THE MOBILE APP ENTREPRENEUR

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Table of Contents

The Launch

Overview

The first step to creating an app is having a great idea. Entrepreneurs develop ideas for new apps in a variety of ways, however at their core, successful apps boil down to **problems and solutions**. The best apps add genuine value to users' lives by identifying a specific *problem* in the real world and developing a creative *solution* to address that problem. If an app does not target a very specific aspect of our lives and serve a very specific purpose, users will have no real motivation to download it.

Developing an App Idea

How do apps solve problems? Let's look at some examples:

In 2009, Garrett Camp was in a foreign city and could not find a ride to his destination. He and his friends were forced to pay for an expensive private driver. Later, Camp and Travis Kalanick thought "what if you could request a ride from your phone?" and Uber was born.

PROBLEM	*People need rides from one location to another and it can be difficult to find taxis, or too expensive to rent a car or pay for a driver.*
SOLUTION	*An app that allows users to request a ride from nearly any location and have an affordable transportation option within minutes.*

Entrepreneur Michael Acton Smith was experiencing stress and sleepless nights from his many business ventures. After reluctantly trying meditation, he realized it worked because it was based in real science, not just a fad. This experience led him to create Calm, a leading wellness app and business selling meditation products and sharing motivational "Sleep Stories."

PROBLEM	*People experience stress in their everyday lives and often have issues sleeping or maintaining focus during the day.*
SOLUTION	*An app that supports users in discovering meditation strategies, sleep aids, and other health and wellness information.*

The same thought process can even be applied to entertainment such as mobile app games.

PROBLEM	*People want to play games remotely with their friends to have fun and challenge each other.*
SOLUTION	*A multiplayer mobile app game that is easy to learn and encourages users to spend time to increase their scores.*

Strategies for Identifying Problems

Mobile app entrepreneurs come up with a variety of strategies for pinpointing a real-world problem and designing a mobile app to solve that problem. Here are a few common approaches:

1. **Take a detailed account of your life for one day.**

    For example, you may wake up early, walk the dog, eat breakfast, commute to school, take notes in class, do homework, play video games with friends, etc. Each of these activities could be a potential area to find "problems" for an app to address.

2. **Place yourself in another person's shoes.**

    Imagine the daily life of a person in a different age group or who leads a different life than your own. What aspects of their lives might benefit from a useful app?

3. **Imagine what life might look like in the future.**

    If you can get creative and identify a trend that may develop in the coming years, you may be able to get in on the ground floor and develop an app to support that upcoming trend.

Researching the App Market

Perhaps one of the most common and successful ways to develop a new app idea is to closely study the existing app market. While it may seem logical that the best app ideas are completely original, that isn't always the case. Rather, true innovation often comes from modifying, improving, and building upon existing ideas. If other successful apps have been created to serve a unique need, then that specific problem really does exist, and users are seeking solutions.

Of course, you cannot simply copy an existing app. You'll need to find a unique approach to the problem by doing the following:

Analyze Your Competition

Identifying the strengths and weaknesses of existing apps may provide insight into what works and what doesn't.

Make Improvements

Perhaps your competitors' apps are too complicated, too broad, or aimed at the wrong audience. Instead, an intuitive, easy-to-use app that solves one specific problem for one specific type of user might be very successful.

The best place to start researching the current app market is to browse the app store for apps listed under various categories and keywords. Exploring each app category and searching for various keywords will give you a good sense of the many types and approaches of apps on the market.

TERM	EXAMPLE
Categories *are groups of similar types of applications that all serve a common function.*	*Social Media* *Games* *Education*
Keywords *are specific words or phrases that describe the topic of an application and provide a more targeted description of individual applications.*	*The Education category includes keywords such as* ***literature***, ***study***, ***notes***, ***science***, *etc.*

Now that you've familiarized yourself with the strategies involved in developing a new app idea, it's your turn to establish yourself as an up-and-coming entrepreneur in the mobile app market!

In this project, you will identify a new app idea and send an email to your instructor seeking approval to pursue your mobile app business.

Instructions

1. Open the **Project 1 Planning Form**. Follow the instructions to complete the form, then save the file.

   Review Isabella's samples for guidance only as you create your own original work.

