

Timeline for Hackathon Project: **Favor me**

Friday 4th November, 2016

Initial conception: Craigslist-lite

Return to commune way of life

Humans for millennia have lived in small communities, tribes and villages of a few hundred people. Only relatively recently in human history have we started to advance and paradoxically become more isolated as we began to live closer together. Think about your average apartment complex. How many people regularly interact with each other, or even know each other's names?

We are proud to present: Favor me

A crowdsourced small-community sharing platform. A way to ask for '**small favours**', there is no current app or platform that allows people to broadcast immediate needs that can be fulfilled by the community. This project will address a common problem that people have where they need an item, an ingredient, or even a service e.g. bringing luggage up the stairs. The interface will be an app where individuals can sign on and make a request. Other users can then look through the requested items and swipe? To accept the request users can swipe? or tap.

This project will also address the problem of the feeling of isolation in dense living situations e.g. apartment complexes or highrises. Particularly Hong Kong, Shanghai, Tokyo etc. Using this app will also provide 'plausible deniability' for social interaction.

Food wastage

Fuel expenditure

Using gps (tinder) to find people in (??) mile radius

Improve community

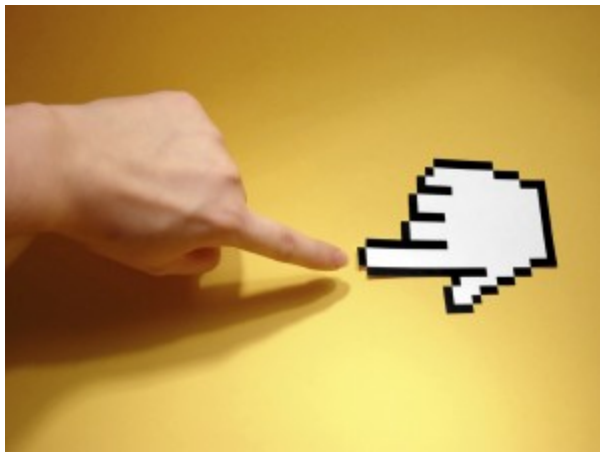
Turns apartment complexes into villages

**Tasks:**

- **Establish idea**
  - Brainstorm names
    - Something to do with 'small favour'
    - 'You owe me one!'
    - Present<sup>2</sup>

- Commun(C)ity
  - "Do me a favour!"
  - 'Favour me ;)'
- Research if idea exists
  - **Apparently not**
- Develop 'reward system'
  -
- Prevent users from abusing the system
  -
- **App Development/Concept + Functionality**
- Home page
  - Name
  - Location
    - Find people near you
  - 
  - Tinder-style interface
    - Two categories
      - Need
        - Type in item/service required
      - Provide a service
- **Design**
  - Sprites for common objects
  - Design the interface

## DESIGN INSPIRATION



<<http://www.reimagine.network/email-does-not-build-trust/>>

## **Saturday 5th November 2016 - Reward System: Favor points**

- More points for doing favors for other people
- Get set amount of points a day (log in)?
- Reciprocal point system
  - Not cash based?
  - Endogenous point system
- Sponsorship?
- But at the beginning, no one has points
- Points for registering
- How could people abuse this system
  
- Buying a favour costs 20 points
  - Give 60 points to start with for each person
- Link to phone number
- Global point system
  - Points exchangeable with anyone

Reward system description:

Registering on the app, by linking a phone number or facebook profile will give 50 points. Doing favors for others give 10 points, and you can spend 10 points to receive a favor from another person.

## **## Inspiration**

Humans for millennia have lived in small communities, tribes and villages of less than a few hundred people. Only relatively recently in human history have we become technologically advanced and started living in bigger communities. But living closer together has not improved communities. We have paradoxically become more isolated as our living arrangements have become more compact. Everyone faces problems in their lives that could others nearby could easily help with but it is more often than not impractical or too awkward to ask for help. How many times have you desperately needed a stapler? Or ran out of milk? Or needed help getting luggage up flights of stairs? There needs to be a way for people to harness the power of their immediate community to help solve these small problems.

- Where could you get immediate help like if you need a stapler? Maybe neighbors
  - What if there is an App help to save your immediate needs?
- How to break the embarrassment that human live in same building but never talk with each other?
  - We want to kick off the frozen space inside the communities.

## **## What it does**

favorMe allows people to give and ask for small favors. Users can download the app and create an account from which point onwards they can access the favor marketplace. The radius of the favor marketplace in miles/km can be adjusted in the settings screen. They can make a request by typing it in a search function. After making a request a feed is updated and everyone with the app in the favor marketplace radius is notified of the new request. Other users can then choose to accept the request, if they do so they are then given a time limit to fulfil the favor. If the time limit runs out, the favor request is returned to the feed for another user to fulfil.

(Rewards system:

Users are given favorPoints when they first sign up. Afterwards, users must do favors for others in return for more favorPoints which they can redeem for favors themselves.)

## **## How I built it**

- We built favorMe app using MIT App Inventor 2, a language that uses a graphical interface that lets users drag-and-drop visual objects to build an application for Android.

## **## Challenges I ran into**

- While Patrick Blinkhorn had experience with App Inventor in the past, he needed to review the language for several hours before he was comfortable using it again.
- In addition, he helped address several challenges his teammates encountered with App Inventor.
- None of us have android phones, so we needed to use the Android Emulator to test our app. It takes approximately 2-3 minutes to load the Android Emulator, so we spent a significant amount of time waiting for to test our app on the Emulator.
- On Saturday night, we encountered a major scaling issue with the layout of the app on the Android Emulator. It took us several hours to a) deduce the source of the bug, and b) to restructure and reformat the parameters so that all of the components fit on the screen.

## **## Accomplishments that I'm proud of**

- Worked in a group setting to brainstorm a potentially revolutionary app that could connect individuals to exchange favors and regain the human connection that we are losing--ironically--as we live in more compact spaces.
- Identified a platform, MIT's App Inventor, to produce the app considering the strengths and weakness of the group.
- Discussed the possible weaknesses in our proposed idea beforehand in order to produce an app with the best possible features.
- Learned to navigate through the platform's functions and comprehend its full capacity.
- App Aesthetics--logo design, sizes of icon, font, etc

## **## What I learned**

- Learned to use a new platform to make an Android app.
- The necessity for attention to detail!
- Experiment until you get it right! 1) Identify the problem you want to solve, 2) Observe what variables you can control to change results, 3) Try changing a small sample, 4) Continue to experiment until you recognize patterns, 5) Solve problem
- Hacking as a group can be difficult unless you have a clear and organized action plan.
- Learned that there are platforms made to make hacking easy. The idea behind App Inventor is to help people who do not know programming make an app! Coding is likely to become more and more friendly to the common person.

## **## What's next for favorMe**

- Figure out effective strategies to attract users, i.e. rewards points when first register, invite friends, daily rewards for check-in
- Test in communities in various scales to further clarify users' demands and collect feedback of user experience
- Upgrade various functions and make them more sophisticated, e.g:
  - the rewards system, an interesting update would be to scale the amount of favor points received for each favor with the time taken to fulfil the request.
  - The favor feed could be a dynamic animated screen where items and services move around and can be tapped on to expand and to view more details before accepting
- Create polls/surveys to gauge user satisfaction and next steps for improving the app.
- Add a platform that will allow the app on a iOS device.
- Add a GPS feature that gives directions for individuals who are not familiar with the location to give or receive favor.
- Clean up the interface with the help of a UX designer.