TripUnite!

A Collaborative Travel Planning App

A UX/UI Case Study

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01

About TripUnite!

Project Purpose, Timeline, and expected outcomes

App name: TripUnite!

Current methods lack efficient collaboration and budget tracking for future travels. TripUnite! provides a social application platform that simplifies planning, coordination, and budget management for seamless future trips

Date/Duration: May - July; 3 months

My Roles: UX Research, Visual Design, User Testing, Prototyping

Tools: **Figjam - Figma - Google Forms - Google Sheets**

About the project

Problem Statement:

- With TripUnite!, travelers can collaborate in real-time, share ideas, and make group decisions, ensuring a cohesive and enjoyable travel experience. Additionally, the app's budget tracking feature helps travelers stay on top of expenses, split costs, and manage financial resources effectively.
- By addressing these pain points, **a collaborative planning and budget tracking app enhances the overall travel planning process and empowers travelers to create unforgettable and stress-free future trips.**

Key Features of development:

- Problem Solving
- User Research & Analytics
- Persona Creation
- Designing & Prototyping
- Usability Testing

TIME TO Travel

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INTO **THE WILD**

What makes Tripit! stand out?

Collaborative Itinerary

A platform in which trip members can vote and chat live time to plan itinerary.

Live-Time Budgeting

The ability to split cost amongst trip members and settle payments.

Storing Memories

Upload photos into trip library and organize based on events within folder that all trip members can access.

INTO The Jungle

TIME TO Travel

02 ◀ ▶

Research

Understanding current user behaviors, needs, and pain points to improve the usability and user experience.

The **Research**

- ❏ Prior to designing, I sought to observe the following:
  - ❏ Pain points of users on current travel planning websites and agencies.
  - ❏ Understand core user behaviors when planning trips amongst family members/friends.
  - ❏ What are the features current applications have? Where do they fall short?

- ❏ In order to answer these questions, I used the following:
  - ❏ User Surveys
  - ❏ User Interviews
  - ❏ Competitive Analysis

The **Interview**

INTO THE WILD

Question(s) asked during the 1-1 interview:

- ❏ Have you ever used a travel planning or itinerary website before?
- ❏ How frequently do you travel for leisure or business purposes?
- ❏ Which types of trips do you typically plan or book through travel planning websites? (Select all that apply: flights, hotels, rental cars, activities, vacation packages)
- ❏ On average, how far in advance do you start planning your trips?
- ❏ Which travel planning websites have you used in the past? (Allow for multiple selections)
- ❏ How satisfied were you with your experience using these travel planning websites?
- ❏ What features or tools do you typically use on travel planning websites?
- ❏ Are there any specific features or tools that you would like to see implemented or improved upon in travel planning websites?
- ❏ How important is it for a travel planning website to provide a seamless experience across different devices (e.g., desktop, mobile)?

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The interview aimed to gather insights and feedback on improving the collaborative travel app.

Feedback from questions such as:
What features or tools do you typically use on travel planning websites?

Are there any specific features or tools that you would like to see implemented or improved upon in travel planning websites?

How important is it for a travel planning website to provide a seamless experience across different devices (e.g., desktop, mobile)?

revealed there needs to be focus on enhancing user experience through streamlined collaboration

Interview Synopsis

Better Interface Design:

Current apps need to be more intuitive and user-friendly interfaces that make it easy for users to navigate, find information (having a search bar to quickly look up the plans/calendar view for plans) , and perform tasks.

Mobile Optimization:

Many participants expressed that they access travel planning websites through mobile devices. Optimizing the app for mobile use is crucial to provide a seamless and enjoyable experience. Responsive design and mobile-friendly features are essential to cater to users who primarily use smartphones or tablets for trip planning.

Greater Collaboration:

Introducing real-time collaboration capabilities, such as simultaneous editing and commenting on itineraries, cost splitting, and ever the ability to real time chose plans like in a questionnaire. The ability to assign tasks, set reminders, and receive notifications for updates or changes can further improve coordination among travel companions.

Location to store photos from trips/ Merge to social media:

Having a group folder within a planning app could be good even when it comes to the older generation if they are actively in email chains. Integrating social media features can enhance the social aspect of collaborative travel planning.

Direct Competitor(s):

TripIt! is a popular travel planning and itinerary management app that allows users to organize their travel plans in one place. It offers features for sharing itineraries with friends and family, syncing with calendars, and tracking flights.
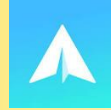
Travefy is a collaborative travel planning platform designed specifically for group travel. It allows users to create and share itineraries, track expenses, and communicate with fellow travelers. It offers both a web-based platform and mobile apps.

