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INTRODUCTION: Exploring Time Tracking Applications

In this comprehensive research document, our team—comprising Akhona Mbatha, Lwazi Zuma, Makabongwe Sibisi, Owami Sibiya, and Ntobeko Gumede—embarks on an insightful journey into the realm of time tracking applications. Focused specifically on three prominent contenders—Monday.com, Notion, and Toggl Track—our aim is to deliver a thorough analysis that encapsulates each application's essence.

Through meticulous examination, we will provide a overview of each application, shedding light on their respective strengths and weaknesses. Furthermore, our exploration will unveil their innovative features, showcasing the ingenuity that sets them apart in the competitive landscape of productivity tools.

A pivotal aspect of our research lies in the creation of a visual infographic, meticulously designed to facilitate a comparative analysis of all three applications. This graphical representation will serve as a compass, guiding readers through the intricacies of feature sets and functionalities, ultimately aiding in informed decision-making.

However, our journey doesn't conclude there. Following the comparative analysis, we will curate a list of features that we aspire to integrate into our own time tracking application Check Box.

In the concluding segment, we will delve into the justifications behind our chosen features, as well as potential adjustments that may arise during the application's development lifecycle. This reflection will ensure that our endeavour remains adaptive and responsive to the evolving needs of users and stakeholders. Helping create the development roadmap for Check Box.

Research Analysis: Unveiling the strengths and weaknesses

In this section, we undertake a comprehensive examination of three leading time tracking applications: Monday.com, Notion, and Toggl Track. Our analysis encompasses various aspects, including user interface, feature set, customization options, integrations, and overall usability.

Monday.com

Overview:

Monday.com boasts an intuitive interface and robust project management features. The platform offers customizable workflows, dynamic dashboards, and seamless collaboration tools. Its visual nature simplifies task management and enhances team productivity. However, its pricing structure may pose challenges for smaller teams or individuals.

(monday.com, 2024)

STRENGHTS	WEAKNESSES
Highly visual interface: When kept simple it is easy to find what you need and display progress to members of your team	**Per-user pricing limits:** Monday.com uses a tried system for pricing and adding more uses increases the overall price. Major weakness for larger teams
robust collaboration features: Application is designed to support multiple users allowing multiple people to edit a list at anytime	**Steep learning curve for new users:** User interface can be come cluttered and disorganised if the user is not familiar with the system
customizable workflows: Up to 1000 items on the free plan with unlimited items being provided for paid plans	

(Daniel Raymond, 2024) (Duncan Lambden, 2024) (monday.com, 2024)

Innovative Features:
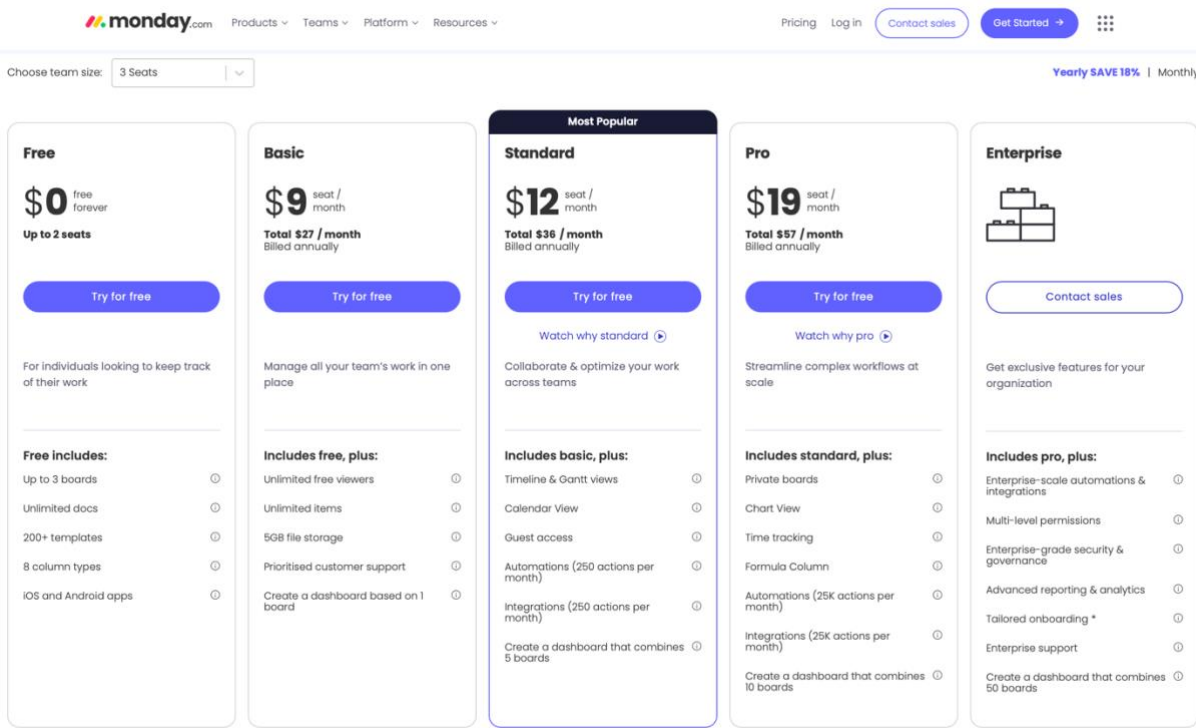
1. Dynamic Dashboards:

   Monday.com's dynamic dashboards provide real-time insights into project progress, enhancing transparency and accountability. This is innovative because it goes beyond a checkbox to display when a task is complete but allows you to see at which point of the task a your team member is on.

2. Automation:

   The platform offers powerful automation capabilities, streamlining repetitive tasks and improving efficiency. This is innovative because it means you only need to create a repeated task once and it will be available for autocompletion
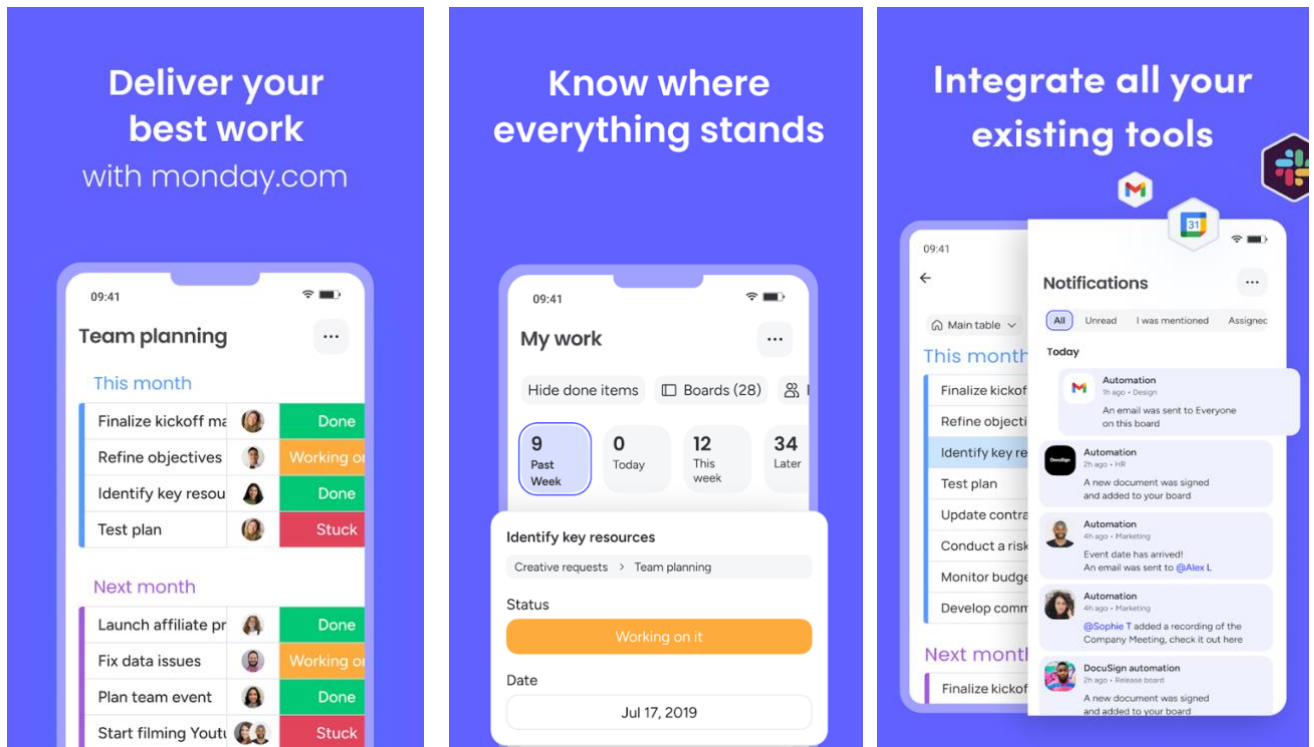
Pricing structure:

The pricing structure for the application is more catered for smaller companies as 2 seats are free but anymore seats above this are given a fee.
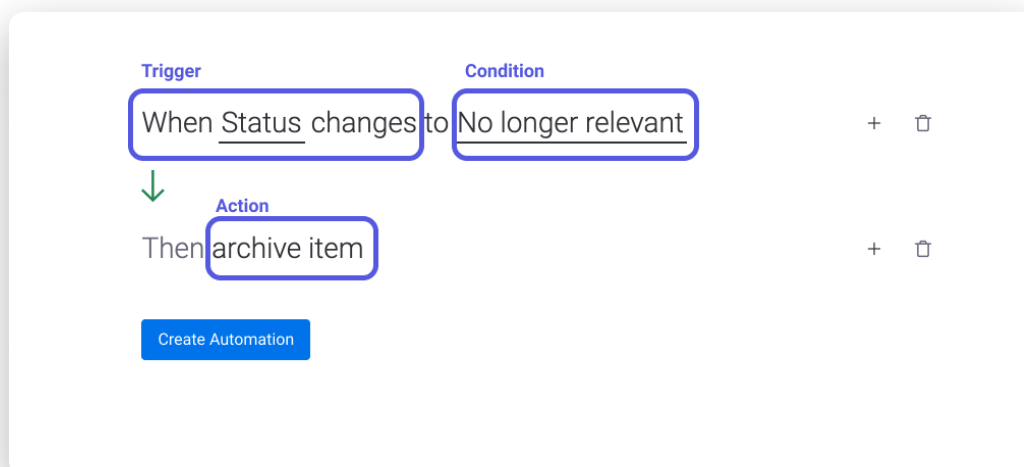

(Monday.com, 2024)

UI

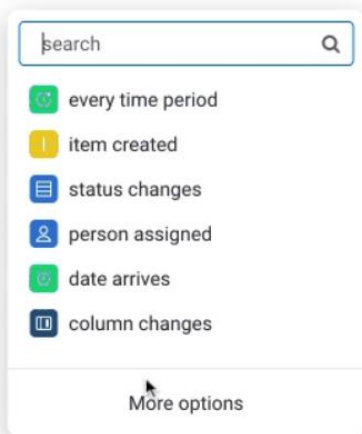**Dynamic Dashboard**

Status update function

(monday.com, 2024)

Group Notifications

Innovative feature screenshot

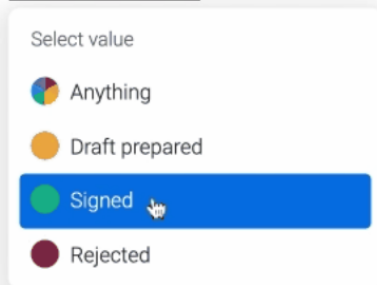When a user wishes to create a new automation they need to follow 3 simples steps

When this happens

search 🔍

- ⏱️ every time period
- 🟨 item created
- 🟦 status changes
- 👤 person assigned
- 🟩 date arrives
- 🔲 column changes

