

CSC 309 - Assignment 4 - Phase 1

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Description

xyz is a platform provided for independent game developers and resource creators. Indie game project owners can find resources they lack in their project ranging from programming (e.g. writing plugins for the game engine) to music, graphic and sound design, and more. Similarly, individuals who possess skills in art & design can look for contract works that meet their expertise. Since developers don't always have all talents in their team, they may want to find someone who can complete part of the work quickly and efficiently without making them a permanent team member. At the same time, the freelancers who are specifically interested in game development will have a chance to get in touch with the indie game projects of their interest in development, see other people's ideas and contribute to the projects.

How it Works

xyz is an online platform where one can register and then either post projects and jobs related to the project as a project representative, or look for suiting jobs as a contractor. One may also choose to do nothing other than following certain projects they're interested in as indie game players. Hence they are not included in the contract matching process.

A project representative can make project postings on the website, introduce the concept of the game, provide some details, upload pictures and videos, or probably provide a link to the project website. Each project posting will get an individual page, including all of their work postings and details, so that anyone can view the game and its progress. Then they can add job postings linking to the project, specifying the work quality and style, contact information, and budget estimation for the work.

As a contractor, one can outline their profile page with a personal biography, tell what they are good at and show their previous work. They will also rate their personal skills on the scale of 1 to 5.

Contractors who had worked for certain game projects will be recommended with similar projects. For example, if a contractor has worked as a concept artist for several fantasy rpg games, they will receive concept art jobs recommendations from new fantasy rpg projects. They will be able to consult the list of job postings on the project page, view the details and contact the project owner, show their portfolio, discuss about details, and potentially enter a contract agreement. At the same time, the owners of fantasy rpg games will be recommended the contractor. Contractors and project owners may contact

each other in private or use the in-site messages.

After an agreement is reached between the two parties, the contractor should sign the contract. As soon as work is completed for a contract, both sides will click "finish" on the contract page as a confirmation, after which they can provide a rating for each other. The development team will rate the contractor by the quality and efficiency of their work. The work history section on each profile page will display all the contracts the contractor has finished on the website, including their ratings. It will become part of the contractor's public profile.

The contractor will rate the development team by how clearly they are providing necessary design specifications, so that the work is made easy and convenient. This rating will not show on the developers' profile page, but it will affect the likelihood of the developer's new projects and new job postings being recommended.

If the contract is broken, the contract can be cancelled by both parties clicking on the cancel button as confirmation.

Challenges

Independent development teams don't typically have all the talents required for game development. A common development team may consist of all-programmers. So they will need to find artists, music design, etc. One circumstance indie games have is that they do not usually have a lot of funding from enterprises. So they often need to pay a lot of money by themselves to hire people to complete part of their work. This website will provide a platform for them to find freelancers who are passionate about contributing to indie games. By browsing the profiles and having recommendations, the development team will easily find their perfect match for their style.

On the other hand, some freelancers have the skill the games need and are enthusiastic in working for games. But they do not actually want to be part of the development team, since their income will depend on how well the game sells. They will find work they like on this website, complete them and get themselves paid conveniently. xyz will help the two parties get in touch with each other.

Another challenge indie game developers are facing is that it is hard for them to get early attention from the public to their game in development, which big companies like Blizzard can get easily. By populating the public project page on xyz, the developers will have an additional way to get some early exposure of their game. They can draw more attention from those who are indie game players browsing ongoing game projects on xyz, so that more people will become potential customers that will purchase the game.

Feature Requirements

User Authentication: Our website authenticates users with a public identifier (username) and a private identifier (password) as well as two-factor email authentication with a temporary code for login.

User Profiling: Each user has a profile associated with their personal information about projects and/or portfolio. This also includes ratings and review gathered by other users, credited works (projects or portfolio pieces), professional skills (if a contractor), as well as a way to contact each other outside of xyz.

Social Networking: Users are able to follow projects and contractors. Following a projects keeps the user up to date with new material that is posted to the website as well as any new job postings created by the project. Following a contractor keeps the user up to date on any new projects they are working on as well as any changes to their portfolio which can include new skills, etc. We also implement a basic chat system between users.

Rating and Commenting: After a contract work is completed, a rating and/or short comment is assigned to the contractor on their quality of work, allowing others to see on the contractor's profile page. A rating is assigned to the project owner posting the contract on how professional they are in the process, which decides the

reputation of the project owner, which affects their chance to get recommended to other contractors. If a comment on work experience is provided, it will be displayed before the ongoing contract postings on the project page.

Search and Recommendation System: Anyone can search for projects by their key words, contract postings that match a certain skillset (including that of the contractor if they are logged in), or contractors that match a given skillset (including that of the project's needs if they are logged in). Once a user logs in, a listing of recommended contractors or projects that meet the user's skillset or skill requirements will be displayed. This is ordered by how compatible the contractor or project is with the user as well as the contractor or project's rating/reputation. This will match the most relevant projects and contractors together.

Admin: The admin panel allows changing passwords for users, freezing suspicious accounts, offensive projects and contracts.

Work Distribution

Team members will partner up into pairs for peer-programming. These pairs will then review one another's work continuously throughout development and occasionally review the other pair's work. Pairs will be split into Daniil/Alex and Xiaoyi(Izzy)/Meichen(Annie). Daniil and Alex will be implementing user profiling, authentication, administration system and social networking. Izzy and Annie will be implementing project/contract management, rating/commenting and search/recommendation.