



Captured Materials
Team 4

Deepthi Ranganath
Prem Shah
Sindhuja Dutta
Yash Mehta

1. Problem/Opportunity:

We found an opportunity in redesigning an experience of our own. When we first arrived to the United States as students or professionals, we met with a lot of difficulties with respect to the food choices available, transport woes, inability to contact our loved ones and having to depend on others for our basic needs. Hence, we chose to redesign the experience of the first few days of arriving in a new country for studies/work.

With our redesign, we are aiming to ease the transition phase one has to go through when they come into the United States for the first time. We wanted to make this experience a relaxed one by taking away all the stress related to this transition. By mitigating the stress that one may have during this process, we can ensure that task of moving to a foreign land is an enjoyable one.

2. Investigate:

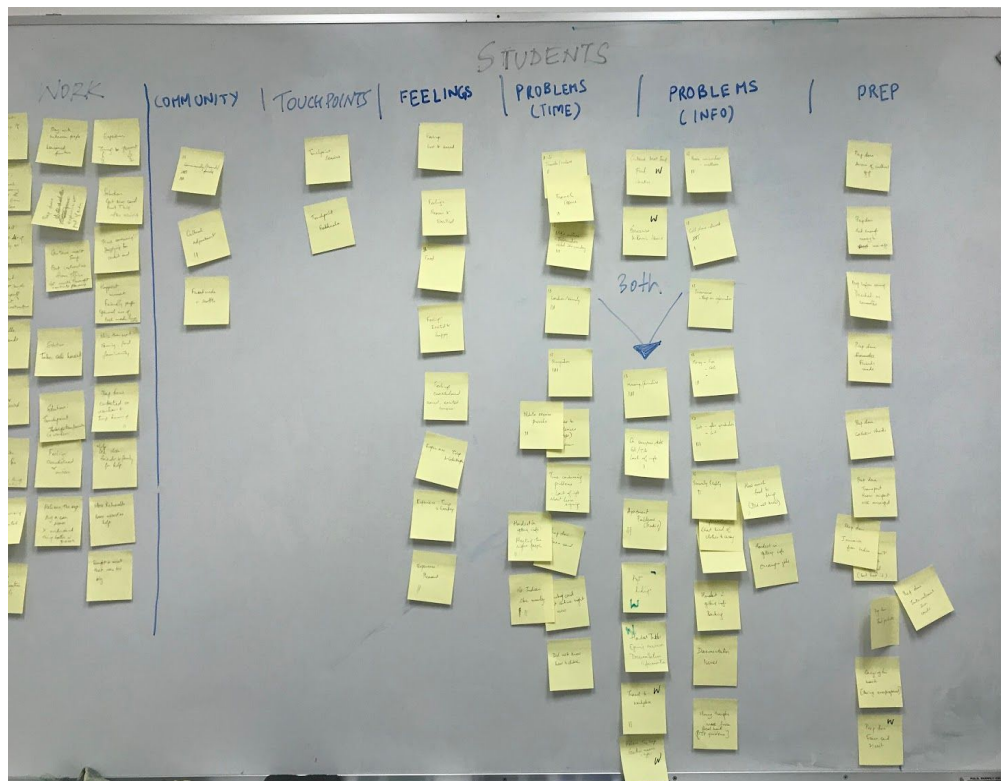
Process:

To gain more knowledge about the specific problems that students and other people face while arriving to the United States, we interviewed 5 people out of which 4 had come to pursue their higher education. One had come to the States on a work assignment for the organisation they were employed in. Apart from that, we also looked back on our own journey and reflected upon the difficulties we faced when we first came to the United States.

We prepared a questionnaire containing 14 questions revolving around the problems people may have encountered, why they thought these were important, and what would they have done if they could have lived the experience differently. This gave us very useful insights into what the immediate needs of any person would be and what kind of solutions we could formulate based on the identified issues.

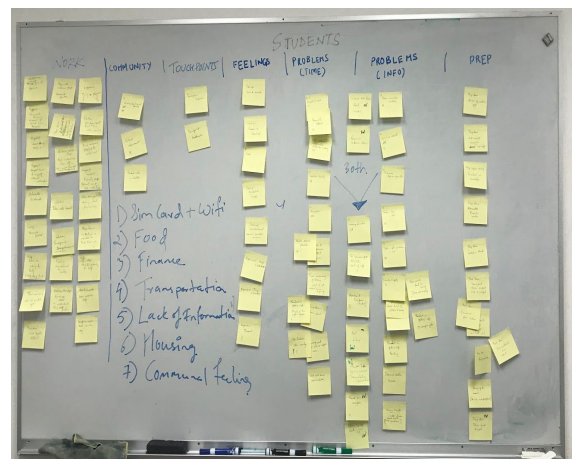
Insights:

We found a very recurring trend in our interviews and questionnaire answers. While people coming here for employment faced more problems in logistical activities like opening a bank account, getting a social security number etc., students faced problems with more basic needs. While adjusting to the culture difference, they found difficulties in adapting to the food available here, finding a house to rent, etc. Most importantly, something that all of them emphasized on was the issue of transportation from the airport to their lodging.



In the above figure, we created an affinity diagram based on the responses of our interviewees, to find emerging themes and patterns in their answers. Based on the segregations we found that the most important, immediate and recurring problems were as follows:

1. **Communication:** No immediate communication, absence of SIM cards & WiFi
2. **Food:** Not able to understand where to get food, also facing difficulties in what food to get.
3. **Finance:** How to open a bank account, what documents are needed, money transfer issues.
4. **Transportation:** No clue about transportation from the airport, unable to pay for Uber/Taxi
5. **Lack of information:** Where to get groceries, where to go for information, how to get to places etc.
6. **Housing:** Skeptical about signing lease from back home, stranded when they landed here due to no accommodation.
7. **Communal Feeling:** Difficulty in being a cultural fit.



