Ping!

So your LDR doesn't become TL;DR

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Problem:

When people move, leaving friends behind, in the face of distance, new stressors, and perhaps even timezones, **relationships inevitably shift**. People can no longer share their lives with friends in the same manner: some try to keep up through long texts or long calls but those **feel high stakes and require schedule alignment** to keep up, while maintaining a brief 'daily streak' results in **meaningless conversations**. People lose serendipitous, quick and meaningful ways to share with their loved ones and show **they are thinking of them in the moment**.

Solution:

A way to **show your friends you are thinking of them, even when you're far apart**, and to **keep yourself accountable** to your communication goals

Introducing **Ping!** Centered around **tokens that have low stakes yet big meaning**, "Ping!" makes it easy to manage communicating across time-zones, keep track of important friendship dates and set/maintain personal communication goals. It's a **hub for small spontaneous tokens** and an **angel on your shoulder reminding and helping you to show your loved ones you care**, even when you're busy.

Tasks

1) Send an immediate thoughtful token (eg. an emoji or short string of emojis) **[SIMPLE TASK]**

2) Receive and save a thoughtful token **[SIMPLE TASK]**

3) Schedule a token to send at a specific time in your friend's time zone **[MODERATE TASK]**

4) Set a communication goal for yourself **[COMPLEX TASK]**

5) Keeping track of important dates and moments with your friend **[COMPLEX TASK]**

Values in Design

Our project is centered around the value of **meaningful, thoughtful communication**. We also value **convenience** amidst stressful, busy days. While these two ideas, meaningful communication and convenience, might seem to be conflicting values, we are striving to enable ways that they can live in **harmony**. We hope to encode these values through applying a constraint on the length of messages to inspire thoughtful, creative, and quick "Ping!". A token sent to one person, might mean an entirely different thing to another. We also plan to limit the ability to share potentially harmful, non-consensual messages (and other potential misuses).

Market Research #1: Facebook's "Poke"
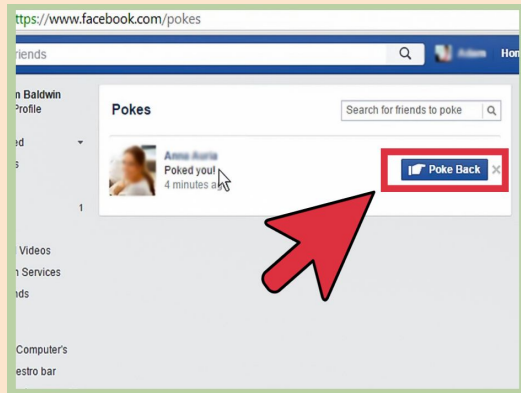
SOURCES: Sathe, G. (2018, February 21). *What is a facebook poke? is it still a thing?* NDTV Gadgets 360. from https://gadgets.ndtv.com/social-networking/features/what-is-facebook-poke-how-to-facebook-poke-1815275

SIMILARITIES: Same idea of low-commitment interaction, a poke lets the other person they are thinking of you. Poke, while still a thing, is largely unused and not as visible on someone's profile anymore.

How their solution differs from ours:
- You can poke anyone
- Not a substantial, meaningful interaction – no content

What worked:
- "My actual friends and I would keep poking each other like idiots and that part of it was fun." - Meena Das (in an interview with Gadgets 360)
    - What worked for this person is the idea of "poking" your friends–our idea that low-level interactions can be fun and meaningful if they are between people who share a connection.

What didn't work:
- "From disgust, boredom to gluttony, one can explicitly express all of this using emojis, stickers, and the feelings/ activities feature on Facebook, so the fact that poke is still around is surprising." - Priya Saini (in an interview with Gadgets 360)
    - As this person said, stickers and emojis convey more emotions than a single poke
- The generality of a poke made it ambiguous and sometimes creepy when given by strangers.

What makes our solution unique:
- Ours will fix this by making the interaction more personal: through emojis, drawings, friend calendars, friend push notifications, etc. while remaining the low-level commitment that Poke was intended for. You can also only send Pings to your friends.

