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RIDE BUDDY

Shaking up the Shared Mobility Market with Socially-driven UX

A proposal on

The next trending app in 2020

Web Application Development & Web Design
IMM (2020-21) Project Ride Buddy by

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I. Background and Prospects

The overarching purpose of Ride Buddy is to create interaction in stranger situations during our daily commute, especially ride sharing.

The unique primary "why"

- We can all relate to that uncomfortable and odd experience of sharing a journey with a stranger (passenger: passenger; passenger: driver)! But the big guns like Uber, Waze, Ola, BlaBlaCar etc are not helping with their cold function-focused UX.

- While this app will help us secure a regular Ride Buddy or two and lower our infection risk, with Covid-19 still lingering, we would like to emphasize that the primary "why" for Ride Buddy is still supporting people to socialise, which is sometimes underrated as part of our overall health and wellness!

Other secondary trending "whys"

- Safety - Women historically and with Covid-19 now basically everyone! People probably want to stick to the same group of usual suspects to carpool.

- $$$ - Tighter pockets because of Covid 19 suggest that people will have much higher incentive to save.

Key target audience/market segments:

As mentioned in a recent McKinsey report, mobility—especially in cities—needs to become smarter to become sustainable. While we do think Ride Buddy can bring value to everyone(!), the below segments are particularly relevant:

- Middle-class (single) professionals, young people
- Big cities

II. Recent Researches Used in this Proposal

1. McKinsey & Company. (2019, December 19). The future of mobility is at our doorstep. (full report)
2. News search for the period of 2019, October 1 - 2020, 30 September. (full clips)
3. User interviews on competitors: standalone carpool apps: Waze, BlaBlaCar, sRide (full interview response)

III. Competitors

There are two types of platform we believe will be of reference value, (1) the All-in-one big guns in the ride hailing market that has carpool as a side function, (2) the standalone carpool apps:

All-in-one ride hailing big guns: Uber and Lyft

In July, Uber noted that gross bookings in its ride-hailing segment were down 75% from a year earlier in the second quarter. Without a food delivery service to diversify the impact of Covid-19, the business of its head-on rival Lyft may be even more vulnerable to prolonged lockdowns.

In September, Uber announced a couple of notable updates to its business-focused platform - it's essentially a carpool for co-workers, as businesses figure out a way to safely exit lockdown and return their workers to offices and warehouses without enduring crowded public transit. In the same month, Uber also started testing demand for its own carpooling business in New Zealand, calling on Aucklanders to express interest in joining its pilot of Uber Commute once the country returns to alert level 1.

Standalone carpool apps: Waze, BlaBlaCar, sRide

Both UBER and the following standalone carpool apps are focused on the employer office community. But as we mulled over the "why", actually the upside of this assumption is not that obvious, because:

- It will be hard to get the closest Ride Buddy if restricting to the office community (or even Facebook), due to the relatively small pool

- It provides comparable security and comfort of having your neighbours with verified identity (up/downstairs for condo, same streets/estate for houses) as a Ride Buddy

As we compare the success factors of BlaBlaCar (India-focused) and sRide(India-focused), we also have some interesting findings:

- Security/identity issues: Users want the "real" identity of other riders. In this case sRide is taking government ID. But some users do wonder whether other slightly less personal identification methods can/should be used, for example, work/school emails.

- Pricing: Users prefer a simpler quoting process - fair price generated by the system based on distance/time is good enough.

