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# PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS OF EMERGING ONLINE BUSINESS MODELS: DEVELOPING A DIGITAL COMIC BOOK PROTOTYPE

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PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS OF EMERGING ONLINE BUSINESS MODELS:  
DEVELOPING A DIGITAL COMIC BOOK PROTOTYPE

by

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A Research Paper

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the  
Master of Science

Department of Mass Communications and Media Arts  
in the Graduate School

Southern Illinois University Carbondale

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RESEARCH PAPER APPROVAL

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for the Degree of

Masters of Science

in the field of Mass Communications and Media Arts

Approved by:

(Dr. Paul Torre), Chair

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## AN ABSTRACT OF THE RESEARCH PAPER OF

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TITLE: PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS OF EMERGING ONLINE BUSINESS MODELS: DEVELOPING A DIGITAL COMIC BOOK PROTOTYPE

MAJOR PROFESSOR: Dr. Paul Torre

Advancing online technologies have traditional legacy media scrambling to generate consistent revenue streams in the digital space. Even though online and mobile technologies encourage publishers to develop new content for the web there are inherent challenges to adapting tactile non digital formats into ones and zeros. Furthermore, the digital space has yet to define a specific business model applicable for all online media.

Presenting current trends in digital publishing of comic books as well as traditional media, this document defines emerging online business models and case examples of consumer purchase incentives. The defined business models and literature provide a guided framework and are applied to the production of a comic book application prototype, the Choosie Book. The prototype is created as an interactive interface following conventions established in comic books and children's picture books. The prototype's intellectual property, *Just James*, was previously published in the popular anthology Reading With Pictures. The *Just James* narrative, graphic illustrations, and structure have been adapted from its original publication for the purposes of this prototype. It is intended as a proof of concept for digital publishers, producers, and developers.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

What are comics, and what conventions establish the medium as a noteworthy form of mass media? The comic book has many incarnations that include collected publication of newspaper funnies, superhero serialized comic books, the graphic novel, and many more. The term sequential art, originally coined by comic legend Will Eisner, is a general term that encompasses the concept of combining two elements within the pages of a comic (McCloud, 2000). These two elements, the written narrative and graphic representations of characters and settings, give a comic its unique form. Comics as defined by Scott McCloud in *Understanding Comics* are, “Juxtaposed pictorial and other images in deliberate sequence, intended to convey information and/or to produce an aesthetic response in the viewer.” In McCloud’s book *Understanding Comics* he uses the concept of juxtaposed pictorial and other images. Juxtaposed pictorial images are the panels in which the reader sees the graphic representations an artist has created. Other images are written words or text within the structure of the comic medium. This idea presents the concept that all aspects within a comic medium are a graphic representation including the character illustrations, environments, and text balloons/ boxes (McCloud, 1993).

For the purposes of this paper it is important to provide a brief historical survey outlining the development of comics as a mass medium in the United States. There are four definitive periods of comic development known respectively as the Golden Age, Silver Age, Bronze Age, and the Modern Age. Pre Golden Age, comics were collected



newspaper strips repackaged in book format and sold through vendors and on store shelves (McCloud, 1993). However, later work began to collect single through line narratives and structure the story by creating a melodramatic story arch contained within a single book. Jerry Shuster and Joel Siegel's seminal character Superman is arguably considered the first instance in which comics became a viable form of commercial entrepreneurship. In June of 1938 Action Comics #1 was released featuring the Man of Steel and thereby launching the Golden Age of comics. This is an important period between 1939 and 1950 in which comic book popularity and commercial success was at its highest (Daniels, 1991). It is during this period that the format modern consumers identify as comics was developed. In the fifties, however, comic books sales began to wane and advocates against violence in media, such as Fredric Wertham, began attacking the medium. In Wertham's book, *Seduction of the Innocent*, he argues that comic book's violent content influence juvenile delinquency (an argument not unlike video games and violence today). However, comic books did not suffer Wertham's attacks long, and a new period of comic development began known as the Silver Age (Daniels, 1991).

The Silver Age, 1950 through 1971, is a period arguably ushered in by the Marvel comics group and its members such as Stan Lee, Jack Kirby, John Romita, and others (Daniels, 1991). Like the Golden Age, the Silver Age of comics, saw an increase in sales of monthly publications. The primary difference, however, is that narrative structures changed with regards to the superhero mentality. Superheroes became complex individuals with emotional depth. Silver age heroes were not motivated solely by the need to save humanity from the onslaught of Super villains; they exhibited

pathos in which their life circumstances became an ancillary aspect of their superhuman activities (Daniels, 1991). As the Silver age waned because of lagging sales and disinterest a new age of comics began, the Bronze Age. This period of development lasted from 1971 through around 1985 (Geppi, 2010). Less notable than both the Golden and Silver Age, the Bronze age did present a surge in the independent creators market. However, this market would not generate the record sales that the industry saw in more popular comic book sectors. The Bronze Age concluded roughly in 1985 and the Modern Age started (Geppi, 2010). The marker by which this historical age began was the printing and distribution of the *Watchmen*. The *Watchmen*, written by Alan Moore and Illustrated by Dave Gibbons, is the premiere example of a long form comic format known as the Graphic Novel. A graphic novel typically ranges from sixty to one hundred pages and includes many of the same conventions of story telling established in previous comic ages (Moore, A., Gibbons, D., Higgins, J., 2008). With the widespread creation of this new format the Modern age has continued until today. However, current trends in digital distribution have begun to transform the medium and a possible new age of comic book production defined in this document as the Digital Age.

In the dawn of what is the digital age, publishers and producers across all media are struggling to apply traditional methods of mass communication distribution to emerging mobile/ Internet technologies. The printed comic, typically 32 pages in length, is still the most acceptable form of presentation. However, the creation of handheld readers, like the Kindle, iPad, and iPhone, have opened up broader distribution opportunities for publishers (Reid, 2009). Traditionally the distribution of comics to the

consumer market occurs through two primary sources, retail book stores and direct market stores. Examples of the retail book store include large retail chains like Barnes and Noble or Borders, and the direct market focuses on the sale of graphic novels and serialized comic books. Direct market stores receive the final printed issue directly from the publisher through a second party ordering service such as Diamond Comic Distributors Inc. (Diamond Comics Distributors, 2011). The direct market has remained steady commercially, but Internet technologies are beginning to alter commercial possibilities and new business practices for the medium.

The goal of this paper is twofold; the first is to review current trends in digital media business models across key platforms: The second is to apply suggestions from current literature toward an interactive prototype project. Included in the final document will be a business plan and carefully outlined sales pitch book accompanying the prototype. The goal of the project prototype is to expand my understanding of interactivity's advantage within digital books, further develop a proof of concept prototype to accompany my previous professional work, and present informed solutions for minimizing online publishing costs.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

Although the comic book and its subject matter is arguably the most sought after intellectual property across multimedia, academic research is strangely lacking. The caveat against comics implies an in-depth cultural stigma that for the purposes of this paper are unnecessary to define. Instead of focusing solely on comics, the broader and more in-depth academic research centers on other media forms, including online social media, music, television, film, and newspapers. Each of these media are, like the comic industry, struggling to traverse the digital terrain and pin down a direct relationship to their once great traditional revenue streams. Therefore, the following literature focuses on both digital comics and digital publishing within some of the more prestigious media industries. Digital Publishing, defined by Xuemei Tian and Bill Martin in *Business Models in Digital Book Publishing: Some Insights from Australia* (2009) is, “publishing dependent upon the World Wide Web as its communication channel, published and distributed online, with provision for the establishment of digital database for future use (2009).” The comic industry and the previously mentioned legacy media formats can be grouped together as one entity known as digital publishers. Each of these media are swiftly becoming a hybrid between their traditional form and a digital one.

#### **Digital Publishing in Comics**

We are familiar with the stereotypical comic shop. Racks of comic books, graphic novels, and action figures cluster a small store manned by an overweight smart mouth fan boy, a la Android's Dungeon from *The Simpsons*. Although, it is a

stereotype, and not all or even most comic shops adhere to this description, it is sure to say that a comic shop has a certain experience that goes along with the visit. The setting can cause both a positive and negative for its customers. For many, the comic shop is a safe haven where they are free to talk comics with others who share this passion. For others, more often the new or returning reader, the comic shop can be quite foreboding, even to the point that the would be customer will opt out of his or her purchase entirely. This consumer hesitancy is a result of the comic shop's inherent fan culture. Fans of comic books and their subject matter can be and are often intensely defined by the comics he or she reads. However, digital comic books are redefining fandom, but the rise in popularity of digital comics has had significant effects on the local comic shop. The initial response from shop owners is one of fear. They worry that their stores will go the way of Hollywood Video who succumbed to bankruptcy after the rise of Netflix. "We're in the business of selling paper products as beautiful art objects," said Eric Kirsammer of Chicago Comics and Quimby's Bookstore, both pillars of the art comics and indie book scene in Chicago. (McDonald, 2010) Shop owners also can not rely on customers not wanting to read on a screen opposed to paper, since in January, Amazon.com reported that it sold more Kindle books than paper ones in 2010. Borders filed for bankruptcy two weeks later." (McFall, 2011). It is a legitimate threat that has many shop owners worried about their future.

This is not true of all shop owners however. Many realize that, as of now, the digital comic industry represents "only \$6 million in sales out of a \$680 million industry, according to ICv2, a group that monitors comics and pop culture." (McFall, 2011). They also know that the experience that can push some customers away is what pulls in the

loyal collectors. At an auction in 2010, a copy of Action Comics No. 1 sold for \$1.5 million illustrating the health of the collectible market. (Shaer, 2010). Even though most retailers do not carry such prize items, they still market to people who like to own, even if they don't touch, physical copies. This means that comic books can still hold monetary as well as emotional value to many collectors. Although these are reasons store owners may hold onto customers, advocates of digital comics look at it from another angle. Digital distributors are not trying to put local stores out of business, quite the contrary in fact. Several online distributors are making it possible for customers of local shops to purchase a digital comic in-store and then download them at home. This does give the physical stores a little hope, but won't likely see high sales of items that would be just as easy to pay for from home. The real silver lining for stores comes in the form of new customers. It is true that reading comics is not near popular among the most recent generations. Even the spike in comic based movies has had almost no effect on sales of comic books. However David Steinberger, CEO of comiXology, a prominent online distributor, puts hope in a new program the company has introduced. It is an application for all-ages comics, which will allow parents and children to browse for titles without having to worry about mature content. (MacMillan, 2010) His hope is that it will introduce a whole new generation to comic characters which will then lead them to retailers to find more adventures of their new favorite heroes and heroines.

