

Development of Eastern Region Travel Application

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ABSTRACT

Tourism has become an important sector that has an impact on development of country economy. In East Coast of Malaysia, there are numerous tourist attraction that recognized by Tourism Malaysia and there are many national heritages that are significance to many regions. Even there are many package is offer user have difficulties to choose suitable package because there are many travel packages with different price. Beside that the information regarding travel agents is scattered and user having difficulties to find suitable travel package based on budget. Regarding to the problem stated, thus the objectives of this paper are to develop a travel mobile application for travelers to book travel package based on budget and to manage information of travel agent for eastern region. This work adapt ADDIE model in developing the application. This application offer travel packages for travelers to choose for travelling to East Coast of Malaysia. Questionnaires have been distributed to get users' evaluation process. The result shows almost user satisfied with this application and it meet the expectation.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Tourist perception is important to a host country. Hofstede (2001) and Kaplanidou (2009) suggest that people from different countries have different destination's perceptions, levels of satisfactions and intentional behaviors. Empirical studies show that what and how tourists perceive a destination can affect them positively or negatively towards the destination (Beerli and Martin, 2004; Chheang, 2011; Woodside and Lysonski, 1990). There will be word of mouth about a destination spreading to friends and relatives or via social media. If positive perceptions are passed on to potential tourists, intending to visit similar place as their next travelling destination will be high. For instance, Reisinger and Turner (2003) find that if perceptions are favorable, there is greater tendency of choosing a product from similar alternatives.

The difficulty that travelers always have is to choose suitable package. This is because there are many travel packages offered with different price. The information regarding travel agents is

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also scattered. This is because there are many travel agents that do not practice online advertising and there are also travel agents that only use their website for promoting their business. Thus, user sometime having difficulties to find suitable travel package based on budget. There are a lot of packages available for user to choose in market. Therefore, by using the mobile app user can select any suitable package based on budget. Thus, the objectives of this paper are to develop a travel mobile application for travelers to book travel package based on budget and to manage information of travel agent for eastern region.

According to Bhuiyan et al (2013), the main tourism resources of Terengganu state are beaches, islands, highlands, hills, mountains, lakes and waterfalls, parks, forest reserves, arts, crafts, culture and heritage. Some beaches and islands are world-class and not crowded, which are appropriate for tourist attraction. This state has lush tropical landscape and nature, marine parks and wide variety of tree and food crops. According to ECER (2007), this state has good mix of royal, religious, historic and cultural heritage. The people of this state are friendly and welcoming hosts. All of these are suitable for potential tourism development in this state.

Tourist arrivals to Kelantan in 2003 numbered 4.5 million and approaching 6 million in 2007. However, the number decreased slightly in 2008 and 2009 to 4.9 million and 4.8 million respectively. It bounced back a year later to 5.38 million and in 2012 the arrivals were around 5 million. In 2013 and 2014, the arrivals were slightly reduced to 4.84 million and 4.96 million respectively. It was above 5.13 million in 2015 and 2016. Looking at the reassuring number of tourist arrivals in Kelantan, more attractions could make them contribute more to the state's income. To continuously boost up tourism in the state, the government agencies, private enterprises as well as the local community should seek the tourist's views of their interests and what they hope to experience in their visits.

According to Mohamad, R. (2012), Pahang is the largest state in Peninsular Malaysia and Kuantan is its capital city. Covering an area of 35,000sq km, almost two-thirds of the state is covered in dense tropical rainforest, making it a natural haven for Malaysia's rich flora and fauna. Pahang is bordered on the north by the states of Kelantan and Terengganu, on the east by the South China Sea, on the south by Negeri Sembilan and Johor, and in the west by Perak and Selangor. The Titiwangsa mountain range that forms a natural divider between the Peninsula's east and west coasts is spread along the north and south of the state, peaking at Tahan Mountain, which is 2,187m high.

Tourism is one of the fastest growing industry now a days and playing a vital role in the economic development of any country. In east coast Malaysia, there are a numbers of beautiful places and point of interest. Therefore, there are a lot of travel agents that offer different holiday package for anyone to pick. Thus, user has many options to choose based on their budget. By using mobile application, customer can manage all their plans on mobile phones thus they can make online booking for their trip to east coast Malaysia.

