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**Birdwatch Application Report**

When looking to develop a unique design we wanted to create something appealing and one that was statistically all inclusive. We chose to focus on the most marketable topic – romance/dating. By “statistically all inclusive” we mean designing an app that allowed romance and dating to exist on the same platform no matter your race, gender, or sexual preference; we would cater to all.

Everyone is looking for love, looking to date, or sometimes just observing the hotties as they pass by; this “observation” or “checking out” others has also been referred to as “Birdwatching”. From that, we designed a dating app called Birdwatch & Birdwatch Plus. Birdwatch was developed to integrate contemporary app styles with classic features derived from the conception of person-to-person instant message interaction via the web.

From our paper prototype we were able to develop a mockup interface that was unique, cohesive, and creative. Our well-organized and thorough concept allows for a demonstration that is easy to market to a developer which is important if we wanted to create its Real-World status, as well as present it to someone who knows nothing about technology or apps in a way that they can comprehend our vision and make it interesting.

Our User Interface is designed to be user friendly. To achieve that we pulled much inspiration from numerous already existing dating apps and sought out to make ours stand out. For the envelopment of the user’s virtual environment, we used a purple color that would pop and be visually appealing. We made sure not to use more than three unique colors (purple, light green, and sky blue) along with two neutral colors (black, white) wherever necessary; Red was only used to signify errors. (show an error page)

Upon downloading the app, the user will go through several predictive prompts that allow the user to either login manually or via apple credentials, and/or create an account. If information is incorrect the box/cell with the incorrect information will switch to a red border to draw in the user’s attention to that area for correction and the error message will indicate what that error is, such as “incorrect username/password” etc.

When setting up an account they will first be taken through a series of set up criteria pages, such as adding photos, creating a username and password, as well as answering questions regarding demographics, sexual preferences, and creating a brief “bio” about themselves before being taken to the main browsing page. Here we can see the bottom profile icon is illuminated to indicate we are on the profile page and there is an edit button. Once moving to the main page, the user will be able to see icons at the bottom and top of the user interface for navigational purposes and a pop-up tutorial will explain what each icon represents. Naturally, if the user already has an account set up, they will be taken directly to browsing.

Our main page is the browsing page indicated by this magnifying glass icon at the top, and it is set up via geolocation placing people’s profile in accordance with their distance. Geo location is why John’s profile is first since he is the closest to himself. As a user attempts to scroll down to view more profiles we have created a limitation that prompts a pop up for the user to upgrade to a paid version, aka Birdwatch Plus, to view more profiles. They can simply click the button and be taken to the settings page where they can then select from a series of subscription options; keeping in mind from the tutorial that this page is always accessible to the user by tapping the gear icon in the upper left of their device screen.

Our next fun feature is our “Birdwatch” feature that allows the user to discreetly browse through profiles swiping left to dislike and right to like; and if there is a mutual swipe right the user has a match! “Birdwatching” is a way for the user to view profiles and live activity without necessarily needing to engage at that moment unless there are signs of a mutual interest, or the user feels ready to engage the other person. That is what we offer not only in the matching aspect of our app, but also our classic adaptation of chat room features…

Our most interesting features are our chat rooms, the ability to connect via facetime when engaging with other users online, and the user’s ability to view or “track” who has viewed their profile. The chat room icon shows the user to the “available rooms” including the amount of people live in those rooms and separates them into categories of interest. Maybe someone is exploring who they are or wishes to engage under certain comfortable criteria. Here they can do that. To help aide in maintaining a healthy and safe environment for users there is always an option to report a profile for “abuse” or violation of terms and conditions which clearly ward against bullying, trolling and solicitation of sex or drugs. Once confirmed by admin/developers the user at fault will have their group chat privileges revoked and/ or have their account suspended, depending on the severity of the infraction; the user at fault will be notified this via a pop up.

View tracking to see who viewed the user’s profile is done by selecting the icon that looks like exclamation marks. This will only show the last user and the user cannot engage the other user or view the entire list unless they upgrade; another limitation to the Birdwatch app that hopes to encourage the user to upgrade to the Plus version resulting in another form of revenue/profit for the app.

Lastly, once matches have been made or messages are exchanged amongst users, those messages are stored in the match/messaging board with the “two bird-list” icon. Here the user can view all unread messages, read messages, and see their matches.

Benefits of our app are that it creates a fun space for all people to entertain themselves and hopefully find a compatible partner, as well as possibly normalizing the integration and acceptance of all communities no matter their sexual preference, and in a way, it can even offer education by creating a safe place for people to chat and share openly.

However, the limitations would be the intentional ones created by us in attempt to encourage people to sign up for subscriptions, as well as ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) compliance. The user will meet points within the user interface design that are programmed to limit their access to all the features. Once upgrading to the Birdwatch Plus the ad banner goes away, the icon at the top changes from Birdwatch to Birdwatch Plus and their feature access is now unlimited. Also, many cell phones currently are not ADA compliant for the blind or those without digital fingers. There are features on a cell phone where it can read to you what is on the screen, but we aren’t quite confident that this feature is effective with such an elaborate series of pages that require vision engagement; plus, there is no way to provide for braille. This is a limitation not only for our app but for cell phones in general.

We were unable to find any features that were unnecessary. Our concept was thought out very meticulously. If we had to pick one thing unnecessary, we would have to say that the Birdwatch Plus subscription itself is unnecessary solely on the basis that the user can use the app without a subscription. Via the free version. While they meet limitations, it won’t be so much that the user won’t enjoy their experience.

In in conclusion, our opinion is that we effectively put together a well-illustrated concept of a user interface mockup design. We were detailed, organized, and focused on core principles necessary when looking to develop practical human computer interactions. Not only was it imaginative, but it is something that is ready to go live***. Are you ready to start Birdwatching?!***

Thank you for your time!