

4 Kik Messenger

Jim Basalnic, CEO of Kik Interactive, makers of Kik Messenger, was on another one of his rampages. While these rampages generally involved getting angry at Kik customers for using too many foolish usernames or the cold weather in Waterloo, Ontario, this time he had a closer target...

Dammit! Dammit! Dammit! Why do I pay you people? I hired a half-dozen product managers over the last year and I don't think that we are ever seeing anything valuable out of 'em. Viber! Viber... got bought for \$900 Million. And... and... WhatsApp, our main competitor, just got bought for \$20 Billion. Here I am, freezing my butt off in Ontario and the CEOs of our competitors can now buy the entire town I live in. What did we do wrong! Why did I hire you?

Despite his proclivity for non-standard american usage, Jim did have a point. They had hired a number of expensive Product Managers ("PM") to work on their product and while Kik was the preferred messenger App in a few countries, both WhatsApp and Viber had significantly outgrown them over the last year and a half.

After work that day, Angelos, the PM in charge of monetization, and you decided to grab a drink together in a local establishment. Angelos, after 3 drinks...

Listen dude, I'm just not sure that Kik has anything going for it and I just got an offer from SnapChat to build a special pet-focused dating application. While I'm totally stoked on the project here and think that we offer a better value than all of our competitors, I'm just not seeing enough data to know if we are doing a good job or not.

As the Director of Data Services at Kik Interactive, you knew what he was getting at. You were hired approximately 3 months ago to help the product team make better decisions, but things had not been going swimmingly. The legacy system at Kik was costly, inaccurate and unnecessarily complex. While your team had been working through the dark Ontario winter trying to pull things together, they were still a few steps away.

After a few beers, you went back to the office and decided to review the system that your trusted lieutenant, Dr. Dedomena had put together. The system consisted of a collector, which collected events from the users, an ugly map-reduce job that simplified the data and then a structured database that housed the final collected data.

Unfortunately Dr. Dedomena, or Dr. Demento as he was called behind his back, had made some costly errors when building his tracking system. In particular, he had built a system that was really good at tracking the technical aspects of the product, but not one that tracked how users interacted with the application.

It is now pretty late, and you have to hand off the specifications for the tracking solution to the engineers by tomorrow morning, so you grab a cup of coffee and go to work.

Tasks:

1. Download Kik messenger onto your mobile device.
2. Spend some time with it and determine:
 - What is the core use of the application?
 - What are the secondary uses?
 - How does/if the application make money?
 - What drives users to use this application over its competitors?
3. Using your knowledge of tracking, what behavior do you want to track?
 - Design a taxonomy that makes tracking how users generate revenue for kik simple, fast and easy (10-20 events). What meta data would you include on the events? Assume that you are limited to 10 total columns.
 - Now design a taxonomy that tracks how users retain and use the app (10-20 events).
 - Assuming that the data was in a standard sql table called “raw_events” write 3 queries for both retention and monetization that you would want to monitor on a daily basis.
4. Finally, SWOT Analysis is a tool used to assist in decision-making. Please complete a SWOT-style analysis for Angelos deciding if he should join SnapChat. In other words, please include in your discussion an analysis of the choice of going quitting Kik and going to SnapChat.

What you should turn in:

- Max 3 page write-up answering the written questions
- 1 Spreadsheet with the two taxonomies. These taxonomies should include not only the events that you wish to track, but the meta data that you would also want to include. In other words, if you have 7 columns of data and 12 possible events for each taxonomy what would you include and why? In the write-up please discuss why you choose these events and what other events you considered and rejected.