NOTE: We have attached an excel sheet with the transcribed interview notes. Please refer to the zipped folder

3. Brainstorm/Ideate:

Some of our ideas were:

1. **Information as a service with some third party provider:** In this we wanted to connect students with third party providers who could give information about what is required for them to feel comfortable when they arrive into the country.
2. **Provide customised package according to students' needs:** This idea revolved around getting to know what students wanted so that we could personalize according to their specific needs, be it with respect to housing, communication, transport or food.
3. **Provide point of contact within university for specific needs:** Here we wanted to connect students with the right point of contact within the university so that they don't have to take the trouble of getting to know who is responsible for certain necessities. For example, there is not much information about what kind of insurance a student can avail. We could connect them with someone who will help them to gather that information.
4. **Tutorial videos/lecture videos to provide students with information before they arrive:** The idea was to create a platform like YouTube for a specific university where we as admin will collaborate with the right people to have videos created and uploaded for incoming students to watch and learn about the university.
5. **A team handling all the needs while still in india.** We thought about having an onshore team that would meet with the students before they travelled and helped them with their requests.
6. **Provide the student with basic necessities by the time he/she arrives (At previously provided address).** By collecting the address, we wanted to have their request met by delivering the tangibles to their residence so that they could avail it after they reached.
7. **Allow a student to stay with an Indian family for the first couple of days.** For students to not feel alienated, we thought of having an established Indian family in the city where the university is located to take care of students and help them settle.
8. **Providing service for just Uduh students.** We thought, we would better be able to serve if we restricted just to university students with a full service including housing.
9. **Specific service for each category.** We also thought of having each pain point separated and develop an exhaustive service that will cover all aspects. For example, everything associated with housing would envelope rental agreements, provision of necessary furniture, and other required supplies.
10. **VR headset that allows to live the experience.** We thought about how it would be if students could use VR to take a virtual tour of the university and surroundings.
11. **2 day hostel service for students (Relocation package).** In this, we wanted to provide a full service apartment for 2 days which would include a cook, cleaning and laundry service with web connectivity available to them.
12. **Allow for bank account to be set up before the student arrives:** We wanted to help with having the finances managed before the student arrived which included having the currency converted and credit/debit card delivered to them so as to eliminate the use of forex cards.
13. **Act as middleman between many services.** Here we wanted to just coordinate between many services that a student would need, without having to explicitly provide a service that we designed from scratch.
14. **Information session with the university for those who will be travelling to foreign land.** We wanted to partner with universities in creating orientation sessions that would be conducted in their home country before they travelled.

15. **University affiliated social media space.** The idea was to have a dedicated space where students could ask specific questions and have them answered by trusted sources.
16. **Involve the alumni to help out incoming students.** Since alumni from the same country are aware of the troubles students face, we wanted hook up an alumni with an incoming student so that they could provide guidance.
17. **Tag along buddy.** We wanted to created a platform where students travelling from the same place to a common destination on the same day could connect and travel together.
18. **Hold meeting groups for students while still in india:** Meet and greets at locations in India would serve the purpose of lending an ear to understand the grievances and needs of students and assist them with any information required. Also it would serve as a place to meet other students who are also travelling for studies.
19. **Gamification of the layout of the university:** We thought of creating a video game simulating the layout of the university to familiarize the students so that when they arrive, they are already aware of their surroundings.
20. **Affiliate with corporations like Microsoft, Amazon:** We thought of asking corporation to include helping incoming students as part of their social responsibility initiatives.
21. **Affiliation with university :** By obtaining the seal of approval from the university, this service would be more likely to be trusted by incoming students and their parents. With the university being involved, the user places more faith in the services being offered.
22. **Application covering most of these ideas:** The idea was to develop an application as a standalone product that could give a framework for different service providers to advertise and facilitate reaching out to students.

4. Narrow:

To narrow down from 22 ideas to 10, we had scored all the ideas based on their relevance to an incoming graduate student. By understanding the importance, feasibility and ranking in terms of most important, we were able to discard a couple of ideas. For example - the idea of using VR headsets and games to help the user acclimatize to the environment before arriving was creative, but we found a lot of loopholes within this idea. Hence, by scoring these ideas, we were finally able to narrow down to 10 ideas. They are as listed below:

1. **Provide customised package according to students' needs.**
2. **Provide point of contact within university for specific needs.**
3. **Tutorial videos/lecture videos to provide students with information before they arrive.**
4. **Act as middleman between many services.**
5. **Information session with the university for those who will be travelling to foreign land.**
6. **Gamification of the layout of the university.**
7. **Affiliate with corporations like Microsoft, Amazon.**
8. **Affiliation with university.**
9. **Application covering most of these ideas.**
10. **Provide the student with basic necessities by the time he/she arrives.**

5. Personae:

Based on our focus on Indian graduate students coming to the United States for higher studies, we created the below two personas keeping the same focus in mind. Our primary persona is fresh graduate going abroad for higher studies, while our secondary persona has some work experience in India as well as other countries. Both of them will be pursuing Master's degrees from the U.S.

Primary Persona:



Name: Sandeep Chakraborty

Age: 22

Gender: Male

Hobbies: Fitness freak, loves travelling, Game of Thrones fan

Background and Motivations:

- Is a dreamer.
- Traveling abroad for the first time.
- First person from the family to pursue education abroad.
- Aims to work in a product based company.
- Has worked as an intern twice.
- Undergraduate degree in Electronics & Communication.

Secondary Persona:



Name: Ritu Sharma

Age: 26

Gender: Female

Hobbies: Plays tennis, has visited all 4 grand slams, loves taking selfies.

