

## *Project Design Lab 1* Final Project Proposal

Student Z.F. excerpted sections (“Issue”, “Similar Projects”, “Position and Goal”, “Project Details”):

### **Issue**

A zine, short for “fan magazine,” is an independent, self-published magazine. The zines of the 1980s and ‘90s were printed and photocopied for distribution, but in today’s digital world, many zines are being distributed online instead.

The world of print was changed forever in 1439 when Gutenberg invented the printing press. Until the printing press was invented, books were painstakingly handcopied by scribes. The printing press made it possible to print the same thing over and over again automatically, saving much time. Self-publishing has existed since then, ranging from the broadsides published by Benjamin Franklin during the American Revolution to chapbooks published by Beat poets during the 1940s and ‘50s (Wright).

Zines as we know them today have roots in the science fiction fanzines of the 1930s (Row). In the 1980s and ‘90s, zine topics expanded from science fiction and fantasy to a much wider variety, including art, music, science and technology, sports, hobbies, etc. (Row). The punk movement was an important part of this, as zines embrace the fundamental rule of punk: DIY, or Do It Yourself. Heath Row points out that because many zines are now produced on a computer rather than being handwritten or typed on a typewriter, “much of the original flavor of punk zines has been lost.” While there may be a loss of “flavor,” this migration to a new technology has brought about a new type of zine -- the eZine.

An online zine, or eZine, lacks many of the problems common to zines. A print zine can be expensive to produce, and as many zine authors are not out to make a profit, they end up spending lots of money to print their zine and getting nothing back from it. Print zines also suffer from lack of exposure. A zine must be promoted or sold through a zine distributor, or, more recently, a bookstore such as Barnes and Noble. However, an eZine does not suffer from these problems. Once an eZine is on the Internet, it is freely available to almost anyone in the world.

### **Similar Projects**

There are many zines, magazines, journals, and other publications to be found online. One that has been successful is Kiwibox, an online magazine/social networking site targeted at

teens. Kiwibox has been online since 1999 and was one of the first sites of its kind (McCarthy). The articles in the magazine portion of the site are written entirely by the site's users. The articles "go through an editorial process and are then published to the site" (Goodstein). The site is free to use and the magazine is published weekly.

Another online magazine that has had a long publishing history is Film Score Monthly: The Online Magazine of Motion Picture and Television Music Appreciation. This magazine started out as a print magazine in 1992 and eventually ended up going online (Wright, H., 129). Film Score Monthly, although an online publication, is not free. Subscribers must pay a fee and log in in order to read the articles.

One online journal that really uses the online aspect to its advantage is Vectors, located at <<http://www.vectorsjournal.org>>. This journal presents articles on culture and technology in a way that a printed magazine could not, utilizing Adobe Flash and interactive elements. In this way, the Vectors journal is experimenting with "changes in reading" through the collaboration of writers and designers to create a new kind of online experience (Pressman).

### **Position and Goal**

The purpose of this project is to create an eZine for and by fans of indie musician Emilie Autumn. The zine will differ from many current popular forms of online publication in that the articles will be selected by an editor for inclusion in the zine. The articles will then be compiled into a website after a submission period. The zine will be free for anyone to read, and back issues will be available on the site. The articles will be varied and will include everything from directly about experiences with Emilie Autumn and her music, to short stories and poetry, to recipes and tutorials, and anything else in between that the fans are willing to write about that would appeal to other fans.

The concept of issuing a magazine at regular intervals is not a foreign one by any means. However, in today's online world, readers expect to receive information instantaneously. News blogs or blogs with articles similar to magazine articles are updated on the fly, as soon as there is a new piece of news out or a new article is written. However, this online zine would not do well in that format. The purpose of the zine is not to share news (which can easily be found elsewhere on the Internet), but to bring Emilie Autumn fans closer together so they can share their thoughts, ideas, creativity, and give back to the fanbase around them. Updating the site

whenever there is a new article would create a disjointed feel. Releasing the zine in an issued format would also greatly appeal to the fanbase's old fashioned sensibilities.

### **Project Details**

As noted above, there are already many online publications, and many of them share a similar format, that of a web site or blog. While this does allow the information to be accessed easily, navigating through a web site is a very different experience from flipping through the pages of a magazine. When flipping through the pages of a print magazine, the reader is able to quickly scan articles until they find something that catches their eye. Clicking through web pages does not allow for the scanning of articles that we are used to. In order to simulate this effect, this eZine will be implemented using Microsoft's Seadragon technology. Seadragon utilizes "deep zoom," which allows a user to zoom into a document infinitely. By using Seadragon to display the eZine, a user would be able to view all the pages of the eZine at once, and then zoom in and pan to "scan" the articles until something catches their eye. (An example of Seadragon in action can be viewed at the Hard Rock Cafe Memorabilia site, at <http://memorabilia.hardrock.com>.)

Monetary resources will be necessary to complete this project. Seadragon is not an open source software and will need to be licensed from Microsoft in order to make use of it. A domain and website hosting will also be needed. There is also a possibility that staff for the zine will need to be hired, including someone to program the website, people to promote the zine in order to get more article submissions, and more editors to help with choosing the articles for each issue.

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