

## **Community Magic CrowdHelping Website (10th draft)**

Following the pattern of “CrowdFunding” and “CrowdSourcing” terminology, CrowdHelping Software would offer users tools for being helpful to other people. Social services, counselors, and community organizers could use this software to augment their ability to tap professional and community resources. Just ordinary people who want to be in touch with a large network of helpful people could also use this software. This would be a tool for “networked social work” as described by the “Connecting People Study” and the animated “Connecting People Intervention Model.”

See: <http://communitymagic.org/resources/connecting-people-study/>

This document describes a cloud-based multi-user environment reminiscent of existing social media. People who gravitate to a role as a community connector (or simply a “connector” or a “helper”) will be able to use this environment to organize, maintain and share appropriate, consensually obtained information about the people in their personal extended network and the people and groups in their community who can be considered to be their “clients.” Connectors will be able to help clients by making well-considered referrals to other connectors and to the other clients they know. Connectors will use existing information services and new tools provided within this environment to publish (or record privately for their own use) information useful in helping to make appropriate referrals. The information will be specific information about the skills, needs, offers and interests pertinent to the people and groups the helpers serve. The system will be designed to maintain the privacy and anonymity of all people concerned, as is appropriate.

### **I. Summary**

#### **A. The Need**

Most of the people in our society who are helping people to make new connections do so professionally. They include doctors, lawyers, social workers, community organization staff, and a host of other service providers. In many cases, the professionals who work with low-income communities are overwhelmed both by the number of people needing help and the intensity of needs that people have. Just keeping up with the wealth of existing resources can be a daunting task.

#### **B. The Idea**

We are proposing to create a Web service that will allow anyone who wishes to be a helpful connector to keep track of the people and organizations that they are helping. As noted earlier, we'll call the people and organizations receiving help “clients” even if they are also connectors and have clients of their own.

##### **1. Client contact information**

Both actual contact info and anonymous keys will be available to helpers to use to identify their clients. Clients can be assigned a client number or a

nickname to assure their privacy, as appropriate.

## **2. Searchability of Listings**

This service will allow helpers to share anonymous client information with other people using this service. Helpers can make certain information about their clients searchable by other helpers and if appropriate, by the public generally. The searchable messages will be called “Listings.”

## **3. Searchability of profile information**

The service will be designed to mark specific profile information about each client as “private” (for their own searching and viewing only). Profile information can alternatively be marked “Helpers Only” to allow other helpers to find or see it or “Public” for anyone to find or see.

## **4. Public resources**

The service will offer pointers to a host of information and communication services and will offer to train helpers to be effective at information retrieval.

## **II. About**

Starting in Philadelphia, Community Magic collects and builds tools people can use to help members of their community. The aim is to make useful connections among neighbors and communities. When enough people are busy connecting their neighbors, and they themselves are connected to each other.... magical things can happen.

### **A. This is a free Web based service**

While the users (connectors/helpers or clients) may or may not choose to charge fees for work they do or services they provide using the Community Magic Web site, the environment is offered as a free service, open to all who wish to use it. The free service will be supported by contributions and revenue generated from screen advertising.

### **B. How is Community Magic different?**

Community Magic is much more than a Web site. It is a community building tool. Its central feature is the people who help other people. For the present time, we are calling the people doing the helping either “Helpers” or “Community Connectors.” The “magic” in this system works by taking advantage of the human ability to make useful connections in a large sea of data. Community Magic uses computer and Internet tools to bring “Community Intelligence” into the development of the “Global Mind” on a one-to-one, person-to-person basis. The process offers people the opportunity to bring their memory and capacity to identify patterns to bear to address local individual and community needs. This is why we call the most active participants “Helpers” or “Community Connectors.”

### **C. What is this service for**

#### **1. Serving Clients**

Community Magic is designed to permit anyone who wants to help other people, and decides to become a “Community Connector,” to maintain a list of “Clients.” Once a person is a client, the Connector will be able to record &

pay attention to their needs, record & be aware of their interests and resources, and be obligated to respect their privacy. Clients shall not be coerced to reveal information about themselves beyond that which they freely share. Clients may use the system to track the efforts made and data collected on their behalf. Clients may choose to work with as many Connectors as they like. The system will allow the public, we'll call them "Browsers" to search and view the most public profile information and listings of interests, resources, and needs.

