Everywhere is Close

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Project Description

Families and friends are increasingly spreading all over a single country or even all over the world. Our goal is to help them remain close and connected despite the challenges of their geographical differences. However, there are challenges unique to older (45+) consumers.

Research

Target Audience

- Adults 45+ years old with at least a high-school education who have basic computer knowledge. To find them, I will utilize:
  - Craigslist
  - AARP forums
  - Reddit participant forums.

Research Objectives

- Identify major challenges for the 45+ age group with respect to staying connected to distant family and friends.
- Identify gaps in functionality with current tools in use.
- Identify how to get new or older users to use our app or website.
- How to improve the connectivity process.

Research Areas of Interest

- Tools users currently utilize to stay connected to relatives and friends who live at least 250 miles or more from them.
- The challenges users encounter with current tools.
- What keeps them from staying in contact more often: time, technology, geography, etc.?
- What prevents use of connectivity tools?

Competitors

	Cost	Group Chat	Voice Calls	Video Calls	Text Messaging	Send Files	Web Interface	Available on All OS Platforms	Cloud Depen-dency	Mail notify-cations as fallback	Calendar Sync/ Event Reminders	Online Availa-bility	E-mail Connecti-vity
Skype	$0 USD	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes
WhatsApp	$0 USD	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	no	no	yes	no
Facebook	$0 USD	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	no

Interview Insights

- "Make it basic and straightforward." – W. S.
- "I have to remember time zone differences; if I don't, then my opportunity to call is gone for another whole day." – D.S.
- "I take a lot of work home, so I just don't have a lot of time." – P. J.
- "The next thing I know six months have gone by and I haven't spoken to people." – P.J.
- "FaceTime only works if other people have an iPhone." – D.S.
- "Newer tech too advanced for older relatives." – W.S.

Hypothesis

Middle-aged and older users (45+):

- Tend to stick to older, "comfort-zone" technology.
  - Older technology may not provide an optimum level of connectivity.
- Resist adopting newer technology because:
  - Tools may not be intuitively designed.
  - Tools not easy to learn.
- They may also have vision or hearing needs that aren't currently addressed in the existing tools.

Persona

Erin Gabriel

"We need to make keeping in touch more of a priority."

Age: 45+
Occupation: Professional
Marital Status: Married
Children: 2

Needs

- Reminders to contact important people
- Make tech. basic and straightforward for older people
- Manage time zone differences
- App works on all phone/OS platforms
- Video chat that's easy to set up

