Photo of some Telmex Fellows removed due to copyright restrictions.

The Fellows Forum

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What is the fellows forum?

- Web and mobile technology based network

- Promotes academic and professional development

- Medium for exchanging ideas, finding career and professional advice, and connecting with peers

- Gateway for students to pursue ambitions inside and outside of school

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Context

- Telmex Fellows
  - 10,000 students from low-income areas with excellent academic records
  - Enrolled in colleges throughout Mexico
  - Receive stipend, computer, and net access
  - Huge potential to impact social development of their communities

How do we help these students realize the value that they can generate together?

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Solutions

Current Solution:

www.interactuando.org

- Bias towards social networking

- Underutilized

- Lack of focus

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Screenshot of http://www.interactuando.org.

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Needs Assessment

How do we refine the existing solution?

- Conducted survey to inquire about internet use and mobile use

- Approx 1300 responses gathered

- Audio conference

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Needs Assessment

- Results
  - Agreement on desire to have exclusivity

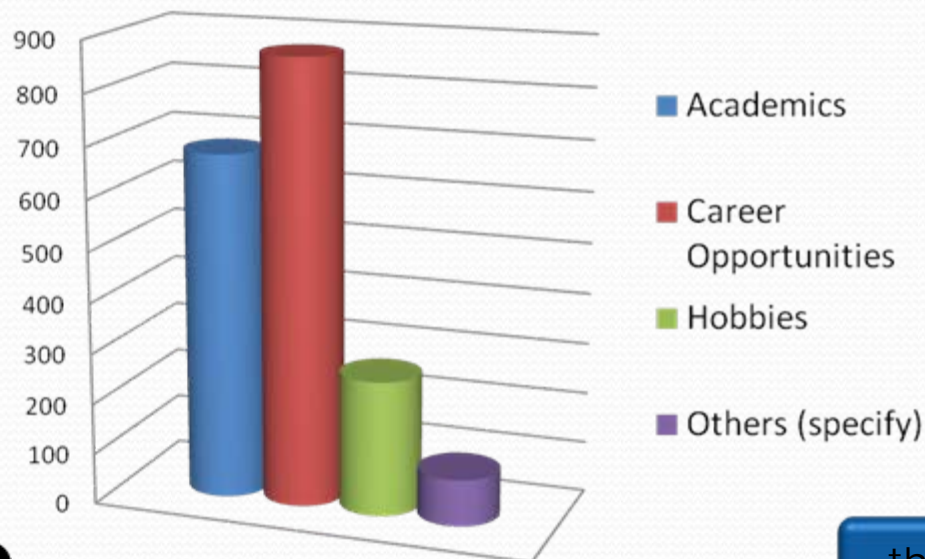Would you be interested in being part of an exclusive social site for the community Fellows Telmex?
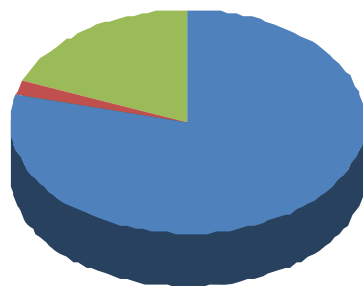
- Yes
- No
- Maybe

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Needs Assessment

- Results
  - Agreement on desire to have exclusivity

  - Academic and professional advice over social connection

How useful would it be to collaborate with other fellows and discuss topics such as:

