Assignment 1: Project Description and Plan

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Introduction and Problem Definition (10 points)

Our project aims to enhance the GoodReads mobile application by addressing the current design challenges, thus increasing the user base and foot traffic to the app. We intend to make the app welcoming to new users and include helpful features for existing users.

■ **What does the system do? (system: app/website/3D interactive system,…)**
- The GoodReads app recommends books, allows users to shop the books, review the same, and has a discussion forum for the reading community.
- They store user preferences based on the user's reading list, keeping an account of the books read, and would like to read. Also storing their reviews, ratings, and recommendations.
- The current application has the following tabs - Home, My Books, Discover, Search, and More.
- They also have a functionality to scan the barcode of the physical books and fetch the same from the database.
- The app has the following types of users we want to address -
  - Users with a Goodreads account
    - **Novice User:** A new person (possibly knows nothing about Goodreads)
    - **Expert User:** A person who uses Goodreads and is familiar with the functionality of the app
  - **Unsigned In User:** A person without a Goodreads account or not logged in (if having a Goodreads account)

■ **What problems do you aim to fix for users of the system?**
- Lack of UI consistency on different platforms.
- Establish a flow between all the features.
- Currently, the app lacks personalized book recommendations for the users.
- Appropriate filter options do not exist when exploring new books or accessing the reading lists.

- Users cannot access local files on the app.
- Users cannot share books or quotes they like on social media apps like Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter.

■ Mention three or more hypotheses as to why those problems exist. Note that you will test these hypotheses later in the project.

- Currently, Goodreads is the only online library catalog website that exists with no other competitor.
- New/Existing users don't feel welcome to the app and move away.
- Android and iOS app versions are different; hence, Android app users may feel cheated.
- There is a lack of personalizations/customizations that can make the users feel disconnected.
- The app design is inconsistent, and there is no well-defined flow between the features.

Clearly state the impact of the project, e.g., "How do you project your solution will benefit the users?"

- Make the application more user-friendly, consistent, and welcoming with the UI redesign.
- Add some social media features so the app will be attractive to the younger generation.
- Maintaining user profiles/preferences with controlled visibility to the public so that the app will feel more personal.
- Adding a better filter/search for the books so that exploring will be easier and more intuitive.
- Add functionality to make the application usable as a general-purpose reading tool with simple and powerful features.

Motivation for Selection (5 points)

- Goodreads is only one of the few mobile apps available for readers for discovering new books.
- The Goodreads database is very vast, however, most of the readers don't know about the app and the features it offers.
- The user experience with the mobile application could be improved for user retention and overall satisfaction.
- We intend to achieve the following features -
  - Increase the userbase for the mobile application
  - Increase the scope of the app to be a general-purpose reading app
  - Improve overall user experience and application consistency.
  - Foster a sense of community in the user base.
  - Make the application more personalized.

Target Audience (5 points)

- **Existing Users**

(reason of focus:)

- To motivate more use of the app
- To increase accessibility
- Give a sense of belonging to the user (Create Loyalty)
- Enhance the user privacy

- **New readers from all age groups**

(reason of focus:)

- Diversify the user base
- Address a wide range of perspectives and reading preferences

Project Plan and Methodology (10 points)

- **Testing Strategy:**

We aim to conduct end-user testing with a group of 6 individuals from diverse backgrounds, which would be a subset representing our target audience.

They will be using the app for 2-3 hours, based on which we will collect valuable feedback through a combination of surveys and interviews.

- **Prototype/Product Development:**
  - We want to make the application more **accessible** to people who don't wish to have a Goodreads account by making the Discover tab visible to them to explore the app.
  - Further, we will **provide book recommendations on the home page** for both novice (famous books to get familiar with the app) and expert (based on similar books read) users for easy access.
  - When the user accesses the My Books tab, we aim to **maintain user profiles/preferences with controlled visibility** to the public so that the app will provide privacy and a sense of belonging to the user.
  - Moreover, on the same books listing tab, we plan to enhance the user experience by customizing the books based on user preferences with the help of **filters**.
  - Lastly, we intend to **add a social media feature** to the app, which will enhance the UX and attract the younger generation.
    - Sharing quotes (similar to sharing lyrics on Spotify)

- **Evaluation Methods:**

- **Tracking user movements while using the app**: We want to understand the common challenges users face while accessing the current app.
- **Observing user behaviors**: Our goal is to gain insights into the processes and emotions individuals go through concerning the issue our redesigned app aims to address.
- **Understanding user requirements and pain points**: We aim to comprehend the user needs and frustrations associated with the product we will be designing.
- **Task success metrics**: We would measure the success rate and efficiency of the users completing the specified tasks. Analyze the time and effort required from various users to achieve the same.