2. From your email account (Gmail, Microsoft Outlook, or similar), compose an email to your instructor with the Subject [Mobile App Proposal].

3. Begin your email with a salutation, such as [Dear Mrs. Toms], then use Part 3 of your completed **Project 1 Planning Form** to compose the 3 paragraphs of your proposal email.

4. Conclude your email with a complimentary close, such as [Sincerely, Isabella Martinez].

5. Attach your **Project 1 Planning Form** to the email.

6. Carefully proofread your email for accuracy and format. Send the proposal email and attachment to your instructor and print if required.

   Note: *Your instructor will respond indicating whether you are approved to continue on in this simulation.*

Syncing Up with Isabella Martinez

Isabella looked to her own life to develop her app idea. She knew that a family chore app would be a huge success.

The proposal **email** that Isabella composed to her instructor is shown below.

Send

From ∨	Isabella Martinez <imartinez@email.com>
To	Deandra Toms <dtoms@email.com>
Cc	
Subject	Mobile App Proposal

Project 1 Planning Form.docx
25 KB

Dear Mrs. Toms,

My name is Isabella Martinez and I am writing to request your approval for my new mobile app business idea. I'm incredibly excited to launch this entrepreneurial venture within the mobile app market and I think that my idea will provide a real value for users. Although the name of my mobile app is not finalized, my initial ideas are TidyUp, WeTidy, and Home Helper.

My mobile app will provide users with a convenient way to organize all aspects of their home lives with their family. In considering my own family's experiences on a day-to-day basis, I realized that we often encounter problems with juggling busy schedules and finding the time and motivation to complete household chores. To solve this problem, my app will allow users to create and manage tasks for their family and will motivate and reward users to get chores done.

Because my app idea involves organizing and completing tasks, it most appropriately fits within the Productivity & Utilities app category. Users will be able to search for the app using the following specific keywords and phrases: task management, household chores, family and parenting, home organization, and motivation. I am attaching my Project 1 Planning Form for your review and approval, and I hope you will agree that this idea would make for a fantastic app.

Sincerely,

Isabella Martinez

Look at What Isabella Produced
Use Isabella's proposal **email** as a guide for creating your own. Do not duplicate her work.
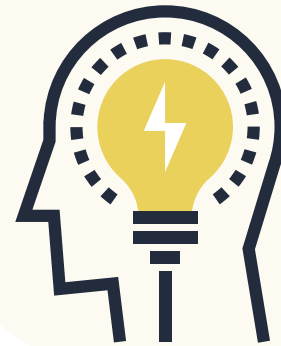
2 Mobile App Business Profile
Defining Your App's Description & Features

Overview

After studying the existing mobile app market and identifying a unique problem and solution your app will address, you're ready to take the next steps into the mobile app business: developing your concept further by detailing its unique features.

Standing Out from the Crowd

While brainstorming problems and solutions to inspire your app idea, you may have uncovered other mobile apps that use a similar approach. Each of these apps likely have their own strengths and weaknesses, and you can use that knowledge to better position your app within the market.

To help your app stand out on the app store among its competitors, you'll need to have a clear understanding of what makes your product better and unique. Based on your review of the app market, your mobile app may differentiate itself in any of the following ways:

- *Appealing to users in different age groups*
- *Offering a cheaper download price*
- *Improving or simplifying a common approach to a problem*
- *Building a more attractive and visually appealing app*
- *Providing a smoother or more intuitive user experience*
- *Building a larger, more active user community*
- *Adding new and exciting features*

Understanding Your Target Market

A **target market** is a specific group of people a business focuses on selling to, often grouped by age, interests, geographic location, gender, and more. A deep understanding of your target market is crucial because it will help you develop the type of app that will most satisfy and appeal to that market. Having a clear understanding of your target market can also help you more effectively promote your app by developing marketing materials aimed at that audience.

When determining the characteristics of your target market, be creative and try to imagine the type of person most likely to use your app. It is important to understand that these general attributes represent only one possible example of a group of users who may be interested in your app; it is *not* intended to represent all possible users.