There are significant technological disadvantages to distributing a comic online or through a mobile device. In 2009 James Pannafino cites a survey from *thecomicsforum.com* in which readers were asked if reading a printed comic book was easier than reading its digital counterpart. "Eighty- seven percent said yes, while 12%

said no.” (Pannafino, 2009, p. 2) The reluctance of digital readership indicated in the survey includes issues of piracy, screen resolution, user interfaces, bandwidth, and formatting. The first factor, piracy, is rampant online and although comics’ publishers have ostensibly embraced the Web, the pace of digitization remains slow, and the vast majority of new titles aren’t available online until several months after the official release date. At the same time, the prices of print titles continue to climb. As a result, a sizable contingent of readers have turned to file-sharing services, where they can immediately and illegally download PDFs of all the latest books.” (Shaer, 2010, n. pag) Secondly, with screen resolution the printed comic still outperforms the pixel based technology that the web and mobile devices offer. When viewing an image on a screen the eye focuses on individual pixels causing eye strain over time. This eye strain can deter the reader from reading lengthy graphic novels. Furthermore, inherent print properties, like tactile pages and ease of use, are absent in digital distribution. User interfaces attempt to mimic printed properties, but the novice technology user can be discouraged from entering the digital realm. Another factor, bandwidth, or slow loading times, often prevent the reader from fully accepting the digital comic arena. The last major barrier mentioned, formatting, is primarily a creator and production difficulty (Pannafino, 2009). The formatting difficulties are inherent to the production of traditional printed page sizes typically six inches by nine inches (Allen, 2010). Screen resolutions on handheld devices and computer screens differ from printed page sizes, and the publishers have to produce multiple copies to properly fit the respective screen sizes. With these difficulties digital distribution still offers the publisher a variety of cost saving production methods and alternate revenue streams. Devices like the Amazon Kindle and iPad are

swiftly improving graphic capabilities and download speeds adding to the advantages for publishers to aggressively market books digitally (Reid, 2009).

The digitization of comic books is an important part of reviving what used to be a very popular market. Although it has been viewed by some as a danger to the retail shop, which may be true in some cases, it can do much more for the comic book market as a whole. Many towns do not have local comic shops, and many readers do not want to have to sit at home or under their laptop to purchase and read new comic books. This is why digital manufacturers have placed their faith in tablets, specifically the iPad, and to a slightly lesser extent the Kindle. Although both offer the mobility and size that is comparable to reading physical comics, the iPad delivers through its variety of apps some of the lost experience a shop offers. First of all, the iPad and Kindle introduce an opportunity “to expand the market,” says David Steinberger, CEO of ComiXology. (MacMillan, 2010, p. 1) The idea is to not only appeal to current readers, but also to reclaim former readers who have stopped buying comics over the years. The immediate access and convenience of a digital magazine is what sparks hope for getting lapsed readers to return to the medium, as well as attract new readers who are still mesmerized by the versatility of the new technology. According to Ira Rubenstein, executive VP of Marvel’s Global Digital Media Group, the number of comics purchased per iPad or iPhone app has been growing. And the anecdotal evidence is that most customers are former comics readers lured back into the fray by the convenience of digital. (McLean, 2010) Beyond attracting new and former members of the market, it is important for the publishers of these digital comics to not alienate the die hard readers that have driven the genre for the last few decades. This is where the iPad shines out



the Kindle. It offers apps that not only allow readers to purchase digital comics, but will also have a forum for fans. "Startup Graphic.ly, which is part of Microsoft's BizSpark program for fledgling companies, is also developing an iPad application that will let fans trade comments within the pages of digital comics. 'The publisher that really ends up making the biggest splash on the iPad is the one that's not going to look to replicate print,' says CEO Micah Baldwin." (MacMillan, 2010, p. 1). Finally, one of the most obvious ways this will grow the market besides accessibility is the price. It is cheaper to mass produce a digital copy of a comic, therefore readers will be able to afford more comics, and more comics bought means more comics made.

### **Digital Publishing in other Media**

Many of the same issues present in digital publishing of comics are inherently similar to other print media industries. Newspapers and magazines, most closely related to comics, are scrambling to discover legitimate online publication revenue. Many of the arguments fall on the legitimacy their printed formats. According to Dr. Steven Richards and Christopher Bell in their research, "Newspapers are rapidly losing readership and circulation as more people look to online sources for information (Perez-Pena), magazine sales fell more than 6% in 2008 (Magazine Sales Fall 6.3% at Newstands) (Bell, C., Richards, S. n.pag)." This online consumer migration is directly related to internet and mobile technologies in United States homes. A recent study conducted by the Federal Communications Commission observed that, "78% of Americans are internet users, 67% of households contain a broadband user, 65% of Americans are broadband users at home, and 86% of Americans have a cell phone

(Horrigan, 2010, p 5).” However, the question is why has it been difficult for print media to find consistent revenue streams in an emerging digital market?

The answer is complicated and inherent to the translation of print to digital media. The newspaper industry largely counted on advertising and classified ads to subsidize publication and production costs. However, the advertising model which traditionally supported newspapers is migrating from print to online. For example, the New York Times has seen advertising revenue fall significantly over the last decade. Online services like Craglist.com and Ebay.com circumvent classified sections in newspapers allowing print readers to purchase items online. (Braun, J., Rossi, A., 2011) Another major factor contributing to declining readership of print publication to online sources can be attributed to digital ease of use. Flavian and Gurrea’s study in *The Role of Readers’ Motivations in the Choice of Digital versus Traditional Newspapers* (2006), discovered that of the 253 readers surveyed an astounding 78.4 % preferred a digital newspaper during working days, and 40.1 % read online digital news everyday. These results can be attributed to free access, immediate updates, availability of the internet and digital interfaces.

Another contributing factor to the proliferation of digital readership in newspapers is directly related to consumer hardware purchases. Hardware, in this case, includes desktops, laptops, mobile phones, and tablets. In a recent study, *The State of the News Media* (2012) discovered that, “nearly 23% of U.S adults now get their news on at least two digital devices.” The study also indicates a migration from the desktop to the mobile device for digital readership; however, the desktop is still the primary platform in which readers acquire content. Since 2007 desktop or laptop ownership has remained steady

with 77% of U.S. adults owning at least one, but 44% of U.S adults possess a smart phone indicating the popularity of mobile technologies. Tablet computers, like the Ipad, Kindle, or Nook have the lowest ownership percentage with just 18%. (Mitchell, A., Rosensteil, T., 2012) The above figures indicate that although desktops are still the most popular hardware platform, the mobile device is becoming the premiere method of digital distribution. The increase in this arena should motivate digital publishing towards conventions established through mobile devices. However, how should the print publishing proceed to maximize its distribution in this platform? Looking at the Digital rights management and the music industry could provide some indications on how print publishers can achieve greater success on digital platforms.

Arguably the biggest distribution concern of all digital media is piracy and the control and management of Digital Rights Management (DRM). DRM is a system developed to control the unintended use of digital intellectual property. The music industry largely championed the DRM system to prevent and limit piracy. In 2009 the Recording Industry Association of America estimates, “that music sales declined from \$13.7 billion in 1998 to \$8.5 billion in 2008 (Sinha, R., Machado, F., Sellman, C., 2010, p. 40).” Via the development of file sharing services the music industry suffered losses in profits from the illegal copying of music files. As mentioned previously the comic industry similarly followed in suit. Therefore, the music industry and other digital publishing entities have used the DRM control to make it nearly impossible to copy purchased files. Consumer behavior indicates that once a person acquires a product it is at their discretion to do what they want with it, and the digital arena provides the consumer with alternative solutions to circumvent the DRM control. Although the music

industry championed the DRM model, Apple and its chief executive officer (CEO), Steve Jobs, called for the music industry to provide DRM-free formats on the popular iTunes store. Jobs' request does not go without complete non-regulation there are still iTunes terms of use agreements that prevent the user from having absolute control over the dissemination of purchased music. (Sinha, R. 2010) Furthermore, there is contrasting research on the impact of piracy and the decline in music sales. Instead the position is offered that competition from, "... other forms of entertainment, such as digital games, movies, television shows, concert DVDs and so forth, (Sinha, R., 2010, p. 42)" also impact music sales. However, according to Sinha, Machado and Sellman (2010) the removal of DRM restrictions paired with lowering cost on downloads can increase overall consumer purchases and producer profits. Taking the iTunes store as their case study, they conclude that by removing Digital Rights Management restrictions and lowering the price per song allows for an increase in consumer purchase. According to the study, DRM removal and lowering price from \$.99 to \$.75 per song, "both producers and consumers experienced large welfare gains (43% and 140%, respectively), resulting in a 74% increase in welfare (Sinha, R., 2010, p. 49)." Although this example focuses on the music industry and its primary dissemination platform, iTunes, the analysis is clear that users want the option to share their purchases with other users. The ability to freely distribute beyond purchase is a major contributing factor in consumer purchase behavior. The primary function and conventions of the web are inherent to the concept that free sharing among consumers is one of the driving factors for successful distribution. However, the difficulty is how does the

publisher maximize its profits when the window for initial purchase is narrow in the online world?

The answer to the previous question is present in emerging online and mobile business models. Currently there is no single set of purchasing parameters that explicitly signify successful distribution. Instead, a cornucopia of varied practices are emerging within the online sphere, and the traditional mass media advertising and subscription models require an amalgamation of purchase incentives and distribution practices to maximize consumer purchases.

Comic books, both online and in print, will aptly need to follow these developing models. However, the printed version of comics, like the printed newspaper, book or magazine will maintain its readership even in the wake of advancing technologies. The primary reason this will remain the case is inherent to both collector value as well as the simplicity of tactile books. However, publishers of comics and retailers alike are seeing considerable growth in the digital market. Instead, of providing a qualitative or quantitative methodology to discover the specific models and their effectiveness this document will provide a practical approach through the development of a digital comic book prototype. As a multi published comic book author, animator/ illustrator for Cartoon Network and the FX Cable Network, and former digital media business owner, I will apply my professional understanding of comic books and careful analysis of new business models in digital distribution. Since print media is a retracting market and mobile technologies are experiencing exponential growth the focus of this document is to apply current research to a tangible product. Therefore, the research questions

asked to better serve content creators –myself included, distributors, and retailers are as follows:

RQ1: What are present examples of developing digital business models?

RQ2: Which of these models, distribution, and production processes are best suited for the final interactive prototype provided within this document?

## CHAPTER 3

### EMERGING DIGITAL PUBLISHING BUSINESS MODELS

This chapter focuses on specific examples of online business models that may provide insights into what digital commerce systems may be applicable to digital comic book distribution. The urgency of discovering a successful business model is at the forefront of all. In fact, a recent study by the Pew Research Center illustrates print publisher frustrations. The study found that for every \$1.00 gained in online revenue \$7.00 is lost in print revenue (Pew Research Center, 2012). These metrics can be contributed to losses in advertising revenue, as well as the multitude of media options in the digital space. Although most publishers are seeing exponential growth in online publishing the emerging models have yet to acquire comparable metrics to those of its printed counterpart. In short, the digital world simply is not replacing the revenue streams lost in the printed and tactile product.

