



Summary of progress

Since the project proposal, our team has:

- Further validated our problem
- Captured a pool of early adopters who have indicated interest in our platform
- Began our social media engagement with users
- Designed our wireframe and prototype and refined it through user interviews
- Developed and deployed our MVP

Validation

Validation is a big part of building a startup: Why spend time and effort to build something nobody would use? Here is a summary of how we have validated the scale and impact of our problem as well as our intended solution.

1. We first identified this problem through our own personal observations: Judging from the amount of posts by NUS students on one social media platform (Reddit) looking for friends, there is some indication that the problem is real and faced by students.
2. We then identified (roughly) how our solution would work, primarily the user flow
3. At this point, it would be tempting to start building! But wait. Personal observations alone are not sufficient to validate a problem! We posted a thread on Reddit to gauge interest if such an app did exist. Surprisingly, we had close to 600 votes.

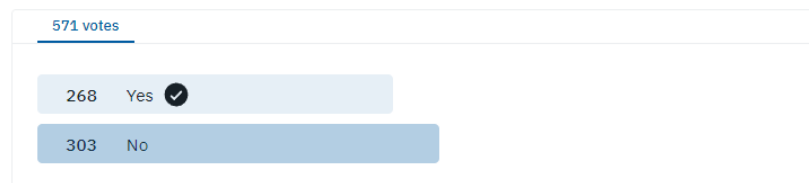
Would You Use An App/Website For Meeting Study Buddies?

Discussion

Saw many rants about being lonely and wanting to find study buddies. Me and my friends are thinking of building an app for "quick buddy finding", which basically works something like this (final product may not be exact because it's still at the ideation stage):

1. You are already in NUS (say at COM3) and you feel lonely, so you take a picture of where you are, specify some details with short descriptions(e.g. estimated time you will stay there until, gender preference, whether you want ppl from the same course only or anything is fine, what mods are you studying for now etc.)
2. Other users can indicate interest and you'll be notified, which you can then accept, and the other person will come to find you to study together.
3. Alternatively, you can choose not to post, but indicate interest in someone's post.
4. After your meetup, if you feel comfortable with the person, you can choose to follow the person, so that next time when the person makes post you can be notified quickly. If it goes REALLY well then I guess yall can also exchange contacts and make friends

For those who feel lonely (especially those who posted looking for study buddies), would you use such an app/website if it is developed? Also, any feature suggestions/concerns you have are welcomed in the comments section



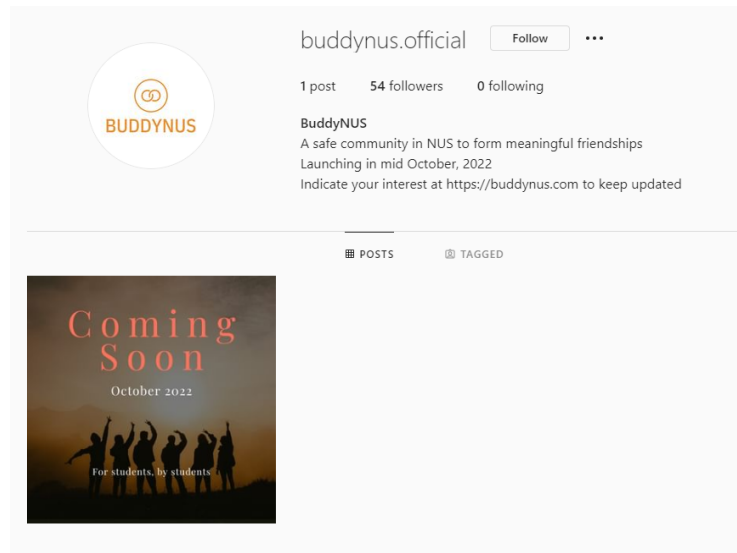
Crucially, this was the point at which we know our intended solution was feasible. The absolute percentages don't matter, as long as a sizable amount would consider using your solution. With 268 "Yeses", if we could capture even 10% as our actual users when we go live, that's close to 30 users and it is a great base to work with for an MVP.

4. We then designed our wireframes, conducted user testing through the Wizard of Oz approach, made changes, designed our prototypes, and conducted more user testing and made more changes.
5. We then began development

User Acquisition

Seeing the success of our small Reddit campaign, we decided to incorporate that into our user acquisition efforts as well as social media and email marketing. While development was in progress, we also engaged our future users.

1. Created a landing page for users to indicate their interest, collecting their emails in the process.
2. Created our social media profile to generate hype, gather leads



3. Continued posting on Reddit to build on the momentum and gather leads from there.
4. In total, we received **23** email leads from our combined efforts across Reddit and Instagram, roughly in line with the 10% we expect to follow through the funnel.
5. We kept these leads warm by sending thank you emails as well as ensuring we will deploy our website within 2 weeks of them indicating their interest.



BUDDYNUS

Welcome to a friendlier NUS

Hey there!

First off, I'd like to extend a warm welcome and thank you for joining BuddyNUS. I recognize that your time is valuable and I'm seriously flattered that you chose to pre-register with us. We have noted down all of your feature requests and concerns and will be actively addressing them over the coming months.

BuddyNUS is created by a team of students in NUS who noticed social ties disintegrating amidst COVID-19, e-learning and the lack of CCAs. Those dark days are hopefully behind us now, and we thought, what better way to restore these social ties than to facilitate meeting new people in a safe, productive and fun manner?

