

STRATEGY

VolunteerMatch

A strategic implementation by Maria Sciortino designed
to scale VolunteerMatch onto a mobile platform



PROJECT

Bringing VolunteerMatch onto a mobile platform

COMPANY



VolunteerMatch

ROLE

Lead Designer

MISSION

Connecting Good People and Good Causes

BACKGROUND

VolunteerMatch is the largest network in the nonprofit world. With over 14.6M registered volunteers and 123.9K affiliated non-profit organizations (NPOs), they pride themselves as offering one of the most effective services for connecting people to local volunteering opportunities.

Presently, VolunteerMatch offers its services for volunteers as a web-based opportunity browser with filtering options for dates, locations, appropriate age groups and categories. With an average of 1.3M monthly visitors and a fulfillment need of 4.1M positions, there is an opportunity to expand VolunteerMatch's reach, engagement and retention of volunteers through exploration of a mobile application.

The focus of this study is to outline the strategy to bring VolunteerMatch's offering to a mobile platform while aligning with their business mission: *Connecting Good People and Good Causes*.

*This study assumes correspondences have been made between myself and VolunteerMatch to initiate the exploration of this project.

A High-Level Path to Success

1

Stakeholders Meeting

Gather a better understanding of each individual's wants and needs. Identify target user groups and key performance indicators for focused measurements of success.

2

Initial Research

Identify pain points in the current volunteer engagement process. Utilize user research methods to determine if there is a market need for a mobile application and measure initial defined KPIs.

3

Stakeholders Meeting

Present research findings and if supported by data and stakeholder consensus, move forward with VolunteerMatch application.

4

Working Sessions

Whiteboard sessions with key stakeholders to draft initial sketches, user flows and solidify app expectations.

5

Wireframes & Stakeholders Meeting

Create wireframes to present for stakeholder buy-in. Implement feedback, if necessary, until a consensus is reached. Begin development of minimum viable product.

6

Prototypes & User Testing

Conduct usability tests and user interviews with low- to mid-fidelity prototypes. Implement feedback with each round of testing. Share results with stakeholders.

7

High Fidelity & Stakeholders Meeting

Create hi-fidelity prototypes for sign off on UI and further user testing. Organize user groups for beta testing. Ongoing development.

8

Controlled App Launches

Internal app launch with stakeholders and feedback implementation. Controlled launch with beta testers. User testing and feedback implementation.

9

Stakeholders Meeting & Public Launch

Final review of testing data with stakeholders. Green Light for public launch. Measure KPIs after defined time period. Ongoing user testing and feedback implementation in updates.

STEP 1: STAKEHOLDERS MEETING

Identifying Key Players

Stakeholder buy-in is imperative for a successful project. Including them from the get-go and understanding their needs, in relation to the overarching business goal, will ensure everyone's voice is heard. With that, a sense of ownership and investment in the project. We will organize our key players into the following categories: Business, Engineering and Design. As the project progresses, stakeholders will provide their own contributions and feedback. Some will be more involved at various stages than others.

*Actual stakeholder meeting would shed light on any contributors missed. Source: [\[1\]](#) [\[2\]](#)

Business



Greg Baldwin, CEO

Source: [\[1\]](#) [\[2\]](#) [\[3\]](#)

- Expansion, reputation and impact
- Building technology that aligns with interests of NPOs & volunteers at scale
- Creating efficiencies
- Data-driven decision making



Julie VanDeLinder, VP of Services & Strategy

Source: [\[1\]](#)

- Enjoys upgrading processes
- Works directly with president on strategy & goals
- Creating & executing large scale projects
- Client retention & revenue growth



Kirk Schaper, CTO

Source: [\[1\]](#) [\[2\]](#)

- Strategy and innovation
- Welcomes challenges & complex problems
- Deliver social impact through technology
- Commitment to continuous improvement
- Active member of CTOs for Good



Scott Lohmann, VP of Sales & Marketing

Source: [\[1\]](#) [\[2\]](#)

