

How do users consume information today?

How are people accessing information today?	How do users define 'useful information'?	What is the best way to deliver content given people's short attention spans?	How does the audience want us to convey the data?	Do they differ in consumption methods between real-time and static content?
What kind of information can capture people's attention?	How can we meet people 'where they are' to get them the info the need?	How do users find traffic news currently?	What are the opinions surrounding various news sources?	Does content format matter? (i.e. News on YouTube formatted differently than a newspaper)

Who are our users?

Can we think of other audience groups besides the media and drivers? Passengers?	How do info needs and preferences vary across the state?	How do we narrow down their users?	How do we define 'drivers' in a way that is meaningful to this project?	Could/should we capture bicyclists/scooters/etc.?	How do we engage new users?
How do user needs differ across rural and urban?	Which of the user's needs do you consider to be the most important, why?	How do different groups of people use TxDOT	Who wouldn't use this service?	Are Gov't and elected officials another user group?	

What are our success metrics?

How do we analyze user's engagement in the content? Especially since they don't login?	What is the indication that TxDOT is currently engaging drivers?	How do we measure improvement or success?
How would you like to see user feedback/comments change?	User subscriptions? Views?	What are the main data-driven metrics for the website?

How are users currently using TXDOT's news/media website?

Are users finding the content they are looking for today?	How do different groups of people use TxDOT?	What are some of the pain points of the current website?	What do their users want?	What are the usability issues with the current website?	On heavy traffic times (holidays), can users get the latest information on roads from TxDOT?	Based on past metrics, what tone/content/length do users like?	How can we best tell this narrative of Texans who use transportation everyday?	What is the context or situation users are in when they engage with the information?	What is the incentive for a user to find news information on TxDOT's website?	What are the scenarios where people are currently being directed to the press room?	Of the existing
What are the top 3 types of information checked most by users?	How is TxDOT communicating info to drivers about impacts to their commute?	What do users like most and least about current newsroom?	What information is resonating well with users today?	Why do drivers come to TxDOT's website?	What information on the website and social media are people engaging with the most?	What are the predictors of people coming to and staying at TxDOT?	What are the top 10 keyword searches for the past 6 months?	What are the things people search for that aren't part of TxDOT (i.e. license, registration, etc.)?	What is the current obstacle keeping people from getting this information already?	Why do TxDOT users need a newsroom?	

Backend Support/Processes

Literature Review

By Literature review and synthesis of the past research, I want to figure out how people process information, what kinds of content match the users needs and how to leverage the power of social media to further clarify the following research question

How can a TxDOT Newsroom meet users's future needs?

What are the day-to-day needs of Texas drivers/ transportation users?	What is the primary news the target audience wants? what is the secondary?	How does Social Media fit in to the future plan? Push vs Pull to/from TxDOT's website	What about emergency text messages, a podcast, youtube channel?	How do we show relevant content to drivers?	How do we improve driver safety through the Newsroom?	What features are critical for adoption and what can be pushed to later phases?	What are the best ways to leverage existing content?	Should user be allowed to submit stories, would this increase engagement?	How do we leverage what TxDOT is already good at and move it to next-gen technologies?
Do users prefer visually rich or simple information?	Are there any Gov't/ Federal regulations that we need to be aware of? must (not) haves, etc.	How do we balance the information on social media and the website?	What does a media platform for safety mean?	How should we segment the information on the site and social media?	How to differentiate 'local news' from 'educational news'?	How can we utilize existing media such as our internal newsletters?	How can we inform drivers of unsafe road conditions?	How can we address the lack of real-time data for users?	How 'local' could we make the content and should we?

Brand Awareness/Image

What is the brand awareness/ penetration of TxDOT among drivers (vs DPS)?	How can we increase the brand image?	How would you describe the current brand of TxDOT	How can we change the negative connotation of a 'big government agency'?	How would we define a 'positive image' for TxDOT?
What does the public perception of TxDOT look like?	Do people understand what TxDOT is?	What does TxDOT mean by 'keeping drivers safe'?	What are the current themes around TxDOT's negative public impression?	What are the risks of this effort besides negative publicity?

