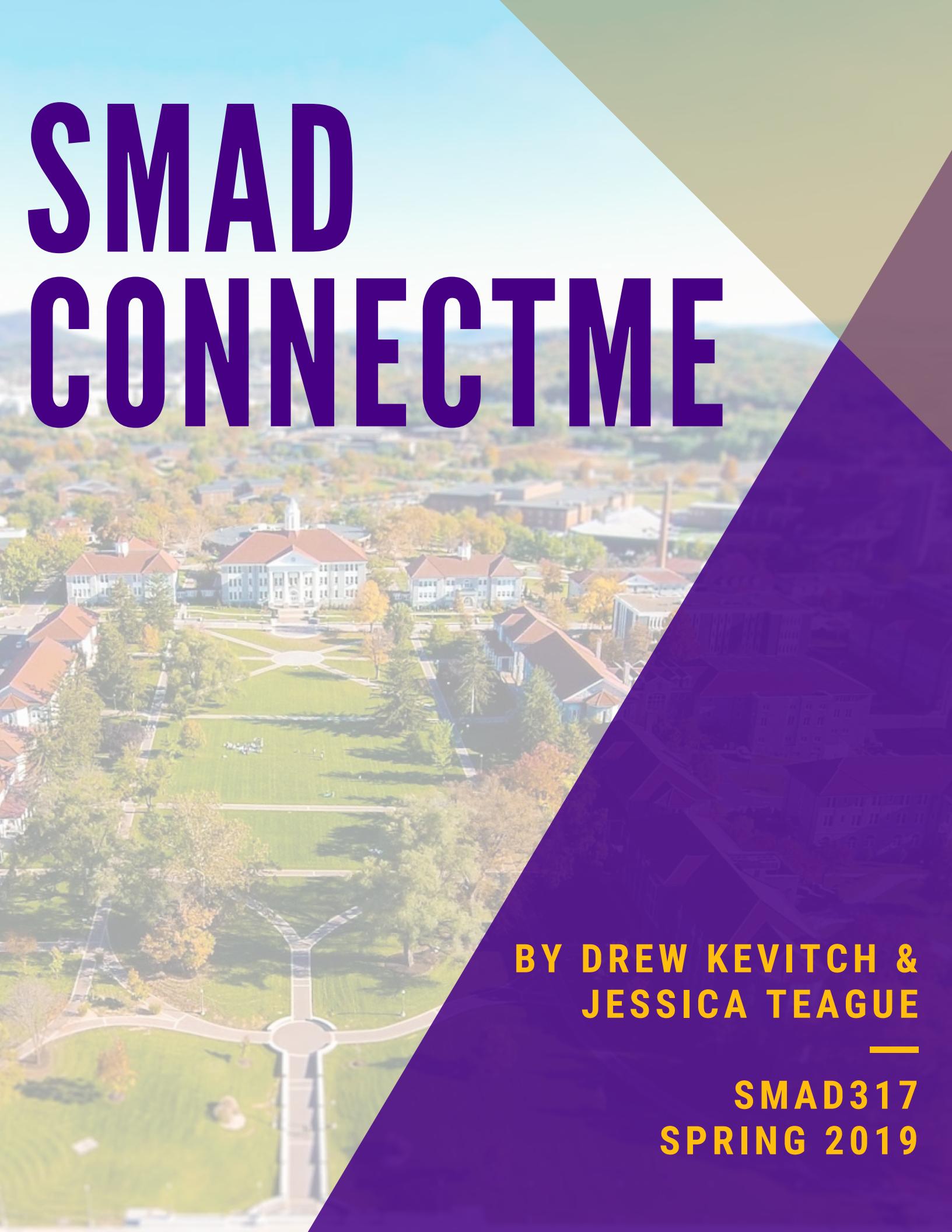


SMAD CONNECTME

An aerial photograph of a university campus, likely Ohio State University, featuring a large green quad with a circular walkway, several red-roofed buildings, and surrounding residential and industrial areas.

BY DREW KEVITCH &
JESSICA TEAGUE

SMAD317
SPRING 2019

Table of Contents

Chapter 1

Executive Summary.....	pg.4
------------------------	------

Chapter 2

Problem Statement.....	pg.6
------------------------	------

Chapter 3

Related Work.....	pg.8
-------------------	------

Chapter 4

4.1 User Research.....	pg.12
4.2 Persona's.....	pg.13
4.3 Storyboards.....	pg.14
4.4 Scenarios.....	pg.16
4.5 Design Requirements.....	pg.17

Chapter 5

5.1 Brainstorming & Sketches.....	pg.19
5.2 The 3 Best Concepts.....	pg.20
5.3 Paper Prototyping & Testing.....	pg.22
5.4 Low Fidelity Prototype & Testing.....	pg.24
5.5 High Fidelity Prototype & Testing.....	pg.27

Chapter 6

Conclusion.....	pg.35
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Chapter 1

Executive Summary

Executive Summary

As JMU SMAD students, we have found it difficult to find internships/job opportunities and to meet new people within our major. As a result, our group has decided to design an app that will relieve this issue: SMAD ConnectMe. SMAD ConnectMe is an app for only JMU SMAD students that allows users to chat with current students and alumni about available internship opportunities and classwork. Users are able to message and create meetings with each other to help build new, lasting connections.

