



# **Canyon Connex**

## Strategic Plan

LEAP Solution Team # 1

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## ***Executive Summary***

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### **Project Overview**

Currently, College of the Canyons has an abundance of resources available to students to assist them in their academic and professional careers. In addition to those resources, and despite the economic climate, College of the Canyons has done a great job of offering courses in a variety of disciplines in both credit and non-credit courses. However, the college serves a diverse population: students come from all walks of life, with varying degrees of skill, and an array of goals, so it is not always an easy job for them to navigate the college climate alone. More importantly, now more than any other time students cannot afford to waste time or get lost. In College of the Canyons' continuous effort to support our students, we propose to create a visual timeline for students in the form an interactive student profile page that will guide them from the initial education plan to graduation, certificate completion, or transfer, with a healthy dose of incentives along the way.

## Description

The interactive student profile page will provide students with a snapshot of their college career, while keeping them informed of their short-term and long term goals along the way. Each profile page will come equipped with a customizable avatar. This avatar will be a visual icon that will evolve overtime as they do. Students will be awarded with accomplishment tags as they complete various milestones throughout their college career. These tags can be earned in a variety of ways ranging from seeking out a counselor to get an educational plan completed, to completing a certificate program.

Students will be encouraged to think seriously about their goals and what they want to get accomplished while they attend classes at College of the Canyons. Once those goals have crystalized, whether they include transferring to a four -year school, earning a certificate, or completing an associates' degree, those goals will be populated into the student profile page along with a timeline for completion of the goals. Students will be prompted with different ways that they can earn accomplishment tags based on the goals built into their plan, students will be notified when a goal is within reach that is not on their timeline. This avoids students from taking random classes when the classes that they need are full but rather allows for informed decision making on their part.

The student's avatar will evolve overtime as the student progresses, and personalized items will be unlocked as they accomplish certain goals. The variety of ways for students to earn accomplishment tags will be endless but their ultimate goal of finishing and moving on will be laid out before them in a highly engaging and impactful way. In summary the interactive student profile page seeks to do the following:

1. Provide a visual, guided timeline for students
2. Motivate students to complete their goals and move on
3. Provide incentives for student accomplishments

## Targeted Customers

The target population is students, faculty, and the staff at the College of Canyons.

## Need

The Student Skills Task Force provided a list of recommendations that all of community colleges need to take into account. Recommendation 2.2 requires all incoming community-college students to (a) participate in diagnostic assessment, and orientation and (b) develop an educational plan. This project if implement will satisfy this recommendation. Recommendation 2.3 calls for community colleges to develop and use centralized and integrated technology, which can be accessed through campus or district web portals, to better guide students in their

educational process. This tool will definitely set the ground work for this happen by better informing our students.

## Mission

The mission of Canyons Connex is to provide students with an interactive profile page, which *ties* to their Education Plan, *unites* the objectives of various departments, and *joins* navigation of college requirements with incentives for successful completion.

## Vision

The vision for the interactive student profile page, Canyons Connex, is to capture the story of students from start to finish, while providing them with tailored guidance along the way. The hope is that students will be able to look over their body of work as a student or working professional and have sense of pride and accomplishment for what they have achieved.

## Project Values

- Motivation for students to persist in their educational studies through incentives
- Higher percentage of students completing their degree
- Sense of direction and confidence built among students
- Increased utilization of academic counselors due to students receiving an educational plan
- Strengthened campus community

