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Background

As an aspiring filmmaker and screenwriter, I have had to learn how the industry works. Through my own research and networking, I have found that the current system of how screenwriters get placements is inconvenient for them and could be made more efficient. In addition, I have talked to my client about this subject before starting this project and he has also raised similar issues concerning this system.

My Client

My client for this project is Rayan Ali, a Year 13 student in Dubai College. He is doing filmmaking for his undergraduate studies later this year; as a result, he has become knowledgeable about the world of screenwriting through preparing his portfolio for his university applications and by networking with those in the field.

Initial Problem Statement

The current system of getting work as a screenwriter involves writing spec screenplays and sharing them with producers, people who can get them made into films by pitching them to the studios they work for. Efficient networking is vital to screenwriters as connecting with others in their field can get them more contacts to share their work with. However, this whole system can be inconvenient for screenwriters. Firstly, they can only share their work through directly e-mailing or messaging producers; with the number of screenplays producers are sent every day, it can be easy for screenwriters' work to be ignored. In addition, they can only network by either creating their own high-quality website - which can be for those with little experience - or by finding other writers on social media platforms such as Reddit, Instagram and Twitter; while those sites achieve their purpose, they are quite large which can lead to people with actual experience and knowledge being hard to reach.
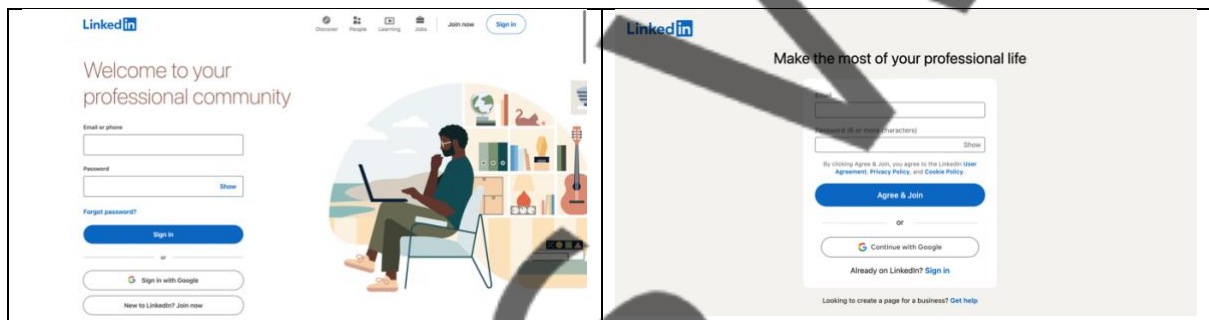
Intentions

Firstly, I need to look at the current system by analysing similar applications to my solution. Furthermore, I need to speak to Rayan Ali, my client, as he can give me valuable insight as to what features I could include. These forms of research will allow me to further develop my solution and get a better understanding of the problem that I am trying to solve. When doing my research, I need to consider how I can make my solution a better fit for screenwriters than what is currently being used and the different issues my solution could have.
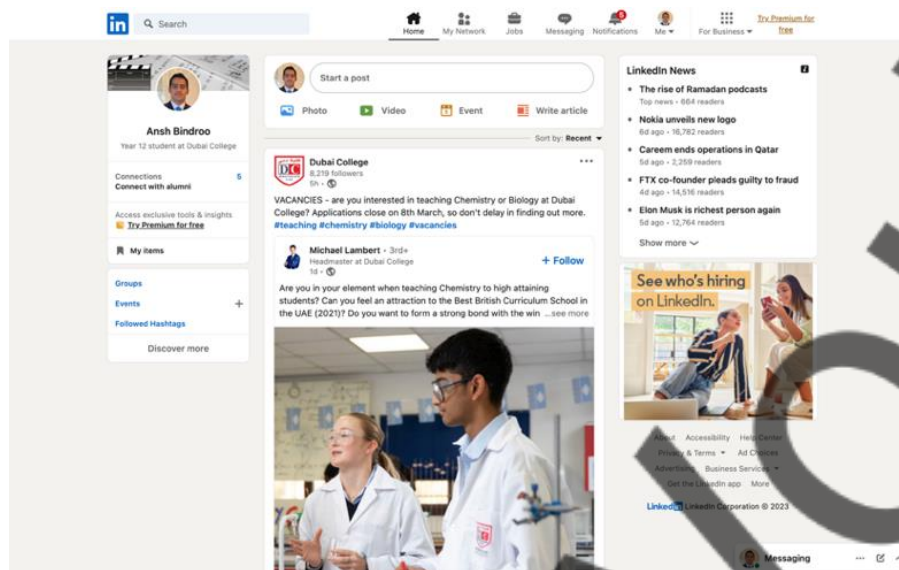
Similar System Analysis

