

# Feature Matching to Stay Competitive

---

How need gathering for a live polling feature turned into a larger campaign to understand a survey startup's users

## THE ASK

Survey startup POPin was losing sales to Slido, a live audience polling software.

The CEO insisted the product team build a Slido clone to help the sales team close more deals.

## THE SOLUTION

A stripped down live polling product that satisfied the ask (i.e. enabled sales) without derailing the product roadmap or contributing to feature bloat.

## THE IMPACT

Need finding for live polling created an opportunity to fill in large holes in our understanding of the product's core users.

# CHALLENGES

## LIMITED KNOWLEDGE OF USERS

- No user personas
- Only 20 interviews had ever been conducted with survey creators
- 0 interviews with survey participants

## LIMITED RESOURCES

- Product & engineering team was small
- Leadership had given us 10 weeks to design, build and ship the feature

## PLAYING CATCHUP

- Live polling was a crowded space
- Main competitor Slido had a very robust product

## Need finding

### Questions

How important is live polling to existing customers?

Do people want to run live polls or consume survey results in a live setting?

### Process

Competitive analysis of live survey products

Interviewed 5 Slido users at a Slido-sponsored meetup

Interviewed 10 POPin customers (5 onsite) and reviewed notes from 20 previous interviews

## Observations

"I wouldn't want to toggle between a PowerPoint and POPin in front of 300 people."

Most POPin users feared causing "app fatigue" by requiring employees to download yet another app.

Moderation is critical for large audiences (1000+). But the average POPin cohort is ~250.

Sorting answers by Most Popular causes "first mover bias" – early answers get all the votes.

## Design Principles

Live product needs to integrate seamlessly with other presentation software.

Enable participation without creating an account (i.e. event join codes)

Moderation is a nice-to-have, but can wait until V2.

Responses should default to chronological. Voting period should be distinct from response period.

# User Personas I

# Observations from 30 interviews

# Affinity matching

## 1st round

The Comma Ninja	The Concerned Listener	The Consensus Builder	The Delegate	The Enlightened, Hands-Off Executive
I use many sunny tools --> I'm not sure what role they play in the organization	OK! goal: keep tabs on how people are using the tools in the organization	GOAL: align priorities and interests of different levels of the org	BEHAVIOR: I facilitate the team's goals, brainstorms ideas & directions for taking an event	The ideas come from the people with customers'
My job is to make sure there is OPEN communication	GOAL: do not waste people's time on unnecessary communications	GOAL: generate buy-in across the org	BEHAVIOR: scrub through higher meetings before sending up to higher management	I communicate high-level strategy to my team and send them the message on their teams'
There's no way to guarantee communications efforts --> I need to know what went wrong	NEED: a more direct line of communication for our team of commanders	GOAL: teach people how to feel their voice will be heard and appreciated	BEHAVIOR: gather topics to discuss during town hall / meeting	GOAL: ensure their feedback can be used for our initiative
GOAL: all communication needs to be clear, direct and info they need to do their job	CHALLENGE: survey fatigue	BEHAVIOR: I capture the pain, but I don't participate	GOAL: expect open, engaged and transparent	GOAL: ensure open, engaged and transparent
GOAL: establish two-way communication between employees (raising concern, asking for feedback, responding to those concerns)	CHALLENGE: low response rates to engagement surveys	My boss tells me what he wants to hear, and I tell everything up	BEHAVIOR: delegates meetings/communications to specific team members	GOAL: ensure people feel like they have a voice
NEED: a way to dig deeper into what's being discussed	PEOPLE: pay attention when email comes from the CEO	BEHAVIOR: forward the results to the team after the paper is closed	BEHAVIOR: only look at the high-level results of a POFM tool for our planning	GOAL: create a culture of transparency
It's not that we don't care, it's that we're overwhelmed and there are so many demands	I don't want to appear as though I'm not listening if the response are	I own the POFM tool for our planning	GOAL: ensure people feel like they have a voice	GOAL: ensure that company has a clear direction
GOAL: keep leadership in the loop	CHALLENGE: app clutter	NEED: a way to synthesize a large amount of feedback so that my boss can use one of it	BEHAVIOR: I'm in there an idea out there and to get how it works	GOAL: ensure people manage POFMs for me so I don't waste time
NEED: charts that you can just drag and drop into your dashboard	if other user-existing software is cluttery software	+ Add another card	+ Add another card	+ Add another card
GOAL: help employees adapt to culture changes after an acquisition	GOAL: download another app			
+ Add another card				

