##### Declaration

I hereby certify that this material, which I now submit for assessment on the programme of study leading to the award of Degree of **Honours B.Sc. in Computer Science** in the Institute of Technology Blanchardstown, is entirely my own work except where otherwise stated, and has not been submitted for assessment for an academic purpose at this or any other academic institution other than in partial fulfilment of the requirements of that stated above.

##### Acknowledgment



Michael or David

##### Abstract

The goal of the project was to create an interactive and enjoyable fantasy hurling style application. It was to be for Hurling, but would be flexible in that the backend could easily be used for a different sport if and when it was needed. This made the project very modular. It was designed to be very intuitive and easy to use.

Some of the key features were the ability for the user to be able to create and maintain a fantasy hurling team, receive hurling new dynamically and interact with other users via an instant messaging style forum.

The result was an application that was very simplistic in its front end design to allow novice users and experienced users alike interact with all aspects of the application with ease. Administration of the application was simple using the administrator login to update and maintain all tables in the system. The application was very modular and could be expanded or used for a different sport very easily. It also tapped into the current phenomena of social media in its instant messaging style chat.

##### Table of figures

[Figure 1 Prototyping SDLC 3](#_Toc417627365)

[Figure 2 Gant Chart 6](#_Toc417627366)

[Figure 3 IBM Analytics Benchmark 8](#_Toc417627367)

[Figure 4 Desktop Browsers 8](#_Toc417627368)

[Figure 5 Moblle Browsers 9](#_Toc417627369)

[Figure 6 Console Browsers 9](#_Toc417627370)

[Figure 7 Consumption 16](#_Toc417627371)

[Figure 8 Website Traffic 19](#_Toc417627372)

****TABLE OF CONTENTS****

[Chapter 1: Introduction 1](#_Toc417627312)

[1.1 Introduction 1](#_Toc417627313)

[1.2 Aim and Objectives 1](#_Toc417627314)

[1.3 Main Research Questions 2](#_Toc417627315)

[1.4 Justification and Benefits 2](#_Toc417627316)

[1.5 Feasibility (Assumptions, Risk, Benefits) 2](#_Toc417627317)

[1.6 Proposed Methodologies 3](#_Toc417627318)

[1.7 Expected Results 4](#_Toc417627319)

[1.8 Work Breakdown Structure 4](#_Toc417627320)

[1.9 Gant chart 6](#_Toc417627321)

[1.10 Conclusion 6](#_Toc417627322)

[Chapter 2: Literature Review 7](#_Toc417627323)

[2.1 Introduction 7](#_Toc417627324)

[2.2 Modern Web 7](#_Toc417627325)

[2.3 Improving Website Design 11](#_Toc417627326)

[2.4 The effect of fantasy sport participation through social media. 14](#_Toc417627327)

[2.5 The effects of fantasy football participation on NFL (National Football League) consumption: A qualitative analysis. 15](#_Toc417627328)

[2.6 Using Social Media to Build Community 18](#_Toc417627329)

[2.7 HTTP Protocol Overview 24](#_Toc417627330)

[2.8 Conclusion 26](#_Toc417627331)

[Chapter 3: Analysis and Design 27](#_Toc417627332)

[3.1 Introduction (Project Overview again) 27](#_Toc417627333)

[3.2 Use Cases + Diagrams + Wireframes 27](#_Toc417627334)

[3.3 Sequence diagrams (Activity diagrams or whatever) 27](#_Toc417627335)

[3.4 Class Diagrams Martin 27](#_Toc417627336)

[3.5 Deployment text, pictures + diagrams ) Martin 27](#_Toc417627337)

[3.6 Database design(tables and diagram) ) Martin 27](#_Toc417627338)

[3.7 And some other shit comes to mind later 27](#_Toc417627339)

[3.8 Conclusion david 27](#_Toc417627340)

[Chapter 4: Implementation 28](#_Toc417627341)

[4.1 Introduction Martin and Michael 28](#_Toc417627342)

[4.2 Methodology (Prototyping) ) Martin 28](#_Toc417627343)

[4.3 Text and Pictures on Front-end parts (each page) David 28](#_Toc417627344)

[4.4 Comments how application developed from early prototypes to later version Martin and Michael 28](#_Toc417627345)

[4.5 Similar for Back-end, but much more technical ) Martin 28](#_Toc417627346)

[4.6 Conclusion david 28](#_Toc417627347)

[Chapter 5: Testing and Evaluation 29](#_Toc417627348)

[5.1 Introduction david 29](#_Toc417627349)

[5.2 User Interface Tests michael 29](#_Toc417627350)

[5.3 Unit Tests ) Martin 29](#_Toc417627351)

[5.4 Integration Tests ) Martin 29](#_Toc417627352)

[5.5 Give it to some user tests david and michael 29](#_Toc417627353)

[5.6 Conclusion david 29](#_Toc417627354)

[Chapter 6: Conclusions and Further Work 30](#_Toc417627355)

[6.1 Introduction michael 30](#_Toc417627356)

[6.2 Achievements david 30](#_Toc417627357)

[6.3 Personal gain (shit learned) all of us should write a bit 30](#_Toc417627358)

[6.4 Further work ( possible improvements ) Michael 30](#_Toc417627359)

[6.5 Conclusion david 30](#_Toc417627360)

[Appendix A: Project Proposal 31](#_Toc417627361)

[Appendix B: Project Diary 32](#_Toc417627362)

[Appendix C: Code Listing 33](#_Toc417627363)

[Bibliography 34](#_Toc417627364)

# Introduction

## Introduction

Fantasy sports games are a fun and interactive experience for sports fans. Existing fantasy sports games allow fans to immures themselves in to a competitive environment and compete against other fans. Fantasy sports games operate with users registering, creating teams with their favorite sports stars and entering online leagues with fans that have also created fantasy teams of their own. Existing fantasy sports games such as fantasy premier league and fantasy baseball provide research statistics detailing the scale of online fantasy sports communities [11, 12].

