

**Title:** Tasker: A Task Tracker Website

**Problem:** The problem that I am looking to solve with my project, is the ability to allow users to simply, and efficiently manage a list of tasks which they can categorize. My goal is to allow users to be able to more effectively manage time through visually identifying what categories have more tasks. This should ultimately help the person to plan more effectively and hopefully increase productivity through an effective and useful interface.

**Users:**

Primary Stakeholders:

The primary stakeholders in my project are the users who will be using the system to manage their tasks. These users will be application visitors who may or may not currently use a system to manage their tasks. These users may include, but are not limited to, employees, students, professors, etc.

Secondary Stakeholders:

In my scenario, because the primary stakeholders will be managing their tasks, they will also be entering the applicable information about each task. These users will also be viewing the tasks entered as the output from the system through various means. The developer(s) will also be able to view usage statistics which is an output from this system. This data can be used to determine the best hosting plan for the project.

Tertiary Stakeholders:

The tertiary users consist of many different groups. The website hosting company will be directly affected because if the idea is successful, then it will likely require more bandwidth and a more expensive hosting plan. If the site fails, then the company would lose one hosting plan. The primary and secondary stakeholders would also be affected because if the website fails, then they may lose all of their tasks that are hosted. If the site succeeds on the other hand, they may experience more lag or slower response times due to an increased number of users. These users could also find that the success of the site leads to the implementation of many helpful features that help them to manage their time better. The developer(s) will also be affected because if the site is very successful, then they could expand and potential host ads, create various user plans, etc. If it fails though, then the programmer(s) could have spent their time on a project that was more valuable

Facilitating Stakeholders:

The programmer(s) involved in this project will be the only users that are involved in the design, development and maintenance of the application.

The only developer on this project is myself, but I may include sample end users in the design aspect of the project.

**Tasks:**

Here is a list of potential tasks that users may want to perform:

- Adding a Task to the Application
- Updating a Task
- Deleting a Task
- Prioritizing a Task
- Viewing Current Tasks
- Completing a Task

Please see the pages at the end of this document for the Hierarchical Task Analysis diagrams.

**Problem Scenarios:**

Adding a Task: (Primary/Secondary Stakeholders)

Maggie is a first year student at Northeastern University who is taking four classes this semester. She receives assignments in each class with very specific due dates and descriptions of a task to complete. Most of her professors do not accept late homework, so it is imperative that she manages her time well or she might do poorly in a class. She currently uses an agenda to manage her work, but she frequently loses it and it takes a few days to find.

She is worried that without a new method of managing her assignments, she might lose her agenda and forget about the assignments that she was assigned. She has been exploring online alternatives such as email herself as soon as she gets a new assignment, but she is not particularly fond of this either since they are easily buried in her inbox by Northeastern News emails. She also noticed that occasionally the emails do not appear right away so she worries that they did not go through and she lost the task information.

Updating a Task: (Primary/Secondary Stakeholders)

Johnathon is a third year student whom is also taking several classes. He studies at Wentworth Institute of Technology and was also utilizing email messages to manage his list of assignments and due dates. Prior to this year, all of his Professors were firm with their due dates and had formulated good descriptions therefore there was no need to update an assignment.

This year, John's Professors have changed the due dates a few times in the first few weeks of class. With his current method, he cannot change the description or due date without sending a new email with the new description and/or due date. This has already caused him to forget about a new addition to one of the assignments during the first week. Since the work wasn't complete, his Professor refused to accept what he had completed. John ultimately needs something that allows him to

easily update his assignment's due dates and descriptions to prevent this from happening again.

#### Deleting a Task: (Primary/Secondary Stakeholders)

John just accidentally clicked the Send button before he added any information about the assignment to his email. Since this task is useless and won't actually help him, he needs to delete it. It is fairly simple to do so with the email approach because he can just delete the message from his account.

#### Prioritizing a Task: (Primary/Secondary Stakeholders)

Maggie has realized that she needs to learn to manage her time well as a new student on campus. She currently cannot prioritize her tasks because her email client does not support custom sorting of emails. She has found this to be a huge issue with the system because she cannot move one assignment higher than another which results in an oversight of it being worked on. This is exactly why she was up until 2:00am last Monday working on a large essay for her American Film and Culture class.

#### Viewing Current Tasks: (Primary/Secondary Stakeholders)

John wants to see a list of all tasks that he needs to complete for Monday so that he does not have to stay up late on Sunday night because he forgot about one. The only way that he could query his emails without adding some sort of keyword to the emails that no other emails would have, is to search by the course number. This approach works, but it displays all emails from the Professors and Piazza for this class. He has a hard time with this view, and ends up writing down all of the assignments on a piece of paper so that he will only have to look at these search results once. John does not want to have to waste paper by writing down all of his assignments and still maintain an email approach.

