

# **FoundIt! : Your Campus-Wide Lost & Found**

## **A Campus-Based Lost and Found Management System**

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A Project Report

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At Kolehiyo ng Lungsod ng Lipa

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## Introduction

The system: **FoundIt!** Is a web-based lost and found management system designed for campus environment. It centralizes the process of posting and claiming of found items, replacing manual and or disorganized methods with a more streamlined, digital database.

This is to ensure and facilitate the return of lost property to rightful owners by providing a concise “Active” list of found items, and a secure “Archive” list for claimed items by providing transparent information of the item and the claimant.

## Technologies Used

### Front-End

- ❖ HTML5
- ❖ CSS3
- ❖ Vanilla JavaScript

### Back-End

- ❖ PHP
- ❖ PDO (PHP Data Objects)

### Database Management

- ❖ MySQL

### Development Tools

- ❖ XAMPP Server
- ❖ phpMyAdmin
- ❖ Visual Studio Code



## Database Design

The database schema follows a normalized 3-table structure to ensure data integrity and efficient management of items and archives.

### Entity-Relationship Diagram

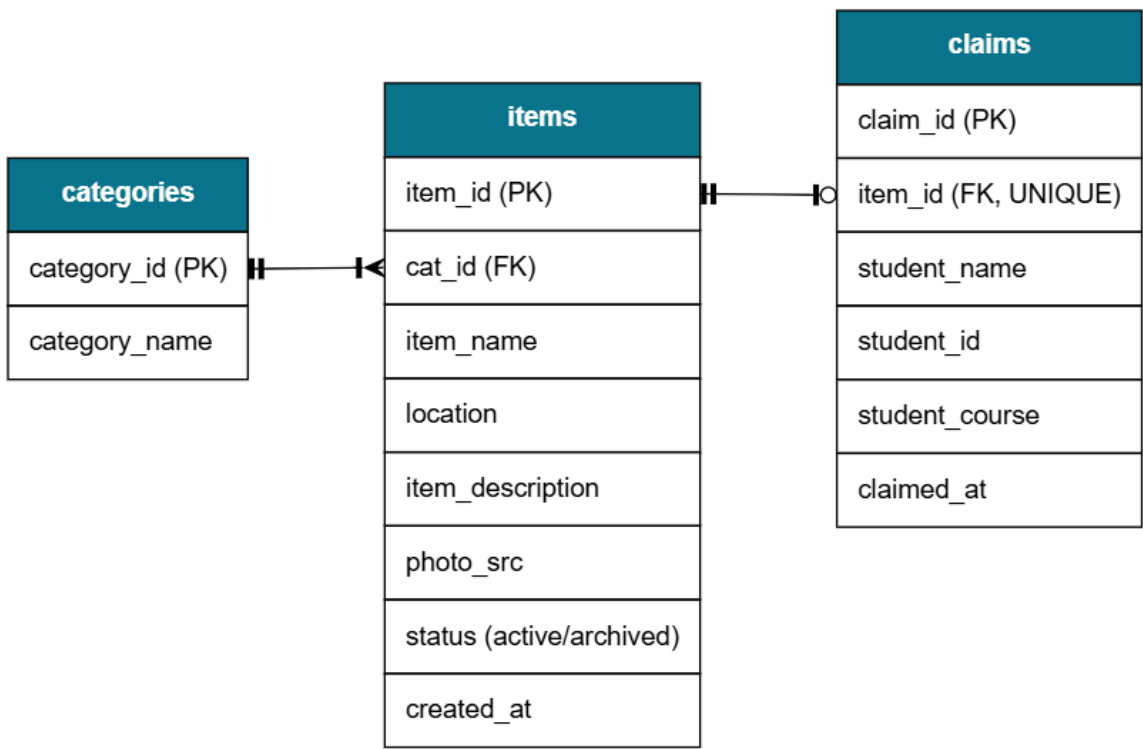


Figure 1 : ER diagram showing the relationship and cardinality using crow's foot notation

Table	Description	Key Columns
categories	Stores the valid types of items allowed in the system.	category_id, category_name
items	The main table storing every found object's details.	item_id, cat_id (FK), item_name, status.
claims	Stores sensitive student information for items that have been returned.	claim_id, item_id (FK), student_id, student_name.



