

Adminca.com

The Interface for your Backend Data

HCDE Capstone, Winter 2016

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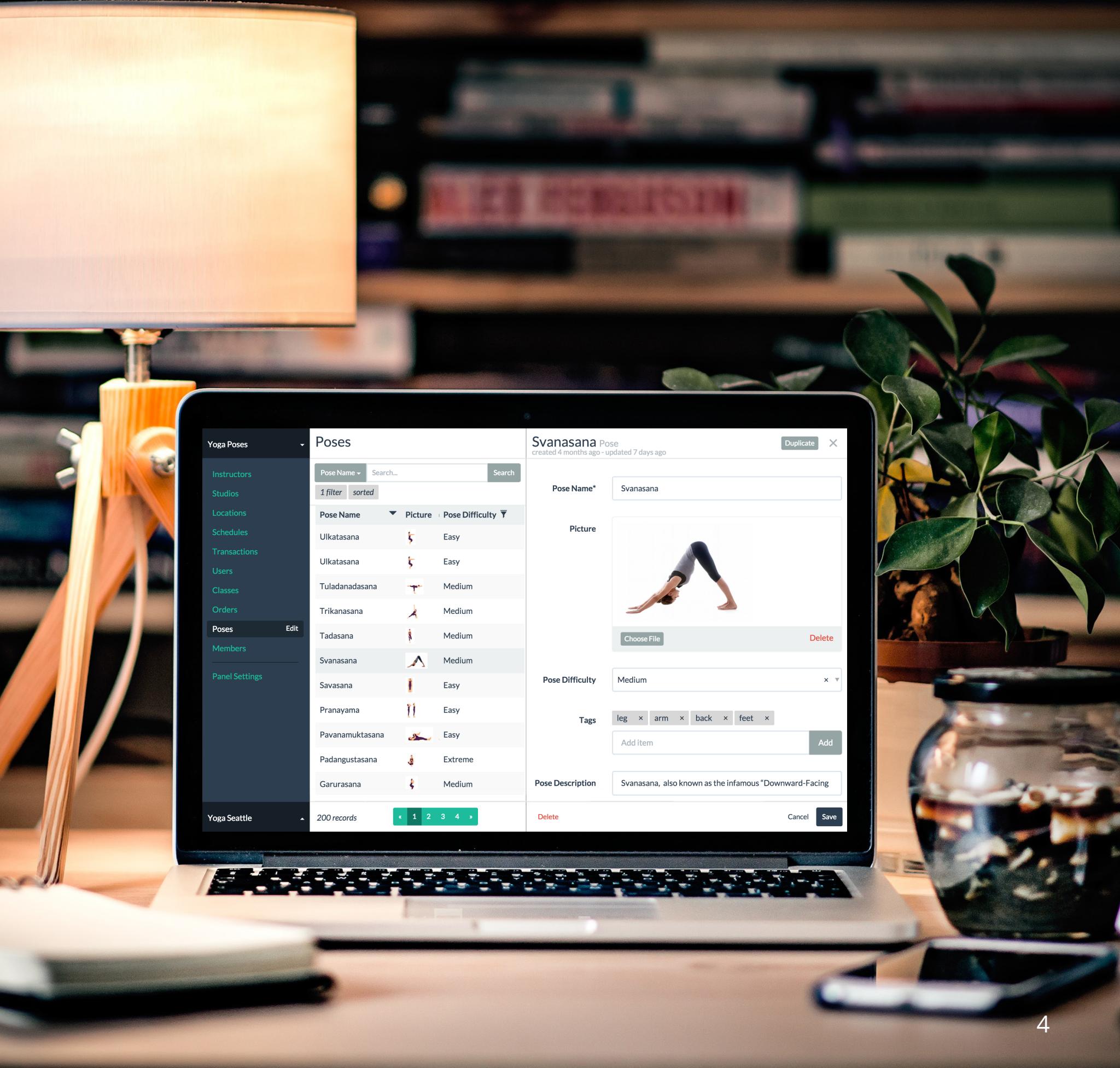
INTRODUCTION

SUMMARY

Mobile app publishers need to manage app content and user information to keep the data up to date. An admin panel is the interface that allows them to view and manage this backend data. But admin panels are broken! Developers waste weeks setting it up, and the interface is often so complicated that nobody wants to use it.

To solve this problem we created Adminca—the interface for your backend data. Adminca provides an Admin Panel as a Service which allows developers to get a powerful admin panel without writing a single line of code. Creating and customizing a panel takes seconds instead of weeks. It comes with roles and permissions for the team or clients that will manage the data. Adminca was designed specifically for these non-technical users so they can view and manage their data intuitively.

We designed and built Adminca over the last five months following the user-centered design process. Two months ago we launched Adminca to the public, and so far we welcomed over 400 users.



MEET THE TEAM



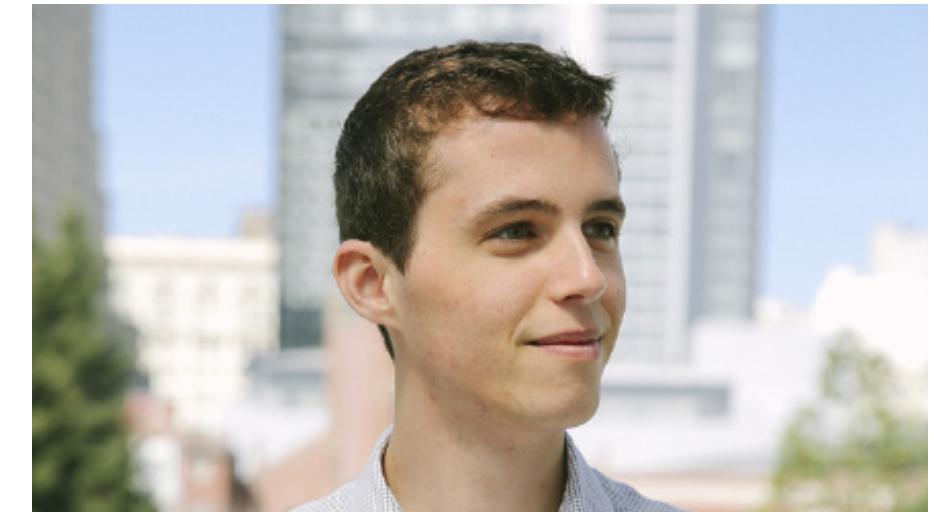
Lukas Eiermann

Lukas is a UX Designer and is passionate about creating products that simplify the complex and serve the user. He holds a Bachelor's and Master's degree in Engineering Management from the Karlsruhe Institute of Technology, Germany. He is interested in solving challenging design problems that translate into meaningful digital experiences.



Frank Kaiyuan Xu

Frank is a UX researcher, striving to understand people and advocate for their needs. With his background in psychology, he has years of experience in research design, data analysis, and finding synthesis. He has worked in multiple Agile teams, and improved the user experience for web, mobile, and hardware products.



Jordan Vincent

Jordan is a UX Designer with a strong background in Software Engineering. He got his Master's degree in Computer Science at INSA of Lyon, France. He has a passion for innovation and entrepreneurship that led him to join startups in France and San Francisco. He focusses on using technology and design to empowers humans.

PROBLEM SPACE

What is Backend Data?

Data generated through or for mobile/web apps that is stored in a database.

Most mobile or web applications do not save all their data locally. The app communicates with a backend server to save or access data from the backend database.

Backend data can be:

- User generated (e.g. a user's profile picture)
- System generated (e.g. a user's current location)
- Publisher generated (e.g. a new article)

What is Backend Data?

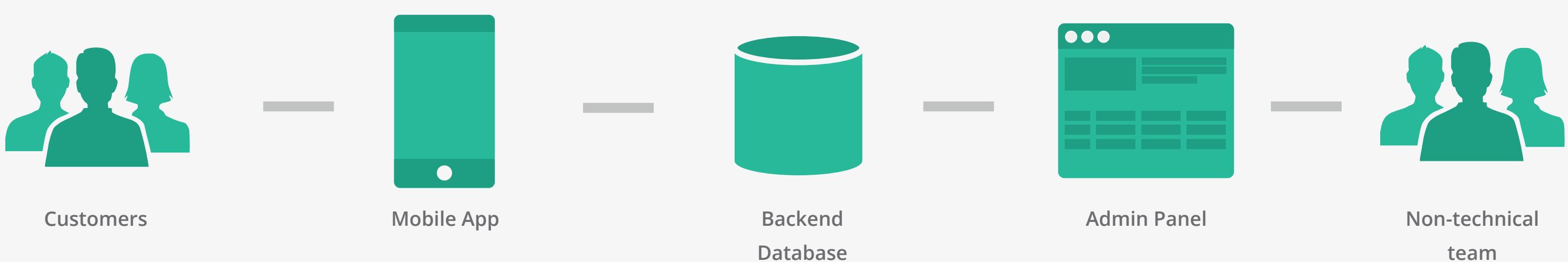
An internal tool allowing the publisher's team to view and manage all the backend data relevant to the app.

The team that owns the app needs a way to access the app data. Developers can access the backend database directly but non-technical users need a tool to access the data: an admin panel.

An Admin Panel can be used to:

- Create new data
- View and analyze existing data
- Edit or delete existing data

▼ Data, from the end-users to the internal team



DESIGN QUESTION

How can we improve the experience of creating and using administrative interfaces to manage backend data?

All three of us have used, built and maintained admin panels in the past, and we believe it's fair to say that **admin panels are broken**.

