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**Individual Value Proposition Research**

**Potential Competitors**

In order to ensure that our value proposition is a feasible business model, we need to ensure that there is a large enough market that has demand for our product. For this reason, it is important for us to know about already existing products that could potentially compete with ours, so that we may tailor our product to find more customers. Ideally, we would want to find a market where our product is unique in what it provides to the customers.

It appears that the main competition for our product is smartphone apps. Apps like BikeHub and Ride the City help plan routes for bikers who want to navigate the city, which is one aspect of our product. However, all of these apps require two things: a smartphone, and a wireless carrier. Our targeted customers (tourists from outside of the US) are not guaranteed to have smartphones, and the chances of them having a wireless carrier are even slimmer.

Each smartphone app has its own unique traits that set it slightly apart from the others. BikeHub gives step-by-step audio directions, which makes navigation much safer as the rider does not need to be visually distracted (this feature is one of the main features of our proposed product). Ride the City plans its routes along roads that are meant for biking (like bike paths) and avoids roads that are not meant for biking (like highways and busy streets). Spokes NYC also provides step-by-step directions, while also having a bike rack/bike shop locator and the ability to report thefts. It would be useful to keep some of these features in mind when designing our own product.

Already, these smartphone apps differ from our proposed product in that they require that the user already has the necessary hardware and wireless carrier. Our product avoids this by being a separate product, which only has one use (navigation) but is very efficient in that use. Hopefully, this will also be able to cut down on costs and improve general aspects of the product (like battery life and weather resistance).

<http://theappwhisperer.com/2011/06/03/top-10-bike-navigation-ios-apps/>

<http://mashable.com/2013/09/11/bike-route-apps/#Yv2sFgEY2EkS>

**Working with Google Maps**

It appears that Google Maps has a free license for use of its product. However, there are also paid services to use for commercial applications and products. For the testing and development phase of our product, we would be able to use the Google Maps API for free, but once we begin to actually sell this product commercially, we would need to pay for the Google Maps API. Specific pricing for the API could not be found without making a specific inquiry to Google, which can be done at a later date.

<https://www.google.com/work/mapsearth/products/mapsapi.html?rd=1>

<https://www.google.com/work/earthmaps/legal/us/maps_purchase_agreement.html>