

JoinMe GP1

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INFO-310-001: Human-Centered Design Process and Methods

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April 23rd, 2023

Introduction

Over the past few years, many external factors have limited people from attending public leisure activities. Factors include time constraints, social comfortability, and unawareness of events. Building a solution that addresses these concerns can help encourage further community between individuals and unfamiliar scenarios. Therefore, JoinMe can bridge these gaps, bringing togetherness that may have not been established if not presented.

Problem Space & Stakeholders

JoinMe recognizes that there are several issues that plague Americans' social lives, especially in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. These issues include making new friends, finding events and time to go with others, and trying out new things whether it be for the thrill of something new, or attempting to find a new hobby. JoinMe also provides a platform for which organizations or companies can publicly announce events and invite others to attend with the purpose of reaching more people than just using multiple social media sites alone.

The primary problem JoinMe wishes to address is the rapid decline of friendships among Americans. In May 2021, an American survey regarding friendships reported that nearly half of Americans have lost touch with at least 1 friend over the pandemic years and a quarter of Americans have not made a new friend in over 5 years. In contrast, just over half of Americans have made a new friend in the last year, however, these friends are work friends versus one in five Americans meeting new friends through a club or activity (Cox 2021). It is clear that most Americans are struggling to make new friends exclusive to their workplace. Contributors such as lockdowns, Americans spending most of their time at work, and parents tending to their kids longer, have led to an environment where making other friends can be difficult.

In retrospect the issues JoinMe wishes to tackle, we have 2 main generalized groups of stakeholders that are affected by these issues: event participants and event organizers. Event participants have either a small or non-existent friend group or are looking to try new things whether it be hobby-finding or friend-making. Event organizers will also use JoinMe as they look to attract others into joining activities they facilitate. Surprisingly in the wake of COVID-19, organizations have seen steady growth in membership, and JoinMe hopes to accelerate this growth in connecting people with both each other and these larger organizations.

Stakeholders' Problems

Our stakeholders have separate but related problems which JoinMe seeks to remedy. Our event participants are looking to fill up free time, try new things and meet new people. The daunting decision of where to start overwhelms many, and as easy as it is to suggest in-person interaction, but few have the confidence.. Then begins the process of finding activities to do with these friends, dealing with scheduling conflicts, plans falling through, conflicts of interest, and time slowly eroding away these new friendships before plans are made. Most existing products address only one of these concerns, unfortunately. By encapsulating all solutions with JoinMe, we can make the process incredibly more fluid, reliable, and fun.

Event organizers range from people offering activities to their friends, to those without many friends looking for others to join them in those activities, to established organizers looking to increase their attendance and reach on JoinMe. It is equally as difficult for individuals to make new friends or finding activities as it is difficult for organizations to reach new people. People are eager however, and businesses willing to take more creative approaches to attract more people will benefit in a more creative time. Our goal in mind is to bridge the gap between people and help our users look for people, activities, and a user base.

Data Gathering Techniques

To collect data on event participant stakeholders, we would create an online survey. Because event participants consist of demographically diverse people excluding minors, a questionnaire would be suitable for gathering responses smoothly. Our survey would also likely include questions that may be uncomfortable to address in person, as our problem space would raise "[...] levels of involvement of [an] individual with others in social activities having different goals[...]" (Levasseur, 2010). Thus, in-person participants may be less honest when asked about varieties of different people that could be part of events other than individuals themselves based on their familiarity with others.

Regarding data collection on event organizer stakeholders, we will mainly rely on an online survey also. Unstructured interviews may be conducted as well with official event organizers if plausible. An online survey would suffice as event organizers can interchangeably be event participants, therefore, being both convenient and beneficial to usual event participants. Lastly, unstructured interviews "[...] generate rich data that is often interrelated and complex [...]" (Sharp 2019) with official event organizers, allowing further considerations that may have been acknowledged before.

Conclusion

JoinMe seeks to bridge the gap between people and promote community engagement. By addressing the primary problem of declining friendships among Americans and the related issues of finding events and time to go with others. JoinMe aims to help users find people and activities with similar interests. Recognizing the importance of stakeholders, JoinMe seeks to remedy their loosely connected problems. Through online surveys and unstructured interviews, JoinMe aims to gather data to offer solutions that are fluid, reliable, and fun to benefit social lives.

References

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