More options

Step 1:Choose a trigger
Tap on "when"

to something

Select value

- 🥧 Anything
- 🟠 Draft prepared
- 🟢 Signed 👆
- 🟤 Rejected

Step 2: Select a condition
Tap on the "to"

Step 3: Select an Action.
tap on "then"

When Contract changes to Signed

↓

Then do this

search 🔍

Most used

- ➡️ move item to group
- 🟦 change status
- 🔔 notify
- ✉️ send email
- 🔵 create update
- 👤 assign person

More options

(Monday.com, 2024)

Once all the steps have been taken click on "create automation"

Notion

Overview:

Notion offers a versatile workspace for organizing tasks, documents, and knowledge. Its modular structure allows for customizable databases, task boards, and wikis. Notion's extensive template gallery and integrations enhance its utility, though its abundance of features may overwhelm some users.

(Notion, 2024)

STRENGHTS	WEAKNESSES
Cost effective: The free version has more than enough features for individual users and the paid tiers are cost effective for larger teams	**Complexity may be overwhelming:** The number of available adjustments make using it very overwhelming especially when starting as a new user
Extensive tutorials and documentation: The application has tutorials for every skill level. Allowing you to find guidance whenever you feel lost.	**No goal tracking:** Creating goals and tracking progress is possible within the application but there is no specific feature for this
Extensive template gallery: Notion has a larger gallery of free templates to use which allow you to start working quickly and effectively	**Lacks collaboration features :** Using Notion has no in built communication features

(Notion, 2024) (Peter Kanai, 2024) (Kris Timothy Simon, 2023)

Innovative Features:

1. Template Gallery:

   Notion's extensive template gallery offers pre-built solutions for various use cases, streamlining the creation process. This is innovative as all the other time tracking apps required you to build your activity from scratch, which takes time away from actually completing the activity

2. Modular Structure:

   The platform's modular structure allows users to customize databases, task boards, and wikis to fit their specific needs.

Pricing structure:

Notions pricing structure allows for good usability for users and small teams on the free plan, with useful addons for bigger teams that may require more features like 30 day page history tracking and the ability to invite more than 10 guests

(Notion, 2024)

UI

Notes, docs, tasks
Drag & drop anything.
Organize everything.
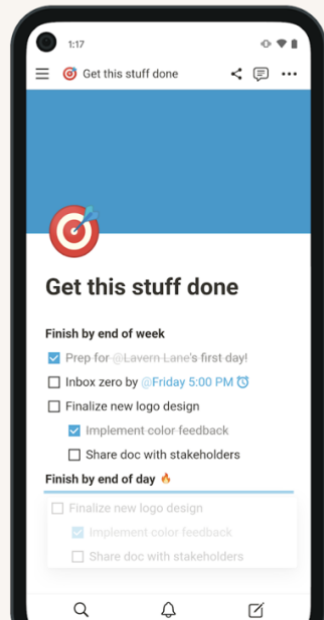
Task manger page

Collaborate in real-time
Easily share pages.
Add comments and
@mention teammates.
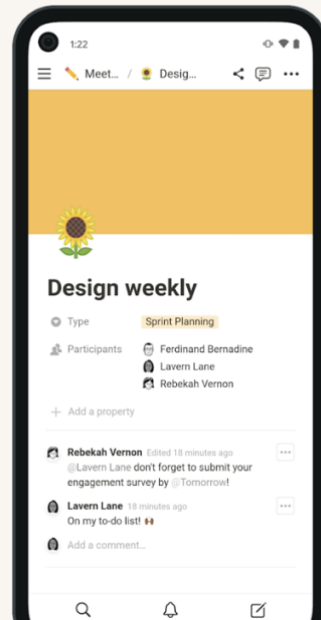
Collaboration page