Developer Perspective

Most admin panels are built from scratch which means developers are basically reinventing the wheel. Developers waste time building and maintaining a tool that it is not core to the actual product or business.

Non-technical User Perspective

Non-technical users have to work with a poorly designed admin panel that was built on the premise of not being important since it is not customer facing. The poorly designed interface often lowers the staff efficiency.

PROJECT GOAL

Focus on a specific backend

There is a wide variety of backends and the admin panel problem exists for all of them. For the scope of this project we decided to **focus on a specific backend called Parse** which is backed by Facebook.

We picked Parse because with over 400,000 active developers, it is the largest Mobile Backend as a Service provider. Parse was particularly interesting because it is mostly used by developers who focus on mobile apps. Creating an admin panel is even more time-consuming for them because they are less familiar with web technologies needed for admin panels.

Build and Launch an actual product

A frustrating part of design projects can be that they don't go beyond the prototyping phase. Our goal for this project was to **include the implementation phase** and built a product. Building, launching and marketing a product would allow us to test and iterate our idea with actual customers in a real world scenario.

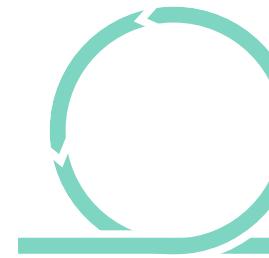
Parse community
event in Seattle ▶

More than 400,000 developers are building apps with Parse.
In the last year, more than 85% of the top apps on Parse were built outside of the US.



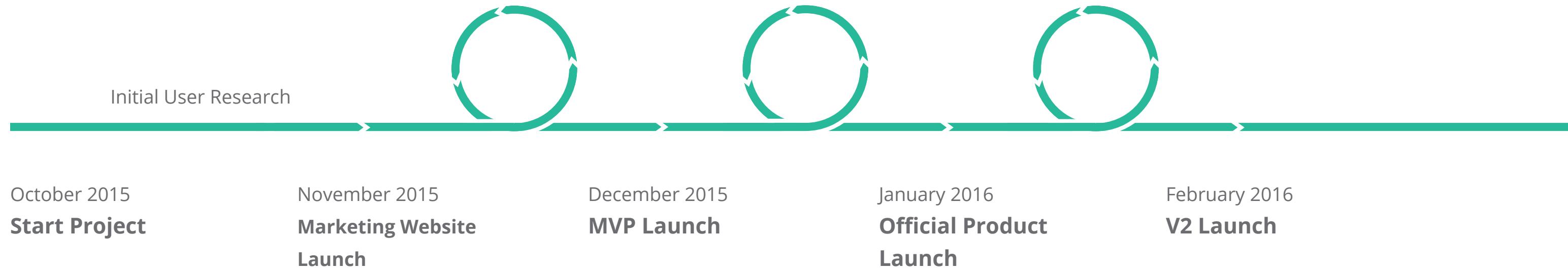
PROCESS

After our initial research phase we started our rapid iterative design process. During each iteration, we went through the process, and improved Adminca based on the findings from the previous round.



Ideation
Prototyping
Implementation
Usability Testing

The process book describes Adminca as of March 2016.



INVESTIGATION

RESEARCH OVERVIEW

We applied three research methods to better understand the Parse app backend data management problem space and user needs.

27

THREADS ANALYSED

We started with secondary research to learn what people asked and demanded online regarding admin panels for Parse.

We found 27 questions and comments posted in recent years, which were either related to improving the current Parse data browser, or asked about building a separate tool for non-technical users. This helped us to identify different user groups and individual needs.

14

INTERVIEWS

We conducted three rounds of interviews with different groups of users: Developers building apps on Parse, Mobile app development agencies and Admin panel template users.

Our interview findings showed us a number of pain points for current admin panel developers and users. We created three personas for our product, and got a better and clearer understanding of our target users.

13

COMPETITORS ANALYSED

We reviewed 13 existing admin panel solutions and evaluated them by comparing them along 28 features and 16 design categories.

We highlighted the strengths and usability issues of the competitors, and gained a clearer understanding of existing solutions for admin panels.

RESEARCH INSIGHTS

Developers

"Parse offers the data browser for data management, which is quite easy to use for me. But it's too complicated for my client. Also, if I invite my client to the Parse account, he may accidentally delete the whole class of data."

— Parse developer building apps for clients

Goals

- Develop and maintain an admin panel for team or clients to access and manage data.
- Make sure team/clients know how to manage data on Parse or through the admin panel.
- Backup the database to ensure the app doesn't crash if team/clients mistakenly delete things.

Pain points

- Designing and building admin panels is usually not a developer's expertise or passion.
- Depending on the complexity of data management needs, building an admin panel can take weeks even with admin panel templates.
- If the team/clients manage data through the Parse backend, they may accidentally delete crucial data or even cloud code saved in the Parse.

RESEARCH INSIGHTS

Non-technical people

"I don't know much about app development, but I do want access to the backend data. I need an admin tool so that I don't have to bother my devs every time."

— Co-founder of a Seattle startup with a business background

Goals

- View data in a straightforward layout
- Manage data quickly and easily without asking developers for help.
- Export data for business analytics or marketing campaign.

Pain points

- Parse data browser is developer-oriented, but hard for non-technical users to view or manage.
- Non-technical users are often afraid of changing or updating data in the Parse data browser because they don't want to mess anything up in the app.
- Parse only export data in JSON format, which is hard for non-technical users to use. It's also not easy to convert JSON data to CSV format.

DESIGN PRINCIPLES AND IMPLICATIONS

Based on our findings, we created the three S. We used them as guidance for our design decisions and as company values for Adminca as a company.

Simple

EFFORTLESS SETUP + INTUITIVE INTERFACE

Save developers weeks of time, and streamline the admin panel setup process. Provide an intuitive interface that non-technical users can get their hands on without training.

Secure

DATA PERMISSION + ENCRYPTED CREDENTIALS

Empower developers to manage data permission to ensure data integrity. Use highest encryption and security measures for Adminca to protect customer's data.

Smart

POWERFUL FEATURES + SMART DEFAULTS

Provide solutions for diverse data management problems with a comprehensive feature set. Understand what users want to achieve and provide them with smart default that make their live easier.

FINAL DESIGN OVERVIEW

THE IDEA

Adminca is an Admin Panel as a Service

For Developers:

[Admin View](#)

Adminca enables developers to easily set up a fully customizable admin panel where they can then invite their collaborators.

For Non-technical Users:

[Contributor View](#)

Adminca empowers non-technical users to intuitively view and manage their data.

ADMIN WORKFLOW

A developer has the role of an admin in Adminca. After signing up he is guided through the admin workflow to set up and modify the admin panel for the contributor.



Create a Panel



View the Panel



Customize the Panel



Invite Collaborators

ADMIN WORKFLOW

Create a Panel

1 - 2 - 3 - 4

A Name & Keys

Assign a name and enter the app credentials.

B Tooltips

Help users find their app credentials on Parse and explain how Adminca uses and protects the credentials

C Create

Once everything is entered correctly, the admin panel is just 5 seconds away.

The screenshot shows a window titled "Create an Admin Panel". It contains three input fields: "Admin Panel Name" (labeled A), "Application ID" (labeled B), and "Master Key" (labeled C). Each field has a placeholder text and a question mark icon indicating a tooltip. Below the fields are two buttons: "Cancel" and a dark blue "Create" button with a white "C" icon. The window has a standard OS X title bar with red, yellow, and green buttons.

Create an Admin Panel

Admin Panel Name
A Admin Panel Name

Enter your Parse App Credentials. ? B

Application ID

Master Key ?
C Master Key

Cancel Create C

ADMIN WORKFLOW

View the Panel

1 - 2 - 3 - 4

A Panels List

Switch between multiple panels or create new panel.

B Data Table

Table view of data in this class.

C Edit Class/Field

Customize contributor permissions and define data access for the class and its fields.

D Class Navigation

Open other classes within this panel.

E Panel Settings

Modify general panel properties, and invite other admins or contributors to this panel.

The screenshot shows the 'Yoga Poses' panel interface. On the left is a sidebar with navigation links: Members, Poses (selected), Orders, Users, Transactions, Schedules (disabled), Studios, Instructors, and Panel Settings (disabled). The main area is titled 'Poses' and contains a table of yoga poses. The table has columns for Pose Name, Picture, Pose Description, Pose Difficulty, and Tags. A search bar at the top right allows filtering by pose name. The table lists 17 records, including Ardh-Chandrasana, Ulkatasana, Garurasana, Dandayamana-Janushiras, Dadayamana-Dhanurasana, Svanasana, Dandayamana-Bibhaktapa, Trikanasana, Dandayamana-Bibhaktapa, Tadasana, Padangustasana, and Savasana. Each pose has a small icon and a detailed description. The 'Tags' column includes categories like back, breath, upper body, etc. At the bottom right are refresh and export buttons.

