



# Roots

*Alpha Version Memo*

**Andy Lincoln, Daniel Kolsoi**

UMass Lowell

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## Goal Review

Our goal was to “create a web-based service for users to compile an elegant and informative family tree that can be shared through the Internet.” In terms of elegance, we have already created a visually appealing website. We have consulted a designer to help us create an organized interface with a project branded color scheme. Elements on the canvas are made slightly transparent to reflect this background. When a node is selected, it changes to a green color to contrast it from other nodes. This makes it clear to the user which node is being edited at the moment.

We created a detail panel on the left hand side of the screen to display and edit information relevant to the selected node. Although not fully fleshed out, it does load the information behind the scenes and displays to the few inputs that we do have implemented. The detail panel is formatted in such a way that finding a specific piece of information is easy to do.

## New Issues

A few cross compatibility issues have arisen since we started implementing our site. Recently, when we added the ability to delete a node, the application would fail to create nodes on the screen in Chrome when prompted. This error did not surface on other major browsers, such as Firefox and Safari. Fortunately, Chrome had a helpful hint in the console logs for fixing this issue and it was quickly patched. Another cross-compatibility issue with Chrome appeared where the entire canvas workspace disappears when a node is selected. This bug does not always surface, and further testing will be needed to find the root cause. For these reasons our project is best viewed in Firefox.

## Current Features

Our application homepage prompts the user to sign up or login to Roots, communicating with our MySQL database to handle user accounts. This page is currently not styled, and will be updated soon to match the application itself. Upon successful login, the user is then redirected to the application

where they can begin creating and editing their tree.

Users are able to create nodes with a right click and selecting them with a left click. Selected nodes can then be edited and saved via the detail panel on the left. Unwanted nodes can be deleted via a red button that appears when a node is selected. The detail panel provides the ability to edit and display personal information such as name, birthday, date of death (if appropriate), birthplace, residence and generation.

## Not Yet Implemented Features

At this time, we are in the process of adding the ability to connect family members via lines on the workspace. These lines will represent the structural relationship that creates the family trees. After that we will add the ability to save these trees as JSON data, which will be used for the permanent sharing links. The automatic generation counter has not been implemented yet, and its feasibility has not been full tested yet due to focus on other needs.

One of our primary goals for acceptability is the ability to share trees with permanent URL's, which we plan on completing by the end of March. This will be achieved once we can load and save trees as JSON and users can maintain their trees through our database.

There are a few smaller parts of the project that have not been implemented yet. We planned to allow the user to provide an image URL so that the picture would be displayed in a particular node's detail panel. Another planned feature was to have nodes automatically determine how many generations it takes to get to the top of the tree. As they are not part of our acceptability criteria, these will be implemented if there is time.

## Contingency Plans

As we were behind schedule originally, we have had to play catch up. In order to stay on track we have continued to add features, but we must also refine what is there already. More time spent

working on the project will be necessary to smooth minor issues of CSS styling that appeared during presentation.

## Delivery Schedule

We have ramped up our development since our presentation, creating a more interactive interface with tighter integration between the canvas workspace and the detail panel. Even with the bug fixes, we are on a good track to getting back on schedule, and staying on schedule if we keep up this rate. User management will be finalized within the week, allowing us to move onto saving trees next week.

## New Resources

At this time no new resources are needed.

## What to Scrap

After reviewing our time constraints, we decided against implementing the Box2Djs physics engine into the canvas portion of our application. This was decided after carefully considering how much time the API was taking to learn. Instead, we used the HTML5 canvas' drawing functions to draw shapes and images to the screen.

We had originally listed exploring the idea of user accounts being linked through social media such as Google, but this will be scrapped. The ability to share to social media will be achieved with our permanent links, so integrating our app would only distract us from creating a good user experience.



*Figure 1 – The Roots final look*

## Final Look and Feel

We decided that the final look of our main web page would reflect that of Figure 1. Visually, we are almost there, but the CSS must be refined as mentioned previously to prevent the overlap and collapsing of the structure. Our login and register pages will be updated to match this feel as well.