Organize information
Nest pages inside pages.
No more messy folders.
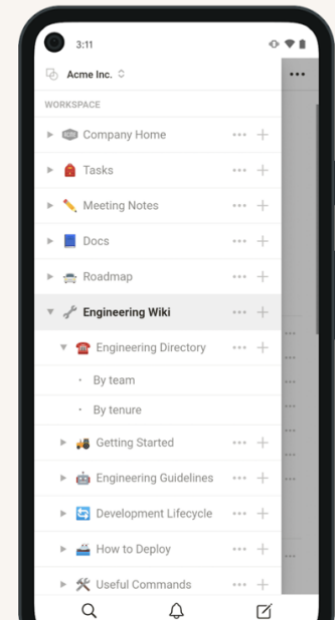
Folder Management

Publish to the web
Turn any Notion page into
a website in just two taps.
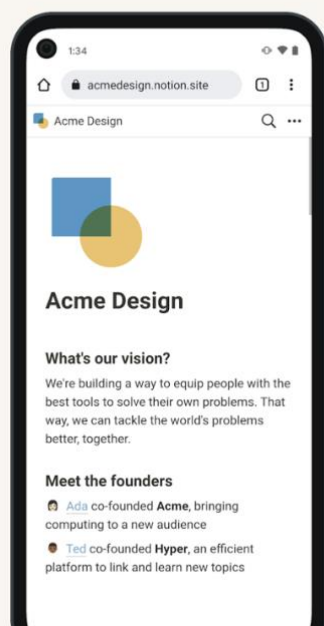
Easy web publication

(Notion, 2024)

Innovative features screenshots
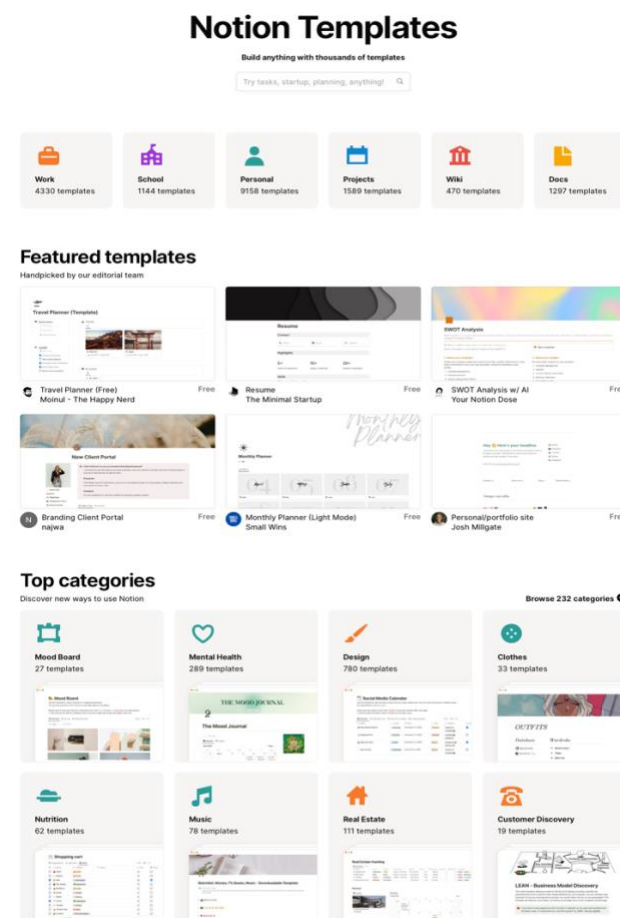
- All templates within the templates page are compatible for all platforms thanks to Notions modular structure. This allows for templets designed on the web to fit in seamlessly with the mobile application
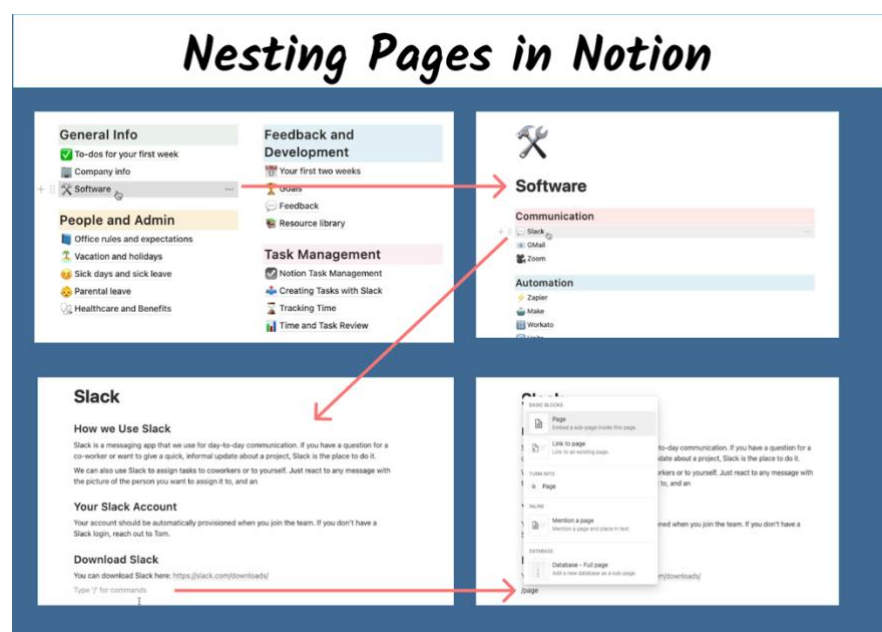
- The nesting function allows you to nest another page or table within an opened page, this allows you to add more detail into a given topic as per the infographic.

