



EXPLORATION AT YOUR FINGERTIPS.

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## Product Strategy Team

Spec Status:

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Last Updated: 08/30/23

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## Executive Summary

## Problem Background

Traveling and taking vacations is something we all love to do any chance we get! Whether for a special occasion such as a birthday or anniversary, casual trip for relaxation, or cultural exploration, planning trips can feel like a stressful part-time job. Travelers spend weeks or even months researching, visiting numerous websites, and organizing an itinerary.

Since the world pandemic in 2020, global regions experienced a massive decrease in international arrivals. Through March 2021, the US travel economy had cumulative losses of **\$645B**. However, now in 2023, “**54%** of travelers plan to take more trips this year than last year” and travelers are planning more last minute trips than ever before! According to an article on Psychology Today, trip planning is the most stressful aspect of traveling/vacationing. As defined by the World Health Organization (WHO), stress is “a state of worry or mental tension caused by a difficult situation”. While conducting research, with 85 responses received, I found that **55%** of Millennial and Gen Z travelers find trip planning to be very stressful, followed by 25% that do not find it stressful and 20% that are neutral. Plenty of factors can contribute to this stress such as researching activities, accommodation, food, and flights for the trip style that

matches your budget and preferences. My research synthesis also proved that the top 3 most stressful aspects of trip planning are: Staying within budget, researching in general, and finding activities of interest.

Maybe you want a more relaxing and luxury type of vibe, or maybe hiking and adventure is more your style. Regardless of the type of trip, occasion or even number of people you're traveling with, the planning process can seem daunting. So, how do we fix that?

## Goals

By creating an app that allows travelers to easily plan their trips, it will decrease the stress levels related to travel planning.

- Allow travelers to easily create trip itineraries that match their preferred travel style and desired experience
- Allow users to have itineraries made for them using their travel preferences (budget, place, schedule, activities, style of trip/vacation)
- Allow travelers to find and be suggested new experiences and activities they'd be interested in
- Allow travelers to plan their trips quickly but efficiently
- Allow travelers to have stress-free trip planning experiences, even during last minute planning
- Allow travelers to have social media reviews and recommendations to utilize for decision-making
- Increase budget-friendly options that match travelers' travel/vacation style, preferences, and stay within restricted budget
- Provide an easier travel planning experience, with a one-stop shop for research/reviews and planning

# User Stories

## User Persona: Meet “Christina”



### MEET “CHRISTINA”

NURSE & CONTENT  
CREATOR

AGE 27

GENDER : WOMAN

LOCATION : WASHINGTON, DC



#### BIOGRAPHY

- Finds pleasure in luxurious travel, new experiences, and diverse cultures
- Loves to capture and share her travel adventures on her social media platforms
- Takes vacations/trips every few months

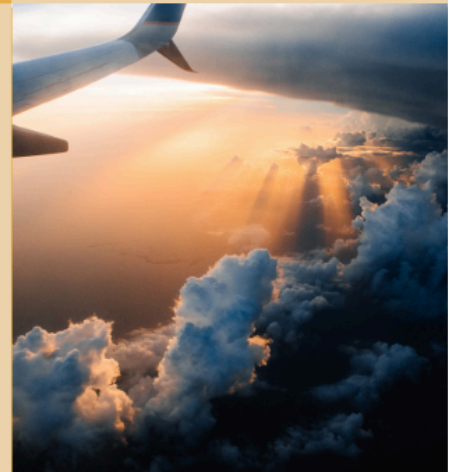
#### PAIN POINTS

- Wasting time searching multiple websites for reviews, feeling overwhelmed by conflicting recommendations, and missing out on unique experiences

“I just wish that finding reviews and recommendations for my trip style was a lot less stressful.”

#### NEEDS & GOALS

- A platform that allows easy customization of travel preferences, access to hidden gems, and an all-in-one that aggregates reviews from various sources
- To use reliable reviews and recommendations to curate trips that align with personal interests and cater to new experiences



Christina is a 27 year-old traveler who loves to take trips/vacations every few months. She likes to have an itinerary to plan in advance. Although she is super excited about this trip, she is stressed by having to use various sites to research and find activities and excursions that match her preferences. She says “I just wish that finding reviews and recommendations for my trip style was a lot less stressful.”

- ❖ As a traveler, I want to specify the type of vacation/trip style I prefer, so that I have activity/excursion options that match my preferences.
- ❖ As a traveler, I want to find new experiences more easily, so that I can make my trip more exciting and memorable.
- ❖ As a traveler, I want to have a comprehensive way to find reviews and recommendations, so that my time is not consumed on multiple platforms/sites.
- ❖ As a traveler, I want to input my spending limit, so that I can stay within my budget.
- ❖ As a traveler, I want to create itineraries and visuals, so that I enjoy the planning experience and am organized.

