Family Shopping List App

Introduction of Concept

Planning a grocery list for a family is hard. It is often a process that includes multiple apps, such as a grocery store's app to see its stock, and a separate app to create a list.

With multiple family members giving input and only able to use one device it's impossible to not make mistakes.

Getting a total cost and other information between people and apps is a time consuming process.

Those problems could be solved by an app that allowed you to create a list of items and share the creation of that list across multiple devices. Allowing any family member to add to the list and browse specific items in the same app.

I have personally experienced all of those problems and currently rely on a fridge whiteboard to make the list.

Summary of Findings

There are currently apps that allow you to create shopping lists for specific stores, while browsing their stock. Such as Walmart's mobile app.

And there are apps that allow you to share a list across multiple devices. Such as AnyList, an app for creating organized lists.

However, there isn't a single app to do both.

AnyList and other similar apps include generic items and often require you to create the item yourself by adding a picture and other information.

While store specific apps that have the needed information cannot be shared across multiple devices.

Applications and Utility

There could be a lot of utility packed into this app to help manage your family.

- The creator of the list could be given owner privileges that can be shared with other members, such as parents. Users with privileges could remove items from the list, impose a price limit on items that can be added, or give an allowance to family members.

- Each user could add comments to items on the list, such as an explanation or specific detail they are looking for. Maybe they want unripe fruit?

- A total cost of all items can be broken down, showing how much each member added to it.

- A history of your previous items can be recorded. Maybe you want to see how much you spent last month or are trying to remember the specific item you bought?

Design Approach

There are some key requirements for the app

- The app needs a method of getting its items. It could interface with the existing apps of stores to get the details of items. Or if there is no other solution the items could be manually added and kept up to date by referencing the stores.

- Users will be able to select from multiple popular stores and see their specific stocks.

- Each user must create an account so that they can be added to lists. Accounts can be given different permissions within a list.

- Each item will have many variables. These will help refine searches for the item and get information to the user.

Design Proposal

How will the app actually work?

- Interfacing with the existing apps of stores is the optimal solution to get the values of their items.

- An extensive database of items would have to be filled out. Each item is an object with many variables such as a name, price, store, associated image, and dietary information.
    - After the item is added to a list it gains several new variables such as the user who added it and the count of that item.
    - Each item also has tag variables such as pastry, fruit, or vegetable so they can be searched for.

- Users can select which store they want to browse and further refine the search through tags and name searches.

- Various totals are calculated from the list. Such as the total cost and total amount of items.

- Each list has a list of accounts that have access to it, and each account has assignable permissions within that list.

Open Questions

I was unable to find the answer of whether it is possible or how easy it is to interface with the existing apps of stores.

I am also curious whether most people in a family use an app to make their grocery list or use something physical such as a whiteboard, paper, or just memory.

Another note is that I was surprised that no apps for stores that I looked at allow you to share your created list across multiple devices. It seems like it would be a relatively simple feature to implement and possibly gain loyalty from customers.

Citations

- Filson, M. (2023, December 30). *The 5 Bes*Filson, M. (2023, December 30). *The 5 Best Grocery List Apps Right Now*. Kitchn; The Kitchn. https://www.thekitchn.com/best-grocery-list-apps-23618481

- *AnyList - The best way to create and share a grocery shopping list.* (n.d.). Www.anylist.com. https://www.anylist.com/

- Catalano, P. (2020, June 20). *The Free-to-Download App That's Made Me a Better (More Organized!) Grocery Shopper*. Kitchn; The Kitchn. https://www.thekitchn.com/anylist-app-review-23004503