

Rate My Apartment

ENSE 374-001

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## Initiation

During the initiation phase, our team struggled to get an idea where we would feel comfortable enough to follow through. We tossed around ideas such as an online website that sells courses at reasonable rates, a streaming watch party where multiple people can watch the same show, an online clothing store, music sheet website, and various more. The reason these ideas did not make it through, were either because the scope was too big or we didn't have a specific or solidified 'why' to go with the idea. Considering that the 'why' is heavily emphasized in the lectures, we decided to keep trying. When we thought about the rate my apartment idea, all the pieces seemingly came together. The scope wasn't too big, as we narrowed it down to Regina. We also didn't see any other website similar for Regina, and it would help out multiple people if executed properly. Rate my apartment is the idea similar to rate my professors, but just as the name suggests, we are rating apartments in our local area.

## Planning

The planning phase was completed but not without bumps on the way. We're sure that similar to most other groups, we went into the planning phase by doing what was given in each activity every week. The stakeholders are incredibly important in any project, as they are essentially our customers.

STAKEHOLDER REGISTER				
Project Name	RateMyApartment			
Name	Project Role	Level of Power	Level of Interest	Level of Support
Timothy Maciag	Sponsor/Supervisor	High	High	Supportive
Faizah Kolapo	Project Manager	High	High	Supportive
Julian Gonzales	Project Team	High	High	Supportive
Sara Roshan	Project Team	High	High	Supportive
Customer	People Of Regina	Low	High	Supportive
Renter	Temporary/Permanent	Low	High	Supportive
landlords	Single/multiple Owners	Low	High	Supportive

Figure 1.0

If you look at our stakeholder register (Figure 1.0), we have a small list. These are the most impactful stakeholders we could think of for a project such as rate my apartment.

Regarding the customers, in other words, the people of Regina. This is critical because without a targeted audience, we can't mold our product to their liking, and without them, the project is essentially useless. They help us lower our scope to a smaller and more feasible project scope. They are the renters and what we thought was probably the most important stakeholder for this project. They are the people who will use this the most in our opinion. Since this is a customer dependent database, they are even more important as they provide the website with the data and the reviews that the people want to see and learn from. Thanks to our supervisor, we were able to think about landlords as another stakeholder. Although this project might be able to go without them, we decided to include them as they can be potentially very helpful if executed correctly. With landlords included, we are able to broaden more of our apartment databases as they can include their single or multitudes of apartment blocks, and in return, they get to the peoples' reviews of their own apartments and improve upon them. This is nothing but a win-win situation for both parties.

Once we had the stakeholder register out of the way, we further went into the project charter document, where we explored more additional stakeholders, milestones, and risks.

PROJECT CHARTER	
<b>Project Name</b>	RateMyApartments
<b>Date Produced</b>	October 14th, 2021
<b>Project Goals</b>	To allow people to have easy access to available apartments for sale and how well they are.
<b>Project Objectives</b>	To build a website that will allow people in Regina to easily see, read, and rate apartments within.
<b>Project Budget</b>	None
<b>Project Sponsor</b>	Tim Maciag
<b>Project Manager</b>	Faizah Kolapo - Developer
<b>Additional Key Project Stakeholders</b>	
[The names of key stakeholders that are known at this point in the project, including their job title or project role]	
Municipal - Oversee legality	
Tim Maciag - Project Sponsor	
Municipal - Oversee legality	
Overall Project Milestones	Dates
[A list of the key milestones that are known at this point in the project]	
Build 1.0 version with main concepts	Nov 20 2021
Build 2.0 version with added features for ease of use	Dec 6 2021
<b>Overall Project Risks</b>	
[A list of the overall risks that are known at this point in the project]	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Validity of ratings posted on the website.</li> <li>2. Team may not be able to communicate properly due to being in different countries and time zones.</li> <li>3. Potential low amount of information due to data being driven by customers.</li> </ol>	

