



ALL ALE DOWNTOWN H'BURG

HELPING JMU STUDENTS DISCOVER NEW BEERS DOWNTOWN

HOW MIGHT WE IMPROVE THE EXPERIENCE OF JMU STUDENTS TRYING TO DISCOVER NEW CRAFT BEERS IN DOWNTOWN HARRISONBURG?

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. Describe your ideal experience at a brewery.
2. What about beer interests you?
3. If you are going out to a brewery, what would you want to know about it beforehand?
4. What current frustrations do you have trying to discover new beers downtown, if any?
5. What kind of features would you want on an app that involves helping you discover new beers downtown?

RATIONALE FOR APPROACH

In beginning to think about how to address the design question, I started brainstorming how to get the information I would need in order to create a successful & useful application. Being a member of the user base I am designing for, myself, made this easy. I have been of the legal age to consume alcoholic beverages for a year now, so being new to trying craft beer experiences is still fresh in my mind. Although it has been a year, I still feel like I don't know as much as I could or want to about beer or my preferences when I go out to a brewery. I have older friends and family that are very interested in beer and know a lot about it & are often trying out new breweries. From these personal experiences **I hypothesized that these varying stages of being of the legal drinking age would bring different levels of expertise** in regards to going out to breweries, & **therefore have different needs.**

I decided to conduct one on one interviews because I felt like it was the best way to elicit the maximum amount of information. When interviewees answered my questions I typically found myself asking some follow up questions that elaborated on their answers. If I had done a survey, this would not have been possible. I also felt that a survey was less personal & therefore people would feel less inclined to give longer, more elaborate answers.

decided to ask more open-ended questions. By asking the interviewees to describe their ideal experience at a brewery I was **trying to get at the aspects of the experience that were the most important to them.** The results led me to realize a certain feature that I would not have thought was necessary, actually was.

I interviewed about **8 people** because after I had interviewed 5, I felt there was still more information left to be discovered. After doing 3 more interviews, I was hearing mostly the same answers and concluded that I had **discovered the existing patterns.**

Because I had so much information from the interviews, I thought a good way to analyze that information and split it into user personas would be to **compare different attitudes/behaviors** in regards to going out for craft beer. In doing so, another feature was illuminated (having a way to invite a group of friends to a brewery).

SELECTING STUDENTS TO INTERVIEW

The primary intention of the app is to help students discover new craft beers in downtown Harrisonburg. It was important to narrow down this idea of a “student” into the different kinds of students that would be potentially using the app. Obviously **the law has influences on the target audience** of this app. It made sense to break up this concept of a student into differing age groups because of that legal influence. Of those who can legally drink, there are students who are newly of age, have been of age for almost a year and know some things about beer but not a huge amount, and those who have been of age for at least a year/ maybe more and know a lot about beer. The app would need to be relevant to these students with varying levels of knowledge in regards to beer. In selecting students to interview, **8 different students** were approached.

