
Interview Questions

Description of the Project

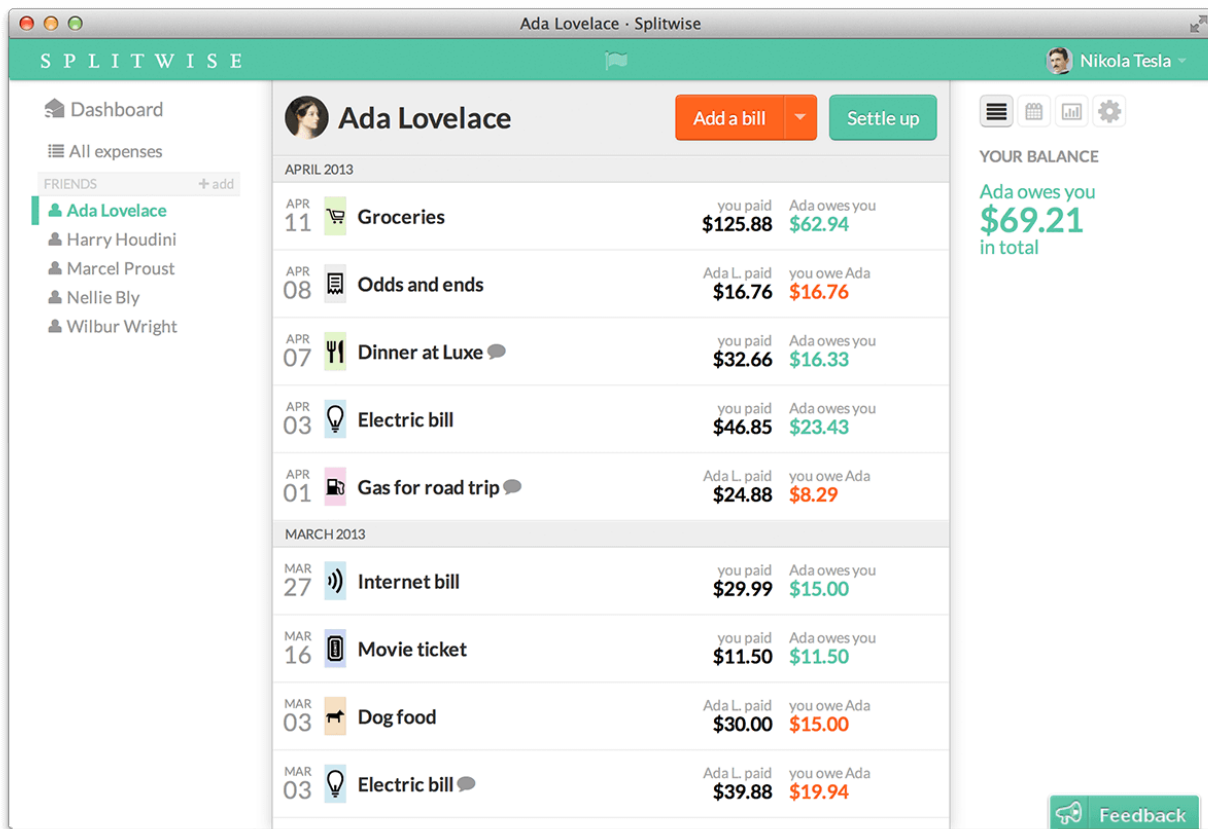
We're still at the very early stage of planning the product. For now, we want to create an app for roommates who are living together. We understand that it can be difficult to room with someone for a year because everyone is different, and we want to create a product that can facilitate roommates to address those differences. Roommates usually find themselves in the context that there is an imminent problem and they have to address it, and our goal is to minimize how many times conflicts like those happen through our app.

Competing Product



Splitwise [1]

Splitwise is a common app that many roommates use to divide expenses in the house. Splitwise makes it easier for roommates to ask roommates for money if they pay for a communal expense. They could divide up the money evenly, and can only apply the expense to some occupants of the house.



