Business Requirements

COMPETITIVE, SWOT, & UX ANALYSES

Anglercast

FISHING WEATHER & FORECASTS

A fishing weather & forecasting web app that allows fishers to safely enjoy their fishing experience.

THE PROBLEM

For all levels of fishermen, interpreting and understanding complex weather reports and forecasts correctly can be challenging.

WHY?

Accurate and easy-to-understand weather reports (wind, wave, weather, water temp, fish forecasts, solunar) and forecasts are important for planning safe and enjoyable fishing experiences. Weather data from current fishing weather and forecasting apps are hard and complex to understand, especially for novices. Some weather data are not reliable and/or multiple weather apps are used by fishermen to get their information.

SOLUTION

I am taking on the challenge of designing a responsive web app that allows fishers of all levels a way to quickly check and understand weather conditions and forecasts in order for them to have good and safe fishing experiences when heading out to the water.

During the research phase, I conducted UX Competitive Analyses on two existing fishing weather apps.

DETAILS

The two apps analyzed were FishWeather and FishAngler. These analyses helped me see the existing marketplace, the apps' strengths and weaknesses, and any opportunity areas where the Anglercast app could stand out.
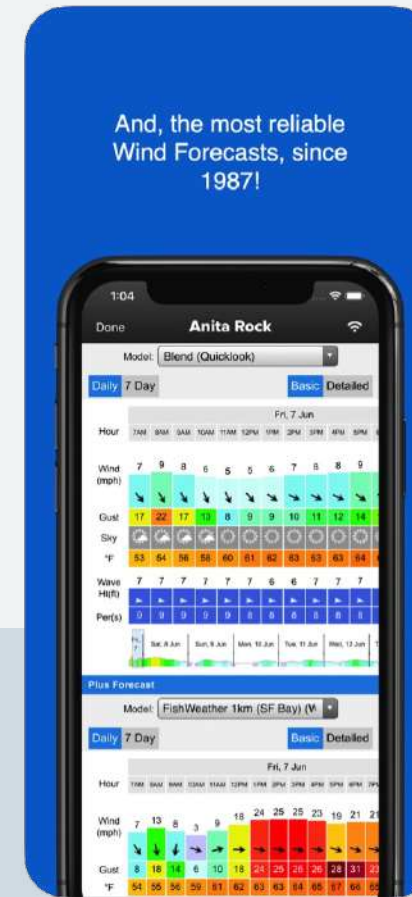
COMPETITOR #1

FishWeather

WEATHER WHERE YOU FISH

FishWeather is a potential competitor providing fishermen with the most trusted, global weather forecasts where they fish. Data from over 50K weather stations. Free and paid memberships levels.

Competitor Profile

KEY OBJECTIVES

- WeatherFlow, a leader in the weather industry, launched the app in 2005, specifically with the fisherman in mind.

- They stand apart by claiming to report the most reliable wind forecasts since 1987 and delivering the "Weather Where You Fish!"

- Delivering live wind and latest reports from their real-time weather stations

- Free accounts can access basic weather and forecasts. Paid subscriptions provide pro level weather and subscriptions.

OVERALL STRATEGY

- After a quick Google search, there doesn't seem to be much press

- Fishweather has a web app, that has the same functions as mobile app.

- No social media accounts evident. Only parent company, WeatherFlow has social media.

- Their main feature is the Live Wind and weather forecasts seem to be secondary importance.

- Ratings on both Google Play (4.1/5) and iOS (4.6/5) are high. Might perform better on iOS based on ratings.

MARKET ADVANTAGE

- Claim to be #1 most trusted fishing weather source.

- First and only listing when searching for "Fishing Weather apps" on Google, seems to be their top market advantage.

- Most reviews from users back up their claim that the data is accurate.

FISHWEATHER
Marketing Profile

TARGET MARKET

- **Clients:** Fishermen in North America. Based on the level of data provided, seems to be more experienced fishermen and boaters.

- **Social Media:** None

- **Website:** fishweather.com

HOW THEY MARKET THEMSELVES

- **Marketing:**
    - From their website, users can purchase branded t-shirts.
    - Their parent company, WeatherFlow has general page for the app and has an article on recent updates to the app.

- **Google Search:** First and only app listing when searching for "Fishing Weather apps" on Google.

