

Mix

William Huang

Development, Documentation
Design

Kirby Gee

Development, User Testing

Cesca Fleischer

Product Management, Visual

Introduction and Mission Statement:

"To help you find activities you love with people you love."

Often times, people skip out on the activities they love to do, whether it be hiking, working out, or going into the city. This is not necessarily because they're lazy, but simply because they cannot find somebody to do that activity with. Their friends may be occupied that day, or maybe they're just looking for something out of the norm to do. Mix empowers individuals to meet new people through mutual interests. It allows individuals to connect with others around the area who are looking to do the same activity. Through Mix, we allow people who may have never met otherwise to become the best of friends.

Prototype Description:

Our lo-fi prototype is based on a tab bar on the bottom, allowing users to navigate to distinct areas of the app. Using this navigation, our user interface allows users to accomplish three tasks: discovering an activity, finding partners, and keeping in touch with those who they have met up with. The tab bar also includes a "past" and "settings" tab.

Task 1: The easiest task is discovering an activity. This task is for users who either have some free time and want to fill it with something fun, or are looking for an existing task that has already been scheduled. In the prototype, the user is shown a page with several different activities scheduled at different times, the user can then choose an activity and is shown a new page with more detailed information (i.e. location, person, skill level etc). They can then join a particular activity and meet up with that person.

Activities	Friends	Past	Settings

Color Zone	Dave, Jerry, Joe

Task 2: The medium task is finding new friends to do activities with. This task is for users who already have an activity in mind, but either their friends bailed on them or they don't have any existing contacts who like the same activity. In the prototype the user can choose the + button to add a new activity, they are then shown a page where they can input detailed information. They can then post this activity for others to join.

Activities	Friends	Past	Settings

Task 3: The hard task is for users to stay in touch with the friends they have made. Hopefully the user has found new interesting people through their common interest, and our app provides a way for them to connect. In the prototype, the user can choose either the 'friends' tab or the 'past' tab, allowing them to see and then message their friends through the Mix app.

The Friends tab displays a profile for 'Ryan Smith' from 9/13/14. It shows a small sketch of a person and a list of recent activities: Golf, Spinning, and Study Lounge. A 'Message' button is present, and a navigation bar at the bottom includes tabs for Activities, Friends, Past, and Settings.

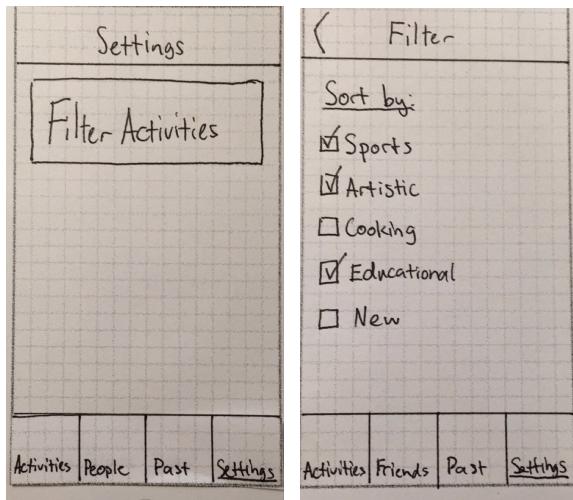
Activities	Friends	<u>Past</u>	Settings
------------	---------	-------------	----------

The past tab simply allows users to search through their past activities and connect with the people they did past activities with.

The Past tab shows a recent activity: 'Hiking' on 9/4/13, participated in with 3 friends. It lists participants (Joe Rada, Jenny Davis, Sara Jones) and a rating section. A navigation bar at the bottom includes tabs for Activities, Friends, Past, and Settings.

Activities	Friends	<u>Past</u>	Settings
------------	---------	-------------	----------

Lastly, the settings tab allows people to filter by only the activities that they are particularly interested in.



We created our prototype by drawing each screen out. By taking pictures of these screens and uploading them on our phone, we were able to utilize POP - Prototyping on Paper to connect all the screens together. This resulted in a realistic prototype where each button led to a correct sequence of screens.

