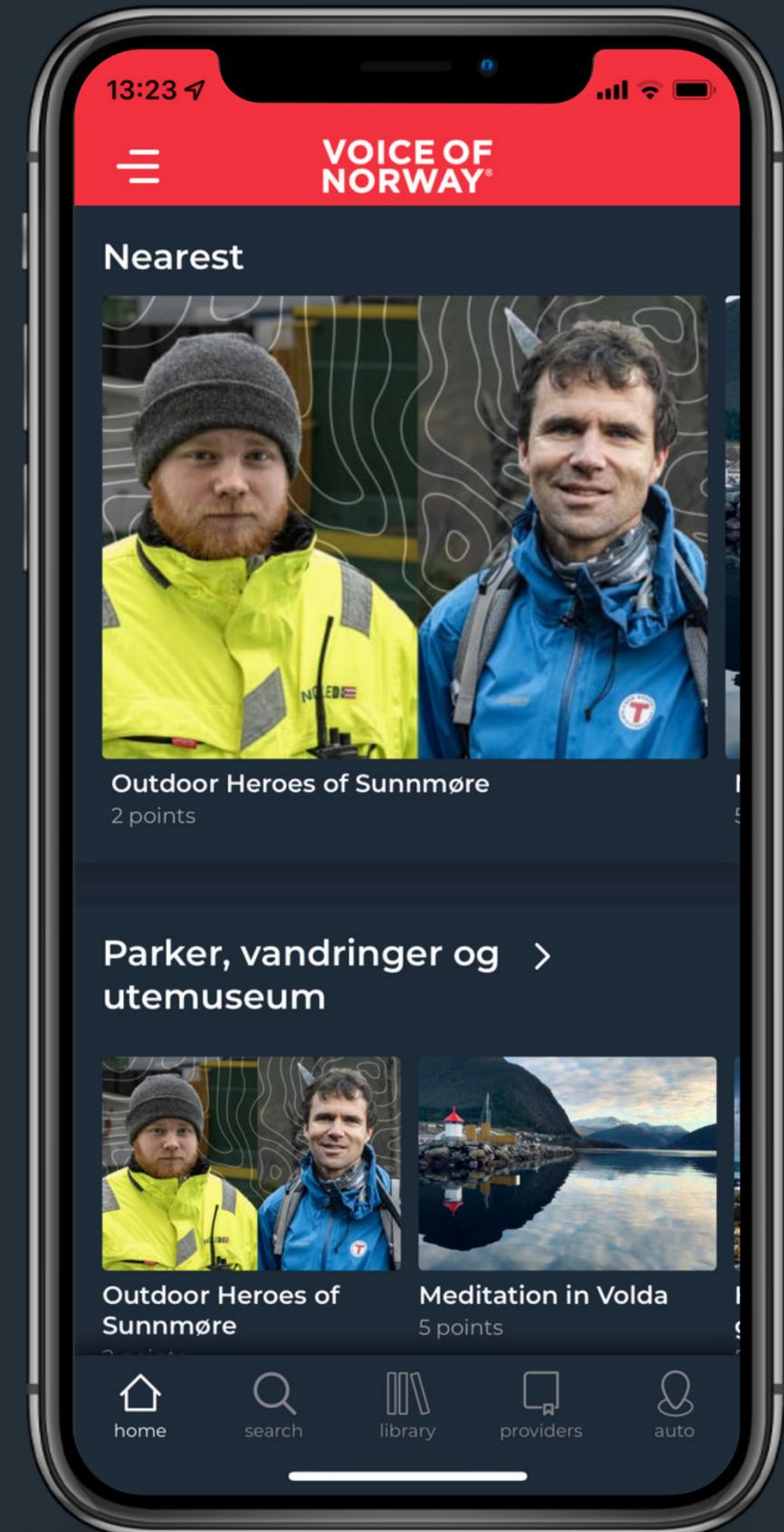


# Evaluation report of the app



Web Documentary (WD201) - spring 2022

Group 11: Andrine Wennemo, Tobias Juul and Julika Olpp



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# presentation of the group members