Background and Motivations:

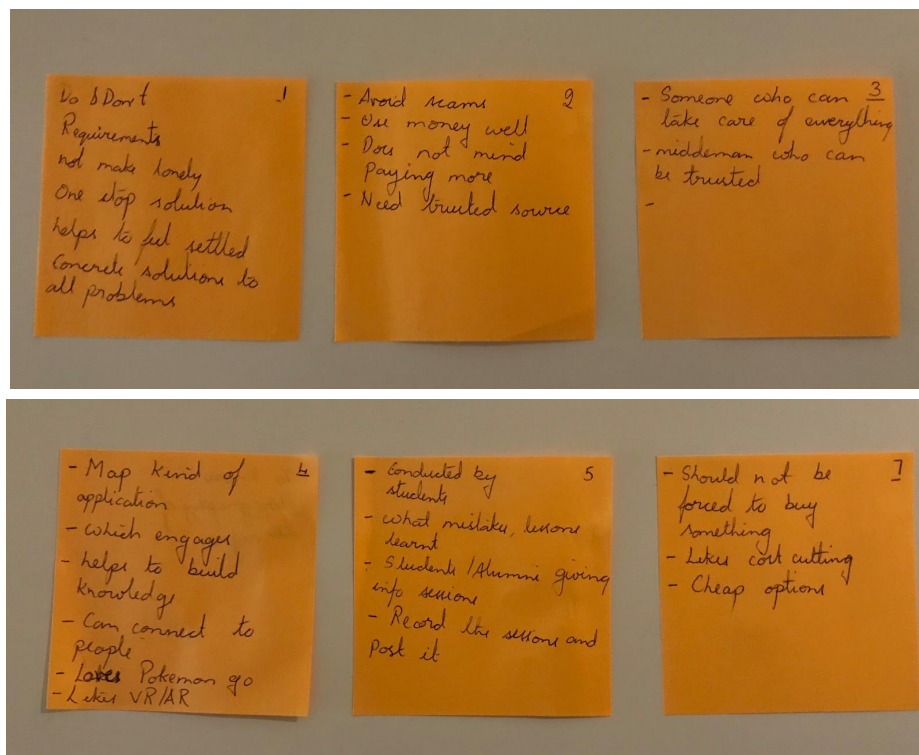
- Has traveled to San Francisco for work assignments.
- 4 years of work experience in a multinational company.
- Aims to be a consultant for the big 4.
- Will be pursuing an MBA in the United States.
- Has an undergraduate degree in Computer Science.

6. Storytelling:

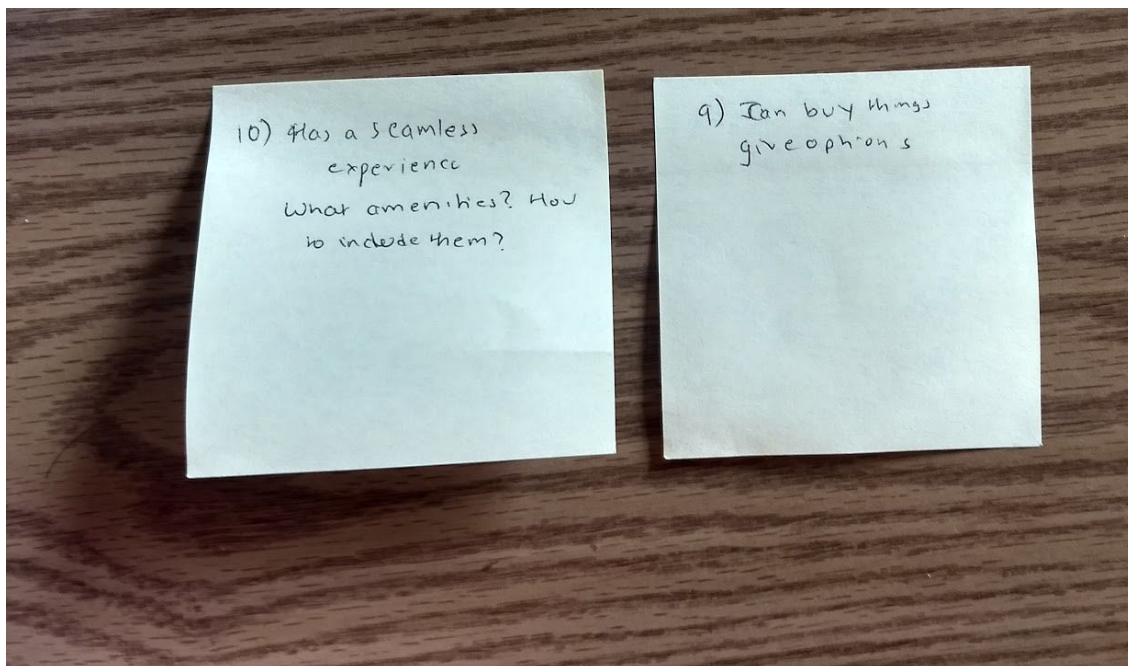
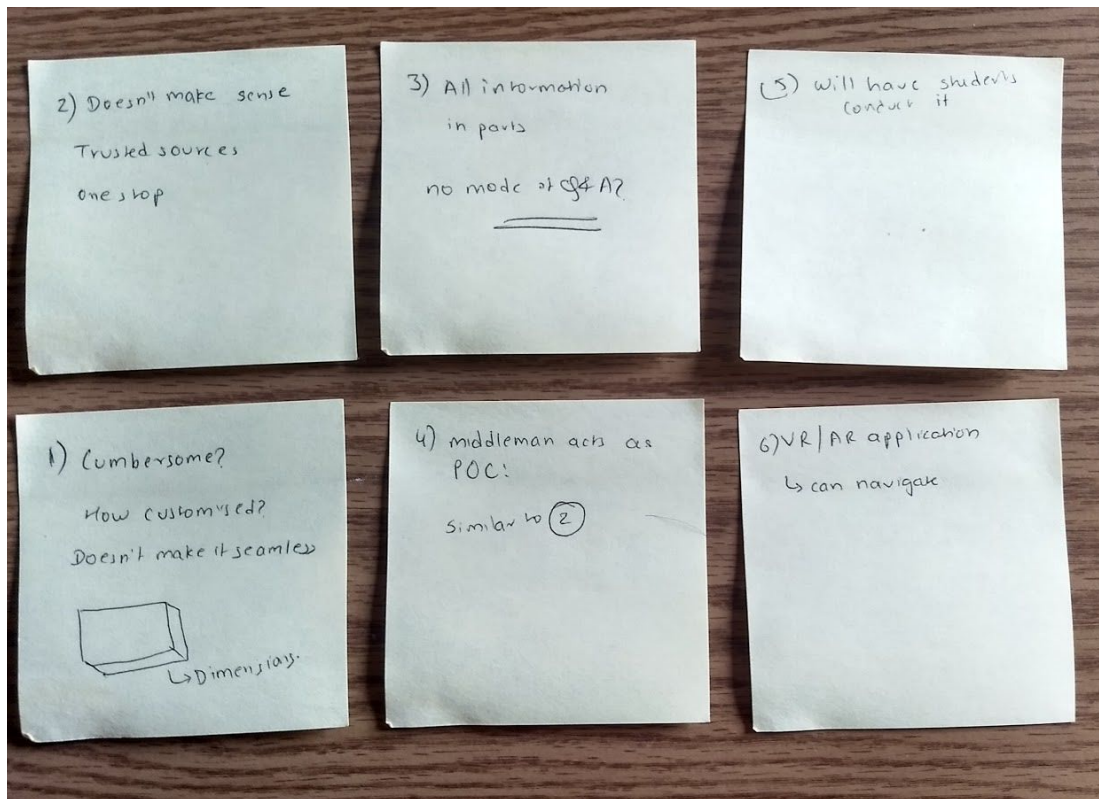
To understand how our target demographic would experience the 10 scenarios we had arrived at, we made one of our teammates play the role of the primary persona. While doing this, the other 3 teammates noted down interesting points that would help us understand how the person felt while experiencing each individual idea. One of our teammates had a very similar background to our primary persona, and since he played the role of Sandeep, we were able to clearly understand what sort of experience he may have had in the same scenario.

