

APEC 3551

CONCEPT DESIGN AND VALUE-ADDED ENTREPRENEURSHIP



THE FFA EXPERIENCE APP

Building an FFA Community-In One App

Final Feasibility Portfolio

Kyle Thomas-Applied Economics



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The FFA Experience App Kyle Thomas

The FFA Experience App is an integrated platform available to every FFA member to select and customize the membership management tools, educational content, and networking resources that best meet their needs through their FFA journey. Our goal is to help FFA members make the most out of their experience and open the door to a wide range of new possibilities. The App is also available to non-FFA members through a premium subscription.

Concept Description

The National FFA Organization is the largest student lead organization in the nation. These students are at the forefront of creating the next generation of leaders, yet they don't have access to an all-in-one platform to manage and lead them through their FFA Experience.

Opportunity

This App combines everything that an FFA member needs to get started, keep up to date, manage all their activities and record keeping, and get connected to the FFA community.

Innovative Solution

The FFA Experience app is designed to build an active community. The app blends educational experiences that students can use in the advancement of their knowledge with real world connections, networking and conversations with the next generation of student leaders. Teachers can easily advise their students and individually track the progress of each student in the classroom, in their Supervised Agricultural Experiences, and in their FFA Leadership opportunities.

Value Proposition

This app will uphold the vision and purpose that the National FFA Organization strives for and gives FFA leadership a forum to communicate with its members efficiently. Having its own platform and community should produce new members and increase retention within the organization. The platform will also allow for greater support from the outside community through connections and additional contributions.

Competitive Advantage

Students have apps that can attract their attention. The app is designed to draw that attention away from the general community sites and get more participation. Our goal is to get members excited about FFA and draw in new members to enhance the FFA experience

Entrepreneurial Team

- User Experience Support Specialist
- Technology Management Team
- Social Media Specialist
- Curriculum Development Manager

Financial/Opportunity Highlights

- Needs National FFA Board Approval to go into development stage with an outside App development company
- \$500,000 will be used in the first year for initial research and development .
- Funded by National FFA Dues and a non member premium subscription resulting in no additional cost for FFA members

To learn more about the National FFA Organization, please visit [FFA.org](https://www.ffa.org)



Consumer Problem Proof

The Average FFA Member

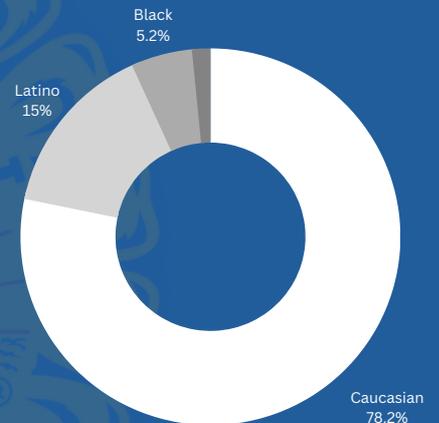
One of the 850,823 FFA members that wear the corduroy FFA jacket. Statistically, the average FFA member is a Caucasian male that does not come from an agricultural background and is a part of one of the 5 state associations below. They could have joined FFA for a multitude of reasons ranging from being in a multi-generation FFA family, or simply being tricked by the FFA advisor to participate in an event, regardless of how they joined the one thing that is constant is the growth that an FFA member is expected to have throughout their FFA journey.

To grow in their FFA journey, members compete in Career and Leadership Development Events, create a Supervised Agricultural Experience, help plan events, hold leadership positions, run meetings, get involved in the community, and much more. To keep track of this progress, students must use multiple applications to try and document and manage their experience to ensure they make the most out of it. The reality is that FFA is not fully caught up with the technological tools available for students to utilize in a way that makes sense to them as they grow. This generation of FFA members uses technology more and more, but there isn't a solution out there to put everything in one place.

6/10 FFA Members do not come from an agricultural background



Membership Demographics



TOP 5 ASSOCIATIONS BY MEMBERSHIP NUMBERS



TEXAS

CALIFORNIA

GEORGIA

FLORIDA

OKLAHOMA

(2020 Data)

