**CDA features**

Below is a list of the features of the two codes (in matlab and in excel-VBA) so far. The list is subject to change by the contributing team.

* Users can vote for the importance of a topic. Topics can be ranked by importance.
* Users can discuss about the goals/requirements of the subject of the topic. They can conclude on a list of requirements that the proposed alternative solutions must fulfill. The administrator (or facilitator or initiator) of the discussion can set the date that the discussion shall have been completed.
* A user can insert a proposal and specify the date that this proposal can be still editable for improvements. Editing can be done only by the person who added this proposal. When a proposal is still editable commenting is allowed but voting for it is not allowed yet.
* The user that adds a proposal can attach references to it.
* References are inserted by a URL and a description. There cannot be duplicates on URL entries.
* Users can vote concerning the importance and the accuracy of a reference. Future versions can have commenting on references.
* Users can comment on and vote for a proposal.
* Users can vote only once (-1, 0, 1 are the only valid votes).
* User can mark two proposals as similar. He/she can choose the most well-written from these two. User is advised to vote the same for these two similar proposals (for avoidance of votes splitting).
* Users can vote for a similarity (they can also comment to justify the similarity). A user is able to display only the most well-written proposals from the pairs of similar proposals.
* Users can view proposals sorted by date or by votes. They can also view the proposals of a specific user. Proposals can be displayed as alone or with their comments below or/and with their references below.
* The application sorts each proposal by its sum of votes. The more people vote positively for this proposals the higher in rank will appear.
* Users can also sort the proposals by displaying firstly those that where last commented. This feature helps users keep track of the discussion.
* A user can group proposals in order to form an alternative solution (he/she must also add the description of the group). The order of the proposals in the group is not taken into account.
* Users can comment on and vote for a group of proposals.
* When a user wants to see the groups, at first the application shows the groups of the three users that their references are the most voted. This is a bonus for the users that have inserted valid and important references. Then the user can see the groups of proposals sorted by date or by votes. Comments of groups can also be displayed below groups.
* When a single group of proposals is selected, the comments of its proposals are also shown.
* A user can evaluate a group of proposals. He/she can select a weight factor for each requirement (concerning how important he/she thinks this requirement is) and a score to evaluate how much this requirement will be fulfilled by this group of proposals. He/she can re-evaluate a group anytime he/she wants.
* A user can categorize and tag proposals, using specific words inside the comments (e.g pros or cons). The user can display the proposals that have these specific words in comments. These comments can also be displayed under the proposals. Search can be done in all the comments or in the comments of a specific user. The user can define search criteria by combining words with AND or OR logical operators.
* A user can create and share a table that shows how each critical parameter/factor of the problem influence each other. This can show how an important factor that enhances a solution can have negative effects on other key factors of the problem. This is a qualitative (and not quantitative) illustration.

Possible future features:

* A profile of each user with contact information. Filters that arrange which information is private and which public.
* Marks that show who is online.
* Information via email whether a comment has been added or other changes in the platform have happened.
* Personal messages.
* Files attachment (as references?)
* Further clustering of groups of different relevant topics for more detailed solutions (tree structure).
* When displayed proposals or groups are sorted by votes, votes might not be necessary to be shown (until the date that the discussion closes), because if they are shown they might influence the voters and the voting result.
* Maybe a calendar that each user can declare that is tending to be online and work on these specific days and hours, can improve collaboration.
* Groups that are not entirely new alternative solutions but are slight improvements of other groups might be marked as that.