

The team met on Monday October 19th to discuss the research which included travel app reviews, and observations/interviews of users planning a trip using a travel app. Ivan agreed to submit the Project 4 Group Assignment and Debra would submit the Team Status Report. The team agreed on scheduling a weekly meeting on Thursday at 8pm EST to assess progress on the project.

Natasha and Ivan did observations with users and the group discussed their findings. Some problems encountered were the inability to have multiple and anonymous field observations (most of those observed were friends or colleagues), and planning a trip can take time, and a user normally wouldn't do it all in one sitting. Several observations showed users switching from the app to Google. We hope to reduce the need for users to revert to google to find any necessary information by providing it directly or via links.

User Observations:

- No one started to plan with a smart phone. Observation in the field, ie out in an unfamiliar area, might have provided different results.
- We have distinct user groups, those who are spontaneous vs planners and those who want to save information vs those who don't.
- Users could be distracted by leaving the app to query google. Basic services, weather, currency converter, etc, should be available in app while information, reviews and outside sites should be linked so that it is easy and preferable to return to our app.
- A user needs to be able to filter information based on their interests, price, and convenience.

William and Debra discussed their research on reviews of apps and finding statistical data on travel apps. Some issues included user functionality problems such as battery draining, lack of a zooming function, and lack of user suggestions. Reviews were often too subjective and there needs to be a way to determine which reviews are useful and which are not. This could be done by setting guidelines for a review, such as requiring examples and supporting statements behind each opinion.

To prepare for the next group assignment, Natasha plans to pursue two problems or behaviors that she noted in her interviews and come up with several different concepts that address the issues in different ways. We will all identify weaknesses of current apps as they relate to the noted problems or behaviors and do more research as necessary. We don't plan to draw prototypes, but will begin to create a list of "must haves" for our app and discuss our thoughts at the next group meeting.