Moralife Vision Document

A Vision Document for the Moralife software product
by TeamAxe, LLC

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Document History

This table outlines the revision history of the document.

Author	Date	Revision	Note
Aaxe	02/18/2010	0.1	Initial Version
Aaxe	03/19/2010	0.5	Content complete draft
Aaxe	03/26/2010	0.6	Revision
Aaxe	04/01/2010	1	Version 1 Complete
Aaxe	06/16/2010	1.1	Scope Revision
Aaxe	07/09/2010	1.5	Revision with Team Axe, LLC verbiage. Future revisions explored.
Aaxe	12/12/2010	1.6	Various updates
Saxe	01/03/2011	1.7	Verbiage corrections

Introduction

This vision document will outline the business vision, requirements, scope and context of the software product known as Moralife. All business decisions and justifications will be outlined here.

Product Vision

The scope of the project will be the release a software product and supporting materials that will allow end-users to enter, amend, itemize and review the ethical choices that they make in their day-to-day lives. This software will act as both the User's "digital conscience" and moral journal. The user-customizable Conscience will interact with the User and motivate them into continuing to use the software by responding emotionally to the User's input and suggesting moral dilemmas.

The initial product deliverables are:

- Client Software - the end-user facing software that allows this data-entry and data perusal

- Documentation – project documentation for subsequent phases, as well as end-user documentation for use of the software

- Support Infrastructure – online presence to support the ongoing development of the Moralife product

- Marketing Materials – print and online documentation for the promotion of the Moralife software

Vision Statement

The vision statement available for marketing and documentation is as follows.

"Nobody thinks that he or she is a bad person, but not everyone is good. So, how do you know what type of a person you really are? You can measure things like your health, intelligence, athletic ability, wealth and even your mental stability. If you choose to change something about yourself in any of these regards, there are thousands of tools available to help you in those journeys. But, how often do you ask yourself, "Am I a good person?" How do you measure that?

Now, there is a way. Using Moralife as your digital conscience, you can record and track your moral growth or decline in an intuitive and efficient interface. You tell Moralife what you think your beliefs are, and it will show you if you are living up to the standards that you set for yourself. By tracking the choices you make, as well as the justifications and consequences of your decisions, Moralife can paint a picture of the real you. Sometimes it will not be pretty, but it will show you that you are in control of your influence on the world.

In life, money comes and goes, your weight will fluctuate, even your health is ultimately beyond your control. But your morality is your's alone. Let Moralife help you."

Application Statement

The Moralife software product will provide users with a digital conscience and an ethical journal in order to efficiently enter moral choices and keep a moral accounting of their own actions. The User's Conscience will to the User's choices and present a moral adventure with which the User can interact.

Features

The project will produce the Moralife software product as well as supporting materials and objectives. The project is divided into several facets. The primary deliverable of the project is the Moralife software product. The subsequent facets of the project are important, but not necessary for project completion.

Software Product

Moralife, a user-facing client, will provide several pieces of functionality.

- A means to enter in choices the User makes in day-to-day life
  - Tabulation of these choices will generate a moral profile of the User
- Ability to customize an in-application rendition of the User's Digital Conscience and an engine in which the Conscience will change in response to the User's actions
  - Various ways of interacting with the Conscience such as card games and dilemma question and answer sessions.
- A reference section of major world religions, philosophies and heroes against which to weigh moral decisions

Business Development

The initial release of the software will be the first product from the business entity of Team Axe, LLC. The development of the business model and workflows to both create and support the Moralife product will be a deliverable of the project team as well.

This project is the initial business venture of the project team. As such, the feasibility of the product as well as the ability for the market to bear it have yet to be determined. It is the opinion of the project team that the creation of a business entity is essential in order to facilitate a sustainable business model based upon a potential Moralife brand of products.

Given the size of the project team, it is imperative that the processes, workflows and testing environments are constructed and heavily iterated prior to the first release of the software. The reason for this is the ability to the project team to respond quickly to the user community is absolutely essential to the growth of the product.

Support Infrastructure

The project will also produce several support infrastructure facets.

- Website for product explanation, user community and contact information
- Means to achieve ongoing version release of the Moralife software product

Assumptions

The project team will make the following assumptions.

- The market segment to support this product will grow once this product is promoted.
- All development, both business and technical, will be completed by the project team. Very little outside consultation services will be sought.
- Two pricing models will be investigated: fully-featured paid software and fully-featured, but free, ad-supported software.
- All publishing will take place electronically either by the project team, or via a 1st-party application store.
- All rights and responsibilities for all aspects of the business model will be the responsibility of the project team.
- Users of the software will be of average moral constitution and ability to affect others. That is, someone capable of either extremely moral or immoral actions resulting in consequences affecting a large number of people fall outside the target demographic of the software.

Business Requirements

The release of the Moralife product is the initial venture of a business model that will hopefully be able to sustain itself given the lack of a competitor in the market segment. Without competition to model requirements on, the project team must assume not only a user type, but also a feature set.

Background

There are thousands of tools and pieces of software that allow someone to track almost every aspect of their lives. From eating habits to sports performance, almost anything that a person can do or think about, there exists an application to track it. Following market research, the project team identified an exception to this rule that also illuminates an as-of-yet untapped market segment.

This market segment is in the area of ethical tabulation. While some decision products are strictly tied to a specific area of self-help, philosophical belief or religious affiliation, there doesn't appear to be an application that takes an objective and comprehensive view of a majority of popular world religions and philosophies and attempt to provide a mechanism to track ethical decision making regardless of the User's affiliation. The term "regardless" is used because the intention of the software is to work with the User in regards to his/her affiliation; not in spite of it. There doesn't appear to be a best-of-breed product to allow a user to track ethical decisions based upon their belief system.

The Moralife sofware product will attempt to fill this gap. In popular culture, the visualization of an Angel and a Devil sitting opposite each other on one's shoulder, giving them either good or evil device is a well-known metaphor. Moralife will attempt to harness this metaphor and provide the User with his or her own, customizable Digital Conscience.

Unique Features

While there are an abundance of software products to track progress towards a goal, none of them provide a way to track ethical behavior or frame of reference for goal setting or completion. Also, the notion of providing an extra incentive to the Users to achieve and sustain their goal outside of personal gratitude is unique to this product.

The algorithm to compute the User's Moral grade is nuanced and complex. However, the results of the calculations should feel natural. Using several studies in tabulation, a set of mathematical equations to derive a logical conclusion given disparate quantities that the User passively and actively enters will provide a positive feedback to the User's entries.

The software will house a data store that attempts to tabulate the most populated religions and philosophies and normalize the data to present it back to the Users, so that the Users are able to frame the decisions that they make in ethical context that they wish, rather than the software

prescribing a set of ideals onto them.

The User will be able to track entries and a Moral Grade Goal that they setup for themselves as well as run reports on the progress that they make towards their goals along with their ethical tendencies.

In order to incentivize the User to continue entering data, the software will attempt to provide a constant, positive feedback loop that gives the User a sense of accomplishment with most actions that they take with the software. This functionality will be delivered via a variety of methods as outlined in the Software Design Document such as Conscience interaction and procurement.

Market Research

The desire and design for the product came directly from the failure to locate a software to complete even the basic Use Cases for Moralife. Once the commitment to begin development was made, the project team researched analogs in the market. The results of this search show that there is no competitor in this market segment. Since Moralife will attempt to combine functionality from several different software paradigms, those best-of-breed products are listed.

- Goal Completion Software – The closest competitors to the feature-set that Moralife will attempt to meet comes in the form of Goal completion software. However, all lack the comprehensive reference set that Moralife will ship with and the customization of an Conscience signifying progress toward the goal (constant, positive user feedback loop). The best-of-breed of this class of software follows:

  - Joe's Goal (online) – Extensive calendar functions and share ability, ability to track negative actions, tabulation of goals. Content completely user driven. No reference material or personification. Free.

  - Touch Goal (iPhone) – Provides calendar tracking and journal entry. Completely lacking in reference material for quick lookup as well as feedback for completed goals. $3.99

  - My Life Changes (online) – Extensive calendar functions, more thoughtful structure with ability to enter in values. $4.95/month

- Ethical/Religious/Philosophical Reference material – There is an abundance of reference software, both public domain and packaged software available on the Internet, however none of them attempt to be comprehensive and show the differences or similarities between belief systems without an inherent bias towards any belief. This is a feature unique to Moralife.

- Avatar-based entertainment software – There has been a sudden change in the way that the User is engaged in entertainment software. The discovery of the constant, positive feedback loop makes the retention of the User's attention is a primary deliverable of the project. That is, for every action that the User commits, no matter how small, the

software rewards that action with some tangible reward either as simple as text alert acknowledging the action or an unlocking of a new feature.

- World of Warcraft – Almost any amount of time that a User is engaged in the software amounts to some reward system. However, to gain any significant reward an inordinate amount of time must be placed into the system.

- Call of Duty: Modern Warfare – In the multiplayer section of the game, almost every action taken moves the player towards the next reward structure, and this progress is displayed visually on a constant basis.

- Farmville – The User is expected to maintain their virtual farm by logging onto the software at least once a day. However, the User is constantly rewarded for almost every single action that they make in the game.

Additionally, neither Google nor Bing searches return any relevant hits in the first 10 results pages for any of the following search attempts: moral(ity) software, conscience, ethic(s) software, digital conscience, Moral Grade, ethical diary.

Business Objectives

Given the complete absence of peer software in the market place, the project team feels that the possibility of significant user adoption and feedback is high.

The following objectives are highly desirable to the success of the project.

- Release of a competent, stable and unique software product

- Successful marketing and advertising of said product

- Creation of a successful support structure for said product

- Creation of a repeatable business and development process for subsequent releases of said product

- Creation of a user community actively vested in the continuing development of Moralife suite of products

- Creation of a Moralife brand and supporting product lines

Should the endeavor fail, several facets of the project will still be productive.

- Use of the lessons learned as to why the project failed

- Use of business and development process to develop unrelated future products

- Demonstration of project teams ability to envision and deliver a software product with modest resources

Success Criteria

As the project team has invested very little capital resources, the only failure condition of the project is the abandonment of the project prior to promotion. Nonetheless, a list of success criteria will drive the project.

1. Successful promotion of the Moralife software product to the target platform

2. Successful documentation of the project lifecycle

3. Successful publishing of said documentation

4. Positive rating and word-of-mouth of Moralife software product

5. Proceeds from the publishing of Moralife software product sufficient to justify the continued development of subsequent Moralife products

Risks

The project team composition is unique such that resources are completely limited. Therefore, the project team sees the following risks.

- Limited resources imply extreme time and resource commitments

- Lack of significant capital funding implies project completion must defer to external priorities of project team.

- Potential market segment is niche and a competing product might reach market before completion of Moralife project negating a majority of the potential to drive the market segment.

- The lack of a competitor in the market segment could imply that there is no need for the market segment.

- The nature of the software is to provoke people into recording unflattering data about themselves. It will be a primary goal of the software to overcome this risk.

- The visual appearance of the Digital Consciences must be compelling enough to the User's in order to incentivize the Users to interact with the Consciences.

Scope and Limitations

As both the project team and the resources available to it are extremely limited, the scope of the project must be decided early and must be realistic in achievable deliverables.

Scope of Initial Release

The initial release of the software will include a fully-functional, client-based data entry mechanism called Moralife. The release of this software will be accompanied by the features listed the Product Vision section of this document.

Scope of Subsequent Releases

It is the intention of the project team to continually build the functionality of the Moralife software product as well as the branding of the Moralife trademark. Subsequent releases are envisioned as such.

- Functionality Expansion: calendaring and pro et contra tabling

  - The User should be able to view their entries in a comprehensive manner in regards to time. The software will allow the setting and meeting of goals in regards to usage patterns based upon timelines

  - The User can use the System to generate a "Pro and Con" list to determine if a course of action is an ethically sound one. The system will calculate the more agreeable solution based upon quantity and weight of each entry.

- Data Expansion: comprehensive selection of most world religions and philosophies

  - Quantifying and supporting most world religions and philosophies is beyond the scope of the project team at its current size. Should the software succeed, more focus should be given to delving more deeply into each belief system.

  - Additional Heroes and Dilemmas.

- Visualization Expansion: Conscience visualizations, accessories, and reactions, possibly at cost

  - Based upon the success of titles such as Pocket God, Angry Birds and Doodle Jump, the System should be updated on a very frequent basis with new visualizations with which to customize the System.

- Social Aggregation – Utilizing external interfaces that allow interaction to social media websites: Facebook, Twitter, Blogspot, etc.

  - The User's should be able to post particularly interesting entries to the Internet in regards to popular social networking sites with available API's.

- MoralWorld – Server architecture to facilitate the online

functionalities

- Post Consciences and/or Diaries online - Allow Users to enter in Moral statements about other Users (and rewarding or penalizing them appropriately). So, that if a User is either offended or inspired by another User, the User should be able to reward or penalize the offending/inspiring User.

- Videogame - Allow your Conscience to compete with other Consciences. The Consciences can be seen as unique and distinct creations of each User after each User has utilized the System for a time. A complete Moral makeup of each Conscience can be quantified and measured given regular entry by a User. So that a Conscience could be very Honorable, but also very Vain. If two Consciences are then made to compete with one another, they would be compared by their statistics. Instead of traditional attributes like Strength, Dexterity, etc., the metrics would be ethics like Honesty, Chastity, Wrath, etc.

- Geographic Moral Breakdown - Aggregate Ethical Values tracked by geography, given a User's permission, Moralife will transmit Moral Weight and specificity (extremely dis/honest, slightly self-sacrificial/selfish) and summarize geographic locations by their Moral Qualities. This will provide a geographic map relating Moralife's User's geographic makeup (e.g. St. Louis is an extremely compassionate city, but also very gluttonous)

Project Limitations

As both the project team and budget are limited, the initial promotion will have to focus on a single platform. Additionally, external resources will have to be restricted as much as possible.

At this time, there is restricted capital funding for the project. All resources are donated by the project team without promise of compensation. Consultation sources external to the primary project team will be funded privately by the project team. Should a funding source present itself, several facets of this project will be re-examined.

Software Limitations

The software will not attempt to judge a choice in regards to morality as there is no objective way to do so. The software will allow the User to make their own estimation of positive or negative consequences that an action might take, but the software will never attempt to judge a User's actions for them. The software is for tabulation and aggregation, not estimation. However, the algorithm to calculate the User's Moral Grade and Ethical compensation is nuanced and researched.

Business Context

The products of the project will inhabit the commercial, personal software market segment. As such, significant vestments must be made to make the

market knowledgeable of the release of the product. Pending successful response to the product, significant efforts must be made to define the market segment and remain the best-of-breed product in the new segment.

Marketing Materials

As this project is one of limited resources, the marketing of the software product fall to the project team. Upon completion of the Release Candidate of the Moralife software, a rudimentary marketing plan will be undertaken.

- Grassroots support – Utilizing social networking sites to propagate the awareness of the product

- Pay-per-click advertising – Enroll in a modestly budgeted directed advertising campaign to increase awareness of the product