

Ideas

Introduction

In conducting user research and participatory design into people's core desires and framing it against a technologically futuristic (2031), and personal-data driven context. I have concluded the directions I should take with creating an application that can motivate people to achieve their goals.

I wish to make people more aware of their own limitations. And to provide them their own tools to control their lives, bringing them self-confidence. I have decided to focus on short-term goals, instead of long-term ones as those were mostly intuitively satisfied (or failed due to a lack of short-term goals).

Core motivators that I have noticed from previous research involves:

- a physical awareness of the state of ones things (abstract or otherwise)
- the presence of realistic goals
- music
- deadlines
- social factors, peer pressure, the need to reach an ideal state of stability
- curiosity, the innate need to learn (a motivator which I believe can be easily exploited via the intentional restriction of information).

Ideas

Music Motivates

My first idea stemmed from the fact that music has an impact on people's performances with various tasks. This same phenomenon can be observed when people work more seamlessly when 'plugged in' and listening to music, Nike has also utilized this phenomenon amongst joggers with the sale of nike+ 'power songs'. Utilizing this phenomenon, I believe that the focus, efficiency and quality of people's activities can be improved vastly, and within a data-driven future, this improvement can be measured quantitatively.

This is observed in this storyboard here.

Meet Mary. She usually takes forever to get her essay done. But using a personal-music-learning application, she can increase her focus and speed in writing her essay, as well as other activities. Over time, the application will experiment with different forms of music, as well as using Mary's historic play-list data, to find optimum characteristics in music (even suggesting the buying of new music), to maximize Mary's output.

Checker

The idea I landed upon can be thought of as a virtual life-tutor that listens to your goals

every week, encourages you throughout the week, and gives you a status update at the end. Conceptually, it is quite a simplistic concept, but I believe it to be a powerful one.

This storyboard is an example of this concept.

Meet Ben. It's a Monday, and this new app he downloaded just asked him what his goals for this week are. Ben prominently responds that he wants to run five times and draw three sketches this week. After a day or so, a message pops up on Ben's phone, asking him if he has done his first sketch or not (with the option to press yes or no). After pressing yes, the phone congratulates him on this progress. The app is also context-aware, knowing Ben's usual routines and current activities and weather conditions. On Wednesday, it's a particularly sunny day and Ben has just finished uni, ready to catch the bus to central to then train it home, the app however then suggests "Hey Ben, it doesn't seem like you've been running for the last couple of days. This might be a good time.". At the end of the week, Ben receives a report from the app, with an encouraging message on his good progress.

Though this concept doesn't utilize motivators like music or social factors. I am trying to utilize curiosity through the restriction of access by the user to reports of their current progress, and by hopefully building a routine weekly deadline for them to achieve their goals set in this simple app. Through these short-term-goals, I intend for users, in time, to gradually set more and more realistic goals for themselves, and hence quantitatively and qualitatively improve themselves. As such, it is intended to give them greater control of their lives and to bring them a greater self-confidence in everything they do.

If I pursue this Idea, there are other areas of research that are required. For example, the possible integration of physical awareness, and the beneficial implementation of a social dimensions have yet to be thoroughly explored. Instead of messages, different modes of expression could be explored in this futuristic context, especially more naturally traditional ones. Psychological motivators would definitely be interesting, including the training of the user to positive and negative aesthetics and sounds, as well as creating a 'stable and safe' environment within the experience of this application.