Assignment 2

Name – Zainab Hussain Khokawala
NUID - 002750435

Question

Read the Lyft case study added as a pdf file in the files area in Canvas.

Elaborate and create a report for the following based on your understanding (please do not copy directly from the case study)

1. Overview of the case study
2. Reasons for the redesign (at least 5 points)
3. What were the solutions for the issues faced? (At least 5 points)
4. Your key takeaways (3 points)
5. Improvements you could provide (at least 2)

Answer

The report's objective is to compose a case study for the redesign of the Lyft application. Jessie Chen, the author of this case study who was a Principal UX Designer at the time, will be used as reference throughout the report. The case study here delves deep into a user experience redesign that Lyft underwent to increase the ease of use for customers and make the application more user friendly. The author adumbrates their 4-year overview, the redesign goals that Lyft had decided, and the design principles implemented by them.

About Lyft

Lyft is a ride sharing application that helps users book rides from point A to point B via cars, bicycles, scooters, rental cars, and food deliveries. The application is predominantly available in USA and some Canadian cities. Its pricing model is dynamic and varies based on location. Lyft has grown from its nascent stage in 2012, and it is the go-to application for more than 1 million users today.

Image from Adobe Stock

Overview

Lyft had some challenges from the time of inception upon which it improved to meet user expectations. They had clearly defined their goals as a course of action and to meet challenges which gave them an idea of their roadmap each year. As stated by the head of product design that year, the goals were divided into sections as follows –

- 1st Year – The objective was to launch the product in the market and check if it was a fit, and focused on getting the functionality right before delving into user needs and ease of usability.

- 2nd Year – Unlocking the supply was the next goal. After a minimum viable product, Lyft had to focus on making the application more scalable to meet the demands of a growing user base and tweaking its pricing model to include as many customers as possible.

- 3rd Year – After developing a competitive customer base, Lyft focused on growing the business by using marketing techniques, expanding into multiple regions, and obtaining as much user data as possible.

- 4th Year – This year involved a complete redesign of the application based on acquired user experiences. This year involved making the application more user friendly and aligned with user expectations.
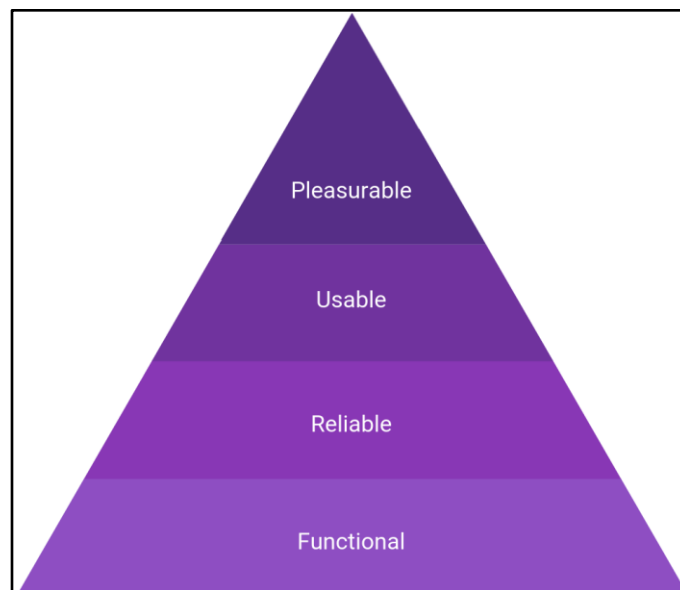

Image from uxplanet.org

Lyft faced some UX challenges which the author had researched about. From *Nectar Design,* the author was able to understand how the company tackled these challenges –

- Lack of usability – Compelling user issues such as vague options for first time users, lack of UI for drivers, awkward placement of options panel needed to be resolved.

- Lack of reliability – The user experience needs to be seamless and transparent. The user did not have fare or time estimates for the rides they booked, and driver information such as the model and color of the car and the name of the driver, hence they could not rely on the application for information.

