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“HelpFinder”

The app idea that I came up with for this class is “HelpFinder”. It is an app where users are able to find people who are skilled at doing something that they need done. Before I finalized this idea, I went through a lot of other app ideas such as parking, mental health support, a calendar with due dates and lastly an airport map. The reason I chose HelpFinder is because it is something that we all need. When I presented this idea, the response I got was that it is an uber but for a handyman. I would say that is an accurate way of describing the app. All the features that it has are kind of like the uber app.

The problem that I am trying to solve with the HelpFinder app is that I want to allow people who have certain skills to take advantage of them by getting paid for it. There are many people out there who are highly skilled at something, but they are not doing anything with it. However, with this app they will be able to advertise their skill and make money from it. One can work their regular 9-5 job and then take offers to do the job for other people. Since they do not have a schedule, they can decide when they want to get the job done and have an option to do it on weekends or at the seller and buyers’ convenience. I also want to make house repairs, car repairs and other jobs to be cheap. There are services being offered right now but they are big companies, and they charge a lot even for a minor job. Some companies charge if they come to your house and see what it is that needs to be done. I do not think it is convenient for us as customers. I believe with HelpFinder I am able to achieve both of my goals. I would say this app benefits the seller as well as the user who is getting the service done for free.

I decided to work on this app with two of my other friends. They are Abhi Jhaveri and Tahirbhai Khalifa. We all shared our ideas of the app and then decided to do this one because we felt like this was something that we needed. It definitely has not been easy to collaborate on this because all three of us have a very busy and tight schedule with full time college plus work. So, we have tried very hard to achieve our weekly goals for this app.

Coming up with the functionality of the app was not an easy task to do. Before we presented our app idea to the professor, we came together as a group and each of us was responsible to design a layout and have a rough idea of how we wanted to handle the app functionality. We decided for the app to have a very strict login and sign-up forms. Every user must create an account to access any feature of the app. They would have to enter their personal information such as their first name, last name, and email to sign up. Also, users would have to create a strong password for convenient log in experience for further usage. Once the user logs in, they have an option to either search for services or they can advertise their services. If they would like to advertise their service, they would have to create a separate account which we have decided to call it a seller profile. That is very important to make because sellers will be given reviews and ratings by the buyers who have used their services. It is also important because that is what the user will see when they come across your services. They will be able to look at your service name, your ratings, reviews, and your rates. Your seller profile is essentially what will help the buyer decide

if they want to hire you or not. If the user decides to search for a service, for example a car mechanic, the search bar would show a list of car mechanics and the user can click on each of them and review their seller profile. If they decide to hire someone, there is an in-app feature which allows the buyer to message the seller. They can work out their date, time, cost, and any other details that might be needed to the seller to identify the job. We would have also implemented an in-app payment feature. The way it would work is that if the seller and the buyer agree on all the terms and details about the job, the seller can send an offer to the buyer, the buyer accepts it, and the money would be gone from the buyer's bank account or PayPal. However, it is important to notice that the seller will not get the money right away when the buyer accepts his offer. Once the job is completed then the buyer will go ahead and mark the offer as completed. That would be the final transaction and the seller would get the money in his account. The buyer would also have a chance to give ratings, reviews, and tips to the seller to help other buyers in deciding.

Implementing this in Android Studio was a challenge that we were not ready for. Prior to this class no member in our group had any experience working with Android studio or any other software that was designed for mobile app development. One of our first objectives was to start off with the login screen. To make it functional, we watched a lot of YouTube videos just for the front-end side of it. We did not get it to actually log in. If you hit the login button it would take you to the next activity which is the search for services or create a seller profile. We just linked the next activity with the submit button or done button. We tried implementing the search bar, but it was very difficult. We tried following a twenty-five-minute video and in the end it did not work. However, we did create a search bar with the search bar tool that is given in android studio. We have not been able to add the messaging and payment features to our app yet because based on our research, they are one of the most challenging features we are going to be implementing. For the appearance of this app, currently, we have gone with a different background on each of our activities because we want to see what is most pleasing to users. Just the plain color or a gradient background. Depending on feedback we receive, we plan on making a concrete decision.

In conclusion, I would say working on this app has been a great challenge as well as been a satisfying experience. Going from having to experience with android studio to learning the very basics of it within three months is very motivating to me. It just proves to me that this is something that I am very passionate about. And I can achieve whatever I set my mind to. I also learned a few things about myself and how I personally handle myself under pressure situations. There were times when the weekly report was due, and we had no progress for that week. So, I would take it upon myself to do whatever it is that we have planned to do that week and do it myself. I have gotten better at working in teams. There are some things that I must work on as well. Overall, I would say because of this class and this project, I was able to bring out the creative side of me and was also able to decide what I want to do after I graduate.