Instead of defining all online business models currently developing in the digital arena, the chapter will outline those that are the most likely candidates for distributing the prototype proposed in this document. The business models presented are based on comparable formats currently in use with print publishers and their online services. Furthermore, I will provide examples of auxiliary consumer purchase incentives for a digital comic book. The auxiliary purchase incentives are those that extend beyond the internal digital interface. For example, an auxiliary purchase includes an additional distribution of limited edition prints, posters, dongles, or consumer contests. The primary function of the auxiliary purchase is to maintain the collector's market by creating scarcity in a digital DRM free market. The auxiliary purchase incentives are

based on examples provided through comic book fundraising examples on Kickstarter.com.

### **Business Model 1: Online Advertising, Impressions and PageViews**

This is the most traditional throw back to mass media publishing. As previously mentioned ad revenues are certainly declining due to online services like Craigslist, Ebay, and companies creating their own digital advertising spaces. Traditionally ad revenue was the primary model print publishers focused on to support production and development. However, ad revenue online provides a complication to accurately quantify relationships between impressions and consumer purchases. For example, if the consumer clicks on an online retail product's advertisement, he or she will have to leave the digital space to acquire the product. Although the consumer may be inspired by the online advertising, discovering accurate online correlation is difficult to define. However, digital publishing media can maximize revenue through impression based models. In *Economic Essentials of Online Publishing with Associated Trends and Patterns*, Jay Hung states,

“Impression based models have a direct correlation with pageviews.

When pageviews go up, the ad impressions go up as well. However, not all impressions create the same value. Very specific and targeted pages tend to command higher revenue rates, and publishers who think in terms of targeted pageviews will likely drive traffic to those pages with the highest rates, to maximize monetization. (Hung, J., 2010, p. 80)”



The impressions imply different ad types or general revenue models; these include Cost per Thousand impressions (CPM), Cost per Click (CPC), and Cost per Action (CPA). (Hung, J., 2010) Although advertising revenue does generate online profits the reality is that every website or mobile space can create their own advertising revenue. This could motivate each URL to develop its own ad revenue further diluting the amount of advertisements one company would receive. Advertising can also distract the user's eye from the content of the website, i.e. cluttering the visual space.

### **Business Model 2: Subscriptions**

Like advertising, subscriptions, have existed in legacy media for decades. Newspapers, magazines, cable television, and others use this business model to support the production of their respective media. However, in the online sphere the subscription has not gone without its scrutiny. Subscription models require the user to pay a monthly or yearly fee to access content on the web. The Wall Street Journal online and the gaming community, Xbox Live are two primary examples. Both provide online content to their users and suggest a consumer decision specific to content value. (Feldman, V., 2002) The user's considerations extend beyond the media producer's control. Legacy media, like the Wall Street Journal, are favored in this situation due to its long standing tradition of credibility and reliable news reporting. The incoming online producer has to establish his or her brand to successfully integrate the subscription model, but there are still few guarantees towards successful profit margins.

### **Business Model 3: Freemium-Premium**

The freemium – premium model is the most promising model for many game publishers and application developers. This model provides a base free version of the application within app purchases available to upgrade the service respectively. (Hung, J. 2010) Some of the more notable freemium – premium sites include LinkedIn, Pandora, Flickr, New York Times, and IMDB.com. These websites offer a free version of their site and often subsidize the free version with advertisements. (Hung, J. 2010) This is especially apparent in mobile applications like Angry Birds. The Angry Birds free version exhibits advertising and once the consumer purchases the premium version advertising windows are removed. In game or in app purchases are also typical in the freemium - premium model. These purchases allow the consumer to expand they already acquired. Often these purchases are made through micropayments. A micro payment is a payment which generally falls under a cost of \$5.00. (Hayes, J., Graybell, G. 2011) Within digital comics applications the micropayment is specifically advantageous. A printed, standard length comic book purchase falls under the five dollar marker, and the digital version of that comic is cheaper to distribute than its printed counterpart. Once the comic is digitally converted a free sample can be distributed with the longer format purchase based on consumer preference.

### **Business Model 4: Pay per Use**

The pay for use model is easily defined. The customer purchases the product and only receives the content temporarily or pays to download the property indefinitely. (Hung, J. 2010) Xbox Live's Zune marketplace is a premier example. In the service the user is given the option to download the content permanently or to rent the product for a

finite amount of time. There are some similarities to the freemium - premium model in respect to the micropayment option, but the Xbox Live Marketplace uses a points system to redefine purchases all together. These points are known as Microsoft points. The user buys points which are set at a predetermined price range, “400 points for \$4.99, 800 points for \$9.99, 1600 points for \$19.99, 4000 points for \$49.99, and 6000 points for \$74.99. (live.xbox.com, 2012)” The interesting aspect of the points system is once the consumer purchases the points he or she is not reminded about their value until another purchase is needed. Essentially, as the consumer spends their points he or she is not prompted to purchase more until the point bank is depleted. By making this proprietary points system Microsoft has created a microearning system within their distribution platform. The microearning system is where the user can purchase, share, or earn points and use their points within the respective platform. According to Hayes and Graybeal, “microearning is in essence a fragmented form of revenue sharing, defined as passing on revenue to the users that have helped generate that revenue (Hayes, 2011, p. 33).” The microearning mode in the instance of pay per use is also applicable to subscription and freemium – premium models already defined.

Although the above models are employed by the most notable media outlets the fact still remains; the digital arena is a space where only a successful few have been able to generate lucrative revenue streams. Even though the digital elite previously mentioned have achieved success the question remains how long will it remain that way? Arguably the time these models remain relevant is almost as volatile as the digital space itself, and the evolving digital space simply has not presented a clearly defined successful revenue stream. Instead a carefully combined business model could present

an appropriate practical solution to digitally distributing not only comic books but the prototype proposed in this document.

### **Consumer Purchase Incentives: Two Examples from Kickstarter.com**

Kickstarter.com is an online fundraising platform where producers are given the opportunity to generate funding opportunities for creative projects. On the home page the Kickstarter motto bold calls out to the user, inciting, “Fund and Follow Creativity (Kickstarter.com, 2012, n.page).” The goal of the platform is to provide content creators the opportunity to fund projects via user generated donations. Creators receive funding after completion of a successful donation campaign. The campaign contribution amounts are determined individually and independently from Kickstarter by users, creators, developers, or producing organizations. Each campaign offers unique strategies to maximize user donations. These strategies offer insights into how the digital space, especially visual content such as online comics, can generate alternative revenue from there sites. These purchases which I am calling Consumer Purchase Incentives are revenue streams created through ancillary item purchases created in junction with a digital download. The following are two examples of successfully funded comic books, including one I was directly involved in called *Reading With Pictures*, and the highly successful *Womanthology*.

Reading With Pictures is a not for profit 501c3 created by graphic novelist Josh Elder, to establish significant use of comic readership in education (Elder, 2012). In 2010, Elder corralled his industry contacts, myself included, and set off to create funding for a printed anthology of educational material. The campaigned received 376 individual donations and generated \$14,969. (Elder, 2012) At that time it was the most

successful comic book Kickstarter campaign. The campaign's unique donation incentives were directly related to its success. For example, the base reward was signed copy of the printed book from Elder himself. However, as the reward price increased, new limited purchases became available. These rewards included being drawn into the anthology as a background character, drawn into the book as a primary character, limited edition prints from famed comic artist Jill Thompson, t-shirts, book marks, and donor recognition in the printed book. (Elder, 2012) Each of these incentives became revenue drivers for both the final printed version of the anthology as well as the digital DRM free version offered in the campaign.

*Womanthology* expanded the limited offerings *Reading With Pictures* established. *Womanthology*, another Kickstarter.com successfully funded comic anthology, expanded its donor base well beyond *Reading With Pictures*. The *Womanthology* campaign received \$109,301 from 2001 donors. The limited rewards included script and portfolio reviews from notable comic industry celebrities, celebrity phone calls, commissioned artwork, and signed postcards. (Liz, 2012) These donation and fundraising incentives can be aptly applied to commercial digital distribution, and are even more applicable to print media outlets in the digital space. In doing so the collector market is incentivized to purchase items simply because of scarcity. In his treatise, *You Are Not a Gadget*, Jaron Lanier (2010) applies this same principle to the music industry and the concept of the Songle. He states:

“A songle is a dongle for a song. A dongle is a little piece of hardware that you plug in a computer to run a piece of commercial software. It's like a

physical key you have to buy in order to make the software work. It creates artificial scarcity for the software (Lanier, 2010, p. 109).”

Artificial scarcity, as suggested by Lanier, is necessary to merge the comic collector’s purchasing behavior with the digital environment. Scarcity is directly related to collecting comics. As mentioned before, the collector’s market exists in comic books because early issues of Superman or Batman are extremely rare. The comic publishing industry, like other publishing media is still discovering how to maximize revenue streams in the digital space. However, both *Reading With Pictures* and *Womanthology* were able to generate immense profits online without the advantages inherent to legacy media distribution and its proliferation. Although legacy media does have time and notoriety on its side the digital space provides the novice producer with many creative, distribution, and development strategies. Practically applying the defined business models as well as inclusion of auxiliary purchases presents an advantage for the newest media content producer.

## CHAPTER 4

### CHOOSIE BOOK PROTOTYPE PROPOSAL AND PRELIMINARY USER TESTING

The digital frontier in online books is currently underway. Publishers are scrambling to become the first to successfully integrate both the inherent properties of the printed page with the interface of a digital reader. However, the most basic, and often overlooked, principle of the two delivery systems is they are simply different. The question is, why should the digital reader bear similar conventions to that of the printed page? I argue that it doesn't need to. Instead, the digital comic and children's book should follow conventions to that of its virtual forefather, the console gaming system. That is why the development of the Choosie-Book is needed. The Choosie-Book will fill the gap between the retracting print market and growing virtual gaming market. The Choosie-Book's intention is to take the best properties of digital children's book, digital comics, and interactive interfaces.

I have developed a unique concept in comic book creation, by proposing an interactive comic book in which interactive choices are entirely integrated into the experience of reading an online comic book. This includes multiple options for story narratives, exciting character creation, and standard comic book format development integrated with digital development. As previously stated, the Choosie Book's goal is to simplify user interfaces for purchases, book selection, shopping, preview functions, and visual elements within the digital interface. One of the primary goals is to successfully marry virtual gaming with the concept of digital reading. Within a printed comic book there is a convention known as the page turn.

Choosie-Book's page turns interactive selections are ultimately unique from its predecessors. The user is given the opportunity to select the direction of the narrative providing multiple opportunities for narrative expansion, user choice, and interactive design.

### **Specifications and Deliverables**

The purpose of the prototype interface is to provide any reader a dynamic experience based upon intellectual property I have created with my professional colleague, Josh Elder. The prototype determines whether the interface and concepts stated within the document are effective for further development and distribution. The Choosie Book menu interface is stripped of non-essential graphics and follows design standards similar to iPhone application icons. Choosie Books further incorporates iPad interactivity by using the Pinch Zoom and the Page Swipe. The Choosie Book also follows a hybrid comic/ picture book style by combining conventions from both publishing styles. Prose is used to tell the story while multiple pictures, in sequence, are illustrated on a single page.

