JoinMe GP2

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Introduction

We know that making friends or meeting new people is not easy for many reasons. The difficulty in facilitating events is also comparable. Multiple reasons exist based on what priorities people have within their lives for both event participants and organizers. Outside of these responsibilities, we have conducted a questionnaire with event participants and interviews with event organizers to implicitly learn what further considerations to take as we design JoinMe for both stakeholders. Responses in the survey and interviews have been impactful gradually in inductive design decisions. From both research methods lastly, translations of stakeholders' concerns are placed in our affinity diagram and clearly outlined in user stories.

Research Methods

The event participant questionnaire has focused on several factors that may link people based on their availability, events they are interested in, and other relevant factors that cause self-doubt about whether one would like to attend social activities. Thirty-one event participants answered the survey, consisting of people's current friend connections, event attendance, event learning approaches, event interest details, and a few demographic questions. As security measures, we ensured every participant's information was safe, anonymous, and private to only our studies, let event participants know the purpose of the survey, and stated their responses as significant for JoinMe's development.

For event organizers, we decided to only do structured interviews with 3 organizers to limit the repetition of answers and as part of physical restrictions. Questions can be loosely organized into how events are created, how events are marketed, and how successful the events and overall participation organizations are gaining from event participants. Interview responses

alone are more than adequate, as they have highlighted the importance of organizations' presence on JoinMe would be a critical factor for the solution's functionality.

Participant Descriptions

From our survey, we gathered information from a total of 31 survey participants who provided insights into their social dynamics, event attendance, preferences, and characteristics. The age range of participants varied, with the youngest being 19 and the oldest 35, primarily consisting of individuals in their twenties. The participants represented a diverse mix of occupations, including both students and employed individuals. Our survey consisted of 17 questions, mainly including multiple-choice questions, a few open-ended questions, and demographic questions. Due to time restrictions and general limitations to earning participation from event participants, all participants are likely have at least one shared similarity based on their occupations. The occupation demographic question is an important factor that contextualizes the time availability question that is previously posed in the survey. Many varied answers passed through the open-ended questions, though primary answers included how the content of an event was most important, people tend to look for personality first, participants are mainly interested in activities that allow them to be active-engaging, and that people are discouraged to attend events due to commutes.

For the interviews, we engaged with three individuals. P1, the president of the Drexel Gaming Association (DGA), organizes a significant number of events, attracting attendees through various channels such as social media, bulletin boards, collaborations, and outreach to other organizations. P1's focus is on expanding their reach and enhancing the marketing process, particularly through the incorporation of video content and clearer event details. P2, a leader within the Community Student Association (CSA), utilizes social media and incentives like free

food/items to attract event participants. They expressed some concerns about attracting individuals who are not part of the immediate CSA circle. The highest turnout for their events typically comes from friends of existing CSA members. P3 takes charge of event planning within their own friend group, relying on social posts and information sharing to attract attendees. They are satisfied with the turnout within their friend group and prioritize effective communication to ensure successful events.

Overall, event organizer participants provided valuable insights into different event-organizing contexts, ranging from larger associations to smaller friend groups, each with their own strategies and levels of satisfaction with event participation. Allowing the minimum amount of interviewees with a grand variety of organizational confidence has drastically allowed proper user stories to be created for event organizers, especially in ensuring that the bare minimum requirements to publicize events as key reasonably so. Without events for event participants to look for, there is no need for people to utilize JoinMe, even though the focus of usability rests on the participant stakeholders.

Affinity Diagram Summary

The affinity diagram we constructed was done in 3 separate phases. Phase 1 focused on group members thinking of features we should include within the app, either functional or nonfunctional, and putting as many of those ideas on the board as possible. Phase 2 focused on the group organizing these features into 3 distinct groups labeled "Events", "Profile/User", and "Communities/Social", following through with our "ideas about UX strategy and vision" (Pernice 2018). The final phase focused on grouping these features together to create a blueprint of our app.

Phase 2 created the 3 main themes that we based our final design around. The first theme, "Profile/User", was a way to sort features into anything that had to do with creating an account, adding information about a user, a personal calendar, and a recommended events page just for a user. Security was important while we diagramed and we decided that accounts are created using a phone number, to support multi-factor authentication if you are a device other than your phone, otherwise, you will be signed in. There are a total of 5 groupings of our sticky notes that each represent what is included on the "frame" of the app. These 5 groupings all revolve around editing one's profile, making friends/viewing friends, and the personal calendar that will fill up with events you have applied to as well as being able to show when you are free and not free to do an event.

