Milestone 2 Report: Uber Priority Ride System

1 Project Overview

Team Members:

- Krishna Kumar Bais (241110038): User Research Lead
- Rohan (241110057): UI/UX Designer
- Sevak Shekokar (241110065): Design Strategist

Refined Project Goal and Scope:

The focus remains on redesigning Uber's app experience to solve ride cancellations for critical destinations such as hospitals, airports, and railway stations.
In Milestone 1, we identified a recurring issue in Uber ride booking where users often face cancellations or delays when heading to critical destinations like hospitals, airports, and train stations. This can result in severe consequences such as missed flights, delays in medical emergencies, or missed train departures. Based on our review analysis and user survey, we proposed a feature enhancement to prioritize such rides.

Key modifications from Initial Scope:

- No High-/Low-Fidelity Prototypes: We're working exclusively with Mid-Fidelity Designs.
- Platform for Review Analysis: Switched from App Store to Google Play Store (via Kaggle dataset) due to better accessibility and volume of data.

2 Needfinding Results

To understand user pain points related to Uber ride cancellations to critical destinations (hospitals, airports, railway stations), we conducted a needfinding study using two complementary methods: Surveys and Review Analysis.
The research aimed to uncover the frequency, consequences, and user expectations around such cancellations.

Research Questions

Q1. Have users experienced ride cancellations to critical destinations such as hospitals, airports, or train stations?

Q2. What were the consequences of those cancellations?

Methods Used

Method 1: User Survey

Sampling and Participants:

- Method: Convenience sampling.
- Sample Size: 88 Response.
- Participants : General Uber users.

Survey Questions:

Q1. Did your driver ever cancel your ride when you were heading to a Hospital, Airport, or Train Station? (Yes/No)

Q2. If yes, what problem did the cancellation cause?

Surveys Dataset: Conducted using Google Forms with 88 respondents.
Survey Link

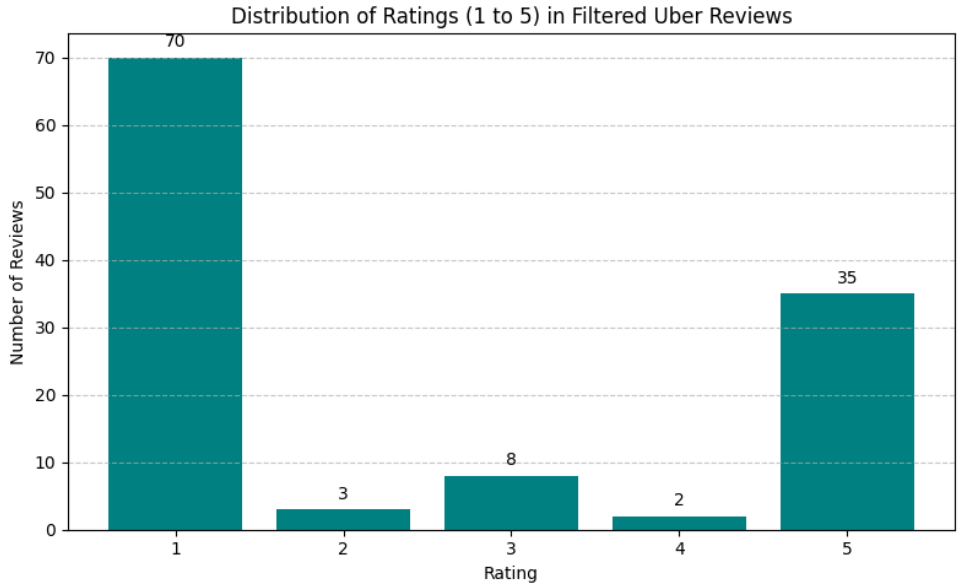
Method 2: Review Analysis

Data Source:

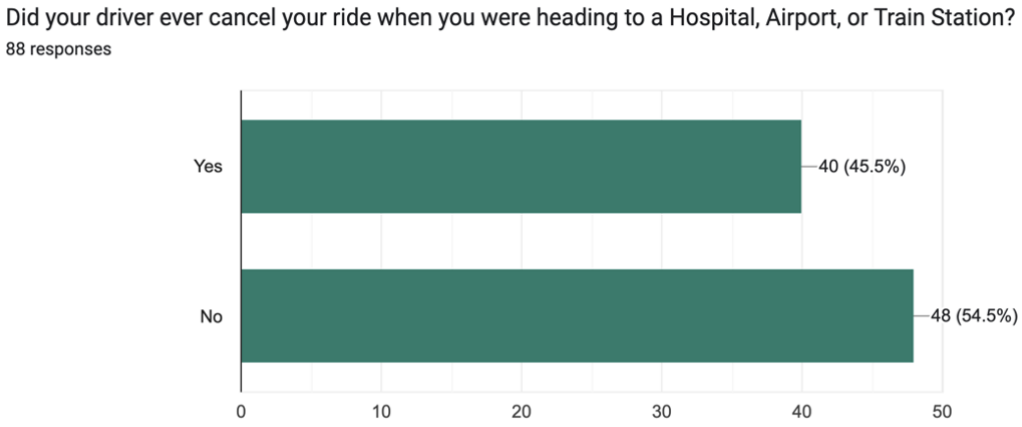
- Dataset: Kaggle 2024 Uber Customer Reviews. using Python.
  Kaggle data link
- Filtered Keywords: “hospital”, “airport”, “railway”, “train station”, “emergency”.

