

Decision Tree Engine App

Project Plan

2014 - 11 - 24

Group 3:

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1 Introduction

Decision Tree App Engine is the project assigned to our group, group 3, for Software Engineering Project Teamwork course at Mälardalens Högskola. The purpose of this project is to create an application that helps users to make investment decisions - in different fields (economics, automation, etc..). To this end, the application will utilize *decision trees*. End users will get statistics from the survey on how many of the questions answered "approve" an investment or how many that "don't approve" and how many that still are "uncertain". The application must also offer the application admin the possibility to create these surveys/trees. This document will go through a presentation of the group, our organization and used tools, planned effort and deliverables, quality assurance (section 2), followed by the technical section. Background, architecture, functional and nonfunctional requirements, traceability validation and verification (section 3).

2 Project Organization

Project manager

Valerio Lucantonio has been assigned this position and will therefore take a leading role within the team to help coordinate tasks and to help initiate decision making. He will also function as the groups main spokesperson towards the steering group.

Customer relations

Anna Enbom volunteered for this position and has since been responsible for communication with the client and for setting up meetings with the client.

Github maintenance

Tamara Dancheva is responsible for setting up and maintaining the group's GitHub repository.

Development team

All project members are part of the development team. The purpose of the team is to design, implement and test the application. They are all responsible for assigning themselves tasks, ask

for help from other members when they're in need and to actively participate in the project. All previously listed members and Julieth Castellanos, Nathan Chape, Eric Johansson and Niklas Sjöqvist will be part of the development team.

2.1 Group Organization and tools

Communication within the group is done through email and the facebook message system. The group shares documents between each other on Google-drive and three different backlogs will be stored on ASANA^[5]. One for tasks that are to be implemented in the application which are done on an individual level. Another for team coordination containing tasks that affects the entire team and a final one which is used to create and plan meetings and meeting agendas. These backlogs are divided into separate folders. Code is shared through Github's online services and documents that are to be shared with the client are done so by using dropbox.

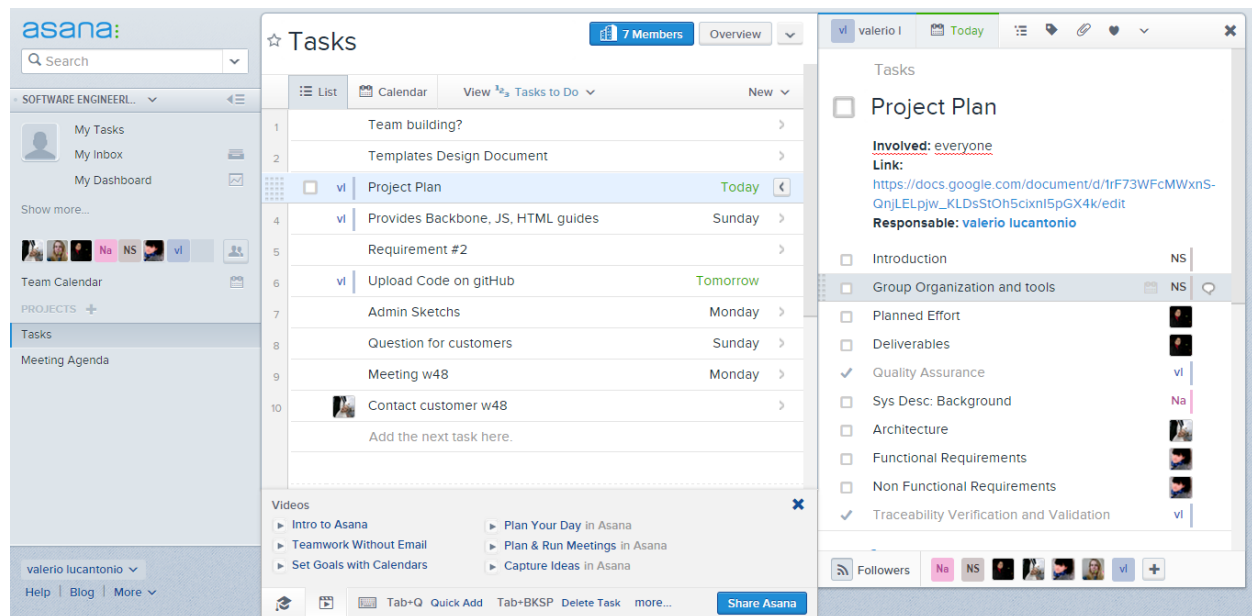


Fig.1: Asana backlog: Organization of this document

Meetings are organized and planned through the use of ASANA^[5] which, in turn, is linked to our respective e-mail. When needed, meetings can also be planned through the facebook message system where the group has created a chat room for quick communication.