Competitors (Direct and Indirect)

What other newsrooms should we look at for best practices?	Who is doing this well now and what defines 'well'?	Who is doing this well now and what defines 'well'?
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Backend Support/Processes

What are the pain points of building and maintaining a social media presence?	What are the challenges of running a digital newsroom?	How is TxDot currently creating content for the newsroom?
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Information Architecture

What is the IA of a product like this?	How do you successfully build relationships with products and what does that look like?	Should news content live under current TxDOT site or somewhere else?
What should users be pushed to other sites for?	How do the TxDOT pillars integrate into this platform?	

Subject Matter Expert

By subject matter expert, I want to sort out how do different platforms interact with each other, and what are the content preferences among different groups of consumers

Brand Awareness/Image

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What does the public perception of TxDOT look like?	Do people understand what TxDOT is?	What does TxDOT mean by 'keeping drivers safe'?	What are the current themes around TxDOT's negative public impression?	What are the risks of this effort besides negative publicity?

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Survey

By survey, I want to determine what are the contents users expect to see by looking up the frequency of the visiting website. Furthermore, I am also interested in device preference used to access these information

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How can we utilize existing media such as our internal newsletters?

How can we inform drivers of unsafe road conditions?

Interview

By interview, I want to learn who are the current users to further determine what kinds of content would fit user's need in terms of their driving behaviors. Also, to know the current perception of TxDOT and how much people know about them to tweak its brand image

Information Architecture

How do you successfully build relationships with products and what does that look like?

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Competitors (or)

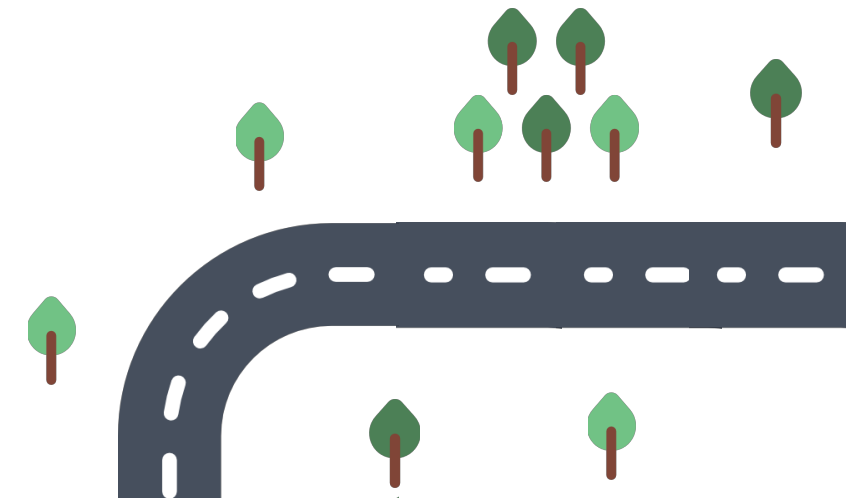
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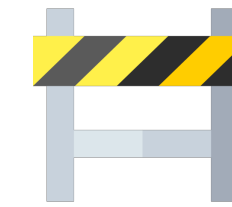
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Why does TxDOT want to become its own media platform?

