

HOSTED

A culturally immersive travel planning app

THE PROBLEM:

It's difficult for adventurous travellers to find a truly authentic and culturally immersive experience while travelling.

THE SOLUTION:

Hosted is a culture focused itinerary planning app that matches the traveller with a local host so that they can experience a culture in the most authentic way possible.

MY ROLE: UX designer, UX researcher

TOOLS: Figma, Adobe XD, InVision, Miro



Interview Plan

I developed an interview plan with a single research question and three research objectives

| Research Question |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>How can we make your travel planning easier?</i> |
| Objective 1: |
| <i>As a user researcher, I want to understand what inspires our users to travel</i> |
| Objective 2: |
| <i>As a user researcher, I want to understand our users thought process about how they choose to travel and plan their trips.</i> |
| Objective 3: |
| <i>As a user researcher, I want to understand the users difficulties/pain points in planning their own travel</i> |

Affinity Diagram

Inspirations



Priorities



Pain Points



The interview data was organized and put into groups based off of natural relationships.

User Persona



*"New cultures and ways of living
help me grow as a person"*

AGE 30
JOB TITLE Photographer
STATUS Married
LOCATION Orlando, Florida

#foodie
#travelbug
#adventureislife

ABOUT

Kendra is a professional photographer with a bachelors degree in communication studies. She is an adventurous spirit who loves to travel, meet new people, and experience new cultures and the outdoors.

GOALS

- Meet new people
- Experience new cultures
- Eat good food
- Save money where I can
- Soak up the outdoors
- Capture new scenery

Kendra Childers

HOBBIES

- Travelling
- Exercising
- The outdoors
- The best restaurants
- Spending time with friends

FRUSTRATIONS

- Planning is time consuming
- All the different app and tool options is overwhelming
- Wishes everything could be in one spot
- When the cost adds up too much

FAVORITE APPS



HOSTELWORLD

Instagram



Expedia

AllTrails



airbnb

Google

Competitor Analysis Matrix

| | Itinerary Planning | Activities | Food/Restaurant | Lodging |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can manually add all travel details to a single itinerary Can't search for travel details to add to your itinerary Can link email so that you can generate booking details to your itinerary | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does a poor job at helping the user find activities. They just provide a google search feature to show venue information but that's it.. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does a poor job at helping the user find restaurants. Just uses a general google search to find places in the area. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Searching for lodging is limited to a google search just like activities, and food |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Itinerary planning is limited to adding places to stay and things to do to a wishlist Can plan your trip with a loca via video call but there is no additional feature to build an itinerary with it | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides a large variety of experiences that you can book and includes a preview of the activity Includes the pricing of activities up front Can chat with a local host to plan your trip | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides dining and food related experiences You can't just do a general restaurant search | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides the most unique lodging options available with lots of filtering options so you can find exactly what you are looking for |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can import all reservation details or have in linked with Gmail to be added to your plan/itinerary. Can add times, cost, directions Easily can rearrange itinerary Not very detailed Can add recommended places and search for activities but not intuitive | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommends places to visit Can search for activities in the area but it's not easy to find | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can search for restaurants in your area but it's not easy to find | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can add lodging information via search or by syncing email No recommendations or options for place to stay |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Able to save things to do to a list but no official itinerary planning | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can search for things to do in an area Recommended activities are mostly places to go visit and not activities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> General restaurant search with the typical cuisine filter | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited to hotel search Can filter on a large variety of criteria |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No itinerary planning at all | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can search for a variety of mostly touristy activities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can search within their "things to do list" but no other filtering options for food | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can bundle lodging with flight and car Generally higher end and expensive but you can set a budget Mostly hotels but has the option for houses |

The Follow Up

I reconnected with a few interview participants and asked some follow up questions to gain further clarity and insight.

How do you find culturally authentic experience today?

“I read people's blogs otherwise I just figure it out when I get there”

- Shiloh

“I figure it out when I get there and ask locals or I read blogs”

- Brittany

Why are tourist focused activities unappealing to you?

