

Introduction

The purpose of this project is to investigate how users of GC Collab and GC Connex view their profiles. The interview comes after a quantitative analysis of all profiles on GC Collab and a comparison of GC Collab profiles to external social media (LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter). These analyses showed that most GC Collab users are not completing their profiles, even if they have fully filled out profiles on other social media.

GC Collab was chosen as the main platform for the profile research as the future of the GCTools is to connect public servants with non-government workers and is therefore the more inclusive platform. Currently, GC Connex does not allow any non-government employee to join the platform. GC Collab is not open to the public, but it does allow various non-public servant groups to join, such as students and academics. Users can also send personal invites to individuals they think would benefit from using the platform. This user base is more in line with the direction of the GCTools, and as such, future research will focus on this platform. Users from GC Connex were able to participate in this study, or choose to focus on their GC Connex profile if it is used more frequently than GC Collab.

This interview was proposed as a means of determining why users are not completing their GC Collab profiles, what value they think the profile has, what features they think are unnecessary, what would motivate them to complete their profile on the platform and to collect user stories that can be used in personas. A secondary goal of this study was to gather suggestions to be implemented for the profile redesign.

HYPOTHESES

While this research is primarily exploratory, there are some expected results. It is expected that the majority of participants will not be able to correctly identify the features included on the GC Collab profile. Based on previous research, we also anticipate that many of the participants will be using the GC Collab profile to interact with Career Marketplace. We are also expecting to gain a better understanding of what features are most important to a profile, as well as the value of a profile, and the motivation behind completing a profile from the view of current users.

Methods

PARTICIPANTS

Interviews were conducted with 16 GC Collab/Connex users. Participants were primarily recruited from the GC Collab group “GC Collab Café”. The recruitment message was also posted on the GC Connex group “UX Research Participants”, and the GC Collab “Wire”. It is expected that this group of people will be diverse in gender, age range, department and job responsibilities, and be representative of the larger GC Collab/Connex population. An effort was made to have interviews with not only public servants, but external partners, in order to account for the future user base of the platform. To ensure that those groups are represented, individual messages were sent for recruitment. While the medium for recruitment varied, the recruitment message (Appendix A) stayed the same.

STRUCTURE

Interviews took place over a week-long period. Participants had the ability to complete the interview in English or in French. All interviews were conducted by two members of the UX team, and there were two teams available to run interviews. One member took notes about the participant’s answers, while the other

administered the interview. At least one team of researchers is fluent in French in order to conduct French interviews. The person administering the interview had a script from which to read, to ensure that all participants received the same instructions (Appendix B). Other members of the UX team were invited to sit in on interviews and take notes, but only the UX researchers were responsible for conducting the interviews. Participants completed the interview in two stages: firstly, a demographic questionnaire, followed by a semi-structured interview. The questionnaire and interview questions were primarily written by the GCTools UX team, however partners for the profile project were consulted, and in some cases provided questions to be added. These questions were relevant to the profile project as a whole, but represent areas of interest for specific partners. The entire process took roughly 30 minutes. To account for late participants, or participants who have feedback that went beyond the time allotted, interviews were booked for 40 minutes.

PROCEDURE

At Office

For participants able to come to the GCTools team office (140 O'Connor, Ottawa), they were greeted in the lobby where they were then signed into the building. Once in the interview room, which was an unused office with a closed door, participants were seated and given a brief synopsis of the purpose of the study, how their data would be used, and informed that they were free to withdraw from the interview at any point if they felt uncomfortable.

Participants received a short questionnaire enquiring about demographic information and their familiarity with the current profile (Appendix C). The questionnaire consists of 7 questions and took no more than 5-7 minutes to complete. Following the questionnaire, the interview began. The administrator asked open-ended questions (a full list of these questions can be seen in Appendix D). The interview portion took the remainder of the time slot (approximately 23-25 minutes). For questions 8 and 9, participants were shown a copy of their profile to use as a reference. Participants completing the interview in person were shown their profile on the administrator's computer. Once the participant answers all the questions, and expressed that they have given all the feedback they could, they are thanked for their time and participation, and shown out.