Recommendation #1

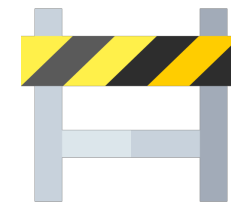


People is having a hard time getting information about road safety

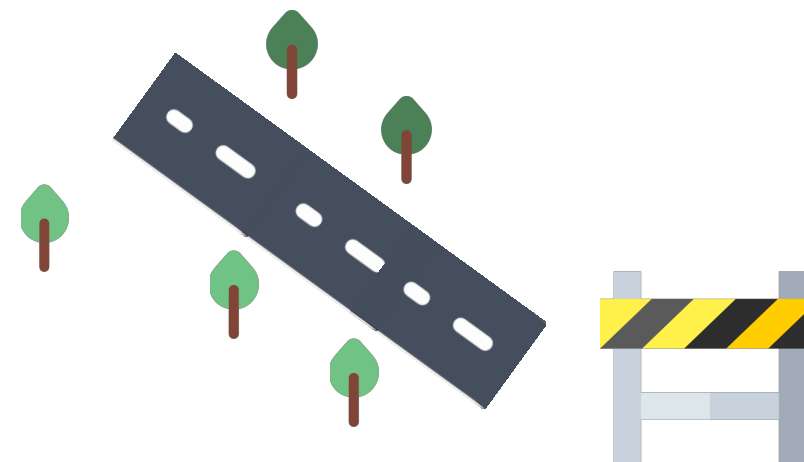


- "For the most part, unless you watch the news regularly, its hard to know whether there is a construction or not." (Interview Findings 4)

Promote Drive Texas of being a better predictor



- "I probably use google map more than Waze, although I think Waze is actually a better predictor, it's a habit (using Google map)." (Interview Findings 1)

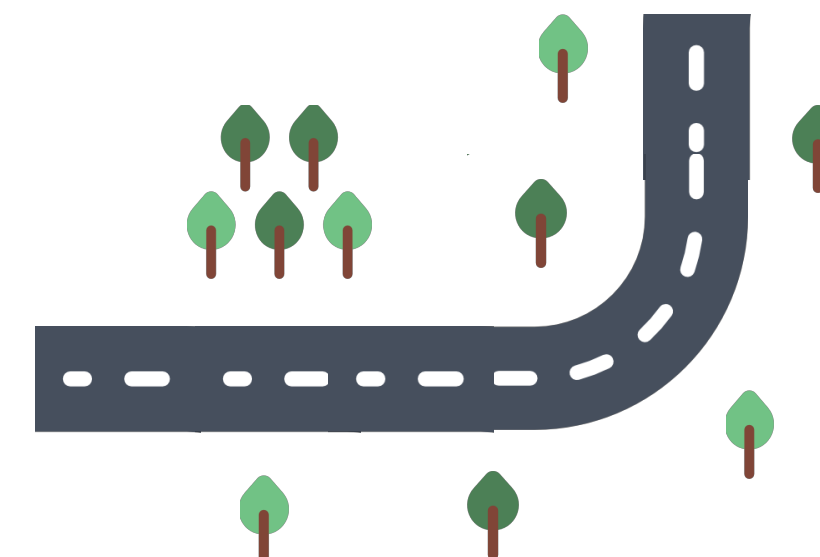
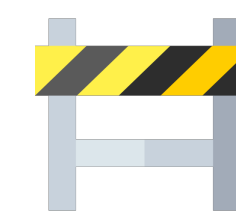


Create an APP using Google Maps toolkit

- "This is the most touchy thing I've ever seen." (Usability Testing)
- It is a possible feature for building a great newsroom (Competitive Analysis)

Divide audience into young and old generation

- Segment the audience group and personalized the message delivered toward audience group will help reach out more people (Literature Review)

