EECS 2311 SecZ Winter 2024 Team 3 Project Proposal

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Project Vision Statement

The purpose of this project, named LongBox, is to provide concise documentation of out of print comic books published from either small or defunct publishers, and independently published ones as well.

It will include information such as the creators (writer, editor, penciler, inker, colourer, letterer, etc), publisher(s), publication dates, the cover page, and description of the book itself. An application created by hardcore comic fans for hardcore comic fans to provide a digital means to archive these books and ensure their longevity at a time where the comics medium faces a decline in sales due to publisher neglect.

Furthermore, the project does not stay strict to cataloging only out of print and independent comics. This is simply the focus and motivation. If users are keen on cataloging more mainstream publications they are free and encouraged to do so.

Now to explain the choice of name as it may be an unfamiliar term. A short box is a home comic book storage device and a long box is a commercial comic book storage device. This application is called longbox as it serves to help users store and archive their comic book collection in a digital long box. As well, future iterations of this project are to be ported to a web-application. We hope that it does eventually become a popular hub for comic book enthusiasts to archive and learn about comic books.

Acting as a sort of digital library management system, LongBox aims to provide a concise documentation of out of print comics, where users can upload, browse, and classify comic books. The value in a project such as this is to provide an open source desktop-based option to push back against the over digitization of print media. While it is good to create digital media, doing so at the expense of print media, thereby rendering it obsolete is not a good direction for the world to take. There is a serious problem of classic print literature of all forms becoming hard or impossible to obtain.

This project is built from scratch and not based on any existing project. It will only use libraries/frameworks. The project will allow users to make profiles and submit comic books to be added to the system's catalog. Furthermore, the project will also have a recommendations system to suggest comic books to users based on popularity and recently added items.

Big User Stories

User Login & Registration
LongBox users must register for and login to the system to access it and use its features.

User Profile & Home Dashboard
LongBox users can view their personal profile along with a home dashboard that serves as a portal for the major

Users Can Browse & Contribute to the Comic Book Catalog
LongBox users can search the comic book repository of the system, browse the full collection and contribute more items to the collection.

Users Can Build a Personal Comic Book Collection

LongBox users can select individual comic books to put into their own personal collections and remove them if they no longer want to keep them.

Users Can Read and Write Comments About Individual Comic Books

LongBox users can view a comments section associated with all comic books and write new comments. These comments are stamped by username and time.

Users Receive Recommendations About Trending & Relevant Comic Books

LongBox users are given trending and recommended comic books upon entry to the system and can navigate back to this page for further recommendations

Iteration 1 Detailed User Stories

Users Can Register For LongBox
Associated Big User Story: Users Login & Registration
Description: Before using LongBox users must provide basic personal information such as date of birth, full name, email address and country of residence. Furthermore, users must provide a unique username that has not been used by any other member of the system before and must also provide a strong password. If the criteria are not met the user is not permitted to register

Priority: High	Cost: 3

Users With A Registered Account Can Login To LongBox
Associated Big User Story: Users Login & Registration
Description: After successfully creating an account or logging into a preexisting account, a user will be greeted

Priority: High	Cost: 3

Once Logged In, Users Remain Signed into the Application and Maintain This State
Associated Big User Story: Users Login & Registration
Description: After a successful login, a new user session will be created for said user. This session will remain active for the duration of the users stay and tailor the profile, comic collection, and recommended pages to the users requirements.

Priority: Medium	Cost: 1

Once Logged In, Users Can Choose To Logout At Any Time
Associated Big User Story: User Profile & Home Dashboard
Description: Once logged in, the user will be able to logout via the 'logout' button on the top right of the menu bar. This will terminate the user session (log them out) and redirect the user back to the login page.

Priority: High	Cost: 1

Users Have Access To A Menu Of Links To All Aspects of the Home Dashboard/Profile
Associated Big User Story: User Profile & Home Dashboard
Description: After a successful login, the menu bar will become visible with all the available tabs (Comic Collection, Search, Add Comic, Profile, and Log Out). The user can select any of these and navigate to them, while the menu bar still remains present.

Priority: Low	Cost: 2

Users Can View Their Personal Profile Information
Associated Big User Story: User Profile & Home Dashboard
Description: After a successful login, the users can view their profile details in text form with one click to get to the user profile screen. This screen is read only and must be synchronized at all times with the user that is logged in and no others. The only field not visible is the password.