It is a multi page comic book spread in which the page turn at the choice page will include a variety of options. The comic panel layout is based on the final scripted version of the *Just James Reading With Pictures* short story. The page turn interactive choice will include three options in which the user can determine the outcome of the story. The Choosie Book's Digital Prototype Deliverables are as follows:

- Rendered in HD format 1080p
- Main Loading Page
- Main Menu Page including three linked icons, Shop, Search, and My Library.



- Shop page with Just James linked Purchase Window.
- A lower third banner with icons linking to their respective pages.
- A free sample preview of Just James.
- Wire frame diagrams of interactive pages.

(See Appendix Prototype Wireframes)

### **Budget Proposals and Creative Team Breakdown**

- 21 members [per hour rate outlined in Master Budget] = \$370.00 total per 1hr of on-clock time. Does not include page rates for comic artists.
- [b]Bonus @ 5% of x (x= sales profits after recoup on development)
- [c]Contingency @10% of final budget = \$4,501.00
- [pm] Profit Margin –Cannot be Determined
- 1472 Total Man Hours including hours for Comic Artists
- Total Staff Budget \$17,720.00

(See Appendix: Staff Budget)

### **Seat Cost Analysis:**

- Adobe Creative Suite 5.5 Production Premium: \$1699.00
- Windows 7: \$199.99
- Microsoft Office: \$85.00
- Computer: \$1800.00
- Monitor: \$1999.00
- Desk: \$150.00

- Chair: \$100.00
- Light/Lamp: \$30.00
- Total Seat Cost: \$6062.00
- Reoccurring Monthly Internet Access =\$60.00 per month

Total Budget Including Seat Cost, Departments, and 10% Contingency: \$25614.99

(See Appendix: Windows System Requirements)

### **Preliminary User Testing**

With the Choosie Book prototype the premiere audience demographics are children between the ages of 8 and 12; however, the scope of this project did not include focus group testing. Instead, I interviewed two subjects, one an avid online comic reader and the other a mildly proficient e-book reader. The subject interviews were given to provide insights for general user testing and development past this documents initial prototype.

The primary participant is a 24 year old male, and reads both online comics and print comics regularly. The secondary participant is a 23 year old female who occasionally reads e-books and never reads comics online or on a mobile device. The following are the questions and responses I received in regards to both the Choosie Book prototype and general digital readership.

The first question asked was: What do you like about reading comics online? The male's response was somewhat surprising. He responded immediately he enjoyed the guided reading in comic apps. Guided reading allows the reader to view panels frame by frame, in sequential order. The viewer is allowed to view in context the full page of the comic, but on smaller devices illustration and text details are hard to see.

He expressed that after prolonged digital reading he would suffer from eyestrain. The female responded by stating she never reads comics on a digital device.

I then asked what do you not like about reading comics or books online? Both responded to eyestrain problems after long use. Interestingly, the male respondent expressed the absence of a tactile page turn. Furthermore, he expressed that mobile devices do not present immediacy for discovery throughout each page. Instead, digital readers present simple, short duration, and infrequent reading qualities. However, the female respondent explained the absence of carrying heavy books was an advantage in favor of mobile devices.

The following questions were asked regarding the specifics of the Choosie Book interface. The first question was what do you think about the Load Screen? Both responded immediately to the amount of purple displayed in the logo and the background. They expressed that it was too much purple, and the fonts seemed to be intended for younger audiences. Next question asked, what do you think about the Main Menu option? Both replied positively to the three options at the start of the prototype, with one saying, "It makes sense." I then guided them through the interactive pages within the prototype. Both respondents thought the sparse amounts of graphics were a benefit for the shopping page. However, the male asked, "Is the shop icon staying present in the lower banner even though you are already in the shop."

Both thought that it would be intuitive to remove the purchase window by simply tapping in the margins. Both felt it was a positive feature. The response to the My Library page was identical to the Shop page. They were not overwhelmed with a multitude of graphics. When asking about the Search page, the female respondent

asked if there would be a scroll bar or finger swipe within the “Search by Genre” box. There will be this function in the fully produced version, giving the user more options beyond the presentation of this prototype.

Both responded positively to the ease of use and simple navigation from My Library to the opening page of the sample book. The suggestion was made to have the interactive book elements that blink or light up indicating interactivity.

### **Further Development**

The male respondent suggested that as each choice narrative concludes it should wrap back to the original page turn. I have considered this, but what was even more promising, was the idea of darkening the user previous selections. Overall the responses were positive. Further research is required within the targeted demographic of 8-12 years old. Testing with a focus group will provide more in-depth results in regards to narrative structure, graphic representations, and interactive elements. The general user testing, however, provides an insightful foundation to continue the prototype’s development beyond its present limitations. I have researched comparable concepts and digital distribution platforms provide similar solutions, but I have yet to discover an e-book that converges all of these media like the *Just James* prototype.

### **Terms and Conditions**

Copyright to the development materials and finished assembled work of the animation, comic book, or papers produced by myself, unless indicated otherwise. Upon final completion of this project, no independent contractor is assigned rights to use the design, animation, diagrams, and text contained in the finished assembled

animation in for-profit or non-profit ventures. Rights to photos, graphics, work-up files, and computer programs are specifically not transferred and remain the property of their respective owners. Independent Contractors will retain the right to display graphics and other design elements as examples of work in respective portfolios upon completion of the project and approval.

## CHAPTER 5

### PROTOTYPE SUMMARY AND WALKTHROUGH

The prototype's purpose is to apply the research and business proposal presented in the previous chapters. The prototype brand title is Choosie Book. The Choosie Book follows a design concept similar to the comparable application developed by Playtales called the Touchy Book. (Playtales Home Page, 2012) The Choosie Book, beyond the prototype, is intended as a downloadable application available in digital application stores such as iTunes or Google Play. The Choosie Book interface is similar to other eBook readers. It offers a library, shop, and search function. The concept of the Choosie Book interface is to strip away unnecessary graphic elements providing the user with a clear focus on available books and content. The books within the Choosie Book application define the brand identity. These books follow similar conventions of traditional comic books. The first, closure, is the "...phenomenon of observing the parts but perceiving the whole... (McCloud, 1993, p. 63)." Closure in comic books primarily occurs within what is called a gutter, the second element of active participation. The gutter in comics is the space between two adjoining panels on a page, and it is within these spaces that the reader becomes a willing participant in the creation of the narrative (McCloud, 1993).

For example, there are two panels on a page. One panel shows a hand gripping a coffee cup that rest on a table, and in the adjoining panel the coffee cup lies at the lips of a character drinking the coffee we saw previously. Now from the grasp of the cup to the character drinking coffee a reader does not see an illustrated process between the two panels. However, the reader perceives that the character had to lift his or her

arm to their mouth to drink the coffee, and it's in between the gutter that the reader has the ability to create a multitude of scenarios. The scenarios a reader creates within the gutters are a result of their associated personal experiences to the fictional character. It becomes easier for the reader to identify with the narrative in this way due to shared experiences of both the character and reader.

In explaining the gutter I have only defined one of the possible active elements in which a reader can participate in a traditional comic book narrative. The other is the page turn. A Graphic novelist, game writer, and independent publisher, Josh Elder, defines the page turn within the structure of a comic book narrative. He writes:

“The page turn is the physical and mental process associated with moving from one page to another in a comic book or graphic novel. Turning the page requires direct physical interaction with the work - whether the work is a physical hard copy or being accessed digitally through an electronic reading device. (Elder, 2010)”

Elder's Definition of the page turn leads me directly into the primary purpose of the Choosie Book application. This prototype allows the reader a choice of options expanding the story beyond a traditional linear narrative.

Within the prototype one story has been created with basic choice functions. The story, *Just James*, was previously published in the Harvey Award nominated *Reading With Pictures* anthology. James is an extremely introverted fifth grader. In fact, his social skills are lacking so greatly that he regularly reverts to his imagination. James uses his imagination to deal with the perils and pitfalls of being an adolescent. He often

dreams up grand stories where he becomes a pirate, a ninja, a superhero, and much more.

The copyright is currently held by Josh Elder and Jason Allen, this document's author. The *Just James* story lends itself appropriately to the Choosie Book interface and its previous publication adds validity to the prototype development.

## **Production and Development**

Most of the *Just James* development occurred prior to *Reading with Pictures*' anthology publication in 2009. Initially, the concept was discussed in phone conversations, and shortly afterward I began the long process of finely tuning character visuals and story. The James' narrative, created for the prototype, is used to illustrate choice functions and multiple outcomes available to a user. Unlike the illustration process used to create the Just James Reading with Pictures comic the illustration process utilized for the prototype's version is similar to animated television show production. The production process is adapted from my production experience on the animated television shows *Archer* and *Frisky Dingo*. Instead of drawing each panel or page on paper in the traditional way, the illustrations are created with Adobe Illustrator. Creating illustrations in this manner builds a library of character, background, and prop assets. These assets can be used in other media books or stories.

## **Illustration**

The illustration process begins with a reference photo or thumbnail sketch. Fundamentally, the final compositions are traced over the reference image. The primary tool used to execute the drawing is the *pen/path* tool. Transforming the path into an



*outline stroke (shift/command/0)* is the most efficient way to manipulate the path points. Changing the path to an outline stroke is an effective method to illustrate a cell shaded cartoon line weight. The outline strokes are also used with commands, *send to back*, *send backwards*, *bring forward*, and *bring to front*, to illustrate the body and head. The body is separated on sequential layers. Ergo the upper arm, lower arm, torso, hands, etc. are positioned on dedicated layers. Like the body the head is also distributed respectively on layers, for example, the head, mouth/jaw, eyes, eyebrows, etc. The first set of eyes and mouth are the .00 position also known as the neutral position. At this position the mouth is closed and the eyes are open to normal width. After the .00 position is finished the .01 through .05 mouths can be drawn. Each numbered mouth is associated a sound or expression. For example, .01 is “AH”, .02 is “A” ,like in HAY, .03 is “T” or “D”, .04 is “UH”, and .05 is “OH. Although characters, props, and backgrounds are inherently different the illustration process is similar for each asset type. Each asset is created using the defined techniques, divided on multiple layers, and labeled respectively.

### **Prototype Walkthrough**

The opening screen of the prototype is the brand identity page, Choosie Book. Its function is to serve as a software loading screen and application identification. Once the application is loaded the user is directed to the main menu. On the main menu I have removed unnecessary functions and given the user three basic options. In screen left to screen right order the functions are as follows, shop, my library, and search. The user can choose to finger tap the icon and go to the respective page. The shop page initially presents the user with six options of books to purchase. However, the user can

see other options by simply swiping their finger vertically and the shop interface with scroll presenting another six options. The user can then tap the respective book icon to purchase the book.

