



Tourister App Project Report

Presentation Poster

TOURISTER



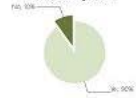
Problem Statement

Tour groups run by tour companies don't always provide the best in-depth experiences into the local culture.

Motivation

- Make taking tours on vacation easier, more enjoyable, and better incorporate local culture.
- Most of people use smartphone during vacation. Also they prefer a local tour much more than local company.

When vacationing do you normally carry and use a smartphone?



Would you be more likely to take a tour with a local tour or local company?



Connecting to Social Computing

Ideas for Newcomers

- Have new tour guides provide answer to question about city in question or neighborhood
- Provide people with referral links to give to their friends who may be good guides
- Give points to local guides to use for discounts when traveling

Encouraging Contribution

- Reputation - Ratings for both tour takers and tour guides.
- Liking - base recommendations on similarity between profiles of tour takers and tour guides.

Social Data Analysis

Recommender Systems

Preliminary Design

- Mobile Application
- Utilize social media integration
- Rating system
- Geolocation integration
- Recommender system

Application Research

- Airbnb
- TripAdvisor

Quantitative Research

- Survey with 9 questions
- 30 answers, 15 from female, 15 from male



What information about a guide would make you more comfortable taking a tour with him/her?



What aspects of information about the tour itself are you concerned about when deciding on a tour?



Lessons learned - Do the same next time

- Advanced application research in same area then start design
- Assign tasks for each member in detail
- Collect data from users for design

Lessons learned - Improve next time

- Start ahead of schedule
- More discussion
- Advanced application research not only for function but also for UI design

Problem Statement

The Tourister App Project set about to improve the way people take tours while on vacation. Many travel companions today are impersonal and managed by large corporations looking to sell advertisement space. We wanted to create a more human, community-based mobile application to assist in finding tours when on vacation. In the same way Airbnb revolutionized the hotel industry, we plan to use our app to put the power back in the hands of local tour guides. To do this we analyzed and designed an application capable of connecting tour takers with tour guides that will hopefully allow a more in depth tour experience for all parties. Getting a taste of local people and culture almost always results in a more satisfying trip. We want to put travelers in touch with area experts who are eager to share their knowledge.

Application Research

To start, we researched other applications that are popular: **Airbnb** and **TripAdvisor** to see what worked well and what ideas we could use for our application. We liked the idea of having a two-way rating system where both the tour taker and tour rater could provide rankings of the other. Airbnb's recommendation system works well so we decided to include a recommendation part to our app. TripAdvisor includes the ability to integrate with Facebook and share your experience there as well. We included the ability for users to share their tour experiences with their friends as well.

Survey Administration

To get a sense of how people vacation with respect to tours, we designed an online survey to get feedback we could incorporate into our design. We asked demographic questions and travel-specific questions regarding how people would pick tours, information about tour guides, and what tour qualities were important to them. The whole set of questions can be found in the Appendix Section 1.

The results were close to what we expected. Most people who answered were in the 20-30 year old age group and carry a smartphone while traveling. Since the sampling we performed was not random, it makes sense that the results are skewed toward our group's age. The snowball effect may have affected the distribution of the survey since we shared it

with our friends on social media. Many more people would like to take a tour with a local tour guide than with a large group so this gives us motivation to make our application. A little surprisingly, almost 94% of people said they would be okay with taking a tour with a stranger if they were verified and provided information. This is good news for us, since that is what our application is based on. People are interested in seeing user reviews for a tour guide and care very much about the tour location when choosing a tour to take. The total results can be seen in the Appendix Section 2.

Kickstarter Campaign

Social Computing - "Tourister" Travel App Design

by Joseph Bender

Tourister



1 backer

\$1.00 pledged of \$50 goal

0 seconds to go

Funding Unsuccessful

This project's funding goal was not reached on March 31.

