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About Me

Nathan Low is a graduating Graphic Communication major concentrating in UI/UX Design at California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo. On his free time, Nathan enjoys cooking and experimenting with different cuisines, trading stocks, barbering for friends, and power lifting at the gym.
Abstract

The focus for my senior project is to empathize, define and ideate an app design called Kutz, a barbering software app that allows for users to search, review, and book appointments with ease. This app will represent a unique target audience of college students that want a more efficient way of booking haircut appointments in nearby locations. Throughout the quarter, I documented the steps and design process to ensure a successful app design.
Problem Statement

The barbering and haircutting industry is constantly evolving with new techniques, equipment, and upcoming young barbers. Many people struggle to find a consistent and reliable barber that they can easily schedule haircut appointments with.

Users want to be able to search, review, and book appointments with ease so they do not have to deal with the hassle of checking the barbers availability. They want to have the flexibility to curate and filter categories based off of their preferences.

Creating an app that solves the issue of searching for barbers in nearby locations and booking appointments while creating a brand identity for young upcoming barbers will create a better experience for customers.
Project Objectives

Project Management
- Plan out the timeline of the project with objectives, tasks
- Account for the unexpected and delays since content is dependent on approval of others
- Monitor progress to ensure it is completed in a timely fashion

Applied Design
- Create a fully functional prototype of the app design
- Showcase variety of programs in Adobe CC demonstrating my skills
- Include documentation of the entire design process from drafts to finish products

Exacerbate effective user experience
- Demonstrating the user interface experience is easy to navigate for any user
- Research, prototype, A/B testing, aesthetic usability effect to ensure design is effective
- Ensure the user experience encompasses all the experiences a user has with the app
Timeline

**Week 1:** Background research and project planning

**Week 2:** Competitive research

**Week 3:** Project infrastructure and mentor check in

**Week 4:** Analyze survey results and begin design guidelines

**Week 5:** Create low fidelity wireframes and finish branding

**Week 6:** Finish low fidelity wireframes and start high fidelity wireframes

**Week 7:** Revise wireframe iterations

**Week 8:** Check in with mentor

**Week 9:** Senior showcase and prepare presentation

**Week 10:** Process book
Background Research


Summary: This article provides both a client and employee perspective of the haircutting industry and the issues that are still prevalent today. Having past experience with paying clients, a servicer within the industry, the article touches on 11 problems and provides solutions on how to ensure a better experience for both parties.

Barbershops are faced with problems and challenges in their day to day operations. Within the industry, it is evident that customers may not have the best experience which can give barbers a bad perception or reputation. To make the experience more enjoyable, it is important to solve some common problems. In this article, waiting your turn due to poor communication is one of the top reasons that affect the barbershop experience. People want convenience and waiting around for your turn to get a haircut may be frustrating and challenging. Though barbers work around the clock and are always busy, it is hard to communicate with the client constantly always. On top of poor communication, not displaying photos of haircuts may be misleading for a client. If they were to explain the desired style or look and the barber is not capable of doing the desired hairstyle, then it is not effective communication. Learning from these mistakes in barbershops made me realize how important online booking features are for clients in mobile design to book a time slot without having to try to get a hold of their barber. Arriving at the designated time to enhance your service is valuable because nobody wants their time to be wasted. A solution for lack of communication is to provide photos and be completely transparent with the clients. To do this, incorporating a feature for barbers to upload photos and have clients leave reviews is important so the customer can gauge whether this barber is an ideal fit for them.
Summary: In this website, it provides a list of popular apps that have been available and widely used for clients in the hair care industry. In the post, I learned about the best available apps today, the benefits of using booking apps, the differences between booking and queuing apps, and some important features to look out for when searching for a booking app.

This was a long, informative report on the most widely used barbering booking apps used today. Throughout the website, the report compiles a lot of important information and data that is being used for these apps. It provides a list of all the apps, the reviews, pros, and cons, as well as the must-have features that differentiate them from other competitors. After providing a list of the top 7 mobile apps for barbering, it dives into the WiseBarber rating summary that indicates every app name, the features, user friendliness, customer support, value for money, and overall rating. The scale they use goes from 1 to 10 which shows how the author rates each app’s overall functionality. Going down the report, it explains in detail what makes the app successful and the pros and cons in summary to give users an idea of which app they would ideally want to download. Having this insight for my app design allows me to learn more about my competitors to understand what makes a successful app. From my understanding, a well-designed UI/UX barber design must be user friendly, appealing, and engaging design, in-app payments, offer notifications, allow to set up a full business profile and offer ratings for user consideration. It makes me realize how important it is to think about the functionality and navigation for the users to ensure that all the features provided are convenient and answer all the users needs. At the end of the day, the purpose of creating a barbering app is to provide a solution for students to easily find a barber in their located area.
Competitive Landscape

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Kutz</th>
<th>TheCut</th>
<th>Square</th>
<th>Setmore</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contactless Payment</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
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<td>Reviews and Ratings</td>
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<td>Manage Notifications</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book Appointments</td>
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<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Barber Search</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Technical Requirements and Limitations

**TheCut**
- **About**: Getting your haircut has never been easier. Find talented barbers anywhere, anytime. Check out their profile and reviews. Book and pay for haircuts with just a few clicks.
- **Pros**: User friendly, easy reviews, consistent business model
- **Cons**: Does not showcase photos, previous work of barbers, too simple

**Square**
- **About**: Cloud based appointment scheduling software for beauty salons and other local service businesses.
- **Pros**: elegant, user friendly, merchant processing, client records, appointment deposit features
- **Cons**: Does not prioritize emergency notifications, calendar not very functional
User Personas

