# Design Research

Part 1: Design Research Summary
Survey

For our research, we decided to field a survey and conduct 1:1 interviews. Krishna and Amari distributed and collected surveys, while Tristan conducted the 1:1 interviews.

Krishna distributed the survey (the exact same one listed on the last assignment) between a few of his friends. He also gave the survey to a couple strangers for a less biased set of data points. Most of the responses he received from his friends were very similar to these responses.
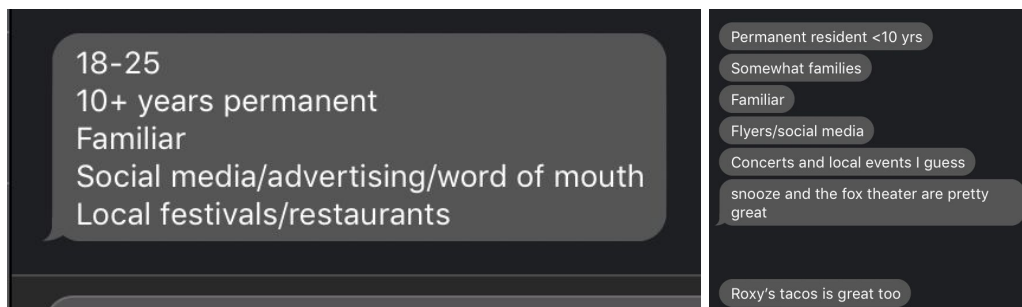
They were obviously students, so all their ages were between 18-25 and most of them have been a Colorado resident for over 5 years – before their college careers began. They all were "somewhat familiar" or "familiar" with Boulder and almost all of them mentioned they had an interest in local events and Boulder's restaurant scene. Additionally, it seems like everyone found out about events primarily via social media or advertising through flyers. According to the survey responses, for people who weren't students, they relied more heavily on word-of-mouth to get information about upcoming events. Also, for some strangers (some were students and some were not), many people mentioned that they were temporary residents or permanent residents of Colorado but for a short amount of time. Interestingly, it seemed like regardless of how long people have been residents of Colorado, most people feel either "somewhat familiar" or "familiar" with the Boulder area.

Amari gave the survey to two individuals: a full-time, third-year CU student and a 15-year Boulder local (age 25-35) who was her Uber driver. Comparing their survey answers, both people described themselves as familiar with the Boulder area, despite the difference in time spent in the area. Both also cited flyers and word of mouth as the main way they find out about events. In contrast, the student was mainly interested in concerts and onetime events, while the Boulder local was more interested in permanent locations, like restaurants and parks.

As it relates to our design, this research revealed that 1) we need to include the ability for users to prioritize what information is relevant to them/is not relevant to them. The

interface should allow the user to mark preferences on what types of places they are seeking so that the app can offer as much personalized use as possible. This would be akin to a personalized "For You" section that apps often offer their users. 2) Since residents generally feel familiar with Boulder regardless of how long they have been in the area, a conscious effort must be made in the design to stay as up-to-date as possible in order to provide all new and relevant information to its users. A "Trending" or "New Finds" section in the app would accomplish this. 3) Most individuals reported that they typically found out about local events through ads/flyers and word of mouth. Therefore, incorporating visuals, like digital flyers, and a community feature simulating "word of mouth" would maximize the value of the information we offer.

1:1 Interviews

Tristan conducted the 1:1 Interviews with individuals living in Denver for greater than a year within his social network. Tristan conducted the interview on three post-college, young professionals in their mid twenties (23 - 28) who are relatively new to Denver and would like to become more of a "local". Each individual felt as if they knew Denver "relatively well" or "above average" and used Facebook, Google, and word-of-mouth mainly to find new events/businesses/locations. Notable and frequent responses included: "Why wouldn't I just use Facebook to manage my events?", "What keeps me using this application?", "An important feature to me would be the ability to share events, just like Facebook.", "I feel like all this information can get overwhelming if it isn't presented in the correct way. ", "Yes, managing my privacy and security is important to me.", and "Do I get any benefits/rewards for using the app to explore? What engages me?". These particular responses, among others, allowed me to draw these findings regarding our App:

1. We need to create an environment that differentiates us enough from Facebook.
   a. When designing our App, its premise is already similar enough to events on Facebook. We need to include designs and features that make us a more exclusive experience.
2. We need to create meaningful and consistent engagement for our user base.
   a. One of the interviewees main concerns was "Why would I use this application instead of just do research on my own?". This shows me that we must add financial incentivizing features such as rewards for exploration, deals for event promotions, and competition based incentives through a leaderboard.
3. We need to neatly organize our information.
   a. Another frequent concern was regarding the presentation of this information. An interviewee made the good point that there could potentially be too much saturation of events, locations, etc. on the UI. We need to include a powerful filtering system along with multiple methods of display for all of the information necessary for locations, businesses, events, etc.
4. We need to make privacy and security a major concern in our project.
   a. Every single interviewee agreed that security and user privacy was of paramount importance to them when it comes to consideration of using an app, especially if their user profile information and location information is available to us.