- Lack of differentiation – Lyft had dull colors in their design and the lack of brand emphasis made the application unappealing to users. Lyft needed to revamp their color scheme and apply it to icons, buttons, or the logo to improve brand visibility.

The redesign goal that stuck out to me was the 'Provide better context' goal. This goal was crucial because many users book Lyft rides in a hurry (for example – emergency, workplace, and school rides) which means that the design should also support the same.
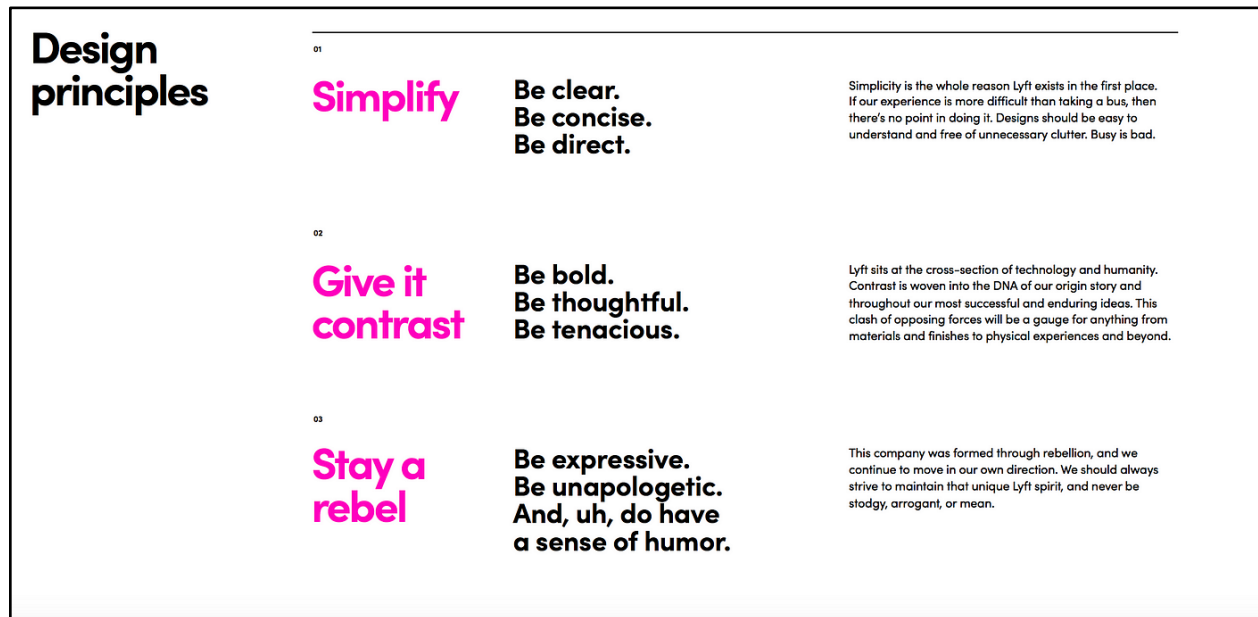

Image from medium.com

Lyft had defined a general company set of **design principles** to follow during their redesign. Lyft utilized 'Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs' to define their user needs which was an interesting integration of psychology with the order of importance of design principles. They are explained below –

- Getting the basics right – The company focused on getting the foundation of the application right to build upon it in later years. The basic flow of the application was set from the start.

- Building confidence – With its marketing techniques and business expansion in years 2 and 3, Lyft worked on instilling confidence amongst its users by building a strong market presence and getting the users accustomed to the application.

- Unique approach – The redesign in year 4 moved forward with uniqueness in mind. With improving user experience based on user feedback and other factors, Lyft strived to be unique in terms of its design and approach to UX research and UI implementation.

