# event.ly

## An Event Organization Service

# Discovery

## Proposal

Create an application that allows users to create and plan events, including invitations and promotions, in one place and publish the event details to multiple social media platforms (Facebook, LinkedIn, etc.) as well as invite contacts that are not on the given social media platforms via text message or email.

### Discovery

My target demographic is anyone who plans events using social media. From my experience, the demographics of this audience is very diverse and not limited to certain age-ranges, genders, incomes, etc., but initial research should help determine if there are any trends in those demographics and further guide the design process.

The problem space I want to tackle is creating and managing event information across multiple social media platforms and with contacts who do not use social media can be a tedious and sometimes complicated process, from invitations to keeping track of what information has been published on what platform.  This app will make creating events, inviting attendees, and managing the event information (invitations/RSVPs, event location, event date and time, etc.) easier by allowing users to do it in one location.

### Design

My main idea is to create a mobile app that may also be suitable as a website. In the app, users will be able to create an event page on multiple social media platforms with details such as event date/time, location/venue, and description of the event, and send invitations to contacts both on social media and those who are not via text message or email. Once the event is made, users will be able to view invitation responses across all social media platforms and texts/emails, send updates about the event across all platforms, and various other event-planning tasks.

### Validation

Since the service would be web/mobile-based, it should be fairly simple to do most of the validation online with remote users. However, during the initial prototype phase, I would like to do some testing and gain feedback from users in person. For this purpose, I intend on creating a prototype for mobile phone and tablet to take to in-person prototype testing.

# Initial Research

**Interview Analysis**

I was able to base the interviews on the free response questions from the survey to collect a bit more information on what type of events the participants were planning and how they went about planning the events.

The five people who I chose to interview all use Facebook as a primary platform for planning and advertising events, with some invitees communicating over text messaging or email. One respondent stressed that Facebook events are only created for social functions, and that all of their work-related events are planned through emails sent between co-workers.

The participants all stated a similar set of steps to plan for a party:
1. Determine a date for the event by reaching out to invitees, sometimes using WhenIsGood or a similar service.
2. Determine a place for the event if not easily accessed, like someone's apartment.
3. Create an Event Page on social media (most often Facebook), or send a text/email to the group.
4. Invite attendees and gather RSVP responses.
5. Post updates (such as if people should bring food/drinks/other supplies, change of location, etc.).

The respondents all agreed that the top features they would want out of an event planning and management service are:
1. Create an event on multiple platforms.
2. Invite contacts from social media and local contact books (text, email, etc.)
3. Manage invitation responses.
4. Update attendees on event details.
5. Share photos from event.

The respondents who typically plan events for work or plan larger social events also expressed interest in being able to generate and track a hashtag across multiple social media platforms such as Twitter, Tumblr, and Instagram and be able to conglomerate all of the social media buzz and images in the same event page without having to hunt it down manually. This would allow them to be able to report the success of an event to their superiors or to clients who hired them to plan the event and provide them with an easy way of presenting that information. Two of the interviewees specifically mentioned interest in being able to create graphics for the event from the service, such as e-vites to send out to non-social media users and banners to use for the event banner on Facebook.

In talking to the five interviewees more about what they would want out of the UI for such a service, I was able to determine that having checklists to help keep the user organized while planning for the event, having a breakdown of RSVP statuses for each invitee, and having a planner's calendar for specific tasks to complete for the party were important. They were interested in being able to color code tasks by various categories (food, drink, venue, etc.), which could be something customizable by the service's graphic creation for the event invitations. Three of them were interested in receiving updates via notifications on their calendars or app badges on their mobile devices to help keep them on track.

One interviewee expressed concern about forcing invitees to sign up for the service; the current intention is not to force anyone to opt-in to the service, but to provide them with a way to respond via social media they already use or to respond via a link in an email or code in a text message.

**Reflection**
Overall, this research reinforced most of the ideas I had when starting with this project. Since my inspiration for creating this service is my own frustration with the number of ways I can and sometimes have to send out invitations and gather responses for events that I'm planning, I'm not terribly surprised by the general consensus in what would be most beneficial in such a service.

Moving forward, I intend on focusing on the top features that the survey and interviews indicated would be most useful to the majority of users. I anticipate some issues with each platform's API for page sharing and editing, as well as calendar event creation within different operating systems.

# Knowing Our Users:

## Personas

After gathering this data, I created two personas to give a more personal look into what individual users of the service might look like. I based these off of individuals who answered my survey and let me ask them a few more in-depth questions about why they would want such a service and how they would use it.

## SOCIAL MEDIA MOGUL SEAN

"I want my parties to be the focus of my Instagram and Snapchat, but I also want to live in that moment."

### Bio

Sean is 25 years old and enjoys throwing parties for his friends at least once a month to make sure everyone gets the chance to spend time together away from their busy work lives. He has a large social media network because of his Instagram and Twitter feeds, and often invites his local followers to join in at the larger parties. For those who can't come, Sean posts photos and short videos during the party and does a wrap-up video the next day to say thank you to everyone who can come.