In Ireland there are two major sports, Soccer and Hurling. Neither of these two sports have a large involvement with fantasy sports games. Although attempts exist online, there are no successful implementations of a fantasy hurling game. With no established game available, hurling fans are deprived the experience of an interactive web based social environment. The purpose of this project is to implement a fantasy hurling game that attempts to fulfill a successful version of an already successful fan experience and applying it to a sport that is lacking an online interactive gaming community.

This paper describes our research and study of fantasy games, online communities and online Gaelic sports websites. We have taken the findings of our research and have detailed how we applied them to the creating of what we feel is a more intuitive, simplified and better social experience for hurling fans. Our application allows hurling fans to have an interactive social gaming outlet.

Our implemented project provides fans with the ability to create, edit and manage their own fantasy team but a key feature is the facility to converse with other online gamers through a social chat environment. Our project follows existing structures for gameplay once the user creates an account. The simplified rules are as follows.

* The user is allocated a maximum budget
* The user uses his budget to create a full team of real life hurling players
* The user can create or enter an existing league of other gamers
* After each real life game week the users points are calculated and added to their current points total
* The user can edit the players on their team but must always be within budget
* The game ends at the end of the real hurling season and the user with the most points in the fantasy league is the winner

The addition of the chat feature allows users to compare and discuss their teams through out the season. A key feature of the chat function is the ability for users to challenge one another in a head to head style competition each game week.

**1.1.2 System Introduction**

The system runs in two environments. The user has a front-end environment for playing the game playing through their browser. The administrator has a back-end environment for the maintaining and updating of scores as the game weeks happen.

The technologies used in the project are native to web based applications. Therefore we use HTML, JavaScript and CSS to design the interfaces. To connect the front-end user environment to the back-end database we have implemented .NET Web API and Entity Framework, we will host the application on Microsoft’s azure servers. These technologies are detailed in following chapters.

## Aim and Objectives

The objective of the project is to build a fantasy football hurling website, with an element of social media capabilities built in. The reasoning behind making this project is as follows. Anyone who plays fantasy football games knows that although they are quite interesting, a lot of the time is spent just logging in, checking your score, maybe making a change or two, and then logging out. The amount of time actually spent on the site is minimal, I feel this is a mistake in the design of these applications and games.

In this document we will provide some analysis and conceptual design of the product using UML diagrams and modelling techniques. We will look at the following:

* Comprehensive Use Case Diagrams
* Development Methodology
* Sequence Diagrams
* Class Diagram of the final product
* Activity diagrams
* User Interface Design
* Database table and schema design and description

## Main Research Questions

The main questions of research in regards this project are how can we improve on similar apps that are already out there, how much can we find out about the game of hurling, can we find out how to get live figures through a RSS feed, is it possible to use real Logos or are there licencing issues, and of course what technologies will we implement in our project. We should also try research if there are other better versions of what we might be able to create out there, we need to find a gap in the market, and if one does not exist the project is doomed. A big area of research for all of us will be how to use Java server to our advantage as we plan on using this in the project.

**Is there a potential gap in the social media market for a fantasy hurling game?**

With over 175,000 people on Facebook interested in the GAA. With a worldwide audience now able to watch live hurling games. Is there enough interest to justify the creation of a fantasy hurling game?

**Could a fantasy hurling game create revenue for the GAA?**

Could a successful fantasy hurling game be sold to the GAA, to capitalize on their social media presence and create revenue through their website?

**Could a fantasy hurling game create social media interest for the GAA?**

If a successful implementation of this project was achieved, Could it generate interest on social media and subsequently expand the number of people engaging with the GAA?

## Justification and Benefits

* There are no similar apps out there for hurling
* Hurling is a very well followed game
* The social media aspect can make it even more popular as outlined in the next section
* The instant messaging service would be unique to a fantasy gaming app
* The possibility of advertising revenues is very high
* Most importantly, hurling fans we have talked to want it!

## Feasibility (Assumptions, Risk, Benefits)

This project is team work of three third year Computer science students. Each participant must have access to a personal computer and internet connection. That should not pose a challenge to acquire. We should be able to finish the project using open source tools exclusively. There are available open source tools for any task this project would require.

At this point it’s not decided what technology (programming languages / frameworks) we are going to use for application development.

Because this project is part of the third year curriculum therefore we have dedicated time available for the project.

## Proposed Methodologies

* First we will need to carry out a preliminary research of similar projects, in other words we will need to see how fantasy sport sites or applications works and what features they offer.
* Secondly we will need to decide what social networking features we want to implement in the application, hence we should undertake additional research toward contemporary social network paradigms.
* Next challenge lies in the fact that either of us have any real experience developing web applications. Comprehensive study of web technologies and framework is therefore required.
* To carry out the research we will use internet and focus mainly on qualitative research methods
* To develop the application we should use adaptive approach.
* I would argue that Prototyping SDLC is the best approach to carry out the development. In this model developer basically re-analyzes, re-designs and re-implements application prototype until the product is accepted by the client. Considering our lack of experience with web application development we should expect major changes in design, but we should be able to have simple, but functioning prototype reasonably fast.

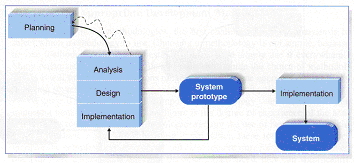


Figure Prototyping SDLC

## Expected Results

With no current social gaming outlet for hurling fans this project could prove fruitful. The potential gap in the market could exist for a game like this to succeed. A successful game could function by itself but could also be sold to the GAA and implemented on their website in a similar fashion to the premier league fantasy football.

The GAA could be interested in integrating a social media game on their website to attract the number of followers they have on social media. A fantasy hurling game could increase traffic on the GAA website and generate user interaction, leading to increased advertising revenue.

With social media friends challenging, debating and boasting about their fantasy team though various social media outlets, the GAA can reap some free publicity and advertising for upcoming games.

**1.7.1 Successful Project**

A successful implementation of this project would create an exciting social environment for hurling fans. The fantasy hurling game would allow users to post their results and scores on social media sites. To be successful users should find the website interface easy to navigate. Playing the game should be intuitive and simple. Selecting to use your GPS coordinates to find other users in your area should be fast. Users should be able to retrieve their fantasy teams results on the final day of a game week. The server should be responsive and load player information quickly. The user-to-user messaging service should be used frequently, for both challenging and talking about hurling. The system should be modular and deployable for a number of different sports.

