

Disclaimer: This document is 100% human authored. No AI was involved in its creation.

Disclaimer: This document is originally written in English. If you have received it in another language, it has been translated by an external party.

Company name: Yriclium

KVK-number: 95530177

VAT: NL005159249B53

Website: <https://yriclium.com>

Author: Cameron Kruit

Email: cameron@visualnovel.world

Mobile number: redacted

Address: redacted

Linkedin: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/cameron-kruit-0604b9192/>

IBAN: redacted

This version of the dossier is publicly available online. Personal information has been redacted.

Project VNWorld: *An online international visual novel distribution/consumption platform, visual novel creation tool, digital art and music marketplace, social forum, and creative monetization solution*

Our goals: Giving new creators a voice. Providing an inclusive platform for artistic expression of multiple media disciplines. Removing the complications of legacy development, marketing, distribution, and audience connection so creators can focus on what they know and love to do. Democratising an oriental technical medium for an international creative crowd.

A crow is a highly intelligent bird, but we should not expect it to write a computer program. However, tailor the environment to the bird's abilities and it can truly show off how impressive and creative it truly is. That is also true for many dormant artists.

<https://visualnovel.world>

Glossary

Visual novel: A digital story, usually with digital art of characters with multiple expressions, overlaid on background artwork, accompanied by music, voice acting, sound effects, custom

text boxes. Usually the reader has the option to make choices to branch the story out on different story paths.

Digital art: Digitally drawn images of characters, backgrounds, UI elements

Creator: A person who creates digital art, music, other audio, or visual novels

Consumer: A person who reads visual novels

Collection: A grouping of novels, or other digital assets such as art or audio

Competition: A public event where participants compete to produce the best visual novel. Can be themed. Can have a prize.

Reader-view: This is the web view/page on which the visual novel is visually and audible consumed.

Writer-view: This is the web view/page on which creators can write, develop, edit, and configure their visual novels.

Platform-view: This is the web view/page on which all users will browse novels, assets, and collections, where they will socialize, and manage their data.

Transaction: This is a payment made to progress in a visual novel, or to gain access to media assets.

Payout: This is money flowing from some controlled debit/balance to a creator.

Project

Description

VNW will be a platform where people can do the following:

- Create and distribute visual novels
- Distribute digital art of characters, backgrounds, and/or UI elements
- Distribute music, sound effects, voice clips
- Consume visual novels
- Make collections of visual novels or creative assets
- Socialize
- Post or browse collaboration offers
- Get paid for your art, audio, novels
- Connect with other users on the platform
- Users can apply relevant filters to find their community, protecting them from content that's AI, NSFW, mature, offensive, or irrelevant if this is not what they are looking for

My favorite way to describe it is: imagine what YouTube does for videos, or what Netflix does for movies, or what Steam does for games, or what Spotify does for music; VNW will do that for visual novels.

Consumer AND creator oriented market disruption

The current state of the visual novel medium is abysmal. The community in the west is roughly a million people, despite related media being much bigger. If we're talking about role playing games, story/narrative heavy games, anime, and manga, the community is likely hundreds of millions. When you reflect on the technology itself it makes a lot of sense. Both the consumers and the creators have been dealt disadvantageous cards.

To produce a visual novel, you need: a writer, a developer, an artist, and a musician. Either that, or you need to be multi-disciplinary.

Even with a team of people, development can still take months. When you've finished development of the novel, you compile their build into an executable. This is usually only for the Windows OS, excluding other operating systems, mobile, consoles, smart TVs, etc. unless the team ports and tests their builds on multiple platforms.

Then to distribute your novel, you will need a separate "demo" build. On each distribution platform (Steam, Itch dot io, etc) you upload your demo- and full build.

For monetization, the model is usually: the demo is free, the full build is full price (€20-€60). Yet just like with a traditional novel, there is no guarantee that a consumer will read all the chapters (especially considering there's usually branching story paths in a visual novel). I myself personally don't finish every book I start. Even having read 10 chapters, I can still grow disenchanted by a book and put it down. Now imagine the psychological hurdle of that €60 price tag, knowing you might not finish the novel, knowing it might have software bugs, knowing it might not have been tested or work well on your computer system, knowing you have to download yet another 700 megabyte executable that'll get lost and forgotten in your file system...