While Sean likes to have the small parties with just his friends on his apartment's rooftop garden, he prefers that each of the larger parties with his followers to take place at a different location.

### Needs

- A way to track hashtags for events
- A way to post his frequent videos and photos on all platforms
- A way to spread the word for his open invitation larger parties

### Goals

- Throw a small party for friends and a large party for his social media network each month
- Show off his favorite hang out spots in his city on social media
- Bring people together to enjoy each others' company

### Behaviors

- Takes photos and videos almost constantly
- Posts multiple of those photos and videos to social media throughout the party
- Posts status updates about how much people are enjoying the parties

### Frustrations

- Finding a new location for each of the larger parties
- Inviting followers across multiple social media platforms
- Keeping his friends who don't use social media updated on plans

# Wedding Planner Wendy

*" I want to alleviate the stress of planning a wedding and let the bride and groom enjoy their day and create lasting memories. "*

## Bio

Wendy is 30 years old and runs her own small business planning and coordinating medium to large events. Weddings make up the bulk of her business year-round. Wendy takes care of the entire planning process for her clients to help them enjoy their day instead of stressing out about whether or not there is enough food or if the decorations were delivered and set up on time.

She works with multiple different vendors for each event and enjoys finding local companies to provide the supplies for the parties. Part of her appeal, especially for brides, is that she creates albums and slideshows using content from the guests at the event by encouraging guests to post on social media using a hashtag for the event so the client does not have to hunt down the personal memories after the event is over.

## Needs

- An easy way to invite guests across various different platforms
- One place for all of the planning for an event
- Recommendations for local vendors
- Create and track hashtags across social media
- Post and view all photos from the event in one place

## Behaviors

- Posts about events on social media
- Sends messages to clients and to guests about event details
- Checks RSVPs to maintain an up-to-date number of attendees
- Writes to-do lists and calendars to keep on top of tasks

## Goals

- Manage multiple events simultaneously
- Connect with guests over various forms of social media and communication methods such as text or email
- Update clients on the plans for the event
- Create a social media presence for the event

## Frustrations

- Too many ways to invite attendees and receive RSVPs
- Takes too much time to look up local vendors for each event
- Switching between multiple applications for - calendars, lists, RSVPs, etc.
- Too many sources for photos, status updates for "blurbs", opinions on event
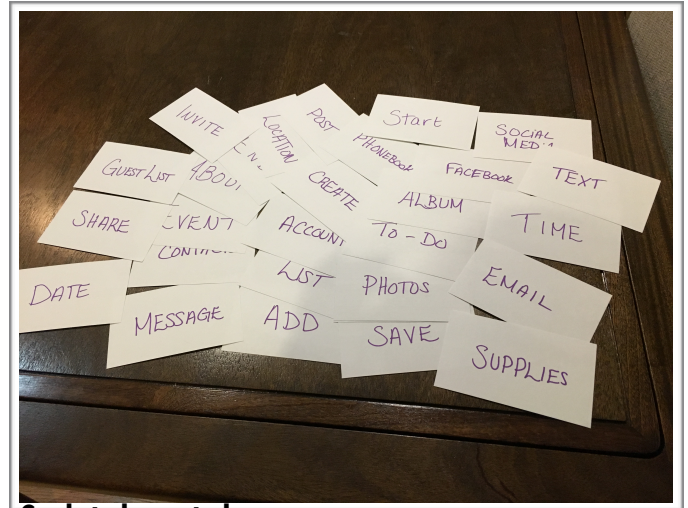
# Card Sort and Site Map

The card sort for this project was conducted with three users who filled out the initial survey and best exemplified the personas that were created to guide the creation of the app.

The terms included in the sort dealt with task flows as well as categorization of where those tasks should be. Participants were encouraged to look over all of the cards before beginning the sort. Each participant used all of the terms provided in their card sorts, though one stated verbally that there were some terms that they would hesitate to include even though they were able to group them with other terms of similar categories.
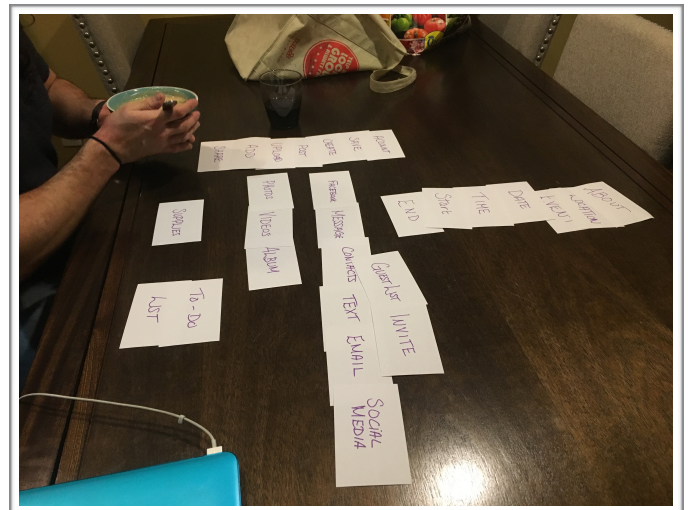
Generally, participants independently agreed which cards belonged in certain categories. Each participant was able to identify a card that best exemplified what page a set of tasks should fall under (e.g., "Location", "Time", and "Date" all got sorted under "Event", which participants categorized under a "Create" card).

