

Concepts and Hypotheses

AUTHENTIC EXPERIENCE

Description

One of the things tourists would highlight was their desire to access libraries, attend classes and experience the day-to-day of a Harvard student. And given how most places on campus are not open to the public, our proposed solution seeks to provide tourists an alternative to access these places from their smartphones. The Immersive Experience will consist of an application in which, using a phone camera, tourists can experience a class, library environment or dining hall atmosphere. The application will rely on augmented reality technology and a podcast-like audio guidance. Tourists will be able to hear about their current location's history and fun facts and also receive recommendations of what/where to visit next, while they enjoy an immersive, imaginative and unique experience. The immersive experience, in general, enables a personalized encounter that provides the user to explore as much of Harvard as they desire.

Hypothesis

The addition of an immersive experience will help tourists gain greater access to see campus life, experience various aspects of campus life and ease the struggle of accessibility. An audio tour will give users an auditory experience that they would not be able to get through a picture. Tourists often take out their devices to capture a Harvard student or some sort of event. This immersive experience will allow tourists the ease of being able to have access to events and allow for more privacy for students as tourists aren't recording or capturing them without their consent. A tourist mentioned their desire to feel the Harvard vibe and an immersive tour would allow one to gain that experience.

Category

Certain and somewhat catastrophic

Assumption

- People want to walk around with their phones out
- People want to switch between this and a camera application
- People are willing to use their data to download an application
- The app will be effective in showing and updating the day-to-day schedules

Prototype



CUSTOMIZED TOURS

Description

As noted in our Problem Statement, tourists would like the flexibility of self-guided tours with the guidance of a guided tour. To address this issue, our team proposes an application where tourists have the opportunity to tailor their experience in whichever way they want. This feature thus allows them to spend more or less time at specific spots. The application will serve as an information hub where all the different stops, including the most popular and the less frequented are listed along with their description, address, accessibility details and more. Furthermore, the application will allow the user to select their preferred sites and receive a time-efficient order of locations to enhance their visit at Harvard. For example, if a tourist is in Harvard Yard or nearby, the application will suggest spots in the immediate vicinity (e.g., Science Center, John Harvard Statue, Widener Library) as well as places a <5 minute walk from their location (e.g., Lamont Library, Harvard Art Museum). Our proposed solution will also allow the user to choose and arrange their tour based on specific time limits such that users that may not be able to visit for the entire day can still enjoy of the main spots around campus in a timely manner. In summary, the application will fulfill the experience of each tourist by tailoring to their interests.

Hypothesis

Due to the lack of customization in tours, tourists desire more personalized tours of Harvard's campus. Thus, providing tourists with customization options allows them to gain a tailored experience that benefits each individual. Tourists will also obtain autonomy as they can choose what they desire to see, not see and for the duration of time they choose. The app allows for tourists who are here for an afternoon or here for an entire day flexibility to choose. The customization will increase the amount of activities tourists have access to, providing more information to the tourists about what is available and thus decrease the overcrowdedness at popular stops like the John Harvard Statue and Widener. As we have observed tourists tend to stay in those locations. In addition, since tourists generally do not have a target list of destinations, customized tours will allow for more efficiency as tourists search for spots since tourists will be given a list of options to choose from.

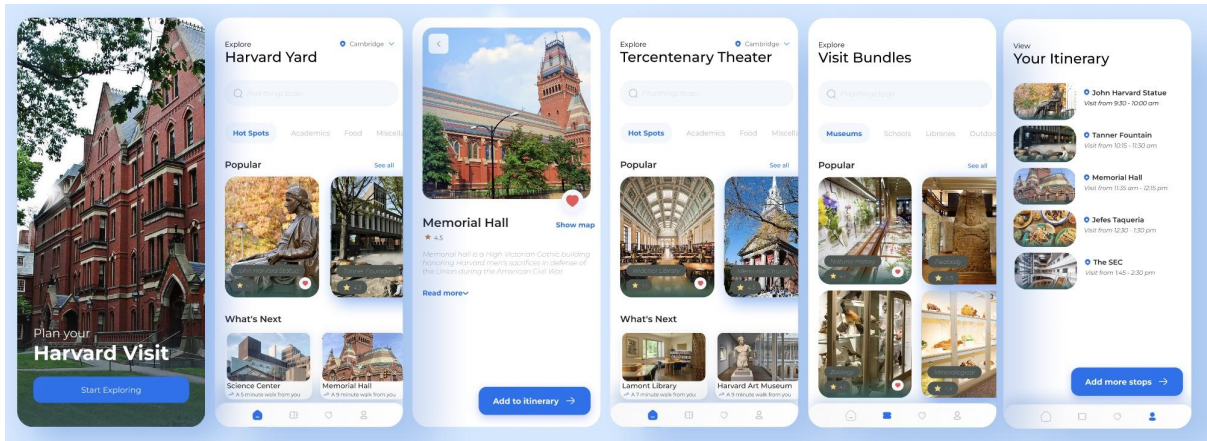
Category

Certain and catastrophic

Assumptions

- This will make a better self-guided tour
- Everyone has a smartphone in which they want to download applications while touring
- Individuals will not mind that the app may involve less human interaction and some more screen time
- Individuals will easily learn how to use the app

Prototype



MAP & SIGNAGE UPGRADE

Description

Many of the interviewees noted that the available maps were too difficult to understand, which hints at a need towards map and signage upgrade. We propose a multi-feature map to solve this problem. First, a set of interactive maps across campus that lists different stops and shows them where they are relative to other stops and would allow tourists to plan their visits more efficiently. This app would also show them what they can and cannot access as well as bathrooms, restaurants, sitting areas, and more. This map would have more detail than Apple Maps as it would give users a better idea of where they can walk through, which is something Apple Maps usually does not include. To provide an enhanced experience, our solution will also include a 2D aerial view with the option of a 3D view. To further the customization aspect of the solution, the map will offer directions and information in various languages. Lastly, this solution, if combined with Customized Tours, will offer tourists a personalized, well-informed experience as part of their visit to Harvard.