Pittsburgh, PA Interactive Design

INFSCI 2430 - Social Computing Graduate School of Information Science University of Pittsburgh Final Design Project

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Joseph Bender

First created | 0 backed

josephbender.com

[See full bio](#) [Contact me](#)



We launched a kickstarter campaign in order to raise funding for the development of our application. Unfortunately, the funding was unsuccessful and we did not have sufficient backers for the campaign to “lock in” the financial contributions. Although, we were able to produce the design project without any monetary support. Regardless, it was a great learning experience creating an account, starting a campaign, and monitoring it throughout the funding period.

Design Development

After gathering the survey results, we created mockups of the application. These mockups show the basic functionality, but more importantly incorporate feedback from the survey. The data collected showed that people want transparency when selecting a tour or tour guide. Therefore, each tour guide has their own profile with a photo, description, and rating. We also addressed common problems social applications sometimes have. Dealing with **newcomers** should always be considered when developing a social network. For example, not everyone should just be allowed to sign up and give a tour with no verification or knowledge of the area. So our design required people to answer questions about the area in which they want to give a tour. These answers will be reviewed by a human before the person is allowed to give a tour in that area. This will give the user confidence that even if a tour guide has no reviews yet, they were pre-screened before being allowed to give a tour. Referral links can also be generated to entice new users to share the application with their friends. **Encouraging contribution** is also a critical factor in the success of a social network. We wanted to build a reliable user base of tour guides. After receiving positive feedback, good tour guides are able to send a referral link to friends they think would also be useful tour guides. For each successful recruitment, the referer is given a free tour (see Appendix Section 3 - Mockups for more information). Badges will also be given to some of the best tour guides. Obtaining a badge will be a goal for ambitious tour guides, and once achieved will only increase their popularity. In addition, collaborative filtering will be used in the recommender system. If you share a common tour with another user, and you both rated it highly, you will be presented with other tours that person found interesting. This adds a more social element to finding new tours. Finally, as we mentioned earlier, having ratings for both tour takers and guides establishes reputation, and puts accountability on both sides of the experience. Hopefully, by anticipating these problems, the application’s functionality will stand the test of any possible user trials.

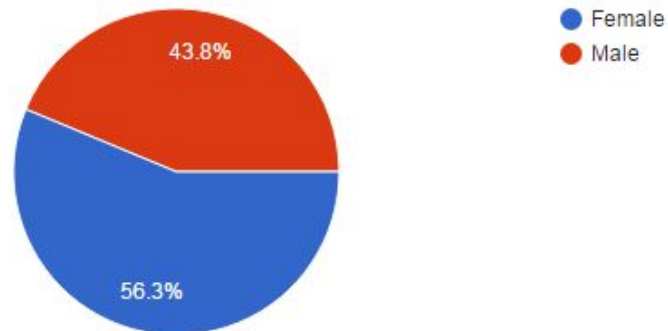
Appendices

Section 1 - Survey Questions

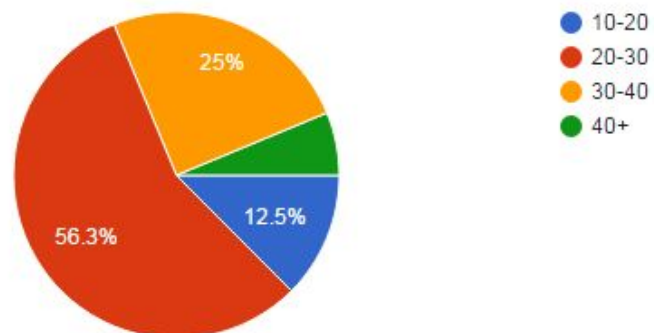
1. What's your gender?
2. What's your age group?
3. When vacationing do you normally carry and use a smartphone?
4. Would you be more likely to take a tour with a local tour guide or large tour company?
5. Would you feel comfortable taking a tour with a local you haven't met before?
6. What information about a guide would make you more comfortable taking a tour with him/her? (Check all that apply)
7. When traveling what aspects about a stranger lead to being friends?
8. What aspects of information about the tour itself are you concerned about when deciding on a tour? (Please rate each on a scale of 1-5)
 - [Tour length]
 - [Group size]
 - [Difficulty of walk]
 - [Tour location]
9. Would you be more likely to pick a tour based on the profile of the tour guide, or the tour information itself?

