

CW Mobile Application

User Research Report

April-May 2020

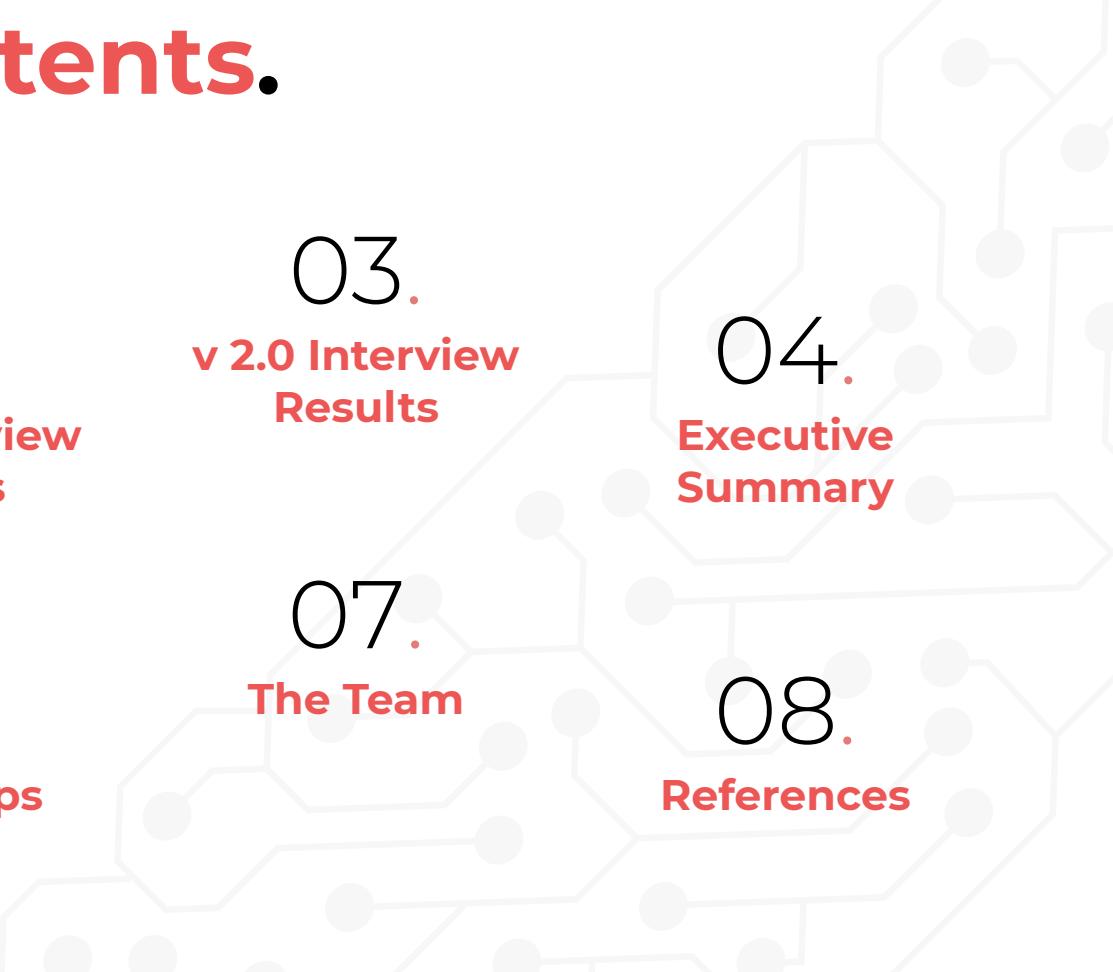


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www.covid-watch.org

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01. **INTRODUCTION**

Why we did it.

This document is meant to provide an easily digestible report of the initial user research done on the design of the Covid Watch mobile application.

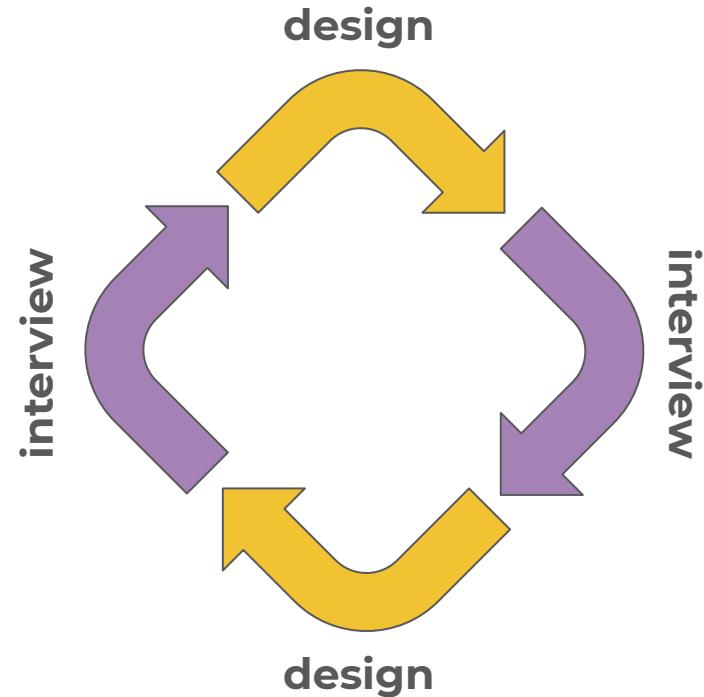
Its main intended use, is for the Covid Watch product team to understand the research's findings, and consider its recommendations, as it crafts future iterations of the solution.



