²Fit

Assignment 2: Additional Needfinding, POVs, HMWs, and Prototypes

CS 147 Online/Local Community 2019

Introduction

Meet the ²Fit Team

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Problem Domain

Our problem domain is how people practice and commit to local fitness in their communities. Through our initial needfinding, we were able to narrow down our domain to focus on the social interactions people have in their fitness realm.

Initial POV

We met Lina, a new member of an MMA gym. We were amazed to realize that although she is satisfied with her current gym culture, she wishes there were more women around. It would be game-changing to help Lina find a greater sense of belonging in the realm of fitness.

Additional Needfinding Results

To elaborate on our initial POV, we went back into the field to dive deeper into the idea of social belonging in the fitness world. To do so, we conducted three more interviews.

Interview #1: Braden

"It comes back to having someone to hold you accountable, challenge you while you're there. It adds to the gym experience"

We interviewed Braden, a senior history major attending UCSC. Braden explained that he did not like attending his campus gym by himself because people don't talk to each other. As a former football player and crossfitter, this frustrated him because he wants people to push and support him throughout his workouts.

Interview #2: Michael

"Whenever I go to Soul Cycle, I would always feel like my body wasn't up to par with everyone else's. At Rae's studio, I'm accepted as I am."

We met Michael, a 28 year old product designer who enjoys dance fitness. While Michael enjoys going to dance classes so much that he always invites his friends, he rarely ever talks to people in his class. He has more fun when he is able to be social during class, yet does not seek out the social connections that are already available to him.

Interview #3: Leon

"The people I workout with must be quiet or really funny"

We spoke with Leon, a sophomore studying Computer Science. He prefers to work out by himself because he believes it is more productive, but he still enjoys seeing people he knows at the gym.

From this additional needfinding, we knew that the idea of being social in the gym and directly working out with other people was a prominent and recurring theme; yet it was one with many obstacles. With these ideas in mind, we derived three new POVs from our initial POV.

Revised POVs and HMWs

POV #1:

We met Lina, a new member of an MMA gym. We were amazed to realize that although she is satisfied with her current gym culture, she wishes there were more women around. It would be game-changing to make people more comfortable in gyms where the gender is not balanced.

Sample of our HMWs:

- ❏ HMW connect people who are not of the same gender?
- ❏ **HMW connect people with similar fitness abilities?**
- ❏ HMW recruit non-members to even the gender imbalance?
- ❏ HMW connect people with similar workouts across genders?
- ❏ HMW make gym culture more welcoming?
- ❏ HMW help people be more confident in their own pace?

POV #2:

We met Braden a busy college senior who has passion for weightlifting and group workouts. We were amazed to realize that Braden does not like going to the gym because everyone is preoccupied. It would be game-changing to connect Braden to people in the gym who can support him.

Sample of our HMWs:

- ❏ HMW bring in pre-existing friendships to the gym?
- ❏ HMW make the gym a social experience
- ❏ HMW create a community inside the gym?

- ❏ **HMW remove preoccupation from the gym?**
- ❏ HMW make every workout activity social?
- ❏ HMW turn the activities that preoccupy gym-goers into social activities?

POV #3:

We met Pulkit, a yoga practitioner and team sports enthusiast. We were amazed to realize that he enjoyed team sports so much that he was willing to skip meals for a chance to play more. It would be game-changing to provide him with a social fitness experience in a way that's more convenient for his schedule.

Sample of our HMWs:

- ❏ HMW make daily activities as exciting as social fitness?
- ❏ HMW make social fitness as accessible as a mobile game?
- ❏ **HMW make solo fitness feel social?**
- ❏ HMW allow him to complete fitness activities while eating?
- ❏ HMW eliminate the logistics of organizing altogether from the social fitness process?

Top HMWs and Solutions

Top 3 HMWs:

- ❖ HMW connect people with similar fitness abilities? (POV 1)
- ❖ HMW remove preoccupation from the gym? (POV 2)
- ❖ HMW make solo fitness feel social? (POV 3)

For each HMW, we set aside 3 minutes to brainstorm as many possible ideas as we could. Each idea was captured on a sticky note that was posted to the wall.

