Informatics 132: Proposal and Competitive Analysis On FreeRice

Discussion: Monday 10am-10:50am

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1. Team and Collaboration Plans

1.1 Team Members

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1.2 Collaboration Plans

- Will you be assigning particular roles?
  - No
- How often will you meet? How will you handle situations when you can't all meet in person?
  - Twice a week, Tuesday 11am-1pm and Friday 12-2pm
- Do you have processes in place for scheduling meetings, making decisions, writing together, submitting assignments, etc.?
  - On Monday discussion we will decide what we are going to do. On Tuesday we are going to start working on the project and make progress on it. From Tuesday to Friday meeting all team members will work individually on the project to make sure if something needs to be edited. On Friday meeting, we will review our project and make sure it is ready to submit.
- What are your communication expectations?
  - Be responsive, be on time, communicating wants vs needs, meet your deadlines, know when to ask for help
- What tools will you use to support your collaboration?
  - WhenToMeet, Google Drive, Facebook messenger
- Are there any challenges you anticipate to completing your project on time (e.g. travel, work schedules, platform incompatibilities, etc.)?
  - Working around schedules and classes, learning the new group dynamic .
- Is there anything else we should know about your team?
  - All of us are hard workers who are going to strive for the highest possible grade.

2. The Product/Service/App

- What is the product called?
  - Freerice
- What is the URL of the product?
  - http://freerice.com/#/english-vocabulary/8300
- In 2-3 sentences, describe the product (as you would to someone who is unfamiliar with it).

- ○ The user answers questions to donate rice to low-income communities. It helps prepare students for their education.
- How is it accessed?
  - ○ It is accessed through a web browser.
- Will you be working with the complete product or a subset of its features?
  - ○ We will be focusing on the UI and UX of the product
- Who produces this product? What kind of an organization is it?
  - ○ This product comes from the United Nations World Food Programme, a non profit organization
- What is the product's history? Is it new or old? Has it gone through lots of versions? How has it changed?
  - ○ Freerice was created by John Breen, a computer programmer, to help his son for the SAT exam. On November 20th, 2007 the World Food Programme launched a campaign to "feed a child for thanksgiving," inspiring users to help hungry people. In March 2009, Breen donated the Freerice website to UN World Food Programme. In September 2010, UN World Food Programme launched a new version (Freerice 2.0) of the game. In August 2018, the UN World Food Programme launched an updated version (beta). We will working on 2.0 version. In 2008, Freerice was economically sufficient to donate 20 grains of rice per answer of question instead of 10 but later in 2009 they had to reduce the amount back to 10 grains in 2009 because of economic instability.

Why you chose this product? Why did it appeal to you? Are there characteristics that make it a good choice for the project?

Freerice is an web browser that allows users to play a quiz game where their answers donate rice through the United Nations World Food Programme. We chose this product because although we feel like it is a good idea, its poor execution prevents it from being a product that most users would want to use. The website lauds the vocabulary game as a tool to become more intelligent in ways such as being able to better formulate ideas, write more effective papers, speak more precisely, and read faster. Despite this noble cause, the user interface is clunky and unappealing, and the main activity that allows people to donate rice is boring. However, the idea of using a web browser game to both increase people's intelligence and contribute to fighting world hunger seems like a good cause that could be improved upon with some user focused design.

3. Competitive Analysis

3.1 Direct Competitors

Free Wheat

- ➢ Product Name: Free Wheat
- ➢ URL for the product: http://freewheat.gear.host
- ➢ A brief 1-2 sentence description of the product
    - ■ Freewheat is a website that helps feed starving kids all over the world. Essentially, by visiting this website and solving the math problems you are contributing to giving these children wheat to nourish them.
- ➢ The problem being addressed
    - ■ Freerice is highly supported by ads. These same ads can result in the websites aesthetic and lead users to no longer use the site. freewheat on the other hand is ad-free with a may simplistic layout.
- ➢ The functionality or feature set
    - ■ Like Freerice, freewheat's main purpose is to people who are starving.
    - ■ Freerice's game is based on vocabulary building which is a skill improvement process. Freefheat's game is based on math solving problem which also to improve skill.
- ➢ The user base for the product
    - ■ The math problems are very simplistic and all multiplicative problems. Therefore, the user base will be children ages 7-12 years old.
- ➢ Any other notable similarities or differences
    - ■ Both Freerice and freewheat focus on helping feed children around the world. The sites are interactive and help the users study and building their skill sets while donating to a cause. However, freerice focuses on more diverse subjects as opposed to freewheat that only has multiplication. Overall, the sites have the same goal which is to help children with their academics while also helping them help other children around the world.

Bean Bean Bean

- ➢ Product Name: Bean Bean Bean
- ➢ URL for the product: https://beanbeanbean.com/what-is-this.html
- ➢ A brief 1-2 sentence description of the product
  - Bean Bean Bean is an online website that allows users to answer questions and when answered correctly bean(s) are gained which are a way of representing aid being used for helping nourish children.
- ➢ The problem being addressed
  - Bean Bean Bean much like Freerice aims to help those in need via answering questions. As sometimes one is unable to directly provide help and through websites like Bean Bean Bean and FreeRice one can provide aid to others while educating themselves.
- ➢ The functionality or feature set
  - Bean Bean Bean and Freerice both provide similar features and functionality while Bean Bean Bean has a smaller variety of topics for people to choose from for answering questions it has superior aesthetics to FreeRice. The User Interface for Bean Bean Bean makes it much easier for people to know what can be interacted with and what cannot as well as the overall feel of the interface is much more user friendly and visually appealing.
- ➢ The user base for the product
  - The user base for the product includes anyone wanting to learn and/or help those in need. There is no specific age rage as people can either be on it for educational purposes, though in the educational aspect it targets k-12. While many others may use the product not for it's educational aspect but instead for helping those in need.
- ➢ Any other notable similarities or differences
  - Some notable similarities include the ability for users to choose amongst a variety of topics for which to answer questions much like free rice. Bean Bean Bean doesn't directly donate beans instead it donates the dollar equivalent per bean earned which is unlike Freerice. Another key difference is how much Bean Bean Bean relies on advertising for funding and unlike Freerice is not a

non-profit, though one cannot be sure that it's for-profit as neither is explicitly stated.

