SUMMER INTERNSHIP REPORT

Company: : **PROXYM-IT**

Project Title: Messaging Web App

Institution:

National Institute of Applied Science and Technology (INSAT)

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background of the Project

1.1.1 Context and Relevance of the Project

In today's digital age, real-time communication has become an integral part of our personal and professional lives. Messaging applications have revolutionized the way we interact, offering instant connectivity and a platform for seamless communication. With the proliferation of smartphones and internet accessibility, there is a growing demand for efficient, scalable, and user-friendly messaging solutions.

The development of this messaging web app is situated within this context, aiming to address the need for a robust platform that supports real-time messaging with features like group chats, file sharing, and notifications. The project leverages the MERN stack (MongoDB, Express.js, React.js, Node.js) combined with Socket.io to ensure real-time, bidirectional communication.

1.1.2 Overview of the Industry/Field

The software development industry is continually evolving, with full-stack development becoming increasingly popular due to its comprehensive approach to both front-end and back-end development. The MERN stack is particularly favored for its efficiency, scalability, and ease of use, making it a go-to choice for developing modern web applications. Socket.io is a powerful library that facilitates real-time, event-based communication, making it ideal for applications requiring live updates, such as messaging apps.

1.2 Objectives

1.2.1 Main Goals of the Project

- Develop a Functional Messaging Web App: Create a fully functional messaging web application that supports real-time communication.
- Implement Real-Time Features: Utilize Socket.io to enable real-time, bidirectional communication between users.
- Ensure Scalability and Efficiency: Leverage the MERN stack to build a scalable and efficient application that can handle multiple users and messages simultaneously.

1.2.2 Specific, Measurable Outcomes Expected

- User Authentication and Authorization: Implement user registration and login functionality with secure authentication.
- Real-Time Messaging: Enable users to send and receive messages in real-time without the need to refresh the page.





- **Group Chats:** Allow users to create and join group chats, facilitating multi-user communication.
- Notifications: Provide real-time notifications for new messages and user activities.
- Friend Finder and Management: Implement a feature for users to search for and add friends. Allow users to manage their friend lists and view their friends' online statuses.
- **Profile Customization:** Provide options for users to customize their profiles, including profile pictures, status messages, and personal information. Ensure profile information is easily editable and securely stored.
- Chat Customization: Allow users to customize their chat experience, including themes, font sizes, and notification settings. Enable users to manage their chat settings for individual and group conversations.

1.3 Scope

1.3.1 Boundaries and Limitations of the Project

- Time Constraint: The project was completed within a one-month internship period, which limited the scope of additional features and enhancements.
- Focus on Core Features: The primary focus was on developing the core functionalities of a messaging app, such as user authentication, real-time messaging, and group chats. Advanced features like end-to-end encryption, extensive media support, and comprehensive user settings were beyond the scope of this initial project.

1.3.2 Key Areas of Focus

- User Experience (UX): Ensuring a user-friendly interface that is intuitive and easy to navigate.
- **Performance Optimization:** Implementing efficient coding practices to ensure the app runs smoothly even with multiple concurrent users.
- Security: Incorporating basic security measures to protect user data and privacy.

1.4 Potential Challenges

- Real-Time Communication: Traditional messaging systems often suffer from delays, requiring users to refresh the page to receive new messages. This disrupts the seamless flow of conversation and diminishes the user experience.
- Scalability Issues: As the number of users and messages increases, many messaging applications struggle to maintain performance and reliability. Scalability becomes a significant concern, especially when trying to support multiple concurrent users and high message volumes.





- User Authentication and Security: Secure authentication is critical to protect user data and privacy. Many applications either lack robust security measures or fail to implement them effectively, putting users at risk.
- Group Communication: Facilitating multi-user communication is a complex task. Existing platforms often provide limited functionality for creating and managing group chats, which are essential for both social and professional interactions.
- User Experience and Customization: A personalized user experience is crucial for user satisfaction and retention. However, many messaging apps offer limited customization options, preventing users from tailoring the interface and features to their preferences.

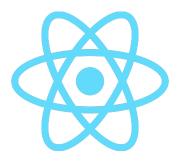




2. Technologies Used

2.1 React

React is a popular JavaScript library for building user interfaces, particularly single-page applications where data changes over time without the need to reload the page. Created and maintained by Facebook, React allows developers to create large web applications that can update and render efficiently in response to data changes. It uses a component-based architecture, enabling code reuse and easier debugging. React's virtual DOM optimizes rendering performance, making applications more responsive.



2.1.1 Key Features

- Component-Based: Build encapsulated components that manage their state, then compose them to make complex UIs.
- **Declarative:** Design simple views for each state in your application, and React will efficiently update and render just the right components when your data changes.
- Learn Once, Write Anywhere: Develop new features in React without rewriting existing code. React can also render on the server using Node and power mobile apps using React Native.

