

Brief Article

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Abstract

Mobile development is one of the most popular industries nowadays. Each year there are several hundreds millions of smartphones which were sold, in which Android devices and iOS devices hold the most part, around 98% of the market. I decided to learn about Android development, since it used Java language, the most familiar programming language to me. For that reason I applied into a branch of Rainmaker Labs in Vietnam, a mobile development outsourcing company.

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Introduction

1.1 Rainmaker Labs

Rainmaker Labs is the singaporean outsourcing company, specialized in mobile development, currently placed first among the competitors in Singapore and Asia Pacific.

Rainmaker Labs in Vietnam is the new branch which was established in Feb 2015. Though it's new, but thanks to the politics, cultures and remuneration policy, the off-shore branch was able to recruit many talented and experienced individuals, some of them even hold high position in their previous jobs.

1.2 Projects

Although I was new to Android at that time, infact, I had never touch Android before, but I still managed to convince my seniors to let me participate in company's projects. The first project was the small project, named **Pedro**, which served at the **Charle & Keith Fasionable Awards 2015**. In this project I was able to study about the basic of Android development and some advanced technic.

The second one is a big project. This project is the digital version of Singapore government project, **Electronic Tourist Refund Scheme** aka **eTRS**. In this report I will concentrate on the technics, and knowledge which I was able to acquired.

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Software Development Method

In Rainmaker Labs, we use **SCRUM** as our software deployment method. With this method, we could deploy software to the customer as fast as possible, and be closest to customer's expectation. There are some important points such as :

- break down the project into small tasks, as small as possible.
- estimate the difficulties of each task and give points to them, then each member of team will select their task, base on their capability, such that all the team members have the same amount of points.
- during the development process, whenever a member encounter a problem which he couldn't solve, they could always ask for help. Team leader, or someone else who did solve the problem before could give hints to help him resolve his issue.
- everyday before starting working, team will have a stand-up meeting for about 10 minutes. Scrum master would hear team member reporting about their processes the previous day, and their planning for today's works.
- after each sprint (about a week), team will demonstrate what they have done to the client, allowing them to follow the development process, and correct the features to their ideal.
- after some sprints, when the product is about to finish, the tester team will join and dug in for bug. The development team now will start to fix the reported bug, along with working on their tasks.

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How I understand about Android development

Although Android use Java as its programming language, writing an Android application is more complicated than writing a Java one.

3.1 Activity and Fragment

3.1.1 Activity

One of the most important component in Android is *Activity*. An *Activity* represent a screen in an application, and an instance of this kind of class is not initialized by user, infact, it is created by the Android's system, by injection via a file *manifest.xml*. For that reason, transfer data between *Activities* can't be done by the usual ways. Using static variable is no good neither, because each *Activity* has their own life circle, when its life circle ends, the system will kill the *Activity*, and garbage collector will free the memory zone which was hold by this *Activity*, that makes all the static variables reset.

3.1.2 Fragment

A *Fragment* is a portion of an *Activity*, it could be added or removed when an *Activity* is active. A *Fragment* also has its own life circle.

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4.1 Project's purpose

Electronic Tourist Refund Scheme (ETRS) is a government's project, which allowed the tourists who visit Singapore could reclaim Good and Service Tax if he bought a product in Singapore.

To be able to reclaim the refund money, a condition have to be satisfied:

- receipt's value must exceed 100 SGD
- merchant or shop who generated the receipt must registry for the ETRS project
- if receipt's value don't exceed 100 SGD, it could be grouped with maximum another 2 receipts, such that the total value of this group must exceed 100 SGD and all the receipts within this group must belong to the same merchant or shop

Our job is to realize the idea of the ETRS project into mobile device.

4.2 Important technics implemented

4.2.1 BlinkID

BlinkID is a library allow scanning the passport of tourist. From the information we got from the scan, we can create account for the tourist, thus each person is associated with his/her passport. So even if a tourist lost his account, the refund process still could going on if he still keep his passport.

4.2.2 QR code

Each tourist, after registry their account, is given 1 QR code. In case that he don't want to show his passport, he could use this QR code to identify himself. Each merchant or shop would have their own QR code, and the tourist can scan their QR code for the ID of the shop.

