Design Evaluation: Team Azure

Summary Assessment from User's Perspective

From the user's perspective, this app is aesthetically pleasing, and easy to follow. There are some problems, but overall the site instills a sense of legitimacy.

From the home page, the clean interface welcomes the user, and it is easy to either sign in or sign up. This page could use some more branding as even though it is clean, it is on the simple side and does not distinguish itself from other sites well.

Once a user has logged in, they can see all companies, or add a company. There are tools available to sort and filter the companies to help the user narrow down their search, which are fully functional. However, there may be some confusion in using them. For example, filtering by 1 star will show all companies with 1 *or more* stars, not only those with exactly 1 star.

While verifying an added company's information was a challenge for us, integrating with Crunchbase takes on some amount of the work on the user. However, a user will still need to input the company's website URL and Location, which must be filled out for the company to be successfully added. It is not ideal to require this of the user, especially as they may provide bad information, and may changed in future work. However, because the site has admins and because company information may be edited by any user, we hope that the community could collaborate to fix any misinformation.

Adding reviews, partners, and comments is completed through an AJAX form, which adds to the user experience.

The profile page is nice to view one's own information and recent activity. However, having a phone number may not be the most useful information. Course number, graduation year, or starts ups worked on might be more interesting, useful, and less intrusive. There is currently no way to easily access another user's profile, other than by specifically requesting "pofiles/[id]". The average user may never know they can even access others' profiles.

Summary Assessment from Developer's Perspective

While this app was developed in a relatively clean and DRY manner, there are still areas that could be improved upon.

One large issue is in the HTML and JavaScript. There may be too much logic in the views, for example in determining if the current user is also the poster of a comment, and whether that comment was anonymous and displaying different messages depending. The JQuery and JavaScript is inline and may be difficult to decipher to an individual seeing the code

for the first time. However, this use of JQuery and JavaScript is what was taught in lecture.

We were able to offload much of our work on gems. This allowed us to implement features faster and more reliably.

The code is well documented through commenting and in the final design doc.

Most and Least Successful Decisions

Most Successful:

- Beginning coding early: we did not generally have issues getting the overall functionality of the project because we began early. We began coding for the Final Delivery especially early, so we were mostly cleaning up code rather than scrambling to finish at the end.
- Using Gems: we used many gems in this project to avoid 'reinventing the wheel'. We used gems for features like sessions and authentication, and sorting and filtering companies, which allowed us to focus our time and attention elsewhere.

Least Successful:

- Not pushing to Heroku earlier: we encountered many more problems than expected when pushing to Heroku. This caused unnecessary stress immediately prior to the Project Pitch that could have been avoided if we had given ourselves enough time to ensure the app would deploy correctly beforehand.
- Not beginning testing earlier: we encountered many issues getting testing to work correctly, and the stress of finishing on time could have been lessened if we had started earlier
- Not following Test Driven Development: our tests were written at the end of the project when all features had been fully implemented. This caused much frustration at the end of the project, and did not allow for our code to be debugged as it was written.

Priorities for Improvement

It would be important to consider the user in moving forward. Team Azure cannot act as unbiased user testers. In order to improve the user's experience, we would need to seek feedback from users of a variety of backgrounds. We may then identify any point of confusion that we would not have expected to be an issue. It would be important to also ensure that the site is accessible to individuals with visual impairments. MIT provides resources for this kind of user testing that we could take advantage of.

Currently, users cannot easily view each other's profiles through normal navigation. They

may, however, access /profiles/[id]. In order to foster a community around our app, it would be important to consider adding this feature. We may also consider other 'community-building' features, such as having circles of friends, showing past work relationships between users, or allowing users to rate or vouch for one another's skills.