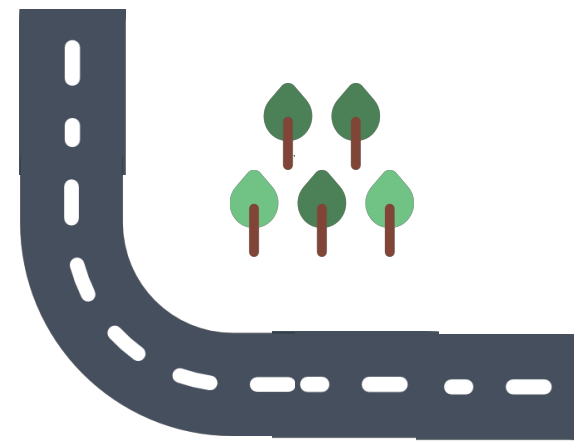


Recommendation #2



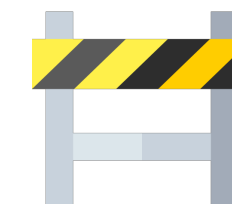
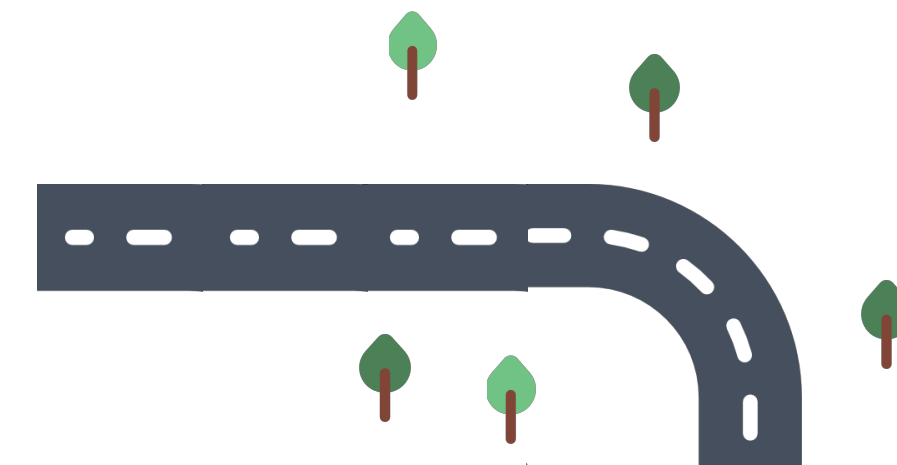
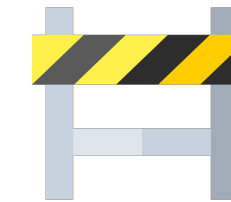
Young people normally don't know well about TxDOT

- "I don't know, but something to do with safety." (Interview Findings 2)



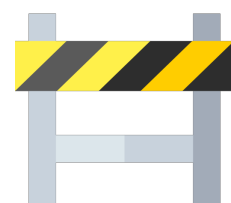
Focus on creating content for scenic route and road construction

- People are interested in receiving traffic condition, constructions and travel information (Survey Findings 5)



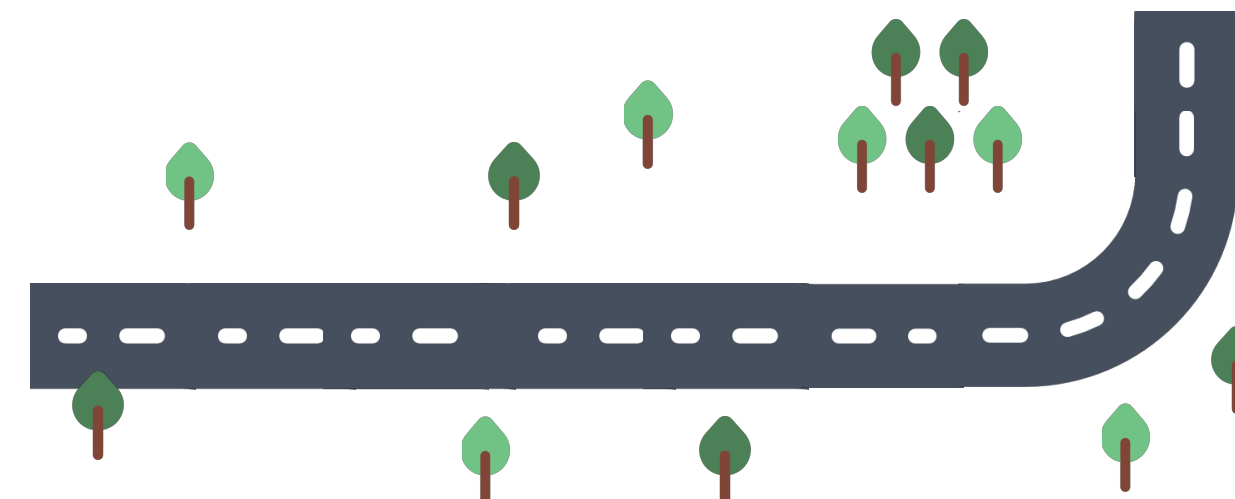
While designing scenic route, include the information for gas station and stops to rest