Pose Name	Picture	Pose Description	Pose Difficulty	Tags
Ardha-Chandrasana		Ardha Chandrasana or Hal	Easy	back breath upper body
Ulkatasana		Utkatasana, Chair Pose, Fi	Easy	leg feet arm back
Garurasana		Garurasana or Eagle Pose.	Medium	breath leg knee arm
Dandayamana-Janushiras		Standing Head to Knee Po:	Hard	back leg feet neck head
Dadayamana-Dhanurasana		Like camel posture, standin	Extreme	hip leg arm back
Svanasana		Svanasana, also known as t	Medium	leg arm back feet
Dandayamana-Bibhaktapa		Dandayamana-Bibhaktapa	Hard	hip back shoulder arm
Trikanasana		Trikanasana is also known	Medium	leg arm shoulder head
Dandayamana-Bibhaktapa		Dandayamana Bibhaktapa	Hard	back arm upper body feet
Tadasana		Mountain Pose: Step-by-Si	Medium	leg knee arm
Padangustasana		Bikram describes this post	Extreme	leg hip knee feet
Savasana		Savasana it's essential that	Easy	relax breath full body

ADMIN WORKFLOW

Customize the Panel — Class Settings

1 - 2 - 3 - 4

A Class Settings

Open class settings page.

B Visibility

Hide or show this class to contributors.

C Label and Name

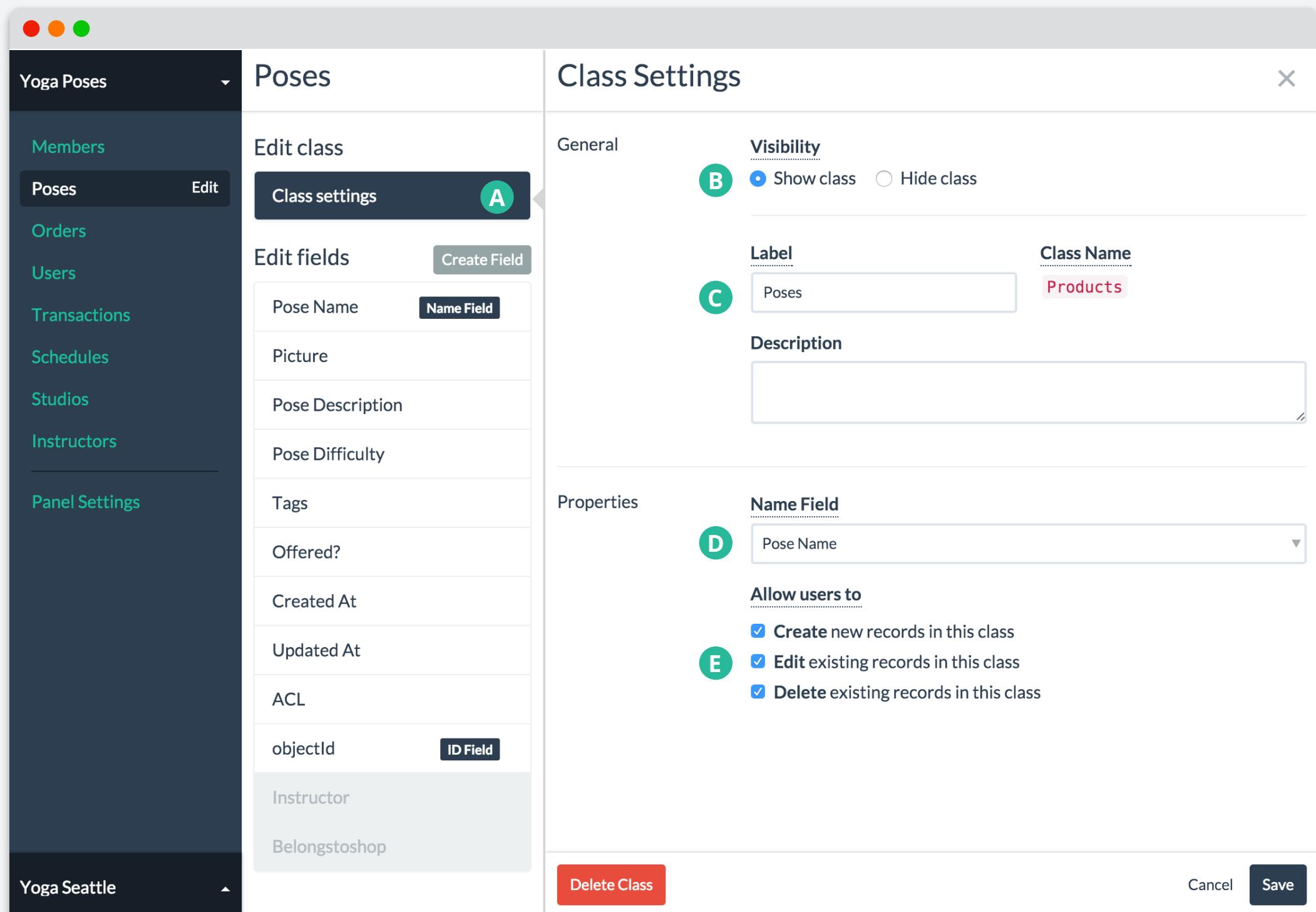
Replace Parse class name with easy-to-understand label.

D Name Field Settings

Change the name field of the class, which is used to identify records in this class. It is also the first column in the table, and the default search field.

E User Permissions

Change contributor permissions for this class.



ADMIN WORKFLOW

Customize the Panel — Field Settings

1 - 2 - 3 - 4

A Create New Fields

Directly create new fields in Adminca without going to Parse.

B Change Field Order

Drag field up and down to reorder the fields.

C Visibility

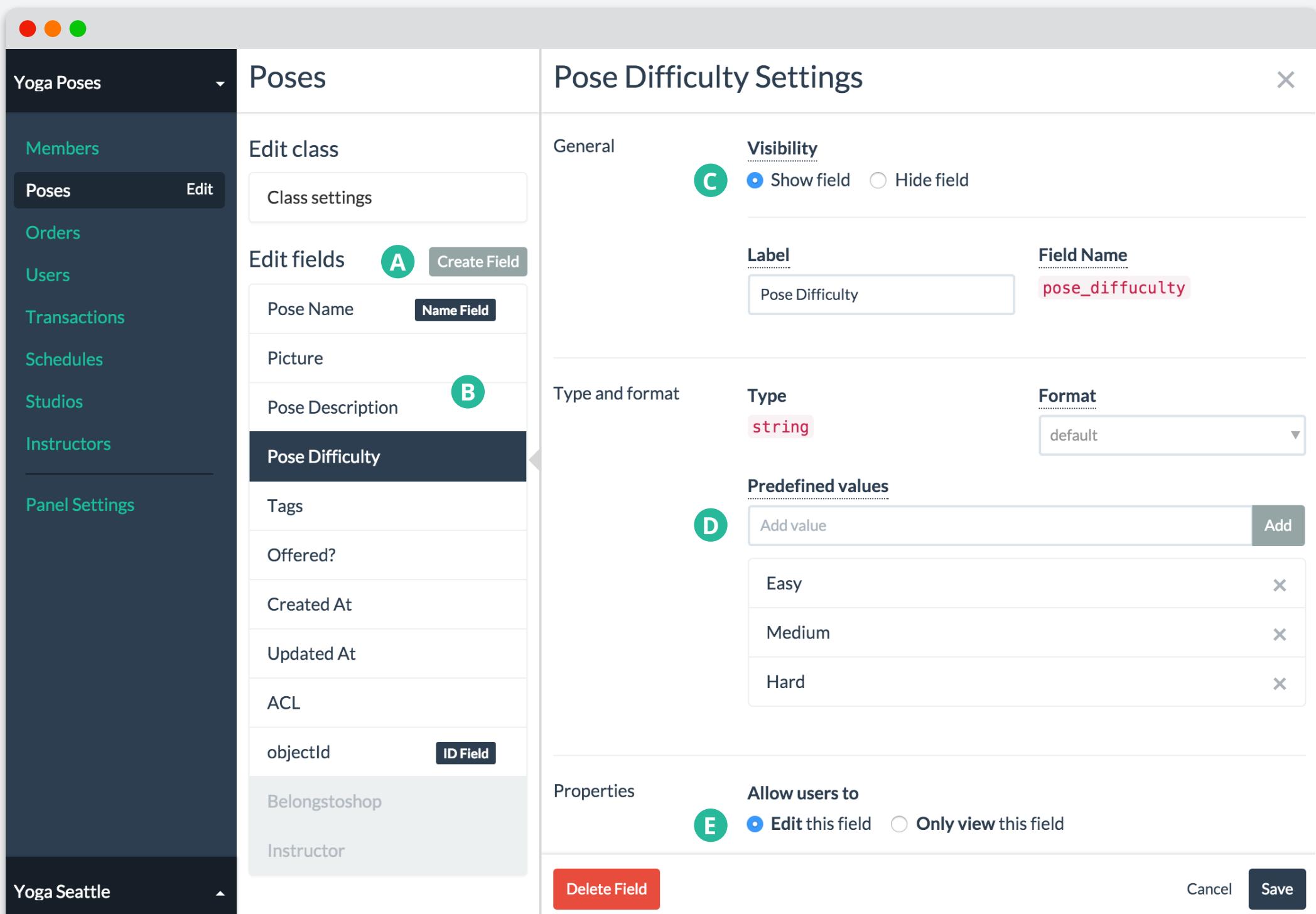
Hide or show this field to contributors.

D Modify Data Format

Define data format for each field (e.g. Email Address), add a default value or create predefined values (e.g. 50 US States).

E User Permissions

Change contributor permissions for this field.



ADMIN WORKFLOW

Invite Collaborators

1 - 2 - 3 - 4

A Change Panel Name

Directly create new fields in Adminca without going to Parse.

B Sync

Drag field up and down to reorder the fields.

