

Creative Steps

Social media & communication report

Helena Helgadóttir

Lena Dís Rúnarsdóttir

Maarja Koobas

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Introduction and Problem Formulation

From the moment a child comes into the world it starts learning new skills and the older they get more life lessons and skills they develop. When a child starts kindergarten they learn a lot by doing and through games whether it is language, math, sports or other important subjects for a child to develop at a given age. When the child starts school at five or six years old they start developing the skills more academically and when people think about the skills a child needs to be successful, skills like reading, math and writing are mentioned.

Creativity is usually not mentioned when talking about skills a child should have in order to be successful, however research have shown that creativity is one of the most important skill for a child to develop. Creativity is used to play music, solve problems, write and tell stories and create art and it can also be necessary to solve complex math operations (Spencer, n.d.). Traits such as concentration, good communication and open-mindedness have also been linked to having children take part in creative activities (Furey, 2006). Fureys case study also detected an increase in motivation, confidence and desire to learn and a decrease in behavioural problems in children aged 11 to 16 years old. The characteristics and abilities children gain from taking part in creative learning have been shown to give the child a sense of purpose, confidence, self-respect and achievement (HandsOnScotland, n.d.).

Creativity scores have been going down since 1990 especially with children on the age from 4 to 13 years old (Miranda, 2012). High creativity means better writing, thinking and problem solving skills which are needed in our everyday lives but unfortunately research show that children, who grow up to be the future business owners and creative leaders that can keep pace with the constant change, are becoming less creative. It can lead to the assumption that the existing association of schools and after-school programs are not enough to support the creativity development. If the existing model, the combination of public authority opportunities and businesses, isn't able to support the successful development of the future generations, then it is necessary to see if other or existing resources can be used.

Children today have easy access to technology and are really familiar with how to use smartphones, tablets and computers. So there is a window of opportunity to reach them on a platform they already know and use.

Which leads us to the following problem formulation:

What kind of sharing economy initiative can support children's creativity development using available resources in the modern society?

Business Concept

Creative Steps is an online community where children at the age of 4 to 15 can take online creative classes taught by creative individuals in the children's native language. Examples of classes are photography, drawing, playing a music instrument, sewing, poem writing.

There will be two different methods for participating, either as a student or a creator. So there are two different account methods that are available:

- Enroll in classes
- Create an online class

The creator account is free and with a possibility to earn money on the content created and the student account is a paid account, where the student will be able to earn trophies and showcase their work. All the work from creators will be watched and approved of a educational specialist e.g. teacher or educationalist.

There will be two ways to participate in a class, users can get a membership that allows you to take as many classes as they want or they can buy a specific class. Users are also encouraged to rate and review the classes they take so other users can take it into consideration when choosing a class to participate in. The teachers or the creators of the classes will get paid according to participation. For every course there is a free preview so that people can take a look at the introduction and the first or first two classes in the course and decide if they want to become a member or buy this course as a stand alone or not at all (Stones, 2008).

There will be a support system for the teachers (online handbook and customer service) on how to create tutorials and upload them. Customer service also assists students and their parents if they have any questions or problems.

Mission: To provide access to teaching in creative subjects for children aged 4 to 15 years.

Business goals:

- Build client base.
- Build credibility and trust in all user segments.
- Establish relationships with key partners.
- In long term become a market leader in online creative courses for children. (To have the most active users on the market).

The benefits of this business concept are the following:

- More children get access to creative classes.
- Less time is needed to educate the same amount of children compared to live classes as online tutorials are created once and can be seen repeatedly.
- Creative individuals can earn an extra income and contribute to the development of the future generations.
- Children develop their creativity and imagination.
- Teachers in school and kindergarten can use Creative Steps in their classroom.

Creative Steps can help removing/minifying the obstacle of Cultural Capital. Culture Capital is theory from Pierre Bourdieu, where he states that it is a collection of symbolic elements, such as skills, tastes, postures mannerism, credentials that are acquired through being a part of a social class. He also says that for people that share the same Culture Capital that it creates a sense of collective identity but he also says that it is a major source of social inequality. That's where Creative Steps can step in, the children will get the same opportunities without regards to what their background or social class they belong to as well as it will also create a collective identity among the students no matter what their background is. The students are increasing their culture capital both in the present and for their future, by increasing their opportunities to get further in their education. So it can help them overcome the obstacle that the culture capital can be in regards to social mobility, like income and wealth.

