

Product Description: Friend Circle

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Overview of Product

Friend Circle is an app designed to bring people together IRL through micro-events, that create an intimate and low-stakes environment to build community, nudging users off their off phone. Users simply see what events are local to them, hosted by local spots (restaurants, cafes, parks, creative studios), sign up, pay a fee to cover cost of the experience at a discounted rate, and attend! No swiping, no DMs, no FYP. Attendee lists stay anonymous until check-in, so the focus is the shared experience - not profiles.

Motivation

Social media has entrapped us with deceptive design tactics that steal our most valuable resource: time. Infinite feeds keep us scrolling long past intention, leaving us less productive, less present, and more disconnected from one another. This erosion of attention doesn't just impair memory or focus, it undermines our ability to build real relationships.

Life is meant to be experienced, not consumed passively through a screen. Yet despite living in the most digitally connected era, we face a growing loneliness epidemic.

Younger generations, who grew up with technology, feel this most acutely. At the same time, they're showing increasing preference for micro-events, small, intimate, low-stakes gatherings, over large-scale events. This shift signals both the depth of the problem and the opportunity: people want connection, but need the right platform for it.

Friend Circle answers that need by making it easy to step away from the scroll and into real, shared moments.

Goal

Friend Circle will take users away from their screens to the real-world, building intentional and real relationships.

Competitive Landscape - Top 3 competitors

1. [Time left](#): Weekly paid group dinners with ~5–6 strangers, anonymity until shortly before, location revealed close to event.
 - a. Cons: Single format (dinners, weekly cadence) limits frequency, interests, and daytime options

- b. How Friend Circle is better: Many formats beyond dinner, multiple times per day, creating an inventory that appeals to diverse interests and schedules. As the inventory grows, it fuels a network effect: more attractive events bring in more users, which in turn incentivizes venues to list even more options - compounding value for everyone on the platform.
2. [Bumble BFF](#): A friendship app built around profiles, matching, and chat; Bumble recently
 - a. Cons: Chat-first platform leading to high drop-off before IRL; not purpose-built around booked, capacity-capped events
 - b. How Friend Circle is better: Event-first platform, anonymous until arrival, guaranteed small groups, discounted seats with local hosts, and no pre-meet DM back and forth.
3. [Meet up](#): Find local, in-person gatherings around shared interests
 - a. Cons: Skews larger/less intimate, not a popular platform so if friend circle executes better, it can win over users.

How is this novel

1. Event-first, not profile-first: Default flow is *book* → *show up* → optionally keep the Circle. Removes the chat bottleneck.
2. Anonymous by default; consentful follow-up: Attendees can opt-in to exchange contact info post-event; auto-spin a private “Circle” for continued plans.
3. Local inventory + discounts: Partner venues list off-peak micro-slots
4. Trust & safety baked in: ID verification, venue check-ins, ratings for hosts/attendees, clear code of conduct, and refund/credit policies for host-initiated changes.

Stakeholders

- User: Attendee
 - Values/Motivations: Safety, ease, affordable novelty, low-stakes socializing, time well spent offline.
 - Expected behaviors: Enable location → browse/book capped micro-events; show up on time; follow code of conduct; rate host/peers; opt-in to share contact info post-event (anonymous by default).
- Customer: Venue/Host
 - Values/Motivations: Incremental revenue (off-peak), predictable attendance, low admin overhead, brand alignment.
 - Expected behaviors: List micro-slots with caps/pricing; honor discounts; run check-ins/ID as required; ensure safe environment; share availability/feedback for better matching.

- Regulators
 - Values/Motivations: Consumer protection, privacy, anti-discrimination, accessibility, payments/tax/alcohol & age compliance, public safety.
 - Expected behaviors: Set and update rules, require permits/licenses, ask for clear policies and event logs, investigate complaints, issue warnings, fines, or suspensions for violations.
- Investors
 - Values/Motivation: Want to see strong growth, retention, and demand for the app
 - Expected behaviors: Expect regular business metrics to give them confidence that app is successful (revenue, retention, churn, etc..)
- Owners: Founder
 - Values/Motivation:
 - Mission-driven: Create a healthier alternative to social media by nudging people off screens and into real-world micro-events.
 - Community-first: Ensure the platform fosters genuine, low-stakes human connection, not swiping, vanity, or algorithmic feeds.
 - Trust & safety: Build an experience where anonymity is respected until check-in, venues are vetted, and user safety is prioritized.
 - Scalable impact: Prove that small, local experiences, when aggregated, can combat the loneliness epidemic and redefine how people connect.
 - Expected behaviors:
 - Set the product vision around micro-events as the core unit of connection.
 - Champion the “no swiping, no DMs, no FYP” philosophy in product, design, and marketing.
 - Build partnerships with local venues (cafes, studios, parks) to create a diverse and discounted event inventory.
 - Secure funding and resources to scale city-by-city, while preserving the intimacy and authenticity that differentiate Friend Circle.

User Journey

1. Discover the App

- a. You hear about Friend Circle and decide to try it.
- b. You sign up, set your location, and pick what kinds of events you're interested in.

2. Browse Events

- a. You open the app and see small events happening nearby (coffee meetups, walks, dinners, classes).
 - b. Each event shows time, price, and how many spots are left.
- 3. Book a Spot**
 - a. You pick an event that fits your schedule.
 - b. You pay a small fee (usually discounted because it's off-peak for the venue).
 - c. You get a confirmation and calendar reminder.
- 4. Before the Event**
 - a. The app sends you a reminder.
 - b. You don't see who else is going - everyone stays anonymous until check-in.
- 5. Show Up**
 - a. You arrive at the venue.
 - b. You check in through the app or with the host.
 - c. At that point, you can see the first names of the other attendees.
- 6. Experience the Event**
 - a. You join the small group (usually 4–8 people).
 - b. The focus is on the shared activity, not on profiles or swiping.
 - c. If there's a problem, you can flag it privately in the app.
- 7. After the Event**
 - a. You leave feedback on the event and venue.
 - b. If you had a good time, you can opt in to stay in touch with others from that event.
 - c. The app nudges you once a week to try another micro-event.

Value Tensions

- 1. User vs. Venue (Host):**
 - a. Users want easy refunds if they can't attend.
 - b. Venues want reliable attendance.
 - c. Solution: prepaid spots with fair refund/credit windows.
- 2. Investors vs. Users**
 - a. Investors prioritize growth, monetization, and retention metrics (want more bookings, higher revenue per user).
 - b. Users want affordable, meaningful connections without feeling exploited.
 - c. Solution: Keep core events low-cost/discounted to build trust, while layering monetization (premium tiers, special events, venue upsells) later.