Neither consumer, nor creator get the optimal experience currently. That while every visual novel follows the same format more or less. This is a medium easily standardized. Just moving the creation, distribution, monetization, and consumption of visual novels to a browser based web platform solves 90% of the problems. Standardisation removes the need for a developer. If you make this platform highly social and allow for independent artists, musicians, and novelists to use each other's work (with consent), you also remove the need for managing an entire team for months. Artists can just post their work, and novelists can just shop for the pre-formatted assets for their novel.

If you allow novelists to provide a "pay per chapter" model, you can also ensure consumers never pay for what they don't read. You can have the writer specify which chapters are free and which are paid; removing the need for a separate "demo" and "full" build.

Consumers have one platform that collects all their novels under one account, instantly accessible on their phone, computer, gaming consoles, etc. Consumers can discuss and connect on the platform, they can rate novels and leave opinions, they can craft curated public collections. You remove the need for Steam, Itch, Reddit, VNDB, and all other scattered unconnected platforms and put everything in one spot. Removing all the headaches, uniting the community, facilitating all novels, assets, creators, and consumers under one platform could make the medium itself grow and evolve.

Cultural significance

The cultural significance of books and stories in general needs no words spent on it. In an age of shrinking attention spans and a growing hunger for connection, books are losing favor more with every generation. However, there is a hole left by movies, video games, and short form content. A hole in the shape of a slow paced, nuanced experience that enriches the mind. Truly a visual novel platform would be literature adapted to the 21st century. Characters can be highly expressive and come to life with vibrant sound design. You can consume it anywhere from any device just like any other media. Where other media leaves a hole in the shape of focussed intellectual activity, a regular novel leaves a hole in the shape of connection. Sure platforms exist to talk about and review books, but the book and the platform are disconnected. A visual novel platform would fill the hole. It is like a 21st century book club, but instead of discussing words, you discuss complete audio-visual experiences paired with the literature.

If this medium will grow like I've predicted, this platform could provide further representation for even more groups of people. As a person of color myself, I tend to notice that niche Japanese media often becomes more diverse and inclusive when it goes mainstream in the west.

More creative jobs world wide

For digital artists and musicians, this platform can be used as an "asset store". Which is a concept that has existed for well over a decade in the game development industry, but is usually more catered to programmers and 3D artists. Will not only provide a storefront for creatives, but allows their assets to be directly implemented on the same platform. The goal is also to work in automatic payments of artists if a transaction comes through on a novel using their assets. This could essentially create a passive income stream for artists and musicians.

As the platform and the visual novel medium grow, there are bound to be new novelists coming to the platform too. They not only profit from this growth themselves, they contribute to it. More people making novels means more good novels to read. More good novels means more readers coming to the medium. More readers means more incentive to write novels. More incentive to write novels means more people making novels. This could snowball a currently underlooked medium into a new industry of opportunity for the creative and entertainment sector.

Inclusivity, free speech, and safety

To protect both the rights and dignity of all people groups - minority and majority alike - a centralized platform for the medium bears great responsibility. Content moderation should seek to prevent and destroy and misuse of the platform. Sexually implicit material concerning minors, inciting violence and hate, illegal content, and cyber-bullying should be reported and removed. Furthermore proper labelling and filtering should be implemented to not alienate any consumer. Inclusivity and freedom of expression should be a great priority of any medium, but unfiltered and unmoderated content can have undesirable effects on the medium as a whole. For example, light hearted visual novels often get buried in a sea of mature and sometimes greatly sexually explicit content. Both forms of content are valid expressions of creativity, but it can be greatly divisive for the community. If someone is not interested in certain material, or if

something politically disagreeable gets presented to someone unfamiliar with the medium, it might scare them away from visual novels as a whole. A genre does not represent a whole medium, therefore proper categorization, labeling, and filtering can create a more inclusive environment where people who don't share love for a genre can still share their love for the medium and the talent of all creators within it.

Road map

The project's first year would be split in three phases:

Already prepared:

Digital art, music, and audio assets for one visual novel. Formatted text for one visual novel. A general sketch and idea of the data model and technology architecture. An unfinished prototype from when this concept was less mature in scope. For this prototype, the prototype's Reader-view already greatly resembled the desired Reader-view as per the current specification. The prototype's Platform-view and Writer-view will have to be rewritten from scratch though.

Phase 0: Funding

Before kicking off the project, it is important to explore all possibilities to establish a fund to cover the costs of the project, or to procure funds during development. Later in this document funding possibilities are explored. If you've received this document, the project is most likely in phase 0.

