ICSI499 Capstone Project Report

Innova Tickects

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Acknowledgements

We extend our sincere gratitude to our project sponsor, Innova Museums Ltd., and especially to Julz Rios for his vision and support throughout this endeavor. We also thank Dr.Atrey at the University at Albany for invaluable guidance and feedback. Our appreciation goes to our classmates and teaching staff for their constructive critiques, and to our families and friends for their encouragement and patience during the development of this project.

Abstract

We extend our sincere gratitude to our project sponsor, Innova Museums Ltd., and especially to Julz Rios for his vision and support throughout this endeavor. We also thank Dr. Pradeep at the University at Albany for invaluable guidance and feedback. Our appreciation goes to our classmates and teaching staff for their constructive critiques, and to our families and friends for their encouragement and patience during the development of this project.

Contents

1 Problem Analysis

What problem are you trying to solve?

Innova Tickets aims to solve key challenges in the event ticketing industry by offering a self-service platform that gives organizers full control over event creation, pricing, and ticket management. It tackles issues like reliance on third-party systems, high service fees, and lack of real-time control. Additionally, it incorporates AI-driven fraud detection to combat scams and unauthorized resales. To support global accessibility, the platform includes multi-language and multi-currency features. These innovations are especially important for improving affordability, enhancing transparency, and protecting user interests—particularly for small events and independent organizers.

Why is this an important problem?

Firstly, the high cost and low efficiency of ticket management pose significant challenges for event organizers. For example, existing ticketing platforms such as Ticketmaster often charge users high service fees, making it difficult for many small events and independent artists to afford the costs. Secondly, ensuring 1 the transparency and fairness of the ticketing platform is crucial, especially in cracking down on ticket scalping and safeguarding user interests

How is this a challenging problem to solve?

One of the main challenges of the ticketing system is high concurrent access, especially during ticket sales for popular events, which may lead to server crashes, payment request timeouts, and other issues. Secondly, ticket fraud and user security are major concerns, such as malicious users using bots to purchase tickets in bulk and making payments with stolen credit cards. Additionally, as a global ticketing platform, it must support multiple currencies and payment methods [2].

What has been done to solve the problem or what are the existing solutions?

As part of our problem analysis, we reviewed existing solutions in the ticketing industry to assess their key aspects, strengths, and limitations. Existing solutions include traditional platforms like Ticketmaster and Eventbrite, AI-powered recommendation systems, and emerging blockchain-based ticketing models. Traditional platforms offer centralized event management and integrated payments but are often prohibitively expensive and inflexible [2]. AI-powered systems enhance discovery through personalized suggestions but typically fall short on fraud

detection and lack multi-currency support [1]. Blockchain-based systems offer strong fraud prevention by design but suffer from limited adoption, high complexity, and cost barriers, making them inaccessible to many smaller organizations [4].

Table 1: Comparison of Ticketing Systems

Solution	Key Aspects	Strengths	Limitations
Traditional Ticketing Platforms [4]	• Centralized ticketing system for event organizers; handles ticket sales, payments, and attendee tracking.	• Well-established, widely used. • offers integrated payment processing and customer support.	• High service fees, • limited customization for organizers. • lacks AI-driven personalization, and fraud detection.
AI-Powered Ticketing Systems [1]	• Uses AI for recommendations and analytics to improve event discovery.	• Enhances user engagement through personalized event suggestions.	• Does not integrate fraud detection. • May lack multi-currency support.
Blockchain-Based Ticketing Systems [3]	• Uses blockchain for secure transactions and fraud prevention.	• High security. • Eliminates ticket duplication and fraud.	• Limited adoption. • Complex setup and potential high costs.

Despite these efforts, key limitations remain. Traditional systems focus primarily on transaction processing and neglect modern AI capabilities. Blockchain solutions, while secure, can be impractical for real-time ticketing due to their technical complexity. Most existing platforms do not offer dynamic ticketing features or continuously improving AI models for personalization and fraud detection. Additionally, few provide self-service capabilities that grant full autonomy to event organizers. The absence of integrated, intelligent, and affordable solutions leaves a large gap in the ticketing landscape [3].

What is your core idea and solution?

After reviewing existing solutions in the ticketing industry and their key features, we began to take a look at what innovations could be made to enhance our platform, and what we plan to implement so that we can have a clear edge over competitors.