Work hours and results are to be presented verbally or in text at a weekly meeting when the presentations for the steering group are constructed, these meetings are held a couple of hours in advance of meeting with the steering group. If a member is unable to do so they should

ahead of time notify a team member (preferably the project manager) about this and give them the information required for them to present their work hours and results.

Backbone^[3] and Cordova^[4] are both planned to be used to develop the application. The team will be using pair programming^[6] as often as possible to simplify the process of divisioning the labour. During the implementation process it's highly likely that a few members will take respectively leading roles in different fields reflecting their areas of knowledge such as user testing, prototyping and continual design.

2.2 Planned effort

Tasks

Name	Begin date	End date	Priority	Effort(hours)
Planning	11/10/14	11/19/14	High	70
Group organization and communications plan	11/10/14	11/14/14	High	10
Customer contact - define meetings	11/17/14	11/18/14	High	2
Define working environment	11/18/14	11/19/14	High	8
Define and write project plan	11/18/14	11/19/14	High	50
Milestone: Project plan	11/20/14	11/20/14	High	0
Requirements and design	11/14/14	12/2/14	High	280
Gathering requirements	11/14/14	11/21/14	High	42
Present paper prototypes to the customer	11/21/14	11/24/14	High	2
Design	11/25/14	11/28/14	High	110
Define tree model structure (common data model)	11/25/14	11/26/14	High	30
Define software modules and their internal structure	11/26/14	11/28/14	High	80
Prepare a mock up for the admin editor	11/28/14	12/1/14	High	30
Testing mock up	12/1/14	12/2/14	High	20
Milestone: Design description	12/3/14	12/3/14	High	76
Prototype 1	11/27/14	12/8/14	High	210
Coding	11/27/14	12/5/14	High	
Survey admin view	11/27/14	12/3/14	High	
Questions admin view	11/27/14	12/3/14	High	
Answers admin 'view	11/27/14	12/3/14	High	
Support for the admin to add languages	11/27/14	12/3/14	High	
Prepare a demo to test the implemented functionality	12/3/14	12/5/14	High	
Meet the customer and test prototype 1	12/5/14	12/8/14	High	
Milestone: Prototype 1	12/8/14	12/8/14	High	
Test Planning	12/11/14	12/17/14	High	50
Design manual and automated tests	12/11/14	12/17/14	High	

Name	Begin date	End date	Priority	Effort(hours)
Milestone: Test specification	12/18/14	12/18/14	High	390
Prototype 2	12/5/14	1/7/15	High	
Requirements and design review	12/5/14	12/19/14	High	
Milestone: Final design description	1/8/15	1/8/15	High	
Coding	12/8/14	12/23/14	Medium	
Logic to generate the survey to the end user	12/8/14	12/23/14	Medium	
Logic to evaluate the end users' answers	12/8/14	12/23/14	Medium	
Enable offline use of the end user application	12/8/14	12/23/14	Medium	
Save state of the answered questions locally	12/8/14	12/23/14	Medium	
Logic to generate and forward the summary/result from the survey	12/8/14	12/23/14	Medium	
Support for localization	12/8/14	12/23/14	Medium	
Prepare a demo for the end-user application	12/18/14	12/23/14	Medium	
Milestone: Prototype 2	1/8/15	1/8/15	Medium	
Final documentation	1/2/15	1/6/15	High	50
Write final report and user manual	1/2/15	1/5/15	High	
Provide extensive code documentation	1/2/15	1/6/15	High	
Milestone: Final report, user manual	1/6/15	1/6/15	High	