What we did.

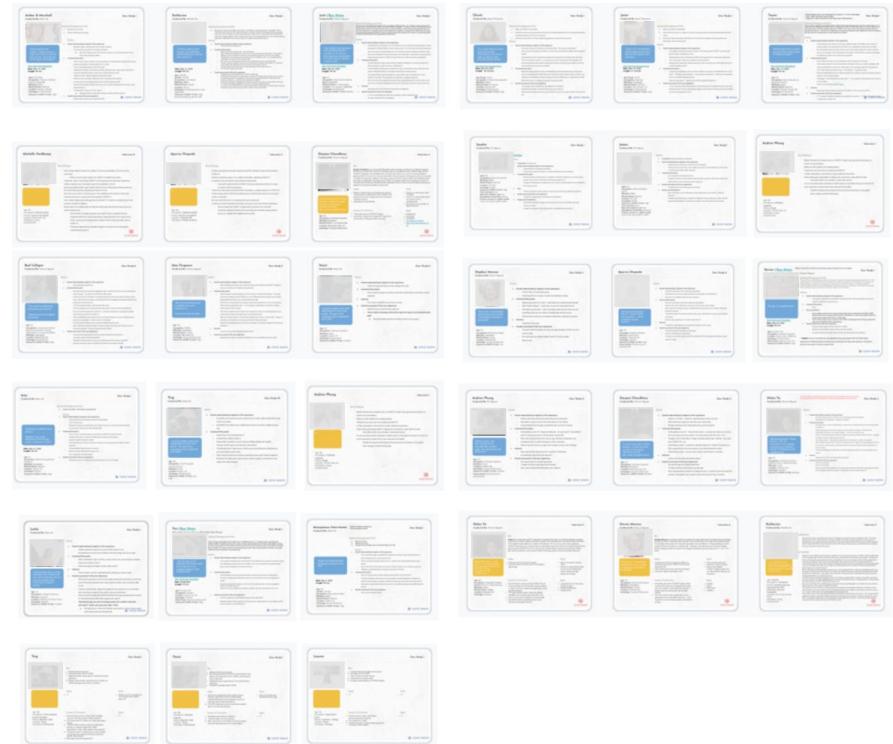
Starting in April, 2020, a team of volunteer researchers began interviewing people to get their impressions of early designs of the Covid Watch mobile application.

As the feedback was shared, the design would adjust accordingly, and the interviews continued, helping to both validate the design changes, and uncover new insights.



What we did.

- All in all, **33 interviews** were conducted, mainly with:
 - Young professionals in their 20s
 - Some professionals over 35
- **2 app design versions** were used
 - v 1.8
 - v 2.0



How we did it.

In roughly 1-hr remote sessions with screen-sharing, **participants were shown mockups and prototypes** of the mobile application, and asked to give their impressions of what they saw.

Participants were also asked about **their understanding** of the app, **what they liked**, and what **concerns** they may have.

Summary report slides were then generated for each interview.

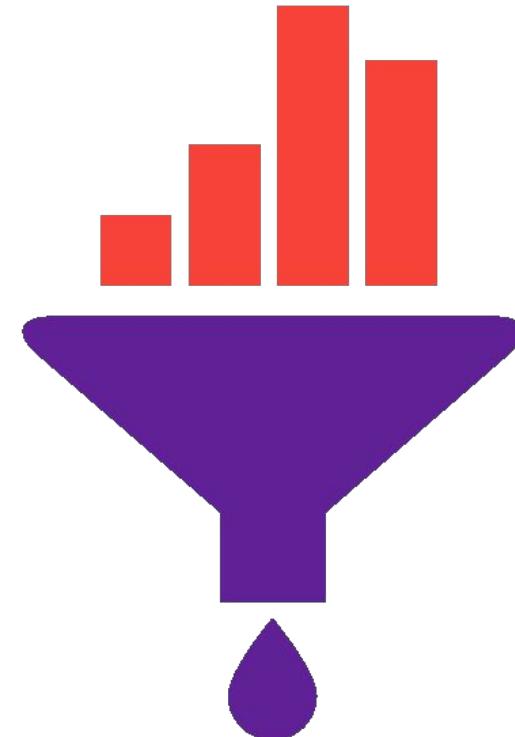
The screenshot shows a user study report for participant A.C. at the top left. The report is titled "User Study 8". It includes a placeholder profile picture for A.C., the name "Conducted By: Thi Nguyen", and a "Notes" section. The notes are organized into several bullet points under categories like "Overall understanding & adoption of the experience", "Confusion/Pain points", "Interests", and "Overall assessment of the user experience". A blue callout box contains a quote from the participant: "'Get tested if advised by whom? ... refer to which local agencies? ... which symptoms should I monitor?'" Below the notes, there is a summary of the participant's details: Age: 23, Occupation: Medical Student, Ethnicity: South Asian, Location: Charlotte, NC, Archetype: Student, Interest in COVID-19 info: High, Flows tested: first-time user & potential risk. At the bottom right, there is a "COVID WATCH" logo.