The author also expanded on the user experience research conducted by Lyft to aid the redesign which included qualitative data collection, user feedback collection, and A/B testing. Lyft started focusing on qualitative data collection by having weekly user and driver feedback sessions and used 'Lookback' to obtain further user insights via prototype testing. Lyft also used A/B testing to determine the design that the users wanted and found that this testing was essential to bring the development in alignment with user needs.

Finally, the author concluded that the UI/UX redesign by Lyft was a bold and essential step that showed how much the company cared about the users and their interaction with the application. With an organized approach to their design principles Lyft was able to bring a new design that was implemented by the user's help for the users of the application.
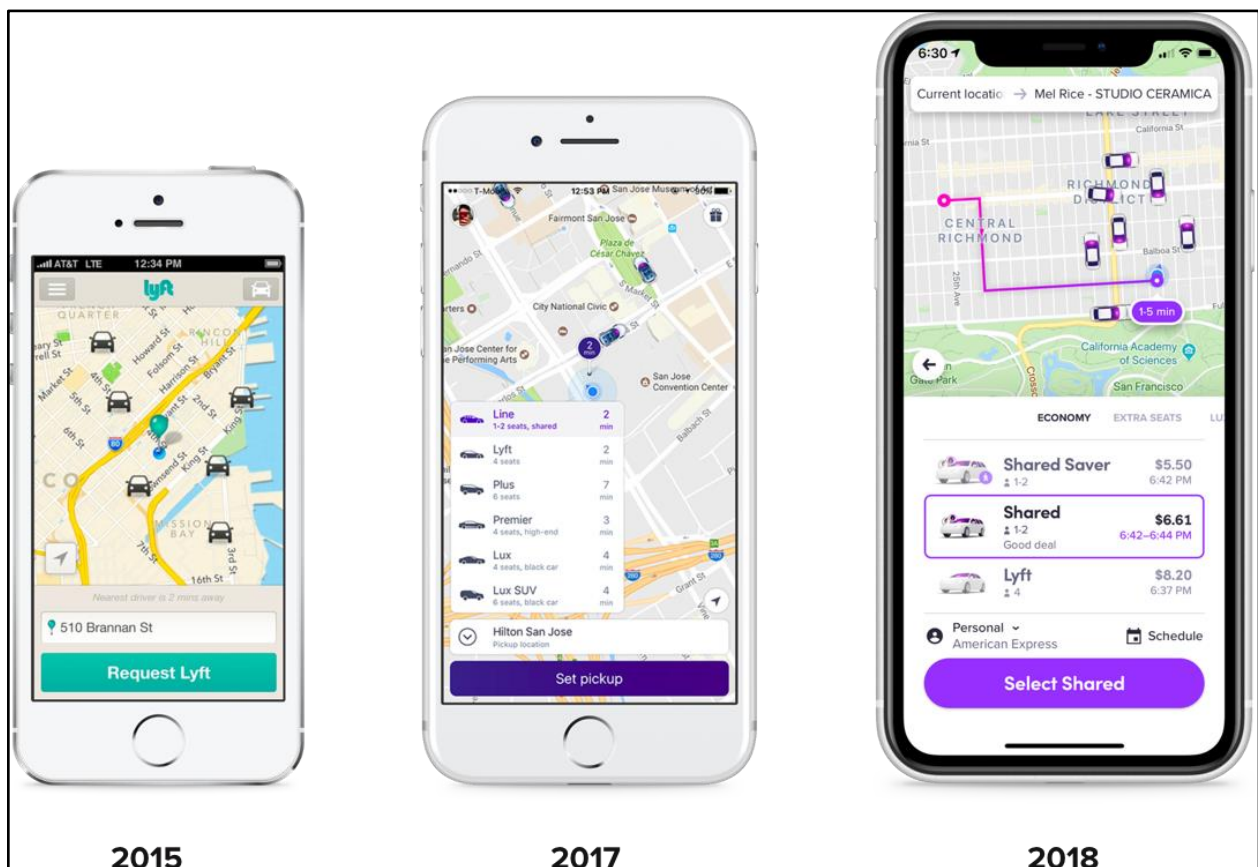

Image from helenbentley.com

Reasons for Redesign
The redesign of the application was based on a plethora of reasons which were provided by Frank Yoo, who is currently the VP of Design & Research at Coinbase.

