

Data ARTchitecture Solutions

Data Management Solutions for the Performing Arts

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INITIAL STUDY / ANALYSIS

PREPARED FOR:

CenterState Costumes, Inc.

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CIS 220 Database Concepts

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OUR TEAM

About Data ARTchitecture Solutions

We are an arts-industry focused team with a goal of providing comprehensive data management solutions to help the performing arts community thrive. Our background in and passion for the performing arts (including music, audio, lighting, costume design, and performance logistics) drives our ideas for data management to deliver custom tailored solutions to suit our customers' needs. Our team (Allegra Willett and Dan Caruso) strives to ensure the highest level of customer satisfaction by designing comprehensive and reliable database management systems for performing arts organizations, paying close attention to the detailed needs of your organization. Our mission is to develop the best, most user friendly and sustainable system to fit your exact needs, with your satisfaction as our focus from start to finish.

OUR CLIENT

About CenterState Costumes, Inc.

CenterState Costumes, Inc. is a costume rental business located in Syracuse, NY. They rent costumes to individuals, theatres, drama groups, and historical reenactors, performing a brisk year round business for their costume pieces as well as fancy dress and black tie event garments. They have a core staff of 10 employees and also hire additional employees during peak costume seasons such as prom, Halloween, June weddings, fall reenactments etc. CenterState Costumes, Inc. has one main storefront location with a costume warehouse where the more custom or specialty items are kept, as well as where they repair and clean their costumes.

Current System

Currently, our client uses Excel spreadsheets for inventory, employee and customer data. This is usually used by the rental associates/consultants and partially by warehouse associates, which creates a disconnect between these two parties as well as the repair technicians. There is a manual system of colored ribbons that are pinned over holes or damage spots in need of repair that are found during return inspection. The costumes are then washed and then sent to repair, with the ribbon still intact. Once the repair is made, the ribbon is removed and the garment is sent back into circulation. For certain types of information such as genres of costumes, they rely on the information stored in the memory of current employees ("most of it is written down somewhere, but if you really want to know how many different or similar flapper dresses we have, ask Rosa.")

Challenges with Current System

The combination of systems they use certainly provides them with many challenges, namely a disconnect of up-to-date information on item inventory and location between rental associates/consultants, warehouse associates, and repair technicians. For example, if costumes are returned needing repairs, the spreadsheet shows the costume as available in inventory but it may actually be hanging on a repair rack. The spreadsheet for inventory also doesn't currently keep track of whether the costume is in store or in the warehouse. This means if a certain costume is asked for, it may take several employees to track it down. The client would like a system that holds all their data, so information regarding their garments can quickly and efficiently be tracked down by any employee. They would also like to be able to see a rental history for their customers so certain data can be quickly pulled up such as exact styles or sizes that their customers might want to re-rent. In one scenario described by the client, a customer came in saying, "I'd like the exact same Marie Antoinette costume I rented from you guys two years ago," and after extensive searching for this illusive costume it was discovered that the client had actually previously rented a Catherine of Aragon costume instead.

OBJECTIVES

Goals

We will design and build a system that allows CenterState Costumes to integrate their current data sources into one smooth and efficient compilation. Streamlining their information will both make day to day operations more pleasant for employees and allow the business to grow, providing more accuracy for pricing and timing for customer quotes. Customer data will be related to inventory data to give a more complete rental history. The system will allow tracking of repair and cleaning status. The ability to classify costume items by genre will be included so that employees can see at a glance whether or not group orders of a particular style of costume can be fulfilled. The system will be a productivity asset for both core and temporary employees and allow them to better serve the diverse needs of their customers.

Scope

- Track customer data including type of customer (individual or group), contact information, and rental history.
- Track inventory data including sizes and quantities, repair or cleaning status, current location of the costume, genre(s) of the costume, how many times the costume has been rented and by which customers.

Users and Uses

- Rental associates/consultants: allows them to keep better track of what is available and when, what is appropriate, when items are due, how much items cost, and who has ordered what.
- Warehouse associates: allows them to track inventory status and location, as well as inventory history.
- Repair technicians: allows them to track repairs and cleaning history/processes.