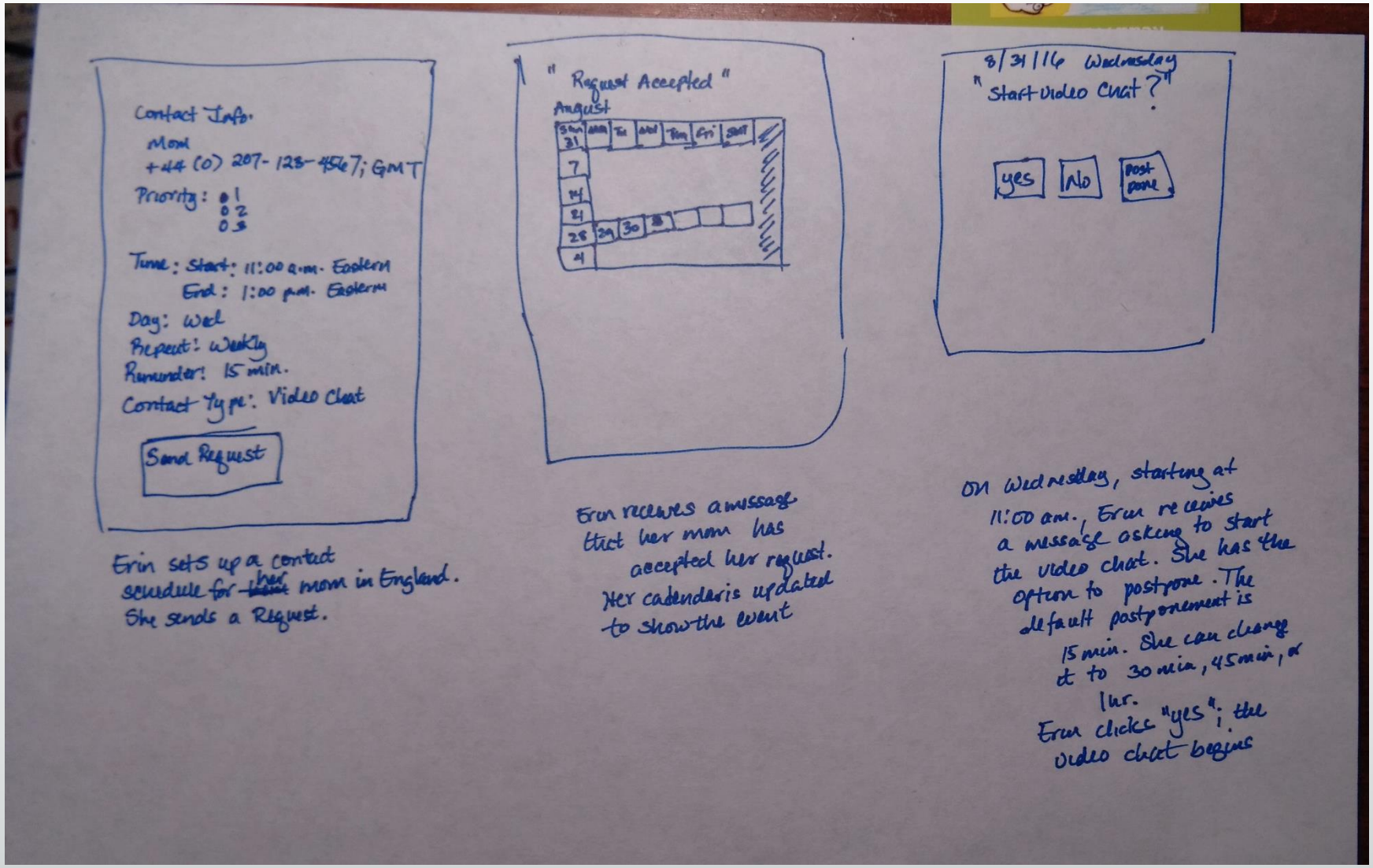
Frustrations

- Tired of technology at end of the work day
- Hard to prioritize most important people
- Not enough time/takes work home
- Older people don't use newer technology
- Time zone differences

Bio: Erin has a stressful workday and often takes work home. There are about 10-15 people (friends and family) that she'd like to make sure she contacts regularly, but often, there isn't enough time. Sometimes she only has 30 minutes available a day. Some of her older loved ones don't like using new technology because the learning curve is too high; she has to use traditional voice to contact them, but doesn't have enough time to call all 10 people regularly. Her parents live outside the U.S., so she has to remember to call them at a decent hour. Doesn't want six months to go by without contact with loved ones.

Scenario: Erin starts the app and sets up a contact schedule for her mother in England. She wants to contact her mom at 11:00 a.m. EST. The app tells her that the local time in England will be 4 p.m. GMT. Erin sets the event to repeat once a week on Wednesdays with a reminder 15 min. before. She then sets the type of contact to Video Chat. The app sends a notification text to Erin's mom. Once Erin confirms the contact settings, the contact event is created. At 10:45 a.m. EST on Wednesdays, Erin receives a reminder text. If Erin and her mom are both online at 11 am, a dialog will appear asking to start the video chat. When Erin clicks "Start", a video chat session begins.

Storyboard


Contact Info.
Mom
+44 (0) 207-123-4567; GMT
Priority: 1
2
3
Time: Start: 11:00 a.m. Eastern
End: 1:00 p.m. Eastern
Day: Wed
Repeat: Weekly
Reminder: 15 min.
Contact Type: Video Chat
Send Request
Erin sets up a contact schedule for her mom in England. She sends a Request.
"Request Accepted"
August
Erin receives a message that her mom has accepted her request. Her calendar is updated to show the event
8/31/16 Wednesday
"Start Video Chat?"
yes
No
Postpone
On Wednesday, starting at 11:00 am, Erin receives a message asking to start the video chat. She has the option to postpone. The default postponement is 15 min. She can change it to 30 min, 45 min, or 1 hr.
Erin clicks "yes"; the video chat begins

