

SYSTEMS
PROPOSAL

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Summary of Proposed Entity

This organization will look at tackling the gap in health literacy among non-english speaking immigrants through visual communication. This will be done not only through the direct operations of the non-profit, but also through the designed system and partnerships which is a functional necessity. In an attempt to solidify operations as a derivative of values, mission and goals rather than one under the influence of driving revenue, the proposed entity will establish itself as a non-profit organization. It will require professionals with varying areas of expertise such as communications, visual design, linguistics, health-care and finance to be contributing and working stakeholders. Looking to start within the community surrounding the Greater Toronto Area due to a high portion of the population identifying as immigrants, we hope to move across Canada to other major hot spots for international migration. Through integrating the product of visual communication within our education system, we can not only reach the parents of these children, but we can also establish generational progression and effects. This will be carried out mostly in elementary, but extending up to having effects in secondary and post-secondary as these parents are a large portion of our demographic. The purpose behind the formulation of the organization is due to the misinformation of the knowledge surrounding the resources as well as the differentiation of knowledge around recognizing problems and knowing exactly how to seek help. Establishing an equitable standard of knowledge surrounding this industry and facilitating the accessibility of the industry helps to ensure not just a surface level change, but a foundational shift.

The Problem

Health Literacy is defined as the knowledge surrounding the awareness and use cases of healthcare resources, as well as the knowledge surrounding identifying health issues and obtaining treatment for those issues. Unfortunately, there are a few components which act as roadblocks to preventing equitable possession and consumption of this knowledge among immigrants who don't speak English. This is something which is a human right and a necessity for well-being, although due to various cultural backgrounds, language barriers and varying education levels, it is also something not made readily available to all Canadians, specifically non-anglophone immigrants (Simich, 2009). When researching and analyzing the causes and effects that have contributed to this situation, one of the largest barriers that physicians identified was communications with patients (Papic, Malak, & Rosenberg, 2012). The extent of this problem runs deep, as without this essential knowledge, it is very hard for non-English speaking immigrants to obtain the services they need. Some even have been found to resort to transnational healthcare options, returning to their country of origin seeking the help they need (Wang & Kwak, 2015). With a large amount of immigrants having a higher risk of dealing with health issues, such as mental illnesses, due to background experiences and immigration processes, it is crucial that the accessibility of this information is addressed (Simich, 2009).

Discussing the problem further with Ana Miguel, a Manager at Citizenship and Immigration Canada for over 35 years, I was able to further identify and solidify the issue. She said that linguistics and literacy is a large barrier for the immigrants and refugees with which she has worked (Miguel). Ana worked originally as an ESL Teacher for nine years as apart of the Toronto Board of Education, then worked for the government directly. First in settlement, and now part of the refugee classification and selection process. She outlined that there are various settlement programs that offer help to refugees in getting rooted, finding work, and becoming financially stable, but there are still other barriers in the background of education and knowledge surrounding healthcare and identifying health issues (Miguel). This is especially true when it comes to mental health (Miguel).

The Solution

This organization will be creating multiple products which use visual communication to break down language barriers. It will effectively translate knowledge surrounding our healthcare system, services offered, how to identify illnesses and health issues, and where to start seeking assistance. Although the products itself are important, the system which has been designed to surround the products is just as crucial, using them in a calculated and optimized way for maximized benefit among the target audience.

The product itself is the tool which aims to simplify the information through pictographs, illustrations and infographics. This will be executed primarily in the form of a children's picture book. The execution allows for a compelling narrative to work effectively to draw the participant in and keep them engaged for an extended amount of time. It also allows for the oversimplification of a narrative, of the presentation and even of the information portrayed without coming across as condescending or demeaning towards the viewer. This story book will

