



Restaurant Review & Rating System

Executive Summary:

What made those 19 companies in the state of New York cough up a whopping \$350,000 as fine in the month of September 2013?

The reason was providing fake reviews on popular review sites. This brought into light the lack of transparency of online businesses and restaurant reviews. However, in the digital age that we live in, online consumer reviews are the second-most trusted form of communication, the first being word-of-mouth recommendations from family and friends. A recent Forrester study shows that 32 % of U.S. online consumers trust a stranger's opinion on forums and websites over branded advertisements.

Our client, a provider of community-based real-time online review system saw a business opportunity in this deficit that was a result of lack of authentic reviews. And this led to the development of a review system that would capture the feedback of customers before they left the premises of a business. This review system has a proprietary method of verification and provides true, balanced and unfiltered reviews that have been gathered in real-time. Also the business owners have no right to modify/delete any part of the reviews. This has made the review system a favourite of both businesses and customers alike and now we see that company's technology is being used by thousands of customers throughout the country. Mindfire Solutions is proud to be associated with such a reliable and robust product that has found great acceptance across businesses.



About the Client

Client: Entrepreneur

Industry: Hospitality/Food Establishment

Technologies: PHP, MySQL, WordPress, HTML5 Geo-Location, IP2Geocode API, Google Geocoding & Maps API, AWS, EC2, SendGrid, SVN, Schema.org, Lime Cellular SMS API, Kraken.io, SinglePlatform, REST API



Business Situation

Project Scope:

In a digital world, online reviews act like word-of-mouth marketing especially for businesses operating in the services industry. The online reviews become paramount in case of restaurants. Our client found out that a good number of online reviews are flawed with businesses often working around to put up unethically obtained fake reviews favoring themselves. This was further validated when the New York Attorney General's office fined 19 companies involved in deceiving customers a whopping \$350,000 on 23rd September, 2013. Based on these premises our client collaborated with Mindfire Solutions to develop an community based application that provides online reviews by real people in real time. The system is gaining great acceptance and has become a fast growing community based app. Attractive offers are extended to customers who provide true reviews thereby creating repeat sales.

The Mindfire Solution:

Our client approached us to work on the project at a very early stage when they were conceptualizing the product. An experienced team of software developers at Mindfire Solutions helped design and implement a WordPress based system to allow Restaurant/Hotel owners to receive reviews and ratings from the customers. This application captures the reviews based upon the current location of the user using geo-location techniques. There are complex rules which ensure that the reviews are authentic and not forged.

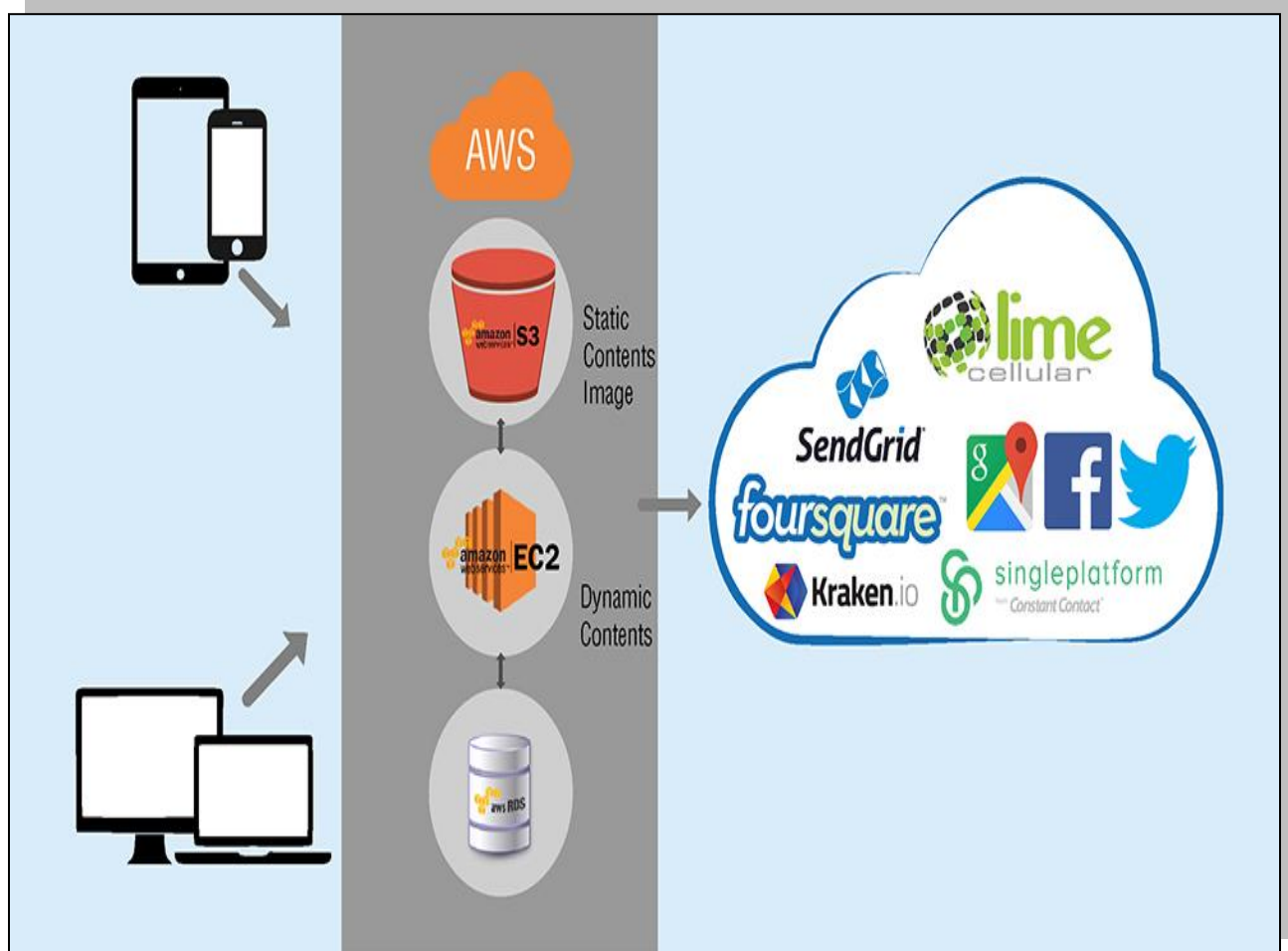
Key Features of the Restaurant Review and Rating System:

Some of the key features of the system are as follows:

- Customized back-end using WordPress meta-box for owners/admin of the application to insert/update business data/amenities etc. easily.
- Graphical reports dashboard for admin to access various ratings and statistics on usage.
- Automated weekly reports/promo emails for the owners and users which are sent via send-grid.
- User-switching implemented for easy navigation between owner and admin dashboard.
- Reviews and ratings displayed as per schema.org to make it search engine friendly on the website.
- LimeCellular API integration for SMS subscription for latest offers and added customized info-box with markers for nearby map.
- Integration with popular social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter and foursquare to auto post the news reviews.
- Coupons functionality implemented for reviews and birthdays.
- Meta tags/keywords implemented for the entire business details page for better SEO.
- RESTful web-services created for native apps.
- UrbanAirship API integration to send push notifications to targeted device.
- Customized login page and used the WordFence plugin for security measures.
- Implemented & optimized location based search to find nearest restaurants (ie. geo-distance search).
- Converted from the standard EAV key-value pair schema to a flat table with full-text indexes for faster search



Architecture Diagram:



How the System works?

The main aim of this system is to echo the true sentiments of the customers visiting a particular restaurant. Assuming there is a person called Khaleesi who would like to visit one of our client's partner restaurants in the city of Mereen.

- Khaleesi uses the **location finder module** to find out partner restaurants in Mereen
- Khaleesi can read the **reviews of the list of restaurants** and having chosen one of them, can **make an online order/reservation**
- Khaleesi then **goes to one of the chosen restaurants**
- Before Khaleesi leaves the premises, she is provided with a **tablet device/smart phone/code to share her experience at the restaurant**
- To ensure that the comment is true, Khaleesi **receives an email to verify her comment**
- After Khaleesi verifies it, **the comment is made online** and shared with others
- For putting up a comment Khaleesi **receives a promo/coupon** to encourage repeat business for the restaurant



Future Relationship:

Mindfire Solutions and the client collaborated on this project right from the ideation stage. With helpful inputs from the client side Mindfire's team of skilled and certified developers created a robust product that has already amassed a huge community following. Complex algorithms were used to ensure that the reviews provided were genuine and unfiltered. We made use of Agile methodologies to adapt to any change that was required by the client. Regular project reporting was carried out to ensure that Mindfire and the client were on the same page.

It has been a learning experience for Mindfire Solutions as we have now developed an expertise in designing, implementing, maintaining and troubleshooting complex review systems. This project provided great insight to understand the working of online review systems.



Founded in 1999, Mindfire Solutions is an award-winning provider of software development and testing services to the global market with 650+ talented software engineers at 3 centers in India. For its people and its work, Mindfire has won coveted international awards such as Deloitte Technology Fast50 India Award 2013 and 2014, Dun & Bradstreet Fastest Growing SME 2013 Award, Red Herring Top 100 Asia Award and Zinnov GSPR 2014. Mindfire has been recognized with ISO 9001:2008 and ISO 27001:2005 certification, is a continuous member of NASSCOM, and has established a strong track record of 2000+ projects successfully delivered for 500+ technology clients.

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Need help to design a review system for your business?

Reach out to us here

Phone: 1-248-686-1424

Web: www.mindfiresolutions.com

Email: sales@mindfiresolutions.com