Some attributes you can use to help understand your target market include the following:

ATTRIBUTE	EXAMPLE
Age	*An app helping users find the best colleges to apply to is likely to appeal primarily to high-school aged users*
Family size	*An app providing parenting tips is likely to appeal to people with children*

	Income	*An app reviewing luxury cars is likely to appeal primarily to those seeking to buy luxury vehicles*
	Occupation	*An app featuring a digital gradebook is likely to appeal primarily to teachers*
	Interests	*An app mapping the path of a user's running route is likely to appeal primarily to people interested in physical fitness*
	Location	*An app reviewing restaurants in New York City is likely to appeal primarily to people who live in or travel to New York*

Keeping key attributes about your ideal user in mind will help as you design your app to include all the ideas that will help make it unique.

Refining Your App Idea

To solidify your app idea, you'll need to develop a **description** and a list of **features**. Not only will writing a formal summary of your app help accurately define your idea, but it will also prove useful when developing marketing materials.

For example, your app store profile page where users download your app is one of the most important tools to communicating what makes your app unique. Your app description will need to capture the reader's attention, convey the benefits of your app, and entice them to download.

Most app store pages also prominently display the various features the app offers. Your app's features will stem directly from your original idea and will determine the overall look and feel of your app, along with the various screens it will include. For example, if you're creating a video editing app, you'll likely need features that allow users to import and export media, trim clips, create video transitions, change the colors or effects of clips, and so on.

Here are some examples of popular apps along with a few of their features:

Twitter FEATURES	Spotify FEATURES	Lyft FEATURES	Yelp FEATURES
• Profile page • Compose tweets • Like and favorite tweets • Search • Direct message • Notifications	• Play music and podcasts • Search • Add media to your library • Create playlists	• Maps • Review ride history • Request a ride • Add payment information • Rewards	• Search • Browse categories • Order delivery • Create bookmarks • View menus • Write a review

Writing a description of your app and brainstorming its features will provide the roadmap for your app's development. These tools will give you a firm understanding of what you want to create, how best to market your product, and the visual components your app must include in order to achieve success.

> In this project, you will refine your idea by writing a descriptive summary of your app, identifying five key features it will have, and defining your target audience.

Instructions

1. Open the **Project 2 Planning Form**. Follow the instructions to complete the form, then save the file.

   Review Isabella's sample for guidance only as you create your own original work.

2. Create a new word processing document and save it as **Project 2**.

3. At the top of the page, key your mobile app name followed by the text [Business Profile] in font size 22, bold and center aligned.

4. On the next line, create a table with 7 rows and 2 columns.

5. Using your completed **Project 2 Planning Form**, complete the Customer Profile information in the table.

6. Merge the first row, bold the text [Customer Profile], and change the font size to 14.

7. Below the table, key your mobile app name followed by the text [App Store Profile] in font size 14, bold and center aligned.

8. On the next line, copy and paste or key the description of your app from Part 2 of your completed **Project 2 Planning Form**.

9. Below your app description, key your list of 5 features, followed by a bulleted list of the descriptions of each feature.

10. Format the size, style, and placement of the table and text so that the document projects a professional appearance.

11. Carefully proofread your work for accuracy and format, then resave the file. Print or share the document if required by your instructor.

Syncing Up with Isabella Martinez

Isabella knew great features would set her app apart from its competition. She made sure to highlight the appeal of these unique ideas in her app description.

The **business profile** that Isabella created to describe WeTidy is shown below.

CHAT

- Keep your househ
- Share family phot

CALENDAR

- Organize everyon
- Reminisce with fa

SHOPPING LIST

- Add items to a co
- Add previous pur

WeTidy Business Profile

Customer Profile	
Age	WeTidy is most likely to appeal to young adults or middle-aged adults. It may also appeal to the children living with those users.
Family size	WeTidy is most likely to appeal to users with one or more children.
Gender	WeTidy will appeal to users of any gender.
Ethnicity	WeTidy will appeal to users of any ethnicity.
Income	WeTidy will appeal to users at any income level.
Occupation	WeTidy is likely to appeal to users of any occupation, but primarily to users who keep normal work hours and work in an office or other setting outside their homes.
Interests	WeTidy is likely to appeal to users interested in household management, organization, and parenting. Users may also have an interest in interior decorating, home improvement, or gardening.
Location	WeTidy is likely to appeal to users in any geographical location who live in houses or apartments.