Section 2 - Survey Results

1. What's your gender? (16 responses)

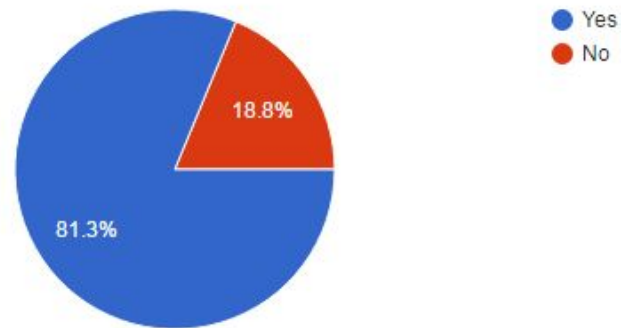


2. What's your age group? (16 responses)



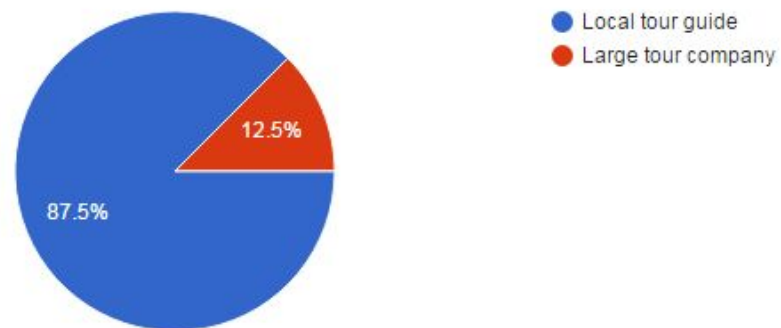
3. When vacationing do you normally carry and use a smartphone?

(16 responses)



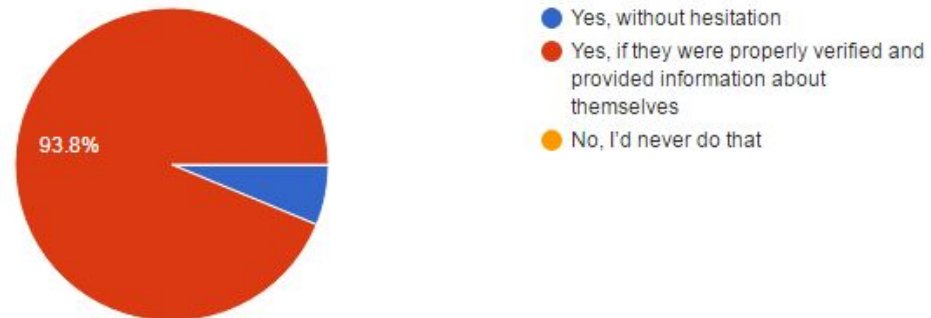
4. Would you be more likely to take a tour with a local tour guide or large tour company?

(16 responses)



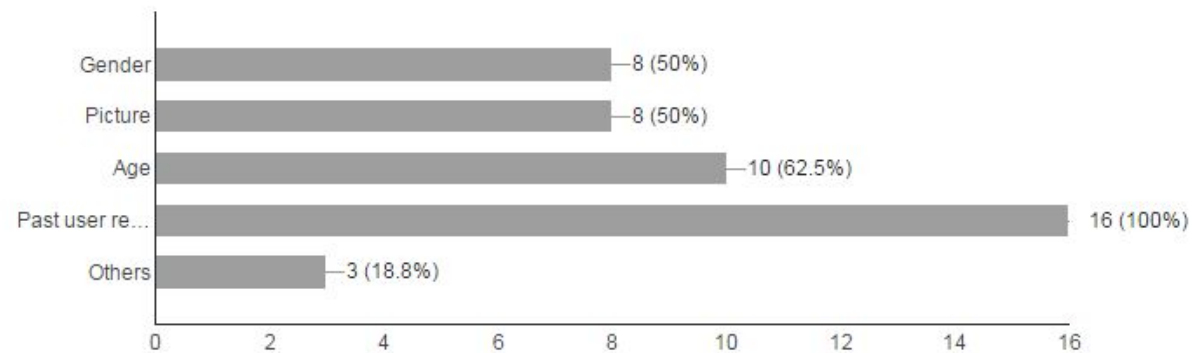
5. Would you feel comfortable taking a tour with a local you haven't met before?

