Team 3: Fin-end

Smart-Scroll

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Executive Summary

Our startup Smart-Scroll helps students in the STEM field gain more insight and knowledge just with a swipe of their finger. Our app is designed to help students learn in a different way. With the rapid improvements in technology and rise in popular short form entertainment on social media platforms like Tiktok, human's attention span has drastically decreased, especially among younger generations. As a result, their academic performance and ability to learn from lectures has diminished. This presents an opportunity to not only capture their attention but also channel it towards productive learning experiences. By utilizing the popularity of short-form content consumption habits, our startup app, *Smart-Scroll*, provides concise and compact educational content that is easily digestible and entertaining

Overview and Background

As a group of current students, we noticed the rather low attention span amongst our peers and underclassmen. There are many factors to why this is occurring, especially in younger generations, but the primary causes are the rise of an instant culture and the popularity of social media platforms like Tiktok and short entertaining videos. Thus, we came up with the idea for *Smart-Scroll*, an educational social media platform where students can learn and connect with effective short videos instead of continually doom scrolling for hours on end.

Our Product

Smart-Scroll presents a reliable platform to host educational STEM clips, allowing anyone to expand their knowledge, understanding and opportunities. Our app's short length videos are more effective in knowledge retention and academic performance than traditional lecture videos (Zhu 2022). The platform's social media aspects in combination with a point-based leaderboard system from posts (similar to Stack Overflow) will also foster communities of STEM students, educators and businesses. Our target audience is for anyone interested in learning STEM in the United States, but caters especially towards students ranging from middle to graduate students as well as educators, universities, and STEM organizations. Since our target audience ranges across all ages, our market size in the US with middle schoolers alone is 11.27 million and including high school and college students, our total market size is 47.15 million students.

Mission and Objectives

Our mission is to empower everyone everywhere to continue learning and satiating their curiosities. Our main method of measuring success will be through the app's download count. Our objective in the short term (first 6 months) is to achieve 100,000 downloads and securing reliable partners for funding and support. In the long term, our goals are to reach 500,000 downloads by the end of the year and to expand our content beyond the US to incorporate international curriculums and education (namely in Europe and East Asia).

Market Analysis

Smart-Scroll lies in the intersection of two markets: social networking and education. The social networking market involves using social media platforms to connect with new and existing friends, family, colleagues and business. The market's primary targets are younger generations (like Millennials and Gen Z) and has continuously been growing. The industry's current market value is around $153.4 billion and its revenue is expected to grow by 7.3% throughout

2022-2027 (Statista 2024). The education market in this case involves apps that enhance the learning process. The market's primary targets are students of varying education levels and its revenue is expected to grow by 10.49%, after an initial growth of 15.2% in just two years (Statista 2024).

Our main competitors are the current leaders in social media (ie Tiktok, Instagram). They host many features for connecting users, from messages and events to short video clips.

SWOT Analysis
Smart-Scroll can obtain a competitive advantage over these competitors through its main strengths and key resources: an improved recommendation algorithm, an educational platform brand, and unique exclusive short length educational videos. *Smart-Scroll*'s educational niche isn't well suited/supported by traditional social media platforms and its short form style is better for learning and knowledge retention (Bradbury 2016 & Zhu 2022). Our main weakness is a lack of brand imaging, a crucial factor due to networking effects and one our competitors have already well established. However, through the various opportunities like securing partnerships with universities and expanding our content and curriculums internationally, we can tackle this weakness and significantly reduce the main threat of the current competitors.
Competitive Analysis: Information about your competitors and your competitive advantage.

Business Strategy
Based on our analysis of the market, buyer power and the threat of competitors are the highest forces while the threat of new entrants, threat of substitutes and supplier power are all moderate or low. Buyers are easily able to change platforms and have many options to choose from and there are many competitors in the market with well established brands. Meanwhile there are lots of suppliers and with few supplies needed to start up and run the server. The threat of new entrants is low due to the networking effects of the market and substitutes like textbooks or tutors are less cost effective and inefficient due to the shorter attention spans. Thus, our strategy moving forward will be to leverage our unique brand and educational material to differentiate from the competition and to introduce higher switching costs with an effective algorithm.

Marketing and Sales Strategy
To attract users, we plan to utilize digital advertising campaigns on social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram to reach our student demographics. Smart-Scroll also plans to expand its reach and credibility by having partnerships with educational institutions, STEM organizations, and influencers within the education space. By teaming up with respected institutions and well-known figures in STEM, Smart-Scroll wants to use their connections and knowledge to make more people aware of our brand.

To retain ongoing users we plan to have engaging content in STEM that will give users videos they want to watch. With machine learning algorithms, we will be able to analyze user behavior and preferences, then offer personalized video recommendations based on their interests and past interactions with the platform. We will also Incorporate elements such as achievement badges, and a leaderboard to incentivize users to explore more content, complete learning milestones, and stay engaged with the platform. We plan on also fostering a sense of community among

users by facilitating discussion and their ideas to encourage users to share their knowledge, insights, and experiences with each other.

Our approach to selling our app is having a sales team to reach out to these educational institutions, universities, and STEM organizations directly to showcase the benefits of Smart-Scroll for enhancing STEM education outcomes. Since we want to maximize our user opportunities, our pricing strategy is making our app free. We don't want there to be stopping people from downloading it. Instead, we will rely on ad based revenue. This way anyone who wants to download our app, can.

Operations Plan

With a team of UI/UX designers and software engineers, we develop the platform's website and app with a Scrum management framework. Through user testing, we will adjust the designs, features and improve on the recommendation algorithm. Our recommendation algorithm will run similarly to our competitors, utilizing likes and labels, but with facial recognition technology to measure users' focus in real time (RK, R., S, S., P, V., & K, S 2021). The site's services will be provided initially by contracted educators to provide short informational content and material for the platform. Over time, as the platform grows, the users of the platform will also be able to post their own educational content for others to view. Initially, our service will be primarily based in the US, with hopes of expanding globally. The main suppliers we are concerned with are for rack servers, namely Dell and Cisco. These rack servers will be stored in ideal conditions at a secure office location. Our physical space requirements involve secure storage for our rack servers and a suitable office location (a large flat would suffice) as most work during development can be achieved remotely..

Financial Plan

For our basic model, Smart-Scroll will generate revenue through ads, as to avoid charging our users any fees. To start and grow, we are asking for a $500,000 investment. $200,000 will be used to further develop Smart-Scroll and enhance the platform through software development, content, and expanding the server for the platform. $150,000 is towards marketing new users and brand awareness with digital advertisement, partnerships, and influencer collaborations to reach our target audience. $100,000 will be for employee salaries, office rent, and everyday expenses. Lastly, $50,000 will be focused on customer support to ensure positive customer satisfaction by implementing support tools and user training sessions.

In our financial projections, our first year we expect to make $100,000 in revenue with a loss of $250,000, for a net cash flow of -$150,000. In our second year we predict to have $500,000 revenue and a profit of $50,000 for a net cash flow of $550,000 from the year. By the fifth year we expect to have a revenue of $3 million, a profit of $2.1 million, and a net cash flow of $2 million. We plan to break even by the end of our second year.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Smart-Scroll presents an innovative solution to the challenges facing the STEM education in this generation. By providing engaging and accessible learning content, we aim to revolutionize the way students and educators interact with educational content. Our platform's unique approach, strategic positioning and revenue model positions us for significant growth and impact in both the education and social networking markets.

We invite all investors, potential partners, and advisors to join us in transforming how STEM is taught. Together, we can empower students of all ages to excel in these subjects. Contact us today to learn more about how you can change the future with Smart-Scroll.

Appendices

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