However this app also lack some critical features that many roomates need. For example, the app only limits to splitting funds. Roommates cannot set up chores for each other. They could not create roommate agreements with the app. It can also be boring to use. We are planning to create a product that gamifies the experience, and incorporating some slow design principles to make the app more enjoyable to use. We want to build a swiss knife tool that address all parts of the problem.

Interview Questions

1. Can we record this conversation?
2. Can opt out at any moment
3. If a question makes you uncomfortable you can choose to skip it
4. User personal info:
 - a. How old are you?
 - b. What is your profession/future goals?
 - c. Where did you grow up?

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- d. Where do you live currently?
 5. What do you look for in a roommate?
 6. How did you meet your roommate?
 7. Describe your relationship with your roommate.
 8. What are the similarities between you and your roommates daily routine? Differences?
 - a. Work/School/Sleep schedules
 9. What housework responsibilities do you share with your roommate and how do you divide them? Ex. cleaning, cooking, etc
 10. How do you and your roommate deal with the cost of living? Ex. Rent, buying household goods/groceries
 11. How do you address differences? Ex. religion, diet, allergies
 12. What do you like most about your roommate? The least?
 13. Does your social life cause you to have problems with your roommate?
 14. Describe a time when you and your roommate argued about something.
 15. How close are you and your roommate?

Logistics

1. Can we record this conversation?
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Intro

1. User personal info: (Blanked for anonymity)
 - a. How old are you?
 - b. What is your profession/future goals?
 - c. Where did you grow up?
 - d. Where do you live currently?
2. What do you look for in a roommate?

I think I look for someone with a good sense of communications, as well as someone who is cleaner on the clean side. I'm also looking for someone who's respectful, and someone who is friendly enough to engage with me but not get into my business.

3. How did you meet your roommate?

I met my roommates during sophomore year or freshman year through UW. She was in my mentor/mentee group (at UWL). I had been talking about how finding housing was super difficult. It was like a month before the deadlines so I was like, oh, I'm so stressed. And so she like we're getting a house with a bunch of my friends and we have an extra room or two, do you want to live with us? And I was like, yes. And then they had an extra room and so I brought in one of my other friends (Beep) from UWL who's also looking for housing. There was like kind of bridging in two different groups in seven of us lived together.

Follow up: So there was one group of people that you know really well. And for the other group you don't really know?

Yeah. So I knew two people and then the other five were people I had no idea who they were. The first time I met them was when we toured the house, and we signed the lease that day, which was crazy, but it worked out.

4. Describe your relationship with your roommate.

It used to be a lot better. Now it's kind of a little bit more strained. There has been a little bit of tension recently. We had an issue with partners staying over and to the point where I felt like I was living with four people instead of two people. So I had a conversation with them and it was kind of tense. I was like, Hey, can we not have partners here so much? Since then I feel like things have gotten a little bit weird. I don't really talk to my housemates as much as we used to. I also had mentioned to them that I felt they're taking advantage of me because I always cleaned and they never cleaned and then nothing's really changed since then. So I've been getting kind of frustrated. Um, and the two of them haven't really engaged with me. We used to be really good friends and we lived with each other for the past, like three years, but I think since they've gotten their partners, they've been spending more time with their partners and don't really talk to me. For one of my housemates, I don't think I said a word to her in three weeks. When I got back home from spring break I was gone for two weeks and she didn't acknowledge, or she still has yet to acknowledge me. So that's been interesting to see, like how our dynamics have changed. I think that like sometimes like friends can room together and it turns out great. And other times like some friendships aren't meant to be tested in that way, you know.

Follow up: That much be a really difficult conversation. Do you think if you guys set those rules before you guys even moved in, do you think that might make it easier for you?