(16 responses)



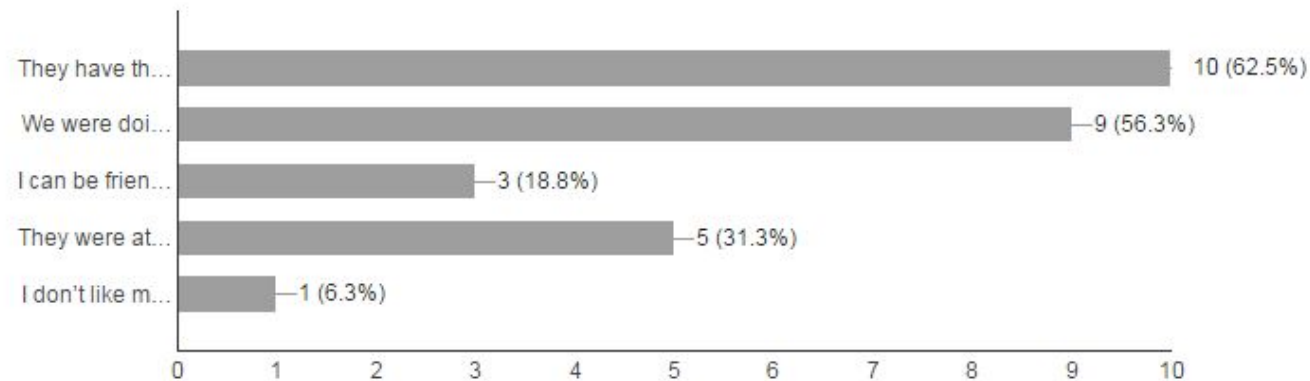
6. What information about a guide would make you more comfortable taking a tour with him/her? (Check all that apply)

(16 responses)

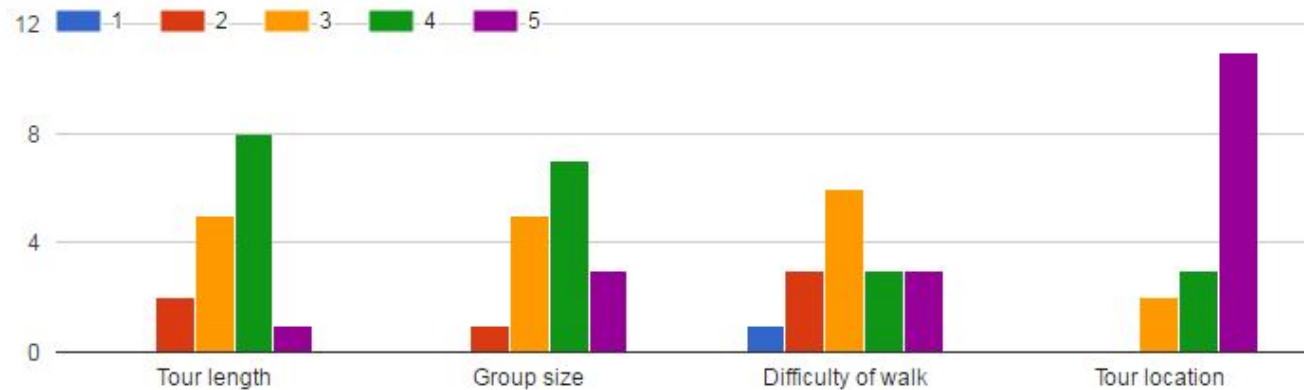


7. When traveling what aspects about a stranger lead to being friends?

(16 responses)