Within the purchase box the user can choose buy, free preview, upgrade, subscribe, extras, and rate. The buy option allows the user to buy the initial single issue of the book. The free preview option allows the user to see a predetermined sample of the book. The upgrade option is unique to Choosie Book content. Each book has a basic narrative with multiple story lines; however, producers can create new content within their initial narrative. For example, in the Just James prototype three options are given to advance the story initially. These three choices are to tap the dog, the lamp, or the side table drawer. Later assets can be introduced to this choice page like a picture, window, or other narrative elements. These new assets advance the story in another direction beyond the initial purchase. When the user chooses upgrades, new assets can be purchased and added to the story. The upgrades are established under the micropayment model each priced fewer than two dollars. The user can also buy the book basic book, and like the upgrades, the price point is under five dollars following a micropayment system. Furthermore, the subscription option is based on the subscription business model presented in the previous chapter. The user can subscribe to a particular book. When subscribing to the book he or she will receive subsequent book upgrades for an established period of time, i.e. six months, nine months, or a year.

Another unique aspect to the Choosie Book interface is the extras option. The extras option allows the user to purchase ancillary content. Like the Kickstarter cases

these extras would include art prints, t-shirts, bookmarks, and other merchandising. However, some extras are limited or special offers. These include online or offline chat with producers, limited edition prints, autographed items, or other exclusive offers. Through providing the extras choice consumer incentive is added and ancillary revenue is created. Finally, in the purchase window the rate option allows the user to share with other users their opinions on a book's quality. Ratings are based on a five star system, and by tapping the star icon the user can highlight a star for rating approval or otherwise.

The My Library icon on the main menu page sends the user to their previously purchased Choosie Book content. The user can organize book listings by hitting the edit button in the lower third banner. They can then delete or manipulate the library by preference. The My Library window functions like the shop page by showing the user's top six purchased items. They can then finger swipe vertically in the window to see other purchases.

The main menu Search icon allows the user to search for book content within the Choosie Book application. Two search options are clickable text boxes allowing users to search book content by title or author. The result appear in the Top Results box, and like the My Library or Shop page, the more results are visible by finger swiping vertically in the box. Users also have the option to search by genres like comedy, horror, action, science fiction, fantasy, among others.

Once the user has selected a book and opened it from the main menu icons the book's title page is displayed. In the bottom screen left corner a Choosie Book logo is displayed on each page. The Choosie Book logo returns the user back to the My

Library page. However, if the user continues to read the book he or she can advance the page by finger swiping the screen from right to left and vice versa for previous pages. As the narrative progresses a page is determined as the choice page. The choice page within this prototype is a single panel page with three options. The user can then select their preference and maneuver through the remaining narrative.

This prototype is a basic yet functional approach to building a digital comic book with exponential possibilities. This prototype was its limitations and yet provides a flexible foundation for further development. One of the goals in developing the prototype is to provide a proof of concept approach to managing some of the emerging business models presented in the previous chapter. However, there are several unique aspects to the Choosie Book prototype which sets it apart from other eBook digital applications.

## CHAPTER 6

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The research questions proposed in this document were:

RQ1: What are present examples of developing digital business models

RQ2: Which of these models, distribution, and production processes are best suited for the final interactive prototype provided within this document?

The online business models defined in the literature review included subscriptions, online advertising, freemium-premium, and pay per use. Each of these models possess their own unique attributes, and by defining them within the document I was able to build an informed digital prototype. Furthermore by providing two examples of online comic books, funded through Kickstarter.com, the prototype incorporated consumer purchasing incentives by offering ancillary merchandise and limited offerings. The business proposal offered explicitly applies current literature towards a tangible product, the Choosie Book prototype. The business models applied to the final prototype were a Subscription model for the user to acquire specific content for a finite period of time, micropayments in the upgrades category as well as the initial price of the base level book, and ancillary consumer purchases, such as limited edition prints, celebrity interaction, and other content related merchandise.

Although the prototype is functional it is not without its limitations. The largest limitation is primarily due to financial production development. The cost of fully producing the application into its final incarnation is beyond my personal finances. However, I have indicated the appropriate budget amount and team involved for a final version of the application. Another limitation to the prototype is specific to its

development beyond visual representation. My production experience and strength is in the creation of illustration and graphic elements. However, I only have minor experience in digital programming languages, and a fully produced application requires skilled programming. Although these limitations exist, the prototype developed for this document is successful as a practical application of current literature. Further prototype development is required beyond its present incarnation, but it does provide the proof of concept foundations I wanted to accomplish.

Reorganization and development of digital technologies has many entrepreneurs and producers scrambling to build content for the users. Furthermore, the business models in online markets are varied and, as of now, success is not guaranteed. I have sat in pitch meetings with hesitant producers who have yet to understand the advantages of web and mobile comic distribution. Two important factors play a crucial role in their hesitancy. The first, how much will initial production costs minimize profits? The second, how to add buyer incentive in a platform where the consumer assumes free access to content? The producer's second concern is a much more complex issue, and the answers are not absolutely clear in the current digital market. However, there are instances in which digital companies have discovered successful profit margins through micropayments, updatable content, and, limited commodity purchases. I do understand that the prototype developed is still in its infancy. Its creation does not guarantee that the applied online business models will work similarly for every application or online business, but it does present a workable proof of concept for digital comic book production, distribution, and incorporation of online business models.

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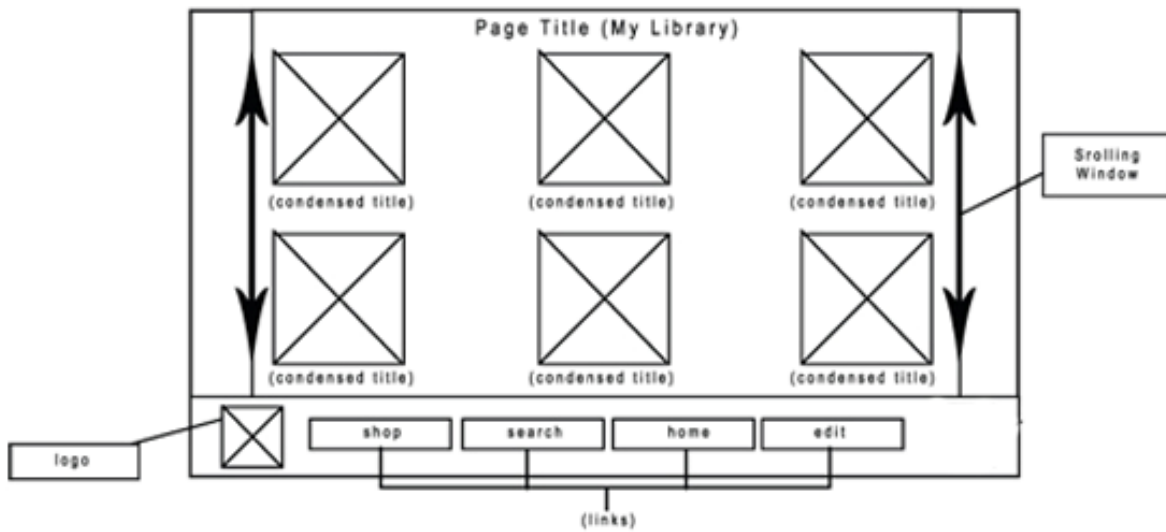
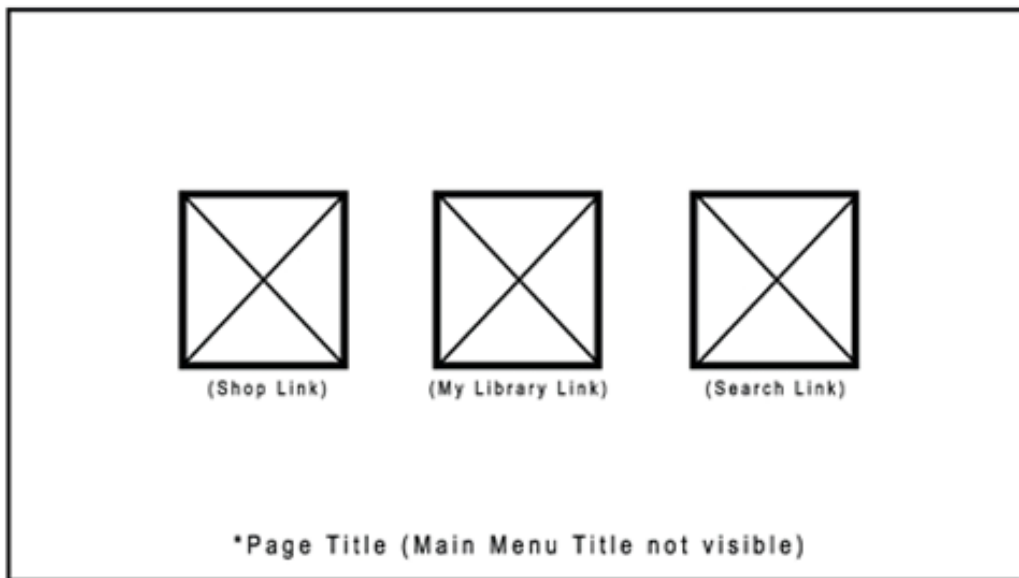
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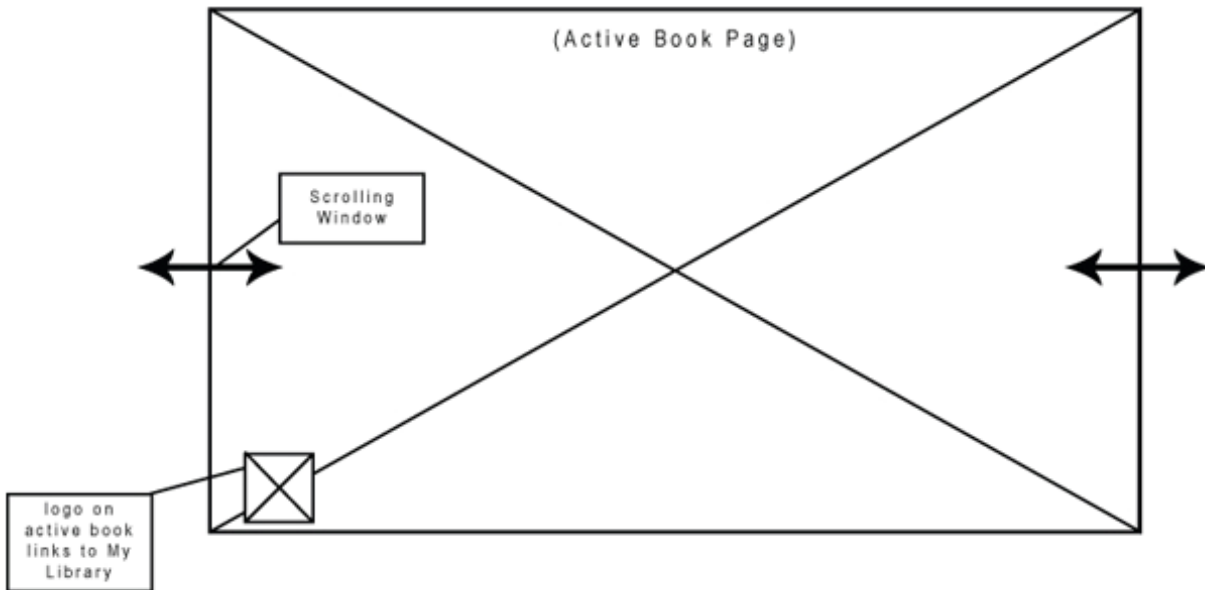
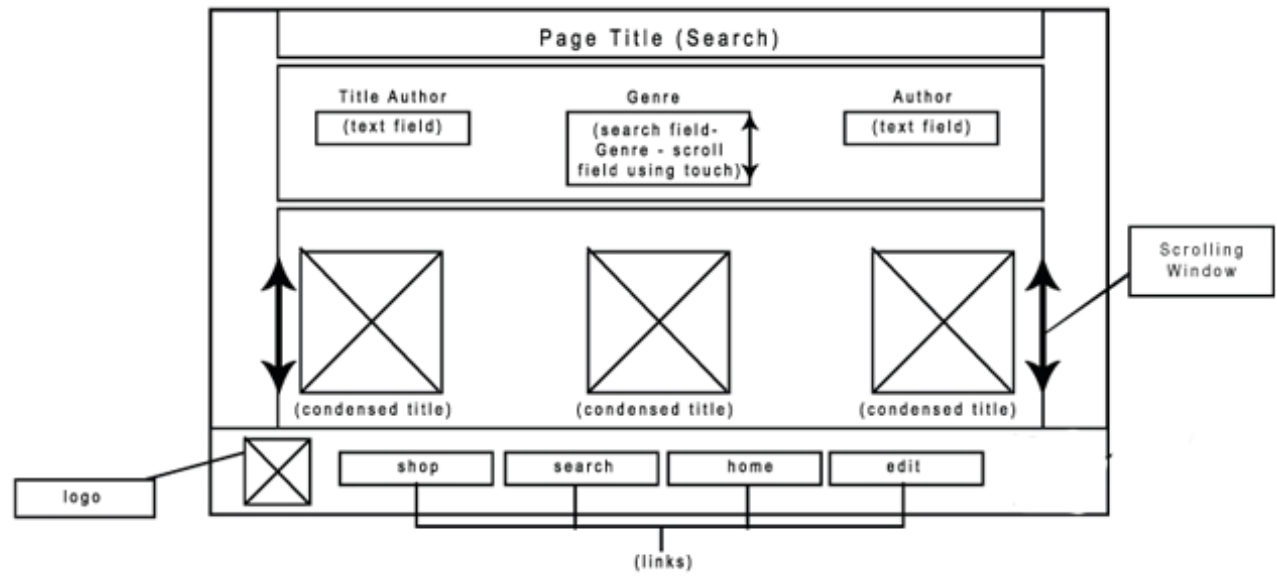
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## APPENDIX

