AllSortz App Spec

Last updated 7/23/2012 by Matt Zoufaly

A.) Displaying Businesses

1. Overall Approach

The goal of the listings page is to always show users an ordering of businesses that we think they will love (with the first item being the most important). We'd like to display enough information to give the users a sense of what the place might be like (e.g. what kind of food they have), and some sense of the businesses' "quality" (e.g. its rating)

2. Location Values

Important so that a user who is new to the system still gets relevant results.This also includes searching within reasonable distances of a particular location (e.g. San Francisco results while in NYC).

i. Defaults

By default, we use your GPS location, or the best approximation of where you are. The default distance 'cutoff ' around you can be set in your account (in a slider).
- A person's apprehension / likelihood of traveling far is going to remain relatively constant over the time they're using the app. We don't want people putting "cutoffs" on their distance unnecessarily. Also, in order to share searches amongst people, you would not want to have hard-defined distances.

ii. Modifying Location

Location is continually updated based on your GPS location / our best approximation. However, we will allow users to set their "location" by using the map view. This is important so that a user on their way to a city / destination can still check to see what's happening in that area.
- A button on the map-page that drops a pin will be sufficient

3. Listing Page Design

Currently, our sketch for the business listings page (7/23/2012):

Business Listing Page

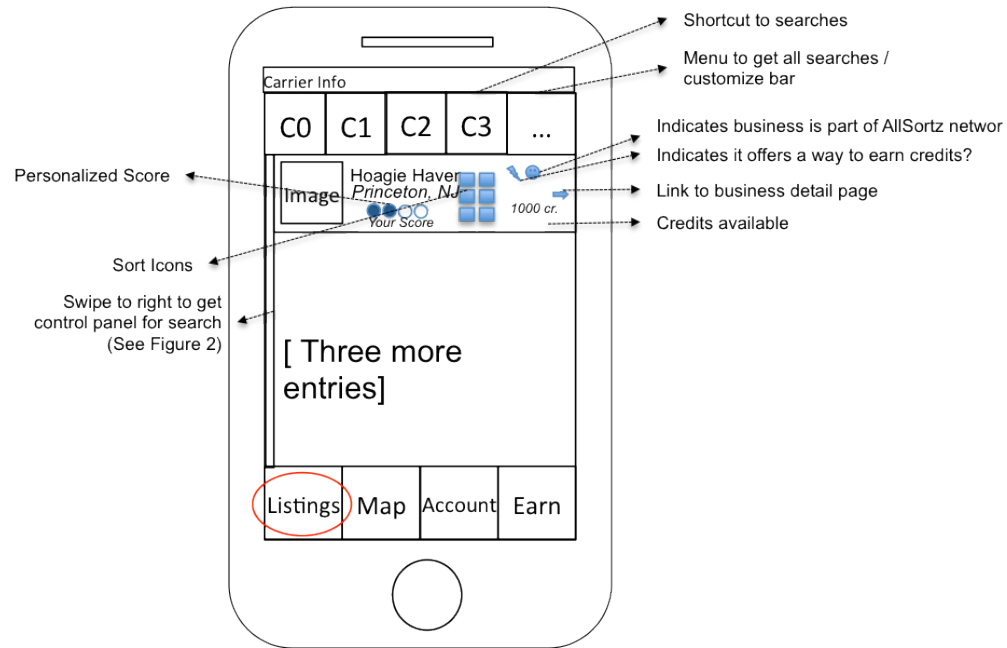*(seem after tapping 'Listings')*

Figure 1

i. Business Listing

The focal point is the list of businesses in the center of the screen. Each listing consist of:

- A picture
  - There should be a default picture for each business.
- The business name and its general location (neighborhood, town, etc.)
- What sorts it is under
  - Tapping the sort icons should bring up a popup that gives at least the text for each sort
- The score our engine has determined you would rate it as
  - Tapping your score brings you to an info page that might bring up a popup that explains why we think this is a good score for you. It should also allow you to edit your scoring
- The categories the business is listed under the strongest
  - For size reasons, we will likely be able to only fit a subset of them
- Whether or not the business is having a deal
  - In the future, might include "types of deal"
- Whether or not the businesses is part of our network
- Credits available to buy coupons, discounts, etc.
- A link to the detail page for the business

ii. Additional Page Functionality

- Swiping from left to the right of the screen will bring up the Search Control Menu page (described in the next section)
- The icons on the top are selected by the user, though we will have default searches when the user first joins the app (Discussed in the Sorting section)
- Pulling down on the listing reveals a general search bar.
  o Can be used as a normal search bar would in Google.
  o This feature isn't necessarily critical to the app, which is why it is hidden away as an Easter-egg type feature.