Out of Office

As the GCTools connect government employees, partners, and students across Canada, and occasionally, the world, some participants were unable to come to the Ottawa office location for the interview. In those cases, the interview took place by phone, or through online conference. Out of office interviews took the same amount of time as the at office interviews (30 minutes). Participants were sent a copy of the questionnaire, in the medium of their choice (email, GC Message, etc.). Participants completed the questionnaire ahead of the interview time, and sent it back to the administrator. For participants who did not complete it in time, the questionnaire was done over the phone. The rest of the interview was conducted as is stated in the *At Office* section, with one researcher asking questions, and the second taking notes. For questions 8 and 9 participants were asked to view their profile on their computer.

Results

QUESTIONNAIRE

16 participants (7 male; $M_{age} = 44.5$ years old) took part in this study, and came from a diverse range of public service backgrounds. Table 1 displays the job title breakdown. While not all participants were working

in the private sector at the time of the interview, all 16 participants had some experience working in the public service. The average participant had worked in the public service for 10 years (120 months).

Table 1. Job titles for participants

JOB TITLE	FREQUENCY
STUDENT	1
CEO	1
ENGINEER	1
WRITER	1
CONTRACT	1
OFFICER	2
MANAGER	3
ANALYST	6

The second half of the questionnaire required participants to identify what features appear on the GC Collab/Connex profile from a list of miscellaneous features. 31 features were provided, and were selected from the GC Collab/Connex profile, Facebook and LinkedIn. Of the 31 features listed, 29 appear on the GC Collab/Connex profile. This question was included to get a better understanding of what features the users are familiar with, and recognize as part of the profile, even if they do not use them. On average, participants were able to identify 60% of features, with the most easily identified being About Me (with 99% of participants selecting it) followed by Department, Phone Number, Email and Work Experience (98%). The least identified feature was Website, with only 31% of participants recognizing it as part of the profile. No hypotheses were made about specific features that would be correctly identified, but the results do support the hypothesis that most users do not know many of the features included on the profile.

INTERVIEW

In order to analyse the results from the interview, an affinity diagram session was held. One interview question required participants to list features they would like to see on someone else's profile in order to contact them, and the resulting data was not included in the affinity diagram exercise. The results from this question are displayed in Figure 1. 159 user quotes were selected from the interview and grouped together to identify patterns and trends. The affinity diagram session lasted the span of four days and 10 members of the GCTools team took part in the analysis.

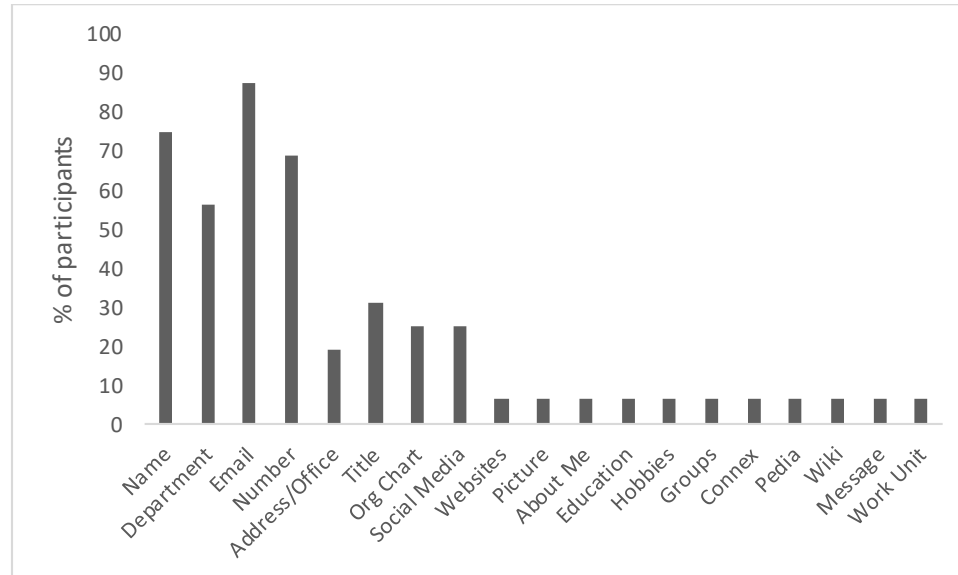


Figure 1. Bar graph displaying the features participants would like to see on someone else's profile.

Quantitative analysis shows that the most important information a profile contains is the users' email address, name, phone number and department. An affinity diagram session was held to analysis the qualitative data. Over the course of this session, 5 main themes about the profile emerged. These themes reflect user opinions and should be considered when redesigning the profile.