WeTidy App Store Profile

WeTidy is the perfect app to help any family make chores fun and get chores done. Bring all your family members together in one virtual space to keep both parents and kids organized and motivated to complete tasks around the house. Easily set up individual or recurring tasks and chores, assign to one or more person, and earn points for getting things done. Creating shopping lists, cleaning up kids' rooms, planning out the family calendar—no matter what your household needs, WeTidy helps make getting it done more fun and keeps it all organized under one roof.

FEATURES:

TASKS

- Create tasks and label them by type, date, and family member
- Organize and group related tasks together into larger projects
- Track your progress towards family goals with colorful charts and fun emojis

REWARDS

- Earn points for completing chores and spend them on fun family rewards
- Stay motivated with points, badges, rewards, and more encouragement

Look at What Isabella Produced

Use Isabella's **business profile** as a guide for creating your own. Do not duplicate her work.

3 App Icon and Company Logo
Creating and Designing Your Brand

Overview

Perhaps the first thing users recognize about a mobile app is its icon. **Mobile app icons** are usually square images with rounded corners that users tap to open an app on their mobile devices. App icons represent great opportunities for businesses to create a lasting impression and brand their products. The best app icons are memorable because of their simple, clear designs that communicate the style and purpose of the apps themselves.

Many mobile app companies also create an additional graphic to use as a company logo. **Company logos** may include elements of an app's icon, but are designed to brand the product in a more general way. For example, company logos may be used on letterheads, marketing materials, or as mastheads on company websites. To differentiate from the smaller app icon, many logos include the full company name as well as a tagline, which is a brief, catchy phrase that's integral to marketing a product.

Taken together, your app icon and company logo are important tools to help brand your business and create its unique visual identity. When designing, pay careful attention to the colors and fonts you select and choose graphics and shapes that will create a recognizable look for your mobile app.

> **In this project, you will create your mobile app's icon and a company logo.**

Instructions

1. Open the *Project 3 Planning Form*. Follow the instructions to complete the form, then save the file.

   > Review Isabella's sample for guidance only as you create your own original work.

2. Using an illustration or drawing software program such as Adobe Illustrator, Adobe Photoshop, or any graphic design software, create a new document named *App Icon 1*.

3. Draw a 2" high by 2" wide rounded rectangle with a 1 pt border, then use your sketch from your completed *Project 3 Planning Form* to create your first mobile app icon design.

   Note: *Be sure to save files in a format that will allow them to be placed as images in other software applications; for example, JPEG, TIFF, PNG, or WMF.*

4. Repeat the process to create your next two mobile app icon designs as separate files named *App Icon 2* and *App Icon 3*.

5. Create a new word processing document and save it as *Project 3 App Icon*.

6. Insert all three icons in the document and resize them to approximately the same size.

7. Choose the mobile app icon that looks the most appealing and realistic to use throughout this simulation by inserting a checkmark, circle, or text box to indicate your choice. Resave the document, then print or share with your instructor.

8. Create a new illustration or drawing document and save it as *Company Logo*.

9. Using your sketch from your completed *Project 3 Planning Form*, design the company logo that corresponds with the icon you selected in step 7. Resave the document, then print or share with your instructor.

10. Upon your instructor's approval of both your app icon and company logo, retrieve the approved version of your mobile app icon file and save it as *App Icon Final*.

App Icon and Company Logo

Syncing Up with Isabella Martinez

Isabella wanted her app icon and company logo to have a clean, streamlined look. She used similar colors and graphics to create consistent branding.

The **app icon** and **company logo** Isabella created for WeTidy are shown below.

