OVERVIEW

Colleges offer students many opportunities to get active, but organizing a large group to do something is often a problem. While colleges offer many services to help students overcome this obstacle, they are often confusing and difficult to use effectively. To solve this problem, we plan to create a mobile app that will let users quickly create and update events, respond to events created by others, and check the availability of facilities. By simplifying the planning process, the application will help users participate in more activities around campus.

TASKS

The application is targeted towards college students looking to simplify the process of planning group activities. Currently, people contact each other through Facebook, email, and text messages, but accepting a Facebook invite is not seen as a real commitment, and email and text tend to create digital clutter and draw out the planning process.

An easy task that a user would accomplish with our application is checking the availability of CRS facilities and fields. Since space is occasionally reserved, being able to quickly find a spot to have a pick-up game makes the chances of the event being a success much higher. We imagine that the user will be using this functionality often, so the process is designed to be simple. The user just hits the map icon on the home screen, and then either scrolls to the field he wants to use, or types the name into the search. The field will be colored green or red to indicate whether or not it is available. The user can then bookmark the field for later reference.

A slightly more difficult task for the user will be creating an event. The user will hit a button on the home screen to take them to the create events page where they can enter a name, date, and description into the provided text boxes. To select a location the user picks one of their bookmarks, and recipients are selected from either the general contact list, or from a list of user defined groups. Icons on the event creation screen display the selected recipients for quick reference.

A difficult task for the user to accomplish with our application will be updating an already created event. Although last minute changes are infrequent, since games often involve large numbers of players, alerting everyone to a change, and knowing that everyone has received the alert, is crucial. First, the user will select the event from the My Events page. Then the user will update all the relevant event information in the same
way they would when creating an event. Since it is often important to quickly determine who has received an updated time or location, the user will be able to track who has responded to the update on the Update Monitor page, which is accessible from the Event Update page.

**REFINED INTERFACE SKETCHES**

We tried several designs before coming up with our final interface. One design was an iteration on our icon based interface. Icons would allow many options to fit on the home screen, and would allow application functionality to expand over time. Dedicated Home and Notification buttons allow for quick access to those screens from anywhere in the application.
Figure 1.
We thought about having the map function slide out, but decided against it. However, this idea did lead to another design where all function would be grouped into 4 buttons that would always be at the top of the screen. This would have allowed for quick navigation between different parts of the app, but left each section feeling cluttered, as we had to fit a lot of information on each screen.
Figure 2.
In the end we chose a design similar to the icon based design, but with large buttons instead of small icons. The user should be able to easily identify what each button does, and the ability to put many buttons on the screen freed up space in each section of the app. To help organize the information on each page, the pages use tabs to separate data into categories.
Drop down filter to predetermined sports (basketball, soccer, etc).

Notification button on all screens to show list of new updates. Click and the update screen will cover the existing screen.

Select column only exists during event creation and adding friends.

Initially "At a glance" can only show immediate availability at time of access.

Icon to the right of the event name is the icon that will be shown in events.

The create event screen changes into a "My Hosted event" once created, the user can come back to his hosted event by selecting it from the "My Events" page. Any changes to the event will cause the confirm button to change red. A confirmation of the event change will be pushed to those invited, and an update monitor will appear on the bottom left, so the user can keep track of who has received the update.

Public checkbox determines if the event will show up in "open events" searchable in the search event page.

A group icon in the invite friends panel represents a group the user has created.
DESCRIPTION OF RATIONALE BEHIND NEWLY SELECTED INTERFACE

Our main goal in designing the interface was to present all important information on the home screen without creating too much clutter. To achieve this, we grouped some of our original pages together, and organized the remaining ones into large horizontal buttons. Because event creation and management is so important to our application, we divided the event functionality into multiple buttons in the event section on the home screen, instead of having one event page manage everything. The buttons on the home screen are event creation, management, and searching in one section; contacts, which contains individuals and groups is another; favorite people and places was placed underneath the contacts part; and lastly, we have a component on the bottom for maps of availability.

We decided that since the home page was such an integral part of the design and afforded intuitive use of the app, we would have a small home page button at the top right corner of every screen on the app. In the left hand corner, there would be a small notifications button to alert the user of any updates in terms of events and urgent news.

At a lower level, we incorporated the distinct functions of event creation, searching, and management in our new design. By having the three options grouped together visually on the home screen, it reinforces their association with each other, but by demarcating them, their separate functions are made more available to the user.

The event search was placed in the top center of the home screen because it seemed to be the most valuable and commonly used part of the app. From it, the user can browse their private events, or search events/games open to general public. Also, from button on the home screen, the user can review his/her past or upcoming events. Each event page features enough simple details to make it useful to a user, but avoids featuring so much that it confuses someone creating or looking at an event for the first time. In creation, the key information includes a logo for the sport to quickly categorize it, a time and place, and the number of people allowed to participate in the event. Other information including privacy settings and competitiveness is optional.

