Evaluating Workspace Needs of Students and Freelancers

Finding workspaces that fit individual needs is crucial to the academic and professional success of students and freelancers. Our research explores the needs and search behaviours of these two user groups and aims to inform the design of a digital resource which will facilitate fast and effective discovery of public workspaces.
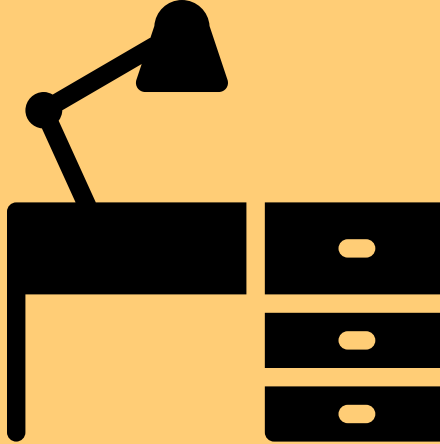
Research Questions

1. What **factors** influence the features digital freelancers and post-secondary students look for when seeking a workspace?

2. What **challenges** do post-secondary students and digital freelancers currently face when searching for a workspace?

3. Which **features** of digital resources provide users with ease of use through findability and clarity of information when locating a workspace?
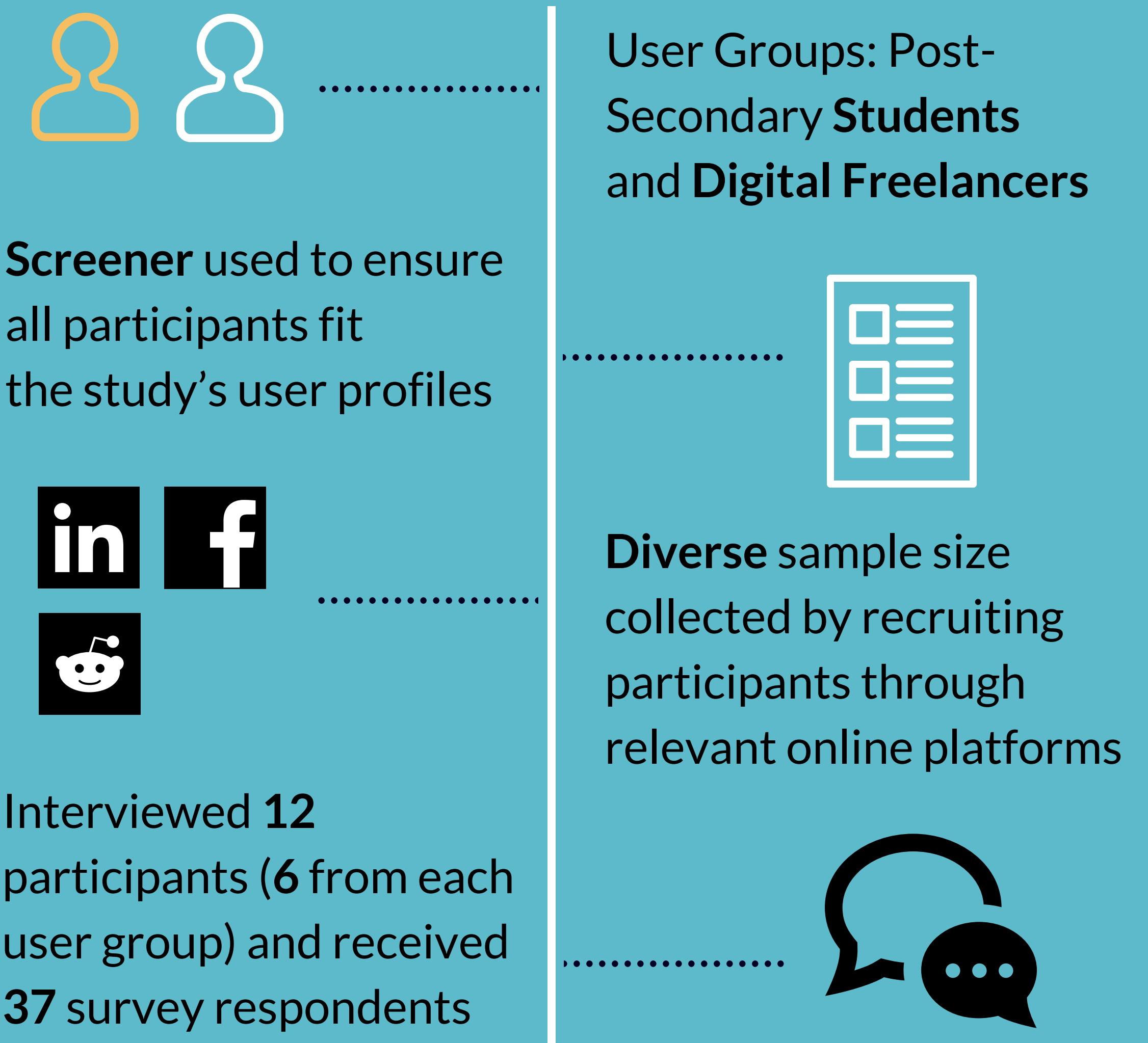
Literature Review

