

COMPETITIVE ANALYSIS

David Goldstein – UX Immersion– Task 1.7



COMPETITOR #1



Overview:

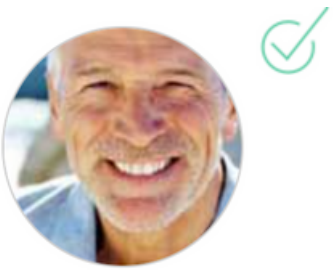
JustAnswer is a website and app which allows users to ask questions on a wide range of topics and get responses from verified experts via chat or over the phone, 24/7.

Key Objectives:

“Ask a question, get an answer ASAP” is the Just Answer tagline. They aim to set themselves apart from other competitors by offering unlimited chats with a library of more than 10,000 “verified experts” built over the course of nearly 20 years in business, all for the price of a monthly membership. JustAnswer asserts itself as a welcome alternative to pricey in-person appointments with professionals such as doctors, lawyers, mechanics, veterinarians, IT technicians, and other experts across a vast array of fields.

Overall Strategy:

JustAnswer offers new users a 7-day trial (with opaque pricing) in order to entice new customers to buy a membership. JustAnswer’s subscription based business strategy means that users pay a flat fee (\$31-\$125/month depending on the type of plan) for unlimited access to text chats with experts, including two free phone calls per month (iOS only), regardless of how much or how little they use the service. Additional calls are charged at an added cost. Experts, verified by an independent third-party, are paid for each question they answer. Pay is based on their area of expertise and user rating scores. JustAnswer is similar to the popular question and answer site Quora in that user inquiries and responses are posted to public forums which all members can access, but differs in the fact that questions are answered by verified experts. JustAnswer also aims to attract customers with speedy responses, claiming an average wait time of 7.5 minutes.

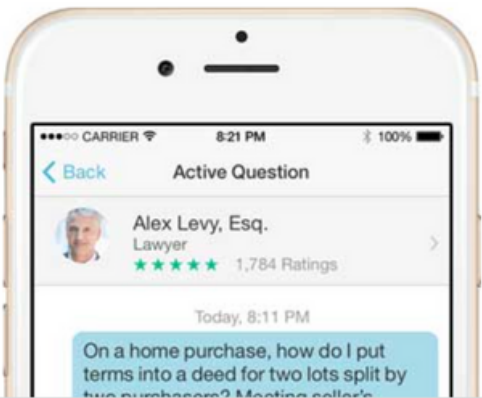


Highly-rated, verified Experts

We pride ourselves in our 8-step expert quality process including license and credential checks. Vetted by us and rated by customers, like you.

Fast and responsive,
24/7

Need a vet in the middle of the night?
Done. You’ll get issues resolved, often in minutes.



“I had a resolution within
15 minutes”

— Erin, JustAnswer customer



Why you'll love JustAnswer

JustAnswer is the best way to get expertise on-demand from doctors, lawyers, vets, mechanics and more.



Since 2003, we've helped more than 9 million people in 196 countries and have an A+ rating with BBB and a 9.6/10 rating with TrustPilot.

Market Advantage:

JustAnswer's biggest advantage lies in the fact that it has been around longer than most, if not all of its competitors. Because it has been in operation for nearly 20 years, JustAnswer has built a library of over 12,000 experts across more than 150 categories, giving it an edge over other nascent competitors with smaller expert bases and a more limited breadth of service. Thanks to its market longevity, it has had time to build traffic organically through keyword searches related to frequently asked questions/topics on their site. Although it does not appear in the top results for expert advice app in a Google search, it does come up as one of the top apps for experts in the App Store. JustAnswer does not have a particularly high rating on either the App Store or Google Play, but it has a 4.4/5 rating on Trustpilot from over 24,000 reviews and an A rating by the Better Business Bureau.

Marketing Profile:

JustAnswer's target market is anybody looking to save money on expert advice, or anyone seeking professional advice outside of normal working hours. Because it's a subscription based service, it's also aimed at people who may have reoccurring issues or need continuous support.

The JustAnswer app comes up as one of the top apps in the App Store for "expert advice", but because the app is members only, I had to go to their website to understand more about how their business works. They don't have a blog and the company didn't come up in many web search engine results for expert advice, unless searched for directly or using very specific keywords (most commonly involving lawyer/vet). However, according to the web analytics company Similarweb, 84% of JustAnswer site traffic is organic vs. just 16% paid, implying good Search Engine Optimization.

Their site features the logos of CNN, FOX, NBC, Today, and The New York Times prominently on the homepage, suggesting they have been endorsed/featured by these news outlets. However, most of the articles I found are over 10 years old, making them an unlikely source for attracting new customers.

JustAnswer boasts a 3.9/5 rating on the apple App Store from 9.2k ratings and 2.6/5 on the Google Play Store.

Strengths

- Large library of experts and wide range of topics covered
- Monthly membership allows for unlimited questions and answers
- Smart Chatbot helps to match people with appropriate experts
- Experts available 24/7 to answer questions anytime, day or night
- Relatively short wait times
- High rate of organic site traffic through effective SEO
- High ratings on Trustpilot and Better Business Bureau

Weaknesses

- Opaque pricing - users complain that they signed up for a free/cheap trial but were charged for a membership without their knowledge/consent
- No Privacy - Questions and answers visible to all members
- App is exclusively for members - only way to sign up is via website
- Low app store ratings and cluttered User Interface design
- Expert Support is mostly text/chat based vs. call/video based

Opportunities

- Members only app access leaves a huge opening for competitors that allow users to sign up and explore their product via mobile app
- Alternative pricing plans such as pay-per-question or pay for time with expert might be more suitable for some people than a fixed monthly subscription
- Greater pricing transparency will inspire more confidence and trust in the product/company
- Increased confidentiality will ease privacy concerns
- Streamlined and updated UI will improve overall user experience

Threats

- There is currently a class action lawsuit against JustAnswer regarding their misleading trial offerings and subscription charges
- Other question and answer forums such as Quora and Reddit, which offer similar services for free
- More specialized apps/services offering a narrower focus and better UX

COMPETITOR #2



Overview:

6ya is an app which allows users to “instantly connect with a professional Expert who can provide all the help you need over a short phone or video call on your smartphone.”