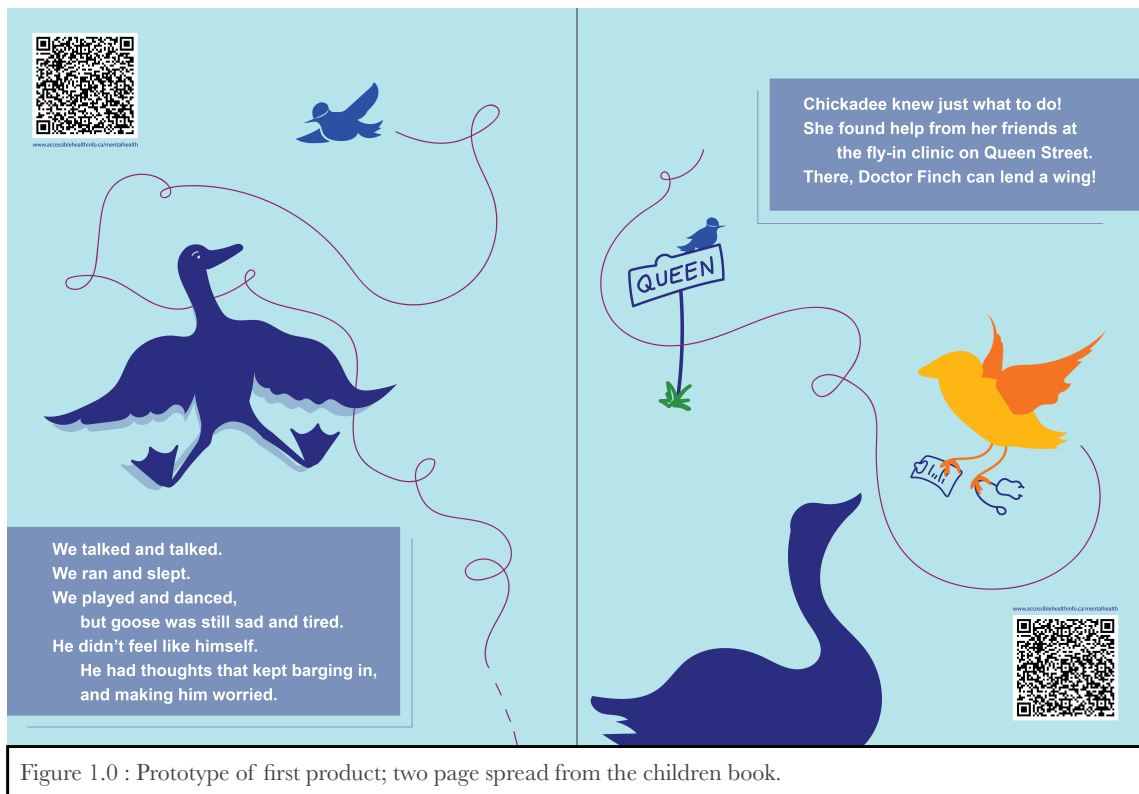


Figure 1.0 : Prototype of first product; two page spread from the children book.

offer an intriguing storyline regarding a young character who is tasked with identifying a health

issue within a friend and helping them find the necessary healthcare services throughout the city. The journey of the protagonist will take the audience through the proper steps needed for these problems to be solved on a high level. It will also use familiar landmarks and other identifiers mainly from the City of Toronto and the Greater Toronto Area to increase relatability and therefore verification and trust. The experience of this product and storyline helps the audience become familiar with the process on a high-level, providing an introductory route of navigation surrounding basic healthcare problems and our system.

The second aspect to the product, which is linked more clearly through the design system surrounding it, is a digital asset for adults which outline the same storyline, information, and pain points. This is also presented visually but contains illustrations and infographics which are more detailed and are accompanied by a higher level of information. This assists in guiding the user towards identifications tips and systems navigation as well. The digital execution is directly connected with the analog storybook, as on each page it has a scan-able QR code along with a reference link which leads to the corresponding digital asset. Whichever issue or problem is being dealt with at that point in the story is the exact solution that will be presented through the digital-visual execution.