Through my analysis of the problem, I have found that my solution would work best as a website that functions as both a place to share content and connect with others in the field of screenwriting. It must allow users to sign up as screenwriters, create profiles to showcase their work and include features to make the process of finding work and contacts convenient. As a result, I have identified two websites that, to an extent, fulfil the requirements I have listed which I can analyse to gain ideas for features to implement in my solution.

LinkedIn

LinkedIn is a revered business-focused social media platform where users can look for jobs by creating profile pages that function as CVs, conduct professional networking through messaging other users and post content and achievements relating to their career. In addition, companies and employers can post jobs which users can apply for.
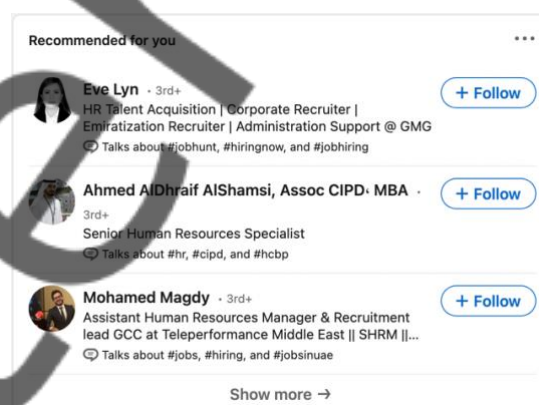