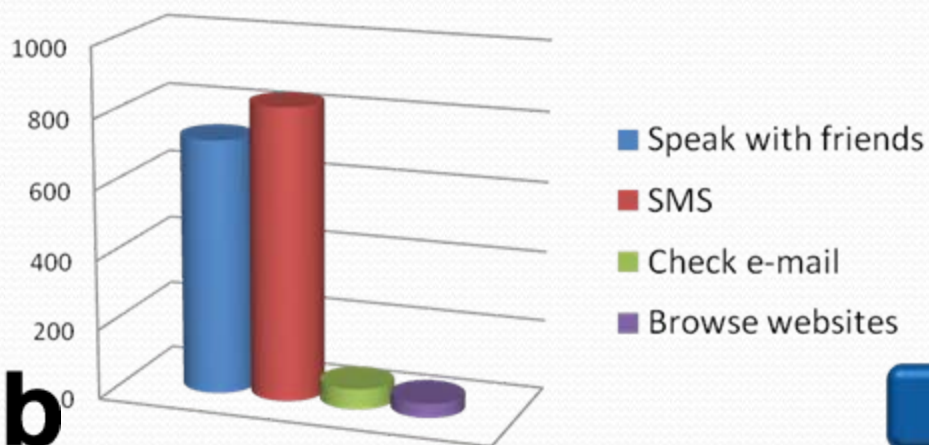**nextlab**

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Needs Assessment

- Results
  - Agreement on desire to have exclusivity

  - Academic and professional advice over social connection

  - Preference for internet and SMS, but should be low cost

What functions do you use your cell phone for?

Legend:
- Speak with friends
- SMS
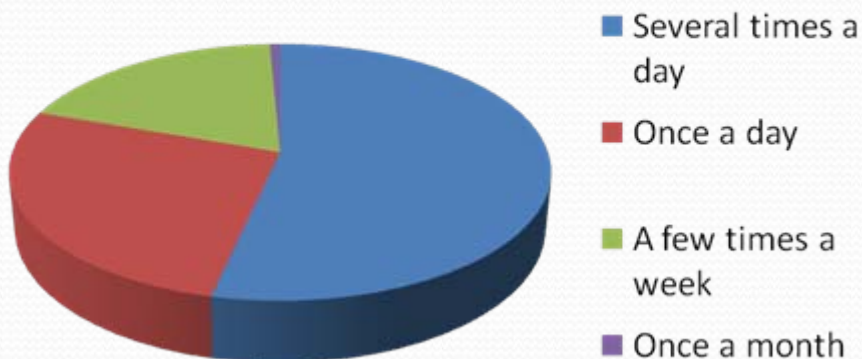- Check e-mail
- Browse websites
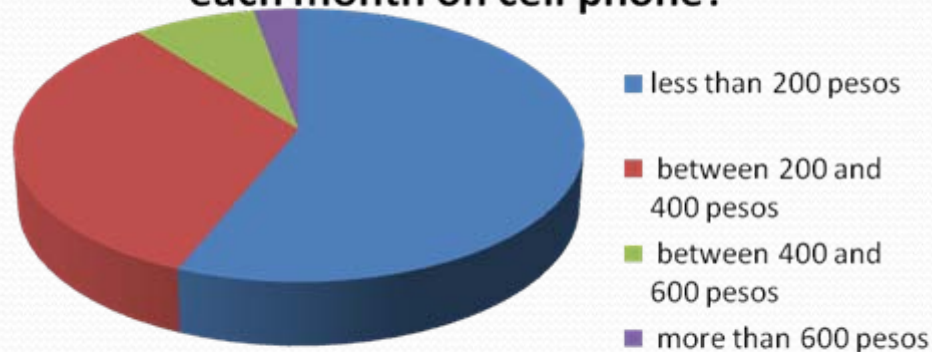
Needs Assessment

