

# EXPLOREPAKISTAN.COM

## HCI ASSIGNMENT # 3 : PROTOTYPING & DESIGN

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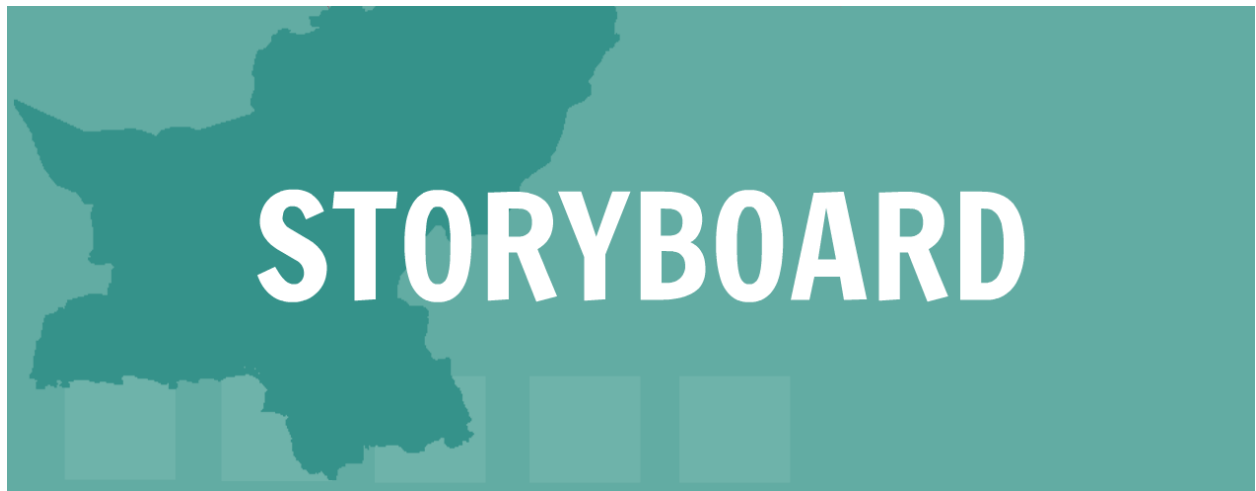
## Introduction

The interactive website we chose to design and prototype for our project was the official website of Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC) to help both local and international tourist explore places to visit in Pakistan and book a trip online.

PTDC currently hosts a very dull and mundane website, Destination Pakistan ([www.tourism.gov.pk](http://www.tourism.gov.pk)). The interface is entirely text-based with very few photos and extremely boring to browse. Although it provides all the necessary information about the places to visit, transportation and the services that the agency provides to the tourists (including trip plans, packages to the north or south of the country, the best rates on flights, car rentals and hotels). However, the interface is not designed in an appealing and consistent manner. It is a little difficult to browse through the options and plan a trip. Hence, there are less chances of planning and booking a trip from this website.

Our team has decided to revamp the official website of the PTDC by designing an interactive interface to tempt both local and international tourists to travel and explore Pakistan. The envisioned interface provides trip ideas, things to see, do and experience in Pakistan and places to go. The main feature of the website is to allow the user search places to visit by topic on the homepage (i.e. adventure, road trips, on the water, cuisine, cultural attractions etc.). It shows the description about every place and shows its location on map and the nearby places. The user can then make a list of all the places that he wants to visit on his trip, or avail one of the trip packages (with pre-planned travel routes and lodging information) already offered on the website. Once planned, the user can book his mode of transportation and his lodging with the Pakistan Tours Limited (PTL) & PTDC Transport Services. Hence, the new interface exploits the user's hobbies and interests in helping him map out a travel route, and makes planning a trip around Pakistan as easy as A,B and C.

## Prototyping



Using each of the two scenarios generated for ExplorePakistan.com in Assignment # 2, we have produced a storyboard for the task of planning a trip and booking the mode of transportation and lodging with the Pakistan Tours Limited (PTL) & PTDC Transport Services.