TripHobo is a platform that enables users to create and collaborate on travel itineraries. It offers a wide range of destination guides, suggestions for activities, and the ability to share and edit itineraries with fellow travelers.

Although not exclusively a travel app, **Splitwise** is widely used for splitting expenses among friends during trips. It simplifies expense tracking and helps calculate who owes what, making it a useful tool for collaborative budget management.

Indirect Competitor(s):

While not solely focused on travel, **Doodle** is a popular scheduling app that simplifies finding mutually convenient times for group activities. It can be helpful for coordinating and scheduling shared activities or meetings during a trip.

Google Trips is a comprehensive travel app that assists users in organizing and planning their trips. It offers features like itinerary management, recommendations for attractions, restaurants, and activities, and the ability to collaborate with others on trip planning.

Kayak is a popular travel app that provides comprehensive trip planning and booking services. While it is primarily known for its flight and hotel search capabilities, it also offers itinerary management features that allow users to collaborate with others on trip planning.

◄ **03** ►

User Development

Process of creating personas that represent users who share similar behaviors and needs.

User Stories

As a creative thinker, I want a way to share my ideas with the planner and everybody else so that I have a voice in the planning process.

As someone who likes to be prepared, I want a way to share the finalized itinerary with my group so that they know what to expect, start getting excited, and don't get lost.

As a user, I want the app to offer a collaborative budget management feature, allowing us to track our shared expenses, split bills, and manage our travel finances efficiently.

As an inclusive trip planner, I want a way to share activities that look fun to me with the group so that I can find out what they're interested in doing.

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Bon Voyage

Persona: Jessica the Grad

Jessica

ABOUT

Jessica is a recent graduate in clinical psychology who is enthusiastic about planning a graduation celebration trip with her friends. She values group coordination, destination exploration, and shared experiences. Jessica seeks budget-conscious options while planning, appreciates travel resources that simplify the planning process, and wants to capture and preserve the memories of their trip.

"Being able to collaborate in real-time and have everyone's input in the trip planning process is a must. Sometimes it would be helpful to not be the group's itinerary and photo storage. "

AGE	27
JOB TITLE	Graduate Student
STATUS	Single
LOCATION	Atlanta, GA

OUTGOING   **COORDINATED**
SOCIABLE   **ADVENTUROUS**

GOALS

- Seamless collaboration among her friends to plan itineraries for upcoming trips.

- Be able to capture and preserve the memories of their graduation celebration trip or make a memento piece.

PAIN POINTS

- Multiple applications such as Messages, Instagram, emails, etc. use to log and make descisions,

- Having to create numerous photo album links and waiting on friends for pictures.

- Being able to view her trip at a glance while traveling

PERSONALITY

Introvert	Extrovert
Analytical	Creative
Busy	Time rich
Messy	Organized
Independent	Team player

LET'SFly

Persona: Alex the Family Man

Alex

ABOUT

Alex is a married man with a loving wife, Sarah, and a 4-year-old daughter, Emma. Alex is a family-oriented traveler who values safety, convenience, and budget-consciousness. He seeks efficient itinerary planning and user-friendly interfaces when using collaborative travel planning websites. By understanding his needs and preferences, travel platforms can cater to his requirements and provide a seamless and enjoyable planning experience for his family.

"It's frustrating looking through every link sent in a group chat. It"s nice to just have the ability to make decisions when seeing your options rather verbally and trying to remember every option at the same time. "

AGE	38
JOB TITLE	Marketing Manager
STATUS	Married, Parent
LOCATION	Miami, FL

PASSIONATE   EMPATHETIC
CURIOUS   ADVENTUROUS

GOALS

- Wants to easily access and modify itineraries, collaborate with his wife in real-time, and receive notifications for any changes or updates
- Clear categorization of information, intuitive search functions to view activities for the day

PAIN POINTS

- Spending too much time comparing and planning in different locations
- Difficult to budget and calculate all income and expenditure during/after the trip
- Hard to remember the schedule after the trip.

PERSONALITY

Introvert	Extrovert
Analytical	Creative
Busy	Time rich
Messy	Organized
Independent	Team player

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User Flows

Understand how users interact with the product, identify areas for improvement.

