

# Fempower ECHO

Business Plan



## Owners

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# I. Executive Summary

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Fempower, a startup located in Andover, Massachusetts, is comprised of four high schoolers from Phillips Academy Andover: Jennie Guo, Anjalie Kini, Sarah Zhao, and Julia Zhu. Members of our community wanted to be more involved in social and political activism but were blocked by logistics, so we decided to create a solution. Through our iOS app, Echo, we aim to make activism and engagement quicker, easier, and more accessible so that everyone's voice can be heard.

## I.1 Mission Statement

Fempower enables people to engage in social and political activism on the issues about which they care. We aim to “make your voice echo”.

## I.2 Problem

Most students and adults want to involve themselves in political and social activism, but too many of them are either unsure of how they can get involved or unable to make time in their busy schedules. They simply may find it daunting to get started and find resources. We have realized that this problem is not found solely in our community, Andover, but in all types of communities around the world. It's especially true of young adults who are taking their first steps into activism.

## I.3 Market

Fempower's target market immediately includes anyone who is interested in activism but has not found the time or has been unsure about how best to contribute. However, we also plan to target populations where we could inspire those who have not yet expressed an interest in activism. Echo should be useful for those in schools, businesses, and other communities who want to stay informed and monitor the available opportunities before choosing to act.

## I.4 Product

Echo is an efficient user-friendly social activism app. It is specifically adapted to each user's social activism interests. After subscribing to topics and movements that they care about, a user will be able to easily view information about those issues. Within each topic, there are options to take action (sorted by the time commitment), a place to learn more by reading articles, and a moderated discussion forum. These features reduce the necessary research time and they will get people started which is often half the battle. Moreover, the app puts the available actions at your fingertips, further minimizing the time spent on non-productive actions and maximizing the time and effort directed towards helping worthwhile causes. With



Echo, both fledgling and experienced activists will find it easier to get involved with the issues that they care about and to make a difference.

### 1.5 Competitive Edge

Other activism apps and websites like Flippable, Change.org, DoSomething.org, Countable, and Daily Activists offer similar features to our app does but Echo is superior for a number of reasons. Echo's combination of news, options to take action, and moderated forums is unique; no other app is designed with all of these features to maximize convenience and efficiency. Additionally, unlike its competitors, Echo makes these features available for a variety of issues, and it tailors itself to the interests of each user. Echo provides a more efficient and approachable environment for people to pursue activism.

### 1.6 Support

In addition to our team members, Fempower has received support and help from the following people:

- Maria Litvin, our coach (Computer Science and Math Teacher at Phillips Academy and co-author of *Be Prepared for the AP Computer Science Exam in Java*)
- Cathy Golas, from whom we received advice (administrator of the Sykes Wellness Center at Phillips Academy with experience in finance and strategic planning)
- Stephen Russell, our mentor
- Vicky Wu Davis, from whom we received advice (founder and executive director at YouthCITIES)



## II. Product Description

Fempower focuses on solving the difficulties that people face when pursuing activism. We aim to solve this issue with our user-friendly activism app, Echo. We created Echo to present ways to make an impact and to minimize the time spent in researching and in pursuing those options. Our app will appeal to every working adult or student with good intentions who is short on time. Echo was created using the Swift framework for iOS applications.

