

Professional Apps

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Introduction

Professional Apps Overview

Develop a system of three integrated apps for an existing profession or life situation. Each app will target one of three devices (smartphone, tablet, and desktop browser). This assignment explores how people use technology to work together and how to design interface systems that can be applied to different platforms.

This project will integrate three main interface platforms: a smartphone interface, a tablet interface (target user must be different from the smartphone app user), and a web based interface (target user should be different from the other two users). Begin by identifying existing professions and life situations where smartphone technology could add substantial value. The final project will include a presentation of your app design and a comprehensive process book.

Project Steps

- Make sure to follow all the project steps in order to pass the project.
- The steps may be rearranged or repeated as your individual project requires.

Profession App Design

- Design for smart phone, tablet, and desktop screen sizes
- Design multiple screens for each environment to demonstrate functionality

Presentation

- Keep your presentation to a seven minute time limit
- Highlight the goals you established for your calculator app
- Discuss how user tests affected your final app design
- Present your final calculator app

Process book

(print, pdf, website)

- Cover
- Table of Contents
- Summary Section (“five minute presentation” version)
- Comprehensive Section (include research, design exploration, usability testing, refinements, etc.)

To be successful app:

- Needs to be adaptable
- Simple, uncluttered
- Easy to navigate
- Easy to understand
- Needs to be private

Exploration: Technology Research

Computer

A computer is a general purpose device that can be programmed to carry out a set of arithmetic or logical operations automatically. Since a sequence of operations can be readily changed, the computer can solve more than one kind of problem. By 1938 the United States Navy had developed an electromechanical analog computer small enough to use aboard a submarine. With the continued miniaturization of computing resources, and advancements in portable battery life, portable computers grew in popularity in the 2000s.



Tablet

A tablet computer is a mobile computer with a touchscreen display, circuitry and battery in a single unit. Tablets come equipped with sensors, including cameras, a microphone and an accelerometer, and the touchscreen display uses finger or stylus gestures substituting for the use of computer mouse and keyboard. Tablet devices became popular in 2010.

Smartphone

A smartphone (or smart phone) is a mobile phone with an advanced operating system.[1][2][3] Smartphones typically include the features of a phone with those of other popular mobile devices, such as personal digital assistant, media player and GPS navigation unit. Most have a touchscreen interface and can run third-party apps, and are camera phones. In 2007, Apple Inc. introduced the iPhone, one of the first mobile phones to use a multi-touch interface.



Exploration: Technology Research

Features

Computer, tablets and smartphones all have the ability to do all the following things:

- Internet
- email
- social media
- camera
- video
- photos
- weather
- games
- ebook reader
- cookbooks
- media storage
- calendar
- information
- writing source
- calculator
- music
- drawing/art
- documents
- timer
- map
- shopping
- communication
- contacts (friends)
- voice recording
- reminders
- stocks
- news



Tablets and smartphones have a few features that the desktop or laptop doesn't have. For starters, size makes a difference in what it is capable of. They also have:

- alarm
- light
- GPS
- text
- odometer (car doesn't work)
- compass
- talk (phone)
- touchscreen
- more portable

Exploration: Computer App Research

Samples of computer applications.

I already have thoughts and designs running through my mind to use. I chose these images for the color, shape and all around appeal. These could any be altered and revised in form to create an app for a subject.



Exploration: Tablet App Research

Samples of tablet applications.

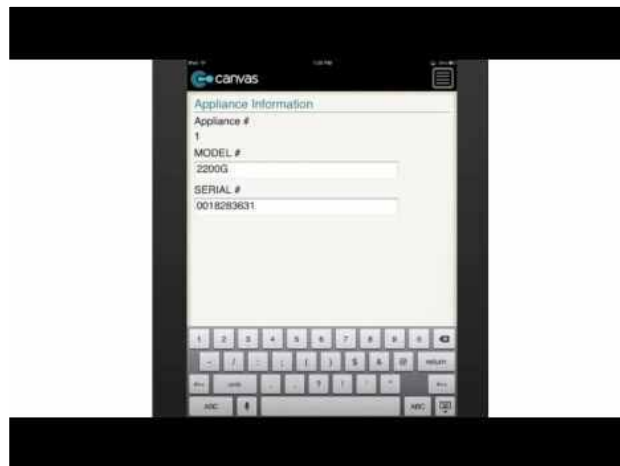
There are so many different types; kindle, ipad and many various android styles. Each of these have a crisp bold design that could appeal to the user.



Exploration: Smartphone App Research

Samples of smartphone applications.

So many styles to choose from, I will be focusing on an iPhone since that is what I have. Here are some random images I found on Google that appealed to me for color and style.