4. Sorting Control Menu Design

This page is opened when the user swipes from the left side of the Listing page. Here is a rough design:
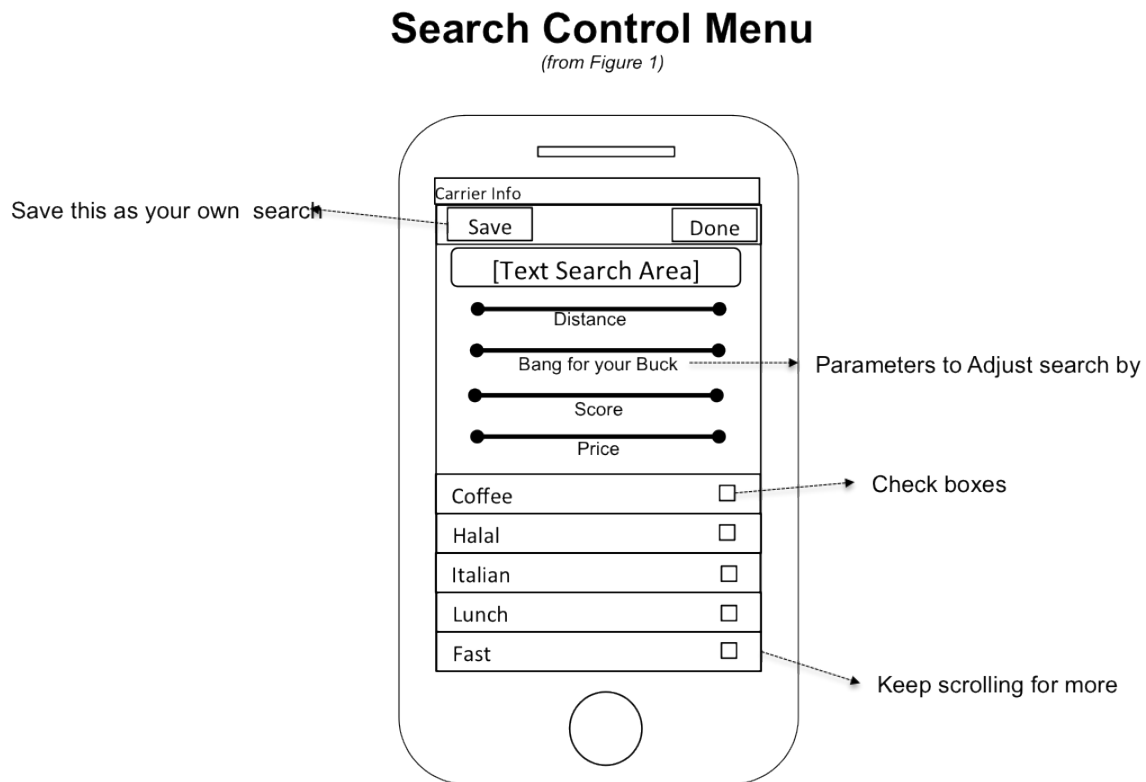
Search Control Menu
(from Figure 1)

Figure 2

The page is defaulted to whatever the values of the current search are. It might contain the parameters for our default searches, or it might be the parameters from a friend's search. Users can tweak the search parameters here.

i. Text Search Option
The text search here allows for users to include some kind of text in their Sorting Control. For example, they might want to search for text that isn't really part of a sort category.

ii. Bars at top
The bars at the top of this screen aren't cutoffs: they are weights. If they are all set to the right-hand side of the phone, then they are considered important (and vice versa). Current options:
- Important of Price
  - o Is it cheap food.
- "Bang for your buck"
  - o What do you rate the "value" of this businesses food
- Importance of distance
  - o Is it important to be down the block, or are you willing to travel?
  - o Actual distance cutoffs can be set for your account
- Importance of Score
  - o Do you want a high-scoring restaurant, or do you care about other stuff only

Having score set to the max, while the others are set to 0, means that we're going to find the place that has the best score regardless of its distance (although there will always be some global default cutoff so that San Francisco results are not returned in NYC). Setting all of them to max is also fine. This ends up finding the "best place, with the best value, with the best score, closest to me". The settings change the ordering proportionally, thus having them all at max is the same as having none set.

iii. Sort Categories
The category searches allow you to find something in particular that you're looking for. Not setting anything is the same as saying you have no preference.
- There needs to be a means of checking all categories, clearing all, etc.

