

From: Seymour Duncker [sduncker@gmail.com]
Sent: 2/25/2007 12:35:11 PM
To: Augenreiz | Tyron Montgomery [tyron.montgomery@augenreiz.de]
Subject: Re: iCharts PPT --- First Thoughts

Hi Tyron,

super good feedback, thanks! Before you get lost in the following - I need to be in Paris on Tue 6th, Wed 7th. Instead of us meeting on the 7th, can we meet this week? You said you'd be very busy.

So here is what I am thinking:

1. Name linked to Vision

I completely agree with you - shouldn't go with a temp name, better to have a good name right from the beginning. iCharts.com can be purchased for 6,5k US\$. I already reserved www.i-chart.net. Perhaps this is as good. I also like www.iChartz.com, has a modern touch to it. Will have to check trademark issues on each candidate.

Most important thing is that the company name links to the vision the company is founded on. What's driving the vision is the following two observations:

- the way we are forced today to look at facts and figures is up-side-down, the wrong way around, and totally skewed. It is determined by the way Excel works, first the data into the spreadsheet then, quick, quick, the chart. The right way is: First, determine the message you want to communicate, then find the data to support the message. At the end, the process to create a chart remains the same, but the focus is on the output not input.
- lots and lots of people, institutions and companies have good, publicly shareable data but no means to enable access to it and share it at a low enough cost

Hence, I have developed the following vision statement: "To change the way people absorb facts and numbers and, as a result, interact with each other"

The corresponding, hands-on (new) mission statement is: "iChartz provides the best, easiest and fastest way to share, update and comment facts and numbers using charts on the net". (I have taken out "create" as this is not really new, Excel does the "create" job, however fails at the other elements).

Let's do some more brainstorming regarding the name when we meet over dinner.

2. Development/Programming

That's unfortunate with Thomas. Let's reassess what is needed when, I may also have contacts to programmers that we can tap into.

The service has three critical main components:

- a. iDATA/iWIZ – an engine that pulls data from spreadsheets, analyzes the data and then makes intelligent recommendations in terms of improving data quality as well as selecting the right data visualization method. Here I am looking for Artificial Intelligence-like capabilities, i.e. the system should get better the more data it processes. Also, from the on-set it should have data visualization expertise built in and continuously self-improve based on customer selection choices (Technology required: XML + AI methods)

- b. iCharts – the heart of the service, as discussed. Should come in 3 variants (Basic, Lean, Power) with differing degrees of flexibility and interactivity (Techno required: Flash).
- c. iBoards & the portal – the kernel of an iBoard is a group of iCharts which we said would be done via Flash in Flash. However an iBoard consists of additional elements: it can be set up as own web-site and has blog like features like comments, documents and links that can be added. The portal (new thinking, you haven't seen it yet) is a public space where publicly accessible iCharts can be listed. (Techno required: Flash + AJAX).

So what is needed is an architect CTO with a solid know-how in Flash, Ajax as well as "AI methods" and a strength in visual design/output. Probably need to bake this person....The question is how to get started. I see Olivier in being able to help on the AI methods + XML bit.

I am meeting next week some VC guys to understand how much is needed to raise seed funds and whether a demo is required. Perhaps a technical concept is sufficient to start with.

3. PPT

Good point, will work on variants.

4. Competition

Here is my take: Need to work in stealth mode for ca. 6-9 months to build the service, make it robust and prepare launch (preferably in the US). Then hit and run.... Competition can come from anywhere, Google is main potential candidate, but there are others too. Not concerned about Microsoft, because they are locked into their model. Regards Google, they are focussed on hitting Microsoft with their SMB office package they just launched. So the calculation is, that by the time they have understood, mobilized and started to copy, our service needs to have gained traction and be on the upward spiral. At the time the service is out in the open, it's all about speed.

Don't want to build an "acquisition only" story, the focus is to build a profitable service. Then all options are open, that's the best way.

Let me know if this week would work for you.

Rgds,
Seymour

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On 2/22/07, **Augenreiz** | **Tyron Montgomery** <tyron.montgomery@augenreiz.de> wrote:

Hi Seymour,

The decision is final: Thomas is now employed by Serviceplan and not available for iCharts.

I asked various people in the business: Nobody knows a programmer capable of handling such a project. I guess the only way to find somebody is through a regular job advertisement in appropriate Flash-forums.

WORKING TITLE OR MORE?

Thanks for the PPT. I do like "iCharts" very much. Catchy, on the spot and easy to remember. Do you see a way of using it officially and not only as a draft title? Because the term is already in use, especially by Microsoft.

At least the domain icharts.com is for sale. It belongs to Moniker, the domain marketplace. I guess it won't be cheap, but at least it's available.

I checked out "iDash", "iBoard", "dBoard", "D-Board" and a couple of other terms – of course these terms are also in use, although I didn't ckeck details.

Another option may be "iChartz". It looks like this term has been used for an online charts service (!) in 2002, and is still in use for unimportant apps of unimportant companies (only 218 search results on Google). ichartz.com belongs to NetworkSolutions, a domain service provider. I'm sure they would sell it for a reasonable amount of money.

The title may seem unimportant, but I simply don't like draft titles. Nothing lasts longer than a temporary solution. Therefore, in my projects, I always go for the real name right at the beginning. This has various advantages in the long run.

PPT

A very nice presentation of the whole idea. There's not much I could add, apart from maybe one thing: Customization is pointed out as one of the key features. Apart from the soccer charts, you always paste the same graphs in the same colours into every example. This could be misunderstood as a rather lousy customization.

Although everybody knows this is just a presentation, people often do regard things as more or less final if it's not clearly just a sketch. Therefore, I would definitely use different kind of charts (like in the soccer example) and also your standard chart in different colours. Just give it a different hue in Photoshop.

COMPETITORS

I guess one question will be: Doesn't something like this already exist? Maybe after a presentation your audience will check on Google. At least that's what I would do. They will then come across companies like www.stratbridge.com or others, and they may have the feeling: Oh, look – they've already done this. So why bother about iCharts?

That's why I would probably do research on the top 5 - 10 competitors, point out disadvantages and missing features compared to iCharts and – as preventive action – include that information in the hand-outs people may get after the presentation or have additional PPT-pages up my sleeve in case such questions arise during / after a presentation.

BIG FISH EAT LITTLE FISH. FAST FISH EAT SLOW FISH.

You mentioned two years of public beta testing as part of the process of bringing iCharts to the market. Additionally you are a tiny company. What strategies do you follow to prevent giants like Microsoft, Google, Adobe or others from copying your idea and simply crushing you with their resources and market power? (if you're lucky they will BUY your idea and prototype, but I wouldn't count on that).

As a potential investor, I would definitely be interested in this issue.

Speak to you soon,
Tyron

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