“I want to promote myself”

A subset of participants stated that they used their profile in order to promote themselves. They used it to show who they are, what they are doing with their work, and side projects they are interested in. One participant noted using their profile to display their experience and education as a means of validating their input and opinions when participating in group discussions on the platform (Participant 11). It was also used as a marketing tool (i.e. a method of personal branding) to apply for jobs, or hire new employees. These users view the platform as a serious business tool, and less of a social media platform, but overall as a method of increasing awareness of themselves in a professional manner (Participant 12).

“I have problems using the profile”

Many participants believed that the profile was often too cluttered and hard to navigate. There was also concern that some of the features (specifically About Me and Skills) were too difficult to define and confusing to fill in, requiring more of a cognitive effort, which ultimately led to incomplete profiles. Comments such as “When I think about skills I'm not really sure how to define that. Like computer skills? Communication skills?” (Participant 5) and “My skills are all over the place... it's hard to nail them down” (Participant 16), showed the lack of understanding for the purpose of skills and the reason for including them.

“I don't use my profile”

Participants claimed not to use their profile for one of two major reasons: they felt as though they had no colleagues on the platform and the current user base is only a small portion of the workforce (Participants 1, 9), with Participant 5 saying “I have had people invite me to discussions but right now I'm not finding anybody who

is relevant to what I'm doing". Participants 2 and 3 said they did not see a value in having a profile, with Participant 3 saying "I haven't felt that it would be useful for me at this time and the projects I'm on".

Motivation for having a profile

While some users proactively created and completed their profiles, the majority of participants said they only had a profile in order to complete another goal. There were two main goals identified which led to a participant choosing to create a profile. Firstly, users explained they would create a profile in order to use the GC Collab/Connex platforms (Participants 4, 16). Participant 4 said they had not completed the profile because "I had a certain objective of what I needed [and I] just wanted to get in [to the platform] as quickly as I could to find what I wanted". The second goal of participants was creating a profile to find jobs or new employees (Participants 3, 5, 10). Participant 10 mentioned, "If you want to hire someone, [a profile] is the quickest way to really know the person".

Conditions for profile pictures

Throughout the interviews, participants articulated they preferred when other users had photos as it helps to build trust on the platform (Participants 6, 16), and reinforces that the other user is a real person (Participants 6, 8, 12, 16). Many participants did not care if the picture was a real headshot of the user as long as some effort was made to upload a photo (whether it was a real photo, a cartoon, a pet, etc.) (Participants 8, 12, 15, 16). A user who did not upload a personal picture was described as "lazy" (Participant 13).

Discussion

While participants were only able to correctly identify 60% of features currently available on the profile, the most often identified features were seen to be the most prominent features on the profile, but also some of the most labour-intensive features to complete. The features that were most often remembered are also the ones which were most often seen on GEDS and showed the information required to identify who the user is and how to contact them. These were also the features which participants identified as ones they would like to see on a profile in order to contact a user, showing they are the most important features to include in future iterations of the profile.

Multiple users expressed a lack of knowledge regarding the distinction between the profile itself and the GC Collab/Connex service. This can be seen to be a successful integration of the profile into the overall Collab/Connex service, or a lack of clarity due to an overwhelming number of features provided. Considering the lack of understanding of the Collab/Connex platforms, including whether you can apply for jobs directly through Career Marketplace (Participant 14), whether participants' profiles were on GC Collab or GC Connex (Participants 5, 8, 14, 15).

One of the comments raised in a number of different ways was about being interested in collaborating but not being able to find value in a profile or participation on GC Collab or Connex because of a lack of members. By not having enough members present and interested in collaborating on a wide range of topics, other members are discouraged from completing their profiles and participating.

Conclusions

In designing the new profile, the above concerns should be addressed. The new design should allow users to easily promote themselves and their work to their colleagues and encourage discussion of ongoing projects. It should also encourage users to upload a profile picture to build trust between users on the platform and trust of the government and public servants as a whole. Addressing these concerns would increase the current value of the profile and encourage more users to complete their profile.

Recommendations

To encourage users to complete their profiles, the profile must be simple, straightforward, and clear about the information it is requesting and the reasons why it wants that information. If it is clear that answering the information will benefit the user in some way, they are more inclined to fill it out. The profile should only request as much information as required to complete the action the user wishes to accomplish.