C Create New Class

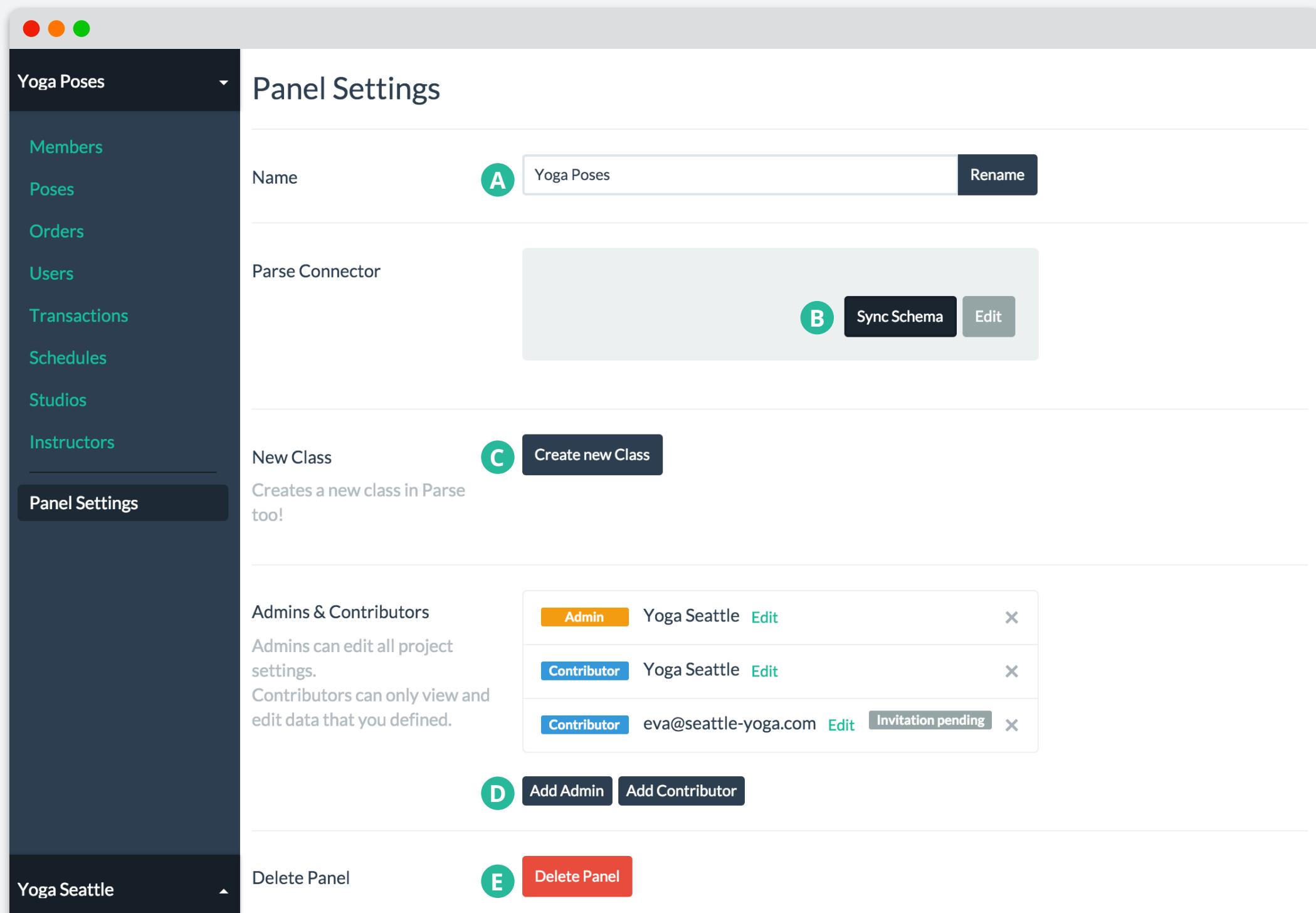
Hide or show this field to contributors.

D Invite Admin and Contributor

Invite the team and clients to the panel. Admins can edit the panel settings while contributors can only view and manage the data.

E Delete the Panel

Delete this panel from Adminca.



CONTRIBUTOR WORKFLOW

A non-technical user has the role of a contributor in Adminca. After being invited by the admin he is guided through the contributor workflow that allows him to view and manage data.



**View
Data**



**Manage
Data**

CONTRIBUTOR WORKFLOW

View Data

A Create

Create a new record in this class.

B Search

Do a fuzzy search on any field in the table and combine multiple criterias.

C Filter and Sort

Filter by a specific value or date range. Sort by clicking on the header to sort of a field.

D Detail View

Click anywhere in the table area to open the details.

E Account

Update email and password or log out. Access the help section.

F Export

Download the current view as CSV.

Pose Name	Picture	Pose Description	Pose Difficulty	Tags
Utkatasana		Utkatasana, Chair Pose, Firefly Pose	Easy	
Trikanasana		Trikanasana is also known as Triangle Pose	Medium	back
Dandayamana-Janushirasana		Standing Head to Knee Pose	Hard	back, leg, feet, neck, head
Tadasana		Mountain Pose: Step-by-Step	Medium	leg, knee, arm
Dadayamana-Dhanurasana		Like camel posture, standing	Extreme	hip, leg, arm, back
Garurasana		Garurasana or Eagle Pose.	Medium	breath, leg, knee, arm
Dandayamana-Bibhaktapāda		Dandayamana-Bibhaktapāda	Hard	hip, back, shoulder, arm
Dandayamana-Bibhaktapāda		Dandayamana Bibhaktapāda	Hard	back, arm, upper body, feet
Ardha-Chandrasana		Ardha Chandrasana or Half Moon Pose	Easy	back, breath, upper body

Panel Settings

Yoga Seattle **E** 9 records **F** Refresh Export

CONTRIBUTOR WORKFLOW

Edit Data

A Duplicate

Duplicate the current record to the class.

C Read-only fields

Some fields are read only, so contributors cannot edit it.

B Editable Fields

Update fields that are editable.

D Relational Data

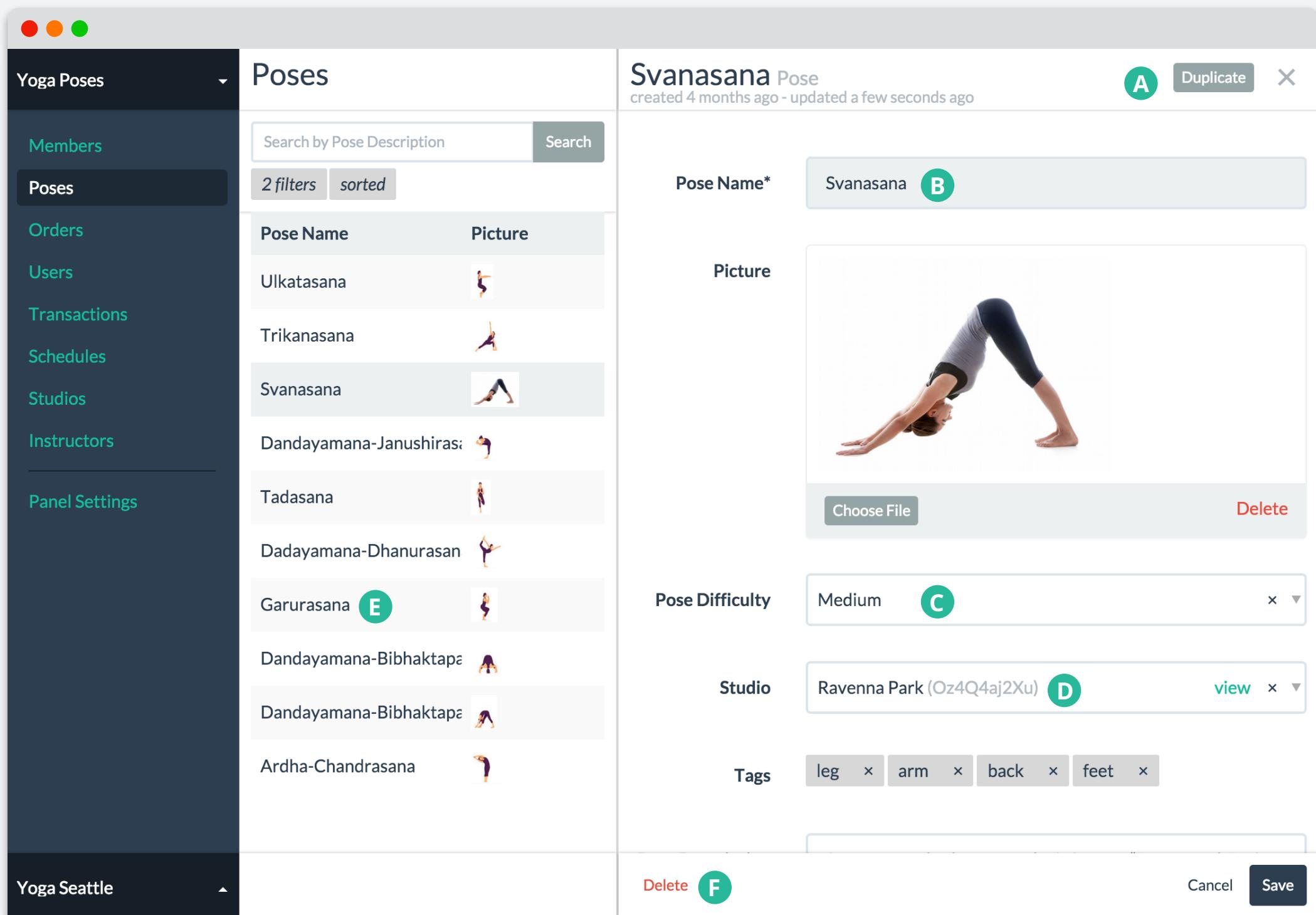
Field linked to a record in another class. Contributors can easily see and search by the name of the record rather than just the object ID.

