Confidential

NDA

GenR8

DB 8

A debate platform intended to help create a benefit to society by publicly surfacing arguments for positions and making those available to all.

Surfacing the reasons that people think as they do on a particular topic and whether on balance given all competing points those positions make sense

Any debate can happen but it is primarily intended at the big social issues and values.

So the merits of omlettes vs egg sandwiches is just as valid as any other topic but the big questions are the ones that the DB 8 tool intends to add value to.

The Problem

In the comments sections of newspapers or the few lines that people send on social media cogent arguments are not discussed / debated in good faith. Positions get dug in and rudeness results.

Divisions are created, people’s mental health suffers, nothing useful is achieved.

Social media in its current form drives division .

In these forums people try to belittle their opponent, they throw links about to their favourite article on the topic but nothing is achieved.

On broadcast/ TV (legacy media) news debates seem to have an agenda and do not appear to be fair and open. The format is also too short for a real honest discussion. Again point scoring appears important. The discussion even if fair is too narrowly focussed, the wider implications of any proposed policy are not covered thus unintended or unarticulated consequences occur.

On new Media there are many long form interviews with participants on particular sides of debates which can be excellent but these are with known “players” in the field.

That the big issues of society are not adequately debated nor the imagination of the population not harnessed to help solve them is a missing opportunity.

One side of debates is garnering all the attention and has cemented itself in organisations and government. This has been done without scrutiny, is presented as fact and fait accompli which dissenters simply have to put up with and be silent and go along with.

Vocal dissenters are removed from position.

A forum which coalesces good argument rooted in explicable clear values and reasoned opinion with a vision is needed to counter what is presented as clear truth.

A media is needed.

A banking / loan / investment capability is needed.

A Legal support structure is needed.

An internet cloud hosting infrastructure is needed.

Joined by some overarching co-ordinating body – constructed in such a way that it cant have control seized or be undermined in values.

The Solution

The purpose of DB 8 is to allow anyone with an opinion on a topic to offer it for debate to particular individuals or to anyone who wants to take up the mantle.

By making the pro and con points made in the debates publicly available over time when the same topic is debated we will see arguments being refined, we will see their “scaffolding” the logic that connects the points made in support or against a position to the underpinning beliefs / values and vision. We will also see predictions on the likely outcomes of courses of action, not just in the narrow sense but also in a whole society sense.

For example HS2 might (or might not ) have an economic argument / business case that in a narrow sense says that communities on the line with be monetarily better off as a consequence in X years and the line will pay for itself but the wider considerations of loss of green space, noise etc might be well argued to out weigh those benefits.

By making that visible to all, people who are active in the public forum via all media forms can have their points better tested / critiqued and the true values that they actually hold discerned and the consequences of what they

By giving space to full debate unintended or unarticulated consequences of a policy or line of thinking will be surfaced.

By repeating the same argument other people who think they have better arguments on either side will contribute and refine points. If enough people take part in separate debates on a topic the richness of the reasons, the underlying values and motivations for a position will be clear, the consequences in the widest possible sense will be clear.

The fundamental philosophical differences of people can be surfaced and then these can be explored in further debates.

Ultimately people will likely maintain their positions because I think personality drives opinion and behaviour but it will create understanding where currently social media creares division.

Open debate, exchange of considered ideas.

Max 4 or 6 in a debate.

Any number of observers

All can be anonymous

Share the arguments made for and against

Rules:

There is no point scoring

There are no winners and losers

Polite engagement

Use logic

Tie your argument to your fundamental values and beliefs

Be prepared to admit that a fundamental belief is a fundamental belief and doesn’t have any under pinnings other than belief if that is the case.

Don’t presume your stated Facts are in fact Facts.

Pressure test all points made

X hours to respond to a point, if exceeded debate ends

Any arguments are valid – including ones that some people may find unpalatable – they just need to be justified / reasoned

Being rude gets flagged – name calling - potentially banned

A debate ends when it either Times out (participants agree a time limit), users don’t respond in time, or they agree to end it.

Marketing Plan

Market Penetration – getting started

Market Size

Target Markets

Cyber Security

Data Promise (ie its not facebook or google or Microsoft)

Needs to be secure from data manipulation and data breach

Data manipulation would be a major threat – duff data will destroy credibility

Business Case / Business Model

How it makes money – if it does.

Can companies use a version internally? Yes if they cant monitor who uses it

Users can get transcript / copy of their own debate for free

Observers can get a few free ones on select topics and then have to pay a bit.

To get full analysis of the current pros and cons of a topic have to either subscribe or pay one off fee

But is cheap

Would we sell it – no – it has to be free of big tech forever. There has to be a permanent public commitment to independence, free of influence and transparency of ownership etc

Barriers to entry – how market is maintained / hard to copy

Open to all

Free to use

No off limits topics

Total transparancy of the data and data model used for sifting

Independent audit of the above every year - published result

Your credentials don’t matter , everyone expert or not, brings their best, evidenced, testable arguments.

