

CS147 ASSIGNMENT 2

POVS and Experience Prototypes

Introduction

The Team



Kim



Basel



Alex



Alexandre

Problem Domain

Our problem domain is decreasing the negative/burdensome aspects of traveling. We noticed that many people struggle with the effort it takes to travel and uncertainty of knowing what to do in a new place.

Initial POV

We met casual and hardcore travelers; we were surprised to learn there was a hyperbolic 'curve of excitement' for traveling over time. It would be game-changing to increase the length of 'upward excitement' or to prevent the 'downhill disillusionment' of traveling.

Additional Needfinding Results

Interview 1

Matthew Interview Questions

1. Tell us about yourself? *Age, occupation, etc.*

I'm a 22-year-old actor living in NYC. Was living in LA the past couple years and really enjoyed the easy access to nature, national parks, day trips, etc.

2. How often do you travel and what is your main motivation for it?

I try to do at least one big trip a year and as many small trips as I can. Main motivation is that it's just so enjoyable. I love challenging myself, being exposed to new things, solving problems along the way. You learn more about who you are, who you could be. Traveling invites in all kinds of new and crazy experiences which deepen your time on earth. You realize those outweigh material possessions, and put struggles of the day to day into perspective.

3. Can you tell us a little more about what your business does?

I'm developing a rental service that delivers all the camping gear you need quickly and affordably so you can spontaneously get away.

4. How did you come up with the idea?

I was working a freelance 9 to 5 gig and losing my mind. As my mind was getting lost, it started to wonder if I could rent a tent and camp somewhere in Cape Cod that weekend. I started looking up services and couldn't find one.

5. In your opinion, how do you get people excited about travelling?

It's so easy. Go traveling, have an amazing time, make the most of every day. When you come back and tell stories, share pictures, people are going to be pretty interested in traveling too.

6. What is the biggest hurdle to starting a business/product related to travel and how do you plan to overcome it?

This is my first venture into a travel related business and I'm at the very beginning stages. Right now I need to secure funding in a way that best benefits the company. I plan to overcome that

by clearly defining what we do and how we do it and then presenting it in a way that gets the right people excited.

7. What do you love most about travelling?

Thrills of the unknown mannnnn

8. What don't you like about travelling and how would you fix that?

I don't especially like anything that limits spontaneity. Like having to set an itinerary around trains that only run twice a week, or buying flights to all different places, two months in advance. It would be awesome if there were more subscription offers that accommodated backpacking. Like you buy an unlimited pass from an airline for a month and can hop around a country / continent as much as you want.

9. What sort of tools/apps do you use when you travel/on vacation?

I use whatever fits the situation. Maps for sure. Schedules for sure. Yelp. I write down hopes and goals for each trip in my notes. Best tool is definitely striking up conversations with people, those leads to the most unique and personal experiences.

10. What tools do you wish you had? *Could be anything – even unrealistic stuff like unlimited money/time*

Everything unrealistic. Unlimited time, money, transport. No sleep so you can do everything. Ability to speak all languages. Tons of luck. Sometimes you're traveling and everything just falls into place so perfectly and sometimes every single thing goes wrong.

11. Would you trust an AI personal assistant to recommend things to do and places to go to on your travels?

It would be a relief to have something with an insane amount of knowledge all in one place. Seems like a very good resource. I don't know much about AI, but if that meant it could tailor its responses and suggestions to your tastes, that'd be pretty great as well.

What we found out

We learnt a great deal from this interview. Spontaneity is easily taken for granted - there are a multitude of factors that will impede it. Some travelers, like Matthew, like the 'unknowns' of traveling, but dislike the concept of 'planning' to travel, which includes things like finding a place to stay, figuring out transport, etc.

Interview 2

Angelica Interview Question

When was the last time you travel? Tell me more about it?

- Well the last big trip was definitely disney land, with my family (*intreresting to see what a big trip is for her*)

And did you have the feeling that you were somehow far, or with foreigners?

- Well of course not, but we were far for sure, don;t do that every month

What's the further you've ever been?

- Seattle, but that was for a funeral. I'm not a big fan of traveling, it's quite expensive and you spend most of your time adapting yourself than enjoying it. It's like you're always a foreigner, I don't need this feeling more in my life hahaha

But have you actually ever been abroad? SOuth America or Europe?

