

Aranea

By: The Conclave
Jerin Schneider
Scott Clifford
Kansu Dincer

Operational Concepts

Seattle is a city of great diversity and variance. It is made up of people of many different interests, lifestyles, and endeavors that meet and interact in the local area. Sorting out such a web of interaction can be difficult, and often people have trouble finding their place in the opportunity-rich environment. The Conclave was forged from the fire of passion and determination of its members for just such a time as this. We will create a community driven information portal that will offer an opportunity for people of the local community to share, advise, and review activities and interests of various kinds that are available in the area. In today's world of information and technology, there are many places, such as Myspace and Facebook for example, where people can convene to advertise activities or share similar interests and opportunities. However, these information networks are disorganized and are not actually made for this purpose. It is difficult to use these resources to find information on activities and events in the local Seattle area since these sites have no specific geographical base. What our web site offers is much more focused for the purpose of sharing and promoting the local activities that people in the Seattle area would care to know about and explore, as well as share their own personal opinions and experiences. Our site would also have advantages over some of the northwest specific activities sites that are out there because rather than containing simply listings or articles on such activities, our site will be based entirely on feed-back, descriptions, and recommendations solely from the people who have actually taken part in the activities.

There are at least three groups of people that our website will be of particular interest to and who will find in our product something incredibly useful. The first of these is the groups or individuals who have a desire to promote and share some interest, experience, event, product, or whatever else with the people of Seattle. This is a way to advertise to the people of the community who will care the most and who are your true target audience. The second group of people are those with similar interests, but simply do not have a convenient and helpful way to plug into their local community. This website will offer an invaluable opportunity to find out how to get involved in the multitude of things going on (many of which are currently difficult to find information on) in the local area. The third group of people are the one who will want to utilize both sides of the features offered in our website by both advertising and getting the word out on their personal projects, as well as using it to plug into the events and activities of others that share their interests.

System Requirements

In order to use this product, we think it is necessary for users to sign up for a free account. This is because the purpose of the product is for the community to be involved, and by having everyone who uses the website register, they will be more inclined to contribute. Furthermore, having people register would allow them to use the full potential of the site which is key to social involvement once again. Registering with an account would require no more than creating a user-name, password, and a contact handle of some sort. For the users of the website, an account would basically be just an identifier much like we use names everyday. If people wish to contact each other, they could do so through the provided contact handle.

From the point of view of the client who wishes to advertise a certain subject, the key features they would require are the ability to: (1) create a page dedicated to their subject, (2) advertise their page and have it be accessed easily by means of useful website organization/navigational features, and (3) have their page convey information in an organized and efficient manner.

As for the users who wish to only look up events and would maybe want to post their thoughts about them, they would require the ability to: (1) easily browse a category of events, (2) perhaps search for a specific type of event they had in mind via a keyword, and (3) an assortment of web tools to facilitate adding reviews, suggestions, pictures, etc.

Essential Features:

- Web tool to add a subject page
- An account for users to manage and be identified by.

High Priority Features:

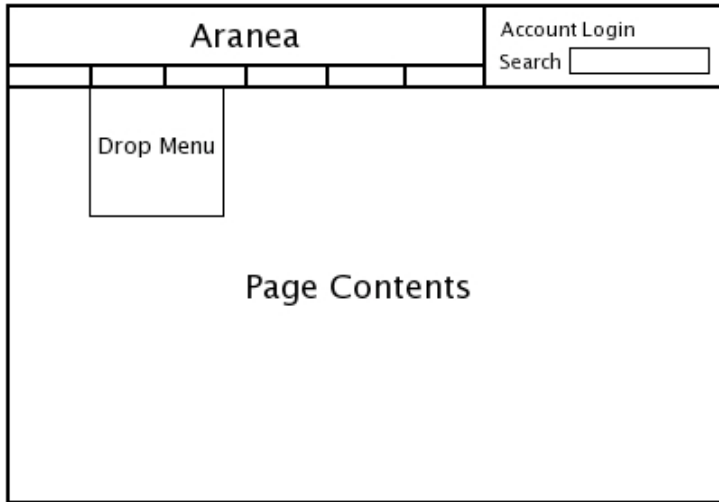
- Web tool for adding reviews and suggestions.
- User friendly interface

Medium Priority Features:

- Web tool for chatting in real-time with others about a specific topic.
- Keyword search functionality to find a subject