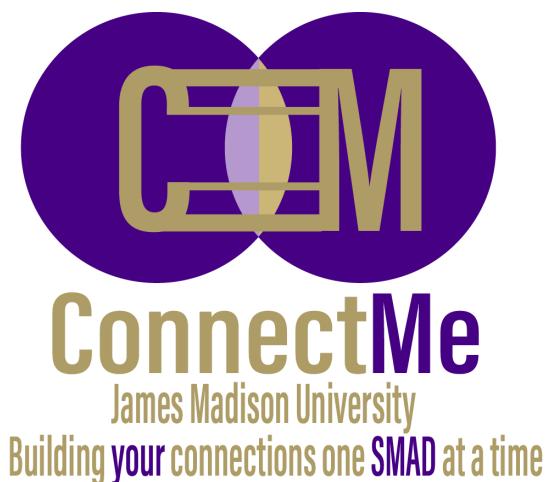
After developing prototypes for our app, users tested our idea, which allowed us to gather feedback on more design requirements. We found that, overall, our design was successful. Our biggest usability problems were with adding a resume and allowing the use of keyboard shortcuts. Other than more minor issues, the design worked well for users and was a very popular idea.

Chapter 2

Problem Statement

Problem Statement

JMU students need to network and connect with current classmates and alumni because developing relationships with people in their field will help them find more jobs, internships and opportunities.



Chapter 3

Related Work

Related Work

Our related works represent the existing brands that positively influenced our app. We chose to focus on five related works.



Facebook

Form of social media that connects you with people around the world

Good Principles of Design: Easy to connect with others, allowing you to keep up with others' lives from looking at their profiles. We may use some of their user experience when creating user profiles because Facebook makes it very easy to understand.

Design Deficiencies: Something missing from Facebook is that it is not professional, and it is mostly pictures and recent news shared on a newsfeed; there is growth for connection between people but no growth for future job opportunities.

Related Work Continued



LinkedIn

A more professional version of Facebook that focuses on sharing your skills and work experience that different companies, businesses and individuals can use

Good Principles of Design: Simple and common design that makes it easy for users to understand. In our design, we would have a similar experience since we would have users create profiles with their resume and interests listed.

Design Deficiencies: Doesn't connect you with alumni easily



Handshake

A website that lists different jobs and opportunities that are available, showing other students' reviews on the job if applicable. It allows you to search by your major and by your interests.

Good Principles of Design: Allows you to filter what type of opportunity you are looking for and what your interests are in. In our design, we could have it so that you can enter in your interests so that the app can filter out alumni and students with dissimilar interests.

Design Deficiencies: You cannot easily speak with other students who have worked at a job that you are interested in.

Related Work Continued



Good Principles of Design: Simple, self-explanatory design, requiring no effort of the users. We may use something similar to the tweeting design so that students can send out information to many users of our app in an easy, familiar way.

Design Deficiencies: Cannot search for users in a particular group to follow. For example, it would be nice to find users with similar interests to you (like the same major, school, etc).

R M P Rate my Professor

A website of student reviews that allows you to view ratings of professors at your university

Good Principles of Design: The search bar is very helpful to find what the user is looking for. We would likely use some sort of search bar in our design that offers suggestions for what our users are looking for.

Design Deficiencies: Multiple pop-ups and users cannot search by major

Chapter 4

Design Process

User Research

Types of Users

The SMAD ConnectMe app would have two types of users. Our **primary user** would be current JMU SMAD students. Our **secondary user** would be the JMU SMAD Alumni members who join the app. The employers of SMAD alumni also work as a potential third party.

Interview Process

Since there were two sets of users, there were two parts to the interview process. The first part was getting in touch with SMAD Alumni members via email, while the second was interviewing classmates face to face. The alumni members had their own set of about 10 questions, and the current students had their own sets of about 10 questions. The questions for Alumni focused on their current jobs, the job searching process and what they struggled with while looking. The questions directed at current students focused on their current connections with SMAD alumni and their concerns for the job/ intern search.

Persona's

Primary

BRIAN AMERICAN, 19, JMU CURRENT SMAD STUDENT

"I want to meet new people and make lasting connections."

Technological Experience:

Intermediate

Technology Tools:

IOS Mobile Device

Laptop



Demographic Info:

Brian is a 19-year-old current, Sophomore SMAD student. He is originally from New Jersey, where he lives with his parents. Over breaks and during the summer, he waits tables at a local restaurant.

Background:

During the school year, Brian works on his B.A. in SMAD with a Digital, Video, and Cinema concentration. He has loved movies and storyboarding ever since he can remember, so he has continued to fall in love with it at JMU. In his free time, he enjoys to spend time with his friends, usually going hiking or trekking out to the slopes for snowboarding. Although, since coming to JMU, he has always felt that he still has not met many other students in his major, despite all the friends that he has.

Goals:

Brian has been searching for new opportunities within his SMAD major. He'd be interested in an internship or collaborations with other students.

Frustrations:

When looking for internships or opportunities, he never seems to get a call back due to his lack of connections. JMU's resources have not been enough for him to create new relationships with professionals in his field.

Secondary

LINDSEY AMERICAN, 24, JMU SMAD ALUMNI

"I am interested in helping current JMU SMAD students receive the help and advice I never got"

Technological Experience:

Advanced

Technology Tools:

Tablet

Laptop

IOS Mobile Device



Demographic Info:

Lindsey is 24 and is a JMU SMAD Alumni who lives in New York City. Her current job is located in NY as well. It took her about a half a year to find herself a job, because she didn't have many JMU connections up north, which made the job process a little harder.

