Advice to Stakeholder

Team: Trust&Launch

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Introduction

Plans for managing stakeholders are necessary to ensure good stakeholder management, which is crucial for the project's overall success. By better understanding your stakeholders' interests, expectations, and intentions, you may more accurately predict their needs, allay their worries, and fulfill their expectations. It may be difficult to comprehend stakeholders without a stakeholder management plan, making it difficult to determine what motivates them and how to win their trust.

In this document we went through all the steps that presents our product perfectly, to match our stakeholders needs and expectations.

Project background

The project, named **connectYall**, was developed by 4 students from Fontys University of Applied Sciences. The project's goal is to provide people with better socializing options post COVID-19. The project team recognized that due to lockdowns and restrictions, people have become more isolated and many previously common activities started to feel out of place, even developing social anxiety for some people. Moreover, for international students like most of the project team members, socializing and finding friends with the same interests as them was even harder, as online education was still happening and social activities were not yet organized.

Goals:
- To provide a platform for people to connect and bond over mutual interests, without the pressure of looking good at all times or having to engage in small talk.
- To help people who have been isolated during the pandemic to connect with others who share similar interests and hobbies.
- To make socializing and making friends easier for international students and other people who have found it difficult to socialize during the pandemic.

Scope:
- The app will allow users to create profiles, list their interests, and connect with other users based on shared interests.
- The app will have a messaging feature that allows users to communicate with each other and plan activities or events.
- The app will have a moderation and community management team to ensure that the conversations are healthy and productive, and the content aligns with the app's vision and values.
- The app will be available on both iOS and Android platforms.
- The app will have a monetization plan, such as in-app purchases, advertising, or subscriptions.

- The app will have a strong cyber-security measures to protect user data and keep the app safe from hacking and other malicious attacks.

The expected result of our app is to create a simulation of it, making it look functional and design it in a professional way that could catch users' eyes.

Stakeholder analysis

There are multiple types of stakeholder involved in this project, each of them standing an important role in the well being of the product and the evolution, as well as in the way the team developed each existing and future feature and took the steps needed to succeed. They are as follows:

Semester teachers: our semester teachers are all part of the Media stream we are currently following at university, meaning that each of them has a crucial role in our understanding of each subject, thus reflecting on how we will implement what they teach us into the product we are developing. Their role is to guide us and give us feedback in the project classes, as well as make sure they respond to any uncertainty we face, and help us fix it.

LiveWall Mentors: the mentors at LiveWall are actual professionals from the field we also aspire to work in, and they provided us with the theme of this project. They had to be the ones approving the concept we wanted to further analyze. This was discussed when we presented them the *debrief*, which they agreed upon, meaning that we could continue our research and dig deeper within the problem. We had to pitch our idea to them, and if they approved it meant we could go on with the developing of our product. Their role was to give us feedback as well, and make us question our choices, as well as make sure we were going in the right direction with the features we were creating.

Team members: the team members are the people who did all the technical work on the project, and made sure every requirement from the other stakeholders was fulfilled. Their role is to take note of every feedback and suggestion, and make sure to implement it in the app. On top of that, we, as team members, have to keep track of our possible competition, and make sure to come up with ideas that are new. We also have to present everything we do to the other stakeholders.

Target users: the target users are the ones who will actually be using our product, meaning that they are an essential part of the way our product is developed. The team members have to always be aware of their needs and wishes. Their role is to test the application and give sincere feedback upon its improval.

Technical Details

The web application is structured in four main key points: *creating an account -> choosing your hobbies (up to 4) -> getting weekly matches -> exploring and making new friends.*

The user creates an account (ultimately, that information will be stored in the database), then proceeds with choosing their preferred hobbies (up to 4). They then can freely browse in the app, and explore connections. The user does not see any pictures of the others, as they are hidden by our privacy policies. You can see another user's profile picture only when you are friends with them, and you both agree you want to share the profile pictures - there is a section where you can choose to do so. You'll then send (or receive) a request to the user to share your pictures. They can agree or disagree with this.