### 2.1 Features

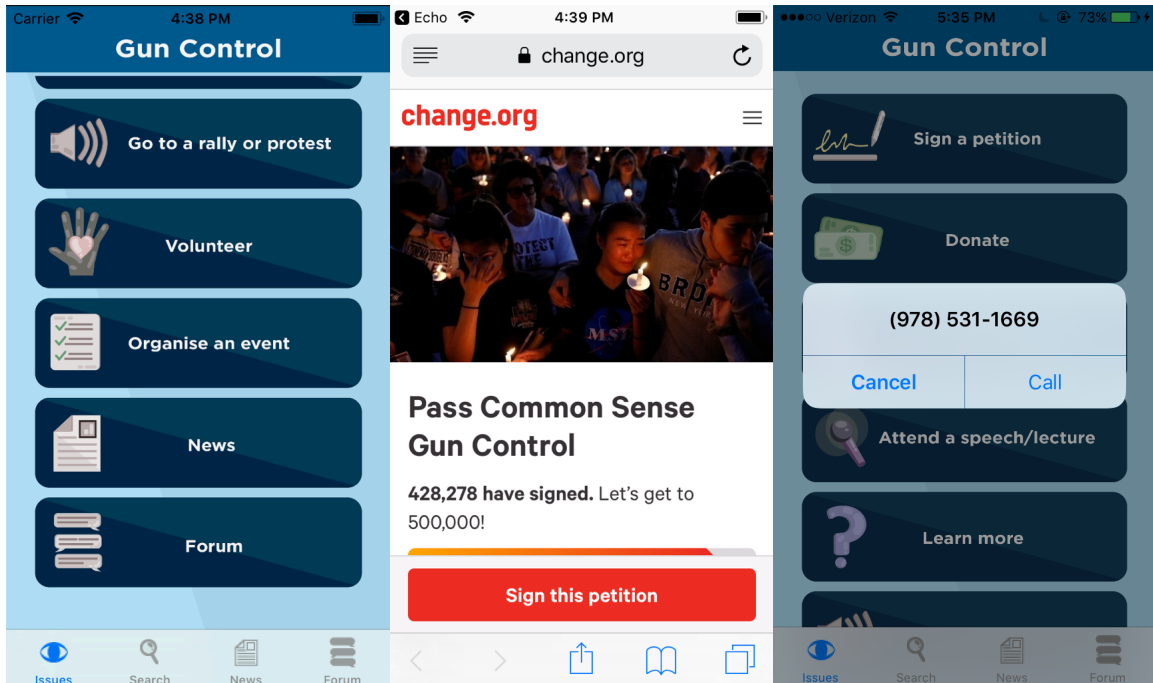
The main components of Echo are

- Subscribe to issues and automatically receive updates
- Read curated news articles about your issues to keep up to date
- Select from a variety of small and large options to take action
- Participate in moderated discussion forums

Users sign up with their email address, and subscribe to a wide range of topics such as LGBTQ+ rights or net neutrality. Once signed in, the user have four tabs at their disposal.

The “Your issues” tab contains a list of all the user’s issues. Within each issue, there are subcategories for types of action: sign a petition, donate, call your representative, attend a speech or lecture, find a protest or rally, volunteer, learn more, organize an event, news, and forum. This tab contains information tailored for the user. With the click of a button, the user is taken to a vetted site providing them direct access to the action they want to take.