App Icon

Version 1

Version 2

Version 3
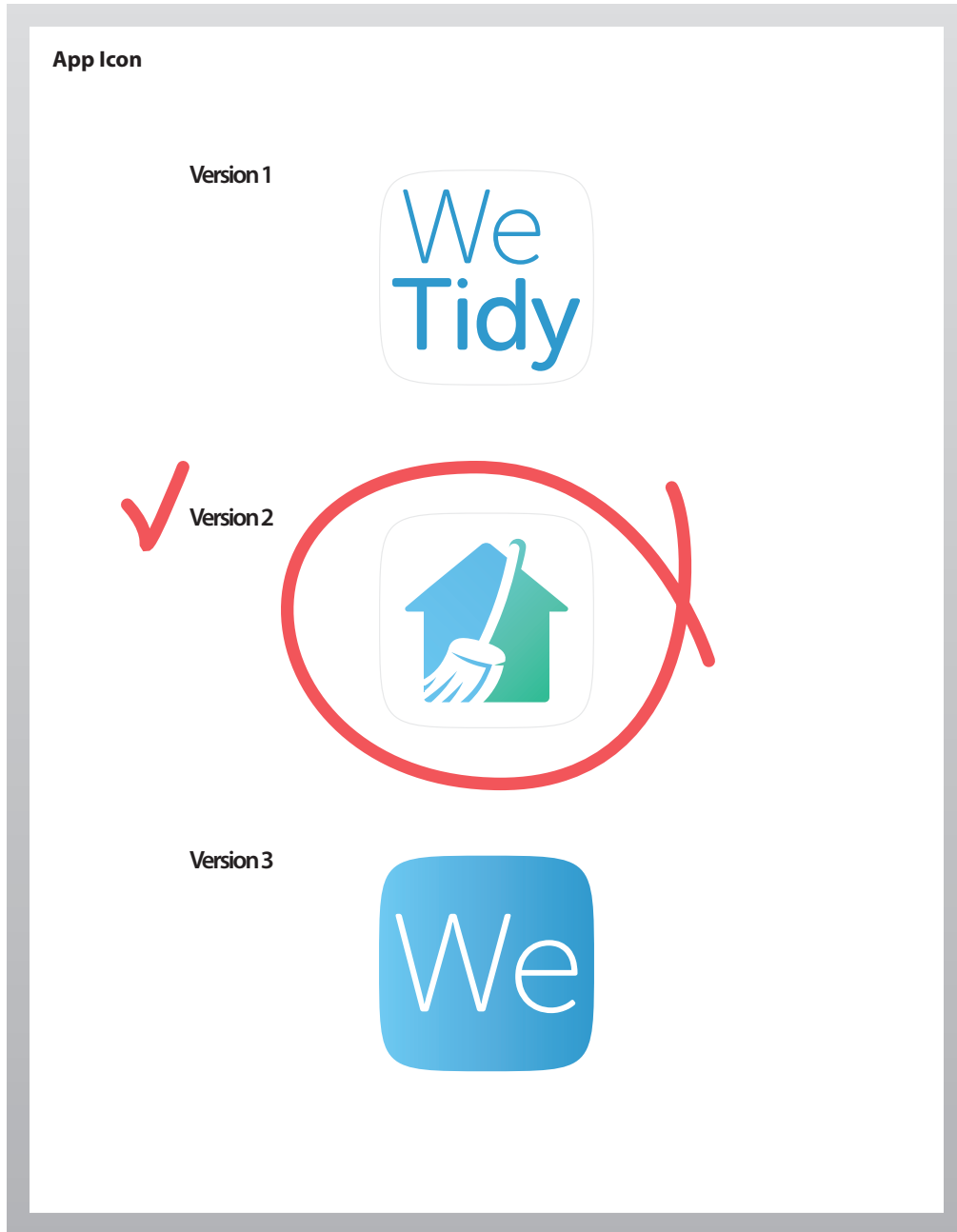
Look at What Isabella Produced

Use Isabella's **app icon** and **company logo** as a guide for creating your own. Do not duplicate her work.

Company Logo

WeTidy

Fun Chores Are Done Chores

Word Processing

5 News Release
Announcing Your New Mobile App

Overview

A **news release** is an official statement from a business or organization designed to announce a piece of newsworthy information. News releases provide the media with information that is accurate, current, and relevant to their readers.