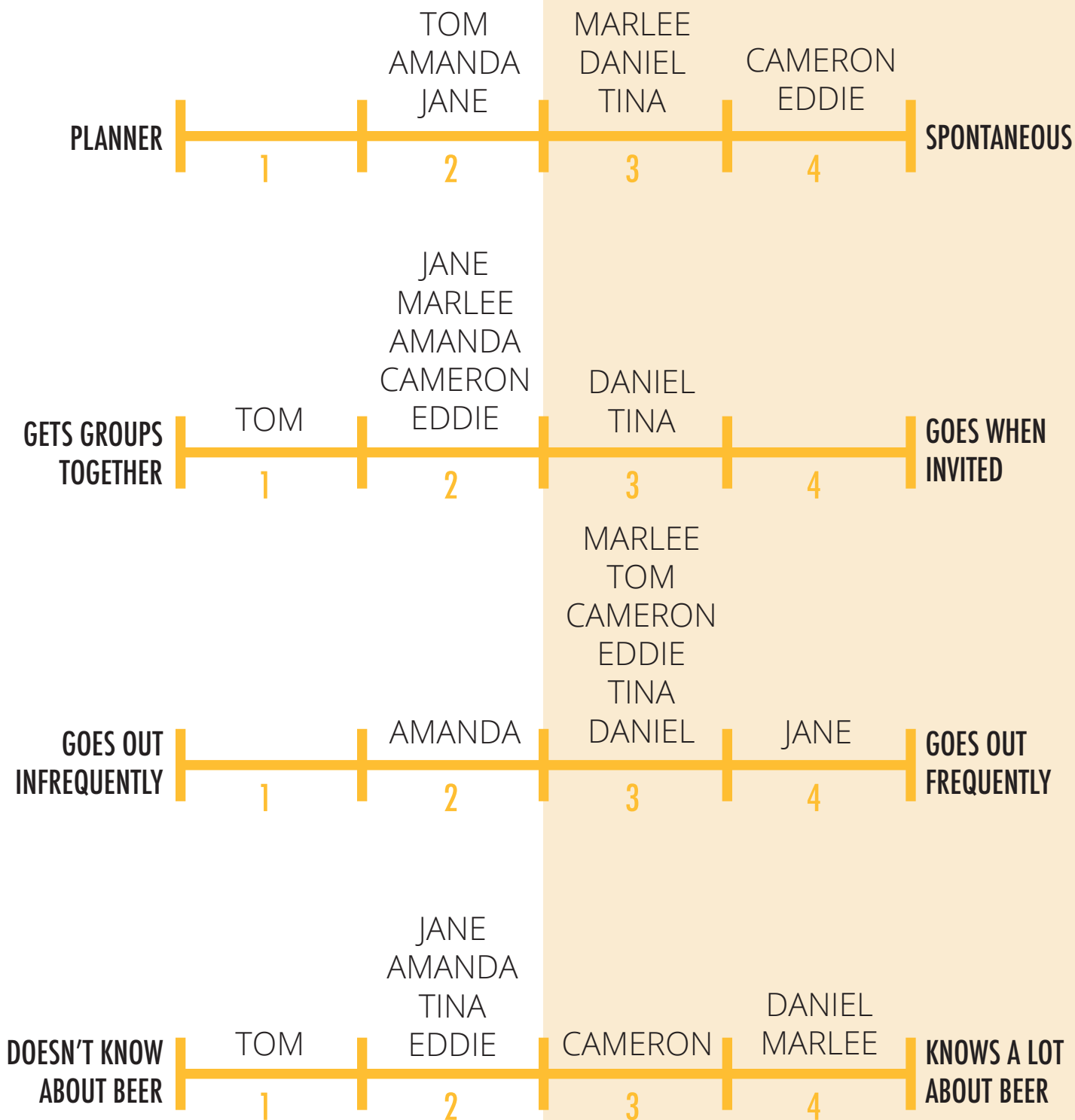
- **3 students that had recently become of age**
- **3 students that have been of age for almost a year & are moderately knowledgeable about beer**
- **2 students that are over 22 & are very knowledgeable about beer**

I also included both gender perspectives. From this selection of people, it was desired that from the user research it would be possible to figure out the features of an app that would help those new and old to the breweries in downtown Harrisonburg find new craft beers to enjoy.



COMPARING RANGES OF BEHAVIORS & ATTITUDES

WHEN GOING OUT FOR CRAFT BEER



RECENTLY BECAME OF AGE

TOM | CAMERON | JANE

As a whole, this group of potential users stated in their interviews that the ambiance was important to them as well as the company they are with when going out to a brewery. They either wanted a place with a lot going on or not much going on at all. Two stated that they are still unsure of what kinds of beers they like so they would like a way to manage their preferences. As a whole they also all expressed a desire to have basic information of each brewery downtown available to them.

HAVE BEEN OF AGE FOR A YEAR

TINA | EDDIE | AMANDA

This group of potential users expressed similar desires to the first group. They also find the ambiance, the people they are with, & how busy the brewery is important to the experience. In this group, the interviewees were more precise in the information they wanted available to them. They wanted to have the same basic info as the other group, however they also wanted to know what beers are on tap & what the ABV & IBU rates. Two of them expressed interest in the app having a rating system of some kind so they could figure out which beers to try.

HAVE BEEN OF AGE FOR OVER A YEAR

MARLEE | DANIEL

These potential users echoed similar themes to the previous two groups. They wanted to be able to access quick, easy information about each location. They want to know if there's food/whether or not they can bring their own. These users were also interested in knowing in more detail about the ambiance. Being alerted to special events/deals would be important. They want to know which beers on tap were flagship & which were seasonal. They both noted being interested in a rating system or way to manage preferences of beers they tried.