Figure 1.1

In figure 1.1 where we show our project charter document, once again thanks to our supervisor, we were able to add the Municipal government as an additional stakeholder, as they can potentially oversee the legality of the apartments and provide trust to not only the users, but to our team who is responsible for providing safe and secure data. However, since for this project, we were only aiming for a minimum viable product or MVP, this was put in the back of our heads for future features, if time allows it. For our milestones, although we tried our best, it does not seem like we were able to reach both of them in time, just for the sole purpose of having the key concepts for the hand in. We had multiple risks for this project and in our opinion, the main risk being a communication problem, since everyone was in a different country literally across the world. The time zones were an issue and there was no real convenient time to communicate. Towards this risk, we did our best to have weekly meetings and sent messages through a group chat on WhatsApp regarding our projects whenever we could, in order to stay up to date in class activities and project execution.

Moving on, we directed our attention to project roles and responsibilities, mainly thinking more about using a responsible, accountable, consulted, and informed (RACI) chart. In regards to the RACI chart, nothing special was given towards it, we simply decided to try and give the most fair and even responsibilities towards whoever was more comfortable with them. We all had the same role as a developer and product designer, but we each focused on what we were good at which we thought was the best case scenario.

Once all the business side of planning was out of the way, we transitioned into working on the coding side of the planning phase. We started with the MVC architecture diagram as seen in figure 1.2.

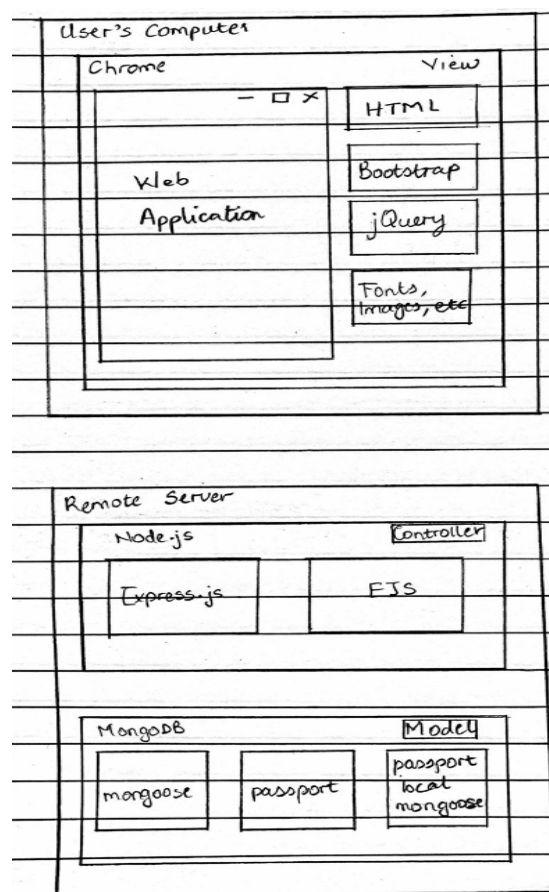
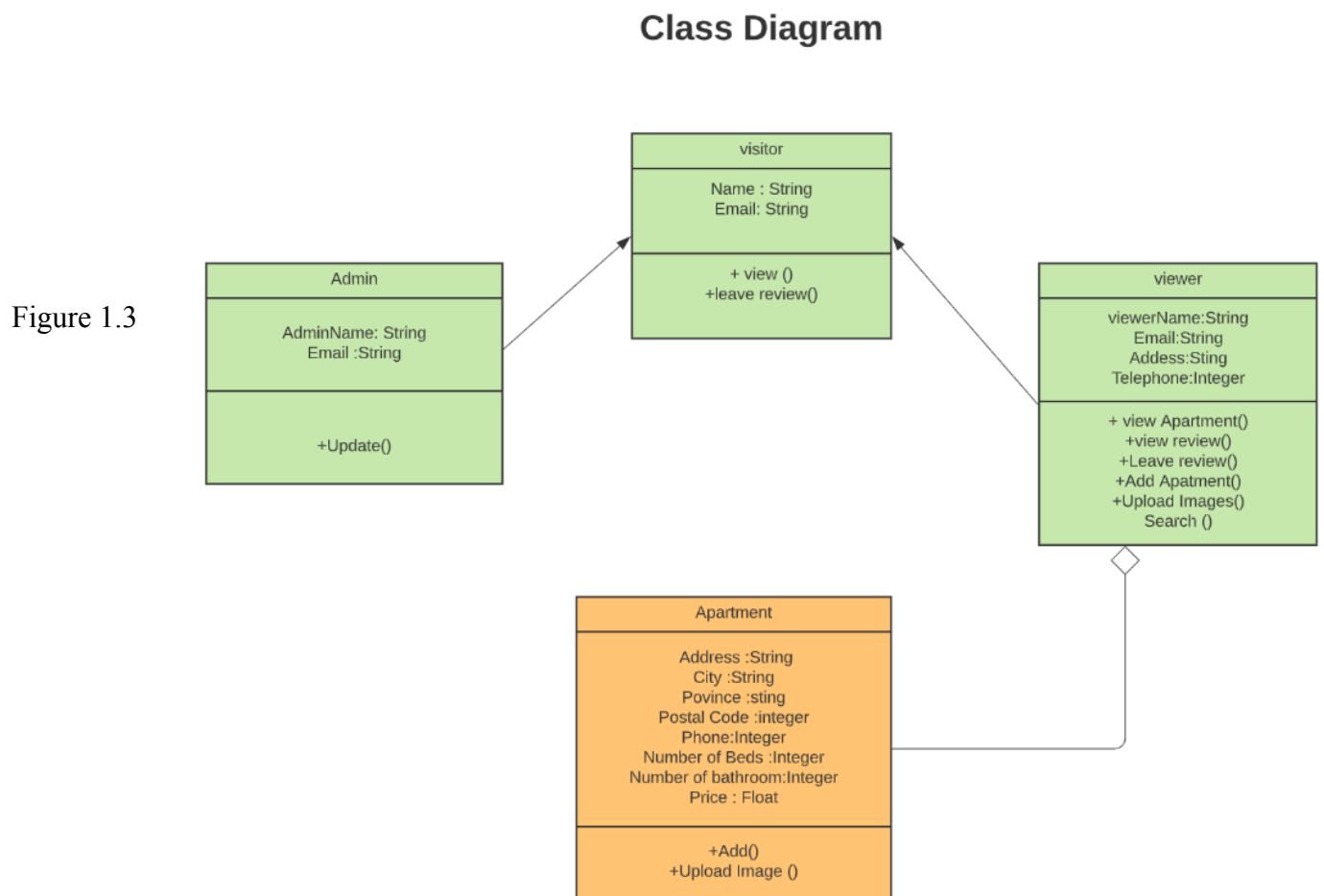


