Lab 1-Voluntunities Product Description

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Table of Contents

1. Introduction.........................................................................................................................3

2. Product Description............................................................................................................5
   2.1. Key Product Features and Capabilities.................................................................6
   2.2. Major Components (Hardware/Software)...........................................................6

3. Identification of Case Study.............................................................................................7

4. Product Prototype Description.........................................................................................8
   4.1. Prototype Architecture (Hardware/Software).......................................................8
   4.2. Prototype Features and Capabilities.................................................................8
   4.3. Prototype Development Challenges...................................................................8

5. Glossary.............................................................................................................................1

6. References.........................................................................................................................10

List of Figures

Figure 1 Current process flow ............................................................................................4

Figure 2 Proposed process flow........................................................................................6

Figure 3 Major function components..............................................................................7
1. Introduction

Charitable acts are on the decline. Reports by the Bureau of Labor statistics show that United States volunteer rates are dropping and have been steadily declining, dropping by 0.4% in 2015 alone.\(^1\) The problem however, does not lie in a lack of available causes to donate to or opportunities to with which to volunteer, the problem lies in the means that volunteers become aware of said options. Fundraisers and opportunities looking for able and willing volunteers are in need of a platform in order to reach this growing digital market, while temporary local opportunities and fundraising causes also need to extend their reach past the average school fundraising sign or volunteer sign up sheet. Without a platform, organizations and individuals lack a means to post a need for donations and volunteers digitally, and with no centralized posts individuals must check organizations individually in the hopes that they may have an opportunity in their area. Individuals that do find events in their area may find them canceled or progress slow do to a lack of other members, while donations given may end up lining the cause creators pockets instead of going where the donor intended. Figure 1 illustrates the current flow.
Voluntunities is a mobile web application designed with these problems in mind. Voluntunities will connect volunteers and donors with opportunities and causes, allow the creation of unique opportunities for volunteering and causes for donation, all while integrating social media into each step to encourage repeat use.

2. Product Description

At its core, Voluntunities is designed to be a social volunteering and donation mobile web application platform. The goals of Voluntunities include: increasing the number of active volunteers, increasing the success of charitable organizations by linking them to volunteers, increasing the awareness of volunteering opportunities in and out of the area, and making...
volunteering more social in a digital age. Figure 2 illustrates the new process flow regarding Voluntunities.

![Voluntunities Process Flow Diagram](image.png)

**Figure 2 Proposed process flow.**

### 2.1 Key Product Features and Capabilities

The Voluntunities mobile web application will allow users, both volunteers and opportunity organizers, to register or sign in order to create opportunities and fundraising causes. Charitable cause creators will be able to track the total number of potential volunteers along with the sum total of donations. While volunteers will be able to log total hours save pictures onto their accounts gallery and keep a journal of everything they have accomplished for every charitable
cause or opportunity all while maintaining the ability to share any of the aforementioned on twitter, facebook, or Instagram with the push of a button. The integration of social aspects are especially notable due to the core demographics heavy use of social media and various other means of social connections.

2.2 Major Components (Hardware/Software)

Voluntunities shall consist of the major functional components as illustrated in Figure 3. Not listed but a requirement is also an internet connection so that users may access either the mobile or web application version of Voluntunities.

![Voluntunities Components Diagram](Image)

Figure 3 Major function components.

3. Identification of Case Study

Voluntunities is being primarily developed with the 18-29 demographic in mind as this is the largest socially connected potential volunteering demographic. According to the pew research center of the adult internet user population aged 18-29 by 2014, 87% had or were using Facebook, 37% Twitter, and 53% Instagram. Major opportunities such as the Red Cross,
Habitat for Humanity and other prominent charitable organizations are the second key demographic, but these major organizations are too varied to be specifically developed for. The third and final demographic consists of any individual or organization looking to make a temporary or unique charity and share the issues that the second demographic has.

4. Product Prototype Description

Consisting of the user and database key prototype functionality will include the ability to sign in on the mobile or web application as well as a user profile and the ability to view and search for opportunities.

4.1 Prototype Architecture (Hardware/Software)

The MongoDB server will handle and process user requests from a stable internet connection. The processed requests will tell the server to load the appropriate webpage of the site including but not limited to mock opportunity creation, mock opportunity donation, mock donation amount received, mock list of opportunities to donate or volunteer to and mock user account page. The basic hardware and software in the prototype will be nearly identical to the finished product. A lack of testing the web application on various mobile devices will be one of the main differences.

4.2 Prototype Features and Capabilities

The prototype in this regard will show that full site map movement is possible starting from the landing page by having appropriate communication between user server and application. Along
with the ability to sign in and save user preferences, volunteer and donate towards mock causes and opportunities and create mock opportunities for the purpose of testing.

4.3 Prototype Development Challenges

Integration of the nearby opportunities serves to be a both a supporting technology and knowledge challenge due to inexperience with the implementation of any similar features in other works. Along with this the search feature of the opportunities and causes by user preference poses more of a knowledge challenge.
5. Glossary

**Cause**- a fundraising opportunity

**Virtual Bulletin Board**- A GUI used for the purpose of viewing and adding opportunities.

**Virtual volunteering**- volunteer tasks completed, in whole or in part, via the Internet and a home or work computer. It's also known as online volunteering, cyber service, online mentoring, tele-tutoring and various other names.
6. References