The people section was designed to make it easy for users to look at someone’s profile and identify their recent activities and ongoing interests for future games. Age, location, and preferred competitiveness in particular sports were other attributes needed for users to create enjoyable games. There are also groups created by either the user himself/herself or shared among many users for continued activity with a particular group having a strong dynamic.

There is also a “favorites” or “bookmarks” section of the program reachable from the home screen. We decided that it would very valuable to the user to have their favorite people bookmarked for a quick invitation. In addition there would be an option to get suggested contacts in case the user had not taken the time to add other users to his/her
bookmarked friend. These suggested contacts would be based on the amount of their past interaction with each other. Similarly, users also have a favorite places tab on the favorites screen. From the tab, the user can view a real-time availability of their favorite places to avoid having to search each time.

Lastly, we designed a map to check potential wait times for places around a specific location. It is colored red for busy, yellow for moderate, green for free, and grey for unknown. The map can have a home location to avoid constant searching and allow for users to find a proximate alternative in the scenario that their ideal playing site is not free.

**STORYBOARDS**

Story 1:
Jeff wants to go outside and relieve some stress. He has a sudden urge to play tennis on a whim. He first needs to determine if the courts are open, since most of the time they are taken in the late afternoon. Jeff decides to find that information out with SetReady mobile application. He arrives at the home screen and pushes on the map button. The application then transitions over to the map page, where he sees all the facilities near north campus which include the tennis courts, the Eppley Recreation Center, and the Cole Field House. Each is labeled green for open, yellow for moderate traffic, and red for very congested play-spaces (respectively). Since Jeff sees that the tennis courts are open. Jeff also decides to bookmark the tennis courts for convenience which requires a tap on the Tennis courts and a tap on the favorite button in the drop down box. Jeff heads out.

Story 2:
Jeff arrives at the tennis courts and by coincidence sees Dustin, a friend of his, there playing tennis all by himself. Awkward exchanges aside, the two decide to contact Jad and Jose to join their new tennis game. Jeff decides to contact both through SetReady mobile application, He creates an event at the tennis courts and names it “Tennis”. The description is left out because it is unnecessary. He invites Jose and Jad from the create event page, and the notification is pushed out to everyone. Jad is sitting at home in DC and sees the notification on his phone. He accesses SetReady mobile application and in the ‘Invited’ tab under the ‘My Events’ page, Jad accepts the invitation. He gets ready to play tennis.

Story 3:
A sudden influx of people at the tennis courts and night force Jeff and Dustin to rethink their event. Dustin decides that they should migrate over to the ERC to play racquetball. Jeff proceeds to access the ‘Tennis’ Event under the ‘Hosting’ Tab in ‘My Events’. The moment Jeff makes a change to the event, the confirm button changes into a red ‘Confirm Change’ button. Jeff makes all the necessary changes and a new description to explain why the change happened. The notification is pushed to all the members invited. Jad has just left his apartment with his tennis racket. He gets a notification on his phone that the event changed, Jad sighs and goes back into his apartment to find his racquetball racket. Jeff checks the update manger button that appeared after he modified the event.
Jeff sees that Jad got the message but Jose had to decline. The three meet up in front of the ERC.

Storyboard 1.
Storyboard 2.
Storyboard 3.
VIDEO PROTOTYPE BREAKDOWN

The goals of the video can be boiled down to either building the believability of the scenario or demonstrating how the user interacts with our proposed user interface. As you can see, there are two major visual styles in the video, raw camera footage and a screen casted PowerPoint presentation.

The prototype user interface was created with Balsamiq mockup. Balsamiq’s built in templates like the iPhone template were nice. The malleable buttons allowed for a very aesthetically pleasing UI. We made some compromises with the tables and lists. The only practical way of presenting things like the list events page was with balsamiq’s single ‘table’ template, which in my opinion detracts from the overall aesthetics. A second compromise in the video was specifically the way the ‘Locations’ button in the ‘Create Event’ page would be used. The reason why the location button is so big is to hopefully have the button be overlaid by the location as represented on the ‘Map’ page.

The raw camera footage was done in the late afternoon. We filmed in locations where we thought the application would be used. The Eppley Recreation Center, the Tennis Courts, and a Dorm room are 3 such locations on campus. To maximize the number of characters, we tried different appearances and visual cues like subtitles to distinguish one character from another.

The reason why we decided on screen casting the UI interaction was due to how clear the picture would have looked in the final video prototype. If we were to film a paper prototype over the shoulder, the text would have been very difficult to read. Pulling video straight from the Balsamiq pictures allowed for color and sharp text. All we needed to do was switch the GUI pages created from Balsamiq after every action. The fact that I could move around a translucent fake finger around power-point added to the believability of the video and the UI.