PRD 2

Title

Empower the Micro-influencer

Overview

This project aims to provide micro-influencers with convenient tools to champion the small businesses they love. Rek restores trust back in the user by limiting influence to one's own social circle. This structure is designed to let the micro-influencer shine. For those users who are always first to discover a hidden gem, Rek is the perfect platform for them to share their experiences.

Objective

Championing the business you love should be as easy as possible. From initial discovery to continued advocacy, we want to make sure the user encounters as little friction as possible. With this project, we aim to provide users with a seamless experience from adding a new business they have discovered to "making a wave" among friends.

Persona(s)

<u>Kyle Finch</u>
Kyle is a gastronomer, who is active in his communities. For example, he often volunteers at his kids' school events and holds a weekly meeting for his book club with neighbors. Kyle takes his family out to nice restaurants every weekend and sometimes his wife to dates at fun and romantic spots around the city.

<u>Go-to George</u>
George is vegan and is always in search of good vegan dishes and restaurants in Metro DC. He also loves to cook and frequently attempts to re-make dishes he's had at restaurants. He is the go-to person among his friends for restaurant recommendations and is a trusted voice when it comes to determining whether a restaurant is worth a try.

User Scenario 1 – Adding new businesses to Rek

Kyle's quiet municipality near Boston proper just welcomed a new ramen place, Slurp Station, down the street and tucked away from the busier business streets of his neighborhood. Kyle loves ramen and has been yearning for a restaurant to open near him. He's one of the first to dine there and finds it exceeds all his expectations.

Kyle wants this place to succeed but worries that there are not enough patrons in the restaurant and its location does not enable the walk-in element for broader discovery. So Kyle wants to waive the banner for Slurp Station and spread the word like wildfire through his neighborhood.

Unfortunately Slurp Station is not yet on Yelp so Kyle has to add the business to the platform by manually inputting their business information. His efforts on Yelp seem to yield little outcome since he's not able to target anyone in his network or neighborhood. His review goes out to a broad audience, and he ultimately feels his work will have little of the intended impact unless someone in the neighborhood explicitly searches for "ramen" or "japanese food" within their area.

Aside from Yelp, Kyle has a group text thread with his foodie neighborhood friends. That's one step but hardly enough to give this place real traction. He also relies on the old-fashioned word-of-mouth approach so he talks to: other parents in his kids' classes when he goes there to volunteer, his book club members and his neighbors via the opportunistic conversation. Having spread the word through these channels, it is then upon his neighborhood to recall that information and act upon it by visiting the business.

With Rek, since Kyle is connected with the bulk of his neighborhood (his target audience) on social media, he is able to spread the news of Slurp Station via a seamless process known as the "crave wave". Rek enables Kyle to achieve his intended action via a sequence of 3 steps:

Step 1: Add Restaurant
Slurp Station is not yet on Rek, but Rek makes it easier to add new businesses. Rek will provide Kyle with a button to load a new business when he cannot find it via search. Rek will make API calls to existing platforms like Google Maps and Yelp and auto-populate the details from the responses. This will satisfy all the required information needed to register a new business on Rek. Kyle has the option to add additional information, but the business profile will need to be claimed by the business owner and any additional information will need to be approved by the business owner.

Step 2: Claim Business
If the contact info includes an email address for the business, Rek will automatically send an email with a special link prompting the business owner to sign up for Rek as business owner. The business owner will need to provide proof that they are indeed the owner in order to claim the business. After that they will have access to their profile.

If the contact info only includes a phone number (or the emailed message has not been responded to for some time) then a human sales associate will reach out to the business owner through that number, walk them through the Rek process and its benefits, and then ask for an email to initiate the aforementioned workflow.

Step 3: Make a "wave"

Once the Slurp Station is claimed by its owner, Kyle will receive a notification that Slurp Station is finally registered on Rek. He is then able to make a "crave wave" to a targeted group of friends. The "Crave Wave" sends a push notification to users in the group with a customized message from Kyle.

User Scenario 2 – Group Chat

Because Kyle is a gastronomer, he is much more up to date on all things food than many of his friends. Some of his old friends who are not gastronomers are visiting from out of town and Kyle wants to take them on a food tour of the city. He has found a number of places and wants to send them to the group to narrow down the options.

With Yelp or Google Maps, Kyle can only send restaurants one at a time to the group chat. This makes it hard for everyone in the group chat to keep track. As conversations go on, the links get lost in chat history.

Within Rek, Kyle can create a list with all of the options and everyone can see the restaurants in one place. To invite his friends to Rek, all Kyle has to do is share a list. Rek can pull from the contacts from his phone so Kyle just has to search for their names. Kyle can also send the group a link that is generated when a user wants to "Share List." When his friends click on the link either in the group chat or text, it will bring them to the App store to download Rek if they do not have it. If they already use Rek, it will bring them to the list that Kyle shared.

