**CS 360 Module One Assignment**

The app I selected for analyzing is the iNaturalist app; an app that was primarily designed for users to record, share, and observe flora and fauna anywhere across the world. This app’s primary function is to allow users to catalog and identify animal and plant species merely by taking a picture and adding it to their personal catalog. The overall goal of the app is to create a shared repository of information that can be collectively accessed and updated by average users as well as scientists, which use the app to better understand when and where organisms are likely to occur.

iNaturalist features four main tabs: observations, species, observers, and identifiers, each updated in real time depending on the global or local locations. It provides real-time up-to-date information of observations made by global users, as well as users in your surrounding area. The observers tab shows you a list of those who recently contributed, while the Identifiers tab is a list of the people that recently contributed to identifying species posted by other users. This design helps users to learn about animals and plants locally or globally. Based on the visual element of the app, it can be apparent to the user that they have the capability of observing and recording any species that they would like to, while also learning information related to the specific posted species.

This app addresses user’s needs, by helping them identify the name of an unknown animal or plant. Additionally, they are also able to communicate with other users across the globe to discuss information related to any identified flora or fauna. iNaturalist’s target audience are fascinated and curious about the outside world and seek to learn more about the environment. It adeptly assists users in achieving their goals of identifying and documenting any wildlife they encounter, while also connecting them across like-minded individuals. The app effectively encourages participation in environmental observation through challenges that prompt users to record and study the plant and animal species in their vicinity. These features all align seamlessly with the app’s business goal of collecting data on global biodiversity.

The app has specific features that are tailored to meet the users needs, including the ability to post a picture of an animal or plant while adding in a customized description. Uniquely, it can automatically identify any uploaded species, providing both the common and scientific name. Additionally, selecting a species name opens a new page that displays a map and graph of sightings and its seasonal activity.

The app’s visuals feature soft green and white colors, appealing to nature lovers while also providing an easy-to-navigate interface. The minimalist front page and side panel simplify access to guides, activity, missions, and account settings, leading to easier engagement by users and access to the apps various features.

As a developer for this app, I would try to focus on understanding the specific information users seek when identifying a species, how this information aligns with their goals and needs, and their preferred methods of visualization. I would also like to determine how to present the visual information in a way that is easy to understand and beneficial. Additionally, I would investigate whether users wish to share their findings with others or seek further information from external sources.

A collage of plants

Description automatically generated