- **User Ratings:** Almost all users back up their claim that the data and forecasting is accurate.

SWOT Profile

STRENGTHS

- The live wind feature and map is engaging. The wind currents animate live.
- No direct competition for Live Wind feature
- Data is accurate and reliable
- Great reviews on the App Store and Google Play
- Are available on multiple platforms: web app, mobile and tablet

OPPORTUNITIES

- The navigation, UX and UI can be improved to make it easier and more intuitive for the user
- Can provide levels of data to appeal to a larger level of fishers
- Design weather graphs and data to be simple and clean so that it's easier and quicker process information for the user
- Benefit from an indicator letting the user know if it's good time to fish, based on user parameters and wind/weather data
- Market and advertise on social media; also include a promo to download the apps from the website

WEAKNESSES

- Can only look at weather forecasts for set locations. User cannot input longitude/latitude coordinates.
- Navigation, usability, UX and UI needs major improvement
- Weather data/graphs are very complex and hard to understand, especially for beginner fishermen
- Banner ads at the bottom of the screen are distracting when viewing complex data on maps
- Marketing and advertising efforts are not evident
- Search results for map locations are listed in no logical order

THREATS

- Competitors for marine weather: Buoyweather, NOAA Marine Weather Forecast
- Apps that provide similar information but that have better navigation, easy to understand and branded graphics.
- Apps where the data is easier to understand for beginner level fishers.
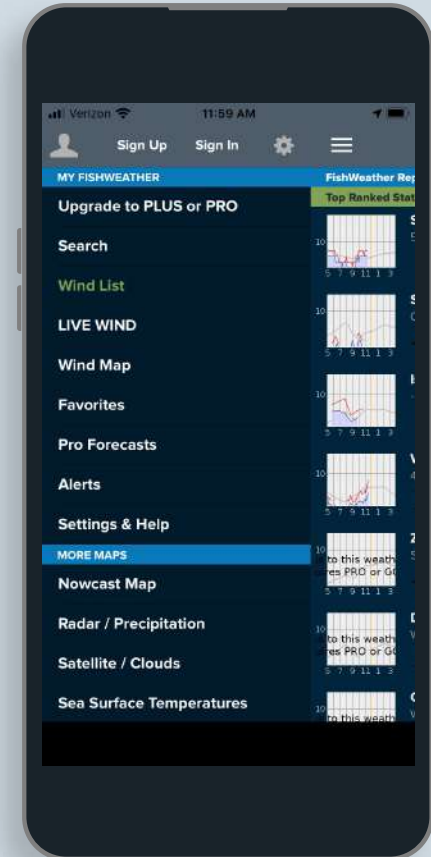
FISHWEATHER
UX Analysis

USABILITY

When first launching the app, it asks if it can allow to send notifications. After you select, you land on the search screen to begin your search. There's no login screens or any tutorials on how to interact with the app.

The usability overall is very poor and not intuitive. The search results are listed in no logical order. The main navigation is a hamburger icon in the top left with too many selections to choose from.