E Open a Record

Open another record by clicking on the row.

F Delete

Delete the record on Parse.



DESIGN PROCESS & EVOLUTION

ITERATIVE DESIGN PROCESS

Ideation

Based our initial user research findings, each of us sketched ideas individually to meet the developer and non-technical users needs. The sketches helped us to ideate different workflows and layouts for each individual view.

Prototyping

We consolidate our initial designs by combining the best aspects of individual sketches. The wireframe we created together enabled us to share a shared vision for each view or feature. It also served as the baseline for later iterations.

Implementation

We set up connectable and interactive prototypes by leveraging Ruby on Rails and EmberJS technology. This architecture allowed us to be very flexible and to support more services than the Parse data browser.

Usability Testing

During our project, we have been constantly doing usability testings with our users or participants recruited through different channels. Based on our user feedback, we kept iterating on the design to fix usability issues as well as adding new features.

DESIGN EVOLUTION

Detail View

Through competitive analysis and user interviews, we discovered that viewing and editing details of a record (one row) is the main task for non-technical users. Unfortunately, this was also the most problematic interaction with various usability problems.

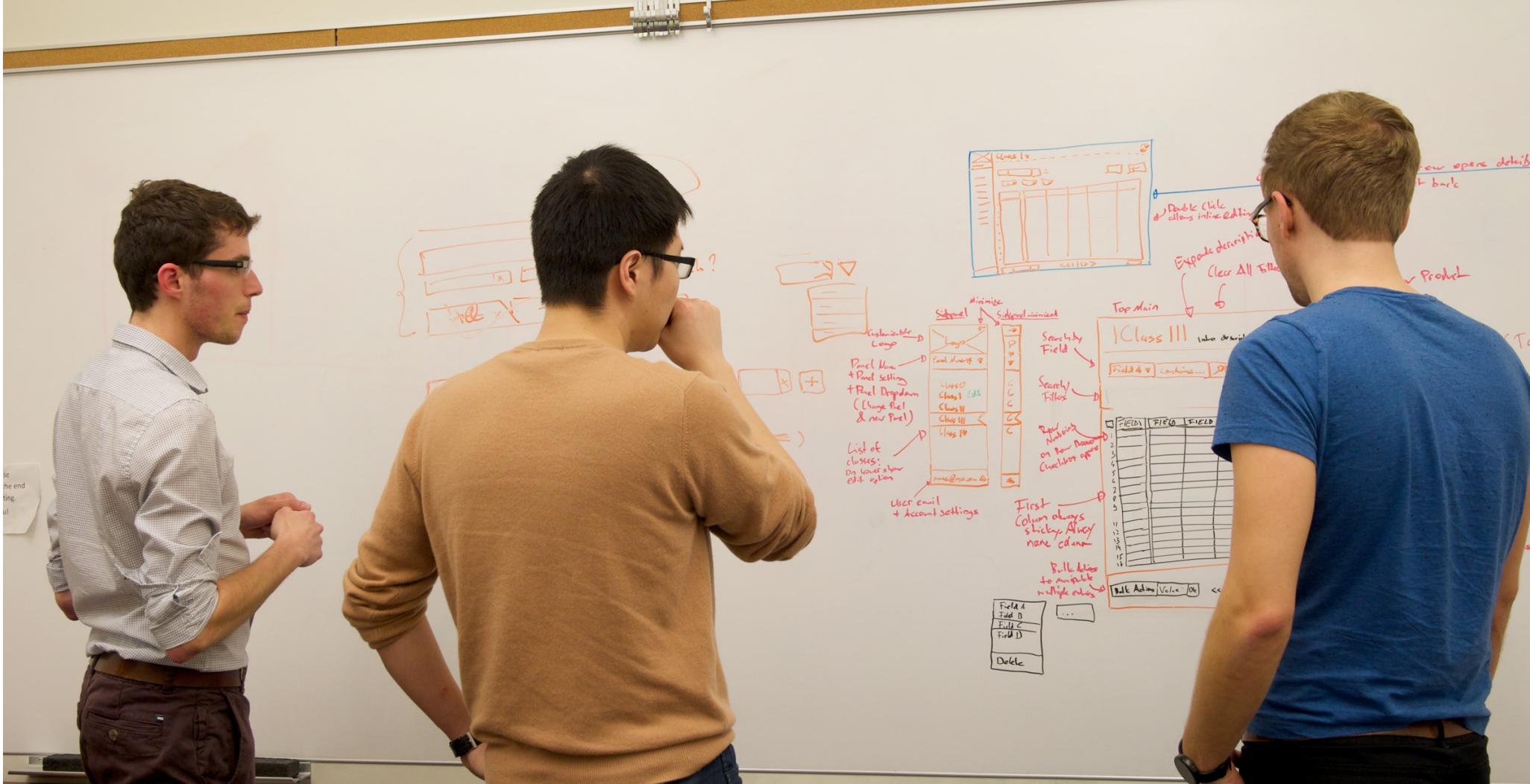
Limitations of current solutions

No Detail View. The Parse data browser and some admin panels only support inline editing but don't allow users to view a record as whole.

Different pages for View and Edit. Users have to decide if they want to just view a record or edit it.

Opening is difficult. In most admin panels the icon to open the detail view is extremely small and located far away from the name of the record.

Loss of context. Once the detail view is open, the relationship to the original table is lost.. .



Our approach

Adminca provides a detail view that can be opened from anywhere in table, because the whole row is a click target.

The Detail View opens in a side panel. This way the user keeps the context of the original table and can easily navigate to other records

The Detail View allows users to edit fields but still presents it in a clear way that makes a view-only page redundant.

DESIGN EVOLUTION

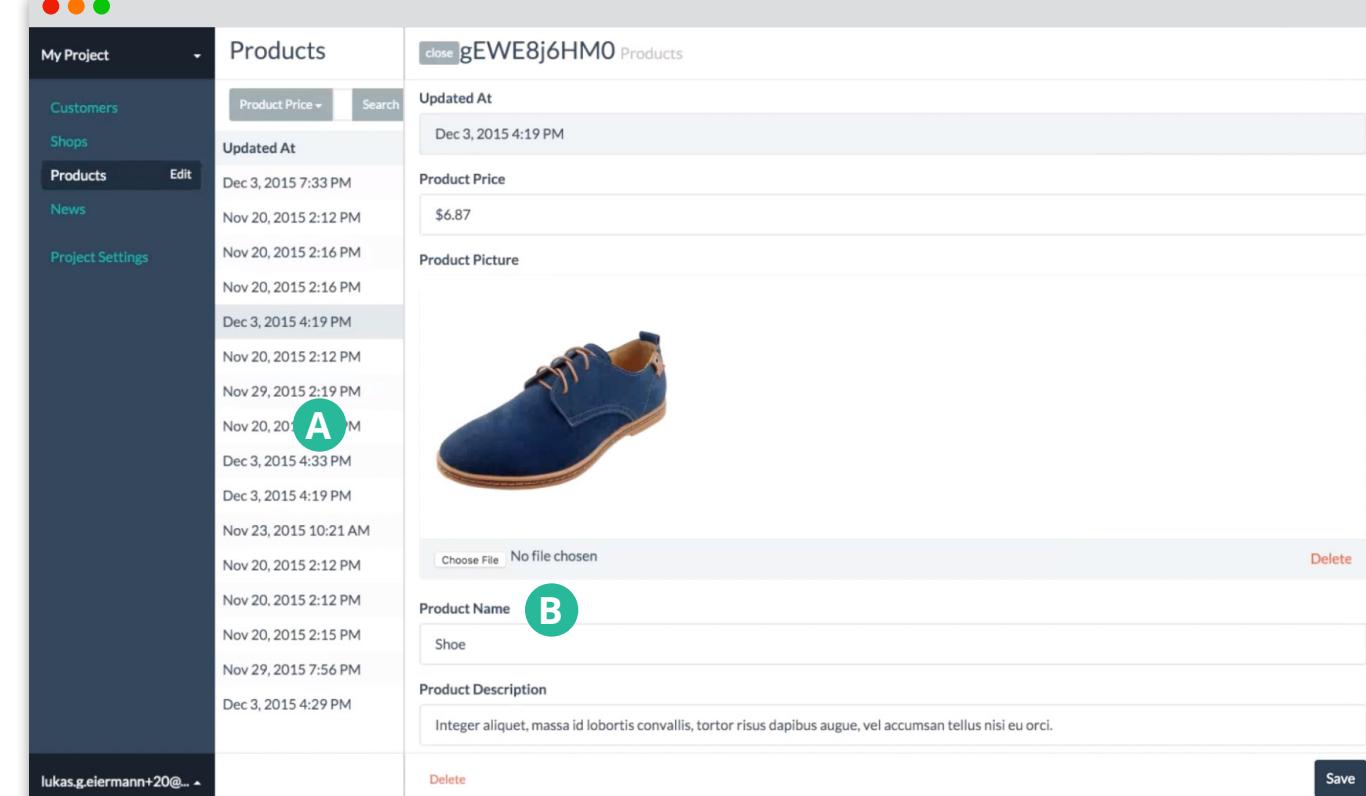
Detail View (continued)

Based on the user feedback from our early prototypes we launched the detail view with the first version of Adminca. Responding to the usability test results we further iterated the design for version two.