# User Personas II



**BUYER PERSONA**

## Larry the Leader

**ABOUT**

Larry is the VP of Corporate Strategy at a multi-national clothing retailer. His number one concern is that the company continues to grow, and that he gets home for dinner at least 3 times a week so that he can spend time with his two daughters, who are 4 and 6. He knows happy employees are productive employees, so he tries to stay in touch with how his team is feeling about the direction he is taking them. With such a charmed career, he is a confident leader who welcomes feedback, but he relies on his assistant to manage most of that information gathering for him. He heard about POPin from another VP. He loves the concept and values POPin results, but his only interaction with the product was during a sales call last year.

**NEEDS**

- Someone to manage his schedule and communications
- Insights from team members who interact directly with customers.
- Reliable direct reports who he can trust to communicate and implement the strategies he comes up with

**GOALS**

- Happy employees who are motivated and aligned along common goals
- To cultivate "strong company culture" so that the company succeeds
- To appear transparent

**PAIN POINTS**

- Keeping remote teams aligned with longterm company strategy
- Unproductive meetings
- When employees want to discuss topics during Town Halls that he is unable to address for legal reasons

**HOW DOES HE GET A RAISE?**

- Company hits quarterly earnings goal
- His strategies prove successful over the next 3-5 years

**AGE** 57  
**JOB TITLE** VP, Corporate Strategy  
**STATUS** Married  
**LOCATION** Washington D.C.

**OTHER TOOLS USED**

*"The best ideas come from the ground up."*



**USER PERSONA**

## Laura the Listener

**ABOUT**

Laura works at a Fortune 500 company. Her job is to make sure that people have the information and tools to do their jobs successfully. She prides herself on knowing what people are talking about at the water cooler, but fears that people won't speak up if they don't feel like they can share their feelings openly. She is tech-savvy and capable, but feels like she never has enough time to meet all the demands that are placed on her. She's worried about how effective her comms efforts are: is the information relevant to employees? Are employees tuning out? Do they believe their ideas will make an impact?

**NEEDS**

- A quick and easy way to get feedback from employees without inconveniencing them or her
- Ability to dig deeper around a certain topic or concern

**GOALS**

- Solicit constructive feedback from employees
- Identify areas of employee dissatisfaction before it negatively affects company
- Turn employee feedback into actions by leadership that produce meaningful results (for employees)

**PAIN POINTS**

- Survey/App fatigue - because it reduces employee engagement
- Employees don't pay attention to her comms efforts because they don't see the value or because they feel bombarded
- Employees don't feel safe expressing their true thoughts

**HOW DOES SHE GET A RAISE?**

- Employee retention improves
- Employee survey response rates improve
- Measures of employee satisfaction go up

**AGE** 42  
**JOB TITLE(S)** HR/Comms Director  
**STATUS** Married  
**LOCATION** Irvine, CA

**OTHER TOOLS USED**



**USER PERSONA**

## Darren the Delegate

**ABOUT**

Darren assists the CTO at a large software company, and spends about 30% percent of his time supporting other SVPs. He's also on the Culture Committee, which puts on the annual Halloween party. He is very task-oriented and comfortable using digital tools. Most of his day is dedicated to managing his bosses' schedules, which include setting the agenda for his primary boss' weekly All Hands meeting. Each quarter he spends about a week sorting out logistics for the departmental Town Hall, when his boss fields questions from the entire department. His duties include coordinating speakers' schedules, collecting decks in advance of important meetings, and making sure remote participants are supported.

