Research

InSite: spatial storytelling mobile app

Sandra Lee

I successfully fought my eviction notice.

What stopped me from jumping off this building was...

This bench was my home for 20 years.

I proposed to my wife on top of these stairs.
What is the behavior(s) you are trying to capture? What are your users physically doing?

Users at the Albany Bulb are
- Strolling
- Walking their dog
- Talking
- Exploring artwork and graffiti
- Climbing up and down structures and concrete slabs
- Talking on the phone
- Biking
- Jogging
- Taking photos of the view and/or artwork
Research
Challenges

Challenge 1
People feel disconnected to their surroundings even if they pass by the same place regularly.

Solution 1
Our app will help people engage in their surroundings by allowing them to discover audio stories based on their location. Users feel a deeper connection when hearing personal stories narrated by the storyteller themselves.

Challenge 2
It is difficult and unpleasant to consume content by staring at a small smartphone phone screen while walking/traveling.

Solution 2
Story content will be primarily audio and will make use of push notifications, which makes it easy for users to be notified and listen to the story while still be immersed in their physical environment.

Challenge 3
People generally want to listen to high quality and interesting stories.

Solution 3
High quality, curated audio content will come first from CBOS and organizations that have recorded these stories. Quality of crowdsourced content will be governed by the community through upvotes and spam-reporting.
Successful design and user experience is defined by these objectives:

Objective 1
Users (both familiar with the Albany Bulb and not) will find the app appealing, engaging, and easy to use.

Objective 2
Users feel more a deeper connection to a specific place after using the app.

Objective 3
The mobile app enhances users’ physical, immersive experience in a place rather than detracts attention away from their surroundings to their phone screen.
Who will use this? How will they use it? How if at all, will it change their behavior or the behavior of whomever is around them? What is the need for this? What do they currently do?

Commuters (whether by car, bus, bike, or foot) often pass by the same places every day but feel completely unconnected to their surroundings because they know nothing about them. The goal of our app is to increase civic engagement of ordinary people by letting them listen to stories of people near the places they are currently in. The stories will focus on those who have historically been denied a voice, such as those in marginalized communities, evicted tenants, or homeless people. Stories will also be linked to resources and organizations where citizens can find out how to get involved regarding the issue. By allowing an easy way for users to hear these stories, this app promotes understanding and consciousness rather than reinforcing stereotypes and segregation.
Where will you find this UI?

- App store – iPhone and Android
- Internet search

QR codes at the Albany Bulb
- spray painted amidst the graffiti
- QR code stickers on the signs
- 3D printed QR codes attached to popular metal sculptures.
Smallest screen size:
iPhone 5 4” inch screen
## Research

### Persona 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGE</th>
<th>Frequency of visiting Albany Bulb</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Regular visitor</td>
</tr>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hobby</th>
<th>Familiarity with Technology</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jogging, yoga</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Annie Walker**

Annie works a full-time desk job so she tries to go jogging as often as she can. She likes jogging at the Albany Bulb because it’s close to where she lives and has a beautiful view of the Bay. She always listens music on her smart phone (Beyonce) while she runs. She passes by the art and sculptures at the Bulb all the time and always wonders who made them and how they got there.
Research

Persona 2

Joe Meyer

AGE 35

Hobby Backpacking in different cities

Familiarity with Technology Medium

Frequency of visiting Albany Bulb

First time visitor

Joe is a free-spirit who quit his full-time job a couple years ago to backpack across the US. He is insatiably curious about different communities and how others live. He uses his smart phone occasionally for useful tasks such as calling or looking at a map but rarely spends more time than that on his phone because he prefers to talk to real people. He doesn’t own much except for his backpack but is content with his current lifestyle.
Create a set of three personas for different users.

Judith Watson

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGE</th>
<th>Hobby</th>
<th>Familiarity with Technology</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>55</td>
<td>Walking, reading</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Frequency of visiting Albany Bulb

Occasional

Judith loves taking walks with her daughter Mary whenever she is in town to visit. She likes walking around Albany Bulb because it gives her and her daughter private space to chat and just take in the scenery and explore the artwork. She has been living in Albany for a long time and thinks she should have been more involved when the City forced the homeless people off the Albany Bulb. She cares about the art she sees there and doesn’t want to see it be taken away when the Bulb becomes a regional park.
Write a scenario that describes what a user would do with the app. This scenario will then be used to create user flow and app screens. Use simple directions.

Joe likes to listen to podcasts. He wanders around the Albany Bulb for the first time and sees a QR code amidst the graffiti to download an app to hear stories about the Albany Bulb.

1. He scans the QR code, which takes him to the App Store.
2. He downloads the app from the App Store.
3. He opens the app and searches for stories near him.
4. He finds out that he is standing next to the former home of an evicted homeless person.
5. He plays the audio story to hear about her wishes, dreams, and how she ended up living at the Albany Bulb.
Research

Content

Main App

Wanderer at the Albany Bulb
Sees QR code at the Albany Bulb
Downloads app from App Store
Introduction Page
Option to Turn On Push Notifications
Home Page - Menu
Browse by Content
Browse by Location
List of Nearby Stories/Sites
Map View
Person/Site Page
Audio Player - Play Story

Push Notification
User walks around Albany Bulb
Push Notification
Go to People/Site Page
Play Audio Story

History of the Albany Bulb
About
Get Involved
Settings
Turn On/Off Push Notifications

Settings
What type of experience do you want to provide for your user?

This app will inspire a sense of curiosity and wonder about places that users pass by. Seemingly mundane and overlooked places will take on a whole new meaning as users discover interesting stories that have happened there. But more than a detached sense of wonder, the user will feel an immediate connection with the real person who is narrating story with his or her own voice. and they are at the same exact spot where the story occurred. The user will feel as if they have just been given a personal tour of the place.
Style Guide

Formal Collage