ID8

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VALUE PROPOSITION

Our project aims to aid the process of self-discovery through strengthening creative intuition and ability. It will offer customers the opportunity to document spontaneous ideas, exercises to help spark inspiration, and an effortless way to think about ordinary things in a new perspective.

PROBLEM SOLUTION OVERVIEW

Creativity is the foundation for problem-solving. Without creativity and "what ifs," exploration is limited, and so are the tasks people are able to complete. However, creativity is not always intuitive, and brainstorming seemingly wild ideas are often prone to negative criticism or excessive perusal, which can discourage people from thinking outside the box. We believe that creative intuition is a skill that can be exercised and enhanced through repeated visitation; we would like to take this a step farther by seamlessly integrating it into people's daily lives with the proper means.

Three main factors that hinder creative development are lack of inspiration, societal restraints, and fear of judgement. We plan to minimize these factors to help foster a better creative environment. Our project, ID8, is a daily-use tool to strengthen creative intuition through repetition and associative ideation. It will give users a private space to capture their thoughts and ideas. Consistent exercises would prompt users to practice creativity throughout their day so that the process becomes natural and effortless. Privacy paves way to a judgement-free zone where consumers can express themselves and try new things without discouragement. ID8 aims to foster consistent ideation and ultimately bolster self-image and self-realization through increased confidence in creative ability.

CONTEXTUAL INQUIRY CUSTOMERS

Sonja Ellicott - 22 year old student at the University of Oregon, Industrial Design major. She met Alka at a design leadership conference in summer 2014. As an industrial designer, Sonja has both a technical background as a mechanical engineer but also the soft skills in design and user-satisfaction. We recruited Sonja because she, as a designer, intentionally employs creativity on a daily basis, but does not consider herself to be "naturally creative". She is a member of the

organization Design for America, where she works on projects involving need-finding and prototyping around a problem space in a twenty-week time frame. She knows how to use Adobe Creative Cloud on a basic level. Sonja would represent an example of a target customer because she is constantly looking for ways to employ creativity in her work, process of ideation, and daily life.

James Tabeek - middle-aged professional dancer/teacher. BFA degree in Theater at Montclair State University. Performed on Broadway, credits include Mary Poppins (swing), Wicked, Taboo, Disney's Beauty and the Beast, New York's Radio City Christmas Spectacular Show. James is one of Julie's past dance teachers at NJ's Dance Arts Academy. In the art of dance, choreography and movement creation requires spontaneous moments of creativity and originality. We recruited him because he offers valuable insight into how he, as a creative professional, approaches the creative process and how it works for him. James also clues in on how to overcome "creative blocks" when the flow of inspiration is stagnant. His answers provide one version of a creative process that we will be able to draw conclusions from to stimulate creativity in others.

Brian - intercollegiate debate coach. We recruited Brian because he is well known in the debate community as a talented researched, and we wanted to explore how creativity manifested itself in logical fields such as research. We were able to recruit him by sending an e-mail, since he knows Sukhi through her involvement in debate. Brian researches pre-assigned debate topics and has to use the topic as a point from which to create original and innovative arguments. Brian exemplifies what we categorize as a "non-creative professional," which means a professional whose job is not traditionally deemed creative but involves creative elements. After contextual inquiry analysis, we would describe Brian as a good example of our target user.

CONTEXTUAL INQUIRY RESULTS

Our contextual inquiries revealed the common theme of associative ideation. All our interviewees demonstrated that their most significant ideas came from multiple ideas from different sources, often connected in unsuspecting ways. Sonja draws arrows on a whiteboard to link multiple brainstormed ideas together to see if there is a common theme surrounding her thoughts. For James, associative ideation means pulling from various dance styles from different choreographers and merging it with his own flair. Brian connects different parts of pre-assigned debate topics in innovative ways to structure effective arguments and counter-arguments. We were also fortunate enough to speak briefly with Elon Musk, who prioritized the importance of pulling together ideas across different industries. Creativity emerges when unexpected things are connected, forming unique ideas. We observed that when our users had at least one source of inspiration to spark their train of thought, this was then further aided by multiple subsequent tools to add to their creative flow.

Another key insight into the creative process was frustration. There were instances where our interviewees experienced creative blocks and loss of momentum. When that happened, a common ground was to take a break from their task and resume with a fresh mind, or look for other sources of inspiration-- though this second step was sometimes an unconscious process. Sonja will often step away from the whiteboard, take a step outside, listen to some music. She also often has a list of thought-provoking, generic, statements that she will consult to generate inspiration. James listens to different songs and continues his day until something strikes him later on. Being on his computer, Brian would check his Facebook and respond to messages. People take a break for two main reasons: one - out of inspiration, and two - no further progress would be made. Rarely did they find that thinking harder in the same way or remaining where they were would help them overcome and defeat the roadblock.