- Lack of driver UIUX – The user interface for the driver details after the ride was booked was suboptimal. It provided no clear information about the driver's car or name which can help the user identify the driver on arrival.

- Non directional car icons – Due to just a static representation of car icons, the direction followed by the driver was unknown which made the user confused if the driver was coming toward them or taking another route to reach the pickup point. The car icons that showed up once the user booked a ride were not directional and consistent with the app's colors.

- Overuse of color – The primary color of Lyft is hot pink which had been overused in the application which needed to change. Due to an abrupt usage of color and lack of luster, the brand of Lyft was not established which prevented the user from revisiting the application.

- Options panel was less dexterous – There are various options involved in booking a Lyft ride. The design had features at both – the top and bottom of the screen which made booking the ride subconsciously unpleasant. They also overlapped other UI elements which made it difficult to use.

- Less transparency in price estimate – There was no display of a price estimate which would discourage users from booking rides from the fear of paying higher prices after the ride has been completed.

- First time users do not have an informed experience – The users who are visiting the app for the first time do not have enough guidance to navigate the app successfully.
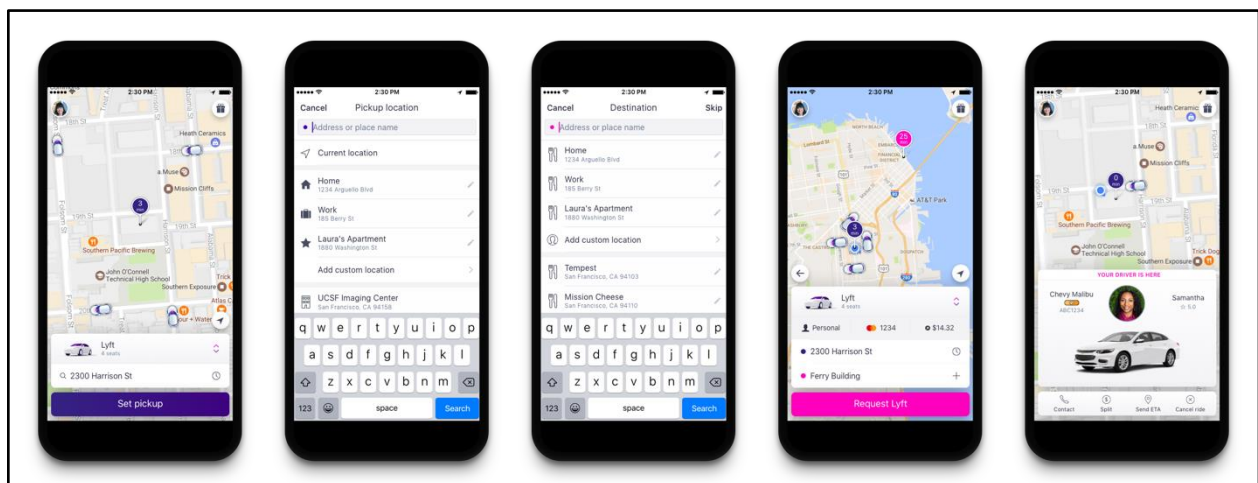

Image from opanichev.com

Solutions

After clearly defining the major issues, Lyft tackled them one by one. These were the solutions presented for the issues –

- Driver UIUX reimagined – Lyft added more information about the driver such as the route, name, license plate, car description, and driver rating in the redesign. Hence, the user can easily check the details of their ride the moment they book it.

- Car icons revamped – The car icons became directional, and Lyft also incorporated a hint of pink and purple (the colors of the app) into the cars. This made the ride more user friendly for the user and made the UI consistent.