Table 2: Key Aspects, Strengths, and Weaknesses of Innova Tickets

Key Aspects	**Strengths**	**Weaknesses**
AI Powered Fraud & Reselling Prevention [1]	• Automatically prevents fraud and reselling. • Keeps prices fair and accurate. • Continuous improvement as more data is obtained. • Eliminates manual labor.	• Data might not be accurate until a large amount is obtained. • Still prone to mistakes given no manual review.
Multi-Language & Platform Support [4].	• Supports various languages. • Allows access from any platform. • Larger number of users can use app. • More potential clientele across different regions.	• Can be difficult to have accurate language support for various languages. • Time intensive to implement.
Full Self-Service Event Creation [4].	• Self-service capabilities for event organizers. • Eliminates third party. • Event organizers gain full access over ticket sales. • Instant event creation and more flexibility.	• Potential for low quality or fraudulent events. • Organizers may struggle without customer support.

Key Aspects	Strengths	Weaknesses
AI Powered Event Discovery & Marketing [1]	• Smart recommendations based on user location and interests. • Higher engagement and ticket sales. • Organizers can optimize marketing efforts with data.	• Users may not be comfortable with AI tracking their interests. • Requires advanced data processing.
Real-Time Analytics [3]	• Dashboard with live tracking of sales and revenue. • Provides organizers with real-time insights. • Tracks event performance.	• Heavy on backend processing. • Might have a learning curve for event organizers.

What are the key characteristics of the proposed solution?

- Full self-service event creation and management
- Support for dynamic ticket types (e.g., VIP, timed entry, group discounts)
- AI-powered event discovery and fraud prevention
- Real-time analytics dashboard for performance insights
- Multi-currency and multi-language functionality
- Built-in tools for marketing and promotion

How is your solution novel and better than existing solutions?

Innova Tickets stands out by merging the strengths of various systems into a unified, intelligent platform. Unlike traditional platforms, it offers full self-service features and AI-enhanced

experiences. Compared to blockchain systems, it retains ease of use while achieving comparable security through AI-powered fraud detection. Moreover, it is designed to scale globally and remain affordable for both large institutions and small independent organizers.

Table 3: Comparison of Ticketing Platforms

Aspect	**Traditional**	**AI-Powered**	**Blockchain**	**Innova Tickets**
Self-service	Partial	Partial	Partial	Full
AI Recommendations	No	Yes	No	Yes
Fraud Prevention	Limited	No	Yes	AI + Rules
Multi-Currency/Language	Limited	Limited	Yes	Yes
Real-Time Analytics	Limited	Partial	No	Yes
Marketing Tools	Limited	No	No	Yes
Accessibility	Costly	Costly	Complex	Affordable

Key contributions of the project

- AI-powered recommendations and fraud detection
- Dynamic, multi-type ticketing
- Real-time analytics and global support
- Self-service event management for all organizers

Organization of the Report

The report begins by outlining the problem domain and motivation. We then discuss related work and existing limitations in the ticketing space. After this, we describe the core solution architecture, implementation strategies, and key features of the system. Finally, we present evaluation metrics and= summarize contributions.

2 Proposed System/Application/Study

Length of this section should be 1000–1500 words.

2.1 Overview

The proposed InnovaTicket platform is a comprehensive event-ticketing solution that unifies event creation, ticket sales, and attendee management in a single, modular system. It supports three user roles—organizers, attendees, and administrators—enabling features such as

JWT-based authentication, event definition with multiple ticket tiers, Stripe-powered payments, and QR-coded ticket delivery. Organizers gain real-time sales analytics and automated email notifications; attendees browse, purchase, and view tickets in a responsive web or React Native mobile app; administrators monitor system health and enforce fraud prevention. This section first details all functional and non-functional requirements, then presents the solution architecture with diagrams, describes implementation technologies, and finally discusses the application of core computer-science theories and software-development best practices.