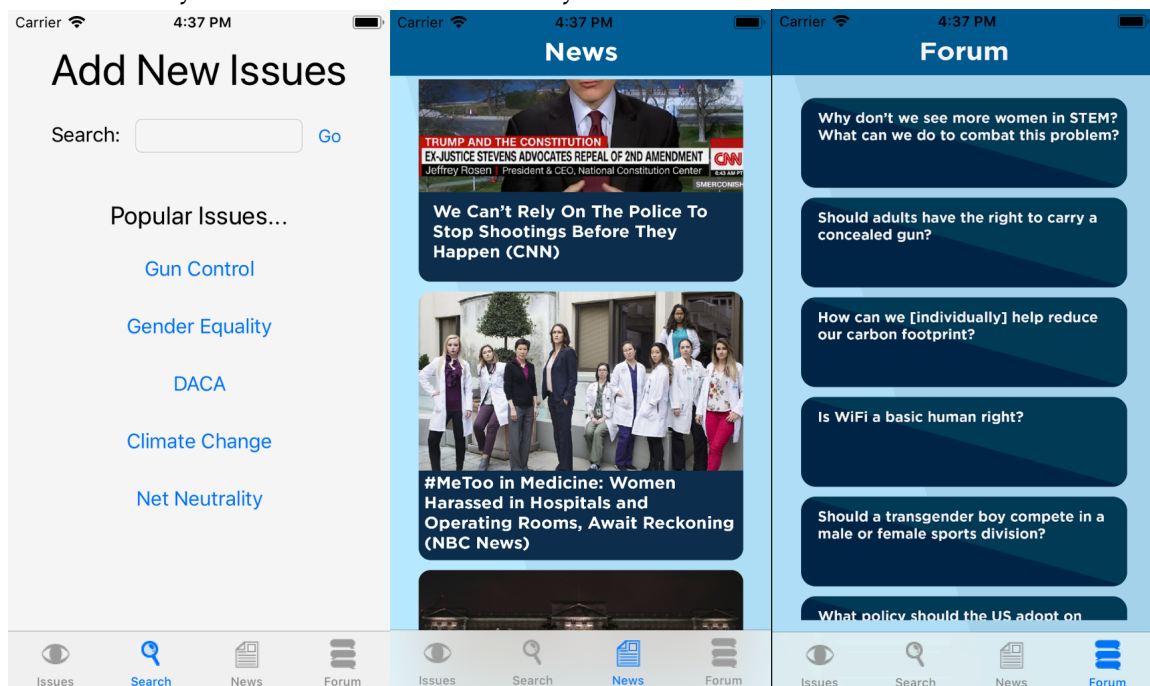




On the “Search” tab, users can add issues, see what’s popular, and explore new issues.

The “News” tab provides users with a variety of articles concerning the topics to which they are subscribed. Given that many news companies do have biases, these news articles will be pulled in from a variety of sources.

The “Forums” tab provides users with topics for daily discussions. User comments can be reported and may be taken down for review by moderators.





## **2.2 Potential Impact**

Echo will make political and social activism more accessible for all members of the community.

With the current charged political climate, many citizens, especially those who are young and inexperienced, have been motivated to engage with one or more societal issues. We want to ensure that every voice can be heard, from the sexual assault survivors of #MeToo to the victims and parents of Parkland. We all have issues that speak to us, and 100% of our survey respondents have either taken action or want to take action. Lack of time or lack of information are the main constraints that are holding back these respondents.

Echo can help solve these issues by bringing the means for learning about issues, talking about issues, and finding ways to take action right to your fingertips.

## **2.3 Evidence of Impact in Our Community**

There is no doubt that our immediate community will greatly benefit from Echo based on the survey that we conducted. Of the 10.87% of respondents who have never taken action, 100% of them want to engage with the causes that have caught their attention. Out of the respondents who have taken action, 28.26% had trouble finding something to do, 39.13% had trouble finding an event to fit with their schedule, and 10.87% had to spend a lot of time researching events. Given the socially and politically aware atmosphere of Andover, which also reflects the larger sphere of our country, we believe that there is a clear need for an app to facilitate activism. An app such as ours will empower our fellow citizens to pitch in to make a difference for causes ranging from gun control to foreign aid.



## III. Potential Market Size

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### 3.1 The Problem and Affected Population

With all the profound social and political changes occurring today, staying informed and knowing how and where to help is crucial to making activism easier. With the limited time and resources available to us, it's tricky to manage all the demands on us from work, school or our personal lives while still getting involved with larger issues.

Echo helps make the process of pursuing activism easier and quicker. Those who have never taken action will find easy ways that they can dip their toes into the water. Those who have already taken their first steps will find further suggestions and resources. They will be presented with events to fit their schedules, and researching events will no longer be a hassle with options always available a few clicks away. There's a reason that we have apps for everything - it's much easier to find a few minutes in the midst of our busy days to scroll through possibilities than to set aside dedicated time. Everyone to whom this applies will find Echo useful.

### 3.2 Market Segmentation

Echo can be used by a wide range of people who are passionate about social or political issues. The tasks listed vary from low commitment to high commitment, which allows for a lot of flexibility. Although our app is currently limited to just iOS users, we hope to expand to all platforms, including Android and browser-based versions.

