# Purpose

XVI from the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology University, have come together to expand on an idea that came from an individual within the team.

The SocialCare Chat will allow for the elderly or those with a disability, to connect and engage with their loved ones through the use of technology. We all have such fond memories with our grandparents and love them dearly but not being able to visit them makes it really difficult as they tend to get lonely. During the unprecedented times we face through the COVID-19 pandemic, the idea of SocialCare Chat was born.

The focus of this application is to make digital contact with family and friends uncomplicated for those that may struggle with technology as well as incorporating brain teasers.

# Objective

The SocialCare Chat project will require various technical skills in order to successfully create and launch. The team at XVI will be working hard over the next 6 weeks to begin with our beta product...

The SocialCare Chat application will be in the form of a web and mobile application that is intuitive and user-friendly. Through both applications, we aim to have Voice operated commands, a navigational layout that is straight forward so our beloved elderly generation can jump on and easily understand what to do next. We will need to use simple language and steer clear from jargon and any form of millennial language, we would also like to consider implementing different languages to suit all backgrounds. We will look to understand the phycology of colors and utilise such colors that will resonate with the elderly generation and have a positive influence.

The SocialCare Chat will consist of many features, the most important feature is the chat option. We want to give the elderly the opportunity to connect with their loved ones through conversation, whether that be through text format or through the use of audio and video connection. The text format will ideally have various language options, so those who may not understand the English language as well as their own native language, can still connect with their loved ones through the ease of their first language. Our beloved elderly will also be able to send and receive photos through The SocialCare Chat.

Another feature of The SocialCare Chat are the games! It’s important to keep the brain as active as possible and to exercise the muscle so, we will look to have a variety of the games that our elderly generation may find interesting enough to get involved. We will look to include brain teasers such as crossword puzzles, word search, sodoku, jigsaw puzzles, as well as chess and checkers, cards and connect four.

# Methods

There are three main online Application development tools: Amazon Web Services (AWS), Google App Engine and Microsoft Azure. We intend to create a web application that can also be accessed in a mobile format. After careful consideration at XVI we have decided to go with Azure in conjunction with Microsoft Visual Studio as our development suite, storage warehouse and launching platform.

Azure offers extensive testing and DevOps tools, expansive middleware, an enormous data staging ground that scales with usage, virtual machines to use as containers and simple compatibility with Visual Studio for front-end support as well as an unimaginable amount of other functions.

We are able to use Java to code the back end and .html for the front-end in Visual Studio. Both offer fantastic platforms to work off and have shared functionality between the two – meaning; we can use those two Microsoft products for most of our project without leaving a conjoined Microsoft suite.

After development of our application, we can perform containerized testing against massive, pre-structured data-pools created by Microsoft, also in Azure, that replicates devices in real-world situations. This ensures we can perform thorough testing without having to establish real-world scenarios, expanding the scope of our testing and giving us an opportunity to ready ourselves for market. These tests will then allow us to go into alpha-testing in isolated, situationally specific, environments like aged-care facilities and schools.

As SocialCare grows, so will the staging ground set by Azure. With extra data availability and future development capabilities always at-the-ready Social-Care, like the market and our families, never has to stop growing.

# Testing Plan

After spending time planning and developing an App, you will need to test and app thoroughly before the official release. The first testing will be conducted by XVI and close friends and family of the team members. This could be hardware related testings like how to app scales on different devices, screen orientation and mobile devices by different manufacturers. This can be done quickly by researching the most widely used mobile device in our specific target audience. By doing quick test between XVI and friends we can test the functionality of the app and quickly fix any alarming bugs that would hinder further testing, things such as installing and running the application and seeing how it affects the devices resources. XVI can also test how convenient the app is by re-locating icons and buttons depending on how used they are, how easily reached they are and how noticeable they are to stop users from getting lost in the UI.

After the obvious bugs and issues are removed, we can start testing in the target audience by releasing the app to select nursing homes that would like to partake in this experiment, then we can gather information given to us by the app and also by employees at the Age Care Facilities. As the app is made for the elderly, talking the them after using the app for a period of time will allow us to make adjustments we may have not noticed previously or that our audience believe will better suit them.

When the App is in a more developed stage, we can start releasing it to testing groups who will be more focused on finding issues with the app. This will allow us to find and fix issues that can be created on accident or in certain scenarios and stop that from happening before realesing the market. Being able to find and fix as many of these features will allow us to more condifently release the app without fear of issues appearing in possibly important situations. After this the app should be in a highly useable state and be able to be released briefly for users to beta test such as on the App store or Google Play. Then feedback can be acquired from this and we can adjust the app and fix and related issues before the full release.

# Marketing/Launch

The first stage of the XVI advertising and launch plan for Socialcare Chat will focus on creating brand awareness through connecting with various managers and owners of elderly and disabled care facilities. To show them the product, how easy it is to use and discuss whether they would be interested in and find benefit from having our software in their facility. Once we have several care facilities on board with instalment, we will roll out the application on both the Google Play Store and Apple AppStore to follow, so that the relatives of those in these care facilities can download the application. This will allow users to communicate with their loved ones during times when face to face visits are not an option, like with the current COVID-19 Climate.

The second stage of our advertising plan for the Socialcare chat software will predominately focus on advertisements towards older demographics. Instead of using digital advertising, we will be using print media, radio and television advertising to create awareness around our software. A variety of promotional content will be required, such as images of individuals using our software, and a short informational video that can be used for television. The ads will all focus on the benefits of Socialcare chat, the ease of use, our contact information, and how to download or receive our software.

While digital advertisements will not be our primary focus for advertising, we will be looking at gathering and analysing data from a small run of advertisements on digital platforms such as Facebook and Twitter. This information will help us determine whether it is important for us to focus on ads in this direction as well.

# Roles

To futher support our intrest in our ideal jobs, we have decided to assign roles that align well with the job’s elements. After research into the application development process, roles have been split into the following areas:

* Researcher
* Designer
* Developer
* Head Coder
* Marketing and Testing

The first task of the Researcher will be to bring the team together to identify the main goal of the project and make a road map on how we will achieve this. The Researcher will complete an investigation into similar applications and competition. They will also lead the brainstorm into features the team identifies and how to implement them.

The designer will focus on the design of the user-interface and will be in charge of creating a style guide that the rest of the application will be built on. They will work with the rest of the team to develop a basic mock-up application.

The Developer should aim to identify the elements of the application and what route will be taken to achieve them. For e.g. the developer will research ways to implement the communication element, whether it’s voice, text or video and how we will make it happen.

Although all members will be involved in code development, the Head Coder will oversee all of it, guiding others and most importantly they will seek to eliminate bugs and errors in the application itself.

Marketing and Testing will firstly work alongside the Head Coder once an alpha is developed, testing the app. They will then decide how to market the app and the target audience.

# Conclusion

We have thought cohesively as a group on the project idea and our plans of implementation. The unpresidented times the pandemic of 2020 has brought upon the world has changed the way we interact socially, moving most of it online. The uptake in software use has mainly orbited around the professional space. Said software relies heavily on the user already having well developed skills with technology and the internet.

SocialCare Chat aims to be as adaptable as it can be in order to suit elderly users through clear displays, size and language, while also giving a fun experience and removing the fear and annoyance of having to create and use social media platforms in order to connect.

XVI aims to fill these gaps with our own application, SocialCare chat.