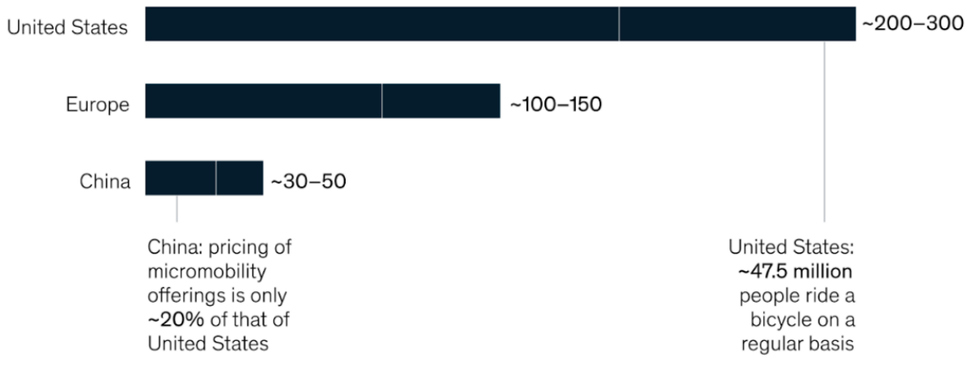
IV. Market Analysis

Strength - Ride Buddy is unique and has an edge to hack into the existing shared micro-mobility market with the first-of-its-kind social-driven UX. - The shared micro-mobility market, albeit quickly expanding, is far from saturated. In just the US, Europe and China, the market can grow from $300b to $500b by 2030. (Figure 1)	**Weakness** - Ride Buddy is a late comer to the market, thus will have to overcome the user bias due to existing habit/familiarity with the mainstream providers. In the below section on " Detailed description of your solution," we will outline our strategy on how to hack into the market, quickly gain market share and achieve economy of scale.
Opportunity - The Covid-19 pandemic hammered the rides business of Uber and Lyft (Barron 2020), which also means opportunities for us new players who are more competitive in engaging and caring for riders. - 2020 will be characterized as the year of the intensifying "double mobility transformation," with players operating in an economic slowdown but, at the same time, needing to rethink their business models in a time of heightened city regulation, technology disruptions, and changing consumer needs. (McKinsey 2019)	**Threat** - The app's development will have to closely observe new regulations of cities, because there are already concerns on how shared micro-mobility may affect the taxi industry and other road users in many cities. As shown in Figure 2, more than half of e-hailing trips are new passenger-vehicle miles. (McKinsey 2019) Our takeaway: We have to proactively engage authorities and the entire mobility service value chain to take part in the sector's dialogue and development.

Figure 1

The shared micromobility market in China, Europe, and the United States could reach $300 billion to $500 billion by 2030.

Estimated size of micromobility market, by region, in 2030, $ billion

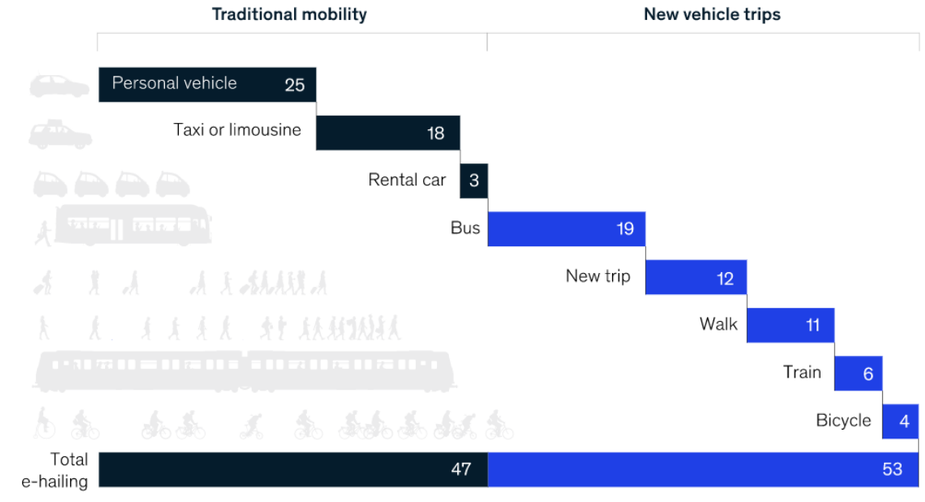


McKinsey & Company

Figure 2

More than half of e-hailing trips are new passenger-vehicle miles, causing public concerns over growth in traffic and congestion.

