

PRD 1

Title

Creating Network of Recommendations

Overview

Rek is an application that brings recommendations for those who like to try new things but are plagued by the burden of choice. Unlike with Google Maps, Yelp or other recommendation platforms where users rely on reviews from strangers, bots, and sponsored content, Rek allows users to browse at ease by gathering recommendations from those users actually know and trust - friends, family and coworkers.

Objective

We aim to develop basic features a user needs to read and give recommendations, and interact with their own network on Rek.

Persona - May Bauer

Behaviors:

May moved to Chicago for her new position a few months ago. She's active, outgoing and friendly. Although being new to the city, May started making new friends from work.

May eats out about 5 times a week and tries to find a new place to eat once a week. She also goes out every weekend for activities ranging from exploring new restaurants to attending cooking classes.

Being open-minded, May also adapts well to new technologies and innovations.

User Scenario 1 - Tourist Traps

May had a long week of work and wants to find weekend adventures to let off the steam. She hops on Google Reviews and searches for 'activities to do during the weekend in Chicago' and selects the price ranges she's comfortable with. However, the conventional review systems filter her towards the high-profile and broadly-known attractions of her new city. Consequently, these experiences are limited in number and are often-times crowded as tourists make use of the same platforms as she does.

She can rely on local periodicals (e.g. Time Out Chicago or a local newspaper's event calendar) but this requires time-consuming and laborious research. What May really wants is continuous recommendations that she can trust and that require little research on her part.

Now, with Rek, May is able to see recommendations from people she trusts - friends, family and coworkers. She can see reviews from the people she knows and understands their habits, so it's easier to judge their opinions and decide if what she sees would be something she likes. May is also able to use the chat function to send messages to her friends to ask questions on Rek about their recommendations.

User Scenario 2 - Limited Connections

Being new to the city her network is limited to the co-workers she has befriended. Thus, May wants continuous recommendations from her co-workers without demanding effort, time or attention from her co-workers. She would also ideally want to access the network of people that have been in the city longer and that she could have real connections with. May thinks that the people would be in-the-know, and they know both what is good but also what is somewhat of a secret or new but worthwhile.

With Rek, May has an option to add 'friends of friends' to expand her network so that can expand her connection pool to see more recommendations. Even though May doesn't know them directly, she can deduce their lifestyle better based on their mutual connections. Additionally, it is much easier for May to connect with and introduce herself to them as their friend's friend to ask specific questions and potentially build real connections.

User Scenario 3 - Interactions within Network

Currently using Facebook, May likes to interact with her friends when she sees posts of them doing something fun. Apart from liking and commenting, she sometimes sends direct messages to her close friends asking about the restaurants or activities on the posts. When May sees posts from people she's not comfortable contacting directly with, she has to put effort into researching the recreations. After May determines that she's interested in the recreation, she saves the places to the list she makes on her phone or to Google Map's 'Want to Go'.

Sometimes, May sees interesting posts from her friends and does all the research on the places. However, she finds out later that she has already seen the places from somewhere else and added them to her lists. May wishes she has an easy and convenient way to solidify the lists.

Rek allows user interactions within their own network. May can save the recommendations to the list in the same platform.. May is also able to see how many of her friends recommended the same places, so that she doesn't see repeated businesses/activities and has more confidence when seeing many friends who have similar lifestyles as hers recommend the businesses. Once May explores the activities, they can further give reviews and share the recommendations to

their network. Additionally, Rek also eases the process of finding the right recommendations through the filter searches.

User Stories

We use the label “Rek” to encompass all proprietary components that comprise the app and its actions. Lastly, the “SRC” column in the table below indicates the scenario(s) from which this user story came and the “ID” column is just a numeric index for the sake of enumerating epics.

ID	AS	I WANT	SO THAT	SRC
01	User	I want to add friends on Rek by linking to the network on social media platform	I can easily build my network on Rek	2
02	User	I want to be able to search for certain friends and add them on Rek.	I can find specific friends when they are not linked to my other social media platform	2
03	User	I want to connect with friends of my friends on Rek	I can expand my connection and recommendation pools.	2
04	User	I want to be able see friend requests and choose to accept or deny	I can manage my connections on Rek	2
05	User	I want to be able to see a list of friends I have on Rek		2
06	User	I want to see recommendations from people I am friends with on Rek		1,3
07	Use	I want to send messages to my Rek friends	we can discuss about the recommendations on Rek	1
08	User	I want to receive notifications when my friends send messages to me on Rek	I don't have to constantly check the chat box manually	1
09	User	I want to see messages sent to me on Rek		1
10	Rek	I need to store chat history	users can look through their chats	1
11	User	I want to filter my search based on my interests.	I can select activities of interest for each search.	3
12	User	I want to filter my search based on my budget	I don't have to worry and do more research on cost for every activity/business I'm interested in.	3

13	User	I want to filter my search based on my location	my searches are tailored to my geographical reach.	3
14	User	I want to interact with my friends' recommendations such as adding the places to my own list		3
15	User	I want to share recommendations I see to friends on Rek	I don't need to use other platforms to do so	3
16	Rek	I need to compile the places that are recommended more than once in a user's network	I don't show redundancy.	3

Epics

listed in order of priority

Epic	Description	User Story ID(s)	Rationale for this priority
Network Connections and Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - create network on Rek through directly adding, or linking to social media - accept and deny friend requests - see list of friends on Rek 	01 02 03 04 05	<p>This is the core functionality which the other two epics are dependent on since Rek requires recommendations from users' networks.</p> <p>The functionality is also standard and expected from the user.</p>
Recommendation Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - see recommendations from friends - save recommendations to list - share recommendation to friends 	14 15	This is another core functionality that drives Rek's main user activities
Search and Filter Features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - see search results accurately - filter search results through users' preferences 	06 11 12 13	Although the users do not need the feature to perform main activities on Rek, the filter enhances user experiences and can potentially increase user engagement with the app.
Chat Feature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - send and receive messages - receive notifications for the messages 	07 08 09 10	This epic is standard but not required as a core function. This aims to boost user engagement on Rek and improve user experiences.

Prototype

[click here for the interactive prototype](#)

Success Metrics

Since the features for this PRD are related to the main user activities on Rek - creating connections and giving/finding recommendations, the focuses are on traffic and user engagement.

Total active users

This is used to measure the total number of unique users who engage with Rek. The metric can be broken down further by looking at the number of unique users who use Rek on a daily basis, which we would call the 'regular users'.

Average number of sessions per user

We will calculate the metric on a daily or monthly basis to assess the popularity of Rek and the customer engagement over a period of time.

Customer churn rate

We can use cohort analysis to analyze when users are dropping off in their usage of Rek. This metric determines how long until users abandon Rek and what qualities of Rek improve or impede retention based on the timeline series analysis.