The second major theme we developed was the "Events" theme which focused on one of our major features of the app. This turned out to be our most prominent theme which required a lot of grouping of similar or related ideas into one area. For example, the first cluster of sticky notes in the events category all have to do with the creation of an event and what details are required for doing so. The next 2 groups dealt with either picking a random event for you to join, or communicating with those in the event before, during, and after the event has concluded.

The final theme "Communities/Social" focused on creating friend groups and organizations, a way to proactively reach out to people to join events, and a general invitation to a group where you and 1 or more persons would all join an event together. The first grouping reflects the creation of these groups, which would be similar in function to other social media apps like Facebook, but also allow you to send out invites to other apps. The second grouping is a feature that will allow someone to specifically view other people's profiles and invite them directly, this may be more comfortable to users that want to know more about who they are going

with without having to meet them first. The final grouping contains a feature that puts an invite into a group. This invite is a "buddy system" where anyone who applies to this invite will apply to the event as a group once enough people have signed up for this intermediate invite.

All three themes lay out the major areas of the app and break down each frame we envision that will be required to display these features. We currently plan to have 11 frames in our design, but more may be added or current ones modified to better represent the findings of our data gathering. For example, a majority of our event participants indicated that time and cost are very important factors when considering going somewhere, so adding these options when creating an event would help these people decide if an event is right for them. Time and cost are not one-dimensional values to consider, as they both can be dependent on each other. To illustrate, event participants' time is not only regarding how long an event would be held for but for every participant, travel time, in both arriving and leaving and travel medium for an event. With how time is dynamic in mind, availability to attend events shifts further, especially as other priorities consume event participants' time and as participants doubt whether to attend. Individual users must highlight themselves more in order for ad hoc connections to be made easier. Lastly, individual attention and freedom of expression for event organizers as organizations matter equally as much as participants to receive and have thorough relationships to begin on JoinMe.

Design Requirements

Out of all 15 design requirements identified initially, most of the requirements assist with event participants' experience, since they are the primary users of our product. The remaining 5 as specified are for event organizers that allow for JoinMe to flourish, as their presence still signifies meaning behind JoinMe's initiatives. All design requirements are recognized as user stories, flowing through the typical 7 product dimensions in order first through participants, then

organizers. These user stories are not in order of how a user would begin and continue using

JoinMe, though some user stories can highlight those experience timeframes.

1. As an event participant, I want to chat with others individually so that I can discuss with them if they want to go to an event with me.

2. As an event participant, I want a calendar so that I, including others, can see when I am free to limit what events I could potentially attend.

3. As an event participant, I want to see available events so that I can learn what events are available to attend based on my circumstances.

4. As an event participant, I want multifactor authentication so that I am sure my account is secure from misuse by others.

5. As an event participant, I want to optionally share my phone number so that I can talk synchronously with others if I decide I trust them.

6. As an event participant, I want to access JoinMe wherever I go so that I can still find things to do, no matter where I am at.

7. As an event participant, I want text-to-speech to work so that I can listen to available events or content from JoinMe without having to read.

8. As an event participant, I want to optionally have location data on or off so that I could retrieve accurate results of what events I may be able to attend based on my availability and location better.

9. As an event participant, I want a quick introduction to using JoinMe so that I can get started in learning available events without confusion.

10. As an event participant, I want freedom with my own profile so that I can allow people to properly know who I am without restraint.

11. As an event organizer, I want to post an event so that individuals can be aware of the event I am hosting.

12. As an event organizer, I want to have an organization page so that I can collectively have all of the events that I am planning available for others to see in one location.

13. As an event organizer, I want a general discussion page so that people could ask about the organization I am part of if they have questions.

14. As an event organizer, I want an updates page so that newer information about any preexisting event I have created will be notified to those interested.

15. As an event organizer, I want a log for an event so that I can keep the data of who has attended my event and other statistics.