We showed these storyboard to two potential users for evaluation. This allowed them to visualize the composition and scope of our intended interface and offer their critical feedback on the structure, functionality and navigation options available within it. This method helped us explore the design possibilities and verify the user requirements. However, it fails to evaluate fine design details nor accurately convey system responsiveness.

### **STORYBOARD # 1: USER FEEDBACK**

“From the storyboard, I can tell that the web portal’s intended interface must be understandable and easy to learn and navigate as it took very little time and effort for the user to plan her trip around the Northern Areas in Pakistan. It is well structured too because she is able to explore places, plan her stay, book a holiday resort and rent a jeep in the order. It also provide sufficient amount of information with respect to travel agencies and safety. I am pretty impressed by how the design team has given thought to the needs of the users and catered for them. A reasonable assumption is about the filtering scheme employed by the web portal to help the user explore places by interests/locations. Amazing Search and filtering features! I remember visiting Malaysian and Canadian tourism web portals where you could easily explore the states and plan your trip and wondering why our tourism department does not come up with an attractive, easy to learn and navigate web portal for our local and international tourists.. I am really glad with the idea behind explorepakistan.com. However, the storyboard doesn’t show the payment procedure, if there’s any provided by the web portal.”

**- Aniqah Iqbal, First year at NUST SADA, Islamabad**

### **STORYBOARD # 2: USER FEEDBACK**

“The storyboard clearly shows that the interface is very user friendly and provides sufficient knowledge to novice users to plan out their trip and book their lodging/transport confidently. It helps them explore places of interest, book tour guides and hotel facilities and register themselves with PTDC. It took Babar only a day to evaluate his options, call the concerned authority, submit his documents at the regional office and confirm his tour. I am really happy to finally see the idea of a website that filters about places to visit by interests/location along with the regular option to book a bus seat with PTL.”

**- Arslan Manzoor, Second year at DOW Medical College, Karachi**

# CARD BASED PROTOTYPE



We have developed a card-based prototype from the use case for the task of planning and booking a trip using ExplorePakistan.com (Assignment # 2) and from the feedback gathered in part (a). This method models our intended interface and helps us further evaluate its structure, functionality and navigation options available within it.

## **USER SCREENS**

Each of these cards represent a user screen and models the interaction tools employed in each.

### **HOMEPAGE**

The home-page introduces the website to users and helps them to get on their way on the site. Being the front door of our site, the design team has especially designed the home page to facilitate introduction (who is behind the site) and entrance (what to find here). The header is divided into three horizontal bars, namely the language selector bar, introduction bar and main menu bar. Besides the bars, the design team has employed Doormat Navigation to give users a quick and informative overview of the primary choices they need to make. Nothing important is hidden and all options in the doormat are accessible in one click.

### **MAIN NAVIGATION**

A header flies horizontally all the time over every webpage. This header facilitates navigation through the website. It is divided into three horizontal bars, namely the language selector bar, introduction bar and main menu bar. The Introduction bar introduces both the purpose and identity of the website using taglines. Users almost immediately know what the site is for (Explore Pakistan) and who is behind it (An official site of Pakistan tourism Development Corporation). The main menu bar facilitates the Entrance functionality of the homepage. It clearly shows the site's Main Navigation so that users know where to get started and how to proceed. Other important elements include a Login button, a Language Selector and sharing options.

### **LOGIN**

The signing in process is a two click task. When the user presses the login button, the interface prompts him/her to enter his/her email and his password and if matched, retrieve his saved trips.

### **ABOUT PAKISTAN**

This webpage facilitates the user to read a brief information about Pakistan, its history, location, culture and language.

## **USER SCREENS: EXPLORING**

### **EXPLORE BY TOPIC**

This webpage prompts him/her to select a topic from a list of topics such as adventure, road trips, on the water, cuisine, cultural attractions etc. Upon selection, the interface must show the description about every place and shows its location on map and the nearby places.

### **EXPLORE BY MAP**

This webpage prompts him/her to select a location from a simple, interactive map of Pakistan. Upon selection, the website displays information about tourist places that are located in the selected state.

