



MakeYourMaps

Product Requirements Document (PRD)

PM: Marius Avram

September 2023

Problem Statement

Users **lack the ability to share their personal insights and recommendations** of places of interest as well as reading other users' opinions and ratings of places within the MakeYourMaps app.


To pride ourselves as the best local guide app we should give the power to the users to express themselves, to foster a sense of community, with a rich and detailed database of information about places of interest, as **users often rely on peer reviews and ratings to make more informed decisions** to visit, as seen during our User research, even those who usually do not use guide apps rely on their family or friends for advice regarding places of interest.

80% of the interviewees mentioned this one way or another. They love when other apps show ratings and reviews. Some even use it for safety tips.

The lack of this ability reduces user engagement and interactions with the app.

Product Audience

Personas



Name: Dora the Explorer
Age: 29 Y.O.
Occupation: Travel Blogger and Freelance Photographer
Location: Lost City of Gold
Pronouns: she/her

"Where do we go next?"

"I need your help."

About

Dora enjoys sports, such as football. She is also a skilled musician. Fluent in both, Spanish and English. Values family. Loves adventure.

Goals and Needs

- Exploration and Adventures
- Community and Sharing
- Being prepared and informed for any new adventure

Challenges and Frustrations

- Wants to be part of a community of explorers who share their experiences and insights. (She can use the Reviews and Ratings feature to connect with like-minded adventurers, exchange stories, and offer tips to others.)
- She would like to access reviews and ratings of various locations and landmarks to decide which ones are worth exploring.
- She wants to find more helpful tips about the best paths to take, animals to look out for, and hidden treasures to discover.

On the other hand, based on Persona Spectrums we could also have the following:

Permanent	Local with a mobility disability	May want to find out if certain places are accessible on a daily basis. They could get that information from reviews.
Temporary	Adult traveling to a foreign country	May want to explore points of interest at the destination. They will only be interested in reviews and rating probably before and during the trip, so anything from days to months.
Situational	Adult wants to find a specialist doctor	May want to check ratings of several doctors before deciding on one. This could take just a matter of minutes or hours.

Solution Justification

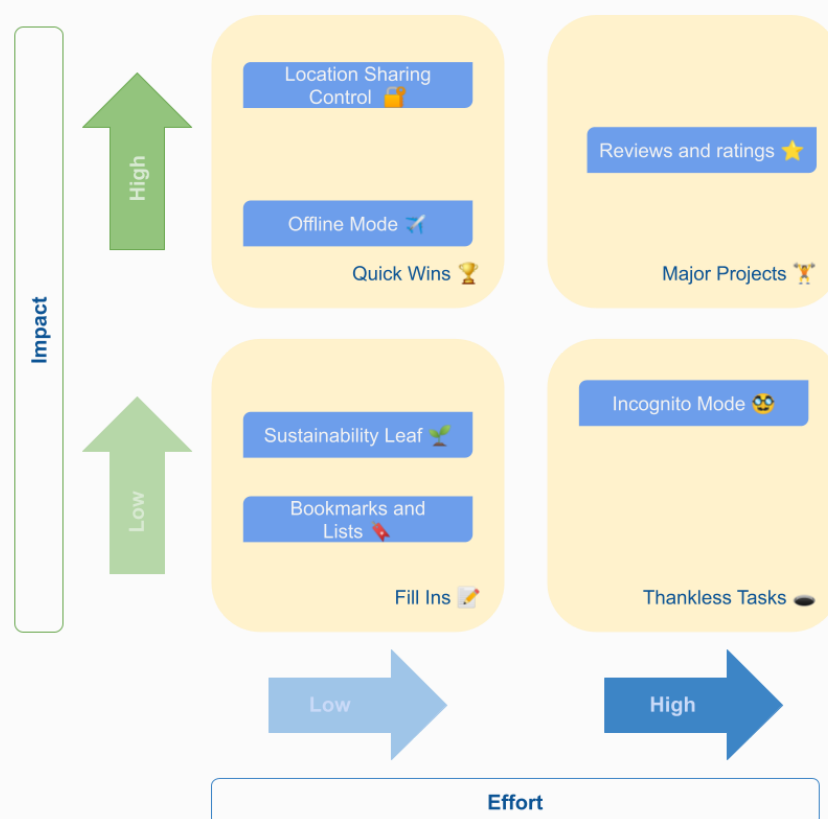
To address these issues and enhance the user experience on our MakeYourMaps app, I propose the implementation of the Reviews and Ratings feature.