Background:

Lindsey graduated with a B.S. from SMAD, Journalism Concentration in May 2017. Coming from out of state, she did not have much insight on JMU coming in as a freshman, and didn't have many connections after graduation while moving back up north. She spent 6 months attending different interviews for media-related jobs, and finally found a job on the media team for a clothing company in NY.

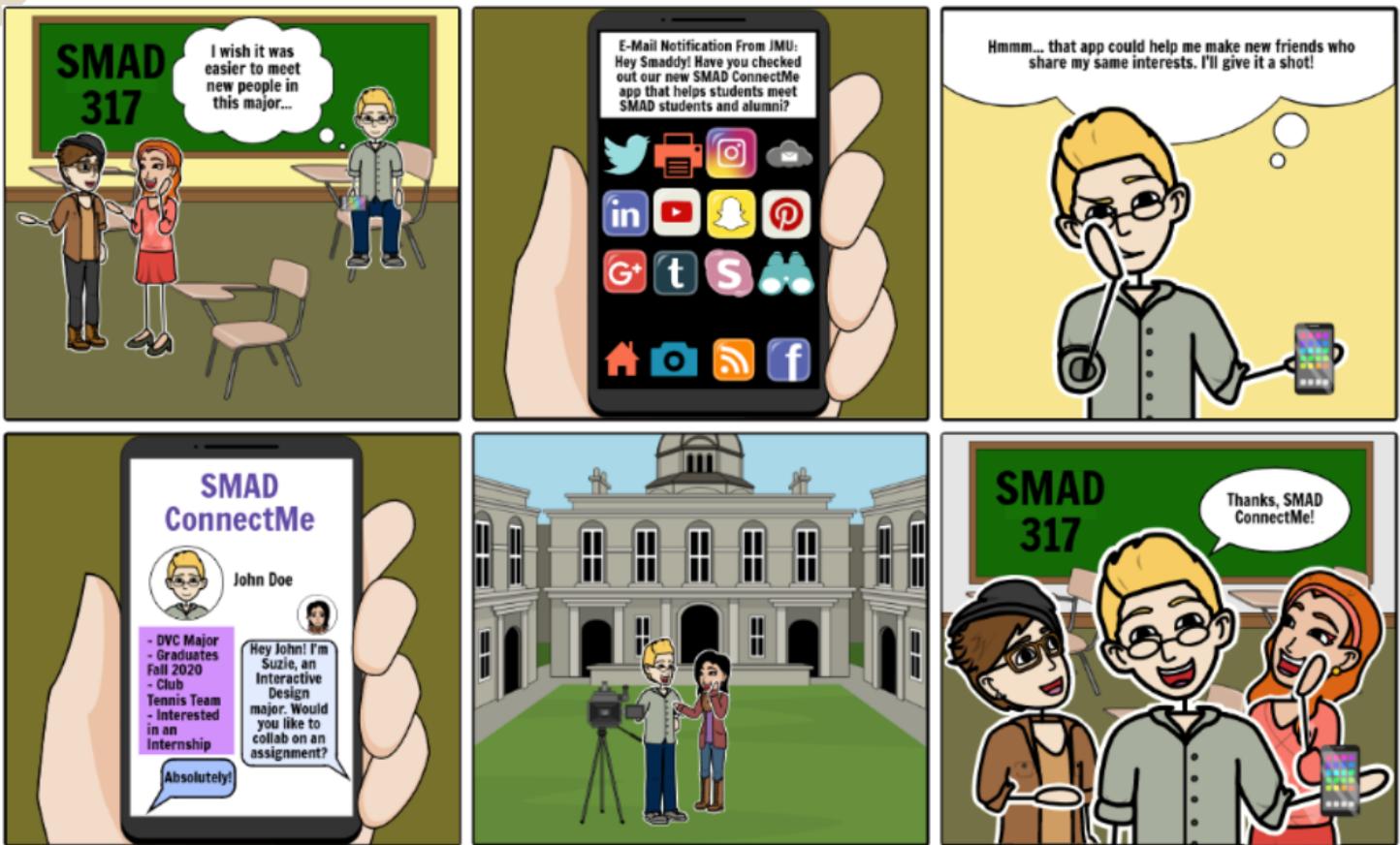
Frustrations:

Not having any mentors or referrals while going through the job-searching process.

