



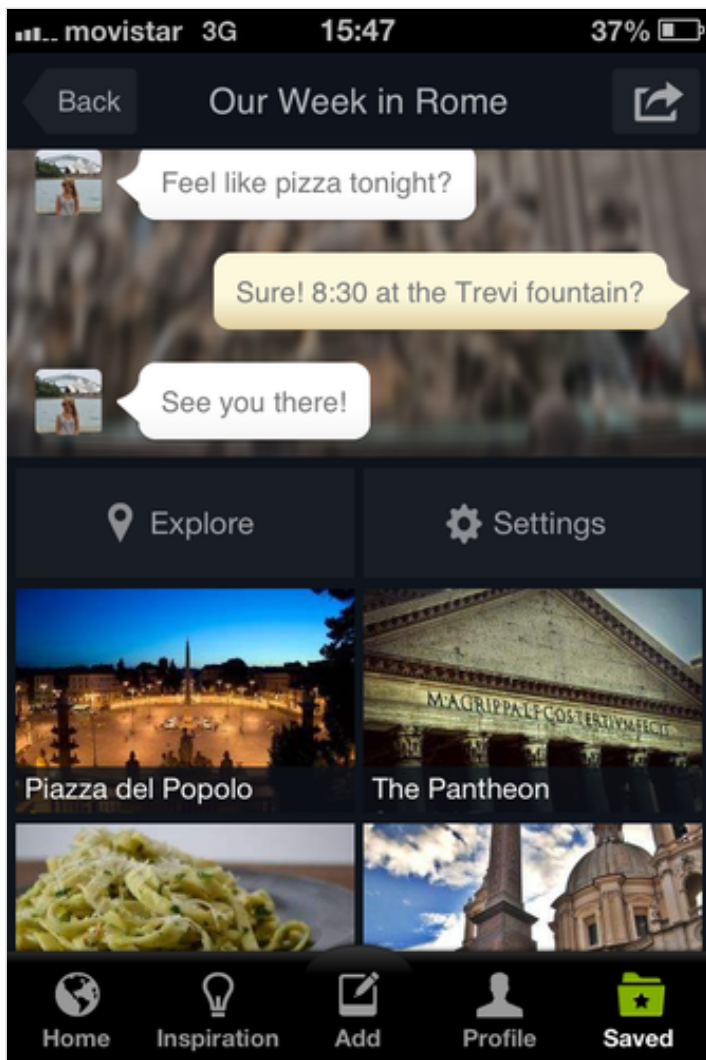
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Minube's Trip Planning Feature Just Got A Lot More Social, iOS App Gets Real-Time Messaging

Posted Apr 2, 2013 by [Steve O'Hear \(@sohear\)](#)



Minube, the social travel startup that focuses on inspiration for would-be travellers, has rolled out a nice update to the trip planning feature of its **iOS** app.

After creating and sharing a list of things to do and see or where to stay or eat — which works like a draft itinerary — any friends or co-travelers who have been granted access to that list can now message each other in real-time, making it a lot easier to communicate with the group, especially when plans typically change.

In this context, Minube's travel list making feature has the potential to become a hub of activity not just at the planning stage of a trip, but also during the trip itself.

Despite users creating 65,000 travel lists last year, either for personal use or to share with friends or the wider Minube community, after receiving feedback the company realised there was something missing. Because plans change, lists on Minube needed to be more dynamic, and that meant giving travellers the ability to communicate before and during a trip. In other words, the social travel app wasn't social enough.

“This way, people on a group trip can keep up-to-date about new developments, like a

change in the meeting time, a new restaurant to check out, or simply plan the next day's activities, without having to leave the list which contains all the places they plan to check out," explains Minube's Chris Pearrow.

The new real-time messaging feature works as follows: Users create a list by searching and browsing the app's travel guides and user-generated recommendations and content, and saving their favorite places. They then invite friends and co-travellers into the list, from which they can access the new real-time chat feature.

The new feature builds on Minube's goal to cover all parts of the travel experience and customer journey — from inspiration, planning, comparison, booking, travelling and sharing travel experiences upon return — though it tries to differentiate its offering from others in the space by **starting from the point of inspiration**.

The visual app enables users to explore destinations and discover sights, restaurants, shops, and hotels, based on various criteria like mood, distance from home, type of trip, and length of trip (and even favorite color). The source of this content is recommendations from Minube's community who have shared their personal experiences, including uploading videos and photos from their travels or local area.

Minube says it plans to bring the real-time messaging feature to the company's Android app, though, perhaps tellingly, isn't able to confirm that it will reach its Windows Phone offering.

Also new to Minube's iOS app is support for Instagram, Flickr, and 500px, so that users can access all their travel photos from within the service. To date, the company claims 600,000 registered users who have shared over 900,000 photos, 11,000 videos, and recommended over 500,000 places.



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