Product Problem Proof

The Solution

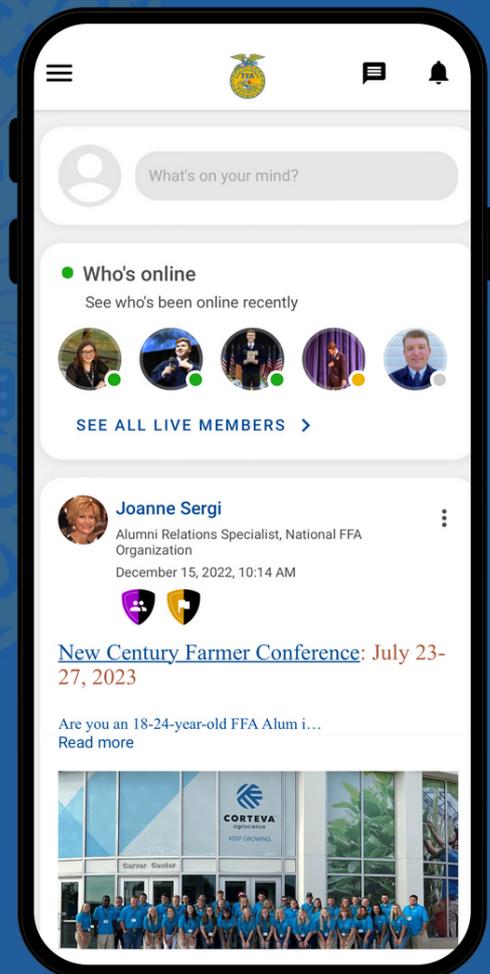
FFA members currently do not have a platform that can manage their FFA experience. The FFA Experience App provides a one-stop shop for all things related to FFA. Current platforms being used by members can be difficult to navigate, especially for younger FFA members just beginning their FFA experience making the learning journey more complex and time-consuming.

Currently, the app is still in the concept stage. While initial research has been conducted to best determine what students, teachers, and others most want out of the FFA Experience App, there are more specifics that need to be understood before this idea can be presented to the National FFA Board of Directors for approval.

In a world that has become ever more connected with technology, this app is the perfect fit to solve the issues these students are facing. Each of the features (membership management tools, educational content, and networking experiences) is all in one place making it easier for the FFA community to become even stronger. The FFA community is at the core of the design.

One product development risk that exists for this experience is the nature of how complex the app is aimed to be and the large volume of consumers who will use the platform. In order to solve this risk, the app will need to be developed by each feature to ensure easy user operation and that the app can handle user traffic. A team of software engineers will be sourced under the direction of the National FFA Board of Directors and The FFA Experience App Entrepreneurial Team to ensure the quality of the app.

Featured on the right is the UI of the Forever Blue Network. The exclusive social media network specifically for FFA members, teachers, Alumni & Supporters of the Organization.



Market Problem Proof

Current Market

FFA members currently do not have a platform that can manage their FFA experience. The FFA Experience App provides a one-stop shop for all things related to FFA. Current platforms being used by members can be difficult to navigate, especially for younger FFA members just beginning their FFA journey.

Consumer Trends: Greater use of technology implementation in everyday life, especially among younger FFA members. Alumni are catching on as well but at a slower rate.

Competitors: The AET Record-Keeping platform, the printed New Horizons Magazine publication, software such as google classroom or canvas, and individual programs students use. The goal of this app is to disrupt the current pattern of consumption for these existing platforms and combine everything into one by implementing the technology to bring the capability of FFA into the 21st century.

Market Size: 10 Million potential users between members and alumni.

Geographical Range: FFA membership is located across all 50 states from the biggest of cities to the most rural towns, as well as the territories of Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands. FFA alumni are going to be almost entirely concentrated within the United States and territories with a few people who have moved globally.

Estimated actual users: Between 500,000 and 1,000,000. Not every FFA member will use the app even if they have access to it, not every FFA alumni wants to stay connected, and others have become so far disconnected that they are not aware of what is actually happening.



FFA Chapters can be found in 24/25 of the largest cities in the United States

Business Model Problem Proof

Revenue Targets \$1,000,000

Currently, FFA members pay an annual membership fee of \$7. The dues amount is set every year at the National FFA Convention by the National Delegate Body. \$2 of the annual membership fee goes to the design, printing, and distribution of FFAs New Horizons Magazine (NHM) to every single FFA member across the country every quarter of the year.

