STUDYBLUE SEEKS THE OPPORTUNITY BETWEEN MOBILITY, CROWDSOURCING AND LEARNING

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This week I would like to talk about a startup that I have been following for a while ago and whose model interests me especially: StudyBlue. StudyBlue was founded in 2009, is based in Wisconsin (USA), and has managed to **pass the figure of two million users and attract $14.9 million in investment to develop a platform mobile social media** that supports the mobile learner by making millions of learning materials accessible to mobile devices.

StudyBlue seeks **to monetize the business opportunity generated at the intersection between social learning 2.0 and mobility**. The potential of mobile apps for learning *on-the-go* is enormous. Every day we lose an infinite amount of time waiting and transfers and the mobile can be a perfect tool to take advantage of those gaps by learning something. Of course, there are many startups that have set their sights on this "blue ocean". **Studyblue combines a social Web tool with a mobile application that also has a fairly solid 2.0 facet**, providing an interesting value proposition both for the student who wants to improve their learning and for the teacher who wants to facilitate the study to their students as well as institutions that intend to generate new learning tools.

At the moment **they are betting on a mixed monetization model based on advertising and a freemium payment scheme and are fighting to "catch" the user by integrating the social component into the app, facilitating communication between fellow students**. To achieve this network effect, however, they will surely also need to create effective formats and tools for learning, a task that is not yet resolved at the mobile level. Personally, I am still experimenting with various language learning apps and it seems to me that there is still a lot of room for innovation and improvement.

The strategy they have chosen at StudyBlue, however, faces a huge challenge. Its approach seems to be committed to attracting content from the most institutional part of education: Universities, Schools, etc. and in this sense they will have to be able to attract the attention of these content generators (teachers, schools, universities, etc) and generate quality content. This work can end up being tremendously resource intensive and end up stifling their growth process if not managed properly.

In addition, they must be able to build a simple but useful tool. In this sense **the lack of specialization of the platform can be a handicap to achieve a differential user experience** and, in fact, **its current operation can be complex for a market beyond the early-adopters.** It seems to me, for example, that the experience achieved by specialized apps such as Babbel can be much more enriching for the student.

Therefore, it is **a field of opportunity with a lot of growth potential** in which there is still plenty of room for **even more disruptive approaches in the 2.0+ mobile experience that further democratize the generation of content and the learning experience**. Studyblue are trying, working to polish the social+mobile learning experience and looking for viral growth. We will surely see many more startups working in this field.

There are no comments yet.