- Business development and scalability
- Building and sustaining new markets
- Co-president of local education foundation
- Involved with external fundraising and charitable work

STEP 1: STAKEHOLDERS MEETING

Business (continued)



Amy Cooper, Sales Director

Source: [1]

- Customer growth, retention & satisfaction
- Client-centric for success
- Identify and expand new markets



**Samir Shah, Technical & Business Director,
Client Services**

Source: [1] [2] [3]

- Volunteer engagement strategy
- Maximizes social impact by connecting corporate clients with NPO volunteer opportunities
- Outreach methods: direct email campaigns, e-newsletter featured, social media posts, blog posts, webinars, and ongoing ads (with millions of impressions)



David Lake, Director of Product Management

Source: [1]

- Works with cross-disciplinary teams: Design, Engineering and Sales
- Creates consensus without sacrificing vision
- Increasing traffic and user acquisition



Basil Sadiq, Senior Marketing Manager

Source: [1]

- Strengthen and expand engagement & communications activities
- Serves as media contact and production of marketing collateral
- Helps corporate and NPO clients achieve volunteer quota goals



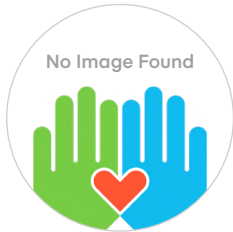
**Jennifer Bennett, Senior Manager, Education &
Training**

Source: [1] [2] [3]

- Needs of NPOs and volunteers are front and center
- Formalize & manage volunteer engagement program
- Better recruitment of volunteers
- Engage volunteers with meaningful work: measurable impact, collaborative outcomes, matching passions and talents

STEP 1: STAKEHOLDERS MEETING

Engineering



Judy (Huimin) Guo, Lead Software Engineer

Source: [1]

- Large-scale projects and data analysis
- Works closely with UX team to ensure alignment
- Dedicated to project deliverables within timeline



Henry Liu, Senior Front-End Engineer

Source: [1]

- Performance and speed
- Contribution to design system
- User-centered focus in design, technology & information



John Rackwitz, Senior Engineer

Source: [1]

- Data security & encryption
- Key player in engineering

Design



Ayçin Çaki, UX/UI Designer

Source: [1]

- User research and usability testing
- Crafts solutions for product integration
- Improvement of volunteer engagement platform



Maria Sciortino, Design Lead

Source (self): [1]

- Aligning user experience strategy with business goals
- Establishing, driving and articulating visions
- Cross-disciplinary communications and engagement, an advocate for all voices feeling heard
- Mapping design decisions with KPIs for measured success

STEP 1: STAKEHOLDERS MEETING

Identifying Measurable KPIs

A meeting with the aforementioned stakeholders will reveal the true business goals for this project along with key performance indicators and targeted user groups. Common themes from initial stakeholder research include:

Volunteer Engagement

Scalability

Growth & Expansion with Technology

User Retention

Furthermore, NPO and volunteer needs have been defined by Jennifer Bennett (Senior Manager, Education & Training) as:

Volunteers

Opportunities that match their interests, skills and schedules

Non-Profit Organizations

Finding volunteers that match their programs, priorities and values

Assuming these business goals are true, the stakeholder meeting could align on the following KPIs for measured success:

1. User Retention: Percentage of volunteers that have completed 2 or more services in a defined time period. Volunteers that have returned or logged in 2 or more times in a defined time period. Target user groups:

- Registered and completed 2+ services
- Registered and logged in 2+ times
- Registered and completed ≤ 1 service
- Registered and logged in ≤ 1 times

2. Activity Sign-Ups (with fulfillment): Percentage of available volunteer opportunities versus filled positions. Compare login counts with activity sign-ups. Filter by fulfillment success – percentage of volunteers that commit to a position and fulfill their duty. Target user groups:

- Logged in and signed-up for activity
- Signed-up and completed
- Logged in and no activity sign-up
- Signed-up and no-show

3. Registered User Accounts: Average daily sign up rate (number of new user registrations over a defined time period)



STEP 2: INITIAL RESEARCH

Determining a Market Need

The purpose of this initial research is to identify the pain points in both volunteering and engagement processes as well as determine a market need for the VolunteerMatch app. We will also look to measure defined KPIs for later comparison.