According to Alex (2019), a travel agent's role is to help people plan, choose and arrange their holiday. They will usually work to a budget set out by whoever is planning the holiday. They also offer advice and opinions on where to go and local tourist attractions, events and customs. According to Van Rensburg, M. J. (2014), the services provided by travel agents are still relevant and valuable. Value is created as a result of personalized service, agents' expertise (experience, knowledge and skills), established connections, access to deals and benefits not available to the public, as well as their ability to negotiate better prices.

Good travel agents should be in a position to customize the travel experience to suit the needs of each individual client recommending experiences for expressed needs. They also need to follow marketing principles and apply clear differentiation to meet the needs of selected target markets (Harris & Duckworth, 2005).

Customers today have completely different expectations from the customers in the early internet era. Customers want easy access to information that is relevant to their needs. Customers are able to be much more spontaneous in their actions, and they are often occupying

two different stages of the booking process at the same time. For instance, a customer may be reading reviews on TripAdvisor along with looking at a friend's recent experience with an airline. Customers furthermore expect instant access to searching information and have little tolerance for websites that does not display the desired information within a few seconds (Thakram & Verna, 2013).

2.0 EXPERIMENTAL PROCEDURE

Development of East Coast Travel App was developed based on Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, and Evaluation (ADDIE) model process. ADDIE model contains five fundamental phases such as Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation and Evaluation as Figure 1. This methodology of this application will be dividing into few stages. These stages will implement in order and details will be assigning to each stage.

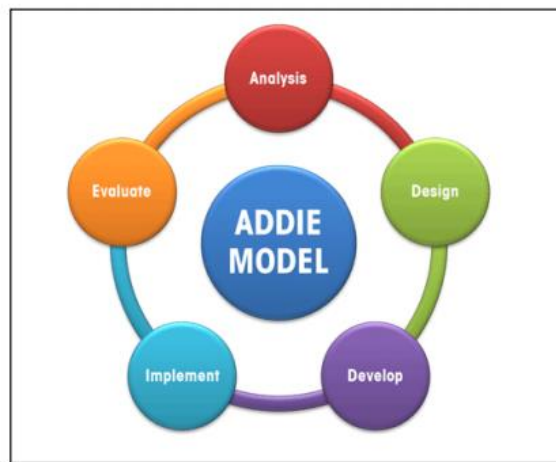


Figure 1: ADDIE Model Process

Kodular is an online suite for mobile app development. Figure 2 shows Kodular Creator Designer Page. It mainly provides a free drag-and-drop Android app creator without coding, based on MIT AppInventor. It brings lots of new features like new components and blocks. It also provides a free online app store to share and distribute apps and extensions IDE for advanced users.

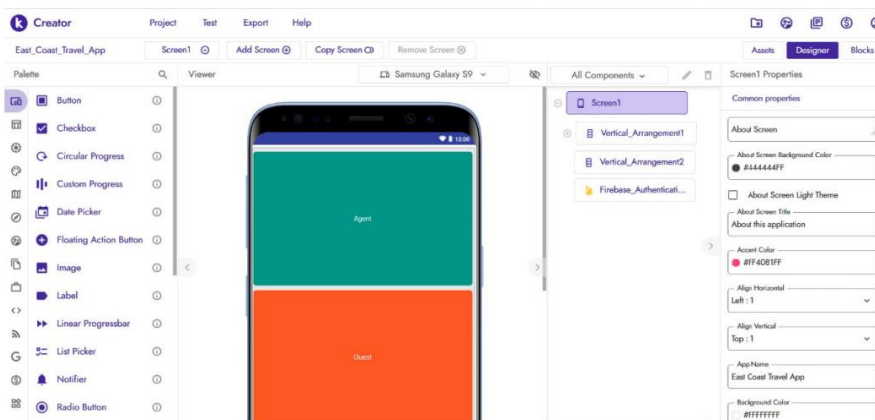


Figure 2: Kodular Creator Designer Page

This application will divide into two main modules, Travel Agent and Traveler. Each module have it own function. Travel Agent needs to login in the application and then they can add travel package within the application. Figure 3 show the process for Travel Agent.

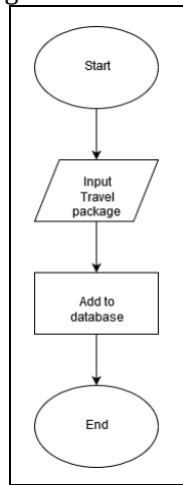


Figure 3: Flowchart for Travel Agent module

Figure 4 below show the storyline on how the process for agent to add and update package in the application. To ensure only the respective agent will add and update, this application will ask for agent to login and authenticate it.