Both the design of the event participant survey and conducted event organizer interviews have had questions that did not imply the conceptualization of JoinMe. Given this, most responses help strengthen what previously defined ideas the JoinMe team brainstormed to fulfill the purpose of an easier platform to start new or continue relationships with public activities. Requirements 1, 2, 3, 8, and 10 are all broader based on event participants' answers to our open-ended questions, where one can talk with others, see their availability, have specified event results, and attract people properly to be acquaintances. Requirements 4 and 5 help ensure safety when using the app relating to events. Requirements 6, 7, and 9 are miscellaneous to ensure that the users' first experience with JoinMe is welcomed. Lastly, all event organizer requirements are designed to allow flexibility in having more attraction to their events and their organization.

Conclusion

Through our research, we have assessed and quantified the needs and difficulties of our

stakeholders, and studied these findings to understand how JoinMe can remedy these difficulties

and provide for these needs. A diverse group of surveyed event participants, as well as the event

organizers in their interviews, have helped illuminate areas of improvement for the design of

JoinMe that will allow event participants and organizers alike to fully reach their potential in

meeting, attracting, befriending, and joining new people. Details such as pushing participants to

let their personality shine in their profile to meet others and allowing event organizers to stress

the most important factors to participants like content, distance, costs, and demographics of

communities have been brought to light through this research. Our user stories, birthed through

this research, as well as the three distinct groups of improvements in our Affinity Diagram,

illustrate the ways we will be able to take this personalized data and apply it to the design of

JoinMe; this practice of surveying and interviewing for data and turning this data into abilities

and actions inside of JoinMe is what will allow us to achieve our pre-stated goal of remedying

our stakeholders' difficulties and providing for their needs.

References

Pernice, K. (2018, February 18). *Affinity Diagramming: Collaboratively Sort UX Findings &*

Design Ideas. Nielsen Norman Group.

https://www.nngroup.com/articles/affinity-diagram/

Appendix

Consent Statements

Figure 1

Event Participant Survey Consent Statement

Note. The consent statement for the event participant survey, in which "I Accept" proceeds the questions when clicking "Next".

For interviews, consent was verbally spoken in agreement through every event organizer after asking the following: "We are interested in hearing your experience and thoughts on event organizing. Do we have your consent to conduct an interview with you regarding this topic?"

Survey Questions

All JoinMe survey questions are targeted at event participants. Some questions include their answers since they are implied to be finished based on the user's selection for those given questions.

1. About how many friends are in your friend group?

2. You have made these friends primarily through…

   a. Work   b. School   c. Activites

3. How many events do you attend a week on average?

4. For the events that you have attended / will attend (if answered for the previous question 0: for events that you may be interested / attend in the future), are they…

   a. Career-related   b. Education-related   c. Leisure-related

5. For events you have previously attended in general, you have attended them…

   a. Alone   b. With friends

6. Generally, do you prefer to attend events…

   a. Alone   b. With friends

7. How much free time do you have each week on average (In Hours)?

8. Would you be interested in meeting new people that share a common interest with you (hobby/event/etc...)?

9. What Social Media Platforms do you usually use to meet new people and find events?

10. When you look for a new event to attend, what are your main concerns and why?

11. When looking to meet new people and make friends, what are the most important

characteristics/traits/interests you look for? What are the least important?

12. What are some events / interests you would be willing to try out?

13. What discourages you from attending events?

14. Which gender do you identify with?

15. What ethnicity do you identify with?

16. How old are you?

17. What is/are your occupation(s)?

Interview Questions & Notes

The following contains all interview questions asked for every event organizer. Event

organizers are not known solely as event orgainzers as addressed in our stakeholder definitions,

as they include people who take part in event organizing in genera for their circumstance.

Answers from "P1" represent the 2022-2023 president of Drexel Gaming Association (DGA).

Answers from "P2" represents a leader within Community Student Association (CSA). Lastly,

answers from "P3" represent a person who primarily handles event planning for their friend

group.

1. Briefly state how events are scheduled from beginning to end.

P1: An idea for an event is created by a Game Lead or an E-board member. A Game Lead or
E-board member fills out the DGA Event Submission Form. Events are submitted to Drexel by
the Event Coordinator (an E-board member whose job it is to submit forms). Drexel approves or
denies the event. The Game Lead or E-board member who submitted the form sets up, notifies
members of the events, runs the event, and subsequently cleans up the event.

P2: Discuss w/ members availability, equipment / prep needed, assign marketing tasks, post event.