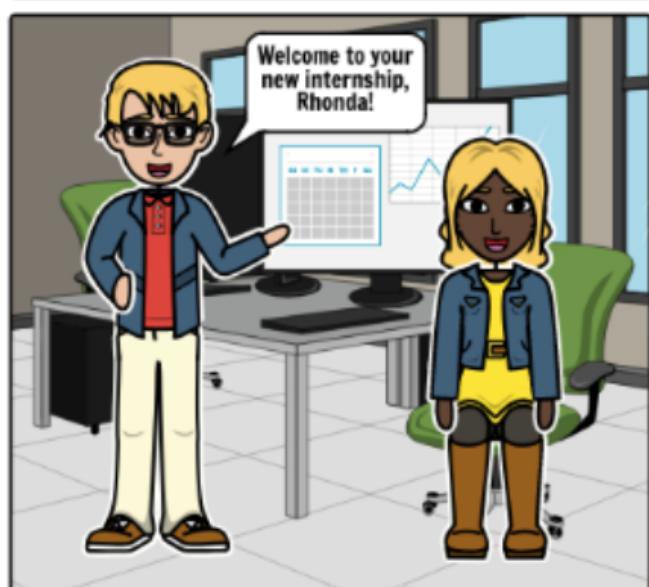
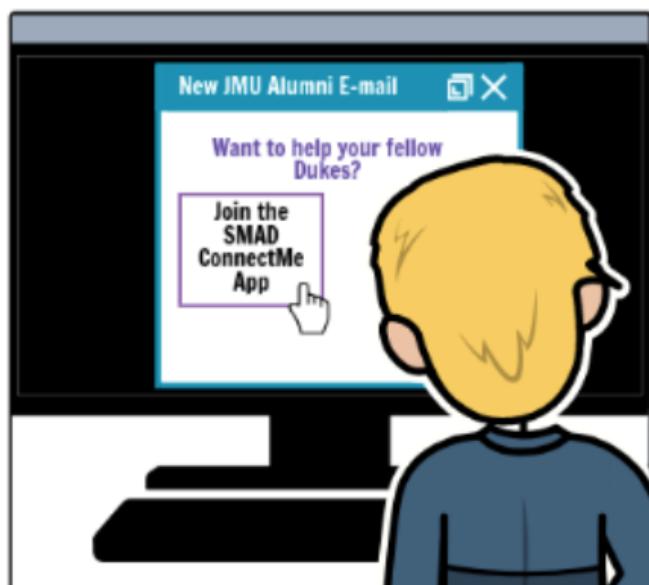
Goals:

Lindsey is looking to assist current JMU SMAD students with finding the right career path post-graduation. She hopes to give current JMU students the advice and resources she didn't have while searching for jobs. What frustrated Lindsey was the lack of guidance she had while stepping into the world on her own. Any help and guidance, even if it's just a little, can go a long way.

Storyboard #1



Storyboard #2



Scenarios

Brian is a sophomore at James Madison University. He is majoring in SMAD with a concentration in Digital Video and Cinema (DVC). Brian is from New Jersey, so he didn't know many people from his area coming to JMU. Something that frustrates Brian is the lack of connections he has not only within SMAD, but in the real world. Brian signed up for SMAD ConnectMe, and within a week he had a study group formed with other DVC majors who were in the same classes as him. He felt more comfortable going to class and got more excited each day to go. While searching through the member list, he noticed a SMAD alumni who is employed in New York and reached out to him to ask about his current job and the company he works for. Brian was able to FaceTime with this alumni member who got him an interview for a summer internship in the company he works for. Without ConnectMe, Brian wouldn't have landed a summer internship and probably wouldn't have hungout with the friends he met in his study group.

Design Requirements

- The user will be able to customize their own data; contact info, profile image, name, concentration, etc. and will also be able to access profiles of other members
- The user will be able to post actively on the newsfeed
- the user will be able to filter by location and concentration
- User must understand basic mobile operations and be connected to Internet and Wifi
- An inbox of read and unread messages to connect with other members
- Ability to be used on Android, IOS Mobile Device, tablet and a Mac/ PC computer
- Easily accessible, simple to understand and able to assist users in their daily lives

Chapter 5

Design Solutions

Brainstorming & Sketches

10 ideas from designs that already exist in the world, whether available as products, described as in research papers, or elsewhere.

Facebook; profile, website, app, social	Rate my Professor; social, website, personal experience	Overall quality: 4.0	Messenger: kate	Handshake; website, customizable, informational, resourceful
Logo, job brand, job title, references, job description	Newsteed:	Profile pic., bio., tweets, replies, media	Facebook Messenger; social connects people, website, app	current location, destination
Handshake; resourceful, website, social	Twitter; social, up-to-date, app, website, social, connects, resourceful, informational	Twitter; website, app, social, profile	snapshot; app, social, connects (snapmap)	Google Maps; app, website, resourceful

10 ideas you think does not yet exist in the world; these should be ideas you thought of yourself

Filter system; search by state, visually show geographical diversity of users	CLASS # SMAD 317 chen Guo	write something @alumni: internship program.... current student: Anyone good w/ PS?	new post: Help! Anyone have a 202 study guide for Johnson's class? send to top	Groups: SMAD 301 SMAD 307 join group SMAD 317
connectMe → JMULibrary	CLASS/ professor rating system w/ student reviews	ONLY SMAD-related posts!	A "send to top" setting that sends an urgent message to top of feed for 24 hrs	"join group" option; allows you access to a discussion board w/ people taking that course #
BOOK study rooms in carrier for study groups within the connectMe app	SURE! send it over! resume, phone#, email	9.10am pounds!	share my	instant race to race interview through the app
customizable shortcut bar that allows you to send something specific w/ one touch	Timer/ screensaver app setting; rotates your wall paper w/ important info	share directly button allows you to instant message a post to someone quickly		

The 3 Best Concepts

1. "Send to Top" button that temporarily moves a post you think is interesting to the top of the chronological feed for 24 hours.

Score of 30

2. Customizable shortcut bar where you can choose what information to have at the touch of your finger tips. Makes it easy to send information with one touch.