2.2 Node.js

Node.js is a runtime environment that allows you to run JavaScript on the server side. Built on Chrome's V8 JavaScript engine, Node.js is designed for building scalable network applications. It uses an event-driven, non-blocking I/O model, which makes it lightweight and efficient, perfect for data-intensive real-time applications that run across distributed devices.







2.2.1 Key Features

- Asynchronous and Event-Driven: All APIs of Node.js are asynchronous, meaning the server doesn't wait for an API to return data. It moves to the next API after calling it, and a notification mechanism of Events helps the server get a response from the previous API call.
- Single-Threaded but Highly Scalable: Uses a single-threaded model with event looping, which makes it highly scalable unlike traditional servers which create limited threads to handle requests.
- **High Performance:** The V8 engine provides a high-performance execution environment for JavaScript code.

2.3 Express.js

Express.js is a minimal and flexible Node.js web application framework that provides a robust set of features for web and mobile applications. It is a lightweight framework used to build server-side applications and APIs. Express simplifies the process of writing server code in Node.js by providing a higher-level abstraction.



2.3.1 Key Features

• Middleware: Use middleware to handle requests. Middleware functions have





access to the request object (req), the response object (res), and the next middleware function in the application's request-response cycle.

- Routing: Define routing for your application to handle different HTTP requests.
- Rapid Server-Side Development: Helps to build server-side applications faster and more efficiently.

2.4 Tailwind CSS

Tailwind CSS is a utility-first CSS framework that provides low-level utility classes to build custom designs without leaving your HTML. Unlike traditional CSS frameworks like Bootstrap, Tailwind CSS doesn't offer pre-designed components. Instead, it provides utility classes that you can combine to build your own components.



2.4.1 Key Features

- **Utility-First:** Provides a comprehensive set of CSS classes out-of-the-box that you can combine to create any design, directly in your HTML.
- **Highly Customizable:** Configure your design system by extending the default configuration.
- Responsive Design: Tailwind makes it easy to create responsive designs using mobile-first utility classes.

2.5 MongoDB

MongoDB is a document-oriented NoSQL database used for high volume data storage. Instead of using tables and rows as in traditional relational databases, MongoDB makes use of collections and documents. Documents consist of key-value pairs, which are the basic unit of data in MongoDB.







2.5.1 Key Features

- Schema-Less: MongoDB is a schema-less database written in C++. It can have any number of fields of any type, making it more flexible than traditional relational databases.
- Scalability: Provides horizontal scalability with native sharding support, making it easy to scale out your database infrastructure.
- **High Performance:** Supports embedded data models to reduce I/O activity on the database system.

2.6 Socket.io

Socket.io is a JavaScript library for real-time web applications. It enables real-time, bidirectional, and event-based communication between web clients and servers. Socket.io consists of two parts: a client-side library that runs in the browser and a server-side library for Node.js. Both components have an identical API.



2.6.1 Key Features

- Real-Time Communication: Enables real-time, bidirectional communication between clients and servers.
- Cross-Browser: Supports all modern browsers, including mobile ones.
- Auto-Reconnection: Handles reconnection automatically if the client loses connection.





2.7 MUI (Material-UI) for Icons

MUI (Material-UI) for Icons is a part of the MUI library, providing a comprehensive collection of Material Design icons for use in React applications. These icons help in creating a consistent and modern user interface. In this project, MUI icons were used for various UI elements, such as avatars and delete buttons.



2.7.1 Key Features

- Rich Icon Library: A large collection of Material Design icons.
- Ease of Use: Simple integration with React applications.
- Customization: Icons can be easily customized to fit the design requirements.





3. Development Environment

3.1 Postman

Postman is a software tool that offers a user-friendly interface for creating, sending, and managing HTTP requests to test and interact with APIs. It simplifies the process of API testing, allowing developers to design and execute requests, inspect responses, and automate testing workflows. Postman is commonly used for API development, debugging, and documentation, making it an essential tool for developers and quality assurance professionals.



3.2 Visual Studio Code

Visual Studio Code (VS Code) is a free, open-source source code editor developed by Microsoft. It offers a wide array of features, including syntax highlighting, code completion, debugging support, version control integration, and an extensive library of extensions and plugins. VS Code is highly customizable and widely used by developers across different platforms for writing, editing, and managing code in various programming languages and development environments.

