FlexList User Research

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Objectives

Our objective upon beginning our user research was to discover what productivity technologies and applications already exist, who currently uses them, and what those users like and dislike about those products. Our findings from this research helped inform exactly who our target market is and how we can best meet the needs of that market.

Strategy

To conduct our research, we created a survey specifically for our peers in the NMI as well as any other college students we have access to. Participants answered a series of questions related to their personal experience with to-do lists and productivity apps. We first wanted to determine if there was a demand for our app by asking participants if they currently use any form of a to-do list or productivity tracker. For those who do not, we were interested in learning what deters those individuals from using a to-do list or task management app. We then sought to understand what participants like and dislike about current methods of tracking productivity and what features they would like to see that they have not found in other technologies. As we took inspiration from the Apple Watch's activity rings,

we also made sure to determine whether people actually like them as much as we thought. Finally, we asked for their feedback on specific features of our app, such as the visual display of progress, and if they would download an app that utilizes these features.
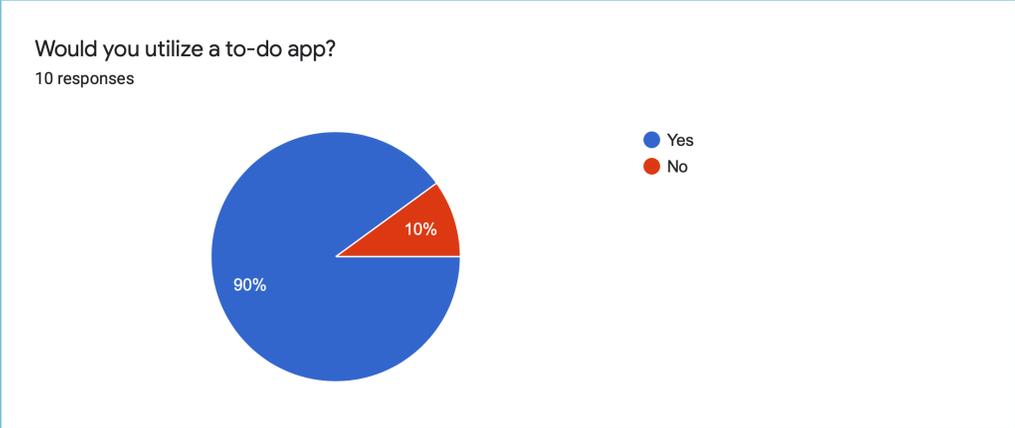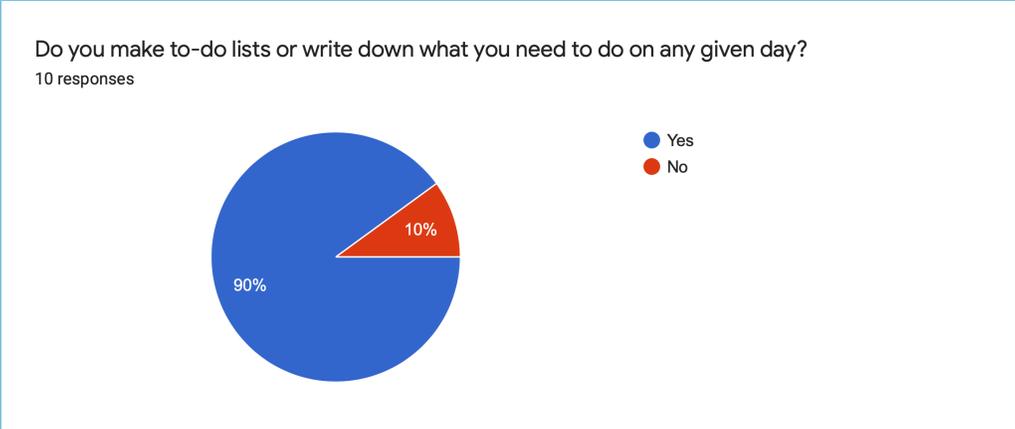
In addition to our survey participants, we wanted feedback from the larger, global population on to-do lists and other similar tools. To do this, we took to the App Store to read the reviews of popular iOS productivity apps. We thought it would be valuable to look at the apps already out there and determine how well those apps are meeting users' needs. It was also important to us that we collected a diverse sample of reviews to study, meaning a balance of positive and negative reviews. We understood going into our research that one size does not fit all, there are features that some users love and others hate, and this helped us determine the extent of customization that we wanted to implement in our app.

Finally, we also wanted to test out one of the popular task management apps for ourselves to see what features we would want to emulate, improve, or do away with entirely. Anna downloaded and tested Todoist as it had the highest reviews of all of the productivity apps on the app store.
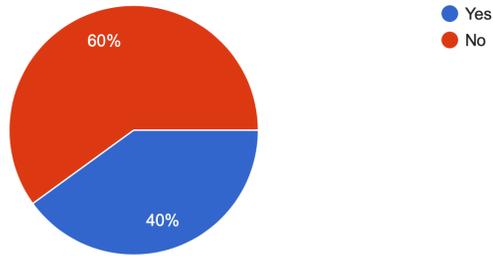
Results

Survey Results

Our survey was extremely helpful in forming our understanding of our target market and how we can best cater to it. The following details the findings of our study:
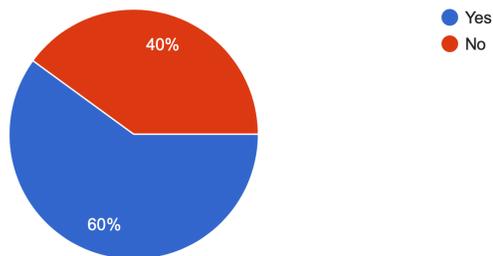
Do you make to-do lists or write down what you need to do on any given day?
10 responses

- Yes
- No

90%
10%

Would you utilize a to-do app?
10 responses

- Yes
- No

90%
10%

Do you have a to-do list app on your phone currently?

