Team Name: Linked

Team Members: Ayah Tharwat, Jialin Yu, Krisia Flores

ITWS 2110 Web Science Systems Development

Term Project Proposal

17 September 2021

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Project Summary

Problem

We came up with the idea for this project when we noticed how hard it was to make friends on campus because of COVID. A large portion of the sophomore and junior student body weren't on campus for the majority of their college careers, and hadn't had the chance to join new clubs or meet new people. It was difficult to find information about clubs and organizations when the activities fair at the beginning of the year was cancelled and interaction with other students was limited to online classes. Sure, there is the RPI club directory, but it's hard to know what exactly the club is about without talking to someone in it. While you could go to the online club meetings, for some reason, approaching someone to talk in person is a lot less awkward than un-muting your mic. How would we be able to overcome this issue? We found that some people had taken to using dating apps to make new connections with people in the same area based on the other users' likes and dislikes in their profiles. Loosely based on that, and the RPI roommate matching page, we decided to take a similar approach to making friends on campus.

Solution

We would create a web application that would help students connect with each other by creating profiles with their current likes and possible hobbies and interests that suggest the user link to other users or organizations that match that data. If you know exactly who or what you are looking for, you can simply find them by using the search bar. If you are just window shopping for new hobbies, you would be able to narrow down your search by using keywords and filters. If you want to connect with other people in a certain organization, you would simply have to join the organization on our website to browse through the list of profiles of other people also in that organization. Suddenly, you have a new, easy path to making compatible connections with other people at RPI.

User & Stakeholders

The target users for our website would consist of all college students at RPI. While we can foresee this project being useful for other universities, it is best to start small and then scale up. A few stakeholders in this application are clubs and fraternities/sororities, and parents, and the university administrators. Organizations need members in order to continue to operate, and COVID has only made it harder for them to be noticed by underclassmen they can recruit. Being active on this platform would allow them to be discoverable and contactable. Parents also have a vested interest in our project, as all parents worry about their children being able to make friends and participate in activities in college, and knowing that they have a way to find both would set their mind at ease. School administrators are interested in this project because parents are usually the ones that finance their

child's education, and having this resource available would make it more likely that parents are onboard with their child coming to RPI.

Technologies

An interesting piece of technology that our site will use is bubble animation. For each user's landing page, they will be able to see a clump of bubbles with information about them. This information will be retrieved directly from a user's profile and displayed in an interesting way through bubble animation. The purpose of this is to implement interesting technologies to the application and to display information about each user in a fun and unique way. Additionally, the web application will utilize a matchmaking/compatibility feature that allows users to see how compatible they are with other users/links. They would get an overall percentage of how compatible they are to another "link". The purpose is to ease the process of making better connections by getting a clearer understanding of how compatible one user is with another. This streamlines the search process and creates a fun way of relating to other Linked users.

Functional & Non-functional Requirement

The Linked web application includes several functional requirements that will ensure a successful launch. The user will be able to create a personal Linked account and log in using a simple

authorization system. The user will have two routes to create an account, either as a student or as an organization.

Student

Upon a user's log in, they will be prompted to personalize their profile page by filling in or clicking on choices that pertain to them. Through that, a user can then begin to link with other Linked users based on interests and similarities using a filter feature. If a user would like to link with someone of similar interests and background, they would use our integrated filter to sift through users by particular categories. Once a user links with another, both parties will not only be able to view each others' basic information but also be able to view their contact information(Instagram, Snapchat, Facebook etc). Additionally, if a user wants to search for a specific person/friend, they could use the search bar for easy and quick access.

Organization

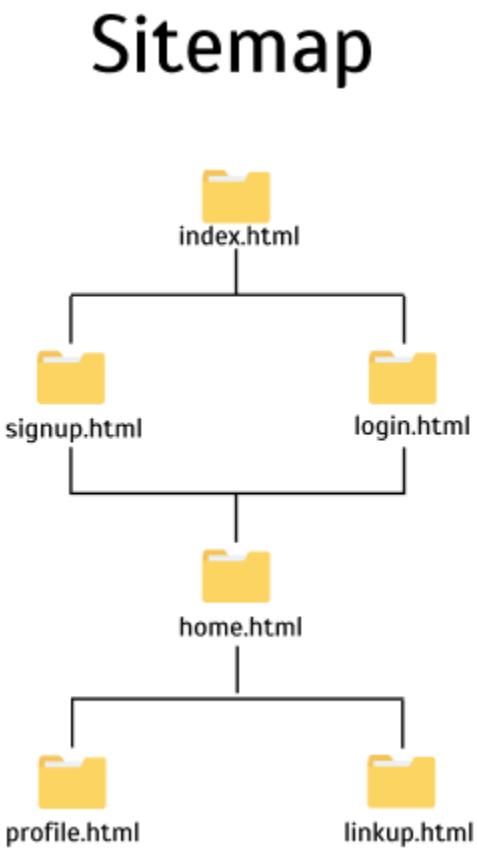
All features of the application are relevant to both types of accounts. The main difference between an organization and a student's account is privacy. A student's profile and link list is private until he or she links up with another user, then both students can view each others' profiles. However, an organization's profile is public to all users. That way any student wanting to learn more about an organization, can easily view that organization's details.

