From the overwhelming urge to be up to date on all social media platforms and the frustration of having to switch between multiple apps, this generates a considerable waste of time just to get an understanding of what your friends and family have been up to. While searching around the internet for an alternative, there surprisingly was not any platforms that provided all the functionalities that I have had in mind. So, I decided to start developing an idea of creating a one-stop app that would make my life and others so much easier.

SIFT will allow users to consolidate their Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram timeline into one customizable experience, where pages and friends are able to be grouped into various “Feeds”. This allows you to customize what is on the feeds and gives complete control over the updates from friends, family or news sources, etc.

The first step is to look for the availability of the domain name, also register it with a trusted authorised register company. While looking through various sites and forums one of the more popular and reliable services at the moment is GoDaddy at godaddy.com. So we have decided to go with GoDaddy. It may not be the best out there but for a start this is enough for our purpose. However, not to our surprise, the registered domain name SIFT.com was already taken, but to our luck the person or business that registered the domain are re-selling the name for a higher cost which is still affordable. Having a good name is important for the marketing side since it reflects on the intentions of the application. So paying a bit more to get SIFT.com is definitely worth it.

We moved away from the original idea of using OAuth as an authentication tool because the hosting services that we are going to utilize are already integrated with the features OAuth offers. The users online safety is paramount so keeping their login details secure is critical. Our website needs to save user login details which is personal information, so we need a hosting service that integrates web, database, security, cloud-based servers for redundancy and is capable to be scalable for the future when higher traffic is acquired and integration for the capability on the mobile application.

One of the service providers we discovered is called Firebase and it complies with all of our needs. We decided to use a hosting platform because doing it locally does have its advantages but also comes with some disadvantages that we are not able to afford in the beginning when cost is always a big factor. Also, a technical consideration when it comes to maintenance and managing of the service and the hardware. Good hosting makes your site almost always available with speed, scalability, and easy to maintain as well as being affordable.

Users will log in to each of their respective accounts, using our website which will store the user’s information in the database. Once signed up the user confirms their information by our email authentication system. As the project progresses we will try and implement the use of Google and Facebook authentication.

The new user after signing up will be redirected to the login page. The fields on login and signup are validated, so invalid data format will not be accepted. Once you are successfully logged on you will be directed to your personal SIFT homepage.

By default, the “main” Feed will be created and selectable from a tab in the UI, this Feed will contain all the accounts and pages brought over from the Feeds screen, custom feeds can be created, named and content can be assigned.

To be able to access users third party social media information we need to liaise with the social media service providers to gain access to the users information and data.

To import a single Twitter feed we will need to acquire the customized code for HTML from Twitter Publish​. Once on the Twitter publish home page we can enter the Twitter URL we wish to embed and are prompted to choose between “embedded timeline” or “Twitter buttons”. After making a decision the code needs to be copied into the HTML of the SIFT website to embed the feed on the webpage, one of the easiest is Twitter because they already give you the option of embedding your social media feeds on your webpage. We just need to store this information and display it on the users home page accordingly, to the setting that was selected by the user.

We will be testing SIFT right from the beginning. Each member of the team will have created themselves a SIFT account so they can run various tests themselves. Once the platform is up and running we will be doing functional, usability, interface, compatibility, performance and security testing. At the beginning, it will just be the team members that will be testing the product but once we build our application and have some investors we will use the services of [UserTesting: The Human Insight Platform](https://www.usertesting.com/) to interact with users and better our service.

One of the challenges we discovered is to gain access to clients' data from social media providers' sites. It is still possible to embed social media feeds quite easily on the website, however, when it comes to managing and having control over the data there is practically zero chance to progress it forward.

Additionally, there is a significant expense that exceeds our already low budgets.

Our team also possesses a very basic knowledge of the tools and technologies that are involved to develop the full project as previously mentioned that is why the team built a prototype website and how the first part of the project will look. That consists of a webpage for the platform with a login field, the resource utilized is the free hosting service of GitHub.

The aim is to utilize this model to draw prototypes and attract investors that are able to cover the expenses, and then we will be able to recruit individuals with the aptitude and knowledge that are expected to manufacture the real viable product because at the moment the group skill is limited to basic HTML/CSS.