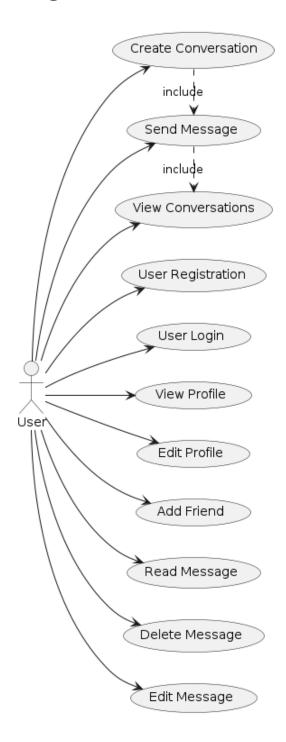






4. UML Diagrams

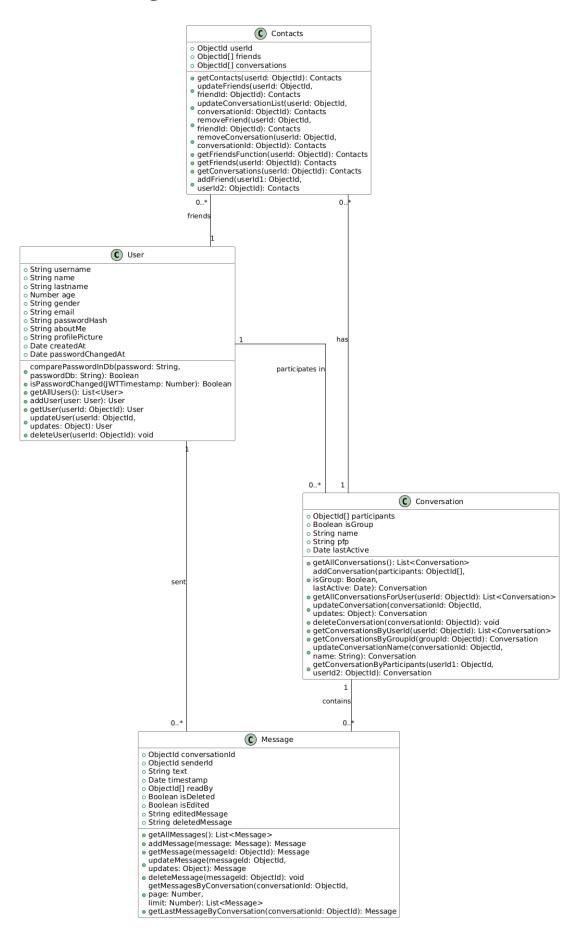
4.1 Use Case Diagram







4.2 Class Diagram







4.3 Sequence Diagrams

4.3.1 Sign up process

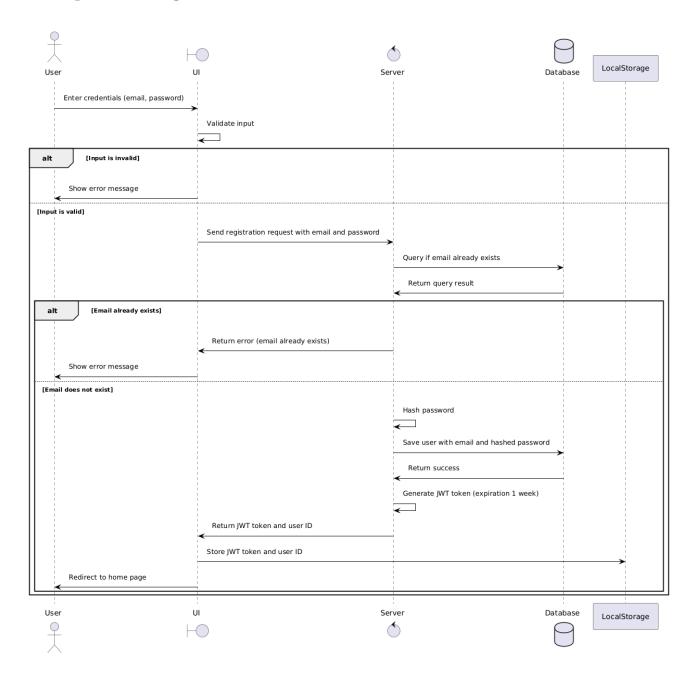
Detailed Process:

- User Input: The user navigates to the registration page and enters their email and password. This input is captured by the React component and validated on the client side.
- Client-Side Validation: The React component validates the input to ensure the email format is correct and the password meets security requirements. If the validation fails, an error message is displayed to the user.
- Sending Registration Request: If the input is valid, the client sends a registration request to the backend server using an HTTP POST request. The request payload includes the user's email and password.
- Server-Side Processing: The server, built with Express.js, receives the registration request. The server uses Mongoose to query the MongoDB database to check if the email already exists. If the email exists, the server responds with an error message indicating that the email is already in use.
- Password Hashing: If the email does not exist, the server hashes the user's password using a secure hashing algorithm (bcrypt). Password hashing is a critical step to ensure that plain-text passwords are never stored in the database.
- Saving User Data: The server creates a new user record with the email and hashed password and saves it to the MongoDB database using Mongoose. Once the user data is successfully saved, the server proceeds to the next step.
- JWT Generation: The server generates a JWT token that includes the user's ID and other relevant information. This token has an expiration period of 1 week, ensuring that users will need to re-authenticate periodically for security purposes.
- Response to Client: The server sends the JWT token and user ID back to the client in the response. The client-side application stores the JWT token and user ID in the browser's local storage. This allows the user to stay authenticated and access protected routes without re-entering their credentials.
- Redirection to Home Page: After storing the JWT token and user ID, the client redirects the user to the home page. The user is now logged in and can access authenticated parts of the application.





Sequence Diagram:



4.3.2 Login Process

Detailed Explanation of Login Functionality:

- User Input: The user starts by entering their email and password into the login form presented by the UI. The UI component is responsible for capturing the user's input.
- Client-Side Validation: The Client performs an initial validation of the email and password to ensure they meet basic requirements (e.g., email format, password length). If the input is invalid, the UI displays an error message to the user. This prevents unnecessary server requests and provides immediate feedback.



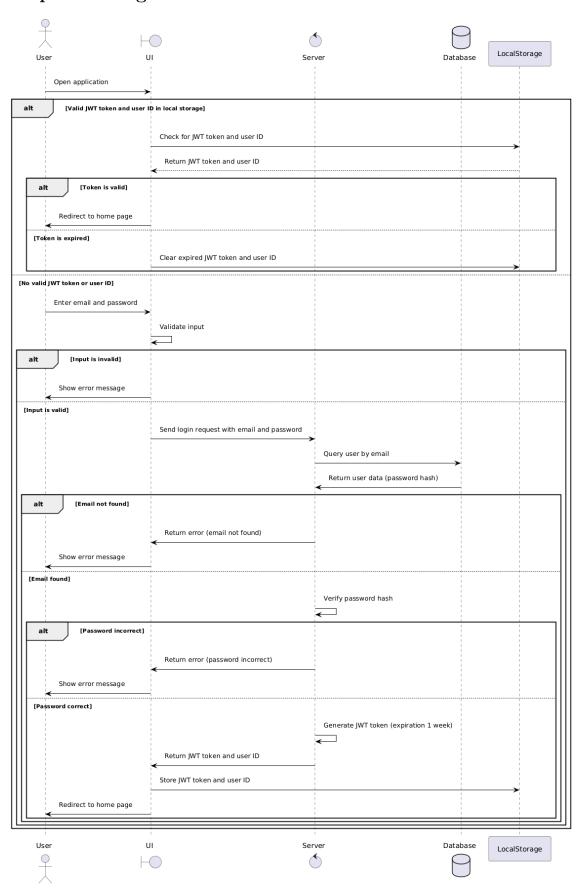


- Sending Login Request: If the input is valid, the Client sends the login request, including the email and password, to the Server.
- Server-Side Processing: The Server receives the request and queries the Database to find a user with the provided email. This is done using Mongoose, an Object Data Modeling (ODM) library for MongoDB, which provides a straightforward way to interact with the database. If the email is not found in the database, the Server returns an error indicating that the email is not found. This response is forwarded to the UI, which then displays an appropriate error message to the user.
- Password Verification: If the email is found, the Server retrieves the stored password hash associated with that email. The Server then compares the provided password with the stored hash using a hashing algorithm (e.g., bcrypt). If the password is incorrect, the Server returns an error indicating that the password is incorrect. This response is forwarded to the UI, which then displays an appropriate error message to the user.
- Generating JWT Token: If the password is correct, the Server generates a JWT (JSON Web Token) for the user. This token includes the user's ID and has an expiration period of one week. JWT is used to securely transmit information between the client and server. It is a compact and self-contained token that includes encoded JSON objects, including claims, and is signed using a secret or public/private key pair.
- Response: The Server returns the JWT token and the user ID to the Client.
- Storing Token and Redirecting: The Client stores the JWT token and the user ID in the browser's local storage. This allows the user to remain authenticated across sessions until the token expires. The Client then redirects the user to the home page of the application, providing a seamless login experience.





Sequence Diagram:







4.3.3 Sending a Message Process

Detailed Explanation of Sending a Message Functionality:

- User Types and Sends Message: The user starts by typing a message in the user interface (UI) and clicking the send button. This interaction triggers the client-side logic.
- UI Sends Message to Socket.IO: The UI component sends the message to the server through a Socket.IO connection. Socket.IO is used to enable real-time, bidirectional communication between the client and the server.
- Server Receives and Processes Message: Upon receiving the message, the server first checks whether the receiver is identified by a user ID or a conversation ID.

