Project report

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FoClocks is the name of our group project, it’s a helper of building reasonable schedules and a good time organizer. It has the ability to organize different kinds of tasks and events, and give users reliable predictions about how much time will take to finish them.

When we started design our project, we all thought about one question: what functions should FoClocks has in order to show itself from other similar products on the Internet. As a result, we decide to add a console to FoClocks.This console will allow users adding codes into FoClocks, and it can be down from web pages directly. It just like the modifier in video games, users can add what they want by coding and it will not effect the experience of other users. It’s an excellent function since different users may have different improvement advice about FoClocks, some of these advice even leads to very different results, we certainly cannot satisfy those advice at the same time without this console, however, it can be down now.

Another special function FoClocks has is image display. We put this function at profile page, the content of these images is a brief summary about how many tasks, what kind of tasks users down in this week and what users will do in the next week if users already upload those tasks to our server. Since students are one of our target users, so instead of have a summary one month, we choose one week as a cycle since students usually have many things need to do every week during semester.

FoClocks is a combination of todolist and tomato clock. So it covers both of these two aspects. For example, other todolist products usually don't have complete tomato clock functions and other tomato clock products usually don't have complete todolist functions. Users will use two differnet products if they want have both these functions. Imagine that every morning when users get up, there are two softwares send messages just about good morning, and mentioned users about the same task at the same time. Using FoClocks will avoid this problem!

FoClocks also have a small function that will be very useful sometimes. FoClocks can transfer task deadline between different timezone. For example, if users add tasks in U.S. and they travel to France for vacation, these tasks will automatic transfer to Paris time when users change timezone to Paris time. This function will help users get used to different timezone faster and prevent possible accidents those users forget to do tasks since different timezone.

The last special point for FoClocks is its humanistic concern. We add complete e-tag on php pages we finish. Those e-tag can help people who have special requirement to read pages. We also import some famous sayings to encourage our users to complete tasks.

The structure of FoClocks is a challenge we face at the start. We thought and discussed about what structure should we use so users will feel comfortable when they using FoClocks, and there are many small problems occurred during this process. For example, should we require users to login? If so, should we askusers to create new FoClocks accounts, or they can use rcsid to login? And there were many likely problems we met during this process. Finally we decided the structure of FoClocks, the index page will be the login page, and what after this page(after login) is the main function page which also can be called “users’ page”, this page link to every other function pages such as on-goingtasks page and overview page. This structure is very convenient so every userwill not confused about how to access certain page. And it’s also convenient for us to fix any occurred issue or add possible new pages.

The developing process is not easy, there always some gap between imagination and reality, not everything in the mock up can be develop easily. As developers, FoClocks is always our proud. However, we design this product for users, we must think about what will users think when they access certain page, not only the structure and distribution of whole page, but also what color will make users feel comfortable, by the way, that’s another advantage of console, users can decide what color they want in their FoClocks. There were many small problems such as what font size and font style is the best? How many percents should each column occupy? And what will happened next if users click some button? We must think about all those questions and that’s just the beginning of design.

When the basic structure was been finished, the rest tasks are adding more and more functions to FoClocks. In order to finish login part, we created a database to store all accounts, and we were thinking about using different accounts such as Google accounts to login. Authorization was a big challenge for us since it’s very important to the security of our product. We don’t want any problem occur in this part. And since we only learn a little bit about authorization, there were lots of things those we need to explore by ourselves. It’s hard to overcome but we will do it. During this process, we realized that it will take several years if we want FoClocks become perfect, however, we don’t have that much time. So we need to find out how to make the greatest improvement of users’ experience in shortest time. Luckily we done that, we add as many functions as possible into FoClocks, we believe that FoClocks now is a good scheduler.

However, there are some limitations of FoClocks. First limitation is FoClocks cannot recognized where users are, so we don't have a function to automatic change timezone, users need to change it by hand. Next limitation is we don't have a screen reader so people with eye problems may have worse feelings about FoClocks.

We will briefly introduce what FoClocks can do as a summary. FoClocks is a helper of building reasonable schedules and a good time organizer. FoClocks can show users' ongoing tasks and automatically generate to-do list. As a conclusion, FoClocks have almost all basic functions those normal to-do list and Pomodoro clocks have. There are also some special functions like console, image display, and humanistic concern. These special functions make FoClocks from a normal product become a special product. It's not easy to develop an excellent product, we met many problems and challenges during this process, but we overcome them and develop FoClocks.