#### Completing a Task: (Primary/Secondary Stakeholders)

Maggie completed her assignments for the weekend and wants to somehow indicate in those email chains that she does not need to worry about those assignments anymore. She proceeds to send herself an email that simply states "COMPLETE." She was content with this, but when she looked for her assignments on Monday, many of these tasks still appeared in her list. Without opening the email and reading the chain, she cannot tell whether or not the assignment has been completed or not. She also cannot see any of the information about the assignment without opening the emails. After one week, she is starting to become annoyed at having to read over old emails to make sure that she is not accidentally overlooking an assignment.

### Preventing Data Loss: (Tertiary Stakeholders)

Jane was a subscriber at XYZ Email services. She paid monthly for an account that she used as her primary email for years now. Recently, the CEO was found to have been stealing money from the company and therefore the company recently had to file for bankruptcy. They closed not long after and did not migrate user accounts to another hosting service. The users lost their email accounts.

Since Jane also used her email to manage tasks that her boss gave her at work, she lost all of her tasks. She had been using this approach for a number of years, she had at least 15 tasks that she had on her to-do list. After the company closed, she lost all of that data. Her boss recently asked why her performance suddenly dropped and she had to explain how her task management system fell through the cracks.

### Maintaining Website (ie. Bug Fixes, Hardware Maintenance, etc.): (Facilitating Stakeholders)

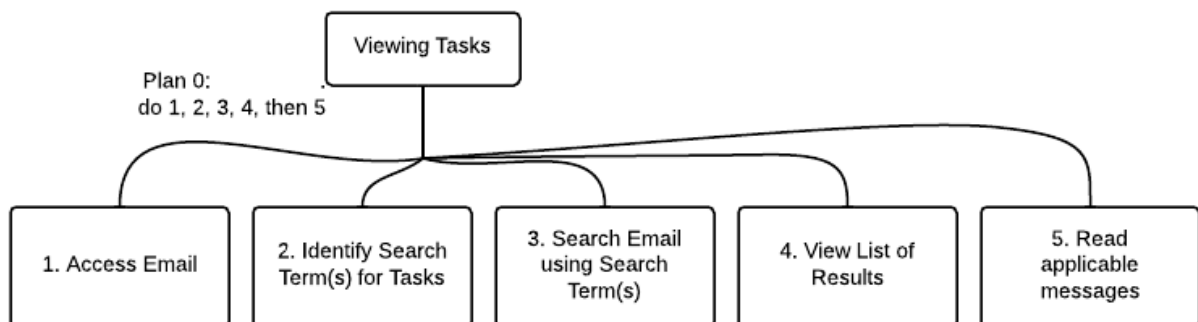
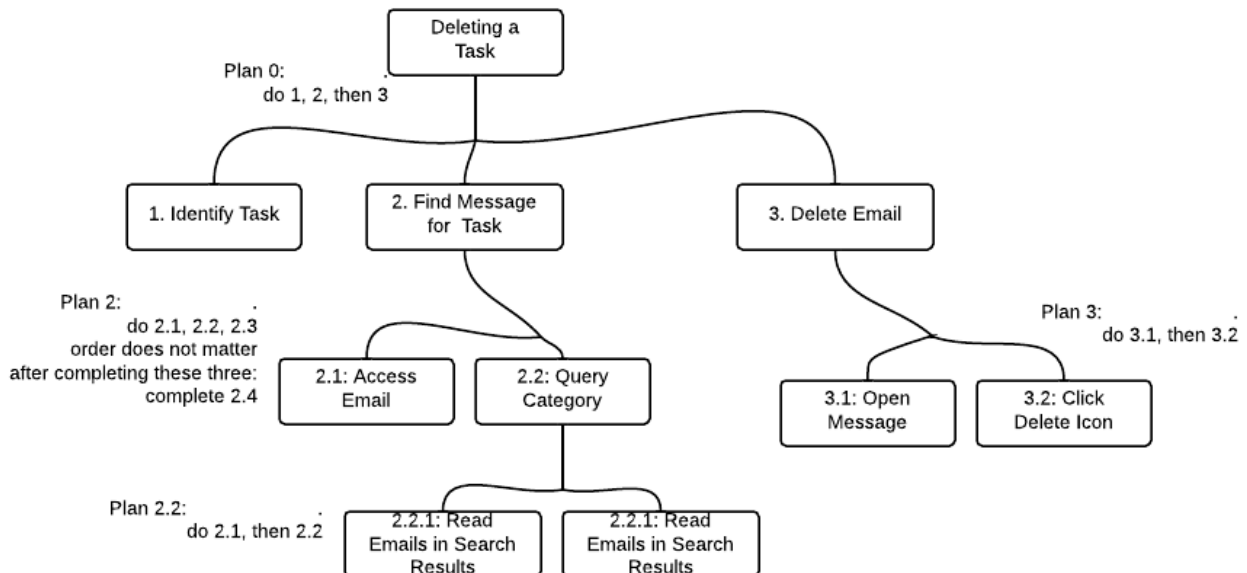
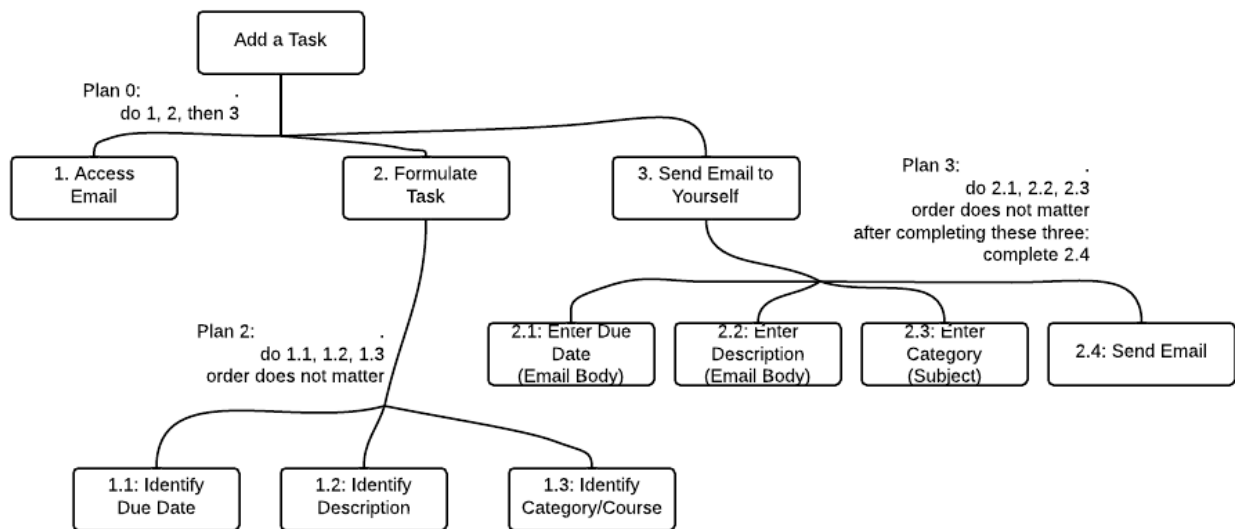
Mike is the Software Developer at TaskTracker Inc. that will be in charge of developing and maintaining the latest task management website that his company will be developing. He has developed multiple websites before and has encountered situations where browser updates can cause website features to break. He knows that the end-users become very frustrated when this occurs due to having received hundreds of emails reporting the issue the last time that it occurred.

