



NerdHerdr

1. Team Details

- a. The team will meet Sunday nights 5-8 and Tuesdays 5-7
- b. Alexis Miller
 - Game Design Major, Entrepreneurship Minor
 - Skills: Coding (HTML, CSS, Javascript, Ruby, C++), Unity3d, Adobe, Video
 - Strengths: Technical, Design
 - Group Role: Technical Developer
- c. Veronica (Tess) Wu
 - Business Administration major, Web Technologies and Applications minor
 - Skills: Coding (HTML, CSS, basic Javascript), Adobe InDesign and Photoshop
 - Strengths: graphics, web, and print design background
 - Group Role: Designer
- d. Tyler Anne Isaman
 - Studying linguistics, East Asian languages and cultures, Computer Science, and Web Development.
 - Skills: Coding (HTML, CSS, jQuery, Javascript, objective-C, C++, Java, Python), Unity3d, Adobe suite, App Development (X-code).
 - Strengths: Technical and technical design development
 - Group Role: Research and Development
- e. Natalie Morin
 - Studying Print and Digital Journalism and Web Development.
 - Skills: HTML & CSS, design (adobe suite), PHP, social media coordination, outreach, writing.
 - Strengths: Content development, marketing
 - Group Role: Research and Marketing
- f. Taylor Dean
 - Major- Business Admin. with focus in Finance and ITP Minor - Innovation: The Digital Entrepreneur.
 - Basic HTML and CSS (ITP-104 in addition to high school courses. Skilled in Photoshop, Illustrator, InDesign and graphic design (Imaging/Design courses)
 - Strengths: Business, Art

- Group Role: Business Development

2. Project Description and Stakeholder Information

- NerdHerdr is an innovative web site where USC students/alumni with relevant skills (ex: coding, video, graphics, design, marketing, translation) can connect with USC start-ups looking for aid on their projects.
- The product connects talent-seeking USC startups with USC students eager to gain more real-world exposure to expand their resumes/portfolios. All startups seek free talent and NerdHerdr connects that talent to these startups. Students with graphics, business, and technical skills can use this site to search for gigs posted by start-up companies with challenging jobs students can take on to create portfolio pieces.
- NerdHerdr is for USC students/alumni on startup teams and USC students/Alumni with relevant skills. Students with relevant skills are our most important users because they are the scarce commodity in this market.
- Potential risks NerdHerdr might encounter are:
 - Not enough start-ups will request USC talent.
 - Students might accept work but not complete it on time or to satisfaction of the startups who hired them.
 - Poor student work ethic might hurt the NerdHerdr and USC brands.
 - Potential mismatching of student talent to start-up needs

The worst thing that could happen is students slacking off on work because of little or no compensation and the start-ups looking elsewhere for help on their projects because they have come to expect low-quality work from USC students.

- The success of this product will be defined by the popularity of the app, as well as its reliability. Students and startups must trust that they will receive quality service and be able to rely those they connect with through Nerdherdr.
 - Startups might not trust the quality of the work, students might not trust the quality of the startups. This would prevent traction on the site.
 - Students aren't necessarily paid, so they might not meet deadlines.
 - Startups might not follow through with recommendations after services have been submitted.

f. Constraints

- Time:** Our group has only one semester to plan and design NerdHerdr, so we will be deeply constrained with what we can do. Because of this, we have decided to limit the scope of NerdHerdr just to USC in the hopes of being able to complete a fuller and more thought out project.
- Development experience:** Though our group has background in different technical skills, we don't have a significant amount of experience implementing the kind of programming that the app would need to function at its best capacity. We also won't be able to add all of the bells and whistles that an app or more experience programmer could develop (or even envision).
- Cost:** Since we will not be receiving compensation, our product cannot cost more than the free labor that we will put into it.

3. Competition Research

a. Our competitors include:

- i) Gust: website connecting startups and angel investors
- ii) Viterbi Startup Garage (website): An accelerator program where students are provided with a network of investors and Viterbi experts in addition to work-space and funding for tech-based start-ups.
- iii) The USC facebook group page “Jobs and Internships,” which has over 10,000 members.
- iv) Amplify LA: a web based LA startup accelerator and entrepreneurial campus that helps startups grow.
- v) Equinox: Connects entrepreneurs and LA students to help innovators and their respective startup projects.

b. Competitor style:

- i) Gust is funding based. Style is very clearly geared towards two types of users: investors and startups. Also has search functions for location and type of startup, as well as trends tracking what kind of insights other investment experts have for new investors.
- ii) The Viterbi Startup Garage is a 12-week program open to all USC students that specifically targets Viterbi students to assist them with their ventures. It provides access to Viterbi staff, investors, \$20,000 for %4 equity, and summer work space.
- iii) The “Jobs and Internships” page of Facebook is limited to USC students and acts as messageboard for opening and employment news.
- iv) Amplify helps startups grow by providing seed funding, mentorship, resources and access to additional capital. It’s more focused on the company itself helping other startups rather than bringing other people in.
- v) At Equinox, entrepreneurs, and current students from USC, UCLA, and CalTech connect at a cross-functional event held by Equinox to offer their expertise in marketing, design, finance, and engineering.

c. Our product vs. competition

Our product seems to be very unique compared to other existing competitors as it has a niche user base (USC startups and USC students connecting).

Additionally, the focus is less on finding funding/seed money or investing for the startups and more on the services/time that students can lend.

4. Preliminary Research Plan

a. Key groups of potential users:

- i) Students: Students would log on to NerdHerdr and offer talent to USC startups, making them an essential aspect of the web site’s success. Students, who are looking to build up their resumes, can engage startups to offer their expertise and talent. Entrepreneurial students looking to start their own companies could also use this web site to check current startups and see if their idea has been already

implemented.

ii) Startups: Startups would use NerdHerdr to find students who will to donate time and talent to their cause. NerdHerdr is beneficial to startups, because they can accomplish needed tasks by outsourcing services to students, who need to bolster their resumes. Startups can offer monetary compensation, or can look for free talent by offering recommendations or LinkedIn referrals.

iii) Alumni: Not only would NerdHerdr be able to connect students and startups, it would also serve to inform alumni on current startups around campus. A database of current USC startups would be created on NerdHerdr, allowing alumni to connect with USC startups and stay informed on USC entrepreneurialism.

b. Potential questions for:

i) Students:

- What type of information would you feel comfortable posting online for startups to see?
- Would you be comfortable allowing potential employers to see your Facebook and LinkedIn profiles?
- How would you want potential employers to contact you? Email? Facebook?
- Would you rather create a profile or just contact the startup directly?

ii) Startups:

- What type of information would you like about students before you hire them to work with you?
- Would you be willing to pay via recommendations and social media promotion (LinkedIn recommendations) of that person's skills?
- How long would you like deadlines for projects to be on average? Are you looking for short or long-term helps?
- What are the most common services your company needs help with?

iii) Alumni:

- How would you like a directory of USC startups to be organized? Would you prefer them to be organized by industry, class standing or funding?
- Do you think you would use a product like this?