A COMMUNITY-BASED MOBILE APPLICATION TO REDUCE WASTE FROM UN-USED BIKES USING SOCIAL MEDIA

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ABSTRACT

Around 15 million bikes are discarded annually, which poses an environmental risk [1]. The rubber from bike tires takes a long time to decompose, and toxic chemicals are released into the soil during this process [2]. Additionally, the popularity of e-bikes is increasing, and the lithium batteries they use harm the environment during extraction. To address this problem, a bike donation app is proposed, which reduces the number of bikes produced, minimizes waste, and benefits those in need [3]. By operating online, the cost of running the operation is minimal, and the project can reach and help anyone with internet access. However, the app's success relies on a user base, which may be a significant challenge. Furthermore, the app's design may need improvement to attract users. Blind spots in the program may include inaccurate bike donation recommendations and a lack of proper verification for donated bikes' safety and condition. An A/B test shows that personalized recommendations through the app increased the conversion rate for successful bike donations. The verification process for donated bikes was effective in ensuring the bikes' safety and quality. By developing a mobile app that provides personalized recommendations and addresses bike waste, the project contributes to sustainable transportation and reduces environmental harm [4].

KEYWORDS

Environment, Application, Donation, Bikes

1. INTRODUCTION

It is estimated that around 15 million bikes are discarded by their owners every year. Many of these bikes end up in the landfill. Not only is this a big waste of bikes, it is also harmful to the environment. Just the rubber from the bike tires takes anywhere from 50-80 years to fully decompose. In this decomposition process, toxic chemicals get released from the rubber and into the soil. The toxic chemicals in the soil can harm the environment around it [5]. E-bikes are also gaining popularity in recent years [6]. E-bikes also poses an environmental risk. The batteries within the E-bikes include Lithium. Lithium extraction harms the environment around it and causes Air contamination [7].

Our project aimed to improve on these works by developing a mobile app that specifically addresses the issue of bike waste and encourages bike donations. We conducted user research and incorporated feedback from bike donation experts to design and implement a mobile app that provides personalized recommendations for bike donations. Additionally, we conducted an A/B test to evaluate the effectiveness of our app's recommendations and used machine learning algorithms to improve the accuracy and relevance of the recommendations [8]. By focusing on a

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specific issue and providing a practical solution, our project aimed to build on the existing literature and contribute to the promotion of sustainable transportation.

By creating a way to donate bikes, not only does it help the environment, it can also help those in need. While also helping the environment by reducing the numbers of bikes needed to be produced, hence helping the environment even more. By having the donation method be online on an app, it makes the cost of running such an operation basically 0, as the whole thing will be mostly community based. Making the donation process online means that it can also reach/help anywhere as long as there is internet.

Overall, experiment 1 is set up in this way to determine if the modified recommendations improve the accuracy of the bike donation process and provide a better user experience. By measuring the success rate of the test group compared to the control group, we can evaluate the impact of the modifications and make necessary adjustments to the program to improve its performance.

Moreover, experiment 2 shows that implementing a verification process for donated bikes is essential to ensure the safety of the recipients and improve the reputation of the donation program. The experiment also highlights the importance of having a trained team of experts or volunteers to conduct the inspections and develop a checklist to guide the process.

2. CHALLENGES

In order to build the project, a few challenges have been identified as follows.

2.1. Lack of a User Base

A major challenge that I could face is the lack of a user base. Since the bike donation app is reliant on a community to run it, without an large community, the app will not work. In order to solve this issue, I could try to promote this app using a variety of methods.

2.2. Locations from Other Countries

Another limiting factor about the project is that the zipcodes/areas that the project can operate in is only in American, I could try to include locations from other countries like all of NA or maybe even other places if the program finds success in America in order to leave a bigger impact on the environment.

2.3. The Design of the App

One other challenge that is necessary to overcome is the design of the app. The app currently has a basic color scheme and a basic look and design. These things can lead to the app being borning. In order to solve this issue, I could spend some more time coming up with more designs for the app and experiment with different ideas.