- Receiver is a Conversation ID:

- * The server saves the message to the Messages collection in the database.
- * It updates the "last active" timestamp for the conversation to the current date and time.
- * The server retrieves the list of participants in the conversation from the database.
- * The message is then sent back to all participants in the conversation, including the sender, using Socket.IO.

- Receiver is a User ID:

* The server checks if there is an existing conversation involving both the sender and the receiver by querying the database.

* If a Conversation Exists:

- The message is added to the existing conversation in the Messages collection.
- The "last active" timestamp of the conversation is updated.
- The server retrieves the participants of the conversation from the database.
- · The message is sent to all participants using Socket.IO.

* If No Conversation Exists:

- · A new conversation is created with the sender and receiver as participants.
- · This new conversation is added to the Contacts collection for both users, ensuring that both users' conversation lists are updated.
- The message is stored in the new conversation's Messages collection.
- · The "last active" timestamp is set for the new conversation.
- · The participants of the new conversation are retrieved.
- · The message is sent to all participants using Socket.IO.



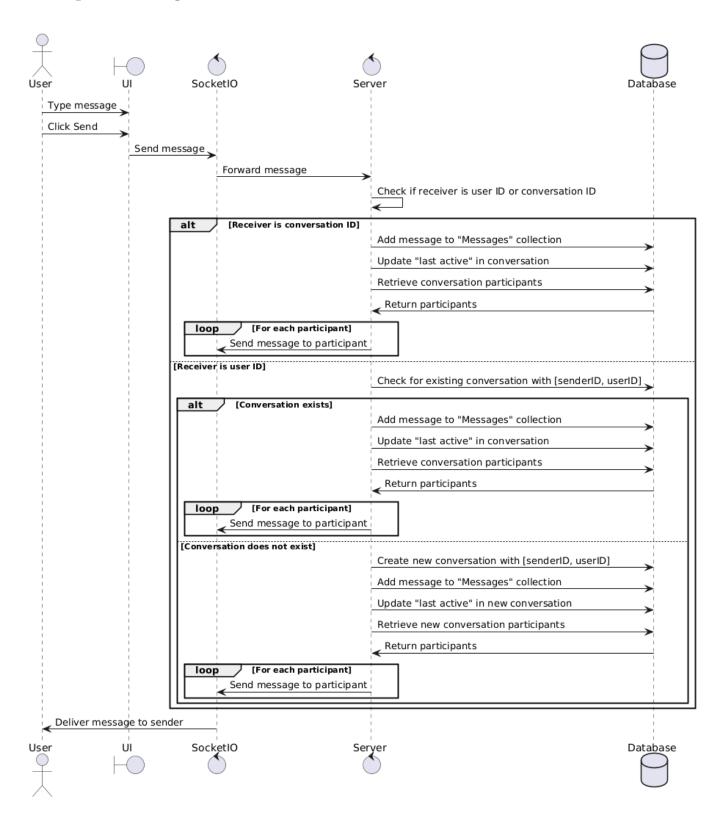


- Updating User Contacts: In cases where a new conversation is created, the Contacts collection is updated to include the new conversation for both users involved. This ensures that the users' contact lists are kept current with their latest conversations.
- Message Delivery Confirmation: Finally, the server sends a confirmation message back to the sender through Socket.IO, indicating that the message has been successfully delivered to the recipients.





Sequence Diagram:







4.3.4 Creating a Group Process

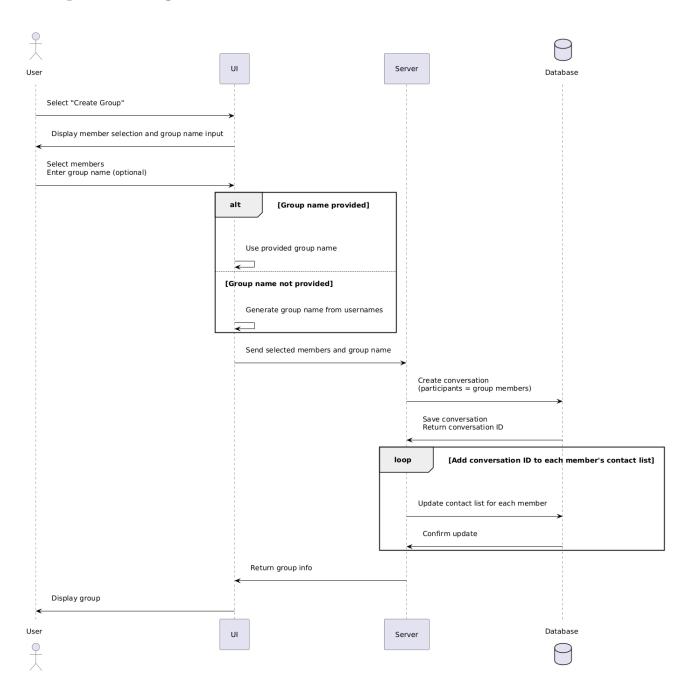
Detailed Explanation of Creating a Group Functionality:

- User Interaction: The user selects "Create Group" in the UI. The UI displays a form for selecting members and optionally entering a group name. The user selects the group members and optionally enters a group name.
- Client-Side Group Name Handling: The client (UI) checks if a group name is provided:
 - If provided, the UI uses the given group name.
 - If not provided, the UI generates a group name from the usernames of the selected members.
- Server Processing: The UI sends the selected members and the determined group name to the server. The server creates a new conversation in the database with the selected members as participants. The conversation is saved in the database, which returns a conversation ID. The server updates the contact list for each member in the group, adding the new conversation ID.
- UI Update: The server returns the group information to the UI. The UI displays the newly created group to the user. The user can then type and send a message in the group.





Sequence Diagram:







5. Technical Choices

5.1 Socket.io vs. WebSocket.js

For the messaging web application, a crucial decision was selecting the appropriate library for real-time, bidirectional communication between the client and the server. The options considered were Socket.io and WebSocket.js.

Socket.io:

- Cross-Browser Compatibility: Ensures consistent performance across all modern browsers, with fallbacks for older ones.
- Event-Driven Architecture: Simplifies managing real-time interactions like message delivery and notifications.
- Built-in Reconnection: Automatically handles reconnections, making the messaging service robust against network disruptions.
- Room and Namespace Support: Facilitates grouping users into different chat rooms and managing multiple channels.
- Additional Overhead: Slightly larger library size and additional abstraction, which can add overhead.

WebSocket.js:

- Lightweight: Minimal overhead with direct WebSocket protocol implementation.
- Performance: Slightly better performance due to the lack of additional abstraction.
- Limited Features: Lacks built-in features like automatic reconnection and room support.
- Compatibility Issues: Requires additional workarounds for compatibility with older browsers.

Decision: Socket.io was chosen over WebSocket.js due to its comprehensive feature set, ease of use, and robust handling of real-time communication scenarios, making it ideal for a messaging application.

5.2 NoSQL (MongoDB) vs. SQL

Choosing the right database technology was another key decision. The options were a NoSQL database (MongoDB) and a traditional SQL database.

NoSQL (MongoDB):

• Flexible Schema: Accommodates changes easily, which is essential for a dynamic messaging app.





- Document-Oriented: Stores user data and messages in JSON-like documents, handling complex data structures efficiently.
- Scalability: Designed for horizontal scaling, distributing data across multiple servers.
- *Performance:* Optimized for high read and write throughput, crucial for handling real-time messaging.
- Complex Queries: Performing certain types of queries can be more complex compared to SQL.

SQL:

- Structured Schema: Ensures data consistency with a well-defined schema.
- Complex Queries: Excellent support for complex joins and transactions.
- Mature Ecosystem: A wide range of tools and community support.
- Scalability: Typically requires vertical scaling, which can be less efficient for very large datasets.
- Schema Rigidity: Changes to the schema can be challenging to manage.

Decision: MongoDB was chosen due to its flexible schema, document-oriented nature, and scalability, which are well-suited for managing dynamic and complex data structures in a messaging application.

5.3 JWT (JSON Web Tokens)

JWT (JSON Web Tokens) is a compact, URL-safe means of representing claims to be transferred between two parties. It is widely used for authentication and authorization purposes in web applications, including the messaging app.

5.4 MERN stack

- Single Language: Enables full-stack development using JavaScript, allowing for a unified development process and easier code sharing between client and server.
- Efficiency: Each component of the stack is optimized for performance and scalability.
- Community Support: A large and active community provides a wealth of resources, libraries, and tools to streamline development.
- Flexibility: The stack is highly flexible, allowing for easy integration with other technologies and services as needed.





Benefits for the Project:

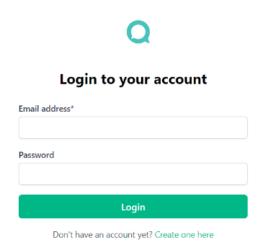
- Rapid Development: Streamlined development process and efficient handling of both front-end and back-end development.
- Scalability: The stack's components are designed to handle high traffic and large amounts of data, ensuring the application can scale as needed.
- Maintainability: Component-based architecture and unified language make the codebase easier to maintain and extend.