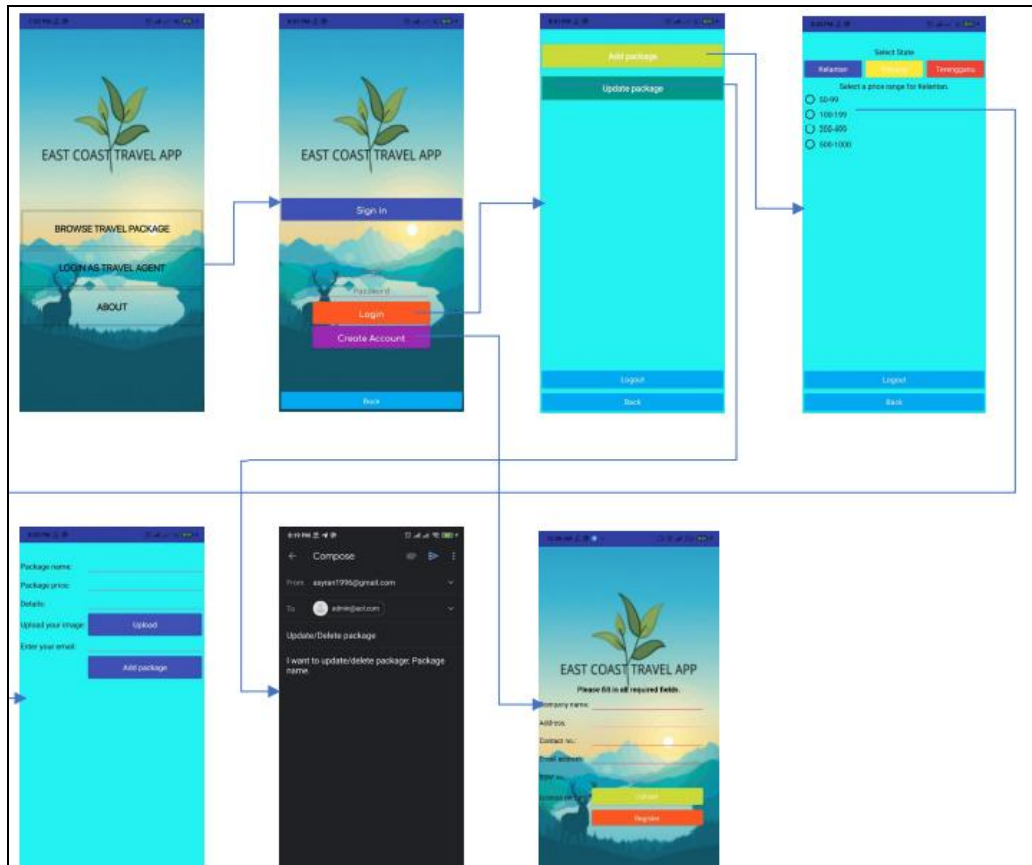


Figure 4: Storyline for Travel Agent

The process for Travel Agent is shown as flowchart in Figure 5. This process involves all users who use this system and way process that will be taken by the. The user will input their desired destination in the search box and the output will display available package. User can select and view details of the package. If the user agrees, they can book the package immediately.

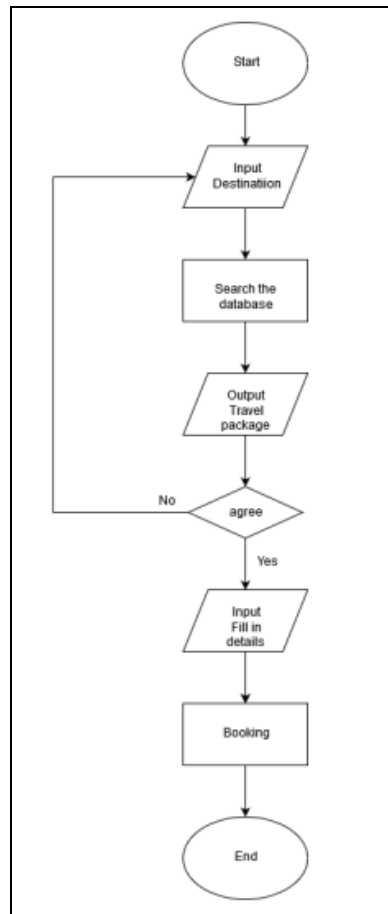


Figure 5: Flowchart for Traveler module

Figure 6 below show the process for Traveler. The travelers need to click Browse Travel Package in the home screen. Then the guest may click search button to find their desired travel package. The result will be displayed and the travelers can select which package is the most suitable.