Andrine Wennemo



21 years old, studying journalism at  
mediehøgskulen i Volda

Tlf:+47 948 30 570  
Mail:andrinewennemo@gmail.com

Tobias Juul



24 years old, studying at  
mediehøgskulen i Volda

Tlf: +45 93 97 00 14  
Mail: tobiasc@stud.hivolda.no

Julika Olpp



26 years old, studying at  
mediehøgskulen i Volda

Tlf:+49 1578 2287431  
Mail:julikao@stud.hivolda.no

# Introduction

The app "Voice of Norway" aims to convey culture, history and sights in an intuitive way. In the work of evaluating the app, we - students at Volda University College have chosen to look at the possibility of also making the app more user-friendly. What we envision is giving the app more features that will prevent the app from becoming a "one-time experience". First, we have evaluated the existing app, later we come up with suggestions for improvements.

# Method

Our task has been to evaluate the potential for improvement of the app by testing it out ourselves. We tried to think about which areas could be developed and make the user want to visit the app more often. Therefore we have chosen to focus on how to personify the app. We have tried to find solutions that make the app easier to use, but also more connective. In addition, we have created several illustrations that will promote these ideas.

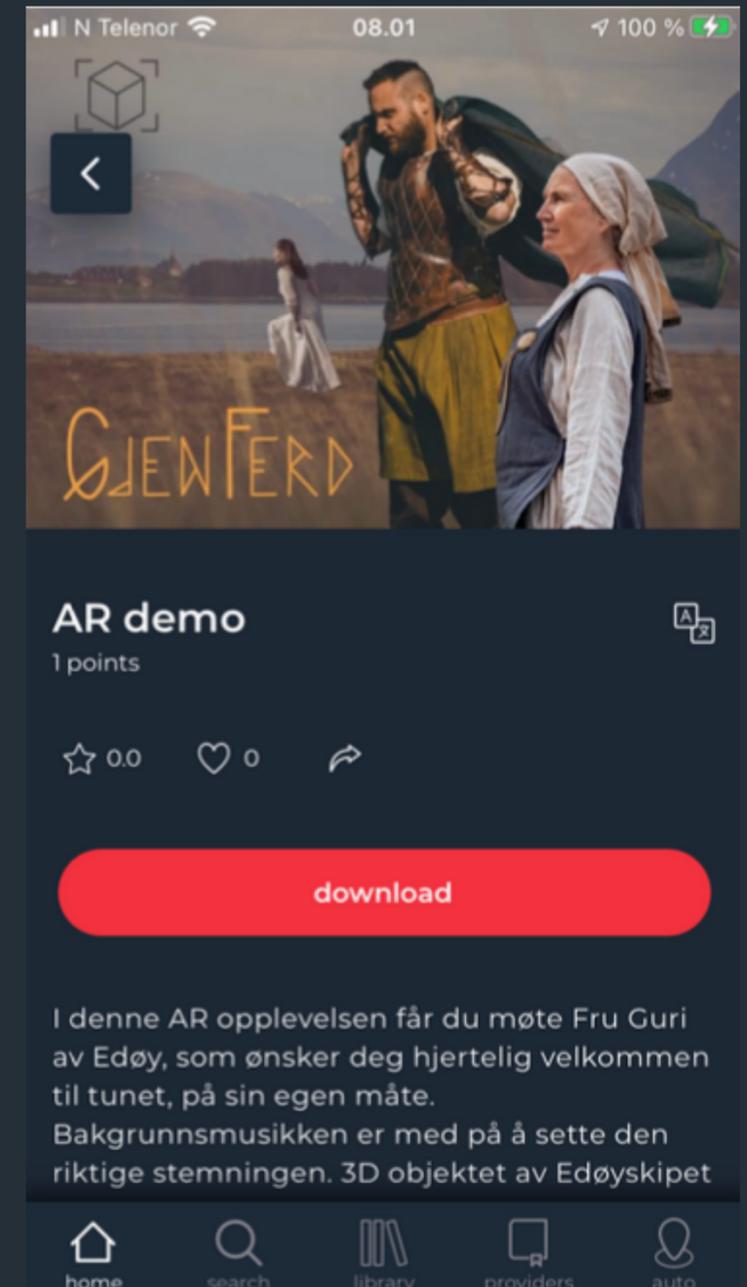
# Part 1: Evaluating the existing solution

## 1. User interface

At first glimpse, the app looks intuitive with an appealing home page. Spacing between the categories and different picture formats gives nice variety while scrolling on the home page. If the user lets the app use its location, the home page will show you the nearest stories. However, it is expected that most users would allow the app to use the location as the user expect location-based stories.