Listener's Notes:

Deepthi:



Prem:



Sindhuja:

Scenarios

1. Customized package.

- Planning to stay with seniors. But need a card.
- My needs are specific want to eat certain type of meal.
- Looking for cheapest but best option.
- Don't want to be forced to buy something.

8. Affiliates with university:

- Would be more likely to trust college.
- Would put in more money for such a service if I was assured about security.
- Parents would be relieved by this as well.

6. Gamification:

- I am tech savvy and love games. Pokemon Go is my favorite.
- Would love to experience a similar tech within the university. Engaging.

7. Affiliation with corporations:

- Company like Microsoft / Amazon would have lot of Indians.
- They may have been students once, they would understand our situation.
- Would gladly stay with a family for first few days.

9. Basic necessities:

- Would appreciate having mattress, basic groceries, utensils, etc.
- This would make me feel slightly more comfortable.

3. Tutorial videos

- Try to network with seniors/alum.
- Wish they would be able to tell me everything I need to know before I come in.
- Recording these & posting on a common portal would allow me to review them later - learn from their mistakes.

5. Act as middleman:

- Trusted individual.
- Go cat to all my needs.
- I needn't be concerned about minor things / logistics.

10. Allocated

10. Application

- Would help me organize things before arrival.
- Maybe all these needs could be fulfilled by the time of my arrival.

2. Point of contact

- Wanted to find out about insurance but don't know who to contact.
- Wish that university would provide a consolidated set of all the required contacts.

4. Info session

- Seniors / alum can help.
- Interact with them directly.
- Pose questions I may have.
- All the information about what they would suggest to sign up, and learning from their mistakes.

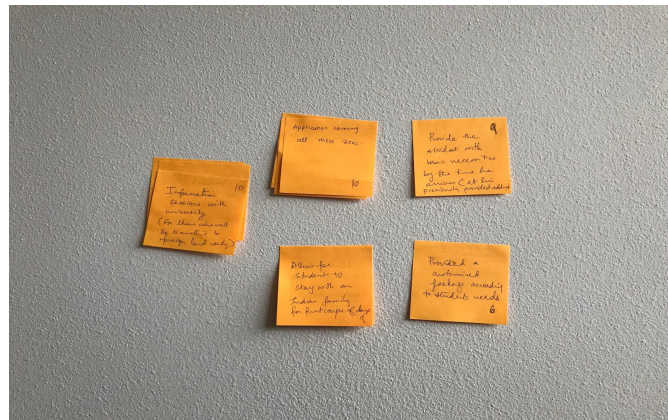
7. Write Scenarios:

We came up with the below 5 ideas as the shortlisted ones after storytelling.

