

Customer and Data Acquisition Plan

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Yelp is our customer for this project, as we are developing a new feature for their existing platform. Our contact is Michael Persinger, who works as a tech lead at Yelp. He agreed to act as the client/product owner for this project. So far, we have met with him once over Zoom so he could give us some high-level feedback and background on what Yelp has done so far to tackle the problem we are addressing. The details of that call are transcribed below. Moving forward, our plan is to email him weekly with updates to our project, so that he can give feedback and new ideas if he has any.

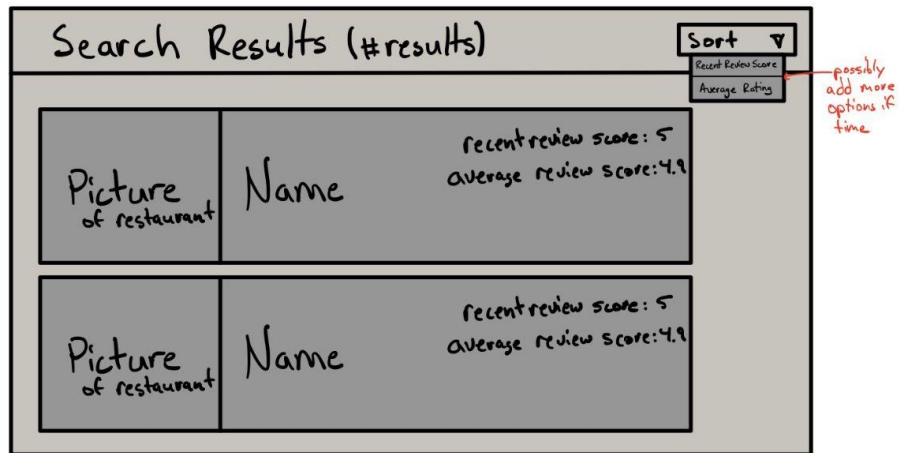
Call Summary

We introduced ourselves and the project to Michael and he told us a bit about himself and his work at Yelp. After our exchange, he asked us to follow up with him with an official proposal and marketing opportunity to get us to really think about how Yelp can benefit from taking on our project. He also gave us some feedback regarding our ideas and proposals, namely, he suggested the potential need for a filter function, i.e. need to search for specific services or a service within a specific area. He also told us about Yelp's previous attempts to address the problem we are tackling, which is how restaurants can overcome a bad overall rating and improve their image on Yelp. One of the unsuccessful attempts he mentioned was displaying a chart of ratings over time. Regular users rarely ever looked at the chart, and so most of the traffic regarding chart data ended up being from web-scraping bots. Taking this into account, we plan to introduce charts as an exclusive feature for restaurant owners and hide them from the general public, so as to avoid cluttering the common (non-owner) UI while providing important and relevant data to the restaurant owner.

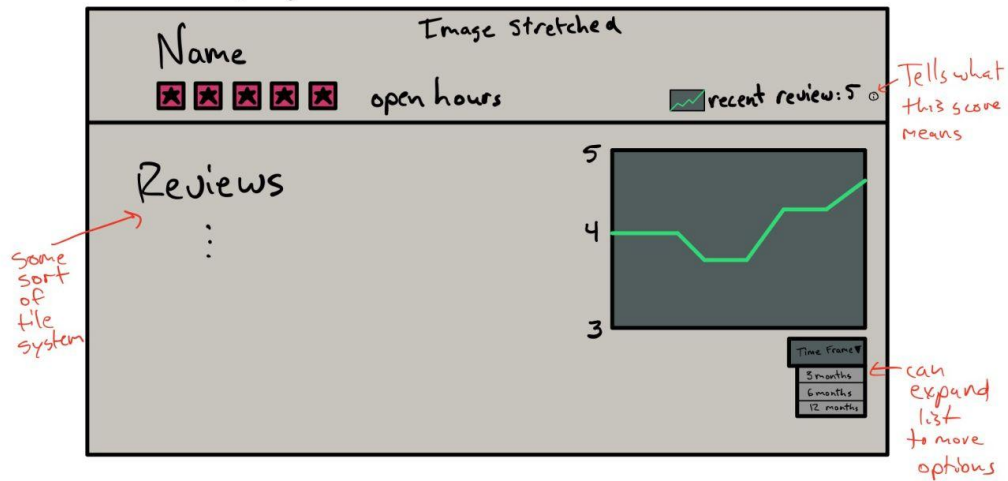
First Round of Feedback

In the call, Michael asked us to get him some more information about our project. Mainly, this included a few of our user stories and a rough sketch of how we wanted things to look. We sent him these two things and he sent us back some feedback on the ideas that we had. These three components are described below.

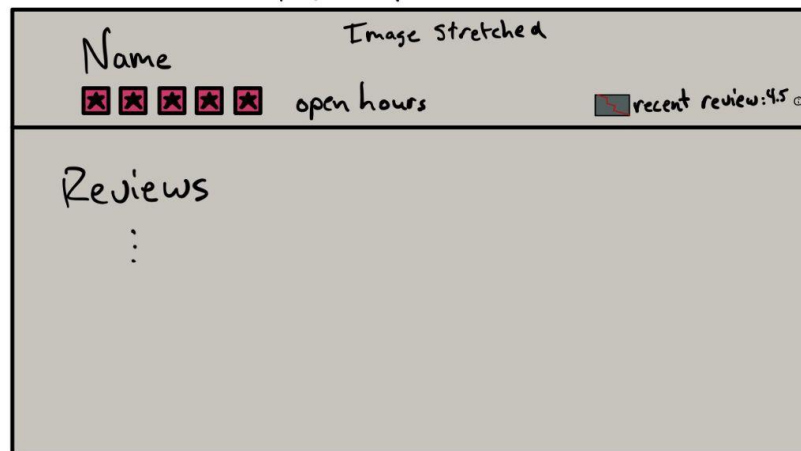
1. The user stories are displayed in a separate document.
2. The rough UI sketch we provided:



Restaurant Owner View



Normal View



3. The feedback that he gave:

Some quick thoughts on the mockups:

- **For this demo are you focusing only on a single area? 99% of the time when searching reviews, users have a location in mind they want to restrict the results to, even if that ends up being a rather simple geo restriction.**
- **Charts are nice, but consider something simpler. When you go shopping for an airline ticket, you might be aware of some websites that offer you a recommendation on whether or not right now is the best time to buy your ticket. They could show a simple graph of price trends (and some do), but users aren't looking to interpret a chart, they are looking for a simple answer to the question "Should I buy my ticket right now?". Likewise, your feature should try to answer the question "Is this restaurant on the up and up and worth the risk?".**
- **Reviews are important, but Yelp has discovered over the years that usually people go mining reviews for specific details, like what to eat or whether or not a business is open on certain days. Most people don't want to spend time reading reviews, they want the data those reviews contain. With that in mind, we try to extract everything we can from reviews and bubble it to the top (i.e. we have a "Popular dishes" and "Open hours" features).**