## **2. Building Relationships Among Helpers**

### **D. Can people earn money through this service?**

The Community Magic site will be offered free of charge. But the services provided by individual Community Connectors or their clients need not be provided for free. Connectors can generate appropriate income from their work. They can offer a variety of different kinds of fees, if they choose. They can be part of an employment agency, for example. They can be a staff member of a community service, a community organization, or a government agency. Their church or a private company can pay them. They can be professional social workers helping clients find needed connections in the community to stabilize their lives. Or they can be a head hunter, matching professionals to large firms.

## **III. Who uses this service**

There are four primary types of users.

### **A. Administrators**

As the system evolves the administrative tasks may evolve as well. But for now we need to consider only a few types of administrators as follows.

- 1. Top level**
- 2. Regional**
- 3. Local**
- 4. Organizational**

### **B. Community Connectors**

Connectors are people who maintain a list of clients, the client needs, and the client resources. They help their community members to find each other as well as resources in other communities. These people also develop interactive relationships with other Connectors, near and far, to allow them to serve their clients and the clients of other connectors.

#### **1. Types of Connectors**

The list of the kinds of people who might be Connectors can run the gamut from people just serving their families and friends to block captains, community resource people, social workers, head hunters, or HR people at international Fortune 500 corporations.

## 2. **Paid or unpaid**

Volunteer, small business, or someone's employee. These people can be self-employed, employed by an agency, organization, firm, or they can volunteer to help the people around them.

### C. **Clients**

People or groups who are served by a “Community Connector.” They may wish to use the service to track their own listings. Clients can also register themselves as a “Connector” to enhance their ability to be of service to themselves as well as offer services to their own Clients. They can be both someone else's client and a connector helping other people.

### D. **Browsers**

Browsers are people who wish to search and view the public listings. They can choose from any particular community or geographical area or within a particular topic area. They also may wish to register to receive a newsletter or other info. Browsers' ability to connect with Clients or Connectors will depend on the settings and choices made by the Connectors or the Clients themselves. In many cases even the public listings will require a Browser to interact or respond with or to a Connector before obtaining contact with a Client.

## IV. **What is at the heart of this service? Profiles and Listings**

People make up the brain and the heart of Community Magic. Profiles and listings are the tools through which the people can know and reach out to each other. The listings are searchable and may be directed to specific types of people, or to specific groups, or to specific geographic areas. The person creating the listing decides who can see it and how long it shall remain in the system. By “who can see a listing,” we are talking about members of an organization, other types of organizations, or specific geographical areas, or specific types of interest areas. This will be a source of much discussion as the system evolves. Profiles will only be searched and viewed by the Connector who entered them and will generally NOT be searchable by other Connectors, Clients or Browsers.

## V. **Screens & Menus**

### A. **Signup/Login**

This should allow people to use a standard signup/login process. People can choose the type of user they wish to be at this point. People may choose to have more than one login and more than one role as an Administrator, Connector, Client or Browser.

### B. **Activities by Role**

The four roles each have the following set of powers and may engage in activities appropriate to their role.

#### 1. **Administrators**

These people may have to be elected by the users or appointed through some form of consensus decision-making. For now, the Administrators will be the system's original designers.

- a) **Create tools for use by others**
- b) **Approve roles**
- c) **Facilitate discussion**
- d) **Moderate listings and other types of entries**

## 2. **Connector**

- a) **Enter new client**
- b) **Enter/Edit a skills inventory**  
Resources, needs and interests of a client will be viewable only by the client and the connector. "Listings" will be the tool for sharing a client's information.
- c) **Create listings**  
Listings are used to circulate needs, resources or interests of particular client to appropriate topics and appropriate communities..
- d) **Search listings for matches for client interest, needs or resources**  
Searches may be set to seek listings within specific topics, and from specific or geographical areas or specific groups.
- e) **Create saved searches**  
Searches, once conducted many be set to automatically run again periodically and for a definite or indefinite period of time.

## 3. **Client**

- a) **Register**
- b) **Choose one or more Connectors**
- c) **Enter/Edit needs, offers or interests to be seen by their Connector(s)**

## 4. **Browser**

- a) **Registration is voluntary**
- b) **May search public listings**  
Registered Browsers may respond to a Connector, but not to a Client.
- c) **May seek to become a Client or a Connector**

## C. **Settings**

Each user will have settings appropriate to their role and need for privacy.

- 1. **Contact Info**
- 2. **Organization**
- 3. **Location**
- 4. **Regional Connections**

## VI. Notification

It may be appropriate for each listing for each client to have settings for who shall receive notification about the status or any results from the listing...

### A. Notification methods

#### 1. Notification via email

Some people may want to be sent a message for each notification. This could become overwhelming. So, there may be a need for notification digests.