This feature will enable our users to contribute with their own reviews and ratings to our platform, **increasing engagement and fostering a sense of ownership and community**. It will also enable our users to research directly within our platform in a possibly vast, diverse, trustworthy database of user created content.

Due to the availability of this feature, the **time spent within the app will drastically increase as well as bringing new users to our user base**. They will more likely return to the app for further reviews or recommendations, as opposed to leaving the app once they have the information of the place of interest.

It will increase the user satisfaction and will bring us up to speed to be true competitors of apps such as GoogleMaps.

We arrived at this conclusion based on our Action Priority Matrix based on our previous User research. As we can see, the impact is really high, and despite the effort being high as well, it will bring a lot of benefits to the table, as we have the Design and Engineering resources to achieve this goal in the next quarter.



Objectives and Measures of Progress

OKRs

Objective 1: **Enhance User Engagement and Interaction**

- ☐ Key Result 1: Increase the number of user-generated reviews and ratings for places of interest within the MakeYourMaps by 50% within the next quarter.
- ☐ Key Result 2: Achieve a 10% increase in average time spent in app, indicating increased engagement with the Reviews and Ratings feature.

Objective 2: **Improve the Quality and Trustworthiness of User-Generated Content**

- ☐ Key Result 1: Implement a content moderation system that reduces the percentage of inappropriate or irrelevant user-generated content to less than 5% within Q1 2024.

KPIs

KPI 1: Number of User-Generated Reviews and Ratings

We can track the user engagement for this feature and measure the number of reviews and ratings, which helps us achieve our OKR 1.1.

KPI 2: Average Time Spent Reading or Writing a Review

We can track the time a user spends reading or writing reviews on our app, which indicates the engagement as well, as part of OKR 1.1.

Stakeholders

External: Users (Contributors, Reviewers)

Internal: Marketing, Customer Support, Engineering, Design

Initiatives, Epics, and User Stories

User stories

User Story 1: Write Review and Rate

As a user who likes to contribute I want to be able to write reviews of places of interest, so that I can share my personal insights or warn other users of negative experiences.

Acceptance Criteria

- User can write reviews for places of interest
- Review consists of the title, text content, as well as a star rating system (i.e. 1 to 5)
- There is a submission button
- User is able to edit or delete their review when authenticated

User Story 2: Show Rating

As a quality focused individual I want to be able to see how other people rate other places of interest, so that I can make quick decisions regarding places I might want to check out.

Acceptance Criteria

- User can see the average rating for each place when they select a place

User Story 3: Read Reviews

As a user who looks for peer opinions or advice for trips I want to read other people's recommendations, so that I can make my own informed decisions of what to visit.

Acceptance Criteria

- User can see a list of reviews
- Each review shows the name of the user, optionally a profile picture, the title and content of the review, as well as the individual's rating

User Story 4: Accessibility

As a person with a sight disability I want to be able to access the information from reviews or ratings, so that I can make my decisions without the assistance of other non-disabled people.

Acceptance Criteria

- The font properties of the reviews should be appropriate for accessibility
- Make sure the list can be navigated through a keyboard
- Ensure the reviews are compatible with popular screen readers (i.e. VoiceOver for iOS)

User Story 5: Content Moderation

As the MakeYourMaps company I want to be monitor for hateful speech, inappropriate, or irrelevant content, so that I can raise the trust and engagement of our users.

Acceptance Criteria

- Users should be able to flag content for review if they deem it inappropriate or inaccurate
- Have a Code of Conduct document that users have to accept when they submit a review
- Inappropriate or inaccurate content should be promptly removed when the Code of Conduct has been breached

User Story 6: Safety Tips

As a user concerned with safety I want to be able to look for safety tips for areas or places I visit, so that I don't get hurt.

Acceptance Criteria

- There is a safety tip option for the review submitter
- Such safety tips for places with potential safety concerns should be prominently displayed in a collection

User Story 7: Photographs

As a very visual person I want to be able to see what a place looks like before I go there, so that I don't have to just imagine it or look it up in other places.

Acceptance Criteria

- Reviewer should be able to submit multiple pictures and attach them to the review
- Show a collection of the latest images submitted by users

Initiative Overview

Initiative: Improve contributor features for MakeYourMaps.	
<i>Epic 1: Add User-Generated Reviews and Ratings feature</i>	<i>Epic 2: Improve Reviews and Ratings features for User Interaction and Engagement</i>
User Story 1: Write Review and Rate	User Story 4: Accessibility
User Story 2: Show Rating	User Story 5: Content Moderation
User Story 3: Read Reviews	User Story 6: Safety Tips
User Story 7: Photographs	

Market Research (Survey and Interviews)

Research Goal

The primary goal of this User Research, through a combination of interviews and surveys, is to gain a deep understanding of our users' needs, expectations, and pain points.