Firstly, as a social media platform, LinkedIn requires users to create an account to use it. On the page initially shown when you open the site (shown left), you can either sign in using your email address and password or join the platform by signing up using your email address and a password of 6 or more characters (shown right). Since my website will likely revolve around screenwriters creating their own profiles, this would be an extremely important feature to include; I would also have to create a database to store users' account information when they sign up and check against when users log in. In addition, requiring the password to be a minimum length would make users' accounts more secure so that would be vital to include too.
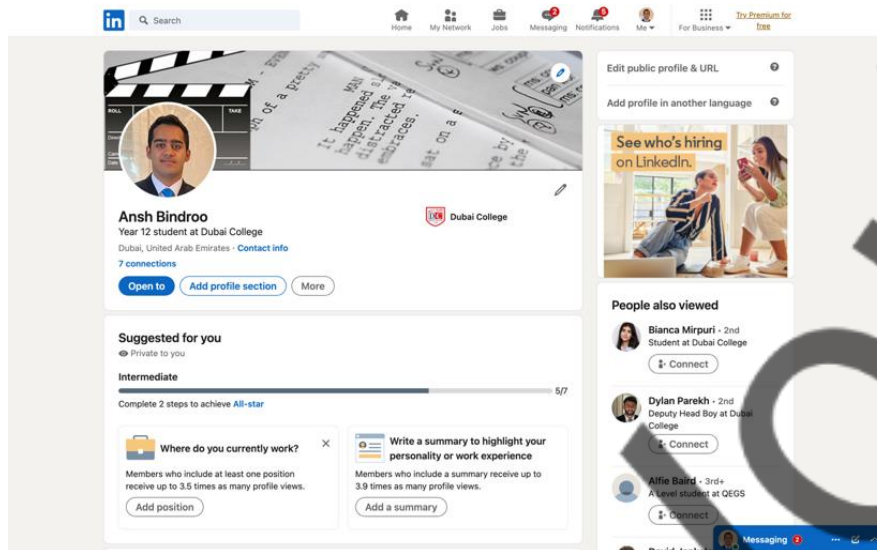
The home page the user is brought to when they sign into their LinkedIn account has a feed of posts from people the user has followed in the centre of the page and a navbar at the top of the page which can be used to go to the other section of the website; such features would be important to include in my website; while I have yet to find other sections that could be linked to in the navbar, the feed would be useful for showcasing users' screenplays.
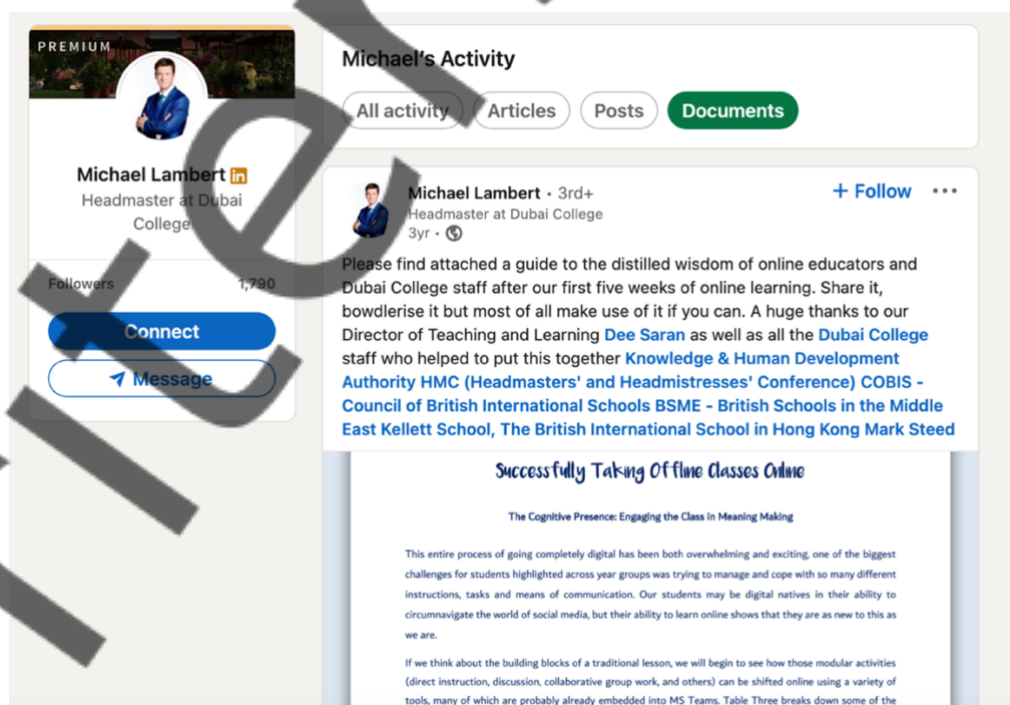
 In addition, the home page has pleasingly minimalistic aesthetics that immediately give the site a sense of professionalism; this is an aspect of the website that I want to model because I need to make sure my website looks like a screenwriter-equivalent to LinkedIn instead of an inferior imitator. On the other hand, the homepage is slightly cluttered with text and elements; this is an aspect I will keep in mind when designing my home page layout as I want to make sure it is easy to navigate.

One interesting feature I noticed while browsing the feed was the "Recommended for you" element which suggests users worth networking with; including a feature like this in my solution could make it easier for users to find the right writers to talk to. However, I feel it could be too complex for this project since it may need AI to be implemented.

Another significant feature of LinkedIn that I would need to implement into my solution is user profile pages. LinkedIn gives its users the flexibility to add as many sections as they need and offers a variety of section types to allow users to showcase their skills, work experience and qualifications; while profiles in my solution will primarily focus on showcasing people's work, it would be useful to allow users to add essential information about them such as their contact information and links to their social media accounts.

