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# A World

# Within

# Lego



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# Product

A world within Lego is an app I've created to open up the doors into the Lego world. The app is designed with a camera and the idea is you take a pile of Lego, and you use the camera in the app to scan the pile of Lego Infront of you and it will bring up recommendations of what you can build using the Lego you have picked, and it will also provide instructions on how to build it.

It also offers difficulty rating so you can tailor it to specific needs and ages. This app is designed for children to allow them to be independent and creative. This app also provides you the ability to search topics for example if you search sea creatures and then scan the pile of Lego Infront of you it brings up suggestions of what sea creatures you can make with the Lego on hand. The app is focused towards schools within Wales so it was important to provide all of its services in Welsh and English.

# Links to Early years

Often a barrier with children playing with Lego is that a Lego box is full to the brim with thousands of different pieces of Lego. This creates a barrier to play and learning and often leads to children not knowing where to start or what to make or doesn't have the time and focus to look for the certain pieces needed and often requiring the support of an adult to help them. This often results in children losing interest and engagement in their play and learning. Sometimes seeing a big pile of Lego can be overwhelming for so many people especially children however Lego has so many benefits.

Lego therapy is a tool first used with children with autism but has grown to show that Lego can be beneficial to all children in so many ways. Salt and Light (2019) suggests that Lego can support children with their social interactions for example, taking it in turns, listening, eye contact, problem solving and sharing. It also supports

children to develop their language by using size and colour, as well as measuring. The app gives children the power to unlock curiosity, imagination and independence, as well as teamwork skills. By giving children more independence and control with their learning it can take away one barrier from a classroom and support teachers.

Seath (No date) suggests that Lego therapy is used to support children to understand social situations. It gives children structured environments to play and allows them opportunities to problem solve. Lego therapy also supports children with their language and communication. Children can also reflect on their skills and actions. Lego is portable so it can also be taken outside this can also support children well-being.

# Personal Experiences

I work within a primary and have always been within the early years age and I have experienced first-hand in my role within a classroom the struggles and frustrations in building Lego. Within my setting we use Lego as part of our continuous provisions. We set rainbow challenges for children to complete independently. Our recent topic was people who help us, and we looked at farmers and what produce we get from animals so one rainbow challenge was to create a farm animal out of Lego to which some children were asking for ideas and were searching for pieces not knowing where to start. With limited time in the sessions of a fast-paced school day our aim was to be able to give children back the control in their learning and play. The initial idea was brought about from the barriers within a classroom; however, the app has no limits. It can be used by parents, grandparents, schools, nursery, care homes.

# Unique Selling Point

Our product is currently undergoing the process of getting a patent which means an app like this cannot be created in Welsh and it cannot provide the search feature that our entails. According to Adam (2019) Patents are important as it stops others from copying our product making it unique. Patents provide protection, exclusivity, and supports profit as it limits competition.

When producing this app, we researched similar apps on the market. There were apps that provided ideas on what to make with Lego however all the Lego apps on the market meant that children had to search for the individually pieces needed to create the model.

Our app is unique and overcomes that barrier by using a camera to scan Lego pieces on hand and enables children to create something based on what they have available in front of them. The app also is bilingual so offers its services in Welsh and English. These factors support us in offering a unique product.

# Customer Costs

Our app is free to download initially and then is a monthly subscription fee starting at 3.99 and ranges up to maximum 15, the monthly rate differs based on how many different varieties of topics use wish to access this is based upon personal use for example 1 device.

There is also packages set for business such as schools or colleges, this includes all of the packages on a number of devices along with a training session to the staff within a setting on how they can best use the app to support the development of the children. It also allows children to have their own account where the teacher can set the challenges and also allows the children to take pictures of their work which automatically saves as evidence for the teacher.

The business package also includes links to forums with other practitioners to share and support ideas within a community. This package tends to be around 40 to 50 a month which includes 2 training sessions a year and 24/7 support and access to our forum.

# Finance and Marketing

The app is mostly advertised on Tik Tok and Instagram to promote our app. Initially we posted some aspects of what the app is about before we launched it. This built suspense, excitement and talks amongst people before its launch which supported us in raising our profile through people in the community prior to the launch. There was lots of interest expressed towards our app by practitioners within school and care workers from residential homes.

According to McLachlan and Newberry (2023) The use of social media is essential tool in promoting a business, it allows a company to reach customers, gain insights and grow. Social media can create product awareness, allow connections between customers and complete market research. It also helps to generate more interest and sales.

Statistics show that more than 4.8 billion people use social media and over 70% of social media users follow a company and see ads from businesses when using social media. The app is available to download from the apple app store and the google play store.

We also had the opportunity to have a stand at the Nursesey world early years conference. This meant we were able to promote our app to other educators from around the UK. The conference consisted of stands, talks, training and a variety of other opportunities. It really allowed us showcase and promote our product to others related to early years.

# Startup costs

The monthly subscription supports us in making a profit from our product which we can use to reinvest back into our app and marketing. The app cost us around £3500 to create and develop we outsourced to develop our app through a digital company.

The app was able to be developed due to an inheritance. The marketing costs to promote our app came from our own saving account however my sister holds a degree in business marketing management which meant she was able to market our item in the best possible way and also in a cost-effective way.