By engaging directly with our user base we aim to validate our proposed solutions, ensuring that these are aligning with the users' expectations and enhancing their experience, as well as increasing their engagement with MakeYourMaps.

Ultimately, the goal is foster strong user satisfaction and loyalty, making our product useful and relevant to real world challenges as a travel app, making MakeYourMaps the GO-TO app for trip planning.

Relevant Topics

- Users' motivation and goals for using local guide apps
- Impact on decision making for trips
- Their engagement and interaction with the app
- Accessibility and Inclusivity

Survey Questions

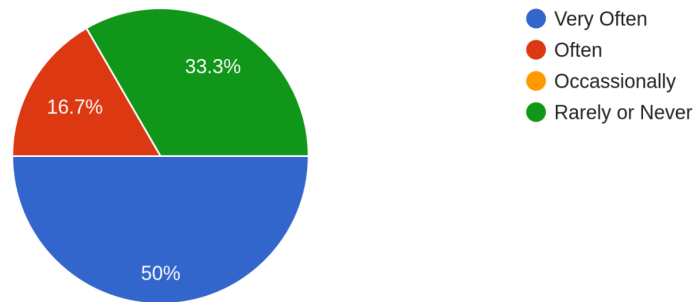
- How frequently do you use an app like MakeYourMaps to discover new places or experiences in your local area or when traveling? (Very often, Often, Occasionally, Rarely or Never)
- Have you ever interacted with any form of reviews or ratings on other platforms? (Select all that apply) (Left a review, Rated a place of interest, If None of the above, why? Please specify)
- What motivates you to read reviews and ratings when exploring new places? (Select all that apply) (To find recommendations and insights, To check the quality and popularity of a place, To ensure safety and avoid potential issues, Other (please specify):)
- Do you believe that integrating a Reviews and Ratings feature within our app would enhance the overall user experience? (Yes, No specify why not)
- How often do you rely on user reviews and ratings when planning visits to new places or experiences? (Very Often, Often, Occasionally, Rarely or Never)
- How important is it to you that user generated content in the Reviews and Ratings feature is moderated to ensure relevance and appropriateness? (Very Important, Important, Neutral, Not very Important, Not Important at all)
- Do you or someone you know have a disability that affects the use of apps or websites? If so, could you please specify the type of disability?

Survey link: <https://forms.gle/C6cAvBmR7jngRi4J7>

Survey Results

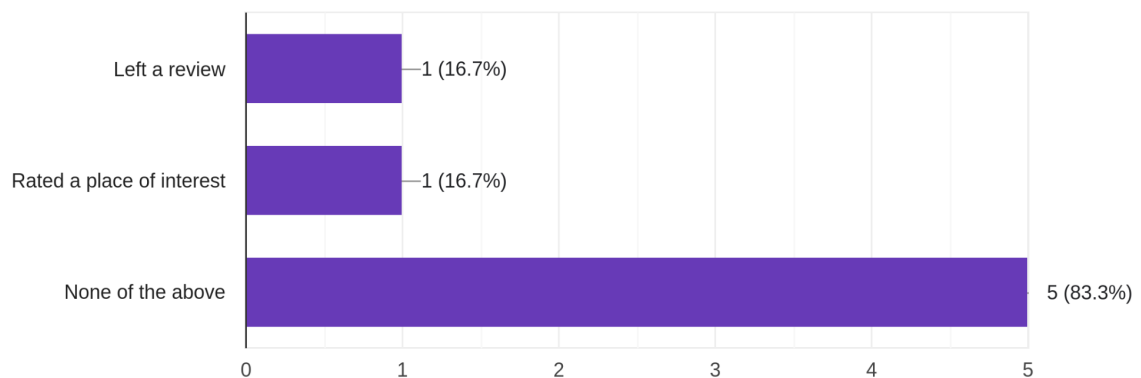
How frequently do you use an app like MakeYourMaps to discover new places or experiences in your local area or when traveling?