- Results
  - Agreement on desire to have exclusivity

  - Academic and professional advice over social connection

  - Preference for internet and SMS, but should be low cost

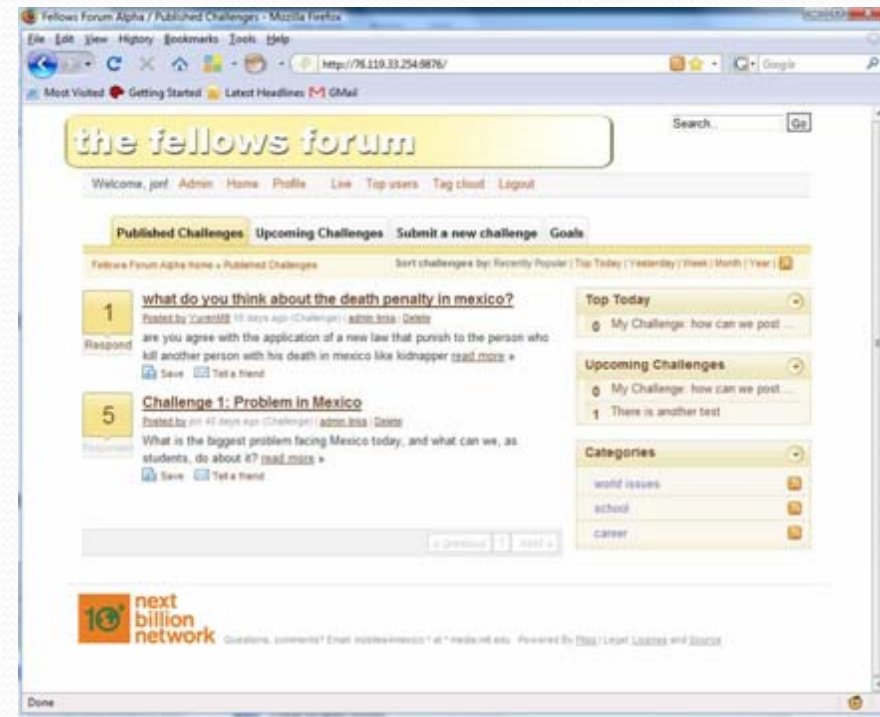## How often do you connect to the Internet?

- Several times a day
- Once a day
- A few times a week
- Once a month

On average, how much do you spend each month on cell phone?

