Mechanic Finder: A UX Strategy Report

Strategy

Unexpected car repairs can be stressful, but Mechanic Finder will make finding and comparing repair costs quick and painless. Mechanic Finder is a price comparison app that provides users estimates on car repairs from local mechanics. The app will provide users the ability to quickly locate and compare repair costs from a reputable mechanic near their location and within their budget.

According to the Bureau of Transportation Statistics, there are more than 273 million registered vehicles in the United States (BTS, 2018). With vehicle ownership, comes the responsibility of maintenance and repairs at some point during the life of the vehicle. Mechanic Finder will make keeping up with this inevitable upkeep simple and convenient. Currently, on the Google Play Store, there are several auto repair estimate apps but none that allow the user to shop for a mechanic based on price comparison. The price comparison feature is what will set Mechanic Finder apart from the apps currently available for download.

The user base for Mechanic Finder is any person who needs maintenance or repairs done on their vehicle. According to a report by the Federal Reserve titled The Economic Well-Being of U.S. Households, 39% of Americans would not be able to cover an unexpected expense of $400 or more (Federal Reserve, 2019). Car repairs are one of the most common unexpected expenses and most people do not plan for these occurrences. Users will be willing to use this app to shop around for mechanics who offer the best price for the work required. This app will save users time, money, and frustration when dealing with vehicle maintenance and repairs.

Scope

Functional Requirements

Major functional requirements on Mechanic Finder's **homepage** will include:

- A fixed, drop-down menu where users select the make of their vehicle
- A fixed, drop-down menu where users select the model of their vehicle
- A fixed, drop-down menu where users select the year of their vehicle
- A fixed, drop-down menu where users select the maintenance or repair
- A fixed text field for users to enter their zip code
- A "search" button will be available to tap after all the above fields are provided

These features will work together to generate search results based on the entries. Each field will be required for the user to proceed. The search results will be provided on the next screen.

Major functional requirements on Mechanic Finder's **search results page** will include:

- A sort by icon to allow the user to sort by price or distance
- A search bar for users to search by mechanic name
- An icon to call each mechanic generated from the search
- An icon to send a message each mechanic generated from the search
- An icon to share each mechanic generated from the search

These features will allow the user to sort their search by their desired criteria, contact the mechanic(s) via phone or message within the app, and share search results with others.

Content Requirements

Major content requirements on Mechanic Finder's **homepage** will include:

- Text for vehicle makes in the "Make" drop-down menu
- Text for vehicle models in the "Model" drop-down menu
- Text for vehicle years in the "Year" drop-down menu
- Text for maintenance or repair selection
    - An option to select "I'm not sure" would be available for those users who are uncertain about what may be the issue with their vehicle

Major content requirements on Mechanic Finder's **search results page** will include:

- Text for the sort button
- Image for each mechanic
- Text with a phone number when call icon is tapped
- Text for the estimate provided from each mechanic
    - This information will be absent if the user selects "I'm not sure" in the maintenance or repair drop-down menu
- Text with each mechanics address and hours of operation

This content will allow the user to quickly select their choices and then view search results with enough information on the search results page to narrow down their selection.

Structure

Interaction Design

The homepage will allow the user to select the make, model, year, and repair of their vehicle via a drop-down menu and will be provided with a text box to enter their location. The system will check that all required fields are entered and will prompt the user to fill in any missing fields. Once the user clicks "search", the app will generate results based on the criteria the user selects. The app will display a loading symbol while results are being generated.

The search results page will allow the user to scroll to view all generated results. Each result on this page will have icons where the user can tap to call, message, or share the mechanic's information. When the user taps the call icon, the system will launch a popup screen with the mechanic's phone number with the option to either call or cancel. If the user taps the message icon, a popup will appear where the user can send the mechanic a message within the app itself. The share button will allow the user to share the mechanic's information via text or email.

Information Architecture

Information on the homepage will be arranged in the following order:

- Make
- Model
- Year
- Maintenance or Repair
- Location

Make and Model will be categorized separately to make it easier for the user to make their selection. The selections in the Make, Model, and Maintenance or Repair drop-down menus will be organized alphabetically. The selections in the Year drop-down menu will be arranged from newest to oldest. Organizing and categorizing in this matter will allow the user to effortlessly conduct their search.

The information on the Search Results page will be automatically sorted by relevancy, though users may select how to sort the results. The same type of information will be provided for each mechanic, in the following order:

- Estimate (if applicable)
- Name of mechanic
- Address / Distance
- Hours of operation
- Phone
- Message
- Share icon

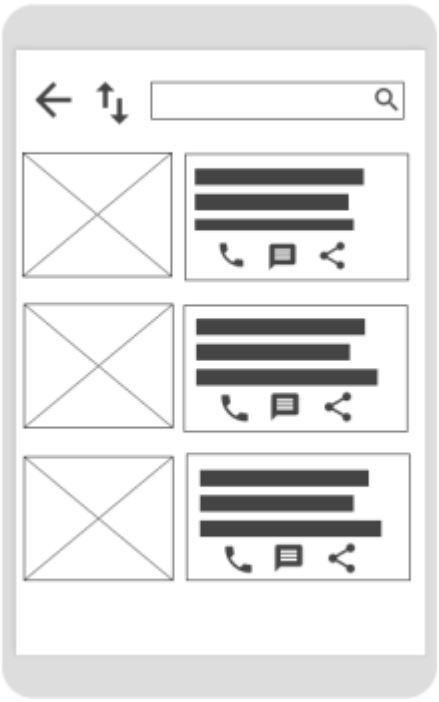
The organization of this information will make the search results easy to read and scannable.

