

CYL Final Project Reflection

Part 1.

“What went well, and what could have been improved, and how?”

“What went well”

We believe that we worked very well as a team together. There was an initial hardship because one of our team members stopped responding so our manpower was reduced by one for essentially the entirety of the project. We overcame this hurdle and even realized that small teams have their own benefits -- for example, it's much easier to organize an impromptu meeting or ask the two other teammates to meet together at the student center with one hour's notice for a coding session.

We are also satisfied because we implemented everything we set out to do. During the project pitch phase, we expected to use Google Maps API but didn't know for sure whether or not we would be able to figure out how to implement it successfully. In our initial TA meetings with Cristina, we decided that in the worse case scenario we would just display a *list* of locations if we could not integrate a map. Fortunately, we were not even close to having to resort to this.

This project was a worthwhile experience for all of us because we learned new things and worked on an interesting problem. For example, we chose not to spend our time coding features such as a user profiles or “like”/“follow” users capability because those seemed like simple variations of the note app or splitter app from projects 2 and 3. Instead we worked on problems like API integration, real-time pushing changes to the browser, and javascript.

“What could have been improved, and how?”

All of us wrote a javascript piece here and there to finish MVP implementation. Later on, certain files became very lengthy and we spent much time refactoring the code. The effort could have been avoided if we discussed thoroughly beforehand about how to maintain modularity and where to put different JavaScript files.

During the last hour of coding, we discovered that a part of our app was not up to date. When we changed a data model implementation, we forgot to think everything through and thus the change failed to propagate to all the ends it should have. Had we kept a detailed connection document of how each model with connect with each other and their related actions, we could have had an easier time keeping

everything updated.

Another small issue is that when we made our team schedule, we usually set the deadline for single tasks to coincide with the deadline for milestones. That made us tend to procrastinate and start working one or two days before the deadline. We then had relatively less time to test and verify our system. This was not a significant problem for this project, but for larger projects, we definitely need to leave time for testing.

Part 3 Lessons Learned

- Think more about code maintenance before implementation
- Have a more average schedule to avoid final day rush and leave more time for testing.
- Analyze thoroughly about the effects of a proposed change to the code; update the to do list accordingly to keep the system consistent.
- Communicate more often to keep each team member's knowledge about the project synchronized.

Part 2. Peer Review

A brief peer review of each of the other team members, each about 50 words long, giving some constructive comments on how that member might improve their teamwork and technical skills.

Chongyuan:

Lucy is an expert at color scheme and other UI design elements. She makes our team relaxed and united. In the future, she can try to work on something new, such as database schema design and using third-party API.

Yang is good at all the implementation and testing parts, and always finishes difficult tasks in a short time. In the future, he can try to get himself some UI training, and think more about robust coding before implementation.

Yang:

Chongyuan's code implementation is consistently reliable, and his attention to details and robustness is highly valuable to the project. In addition, he also did a good job organizing the schedule of tasks and keeping our team on track. My only suggestion will be to pay more attention to the relationship between components when looking at the big picture of a project.

Lucy--the team's favorite UI designer! Good job styling up the app and all the slideshows. Feel free to discuss UI designs with the functionality programmers more in the future though, since it would often help both sides realize the pros and cons in their own design choices and implementation.

Lucy:

Chongyuan's intuition and expertise were invaluable during this project. For example, we had some funny behavior with pinpoints and the real-time updating, and Chongyuan immediately suspected that it was an issue with javascript global variables and caching. He is also very organized and helped keep us on track by creating spreadsheets and sending out emails a couple of days before each deadline. If he tried working on more of the CSS/HTML side of things it would be a great addition to his already-strong technical skills.

Yang is a very hard worker and also reliable. He consistently worked on new features even between deadlines which amazed me because I tend to procrastinate intensely. He's not afraid to take on a difficult task (such as the route evaluation) and we owe a lot of our cool features to his determination. In the future, he could practice coding javascript without using global variables (though for what we had to do, this was very hard).