## Key Strategies

### ***Goals and Objectives***

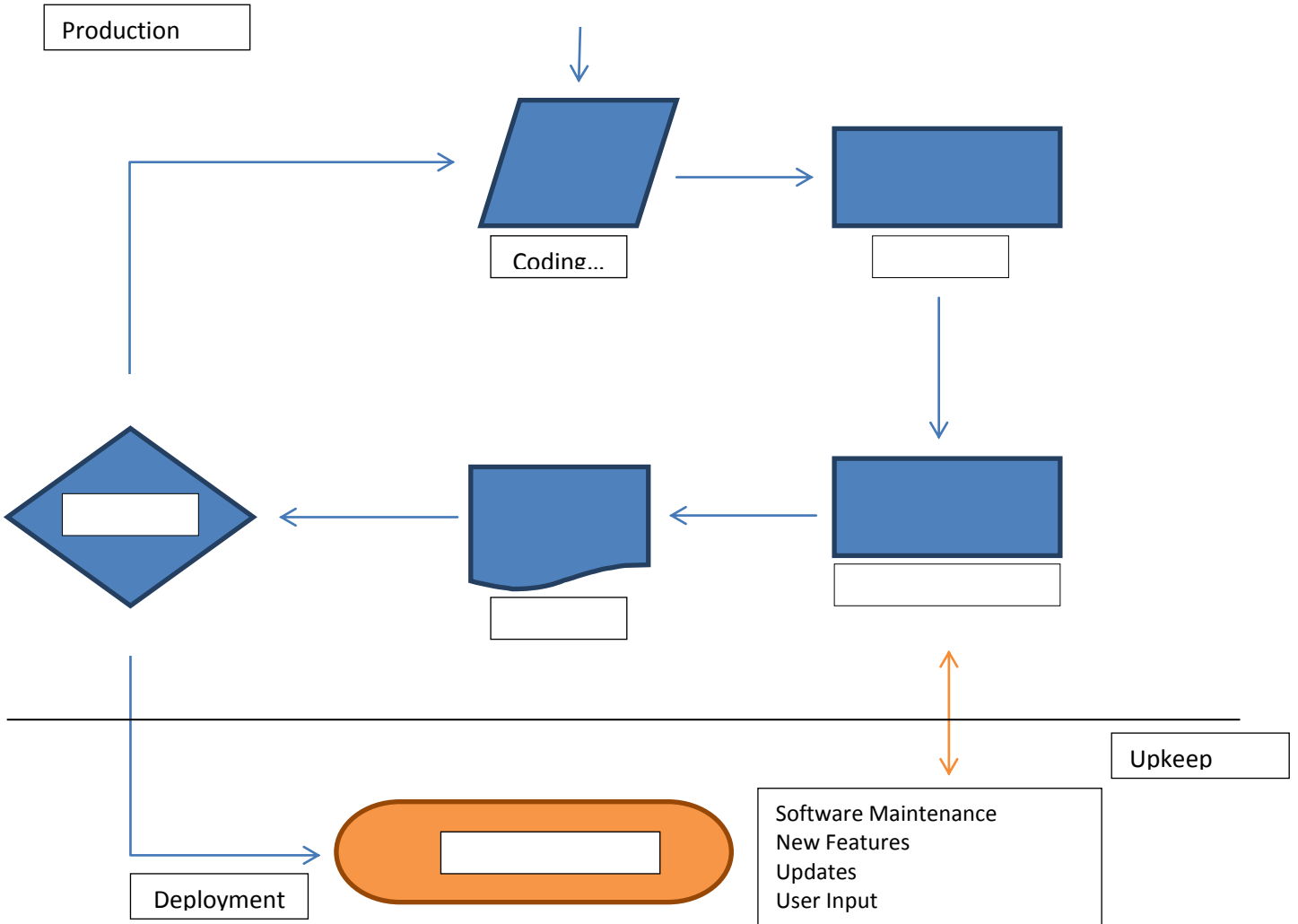
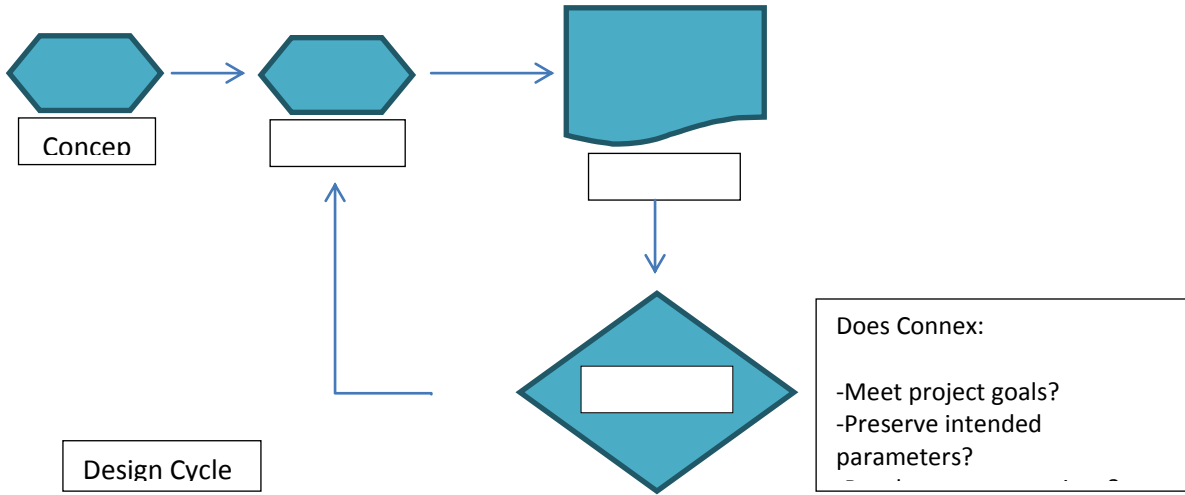
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- Track student achievement throughout their college career
- Encourage all students to get an educational plan
- Motivate students to stay on track
- Provide a career path for students based on educational plan
- Provide incentives for progression in their educational and professional pursuits
- To eliminate students from getting lost in the system