Findings

- 118 relevant reviews were identified.



- Key problems included:
  - Last-minute cancellations for airport/train trips
  - Unreliability during medical emergencies
  - Emotional distress and frustration
- Sample user quotes:
  - "Had a flight at 4AM, driver canceled last minute. Almost missed it!"
  - "My mom was sick and I had to go to the hospital. App showed driver coming but then canceled!"
- 45.5% (40 out of 88) reported cancellations while heading to a critical destination.



- Common consequences included:
  - Missed trains/flights
  - Delayed access to medical services during emergencies
- Sample user quotes:
  - "Yes, I missed my train and had to book another ticket."
  - "I was heading to the hospital with my father, and the ride got canceled twice."
- Many users indicated willingness to pay extra for a reliable, high-priority ride option.

Triangulation and Insights

The survey and review data revealed consistent issues:

- Frequent cancellations before critical events like flights and hospital visits
- High stress due to last-minute transportation issues
- No feature to distinguish time-sensitive rides from casual ones
- Users are open to paying more for guaranteed rides

Key Pain Points

Pain Point	Description
Unreliable Service	Last-minute cancellations cause users to miss flights, trains, or face delays during emergencies.
No Prioritization Option	Uber does not allow users to flag a ride as "critical" or "urgent."
Lack of Trust	Users hesitate to rely on Uber for time-sensitive trips.

Opportunities Identified

1. Introduce a "Priority Ride" feature for critical destinations.
2. Offer a paid option for guaranteed pickup (surge-proof).
3. Notify drivers when a ride is marked as urgent.
4. Show reliability metrics to users for selecting drivers.

Key Themes Identified:

- Frequent cancellations before flights or train departures.
- Lack of trust in Uber for medical emergencies.
- Frustration due to delayed pickup or unreliable drivers.

3 Preliminary Design Considerations

Addressing Identified User Needs

From our needfinding through surveys and review analysis, a major issue emerged: cancellations and delays for rides to critical destinations (such as hospitals, airports, and train stations) cause stress, inconvenience, and in some cases, severe consequences.

Initial Approach: We first considered automatically converting all rides to critical destinations into "Priority Rides." However, we realized this approach could create problems, as not every trip to a critical location is urgent. Automatically charging extra could reduce user satisfaction, especially in non-emergency situations.

Refined Approach: To better address this, we propose a balanced solution where the system:

- Detects critical destinations automatically.
- Gives the user an option to choose a **Priority Ride**.
- Explains the benefits (e.g., No cancellations, faster pickups) and extra costs.
- Respects user autonomy by not enforcing priority unless requested.

This approach ensures that users facing genuine urgency can opt in, while others retain the standard experience.

Initial Ideas for the Prototype

Design Directions

- **For Users:**
  - Optional upgrade for rides to critical destinations.
  - Transparency in extra costs and benefits.
  - No ride cancellations and reduced waiting time.
- **For Drivers:**
  - Higher earnings for priority rides.
  - "Cancel" button disabled for such rides, with only an "Emergency Report" option.
  - Penalties for no-shows to maintain commitment.

Though we have not yet developed a working prototype, our initial ideas include:

- **User App Layout:**
  - Smart destination detection using keyword filters (e.g., "hospital", "airport").
  - A simple toggle or pop-up labeled "Make this a Priority Ride."
  - Clear breakdown of additional charges and benefits if the user opts in.

- **Driver App Layout:**
  - Visual tag like "High Priority Ride: +25% Earnings — No Cancellation."
  - Disabling of "Cancel" button for priority rides, leaving only an "Emergency Report."

Why This Works

- **Builds Trust**: Users feel in control and safer—*68% willing to pay more for guaranteed service*
- **Encourages Driver Commitment**: Better pay offsets restrictions—*Drivers more likely to accept*

These concepts will guide our upcoming Figma prototypes. We aim to test these ideas in future iterations and align them closely with the user needs we've identified.

4 Timeline & Next Steps

Milestone	Task
Milestone 2 (Due: End of this week)	Needfinding and user research; Requirements, screen designs, and tech stack selection
Milestone 3 (Due: April 15)	Prototyping based on needfinding results; Initial engineering implementation
Final Milestone (Due: May 1)	Evaluation of prototypes, analysis of results, final engineering refinements, and project submission

Attachments Data

- Google Form Survey Responses
- Kaggle Dataset Reviews (filtered)
- Python Filtering Script