

PROBLEM STATEMENT:

Trust in our media today is slowly becoming lower and lower with major news outlets sticking to a few biased journalists who only cover the news when it makes their affiliated party look good. This leads to a lot of misinformation circulating through our media and decreasing public trust. Many journalists are overlooked because of this and have a lot of trouble getting their foot in the door. Truth is key for the survival of public trust in our news media. With a handful of journalists putting out stories the media becomes easier to control and makes it lean to one side.

We aim to restore faith in our media and to give journalists the chance to increase their chances of work. We aim to do this by creating a site that connects journalists to media corporations where they can post their work over any topic and media companies can pick which journalists it wants to use for any story or to see which journalists they could potentially use for future stories.

MARKET ANALYSIS:

For this site we are using a subscription based revenue system to use our site to market yourself, share work and opinions and get connected to media companies to make it easier for journalists to find work. Our subscription will run monthly for subscribers at 20\$. Our target market for our site is journalists of any age with an emphasis on journalists who are starting out in the field. With the feature to share your work together and collaborate with different sources we expect that all types of journalists will use this site for different reasons.

We believe this is our target audience because there is really no other site out there that uses the different functions that connect journalists with not only media corps but also with each other to cross reference and fact check your own work and others. According to the US Labor

Force Bureau only about 6,000 jobs in the US open up yearly for journalists and this is because many leave the industry due to failure to get work and move on the different jobs. With our site it will be much easier to connect with all different types of media sources to increase these odds making it the prime site for journalists looking for work.

FINANCIAL PROJECTIONS:

For aspiring journalists, it's not always easy to find resources that guarantee quality information; with our platform, journalists as well as professional contributors will be able to access and provide research, knowledge, and skills at an affordable price for all parties involved. According to sources such as Indeed and Glassdoor, journalists make about 28k-83k, or even up to 47k-86k per year. However, journalism is the most stressful career involving finding a consistent and well-paying job. As of 2022, the Pew Research Center found that 77% of journalists sensed turmoil in the industry and would choose their career all over again. Journalists are faced with an economic burden. Our goal is to limit this turmoil by opening a gateway between aspiring journalists and professional journalists and give them opportunities to connect and increase their income.

For individuals, we will have a standardized monthly fee of twenty dollars. This will include full access to the website's materials, resources, and contributors. Since our main target audience are student journalists, there will be a student discount at the rate of ten dollars per month. This will encourage journalists to use the platform, especially during their time as a student, which will create a steady professional path. We will also offer discounts through major news organizations and research firms, where one can get a membership or cheaper subscription through a partnered contributor. This way, we are still making a monthly profit while also offering affordable pricing. By providing journalists with the support they need at an affordable

price, such as access to resources, mentorship, and career guidance, we can help them find and keep meaningful jobs. This will reduce the amount of turmoil in the industry and create a more stable and secure environment for journalists and hopefully we will continue to gain aspiring journalists seeking cost-effective connections.

GLOBAL AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS:

Journalists often struggle with finding jobs and/or getting their work recognized post graduation. This is a problem that affects journalists everywhere due to the turmoil around the industry. With this program, we will be enabling access to a worldwide network inclusive of journalists, professionals, and resources, rather than having journalists struggle to find work or opportunities around them. Being new to the job industry, it can be disheartening trying to make and find those initial connections within the field. Our goal is to allow individuals, businesses, news organizations, research firms, etc., to easily connect with people as well as necessary assets. Using this online platform will quickly help people expand their desired reach and be able to grow their connections globally.

Another benefit is the opportunities that it can create for journalists to grow their knowledge, experience, and skills as well as professional contributors that will be able to share their expertise with a global audience. Hopefully, this website will generate an abundance of diverse mutually beneficial relationships and will identify potential partners for journalists around the world. These connections will help journalists to share their stories to a wider audience, and to create more meaningful and impactful journalism. Connecting people globally will be the ultimate outcome of this website, providing opportunities for collaboration and innovation. Ultimately, this will result in a more engaged and informed public.

COMPETITION:

There are several platforms on the market working to connect journalists with resources. Muck Rack takes a slightly different approach from the platform we're proposing. Instead of connecting journalists with experts, this platform works to connect journalists with public relations experts and brand representatives seeking media coverage. "PR Pros" can filter through a database of journalists and pitch their story ideas to relevant reporters. This can be an extremely effective marketing technique for companies looking to promote new campaigns and products. At its core, Muck Rack is a media database that utilizes "AI and machine learning technology to source and surface relevant information from across the web, social media, TV and radio" (Zebian) Public relations specialists can opt in to receive alerts anytime their brand is mentioned in both social media and web based media outlets. This makes it much easier for brand representatives to monitor media trends within their industry and connect with relevant journalists.

