**News Now User Experience Research Plan**
**Moss: JRMC 8016E**

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**UX-RP TABLE OF CONTENTS:**

- **Executive Summary**
  - **Emerging Media Capstone Intro:**
    - Formed by three team members Mamie Johnson, Briana Griffiths and Ereina Plunkett, News Now is the future app for news consumption. Inspired by various apps of our current age such as social media applications like TikTok, News Now delivers short and sweet, 60-second news reels that leave our audience feeling informed, without being overwhelmed. News Now provides users with relevant news that aims to entertain, ultimately informing our audience of the news that matters and affects them so they can live more informed lives. Now more than ever, as public distrust in the media grows, so has our indifference to avoiding news altogether. It was for that reason why the creators set out to do away with the old model of traditional news presentation and embrace a new news platform that embraces unconventionality, called News Now. As a platform that is founded on being different, News Now prides itself on transforming the way we tell news by encouraging verified content creators to think outside the box, and present just the facts in "quick hits."

  - **Overarching Research Goals:**
    - Primary Goal: locate areas for improvement and greater user experience through user testing. Due to the nature of app development, News Now embraces iteration and understands that in order to create a strong app, iteration is vital. Thus, by conducting the following user research, we hope to find elements of our UI that can be improved for a more seamless app experience.
    - Secondary Goals: locate sources of confusion regarding current UI elements and any missing aspects of the app that our target user may want in future iterations of the app.

- **Methodology**
  - i. Roles: All team members will be acting as the interviewer, notetaker and data collector, collectively. Similar to our past user testing experience working in JRMC 7011, we will follow a similar method of personally recruiting an equal number of test subjects, hosting a recorded zoom meeting (or whatever platform best suits XCode distribution) and then uploading all testing material including videos and notes to the Drive for all team members to access and collect data from.
    1. Interviewer
       a. Reads and follows the usability protocol
       b. Gets participant consent and encourages honest feedback
       c. Maintains order during testing and guides interview when needed
    2. Notetaker
       a. Takes notes of participant

        i. Notes may include: areas of confusion, difficulty navigating UI, missed tasks

        ii. Commentary from test subjects when thinking aloud

3. Data Collector/Observer/Photographer
   a. Observes participant
   b. Takes notes on feedback from participant
   c. Screenshot or take photo of significant moments during the test

  ii. Sampling

1. Population
   a. Micah (Persona 1)
      i. **Persona:** Micah, 27 years old, is motivated by learning and wants to feel as though his time is being used well. He doesn't like wasting time on social media, but has found that TikTok has a lot to offer in the educational space. He likes how he can learn a lot in a short period of time. The quick, 60-second reel style from News Now would match perfectly to his UX and UI desires.
      ii. **Goals:** to learn something new and useful on the app that he can apply to his life, such as new recipes and general tips and tricks about his hobbies and interests.
      iii. **Social Media Use:** Micah tries to limit his time on social media and because of this, he needs content to be delivered fast with the benefits clear from the very beginning.
   b. Jodie (Persona 2)
      i. **Persona:** Jodie, 18 years old, is motivated by fast-paced content that delivers what she needs, right when she needs it. As a proud member of generation Z, Jodie's attention span is likely not very long, so she needs content that is short and sweet, with the information she needs.
      ii. **Goals:** to stay entertained on the platforms that she uses once she's bored she is likely to leave.
      iii. **Social Media Habits:** Jodie spends a lot of time on social media especially TikTok, where hours just seem to pass without even realizing it. She's influenced by content and actively participates in new TikTok trends.

2. Sampling Frame and Method: How will you identify and recruit the required number of subjects?

a. We plan to recruit subjects within the same age range as our target user personas, between 18 and 27 years old, as this age demographic is likely to be the majority of News Now users. We plan to recruit these subjects both personally and through social media.

b. We plan to ensure our sample is **representative** by choosing subjects whose social media habits  range from being active TikTok users and news watchers to those who distrust and dislike the news.

c. We plan to test users through Zoom and use it's recording function to later review and track our findings.

d. Recruitment responsibilities will be equally distributed across team members, each tasked to recruit the same number of test subjects.

3. Opportunities and challenges we predict encountering through sampling:

a. Opportunities: By choosing a younger demographic that likely has experience with similar UI like TikTok, this will give us a major opportunity to see how users would react to our app in the real world.

b. Challenges: locating representative users to recruit for testing that dislike or distrust the news; this may be challenging to get those individuals to test our app, if they already have disdain for the news, naturally. Another challenge is the subject of how we will be distributing our app to test. Since it may require a download to access it, we could see this as being a potential problem for some test subjects.

iii.    Testing Instruments

1. Script

a. Consider how you will complete your UX testing (ie, prototype hand-off, screen recording, etc) and include notes to help you.

i.    Interviewer will share the prototype with participants whether it is via Zoom or in-person on a device. Then, the interviewer will proceed with the research and give the participants a list of tasks to follow. We will record the screen of the device and the participants themselves as they explore the app. At the end, the participants will then fill out a post-test survey.

ii.    Link to script here.

b. **Technology:** Zoom recordings to serve as our testing platform. Zoom will allow us to video record users and reflect

back to watch experiences of confusion or frustration on the app through facial expressions and verbal commentary, informing our next iteration of UI development.

c. Be detail-oriented: What screen will you start your testing on? When will you start the timer for time on task? The more thorough your notes are, the more you will help your future self remember everything.

   i. We will begin testing on the very first page view, with the NewsNow logo serving as a welcome message to new users, which then dissolves into the sign in/sign up page. The next screens will be determined by the user's actions. We plan to start the timer for each task as soon as the user lands on the page that requires an action. For pages that don't require an action such as the introduction page, we will not use a timer, as it wouldn't reveal any applicable findings.