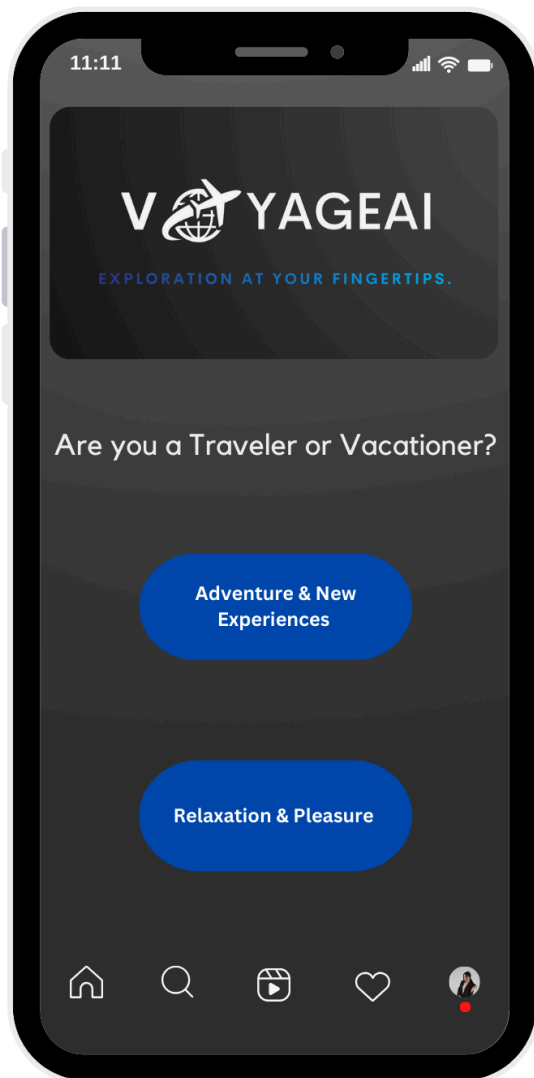
# Proposed Solution

## Problem Statement

How might we make trip planning easy and effective for travelers so that the process is not stressful?

A solution would be an effective and resourceful way for users to search by their travel/vacationing style and budget, to find activities/excursions of their interest. This could be sort of like a search engine, suggesting experiences that match the style of traveler in more detail (traveler vs vacationer). This will engage more users to refine their search to find activities of interest and new experiences. The solution should also allow users to see and utilize social media review videos, and online recommendations for decision making in the details of their itinerary. This feature should allow users to see comprehensive reviews in one place without having to jump between platforms/sites. Lastly, the solution should incorporate budgeting and spending limitation refiners which will allow users to explore things in their budget but also of interest to them. This will relieve stress during the trip planning process.





## Scenarios

**User story 1:** *As a traveler, I want to specify the type of trip style I prefer, so that I have activity/excursion options that match my preferences.*

**Scenario 1:** Choose between Traveler or Vacationer, then type of trip: Celebration, Work, Leisure, Luxury, Casual, Exploration, etc.

**Acceptance Criteria:**

- User can see visuals & small description of Traveler vs Vacationer to choose from (two photos + name to choose from)
- After choosing initial Traveler/Vacationer, user can choose type of trip/style to

refine preferences moving forward (shows visual as multiple-choice style design, with ability to choose multiple answers)

- List of activities, excursions, things-to-do, and food are populated and refined with chosen preferences (using AI)

**User story 2:** *As a traveler, I want to find new experiences more easily, so that I can make my trip more exciting and memorable.*

**Scenario 1:** Choose between Traveler or Vacationer, then type of trip: Celebration, Work, Leisure, Luxury, Casual, Exploration, etc.

**Acceptance Criteria:**

- List of activities, excursions, things-to-do, and food are populated and refined with preferences
- Lists are categorized by name (activities/excursions, things-to-do, food)
- User can browse through suggested experiences based on their preferences and heart their favorites
- Users are able to share and save (favorite)

**User story 3:** *As a traveler, I want to have a comprehensive way to find reviews and recommendations, so that my time is not consumed searching on multiple platforms/sites.*

**Scenario 1:** Search for reviews/recommendations

**Acceptance Criteria:**

- User can see social media and online video and written reviews when a preference is chosen (integrates with socials such as Tiktok and IG from search engine)
- User can see reviews from different sources on one page (may direct to original site but will be listed on application)
- User can see the preferences chosen previously at top for reminder of why the preferences are refined
- Users are able to add/take away refinements to preferences to alter search

**User story 4:** *As a traveler, I want to input my spending limit, so that I can stay within my budget.*

**Scenario 1:** Specify a spending limit/budget

**Acceptance Criteria:**

- User can use choose a spending range to refine search
- User can see multiple ranges and choose one that best fits them



