

Studio Task 2

My geocaching application allows users to do three main tasks:

- hide (find ideal spots for burying caches)
- seek (see the location of caches nearby)
- connect (talk with others about geocaching)
- record (report a found geocache – this is a minor task)

For this project, I focused on the seek task. Seeking for novices is very straightforward. They are taken through three main screens:

- 1) The main screen where they select seek (a clear and large button) from a list of three major tasks.
- 2) The map screen that shows locations of nearby geocaches on a map. Stars on the map represent Geocaches.
- 3) After clicking on a star, the resulting screen shows info about the selected geocache. From this screen, the user is able to go into the more minor task of recording that they have found that geocache.

For novices, the primary goal was usability. Buttons are large and clear, any extra information is hidden away (as we will see when the expert uses this app), and all the major tasks are easily accessible. I wanted novices to see this as simple, an app with no learning curve and so I also made sure to model it on other navigational apps (since user is likely familiar with one of them). For example, google maps inspired the tips and tricks, zoom feature and download feature.

Seeking for experts is similar but has extra features. Essentially, the expert learns over time by exploration of these features or may click the menu button and go to tips and tricks to learn.

There are three tiny dots to the top, right of the screen. It is expected that novices won't be bothered by/with this. But after experimenting with the application or reading the tips and tricks, experts will notice. These dots open a 'more menu', essentially an additional path further into the app that experts can take. This path includes the ability to download the map to your phone, chat about a particular geocache, get emergency help, turn the map using the compass, and activate voice commands.

Other expert functions take a different form – they are functions one would not figure out without doing them accidentally or reading the tips and tricks, because there is no menu. These include double clicking to zoom in on map and swiping up from bottom of screen to reveal the 'more menu' (mentioned above).

For the experts, the primary goal was to 'wow' them, to help them be more efficient, to promote the social aspect and to maintain usability. The usability remained as nothing was really changed from the novice screens. The app remained the same; there was no new path. But as a person uses the app more and more, they

would discover new paths that would 'wow' them – this is in reference to the 'more menu' and the various ways of getting there (clicking '...' or swiping up). In addition, since geocaching rests on the idea of finding things strangers have found, in a way, it promotes some random form of socialization between strangers. Therefore, for a heavy user of this app. ie a big 'geocacher', the social aspect might be important. This is why in addition to 'connect', chat is added in the 'more menu'. The idea is that this chat would allow the user to see a forum about the particular geocache he is in interested in, and would also be able to chat about it. In comparison, 'connect' is more general and focuses on the activity of geocaching rather than a specific geocache.