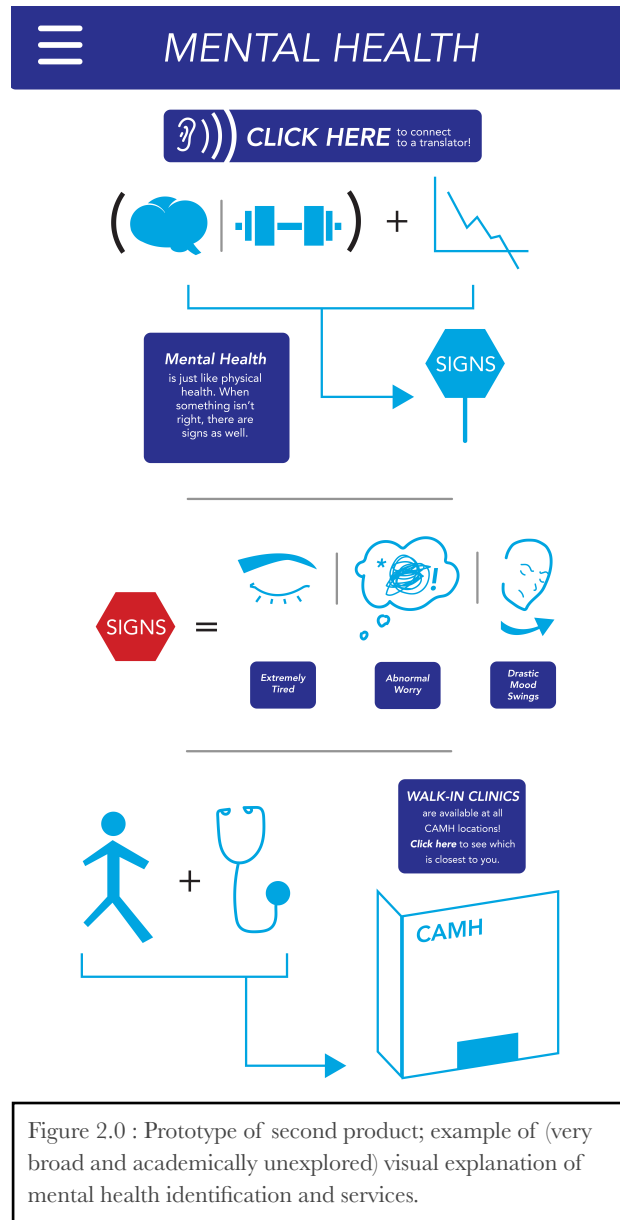


Figure 2.0 : Prototype of second product; example of (very broad and academically unexplored) visual explanation of mental health identification and services.

Finally, the custom designed system which surrounds these products not only enhances their primary use cases, but it also ensures that these products can contribute towards a generational shift in processes. The physical children’s book was created with the intent to be used within the elementary education system throughout the expanding city area, exposing young learners to this information at an early age. The beginning of the system map starts here, as we pair with the elementary education system, this book would be worked into a mandatory module as part of the curriculum. It would be first delivered to students through an in-class reading guided by the