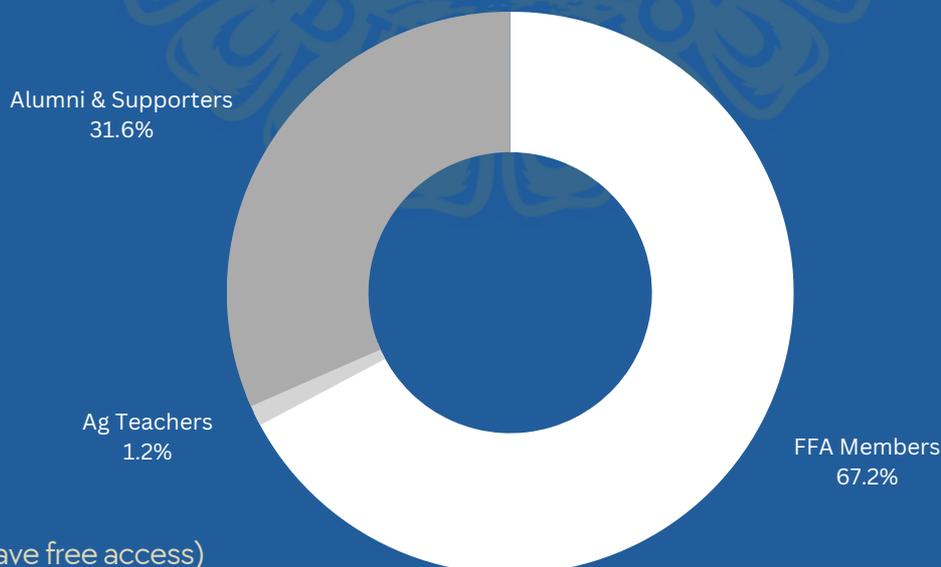
Not every FFA member reads the magazine, some may not even want it at all resulting in a waste of money spent by the National FFA. An alternate solution would be to provide a digital copy of the New Horizons Magazine to every student who uses the FFA Experience App and offer a paid subscription to receive a physical copy as well. The money saved and additional revenue generated from a paid subscription would allow for a certain percentage of the money from the magazine to go to the funding of the app. Alumni & Supporters will have access to the app as well through a subscription of \$10 per year. Based on the estimate of consumer groups' usage of the app below, this is the goal required to generate \$1,000,000 of revenue in a year.

FFA Membership Dues: \$1 per member is diverted from NHM to the app resulting in no additional cost. \$850,000 generated automatically

Alumni & Supporters: \$10 annual subscription would require 100,000 subscribers annually. FFA has an alumni network of 8 million people plus additional supporters who weren't in FFA. The average Alumni retention rate is 5%

Assumption Prediction: $\$1 \times 850,000 \text{ members} (\$850,000) + \text{estimated } 400,000 \text{ Alumni Retention} \times \$10 (\$4,000,000) = \$4,850,000$ revenue generated reaching the goal almost 5 times

Projected Percentage of consumer groups using the app



(Ag Teachers will have free access)

Operations/Commercialization Problem Proof

Development Roadmap

The best way to bring this app to life is by highlighting the real value that such a tool could bring to the FFA community. Even when projecting under the target numbers, this app has the capability of generating a good sum of money for the organization to use in a way that creates a positive experience for everyone.

This development roadmap is designed once a company has been outsourced by the National FFA Organization to create the app. These goals are designed to bring incremental returns for the organization over a 2 year development period while still allowing room for change as needed

3 Month Goal	6 Month Goal	9 Month Goal
Membership Data Entry Open	New Horizons Magazine is digitized and expanded	Ability to enter project records
Calendar organizer tools and push notifications	Create feedback form for user experiences	Ability to pay dues/other fees from the app
1 Year Goal	18 Month Goal	2 Year Goal
Integrate the Forever Blue Network into the app	Online supplemental educational resources added	All Features Operational
Adjust communications plan for further user growth	Integrate easy application information transfer	3/4 of FFA members are registered within the platform

Quality Standards:

Advanced security to protect user data including credit card encryption, and other personal information

The App can handle large volumes of user traffic at once without slowing down, especially during events when thousands of users are active.

App is more favored compared to current market options through the user feedback form

Resource Problem Proof

Items to Consider

Additional Market Research: Conduct additional surveys among FFA members, teachers, and alumni to gather features, price points, and other capabilities. Initial thoughts and data have already been gathered but it is impossible to gauge the membership if their thoughts are not heard.

Resources required to move into prototype development: Financial contributions either from the National FFA Organization by a research effort to allocate funds or through the investment of a company that supports the mission of the FFA to allow the contracting of a software development company.

App Transition: The transition to the widespread use of the app will take work on behalf of the National FFA as well as teachers and more to promote the app so it can become a core of the FFA experience. To do this, targeted social media and other forms of communication will be essential. In the final widespread printed publications of the New Horizons Magazine, it would be the perfect time to begin explaining the adjustment and the benefits that will result from it. If the reallocation effort is successful, then the focus needs to be on actually getting people to use the app as well as developing a retention strategy for keeping members and others engaged in the platform.

