**Michael Watkinson**

**Brian Highnam**

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**SentenceZing Funding Research**

**Kickstarter - Michael Watkinson**

Kickstarter is a unique site that allows developers of creative projects to fund their work through allowing a multitude of donation amounts, ranging from small to large. To use Kickstarter, the project must be creative and have a clear completion goal for the project. It also requires a funding goal and an end date to establish the time period within which the donation goal must be funded. These two elements are very important as Kickstarter works on an “all-or-nothing” funding model, which means if the funding goal is not met then no pledged money is received. Even if the project isn’t fully funded by the end date, the project can be relaunched again later and can likely draw on the same supporters again in trying to reach the goal another time.That being said, a project can have stretch goals which ask for more money to work on additional goals beyond goals.

Once the Kickstarter funding goal and end date are established, the project must be clearly and eye-catchingly explained. Solid explanations must be given to describe the project, all goals, how work will be done, who is leading the project, stretch goals, and how updates will be made. A good way to do this besides simply using a text explanation is to have a Youtube video for both an initial explanation and interest video, but also for future updates and events. An explanation/justification for the use of funding is also necessary to let the funders know how their hard earned money is being spent on the creation of the project.

Use of social media sites and advertising will be critical once the kickstarter project has been established. Youtube, Facebook, Twitter, and Twitch will be very useful in garnering support for the SentenceZing kickstarter, but also friends and family will be essential in both creating an early community and as funders. Another feature that Kickstarter provides is the ability to offer different reward packages for the incremental donation amounts. For SentenceZing, these could be free e-books made from stories, t-shirts, multiple funder/backer badges for profile, skype sessions with developers, or original stories made by developers. Finally, organized events that correspond with using and testing the site, such as, story competitions with prizes for the highest voted stories.

The two Kickstarter projects, listed below, demonstrate very well how to outline the description of the website, rewards, and stretch goals. It also models how to show off the functionality of the site and why the project idea is so unique. The unique idea and aspects of SentenceZing should be similarly shown as well as what it could be with proper funding. What skills and services are required and what funding would be spent on needs to be included in the video and description of the project. Chaos Hour serves as a useful case study by how well it sets its goals and rewards and also by how many graphics it uses to make the project appealing to the funder. Eat Your Serial also proves useful as it is a website dealing with short chapters of books for viewers to read. It will be a beneficial comparison for how to approach describing and promoting Sentencezing on Kickstarter.

Kickstarter Case Studies:

<https://www.kickstarter.com/projects/padraig-balch/chaos-hour-website-development-and-entertainment-p?ref=search>

<https://www.kickstarter.com/projects/592377631/eat-your-serial-a-new-website-connecting-writers-a?ref=search>

**Google AdSense - Roberto Isidro**

Google AdSense is a service that allows publishers in the Google Network of content sites to serve automatic text, image, video, or interactive media advertisements that are targeted to site content and audience. Such advertisements are administered, sorted, and maintained by Google, and they can generate revenue on either a per-click or per-impression basis.

Google uses its Internet search technology to serve advertisements based on website content, geographical location, and other factors. Anybody who would like advertise with Google's targeted advertisement system may enroll through Google AdWords. AdSense has become one of the popular programs that specializes in creating and placing banner advertisements on a website, because the advertisements are less intrusive and the content of the advertisements is often relevant to the website.

SentenceZing can benefit from adding adsense advertising on both the actual SentenceZing website and the youtube channel. It will act as a complementary source of income and not a main funding source. As the community grows and views on youtube increase it will start to bring in more advertising revenue which could help pay for recurring bills. The advertisements would be automatically chosen and displayed by Google and would only require embedding some code into the site or enabling it on the SentenceZing youtube channel.

Many websites use AdSense to monetize their content; it is the most popular advertising network. AdSense has been particularly important for delivering advertising revenue to small websites that do not have the resources for developing advertising sales programs and sales people to generate revenue with. To display contextually relevant advertisements on a website, webmasters place a brief Javascript code on the websites' pages. Websites that are content-rich have been very successful with this advertising program, as noted in a number of publisher case studies on the AdSense website. AdSense publishers may only place up to three link units on a page, in addition to the three standard ad units, and two search boxes. This restriction is not applicable for premium publishers who work directly with account managers at Google.

Success Story:

<http://youtu.be/wGkbv7DPONA>

**YouTube - Brian Highnam**

We are planning to utilize the vast world of the YouTube community to help us get funding for our business. We realized this would be a useful method of gaining interest after taking a look at the different startups making use of rails or other programming languages. Some of the successful channels were thenewboston that does weekly programming tutorials in different programming languages( e.g. Java ). Youtube is a useful tool for connecting to viewers, establishing a community, posting updates, and earning revenue from ad through Google Adsense.

We have found an article in mashable.com called “9 Tips to Maximize YouTube’s Marketing Potential”. This article was a great source to help us to get tips from experienced professionals.

Here some of the 9 tips that we thought was the most important:

* **Partner With YouTube Celebrities that are in the same field as you** In our case, find startup companies that build Rails apps. What this does it help you get networked in with the rails community. They might even become early adopters of your app. For example, we could partner with RailsCast.
* **Link Back to Your Site -** Have a link back to your website after all of your videos. Make sure it is easy to see!
* **Fill Out Your Descriptions thoroughly -** YouTube uses Google’s powerful search engine capabilities and this means that they are looking for keywords of your video. When we publish our videos, we have to make sure that all of the fields have been filled. This will increase the chance of our videos to be found.
* **Be creative -** Make videos that are unique to your audience. Make sure that the videos that you create will stand out from the other videos on YouTube.
* **Have customer feedback videos -** Have videos that highlight positive customer feedback. This is really important because it will show the potential users( or even early adopters ) see that people are really enjoying our app. Also, have the ability for the actual users to send videos on they want on the app.
* **Upload new videos frequently -**  Brand new videos will encourage your audience base to come back for more. For example, every week we can upload the top voted story for every week. This will get our potential user base to see what cool stories can be created. This may turn into a competition in who can create the most creative story.

We found several successful startups utilizing YouTube, but we found one that was in our niche is called [thenewboston](http://thenewboston.org/) . This channel was created by Bucky Roberts who was a college dropout and basically learned how to do programming and web design in a variety of programming languages by himself. He started by creating a few programming videos and began to receive comments from users to post more videos. That is where his business took off. Now he currently has 178,000 subscribers 43 million views. Now, his business grew out of his bedroom and into small town in North Carolina.

The way that we are going to utilize YouTube is to adhere to the advice that we got from the nine tips. First we need to create an account on YouTube and upload one or two videos about sentencezing. Then, we tell all of our followers on Facebook to tell them that we have created a YouTube channel and have a link below. What this will do, we will get an initial pool of subscribers and viewers for our site. Also, we will post on our Facebook page all of the new videos that we just uploaded to YouTube. Hopefully this will get people to share our page with their friends to check out our YouTube channel and our app.

**Sources**

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