"I like it that it allows me to directly go to other records when I'm done viewing the details of one record. But why can I only see one column?"

— Former catalog specialist at an e-commerce company

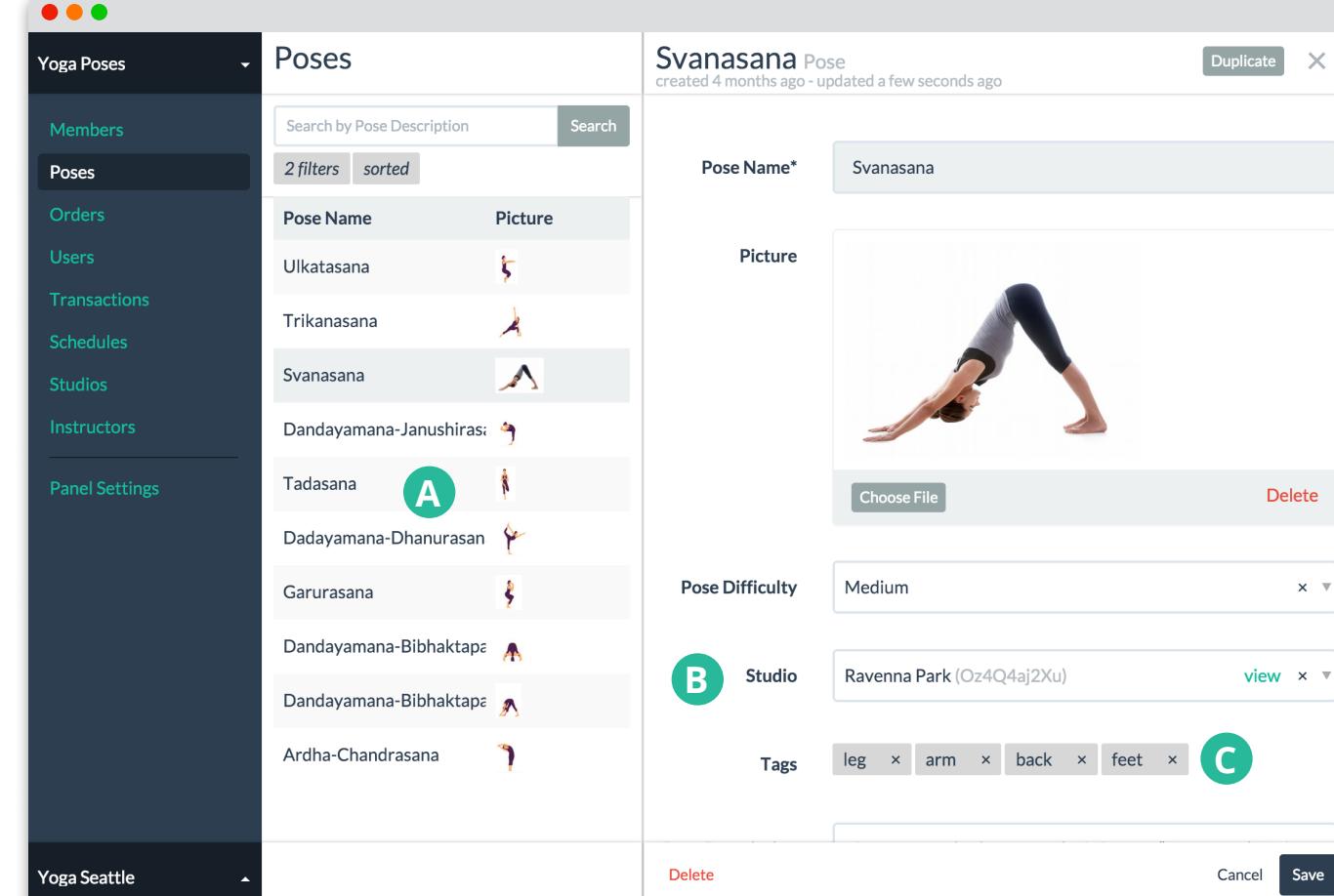
- A In the first version the table only allowed vertical scrolling and was limited to one column. In the second version users can scroll vertically and horizontally and can view multiple columns at once.
- B We changed the field labels from vertical labels (on top of the field) to right-justified horizontal labels. This reduces the vertical space needed while still having the label and the field close together.
- C We added more field type formatting options. Strings, for example, can either be formatted as an email address, a one line text or a long text.



This screenshot shows the first version of Adminca's detail view for a product. On the left is a sidebar with 'My Project' and links for 'Customers', 'Shops', 'Products' (which is selected), 'News', and 'Project Settings'. The main area has a title 'Products' and a sub-title 'gEWE8j6HMO Products'. It includes a 'Search' bar and a table showing 'Updated At' and 'Product Price' for various entries. A blue callout 'A' points to the 'Updated At' column. Below the table is a product image of a blue shoe, a file upload field ('Choose File'), and a 'Delete' button. The product details section includes 'Product Name' (labeled 'B') set to 'Shoe', 'Product Description' (containing placeholder text), and a 'Save' button.

▲ First Version

Second Version ▼



This screenshot shows the second version of Adminca's detail view for a pose. The sidebar is identical to the first version. The main area has a title 'Poses' and a sub-title 'Svanasana Pose'. It includes a search bar and a table showing 'Pose Name' and 'Picture' for various poses. A blue callout 'A' points to the 'Pose Name' column. To the right is a detailed view for 'Svanasana' with fields for 'Pose Name*' (set to 'Svanasana'), 'Picture' (showing a person in a downward dog pose), 'Pose Difficulty' (set to 'Medium'), 'Studio' (set to 'Ravenna Park (Oz4Q4aj2Xu)'), and 'Tags' (with 'leg', 'arm', 'back', and 'feet' listed). There are 'Duplicate', 'Delete', 'Cancel', and 'Save' buttons at the bottom.

DESIGN EVOLUTION

Settings View

After creating the panel, the main task for an admin is to customizing the panel. Through our interviews, we learned about the problems that developers currently face.

Limitations of current solutions

All settings are defined through code. No other person (e.g. a product manager) can make changes to the views without involving the developer.

No easy way to customize views. Once the admin panel is in production, it won't be modified because even small changes require a lot of work.

One size fits all. Admin panel templates and plugins only allow users to change a few settings that don't account for all scenarios.

The screenshot shows the Adminca interface for managing 'Product Review' settings. It includes a sidebar with 'Products' selected, a main 'Edit Class' section for 'Product Review', and detailed configuration options for the field.

Our approach

Adminca lets users modify the settings through an interface rather than code.

All settings for a class and its fields can be accessed and edited in one place. Changes are reflected instantaneous.

Adminca allows users to change granular permissions and settings for all classes and fields.

DESIGN EVOLUTION

Settings View (continued)

Based on the user feedback from our early prototypes we launched the settings view with the first version of Adminca. Responding to the usability test results we further iterated the design for version two

"Where are the class settings? I only see all the fields here."

— Parse developer building apps for clients

- A The class settings in the first version were difficult to discover. For the second iteration we adjusted the IA and moved it to the side navigation into its own section to highlight it.
- B We simplified the side navigation by removing additional information that was distracting for users.
- C Users can now rearrange the fields in table by simply dragging the fields. The name field stays at the top and hidden fields are shown at the bottom.
- D Simplified the structure in the main view. Created new and easier-to-understand categories and descriptions. Added tooltips for each field that explain details.

The screenshot shows the 'Products settings' page in Adminca. On the left, a sidebar lists 'Customers', 'Shops', 'Products' (selected), and 'Project Settings'. The main area has a table with columns 'Field' and 'Type'. Fields include 'Updated At' (Read Only), 'Product Price', 'Product Picture', 'Product Name', 'Product Description', 'Product Color' (with a tooltip 'B'), 'Object' (Read Only, ID Field), 'Created At', 'Belongstoshop', and 'Tags'. To the right are sections for 'General' (Label: Products, Name: Products), 'Allowed actions' (checkboxes for Creating, Updating, Deleting records), 'Special Fields' (ID Field: Object, Name Field), and a 'Save' button.