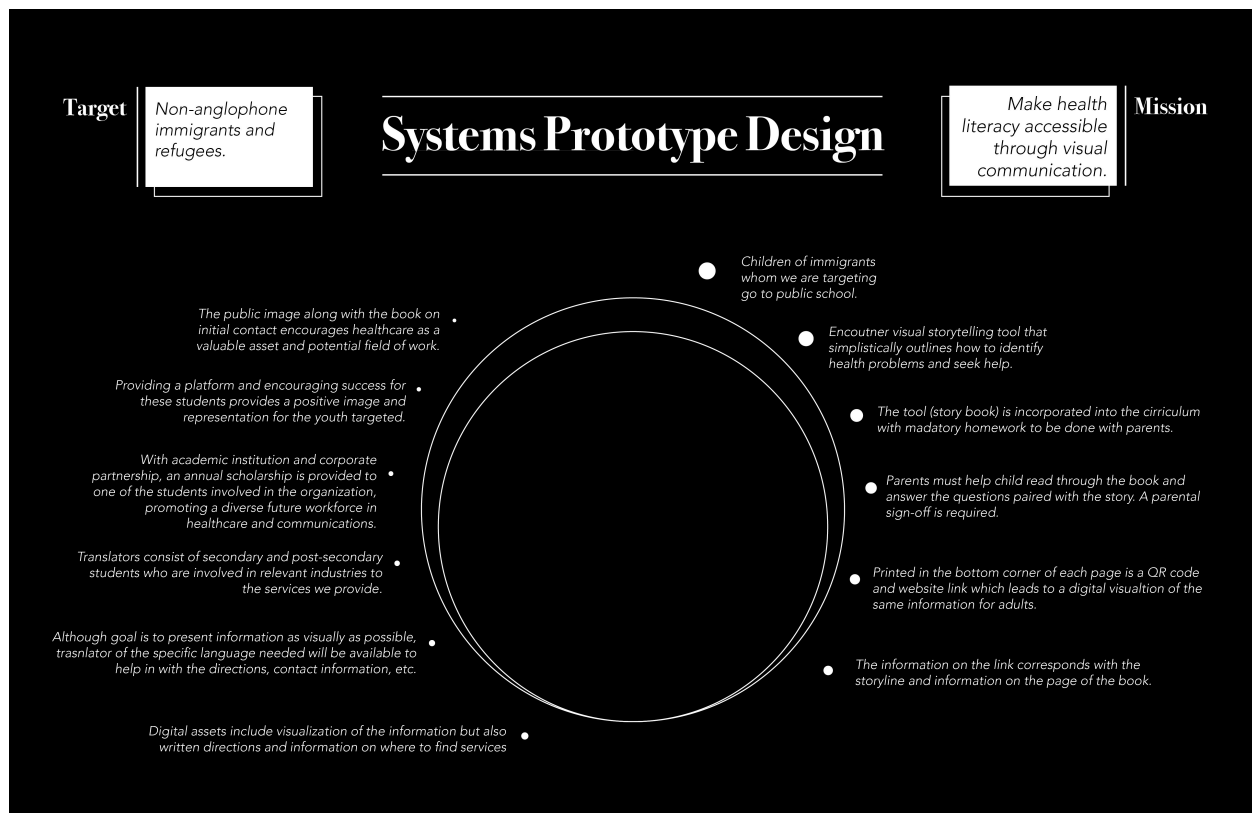


Figure 3.0 : Prototype of business systems design.

educator, walking them through the narrative. This is essentially guiding them through the information of identifying health problems, and finding services they might need to assist in the recovery. Then, the students will be required to take the book home for homework and answer a series of questions. This is how we engage the parents of the children, some of which will contain our target market of non-anglophone immigrants. A requirement of the homework is to have the parents help with another read-through of the book and the answering of the questions which keep the reader engaged and comprehensive throughout the narrative.

This engages our target audience as well with a simplified and visual representation of the information without approaching them in a way that can be seen as demeaning. As we capture their attention, we have integrated our second product as a second point of contact with this audience. A link as well as a QR code is attached at the bottom corner of each two page spread which leads to the digital and slightly more dense version of a visual presentation of the same information. The difference is that this will be executed in a manor directed to adults rather than to children and will contain actual references to programs, services or institutions which help with that specific problem. While they are engaging with this digital product, participants will potentially require translators to optimize the navigation of the actionable data and directions despite the importance placed on the visually communicative aspect. This will be an available option and provided to the participants through a pairing with a secondary or post-secondary student who speaks the same language as the participant. These will be volunteers and employees who are required to either be enrolled in or applying to post-secondary programs of relation to the tasks at hand. This includes industries and areas of study such as communications, education, linguistics, health systems, health sciences, political sciences, international relations, or any others that draw relations not only to the task at hand, but also to the larger goal of the organization and system in which it functions.

Involving students from these various educational backgrounds and also from the pool of the cultural majority in new Canadian immigrants not only promotes interest in the industry, but is also solidifies their presence in related future work and education. To enhance this, we have worked into the system design, the goal of pairing with numerous post-secondary institutions and private corporations to provide a scholarship to which our volunteers and employees can apply. This scholarship is designed to encourage the interest in the industry among those with various cultural backgrounds, and to ensure they stay within the industry and build a generational path for others who are similar.

Mission

We are striving to bring a standard level of health-care literacy to all Canadians who lack the English skills and educational background to have sourced this themselves. It's not just services, or a product that we are looking to offer to translate this information, rather we are

looking at setting up a generational and systemic shift within our combined health-care and education structure. Through bringing accessible information as a requirement to our integrated communication and promoting further post-secondary education among a diverse pool, our design should work in a circular fashion and feedback into itself. Providing opportunities for those in need and supporting them leads to passion and appreciation that helps us to continue giving back to the community and being able to continuously optimally reshape its environment.

Organizational Structure

Our organization will operate as a government and privately funded non-profit, reinvesting any revenue surplus back into the operations of the business. We are relying on corporate sponsorships and government grants for funding for labour as we aim to provide competitive wages for our employees. This can evidently give us an advantage in being able to obtain skilled talent. Through our aimed partnerships with post-secondary educational institutions, we not only aim to provide a scholarship to which our student employees can apply, but also to keep the benefits of academic expertise in consulting as well as access to research resources. Setting up the structure as such was done with a strategy in mind for maintaining the mission as well as preventing a shift in the product, services and solution provided. Having stakeholders that see this operation as an investment in our community and society rather than a short-term revenue generating investment helps to relieve payout pressure and therefore allows the system to function solely with the original benefits in mind. In turn, we are able to focus better on our target audience rather than the profits we would be generating for investors.