There are several drawbacks to the Muck Rack platform. For starters, it's one of the more expensive platforms connecting journalists and sources, making it a less attractive option for freelancers and startups with tight budgets. In addition to this, several companies have reported inaccuracies in reporting from Muck Rack's journalists. This is due to the fact that Muck Rack itself does not verify their journalists. Instead, they rely on publicly available information and data to compile their media database. In this way, the platform operates on a sort of honor system wherein the PR Pros bear the responsibility of fact checking journalists.

MARKETING STRATEGIES:

We aim to use several strategies across multiple platforms to get our products into the hands of journalists and experts. LinkedIn is a great tool for connecting with educated professionals and business minded individuals. We plan to create a company page as our home base for connecting with the community of professionals already active on the platform. LinkedIn also offers the option to create groups that allow individuals to engage in discussion around certain topics. Creating a group related to our platform will provide us with the opportunity to directly engage with new customers and educate them on all that our platform has to offer. Currently, there exist many groups on LinkedIn related to journalism and adjacent topics. Participating in these conversations will allow us direct access to building repertoire with our target audience.

The platform we're proposing will offer discounted subscription rates for professionals affiliated with both educational, and independent research institutions. This will make our platform especially attractive to larger institutions. To capitalize on this, we plan to create educational campaigns catered towards these organizations. Our aim here will be to inform them of how they will benefit from using our platform. By connecting with university experts, we will also gain access to a market of student journalists and future professionals.

The overall philosophy behind our marketing strategy is targeted marketing. For this proposal, we don't believe that traditional social media platforms (Instagram, Facebook, etc.) will be as effective for marketing our platform, since many of their users don't fit the category of either expert or journalist. The strategies we're proposing will directly target these two groups and steer clear of the outliers.

POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS

Solutions to this problem do already exist. Journalists are able to use platforms like HARO and Profnet to connect with expert sources. Even if a reporter is not a member of these services, they can always try to cold email a source to try to get an interview. This isn't exactly ideal, as journalists are often on a time crunch and have time sensitive stories. Some experts could be unresponsive, or be inundated with requests for interviews and comments. The entire process is generally cumbersome, so hopefully our platform can provide an easier way for all parties involved. Experience in the industry is ultimately the best way for reporters to gain access to experts, but we want to make that level of interconnectedness available to reporters with much less experience and freelance journalists.

The necessary resources users would need to adopt a solution would be funds to join the network (paying for the monthly subscription), an internet connection, and a device to access the internet on. Most people have these, as "70% of all Americans own smartphones and 50% own tablets," according to jmango360, a business that helps retailers launch mobile apps. These barriers to entry are very low. For us to effectively deliver a product, we'd need servers to host the website/application on and moderators to ensure the members of the network are who they say they are.

LIMITATIONS

The main issue I see with our project is getting people to use it. There are a fair number of competitors already in the game, meaning we'd have to have some kind of incentive to get people off other platforms and onto ours, like perhaps offering users some kind of discounted rate as early adopters. Technical issues we could face would be things like not having enough space on the server to host all the content or coding errors.

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Lean Canvas

Your Name

<p>Problem</p> <p>Top 3 problems</p> <p>Finding expert sources is difficult, especially for journalists with less industry connections</p> <p>Academics want their work to be cited as experts</p> <p>Existing Alternative That one website</p>	<p>Solution</p> <p>Top 3 features</p> <p>Connection and networking tools</p> <p>Board for peer reviewing articles</p> <p>Key Metrics</p> <p>Amt of users on the site</p> <p>Journalists vs expert demographics</p> <p>The fields of study used</p>	<p>Unique Value Proposition</p> <p>Single, clear, compelling message that states why you are different and worth paying attention</p> <p>We unite journalists with expert sources to give people faith that the news they read is accurate</p>	<p>Unfair Advantage</p> <p>Novel concept</p> <p>Channels</p> <p>Targeted advertising</p>	<p>Customer Segments</p> <p>Target customers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Academics (pay to be available to journalists) -Journalists (pay to access the network and peer reviewing) <p>Early Adopters</p> <p>Early journalists and experts sharing their work</p>
<p>Cost Structure</p>		<p>Revenue Streams</p>		