- "Check the weather usually in consideration of driving condition. We will also look at how far apart gas station are, potential stop for grabbing food, restock the gas and continue." (Interview Findings 3)



Add the offline mode function on Drive Texas

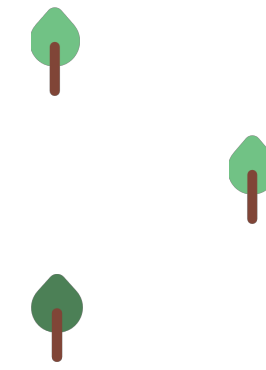
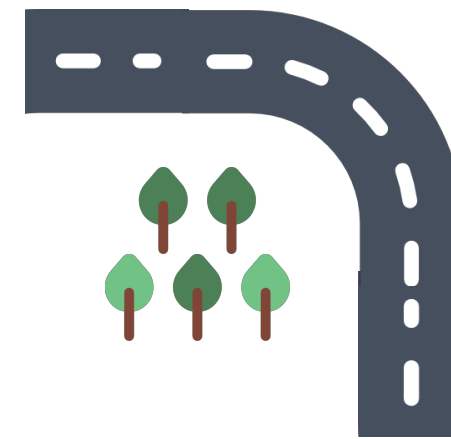
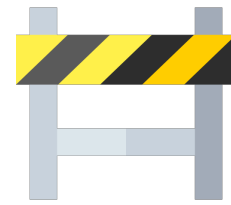
- "We are going to that direction that doesn't have internet connection. I have to screenshot a lot of direction and hope for the best finding exit, even the GPS doesn't work." (Interview Findings 5)



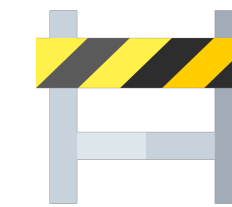
Recommendation #3

Enable users to scroll the news smoothly on phone

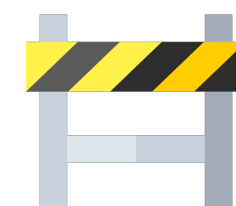
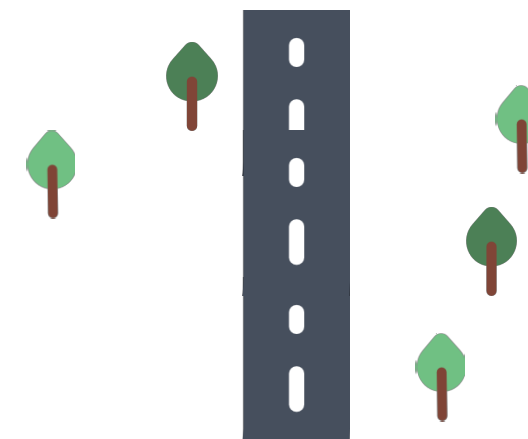
- Make sure your website fits well on every device (Literature Review)
- It is a must-have feature for building a newsroom (Competitive Analysis)



