



Brief Description

iCon is a web-based company offering a reconstruction of one's social identity through the provision of social capital (software contributions) such as networking and character referrals as well as status symbols (hardware contributions), which could include dress or "friends-for-hire". The target market is those individuals seeking to further their social status, and our company facilitates the construction of a social identity through an alternative makeover.

Artistic Concept

The central notion behind transactional art is that of interaction – an exchange of meaning, and transaction – an exchange of value. **iCon** utilizes the Long Tail (Anderson, Chris, 2005) characteristic of the internet to optimize matching of niche demand and supply (Plewe, Daniela, 2009). While the overt form of payment is monetary, the client is actually sealing an unwritten contract that gives the company the right to deconstruct his identity if the staging is revealed. This also highlights the idea of social debt – how much is the company owed for the clients' eventual success?

Our piece aims to address the question of how an individual is constructed or represented in society on the surface. It serves as a critique on society's fixation with "image" and how one's initial social value is based on cultural symbols/gestures that one exhibits. The company facilitates the creation of a social identity via staging a scenario and provision of the required human software and hardware. However, can this "fake" social value be translated to "reality"? The use of loaned or purchased status symbols could result in the successful acquisition of "real" status symbols, i.e. a hot girlfriend or a high-flying job.

The web-based economy is largely conceptual. With such low start-up costs, there is a superfecundity of web-based companies. This makes them hard to keep track of, especially since most do not or have no need to practice transparency with regard to their internal structure. **iCon** is also a criticism on how social phenomenon evolved from a creation of value from nothing, which seems to violate the laws of entropy in the universe.

The use of a web-based company to provide such a service further leads us to evaluate the reliability of "testimonials" and "character referrals", which while intrinsically biased in nature, form much of the basis upon which judgments are made on one's social value. These testimonials could be part of an individual's job resume, as well as his personal profile online. The success of such staging brings us to the questions: how much is one's social identity worth and can it be stolen or bought? From the perspective of "image" creation, the answer seems to be a resounding yes. Further developments to the company could possibly include networking between successful clients as a form of social capital creation, whereby they vouch for each other's credibility and indirectly the credibility of **iCon** in a vicious cycle that helps to translate drama to reality.

Aesthetic Decisions

A complementary color scheme of orange and turquoise, with neutral colored text was chosen to provide a more energetic feel as the contrast between the colors creates greater vibrancy than if they were standalone. This brightness serves to present an attractive image to the potential client. The design of the website consists of clean lines and clear directions for usage. This elegance of a simple design would serve the company well as the client would be more willing to browse through the website and go through the hassle-free steps to order the product.