2b: Design Research Plan

CSE 440 AD: Dylan Babbs, Hao Liu, Steven Austin, Tong Shen

Target Participants

Our design deals with the problem of excessive amount of unnecessary items in people's wardrobes and thereby the difficulty in wardrobe management and dressing decisions. We propose a system that records the items in people's wardrobes, and assist in refining their clothing selections/choices. We think two categories of people best meet our offerings:

- *Fashion-minded individuals*
  The people that care about what they wear and spend time to search for ideal garments that matches their fashion pursuits. Our application will greatly simplify and speed up this process.
- *Inventory/functionality-driven individuals*
  The people that focus on wearing based on the situation (Bussiness, sport, casual, etc.) and utility (Waterproofness, endurace, number, etc.) Our application will assist them buy filtering down the options and giving calculated recommendations. Also the application will provide a platform for garment donation and exchange.

Research Stakeholders

In order to properly design a useful and in-demand product, we will consider speaking to not only our target participants, but to additional stakeholders in the fashion sphere. For example, a fashion stylist is not a direct stakeholder in our solution, but their information and insights will go a long way in helping shape the design of our solution. Research stakeholders include:

- *Retail clothing employees:* Potential influence on clothing recommendations with more information from the shopper
- *Stylists & designers*: high-end designers, accessible stylists (Nordstrom?)
- *General consumers:* Management of wardrobe items; Improve purchasing decisions

Research Methods

Contextual Inquiry

Our primary design research method will be a contextual inquiry involving people walking through their routine of interacting with their wardrobe and selecting their outfit. Each team member will interview 2 people each, resulting in a total of 8 contextual inquiries. Asking a person to walk through their wardrobe and outfit selection process will allow us to learn about how a participant manages their wardrobe, how they choose outfits, and how they determine what is in their wardrobe inventory. Following the contextual inquiry, we will ask the individuals if they would be interested in a product to assist them in their routine. If so, what features they would be interested in or improve their routine?

Also we want to see whether people are aware of their clothing inventory. To do a contextual inquiry, we will ask people to take down how much clothes they have, and then to observe the inventory they actually own. This process will tell the difference between an individual's conceptual inventory and real inventory.

Interviews and Surveys

We will interview stylists and personal shoppers to see how a wardrobe management system could change the way they sell to consumers. We will ask them to share observations of shoppers to see if there is a consistent driving motivation behind their purchases, or if habits could be improved with the use of a wardrobe management application.

Finally, we will interview shoppers in retail stores to learn more about their shopping patterns. For example, we aim to learn the driving factor for their purchases, why they chose the item they just bought, how their current inventory affected their shopping decision, and if it would be helpful to see existing ratings and reviews on the clothing item.