BNDN F2013, ITU
Midway review, Project Group 5 (done by project group 6)

Review

Dear group 5, thank you for the report you submitted for review. We've read it with interest, and found it to be inspiring for our own writing as well. We've written a short review for you, and also included a scan of the comments we added, when reading your report. The first and last pages (index, references, and appendixes) are left out from the scan to keep the file size down. We hope you find the review useful – feel free to get back to us if you have further questions with regards to our feedback. We will try to keep the feedback short and precise. This might make it seem a bit tough, but we're sure you know that we don't mean to nag down on your work, but rather to try and help you improve the great work you've already done.

Content and structure

The division with two very separate sections on respectively implementation and collaboration works very well. Consider having some more dedicated sections for discussions and conclusions, so you can elaborate more on your discussions, and keep the descriptive parts a bit shorter and more precise. Also consider adding a short abstract. The abstract can be a good way to make sure that you have a consequent direction in the report; if the report is messy, the abstract will be the same thing, just in a more obvious way. Some parts of the report (as we will mention later) is a bit messy, not very coherent and not very well written. We guess this is just because you're not completely done yet, as some other parts are more coherent and easy to read.

Nice layout by the way!

The section on implementation

You could consider doing a more dedicated section on scope and assumptions to make sure it's nicely separated. 2.1.1 is sort of what we're looking for, but the title is not spot-on. Be careful not to focus too much on "internal" details in this section, such as collaboration tools, or what course you were taught a certain diagram type.

You mention that you decide on C#/WCF – this is more like a constraint on the project as we see it. Section 2.4 is not very coherent, and could be worked more on. But you have some good considerations; see our notes. We like your models and diagrams in this section; they are nicely drawn and easy to read. The implementation section could use a better ending with a nice summation and/or conclusion for this part.

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Technical details / suggestions

- Your data model is very simple, and not very flexible. Consider making it easier for the client developer to make decisions as to e.g. movie-meta-data.
- Usually, when concatenating tables for junction tables, you arrange the entities alphabetically, ascending. This leaves less room for confusion about naming.
- Instead of breaking your system because of MSSql's crazy keywords, you should try and come up with something different. Inconsistency renders your naming conventions rather useless.
- Consider if DBAccess can be more general for accessing the database, instead of implementing a ton of queries for different entities. Depending on your overall design of course!

The section on collaboration

Section on firsthand experience is nice, but first part about your expectations is very long, considered that you don't use it for anything important. In this section in particular, you should be careful about using weak words such as "clear and responsive" (p. 10), with regards to the communication and collaboration. Be more concrete and precise about what you want to achieve.

In describing different means of communication, try and focus more on the *effects* of using different techniques and tools. Consider if the benefits from various means of communication, in retrospect, could have helped you in certain parts of the project, e.g. would it have been useful to establish the Facebook group earlier, or have done more video-conferences with the video-room?

Discussions and conclusions

In general you should aim at keeping the descriptions at a minimum, and focus on introducing some more focused discussions and conclusions. What you actually did is mainly interesting in so far that it has a relation to a more general consideration in this type of project. Try to identify the aspects of your experience, that can be generalized to support or criticize theory, or even form your own theory. This allows for discussions and conclusions.

Final remarks

You are well on your way, and if you keep in mind that you should try and have some more discussion and cut a little down on your descriptions, we think you'll have a really good report. In general you can try not to spend too much time explaining obvious things, like that we want the service to be fast, or that redundant data in the database is usually a bad thing. The reader is a technical person, and can be expected to know most of these things, so a short reference can be enough.

We felt it was a bit hard to evaluate your argumentation, as you didn't really have a lot of claims, but more descriptive sections, that are kind of hard to critique with regards to argumentation; we believe you've experienced the things you are writing. However, in the parts where you do make argumentation, make sure to remember the *warrant* part of your argumentation. We found a few passages, e.g. the last paragraph on page 13, where you write "we realized that…" – it would be great if you could make a stronger argument *why* this approach is more optimal.

On behalf of the rest of group 6, I wish you the best with the report and the rest of your project!

/Michael Valentin (mier@itu.dk)