There are a variety of user groups we can target with surveys and user interview methods:

Registered volunteers	Associated NPOs
Registered volunteers that have completed 2+ services	Associated Corporate Clients
Registered volunteers that have completed ≤ 1 service	Non-affiliated NPOs
Non-registered volunteers familiar with VolunteerMatch	Non-registered volunteers unfamiliar with VolunteerMatch

User interviews will be geared to identify any issues with the current web-platform’s search and filtering functionality & usability. Surveys will be structured to gather feedback on current and potential volunteer engagement options. In addition to user research, competitive analysis will be performed to discover other methods of engagement being utilized. As an added bonus, research findings may be implemented on the web-platform as well.

An additional measured test for market demand, complementary to user feedback, would include a call-to-action for the app on the VolunteerMatch site and in marketing newsletters (both of which report millions of impressions) – users that click this button would be invited to a sign up as Beta Testers [see Step 7].



STEP 3: STAKEHOLDERS MEETING

Hit the Ground Running

The purpose of this meeting will be to present research findings. If the data supports it, along with stakeholder backing, we will align and move forward with the creation of the VolunteerMatch app.



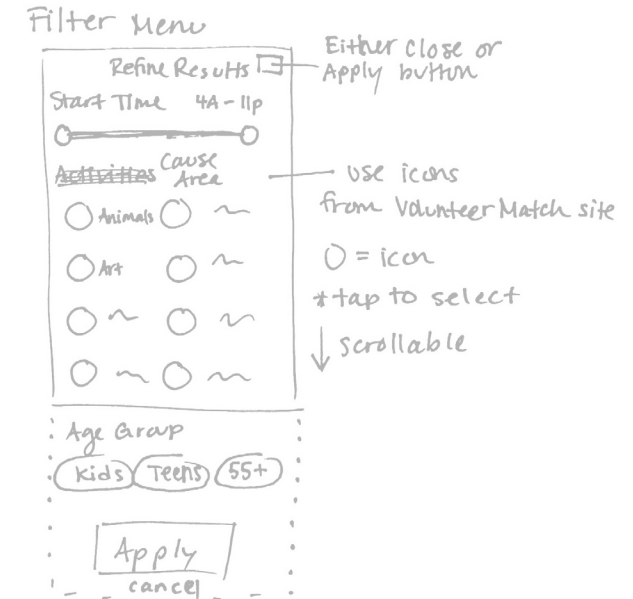
STEP 4: WORKING SESSIONS

Stop. Collaborate. Listen.

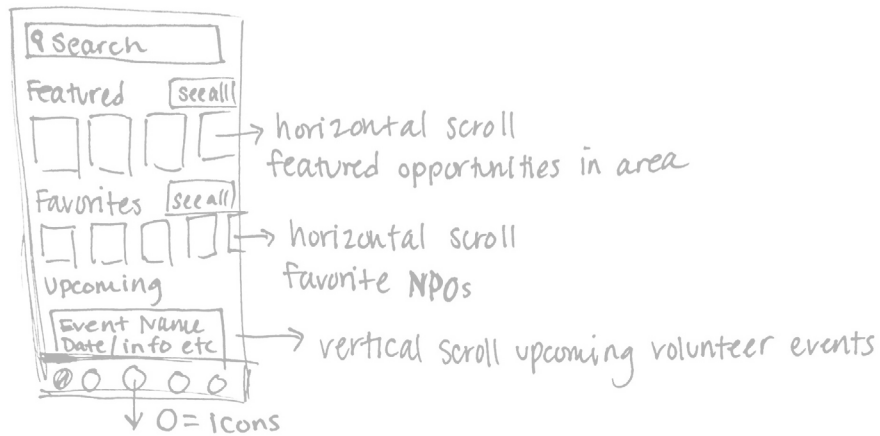
Whiteboard sessions with stakeholder involvement are designed to draft initial sketches, user flows and solidify app expectations. At this point we can define the minimum viable product as a team. Engineering can chime in on features that can be implemented right away versus features that should be held off for future app updates.