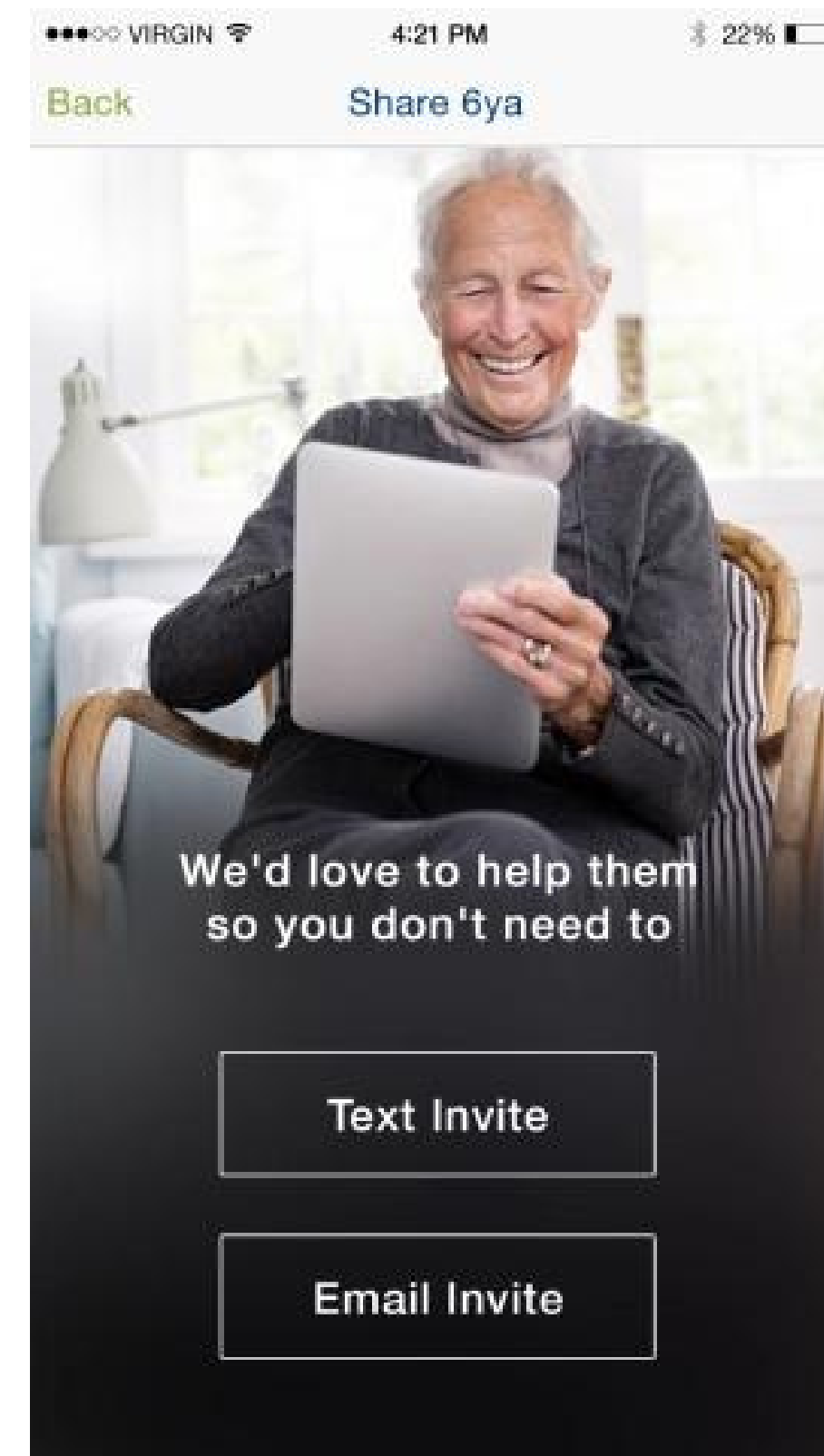
Key Objectives:

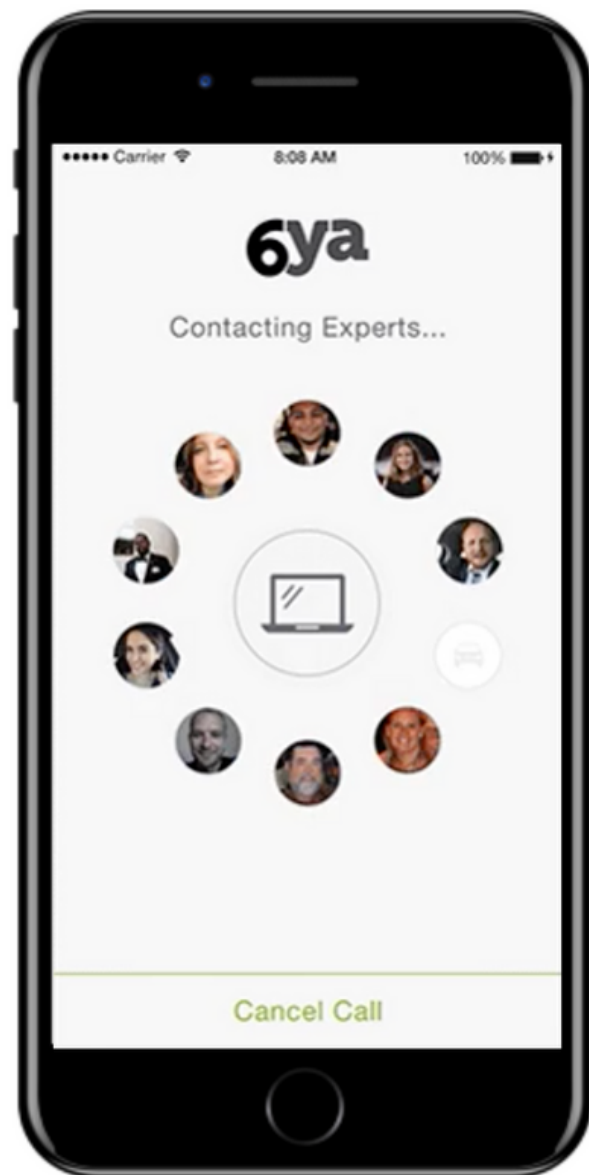
“Expert advice over the phone on Everything you own and Anything you need” is 6ya’s tagline. They aim to set themselves apart from competitors by offering “instant” connection with experts over the phone or video calls as opposed to text chats. “With 6ya you are never placed on hold, talk to computerized answering robots, or receive unhelpful and scripted answers. All Experts have professional experience and are located here in the United States.” Their objective is to provide expert customer support for people who just want to talk to a real human being. They offer support in more than 70 categories with a library of 5,000 experts available 24/7.



Overall Strategy:

6ya offers two ways to use its services: pay-per-call (starting at \$9 per call) or through monthly membership (starting at \$9.99 per month) depending on the type of plan users sign up for and the category they need help with. Although 6ya provides expert assistance in more than 70 categories, their support is more tech heavy than Just Answer's, with two of the five monthly subscription options focusing on tech/IT related needs. Furthermore, in their App Store description, 6ya writes: "Free Yourself From Tech Support Forever - 6ya is the Best alternative to AT&T ProTech, Verizon Tech Coach, Sprint Tech Expert, and Solutio". Here the company is clearly positioning itself as a tech-first platform, although the same description is not used in the Google Play store, signaling they could be targeting different audiences depending on which type of phone people are using.





Don't waste time
searching for answers.

Talk to a Professional who can
help over the phone

- ✓ Help in Seconds
- ✓ US Based Experts
- ✓ Available 24/7
- **Talk to an Expert**

Market Advantage:

6ya's biggest advantage lies in the fact that it allows users to speak with experts directly over the phone/video instead of chatting online via text. This format provides greater clarity and a more streamlined experience for users who are tired of endless wait times with customer support staff or the back and forth of written responses.

In fact, 6ya boasts an average wait time of only 30 seconds to get connected with an expert - 15x faster than JustAnswer's wait time of 7.5 minutes - giving it the distinct speed advantage over its main competitors.

Marketing Profile:

6ya's target market is anybody looking to get expert help in one or more of 70 categories by speaking with a real human being over the phone or video chat. Based on their monthly subscription offerings, their core audience are people looking for support with Tech, Home, and Auto. This differs from Just Answer in that they do not offer monthly plans for veterinarians, doctors or lawyers.

The 6ya app comes up as one of the top apps for "expert advice" in the App Store and on Google Play, with ratings of 4.4/5 and 4.1/5 respectively. The company claims to have helped over 1 million people, but it only has 486 reviews on the App Store and 845 reviews on Google Play, with over 100,000 downloads. The ratings are decent, but not excellent, with only a small percentage of overall users submitting feedback, implying 6ya is not doing a good enough job of prompting users to rate their app.

The 6ya website features the logos of CNN, FOX, NBC, and USA Today prominently on the homepage, however, upon searching I was unable to find any news about 6ya from these outlets. It seems one of 6ya's most effective marketing strategies and biggest sources of new traffic is its how-to-guides. 6ya's guides comes up frequently in searches about how to perform tech related tasks such as cancel social media subscriptions or connect smart home appliances. They have done a good job of creating content to drive traffic to their site and increase product awareness. 6ya also uses social media to promote their how-to-guides and services.

Strengths

- Chat directly with experts over the phone or video chat
- Extremely short wait times - 30 seconds on average
- Experts available 24/7 to answer questions anytime, day or night
- Good use of content (how-to-guides) to drive traffic
- App is not exclusive to members - better accessibility
- Provides robust tech support options
- Friendly and intuitive User Interface

Weaknesses

- Monthly membership options only available for Home, Tech and Auto
- Fewer categories on offer than JustAnswer
- Limited number of reviews on App Store and Google Play
- Low ratings on Better Business Bureau (F)
- Users automatically connected to experts without prior confirmation of pricing
- Less-stringent vetting process for experts