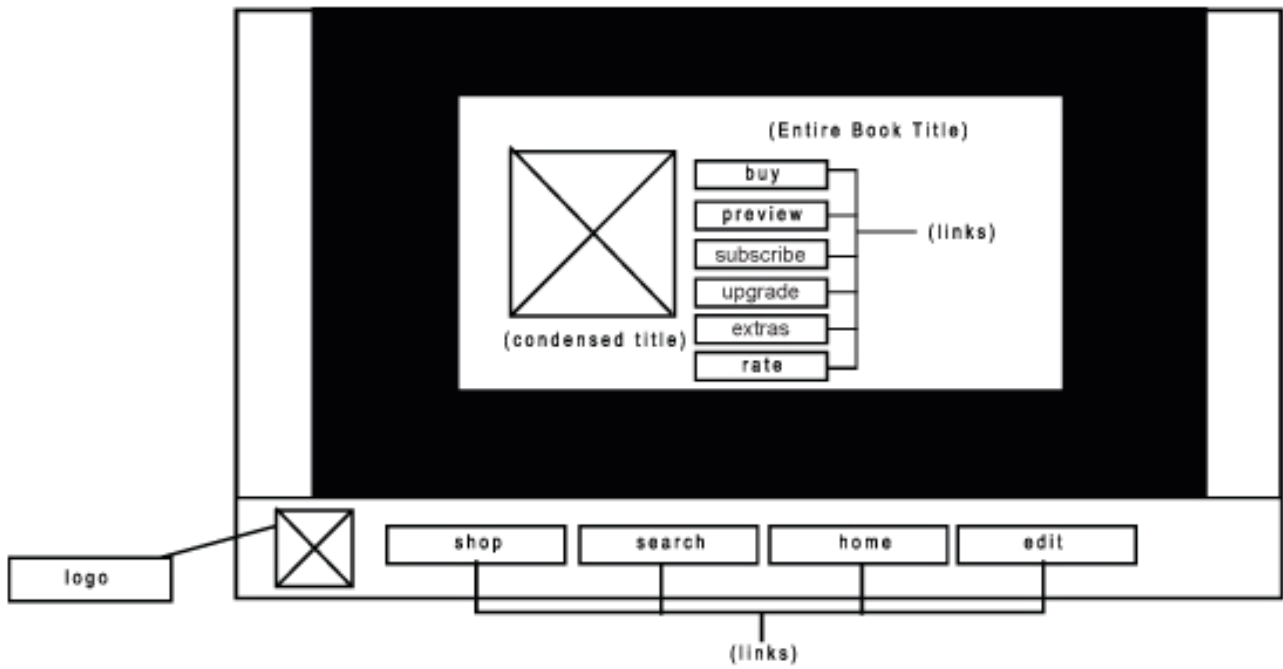
### APPENDIX PROTOTYPE WIREFRAMES



APPENDIX PROTOTYPE WIREFRAMES (CONTINUED)



APPENDIX PROTOTYPE WIREFRAMES (CONTINUED)



## APPENDIX STAFF BUDGET

STORY AND SCRIPT		Time/Quantity		Rate	Actual
	WRITER AND SCREENPLAY	2	days	15.00	240.00
	TOTAL STORY AND SCRIPT				240.00
PRODUCER & DIRECTOR		Time/Quantity		Rate	Actual
	EXECUTIVE PRODUCER	14	days	26.00	2,912.00
	PRODUCER	14	days	25.00	2,800.00
	DIRECTOR	14	days	25.00	2,800.00
	TOTAL PRODUCER AND DIRECTOR				8,512.00
PERFORMERS		Time/Quantity		Rate	Actual
	PERFORMERS	2	days	10.00	160.00
	TOTAL PERFORMERS				160.00
PRODUCTION STAFF		Time/Quantity		Rate	Actual
	PRODUCTION MANAGER	14	days	26.00	2,912.00
	TECHNICAL DIRECTOR	14	days	26.00	2,912.00
	PROD DESIGNER/ART DIRECTOR	14	days	26.00	2,912.00
	CHARACTER DESIGNER	3	days	25.00	360.00
	ENVIRONMENT DESIGNER	3	days	25.00	360.00
	STORYBOARD ARTIST	2	days	25.00	400.00
	LEAD ANIMATOR	14	days	27.00	3,024.00
	LEAD PROGRAMMER	12	days	25.00	2,400.00
	PENCILER	4	days	per page	500.00

## APPENDIX STAFF BUDGET (CONTINUED)

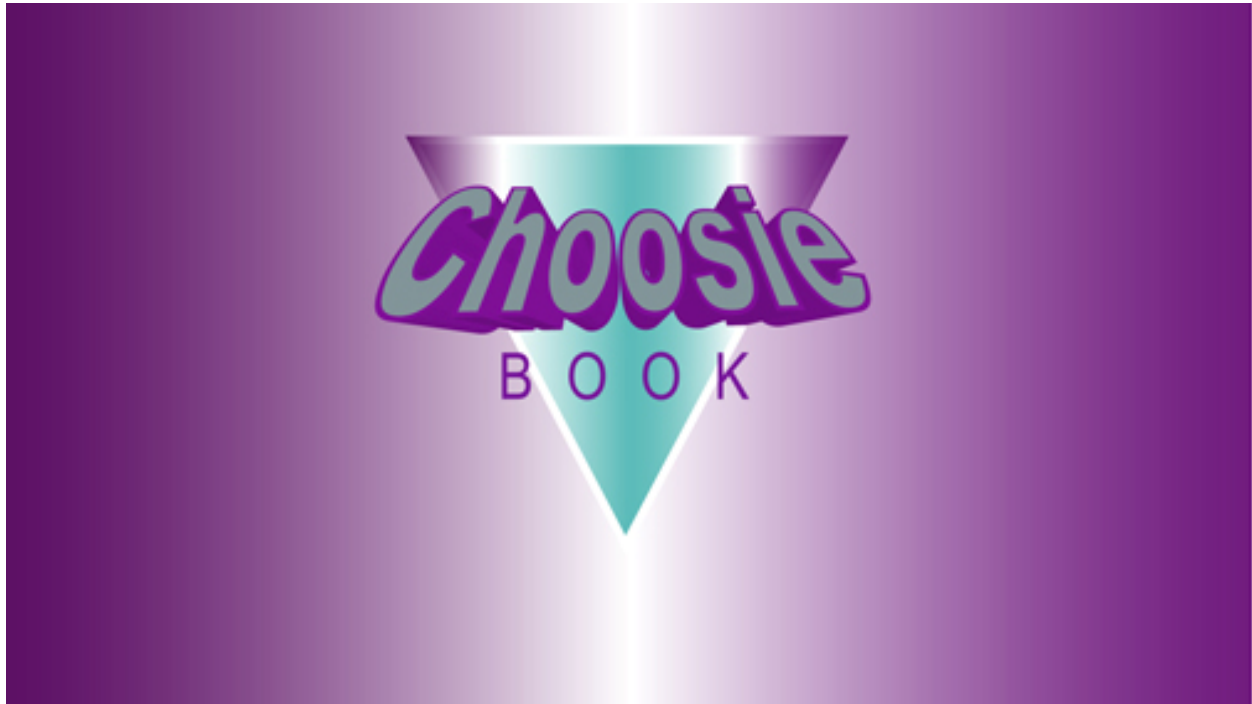
INKER		2 days	per page	300.00
COLORIST / FLATTERER		2 days	per page	200.00
8912				
TOTAL PRODUCTION STAFF				16,280.00
EDITING AND FINISHING		Time/Quantity	Rate	Total
EDITING STAFF				
Editor		12 days	15.00	1,440.00
TOTAL EDITING AND FINISHING				1,440.00
Budget Total				17,720.00

