**Date:** Sep. 22, 2024

**Venue:** Online Focus Group Discussion

**Moderator:** Wei

**Participants:**

Li Qing (urban white-collar worker with a garden)

Grandma Zhang (senior citizen with a garden)

Michael (young gardening beginner)

Jessica (university student)

Tina (designer)

**Discussion Points:**

**·Users' gardening habits and vision for the project**

Li Qing: She usually can only take care of her small balcony garden on weekends or vacations. She said that sharing gardening results and getting new planting inspirations are her biggest needs, and she hopes to be able to interact with other gardening enthusiasts through a simple platform.

Grandma Zhang: She has a balcony garden and spends several hours a day in it. She mentioned that almost all online gardening communities are based on other communities, and she would like to have an easier to use and purer tool to share her achievements and get gardening tips.

Michael: He is a beginner gardener and usually gets his gardening knowledge through social media, but feels that these platforms lack focus and information is fragmented. He would like to have a specialized gardening community where he can learn and interact with others.

Jessica: She thinks the gardening community needs more practical features, such as real-time reminders and advice on how to care for plants. At the same time, she would like to be able to participate in interactive activities such as online garden competitions or market trading.

Tina: She emphasizes that user experience is crucial, especially for beginners and older users, and that the interface must be simple and easy to understand, avoiding complex feature stacking.

**·Core Functions Explored**

**Virtual Garden Functionality:**

Li Qing: She would like to have a page to display her garden, and be able to show the results of her garden through photos or short videos. She suggested that the interface should be simple, and she could see the status of her garden and other users' gardens at a glance.

Grandma Zhang: She said it would be very useful to have a “virtual garden” feature that allows her to show and organize her garden layout in the app, because she always thinks her garden doesn't look good and she doesn't know how to design it.

Michael: He agrees with Zhang and says he can help others online.

Jessica: She thinks that the “virtual garden” feature should support multiple image uploads and descriptions of the garden's status, and encourage users to participate in discussions through tags.

Tina: She suggested that a rating or interaction mechanism could be added to the virtual garden display, such as allowing other users to like or comment.

**Marketplace and item exchange:**

Li Qing: She is interested in the marketplace trading feature, especially the possibility of exchanging seeds, plants and gardening tools through the platform.

Grandma Zhang: She expressed interest in buying and exchanging gardening items on the marketplace, but would like to see a simple interface design where she can easily find the items she needs or post them.

Michael: He said he would not use this feature.

Jessica: She suggested adding a credit system or user evaluation mechanism to ensure the security of transactions.

Tina: She emphasized that when designing the marketplace interface, the display of product images is very important, users should be able to see multiple images of product details, and the transaction process needs to be kept simple.

**Community interaction and contests:**

Li Qing: She would like to have simple sharing contests rather than contests with fixed themes. She mentioned that her time is limited, but she still enjoys learning new things from contests.

Grandma Zhang: She is interested in the contest features and said she could participate with her friends.

Michael: He mentioned that participating in a garden competition would motivate him to be more active in tending to his garden, especially if some gardening-themed challenges and tasks could be set.

Jessica: She suggested that the competition activities can be grouped under different themes as well as set up regular competitions. There should also be some social interaction, such as allowing users to like and comment on each other's contest entries.

Tina: She pointed out that when designing contest features, it should be ensured that users can easily browse, participate and view the results of the contests, while adding reminders about the progress of the contests.

**Uploading and Sharing Functions:**

Li Qing: She suggested that the upload process should be as simple as possible. “Just like insgram or tiktok.”

Grandma Zhang: She wants the upload button and instructions to be more visible, especially for older users, and the interface must be very intuitive.

Michael: He suggested that users could be able to categorize their uploaded images themselves.

Jessica: She emphasized that the upload function should be flexible enough to allow users to make simple image edits or add descriptive tags.

Tina: She suggested keeping a clear layout when designing the upload page, minimizing unnecessary input fields, and ensuring that upload progress and success alerts are obvious.

**·User experience and navigation design**

Li Qing: She would like the navigation of the app to be simple and clear, just like some other popular apps.

Grandma Zhang: She emphasizes that all buttons and text must be large enough for her to click and read easily.

Jessica: She suggests adding a directory navigation feature to allow users to move between different functions at will.

Tina: She suggests a modular design when designing the navigation, each module should have a clear title and concise layout to minimize the number of steps the user has to take.