Opportunities

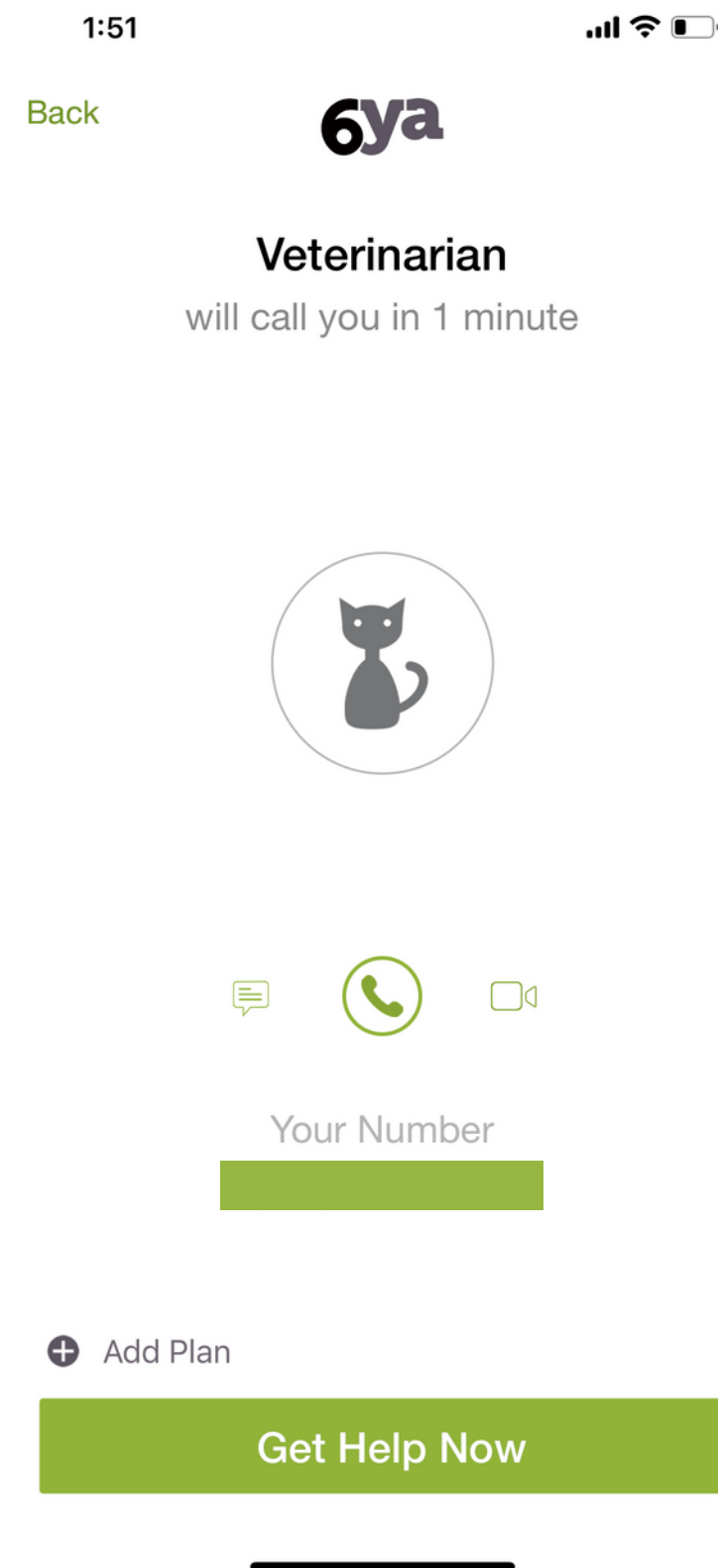
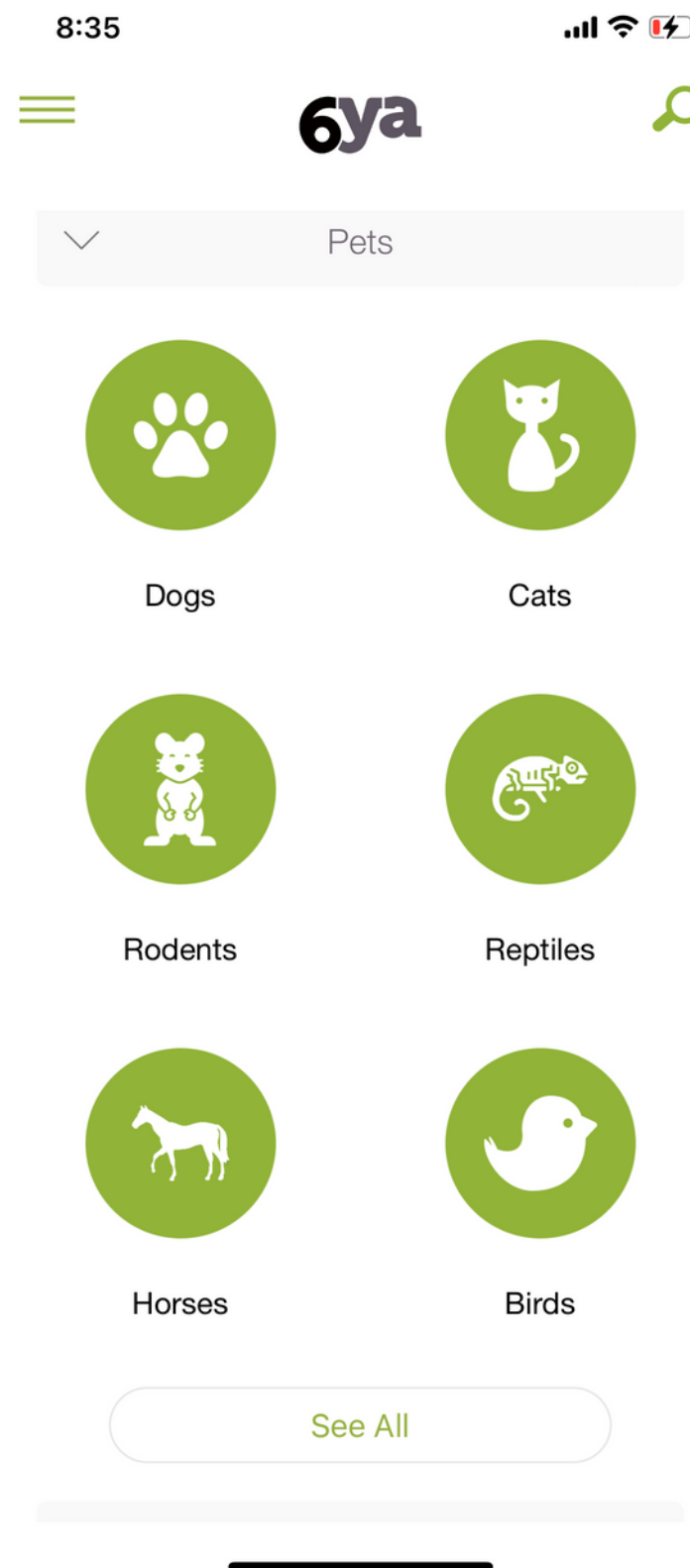
- More options for monthly membership plans which include broader range of experts
- Greater transparency/customer awareness in pricing, especially for individual phone calls, will inspire increased user confidence and fewer negative reviews
- Better/more widespread How-to-guides or other content to boost SEO and increase customer awareness
- Stricter vetting process for experts