▲ First Version

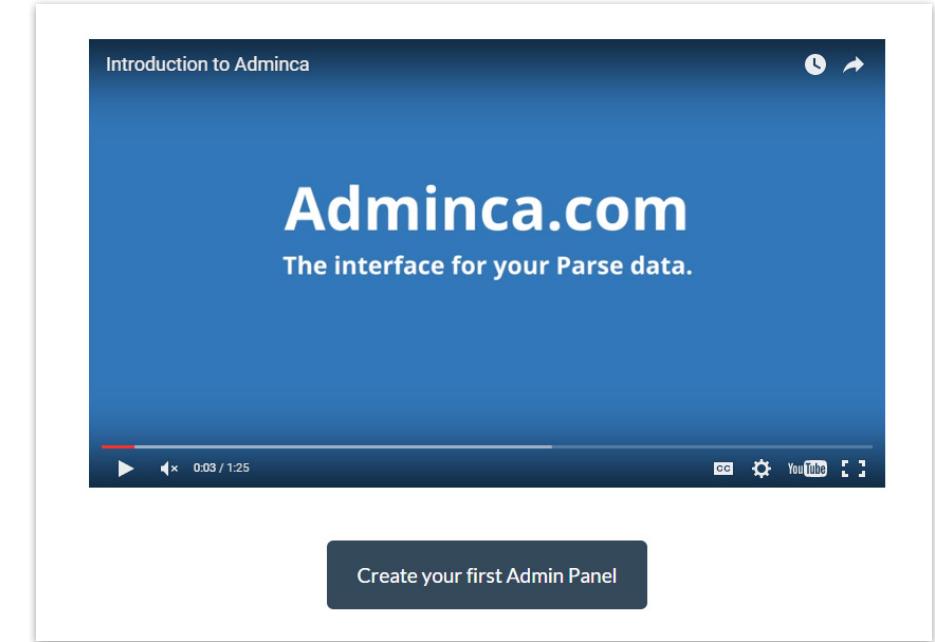
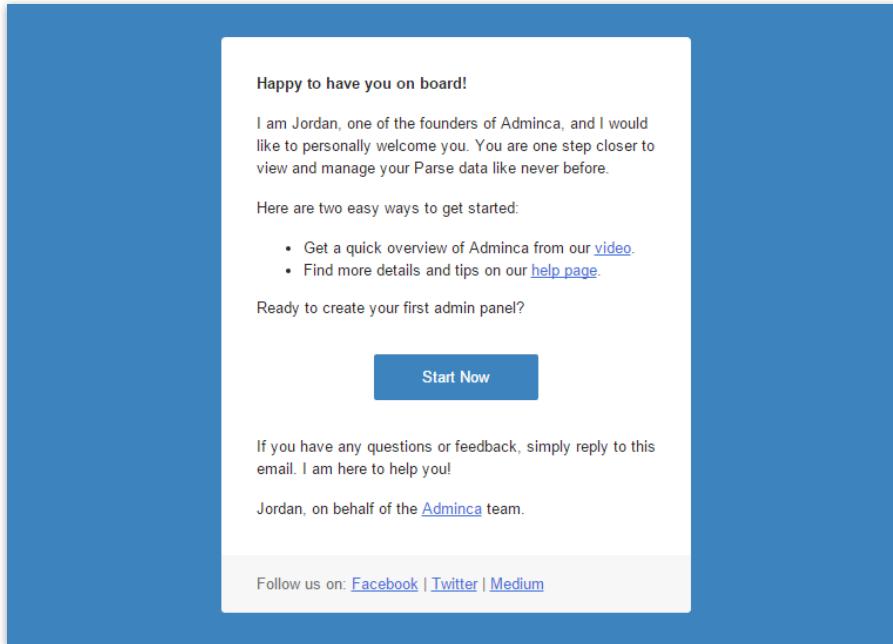
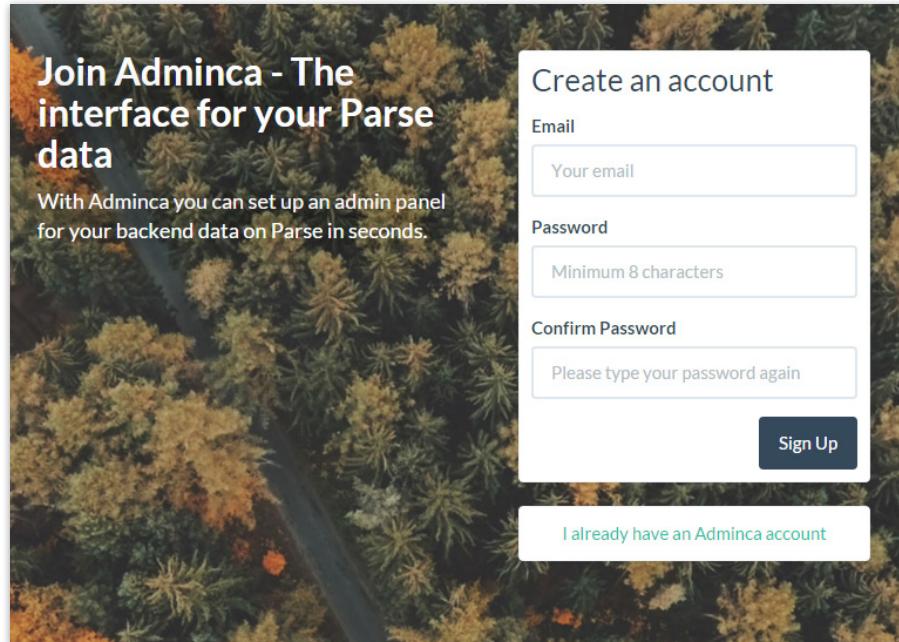
Second Version ▼

The screenshot shows the 'Poses' settings page in Adminca. The sidebar has 'Yoga Poses' selected. The main area shows a table with fields: 'Edit class' (Class settings A), 'Edit fields' (Create Field), 'Pose Name' (Name Field), 'Picture', 'Pose Description', 'Pose Difficulty' (C), 'Tags', 'Offered?', 'Created At', 'Updated At' (B), 'ACL', 'objectId' (ID Field), 'Belongstoshop', and 'Instructor'. To the right is a detailed configuration panel for 'Pose Difficulty' under 'Pose Difficulty Settings'. It includes sections for 'General' (Visibility: Show field selected), 'Label' (Pose Difficulty, Field Name: pose_difficulty), 'Type and format' (Type: string, Format: default), 'Predefined values' (Easy, Medium, Hard), and 'Properties' (Allow users to: Edit this field selected). Buttons for 'Delete Field', 'Cancel', and 'Save' are at the bottom.

DESIGN EVOLUTION

Onboarding

We introduced a new onboarding flow in the second iteration to simplify and streamline the signup process, and help users get started.



1. Account Creation

By selecting “Create admin panel” on the marketing website the user is brought to signup page.

We removed unnecessary fields and reduced the required information to the essential (email and password).

2. Welcome email

Once the account is created the user receives a welcome email with additional resources.

Initially it was required to verify the email address with the welcome email. We removed this step so users can continue their process without interruptions.

3. Intro Video

After creating an account the user can watch quick a 90 second introduction video.

In the first iteration we saw that users understood the basic concept from our marketing website but weren't exactly sure how Adminica works. We added the video to provide a quick overview of Adminica and show how a panel can be created and customized.

DESIGN EVOLUTION

Onboarding (Continued)

Create an Admin Panel

Admin Panel Name

Enter your Parse App Credentials. ?

Application ID

Master Key ?

[Cancel](#) [Create](#)

Table View (3/8) x

Click on a class in the navigation to see its data in the table view. Sort data by clicking on column headers. With the search bar you can search data by any field.

Previous Next

	Public Read Write
exPSPnqpXd	Public Read Write
O127ELwSXh	Public Read Write
RuC5HdPqja	Public Read Write
fXKnhl8ea0	Public Read Write
DZ8ELgFghv	Public Read Write
FM0m8Llkjk	Public Read Write

jordan@adminca.com ▾ 64001 records

Help

[Creating a Panel](#) Creating a Panel

[Using a Panel](#)

[Customizing a Panel](#)

[Inviting Collaborators & Admins](#)

[Glossary](#)

Creating a Panel

Getting Started:

Creating an Admin Panel for your Parse data couldn't be easier. After signing up assigning a name to your first admin panel. Then you can put in your Parse App application key and the master key under settings/keys in your Parse app. Where be automatically created for you.

Security:

- *Why does Adminca require the Master Key?* The Master Key is the only key app. Adminca requires the schema to understand which classes are included appropriately.
- *Who can see/access the Master Key?* Nobody. The Master Key can't be accessed by collaborators nor the Adminca team are able to view your Master key. The account in case someone else logs into your account.
- *How is the Master Key stored?* Adminca uses SSL to establish a safe connection to our server. On our server the Master Key is encrypted with the AES-256 algorithm.

[Next](#)

4. Create Panel

After the video the user is brought directly to the panel creation page.

According to our usage data this was the step where most users dropped off. We learned that most users weren't comfortable with providing the Master Key and added a new tooltip that explained our security measures and why Adminca required the master key.

5. Onboarding Tips

The admin panel is automatically created and the user is brought directly to the main view.

This is the 'wow' moment and we made sure to get the user to this point as fast as possible. We observed that users didn't know what exactly they were supposed to do next. We added a guided tour (8 steps for admins and 5 steps for contributors) to easily get started with Adminca.

6. Help Section

More detailed explanation about all of Adminca's features are available in the help section.

In our tests we saw that after the onboarding tips, most users didn't need a help section. However we still added it in the new version, because it was frequently requested by our users as something that they would like to have "just in case".

CHALLENGES

Cover edge cases

When we created our prototypes, we used our dummy app database to verify some of our decisions, for example, width of table column, area of class names, etc. But as we conducted usability testings with our real users on their real apps, we were shocked that sometimes there are super long class or field names, more than ten class, or more than 100 fields in a single class. These somewhat extreme cases gave us some hard to make our design scalable.

Diverse Needs

Mobile apps can be very different one from another, and users who manage different app data have their unique needs. Thus, we often hear users asking for specific feature. It is hard to incorporate all the feature request into the design.