Market Research #2: HONK
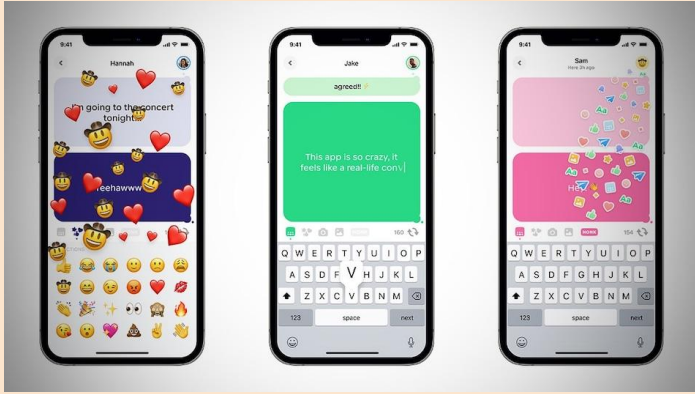
OTHER NOTES:
- Two of our teammates tried the app. Here's our brief review:
    - Really clean UI.
    - Emojis are very limited. The feature where you can see what the other person is typing is interesting, but doesn't seem to be good for longer-types of texting.

SIMILARITIES: Have an option in its live chat feature where you can react with emojis and it will float in the screen like the picture on the left. One of the features where the app's concept might be similar is: "Honk friends to get their attention" (from the App Store description).

How their solution differs from ours: The app has a different purpose – it is used for live chat like Omegle and you can either interact with entirely new people or your friends.

What worked: (Quotes from App Store Reviews)
- I'd say this app is good for quick conversation that you don't want saved because everything is in real time, and it's a good way to quickly get ahold of someone.
- "+2 stars for having an option to send pics n audio messages! V much enjoy much fun"
- "The customizable magic words are super cute."

What didn't work:
- Users reported that there are not a lot of users in the app and therefore they cannot meet new people
- Limited range of emojis
- Harassment from strangers
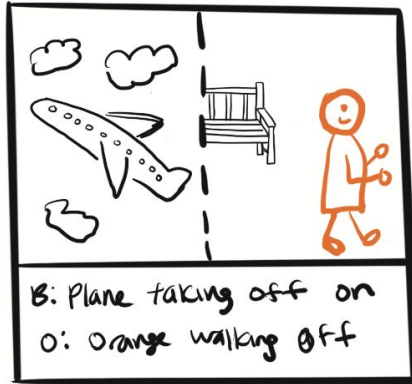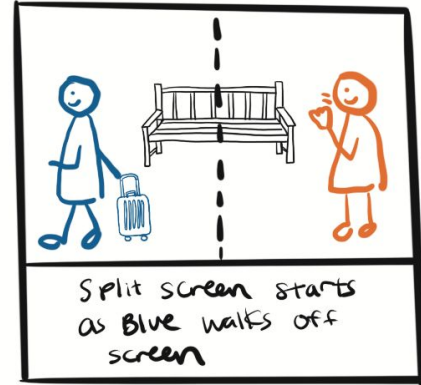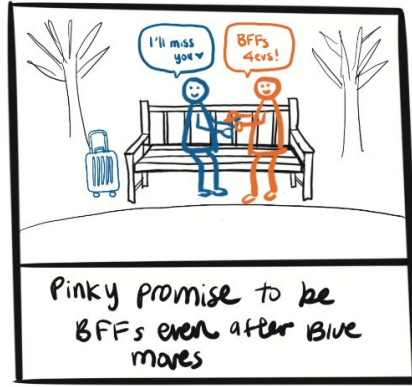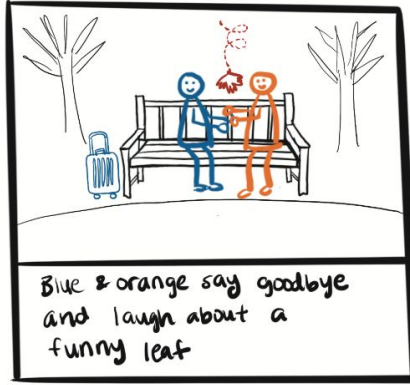- Lack of group chats