According to Pine and Gilmore there are five forms of commercial output. One of them being transformations, that are effectual outcomes that guide customers to change some dimensions of self. For example customers of a management consulting firm do not merely want ideas, reports, analyses and advice, but they want to transform, to become a better business as a result of purchasing consulting offerings. Pine and Gilmore have also suggested that the same holds true for educational institutions (Pine & Gilmore, 2007). As described above Creative Steps operates in the educational field and its goal is to transform its customers (children) who get the access to creative classes and who by that gain better writing, thinking and problem solving skills which are needed in our everyday lives. Due to that we can say that Creative Steps commercial output is transformations. This statement is also supported by the fact that creative individuals are encouraged to share their skills and take part in developing the future generation who grow up to be the future business leaders, calling human beings for a higher goal is a common trait for authenticity in transformations. Pine and Gilmore describe that authenticity in transformations mean exerting influence on the other entities, calling human beings to a higher goal and providing a foretaste of a better way (2007).

On page 6 the business concept is further analysed using the Business Model Canvas, initially created by Alexander Osterwalder.

Users

The users are split up into two groups, the creators and the students/parents.

Students & parents

The students are a group that is also split in two, the parents, that will most likely be the ones that pay for the services and then the children or the students themselves.

The term Millennials generally refers to the generation of people born between the early 1980s and the early 2000s. Which means that Millennials who were born in the first half of the period are young parents now and in the near future whose children are the possible users of Creative Steps and the Millennials who were born in the second half of the period are the possible students. To understand the lifestyle and behaviour of those two groups we need to research the characteristics that describe Millennials.

Millennials are generally more open-minded than Generation X (born early 1960s to early 1980s), research have shown that Millennials are more supportive of equal rights for minorities. Characteristics that can describe the Millennials are confident, liberal, upbeat, self-expressive and receptive to new ideas and new ways of living. With that in mind the Millennials have more emphasis on the self than previous generations (Generation X, BabyBloomers) and is the reason the generation has also been called Generation Me (Main, 2013).

Millennials and social media

Social networks are important part of Millennials digital lives. Research conducted by the Media Insight Project showed that 88% of Millennials get news from Facebook, 83% from YouTube and 50% from Instagram. Social networks that were also mentioned were Pinterest (36%), Twitter (33%), Reddit (23%) and Tumblr (21%). Of those 83% that get news from Facebook 57% of them said they get news from Facebook at least once a day and 44% at least several times a day (AmericanPressInstitute, 2015).

Generation X and social media

Before the Millennials, the older generation of parents, Generation X, also needs to be taken under consideration when creating a social media plan. They can be described as productive, good balance between work and life and acceptive of diversity. Generation X spent less time with their parents than the generations before them and a lot of their parents got divorced, leading to characteristics like independency, resilience and adaptability (Wikipedia, 2016).










Generation X (GenX) was the first generation to experience the internet as part of their daily lives so it has become a part of most GenX's lives. Research show that GenX use social media mostly to get news and see what their friends are doing and talking about. What is interesting for GenX is that they use the online media but TV and flyers as well, so they are known for using more types of media than both the generation before them but also that have become after them. Facebook is most widely used with GenX of the social media channels but Twitter usage is also rising as well as video (Fox, 2014).

It's important to know these characteristics but at the same time be aware that the users of Creative Steps are more lifestyle related than characteristics of a whole generation. The users of Creative Steps are people that want their children to learn creative subjects and children that are interested in these subjects. It's a platform that teachers and students come together and learn new and exciting things so open minded and creative individuals are our biggest user group.

