

Proposal for Agit

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Table of Contents

- Executive Summary
- Gap in the Market
- Meeting the Market's Needs
- Implementation
 - Management
 - Development
 - Marketing and Distribution
 - Monetization
- The Problem and Our Solution
- Industry Need for Our Technology
- Market Analysis (Primary/Secondary Market)
- Marketing Strategies
 - Overview
 - Primary Customer Analysis and Entry Strategy
 - Core Competency
 - Sales Strategy
- Competition
- Development Strategy
- Barriers
- Critical Risks
- Interviews

Executive Summary

In modern society, most people enjoy going out to dine at restaurants. Dining out is no longer a display of wealth or class, but now is a social experience that is available to everyone. Although the dining out experience is now accessible to anyone, the cost of eating at a restaurant (especially multiple times a week) is a large factor for most consumers.

The issue of cost is handled in many different ways. Although these methods vary, one is constant across almost all restaurants; specials. Many restaurants offer weekly or even daily specials. However, each restaurant has a different standard of where these specials are posted. Some are posted on social media (of which there are many) and others on the company's individual website. Agit aims to solve this issue by creating a central hub for all restaurants to list their specials.

Our clients will be any restaurant that offers specials and also any customer who would like to take advantage of these specials. Restaurants will be able to post their specials to a single location, and users will be able to view all the specials in their area. Agit will be a tool that restaurants can use as opposed to multiple types of social media.

Current competitors include Loople and Groupon. Loople is local to the Baltimore area and Groupon requires the use of coupon that is given by the company specifically for Groupon.

Agit will improve on all of these fronts by allowing restaurants from anywhere to use the services, and since specials are already incorporated by these companies, once you see a special you can just show up and enjoy your meal. No coupon, code, or cell phone needed as customers will just be taking advantage of deals that are already available to them.

Agit will be created using free and open source software, eliminating any cost from basic users and small businesses.

Gap in the Market

There really is no market for specifically sharing specials. Currently, there are plenty of sites that offer coupons and other deals, but most of these require something from the user. This could be some sort of point system (as in PocketPoints) or a copy of the deal (as in GroupOn). This can be difficult for the customer to use at restaurants, and difficult for businesses to begin using.

Customers and business owners alike would enjoy the opportunities provided by Agit. With the services provided by Agit, businesses will not have to create any extra deals or incentives and customers would not have to provide any proof of the deal or collect any incentive. This allows for businesses to advertise and customers to search in one central location.

Meeting the Market's Needs

Agit will exceed the market needs, providing a central location that allows businesses to advertise their specials to already interested customers. All of this will be done at no cost to basic users and no cost to small businesses.

Implementation

Management

Agit will be managed by all contributors; Noah, Jared, Michael, and Brian

Development

Agit will be developed using the following technologies and libraries;

- Frontend (Client Side);
 - React- A JavaScript library used in building dynamic user interfaces
 - Next- A JavaScript library used for server side rendering and routing
 - styled-components- A JavaScript library for adding CSS to JS files
- Backend (API/Database);
 - Node- A JavaScript run-time environment (compiles code outside of the browser)
 - Express- A JavaScript framework for managing the database and API calls
 - PostgreSQL- A relational database management system

Marketing and Distribution

Agit will be marketed largely on social media and through the idea that businesses can use it as free advertisement. The services will be available for use online through any web browser or smartphone.

Monetization

Agit will be free to use by all users. Once a minimum daily active users is reached, ads will start to be incorporated and users will be able to buy “pro” status that removes ad for a low monthly cost (~\$1). Businesses will also be able to use Agit free of charge. However, corporations will have the option to pay a yearly fee in order to update all locations of their franchise simultaneously.

The Problem and Our Solution

The problem is that in order for a customer to find a business' specials, they have to look on their website, on social media such as Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram, or even in person. The method that business use varies greatly from one business to another. Another perspective to the same issue is that businesses have to post their specials to multiple places and update it accordingly.

Our solution is to have all this information in one place, saving time and money for business while also giving them free advertisement, and also saving time as well as exposing customers to new businesses and deals.

Industry Need for Our Technology

Right now, the food industry has a need to centralize their specials. Agit can be developed into a tool that allows businesses to post their specials once, then have it post on their behalf to social media. This would allow businesses to spread the word on specials, while also keeping up with social media.

