

Business Plan

Executive Summary

Business name: RentTheKnowledge

Business location: Bucharest, Romania

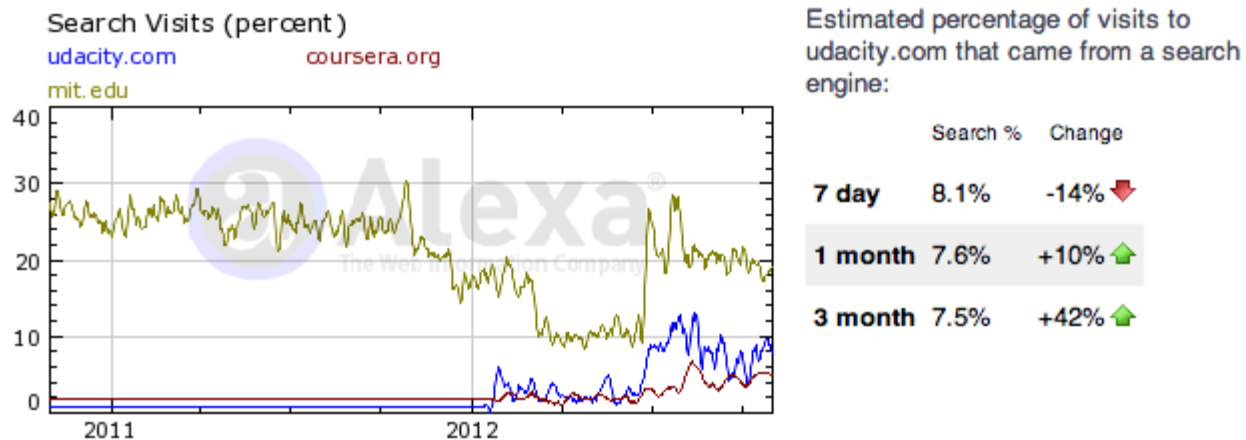
Product or service we sell:

eLearning **aggregator** with *reviews* and hard to find content, classified by *difficulty*, with user own level *auto-evaluation* and with a *roadmap* one has to follow in order to improve one's knowledge.

Opportunity & Purpose. We think the moment for our product is right, and would impact a vast majority of people aged between 18-24 (which have been shown to be the most interested in e-learning content, and the ones opened to new technology). Our purpose is to become the most used e-learning platform, as an intermediary between the existing and future e-learning platforms and worldwide users.

Growth rates for e-learning platforms. From accessing statistics [1] related to a successful e-learning platform, udacity.com, we've observed some key factors:

- 94% of the audience is out there for the content, not the forums
- The 1st and 2nd countries in traffic rank are Ghana and Morocco, so there is a big potential audience for e-learning content
- Estimated daily time on site: about 8-9 minutes
- **Important** from the below graph is that most of the visitors on udacity.com did not come from a search engine, but became loyal to the platform so they entered on this particular platform because they saw value in what it can offer. This offers a great deal of confidence that once you get the user to use your e-learning product, if it was a good experience, he will probably return and use it again.



Our product over competiton. Seeing that loyalty from the user is hard to get but once you do get it, it's not hard to keep it once the user can find what he finds for. What we do by aggregating e-learning content and centralizing all meta-information about them in one place would determine users to use it as an intermediary most of the time when looking to learn something new. It may be very hard to override the user's behavior of directly searching on a search engine for e-learning materials. We can overcome this difficulty by providing our users the best content aggregator, advanced content that would be hard to find directly through a search engine. Also, using a browser plugin to search directly in our aggregated e-learning material database would also help.

Objectives. Some of our objectives are:

- generate a lot of initial content from e-learning platforms like youtube (somewhere in there), coursera, udacity, vimeo (somewhere in there again) etc.
- have all the crawled data sorted out, by exploiting as much as we can the meta-data from videos, to be able so classify them by difficulty
- gather 100,000 unique visitors in U.S. and 500,000 worldwide
- create an interface and an API for e-learning platforms to use to simplify our work

Keys to Success. No doubt about the fact that the key to success is to offer the user the feel that it can trust our platform to help him/her improve ones skills, so that one can find it valuable enough to use it. This means we need to:

- offer vast content
- suggest the user some successful roads to follow in order to improve ones skills
- be reliable, no extended down times

E-learning keyword searched in **Google search engine** [2]:

Keyword	Competition	Global Monthly Searches	Local Monthly Searches
e-learning	Low	2,740,000	368,000

Company overview

Founding Members & Ownership

Andrei-Niculescu Petre

- 3rd year student in Computer Science at Politehnica Bucharest
- programmer at social media startup, uberVU, working with both front-end javascript and django

Gavrila Alexandru

- Background in Mathematics-Informatics high school (Gheorghe Sincai), Managerial Informatics at the Romanian American University.
- Working history : 2 year stable job at BetBrain Software. Advanced from Customer Support, through Junior Java Developer to Front End Javascript Developer.