E-hailing growth sources, % of trips that would have been taken by alternative mode of transport



Note: Figures may not sum to 100%, because of rounding.
Source: US Department of Transportation; McKinsey analysis

McKinsey & Company

V. Detailed Description of Our Solution

The overarching purpose of Ride Buddy is to create interaction in stranger situations. To achieve this purpose and eventual success, we have planned different features for the apps in Version 1.0 and Version 2.0.

Version 1.0: Ride Buddy for air travel

In order to hack into a crowded ride hailing space, our strategy and focus in the first stage is the relatively untouched air travel space. We believe this will get Ride Buddy an elegant entry and gain traction, user familiarity of our brand, and UI/UX speedily, especially for this air travel branch of the app targets the exact same group of key target audience as our eventual carpool game. Furthermore, we can use this Version 1.0 to test user acceptance in all major cities globally and determine our eventual target markets.

The major objective of this app is to match riders and create incentive for them to connect for networking, socialising or romance (we will not define or limit their imagination).

1. Data: personal profile showing background, personality and preference, such as name, gender, marital status, work, school, etc

    - Fun interactive personality/preference collection: similar to games such as: Trivial Pursuit, Question of Scruples, Cards Against Humanity, Movie Theatre Pre-Show Quizzes

    - Option to plug in Facebook and LinkedIn to gauge level of connections with one another, ie “first degree, second degree”

2. Functions: user profile, photos/videos display, flight floorplan showing a Ride Buddy’s location, chatbox

    - Find a Ridy Buddy before boarding or selecting their seats - Existing users can scan the QR code all over the airport to access our website, enter their flight details and then locate other users also looking for buddies for the same flight.

    - For users already boarded and be seated, if they see this QR code seat back advertisement

        - for the cautious-minded: we provide function to connect/confirm only when mutual liking is confirmed, thus they will have high incentive to set up accounts, test mutual liking and connect immediately

        - for the free spirit: they will set up an account, search for their target buddies (in the flight’s seating plan view) and if the buddies are open, they can start conversations immediately

Version 2.0: Ride Buddy with carpool fully functioning

Riding on v1.0's data and users' familiarity of our UI/UX, we will upgrade the app to a fully functioning carpool app and start getting income from the carpool trips:

1. Data: Drivers' profile if they are not already a user (they are not only users but partners of Ride Buddy, as a portion of the fare will go to our app).

2. Functions
    - Similar to Version 1.0, we will allow users to plan the carpool ahead or initiate carpool on the spot (eg, at a taxi stand, bus stop, train station etc), and similarly we have different matching functions for the cautious-minded or the free spirit
    - Allow users to set up regular carpool group for regular detours
    - Provide users with driver/car choices matching their preference
    - Provide route suggestion using public/Google map data
    - Provide fair fee of detour using public/Google map distance/time data

Application platforms and role of social media

This is an app mainly for people on the road. Thus, our platform priority is listed in order as follows:

- UX/UI fitting smartphone browsers and apps - Bootcamp to take care of compatibility of common browser versions
- UX/UI fitting PC browsers - Bootcamp to take care of compatibility of common browser versions

As mentioned above, we intend to leverage Facebook and LinkedIn's data volunteered by users to enhance the UX. Social media will also be used in the promotional campaign to attract new users:

- YouTube infographics, infomercials with analytics targeting business and leisure travellers
- Facebook/Instagram Ride Buddy story competition with attractive travel-themed prizes
- Ride Buddy Instagram/Facebook pages, hashtags collecting and showcasing the buddies' experience globally

In addition to digital/social media, we feel that the key to determine success of this app will be to connect the online and offline experience seamlessly.

- An offline QR code advertising campaign will be rolled out in airports and airport lounges in select major cities across different continents

How we measure success

1. Website traffic volume and route, number of registered users, number of matchings, user demographics and locations where these activities happened - we will capture these data through backend together with Google Analytics.

2. Visibility and conversion rate- we will optimise our metadata and SEO, and measure visibility through backend data captured, as well as the ad impression and hit rate data of the media campaign.

