Project 3 - An Accommodation Booking Web Portal

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**1. Background**

As we all know, the accommodation requirement is one of the fundamental requirements for human beings. According to the researchers in MODUL University (Astrid and Josef, 2014), as the second most vital product of the Internet development in the tourism industry, online accommodation booking provides innovation for accommodation lease marketing[M1]. Moreover, the article written by Amsterdam at the Vacation Rental Management Association International Conference (2019) disclosed that there are seven people (per second) who are making a deal for moving in new accommodations, on average [M2]. Thus, the accommodation booking web portals occur for supporting the holiday units’ holders to post their available accommodation resource online for attracting the potential tenants.

There are hundreds of estate leasing sites assisting accommodation seekers to check into houses, apartments or units, however many of them still have some omission, which causes the customer might not have their best deals. One of the issues might be the accuracy of accommodation information. Due to the article written by Jodi and Peter (2019), some people who have selling pressure could publish misleading information, ask for the hidden and this like[M4]. In this case, websites have the responsibility to guide providers to fill appropriate and complete information.

Secondly, the website design does not an easy job. Essawy in 2006 deems that the negative effect on online booking might occur because of the usability issues, but the more depth the information support and the more customer interaction could lead to positive influence. As an example, the contact details of householders are not easy to obtain because the “HomeAway Stayz” website hide this information unless visitors register on its website [Project3-website3]. This drawback lower down the flexibility and convenience of the website, so that this is also should be considered in this project.

Moreover, some page designs are not user-friendly. For example, the home page of the “Expedia” website post colorful house picture as the background picture of the main function – the accommodation searching part [Project3-website4]. Meanwhile, its searching part has restricted position on the page, which is the first obstacle for the clients to accomplish this part. In short, the front-end design could influence further user experience.

Furthermore, the review from customers is the significant part that also cannot be looked down upon. Some reviewers still complete their review as same as writing an article, although the majority of visitors are paying their attention to limited keywords. That is why in our project, the review part will have a highlighting function for labelling the keywords that the accommodation seekers might care about. Xinyuan and his team who published a research about “the influence of online reviews to online hotel booking intentions” (2015) declare that there are six attributes to impact the actual value of an accommodation post, usefulness of reviews, reviewer expertise, timeliness, volume of reviews, positive online reviews, negative online reviews and comprehensiveness of reviews[M3]. That article might offer some efficient method to label the keywords in the review part.

Finally, in recent years, artificial intelligence and machine learning have expanded utilization. The combination of recommending system and communication chatbot into present websites become more and more popular. Therefore, both of an accommodation recommendation system and a communication chatbot are in the consideration in our project.

In conclusion, our project will be separated into 9 parts: the basic function for clients’ registration and information management part, the accommodations posting and management part, the searching part, the accommodation review part, disable support, communication system, recommendation system, comparison system and payment support. These components would give the users a better experience and improve their registering rate, reviewing rate and website using rate.

**2. Aim**

We are aiming to create … (Targets include some technical skills and tools)

Design / flow

Scope / Technical Details

Expected performance

**3. Epics**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Epic5+ Epic9** | **Payment Support** | | | **Disable Support** | | | |
| **Epic7** | **Accommodation Recommendation System** | | | | | | |
| **Epic8** | **Accommodation Comparison System** | | | | | | |
| **Epic6** | **User-to-Service Center** | | **Accommodation Provider-to-Accommodation Seeker** | | | | **Anyone-to-Chatbot** |
| **Epic4** | **Customers Review** | | | | **Keywords Highlighting** | | |
| **Epic3 + (Epic7, Epic8)** | **Inappropriate**  **Information Filtering** | **Epics 7** | | | **Epics 8** | **Booking**  **Requesting** | |
| **Accommodation Searching** | | |
| **Epic2** | **Accommodation Information Management** | | | | **Accommodation Booking Information Posting** | | |
| **Epic1** | **Registration** | | **Admin Backend** | | | **User Profile** | |

**Epic 1. Registration, Admin Backend, User Profile**

This epic is focus on managing the basic information of users (, including estate provider and estate seeker) and admin (, the IT support and website owner). The major functions that it supplies are registration function, user/admin profile management, authority management and so on.

*User Story:*

1. As a user, I want to register on the website when I find the website is useful for me, so that I can review my previous online booking orders conveniently and keep using this website without rewriting majority information about me again.
2. As a user, I want to maintain my profile, so that the accommodation providers can have a brief knowledge about me, which can increase the booking rate.
3. As a user, I wish my profile can be modified at any time, so that the housekeeper can contact me.
4. As an admin, I hope I can control the authorities of all users, so that their privacy can be prevent from some hostile attack.
5. As a user, I do not want that anyone can read my profile and the only one who can read my basic information might be the house holder who received my booking application, so that only the estate keeper has the right to contact me.

**Epic 2. Accommodation Posting and Maintain, Properties Description, Service labels**

Pages contains:

Posing

Maintain

Service labels should contain:

WIFI

Near to station

Central of city

Kitchen, parking

**Epic 3. Visitors Requests, Selecting and Booking, Accommodation Searching**

Searching should contain:

Duration

How many customers

City / Suburb

**Epic 4. Accommodation review**

This epic is aim at keeping a platform for the renters to write down their reflections about the accommodation that they already lived and left. And all the users can view others’ review. The major function could be creating a review, filtering the review by time, replying the review, keywords highlighting…

*User Story:*

1. As a renter, I want to write down my thoughts about the experiment of living in an accommodation, so that my positive or negative review can cause the attention of other potential renters and the householder.
2. As a potential renter, I hope to get more information and feedback about the accommodations, so that I can pick the most suitable one to check into it.
3. As an estate provider, I desire to know how my renters’ feel to stay in my accommodation so that I can base on their feedback to make some change or give a reply to illustrate the situations about my house/apartment/unit.
4. As a user, I need to seek for current review so that I can get the fresh message about the accommodation.
5. As a user, I do not want to read too many reviews, and what I need is only to find a clean and quiet accommodation, then I looking for the highlighted keywords to find any reviews talking about “clean” and “quiet”, so that I would not miss my dream accommodation.

**Epic 5. Disable Support**

Todo

**Epic 6. Communication System**

This part is the communication platform which is divided into three parts: users to website service centre, accommodation provider to accommodation seeker, users to Artificial Intelligence Chatbot.

***Epic 6.1 Users-to-Service Centre***

This sub-epic is used for any users who need help from the booking website service centre, which maintain the communication function like online WeChat/WhatsApp.

*User Story:*

1. As a user, I might need to know how to use the website, so that this communication platform can support me to ask questions with the service centre immediately.
2. As a receptionist in the service centre, my job is to assist my clients to make good use of the website, so that the accommodation booking transaction can go on wheels.
3. As a user, I hope the communication between the service centre and me can be agile so that I need the online communication channels to talk to the service centre.

***Epic 6.2 Accommodation Provider-to-Accommodation Seeker***

***Epic 6.3 Users-to-Chatbot***

**Epic 7. Recommend System**

todo

**Epic 8. Comparison System**

todo

**Epic 9. Payment Support**

todo

**4. Project Methodology**

Contains Plan, task dividing, and Tools used.

**5. Timetable**

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**6. Reference**

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