

ICT App Design

Based on the discussions we had in class, we decided that the “itch” we were going to target was a lack of access to local information. To “scratch” the proverbial itch, we conducted interviews to find out what needs and wants have to be addressed and how an app could have features that address them in a convenient and user-friendly way. Highlighted below are the main needs that we ascertained and how we designed features to fulfill them. The underlying assumptions and rationale are also outlined.

App Theme: We chose orange because research indicated that it's a color associated with warmth, energy, and creativity, fostering a welcoming and dynamic environment for users to engage with community knowledge-sharing. Additionally, we opted for a clean, modern theme with bright colors and intuitive features to ensure a user-friendly interface, facilitating easy navigation and enhancing the overall user experience, making it both visually appealing and accessible to users of all backgrounds and abilities.

App Name: Naming the app "Zakheera" serves multiple purposes. First, "Zakheera" means "treasure" in Urdu, evoking the idea of a valuable repository of community knowledge, fostering a sense of significance and importance. Second, using an Urdu word can help users feel a sense of ownership and cultural connection, making the app feel more familiar and relevant to them. Third, it helps to bridge linguistic and cultural gaps, making the app feel less foreign compared to English-named apps, thereby encouraging broader adoption and engagement within diverse communities. Ultimately, the name "Zakheera" encapsulates the essence of the app as a cherished resource for collective wisdom while also fostering a sense of inclusivity and cultural resonance among its users.

Accurate and Up-to-date Navigation

Assumption: Users rely on navigation tools for daily routines and personal travel, requiring current and accurate information.

Feature: Integration of navigation data using Google Maps API with real-time updates.

Rationale: Leveraging Google Maps ensures access to reliable navigation tools, enhancing user trust. This approach addresses users' frustrations with outdated navigation information by providing the most current data, thus significantly improving the utility of the app for daily travel needs. The thematic analysis highlighted a dependency on accurate information, underlining the importance of real-time data for an effective navigation experience.

Smooth App Integration and Practical Navigation Routes

Assumption: Users prefer a cohesive ecosystem of apps that minimizes switching and offers practical, safe navigation options.

Feature: Seamless integration with other apps and route optimization based on user feedback.

Rationale: Improved integration and navigation assistance cater to the user's need for a seamless digital experience, promoting longer engagement. By addressing the feedback regarding clunky app integration, this feature directly enhances usability, making the app a more

integral part of the user's tech ecosystem. For example, our app should seamlessly integrate with Google Maps when the user is trying to navigate, and it should seamlessly integrate with the users' other social media profiles when connected to their user page.

Current Local Information and Rich Local Insights for Exploration

Assumption: Users find value in current, comprehensive local information that includes detailed reviews on various metrics.

Feature: Dynamic data updates, community-driven content verification, and detailed user reviews with ratings on Value for Money, Safety, Maintenance, Enjoyment, and Accessibility.

Rationale: Regular updates and verified content from the community ensure the information's accuracy and relevance, addressing concerns over outdated data. By incorporating detailed reviews and ratings across multiple metrics, the app provides a nuanced understanding of locations and services. This multidimensional feedback system enriches the user's exploration experience, offering insights that are both broad and deeply personalized. The addition of specific ratings like Safety and Maintenance addresses direct user concerns and needs for detailed evaluative information, facilitating informed decision-making. This comprehensive approach caters to a diverse set of user preferences and enhances the quality of community-sourced knowledge.

Engaged and Supportive Community Interaction

Assumption: A platform for moderated discussions will foster quality interactions and community engagement.

Feature: Community chat rooms with roles for users, including community moderators.

Rationale: Implementing moderated community chats encourages active participation and maintains a supportive environment, mirroring successful models from platforms like Discord and Reddit. This feature leverages the collective knowledge of the community, enhancing the app's value as a hub for sharing and receiving local insights. The thematic analysis indicated a strong desire for community contribution, and by facilitating moderated interactions, the app meets this need while ensuring discussions remain constructive and relevant.

Accessibility in Local Languages

Assumption: A significant portion of the user base benefits from accessing information in their preferred language.

Feature: Multilingual support to make app content accessible in users' local languages.

Rationale: Providing local language options increases the app's accessibility and inclusivity, encouraging broader participation. This feature addresses the diversity of the user base, ensuring that language barriers do not hinder access to valuable community-sourced information. It responds to the global nature of community knowledge, making the platform more welcoming and usable for a wider audience.

Transparency and Credibility in Community Contributions

Assumption: Users value transparency and credibility in the information shared within the app.

Feature: Mandatory user profiles with ID verification, demographic visibility in reviews, option for anonymity, and social media linkages.

Rationale: Verified profiles and visible demographics in reviews enhance the platform's trustworthiness, providing context that helps users evaluate the relevance of the information. This system also allows for a level of anonymity, balancing privacy with the need for accountability. Linking profiles to social media can add weight to reviews, further increasing the credibility of user-contributed content. This addresses user concerns regarding the authenticity of reviews and information, promoting a culture of trust and reliability within the community.

App Profitability Without User Fees

Assumption: Users are willing to tolerate advertisements for free access and will utilize integrated third-party services.

Feature: Display advertisements and form partnerships with transport apps like Careem or InDrive for referral links or booking features.

Rationale: This monetization strategy supports the app's operational costs while providing free service to users. Incorporating ads and partnerships with transport services offers a dual benefit of generating revenue and enhancing user convenience. By embedding these services directly into the app, users gain a streamlined experience that complements the core functionality of the app, making it a more comprehensive tool for travel and local exploration.

Consumer Safety

Assumption: Customers are wary of their surroundings and submit reviews with complete honesty.

Feature: Any review by a customer that includes keywords like "harassment," "assault," "unsafe," "hostile," and "attack," among others, would result in that specific place being marked with a red exclamation mark. This is shown in the "See all Places" subsection under the "Search" section. For example, Haveli restaurant has been marked with an exclamation mark on possible reports of consumers encountering hostile behavior.

Rationale: A number of individuals from our user research notified us about safety concerns and how appropriate mechanisms for safety awareness are not in place thus, it is essential that our app caters to those concerns.

Incentives and Point-based Reward System

Assumptions: Users are willing to contribute to community-generated information if they are given the appropriate incentives.

Feature: The application awards users some points based on the number of sites they have reviewed so far. This record is kept in the "explore and navigate" section's dashboard. There is a subsequent section that entails user rewards that could be redeemed through points acquired.

Rationale: A number of users highlighted the lack of motivation to generally contribute to community information if they have no direct benefit for themselves.

Limitations:

- Not all subfeatures are fully functional.
- Vertical Integration is applied to only relevant features.