Phase 1: R&D (month 1, 2, 3, 4)

During this phase the bulk of core features and functionalities will be deployed, reviewed, and iterated upon based on user feedback. This phase will also be used to build a strong base of early highly involved community members. When this phase is largely completed, the project would also be ready to be shown off at conventions. During this phase, the events to attend should also be researched and planned ahead to save on flight costs, and a public website needs to be up for communications with event/convention organisations. The prepared media and formatted text will be used to develop the platform and an initial visual novel.

Month 3 and 4 of this phase will have:

- 1 EU conventions/events attended per month
- 2 small themed competitions hosted per month

Phase 2: Monetization (month 5, 6, 7, 8)

During this phase the focus will be on technical implementation of the monetization model, engaging in discourse and retrieving feedback of creators on the platform about the implementation, and iterating upon this. This phase will also be used to update any

documentation missing from phase 1 if needed, and I'd like to work on more distribution methods for novelists outside of the platform to offer them more freedom. After this phase, the infrastructure should be in place to self-sustain the platform's hosting financially depending on the success of onboarding users at scale.

This phase will have:

- 2 Non EU conventions/events attended
- 1 EU conventions/events attended per month
- 1 small themed competitions hosted per month
- 2 general big competitions hosted

Phase 3: Accessibility (month 9, 10, 11, 12)

During this phase the focus will be on making the platform more accessible for not only content creators, but also mainly the consumer. Any simplification of the monetization, authentication, or social technologies would take priority during this phase. All landing pages should provide a clear concise overview of the platform, and answer every possible question in an intuitive way. By the end of this phase, the goal is to have a self sustaining community of content creators and consumers.

This phase will have:

- 2 Non EU conventions/events attended
- 1 EU conventions/events attended per month
- 1 small themed competitions hosted per month
- 2 general big competitions hosted

Post year one

If the first year is a success, I would like to build a feature request form to prevent the platform from growing stale for content creators, a more community moderated platform to ensure safety and involvement of the community, and explore ways to include more creators from a wider array of media and communities. It would also be interesting to see how the project evolves during development, and what type of culture develops on the platform, and how to nurture this as much as possible until the medium goes from niche to mainstream. Ultimately the goal would be to have the visual novel to be as mainstream as video games, short form content, manga, movies, audiobooks, etc.

Budget

Costs

Year one budget 20k€ (outreach, hosting, costs, fees, outsourcing, excluding personal development cost)

Year one development cost 50k€

Year one total required fund 70k€

Small competition: €150 budget (€100 first prize, €50 second prize)

Big competition: €600 budget (€500 first prize, €100 second prize)

Average big event costs outside of EU:

€900 flight and travel, €200 lodging, €100 fees and costs = €1.200 (overshoot could be paid out of pocket)

Average small event cost inside of EU:

€300 flight and travel, €200 lodging, €50 fees and costs = €550 (overshoot could be paid out of pocket)

4 big events = 4.8k€

10 small events = 5.5k€

Total events = 10.3k€

12 small competitions = 1.8k€

4 big competitions = 2.4k€

Total competitions = 3.2k€

Hosting and technical support budget: 2k€

Total budget: 15.5k€

Buffer for extra cost (gear and printing branded promotional materials for conventions, miscalculations, hidden fees, hiring freelancers for graphics, paying for content moderation, product testing, translation, etc): 4.5k€

Development cost

Development costs will cover full time development in the form of a personal salary.

€50k for a year = €4.2k per month ~= €1k per week ~= €208 per work day

Assuming 5 days of work per week, minimum 8hrs per day ~= €26 per hour.

My current hourly rate as a freelancer is €55/hr excl. VAT so I would be working at a reduced rate versus if I spent the same amount of time freelancing, so I would say this is a realistic and fair salary.

Post year one budget funding

Once monetization is implemented in phase 2, hopefully the cut taken from every transaction will be enough to cover the hosting costs and make this project self sustainable. An exact calculation of the costs is difficult, because more users means more hosting costs, but more users also means more transactions and thus more cuts taken. Since most development of core

features should be done during phase 1, the maintenance of this project should not scale up to requiring more developers. The user base and transactions will be monitored to calculate a fair cut to cover hosting and development after the year one budget is exhausted.