This notion of creative observation is illustrative of the mental energy that goes into the creative process. Creativity requires significant mental energy to turn the quotidian into the exciting. This is readily evident in the types of workspaces that our interviewees chose for themselves. Sonja likes open spaces with whiteboards and plenty of writing room. James works in an open dance studio. Brian will often work in a coffee shop or a sparse classroom. The three work spaces are visible below:

Figure 1. Sonja's workplace.
Open space, natural light, way to write down ideas.

Figure 2. James's workplace.
Dance studio, open space, natural light, way to record.
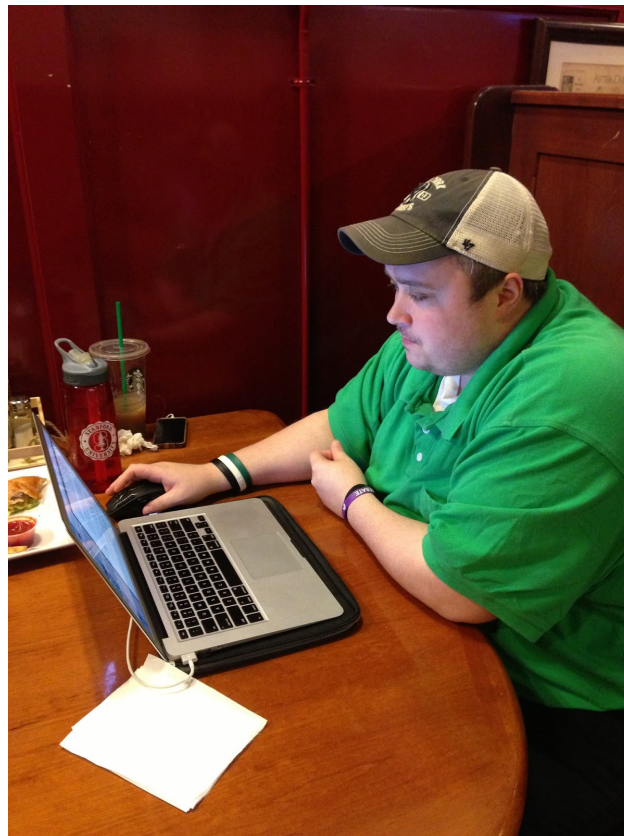
Figure 3. Brian's workplace.
Coffee shop, open table, portability.

The commonality between these spaces is that they are just that: common. An empty and open room, a place to write, and your mind. There are few physical things needed to facilitate the creative process. The process decomposes into something to facilitate thought (ie: a computer, a white board, an empty space) and something to record it (a video camera/mirror, post-its, a logbook, or a computer and whiteboard as well).

Each participant provided us with unique insights, as well. Brian gave us the idea of targeting the application to "non-creative" potentials. Brian knows what he needs to do to be creative, but was much more lost regarding how to get there than was Sonja or James. Sonja analyzed existing tools - particularly Adobe Creative Cloud, whiteboards and post-it note brainstorming - and practiced the traditional design-thinking method of mind-mapping and iterative ideation. Finally, James provided insight into the importance of self-reflection. James discussed going back and reviewing his own old work (ie: old dance performances) and being unafraid to start over and grow from his past work. This gave us fodder for thought in terms of chronology of the creative process: it is not always linear. Unlike many other processes, regression can be welcome and productive.

TASK ANALYSIS QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

[Who is going to use the system?]
Based on our contextual inquiry (CI) results, our primary consumers will consist of non-creative professionals who want a space to strengthen or develop a better creative intuition. Most of our interviewees did not consider themselves to be creative or naturally creative, even if their jobs demanded significant amounts of creativity. For example, for James, we observed that creativity would strike in the most mundane of situations. Most of ID8's users would include people with busy schedules who want a convenient space to experiment with new ideas and thoughts without judgement either to mass brainstorm to solve a problem or just for fun.

[What tasks do they now perform?]
Users perform the tasks of idea generation, research, and problem solving. Less aptly, they also partake in recording creative insights, finding inspiration for creative insights, as well as practicing creativity through sporadic creative moments. We noticed that our target customers currently record their moments of inspiration and creativity, whether it be on a whiteboard, via a video, on Adobe products, or note-taking in Microsoft Word. People like Sonja use post-its and the whiteboard to mass brainstorm an abundance of ideas and then step back to draw associations and connections from the fragmented thoughts into a cohesive concept. If provided a revolutionary idea, most users typically write it down to avoid forgetting it. In some cases, the novel thought may ignite a new train of thought that had been previously overlooked, revealing new angles and perspectives to a problem that will be written down.