On the other hand, a major flaw with the profile page is that it does not allow for it to be changed aesthetically. While this is understandable considering the site's professional nature, I will aim to add such features to my application because my userbase would be made up of creatives who would want to further express themselves artistically through their pages' design. However, the changes users would be able to make should be minimal such as allowing the background colour to be changed or the font of the page's writing to be changed.

Finally, the Activity page shows users all the posts a user has put on their account and sorts them into categories of posts. One of the categories listed is 'Documents' as the site allows users to upload documents as posts to their profiles; I will need to create a similar feature for my site since my solution will revolve around users posting PDFs of their screenplays.
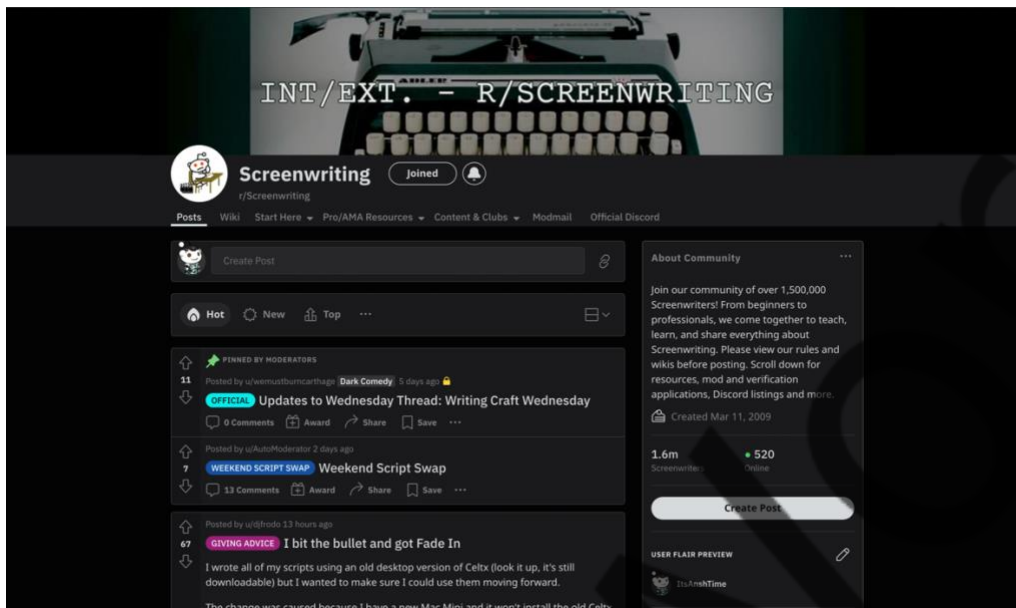
Summary:

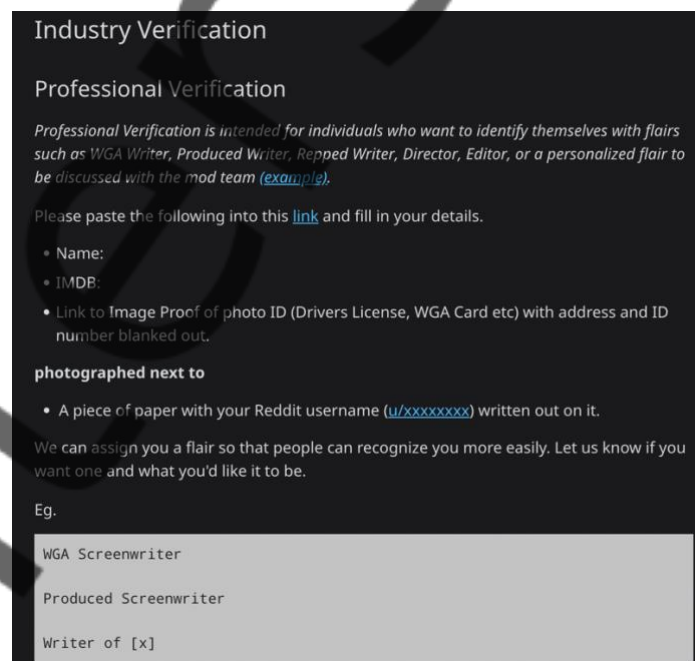| Positives	Negatives
• The website has a sign-up/login system that allows users to create and log into accounts. • Posts can be viewed in the scrolling feed in the centre of the home page. • The home page has a navbar that allows users to access other areas of the website. • Users can create their own profile pages with a variable amount of content and different sections. • The whole site has minimalistic, sleek aesthetics. • The site allows you to post documents.	• The home page is slightly cluttered with elements and text. • The site does not allow for profile pages to be altered aesthetically.