Exploring different work/study spaces improves **performance** of both user groups (Nebel, 2017).

Sound, temperature, and physical design of a workspace all affect **productivity** (Mak and Lui, 2012).

Both user groups face **barriers** such as over-crowding or price when searching for workspaces (Simpson, 2014; Toren, 2013).

Students express **dissatisfaction** with private workspaces provided by university (Sens and Bloomstrom, 2017).
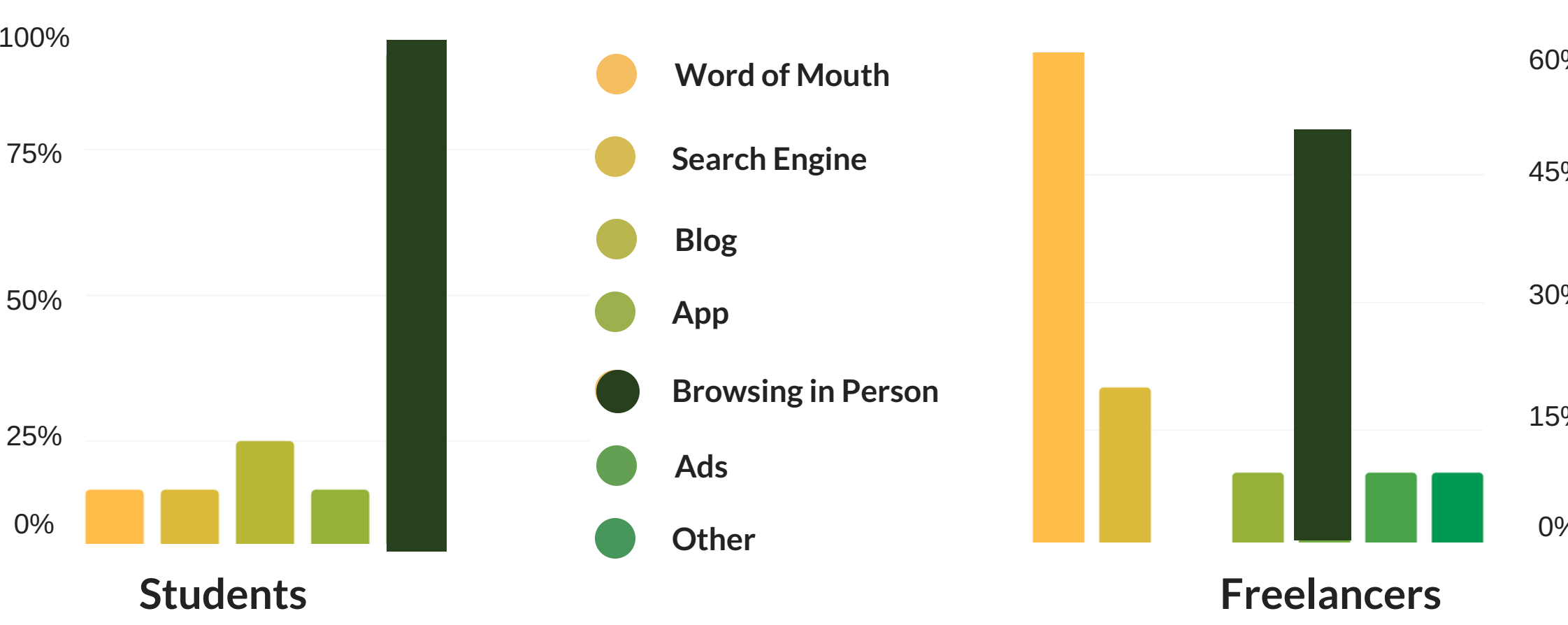
Research Protocol