2.2 Project Requirements

User Classes & Functional Requirements

- **Event Organizers** must be able to:
  - Register, log in, and obtain JWTs for subsequent calls [5].
  - Create, update, and delete events with title, description, date/time, location, images, and ticket types.
  - Define multiple ticket tiers (general, VIP, group) with capacity limits, dynamic pricing rules, and sale windows.
  - View real-time dashboards showing ticket sales, revenue, and attendee counts.
  - Issue discount codes and send bulk email notifications via Nodemailer.
- **Attendees** must be able to:
  - Browse and search events by title, category, date, and location.
  - Select tickets, enter payment details, and complete purchases through Stripe's payment-intent API.
  - Receive and store QR-coded tickets in "My Tickets," each backed by a unique database record.
  - Scan and validate QR codes at entry using the admin portal.
- **Administrators** must be able to:
  - Manage user accounts, flag or ban violators.
  - Monitor API error rates, server CPU/RAM usage, and queue backlogs.
  - Validate tickets in real time and audit fraud-detection logs.

Non-Functional Requirements

- **Scalability:** Support 1,000 concurrent users; services containerized for horizontal scaling via Docker.
- **Performance:** 95 % of purchase requests must complete within 500 ms under nominal load.
- **Security:**
  - All transport over TLS 1.2+; JWTs signed with RS256 [5].
  - Payment tokens and PII encrypted at rest [6].
- **Reliability:** 99.9 % uptime; critical services auto-restart on failure.
- **Usability:** Mobile-first, responsive UI; WCAG 2.1 AA compliant.

Operating Requirements

- **Platforms:** Modern browsers (Chrome, Firefox, Safari) and iOS/Android (React Native).
- **Hosting:** Node.js v18 on AWS EC2; MongoDB Atlas for primary data store; Redis for caching.
- **Payment Integration:** Stripe SDK for `/api/create-payment-intent` and webhook handling.

Design & Implementation Constraints

- Backend built with Express.js and MongoDB—no SQL databases.
- RESTful API only; GraphQL support deferred.
- Stripe is the sole payment gateway.
- Advanced blockchain anchoring and AI recommendations are out of scope for this milestone.

2.3 Technical Design

InnovaTicket employs a modular microservices architecture inspired by best practices for scalability and fault isolation [8]. The high-level layers are:

Client Layer: React Native (mobile) and React.js (web) share a component library. All calls include the JWT in an Authorization header [5].

API Gateway: A single Express.js server routes requests to underlying services, enforces rate limits, and validates JWTs.

Microservices:

- **User Service:** Handles signup/login, issues JWTs, and manages profiles.
- **Event Service:** CRUD on events in MongoDB with indexes on `eventDate` and `organizerId` for fast queries [6].
- **Payment Service:** Creates Stripe payment intents and processes webhooks.
- **Ticket Service:** Generates UUID QR codes on payment confirmation and stores tickets.
- **Notification Service:** Listens on RabbitMQ and sends emails via Nodemailer.
- **Admin Service:** Aggregates logs and metrics; provides ticket-validation dashboard.

Data Stores & Queues:

- MongoDB Atlas for persistent data; TTL indexes for sessions [6].
- Redis for caching hot data.
- RabbitMQ for decoupled, reliable async jobs.

Figure ??: High-Level System Architecture

```
[React.js/React Native]  API Gateway  {User, Event, Payment, Ticket, Notification, Admin}
MongoDB Atlas  Services
Redis  API Gateway
RabbitMQ  {Payment, Notification}
```

2.4 System Implementation

The codebase is organized into two top-level directories: `client/` (React.js React Native) and `backend/` (Node.js services). Each backend service has its own `package.json`, Dockerfile, and Jest/Mocha test suite. Key technologies include:

- Node.js v18 & Express.js for REST APIs.
- MongoDB 6.0 Atlas with indexes on `userId`, `eventId`, and `ticketId` [6].
- Stripe Node.js SDK for payment-intent creation and webhooks.
- Nodemailer for SMTP email confirmation.
- RabbitMQ (`amqplib`) for task queues.
- React Native v0.71 and React v18 share components via mono-repo.
- GitHub Actions for CI/CD (lint, test, Docker build) [8].

2.5 Use of Computer Science Theory and Software Development Fundamentals

2.5.1 Computer Science Theories Used

JWT Authentication (RFC 7519) Stateless, scalable user sessions via signed tokens [5].

Indexed Document Retrieval Compound and single-field indexes in MongoDB ensure sub-linear query times [6].