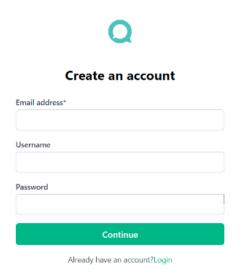


6. Snapshots of application interface

6.1 The Login page



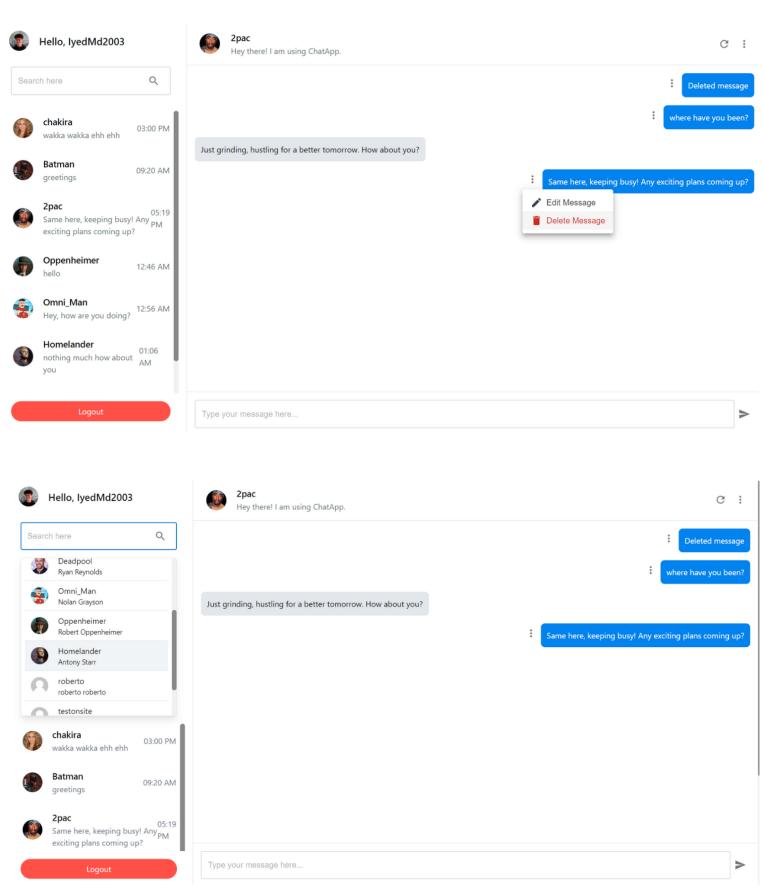
6.2 The Sign up page







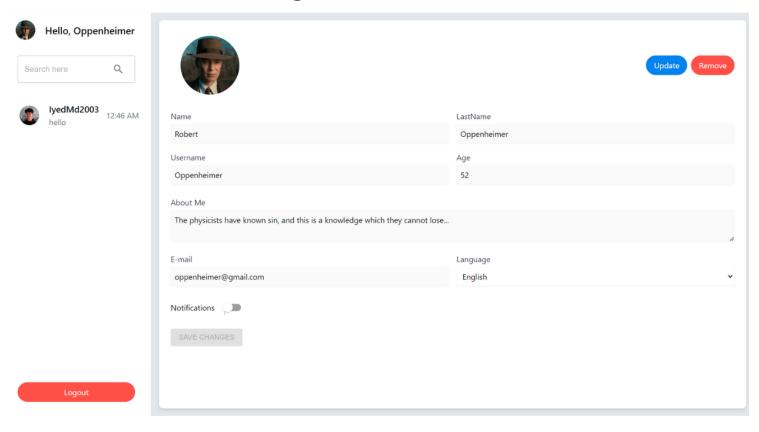
6.3 The Home page



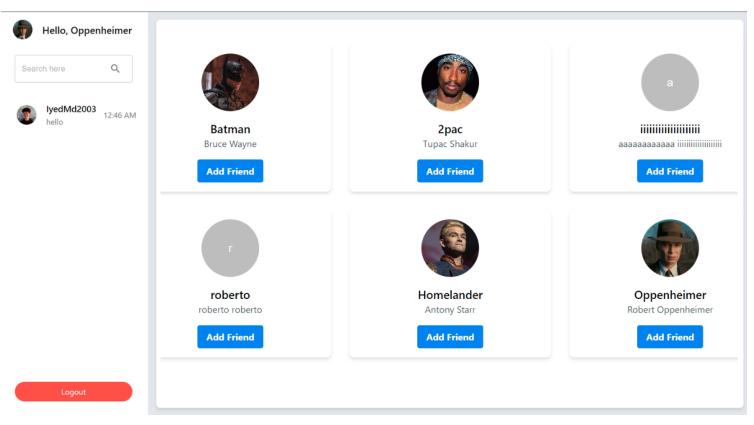




6.4 Profile Edit Page



6.5 Add Friends Page







7. Personal Development and Learning

During my one-month internship at PROXYM-IT, I experienced significant personal and professional growth. This internship provided me with the opportunity to develop a messaging web app, my first project using the MERN stack (MongoDB, Express.js, React, Node.js). Before starting, I had no prior experience with MongoDB, Express.js, Tailwind CSS, or Socket.io. By the end of the internship, I had gained proficiency in all these technologies, marking a major milestone in my learning journey.