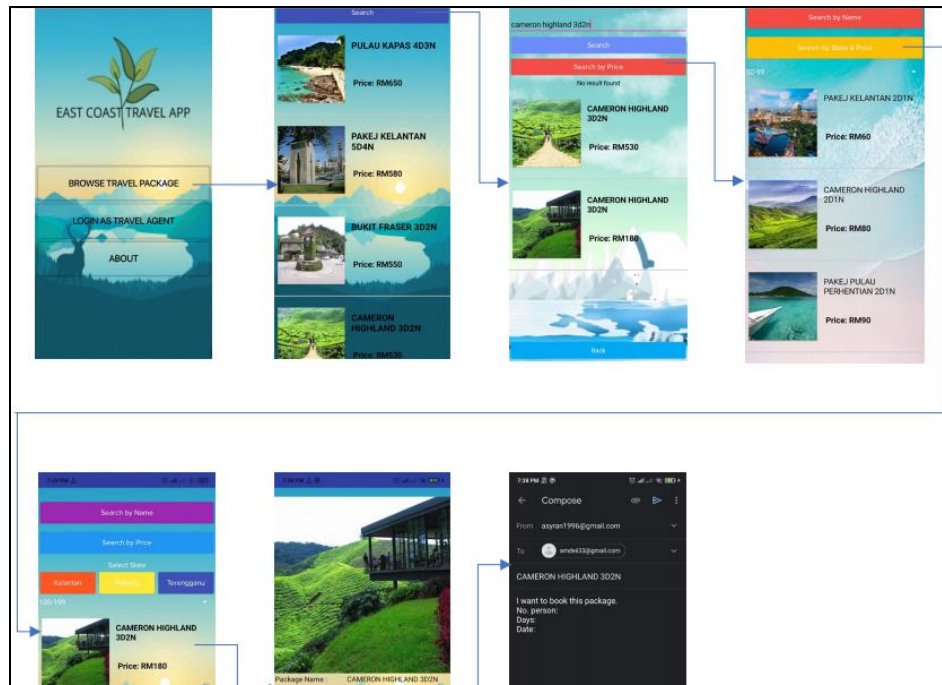


Figure 6: Storyline for Traveler

3.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To obtain data on users' opinion about the application's ease of use aspect, the instrument - questionnaire was administered. A total of 30 respondents participated in users' evaluation process. The respondents of the study were the users who had tested the application for the first time. These users were requested to fill out the questionnaire upon the completion of the application testing and rate their experience in using the application.

Most respondents or 86.7% find this application will ease their vacation in East Coast of Malaysia and 13.3% thinks the application will probably help them. The result is representing in pie chart as in Figure 7.

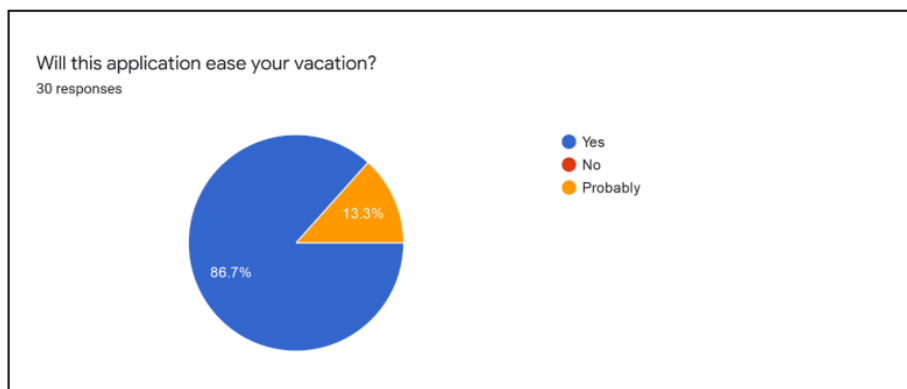


Figure 7: The ease of application

According to Figure 8, majority or 50% of the respondents says it is easy to find their desired travel package. 33.3% of the respondents find their desired travel package very easily and 16.7% of the respondents find their desired travel package moderately easy.

