Gather is not just another event planning app. Gather knocks down social limitations and makes the planning and discovery of social get-togethers simple and, most importantly, successful.

**PROCESS**

The discovery and planning of social events is a three stage funnel:
1. Identify possible activities.
2. Screen for mutual interest within social groups.
3. Plan and commit to an event.

Unfortunately, this natural transition from possibilities to events is choked by two constraints:
1. Individuals’ limited ability to identify possible activities.
2. Individuals’ mutual interests and availability.

Existing tools fail to solve this problem. Facebook Events is easily the first competitor that comes to mind. However, Facebook Events caters to much larger events, such as birthdays and baby showers, leaving short term social get-togethers underserved.

Mobile apps, such as Evite, Rally, and Plancast, heavily rely on the natural leaders in social groups to initiate an event and invite their friends. This approach acts as a tool for the natural leaders, but does not actually loosen the constraints that limit social event planning.

**RESEARCH**

Human-centered design is all about building empathy for the user in order to understand and address their needs. By collaborating with the target audience all the way through the design process, the design team was able to build a solution that makes users excited. The use of unstructured observations, paper prototyping, and usability studies enabled quick iterations of the concept well before it was ever brought to the design stage.

There is a need for a simple method for groups of friends to discover interests and plan events together.

Gather is an app that leverages an expanded social network to enhance short-term social discovery and planning. Users first discover activities in a database produced by his/her social circle and external sources (e.g., local newspapers, movie listings, etc.). The user can then express interest in activities, and see who within his or her social circle is also interested and available in joining.

Lastly, the individual may invite or be invited to join others to do an event. By connecting with existing friends or old lost friends in the user’s phone contact list, the likelihood that a user finds someone with shared activity interests is increased.

We would like to thank our Professor Isabel Meirelles for encouraging us to find this opportunity, and for being a source of guidance and inspiration.

**SUMMARY**

Gather is an app that leverages an expanded social network to enhance short-term social discovery and planning. Users first discover activities in a database produced by his/her social circle and external sources (e.g., local newspapers, movie listings, etc.). The user can then express interest in activities, and see who within his or her social circle is also interested and available in joining.

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**REFERENCES**

Hugh Dubberly, Donald Norman, Bill Buxton