Hoppr Evaluation

Part 1 - Evaluation Plan

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Description

Hoppr is a mobile application that helps people find free accommodations while travelling. Hoppr helps users reach out to their friends and people that they have mutual friends with in areas that the users wish to travel. Users 'pay' each other using virtual currency (travel coins) and can also use the app to find suggested places to visit based on the amount of potential hosts they have in the area.

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to evaluate the usability of the paper prototype of the Hoppr mobile application. Our evaluation team created introductory script and testing protocol to figure out user pain points. By identifying user pain points through observations and a post-task questionnaire, our Hoppr team hopes to find out usability flaws and design recommendations.

Target users

Our target users are mainly people who wish to stay in free or cheap accommodations while traveling. Our target users still have safety and convenience as high priorities while travelling, but affordability is their main concern.

Participants demographics

There are four participants for this particular evaluation assignment in our sample group. There were three females and one male. Our participants are college students all with intermediate to advanced technological skills. They are all potential users of this product,

primarily valuing affordability while travelling. They have all experienced travelling, some internationally, and some even internationally by themselves. This is particularly helpful, because our participants were more likely to provide insight as to what travellers would be looking for in accommodations.

Method

For this evaluation assignment, one team member will instruct the participant with an introductory script. After the participant has been given the introductory script, they will work alone to complete the 3 tasks. While the participant is working to complete the task, the team member will take note of any visible difficulties the participant has with the prototype or any comments the participant makes regarding the prototype. Once the 3 tasks have been completed, the team member will ask the participant the post-task questionnaire questions.

Test environment, equipment, and related logistics

The test environment varied from team member to team member, however, all studies were conducted in areas where participants could focus on the task at hand, not be too distracted, and feel comfortable vocalizing any complaints or comments with the team member conducting the test. Each team member utilized:
- The paper prototype or the POP version of the paper prototype
- Paper / pens or laptop to take notes

Participants were not required to bring anything with them to the study or provide any of the technological components themselves. The team member provided the participant with a computer or phone if the team member was using the POP prototype rather than the physical paper prototype.

Facilitation approach

Each team member will conduct their study by themselves, with a minimum of one participant. Team members will choose to either use the physical paper prototype, the POP version of the paper prototype, or the laptop picture version of the prototype. This is our approach to getting the most feedback as possible regarding our actual application prototype and not feedback simply on the way we presented it to our participants. Regardless of how the team member presents the prototype to the user, however, there will be consistency with the introductory script, note-taking, and the post-task questionnaire.

Data that will be collected

The data collected for this evaluation will be taken through handwritten or typed notes taken while the participant goes through the prototype. The participant will be asked to speak aloud as they go about the process to try to communicate their thoughts to the administrator.

At least one of the participants was uncomfortable with a recording of the session, so a audio or visual recording wasn't taken.

Introductory Script

Thank you again for coming in. We really appreciate you taking the time to help us conduct our study. I will be walking you through this session. Today's test is going to take between 10 - 15 minutes. (Note taker's name) is here to help accurately record the session, as well as take notes. Before we begin, I am going to read you a script to ensure my instructions are the same for all participants.

Our objective today is to observe you using the paper (or POP or laptop picture) prototype of Hoppr mobile application. Please keep in mind that we aren't testing you, we are evaluating the prototype.

We would like you to try to think aloud while you're working. By thinking aloud, we mean that you explain your thought process while trying to complete each task. If you have any questions as we go along, please feel free to ask. We may not be able to answer everything, as we are looking to observe how people use HuskyJobs independently. However, if you still have any questions once the test is completed, I will answer them for you. If for any reason you need to take a break, let us know and we can pause the test.

Thank you. Do you have any questions so far?

I will now explain how the session will work.

- I will read you a scenario that we would like you to keep in mind as you complete the tasks. You will also be provided a written version of the scenario to refer back to at any time.
- You will complete the task to the best of your ability. After each task, we will ask you several questions regarding your experience.
- Once all tasks have been completed, you will be asked to give feedback on the website through an online questionnaire.
- Before we finish, we may have some clarifying questions to ask you based on our observations.

Do you have any questions before we begin?

Task Scenarios

Participants are expected to complete one task them move on to the next. They are not organized in any particular order.