[What tasks are desired?]
Our target customers brought up some additional suggestions to better the creative experience. James commented that sometimes it is difficult to find inspiration from sources he found interesting and useful. Sonja commented that it was not always easy to connect her fragmented ideas together and see how they relate to one another. A person's mind is routine in that it tends to think the same things and make similar associations. She commented that it would be helpful to have something connect her thoughts for her in ways she does not initially see or might overlook. Instead of searching for hidden connections, Sonja would benefit from being prompted two terms and asked to think about a possible connection between them.

[How are the tasks learned?]
A common trend was repetition and experimentation. James envisions a movement phrase in his mind and then tries it out. If it fails, he improvises with something else and works with what he has. Sonja is involved with Design For America and consistently practices prototyping and need-finding exercises in a twenty-week time frame. Mass brainstorming is also a form of experimentation, seeing which ideas work and which ones do not. Brian learns his tasks through repetition and experience searching for certain related terms. By coaching a debate team, he learns how to structure debate arguments for a win.

[Where are the tasks performed?]
These tasks are performed anywhere. Figures 1, 2, and 3 show the workplaces of our potential users (open room, dance studio, coffee shop). Because creativity often comes around spontaneously in unexpected situations, the project needs to embody that and be applicable anywhere. We found that the most common spaces where creative thought was most commonly fostered though, were places that were uncluttered, where users felt comfortable and open to thought.

[What's the relationship between customer & data?]
The relationship is mainly personal, since the data comes from the customers themselves, as it is their individual creative thoughts and ideas that is the information. Other data may include people or things that inspire the users.

[What other tools does the customer have?]
Customers have tools such as post-its, the whiteboard, YouTube, and search engines to discover new ideas and create connections. Often other people and unconscious daily observations are used as a method for associative ideation and fostering creative thought as well.

[How do users communicate with each other?]
Some users collaborated with friends, asking them for feedback on their existing ideas and for new angles. However, our project will focus on individual creativity before the phase of group collaboration because an app to foster group creativity can easily turn into a social media site like Instagram, Facebook or Vine, where the sharing environment opens the door for the need to portray oneself a certain way. This would be opening up the floor for unintended judgement. Furthermore,

with collaboration, sometimes intended judgement or even well-intentioned constructive criticism could be a limiting force in people's decision to exercise creativity.

[How often are the tasks performed?]
Because our users span a wide population of people, task performance frequency varies widely. James and Sonja practice creativity almost daily, as their job entails obvious creative elements like original choreography and prototyping new solution ideas. Brian may use creativity less often for research and constructing a strong debate argument.

[What are the time constraints on the tasks?]
Brainstorming creativity may or may not have a deadline. Some users may need to have an idea ready for their job responsibilities and meet an end date, while others may practice creativity for fun and on their own time. For users like Sonja who employ design thinking, however, sped up timelines can actually help spur creative ability through creative need.

[What happens when things go wrong?]
Some consumers may be afraid to venture outside of their comfort zone in fear of failure or reaching a "useless" idea and wasting a process. In response, they will often stick with what they are comfortable and familiar with, cutting the creative process short. As a result, they do not practice thinking outside of the box into innovation, and rarely will they come up with a novel idea that can catalyze a chain of new thoughts. Some things that users do to achieve overcoming of roadblocks are collaborate with others, remind themselves that having roadblocks are okay, and taking a step back and doing a different task to clear the mind; sometimes, unproductive coping methods involve belittling of self, decreased confidence through over analysis or over emphasis on creative ability.

[Analysis of old and new tasks]
Task One: Recording of creative insights
The first task that our group chose to be included in our application is the recording of creative insights in a way that would be integrated seamlessly into daily life. Currently users have different methods to record different insights-- whether it's through post-its and whiteboard, a logbook, the Notes app, or through videos that one sifts through on their phone. In regards to creativity, this task is in fact quite simple, yet incredibly crucial to the process of creative development. When users log their ideas they are able to track creative growth; recording of creative insights helps users revisit ideas for further reflection, make connections, or even remember moments that are significant to their creative development.

However, we found that while users did exercise ways to record ideas in their life, there was no tool that let them integrate all the different ways of remembering creative moments in their life. We want to have the many different ways for people to exercise the recording of creative insights and moments all available instantaneously, easily, and in a fashion that makes it easy to combine all the

different methods in a harmonious manner. By having an interface that allows users to easily access videos, audio recording, pictures of creative moments, created mindmaps, notes and typed entries all in one application, users are able to integrate and easily access creativity regardless of the situation. The different methods also allow for user discretion in situations in terms of privacy and comfort-- if in a public space, jotting down a quick note could be more conducive than recording an audio note, which would be much easier to do 3:00am, when an idea randomly hits you.

