

Vacation Tracking System

For many businesses today, the independence of workers has been ever increasing. It is not uncommon for workers to divide their time across multiple projects and to report to multiple project managers. As a result, managers have fewer informal interactions with their workers and find it increasingly difficult to be aware of and manage their workers' vacation time. Our fictitious company has decided to develop and deploy a flexible vacation time management application for managers and employees alike to use to manage their vacation time.

The decision by a large enterprise organization to implement this and similar functionality is never made in isolation. It is unlikely that this proposed system is the first that this organization has ever created. This desired functionality must be considered in the context of any existing systems (and perhaps even with other proposed systems).

The vision for this project can be summarized easily:

A Vacation Tracking System (VTS) will provide individual employees with the capability to manage their own vacation time, sick leave, and personal time off, without having to be an expert in company policy or the local facility's leave policies.

The most important goal of this system is to give individual employees the capability and responsibility to manage this particular aspect of their employment agreements with the company. The underlying motivations for this desire include the need to streamline the functions of the human resources (HR) department, to minimize noncore, business-related activities of management, and to give a sense of empowerment to the employees. These objectives will be met only if the system developed is easy to use, intuitive, and intelligent. An overriding design goal can therefore be stated simply.

The system must be easy to use.

The main goal of this application is to improve the internal business processes of this organization, at least with respect to the time it takes to manage vacation time requests. In the past, all vacation time had to be approved by an immediate manager and then checked by a clerk in the HR department before it was authorized. Sometimes this manual process could take days. An automated system will speed up this process and will require at most one manual approval by the immediate manager (some high-level employees may not require manager approval).

This system has the potential to save time and money mostly in the HR department, which is essentially taken out of the individual time request process and replaced by a rules-based validation system. HR personnel are still responsible for entering and updating employee vacation data in the system; however, they will no longer be a link in the chain for requesting and validating each time request.

The system will provide the following key features:

- Implements a flexible rules-based system for validating and verifying leave time requests

- Enables manager approval (optional)
- Provides access to requests for the previous calendar year, and allows requests to be made up to a year and a half in the future
- Uses e-mail notification to request manager approval and notify employees of request status changes
- Uses existing hardware and middleware
- Is implemented as an extension to the existing intranet portal system, and uses the portal's single-sign-on mechanisms for all authentication
- Keeps activity logs for all transactions
- Enables the HR and system administration personnel to override all actions restricted by rules, with logging of those overrides
- Allows managers to directly award personal leave time (with system-set limits)
- Provides a Web service interface for other internal systems to query any given employee's vacation request summary
- Interfaces with the HR department legacy systems to retrieve required employee information and changes