

Mateo
The Newcomer

Mateo is a shy study abroad student from Argentina struggling to make genuine, in-person connections at the new university in Alabama

Scenario

Having recently moved from Argentina to the United States for a study abroad program at the University of Alabama at Birmingham, Mateo is facing significant challenges in building a social circle. His attempts to make connections via standard apps have been consistently disappointing, as most interactions remain digital and quickly fizzle out. While browsing in the app store for social apps, he finds Social, which differentiates itself by allowing users to initiate conversations based on shared real-time proximity. Intrigued by this location-centric approach, Mateo immediately downloads the app. He sets up his profile, deeply curious to test whether Social's proposal can effectively support his goal of forming new friendships and securing dates that ultimately lead to meaningful, offline engagement.

Goals and Expectations

- Minimize social awkwardness in a public spaces
- Get people to go outside more
- Ensure a safe experience for users
- Promote offline interactions
- Foster meaningful social connections

DISCOVERY

What event triggers a user to enter into the UX funnel?

Learns about the app via word of mouth or App Store

Installs app on their phone

This is an interesting concept

I hope this app is better than the other apps I use or tried

Can I control when people can see my location?

Is this really safe for me to use when I'm out?

ONBOARDING

What are the first few steps in the UX funnel?

Creates an account with email or social login

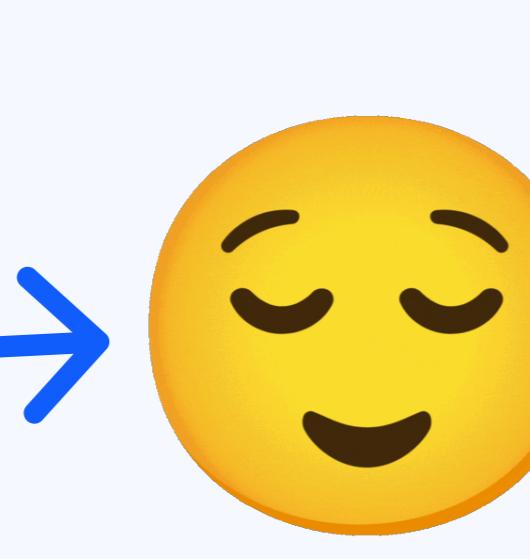
Provides the required profile information

Get on board with the app by finding out about its purpose and how it works

Explore the app and see a number of users who are active at a nearby café.

This profile is very easy to setup

This app is unlike anything I have tried before. I can check where to go beforehand.



CONNECTION

What task(s) is the user trying to accomplish?

Arrives at the café and settles at a table

Check the app and activate location visibility to see who's at the café.

Explore the profiles of other users and the location feed to start interacting and sending casual private messages.

Wow! I can see some of the people who are here right now.

This person seems interesting but looks too busy.

This person has an interesting profile. I'll send them a message to see if they want to share a table and chat.

I hope someone replies back. I feel awkward just browsing here



INTERACTION

How does the user complete the task?

Receives a positive reply in the chat

Starts a short conversation to get to know each other

Sends a message to suggest sharing a table and have a coffee together

Receives a positive response and the person joins the table to chat offline

Orders a coffee in-app for the person using the cafe menu available

This person is great and we're only a few tables apart haha

This is silly but I'm having a lot of fun

I'm gonna get brave now and ask if this person wants to share a table

I can surprise them with a coffee right in the app

POST INTERACTION

What follow-up actions occur after the user completes the task?

Wrap up the conversation at the cafe and goes back to the college dorm

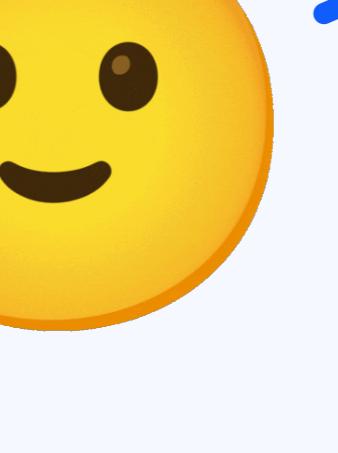
Reflects positively about the experience on the way back

Messages the person via the app to suggest grabbing coffee together another time

It was so nice to chat with someone in person without struggling to set a date and time

I was surprised at how much we ended up having in common

I need to make sure we do something together again



Users should learn early on that the app won't have matching mechanics to start a conversation

Emphasize safety and custom privacy preferences in the app store description and other marketing mediums

Communicate why certain verification or information is needed (authenticity/safety) to ease any chances of discomfort

Might be necessary to require additional verification and/or limitations for users younger than 18

Users may feel more at ease if they start organic conversations through a feed/thread.

Starting a conversation in a thread or as a comment on a post means the initiating message is grounded in the content of that post (a shared topic, interest, or event).

This shared context makes the conversation feel less "out of nowhere" and more natural.

The Treats feature can be used throughout the interaction stage, as long as both users are in the same location.

It is important to be cautious when or if enabling the app to make money or goods transactions, as this can encourage a sugar dynamic within the social context of the app

How can we encourage users to engage in post-interaction activities within the app to help them maintain connections?