2) Demographic:

I believe this application will address a need and a want for mainly women shoppers/gift givers between the ages of 21 and 55. This demographic has the disposable income to spend money on friends and family.

Function of Application:

My consensus is that this demographic will be interested in an application that could streamline the strenuous process of finding the right gift for the right person at the right price. This application can function as an easy alternative to fishing around for gift clues from the gift recipient and the tedious process of shopping around for the right gift with the vague information you managed to catch in the first place.

I believe that this application should help shoppers know what type of gifts their friends and family are in the market for at that point and time as well as what their general preferences and sizes are at that point and time. This information alone can go a long way.

The second part of the functionality of the application is actually allowing the shopper an opportunity to browse relevant products now that the above information is known and lastly be able to make a purchase decision and act on that decision, making this application a point of sale.

3) User Research

The user research methods that I believe would be most beneficial in ensuring that we apply the best approach in pursuit of a successful application are the user observations, contextual interviews and lastly user personas. The reason I believe that these two methods and then the third will be specifically valid is due to:

1) The nature of shopping and
2) The nature of how we interact with mobile technology.

The nature of how, where and why people shop has been something that marketers have made a science of since the industrial revolution and something, I’ll argue, people have psychologically analyzed since the beginning of trade.

I believe that contextual interviews will be most beneficial here due to the complex nature of making purchase decisions. Contextual interviews might not be able to return you a vast volume of big data the way surveys might, however the interviews will give you an opportunity to get much more intimate with the shopper. This intimacy will lead you down the trail to best understand how people make their decisions and why when looking and purchasing gifts.
Contextual interviews will give you some good insight into different demographic personas of the people that might use the gift app, why they might use the gift app and their technical as well as intuitive knowledge of how they could interact with the gift app. A grandmother shopping for her 15 growing grandchildren and a recent graduate shopping for her best friend’s birthday are 2 totally different customers.

The user observation approach can be beneficial in two ways. The first is paying attention to how people buy gifts, both, traditionally and online and the second is really paying attention to how they use your app and how they move through the purchase decision on your app.