Project Experience Report

No More Waste

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Introduction

Project Name: No More Waste

Members:

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Project Background and Business Need/Opportunity

Many restaurants and businesses throw away their excess food at the end of their work day when it could instead go to home shelters and individuals in need. Businesses may not be aware that shelters are willing to accept their excess food or they may not be willing to drop it off to shelters themselves. We want to create a responsive web application that addresses this problem and provides an optimal solution for restaurants willing to donate their excess food by giving them the opportunity to donate it with minimal effort on their part.

Reason

We want to do our part to help eliminate food waste in this world and instead give it to those in need in our city. Food waste is extremely preventable, we will help fill a gap by providing businesses the opportunity to eliminate their food waste.

Impact

The current reality is that excess food is almost always thrown out at the end of the day instead of being donated to those in need. Our vision is to allow restaurants and businesses to donate their unused, excess food to local shelters instead of wasting it. In order to accomplish this goal, we created a responsive web application that will give restaurants a platform to connect with local shelters so the excess food does not go to waste.

Target Customers

We envisioned a total of three main target customers, this made it a little more complex to build and test our application because each target customer had different homepages with different functionality. The three include:

1. The restaurants/businesses who will be using the application to create posts of their donations.

2. The shelters who will be using the application to request the donations that the restaurants make.

3. The volunteers who will accept the requests of the shelters, drive to the restaurant to pick up the donation and then drop it off at the shelter.

Project Results

Objectives

The object of No More Waste remains true to what it was set out to accomplish during the project initialization, that is, to create an application that allows restaurants to donate their excess food to shelters in an effort to help reduce food waste in Regina. Based on our initial research, we found that a responsive web app would work best in serving our diverse range of customers. We implemented this with React for our frontend, Node JS for our backend and MySQL for our database.

Goals

The key goals and functionality we set out during our initial planning and whether we achieved it or not is included in Table 1.

Feature	Implemented?

Sign up as different user types	Yes
Login	Yes
Create donation post as restaurant	Yes
Request donation as shelter	Yes
Accept requests as a volunteer	Yes
Update status as a volunteer	Yes
Text notifications	Yes
Chat feature	No
Live tracking	No
Map assistance	Yes
Dashboard	Yes
Filtering feature	No
Search feature	No
User history	Yes

Table 1: Goal features and whether they were implemented

Completion Dates

Based on our milestone based schedule, we did finish the majority of the functionality by March 3rd for the mock tradeshow. Our deployment was not included in our schedule but it did take much longer than expected to complete, and was deployed around one week after the mock tradeshow. Our final documentation also took longer to complete and finished in April instead of the expected March 15th date set.

Project Reflection

What went well and why?

We believe our final product addresses the objectives exactly as intended. We believe our functionality and implementation of the application went very well. We were especially very

proud of our ability to get the Twilio notifications to work and the responsiveness. We believe these two features added extreme value to our project and we gained a lot of knowledge on these features that we could make use of in future projects. We believe our ability to learn React and do all our frontend and backend code with React and Node JS also went very well. Not only did we gain skills learning new technology, we also learned many valuable software engineering principles. We learned the importance of the feedback cycle and how much your initial project will develop and adapt to best fit your user's needs. We learnt the importance of mentorship and how they can provide valuable insight on topics we may not have even considered, like the legal issues of safe food handling or the training of volunteers. Overall, we feel like our final product solves the problem it set out to address in an efficient and effective way.

What did not go well and why?

We believe our separation of tasks and use of Kanban to address project roles and responsibilities could have been implemented sooner to ensure the work was divided equally at the start. We could have also done user testing of our final application earlier on to ensure we had more time to address the concerns brought up by our testers.

What should we do differently next time? How can we improve?

Our deployment seemed to be a more complicated task than we initially expected and next time, we would improve our ability to test with users by deploying much earlier on. We could have used project management tools earlier on and more effectively to ensure we had more time to implement other features like chat and filtration.