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Student Community Communication Portal for University of Ruhuna

Prepared by

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MScIT/08/10020

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Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of Information Technology, University of Moratuwa, Sri Lanka for the partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Master Degree of Science in Information Technology.

January 2011

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Declaration

I declare that this thesis is my own work and has not been submitted in any form for another degree or diploma at any university or other institution of tertiary education. Information derived from the published or unpublished work of others has been acknowledged in the text and a list of references is given.

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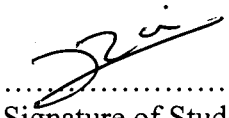
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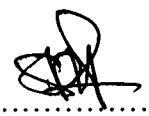
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Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to my wife, Thanuja, who gave more than her share when I am studying for Master of Science. She has accompanied me with her love, unlimited patience, understanding and encouragement. Without her support, I would never be able to accomplish this work. On this period, she played dedication role of excellent mother with my baby daughter and son with my minimum help.

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Abstract

University is a place where vast varieties of people gather and interact with each other. University consists with major community categories such as students, academics and non-academics. Students are the majority of the university community. Diversified set of notices can be seen everywhere in Sri Lankan university premises. Several types of notices can be seen such as posters, notices on boards, hand bills, banner and cutouts. Most of these are published by students. But effectiveness and efficiency of these types of notices are very low. It is a time & resources wasting process also. On the other hand existing mechanisms are not fit for required vital information delivery on focusing to target audience. Students are needed more effective and efficient communication system with emergency alerts service and live monitoring mechanism at rush of common places remotely. Most of the time student representatives and administrative officers need to keep track about notices they have published for further reference.

Internet and web is the world most popular tools in ICT. All local universities have been established own website and most of the time established societies in the university maintaining their own web site or a page within main university web site. But faculty level student union or university student union does not engage with web. Traditional web site, email applications or discussion forums will not fulfill this students' community communication requirement.

By introducing a new web portal dedicated for students' community communication can be done in effective and efficient manner. Existing computer network infrastructure, tools, technologies and resource person in the University can be use to develop new communication and information system with effectively and efficient manner for University community based on students' needs. This web portal integrates with content management system, emergency alert service, live monitoring and much more. Users perform as visitors, authors, editors, publishers or super administrators within their privileges. Subscribers of the system can be access restricted information which is not published to general public. It is included with customization ability and localization as user desired. Those features are implemented by server applications, DBMS, CMS, SMS gateway and much more tools.

The evaluation revealed new system is operating in acceptable level to users'. But it is clearly point out interfaces and functionalities should be significantly improved.

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Table of Contents

Page

Chapter 1 - Introduction 1

1.1. Chapter Overview 1

1.2. Motivation 1

1.3. Aims & Objectives 3

1.4. University Student Community Communication Portal (USCCP) 5

1.5. Structure of the Dissertation 6

Chapter 2 - Communality Communication Methods in the University of Ruhuna 7

2.1. Chapter Overview 7

2.2. Consideration for Students Centered Communication 7

2.3. Major Problems in Current System 8

2.4. Comparison of the Features of Existing Communication Methods 11

2.5. Why Need a New System? 12

2.6. Chapter Summary 13

Chapter 3 – Technologies on Community Communication 14

3.1. Chapter Overview 14

3.2. Free and Open Source Software 14

3.3. Three – Tier Architecture 14

3.4. The Internet and the WWW 15

3.5. Web Portal Technology 17

3.6. HTML, CCS, XML and PHP 17

3.7. DBMS 19

3.8. Web Development Software Bundle 19

3.9. Content Management Systems (CMS) 19

3.10. Mobile Phone and SMS Gateway 20

3.11. Chapter Summary 22

University of Moratuwa, Sri Lanka.
Electronic Theses & Dissertations
www.lib.mrt.ac.lk

