, Huddle!

user goes to event using Huddle's instructions

Video Planning Storyboards

Opening

Scenario 1: Plan event with friends.

Scenario 2: Get invited to an event.
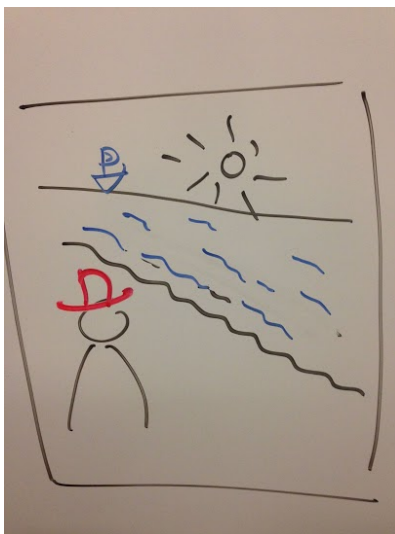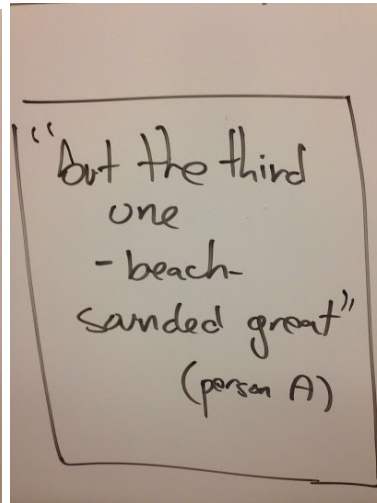

"the Sat. morning Joe invited me to huddle and we all decided to go to Yosemite!" (person A)

A want to huddle

nature

Scenario 3: Find an event to go to alone.

"then Sun wanted to do something by myself, not sure what..."
(person A)

"so huddle suggested"..
(person A)