Flow: Accessing Current Trip
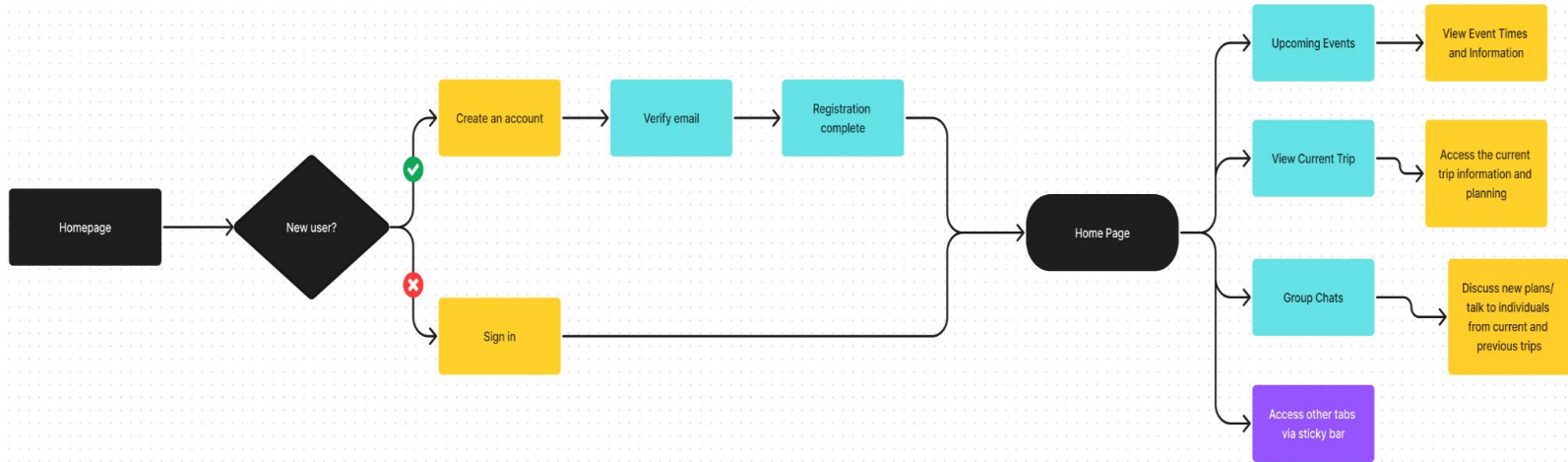
Flow: Adding a Transaction - Budgeting

Budgeting Tab → Add a transaction to Trip

✓ → Click of the trip of reference → Click on the Receipt tab for option → Select from four options

✗ → Return to Home Page

Select from four options:
- Add an Expense → Add the cost and group and submit
- Settle an Expense → Add the indiviudal and cost you are paying back
- Split an Expense → Add the indiviudal and cost you are dividing then submit
- Create a Sub-group → Add individuals within the group that you are making a sub-group for and...

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◀ **05** ▶

Sketching/ Wireframes

Visual representation of an idea, concept, or design using pen and paper or digital tools.

Crazy 8's

Solution Sketch

Solution Sketch: Trip Overview Screen: ① Add Travelers & ② Create a Poll

Window will pop up from the bottom of the screen.

Adding a Guest/Traveller

└

The More the Merrier!
Add your fellow travelers so you can get the plans in motion! Add via...