We took turns voting for our top ideas using colored stickies that we placed on the post-it notes. From the nine most voted-on ideas, we held a discussion and agreed on our three favorite ideas to pursue going forward.

Our top 3 ideas were:

❖ Words of Support (POV 3) - Post words of encouragement on fitness machines and in fitness spaces
❖ Tinder for Fitness (POV 1) - Provide a profile matching service for individuals looking for fitness buddies
❖ Fitness in VR (POV 3) - Provide a VR experience to encapsulate the workout routine that is designed around social accompaniment

Prototypes

Prototype #1:

Assumption

Words of support help individuals who do solo fitness feel more supported by others.

Our product idea presumes that words of support is an effective way to simulate the feeling of social support that exercisers feel when they work out in groups.

Methodology

The experience was designed around a circuit training gym scene. The exerciser was presented a series of cards while they were performing specific exercises. We prepared two sets of "notification" cards: one set of cards hosted a general status update from a fitness buddy and the other set of cards swapped the general status update with a message of encouragement.


The subject was presented different cards in three phases: (1) general status update, (2) message of encouragement, (3) subject's choice. Following the exercises, the subject was asked to comment on about their choice and to speak to the impact the cards had on their state of mind.

Subject

We performed the test on Anku Madan, a 26-year old venture capitalist who lives in Palo Alto and weight lifts 3-4 days per week. He usually performs his workout routines solo, although he used to head to the gym frequently with his roommates.
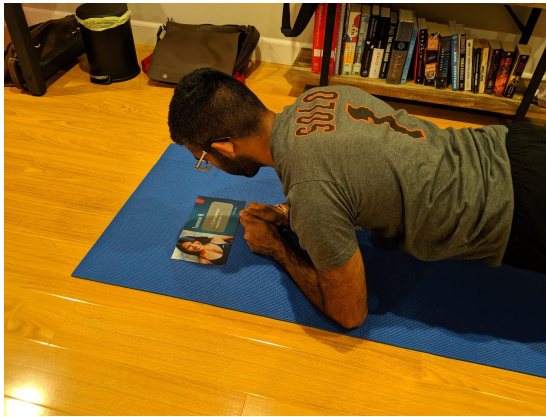
Results

Anku selected the general status update card for his third round of exercises, which surprised us. Anku shared with us that he actually liked the words of support cards that used his name or referenced his goals because they "elicited a greater desire for me to complete the exercise." However, Anku felt that some of the cards were kitschy and they "reminded me of Taibo or P90X." Our key takeaway from the experiment was that the *content* of the words of support matter a lot, and for the results to be most effective, the messages should be personalized.

Prototype #2: Tinder for Fitness

Assumption

People want to workout with people who have similar or greater fitness abilities.

An important assumption about "connecting people with similar fitness abilities" is that they want to work out with people who have the same fitness ability as them. To test this, we wanted to see if people would prefer to "match" with people who were of the same, or greater, fitness ability.

Methodology

We designed a basic prototype consisting of pictures and a basic profile.

The idea was to present these wide range of pictures to people and see which ones they would like to work out with by "swiping right". Afterwards they would be asked why they chose the people they chose, where their fitness level is at, and whether or not they already have workout with a buddy.

The Fitness Tinder Photos

Subject

We tested this product with two people. One who works as the Stanford Recreational Service Supervisor and the other as the Stanford Recreation Service Assistant. We tested them both at their place of work.
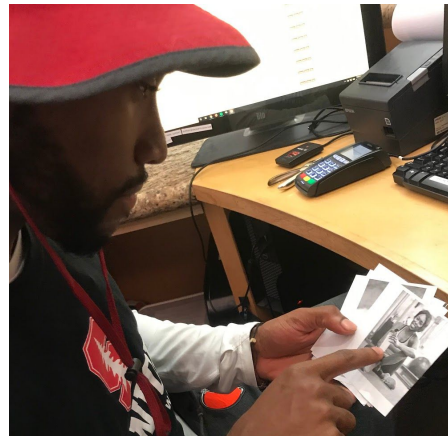
Results

- Alex swiped on people with the same or greater fitness level

    - "I like the fact that it can be someone new every week"

- Alberto swiped on everyone

    - "Just because someone looks out of shape doesn't mean I can't workout with them"

- The woman body builder was intimidating for both Alex and Alberto

Our initial assumption was mostly valid, but there are other factors as well. From this test, we understand that people usually enjoy the idea of working out with someone of a similar fitness level, but there are instances where they consider other traits as well. For example, Alberto swiped right on everyone because he felt like he could work out with other people, as long as they motivated and supported each other.