P3: Make idea - how many people onboard, interest. 2nd: send out group chat who is interested. 3rd. - time that works. 4th - figure out transportation, finiances.

2. Based on your answer for #1, how successful is that process?

P1: The process is very successful because we run 100 events per term, with the smallest scale events garnering 20 attendees and our most expensive and high production events garnering 150+ attendees.

P2: Mostly successful, sometimes not b/c errors.

P3: Pretty successful. Doesn't work out if accommodations would stop event from happening. (whether out control or is) If event has enough interest, it will be done.

3. Are there ways to improve your process after reaccessing it, and how?

P1: I don't think there is a way to improve my process after reassessing it. This is because most of the issues with this process, such as events being denied by Drexel, are due to a third-party, Drexel, and nobody within my organization.

P2: Yes; think ahead of time further out than currently seen.

P3: Not a lot of improvement - though there are improvements to how to communicate ways - like time. Organized way of talking.

4. Briefly state how events are marketed.

P1: A Game Lead or E-board member running an event submits a Marketing Request Form 2 weeks before their event. The Marketing Director selects a Graphic Designer on the Marketing Team to complete the request. The finished graphic is sent to members by the person running the event. And, the graphic is posted to our social media.

P2: Posted both to social media and certain email or websites.

P3: If there's a social post about an event, it is shared, more so if wanting multiple people to show at an event that is not directly made by personal development.

5. Based on your answer for #4, how successful is that process?

P1: This process is very successful because our discord server membership has increased 4x and our social media following has increased 2x since I became president and implemented these processes.

P2: Successful - allowed people's awareness.

P3: Successful - a lot of plans b/t friends created… big plan to the Pocnonos over weekend as an example. Ensuring time accountable per person.

6. Are there ways to improve your process after reaccessing it, and how?

P1: I think for our social media outreach we are significantly lacking video content. I would like to potentially have video content per event. This would be a video content form submission in addition or added on to the Marketing Request Form. Additionally, I think people running events do not give the proper amount of detail about their events on the Marketing Request Form. For instance, is the event a tournament or free play? This leads to mistakes on some final graphics, which need to be corrected. We need more sections in our original Marketing Request Form to address this in order to produce more correct final graphics for our events.

P2: Yes; repost events as reminders.

P3: If we were to expand - improvements would include time management. Recall last minute decision for how more people would attend, not optimal for larger sizes, ok for small.

7. How do you attract new people to your events?

P1: We attract new people to our events by advertising on bulletin boards around campus, posting actively on our social media to have the algorithm push our posts to new members, ask other Drexel organizations to share our posts to attract more of our target audience, and do collabs with other brands to increase DGA's brand awareness.

P2: Mention free food or items.

P3: People are attracted to the events themselves. Just offer information of events existing / possibilities.

8. Has the techniques you have stated in #7 been successful?

P1: This has been very successful. Most new people who participate in our events are from our social media posts, bulletin board posts at local businesses and on campus, or from joining our discord.

P2: Yes, though dependent on what is free.

P3: Successful - good outreach.

9. Considering your past events, are you satisfied with event participation/turnout? Explain.

P1: I am satisfied with event participation/turnout. Our event turnout is stable and follows the usual ebbs and flows of college life. In Fall Term we get the most turnout, double the average due to incoming Freshmen. In Winter Term we get the least turnout due to the weather. This pattern recycles every year. Therefore, the attendance/participation lulling in the Winter term every year does not worry me.

P2: Depends, but mostly no; greatest turnout resulted from friends of other friends within CSA, least amount were unrelated individuals.

P3: Satisfied. Friend group that are open to new things, usually have good amount of people to attend. Good times!

