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USER INTERVIEWS
BUILDING ATTENTION

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Introduction

This document summarizes user interviews conducted to understand student project awareness and preferences for project showcases at the Fontys TQ building.

Goal of user interviews

- Who are the primary stakeholders, regarding the topic of project overview?
- To find out if users might be interested in a project showcase.
- To find out if users are aware of projects around them/around the building.
- To find out if users want to have their project showcased in front of their peers.

Important Definitions

Through this interview, I wanted to find out how students define a project and a showcase, but to do that I also needed to define it within my own project. I have already defined them in my literature study on defining student projects, so I will reuse those findings in this document.

Student Project Definition:

Student Project is the sum of research, conceptualization & MVP of an assignment given by a client to a individual or a group of students, which is conducted within the university. (An exception holds for Open Learning) (Law Insider, n.d.).

Project Showcase Definition

An exhibit of multiple projects, showing off the research, conceptualization, and MVP of an assignment given by a client to students, conducted within the university.

Research Questions

What is the current situation within the TQ building, specifically concerning student project awareness and overview?

How can student project showcases be designed to effectively engage and inform diverse audiences within a university setting?

Approach

To achieve the aforementioned goals and find an answer to my research questions, I will interview 9-10 students on campus. I will ask questions regarding their occupation; their level of project awareness and project showcase related questions.

Questions:

Personal:

- Occupation (student/work position)

- How frequently do they visit the building?
- Which floor do they primarily stay on?

Project Awareness:

- Are you aware of student projects happening around the campus?
  - If yes, from where?
- Do you see any benefits in people being aware of current/past projects? (inspiration, collaboration, etc.)
  - Why?
- Do you face any challenges in accessing information about ongoing projects?
- Are you interested in finding out about other student's projects?
- Do you feel like knowing about other student projects can contribute towards your student experience.
  - How?

Displaying projects:

- What comes to mind when you hear the words – student project showcase?
- Have you attended any project showcases in the past? If so, what did you like or dislike about them?
- What motivates you to engage with student project showcases (e.g., personal interest, academic requirements, professional development)?
- What type of project information would you like to be presented? Why?
- What features do you think would make project showcases more engaging and informative? (interactive displays, personal guide, feedback mechanisms)
- What technologies do you think would enhance the project showcase? (AR, VR, Kiosks, Digital Screens)

From these Interview question I am looking for insights regarding the following topics:

- Awareness: The student's level of awareness regarding student projects

- Preferred methods: Ideally how would they like to view projects

- Challenges: What stops them from viewing other student projects

- Suggestions: Their ideas to solve this issue

Results

After conducting 9 interviews with students around the campus, I have received the following results grouped by the topics:

- Awareness:
  - Students generally lack awareness regarding students around the campus, mainly due to missing incentivization to do so and missing signage
- Preferred methods
  - Interactive Elements: Many participants preferred interactive elements such as kiosks or touchscreens to engage with the project showcase. Vlad and Harry mentioned that having a kiosk or interactive display would make them more likely to engage with the content as it makes information more accessible and engaging.
  - Physical Presence: Cecile highlighted the importance of physical elements, mentioning that interactive displays or physical objects like a rubber duck with a QR code could effectively grab attention.
- Challenges
  - Lack of Awareness: Several participants, including Samuel and Vlad, mentioned that they were not aware of other student projects happening around the campus due to a lack of signage and information dissemination.
  - Information Overload: Harry mentioned that current showcases like Innovation Insights can be overcrowded and overwhelming, making it difficult to engage meaningfully with the projects.
- Suggestions
  - Centralized Information Hub: Vlad suggested having a designated spot-on campus where students can easily access information about ongoing and past projects. This could be a physical or digital hub.
  - Enhanced Visibility: Participants like Cecile and Alex recommended improving the visibility of project showcases through better advertising and engaging displays that capture attention immediately.
  - Interactive and Visual Displays: Mia and Vlad emphasized the importance of visual and interactive elements, suggesting that projects should be presented in an engaging manner to attract interest.

Frequency of Presence in TQ Building:

- I found that most students are in the TQ building three to five times a week. Despite being there often, they often miss out on other projects because events like Innovation Insights are too crowded.

Definition and Understanding of Student Projects & Showcases:

- Students see projects as collaborative efforts involving research and client needs. Showcases are important for presenting work, getting feedback, and networking.

Awareness of Other Student Projects:

- Most students aren't aware of projects outside their classes since there isn't enough information shared.

Interest in Other Projects:

- Students are interested in learning about projects related to their field for inspiration and collaboration opportunities.

Perceived Benefits of Awareness:

- Knowing about other projects helps students get inspired, understand the quality of peer work, learn new approaches, and find collaboration opportunities.

Preferred Methods of Information Spreading:

- Students prefer engaging methods like interactive displays, digital screens, regular events, and posters.

Interest and Motivation:

- Students are motivated to engage with project showcases for personal interest, academic requirements, and professional connections.

Preferred Presentation Methods:

- Interactive displays, demos, and personal interactions are preferred. Technologies like kiosks and digital screens are seen as simple and accessible.