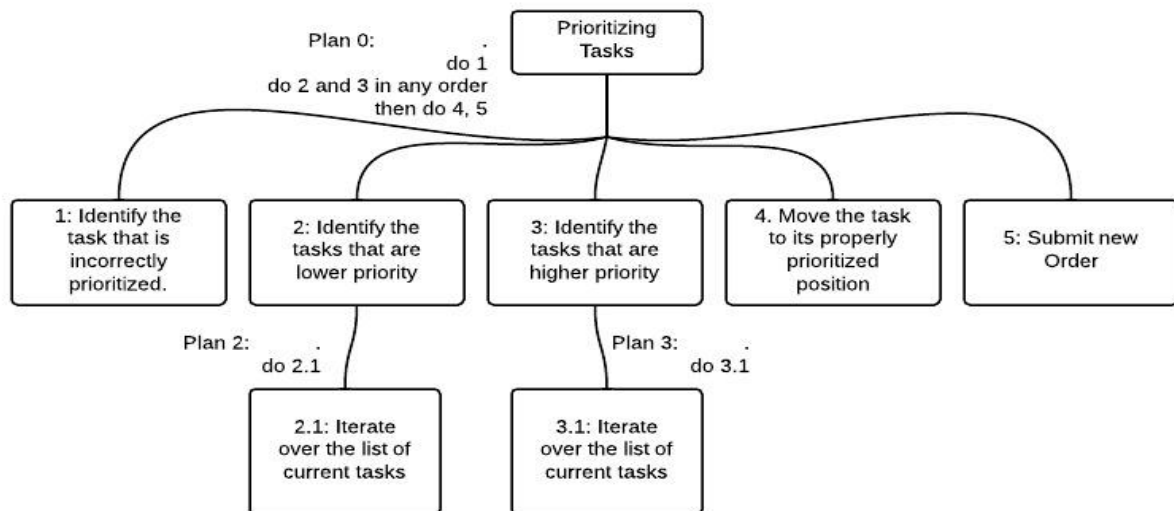
When he develops this website, he wants to make sure that he will have a web hosting platform that will allow him to quickly and easily update the site to prevent a massive number of bug reports being filed. He also found that with his last server setup, he needed to occasionally take it offline for maintenance. He wants to be sure that he can still keep the site accessible for end users during maintenance via a secondary web hosting server.

### Usability Requirements:

Based on the problem scenarios and other considerations, I have identified the following usability requirements:

- Satisfaction determined by users is at least a 7/10
- At least 3 of 5 users find this app. extremely useful.
- At least two tasks can be completed in 6 clicks or less.

**HTA Diagrams:**



(Note: The current email method does not support prioritizing – this is a generic HTA)