Score of 26

3. A filter system that visually shows the geographical diversity of users when searching by location

Score of 26

Prototypes and Testing

For the paper prototype, the low fidelity and the high fidelity prototype testings all of the following applied.

Briefing: "Today you will be testing our app known as ConnectMe. This app is designed with the purpose to connect current JMU SMAD students with classmates and alumni members."

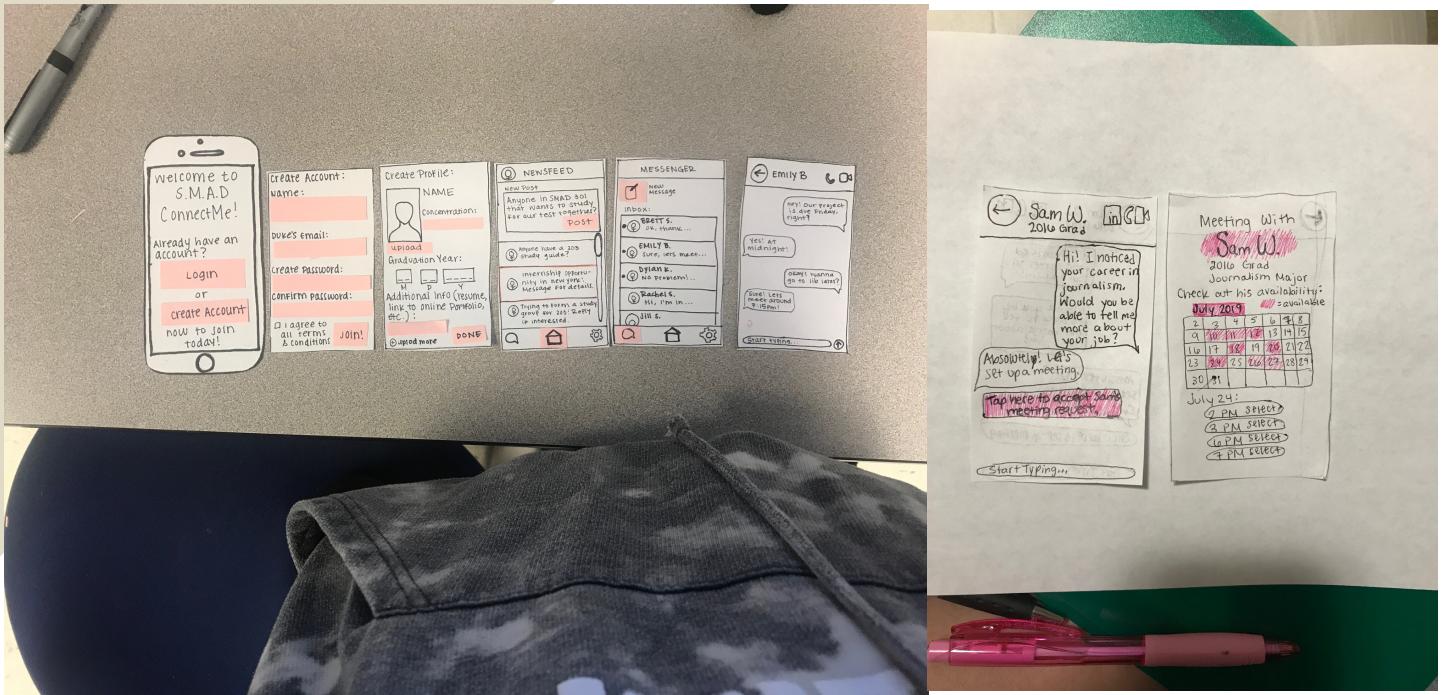
Tasks: During this test you will perform the following five tasks...

1. Create an account
2. Create a profile
3. Post on the newsfeed
4. Message a classmate
5. Connect and schedule a meeting time with an alumni

Post-test Questions:

1. Were you able to differentiate between student and alumni posts on the newsfeed? Would you like the newsfeed to be more organized
2. Did not having to "friend" people throw you off?
3. What would you add to this app?
4. Was creating a meeting with alumni easy or difficult?
5. Was your profile simple to create? Would you like to add more information about yourself?

Paper Prototype and Testing



All testers were Interactive Design Students. All students reported that they have trouble connecting with classmates and alumni.

Tester 1 [Male]: He couldn't quite differentiate students vs. alumni on newsfeed, didn't even notice the no friend feature, had no recommendations for the app, he liked the set up and everything was easy and simple to understand

Tester 2 [Female]: Couldn't differentiate, didn't notice the no friend feature, recommends a page with all members of the app, was an easy app to navigate

Tester 3 [Female]: Noticed a colored border but didn't know it represented alumni, didn't notice the "no friend" feature, had no recommendations, likes the layout and simplicity of app

Paper Prototype Conclusion

Based off of our questions and observations asked and seen during the testing, we wanted to add a filtration system onto our newsfeed. This filter system will give the user the ability to filter their newsfeed by concentration, current students and alumni. This will make it easier for users to locate specific posts. In addition, we would also make the posts from alumni on the news thread more distinct; whether it's a different color or a different font, we will make them stand out from current student posts. Lastly, we are going to add a page that includes all users of the app separated into current students and alumni so that you are able to view people's profiles and view all the people with a ConnectMe account.



