**Idea Proposal & Research**

1. What is the problem we want to solve?
   1. We are building an app to create and share notes, in the hopes to simplify and encourage collaboration amongst peers.
   2. Currently the top methods to share information are through email, facebook, and similar services. The problem with this approach is that the key information to be used is often engulfed between multiple threads, or is perverted by the addition of irrelevant data and features. Another issue is that, often, users must send friend requests, or add users to their contacts. This feature makes users think about why or why not an individual should be added to their contacts, which in turn causes a restriction in information flow.
   3. The idea is: a user creates a note (holding text or images), tags the note based on a subject, and sets it to either be store privately or shared. A shared note can be viewed and/or downloaded by anyone with the app, without revealing information about either party.
2. Who are the users you are targeting?
   1. David is a student. David is highly organized and digitizes all notes between work and school for easy reference. He uses Microsoft office and Google docs to digitize notes, but is tired of managing all his separate files and the unnecessary features that he doesn’t use and seems to clutter his interface. He uses a mobile phone and a laptop, but gravitates towards using his phone when possible.
   2. Jane is a professor at a school who relies on the blackboard system. She gives a lecture and posts notes and assignments on blackboard, but notices that students use blackboard differently. Some students download the files and print them out to bring to class, others exclusively view the notes through a browser on their laptop, and overall the system is sloppy and hard to keep consistent. Off all the devices she owns, her smartphone is the one device that is next to her at nearly any given moment. She likes to keep things simple, and notices that most of her students have a smartphone on them more often than a laptop.
   3. Bill works at a medium sized start up as a developer. He is constantly collaborating with different departments and people, and his inbox cannot neatly handle communications because, while he keep related conversations in a single thread, his co-workers start a new thread for every single message.
3. How will this solution solve problems?
   1. David would benefit from this app because each note is stored and tagged, removing the tedious task of file management and makes searching through his notes easy. Since he takes great notes, he can make his notes public to be used or improved on by his classmates. Because it is a mobile app, he can view his notes anywhere.
   2. Jane can create notes based on her lecture, anywhere from her smartphone. She can set those notes to public to be accessed by her students without worrying about who has a laptop or printer on hand. If she draws a helpful image on the board, a student may take a photo and further enhance a note relating to a lecture, without Jane doing anything other than encouraging such actions. Since most of her students have smartphones, accessing and collaborating on notes can happen in real time.
   3. Bill can set a note for each task/project he is responsible for, and set the note to public so the departments he works with can also view and edit the note. One project may primarily involve 2 departments, however if another department has a great idea that may benefit Bill, they can also jot the idea in the shared note. Bill also has a few notes set to private that contain things like to-do lists, specifically for him.
4. 140 character pitch
   1. Our app allows for notes to be shared, or kept private. Shared notes can be found with tags, and edited by different users. Notes can also be set to private. Anyone has the opportunity to change a note (without the need to sharing contact information), but the original creator of the note will be notified of a change and must choose to allow or reject the change. Notes can also be exported as PDFs or Text files. It is an app that removes the need of social interaction to focus on information and collaboration.
5. What are the major features?
   1. Each note as its own object
   2. Each note capable of recording texts and images
   3. A tag system
   4. Each note can be 1 of 2 states: public or private
   5. Rich Text Formatting including the ability to create bullet points/outlines
   6. Approval/Rejection system as controlled by creator of the note
6. How is this solution unique? How does it relate to existing solutions on the market?
   1. Because users are essentially anonymous, and because anonymity can be a catalyst to taking action, it is our hope that users will feel free to make changes or manage notes without fear of judgment. Essentially by removing that fear, we allow full focus for the sake of productivity. This app purposely has only a few features, because just as people use sticky notes in the initial phases or a project, these simple notes should help in the same way; **to jump-start a collaborative effort**.
   2. Evernote, Google Calendar, Microsoft Office, and even “Sticky Note” programs are existing solutions to address a similar problem, however all these options are overloaded with features or severely lacking, and in almost all cases require previously being acquainted with the persons that would be involved.
7. Risks
   1. Note management falls to the initial creator; if the initial creator abandons the note or app without designating another ‘admin’, the note becomes useless and forgotten
   2. People have no way to know if a note exists (or its reason) unless being told about of or manually looking for the note through tags.
   3. Anonymity may or may not help with the primary goal of jump starting collaboration between peers.