Users don't need to spend a long time using the app to find usability problems. There have been made many good solutions in the menus and generally browsing for stories feels good. But when the users find the story they want to experience, several problems appear.

When entering a story most users would click on the picture. But the picture is not a clickable element; instead, the user is being asked if they want to download it. What does that really mean, and it's not clear what you are downloading? That can be a barrier to many users as downloading content to the phone is connected to downloading new apps, music pictures etc. not many third-party providers ask their users to download content before it's possible to interact with it. The question is if it could be called 'start' instead of 'download' as the data is kept within the app.



# 1. User interface

To find out if the user does understand the interface of the app and also to have a closer look at how well the augmented reality works we used the rating scale by the Nielsen Norman Group.

## Nielsen severity rating scale

- 0 = I don't agree that this is a usability problem at all
- 1 = Cosmetic problem only: need not be fixed unless extra time is available on project
- 2 = Minor usability problem: fixing this should be given low priority
- 3 = Major usability problem: important to fix, so should be given high priority
- 4 = Usability catastrophe: imperative to fix this before product can be released

Usability problems	Description	Rating
Burger menu	Some of the elements does not seem necessary, and the importance of these elements does not justify their priority in the menu	2
Where to click?	Best practice is clicking on pictures would lead you to a video, story, etc. but that's not the case here. You need to scroll a lot to interact with stories	3
Links	Scrolling and other links distract the reader from the story, and the question is if the user would click on the links?	2
Download	To interact with stories you need to download? It's not clear what's happening when you click download and is it nessecary to call the element 'download'?	2

Usability problems	Description	Rating
AR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Too much to read</li> <li>- Sound doesn't play when phone is on silent mode</li> <li>- Screen locks before video is over</li> <li>- You can't continue but needs to return</li> </ul>	3
Search menu?	The recommended elements in the search menu should have explanatory pictures instead of grey boxes	2
Providers	<p>Does the user understand what the provider's menu is?</p> <p>Before clicking on it you don't really know what to expect in that menu</p>	2
Search option	The searching option is not clear for English speaking people: do not get if it is about places?	2

## 2. Pedagogical functionalities

To find out and evaluate what kind of content is shown and how well it does communicate we stepped systematically through the options and features of the app by using the walkthrough method.

### The vision of the App Voice of Norway

**Purpose:** To tell people stories about places around Norway in interactive ways. Gathering stories through different providers. And also be a platform where everybody can tell and share a story about a specific place.

**Target user base:** History interested, curious people, who want to learn something about stories and places around them (18-60 years).  
→ hard for kids to navigate through the app because the structure is quite complicated and packed with information.

#### Scenarios of use:

- On holidays, while driving through different places and wanting to get to know the area more deeply.
- Exploring the surrounding areas from where users live in different ways.
- In schools, maybe as an interactive history class where kids can learn something about culture and history nearby or on a school trip.

→ The app is mainly for people that are interested in getting more information, stories, and also possible activities about the area they live in or travel to. Also, people that are into exploring new places on a deeper level, will enjoy this app. Its purpose is the distribution of culture, history, and art through an interactive way (Audio, AR, video, maps, text). Combining learning and entertainment.

## 2. Pedagogical functionalities

### Operating model

Behind the app stands the company Experio AS, which is providing audio tools, location-based storytelling, and also tools for AR. The content of the app could be entered into the publishing tool by the company's customers, which are district municipalities, tourism stakeholders, destination and passenger transport companies. Different tariffs offer different opportunities that have to be paid monthly. The information about the prices is only written on the website, not on the app that should be changed.

### Governance

The user can find information about the General Data Protection Regulation in the burger menu. The most important points about collecting personal information and for how long it will be stored, are listed in a short, clear, transparent, and easily understandable text. That saves a lot of time for the user for getting a quick overview of the whole privacy terms. There is also the option to access the full document of the privacy policy.

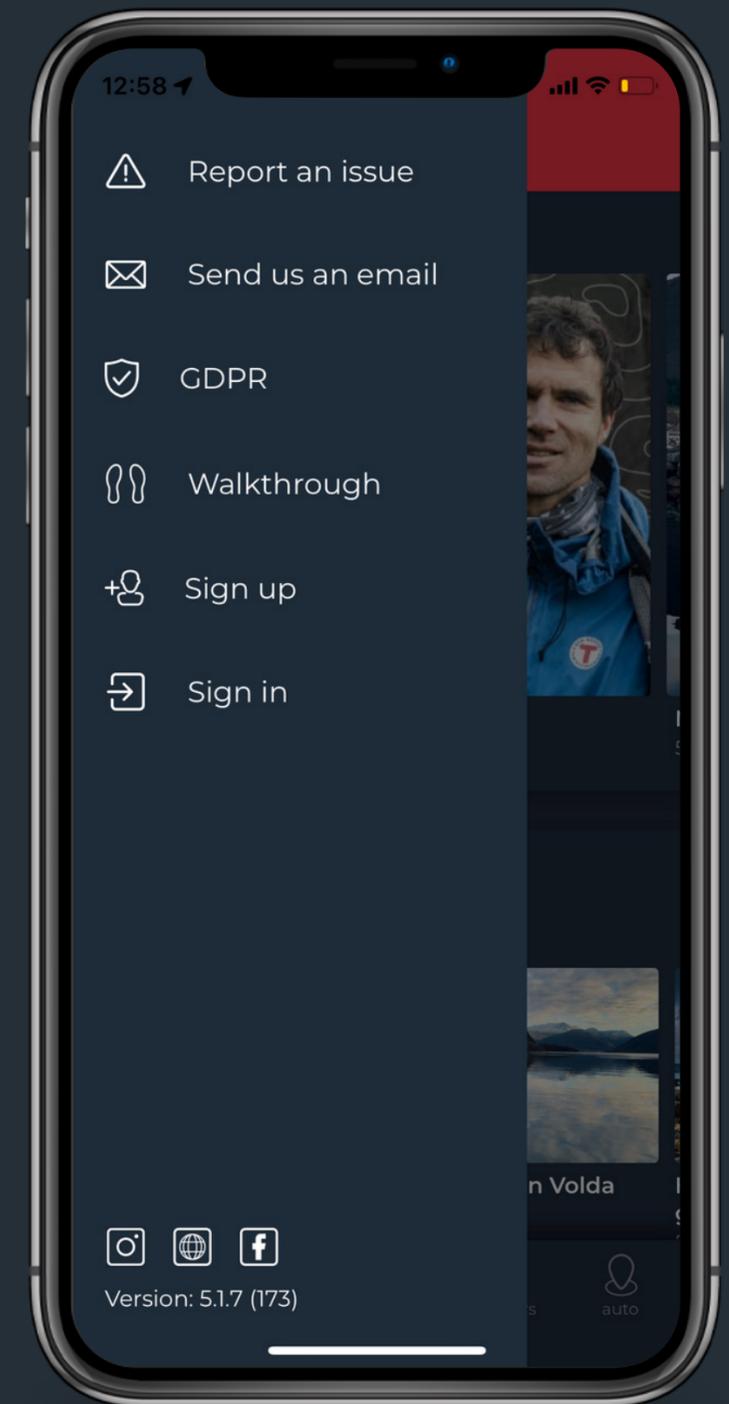


## 2. Pedagogical functionalities

### Registration and entry

The first thing that appears by opening the app is the request for access to the user's actual location. It is not necessary to sign up for using the app. By clicking on the burger menu it is possible to sign in with the user's Apple or Google accounts. It is a bit confusing that there are two buttons for signing up and signing in right next to each other but with the symbols, it gets clearer what is meant by the two options. First, it is not clear what benefits come from signing in, but through clicking the menu it is shown that the user can save some favorites when signed in. The signing-in option could be improved to build a stronger connection to the user and to tie them to the app. We will come back to this with some ideas later in the report.

