**Analysis**

1. **Provide a brief overview of the online community, including its purpose, function and goals.**

Dr David Smith, a worldwide expert on monotremes. Previously, Dr Smith has visited a number of small websites based in each state of Australia and at different zoos across the world (including Milwaukee and Chicago). He has also previously set up an email group for his postgrad and undergrad students which have proved to be a success. The purpose of the online community Dr Smith wants to develop is to create an online community that focuses on providing a place for likeminded experts to collaborate, exchange knowledge and socialise online. He is aware of the popularity of social networking sites and wants to incorporate some of these features in order to attract teenagers and young adults to the community.

In analysing the functions needed for Dr Smiths online community, the following decisions were made about the function of the website;

* To broadcast information to an open community about platypus related information
* To exchange information between registered users of the online community
* To encourage and attract teenagers and young adults to raise awareness of Dr Smith’s environmental pursuits.

These are the attributes;

* To be user friendly and visually appealing to attract a younger audience.
* To incorporate social networking like interactivity, such as allowing users to write comments, posts, upload photos.
* To be able to maintain large amounts of web traffic
* Maintaining the solution needs to be done by Dr Smith, or someone who Dr Smith appoints to run the online community.

The goal of the community is to bring people together from around Australia and the world in order to collaborate and communicate with other likeminded people. The online community will also be used to promote the conservation efforts of Dr Smith in order to help ensure the Platypus does not become listed as an endangered animal.

1. **Provide a succinct problem statement that describes the problem to be solved.**

In the past, Dr Smith has had to visit numerous different websites in order to communicate with other likeminded people. Dr Smith has also had to maintain an e-mail group and a wiki that he had setup for his undergraduate and post graduate students. Having to visit all these different websites and manage an email group and wiki is affecting Dr Smith’s time due to the repetitiveness of information he must communicate on each of these sites, including the time it takes to visit and search through each of these sites for information.

How can Dr Smith effectively exchange and collaborate information with other likeminded people without having to visit numerous websites and manage an email and wiki group?

1. **Identify the type/s of website/s required referring to the information needs of the online community.**

Dr Smith wants to develop a user friendly, visually appealing informative website in order to serve as a base for likeminded people collaborate and exchange information. Dr Smith also wants to incorporate social networking features to attract a young audience.

After analysing the information needs of the online community, the type of website best suited to Dr Smiths community is a forum website with the addition of social networking elements such as instant chat with online members, photo uploading and the ability to set up a personal profile in order to identify yourself within the community.

1. **Identify 3 input and 3 output requirements.**

Input Requirements:

* Comments entered in discussion posts via website members
* Users upload photos to their profile
* Can’t think of 3rd???

Output Requirements:

* Comments are displayed in the relevant discussion thread
* Users uploaded photos are displayed next to the members username
* Can’t think of 3rd???

1. **Identify any technical or non-technical constraints.**

There are no visible technical constraints associated with Dr Smiths proposed online community – however Dr Smith will need to ensure he has the correct hardware and software in order to ensure he can host the website himself. Non-technical constraints here may include issues to do with copyright, such as uploading images to the website which may not belong to the user.

**6. Describe the benefits of the website for the online community.**

The benefit of this website for Dr Smiths online community include being able to discuss, share and collaborate with other users in an efficient manner.

The website will improve the efficiency of the information as it will require less time and effort for Dr Smith and other users to access and share information as Dr Smith won’t have to visit numerous websites.

The website will improve effectiveness of information as it will be readily and easily accessible to Dr Smith and other members. Information on the website will be relevant and will increase timeliness of information. The quality of information will be higher due to the collaborative nature of the information exchange from likeminded professionals.