Niche Pitch: Sci-Fi Fan Artists

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Idea #1
Sci-Fi Fan Art Book Club

What It Do:

Artists/users read a book selected book and are encouraged to create illustrations of the characters, aliens, worlds, ships, and technologies in the book.

- Each month a book is chosen from a list by users.
- Then artists have a month to read and do illustrations for the book.
- In the meantime users/artists pick the next book.

What It Do Part II:

- After a month the artists work is then collected and showcased in weekly batches on the site for the next month.
- At the end of each year the best Illustrations are selected by users,
- Artists are then allowed to revise and refine those illustrations.
- Then they are collected and printed as a coffee table book, and a yearly best of the best collection on the site.

How does it serve the niche?

- Eventually, given enough time and contributors, the site will become a pretty complete visual reference guide for sci-fi novels.
- It will also draws attention to the artists work.
- Fans that participate in the club, or are just visiting the site will have a more enriching reading experience due to the illusrations.

How is it better?

- Currently fan artists work is hard to find and poorly organized on personal websites and deviantART.
- The book club allows artists to Showcase their work in a forum in which everyone has read the book they've created art for.
- Organize is it all in one place associated with the specific novel/author rather than the artists themselves making it more accessible to a broader audience.

Idea #2
Illustrated Encyclopedia of Science Fiction

What It Do:

- The site would be fan-made and fan supported so to begin with it would be pretty Bare Bones.
- Basically, Science fiction authors would have portals with their bibliography, and a page for each novel with a short cover flap summary of the books (no spoilers).
- The pages would less be focused on the actual story content of the novels, more so on the planets, Aliens, characters, ships, and technologies in the the novels. (These sections would be filled out by users/moderators)

What It Do Part II:

- Each section would also contain a gallery space where fan submitted illustrations can be submitted.
- Fan artists and illustrators would somehow be incentivized to contribute their work, either monetarily or buy some sort of site-specific award/accolade.
- Users can also contribute to an edit the written side of pages and they would also be rewarded probably non monetarily, moderators would have to approve these edits (moderators might need to be paid too).

How does it serve the niche?

- The encyclopedia would give users a concentrated and specific visual and textual reference guide to an author's body of work.
- Not everyone who reads sci-fi is a nerd, but most are and nerds love this stuff.
- The site gives fan artist a place to display their work, where fans can appreciate it.

How is it better?

- The current Encyclopedia of Science Fiction is extremely academic and dense. It is not user created or fan-friendly.
- It doesn't go into depth about specific books by authors, it just analyzes an author's style the themes the commonly deal with.
- This encyclopedia would give users a space to dive deeper into the world's that authors create.

Idea #3
Fan Funded Knockoff of Barlowe's Guide To Extraterrestrials

What It Do:

- People donate to a fund and then get to pick the books and authors whose aliens they want to see illustrated.
- The site and book would be specifically dedicated to extraterrestrials in sci-fi.
- It would contain no information about the story from which the aliens are from and and would focus solely on the alien biology ecosystem and physical characteristics (like the original book).

What It Do Part II:

- Professional illustrators, and really good fan artists would be hired to do the art for the book/site.
- Donators and backers would get to access to preliminary sketches and other exclusive content on the site.
- They would also get a early "free" copy of the book, maybe a poster of their choosing or something.
- The site would display the art and sell prints and coffee table books. If the first one sells well then potentially it could become a yearly thing.

How does it serve the niche?

- People like coffee table books?

How is it better?

- Barlowe's original book is pretty great, but he only ever made one of them.
- It's been nearly 40 years since it came out, so it might be time for a new one.
- Plus the aliens from the novels he depicted were fairly niche, so fans would appreciate being able to pick which extraterrestrials go in the book.
- And the artwork looks pretty goofy now.