

# Cowabunga!

A System to Facilitate Multi-Cultural Diversity through CouchSurfing



## 1 RESEARCH

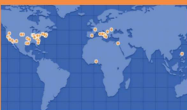
**Problem Identification:** We investigated many communities and discovered a problem related to diversity on the Couchsurfing (CS) website.

**Literature Review:** People prefer to be around similar people (Byrne, 1971) and not around dissimilar people (Rosenbaum, 1986).

**Digital Ethnography:** We created profiles on CS.org and reviewed over 100 profiles and dozens of group discussions.

## 2 IDEATE

We formulated our initial ideas and concepts based on our research findings.



## 3 VALIDATE

We posted a survey in a Facebook ad and had 39 respondents from 6 countries, and 8 respondents participated in a follow-up interview.

## 4 DETERMINE DESIGN GOALS

**Affinity Model:** We created an affinity diagram and identified the design opportunities, triggers for interaction, breakdowns, and key insights.

**Results of Affinity Diagram:**

- Opportunity:**
  - Direct to meet any couchsurfer
  - No hotel experience, no concern
- Trigger:**
  - Unavailability alert
  - Instantaneous meeting
  - Conveniently search interface
- Key Insights:**
  - Less documentation in last minute requests
  - Filming common in both couchsurfing & traveling
  - Google use mostly based on geography & time

**Functional Goals:** The two main goals were to alert CSers of other CSers in same vicinity, and to facilitate last-minute couch requests.

**User Experience Goals:** The two goals we focused on were to only show information when it is needed, and make the proximity notification a "Cowabunga" experience.

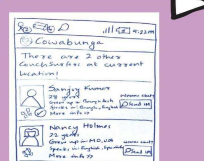
## PERSONA & SCENARIOS

**Pierlick** - The Consummate Couch Surfer (this host canceled on him)

**Serenity** - The Newbie (wants to meet fellow couch surfers for advice)

**Nick** - The Convenience Couch Surfer (wants to check out local CS activities)

**Xavier and Lise** - The Host Family (happy to have guests and help fellow CSers)



## 5 IDEATE

We sketched several low fidelity prototypes.



## 7 DESIGN

We designed a mid-fidelity interactive prototype in PowerPoint.

## 6 VALIDATE

We performed a heuristic review on all low fidelity prototypes.

## 8 VALIDATE

Five users participated in our remote usability tests using voice-call and MikoGo.

## 9 RE-DESIGN

We re-designed our prototype based on user feedback.

## 10 RE-VALIDATE

Seven users participated in the second usability test, 2 ethnographically observed in their home.