The user needs to take a lot of time to explore how the app works and find where information is located. This is time consuming and a point of frustration.
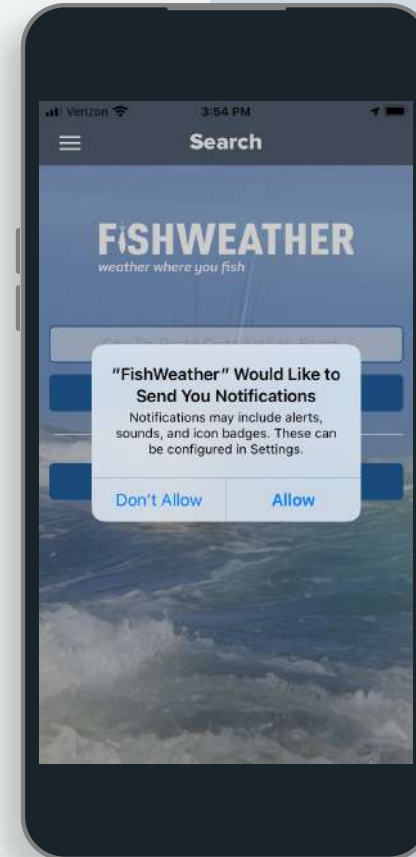
SPLASH SCREEN   MAIN MENU
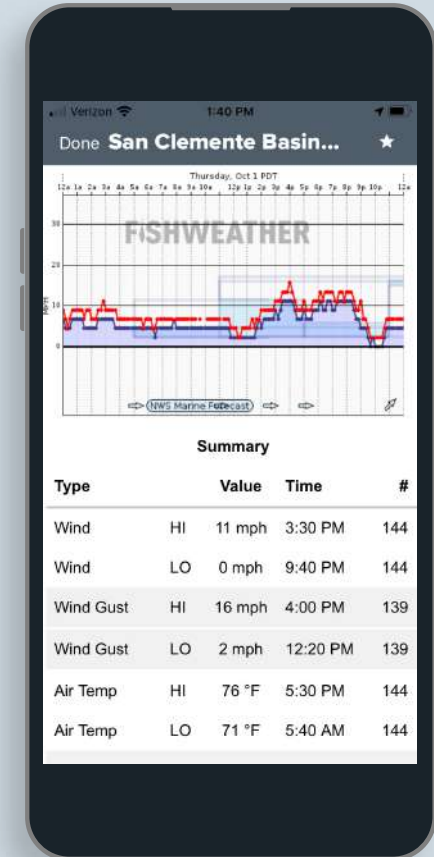
FISHWEATHER
UX Analysis

LAYOUT

The overall design is hard to understand. The combination of a hard to use menu and no consistent branding, makes it hard to understand the structure of the app.

• The graphs/charts in the detailed weather section are not branded and contain raw data, which is hard to process/analyze.

• The search results are confusing because the list doesn't clearly state what the information is providing, nor are they listed in any logical order (distances are random).

• In detailed weather mode, header font is too large and the headings get chopped off. Star icon is for favorites, but when tapped, it turns into a wifi icon which is confusing and doesn't let user know if it's in favorites.
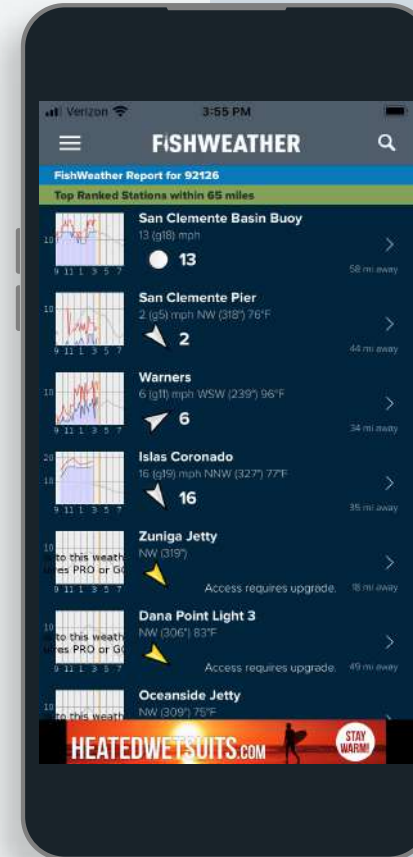
SEARCH RESULTS