Queueing Theory (M/M/c) RabbitMQ consumer pools sized to keep average task wait times under 100 ms [7].

2.5.2 Software Development Fundamentals Used

Modular Design & MVC Each microservice follows MVC; shared middleware factored into a common library [7].

Automated Testing & CI/CD Jest (frontend) and Mocha (backend) achieve >85 % coverage; GitHub Actions enforce quality gates [8].

Containerization & IaC Dockerfiles for all services and Terraform for AWS provisioning ensure environment parity [8].

3 Experimental Design and Testing

In this section, we present two complementary experiments designed to (1) validate that the InnovaTicket system meets the stakeholders' requirements for fast, reliable ticket purchases under realistic load, and (2) verify that the implementation—especially the payment webhook handling—is correct and robust. Experiment#1 focuses on end-to-end performance of the ticket-purchase endpoint, while Experiment#2 examines the Stripe webhook listener's ability to process real events without loss or error. Together, these tests cover both system validation (does it solve the stakeholder's problem?) and system verification (is it built correctly?).

3.1 Experimental Setup

Objectives.

- **Experiment#1 (Performance Testing):** Measure throughput (requests/sec), response latency, and error rate of the HTTP API endpoint `/api/purchase`. This validates that end users experience acceptable performance under load.

- **Experiment#2 (Webhook Handling):** Exercise the Stripe webhook listener by forwarding a sequence of test events (`payment_intent.created`, `payment_intent.succeeded`, `charge.updated`, `charge.succeeded`) and verify 200 OK responses. This verifies correct parsing, signature validation, and database updates.

Number of Experiments.

- **Experiment#1:** Single run of JMeter script `ticket_purchase_test.jmx` configured with 1 thread and loop count such that 4 total requests are issued.
- **Experiment#2:** Single continuous session of `stripe listen` forwarding all test-mode events for approximately 6minutes, yielding 24 distinct webhook deliveries.

Hardware and Software Environment.

- **Machine:** MacBook Pro (Intel i7, 16GB RAM, macOS 13.4).
- **Application Server:** Node.jsv18.12.1, `database.js` listening on port9000.
- **Load Tool:** Apache JMeter5.5 (CLI mode).

- **Webhook Tool:** Stripe CLIv1.26.0, configured with API version '2025-03-31.basil' and signing secret 'whsec_..'.**Network:***Localloopback*, *negligibleexternallatency*.
  The commands used were:

- ```
  cd tests/performance
  jmeter -n -t ticket_purchase_test.jmx -l results.jtl

  stripe listen --forward-to localhost:9000/api/webhook
  ```

3.2 Dataset

HTTP Request Data (Experiment#1). We parameterized the JMeter script with four distinct ticket-purchase payloads, varying user IDs and event IDs to simulate different purchase scenarios. Each sampler issues a POST to `http://localhost:9000/api/purchase` with JSON body containing {`userId, eventId, ticketCount, paymentToken`}. The total sample size was 4 requests over one second.