“They are often overpriced and the food or activities are not as good as they could have been”

- Shiloh

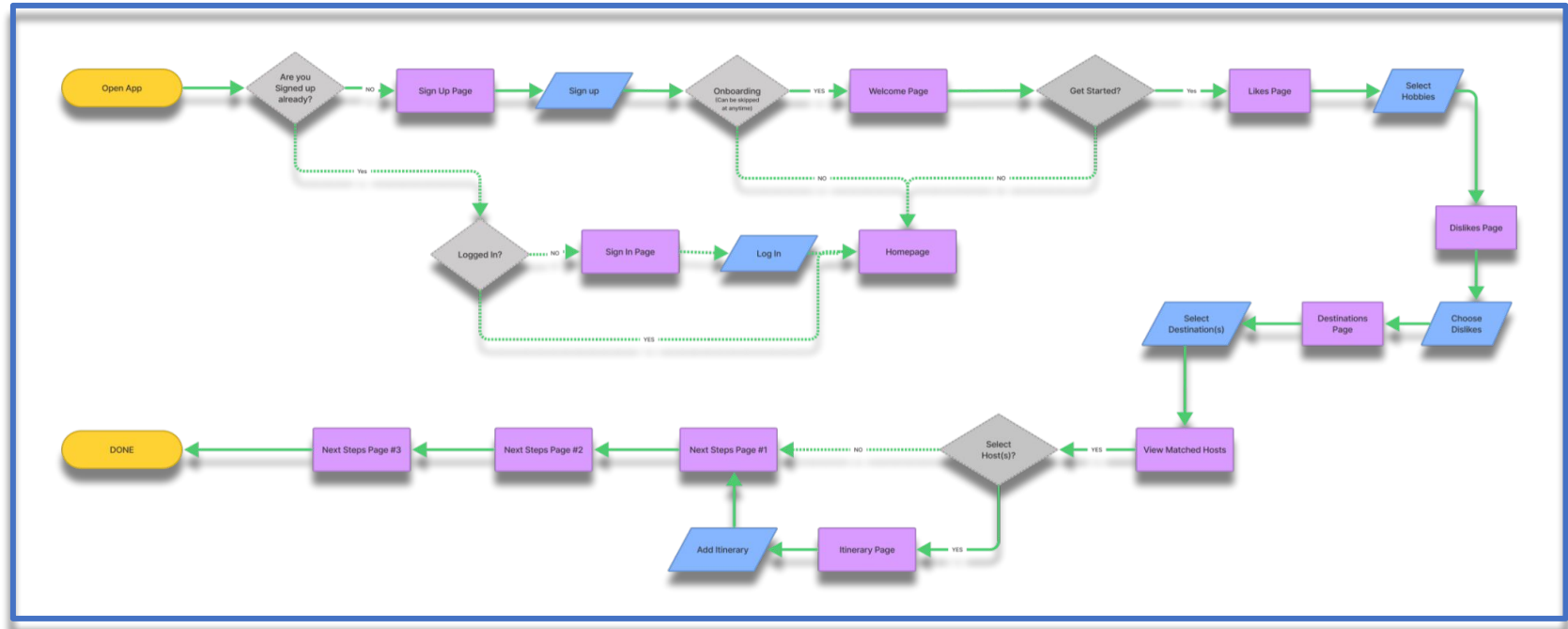
“They are not as culturally centered, the places are interrupted as opposed to what they are meant to be”