(Jasinski Matt & Tom Nassr, 2022)

Toggle Track

Overview:

Toggl Track prioritizes simplicity and efficiency, providing a straightforward time tracking solution with minimalistic design elements. Its one-click timer and cross-platform integration make it ideal for individuals and small teams. However, its feature set may be perceived as limited compared to more comprehensive solutions.

(Toggle Track, 2024)

STRENGHTS	WEAKNESSES
Simplicity and Ease of Use: offering a straightforward time tracking solution that is easy to understand and use. The intuitive interface and one-click timer make it effortless for users to track their time without unnecessary complexity.	**Limited Feature Set:** Compared to more comprehensive project management platforms, Toggl Track's feature set is relatively limited, lacking functionalities such as task management and collaboration tools.
Cross-platform integration: Toggl Track seamlessly integrates across multiple platforms and devices, allowing users to track their time from anywhere.	**Lack of Advanced Project Management tools:** Toggl Track primarily focuses on time tracking and lacks advanced project management features found in other platforms

(Toggle Track, 2024) (ProjectManagers.net, 2023) (Erica Dias, 2024)

Innovative Features:

1. Pomodoro Timer:

   Toggl Track's Pomodoro timer promotes productivity and focus by encouraging structured work intervals and breaks.

2. Built in Widgets:

   Toggles widgets make it easy to keep track of your work without having to open the application

Pricing structure

the pricing of Toggle Track is very similar to Notion where all the basic features of the application are included with more advanced features made available for paying teams. One major benefit to purchasing the starter package is the ability to store your inactive data for an unlimited amount of time, allowing for task auditing.
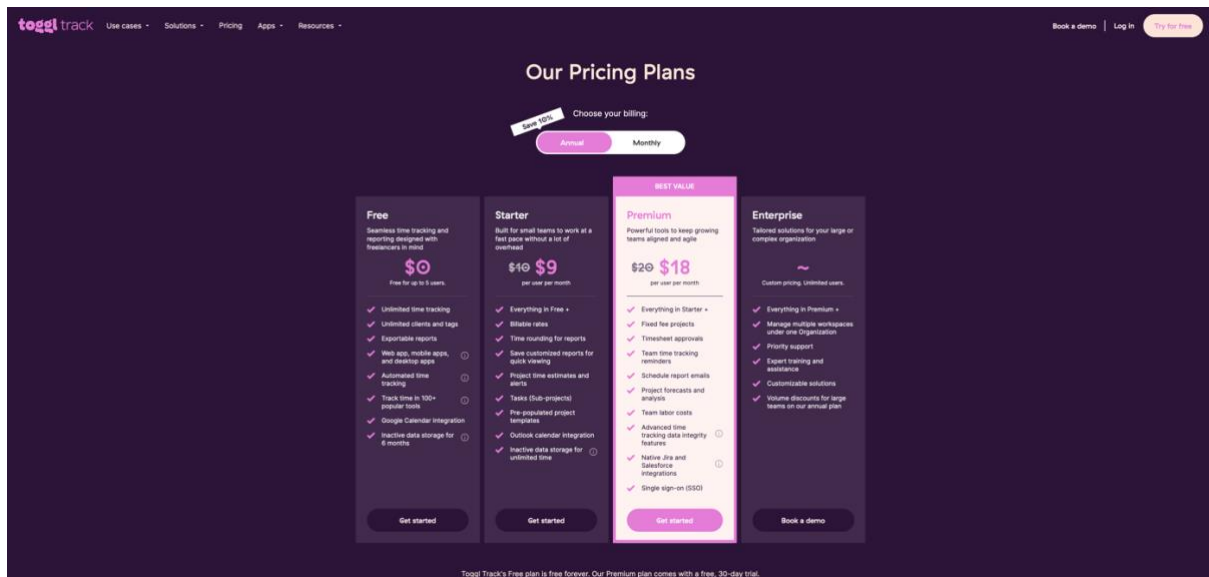
(Toggle Track, 2024)