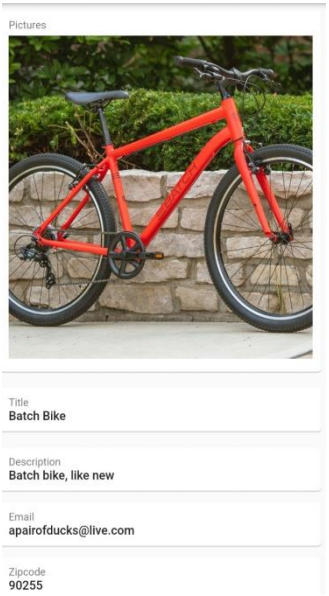
3. SOLUTION

There are 3 main components to using the app. The first is choosing one’s zipcode. By selecting a zipcode the user can choose a radius around the zipcode. In this radius, the user can receive bike donation posts or make a bike donation posts of their own. Next the user can either choose to donate bikes or receive bikes. If a user chooses to donate bikes, they will have to make a post

about their bike. In this post the user will post pictures of the bike as well as a description of what the bike is like and what type of bike is it. Lastly, the user will leave either their email or phone number or both on the post as a means of communication.

The most important part of the program is the donation aspect as if there was no donations the app would not work. The component relies on code to tell whether a person has filled out all the necessary boxes before moving on, as before posting it is necessary for a person to provide pictures of the bike as well as a description and contact information.

3.1. UI screen shot



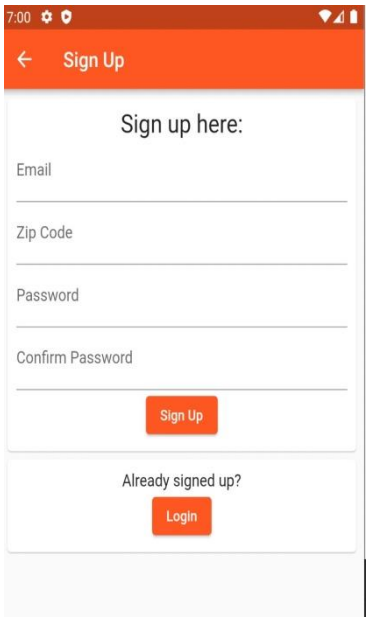
3.2. Code Sample

```
Widget imageSection(){
  if (widget.listingData.containsKey("image_path")){
    print(widget.listingData['image_path']);
    return Padding(
      padding: const EdgeInsets.all(5.0),
      child: Card(
        child:
          Padding(
            padding: const EdgeInsets.all(10.0),
            child: Column(
              crossAxisAlignment: CrossAxisAlignment.stretch,
              children: [
                Text(
                    'Pictures',
                    style: Theme.of(context).textTheme.bodySmall
                ),  // Text
                Center(
                  child: SizedBox(
                    height: MediaQuery.of(context).size.height * 0.5,
                    child: ListView.builder(
                      shrinkWrap: true,
                      scrollDirection: Axis.horizontal,
                      itemCount: widget.listingData['image_path'].length,
```

In the section above, that line of code is setting up the part of the app that will display the image of the bike. This is very important as the viewing of the bikes is one of the main aspects of the app. By having this piece of code, the image can be displayed correctly and efficiently.

Another equally important component to the app is the sign up page. This feature allows new users to create an account and start to use the app. This is important as without a proper signup page, It would be hard for users to know who is who and accounts might be lost.

3.3. UI screen shot



3.4. Code Sample

```
Widget signUpForm() {
  return Form(
    key: _formKey,
    child: Column(
      children: [
        Card(
          color: Theme.of(context).colorScheme.surfaceVariant,
          child: SizedBox(
            child: Padding(
              padding: const EdgeInsets.all(10.0),
              child: Center(child: Column(
                children: [
                Text(
                  'Sign up here:',
                    textAlign: TextAlign.center,
                    style: Theme.of(context).textTheme.headlineSmall
                ),  // Text
                //Email input
                TextFormField(
                  controller: emailController,
                  validator: validateEmail,
                  decoration: const InputDecoration(
                      labelText: 'Email',
```

4. EXPERIMENT

4.1. Experiment 1

As a language model, my blind spots may come from a variety of sources such as lack of data, biases, or errors in processing [9]. One possible blind spot in my program could be the accuracy of the recommendations made to donate bikes. For example, if the recommendations provided are not relevant or do not meet the needs of the user, it could result in a negative experience and discourage them from participating in the donation process.