Priority: Medium	Cost: 2

Users Can Browse The Full Catalog of Comic Books In The System's Repository	
Associated Big User Story: Users Can Browse & Contribute to the Comic Book Catalog	
Description: A user should have a one click option to view the full list of comic books in the system's catalog in tabular form by the individual fields that a comic book is described by. The User can choose to sort these items by columns.	
Priority: Medium	Cost: 3

Users Can Add A Comic Book To The System Repository	
Associated Big User Story: Users Can Browse & Contribute to the Comic Book Catalog	
Description: Users can fill out a form to add a comic book to the system repository by giving all information they know about it. The form is not strict and is lenient on empty fields as users may not have all information available to them and the purpose is to slowly build the catalog based on users best effort and knowledge about the comic books.	
Priority: High	Cost: 3

Users Can Search For Individual Comic Books By Series Title
Associated Big User Story: Users Can Browse & Contribute to the Comic Book Catalog
Description: In the search tab of the menu bar, the user will be able to enter the title of a comic series and the system shall return the result, if it exists. If the result does not exist the user will be prompted that there is no such item. If the result does exist then the user will be guided to a page showing the basic details of the comic book.

Priority: Medium	Cost: 2

Customer Meeting & Summary

The customer for this application will be an avid fan of comic book/graphic novel literature. His name is Rocco. He is a young male in his 20s from the Greater Toronto Area and has no formal/professional technology background.

Rocco, an avid comic fan, is frustrated with the comic industry's neglect of their older titles, as various comics from the 70s, 80s, and 90s lack not only printings or legal digital copies but also any documentation of such titles. Additionally, the comic industry's hesitance to adopt new technologies to assist with distribution and preservation make it difficult for newer comics fans to access older titles. As such, many readers will tend to gear towards piracy to access these titles, which is not a desirable alternative.

Rocco agrees that a digital archival, such as a comic book database, can help overcome some of these issues. With such technology, Rocoo believes comic fans can access information about older titles such as their publication and creative details, as well as engage in forum discussions about them.

Overall, Rocco believes that a digital archival can help with not only preservation of older comic titles, but also to rejuvenate public interests in the comics medium as a whole.

The customer meeting video can be found at the following link: Rocco Interview Video

Appendix: Rough Work Done Before ITR0 Document Was Assigned

Requirements/Features

This program will have multiple tabs, such as a favorites, search (with filtering), account, view history, and an add comic tab.

Nothing will be possible if not logged in, a user must initially sign up or log in with an email, password, and username. All of this will be stored on a database with the password hashed for safe encryption. The user tab will contain information about the user's account, a brief description, and a profile picture. There will also be some user settings as well as a logout button.

The main feature will be the search tab, as you can search and filter comics based on their characteristics such as title, creative team, publisher, year, and genre. A user will be able to search for a certain comic with either a title search or with more elaborate filters. When a user selects a certain title, they will also be presented with the publication information and creative team of the comic complemented by a picture of the first issue's title page as well as a brief description. To add on, there will also be an interactive forum where users will be able to discuss the comic and interact with others.

Furthermore, once a user has selected a comic, it will be added to their view history, which is a separate tab that can be accessed. The final feature will be to favorite a comic, which will then store it in the favorites tab. The user will be able to navigate to this section and view all their favorite content.

Additionally, the users will be able to also upload a comic entry into a separate database and include all the relevant characteristics for a comic as discussed previously. The database will also forbid any duplicate entries.

Features:
- Search tab to filter and search for desired title(s)
- Favorites tab to store and view favorited comics
- Add tab to add a comic entry to the database
- History tab to view previously viewed titles

- Accounts tab to view and edit user information and log out

Unique Features:
- Users are able to upload a comic to the database, which can be viewed by other users
- User can comment and interact with others on a comics' forum section
- Users can filter with great detail for the title(s) they want to search for
- User will have a favorites tab to keep track of their favorite titles
- User will have a view history to see all the comics they viewed
- A trending page, which entries will be based on their favorites count

Use Cases

UC1A: Users can sign-up to create an account

UC1B: Users can log-in to view their account

UC2: Users can upload the cataloging information for a comic book to add it to a shared system repository of comic books

UC3: Users can search and filter comics based on title, author, genre, publisher, year, and creative team

UC4A: Users can create and maintain a list of their favorite comics. They can add/remove comic books from this list if they choose.

UC4B: Users can view the full catalog of books added to the database and select these for their own personal collection

UC5A: Users can comment their thoughts on a comic book

UC5B: Users can view the comments by others on a comic book

UC6: users can view trending comic books in a trending page