- Brittany

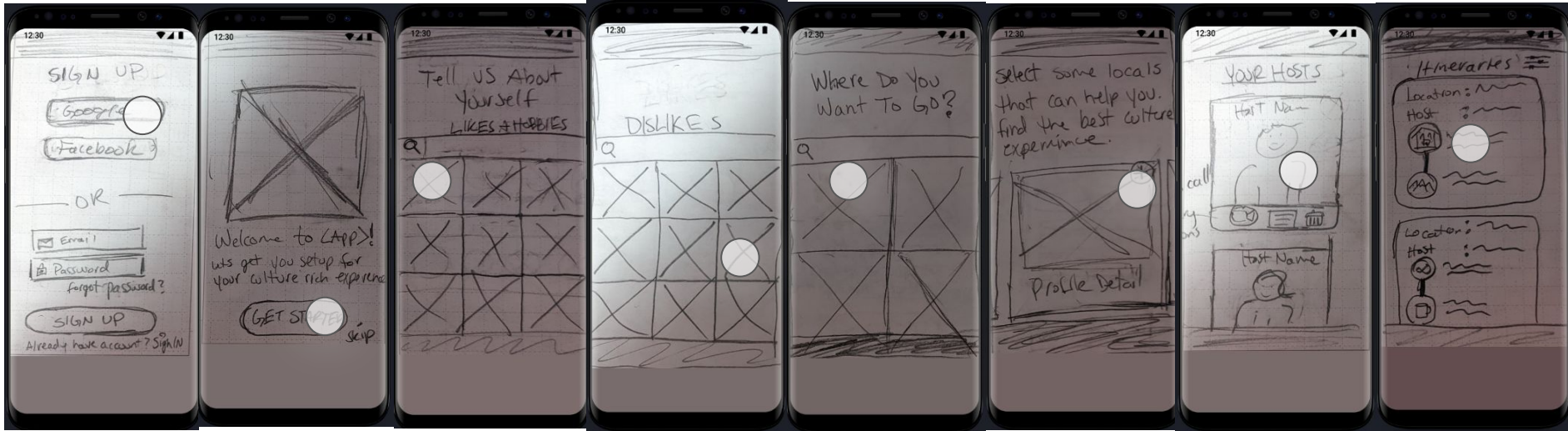
User Insight

Young adventurous travelers need a more culturally immersive experience when travelling but they don't want to wait until they get to their destination to find that experience. Authentic travel experiences are important so that they can avoid the busy, over priced tourist traps that don't live up to the true nature of the culture and because experiencing new ways of living make them feel free and helps them grow as person.

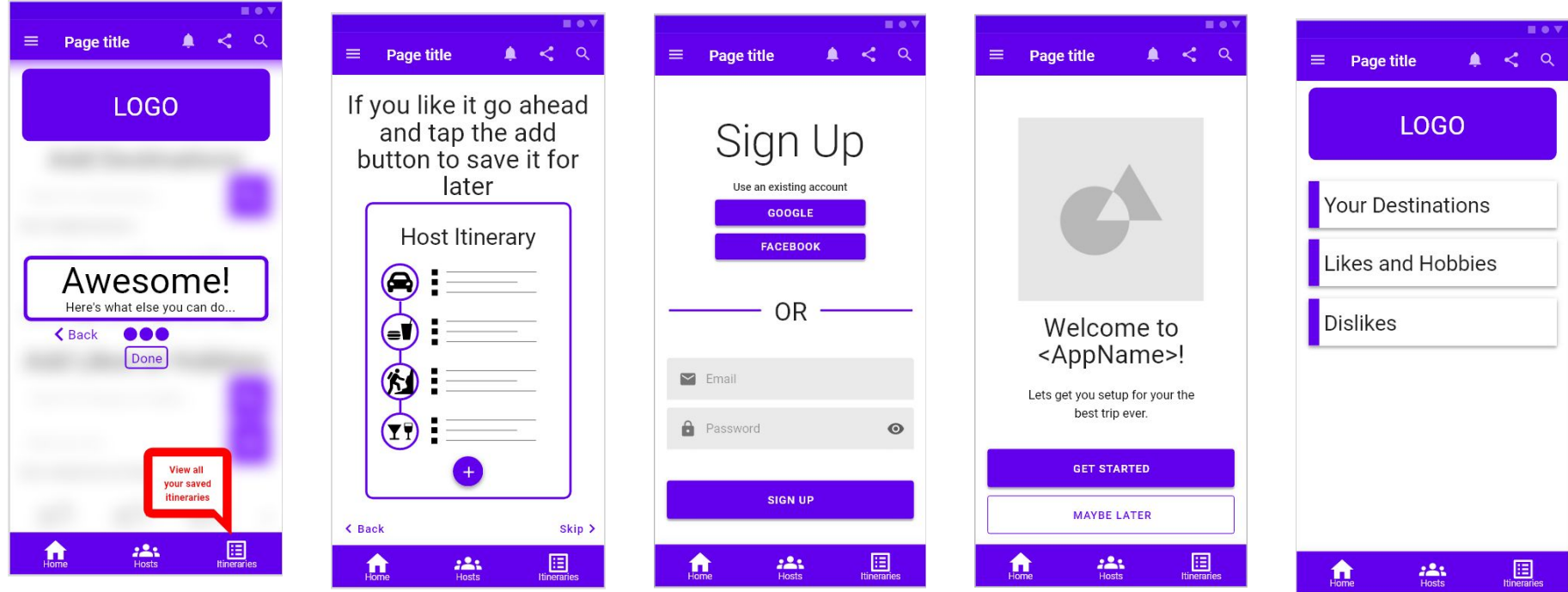
User Flow



Sketches/Lo-Fi Clickable Prototype



Digital Wireframes



Guerilla Testing Plan & Notes

Objectives

1. Can the user successfully complete the onboarding process?
2. Can the user add hobbies, vacations, dislikes to the home page

Tasks

1. Complete the onboarding process
2. Add likes/hobbies to your likes/hobbies list
3. Add a destination to your destination list
4. Add a dislike to your dislikes list
5. View all the hosts that you have saved
6. View your saved itineraries