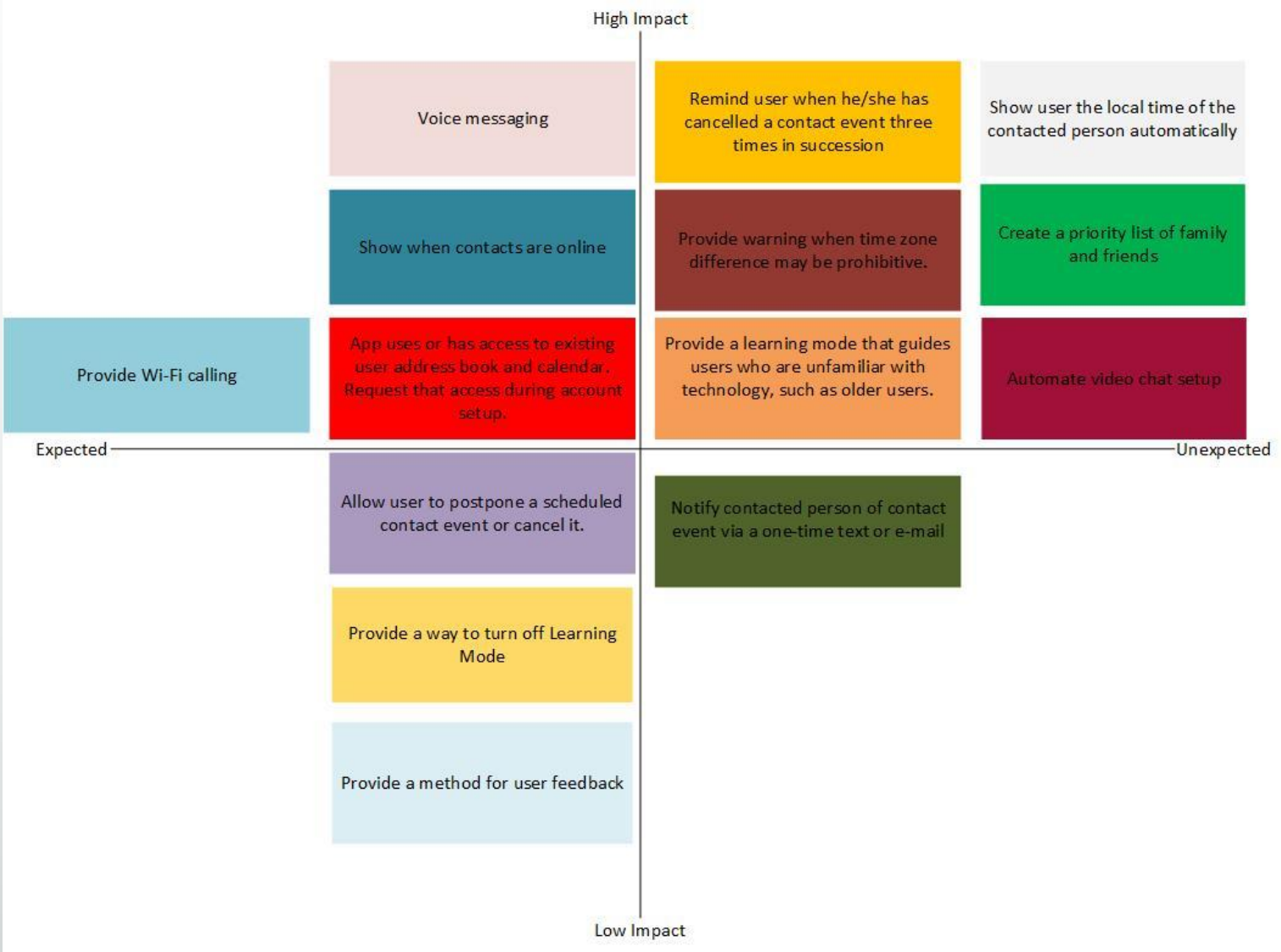
Features

Features

User Goal: Make keeping in touch a priority.

- Create a priority list of family and friends.
- Voice messaging
- Show when contacts are online
- App uses or has access to existing user address book and calendar.
- Remind user when he/she hasn't contacted a priority contact for over three weeks or has cancelled an event three times in succession.
- Provide warning when the time zone difference may be prohibitive.
- Provide a learning mode that guides users who are unfamiliar with the app.
- Automate video chat setup
- Call forwarding for voice contact events
- Provide Wi-Fi calling

Feature Prioritization



User Flows

Task Scenario 1: Create an account and send a voice message to a contact in your device's address book.

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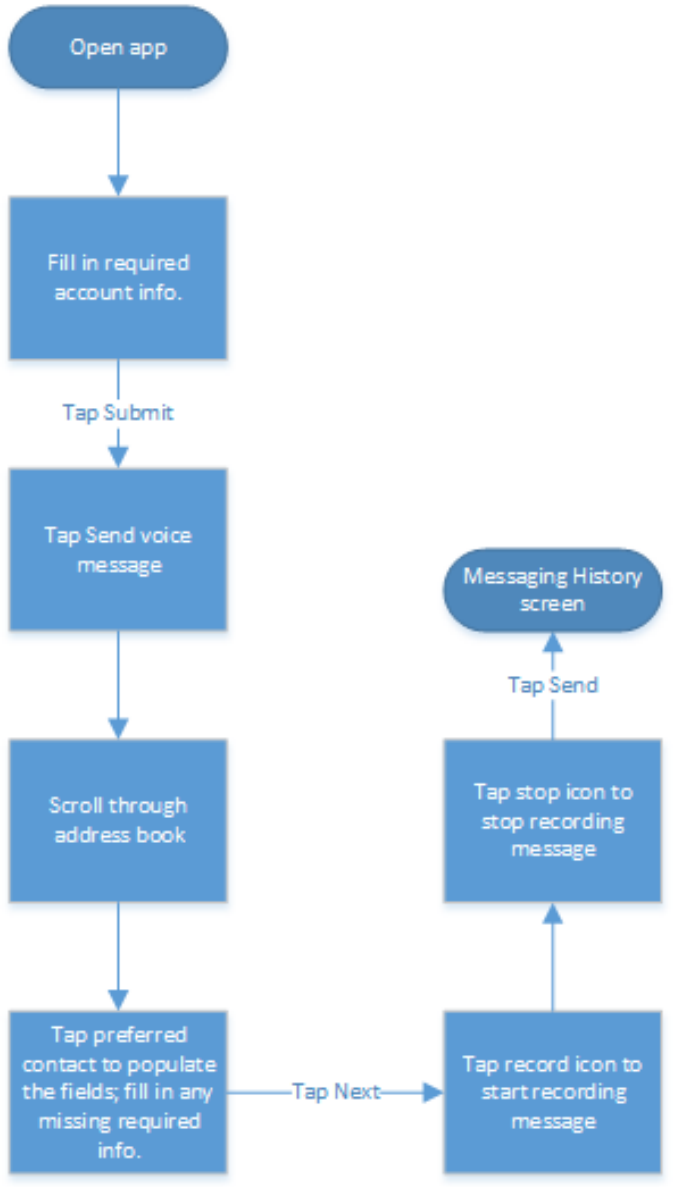
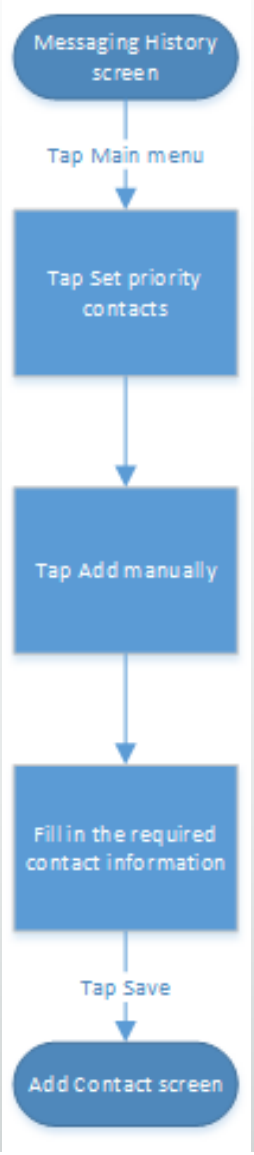
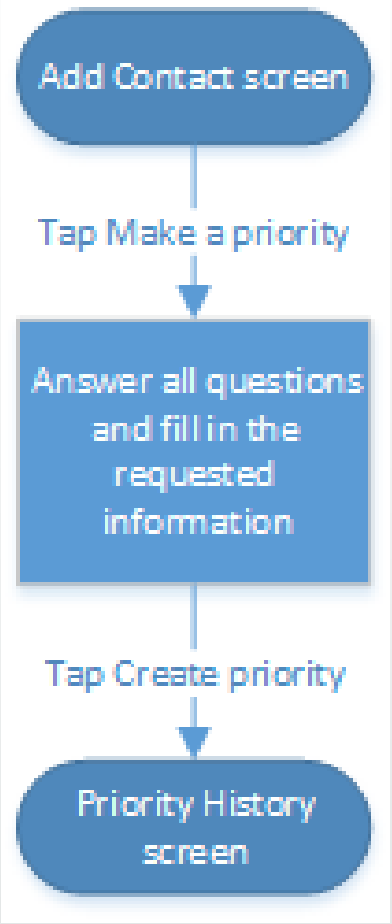


