FitFriends

Motivation

Regular involvement in fitness activities is an integral part of a healthy lifestyle, yet MIT students, on average, do not meet minimum exercise requirements.

The Center for Disease Control recommends that that adults participate in 30 minutes of light-to-moderate exercise five times a week and twice-weekly strengthening activities.[1] According the to Mayo clinic: exercise controls weight, combats health conditions and diseases, improves mood, boosts energy, promotes better sleep, and improves an individual's sex life.[2] Exercise is even more important for a student than the average American. A study by the American College of Sports Medicine found that students who regularly engage in vigorous exercise get better grades.[3]

Yet, the majority of the MIT student body does not meet the recommendations of minimum exercise for a healthy lifestyle.   Every year the administration conducts a survey to evaluate the quality of life at MIT. The results indicate that over half of the student body found that they exercise regularly or participated in club or intramural sports less than they would have liked[4] and around 64.2 percent of undergraduate students spend between 0 and 5 hours on physical activities each week.

When interviewed, MIT students pointed out the following barriers to exercise:
- Lack of interesting fitness activities.
    - "I don't just want to run on a treadmill"
- Lack of peer involvement.
    - "If someone doesn't hold me to my commitment to go, I probably won't make it"

Purpose

FitFriends will enable MIT students to connect and be healthy.

We would like to build FitFriends because we believe that MIT students have a hard time getting a proper amount of exercise. Part of the problem is lack of motivation or lack of knowledge. With FitFriends, we can create a place for MIT students to feel comfortable connecting with friends and peers in order to help them to keep in shape. In doing so FitFriends will speak to two purposes: fostering a sense of community and helping MIT students find fun healthy activities.

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[1] To stay healthy, adults aged 19-64 should try to be active daily and should do at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity over one week and muscle-strengthening activities on two or more days a week. Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's *2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans*
[2] "Money Talks When It Comes to Losing Weight, Mayo Clinic Study Finds." *Mayo Clinic*. N.p., n.d. Web.
[3] American College of Sports Medicine, 2011
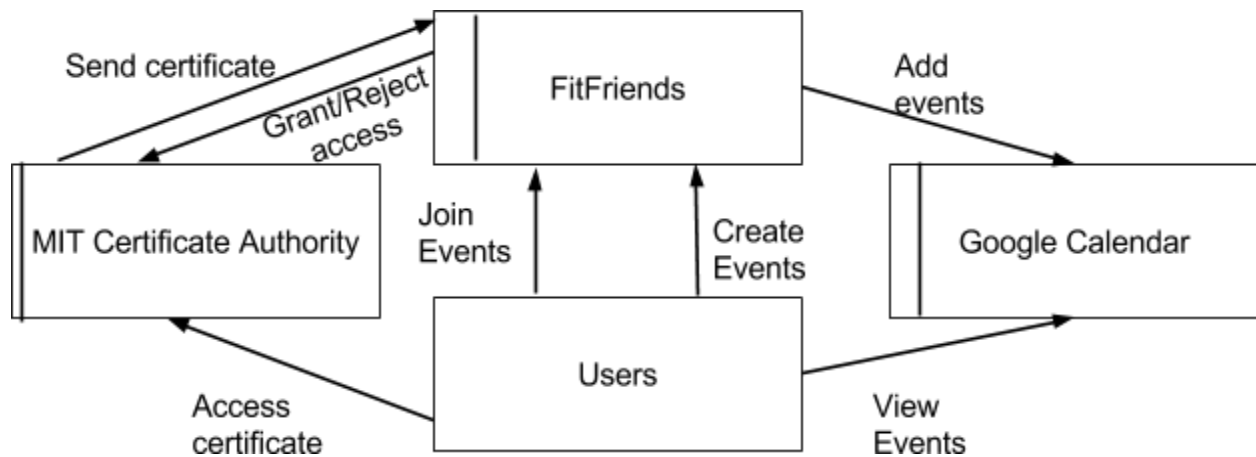[4] http://web.mit.edu/ir/surveys/pdf/2013_SQL_Survey_Highlights_050613.pdf, page3

Implementation

<u>Event</u>: an organized exercise activity led by the organizer and attended by other users at a specific time and place
<u>Group</u>: a set of people who plan events together on a recurring basis

Context

Risks

Implementation Risks

Recurring Events

We considered a few implementation risks when designing our project. One consideration we had was the difficulty of enabling recurring events. It could be a challenge to create an event that is every Tuesday until the end of time as opposed to just one instance of it. It may be hard to design the event model well in order to handle this and we could see some problems with data model.

Design Risks

Lack of Trust

We imagine the system to foster a sense of community by allowing any individual to commit to and attend a fitness event. This requires users to feel comfortable with posting a public event that includes an activity they will participate in as well as a location that they will be at a given time. This is information that an individual may not want to share if they distrust the community. In order to mitigate this risk we will limit the system to members of the MIT community.

Development Risks

Google Calendar Integration

We might have a hard time using the Google Calendar API. If it is too complicated, we may implement our own simple calendar.