Lab 2:

UConnect Software Requirements Specification

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1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this Software Requirements Specification is to outline the requirements for the development of the UConnect software (an online social platform intended to help college students find peers with whom to collaborate on projects). This document is primarily intended for use by the development team of this software as a design and implementation reference. It could also be useful for QA testing, should the project reach that stage.

1.2 Scope

Today, a bachelor's degree is simply not enough to qualify for many early-career positions. This has not always been the case; historically, a college degree was a way to show employers and the world that a graduate is ready to start a new job. It was understood that they could get started easily, without much training. Recent circumstances, however, have contributed to increasingly higher expectations on the part of employers.

These employers increasingly want proof that a candidate not only has the skills and knowledge they need, but that they have experience utilizing them. To the student, this poses a problem: how can they get the experience they need, if they cannot land an internship or entry-level job, often due to a lack of this very kind of experience?

For college students, perhaps the solution can be found all around them: they are surrounded by other students with similar interests in developing their skills. However, an issue arises in that the process of seeking other students out and organizing a joint effort around a project can be challenging and intimidating. Social media platforms such as Reddit might be helpful, but with none of these major existing platforms being oriented towards projects in particular, the search process is likely to be relatively tedious and involved.

A specific vision for a solution to these contemporary challenges can be found in UConnect: a service explicitly designed to allow college students seeking to launch projects to meet students looking to demonstrate and further develop their skills. It will aim to create a central platform for both advertising project ideas and finding projects to work on, in order to create a convenient avenue for students to gain valuable, hands-on experience.

1.3 Definitions, Acronyms, Abbreviations

Project Launcher: User who has a project they are interested in recruiting students to work on

Project Seeker: User who is interested in using their skills to contribute to a project

1.4 References

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1.5 Overview

   The remainder of the document is split into two main sections. Section 2 gives an overview
of the envisioned system. Section 3 (presently omitted) elaborates on the requirements, with
functional requirements (organized by feature) being followed by various non-functional
requirements.

2 Overall Description

2.1 Product Perspective

UConnect has several key aims with respect to fulfilling its intended purpose. For the prospective project launcher, it should provide relatively simple and frictionless processes for attracting interested individuals, as well as reaching out to potential team members manually. For the student seeking a pre-existing project or idea to work on, it should provide similarly convenient processes for browsing projects and project ideas, as well as for inquiring about and applying to join them. For both categories of user, it should provide a single, bespoke destination wherein like-minded students may reliably be found, and in a relatively quick manner. Above all, it should be conducive to fostering an active ecosystem of individuals cooperating to the end of gaining experience and bolstering resumes. Thus far, a product fulfilling all of these characteristics does not exist; UConnect seeks to rectify this.

2.2 Product Functions

UConnect seeks to accomplish its goals via several key features and functions. A central component to many of UConnect's functions is the tagging system. Many of these are used to indicate relevant areas of specialization, such as "graphic design", "psychology", "academic", "short-term", and so on. These tags are useful for indicating needed skills on project posts, as well as conveying individual users' areas of expertise and experience. Other tags may describe other general characteristics of a project, and may include terms like "short-term", "artistic", or "large-scale". These tags are firstly practical for conveying key information about users and projects at a glance, but they also serve an important role as search terms. Given that UConnect is not envisioned as a matchmaking service, but rather as a networking platform, its search functionality represents the primary avenue through which users can find projects and potential collaborators.

Another core function is the ability to create project posts. The contents of such a post include a variety of details, including the project's name, the number of desired collaborators, the estimated timespan of work, a set of tags listing desired skills and/or areas of expertise, additional tags, and a general description. Only key details like the name and desired skills are required to create the post, but the full set of fields seeks to enable the launcher to create a

comprehensive and compelling overview of the project's vision, so as to more effectively attract potential collaborators.

Project seekers will then spend much of their time browsing these posts. They will be able to filter results by selecting tags; the search algorithm will prioritize the results accordingly (with projects and/or users matching the most tags being displayed at the top). Custom keywords can also be entered, providing another metric by which to measure relevance. Additionally, profile browsing functionality will enable project launchers to seek out potential collaborators. Similarly to posts, profiles will also be filterable via tags.

The messaging functions provide the avenue through which an interested seeker can contact a project launcher and vice-versa. Dedicated buttons will be present on both profiles and project posts, allowing the viewer to contact the associated user through UConnect's built-in messaging system.

2.3 User Characteristics

UConnect is envisioned, first and foremost, as a platform for students looking to build experience and bolster their resumes. Thus, the primary end user demographic is intended to be comprised of individuals enrolled in universities and colleges.

Within this demographic, the platform is envisioned as having two main categories of users. Namely, these are "project launchers" and "project seekers". Project launchers will use UConnect to make posts describing projects they are interested in realizing. On the other hand, project seekers are users who will browse posts to find projects they would like to contribute to.

Note that this distinction is abstract in nature, and the two terms are not planned to be user-facing. In practice, users will act as either role or both, depending on their individual needs and goals.

2.4 Constraints

N/A

2.5 Assumptions and Dependencies

N/A