Reminders sent to the user to prompt them to fill out unfilled sections would also nudge them towards a higher completion rate, as speaking with participants made it clear that they were often unaware they had uncompleted sections left on their profile and were then motivated to fill out more information after the interview. A number of participants filled out their profile more completely in the week following their interview.

It should be made clear that it is possible to apply for jobs directly through the Career Marketplace, and that having a filled out profile makes this process less burdensome. Finally, the new platform should have an easily navigable, intuitive design.

Appendix A (recruitment message)

English

Volunteers needed for a GCTools profile study

Help us improve our profile service!

We are looking for volunteers for GCTools profile research. Our study investigates how GC Collab users view their profiles, and how they use their profiles. We'll also be collecting suggestions from our users for the redesign of the Open, Accessible Digital Workspace, part of the GCTools rebuild and rebrand.

Volunteers will be asked to complete a short demographic questionnaire and participate in a thirty minute interview about how they currently use their profile.

The study will take place at 140 O'Connor, Ottawa on July 4 and 5, 2018. We can also conduct the study by phone if you are unable to come to 140 O'Connor.

All responses will be kept anonymous and you may request that certain responses not be included in the final project. You have the right to end your participation in the study at any time, for any reason, during the course of the interview.

If you are interested in participating, please email Alex Mesley at Alex.Mesley@tbs-sct.gc.ca or Donna Monbourquette at Donna.Monbourquette@tbs-sct.gc.ca for more details and to sign up for a time slot.

French

Nous sommes à la recherche de bénévoles pour une étude sur les profils dans le cadre des OutilsGC

Aidez-nous à améliorer notre service de gestion des profils!

Nous sommes à la recherche de bénévoles pour une étude sur les profils dans le cadre des OutilsGC. Notre étude consiste à examiner comment les utilisateurs de GCcollab voient leur profil et comment ils l'utilisent. De plus, nous recueillerons des suggestions de nos utilisateurs pour la nouvelle conception de l'Espace de travail numérique, ouvert et accessible, qui fait partie de la nouvelle conception et image des OutilsGC.

On demandera aux bénévoles de remplir un bref questionnaire démographique et de participer à une entrevue de 30 minutes sur leur méthode actuelle d'utilisation de leur profil.

L'étude aura lieu le 5 à 11 juillet 2018, au 140, rue O'Connor, à Ottawa. Si vous n'êtes pas en mesure de vous présenter au 140, rue O'Connor, nous pouvons aussi mener l'étude par téléphone.

Toutes les réponses demeureront confidentielles, et vous pouvez demander que certaines réponses ne soient pas incluses dans le projet final. Vous avez le droit de mettre fin à votre participation à l'étude en tout temps et pour toute raison au cours de l'entrevue.

Si vous voulez participer, veuillez envoyer un courriel à Alex Mesley à Alex.Mesley@tbs-sct.gc.ca, et si vous voulez obtenir de plus amples détails et vous inscrire en réservant un intervalle de temps, veuillez envoyer un courriel à Donna Monbourquette à Donna.Monbourquette@tbs-sct.gc.ca.

Appendix B

English

Hello,

Today we are conducting an interview to determine how users interact with their GC Collab profile. The information we collect from this interview will influence the construction of the new profile-as-a-service on the GCTools rebuild and rebrand. We will be asking questions which will help us understand how people are using their profiles.

This study will consist of two parts: a questionnaire and an interview. We ask that you be open and honest when answering the questions. There are no wrong answers, we just hope to gain insight into the thought process and activities of our users. The whole interview is expected to take 30 minutes.

I will be administering the interview, and my colleague “insert name here” will be taking notes.

Do you have any questions before we get started?

You may begin the questionnaire. Once you are done, please let us know.

Thank you. We will now begin with the interview portion.

Thank you for your time.

French

Bonjour,

Aujourd’hui, nous effectuons une entrevue afin de déterminer comment les utilisateurs interagissent avec leur profil de GCcollab. Les renseignements que nous tirerons de cette entrevue influenceront la conception du nouveau profil-comme-service, qui fera partie des OutilsGC. Les questions que nous poserons ont pour objet de nous aider à comprendre comment les gens utilisent leur profil.

Cette étude comporte deux parties : un questionnaire et une entrevue. Nous vous demandons de répondre aux questions de façon ouverte et honnête. Il n’existe pas de mauvaise réponse. Nous voulons simplement acquérir une perspective de la façon de penser et des activités de nos utilisateurs. L’entrevue entière s’échelonne sur 30 minutes.