#### 2. Notification via a list of notifications on the system

It would be tedious to have to search through email for notifications. They ought to be searchable on the system.

### B. Notification types

#### 1. System messages (status, pending events, etc.)

#### 2. Messages from Administrators

#### 3. Requests from other Connectors

#### 4. Replies from other Connectors

#### 5. Comments from other Connectors

#### 6. Notification of a pending response to a listing

#### 7. Notification of the status (pending, success, or failure) of a saved search

#### 8. Notification that a listing has been fulfilled

#### 9. Notification that a listing has timed out

## VII. Screen shots with sample data

To be developed shortly

## VIII. Other Important Concepts

### A. Structure of the network

#### 1. Lists

We will need to have tools that can help users find the other connectors in their area and the organizations in (and adjacent to) their area or conceptual community. A process will be needed to avoid duplication since a user wishing to set up within a particular church, for example, should be informed that the church already is registered within the network. The same would go for a conceptual community. An example might be something like “The Global Stamp Collectors Guild” where there are no physical boundaries but the organization should be uniquely identified in the network along with any sub-divisions that the organization may have.

#### 2. Structure of the needs and offers

Many useful categories may be found in Craigslist. Other sources of terms for employment titles, and activities that may be used to identify needs and offers

will be appended to this description.

a) **Skill inventories**

Connectors will need to collect data about people and the community. One structure for this is a community skill inventory such as <http://communitymagic.org/public/The%20Capacity%20Inventory.pdf>

b) **Another list of services from Everything for Everybody**

<http://communitymagic.org/public/EFE%20Services%20list%20with%20Capitals%20column.pdf>

c) **Needs and offers will be organized into “Listings”**

d) **Needs and offers will have both categories and subcategories**

We may need to design an intelligent tool for selecting which sub and sub-sub categories to display as data is entered and searched using pull down menus.

3. **Dates (and perhaps time) as tools for keeping the data relevant**

Many listings of needs and offers will have time limitations. These can be defined as the listing

4. **Governance**

The idea of a self-governing group of indiscriminate participants is somewhat scary. It will be wonderful as we grow to be a network of helpful people paying attention to each others' needs, resources and interests. But issues such as individual status and how each person is viewed by others on the network as well as how personal views and individual rights are treated will also be very important. One would hope that personal accomplishments would be lauded and the diligent care givers be appreciated. On the other side, how will the people on this network deal with discrimination, bigotry, bullying, scams, and other aberrant behaviors? I have more questions than answers for this as you can see below...

a) **Personal protective controls**

Since anyone can join this network, what protective controls need to be implemented to give each user control over who sees them, who can write to them, and who can make use of their writing?

b) **Community norms**

Who do we complain to when someone behaves badly? How does the community provide protection for members from bullies? Or from scam artists?

(1) **Consensus approval**

(2) **Consensus disapproval**

(3) **Public appreciation**

(4) **Public humiliation**

(a) **Examples & Discussion**

- i) violentacrez (pronounced Violent Acres)  
<http://gawker.com/5950981/unmasking-reddits-violentacrez-the-biggest-troll-on-the-web>
- ii) The shame army  
<http://www.theawl.com/2012/12/the-internets-vigilante-shame-army>
- iii) shame someone on the Internet - Google search  
[http://www.google.com/search?hl=en&source=hp&q=shame+someone+on+the+internet&gbv=2&oq=shame+on+the+internet&gs\\_l=heirloom-hp.1.0.0i22i30.130.4520.0.7153.20.17.0.3.3.0.227.1429.14j2j1.17.0.msedr...0...1ac.1.34.heirloom-hp..0.20.1461.K71fty39Jiw](http://www.google.com/search?hl=en&source=hp&q=shame+someone+on+the+internet&gbv=2&oq=shame+on+the+internet&gs_l=heirloom-hp.1.0.0i22i30.130.4520.0.7153.20.17.0.3.3.0.227.1429.14j2j1.17.0.msedr...0...1ac.1.34.heirloom-hp..0.20.1461.K71fty39Jiw)

**(5) Research is needed to address legal liability**

**(6) Legal action**

**B. Access to external resources**

There are thousands of useful web sites that Connectors might use in their efforts to help clients. Craigslist and Freecycle are just two. It would be great if we could create software to “accumulate” sets of regional Freecycles so that a Connector need only perform one search to cover the whole region since Freecycles are so fragmented... See the Community Magic page on Freecycle: <http://communitymagic.org/free-training/freecycle-org/>



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