Threats

- Other apps which offer specialized tech support for lower prices
- Apps which offer a broader range of categories and better quality of experts

UX ANALYSIS

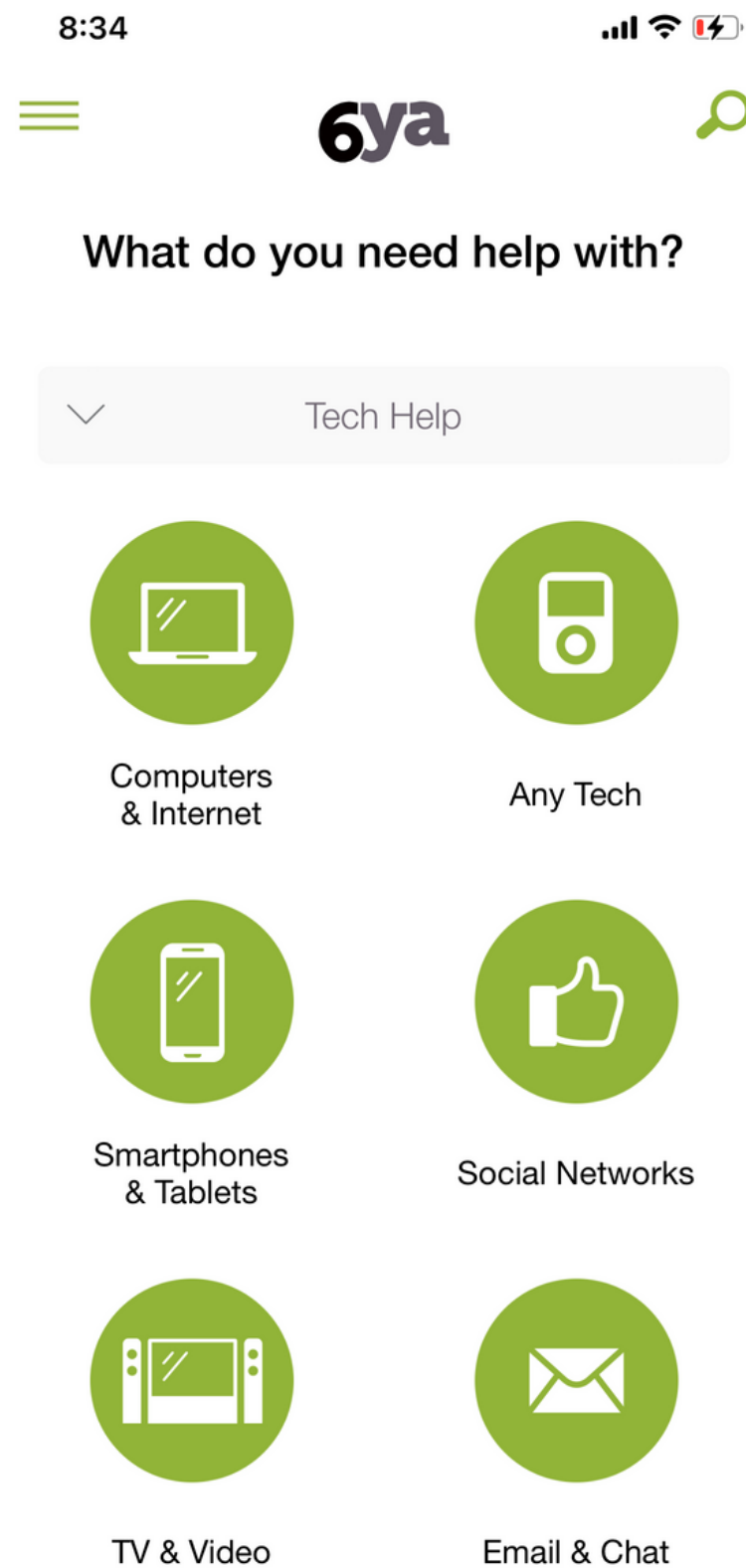




6ya

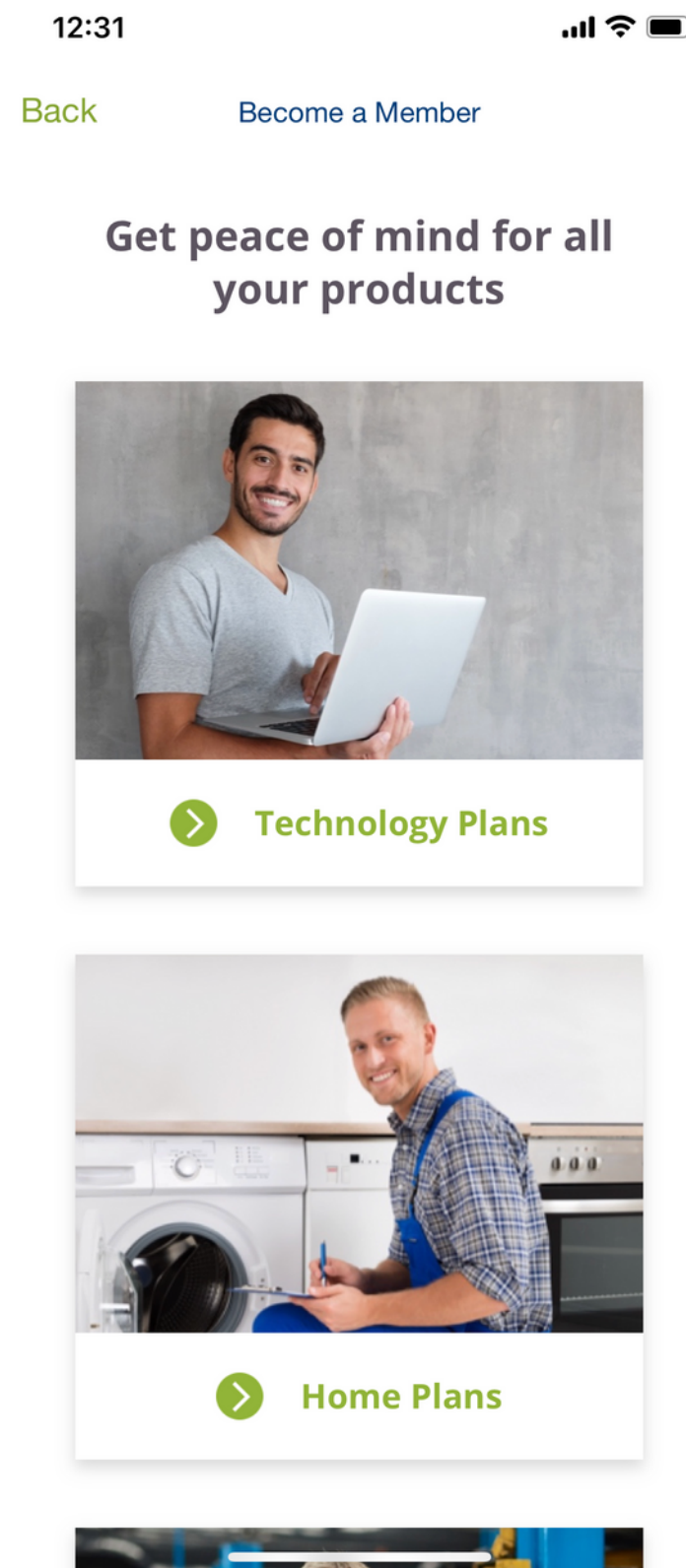
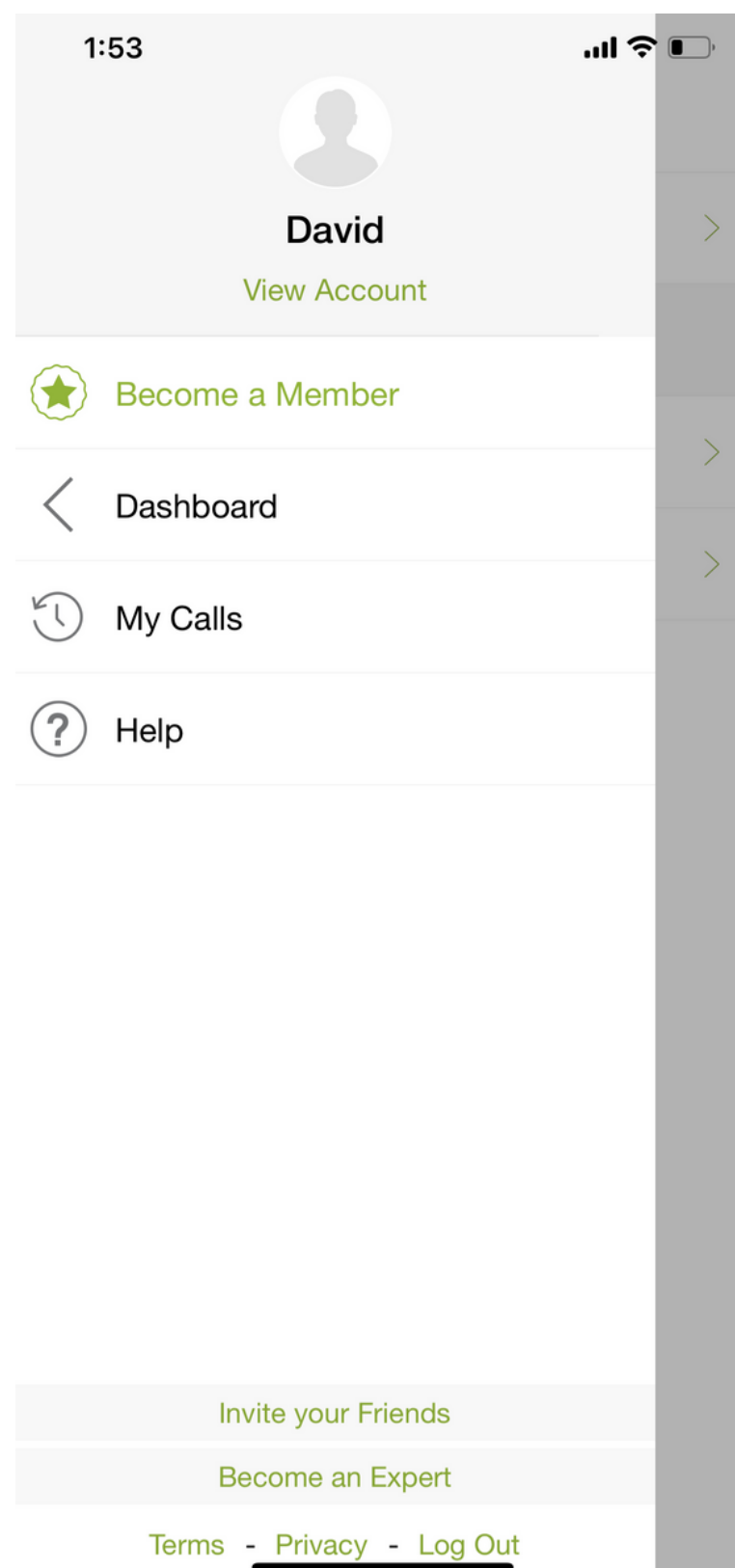
Usability

