Persimi

Insight Summary

Name: Gilda Lasky

Profile Group: Grass Roots Organizations

Demographics: Jewish Female, age 52

Background: Gilda Lasky, a dedicated New York City volunteer and community advocate, embodies responsibility and sociability. With strong family ties and a commitment to personal wellness, her life reflects a harmonious blend of civic engagement, spirituality, and a passion for connection through shared experiences.

Dates: Thursday, March 27th to Tuesday, April 1st

Interviewer: Jeffrey Wright

Method: Text chat via Persimi (persimi.com).

Duration: 23 exchanges with a total of 4559 words.

Challenges

- **Staying Informed** - Gilda expressed the challenge of keeping up with multiple sources of information to engage in civic activities. This is a challenge because it requires constant effort and can lead to missing out on important opportunities due to the fragmented nature of information sources.

- **Engaging with Diverse Perspectives** - Gilda acknowledged that the platform might facilitate competing grassroots efforts, which can be challenging. This is significant for her as it raises concerns about maintaining respectful dialogue and avoiding conflict among users with differing opinions.

- **Over-Commercialization** - Gilda indicated that excessive advertising could deter her from using the platform. This challenge stems from her desire for a community-focused space that prioritizes grassroots values over profit, which could lead to a loss of authenticity.

- **Complex Navigation** - Gilda mentioned that a complicated user interface could lead to disengagement. This is a challenge because if users find it difficult to navigate, they may abandon the platform, hindering community engagement.

- **Inclusivity and Accessibility** - Gilda emphasized the importance of making the platform accessible to all users. This is a challenge as barriers could exclude potential participants, particularly those with different abilities or those who are less tech-savvy.

- **Managing Conflict** - Gilda recognized the potential for conflicts in a diverse user base. This is a challenge because it requires thoughtful moderation and mechanisms for resolving disputes to maintain a positive environment.

- **Building Trust** - Gilda stated that transparency is key to maintaining trust within the community. This is a challenge as it requires consistent communication and a clear rationale behind decisions, which can be resource-intensive.

- **Engagement and Retention** - Gilda identified the difficulty in keeping users engaged over time. This is a challenge because ongoing participation is essential for fostering a vibrant grassroots community, and without it, efforts may stagnate.

- **Establishing Guidelines** - Gilda noted the need for clear guidelines on acceptable content. This is a challenge as it requires careful consideration to balance free expression with the platform's values and community safety.

- **Funding Sustainability** - Gilda expressed concerns about how to fund the platform without compromising its grassroots nature. This is a challenge because it requires innovative solutions to generate revenue while keeping the platform accessible and community-focused.

Desires

- **Civic Engagement at the Grassroots Level** - Gilda expressed a strong desire to be involved in community efforts, believing that meaningful change starts at the neighborhood level and helps foster connections among diverse groups.

- **Staying Informed About Community Needs** - Gilda emphasized the importance of keeping up with local events and initiatives through various sources, indicating a desire to maintain active participation in her community.

- **Creating Opportunities for Community Connection** - Her involvement in community gardening reflects a desire to facilitate connections among people from different backgrounds, which can enhance community spirit.

- **Accessibility of Information** - Gilda expressed the need for a centralized platform for grassroots efforts to streamline information access, indicating a desire to remove barriers to participation.

- **Empowering Community Voices** - Gilda appreciates the idea of a platform that empowers local leaders and community members to share their initiatives, indicating a desire for inclusivity and collective ownership.

- **Maintaining a Community-First Focus** - She highlighted the importance of keeping the platform's spirit grassroots and avoiding commercialization, reflecting her desire for an authentic community space.

- **Transparency in Governance** - Gilda suggested involving community representatives in decision-making processes, indicating a desire for transparency and accountability in how the platform is managed.

- **Inclusivity and Diversity of Perspectives** - Gilda recognized the value of facilitating dialogue around competing efforts, reflecting her desire for a platform that embraces various viewpoints while maintaining community standards.

- **Managing Conflict Constructively** - She indicated a need for clear guidelines on acceptable discourse, suggesting her desire for a healthy, respectful community environment.

