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Linked In (Project 3) - Research Protocol

Background (provided)

Client
LinkedIn is the world's largest professional network with more than 610 million users in more than 200 countries and territories worldwide. The mission of LinkedIn is simple: connect the world's professionals to make them more productive and successful.

Their Situation
LInkedIn has identified that **as a member's network grows, it can be difficult to remember and properly associate all of the connections.** The LinkedIn product team is looking for a means to have members mark connections to indicate custom groupings and personal references so that they can be located and recalled by those criteria later.

Questions/Issues to Consider
- What can we learn about the members of LinkedIn and their interests in maintaining their networks?
- What makes members add someone to their network and how do they remember the motivation for the connection?
- In what ways might members assemble or associate connections with one another?
- What additional personal information or cues might they consider adding to a connection on LinkedIn?
- What approach to identifying small groups and affiliations is the most engaging and effective?
- How might this functionality facilitate more effective engagement with LinkedIn?

Protocol Table of Contents

Research Methods

1. **Screener Survey**

2. **Five (5)+ User Interviews**

3. **Competitive Analysis**

Target Participants / User Criteria
- Users - Must haves:
    - Have 500+ connections
    - Have had a LinkedIn account for at least 1 year
    - Are at least "slightly comfortable" with the platform
    - Look up contacts in their network on a monthly basis
    - Have added at least 1 new contacts to their network in the past month

- Ideal users - Nice to haves:
    - Have 1000+ connections
    - Have had a LinkedIn account for at least 5 years
    - Are at least "very comfortable" with the platform or identify as "power users"
    - Look up contacts in their network on a weekly basis
    - Use LinkedIn's messaging system to communicate with others (in or outside of network)
    - Have added at least 5 new contacts to their network in the past month

Recruitment Methods
- Post screener to GA Boston Slack
- Post screener to LinkedIn networks
- Direct emails to individuals in our networks who we suspect would meet our screener criteria

Screener Questions

- What is your name? Required

- Do you have a LinkedIn profile? Y/N Required

- Are you a Premium LinkedIn user? Y/N Required

- How long ago did you create your LinkedIn account? Required
  - Less than 1 year
  - From 1 to 2 years
  - From 3 to 5 years
  - From 5 to 10 years
  - More than 10 years
  - I don't know

- How many connections do you have on LinkedIn? Required
  - 1-299
  - 300-499
  - 500-999
  - 1,000-2,999
  - 3,000+
  - I don't know

- How comfortable do you feel about using LinkedIn? Required
  - Not at all comfortable
  - Slightly comfortable
  - Moderately comfortable
  - Extremely comfortable

- In the past month, how many people did you add to your LinkedIn Network? Required
  - None
  - 1-2
  - 3-5
  - 5-10
  - More than 10

- In the past week, how often did you visit LinkedIn website on a desktop? Required
  - Not at all
  - 1-2 times a week
  - 3-5 times a week
  - Mostly every day

- In the past week, how often did you visit LinkedIn mobile app? Required
  - Mostly every day
  - 3-5 times a week
  - 1-2 times a week
  - Not at all

- In the past week, how often did you use LinkedIn messaging system to communicate with others? Required
  - Mostly every day
  - 3-5 times a week
  - 1-2 times a week
  - Not at all

- What is your occupation? Required

- Do you use LinkedIn primarily for: Required
  - Job Seeking
  - Hiring & Recruitment
  - Networks
  - Other _____

- Do you use any other social networks to stay connected to people in your network?
  If yes, please list them:

- Have you ever had to manage a contact database or customer relations management system (Salesforce etc)? Y/N Required

- If yes, how confident did you feel using the system(s)?
  - Not at all confident
  - Slightly confident
  - Moderately confident
  - Extremely confident

- Would you be willing to participate in an interview (by Thursday, October 24th) about your experience with LinkedIn? Y/N Required

- If yes, please provide email

- If yes, please also provide dates/times that work for you

Consent Form

About the study
October 21st through November 1st, 2019
We are conducting a study to understand how users use LinkedIn and other platforms to manage and connect with contacts, and understand their experiences doing so. User interviews are an essential part of helping us get to know our target users and understand their expectations, needs, and desires.

About the interview + your rights as an interviewee
We will be conducting in-person and/or remote interviews with LinkedIn users about their experiences with the platform. During the interview, **we will be taking notes and/or recording audio for our reference**. All information provided to us by users both during and outside of interviews as part of this study will be **kept strictly confidential. We may use anonymized quotes** as part of the reports and presentations we create in order to illustrate our users' general feelings and expectations relative to the LinkedIn platform.

