

Awesome South Africa

Overview (Tourism Update, 2015)

- Improve connection between travelers and their demands from the tourism industry
- This is done by allowing consumers to search for their preferred activity or location and then waiting for the app to display the nearest activity suited to their needs within the closest range of their preferred location

Strengths (Tourism Update, 2015)

- Free to Download
- Developed with comprehensive search categories
- Includes information about various tourism sectors
- Endorsed by SA Tourism
- Allows vendors and merchants in the tourism industry a platform on which to promote products, services, and establishments to tourists
- Advertising on the app is cost efficient and allows vendors to cut costs on marketing and advertising

Weaknesses (Tourism Update, 2015)

- Incompatible with some smartphones
- Because the app isn't specialized in certain sectors, information can sometimes be minimum and unsatisfactory to the consumers
- Jackson (2015) states the categories for vendors to list their products on are limited to 15 categories

Possible Implementation

- Development method most likely used was web-based
- High amount of user input and data extraction which requires a dedicated database such as Microsoft Sequel Server or Firebase
- Google APIs were potentially used in the development of the app, such as Google Maps

Culture Trip

Overview (Google Play, 2022)

- Plan trips by wish listing landmarks and experiences, and collecting inspiration
- Includes a map
- Book places to stay and experiences

Strengths (Google Play, 2022)

- Recommendations from global experts and locals for the best things to do, landmarks to visit, places to stay, etc.
- Award-winning travel guides, stories, and videos provide more unknown global landmarks, and experiences
- Easy to plan trips and add to wish lists
- Free cancellations and changes with price-match guarantees
- Easy access to support team for questions
- UI is easy to navigate (A Google User, 2019)
- Ideal for short trips to fit as many experiences in as possible (A Google User, 2020)
- Free app

Weaknesses (Google Play, 2022)

- Frequent bugs, error messages, and crashes
- A Google User (2020), stated that this travel guide is limited to only a few areas
- A Google User (2018) stated that it is tedious to make lists and save items to them

Possible Implementation

- It is assumed that they used JSON to store and call information from a database
- The app is likely coded in Java on a platform which can be used for both Android and Apple software, such as Xamarin.

Horizon Explorer

Overview (Horizon Explorer, 2022)

- Created by Arrow software development
- Scan local environment to identify landmarks
- Give users their approximate location
- Set destination on a map

Strengths (Horizon Explorer, 2022)

- Free app for Android and IOS
- Allows users to utilize their phone camera to identify any landmarks in its view. For example, mountains, peaks, lakes buildings and airplanes.
- Identifies the landmarks and provides their names
- Provides the distance between the user and the identified landmark as well as the altitude
- Translates this information on a map and can set the quickest route towards said landmark from the users' current location
- Users can view information on discovered landmarks

Weaknesses (Google Play, 2019)

- Cluttered UI
- Difficult to read text
- Confusing layout
- Information displayed on the app can be incorrect
- Slow and crashes frequently
- Hardware intensive and badly optimized

Possible Implementation

- Probably uses Google Maps for route planning
- Uses photos stored in a database to cross reference with image captured with device
- The user's location is used and stored within the app
- It can be assumed that Java was used to code
- React Native was possibly used for development of this app as it supports both Android and IOS

To develop any app, it is necessary to research similar apps. With the intention of creating an app which showcases local landmarks on Android devices, it is important to research at least three of these types of travel apps. Research was done on Awesome South Africa, Culture Trip, and Horizon Explorer.

awesome SOUTH AFRICA	Culture Trip	Horizon Explorer
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Free download</li><li>Runs on Android and iOS</li><li>Limited information for certain areas</li><li>Limited to 15 categories for vendors to list products</li><li>Includes access to Google Maps</li><li>Products supplied by vendors</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Free download</li><li>Runs on Android and iOS</li><li>Limited information for certain areas</li><li>No limit to trip plans listed in wish list or their items</li><li>Includes access to Google Maps</li><li>Guidance supplied by global experts and locals</li><li>UI is easy to navigate</li><li>Crashes often</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Free download</li><li>Runs on Android and iOS</li><li>Information provided can be incorrect</li><li>Includes access to Google Maps</li><li>UI is cluttered and confusing</li><li>Crashes often due to poor optimization</li></ul>

Showcasing Local Landmarks

In conclusion, these apps have issues in common that is important to avoid so to make a new and improved app. Some of these issues include limited information on certain landmarks and bugs with frequent crashes. It is vital to ensure the UI is neat and easy to navigate, the app is not tedious, the app is optimized, and that all information provided is correct, as mentioned.

Best Features for Final App

- Free to download
- Make use of firebases for the database
- Code in Android Studio using Java (Android devices only)
- Provide contact details for the support team for users who need assistance
- UI is neat and easy to navigate
- Ensure the app is not tedious to use
- Ensure that all information displayed on the app is correct through verification
- Ensure optimization for the best experience
- Add system to favourite/wish list landmarks to visit later
- User can search for specific landmarks using the search bar
- Allows access to Google Maps through the app

Search for, explore, and book activities with Culture Trip (Google Play, 2022)

Create own personalized plans/list of places to go with Culture Trip (Google Play, 2022)

Screenshot of Horizon Explorer (Horizon Explorer, 2022) shows a landmark "Copenhagen Opera House"

Landmark description is displayed

Distance to the landmark is displayed

User's location displayed

Scroll through the selection of locations and choose one to view more information on

Can contact vendors with a messaging tab

Can view photos of the location and reviews using Awesome South Africa (greeneconomy.media, 2022)

Travel recommendations from locals with Culture Trip (Google Play, 2022)