With the information gathered from the card sort, I was able to create a site map that will allow for easy, intuitive navigation of the app.
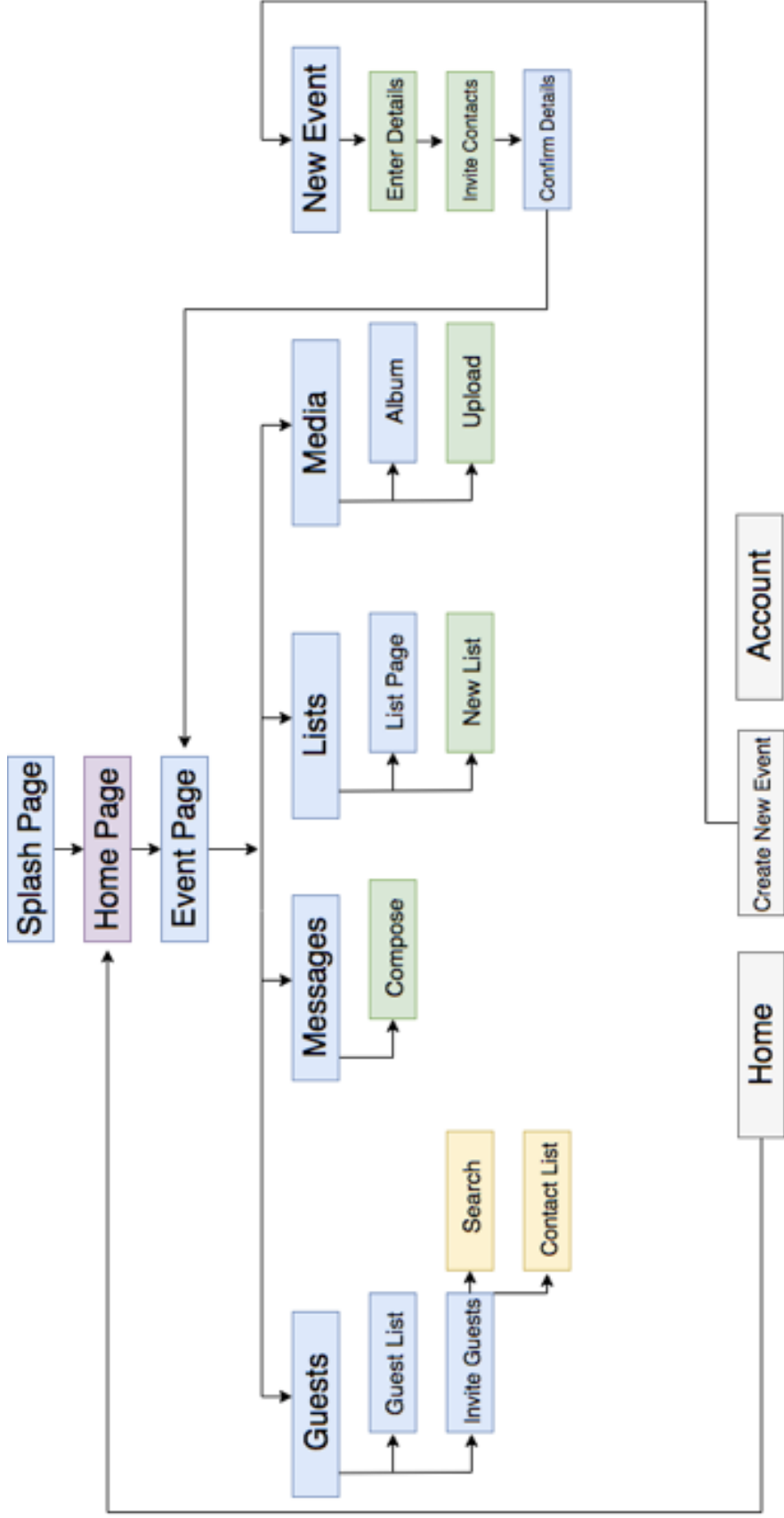


**Cards to be sorted.**



**PERSONA: Sean**

With the information gathered from the card sort, I was able to create a site map that will allow for easy, intuitive navigation of the app.