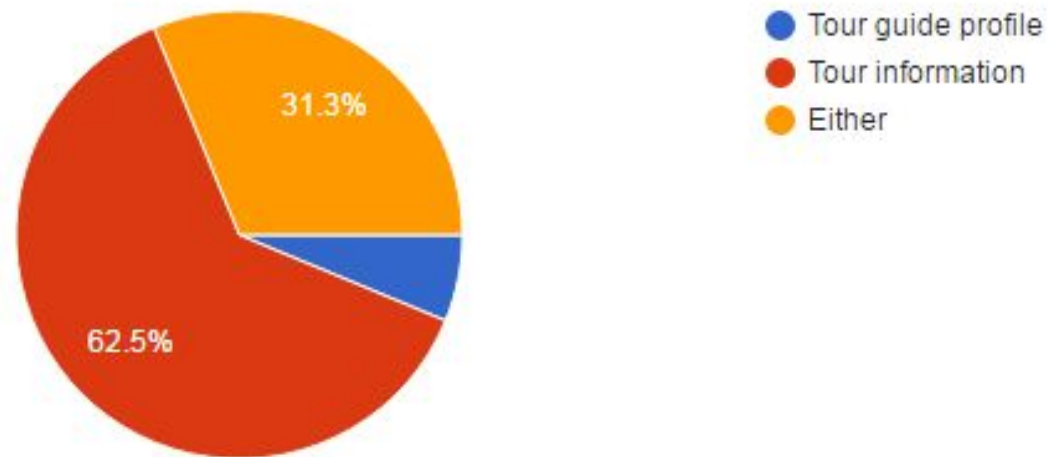


8. What aspects of information about the tour itself are you concerned about when deciding on a tour? (Please rate each on a scale of 1-5)



9. Would you be more likely to pick a tour based on the profile of the tour guide, or the tour information itself?

(16 responses)