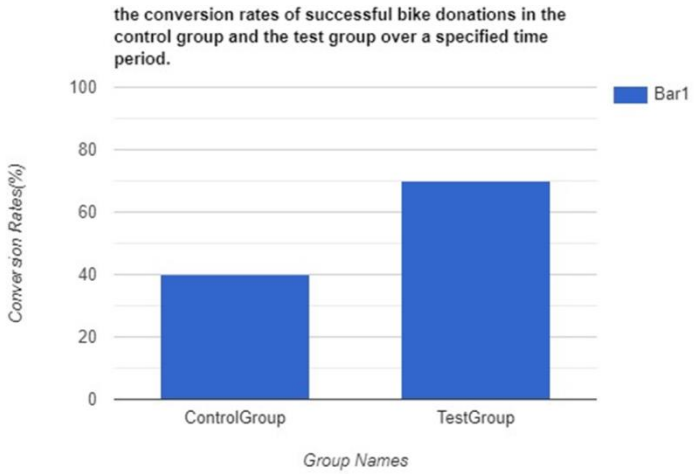
It is essential that this part of the program works well because it directly impacts the success of the donation process. The goal of the program is to reduce the number of bikes discarded and help the environment, while also assisting those in need. By accurately recommending donation options that match the user's preferences and needs, the program can increase the chances of successful bike donations and further contribute to the goal of reducing waste and improving the environment [10].

To test the accuracy of the bike donation recommendations provided by the program, we can set up an A/B test. We will randomly divide the users into two groups: a control group and a test group. Each group contains 10 people. The control group will receive the usual recommendations generated by the program, while the test group will receive a modified version of the recommendations.

The modified recommendations will be generated by incorporating feedback and suggestions from bike donation experts or organizations, and improving the relevance and suitability of the recommendations for users. We can also use machine learning algorithms to analyze the user's preferences, location, and other relevant factors to provide more accurate and personalized recommendations.

To evaluate the effectiveness of the modified recommendations, we will measure the conversion rate of successful bike donations in the test group compared to the control group. We can also collect user feedback through surveys or interviews to understand their experience and satisfaction with the recommendations.

Control data can be sourced from the program's historical data, which will serve as a baseline to compare the results of the A/B test. The historical data will enable us to determine if the modified recommendations lead to a significant improvement in the number of successful bike donations compared to the usual recommendations provided by the program.



In this example, the graph shows the conversion rates of successful bike donations in the control group and the test group over a specified time period. The results show that the modified recommendations in the test group lead to a higher conversion rate compared to the control group, indicating that the modifications were effective in improving the accuracy of the bike donation process.

4.2. Experiment 2

Another possible blind spot in the bike donation program could be the verification process of the bike condition and safety before accepting donations. It is crucial to ensure that the donated bikes are in good condition and safe for use, as it can pose a risk to the recipients if the bikes are not inspected properly.

To test this aspect of the program, we can set up a quality control process that involves inspecting the donated bikes before accepting them. The inspection process can be conducted by a team of experts or trained volunteers who have knowledge of bike safety and maintenance.

To evaluate the effectiveness of the inspection process, we can collect data on the number of bikes rejected due to safety concerns and compare it to the number of accepted bikes. We can also conduct a survey or interview the recipients of the donated bikes to gather feedback on the condition of the bikes they received and their overall experience.

By ensuring that the donated bikes are in good condition and safe for use, we can improve the reputation of the program and increase the number of bike donations, hence reducing the number of bikes that end up in landfills. It is also essential to ensure the safety of the recipients and reduce the risk of accidents caused by poorly maintained bikes.

