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PROBLEM DOMAIN

Our initial needfinding during Week 1 for Mobility/Travel explored the broad area of vacation travel. Unpacking of our results identified a major pain point in the reacclimation to home life after vacationing.

OUR INITIAL POV

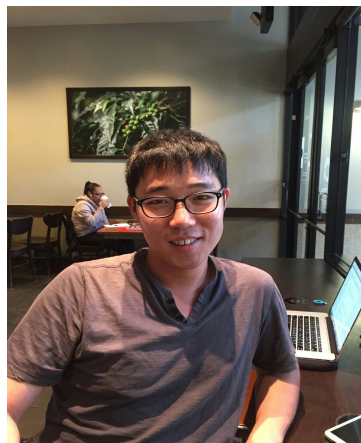
While all four of our interviewees voiced annoyance toward the transition period between vacationing and returning home, one of them was particularly vocal about her discomfort. We chose to use her extreme case as our initial POV. We met Kimberly Truong, a 25 year old backpacker. We were amazed to realize that readjusting to life at home is the worst part of traveling. It would be game-changing to help her ease back into everyday life while reliving the excitement of her journey.

ADDITIONAL NEEDFINDING RESULTS

Our goal of our second round of needfinding was to test our assumption that the travel-to-real life transition is a major pain point. We targeted extreme cases: frequent travelers for whom travel may have lost its appeal and also for whom the transition may be normal and insignificant. We focused our questions, some of which were:

1. How do you readjust after coming home from a trip?
2. Starting from when you get off the plane in your hometown, please describe the steps you would take to get home. Please also describe your thought process along the way.
3. How do you feel emotionally after being back?

On Sunday, October 4, we headed into Palo Alto to conduct our interviews.



Hyung-Ju Yang previously worked for IDEO, a job that had her traveling three times a month. She disliked the traveling so much, it led her to quit her job. Despite her distaste for traveling, however, she repeatedly expressed her loneliness when returning home to an empty apartment. Based on the interview we noticed that she wants to stay connected with her family while living abroad and she needs a way to not feel lonely after a trip. We noticed that while she said she hated traveling, she repeatedly emphasized how lonely and cold her apartment is after coming home from a trip. This contradiction revealed a nostalgia about the traveling experience. There is a lot of tension surrounding her loneliness.

Sung-Min Lee travels frequently for work and for vacation. He said he reminded himself of the fun waiting for him at home to overcome his vacation nostalgia. He also said he makes a point to meet up with friends both while traveling and at home upon return. We noticed that while he remained even-mannered for most of the interview, he became animated when we asked, “Do you know people who take the transition home worse than you do?” He responded immediately by describing his co-worker whose vacation nostalgia impaired her ability to work. This supports our assumption on the difficulty to transition. Sung-min needs a way to identify fun events at home and values a positive, easygoing attitude. Most importantly, he values catching up with friends while traveling. Traveling is a social activity, and that supports our idea to improve the social community for travelers.

Lena permanently lives as an au-pair for a family in Palo Alto, and very rarely visits home in Berlin. In fact, she said she “hates going home.” The root of her dislike was revealed when she said, “While I have changed [when I return home], no one else has.” The people she interacts with strongly dictates her happiness with a place or experience. Lena needs constant new experiences and a way for her home life to adapt with her travels. She values personal growth through travel and living abroad. This made us wonder if we can bring some of the new experiences she valued to wherever she may be living.

OUR REVISED POVS

We met Kimberly Truong, a 25 year old European backpacker. We were amazed to realize that readjusting to life at home is the worst part of traveling. It would be game-changing to help her ease back into everyday life while reliving the excitement of her journey.

HMW connect Kimberly with the places that she just left in an engaging way.

HMW slow down the transition to everyday life.

HMW remind Kimberly of the exciting journey she just left.

HMW eliminate the transition into everyday life.

HMW integrate her vacation into everyday life.

How might we make her feel like she never left her journey.

HMW entirely remove the stresses of everyday life.

HMW we make home life less mundane.

HMW utilize her trip home to help her transition to life back at home.

HMW leverage her community at home to make the transition less abrupt.

HMW make Kimberly's vacation less exciting.

HMW make home a place that Kimberly looks forward to returning to while she is still traveling.

We met Andrew, a high school senior, who needs a source of escape because he feels trapped in everyday life. It would be game changing to provide him with more frequent escapes through travel.

