

StartMart Teamwork Plan

Victoria Li, Julianna Mello, Angela Zhang

Stakeholders

MIT Startup Community: MIT students who are currently working on startups, students associated with the Trust Center and Beehive Cooperative. These groups stand to gain a lot from this project. One of our team members, Angela Zhang, was approached by the Trust Center to build this application.

Reviewed Companies and Contacts: Their reputation at MIT will be determined by reviews on the site. Though they will not be interacting with the site, the site directly impacts their business and professional image.

Team Azure: In the short term, we have the most stake in the project as its success or failure will directly impact our grade for this course.

6.170 Staff: The staff will have to spend a considerable amount of time when they could have been enjoying the weather to peruse and evaluate our code and writings.

Resources

Computational: We will be working with whatever free server service is available. Options include MIT Scripts, Amazon Web Services, and Heroku.

Cost: We are working without a budget for this project. However, because this project is for the Trust Center, if we choose to extend the project further, it is conceivable that we may receive funding from them.

Time: We are working with very limited time, and unfortunately team members each have other commitments which will require their time and attention during specific time frames. Our plan is to of course attempt to manage our time well and not to put the work off until the last minute. However, it is unavoidable that we will likely encounter time pressures. We hope to be honest with which times will be worse for each of us individually, and attempt to redistribute work accordingly.

Tasks

The application will be implemented feature by feature, where certain team members are responsible for certain features. The initial barebones structure of the application will be implemented by the team as a whole.

Basic CRUD functionality: hack it together in a group session

Feature 1:

Search/Filter: Angela Zhang

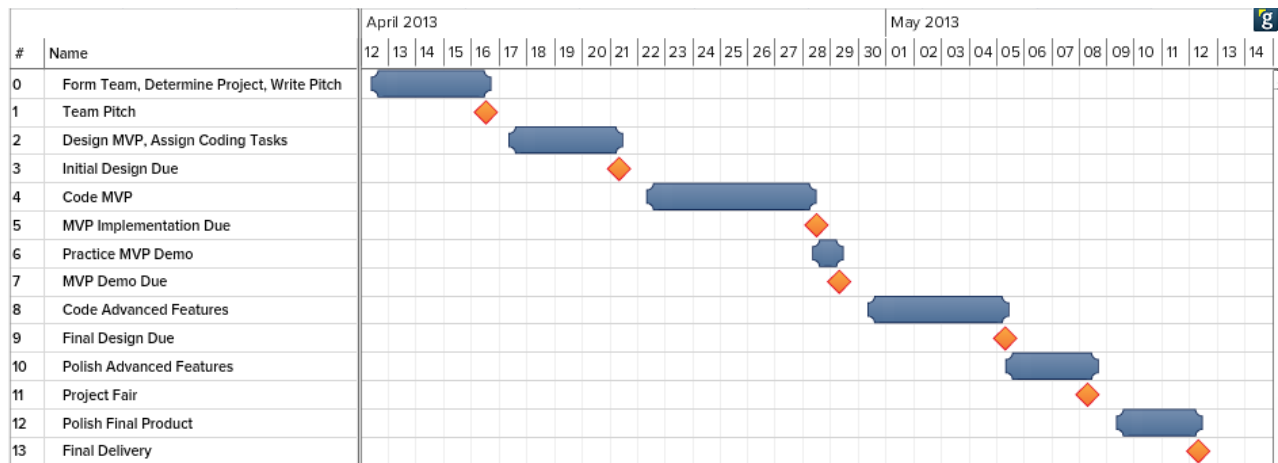
Feature 2:

User Profile/AJAX - Victoria Li

Feature 3:

Commenting/Discussions: Julianna Mello

We have created a Gantt chart with a timeline of tasks:



Risks

- 1) Need Users and Data: In order to start a site that relies on information provided by users, we will need users and a substantial amount of data before we ever release the site to the public. The site would be completely useless and unappealing to students otherwise. To overcome this issue, we plan to reach out to start up resources on campus, like the Trust Center and the Beehive Cooperative, to join and provide reviews on companies and contacts. They may also be able to help publicize our site.
- 2) Need Trust in Users: For the minimum product, we are relying on users providing information on companies and contacts, including names, email address, and phone numbers. It would be an extremely useful feature if we were able to verify this information, but for the MVP, we will need to trust our users to give good information. This is extremely difficult to mitigate, but we believe that requiring an MIT certificate and only opening the site to MIT affiliates is a good start. It may also be possible to have an administrator from the Trust center to verify the information before it is posted to the site, but this is not a scalable option.
- 3) Need Honest Reviews: The purpose of the site is to provide a honest open outlet to discuss various startup resources. There would be no benefit if users were not completely honest in their reviews. However, we do not want users to fear repercussions if they give a negative view. To this end, we will allow anonymous posting. We will also take special care to make our database as secure as possible to prevent attacks and any leaks.
- 4) Scalability: For the purpose of this class, we will not need to worry about heavy traffic. However, we intend to take the project further and have it become a real resource for MIT students. It is unlikely that we will have to deal with extremely high traffic, but we must be able to handle many users accessing and posting to the site at once, especially if the project grows in the future.

Minimum Viable Product

The descriptions of each feature of the site is described below. The basic features describe the minimal viable product whereas the advanced features are lower priority and will be added after the MVP is perfect.

1) User profile:

- A user may create an account using either a verified @mit.edu email address or MIT certificate.
- A user may edit their profile information
- A user may destroy their account

2) Reviewing:

- A user may create, edit and destroy reviews
- A user may create a category, company, or partner if it does not already exist
- A user may edit a company or partner's information

3) Exploring Reviews:

- A user may search reviews based on a keyword, by category, or by rank

4) Discussing:

- A user may post a public or private discussion. Public discussions are viewable by everyone and private discussions can only be viewed by individuals it is shared with.

Advanced Features

- 1) Search suggestion based on search history, as well as auto-fill for searches.
- 2) Search by any combination of keywords, categories and ranks
- 3) Verify provided company information by cross referencing with some sort of external database
- 4) Allow integration with social media to "share" reviews --> this may be tricky to implement as security concerns will have to be addressed
- 5) Extended AJAX for asynchronous experience
- 6) A feedback/credibility system, upvoting/downvoting certain reviews and/or discussions.
- 7) An admin interface to allow easy management for administrators