Market Forces: A big driver that turns many people away is time. Time is a precious resource which is one of the considerations taken in when designing the app. In the end, the app should save users time to allow them to focus more on the actual experience, rather than managing it. An app of this size and feature capability will take quite some time and money. As the app develops and continues to add new features, users could become disinterested if all features are not yet available to their full capacity. It is important to make sure this app is delivered in a timely manner, but not in a way that compromises the structure and quality of the platform.

Recommendation

The Next Steps

In order to make the FFA Experience App a reality, there are several steps that need to be taken over a certain period of time to move the app into the FFA community. The following recommendations are proposed for what is to come.

The first step is for approval by the National FFA Board of Directors to explore the possibility of the app. This stage is important to begin collecting information for the exact needs of users.

Second, The National FFA Organization works with the Entrepreneurial team, and the publishing company for the New Horizons Magazine to create a set budget for development through the reallocation of FFA membership dues.

Third, after a budget has been established for app development, the National FFA Organization will contract a software company after reviewing the bids from contacted companies to determine which one will create the best quality app within the given budget set by the organization.

Lastly, once the platform becomes operational, the National FFA communications team will work to promote the app to students, teachers, and those who are connected to the FFA in some way or another. In the first 5 years of the app being operational, there will be an extra emphasis on promoting the app to get students and teachers accustomed to the transition from the existing market to the new platform.

The FFA Vision states that "FFA will create the next generation of leaders who will change the world". The FFA experience app will be the tool to help the next generation of FFA members to find success and benefits from their FFA experience to help make that vision a reality.

Concept Portfolio

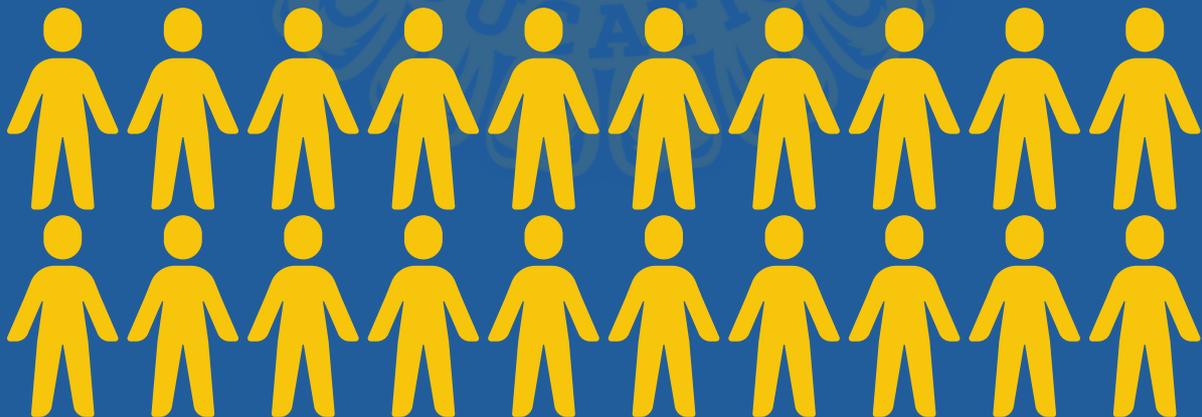
Additional Consumer Concepts

High School Ag Teacher/FFA Advisor

The average High School ag teacher is a caucasian female who has around 11 years of teaching ag ed under her belt. Even with this amount of experience, there is still a lot that this teacher has to keep track of to manage her classes and the FFA program. Teachers have to juggle multiple learning and record-keeping platforms to manage their FFA programs and ag classes. Teachers already have a lot happening in their classrooms and ag teachers are responsible for doing even more outside work outside the classroom. With the FFA Experience app, ag teachers can manage logistics, track student progress, and chapter budgets, and stay organized with a chapter calendar with reminders sent to students at no cost for teachers to utilize