Task 1: Finding an ideal accommodation	
Scenario (Landing Page: The participant already logged in. He/she is on the main page, where he/she can input searching information.)	You're about to travel to Paris, France for 12/20/16 to 12/21/16. You want to filter the search results by **gender** (**female** host only), by **age** (hosts aged 18-25 only), and by **proximity** to the Eiffel Tower (less than 5 miles away). Then, you want to sort search results by highest to lowest rating. Finally, you click on a promising accommodation. Task 1 finish.
Task 2: Book an accommodation	
Scenario (Landing Page: the participant just clicked on a promising accommodation. He/she is on accommodation description page.)	Now, you are reading, the profile, browsing all the pictures. Then you want to check who the mutual friends all are. You are close with Annie, so you decide to send messages to a mutual friend Annie. Then, you read customer reviews (please read full list of customer reviews), and then go back to profile. You like the place, so you decide to contact host and book the room. You

	book the room and change date - 12/20/16 - 12/23/16 instead. However, it's not working out, so you decide to book instead 12/20/16 - 12/22/16. Confirm your booking. Cancel your booking. Task 2 finish.
Task 3: Reviewing the accommodation	

Scenario (landing page: the same main page as task 1.)	You are at the end of your trip, so you decide to give a review about your experience staying in this accommodation. You open review of Host. Please finish the following tasks:
	1. Open camera
	2. Take a photo of place stayed (couch)
	3. Add category: bed
	4. Add a new photo of the bathroom
	5. Go through the qualities and rate them at the following ratings
	   a. Cleanliness: high
	   b. Comfort: medium
	   c. Safety: high
	   d. Convenience: medium
	6. Rate Host with the following ratings
	   a. Kind: high
	   b. Helpful: medium
	   c. Respectful: high
	7. Rate overall experience with 5 stars
	8. Review answers
	9. Edit "Helpful" rating to be high
	10. Write entry for the review about the experience
	11. Submit review

	Task 3 finish.

Post-test Questionnaires

1. What positive and/or negative feedback would you give the developers and designers of Hoppr based on your experience?
2. What would be the confusing part(s) throughout the experience?
3. Was there anything you would like to do but were not allowed to do so?
4. Would you use Hoppr again based off this experience? Why or why not?
5. We plan on taking notes and asking follow-up questions after the test based on what is said during the think out loud process.

Reporting

Our findings of pain points and design recommendations will be reported in part 2 - Simple Evaluation. According to the findings, we will make design suggestions to move on to our second round of designing. The strengths and weaknesses of Hoppr will be listed and supported with real data of user feedbacks.

Part 2 - Simple Evaluation

Findings

Below are some of the findings that were most common across participants and team member observations. There are a lot of other actions, questions, and suggestions from the participants that we considered valuable and will refer to in our later design, but they will not be highlighted in this assignment. Our team has analyzed these participant problems and worked to ideate some possible design solutions to improve our prototype for the Hoppr app. Participant quotes and specific details from individual observations are used to support these design recommendations and evaluations.

Some functions are missing when users try to adjust their actions

There are mainly two frustrations that users met when they would like to adjust their actions or selections during the test. There are both in Task 1, where users are allowed to search for place to live and filter the results according to their preference.

The first frustration happens after the four participants finished deleting the gender filter, when they wanted to add more filters or get the gender filter back. Two of the participants asked "how do I get that filter back" during the testing. Both the other two participants claimed during the post-test questionnaire that they might need to add filter if they would use this product in the future. One of the participants stated, "If I am using it for real, I will want to add back the deleted filter or add even more filters than just these three."

The other frustration was that users were not able to browse where exact the location that they selected was. One of the filters in Task 1 filtered out the locations that were not close to the place that the users selected. Three of the four participants hoped there could be a map so that they could see where exact the places locate. "Maybe a map would be much better, 'cause I don't wanna check Google map over and over again." One of the participants even suggested to have a map that allows users to selection multiple locations. "I always visit more than one places when I travel, so I always hope there can be an app that finds the best location for me that is closed to all of my destinations."

Categorization in context caused confusion

All the participants encountered some confusions while doing Task 3 - the review process. After taking a photo of the room that the user recently live in, they are suggested to categorize the photo. During the in-class testing, the categories was a process that was not in-line with the clear path and caused substantial confusion. Because it was a separate button they had to find, they only then noticed the menu bar at the bottom of the screen which also caused confusion. In order to subside this initial confusion, the categories was made into a pop-up that would appear about the picture was taken.

After this adjustment, it was found that all four participants wanted to select multiple or no categories. "I don't like posting reviews, but if it's mandatory, I will want the review session as easy as possible. If I have to categorize all the pictures, and that's annoying." One of the other participants reflected that the buttons on the screen (the category menu and a check mark indicating finished) made the categorization confusing. "I wasn't sure whether I should click on anything or just wait." We will adjust the process to a single-path process where you can select one, several or none, then hit continue, would solve all the pain points described above.

Placement of some elements problematize the Information Architecture

We created the prototype based on the information architecture. However, the placement or existence of some elements on the prototype can change how the

architecture looks to our users, making is confusing. There are mainly two confusions caused by that.