Je vais administrer l’entrevue, et « insérer le nom », mon collègue, prendra des notes.

Avant de commencer, avez-vous des questions?

Vous pouvez commencer à remplir le questionnaire. Une fois que vous avez terminé, veuillez nous le faire savoir.

Merci. Maintenant, nous allons lancer l’entrevue.

Je vous remercie d’avoir pris le temps

Appendix C (questionnaire)

Features with an asterisks are on the current GC Collab profile. Note that the asterisks does not appear on the questionnaire seen by participants.

English

Questionnaire

Age: _____

Gender: _____

Role: _____

Responsibilities:

How familiar are you with the GC Tools?

How long have you worked for the Government of Canada? _____

Circle all that apply: Which features do you think are currently on the profile?

- | | | | |
|---------------|------------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| Avatar* | Education* | Files* | Bookmarks* |
| Department* | Work experience* | Blog* | Polls* |
| Phone number* | Skills* | Interests | Photo albums* |
| Location* | Endorsements* | Events* | Badges* |
| Email* | Groups* | Badge progress* | Profile strength* |
| About me* | Portfolio* | Wire posts* | Sync profile* |
| Social media* | Widgets* | Docs* | Colleagues* |
| Website* | Likes | Pages* | |

Appendix D (interview questions)

English

Interview Questions

1. Tell me about what a profile means to you.
2. Why do you have a profile on GC Collab?
3. How do you use your GC Collab profile?
4. Do you use your profile to connect with other users?
5. When would you find it valuable to have a completed profile?
6. When did you complete your profile? When you first made your account, after interacting with the website, etc.?
 - a. Did anyone prompt you to make a profile if so, who was it?
7. How do you feel about including a photo of yourself on your profile?
8. Which profile sections have you filled in?
 - a. Why have you filled X sections in? Why haven't you filled in X sections?
9. What motivated you to fill in your profile?
 - a. What would make this process easier?/What would make you more motivated to complete this profile?
10. Is self-promotion important to you? (i.e promoting yourself and/or your skills, etc.)
11. Are you interested in career advancement?
 - a. Do you see the GC Collab profile as playing a role in your career advancement?
12. Do you use GC Directory?
 - a. Why?
13. Do you use GEDS (the public version of GC Directory)?
 - a. Why?
14. Here is a template for a profile. On the card, please write what you would like to see when viewing someone else's profile in order to contact them.
15. Do you have any further feedback about the profile you would like to share?

French

Questions d'entrevue

1. Décrivez ce que signifie un profil, selon vous.
2. Pourquoi avez-vous un profil GCcollab?
3. Comment utilisez-vous votre profil GCcollab?
4. Utilisez-vous votre profil pour faire des connexions avec d'autres utilisateurs?
5. À quel moment croyez-vous qu'il soit le plus utile d'avoir un profil complet?
6. À quel moment avez-vous complété votre profil? Lorsque vous avez créé votre compte, après avoir utilisé le site Web, ou à un autre moment?
 - a. Quelqu'un vous a-t-il poussé à créer un profil? Si oui, qui était-ce?
7. Que pensez-vous d'inclure une photo de vous dans votre profil?
8. Quelles sections du profil avez-vous complétées?

- a. Pourquoi avez-vous complété les sections X? Pourquoi n'avez-vous pas complété les sections Y?
9. Qu'est-ce qui vous a motivé à compléter votre profil?
 - a. Qu'est-ce qui faciliterait le processus? Qu'est-ce qui vous motiverait à compléter votre profil?
10. L'autopromotion est-elle importante pour vous? (c'est-à-dire, faire connaître vous-même et vos compétences)
11. Est-vous intéressés par l'avancement de carrière?
 - a. Croyez-vous qu'un profil GCcollab puisse jouer un rôle dans l'avancement de votre carrière?
12. Utilisez-vous GCannuaire?
 - a. Pourquoi?
13. Utilisez-vous les SAGE (la version publique du GCannuaire)?
 - a. Pourquoi?
14. Voici un modèle de profil. Sur la carte, veuillez écrire ce que vous souhaitez voir lorsque vous consultez un profil dans le but d'entrer en contact avec cette personne.
15. Souhaitez-vous partager d'autres commentaires au sujet du profil?