myUni404

BUSINESS PROPOSAL

myUni404

WEB310

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Elevator pitch.

myUni404 is an optional add on for an educational institutions' student portal such as Learning Space or Moodle, or the **myUniSocial** platform which is currently in development.

Being a programmer myself, I often use existing platforms such as Stack Overflow in an effort to navigate programming and coding challenges, which is infamous for not being particularly beginner friendly.

Asking a question that has previously been answered but hidden behind different naming terms (*that you might not be experienced enough to know)* can result in criticism or in some cases even getting your account banned and leaving you feeling discouraged and defeated.

Wouldn't it be fantastic if there was a similar medium built right into the university experience, accessible from the student portal, where you can ask your peers and cohorts these questions in a beginner friendly environment instead of posting it out to the world.

This is exactly where **myUni404** comes in.

The platform offers students the ability to post questions into a field (Web, Game Dev, Robotics, etc...) where any other student on the platform can post a reply.

Replies can be voted up and down, based on how helpful it is in helping both the original poster and others in fixing and debugging their code.

These issues would usually be navigated by students going to staff with buggy code, and now we give students the opportunity to help other students and develop their debugging skills as a community and lessen the load for university staff.

The platform comes with syntax highlighting built right into the user interface for easier identification of issues.

You'll be asking why it isn't in place already!

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Executive Summary

Overview

myUni404 is a platform for educational institutions with computing departments, intended as an optional add-on for an up-and-coming social media platform for universities, but could be added to existing solutions such as Learning Space or Moodle.

The platform offers the perfect space to ask questions around fields of computing, allowing them to include an explanation of their problem as well as the code that they are having trouble with.

In turn students can browse myUni404 and answer questions, helping them improve vital debugging skills. The current categories for questions on the platform are Web, Game Dev, System and OS, and Robotics. Students can easily switch between these categories should they wish to be versatile with their disciplines.

Each user has a profile which displays how many questions they have asked and answered, their university course, year, profile picture and some 'about me' information. Questions asked and answered questions are also displayed in this space.

Users cannot update their course and year by themselves, as this would be performed by university staff, or information would be carried through from Learning Space or Moodle.

The Problem

The problem that I have observed within current iterations of similar platforms such as Stack Overflow, is that they are famously not beginner friendly. Many questions have already been answered perhaps under different search terms, but it is my opinion that becoming a skilled searcher within these domains takes some experience, users can be penalised or even banned for asking what may be deemed repeated, too simple or too trivial of a question.

The second problem is university staff are no doubt regularly inundated with coding questions natured around "Why doesn't this work", this platform offers a simple solution to this, giving them more time.

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The Solution

myUni404 offers a similar experience but aimed at beginners. The user-friendly platform aims to provide experience in asked good questions and providing accurate answers in a space where the simpler a question might be, so will be the answers, in turn providing bug fixing experience to any and all that may want to submit an answer.

The platform would also be a benefit to university staff who may get asked a lot of question around debugging students' code. myUni404 provides a space where students can put the question to other students, allowing those that answer to gain more experience and those that asked to take their solution and continue their project.

The Target Audience

The target audience for this application would be educational institutions and students. The platform could be added onto their existing student portal such as Learning Space or Moodle, or as an optional add on to the social media platform **myUniSocial** which is currently in development.

The Market/Competition

in development. Stack overflow enterprise would be the closest market competitor. We stand aside from them by being integrated into educational institutions learning platforms, offering the same colourings and familiar feeling space that they are used to, also allowing university staff to watch over the space very easily.

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SWOT Analysis

Strengths

Beginner friendly – The platform offers a beginner friendly space, allowing users to gain experience which would be industry relevant, and make them confident to move on to other platforms after their education.

Different fields – Offering different channels for different fields of computing gives users a great opportunity to browse for questions around their specialism or try something new to keep themselves versatile as a budding computing professional

Student portal integration – Available right from the student portal will drive user interaction as users will feel they are using a university feature rather than a third-party website. This ease of access will attract students to spend time answering questions or asking them as replies could come through quickly.

Weaknesses

Competition - Similar platforms exist such as Stack Overflow which does currently have more functionality and a large user base.

Opportunities

The Games Academy – The Games Academy at Falmouth University would pose as a fantastic opportunity for this platform. Teams of junior computing professionals would benefit greatly from having an in-house space in which they could post questions or develop their skills by logging on and answering some, this could also provide staff with less work to do as they wouldn't have to answer them, and could add a new step in terms of what educational services that are offered.

Threats

Competition - Existing platforms such as Stack Overflow are massive, even so, Stack Overflow has a reputation for not being very beginner friendly which can be massively discouraging for new users. With this in mind and the platforms focus on beginners, the overall demographic and target audience should be different enough that Stack Overflow should not be too much of an issue.

Data Breaches - Data breaches would be a concern as users lose trust in such platforms very quickly, with this in mind, it would be of the utmost importance to make sure all security measures are present to ensure the safety of all user data held.

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PESTLE Analysis

Political

Given the focused nature of the platform being education and computing, I cant foresee any major political impacts. We would have to be sure people do not use the platform unintended means and start using it as a general forum where questionable content might be shared.

Economical

The platform would have a lot to offer to educational institutions and the local economy included. The platform would help create more confident developers and prepare them for industry bug fixing issues and a great understanding around asking questions on other platforms and necessary levels of detail to be applied when doing so.

Social

Being a forum at its heart, myuUni404 proposes a fantastic opportunity for social side to university, students helping students is a great way to make new industry connections and gain a reputation as not only a good would-be developer, but also team member.

Technological

We would have a massive responsibility to ensure the safety of everyone's data on the platform. Ensuring that the necessary security measures are implemented will be an absolute must to keep our users safe from data breaches.

Legal

As previously mentioned, we will have a great legal responsibilty to ensure all user data if very well looked after and that every security measure is in place. The data could be of potential value to those with such a mind to obtain the information illegally, which could result in legal action against the company.

Environmental

Being a Tech company, we would have to consider the environmental impacts of the energy we use. By 2040 it is projected that the tech industry will constitute 15% of global emissions, which is equivalent to half of that of the world's transportation sector. Keeping this in mind, ensuring we operate on as much 'green' energy as a continued focus will be very important.

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