### **PLACE**

Every place logged into the database has a dedicated page in the web portal. When the user selects any place, say Masjid-e-Tooba, Karachi, the following web page is shown that allows him to read about the place, how to get there by car/bus/train/boat, the nearby hotels and other similar tourist attractions in the region using a vertical menu bar.

## EXPERIENCES

This webpage lists down a number of tourist experiences to help the user know what to see, do and experience in Pakistan. Every experience, say mountain/rock climbing, has a dedicated page enlisting details of the activity, key tips to follow and take note of and tourist places to visit to perform the activity.

## EVENTS AND FESTIVALS

This webpage allows the user to browse through a catalogue of events to catch festivals happening all around the year.

## USER SCREENS: PLANNING & BOOKING

### TRIP PLANNER

After exploring different places by topic and location, the user shall make a list of all the places that he wants to visit on his trip in an online notebook. The trip planner option allows him to make a diary/planner of the places he wants to visit in his trip day by day. After making the planner for the number of days he's going to stay, he can save his planner or download it. Alternatively, this trip planner allows the user to avail one of the trip packages (with pre-planned travel routes and lodging information) already offered. The trip packages help the tourists to decide from where they should start their trip and to which places should he travel to. The users select if they want to avail a package or plan the route themselves using tabs.

### BOOK YOUR TRIP

This webpage prompts user to book his trip. Once the trip is planned (using trip planner or not), the user can book his mode of transportation and his lodging with the Pakistan Tours Limited (PTL) & PTDC Transport Services by browsing through a number of options for transport and accommodations based on price and quality. He can also browse through a catalogue of different travel agents and grab their contact information if required.

### BOOK YOUR TRIP>BOOKING BUS

This webpage prompts user to book his bus seat with the Pakistan Tours Limited (PTL), a subsidiary of PTDC working as a pioneer tour operating agency and responsible for organizing tours/arrangements of transport and accommodation for foreign and domestic tourists in Pakistan. PTL operates daily air-conditioned tourist coach service within Pakistan. It also operates transport service between Pak-China border on Karakoram Highway (KKH) from Sost (Pakistan) to Taxkurgan (China) between Lahore and Delhi,(India) Lahore and Amritsar (India), and Nankana Sahib (Pakistan) and Amritsar (India) for the convenience of local and foreign visitors. PTL transport is also rented out to foreign and domestic individual and group tourists.

This webpage prompts the user to select his source and destination, his departing time and the number of passengers. It then filters out the results based on departure, arrival, duration and price. The user can select any time of the particular route bus and book his ticket.

On selection, the user is prompted to register himself with PTDL (if he's not registered already). The Sign Up panel asks him to store his personal information and login details.

Once done, he is shown a confirmation message to confirm his seat (s).

### **BOOK YOUR TRIP>SEARCHING LODGING**

This webpage helps the user search lodging services in the places they want to visit. It prompts the user to fill in his details and shows him the search results. The user can browse through a number of hotels, check their ratings and grab their contact details to book a room.

### **BOOK YOUR TRIP>TOUR AGENTS**

This webpage helps the user browse through a number of travel agencies that the user may register himself with. The website only provides their contact information including address, telephone number, email, website URL and the person to be contacted.

### **USER SCREENS: ABOUT PTDC, FAQ, SITEMAP**

A foot bar positioned at the bottom of every webpage facilitates the user to access the Frequently Asked Questions, about the PTDC, Contact Details, Privacy policy and the Sitemap.

## USER FEEDBACK

We modelled the following scenario using these cardboards to two potential users for evaluation.

We first read an experience about trekking in Islamabad using 'Experiences', looked up places that facilitate that activity using 'Experiences>WhereToGo' and came across the Margalla Tracks located in Islamabad, Pakistan. Next, we explored places to visit in Islamabad using 'explore by map'. We chose three to four places to visit, designed a trip plan using 'trip planner', downloaded our trip plan in PDF format and booked a bus from Lahore to Islamabad. As we weren't registered users, we had to register ourselves with PTDC before confirming our booked seats. We logged out.