    - Combining the data captured through the backend and media campaign, we will be able to analyse the conversation rate and optimize the social media strategy.

    - From the data we can also identify any major UI steps that stop users from moving forward and improve our UI/UX.

3. Word of mouth - we will monitor user comments and dialogue on social media for coverage volume, tone and trending topics, in order to make improvements on the UI/UX and media campaign.

Technical considerations

1. We have considered the wi-fi requirement for people to be able to use the app on a flight (we will only advertise on classes/flights with wi-fi).

2. In order to enhance ease of use, the QR code scan access will be provided on key target locations to help increase traffic.

3. With our primary focus being the most popular versions of iPhone and Android smartphones, we will test the app against most used/latest browsers/OS to make sure we cover the latest/most used versions. This is to correspond to our key target audience who are middle-class and young people.

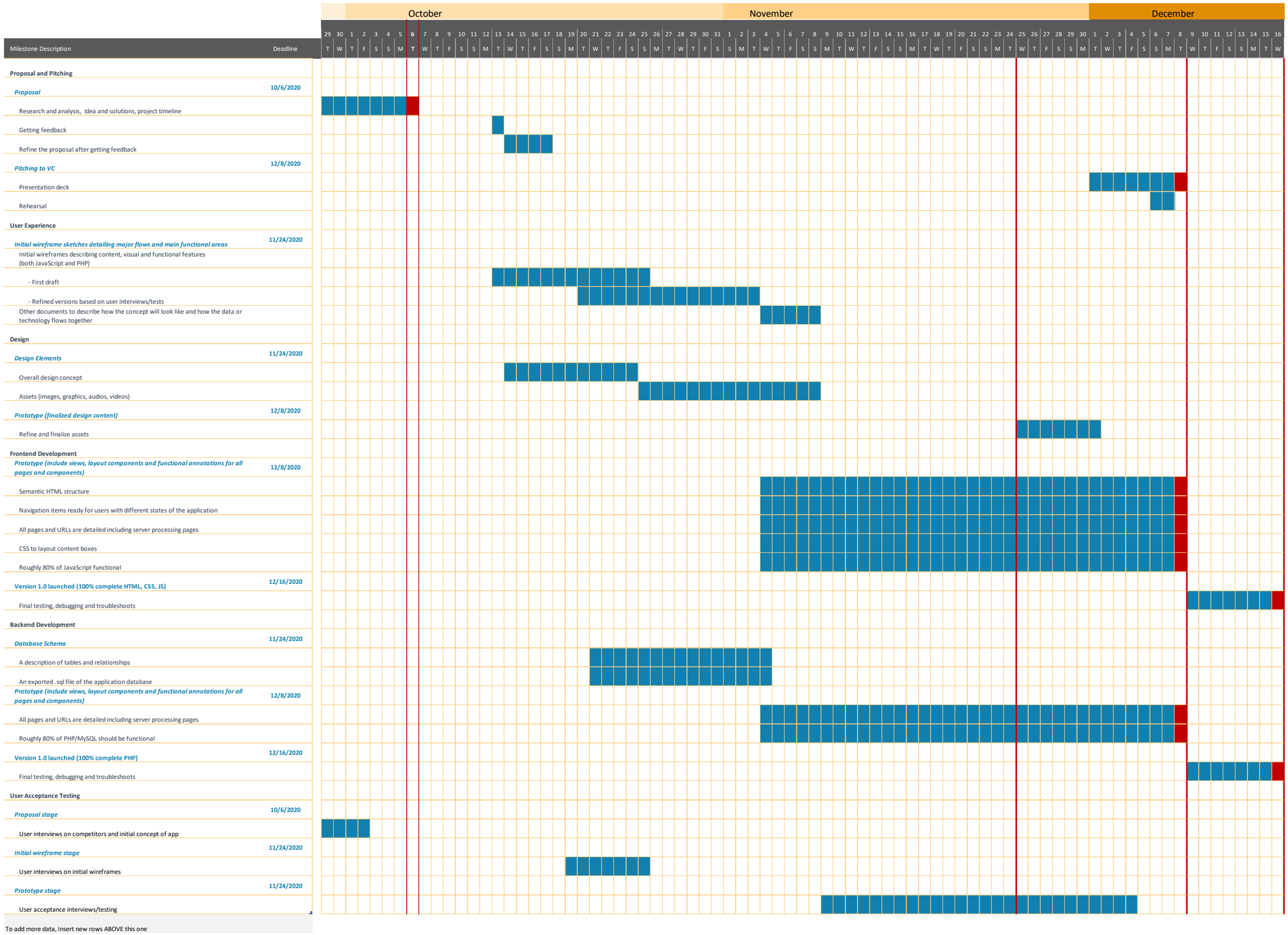
Growth trajectory

Version 1.0 will be launched globally leveraging the open data of major airlines' flight schedules, with the promotional campaign focused on major financial/business hubs and top travel destinations.

For Version 2.0, the traction of Version 1.0 will inform us on which one or two markets we should make entry first. And the experience with these markets will then help us repeat the success in other markets to eventually achieve economy of scale.

VI. Timeline

Click here to download the EXCEL spreadsheet



Milestone Description	Deadline
Proposal and Pitching	
Proposal	**10/6/2020**
Research and analysis, idea and solutions, project timeline	
Getting feedback	
Refine the proposal after getting feedback	
Pitching to VC	**12/8/2020**
Presentation deck	
Rehearsal	
User Experience	
Initial wireframe sketches detailing major flows and main functional areas	**11/24/2020**
Initial wireframes describing content, visual and functional features (both JavaScript and PHP)	
- First draft	