Task Scenario 2: Add and save a contact manually to begin creating a priority list; this should be someone living outside of the US.

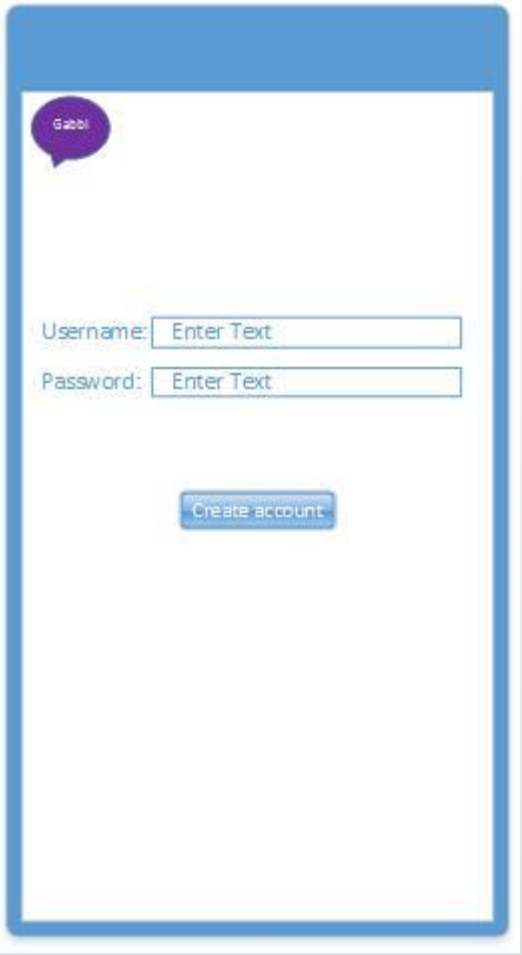


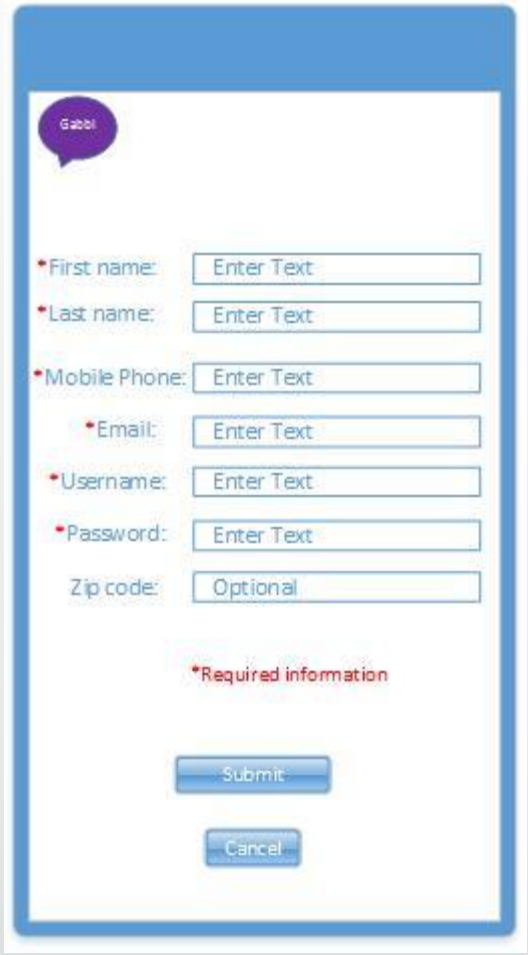
Task Scenario 3: Make a priority schedule and create a reminder to contact a priority friend or relative in a foreign country.

