

Project Description Document

Deliverable 0:

Group Name: The Lab Rats

Team members:

- Paula Gallego
- Kenzie Young
- Henry Kindler
- Rhiannon Gould

App Name: RoomUp

App Category: Social Networking

General Overview and Description:

Our app, RoomUp, will aim to connect people who are looking for roommates. In the set-up section of our app, users will be asked whether they are college students or not, and other basic information, such as age, gender, and desired location. Those who select the college student option will be asked a further question of whether they wish to live on campus or not. Also, users will be asked to indicate whether they have a place to stay and are just looking for a roommate to join them there, or if they are looking for a place to stay in addition to a roommate. Following the profile set-up process, users will be presented with other profiles, including photos and information, one at a time; those users who already have a place to stay will not see profiles of others who also have a place to stay. Users will swipe up on a profile if they are interested in that user, or downwards if they are uninterested. If two users swipe up on each other, they will be “matched”, meaning they will be notified of the match and will now be able to message each other. Then, the users will be able to message each other, and discuss how and if they should become roommates. This app will offer a simple, fun way to connect people to good potential roommates.

Similar App Description and Comparisons:

1. Tinder:

This app provides inspiration for stylistic choices about our app, yet it differs in purpose. Tinder aims to connect people for the reason of dating, yet our app will focus on those who strictly want to find roommates. We hope to ease the intimidation that may come from traditional ads for roommates with a platform style people may already be familiar with. We accomplish this with similar user accounts that are completed using photos, interest categories, etc. We will aim to transform these topics away from the dating scene and into ones that are more conducive for roommates such as rent prices, location, etc. Tinder has a popular “swipe” feature that we look to implement into our own app. After the user's account is created they will be able to see others within a preset distance and “swipe right” to match and “swipe left” if they are not interested. From here, users will only be able to connect and chat when both users have “swiped right” on each other, also known as matched, to ensure that both parties are interested. Users will then be able to chat one on one to further discuss living compatibility. There are certain features that Tinder implements behind paywall that our app does not plan to offer. The paywall provides

certain features such as being able to go back to users you may have swiped left on, “boosting” your profile in the algorithm to other users, or providing unlimited “swipes.” We simply do not plan to have a paywall at all as we think it provides unneeded barriers and will not always allow for the safest or most timely matching.

2. SpareRoom:

SpareRoom is an App that allows users to post ads of rooms, properties or promote themselves to find what kind of place they might be looking for. As in our App, when users sign up they are asked if they are “seekers” or “offerers”, however this option is rather a preference than a status since the user can still use the app for both anytime. Similar to our app, the user is asked for gender identity, age, occupation and interests among others; as well as characteristics that people they might be looking for should or shouldn’t have (smokers, pets...). In SpareRoom, users can view everyone’s profile and message each other, while in our app we require both users to be interested in each other to start talking. However, unlike our application, SpareRoom includes a variety of things that make the app very diverse, such a blog that includes news & trends or articles of sharing lifestyles. This app also differs from ours in that it has many ways of making a user VIP: you can upgrade by paying so that your profile or your ad pops up before others’; and there are certain ads you cannot contact with in the first week of them being posted unless you are a certain upgraded member.

3. Roomie:

As an app that seeks to connect people with living situations, Roomie has a lot in common with our app. Like our app, the set-up portion of Roomie asks if the user is looking for a college roommate or a general roommate, as well as the user’s interests and desired location. Additionally, the formats for viewing potential roommates are similar: the user is presented with a picture and some basic information about another person. In our app, the user either swipes down to avoid the other user, or swipes up so that if the other user swipes up they can message each other. In Roomie, users either hit the decline button or can send a message to other people immediately. One large difference is that Roomie allows landlords to post listings, whereas our app focuses solely on people who will be living together. Furthermore, unlike our app, Roomie offers a paid-version that comes with several benefits like no ads.

4. Roommates.com:

Roommates is an app that allows users to find roommates for apartments, condos, houses, or townhouses. When a new user signs up for Roommates, they are asked questions about themselves, such as: where you want to live, the type of place you want to live in, move in date, the maximum you will pay for rent, lease terms, etc. Additionally, they ask personal questions, such as: gender, sexuality, age, what pets you have, if you have kids, and if you smoke. The app also asks the user what they want in a roommate by asking similar questions. Roommates offers a free version, as well as a VIP membership option which includes complete profiles, full-size photos, and unlimited messaging. Roommates does not include ads for either

the free or paid version, and gets its profits from VIP memberships. This app is solely to find roommates, and does not have an option to find available properties. Instead of listings, the app asks the user if they already have a room, or if they are looking for an available room, then pairs users according to what their answer is. Lastly, some issues with this app are when trying to search for a roommate, a user can only select one “earliest move-in date,” versus having a range of move-in dates. The reason why that is an issue is because it makes it difficult to match with anyone.