- Refined versions based on user interviews/tests	
Other documents to describe how the concept will look like and how the data or technology flows together	
Design	
Design Elements	**11/24/2020**
Overall design concept	
Assets (images, graphics, audios, videos)	
Prototype (finalized design content)	**12/8/2020**
Refine and finalize assets	
Frontend Development	
Prototype (include views, layout components and functional annotations for all pages and components)	**12/8/2020**
Semantic HTML structure	
Navigation items ready for users with different states of the application	
All pages and URLs are detailed including server processing pages	
CSS to layout content boxes	
Roughly 80% of JavaScript functional	
Version 1.0 launched (100% complete HTML, CSS, JS)	**12/16/2020**
Final testing, debugging and troubleshoots	
Backend Development	
Database Schema	**11/24/2020**
A description of tables and relationships	
An exported .sql file of the application database	
Prototype (include views, layout components and functional annotations for all pages and components)	**12/8/2020**
All pages and URLs are detailed including server processing pages	
Roughly 80% of PHP/MySQL should be functional	
Version 1.0 launched (100% complete PHP)	**12/16/2020**
Final testing, debugging and troubleshoots	
User Acceptance Testing	
Proposal stage	**10/6/2020**
User interviews on competitors and initial concept of app	
Initial wireframe stage	**11/24/2020**
User interviews on initial wireframes	
Prototype stage	**11/24/2020**
User acceptance interviews/testing	
To add more data, Insert new rows ABOVE this one	

VII. Team Biographies

Disha Rakeshbhai Shah, Co-Founder & Chief Art Director

Disha Rakeshbhai Shah strives to overcome all the hurdles and make Ride Buddy a success. She has five years of experience in the art and design field. She seeks to invest her creative design expertise to create innovative methods of communication and interface that would generate value for Ride Buddy. Being a design specialist, she supervises the assessment of all graphic materials in order to ensure quality and accuracy of the design.