Many mobile app businesses use news releases to announce their initial launch, communicate major version updates, or promote specific deals. Outlets that receive your news release may decide to use that information to publish articles featuring your news, promote your app, or contact you for additional comments. By distributing a news release to a variety of relevant newspapers, magazines, websites, and social media influencers, you can communicate important information about your app to many potential users with this single promotional tool.

A well-written news release should be concise, informative, and attention-grabbing. While news releases are generally written with an objective tone, they can also help tell your business's story the way you want, portraying your mobile app in the best possible light.
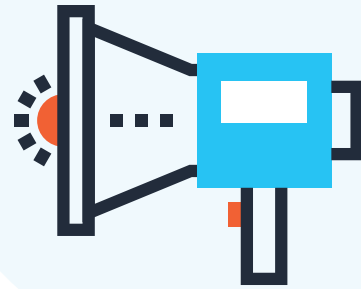
> In this project, you will create a news release on your company letterhead to announce the launch of your mobile app to members of the media.

Instructions

1. Open the *Project 5 Planning Form*. Follow the instructions to complete the form, then save the file.

   > Review Isabella's sample for guidance only as you create your own original work.

2. Open your *Project 4 Letterhead* file and save it as *Project 5*.

3. Change the document spacing to single spaced and key the text [FOR IMMEDIATAE RELEASE] in bold and all caps.

4. Two lines below the text, use your completed *Project 5 Planning Form* to key your headline in bold and all caps.

5. Key the four body paragraphs of your news release.

6. To indicate the end of the news release, two lines below the last paragraph, key [###] center aligned.

7. Carefully proofread your work for accuracy and format, then resave the file. Print or share the document if required by your instructor.

Syncing Up with Isabella Martinez

Isabella understood the importance of good publicity. She knew a compelling news release could help drive new users to download WeTidy.

The **news release** that Isabella created to announce WeTidy is shown below.

WeTidy

86 Hillyard Street • Mesa, AZ 85202

(480) 555-1212

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FAMILY CHORE AND PRODUCTIVITY APP "WETIDY" AVAILABLE NOW ON APPLE AND ANDROID MOBILE DEVICES

Mesa, AZ August 1, 20___, – Local entrepreneur Isabella Martinez is proud to announce the launch of the innovative new household organization app, WeTidy. After a successful beta app campaign supporting thousands of initial users, this all-in-one mobile hub for families is available now for iPhone and Android users on both the Apple App Store and Google Play Store.

WeTidy is designed to help families and households stay organized, productive, and efficient by making chores more fun through a unique rewards feature. The mobile app brings all family members together into one virtual space to help organize household chores, assign tasks to specific family members, and promote motivation and responsibility by awarding points that can be redeemed for fun prizes like extra allowance, movie nights, favorite takeout meals—anything the user sets.

"I created WeTidy not only because a family chore mobile app was a great idea," Martinez explains, "but because it was something my own chaotic family desperately needed! With WeTidy, busy families like mine can always stay connected, stay motivated, and stay tidy."

WeTidy includes a number of additional great features, including charts and filters, a centralized family chat, a joint household shopping list, a collaborative calendar, and many more. The app is available now for both iPhone and Android users for the low price of $4.99.

###

Fun Chores Are Done Chores

WeTidyApp.com

Look at What Isabella Produced

Use Isabella's **news release** as a guide for creating your own. Do not duplicate her work.

Spreadsheets

14 User Review Analysis
Analyzing App Store Ratings

Overview

App Store Optimization (ASO) is a critical component to increasing downloads, and therefore profit, on the app store. ASO involves boosting the visibility of your app within the app store, meaning users are more likely to discover and download your app when browsing. One way to increase ASO is to ensure your app receives great reviews. Glowing reviews will make your app more attractive to potential new users, just as a higher average star rating can bump your app up to the top of the charts.

To keep track of how users are rating and reviewing your app, you will create a **user review analysis** comparing the number of user ratings you have received at each star level (from 1 to 5) as well as including a sample review at each star level. Of course, you want user feedback of your app to be as positive as possible and monitoring ratings and reviews can help achieve that goal.