There is also an offered option of a walkthrough that explains the most important features and options that are available in easy steps and short text. A really helpful overview that provides a quick understanding. The app's starting page is built of different boxes with headlines that are all in Norwegian. For English-speaking people, it is really hard to understand the individual topics. The whole home page is a bit cluttered by topics and it takes time to get what it is all about. There is no vision text or claim that explains to the users what the main goal or purpose of the app is. Maybe there could be just one short sentence to give the user a better understanding.



## 2. Pedagogical functionalities

### Registration and entry

It is not difficult to see the Voice of Norway's structuring as it uses navigation through tightly organized headlines and images to guide users. Nevertheless, the start page seems a bit cluttered and the user has to scroll a lot.

### What we noticed while walking through the app:

- The headlines on the starting page offer a structured guideline through the app but there is no additional introduction text about what the user can experience at the different stories, so it takes a bit of time to understand the structure and its individual topics.
- Two menus: one burger menu with "practical tools/information" and a menu bar at the bottom of the starting page: The navigation structure remains the same at deeper levels which helps with orientation. Maybe the menus could be combined.
- The searching option is not clear for English-speaking people. The language for the headlines should also be choosable.
- The provider's menu section is well structured, a short text about each provider would be an interesting addition.
- A great feature for road trips is the auto mode: possible to stream stories automatically by entering the geofence of the points. The user can decide between 14 different languages in this mode, which is a great offer. The auto mode is also well structured with different categories with which the user can filter the map's story points along with their interests.

## 2. Pedagogical functionalities

### What we noticed while walking through the app:

With tapping on a specific story there is a selection option for the language (Norwegian/English) and a summary is given about what the story is about. There are also well-structured story chapters. How well structured a story is, depends on the different providers, for example sometimes there is no English introduction text available. It might help to create a guideline about what items and aspects are necessary to complete a story for the app. In this way, there will be a more clear and similar structure for what each story should contain from all the different providers.

The app's aesthetic includes a dark grey background color and red as a color of excitement, to highlight aspects and actions. These two colors make it easier for the user to notice important icons and aspects. The dark grey background builds a good contrast and provides a serious and calm tone, emphasizing the app's intention of providing information and learning material about places, history, art, and culture. The headlines, text blocks, and the icons in the menu bar are all white, and if the user taps on the icons they are getting brighter, so there is direct feedback.

Something that we find a bit annoying is that every time the user goes to the burger menu and then wants to switch to the stories, the user gets the question for accessing their location again which can be perceived as distracting.

### **3. Technical and normative appeal**

Our work for the third method of evaluating Voice of Norway is based on the value model, through seven dimensions. This model helps to find out how the app appeals to users and its causes.

#### **Time spent:**

Is the app worth the time of the user? How can the app be experienced as important enough that the user wants to use it regularly? Several elements should be in place so that the app will appeal to the customer. Among other things, it should be easy to understand. Users tend to scan through important parts of the page quickly to determine if it is relevant to their needs. Good website usability is about making it easy for visitors to find the information they need quickly and easily. Therefore, we propose some changes in the design. Carefully planning categories, proper use of headings, subheadings, paragraphs, bullets, or lists helps to break up the text, and will help make it easy for readers to scan. In addition, a limited number of menu items may appear less cluttered. Another suggestion is to make it easier for the user to click on the various destinations/stories, which will save the user a lot of time.

#### **Public connection:**

The content of the app must help to maintain relationships with users. A user-friendly website should also be accessible to everyone, including the blind, disabled or elderly. These users typically use screen readers to access the internet. Ensuring that your site is easily accessible to on-screen readers will make the site accessible to a wider audience.

