

5 Conceptual Design

5.1 The Social Calendar



Figure 5.1: The Social Calendar

After a thorough data analysis for our two-week long foursquare study, we decided to design some additional features into foursquare and incorporate the design ideas that surfaced while doing data analysis. The design idea that we wanted to work on addresses the networking dimension and incorporates friendsourcing [[4]] into information search. Before going into the low-level framework and laying down the widgets, in this section we present a high-level description of how the proposing features are organized and will operate.

Our idea is to allow users to build a social calendar—“SoCal”. Now why is this related to location-sensitive nature of the foursquare app? Moreover, why a calendar on-the-go? And how is it related to information search activities? Let’s see how:

The SoCal will allow users to plan future events to some location. By mining that information we will be able to customize users’ friends’ information search. For e.g., if I plan to go to Starbucks on West street and 34th for a coffee in an hour and enter it into the SoCal now; half an hour later my friend Jane who is looking for a coffee place at West and 32nd will have search results showing a nearby place where a friend will be in sometime. The idea is to introduce the social factor into search – to be precise search for places. Foursquare is one of its kind app which has a social network and a location sensitive information search. Not only knowing which are the nearby places for a certain category, but also getting to know if friends will be or are around can make information search using foursquare a better option that just any other search engine. Right now, one can check –in to a place and see if any friends are around. Our idea is to extend this further – to get search results telling where your friend has planned to be. Under flexible privacy settings this can lead to serendipitous social gatherings as well as introduce a novel dimension to information search on mobile platforms.

5.2 Conceptual Model

Metaphors and analogies

The SoCal is a digital calendar—a more organized version of a to-do list. In its own, this is nothing but just a digital calendar. It is to be used by users to plan visits to locations—mostly short-term ones. However, users can choose to plan and record long-term visit plans. An inherent nature of SoCal is shareable. A SoCal by default is shared to the user’s friends on the foursquare app. But privacy is customizable. The idea in a nut-shell is to share a calendar for social outings digitally.

Concepts

The primary concept is to enter details of an outing plan in a digital calendar, being able to share entries to all or a customized group of friends. Another concept the user will manipulate is information search about locations. And the search results will be flagged if a friend has an entry in his/her SoCal with that location. Referring back to the cultural model as was explained in the data analysis section, this idea is another element in influencing the user's decision in selecting a search result – not only based on other people's tips, location but also friendsourcing. So, friendsourcing is also a concept that is introduced in this idea which means using friends' information to deliver better search results that might be relevant to the users. Overall, we introduce the concept of social search to the foursquare app – an information search that is fed by social elements like friends' preferences.

Relationship between the concepts

The idea of social search intricately integrates planning of events or entries and getting friend-sourced search results. To get social search results, it is essential that one's friends are social and care to share visiting plans. So sharing and friendsourcing maintains a symbiotic relationship. Altogether they create the paradigm of social search.

Mapping between the concepts

The user experience that the product is designed to invoke is giving users search results fed from friends' preferences or entries recorded in the SoCal. So the elements that play into deciding a search result are not only third party ratings or just nearby location but also if friends are around or will be around in sometime.

5.3 Vision

The vision for the social calendar (SoCal) feature on Foursquare is focused on allowing users to share location- and time-based information of their planned activities with friends. When a user posts a status update on Foursquare of what they want to do, the system will identify proper nouns and keywords as tags that associate a person to a certain location and time. Users will have a social calendar that auto-populates based on their status update.

When another user searches for a place that is relevant to those proper nouns and keywords, they will see a notification on the company page if a friend has added that place on their social calendar. Users will be able to view each other's social calendar and join them if they choose. If a user decides to join a friend, the friend will receive a notification that someone wants to join. The user may also cancel on an activity, in which case, the friend will also be notified.

