

# Needfinding

Studio Theme: Mobility and Travel

## Team Members



Ben



Kevin



Minymoh

*Problem Domain:  
Tourists' experiences in navigating new places*



- We want to dive into tourism
- Why do people travel?
- How do tourists handle being somewhere new?
- What do they use to orient themselves?
- What can go wrong?

## Interviewees



Tyler



Joy



Edward and June



Stanford Tour Guide

### Why they were chosen?

- Edward and June: They represent an extreme user (they often travel with their children).
- Julien: Tour Guide. An interesting case, we thought it may provide additional insights into travel.
- Tyler: New to traveling; took a huge trip to ecuador this summer
- Joy: Travels a lot; has been to west africa, santiago, cambodia, thailand, japan

### How were they recruited?

- Edward and June: Met them at the Stanford Visitor Center.
- Julien: Worked at Stanford Visitor Center.
- Tyler: Wrote about her experience online, and is good friend of Ben
- Joy: Personally knows Ben

## Interview Locations



Stanford Visitor Center



Starbucks



Skype

## Questions Asked (Tourists)

1. Where are you from?
2. Why do you travel?
3. What made you decide to visit...?

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1. Where are you from?
2. Why do you travel?
3. What made you decide to visit...?
4. How many people are you travelling with? How did/do you coordinate/plan with your fellow travellers? Tell me how you felt about the coordination process.
5. How do you decide what to do when you visit?
6. What kind of apps/tools do you use (maps, calendars, reservation making, transportation) when you travel? Which one do you rely most on and why?
7. Have you faced any major difficulties on this trip? Elaborate.
8. What's the most frustrating traveling experience you've had? What made it so frustrating?
9. Tell me about a time where things didn't go according to plan (Missed planes/trains etc.). How did it make you feel? Was there anything that could have been improved?
10. Explain your idea of a perfect trip.

## Questions Asked (Tour Guide)

1. Why did you decide to tour guide?
2. Talk us through the process of taking a group on a tour.
3. What's the most common question you get asked by tourists?

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1. Why did you decide to tour guide?
2. Talk us through the process of taking a group on a tour.
3. What's the most common question you get asked by tourists?
4. As a visitor center worker, what do you think is most important tourists experience when visiting? Why?
5. Since becoming a tour guide, have you been on any trips on which you took a guided tour? Which ones stood out to you and why?
6. Has being a tour guide had any effect on your travel habits?

## Some Interesting Quotes



## Tyler

“We didn't look into bus times prior to getting to the bus station, due to our assumption (and some reassuring words from locals) that the buses ran at all hours.”



## June

“Trips to a new location where we explore new things are more worthwhile versus trips purely for relaxation, but sometimes, the planning makes it feel like less of a vacation and more of a job.”



## Joy

“ . . . Making use of the little time we had in Bangkok (two days.) It was a big deal when we were not able to find a temple we wanted to visit until we walked around for 30 minutes and asked about 4 different people for directions. Then we had less time to explore other sites.”



## Results: Tensions, Contradictions, and Surprises

- There is a connection between tourists and locals
- Delayed trip plans and bad customer service caused tension
- Being immersed in foreign culture can make simple things, such as checking bus schedules, difficult and scary
- The couple seemed to schedule their trip meticulously but mentioned that excessive planning “feels like a job and not a vacation”.
- Tourists want to know a place intimately in a short amount of time
- The couple displayed both attentiveness (planning) and carelessness (hotel booking).

# Analysis

- The issue of time constraints came up in every interview
- It's very easy to remember a trip by the bad experiences
- Technology Gap: While ride-sharing is seemingly ubiquitous among young people, older people are less willing to adopt it.
- Knowing the 'book version' of the history and culture of a place can help travellers situate themselves in their environment
- It's easy to visit a location without ever truly having to interact or engage with the location and its residents

## Empathy Map: Say (1)

**“Trips to a new location where we explore new things are more worthwhile versus trips purely for relaxation, but sometimes, the planning makes it feel like less of a vacation and more of a job”**

**“When I went to the Pearl Harbor Museum, I sat around and read everything, like every single word, that was on the walls to fill in what was missing in the audio tour”**

“If we see something that wasn’t planned on our trip, we will check it out if we have time”.