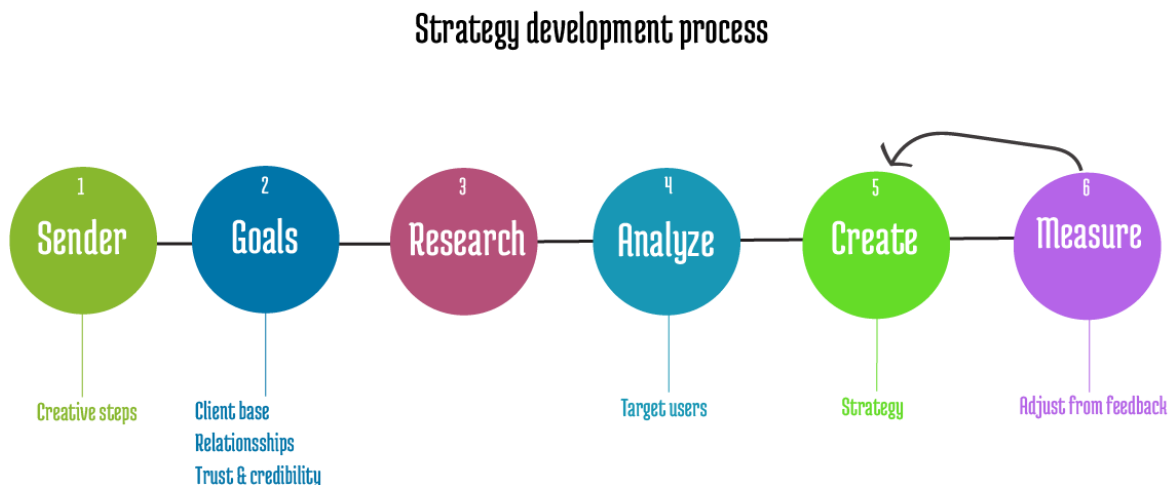
Creators

The teachers of the classes on Creative Steps are creative persons even teachers that want to share their skill and earn an extra income doing it. They are passionate about the subject and ready to make an effort in making their courses good. The teachers need to have basic technological devices and knowledge to be able to take videos and create online material as well as to communicate with their students.

Business Model Canvas

<p><i>Key Partners</i></p>  <p>Bookkeeping, maintenance of the office room and software development will be outsourced.</p> <p>Key partners marketing wise - schools and family life bloggers (aka momblogs) and education blogs who are a part of the marketing strategy.</p> <p>Key suppliers content wise - creative individuals who produce high quality classes.</p>	<p><i>Key Activities</i></p>  <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Software design and development2. Marketing activities to reach both customer segments3. Client support during working hours <p><i>Key Resources</i></p>  <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Human2. An office for the team.3. Intellectual - Software4. Stable revenue income to support the development and maintenance of the software	<p><i>Value Proposition</i></p>  <p>The idea: Platform that enables teachers to create online classes in creative subjects and students to take the course for a fee.</p> <p>The value delivered to both customer segments: Convenience - online solution that gives easy access, saves time.</p>	<p><i>Customer Relationships</i></p>  <p>Personal online customer support service.</p> <p><i>Channels</i></p>  <p>App and website.</p> <p>Social Media and physical advertisements like posters and flyers.</p>	<p><i>Customer Segments</i></p>  <p>Parents and Children (4-15), paying customers.</p> <p>Content creators</p>
<p><i>Cost Structure</i></p> <p>Most Expensive is the software development followed by marketing activities.</p> <p>The cost structure is scalable because the cost of serving an additional customer falls instead of rising.</p> 	<p><i>Revenue Streams</i></p> <p>The main revenue stream comes from monthly and annual memberships and secondary revenue stream comes from buying access to one class at the time.</p> 			

Social Media Strategy



The image above shows the social media strategy process in six steps, the first thing is to identify the sender that is Creative Steps. Step two is to identify the goals of Creative Steps which regard to the client base, relationships, trust and credibility. Research on the market, target groups and other elements connected to the business and the Creative Steps solution are step number three. After the research is done the next step is to analyze the target users ...!!!. The fifth step is to create the social media strategy which is based on the first four steps and the strategy has to be measured to see what is working and what is not. When the strategy has been measured it can be adjusted from the feedback and then we go back to step five with adjustments on the existing social media strategy or make a new one, measurements should be done periodically.

