

CrowdSurf – a user-friendly social media-based crowdfunding application

Description

CrowdSurf is a powerful and versatile crowdfunding web browser-based software application.

CrowdSurf guides users through all steps of the crowdfunding process, from the initial advertising plan to the donation goal and beyond. More tools in the application include currency management, progress and reward tracking, research and data extrapolation.

CrowdSurf is built to accommodate users of all levels of social media and technological prowess. Using the in-built “SurfBoard” tool, it lets a user quickly and smoothly develop a social media advertising strategy. It does this by generating social media platform suggestions, messages and tips based on previous crowdfunding projects, while also aiding users with advertising material creation.

Once the advertising strategy is in place, CrowdSurf streamlines the use of currency for any donations made. The application accepts all legal tender regardless of rarity. Cryptocurrency is currently not accepted – however, the application has been futureproofed to allow other forms of currency in the future if they are deemed viable.

The currency exchange process is free, immediate and automatic. This is allowed due to a number of factors such as currency investment and the use of in-house exchanging, circumventing the need to pay another party.

When donations are made, the application collects non-identifying data for marketing research purposes. This data can be used to identify demographics and strengthen future marketing campaigns. While donors are not required to offer information, it is still highly encouraged.

Finally, CrowdSurf offers a flexible donor reward system. Users can define rewards for donors on a manual (set-stage) or automatic (percentage-based) basis.

Glossary of Terms

The following are important terms in this document:

- **User:** the entity using the software for a crowdfunding purpose.
- **Donor:** the entity donating to a user.

Claims

CrowdSurf was designed with 4 core claims in mind:

- Constantly updating support for all known global and domestic currencies.
- Comprehensive tracking of funding progress, plus programmatic encouragement strategies.
- Complete privacy for all donors while collecting research data.
- “SurfBoard” – a tool for simplifying and automating sharing and targeted advertising on social media.

Currency Support Claim

The software collects currency data whenever a donation is made. The most important aspect of this to the donor is **primacy** – they will be guaranteed the most up-to-date currency, regardless of rarity or exchange rate. The most important aspect to the user is that this service is **free**.

CrowdSurf accomplishes this with a server-side, semi-automated currency flow and investment routine, which is the essential component of this claim. CrowdSurf sidesteps the need for currency exchange fees by maintaining a constant flow of all types of currency without needing a third-party. This also lets CrowdSurf wisely balance investments in favourable markets. Even in instances where CrowdSurf “loses” money in a currency exchange (e.g. very rare currencies that are not strongly enough in circulation), these investments easily cover losses.

Comprehensive Progress Tracking & Furthering Claim

Tracking of funding progress refers to the live updating of progress towards the donation goal. This data is updated every time a payment is made, ensuring that data is always accurate. It also allows – in fact, actively encourages – the extension of donations beyond the goal threshold.

Progress tracking shows all donor, unless they choose to be anonymous. Donors can be rewarded based on the size of their donation. On the other hand, don

A key element of this claim is CrowdSurf’s programmatic encouragement strategies. Users can automatically set the rewards of donations beyond the goal to increase with the donation pool. There are 2 types of reward increase:

- **Goal-based:** reward increases based on asset user-defined goals, e.g. if the donation pool exceeds the goal by \$4000, a free 6-month subscription is offered.
- **Percentage-based:** reward increases based on a percentage total over the goal, e.g. if the donation pool exceeds the goal by 50%, a free 6-month subscription increases to 9 months.

No major crowdfunding software currently uses automatic percentage-based reward levelling, making it a major element of the claim.

Donor Data Research, Privacy & Discretion Claim

Donors are encouraged to enter select **non-identifying** data – that is, data that can be used to uniquely identify them, like name or address. This data will be used **exclusively** for research purposes by both the user and the CrowdSurf developers, and will not be linked to an individual.

Research data can be used by the user to more easily identify their target audience. With this knowledge the user can more accurately target advertising campaigns and incentives towards their intended audience. It can also help users identify periphery demographics – unexpected groups taking an interest in the crowdfunding purpose.

Donors are not required to make an account – they only need a credit/debit card or a PayPal account. Card or PayPal data is never saved. However, if they do not create an account, they will be prompted to enter some additional data, such as age group, gender, etc.

Advanced Social Media Advertising Tool “Surfboard” Claim

One of the best ways to target an audience is through social media. Understanding this, CrowdSurf provides a powerful tool for maximising social media presence: SurfBoard. In the broadest strokes, SurfBoard analyses past crowdfunding projects and generates tips, suggestions and full social media messages.

Using the research data collected by their current project and similar crowdfunds in the past, SurfBoard helps the user formulate a social media marketing strategy on a case-by-case basis. For example, if the crowdfunding project is for a new video game, SurfBoard is likely to choose Reddit, Twitch and Twitter. SurfBoard will automatically generate specific messages for each target demographic and social media platform. It also provides instructions about how to post to each platform.

While obviously SurfBoard will not generate messages with images, sounds or videos, it will produce a scaffold for the user to include their own. These scaffolds offer an unprecedented level of precision – they will describe, based on past research using positive social media reception, the optimal use of sound and picture.

For example, if the user is crowdfunding a very relaxing and natural perfume and wants a video, SurfBoard will outline steps for a slow, peaceful and gentle video, including but not limited to:

- No more than x transitions to minimise choppiness.
- Which colours to include (earthy tones) and which to avoid (bright garish colours).
- Ranges for audio pitch and volume.
- Words to include and words to avoid in the script and overlay.

An important final note is that while SurfBoard will help generate a social media strategy from the ground-up, **it will never release news or updates without user input**. This is a precautionary method as automation can produce unexpected results at times, such as grammar errors, flaws in logic or worse. It places the onus on the user to review and revise any potential strategy.

Abstract

A software application that provides all the research, marketing, currency handling and data tools needed for social media-based crowdfunding. The application is intended for use by anybody with an interest in crowdfunding, regardless of their level of knowledge.

For initial and continued marketing, the application provides the SurfBoard tool which contains a suite of functions for building a textual, visual and audio campaign across multiple platforms.

When these campaigns start to bring in donations, the in-built currency exchange calculation functions ensure that donors and users alike can use any denomination at no extra cost.

With each donation, donors can provide data which is stored by the application to help identify which demographics to market to. This data forms part of a large database which will help similar future crowdfunding projects. All personal and financial data is anonymous and not stored by the application.

Every donation updates the progress tracker in real time, including user-defined rewards. This also updates percentage-based rewards, which are influenced by how far over the goal the donation pool is.