HMW help Andrew travel more often

HMW provide him with the means to feel like he's travelling but for free 2

HMW make Andrew feel more free in everyday life

HMW make home life as exciting as a vacation

HMW provide Andrew with different experiences in his hometown

HMW find a new source of escape for Andrew

HMW make everyday life something that Andrew loves and doesn't want to leave.

HMW let him live his life unencumbered instead of locked down?

HMW leverage a network of people to get funding for a vacation?

HMW bring together a community of people like Andrew so that he doesn't feel trapped.

We met Hyun-Ju Kim, a Silicon Valley designer. We were amazed to realize that she feels overwhelmingly lonely when back at home. It would be game-changing to help her connect to people, both while traveling and at home.

HMW help her organize trips with her friends

HMW make her feel welcome the moment she returns from a trip so she doesn't feel lonely

HMW build a community for Hyun-Ju while she is abroad

HMW help her make friends while she is abroad on business trips

HMW facilitate interactions with strangers on vacation

HMW leverage her social network to make her feel like she has a community

HMW help her feel more content while alone

HMW encourage her to communicate with her existing friends while abroad

HMW make international communication less expensive

HMW help her befriend people nearby to her

HMW give her a travel companion at all times

HMW help her find people to date on vacation

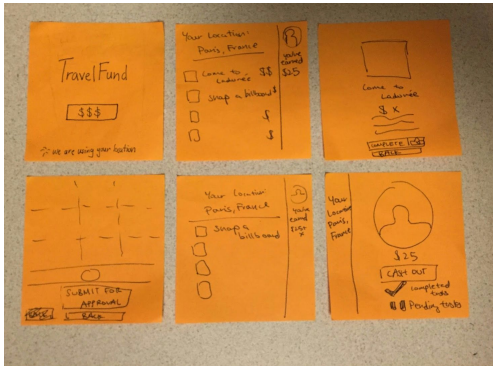
BEST HMWs

How might we make travelers feel like they have never left their vacation?

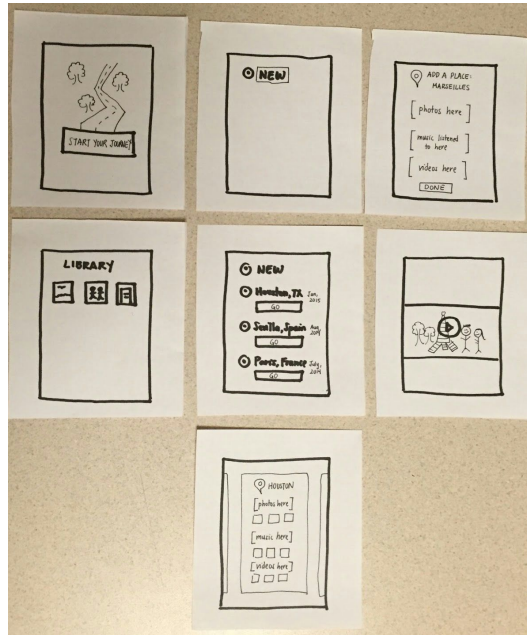
How might we give travelers an expense-free travel experience?

How might we build a community for people while they are traveling?

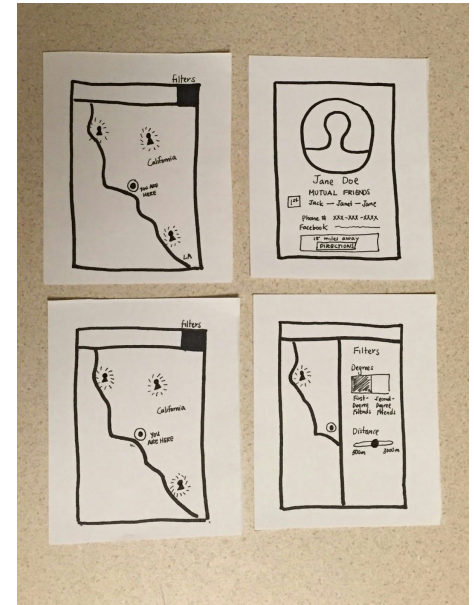
EXPERIENCE PROTOTYPES



“money-making”



“media-map”



“friend map”

We created the prototypes using pen and paper or sticky notes, where each slip of paper represented one screen on a mobile device. We ventured out to the Palo Alto Caltrain Station to interview three participants, and then interviewed a Stanford student as our 4th interviewee. To test how people would interact with our prototypes, we showed our interviewees our paper slips one screen at a time and allowed them to tap on what seemed the most logical to them. Based on their decisions, we replaced the paper with the corresponding screen in our flow. For pop-up menus and buttons, we took sticky notes and placed them on top of the paper. Along the way, we asked them additional background questions.

