



# TimeKiller

By: Jordan Freund, Kyle Kulesza, Taybor Pepper, Nick Wright

---

## Introduction

Have you ever been bored and wanted to find an activity to do quickly and easily? Luckily our app “Time Killer” is perfect for making people’s lives easier! Our app’s goal is to be a simple solution to the process of planning out a night’s activities. The way our app works is by finding submitted events in the local area and showing an easy list of events for your selected time. “Time Killer” will have social media integration, allowing the user to connect with friends to more easily find companions to attend events with.

## Data Gathering

### Gathering Method

Our initial research came in the form of a contextual inquiry. We sat down our interviewees and began our questions (seen below). We also took note in the behaviors of our participants; in times, participants lost enthusiasm in our research questions and other times, they gained enthusiasm. It was in these areas of high enthusiasm or strong reaction where we knew that we had an opportunity to address the areas in later development. We also included participatory research another approach of data gathering during our interview and that was. This approach emphasized participation and action. Having users sketch out interfaces of how

they feel certain pages should be laid out was a perfect indication of where our users heads were at in design preferences.

## Findings and Influences

A main question we thought about going into this survey was “Is there something already like the idea of a Time Killing application, and is this a problem that people have often?”. Almost all of our interview participants spoke about how they never have ideas set in stone, or often spend time trying to figure out what to do (mostly at night). This proves that this could be a major opportunity to help people spend less time thinking about what to do, and more time doing that activity. It was also surprising that none of the participants had heard of some similar service or used something. These responses could also be contributed to the fact of the small sample size and average type of person we interviewed (student at Michigan State).

The different types of responses we expected from “single” and “taken” interviewee’s was not really apparent with the questions we asked. We had expected there to be some type of significant difference but mostly the responses could be interchangeable with each other.

One part of feedback from our surveys is that we found little willingness to have this app/idea be a paid service. This was surprising as it seems that the idea of paid applications on phones are dying. It seemed that since this service would be something that people do not currently know exists or do not currently use, they wouldn’t have as much of a feeling that the app deserves to be free. We think this says more about the hole this app would fill than the possibility of charging for the service.

In our contextual research, we found new ideas that have potential to be included into our final design. The research also developed our knowledge on how users might initially use and react to some features and how some may completely avoid them.

Firstly, we have a good idea of elements that people consider before deciding an activity. These include: weather, energy level, time of year, people with, location, time, and money.

Weather, time of year/day, and location can be done on the apps side. Other elements such as the amount of money, energy level, and time allotted would have to be inputted and filtered by the user.

We also were able to categorize people as either being more avid in the decision making process or not. When it comes to joining others in an activity, the design needs to allow for the decision maker to make a subtle push of an activity towards those who are more the “ride-along” sort; all while not seeming pushy. This means allowing the user to customize what gets pushed towards them and how often.

The interviewees also seemed disinterested in connection and posting to other forms of social media. This may be a larger challenge for us. It would be most efficient for the user and their profile to simply be connected to their Facebook and their friends -maybe that's as far as we go with Facebook connectivity.

Giving users the ability to easily create, share, and do is a big part of the app and therefore, will need to have a heavier presence in the design. This leads to the possibility of users altering other shared events and making them tailored for himself. It is important for the user to partake in feedback for these activities. The idea of simple “Do” and “Did” buttons come to mind. Activities that the interviewees thought that they would use the app for include; new places to eat/drink, randomized date nights, unpaid activities, and larger events such as sports or concerts. This means creating bold categories of types activities for our users who just feel like browsing.

Because many have not heard of such an app, users would not have much to compare it to besides widely used apps. This allows our design to be very original, in the sense “a new concept, a new design.” Being able to pull some basic conventions that the users would feel comfortable with from larger apps while introducing new ones will give the app an interesting leg up with appeal.

## Interview Protocol

1. Take us through your process of finding an activity to do.
2. Would you be interested with possibly meeting up with other (random) people for events/activities?
3. Are you the person that usually makes plans. If yes, how do you feel about it?
4. Would you use this app in an unfamiliar area?
5. Check in feature? (Share, tweet, social media connection)
6. Could you sketch your idea of what an interface for this application would look like?
7. Could you see yourself sending in ideas for “events”?
8. If you had a good night after using this application would you “save your night” in the app to save for later use or share with others?
9. Take us through a typical night of you going out.
10. How often do you see yourself using this application?
11. What do you think you would be using this application for most often?
12. Have you heard of (or used) an application similar to this?
13. Would you pay to use this application?
14. Would you mind seeing promoted content?
15. Would you trust reviews of events in the application?