UI
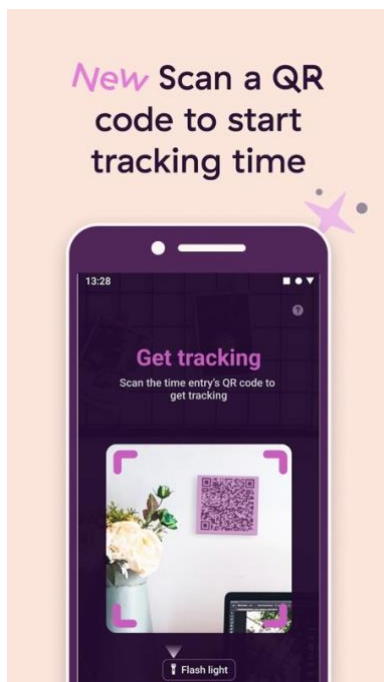
QR Code scanner to allow easy sharing
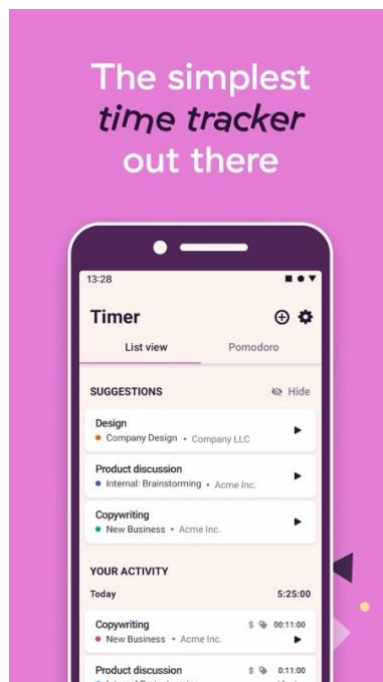
Simple user interface
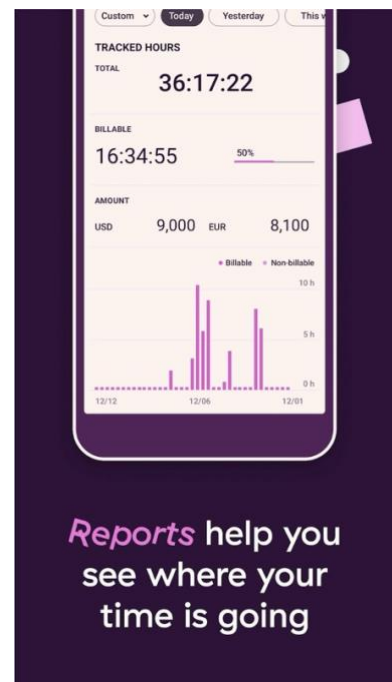
Easy reporting function

(Toggle.com, 2024)

Innovative Features screenshots

(Toggle.com, 2024)

