Assignment II:

TunePal end-user inclusive plan

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User Research

User research is a complicated process that goes into the deep and complex themes of user behaviour, preferences, and needs. To ensure that TunePal is designed with the end-users in mind, an extensive and in-depth approach to user research is not only recommended but needed.

This process can be divided into 6 different steps, each of them vital for research, and following the forementioned a deep understanding of the target audience will be gained. They can be applied during development, testing and even after release.
The steps are the following:

1. Defining Objectives:
   The first step must always be to state the goal of this research. By aligning these to the end goal of TunePal, the process will be much more fruitful. We must take time in this step: an ill-set aim can mean the difference between useful and useless data, and not prioritizing effectively will most likely mean that relevant insights won't be made.

2. Descriptive Research Methods:
   Once the goals are defined, we must interact both personally with some potential users and at a greater scale with a vast number of people to get essential information. For the former, we must employ these following techniques:
   a. In-Depth Interviews: by interviewing a range of potential users, we can discover features they might like from existing services, pain points and habits. For this we must ask open-ended questions, which can offer deeper insight on their

wants and needs, interests and features they might miss, all while gently guiding the conversation to specific areas defined in the first step.

b. Ethnographic Studies: these studies allow for a wider range of potential users, while also offering real-world insight on their listening habits and interactions with different platforms. This can offer particularly useful insight into the behaviours of users in diverse types of environments. By watching users during regular use, we can achieve a deeper understanding of what is asked from our platform.

By capturing a wide range of users from different demographics we can ensure what target audience we would like to appeal, including age group, cultures and tastes, and we can even consider ways to appeal to a greater public.

3. Quantitative Research Methods:
   As said before, we also need a greater number of people to offer information. Applying descriptive research methods for so many people is unfeasible, so a more general approach must be taken. For this, we will do the following:
   a. Surveys: by distributing surveys we can sample an exceptionally large sample of users and in a broader scale. By asking about general information about them we can figure out demographic and general behaviour, and the questionnaire can be tailored to what aspects about TunePal we need information about.
   b. Analytics: by using existing data sources we can already find a lot of the public's behaviour on what we are looking for, and even get usage patterns. This can be both used before and after release, by reviewing both similar apps' reviews

and ours.

4. Recruitment:
   In this phase, we will gather people for the beforementioned research. For our quantitative research we can advertise our surveys to specific demographics by making use of available analytics, and analytics don't require the public's input.
   On the other hand, our descriptive research requires us to personally interact with our public. For that reason, we will need both to make our research known to potential users and have a screening process to make a cured selection of users as to make our research as useful as possible.

5. Data Analysis:
   As its name implies, we must dedicate time to sort and analyse all the data compiled after applying our research methods. This is one of the most vital steps as a bad data analysis can mean a lot of wasted time and resources, or even create the need to restart the whole research process.
   A good sorting and triangulation of the findings will also ease the final step of research and can offer future insight on how the users' needs evolve during use.

6. Data Synthesis and Insights:
   This final step means the interpretation of what the research has produced and its application to the development and maintenance of the application. Organising the data obtained in easy-to-read graphs and charts also helps all members of the team determine what the future goals of development will be, and in consequence a greater opportunity for everyone to improve upon the application in a meaningful way.

In summary, user research for TunePal is a complex journey, exploring the depths of user behaviour and preferences. Through six essential steps, we uncover crucial insights for designing a user-centric platform. Beginning with clear objectives, we align our efforts with TunePal's goals. From intimate in-depth interviews to broad surveys and analytics, we gather diverse perspectives essential for understanding our audience. Recruitment ensures a curated research pool, while data analysis lays the foundation for actionable insights. This synthesis translates data to strategy, guiding TunePal's development and maintenance. In essence, user research isn't a one-time task but an ongoing process that will fuel TunePal's evolution, ensuring it remains finely tuned to our user’s needs and preferences.

