

## Part # 2 – User Research

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### Motivation of the User Research

As described in part 1 of this assignment, David is a mobile app that is intended to streamline hotel experience and cater the needs of hotel visitors via the use of virtual assistant technology. The idea is to market David as a virtual but “human-friendly” hotel ambassador. In this user research, a feature analysis on the concierge apps in the current market and questionnaire have been conducted to determine the uniqueness and user receptibility of my proposed idea.

### Feature Analysis on the Concierge Apps in the Current Market

Katrijn Knepp, who has engaged in the hospitality industry since 2008, has written a review on the features of the Top-11 hotel concierge apps in Apr 2020 (Knepp, 2020). I have summarized 5 of the most note-worthy hotel concierge apps in Table 1.

Table 1

Feature Analysis of Concierge Apps in the 2020 Market					
Features	HotalFriend	Guestfriend	SuitePad	Betterspace	Alice Guest
Hotel Booking	*				
Mobile Check-In	*			*	
Hotel Directory (Information and Service)			*	*	
Real-Time Chat with Hotel Staff	*			*	
Itinerary Recommendation	*	*		*	
Booking for Hotel Service (restaurant, spa etc.)		*			*
Request for Room Service (house-keeping, food deliver, morning call etc.)		*	*	*	*
IOT Controls (tv, hvac etc.)			*		
Digital Access to Hotel Facilities	*			*	
Hotel Service Usage Analytics		*	*	*	
Online Payment for Hotel Services	*				
In-stay feedback		*	*		
Multilingual Support		*	*		

As shown in Table 1, each app offers a distinctive suite of features, except for Alice Guest, which offers the least features out of all. 4 out of the 5 apps offer room service request feature. 3 out of the 5 apps offer hotel service usage analytics feature and itinerary recommendation feature.

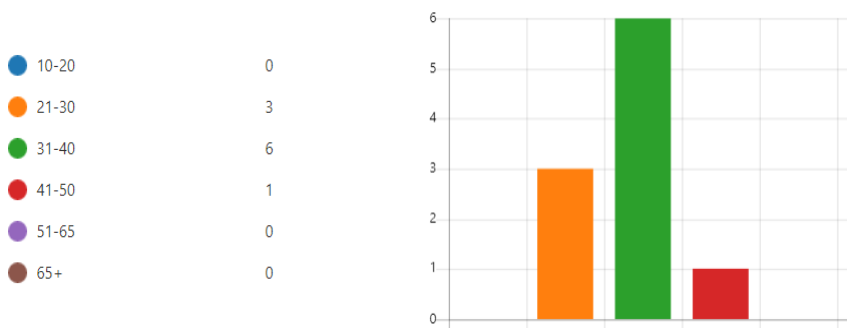
Some apps offer features that none of the competitors offers. For example, HotalFriend is the only app that offers hotel booking and online payment for hotel service; whereas SuitePad is the only app that offers IOT (Internet of Thing) control feature for the hotel room.

The rest of the features in Table 1 include mobile check-in, hotel directory information, real-time chat with hotel staff, booking for hotel service, digital access to hotel facilities, in-stay feedback and multilingual support.

## Questionnaire Results and Discussions

Results are obtained from 10 anonymous participants. The majority falls into the 31-40 age group, as shown in Figure 1.

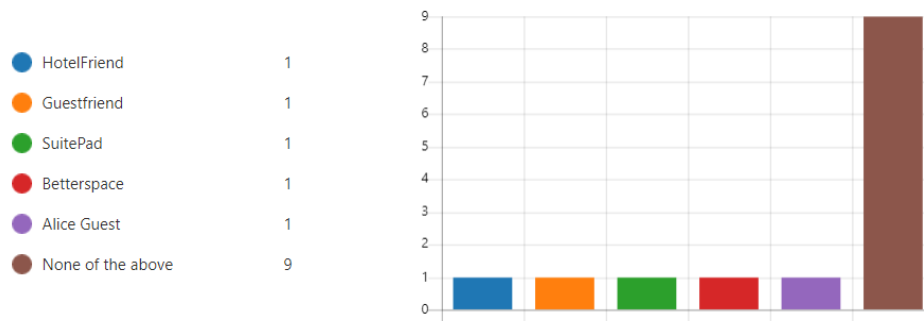
Figure 1



The participants were asked whether they have used any of the Concierge Apps mentioned in Table 1.

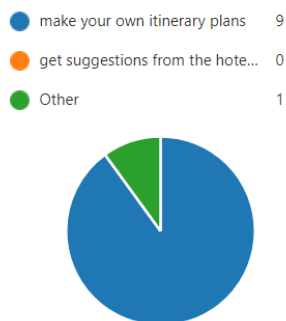
90% of the participants said they had never used any of those apps (Figure 2). This shows that the concierge app market is full of opportunities and room for growth.

Figure 2



9 participants expressed that they make their own itinerary plans. None of them has indicated that they rely on the hotel recommendation (Figure 3). Most participants seem to make plans for their trip before arriving to the hotel. Still, 5 participants indicated that they would see themselves using an itinerary recommendation feature on a mobile app (as shown later in Figure 6). Perhaps our app should put more focus on the “in-hotel experience”, while preserving a minimal ability to make itinerary suggestions to the users.

