User Research Plan

User Group: ASU Event Staff
Team Members: Alyssa Clark, Nate Kelley, Nevine Khan, Linda Nguyen, Kendall Slaughter

Overview

This research plan outlines the process for collecting, analyzing, and reporting data gathered from the Arizona State University (ASU) event staff user group. As ASU event staff members are experienced in event planning at Arizona State University, this group of individuals is vital for our understanding of event planning processes on campus, which will aid in our goal of designing a functional, user-friendly interface for ideating, coordinating, and/or promoting events at the Polytechnic Garden Commons.

Goals

Our primary goal is to use this information to create an interface for the garden that addresses the multifaceted demands that arise when planning an event. To accomplish this, we will identify current processes and challenges of planning, promoting, and executing events that occur around campus; this will provide insight to which areas need improvement. Additionally, we plan to discover types of amenities and vendors that the staff currently use for events, because this information will reveal the types of features and details that increase an event's popularity.

User Group

Determining user groups did not require extensive research because this is a compact and limited pool of individuals. Thus, we selected our participants based on a set of qualifications and plan to recruit them using the means described below.

While there are many organizations at the Polytechnic campus who host events, we plan to focus primarily on the Polytechnic divisions of a few university-wide organizations with a broad reach and influence, such as the Programming and Activities Board (PAB), Changemaker Central, Sun Devil Fitness Complex (SDFC), and ASU Housing.

Participant Qualifications

Participants must meet the following requirements:

- Be related to event functions at any ASU campus
- Have a primary role as an event staff member, worker, leader, or organizer

Preferred qualifications include:

- Plan events specifically on the Polytechnic campus

Participant Recruitment

Recruited participants will be contacted via their professional emails in order to request a meeting time to perform the semi-structured interview in person. Once a date is set, we will make sure to keep in contact in case the date needs to be altered. If we are unable to contact the individuals via email, we will attempt to locate them and speak briefly in person with them or talk to them via the phone as a last resort.

Research Methods

In order to gain an understanding of the existing practices, resources, and outcomes for event planning on campus, the methods of conducting semi-structured interviews and researching past event histories will be executed.

Semi-Structured Interview

A semi-structured interview will allow participants to fully explain their perspectives and processes as event planners. The questions seek to gain a qualitative understanding of the existing tools, routines, and challenges involved in planning on-campus events. Moreover, an in-person semi-structured interview will allow for a free-flowing conversation. This will allow the interviewees to share information that is currently outside of the scope of our existing knowledge and pre-planned questions. This can lead to valuable and potentially unexpected insights which can be difficult to acquire with a structured online questionnaire. An in-person interview also ensures that our questions are answered by the desired person rather than a written questionnaire which can be answered by a subordinate or peer. Additionally, this research method would also allow us to analyze the body language, facial expressions, and tone of our interviewees. The information gained through these interviews can be used to design an event-planning interface that suits the needs of event-planners. Our initial interview questions are as follows:

1. Can you walk me through how you would plan an event (Steps)?
2. Who is involved in the planning process?
3. What tools are used to plan an event?
4. *How long does it take to plan an event?*
5. Which spaces do you typically use for events? What do you look for in event spaces?
6. How do you go about finding new venues?
7. Describe to me one of your most successful events. What made it successful?
8. What makes an event successful? How do you draw people in?
9. Do you collect any data/metrics about your events, e.g., attendance, demographics, ticket sales, students' degree programs, etc.?
10. *How often do you host events outdoors? Do you prefer indoor or outdoor events? Why?*
11. What are the challenges of event planning? What are the easiest parts of event planning?
12. What do you enjoy most about planning an event?
13. Can you tell me what resources are best to use to locate information on past events?

14. What else can you tell me?

Historical Research

For our second research method, we will examine posts about past and upcoming events on websites and social media managed by various organizations at ASU. We will collect factual and quantitative data about these events, e.g., type of venues used, size of venues, frequency of events held at different venues, common event themes, cost of attendance, RSVP counts, social media engagement (likes/shares), etc. Ultimately, we will use this information to design an interface that makes it easier for event planners to organize events, access resources, and learn about different venue options. We can also potentially glean information to help promote the garden as an event venue and possibly generate ideas regarding future amenities that will transform it into a highly desirable event space.

Our sources for historical research are listed in the table below.

Organization	Source URLs
The Garden Commons	https://www.facebook.com/pg/PolyGardens/events
Programming and Activities Board	https://asu.campuslabs.com/engage/events
	https://www.facebook.com/ASUPABPoly/
	https://www.instagram.com/ASUPABPoly/
	https://twitter.com/asupab?lang=en
Changemaker Central @ ASU	https://asuevents.asu.edu/event-search...
	https://www.instagram.com/changemakercentralpoly/?hl=en
	https://twitter.com/ASUchangemaker
Sun Devil Fitness Complex	https://wellness.asu.edu/get-involved/wellness-events
	https://www.facebook.com/sundevilfitness/
	https://www.instagram.com/livewell_asu/
	https://twitter.com/sundevilfitness?lang=en
ASU Housing	https://twitter.com/asuhousing?lang=en
	https://www.facebook.com/HousingASU/
	https://www.instagram.com/asuhousing/?hl=en
All ASU Events	https://asuevents.asu.edu/
Barrett, The Honors College	https://barretthonors.asu.edu/news-events/upcoming-events

Timeline

The following timeline with delegated tasks will enable us to complete our research efficiently in a collaborative environment.

Due Date	Task	Assignment	Output
February 4th	**Reach out to potential interviewees**		**Interview calendar confirmations**
	ASU Polytechnic Housing	Nate	
	ASU Programming and Activities Board	Alyssa	
	ASU student organization officers	Linda	
	Changemaker Central @ ASU	Nevine	
	ASU Polytechnic Director's Office event planner	Kendall	
February 13th	**Complete data collection**		**Research notes (Google Doc)**
	Conduct semi-structured interviews	Whole Team	
	Historical research: Garden Commons	Alyssa	
	Historical research: PAB, ASU Housing	Nate	
	Historical research: Changemaker Central	Nevine	
	Historical research: Sun Devil Fitness Complex	Linda	
	Historical research: All ASU Events, Barrett	Kendall	
February 18th	**Discuss and analyze findings collaboratively**		**Aggregated analysis (Google Doc)**
	Hold in-person team meeting to share notes and discuss findings	Whole Team	
February 23rd	**Complete draft of research report**		**Initial report draft (Google Doc)**
	Write initial draft based on aggregated analysis	Alyssa, Nevine, Kendall	
	Format and stylize document	Kendall, Linda	
	Revise draft	Nate, Linda	
February 25th	**Finalize and submit report**		**Final research report (PDF)**
	Proofread and edit	Nate, Linda	
	Upload to Canvas	Whole Team	