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BUSINESS PROPOSAL

Technical Business and writing project

**Table of Contents**

**Section 1: Our Company3**

**Section 2: Problem Statement3**

**Section 3: Statement** **of** **Goals4**

**Section 4: Proposed Solutions4**

**Section 5: Implementation** **in** **our** **System5**

## **Our Company:**

We are proud alumni of Fast NUCES, having completed a bachelor’s degree in computer science in 2023. Currently, we are thriving in the dynamic and lively environment of Nexus, a prominent software house and a renowned custom software development company based in Karachi. Founded in 2012 by two former frontline developers, Nexus has grown to become a leading IT outsourcing provider.

**Problem Statement:**

In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, society grappled with unexpected challenges, but amidst the chaos, valuable lessons emerged, driving sectors like education to adapt and innovate. Universities have been propelled into a new era of learning, embracing transformation marked by the rapid use of advanced information and technology tools. Even after more than five years of online learning, it appears that we still have gaps to address. At our university, we face significant challenges with our current online learning approach. Many students find traditional online platforms uninspiring and passive, leading to decreased engagement and retention of course materials. The lack of interactive elements makes it difficult for students to stay focused and motivated during online lectures and discussions. Additionally, the use of multiple communication channels and platforms hinders effective communication and collaboration between students and teachers outside of traditional classroom settings. This often results in miscommunication, missed deadlines, and a lack of cohesion within the learning community. Furthermore, students encounter difficulties accessing course materials, textbooks, and academic support services outside of traditional classroom hours, making it challenging for them to succeed academically and causing feelings of isolation in their learning journey. To compound these issues, the university's use of multiple platforms for different needs creates a disjointed user experience and inhibits the seamless integration of various tools. Moreover, the existing video conferencing platforms, such as Zoom and Google Meet, do not fully meet the unique needs of students and educators due to the lack of customization options for education. The absence of a dedicated platform for collaboration and interactive learning further limits engagement and the development of critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Our current online learning approach is not meeting the diverse and evolving needs of our students and educators. Therefore, we propose the implementation of a comprehensive and integrated online learning platform that addresses these critical issues and provides a more engaging, interactive, and supportive learning environment for our university community.

**Statement of Goals:**

Our goal is to advocate for the creation of a cutting-edge educational platform designed to elevate the online learning experience at our university and effectively tackle the distinct challenges encountered by both students and educators.

**Proposed Solutions:**

Considering the difficulties encountered with our university’s existing online learning approach, we have devised a set of potential solutions to improve the educational experience for both students and teachers. We propose the implementation of interactive elements, such as immediate feedback quizzes, virtual laboratories for practical experimentation, and group projects, to make learning more engaging and livelier. These elements are intended to promote teamwork, critical thinking, and active student involvement, tackling the problem of reduced engagement and retention of course content seen on conventional online learning platforms.

We suggest creating a unified communication center within the online learning platform alongside interactive elements. This center will bring together communication tools and enable smooth interaction between students and instructors. Essential features of this center will encompass discussion boards, instant messaging, and group video calls, addressing the issues related to the use of various communication channels and platforms that impede effective communication and collaboration outside of standard classroom environments.

Moreover, we propose the creation of an extensive digital library within the online learning platform to give students access to a broad array of resources, including e-books, recorded lectures, additional materials, and academic support services. This initiative seeks to tackle the challenges students face in accessing course materials, textbooks, and academic support services outside of regular classroom hours, ultimately aiding their academic achievement and reducing feelings of isolation in their educational journey.

To simplify the online learning experience, we suggest merging course management, academic portals, video conferencing, collaboration tools, and interactive learning resources into a single integrated platform. This unified approach seeks to address the difficulties associated with the university’s use of multiple platforms for different purposes, which results in a fragmented user experience and hinders the smooth integration of various tools.

Furthermore, the proposed platform will provide specialized video conferencing features not available on standard platforms like Zoom or Google Meet. These features will comprise adaptable breakout rooms, automatic attendance tracking based on active participation, a sophisticated interactive whiteboard for real-time collaboration, and tools to uphold academic integrity during exams or quizzes.

**Implementation in our System:**

The implementation of the system at the university will involve several steps. Firstly, there will be a collection of requirements developed by consulting with students, educators, and administrators through surveys, interviews, and focus group meetings. Then, a team of developers will design and build the platform based on the collected requirements, with multiple iterations and prototypes. Before the complete implementation, thorough testing will be conducted to identify and fix bugs or issues, if any, potentially involving a beta testing phase with user feedback. To ensure a smooth transition, comprehensive training materials will be developed for students, educators, and administrators, including written guides, video tutorials, and live training sessions. The platform will be rolled out gradually, starting with a few courses or departments, allowing for the identification and resolution of any additional issues. Ongoing technical support will be provided to users, along with a process for collecting and implementing feedback to continuously improve the platform.

In response to the challenges faced by our university's current online learning approach, we will try to implement a comprehensive system that gathers information about each student's performance through quizzes and assessments. This data will be utilized to create personalized learning plans, which will be integrated into the platform to automatically adjust based on ongoing performance. This personalized approach aims to address the issue of uninspiring and passive learning experiences, fostering greater student engagement and motivation.

To ensure the effective utilization of these tools, comprehensive training for both students and teachers will be essential, and responses from users will be instrumental in refining these communication tools, ensuring that they are user-friendly and efficient. This iterative process of improvement will be crucial in creating a learning environment that is responsive to the evolving needs of our university community. Furthermore, the proposed system will involve partnering with libraries and content publishers to provide articles, videos, and other learning tools. It's crucial to ensure that these resources are easily accessible and managed properly so that students can benefit from them.

Furthermore, the platform will incorporate discussion forums for academic discourse, real-time messaging for quick clarification on course materials, and group video calls for meaningful interactions between students and instructors. Additionally, a digital library will be curated to provide a diverse collection of resources relevant to each course, including textbooks, lecture recordings, and academic support services. These proposed solutions and the comprehensive system implementation align with the evolving landscape of educational assessment and the integration of technology to enhance the learning experience. The integration of personalized learning plans, continuous feedback mechanisms, and a diverse range of learning resources reflects the ongoing advancements in educational assessment and the growing emphasis on individualized learning experiences.