Splash Page → Home Page → Event Page

Event Page branches:
- Guests → Guest List, Invite Guests → Search, Contact List
- Messages → Compose
- Lists → List Page, New List
- Media → Album, Upload
- New Event → Enter Details → Invite Contacts → Confirm Details

Home | Create New Event | Account

# App Road Map:

## Wireframing

Using Balsamiq Mockups, I created wireframes that allowed potential participants to complete the five tasks that were determined to create user flows. Using Balsamiq allowed me to make those wireframes interactive, which I saved as a PDF in order to send out to potential users for usability testing.
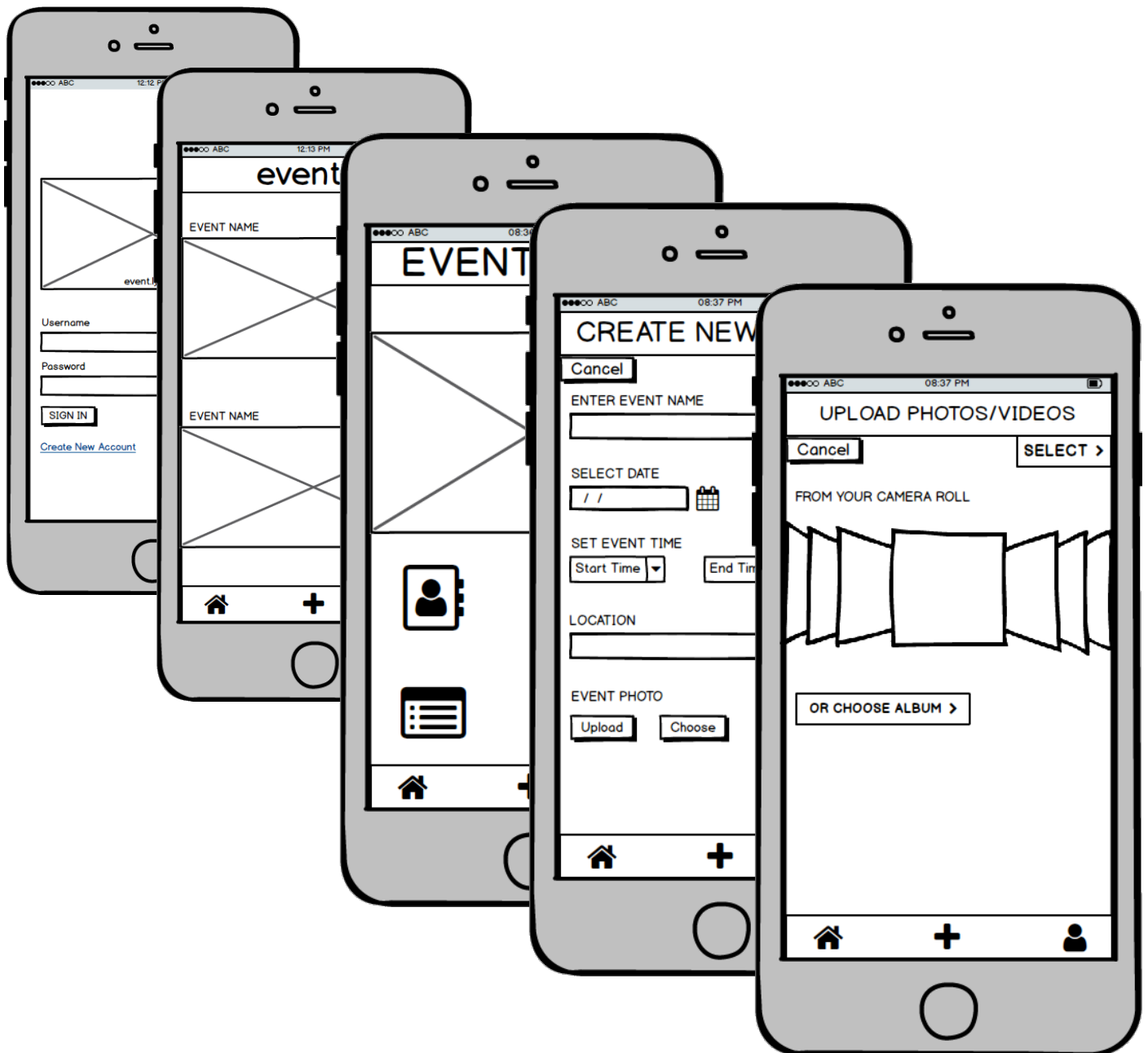
# Let's Talk Visuals:

## Design Guide

## Colors



The colors for the event.ly app are reminiscent of the vibrance and energy of events that users would be creating and inviting guests to through the app.

Going through photos of concerts and both small and large get togethers showed a significant amount of purple lighting, inspiring a base color of a deep purple for the foundation of the app's design.

Complementary teal and lighter greens add contrast to buttons and text boxes, while a soft grey is used for text.

## Typefaces

*Lemon Tuesday Italicized*
*Logo, Page Names*

**Avenir Next Condensed Bolded**
*Headers and Buttons*

Avenir Next Condensed
*Body and Icons*

AVENIR NEXT CONDENSED BOLD CAPITALIZED
*Photo Labels*

## Buttons

Sign In

Sign Up

Next

Cancel

Post

Send

Choose

Upload

## Icons

### Universal Navigation Bar

Home Button

Create New Event

Account

### Event Page Navigation Buttons

Guest List

Message

Lists

Media

# Bringing It All Together:

## Usability Testing Feedback

**Summary:**

Testing with four participants showed that users find the current design of the app very easy and intuitive to use, with very few pieces of feedback given to "fix" anything. Some of that feedback stemmed from the limitations of the user scenarios built for the prototype. Users also wanted labels on navigation buttons instead of just buttons.