Status

The project is still in its infancy. The goal at the moment is to get our idea across and attract open minded visionaries that can help us make it a reality. (Proof of concept state)

No legal details related to the firm.

Product and services

Technical overview and features

- Description of the product / service
 - Our platform aggregates courses, tutorials, articles and presentations from various sources all over the internet and serves them to the end user in a single place according to his preferences / interests / level.
 - The main goal of our product is to target your interests accurately and offer you the ideal content and references to help you.
 - We offer a powerful self-assessment tool that gives you a strong idea about your level of knowledge in your field and recommends the ideal starting point and or route to reach your goal.
- Main characteristics
 - We facilitate the user's access to vast amounts of knowledge with the help of web crawlers and intelligent usage of pre-compiled lists of suggestions from the different public search engines.
 - Lightweight and easy to use application from the user's perspective. All they have to do to get the desired result is to fill out a simple interest form and take an optional level assessment quiz and they will be served with the content they are interested in.

- Main innovation
 - Educational roadmapping best suited for your individual needs.
- Any details relevant in order to distinguish the product
 - We offer informational plans (roadmaps) aggregated from all over the internet as opposed to other competitors who build their own knowledge databases but oversee certain aspects.
- Gamification concept
 - Reward the user with badges and posts on social platforms and on our platform's account with something similar to "Completed achievement Learn C pointers, 7/10 steps completed towards becoming an advanced C programmer."

Competitive advantages

State of the art competitors. There are some similar products in the sense of e-learning offerings, like Coursera, Udacity, edX, MIT OCW, Khan Academy etc.

Merging all competitors together is a plus. There are many e-learning platforms, but which don't *directly interact* with each other, so our product would aggregate all e-learning content and offer a common interface for reviews and comments of the courses. This way one can compare one course from Stanford with one dealing with a similar subject, but from MIT. Furthermore, the courses would each have reviews/comments from users, so you'd know which one is better.

Roadmap on learning something new. Doing a simple search on Google does not guarantee one he will ever discover the content X presented by Y. But once the user has been directed towards a beginner level on learning how to program Java for example, he may feel the need for a follow-up on said topic. Our product would offer a roadmap which the user should follow to reach the next stage.

Access hard to find materials. Using a roadmap a user has to follow to reach the next *mastery* level, he will be presented different search results, where some search results could be from University of Arizona, course CS123. Particular results which are hard to access by random search could be simplified by our filtering search, and using a difficulty level, tags, authors and other meta-information.

Proprietary rights

We do not own the rights to the materials to which we link. We simply point the users in the right direction and give credit where credit is due (original poster, creator).

Production challenges

The internet is one big mess full of information. As with all aggregator type products, the issue of component intercompatibility arises. This information is often scattered all over the place without any real order or links between relevant pieces of information.

Seeing as we aim to fix this, the real problem of making all information interoperable must be solved. We must first define a strict informational model that dictates what is and what is not considered valid or useful data. The next logical step consists in building a database with information validated by our model.

By far the hardest part is to collect information from totally different sources and turn it into a uniform set of data that the model knows how to interpret. How the data is structured around the internet would be very easy to sort out if they would all implement a common interface (standard) we could then use.

Market and industry analysis

Opportunity

At the moment, we would be the only ones on the market to offer such features. Some video aggregators exist from more than 6 years [3], but don't offer e-learning material exclusively. The first ones on a market set the trend and dictate the rules. We would have the rare opportunity to break ground and to innovate something that could alter the way we study in the future.

Barriers to entry & competition

Competition is tough. It will be rather hard to overcome the popularity that current e-learning platforms have gained. To do so, we will have to have a very light and intuitive platform design, with a lot of content for the user to search for.

Economies of scale. Re-building our platform idea by a competitor would be hard to do, primarily because of engineering challenges one has to face.

Agreements with suppliers. We can ensure a steady flow of new information into our system by collaborating with specialised sites. If we get some of them to publish their information in a more orderly fashion, a template proposed by us let's say, or having them publish their data via our application by means of an API, our job of collecting it would become a lot easier.

Capital requirements. For servers to support user requests and advertising our product, but no extra big investment for a proof of concept phase.

References

[1] <http://www.alexa.com/siteinfo/udacity.com>

[2] https://adwords.google.com/o/Targeting/Explorer?__c=1000000000&__u=1000000000&ideaRequestType=KEYWORD_IDEAS

[3] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Video_aggregator