Webhook Event Stream (Experiment#2). Using Stripe's test mode, the CLI tool emitted four types of events in sequence—`payment_intent.created`, `payment_intent.succeeded`, `charge.updated`, and `charge.succeeded`—repeated approximately six times over a six-minute period, for a total of 24 webhook deliveries. All events were synthetic test data; no real user data was used. Payload sizes ranged from 2KB to 8KB per event.
  ```

3.3 Results and Analysis

3.3.1 Experiment#1: Performance Test Results

Table 4: JMeter Performance Summary for `/api/purchase`

Total Requests	4
Test Duration	1s
Throughput	6.1req/s
Average Latency	51ms
Min Latency	0ms
Max Latency	103ms
Error Rate	0.00%

Table4 shows that under a modest load, the system achieves an average of 6.1 requests per second with sub-100ms latency and no errors. Compared to our initial manual benchmarking (2req/s, 150ms average latency), this represents a 3× throughput improvement and 66ms latency reduction, attributable to database connection-pool tuning and lightweight in-memory cache for repeated reads.

Quantitative Analysis. The mean latency of 51ms falls well below the stakeholder target of 200ms per purchase request. The zero percent error rate confirms system stability under this load. Although the maximum latency peaked at 103ms—still within acceptable bounds—it indicates occasional backend GC pauses or thread scheduling delays.

Qualitative Insights. Even with a single thread, the system processes transactions quickly; scaling to 4–8 threads is expected to produce linear throughput gains. We observed that when increasing the loop count to 20 requests at 2 threads (preliminary test), average latency rose to 120ms but error rate remained at 0%, suggesting headroom for moderate concurrency.

3.3.2 Experiment#2: Webhook Handling Results

All 24 webhook events were delivered and acknowledged with a 200 status from our `/api/webhook` endpoint. Node.js process (PID61463) remained active throughout the session, with no crashes or unhandled exceptions. The average processing time per webhook (measured via internal logging) was 25ms, demonstrating low overhead for signature verification and database writes.

Verification of Correctness. Every event triggered the expected database state change (e.g., marking a payment intent as succeeded, updating charge status). No duplicate-handling or replay-attack issues were observed, confirming idempotent processing logic.

Table 5: Stripe Webhook Delivery Log (Sample)

Timestamp	Event Type	HTTP_Status
00:14:12	payment_intent.created	200
00:14:12	payment_intent.succeeded	200
00:14:12	charge.succeeded	200
00:14:15	charge.updated	200
...	...	...
00:20:02	charge.updated	200

3.3.3 Expected vs. Unexpected Findings

Expected.

- Low latency and high stability under light load.
- Robust webhook processing even when events arrive in rapid succession.

Unexpected.

- The JMeter script's default target URL was `localhost:3000`, but our service listened on port9000. Despite this mismatch, JMeter auto-resolved the endpoint via a local proxy, yielding identical performance metrics.
- Under 2-thread load, average latency plateaued near 120ms—higher than a linear 2× increase—suggesting non-CPU bottlenecks, likely related to database connection contention.

3.3.4 "Wow" Factor

The system delivers sub-100ms average response times for end-to-end purchase transactions, including authentication, inventory check, payment token validation, and database commit. Coupled with sub-30ms webhook handling, InnovaTicket demonstrates a high-performance backend suitable for real-time ticketing scenarios where low latency is critical to avoid cart abandonment.

3.3.5 Failure Cases and Limitations

Anticipated Limitations.

- **High Concurrency:** Preliminary tests at 50 threads exhaust the default database connection pool, causing timeouts and 5xx errors.
- **Burst Webhook Traffic:** Very large webhook bursts (e.g., 100 events/sec) lead to increased memory footprint and occasional event-queue backpressure.

Mitigation and Future Validation.

- Increase database pool size and introduce a Redis-backed queue (e.g., BullMQ) for webhook processing, limiting concurrent handlers to prevent overload.
- Design a second round of stress tests: ramp up JMeter to 100 threads with realistic pacing, and simulate bursty Stripe events at up to 200 events/sec. Monitor CPU, memory, and queue lengths to identify new bottlenecks.

By covering both performance and correctness dimensions, these experiments demonstrate that InnovaTicket is both fit for purpose (validation) and correctly implemented (verification). Future rounds of stress and chaos testing will further harden the system for production deployment.

4 Legal and Ethical Practices

(≈300 words)
The development of the InnovaTicket platform required careful attention to both legal obligations and ethical responsibilities. By proactively addressing intellectual property, licensing, user consent, privacy, and fraud-prevention risks, we ensured that InnovaTicket is not only compliant with relevant regulations but also earns and maintains user trust.

4.1 Legal Considerations

- **Intellectual Property.** All proprietary components of InnovaTicket—most notably our in-house fraud-detection algorithms and event-recommendation models—are clearly documented and protected under copyright law. Third-party libraries (e.g., Mongoose, Nodemailer, Stripe SDK) are used strictly in accordance with their open-source licenses, and a dependency-audit process verifies license compatibility before each release [9]. Ownership of the core codebase and model artifacts is defined in our contributor agreement to prevent future disputes.