Our first interviewee was Molly Dow, a woman in her late twenties, who tested our “money-making” prototype. The assumptions we made for our “money-making” prototype were:

- people are willing to do take time out of their vacation to complete little tasks
- people are looking to make money to offset amount spent on trip
- people trust they will receive the money they make
- people’s schedules on trips are flexible

When presented with the app’s home screen, she immediately understood that she could make money by completing tasks on the list. However, she “[wasn’t] sure if [she] would go” to the necessary places as it required



knowledge of the tourist location. Regarding the payment options, her main comment was, “This is sketchy though, I wouldn’t use it.”

From Molly, we learned that people will not know what to do when they are in a unfamiliar place. Money also comes second to exploring tourist attractions. As for our original assumptions, people will not trust to get paid for completing tasks and will not necessarily sacrifice time to complete tasks. We were correct in assuming that people are looking to make money to offset their spending during a trip.

We interviewed Richard, a 40-year-old man who goes on many vacations, for our “media map” prototype.



For this prototype, we assumed:

- a good way to remember one’s trip is through media
- people use and create media during trips
- people need a good way to organize and group the highlights of their trip
- the transition back home is made simpler if commemoration is done before returning home

Richard intuitively knew how to start a new media map, but then struggled through other parts of the app flow. He didn’t understand that he could upload photos, music, *and* videos. When he saw the video player screen, he assumed that it would only show the videos he uploaded and struggled with how he would edit his content.

From a conceptual standpoint, Richard’s experience with the prototype was more positive. Richard said he took many photos on trips. We asked him which was more important, the process of making collages or seeing the end product. He said “the end product”. The main sell for him is that “it takes hours after the trip to [put my photos together], but it’s easier to do it during the journey.” We were correct in all our original assumptions. However, we learned that we cannot assume a media map is an intuitive interface; people do not expect an app to build a video for them.

Jared, a 60-year-old tech salesman who has traveled all over the world, tested our “people map” prototype. In creating this prototype, we assumed:

- people would want to meet up with friends and friends of friends while abroad
- people will contact a stranger
- people are willing to meet up with people they do not know
- a map-based interface is the best way to find out where people are

When he saw the main screen of the prototype, he immediately understood the map and the symbols for nearby friends. He



tapped on the people icon, and was very excited to be taken to a profile page of Jane Doe. He debated over how he would contact her. “Can I text her? I don’t want to text, it might be creepy.” He ultimately decided to text with the understanding that “when would I ever be in this situation again?” This showed that he values spontaneity over potential discomfort. When he saw the “Filters” screen with the choice of either 1st degree or 2nd degree friends, he immediately had a lot of opinions. “Slider bars are the best. 1st and 2nd degree is too binary. What about the strangers nearby?” He lit up when talking about the potential of meeting someone he didn’t know at all, and the possibility of having filters for age and gender.

Overall, Jared was very excited about the app. A key insight we got from Jared is that making plans is a hassle. In addition, the possibility of having a community abroad took precedence over security concerns. Of our original assumptions, we found them all to be valid. However, we were incorrect in a later assumption that filtering friends by first and second degree friends is the best approach to forming connections. Jared’s dilemma about how to contact Jane showed that while people will contact a stranger, we need to make reach-outs more intuitive and less awkward.



Our final interviewee was Skyler Sin, a 20 year-old Stanford student. Our main goal when interviewing Skyler was to compare his reaction to two prototypes to the two positive reviews from Richard and Jared. Skyler fully endorsed our “friend map” prototype, ecstatic at the possibility of meeting someone abroad. Unlike Jared, Skyler did not have qualms about contacting a stranger. This shows that the hesitation before contacting a stranger may be generational. He said, “I think something like this would make the world more connected.” On the other hand, he admitted he was “confused” by the app flow, and would not use the app as he does not take many photos while traveling. Other valuable insights were his suggestion of a “share” button, suggesting his interest in connectivity and visibility. In addition, he, unlike Jared, did not have qualms about contacting a stranger. Hesitation before contacting a stranger may be generational.

We concluded that our people map prototype was the best, because it received the best reaction and addressed a clear need with our interviewee, Jared. It is also useful from our Hyung-Ju POV to create a community while abroad--a community that she can still stay in contact with when she returned from her travels. We believe it is innovative and provide great user interface possibilities.