TailorBook Needs and Requirements

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Data Collection:

Our primary data collection for this project was done via a brief Google form questionnaire and through research on other existing technologies and systems. Our questionnaire was brief, but focused on the needs of real small business owners and on their desires in the web space.

Our other research focused primarily on the businesses listed in the article *Best Scheduling Apps (2024)* by Kimberlee Leonard[1], a Forbes analyst. We assessed the main features of these other technologies, as well as the features they highlighted on the forefront of their own websites, to identify important trends to incorporate ourselves.

Our questionnaire was a simple three-part form. The first question asks if the person has an existing website or booking tool for their business. If so, the next section probes into the most and least useful features of that website, and if not, asks what features they would like if they had one. Finally, some brief information is collected about the individual and their business or service. We received feedback from a handful of individuals with occupations ranging from piano teacher to Instagram photographer to barber regarding what they'd like to see from a service like ours.

Results:

From our data collection, we found some important trends. Real-time booking is the most important feature, as it helps avoid double bookings, which can frustrate both customers and business owners. In a similar vein, reminder emails or texts were regarded heavily both by the services we researched and the small business owners we

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[1] Leonard, K. (2024, March 21). *Best scheduling apps (2024)*. Forbes. https://www.forbes.com/advisor/business/software/best-scheduling-apps/

heard back from. However, we noticed that many current booking services only offer unlimited confirmation and reminder emails in their more expensive payment plans, which is a major downside.

Integration with tools like Google Calendar is highly touted by booking services, as it allows for easy scheduling, and simple crossover with tools that are already broadly used. Most services similarly allow one to manage bookings from any device, either through mobile apps or mobile-friendly web experiences. Finally, we noticed that most of these services offered a clean, minimalist design to their services, with very little clutter.

Responses to the questionnaire (or in some cases, personal conversations related to the questions) emphasized a need for accessibility and simplicity. The piano teacher we spoke to in particular said that if the service were to take more than two minutes on her phone to get to what information she needed, she wouldn't use it – her existing tools, mainly text with her students or their parents, work well enough quickly enough to not justify use of another tool unless it proves to be faster and better organized.

With these results in mind, we developed a set of needs and requirements that we feel must be met to bring this tool to life and make it useful for our target audience.

Needs and Requirements:

User Capabilities –

There are essentially two organizations we aim to satisfy with TailorBook – small business owners, and their potential customers. Customers need to be able tobook appointments in real-time, receive timely reminders through their chosen channels (email, SMS), and manage their bookings from any device. Business owners require tools to set and modify their availability, block off time for appointments, and manage schedules on the go. They also need the ability to tailor the experience they

offer to the business they're running, both by eliminating certain features that may not apply to them, and by controlling the appearance and content of the booking site itself.

Since we're catering to a diverse range of users in both of these groups, including those who may not be tech-savvy, the interface of both the owner dashboard and the customer experience will need to prioritize simplicity. We expect users to have internet access and to be able to read and navigate web pages from the device of their choice. Additionally, we do expect customers to have an email address and/or phone number so that they can be contacted for automated appointment reminders.

Functional Requirements –

Real-time booking is our top priority, allowing customers to avoid scheduling conflicts and potential double-booking issues. To do this, we will have a database table of appointments that syncs up with the calendar integration the moment an appointment is booked. Additionally, the system will need to send appointment reminders in customizable formats, such as email or text, so users can choose what works best for them. Several APIs exist to manage scheduled and automated sending of reminders through those media.

Ensuring that all features of the booking site are easily accessible on mobile devices will increase the traffic of customers, and utilizing a payment API to collect card information ahead of the appointment will help eliminate potential no-shows. Data security is also essential, especially when handling user information like payment and contact information and appointment details.

Business owners should be able to easily manage their schedules by adjusting their hours, blocking off time, and reviewing bookings in real-time. They must be able to edit the services they offer, the prices of those services, and the descriptions and images attached to them at any time. Additionally, they need to be able to control what business information is shown on the landing page of the site, as well as what logos, images, and color schemes are used throughout. All of these features will be included in

their owner dashboard, with appropriate information being stored in the backend database and used where requested on the customer site.

Nonfunctional Requirements –

The booking system needs to perform efficiently across all platforms, including smartphones, tablets, and desktop computers, without significant lag or delays. Simplicity is key—users should be able to access core features quickly without navigating through cluttered menus. We plan to study related design principles to help us plan out the pages we create, drawing attention and emphasis to the correct areas. Additionally, introducing site translations to different languages will be a crucial boon in certain areas, allowing the business owner to broaden their customer base.