

An Exploratory Study Plan for Incentivized Development of Currency Brand Indices (Draft)

This paper presents a rough outline for planning and conducting exploratory studies on establishing currency brand indices. The plan encourages a definite time limit to a study, in contrast to other approaches that assume self-sustaining implementations. In addition, the plan emphasizes the importance of anchor entities, incentive structures and information systems. This rough draft might be of interest to those who study, package and deploy currency systems.

Outline of Study Plan (To be described in detail in future revisions; see attached examples for now)

- I. Study Objectives** – A brief summary of goals or rationale for collecting empirical data
- II. Trial Environment** – Location, Market Conditions (density, mean monthly wage, etc.), Duration of Study
- III. Anchor Entity** – Enthusiastic supporter; has high visibility within trial environment and diverse customer base; list subsidy amount, if any
- IV. Incentive Structure** – to draw less enthusiastic entities to participate; minimum number of registered entities to start trial, prize or awards, if any, duration (a subrange within the trial duration)
- V. Information System** – technology needs: transaction devices, accounting systems, publishing platforms, reporter service providers and currency brand indices including printed publications, as needed; budget for development, maintenance and support
- VI. Team** – describe core team members and qualifications, plus salary/allowance considerations
- VII. Funding** – any suggestion for funding sources, e.g., local government relative to the trial environment, grants, donations, etc.

Attached Example Study Plans:

- Pike Place Market: a café, food vendor or magazine vendor(s) as anchor entity
- University of the Philippines: passenger jeepney operator(s) as anchor entity
- Online: a delivery business as an anchor entity

Related Work:

- A Community Approach: <http://www.valueforpeople.co.uk/process>
- Community Way: <http://cw.lets.net/>
- Studies and Reports on Other Systems: complementarycurrency.org

An Exploratory Study Plan for Incentivized Development of Currency Brand Indices (Draft)

Guideline Questions for the Formulation of Study Objectives

What characteristics correlate with a good choice for an anchor entity?

How should a cost-effective incentive structure be determined? For example, would a contest prize that is three times the median monthly wage attract enough participants during a trial?

For a given trial location, is there a minimum business concentration required? What types of participating entities correlate with a trial environment that is conducive to a sustainable brand index?

What are the participants' reactions to a regularly updated currency brand index? How frequently did participants monitor the index, and what information was monitored more closely than others? Did participants expect information that was missing from the index?

What are the user observations and experience with using a mobile device to conduct transactions in ledger-based currency?

Looking at a map of the trial location over the trial duration, are there any propagation patterns with regards to the spread of participating entities over time?

Would a currency brand index encourage participants to establish market entities that are not likely to emerge within current market systems?

Pike Place Market, <http://www.pikeplacemarket.org/>

This location has a high density of small businesses and 10 million visitors a year, making it a good testing ground for studying the impact of a currency brand index.

Pike Place Market is a public market overlooking the Elliott Bay waterfront in Seattle, Washington, United States. The Market opened August 17, 1907, and is one of the oldest continually operated public farmers' markets in the United States. It is a place of business for many small farmers, craftspeople and merchants. Named after the central street, Pike Place runs northwest from Pike Street to Virginia Street, and remains one of Seattle's most popular tourist destinations.

The Market is built on the edge of a steep hill, and consists of several lower levels located below the main level. Each level features a variety of unique shops. The upper street level contains fishmongers, fresh produce stands and craft stalls operating in the covered arcades. Local farmers and craftspeople sell year-round in the arcades from tables they rent from the Market on a daily basis, in accordance with the Market's mission and founding goal: allowing consumers to "Meet the Producer." ([Wikipedia](#))

I. Study Objectives

This study will collect empirical data related to the short-term implementation of a currency brand index for entities within and around Pike Place Market. (Include specific questions of interest, such as those given in the guideline questions.)

II. Trial Environment

Location: Pike Place Market, Downtown Seattle, WA ([google map](#))

Market Conditions:

- Business Density: Approx. 500 stores, cafes, fruit stands, arts and craft vendors, etc. surrounded by downtown seattle businesses
- Attracts 10 million visitors a year
- Median Monthly Income within Downtown Seattle: (insert data here)

Trial Duration:

- May – October, 2010 (6 months)
- Month 1: Scout the area and meet with prospective anchor entities (Section III)
- Month 2: Negotiate with anchor entity, train local contacts and start advertising contest (Section IV)
- Month 3: Hold short informational sessions about contest rules and monitoring; register participating entities
- Month 4: Hold one-month contest (transactions will be published and monitored online, with summaries provided in weekly printouts – see Section V)

- Month 5: Evaluate transaction data and patterns to determine contest winners; observe if trading occurs after the extra incentives expires
- Month 6: Collect observations, questions, concerns from participants

III. Anchor Entity

Candidate 1: Left Bank Books, <http://www.leftbankbooks.com/store/>

- Located at main street entry to Pike Place market, ideal placement for displaying up-to-date currency brand tickers, handouts and bulletins
- Store management likely to embrace viable alternatives to mainstream systems
- Sells lower cost items that attract casual customers and tourists
- Proposed Subsidy: \$500/mo. for three months during trial period

IV. Incentive Structure

Upon enrolling 100 businesses but not earlier than the fourth month of the trial duration, start a one-month 'contest' period where entities are encouraged to trade using self-issued currency brands. At the end of the contest, the entities will be judged according to the diversity of its trading partners, inflow/outflow ratio and percent cancellation of its target revenue. The winner will be awarded \$3000 and the first runner-up will get \$1000.