Project Requirements

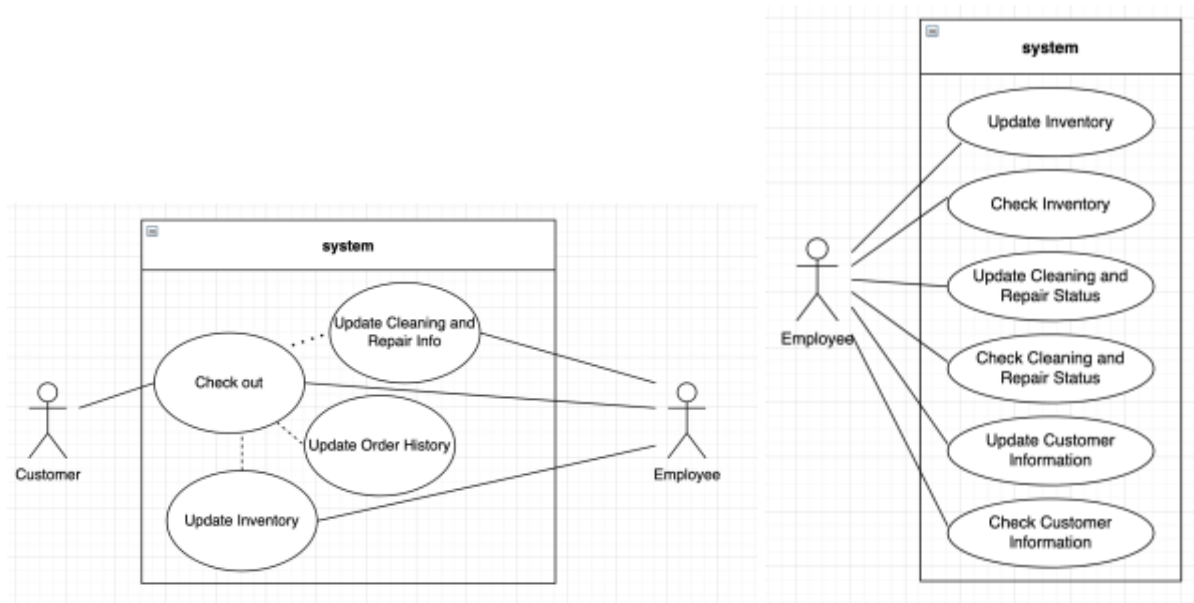
- Keep privacy for customer information.
- Keep privacy for sensitive company information, such as pricing, employee information, and financial records.
- Project timeline to be complete by mid to late December 2021, with maintenance and support thereafter (upon contract).
- Our priority is the quality of our work: we will work within the budget set between us and CenterState Costumes, and offer additional maintenance and support thereafter for a yearly cost.

Use Case Scenarios

Prime Actors: customer, rental associate/consultant, warehouse associates, repair technicians

Basic Database Interaction:

1. Rental associate/consultant establishes the needs of the customer, gathering order requirements and customer information.
2. Rental associate/consultant uses available inventory to establish best fit solutions for the customer for their desired rental time frame. Customer and associate finalizes and places an order for the required materials.
3. Warehouse associates receive orders, gather materials from proper locations, and prepare orders.
4. Rental associate fulfills the order, and the customer returns materials when finished.
5. Repair techs perform incoming inspection and cleaning for returned items, performing maintenance if necessary before issuing back into inventory.



Example interactions Between an Employee, Customer, and Database System

PROJECT ASSESSMENT

The current database structure at CenterState Costumes provides a clear opportunity for upgrading to a database through Data ARTchitecture Solutions. This new database will provide a large improvement in the way that items are tracked, saving time and allowing a smoother operation to ensure order accuracy and timing. CenterState Costumes will benefit from having a new system in place to maintain a higher level of control over their inventory and customer information, allowing them to provide even better service for their customers and grow their business.