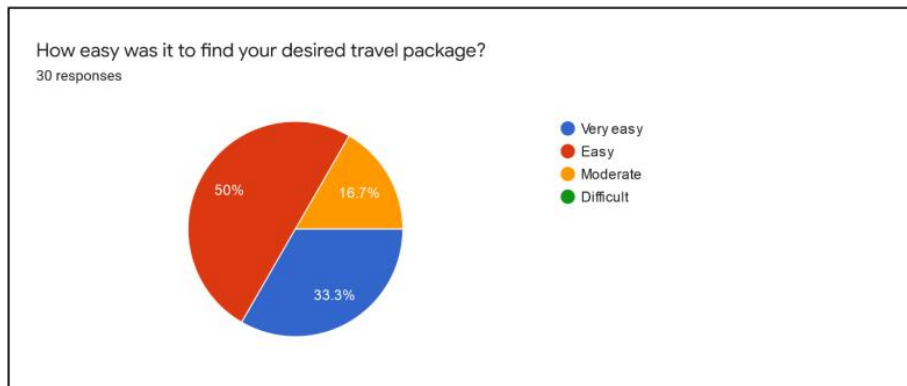


Figure 8: The ease to find travel package

By referring to Figure 9, majority or 80% of the respondent agree that the application meet their expectation while 20% of them agree that the application probably meet their expectation.

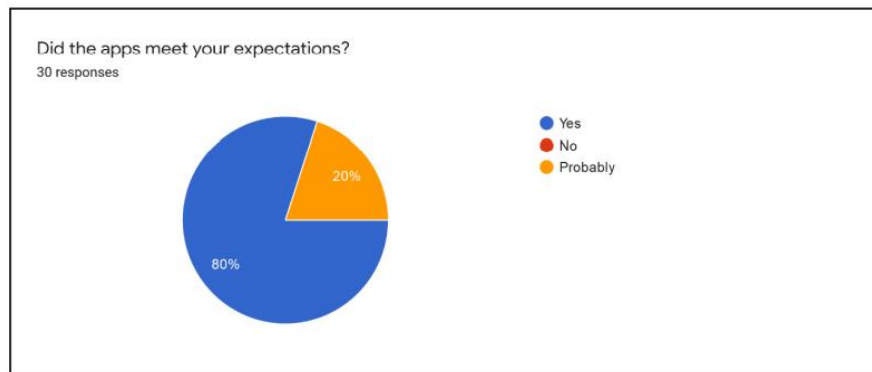


Figure 9: User's Expectation

Finally, the rating from the user for this application is very supportive where as 53.3% of the respondent give the application 5/5 rating while 46.7% of them give the application 4/5 rating as per shown in Figure 10.

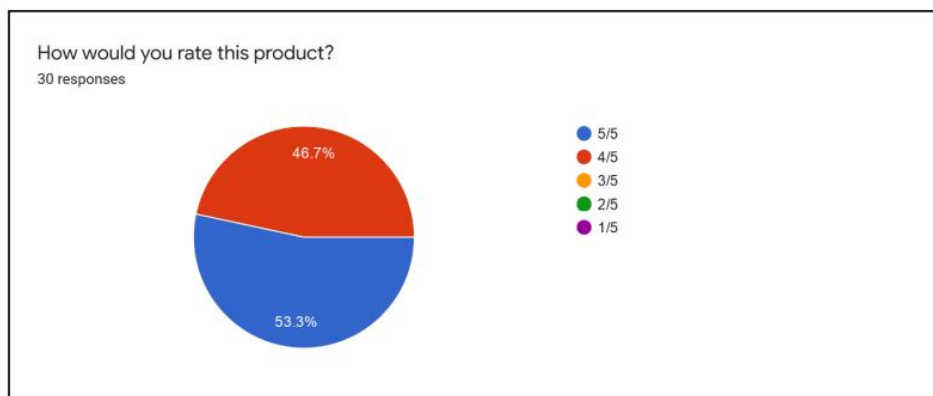


Figure 10: Application Rating

4.0 CONCLUSION

East Coast Travel App may help a lot of travel agents in East Coast of Malaysia to promote interesting travel package through this mobile application. There will be a lot of travel packages to be chosen with different price point. This will benefit travelers in time they want to travel to East Coast of Malaysia. Hereby, the objectives of the app are successfully achieved East Coast Travel App also encouraged travel agents in East Coast of Malaysia to introduce many travel packages that will contribute to country's income. The tourism sector in Malaysia will be booming with many interesting new places will be open to welcome travelers from anywhere in Malaysia.

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