Three of the four participants were of the Social Media Sean persona type, and one was a variation of the Wedding Planner Wendy persona. Two were female, one was male, and one identified as a non-binary gender. All were within the age range of 24-35 and work in technology retail, with educational backgrounds in liberal arts.

Participants were asked to complete these five tasks:
1. Create a new event.
2. Invite additional guests to an existing event.
3. Message guests.
4. Create a to-do list for an event.
5. Upload photos to an event album.

With the information and feedback gathered from this testing, I will plan on changing some of the navigation icons and adding text to other menu buttons in a more high-fidelity prototype to further clarify the function of those buttons. With the addition of more functionality, users will also get more clarification on being able to share lists and albums with event guests through the app.

# Appendices

## Appendix A: Initial Survey Data

**Survey Questions**

About You:

What is your age range?
- 18-24
- 25-30
- 30-34
- 35 or older

What is your gender?
- Male
- Female
- Other

What industry do you work in?
- Marketing
- Technology
- Retail
- Hospitality
- Healthcare
- Manufacturing
- Education
- Finance
- Communications
- Transportation
- Government
- Other
- Prefer Not to Say

Event Planning:

What steps do you take to plan an event? (Free Response)

How often do you plan events?
1 - Never; 2 - A Few Times a Year; 3 - Once a month; 4 - Once a Week; 5 - Daily

What sort of events do you plan? (free response)

Do you do any event planning for your work?
- Yes
- No

Social Media Habits:
How often do you use social media?
1 - A Few Times a Month; 2 - Once a Week; 3 - A Few Times a Week; 4 - Once A Day; 5 - Multiple Times per Day

What social media platforms do you regularly use?
- Facebook
- Twitter
- LinkedIn
- Myspace
- Tumblr
- Instagram
- Google+
- Pinterest
- Reddit
- Snapchat
- FourSquare
- Other

What social media platforms do you plan or advertise events on?
- Facebook
- Twitter
- LinkedIn
- Myspace
- Tumblr
- Instagram
- Google+
- Pinterest
- Reddit
- Snapchat
- FourSquare
- Other

Event Planner:

What devices do you use to plan and advertise your events?

- Computer (laptop, desktop)
- Mobile phone (iPhone, Android, Windows, etc.)
- Tablet (iPad, Android, Kindle Fire, etc.)

Would you find an app that let you plan, create, and manage an event across multiple social media platforms and other forms of communication beneficial?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

What features would you like to see from such an app?

- Create an event on multiple platforms at once
- Invite contacts on social media
- Invite contacts from my phone/computer/email
- Manage invitation responses
- Update attendees on event details
- Receive location/venue suggestions
- Create graphics from templates to advertise the event
- Create and track a hashtag for the event
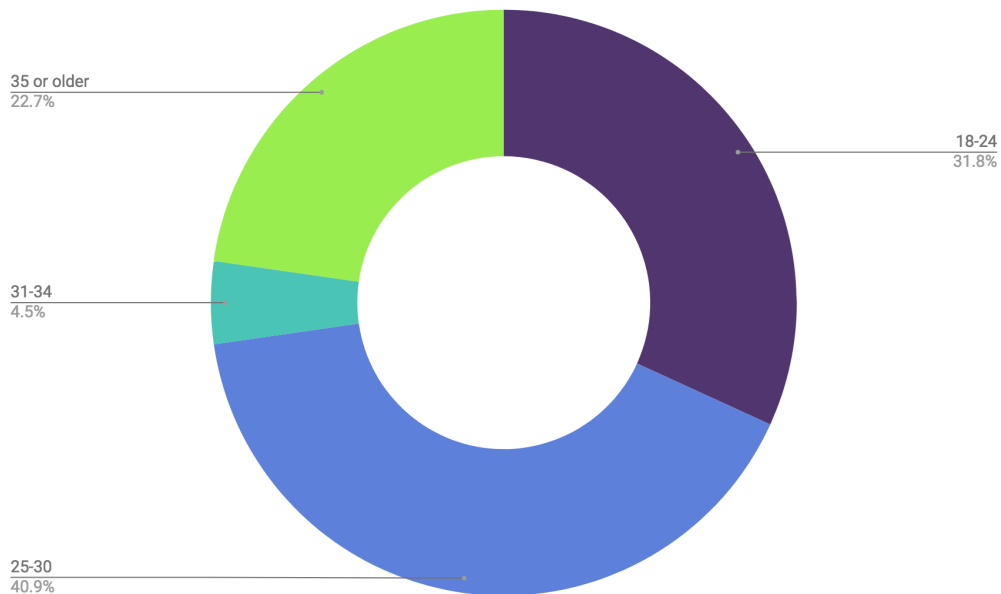- Upload photos from the event
- Conduct surveys with attendees
- Other