- **Affordable Access to Resources** - Gilda expressed a preference for low-cost or tiered membership options, indicating a desire for financial accessibility to ensure broad participation.
- **Building Trust and Community Engagement** - She emphasized the importance of transparency and regular communication to foster trust within the community, reflecting her desire to create a strong, connected user base.

Perspective

- **Civic Engagement Importance** - The interviewee emphasized that civic engagement starts at the neighborhood level and is about making a difference, even in small ways, as demonstrated through her involvement in a community gardening project.
- **Staying Informed** - Gilda mentioned relying on community boards, local newsletters, social media groups, and conversations with neighbors to stay informed about local initiatives and opportunities for engagement.
- **Patchwork of Information Sources** - She described her information-gathering approach as a "patchwork," suggesting that no single source provides the full picture, and she enjoys connecting the dots from various angles.
- **Word-of-Mouth and Personal Touch** - Gilda highlighted the effectiveness of word-of-mouth and personal touch in publicizing events or volunteer opportunities, emphasizing the value of community connections.
- **Support for an Online Hub** - She expressed enthusiasm for the idea of an online hub for grassroots efforts, appreciating the potential for accessibility and empowerment it could provide to the community.
- **Accessibility and User-Friendliness** - Gilda underscored the importance of designing the platform to be user-friendly and accessible, advocating for features that cater to various community members' needs.
- **Community Governance** - She suggested that a community representative group could help manage discussions around content that might be controversial or in gray areas,

ensuring diverse perspectives are considered.

- **Inclusivity in Pricing** - Gilda expressed the need for a tiered pricing model that remains affordable, ensuring financial accessibility while considering options for scholarships or sliding scale fees.

- **Transparency in Decision-Making** - She stressed that transparency in the platform's operations and decision-making processes is crucial for building trust and maintaining a community-focused ethos.

- **Conflict Management and Healthy Dialogue** - Gilda acknowledged the potential for conflicts in a diverse community and emphasized the need for clear guidelines to ensure respectful engagement and constructive conversations.

- **Ethical Boundaries for Content** - She advocated for establishing ethical boundaries regarding the types of efforts accepted on the platform, focusing on excluding those that promote hate, violence, or misinformation.

- **Engagement and Retention Strategies** - Gilda highlighted the importance of developing strategies to maintain user engagement over time, including regular updates and showcasing community success stories.

Suggested Insight

- **Emphasis on Grassroots Engagement** - Gilda's deep commitment to grassroots civic engagement suggests that any platform should prioritize facilitating local initiatives, fostering a sense of community ownership, and encouraging collective efforts.

- **Importance of Diverse Information Sources** - Gilda relies on a variety of local sources for community engagement. The platform could explore partnerships with community boards, libraries, and local organizations to aggregate this information more effectively.

- **Potential for Just-in-Time Alerts** - Implementing real-time notifications for events or volunteer opportunities could significantly enhance engagement, especially for users with busy schedules or those who are mobile.

- **Community Governance Structure** - Establishing a representative council as a form of community governance could empower users, ensuring that the platform remains aligned with grassroots values and that diverse perspectives are included in decision-making.

- **Transparency in Advertising Policies** - It is critical to develop clear policies regarding advertising to avoid alienating users; include only local businesses aligned with community values to maintain trust.

- **Inclusivity in Pricing Models** - Considering a tiered pricing model while ensuring that core functionalities remain accessible to all users is essential. The platform should prevent any perception of inequality in visibility or influence based on financial contributions.

- **Managing Competing Perspectives** - The platform should facilitate healthy dialogue around competing grassroots efforts while establishing guidelines to prevent hate speech or misinformation, creating a respectful environment for discussion.

- **Handling Controversial Issues** - A clear, community-involved process for addressing gray areas in grassroots efforts could help maintain a balanced platform that reflects diverse opinions while upholding community standards.

- **Focus on Accessibility and User Experience** - Ensuring the platform is user-friendly and accessible to individuals with varying levels of technical skills is critical for widespread adoption and engagement.

- **Regular Community Feedback Mechanisms** - Implementing regular surveys or forums for community feedback could foster trust, ensuring that users feel their voices are heard and valued.

- **Measuring Community Impact** - Establishing metrics to assess the platform's effectiveness in promoting grassroots efforts can inform future enhancements and demonstrate the value to users.