Hypothesis

The accessibility concern for maps is about considering people with visual impairment. Especially under some weather conditions, like when the sunshine is strong, it is hard to see what is on the screen. In addition, as we upgrade the map on our phone, some people still prefer physical maps and standing signs because the screen is quite small for so much information and some are not tech savvy. With the addition of map and signage upgrades, tourists will gain a better understanding of the location of the different spots that one could visit.

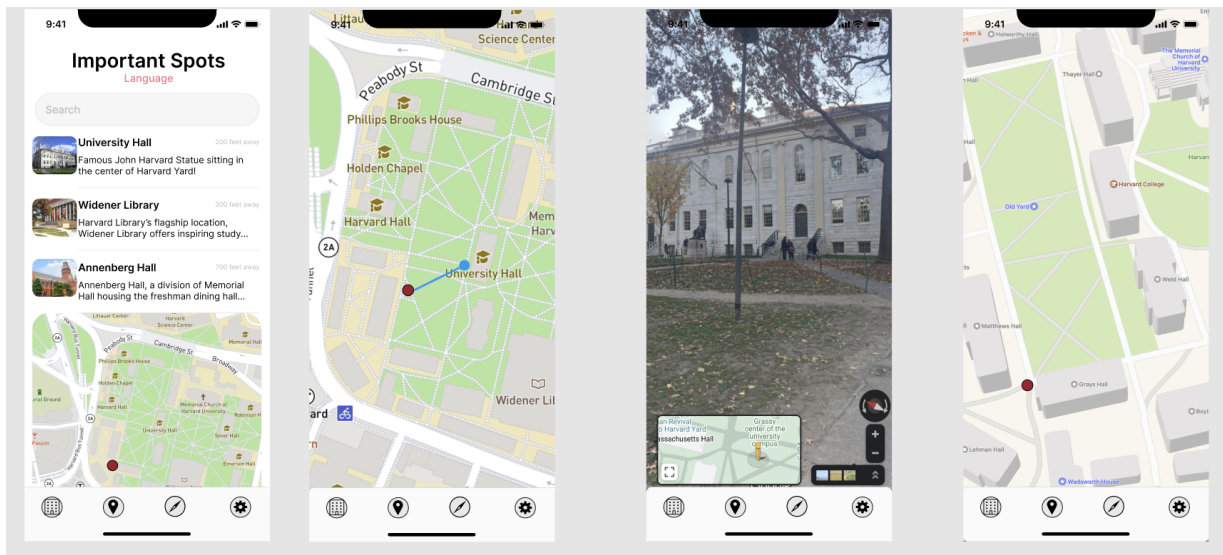
Category

Uncertain and minimal

Assumptions

- The map will make walking around Harvard easier
- People are unhappy with whatever GPS they use
- People do not have a preference for physical vs digital maps or signage.

Prototype



SOCIAL GUIDE

Description

People want to know the hot spots of campus and this is extended beyond the academic buildings and dormitories. This solution strives to address exactly that. Social Guide, which could work as a website or a feature integrated within an application, make tours shareable! It provides tourists the social aspect of a guided tour while also providing them the independence and flexibility of a self-guided tour. Our proposed solution allows tourists to comment on different locations, what they like and dislike, any secret tips and tricks, nearby landmarks, restaurants, etc. Social Guide would be like Yelp for Harvard-specific places. And in the case that a location is not listed among the campus spots, users will have the opportunity to submit a form with the location details (and their review) for the application authors to add. Another feature within Social Guide will allow students to share stories, experiences and reviews on sites at Harvard. This way, a seamless tourist-student community will be created such that users are allowed to feel more connected to campus. To maximize application visibility, the product will notify the user to leave a review of a site in real time. The feature and/or website will make the tour more authentic because the recommendations on the platform will be written by tourists (rather than the application), which will also help with making customized tours based on other people's potentially similar interests, demographic, etc.

Hypothesis

The most concern in this concept is users' privacy. By tracking the users' locations and routes, the app is able to provide touring recommendations. Once the users' disagree with the tracking term, this concept is totally of no use. Besides, tracking and locating can be a burden for data and storage, let alone it affects the battery of cell phones. Another concern is that tourists would prefer more tour insights from Harvard affiliates. As we conducted the interview, tourists tended to ask for our recommendations even before we finished asking

questions. Insights from inside can be more appealing to tourists as they would like the authentic experience in Harvard. The experience of receiving an insight from a Harvard affiliate and/or tourist and enjoying the recommendation will entice the user to want to leave a recommendation for the next tourist.

Category

Certain and catastrophic

Assumption

- People want to share their experiences as they go
- Individuals do not have concerns about the degree of privacy
- Tourists want to receive insight from Harvard affiliates and past tourists.

Prototype