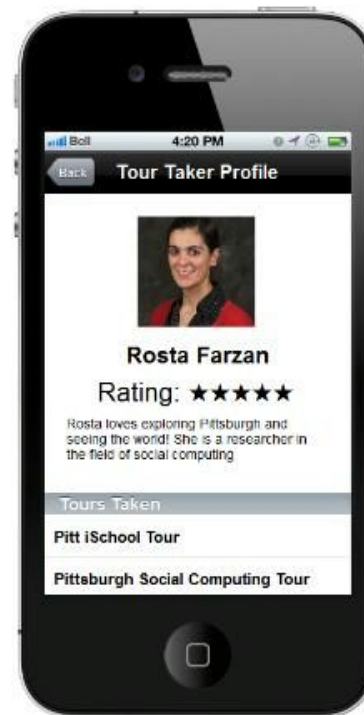


Section 3 - Mockups

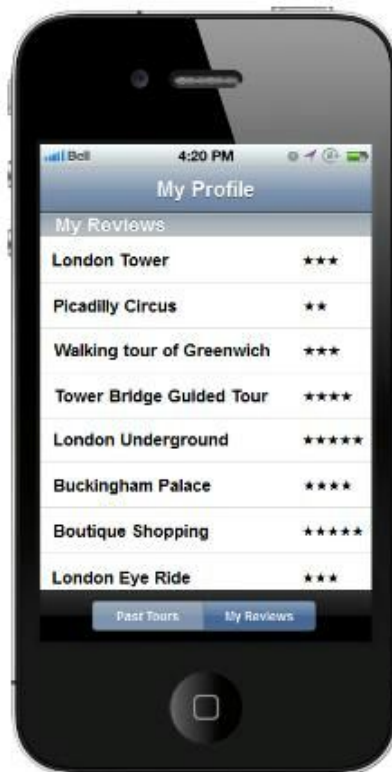
Tour Map and Tour Listing



Tour Taker/Guide Profile



My Profile - Past Tours and Submitted Reviews



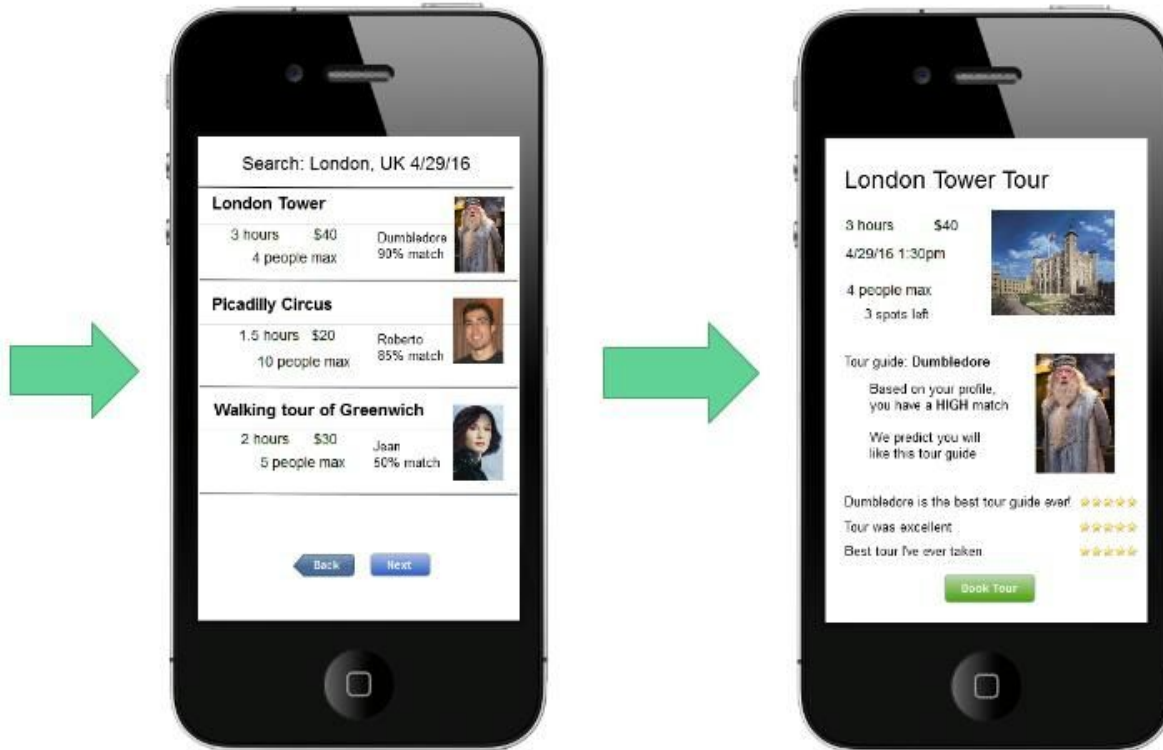
Referral



Recommendation



Recommendation Continued



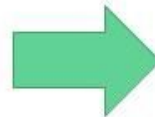
Encouraging Contribution with Email



Logging in/Create Account



Loading Screen



Login Screen



New User Creation



New User Creation Continued

You have selected:

London, UK

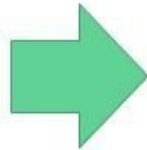
Kensington

Is this the city and neighborhood you wish to give a tour in?

Yes

No, search again

Confirm



Please answer a few questions about the neighborhood

Name the 3 museums in the neighborhood

Name the 2 major shopping streets

Provide lesser-known information about the neighborhood

Back **Next**

More Information



Thank you for your responses

They will be evaluated and the decision made about your application

Return to Profile

Search for Tours

Application Review

