BuiltSteady Strategy

# Vision

BuiltSteady empowers people with the tools to live organized, stress-free lives.

There are countless products and tools available that are aimed at productivity and organization, but our experience is that helping people get organized and keeping them that way is a problem that hasn’t yet been adequately solved. At the same time, some aspects of the problem do have good solutions (for example, online calendars, social networks, sharing documents and structured data, etc) and we want to actively leverage these solutions as opposed to reinvent the wheel.

# Target Customer

Our focus is on helping people manage their personal lives. While we aspire to build a product that appeals to a broad range of people, our initial demographic is on moms – who have not only their own lives to worry about, but also the lives of their kids and often their spouses. This is the demographic that has the deepest unmet need. That said, this demographic also presents some challenges: moms aren’t the most tech-savvy audience, making it more difficult to reach them with a digital solution; moms don’t have the same level of confidence and trust in social media (notably Facebook), which makes it more difficult to create viral distribution among that user base; and moms are difficult to sell to – they strongly prefer free solutions.

# Problem Space

The user problems we are trying to solve:

## Making Tasks Actionable

Breaking up complex tasks into a sequence of actionable steps is a cornerstone to getting things done. While there are hundreds of productivity tools inspired by GTD, we know of no solutions that actually help you do this. Yet the much of what we have to do every day in our personal lives looks remarkably similar to what others like us face. Our goal is to create the definitive community for users to discover and share their “recipes” of how they break down complex tasks into actionable steps.

While we can create first-party content that seeds this for common scenarios, we cannot hope to cover enough scenarios on our own to create a useful resource. We need help from our user community to capture and share the “long tail” of content. Our goal is to capture the collective wisdom of our community by letting people create Activities, catalog the steps they use to accomplish these Activities, share their Activities with others. Much like other communities that thrive on user-generated content such as Wikipedia, Quora, and Stack Overflow, a fraction of the overall user base contributes content, and those contributors are motivated by building reputation within the community. Our strategy for fostering a vibrant community is to employ the characteristic elements of reputation:

* create a quantitative reputation score for users and potentially a set of “achievements”
* make it trivial to contribute user-attributed content
* make it trivial to find user-generated content that is annotated by user and reputation
* allow users to up-vote and possibly down-vote content
* provide a ladder of administrative privileges for users as they cross reputation boundaries

We will need to seed the community by contributing some (most? all?) of the “built-in” content as community contributions, as well as find a set of “mavens”, preferably people that are well-known organizational experts, to become active members of the community.

## Local Discovery / Search

Finding (local) providers you can trust is an unsolved problem. Angie’s List, Groupon, Yelp, and RedBeacon all try to address this space with various solutions and different business models, but none tap into the most important resource – recommendations from friends and neighbors. At the moment, the “state of the art” for neighbors that are trying to share provider recommendations is a general Google/Yahoo group that is set up and managed by the neighborhood techie. Providing a “social” angle to local search is an untapped opportunity that Bing is just starting to scratch the surface of.

We aim to squarely address this space by creating a social network of friends and neighbors that live in the same area and have similar Activities, who can help each other by sharing the information around how they get these Activities done. This social network is bootstrapped on top of Facebook, but ultimately extends beyond local friends by providing an anonymized summary of data from local users who may not be otherwise related to the user through a traditional social network.

# Business Model

Aside from premium games, the traditional transactional model is dying away. Consumer products today typically operate on a freemium business model – a base offering is free, and a premium / unlimited version is typically monetized via a monthly subscription. Alternatively, in-app premium content / virtual goods can be bought or unlocked via an in-app payment.

The other popular consumer business model is a free, ad-supported offering. These offerings typically annoy their users with untargeted ads / offers, and are often combined with ad-free versions that do cost money (either using a transactional or subscription model).

The last business model is based on obtaining commissions for qualified lead generation. Affiliate programs and networks are the notable examples of this, but Groupon and AirBnb are also examples.

We believe the business model for monetizing the productivity space is lead-gen. Given our product’s heavy dependence on creating a vibrant community, we must remove all friction and psychological barriers for users to enjoy using our product. This rules out charging users for transactions or subscriptions (with the possible exception of in-app virtual goods). However, every piece of data the user gives us about their Activities and their unaccomplished intents presents an opportunity to help that user accomplish that intent by matching them up with a provider that wants to earn their business. Moreover, the user is psychologically in the frame of mind of getting stuff done when they are using our product, and therefore particularly receptive to offers to help accomplish their intent.