GP Appointment Booking Site

Industry Trends

UK Public Health

Increasing obesity rates, an ageing population, and an increasing number of patients living with one (or more) chronic illnesses is putting strain on public health resources in the UK. This is evident in the statistics of GP visits, with an average member of the public seeing a GP six times a year; double the number of visits from a decade ago. This has made GP appointments at reasonable times a hot commodity, with over 1/5 people struggling to find a time that suited them in 2016-17.

Digitising Health

The NHS is slowly digitising, with a focus on reducing the need for in-person services. 95% of GP surgeries now offer online appointment booking, repeat prescriptions and access to their summary care record. 10.4 million people are registered for online services (Feb 2017). However, the current sign up process is lengthy and complicated, involving the user filling in a form in-person at their GP's surgery, then waiting to receive a letter with instructions on how to create an online account and log in. The number of services that provide online booking is saturated, with 6 companies currently involved with the booking of a GP appointment in the UK.

Direct Competitors

Patient Access
The largest provider of GP appointment booking in the NHS.

Strengths
- Size of user base
- Has an app

Weaknesses
- Crowded, dated, complex UI - both on site and app
- Long, multi-step sign-up process
- Lack of continuity in services across surgeries
- No chat with doctor feature
- No links to other NHS digital services such as NHS choices

Evergreen Life / i-Patient
The second largest provider of GP appointment booking in the NHS.

Strengths
- Sleek UI, NHS related colour scheme
- Has an app

Weaknesses
- Confusing branding, is it Evergreen or I-Patient?
- Sign-up process
- Lack of continuity in services across surgeries
- No chat with doctor feature
- No links to other NHS digital services such as NHS choices

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SystmOnline
GP appointment booking app in the NHS.

Strengths	**Weaknesses**
- Neutral, clear, colour scheme	- Lack of continuity in services across surgeries
- Has an app	- No chat with doctor feature
	- No links to other NHS digital services such as NHS choices

Indirect Competitors

ZocDoc
Patient-doctor matchmaking service based in the US.

Strengths	**Weaknesses**
- Modern, friendly UI	- UI doesn't immediately convey trust, more a sense of fun. Too colourful
- Has an app	- No sense of security features of the site
- Ratings for doctors / surgeries	
- Map feature	
- No sign-in needed until a service / doctor is found	
- Can search by location, illness or GP facts i.e. gender, experience etc	

ScalaMed
Patient-doctor prescription matchmaking service in Aus.

Strengths	**Weaknesses**
- Modern, friendly UI	- Business model of finding a doctor to prescribe medication could be exploited
- Has an app	- No sense of security features of the site
- Uses blockchain for accountability and security	

Opportunities

Based on the weaknesses of competitors, there exist opportunities to create a responsive site with a friendly, modern, trustworthy UI that complements the existing NHS brand. The UI and copy would be simple and easy to understand for users of any age and techincal ability.
There also exists an opportunity to leverage blockchain technology to ensure the security of patients information. Options should be explored for a live-chat (and / or video) service with a doctor or fellow medical professional - helping to meet some users need for an in-person experience.