V. Information System

- Transaction Device: Mobile devices (not printed currency); donated phones will be distributed to participants
- Accounting System: any web accessible system with OCAUP and PaCT support
- Publishing Platform: Blogs, Tweeter, Web Sites, printed periodicals
- Reporter Service: any Prowl compatible application
- Index: online provider TBD; weekly printed periodical with participant news, updates

VI. Team

Local Coordinator: John Doe (Proposed Allowance: \$1000/mo, 0.25FT)

Fundraiser: Jane Doe (Proposed Allowance: \$500/mo + 10% of total funds)

IT Support: TBD

VII. Funding

Basic mobile phones – seek donations of recycled phones (recipients will be advised to purchase cheap pre-paid cards)

Subsidy: grants, donations

Incentive Fund: grants

Technology: to be provided by Tyaga.org

Team Allowance: grants, donations

University of the Philippines - Diliman, <http://www.upd.edu.ph/>

With tens of thousands of students, faculty and staff, and a campus surrounded by small businesses, U.P. Diliman is a good testing ground for studying the impact of a currency brand index. The school has a history of challenging the status quo and has a reputation for progressive activism. An exploratory study of the type described here is likely to attract many participants and academic interest.

The University of the Philippines, Diliman, or U.P. Diliman, is the flagship campus, seat of administration, and the largest constituent university of the University of the Philippines System. It is located in Diliman, Quezon City in Metro Manila. It offers courses in Liberal Arts, Social Sciences, Law, Business and Economics, Natural Sciences, Engineering, Music, Archaeology and Fine Arts among others. It offers the largest number of graduate and undergraduate courses among all the universities in the Philippines. ([Wikipedia](#))

I. Study Objectives

This study will collect empirical data related to the short-term implementation of a currency brand index for market entities within and around the U.P. Diliman campus. (Include specific questions of interest, such as those given in the guideline questions.)

II. Trial Environment

Location: UP Diliman Campus, Quezon City, Philippines ([google map](#))

Market Conditions:

- Business Density: Approx. XXX stores, cafes, fruit stands, arts and craft vendors, etc. surrounded by academic, government and business institutions
- 23,000 students plus thousands of faculty and staff
- Median Monthly Income: (insert here)

Trial Duration:

- July – December, 2010
- Month 1: Scout the campus and meet with prospective anchor entities (Section III)
- Month 2: Negotiate with anchor entities, train local contacts (likely to be student organizations) and start advertising contest (Section IV)
- Month 3: Hold short information sessions about contest rules and monitoring; register participating entities
- Month 4: Hold one-month contest (transactions will be published and monitored online, with summaries provided in weekly printouts – see Section V)

- Month 5: Evaluate transaction data and patterns to determine contest winners; observe if trading occurs after the extra incentives expires
- Month 6: Collect observations, questions, concerns from participants

III. Anchor Entity

Candidate 1: Any independent passenger jeepney operator(s)

- The 'ikot' route circles the campus regularly, offering a good opportunity to advertise to passengers through leaflets and to pedestrians through side-mounted posters
- The extra income from a subsidy will most likely be welcomed by a typical jeepney operator
- The ability to pay for a regular fare using independent currency brands will likely be welcomed by participants

Proposed Subsidy: \$200/mo. during for three months during the trial period

IV. Incentive Structure

Upon enrolling 100 businesses but not earlier than the fourth month of the trial duration, start a one-month 'contest' period where entities are encouraged to trade using self-issued currency brands. At the end of the contest, the entities will be judged according to the diversity of its trading partners, inflow/outflow ratio and percent cancellation of its target revenue. The winner will be awarded \$2000 and the first-runner will get \$500.

V. Information System

- Transaction Device: Mobile devices (not printed currency)
- Accounting System: any web accessible system with OCAUP and PaCT support
- Publishing Platform: Blogs, Tweeter, Web Sites, printed periodicals
- Reporter Service: any Prowl compatible reporter application
- Index: tbd online provider; weekly printed periodical with participant news, updates

VI. Team

Local Coordinator: TBD (Proposed Salary/Allowance: \$300/mo, 0.5FT)

IT Support: TBD

VII. Funding

Basic mobile phones – seek donations of recycled phones (recipients will be advised to purchase cheap pre-paid cards)

Subsidy: grants, donations

Incentive: grants

Team Allowance: grants, donations

Online

Any market entity with a web presence could participate.

I. Study Objectives

This study will collect empirical data related to the short-term implementation of a currency brand index for e-commerce entities. (Include specific questions of interest, such as those given in the guideline questions.)

II. Trial Environment

Location: online

Trial Duration: May – October, 2010

Market Conditions:

- Limited to those with internet access

III. Anchor Entity

Candidate 1: Farwest Taxi

Contract: Open a charge account to pay for shipping and delivery costs of purchases related to trial

IV. Incentive Structure

Upon enrolling 1000 businesses, start a one-month 'contest' period where entities are encouraged to trade using self-issued currency brands. At the end of the contest, the entities will be judged according to the diversity of its trading partners, inflow/outflow ratio and percent cancellation of its target revenue. The winner will be awarded \$5000, with the first-runner up getting \$1000.

V. Information System

- Transaction Device: Mobile devices (not printed currency)
- Accounting System: any web accessible system with OCAUP and PaCT support
- Publishing Platform: Blogs, Tweeter, Web Sites, printed periodicals
- Reporter Service: any Prowl compatible application

- Index: tbd online provider; weekly printed periodical with participant news, updates

VI. Team

Project Coordinator: TBD

IT Support: TBD

VII. Funding

TBD