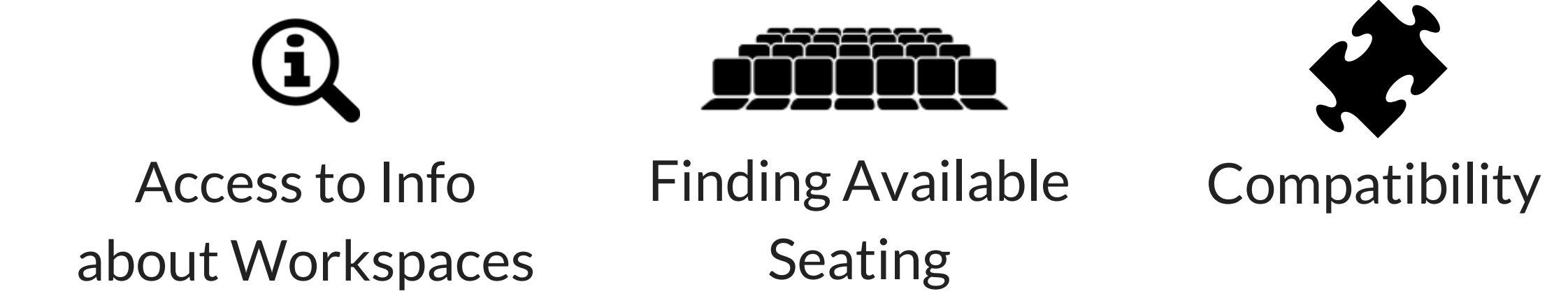User Groups: Post-Secondary **Students** and **Digital Freelancers**

Screener used to ensure all participants fit the study's user profiles

Diverse sample size collected by recruiting participants through relevant online platforms

Interviewed **12** participants (**6** from each user group) and received **37** survey respondents

Data Analysis and Results

Info Queried in Searches for Workspaces

Students pie chart: 2%, 23%, 23%, 17%, 20%, 6%, 10%

Freelancers pie chart: 5%, 19%, 19%, 17%, 15%, 7%, 19%

- Hours of Operation
- Location
- Atmosphere
- Seating Availability
- Food Options
- Price Range
- Other

Users' Search Methods

- Word of Mouth
- Search Engine
- Blog
- App
- Browsing in Person
- Ads
- Other

Workspace-Seeking Challenges

Access to Info about Workspaces

Finding Available Seating

Compatibility

Design Recommendations

App and/or **mobile-friendly** platform

User profile with personalized **filters**

Push notifications signalling **nearby** work spaces

Workspace **recommendations** from friends

App Features: User Profile, Reviews, Geo-Location, Recommendations, Photos, Filters, Ratings

