



DigiEduHack Solution

Berlin - #SemesterHack 2.0 (in German & English)

Challenge: Berlin - #SemesterHack 2.0 (in German & English) Challenge 2020

MyUniLife

Start networking with your peers now!

The goal of the application is to promote the community spirit of the students of any given university or other educational institution by actively promoting networking and collaboration among students.

Team: MyUniLife

Team members

Can Dogan, Alexander Geib, Lukas Metzger, Julian Schwarz, Kaan Selcuk

Members roles and background

All of us are 5th term students in Business IT at Hochschule Mainz.

Can Dogan (25) did the front-end development together with Lukas Metzger (21).

Alexander Geib (21), Julian Schwarz (21) and Kaan Selcuk (26) worked on the concept behind the app.

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Solution Details

Solution description

Our goal is to develop an app that allows students to connect with each other. Thus we listed the basic functionalities of the application:

Homepage

This is the landing page. On the homepage the user can see all new events, news and surveys at a glance. This overview enables the user to be up to date in the shortest possible time. Furthermore, notifications, e.g. messages or events, are displayed there.

Newsfeed

The newsfeed will be the communication channel of the university. AStA, university, professors and staff can publish posts here. Students can read the latest contributions as well as publish events (see Events).

Channels

In the channels there will be a chat and group function. The channels are used to exchange information directly with each other. There are private, as well as public channels that you can join. For example, you could create a channel for exam preparation in order to exchange information and generate synergies. In addition to that there will be permanent channels for each module where students in higher semesters can help those in lower ones by providing information about the exam or the professor.

Events

A simple calendar display allows the student to get a quick overview. Other calendars, e.g. a Google Calendar can also be imported. The event invitations sent to the students are accepted with a click on the link. Of course, this can be rejected afterwards in the calendar. In addition to that, there are detailed information about the events and webinars. If required, chats can also be opened for the events or webinars.

Surveys

With the survey function you can engage the community, so you automatically have a wider reach and can achieve more accurate results for your homework. This could especially be useful for a bachelor or master thesis. Of course, you can also start general surveys like asking what peoples' favourite food is.

Help

A FAQ page answers the most frequently asked questions, to enable a faster start for the user. In addition to that, a tutorial should make the use of the application easier. The tutorial could work like a sort of guided journey through the app for first-time users.

Profile

The student logs onto the application using single sign-on from their institution. He can then set up

his profile by providing information like a profile picture, alias, course of study, skills and interests. These details automatically add the student to the appropriate channels by working as a tag.

myMentor

Mentors are students in higher semesters who offer their help to others. First-year students or people in a third attempt receive special support from assigned mentors by matching them based on their needs and interests.

Digital education could be enhanced by sharing information and forming learning groups. This will not only help the students with their exams and papers, but also form connections among them.

The success of the solution could be measured by the number of users as well as user ratings and experiences or other statistics such as in-app time or frequency of use. Although the "real" effect, namely interpersonal connections and exam results cannot be measured by us.

The benefit of the solution certainly is that it acts as a central platform for all kinds of students from a university. It actively aids networking and communication between students by providing above named functions. One of the main goals is to improve the community feeling among students as well as restore a kind of campus feeling.

Solution context

The general problem we want to solve is the lack of communication between semesters and among students in general. Especially in the current situation this is often forgotten. From our own experience this is very good in your own course, but has some weaknesses if you look beyond your horizon, e.g. higher semesters or other courses. As a result, many opportunities are lost, such as the opportunity to learn from the higher semesters and to exchange modules and topics with them. Furthermore, interpersonal topics come a bit short nowadays because the little talks on the way to the next lecture or at lunch are missing.

Solution target group

The target group for the solution are mainly students of a certain university or educational institution. Our solution will affect them to the extent that we provide a platform for them to network and gather information. In addition to the students, professors and other employees of the university have the possibility to create events, blog posts and surveys in order to not only enhance communication among students, but also between students and their university. As said before, users will not benefit directly from the application but experience the effects latently.

Solution impact

The impact of the solution isn't really measurable from our side. The effects are better networking and thus more communication among students which both aren't quantifiable. What we can measure are user ratings and reviews as well as simple usage statistics.

Solution tweet text

Hi guys, we are happy to be part of the Semesterhack 2.0. Our team is working on a concept for a

community app with the focus on networking among students. With our development we are taking digitalization and networking to the next level. #DigiEduHack #SemesterHack #communityapp

Solution innovativeness

At first glance MyUniLife might appear to be a rather generic application for universities. But what really stands out in this project is the concept behind myMentor.

With myMentor we want to match mentors with students in their first semester or people in need of help in an exam. A mentor makes it easier to start studying and get to know basic things like mail account, exam registration, tutoring etc. The mentor can also help making new friends and contacts beyond one's own horizon. The matching is based on skills and needs as well as personal interests such as hobbies etc.

A mentor must have studied at the university for at least one year. Mentoring lasts for a whole semester and can be extended for another semester if both parties agree. Although the mentoring should end after one semester, we really do not want to forbid people to stay in touch. We want exactly that!

Solution transferability

The application could be used in a lot of contexts. We thought about implementing a single-sign-on solution so the application could be used by any organization. Besides that a simple login via email is possible too. The onboarding of a new organization has to be done manually by one of the administrators of the application. This includes granting user rights, assigning databases and server capacities etc.

Solution sustainability

The user interface is developed with the ionic framework. The frontend communicates with the backend via REST services. The data are stored in a relational database. The onboarding process for an organization would be manual, but with the right API's and configurations we can see it becoming automated in the future.

Solution team work

It was a pleasure to work together. Because we are all from the same course we knew each other beforehand and we decided to use the solution from the Hackathon as a substitute for an oral exam. This gave everybody that tiny bit of extra motivation as we really felt the fire burning in each one of us. Surely not everything was smooth sailing as we had some heated discussions during the two days but ultimately they led to a constructive result with which everyone could continue working. We are proud of the result and are already excited about the next Hackathon.