Her key past experiences include:

- BuzzTiger (July, 2020 - September, 2021) - Designed perfume and mask packages, brochure, social media planning + creatives and gifs.
- Turtle Minds (June, 2019 - July, 2020) - Designed social media creatives + gifs
- Fitternity (February 2019 - April, 2020) - Designed major projects Disney x Fitternity fitness merchandise, Fitbox, print media - poster, sticker, billboard, signage, cab branding, banner, standees, visiting card, brochure, social media creatives, ads, gif, newsletter, app + web banner.
- Nav Clothing (October, 2017 - June, 2018) - Designed logo + branding, swatch Cards, visual representation of garment designs, social media posts, wash care labels and tags, landing page creatives.

A 2020/2021 postgraduate candidate of Sheridan College's Interactive Media Management program, Disha holds a Bachelors in Fine Arts Degree (BFA) from Rachana Sansad College of Applied Art and Craft. She speaks fluent English, Hindi, and Gujarati.

Jessie Fraser, Co-Founder & Chief Creative Officer

Jessie Fraser joins the Ride Buddy team with fifteen-year experience as a performance and creation facilitator. Over the years she has worked in both the performance and the corporate sectors facilitating training and development in communication and collaboration skills.

Career highlights include the founding of Groundling Theatre Company in Toronto; ten years as resident Director and Production Manager for the renowned Talker Players; Project and Event Management for Massey College, The Canadian Journalism Foundation and The Annual Gairdner Awards.

A graduate of the University of King's College (BA with Honours), the School for Theatre Creators and a 2020/2021 postgraduate candidate of Sheridan's IMM program, Jessie is thrilled to bring her enthusiasm for collaborative creation and creative entrepreneurship to an already well-rounded international team.

Pratik Mankame, Co-Founder & Chief Innovation Officer

Pratik Mankame is a passionate UI/UX designer and one of Ride Buddy's co-founders. He has over four years of experience in the IT field. He had worked on various visual design activities such as converting wireframes into visual composites, iconography, typography and UX design etc. while working as a Module Lead Visual Designer at Persistent Systems Limited. He worked on projects from different domains with multiple clients which includes Schlumberger (Oil and Gas), Tata Capital (Banking), Atlas Copco (Industrial Equipment) and others.

His key past experiences include:

- Former Module Lead - Visual Designer at Persistent Systems Limited, Pune, India (Jan 2020 - Sep 2020)
- Former Senior Visual Designer at Persistent Systems Limited, Pune, India (Apr 2018 - Dec 2019)
- Former Visual Designer at Persistent Systems Limited, Pune, India (Jul 2016 - Apr 2018)

Awards:

- Persistent Systems Limited - Bravo Team Award (Oct 2019)
- Persistent Systems Limited - High Five Award (Jul 2017)

He is a postgraduate student from Sheridan College. He holds a bachelor's degree in fine arts (applied arts) from Padmashree Dr. D. Y. Patil College of Applied Arts & Crafts, Pune, India. He speaks fluent English, Hindi and Marathi

Yuki Cora Wan, Co-Founder & Chief Commercial Officer

Yucky Cora Wan has over a decade of experience in helping businesses engage target audiences over trending media and channels. An entrepreneur and one of the co-founders of the Ride Buddy now, she is focused on developing optimal media solutions to help the Company achieve sustainable business success in the rapidly changing traditional and digital media ecosystem.

Her key past experiences include:

- Appointed as the lead communication counsel for a leading fintech firm's thought leadership and fundraising, including a major M&A transaction with Nomura, since 2017
- Appointed as the lead communication counsel for the global communication of 2018/19 biggest cross-border M&A across Europe and Asia
- Appointed as the lead crisis communication trainer for a Fortune500 tech client's management team in 2019
- Held senior roles at multinational PR consultancies and a financial regulator: notably Director, FTI consulting (2013-17), External Relations Manager at SFC (2009-2013) where she led the regulator's corporate website revamp

A postgraduate candidate of Sheridan College's Interactive Media Management program, Yukyi holds an LLB degree from the University of London, Bachelor's Degree in Statistics & Actuarial Science and Economics and Finance and a Master's Degree in International Relations and Public Affairs from The University of Hong Kong. She speaks fluent English, Cantonese and Mandarin.