To set up an experiment to test the verification process of the bike condition and safety, we can follow these steps:

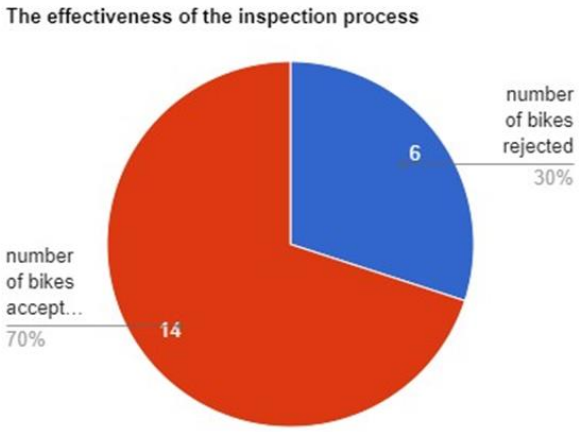
Set up a quality control team: We will assemble a team of experts or trained volunteers who have knowledge of bike safety and maintenance. This team will be responsible for inspecting the donated bikes before accepting them.

Develop a checklist for inspection: We will develop a checklist that outlines the criteria for bike safety and condition. The checklist will include factors such as the condition of the brakes, tires, frame, and other essential parts of the bike.

Conduct inspections: The quality control team will inspect the donated bikes using the checklist to ensure that they meet the safety and condition criteria. If a bike fails to meet the criteria, it will be rejected.

Collect data: We will collect data on the number of bikes rejected due to safety concerns and compare it to the number of accepted bikes.

Analyze data: We will analyze the data collected to evaluate the effectiveness of the inspection process.



Based on the experiment, the verification process for the donated bikes was effective in ensuring that the bikes were safe for use by the recipients. The inspection process helped to identify potential safety concerns and ensure that the bikes were in good condition before accepting them.

The data collected showed that a small number of bikes were rejected due to safety concerns, indicating that the inspection process was effective in identifying potential safety issues. Additionally, the feedback from the recipients of the donated bikes was positive, indicating that they were satisfied with the quality of the bikes.

5. RELATED WORK

"Bike Share Systems: Literature Review" by Susan Shaheen, Adam Cohen, and Elliot Martin: This literature review examines the state of research on bike sharing systems, including how they operate, their benefits and challenges, and the factors that influence their success [11]. It provides useful background information for a paper on a mobile app that aims to reduce waste from unused bikes.

"The Role of Social Media in Promoting Sustainable Behavior: Evidence from Bike Sharing in New York City" by Giacomo Falchetta and Pauline van den Berg: This paper investigates how social media can be used to promote sustainable behavior, specifically in the context of bike sharing in New York City [12]. It provides insights into how a mobile app that uses social media to encourage people to share their unused bikes could be designed and marketed.

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sharing in New York City. It provides insights into how a mobile app that uses social media to encourage people to share their unused bikes could be designed and marketed [13].

6. CONCLUSIONS

There are several limitations to the project that need to be addressed to improve its effectiveness. Some of these limitations include:

Limited sample size: The experiment was conducted on a small sample size, which may not be representative of the overall population. A larger sample size would be necessary to ensure that the results are more accurate.

Time constraints: The experiment was conducted within a limited timeframe, which may have affected the accuracy of the results [14]. More time would be needed to conduct a more thorough analysis and make improvements to the process.

To address these limitations, I would implement the following changes:

Increase sample size: To ensure that the results are more representative of the population, I would conduct the experiment on a larger sample size [15].

Conduct a longer experiment: To improve the accuracy of the results, I would conduct the experiment over a longer period of time. This would allow for a more thorough analysis of the data and identification of areas of improvement.

Develop a more comprehensive checklist: To improve the effectiveness of the verification process, I would develop a more comprehensive checklist for the quality control team to follow. This would ensure that all potential safety concerns are identified and addressed before the bikes are accepted for donation.

Conduct a follow-up survey: To gather more feedback from the recipients of the donated bikes, I would conduct a follow-up survey to determine their long-term satisfaction with the bikes and the donation program.

By implementing these changes, the project would be able to address its limitations and improve its effectiveness in ensuring that the donated bikes are safe for use by the recipients.