User Scenario 3 – Recommendation Lists

One of George's favorite restaurants, Pigeon Peas, is in danger of going out of business. This restaurant was a neighborhood favorite, but since Covid many of the previous residents have moved out, and it has been hard to establish the same foothold with the new residents that have moved in.

George tries to bolster Pigeon Peas' rating on Google Review and Yelp, but this only helps once a user tries to look up Pigeon Peas. This does not necessarily help his new neighbors or network discover the restaurant.

The only other method George can think of is word-of-mouth. As he meet-and-greets his new neighbors, George always makes sure he drops Pigeon Peas, has a recommendation and heralds it as one of the best restaurants in the neighborhood. However, since his neighbors are meeting George for the first time, he doesn't have the same credibility with them as he does with his friends. Afterall, he's not the go-to person for all things food with his new neighbors, or at least not yet.

With Rek, however, his new neighbors can see the engagement George has with his previous recommendations and be able to see that he is a trusted source when it comes to restaurant recommendations. Georges has a number of recommendation lists of local hidden gems that have over 200 saves, all of which are from real connections within his network.

Once his new neighbors feel that George is a trustworthy source of recommendations, they will no doubt be much more inclined to try out Pigeon Peas. The network effect will then trickle throughout the neighborhood. Before you know it, Pigeon Peas will regain its position as a neighborhood favorite.

User Stories + Epics

ID	AS	I WANT	SO THAT	SRC
01	**User**	I want to be able to search for restaurants		1
02	**User**	I want to be able to see an "add restaurant" option if the restaurant I'm searching for is not yet on Rek	I can write reviews on new places	1
03	**User**	I want the information about the restaurant to be auto-populated if it exists on other platforms	the information can be retrieved through APIs.	1
04	**User**	I want to be able to manually change the information that was auto-populated if it is incorrect	I can input the information accurrately	1
05	**User**	I want to see the number of friends that recommend a place/list		2
06	**User**	I want to see the total number of users that recommend a place/list		2
07	**Use**	I want to see reviews of a place from only friends		2
08	**User**	I want to see all the reviews of a places from all users		2
09	**User**	I want to be able to share lists and recommendations with contacts on my phone		3
10	**Rek**	I want to be able to share lists and recommendations with my friends on Rek	users can look through their chats	3
11	**User**	I want to be able to pull existing contact information from my phone	I don't' have to manually type phone numbers or emails when I'm sharing a list or recommendation from Rek	3

12	**User**	I want to be able to make a "crave wave" to both friends on Rek as well as friends who are not on Rek		3

Epics Priority

In terms of priority, Automate Restaurant Onboarding would be the most important because without the ability to onboard new businesses, users would have sufficient places to review or recommend. In order to compete with existing platforms on the market, Rek needs to have the most up to date information. This means any place that is on an existing platform should also be on Rek. Otherwise Rek would have a huge disadvantage.

See Network Engagement would be next in terms of importance because one of the main purposes of Rek is to connect users with their network. Seeing recommendations and reviews by friends and close connections is core to the value proposition of Rek. It is also what distinguished Rek from its competitors. Rather than relying on ratings and reviews of strangers, users are able to rely on the reviews and recommendations of friends and close connections.

Alert and Notify Network would be last because the value of Rek would not decrease without this feature. While it is important for growing the platform, it does not necessarily make Rek stand out from its competitors since push notification is not a unique feature. Similarly, Yelp and Google Review does not heavily rely on push notification if at all since neither are social media platforms.

Success Metrics

Completion Rate

The most straightforward way to measure the success of implementing Automate Restaurant Onboarding is seeing the percentage of Businesses that gets added versus the percentage of Business that is abandoned mid way through the process. This is a quantitative measure that can indicate to us whether the feature is effective. The initial rate can also serve as the benchmark to measure future improvement against. As Rek goes through multiple iterations, the hope is that completion rate increases and we are able to continuously increase our goal for the next iteration.

Conversion Rate

This is a common metric to quantitatively measure how successful an ad campaign or other marketing tools are at converting targeted audiences to users. In our case, we would be measuring how successful user shares (from Alert and Notify Network features) are in converting friends and close connections to using Rek. When a user shares a list or a place

from Rek to someone who is not currently on Rek, they will be taken to the app store. A tracker can be embedded within the link to track user behavior once they reach the app store. There can also be multiple points during the user journey to track. The first can be the number of users that download the app, and then the number of users who actually sign up to use Rek. This will allow us to be more granular in determining exactly which point in the user journey to enhance and where there is the most friction in the user acquisition process.

App Store Rating and Reviews

Much like the places on Rek, our app is also subject to reviews and ratings. App store ratings and reviews are often the most useful in terms of getting both qualitative and quantitative user feedback. Reviews tell us firsthand what customers are most frustrated with and what new features they'd like to see. The rating also provides a quantitative measure for how much users enjoy using the app and can serve as an objective measure for improvement.