## APPENDIX WINDOWS ADOBE CS5 SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

- “64-bit support required: Intel® Pentium® 4 or AMD Athlon® 64 processor (Intel Core™ i3, i5, or i7 or AMD Phenom® II recommended); Intel Core 2 Duo or AMD Phenom II required for Adobe Premiere Pro
- 64-bit operating system required: Microsoft® Windows Vista® Home Premium, Business, Ultimate, or Enterprise with Service Pack 1 (Service Pack 2 recommended) or Windows® 7
- 2GB of RAM (4GB or more recommended)
- 16.3GB of available hard-disk space for installation; additional free space required during installation (cannot install on removable flash storage devices)
- 1280x900 display (1280x1024 recommended) with qualified hardware-accelerated OpenGL graphics card, 16-bit color, and 256MB of VRAM
- Adobe-certified GPU card for GPU-accelerated performance in Adobe Premiere Pro; visit [www.adobe.com/go/premiere\\_systemreqs](http://www.adobe.com/go/premiere_systemreqs) for the latest list of supported cards
- Some GPU-accelerated features in Adobe Photoshop® Extended require graphics support for Shader Model 3.0 and OpenGL 2.0
- Some features in Adobe Bridge rely on a DirectX 9–capable graphics card with at least 64MB of VRAM
- 7200 RPM hard drive for editing compressed video formats; RAID 0 for uncompressed
- Adobe-certified card for capture and export to tape for SD/HD workflows
- OHCI-compatible IEEE 1394 port for DV and HDV capture, export to tape, and transmit to DV device
- Sound card compatible with ASIO protocol or Microsoft Windows Driver Model
- DVD-ROM drive compatible with dual-layer DVDs (DVD+-R burner for burning DVDs; Blu-ray burner for creating Blu-ray Disc media)
- Java™ Runtime Environment 1.5 (32 bit) or 1.6
- QuickTime 7.62 software required for QuickTime features
- Adobe Flash® Player 10 software required to play back DVD projects exported as SWF files
- Broadband Internet connection required for online services and to validate Subscription Edition (if applicable) on an ongoing basis\* (Adobe System Requirements 2012, n. pag).”



## APPENDIX PROTOTYPE SCREEN IMAGES

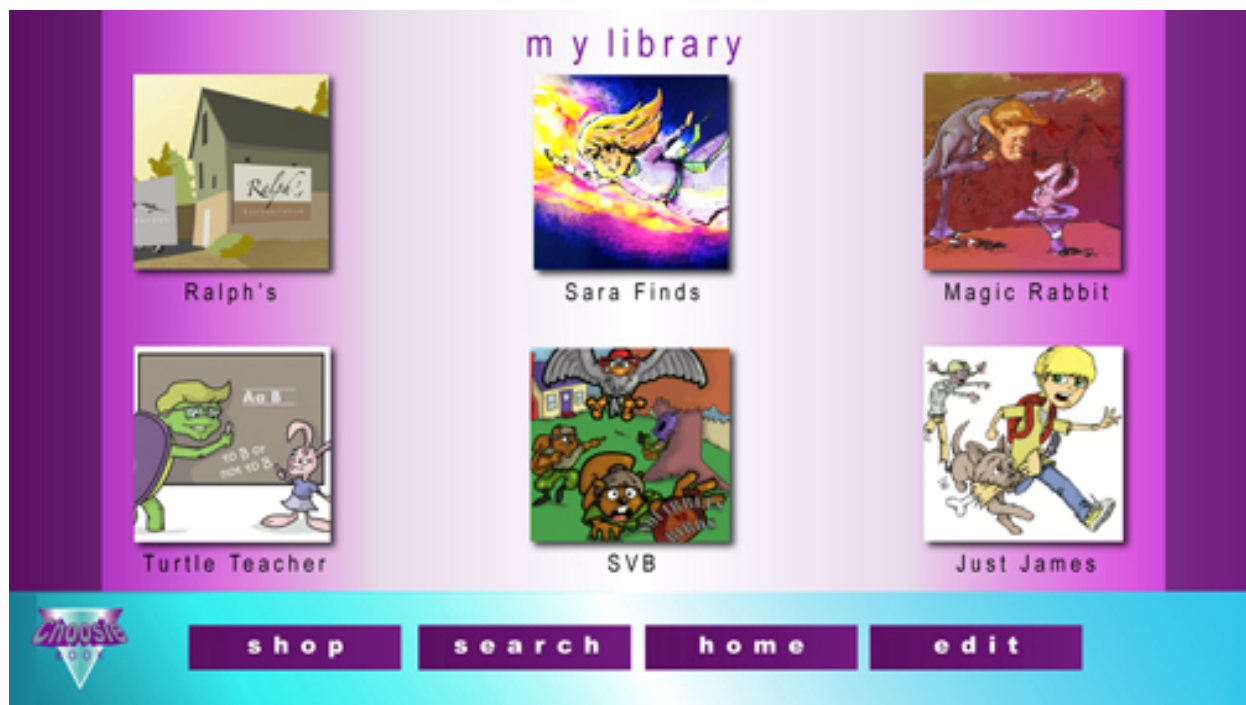


Logo Screen

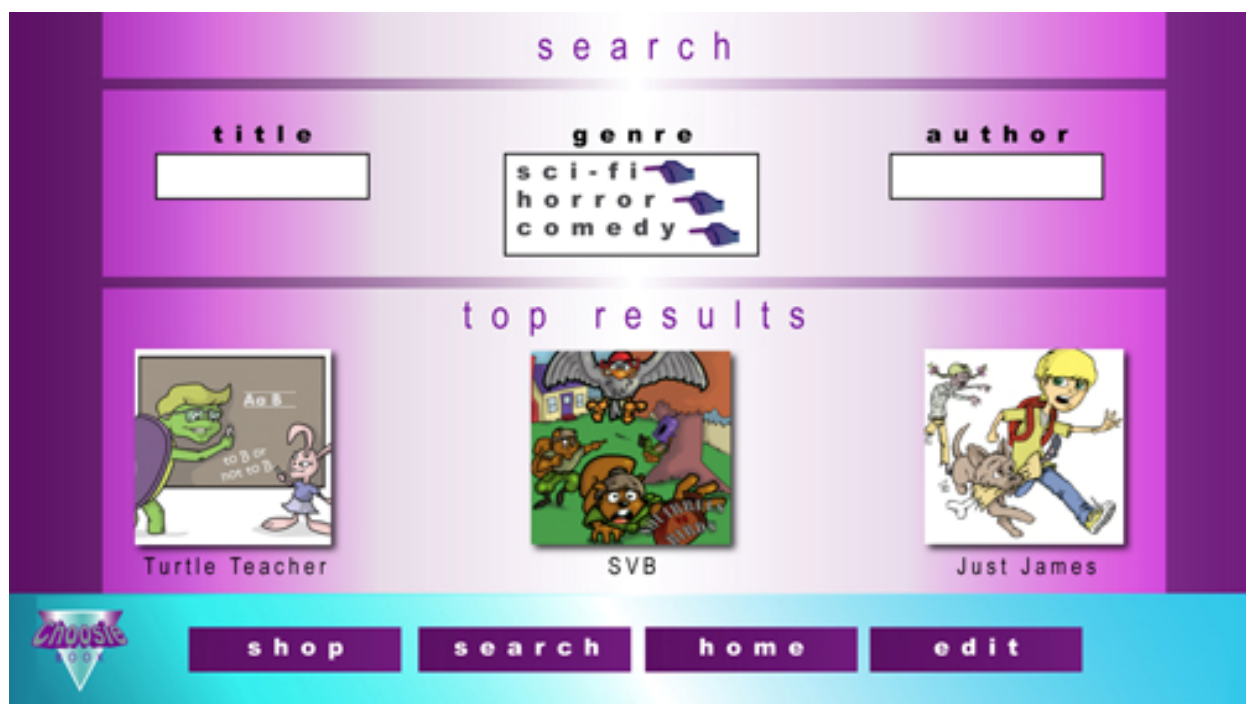


Main Menu

APPENDIX PROTOTYPE SCREEN IMAGES (CONTINUED)

