09. Decisions made

Data

1. We use additional login field instead of email for 2 reasons. First we do not want to connect parent communication to email. Second, separate login field give our users more security.

2. We do not use SSN or even 4 last digits of the SSN. Reasons - our SME and users say that Parents are not ready to share this id. Actually we have no usage for it in our system yet. CWS have own ids good enough to perform authentication of the user.

3. We ask for License number (Foster Parent case) or Family Case Number (Biological Parent case). This id allow us to identify person (or family). From conversations with users we know that usually mom presents the family for both biological and foster cases. Sometimes dad is also active. To avoid miscommunication problems we use one number id per family. Both parents will communicate via same account. This communication is not a personal but a family task. We do not implement any kind of security check around it because we have no access to license number database.

4 .Inside parent profile we allow user to enter additional contact information (email is already in - mandatory for registration purposes) - address to improve Facility browser experience and phone to preserve communication options outside the application.

5. We ask additional fields like DOB and gender but them are optional and are not used in current business logic. We can use them for future improvement - use more personalized messages.

Design

1. There is no difference inside application for both types of parents - both Inbox and Facility Map are generic.

2. We do not allow any kind of social network based login - our users do not like this idea. Same time some integration during registration is possible (import name, email and optionally address from social networks). We add this to our backlog but with low priority due to low positive impact on parent usability.

3. We try to use 5th grade language everywhere in our messages because we expect some limitations from biological parents side - due to our SME information many of them are even illiterate and speak different languages than English at home.

4. Our communication model is the mix between social network oriented communication (chat) and traditional email communication (web mail). The major needs of our users - secured communication and ability to trace and export messages. So that we provide traditional web mail like communication with folders, threads, ... Same time parent will communicate with some limited number of Caseworkers and some other representatives. We allow to see them as Contacts and start personalized communication. User also can filer messages inside the current folder using

5. We use just plain text area for message context. Some WYSIWYG rich text editor is in the backlog.

6. Address field is not a mandatory one during registration step. We ask for it when user first time try to browse facilities. User also have options to update personal profile from this place. If use do not want to enter some address default one (Sacramento, CA) will be used.

7. Because in the facility database provided we have no detailed information about facility service quality only the distance from home is the key factor for our users. We calculate this distance to identify closest facilities and sort the result list using this criteria.

8. We have only two functional areas (inbox and facility map) and one non functional (member profile) so that we place all of them as top menu with clear separation from left to right.

9. We group facility pins on the map in case of overlay into groups with number of facilities grouped. This generalization approach is used to avoid total mess of hundreds of icons on whole California zooms.

10. We do not limit facilities search with same Zip code filter but always show all facilities near the parent's address. Zip code itself do not guarantee the closest facility. We use smooth model - user can zoom in and out and scroll to see proper facilities near expected point. Actually user can enter address even without Zip code.

11. We also allow user to search facilities in any desired area by entering address into Search box. Parent can plan to move and so that start to investigate other areas outside close proximity to own home.