COMPLETE
WEATHER REPORT

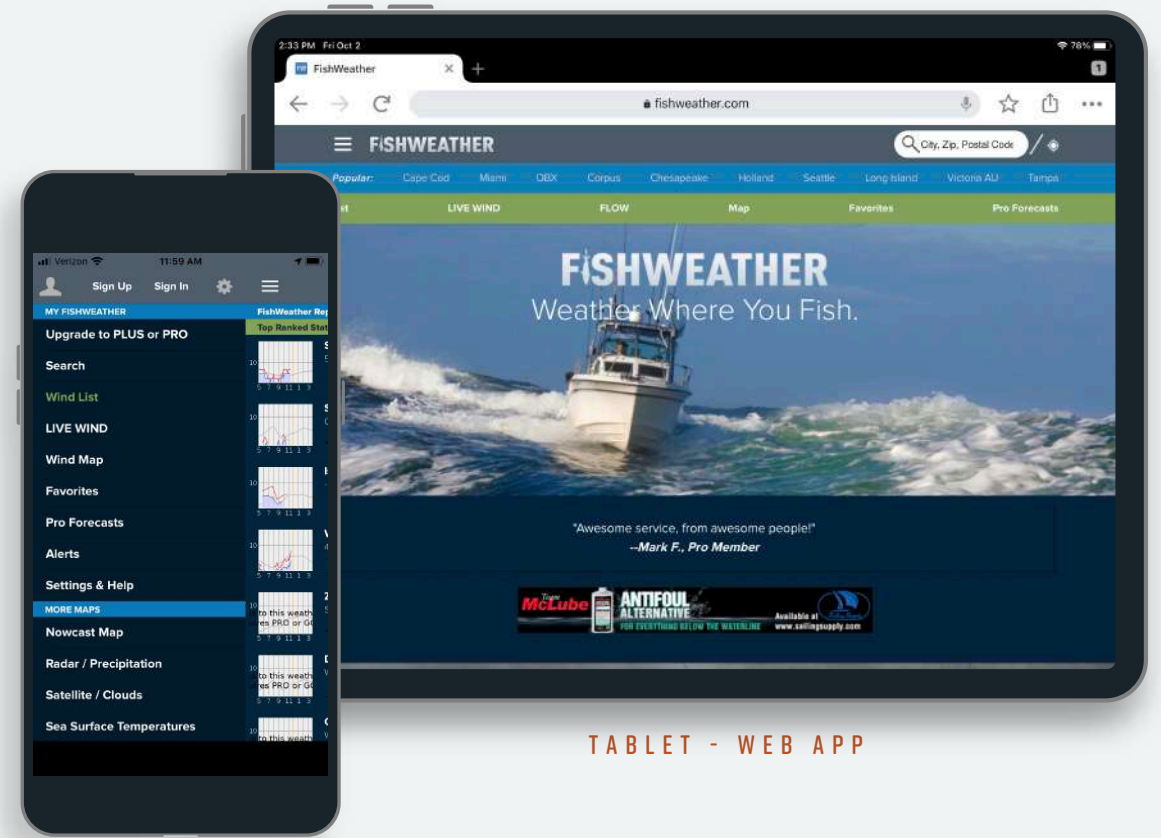**FISHWEATHER**
UX Analysis

NAVIGATION

On the mobile apps, the main menu has too many options, aren't intuitive and not organized logically. The wind options are grouped with the user Favorites, Alerts and Settings. Then below are more detail map options.

The main focus of the app is its Live Wind feature, so those are the main options listed in the menu. In order to find Complete Weather Reports (all forecasts, tides, stats), you have to either do a search, then click on the location OR click on the location marker from the Live Wind map. This was difficult to figure out and find.

COMPATIBILITY

FishWeather has its own desktop app, and supports iPhone, iPad and Android. Responsive website and supports multiple browsers.

MAIN MENU

TABLET - WEB APP
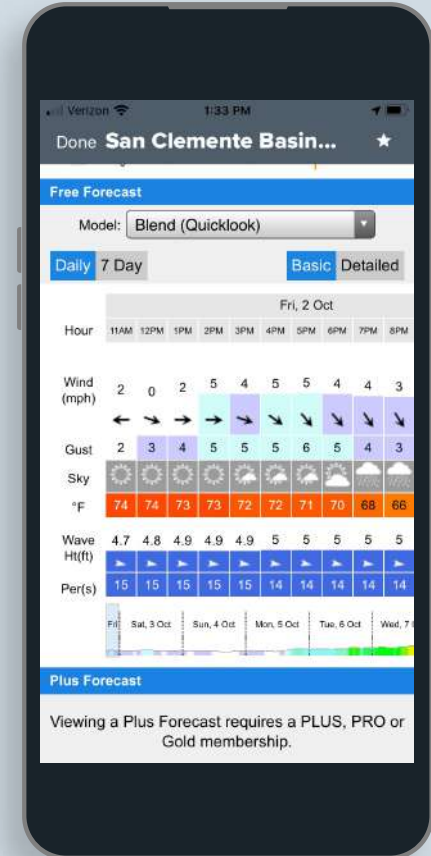
FISHWEATHER
UX Analysis

DIFFERENTIATION

FishWeather's aim is to provide the most reliable wind forecasts, which it does very well on the desktop and mobile platforms. However, the rest of the weather forecasts (tides, waves, etc.) are hard to find and need a lot of analyzing by the user to understand. Combined with a hard to navigate app and lack of branding, there are many improvements that can be made.