Low-fidelity Prototype

Task 1 & 2: Create Account and Set up Profile



Create Account

Full name

JMU Email

Password

Confirm Password

I agree to all the terms and conditions

CREATE ACCOUNT

Create Profile

Name

*Concentration

*Upload profile image

*Graduation Date

Month

Year

Additional Info (optional)
Biography

Upload resume here

Portfolio Link

CREATE PROFILE

Task 3: Post on Newsfeed



Write a Post

Post

Anyone have a good study guide they're willing to share for smad203 with Chen Guo?

A Hi smaddies! The company I am working for is hiring interns for this summer. Message me if interested!

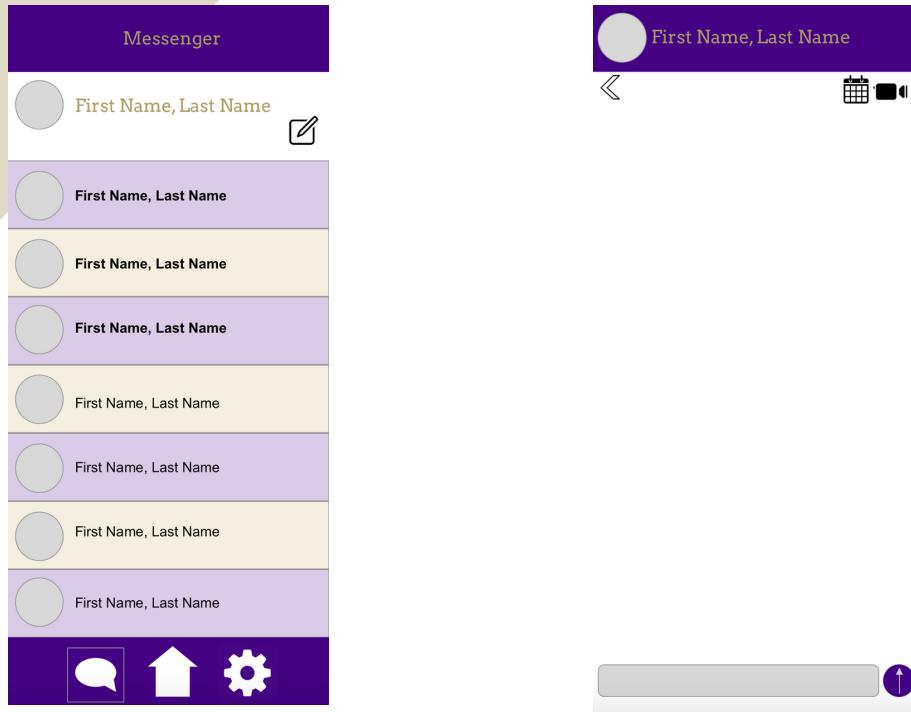
Anyone interested in joining my study group for 317?

Need advice for what smad classes to enroll in next semester. Please message for help!