## Who we Interviewed

We decided that having two main groups of people would be an effective way to get responses that could possibly be very different. Each person in our group interviewed one person who was single, and one person who was in a relationship. We also chose to interview college aged people because we felt that it was with this age our potential users are more interested in going out and joining groups of people (large and small) for activities.

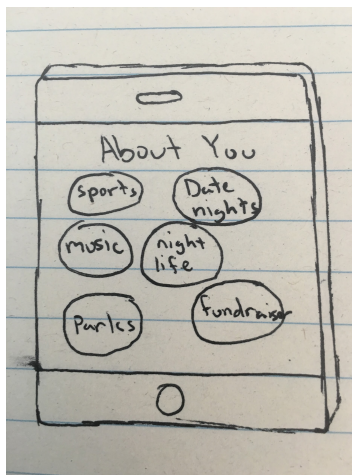
For the person who was in the relationship, we chose that factor as that person may not be as active in deciding plans. There could be external factors that decide what they do to spend their time. The person who may not be in a relationship may have more enthusiasm towards meeting new people. People who are in a relationship could also lean towards more private, intimate events as well. Such as dinner and a movie, walk through the MSU gardens, or ice skating.

With the single interviewee's, we expected a bit more of “freedom” to come up in their responses. The idea was that they were not restricted as much to anyone else for their plans had come up, and we thought perhaps they would be more inclined to make plans rather

than to follow. Single individuals may prefer more public, social events than those who are in a relationship. Events such as sporting events, concerts, or promotional events at local bars.

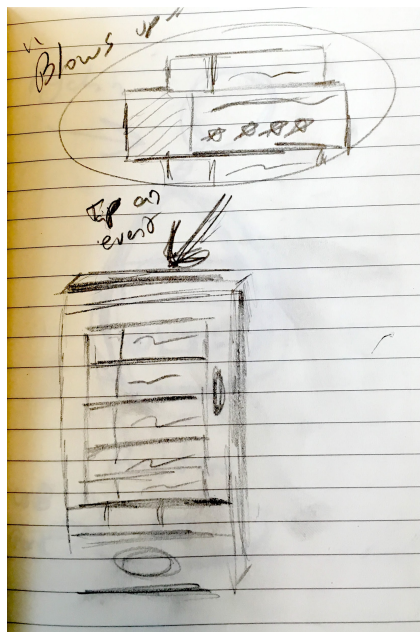
For both groups of interviewee's we observed them while they went through their routine of finding something to do. From coming up with an idea and finding people who want to join, to getting together and leaving we were able to find out the deciding factors for people when making plans. After knowing what factors played into the decision we were able to begin creating a design that allows the user to quickly navigate through the app while letting them make plans with ease.

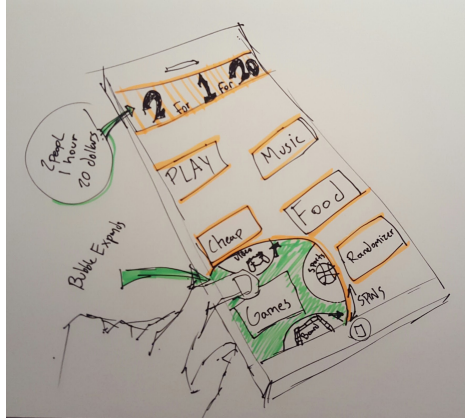
## Sketches



A minimalist bubble design to show the user's personal info.