It's interesting because we did, we had a roommate contract that we all signed because when you first moved in and I'm like, you want to make sure that these rules are set because our old house has the same issue with partners. So I was like, OK, let's make it like a four night a week rule. And then I realized that that was still too much. I didn't think about that. So we revisited the rules and made it stricter. I think they have been adhering to it more. So that was the difference.

Routines

1. What are the similarities between you and your roommates daily routine? Differences?
 - a. Work/School/Sleep schedules

I think that we all adhere to like a pretty regular schedule where my housemates work from like 8 to 5-ish. I usually get home around like 9 PM, so I think it depends on some days I'll get one of the same time, but we usually start around the same time. One of my housemates goes to bed at like 9, 10 PM, but then my other housemates and I go to bed around 12, 1. Sleeping schedules are usually kind of on track, but we don't stay up too late and like bother each other.

Similarities. We also all like to keep things on like a foundational level of cleanliness. So like dishes usually aren't a huge thing for us. We don't wear shoes in the house and the girls like that. So one of the things like that were pretty similar and then we all eat at the same time as well as most of us were like cook up the same time and like prep at the same time.

Follow up: You mentioned some of your roommates go to bed at nine while others go to bed at one. And was there any inconvenience because of that?

My floor is the ceiling of one of my housemates and I can hear almost everything that goes on in her room and so she's doing that pretty late. It would be like 11:00 at night and I can still hear her. So sometimes when like I'm going to go to bed early, that was hard and that I know that like my other house mate, he goes to bed pretty early, like we have to be careful about things like walking around upstairs and stuff like that.

2. What housework responsibilities do you share with your roommate and how do you divide them? Ex. cleaning, cooking, etc

in terms of chores, we have two Chore Charts. One of them, I think you've seen it. It's the one where like there's sticky notes. And so things like taking out the trash,

dishes, cleaning the dish rack, that stuff's like we do it on a rotational basis. Yeah, we really like it and that way not one of us is doing all of it. And then we have a chore chart as well where it's like take out the trash and dust, cleaned the kitchen and then cleaned the house linens and vacuum the living room. Yeah. And then we have assignments for each week that we have to do by Tuesday of every week.

3. How do you and your roommate deal with the cost of living? Ex. Rent, buying household goods/groceries

So for groceries we have a different shelf. So we buy our own groceries. In terms of like household things like toilet paper or paper towels and like laundry or dish detergent, so communal space stuff. We split the cost three ways so my friend would go to Costco and then she'll just be like, hey Venmo me this much. For rent. We divided it up by rooms so I have like a medium, the medium sized room, but I get my own bathroom so I pay 870. My friends live downstairs, in the smallest room, so her base level was like 790, but then she gets the garage for herself. So then she pays 860. We divided up in terms of like how much space you have and then also like to get your own bathroom like because the two people downstairs share a bathroom. So we tried to even it out that way.

Follow up: I bet she is the only one who has a car?

Yeah. Well two of my housemates have a car but one of them doesn't care that it's out in the rain. And my other housemate who pays for the garage has a lot of storage. So she's basically been using the garages like her own storage unit.

4. How do you address differences? Ex. religion, diet, allergies

So one of my friends is vegan, and the two other housemates are not. And so we try to be conscious of like, for example, cutting boards, like if we cut meat or anything on it, like we have to make sure we'd disinfect it completely or sometimes we have a separate board just for vegetables because some people get uncomfortable even with the idea of cross-contamination. And so we're very aware of that or it's like what do you need us to be aware of and like how does that best fit into your schedule?

In terms of allergies, my other housemate has a lot of allergies. We like try to give a warning if we're going to bake something that has like bananas or eggs or anything so she doesn't have to be in the room because then she'll go into shock. Yeah. So a lot of open communication, um, but then also just like asking a lot of questions about

like, oh, what do you need and what do you need us to do? Um, but we pretty much like understand like keep to your own stuff and like don't eat other people's stuff.

In terms of religious differences, religion is not a huge thing in our lives. Political views range I will say, but we tend to like talk about it to a point where like we can come to a mutual understanding and then once you start to argue about it then I'm like, we challenge each other but in a constructive way, you know.

