**

***SmartBoard Project Plan Draft***

*Binary Bandits*

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***Table of Contents***

*Introduction*

***Scope and purpose of document***

*System Scope*

***Problem/Opportunity Description***

***Anticipated Business/Personal Benefits***

***System Capabilities***

***System Context***

***Schedule***

*Staff Organization*

***Team Structure***

***Tracking and control mechanisms***

# *Introduction*

## ***Scope and purpose of document (MD)***

*A project plan contains essential information such as an overview, scope, schedule, budget, quality assurance, and management strategies. It provides necessary details to investors and upper management, outlining the project’s objectives and required resources. This document includes both written components and visual elements, such as a system context diagram and a Microsoft Project breakdown, to give a comprehensive yet concise summary of the project’s key aspects. A well-structured project plan helps stakeholders feel confident that there is a clear timeline, budget, and execution strategy. Additionally, it defines the roles and responsibilities of each team member and typically includes contact information to ensure effective communication.*

*Our project plan does not include all the traditional components but instead focuses on key elements specific to our project. It outlines a problem/opportunity description, explaining why we chose this project and how it will benefit our (fictional) company. It also details our anticipated benefits, such as increased profit or customer acquisition. Furthermore, we define the capabilities of our new system, emphasizing how Smartboard will differentiate itself from competitors and why our app will be more desirable. A system context diagram visually represents our app’s data flow, showing how different components will interact. Lastly, our plan includes a schedule built in Microsoft Project, providing a structured timeline for the semester and the team’s development progress. It also outlines our approach to tracking project changes, monitoring progress, and maintaining clear communication to ensure successful completion.*

# *System Scope*

## ***Problem/Opportunity Description (MD)***

*The goal of our project is to develop SmartBoard, a modernized learning management system (LMS) designed to replace outdated and inefficient platforms like Blackboard. Our objective is to create a streamlined, user-friendly interface that enhances the workflow for both students and teachers, making it easier to manage assignments, track due dates, and organize coursework efficiently. Current competitors, such as Blackboard, suffer from poor user experience, slow performance, and cluttered interfaces, despite generating significant revenue from their subscription-based services. SmartBoard aims to solve these issues by introducing a more intuitive layout, enhanced organization features, and a seamless grading system. Our platform will offer clearly structured tabs for assignments with due dates, grades, along with a calendar, ensuring that users have easy access to the information they need without unnecessary complexity.*

## ***Anticipated Business/Personal Benefits (MD)***

*By creating SmartBoard, our company aims to establish a steady revenue stream through subscription-based services while expanding into the educational and business software markets. Our goal is to modernize learning management systems by providing a fast, reliable, and intuitive platform that simplifies the user experience for both educators and students. Beyond SmartBoard, we plan to develop additional applications that can be utilized by both educational institutions and businesses, ensuring long-term growth and innovation within our company.*

*SmartBoard offers numerous advantages over existing platforms. It features a clean, user-friendly layout where coursework, grades, and due dates are clearly displayed in both calendar and list formats. Users can customize how they view assignments, receive notifications for new assignments and grades, and set reminders for upcoming deadlines. Additionally, our robust backend architecture is designed to efficiently handle large volumes of data, offloading some processing to local servers within colleges and student devices for improved performance. Overall, SmartBoard will provide a modernized and faster alternative to existing LMS platforms, ensuring a seamless and efficient learning experience.*

## ***System Capabilities***

*To give a good image of what you may expect to see in our upcoming Smartboard application, it’s necessary to state the main features we plan to include. In the stead of alternatives including but not limited to Blackboard and Canvas, we have chosen to pick certain strengths in current course-centric student portals.*

*The first essential part of Smartboard is its tab for each of a given student’s courses. This feature is simple in nature, crucial to minimize the confusion of the student, and maximize academic throughput. The organization of courses in their respective sections will also serve students access to all of the other numerous features to follow.*

*Getting deeper into this idea, the layout of the course itself will be intuitive and uniform; the layout will be a predefined and nearly identical template for all courses. In the alternatives of Smartboard, they give professors a lot of options and possibilities for how exactly they want to organize their course, though there are many scenarios where differences in faculty preferences can drive students mad. One course can be void of any useful information whatsoever, while another is a myriad of menus that only serve to complicate the learning process. With more simplicity in the layout of courses, students are more likely to understand the assignment and where they can go to get what they need. There will be multiple templates to choose from, but they are selected by the administration of the service: all courses at a given institution will have the same template, but it may vary from school to school.*