“Even though we understand that it was our fault the flight was missed, the “don’t care” attitude of the airline representatives was frustrating”

“We didn’t look closely enough at the email confirmation for the booking”

“Perhaps a phone confirmation after booking something online would be nice”

“Trips to a new location where we explore new things are more worthwhile versus trips purely for relaxation, but sometimes, the planning makes it feel like less of a vacation and more of a job”

“We didn’t look into bus times prior to getting to the bus station, due to our assumption (and some reassuring words from locals) that the buses ran at all hours.”

“When I went to the Pearl Harbor Museum, I sat around and read everything, like every single word, that was on the walls to fill in what was missing in the audio tour”

## Empathy Map: Say (2)

**“Major difficulties on this trip was making use of the little time we had in Bangkok (two days). It was a big deal when we were not able to find a temple we wanted to visit until we walked around for 30 minutes and asked about 4 different people for directions. Then we had less time to explore other sites.”**

“Most people are like ‘Oh I’ve heard Stanford is nice, we should go visit’”

“The most frequently asked questions are about Stanford’s size. People want to know about the history and stuff too, but the first question is always, how big is Stanford?”

“The most important part of the tour is definitely the personal stories. My Obama story is always a hit, but people want to know about everyday life at Stanford”

“Major difficulties on this trip was making use of the little time we had in Bangkok (two days). It was a big deal when we were not able to find a temple we wanted to visit until we walked around for 30 minutes and asked about 4 different people for directions. Then we had less time to explore other sites.”

## Empathy Map: Do

**Couple was uneasy when telling airline story, laughing when telling hotel story**

**Visibly flustered as she recounts the story**

Couple was uneasy when telling airline story

Last story was told in a rushed manner

Laughing when telling story (good customer service experience)

Stern “no” when asked if couple used ride-sharing services.

Visible flustered as she recounts the story

Spoke more animatedly (more hand and head movements) about Stanford traditions/quirky facts that were integral to his own experience

Audible frustration



## Empathy Map: Think

**Customer service plays a large factor in the enjoyment of a trip**

**Tourists visit places because they've been told to or they feel that they're supposed to rather than out of pure curiosity**

**There's always something missed by a guided tour and it's up to the traveller to fill in the blanks for himself**

Distrust of ride-sharing services (Uber)

Some travel is almost purely for the kids' benefit

Believes in a somewhat strict schedule during travel

Email confirmation after booking is not enough and often misread

Customer service plays a large factor in the enjoyment of a trip

Transportation in foreign places is scary because there is no sense or understanding of scale and being grounded in where you're currently located

Tourists visit places because they've been told to or they feel that they're supposed to rather than out of pure curiosity

Tourists want to understand the scale and scope of the space they are in to better orient themselves

Tourists use guides to get a feel for everyday life at a high level with little vulnerability on their ends

There's always something missed by a guided tour and it's up to the traveller to fill in the blanks for himself

Does not enjoy wasting time on seemingly simple tasks

## Empathy Map: Feel

**Much more trusting of in-person advice versus online resources**

**People want to get to know the idea of a place rather than actually getting to know a place.**

Bad customer service made the couple feel frustrated and helpless.

Good customer service turns a bad situation into a funny one.

Much more trusting of in-person advice versus online resources

GPS has simplified travel, made couple feel more in control and less likely to get lost.

No sense of orientation left individual feeling lost even though she hadn't moved

People want to get to know the idea of a place rather than actually getting to know a place.

Frustration when restricted from doing simple things

## Needs

- Discover: Where am I? Who am I in relation to where I am?
- Commute: How do I get around?
- Explore: What should I do here?
- Prepare: How much should I plan?



## Insights

- Balance
- Familiarity
- Culture differences



- Balance between spontaneity and planning when it comes to traveling
- Getting to know a place through reading/research/guided tours vs. getting to know a place through personal experience
- Culture differences can give rise to many problems

# Summary

It is often more difficult to understand where  
you are in reference to everything around you  
while travelling

Interactions with people can ease the  
challenge

There are also a lot of tradeoffs in spending time, and having someone there to show you the ways eases that process.