Kennedy Kaufman

Persona Report

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Mobile Planner and Time Management

**Recruiting**

Since our app is gear towards managing time, it was easy to find possible users for a mobile planner app. Many apps are geared specifically towards students, as they are a major demographic of users. Thus, finding users to speak to was relatively simple. One of our main research questions poked at correlations between good time management and good grades. I created a list of students I know to be well organized (mostly females) and another group of less structured students. I decided to go with Mike, a well driven student, and John, a man with a messy backpack.

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| --- | --- |
| Mike | John |
| * 21 years of age, male, white * Economics major, Applied Statistics minor * Lives on central campus * Some tech experience * Self proclaimed time mangager | * 20 years of age, male, mixed race * IO Engenierr * Lives on south campus * Much tech experience * Poor organizer * Not involved |

Having known them a bit, I knew about some of their habits. Knowing this, I could unveil perspectives from two distinct potential users; the organized and the unsystematic. I was curious as to how the two types of students managed time, planned their day, and other behaviors.

Understanding the power of the story, I hoped to understand my guests on a deeper level than I would otherwise. This meant stepping out of my comfort zone and into theirs. My goal was to facilitate conversation by allowing the interviewee to thrive in his comfortable environment. For example, I met Mike at his home. He played one of his favorite video games while speaking to me which seemed to relax him. He also didn’t feel as burdened by time since he was enjoying playing a game. For my other interview, we met outside on a nice day. I recorded both interviews on my phone.

**Data Analysis**

Development of data was done as a group with my partner. Analysis began with categorization of our interviews. This began before we even asked the questions, by structuring our questions into respective formats. Once we had our answers, we had a decent idea of what the question pertained to before even coding it. For example, if we asked a question about usage, we knew it would most likely get a behavioral tag. This helped the coding process. After we coded our answers, we discussed similarities and differences, what surprised us, and began drawing patterns. By connecting patterns, themes naturally arose. Themes included;

* Non-satisfactory task input, desire for easier input
* Everyone used at least one thing to organize and manage time, whether it be a planner or sticky notes
* Being highly academic students, most participants described themselves as above average or better at time management
* Prioritization in all cases went to homework deadlines, most common entry
  + Additionally, all participants strictly used their apps for school/professional use
  + i.e. they did not use it for chores like laundry or remember birthdays
* Participants who used a mobile planner voiced the overload of options on app stores

**Key Quotes & Insights**

John - “Last year I had a white board that I would list off my assignments and corss them off as I finished them. I liked the white board better [than my mobile app]. It was more tangible. I liked the idea of crossing things out and adding them back up there.”

Mike – “[My favorite feature is] swiping to the right and having [the task] check off, I think that whole check off mentality is what I base a lot of what I need to do on.”

Insight – These quotes highlight an important feature to planning. There is a sort of aesthetic response to crossing something off a list. Its key to have this feature in an app, the more realistic the better.

John – “Well probably anything having to do with school is number one and then I don’t really use anything in my planner besides school or professional use.”

Mike – “All of my school work, whatever I name it will remind me of what it is. It could just be like “chapter 2” but then ill see what class its from and know what I need to do, exam times, because those can be different sometimes. Very rarely do I put side of school events in there.”

Insight – The participants made it clear they used their apps strictly for school/academic usage. For a planner app, it may be a successful route to focus on the student as a user. There is a huge demographic of students looking for an app catered for school planning.

Mike – “I like the color coding, I don’t know why, pretty basic idea. I just like how it is what it is not trying to do too much. The natural feed of the app is to just show what most recent thing due is, and it has the date that its due next to it and its colored in red, or it progressively gets closer to red the closer to the date. So I just scroll up and down.”

Insight – This quote highlights the power of simplicity. It’s good when an app just does what it is supposed to do for the targeted audience. Color coding helps with memory retention. Colors make it easier to find things and visualized deadlines.

**Future**

For future research, I would gather more interviews on diverse students. Diversity can come from race, age, education level, technology expertise, gender and more. Additionally, find students that don’t use planners. Time management is so crucial in college, I’d like to know who doesn’t use a planner and why. Also, who else uses planners besides students? There could be more target audiences with niche needs for a planner. Just as a students prioritize on deadline, other users may prioritize on different aspects.