Relationship

1. What do you like most about your roommate? The least?

I think what I like the most is that they understand I need my personal space so they know when I just need to be by myself and the respect to them, which wasn't something I had before. So like that's been really nice. Something else that I appreciate is that if I bring up something that bothers me, like they try their best to address it even though it doesn't always work. Like they don't dismiss it, if that makes sense. They're not like, oh that's a stupid thing to be upset about. At least try to affirm what I'm feeling. Something I don't like about my housemates is the cleanliness thing. I feel like they, we grew up in different cultures and different household roles. And so like I grew up in an Asian household so like everything was always clean and like my friend grew up in a house where like she wears shoes everywhere in the house and like never did dishes. Because of that, we have different definitions of what clean is. That's frustrating. Where I'm like, hey, it really stresses me out to come home to a place that's messy. And they're like, oh, but it's not messy. And I'm like, but there's stuff everywhere, you know.

Follow up: I bet it's especially difficult because you live next to the kitchen

Exactly. And I'm like, the first thing I've seen when I exited my room is like clutter everywhere. Like that stresses me out. So I do kind of get frustrated with that. Again, the whole thing with like, I feel like my housemates, the two of them have like, are still pretty close. But then it makes me feel a little bit more ostracized. The weird thing with threes where it's like, two people tend to gang up on the other? I don't think it's necessarily gang up on me, but I do feel like uncomfortable in some ways where I'm like, I feel like they support each other, but they don't support me in the same way, which is very difficult.

2. Does your social life cause you to have problems with your roommate?


So for them? Yes. Um, I got into the whole boyfriend thing because they would always come here and so that caused issues with me and I tried my best were like I only have people over maybe once a week if anything. Um, and I always give enough notice in advance and if they're not comfortable they can tell me no. So for me, not necessarily. Also because my partner doesn't live here, I don't usually have people over and usually when I meet up with people it's at another place, like I don't usually have them over. And so I guess it hasn't caused problems with them but it has caused problems with me based on like their social lives because for me home is like a sacred space and I'm like I really needed to be quiet. I need it to be mine. And so having people in my space being loud makes me feel more stressed, you know.

3. Describe a time when you and your roommate argued about something.

So this year it would've been the partner thing. In my other house when there were seven of us, we argued about one of my housemates being like very aggressive towards another housemate. Like she was not happy with this other housemate, but because of that she started becoming like, like almost physically aggressive in some way. She would push her a little bit. It looked like it was unintentional but like it was intentional and like she would completely ignore her. She would slam doors and be like very petty and very passive-aggressive. And so I had to confront her about it because it was like, hey, it's making me stress because I can't be in the kitchen when you two are in the kitchen or like it's making all of us feel like we have to take sides. Like the whole house was like really tense for a while. So I had to address my friend and be like, Hey, I'm really stressed out about this. It's not just about you, it's about everyone, like you're making this house really toxic. That was an argument we had to have because she was like, well this person did this to me and like she is a terrible human being and all this stuff. And I was like, yeah, but at some point we have to grow up and accept that like I'm going to treat others with respect. And so that was weird for me because I hate confrontation. But like that was definitely an instance of like us having to hash it out a little bit.

4. How close are you and your roommate?

Yeah, we used to be a lot closer. Nowadays, not so much. I don't think they have any idea what's going on in my life to be honest. I wish that we were so close and it's sad because I talked to (Beep) about this. She's like, you know who your friends are by who you celebrate with. A lot of stuff that's happened to me recently that are exciting I haven't shared with them because I'm like, oh, they wouldn't really care. We all used



to hang out a lot, spent a lot of time together. Nowadays we're kinda just like do our own things, you know.

References

[1]“Split expenses with friends.,” Splitwise. [Online]. Available: <https://www.splitwise.com/>. [Accessed: 08-Apr-2018].