Task Two: Observation and Creative Practice
The second task that our group chose to include in the application was creative skills-building and observation. Users like Sonja and James showed us the importance of practicing creativity as a means for developing it. They both understood and showed us how their use of applied creativity in their daily lives bolstered their creative ability. What this entails is simple exercises that are available for users to practice mindful creativity, clearing of the mind, brainstorming exercises, prompts to get the "creative juices flowing."

However, we also wanted to include in this, as the main subcategory, prompts to stimulate observation. With means of observing, users unknowingly build the skills for creative recall and association. With increased practice, observation and insight making will become more part of their natural nature and build the foundation for creative insight.

Task Three: Association and Inspiration
The last task that our group chose to focus on was associative ideation, association, and getting inspiration. We learned that the most common way that people gained creative insight was through associating ideas or concepts from different aspects of their lives, and simple association was often the means to catalyzing creative breakthrough or overcoming creative roadblocks. Searches for inspiration were a task that many of users looked for, both consciously and unconsciously, to overcome roadblocks.

This third task of association and inspiration is a complex task because while building off ideas and integrating different inspirations to find new insights are often the most common window into creativity, this can also be the hardest skill to learn, and the one that involves mental exertion and practice to become a more natural skill. Creativity cannot be forced, and even with inspiration, it can take a while before a new idea comes to mind.

However, by providing the means to help our consumers associate (prompting them to find associations with two seemingly unrelated or related words/pictures/tasks/inputted observation), and even building associations in the users inputs through different types of data visualization (through natural language processing data could be displayed in different ways: mindmaps, graphs, clusters, etc.), we feel that we can really help users out of stages of roadblocks and give them the biggest tool to exercising their creativity and finding creative insights.

THREE BEST APPLICATION IDEAS

One: Project-Oriented

A project-oriented application would provide tools geared towards fostering creativity with the intention of creating a specific project. Thus, this application would be progress and research oriented. There would be path-charting to record milestones, data visualization to show previous search terms, and a processing to facilitate new research ideas.

Significance	Feasibility	Interest
Yes A project oriented application would be significant. Keeping on tracks while doing justice to the creative process can be challenging.	Maybe This project is feasible but quite difficult to design. What is needed to facilitate specific projects is largely a question of the specific job - blanket solutions are difficult.	No Not much interest. There are a multitude of project-management applications and workplaces often provide more job-specific metrics and methods.

Two: ID8 (Worldview)

ID8 would focus on being a private space to record, integrate, and exercise creativity. This application would be focused on facilitating associative ideation through creative observation as a worldview as opposed to creativity towards one specific end like a project. Users would make observations about the world and the application would draw connections through visual juxtaposition (either randomly or by pairing similar words together) for the user to comment on. The user would be able to practice and visualize association or connections, which we found to be the biggest tools in creative insight. ID8 would record progress in all directions, non-linearly and would prioritize recording mechanisms for ideas and observations. There would be a way to record all the different types of creative insights, whether through audio, video, or text, and by having everything available within one application, allowing for seamless access and integration to inner creativity instead of cross-application creative intuition building.

Significance	Feasibility	Interest
Yes We believe this app to be significant - developing creative intuition is non-trivial in facilitating	Yes This project is feasible. Recording mechanisms are something we can implement. Random associations are feasible for	Yes This project would generate interest - it represents a new approach to creativity. People often view

productivity, self-growth, and confidence.	certain; associations based on language processing may be more complex.	creativity as something you simply possess as opposed to a worldview that one could develop.

Three: Creative Digitized Diary

The creative digitized diary would journal day-to-day creative progress using a wearable pen that could be accessed in different environments. Users could record thoughts, ideas, and pictures. There would be a timeline feature to allow users to gage progress over time and draw their own conclusions about their creative process and encourage them to view their personal growth.

Significance	Feasibility	Interest
Yes A creative diary would allow users to record ideas at their individual convenience. The individual aspect is crucial to maintain a judgement-free environment. Users being able to access their creative moments at different points would be useful as well.	No This project is not feasible. An interface to record audio and digitize text through a wearable, waterproof pen would require engineering completely new technology in terms of the pen. Even though it is an interesting and potentially incredibly useful means of recording ideas, the current skills and means on our team aren't enough to realize this technology.	Maybe We are interested, however feel that we would like to focus on ways to build creativity instead of solely building ways to access it. There are many apps like Instagram, Vine, and Twitter that are ways to document ideas in either case.

We settled on the second application idea: ID8. We chose this one because we think it is the most interesting application to develop. We think attempting to teach and integrate creativity as a way of seeing the world is both a novel and feasible paradigm. While our other ideas were useful, they were simply not as interesting.

SKETCHES

Zoom and pan to
See all observations
connected with your
thought!

Observing

video

audio

text

← Simple, intuitive
interface

← recognition vs.
recall

← multiple
recording
options