Prototype #3: Fitness in VR

Assumption

"The simulated social presence of a VR workout partner can make a workout more engaging."

A critical assumption in VR solving the problem of "Making solo fitness feel social" is that VR fitness with another person actually does feel sufficiently social. To test this,

we would want to compare how engaged someone is with standard solo fitness with how engaged they were in VR fitness.

Methodology

We designed a simple two-stage experiment for a single person.

In the first stage, we would put the participant alone in a room and simply asked them to repeatedly do squats "until they felt like stopping" - whether they were tired, bored, or otherwise.

After a break, we would have the participant put a VR headset on. We would then have one of our team members go into a different room from the test subject and connect to them via a voice call. <u>This time, the person in the voice call with them would be doing squats with them.</u> The idea was that, if the "digital presence" was enough to make solo fitness more engaging, the subject would continue for longer.
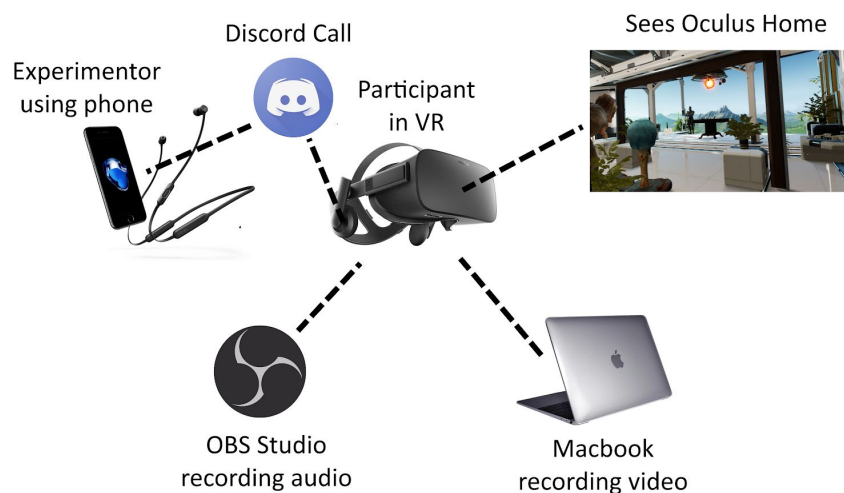
Subject

We tested this with Zheng Lian, a Stanford Junior who plays badminton regularly.

Results
- Zheng did the same number of squats on each run.

- Immediately as he was doing the first squat in VR: "How am I supposed to work out without seeing my body?"

- "When I'm working out seriously, I'm very engaged. I'm paying attention to my posture, my breathing. I'm very focused. But the thing is, in VR, I didn't know where my body was, so I couldn't pay attention to any of that."

And so, we uncovered another underlying assumption - that people are comfortable with working out in VR in the first place - which proved to be an incorrect assumption.

Conclusion and Takeaways

We began our research looking at the social aspect of local fitness. A majority of our interviewees said they enjoyed working out with others, but there were some obstacles in their way that prevented them. It is because of this that we prototyped ways of connecting people. We had three main takeaways from our needfinding and prototyping:

➔ People want to work out with people who are similar to them.
➔ People specifically enjoy personalized notes of support.
➔ People do not like the concept of working out through VR.

With these insights, we understand that connecting people with similar fitness abilities ties directly with the concept of a support system. Moving forward, we plan

to further refine our Tinder for Fitness idea in order to help people navigate their workout partner preferences. We would like to build on this solution with our Words of Support idea in order to incorporate social support for workout buddies who may need to exercise independently when schedules do not align from time-to-time.