Skeleton

The wireframes below show the general interface and elements of the Homepage and Search Results page.

Homepage

Search Results

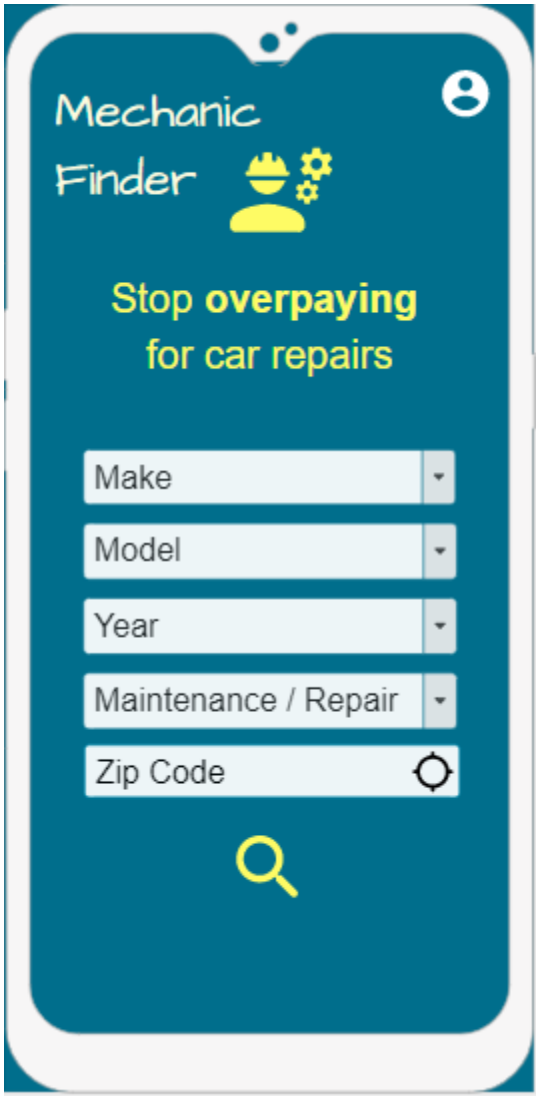


As presented, the interface design of the app arranges the elements in a simple yet effective style for ease of use and functionality. The navigation is obvious, clear, and is designed to be intuitive. The information is placed as such to be highly scannable and easy to decipher.

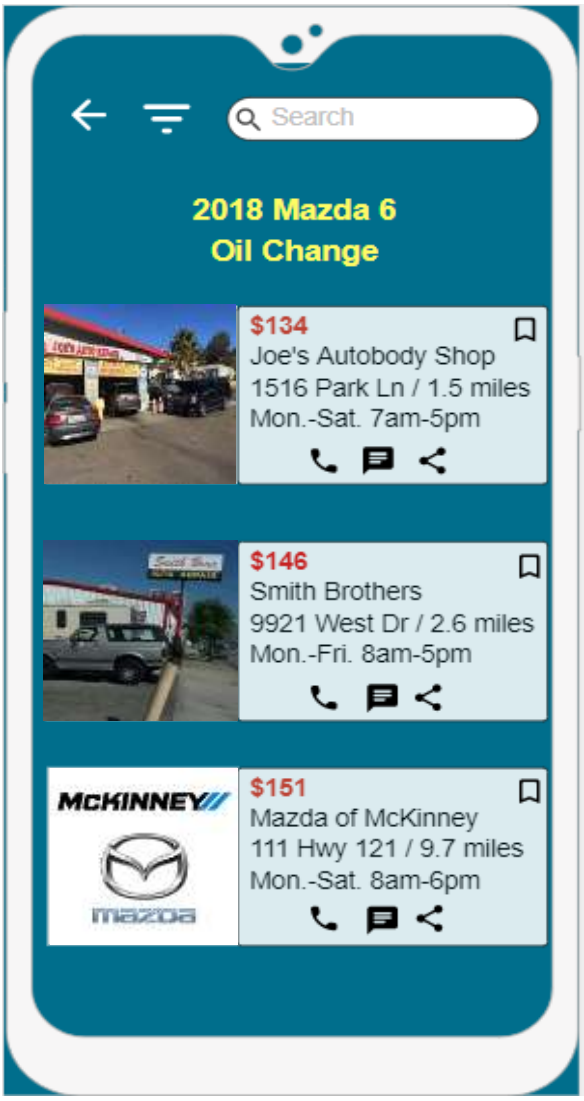
Surface

The final visual representation of Mechanic Finder's Homepage and Search Results page is shown below.

Homepage



Search Results



Rationale

Mechanic Finder uses a grid to ensure all elements are aligned, neat, and balanced. Simple, high contrast colors make the app easy to view and helps make its elements distinguishable. The same font is used for all text with the exception of the app's name. This makes the text content on the app look refined and uniform. Each element on the app is positioned to ensure there is an appropriate amount of negative space. This makes the app "more readable…less chaotic, and…feel more professional" (Osborn, 2017).

Conclusion

Mechanic Finder is a price comparison app that helps users save money on auto repairs. The app offers a clean and simple layout that is easy to navigate. These elements make for a highly functional and easy to use the app. The intuitive design will allow users to quickly accomplish their search and find the information they need to complete their auto repairs.