Funding

The current goal is to attain up to €70k the following sources:

- Max €40k from Stimuleringsfonds Digital Culture (€20k to cover the budget, €20k to partially cover the development costs)
- Max €30K from Creative Europe MEDIA (completely dedicated to development costs)
- Max €10k from SIDN fonds (completely dedicated to development costs)
- Attain sponsorships/partnerships with visual novel publishers, drawing tablet producers, illustration software companies, established visual novel devs, other visual novel tools, music software
- Voluntary donations can be requested during competitions, events, and on the platform itself. During phase 2, getting a creator account will also require a small one time payment. However this money is unreliable, comes after phase 1 has already started, and will likely not be much
- If any of the above do not (fully) approve funding, the remainder will be supplemented from a kickstarter crowd funding campaign. Though a clever strategy has to be developed to get enough attention for this to work.
- If all of the above does not work out, and no clear path to funding is visible, the time and scale of the roadmap may be subject to change, and a new funding strategy should be developed.

According to Stimuleringsfonds Digital Culture they only fund up to 80%, and Creative Europe MEDIA they fund up to 60%. This current funding scheme should suit both their conditions. Note that if only one of them refuses funding, I am still able to continue development. The results of the crowdfunding campaign would then determine to what capacity I would be able to follow the original planning of the three phases. This would have to be revisited when the time comes.

Funding should only be required for the first year of development, since after the completion of the three phases the platform should be self-sustaining. The community will grow organically since creators will inherently have incentive to onboard new consumers, work with- and onboard new creators, and of course they will have creative and monetary incentive to keep creating for- and with this community. Since the platform undergoes its organic growth cycle - due to the incentives for users to market the platform themselves - eventually my percentual cut of the pie should be big enough to not be dependent on external funding, and I can finance the development of the platform further myself.

Furthermore, since at this point there will hopefully be a large community around the platform, it should be easier to rely on crowd funding for any major undertakings related to the project.

Funding can also be done in waves. If let's say only €10k of funding is acquired, phase 1 can still start but be scaled back to fit the budget while still looking for further funding.

Funding eligibility

SIDN fonds

The project seems to be a perfect fit for what they're looking for.

Creative Europe MEDIA

The project seems to fit most criteria. The credibility and capability of Yriclium as a developer is up to their own interpretation.

https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/crea/wp-call/2026/call-fiche_crea-media-2026-devvgim_en.pdf

Page 7 states

The following projects are ineligible:

...

- platforms for games or interactive experiences and websites being, or dedicated specifically to, social platforms, social networking, internet forums, blogs or similar activities;
- tools and software services aimed solely at technological development and/or used solely for further developing already existing game or interactive experience concepts;

Note the platform is only partially a creation tool and a social platform. These are merely aspects of the greater platform. The true essence from a consumer's point of view the platform delivers a standardised format and distribution system for the audiovisual experiences they'll consume. The social aspect merely makes it more engaging, but does not define the platform. The creation tool aspect makes it more convenient to distribute experiences on the platform, but it might as well have been a separate product. Therefore the platform is not in essence any of the above, but does have these features as an added convenience. However these are not mandatory features for the experience from the consumer's point of view.

Stimuleringsfonds Digital Culture

The project seems to fit most criteria. The credibility and capability of Yriclium as a developer is up to their own interpretation.

Partnerships

While reaching out for partnerships, the following tiers of partnership will be proposed to prospects. A good fit for a partnership includes but is not exclusive to:
Hardware/software companies for art or music production, visual novel publishers/producers, visual novel dev tools, artist collectives, media/asset banks, content creators.

For every partner of every tier, a commitment will also be made to mark any of their accounts as “verified” if they choose to join the platform. For ambassadors and sponsors, they can also have any novel, collection, or assets verified as long as these are not: containing controversial content, NSFW, AI generated- or assisted content, strictly 18+. Any of the works submitted for verification that do not suit the aforementioned criteria, will be subject to the regular vetting process for verification (checked for quality, appeal, etc). For verification, the partner must communicate the accounts, assets, novels, or collection in question.

A general commitment and dedication to complete the project is ensured to all partners. If any practical or financial complications arise that could complicate development of the project, all partners will be informed.

Observer

If you are interested in the project, but do not want a formal partnership, you can join the mailing list, or follow our social media. All relevant links can be found on <https://visualnovel.world>

Partner

What: This tier is a general endorsement and consent to public association. The partner will be displayed on the partner page, and can be publicly mentioned as a partner. This partnership will be assumed until the end of phase 3 of development. Extension/upgrading of the partnership will be discussed upon completion of phase 3.

