FACULDADE DE CIÊNCIAS E TECNOLOGIA
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Human-Machine Interaction

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Study Helper

Stage 1: Project Proposal

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Problem Description

Oftentimes students suffer from a lack of organization and methodology on their studies. Study Helpers' main focus is to increase these students' productivity and motivation by making their time management easier.
It will help planning study schedules and routines as students will be allowed to create tasks and divide them over specific periods of time. Also, they'll be able to create a calendar with the important dates and will be notified on unfinished tasks, upcoming exams and presentations. Lastly, they won't ever be caught off-guard with deadlines and with regular feedback on their performance over time, there won't be any risk on falling behind schedule throughout the coursework.

Project Goal

As described above this project was created to provide students, regardless of their school stage, with a useful app that helps them organize and manage their studies. This app has the following functionalities: A Calendar, a To-Do list, a Feedback system and a Notification system.

- The Calendar functionality, there is no limit here, students can not only create their class schedule but also create or add a bus schedule, a train schedule, extracurricular activities schedules, etc. We intent to use a regular calendar display that will be editable by the students;
- The To-Do list, as the name suggests, is intended to help the student to keep track of the tasks that need to be completed. This functionality is related with the feedback system, as will be mentioned bellow, will let the student determine the tasks priority and will be organized in order of priority;
- The Feedback system purpose is to give the user an overview of his performance in the past day, week or month, for example, the number of tasks created vs. tasks finished, exams completed and presentations done. We are planning on using graphs to illustrate the students' performance;
- The Notification system goal is to warn students of upcoming deadlines as well as providing feedback alongside the feedback system mentioned above. The Notification system will be implemented with push notifications.

These are the main functionalities of the preliminary project design, although, as described in the assignment sheet, can be subjected to further changes.

Competitors & Market

The productivity app market is a very competitive one. Popular applications backed up by large teams aren't unusual, and there are many great products coming out in a fast pace. However, we're focusing on a *niche* here; a specialization of the general productivity app.
After some research, we managed to come across a couple off apps that compete with our project idea.

The first one we found was My Study Plan by *SQA*:

Strong Points:

- It showed weekly, monthly and total hours spent in an organized way.
- The UI was not clustered and it was very easy to navigate around.

Weak Points:

- The on-boarding process was very intrusive.
- Absolutely no feedback for most of the user's actions.
- You could only plan one week ahead.
- The priority system was percentage-based, which made it very odd to use.

The other one was Smart Study Plan by *Intelectin*:

Strong Points:

- Label-based priority system; very easy to use.

Weak Points:

- You could only plan one week ahead.
- Every single change on the current study plan would force a completely new plan generation. These took a VERY long time.

Last but not least, none of the competitors we found offered a cross-platform desktop application. In fact, none of them were even *targeted* for desktop usage. As most of our studying nowadays is made through digital content (and specifically on our computers), we believe that targeting the desktop environment is the way to go.