How we did it.

Then for each app design version, we distilled the key takeaways, findings, and recommendations from each report slide. **These are the next 2 sections of this report.**

And finally, **in section 4 an executive summary** highlights the overall key takeaways, covering all interviews and all app design versions.

Let's get into it.



02.

v1.8 Interview Results

v1.8 Interview Results

WHAT WORKED

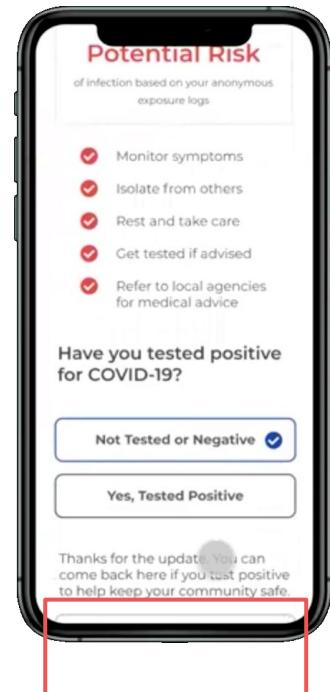
1. Simple & clean look
2. Pleasant and exciting reaction to the in-app illustrations
3. Positive evaluation of the flows' intuitiveness

"It was an easy app to follow through...it shows the least amount of information required to run this app...pretty straightforward." - Male, 25

KEY ISSUES

1. Confusion over the interaction after selecting either options (tested/not tested) on the testing report screen: **most users didn't know they had to scroll down to continue..**
2. Slightly misguided expectation for the flow following the "Setup" button: **some users expected to be asked for more info such as login credentials** and location.
3. **Uncertainty over how to report a positive test:** some users pointed out that some positive cases could be asymptomatic and date tested is also important.
4. **Motivation to use the app** (e.g. doesn't see point since currently in self-isolation)

"Would download it...forget about it..." but "not motivated" to do anything more because it felt like I already "contributed to the neighborhood." - Female, 30



v1.8 Interview Results

OTHER ISSUES

1. Concern that apps like CW would increase fear/stress, which weakens the immune system
2. Would forget to report positive COVID-19 test
3. Confused about "Tested" button
4. Unclear about when alerts will come

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Use a fixed footer** so that continuing is always visible
2. Better explanation of the benefits of the app - personal benefits and benefits to the community
3. **Add arrows** on buttons
4. Make more references to Bluetooth in the onboarding screens and maybe change the wording for "setup".*
5. **Rename "Symptoms start"** to "Date tested"*
6. Put "Tested" button on separate page after "Allow notifications"
7. **Provide more advice** to user (i.e. where to get testing if potentially exposed)

03.

v2.0 Interview Results

v2.0 Interview Results

WHAT WORKED

1. App looks great
2. Finds the experience very straightforward and the app useful
3. Like seeing the history of exposures

"That's cool. That duration of the exposure and how it tells you the duration and risk factor." - Female, 54-65

KEY ISSUES

1. Not understanding **what they should do relating to the risk score.***
2. **Confused about verification process** - what is being verified and why
3. Still unsure of **how the app actually makes it anonymous**
4. **Unclear terminology:** "Random IDs" "Notify Others"
5. Motivation: **How to encourage more people to download the app?**
6. App doesn't explain **how it addresses privacy**
7. Branding (splash screen): **Not clear the name of the app is Covid Watch** and people thought it was "California" or funded by the government

"Anonymity is different from privacy."
"Maybe if I was more educated on how the app works, I could trust it more." - Female, 61

"I am not sure, if one exposure alert alone would encourage me to do anything." - Male, 22

v2.0 Interview Results

OTHER ISSUES

1. Possible Exposure Page: **Unsure what the toggle notification is for or why is it important.**
2. Giving the user the exposure duration but not the time may cause more anxiety
3. Enable Notifications Screen: **Numbers look like phone numbers**
4. Two participants expected the ability to log a negative test result as well



