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Mobile App Data Display Analysis

For this analysis, I have chosen to talk about the Robinhood brokerage android application. Robinhood is a stock brokerage app that allows you make a portfolio, trade stocks and other equities, as well as do market research. In this analysis, I will describe what features are present on various screens throughout the android app, as well as discuss the data on these pages, and where the data likely comes from.

The way Robinhood is designed, there is always a “button bar” visible on any view in the app. This overlay is always at the bottom of the screen and fills the full width of the UI. The button bar is a list of 5 buttons horizontally likely using a grid, or table layout. The 5 buttons allow the user to navigate through the major pages of the app including “Portofloio”, “Wallet”, ”Search”, “Messages”, and “Account”. Above this button bar, is the primary UI view. Now that we have discussed what is in this button bar overlay, I will discuss some of the primary views that are displayed based on selecting one of these 5 primary buttons.

Firstly, there is the “Portfolio” view. The portfolio view shows the users total portfolio value at the top, and a graph that shows the portfolio value over time. The user can scroll down to see individual holdings, as well as watchlists that the user has configured. This page is very data intensive. In order to create this portfolio view, the Robinhood needs live stock market data. Additionally, Robinhood also has data specific to the user’s account so the portfolio page does access a database of user account holdings (such as which stocks are owned and how many). Additionally, the portfolio page shows historical data, so the page also hits a data endpoint that has user account value over the past up to 5 years. Using the current live stock market data, and the user account information, the application can do calculations to give the user an accurate snapshot of their account value at this time. One of Robinhood’s goals is to make investing easy and appeal to younger, newer users. This portfolio view uses the data at it’s disposal to create a crystal clear snapshot of the users account at that time which appeals to the younger newer users who want to have all their account info at the touch of a button without needing to look through statements or navigate to multiple pages.

The next page to discuss is the “Research” page. The research page is a page that allows the user to search for stocks or other equity holdings and do research. At the Top and center of this page is a search bar that allows the user to type in any company or fund to find more details. In addition the research page allows you to scroll down where it displays “Popular Lists” of stocks, as well as a list of news stories about stocks that have any newsworthy events or movement. To achieve this research page, there are two primary data points that are needed. Firstly, Robinhood needs access to live stock market data. This is a massive quantity of data that is changing every second while markets are open. I do not believe that Robinhood sources this data for themselves. There are third party vendors that expose current live stock market data. I suspect this is where Robinhood gets their live market data. Secondly, Robinhood is also displaying many news articles about various companies. To get this data, Robinhood must have agreements with news vendors to allow them to display or link to their news articles on Robinhoods web site. This could be done via simple links, although the formatting is much more creative than that. Additionally, Robinhood needs to know what lists to include in the “Popular Lists” as well as what news articles the users would want to see, so Robinhood is accessing data about what lists the users are actually looking at, as well as what news articles are popular at that point in time. By having lives tock market data, and popular news stories, in combination with the clean UX and friendly design, Robinhood is able to appeal their application to new, younger investors and therefore meet their goal of bringing investing to younger, newer investors.

Robinhood is a large application and contains more pages than those I listed here, however In the list I supplied, it is clear that Robinhood is using a combination of solid and concise design techniques along with large amounts of market and user data to create an experience that is consistent with their goals of expanding their platform and stock market trading as a whole to younger newer investors.