Chapter 4 – University Student Web Portal 23

4.1. Chapter Overview 23

4.2. WAMP Server 23

4.3. Joomla - CMS 24

4.4. SMS Gateway - Ozeki 28

4.5. Webcam Software - yawcam 29

4.6. Chapter Summary 29

Chapter 5 - Analysis and Design 30

5.1. Chapter Overview 30

5.2. Requirement Capturing and Verification 30

5.3. Content of the System 30

5.4. Menus 31

5.5. Template 31

5.6. Users of the System 32

5.7. Users Requirements 34

5.8. USCCP System Requirements 36

5.9. Functional Requirements 36

5.10. Non Functional Requirements 42

5.11. USCCP Front Side Interface 43

5.12. Chapter Summary 44

Chapter 6 - Implementation 45

6.1. Chapter Overview 45

6.2. USCCP Hardware Implementation 45

6.3. USCCP Software Requirements 46

6.4. Use Case Specifications 47

6.5. Chapter Summary 59

University of Moratuwa, Sri Lanka.
Electronic Theses & Dissertations
www.lib.mrt.ac.lk

Chapter 7 – Evaluation 60

7.1. Chapter Overview 60

7.2. Statistical Survey 60

7.3. Selection of Participants 60

7.4. Design of Questionnaire 60

7.5. Sectional Evaluation 61

7.6. Sectional Evaluation Result 61

7.6.1. Interface section evaluation 62

7.6.2. Contents section evaluation 63

7.6.3. Functionalities section evaluation 64

7.7. Overall Evaluation Result 65

7.8. Chapter Summary 66

Chapter 8 – Conclusion and Further Work 67

8.1. Chapter Overview 67

8.2. Conclusion 67

8.3. Encountered Problems and Limitations 67

8.4. Further Works 69

Chapter 9 - References 70

Chapter 10 Appendixes A – USCCP Screenshots 71

Chapter 11 Appendixes B – Questionnaire 78

Chapter 12 - Appendixes C - Installation Guidance 80

University of Moratuwa, Sri Lanka.
Electronic Theses & Dissertations
www.lib.mrt.ac.lk

List of Figures

Figure 1-1: Union and Societies hierarchy of the University 2
Figure 2-1: Student centered communication direction in university 8
Figure 3-1: Three-tier architecture 15
Figure 3-2: Growth of Internet & Email subscribers in Sri Lanka [6] 16
Figure 3-3: Relation of HTML, CSS, XML, and PHP 18
Figure 3-4: CMS (Content Management Systems) 20
Figure 3-5: Growth of cellular subscriber in Sri Lanka [6] 21
Figure 3-6: SMS gateway 22
Figure 4-1: WAMP server 2.0 setting interface 24
Figure 4-2: Joomla architecture 24
Figure 4-3: Joomla administrative control panel 25
Figure 4-4: SMS gateway system architecture 29
Figure 5-1: Siteground-j15-84 template view 31
Figure 5-2: User groups' hierarchy of joomla 34
Figure 5-3: Use case diagram of the USCCP 41
Figure 5-4: Users privilege hierarchy in USCCP 42
Figure 5-5: USCCP home page 43
Figure 5-6: Top Level module architecture of the USCCP 44
Figure 6-1: System hardware structure 46
Figure 6-2: System software structure 47
Figure 7-1: Interface survey graph 62
Figure 7-2: Contents survey graph 64
Figure 7-3: Functionalities survey graph 65
Figure 7-4: Overall evaluation graph 65
Figure 10-1: RUPCCP Home 71
Figure 10-2: login interfaces 71
Figure 10-3: Password or Username recover option 72
Figure 10-4: Official Notices 72
Figure 10-5: New user registration 72
Figure 10-6: User management interface 73
Figure 10-7: Profile update interface 73
Figure 10-8: Lost and Found, RUSCCP opportunities 74
Figure 10-9: Auctioning 75
Figure 10-10: Event Calendar 75
Figure 10-11: Forum 76
Figure 10-12: Live monitoring 76
Figure 10-13: Comments 77
Figure 10-14: Social Network Interaction 77
Figure 12-1: Creating Database 80
Figure 12-2: Importing Database 81
Figure 12-3: localhost 81

University of Moratuwa, Sri Lanka.
Electronic Theses & Dissertations
www.lib.mrt.ac.lk

List of Tables

Table 2:1 : University Information -2009 [4] 7
Table 2:2 : Existing method comparison for student public communication 12
Table 2:3: Compression of the old and new system 13
Table 4:1: Joomla access levels 26
Table 4:2: Additional extensions used 28
Table 7:1: Participants group 60
Table 7:2: Interface survey summary 62
Table 7:3: Contents survey summary 63
Table 7:4: Functionalities survey summary 64
Table 12:1: Users details 81

University of Moratuwa, Sri Lanka.
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