Konzeption einer Generationen-Treff App
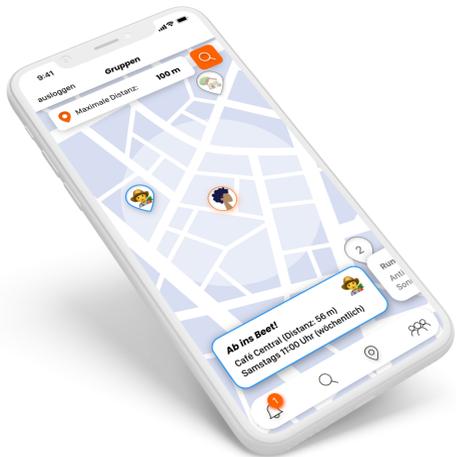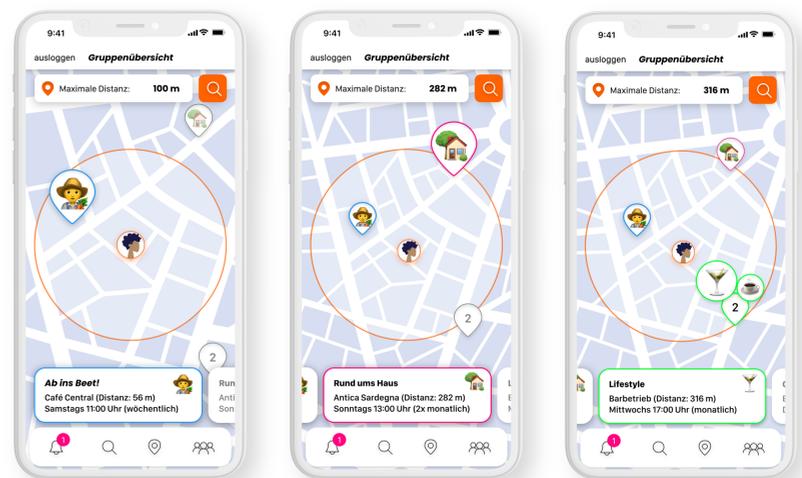

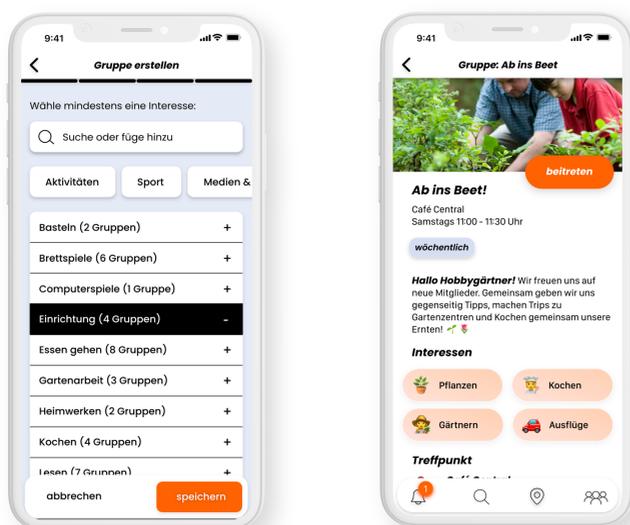Example of what the „group map"-screen could look like.

Abstract

In the „Interactive Media Systems" master's program with a focus on „Mobile Experience",special attention is paid to the connections between digital content and the physical world.

This is exactly what Larissa Schmidt focuses on in this master's thesis. The aim of the work was to create a concept for encounters between generations. For this purpose, the qualitative method of the diary study was used. To carry it out, nine participants were recruited. The study was divided into three consecutive phases. After each completed section, the results were analyzed and evaluated. The knowledge gained from this was used to optimize the next phase. It was rounded off by a follow-up interview with each test person. This is how the concept of the generation meeting app came about. The iterative design process always focused on the users and their needs. The aim was to find out under what conditions people from different generations would meet. The results of the work largely confirmed the hypotheses set out. This master thesis is aimed in particular at municipalities that are looking for initiatives against loneliness in old age and for an overall better community.

The concept can be used in rural areas as well as in cities. The findings of the work should show ways to create sustainable bridges between generations.

Special Focus

The basis of the app concept are the results of a diary study with six to nine participants. It had three phases, that have been continuously optimized on the basis of an iterative design process and thus able to answer the research questions.

In the first phase, the senior test subjects presented tasks and requests to the remaining participants. Interest and motivation steadily decreased here. The following phase, groups were formed based on common interests. It builds directly onto the previous stage and focuses on establishing a relationship between participants. The assigned group members should meet and discuss. This was proved to be unsuccessful. In the last phase, the test persons got to choose their own group and had to meet regularly. It also ran longer than the previous tests. This was to gain better insights on motivations and the success of the test. In a follow up interview, further questions were asked to clear up uncertainties.

In the evaluation phase that followed the analysis of the results, a provisionally prototype of the app could be designed.

Example of the user taking a look at different group overviews.

Result and Future Work

The key findings of this work is that forming groups based on interests can help people of different generations to make contact. Keeping the meetings low-threshold, meaning easy to join, flexible with no obligations and fun, will keep users motivated.

The test subjects were also pleasantly surprised at how well they interacted with people from other generations.

The aim of this work, namely the development of a concept for cross-generational Contact app, could be reached. In the future, the concept can be optimized with further tests.

The main focus in the future would be on creating the actual app, that is pleasant to use for all target generations. Therefore a high level of accessibility must be reached. User testings with older people should be conducted to ensure that the overall user interfaces and the flow is understood easily.

After the app is released, there should be a campaign via print media in potential meeting places. Local newspapers and communities could advertise the app as an initiative against loneliness and for a better, more active commonality between generations.

Left: „create group"-screen; right: „group"-overview.

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