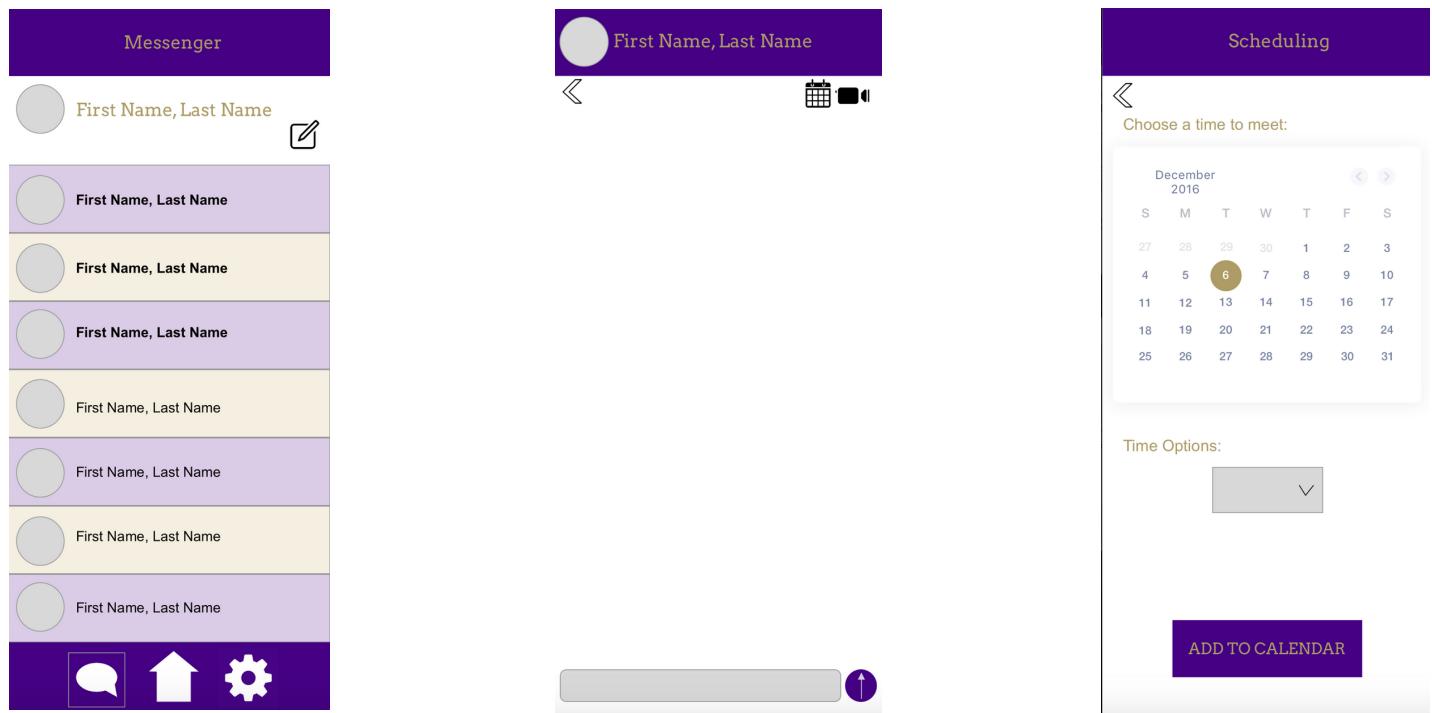


Low-fidelity Prototype

Task 4: Message Classmates



Task 5: Connect and schedule a meeting time with an alumni



Low-fidelity Prototype Feedback

- Make it more interactive; we only used sketch for our low-fidelity. Pair with Axure to make it more reactive so that it is more life-like
- Differentiate more between alumni and students on newsfeed
- Make the "new/ unread message notification" more prominent
- Add a list of all members that have an account with the app
- Add a filter system to newsfeed



High-fidelity Prototype

Task 1 & 2: Create Account and Set up Profile

The image displays two high-fidelity prototypes side-by-side.

Left Prototype (Task 1): A mobile-style interface for creating an account. It features a purple header "Welcome to ConnectMe" with the "ConnectMe" logo. Below the header, there's a large "CREATE AN ACCOUNT" button. To its right, a "SIGN IN" button is visible. The main area contains fields for "JMU Email" and "Password".

Right Prototype (Task 2): A mobile-style interface for setting up a profile. It has a purple header "Create Account" and a "Create Profile" tab. The "Create Account" section includes fields for "Full name", "JMU Email", "Password", and "Confirm Password". It also features a checkbox for accepting terms and conditions and a large "CREATE ACCOUNT" button. The "Create Profile" section includes fields for "Concentration" (Interactive Design), "Status" (Student), "Graduation Date" (set to "Other"), and "Additional Info (optional)" (Biography). It also includes sections for "Career History" and "Job Duties" (with three dropdowns for each) and a "CREATE PROFILE" button.

Task 3: Post on Newsfeed

A newsfeed interface prototype. At the top, a purple header bar shows a user profile for "Beth Smith". Below the header, a "Write a Post" input field is present. The newsfeed lists several posts from other users:

- Student I Phillip Gallagher:** Anyone have a good study guide they're willing to share for smad203 with Chen Guo? Like Comment
- Alumni I Danica Feuz:** Hi smaddies! The company I am working for is hiring interns for this summer. Message me if interested! Like Comment
- Student I Tina Torres:** Anyone interested in joining my study group for 317? Like Comment
- Student I Danny Scully:** Need advice for what smad classes to enroll in next semester. Please message for help! Like Comment

At the bottom, a purple footer bar contains icons for user, message, upload, person, and settings.

A filtering interface prototype. A "Filter" button is at the top. Below it is a list of categories with checkboxes:

- Students
- Alumni
- Interactive Design Students
- Creative Advertising Students
- DVC Students
- Journalism Students

A "Finish" button is located at the bottom right.

5.5

High-fidelity Prototype

Task 4: Message Classmate

The image shows a mobile application interface. On the left, the "Inbox" screen displays a list of contacts with their names and profile icons. The contacts listed are Samantha Hammond, Phillip Gallagher, Danica Feuz, Danny Scully, Ben Simmons, Kelly Stickell, Leslie Miller, and Tina Torres. Below the list are five navigation icons: a person, a speech bubble, an upward arrow, another person, and a gear. On the right, the "Compose Message" screen is open, showing a recipient field "New Message to Whitney Houston" and a plus sign icon for adding more recipients. A text input field at the bottom is labeled "Start typing...".

Task 5: Connect and schedule a meeting with alumni

The image shows a mobile application interface. On the left, the "Inbox" screen displays a list of contacts. In the middle, a message from "Danica Feuz" is shown, containing a text message: "Hi Danica! My name is Beth Smith. I am a SMAD major and am really intrigued by your experience. Would we be able to schedule a meeting sometime? Thank you!" On the right, the "Scheduling" screen is open, showing a calendar for December 2016. A date, December 6, is highlighted. A message at the bottom right says "Success! You've added an event to your calendar." Below the calendar are "ADD TO CALENDAR" and "Time Options" buttons. At the bottom right is another "ADD TO CALENDAR" button.

New Features Added to High-Fidelity Prototype

List of Members

ConnectMe Members

All SMADIES should be friends! With ConnectMe, we believe in instant connections. Below you can find a list of all SMAD current student and Alumni members on this app!

Search members by

Current Students

or by

Alumni Members



James Madison University

Building your connections one SMAD at a time



Current Students

Filter

Search by name...

- | | | |
|--|-------------------|---|
| | Adam Harstein | > |
| | Maddie Eckles | > |
| | Phillip Gallagher | > |
| | Danny Scully | > |
| | Ben Simmons | > |
| | Kelly Stickell | > |
| | Leslie Miller | > |
| | Tina Torres | > |

Alumni Members

Filter

Search by name...