The game should be complete and function well enough to potentially be sold to a third party, namely the GAA. With out deconstructing the system the game could be implemented on to a new website with little disruption. This would make the game profitable and marketable. This would be the ultimate goal and a truly successful project.

**1.7.2 Successful System**

A successful system would implement all the functionalities outlined in the methodology. Users could create and account, login, customize a profile, create a team, create a league, invite users, challenge users and use the messaging features within the system. The client side of the system would interact with the database. Data related to players scores and results would dynamically update on the client side after being updated by the administrator on the server. However if the game failed to attract interest from gamers and investors, the project may prove to have been created in vain. A successful system could be modified to adapt to different sports but without users playing the game the project would be considered incomplete.

**1.7.3 Failed Project**

A failure to create a functioning system that allows users to play the game would be considered a failed project. The project aims are to create fantasy hurling gaming system with social media capabilities that can operate as a standalone website. Potentially if the system created was successful and the market was there for hurling fans, users of social media and an investor to interact and back the game, the project would be considered successful. Failure to create a functioning system however has a knock on affect to potential investors. How can an investor buy a system that does not exist? A failed project can only occur if the team fails to build the system.

**1.7.4 Incomplete Project**

Failure to complete the system before the deadline could be considered a failed project. The difference between incomplete and failed is that the team mismanaged the time allocated to create the project. The system could still be completed in future iterations. If the system is completed outside of the allocated time and the market still exists for a fantasy hurling game with social media capabilities, the project may not be considered failed and could still potentially be distributed at a later date.

The plan is to deliver fully tested and working application implemented on the web in early May 2015. We would consider to be a great success if we managed to add few additional features and make the application stand out from the competition. The most important reason why we agreed on this project is an exposition to cutting-edge web technologies such as HTML5, Angular.js, GWT, Node.js and Rubi on Rails etc. We are planning to exhaust this opportunity for learning.

## Work Breakdown Structure

* 1. **Design**
     1. User Interface
        1. Specification
        2. Interface Model
        3. Design review
     2. SQL Database
        1. Identify table relationships
        2. Database model diagram
     3. User case, class and sequence diagrams
  2. **Development**
     1. Research on web technologies and frameworks
        1. Find most appropriate technology
     2. Front-end
        1. Code web pages
        2. Conduct unit tests
        3. Review web page design and functionality
     3. SQL Database
        1. Build database
        2. Review database
     4. Back-end and web services
        1. Code back-end
        2. Conduct unit tests
        3. Review back-end functionality
  3. **Quality Assurance**
     1. Front-end
        1. Perform integration tests
        2. Perform user acceptance tests
     2. SQL Database
        1. Perform integration tests
     3. Back-end and web services
        1. Perform integration tests
  4. **Implementation**
     1. Hardware
        1. Determine hardware needs
     2. Software
        1. Determine system software needs
     3. Deployment
        1. Make hardware production-ready
        2. Verify code
        3. Deploy
  5. **Post-Implementation**
     1. Verification
        1. Obtain user acceptance of production system
     2. Monitoring
        1. Verify performance and functionality
     3. Project Wrap-up

## Gant chart

Figure Gant Chart

## Conclusion

We, a group of three Computer Science Students is going to develop a feature rich application which would bring the fantasy hurling game to fan audience all around the Ireland. We hope this app will bring people who love hurling closer together. Serious lack of fantasy hurling games on the web made us confident that our application will be welcomed among potential. It is an exciting project and a great chance to pick up on modern application development skills and techniques.

In order to begin the analysis phase of the project the team must research all the data relevant to the proposed fantasy hurling game with social media capabilities, Information about social media interaction between the GAA and hurling fans. With no current game similar to the proposed project available, there appears to be room in the social media gaming market for a fantasy hurling game to exist and benefit fans of the sport and the organizers.

Fans can use the game as an outlet to interact with fellow hurling fans and feel involved in their sport. The GAA can use the game to attract visitors to their website. The project would need to consult the GAA over licensing laws and complying within the existing copyright laws.

The team involved has all the necessary skills to implement this project. Referencing the task time line in 6.2, the project is feasible within the allocated time. The most difficult parts of the project will be creating the website and updating the real life player ratings on the database.

# Literature Review

## Introduction

The project required extensive research of literature. We each picked a topic and reviewed a relevant piece of literature. One topic was social media, another was back end development. We used the knowledge gained in these reviews to help us in the overall project.

## Modern Web

###### Abstract

Today’s web is more complicated than ever. Web content is delivered to desktops, laptops, mobile devices, game consoles, and smart televisions. Each has a different screen size, performance capabilities and additional features. Web content is delivered in the form of dynamic web pages and feature rich applications in an environment without a common standard in web browsers. In addition to that, internet usage reaching billions online with all the human diversity additional complexity can be problematic. This paper purpose is to review some studies and white papers that address these problems. The research done in this field is immense and produced many solutions in the form of frameworks, tooltips, plugins, design patterns and methodologies and it’s out of the scope of this paper to cover all of those. I tried to name only general challenges in this review. Therefore I chose three white papers to study with additional research of relevant articles on the web. My work was driven by the need to acquire better understanding of concurrent state of the web, the web development challenges and methodologies. In conclusion I can claim that this paper delivers just that. It does not provide any specific solutions, but general recommendations.

###### Platforms: Mobile devices are on the move

Each month an increasing number of people are switching from PCs to tablets and mobile devices to browse the internet and by 2015 they’ll be using those more than any other device. Mobile traffic grew 120% between Q2 2013 and Q2 2014 while desktop traffic remained flat.