- Mexico of course, this is where my family is, best place on this planet. But that was a long time ago, I don't have a passport, it's expired, and I don;t have any reason to travel now..

Why? Don't you want to discover the world?

- Hahaha well I'm already discovering mine and everything, but of course I wuold love that, but it takes money, time, paper etc... too complicated to feel like a stranger one more time

The discussion goes on on this path of "feeling like a stranger" or the "logisitics issue" to do it. Also the fact that Seattle is already super far, or Disney is a once a decade opportunity re-scale the whole issue of travelling

Revised POVs

POV 1

We met a casual traveler, and we were surprised that she liked exploring new places but preferred going to places that were off the beaten path; it would be game-changing if we could compile a list of places near you that are small/exclusive/unique to a location.

POV 1 HMW's

How Might We:

- Identify places that are off the beaten path?
- Vrowdsource local places of interest?
- Local, small places into something cool to visit?
- Bring attention to off-the-beaten path locations?
- Remove the crowded/popular factor of major places to visit?
- Tell people what's interesting around them anywhere they go?
- Tie local history to non-monumental places?
- Convince others that this unknown place is interesting?
- Use local tour guides to show tourists off-the-beaten-path places?

POV 2

We met an extreme traveler who spends a lot of time planning her next steps. It would be game changing if you could easily be told exactly what to do and where to go and know you will have a good time.

POV 2 HMW's

How Might We:

- Automate travel itinerary creation for people?
- Learn from a user's preferences to give them suggestions for perfect places to travel?
- Remove all of the stress of travel?
- Provide assistance or suggestions to at least ease the process of trip planning?
- Create a virtual assistant or travel concierge?

- Bring trip planners and trip takers together?
- Make traveler's feel like they have a companion who "has their back"?
- Make travel planning as easy as googling something?
- Give people a personalized travel experience?
- Remove the cognitive burden of managing travel details?

POV 3

We met a person interested in history and culture, we were surprised to learn that she just manually googled this information about the places she visited. It would be game changing to easily give people an intimate understanding of the culture and history of the place they are visiting.

POV 3 HMW's

- Give an engaging well-rounded audio guide to people visiting a city.
- Teach someone the history of a location.
- Help travelers understand the people living in a given location.
- Crowdsource local information
- Compile all interesting, relevant information into an easy to follow video or document
- Cater this information to people's specific interests
- Automate sourcing of this information
- Teach people interesting information that they couldn't find simply via google search (maybe by including local stories)
- Present information at various levels of education (in depth history vs high level simple history)
- Make it appealing to different groups of people

Experience Prototypes

Three best HMWs

- tell people what's interesting around them anywhere they go? (POV #1)
- Cater this cultural information to people's specific interests (POV #3)
- Compile all interesting, relevant information into an easy to follow video or document (POV #3)

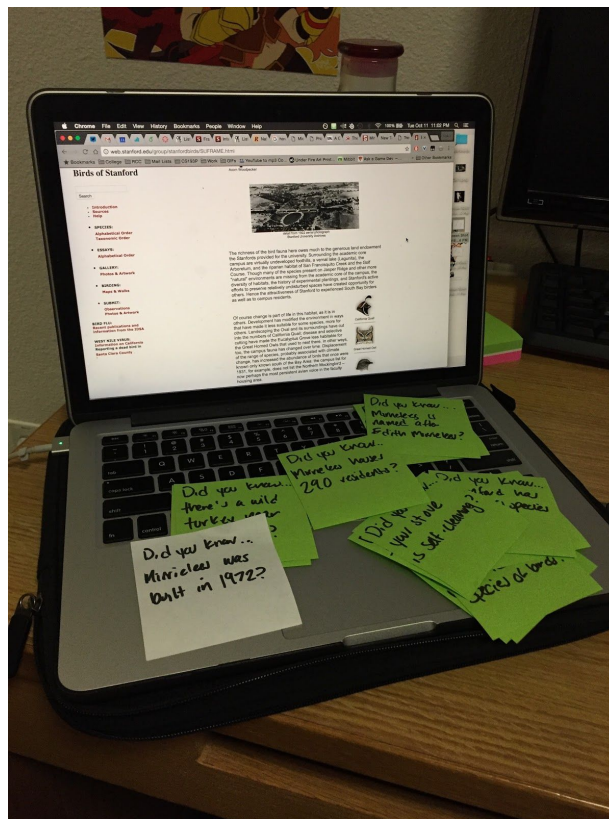
Prototype 1

Assumptions

We assume the user, when traveling to a destination, would be entertained to learn things about the path they're on, and not just their destination. It keeps the 'travel' part of travel interesting, instead of wasting time sitting in a car/train.