The created social media strategy needs to help Creative Steps to achieve previously mentioned business mission and goals. To ensure that the social media strategy contributes to the achievement of those objectives the authors of this report went through a six step social media strategy development process created by Radian6.

As there are 2 different user segments (and one of them also divides into two - parents and students) the social media strategy targets those segments separately. The end user (children) who are younger (e.g. between ages 4 - 10) will be targeted through their parents who are the influencers of their children. The older children (e.g between ages 11-15) will be targeted directly because they are more independent and are more in control of what they spend their free time on.

Targeting process (teachers and children between 11-15)

The social media strategy targets first the creators who develop the content, followed by targeting parents and children. The first content creators will be contacted directly by the company so before launching the site so there will be available classes. Creators can share their classes on their social media accounts (mostly on Facebook) which will raise the interest for new content creators and students. After gaining the first students, who get free access for three months, they will have a possibility to upload their work and share it on their social media channels (mostly Instagram and Snapchat) which will raise the interest for new students. Older children see the posts in their news feed and being the “influencers” of their parents who buy the membership for their children, Creative Steps gains new users.

Targeting process (parents and children between 4-10)

To target parents and younger children the company is planning to collaborate with bloggers and post videos on Facebook, because the research shows that Facebook is the most used social media channel for getting news by the parents that Creative Steps is targeting. As parents are the influencers of their young children they are the ones who the videos posted in Facebook need to address. The videos are going to show children following classes and creating their own work.

Steps	Segment: Parents
1) Set goals and objectives	Create awareness about Creative Steps' platform and gain 200 new memberships in the first 6 months.
2) Determine metrics	Number of new memberships. Number of shares, likes, comments.

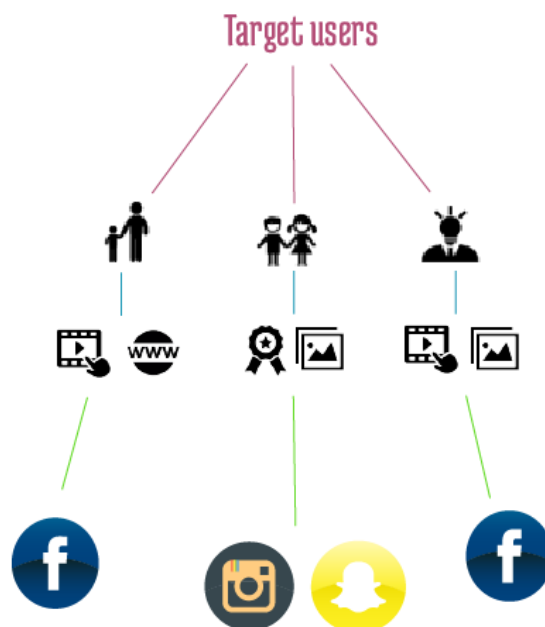
3) Determine audience	Parents of children ages 4-15.
4) Discover the right platform	Facebook and blogs.
5) Gather resources and determine goals	Resources that are needed is to work with bloggers and create videos. The goal is to find 5 bloggers to work with and create 2 videos.
6) Create content	Short videos by Creative Steps on Facebook and blog posts by bloggers.

Steps	Segment: Creators
1)Set goals and objectives	Create awareness about our platform and it's opportunities Gain 20 creators in the first 6 months.
2) Determine metrics	Number of new teachers. Number of shares, likes, comments.
3) Determine audience	Creative people interested in education.
4) Discover the right platform	Facebook.
5) Gather resources and determine goals	Goal is to gain 20 new teachers by using marketing on Facebook. Resources that are needed for Creative Steps own posts on Facebook.
6) Create content	Creative Steps own posts on Facebook and also posts by individuals who already are teachers on the platform because they want to get more views.