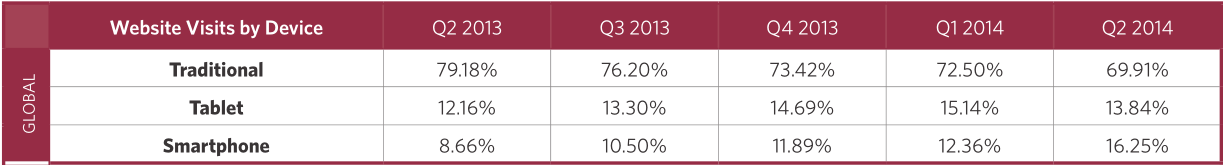


Figure IBM Analytics Benchmark

From a development point of view certain areas on a website may function differently or may not function at all on mobile or tablet devices.

**Some of the issues are:**

* No Flash support
* Popups stops a website to being used on a small screen
* Tiny text links unusable on the touch screen
* Website elements overlapping on the small screen
* And many more…

Screen size and performance restrictions are the main reasons for design reevaluation of the application design. Web developers are using separate mobile pages, responsive web design and business apps to ensure a good user experience regardless of device type.

###### Browsers: Many knights, but no king

In the past, nobody questioned which browser ruled the land – it was Microsoft’s Internet Explorer. According to the latest analysis of the Web browsers, situation is very different now. Web browser market share varies from platform to platform.

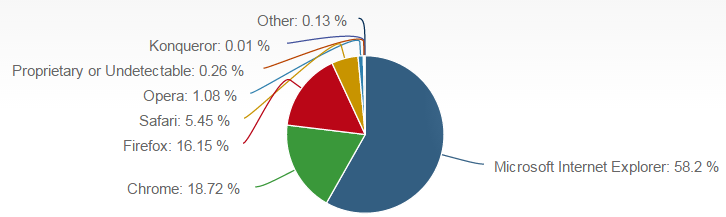


Figure Desktop Browsers

Microsoft still wins desktop market with 58.2% share has acknowledged being critically late to mobile where his presence is almost negligible with 2.21% share. This led to domination of Webkit-based browsers: Safari, Chrome and Android with Apple’s Safari being the leader with 48.91% share.

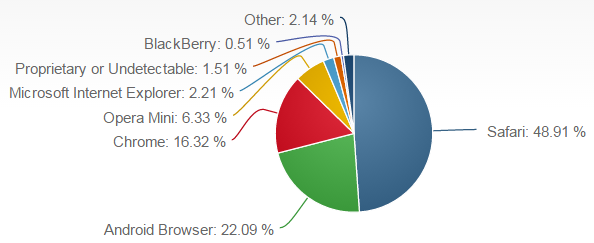


Figure Moblle Browsers

Situation in console market is very different with most of the market shares in hands of proprietary browsers embedded in a particular device. Only Opera is getting a 4.51% share as a result of Nintendo implementing Opera browser in some of their consoles. (1).

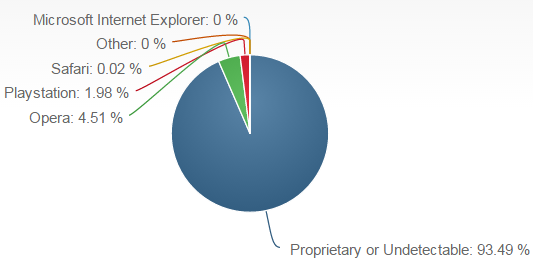


Figure Console Browsers

It’s great that internet users have so many browser options. Unfortunately developers must put a lot of work into making sure that websites are compatible with as many browsers as possible.

**Here are some of the most common browser compatibility issues**Invalid source specified.**:**

* Elements not correctly positioned
* Browser specific CSS styles
* Lack of Valid HTML/CSS
* Javascript processing times
* Frames related problems

There is a vast research done to tackle these issues and many useful practices, methodologies, frameworks and tooltips have arisen in recent years. Technologies like HTML5 and CSS3 are making cross-browser problems more manageable and web developers are getting less concerned about browser compatibility issues (2).

###### Sources: More content is coming from third parties

Third-party content is a term that covers a lot of ground, from advertising to guest blog posts.

**The term frequently include:**

* Content delivery networks (CDNs)
* Advertising
* Web analytics
* Social Media
* Microblogs
* Miscellaneous Widgets

Analysis shows that the average web transaction involves 8.59 different third parties or hosts. (3). These web page components are dragging down the overall performance of the website. Various research was done to illustrate the impact that third-party additions have on web site performance. Some of the third-party widgets can impact a site’s performance by as much as 30% (4). In spite of these findings third-party components are virtually indispensable to many web sites today, whether they bring in revenue through advertising, or drive business by bringing in new users through social media. To tackle performance issues the best option includes continuous performance monitoring of the web site to pinpoint the components with the worst impact.

###### What developers think?

Recent study (5) took a different approach to name modern web challenges. They tried to find out what are the issues that web developers are discussing among themselves. To do so, they examined over 500,000 questions asked on <http://www.stackoverflow.com> over a four year period (2009-2013).

**Here are the big takeaways from their analysis:**

* Javascript is still most popular topic, but HTML5 and CSS is raising
* Cross-browser compatibility still big, but declining
* New HTML5 and Javascript features questions are raising
* Web technologies are growing in importance in mobile development

###### Conclusion

Modern web is a complex and lively medium. New technologies arise on daily bases. Users are connecting to web with various devices through different browsers. Webpages of today are dynamic applications with third party content interconnecting different domains. With all these fast paced changes, the contemporary web developers are facing many new and difficult challenges. Evolving and researching never stops in the life of web designers and developers. New frameworks, toolkits, methodologies are created to tackle major issues and improve web development productivity. Some of the examples of prominent frameworks are Bootstrap, Grails, jQuery, Node.js (6).

The user doesn’t care about all these technical issues. He wants to browse his web sites from laptop, mobile phone or game console. He expects a web page to perform quickly and properly every time and on every device. He wants to share content or buy a product by touching a widget. All this is possible on today’s Web.

## Improving Website Design

###### Who did what?

Melody Y.Ivory and Marti A.Hearst University of California, Berkeley 2002 investigated what makes a good design to a website, and developed a model to help users implement these changes that would make the website more pleasing to the eye and in terms of usability.

###### Summary

Two students undertook a paper to investigate current methods of website design, their effect on productivity and how it can be improved though better website design principles. They undertook this as part of the Web Tango project. They aimed to help steer the average web site builder away from poor design principles and toward an automated quality checking tool and a grammar checking tool. They made these tools available online at “webtango.berkeley.edu”.