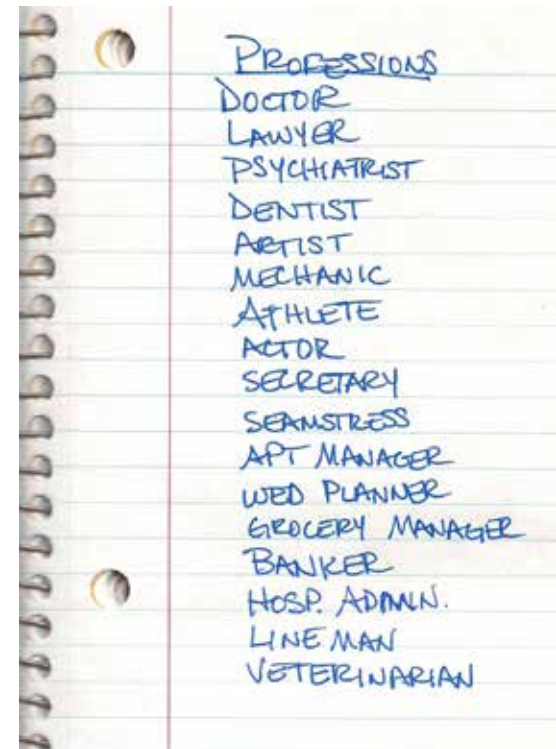


Exploration: Profession Research

Professional App Ideas

Child with diabetes	Doctor, parents, child
Someone w/ genetic disorder	Doctor, parents, child
Drug addict	Addict, therapist, doctor/parole officer
Physical therapy	Doctor, patient, therapist
** Wedding planner	Wedding planner, bride, florist/photographer/baker
Artist	Artist, gallery owner, buyer
Movie crew	Producer, director, actor
Dentist	Dentist, secretary, patient
Psychiatrist	Psychiatrist, secretary, patient
Photography	Photographer, client, printer
** Realtor	Realtor, buyer, seller
*** Apartment manager	Apartment manager, renter, maintenance man
Florist	Florist, consumer, wholesale supplier
Prescriptions	Doctor, pharmacist, patient
Veterinarian	Veterinarian, assistant, pet owner
Mechanic	Mechanic, customer, supplier
Shipping	FedEx/UPS, warehouse/main office, client

The coordinating list is a list of random professions that could use a computer, tablet or smartphone app with the associated people that would use them together. These are just a few of the ones that could be named. As I looked them over, I ruled out those that were medically inclined since it is not my area of expertise.



Topic Choice: Apartment Management

I chose Apartment Management for my project. I worked for a senior center that manages low income senior apartments and still work there a few days a week. It was my job to recertify the tenants for their yearly government certify. I am familiar with this area and do not see this as an area that has been overdone with apps. With the way technology is going, this would be an area in the future that would require something like this.

Granted, each of these should be accessed via any device but for the sake of this project, we will assume that the manager is using the computer, the maintenance person will be using the tablet and the tenant will be using the smartphone.



Exploration: Profession Research

Apartment Manager

Typical duties expected of a property manager include finding/evicting and generally dealing with tenants and coordinating with the owner's wishes. Such arrangements may require the property manager to collect rents, and pay necessary expenses and taxes, making periodic reports to the owner, or the owner may simply delegate specific tasks and deal with others directly.

A property manager may arrange for a wide variety of services, as may be requested by the owner of the property, for a fee. Where a dwelling (vacation home, second home) is only periodically occupied, the property manager might arrange for heightened security monitoring, house-sitting, storage and shipping of goods, and other local subcontracting necessary to make the property comfortable when the owner is in residence (utilities, systems operating, supplies and staff on hand, etc.). Property management can also include commercial properties where the property manager may operate the business, as well as managing the property. Some jurisdictions may require a property manager to be licensed for the profession.

Maintenance, repair, and operations

Generally speaking, there are three types of maintenance:

Preventive maintenance, where equipment is maintained before break down occurs. This type of maintenance has many different variations and is subject of various researches to determine best and most efficient way to maintain equipment. Recent studies have shown that Preventive maintenance is effective in preventing age related failures of the equipment. For random failure patterns which amount to 80% of the failure patterns, condition monitoring proves to be effective.

Operational maintenance, where equipment is maintained in using.

Corrective maintenance, where equipment is maintained after break down. This maintenance is often most expensive because worn equipment can damage other parts and cause multiple damages.

Tenant

Renting, also known as hiring or letting, is an agreement where a payment is made for the temporary use of a good, service or property owned by another. A gross lease is when the tenant pays a flat rental amount and the landlord pays for all property charges regularly incurred by the ownership.