*Within the neat layout of a course, one of the important articles to include are due assignments that leave nothing to the imagination. There will be a central location for all assignments of a given student, each required to be assigned a due date by the professor if the student has to submit anything. It can be very disorienting and foster procrastination to not know when an assignment is due, so to have a single place where all assignments can be seen is a definite. The assignments, since they all will have a date, will optionally be organized into a calendar view, toggleable by the student.*

*In the same way that a section for due assignments is vital, so is the feedback you receive for said assignments. The grading tab in Smartboard will be chocked full of abilities to chart a student’s performance. It will clearly be able to communicate to a student how they are faring in their courses. The grading system is universal, with the same system used across courses. With a more open design, it’s possible for one student’s assignments to be graded out of 100 points, and another out of 10, this only being one of the number disparities possible found on other college course platforms.*

*Somewhat present in other applications like Blackboard, we want to fully implement an open discussion tab for each of a student's courses that is more encouraging to use. Instead of the traditional use case of a grade-mandated assignment where students are told to say something, we want to also add a section to allow students to clear up misconceptions over a given course. Think of a groupchat of study-partners for a given course; except it’s publicly available in view of everyone enrolled in that section of the course. It will allow students to exchange ideas and information that they may have otherwise not have caught from the professor, for example an assignment the professor mentioned in class. It could also be treated like a censored forum of sorts (only appropriate language, no sharing of personal information) to help students be more aware.*

*Finally, for whatever the subject at hand is, we want all of the resources a professor has pushed to students to be accessible in one spot. This plays into our simplified layout, as currently with the use of Blackboard, students can easily be overwhelmed with the amount of different sections a professor may create in a course for various documents, and a singular location for resources mitigates that. The same policy for more restrictive but clear layout will also be used, so that professors are encouraged to slim down or aggregate the amount of documents they post to their course. All textbooks will be segmented from professor-created material, so that students can get straight to the point if need be.*

## ***System Context***

*To see the current schedule view SmartboardSystemContextDiagram.vsdx within the GitHub repository.*

# *Schedule*

*To see the current schedule view SmartBoardPlan.mpp within the GitHub repository.*

# *Staff Organization*

*Our team is composed of four dedicated members, each playing an essential role in the development of SmartBoard. The team is structured to ensure a smooth workflow, with each member bringing specialized skills to the table.*

*At the helm of the project is our team leader, Matthew Dirlam, who is responsible for overseeing the entire development process. He coordinates the efforts of all team members, ensuring that we stay on track and meet project milestones. Matthew’s leadership ensures that the project remains aligned with our overall goals.*

*Our project manager, Austin Toro, plays a crucial role in keeping everything organized and on schedule. He is responsible for managing the project timeline, ensuring that tasks are completed on time, and allocating the necessary resources to ensure the development process runs smoothly. Austin’s organizational skills are key to preventing delays and keeping the team efficient.*

*Alex Volz, our system designer, is responsible for the architecture and overall design of SmartBoard. He plans and defines the layout, user interface, and features that will make the app both functional and user-friendly. Alex’s design skills ensure that the app is not only aesthetically pleasing but also intuitive and easy to navigate.*

*Finally, Marco Martinez, our programmer, takes the design and plans created by Alex and implements them into a working application. Marco's expertise in coding and development ensures that SmartBoard functions as intended and meets the performance standards required for an optimal user experience.*

*Together, our team’s combined efforts are focused on creating a powerful, efficient app that will provide both students and professors with a reliable tool for managing courses and accessing materials seamlessly.*

# *Tracking and control mechanisms*

*To track changes during the development of SmartBoard, we will hold weekly meetings to provide status updates, assess project progress, and identify upcoming tasks. We will use a Gantt chart to visually track project timelines and key milestones, and rely on calendars and groupware tools like Slack and EGroupware to ensure effective communication and keep the team aligned. To keep files up-to-date and in sync, we will utilize cloud storage, as well as physical media for backups. Additionally, Austin Toro, our project manager, will play a vital role in overseeing performance, managing scheduling, and controlling the project budget. These strategies will help us ensure the project is completed on schedule and within budget.*