2.3 Deliverables

Course deliverables	Date
Project plan	20/11/2014
Design description (first version)	4/12/2014
First prototype	4/12/2014
Test specification	18/12/2014
Design description (final version)	8/12/2014
Final prototype	8/12/2014

Client deliverables	Date
Requirements document (first version)	20/11/2014
First prototype	4/12/2014
Final prototype	8/12/2014
User Manual	12/12/2014

2.4 Quality Assurance

In this analysis quality assurance should be guaranteed from three points of view:

- Product quality: we will ensure the (internal) quality of the product in regards to the engine and the algorithms. For the front-end, we will have several meeting with the customers, in which we will demonstrate mock ups and sketches of the application design in order to get feedback from the client.
- Deliverables quality : we will ensure the quality of deliverables using our previous knowledge acquired during other courses of software engineering. Including documentation and templates from previous course.
- Process development quality: we are trying to achieve a good quality of the process development by having at least two meetings per week, and continually trying to reach a consensus to the most pressing problems. Moreover, we are using several tools (Asana, Google Doc, Dropbox) to share all the possible information to keep the group members' aware of the current status of the project. In this course the time has a very crucial roles, and usually time and quality are divergent. In order to respect deadlines and to deliver all the required materials we are organizing documents with Asana assigning the task to one among us that will be the responsable and dividing the sections of the document and assigning them among us. For the implementation we will make three sub-groups of two people implementing the same feature and all the features will be managed in a product backlog in asasa with the same pattern of the document.

3 System Description

3.1 Background

As stated in the introduction, our goal is twofold:

- to develop a web based application that allows an administrator to easily create *decision trees* for various applications, e.g. Economic analysis, Industry and Production, Automation... etc.
- and secondly, to develop a mobile application that allows a end users to access these trees, and answer some questions about investments in their respective domains. The application should be available for Android and IOS devices.

The application for the administrator will be deployed for one administrator, and it will be a web application (probably running locally). Instead the application for end users will be android and ios applications.

3.1.1 Existing System

The client has stated that they have, internally, developed an excel based application that they use to develop decision trees. Whilst conceptually, a basis for the current application we are developing, it is unlikely there will be structural - beyond the formal decision tree structure - similarities between the two.

In regards to the end user interface, the client has supplied us with a *user interface* demonstration that we could possibly use in our development of the mobile application.

While data storage, in some form (e.g. database), will be necessary for testing. It is currently unclear how the client intends to store data used and created in the final product.

3.2 System Overview

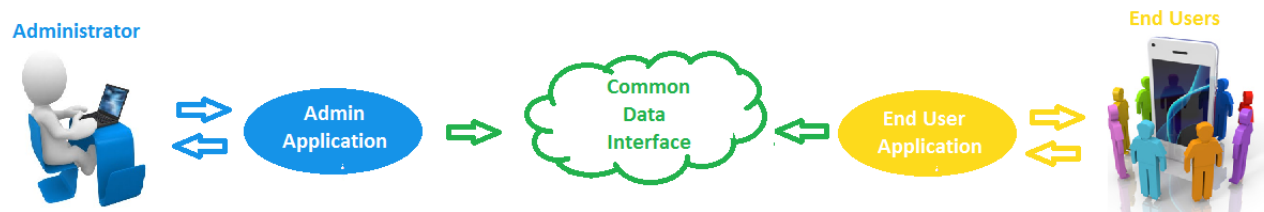


Fig.6: Overview

We will develop a decision tree engine application for the administrator to develop trees. According to the customer, there will only be one administrator (Andreas) that will develop all the trees and he will be using the admin application through a desktop computer or laptop.

There will also be an application for end-users. The end-user will go through the questions in the tree and receive statistics on how many of the questions answered that "approve" an investment, how many that "don't approve" and how many that still is "uncertain". This is in percentage %. Easiest way is by putting weight on the answers.

We have decided to develop the end-user application in Cordova. Cordova is a hybrid cross-platform tool for mobile applications. It is called hybrid because it can be deployed like a native app (for Android and IOS devices) but it is made like a web page (HTML, CSS and JavaScript) and executed in a browser environment. The advantages of an approach like this are that the same code can be used for all mobile platforms and almost all the native functionalities can be accessed. Maintenance is also assured because the source code is only one and every operations of updating will produce consistent final apps. We have also decided to use the Backbone.js as a business logic layer. Backbone.js is a lightweight framework. Some call it a MVC (Model View Controller) framework, some call it a MV* framework. Backbone.js is dependent on Underscore.js and jQuery.

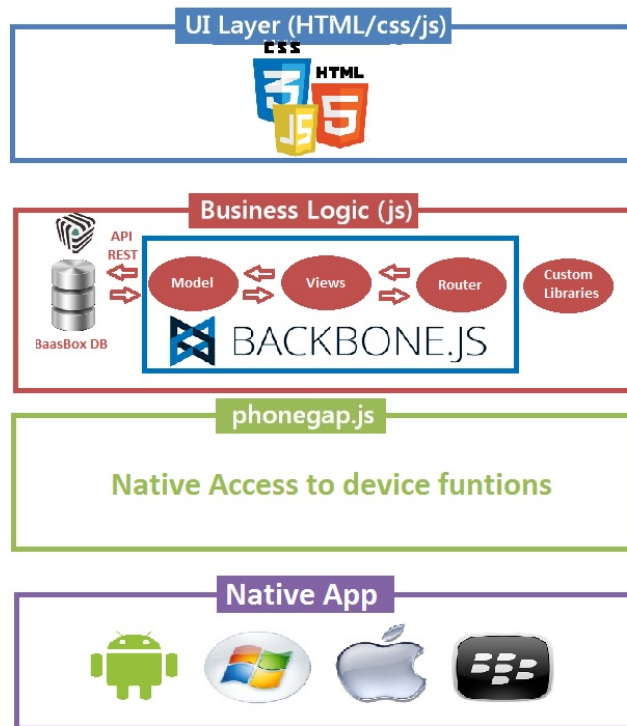


Fig.7: Cordova Architecture

The admin tool will probably be a web application as well, so that we can reuse as much code as possible. We will use Backbone outside Cordova to be consistent with the front end application and to make reuse of the tree structures. We are still not sure how the applications will communicate each other because we need yet to discuss this with the customer, but we have two different proposal: local or remote DB.

We have not yet decided on the structure of the tree and how to store trees. We made a simple sketch on how it might look (not a finished solution):

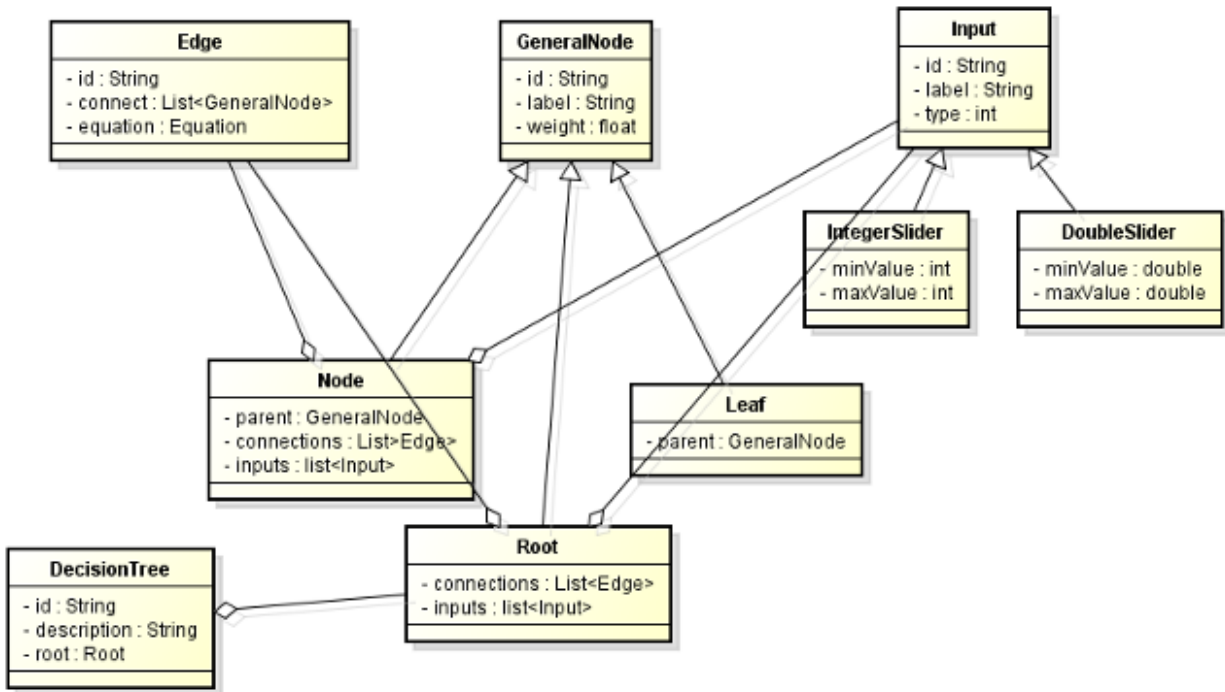


Fig.8: Tree Engine Model

3.3 Functional Requirements

A tree creator/editor, engine, and a web application (in which the engine is integrated) to test the functionality should be developed. There are two main categories of actors in this project: application end users and application creators.

The end users should be able to access the surveys offline. They should be able to continue working on a survey they have started or change the answers on a survey they have completed. Once a survey is completed, users should be able to forward it to an email address. Other features include changing the language, subscribing for updates, having access to tips and advices and a general description of the application.

The app creators should be able to integrate the engine in the application they create that is to be used by the users. They use the engine API calls to generate the view that lets the users fill the survey (by interpreting the tree that is generated by the tree creator/editor) and to evaluate the user's answers according to a predefined formula. They use the tree

creator/editor to create and edit trees, add and edit questions and answers and create a formula that is used to generate the final result.