The app can improve their usability, UI and simplify weather data to help attract beginner levels of fishermen. Also by offering all weather forecasts in a better, more accessible manner and providing in-app tutorials, it would improve user experience. The navigation menu is too cumbersome for the user and could benefit from a static menu on bottom, to decrease the user click flows. The app could grow in visibility if they are more active on social media.
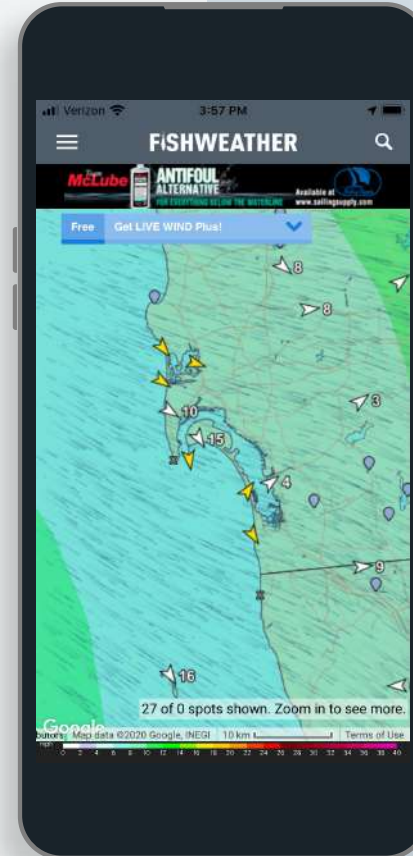
LIVE WIND FEATURE


WEATHER
FORECAST REPORT

FISHWEATHER

# UX Analysis

CALLS TO ACTION (CTA)

Before landing on the splash page, new users are first prompted to allow/not allow notifications, which is jarring when starting the app.

