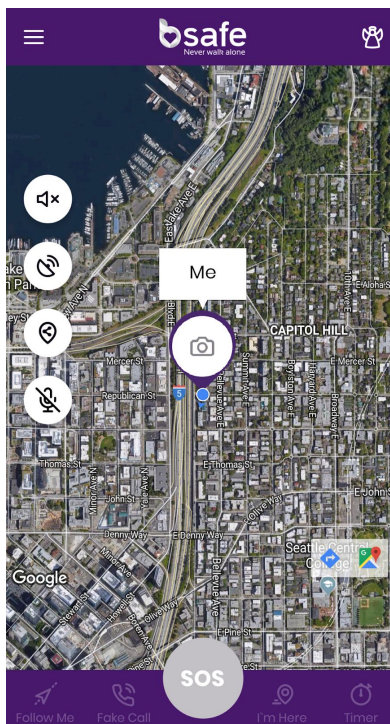


# Competitive Analysis: BSafe Phone App

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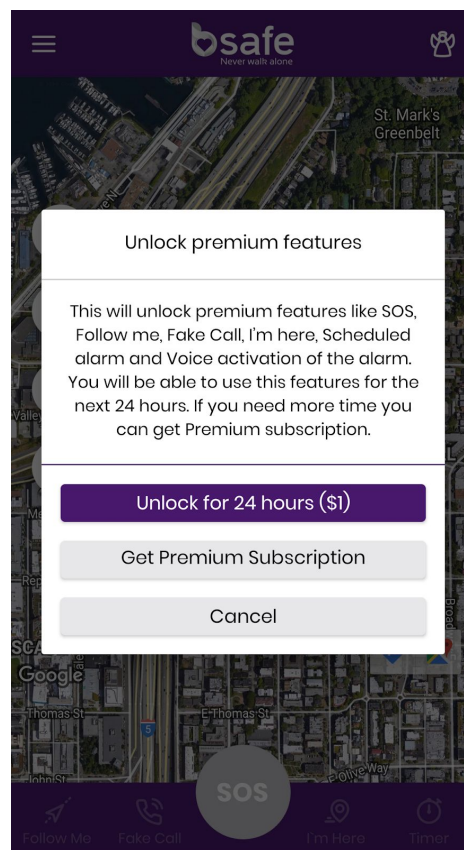
## Features

The BSafe app allows users to create a safety network from contacts on their phone. Users must either create an account or log in through Facebook in order to use the app. The user's contacts also must download the app in order to receive alerts from the user. One of the main features of this app is the SOS button, shown in Figure 1. Upon pressing the button, users will send out an SOS alert to their safety network, and the phone will start recording audio and video. The footage will be livestreamed to their safety network as well as saved to their phone. The SOS alert can be activated either by touch or voice. Users can also set a timer alarm, which alerts everyone in the user's safety network if the user hasn't checked in before the timer is up. Another feature of this app is the ability for people in the user's safety network to "follow" the user while they're walking by using the user's real-time location data. If the user wants to get out of an uncomfortable situation, they can start a fake call using the app. Finally, the user can set off a "siren" using the app, which produces a loud alarm noise [1].



**Figure 1.** The main interface of the BSafe phone app, with main features shown on the bottom of the screen.

Overall, the features included in this app seem to provide an easy way for users to alert others about important information while they're walking outside, and even several ways to potentially get users out of dangerous or uncomfortable situations. In particular, having the phone automatically record footage when an SOS alert is sent out is a great way to let the user's safety network know what's going on in real time, as well as collect evidence of dangerous incidents. The interface is simple and easy to use, and the location data seems to be accurate. However, there's a big catch: the user has to pay in order to use any of the features described above. This is shown in Figure 2. The user can pay \$1 to use the features for 24 hours, or get a "premium subscription" for \$70 a year or \$2 a week. Without paying, the only functionality that the app provides to users is being able to receive information and see the location of people that have them in their safety network. Because of the paywall, I believe that this app is not effective at meeting its users' needs. When in a dangerous situation, the last thing a user would want is to be presented with a paywall.



**Figure 2.** A screenshot of the app showing that payment is necessary in order to use any of the app's main features.

## Reviews

Unfortunately, I was unable to find any reviews of this app from credible news sources, academic research, etc., so I had to find reviews on a few random websites (techsafety.org and pcworld.com). I also read through some of the app's reviews on the Google Play Store. The review from techsafety.org was mainly focused on the data that the app collects and how that affects your privacy. Some positives from the review included the ability to set a primary contact, a lack of minimum or maximum number of contacts, and how users are able to control some parts of how the app works [2]. The review from pcworld.com mostly just describes the features of the app, but does bring up the subscription aspect [3]. It should be noted that these articles are from 2018 and 2013 respectively, so they aren't up-to-date and don't take into account how the app has changed. Some of the reviews on the Play Store, on the other hand, are more recent. The app has received many low ratings recently for either a) the paywall or b) account registration not working. Currently, the app has an overall rating of 3.8 stars.

## Sources

[1] "BSafe - Never walk alone," getbsafe.com. [Online]. Available: <https://getbsafe.com/>. [Accessed: Oct. 29, 2019].

[2] "bSafe you App - Technology Safety," techsafety.org, Oct. 2018. [Online]. Available: <https://www.techsafety.org/bsafe>. [Accessed: Oct. 29, 2019].

[3] A. Bouman, "5 personal safety apps that watch your back," pcworld.com, Oct. 28, 2013. [Online]. Available: <https://www.pcworld.com/article/2057930/5-personal-safety-apps-that-watch-your-back.html>. [Accessed: Oct. 29, 2019].