4.2.3 Android location service

Using this service, the application will notice the tourist if he's near one of the shop registry for the ETRS project. This service locates the user's position either by wifi or by GPS.

4.2.4 Geofencing

This function allow the application to detect if the user is going in or out of the airport, thus allow to take correspondent behavior.

4.2.5 Push notification

This allows the server to notify users when there're change in their data, such as if their request to refund is realized, or refused.

4.2.6 Google Cloud Message (GCM)

The application allow user to define their events that need to be notified when the time come, for example the flight's time. Application will use GCM to notify the user when such time come.

4.2.7 Social network sharing

The application allow user to share on their social network, such as Facebook, Wechat, Sina Weibo. And this is abig challenge, because China's social network (Wechat, Sina Weibo) do not have many tutorials in English, and the procedure to register application ID on these network is complicated too.

4.2.8 Map

Google Map service is intergrated into the application, thanks to the need of path finder. It's not very complicated, but then the problem rise. As Google Map can't be used inside China, we have to adopt another map service from China, Baidu map, and this process is extremely difficult, from the registration process to implementation process, since this service only work if you are in China, even fake GPS couldn't help.

4.3 Algorithm utilized

I was given the task to write the algorithm that filter a list of receipts and return receipts which satisfy the condition in 4.1.

4.3.1 Brief description

Given the list of receipts, could be generated by many shops, extract a list of receipts which satisfy the conditions in 4.1.

4.3.2 Solution

We devide the list of receipts into many lists such that the receipts in each list belong to one shop only. This lead to a new problem: Given the list of receipts, all receipts belong to 1 shop, extract a list of receipts which satisfy the condition in 4.1

Step 1

Extract all the receipts which value greater or equal 100. Then sort the rest of list in increased order.

Step 2

Divide the ordered list into many smaller lists :

Algorithm 1 Split list of receipts into many sublists

```
function SPLITLIST(receipts)
   $j = 0, i = 0$ 
  while  $i < receipts.length$  do
    if  $\left\lceil \frac{receipts[i].value}{10} \right\rceil \leq j$  then
       $list_j.add(receipts[i])$ 
       $i++$ 
    else
       $j++$ 
```

Step 3

From the sublists, we will extract groups of receipts which satisfy the condition. There's some preconditions we could make for simplifier the process.

- for a group of 2 receipts, if they belong to $list_i$ and $list_j$ then $i + j \geq 9$
- for a group of 3 receipts, if the belong to $list_i$, $list_j$ and $list_k$ then $i + j + k \geq 8$

First of all we need a function that check the condition of a set of receipt. If satisfy, remove the receipts from their correspondant sublist, and add a new group of receipt to our list of group and return true. Otherwise return false.

Algorithm 2 Check if the correspondant receipts could form a group

```
function CHECK(i, j, k, a, b, c, groups)
   $r_a = list_i[a]$ 
   $r_b = list_j[b]$ 
   $r_c = list_k[c]$ 
  if  $r_a.value + r_b.value \geq 100 \wedge (i \neq j \vee a \neq b)$  then
    groups.add(new Group( $r_a, r_b$ ))
     $list_i.remove(r_a), list_j.remove(r_b)$ 
    return true
  if  $r_b.value + r_c.value \geq 100 \wedge (j \neq k \vee b \neq c)$  then
    groups.add(new Group( $r_b, r_c$ ))
     $list_j.remove(r_b), list_k.remove(r_c)$ 
    return true
  if  $r_a.value + r_c.value \geq 100 \wedge (i \neq k \vee a \neq c)$  then
    groups.add(new Group( $r_a, r_c$ ))
     $list_i.remove(r_a), list_k.remove(r_c)$ 
    return true
  if  $r_a.value + r_b.value + r_c.value \geq 100 \wedge (i \neq j \vee a \neq b) \wedge (i \neq k \vee a \neq c) \wedge (j \neq k \vee b \neq c)$  then
    groups.add(new Group( $r_a, r_b, r_c$ ))
     $list_i.remove(r_a), list_j.remove(r_b), list_k.remove(r_c)$ 
    return true
  return false
```
