

Technical Scope for Salon

Version 3

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Revision History

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Version | Description | Date |
| 1.0 | first look, getting ideas down | 2/9/2023 |
| 2.0 | * indented text removed * ideas formed into sentences * dates, version, document title, and page number updated | 2/20/2023 |
| 3.0 | * Updated to reflect change to C# instead of Swift * Updated platform release expectations | 4/5/2023 |

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# Introduction

This scope document will provide the foundation for what we are going to do, and why we are doing it. It will be used to clarify the project’s objectives and to properly set the expectations on what is and what is *not* included in the new system.

# Opportunity and Vision

## Business Need

People are more isolated than ever due to the rise and convenience of online communication, online shopping, and numerous other roadblocks that make physical interaction almost obsolete. However, this has resulted in many people citing lack of social interaction and loneliness to be a major contributor to their unhappiness in life.

To help remedy this, we bring forth Salon to weaken the walls we put around ourselves and others by incentivizing meaningful interactions with the people around us. Salon only allows interaction with a small group of people within a limited range of your device. This is the cornerstone of our design, as it limits interaction with the people nearby, and incentivizes you to talk and interact with people you wouldn’t otherwise approach.

The primary function of the app is to socialize with the people around you; as such, we want to implement chatting and games to help break the ice.

A group of local users named Bob, Alice, and Emily want to interact but don’t want to give others their phone numbers or meet in person due to social anxiety. Already having other social media accounts, they have no way of knowing when others are online or bonding over fun activities.

After picking up Salon, the group gets to know each other as well as others in the local community by playing short games and chatting afterward due to having fun.  
  
Though these groups live busy lives, they keep in contact by chattings in their free time and setting up times to recreationally playing games.  
  
Users from ages 16-29 of all genders are more likely to use Salon due to not having proper and safe means to improve their social skills online. They expect to be able to meet others who are open to talking with others, have engaging activities to participate in, and form meaningful relationships over time.

## Revenue Potential

Games on initial release will be free. Additional games will be 99 cents each with the ability for those who don’t own paid games to participate with others that do. Organizations that operate in a region can pay a monthly fee to have custom games added and event announcements broadcasted to others in a defined radius starting at 10 miles for 2 dollars.

We decided to have the ability for others who have not paid for games to be able to participate because it increases the ability for users to socialize. The goal of Salon is to be engaging, forcing mandatory paywalls on users to get in the way of that engagement.

Funding from purchased games and interest from organizations will fund the development of Salon. For example, suppose a mobile game development company wanted to showcase their game on Salon in exchange for exposure to its audience. In that case, they can negotiate the monthly fee to do so.

## Competitive Analysis

Salon’s main competitors are Twitter, Messenger, Whatsapp, and Discord due to their direct message and group chat capabilities. Salon is unique because it is not meant to replace its competitors, but to cover ground that its competitors do not have local communication.

Salon users will not be communicating in the open forums present in competitor products, users will pick others nearby in order to challenge each other in friendly competitive games or engage in thought-provoking conversation. This differs from other products because it is well known that the open forum style of communication decreases the level of discourse of conversation and even occasionally prevents meaningful discussions from taking place, Salon will change this.

Most other social networking applications focus on connecting with pre-existing friends and colleagues, which isn’t an issue in itself, but on a larger scale can’t maintain the need for humans to have meaningful discourse. Salon plans to remedy this by allowing strangers within the same area/community to connect and form meaningful bonds over games and conversation around games.

# Technical

## Technical Objectives

Salon will be native to iOS. Users and user authentication data will be stored a connected database and will communicate relevant user information to the app for login purposes. Additionally, devices must be connected to data or WIFI so that user location can be used by the app. Programming will be completed using C#, allowing for both android and iPhone releases to be worked on concurrently.

## Operating Environment

Salon will be a social mobile application because mobile devices allow for easy and straightforward communication with others whether it be through games or conversation. Not only that, mobile devices such as phones are portable and easily accessible.

The downside to our mobile approach is that users may be apprehensive to pay for our games which is one of our monetization sources when they use other non-communication-focused applications that are free to play games with others. We aim to ease this apprehension by having our games be an extension of the conversation users have with one another.

## Development Tools

The tools Salon will use are:

* C# to program the application due it being more accessible for us as Windows users
* Visual Studio environment due to our familiarity with it as a team
* Git for program documentation due to its simplicity
* Google Firebase as its database though we are open to other options if requirements change during development as we will not be implementing it into Salon immediately in the development process

## Assumptions and Dependencies

We assume Salon:

* will take 3-4 months to build
* will be enough users in any given location to connect and play with
* can rely on firebase being a reliable host the app
* won’t be comparable to similar mobile applications released during development
* will engage users as planned with the formula of games and chatting in close proximity
* will interest users with its limitation in chatting radius
* will be relatively major bug-free on its release
* will keep users coming back after initial visit

# Scope & Limitations

## Scope of Initial Release

Our planned features on release are:

* customizable user profiles
* storage database for all profiles
* wireless network connection
* seamless chat functionality
* a simple free to play game
* AI practice room for chatting

## Scope of Future Release

Addition features we plan to release are:

* additional paid games
* adding friends
* connecting to random users for chatting or playing games
* increasing communication range for isolated users
* additional moderation to chat systems
* reporting users
* more profile customization

## Limitations and Exclusions

We want users to know that Salon:

* won’t automatically connect to user phone contacts
* won’t track user specific location
* won’t sell user data to advertisers
* won’t substitute physical communication
* won’t substitute dating applications
* won’t substitute global social media