OLMSTED LINEAR PARK

4

DANA HICKY • HANNAH MOON • JACK CONWAY

LE FIVE

Oakdale Rd N

Clifton Rd

LAKE CLAIRE

Fron Rd

ELate RONK

Walb Ave NE

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(1) INITIAL RESEARCH

1.1 Introduction

Goal

We worked alongside the Olmsted Linear Park Alliance to create an interactive mobile experience that highlights the history and spirit of the Olmsted Linear Parks. The goal for this app was to attract people to the parks.

Approach

The Olmsted Parks have a deep history behind them. In the 1980's the parks were threatened by a highway proposal that would have cut right through these slim pieces of green space. Protests and sit-ins eventually derailed the construction plans and these parks are some of the best in the Atlanta area. We took this history as well as its beautiful landscaping and put it on display with our app. We use the app as a way to not only get people to the park but also learn about and enjoy the parks while they are there.

1.2 Problem Research

Research

The problem that the park faced way trying to get visitors to come to the park, interact with it, and hopefully donate money. We examplined the information that the park organization gave us, which was the extensive tree survey, the general Olmsted history, and the placards of the park itself. We did additional research to find out the demographics of the area to know our target audience and who uses the park.

From there we found applications with similar elements that we wanted to incorporate into our design. The *Forest Park* app (top) has a design that tracked trails well, and its aesthetic and usability aspects were something we hoped to incorporate into our own design.

ActionBound (bottom) incorporated the visual photo documentation and the scavenger hunt elements that were included in every level of the prototype.



Features

Simple, easy-to-use interface. Fully interactive offline map. GPS location shown on map. Navigate the park in its entirety. 49 trails and 10 suggested hikes. Interactive elevation profiles. Trail and Hike lengths. Trail-usage key for hikers, bikers, and horses. Parking locations shown on map. General park information.



ne program quite literally augments our reality by enhancing peoples' real-life interaction whilst sing their smartphones and tablets. You can create a digital timeline of events or a places of interest.

1.3 Concept Formation & Persona

Target audience

The people of the area are relatively rich young adults and many have small children.

The app is targeted to this demographic group because of their proximity to the park and they would be the ones to visit the park the most and thus use the app.

Peronas



Garrett, a local yuppie

Frustrations: Wants technology that is fast and flexible to suit hs constant usage.

Hopes: Stay on trend forever and move up in his company.

Goals: Keep his consultant job that allows him to travel and see new places.

Quote: "I always have my phone on me and use it to document every part of my life for my friends"

Goals in relation to this app:

- GPS where you are
- Distance of the trail
- Wants a place to take good instagram pics - highlight that in the app



Mary-Claire & Miller, local walker (family/child)

Frustrations: Wants technology that is fun for her to user but also lets her daughter use it too.

Hopes: Stay up to date about her neighbourhood/friends/family but also have a happy healthy family. Be able to work from home.

Quote: "I love staying with trends no matter the area - but especially in parenting and style"

Goals in relation to this app:

- Area to play
- Easy to read facts
- Lots of images
- Something both mom and daughter can find useful

(2) INITIAL DESIGNS

2.1 Scenarios and Storyboards



Scenario

One of the scenarios we envisioned for our app was aiding a user with discovering a tree. In this example, we have a visitor stopping at a tree in Springdale Park and opening their app to learn more. The app opens on the map and the specific park the visitor is in, and shows a location marker. By clicking on the point closest to the live GPS location, visitors can figure out information about the tree. There is a popup that shows a picture of the tree with the species name, trunk size, and the condition it is in. The user then puts their phone in their pocket and continues to enjoy the park.

2.2 Lo-Fi Prototype

Our Ideas & Goals

We wanted to create an initial prototype that addressed the organization's concerns for a walking app that allowed the users interact with the park.

We also tried to include elements from history, map GPS tracking, information pulled from the tree survey, and an ability to create an account and comment on particular portions (user accounts and commenting were removed in later iterations for simplification of use). For the first few prototypes we wanted to create an interface that combined all the goals but also provided a simplified presentation of information for someone to use when they were mobile in the park.