- Limited use of color – The UX team focused on restricting the color profile to important situations. They decided to use hot pink the primary color only for action buttons and icons.

- Ergonomic design for options menu – The UX team made the design more ergonomic to make the application more pleasant to the user.

  - The options panel became more comprehensive but defined on one side of the app in a tab menu, which made it easy to check all cab options before booking.

  - The redesign also included making another options ('Split', 'Cancel Ride', 'Send ETA', 'Call Driver') menu in the same position once the driver reaches the pickup location.

- Price estimate – A new option to check the estimated price of a ride from location A to B was added to the application to make it more user friendly and encourage users to book rides.

- First time user consideration – With the help of the options menu which pops up on the arrival of the driver, first time users are encouraged to make guided choices on their next course of action. Options such as 'Split', 'Cancel Ride', 'Send ETA', 'Call Driver' are easy to access and not hidden in the app which make it easier for the user to connect with the driver.

- The Lyft team did tons of A/B testing and user feedback prototype testing using Lookback which made it easier for the team to align the design with user expectations.

These solutions were in alignment with the redesign goals defined by Lyft in their 4th year.
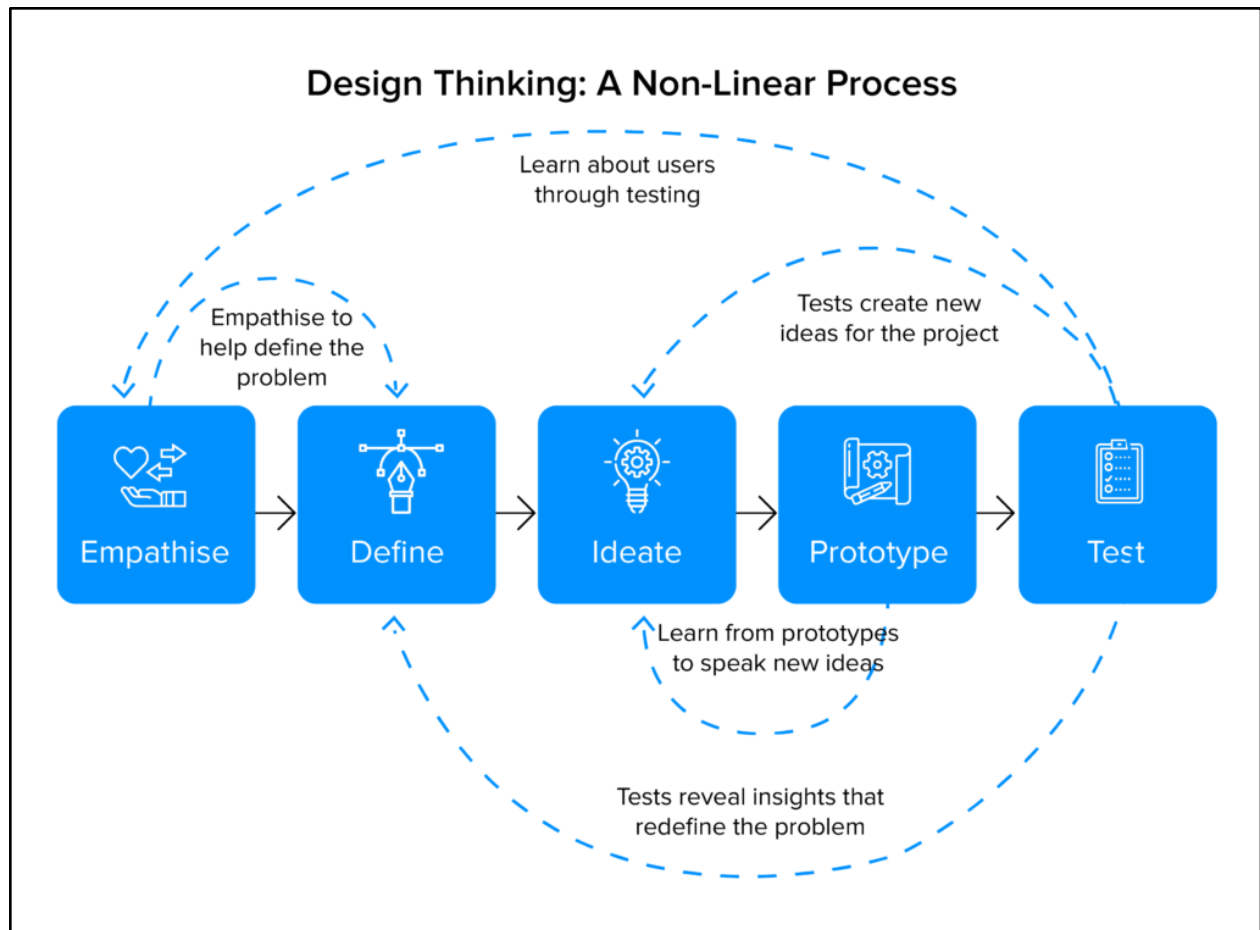
Image from appinventiv.com