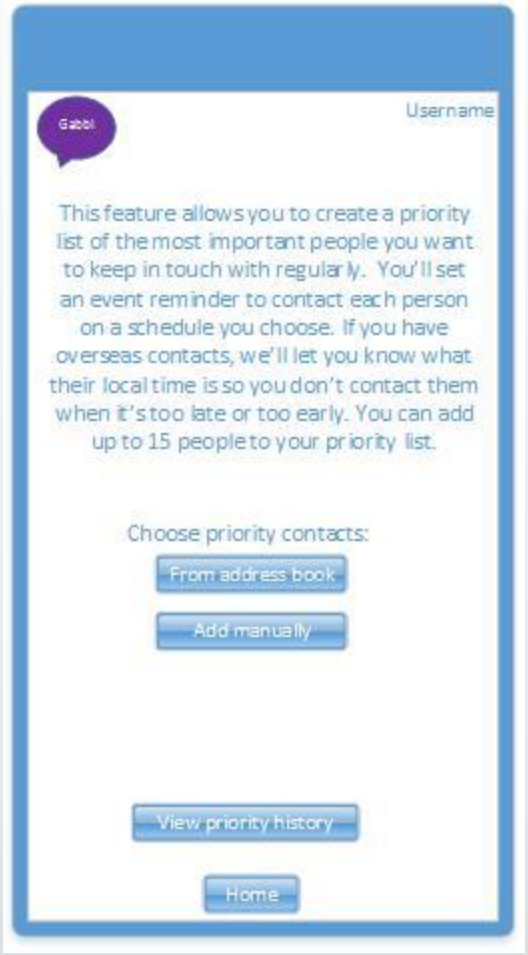


Sketches

Paper Prototype – part 1



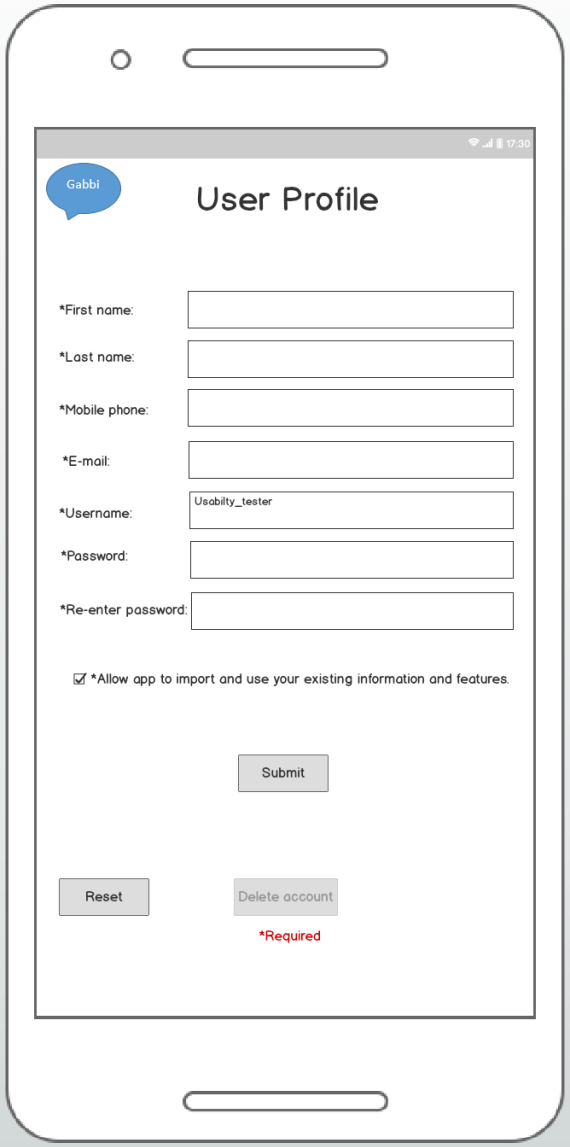


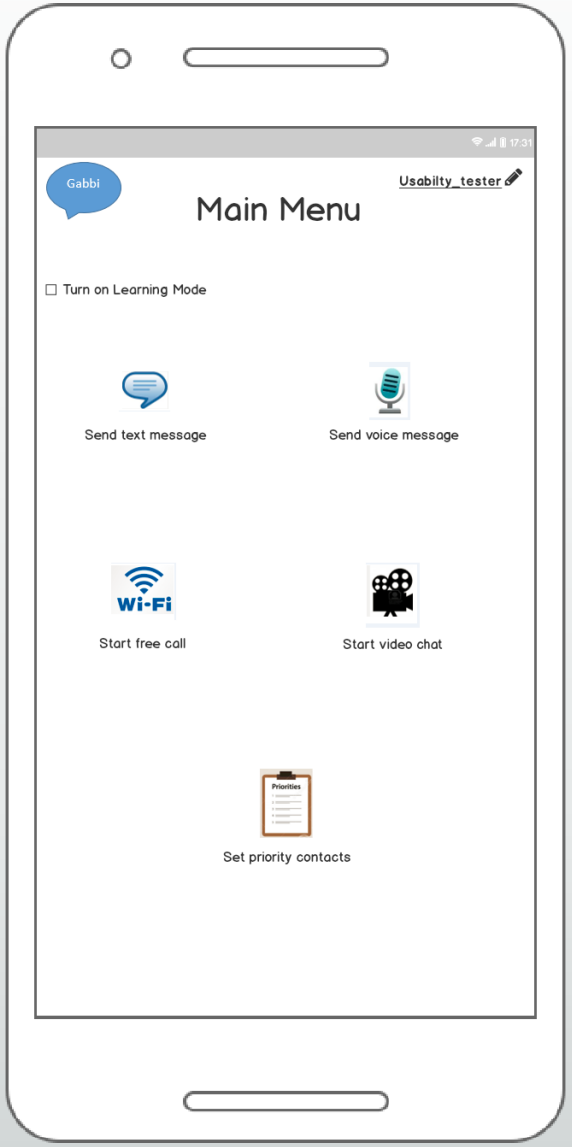


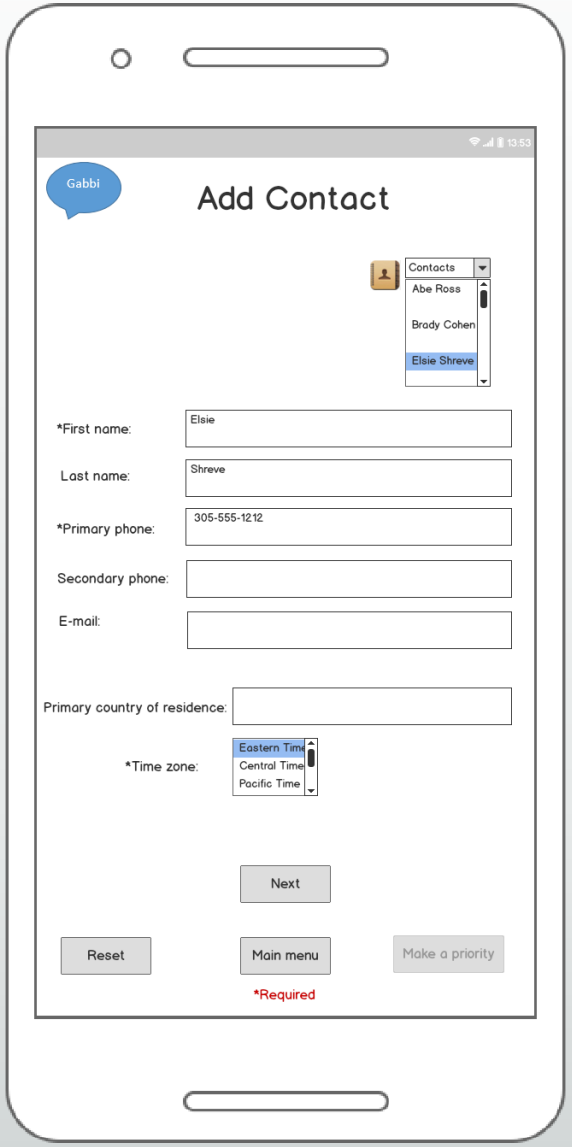
Paper Prototype – part 2

Wireframes

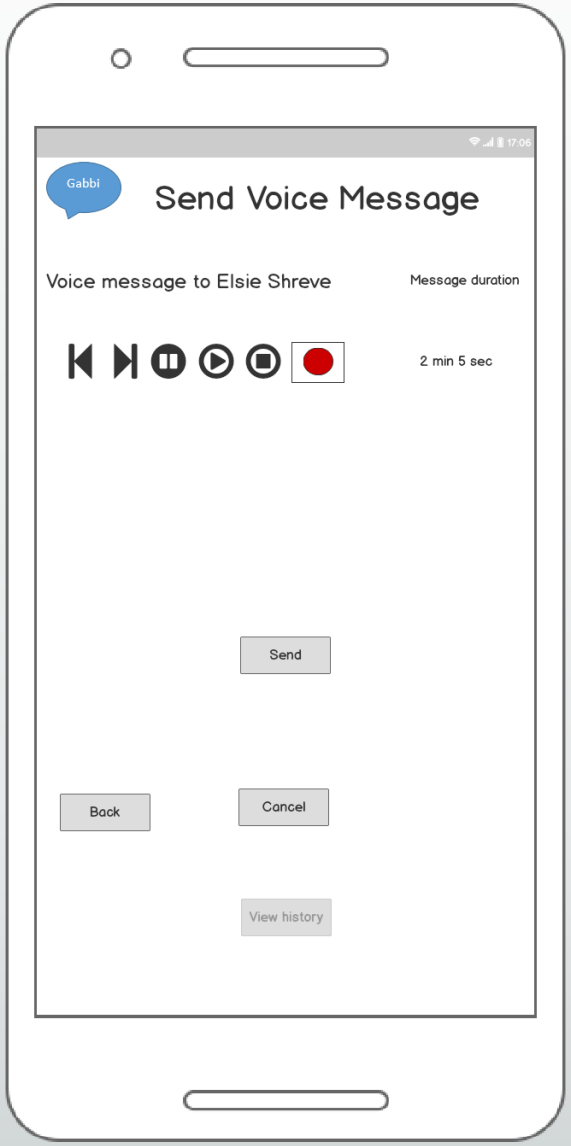
Wireframe (Software) – part 1

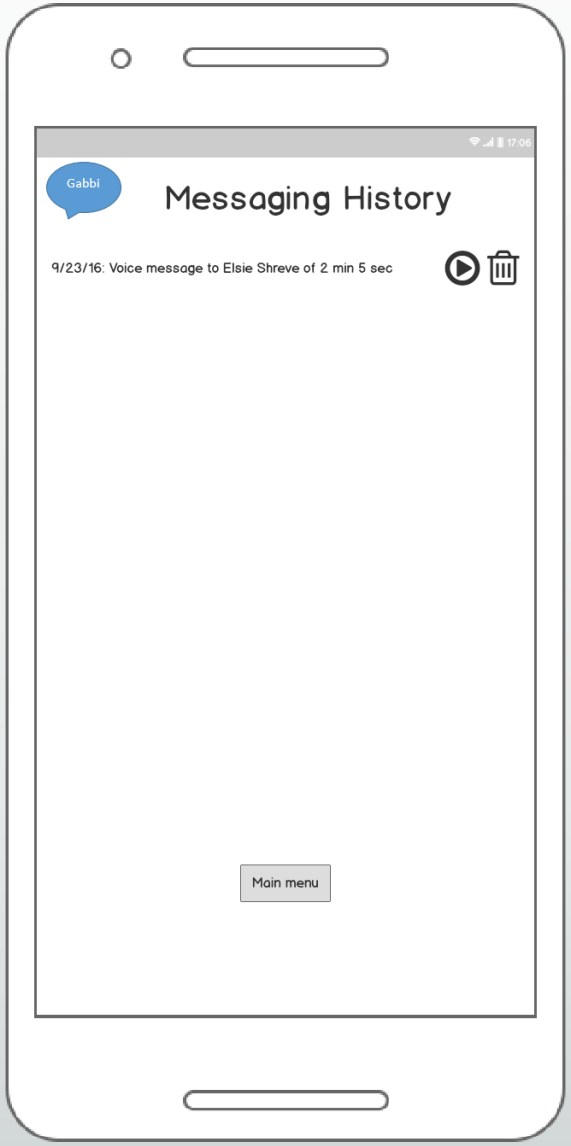


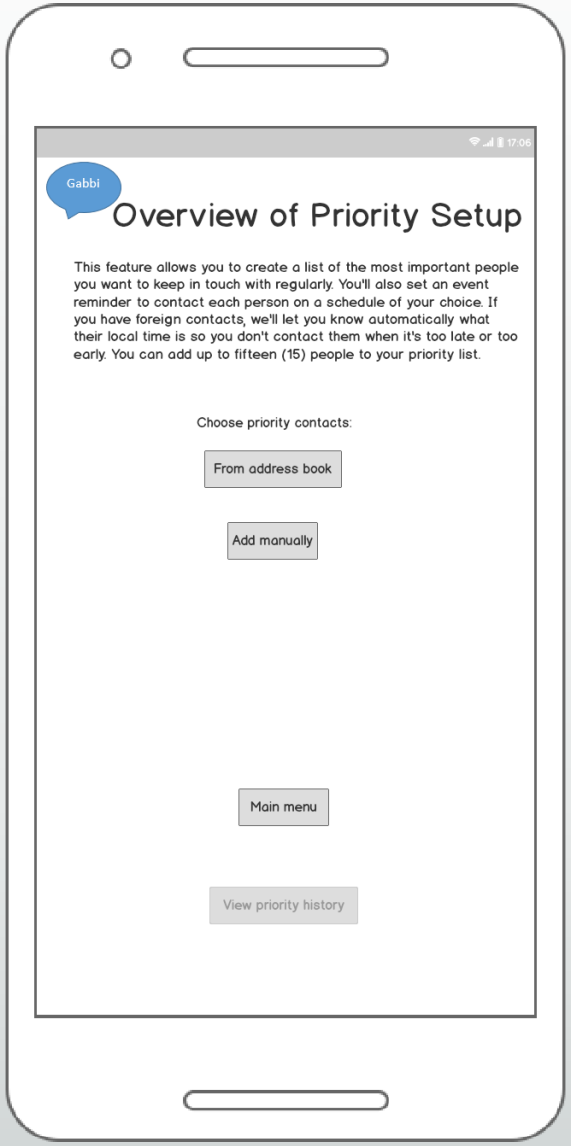




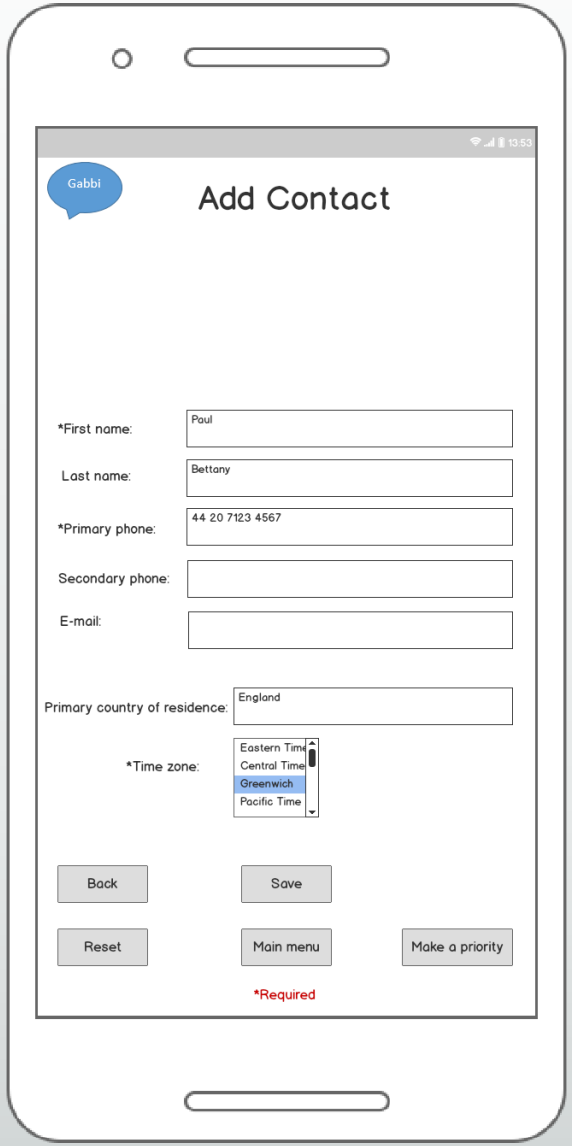
Wireframe (Software) – part 2

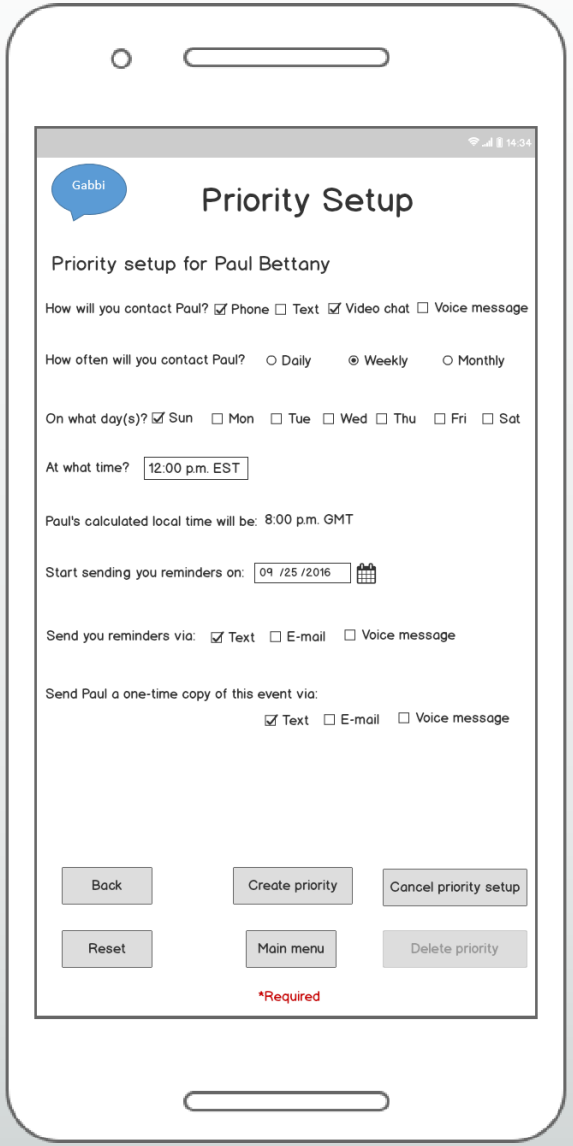


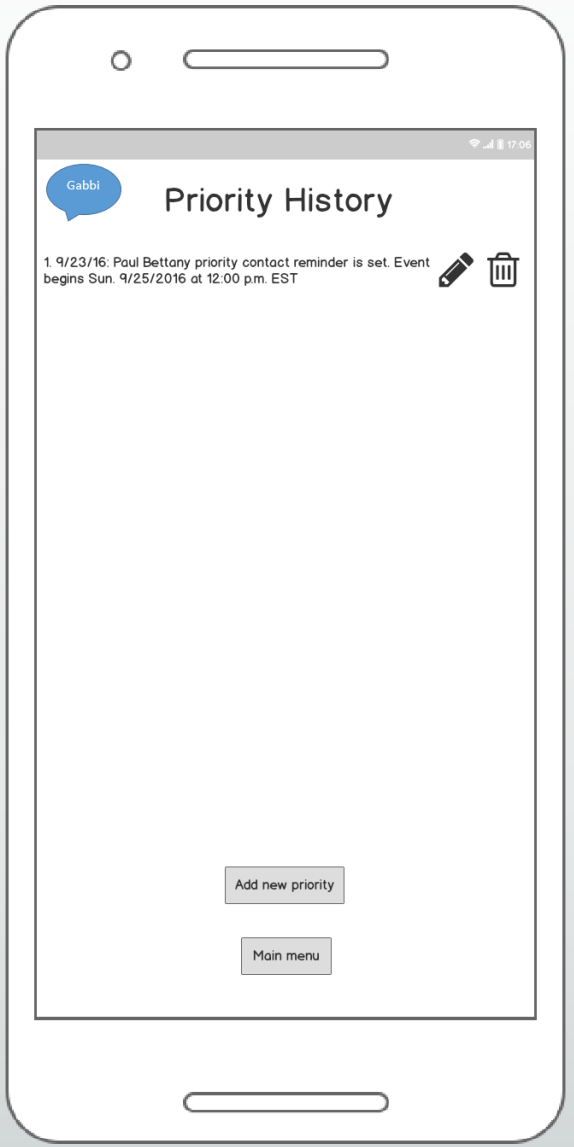




