**Plant That**

Your Plant Companion

Project Type: Mobile App

Team: Tena Johnshoy Barasa & 2 UX Designers

Year: Summer 2020

My Role: Research, wireframes, prototyping, testing

Tools Used: Adobe XD, Google Forms, Miro, Lucidchart, Storyboard That

The Plant That app was developed to address and solve a problem for our users’ everyday lives. The problem we identified is that many people enjoy the process of planting and growing a variety of plants, but they lack the knowledge and resources to be successful in maintaining them. The goal for the project was to create an app that helps people be successful at growing plants. The project would address those needs by providing the help and resources to enable growers of all levels of experience to succeed.

**User Research**

The research phase for this project included 6 twenty minute user interviews and survey feedback from approximately 50 respondents. We asked all participants a series of questions about their interests in plants and/or gardening. The purpose was to understand the highs and lows of gardening and determine if a digital tool would be useful for gardeners.

Through our research, we set out to discover how to help users achieve their goals and maintain optimal conditions so their plants can thrive. What we found is that people have many reasons for wanting to grow and maintain healthy plants, but oftentimes there is a lack of knowledge, time, and discipline preventing them from achieving their desired outcome.

“Gardening vegetables can be daunting because I have so much to learn… My vegetables can be limited because I have so many questions and I'm not very good at problem solving if something isn’t growing right.”

**Our research shows that younger people struggle more to keep their plants alive, even though they reported having researched the plant.**

**Definition**

We determined the focus for the project should be on plant enthusiasts with beginner and intermediate skill levels. Our survey data showed a positive correlation between skill level and age, so we deduced that the younger age ranges would benefit most from this product. With this information, we narrowed our user personas age to be between 20 and 35.

Our data revealed that people need a simple, curated source of information and need help with mitigating plant loss. The two main pain points for our user are:

1. Finding helpful and reliable information
2. Keeping up with plant maintenance

These two points of frustration lead to the user spending more money, time and energy than they would like due to their plants growing poorly or dying.

**How might we reduce the amount of time, money and frustration for users due to plant underperformance or loss, and enable them to be more successful in plant growing and gardening?**

**Ideation**

One problem we encountered in defining the parameters for the app was scope creep. The research and brainstorming process resulted in a long list of wish list items that had merit and were supported by our research findings. Given the timeline and resources allowed for the project, it was not feasible for us to build out all of these tools. To address the problem, we created a feature priority matrix and mapped out the effort versus impact for the various proposed features. This method allowed us to create a “short list” of manageable yet high impact offerings for the app.

As a team, we experimented with storyboards to come up with a design flow that made sense for our user. We made iterations to our story in order to capture the most useful application of the product and to get the team on the same page before moving into the prototyping stage.

**Prototyping**

PlantThat also assists users in successful horticulture experiences by providing them access to a suite of tools including notifications, plant progress reports, and maintenance schedules. The Plant That application covers the entire planting process from plant selection, planting, growing and harvesting.

**User Testing**

Biggest Findings:

The user was confused as to why our maintenance for upkeeping plants was so difficult to navigate.

We found that the maintenance section could be easily incorporated into our “My Plants” and “Calendar” section making it easily accessible to update from both parts of the application.

This was a WIN-WIN for all! It made it easier to develop the application and made it less complicated for user.

**Outcome**

**Final Thoughts**