LocateU : Lost and Found System

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User Requirement Specification

Purpose of the Project

The purpose of this project is to design and develop a university-level Lost and Found Management System that allows students and administrators to record, track, and manage lost and found items efficiently. In most academic institutions, students frequently lose their personal belongings such as books, ID cards, mobile phones, and other valuables. Similarly, found items often remain unclaimed for long periods because of a lack of proper reporting and tracking mechanisms. This project aims to bridge that gap by providing a structured and reliable database-driven system that makes it simple for students to report lost items, submit details of found items, and check the status of their claims.

The project also ensures accountability and transparency in handling lost property within the university campus. By using this system, we seek to reduce the time and effort that students and staff currently spend on searching for lost items, while also minimizing the risk of unclaimed or misplaced belongings being discarded without proper notification. The purpose is to create a digital solution that ensures that lost belongings are returned to their rightful owners in a smooth and organized manner.

Scope of the Project

The scope of the project covers the design and implementation of a fully functional Lost and Found Management System that will be accessible to students and university administrators. Students will be able to register into the system with their details, report lost items by providing descriptions, upload information about items they have found, and track the status of their claims. Administrators will be able to verify reports, manage the database of lost and found items, confirm ownership based on student details, and maintain a proper record of transactions.

The system will be developed with a backend database that ensures data consistency and reliability, while also supporting essential features like unique student records, item categorization, and claim verification. The scope also includes ensuring that duplicate entries are prevented and that there is a secure way to validate student identity before releasing any claimed item. The project does not extend to developing mobile applications or integrating external third-party tools but focuses entirely on building a robust web-based platform supported by a relational database.

Detailed Description

The Lost and Found Management System is a database-driven application designed to handle the process of recording, storing, and tracking lost and found items within the university campus. Students are at the heart of the system, and every student is required to have a unique record that includes their name, email, phone number, department, and year of study. Once registered, students can interact with the system in two main ways. Firstly, if a student loses an item, they can log into the system and submit details of the item such as the name of the item, a description, the location where it was lost, and the approximate date of loss. Secondly, if a student finds an item, they can provide a similar record which includes the category of the item, its condition, the place where it was found, and the date it was retrieved.

All records are stored in the database and can later be searched and filtered by both students and administrators. The system ensures that every lost or found item is assigned a unique identifier, allowing for accurate tracking. When a student comes to claim an item, the administrator verifies the ownership by checking the details provided by both the owner and the finder. Once verified, the administrator updates the database to mark the item as claimed, ensuring that it is no longer listed as available.

The system also maintains transparency and prevents misuse by ensuring that no two students can register with the same email or phone number. This prevents duplication and makes it easier for administrators to manage student records. Additionally, reports of lost and found items are time-stamped so that administrators can prioritize recent claims. The database is designed to handle multiple categories of items, ranging from books and stationery to electronics and personal belongings, making the system versatile enough to address the diverse needs of the university community.

In practical terms, the system acts as a bridge between students who have lost belongings and those who have found them. Instead of relying on notice boards, word of mouth, or manual registers, the Lost and Found Management System provides a centralized and secure digital platform that keeps all information in one place. It reduces confusion, saves time, and ensures that students can recover their belongings more efficiently. By implementing this project, we are providing not only a solution to an existing problem but also a model that can be adapted by other institutions to improve campus life through better management of lost and found items.