**Development of a Social Media Application Using the Rapid Application Development (RAD) Model**

**Introduction**

Rapid Application Development (RAD) is a software development methodology that emphasizes quick development and frequent iterations through user feedback. It involves building prototypes rapidly, testing them with users, and refining the product based on the feedback. In this assignment, we apply the RAD model to develop a social media application by releasing multiple prototype versions, each with incremental features focused on user engagement and interaction.

**Project Title: BuzzLink – Connect, Share, Engage**

**Phase 1: Requirements Planning**

**Objectives**

* Understand user expectations from a modern social media platform
* Prioritize core features for early prototypes

**Initial Requirements Identified**

* User Registration and Login
* Post creation (text/image)
* Like and Comment functionality
* Follow/Unfollow system

**User Feedback Focus**

* Simplicity of UI
* Ease of content sharing
* Privacy settings for posts and profiles

**Phase 2: User Design & Prototyping**

**Prototype 1: Core Social Feed**

**Features Introduced**

* User account creation and login
* Basic profile page with editable info
* Home feed displaying posts from followed users
* Ability to create text/image posts

**Feedback Received**

* Users liked the clean layout
* Requested dark mode and better image compression

**Improvements**

* Added toggle for dark/light mode
* Compressed images on upload to reduce load times

**Prototype 2: Engagement Features**

**Features Introduced**

* Like, Comment, and Share features
* Follow/Unfollow with follower count
* Notifications for likes and new followers

**Feedback Received**

* Users wanted threaded comments
* Some notifications were delayed or missed

**Improvements**

* Added comment replies with indentation
* Optimized notification system using real-time push updates

**Prototype 3: User Privacy & Customization**

**Features Introduced**

* Post visibility settings: Public, Friends, Private
* Profile privacy controls
* Customizable bio and themes

**Feedback Received**

* Confusion around privacy settings
* Suggested profile verification option for influencers

**Improvements**

* Redesigned privacy settings layout
* Added "Verified Badge" request system

**Prototype 4: Direct Messaging and Groups**

**Features Introduced**

* One-on-one messaging
* Group chats with shared media
* Message notifications and status indicators

**Feedback Received**

* Users requested message deletion and muting options
* Group messages lagged on slower connections

**Improvements**

* Implemented message delete/edit options
* Optimized message sync for low bandwidth

**Prototype 5: Analytics and Content Discovery**

**Features Introduced**

* Explore page with trending posts and users
* Post reach and engagement analytics
* Suggested friends algorithm

**Feedback Received**

* Interest in scheduled posting
* Wanted content filtering options in Explore

**Improvements**

* Added post scheduler
* Introduced filters based on tags and categories

**Conclusion**

The RAD model proved highly effective in the fast-paced development of BuzzLink. Prototypes were delivered in short cycles, allowing real users to engage with early versions and provide actionable feedback. Each iteration added new features while refining the existing ones based on user needs. As a result, BuzzLink evolved into a dynamic, user-centric social media platform with high engagement potential.