Method:

Participants were selected randomly. We went to the nearest Philz Coffee off campus to interview three random people and selected two random people we found sitting outside Tresidder Union. We chose these places because we felt like these are where young people hang out often and would be in the target audience for our app. We did not give them compensation because it only took up a couple minutes of their time. They were all aged 20-25, were either in college or right out of college, and all familiar with smart phones.

The participants were given our product on POP - Prototyping on Paper. We first gave them a description of our app, its goals, and a then followed a script to watch them work through the tasks. One person presented the app to the participant, and the other two observed and took notes.

For the simple task, we asked the user:

“You are bored, have 2 free hours, are looking for an activity to do. How would you look for an activity and join it?”

The user is then presented the home page of the app with a small list of activities on the front. In theory, the user would press one of the activities, leading to another page where they can join that particular activity.

For the moderate task, we asked the user:

"You are not satisfied with any of the activities offered on the home page and you want to create an activity yourself for other people to join. How would you do that?"

The user is once again presented with the home page of activities. The right set of actions is that the user would press the "+" button at the top of the page to create and add a new activity to the list.

For the hard task, we asked the participant:

"You had a great time with the person you went to do [activity] with and you want to keep in touch. How would you do that using this app?"

The user is presented with the home screen once again. The participant is supposed to press the "friends" button to reconnect with the people they've met before.

We began our usability tests by briefly explaining the concept of Mix, as well as how POP (Prototype on Paper) works. Then we gave the device to the participant, giving them control of the Mix app. We then presented the three different tasks. Every time the participant completed a task, we would reset the app back to the home page. Kirby was the interviewer, and Cesca and William observed and took notes.

While testing, there were a couple key points we were looking at specifically. First, observed how the user navigated through each task. Since each task had a specific UI flow, we noted any points of confusion or wrong button presses. We also looked at overall flow of the app. We noted how difficult it was for participants to navigate through each page and find the right places to press. We also noted how hard it was for each person to navigate back to the home screen. This allowed us to assess how intuitive our overall UI design was.

Results:

For the most part, our UI was intuitive and there were very few times where people pressed the wrong button for a particular task. The tab bar is a common design implementation in iOS, so all participants found comfort in the familiarity. All participants aced both task 1 and task 2. This means that our UI flow for the first two tasks made intuitive sense. Most participants also liked the "person screen," which includes a person's picture, a short bio, and the ability to message them.

There was only one common mistake amongst the people we interviewed: multiple participants went to the "past" tab when performing task three when we asked them to stay in touch with their friends instead of the "friends" tab. One participant brought up that it would make more sense to connect with friends by associating them by the activity they did together. Once redirected to the "friend" tab, he said it would be hard to remember somebody's name if you do a lot of activities.

Another complaint by the participants was that the app was not personal enough. There was no way for you to customize your own “person page.” The settings tab was a bit empty in that it only included a filter and nothing else. As Mix is a social discovery application, participants thought it would be important to be able to have control over the information other users view on your profile.

Discussion:

Our usability tests were extremely helpful, giving us a lot of feedback on our UI design, as well as Mix’s general concept and structure. We want to incorporate the results from our tests into the next phase of our design process.

Due to the fact that many of the participants were confused at the 3rd task and struggled to differentiate between ‘past’ and ‘friends’, we focused our changes on those two tabs. We began by stepping back and looking and what we wanted each tab to allow the user to accomplish. The most obvious change was relabeling the ‘past’ tab to a ‘recents’ tab. We looked at several other mobile apps and realized that past isn’t a commonly used word, and recents would be more applicable for the use of that specific tab: viewing recent activities.

Through the ‘friends’ tab, we want our users to be able to cultivate and sustain lasting friendships--our third task. Yet many of the participants thought the friends tab was confusing because they weren’t sure if it was their existing friends or the new ones they’ve made through mix. There was also a hesitation to label the connections a user has made on Mix, were they sure that these contacts were friends yet? Through discussion we decided that we want to structure this tab as simply a messaging tab. Call it messages, and have the past and current messages stored in this tab. This facilitates the third task-- create lasting friendships.