- | | | |
|--|---------------|---|
| | Danica Feuz | > |
| | Jolie Klein | > |
| | Olivia Gaber | > |
| | Justin Sachs | > |
| | Larry Wax | > |
| | Gaby Combs | > |
| | Brian Geller | > |
| | Eli Silverman | > |

Member Profiles



Leslie Miller

Student Dec 2020 Grad

Concentration Digital Video & Cinema

Bio

Hi everyone! I am highly interested in interning with an alumni this Summer. I have a strong background in DVC, so feel free to check out my resume. Thanks!

Career Interests

- Director
- Producer
- Editor
- Cinematographer

Download Resume

Portfolio

www.lesliemillervideography.com



Danica Feuz

Alumni May 2016 Grad

Concentration Interactive Design

Career History

UX Designer 2016 - present

Google, Inc.

- Conducting user research and testing
- Developing wireframes and task flows
- Collaborating with designers

Web Programmer 2014 - 2016

Deloitte Digital

- Create fully functional programs
- Collaborate with other teams
- Upgrade existing programs

Sign-Out/ Settings

Settings

Push Notifications

Email Notifications

Hide Profile

LOG OUT



ConnectMe

James Madison University

Building your connections one SMAD at a time

MESSAGE STUDENT

MESSAGE ALUMNI



High-fidelity Prototype User Testing

Two of our participants were female and one was male. One of the females and the male were both 25-years-old and were fairly recent graduates from college. The other female was 56-years-old and has held many jobs throughout her career. The current occupations were a nanny, a delivery driver, and a secretary.

Technology experience level ranged from low to high.

Testing Environment

The testing was completed in a quiet space at home. Each test took roughly 6 minutes each. Testing was conducted using Axure and screen recorded using QuickTime.

Pre-test Questions

1. What would you like to see in this app?

- Participants stated they'd like to have a filtering feature

2. Where are you from?

- 2 of 3 participants were from Staunton, VA & the other participant was from Harrisonburg, VA

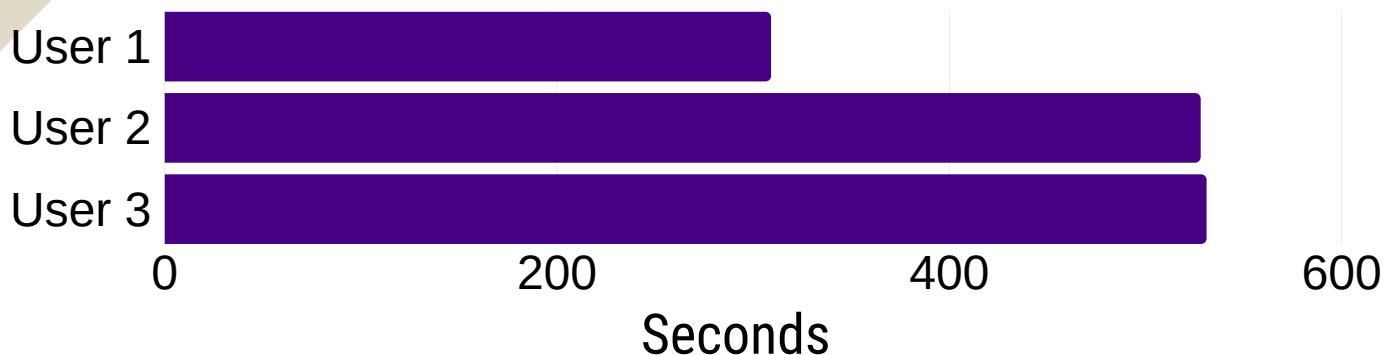
3. Do you have trouble connecting with students and alumni?

- All respondents they have had trouble connecting with students/alumni

High-fidelity Prototype User Testing Findings

Performance Metrics

Time Taken to Complete the Five Tasks



Qualitative Results

Users were unsure if they should input first and last name or just first name when creating a profile. Users did not know what to select when entering career history information when the career they're entering has no end date (in other words, their current job). Users found it frustrating that when posting to the newsfeed, the text does not move to the next line.

High-fidelity Prototype User Testing Findings Cont.

Usability Issues & Severity Score

- 2 • Users did not know to hit apply to add a photo when creating the profile
- 3 • Users found the button to upload a resume confusing because you had to select the file first
- 3 • Users could not hit the "enter" button to post on the feed or send a message
- 0 • Users password show when typing rather than using dots to help with privacy

High-fidelity Prototype User Testing Evaluation

After our high fidelity testing, we evaluated the feedback from our testers, and gathered these design recommendations.

Design Recommendations

- Make separate first and last name boxes
- Make a "current" selection for the career history end date
- Make the text box for the news feed move to a separate line when user is typing
- Take away the apply button when adding a photo
- Make the "upload a resume" button clickable
- Make the "enter" button usable when the user is typing a post or message
- Hide password as user is typing

Chapter 6

Conclusion

Conclusion

Throughout the semester, we worked cohesively and diligently to understand the steps and concepts of creating an app. We truly enjoyed being able to bring the design process to life and develop a prototype we are proud of. Each part of the design process was a milestone that lead us to bring our idea to life and create our very first prototype.

We have learned and accomplished things we never imagined. Overall, we believe that one day this app could exist in our SMAd department at James Madison University, or could be transformed into an app that supports connects for a different major. We are pleased with the way our final production came out and are enlightened after performing the design process first hand.