Comparison Infographic: Monday.com, Notion, Toggle Track

MONDAY.COM NOTION TOGGLE TASK

SIMILARITIES

- Cross-platform
- basic features are free
- Accessible Offline & Online
- All provide third-party integrations
- All provide a level of customization

DIFFERENCES

Monday.com	Notion	Toggle
Online notifications	No Notifications	Online notifications
Customisable	Customisable	Limited Customization
Expensive	Affordable	Affordable
No Timer	No Timer	Incudes Timer

PLAY STORE RATINGS

Toggle 4.7 ★★★★☆

Notion 4.7 ★★★★☆

Monday.com 4.9 ★★★★★

Check Box additional features

Features Adapted from Competitors

Adaptive Time Tracking:

Similar to Toggl Track's simple and effective time tracking, we will implement adaptive time tracking that adjusts to the user's work habits, providing suggestions for logging based on previous entries. This feature aims to minimize manual entry, making time tracking more intuitive and less intrusive.

Visual Project Dashboard:

Drawing inspiration from Monday.com, our app will feature a highly visual project dashboard that allows users to see the status of various tasks at a glance. A visual dashboard simplifies project management and enhances team collaboration by providing a clear overview of progress.

Automation of Repetitive Tasks:

Like the automation capabilities seen in Monday.com, we plan to allow users to automate repetitive tasks within our application. Automating routine tasks saves time and reduces the potential for human error, allowing users to focus on more critical aspects of their work.

Pomodoro Timer:

Taking a cue from Toggl Track, we will incorporate a Pomodoro timer to promote focused work sessions interspersed with short breaks. This feature is aimed at enhancing productivity and preventing burnout by encouraging users to work in bursts of concentration.

Customisable Alerts:

Building on the customizable notification features found in Notion, our app will offer personalized alerts for deadlines, meetings, and when it's time to take a break. Customizable alerts help keep users on track with their tasks and maintain a healthy work-life balance.

Features Competitors Lack

Integrated Goal Tracking and Progress Monitoring:

Unlike the tools we analysed, Check Box will include a built-in feature for setting long-term goals, tracking daily progress towards these goals, and visualizing achievements over time. This feature aims to provide users with a sense of accomplishment and direction, keeping them motivated and focused on their objectives.

Focus Mode:

We plan to introduce a focus mode that minimizes distractions by temporarily blocking notifications and other interruptive elements within the app. Focus mode is designed to help users maintain concentration on demanding tasks, thereby enhancing efficiency and the quality of work.

Conclusion

In conclusion, our research has not only provided insights into existing time tracking applications but has also laid the groundwork for the development of our own solution, Check Box. By synthesizing the strengths of Monday.com, Notion, and Toggl Track while addressing their limitations, Check Box aims to deliver a comprehensive and user-centric tool that revolutionizes the way users manage their time and tasks.

At the core of Check Box's development lies a commitment to simplicity, functionality, and user satisfaction. Inspired by the clean interfaces of Notion and Toggl Track, we prioritize an intuitive design that enhances usability and accessibility. Our app will feature a visually appealing and streamlined user interface, allowing for seamless interaction and navigation.

Furthermore, Check Box will offer customizable features akin to those found in Monday.com and Notion, empowering users to tailor the app to their preferences. This includes personalized task lists, project boards, and notification settings, ensuring a flexible and adaptable user experience.

Additionally, Check Box will introduce innovative functionalities to address key user needs. Integrated goal tracking and progress monitoring, inspired by our analysis of market gaps, will enable users to set and achieve their objectives effectively. Focus mode, another unique feature, will minimize distractions and enhance productivity during work sessions.

As we embark on the development journey of Check Box, our commitment to excellence and user-centric design remains unwavering. We will continue to incorporate user feedback, stay responsive to market trends, and refine our product to exceed user expectations. Through thoughtful design and continuous innovation, Check Box aspires to set new standards in the realm of time tracking applications, offering users a powerful yet intuitive tool to manage their time and accomplish their goals effectively. Together, let us embrace the possibilities that lie ahead as we strive to make time tracking simpler, smarter, and more impactful.

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