10. Are there any other conclusions you would like to state from this interview?

P1: I think for students with no real life experience in marketing and no payment, we are doing pretty good. We have significant followings on all our social media for a student club and have become one of the biggest clubs on campus due to our process improvements and our marketing. Even though we still have a lot to improve, as our marketing isn't entirely done to industry standard, I think we are doing amazing.
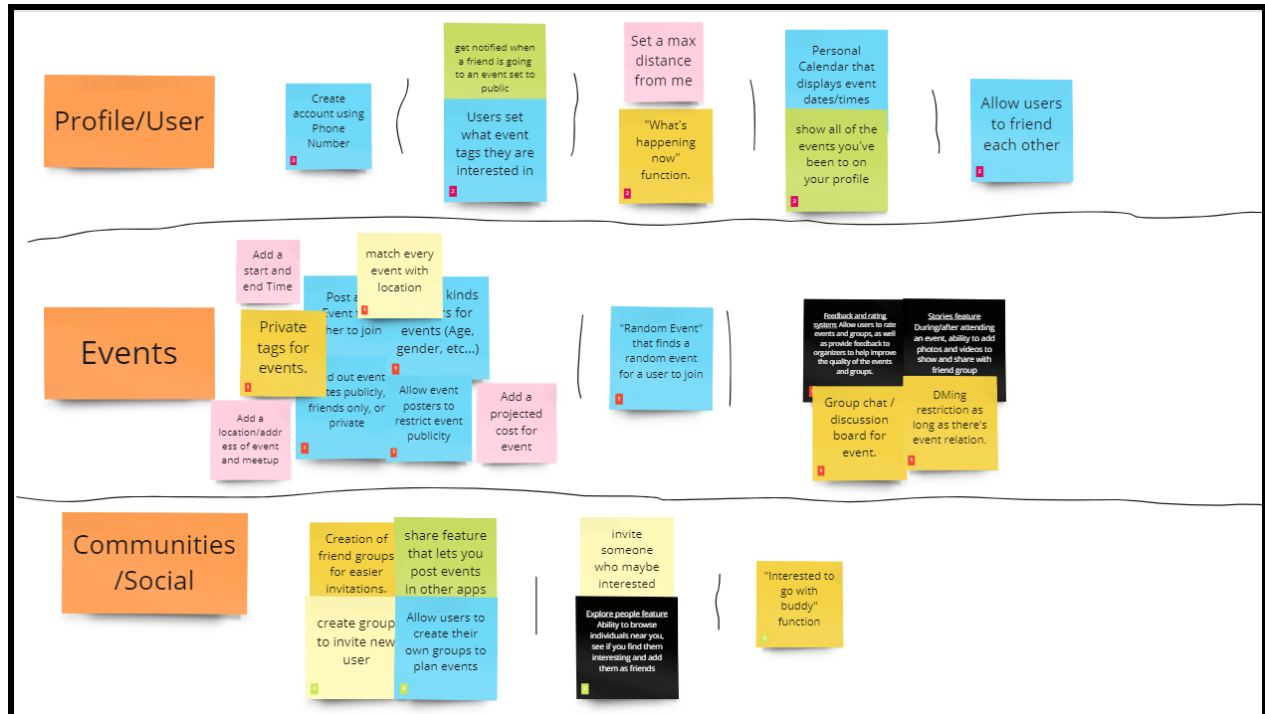
P2: Perhaps discuss with team members realizations.

P3: No.

JoinMe Affinity Diagram

Figure 2.

Compiled JoinMe Affinity Diagram

Profile/User

- Create account using Phone Number
- get notified when a friend is going to an event set to public
- Users set what event tags they are interested in
- Set a max distance from me
- "What's happening now" function.
- Personal Calendar that displays event dates/times
- show all of the events you've been to on your profile
- Allow users to friend each other

Events

- Add a start and end Time
- match every event with location
- Private tags for events.
- Post an Event ... her to join
- ... kinds ...s for events (Age, gender, etc...)
- ...d out event ...tes publicly, friends only, or private
- Allow event posters to restrict event publicity
- Add a location/address of event and meetup
- Add a projected cost for event
- "Random Event" that finds a random event for a user to join
- Feedback and rating system: Allow users to rate events and groups, as well as provide feedback to organizers to help improve the quality of the events and groups.
- Stories feature During/after attending an event, ability to add photos and videos to show and share with friend group
- Group chat / discussion board for event.
- DMing restriction as long as there's event relation.

Communities /Social

- Creation of friend groups for easier invitations.
- share feature that lets you post events in other apps
- invite someone who maybe interested
- "Interested to go with buddy" function
- create group to invite new user
- Allow users to create their own groups to plan events
- Explore people feature Ability to browse individuals near you, see if you find them interesting and add them as friends

Note. The affinity diagram for the JoinMe app. New ideas are in pink. All previous ideas are in other colors, yet modified after research.