Literature Survey

News Tracker Application

Overview: People like to get the latest news on the go, anytime and anywhere on demand. It's not difficult these days to access the latest news: the internet and the intermingling of social media with critical worldwide events have made it almost impossible to live under a rock. But finding a reliable one-stop shop to engage with your news can be somewhat of a challenge.

Introduction: Our Project aims to overcome this challenge faced by the people by developing a one-stop solution which aggregates the News from all the reliable sources and also categorises them under different sections for the best user experience.

Existing Solutions: There are some applications at present which are solve the above-mentioned challenge that is faced by the people and most of them pull from the same news sources. Some of them, like NewsBreak and Google News, also prioritize free stories over subscription-only sources. As a result, those news apps tend to pull articles from lesser-known publications, providing a wider selection of news than apps like Apple News, which mainly promotes news from more prominent sources.

 Attributes Taken into Consideration when performing the literature survey:

1. Personal feed: The news needed to be presented well and organized intuitively on a custom feed.

 2. Content interaction: Options that are available for the users to engage with the content (e.g., a comment section or share options).

 3. Categories: Category-based organization, using tabs, side panels, grouped content, or anything else.

 4. Search and filter: Filter Capabilities to look for a specific news topic.

 5. Customization: Everyone reads the news differently, so there needed to be features available for personalization, including the ability to follow certain topics, save searches, or create folders.

The list of existing Applications are as follows:

 ● Apple News (iOS, macOS)

 ● Apple News, for its affordable access to top news sources.

● Apple News may not be the most beloved app on this list, but it gets half a point for its convenience to Apple product users—the app comes already installed on devices, and you can enable Siri to suggest stories based on the apps you've been using and the sites you've been browsing in Safari.

● There are audio stories narrated by voice actors. The feature isn't available for all stories since Apple creates the narration, but it's a really nice feature: the actual human voices of the actors make the news stories more much engaging.

 ● Readers can curate their content by upvoting or downvoting, and the search and filter options are equally comprehensive, with the results broken up by top results, articles, topics, and sources.

- Google News (iOS, Android, Web)

- Google does aesthetics well—and the modern look of the Google News app definitely helps create a more enjoyable news-reading experience. It's been recently revamped, too, they're working to keep it fresh.

- There are Full Coverage panels, available on bigger stories: they give a range of sources on a breaking story, plus relevant tweets and videos, and even a timeline showing the readers how events have unfolded.

- When reading an article, readers can just click the full coverage icon to access more on that topic. This made it easy and quick to spot similar stories without having to go out of my way to manually search for them. It also helps ensure that readers are getting a variety of perspectives on a particular topic instead of just taking one perspective.

- A reader can follow the topics and news sources he/she is most interested in, give individual stories a thumbs up or thumbs down, and save the searches and stories you're most interested in.

- There are also extensive search options, which include subcategories, recommended sources, and relevant articles—all of which means the reader will get more relevant news the next time around.

- FlipBoard (iOS, Android, Web)

- Flipboard is based around the idea of creating a digital magazine curated by the reader—a compendium of stories, pulled from the reader's choice of news sources, blogs, and any other site you can plug into Flipboard (which is pretty much all of them). It borders on RSS reader, but it's definitely more of a news app.

- Reader can be as broad or specific as they like with Flipboard: point it toward a general topic like technology or productivity, or specify one site in particular that they want to keep up with, and Flipboard mixes everything together seamlessly.

- Flipboard beats out other news-gathering apps when it comes to its interface: the flow feels natural, whether reader wants to check out the top stories of the day or dig deeper into something that hasn't been as widely covered. Where relevant, podcasts, tweets, and videos can be embedded alongside news stories.

- GroundNews (iOS, Android, Web)

- The look of Ground News is a bit drab, but the app certainly makes up for it in other ways.

- At the top of each article is a paragraph-long summary called Ground Summary. It gives the reader a slightly-more-than-headline level of information before deciding if they want to invest time into reading a story.

- Ground News prides itself on presenting a wide range of perspectives, and this comes through its, Across the Spectrum and Factuality features.

- Ground News also has what they call Bias Distribution for political stories, which indicates how biased a story or topic is toward a particular side of the political spectrum. If a story appears to be too weighted in favor of one side, Ground News will offer a warning that the story may be a "blindspot."

● NewsBreak has a tab dedicated entirely to local news (including a neat weather report). But the other tabs at the top of the screen host a wealth of topics for the reader to explore from news sources all over the world. ● Instead of bombarding with lines and lines of text, NewsBreak splits each article into its own card with a large image and title.

● NewsBreak offers a thumbs-up feature and comment section on each article. People can post their opinions in the comments of certain articles.

● It provides the typical customization options, like the ability to follow topics, but the reader can also block specific topics they are not interested in.

● Yahoo News (iOS, Android, Web)

● Yahoo News is pretty: the splashes of yellow and purple add a little more personality to the platform.

● Most apps will throw articles from various topics all together in one place, but Yahoo News organizes the reader's feed so that they see similar articles together before scrolling to the next topic. This made the whole reading experience less stressful.

● What sets Yahoo apart most is the ability to view news via video: there's an entire tab for video news.

● News360 (iOS, Android, Web)

● News360 has been around for over a decade and does a fantastic job of pulling together news from multiple sources, based on reader's interests and preferences.

● News360 is simple to connect to and simple to operate, with like and dislike features and an option to listen news, similar to the audio stories in Apple News.

● The audio news in News360 is also a premium feature, but unlike Apple News, audio is available for all stories on the app, making it a win for accessibility. Having said that, the robotic, auto-narration may take some getting used to.

● Other bonuses are the choice to view articles in either News360's reader or on the original source. The reader has a sleeker design and didn't take as much time to load as the original source websites, but it can sometimes feel more authentic to read the article on the source site.

Conclusion: The literature survey has revealed the existence of some already existing solutions for the News Tracker Application each with their own pros and cons. Thus, we need to focus on coming up with a solution that has the best features of all the above listed applications.