ZEIT

Time Travel Tourism

DIFFICULTY LEVEL
HARD

Designlab UX Academy Phase 1 Briefing

Scope & Focus

Zeit is a subsidiary of Richard Branson's Virgin empire. After a long struggle with Elon Musk, Virgin has been able to make time travel tourism available to all. Zeit is looking at you to create their new brand, and set up an ecommerce responsive website in which they can sell travel packages to different times.

Project Background

The human race has been dreaming about time travel for ages. Now it's finally possible! Truly, these are exciting times to live in!

It hasn't been without bumps in the road, though. While the technology has been available for over a decade, international governments blocked widespread adoption due to safety concerns. Massive conferences of philosophers, archaeologists, and high-energy physicists have gathered to raise concerns about changing the past and its possible effects on the present. They also formed committees to explore safety protocols for chrono-nautical exploration.

After years of discussions and deliberation, officials in Brussels last month announced the International Concordance on Time Travel, giving Zeit a set of standards to under which they can democratize the experience of time travel.

A total of 289 destinations all over the world, up from prehistoric times through today, have been approved and finalized to receive people any moment. These destinations are selected because of their safety: separate from critical historical turning points, and relatively isolated from populated areas. Due to the need of control, destinations are only in the past. People will travel to controlled and extremely protected places. They are similar to what we know today as resorts, albeit with organised (and secured) trips to nearby cities and attractions, where interaction with locals will be limited. However, the travelers will be able to look at, and do things typical of the time, like workshop activities or attending shows.

Here a few popular time travel examples:
- A resort outside Vienna in the 18th century. Besides visiting all the monuments in its newest version, travelers can also see the first Mozart concerts ever.
- A Jurassic resort in Australia, with great access to watch and photograph dinosaurs.
- July 21, 1969 - the day Neil Armstrong landed on the moon. Feel the hopes and fears of an entire planet as NASA makes one giant leap for mankind.

The more specific a date is, the more expensive the trip will be, because the resources needed to have people in the exact same time are very high.[1]

Despite all this, Zeit wants to make the selling of the tickets as easy as possible. Think about what you know today as travel agency packages - something like that! Since it's quite restricted still in terms of flexibility, people will be able to shop trips like you now shop books or movies: find what interests you, read more about it, and make a purchase decision.

This will happen through the ecommerce site that you are going to design. Zeit wants you to think about the best way to display the trips, what's special about each time and space, and how to classify or categorise trips to make it easier for people to find the one that they like best.

How will the travel experience actually work?

It starts with the traveler choosing a destination on the ecommerce website you're going to design. That destination can be filtered by interests, time ranges and other ways you find relevant.

During the checkout process, the person will decide when in the present time they want to book, and for how long they want to travel. Once they made their decision, they will have to physically travel to the Virgin Zeit headquarters in Germany, where they will be sent through the time travel process to the time and space they have purchased online.

When they are in their destination, they will be staying in those resorts mentioned previously. These are maintained by delegates of Zeit working undercover in that time and space. At times, they work with a carefully selected group of locals who know their true purpose. They organize trips to the closest city, town, or attraction to allow guests to participate in highly controlled activities such as visiting a market or a monument, or attending an event.

Once everyone's time is up in relation to what they have purchased, they will be sent back directly from the resort back to their time.

High Level Design Goals and Objectives

These are the high level goals and objectives:
- Design a logo for the company that can be modern and historical at the same time: how can you reflect a modern technology with a link to the deep past?

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[1] Guests can only ever make <u>one</u> trip to a given resort; repeat visits would offer opportunities to meet past and future selves, and break rules on cross-time contamination. You also can't use it to slow time down in your own life--if you stay two weeks at a Zeit resort, you'll be sent back to your own time plus two weeks.

- Design a responsive ecommerce website that is easy to use and that allows customers to browse through all all different trip categories and details, filtering via interests and classifications you create.

Key Features

- The website needs to be responsive so users can access it from any device (laptop, tablet and mobile mainly)
- The website should be able to show all products (tickets to a specific space and time) with the right categorisation and filtering
- During the checkout process, the user will be able to select the day of departure as well as duration of the trip in the present - whenever it's more convenient to them, as well as understanding that the trip to the Virgin facilities is not included
- Although very secondary and low priority for the project at hand, the website should also provide information about how the service works in order for people to understand and trust the company

Brand Message

Zeit is time travel to the past - for now. The brand should be:
- Modern and fresh
- Classical and historical

Should you choose this project?

Every project in UX has its tricky and nice things. Mirror, Kaus and Zeit are very similar because they are all e-commerce, responsive websites. However, the research is a key differentiator here.

Research in Zeit is the hardest, but most stimulating. It's a business that doesn't exist, so you won't be able to recruit users with prior experience. This is the kind of challenge that you will face if you work on any innovative environment, trying to create things that have never existed before.

The biggest difficulty here is to get information without mentioning "time travel". This requires an extra thought: what is really the core information that you want to find? If you're trying to find the pains of your users, you should make them think about current problems when they travel in ordinary ways, for example. When asking something around how they choose a destination, you may want to give them general classifications that could apply also to Zeit such as "adventure", "exploring new cultures", etc.

When analysing the competition, you also have to think further and find secondary or indirect competitors: if a person is planning a vacation, what other service could they use?

Final Notes

This is a fictional project, all the information above is completely fictional. "Zeit" doesn't exist at all. Remember also that this is a UX course, not a branding one. Therefore, you will have the time to create a logo, but won't go too deep into branding.