iv. Other
There is some limited filtering capability
- Different than ordering since businesses will *NOT* show up if conditions are not met
- Filter if there is a deal available
- Filter if the business is in our system
- Filter if business is currently open
- Tapping save (on the top-left) will allow you to save this particular configuration to be used to sort later (see sorting in next section)

v. Use Cases
- User maxes the "score" bar and checks "sandwiches" to search for high-scoring sandwiches within default distance parameters
- User wants to search for a particular tag word under the current parameters. The tag can be put into the text-search area
  - o E.g. user wants to search for winter wonderland
  - o Full-text search will be covered in more detail later

5. Custom Sorting Buttons

On the iPhone there is enough room for roughly 5 buttons on the top of the screen (if they are to be square). They are used for ways to sort businesses. For example, if a user has a "sorting" that finds delicious coffee in the area, there should be a button that does just that.

i. Default Behavior

AllSortz maintains roughly 20 different kinds of Sortz that we think people would like to use (e.g.):
- Top Rated Dinner (anywhere)
- Top Rated Coffee (near you)
- Best value food (anywhere)
- Best bars (near you)
- Best Brunch (near you)

Each of these will have corresponding settings in the "Sort Control Menu" that brings up the results.

ii. Customizing Sortz

Once the user taps '…', a custom sort menu is brought up:
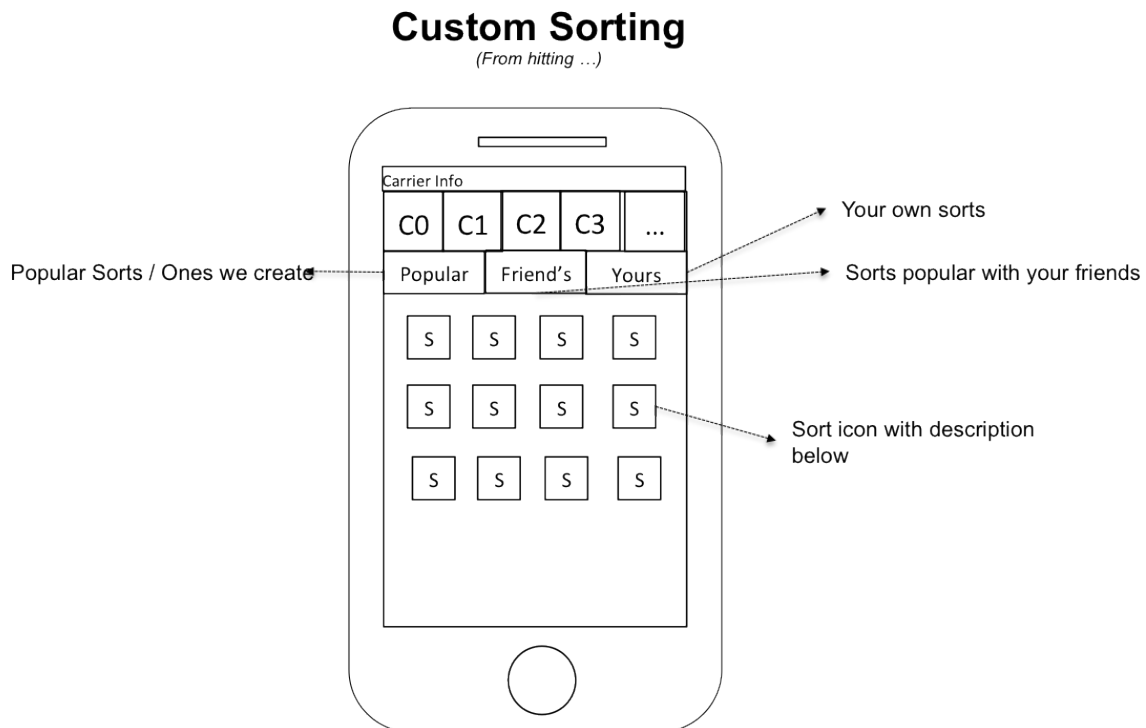
Custom Sorting
(From hitting …)

Figure 3
Custom sort menu

B. API
Overview
AllSortz uses a RESTful API which uses a Django web framework running on an EC2 instance. Querying the API will return a JSON object with the results. The API uses a Postgresql database backend that is identical to the data seen on the website. Thus, using the website is no different than interfacing through the app. This section will describe how the API is laid out, and how it is queried.

C. Meetings
1. 7/23/2012
- Development of the manual is key. Do not slack on it
- Need to have a functional version of the app for VC meetings, even if there are only a couple of businesses
- What are the default values?
    - Default search for listings? Default map location? Default preferences for users?
- Non-logged in users on iphone OK.
    - Only 'earn' required additional user information
- Higher levels of categorization for the future
    - Amusement parks
    - Salons?
    - Etc.
- Reputation of a business?
    - Is it a tourist location?
- References to other establishments should be OK
    - Refer to Small World when talking about "Local" in Starbcuks
- What happens when you open the App?
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