

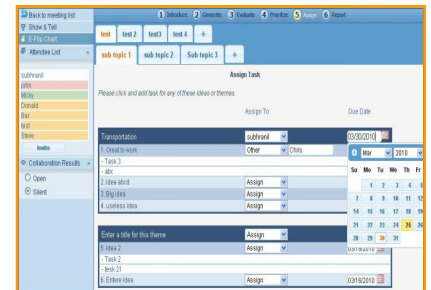


Groupware Meeting System

Web Conference Prototype– A Case Study

Executive Summary

The client needed an online platform to conduct textual meetings for its geographically separated offices in order to create a roadmap and act accordingly. When the client approached Mindfire Solutions for creation of such a platform, they were very much pleased with the manner in which Mindfire's development team progressed on with the initial project requirements giving them a complete and feasible solution to their problem at the end.



About our Client

Client IT Solutions Provider | **Location** USA | **Industry** Information Technology

Business Situation

The client was worried about its ability to take up right decisions for its different offices. They required a platform which would reduce the complexities of attending meetings and sharing documents. So, they decided to develop a groupware meeting system for the web that will allow a meeting facilitator to plan, prepare for, and start an online meeting with group collaboration capabilities. The system needed to be very simple from a facilitation standpoint, and be able to provide some of the features offered in larger groupware systems. This was more of a text based online meeting platform which the client wanted us to develop. Mindfire Solutions analyzed the requirements and came up with a solution which was far above the expectation of the client.

Solution Details

The Mindfire Solution

Mindfire team of developers thoroughly brainstormed the requirements, researched about it and after the project specification evaluation provided the client with a proposal which is mentioned below:

- **Meetings:** A centralized repository to hold all the meetings. Data gets pushed into the meetings repository from different discussion phases within a meeting life cycle.

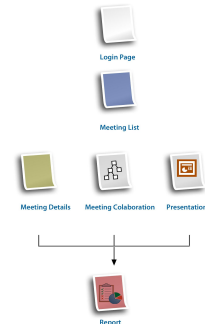
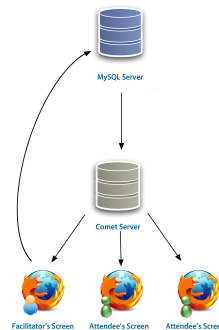
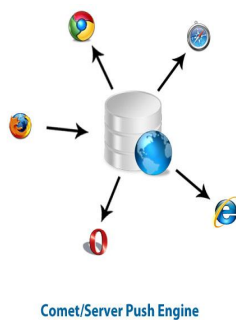


- **Facilitator:** Each of the projects can have a facilitator. So, facilitator repository needs to be in place to hold all meetings specific facilitator data and own set permissions and meeting rules.
- **Attendees:** Each of the projects can have multiple competitors associated to it. So, an attendee's repository needs to be in place to hold all the meeting specific attendees data.
- **Documents:** A centralized document repository to hold all the meeting specific documents which will be shared between all attendees during meeting.
- **Reports:** A centralized document repository to hold all the meeting specific reports when a meeting is completed.

We also proposed the client to create a Comet/Reverse AJAX based web solutions. The main reason for opting to Comet/Reverse AJAX solution is to keep all meeting attendees screens up to date.

The application was based on a Security model which mainly revolves around 3 kinds of users.

- **Admin:** The users belonging to admin group can set the entire rule and control the website.
- **Facilitator:** Facilitator to create a meeting, setting summary meeting information up, schedule the meeting, enters discussion topics. The facilitator would be able to send out invitations to attendees email addresses. A way, to keep, all meeting attendees screens up to date. The facilitator will control what the users see. The facilitator will be able to add more data through group prioritization. This happens through several voting type options.
- **Attendees:** Users will be able to provide group input as requested by the facilitator. When a topic is put up on the screen, all attendees of the meeting can see the topic and add ideas about that topic. As attendees add their ideas all other attendees can see those ideas and add more ideas of their own.





Achievements

After the client agreed to the proposal laid by Mindfire's development team, the project got started. Apart from the learning curve which the development team gained through this assignment, there were numerous other challenges which the team faced like synchronization during meeting, integration of an icalendar etc. The project involved creation of various web pages and modules to attain the desired result as listed below:

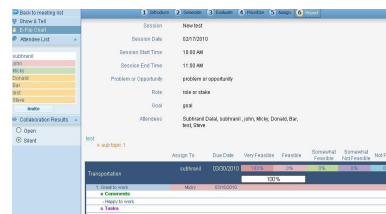
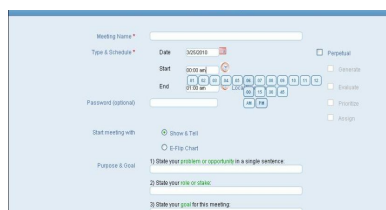
- A marketing web page, which generates interest among the user. A user can visit this area and learn about their solution. They can then sign up for a free account which enables them to hold meetings online.
- Sign up process will get the user set up to be able to create, plan and prepare for group meetings through their open id, Google ID or other if the user has one.
- After the user signs up, they are in the facilitator screen. These screens allow the facilitator to create a meeting, set up summary of meeting information up, schedule the meeting, and enter discussion topics. The facilitator is also permitted to send out invitations to attendees e-mail addresses.
- Creation of a module to keep all meeting attendees screen up to date with the facilitator controlling the user view. Users were provided with a facility to provide group input as and when requested by the facilitator.
- Brainstorming Session, wherein a topic is put up on the screen and all members of the meeting will view the topic and add ideas about that topic. As attendees add their ideas all other members can see those ideas and add more ideas of their own.
- The facilitator was able to add more data through group prioritization.

Technologies

LAMP, AJAX, Javascript, jQuery, Reverse AJAX, Comet, MySQL, Linux, Apache, PHP, Zend Framework, ImageMagick, Google friend connect.

Final Results

Software System





Customer Benefits

Keeping in mind the ultimate goal of the client, Mindfire's development team delivered the platform which enabled the client to take up correct measures and decisions in order to prepare a roadmap for future. Client's worries of holding meetings between different offices were resolved. As a result they could efficiently manage the offices.

Future relationship

Judging our efficiency in providing perfect solution that too in stipulated time, the client has doubled the team size for its new assignment.

