



Tailoring nutrition apps to engage different consumer groups

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Background

A nutrition app could be a helpful tool to support the transition towards a healthier diet. For a prolonged change in eating behaviour, such an app should be used for a longer period of time. Therefore, the app must meet the consumers' needs and desires.

Objectives

Firstly, to identify which prerequisites a nutrition app should meet in order to support healthy eating behaviours. Secondly, to investigate how preferences for these app-functionalities differ between consumer groups with varying health-related motive orientations.

Methods

- Year 1: Home-use test with 6 commercially available nutrition apps + focus group discussions with 48 Dutch consumers.
- Year 2: Online survey among 1500 consumers, representative for NL population. Cluster analysis based on HRMO (Geeroms, 2008).

Results

Home-use test and focus groups

- Three stages in nutrition app usage were defined: (1) start, (2) usage and (3) end or continuation.
- Ten user centric aspects were identified, containing a total of 41 prerequisites for a nutrition app - see figure 1

Online survey

Table 1. Top three of most important app functionalities and mean scores in the 'usage phase' per segment

	Segment 1 - Moderately motivated (32%)	Segment 2 - Health motivated (43%)	Segment 3 - Body motivated (14%)	Segment 4 - Mind motivated (9%)	Total sample
1	Little advertisement in free version	5.3 Clear privacy conditions	5.7 Complete and reliable database of food products	5.9 Easy navigation	6.1 Complete and reliable database of food products
2	Complete and reliable database of food products	5.3 Whole app in one language, preferably Dutch	5.7 Quick and easy entry of daily food intake	5.9 Quick and easy entry of daily food intake	6.0 Easy navigation
3	Easy navigation	5.2 Easy navigation	5.7 Food products from reliable scientific database	5.8 Complete and reliable database of food products	6.0 Little advertisement in free version

- For all segments (except 3) 'easy navigation' is in the top three
- For the health-motivated, 'privacy' is particularly important
- For the body-motivated, 'reliability' is particularly important
- For the mind-motivated, 'ease of use' is particularly important

Conclusions

- A nutrition app should be supportive in all phases of usage in order to achieve continued use of the app and thereby persistent changes in eating behaviour.
- Consumers differ in which app functionalities they find most important in a nutrition app, but overall reliability and user-friendliness seem important across all groups.

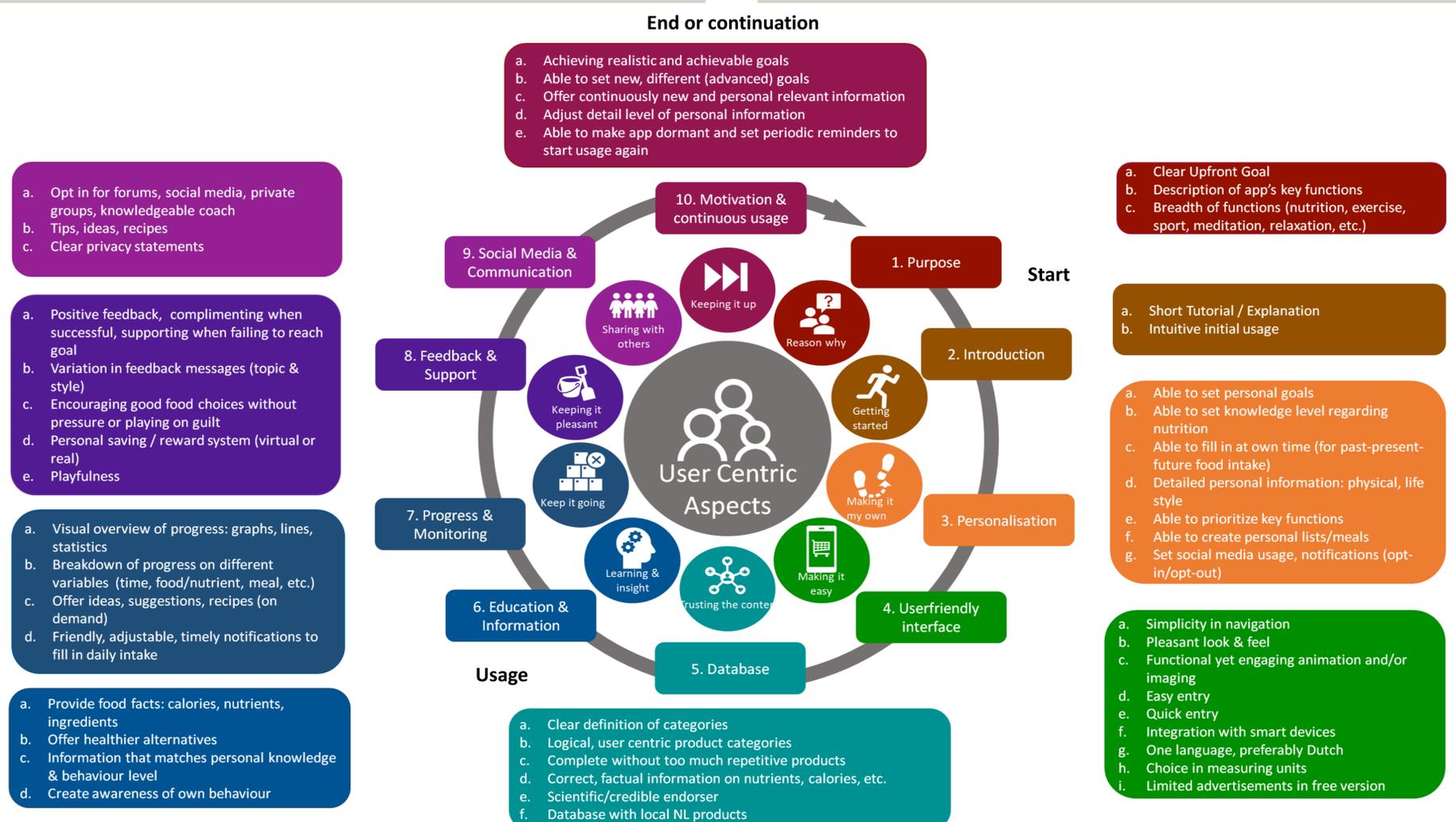


Figure 1. Three stages of nutrition app usage (start, usage, end/continuation) and 10 'user-centric aspects' each containing several requirements