Should you wish to withdraw from the study before its conclusion on November 1st, please notify us in writing. All recordings and data collected will be destroyed and omitted from the final project deliverables.

We value and take seriously the time and effort given by interview participants.

Submission of this form constitutes acceptance of the terms stated above. A copy will be sent to your email for your reference.

(Full name) (Email)

Interview Protocol

Introduction Script
Welcome the subject and thank them for their time.

Explain the reason for the interview:
- For a class project, we have been tasked with designing a new feature for LinkedIn.
- As part of the design process, we are conducting research on how users manage and maintain their contacts on the platform.

Explain how the interview will unfold:
- 11 questions with occasional follow-up questions.
- Then we will XX if there is another activity XX.
- The entire interview should take approximately 30 minutes / less than an hour.

Explain that their answers are confidential and will be used for
- All of your answers will be kept anonymous and confidential. Any recordings will only be reviewed by me and my team members and possibly our instructors.
- Any findings will be made anonymous, but may eventually be shared as part of a portfolio online.

Ask permission to record conversation.

Questions
Organizing contacts LinkedIn or elsewhere
- How do you typically organize your contacts, if at all?
  - When storing contact information through apps, do you organize your contacts in groups?
  - After a contact's name what is the most important piece of information you want to remember about someone?
  - Think back to a person you recently added to your contact list (any app), what is the most memorable quality or attribute for that contact?

- How satisfied are you with how LinkedIn organizes the contacts in your network?
  - If not satisfied, what might you expect?

General - LinkedIn
- What was the main reason for you to create your LinkedIn profile?
- How many connections do you have on LinkedIn?

Finding contacts in LinkedIn
- Can you tell me about your process for looking up people in your LinkedIn network?
  - Who was the last person you looked up?
  - Why did you look them up? (to what end?)
  - How did you go about finding them in your LinkedIn contacts database?

- How satisfied are you with the process of looking up contacts in your network? Why?
  - If not satisfied, what might you expect?

- Have you ever had trouble finding a contact you knew you had?
  - What did you do to solve that problem and find them?

○ For a contact you may not have been in touch with for a while, what strategies do you use to remember how you know them?

Satisfaction - LinkedIn
● Is there anything else you'd like to share about your experience with LinkedIn specifically, or with managing your contacts generally?
● How satisfied are you with the LinkedIn interface/platform as a whole? Why?

Parking Lot (if you have time to ask)

Close Out Script
Thank them and share possible next steps.
● Thank you so much for your time! Your insights are going to be invaluable.
● If we have any follow-up questions, would it be ok if I reached out to again?
● Would you have any interest in participating in later "usability" tests of a rough prototype? Those tests are likely to be taking place early next week and would likely take 30 minutes to 1 hour as well.

Researcher Post-Interview Summaries
Top 3 Insights
1.
2.
3.

Pull Quotes

Competitive Analysis

LinkedIn's problem: LinkedIn has identified that as a member's network grows, it can be difficult to remember and properly associate all of the connections. The LinkedIn product team is looking for a means to have members mark connections to indicate custom groupings and personal references so that they can be located and recalled by those criteria later.

Competitors:
LinkedIn is primarily a social networking platform, however because it is used primarily for professional and career-related networking, users may expect it to function a bit like a customer/contact relationship management system does. Competitors will be discovered through online searches of the following groups:

      Social Networks
      CRMs
      Job Search sites

Goals:
Understand how have competitors addressed this network growth issue
Understand how competitors help users organize their contacts
Understand how competitors help users find people within their contact networks

Methodology:
- General Inquiry & Feature Analysis
  - Qualitative - what is feature & how does it work
    Questions/Criteria for Evaluation
    - How does product help users organize their contacts?
    - How does product help users find people within their contact networks?
    - How does product help users remember people they may not have been in contact with recently (i.e. within the past two years)?

    Feature Analysis
    - Add new contact: What information can be added?
    - Find existing contact: Filter, Sort, Search, Other?
    - Organizing methods: tagging, grouping, personalized referencing systems, affiliations, co-referencing, linking contacts / relating contacts to each other, other?

    Notes

  - Evaluation
    - Green = Good/helped user trying to accomplish goal
    - Yellow = Unclear
    - Red = Bad/hindered user trying to accomplish goal

- Documentation through screen shots
  - add new contact
  - find existing contact
  - some kind of organize contacts view