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LABORATORY 3 ACTIVITY IN CMSC – 128 (SRS DOCUMENT)

Introduction

This project is known as “The Chronicles” , an independent and anonymous news platform where users can gain access to information freely. This will eliminate the risk other news outlets have where the news articles are influenced by a small group of people who controls the organization. This platform plans to democratize journalism on a whole new level due to its inclusiveness.

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this product is to create a news platform that is impartial and unbiased. This will be achieved by pooling different news articles and reports from different sources with different political spectrum and compressing it into a much more comprehensive and objective article. This is in order for easier fact-checking and cross verification. At the same time, the product users must be able to contribute to the content of the platform. Hence, this will give whistle blowers an avenue to anonymously expose any injustices and corruptions in our society. The product must be able to perform this swiftly without compromising the relevance and accuracy of the news articles.

1.2 Intended Audience

The intended audience of this SRS are the project managers, developers, engineers and other members of the community who are interested in participating in the development of this product. Other parties outside of the developers community (journalists, civil-society groups, and any individuals) who want to contribute or join us in the development of this product are also allowed to see this SRS.

1.3 Intended Use

This SRS will serve as the guidelines for the community regarding the principle and direction of the product development, this will become the basis for the fundamentals and core functions of the product. Future developments and iterations of the product must be related to the fundamentals and objectives that are articulated in this SRS. Future developers and community members must stick to the principle and direction of the product development,

1.4 Scope

The goal of this product is to create an independent news website that is unbiased and non-partisan. This can be achieved by making the project community-based and open-sourced to make the stakeholders participate on the general aspects of the product. This set up must enable the project development and operation to be democratized and inclusive. At the same time, an open-sourced or community based product is an excellent choice in terms of transparency and accountability. Lastly, there should be a balance of transparency and anonymity. Where everyone can contribute and cross examine everyone's work while doing it anonymously to avoid repression from other entities.

1.5 Definitions and Acronyms

Having a news platform that is non-affiliated to any party or group poses significant risks. Due to the nature of this project, it is most likely that this will get into trouble with the government or other concerned entities. We classified the risk into different categories from political risk to community risk.

Political Risk:

- Having contents and publications that are controversial may resort to repression or possibly violent response from the concerned party.
- The platform may be used by others to spread radical and violent ideologies.
- The news platform may experience news censorship or possible take downs.

Community Risk:

- Since this platform is non-profit and non-income generating, it solely depends on the participation of the community members. Community members may lose motivation in continuing and pursuing the development of the platform.
- Since there is no single entity that controls the entire platform, chaos and incoherence may occur if the community will not act as one.
- Partisans might disguise themselves as community members and tamper the contents published on this platform.

Overall Description

This platform is free and non-revenue generating where community members can gain access to different news articles online across different political-spectrums and angles. With an algorithm, the platform must be able to digest or compress those articles and produce a comprehensive summary of all the articles published regarding a certain issue. This will help the readers get a full grasp of any topic and objectively make their informed stance on every issues. On the other hand, the readers will be given all the necessary materials or references if he/she wants to dig deeper on the matter.

Community members can also contribute any content if they have any first hand information on a matter or if they think that they are knowledgeable to it. At the same time, the platform also provides a way for other users to unanimously cross-examine or debunk and even rebuke other users' content if they think that the contents shared are false information.

2.1 User Needs

The platform will be free for all users regardless of age and any background. The burden of using the platform responsibly lies to the users. Free access to unbiased information for all will remain as the core value of this platform. The users, developers, and everyone who contributed to this platform must remain anonymous. The platform should not harvest any critical data like IP address and other important data from the users. No one has to know who are they interacting with unless some users voluntarily introduce themselves.

2.2 Assumptions and Dependencies

The assumption of these platforms is mass participation from the developers to the stakeholders. The success or failure of this platform solely depends on the community. Assuming that the community remains active in sharing their knowledge and expertise for the development and overall improvement of the platform. At the same time this platform will be deployed using blockchain technology so that no single entity or government can unanimously take down the platform. Using blockchain technology will also be useful in practicing the transparency of the platform since there is no single entity that can arbitrarily control the entire platform.

System Features and Requirements

In general, the platform must be easy to use and navigate. The platform should be friendly U/I wise and accessible to less tech savvy users. Other similar platforms are too technical and complicated to navigate for non-geeks user hence it discourages stakeholder participation. The interface of this platform should be as friendly as mainstream social media platform to encourage mass participation.

3.1 Functional Requirements

- The system must run on APIs so that it can have access to different sources of news and information.
- The platform must give the community a way to vote on what kinds of improvements they wish to have.

- The platform must allow all developers to work harmoniously with each other while maintaining anonymity.
- The platform must always give an emphasis to anonymity and security for the general community.

3.2 External Interface Requirements

Since the platform runs on blockchain technology, there shall be no central server to house all the data itself. Instead the data will be stored in a series of computers chained or linked together(which in this case the users' computers). The platform's content must not be too heavy so that it will not take too much space on the users' computer and it can run smoothly with less sophisticated hardware.

3.3 System Features

The engine of the platform must be powered by AI or machine learning so that it can efficiently collect all the news articles from different websites and compress it into a comprehensive summary. The engine must also collect the general consensus of the community and give back analysis on the perceptions of the general population about a certain issue.

3.4 Nonfunctional Requirements

Lastly, the platform must enable the users to set the community guidelines and implement it on themselves instead of having a central authority to police everyone. The community members must be given a task to perform. From maintenance to policing the

platform. This is in order to keep the platform environment harmonious and conducive to the community.