10 responses

- Yes
- No

60%

40%

Do you have an Apple Watch?
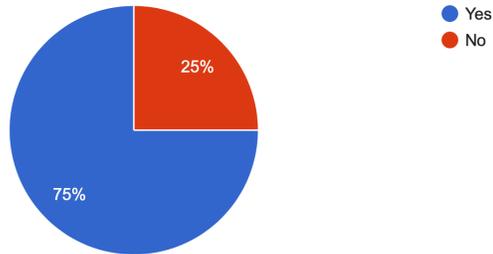
10 responses

- Yes
- No

40%

60%

If yes, do you enjoy the Apple Watch rings?

6 responses

- Yes
- No

100%
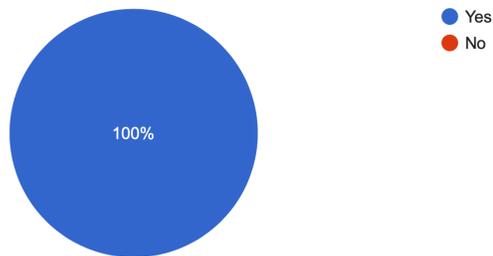
If no, would you be interested in having access to Apple Watch rings on your phone?
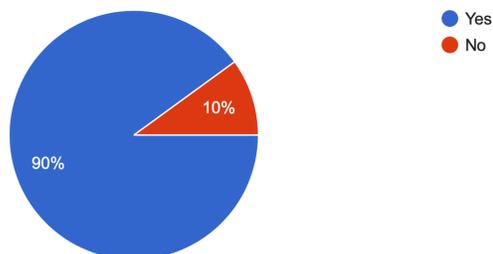4 responses

- Yes
- No

25%
75%

Do you think such a ring design would be helpful for you to keep track of your daily tasks or encourage you to finish your tasks?
9 responses

- Yes
- No

11.1%
88.9%
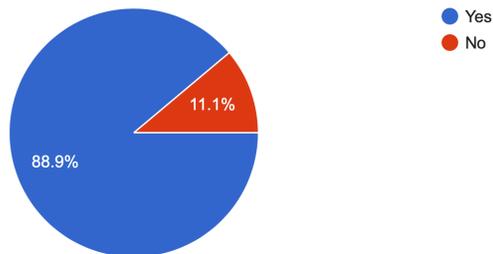
Would you download an app that allowed visual display of progress on your app? (for a to-do list)
10 responses

- Yes
- No

10%
90%

We also collected information from our survey participants about what specific features they would want to see from us. We wanted to know what they enjoy about to-do list apps they already have and learned that users appreciate having multiple different to-do lists, they like seeing tasks get completed, and they like having reminders. When asked what they dislike about the app they have, our participants responded that they often don't work in the long-term as people might forget to use the app shortly after downloading it, they can be basic and boring to use, and there can be a steep learning curve. In addition to learning the existing market's needs and preferences, we wanted to know why some people are deterred from using a task management app and what we could do with our app to bring those people into our market. Our survey respondents told us that they don't use task management apps because they have not found a good one, they don't see themselves keeping up with it, they want something more customizable to them, or they simply prefer to write on paper. Finally, we asked participants to tell us what their ideal productivity app looks like by providing specific features that they would want, and we learned that users would like to see the following: dates and times, a calendar, customizable notifications and reminders, completion indicators, simple aesthetic with complex customizations, a notes section for list items, customizable colors and themes, a progress bar, and ultimately, that they feel productive when they use the app. This feedback is invaluable for our team as it not only helped us determine who our target market

is, but also how we can best serve that market and meet their needs in ways that existing apps have not been able to.

Additional Findings

We also used reviews from the iOS app store to learn more about the apps that are currently available in this space and what people think about them. We found one app in particular that was one of the popular task management tools on the app store, *Wunderlist*, and did a deep dive into its reviews. We read that users most like the voice to text feature, the app lock feature, the time tracking feature, customizable text size, colorful backgrounds, sorting options, sound effects, and the ability to recover a completed item. We also downloaded and tested the most popular app in this space, *Todoist*, to get some hands-on experience with these features and inform how we can make our app even better than the most popular one out there. We liked that *Todoist* displays inspirational quotes when you login and includes a feature where users can establish daily habits and create streaks, but we would have liked to see more color customizations and, more importantly, the ability to create a list for a specific day rather than having to change the date and/or time of each individual task as you create it. This is something that we think would potentially deter someone from using an app like this because it is tedious to change the date every time you create a task. We plan to improve upon this by allowing our app users to create entire lists set for a specific date and time.