

Abstract

The aim of this project is to **explore how to best provide the experience of navigation inside shopping centers**, through the media of touchscreen wayfinders, and meet the needs of shopping center customers who wish to have an efficient and accurate wayfinding experience. Through the literature review and user research conducted, the analysis illustrated key findings being that the shopping center touchscreen wayfinder should have high quality information and accurate navigation. Based on the findings, a high-fidelity prototype is created to demonstrate the features of the wayfinder.

Introduction & Background

Wayfinding in shopping centers could be inevitable, as shopping centers are big areas with tons of various shops, sometimes even with multiple buildings. Various methods for wayfinding and way illustration were invented, for example, digital wayfinders, physical indoor signages and maps provided by the shopping center, GPS mobile apps that are available to use indoors. There are also advanced wayfinding methods, such as AR wayfinding apps on mobile phones. Wayfinders are mostly presented by a touchscreen, with an interactive map and navigation. However, as more advanced methods were invented, less people would like to use the touchscreen wayfinders inside shopping malls. The phenomenon is discovered through more and more literature focusing on other advanced methods, and through observation in shopping malls. This issue provoked a question, **what are the reasons for customers to not use wayfinders?** The study explores the answers for this question, and proposes a new design as the solution.

Methodology

Online user research questionnaire

To have a better understanding of customer shopping habits, wayfinding habits, pain points and needs in using wayfinders.

Features & information architecture

Tree test

Improve the structure of the wayfinder application, prevent interruption for the individual study.

Prototype design

Evaluation

Individual study for testing the usability of the designed navigation, using a Wizard of Oz low-fidelity prototype. User testing on the high-fidelity prototype, to test the usability of the application and user acceptance.

