

GuideUz: Implementation of a New Travel Guide Android Application

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Abstract People don't need to depend on local guides or tour operators anymore. In this fast-paced high-tech world, your smartphone can become your best and most reliable travel guide with the right application when traveling to a new destination. In this paper, we implemented a mobile application – called “GuideUz” – to give people a relaxing and enjoyable trip when in Uzbekistan.

Keywords: *Android, Kotlin, Travel, Uzbekistan, Tourism*

1. Introduction

When it comes to planning and taking a vacation, travelers are relying on their smartphones more than ever. Basically, your mobile phone has everything that you'll ever need on your trip, no matter which country you are visiting. Travel apps help you get better control over your journey and make it as comfortable as possible. This paper describes a wonderful mobile travel application that we propose which might have a high potential in actively helping travelers visiting the Silk Road heritage – Uzbekistan.

The main objective of our android app is to help international tourists get better control over their journey and make it as comfortable as possible. It functions as a guidebook to provide most of the important information about Uzbekistan.

Table 1. Uzbekistan Tourism Statistics 2020-2018[1]

<i>Year</i>	<i>U.S. Dollars</i>	<i>Increase</i>
2018	1,314,000,000	57.37%
2017	835,000,000	44.21%
2016	579,000,000	378.51%
2010	121,000,000	22.22%

Another main goal of this application is to help improve the tourism economy of Uzbekistan by attracting as many international tourists as possible so GuideUz works as a kind of advertisement too. As you can see in Table 1, there has been a huge 378% increase between 2010 and 2016 in the international tourism income of Uzbekistan. This is mainly because the Uzbekistan government gave more countries visa-free entry permits and also because of technology, news, advertisements, and travel apps about Uzbekistan. However, when we have searched Uzbekistan travel apps on the internet such as Google Play Store, we were surprised because we have found less than 5 satisfactory apps that can actually be counted as informative and reliable travel apps with good content about Uzbekistan. Through this, tourism in Uzbekistan is more active than in previous years, but we find the need to develop a new mobile application that can help it by offering new functionalities and more information.

There is no doubt that almost all travelers carry smartphones with them and prefer apps for various tasks like flight booking, hotel room booking, etc. That's why these mobile apps bring happiness with multi-benefits for both its users as well as for tourism companies who own these apps. It is estimated that about 85% of tour operating companies make use of travel apps while planning for a holiday trip.[2]

2. Related Works

There are plenty of apps to help with everything from day-of hotel bookings and last-minute flight changes, as well as those that serve as guidebooks and foreign-language dictionaries that fit in your hand. Some of the most popular travel apps that are commonly used are Hopper, Hotel Tonight, Airbnb, TripIt, Skyscanner, and many more. The app world is a constantly changing place and these

type of travel apps out there already that take the pain out of travel.

3. Implementation of Proposed GuideUz app

GuideUz was built in Android Studio using Kotlin programming language. To run this application, a minimum SDK 16 version is required which is Android 4.1 Jelly Bean. GuideUz contains useful and up to date information about different regions, culture, cities, traditional foods, natural parks, attractions, and the Uzbek language.

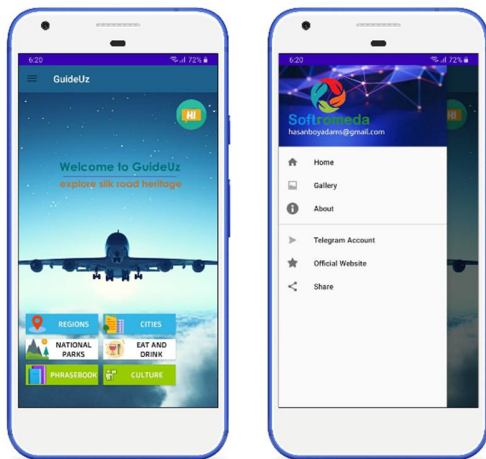


Figure 1. Activity Main and Navigation Drawer Menu

onClick events to these buttons take the user to 6 different categories mentioned above. Activity Main (shown on the left side of Figure 1) which is the first screen user sees has 6 buttons that were designed with similar colors to the Uzbekistan flag.

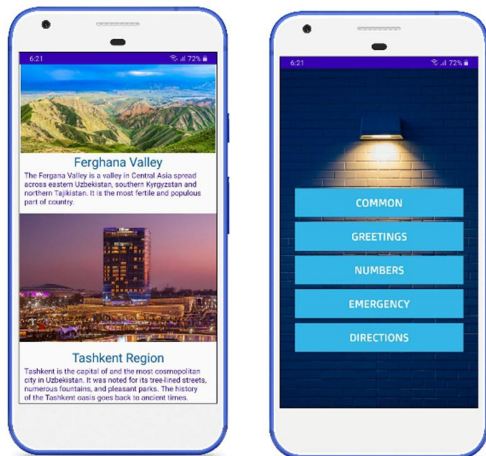


Figure 2. Regions Screen (left) and Phrasebook Screen (right)

Regions, Cities, National Parks, Eat, and Drink, Phrasebook and Culture screens display images and descriptions related to the content. The screens were built in nested layouts which contain Linear Layout, Scroll View, and Constraint Layout. Activity main was built in coordinator layout and it has a floating action button on the top right corner which opens Slideshow. The slideshow screenplays Uzbekistan traditional music in the background while several photos of Uzbekistan nature and landscapes flips. This screen was coded using view flipper.

In general, GuideUz gives information about many other travel destinations in Uzbekistan. It works offline so you don't need an internet connection.

5. Conclusion

There is no doubt that mobile apps have become one of the most vital aspects of the travel and tourism industry. And with travel apps becoming the seventh most downloaded mobile applications, it essentially amplifies all the more. In fact, you can frame many of your business strategies based on the response from the apps and also get in touch with more clients taking the quickest possible route. We believe that this app will benefit the tourism of Uzbekistan. In the future, we will add more functions, content, and languages.

Acknowledgments

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