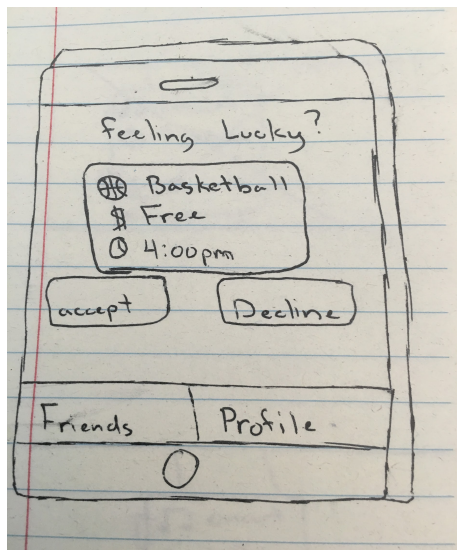
This design was translated over and used in our "friends" page.





Another design that incorporates the bubble feature.

This one expands and also would later on be used in our friend page.



A “Feeling Lucky” page that would randomly select events for the user to select or decline. This feature is one that we did not incorporate into our final design but lives on in the backlog of potential implementations to keep the app fresh after release.

## Prototype

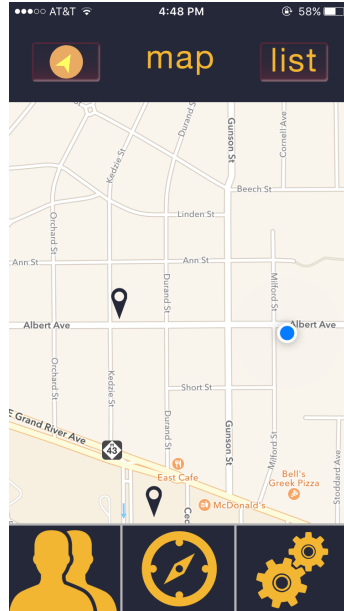
Our prototype reflected the multiple viewpoints from the interviewees we gathered data from along with our teams own depiction of and narrowing of the information. Our first goal was to narrow down the many ideas that we had come up with

The idea behind the application would be a quick and easy way for friends and couples to find events and activities to do. The user could input amount of time / money available /

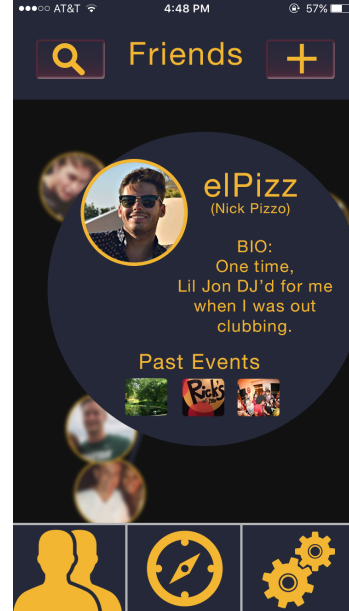
possibly location, and the service would return a list of possible ideas that fit the user's requirements. We believe that there are many times people are bored and don't have any plans in mind, so this application would be created to help them. Below are the screenshots from the high-fidelity prototype.



The first startup “login page”

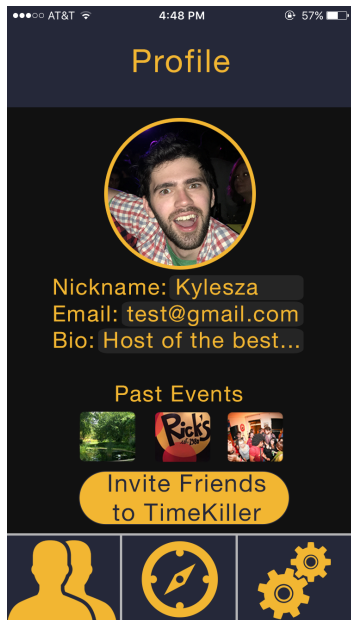


Map screen of the event page. The map displays closest events near you.



Friends profile page. Displays their most recent events and bio.





User's profile.  
Displays nickname,  
bio, email, past  
events and ability  
to invite friends.



Event list of the event  
page. Lists events in  
order of proximity. Quick  
buttons to select either  
join or invite others

# Evaluation

## Overview

For our evaluation we had four key objectives that we wanted to find out more about. These included tasks such as locating an event to go to, and check the guest list to see who is attending an event. It also included objectives that were focused on learning more about the interface such as, finding any hard to navigate sections of the app and how easily the user can find things (e.g. Search bar, filters).

