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## What is Capitol Quest?

Capitol Quest is a multiplayer mobile app game that allows users to assume the role of local politicians and gain power through strategic play against other real users. Players pass bills, make backroom deals, gain political capital points and advance to the top. Capitol Quest is based on current events in the North Carolina General Assembly.

## What is your position in the market?

We predict young adults ages 18-23 to be the most interested in downloading Capitol Quest. When we surveyed more than 50 individuals in this age group, we found that more than half of people in this age range were likely to download Capitol Quest . There is evidence that this game could be successful centered around other states. Nationally, 77% of this target age group download apps on their mobile devices, and they are a large share of the audiences for very successful political TV shows such as House of Cards, West Wing, The Colbert Report and The Daily Show. In our survey, we found that people who reported that they watched these TV shows were the most likely to say they wanted to explore this game focused on the local, state level. We plan on Capitol Quest fulfilling a largely entertainment role; however, users will also gain knowledge on local government proceedings and local issues as they work through the game.

## Who are the competitors?

There are many online government simulation games already in the market. All of the recreational political games that currently exist focus on accumulating power in different ways than Capitol Quest to achieve a variety of goals. Many of the games simulate political campaigns where users are political candidates running for the leader of a country. Other games simulate the interactions with other countries, either fictional or real, and a few focus on the national level. None of the games currently in the market simulate the local government.

Government in Action, a online simulation game sponsored by textbook publisher Prentice Hall, is the most similar to Capitol Quest. Users can pass bills by interacting with their classmates. However, this game is solely dedicated to educational purposes in classrooms. The users cannot interact with other users and there are not defined levels. Government in Action only allows for users to learn the process of the general legislature; however, the game does not provide the local context by being directly linked to a specific state legislature.

## How much does it cost to produce and launch?

Applications for smart phones and tablets range in development cost based on the purpose of the app and number of features included within the app. After talking with app developers about our concept for a strategy, we were able to create a basic formula for finding our projected development cost. A strong creative developer that would be able to work on a gaming venture like Capitol Quest would charge \$75.00 per hour for development. We have projected around 400 hours of development, at a rate of \$75.00 per hour to cost us \$30,000 just to get the game up and functioning. Our website will cost \$2,000 to create and will not be difficult to maintain as we move forward with our idea. Given each cost, we are looking at a total startup cost of \$32,000.00 for getting the game off the ground.

## **Maintain and Operate?**

Capitol Quest will need backend support and a team to operate and update the game on a regular basis. We do not expect to have to pay a large amount to an experienced tech support team, but we will have a small tech support team working for Capitol Quest. Our small team will consist of founders and interns that we will hire from nearby universities and colleges. Internships will be paid and unpaid so we can get a plethora of team support and differing skill levels. Our Interns are needed to monitor the general assembly and introduce current bills and topics into the game weekly. As our game grows in popularity, it is possible that our team will also need to be built out, but in the early stages of operation this is the most cost effective plan.

## How will we make money?

Capital Quest utilizes a Freemium Business model, which offers a Lite and Premium Version. The Lite Version is free for the user to download and allows the user to play and explore every aspect of the game. However, the user is limited to only playing against the computer and the user's progress in the game is also limited to a week before he or she must start back from the beginning.

The Premium version costs \$1.99 and is available for download and upgrade at any point in time during the user's Lite Version experience. With this version users can pick a political world based on who is playing in their geographical area, they can find a political world that already exists with friends or they can create a new political world. The Premium version allows for users to interact with others on the game and create a mass multiplayer community.

We will generate revenue and eventually profit from our Premium downloads and upgrades, as well as our in app purchases. We plan to compensate for our costs with approximately 16,000 downloads and then make a profit with in app purchases such as custom avatar features and snacks. Our in app purchases will vary in cost based on the purpose of the purchase, but the average cost of an in app purchase will be \$0.50.

## **Evolution of the prototype**

The idea for a multi-player online game began as an educational supplement for middle and high school classrooms. We saw a possibility for a subscription-based service that would simulate legislative processes like passing bills and interacting with other congressional members. Through a computer game delivered to schools and/or school systems, it would have been a supplement to classroom learning through use of technology (computers or mobile.) Unfortunately, the market was already taken, so it was time to switch gears. After a survey that was sent out to survey interest in our idea, we discovered by talking with subjects that there is an enormous amount of hype around politically affiliated shows, especially those that are about navigating the legislative system through making secret deals.

### The board game

In order to create the flow of the game – a logical progression from the start of the game to the end – we experimented with creating a board game. The way to win the board game would be to successfully be the first to pass a bill. At the beginning, a player would create their platform and choose their district for the duration of game play. These concepts evolved to become our final iteration of the prototype.