One of the confusions was caused by the menu bar at the bottom of the screens in Task 3. This can be a problem to every task and the whole project, but only Task 3 covered this detail in the prototype. There are four buttons on the menu where users can click on throughout the experience. Three out of the four participant said it was confusing because they couldn't figure out what that was for. One of the participants said, "I know why there need to be a menu but I just think it shouldn't always be there. I just kept wondering if I've successfully entered something I pressed because the bar is still there. The structure's just kinda confusing." By saying that, the users indicated that after entering a subcategory, in this case, review page, or camera, the menu should not be there because it is the highest level of the information architecture. Messing the structure could interrupt the users and make them think whether they did things right.

The other confusion happened when users were rating on their experience. In the former page, users rate on the host and his or her place based on a few aspects such as kindness, and cleanliness. They then give an overall grade, and hit continue. The next page requests users to write comments on the top, and provides an overview of the former page at the bottom. Three of the four participants thought this part was confusing. One of the participants said, "I feel like writing review should be right after the rating, not like the next page. I didn't know what that page did because they didn't look quite right together." Another participant also thought, "writing comment should not be with the overview. I made me think I did the comment thing wrong."

The order and hierarchy are very important for the users to perceive what stage they are on while using the product. The users' thoughts help us adjust those confusing elements in the design.

What worked well

The following points are either direct quote of the users or summarized from their words. They are summarized carefully not to change their originally meanings.

Task 1:
- It is very closed to a usual products.
- The filters for personalization are good, and one of the users "like the gender filter".

Task 2:
- It is very detailed and completed.
- "It has basically everything I need."
- It makes the process contacting host simple.

Task 3:
- It is very cool to categorize photos in the review.
- "I like the categorizes, and I think they really make sense."

Suggestions for refining the design

These suggestions are collected from the usability test. Not all of them will be necessarily accepted but we will discuss about all of them and apply the reasonable ones to our design.

Task 1:
- The description of the drop down menus can be clearer. One of the users claimed, "I didn't know what they mean if I am not following the tasks or before I click on it."
- Providing maps for users to select location. Users do not hope to use another product to check the location over and over again.
- Allowing users to select multiple location, and recommending hosts that are relatively closed to all of the locations. One user stated that she always visit multiple place while travelling and she hopes to find a convenient place to stay.
- Allowing users to edit the filters more freely. All of the users thought they are frustrated with adding filters after deleting.
- Adding a filter of interest. For example, a user who wants to live with someone who can watch football game together can use this filter to find host. Some of our target users hope to meet more people through travelling. This filter can help them find host who will have more common topic with them.

Task 2:
- Making the reference part clearer and more obvious, because "that is the most important thing I wanted to see." The reference section is in between room rules reviews. Users thought this section should be highlighted.
- Profile picture of the reference shown beside the name. One user claimed that he has a lot of friends who have the same first name and that can be frustrating. So it will be clearer to those users if there is a profile picture beside each name.
- Allowing the users to call the host. One of the users said when she uses Uber, she is allowed to call the driver directly. Although Uber's service requires instant communication, it is more convenient for some people to call. The host can hide their number if they do not want to be called.
- Providing booking suggestions after cancelling the booking. One of the users said she might want to see something else after she cancel the booking. The app can provide recommendations based on the users' previous search.

Task 3:
- Making selecting photos from album together with taking photos. This will allow users to do review after the trip ends.
- Allowing adding multiple images at one time. Most of the users did not like to review so they all hope the process can be faster. Adding multiple images together can save some time.
- Utilizing the "confirm" button and adding a retake button.before submitting the photo. Some users stated that they sometimes change their mind after taking a photo, or sometimes they do not like the photo. So they hoped to have these functions allowing their mistakes.
- Not making the logo look like one of the buttons. One of the users asked the interviewer twice what that button (the logo) means. It also distracted her and she thought it is confusing.
- Setting seems more reasonable to be under "my profile". When one of the users tried to get photos from the album in the cell phone, she clicked on the setting button. After the interviewer told her that is actually "setting", the participant was very surprised and made this suggestion.
- Putting writing review and rating on one page. The structure on these two pages was confusing to the users and they all think they should be on one page.
- Making the process as short as possible. Again, most of the users do not want to review, all of them said they hope this can be shorter and clearer.
- Standardizing the rating. People has different standard of 3 stars, or medium. Maybe it would be better if the rating is standardized, like with photos or descriptions.
- A button for complaint. When the interviewer asked the participants what might you want to do but was not able to do during the process, one participant said he might want to complaint about the host.