- shopping -

- bike ride -

"but the third one - beach - sounded great"
(person A)
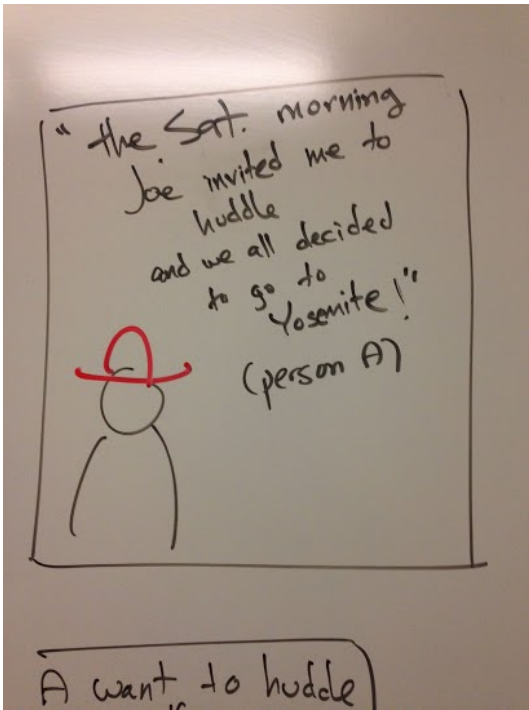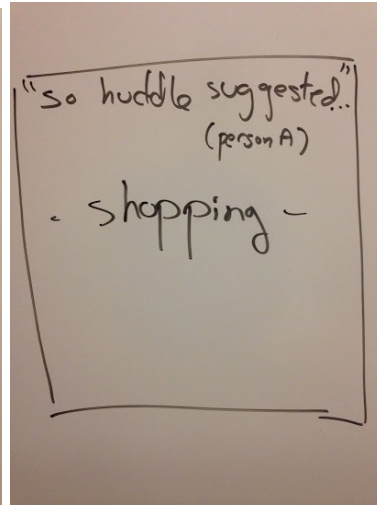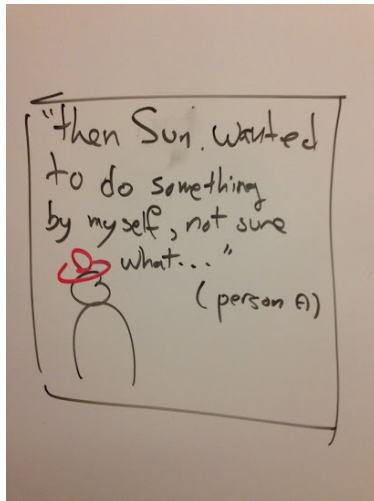
Ending
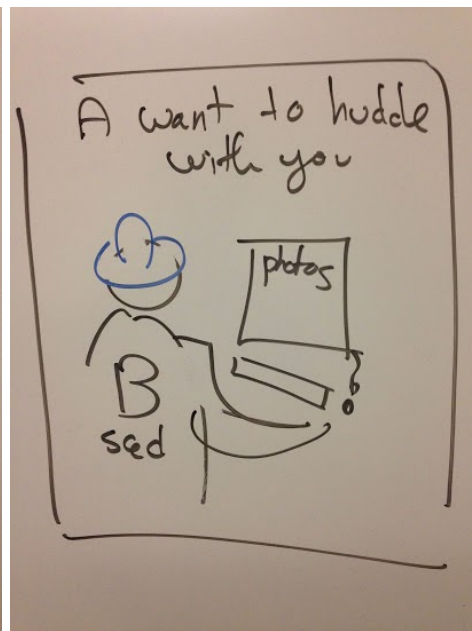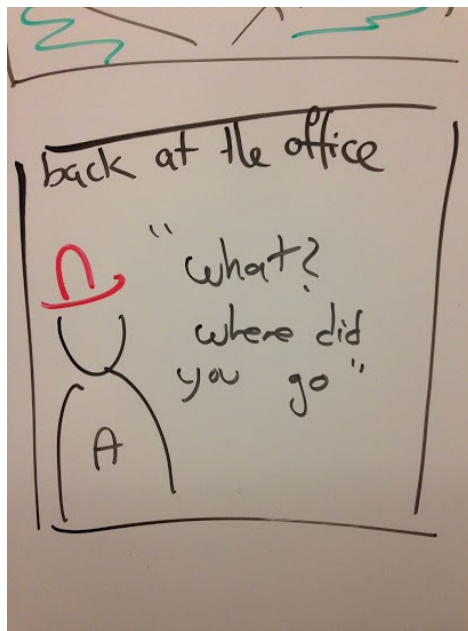
Concept Video Description

Link to video.

Visually conveying the frustrations with the current way people discover new things and plan events, as well as how Huddle eliminates these frustrations, proved challenging. For instance, we wanted to show that people have trouble finding new events in addition to difficulty finding the motivation to leave their comfort zones and attend new events. It was also challenging to show how people generally prefer to go out with friends but have trouble coordinating with friends and reaching a consensus. Conveying these issues in a way that is both natural and clear, while also operating under the time constraints of a concept video required some creative thinking. There was also the difficulty of showing how a product works even though it does not yet exist. The idea was constantly changing, so taking on the role of a typical user for our still-amorphous role took quite a bit of imagination.

We found that it was extremely helpful to storyboard the entire video very thoroughly. This allowed us to act out each scene with an understanding of its purpose and what was going to be happening directly before and after. Further, from a logistical standpoint, the storyboarding allowed us to make efficient use of our time since we only had time to schedule each setting once due to scheduling constraints. On the filming side, we found that a conversation doubling as a narration (with videos interspersed) did a good job of allowing us to convey both visual and audio descriptions of what was going on. The narration could be more detailed about logistics while the video flashbacks could give a more fundamental sense of why and how this was good or bad. Finally, having the narration take place in the context of a conversation made it feel more natural and (hopefully) will allow viewers to better relate to the story.

Preparation for the video took approximately 3 hours, including storyboarding, coordinating logistics, collecting props, etc. Through efficient planning, we were able to shoot the main footage in 2.5 hours. Editing took around 7 hours.