Figure 3.



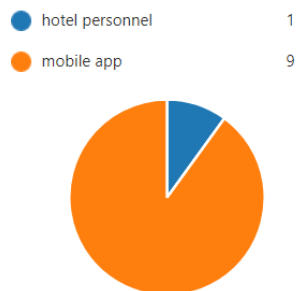
When it comes to transportation (i.e., from the airport to the hotel), 9 participants expressed they would plan their own transportation; only 1 participant said he/she would leave it to the hotel (Table 2). Participants reasoned that planning for their own transportation can save on cost. It also allows them to experience the local transportation system. Our app should take cost and local experience into consideration when making transportation recommendations for the users.

Table 2

When you are travelling to a foreign country, would you rather ask your hotel to manage the transportation (i.e., from airport to hotel) or resolve the transportation on your own? What are the reasons?
Hotel manage
I will solve it by my own by Google map.
Resolve on my own. It gives me more flexibility.
On my own. Asking for help is normally not the first thing in my mind.
By my own. Cheaper. Learn more things when doing it.
Plan the transportation on my own to save money
Myself since my boyfriend is good with direction.
Resolve on my own because it is usually cheaper
Resolve the transportation on my own. I want to know how the transportation is like so that if there is ever a case where I am unable to contact the hotel I know what to do.
Resolve it by myself, it is cheaper and able to see the local more easily.

9 participants expressed that they would rather make room service requests via a mobile app as opposed to a hotel personnel (Figure 4). This highlights a great demand for a room service request feature. Our app should excel in handling all typical room service requests such as food delivery, laundry service, calling for a cab, etc.

Figure 4



6 participants expressed that they do not care about the usage analytics of hotel facilities, such as restaurant, gym room, swimming pool (Figure 5). The result is not exactly clear cut, but the ability to provide such information can be helpful to the users if they plan on using the hotel facilities.

Figure 5

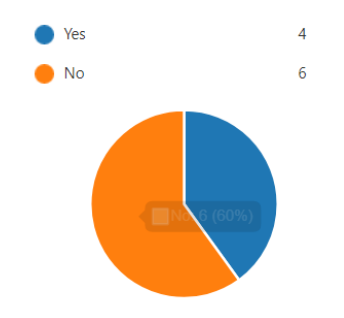


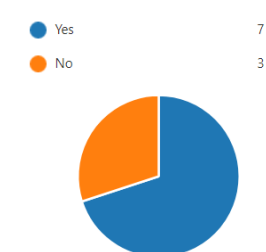
Figure 6 shows a histogram of features that the participants would see themselves using in a mobile app. Each of the listed features is close to or exceeds 50% of the participants. The results suggest that all of the listed features are good candidates to be implemented in our app.

Figure 6



7 participants have expressed that they do care about whether the hotel maintains a record about their personal preferences (such as their favorite food, room temperature, room lighting intensity etc.), and room service requests that they make during their stay. This piece of information will be important when it comes to user privacy concern.

Figure 7



When the participants were asked what factors would make them want to revisit a hotel, hotel cleanliness comes first, hotel services come second, and then pricing comes last (Table 3). Perhaps our app should implement a user feedback system. The data will be useful to monitor the quality of services in the hotel, such as hotel cleanliness and customer services.

Table 3

ID ↑	Name	Responses
1	anonymous	Service clean
2	anonymous	Cleanliness, environment, customer services
3	anonymous	Comfort level.
4	anonymous	Comfort bed, well maintained bathroom. Fare price
5	anonymous	Safety, location, comfort
6	anonymous	The environment and cleaning
7	anonymous	Hygiene and good service.
8	anonymous	Cleaniness, Services, Amendities
9	anonymous	Overall service, location, room ambience, nearby food or amenities
10	anonymous	Room cleanliness, Location, Price

When the participants were asked whether they have used a personal assistant apps before, 50% of the participants expressed negative (Table 4). It seems like many participants are unfamiliar with the technology. This information is valuable when it comes to UI design. Our app should be intuitive and beginner friendly.

Table 4

Have you ever used personal assistant apps such as Google Assistant, Amazon Alexa or Siri? Tell us about your experience(s) with these apps?
Never
Yes. I'm doing amazon Alexa. Easy to manage, can follow requests accurately.
No
Never
Alexa. Only for work. Convenient but Not very into that. Communication problem.. misunderstanding lol.. and i dont like it as i feel it's always eavesdropping tracking and recording, have privacy issue as companies use these personal info for different purpose for making profit nowadays, either selling the info for marketing or political purposes etc.
No
None
Yes, sometimes they're helpful but not always.
Siri and Google Assistant
Yes, and my experience is moderate with it. Most of the time, they misunderstand what I am saying.

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## References

Knepp, K. V. (2020, April 7). *Top-11 Hotel Concierge Apps*. Retrieved from Katrijn Veronika Knepp:  
<https://medium.com/@kneppkat/top-11-hotel-concierge-apps-2955a7168187>