Overall the app is relatively intuitive any easy to use. The categories are clearly identified and the icons match the sub-category titles. However, when the user clicks on a specific category they would like assistance with, the app says “ ____ (category specialist) will call you in one minute” on the phone number provided upon sign up. It does not list any prices for the call or give you buttons to press to confirm the call. This made me feel anxious that I would receive a phone call and then be forced to pay for an expert’s time without being fully aware what I was going to pay/receive. Some sort of walkthrough would be very useful for the user to better understand how the calling feature works.



Layout

Layout is generally very clean and uncluttered with good spacing. When the user first opens the app after signing up, all the main help categories are expanded, with sub-category icons beneath them. However, the only main category visible initially is "Tech Help." The user must scroll to see the other main categories. Although this was intuitive to me, it might not be to all users. Additionally, although the design is clean, it's a bit bland, especially when it comes to use of pictures and color choices.



Navigation structure

6ya is easy to navigate in terms of finding the category you want help with. However, the pricing/available plans are buried in the menu. The homepage asks users what they want help with, but in order to view subscription plans the user must click on the hamburger menu icon and then click "Become a member." From there users can view available subscription plans. There is no information about the cost of individual calls if users don't want to sign up for a membership.

Instant Expert Help

Anytime, Anywhere

Auto

Beauty & Fashion

DIY & Home Improvement

Education

Gaming

Health & Wellness

Sports

Tech



Chris

Elm Grove, WI

7,630

People helped

"Very helpful and very knowledgeable on all that I requested. He also talked to me in what I call language that we all know, layman's terms to help describe things ...

- Mike



Philip

Long Beach, MS

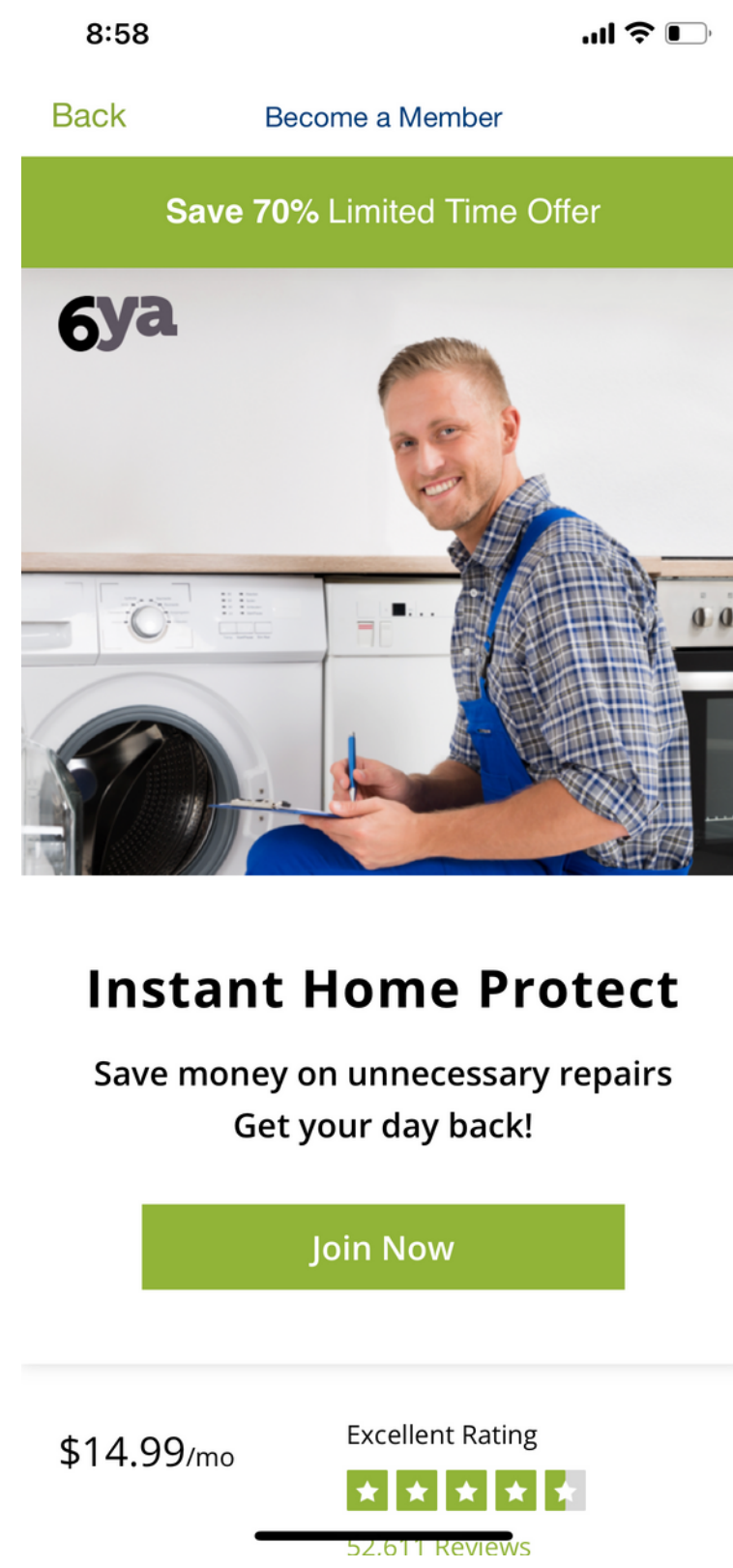
4,840

People helped

USMC Veteran. 50+ Years Experience Beginning with 10 years as a Senior Instrumentation Technician with our NASA Space Program, worked on Saturn S1B, Saturn ...