- less than 200 pesos
- between 200 and 400 pesos
- between 400 and 600 pesos
- more than 600 pesos
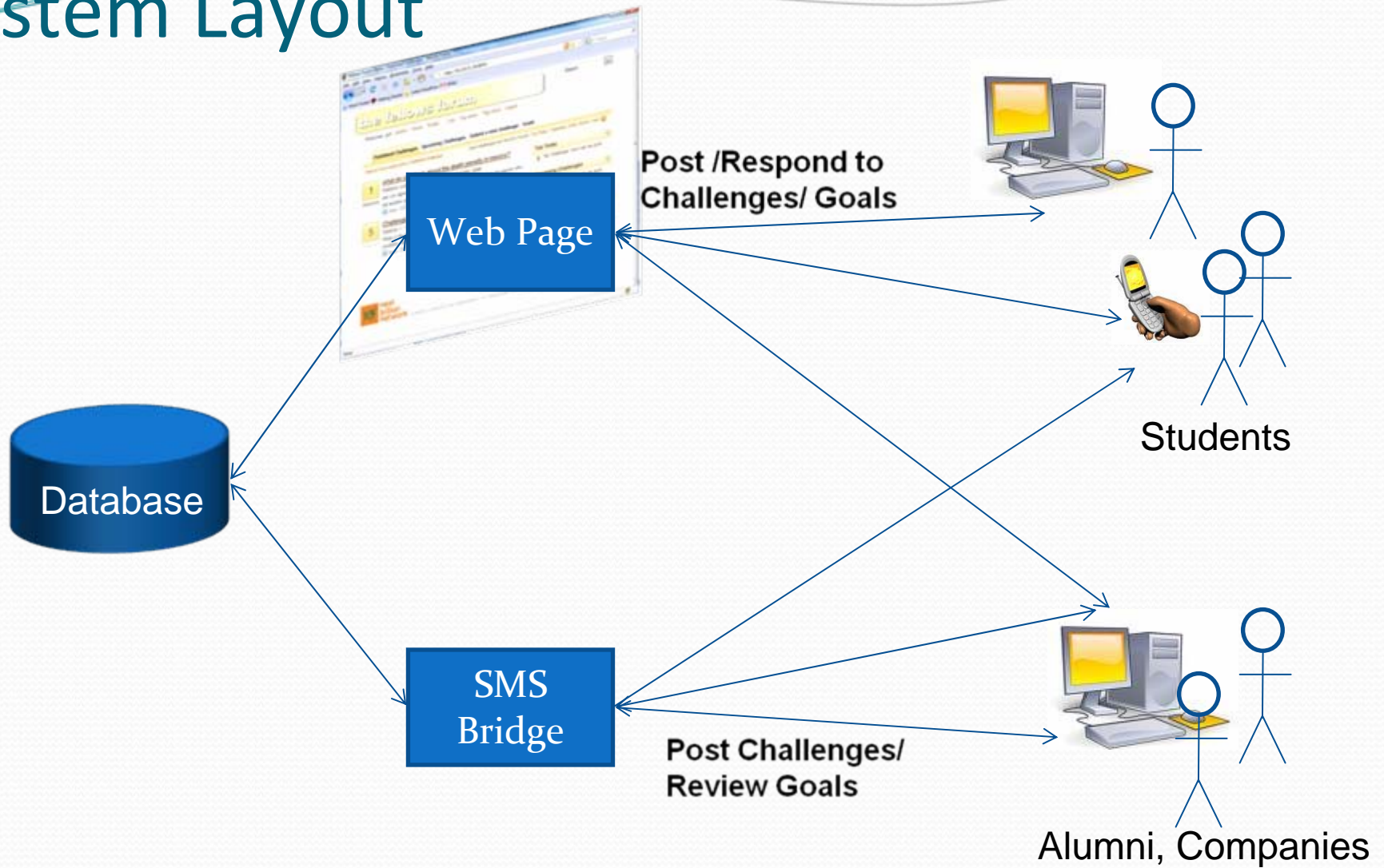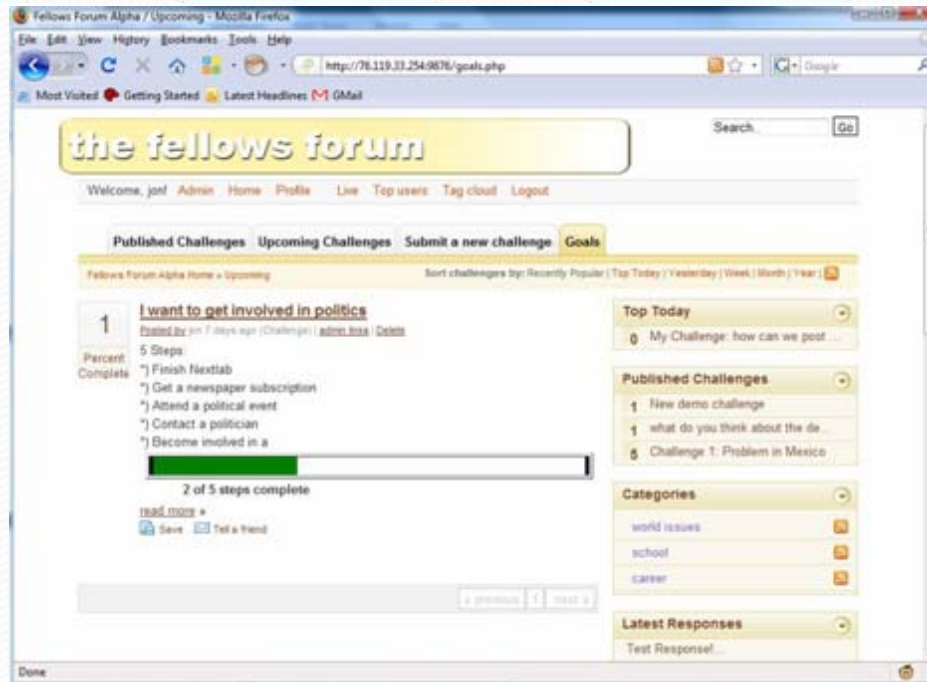