Needs a vlume of usage on each topic to create useful data (us the qualitative principle of when no new points are being raised it is probably, thought not certainly , done)

Workflow

The solution probably exists as a Portal / Website with a mobile app (and possibly with links out to other social media?)

Entry Points as a User

Entry Points as an observer

How data (arguments are sifted and sorted)

Users can add comments via any device to the portal

Users do not need to be Members or Subscribers.

Login is needed

Pseudonyms are ok

Website tracks IP address origin for foreign influence and same person using multiple pseudonyms, this may be necessary for the analytics.

A User starts a potential debate by one of the following:

“Advertising” on the Portal that they would like to Debate a topic – in this scenario a User creates a profile and completes login (or logs in with a pre existing profile) and then either selects a topic from a drop down list or creates their own topic title (this may need careful management and curation so that it doesn’t grow multiple self titled topics all meaning the same thing ).

The initiating User can select the number of participants they wish to debate with, anywhere from 1 to 5 (so minimum participants is 2, max is 6).

The initiating User sets a time period for the debate to run over (from hours to days), this is to accommodate people being able to think carefully, do research if necessary, and respond carefully.

The initiator can create a maximum wait time for a response (the response could just be a holding response “I am still thinking”) so that they know the other participants are still active in the debate.

There is an active exit debate feature which informs other participants that someone has actively left. Anyone can leave the debate at anytime for any reason (no reason needed) or juts not respond and time out.

The initiating User has to broadly state their position on the topic, (this needs to be in the form that can be either agreed with or disagreed with) the intent being to attract some who represents the opposing view if it is a 2 person (1:1) debate or roughly even (2:3 or 2:4 is still Ok for the debate to happen)

That Title of the proposed Debate then appears on an “offered Debates list” along with name / User Name of the Debate offeror and will sit there for X amount of time (say 2 months – this might change as we move forward therefore needs to be a system configuration item, maybe also User configurable).

Users who wish to participate in a debate state their position on the topic (couple of paragraphs, with a word limit starting with the word Agree or Disagree to be clear on their position) the originator selects participants from the people who volunteer to take part and by reading their statements (or just at random). If the User Selects 2 person debate, the other person has to hold the opposite view, if 4, he has to select 2 of each, if 6, 3 of each.

Odd numbers can have a 2:3 or 2:1.

If there are not enough participants on one side the debate can still go ahead eg 4:2 if only 2 from one side come forward.

It would be good if the Debates being offered can appear elsewhere with a link to the site

A variant on initiating a debate would be where some (2 to 6) people are discussing a topic (Friends Debate) and want a means to do in a more controlled setting over a period of time. One of them picks / creates the debate title and sends invites to the others to join at a specific date time. (they will need user name login or guest account).

If that debate were for 6 but only 4 accept the initiator can choose whether to allow unknown participants or lock it to just their friends.

Other points same as anonymous debate.

Once all participants in the debate are signed up to join at the appropriate time the option to join disappears/ greys out / debate full message.

However that the debate is taking place is still “advertised” made visible on the website / portal. This is so that anyone who is interested can follow the debate i.e observe the dialogue and any materials offered as part of the debate.

Any number of people can follow the debate and receive notifications of how it unfolds or choose just to receive the whole transcript at the end

Observers still have to login / guest to get access as an Observer

The system is to allow access to video clips and a white board and links to other materials as debate supporting materials.

Debates could take place in real time by video link like a group skype if all participants agree (as this would no longer be anonymous), or they could obfuscate their faces.

Debates could also take place by voice (like skype voice) if all participants agree.

The above would provide for real time debate. This would need a fixed end time to complete the debate.

Speech to text recognition will be needed for converting the content of the debate to text and to incorporate it into summary positions on the topic

Running the Debate

Debates are self policed

The exception being that a live debate, Video or voice, can request to have a moderator / chairman join the debate to control proceedings / keep things fair . (this would probably be a paid for bookable feature).

The organiser of the debate makes their opening remarks, opposite view opening remarks, other participants in turn. The system locks until each has contributed in turn? (if someone drops out then it moves to the next, if someone takes too long to post their remarks

Once all opening remarks are made the debate begins in earnest back and forth – controlling how this unfolds without threads getting lost is key, allowing people to contribute at will without points being missed or drowned out.

The response time from participants will vary depending on the time frame that the Organiser has set for the debate. Short debate will need quick responses. Debate that runs for many days can allow hours to respond

The thread of a textual conversation is maintained by participants comments being held in their own column under their User name. Arrows / Lines link the point being responded to to the points being made.

When a User reads someones comments it highlights that that User has read the Comment made (when there are 6 participants the each comment should ultimately show 5 Users and their names, have read and the time read).

Comments can be any length – suggest max 600 words plus any supporting material

System needs to take account of participants in different time zones