2.2 Lo-Fi Prototype (1)



2.2 Lo-Fi Prototype (2)

The app received an updated list of information that would be included.



There was a change in the navigation from one screen to the next and where the buttons would be placed.

A new tree characters was introduced to walk the user through the app.

2.3 Evaluation and Changes

Initial notes received from the critique:

There was an initial in class critique that provided a review of what elements needed to be improved upon by the reviewers experiencing a walkthrough of the app.

- Include a comments section so the users can add their our history about the park.
- To maybe have the ability for the app to portray the seasonal changes of the part. By changing the information (about the trees) in the app regular users can track their multiple experiences of visiting the part over time. Having an element like this will make it more "than a 1 time thing".
- Have the users upload their own photos so that people interact more with the park and look up from their phones.
- Minimize the personas and choose fewer so it is easier to design the app for a more specific target audience.
- Allow the information to be available in areas outside of GPS location only.

(3) INITIAL HI-FI PROTOTYPE

3.1 Design Elements

Icons

Each portion of the app had an icon that represented it so that no matter where the user was on the app they would be able to identify the other pages.



A simplified and stylized location marker to emphasise the GPS aspect of the park map.



History

A book to represent the recording of the park's history.



A compass to signify an adventures more portion that quests allow the user to take part in.

Color Scheme

There were three main colors, a golden yellow, a light green and a light blue and each was associated with a portion of the app. The app elements for each section was themed according: the map was green, the quests were yellow, and the history was blue. The icons would also be highlighted in its color when the user was in each section so that they would have a renforcement of where they were.



3.2 Character Creation

Intentions

The characters were created as a way to help the user have more of a purpose for going through the app. These 'tree men' help to guide the user and allow the conveying of initial explanations to smoother reasoning.

The trees are each different ages to help provides variety of characters to interact with and also personalize the narrator for each portion of the app. By making them all 'tree men' is keeps a consistent theme, but allowing enough variety to make sure that the characters do not become redundant or boring. The **Teen Tree** introduces the user to the app and also guides the user through the map to tell about all the trees in the park.



The **Young Sapling** leads the user through the quests. The **Old Oak** teaches the user the history of the park.

3.2 Character Creation

Tree Variations

In addition, there are multiple poses for each of the trees to give variety to their characters as the user interacts with them through the app.

The Teen Tree has two versions, waving on either side and with a cell phone. This hip tree explains how the app is used and uses this phone for reference.

The quest Young Sapling has three varieties, the most of the three. This was done because he appears in succession through the hints of the quest, and would be more noticable if his character did not move.



3.3 Key features: Map

Through **GPS tracking** on the map users can see their location. Clicking a **map 'marker'** close to users allows them to find the tree in person and provides information about the tree (from tree survey). **Drop-down tap** allows easy navigation through 6 parks.



main menu bar to navigate through app's 3 sections (quests, history, maps)

3.3 Key features: History

(quests, history, maps)

A history library has a **series of clickable sections** to info about each park, Frederick Law Olmsted, and more. Design and information is straightforward and aided with a **picture** and an aged tree **character**.



3.3 Key features: Quest

A quest mode allows users to go on **scavenger hunts** to find landmarks in specified parks. A **series of hint pages** lead users through the park, **current location** aids their relative proximity when close, and the landmark's **information and picture** is presented after the user finds it.



(4) USER EVALUATION: HEURISTIC

4.1 Review Method

Method

For the user evaluation we used Heuristic evaluation with 6 evaluators. For this form you need experienced users to conduct the test. The testers thus were people from class who are familiar with the Heuristic evaluation process and also other friends who have gone through prototyping. Allowing different viewpoints, but both from experienced evaluators, helps to get us away from end users but have still obtain useful information.

Rational

This form of evaluation was chosen because it was most suited for our simplified forms of review we hoped to achieve. We wanted reviewers that were in a similar age group (the young professionals) and yet still had app evaluation skills - which is what our group achieved.

4.1 Review Method

Tasks to perform

There were eight (of the referenced 10 usual) Heuristic evaluation elements that the tests were asked to review and select at least four to comment on. The evaluators were asked to become familiar with the app by just clicking through and pretending they were walking through the park. After they had become familiar with the app to some extent, we asked them to look at these eight questions (to the right) as mentioned and comment on and rate the issues they saw on a severity level from 0-4. The answers were collected via google form.

