

Google Project 10 to the 100 submission questions

Written by Robert Ahdoot, Oct. 19, 2008

YayMath.org

What one sentence best describes your idea?

YayMath.org is a free, online video catalog of math lessons, filmed LIVE in an entertaining manner, for the first time in the high school classroom.

Describe your idea in more depth. (300 words max)

Let's begin with one major truth: I LOVE WHAT I DO. Educating minds is a calling which I am so fortunate to have found during my lifetime. Every day in the classroom, I am completely in my element. The students know I am their #1 advocate, and in turn, the entire room shares a special chemistry. Our lessons are a truly distinctive source of positive energy one would have to see to understand. Imagine capturing vital student questions, uplifting teacher-student interactions, fun, lively, fresh banter and humor... all encapsulated in easy-to-access online videos. Then imagine the ability for students of all demographics across the world where math is a necessity for success having instant access to this source of knowledge and positivity.

The concept of filming LIVE truly distinguishes YayMath.org from any other online tutorial system. Due to many schools' policies of uniformity, such endeavors are not even attempted elsewhere. The only comparable online math videos are of individuals talking only to cameras, which comes across dry and unconnected to the students watching. And, the only lessons that attempt to be entertaining are marketed for younger ages. So YayMath.org is unique in that it brings the excitement and spontaneity of an actual high school level class. To boot, the students in my class "get it"... they understand how cool it is to be a part of a pioneering project that aims to help the world, and I could not be more grateful to them for their role in this. This endeavor is nothing without the students, and I have told them that repeatedly. The vision is already in its infancy; I invite you to watch the videos and I am sure you will "get it" too. Let's transmit this idea to the world!

What problem or issue does your idea address? (150 words max)

With each passing year, I have become more aware of how many students are in dire need of improved educational resources. Math education is no exception. Schools lack funding, inspired teachers, quality supplies, and it only seems that the educational gap is widening for the underprivileged. As a result, the world's educational community needs fresh ideas to allow the light of knowledge to reach the most number of minds.

The education system at large is waiting to be REINVENTED via technology. Think of getting music at the record store fifteen years ago versus on iTunes today. Whereas before, students in need had to go somewhere and/or find someone for help, now students are turning to technology. How our society consumes more information in less time is ever-evolving, so initiatives such as YayMath.org are designed to propel us smoothly into the 21st century world of education.

If your idea would become a reality, who would benefit the most and how? (150 words max)

Through the internet, the potential for YayMath.org to help the world is limitless. Math is a universal subject, taken by students of all ages, abilities, and educational institutions across the globe. And the subject is no simple feat. Go to a math class anywhere and one is sure to hear stories of how numerous students struggle. Add to that reality the additional pressure of a more competitive world, in which the bar measuring success is constantly rising, and students' frustrations rapidly descend into despair. Without alternative sources for help, students sadly do not gain their required knowledge. That sets off a domino effect, in which completely capable individuals are overlooked at later stages in life, whether for higher education or in the job market. To answer the question in short, any student in the world that struggles with math will benefit significantly, while also being entertained.

What are the initial steps required to get this idea off the ground? (150 words max)

The idea is only the few steps off the ground. The foundation has been laid. However, major steps are still required to attain the vision's worldwide scope. YayMath.org needs a massive marketing campaign. Students need to know about this service so that they will be aware of where to go when they need help. In addition, we need technical expertise to maximize the viewing experience: web designers, programmers, web traffic experts, video technology experts, etc. Perhaps most importantly, we need additional visionaries for how we can implement this idea of fun, live educational videos to reach beyond the field of math, to every major scholastic subject, to help even more people! This vision must transcend beyond me.

Describe the optimal outcome should your idea be selected and successfully implemented. How would you measure it? (150 words max)

The beauty of an online system is that the number of people it can reach grows exponentially. The simplicity and cost effective nature of YayMath.org is overwhelmingly exciting. A very concrete measure of progress would simply be web traffic, that is, measuring how many people are visiting and using the site, and from where. The optimal outcome would be a revamped approach to education, in which students can easily access this resource for help, as opposed to panicking and losing hope. Too many students these days have an alarmingly low level of hope. Let's rethink how students can get quality education, by permanently changing the many outdated systems we currently use. YayMath.org, should it be successfully implemented, will instill a can-do approach in students worldwide that is just waiting to be realized. Yay Math, and YAY LIFE!