Challenges and Suggestions:

- Common challenges include overcrowded events and lack of accessible information. Students suggest more interactive elements, designated showcase spots, and engaging narratives to make presentations more appealing.

Conclusion

The interviews provided valuable insights into the current situation within the TQ building regarding student project awareness and overview. It's clear that there is a significant gap in awareness about the work of their peers. This lack of awareness is primarily due to insufficient sharing of information and the high personal workload that limits students' ability to explore projects beyond their current focus.

Reflection

Reflecting on the interviews and valuable insights I got, it's evident that there is a need for a more structured and proactive approach from the university to showcase student projects. By implementing

the suggested solutions, the TQ building can be one step closer to a more collaborative and inspiring environment. These changes would not only enhance the students' educational experience but also foster a stronger sense of community and shared learning.

Interview Summaries:

I ended up interviewing 9 students from Fontys, everyone is studying ICT, except for Vlad, who is in International Communications.

(I**mportant Note*** - *as you can see, I have 2 people, with whom it says follow up. During these interviews I iterated the questions, so people like Harry & Vlad were first asked only questions regarding their awareness. But due to valuable insights I got from their first interview, I decided to come back and delve even further into their problems*)

Sam

Sam's in Semester 7 for software and spends a lot of time at the TQ building, about four times a week. He mostly knows about the projects happening on his floor and wishes there was more info on what others are doing. To him, student projects are all about working with a group, usually for some client. He thinks it'd be great to see more projects, especially those in backend or full-stack development, for inspiration and to gauge skill levels. Sam feels that putting up cool displays with high-level overviews and pictures around the building would help everyone stay informed.

Harry

Harry, also in Semester 7 for advanced software, is at the TQ building almost every day, juggling classes both in-person and online. He defines student projects as tasks for clients or the university, done solo or in groups. But he only knows about the projects in his own semester and sees the lack of posters or announcements as a big reason why. Harry thinks knowing more about other projects, especially in software or IoT, would be super useful. He suggests that posters or digital displays could make it easier for students to find out what's going on.

Rado

Rado's a third-year ICT student majoring in game design, and he's swamped with coursework. He doesn't really know what other student projects are happening around him because he's so focused on his own work. He sees student projects as goals achieved either solo or with a team, often leading to a final product. Even though he's busy, Rado wishes he had more time to learn about other projects, thinking it could boost his motivation. He believes making other projects more visible would help students like him get more engaged and inspired.

Vlad

Vlad, a second-year international communications student, isn't very aware of student projects in the TQ building beyond his own immediate surroundings. To him, student projects are group efforts required every quarter. He's seen some ads for student committees but nothing specific about projects. Vlad thinks information should be more directly communicated and suggests having interactive displays or kiosks around the campus. This, he believes, would make it easier for students to find out about all the cool projects happening and would be beneficial for both current and prospective students.

Alex

Alex is in Semester 6 of advanced software and is at the TQ building almost every day. He defines student projects as collaborative efforts involving research and creating a product for a client or the university. He knows about the projects in his semester but struggles to find info on what others are doing. Alex thinks knowing about these projects could provide inspiration and help understand what's expected in new projects. He suggests having a centralized showcase where students can see and interact with other projects, maybe through interactive kiosks or digital displays. He believes this would greatly improve the learning experience and encourage more collaboration.

Mia

Mia, a second-year media design student, thinks of student project showcases as platforms where students can present their work in an engaging way. She's attended some presentations but usually finds them uninteresting unless they relate to her field. Mia believes that to catch her interest, project showcases need to be more visually appealing and interactive. She suggests adding feedback mechanisms and interactive displays. She also thinks technologies like augmented reality and interactive kiosks would make the showcases better.

Harry (follow up)

Harry, a Semester 7 advanced software student, sees student project showcases as a chance to get valuable feedback from peers and teachers. He's attended Innovation Insights events, which he found interesting but too crowded. Harry is motivated to engage with showcases for personal interest and professional development, especially for finding internships. He suggests showing short demos and the current state of projects, with both presentations and personal interactions. He prefers interactive kiosks over AR and VR because they are more practical and easier to use.

Vlad (follow up)

Vlad, a third-year student, thinks of student project showcases as presentations or online content that guide viewers through the projects. He attended an event where he liked the easy access and engaging setup, such as booths with flashy posters and music. Vlad's interest in showcases comes from personal interest, academic requirements, and professional development. He believes that interactive elements and designated spots on campus for these showcases would make them more engaging. He prefers interactive kiosks and digital screens over AR and VR, which he finds too time-consuming.

Cecil

Cecil, a graduation intern at Fontys ICT, often uses the TQ building and has attended Innovation Insights. She enjoys these events for their lively atmosphere, socializing opportunities, and chances to connect with companies and peers. Cecil values interactive elements in showcases, like phones and screens that allow direct interaction with projects. She suggests engaging narratives and interactive prompts can make showcases more interesting. She prefers physical elements over digital screens, finding them more attention-grabbing. Technologies like interactive kiosks and digital screens that offer engaging content would enhance her experience.

References

Law Insider. (n.d.). Student project. Retrieved from https://www.lawinsider.com/dictionary/student-project