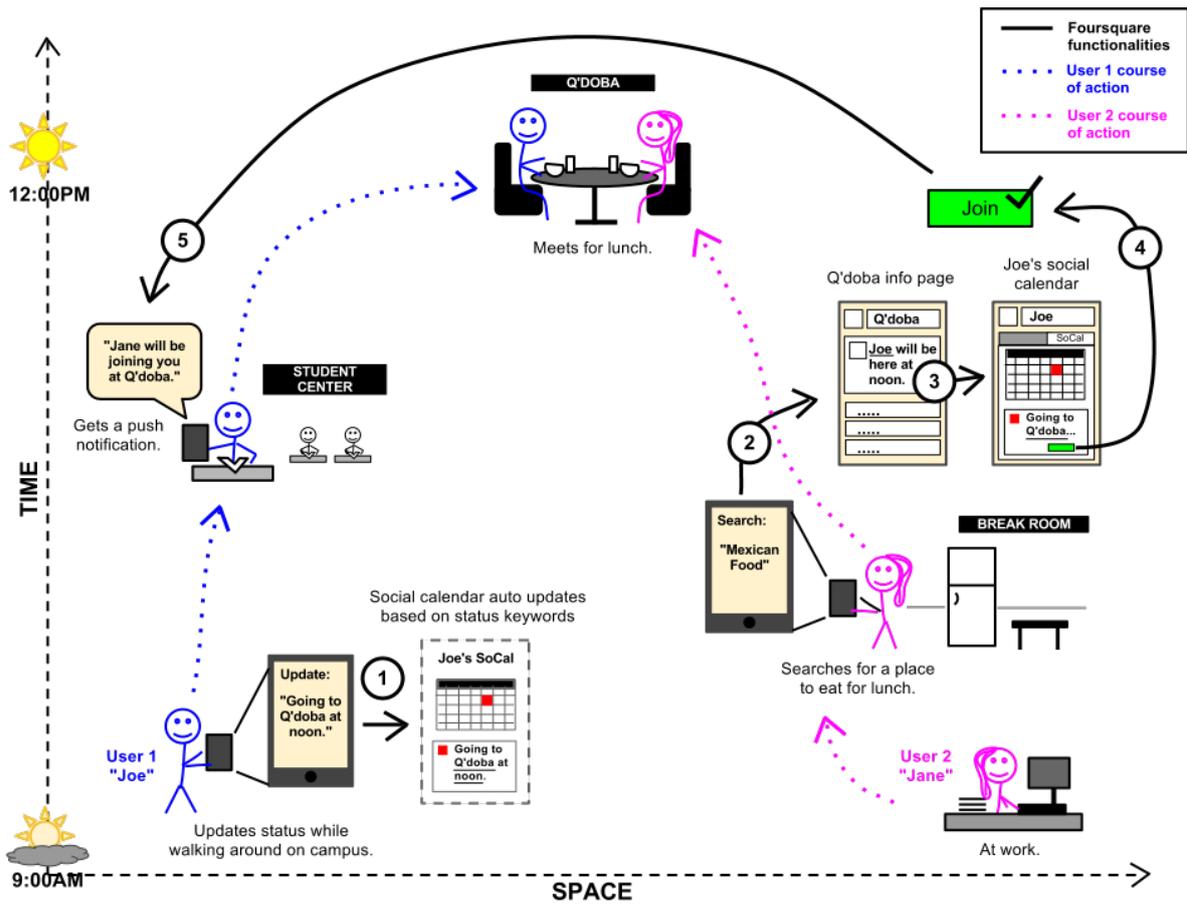


Figure 5.2: Visioning Social Calendar.

6 Requirements Gathering

6.1 User Profiles & Scenarios

6.1.1 User Profile

Table 6.1: User Profiles for Social Calendar.

Primary Users	Mobile and web-based Foursquare users
	Social/outgoing
	Curious
	Easily bored
Secondary Users	Companies featured on Foursquare

6.1.2 Scenarios

Scenario 1



Figure 6.1: Scenario 1 for Social Calendar

Alli is an outgoing 22-year-old college student. She likes hanging out with friends, watching movies, and going shopping. After a long day, she wants to enjoy herself and decides to do some shopping at the new mall downtown. She uses her Smartphone to update her status on Foursquare, which she always uses to let her friends know what her plans are. In the meantime, Rebecca (Alli's friend) sees Alli's latest status update. Rebecca is curious and wants visit the new mall too. Since Alli will be there, Rebecca decides to go to Alli's social calendar and click "Join" next to her latest status update. Alli receives a notification that Rebecca want to join her, so she calls her up to discuss

where exactly they should meet.

Scenario 2

Jack is 27 years old and easily gets bored doing the same thing every weekend, which is usually watching TV or playing video games on his PC. He decides that he would try something different this time. He logs in to Foursquare on his computer and browses through the categories of things to do. Most of the suggestions are places he had already visited nearby.



Figure 6.2: Scenario 2 for Social Calendar

He continues randomly browsing and finds a bar he hasn't been to yet. He reads some more information about it on the company's page. Upon reading the page, he notices that two of his friends have added it to their social calendar for tonight. Instead of spending another Friday night at home, he decides to head over there to join them.

6.2 Key Requirements

Table 6.2: User Requirements for Social Calendar

User Requirements	The user must be familiar with Smart-phone applications.
	The user must have a Foursquare account.
	The user must be willing to share location-sensitive information with friends.
	The user must be familiar with searching and accessing information using keywords.

Table 6.3: Functional Requirements for Social Calendar

Functional Requirements	The feature must allow users to update their status.
	The feature must identify proper nouns and relevant keywords from a user's status update to determine their future activities.
	The feature must keep track of a user's past and future activities.
	The feature must allow the user to choose with whom he/she wants to share location-sensitive information.
	The feature must allow users to access information about a friend's future activities.
	The feature must allow users to join friends in their future activities or cancel it.
	The feature must inform the user if a friend wants to join them in a future activity or cancels it.

Table 6.4: Usability Requirements for Social Calendar

Usability Requirements	<p>Effectiveness</p> <p>The feature must allow users to review their past and future activities.</p> <p>The feature must allow users to view a friend’s past and future activities.</p> <p>The feature must effectively provide relevant and updated information about a friend’s future activities.</p>
	<p>Efficiency</p> <p>The feature must allow users quick access to information about a friend’s future activities.</p> <p>The feature must allow users quick access to information about a place.</p> <p>The feature must immediately prompt the user if a friend wants to join them in a future activity or has canceled it.</p> <p>The feature must be easily accessible on the application.</p>
	<p>Safety</p> <p>The feature must allow users to choose with whom to share location-sensitive information.</p>
	<p>Learnability</p> <p>The feature must have a meaningful and intuitive interface.</p> <p>The Foursquare website and mobile application must be synced together.</p>
	<p>Utility</p> <p>The feature must allow users to join a friend in future activities or cancel it.</p>
	<p>Constraints</p> <p>A user’s status update may fail to specify the exact location of the place and time that he/she is planning to go somewhere. Additional communication between friends may be necessary.</p> <p>Push notifications may become intrusive.</p>