MANG3067 - Management Coursework

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Outline Description of the Innovative Technology

Often travellers can find themselves lost in foreign cities if they don’t speak the native language, and therefore cannot read directions from signs or maps. A smartphone app is proposed that would allow the user to photograph an unreadable sign with their device, and have the text automatically translate to their chosen language on the screen. This would provide travellers with an intuitive method of tackling the otherwise daunting challenge of navigating an unfamiliar city, with unreadable signs.

# Strategies to improve market share and profitability

# When attempting to Improve the market share of any item it is Important to consider the four P’s. These help to persuade the consumer that this really is a tool that they need to own.

## **Product**

The product will take the form of a software package, to be downloaded from the Google Play store [1], the Android operating systems native app store. This will make acquiring the software a simple and easy process for the consumer. After installing the app, the user can immediately start using it to translate foreign text.

## **Price**

The actual download for the app will be free, making it highly enticing for the consumer, with no reason not to try it out. The software will make revenue by allowing third parties to embed their advertising banners into the app, at a cost; effectively shifting the financial investment from the consumer, to the advertisers.

## **Place**

Since Google Play is a globally available platform, the app will be available for download in any country with sufficient network infrastructure, and Google Play support [2]; the majority of the developed world.

**Promotion**

An advertising campaign will be run on major social media websites, specifically targeting users of social media on their mobile devices. This targeted marketing will ensure that the campaign is viewed by the intended consumer – smartphone owners.

# Method for getting pre-launch customer input

In order to launch a successful product, it is important to know what the customer thinks about your product, and what they really want. Understanding the consumer’s view of the product may expose unexpected criticisms of it. This is an important step, as it allows these issues to be addressed early, before the public release; ensuring the app is desirable to the customer. This will help to maximise the number of app downloads on release, encouraging more advertisers to invest heavily in the product.

Several methods can be used to do this, some of which include:

* Street surveys
* Email surveys
* Focus groups
* Postal questionnaires
* Social media websites

A major source of customer feedback will be through carefully run focus groups. Many of these focus groups will include foreign exchange students, studying away from their home country. With the majority of smartphone users being in the age range 18-34 [3], it makes sense to target students, as they mainly fall into this age range. Exchange students who are not proficient in the local language are likely to have encountered problems when navigating. Getting the feedback of this group will allow for a more tailored user experience on the app’s release.

# Select a project management method for this project

## A suitable management method for this project is SCRUM. This method uses input from the end-users, namely the customers to create a desired feature list. The team then decides which of these features to commit to implement, and adds them to the sprint backlog. The sprint, very fast dynamic development, then begins, with the team committed to their feature list. Daily meetings are held and allow for dynamic updating of minor aspects of the project. This method is very well suited to a small team of software engineers developing an application for a specific purpose, and is therefore ideal for the development of this app.

Once the sprint is over the resulting product is potentially at a stage where it can be released on the Google Play store. At this point the software is reviewed to check that it meets the initial feature list. Provided the software works to the specification, it is now ready for an initial release.

# How will three entrepreneurial traits you have, help drive the performance of your new company?

My ability to adapt – Even if I am committed to an idea, or design, I am always willing to explore a better solution should one present itself.

Dedication – Once I have started a project, I am always willing to see it through to the end. Should unforeseen problems occur, I do not give up; there is always a solution.

Risk management – I am willing to take calculated risks, in order to further my goals. An example of this would be investing heavily into a new idea that has not yet been fully tested, but my gut feeling is that it will be successful.

References:

[1] – Google, Google Play store, <https://play.google.com/store?hl=en_GB>, last access: 11/12/2014

[2] – Google, “Country availability”, web resource <https://support.google.com/googleplay/answer/2462844?hl=en-GB>, last access: 11/12/2014

[3] – Aaron Smith, “Smartphone Ownership 2013”, June 5 2013, available at: <http://www.pewinternet.org/2013/06/05/smartphone-ownership-2013/>, last access: 11/12/2014