

Module 7

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Define a community problem you want to solve with technology and the people who it affects that you want to serve.

The Parlor App

I come from a line of South Asian heritage—specifically Bangladeshi. Although I was born in Canada and I grew up here in the United States, I was still brought up with an immense sense of culture. Both my parents emigrated to America for a better life, a country with a decent system for education, health and opportunity. Bangladesh has a certain cultural fashion and is big when it comes to women dressing up. Typically South Asian get dressed up in this “gorgeous style” for occasions such as parties or weddings. This can take hours because you would have to put a saree on properly draped and pinned in place so that it won’t come off. Some women get henna tattoos on their arms and feet. And of course we can’t forget hair and makeup. In Bangladesh there are usually parlors where you can pay someone to help get ready and look very put together professionally for a low cost. They even have a system where they can send someone to your house so that you’re comfortable and don’t have to travel in the heavy clothing. However, when it comes to places like America, or even from a micro stand point, NYC South Asian beauty parlors that provide this service are scarce to find and it can be extremely expensive at the parlors that exist. Most of the time the way people find this service is through word of mouth. This is particularly difficult for the younger generation who may not be as connected to Bangladeshi communities. It is also difficult for the younger generation, for example millennials to attend these events because they might not have adequate knowledge on how to style and drape (the act of wearing a saree) their clothing. This is where the Parlor app comes in.

The app will allow both parlors that are businesses and self employed South Asian stylists to find customers. For example a user will have a wedding they need to attend and they need the full hair, makeup, and draping of the saree. They go on the app and select what services they need. The user will then select whether they want the service done in their own home or if they don’t mind traveling. Once that’s done, they will select an appointment date/time and include the event details, and then be shown available Parlors and stylists. They will be able to see a portfolio of their past work so they can make the choice that suits them best. Afterwards the user will be shown a final price and once the transaction is complete the stylist/parlor will confirm the appointment. After the appointment is completed the user will be able to rate the stylist/parlor. This service helps to preserve South Asian Bangladeshi culture for the upcoming generations. It helps bring availability to a service that is difficult to find here in NYC. It also helps stylists and parlors to manage their clientele and make organized income.