## Timeline

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Initial Concept.....	LEAP (5 weeks)
Conceptualization and Feature planning	
Design.....	2 Months
Design of aesthetics: User Interface and feature location.	
<i>Expect to produce art boards and design templates.</i>	
Survey Campaign.....	1 Week
Survey feature and design set.	
Marks the initial marketing phase.	
Incorporate Feedback Consideration.....	1 Week
~ Survey Campaign.....	1 Week
Coding.....	4-6 Months
Programming portion	
Testing.....	2 Weeks
Testing features and limitations within a controlled (isolated) environment.	
Performance and compatibility issues are targeted. <b>Alpha revision</b>	
Implementation / Rollout.....	1 Week
<b>Beta release:</b> All major features are included and working to specifications.	
Concepts are in place and design visions are fulfilled.	
Minor bugs are found and solved before deployment.	
A test group is chosen for Beta Surveying.	
Survey Campaign.....	2 Weeks
A beta revision of the project is provided for users beyond the development team.	
Beta testers are encouraged to examine all features, design or interface flaws missed, and provide consideration for future updates.	
Code and Patching.....	2-3 Weeks
The conclusion of these patches marks readiness for public deployment.	
All major bugs fixed, minor flaws identified, and considerations for future patching and software maintenance are outlined.	
~ Survey Campaign.....	1 Week
Deployment @.....	8 Months–1 Year



**Flow Chart**

## ***Budget***

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Budget

### **Complete Virtual Website**

- **Web Designer- \$50 dollars per hour (One time cost)**
- **Programmer: Anywhere between 50000 to 80000 year (One time cost for the initial programming)**
- **Avatar Creation: There are many free vendors that will let you link to their site for free (\$0)**
- **Own custom Avatar creator: \$12000 a month depending on the number of options needed. (One time cost)**
- **Upkeep and maintenance (fixed cost)**
- **Software Costs: \$100,0000 (open source may be an option)**

### **Possible funding Sources**

- Grants for gamification, technology innovation for education, and gaming
- Foundation mini grant-1000
- ASG Mini Grant-1000

### **Working Examples of avatar communities**

<http://www.kaneva.com/free-virtual-world.kaneva>

<http://www.imvu.com/signup/index/>

### **Sustainably**

- Partnerships with the computer science department & Animation to help with maintenance and upkeep
- Integration with MIS
- Integration with counseling department



# Marketing Plan

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## Growth of the Program

### Gamification Success in Business

Gamified elements should:

- Be inherently social

- Not restrict engagement to the internal site community

- Award points for activities that reach users' social networks to bring in referral traffic

- Focus on rewarding activities that create value for the user and business

Any gaming experience should aim to make users feel their experience is special.