### FEEDBACK #1

"Oh my God, the very concept of this web portal has made me feel so nostalgic about my childhood in Pakistan, especially, the features such as experiences and events and festivals. Tourist experiences are a bonus for the tourists to know what to see, do and experience in Pakistan. They can also browse through a catalogue of events to catch festivals happening all around the year and plan their trips around the festival dates of their likeness. The cardboards clearly show that the intended interface will be easy to use and navigate for both the novice and experienced users. There're helpful menu bars and hyperlinks to help the user explore places to visit and find his lodging and transportation options too. I would especially highlight the feature 'explore by topic' that will help the users who have never visited Pakistan before and do not know any cities, to search out places of their favorite cuisine, sports and other activities. This portal is promising. "

—Sagrika Israni, Aurangabad, India

### FEEDBACK #2

"To completely summarize my experience with the site prototype, I must say that I'm blown away by the concept of this web portal. Features such as explore by topic, by map and trip planner are carefully selected to tempt the users to explore the Himalayas, the rugged mountains, the sandy beaches with rich, humid mangroves and the towering skyscrapers of Pakistan. Moreover, the interface appears really simple and easy to operate. All the navigational options are visible to the user and help him explore, plan and book his trip. The booking procedure is clearly simple and flexible. Users can narrow down their preferences for dates, prices, type of fare (if applicable), sort of transport, and the number of persons. This portal is definitely going to help our tourism flourish by attracting both local and international tourists."