Vu Nguyen

**GOALS**
- High-quality hair services
- Be able to book an appointment ahead of time on a virtual calendar
- Look for a suitable barber that he feels confident and feels safe while getting a haircut
- Wants a barber that can explain his hair type and how to style it to his liking

**FRUSTRATIONS**
- Struggles to look presentable for business conferences due to lack of time
- Worries about the potential risk of exposing himself in a new barber's situation
- Committing to try a new style that is not in his comfort zone

**PATTERNS AND BEHAVIOR**
- High-quality hair services
- Has the flexibility to book an appointment ahead of time on a virtual calendar
- Consistently looks for a suitable barber that he feels confident and feels safe while getting a haircut
- Wants a barber that can explain his hair type and how to style it to his liking

**FAVORITE BRANDS**

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John Do

**GOALS**
- Have the resources to keep and maintain appointments
- Communicate effectively with clients
- Have clients show up to appointments on time
- Establish credibility in a new environment

**FRUSTRATIONS**
- Concerned about how to maintain a new barber's business
- Struggles with clients' demands for appointments ahead of time
- Nervous and intimidated around new people
- Has difficulty organizing and scheduling new clients
- Overwhelmed by too many notifications
- Prefers to be independent and self-paced
- Enjoy being efficient in technology and software

**PATTERNS AND BEHAVIOR**
- Has the flexibility to book an appointment ahead of time on a virtual calendar
- Consistently looks for a suitable barber that he feels confident and feels safe while getting a haircut
- Wants a barber that can explain his hair type and how to style it to his liking

**FAVORITE BRANDS**

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These user personas provide insight on user testing and help give us a better understanding of user behaviors and needs to create reliable and realistic representations of my target audience.
This user flow exemplifies how a user interacts with the product one task at a time. In this case, this perspective indicates how the client goes from the start screen to booking an appointment. It provides a foundation for the rest of the design process and indicates a typical user scenario interaction.
The Process

**Phase 1: Research**
- In depth research was conducted to figure out what were common issues and problems within the barbering community. I wanted to get feedback about people's experiences and what could be improved to make the process of booking an appointment easier.

**Phase 2: Design Guidelines**
- Before creating the basis of the app design, I had to figure out what icons, typography, and color scheme was going to be incorporated to capture the style I wanted for the project. I wanted to create a brand identity as well as the logo process.

**Phase 3: Wireframing**
- After completing the basic ideas for the app, starting out with a rough layout placement of elements and features was important to developing the low fidelity wireframes. Once I felt that the layout of my low fidelity wireframes was easy to navigate, I then created the high fidelity wireframes by implementing my design guidelines. Starting with the illustrations, colors, images, and typography, I was able to envision fully completed interfaces.

The following softwares were used in the completion of this project:
- Adobe XD
- Adobe Photoshop
- Adobe Illustrator
- Adobe InDesign
Low Fidelity Wireframes

Low fidelity wireframes include: onboarding, login, sign up, home page, nearby location, booking appointment process. Everything was designed in Adobe XD and the main goal was to focus on the layout and navigation of buttons and placement of certain features.
Low Fidelity Wireframes
Results

When considering my design guidelines, I wanted to focus on utilizing a sans serif font because it is the most legible and easy to distinguish from everything else. To differentiate myself from other competitors that go for a more neutral color scheme I wanted to implement colors that are fun and playful. I wanted the color scheme to have a contrast of light and dark colors and emphasize the brighter colors as buttons and important signifies throughout the app.

Typography

Jam Grotesque

Primary Colors

| #2D2C40 | #2D826B | #CF4663 | #D7D7D8 |

Regular

Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii J Jk Ll Mm Nn Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz

Medium

Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii J Jk Ll Mm Nn Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz

Bold

Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii J Jk Ll Mm Nn Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz
Logo Process

For the logo process, I wanted to focus on incorporating an element that represents both barbering and styling and the common theme was scissors. Using scissors, I wanted to alter the shape of it to illustrate a K for the app name Kutz.
Illustrations

These are a few of the illustrations I created that encompasses what the app is about. I wanted to emphasize a login, discover, services, and appointment illustration in the beginning when you first navigate through the app. Having these illustrations make the app more playful and seemed fitting considering these 2D vector illustrations are widely used in other apps and websites. It definitely catches the users eye because it is different compared to the typical black and white login and loading screens. It took a few days to execute these illustrations, but I wanted to emphasize the color scheme and palette for the app.
High Fidelity Wireframes

With all the design guidelines and low fidelity wireframes finished, the only thing left to do was apply these styles and visuals to the interfaces. Using different shades and opacities, I was able to utilize the main colors for important buttons and navigation signifier.
High Fidelity Wireframes
Reflection

Overall, I think this project showcased my skills in UIUX over the past 10 weeks. Though I have done projects before, being your own project manager and creating an organized timeline of tasks and assignments was something that I undermined during the process. Because this project was mainly independent, there were times that I felt unmotivated but still managed to push through and create an app design that I am content with.

If I can go back and change one thing, I would have wanted to structure my project to have enough time to create a functional prototype. I think that I managed to create the most important parts of this app, but having a working prototype in Adobe XD would have showcased my other skills. If I had stayed in line with the schedule and deadlines I created for myself, it would have been possible to finish a prototype. Something else to consider is creating more interfaces for the other menu tabs that I did not get a chance to create due to the lack of time. I think in the future, creating the prototype might not be that far fetched considering I have majority of the wireframes completed.
Sources


- M. 2020, November 2. 8 must-have features for your barbershop management software. Review. Retrieved April 2, 2022, from https://www.meritline.com/8-must-have-features-for-your-barbershop-management-software/