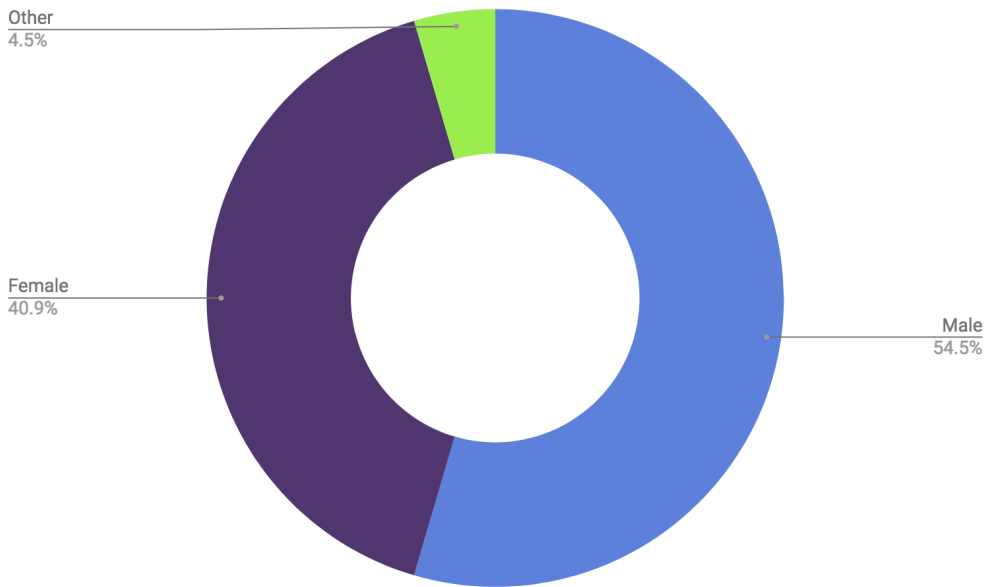**Survey Results**

Number of respondents: 22

*Demographic Breakdown*

Of the 22 participants surveyed, 55% were male, 41% were female, and 4% did not identify as a binary gender. The majority of participants were 30 years of age or younger, with 32% aged 18-24 and 41% aged 25-30. Participants worked mainly in Technology (37%),  Retail (32%), or Healthcare (21%).
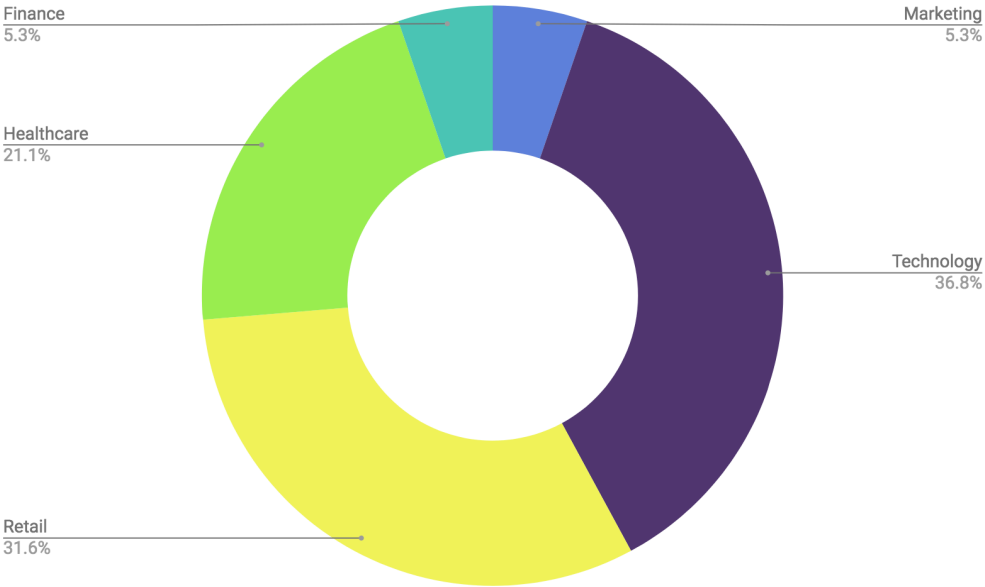
Age:



35 or older
22.7%

18-24
31.8%

31-34
4.5%

25-30
40.9%

Gender:



Other
4.5%

Female
40.9%

Male
54.5%

What Industry Do You Work In?