Wireframe (Software) – part 3







Prototype

User Tasks

PDF Prototype

Task Scenario 1
User Goal: Make technology basic and straightforward
Task Scenario: Create an account and send a voice message to a contact in your device's address book.

Task Scenario 2
User Goal: Prioritize important people.
Task Scenario: Add a contact manually to begin creating a priority list; this should be someone living outside of the US.

Task Scenario 3
User Goal: Schedule reminders to contact important people and manage time zones
Task Scenario: Set a reminder to contact a friend or relative in a foreign country.

Usability Testing

Post-Test Reflections – part 1

Main user pain points and highlights:

- Button labeling confusing
- Not sure what Cancel button did
- Need more titles for each screen; don't know where they are
- Address book screen confusing
- User flow was unexpected particularly regarding import of contacts

Post-Test Reflections – part 2

Priority list of improvements:

- Change Home button label to Main Menu
- Add Next buttons in the Address book screens
- Add an Import button or check box to allow import of existing contacts
- Improve the scheduling of the Priority Setup feature

Conclusion

Conclusion

- Erin needs a way to prioritize and contact her loved ones because she doesn't want six months or more to go by when she hasn't contacted anyone.

We will create an Android & iOS communication app that:

- Helps users to manage and prioritize contact with key family and friends.
- Provide a learning mode to guide users who are novices.
- Mange time zone differences.

We will know we are successful when we receive positive user feedback on the use of the tool.