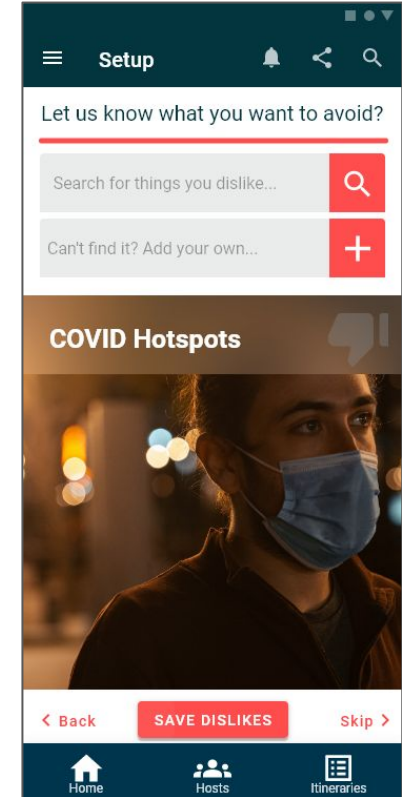
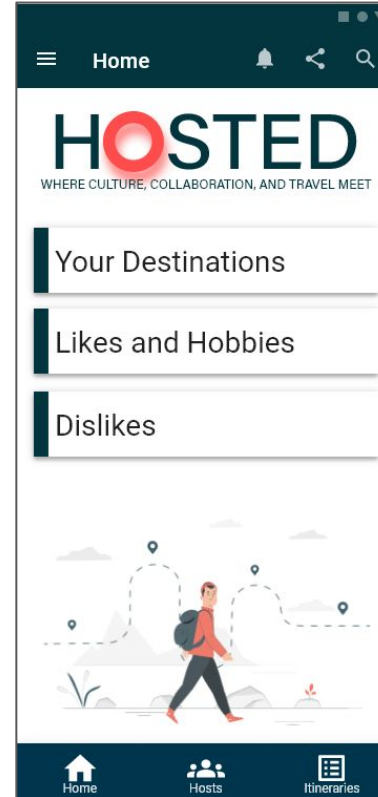
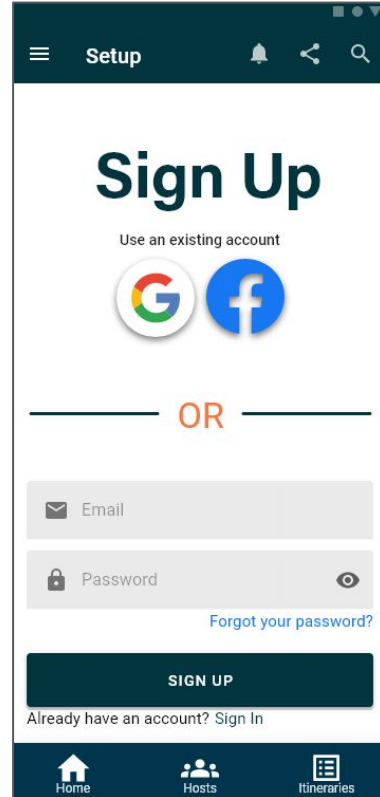
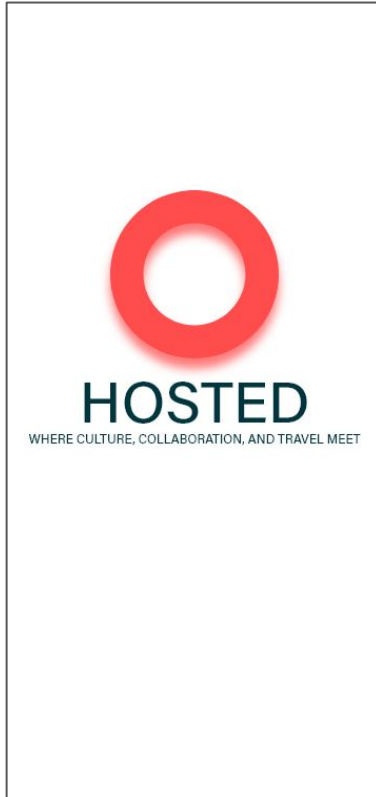
Post Questions

1. What did you like the most about the app?
2. What did you like the least about the app?
3. Any other thoughts about the app?

Feedback

- All participants were able to complete the onboarding
- All participants were able to add destinations, hobbies/likes, and dislikes
 - Some confusion on the drop down menus
 - Verbage, such as 'dislikes' could be rephrased because it is off-putting
- Thought hitting the '+' button would provide a pop up

Digital Prototype



Takeaways

- It's incredibly important to continue iterate over the entire design process especially for the user insight statement as well as after usability testing
- Testing early on low fidelity wireframes reveals usability problems early thus reducing the time, effort, and money in developing the finished product
- If I was to do one thing differently, I would of spent less time on the competitive analysis and more time on refining the user and prototype. I would have liked to iterate at least one more time.