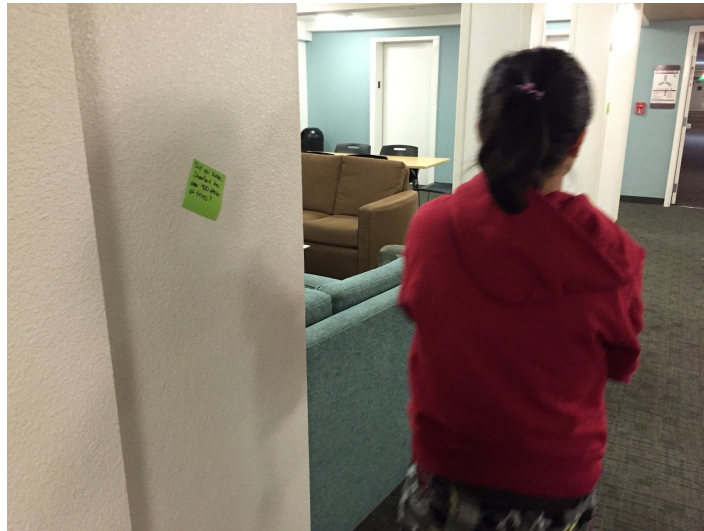
Creation

Got a bunch of sticky notes, figured out fun/cool/random facts about the place my person was in, placed those sticky notes around and had person travel around to look at them and comment.



Testing

We had friend and a random person walk around and look at sticky notes that contained interesting facts about a given location. We observed their behavior and reaction to the facts. Additionally, we paid attention to how they moved and discovered new sticky notes in both enclosed and open spaces.



Lessons Learned

1. Pacing/Spacing of sticky notes. In hallways, they felt guided. In open spaces, they felt obligated to look at every sticky note in the room. In a real life situation, an app telling them (supposedly) infinite facts about the place they're in would probably motivate them not to stay in one place (or maybe they would until they think they've heard all they've needed to hear).
2. Users tended to explore open spaces as much as possible before moving on. Felt obligated to hear/see everything.
3. Users preferred 'random' facts sequences rather than 'guided' facts sequences; ie. sequential facts could jump from topic to topic (birds to trees to buildings), while 'guided' facts were facts related to a certain topic (like trees).
4. Should facts be relative to location or relative to time? Should show a fact when they do certain number of steps or when they reach a certain location or after time period?
5. This was tested by just walking around, and not in a car/train.

Lessons Learned

1. Just preferences aren't enough; we need to know budget and the other things that the person is doing/their schedule.
2. Levels of spontaneity need to be considered
3. How to personalize/understand user preferences?