Compatibility

6ya is compatible with iPhone, iPad, and android operating systems. It does have a website for desktop users, but the website does not allow users to pay-per-call, only sign up for memberships. The website does, however, allow users to browse experts, view their profiles, and request a call with a specific expert, while the app does not include these features. Synching features and offerings across platforms and devices would provide a more consistent user experience. Because 6ya is only available in the US, it is missing out on markets in other countries.

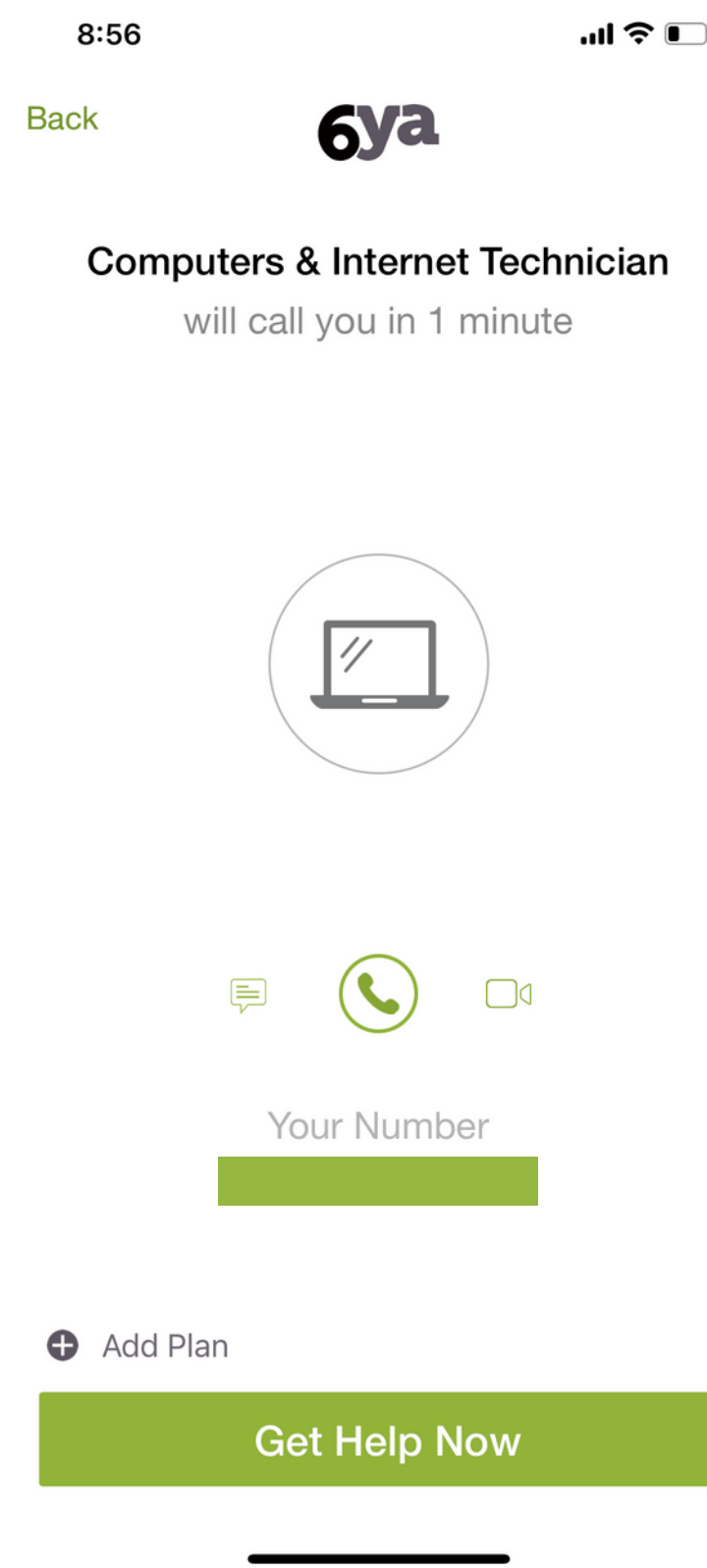


6ya

Differentiation

6ya's greatest strength is the fact that users can speak to real, live humans to get assistance within seconds. The ability to talk to experts over the phone or video makes the experience much more personal and less daunting than other services which rely on text or require longer processes for getting assistance. When I open the 6ya app, I could be talking to an expert with as little as 3 clicks, which severely lowers the user wait time and potential for pain points.

I like the ease with which 6ya allows users to connect with experts, but there is room for improvement in terms of breadth of topics covered, selection of experts, transparency of pricing, price flexibility, consistency among platforms and devices, and location availability. I also believe a more dynamic and interesting user interface would make the user experience more enjoyable overall. By improving upon all of these key points, my app will rise above the competition.



Calls to Action

Users must input their US based phone number and texted confirmation code in order to begin using the app. There was no option to sign up via email or social media, which means that only people in the US can use the app. When users click on a specific item or topic they need advice on, they are taken to a page saying that an expert will call them in 1 minute, without any button to confirm the call or request additional information. At the bottom of the page there is a call to action button that says “Get Help Now,” but when users click on it they are taken to the page with membership plans. These options are confusing, especially if I just want to make a call with an expert without becoming a member. To improve upon this, my app will make pricing options and information much clearer.

6ya