### **3. Technical and normative appeal**

#### **Participation potential:**

For many, participation is decisive for whether the person returns to the medium or not. Interactivity can be shown, among other things, by expressing their opinion about the product and contributing their own user-generated content. Voice of Norway is an interactive app in many ways where the user can create their own content, in addition to text, animation, video and audio are presented as a result of the user's activity. One suggestion would be to focus more on the user's profile that can show the places one has visited. In this way, friends and other profiles can follow which areas one has visited and gather inspiration.

#### **Public connection:**

Has the news medium been the price? The cheapest membership to the app costs NOK 490 a month. This award immediately strikes a large audience, and we think that a cheaper alternative will attract more customers' attention. For example, student offers, etc.

### **3. Technical and normative appeal**

#### **Technological appeal:**

We also have some ideas for how the material appeal can be prepared. For example, the right contrast between the background of the website and the content has a basic element that should not be overlooked. Good contrast between background and text e.g. black text on a white background makes the content readable and easy to read. The background is already quite dark, but choosing an even darker background for the white text can be an idea to make the font even clearer. Since the front page is the first thing the user sees when using the app, focusing on getting this page even more clear and easy to use will be a good priority. A way of doing this could be adding an item/category that shows the top ten stories or most popular places to learn about.

#### **Situational adaptation:**

We believe the App adapts to the user's time and place by offering several ways to discover areas. For example, Auto mode is designed to be used on car trips. There are also several options that will satisfy the user's desire.

## Part 2

# Voice Of Norway

## More than a one time experience

We believe it's important that the app should be used by each user more than once. We are afraid that many users will only use the app once as it stands now and therefore we have come up with some new solutions which will make the user remember the app. As the app develops and more experiences will be added to the app, the platform should be ready for a community within the app just as many other apps are doing. We think that many use this app as a social experience with friends and family, and therefore it should be possible to connect with them in the app as well. Therefore we believe it's important to strengthen the profile experience and add elements that can make you connect with friends and make them remember the app.

