



myCircle

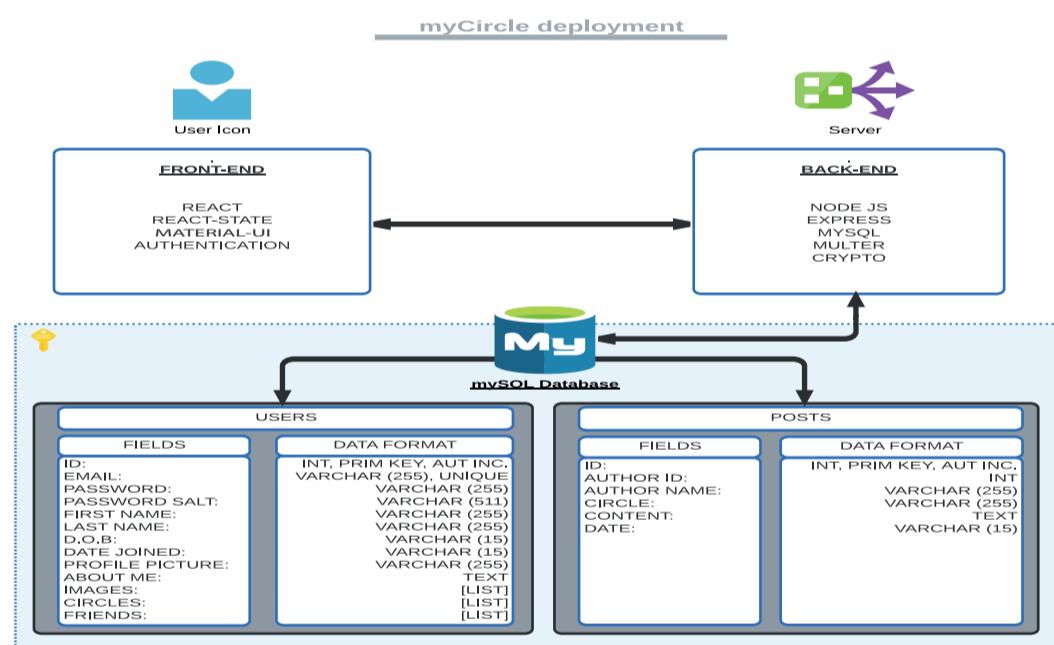
A social media platform built around interests and hobbies could have a positive impact on mental health of individuals of all ages[1]. *"Nowadays social media has become a new set of cool tools for involving young people. Many young people's day to day life are woven by the social media. Youngsters are in conversation and communication with their friends and groups, by using different media and devices every day"*[2].

myCircle is a social media platform built around the idea of bringing friends, both real-life and online, closer together through shared interests and hobbies.

The Problem

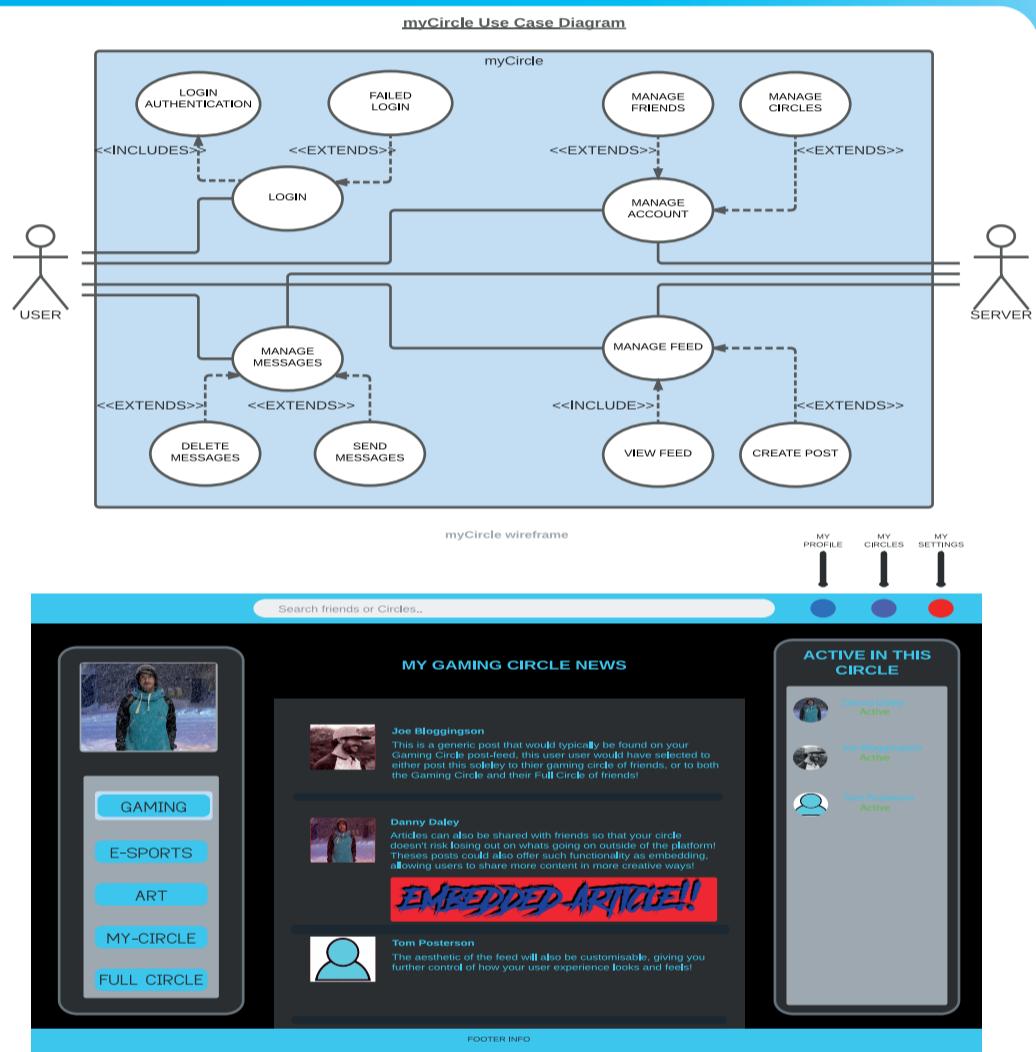
On current iterations of social media platforms, there are not many ways to filter content (if such functionality is in place at all), which can render much of the content feed irrelevant. Some platforms offer groups where communities can be formed but it is most often the case that the majority of the group are not actually people within your friends list, which can once again deem the content irrelevant.

