

## **COMP 486 - Written Retrospective**

Nick Bilotti, Martin Maxim, Jud Turner, Peter Halvorsen

### **1. Skills Acquired**

- a. We got much better at Version Control over time with this project. At first we got merge conflicts that would take more time to solve than they should've, but by the end we knew exactly how to avoid a lot of those. We got good at not "accepting left/right" but actually merging the necessary code into the main branch and getting rid of what wasn't necessary if people merged over top of each other. We always pulled before working and pushed at the end of working. We made a lot of different branches, almost every single edit to the project. Sometimes we would just merge into main if it was something really small.
- b. We also learned a lot about CSS styling and html web page design. None of us had really ever done anything with html, so learning to do some of the more fun looking things on web pages was fun. Flipping cards on the page, highlighting things when hovering, pulling items from the database such as profile names and information, changing comment colors, upvote/downvote comment colors, things like that.

### **2. Lessons Learned**

We learned the importance of properly committing branches and adhering to good Git practices to prevent unnecessary issues. Following proper Git etiquette helps minimize merge conflicts down the line. For instance, our team occasionally struggled to merge feature branches due to miscommunication and errors with Git commands. Mastering Git skills significantly enhances team efficiency and collaboration.

Additionally, we explored how to use Flask sessions to store user data, ensuring that logged-in users remain authenticated and retain their information while navigating the website.

We also realized the value of starting with a clear, fundamental vision for the website and building upon it incrementally. Adding non-essential features too early can lead to inefficiencies, increase the likelihood of merge conflicts, and introduce website issues. Instead, it's better to focus on core functionality initially and incorporate additional features later in the project.

### **3. Things accomplished/not done**

For our final website we were able to complete almost everything we set out to create. Our MVP was completed on time and it included a fully functional website with our test data. Our main homepage was complete with a browser page showing all articles with each title on the front of the cards. When you hover over the card it would show all details about the article with the author, news site, etc. When you would click on a card you would see the reviews from verified users, comments section, and the article itself. As a verified user you can add reviews on this page. We also designed a page for categories of the articles. We had a verified users page where you can see all verified users, their bios, their reviews, and ability to follow them. Finally, the profile page allows users to see who they are following and write a bio for verified users. Our sign in and create account pages were able to work correctly as well. We were not able to complete our screen scraper to work correctly. We were able to get the scraper to pull from FOX and CNN, however when the articles were pulled into our website it would not format correctly every time. We would like to get the scraper working on all major news outlets in the future. We also realized that we did not include a reply system for comments for better user interactions with each other.