

Assignment 3

From an academic perspective, the project is going to help Brian and I increase our skills in development. Using React Native we will get experience writing both mobile apps and websites. Additionally, we will learn proper development workflows using kanban boards, source control, and other tools. These things are extremely important in the software development industry and are not often taught in class. For example, many of the students I speak to don't know things like git which is a necessary tool in development. Learning proper development workflows during the development of this project will help boost our skillset and help us find a job after college.

My co-op experience will help me the most in this project. Having worked at Kinetic Vision and Siemens, I have a fair amount of experience with how software projects are generally managed in a work environment. I also have experience with the technologies we will be using, such as React and other web development tools. This knowledge will help us be more efficient and effective with our development than we might otherwise be. I am also still in contact with my supervisors at Kinetic Vision who have offered to sponsor our project in any way we might require. These connections I made during co-op will prove valuable if we find we need server access, or potential design work.

Classroom knowledge on the other hand will probably not help us very much in this project. Some classes such as Python Programming might be useful if we decide to use Python somewhere in our project. Most of the other coursework has been theory-heavy and hasn't taught us many real-world development tools or strategies. Developing an app is an entirely different beast from optimizing a search algorithm, for example. While the knowledge itself might not be helpful, the problem-solving strategies developed in class will be valuable. Being able to work through a complicated problem will be a great asset to have when figuring out implementation details.

When Brian pitched the project idea to me I immediately thought it was something I would be interested in. I love coffee, and have often had problems finding local shops on sites like google maps. Putting this information in one place will be valuable for people like me who like to support local shops. The project would also open up the door for more features down the line if it takes off. While this project might not be extremely exciting from a technology perspective, it fills a needed niche and I think has a lot of room to grow into something really

cool. It also provides a lot of room to learn a lot of different subjects in development besides just app development, such as web scraper and web server development.

Our preliminary approach was to use the React Native framework using the Expo project bootstrapper. React Native, based on ReactJS, was developed by Facebook and has seen widespread adoption over the past few years. The framework provides a cross-platform way to develop on iOS and Android, and Expo allows us to also compile it as a website. This allows a single codebase to work on a majority of the popular platforms and gives us a much wider audience for the same amount of work. We might also use Python to develop a web server, or a web scraper to gather some initial data on local shops from google. If we're able to develop an attractive, functional app that does what we set out to do, I believe we will have done a good job.