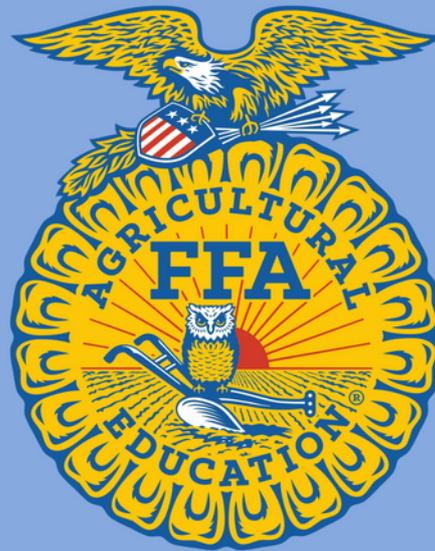
FFA Alumni & Supporters

The National FFA Alumni changed their name to reflect the desire for those who were not able to be a member of the FFA with the opportunity to still support the organization. Today, anyone can become a member of the National FFA Alumni & Supporters program to support the mission and vision of the FFA. These are teachers, Parents, Business Professionals, Farmers, and more but currently do not have a well-known place to connect with other alumni as well as current FFA members. While the Forever Blue Network is an already existing platform, it is not integrated well enough into the FFA community for people to use. The FFA Experience app offers alumni a place to reconnect with the FFA community, and supporters the chance to learn what the FFA community is all about, and see what FFA members are accomplishing. Find ideas to support the FFA program. All in one place.



FFA has an Alumni Network of over 8 million people including several public figures such as President Jimmy Carter, Johnny Cash, and Taylor Swift

THE FFA EXPERIENCE



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GET IT ON



Google Play



Download on the

App Store

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BUILDING AN FFA COMMUNITY-IN ONE APP

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APEC 3551
Fall 2022



FFA makes a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for

PREMIER LEADERSHIP



PERSONAL GROWTH



CAREER SUCCESS



Through Agricultural Education

CONSUMER CONCEPT

Demographics: White, Male, 16 years old from a suburban or rural setting in Texas/California.

FFA Involvement: Participates in 1-2 activities. Is a chapter FFA officer

The Problem: FFA members do not have a singular place to manage their FFA experience and are currently using platforms such as AET that are not well-liked

App benefit: All things FFA, all in one place. A community specifically for FFA members to belong

The Average FFA Member



CONSUMER CONCEPT

High School Agriculture Teacher/FFA Advisor



Demographics: White, Female, Average of 11 years of teaching experience

FFA Involvement: Attends every FFA event. Helps plan officer and chapter meetings. Works with school board for planning trips

The Problem: Teachers have to juggle with multiple learning and record-keeping platforms to manage their FFA programs and ag classes

App benefit: Manage logistics, track student progress, chapter budgets, stay organized with a chapter calendar with reminders sent to students

CONSUMER CONCEPT

FFA Alumni/Supporter

Demographics: Teachers, Parents, Business Professionals, Farmers.

FFA Involvement: Involved in the local FFA Alumni & Supporters Chapter to plan events for the program. Interested in helping FFA members find a career path

Problem: Alumni and Supporters do not have a well known place to connect with other alumni as well as current FFA members

App benefit: Reconnect with the FFA community, see what FFA members are accomplishing. Find ideas to support the FFA program. All in one place.



WHAT THE FFA EXPERIENCE APP OFFERS



Membership Management Tools

- Pay FFA Dues
- Organize events
- Track Activity Progress



Educational Content

- New Horizons Magazine
- Learn from others
- Develop skills

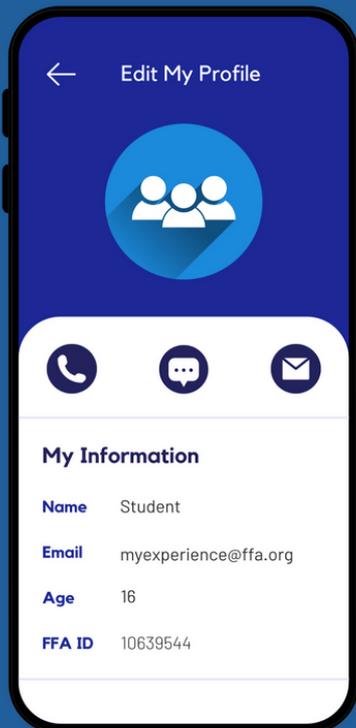


Networking Experiences

- Forever Blue Network

At no additional cost for current FFA members, and non-members through a premium subscription of just \$10/year