Part 2: Group Reflection

Meeting: Sunday, 10/28 at 1:30 PM in the Engineering Center Lobby; all members present

Amari and Krishna had fairly similar responses to the survey. The most notable thing we found that was consistent across all the responses between Amari and Krishna is that, regardless of age or length of residency in Colorado, most people feel somewhat familiar to familiar with the Boulder area. We think this may be due to Boulder's high population density which in turn has created a more closely-knit culture. Additionally, Boulder is fairly small area wise and most of the city events happen in specific areas like Pearl Street or the CU Boulder main campus, which contributes to why people feel familiar with Boulder quickly. This is an important insight because this emphasizes the need for our app to provide personalized suggestions for exploration and discovery based on what the user likes. If they like concerts, we should offer more details about concerts. Or if they like house parties, posts about nearby house parties should show up. And since this is an app to help people discover new things in their city, it should occasionally also offer up events or locations that the user might not normally think about going to. If they go, we can offer higher incentives/rewards for reaching out of their comfort zone and truly exploring their city.

Tristan's 1:1 interview responses about Denver were slightly different to the responses Krishna and Amari found in their surveys. All three interviewees felt that they somewhat knew Denver, however not to the fullest extent that they wanted to. This is probably because Denver is much bigger with lots more to do compared to Boulder. With this difference in data, we now understand that the personalization that we offer to our users must change not only based on the user's behavior, but also based on city size. In bigger cities, people seem to want to know more and they feel like there's much more left to be explored. With this in mind, we can recalculate our incentives we offer to our users. If people in a bigger city are more inclined to explore new things since there's so many different things to do, we can offer more things outside of their comfort zone and encourage city exploration. Likewise, in a smaller city where people feel more familiar and comfortable with their environment, we can focus on offering more events the user would like to go to and more occasionally offer events outside of what they normally do since they've already found their niche in their smaller city.

Both research methods showed that individuals typically use social media, the internet, and word of mouth to source their new local events/businesses/locations. However, Denver and Boulder differentiate vastly in population and size, but still remain similar in culture. This data suggests that regardless of city size, this application can be easily integrated into new markets allowing aggressive expansion. The data gathered from the 1:1 interviews also revealed just how important keeping users information anonymous and secure was to them, especially involving an app that uses location and accounts. Both research methods suggest the use of a powerful organization tool for all of the data being presented on the application, and the application must be engaging, up-to-date, and incentivizing to keep users interested in the application. Both data collection methods proved useful in different ways: the surveys allowed us to receive concrete, categorical answers which will be useful in compiling general trends and

1:1 interviews allowed us to understand a specific vision of what a user desired out of their experience with this application. Further data collection would simply increase the amount of varying responses, potentially revealing even more ways to cater the design of our application to the personalization of its users.

Part 3: Appendices
Survey

Age:

Under 13   13-18   18-25   25-35   35-55   55-65   65+

What is your residency in Colorado?
Temporary Resident < 1 year
Temporary Resident < 5 years

Permanent Resident < 5 years
Permanent Resident < 10 years
Permanent Resident 10+ years

How familiar do you consider yourself with the Boulder area?
Not Familiar   Somewhat Familiar   Familiar   Very Familiar

What sources do you use to find out about local events? Check all that apply.
___ Magazines/Newspapers
___ Social Media
___ Word of Mouth
___ Flyers/Advertising

Other: _____

What types of places are you most interested in? Check all that apply.
___ Concerts
___ Restaurants
___ Local Event Festivals
___ Park/Nature Spaces

Other: _____

Any Boulder places/events you would recommend?
_____
_____
_____

1:1 Interview Questions

1. How well do you feel you know the "local" Denver?
    a. If not very well: Why would you say that is?
    b. If well: What would you credit that success to?
2. How do you go about your exploring if you do?
    a. Do you use websites, social media, apps, etc?
    b. Do you use word of mouth?
    c. Are there any issues you have with your current methods?
3. If there was an app that promoted local exploration what kind of events, locations, businesses, etc. would you want on it?
4. What are your thoughts on an event sharing feature, similar to Facebook, to promote private or personal events?
5. Would sharing and messaging of the app's content to other friends be an important feature to you?
6. Are there any other features you would like on this app if it existed?
7. What are your feelings about location services being on 24/7?
8. What options would you like to be able to manage your privacy?