Take the advantage of using social media

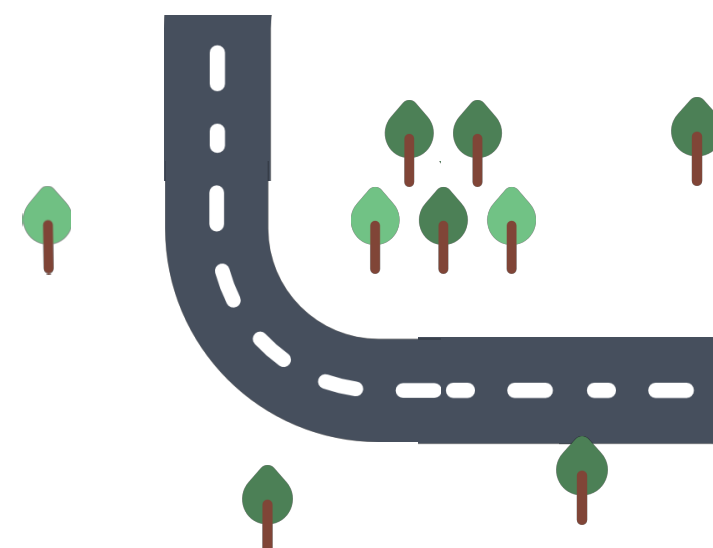


- Social media can help to broaden the audience group (Literature Review)



Add sharing function on the newsfeed

- Sharing by friends via social media is a powerful tool for spreading the words (SME #2)

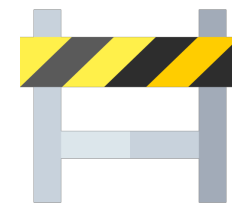


Fix the most frequent visiting broken link of website

- "It was unclear what I was looking for in terms of a crash report or what that should look like" (Usability Testing Findings 2)
- Young adults prefer to get news on mobile, while elders prefer computers (SME #2)

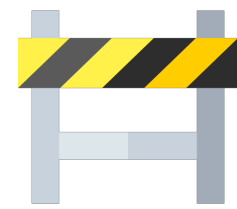
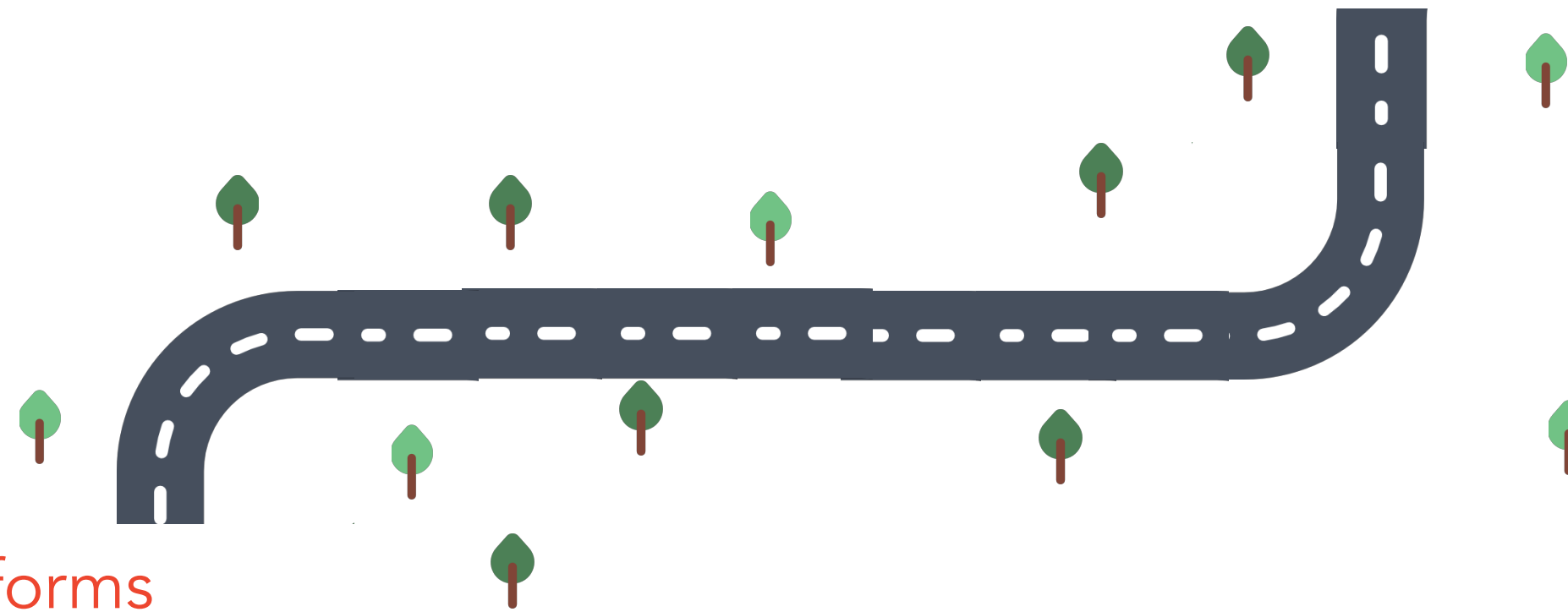