One way a review analysis can be useful is to highlight potential issues with your app to address in future updates. Negative reviewers may be frustrated using certain features of your app, which represents valuable information your Development and Design Teams can use to improve the app. Similarly, 5-star reviewers are likely to rave about aspects of your app that they love, which may give you new ideas for marketing your app to your target audience.

> In this project, you will create a spreadsheet and a chart comparing the number of user reviews your app has received at each star level.

Instructions

1. Open the **Project 14 Planning Form**. Follow the instructions to complete the form, then save the file.

   Review Isabella's sample for guidance only as you create your own original work.

2. Create a new spreadsheet and save it as **Project 14**.

3. In cell A1, key your mobile app name in font size 20, bold, then in cell A2, key the text [User Review Analysis] in bold.

4. Merge and center cell A1 across columns A through D, then merge and center cell A2 across columns A through D.

   Note: *Adjust row heights and column widths as needed so that all data displays properly.*

5. In cells A4 through C4, key the column headings Rating, Number of Ratings, and Sample Review.

6. Using your completed **Project 14 Planning Form**, key the text in cells A5 through C9 for each of the five reviews.

   Hint: *Use quotation marks as you key the reviews in cells C5 through C9.*

7. Wrap the text in cells C5 through C9.

8. Center and middle align the text in cells A4 through C9.

9. After each review in cells C5 through C9, key a dash (-) followed by a fictional username to represent the account leaving the review in the app store.

10. Using drawing tools or shapes, insert a star near cell D5 measuring approximately .4" high and .4" wide. Change the shape fill and outline to a color or colors of your app icon.

11. Copy and paste the shape four times, then align each shape and distribute them horizontally.

12. Group the shapes, then position near the center of cell D5.

13. Continue to create stars in groups of four, three, two, and one and position in cells D6 through D9 accordingly.

14. Using the data in cells A5 through B9, create a bar chart comparing the number of user reviews at each star rating titled [App Store Ratings].

15. Change the chart colors and apply a chart style to project a professional appearance, then position to the right of the data.

16. Format the style, colors, and borders so that your spreadsheet projects a professional appearance.

17. Carefully proofread your work for accuracy and format, then resave the file. Print or share the spreadsheet if required by your instructor.
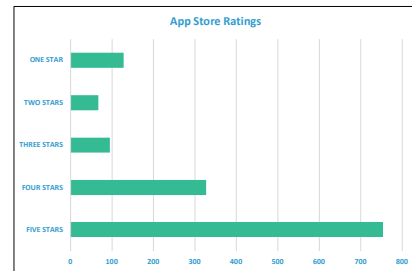
Syncing Up with Isabella Martinez

Isabella wanted to study how users were responding to her app. She created a review analysis to see how many reviews were rated with 5 stars.

The **user review analysis** that Isabella created is shown below.

	WeTidy		
	User Review Analysis		
Rating	**Number of Ratings**	**Sample Review**	
FIVE STARS	754	"This app is fantastic! I couldn't believe how easy it was to get my whole house up and running completing tasks and staying organized with chores. And the calendar feature is perfect for a busy family like ours." - CptFantastic11	★★★★★
FOUR STARS	327	"WeTidy is so much fun to use with my family! We all love posting fun, silly messages using the chat feature to help us all stay in touch and know what's going on in the family." - VTSkiBum	★★★★
THREE STARS	95	"A good solution to staying productive and efficient getting chores done. The rewards system is a nice touch for staying motivated, too." - RobertH72	★★★
TWO STARS	67	"My family needed a tool to stay organized, but WeTidy sometimes felt like an extra step in getting things done. For example, I struggled adding items to the shopping list and it would have been easier to write it by hand." - RobinsonFam	★★
ONE STAR	128	"I installed this app and deleted it that same day. It was way too confusing and complicated to get started with too many settings." - StantonYoung	★

App Store Ratings

(Bar chart showing: ONE STAR ~128, TWO STARS ~67, THREE STARS ~95, FOUR STARS ~327, FIVE STARS ~754, with axis from 0 to 800)

Look at What Isabella Produced
Use Isabella's **user review analysis** as a guide for creating your own. Do not duplicate her work.