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Our Solution
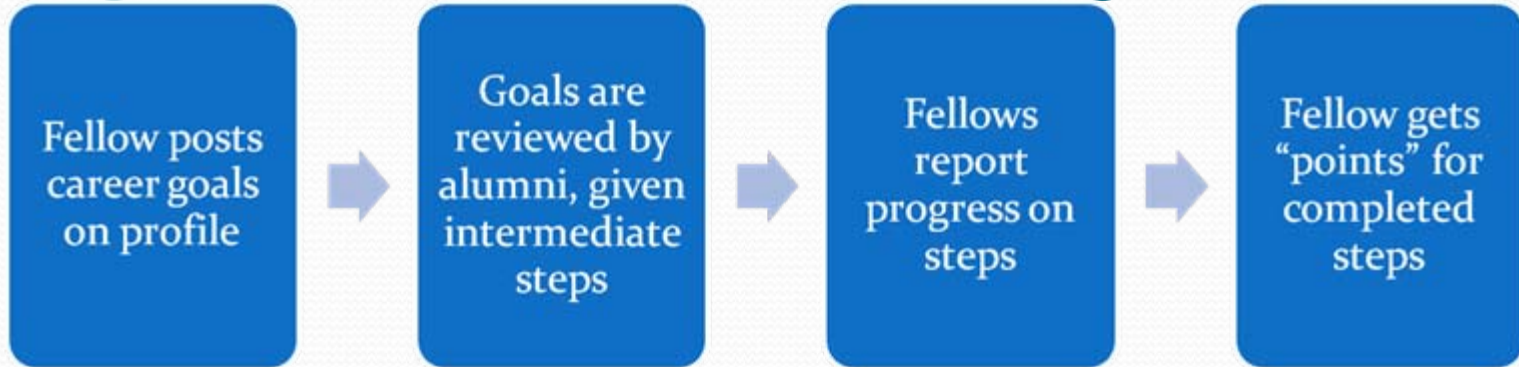
- Online (and mobile) network to foster lasting connections and motivation among students.