Figure 1.2

It just made sense to use what we were learning in the lab section for this project. Using HTML, Bootstrap and jQuery for our client side or the view, Node.js with express, ejs for our controller, and MongoDB with mongoose, for our model which completes the MVC. Since this was being used in our lab section in parallel to the project, it was a bit of a no-brainer for us to use what we were being taught.

Up next were the UML diagrams and other assorted diagrams related to domain driven design. We made multiple diagrams such as the UML case and class diagrams, sequence diagram, and data flow diagram. In the end, they all show similar results because of how little the functionalities are needed for the MVP. Taking a look at our UML class diagram at figure 13,



since all our relevant functionalities fit into 4 pages, there was not much that needed to be added into our diagrams. It's almost like a line that users can go back and forth with from point A to

point B. Having them all connected gives them a sense of one entity and what we think fulfills a domain driven design.

Looking at our low-fidelity sketches, we tried to keep it as bare as we could, however, we added a little bit of flair here and there, some images to not make it so ‘ugly’ per say and in our opinion, this was still considered an MVP. Although some sketches were changed and implemented differently, we tried our best to stay true to the sketches we had made.

## Execution

When it came to executing our designs, we thought we did pretty well. Since it is our first time trying to design a product that we want people to use, we had some fun trying to recreate our low-fidelity sketches by bringing them to life. Using HTML and Bootstrap was easy enough for us, however, there were little bits of hiccups while converting them into ejs, due to some of our structures breaking down. The issue was eventually fixed without any real troubles. The coding for the server side was a little bit more challenging as it first started out with many bugs and problematic code. We were definitely frustrated at one point and couldn’t seem to get anything working, however, once we had one thing working, the rest came quickly and was completed on time. One interesting component we found was that the css had some rigidity when we were working on the server side and we would have never thought about it until this class. We found some unnecessary functionalities after implementing them such as certain filters and decided to remove them as they provided no real value to the overall product.