Melody Y.Ivory and Marti A.Hearst (2002) found that a website is a complex mix of text, links, elements and formatting, surmising that all these aspects affect a websites quality and usability. They came to the conclusion that these principles are important in thinking about website design to begin with.

The students came up with a table that created a way of calculating how many measures for each element on a web page were needed in order to come up with a design that is pleasing and easy to use. For example, they came to the conclusion that there are 31 separate measures that are important to think about in regards a text element including amount, size and complexity. The table also related to site architecture and the performance of the page, all elements discussed had a set of measures that were important to that particular element to optimize design.157 Measures in total were found.

Melody Y.Ivory and Marti A.Hearst (2002) then ran their crawler tool and used this to gather sample web pages. Initially it ran on the home page of a website and randomly selected pages at successive levels starting at that page and only selected informational pages ignoring advertisements or flash pages totally. The analysis tool then runs on these pages and retrieves the information on each element in conjunction with a site metrics computation tool, forming the table they discussed with the elements and their measures.

The students found there were three main principles to successfully designing a webpage; navigation design, graphic design and experience design. From these 3 main principles a hierarchical pyramid model was built, surmising that on the top level is the site architecture, while on the bottom are the actual site elements themselves. Web design literature and user studies were used to come up with the final model. A tool was then developed from this model that could compute 157 site level measures. The accuracy of this tool was tested on many websites and it was found to be 86% accurate on 154 measures.

The students performed three studies to try to predict page and site ratings. From these 3 they developed a simple prediction model. They called it the WebTango model. Firstly they drew up an analysis of 428 web pages and found expert reviews and ratings on these pages from PC Magazine’s top 100 sites. They called sites either rated or un-rated and set out to find a way to predict which category a sample site would fall under. They then computed 12 quantitative measures related to page composition and design among other factors. They tried to see if they could predict with their model the page standings on this top 100. They found that 6 features were most important to design. The most prevalent were text cluster, reading complexity, and colour count and page size. They found that in rated sites these features needed to be tweaked a certain way to make the site very usable and stay in the rated group.

A second study was conducted and asked 6 website design experts to examine 1898 pages from the Webby awards winner’s websites. These pages were judged on certain criteria including content, structure, navigation and visual aesthetics. They broke these pages into three groups, “good”, “not good” and “poor”. They wanted to see if their model, using the measures they had created, could predict which group a site would fall into. Predictive accuracy was 67%.

The third and final study was to analyse over 5000 pages from 300 sites. They used all 157 measures from their model and again had 3 groups, “good”, “average” and “poor”. They used the model to try predict which group the web pages would fall under. It was proven to be accurate on a page level 96% of the time, and accurate on a site level over 60% of the time.

Melody Y.Ivory and Marti A.Hearst (2002) talked about their final task of applying the model they had built to website design. They took a sample of 15 web pages and made minor tweaks to these based off their model parameters. They asked 13 people to analyse the pages both before and after the adjustments had been applied to them using the model. They made findings that 10 out of 13 people preferred the web pages after they had used to model to make adjustments to it.

The students then analysed their final tool, the WebTango system. They analysed how the tool worked and how it can be applied to a website. The tool compared all 157 site level measures from the website, and then makes suggestions on how to improve the website and also gives links to example websites who are similar in type but have been designed to a higher level.

The major findings were in essence that a model can be developed by 2 students with little or no web design experience that can enhance the usability and visual aspects of a website very quickly by identifying areas that can be improved. It found that although some studies have found automated tools find it difficult to find problems with usability issues, the tool developed is considered a practical and useful solution to solve design issues early in the design phase of a websites development.

## The effect of fantasy sport participation through social media.

Sport spectatorship is one of the largest forms of leisure behavior in the world [missing citation]. Large numbers of sports fans attend sporting events frequently and follow their sport ubiquitously through various mediums, TV, radio, newspapers, and magazines. With advancements in Internet technologies, fans are redirecting their consumption of sport to online platforms. Sports fans can now consume news and content via applications and social media on mobile devices. Fans can connect with each other through tweets, texts, blogs and Facebook.

Fantasy sport participation is not a new phenomenon; the history of fantasy sport is a topic of debate. In America the formation of a fantasy baseball league in the 1960’s by a man called Bill Gamson is considered to be the first documented account of a fantasy league [missing citation].

Today the exponential growth of fantasy sports participation is fuelled by the increased televised broadcasting of sport, accessibility of sport and statistics on the Internet and the advent of social media as a communication outlet for fans worldwide, because of this, fantasy sport platforms are now formally aligned with many official major sporting leagues globally.

Fantasy sport provides engaged fans a unique and personal opportunity to be involved while also building the interest and knowledge of new participants with lower prior involvement. Further, fantasy sport provides additional social interaction between players. It can serve as an education tool about the sport, teams and players and can also serve to increase the commitment and interaction of consumers with a sport.

###### 2.2 Existing Trends

In North America and Canada the fantasy sports industry has a body that monitors and provides information on all fantasy sports websites known as the Fantasy Sports Trade Association (FSTA) [missing citation]. The FSTA released figures on the number of participants in 2011, more than 35.9 million users are involved in some type of fantasy sport. The FSTA then surveyed the group to find out how many users participate using mobile devices. The survey found that 30% (12,000,000) of users are engaging through mobile devices. Further, of the 12,000,000 users that play through mobile devices 14% (1,680,000) use social media to discuss their fantasy games.

The Barclays Premier League (BPL) claims to have the biggest football fantasy game in the world [missing citation]. The Fantasy Premier League game has over 3,000,000 participants. If we apply the same calculations from FSTA to the Fantasy Premier League game we can get an estimate value of over 125,000 users that discuss their fantasy football game via social media.

###### Reason for Literature Review

This literature review is being conducted to ensure a thorough understanding of the connection between social media communities and fantasy gaming. I am currently working on a project that is combining a fantasy-hurling platform that enables social media capabilities.