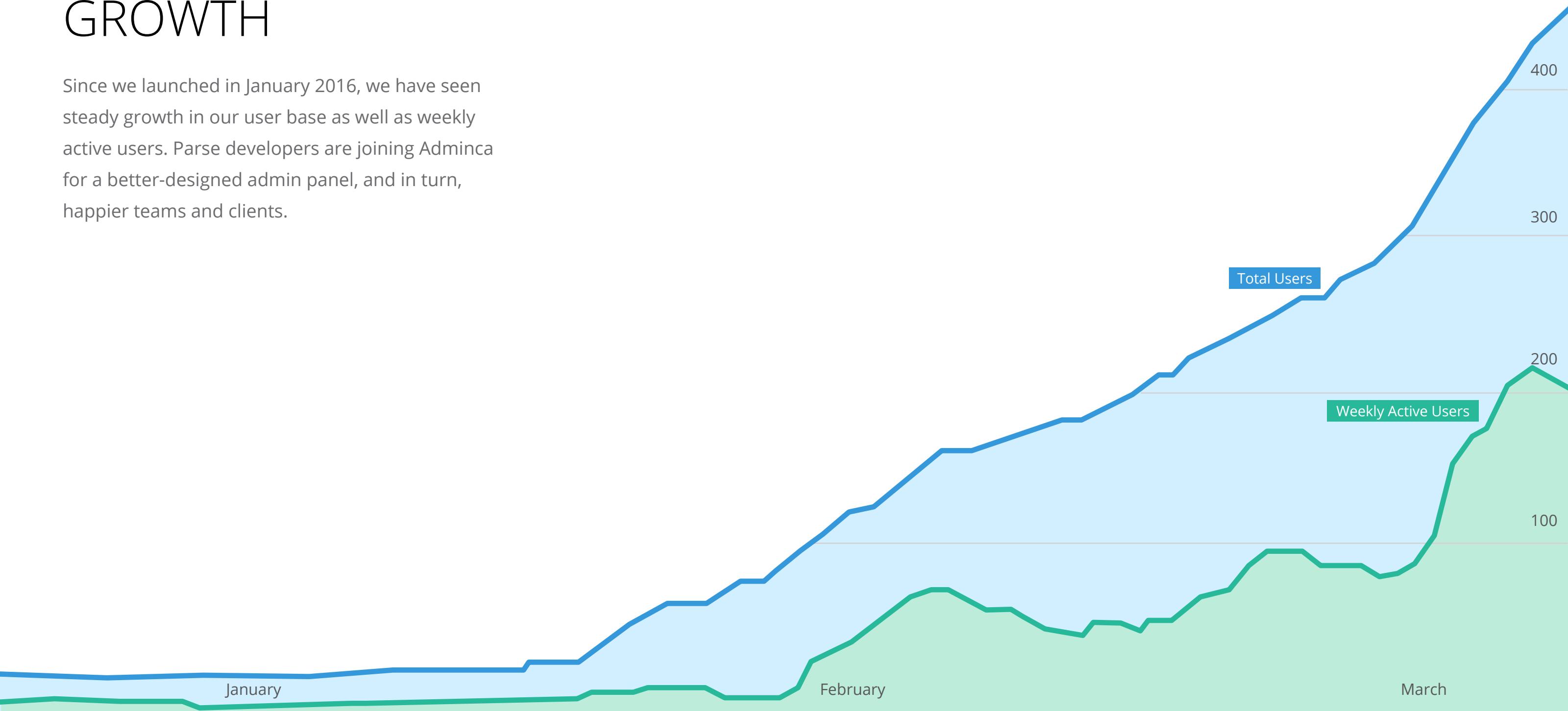
Developer & non-tech needs don't align

Adminca serves both developers and non-technical users, but sometimes it's challenging to meet both sides' need simultaneously. For example, some developer would like the downloaded CSV file to have the original Parse headers for the column name, but non-technical users prefer to see the labels they defined in Adminca as the headers.

IMPACT & OUTLOOK

GROWTH

Since we launched in January 2016, we have seen steady growth in our user base as well as weekly active users. Parse developers are joining Adminca for a better-designed admin panel, and in turn, happier teams and clients.



USER FEEDBACK

Philip Kotler—the marketing guru—once said “The best advertisement is done by the satisfied customer”. Check out what our customers tweeted and emailed us about Adminica!

Good job on the product! Awesome to see you guys helping our Parse developers.

✉ James Yu,
Co- Founder of Parse

I blown away when I had up and running in less than 30 seconds. [...] I can't believe how user friendly it is!

✉ Gabel W

@A_dminca, I really like your product, it's the missing piece.

🐦 Chris B, Co-Founder of Catalyst Mobile

You guys are awesome! Nice work. Clean, simple, useful.

✉ Alex S, CEO at Kenmore Design

Probando @A_dminca ES INCREIBLE!!

🐦 Arturo J, Co-Founder of Brounie

I really love what you guys have created. It's so much better than Parse's own Dashboard!

✉ Johan N, Co-Founder of Meetio

The dashboard seems extremely powerful and useful, I'm very happy with it!

✉ Antonio G, Director at Mobixee

@A_dminca nice!
Adminica is a godsend. :D

🐦 Jayson

@A_dminca is a breath of fresh air to my Parse based projects. Finally a client friendly UI that just works!

🐦 Sasha R, CTO at Hyper Apps

FINAL REFLECTION

Thinking back, there are a few things that we would do better if we had the opportunity to start again.

Recruit more non-technical users

Even though we were able to learn about our target users and identify the main workflow for developer and non-technical users, we still want to validate our findings with more users in each type. Due to the limitation of our recruitment methods (mainly searching for Parse developers on GitHub, and mobile app development agencies), we were not able to talk directly to as many non-technical users who manage their data on Parse. We have tried to reach out to local startups and apps that are listed on the customer page of Parse or other mobile backend as a service website, but wasn't able to recruit non-technical users.

It is not until our developer users invited their non-technical partners or clients when we finally directly hear about the non-technical user feedback. It is highly possible that we could have

discovered more about backend data management needs from a variety of non-technical users. More use cases and scenarios were likely to be found, which could in turn lead to new features we need to design.

More market research

Related to the non-technical user recruitment issue, we should have done more market research at the beginning of the project. Since we decided to turn this capstone project into a startup, we should have examined closely the feasibility of the idea as well as the market size and profitability. As we found during our interviews, there was only a small portions of app agencies that build client app with Parse. Among the 400,000 Parse developers, most of them are working on solo project, in which case an admin panel is not a necessity. Therefore, to validate our project idea as potential business initiative, we should have done more market research before committing to the idea. It is very possible that market research would revealed us

either a large potential market for other backends, or a totally new approach in the backend data management field.

Parse Shutdown

As we started last September, Parse was still one of the leading mobile backend as a service, backed by Facebook and used by more than 400,000 developers. In November 2015, Parse hosted promotional events in Seattle and encouraged developers in the community to jump on board to leverage the advanced features of Parse. Even in January 2016, Parse launched a visually redesigned website as well as data browser. Everything looked promising that Parse was going to expand and provide better support to developers.

It was so shocking to us and the community that on Jan. 28, Parse announced that it is going to shut down in a year, and everything is going to be open-sourced. To developers, it means they need to find a new service or host their app on their own server.

Either way there will be a lot of extra work, or even rewriting their app. For us, it means Parse is even less likely to be the top choice for app agency to build client apps with, which was then our primary customer base.

But it also created an opportunity for us. Because Parse didn't say anything about open-sourcing their data browser, the interface for Parse data management. It left a void to fill, because now even a solo developer would need an admin panel. And that's what Adminca can provide.

So we shifted our focus from designing and developing new features to supporting the open-sourced Parse Server. This time we attracted a lot more attention from the Parse developer community. We thought filling the admin panel void could be the turning point of our business outlook. However, 4 hours after we announced "we now support Parse Server", Parse announced that the data browser is also open-sourced. Another lightning over head.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Launch Version 3

We already conducted the next round of usability tests on the current product, and are ready to iterate for another time. On our roadmap are exciting new features like bulk actions and predefined views, based on our findings and user feedback.

Create white label solution for Partners

Companies from New York, Florida and the UK reached out to us because they were interested in using Adminica as a data interface for their platform. We see this as an opportunity to sell a white label version Adminica.

Explore other backends

From the beginning it was our goal to bring better admin panels to all types of backends. We already started working on making Adminica available for Kinvey (service similar to Parse) as well as Ruby on Rails.

www.adminica.com

The interface for your Parse (Server) data

Adminica empowers your team to view and manage data like never before.
Get an admin panel in seconds without writing any additional code.

[Create your Admin Panel](#)

Company Name	Street Address	State	Rating	Phone Number	Email
Trupe	0734 Sutherland Place	Georgia	2	1-(754)420-8347	aperry2j@cafepress.com
Twitterbeat	9594 Waxwing Alley	Florida	4	1-(941)970-1475	nbailey2p@nydailynews.com
Realpoint	78 Kenwood Lane	California	1	1-(626)976-9412	bkennedy18@nps.gov
Cogibox	038 Aberg Plaza	Massachusetts	4	1-(617)418-5820	lchavez1a@pcworld.com
Twitternation	6531 Becker Trail	Michigan	1	1-(248)271-5436	phayes27@so-net.ne.jp
Oloo	4 Porter Street	Missouri	2	1-(816)508-2292	dmorris5@reverbnation.com
Blogtags	31 Mayer Avenues	Illinois	4	1-(630)445-4519	wwatkins2a@ning.com

Connect your team or clients with Parse data

Your team or clients need access to their data in order to manage it. But inviting them to your Parse Account can put your whole backend data and code at risk. With Adminica you can create a Parse admin panel and have full control of which data can be viewed or edited.



THANK YOU

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We also want to thank everyone who signed up for Adminca. We appreciated your feedback and support during the last three months.

