



AskLocal

Active Communities
Real-time question and answer about any location.

Problem Space:

The problem space we are exploring is the limited amount of information available on the internet about locations. From the conducted user research and surveys, it was found that 90% of the respondents look up information such as reviews, hours, and facilities before visiting the place. From these survey results, it was also established that not all data available about certain locations is always true as some business may fail to update their details or provide incorrect information. These results allowed us to think of ways to allow information to be easily accessible with precise data.

As part of our background research, it was found that there are a range of mobile and web apps available that are used to fill in the gaps such as yelp that allows users to see reviews about places and Google which provides the address, contact information, website details, hours, and busy times. However, none of the currently available applications provide real-time information which we aimed to solve with our application. Also, due to our chosen domain being active communities, the purpose of AskLocal is to ensure users are involved in giving something back to the community by asking and answering questions that are not readily available elsewhere.

User Group:

The user group for our application are people who go out often and are always looking online for information about places. Particularly, our app targets active users who are always interested in giving reviews about locations. Below are two distinct personas that were created in the initial part of the design process to help understand the category of users we should target and what types of features to include in the application.

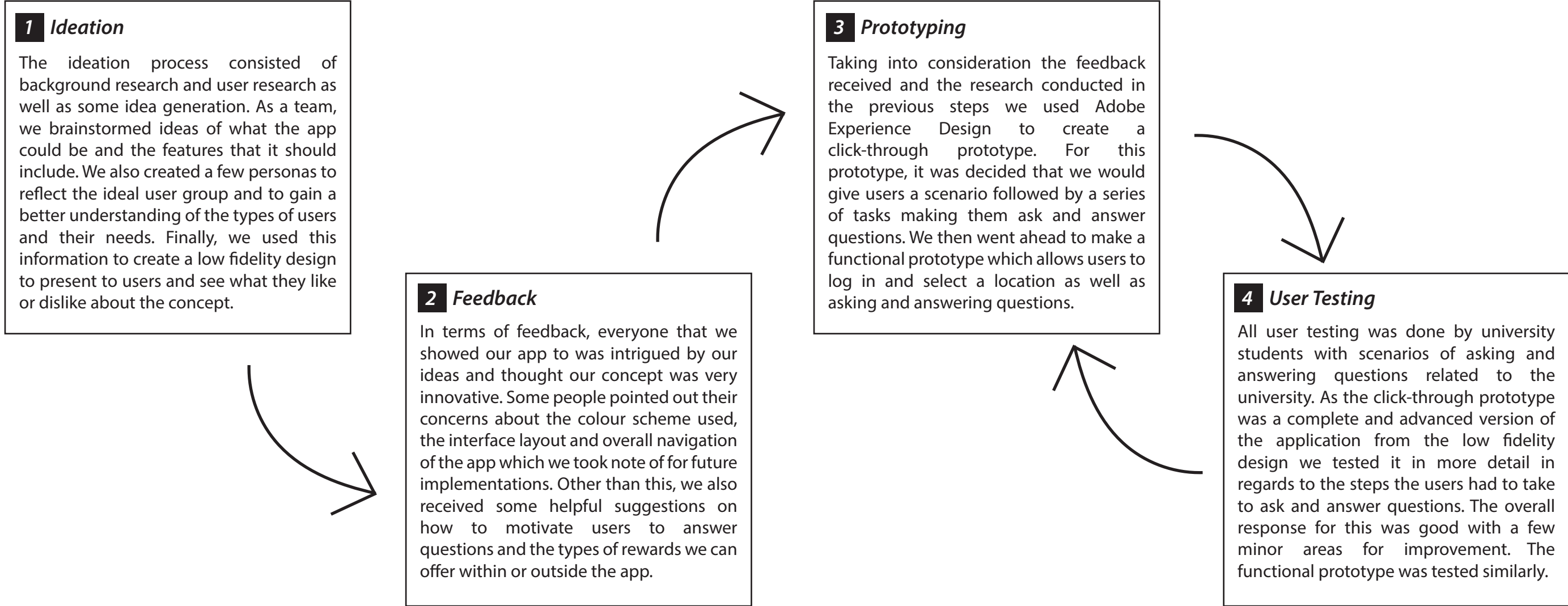
Mary Jane is a 30-year-old housewife who often buys fruit and vegetables from the local markets. There are a couple of markets near her home but she only has the time to visit and buy groceries from one of them. Today she wants to buy mangoes but is unsure which market has them available and if both of them have them which market is selling for a cheaper price.

In this case, the AskLocal app would be handy for the user as markets do not have their own website and are rarely associated with other websites. Due to this, Mary Jane would be able to use AskLocal and have the ability to ask questions regarding which market is the better option in terms of availability of certain products or the quality and price of the groceries. Users that are at the markets will see the question appear and reply back with the necessary information.

John Doe is a 25-year-old traveler and loves to visit waterfalls. Sometimes he is lucky to see water but other times there is no waterfall present which makes his whole trip worthless. Most websites give indications as to when water may be flowing but due to some weather conditions or other catastrophes, this information is not always accurate.

From this scenario, John Doe would be able to use the AskLocal app to ask whether a waterfall is flowing and users that are at the waterfall or within a 5km radius will be able to answer. John is also able to confirm that the waterfall is flowing and give the user a good or bad rating depending on their answer.

Design Process



Final Product:

AskLocal is an application that allows real-time communication between people at a location and people who are wanting to go to that location. Throughout the many design iterations of user testing and prototyping, there are numerous improvements made to enhance the quality of the application and provide a user-friendly experience. All of the changes and improvements made have been effectively reflected in the final prototype.

Searching for location:

To search for a place, the user will use a map and search bar, they will also be able to find places near them which will auto-generate based on places they have visited before. The user will be able to view the questions asked in the location and be able to filter them according to date, votes or categories.

Asking and Answering:

To ask a question, users will be required to have points which they can gain by answering other people's questions. When asking a question, users can set the amount of points they want to give to the person that best answers the question. This reduces mass questions being asked about places. Also, when setting questions, users will have the ability to set the duration for the question to remain on the app. For example, asking whether a bar has a long queue to get in might only be relevant for an hour maximum. Once this hour is over, the question will disappear and the user who was rated the highest in terms of the best answer will get the set points.

Points and Rating:

Points are gained by answering questions and they are only rewarded to the user with the best-rated answer. Other users can upvote already provided answers and if an answer is considered to be duplicate it will be removed.

