2.2 User Interviews and Surveys

Understanding the User

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Purpose

This presentation will:

1. Define 3 research goals I'd like to achieve from talking with users from the Vela App's target audience
2. Identify participants with whom to conduct user interviews
3. Outline the script/questions used for the user interviews
4. Summarize the findings of the user interviews

Research Goals

To better understand user behavior around water sport activities (i.e. surfing, skimboarding, boating, swimming, fishing, etc.).

To collect data on the context in which users (Ocean Enthusiasts) would use a weather app or website.

To determine what tasks users (Ocean Enthusiasts) would like to accomplish when using a weather app.

Participants

- Novice, intermediate, & professionally experienced ocean enthusiasts

- Ages 18-45 years old

- Live minutes or up to 3 hours away from the beach (i.e., surfers, boaters, fisherman, sailors, skimboarders, beach-goers, etc..)

User Interview Script

Hi, _____. my name is Kristen and I will be walking you through this session today. We are conducting several short interviews today with users included in our target audience. This is to better understand the context in which Ocean Enthusiasts use weather apps, their behavior around water sport activities, and what tasks they would like to accomplish when using a weather app or website. This should take about 15 minutes. Do you have any questions? ... Ok, let's get started!

Interview Questions

1. How do you go about checking the weather at a beach spot you want to go to? How far and how often in advance do you check?

2. How do you use apps or websites to help you with planning your water activities at a beach spot?

3. What are your favorite features of current weather apps for describing wind, wave, and weather reports and forecasts?

4. What don't you like about current apps or tools you use, and why?

5. How much of a role does being able to connect on social media with other Ocean Enthusiasts play in your enjoyment of water sports and activities?

6. What features do you like and dislike when looking at a weather map or graph?

7. How do you decide you want to go to a particular beach spot or try out a new what? What features do you look for in a beach spot?

Keshanna Woodruff
Housekeeper, 32

1. How do you go about checking the weather at a beach spot you want to go to? How far and how often in advance do you check?

   - I check the day I'm going to leave, and night before
   - I just look up the beach, what town I'm going to go to and then what beach.

2. How do you use apps/websites to help you with planning your water activities at a beach spot?

   - Mostly to just check the weather
   - Making sure it's not going to pour when I get there since I live like 45 mins from the beach.

3. What are your favorite features of current weather apps for describing wind, wave, and weather reports and forecasts?

   - I like how it tells me hourly, for example like how sunny it's going to be

4. What don't you like about current apps or tools you use, and why?

   - They are complicated and I don't understand them
   - Usually they don't explain it, they seem to assume you know what the certain symbols and letters mean

5. How much of a role does being able to connect on social media with other Ocean Enthusiasts play in your enjoyment of water activities?

   - It doesn't really matter to me
   - If I want to go surf or sit in the sun, I'm going to go do it, I don't care if anyone else is.

6. What features do you like and dislike when looking at a weather map or graph?

   - Not sure, I like that I can see the whole picture, but I don't like that I don't know how to use most of it
   - I like when they give you an actual picture of the beach like a live video stream, because the weather data can say it's not cloudy but looking at the video actually shows more clouds in the sky.

7. How do you decide you want to go to a particular beach spot or try out a new one? What features do you look for in a beach spot?

   - I guess which ever one is closest, I like to know it's clean and not super populated

Tammy Lee
Revenue Specialist, 32

1. How do you go about checking the weather at a beach spot you want to go to? How far and how often in advance do you check?

   - Looking at the local weather or app on my phone
   - Multiple times a day and several days prior I begin looking, and I look leading up to the day I want to go

2. How do you use apps/websites to help you with planning your water activities at a beach spot?

   - To gather info for making appts to rent a surfboard
   - And just search for what's nearby for activies

3. What are your favorite features of current weather apps for describing wind, wave, and weather reports and forecasts?

   - I like the wind speed/direction, it really helps with surfing, including the swell info for the waves.
   - UV index, air quality, and humidity are good

4. What don't you like about current apps or tools you use, and why?

   - They only give the hourly for the next 24 hrs, but wish there was an hourly one for the next 3-7 days

5. How much of a role does being able to connect on social media with other Ocean Enthusiasts play in your enjoyment of water activities?