Finance
5.3%

Marketing
5.3%

Healthcare
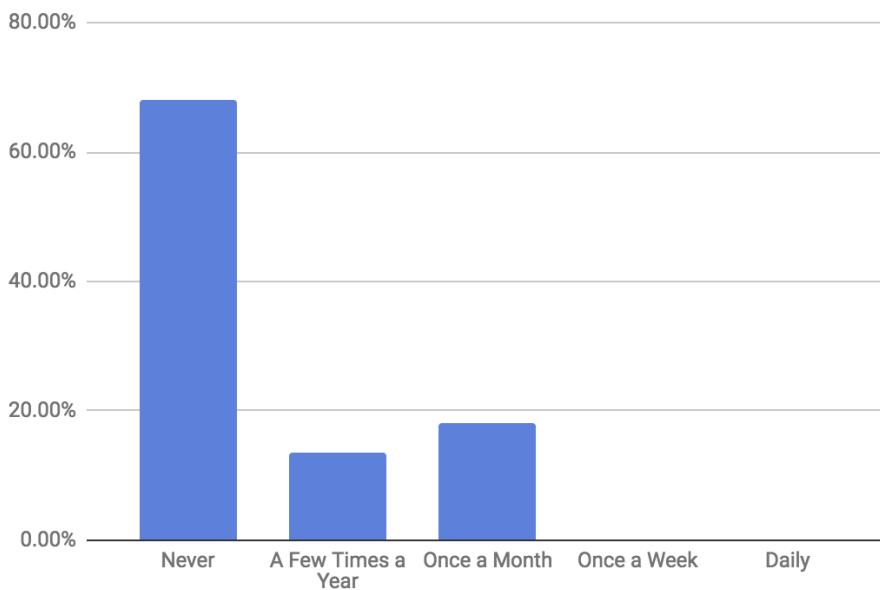21.1%

Technology
36.8%

Retail
31.6%

*Event Planning Habits*

A majority of the participants plan events only a few times a year or once a month. The majority of participants do not plan events for work. The most commonly used social media platform for planning and coordinating events was Facebook, followed by Instagram and sending out text messages.
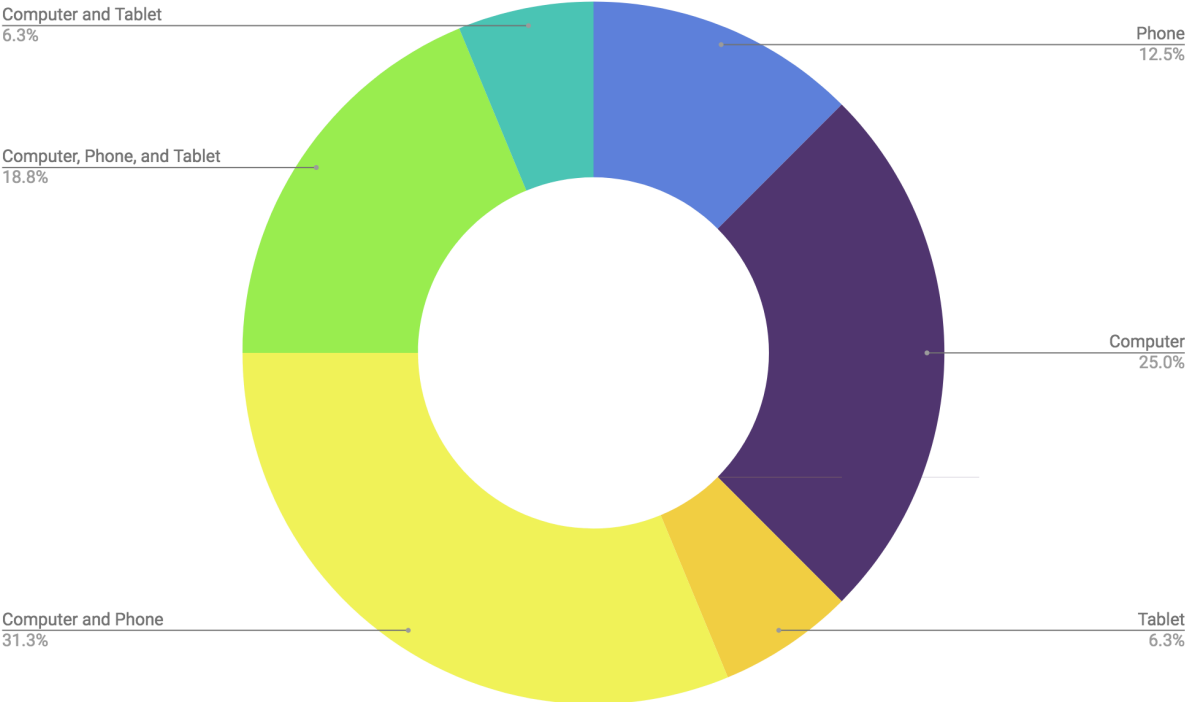
How Often Do You Plan Events?
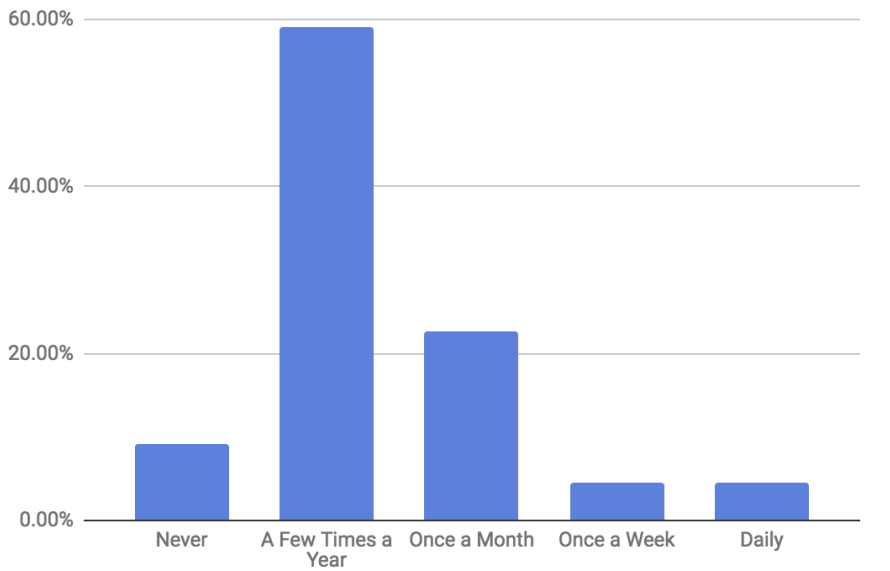


How Often Do You Plan Events for Work?