6 responses



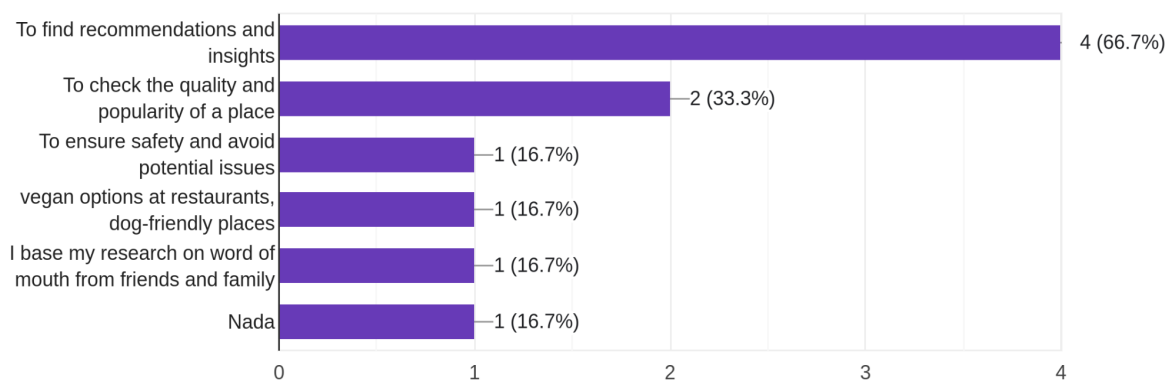
Have you ever interacted with any form of reviews or ratings on other platforms? (Select all that apply)

6 responses



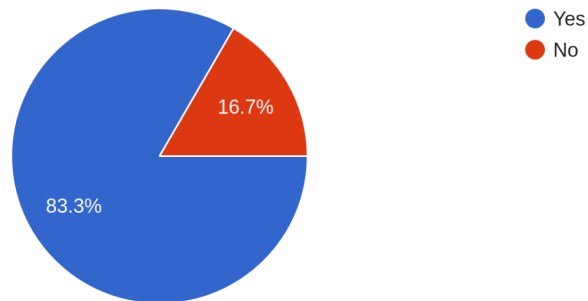
What motivates you to read reviews and ratings when exploring new places? (Select all that apply)

6 responses



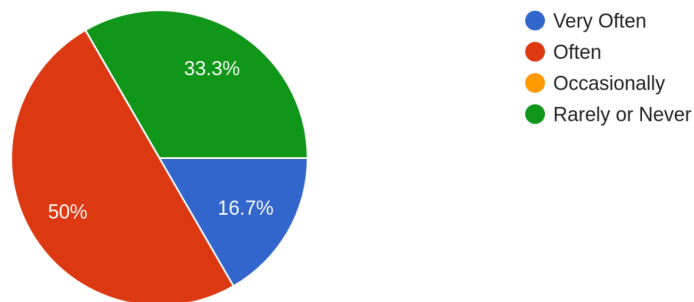
Do you believe that integrating a Reviews and Ratings feature within our app would enhance the overall user experience?

6 responses



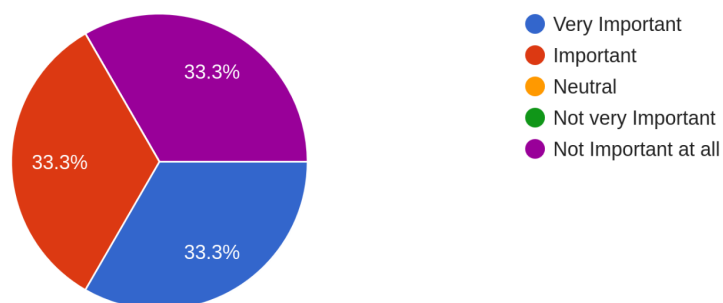
How often do you rely on user reviews and ratings when planning visits to new places or experiences?

6 responses



How important is it to you that user generated content in the Reviews and Ratings feature is moderated to ensure relevance and appropriateness?

6 responses



Do you or someone you know have a disability that affects the use of apps or websites? If so, could you please specify the type of disability?

6 responses

No

reading is hard

Poor sight

Interview Questions

- Can you describe how you currently gather information and make decisions when planning visits to new places or experiences?
- - Follow up Q: What specific tools or applications do you usually use?
- Are there any other specific features that you'd like to see on a local guide app?
- When exploring new places, do you find the content of reviews to be particularly valuable for gaining local insights or recommendations?
- If we were to introduce this feature, what concerns or challenges do you foresee?
- How do you assess the trustworthiness and reliability of user-generated content, such as comments, reviews, and ratings, on other platforms or websites?
- Imagine the Reviews and Ratings feature as a personal travel advisor who knows your preferences very well. What would this advisor recommend for your next adventure, and how would it enhance your travel experiences?