Our third main discovery from our usability tests was that some participants felt that the app wasn’t personal enough, especially for a social networking app. After discussion we decided that our settings tab, would be turned into a ‘personal’ tab. In this space, users could personalize their own profile, adding a bio, interests, a photo, and any other information they want to share. This space allows the users to feel they are connecting with the app, and will ultimately find better matched contacts.

Appendices:

Script for experiment:

- 1) First give overview of our app and explain how POP works (Basically a very low-fi implementation of our app with minimal interaction)
- 2) Ask them to perform task 1. “So you are bored, have 2 free hours, are are looking for an activity to do. How would you look for an activity and join it?”

- 3) Ask them to perform task 2. "So you are not satisfied with any of the activities offered on the home page and you want to create an activity yourself for other people to join. How would you do that?"
- 4) Ask them to perform task 3. "So you had a great time with the person you went to do [activity] with and you want to keep in touch. How would you do that using this app?"

Kirby's Interview Notes

Participant #1

Task #1: Able to perform task 1 with no problem. Said, "its cool that i can chat with this person"

Task #2: Able to perform task 2 with no problem.

Task #3: Participant went to the 'past' tab when performing task 3. Said that he thought it would make more sense to connect with friends by associating them by the activity he did with them. Once redirected to the 'friend' tab, he said it would be hard to remember someone's name if you do a lot of activities. But overall, like the 'person screen' (picture, bio, opportunity to message person)

Participant #2

Task #1: Able to perform task 1 with no problem

Task #2: Said, "well im not quite friends with this person yet, so ill look at my past activities as a way to find her". He was unclear how to become friends with someone.

Task #3: Able to perform task 3 with no problem

Cesca's Interview Notes:

Participant #3

Task #1: "activities... and then i would click on one of those" -- "This sounds fun.. Join"
- no problems - totally got it

Task #2: "I would have to go back, press +, fill in information"

- no problems

Task #3: "Is it friends??Past - I'd go to past!" "then click friends"

- Got a little confused which ones to do

Overall understanding:

"Pretty intuitive, especially with the different tabs"

- "Do you fill out survey in the beginining? - something else that would be helpful would be like ... age - wouldn't want to do pottery with an 80 year old.

Participant #4

Task #1: "Beach volleyball and pottery -- is it one of those two?" "Do I know kathy? - I'm confused" -- Clicked join

- no problem with interface - slightly confused at concept

Task #2: "I see it, I press +"

- no issues

Task #3: "Friends!" clicked friends and looked "I can message him"

- didn't feel confused, pressed friends, no issues

Overall understanding:

- Could you put the tabs down the right? - because my thumb is there?

William's Interview Notes:

Participant #5

Task #1: "you mean one of these?"

slightly confused at first, but made sense once she clicked one of the activities on the front page

Task #2: able to perform task 2 with no issue

Task #3: "Oh does that mean past?"

had to correct her to friends, not exactly the most intuitive

Consent Form:

The Mix application is being produced as part of the coursework for Computer Science course CS 147 at the Stanford University. Participants in experimental evaluation of the application provide data that is used to evaluate and modify the interface of Mix. Data will be collected by interview, observation and questionnaire. Participation in this experiment is voluntary.

Participants may withdraw themselves and their data at any time without fear of consequences. And concerns about the experiment may be discussed with the researchers Cesca Fleischer, William Huang, or Kirby Gee or with Professor James Landay, the instructor of CS 147:

James A. Landay
CS Department
Stanford University
Gates 390
(650) 498-0533

Participant anonymity will be provided by the separate storage of names from data. Data will only be identified by participant number. No identifying information about the participants will be available to anyone except the researchers and their supervisors.

I hereby acknowledge that I have been given an opportunity to ask questions about the nature of the experiment and my participation in it. I give my consent to have data collected on my behavior and opinions in relation to the Mix experiment. I understand I may withdraw my permission at any time

Name _____

Date _____

Signature_____

Witness name _____

Witness signature_____