ILLINOIS
School of Information Sciences

Route 66: A Traveller's Experience
By: Erin Engel & Araceli Moreno

Background

- The idea to design a mobile app was prompted by questions the museum staff was receiving from visitors intent on driving the original route of Route 66.
- Multiple sources for directions exist; online maps sourced from Route 66 websites and physical maps written specifically for the route. Many are created from first-hand accounts and observational guides created by first-hand experience.
- There can be an extensive amount of time spent compiling information from the multiple sources (websites, blogs, maps, travel guides, books).
- For this situation we were focused on developing a plan for the Illinois portion of Route 66.

Issues at Hand

- Museum staff saw an issue as visitors increasingly asked if there was a way to drive the original Route 66 using GPS.
- Traditional maps and guides that are provided did not always satisfy what visitors sought.
- Despite advancements in global positioning satellite technology there are few options that provide access to the course of the original Route 66.
- Online resources provide excellent detail regarding all aspects of Historic Route 66; however, seldom does this transfer to mobile devices.
- As a result, we needed to create our own solution. The intention behind this app is to document the public's interaction with America's "Mother Road."

Plan + Process

Our app would do two distinct things:

1. Enable users to drive the original course of Illinois Route 66 through turn-by-turn navigation
2. Document the public's experience with America's "Mother Road" while also provided a practical resource through information gathered from social media tags and interaction with the apps features.

We decided that, in addition to the turn-by-turn navigation, the app would include these additional features:

1. Access to Social Media
2. Playlists featuring songs about Route 66 or music produced during the Route 66's lifetime
3. Travel destinations and highlighted check-ins
4. Restaurant ideas with menus
5. Printable coloring pages

Tools Used

- After researching different application design tools we decided to use Adobe Experience Design (XD)*.
- The tool (in beta form at the time) allowed design to take place on a desktop while automatically synced to a phone so as to preview designs real time.
- There was also a share feature was found to be helpful to view progress only. Emailing the actual file was easier.
- Some constraints included being unable to embed website links. We also had some trouble incorporating an entire map.
- We do not have extensive coding experience so we were limited in what we could create (ie. no games).

Prototyping Process Example

App features spread out

App Features connected

*[Now called Adobe XD CC]

Results

- Using the app can help visitors and our museum staff.
- The app can also encourage people to travel along one of Illinois' most famous landmarks and discover restaurants or destinations.
- We envision the app to help gather information to better understand the public's present-day experience with Route 66
- Social Media tagging, links, and shared items will promote the collection and collaboration with the museum which can keep exhibits fresh, essentially creating A Participatory Museum.
- All data will be housed with security and knowledge of data collection will be made known to users at the initial creation of a new account. Acceptance to this is mandatory if users are to interact with the app.

Interact with our Prototype

References & Further Information on Route 66: