**Introductory Style Guide**

**Overview:**

Our website is intended to be a quick, lightweight system, with easy-to-use, web-app like controls and intuitive, ubiquitous design. As such, all elements within the app must have an immediately identifiable, purposeful use. As such, we have conducted ourselves to follow a very strict design philosophy when creating and styling our site – Any element which does not posses an immediately identifiable purpose, or valuable contribution to the page has been purged to maintain our goals of a simplistic, easy to use and aesthetically pleasing product.

**Universal**

**Scalability**

Possibly the most important feature of the site, and thus it's styling is the utmost requirement for all elements and content of the page to be scaled appropriately to the size of the screen. As such, whilst not a specific property of any element, ALL elements must use percentage or em based measurements in all possible attributes. Any element which will not scale relative to the page, or maintain an aesthetically pleasing state in most common ratios when scaling, must be removed or reworked until such standards can be met.

**Elements**

**Control elements:**

The visible directional controls of the site are composed of four edge buttons. These must follow a few design rules, in keeping with the style of the site. Each must be visible from the central point of the webpage. When navigating along a linear progression of pages, only the two keys relative to the direction the user is proceeding through (forward and backward respectively) must be visible. Each button must have a colour appropriate to it's current background in order to maintain contrast, however considering further style specifications related to content backing, this will in most cases mean a white button element. The button sizes should scale to sizes relative to the corresponding page borders. The edge closest to the nearest page border, be it the element's width or height, should be 6% of the corresponding edge length, with the remaining measure being 2%. The button itself should be composed of a square bracket, drawn in a 'carefree' freehand manner.

**Content elements:**

Any element containing content must follow these blanket rules, with content defined as either images, text or otherwise similar visually displayed elements. All such divisions must maintain a 15% space between any piece of content and the element edge, to leave room for control elements and reduce unnecessary clutter of the page. Further, any content element must maintain a flat background colour, with a darkness equal or less than the transparent grey value rgba(41,41,41,0.7). All elements featuring content should have overflow enables, but set to auto – to ensure that on any screen size or ratio, it is possible to display all intended content through scrolling.

**Text**

**Universal**

All text elements within the page must maintain three features: a size measurement in em, a text colour of white, and the helvetica sans serif font.

**Titles**

Title elements from h1 to h3 are utilised. Each must have the following measurements: h1 – 4em, h2 – 2em, h3 – 1.5em

**General text**

Unless otherwise specified, all text should feature 1em font size.

**Privacy Policy**

Our website will feature basic statistic tracking, and data gathering from the user, with information including user age, gender and location. We also acknowledge that, whilst we don't directly ask for identifying information about the user such as names or passwords for other services, that such information may come into our possession through use of username or password fields. In any such case, all user information gathered will be maintained in manners befitting the utmost secure nature of such information, and will not be used or transferred in any purpose other than the intended use of the site – tracking the statistics and providing targeted information for the users.

**Evaluation plan**

To evaluate the success of our product, we will be focusing primarily on judging it's adherence to our design specifications and achieving of our design goals. As such, we have laid out a series of objective goals and means to quantify success in such goals:

**Simplistic design**

If any element of the page's content is found redundant, or without a clear purpose or appropriate improvement to the site, the absolute minimalistic design goal of our site, we will view our design a failure.

**Instinctive design**

If a first time user cannot innately solve the navigation of our site, we will view the site as a failure, for requiring further explanation of what should be unconsciously understood controls.

**Aesthetically pleasing design**

If the project produces anything less than a pleasant-to-view design that is seen by the majority to be inoffensive to bear witness to, we will consider the project a failure

**Painless, unhindered experience**

If a user feels that they could not use/navigate the product in a way that provided intuitive, sensible, effective, easy and flowing grace then we will view the product's design a failure.

**Quantifying results**

Through a combination of internal/external peer review and closed public testing, we will ask individuals to express whether they feel each of the above principles were appropriately met, and for any feedback they feel could help us improve upon our design when striving for the achievement of said principles.

**Through google analytics**

Using google’s online website/webapp tracking service ‘Google Analytics’, we are able to track the first time and returning users to the page, from which we can measure the exposure and relative ‘enjoyment’ of the site. Further, we can observe actions within the website and user trends based on such actions. From this, we can gauge a level of understanding of the website’s function by the user, and adjust our site to cater to the most used features/most experienced issues.

**Through surveying**

Utilising the email addresses attained by users through the signup process, we will be able to construct a mailing list comprising the most dedicated users likely to return to the site beyond an initial check. Using such a list, we would be able to send out online surveys and response forms, likely using google’s ‘forms’ software.

**Through the site’s response features**

Utilising the site’s user submitted response forms, we will be able to learn firsthand the issues found by dedicated users. From these we will be able to gauge importance and reproducibility of issues ready for fixing.

**Improving the site based on feedback**

Depending on the nature and importance of the issues found through our responses by users/testers, we will quantify the priority of particular fixes/additions to the site based on the principles defined at the beginning of the plan. When working on such changes, we will develop them in the same manner as with the other site, and if the change meets the design principles at the time they are finished they will be implemented. Otherwise, the changes will be evaluated and either further developed or discarded.