Redesign & Reconstruction of a HR Absence and Holiday Planner

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Abstract

Youmanage HR Ltd is a company based in Stirling, Scotland who specialise in the development of software for Human Resource Management. Their product, of the same name, is a web-based application that is designed to simplify and automate the numerous administrative processes associated with managing the people who make up an organisation. One feature of this application is an Absence and Holiday Planner, which allows users to plan for holidays and other absences through a calendar-like graphical planning screen. This feature is very problematic in its current state due to a plethora of issues including difficulty in maintenance due to a convoluted construction method, consequent poor performance and an interface design that is disparate from the rest of the application.

The objective of the project was to completely rebuild and redesign the Planner from the ground up to create an easily maintainable, flexible solution that integrated seamlessly into the Youmanage application.

It was first necessary to conduct an in-depth analysis of the existing system in order to gain an understanding of how the planner works and to identify the source of its inefficiencies as failure to do so may result in these problems being repeated in the new planner. With this foundation in place, it was then determined that adopting an adapted version of the incremental software development model would provide a solid framework to guide the project, whilst maintaining enough flexibility to accommodate changes in the client's needs.

A fully redesigned and reconstructed implementation of the Absence and Holiday Planner was realised as a result of the project. The new planner fully satisfied the client's set of essential requirements outlined during elicitation, whilst also incorporating the vast majority of desired extra elements that were specified as optional inclusions. The new planner was constructed in an object-orientated manner that drastically improved the maintainability of the solution and produced a more efficient and robust model. User testing highlighted that the new interface was deemed easy to use and aesthetically pleasing.

The new Absence & Holiday Planner is now in the process of being tested by the professional team at Youmanage. The feedback from the client has been extremely positive and there is full intent to include the new planner in a future release of the commercially available application.