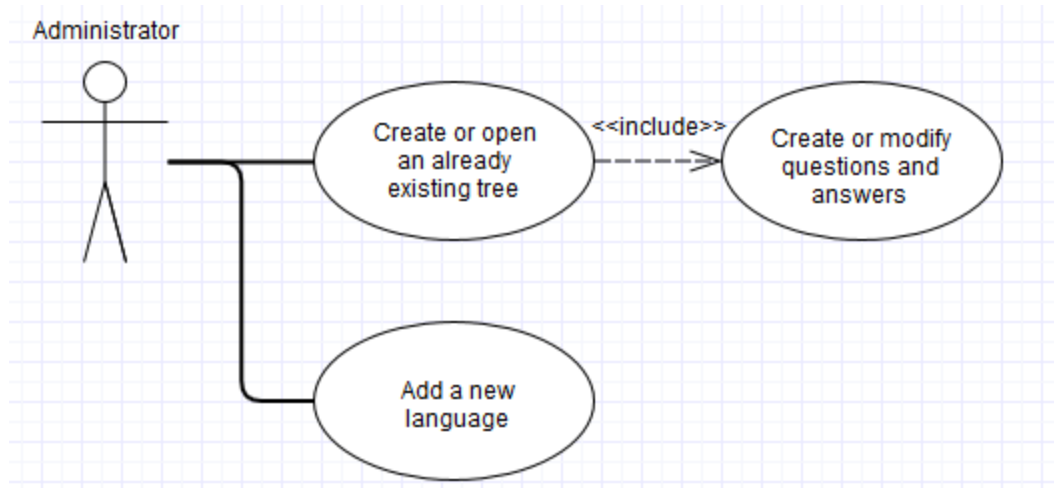


Fig.9: Admin Use Case Diagram

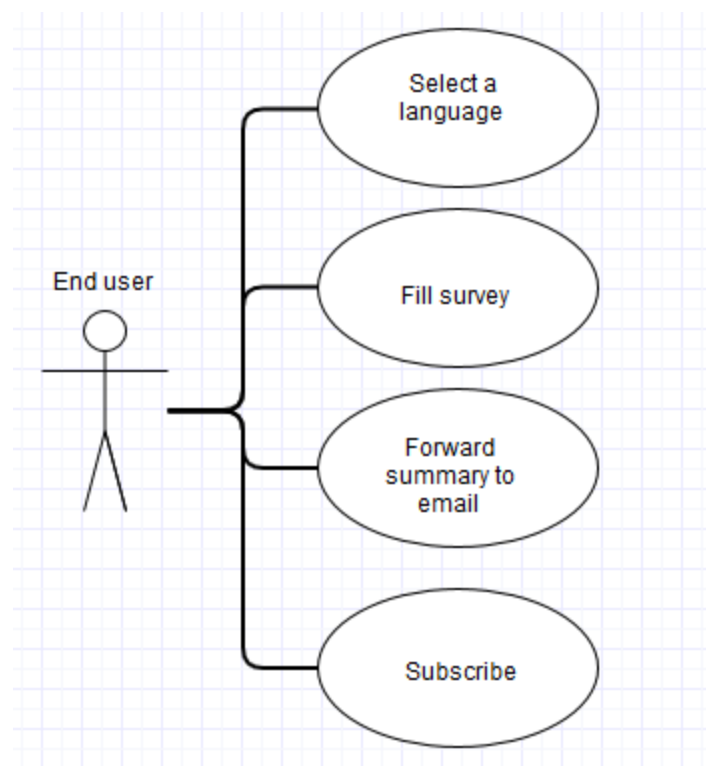


Fig.10:End User Use Case Diagram

3.4 Non-Functional Requirements

3.4.1 Usability

The applications targeted for both the users and the administrators should be simple, highly intuitive and easy to understand. The graphical user interface should be non-distracting, with easily readable font. From an aesthetic point of view, the look of the application does not have to be embellished.

The administrator application should be implemented in a way so the admin with no programming skills can easily create and edit decision trees. A clear, easy to edit view of the tree has to be provided. Drag and drop is desirable.

As for the user's application, the application should contain information about how to use the application and an option to check out a question's specific description, making it more user-friendly.

3.4.2 Reliability

The reliability of the decision tree engine is of great importance. The engine should always produce a correct tree structure and correct end results after completing the survey according to the formula provided by the administrator who created the survey.

3.4.3 Testability

Testability is necessary in order to make sure that the engine is reliable and always producing the correct output. Therefore modularity of the code and separation of concerns are essential, the modules have to be as isolated as possible to ease the process.

3.4.4 Portability

Portability is one of the main requirements in this projects since the goal is to make the user application accessible for as wider audience as possible deploying it in a multiple different platforms (Android, IOS).

3.4.5 Reusability

The engine source code should be independent of the user interface, therefore making the code easily reusable. This is one of the main requirements for this project.

3.4.7 Extensibility

Since work on the engine will probably be resumed after the hand-in of the code, it is very important that the code leaves space for an easy way of adding new features and modification of existing features.

3.4.8 Documentation

In order to assure reusability, maintainability and extensibility, extensive documentation has to be provided including: project plan, design description, test specification, project report. The source code has to be easily comprehensible, including a lot of comments, sufficient code documentation and has to be written following a set of code standard rules.

3.4.9 Price

The project's prototype has initially been developed using the Xamarin Forms framework. Because of the high price for the license, a cheaper alternative for creating a cross-platform solution is sought. Using open-source frameworks like Cordova and libraries like Backbone is therefore a suitable choice.

3.4.10 Performance

The performance is not of great importance in this project.

3.5 Traceability, Verification and Validation

We will manage these three important aspects of this project in following way:

- Traceability: for requirements and implementation traceability we will use ASANA. We will use a product backlog to distribute the work among us, and each functionality will be assigned to a member of the group. In this case, since it is mostly a mobile application, of *views* instead of *functionalities*. We will develop *views* independently from each other so that it is possible to assign each view among us and to trace it through the backlog we are going to create.

- Verification: in order to verify that the application meets the requirements and that the process of building it is correct, we will follow the strict pattern provided from the technology. We will divide our work and follow backbone's patterns systematically to assure the product will be built correctly.
- Validation: we will validate our product by having weekly meetings with customers to see if the product meets his expectations. The validation process will start as soon as the requirements definition is completed and used continually throughout the development process. As we are familiar with the agile approach we know that the process of validation is important, and that suddenly the work of an entire week could be meaningful. To manage this problem we need to be sure, before we start coding, that the expected result and final result will be the same. We will manage this with granularity on features so that we will start to implement a new feature only if both the logic and the presentation layers are in accordance with the clients wishes.

References:

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