TURNING USER INFORMATION INTO REQUIREMENTS

FINDING THE COMMONALITIES BETWEEN USER INTERESTS

Through the data collected, it was unveiled that there were **many similarities in the participants' responses**. All of the participants agreed that the atmosphere was important to them, almost all of them made a remark about wanting to know in some form or another the peak hours for the brewery, they all find the social aspect of going out to a brewery important, and they all expressed that they enjoyed the experimentation that occurs when going out for craft beer.

Many of them expressed an interest in having a **codified source of basic information about each brewery** that consisted of the hours, location, price, beers on tap, and an overall description of the brewery. Two participants expressed frustrations with the **current websites** of the breweries being **hard to navigate**, especially on a mobile device.

Along with these key findings, there were many similarities in their ideas for features for an app. Many of them wanted some sort of **rating system** to be able to use/view when they go out to breweries and also a way to **filter through different beers**. Another common interest was the desire to be able to **manage/keep track of beers** that the interviewees tried and either liked or disliked.

When analyzing behaviors and attitudes it was found that **many of the interviewees tended to be the ones who get groups together**. Three participants expressed frustrations with getting groups together and liked the idea of the app having a **feature that allowed them to easily invite friends out to a brewery with them**.

These findings were crucial in helping to decide the product requirements.

PRODUCT REQUIREMENTS

- 1.** The app must have basic information about all of the different breweries downtown (hours, location, beers on tap/distinction between flagship and seasonal, pictures of the place, typical times when it gets busy, if there is food/if you can bring food, prices).
- 2.** The app must have a way for users to manage beers that they have tried and either liked or disliked.
- 3.** The app must have a rating system of the beers available downtown.
- 4.** The app must show users what events/deals are going on at the breweries downtown.
- 5.** The app must have a function that allows users to invite a group of friends to go out to a brewery.



ALEXANDRA

RESPONSIBLE | ORGANIZED | SOCIAL | 21



Major: Justice Studies
Year: Junior
Primary Device: Mobile Phone

“I can’t wait for the weekend! I wonder what I should do now that I’m 21.”

QUICK TAKE ON ALEXANDRA

TECHNOLOGICAL SKILLS

Advanced
Expert

TECHNOLOGICAL TOOLS

Mobile Phone
Tablet
Laptop

MAJOR

Justice Studies
International Affairs
Media Arts and Design
Computer Science

A TYPICAL WEEK

Alexandra’s typical week includes her going to class for a majority of the day, and participating in a lot of extracurricular activities. She is very involved in her sorority and Club Rowing. Because of her extra involvement, her weeks are typically very packed and she doesn’t have time to relax. When the weekend comes she does not want to sit on her couch but she also does not want to do something that requires a huge amount of energy.

Alexandra is typically the one to get groups of friends together, but she’s not always sure where the best place to go is. Her friends like spaces that are overall, a little more relaxed but still have things to do.

GOALS

Alexandra’s goals are to get friends together and enjoy a casual night exploring downtown, with minimum effort. She wants to know what places there are to explore. She also wants to discover what kind of beer she likes without wasting money on a drink that she ends up hating.



MICHAEL

KNOWLEDGABLE | SPONTANEOUS | FRIENDLY | 23

Major: Communications
Year: Graduate Student
Primary Device: Mobile Phone

“Let’s go downtown right now! I want to try that new IPA.”

QUICK TAKE ON MICHAEL

TECHNOLOGICAL SKILLS

Expert
Advanced

TECHNOLOGICAL TOOLS

Mobile Phone
Tablet
Laptop

MAJOR

Communications
Psychology
Engineering
Media Arts & Design

A TYPICAL WEEK

Michael’s typical week is very busy with balancing schoolwork along with his assistantship. He works mostly during the day and then goes to class at night. He usually will stay up late to finish assignments because he really values his friendships and likes to spend time with people whenever he can during the day. When the weekend comes he is ready to go wherever, whenever. He’s always looking for a new adventure, new friendships, new knowledge, and an overall good time.

Michael is mainly the one who gets invited to go to things by other people. He used to be the one to invite people out, but it got super frustrating texting everyone individually.

GOALS

Michael’s goals are to go where everyone else is. He wants to meet new people and is excited to try new things. He knows a lot about beer already, but feels there is a lot more he could still learn. He wants more in depth information about the breweries downtown and wants to know when there are events going on so he can make sure he goes to them. He also wants to be able to manage his preferences when he tries new things and be able to filter through the different kinds of beer available.