Mentorship and Code Quality:

• Mentorship: One of the highlights of my internship was the mentorship I received from my supervisor. Their guidance was instrumental in improving my code quality. They pointed out best practices in coding, such as writing clean and maintainable code, adhering to coding standards, and implementing efficient algorithms. This mentorship was pivotal in my development as a software developer and significantly enhanced my technical skills.

Learning New Technologies:

- MongoDB: This was my first encounter with a NoSQL database. Learning MongoDB broadened my understanding of database management, particularly in handling unstructured data and utilizing flexible schemas. The experience contrasted with my prior knowledge of relational databases and introduced me to new concepts such as collections, documents, and the advantages of NoSQL in certain scenarios.
- Express.js: Building the server-side logic of the application using Express.js was a transformative experience. I learned how to set up routes, handle requests and responses, and manage middleware. This knowledge is invaluable for developing scalable and efficient web applications.
- Tailwind CSS: Tailwind CSS revolutionized my approach to styling web applications. Its utility-first framework allowed for rapid and responsive design, streamlining the development process. I appreciated how Tailwind enhanced my ability to implement modern UI/UX principles with ease.
- Socket.io: Implementing real-time communication features with Socket.io was particularly exciting. This technology enabled the creation of live chat functionality, a critical component of the messaging web app. Understanding the intricacies of WebSockets and real-time data exchange was both challenging and rewarding.

Positive Work Environment:

• Supportive Environment: The work environment at PROXYM-IT was incredibly supportive and conducive to learning. The company's work ethic and collaborative culture were inspiring. I felt welcomed and valued as a member of the team, which motivated me to put forth my best effort.





8. Future Goals

- Enhanced Customization Options: One of the key areas for future development is to offer more customization features within the conversation interface. This would include:
 - Nicknames: Allow users to assign nicknames to their contacts, providing a more personalized and user-friendly experience.
 - Background Images: Enable users to change the background image of their chat windows, adding a layer of visual customization that can make the app more engaging and enjoyable to use.
- Swearing Censorship: To ensure that conversations remain professional and respectful, implementing a swearing censorship feature is crucial. This would involve:
 - Automated Filtering: Develop an automated system to detect and censor inappropriate language in real-time.
 - User Settings: Allow users to enable or disable this feature based on their preferences, ensuring flexibility while maintaining a professional environment by default.
- Voice Messages: Adding voice messaging functionality would significantly enhance the app's communication capabilities. This feature would include:
 - Voice Recording: Allow users to record and send voice messages directly within the chat interface.
 - Playback Controls: Provide options for users to play, pause, and replay voice messages, ensuring a seamless audio messaging experience.
- Audio and Video Calls: To compete with leading messaging apps, introducing audio and video call features is essential. This would involve:
 - Audio Calls: Implementing a reliable and high-quality audio calling system that allows users to make calls directly through the app.
 - Video Calls: Adding video calling capabilities to enable face-to-face communication, which can be particularly useful for both personal and professional interactions.





9. Conclusion

My internship at PROXYM-IT has been an incredibly enriching experience. Working on the messaging web app project allowed me to delve into new technologies and frameworks, such as MongoDB, Express.js, Tailwind, and Socket.io. As someone who had no prior experience with these tools, I gained valuable knowledge and practical skills that significantly enhanced my understanding of web development and NoSQL databases.

Developing my first MERN (MongoDB, Express.js, React, Node.js) app was a significant milestone in my career. It provided me with hands-on experience in building a full-stack application, reinforcing my programming skills and broadening my technical expertise. The supportive and encouraging environment at PROXYM-IT, coupled with their strong work ethic, played a crucial role in my learning journey.

Throughout the internship, my supervisor's guidance was invaluable. They helped me identify and adopt best practices to improve the quality of my code, which will undoubtedly benefit me in future projects. The constructive feedback and mentorship I received have not only enhanced my technical abilities but also instilled in me a sense of confidence and a drive for continuous improvement.

Overall, this internship has been a pivotal experience in my professional development. It has equipped me with the tools and knowledge to tackle more complex projects in the future, and it has solidified my passion for software development. I look forward to applying what I have learned to future endeavors and continuing to grow as a developer.