1. **Information session with university** - Imagine that the student attends a webinar conducted by the university. This webinar would be set on a specific date, and would be informed to the students beforehand. The webinar covers all the potential questions that a university student might have, and provides him with information about what essentials he should carry when he first arrives, how much money he would need in the initial few days, where to go to obtain a sim card, etc. Sandeep lives this experience and is elated that the university has put so much effort into ensuring that his arrival into the US will be seamless. He feels like he belongs to a community that cares, and builds faith and trust in his university. Besides that, he is now less fearful of the what to expect when he arrives, as he has enough information to go by.
2. **Provide the student with basic necessities at the time of arrival into the country** - Sandeep would be famished and exhausted when he arrives at the Seatac Airport. He would have to lug around 2 heavy bags to the nearest information kiosk in order to book a cab, as he would have no facility to do so through his phone. This entire experience would leave him feeling bitter about coming to a new country, and would only make him more upset. This feeling could be mitigated if he were to be given basic necessities like a sim card.
3. **An integrated web application** - A form or web application that would store the information of the user could log all the things he would require once he arrives in the USA. Sandeep would fill such an application, and mention all the things he would need when he arrives in the US. This would help him keep calm during the process of planning his journey, and would release any tension he might have about getting his hands on some basic items needed for survival. The service might even provide him with things like furniture when he arrives in his new home, to ensure that he doesn't have to spend the night on a cold hardwood floor.
4. **Affiliate with Indian families/ Corporations where employees could accomodate students-** Sandeep has never travelled outside the country before, and can't imagine the kind of culture difference he would be exposed to in the US. He is dreading the idea of having to spend his first few days in a new country, with people who don't understand his cultural habits. He would feel much more at ease were he to have the option to stay with an Indian family that could host him until he is comfortable enough to move into his apartment. He would be ecstatic that he could be around people who understand what kind of food he likes, and the environment he has come from. This makes his transition of moving much easier to handle.
5. **Provide a customized package according to the student's needs** - Imagine a scenario where Sandeep has contacted a couple of seniors, who he has never met before, via WhatsApp. They offer to pick him up from the airport, for which is grateful. He arrives at Seatac, where he finds them waiting by the baggage claim, and he's so happy that he isn't stranded alone in a foreign country. They make light conversation as they make the car ride back to his place, and even help him with this bags to his flat on the 3rd floor. He appreciates their kindness, and is relieved that people actually care about his comfort. They bid him farewell, and he is happy to enter his house so he can fall asleep. However, once he steps into his empty flat, he realises how lonely he is. He has no furniture, and no means to talk to his parents back home in India. He tears up, and sits in a corner, frightened and worried. It was for this reason, that he wished that he could have had help for things aside just being picked up from the airport.

8. Select One Idea:

After narrowing down from 10 to 5 ideas we started discussing the feasibility aspect and scope of our 5 ideas with reference to our problem statement. The rationale behind selecting one particular idea was to visualize which idea could provide a seamless experience and could alleviate the intensity of the student's problems. After constructive discussions we decided to opt for a website that will provide 3 important services pertaining to food, transportation and communication for the first 48 hours. Disagreements were constructively managed by taking into account the perceived experience of the user