# Measuring Success

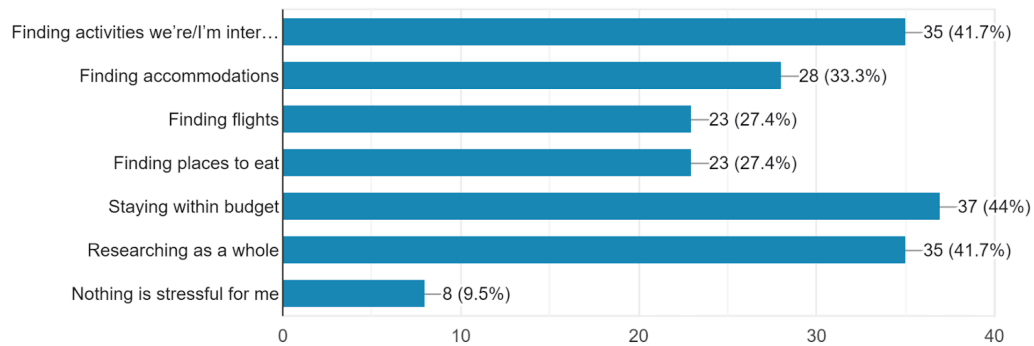
## Co.Lab Success Metrics

By Demo day, we would like to have an MVP with user story 1-3 or 1-4 (if possible), since they were the most in-demand and overlapped in the research synthesis regarding what is most stressful vs what is most valued in trip planning.

### For reference:

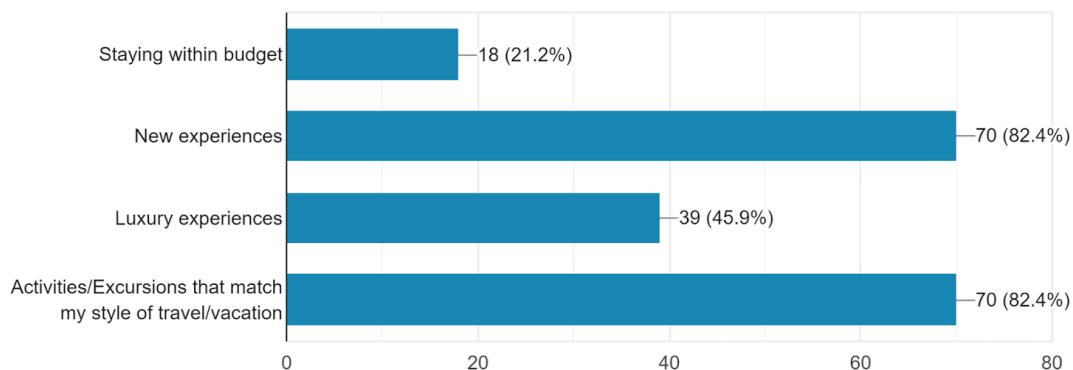
What is the most stressful part about planning a trip? (Click all that apply)

84 responses



What aspects of traveling do you value most? (Click top 2 that apply)

85 responses



## Product Success Metrics

### ***First 4 user stories & success by Demo Day :***

- **Product Adoption:** Acquire 20 registered users by Demo Day to understand product user retention
- **Product Adoption:** Acquire 50 app downloads by Demo Day
- **User Satisfaction Feedback:** 4+ star rating on application interface and features via surveys and user interviews
- **User Engagement Metrics:** Users are on app for at least 15 minutes per session

### ***Success after launch:***

- **Product Adoption:** Acquire 30 users that at least use app to browse or plan a trip (sign-up will be a bonus)
- **User Preference:** Understand the trip style that is preferred most between traveler vs vacationer (maybe this may lead to a more refined approach to the application)
- **Feature Adoption:** Acquire 15 users that utilize save/favorite feature to understand if they using app as a resource/reference

## **Milestones & Timeline**

4 week Sprint:

<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Milestone</b>
<b>Week 1</b>	Backlog created, features prioritized Assess resources available for sprint <b>Design</b> LO-Fi front page layout theme Align on research synthesis, create lo-fi designs for user story 1-2 User testing for designs <b>Dev</b> Scope high-level development tasks Begin development for user story 1-2 User testing for designs
<b>Week 2</b>	<b>Design</b> User story 1-2 hi-fi designs

	<b>Dev</b> Development of story 1-2 using lo-fi designs Push prototype for user story 1
<b>Week 3</b>	<b>Design</b> Live user demo testing Refine w user feedback Begin designs for user story 3  <b>Dev</b> Refinements from live demo Push prototype for user story 2 Start SEO user story 2 development (AI incorporation)
<b>Week 4</b>	<b>Design</b> User story 3 lo-fi designs  <b>Dev</b> Continue SEO user story 2 development Prep for next live user demo

## Open Questions

1. Will it be possible to integrate social media with the application system to refine the searches and only show relevant content that pertains to the preferences shown?
2. How will the itineraries be made on the app?
3. Will this application basically be a search engine app as an MVP?
4. How exactly can the trip planning be quicker on the app? (apart from research)
5. Will groups be able to collaborate on the app to plan together?

## Appendix

[1] [Travel industry faces post-pandemic choices](#)

[2] [2023 Travel Trends Report](#)

[3] [Vacation Stress? You're Not Alone](#)

[4] [17 Travel Trends You'll See in 2023, According to our Editors and Contributors](#)

[5] [How to Reduce Travel Stress & Anxiety](#)

[6] [What is Stress?](#)