

## Elaboration Phase document

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### Introduction

The idea of the website is to help create a unique experience for readers of my novels. As a first-time indie author I need to create something unique for my readers and not just be 'yet another wannabe author' who wrote a book. I also want to make the books fun, make reading this series fun and maybe even create a new expectation of what authors should do. When I buy a technical book (e.g. A Smarter Way To Learn JavaScript) I get a website to practice code on. So, why don't we try and copy that model?

The book is set in a world where information, puzzles, cyphers, codes, etc. are heavily used. The idea of the website is that readers can join one of the groups mentioned in the book then try and complete challenges to gain points for their group/team. In this way they can enjoy the novel(s) and also interact with the reader community.

### Purpose of this document

This document and the associated Balsamiq mock-up is no more than a rough guide, a discussion document – with which to think about how to successfully build the website.

### Your Role

I need you to think about how this website could be achieved from a technical perspective. What tools, technology, frameworks, etc. are good to use? How would you approach it, what would you do first, what technology do you have that you can re-use for this project, etc. Please also be creative, feel free to suggest changes, ideas, approach

### Phases - Timescales

I'd like to publish the book in September 2015 and ideally the site is up then with at least some challenges.

Phases I see us needing:

- **Elaboration** – this phase where we analyse and work out how to do the next phase quickly a
  - **Budget of \$200**
- **Build** – create the website so it's technically complete with at least 1 mock puzzle
  - **Budget of \$1000**
- **Content** – add more games!
  - **Budget of *tbc***

## Beyond this project

If this project is successful:

- I'd like to explore building a mobile app that gives another form of game.
- I also have other microsites that need building.
  - o [www.markjdiez.com](http://www.markjdiez.com) (author site)
  - o [www.astu.co.uk](http://www.astu.co.uk) (team)
  - o [www.sorcesek.co.uk](http://www.sorcesek.co.uk) (team)
  - o [www.thehannovergame.com](http://www.thehannovergame.com) (novel)
  - o [www.blackdragonprotocol.com](http://www.blackdragonprotocol.com) (novel)

## ... and thanks

I'm excited about what this site, the games, the community, the novels could turn into. Excited and nervous. It could be epic, it could all be a flop. We won't see until we build it!

Mark.

## Main Website Template Sections

Each of the following items are template components that sit around the main content window.

### 1) Balance of Power banner

The BoP banner shows the percent split of points for each of the 3 teams (ASTU, Black Dragon, SorceSek). Points should be calculated from the total points each team has and change as players gain more points for their team by completing game puzzle challenges.

### 2) Current date

LOW PRIORITY - The date as the user's system has it

### 3) Sign-in / Sign-up widget

This is a standard widget to have the user sign-up for a new account or sign-in to an existing one. The 'remember me' checkbox should only remember the username, not the password. They should enter their password every time (unless stored in the browser etc). The Lost Password link opens a new page in the central content area to recover the password.

- Do we need a https connection for this?

### 4) Links Section

The links section has 2 parts, a) Community and b) Challenges that open relevant pages in the central content area.

The 'Contact Us' link should open a contact form in the central contact area. Email this form to [support@markjdiez.com](mailto:support@markjdiez.com)

### 5) Statistics Box

This has basic statistics for now, the text for each should read:

- Number of Readers Online: {nn}
- Newest Reader's Name: {username}
- Total Challenges: {nn}
- Total Challenge Points: {nn}

LOW PRIORITY - Do we even want this? Maybe get rid of it.

### 6) Mark J Diez Logo

This is a logo image that will be seen across any related sites. I'll provide this logo along with the team logos and other artwork for the site.

### 7) Links

There are two links to be placed below the logo:

- Main Site
  - <http://www.markjdiez.com>
- Wiki
  - <http://markjdiez.com/doku/doku.php>

## 8) Social Media Links

There are three social media links to be used:

- Facebook
  - <http:// tbc>
- Twitter
  - <https://twitter.com/markjdiez>
- YouTube
  - <http:// tbc>

## 9) Book Advert Space

This space should be able to take text or images and will be used for placing banners and messages about the author's books.

## 10) Footer Section

The footer section will contain reduced sized text links to the following:

- T&Cs
- Copyright and disclaimer statement

Links should open in the central content area. I will write and provide the content for these pages.

## 11) Central Content Area

This is where the website content and puzzles will be shown.

There are 3 tabs at the top right of the content area: Home, About the Site, Buy the Books

**Home** - welcome page content when the user arrives on the site

**About the Author** – Details of the author

**Buy the Books** – Shows available books and links to Amazon to buy them or buy direct

I will write the content for these pages but will need your guidance on design and layout.

## More Details...

### 3) Sign-up

When a user chooses to sign-up they are presented a sign-up form. On submitting this form they should be signed-in.

- Should they will also get an email confirming they are signed-up to the website? It seems a good idea to make sure they have a reminder and we confirm email addresses

### **Cypher**

As part of sign-up users need to enter a 'cypher', this is like a CAPTCHA. This cypher code should be generated from text in the book The Hannover Game.

I can provide a copy of the novel as a word document. I imagine the text can be 'read' so we can select a Chapter > Paragraph > Word, then use this as a cypher code the person signing up needs to use?

### **Teams**

Users must join a team at account creation (they cannot change teams, this is an Admin task)

- The teams are ASTU, Black Dragon or SorceSek as shown in the mock-up

This ties into when the users play games and add points to their team, see also the Balance of Power widget.

### **3) Sign-in**

When a user is signed in:

- The Sign-up / Sign-in widget changes to show the user is signed-in
- The Challenges links become active

The widget should:

- have a faded version of the player's team logo in the background to 'brand' their experience a little
- show the users Avatar and points
- have 'Sign-out' text showing

**Nice to have:** If possible, it would be good to add a style sheet to change text font, colour and borders to match the team colours