The front-end system will be built using React along side the Material-UI library for stylings. Developed by Facebook, the use of states and how the technology handles user sessions and cookies makes this a great fit for this project. The back-end will be developed with Node.js, Express for server functionality, Multer for media upload handling and Crypto for sensitive data encryption. MySQL will be used for the data storage solution for this system, chosen based on its capabilities to use data tables relationally and securely.



The Solution

With **myCircle**, users will be able to manage their feeds by adding or removing interest circles. These will act as filtered feeds in which they would only be presented with posts relating directly to that field of interest, or all posts from friends that are part of that circle, the user will have the choice between a strict or more social circle setting.



Future Direction

I will conduct a study towards how this platform effects the mental health of individuals using social media in contrast to other available mediums, and whether they are more engaged in their interests and hobbies after using **myCircle**. I will conduct the research in a quantitative manner, using a similar methodology to this study by Md. MosfikurRahman.[3]

Development

With a development time for a minimum viable product being around the 5 week mark, time available will be split into main focus points for each week or sprint and will follow an Agile methodology of implementation and refinement. Week 1 will focus on front end UI development, Week 2 will aim for server and routing functionality leaving Weeks 3 and 4 for database architecture/implementation and further refinements respectively.

Week 1
front-end

Week 2
server/routing

Week 3
database

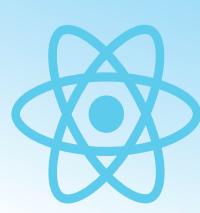
Week 4/remainder
refinements

The Outcome

With a social media platform centred around interests and hobbies, users could feel more inclined to engage in these activities in a social environment, bringing about a new medium to share and collaborate with new and existing friends from both the online and real world. This platform could take the focus away from the comparative lifestyle approach to social media, which has been seen to contribute towards detrimental mental health habits [2], and more towards creativity and engaging in creative activities.

References

- [1] Iwasa, H., Yoshida, Y., Kai, I., Suzuki, T., Kim, H. and Yoshida, H., 2012. Leisure activities and cognitive function in elderly community-dwelling individuals in Japan: a 5-year prospective cohort study. *Journal of psychosomatic research*, 72(2), pp.159-164.
- [2] Siddiqui, S. and Singh, T., 2016. Social media its impact with positive and negative aspects. *International journal of computer applications technology and research*, 5(2), pp.71-75. <http://www.ijcat.com/archives/volume5/issue2/ijcatr05021006.pdf>
- [3] Rahman, M.M., Saifuzzaman, M., Ahmed, A., Mahin, M.F. and Shetu, S.F., 2021. Impact of COVID-19 on mental health: A quantitative analysis of anxiety and depression based on regular life and internet use. *Current Research in Behavioral Sciences*, 2, p.100037.



express