HOW THE APP WORKS-STUDENTS



EASY SET-UP & VERIFICATION

FFA Members: Register with an existing ID

Advisor: Verify their students

Answer a few questions to customize the user experience

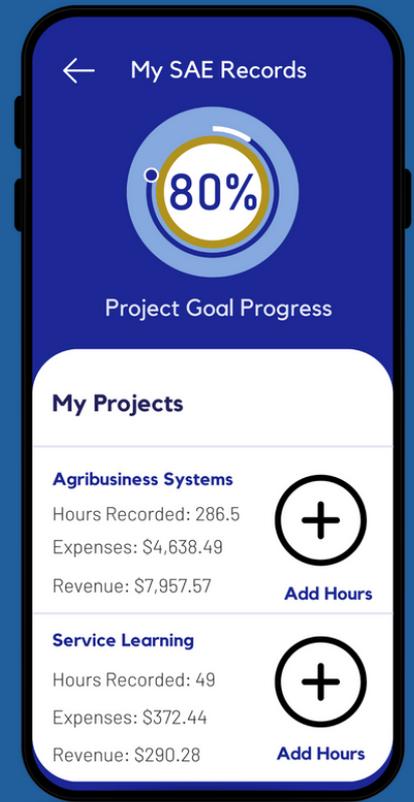
KEEP TRACK OF YOUR FFA PROJECTS

Add as many projects as you would like

Learn how to manage finances and other valuable skills

Share your progress with your advisor

Automatically upload your records for applications



GET CONNECTED TO THE FFA COMMUNITY

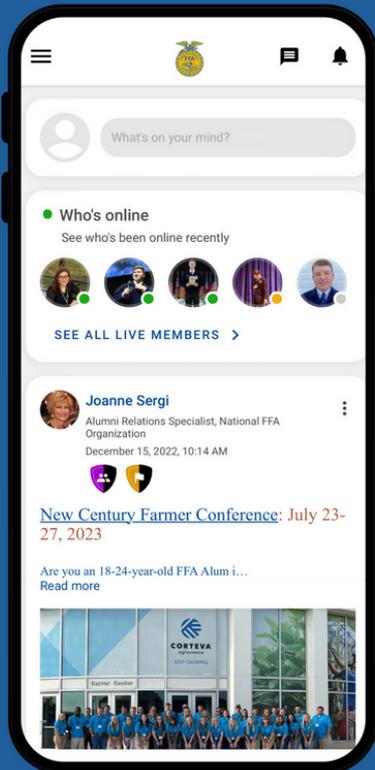
The Forever Blue Network

Post FFA accomplishments

Connect with FFA members, present and past

Interact with business professionals to explore potential careers

Conversations have the ability to be monitored since some students who utilize the Forever Blue Network are under 18

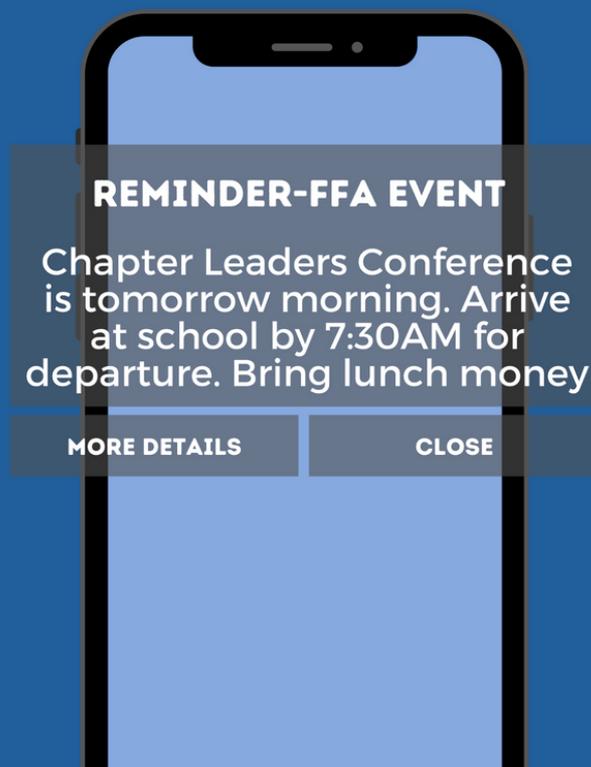


RECEIVE REAL TIME NOTIFICATIONS

Teachers can create events and make automated reminder notifications

Receive notifications while at certain events including conventions and conferences

Notifications about upcoming deadlines for applications



PANELIST QUESTIONS



1. Can student pay their dues in the app? What other monetizable activities can you charge for to build revenue?
2. Can students take online classes through the app?
3. Is there a Facebook style social networking area or more of a Instagram posting area within the app?

FUTURE STEPS



- Will need National FFA Board of Director approval to move into development
- Time span before fully operational 2 years
- Estimated Initial Investment \$500,000
- Once operational have FFA promote the platform to ensure s many members utilize it



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