Board Game Glasses

As an avid boardgamer, I’ve always found the information on board game boxes to be lacking. They usually have an ideal player count, estimated playlength, and the age ranged recommended. These would be useful metrics, but the problem is that most of the time they are quite inaccurate. A game that says 2-6 player may technically play 2-6 players, but the gameplay suffers unless playing at the 4-5 range. A game that says 60 minutes might mean 60 minutes per player and so can actually extend a lot further.

However, there is a solution! There’s a website called Boardgamegeek which is a crowd-sourced database for every board game. Users input their preferred player counts and length of game, among other metrics. Because this is the go-to website, it is quite useful and far more accurate than the information supplied on the box. However, the problem is that it has quite a poor interface and requires you to look up the game on your phone and click through to get the information.

What I’m suggesting is an android app that you use to scan the box cover art, and by detecting the title text and cross-checking the image to the one in the database, you then return key information such as suggest player count and playlength. Boardgamegeek has a XML database (1) that can be used to pull up information by searching for name. Therefore, I suggest using an image processing algorithm that recognizes text on the game cover to then look up the game in the database and return the necessary information. In addition, once we have the name we can cross reference by comparing the overall box cover image to the one on the database file so that we make sure that we have the correct game (3).

Therefore, the final product will be an app that quickly gives users access to key information that is normally cumbersome to detect. It would enhance the shopping experience as you can scan many games quickly and also it would enhance the game night experience as you would be able to look up information on games in your collection.

1) https://boardgamegeek.com/wiki/page/Data_Mining
2) https://developers.google.com/vision/text-overview
3) https://cate.blog/2015/03/18/creating-and-comparing-images-on-android/