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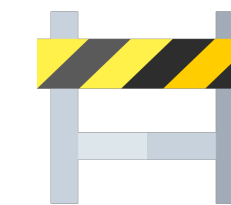
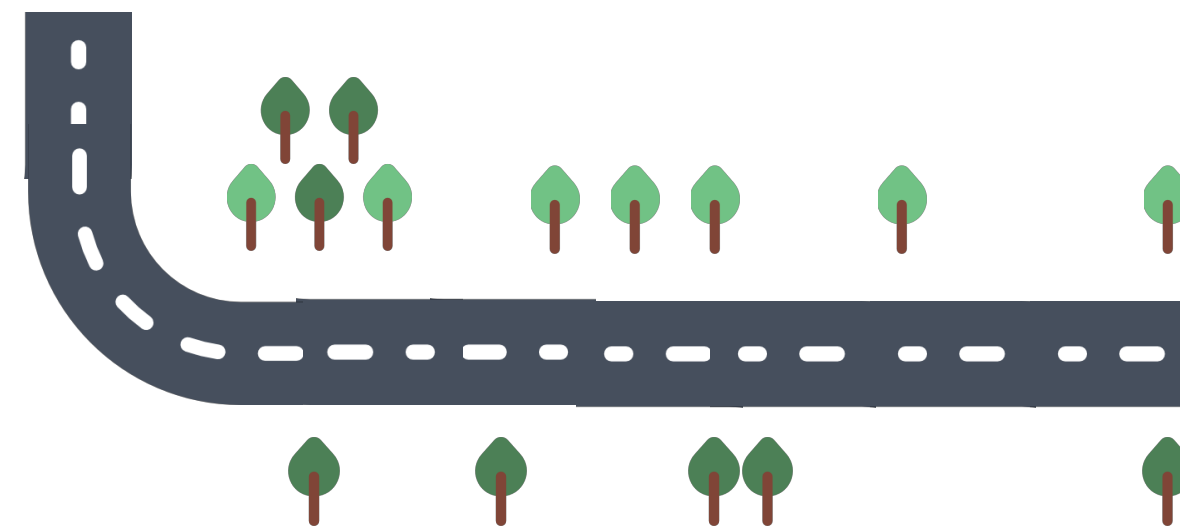
Release 3-4 posts on Facebook weekly

- While facebook has a stable and big user population, twitter and other social media has the potential of future audience growth (SME #2)



Post more videos on the platforms

- All of the competitors include multimedia within content (Competitive Analysis)
- The result: 18% of all Americans now get news on YouTube, making it the second most common social media site for news – albeit still far behind Facebook. (SME#2)



Provide comment section for the public to express their thoughts

- Whataburger has a large group of loyalty audience (Competitive Analysis)
- Sharing stories of the users can build the affinity with the organization, increase interactivity and the opportunity to reach potential customers (Literature Review)