Members

Nadine Adelaar   Sharon Pun
Elena Djordjic   Phoebe Tagoe
Hyungbin Lim

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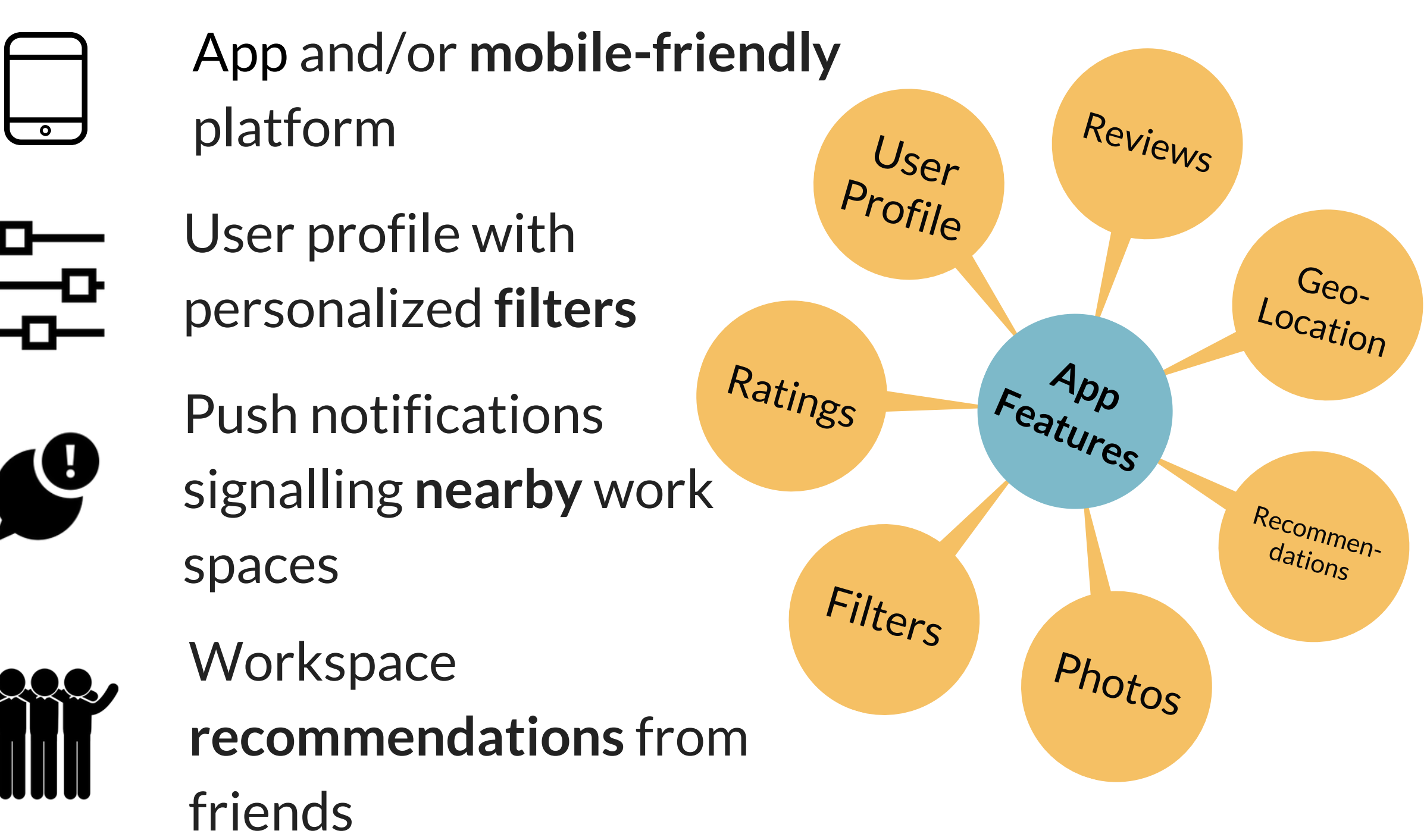
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Mak, C. & Lui, Y. (2012). The effect of sound on office productivity. *Building Services Engineering Research & Technology*, 33(3), 339-345.

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