Interview link: <https://forms.gle/2A2RZtvm6a7wmPE8>

Interviews Results

Can you describe how you currently gather information and make decisions when planning visits to new places or experiences?

2 responses

Sarah: I talk to people that have already been there. I google for vegan friendly restaurants/cafes. I used to use komoot for hiking trails. I use google maps (especially satellite view) to kind of look around in the area. Especially nice for me is the satellite view because I can see how the "terrain" is. I also like to watch youtube videos about hiking trails/van vacations etc. Sometimes (more rarely) I watch documentaries to see more places that less tourists would be seen there. For quick bookings I usually use booking.com or air bnb. For camping I use camp4night.

Daniel: I use different ways to gather information. I usually search for Top places to visit, check pictures and videos of those places. I like to find if the cities I visit offer activities of my hobbies (such as climbing or other interesting experiences). I also ask people I know if they visited such places and would would their recommendations be. I usually like to book accommodations well in advance. I check how public transport works locally. I make web searches specifically for locals recommendations. I like bookmarking places I would like to visit in a list. I try to find out which places to avoid completely due to safety concerns.

What specific tools or applications do you usually use?*2 responses*

Sarah: booking.com, airbnb, youtube, google maps, komoot, park4night

Daniel: Google Maps, Airbnb, Google Search, TripAdvisor, Social Media (Instagram), Youtube, Blogs

Are there any other specific features that you'd like to see on a local guide app?*2 responses*

Sarah: free parking spots, free "sightseeing" for nature points of interest

Daniel:

- Filtering reviews by tourist/local.
- Built in translation (sometimes I have to use Google Translate during my research)
- Create some sort of itinerary

When exploring new places, do you find the content of reviews to be particularly valuable for gaining local insights or recommendations?*2 responses*

Sarah: Usually not. In my experience the reviews are written more by tourists.

Daniel: Most of the time I find it hard to find truly local recommendations as, I think, most of the reviews are from tourist instead of locals. I find them useful to check the general quality or safety of those places, but if I want to check for locals' insights I either talk to locals at the destination or search for specific local insights.

If we were to introduce this Reviews and Ratings feature, what concerns or challenges do you foresee?*2 responses*

Sarah: - That not a lot of local people are giving reviews - That they don't point out how disability friendly they are (eg accessible with wheelchair, braille, sign language) - that ratings come from the "owners" or bots

Daniel: Like I said before, these recommendations and ratings being from tourists. I think there are usually a lot of fake reviews, or inaccuracy. I never leave reviews or rate places, unless I have an extremely bad experience, and most of the people I know don't leave reviews either.

How do you assess the trustworthiness and reliability of user-generated content, such as comments, reviews, and ratings, on other platforms or websites?

2 responses

Sarah: I look up what I found on some other website to see if it kind of has the same reviews or similar ones.

Daniel: I just cross check information to get a general feeling for the place.

Imagine the Reviews and Ratings feature as a personal travel advisor who knows your preferences very well. What would this advisor recommend for your next adventure, and how would it enhance your travel experiences?

2 responses

Sarah: To show me dog friendly areas. To show me the shortest routes for seeing as many different landscapes as possible. Maybe with my all-time personal filters that are turned on with one click!! :)

Daniel: The travel advisor would give me all the information I need, such as a list of places I'd like to visit and what is interesting about them. Would show me a lot by providing images and videos. Would provide me with places off the beaten path and have my safety into account. It would have to be someone I really trust, so I don't have to double check the information myself or do my own research. It would basically decrease the time I spend doing research, all the info would be in the same place and it would be personalized to me so I can make the best out of each trip.

Participants

Participants were informed that their data will be auto-deleted after 2 months and during the interviews that they were transcribed.

6 out of 7 users participated in the Google Form survey.

2 out of 4 users participated in the Google Form interview.

Product Improvements Validation

Taking into account the data gathered in the survey and interviews, as more than 50% of the total interviewees are interested in this feature, the proposed solutions are largely **validated**. Most users do use in some way or another reviews and ratings during the planning phase of their trips. Although many do not fully trust such reviews, thinking many could be fake or inaccurate. Many rely on reviews for decision making as well as for safety tips.

I would not add any new user stories as of now, although I would like **further exploration into the tourist vs. local recommendations** that were mentioned throughout the interviews.