Key Takeaways

My key takeaways from this case study can be summarized in the following points –

- The key learning that I received was to being organized towards a UX redesign approach. Using defined principles for a redesign would help in staying aligned with company goals and user needs.

- Another learning that I received was to keep an open mind towards product revamps. Caring for the user like Lyft did was enough for a revamp to improve their user design. This opens the path to more research in the field and helps understand the user better.

- Keeping myself in the user's shoes is the best way that I can implement a successful UI design. Collecting more user data and feedback helps in understanding what keeps the user happy. This in turn helps keeping the end users happy and helps in pushing the developers to do more.

- A good user experience helps in generating more business value. The front end or UI is the face of the application and implementing an impressive UI based on extensive user research helps in garnering more users.

- The user context is the most important requirement in any UIUX design. Understanding the needs of the user while keeping a design in mind is important to make an app that the user likes and wants to navigate.

- Split (A/B) testing is a novel method to present ideas to a sample group in the form of control and variation. This gives the developer team an idea of building the application in a way that the user requirements.

- Using Maslow's hierarchy of needs to aid their UX research was an important point. A redesign that has clearly defined principles is a recipe for success. The way Lyft defined the first need as 'Nail the basics' was an important finding and it was the major contributor to the redesign's success.

- Finally, I understood the importance of case studies and how to observe the changes other companies implemented so that I can incorporate the same in my designs.
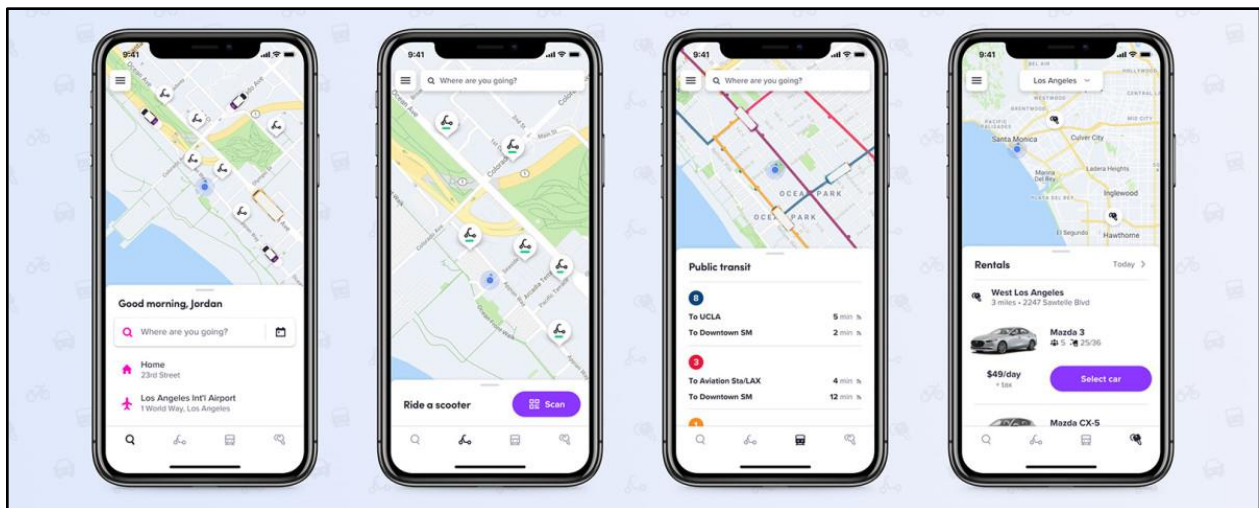