Persona Development

Creating personas is an essential step in this user-centred design process, as it allows the design team to develop a deep understanding of the great range of users who will interact with TunePal. Personas are fictional representations of typical users, each embodying a distinct set of characteristics, behaviours, goals, and pain points. By crafting personas based on the insights gathered from user research, the design team can understand the users' needs and preferences, guiding the development of TunePal in a way that resonates with its target audience.

To develop proper personas that can assist on this goal, a series of requirements must be met by the ones that will create them as to ease the development of both the requirements of the app and the personas themselves.

1. Framework:
   A framework for persona creation must be created so that it incorporates the key dimensions identified during the user research phase, all the while maintaining a proper structure. We must ensure that personas are based on real user data and insights derived from the qualitative and quantitative research methods used before, and we need to avoid relying on stereotypes or assumptions that may not accurately reflect the userbase.

2. Profiles:
   Based on the framework, the personas created must be created to fill in each archetype and provide essential information points about themselves. The most important ones for our purpose are the following:
   a. Demographic: age, gender, occupation and location.

   b. Psychographic: music preferences, favourite genres and artists
   c. Behavioural: frequency of music listening, devices used, music discovery methods
   d. Motivations: what is expected to achieve with TunePal
   e. Pain points: frustrations, barriers and annoyances

3. Narrative and presentation:
   A scenario must be crafted for each persona to “bring them to life”, in which the use of TunePal impacts them in various specific scenarios. Giving the persona a face, tastes and backstory will help in this goal, as they become a much more believable human being. This means credibility in their situations, feelings and woes, as well as empathy and connection with teams during development, achieving a greater focus on user-centric development.

4. Refinement:
   People change, and personas should be able to too. By continuously implementing user feedback, new requirements and testing results, the persona can “grow” and accurately represent target demographics. Revalidation of the persona should be a regular occurrence as to adjust any misrepresentation and/or evolution of needs.

By developing a series of personas that reflect the diverse range of users who will engage with TunePal, the design team can empathise, align, and gain clarity in their decision-making processes. Personas are a powerful tool for keeping the user at the centre of the design process, leading to the creation of an intuitive, engaging, and user-friendly app.

In the attached pdf document, two examples of personas are available as examples to this process of prioritising the user in TunePal's development.

Features and Prototyping

Feature prioritization

Based on everything done up to this point, we can start focusing on improving or developing the features that the research has guided us to. Still, features must be meticulously thought out and planned as to not break existing functionality or alienate other users with their implementation.

For this, we must start prioritising what the users want from the app. By following the MoSCoW technique, a clear picture can be drawn as to what to start developing right away, what to leave in the backburner and what to ignore:

- Must-have: indispensable for functionality, core user needs and/or stability
- Should-have: greatly requested features and QoL (Quality of Life) improvements, can drastically change and improve usability and/or functionality
- Could-have: less requested features
- Won't-have: unfeasible features or features that don't align with the application's end goal.

After doing this, a lighter version of user research can be done as to determine in what way the feature should be implemented. Personas should also be adjusted or created accordingly to really start the process, and most importantly investors and the dev team should be briefed on the results of the MoSCoW process.

Prototyping process

After prioritization, prototyping can begin. Using iterative cycles, prototyping will start addressing the user needs in the order established in the MoSCoW process.

The first prototypes will be very basic, not really prepared for distribution, but with enough functionality to represent what the intention of the feature is. Each consequent cycle will improve upon this foundation, refining functionality, appearance and fidelity, eventually reaching a state of near completion. Testing is a vital role during prototyping, and we will go more in-depth afterwards.

Multiple prototypes can be created at the same time as to determine the best way to approach a feature's implementation, and by culling the lesser preferred prototypes resources can be endlessly reallocated either to the winning prototype or to the start of another feature's prototype.