   - A good amount, just so I can see images and read comments about the area and also it can help me build a group that is going out

6. What features do you like and dislike when looking at a weather map or graph?

   - I like the ability to zoom and move around the map
   - The radar, you can see the severity with the colors
   - I would love to see the models to have the ability to show the next hour, the time lapse is limited. For example, when I watch the news they actually show it for the day ahead vs. just the next half hour.

7. How do you decide you want to go to a particular beach spot or try out a new one? What features do you look for in a beach spot?

   - It depends on if I'm doing a different activity (paddleboarding, beach volleyball, canoeing, boating, flying a kite, or surfing), how the weather is and who I'm going with.
   - That it's clean, if there's parking, lifeguards, safe area, I prefer local spots that are less populated.

Mollie Kensington
Reporter, 35

1. How do you go about checking the weather at a beach spot you want to go to? How far and how often in advance do you check?
   - 1 week ahead of time, then 3 days, then each day before.
   - Check different sites online; Wunderground is my favorite to use. Graphics are good, easy to see and use.
   - I like how it has a radar and radar map of the beach.

2. How do you use apps/websites to help you with planning your water activities at a beach spot?
   - Look at recommendations, research online
   - Type place in app to see conditions

3. What are your favorite features of current weather apps for describing wind, wave, and weather reports and forecasts?
   - I like the live radar, the morning of is when I pay attention to live streams. Sometimes they don't work, so I don't focus on relying on them always. They are nice to have, but I'm able to refer to the graphs and radars for the wind speed, gusts, and the direction.

4. What don't you like about current apps or tools you use, and why?
   - Sometimes the icons are too small to see on the phone
   - Sometimes info doesn't seem as up to date as it should, and livestreams are down

   - Graphs are hard to understand bc too much complex info
   - I don't like the compass visual for showing wind direction, I prefer the regular graphs as you can see more info

5. How much of a role does being able to connect on social media with other Ocean Enthusiasts play in your enjoyment of water activities?
   - It is important to me because this is a community, and I/we like to share experiences, we are friends
   - I also like to learn about different areas to go surfing, and it's just fun to have in common with others

6. What features do you like and dislike when looking at a weather map or graph?
   - I like when they are large enough to easily view the information and to the point
   - I don't like small/hard to read stuff or clutter
   - Also, too much info that is irrelevant I don't like

7. How do you decide you want to go to a particular beach spot or try out a new one? What features do you look for in a beach spot?
   - I tend to shy away from touristy areas, I prefer off the beaten path areas so I can enjoy the open ocean front
   - Not rocky coasts, I prefer sandy beaches

Summary

1. Users like to begin checking weather at least a week to several days before they follow through on their water activity plans.

2. Users like to research what's nearby certain beaches, how to make rentals, and most importantly, want to check the weather.

3. Users like the live radar maps, the live video streams, and learning the wind speed, gusts, swell of the wave, and UV Index.

4. Users don't like how sometimes the weather info doesn't seem as updated as it should be, the font and symbols are too small on some apps, hour forecasts go up to only 24 hours ahead (vs. multiple days), and how the maps/symbols are too complex and not explained.

5. Users seem to enjoy being able to connect on social media to build community, meet other beach-goers or ocean enthusiasts, and learn about other spots and other people's experiences with them.

6. Users like weather maps/graphs to be easy to read (bigger font), straight-forward, not too complex, like video streams (live picture), ability to zoom, and the live radar.

7. Users choose their beach destinations due to their cleanliness, if they are local areas (they prefer local), are less populated, sandy not rocky, have available parking, have lifeguards, and if they are not too far of a drive away.