My proposed solution will need:
- A sign-up/login system
- A scrolling feed of posts in the home page
- A navbar in the home page
- A neatly structured home page
- A feature that allows users to create profile pages and posts
- A feature that allows users to post PDF documents as posts
- Minimalistic aesthetics

r/Screenwriting

'r/Screenwriting' is a community of over 1,500,000 Screenwriters (or "subreddit") on the discussion website Reddit. According to the community's biography, the subreddit consists of screenwriters of varying levels of experience; it can be used to learn about the profession of screenwriting and share posts relating to it.

Firstly, there are certain fundamental features of Reddit that would be worth implementing into my application. For example, Reddit users can upvote or downvote posts and comment on them through comment sections that can be accessed when the post is clicked; I can adapt this to my site by allowing users to give their opinion on screenplays using like and dislike buttons or by commenting below them. In addition, every feed on Reddit has its own navbar that allows the feed to be sorted by Hot, New, and top of that day, month, year or all time. It would be useful to include a similar feature on my website's home page feed as it would give users more flexibility when searching for screenplay posts. However, rather than 'Hot', I would sort the feed by top of the day in descending order by default as it would be easier to implement.

One feature unique to r/Screenwriting is that users can get approval to identify themselves as industry professionals such as produced writers, directors, and WGA writers; by

becoming approved, they gain a flair next to their username. I could adapt this idea in my application to allow producers to join the website and be verified by having them enter their company. This would make it much easier for screenwriters' work to reach accomplished people from the industry who can get them placements. In addition, I find the home page for this subreddit easier to navigate than LinkedIn's so I think it would be a better model to take inspiration from when designing my homepage.

In addition, users can put out different types of posts on this subreddit; other than screenplays, users can put out discussion posts, requests for advice and announcements about competitions. While I do not want to borrow heavily from this subreddit in terms of the types of posts users can create in order to avoid complete imitation, I could allow producer accounts to post screenwriting competitions or challenges which would give writer accounts opportunities to prove their skills to professionals. Furthermore, whenever users' posts are responded to, a notification is sent to a notifications store which they can access from the navbar; it would be necessary to include this feature to notify screenwriter users of producers' responses to their competition submissions.

In terms of issues, however, it can be inconvenient to post your scripts to gain feedback because, unlike LinkedIn, it does not offer PDF documents to be uploaded so users have to settle with providing shareable links to their script; this would not be ideal for my site as giving out links could allow users to easily download screenplays from posts. Therefore, my website should allow users to only upload their screenplays as PDFs for posts or responses to screenwriting competitions; users should also not be able to download screenplays to prevent them from being shared with people without accounts. Furthermore, Reddit users' profile pictures are not included with posts; this gives posts on the subreddit a sense of anonymity so I would make sure posts on my website would include users' profile picture next to their usernames in a similar fashion to LinkedIn.

Summary:

Positives	Negatives
- Users can get approval to be identified as industry professionals. - The posts feed can be sorted by different preferences. - Users are able to give their opinion on posts through voting or commenting. - Users are able to put out different types of posts. - The homepage is easy to navigate.	- Documents cannot be uploaded as posts. - Users' profile pictures are not included with posts.

My proposed solution will need:
- Like/dislike buttons on posts
- Comment sections included with posts
- To allow users to be approved as industry professionals

- To allow producer users to post competitions or challenges
- A home page that is easy to navigate
- To allow documents to be uploaded as posts
- Users' profile pictures included with posts