User Testing

User testing is a critical phase in the development process of TunePal, ensuring that the features and functionalities align with the needs and preferences of the end-users defined during user research. This phase involves gathering feedback from real users through various methods to evaluate the usability, effectiveness, and overall user experience of the application.

Testing will be done from the start, once the first user research is done. There are multiple types of testing that will be done during different stages of development, stated below:

1. Usability Testing:
   This involves observing users as they interact with the actual application to identify any usability issues, navigation challenges, or areas of confusion. Users are typically given specific tasks to perform, and their interactions are closely monitored to figure out areas for improvement.

2. Prototype Testing:
   During the prototyping phase, prototypes are tested to gather early feedback on the proposed features and functionalities. This allows the development team to make necessary adjustments before investing significant resources into full development.

3. Beta Testing:
   Beta testing involves releasing application features to a select group of users in a real-world environment before the official launch, usually during the final stages of prototyping. This allows

for broader testing across different devices, operating systems, and usage scenarios, helping to uncover any remaining bugs or usability issues.

4. A/B Testing:
   A/B testing involves comparing two or more versions of a feature or design element to figure which performs better and is preferred by the end user. This iterative testing allows taking decisions based on the data extracted. This will be used during the prototyping phase to figure out where to allocate resources.

User testing should be an iterative process, with multiple rounds of testing done through the development lifecycle. Each round of testing builds upon the feedback gathered from previous rounds, allowing for continuous improvement and refinement of the user experience.

After this, we can use these results as user research, which means we must do everything we've done up to this point with this data: the persona development and features and prototyping.

Feedback Loop

Integrating a broad feedback loop into TunePal's development is as an indispensable pillar in creating an application that resonates deeply with its user base. Disregarding this essential part would mean overlooking an incredibly big source of insights and opportunities essential for refining TunePal's goal. This iterative process of feedback collection and implementation not only reinforces TunePal's commitment to user-centricity but can also serve as a big stepping stone for sustained growth, relevance and user satisfaction.

The best aspects of implementing a feedback loop for TunePal can be summarised in three essential points:

1. User-Centric Evolution:
   At its core, TunePal exists to satisfy the needs and preferences of its users. By having a feedback loop, TunePal can aim its development trajectory with the community’s wants, ensuring that every improvement and feature addition is based in user insights and aspirations, which will become future user analysis.

2. Iterative Refinement:
   TunePal is intended to be an ever-growing app which, rather than staying the same forever, evolves with its userbase. A feedback loop allows TunePal to iteratively refine what it offers based on real-time user feedback, creating improvement and innovation.

3. Competitive Edge:
   By leaning on a feedback loop, TunePal can gain an advantage by

adapting to changing user preferences and market trends, proving its position as a frontrunner in the industry.

A solid feedback loop relies on a mix of key elements that help TunePal and its users communicate smoothly. We can follow the guidelines stated below to effectively set up that communication:

1. Offering Various Ways to Share Thoughts:
   TunePal needs to provide different channels for users to give feedback, like in-app forms, community forums, social media, emails, or talking directly to support. This way, no useful input gets missed.

2. Analysing Feedback Carefully:
   It's not enough to just collect feedback; TunePal needs to analyse it thoroughly. Methods like sentiment analysis, thematic analysis, and sorting help find common issues and new ideas in all the feedback.

3. Being Open about Communication:
   Keeping communication open and honest is important to build trust with TunePal's users. Regular updates on how feedback is being used and clear timelines for changes show users that their opinions matter.

To sum up, incorporating a robust feedback mechanism into TunePal's development process is vital. It enables the app to evolve coordinated

with user needs and preferences, fostering continual improvement and innovation. By attentively listening to user feedback and implementing necessary changes, TunePal can keep its competitive edge and ensure user satisfaction. Additionally, transparent communication about how feedback is used cultivates trust and loyalty among users, laying a solid foundation for sustained success. Prioritizing feedback is essential for TunePal's ongoing growth and relevance in the market.