Steps	Segment: Children
1)Set goals and objectives	Create awareness about our platform and get children to try it. Part of the 200 memberships in the first 6

	months as mentioned above. Number of shares, likes, comments.
2) Determine metrics	Number of new members.
3) Determine audience	Older children from the age of 10 and up.
4) Discover the right platform	Instagram, Snapchat.
5) Gather resources and determine goals	Engagement with visual assets. Students share their work on Instagram and Snapchat so doesn't require resources from the company besides reposting the images on their news feed.
6) Create content	Content is created by the students.

Social media strategy



The image above shows Creative Steps social media strategy, it begins by categorizing the target users which are parents, children and creators/teachers. After researching the target users in regards to social media, which media and social channels to use were decided.

- For parents educational and parenting blogs will be used as well as preview videos of the courses that are shared in Facebook by the creators/teachers.
- For the children pictures and trophies from Creative Steps courses can be shared to Instagram. Also snapchat will also be for the children to see creative things and Creative Steps will also have guest snapchatters (creative older students or others) taking over Creative Steps account for one day or longer. Instagram and Snapchat were chosen as millennials are known for spending a lot of time on their smartphones.
- For targeting new creators/teachers Facebook will be used where videos and pictures are posted and shared by existing creators/teachers and Creative Steps.

Communication

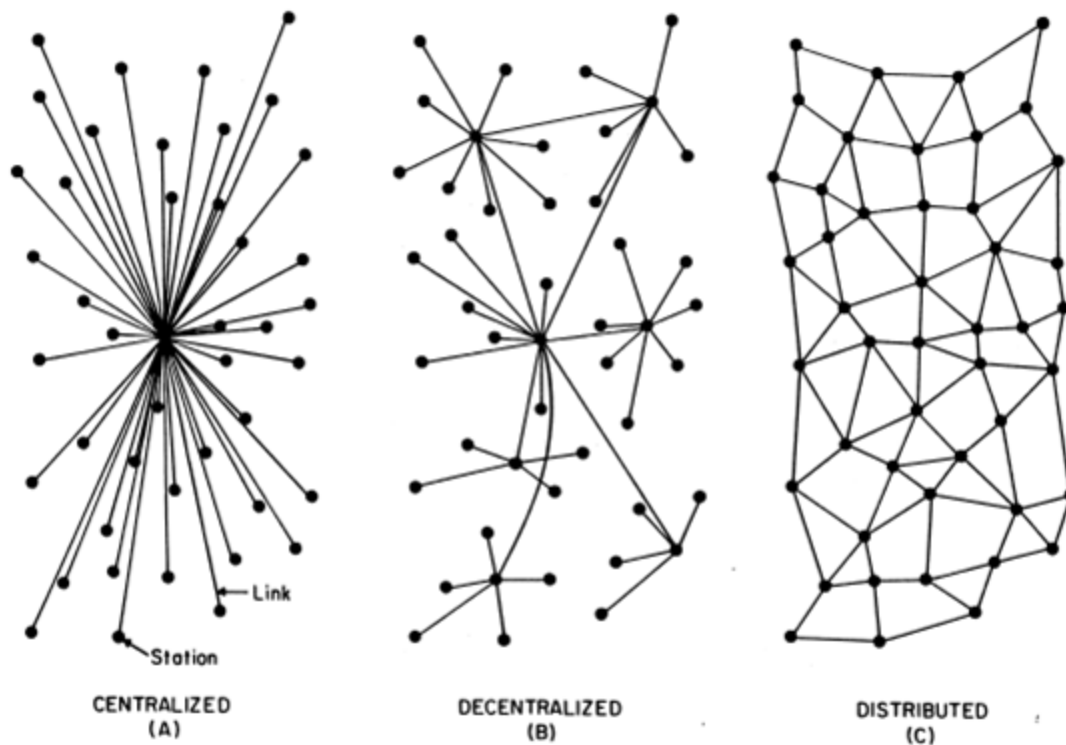


FIG. 1 – Centralized, Decentralized and Distributed Networks

Using the selected social media channels (which were introduced in the previous chapter) engagement of potential users take place, they give feedback and interact with each other by posting comments, liking posts and sharing. As the info is passed on by different individuals and everybody understand some things a little differently, there is noise that Creative Steps needs to be aware of and address if the message Creative Steps is trying to send, changes along the way.