9. Lean Canvas:

NOTE: File is attached in the zipped folder

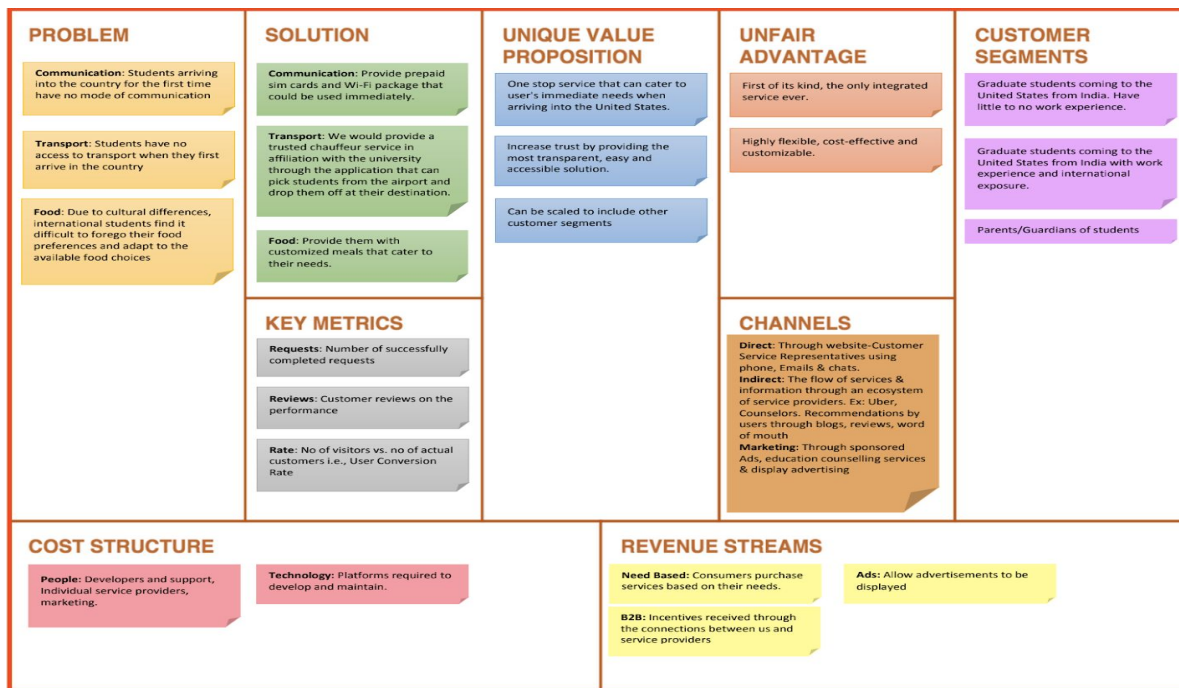


Figure: Lean Canvas

10. Customer Journey Mapping:

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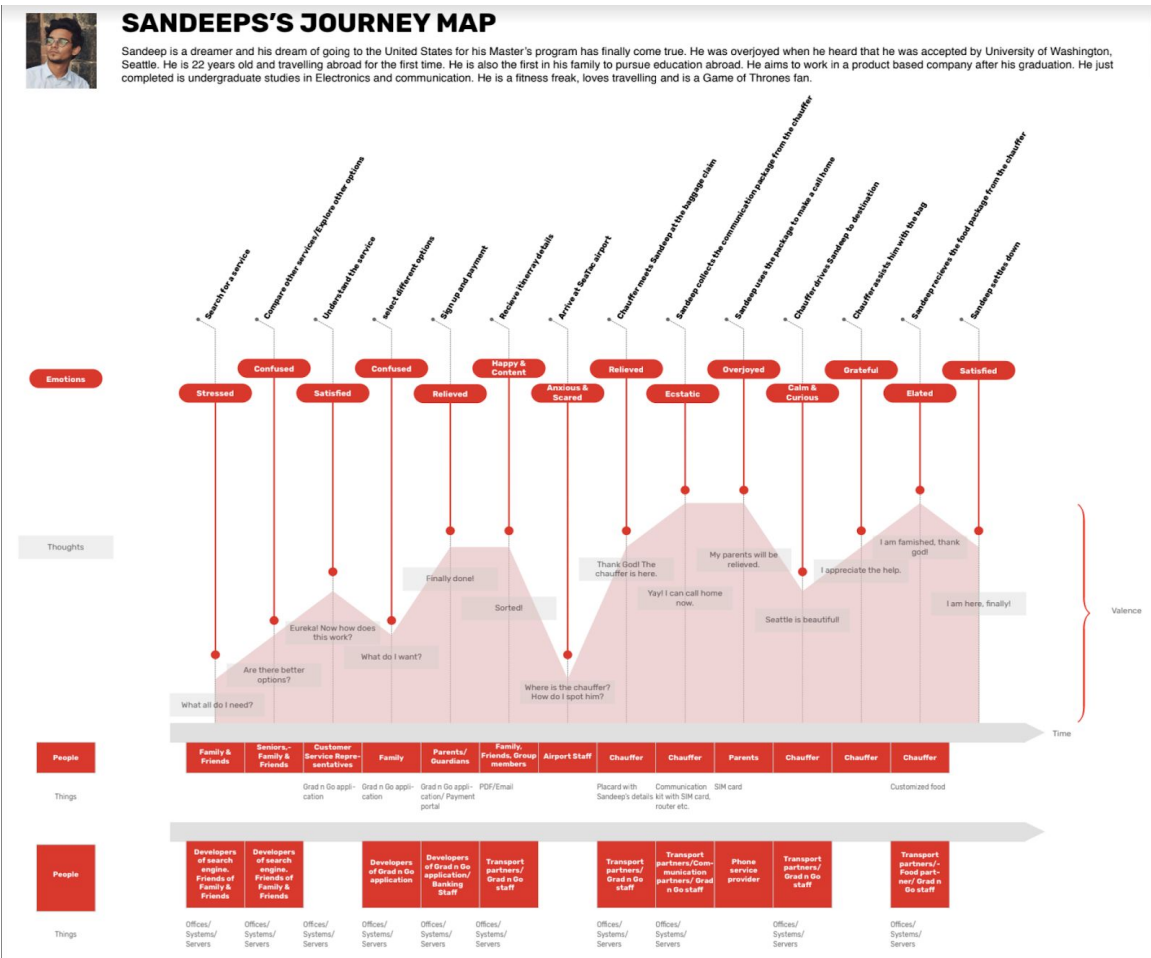


Figure: Customer Journey Map

11. Prototype the Experience:

What to capture? A description, with photos, of the experience prototype, and any materials used in the prototype itself.

For prototyping our idea, we created a website prototype ([GradnGo](#)) and also created a service walkthrough to closely understand our service as possible. Both the prototypes are described in detail below:

Website Application Prototype:

We used wixsite to rapidly develop a high fidelity prototype of our website through which users can access information regarding the service, look at the available plans and of course, buy our services as well. Below are some screenshots of the same:

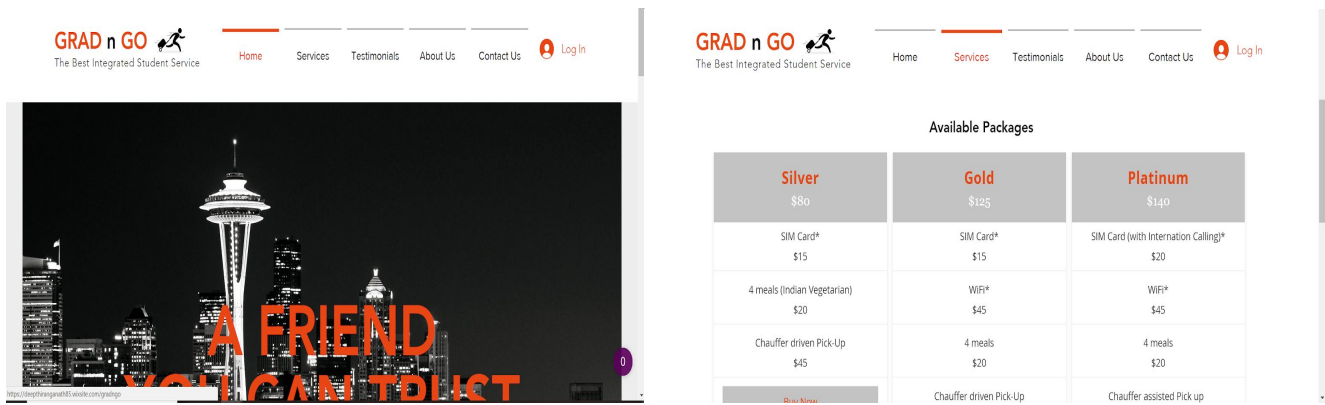


Figure: GradnGo homepage & Services page

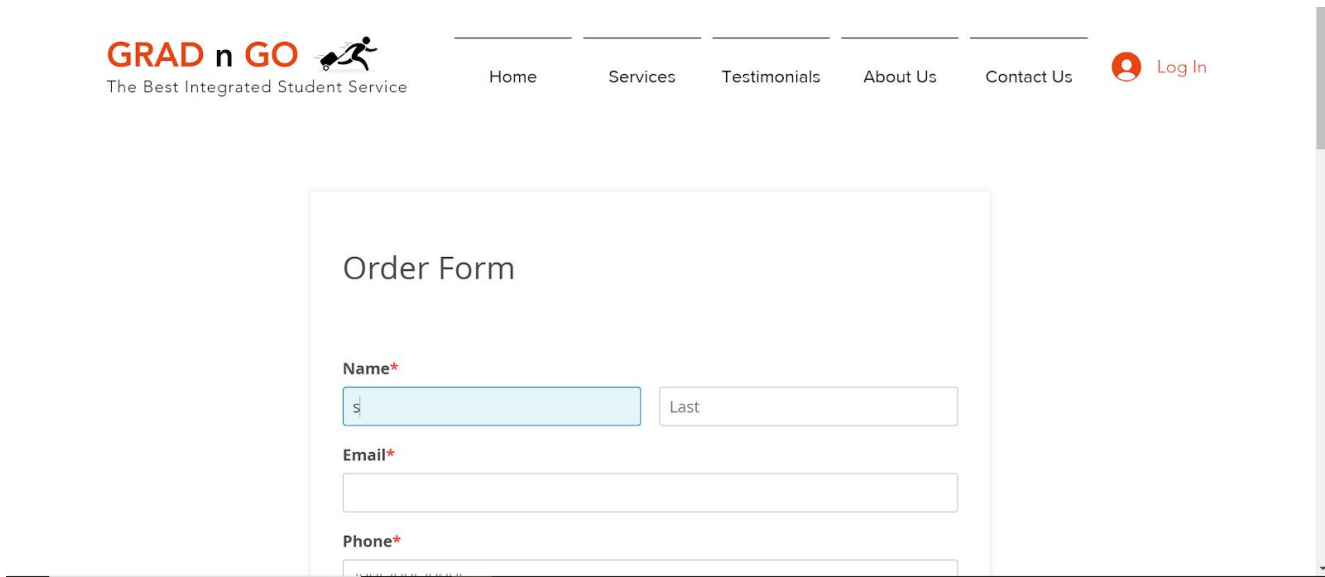


Figure: GradnGo Order form page

Prototype Service Walkthrough:

To simulate as close as possible the experience of landing in a new country and the effectiveness of our service, we created a service walkthrough involving all the touchpoints in our service. We were debating between live prototyping and service walkthrough because some MSIS students were scheduled to arrive in the month of May and June. Eventually, we were not able to proceed with the live prototyping idea due to the fact the none of the students were arriving in the timeframe before the project presentation. Hence, we moved forward with creating a service walkthrough prototype.

After some discussion, we chose the UW link light rail station as the base for our walkthrough since shooting a video at the airport would not be possible. We chose the Light rail station because it provided an environment as close to an actual airport as we could get. It had escalators, a waiting area near the parking and parking as well. We used Yash's apartment as the place to simulate the service once the user reaches home.

To make the experience more realistic, we used two full sized bags loaded with some clothes. Additionally, we made a makeshift kiosk to serve as an information portal at the link station. To simulate the driving experience, Yash took on the role of a chauffeur and we used Deepthi's car for transportation. We also created a Communication box and food packet using cardboard and paper bags. Below, you can see some pictures of the service walkthrough prototype and some material used:



Figure: Service Walkthrough

12. Evaluate:

Setup:

To test our web prototype and service walkthrough, we invited 3 people as our test subjects in order to get some valuable feedback from them. We tried to keep the subjects as close to our primary persona as possible. All three subjects are current graduate students at the University of Washington. We gave the users real world scenarios wherein they would use the website to book a service with us and we requested them to voice out their opinions while undergoing the whole experience. We also subsequently took them through a service walkthrough keeping the experience as close to an airport as possible. We used props like bags, tickets, elevators, parking spots, make do information kiosks for the same.

One of the subjects (Prithvi Shetty) opted just for communication and food (no transport), while the other two subjects (Abhinav Garg & Neelam Purswani) opted for all the three options: Communication, Transport & Food. While Sindhuja, Deepthi and Yash helped the subjects navigate through the walkthrough, Prem took notes of the customer experience.

Iteration 1:

Abhinav Garg was the first subject to undergo the evaluation. He found the website pretty easy to use and simple, and really liked the idea of such a service. We handed him a food parcel on arriving at his home, and this led to an important finding. He suggested that many times people are hungry by the time they land and would probably want to grab a bite so they could eat during the journey from the airport to home. He felt that if the food parcel was handed over as soon as the student got into the car, it would make him/her feel more comfortable.

Observer's Notes:

Abhinav Garg:

- Takes in details of the website, thinks it through. Surprised by the options.
- Anxious at first, momentary relief when he sees the chauffeur
- Didn't care much about interaction with the chauffeur, constantly looking at his phone.
- Relief all over his face when he enters the car.
- Delight on seeing the food packet.



Figures: Abhinav undergoing the experience

Iteration 2:

Keeping in mind Abhinav's feedback, we proceeded to evaluating the next two subjects. For both of them, we gave them a small packet of food as soon as they were in the car/at the airport. The last subject, Neelam was quick to mention that if possible, the chauffeur should come to the baggage claim to help her with the bags because many times people bring more than two bags. They both again found the website simple to use. Prithvi also commented that by having the seal of approval from the Universities, he would be more likely to pay for the service as it would seem more trustworthy. He also mentioned that his parents would push him to opt for such a service if the University were involved, as they would be reassured that the university was taking responsibility for his comfort and care.

Observer's Notes:**Prithvi:**

- Takes in details of the website, thinks it through. Surprised by the options
- Doesn't look worried, but searches for the kiosk. Collects his communication packet and is happy.
- Calls home and is satisfied after talking to his mom.
- Aware if what to do next, not struggling to find anything.