- 👤 Contacts
- Facebook
- Instagram
- Email
- Text w/ Link

Multiple options to add participants to the itinerary including popular forms of social media.
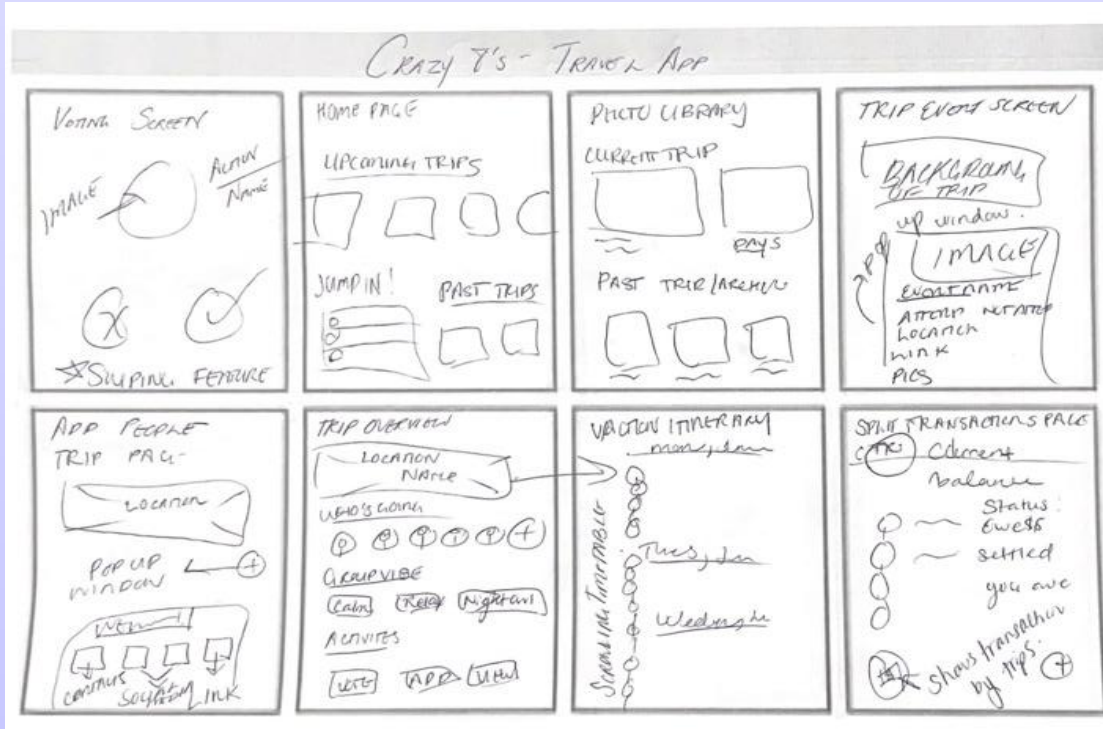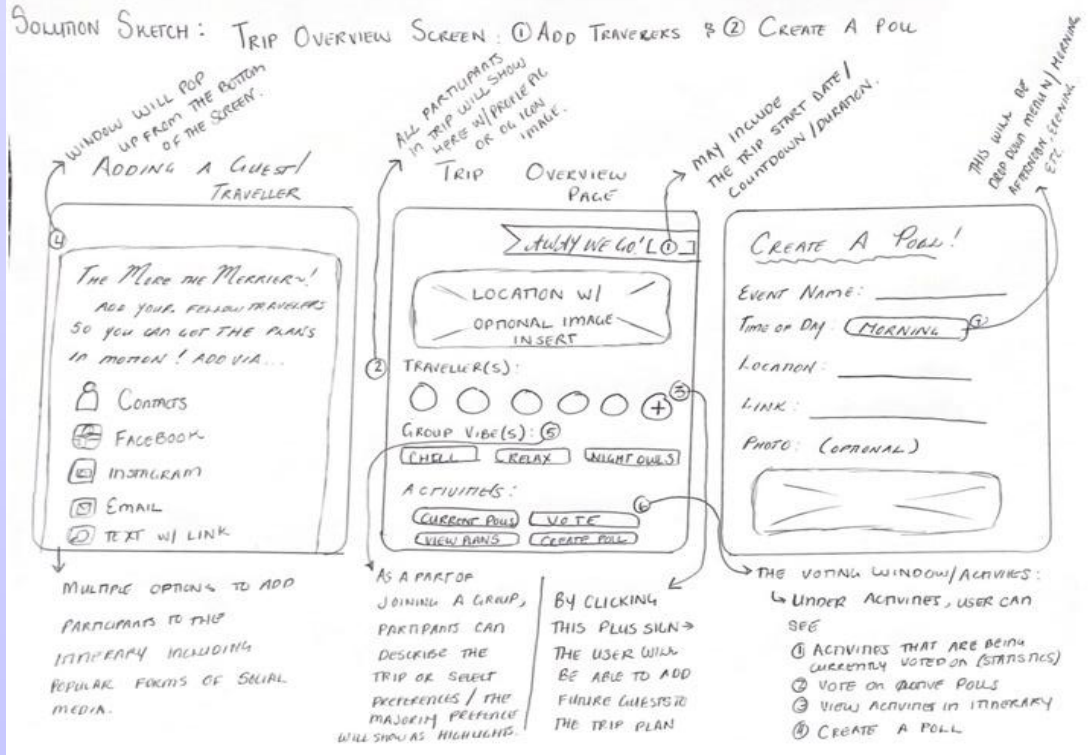
All participants in trip will show up here w/ profile pic or OG icon image.

Trip Overview Page

Away We Go'L ①

LOCATION W/ OPTIONAL IMAGE INSERT

② Traveller(s) ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ⊕ ③

Group Vibe(s): ⑤
[Chill] [Relax] [Night Owls]

Activities:
[Current Polls] [Vote]
[View Plans] [Create Poll]

As a part of joining a group, participants can describe the trip or select preferences/the majority preference will show as highlights.