For artists and musicians: to apply for this tier you must provide some artwork or music that the project is allowed to use as promotional material.

Why: The project benefits from this partner through status and credibility. The partner benefits through exposure.

Who: This could be interesting for companies willing to establish a low-commitment relationship. They can aid the platform’s early growth and then discuss a higher tier of partnership later. This is also interesting for developers, content creators, or other parties who want low-commitment exposure.

Ambassador

What: This tier is a general endorsement and consent to public association. Along with the endorsement comes a minimum donation of €2.000 from the partner to the project or something else of similar value in the form of relevant exposure, hardware, guidance, network, etc. The partner will be displayed on their own dedicated ambassador section on the partner page, and can be publicly mentioned as a partner. Along with this, if the partner has any affiliate programs, they will be implemented to advertise the partner's products wherever relevant in the project's documentation.

The links in the documentation and the placement on the partner page will be indefinite until the partnership is explicitly ended by either party.

If there is no affiliate program available for products, we can negotiate another implementation.

Examples: a drawing tablet can be advertised in documentation on art, a content creator can be advertised in documentation on outreach, a visual novel dev tool can be advertised as an alternative while outlining the limitations of the platform.

Why: The project benefits from this partner through status, credibility, and the donation. The partner benefits through exposure, new leads linked to their products.

Who: This is for partners who want to advertise product, gain new leads, and want to directly contribute to the growth of the platform.

Sponsor

What: This tier is a general endorsement and consent to public association. Along with the endorsement comes a monthly donation of €300 from the partner to the project. The partner will be displayed on their own dedicated sponsor section on the partner page, and can be publicly mentioned as a partner. Along with this, links to the partner's products or any other desired page will be implemented to advertise the partner wherever relevant in the project's documentation. There will also be advertisements implemented during phase 3 of development. These will have to be designed to be effective yet unintrusive. These are not finalised yet, but could be banner ads on pages accessed by creators.

All links in the documentation, ads, and the placement on the partner page will be active during the partnership. Termination of payments will be assumed as a termination of the partnership.

Why: The project benefits from this partner through status, credibility, and the donation. The partner benefits through exposure, new leads linked to their products, and direct advertising to a highly targeted group of creators in a small pool of advertisers.

The cost of advertisement will be fixed for sponsors onboarded before the end of phase 3. If the advertiser pool grows after phase 3, advertisers onboarded before phase 3 will get priority over them. Technical documentation will be provided on how this is implemented once advertisements are fully designed.

Who: This is for partners who want to advertise product, gain new leads, and want to directly contribute to the growth of the platform.

Timeline, deliverables, and goals

Note that big events and big competitions are not noted in the deliverables since I can't guarantee that these dates will perfectly overlap with my phases. This will need to be researched and planned during phase 1.

Phase 1

Month 1

- Feature complete prototype (authentication, Reader-view, Writer-view, Platform-view, saving progress, managing profile)
- 1 Visual novel on the platform
- List of online communities and personalities who would be interested in the project
- Set up social media to further engage with the community

Month 2

- Refining prototype and visual novel into a presentable product
- Develop landing pages with documentation/information about the project for new consumers, creators, and organizations
- List of conventions/events for the year/coming months + preparations (booking, contact, etc)
- Contacting online communities and personalities who would be interested in the project
- Host the project live

Month 3

- Start a public chat group for discussing the platform with users
- Developing something on the platform for users to keep track of updates and changes
- Developing something that allows for a feedback loop with users
- Host 2 small themed competition and provide some log/rapport/archive on the website after it finishes
- Attend 1 EU convention and provide some log/rapport/archive on the website after it finishes including enough content for social media posts

Month 4

- Refining platform
- Implementing user feedback
- Onboarding more creators through reaching out on social media
- Host 2 small themed competition and provide some log/rapport/archive on the website after it finishes
- Attend 1 EU convention and provide some log/rapport/archive on the website after it finishes including enough content for social media posts
- Reflect on first month and revisit workflow if needed, add tasks if needed, plan accordingly

Phase 2

Month 5

- An intuitive documentation system
- Design and prototype for monetization model
- Exploring greater discourse with community
- Research legal limitations of monetization model
- Apply user feedback
- Host 1 small themed competition and provide some log/rapport/archive on the website after it finishes
- Attend 1 EU convention and provide some log/rapport/archive on the website after it finishes including enough content for social media posts