What makes our solution unique:
- Our app is different in that it is not a "live-messaging" app. One of our features, where you can schedule Pings or get reminders for Pings, is the opposite of Honk's purpose.
- Our emojis and Pings would have a larger range. For example, you can send personalized drawings or short song snippets.
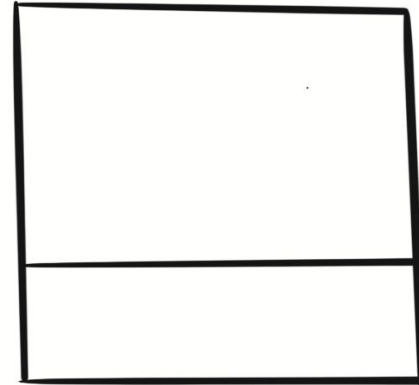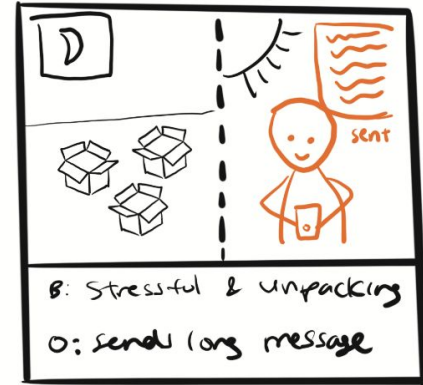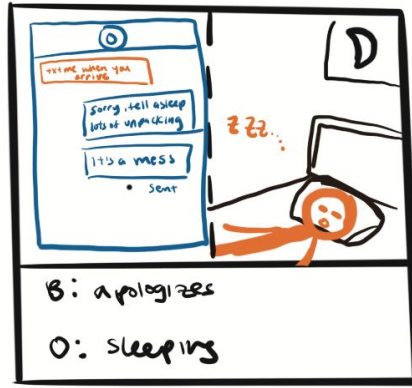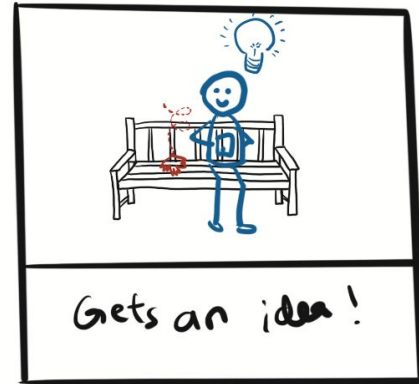   -

Video Storyboards

INTRO : SETUP

Blue & orange say goodbye and laugh about a funny leaf

Pinky promise to be BFFs even after Blue moves

Split screen starts as Blue walks off screen

B: Plane taking off on
O: Orange walking off

B: Gets to new place
O: Walking & texting Blue

B: Sleeping
O: what orange texts

Rising Action (Issues)

Panel 1:
B: Responds quickly as busy
O: sleeping

Panel 2:
txt me when you arrive
Sorry, fell asleep lots of unpacking
It's a mess
· sent

B: apologizes
O: sleeping

Panel 3:
sent
B: Stressful & unpacking
O: Send long message

Panel 4:
refreshes
sent
B: Stressful unpacking & sees message but can't reply
O: refreshes messages

Panel 5:
refreshes
sent
B: Forgets to reply
O: sad

Panel 6:
(blank)

Conflict

1 week later	Both try to type messages	screens show no correspondance
They both do not press send	B: on bench, sees leaf	Gets an idea!

