HARVARD UNIVERSITY

Building a Transformative Scalable Web App for Harvard's Model UN Conferences

Company Overview

The Harvard International Relations Council (HIRC) is one of the oldest, most prestigious, and largest student-run organizations at Harvard University. Established in 1953, the HIRC organizes Model United Nations (MUN) conferences globally in Latin America, China, India, and Dubai. At these events, students simulate United Nations (UN) committees to foster leadership, diplomacy, and critical thinking skills.

The Challenge

HIRC faced significant challenges with its decade-old software which was becoming a bottleneck as the organization began to scale. The old software consisted of multiple clones of a single software system, each with a separate server and database. The HIRC team aimed to create a unified web-based software application that could scale to manage numerous conferences and events over the next few years.

This intelligent, user-friendly web app would be used for managing event applications and creating school assignments for thousands of participants that required two systems: one for users to register and submit applications, another for admins to manage applications and events.

The Approach

HIRC partnered with LaunchPad Lab to deliver a cutting-edge solution through an Agile development process involving bi-weekly sprints.

The project kicked off with an in-depth discovery and product strategy phase that included product workshops to better understand the inner workings of Model UN. As a result, the teams defined the project goals, determined the project scope, and built alignment across the entire team.

The team met regularly to obtain feedback, demonstrate progress, and ensure the right steps were taken when building the product. This collaborative approach continued throughout the project to gain feedback and implement changes.

Pain Points

- ✗ Outdated software on multiple servers
- ✗ Manual processes
- ✗ Poor user interface
- ✗ Limited customization
- ✗ Inability to scale effectively

Product Requirements

- ✓ Unified, web-based software
- ✓ Streamline workflow
- ✓ Customization
- ✓ Modern UX/UI
- ✓ Ability to scale

Delivering a Scalable Web App that Redefines Testing Efficiency

The Solution

The system offers a new, intuitive interface, Quickbooks integration for invoicing, and customizable reports to better manage events.

Committee Assignment System easily manages applications and committees.

By creating a back-end system, admins can create committees and assign countries. The interface identifies the committee's status, the number of available seats, and the number of open seats. Admins added countries to the committees as necessary for their events. in addition, the system is capable of handling older countries and special characters.

Delegate Assignment System enables admins to view assignments and assign students

The user-friendly interface, incorporates visual cues to guide users in completing tasks. School administrators can easily log into their application dashboard to view their assignments and assign students to the various open delegate spots.

The Results

The new application has transformed the way Harvard manages Model UN conferences with:

- ✓ **Weeks of manual work saved by streamlining invoicing and reconciliation**
- ✓ **Faster application processing with automated workflows**
- ✓ **Modern UX/UI drastically reducing the time taken to handle assignments**
- ✓ **Automated custom reports leading to greater efficiency managing events**
- ✓ **Enhanced accessibility providing a more inclusive experience for users**