Upon completion of this literature review I hope to identify potential areas of difficulty that may be unforeseen without specific research in to the topic of social media and fantasy gaming.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Members | Mobile Users | Social Media Users |
| BPL | > 3,000,000 | 900,000 | 125,000 |
| FSTA | >35,900,000 | 12,000,000 | 1,680,000 |

## The effects of fantasy football participation on NFL (National Football League) consumption: A qualitative analysis.

Joris Drayer, Stephen L. Shapiro, Brendan Dwyer, Alan L. Morse, Joel White. (2010) *Sport Management Review, 13*, 129-141. [missing citation]

Drayer, Shapiro, Dwyer, Morse and White proposed three areas of interaction that may be affected for fantasy football users and non-fantasy football users.

1. Identification and loyalty
2. Consumption
3. Attitudes and behavior

###### Identification and loyalty

To conduct a test on the fantasy gaming NFL fans, the authors must first define a norm. A fan that does not participate in fantasy football and the attributes of one such fan. A normal fan is considered to have allegiance to one team. The normal fan supports the team and the players that play for their team and no one else.

The authors expected gamers to have no loyalty or identification to a certain team, but rather have identification to a player. This was not the case, gamers still identified themselves with a team but their affiliation to other players via the fantasy game was just an extension.

Those interviewed stated that their loyalty to a fantasy player ended with the season.

Only 2 people of the 13 interviewed said that they carried affinity for a player in to the next season and rooted for them if their favorite team wasn’t playing.

###### Consumption

To conduct this test the authors once again had to define a norm. A normal fan is one that only consumes information about their favorite team.

The authors expected gamers to consume NFL information in a different manor. Having affiliation with many players in many different teams’ leads to greater consumption of information.

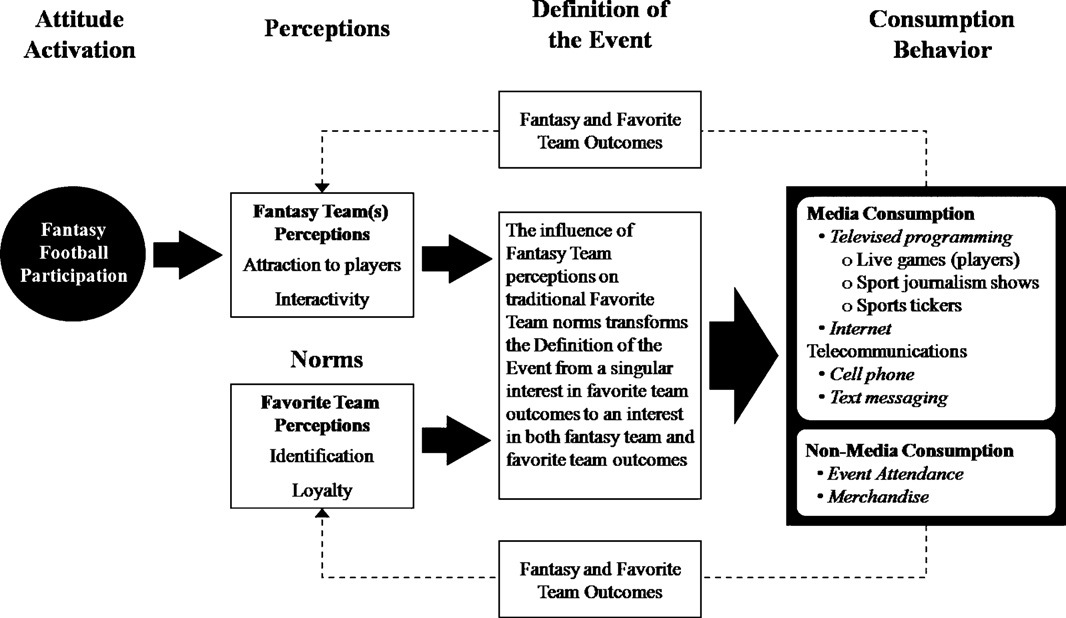


Figure Consumption

Fantasy gamers have an increased media consumption of the NFL, spending time on the Internet and watching ESPN to gain information on starting rosters, injured players and to check which teams are playing in game weeks. Of those surveyed participants admitted to checking their mobile device and going on to the Internet every 10 minutes while a game is on. Some gamers paid for subscription sites to get informed advice on their fantasy teams. Fantasy football participants found themselves watching more matches on game weeks because they had numerous players playing in different games. When asked if they would watch as many games if not playing the fantasy football game, the answer was no.

No change was noted in the form of consumerism. Only one person said they would buy the jersey of a player because she began to like him in her fantasy team.

###### Attitudes and behavior

The control norm for this test was that of a fan, who regardless of their favorite teams result would support them.

The results found in the survey suggested that a fantasy football player would have allegiance for a team but if that team lost, the fantasy football player would adjust their attitude towards a real team to suit their fantasy game. When the 13 fantasy gamers were asked about their behavior towards an opposing player, 2 gamers admitted to supporting opposing players of their favorite team.

Those interviewed stated that if their fantasy football team began to lose and become uncompetitive they would lose interest and stop updating their team towards the end of the season.

###### Research Paper Conclusion

The research results show that fantasy gaming participation really does have an effect on how fans, consume, interact, behave and identify themselves with teams. A non-fantasy gamer does not consume as much information over a broad scale but rather focuses solely on their favorite team. With fantasy gamers this is not the case. Fantasy gamers spend more time online, on blogs, sports news websites, social media, TV, magazines trying to get information on their fantasy team. Fantasy gamers tend to be more fickle in their allegiance to a team and player, favoring and supporting teams and players that can generate points for them in their fantasy league.

## Using Social Media to Build Community

Kurt Komaromi, Scott Erickson (2011). *Competition Forum,* *October 27-29*, 325-333. [missing citation]

Komaromi and Erickson follow a template laid out by Culnan, McHugh and Zubillaga that assesses the effectiveness of an organizations social media strategy. Effective implementation of a social media strategy is one that attracts an audience enabling them to engage and interact with both the organization and each other.

Although the study is not conducted on a sports category, the essential requirements for a successful social media community apply in all communities. The study instead researches 18 insurance firms over a two-month period in 2011. The authors then present specific results for three firms that display a range of social media outlets to support a community.

