Q&B : Questions & Beyond

Q&B: A geosocial&online learning platform for ones with questions

Ask, find personalized answers, and then meet up online to deepen your knowledge and mingle! Q&B is a geosocial networking & online learning platform for all those who have a specific question in mind, from small to big, from seemingly frivolous to really important.

Team: Team Aşure. Aşure (known as Noah's pudding) is a Turkish dessert with a mix of grains, dried fruits and nuts. Our team is a mix of many skill sets, and we believed this Turkish dish describes our team spirit best.

Team members

Berkman 'Lord' Gülenç, Hale Tuba Yılmaz

Members roles and background

Berkman is a confused biochemist and a hopeless nerd. Through his professional journey, he serviced audio-visual equipment and assisted on stage production crews with their technical needs. He has been working with children since 2015, coordinating an English immersion program & advising various co-curricular activities. Now looking for educational tech. opportunities to move ahead with his passion, developing methods to use gaming in education.

Hale is a Philosophy and English Literature graduate who is interested in improving the quality of education. She is self-described as a jack-of-all-trades. As a certified teacher, she has taught English and led workshops on various visual art subjects. Hale is eager to contribute in order to make education more fair, inclusive, inspiring, and accessible.

Solution Details

Solution description

We all learn better when things spark our interest. We are also more willing to answer when asked about subjects we care about. Our online platform & app will provide answers with a personal touch, from people with passion, in one-on-one live calls/videos, in a friendly manner.

With a "question in a bottle" kind of fashion, asking questions becomes an anonymous process. Q&B offers a chance to individuals with difficulty speaking in front of crowds, or shy to acknowledge explicitly that they do not know a subject to present themselves with their passions and interests. This also allows individuals to confidently answer questions about things they enjoy doing.

Once a question is asked, our algorithm will suggest categories to use as the question is written to find the appropriate person for the right answers. Questions can include photos & videos too!

Based on their interest, our members will receive questions, which they can answer with a few short sentences and/or through a video call. With our monetization feature, professionals can offer online courses, as they will receive questions and customers that are interested in their respective fields. However, we believe in free learning experiences and encourage that through the gamification part of the platform. If the answer is for free, then the user earns more points in Q&B.

Our solution provides support for formal, non-formal, professional, and social settings; your question can simply be a way to find study buddies or people to cook with! We aim to provide social interaction, almost equally as much as we wish to provide the answers, as both can be hard to reach in times of Covid-19.

The success of our system will be measured through various rating systems: one is for respondents from the questioners after they respond, and the other after a video-call for the quality of the video call. Here, the quality is not only measured through picture and sound quality but through the quality of the interaction as well.

Solution context

Covid-19 forced us to quarantine, separate from the ones we love and care for. Schools, serving as the social hub for many people, took its share of that as well. Since all the institutions went forward with online learning, teachers and students had to change the way they live, teach, and learn. The shy kids in the classroom became the videoless, muted students. Many teachers had to work extra to learn what each button on various software meant and worked. There were many questions on the minds of many before, during, and after classes. Either a teacher needed to learn how to use a feature on their platform of choice, or a student who had lost connection or zoned out during class sent private messages to friends to figure out what they missed.

One of the biggest problems in online learning and pedagogy is that teachers try to copy the way they teach in a classroom setting to online platforms. In general, so much of teaching is finding new

ways to introduce the same concept as students need repetition to learn. Duplicating that online is difficult, not because of the lack of resources, but because it becomes obvious that the teacher is repeating the same task.

All of which increase the number of questions that get unanswered. With the online environments, asking questions puts people under even more of a spotlight; individuals who are hesitant to ask questions are impacted more than ever, students who didn't do so well in in-person classes struggle even harder.

There is hope for better online alternatives as carrying over traditional classroom methods to online platforms has proven to be insufficient. However, they are not currently in active use and 990 million children in 130 countries are affected by school closures due to Covid-19, according to UNESCO. On that point, Q&B brings an alternative, a complement to the current online systems which end up inadequate to fulfill expectations.

