CS325 Project 4.3

Project Proposal: Make it Better

Michelle Ko

Cici Chen

Jaeseong Lee

Foroogh Hajiseyedjavadi

INTRODUCTION

Our proposal is a rideshare application for students of the 5 colleges. Based on the information acquired earlier through the knowledge elicitation process, the following sections address the needs and main idea of our application, the existing and proposed approaches, and the representative tasks to help gauge the general usability of our application..

THE NEEDS AND MAIN IDEA

Currently, there are several websites and applications that try to address the needs for an easy and convenient rideshare platform. However, each of the platforms address those needs differently with advantages and disadvantages. As the result of the knowledge elicitation stage, it is clear that UMass 5 college students do not have access to a user friendly rideshare application in comparison to applications like Uber and Lyft; And those applications serve differently from other rideshare platforms in that the user can't share their itinerary and request or offer rides without being hired by a company. The UMass rideshare Facebook page also has its own shortcomings including not being user friendly, not providing the benefits of an application, and not being designed around the needs of a rideshare platform. The purpose of our application is to give a better answer to that need and fill the current gap for a rideshare application for 5 colleges students.

The target population is the 5 colleges students who are currently active users of the Facebook rideshare page. Our aim is not to increase the demand for rideshare, but rather to provide a more convenient platform for the current users of the rideshare sites.

EXISTING APPROACHES

In the market, there are several platforms offering rideshare, such as Uber, Lyft and the Facebook rideshare group. However, our proposal would like to provide a rideshare platform that combines some UI features of those platforms with some improvements. Based on our interviews and personal experiences, we concluded some problems of Uber/Lyft and Facebook rideshare group were (for Uber and Lyft) having no ride reservation option, (for the Facebook group) forcing users to manually search through posts to meet their rider needs, having similar offers and requests go unmatched after being made, and having to ask for updates (ex. Is the ride taken, yet?). Our proposal will address these problems and shortcomings by providing a search engine and filter to make searching for desired post easier, having a ranking system for drivers, having a system to match similar requests to offers made after them, and providing live updates to an offer's status.

APPROACH

Our system will provide a hub to connect 5 College student passengers to 5 College student drivers (and vice-versa). Several interactions will take place in our system. First, creating a user profile; All users must create their own profiles when signing up. They will be asked to provide their name, age, affiliated 5 college school, profile picture and a checklist of precautions (ex. allergies). Second, making posts (to request or offer rides); to procure a ride, users must provide their destination to a search engine (another interaction) and choose among a list of offers going to that area with the assistance of a filter; If there is no satisfactory option, users can make posts inputting desired destination, departure date/time, and other specifics; If a user is

offering a ride, they will go straight to creating a post and inputting destination, departure date/time, and other specifics. Third, notifications will be made to users to either remind users of their upcoming trip or to notify them of a matching offer made after a request. Another interaction is users contacting their passenger or driver through an in-app messanger and caller. Lastly, after rides, users will be required to rate the driver out of five stars based on their riding experience with this driver.

The particular parts of our system that will be prototyped and tested will be making the user profile, making ride requests or offers, and the search engine/filter.

REPRESENTATIVE TASKS

We hope to gauge the general usability of our system by observing test subjects accomplish three representative tasks with varying difficulty. The easiest of tasks is communicating with another rider or driver through in-app messaging and calling. The task with medium-difficulty task is creating a profile. This task entails having the user signing-up for the app with his or her 5 College's email, uploading a profile picture, provide gender and age, and writing an optional short description of themselves. Finally, the most difficult of the tasks is creating a post needing (this will be combined with searching for offers) or offering a ride (both kinds will be tested). To accomplish this task, the user will be required to specify to the app if he or she is searching for or offering a ride. If searching for a ride, he or she will be first require to search among existing offers by being inquired for their destination and then given a list of offers going there. The user can either manually go through the list or use a filter. If the user cannot find what they are looking for, he and she will make a ride request post sharing desired

destination, departure date/time, and other specifics. If offering a ride, a post will be made with the destination, departure date/time, how many seats are available and more.

Breakdown

Foroogh Hajiseyedjavadi: wrote on “Need and main idea” part

Cici Chen: wrote on “Existing approaches” part

Jaeseong Lee: wrote on “Your approach” part

Michelle Ko: wrote on “Representative tasks” part