Project Proposal - Lounaat.info mobile experience

1. Introduction

Lounaat.info is the most popular lunch web service in the Finland that is gathering together to a centralised page lunch lists from thousands restaurants.

- Technically Lounaat.info is build on top of Yii PHP framework, and front-end is done with twig and jquer (responsive design)
- Backend provides also a simple API that can be used for external applications, but might use some additional love
- The service includes features for both non-registered users (“lunch seekers”) and registered users (either “lunch seekers with preferences” or “restaurant owners”).
- Non-registered lunch seekers’ features and views are a lot less complex, than for example restaurant owners, and in this project the priority would be on making improvements on those, as that is the biggest user group for the service
- This project will be very good for a group who want to gets their feet wet on web-based technologies and see that their work might end up in hands of a pretty nice amount of end users.

Lounaat.info reaches more than 65 000 – 70 000 unique visitors every week looking for lunch inspiration, so if the project team should be successful, and the end result will be taken in to production, their work will have a big and public impact.

2. Project goals

- At the moment Lounaat.info’s front-end is technically a bit outdated, and especially the mobile user experience – but also other use cases – could use a clear improvement
- Hence the main goal for the project would be to transform the mobile experience the end users face when looking for lunches to be fun, fluent and more useful!
- This means especially reflecting and improving the current mobile concept and executing on the plan made based on concept on the mobile-end against API provided by the backend (API can be improved)
- Project team can also influence the scope of the project to some extend based on group’s strengths and interest
- For example Location information (maps) was previously done using Google maps, but the feature has been turned on since it closed down the free tier. Here Maps new free tiers might offer a feasible alternative, and also data gathering from restaurants could give opportunities for the project.

3. Technologies

- Recommended technologies for the mobile side is React and PWA (progressive web app technologies); PWA basically requires front-end architecture to be moved to the Single-page application, but as its support is growing fast, it might replace most of the native implications in the near future (2-3 years)
- PHP knowhow is needed for backend if the team will want to keep in their hands an ability to directly modify the API’s

Technologies listed her are more than capable to take care of the need.

Some support can be given for example on the React side on the best practices, but the amount of support is somewhat limited. We can give a few architectural lectures from the experienced architects and senior developers to smoothen the ride.
4. Requirements for the students

- The difficulty of the topic can range for easy to demanding, i.e. it depends on the ambition level of the project.
- At the simplest level, the project is only about making somewhat simple calls to the API backend and just replicating what there is already. At more demanding end it’s either taking the experience to the other level, for example adding also new useful features / extending API capabilities or taking under work features for restaurant owners. We would wish for at least moderate or demanding aim.
- In this project it’s very beneficial for one or some of the group members to have taste for UX design
- Even if the project team would not know React at any level, at least good foundation / some experience of javascript and CSS is basically essential on this project

5. Legal Issues

Intellectual Property Rights (IPR):

1. The client gets all IPRs to the results.

Non-disclosure agreement (NDA):

1. Signing the NDA included in the Aalto's contract template is required

(The latter might depend on the final scope of the project though)

6. Client

- Rohea (https://www.rohea.com) is a Finnish web product company, whose background is in B2C services. Lounaat.info is co-owned by Rohea and Miikka Laakso, who originally founded and build the service.
- Main contact persons: Miikka Laakso on the tech side (not much experience on React, but on php side) and Eero Holmila (can connect to persons from Rohea’s side with experience on React)
- At least few hours per week each + separately agreed meeting
- Lounaat.info has a dev and staging server, and in addition client can help with the development environment setup

Client representative(s)

- CEO Eero Holmila, Eero.holmila@rohea.com, +358 40 592 0671 / Kaisaniemenkatu 6A, 00100 Helsinki
- Miikka Laakso, miikka.laakso@lounaat.info

7. Additional information

- There might be some part-time work opportunities to continue with the development in Lounaat.info after the project or other projects