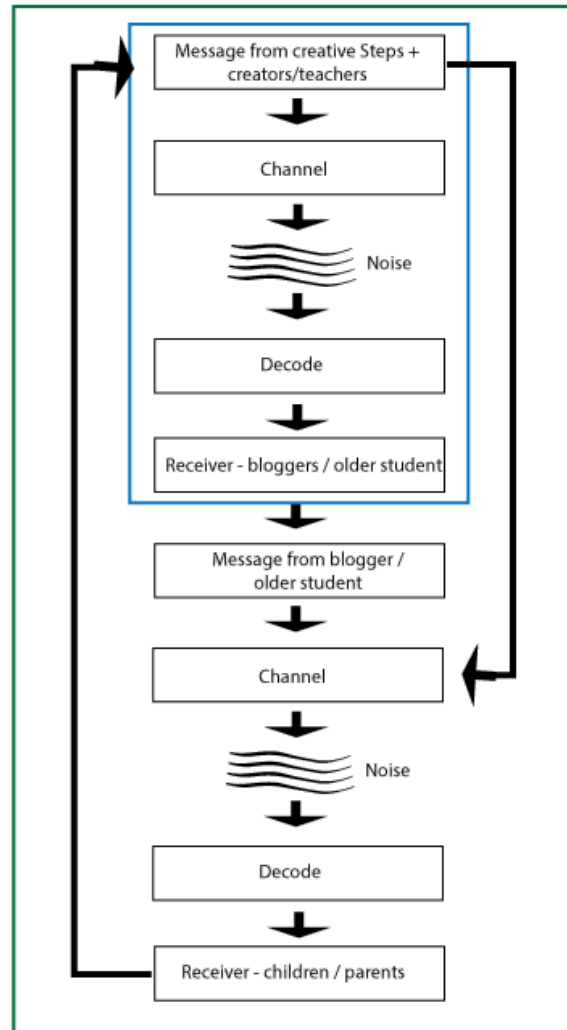
As we are talking about communication on social media, the approaches used are decentralized and distributed. Decentralized in the case when older children share their work on Instagram and Snapchat, so they are in the center as role models for younger children. Distributed in the case when teachers post their classes on facebook and their friends start to share their post. There isn't any central point, as no one person is more authorized than the other.

Communication Model

We have created a communication model (page 13) for Creative Steps which illustrates the communication flow from Creative Steps and its creators to the end users (children and their parents) and the end users feedback to Creative Steps.

Creative Steps can communicate its message straight to the end users or through third parties that were mentioned in the previous chapter. If Creative Steps decides to reach their end user through third parties then the process in the blue box will be followed which will carry on with the process that the third parties (e.g. blogger) communicate their message to the end users. There is also a possibility to skip the third parties so Creative Steps sends their message straight to end users (which is illustrated by the black arrow on the right side of the model).

On the model there are also described the moments in the process flow where noise from the communication environment effect the message so the receiver needs to decode it, which unfortunately creates space for misunderstandings. Because of that Creative Steps needs to listen to the feedback from the end users, so they are able to react to the misunderstandings and send a new/improved message.



Conclusion

In the beginning of this report the following problem formulation was stated : What kind of sharing economy initiative can support children's creativity development using available resources in the modern society?

The conclusion was to make an online community platform for children to learn creative subjects like learn a musical instruments, drawing and photography called Creative Steps. The mission of Creative Steps is to provide access to teaching in creative subjects for children aged 4 to 15 years. Professionals and creative people will be able to share their knowledge by making courses for the children to enroll in like described in the business concept chapter.

Creative Steps has three target groups, they are children, parents and creators. By researching those target groups the social media strategy and communication model was made. Different media and platforms are used depending on the target group. Social media platforms for parents and creators are Facebook and blogs and for the children Instagram and Snapchat will be used. Like the communication model and social media strategy development process model both show it is really important for Creative Steps to re-evaluate after they get feedback from their users and other influencers. With re-evaluation there can be made changes in the strategies and communication models.

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