Users can access many weather forecasts in the free membership. But for more data on popular locations, users can sign up for a membership. However, when you proceed to sign up for a membership, it's not clear where to go from that page. The prices listed are supposed to be buttons (no clear visual UI that they are buttons) and the user can choose an option to proceed forward with payment.
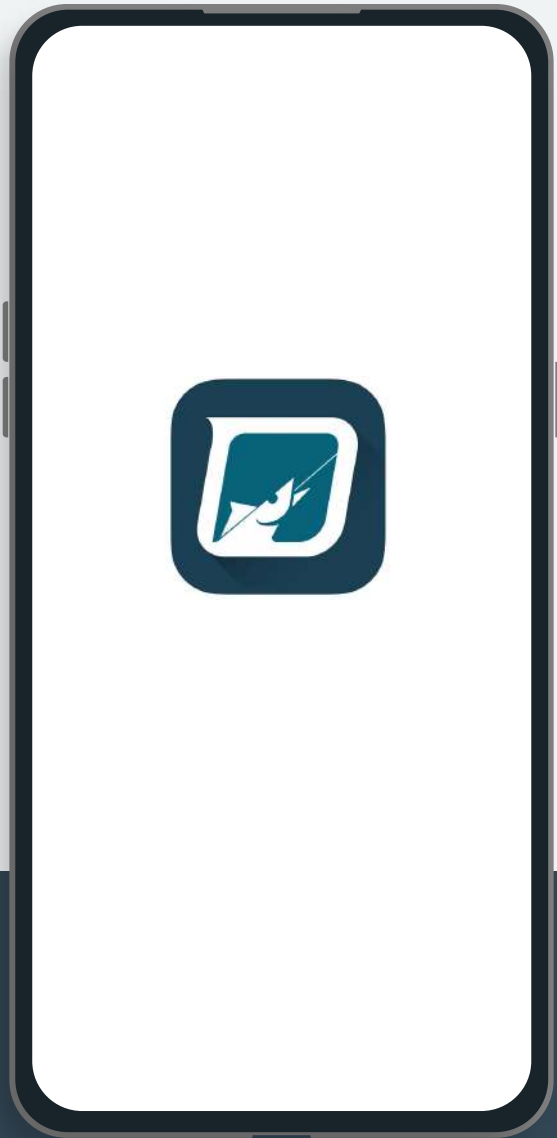
Contact Us and Sign In forms are intuitive and don't present any points of friction.
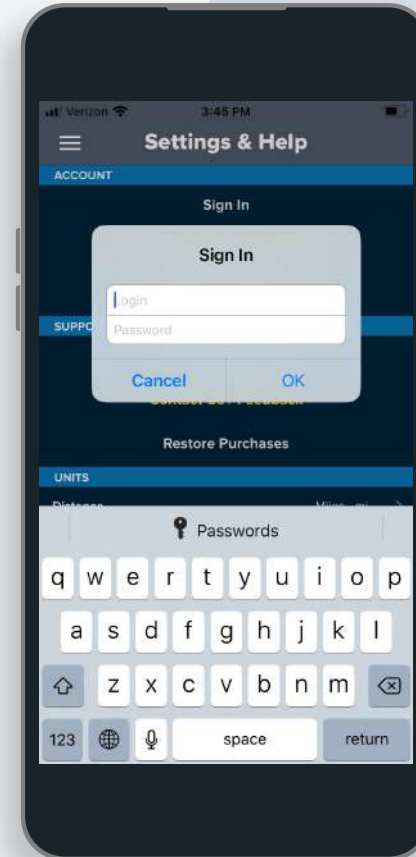
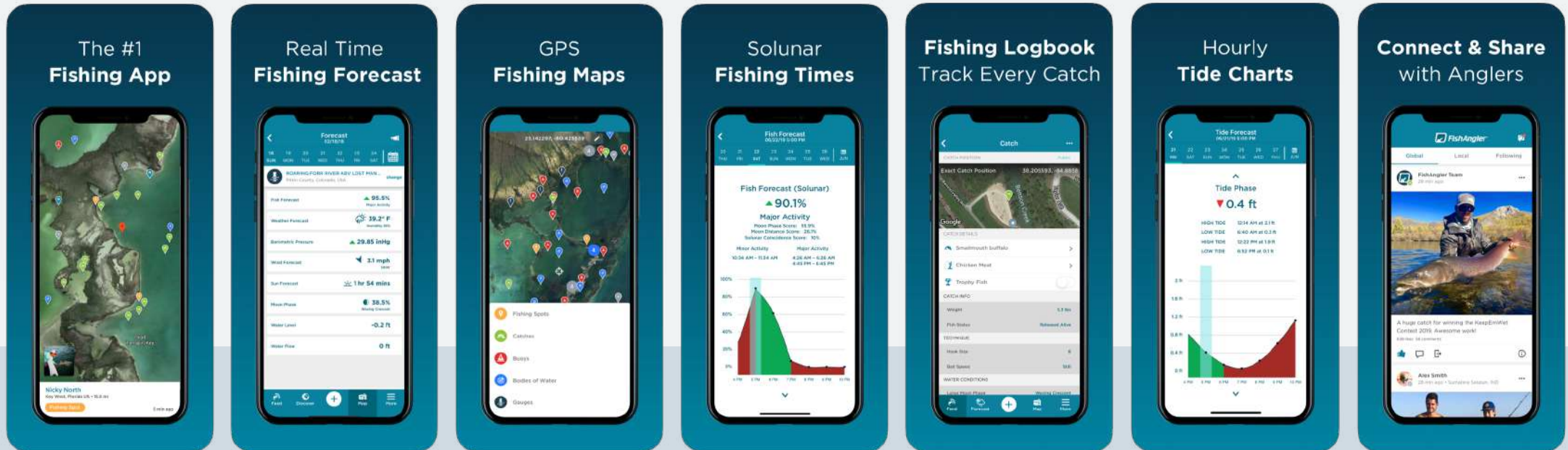**SIGN IN FORM**
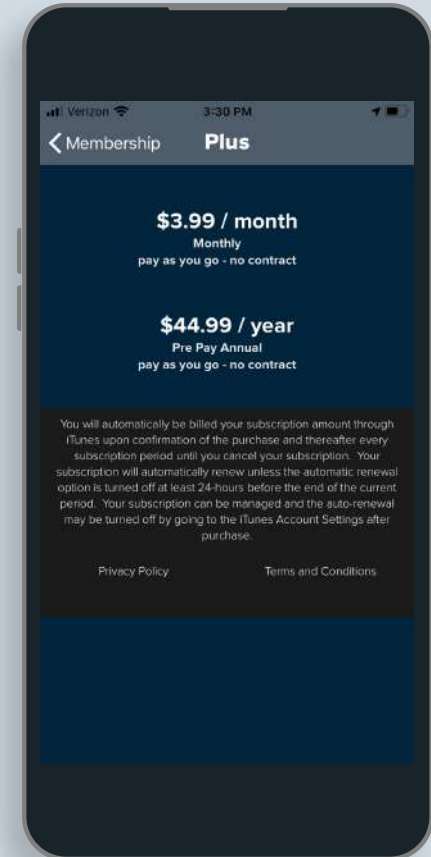
MEMBERSHIP SIGN UP
Not clear where to go