Questions asked to consider when reviewing the app:

- **1.** Visibility of system status
- 2. Match between system and the real world
- 3. User control and freedom
- 4. Consistency and standards
- **5.** Error prevention (*omitted in review because none noted)
- 6. Recognition rather than recall
- 7. Flexibility and efficiency of use
- 8. Aesthetic and minimalist design
- **9.** Any other problems you saw that do not fit under these 8 listed above?

4.2 Feedback and Analysis

Feedback

Overall the majority of the feedback revolved around the topic "Viability of system status" and some comments about needed to simplify the design. Examples of user comments:

- *(Level 3 severity rating)* = When initially reading "you can learn about the park and its history" my first thought was "What park?" I feel like the logo blends into its background on the intro page. It would also be helpful if the logo was shown in the top corner (L or R) of each page.
- (Level 3) = The introduction to the app was jarring, and I felt like I was fumbling around until I figured out what was going on.
- *(Level 3)* = Sometimes, I did not know what the hell was going on with the buttons. That was a big issue for me. Very non-intuitive. Should keep the user informed on what each button does.
- (Level 3) = Improve the button/page layout after clicking links [under recognition rather than recall].
- A considerable amount of boxes in boxes look to the app which makes it heavy and should be simplified for a more minimalistic design. Also try to keep a more coherent design between the each of the three sections of the app and also the home screen.

4.2 Feedback and Analysis

Improvements

- Make the logo/title of the park on the main intro page more prominent for clear understanding upon entering app.
 - Possibly add logo or park name to top right/left of each page or each section intro page for clarity.
- Add *'back' buttons* on each/most pages for improved navigation through app and each section.
- Add section labels to the icons and ability to go back to main page of section selections to clarify what the user is doing/wants to do in the app and which section of the app they're in.
- Modify layout of (section) buttons & main section pages for improved clarify and less reliance on recall (& more on recognition).
- Add additional quests, map locations, and a history sections to finish inputting all the information on the park into the app.
- Add a different way to exit the model rather than taping the background (for example, specific buttons on the tree pop up).
- Modify details of app to better fit standard iOS formatting.

4.3 Evolution of Design: Title Page & Map



4.3 Evolution of Design: History







4.3 Evolution of Design: Quest













LMSTED

(5) FINAL PROTOTYPE/DESIGNS

5.1 Home Screen

The graphic elements were created to be just like the ones in the Quest section, but in green. This was done have more consistency of shape style. These new elements are more linear compared to the circular style of the last iteration.



The logo was increased in size to emphasize the name of the park and the app's purpose.

The background was changed from a simple white with curved transparent rectangles to the overhead map of the park. This was done to create a more consistent design with the other elements of the app.

The 'click to continue' button was removed and replaced with a loading icon to help eliminate unnecessary clicks. This also created a more simplistic design on the homepage to mimic the other sleeker elements of the app.

5.2 Section Design: Map



5.2 Section Design: History



clickable history sections



picture (one for each section)



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scroll down for info (for each above section)

5.2 Section Design: Quest



5.3 Other Final Design Elements

Final Overall Changes

The final prototype design aesthetic evolved as a more **linear design** with straight lines and edges, whereas to the initial prototypes had more circular aspects and rounded edges. Many of the boxes-within-boxes that were present in headers, text boxes, buttons, and backgrounds were simplified and made more linear, as well, to match the overall design.

A change to black text (rather than grey) helps key titles stand out, and sections titles (map, history, quests) were added to the main menu bar to clarify the menu icons' meanings. Additionally, light grey/black borders were added to some shapes (like those bordering history section titles) to coincide with the design of the tree characters.

Certain areas still retain their circular look, like the pop-up tree images, the tree hamburger menu, speech bubbles, and buttons. This was done to help distinguish more interactive elements like the buttons, menus, and pop-ups from the more rigid background graphics. The speech bubbles were kept circular because users are familiar with speech bubbles with circular edges, and otherwise they would look like just regular text boxes.