- Network has two main activities for the students:

  – Posting and responding to Challenges
    - Open-ended questions that are chosen to promote discussion
  – Sharing Goals
    - Post career goals on personal profile
    - Get feedback from peers and alumni

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System Layout

Post /Respond to Challenges/ Goals

Web Page

Database

SMS Bridge

Post Challenges/ Review Goals

Students

Alumni, Companies

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Usage scenario 1: Sharing Goals

Fellow posts career goals on profile

➡

Goals are reviewed by alumni, given intermediate steps

➡

Fellows report progress on steps

➡

Fellow gets "points" for completed steps

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Usage Scenario II: Challenges

Demo

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Sustainability

Finances
- Fellows
- Foundation

Sustainability

Concept
- Fellows
- Foundation

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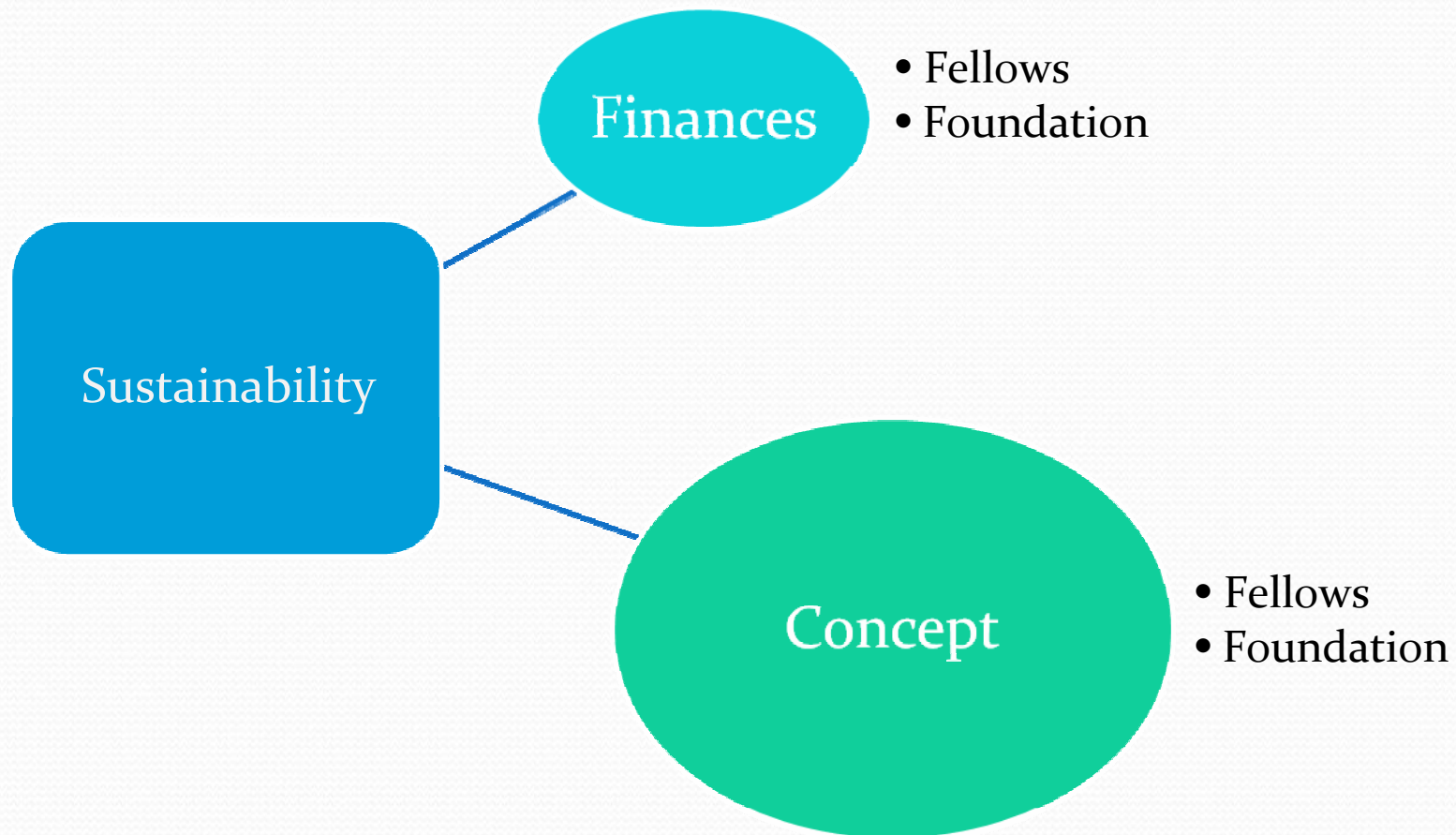
Sustaining the Costs

- Operational Costs
  - server management
  - labor for website

- Student Costs
  - local cost for SMS

- Generating Revenue
  - advertising on website
  - companies paying to be members of network
  - companies post challenges

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Sustaining the Concept

FELLOWS:
- Appeal of "Challenges"

- Website aesthetics and functions align with student preferences

- Create exclusivity and sense of community

FOUNDATION:
- Ensure fresh content

- Transitioning: independent committee to handle the network

- Building status and reputation; furthering scholarship

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Conclusions from our work

Developed a possible structure for networking:

- Encourage participation of group members
- Encourage planning for future

Testing Prototype...

Open questions:

- SMS component
- Incentivization
- Success?

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Future Outlook

- Metrics for Success
  - Usage: number and speed of responses / users
  - Focus group feedback
  - Attendance at other Telmex Foundation events

- Applicability
  - This can be used for any environment that calls for a unique, productive way to connect its members
    - Especially those looking for academic/professional discussions
  - Universities
    - Programs within a university (i.e.: MITES program)
  - Scholarship/Fellowship Programs

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