2. Consent Form

   Upon gathering test subjects, we plan to distribute the same consent form (can be located in our UX-RP folder in the EMO Capstone Drive or here) to the entire pool. Once we receive their signed consent, we will then host the Zoom meeting to perform our testing plan.

3. Task Table: Minimum of **10** tasks

   a. Include post-task questions for at least 5 tasks.
   b. Tasks should be relevant to testing your hypothesis and research questions from the Executive Summary.

      i. **Tasks:**

         1. Create a new account on the app.
         2. If still on the Starter page, proceed with entering the NewsNow feed.
         3. Explore the feed.
         4. Try liking a video.
         5. Find how to search for other user's videos.
         6. Try sending a message to someone.
         7. Locate the profile page.
         8. Find how to check if a user is NewsNow verified and their qualifications.

     a. <u>Post-task question:</u> Was it easy to locate? Do you think there should be more information to display why someone is qualified? What do you think is a NewsNow Verified Reporter?

9. Locate the application to become a NewsNow Reporter.
   a. <u>Post-task question:</u> Was it easy to locate?
10. Locate where you would create a new post.

4. Pre and Post-Test Survey Instruments: Minimum of **10** questions per survey. Must be a mixture of closed-ended questions and open-ended questions. Survey software is up to you. Include ENTIRE survey instruments (questions and answers options) in the UX-RP.
   a. Both pre- and post-test surveys should include at least 3 Likert Scale questions and 3 Semantic Differential scale questions.
   b. Pre-Test and Post-Test Questions:
      i. **Likert Scale Questions:**
         1. I think that I would like to use this product frequently.
         2. I thought this product was easy to use.
         3. I think that I would need the support of a technical person to be able to use this product.
         4. I found the product very awkward to use.
         5. Did you find it easy to locate the NewsNow application?
         6. Navigating the app was easy (Totally disagree – Totally agree).
         7. This app would make me watch the news more.
         8. I use news-related apps frequently.
         9. I like watching the news.
         10. I watch the news on TV frequently.
         11. I would rather read news articles than watch a broadcast.
      ii. **Semantic Differential Scale Questions:**

1. My experience was _____(somewhat pleasant - not pleasant)
2. Based on what you have seen in the app, rate what part interested you the most? (Profile, NewsNow Verified, NewsNow Feed, Searching for videos, Messaging)
3. How do you perceive the news? (Fun - Boring)
4. How well do the following terms describe your experience with TV news broadcasts? (Slow, convenient, frustrating, fast)
5. On a scale, do you find downloading news-related app on your phone… (boring - interesting, unnecessary - necessary)

 iii. **Open-Ended Questions:**
1. What are some apps you use to get the news?
2. How many times a day do you watch the news?
3. How often do you check the apps you use for news?
4. What are some reasons you watch the news?
5. Any comments or suggestions?
6. What were some challenges about figuring out the app?
7. What were some things you learned about a Verified NewsNow Reporter?

5. System Usability Scale
6. Other UX testing methods used: As a result of our Zoom hosted interviews with test subjects, we foresee in-depth interviews naturally taking place as we talk through the users' experience as they demo the app. Any findings from this methodology will be documented by our Notetaker for us to reflect on for our next iteration. In this same vein, we also foresee the "thinking aloud" method playing a part in our studies, as we want test subjects to feel comfortable saying what comes to their mind as they interact with the user interface. This may locate additional areas for improvement that may otherwise be hidden.

- **Analysis**
  - Based on all the methods above, how do you plan to analyze your results post-testing with real participants in JRMC 7017: Emerging Media Capstone?
    - Which metric(s) will be used to analyze tasks?
      - Time on task
      - Ability to properly complete the task / difficulties the user meets when performing the task, if any.

- Which metric(s) will be used to analyze surveys?
  - Agreement preferences to Likert Scale questions
- Which metric(s) will be used to analyze the SUS?
  - Average number associated with Usability
- How will you categorize major and minor issues?
  - Major issues: also tracked by time on the issue, user misses action on the page or is unable to complete it
  - minor issues = had little to no trouble and was still able to complete task successfully

- Can you characterize the results to the population? How should you communicate your results?
  - Based on results from the testing population, we plan to use our findings to improve the UX and UI of the app.
- **Summary**
  - In conclusion, we expect to find various areas for improvement within News Now's UI, through the application of this testing plan next semester. By setting our initial overarching project goals, we will have a constant objective to track throughout our testing and plan to use the insights we find from our test subjects' experiences to improve the next iteration of UX and UI. Though this plan may change slightly through the course of next semester and based on feedback from our professors, we expect to follow the general plan detailed above for our team's sampling methodology, strategy for measuring success and overall testing procedure.