## PART 2

Sagacity education solutions (2023) states that learning experiences that are hands-on for children can be beneficial as it sparks children's curiosity and allows for meaningful learning and experiences. Lego is a tool that gives children the opportunities to problem solve, think critically, to construct, design and investigate. This can give children important skills for the real world. Lego allows children to learn science, technology, engineering, and maths which can be incorporated into many areas of learning. Children can experiment, explore and create thousands of combinations. Lego can support children through open ended play and focused activities, they can create unique pieces, storylines and many more. It can bring their imagination to life. It also allows children to work together as a team and communicate. It supports them in developing their skills and ability to work together. Lego is accessible for people of all ages with different sets to support education. Lego can also support children with the social and emotional skills such as resilience and confidence. However the strategy story (no date) States that Lego is often highly priced and is seen as a premium in the construction toy market. Meaning that it can often discourage people from buying it. The material of Lego is plastic, and it has faced some issues with environmental factors. Lego over time has become complex in the sets they sell and can be very time consuming to create which builds a barrier and may drive some customers away that would prefer more easy and accessible sets. There is also the factors of imitations of Lego and others creating similar products. According to Simons (2014) since Lego has started franchising sets it has been undermining the aspect of the toy, as children are following instructions to create sets and are not using their imagination. As well as introducing some sets that ended up becoming stereotypical towards boys and girls. Lego has decreased the ability of children using their imagination to create things. McColgan (no date) states that Lego can support children with their spatial awareness, hand eye co-ordination, colour recognition, free-play, creativity, social development and language skills.

Indeed editorial team (2022) suggest that marketing is an important an important aspect of promoting a business as it can support business in growing effectively and reaching a mass of people. Marketing can boost engagement with content, improve sales of products and help businesses grow. Marketing can be traditionally or digitally. There are many ways of promoting business through marketing such as,

mail, posters, articles, adverts, email, social media and online posts. Marketing can also support with market research and analysing where the best place is to target the marketing and tracking engagement and the effectiveness of certain marketing tactics. Marketing is a process that takes time and details to develop. Many businesses now have marketing strategies. Brand awareness is important by making your business stand out. Engagement and communication with customers is important in developing a brand and tailoring it to meet the target audience. Sire (2023) suggests that developing an app can be a costly expense, and there are many diverse factors to consider when developing apps, such as the app type, the region, the hire of app developers as well as the hidden development costs. There are different stages of app development to consider, such as the planning stage, design stage, app development, app testing, app deployment and then the app maintenance. As well as the additional costs after development such as marketing, analysing, legal, security, customer support and further development in the future. all these considerations should be thought about when developing an app.

According to child therapy service (2023) Lego therapy is an important tool used in children's development and progression as it improves interaction and social skills supporting their communication, it works by sessions of group play where the children and adult have different roles and they work together as a team and communicate to produce an outcome. Children are then also working together to problem solve, share and cooperate. Gandhi (no date) suggests that Lego can not only be an important tool for children but it can also support parents, teachers and therapists. Lego offers children endless opportunities and speech and language therapist suggest that it can be a vital tool as it offers so many possibilities for children to learn language. Adults can facilitate the learning through Lego by asking open ended questions to spark language and thinking and creativity. By creating a story using the Lego it can open up the imagination. Building Lego can support the children in developing fine motor skills and hand eye coordination, which can also support them in real life situations.

According to Kenton (2024) McCarthy's 4p's in marketing are, product, price, placement and promotion. These are all important aspects during the marketing process and support a holistic customer experience. It supports an effective way in marketing an item to get the most out of a product development and supports the

focus on the best ways to market the item. However, some can be extending on from his 4p's and over time people, process and physical evidence can be linking into the marketing mix. Stanley (2022) suggests that having a UPS Unique selling point in a business can be important in promoting a product. Having a unique selling point in a business can mean a customer more likely to choose your product over someone else, it makes the product special and one of a kind which would support a business in the marketing process. Thinking about the target audience is important as well as the image and colour of a business, supporting it in being eye catching to the target audience. By having a unique selling point it can allow a business to stand out, be memorable, attract and maintain new customers, increase prices as its one a kind, as well as building relationships with the customers, allowing you to develop and better a product based on customer feedback.

UNICEF (2021) has been working with the Lego foundation since 2015 to support children in becoming, creative, engaged, and lifelong learner through the process of play. The Lego foundation supports UNICEF in accessing training for teachers south Africa to teach learning through play to children. They have supported UNICEF in giving boxes of Lego to support children's learning through play in countries such as, Egypt, Iraq, Syria and turkey. As well as a respond from covid providing parents with Lego for their children and the support for parents in providing learning and playful opportunities for their children. Play is a right of a child which supports their cognitive, physical, social and emotional development so it is important to provide children with meaning playful opportunities. Playful opportunities provide children with skills and knowledge that will support them in real life authentic experiences, which is equally important for children living in poverty who may have limited access to safe play environments and experiences. Play also supports children in providing comfort and safety, it can help them gain a sense of routine and normality. They have also created a digital child safety policy to support the safety and welfare of children when accessing digital Lego products. Swanton (2021) suggest that using Lego in the classroom can promote play and interaction which supports engagement and communication. Using Lego can switch the atmosphere and gets the children discussing and talking, they interact, make connections and share ideas with each other. Lego can be used to develop lots of different subject areas and the teacher can think about the best ways to enable meaning play and learning through Lego and

develop the skills of the children. It also supports children in experimenting and trying different ways showing that no method or answer is incorrect supporting the children's confidence. Using Lego and also support children with having a visual way of learning and progressing as well as reflecting on the ideas and experiences. Lego can keep children engaged and allows them to be practical and hands and allows them to spark discussions and learn language from each other. However, through observation it can also show the children's ideas through nonverbal communication as through the actions it can speak a story of the child's thoughts. It can also bring the class together by sharing ideas and creations with each other and bounce ideas and reflections off each other.

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