There are many possible reasons for renting instead of buying, for example:

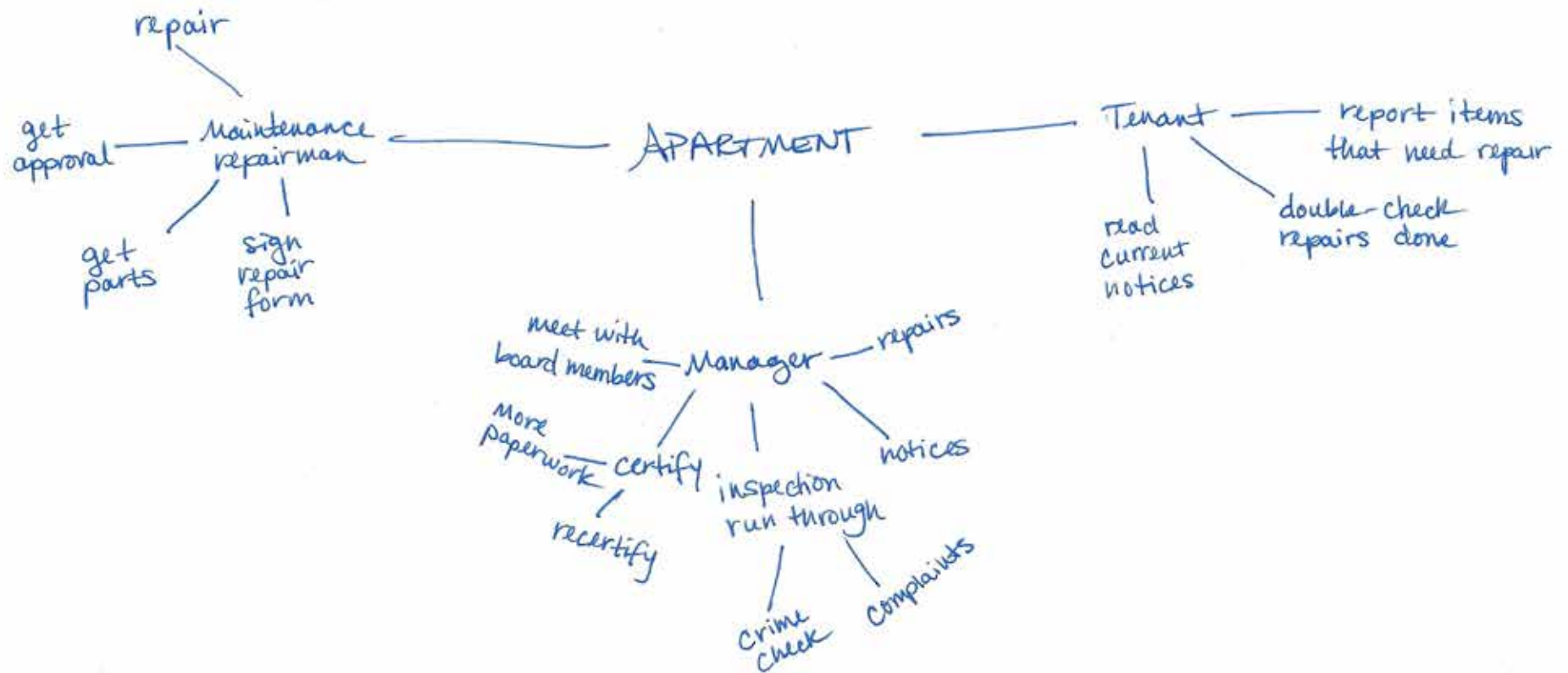
In many jurisdictions business rent is tax deductible.

Financial inadequacy, such as renting a house when one is unable to buy it. One may not wish to pay the full price that ownership would need, allowing for smaller payments over a specified period of time.

Reducing financial risk due to depreciation and transaction costs, especially for real estate which might be needed only for a short amount of time.

The tenant may want to leave the burden of upkeep of the property (mowing the lawn, shoveling snow, etc.) to the owner or his agents.