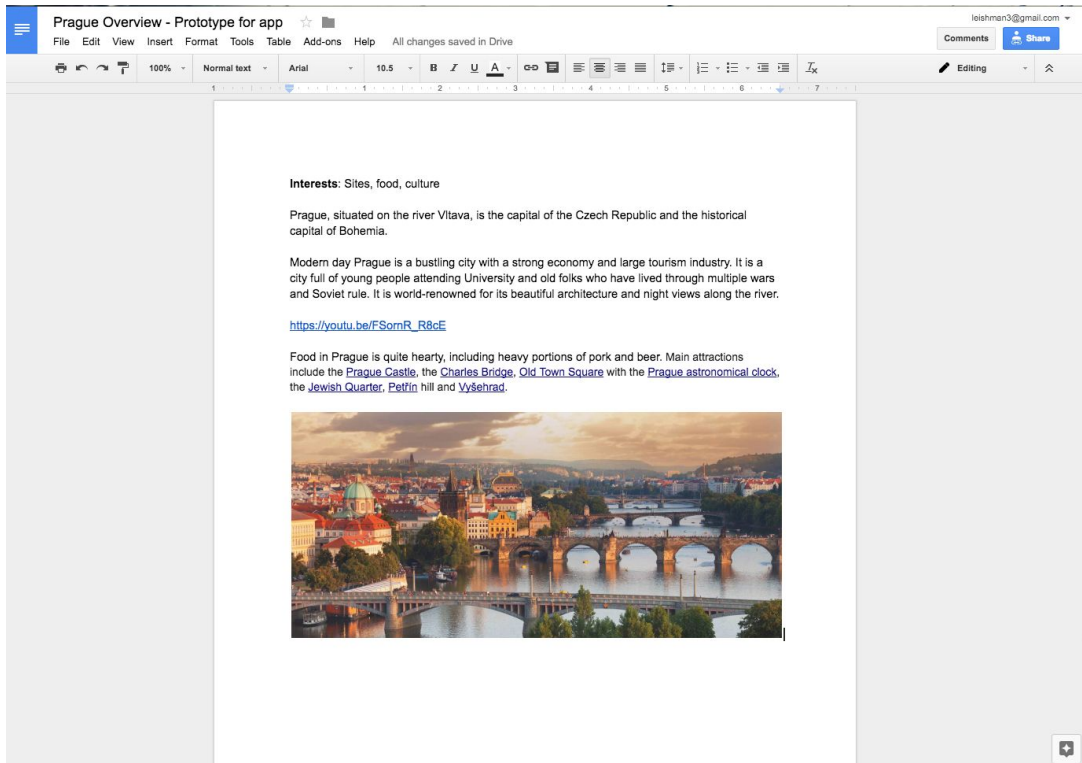
Prototype 3 (History and Culture Overview)

Assumptions

We assume the traveler would want an overview touching on all interesting and relevant aspects of their location.

Creation

I first asked the destination to which they were traveling. Then I compiled a Google Doc including photos and videos about the location (Prague) based on the traveler's interests. I touched on the history, food and culture.



The screenshot shows a Google Docs interface with the following content:


Interests: Sites, food, culture

Prague, situated on the river Vltava, is the capital of the Czech Republic and the historical capital of Bohemia.

Modern day Prague is a bustling city with a strong economy and large tourism industry. It is a city full of young people attending University and old folks who have lived through multiple wars and Soviet rule. It is world-renowned for its beautiful architecture and night views along the river.

https://youtu.be/FSomR_R8cE

Food in Prague is quite hearty, including heavy portions of pork and beer. Main attractions include the [Prague Castle](#), the [Charles Bridge](#), [Old Town Square](#) with the [Prague astronomical clock](#), the [Jewish Quarter](#), [Petřín](#) hill and [Vyšehrad](#).



Testing

I tested this with a person who has traveled in the past but does not frequently travel. I asked him to “input” his preferences into a chat box and recorded them. Then I manually generated the document based on his interests and returned it to him via chat.

Lessons Learned

1. A lot of the high level overview of a location is already on Wikipedia but it may not cater specifically to what a user desires to see. Some of these introductions may be dry and unengaging for users so multimedia can really liven it up.
2. Knowing what (out of a lot of possible options) to include in the document is difficult and would be very hard to automate. Crowd sourcing this might be a good option
3. Multimedia makes the document much more engaging and easy to absorb

Key Takeaways

What people see, is what they explore.

People will explore what they know about. Guiding people to places that are visually appealing and engaging will lead them to explore and have their own adventure. Giving people fun tidbits of information while they are exploring a place keeps them engaged.

Applications that give immediate information are useful, but present challenges

Giving suggestions and building a “smart” assistant for travelers would be incredibly useful. However, there are big barriers to automating the assistant task because it requires knowing a lot about the user and having access to personal information such as credit card information, personal preferences etc. Building such an AI is also a non-trivial task.

Spontaneity is limited by possibility (ironically)

Giving people a list of possible fun, spontaneous things to do is valuable. But people are often limited by what they can actually do because of money, time and other logistical constraints. We discovered this when prototyping the personal travel assistant and giving our tester in Amsterdam a list of fun ideas for activities. They were quite limited by what they could complete due to the aforementioned constraints.