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## Relationships

**Categories to Items (One-to-Many):** One category can be associated with many different items (e.g., many different phones fall under "Electronics"), but each individual item is assigned to exactly one category.

**Items to Claims (One-to-Zero-or-One):** An item exists in the system without a claim record while it is 'active'. Once it is 'archived', it is linked to exactly one claim record. This relationship is established through the item\_id, which is a **Unique Foreign Key** in the claims table to ensure an item cannot be claimed more than once.

## Web Interface

The initial webpage

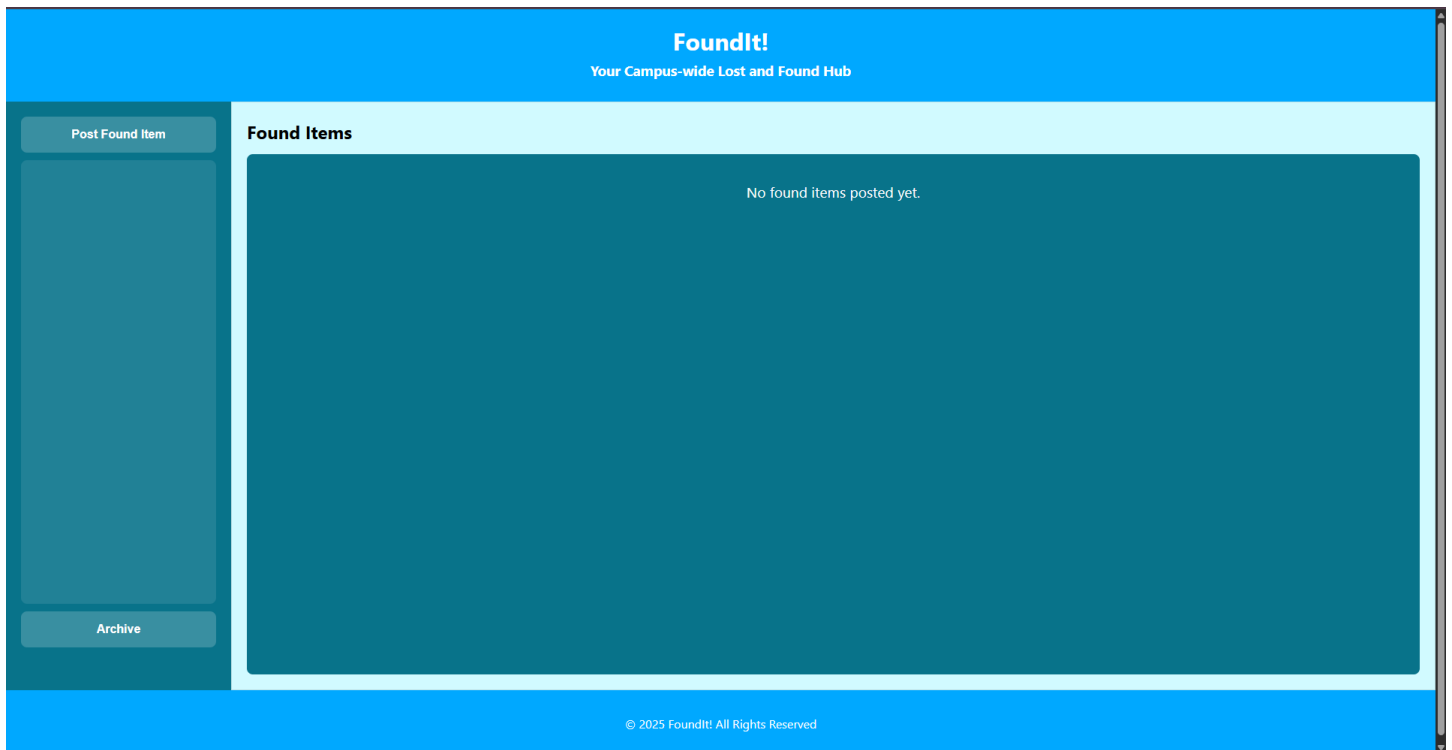


Figure 2 : GUI of the initial webpage



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**Posting Form:** A dynamic interface that allows users to upload a title, location, description, and a physical photo of the found item.

FoundIt!  
Your Campus-wide Lost and Found Hub

Post Found Item

Post Found Item

Item Title

e.g., Blue Hydroflask

Category

Select category...

