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Goodreads contextual interview findings

I interviewed four people in total, two of which were my friends, and the other two were strangers who responded to a social post. I transcribed each meeting and categorized my findings into four categories: pros, cons, hopes/expectations, and concerns.

Pros
The central reason why people seem to use Goodreads is to keep track of what they read. Everyone I interviewed said that was the initial reason they downloaded the app, and all the other features were an added bonus. Sharing reading lists, getting recommendations, and giving recommendations to friends were the most popular "additional" features that my interviewees seemed to value the most. Because it's free, simple to use, and the most well-known platform in its field, a different platform would have to be incredibly enticing to bring readers to it. Two of the people I interviewed had used the app for more than a year, and they both said that they wouldn't want to change platforms out of sheer convenience. The other two were relatively new, and seemed more willing to change platforms if a better one came along. Additionally, one person said that they liked the ability to interact with authors on the app, something they tried a few times, but only one author responded.

Cons
The two most common problems people had with the app are that it is owned by Amazon, and that it was difficult to discover new books by filtering through genre/keyword. Additionally, everyone wished that new updates would come soon, for the sake of keeping the app fresh and engaging. When I asked about the functionality and appearance of the app, none of the people seemed blown away by it, but no one thought it was bad enough to move to a different platform solely because of that. One person said their app crashed periodically, so they had to delete and re-download it, which fixed the problem.

Hopes and Expectations
Everyone wanted more updates for the future, and a better way to filter through the database of billions of books. Everyone also said it was time for a redesign of the app's aesthetics. People also wished the company was independent, whether that means getting sold by amazon or terminated and restarted by the founders - they didn't care.

Concerns
The main concern with the app that people had was that they didn't want Amazon to comercialize it, stopping authors from personally interacting with the platform. Additionally, personal privacy and data leaks were concerns that 2 people had.

Summary
Overall, my findings tell me that in order to get users to switch to a different platform, it would have to be independent, community-based, offer advanced search options, and have a modern layout and aesthetic. Features to include in the new platform that Goodreads already has are: a huge database, opportunities to interact with authors, and personalized recommendations.