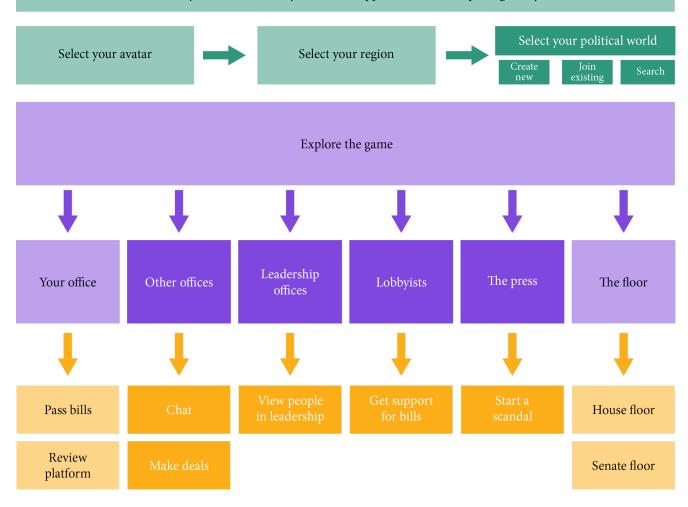
## The mobile app

If anyone who saw the design could see themselves playing the game, we would hope build support and momentum behind the product. The hope would be that a developer would be more likely to sign on to develop our product if we did so. The board game emulates one aspect of what became our final product – the passing of bills in the North Carolina General Assembly.

## The game layout

Players are in competition with other players and move up on the leaderboard by gaining three types of political capital points. Players gain constituent points by passing bills in line with your constituents, gain party points by passing bills along with your party platform and gain cash through interactions with other players.

Welcome to Capitol Quest, a game where you can be a member of your state General Assembly. You are now entering the lite version where you can explore this game for a week playing against computer players or your game progress is deleted and you must start over. You can upgrade at any time for 99 cents to the full version where you can customize your avatar's appearance and compete against your friends.



## **Future development**

With the focus today on the mobile sector and optimization for mobile, we found it to be important to let that be our target platform. The mobile game market is unpredictable, but with more developers entering the workforce, it is more and more possible for one to see the value in the idea and pursue it.

The next step of taking the prototype from being a prototype to an actual product would be to a hire a developer who would see our vision for the product and be enthusiastic about pursuing it. It is important to find a developer that would be a good fit. Today, it is important to find developers who develop for both Android and iPhone. Android is 25% of the cell phone market and to leave them out would significantly reduce the possibility for downloads.

After development of the game for North Carolina, we see the potential to extend the product to different states. The game would incorporate events in each state's legislature, and the structure would be based off of that state's legislature.

## Marketing

It is nearly impossible to determine exactly how many downloads Capitol Quest can expect when it is released to the market because all mobile app games have different levels of success. However, we will set a release date and plan a publicity campaign around it accordingly in order to get in touch with our audience and build as much hype as possible leading up to the release and after. The exciting name, logo, and prototyped design screens, or images of actual design screens for the game when they are available, will be integral in this process. They will help us attract users and allow them to easily envision themselves playing Capitol Quest.

Optimizing Capitol Quest's presence in app purchasing stores will be one aspect of this, especially because 63% of all apps are discovered by users simply doing searches in the app store. We will want to be easily accessible and intriguing, and this will be done by utilizing key words that are commonly searched and ensuring that there is a captivating game synopsis. Game ratings are also important with how close to the top a game comes up when something is searched, so we will have a feature within the game that asks users to rate the game and provide feedback.

There is a simple website already available to help with providing information about the game and attract users. There is a short description of the mobile app game and a place where visitors will be able to enter their email addresses and receive updates about Capitol Quest. When the app is launched, there will be a direct link that visitors can click on to download the app. A blog will also be a component of the website which will help the site and its content remain up-to-date.

Local media will be important to reach out to as well, and these will be outlets such as the News & Observer, Daily Tar Heel and others. Those contacted will be those who report on topics like politics and technology, and this will include tech bloggers who we will personally reach out to and ask for them to review our game. These people are easily accessible by contacting them via Twitter, email and by issuing press releases about our product.

Using social media accounts such as Facebook and Twitter will tie all of these aspects together to help spread information about Capitol Quest to our audience and allow us to interact with them. Social media is an important avenue to utilize to reach our target market of people aged 18-23 because they are so active on it, and this presence is crucial in modern advertising/branding. Our product will be able to express its personality and entice users.

#### Who Are We?

### Leslie Carlucci

Leslie is a junior from Raleigh, N.C. pursuing majors in advertising and political science, and she started at Reese News Lab in January 2014. Watching movies is one of her favorite activities, her favorites being The Holiday and V for Vendetta, and she is a sister of Kappa Kappa Gamma. Her dream jobs are either to work for the C.I.A. or make movie trailers.

#### **Katie Marriner**

Katie is finishing up her journalism degree this semester with a focus in editing and graphic design. She is from Wilmington, N.C. where she went to New Hanover High School. During her time at Carolina, she has pursued her passion of music through marching band, and she loves bagels.

## **Hannah Doksansky**

Hannah is a sophomore chemistry and photojournalism double major from Atlanta. When she is not at Reese News Lab, she spends her time as a Study Coordinator at the UNC Anesthesiology Research Department. After she graduates, she hopes to capture photos of the world before attending medical school to be an oncologist.

### **Thomas Webster**

Thomas is a junior from Greensboro, N.C. studying Strategic Communication with a Minor in Entrepreneurship. He is a brother of Phi Gamma Delta fraternity, loves the movie A Beautiful Mind, and hopes to launch his own tech startup after graduating UNC. When he is not at school, he enjoys trekking the rainforests of Panama with Dave Chappelle.