The three insurance companies presented are, Progressive, Liberty Mutual and State Farm. The study begins by analyzing the company’s website homepages. The homepages all display a range of tools that allow customers to interact by getting quotes, mobile apps, price comparisons and calculations for various insurance plans. What is important on all these homepages is the prominence of social media resources. All three websites have social media icons to connect via Twitter, Facebook and YouTube. Liberty Mutual is the only site that has a LinkedIn page that allows customer access. State Farm has an additional social media outlet through Flickr.

Metrics for each homepage visit can be seen in the graph below. Progressive has the highest unique visit rate at over 4 million visits per month. State Farm is second with 2.5 million and Liberty Mutual is third with 1 million unique visits.



Figure Website Traffic

###### Facebook

Facebook is the first social media outlet covered in the findings. All three insurance companies are present on Facebook.

Progressive have a Facebook page that primarily provides information about the company, offers and customer feedback. Progressive also have a current marketing campaign that attracts the most followers of the three companies Facebook accounts. “Flo” is the name of that marketing campaign and has a Facebook account that is updated daily and has interactive videos and games to engage customers. At the time of research, Progressive has a following of over 2.5 million on their Facebook accounts.

The Liberty Mutual Facebook page is similar to Progressive, They have an about section to provide information about the company. Further Liberty Mutual has videos, comments, polls and games on their page to engage customers. Their Facebook wall has daily posts from employees and brokers that can be interacted with by visitors via likes and comments.

State Farm’s Facebook page offers a diverse content including offers, promotions, and sponsorships for social causes, games to rate drivers and apps that can be played with friends. The site also has a driving game application to complete a safe driving discount offer. Their wall has many comments both by State Farm and visitors.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Progressive | Liberty Mutual | State Farm |
| Facebook | ~2,500,000 followers | ~10,000 followers | ~90,000 followers |

Although Progressive have an advantage with a larger hold on the market, the evidence is clear that an updated and well-maintained Facebook page that interacts with visitors gathers more followers. State Farm has a large number of followers because they engage their visitors with apps, polls, videos and respond to comments daily.

###### Twitter

Twitter is the second social media outlet researched in the report. All three insurance companies have an active twitter presence.

Progressive utilize twitter to connect with customers with posts daily and responding to complaints, questions and criticism. Progressives Twitter account post basic answers to very common customer questions in a timely basis.

The Liberty Mutual Twitter account is active once or twice a day. Their Twitter account is used to promote news and answer questions from customers. Liberty Mutual also use their Twitter account to promote sponsorship activities and encouraging followers to attend social events.

State Farm populates their Twitter feed with posts daily, ranging from comments, questions, complaints, and re-tweets from other third party sources. The emphasis is on responding to customer queries. State Farm is more concerned with customer comments and feedback than Liberty Mutual and Progressive. State Farm shares a lot of content from their other social media sites through twitter, connecting their Facebook, YouTube and Flickr accounts.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Progressive | Liberty Mutual | State Farm |
| Twitter | ~7000 followers | ~2500 followers | ~30,000 followers |

###### YouTube

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Progressive | Liberty Mutual | State Farm |
| YouTube | ~2,000,000 followers | ~250,000 followers | ~3,000,000 followers |

YouTube is the third and final social media outlet researched in this paper. All three insurance companies again utilize YouTube as a connection tool to their customers.

Progressive don’t only use their YouTube account as a video player but also implement a quote app link and link to their other social media outlets. The site has adverts, promotions and visitor uploads. Progressive had 97 videos uploaded to their account at the time of research and the comments section on their YouTube channel is very active with over 400 comments.

Liberty Mutual has 31 videos uploaded to their YouTube account, providing both advertising and more in-depth information. Liberty Mutual does not update or maintain their

YouTube account frequently with only a hand full of comments on their account page.

State Farm has the most amount of content on their YouTube account, with over 180 videos at the time of research. State Farms videos range from adverts, promotion offers, to custom content. Fail Fridays is a popular video series that compares customer reasons for claiming insurance. State Farm also provides instructional videos to prevent accidents. Comments are extensive across all their videos and a find-an-agent app is available.

###### Research Paper Conclusion

Social media connections to customers are of huge importance to building a community around a product. The statistical analysis of three insurance firms provides evidence of such a statement. State Farm update their social media accounts more frequently than the other two firms as a result the community surrounding State Farm is larger and engages more with the company. State Farm makes it important to respond and interact with followers daily and update followers with relevant information regarding their industry and company.

###### Research Paper Connection

Although the topics in both research papers are very different, the ubiquitous nature of social media is the connection. Taking advantage of social media to connect fantasy sport gamers and allow them to share their information is easier said than done. In order to understand the best methods of engaging fantasy sport fans and encourage them to use social media as a platform to create and interact with a community is the problem.

The first paper reviewed states that fantasy sports gamers clearly consume information at a higher level than that of a normal spectator. Fantasy sports gamers gather more information regarding a sport through magazines, TV, radio, blogs and online. A part of making the transition to social media is by creating a community where user content is updated and fans can interact with one another, sharing information, tactics, statistics and analysis.

The second paper reviewed contains data and an analysis of social media communities that already exist. This data gives an insight in to how a social media community works.

State Farm take advantage of their social media presence more than the other two firms. The number of followers proves that maintaining a regular social media presence attracts followers. Having a Facebook page and Twitter account is essential to connecting with an online community. All three firms in the research paper use these social media outlets regularly to post comments and just as importantly to receive questions, input and criticism.

###### Gaps in Research Papers

After doing research external of this literary review I would like to draw attention to some gaps that I feel exist in both research papers. Although the connection between the two papers is very real and an outlet for fantasy sport gamer discussion can be managed in a social media platform, questions must be asked about the data analyzed.

The research paper by, Joris Drayer, Stephen L. Shapiro, Brendan Dwyer, Alan L. Morse, Joel White. **“The effects of fantasy football participation on NFL (National Football League) consumption: A qualitative analysis”** is a research paper about fantasy football in America and not sports globally, including hurling. Questions about a fantasy sports player consumption of information must be asked in order to get a complete view of the fantasy sport industry.