Ultimately, although the user can always explore more connections, the best matches are the ones provided by our algorithm.

In the future, we plan on improving it, with the help of an A.I. technology.

Apart from that, to improve the security of our users, on top of what we have already put in place, we want to work with professionals who can help us implement an ID-check functionality, which will verify the identity of the users who create an account and make sure they are not bots or ill-willed people (this will be checked ideally by an A.I. system that can identify if those people have a criminal record on their name).

The folder architecture is simple:
- in the *public folder* - you will find every html & css file and front-end JavaScript (what is visible to the client);
- the *views folder* - stores the view engine *.ejs* file, and it is useful for rendering the webpage, as we used variables in it;
- the backend of the product could have been stored in a folder named *server,* but we left the app.js file as a singular, as we do not have any other server files, and the teachers (stakeholders) mentioned it is good like this;
- finally, the node module folder stores all the dependencies needed to run the application on the server.

The application follows a simple architecture, using HTML & CSS, JavaScript and MongoDB as a database.
We use JavaScript in order to create some front-end interactions, but the most crucial part is in the backend, where the application runs on a NodeJs express server, which is connected to a Database in MongoDB Atlas. We chose to use this type of database, as it can be accessed by everyone, not

only locally. This database is used to store information about the users: personal details, the hobbies of each user and the connections (existing friendships).

The key feature of the app is the *Weekly matches*, created with an algorithm that filters the non-friends users, and gives three weekly recommendations of people with whom you might get along (based on a compatibility percent).

To make the application accessible for everyone, we hosted it on https://render.com.

User experience

Similar to other apps, connectYall has a "Welcome" page that gives you the option to sign in or sign up. When creating a new account, the user will select "Sign up." The app will direct users to the hobby section when they have completed all of their personal information. On our app, this is one of the implementations that stands out. The user can select all of their interests from a range of possibilities. The account is established after you click "continue."

They will be directed to the "My profile" page by the app automatically. They can locate their already filled-out description, their hobbies, and their own weekly matches there. The feature of the weekly matches is one of which we are quite happy because it allows the user the the chance to develop meaningful friendships with people who have similar interests as they do. What does it concern? The user receives 3 matches each week. If one of them piques their attention, they can click on it, and the app will lead them to a profile where they can see all of the other person's details as well as a "befriend" option. The friend request will be sent if the button is pressed. Want to avoid using the weekly matches? No worries—users may quickly use the Explore tab to find a selection of individuals that have at least a 50% match rate. After a few days have passed, a popup will show on their screen requesting their consent to share their personal profile picture with their buddy. If approved, both their photo and that of their friend will be displayed. They can now observe how their buddies look! Why did we put this functionality in place? Pictures cannot be shared until after building a true friendship connection with the other person because we really wanted to concentrate on the shared interests rather than the physical appearances.

The user may always see the other person's interests on the Messages tab, which serves as a constant reminder of why they choose to communicate with a particular friend.
In order to set our software apart from the market, we worked extremely hard to make it better. We made the Connect page so that the user could find all of their friends as well as pendings. We purposefully omitted the requests part because it's a feature of other apps, and accepting many friend

requests and having an entire list of them appear on your profile can be quite irritating. A new popup that occurs in response to a friend request was something we intended to create but because of the lack of time will keep it as a future implementation. If accepted, their buddy is displayed on the Connect page; otherwise, the request is entirely removed.

Business considerations

User acquisition: Attracting a large enough user base to make the platform viable is crucial. We will need to develop a comprehensive marketing strategy to reach the target audience and create awareness about the app. This could include utilizing social media, influencer marketing, and paid advertising, especially targeting the population that is more likely to be isolated and may benefit from the app's concept.

Monetization: Finding a profitable business model for the app is essential. We will need to explore different monetization options such as in-app purchases, advertising, or subscriptions. It's important to consider the balance between generating revenue and ensuring that the app remains accessible to users, especially for those with financial constraints.