3.2 Indirect Competitors

Hunger Site

- ❖ Product Name: The Hunger Site
- ❖ URL for the product:
  https://thehungersite.greatergood.com/clicktogive/ths/thank-you
- ❖ A brief 1-2 sentence description of the product
    - ❑ The Hunger Site is a website that allows users to donate to certain international program, which includes donating food to refugees or to people in need. The user is able to help donate by clicking and viewing sponsor ads, buying merchandise from the websites store, and by directly donating money to those certain programs.
- ❖ The problem being addressed
    - ❑ The conflict from this website to Freerice is that it directly asks users to donate by purchasing their products instead of doing it in a fun and exciting way like FreeRice does. By directly asking users to donate, users are less likely to participate because they see the process of purchasing an item as long and maybe strenuous because they have to actively look for an item, unlike Freerice which is a quick and educational game. The user is also unable to see the amount of food that is being donated and to which program, unlike Freerice which gives the exact amount of rice being given and only donates to the United Nations World Food Programme.
- ❖ The functionality or feature set
    - ❑ The Hunger Site has a different functionality than the Freerice website. The Hunger Site caters more towards helping its international programs by having users buy its products, so many advertisements are shown showing what items can be bought. There is an option at the top of the screen that allows the user to click a button and help donate, however the product advertisement are distracting, making it hard to notice it.
    - ❑ The Hunger Site and Freerice are both nonprofit organization.

- ❏ The Hunger Site has an option to subscribe so that the user can get notification on sales and new products. It also includes a review system for its products.
- ❏ In order to purchase one of the Hunger Sites products, the user will have to create an account and login, similar to Freerice
- ❖ The user base for the product
  - ❏ The user base for this will be people who have money to spend and help donate to whatever program the Hunger Site helps donate to, most likely people over the age of 28. The Hunger Site user base is unlike the Freerice users, where users don't necessarily have money to spend and users can play an educational game in order to donate food, which can include all ages.
- ❖ Any other notable similarities or differences
  - ❏ The Hunger Site does not only donate to food charities but also charities that support breast cancer patients, animals, the rainforest, veterans, people who are autistic, have alzheimers, diabetes, have literacy issues, and many others.

Answer4Earth

- ❖ Product Name: answer4earth
- ❖ URL for the product: http://www.answer4earth.com/game.php?answ=1
- ❖ A brief 1-2 sentence description of the product
  - ❏ Answer4earth is a website where if we play games to plant trees. Each answer we give helps plant a tree. We have to choose the best answer of the question. Next question difficulty depends on our overall skill. Each correct answer we give, generates a donation to plant trees thus helping our environment.
- ❖ The problem being addressed
  - ❏ In our product Freerice, if user answers the questions the donation goes to low-income communities but in answer4earth if the user answer the right answer to the questions, the donation does not go to any specific people or communities. Trees get planted all around the world. The whole world gets benefited.
- ❖ The functionality or feature set
  - ❏ Money generating process between Answer4Earth and freerice is almost the same. On both products, each time a user the question right, the money is generated through the advertisements appeared on the screen except in Answer4Earth each correct answer leaves,

branches or trees are donated where in Freerice for each correct answer 10 grains of rice is donated.
- ❏ Answer4Earth splits its donations between two non-profit charities, Trees For the Future and The Fruit Tree Planting Foundation where Freerice is based only on one organization called United Nations World Food Programme.
- ❏ Both Answer4Earth and Freerice makes zero profits through their product.
- ❏ Answer4Earth does not require the user to sign-up but in freerice sign-up is required to track total answers, join or create groups.
- ❏ There is a special feature in Answer4Earth which lets the user do direct donation but this functionality is missing in Freerice.
- ❏ The games in Answer4Earth not specifically aimed for learning but Freerice provides excellent vocabulary building games.
- ❖ The user base for the product
  - ❏ Answer4Earth contains questions that varies with different levels. The easiest questions are created for elementary school kids and the challenged questions are made for people whoever thinks can answer the hardest questions ever. So, there is no special categorized user base for Answer4Earth. Anyone can play the question-answer game which is the similar user-base of Freerice as user base of Freerice is also all aged people.
  - ❏ In Answer4Earth when we play the game, advertisements appear above the question area. The money generated by these advertisements is then used to plant trees. We generate money by playing the games which pays for the planting of trees. Here the user do not have to have money to play the game as the tree planting is paid by the sponsors whose ads appear on the question screens. This way, the user base of Answer4Earth also seems similar to the user base of Freerice which is basically anyone.
- ❖ Any other notable similarities or differences
  - ❏ Both websites' user interface has similarity in colors except new beta version of freerice has a different color option.
  - ❏ Answer4Earth is to fight global warming where Freerice is to end hunger.