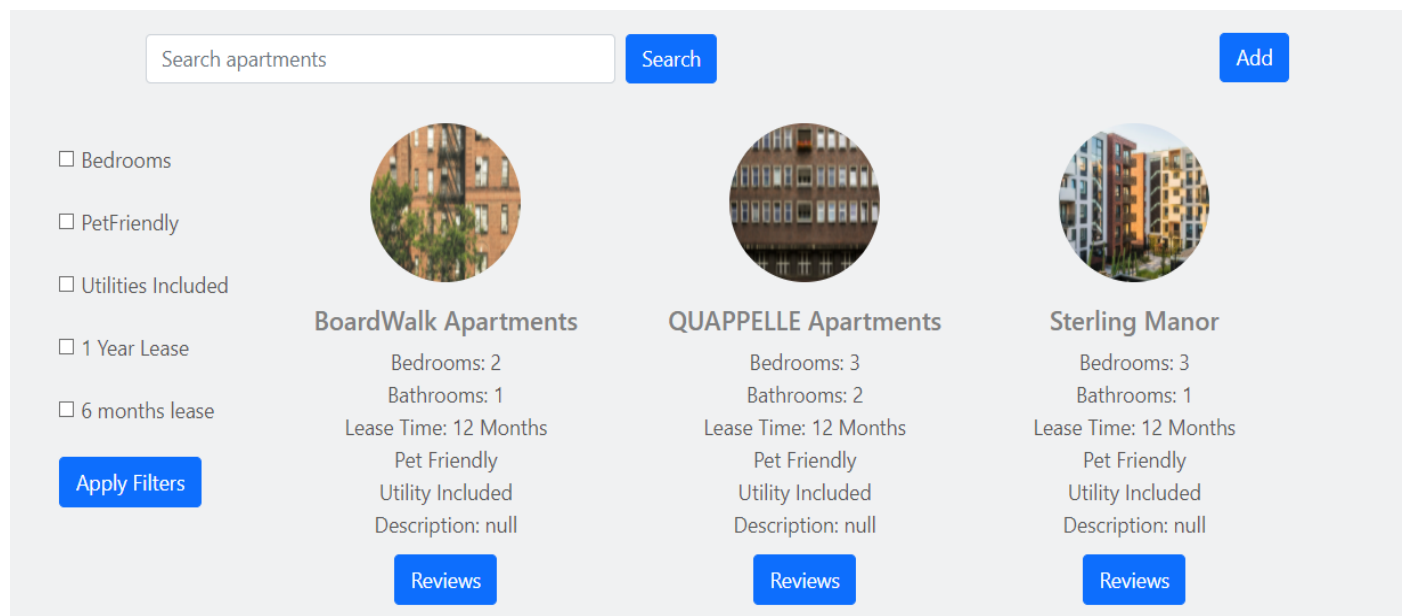


Figure 2.0

As you can see in figure 2.0, we kept the filters on the left side to the bare minimum so that it remains focused on the main problem.

## Closing

This entire project has been a stressful but productive and growing experience for all of us. It has taught so much about how to work properly with a team and in a business-like structure. The planning documents such as the stakeholder register, RACI chart, project scope and the different types of UML diagrams, have all been really helpful in terms of organization and it forces us to think outside the box by considering the business side as well. One of the aspects we will definitely take out of this project and further develop is the communication aspect between each team member. Since there were only three of us, communication was a little simpler than what we would imagine in a larger team but it was not without its challenges considering we lived in different countries. Another aspect is the ability to think and write with clean code because it helps tremendously to have other members understand your code with one or two reads, instead of scratching your head in confusion. Lastly, we would like to thank our professor Tim Maciag for the opportunity to experience a project like this one, as this is our first time and it has been a challenging, but fun project.