User engagement: Encouraging users to actively use the platform and participate in meaningful conversations is crucial. The app will need to continuously update and improve features to meet the changing needs of users. Additionally, the app creators will need to develop a system to reward users who are actively engaged with the platform, to keep them coming back.

Building a User-friendly and efficient interface: Creating an interface that is easy to navigate and serves the purpose of the app is crucial. A user-friendly interface will make it easy for users to find and connect with others who share their interests.

Cyber-security: As an app that connects people and share personal information, it is important to keep the app secure to protect the users from potential cyber-security threats. We should invest in strong security measures to protect user data and keep the app safe from hacking and other malicious attacks.

Compliance: We will need to ensure that the app complies with all relevant laws and regulations.

Scalability: As the app grows, it will be important to ensure that it can scale to accommodate a larger user base and increased usage. This includes investing in the necessary infrastructure to support a growing user base and ensuring that the app can handle increased traffic.

Community management: It will be important to have a team to manage the community within the app and to ensure that the conversations are healthy and productive. Additionally, having a team to moderate the content and ensure that it aligns with the app's vision and values

Implementation plan

Project Goal: Create a new app for helping people build friendships based on shared interests.
Objectives: Solve all the milestones in order to reach that ultimate goal.

Scope Statement:
Here's where the development team will document all the work needed to develop the app. That work is broken down into tasks. That is why we used the Moscow Method; we wanted to have a clear picture of what we are going to implement, what is optional and what we won't.

Resource Plan:
What we needed regarding hardware were laptops and a screen that we could use as a mirrored one for an easier process of working for the team sessions. In addition to this, the main and most important software needed was the VisualStudio programme which we used for coding. AdobeXD had been used for building our prototype and Canva for making out wireframes. Other than this, we used some websites which helped us with creating pictures such as Dribble, for downloading images, and Canva, for editing them.

Risk Analysis:
- the app being seen as a social media one
- comparing the app with Tinder

Timeline, Milestones and Metrics:
Oct 2022 - Nov2022 - Discover, Define, Develop phase 100%
- Debrief
- Brainstorm
- Library research
- Empathy Map
- Survey
- Interview
- Personas
- User journey
- How might we
- Design challenge
- Moscow method

Dec 2022 - Jan2023 - Deliver phase 80%
- Pitch Presentation

- [Concept Document](#)
- [Wireframes](#)
- [Prototype](#)
- [Coding](#)

Jan 2023 - Iterations, app testing

11 Jan 2023 - [Final presentation](#)

22 Jan 2023 - Final fixes

Risks

Privacy concerns: With the app connecting users based on shared interests, there may be concerns about the security of personal information shared on the platform.

Limited user base: The success of the app depends on a sufficient number of users joining and actively using the platform. Without a large enough user base, it may be difficult for users to find people with similar interests.

Competition from existing social media platforms: The app may face competition from established social media platforms (Instagram) that also allow users to connect based on shared interests.

Misuse of the platform: As the app connects people based on shared interests, there is a risk that some users may use the platform to exploit or prey on others, which could lead to negative consequences for the app and its users.

Technical difficulties: The connectYall development team might run into difficulties with bugs, security flaws, or functionality. The development process might be delayed as a result, and fixing it might require more resources.

Challenges

User acquisition and retention: Attracting and retaining a large enough user base to make the platform viable may be a challenge.

Monetization: Finding a profitable business model for the app may be difficult.

User engagement: Encouraging users to actively use the platform and participate in meaningful conversations may be challenging. Keeping the app updated with the latest trends and features to meet the user's needs. Marketing and promoting the app to reach the target audience. Managing and moderating the content to ensure the safety and security of the users.

Managing and moderating the content: Monitoring and moderating the content on the platform can be a significant challenge, particularly if the app becomes popular and attracts a large number of users.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this document serves as a starting point for understanding what our values are and what we stand for, as well as providing a communication bridge between the team-members and the external stakeholders.