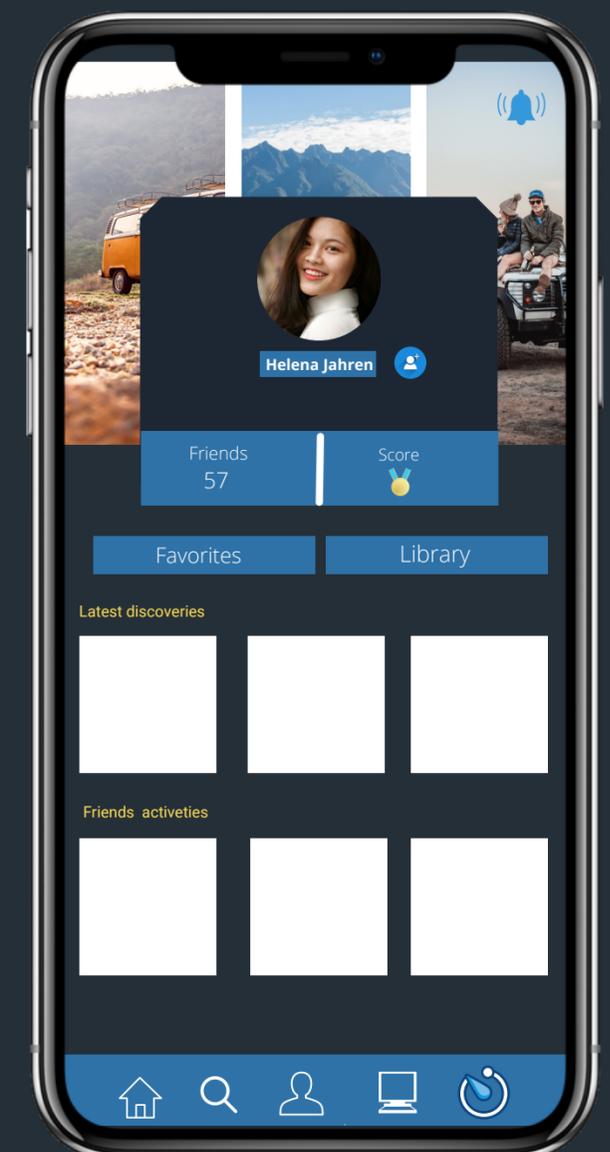
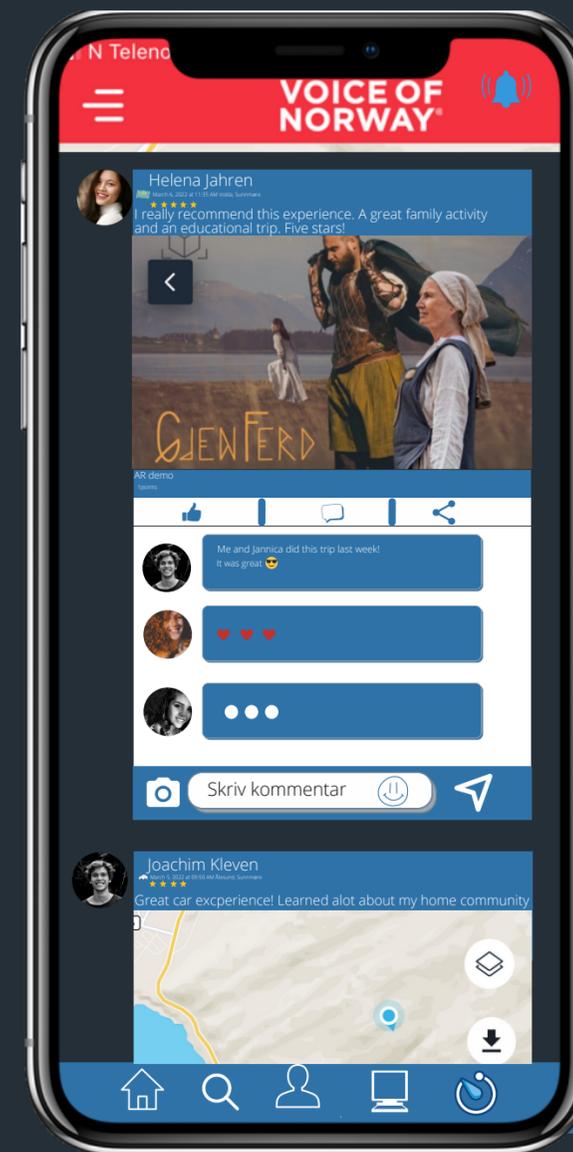
By strengthening the personal profile feature with functions such as connecting with friends, adding pictures to your experience, and commenting on others' activities we encourage a whole community in the app. By giving achievements to its users such as (walking 50 km.) (5 trips with friends) we make it more attractive to go on more trips and experience Norway with people you care for.

# Voice Of Norway

## More than a one time experience

Adding a profile will make the app more personal while allowing the user to form a network and a community. In this way, it is easier to keep track of which sights you have completed and you will get an insight into your friend's activities. On the profile, you will be able to rate the various sights and recommend them to your friends. On the platform, you can comment on each other's trips. On the profile, there will be various icons that are going to make the app more user-friendly. We will describe some of them.

- **Notification-button:** This icon will show new notifications when something exciting has happened on the app. For example, when someone likes or comments on the trip you have been on.
- **Add as a friend:** This icon will give you the chance to add new friends from the app.
- **Score:** Adding a score can bring out the competitive instinct of the user and in this way motivate the user to return to the app.
- **Sharing your trips:** By giving access to share the experiences you have been on, you can inspire more people to go on the same trips.



# Voice Of Norway

## More than a one time experience

### Walk and talk.

Many of the activities involve walking from a to b where the users need to entertain themselves or worse, losing concentration on the experience and having the mind wander. We want to encourage more presence. If the users are present in the experience with the person they are with the chance of having them using the app again increases. Interactive cards which lead the conversation will help the users to understand the experience and reflect on what they experience and also learn something about the stories and each other.

By adding the feature walk and talk we want to encourage the users to discuss a certain topic or question while they're on a trip. By adding the topic of conversation we have the chance to impact the presence of the users and that they will definitely remember the trip where they weren't thinking of bills and laundry at home. Instead, we want the users to speak with each other about it on a bit deeper level.