Award points and badges for behaviors, such as subscribing to newsletters, "checking-in", or sending out notifications to friends/other users. The badges/awards should not be used haphazardly throughout the site and the users should have to earn badges.

#### Club Psych

Purpose - to increase engagement on the website *Psych* one of USA's television shows. *Club Psych* was launched as a fan loyalty program which let users win weekly prizes by completing different challenges. To enhance it they launched *Psych Vision* a mobile app that let users access behind-the-scenes videos, play trivia games to earn points and unlock prizes, chat with other fans, while watching the show. With this USA became one of the first marketers to offer a complete second screen experience where fans could experience the show on TV as well as via mobile app. Gamified social experience can turn engaged fans into valuable brand ambassadors.

#### Verizon Insider

Verizon Wireless wanted to increase the time users spend on its website. Developed *Verizon Insider* - users earn points and rewards for participating in contests, posting comments and promoting events. It gives users customized badges to personalize their experience. Gamification can reward behaviors consumers will naturally take on the site, such as sharing a blog that's relevant to their social networks or uploading a photo while attending a Verizon sponsored event like a concert. *Verizon Insider* can also be customized to match a user's interests or location. *Verizon Insider* seems to be paying off. On average, users spend over 30 percent more time on-site with social login versus site login.

#### Samsung Nation

Launched a social loyalty program, Samsung Nation, to target millions of fans who were already engaging with its corporate website. Users earn badges for completing activities such as writing reviews, watching videos and participating in forums. So far, results

have been encouraging, with user behavior such as product reviews increasing per month.

### Starbucks

Similar to eBay, the Starbucks app rewards users with Stars and status levels. It also gives users incentives to keep playing. Upon reaching the “Green” level, the Starbucks app immediately congratulates you. The Green level entitles users to free refills on brewed coffee or tea. Progress bars and incentives are great ways to motivate users. Even the little things, like Badge notifications for new messages can increase app usage time by audience. Synching social networks allows your usage to be shared to friends online. This type of gamified social loyalty keeps its players/customers coming back. You can load your card/account with money and use your phone to pay. Each time you use your app on your phone you earn a star. Once you have reached x amount of stars you receive a free drink of your choice. The Starbucks app is extremely successful and the possibilities on their website, rewards site, and integration with the app from the web are limitless. Starbucks’ website has a great potential for a landing page that encourages web users to join, engage online, download the app and start drinking more Starbucks.

# *Evaluation of Program*

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## **SWOT Analysis**

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### Strength, Weakness, Opportunities, and Threats

#### Strengths - students will be able to

- connect with fellow students, trace and connect services they have utilized
- use technology that is common to help them along their journey at COC
- share with counselors what services they have visited and allow counselors to better advise them
- feel motivated to proceed through education plan

#### Weakness

- Will students visit offices just to get points?
- Will students have to show they understand information given to them through their visits?
- Students may view this as an extra “task” for them to have to accomplish during their time at COC
- Will students access computers outside of COC to keep track of their profile page

#### Opportunities

- Creates a friendly competitive game within the COC campus student-body
- Provides campus wide engagement
- Promotes students to utilize student-services
- Visualizes path through out a student’s time at COC
- Encourages and rewards student success

#### Threats

- Cost
- New computer/software/network may be needed
- Students may not decide to utilize this system
- FERPA
- Student services offices may not update system in a timely manner
- 508 compliance

## ***Exhibits:***

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### Exhibit A

#### **Capabilities**

**IF:** students declare a major and develop an educational plan

**THEN:** Their education plan is mapped out on their page, with cougar tags (badges) that are locked & a brief description of how to unlock them.

**IF:** Students complete a milestone.

**THEN:** A cougar tag (badge) is unlocked, their map changes, their avatar evolves in some way, or their accomplishment score goes up.