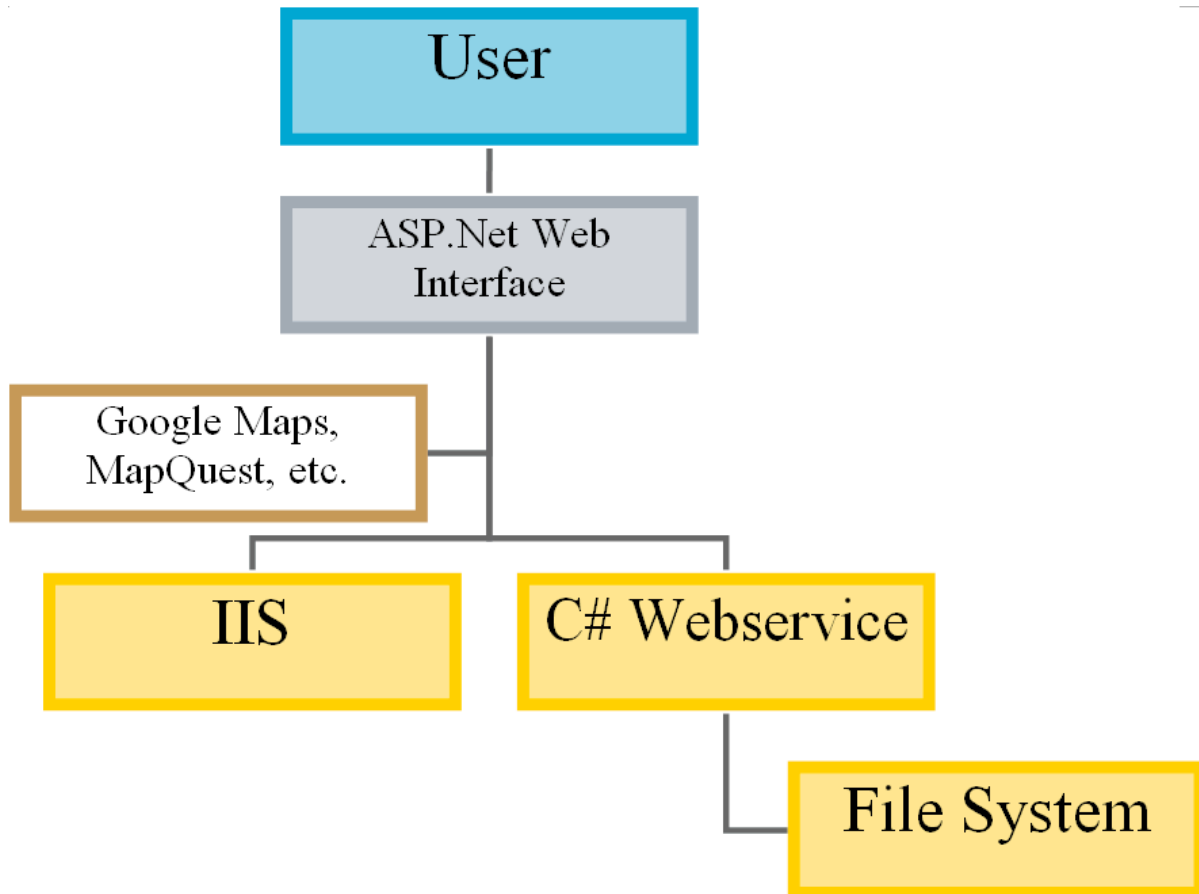
Low Priority Features:

- Web tool for adding short comments about a topic.
- A server generated suggestions list based on a persons past history of events or interests.



System and Software Architecture

To implement the preceding functionality, we will plan to roughly follow the diagram below. In this diagram, the client will interact with our product via a web interface. The web interface is constructed using HTML, JavaScript, and ASP.net. The web interface will communicate with our main server which does the behind-the-scenes work with our flat data files. We plan on not using a full-blown database for this project because we feel flat files are sufficient. The flat files will incorporate some XML functionality for ease of data lookup. As for the web server we will be using, Microsoft's IIS will be put to the test. Along with all of these languages, we plan to implement some C# modules to do the bulk of the data processing.



The tools we will use for each of these languages are as follows. We plan to use Visual Studio for the C# and ASP.net modules. As for the HTML and JavaScript, we could also end up using Visual Studio or some simple third-party software so as not to go overboard with simple scripting. Some references we think we will take advantage of is the MSDN libraries because they are very well documented for C# and ASP.net.

