Milestone 7: Refactoring/Quality Review of Byte This Software

HELL’s Tech Support

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Byte This Software created their project using Node JS, Express JS, and Passport JS among other technologies. Neither Nikolas nor Amruo has any experience with these technologies, and Shawn’s experience is limited. For these reasons, please take the points laid out in this refactoring and quality review with a grain of salt.

In our opinion, code should make sense regardless of the language if it is properly written and has suitable documentation. While looking through the code base, we were often stumped at what chunks of code were doing. This indicates a lack of documentation within the code. Along with this, variable names were not clear at times. In other words, we would suggest changing the variable names to better imply their purposes. As an addition to this, the name ‘App’ and ‘Application’ both exist within the source code and the distinction between the two is unclear. We are assuming ‘App’ is a Node JS function, and ‘Application’ is a user defined object; however, we would suggest renaming them to be more distinctive if possible.

While looking through the CSS scripts, we noticed the use of the ‘!important’ on more than one occasion. If these were to override parameters set in 3rd party CSS libraries, then it is okay; however, if they were not, then we would consider this bad practice. Looking at the code, we were not able to determine whether these were for overriding parameters. Additionally, remove HTML <style> blocks from the HTML source code and move them into separate CSS files.

Node JS and associated technologies seem to like to structure their code in a lot of small files. While, this may be great for maintainability, it is confusing for beginners to Node JS. For this reason, it is difficult for us to gauge which code files are ultimately compiled into one, and which HTML links and scripts come from where. Perhaps, documentation which details how the pages are built would help people to understand the code.

While reading the source code, we found there were some sections of commented out code. We suggest removing commented out code if it is no longer necessary. Additionally, the user credentials for the email SMTP server were hard coded into the source code. We would suggest using an external configuration file which is not uploaded to a public repository to house these credentials instead.

With respect to the GitHub repository for Byte This Software, we would suggest showing that all the acceptance tests passed. Unfortunately, we could not find proof of this in their repository. However, the rest of the repository is well organized and clean.

We believe that Node JS and/or Express JS might have included generator utilities. However, if these were used, we are not sure which of the source files were generated via these utilities. For this reason, some of the points listed above may be invalid as they could have been about automatically generated code. Additionally, it is difficult to suggest changes to the code structure and organization when the code is split across many files with little indication of how they are combined. Thus, we must give them the benefit of the doubt and conclude that other than the nitpicky suggestions listed above, Byte This Software has written quality software for this release.