**NEEDS**

- To solicit, synthesize and condense information/feedback so that his boss can consume the most important info quickly.
- Meeting moderation tools that aren't clunky
- A way to better support remote participants during meetings/town halls

**GOALS**

- Get his boss what he needs before he asks for it
- Find out what his boss' team wants him to discuss at the next All Hands
- Ensure that there are no technical difficulties during the department-wide Town Hall

**PAIN POINTS**

- When people ask him for information that he has already sent out in an email or included in an invite ("It's inconsiderate!")
- When people ask irrelevant questions during Town Halls

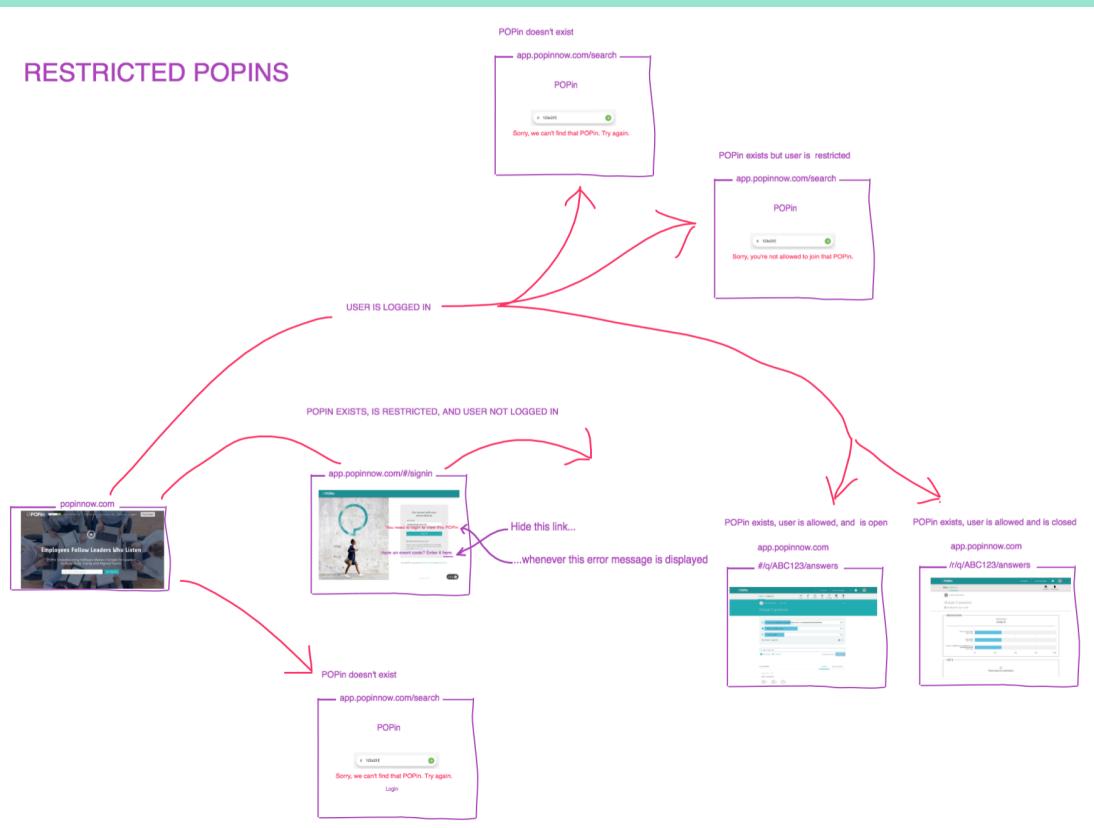
**HOW DOES HE GET A RAISE/KEEP JOB?**

- His performance review is based entirely on his boss' opinion
- His boss feels supported
- If he helps his boss succeed, he succeeds

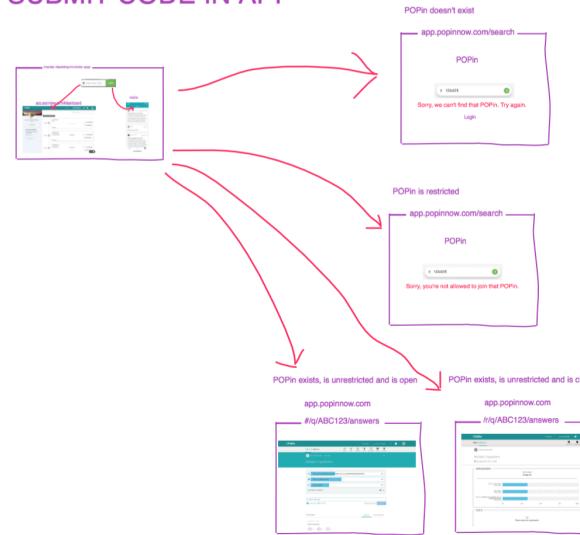
**AGE** 28  
**JOB TITLE** Executive Assistant  
**STATUS** Single  
**LOCATION** Denver, CO