As the semester comes to an end, our academic workload increases as well. It is vital to take a rest and continue to socialize. BuddyNUS is here to help you with that: Find a coursemate, find a modulemate to study with, or simply a companion for your next study session at NUS!

A more connected NUS, that's what we dream of. We'll be dropping you emails when we launch, which is expected to be in week 9!

Until then, have a great week ahead!

Engaging with our early adopters via email

MVP

Our app MVP can be accessed at <https://cs3216-final-group-9.web.app>

Users can go through the entire workflow of signing up, finding a study buddy, applying to study with others and will be notified via email. Exact features are in the appendix, under "Project Schedule".

We are planning on doing some internal testing before launching it on <https://buddynus.com> and announcing it this week (week 9, 10 Oct - 16 Oct)

Schedule

Thankfully, we are on track and there are no changes to our schedule. Our schedule is attached in the appendix (from project proposal) for your convenience.

Customer Contact Report

<https://tinyurl.com/buddynuscustomer>

Wireframe & Prototype

<https://www.figma.com/file/YAOzJ4BGCjBSNyJ6vDpcRA/Untitled?node-id=55%3A62>

[wireframe and prototype are in the same file, two different pages]

Appendix

Relevant contents from the proposal are copied here for convenience.

Problem Statement

University life can be lonely, especially during COVID (and post-COVID because senior students have not been meeting new people since they enrolled). Finding people you can click with can be challenging. What can you do to find friends?

1. Talk to your module classmates/project group mates
2. Attend CCAs frequently and hope you find someone you can click with
3. Hall mates/Residential College friends

It is difficult to interact with module classmates as many modules are primarily individual in nature (think tutorials, lectures) and it would be weird to randomly jio someone to hang out after class. Furthermore due to differing schedules it is difficult to find common time. If you are drowning in your coursework there might be limited time to join a CCA, so #2 is not viable for everyone. #3 is also not viable because most students do not stay on campus. In fact, absence of #2 and #3 are the most common reasons cited by NUS students on why they are looking for buddies.

Even for those with many friends, you may not actually spend a lot of time socializing due to differing schedules. For example, you have 8 hours until your next class at 6.30PM! Unfortunately, your friends all have their lessons. You have assignments to do. You are then alone for the next 8 hours ☹

What if you could, within a few clicks, find people in NUS who are also interested in studying at the locations at the same time slots as you? You can find someone to study with, and if you click, you can exchange details to study with in the future. If you dont click, no worries, you didnt lose anything anyway as you managed to work on your assignment during that time. Low-commitment socializing with the chance of forming friends.

How BuddyNUS differentiates from existing friend-making apps/solutions

Some existing solutions like NUS's Aphrodite Project for finding date partners use a matchmaking system. Matchmaking is long and tedious and requires a lot of user information to make good matches. It is also slow (Aphrodite Project takes around 2 weeks after users fill in a long-winded survey). Most people cannot predict when they are going to feel lonely. When you feel that you need some accompaniment for revising your midterms now, you just do not wait for two weeks, right?

Other friend-making apps like NUSChatBot/NUSMatchBot focus on chatting, and users usually chat for some time before meeting up. In the end, most users may not even get to see each other. BuddyNUS designs our feature such that users only use it for the intention of

meeting up and studying together - not tomorrow, not next week, but right now. No more worries about all talk and no meetup, you get to see your buddy right away!

Project Schedule

Time	Implementation	Deployment, customer contact and Marketing
28 Sept - 3 Oct (Ideation)	Wireframing API Design Authentication and basic navigation flow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - User interview with wireframe. - User interview with prototype. - Initial marketing poster + Google Forms for interest indication
3 Oct - 10 Oct (Sprint 1)	Complete the first MVP, which includes: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Authentication 2. Post and accept study requests 3. Notification feature (either email or notification) 4. Analytics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Social media account creation on Instagram and Reddit to start content posting - Deployed MVP with primary feature in production, ready for alpha-phase user testing.
11 Oct - 24 Oct (Sprint 2)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Refine existing features 2. Bug fixes 3. Aesthetic improvements 4. Additional filtering options for posts 5. Leave reviews for each other 6. Chat Feature 7. Following Feature (lower priority, may be removed depending on schedule and user feedback) 	Contact users to know more about their use case and feedback. More user acquisition efforts on Instagram and Reddit (Refer to Marketing timeline below)
25 Oct - 20 Nov (Sprint 3)	Implementation of backlog features, and features requested by users in interview and testing.	Project poster. Project video. More user acquisition efforts

Marketing Schedule

Approx.timeline	Content
Week 8	Gathering interest for our app pre-launch <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Describe the app• Poster• Google form to capture contact details of those interested
End of week 9 or start of week 10	Announcing launch of app [after it is launched] + Contact those who indicated interest (to capture early adopters)
Week 11	Announcing usage statistics of our app (to encourage laggards to join the platform)

Content Calendar

Social media engagement will be a critical pillar of our marketing efforts

1st post (Week 8)	Interest Indication Link + Coming Soon poster
2nd post (Week 9)	Maximising productivity in studying + Interest Indication Link
End of week 9 or start of week 10	Post to announce launch of app + places to study in NUS reel
3rd post (Week 10)	Short video/reel to showcase app
4th Post (Week 11)	Mental wellness
5th Post (Week 12)	Post to address privacy concerns
6th Post (Week 13)	Meme about exam season in NUS, and encourage people to use our app to find study buddies