

*“Unlimited destinations, unlimited possibilities”*

**Product Development Blueprint**

**v1.0**

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# Introduction

This document explains broadly the product implementation of *Destinations Unlimited* platform, its feature’s and MVP (Minimum Viable Product) plan. Destinations Unlimited hereinafter referred to as DU specializes in inbound travel into India for foreign nationals. At the core of its service is Itinerary planning for which it utilizes excel based solution which is not scalable. It is seeking to induct a sophisticated web based tool that can provide host of services that is otherwise not possible through excel worksheets.

# System Definition

At the core of DU service is **Itinerary**, hereinafter referred to as DUIT, which is the master plan for individual or a group looking to visit India. Typically, inbound tourists prefer a well-planned itinerary wherein they don’t need to worry about small details especially when travelling in a group. It is up to travel planners such as DU to create itineraries that can accommodate complex requirements with real time contingencies that otherwise some of bigger travel operators may not be able to provide. To help with some of these mico requirements, a sophisticated service needs to be in place such that the customers get the best possible service at best possible rates.

Currently, DU prepares an itinerary based on excel templates which includes a “cost sheet” (internal detailed breakup of a tour with events, timelines and pricing), a “quote sheet” that imports data from a “cost sheet” and accommodates margins over and above actual costs as well as currency conversions. Finally, an invoice is prepared from “quote sheet” and sent over email to the customer. During the process of “quote sheet” preparation to “cost sheet” finalization, DU engages with service partners such as hotels, cab services, escort services and others to finalize applicable rates. In the case of hotels, rates are typically published on a 6 month basis but same does not apply for other services including travel (cab, airlines) where pricing remains dynamic and requires to be accommodated at the time of preparation of itinerary.

DU works with a third party to get published (rack) rates for hotels pan India that includes discounts for travel planners every 6 months. This information is core while preparing an itinerary as hotel accommodation is the single biggest expense for any travel that DU handles.

# Modules

A workable and efficient solution for DU will have following components:

1. Itinerary Creation

A smart form, that allows DU employees, to input various data parameters for building an itinerary. This will be saved to a MySQL database for future edits, invoice generation and search functionality. At a minimum this process streamlines and automates to a large extent the current process of creating ‘cost’ and ‘quote’ sheets.

1. Identity Management
2. Access control

Users (Employees) will access this service based on extent to which they have access to data. For example, most employees will be able to create “cost sheet” but may not have access to create a subsequent “quote sheet” or prepare and dispatch a final invoice to end customer.

1. Activity Tracking

All transactions related activity such as creating itineraries, edits, preparation and dispatching of invoices will be tracked and logged for future investigations and access control.

1. Itinerary Life Cycle Management

An itinerary will have a unique id once it has been created and submitted.

**Itinerary Format**

Number-SubNumber-DayNumber-Version

Number is unique and incremental. It will remain unique across all years and never repeated. Any itinerary may be reused but will be assigned a unique number once it is created.

SubNumber is by default 1 meaning every Itinerary will have a minimum of one sub itinerary. In case, if multiple itineraries are to be maintained for larger groups, then sub itineraries can handle this special requirement while being part of main itinerary. For example some inbound members of a group may want to visit Chandigarh while visiting North India and others some other city, say Shimla. This will help manage this requirement.

DayNumber will have values 1,2,3… representing Day 1, Day 2, Day 3 of the itinerary

Version tracks changes in an itinerary denoted by increasing numbers. It will be possible to check changes across different versions for an itinerary.

(Example: 1234-1-2-5)

Version control will be in place such that individual invoices with ‘delta’ changes will be available once an itinerary reaches silver stage. It should be possible to view itinerary data and the changes in a sequential and chronological order.

1. Framework

DUIT is relatively complex in terms of functionality and requires security, access control, reporting and other elements that are standard with a similar system. A stable and robust Java based Spring framework with HTML5, CSS3 and My SQL database will be provisioned to build this service.

1. Reporting

Custom reports will be made available to keep tab on system activity, financial reporting and anything else required for compliance. It should be possible to export reports into excel and any other standard format (pdf) [TBD]

1. Notifications and Alerts
2. Email and SMS notifications to ensure itineraries are processed in a timely manner.
3. Email notifications to end users to dispatch invoices, manage customer queries with relevant reference id. It would be required to include itinerary number along with reference number (for example: 00125\_g3) in all communication to customers for tracking and resolution.
4. Revenue Management
5. Revenue booking [TBD]
6. Chargebacks, refunds [TBD]
7. Invoice Generation

Currently a manual process is in place to generate invoice that includes final quotation for an itinerary, details of the tour and some additional information relating to areas of interests such historical and demographic details. It is possible to automate this process [TBD]

1. Search

It would be possible to search data that is part of previous itineraries [TBD]

1. Customer Profile

It would be possible to create and update profiles of customers during preparation of itineraries. This can be an automated process where customer related information can be picked from an itinerary and maintained under customer tables within backend. This can be used for future marketing and customer loyalty programs.

1. Data Import and Maintenance

There are 2 types of data that the system must be able to handle. Existing legacy data that may be required to be imported and recurring data feed from third party sources. Legacy data from created itineraries will help in search and generation of customer profiles. Data feed, for example, hotel rates are updated every 6 months, it will be required to update this information as and when it becomes available. System should also allow rates from other service providers (cab companies, escort services) that can be automatically included during preparation of ‘costing’.

# Implementation

A minimum viable product (MVP) is planned at onset. This requires finalization and prioritization of product features by product owners. It may be necessary to train employees to use new service once it’s provisioned though it will be far simpler and intuitive to use than the current process of using excel worksheets.