FishAngler is a potential competitor that offers fishers instant access to fishing hot spots, nearby catches, and real-time fishing forecasts, as well as social features to connect and share.

Competitor Profile

KEY OBJECTIVES

- To inspire the fishing community to share their fishing experiences knowledge on a global community fishing platform to increase the advancement of the sport.

- They stand apart by providing fishermen with a free all-in-one companion app that allows them to get instant access to fishing hot spots, nearby catches, and real-time fishing forecasts.

OVERALL STRATEGY

- FishAngler attracts customers by:

  – Providing a robust fishing platform all for free.

  – Being active on many social media platforms: Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Youtube and Linkedin.

- They have a support page on their website that provides tutorials on how to use major features of app.

- Ratings on both Google Play (4.6/5) and iOS (4.8/5) are high.

MARKET ADVANTAGE

- When googling "FishAngler", the website and apps are top hits.

- 100% free to use, no hidden fees

- Businesses can build pages highlighting their organization and connect with local & int'l fishers

- Recently voted best fishing app by Xprize – Ocean Initiative

- Featured on multiple fishing blogs as one of the top fishing apps

- Compatible on desktop, mobile and tablet platforms

FISHANGLER
Marketing Profile

TARGET MARKET

- **Clients:** Beginners to avid professionals, global

- **Social Media:** Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, Vimeo, and Linkedin

- **Website:** fishangler.com

HOW THEY MARKET THEMSELVES

- **Advertising:** One Facebook ad running since June 26, 2020; promoting app download as "#1 FREE fishing app". No evidence of international ads.

- **Marketing:** In 2017, they partnered with professional angler and TV host Henry Waszczuk to help promote the app. They sell branded merchandise from the app.

- **Blog:** A link to a blog on their website, but it doesn't work.

- **Press:** 5 press releases since 2017

- **Youtube:** Youtube channel with 159 subscribers that shows fishing tutorials, promos of app and how to use videos

- **Community:** In 2017, FishAngler teamed up with Bobby Lane (2017 Professional Fishing World Champion) in holding a fishing competition for students to win 12 educational scholarships.

- **Awards:** In 2018, FishAngler was one of the winners of the XPRIZE Ocean Initiative's Big Ocean Button Challenge on Herox, a global mobile app development competition.

SWOT Profile

STRENGTHS

- The app is free for all users with no ads
- Users can join groups and communities to share information and show catches. Feed layout is similar to Facebooks' feed
- UX and UI is intuitive and simple to use for all levels
- Good user experience after signing up. User gets an email with tutorials on their main features. Additional links redirect to their blog for more in-depth info.
- Uses the "Feed" function as an opportunity to promote app's capabilities (mini ads)

OPPORTUNITIES

- Focus more on the weather and forecast part of the app
- Make it easier for the user to save favorite locations to check weather and access them
- Provide in-app tutorial call outs for first time users on complex features
- Provide live weather updates
- Ability to save and download weather forecasts if offline
- All aspects of website needs to be working (i.e. blogs)

WEAKNESSES

- Map function not intuitive
- Saving favorite locations is not intuitive; had to search around
- Weather and forecasts are only updated every hour
- While the how-to tutorials are nice for the user, it might mean some features of app are hard to use. The blog how-to's are time consuming to go through.

THREATS

- Competitor app: FishBrain, Fishing Points
- Competitor (FishBrain) appears above FishAngler as an Ad when search results for "FishAngler" on the App Store.
- Facebook Groups with similar interests