Persona



Abby

Female
24 years old
Employed
London, UK

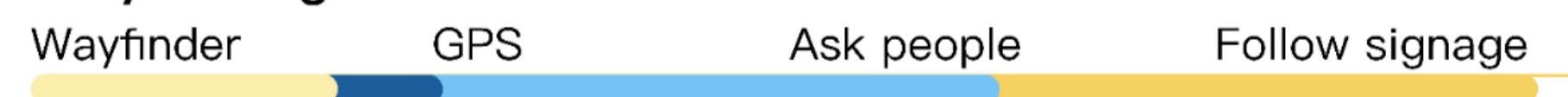
Go shopping center
2 to 3 times a month

Tech
Mobile phone

Shopping



Wayfinding



Pain points

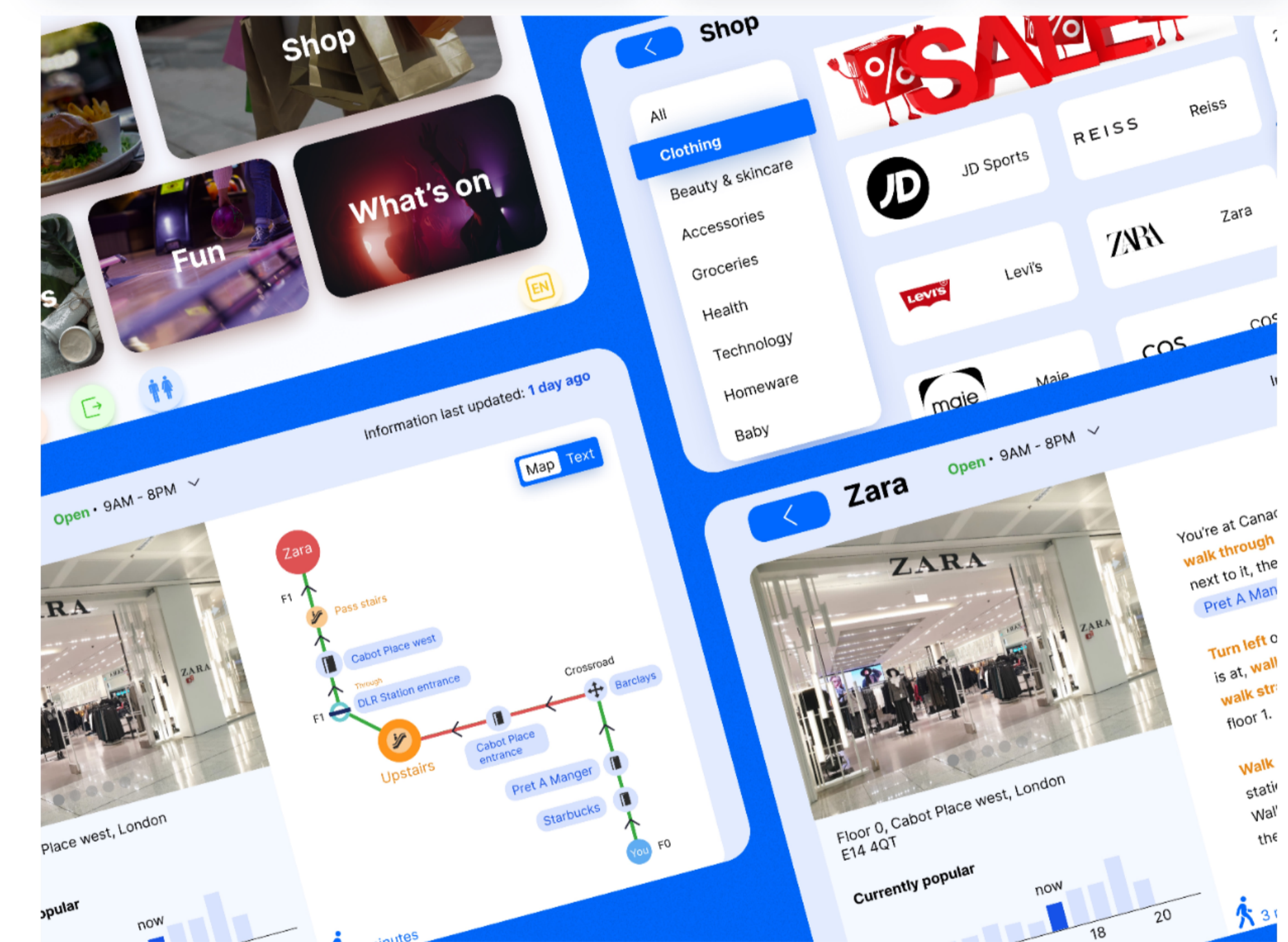
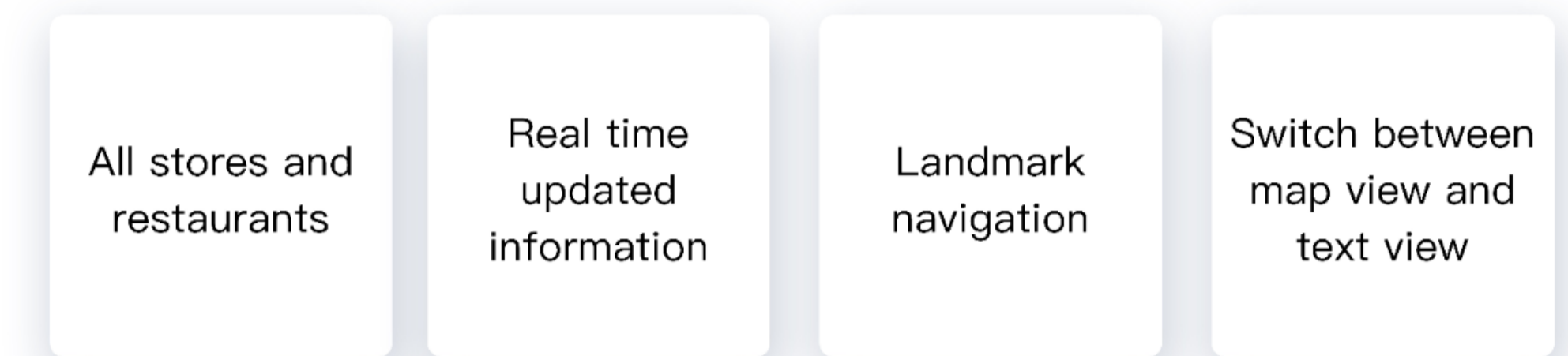
- Hard to understand and interact with wayfinders
- Does not fully trust the information provided by wayfinders
- Hard to locate wayfinders inside shopping centers

Desires

- To find a way to avoid busy crowd indoors
- To quickly get information of stores and events in a shopping center
- To find a efficient and easy method for wayfinding

Concept & Design

A wayfinder application that emphasizes the functionality of landmark wayfinding, providing only the directions, actions and landmarks for navigation, helping users save time memorizing the route.



Conclusion & future work

As the individual study and user testing results showed, participants have a relatively high acceptance for wayfinder, as long as it has clear and credible information and accurate navigation. However, there are still downsides of wayfinders that are unchangeable, making it less likely to be used. Such as lack of mobility and limited access locations. If this project were to be improved in the future, the landmarks on the navigation would be improved, such as making the highly mistaken turns more visible to prevent users from making mistakes. This could be realized by conducting more wayfinding user tests in the shopping mall.