Location Found

Select location...

Description

Describe the item...

Photo (optional)

Choose File No file chosen

Submit Found Item

Archive

Found Items

No found items posted yet.

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Figure 3 : GUI of the posting form

**Found Items Panel:** A real-time list that fetches "active" items from the database and displays them as cards.

FoundIt!  
Your Campus-wide Lost and Found Hub

Post Found Item

Post Found Item

Item Title

e.g., Blue Hydroflask

Category

Select category...

Location Found

Select location...

Description

Describe the item...

Photo (optional)

Choose File No file chosen

Submit Found Item

Archive

Found Items

Blue AquaFlask

Category: Personal Belongings

Location: Canteen

Date Posted: 12/28/2025

Description: Aquafask na blue

Claim This Item Delete

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Figure 4 : GUI of the found items list



**Claim System:** A modal pop-up that captures claimant details and moves the item from the "Found" list to the "Archive" through a database transaction.

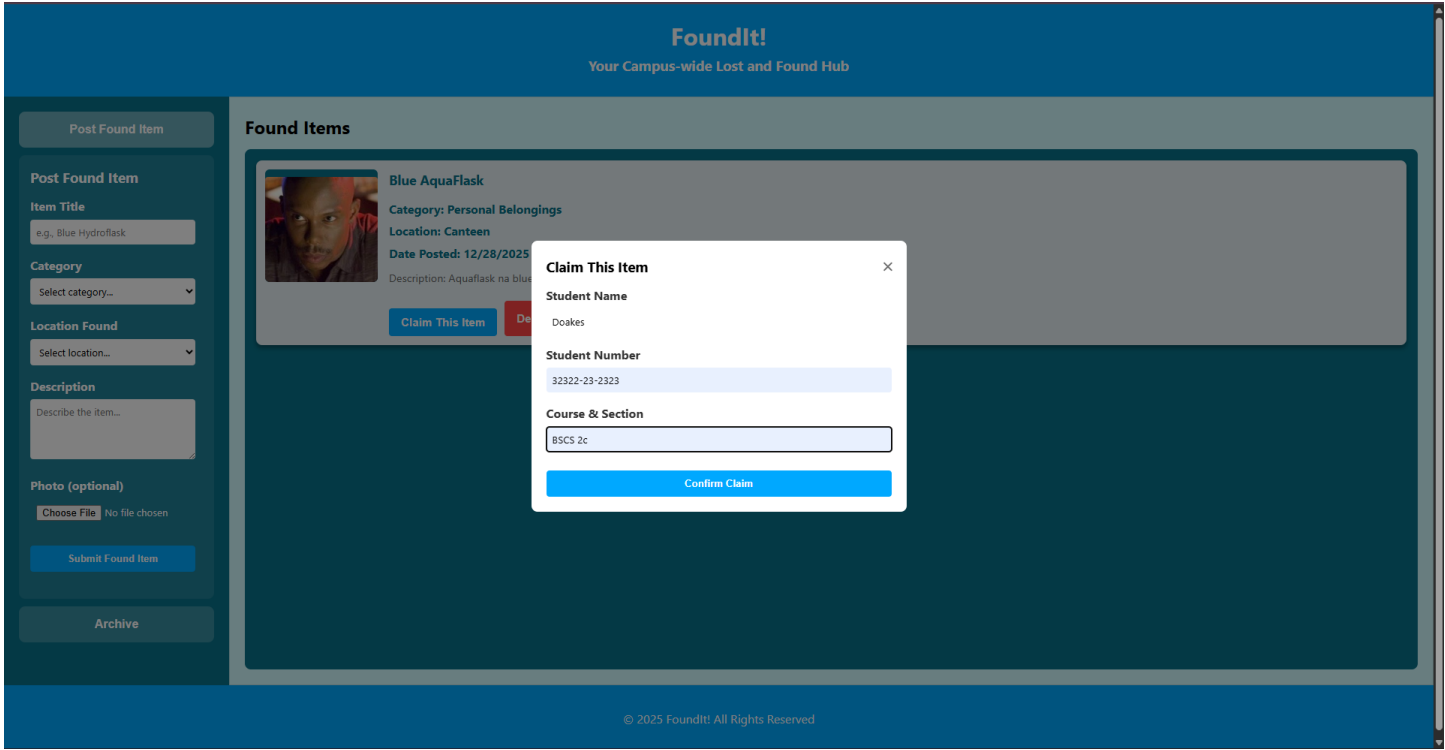


Figure 5: GUI of the claim popup modal

**Archive:** A list where all claimed items are stored, showing the history of who claimed what and when.

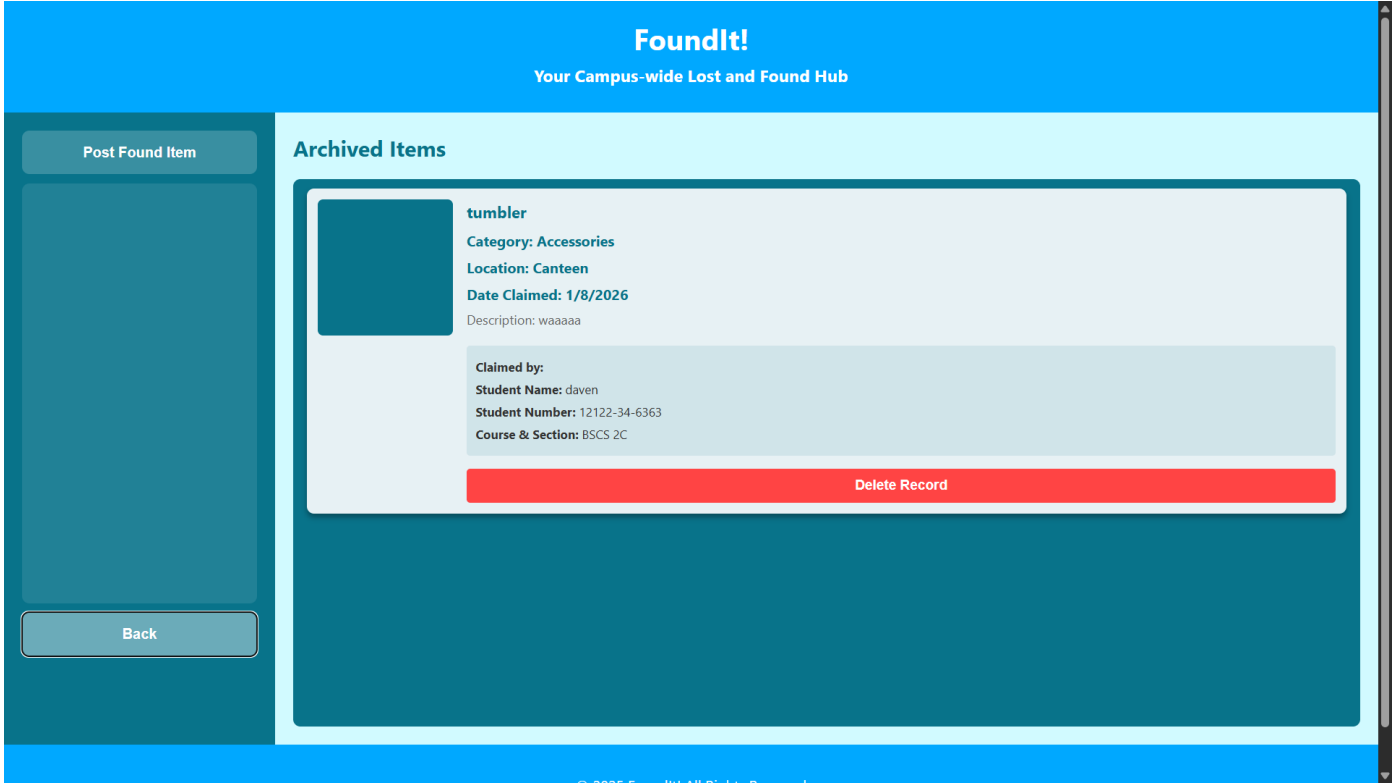


Figure 6 : GUI of the archived items panel



**Mobile View Compatibility:** The webpage changes the structural layout when viewed in a much smaller screen.

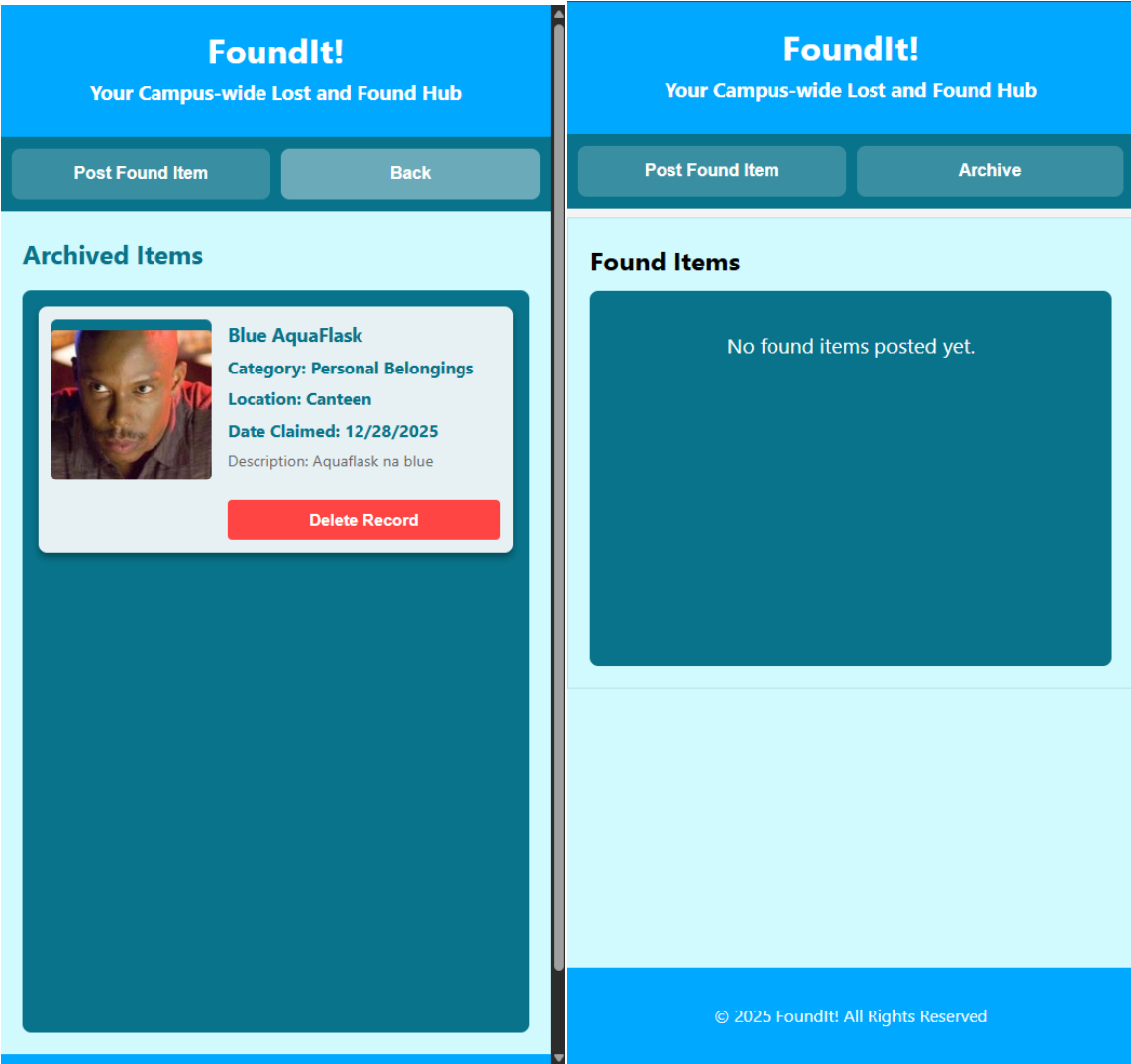


Figure 7 : GUI of the mobile view

Challenges and Learning

**Challenge - Normalization:** Transitioning from a simple one-table design to a three-table relational model was difficult, especially managing **Foreign Key constraints** and ensuring that deleting an item also cleaned up its claim record (using ON DELETE CASCADE).

**Challenge - Pathing & Caching:** Debugging why images weren't showing up (404 errors) taught me the importance of absolute vs. relative paths in PHP and how browsers cache CSS files.

**Learning - Full-Stack Integration:** I gained insight into how JavaScript fetch requests bridge the gap between a front-end UI and a MySQL database via PHP.

**Learning - UI/UX:** Implementing object-fit: cover and display: block to ensure images perfectly filled their containers taught me the precision required in modern web styling.