Life-cycle Plan

There are several important phases involved in completing this project which coincide with the feature sets mentioned above. In order to complete the desired features and then the lesser desired features also, we have devised a schedule as outlined below:

Phase	Tasks & Milestones	Completion Date	Time Remaining (7.5 week schedule)
1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flat file data storage working • Main layout framework for a web GUI done • Completed feature: Ability to create and register an account • Testing for each of the above 	Within 2 weeks	
			5.5 weeks
2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Web GUI in final stages (excluding subject page layouts) • Completed feature: Ability to create a subject page • Testing for both of these goals 	Within 3.5 weeks	
			4 weeks
3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Web GUI done - graphics, layout, etc. • Essential features completed • Final testing for essential features and GUI • Begin work on the review and suggestion modules 	Within 4.5 weeks	
			3 weeks
4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High priority features completed • Final testing for high priority features 	Within 6 weeks	
			1.5 weeks
5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medium priority features underway • Testing of medium priority features concurrently • Low priority features begun if time permits 	Within 7.5 weeks	

As for how the team members will be broken up and assigned duties, below is our rough plan based on 7 members in total:

- There will be a project manager who coordinates between each subgroup and adjusts plans and duties as needed. The project manager will also be involved in the code development and testing where extra help is needed.
- **Phase 1**
 - Two data storage developers/testers:
 - One full-time developer
 - One part-time developer and part-time tester
 - Four interface developers/testers:
 - Three full-time developers
 - One full-time tester
- **Phases 2 - 5**
 - Four full-time developers
 - Two full-time testers

Feasibility Rationale

It is difficult to predict with absolute accuracy the feasibility and the many possible risks of a large-scale project. However, doing so can be invaluable as it will in most cases save a project from many avoidable mistakes. We believe that as long as we look at and carefully evaluate these many risks as well as the scale and difficulty involved in each stage of development, we will in fact be able to successfully deliver the product we set out to create. The most general risk involved in the project would probably be the fact that we are planning to utilize many tools, elements, and languages that we are not entirely comfortable with. While this will make this project very valuable to us in terms of a learning experience and gaining new skills for the future, it also adds to the risks involved with the project. This is because our current inexperience in some of these areas makes it difficult to predict the difficulty and time that will be necessary to not only employ these elements and tools, but even to learn how to use them in the first place. So we must analyze this risk to the best of our ability by doing substantial pre-project research of these unfamiliar tools we plan on using as well as talking to people who have experience in these areas and have been through similar processes to the one we are undertaking. There is also a very important risk of perhaps ambitiously aspiring to an overall project that is beyond our abilities. It is important therefore to carefully look at how many elements and features we plan on producing and evaluating to the best of our ability each and every one of them. We must also consider the overall combination of these features to make sure that we don't end up with a product that is unfinished or sub-par due to over-extending ourselves. On the other hand we must be careful not to end up with something trivial because

we underestimated our abilities.

There are a few assumptions that are being made in the overall project. A couple of our features (such as offering maps and directions for various events or offering a search feature) are based on an assumption that we will be able to incorporate the functionality of outside providers such as Mapquest or Google in our project since we are not planning on actually writing a search algorithm or an extensive map program ourselves. Also as was touched on earlier, we are assuming that the tools and languages we are planning on implementing in this project are sufficient to accomplish everything that we hope to provide. Another assumption is that this is indeed a useful and desired service that we are planning on providing, but as has been stated and defended earlier in this proposal, we believe that there are many reasons that this is indeed something that many people will find useful, and that there is nothing out there at this time that truly offers this valuable service.

In the development of this idea and proposal, we have revised some of our ideas and plans as the need to do so has become clear. For example, we initially thought of implementing our own keyword search, but later decided that using the service already offered by Google would allow us to focus on more functionality in other areas. Similarly, we were initially planning on including, or asking our clients to provide directions to various events, but then decided that utilizing say Mapquest would better suit our intentions. As well as these shortcuts, there are also features that we have simply decided to cut from the project entirely as we came up with other features that were of more overall importance, or simply realized that the feature was just too large or cumbersome an undertaking for our purposes. Our project includes the feature of user profiles by which people can log on and use the site in various ways. At first we planned on a very extensive notion of user profiles that included things such as inter-user messages and chat options. In light of the difficulty involved, as well as other features being seen as more important to us, we have decided to cut this feature down to simply a user account by which people will log on and can be identified by. All messaging and chat options will be taken care of in a more general way by the implementation of such things as general forum posting and chat rooms. This will simplify this section of the project and allow more focus to be put on other features that we feel will better serve the clients of our software.