Image from the Lyft blog

Improvements

The design challenges and solutions were very comprehensive in understanding how to implement a good UI. Here are some improvements I would suggest –

- The safety of the users should be more of a priority rather than an afterthought. More implementations of safety should have been kept in place and redesigned as much as possible. This means that improper customers as well as unsafe drivers are not allowed on the application.

- In terms of maintaining user context defined earlier in the report, Lyft can implement a helpful widget where they can track their ride from the pickup location to the drop location successfully from their locked screen. They can also provide driver ratings from there once the ride has been completed as a quick action.

- Options to track accidents and notify other drivers in surrounding regions, better communication between users and drivers at the time of ride booking, and matching the best drivers with the best customers based on rating should be added to the app.

- Lyft can incorporate gesture-based ride booking so that the user can book rides with some gestures which is helpful to improve accessibility and in case of emergencies. It can be connected with voice-based booking to provide a seamless user experience or help the user if they are in danger.

- Lyft can incorporate an AI travel bot to suggest nearby tourist spots and involve a tourist guide for drivers who want to haul day long rides.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the Lyft redesign case study offers insightful information on the company's efforts to enhance its user interface and customer experience. The study analyzes Lyft's growth and progress over the past four years, highlighting the necessity of a redesign in the fourth year to improve usability.

The rationale behind the makeover is made quite apparent, and it covers difficulties with driver information, non-directional automobile iconography, color utilization, options panel design, a lack of price transparency, and the requirement to enhance the user experience for novices. A number of remedies were used to address these problems, including adding additional driver information, updating the automobile icons, reducing the use of color, improving the ergonomics of the options menu, adding price estimates, and providing instructions for novice users. Additionally, Lyft conducted extensive UX research, including qualitative data collection, user feedback sessions, A/B testing, and prototype testing, to inform the redesign decisions.

The usefulness of being open to product redesigns, the necessity of a user-centric approach to UI design, the connection between business value and user experience, and the significance of comprehending user demands, and context are just a few of the key lessons to be learned from this case study. Another advantageous strategy is the usage of Maslow's hierarchy of requirements as a framework for design ideas.

As for enhancements, Lyft should give safety features even more priority, put a trip monitoring widget in place, increase user-driver interaction, offer gesture- and voice-based booking choices, incorporate AI-driven travel ideas, and add driver instructions.

Overall, UI/UX designers and product teams wanting to develop a successful and user-friendly program may learn a lot from Lyft's makeover case study.

References

- Chen, Jessie. (2016, June 21). Lyft Redesign – a UX case study. Retrieved from https://uxdesign.cc/lyft-re-design-case-study-3df099c0ce45.
- Durgude, Ashish.(2019, October 29). App Critique – Lyft (Android). Retrieved from https://uxplanet.org/app-critique-lyft-ea0d3eff30a6
- Chen, Hannah.(2020, December 1). How we run design-led UX research at Lyft. Retrieved from https://design.lyft.com/how-we-run-design-led-ux-research-at-lyft-eaa27d9f3cd8