Show & Recieve Care & Thought of Other Person

Panel 1: sends short inside joke

Panel 2: sends to orange

Panel 3: ??? IykyK — orange's friend doesn't get it, but orange does

Panel 4: orange sends appreciation back

Panel 5: both keep their token as they go about day

Panel 6: (blank)
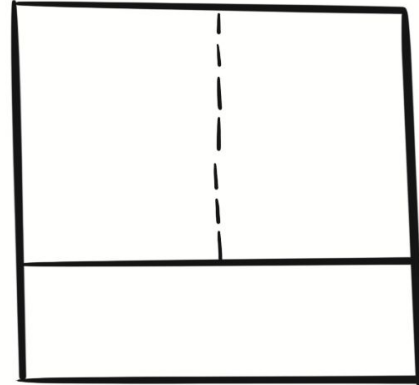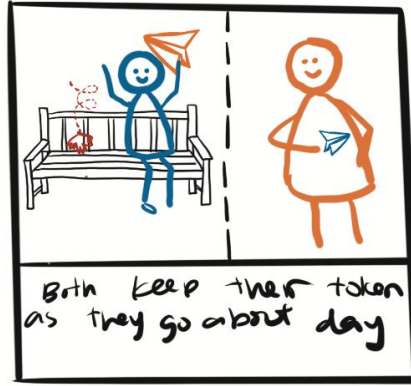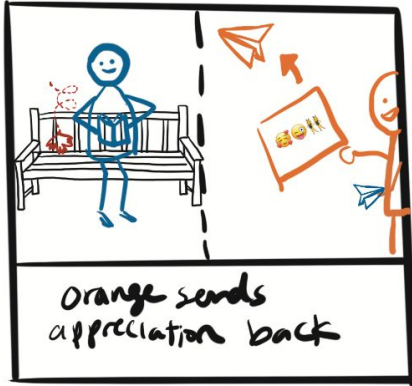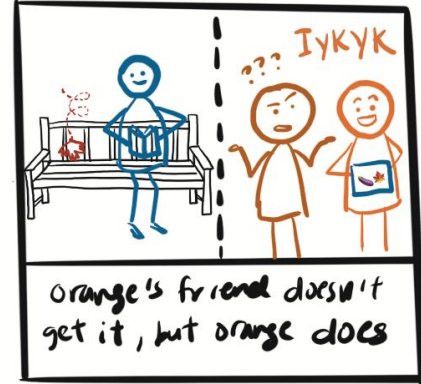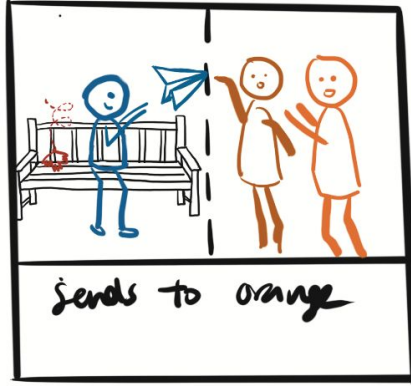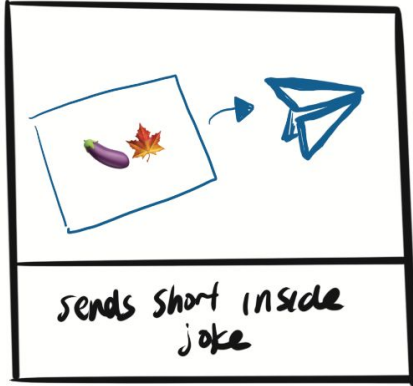
Making Communication Goals & Scheduling Tokens

Orange makes communication goal

Orange gets reminder

Thinks about what to send

Schedules good morning token

While orange is asleep, blue makes up to a perf. timed tok

Blue is happy from thoughtful token
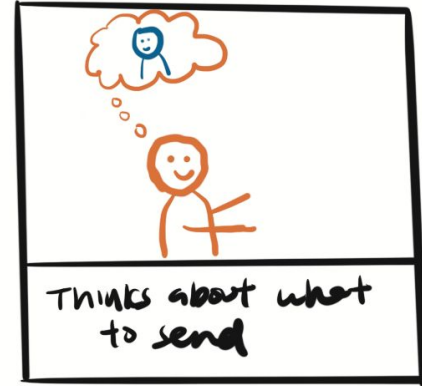
Remember & Remind friends of meaningful dates

Blue puts sticker on friendaversary date

01/25/21
Dates show time passing

01/25/22
on friendaversary date both get Blue's prompt

orange smiles & sends token

Blue confused at token

Opens door & sees orange visiting Blue