### 3.3 Potential Market Size

At Phillips Academy there are over 1100 students and teachers who are potential Echo users. We plan to expand to the entirety of the US because almost everyone has an interest in specific social and political issues.<sup>1</sup> This leaves us with a potential market size of over 80 million iPhone users. Our market will grow as we implement our app on other platforms.

### 3.4 Predicted Use

In a dynamic and fast-paced political and social atmosphere, being able to stay on top of news and policies and having a voice for your opinions is key to creating a healthy society. Echo, with its automatic news updates and its convenient options to take action, can greatly

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<sup>1</sup> Statista, "Number of People Who Own an Apple (iPhone) Wireless/Cell Phone in the United States from Autumn 2013 to Spring 2017 (in Millions)," Statista, accessed April 16, 2018, <https://www.statista.com/statistics/369543/apple-iphone-ownership-usa/>.





minimize the time and effort needed to contribute your bit. Behavioral scientists have shown that most people are much more likely to take a default or convenient action than an action for which they have to go out of their way. An app which minimizes the stress and difficulty of staying engaged will appeal to almost all members of an active society such as ours, and will make its own valuable contribution in that way.

### **3.5 Competitor Market Size**

DoSomething.org had over 5.5 million users as of March 12, 2018.<sup>2</sup> However, DoSomething.org fails to allow users to subscribe to topics they are interested in or to provide plausible courses to take action. Furthermore, DoSomething.org does not have a moderated forum or a news section, and there is a lack of personalization within the app.

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<sup>2</sup> DoSomething.org, "Frequently Asked Questions," DoSomething.org, accessed April 16, 2018, <https://www.dosomething.org/about/frequently-asked-questions-0>.



## IV. Competitive Analysis

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### 4.1 Competitive Edge

While Echo shares a few of its features with its competitors, it is superior to its competitors in many ways. Our incorporation of news, discussion forums, many issues, and a multitude of ways to take action makes activism easier, faster, and less daunting.

While many political activism apps have practical ways to take action, they lack breadth both in issues and in options. Unlike these apps, Echo *does* have a wide variety of issues and solutions within those issues in an organized format. Echo also has a unique moderated forum feature as well as a news feature pulling from a variety of media companies. Our app also emphasizes customizability; Echo is the only app that allows users to subscribe to the topics they are interested in and receive only those updates.




























### 4.2 Competition Analysis

Although there are multiple activism apps, we have selected five sites and apps that are the most similar to Echo: Flippable, Change.org, DoSomething.org, Countable, and Daily Activists.

- DoSomething.org is very similar to Echo in the sense that both have a variety of causes and ways to action based on the amount of time needed. Although DoSomething.org is targeted towards teens and tweens, many of their actions cannot be completed by teens. Many of the available options are a bit strange with little to no real impact, and there are very few viable options. In Echo, we hope to bring together the most impactful ways to make a change so as to maximize efficiency for the user.
- Flippable's only focus is flipping states from the Republican Party to the Democratic Party. There is just one issue, while Echo has both information and ways to make a change in a variety of spheres regardless of political affiliation.
- Countable focuses solely on connecting users with their representatives as a way to hold politicians accountable. Again, Echo is more comprehensive in the issues and solutions it deals with.
- Daily Activists provides a list of quick daily actions under their seven main causes. However, Daily Activists does not have a news section nor discussion forums, which Echo does include. Furthermore, Echo allows users to choose their own actions.
- Change.org is a platform which allows you to create your own petition and to have like-minded citizens sign it. Echo gives the user more options than just creating and signing petitions.

Table depicting Competitive Analysis



Features	Echo	Daily Activists	Countable	Change.org	Flippable	Do-Something
Forum						
Variety of issues						
Plausible ways to take action						
Subscribe to issues						
Updates on issues						
Organized by issue						
Variety of ways to take action						
Explore page						
News page with variety of sources						



## V. Branding and Promotion

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### 5.1 Messaging

We will describe our app to consumers with fun, inventive slogans like our tagline: “Make your voice Echo”. We hope to make Echo engaging and appealing to our primary target audience of busy people, especially those relatively new to activism.