Solution target group

We would like to reach everyone who has a question in their mind, who miss social interactions, meeting new people as well as learning new things from others. This platform would also enable easy access to and connection with 'experts' on the other side of the world who carries the knowledge the other looks for: from a pasta maker in Italy to a chemical engineer post-doc, to a mother and even to a fellow student or teacher, who had faced the same problem before and now knows the answer.

Solution impact

We will get evaluations from the users on other users, from questioners to respondents, about the quality of the answer and interaction. After a year of Q&B being online, we will measure how many individuals from which countries have connected thanks to the platform of Q&B, and will provide statements from users as well.

The nature of it being a digital platform allows us to collect anonymous data to assess focus areas to enable better reach. Said anonymous data can also be shared to reflect user preferences and aid EduTech researchers in developing better techniques. The impact of the platform can then be evaluated, even independently.

Solution tweet text

To all the teachers who spent hours on learning functions on Zoom and students who zone out online, trying to figure out what the teacher has said through private chats: Q&B is here to help! Connect with individuals around the world and turn socialization into a learning asset.

Solution innovativeness

Our platform aims to bring a new angle to non-formal learning, in a way that the questions in mind are answered through one-on-one live video calls. In this way, social interaction is added into the scene even to the answers one can easily find online. This helps users to meet new people, make connections, and provide networking opportunities. Q&B can even help to diminish the psychological impact of Covid-19 on older adults.

We would like to turn answers into consumable, easy to access conversation starters. That way, one's confidence in their field could provide vital information to those who need it. On our platform, answers aren't the end of the journey, they are a way to end social disconnectedness.

In the market, there are many educational resources and social media platforms and forums which answer questions, but they either do not focus on tailoring answers according to each user or producing on-demand, one-on-one, and personalized videos. In Q&B, we provide it all in one setting. We value bringing individuals closer and building an interconnected world, where one provides the knowledge the other seeks.

Solution transferability

Q&B is a platform that works on-demand. Users can type a question anytime, and the topics one can ask on Q&B are limitless. As individuals who always have questions on their minds, we value asking questions— whether they seem frivolous or really important to understand a topic.

Our users can ask about a math problem, a chemical experiment, a question for their survey, ask how to take pictures better by sending one of their pictures, ask how to cook pasta like an Italian, and so on.

We also combine services together, so a user who uses Q&B not only learns something online but also gets the chance to try out what they have heard/read through cooperation via live chat. We also aim to provide a purchasing service for those who would need help with the equipment needs while carrying out an activity. As it sometimes can be difficult to find the right tools for the job.

Q&B is suitable for very short term interactions to a fully-fledged course on a certain topic. Even service providers can find use in the concept of receiving targeted questions. Q&B can prove to be a swift way of getting the customer through the door.

Solution sustainability

We plan on providing bite-sized answers and interactions. Today, people expect information to be provided to them with little or no effort. We aim to not only make asking questions fun, easy, and rewarding but also do so for answering as well.

Our aim is to be a platform where educators and professionals can provide courses and if they want, monetize them. Through commissions with small percentages, we hope to cover certain costs associated with hosting an online platform.

In addition, when the answer is through a live meeting, at times there are required items listed, we wish to work together with local stores that deliver such items, and acquire funding through sponsorships and advertising as we forward the shopping cart of items to nearby stores.

Solution team work

An online hack-a-thon comes with its own set of quirks. It has proven to be more challenging to conclude our tasks, lack of instant feedback, or the ability to work side by side has made us feel even more tired.

Despite all the difficulty, however, we seem to behave a lot more direct; negative feedback was a lot

easier to give, putting our thoughts out there was simpler. We also were lucky to come up with a blueprint that we both enjoyed building.

In addition, this project has proven to be a good bonding activity, sparked even more ideas we hope to tackle together in the future.