Neelam:

- Wonders at the price, probably being hesitant looking at the cost. Still books it
- Looks tired when she arrives at the airport, again relief on seeing the chauffeur.
- Takes in the scenery on the drive home, seems to be enjoying herself
- Feels satisfied after seeing the food packet.



Figures: Prithvi and Neelam undergoing the service walkthrough



Post Evaluation Interview Questions:

1. What did you like/not like about the service? First thoughts.
2. How many options do you suggest we integrate?
3. Would you use such a service keeping in mind the cost involved?
4. Any other suggestions/feedback?



Figures: Sindhuja interviewing the subjects post evaluation

Interview Findings:

- While all three subjects liked the service, one subject mentioned that the high price made them skeptical about using the service
- One subject said that they were not sure on how willing the universities will be to tie-up with us and they also mentioned security flaws in our design. They were concerned with the chauffeur knowing their address and other details.
- Two subjects claimed that they preferred to take all the three services and would not mind paying for them.
- One subject really liked the concept of having someone to help out with the luggage. They also mentioned that engaging in small talk with the chauffeur helped ease the tension they faced of being alone in the US. Two subjects also mentioned how having a SIM card immediately was helpful in reaching out to parents and relatives and that it solved a major issue which they had faced when they first arrived.

Final Prototype:

For the final prototype, we took into consideration our subjects' feedback and categorized our service according to the user's preferences while also including an option to have a chauffeur assisted service in place of a chauffeur driven service.

Next Steps:

1. The next immediate step would be to chalk out a feasibility analysis for such a service.
2. Subsequently, we would like to expand and cover other pain points.
3. We also want to become a multi-platform service and develop a mobile application.
4. Extend the scope of service beyond the first 48 hours.

13. Video:

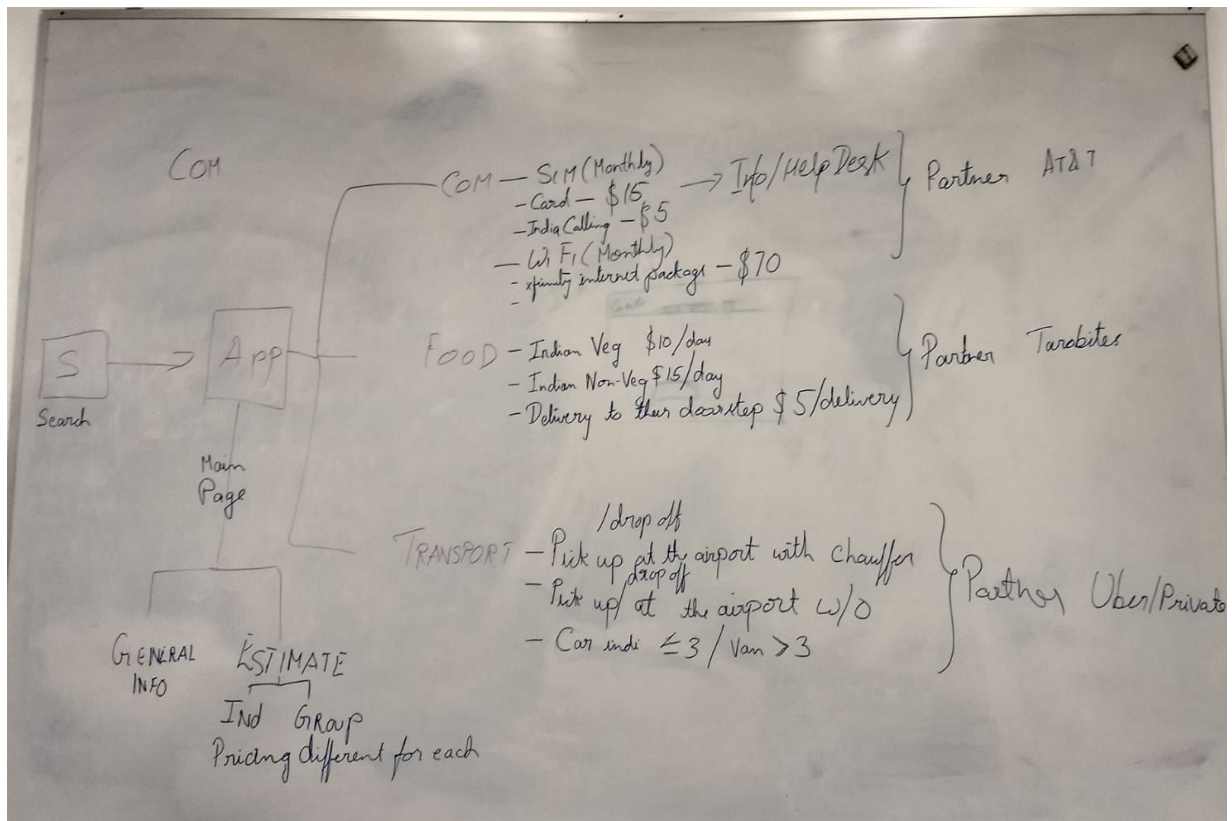
Submitted on Canvas

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O79yZOflHwM>**14. Presentation:**

Submitted on Canvas

15. Extra Materials:**1. Experience Workflow Diagram**

Since we aim to provide a customizable package to our users, we found it important to list down all the workflows involved within the service. The following is a visual representation of the same, along with a pricing strategy for each workflow.



2. Estimated Cost Benefit Analysis

Human Capital Cost -Management -Platform Developers -Chauffers	Sales & Marketing Cost - Online Branding - Affiliation with universities
Direct Revenue Streams - On Click Ads - Service Based	Indirect Revenue Stream - Collaboration with different businesses