Austin’s Town Clock

Projections

Digital Media Design Project #3
Eliza Barry, Lauren Claymon, & Rae Gibbs
Background

Historically, there have been many ways to orient people and create a sense of community and unity. One of the earliest ways was the medieval town clock, which formalized time for all citizens and created a synchronized sense of time rather than a relational one. These clocks also provided a common visual reference point for all citizens and created a universality of perspective for the community at large.
As populations increase and cities grow, modern environments can seem disconnected. People interact and interpret their surroundings in different ways, leading to mixed and diverse perspectives. This diversity creates both positive (spice of life) and negative (feelings of “otherness” and disconnect) outcomes for residents of modern cities.

In order to ease the negative outcomes of divergent perspectives, create a “town clock” to align everyday citizens of Austin to one (or more) perspective(s).
Display the past and future of Austin landmarks via 2D and 3D projections. Incorporate a website allowing people to preview the projection sites and plan their journey. Additionally, an app with similar features and push notifications that provide additional information upon arrival at any given projection location could also be developed.
The Solution in Detail

We chose specific sites with significant meaning to the Austin community that would also be interesting to visitors in the area.

- Pennybacker Bridge
- Threadgill’s
- The Driskill Inn
- Barton Creek Greenbelt
- Zilker Park
- The State Capitol
- Auditorium Shores
- Congress Avenue
- 6th Street
- UT Campus
- The Drag
- Clarksville
- Leslie @ Oil Can Harry’s
- Treaty Oak
- And so on..

These sites embody Austin and give residents new and old new insight into just how much Austin has changed.
projections is a digital art project that seeks to involve the entire city of Austin in creating an ephemeral timeline of the city, its history, and inhabitants.

Each week, the city is lit up with projections of photographs from Austin’s past, present, and potential future. The project seeks to highlight the ever-changing nature of the city by different images each week, allowing Austin and its visitors to experience moments of serendipitous discovery.

projections invites locals to participate in the project by submitting photographs of their own, downloading the mobile app to learn more about the projections, or merely walking, biking, or driving around the city.
Historical images from photo archives and personal collections are submitted online and selected for execution on a rolling or seasonal basis. Historical images will be matched with information made available via a mobile app with push notifications to enhance the experience for smartphone users. Users can plan a journey to see all projections in a specified order (or mode of transportation) via a Google map plug-in online and through the app.
Static photos are displayed on the site as well to illustrate the current gallery of images and allow users to see when projections have been changed.

In addition to historical images, users can also upload recent pictures taken at the specific locations (i.e. friends having fun on 6th street, a recent striking historical event at the Capitol) increasing their sense of connectedness to the project.

Further, designers, architects and futurists can also upload their visions of what the future will look like at these sites. This has the potential to greatly increase the public’s interest in community building projects and orient Austinites in the perspective of “where we are headed.”
photography

[Image]
Similar Existing Solutions:

*Road Trip app*

UT’s Advertising department recently participated in user testing for an Android App called Road Trip. This app used rough GPS location services to approximate when a smartphone user was near a sponsored location and used push notifications to give more information about what is nearby. For example, when walking down Guadalupe Street heading south towards UT campus, a push notification about The Love Goat bar would appear and tell the user the bar’s Zagat rating and specials.
Why Our Solution is Superior:

Road trip provides similar utility of letting users know what is near them and some interesting information about it. However, it does not provide the sense of community or depth of important information our app would. In addition, the user could not choose to map out a journey of sites they wished to visit and the information was only for sponsored businesses, usually bars and restaurants. While road trip does provide perspective on proximity to hidden “Austin-y” gems, it lacks the depth to be a real uniting force or reach across the digital divide to non-smartphone users.
Who We Are:

Eliza Barry
I'm interested digital and real-world user experience, be it an app or a party. I think structurally, but focus on aesthetics.

Lauren Claymon

Rae Gibbs
UX/I rschr.designr, MIS student, post-it magician, art/writing dabblr, culture, cook, trekkie, whovian, world-wanderer
Sources:

http://kutnews.org/post/getting-home-safe-nye
http://www.flickr.com/photos/valerietexas/3205648247/
http://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metapth125158/
http://www.psiopradio.com/2013/02/
http://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metapth125166/
http://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metapth125241/
http://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metapth125235/
http://www.austinlibrary.com/ahc/green/images/PICA06970lg.jpg
http://library.austintexas.gov/ahc/photographs
http://rhinestonearmadillo.typepad.com/my_weblog/2012/03/leslie-died.html
https://mts1.google.com/vt/lyrs=m@228000000&hl=en&src=app&x=1871&y=3372&z=13&s=G