* Do all fantasy sports players consume more information about their sport than that of a normal fan?
* Do fantasy sports games accommodate gamer interaction?

The survey documented in the research paper reports on only 13 test users. The information could be incorrect or corrupted by such a small number of test users.

Kurt Komaromi, Scott Erickson. **“Using Social Media to Build Community”** researched the social communities surrounding three large insurance firms in America. The data gathered in this research paper is informative and formidable but questions still exist in the form below.

Can the social community of an insurance firm be relevant to that of a fantasy sport community?

* How do insurance customers differ from fantasy sports gamers?
* Have all forms of social media been researched?

###### Literature Review Conclusion

It appears that fantasy sports gamers may consume information and data of their sport on a different level to that of a normal fan. Fantasy sports fans follow a greater number of players and teams connected to their fantasy game. A platform to cater for an online community of gamers could exist to allow gamers to share information with fellow gamers. Fantasy gamers spend more time on mobile devices during games and between game weeks researching real life player and team data.

Fantasy players can still identify themselves normally with one team but can also extend their identification to a number of other teams during the season. Gamers however have a tendency to lose interest in their fantasy games if their fantasy team is performing poorly or their real life favorite team is performing well.

Social media communities flourish when content is updated regularly and interaction between community members is high. Building a social community takes many platforms through YouTube, Facebook and Twitter. Connecting social media outlets together such as linking videos on Twitter to videos on YouTube engages the community to interact within itself.

Having platforms high in content produced by community such as comments and questions creates a larger following. Users tend not to follow social media outlets that rarely post content. The insurance company with the smallest amount of content on social media platforms had the fewest number of followers. The insurance company that had the largest amount of content, videos, posts, tweets and applications had the largest number of followers. The connection between a maintained up to date social media presence directly relates to the number of followers in the community.

## HTTP Protocol Overview

Hypertext Transfer Protocol is a stateless application layer protocol for communicating between distributed systems (7). HTTP is specified by RFC 2616 (8).

HTTP is connectionless, stateless and media independent protocol. A client sends a request and server answers with a response. After that the connection is closed and communication is forgotten on both sides. Current version of HTTP is 1.1.

HTTP is using Uniform Resource Identifiers (9) for resource requests.

###### Generic URI format

URI = "http:" "//" host [ ":" port ] [ abs\_path [ "?" query ]]

Example

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BNgU-ZaF06w

###### HTTP request

A Request-line

Zero of more header fields ending with CRLF

An empty line ending with CRLF

A message body (optional)

Request Line generic syntax

Request-Line = Method SP Request-URI SP HTTP-Version CRLF

###### Request methods

* GET: asking server for a resource located at given URI
* HEAD: similar to GET request method, but only header is returned from server
* POST: asking to send a data in request body to server
* PUT: asking to replace a resource located at given URI with new data in request body
* DELETE: asking to delete a resource located at given URI
* CONNECT: asking to establish a tunnel to server identified by given URI
* OPTIONS: describes the communication options for resource at given URI
* TRACE: test the resource availability

###### HTTP Request Simple example

GET <http://www.itb.ie/> HTTP/1.1

User-Agent: Fiddler

Host: <www.itb.ie>

User-Agent and Host are some of many predefined header fields. Custom fields can be introduced as well. This request message doesn’t contain any message body.

###### HTTP response

A Status-line

Zero of more header fields ending with CRLF

An empty line ending with CRLF

A message body (optional)

Status Line generic syntax

Status-Line = HTTP-Version SP Status-Code SP Reason-Phrase CRLF

###### Status Code

It’s 3 digit integer. First digit defines the class of the status.

* 1xx : Informational
* 2xx : Success
* 3xx : Redirection
* 4xx : Client Error
* 5xx : Server Error

###### HTTP Response example:

HTTP/1.1 200 OK

Cache-Control: private

Content-Length: 14887

Content-Type: text/html

Server: Microsoft-IIS/7.5

Set-Cookie: ASPSESSIONIDQAADTRCR=KIIFFBMDCAOAICBNIDKKACIH; path=/

X-Powered-By: ASP.NET

Date: Sun, 05 Apr 2015 09:36:25 GMT

<!DOCTYPE html PUBLIC "-//W3C//DTD XHTML 1.0 Strict//EN" "<http://www.w3.org/TR/xhtml1/DTD/xhtml1-strict.dtd>">

<html xmlns="http://www.w3.org/1999/xhtml" xml:lang="en" lang="en">

Rest of the html omitted…

Example above is the response to <http://www.itb.ie> request. Response returned with status code 200 which indicates the success. After Status Line the various header fields follows. Then there is an empty line followed by message body. The message body contains actual html document of requested web page. Most of the html document is omitted in this example.

## Conclusion

All the reviews were useful in research towards the eventual project itself. The reviews were of both technical and observational variety. The reviews themselves gave us fresh impetus in working on the project as they seemed to back up the idea that social media in this form would be something people would be interested in. The HTTP research was obviously vital to the project also as the front end heavily relies on these concepts.

# Analysis and Design

## Introduction (Project Overview again)

## Use Cases + Diagrams + Wireframes

## Sequence diagrams (Activity diagrams or whatever)

## Class Diagrams Martin

## Deployment text, pictures + diagrams ) Martin

## Database design(tables and diagram) ) Martin

## And some other shit comes to mind later

## Conclusion david

# Implementation

## Introduction Martin and Michael

## Methodology (Prototyping) ) Martin

## Text and Pictures on Front-end parts (each page) David

## Comments how application developed from early prototypes to later version Martin and Michael

## Similar for Back-end, but much more technical ) Martin

## Conclusion david

# Testing and Evaluation

## Introduction david

## User Interface Tests michael

## Unit Tests ) Martin

## Integration Tests ) Martin

## Give it to some user tests david and michael

## Conclusion david

# Conclusions and Further Work

## Introduction michael

## Achievements david

## Personal gain (shit learned) all of us should write a bit

## Further work ( possible improvements ) Michael

## Conclusion david

### Project Proposal

### Project Diary

### Code Listing

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