—Abdullah Khan, Hyderabad

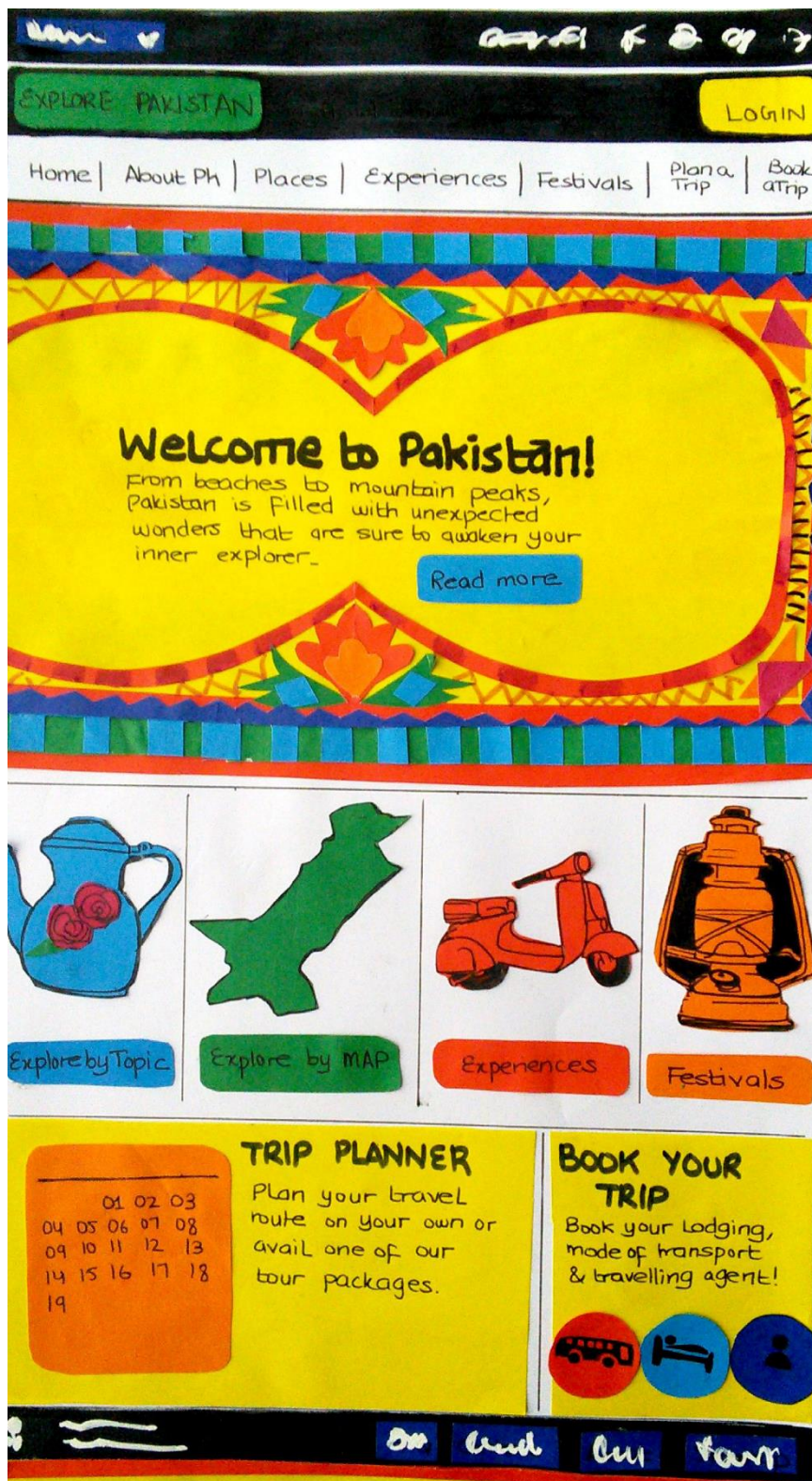


## Design



In the following pages, we have considered the web page's detailed design. Attached is the sketch of our website's home page and design specifications.

The home-page introduces the website to users and helps them to get on their way on the site. Being the front door of our site, the design team has especially designed the home page to facilitate introduction (who is behind the site) and entrance (what to find here).



## HEADER & THE MENU BAR

The header is divided into three horizontal bars, namely the language selector bar, introduction bar and main menu bar. The Introduction bar introduces both the purpose and identity of the website using taglines. Users almost immediately know what the site is for (Explore Pakistan) and who is behind it (An official site of Pakistan tourism Development Corporation). The main menu bar facilitates the Entrance functionality of the homepage. It clearly shows the site's Main Navigation so that users know where to get started and how to proceed through different options such as places, experiences, festivals, trip planner and booking. Other important elements include a Login button, a Language Selector and sharing options. The currently selected item is highlighted using a different color. The header and its hyperlinked labels are a usability consideration.

## SCREEN LAYOUT & NAVIGATION

The main navigation consists of a language selector, a main menu bar with several clickable items placed at the top of the page and a foot bar, each of which stay unchanged when browsing through the site and it is present on every page. A link to the home-page is also present on the menu bar.

The screen has been divided into sections to help the users see elements in a pleasing and distinctive way. There's a welcome message panel spread horizontally across the screen, four panels below it to help the explore by topic, by map, read tourist experiences and festivals' details, and two other panels below them to plan and book a trip. Every panel consists of an iconic image and a label to facilitate affordance and learnability.

welcome message			
explore by topic	explore by map	experiences	festivals
Trip planner			Book your trip

As observed, this grid design creates a systematic and consistent rule for placing objects. It creates a visual rhythm. It makes it easier and more pleasant for the eye to scan the objects on the page. Hence, this screen layout is a user experience consideration to help the users know where they can find what they are looking for.

## SITEMAP

The site's main navigation is not the only way to access the information. A Site Map placed as a hyperlinked label in the foot bar allows the users to reach the information. This navigational tool is supportive in the sense that it exists together with the main navigation itself. This is a usability consideration as it used by the main navigation.

### THEME & THE USE OF COLOURS

ExplorePakistan.com is truck art themed. The theme is chosen to present a pleasing aesthetic to the viewer, keep his interest in the rich and colorful culture of Pakistan and gives him a clear impression about the website's contents. The web portal provides a brief information about our history, our culture & heritage and facilitate the tourist in tracking down the museums and historical sites that he can visit, or the food outlets where he can enjoy our desi food, take Lahore's food street for instance.

Our color palette consists of seven colors, as follows:



This color scheme is a user experience consideration.

### FOOTBAR

A foot bar positioned at the bottom of every webpage facilitates the user to access the Frequently Asked Questions, about the PTDC, Contact Details, Privacy policy and the Sitemap. This foot bar and its hyperlinked labels are a usability consideration