Market Analysis (Primary/Secondary Market)

All the main competitors to Agit do not offer the exact services that we will. There is no detriment to businesses as they do not need to create new deals, Agit will only use pre-existing specials offered by the business.

The primary market will be restaurants and bars that offer frequent specials, with large corporations generating the profit, as well as consumers of these deals. The secondary market will be grocery, clothing, or any other kind of store that offers specials more infrequently.

Marketing Strategies

Overview

In order to be successful, Agit will need to be attractive for users (visually) as well as be offered for no cost at first. As more features are added, it is possible to charge for superfluous features.

Primary Customer Analysis and Entry Strategy

The strategy for Agit to get into the market is to offer an easy-to-use, visually appealing service free of charge, that allows users to save money and businesses to advertise for free. Eventually, corporations will see the benefits of this service, and being willing to pay in order to update specials for all of their franchised locations with ease.

Core Competency

The core competency of Agit will be that it is the first service to offer purely pre-existing specials. This combined with the ease of use and no cost, will be an obvious choice for current businesses and any future businesses as well.

Sales Strategy

Pricing

Agit will be free to use by any business or user. There will be a paid level that allows a business to post or update specials for multiple locations, otherwise this will have to be done manually for each location. If advertisements are implemented, then users will be able to pay a small fee to remove ads.

Positioning

Any business that offers a special (does not require coupon or points) will benefit from Agit. Any consumer who takes advantage of these specials will also benefit.

Promotion

Promotion strategies for Agit will include social media marketing, client interviews, word of mouth, and other strategies.

Place

Agit will be managed from anywhere, as it hosted online.

Competition

Loople

Loople is an app only usable in Washington D.C. and Baltimore which provides information on local specials and deals.

GroupOn

GroupOn is a service that offers deals to GroupOn users that requires a coupon to be purchased by the user and presented at the business.

PocketPoints

PocketPoints is an app that offers unique deals to users if they get a certain number of points (by not using their phone on campus or while driving) but requires the user to show their points.

Development Strategy

We will develop Agit in stages, in order to ensure quality of each stage. Each stage will also improve on the website's general design and add more features.

Seed Stage

A wire frame prototype will be designed in order to give an idea of the look and initial feature requirements.

Development Stage

Next the prototype will be developed. At this point, it will only contain basic users and the ability for businesses to post specials.

Launch Stage

After all implemented features are tested, the website will be publicly available to allow for user testing. At this point, corporate management and community suggestions will be added.

Barriers

The biggest and only barrier Agit will face is growing the number of users. With more users and businesses using the site, the experience will improve for the user.

Critical Risks

One major risk is that no one will ever use the site, or the site will be used for scams and other invalid offers. If no businesses use the site, customers will not want to use it, and if no customers use the site there will be no use for the businesses to continue using it. Alternatively, if the site gets filled with fake businesses or offers, this will also turn customers and legitimate businesses away.

The development team will need to work hard to spread the word, as many people would be interested if they heard about Agit. Another solution is to have a community feature allowing for users to make suggestions and recommend specials. This will allow users to take the place of businesses not yet using the service. A verification process will be required to ensure the businesses are real and the business that they are registering as. Initially, this will be done manually to ensure legitimacy.

Interviews

Consumers (32 Responses):

The questions numbered below were answered by respondents. Some questions allow for multiple selections, so the amount of respondents that selected each option is denoted.

1. Name:

Brandon Trouard	Julia	Bradley Benton	Stephan JOhnson
Bungaloo McHornan	Christian Bilke	Liam Cambas	Kait
Elizabeth Alvarado	Sydney Kerr	Emily Rose	Harrison Reiner
Carol Key	Christian	Logan	Erick ho
Vanessa	Ethan LeBlanc	Liza	
Shane	Jeff Pouliard	Ben	Evan Loria
Michael Martin	Savannah Weisensee	Luke	Phoebe
shannon	Elissa Lombardo	Mateo	James

2. What are some things you consider when deciding on where to go out to eat? (select all that apply)

- Cost (32x)
- Location (25x)
- Popularity (5x)
- Good Reviews (14x)

