

Party Manager Narrative

Fatma and Arif are graduating from high school this year and the Al Doha family is planning a major party to celebrate this milestone. Mrs. Al Doha had thought about mailing invitations, but Mr. Al Doha realizes that it would be more efficient to handle the entire invitation/RSVP process online. Your task is to build a Party Manager system that, among other things, will allow a user to register an account, create a party, invite guests to that party and collect RSVPs from guests who wish to attend.

Creating and managing an account on the system

To use the Party Manager system (or whatever you choose to call it), one must first create an account. Anyone is able to create an account – no special requirements, membership or invitation is needed. A user can choose to delete their account on the system at any time; doing so should also delete all related records in the system. A user who creates an account is referred to as a 'host' for purposes of this narrative.

To make changes to his/her account, a host needs to login to the system with a username and password. Of course, hosts periodically forget their passwords, so there must be a way for a host to recover or reset a missing password via email.

Details about host parties

The first thing most hosts do after creating an account is set up a party. A typical party has a name and description, a date it is being held and its start and end times. If RSVPs are required, then an RSVP date (which must be on or before the date of the party) can be added to the party. If no date is provided, then not only are RSVPs not required, but guests will not be able to RSVP to the party.

A party also has a location – whether it is the home of the host, a park or other special venue. Each host likely has a small number of locations they use for parties, so a host should have the option of saving the party location for another time. In addition to the usual address information, there needs to be enough

information in the location data to easily generate a map (using Google Maps) on the party details pages that guests can use to find their way to the party.

Each party is different and there are four types of parties that we will consider for now in the Party Manager system: graduation parties (the genesis of this system), birthday parties, baby showers (parties to celebrate a woman's first child), and generic parties.² Once the host selects what type of party it is, the party details page will automatically change its styling and images to reflect the theme of the party and put visitors in the right frame of mind.

Inviting guests to a party

Of course, no party is really a party without guests and each host should be able to invite guests to their party. Each guest has a 'name' – although that name is just a string and could be either a person's name like 'Rick Artis' or an identifier that is meaningful to the host like 'Artis Family' or 'Uncle Rick and Aunt Janine'. Each guest should have an email address so invitations and thank you notes can be sent electronically. That email invitation has to include a randomly generated 'invite code' that the system can use to verify that this guest has been invited to the party whenever the guest tries to either (1) access the party details page or (2) RSVP for the party.

When the host adds a guest, he/she should add the number of people expected in the guest's party (for example, if my wife added the 'Artis Family' to the guest list, she would expect both parents and the three children for a total of 5). There are times when not everyone in a guest's party can attend (in the example above, Mr. Artis is out-of-town that day at a conference), then the guest should be able to put in a number of actual attendees that might differ from the expected number. The actual number of attendees must be confirmed at the time of RSVP; if the actual number of guests coming remains *nil*, then it is safe to say that the invitation has not been accepted. If a guest later has to withdraw, this value should be reset to *nil*.

² Students are welcome to add additional party types such as retirement parties, anniversaries and even bachelor parties if they wish. A word to the wise, however: all images and language employed on the site should be appropriate for public consumption. For instance, if one were to choose to add bachelor parties, images used at worst should be PG-13. We will penalize severely any project that uses obscene or offensive images. Also note that when using Rails, do *not* use the word 'type' for an attribute name – in this case 'party_type' is the preferred reference.

The host who logs into the system should be able to see the guest list for a particular party. That list should be divided into two parts, the first being the confirmed guest list. That part of the page should give the name of the guest as well as the number attending for each guest. At the bottom of the list should be a count of the total number of confirmed guests. After that should be a list of names of guests who have not yet RSVP'd to the event, along with a count of the number of unconfirmed guests at the bottom. On the home page of the host (viewable after logging in) should be a quick summary of any future parties being hosted – the party name, date and number of confirmed guests should appear in the summary.

Handling gifts and thank you notes

In addition to automating the invitation process, the system should be able to help the host in processing thank you notes. To do this, any gifts given should be recorded in the system and linked to the guest who gave them. The actual gift can be recorded as text that can be inserted into the thank you note; it can include a comment on the gift added in as well. An example might be "Irish tin whistle. You know how much I like folk music and appreciate the thoughtfulness of the gift." and this note, along with the guest id and party id would make a complete gift record. This note gets pasted into a generic 'thank you' email that is sent out to all gift givers when the host pushes a button or clicks on a link to this functionality on the site.