The participants we selected were from our target market, which is college aged people who enjoy going to different events and social gatherings. We want to select the participants by going to events similar to the ones we promote and find people who want to help make the event finding process easier. For collecting data we preferred to use the “think aloud” protocol. The “think aloud” protocol helped us get a sense of what the user was thinking and doing as they went through tasks, also giving us a sense of what they were expecting to see on the next screen. After going through each of the objectives we had the user rate their experience with that objective on a scale from 1 to 5, 1 being Very Difficult, and 5 being Very Easy. They rated each objective on three items, Effectiveness (completed tasks, number of errors), Efficiency (amount of time and effort to finish), and Satisfaction (satisfied enough to plan next event).

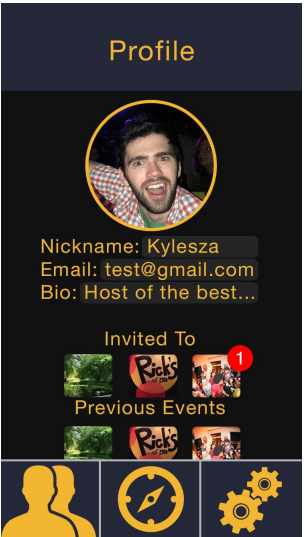
## Results and Changes

The feedback we received for the first two objectives, which were task related, came back positive. We received good overall scores, with nothing less than a 3, while still receiving positive suggestions about what to improve. From all of the users we heard back that they liked seeing a map first thing when opening the app, “I liked seeing a map when first opening the app instead of asking for information from me right away”, one user said. Both of the objectives

received a 4 for Effectiveness and efficiency and a 3 in Satisfaction. One user mentioned that to give it a 5 in Satisfaction they “would like to have a way to see people going from event list”.

We narrowed these results down to four main changes we should make to the site: better friend integration, improved filtering through location, allowing preferences to be “overall” and not so directly tied to settings, and working on simple logo miscues. For logo miscues we changed the profile icon to just be a single person (see below image) to allow the user to find their own profile easier. In order to make the friends integration in the app better we added notifications on events with the number of friends you have that are going to it. This allows someone to quickly tell what activities the majority of their friends are attending.

If we were to go back and do the evaluation again there would be a few things that we would change. The first being, we would use a survey method to gather results in addition to the “think aloud” protocol. The “think aloud” protocol helped us get inside the head of the user and see what design concepts that they did and didn’t like. Also it helped us find the places in the app that were hard to understand or navigate through. The survey method would be beneficial because it would help gather more about the numbers we received on the 1-5 scale. These numbers help tell us how effective our app is at doing what it was designed for. In this instance, how easy it is for the user to find an event they want to attend, or see who they know going.



Notification Icon in Events

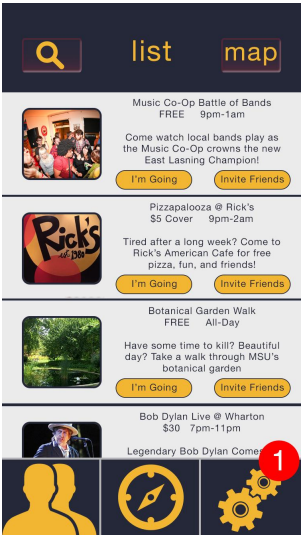
Easier for users to see what's new.

Notification Icon in preferences main menu.

Easier for users to see what's new.



New User Preference Setting Icon



## Conclusion

After our entire process from our gathering of data, to our evaluation, our group learned a great deal about our app idea. The base idea was something that seemed to connect with others, especially those located on a college campus. Throughout the process, we learned the types of features users would want, and how to implement them correctly, and to the users expectations. Throughout the design process, we tried to emulate other apps that are widely used, so when a user opens TimeKiller for the first time, they'd be greeted to design elements that would be recognized. While we did find issues with our initial prototype, it was great to find these issues and come up with a plan of action to address them. Overall, throughout the entire process, the entire group learned a lot about the design process, start to finish. We're very happy with the progress we made all the way to the prototype, and maybe in the future, we could build the app out fully and get it to market.

## References

Inspiration for color scheme from

BRANDTS - Museum For Art & Visual Culture By Stupid Studios

The app logo (skull surrounded by a clock) is an original design by Taybor Pepper.