- Food/Drink Specials (13x)
 - Dietary Limitations (1x)
3. What drives your choice of location for drinks? (select all that apply)
- Cost (23x)
 - Location (17x)
 - Food/Drink Specials (17x)
 - Live Entertainment (10x)
 - Good Reviews (6x)
 - Popularity (5x)
 - Menu Items (1x)
4. Would knowing about a good special cause you to choose a restaurant or bar?
- Yes (28x)
 - Probably (2x)
 - No (1x)
5. How often do you take advantage of restaurant/bar specials?
- A few times a month (x19)
 - Less than once a month (x1)
 - Not often (x3)
 - Once a month (x1)
 - Once or twice a week (x3)
 - Never (x2)
6. Where do you go to find out about restaurant/bar specials? (select all that apply)
- Website of business (x14)
 - Facebook page of business (x4)
 - Word of mouth (x3)
 - Twitter (x13)
 - Instagram (x11)
 - Google (x3)
 - Magazines (x1)
7. Would you use a service which collected food/drink specials from all around town and displayed them in one place (a website)?
- Yes (x28)
 - No (x1)
 - Probably (x2)
8. If a service gathered restaurant/bar specials, would you contribute to it by adding specials you noticed to the service?
- Maybe (14x)
 - Yes (14x)
 - No (3x)

9. Would you pay for this service? If so, how much?

- No (20x)
- \$1-\$5 (3x)
- \$5-\$10 (1x)

10. Are there any features you would expect from a service like this?

- save favorites, search by % off or similar, link to reviews, info on hours etc, info on specials must be kept current
- I would not expect anything but the specials and a date for when the special ends.
- A Map feature to give me directions or a link to google maps
- I would expect the offers to be legitimate; services similar to this usually fill up with fake or expired offers, or they have some secret stipulation to getting the deal
- Simple, easy, customizable possibly (set to locations near you) or like a favorites list, etc!
- A favorites tab
- Quick links to the special/ad info from the company, good UI, details about the location in particular
- If I were to pay it would need to do more
- I would like for it to meet the non-functional requirements of being quick and easy to use.

Businesses (3 Responses):

1. Name:

John Mabus
Brad
Devin Dupre

2. Name of Business:

Raising Canes
Matherene
Olive Garden

3. Do you offer daily or weekly food specials?

- No specials, just a Caniac rewards member card that does offer periodic offers to members.
- Daily specials (different each day of week)
- Changes every few months

4. How do you let customers know about your specials?

- Website, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram
- Website, On menu
- Combination of a tv and internet

5. How often do you have to update the items in the previous question?

- Monthly

- When new products are sent out. Usually specials stay the same
 - Weekly
6. Does your business use social media? If so, which ones?
 - Facebook (3x)
 - Instagram (3x)
 - Twitter (2x)
 7. Who posts on your behalf on social media?
 - Manager, Corporate employee approves and post store General Managers items.
 - Corporate
 - Other employee
 8. Do your food/drink specials increase customer traffic?
 - Yes (x3)
 9. If a service gathered restaurant/bar specials from around town, would you contribute to it by adding your specials?
 - Yes (x3)
 10. How much would your business pay for this service in order to control what is posted concerning your business?
 - Zero, we would not pay for this
 - Depends on what the service specifically offers and whether there is clear increase in traffic
 - That's a question for corporate
 11. Are there any features you would expect from a service like this? Or would any features convince you to use it?
 - Besides special, maybe full menu, and hours of operations.
 - The ability to send and save coupons

Customer Discovery (*collected remotely*)

Consumer:

What are some things you consider when deciding on where to go out to eat?

What drives your choice of location for drinks?

Would knowing about a good special cause you to choose a restaurant or bar?

How often do you take advantage of restaurant/bar specials?

Where do you go to find out about restaurant/bar specials?

Would you use a service which collected food/drink specials from all around town and displayed them in one place (a website)

If a service gathered restaurant/bar specials, would you contribute to it by adding specials you noticed to the service?

Would you pay for this service, if so, how much?

Are there any features you would expect from a service like this?

Business:

Do you offer daily or weekly specials?

How do you let customers know about your specials?

How often do you have to update this?

Do you use social media, if so, which ones?

Who posts on your behalf on social media?

Do your food/drink specials increase customer traffic?

If a service gathered restaurant/bar specials from around town, would you contribute to it by adding your specials?

How much would you pay to automatically post to social media? // bad

Are there any features you would expect from a service like this? Or would any features convince you to use it?