**IF:** Students are close to completing a milestone

**THEN:** Students are alerted in some way.

**IF:** The next class on the students' education plan is full.

**THEN:** Students are prompted to take a class that is open that helps them to complete a certificate or is a part of a certificate program.

**IF:** Students register for a class outside of their plan.

**THEN:** A counseling check prompts them to reconsider, alerting them to the classes that are open that are on their educational plan.

**IF:** Students get closer to their transfer choice.

**THEN:** Applications to those qualifying schools are made available.

**IF:** Students complete all milestones.

**THEN:** The Avatar evolves, map changes, accomplishment score goes up.

#### *Features*

1. Customizable avatar
  - An avatar is a visual representation of the student, such as model or pictorial icon.
2. Ability to login via Facebook
  - Allows students to share their accomplishments with their friends on Facebook, also provides free advertising for the profile page.
3. Education plan map
  - A visual map that tells the story of the student, and highlights accomplishments as well as future goals
4. Accomplishment tags
  - Cougar tags that are visual representations of student accomplishments. Students will unlock these as they complete certain milestones.
5. Counseling checks
  - Periodic prompts based on student performance, giving tips, guidance, and advice on what to do next. This is a built in counselor and performance coach.
6. Program Highlight
  - Every month of couple of months a program at College of the Canyons will be highlighted.

7. Mobile App
  - Students are able access the application on their mobile devices.
8. Blackboard Access
  - Blackboard link, building block, or integration.
9. Friends list
  - Ability to share page with other College of the Canyons students, as well as with their friends from other social networking sites.
10. Student Email
  - Student email integration
11. Instant Messaging
  - Ability to send instant messages to friends who are logged into the profile page at the same time.
12. Tag idea submission box
  - Ability for the College of the Canyons community and students to submit new cougar accomplishment tags suggestions.
13. Student success stories
  - A space to highlight student accomplishments, alumni, etc.
14. Sustainability Challenge
  - Creative ways provided by faculty and staff to keep the page running and interactive.
15. Tag of the month
  - Highlights a tag that all students should try to get, such as going to a show at the PAC, or another school sponsored event.
16. Tag store
  - Marketplace similar to android market or the apple app store where students can purchase things for their avatar.
17. Unlocked items
  - Items that students have unlocked for their avatar
18. Goals
  - Student goals will be built into every decision that they make
19. Accomplishment history
  - A place to display the visual story of the student's accomplishments
20. Job notices
  - Job notices posted in the student's area of interest
21. Career trends
  - What is happening in the field that the student is planning on entering into

## Exhibit B

### ***Economic development and education***

#### Sustainability

The plan is to have the student community help sustain the application. We hope to use student programs, animators, and 3D molders to maintain maintenance, and provide updates to the page. This allows for portfolio opportunities for students.

Chris Ferguson- Computer Programming--

Jeff Baker- Media and Entertainment Arts-

These faculty members could make the recommendations of which students ongoing would be good for the upkeep of the page

Exhibit C

### ***Student Survey***

A random sample of students was given the following survey:

Do you have an Education Plan?

Do you know what resources are available to you to help you reach your academic goals?

Which of these on-campus resources have you used?

counseling

financial aid

student health center

EOPS

DSPS

TLC

Library

Do you belong to any student groups? If so, which ones?

Have you ever attended an event on campus that required you to show your student ID? If so, what was it?

Of the students surveyed, the vast majority have Education Plans. However, many do not use campus resources, nor do they attend on-campus events. The Student Profile Page will motivate students to become more involved with campus life and provide easy access and functionality to their Education Plans.

Exhibit D

### ***Future Planning***

Should implementation of this project be requested, we suggest that ownership of the Interactive Student Profile page be administered in the Distance Learning Department under James Glappa-Grossklag. The department, along with additional faculty and staff as needed, will handle the coordination, implementation, and maintenance of the Interactive Student Profile page to ensure that its original intent and vision is secure.