*"It gives me the number to call?"
- Female, 58*

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Have a clear way to "get more info"** on any screen. This will help for the confusion around risk score and verification
2. Verification: Clearly explain why this is important
3. Have an **action prompt if high risk score**
4. More urgency in the text of the exposure alert, **more suggested actions** on what to do now
5. Use more precise language for action prompts
6. More accessible information on diagnosis verification. **Prep them for a potential phone call.**
7. Exposure notification screen: **Use a more "human" illustration rather than the numbers and keys**
8. **Reinforce anonymous data sharing**
9. Branding: "Covid Watch - California" to clarify the name of the app on the splash screen
10. Convey the purpose of the app earlier

04.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Executive Summary - What Worked

The large majority of participants reacted positively to the look & feel of the app, noting the simplicity of the app's flow and navigation.

They also appreciated the value of the app, and what it strives to do.

Top 5

- **Look & feel** was praised
- **Easy to navigate** the app
- **Onboarding screens** were straightforward
- The value of the app was **appreciated**
- **Valued being notified** of possible exposures, along with follow-up procedures

Executive Summary - Key Issues

The issues encountered mainly revolved around the conceptual understanding of how the app worked, and in being able to readily get more details, and more guidance on what to do.

There was also general concern about people being motivated to self-report, for lack of prompting and/or understanding of how this ends up benefiting them and their community.

Top 5

- Not understanding what they should do relating to the **risk score**
- Confused about **verification process** - what is being verified and why
- **Accessing more information** about a particular topic
- Not 100% clear on **what to do** in various scenarios (getting an alert, high risk score)
- General **motivation to self-report**

Executive Summary - Adoption

From the interviews we can also extract some **key factors to adoption:**

1. **Can they install the app** in the first place (significant factor is the required OS version)*
2. **Do they trust** the app provider & technology
3. Are their **privacy concerns** addressed
4. **Do they believe** that using the app will help
5. **Do they understand** why and how they should use the app
6. **Will they promote** the app to others

Each of these factors have barriers and various ways to address them.

Executive Summary

While it appears that the app's visual and interaction design is largely successful in providing an easy-to-use, intuitive experience in using and navigating the app, participants would benefit from a better understanding of how they are to use the app in various scenarios, and how the app works to benefit them and their community.

This would also, in theory, impact their motivation to self-report, and also promote the app to others.

Key Areas to improve on:



EDUCATION

Helping users connect the dots between them, the app, and the larger context



GUIDANCE

Helping users do what they should do in a given context



ENCOURAGEMENT

Motivating users to self-report, and promote the app to others

05.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations

Continue our research activities, specifically:

1. **Put the app design to a more difficult test**, by conducting less guided, more task-based usability testing sessions
2. **Test more at scale** using unmoderated tests, fed by a campaign to recruit more test participants
3. **Explore/test** various ways to improve on education/guidance/encouragement
4. **Continue our qualitative interviews** for deeper insights, especially with people who are less tech-savvy and less likely to adopt new technology

Recommendations

Here is a non-exhaustive collection of ideas we could explore and test, to improve on user education, guidance, and encouragement:

1. Tutorials, explainer videos
2. In-context help icons with popups explanations
3. More “question-centric” content
4. Explicit “step-by-step” wizards to complete key tasks
5. “To-do list” with completeness %
6. Social challenges to promote the app



06. **NEXT STEPS**

Next Steps for the Team

- **Raising the bar on usability testing**
 - Task-based, less guidance
 - Unmoderated (yields more results with less resources)
 - Asking participants if they would consent to make clips public
 - Ask participants if they want their names in a “Thank You Wall” on the website
- **Interviewing an even “harder” audience**
 - Less tech-savvy
 - Resistant to adopting new tech
 - Skeptics
- **Report on interviews with public health workers and students**
- **Prepping for additional surveys** (e.g. Arizona University pilot program)

07.

THE TEAM

Who we are.

We are 100% volunteer researchers & designers, from across the country.



Sameer



Sebastien



Vic



Victoria



Thi



Helen



Peter



Emily



Michelle



Gayla



Rashi

Who We Are (active members as of June 2020)

LEADS

- Sameer Halai (product team)
- Sebastien Le Tuan (research team)
- Peter Leykam (research)

RESEARCHERS

- Helen He
- Victoria Nguyen
- Thi Nguyen
- Peter Leykam
- Sebastien Le Tuan
- Emily Valente
- Gayla Thompson
- Rashi Bargoti
- Ruth Chen
- Richard Tran



08. **REFERENCES**

QUESTIONS?

For inquiries, please contact:

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- sebastien@covidwatch.org



Thank you!

