



# HABIT

AS A STRATEGY

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What does Candy Crush,  
Facebook and Netflix all  
have in common?





# Habit 101

- Free the frontal lobe
- A series of cues, routines and rewards
- From brushing your teeth to backing out of the driveway





# Creating Habit Forming Products

- Triggers
- Actions
- Variable Rewards
- User Investment



# What's a Trigger?



- A trigger calls a user to an action
- Advertisements, press mentions, shares on Facebook, newsletters, app notification, breaking news alert.
- An event that brings the product, to the top of mind for the user and asks the user to take an action.





# The Trigger Holy Grail



- Internal triggers
- When a product is tightly coupled with a thought, emotion, or existing routine it has developed an internal trigger.
  - External Trigger: App alert
  - Internal Trigger: I need to know what is going on today, I need to open the Gazette app



# Actions

- Actions contain two elements
  - Ability
  - Motivation
- To initiate an action it must be easier than thinking





# Variable Reward



To hold our attention, products must have an ongoing degree of novelty coupled with a reward.





# Types of Variable Rewards

At the heart of this framework of variable rewards is a powerful hack that focuses attention, provides pleasure, and infatuates the mind.

Our search for variable rewards is about an endless desire for 3 types of rewards: those of the **tribe**, the **hunt** and the **self**.





# User Investment

## IKEA Effect



Businesses that leverage user effort confer higher value to their products simply because their users have put work into them.



# How do we apply these?

A sample news product built with a habit formation strategy



# The Product

- **Target market:** educated millennials
- **Problem to solve:** desire to prove/know they are an informed member of society
- **Product:** A news app that provides feedback on your news consumption and gives you goals to complete to become a fully informed citizen



It takes less than 10 minutes  
to get Up 2 Date!






# Internal Trigger

- Determine your internal triggers by determining the problem you are solving and the emotions tied to it
  - I am bored right now at work, I need a mental escape
  - I am out of the loop, I need to see what is going on
  - I want to show my friends how informed I am



Select a category below to get Up 2 Date.



**FEATURED: National News**  
This is the breaking news headline, this news is breaking right now or is possibly a featured headline.  
🕒 2:30

- ☒ World News
- ☐ National News
- ☐ Local News
- ☐ Politics
- ☐ Popular Culture
- ☐ Sports

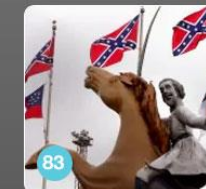




# Rewards

- What is the reward we are giving the user?
  - The answer is not news, it is self mastery, it is pride
  - Which is reinforced by a 100% gold star informed citizen award presented in an animated format.
  - The user feels satisfied that they can now return to Netflix

## Current National News Stories



### On Confederate monuments, the public stands with Trump

President Trump called the removal of Confederate memorials and statues "foolish,"...

⌚ 2:30



### Why America's biggest government contractors balked at criticizing Trump

⌚ 2:00



### Purifying the house, praying for the sun: Religious tradition has a lot to say about solar eclipses

⌚ 1:30



### How statues of Robert E. Lee and other Confederates got into the U.S. Capitol

⌚ 1:50



### These CEOs stuck by Trump as others defected. Then he dumped them.

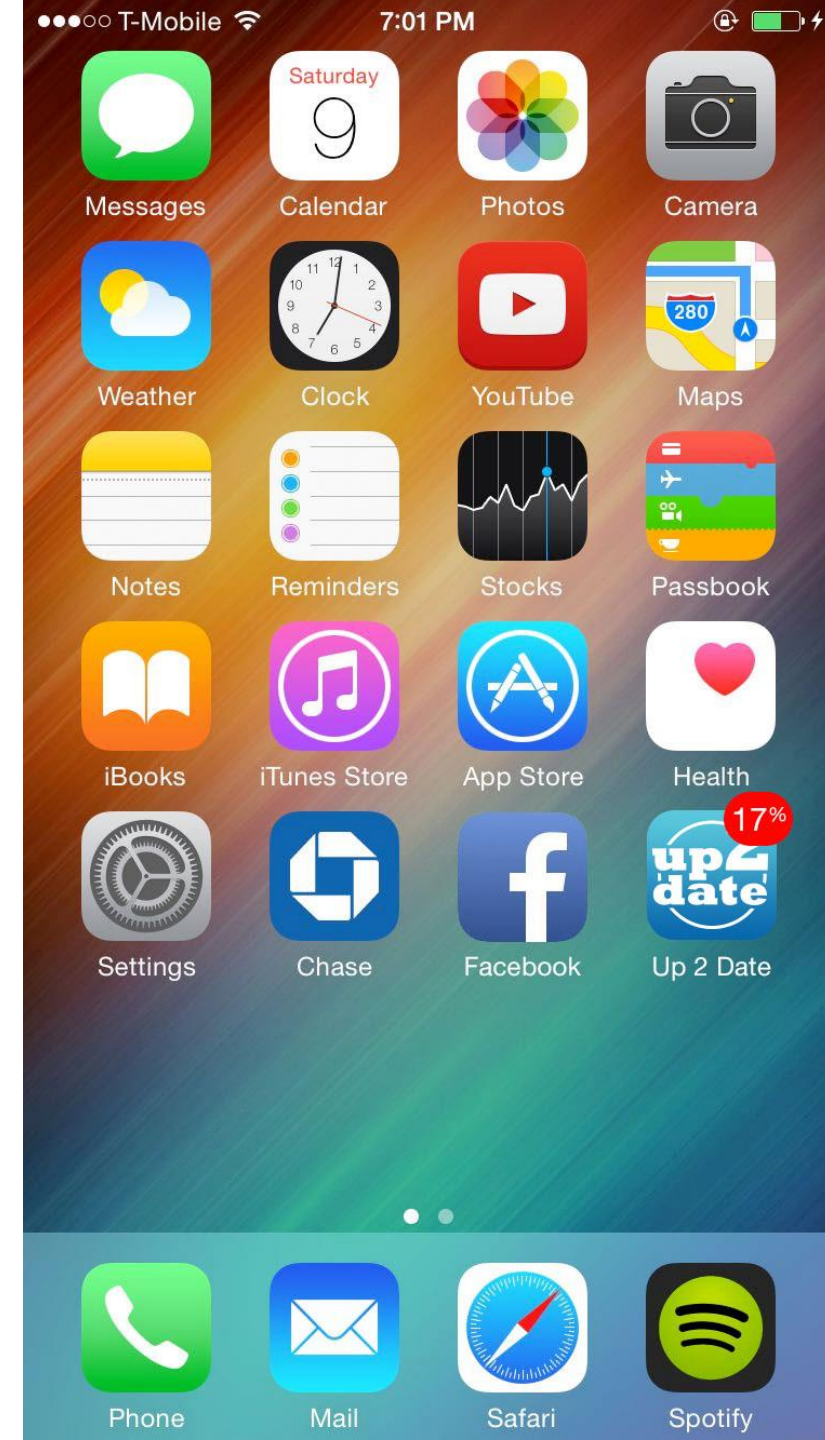
⌚ 0:30





# Actions and Triggers

- What action do we want the user to take to receive this reward?
  - Our data indicates that 8 minutes is the minimum amount of time need to complete the required habit forming actions
- What external triggers are we using to get the user to take action
  - Reminder notifications
  - Content consumption progress bars
  - Sharable report cards





# User Investment

- What user investment do we require?
  - Progressive customization
- Once the user adds their city they get news from their local paper which makes them even more informed
- The user adds their political affiliation and they get opposing political views on the same issue



# Thank You

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