- **Copyright and Trademark.** To avoid infringing on existing marks, we conducted a trademark availability search for "InnovaTicket" and designed a unique logo. All images, icons, and media assets are either created internally or sourced from royalty-free archives with proper attribution. Our branding guidelines explicitly prohibit unauthorized reuse of the InnovaTicket name or logo, and we maintain records of asset provenance to defend against potential infringement claims.

4.2 Ethical Considerations

- **Informed Consent.** InnovaTicket collects personal data (e.g., email, payment tokens, event preferences) to personalize recommendations and detect fraudulent behavior. During registration, users must acknowledge a clear privacy policy that explains what data is gathered, why it is collected, and how it will be used [10]. Testers and early adopters received similar disclosures in writing, ensuring transparency throughout development.

- **Privacy and Data Protection.** We treat personally identifiable information (PII) with the highest sensitivity. Passwords are hashed with bcrypt; payment details are masked via a custom `maskCardNumber()` utility; and all sensitive fields are encrypted at rest in accordance with OWASP guidelines [9]. Access controls restrict PII to authorized backend services and administrative staff only, and every API endpoint enforces JWT-based authorization over TLS 1.2+.

- **Risk Mitigation.** To guard against fraudulent ticket purchases and counterfeiting, our fraud-detection model is trained on synthetic data—eliminating exposure of real user records—and ticket validation enforces server-side checks on each QR scan. We also impose schema validations on event creation and purchase endpoints to prevent injection attacks and misuse.

- **Ethical Use of Intellectual Property.** Beyond legal compliance, we committed to ethical sourcing: no proprietary algorithms or datasets from third parties are used without explicit permission. Stripe's and other APIs' terms of service are reviewed regularly, and any new integration undergoes a legal-terms assessment before adoption.By embedding these legal and ethical safeguards, InnovaTicket establishes a secure, trustworthy environment for organizers, attendees, and administrators alike.

5 Effort Sharing

(≈200 words)
Since this is a team-based project, we explicitly document both joint and individual contributions. Overall, each of the four core members contributed equally—25

Livio Xie (Front-End Development): Designed and implemented the React.js web interface and React Native mobile app. He built reusable UI components, integrated API calls for browsing and purchasing tickets, and ensured responsive, accessible layouts.

Zeyuan Chu (Back-End Development): Architected and developed the Node.js/Express microservices. He defined MongoDB schemas, implemented JWT authentication and API routing, and managed data consistency across user, event, payment, and ticket services.

Samliulla (Machine Learning): Developed and trained the fraud-detection and event-recommendation models. He preprocessed synthetic datasets, optimized TensorFlow model performance, and integrated model serving for real-time predictions.

[Nickolas Krivich] (Group Leader): Coordinated project activities, maintained the GitHub repository, set development milestones, and managed CI/CD pipelines with GitHub Actions. He facilitated team meetings, resolved blockers, and compiled project documentation and reports.

All members participated jointly in requirements gathering, design reviews, testing, and report writing. This equitable division of labor ensured consistent quality and shared ownership across design, implementation, validation, and documentation.

Table 6: Effort sharing

Team size	Joint efforts	Member 1	Member 2	Member 3	Member 4	Member 5
5	J (≈25%)	I (≈15%)	I (≈15%)	I (≈15%)	I (≈15%)	I (≈15%)
4	J (≈30%)	I (≈17.5%)	I (≈17.5%)	I (≈17.5%)	I (≈17.5%)	-
3	J (≈31%)	I (≈23%)	I (≈23%)	I (≈23%)	-	-
2	J (≈40%)	I (≈30%)	I (≈30%)	-	-	-

J = description of tasks jointly performed
I = description of tasks individually performed

6 Conclusion and Future Work

(≈150 words)
This project has demonstrated the viability of InnovaTicket as a scalable, secure, and user-friendly event-ticketing platform. Through a modular microservices architecture, we achieved sub-500 ms purchase latencies under nominal load and zero errors in webhook processing. Our JWT-based authentication, Stripe integration, and automated email notifications provide a seamless experience for organizers and attendees, while the synthesized fraud-detection model and QR-code validation mitigate security risks.

Future work will focus on several enhancements: integrating AI-driven event recommendations and dynamic pricing models; anchoring ticket receipts on a public blockchain for tamper-proof verification; extending the mobile app with offline QR scanning; and conducting large-scale stress and chaos tests (e.g., 10,000+ concurrent users). We also plan to introduce GraphQL endpoints for more efficient data querying, implement multi-tenant isolation for white-label deployments, and incorporate user-driven feedback loops to continually refine the fraud-detection algorithms.

Provide below at least 10-15 references for your work.

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