Beneficiaries and Impact

The primary beneficiary of our designed system and products will be the families of non-english speaking immigrants who take place and engage with our tools and products. It directly affects the children of the families first as they are the first point of contact within the elementary school system. Consequently, the parents and siblings benefit from this contact as they are not only provided with an accessible route to obtaining health-care information, but they are able to use this information immediately to ensure the safety and health of the family. This extends

beyond the immediate family as well. They are likely to pass this knowledge onto other family and friends in the same way most people are likely to pass information of a great recipe onto the ones who they care about. This extension provides us with the ability to have a wide reach and effect among our primary beneficiaries as we are able to use the trust system, which most of these immigrants rely on prior to obtaining health care knowledge, to our advantage.

Our secondary beneficiary would reach to the students who would be working and volunteering with us to provide assistance and translation services to the target audience. As we provide them with experience in the industry which they are considering entering, and a chance at obtaining funding for their education, they are able to obtain a solid foundation and support system from our organization upon workforce entry. An effectual benefit of this happens to be inspiration and reassurance towards their work and contributions, allowing us to contribute emotionally as well to their future success.

Finally, our third portion of beneficiaries includes our financial and labour backing stake holders. As this system rolls into effect, we will start to see a consequential ripple into our healthcare system among the patients and the care givers. As patients become increasingly informed around health issues, systems and navigation, that will relieve pressure from the healthcare organizations and workers within them. Financial stakeholders will see community and societal returns on the investments that they input and labour providing stakeholders will be able to see visible relief and an increase in efficiency among operations in their industry.

Challenges

One of the major challenges this organization faces is the dependence it has on the on the relationships with both private and public organizations, especially the dependency on collaboration with the school board. The politics of changing the curriculum in the publicly funded education system is incredibly difficult and needs a significant amount of backing to do so. This being said, if partnerships with post-secondary institutions were established first through research projects, it would help back the viability and credibility of the proposed partnership. Furthermore, if government funding were to be obtained as well through social improvement grants, the benefits of the our project implementation would be undeniable. This system does

rely on an intricate interconnection of relationships, but by strategically establishing certain relationships first, we are able to ensure successful integration.

Another potential challenge would be the the development of the product itself in terms of optimization of accessibility. As this product attempts to break language barriers, I am looking for it to be as effective as possible. The amount of time and resources that would have to be put into its production would be astronomical and potentially always on-going. Not only would visual designers become involved, but we would need communications specialists, linguistics professionals, accessibility experts and consequently a number of research projects and market testing. The project management aspect of this will be a large job requiring assistance on many levels, but again, as we build partnerships and funding we can scale accordingly.

A third challenge is the accessibility that our target audience has to both internet and digital devices that navigate the internet. When speaking with Ana Miguel, she mentioned this as a major barrier, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, as points of contact was made extremely difficult for these refugees. She outlined that telephone operations and measures were put in place to provide advice in regards to access to healthcare services, but often due to multiple connections and translation, it was not very efficient (Miguel). Here, we can develop a better auditory plan of breaking down the language barrier, possibly with help of both the student translators and the integration of our physical visual representation in the children's book.

Sustainability

We are looking to provide sustainability on many levels through this system design. Social sustainability is the primary goal as well as the reason behind the conception of the product. As we have identified a clear problem within the lack of structure and services available for immigrants who do not have English abilities, this solution not only fixes the derivative of the problem, but it attacks it right at the roots. The product is used in such a way that it promotes healthcare education amongst the targeted audience and amongst their family members, therefore providing awareness and knowledge to be used in a generational trickle effect. Presenting this information to the younger generation of immigrants also places value upon these issues at an early age when they are developing these values, morals and perceptions of how the world works. Building a generational value sets up more action for the future and a deeper reach

into the personal network of that individual. Another sustainable aspect of the product is the accessibility of its delivery. The book as delivered through the public school board is made accessible to all children through the right to a free education, and therefore to their families as well. This is also the main method of delivery of the digital tool to the parents of the children, allowing the digital tool to not only be accessible, but ensure that the product reaches the target for which it was intended.

