

AndrewID: nlamkin (open to more members)

### Project Pitch:

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Across the web there are countless sites dedicated to the big-budget world of Broadway Theatre. Successful, large-scale productions commonly find their way into the public eye; ticket retailers like TicketMaster feature Broadway's "Aladdin" right next to seats for the Yankees' Spring Training and Madonna's latest concert tour. But what about the smaller productions which aren't as focused on commercial success? The internet is currently lacking a resource to help theatergoers find their way into the box offices of America's smaller stages, and I want to build a web application that fills this niche. I want to design this site in a way that will benefit the theaters as much as it does the users. By facilitating communications between regional theaters and their regular supporters, this website will encourage return patronage, and improving the searchability of local productions will unite new audiences with the theatre companies producing the content that they are interested in.

Say you had the urge to see a production in Pittsburgh this weekend, but the offerings "Disney on Ice: Princesses and Heroes," or "Young Frankenstein" (the only productions listed on [www.pittsburgh-theater.com](http://www.pittsburgh-theater.com) for the night of Sat. March 7<sup>th</sup>) weren't exactly what you had in mind. Without prior connections within the Pittsburgh theatre scene, or significant time spent searching the individual theaters' websites, it would be difficult to quickly get a broad sense of what might be playing across Steel City's smaller venues.

### Project Description:

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Eventually I would like to expand this site into a national product available across America, but this is obviously in its earliest stages. For this project, I hope to build a prototype based on a few example theaters in Pittsburgh.

The core features of this application are twofold:

1. A Theater Profile template which allows theaters to represent themselves with pertinent information such as:
  - a. A digital Box office with the typical contact and venue information as well as a calendar of upcoming performances and ticket availability.
  - b. The concept of a "Production"
    - i. Basic information: Description, performance schedules
    - ii. Specific fields for Director, cast, crew, etc. to improve formatting (develop a professional standard for theaters to follow).
  - c. Past seasons and upcoming productions
  - d. Notification system for subscribed users
2. A user creation system that allows people to:
  - a. Follow theatres to receive their updates
  - b. Specify tastes (comedy, tragedy, experimental, musical, ballet, etc.)
    - i. Generate suggestions by location that match these tastes

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These core features seem very similar to the homework assignments we have already been working on, but there are dozens of potential extension points past this core functionality that I hope to implement. Here is a list in order of priority:

1. A search function with significant refining tools:
  - a. Search by: location, theater, production, category/taste, director, ticket price, etc.
2. Google maps integration
  - a. Display search results on a map.
  - b. Directions to a specific theater without leaving the site.
3. Transaction processing
  - a. Ticket sales
    - i. Potential for discounts through the app
  - b. Donations to support the theater
4. Seat selection for ticket sales
  - a. A template or process for theaters to create this functionality from their own image (or other relevant file types).
5. Social media integration
  - a. Share on Facebook without leaving the site
  - b. Tweet about the production without leaving the site
6. Production reviews
  - a. Media reviews with links to external articles
  - b. User reviews/ratings created in app
  - c. A method for tailoring search results based on reception

My goal is to reach a basic implementation of everything through extension point #4, but if speed bumps arise I would be pleased with a polished implementation through extension point #2. If things magically go without complication, extension points #5 and 6 both pose unique challenges that would be great additional tasks.

Some of these extension points do not need to reinvent the wheel. For example, there are obviously existing services that do transaction processing, so I would be working with the APIs of these services to embed them within my application.

I am deeply passionate about this project. I have worked professionally as a technician in various regional theaters in Massachusetts and a few in Baltimore, MD, and I know that audience retention and outreach are the most pressing concerns for their marketing teams. I feel like this project is incredibly scalable to whatever situations may come up in the coming weeks because of the distinct extension points I have defined above.

I am also writing a SURG proposal for funding to research and market this project to theaters in Pittsburgh for eventual release. The work I am doing for the class would eventually merge with this SURG proposal, but certainly not before the end of this semester. I definitely would not be paid for my work on this project, and it would not be a part of any of my other coursework.