Social / Ethical Implications

Answer the following questions. In your answers, please distinguish which implications follow from your *conceptual* design and which follow from your *UI* design.

1. **Did you make cultural or other assumptions about your users that affect how they interact with Fritter?**

    (UI Design) We assumed that our users are native English speakers and that they are familiar with basic functionalities of social media platforms such as Twitter, Instagram, etc, so that they do not require in-depth explanations for functionalities. This allows us to create a more streamlined interface that our users can pick up quickly.

2. **Would an effective use of design heuristics to maximize engagement with Fritter be manipulative?**

    (UI Design) An effective use of design heuristics to maximize engagement would be manipulative in the sense that the increased activity will be partially due to our control. However, design heuristics serve to improve the user experience, and a better user experience encourages users to engage more. Though we benefit from the design heuristics in the form of increased user engagement, the user benefits just as much from an improved user experience.

3. **How would you adjust your design if your only goal were to: get children addicted to Fritter? or make it hard for older people to use Fritter? or stop fake news spreading? or prevent harassment? How, if at all, do your answers to these questions inform how you would actually design Fritter?**

    (Conceptual) To get children addicted to Fritter, we would have a karma system derived from upvotes and other forms of engagement. We would then gamify it further by giving in-app points for spending time looking at posts, the age of their account, and using the site actively everyday (streaks like snapchat). Younger children are often more susceptible to these gamification tactics than older users.

(UI Design) To make it harder for older people to use Fritter, we would remove our tooltips that indicate the functionality of each icon. In this fashion, we would exclusively represent all activities with icons with the assumption that our users are familiar with new social media sites. We would also make all the buttons much smaller to make it harder for them to see and click on.

(Conceptual) To stop fake news and prevent harassment, we would expand upon our upvote system. We would implement a downvote system, a report system where users can report inappropriate, offensive, or misleading content, and a karma system where users with high rates of reported posts/downvoted posts are put on suspension. By including downvotes, we can order the popularity sort option by least controversiality as well as raw upvote count. The report system keeps the worst offending posts out of feeds, and the karma system prevents offending users from continuously posting harmful content.

The questions guide our design of Fritter. We intend to stop fake news from spreading, make the site comfortable for older users, and prevent younger users from getting addicted. To accomplish this, we minimize the level of gamification, enlarge all buttons/text, and use icons with meanings found beyond other social media sites. In the future, if we implement this design further, we intend to implement a downvote and karma system.

4. **You have the option to allow users to see which other users have upvoted a Freet. What forms of engagement between users (positive or negative) would be encouraged by allowing this?**

(Conceptual) Some forms of positive engagement include: it will be easier for users with like interests to meet, users can view activity of other users who like similar content as them, and users are more willing to like other people's posts, seeing the like count as a group of people rather than just a number

(Conceptual) However, publicizing the identities of upvotes also has several forms of negative engagement. Namely, users are more likely to upvote or downvote a post only to follow the bandwagon (i.e. another user you admire upvoted the post). Users might also have hostility towards other users for not upvoting their freets. And finally, users can game the system with upvote-for-an-upvote agreements. Users can upvote each other's posts in exchange for upvotes on their own posts.

5. **In A3, we asked about stakeholders who aren't your immediate users. Identify a design choice you faced that would benefit or harm such a stakeholder, and explain how.**

   (Conceptual) One stakeholder that isn't our immediate users is advertisers and other sponsors who may potentially want to use our site for publicity. We display the follower count of users, which is a measure of popularity for the content posted by these users. This benefits advertisers by allowing them to understand the trends amongst users of our platform, which can allow them to create more effective forms of advertising.

6. **What are the accessibility implications of your design for people with different abilities?**

   (UI Design) We chose a color scheme that showed lots of contrast for different forms of color blindness.

   (UI Design) For blind users, we use semantic HTML to help text-to-speech programs parse the content (headers, main, section). Website is more accessible to visually impaired.

   Finally, because of less tech-savvy users might struggle to learn how to use the site, and may be underrepresented in the content posted on Fritter. Our user-base may consist primarily of users who utilize many other forms of social media. Non-native English speakers might also initially have trouble navigating the site or understanding what some of the functionality does and might be discouraged from continuing to use the site.

7. **One of the heuristics is to "speak the user's language." In retrospect, assuming you followed this, can you identify what kind of user you had in mind?**

   (UI Design) The user we envisioned was a tech savvy 10-30 year old who is familiar with social media conventions from other social media sites. Many of the icons and terminology we use in our functionality is similar to terms commonly used in social media such as Like, Follow, Refreet whose functionality is not obvious just by knowing English, but requires the user to be familiar with language commonly used on social media sites. (Though, we also implemented

a few measures to help less tech savvy users learn the icons and functionality through tooltips.)