When looking at the culture, and various cultures, that are intertwined and surrounded by the implementation of this system, we can see an enormous potential for impact. One of the main areas where we plan to impact the culture surrounding immigrants involved in Canadian healthcare is through the student employee and volunteer program. This is the program that offers volunteer and paid positions to secondary and post-secondary bi-lingual students that are either currently enrolled in a related program or looking at going into a healthcare and communication related program. This program also provides them with the chance to enter for our annual scholarship, which is provided for students enrolled in any related program. This was designed to help the efficiency and effectiveness of the product of course, but it was also designed with the purpose of promoting and supporting diverse and immigrant related workers in the industry of healthcare and communications. This aims to enable the future generation of the labour force within this industry, and through placing a diverse image of workers in positions of power and high-achievement, it provides visual examples for those of the same background that are looking to do the same. Founder and CEO of Slack, Stewart Butterfield mentioned this method of inspiring and effectually creating change in an interview that greatly changed my view on business systems design. Though his interview with FORA, Butterfield mentioned that it is not simply enough to employ diverse workers that are already in the industry. When that is done, one is just shifting the same pool of employees around the industry and not actually improving on its overall diversity. (FORA.tv, 2016). Rather, we have to empower young professionals and students of colour to join these industries and coach them into places of success, which will ultimately create a new image for other diverse young professionals and students to do the same. (FORA.tv, 2016). Once a child sees someone that they resonate with in a position of power, they too believe they can achieve the same thing.

When it comes to sustainability relating to environmental preservation and impact, the mass execution of the product contributes in a production-related aspect. As the largest part of

the product execution is to be carried out digitally, it reduces and minimizes the need for physical printing and wasted resources that would be seen with similar executions in the format of pamphlets, booklets or other disposables executions of portraying information. The aspect of our product that is physical in the form of a children's book is meant to be reusable and not just a one time use execution of information communication. By providing reusable resources, it allows the system to save money, a significance of the information to be established through annual use, and of course, the reduction of wasted resources.

Financially, the non-profit organization relies on two major sources of income; government grants and private corporation funding. Through these avenues of funding, we can start to scale and employ the experts we would need in order to make this system and product possible. In order to jump-start the approval for this kind of funding, we need to first partner with academic professionals. Through this we can establish research papers that support and prove why this system and product is needed and how it would be beneficial. Establishing this would assist significantly in providing a sense of value when submitting proposals to both government funding agencies and private organizations. As we do this, and get the initial seed funding we need, we can then hire more industry professionals that will help to fine tune, and optimize the product. This will provide a greater value in the eyes of investors, therefore driving up the likeliness of continual funding. Establishing this circular financial strategy, as well as using performance driven metrics of our system and product to provide value to the investors and stakeholders, helps to ensure the longevity and sustainability of our revenue. Investing any excess revenue back into the organization and using it to see how we can scale and optimize the product while targeting more of the audience helps to ensure the functionality and maintain the large scale goals as well.

Externally, the investment made by both corporate and government parties actually helps to create a financially sustainable model for our healthcare system as well. Through plotting resources towards the education of this audience in reference to the proper identification and use of our healthcare system, it will consequently prevent instances of long term care and intensive care in hospitals. This in turn saves money for the healthcare system in the long run. Solving this problem creates a preventative measure to be set in place, which tends to cost less than funding reactionary measures and services for individuals that are not able to use or identify problems and services until it is too late.

Conclusion and Next Steps

Our non-profit organization contains two separate products which work in unison to provide an education of healthcare issues and the healthcare system to immigrants which usually do not have access to this information through language barriers. The system surrounding the products is crucial to its function as well as to the lasting generational shift in the industry and eradication of the problem. Tackling this problem within the greater area surrounding the metropolis of Toronto is our first large goal, but we hope to be able to implement this into all of the major cities across Canada which are hot spots for immigrants and refugees. This can be made possible initially through establishing core research around not only the problem, but also the solution. We need to prove that eradicating this language barrier with visual tools will be effective, and that the system designed to directly target these individuals will be successful in doing so. Once this is established, our unique selling proposition of direct and efficient targeting, accessibility and fluid communication can help set us apart from the other players in the industry.

Setting us apart in this way can help us to get the funding we need, and drive interest among skilled industry professionals. This would help in being able to drive talent towards our organization and make it a desirable place to work with a respectable mission in place. Immediate next steps would include the research as mentioned, but also the collaboration of communications, healthcare, digital development and creative professionals in order to build a fully feasible and working prototype which we can test. With our goals set clear and our hearts on our sleeves, we aim to attract like-minded and driven individuals dedicated to making a difference which can be perceived over generations to come.

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