Furthermore, the Linked web application includes several non-functional requirements that include privacy, maintainability, performance, and usability. Linked prioritizes its users' privacy. This is why students will be prompted to make accounts using PHP and MySQL to ensure security. Each account is personalized for each user to include as much information they want to their profile. In addition, all users will have private accounts that can only be viewed by other "links" and will have an option to accept or decline a link request. This ensures privacy within the Linked community for each user to choose links they want to have. Features such as the search bar will be implemented using JQuery, meanwhile the filter feature will require HTML, CSS, and JavaScript. Furthermore, we understand the importance of maintaining our high-end application as more and more users join the Linked community. This is why our back-end developers will ensure neat and scalable code that can be easily adjusted and tweaked as we move forward into the future. With scalability comes performance. Our team is dedicated to providing a unique and enjoyable experience for every user. The application will maintain speed, performance, and design through the use of UX/UI development. By implementing a navigation bar on the home page using JQuery, the users can quickly direct to other pages like profile, searching and messages pages. Ensuring quick searching and filtering as well as ease of use through good interface design, will be essential for the brand and the user's experience.

Estimated Project Schedule

Deliverables	Estimated deadline
Project proposal & presentation	September 17th
Design interface using Figma	September 21st
HTML & CSS	September 29th
JavaScript for functional requirement	October 7th
Midterm presentation	October 15th
Setup Database using MariaDB	October 29th
Finalize project deliverables	November 15th
Project preview	November 30th
Final presentation	December 3rd

Site map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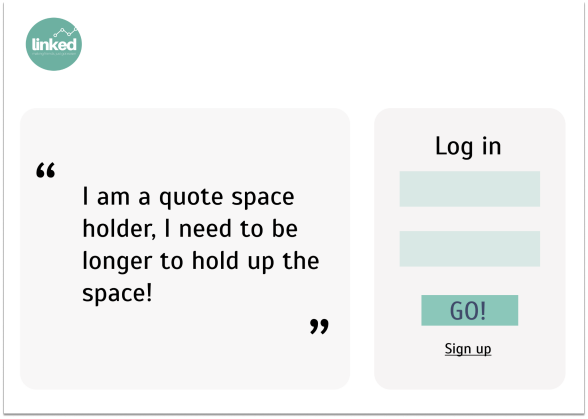
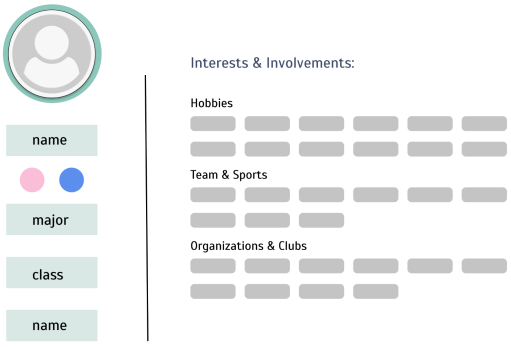
login.html
home.html
profile.html
linkup.html

Wireframes

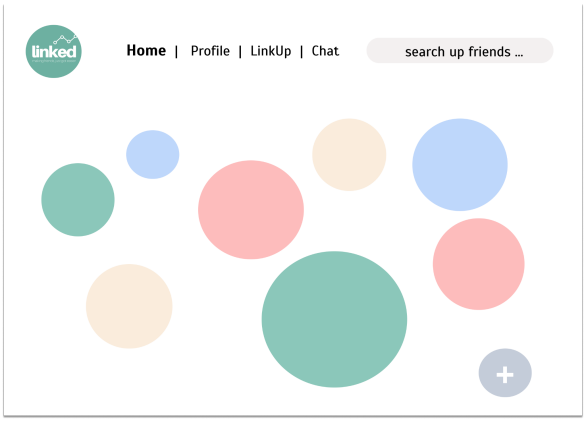
Login Page



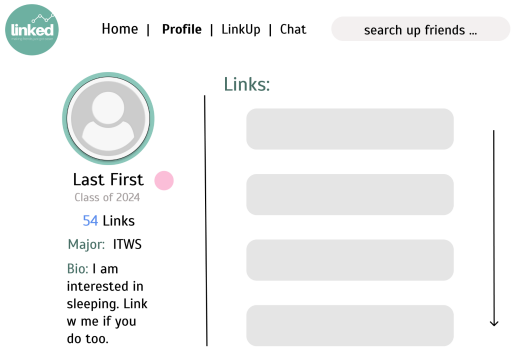
Customize Profile



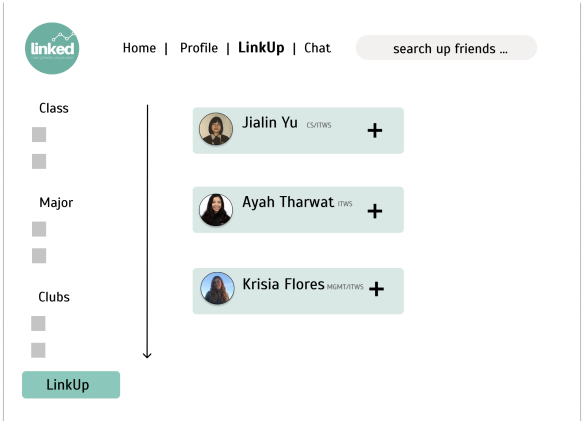
Homepage



Profile



LinkUp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Jialin Yu CS/ITWS
Ayah Tharwat ITWS
Krisia Flores MGMT/ITWS