

Assignment 1b – Project Proposal

Design Problem

The habit of reading on a daily basis has become a sort of ideal in our technology focused society, instead of a habit. This discontinuity is what I seek to address and change with this proposal. The design problem centers on two aspects. The first is how to encourage individuals to read to a given goal each day, and b) assist in finding new books to read. There is an expanding set of research that suggests that because of technology, our attention spans are decreasing with time¹. I do not necessarily suggest that we should avoid technology, but instead counter this by building habits of people to read on a daily basis. To fully appreciate the reasons for undertaking improving a task, we must fully understand the motivations of the individuals in this area. The reasons that people chose to read books can vary widely, from expanding their knowledge, to being able to disconnect from constant barrage of notifications, or even just for pure entertainment value. Whatever the case maybe, this project makes the assumption that people a) have a desire to read on a daily (or near daily) basis, and that b) they have difficulty finding the time to do so consistently.



Background

There are two aspects that I want to consider. The first is the implications of remembering to find time to read. Quite often, we fail to remember to take the time, even to read just a few pages. New research suggests that humans have a greater tendency to read in short sprints, however enabling them to take in more streams of information over time, but lacking the same depth. This is a trade-off that I do not necessarily suggest one is better than the other, merely encourage people to continue their development on one side. The second aspect of consideration is that of deciding what book to read next. With the decreasing number of bookstores, it is also important to take into consideration the efforts that are currently taken to



¹ <http://www.medicaldaily.com/human-attention-span-shortens-8-seconds-due-digital-technology-3-ways-stay-focused-333474>

find a book. There is an active trend towards ordering books online, or purchasing them on digital readers. This trend has certainly made it easier to get access to books, while at the same time, considerably limiting a person's ability to peruse the book prior to purchase, the ability to compare two or more books, and forcing a person to search through among a number of books in search of what they are looking for.