Month 6

- Refine monetization model
- Develop multiple distribution features for users who want to distribute beyond the platform
- Apply user feedback
- Host 1 small themed competition and provide some log/rapport/archive on the website after it finishes
- Attend 1 EU convention and provide some log/rapport/archive on the website after it finishes including enough content for social media posts

Month 7

- Publish monetization model live
- Apply user feedback
- Host 1 small themed competition and provide some log/rapport/archive on the website after it finishes
- Attend 1 EU convention and provide some log/rapport/archive on the website after it finishes including enough content for social media posts

Month 8

- Apply user feedback
- Host 1 small themed competition and provide some log/rapport/archive on the website after it finishes
- Attend 1 EU convention and provide some log/rapport/archive on the website after it finishes including enough content for social media posts

Phase 3

Month 9

- Apply user feedback
- Implement advertisements
- Revisit frontend UX and UI for accessibility
- Develop all required missing landing pages
- Host 1 small themed competition and provide some log/rapport/archive on the website after it finishes

- Attend 1 EU convention and provide some log/rapport/archive on the website after it finishes including enough content for social media posts

Month 10

- Apply user feedback
- Revisit consumer payments for accessibility
- Complete documentation
- Host 1 small themed competition and provide some log/rapport/archive on the website after it finishes
- Attend 1 EU convention and provide some log/rapport/archive on the website after it finishes including enough content for social media posts

Month 11

- Apply user feedback
- Refine all features to be production ready
- Have all features and graphics polished
- Host 1 small themed competition and provide some log/rapport/archive on the website after it finishes
- Attend 1 EU convention and provide some log/rapport/archive on the website after it finishes including enough content for social media posts

Month 12

- Take any final required steps to have a self sustaining platform live in production
- Host 1 small themed competition and provide some log/rapport/archive on the website after it finishes
- Attend 1 EU convention and provide some log/rapport/archive on the website after it finishes including enough content for social media posts
- Release official production version 1.0

Market size and revenue projections

Audience

The numbers below are an amalgamation of the total market over 45 years, though most numbers have likely only been documented from the last 20 years since the genre and medium weren't of significant size before the 2000s.

Visual novel DB

- 291k users (consumers)
- 58k visual novels
- 26k visual novel producers (creators)

VNDB also had "releases". Note that a visual novel can have multiple versions/releases, but these numbers are not very relevant. Using these numbers we see that on average every

producer only has an outreach of 11 people. In the “money” section I highlight that we could conservatively estimate that we’ll capture 600 producers yearly, which means we could expect to also onboard 6.6k consumers yearly. This is disregarding that the platform could make outreach more efficient with the social features and instant accessibility from consoles, mobile, mac, and linux.

If we look at reddit, they have roughly 600k users on r/visualnovels

Money

A conservative estimation is that visual novels are currently a 40m€ market. It is tough to get an accurate number since sales are split over Steam, ItchIO, and consoles. Console sales are especially hard to keep track of. Let’s say 50% of visual novels do not fit the platform due to needing some complex game mechanics, or for any reason do not want to be on- or have not heard of the platform. Let’s also assume the platform captures, but does not expand the market. That means in a conservative estimation, the platform could capture a €20m dollar market if successful. Let’s say the platform takes a 5% cut of every transaction/revenue, that’s €1m dollars in revenue per year.

VNDB lists 26k visual novel producers seeing as visual novels exist since the 80s, let’s assume there’s about ~600 new producers per year. Charging a small fee to register as a producer would barely alter revenue, considering we won’t capture all of these producers. However there are almost 60k visual novels. That’s about 1.3k novels per year. Say we capture about 600 of these, make the first novel free for an account but charge 5€ for every subsequent novel. Say we have 500 paid novels netting 2.5k€ per year, then the novels would pay for their own hosting and the €1m projection is pure profit.

Despite charging for novel creation would net a little more revenue on the short term, if the community expresses discontent towards this, monetizing creator accounts or not charging anything at all except our 5% cut would make little impact compared to the 1m€ projection.

All of these calculations assume optimistic successful positioning of the platform, but apply a pessimistic view of the market, and neglect the possibility of the platform expanding the market.