### 5.2 Logo and Branding

Echo has a beautifully designed app logo and icon that is professional and can compete with other activism apps. The visually appealing design is essential both to attract attention from potential users and to motivate actual users to use our app.

Branding



Icon



### 5.3 Channels

Fempower plans to raise awareness for Echo by advertising on social media, including Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. We will share promotional videos, announcements and photos via all of these channels. We also intend to create a company website to make more information about our app easily available.

Locally, we will put up flyers in downtown restaurants in addition to posting notifications on our school website. Teachers at our school, Phillips Academy, have expressed interest in our app and are willing to help with our advertising efforts. We are also supported by the Tang Institute.



#### 5.4 Long Term Success

Our app will have long term success because people will always want to get involved with the issues about which they feel passionate. Our app helps people help the world. Since our app is written using Swift, it will be easily and immediately accessible to the large population of iOS users. As we reach a critical mass of users, word of mouth and social effects should help us to form communities within our app which will make it more “sticky”.



## VI. Potential Revenue

Echo will be a free app, but we will include topical advertisements. Once the user base has increased, advertisements and sponsors will continue contributing to the Echo's revenue. Especially if we are able to follow through on our plans for expansion to further platforms, we estimate that Echo has the potential to make \$1,000,000 in 5 years.

### 6.1 Revenue Models

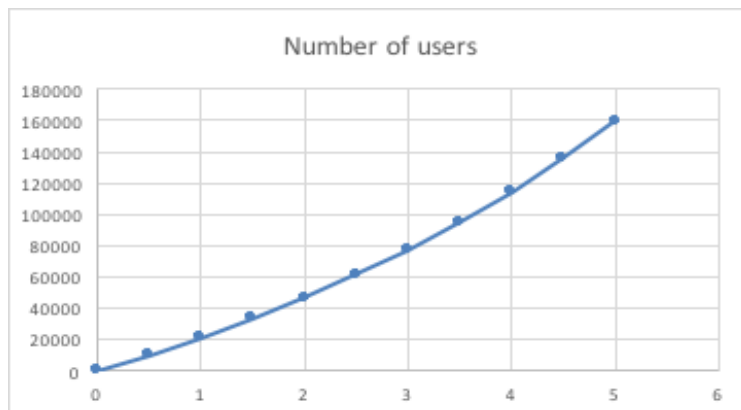
Echo will use advertisements in the app to make up its revenue. To obtain initial funding, Echo intends on applying for an Abbot Grant in addition to asking other associations for grants, sponsors, and donations.

Once the user base has increased, Echo plans to earn revenue with more advertisements and sponsorships. However, Echo would also like to use this space to advertise charity events and fundraisers free of charge.

### 6.2 Potential Revenue Calculations

To begin, we needed to approximate the growth of our user base over a span of five years. We decided that getting 10,000 users in our program in the first six months was reasonable, through examining the original market of our competitors. We then approximated that every six months we would be able to get 1.1 times the number of users to join as we did in the previous series of six months. For example, in the second set of six months we would add 11,000 users. Next, to compute the total potential revenue, we calculated the revenue from advertisements.

For revenue from advertisements, we approximated that each user will spend 10 minutes on the app daily, and two advertisements will pop up every minute. We used these estimates as



well as our estimated user count to calculate the number of advertisements seen. Based on research, we have found that a reasonable click rate is 1% of views, and we will charge \$0.25 per click. To calculate the total revenue, we multiplied the number of days in six months by the price per click by the click rate by the number of advertisements seen.





## VII. Future Directions

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### 7.1 Additional Features

Fempower has many ideas for Echo's future including

- Implementation in new platforms
- Implementation for more communities
- Multiple languages
- Increased options to take action, new actions added every day
- Expanded forum topics
- Increased number of issues
- Sponsorship from established NGOs
- Feedback loop based on popularity of options
- Integration with other apps





## VIII. Works Cited

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DoSomething.org. "Frequently Asked Questions." DoSomething.org. Accessed April 16, 2018.  
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