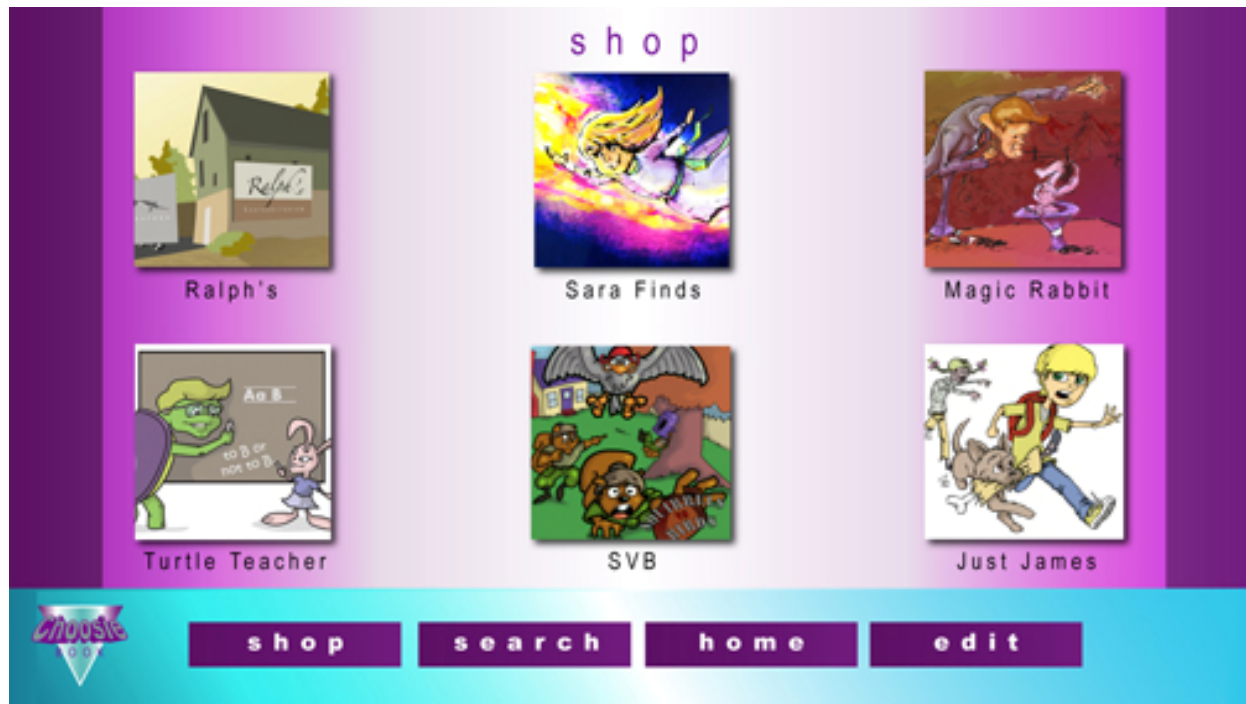


My Library

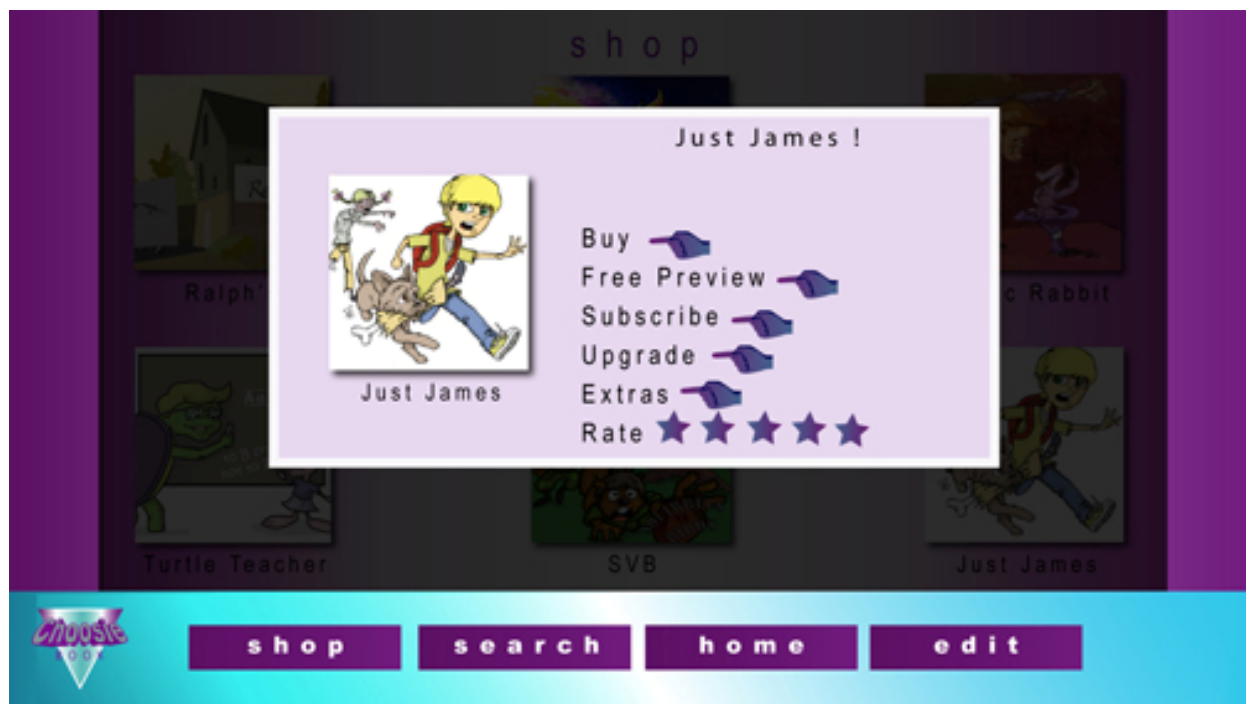


Search

APPENDIX PROTOTYPE SCREEN IMAGES (CONTINUED)



Shop



Purchase Window

## APPENDIX PROTOTYPE SCREEN IMAGES (CONTINUED)

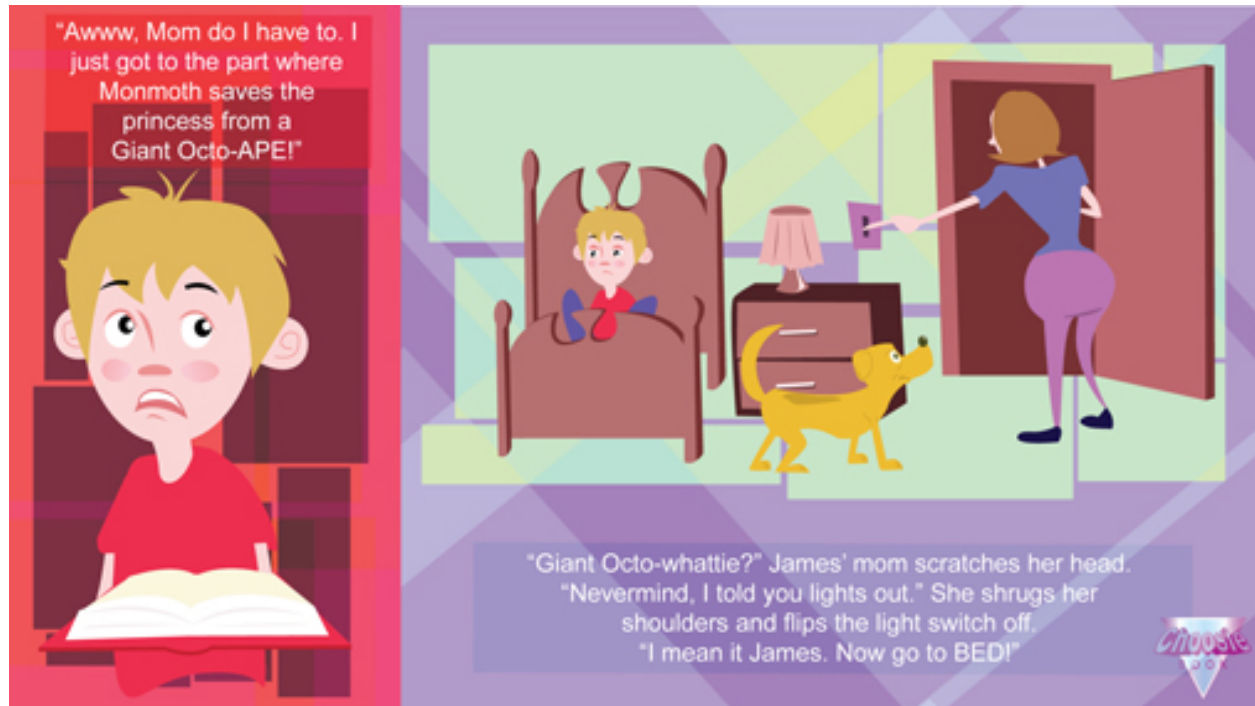


Just James, Page 1



Just James, Page 2

## APPENDIX PROTOTYPE SCREEN IMAGES (CONTINUED)



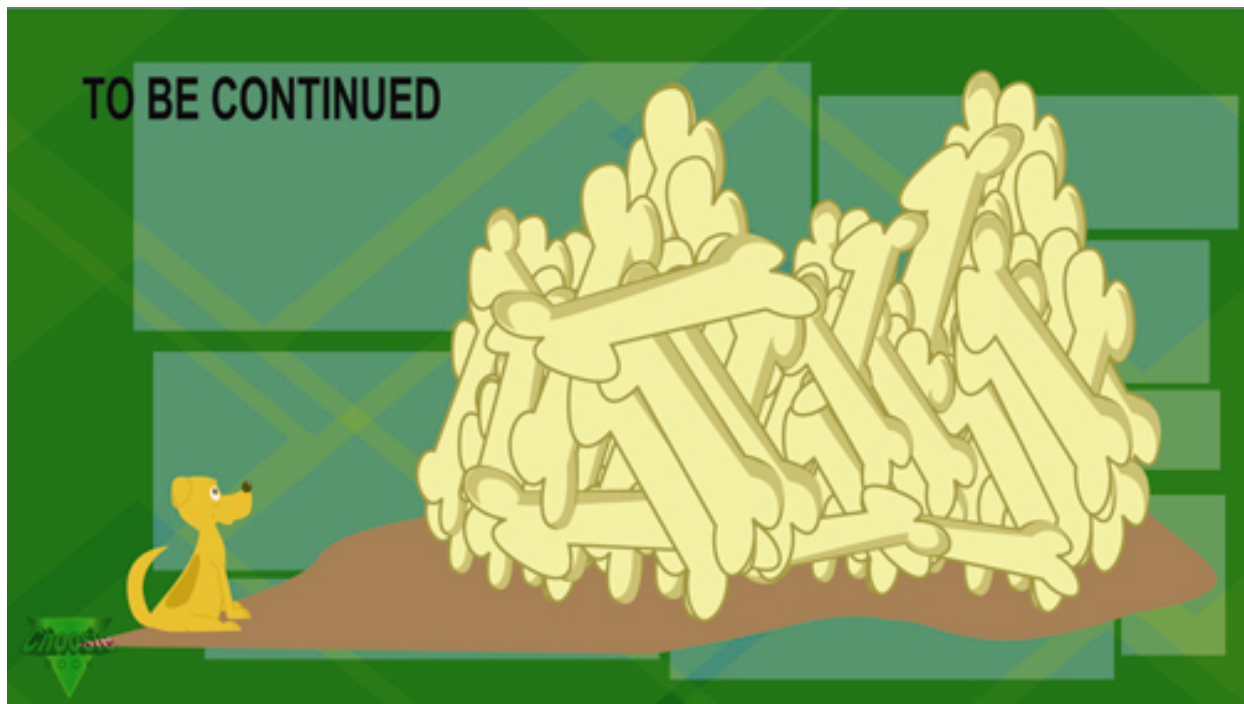
Just James, Page 3



Just James, Page 4



APPENDIX PROTOTYPE SCREEN IMAGES (CONTINUED)



Just James, Page 5, Dog Choice



Just James, Page 5, Drawer Choice

APPENDIX PROTOTYPE SCREEN IMAGES (CONTINUED)



Just James Page 5, Lamp Choice

## VITA

Graduate School  
Southern Illinois University

Jason D. Allen

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Southern Illinois University Carbondale  
Bachelor of Arts, Theater, August 2004

University of Georgia Athens  
Masters of Fine Arts, Theater and Film Studies, May 2008

Special Honors and Awards:

Harvey Award Nominations for Best Anthology and Best Comic for Young Readers, Reading With Pictures, 2010.

Dissertation/Thesis/Research Paper Title:

Practical Applications of Emerging Online Business Models: Developing a Digital Comic Book Prototype.

Major Professor: Dr. Paul Torre

Publications:

Editorial Cartoonist, Gateway Journalism Review, Vol. 41 Number 321, Southern Illinois University Carbondale. 2011.

Editorial Cartoonist, Gateway Journalism Review, Vol. 40 Number 319, Southern Illinois University Carbondale. 2010.

Writer and Illustrator, Just James and the Playground of the Living Dead. Reading With Pictures. Canada. 2010.

Illustrator, *Archer*, Season 1, Episodes 2, 3, 4., FX Cable Network and Floyd County, Atlanta GA., 2010.

Illustrator, Action! Acting Lessons for the CG Animator. Wiley Publishing. Indianapolis, Indiana. 2009.

Cover Artist, Theatre Journal, Vol. 59 Number 4, John Hopkins University Press, Hanover, PA., 2008.

Illustrator intern, *Frisky Dingo* Season 2, Episodes 3, 4, 5, 6., Cartoon Network Adult Swim and 7030 Studios, Atlanta GA., 2007