**ForgetMeNot**

iPhone Application Design and Implementation - INB345 Project

Jack Chen, Bodaniel Jeanes, Anthony Mittaz

**Abstract**

This document covers the business case, market research, user interface design of ForgetMeNot, an iPhone application designed to help with memorizing of facts about other people.

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# Introduction

Humans are forgetful. This is a fact. We were not born with infallible memories. Ever since the introduction of the versatile pen and paper, we have written down things we would forget and we would refer to them later on. Technology has improved and so have our abilities to store information. From notebooks, to organisers, to computers, to the internet, to PDAs and mobile phones, we have gained the ability to organize and search for information more effectively. With the advent of search engines such as Google, we have easy access to more information than ever. However, there is a frontier on the information front that has not been made easily searchable yet.

Web applications like Facebook and OkCupid have attempted to make personal information such as interests, hobbies etc., searchable, but the lack of a rigid classification system and unintelligent ways of searching, as well as it not being a primary feature detracts from the experience.

Even if the information was made easily searchable and categorised, then the question is how to get to that information when you need it, and how to use the information effectively in real life situations.

This is the main problem ForgetMeNot plans to solve. It is a searchable and categorised database of factoids about people you know or may encounter. Data can be imported from existing sources like Facebook or LinkedIn, which are then categorised into different fact types. This information can now be searched and recalled anywhere, anytime.Business Case

As covered in the introduction, there are a scant few people in the world with photographic memory. The core problem with most information is that it is rarely there when you need it. With the advent of mobile internet and the introduction of more and more mobile devices that are capable of harnessing the internet, this is becoming less of an issue. People can now access the email, search the internet, check the weather, public transport times, etc from anywhere given they have an internet connection on their mobile, but there are a few things that mobile computing still does not cover. One of these is storage, classification, and retrieval of personal facts about people.

ForgetMeNot is the first application that puts storing and organising personal facts first and foremost, as opposed to a secondary function like Facebook has. A survey revealed that many people had issues with remembering names, but remembering personal facts like what school they went to and what bands they like was much tougher. There are many pre-existing ways to tackle this problem, mainly involving mnemonic devices that help you link names to faces, but there a scant few techniques that help you remember which of your work colleagues like a particular sports team.

For example, say you had to meet an important client to seal a contract, and you know that he has a daughter that likes to draw and her birthday is coming up. You buy a set of Staedtler markers and offhandedly present it to the client during the meeting. This piece of seemly innocuous bit of information might be critical to sealing the contract.

ForgetMeNot can be used

# How ForgetMeNot Was Born

All three team members in our group own an iPhone. This made it evident that we would each find passion in looking at how we use our phones in every day life. All of us knew the frequency and intensity with which we use these devices, and how the sheer number of functions provided by devices such as the iPhone render the actual phone component a minor quality.

With access to almost every stretch of human information in the palm of our hands, allowing instant retrieval of facts and entertainment from most locations in the world, what was still missing?

I am sure everyone has been in an awkward social situation when you can’t remember basic details about someone you are talking to. It could be their name, their career, or their birthday that you are forgetting. In a world that provides information ubiquitously and effortlessly, why aren’t these facts part of that available data?

We decided to develop an application for the iPhone that would allow mobile users to input the titbits of random facts about associates into a central place so that they could look at them later. The idea was to allow users to create groups of contextual and relevant information that would make it intuitive to retrieve the information, either in an attempt to quiz yourself into remembering them, or to simply jog your memory during a meeting or conversation.

We started the development process by meeting over the course of the first few weeks and planning out features and mocking out the interface and interactions. We then iteratively chose features to work on based on their usefulness and uniqueness, with the ultimate plan of finishing the semester with a product worthy of a real release to the world.

The idea drew in our passion and this pushed us to spend great attention on small details such as the quality and interface of the application, as well as making sure existing features were rock solid before building new ones.

Below shows how we turned our mock-ups into real features:

