Word by Word Press Kit

INTRODUCTION

This document brings together the various elements needed to launch an initial press release campaign for Word by Word. The kit starts by defining Word by Word as a company and succinctly summarizes the system through a one page fact sheet. It then continues by offering insight into the foreign language learning industry and ends with an initial news release to be shared at the start of the press campaign. The document also offers a gallery of potential images that could be used throughout the initial press campaign.

Word by Word

Organizational Profile

Company Name: Word by Word

Vision: We aim to be the best way to learn vocabulary.

Mission: We strive to teach and empower our customers to embrace and learn new vocabulary through well researched instruction techniques

Values: We value active, confident learning that empowers the learner to confidently speak and use their personal lexicon of vocabulary. We passionately believe there are better ways learn vocabulary, that time is valuable and focusing on long term retention is key to mastering a new language.

History: Word by Word was created by three students for their senior project in a digital communications Capstone course at Lebanon Valley College in Annville, PA. It was designed as a response to these students' unsatisfactory experiences with other language learning platforms. While traditional foreign language lessons taught vocabulary, they failed to fully consider the cultural context that came with the acquisition of language. Lessons limited vocabulary to the bare minimum needed to communicate. From this standpoint, the team decided to create a system that would consider native speakers vocabulary and focus on expanding foreign speaker's vocabulary to include words beyond the bare minimum needed to communicate.

The Team

Malia Waltman

Project Manager

As a senior Digital Communications student with a concentration in business technology, Malia is the leading force.

She focuses on developing the brand identity and business plan, maintaining the project schedule, and acting as the communication lead between the team and outside entities.

Dan Bennett

Developer

As a senior Digital Communications student with a concentration in design, also majoring in art and visual culture, Dan is the design king.

Serving as the main developer for Word by Word, he focuses in coding and promoting the visual brand through appropriate design elements.

Michaela May

Editor

As a senior Digital Communications student with a concentration in design, also majoring in English, Michaela is talented with words.

As the editor for Word by Word, she focuses on writing copy such as research reports and proofing all released documentation.

Fact Sheet

How it works:

Word by Word's system is derived from the competency-based learning model, which evolves from the demonstration of knowledge being tested and the reinforcement of positive learning techniques. Questions created for the quizzing function of the system will allow for individual learners to display where they are at in retaining vocabulary, and users will always be able to learn at their own pace and at the level they succeed best in.

By using the Word by Word system, language learner's will grow their foreign language vocabulary Word by Word.

System Components

Language Levels

For customized learning based on the individual

Interactive Word Pages

Creates deeper cognitive connection to words

Dynamic Questions

Test varies aspects of vocabulary knowledge

Target Market:

Institutions

- Offer language courses
- Aim to teach language fluency
- Looking to build student's vocabulary skills

Individuals

- Language Learner
- Looking to enhance vocabulary
- Aim to reach or move beyond fluency

Backgrounder

While there are many language learning applications and webpages across the Internet as well as an abundance of books to choose from, there are not many that focus specifically on the acquisition of vocabulary in a foreign language. Within a cultural sense, there can be multiple words that mean one singular thing. However, people are likely to only obtain knowledge about one word and disregard the rest of the synonyms, alternatives, and cultural contexts surrounding it.

Vocabulary learning, even without the foreign language umbrella, is a full topic in its own regard. While multiple vocabulary acquisition models exist, each one falls under its own subcategory of where it belongs on the education scale. One the Word by Word team investigated is known as the socio-psycholinguistic theory, which examines how knowledge is retained through social and cultural settings, similarly to how the team wanted the questioning algorithm of the quizzing function to come into play. However, it failed to consider how students would be tested on the material at hand despite "learning" the social and cultural information. Another theory the Word by Word team investigated was the schema theory, which states that all knowledge is organized into units, and within these units is stored information. This one did not end up working for the team due to the practice being virtually irrelevant when considering how the questions needed to be organized to best fit learning and retaining vocabulary for learners.

The competency-based learning model was the vocabulary acquisition tool the Word by Word team utilized when developing the system. This model demonstrates knowledge being tested and the reinforcement of positive learning techniques. Questions created for the quizzing function of the system allow for individual learners to display where they are at in retaining vocabulary.

Word by Word Removes Barrier to Learning Foreign Vocabulary

Local recently graduated students create vocabulary learning application for foreign language learners of all levels

Annville, PA

Today, three digital communications majors from the local Lebanon Valley College announced a webpage dedicated to foreign language vocabulary acquisition to be released on Wednesday, Oct. 21. On this date, the webpage and application, known as Word by Word, will be revealed in its fullest form to the public after finishing a successful Kickstarter campaign back in May of this year. Through this crowdfunding service, Malia Waltman, Dan Bennett and Michaela May, all of whom graduated from the college this prior May, were able to raise over $100,000 for this system to be launched.

Word by Word is an integrative system for foreign language learners which teaches vocabulary in the user's chosen language. After taking a pretest to determine how much they already know in their respective languages, users will learn vocabulary through written and aural methods indicated on word pages. Through a quizzing function, they will be tested at regular intervals to determine how the information is recalled versus simple recognition of the terms.

All being travelers and language learners, Waltman, Bennett and May wanted to create this system after finding it difficult to practice and build vocabulary through highly structured lessons. Through Word by Word, language learners will have the ability to have a more robust and integrative vocabulary of words at hand and will be able to move at their own pace with this system.

Word by Word is available for free or for a premium option of $10 per month for extra features.

Boilerplate: Word by Word is a webpage giving foreign language learners the opportunity to expand their vocabulary through multimedia and quizzing functions and interactive, individualized, comprehension-based learning.

STORY IDEAS

- Feature on the founders of Word by Word and why it was created

- How Word by Word has represented Lebanon Valley College and the values it teaches to its students

  - How LVC educators have utilized the system in their classrooms

- A look into how this system benefits foreign language educators in the classroom (feature at least two professors/teachers)

- A look into how this system benefits students (feature multiple students- perhaps across different academic levels like secondary education versus college)

- A look into how this system benefits individualized learners (feature at least two individuals)

- One individual's timeline from where they were in their vocabulary learning before starting on Word by Word going up to where they are now

- How someone is taking advantage of the premium system

  - Going off this point- why someone chose to study vocabulary in more than one language and how Word by Word has helped with that

INFOGRAPHIC IDEAS

- After sending out survey- percentages of people who view Word by Word as advantageous after using it for certain amount of time

- Which language's vocabulary is studied most frequently on Word by Word

- After sending out survey- most common reasons people chose to increase their vocabulary

- Benefits of increasing vocabulary in your targeted foreign language
  - Benefits of speaking a country's native language while traveling
  - Tips for sounding like a native speaker (different infographics can be done for different languages)

- How learning this vocabulary affects our brains

Photographs

Photo by Christin Hume on Unsplash

Photo by Brooke Cagle on Unsplash

Photo by Sasin Tipchai from Pixabay

Photo by Mimi Thian on Unsplash

Photo by Victoria Heath on Unsplash

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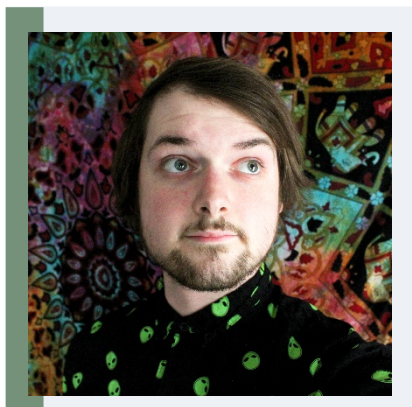
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