



Deets

Eats

On



User Research Project

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SMAD 203

Question



How could we improve the experience of students trying to choose which restaurant to eat at in downtown Harrisonburg?



Research Questions



1

Where do you currently go to find out information about restaurants in downtown Harrisonburg?

a. Laptop? Phone? b. Websites/sources? c. Word of mouth?

2

What would you want to know about a restaurant before choosing to go there?

a. Out of what you named, which factor is most important to your decision?

3

Who do you usually go out to eat with in downtown Harrisonburg?

a. How do you all make a decision together?

4

Why do you go out to a restaurant rather than cooking at home?

a. How often do you currently go out to eat downtown?
b. How often would you like to eat out downtown?
c. What would make your restaurant experience perfect? Describe it.

5

What parts of choosing and going out to a restaurant frustrates you?

a. Is what you named a deciding factor on making you not go out?

Rationale For Approach



When asked to come up with a question based on Downtown Harrisonburg, I geared my question towards something that I did often - eating at restaurants. I realized I tend to choose the same couple of restaurants to eat at every time and it is very likely that many other students do the same thing. Branching out and finding new places to eat is sometimes difficult whether it is because you like familiarity or you just simply don't have the information. I wanted to create an app that would help break routines and encourage students to choose new places to eat by providing all the possible information a person would want to know about a restaurant. This idea came to me because of my

hypothesis - students go to the same restaurants because they do not have the information or suggestions needed to reassure them to branch out.

Interviewees



Since my app was directed at students specifically, I only interviewed JMU undergraduates. Since I wanted to get as many responses as I could, I chose to interview 10 students that all had different characteristics. I interviewed at least 1 member of each class-freshmen, sophomore, junior and senior. I also made sure to talk to students of both sexes and also those of different organizations in case that had any impact on their responses. I ended up interviewing students from sororities, fraternities, an honor society and different clubs on campus. I believe that, despite my time and source restraints, I questioned a group of students that represented a large percentage of the school. I interviewed everyone either at my house or in a JMU library as those were the most convenient for everyone.



Interview Summary



After I got my research, I sat down and laid out all the student's responses next to each other on Microsoft Word so I could easily spot the patterns. I found that despite their demographic differences and various involvement on campus, everyone had very similar needs for my application. The students all shared the fact that they went out to eat downtown with other students at JMU and for the same reasons. All students felt like going out to eat was sometimes easier than cooking at home but since it is more expensive, they all answered that knowing the *general price of the food* was the most important factor of the restaurant besides the *quality of the food*. Knowing what information students wanted to know about restaurants made it very simple to design an app that they would use. I would focus on creating *a simple platform* that gave the students *quick and easy access* to their wanted information. The only major differences between student's answers were those who were concerned about *parking and wait times* and the amount of time they spent choosing or researching a restaurant.

Design Requirements



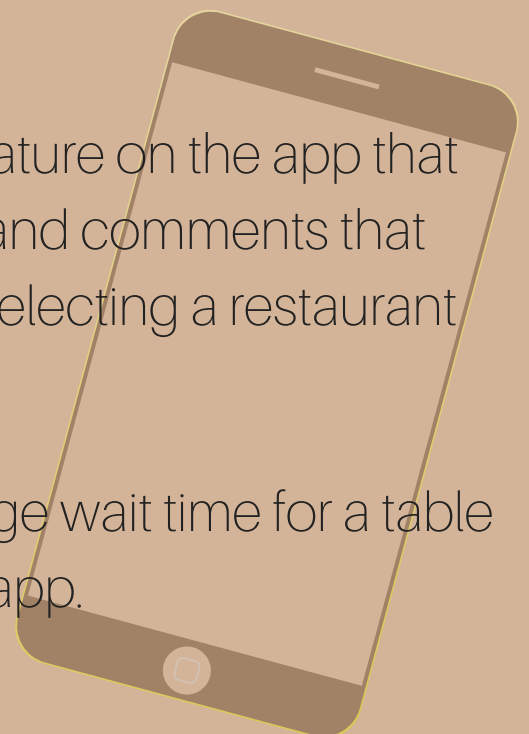
1 The homepage of the app must be a simple navigation menu with links to all of the wanted information that was given in the students answers - Menu, Price Range, Specials, Parking, Etc

2 The app will feature a map that clearly shows the locations of all possible parking and any guidelines/prices for parking in that area. It should also suggest the best parking location relative to the restaurant you select on the app.

3 A daily specials link on the homepage of the app will list deals/specials/discounts for multiple restaurants for the day you select so students can compare and choose a restaurant based on that.

4 There will be a discussion board feature on the app that students can use to leave reviews and comments that could help another student when selecting a restaurant to go to.

5 The app will tell students the average wait time for a table at the restaurant you select on the app.





Caden



"I'm a simple dude, I don't like to think too much"

A Day In His Life

Caden is a simple teen who prefers to take the easier paths in life. Being a college freshman, he has yet to begin his hard major classes and has been going through his first year with a breeze. He doesn't like to think or plan too much. When he goes out, his plans are messy and he relies on his friends to give him rides when he asks last minute.

Goals

Caden doesn't bother looking up a lot of information about restaurants before going to eat there. To him, it's "too much work." He relies a lot on word of mouth recommendations from his friends which is why he would like to see an app that students can communicate on and leave reviews. Him and his friends are always running late because Caden insists on asking for rides last minute therefore he wants the app to have a parking feature so they can cut back on how late they are. Being a freshman without a job, his savings from summer need to go a long way. His top priority when choosing to eat out is saving money so he insists on an app that compares the average prices of local restaurants.

Name: Caden

Age: 18

Year: Freshman

Major: Business

Location: Lives on campus with no car

Occupation: No job at school

Technology Level:

Caden is lazy when it comes to technology. He owns a smart phone with minimal apps. Caden is always looking for the easiest, simplest thing. He uses Google and the maps app and typically bases things off of simplicity and convenience.



Rebecca



"It's all about the experience for me.....and happy hour!"

A Day In Her Life

Rebecca is finishing up her time at JMU with a light schedule and a steady job off campus. When she goes out to eat with friends, it's a planned out occasion and usually ends with some drinks. She likes to make weekly dinner plans with some of her sorority sisters who are also of age.

Goals

Rebecca is not too worried about time or money constraints when it comes to picking a restaurant. The most important part of choosing a restaurant to her is the experience. She likes to know where other students are going to be hanging out as she squeezes in as much time with friends as possible before graduating. Since she recently became legal to drink, she's been trying out different drinks when she goes out. The daily specials and happy hour discounts are another deciding factor when she goes out. She wants an app that lets her connect with other students and view all the local happy hours in one location.

Name : Rebecca

Age : 21

Year : Senior

Major : SMAD

Location : Lives in townhome a bit further away from downtown but has a car

Occupation : Works part time off campus, steady income

Technology Level:

Rebecca is super tech-savvy.

It's one of the reasons she chose to be a SMAD major. She uses a ton of different apps and likes to look up everything.

She's always trying out the latest apps.



Persona Photo Citations

<http://sparrowsheartphotography.blogspot.com/2014/06/lake-travis-senior-photographer-jake.html>

<https://www.joshfisherphotography.com/2014/05/hanna-oklahoma-senior-photography/>