Hypothesis

An application will put volunteering at our users' fingertips, enabling them to quickly find new opportunities that match their interests and fit their schedule. The map will offer a more accurate representation of NPOs in the community and allow users to discover new organizations that share their values. We will see an increase in user retention and activity sign-up rates.

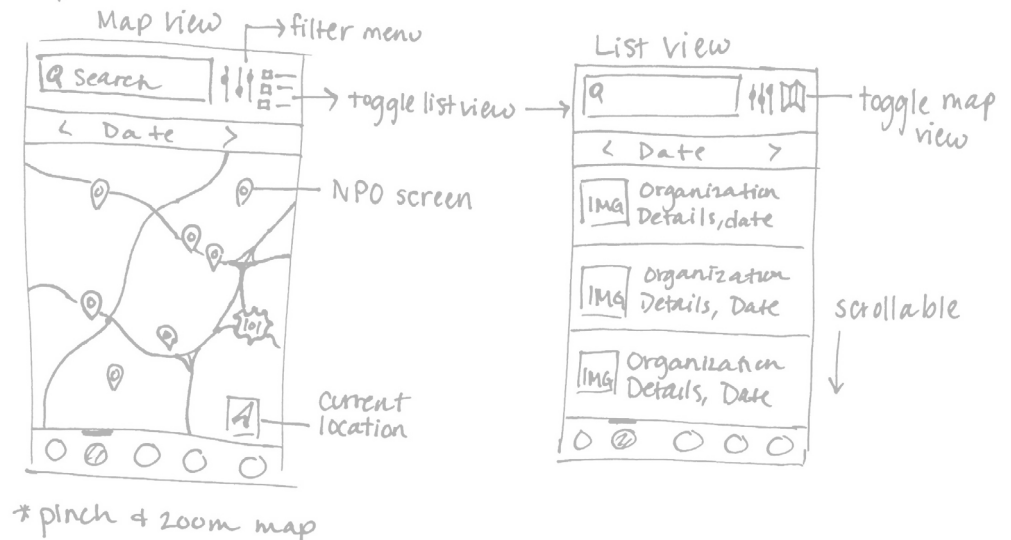


Home



Home Explore Schedule Favorites Profile

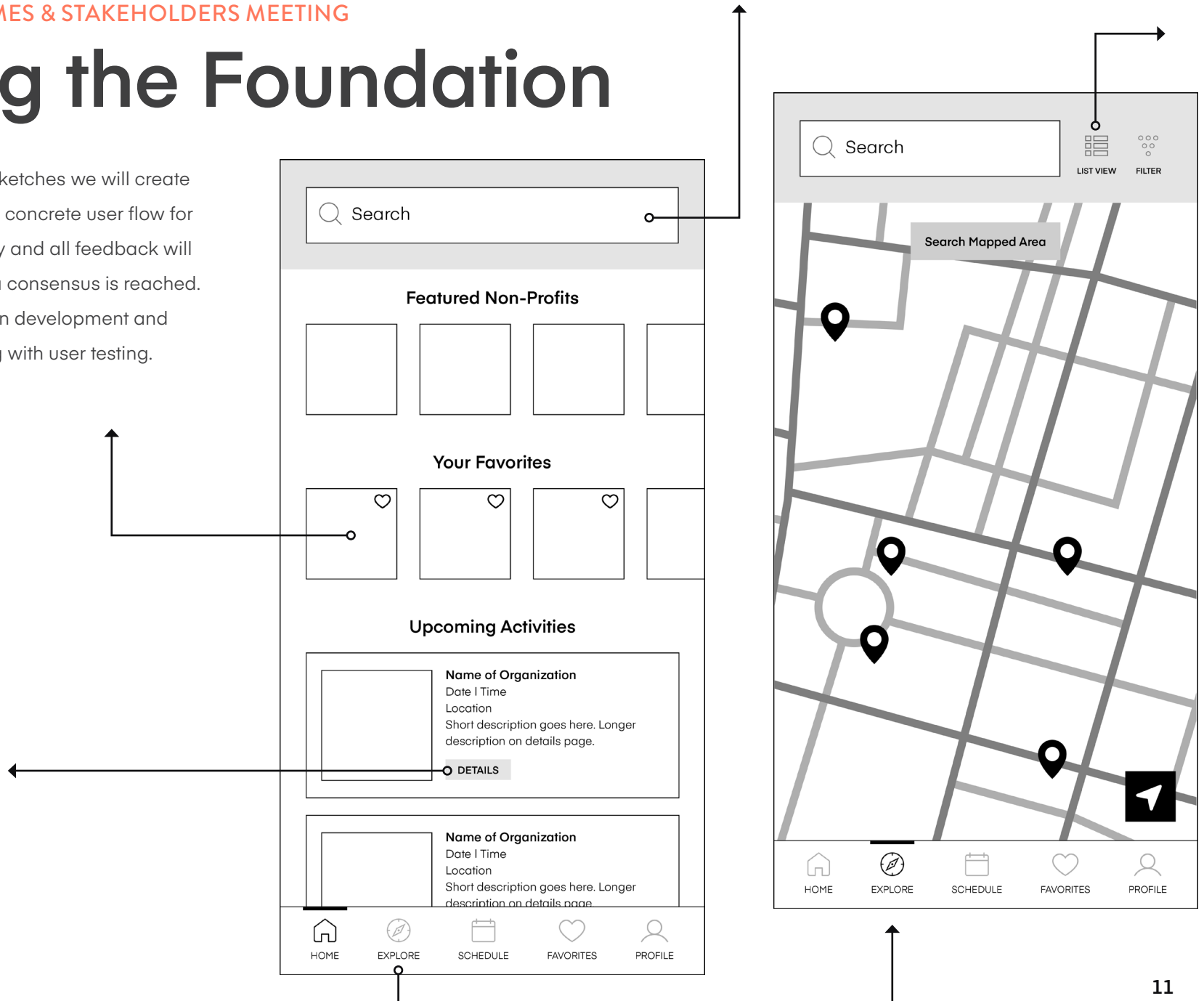
Explore



STEP 5: WIREFRAMES & STAKEHOLDERS MEETING

Laying the Foundation

From our whiteboard sketches we will create wireframes to outline a concrete user flow for stakeholder buy-in. Any and all feedback will be implemented until a consensus is reached. After this, we may begin development and move on to prototyping with user testing.



STEP 6: PROTOTYPES & USER TESTING

Fail, Learn, Adjust, Repeat

With wireframe approval we will move on to creating low- to mid-fidelity prototypes and conducting user interviews & usability tests. Usability tests will request users to complete some of the following tasks:

- Sign up and create a user profile
- Sign up for a volunteer activity
- Add 3 NPOs to your favorites list
- Find a local NPO that matches your interests
- Find a NPO in X category with volunteer activities on Y Date
- View your schedule and delete a volunteer activity

If we find discrepancies with user flow or confusing naming conventions, we will turn to card sorting exercises with users to ensure options in the app are clear and intuitive.

As results become available, they will be shared with stakeholders. Prototypes will continuously update through an iterative process while implementing feedback from each round of testing. Once the team is satisfied with test outcomes, we will advance to hi-fidelity prototypes in the next step.



STEP 7: HI-FIDELITY & STAKEHOLDERS MEETING

It's All in the Details

In this step we are looking for consensus on a hi-fidelity prototype. This representation will be the closest to the actual application so we want to make sure UI elements, color palette, imagery and the like are all consistent with VolunteerMatch's established brand image. With an approved hi-fidelity prototype we will continue further user testing.