## What Devices Do You Use to Access Websites to Advertise Your Event?

Computer and Tablet
6.3%

Computer, Phone, and Tablet
18.8%

Phone
12.5%

Computer
25.0%

Computer and Phone
31.3%

Tablet
6.3%

Based on the fact that most users (55%) use a combination of a computer, tablet, and mobile phone to access services to plan events, I believe it would be best to pursue developing a multi-platform service through a website and mobile app.

# Appendix B: Usability Testing Script

Event.ly is an app is designed to help organize events you're planning and posting on social media platforms. Ideally, this would gather all of the information for an event, like the date and location of the event, media that has been posted on multiple platforms, attendee information, etc., into one location so that you don't have to switch apps multiple times to update or view the details of one event. The goal of the project at this point is to ensure that creating and editing events within the app is the most streamlined process for users. To find that out, we're going to test the usability of the current design of the app.

What you will see today is not a finalized design of the app; you'll notice that there are no graphics or images and that the design is in black and white. We are not testing those aspects of the design. These wireframes will give you an idea of the layout of the app and how pages and buttons relate to each other.

Here's what the splash and home pages of the app look like.

**Question:** Take a look at these pages and let me know what you see and think about the design. If you see anything that you have questions or feedback on, please write that below.

You will be given five tasks to perform that the wireframes have clickable links to allow. Not all icons are clickable buttons for the purpose of this exercise - if you don't get a response from a click, assume that what you are trying to click is currently disabled or irrelevant to the task.
For these tasks, we are going to assume you have an event.ly account, and that some information for an event is already filled in on the app.

Download the wireframes and open in a program such as Adobe Acrobat or Preview. Arrange the on-screen windows to allow yourself to see the instructions and interact with the wireframes simultaneously.

Each task page will have some questions; feel free to answer those as you complete each task or after finishing.

Interactive wireframes: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1eEmHq23sHJARS4BzyL427Bagj4lbF8N4/view?usp=sharing

## Task 1: Create a New Event

From the Splash Page, go ahead and click sign in, assuming you've entered your username and password for evently. You should now be at the Home Page.
From the Home Page, take the steps you think you would need to follow to create a new event.

As you're creating the new event, don't worry about entering any text or choosing any files to upload. Just assume that you have done it and progress through the task.

**Question:** As you're creating the new event, do you have any trouble finding the necessary buttons to accomplish your goal? (Yes/No)

**Question:** What things did you have trouble finding, if any?

**Question:** Do you have any other feedback about the design of the app or the process of creating an event?

### Task 2: Invite Additional Guests

Navigate back to the Home Page, if you did not do so after creating a new event. Now, you'll want to select the first event in your list. Your goal now is to invite additional guests to the already-created event.
Once again, don't worry about entering any text or selecting fields; assume that it is done successfully.

**Question:** As you're inviting guests, do you have any trouble finding the necessary buttons to accomplish your goal? (Yes/No)

**Question:** What things did you have trouble finding, if any?

**Question:** Do you have any other feedback about the design of the app or the process of inviting additional guests?

### Task 3: Message Guests

Navigate back to the event page for the first event in your home page list. Now your task is to compose and send a message to the guests of your event. Again, don't worry about inputting text.

**Question:** As you're writing your message to guests, do you have any trouble finding the necessary buttons to accomplish your goal? (Yes/No)

**Question:** What things did you have trouble finding, if any?

**Question:** Do you have any other feedback about the design of the app or the process of messaging your guests?

### Task 4: Create a To-Do List

Navigate back to the page for the first event on your home page. Your task now is to create a to-do list for the event. Again, don't worry about inputting text.

**Question:** As you're creating a list, do you have any trouble finding the necessary buttons to accomplish your goal? (Yes/No)

**Question:** What things did you have trouble finding, if any?

**Question:**  Do you have any other feedback about the design of the app or the process of creating and using lists?

## Task 5: Upload Photos to an Album

You are nearly done. Your final task is to upload photos from your device to an album for the first event listed on your homepage. Don't worry about actually selecting photos, just assume they are successfully selected and uploaded as you press the appropriate buttons. If a button doesn't respond, it means there is nothing for you to input (for example, the "Select Album" button in this task will not respond to any clicks).

**Question:** As you're uploading photos, do you have any trouble finding the necessary buttons to accomplish your goal? (Yes/No)

**Question:** What things did you have trouble finding, if any?

**Question:** Do you have any other feedback about the design of the app or the process of viewing or uploading photos to albums?

**Question:** Now that you're done with the 5 tasks, please provide any additional feedback you might have about the usability of the app.