Another thing to keep in mind is how much quicker and easier this tool will make it to produce novels, meaning there is a greater chance for a viral novel to be on this platform. If we use Doki doki literature club as an example for a viral novel, this could pull at least 3m people and over €10m (revenue, not profit) to the platform. Now imagine what could happen if it were to be so two viral novels are hosted on the platform in the same year.

My conservative estimation is based largely on numbers found on

https://games-stats.com/steam/?tag=visual-novel&utm_source=chatgpt.com

Taking into account that most entries here are not “true visual novels”

https://www.marketreportanalytics.com/reports/visual-novel-game-55427?utm_source=chatgpt.com

Estimates the market to be about 500m\$. This analysis is highly detailed and shows a huge chunk of the market is “indie” or at least not by “lead players”. However since they don’t define the genre/medium, I can’t say for sure to what degree this analysis is relevant and a critical projection sets realistic expectations. However if this analysis is accurate and relevant, then the calculations above could be 10 folded.

Assuming the numbers of the 600k users on reddit and 500m\$ market are relevant and accurate, each user contributes around \$833 to the market on average. This leads me to believe that the user base is under-represented by social media and is actually much bigger but more scattered online among multiple social platforms and non vocal consumers. Combine that with a possible overestimate of the 500m\$ and we’re still looking at good numbers.

Japanese market vs western market

Since Steam has become one of the biggest distribution platforms for visual novels, and Steam is also widely adopted in Japan, it is tough to say without a professional analysis if there is really any relevance to consider these markets as distinct. However, the cultural influence of visual novels in Japan is common knowledge. Visual novels have led into established IP franchises, which have spawned anime, video games, merchandise, etc. Steins;Gate, Clannad, and Fate are all IPs which have grown bigger than Doki doki.

Conclusion

There is a big market with a lot of potential for technological innovation and community unification. If the platform successfully reaches its goal, it could look at profits of 1-10m€ per year while still having potential to grow the market.

Credentials

I’ve worked in software development professionally since 2018. I have been coding and developing games since 2011. I went to a high school where we got art history classes, digital media classes, philosophy classes, and extra art classes. I’ve been a big Japanese media fan since my teens and went to several conventions. I have loved games and digital media since I was six, and I have been drawing since I could walk. I love to make music, digital art, and interesting coding projects. This project is the perfect amalgamation of both my passions and professional disciplines. I’ve also made small visual novels before, but these have all been personal projects that don’t hold any weight compared to my more serious projects.

Previous comparable public projects I’ve worked on are:

The MyHappySpace dating app

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.myhappyspace&hl=en>

This is my most recent project as a freelancer. I've been the only developer at this project. I was in charge of everything from choosing the technologies, designing the data model and technical architecture, deployment, and coding. The client was in charge of graphics, UX, planning, marketing, and managing storefronts. Since we were such a small team, I've greatly influenced the UX and the design too if I saw room for improvement.

The MasterMatch professional AI match making platform

<https://yriclium.com/en/projects/mastermatch>

This was a match making platform for professionals to connect with other professionals at events. This has since been discontinued. The platform was able to use AI to generate and match requests and offers based on a user's profile. This was meant to be a complimentary technology for people going to events. My role in this was big since I took this project on solo from another team before any users were on the platform. Though I inherited a lot of legacy poorly written code, bloated tech stack, security vulnerabilities, no automated tests, no documentation, and weird architecture, I managed to fix most of it, documented everything, added what features were missing, implemented the entire AI-aspect of the app, and implemented a complete redesign of the app's frontend. During my development the app went from 0 users to > 500 users.

Spring Shabobble - an indie puzzle platformer

<https://yriclium.itch.io/spring-shabobble-easter-egg-hunt>

On the more creative side I've also developed a complete video game. This was before the age of AI, so all digital art, modeling, animation, music, code, graphics were implemented completely unassisted expressions of my own creativity. Since it's a greatly visual medium, I would recommend checking out the material in the link rather than just reading about it here. I completed development of this game in a month + 2 days.

BareFolk - a webshop for plastic free toothbrushes

<https://barefolk.eu/en>

I run a webshop where I sell plastic free toothbrushes. I've probably sold well over a thousand toothbrushes already and regularly have to service customers with support all over the western world. I also have to maintain relations and do business with Chinese suppliers, international postal services, and every now and then interested potential customers on social media. This is my strongest credential for running a small business and all the social- and administrative that come with it.