While engineering continues development, marketing and client relations stakeholders can begin organizing user groups for beta testing in the next step.

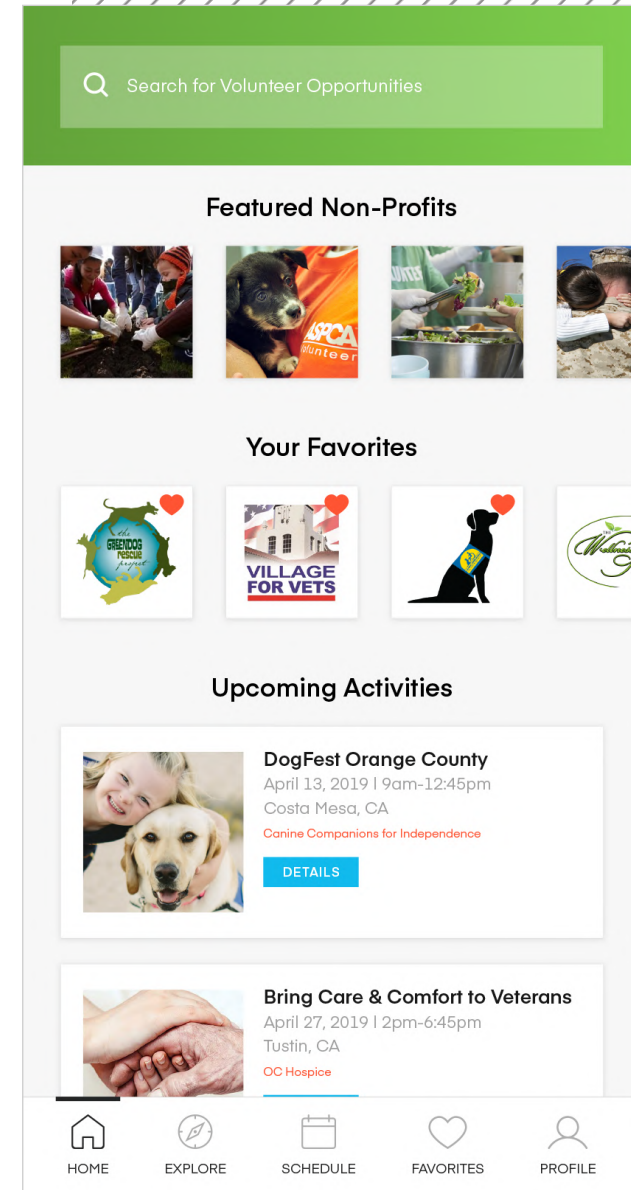


STEP 8: CONTROLLED APP LAUNCH

The Final Countdown

At this point we are ready for an internal app launch. Stakeholders will review, provide feedback and prepare for beta testing. Once feedback has been incorporated we will move on to a controlled launch for beta testing.

We will conduct user interviews, usability testing and surveys with our beta testers. As results become available, they will be shared with stakeholders for implementation.



STEP 9: STAKEHOLDERS MEETING & PUBLIC LAUNCH

Ready to Launch

This is our final round of data review with all stakeholders. Based on positive beta testing results, we will collectively give the green light for a public launch. Marketing efforts will be made to promote our app on the website, email campaigns and social platforms. Within a defined time period we will measure KPIs for comparison against initial values. As our app takes hold we will continuously improve it through ongoing user testing and feedback implementation in updates.

Future Features for Consideration

For the initial app launch, we did not look to implement many new features to avoid skewing volunteer engagement data. Subsequent updates could incorporate an array of features including:

- In-app monetary donations, in lieu of time
- No-show donation feature to increase position fulfillment percentages
- Social integrations and gamification (ranking based on completed volunteer opportunities or hours logged)
- App notifications of new opportunities that match user's search criteria
- Calendar app event integration
- Waitlist for filled volunteer opportunities



Thank You.