By clicking this plus sign → the user will be able to add future guests to the trip plan

May include the trip start date/ countdown/duration.

Create a Poll!

Event Name: ____
Time of Day: (Morning)
Location: ____
Link: ____
Photo: (optional)

⊠

This will be drop down menu/ morning, afternoon, evening, etc.

The voting window/activities:
└ Under activities, user can see
① Activities that are being currently voted on (statistics)
② Vote on active polls
③ View activities in itinerary
④ Create a poll

Lo Fi WireFrames

Home Page

Trip Overview...

Vacation Itiner...

Event Screen

Event Creation

Home Page

Photo Library

Trip Photo Lib...

Trip Photo Lib...

Home Page

Split Transacti...

Transaction – ...

Add Expense

Settle Expense

Group Payme...

Group Payme...

Style Guide

Colors

Ink

Utility

Accent

Mid Fi Wireframes

Home Pa...

Trip Over...

Vacation ...

Event Scr...

Event Cr...

Home Pa...

Photo Lib...

Trip Phot...

Trip Phot...

Home Pa...

Split Tran...

Split Tran...

Action ...

Add an ...

Settle E...

Group Pa...

Group Pa...

Home Pa...

Calendar ...

Create a ...

Hi Fi Wireframes

Hi Fi Wireframes

Usability Testing

Observing and measuring how well users can complete specific tasks.

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Usability Testing

❏ Usability testing was conducted in two rounds- both via Zoom calls, where participants were notified their interactions going through the app was being recorded. Each round included 3 participants - aged between 22 - 43. .

❏ TripUnite performed well in usability testing, meeting user expectations for collaborative travel planning and budget tracking. Its user-friendly interface and seamless collaboration features received positive feedback.

Usability Testing

- ❏ The app's budget management and scrapbooking feature were also well-received by users. However, some minor accessibility and personalizations enhancements were recommended for an improved user experience.
- ❏ Suggested changes related to including icons for going back, exiting, adding more personalized option to the trip pages -such as colors. Maybe introduce a home button at the top left rather than rely on the sticky bar. Also, including confirmation screens for different actions to confirm they have been completed.

TRIPUNITE
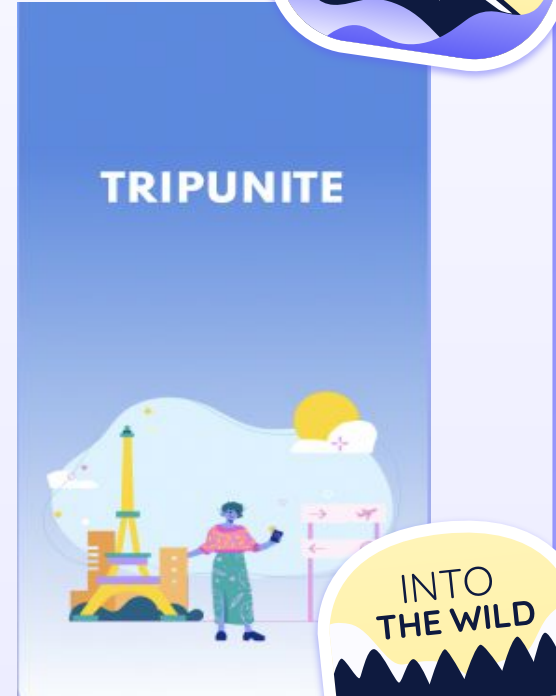
Afterword

This project was an excellent opportunity for an in-depth exploration and execution of the UX/UI process. It truly illustrates the ways in which each step of the process informs the next.

In the future,

- ❏ I would like to explore ways in which the TripUnite app could sync with popular booking platforms/email calendars to auto-populate travel and accommodation information into the user's trips.
- ❏ It would be nice to explore the potential on integrating social platforms such as instagram, Facebook, etc. to aid the users in sharing the photos with friends and families.
- ❏ Exploring how to set up a reminder systems for purchases/payments that have been forgotten.

Thanks!

Do you have any questions?

Cheyenne Rattray
cheyenne.rattray3@gmail.com

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Fonts & colors used

This presentation has been made using the following fonts:

Poppins
(https://fonts.google.com/specimen/Poppins)

Quicksand
(https://fonts.google.com/specimen/Quicksand)

#0e1a3f	#5f5ff6	#8686fa	#9393fb	#adadfd
#c7c7ff	#dadaff	#ececff	#fff4b8	#ffee97