Brainstorming

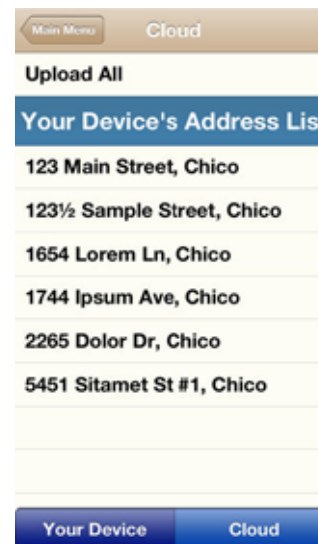
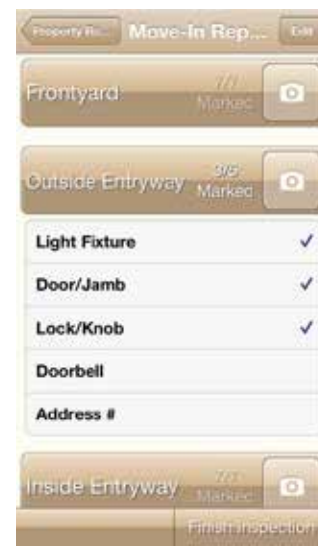
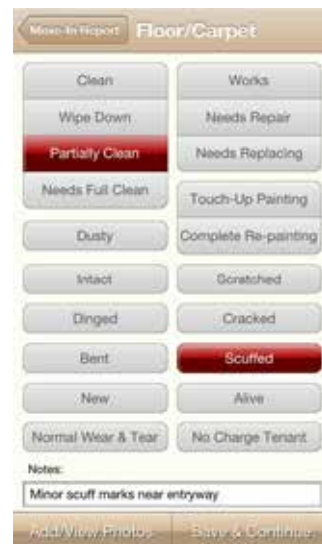


Here is my brainstorming map. It started out with the apartment and went to the manager, the tenant and the maintenance repairman. It also includes some of their responsibilities.

Exploration: Manager App Research

When I searched for apps for an “apartment manager”, 75 apps came up similar to Zillow Rentals – Apartments & Hotels or Property Pal (for realtors).

Property Pal is to be used for property inspections. It would be useful if it could coordinate with the maintenance person and the tenant on various problems.



Exploration: Maintenance App Research

“Maintenance” is the keyword I used for the repair man. I received a list of over 1000 car maintenance and home organizational apps or a few to maintain your body/health. The only other similar topic would be repair manuals.

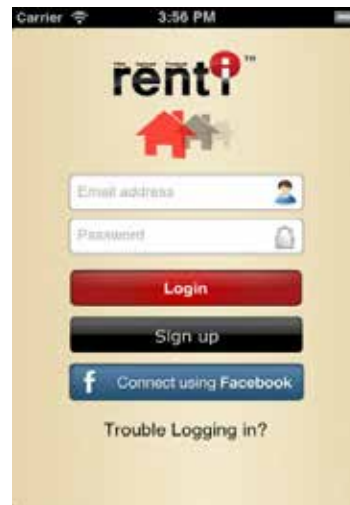
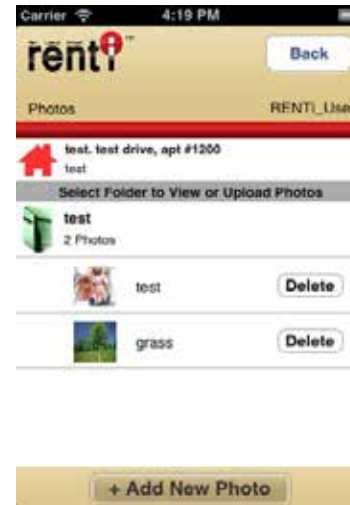
I did find one app called “Repair Ticket” that describes itself as the only professional repair ticket solution available. I only found 4 maintenance apps available.



Exploration: Tenant App Research

When I searched “renter” it came up with 34 results that had nothing to do with my topic. When I entered “tenant” I got a lot more but a majority of them were geared towards the landlord, not the tenant. There is a clear need for these type of apps.

Without purchasing these specific apps, I am unable to determine if these apps would correspond with the tenant. There was one app that seemed promising, RENTi Tenant. It is to help the tenant keep track of the condition of the property they are renting.



Professional Description & Ideas

Apartment Manager

Job description:

- Take & review housing applications
- Place people in apartments as available
- Re-certify follow up
- Apartment inspections
- Items for review
- Deal with complaints
- Authorize repairs
- Meet with board members

On the computer:

- Recertify
- Write up apartment notices
- Do crime checks
- Write up inspections
- Print forms
- Fill out approved repair forms
- Authorize the hours for repair/maintenance

Maintenance /Repairman

Job description:

- Maintain apartments and grounds
- Make repairs
- Painting
- Supervise outside contractors
- Sign repair forms
- Order parts
- Empty trash
- Vacuum
-

Possibly on a tablet app:

- Take photos of the repair/damage
- Sign repair forms upon completion
- Order parts

Tenant

These specific apartments are for elderly 60 and older or disabled persons. Clearly not everyone would have a smartphone.

Life description:

- Get renter's insurance if desired
- Enjoy retirement/life
- Keep receipts & papers for recertification
- Report problems/repairs
- Approve repairs
-

Possible on a smartphone:

- Sign/approve repair upon completion
- Lodge complaint for repair
- Take photos of damage
- Check for apartment notices