**OTHER TOOLS USED**

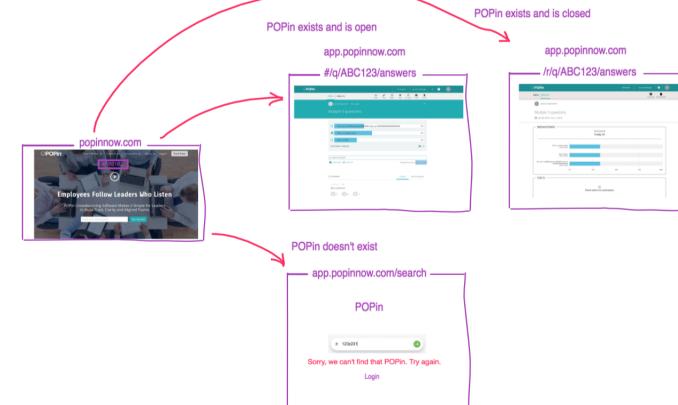
# User login flows



## SUBMIT CODE IN APP

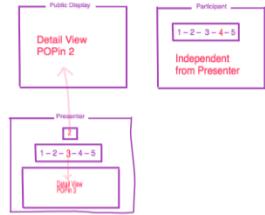


## UNRESTRICTED POPINS



# Modality experiments

## Option A



Presenter controls real-time Public Display view

Roles: Presenter + Participant

Views: Presenter + Participant + Public Display

Add a third detail view called Public Display (i.e. a cleaner, read-only view)  
#/q/:slug/answers => presenter/hero view  
#/q/:id/answers => participant view  
#/q/:id/display => public display view

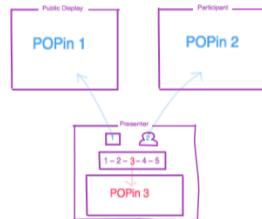
Presenter view

Identical to our concurrent collection  
With the ability to control which POPin is highlight in the Public Display view

Notes:

Presentation mode = sexy beautiful animated, nav-key controlled in fullscreen, include easy-to-use-nav-to sharelink or event code  
Real-time updating of collection, question content - if presenter adds or edits questions on a separate device, the changes will be reflected in Presentation mode  
participants 'login' by entering an event code on the existing login screen  
app.popinnow.com => Heroes – login here | Participants – enter your event code

## Option B



Presenter controls real-time Public Display view and Participant View

Roles: Presenter + Participant

Views: Presenter + Participant + Public Display

Add a third detail view called Public Display (i.e. a cleaner, read-only view)  
#/q/:slug/answers => presenter/hero view  
#/q/:id/answers => participant view  
#/q/:id/display => public display view

Presenter view

Identical to our concurrent collection  
With the ability to control which POPin is highlighted in the Public Display view  
With the ability to control which POPin is highlighted in the Participant view

## Option C



Presenter controls real-time Public Display view and Participant View

Roles: Presenter + Participant + Moderator

Views: Presenter + Moderator + Participant + Public Display + Additional Public Displays

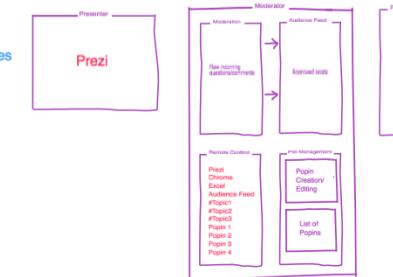
Moderator View

Remote control - ability to choose what is displayed across all screens  
Moderation => Audience Feed  
Poll Management

Presenter view

Presenter's main concern is their 3rd-party presentation software  
Must be in sync with moderator to manage toggling between different apps, including the different POPin Live screens

Roles



# Running polls live vs presenting results live

