

CASE STUDY

SWISSCONTACT



INTRODUCTION

Swisscontact is a foundation for international development. Represented in 34 countries, Swisscontact promotes economic, social and environmental development. One of their largest projects currently being implemented in South Asia is Building Skills for the Unemployed and Underemployed Labour - the B-SkillFUL project. The project is funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and European Union (EU). B-SkillFUL is implemented by facilitating training to target groups through various partner training service providers, arranging for employment and following up on improvements in their wellbeing. The project aims to facilitate the training of 40,000 poor men and women. The majority of the beneficiaries are from disadvantaged groups such as divorced or widowed women, single mothers, differently abled people and people from ethnic and religious minority. For more information please visit: www.swisscontact.org

CHALLENGE

Swisscontact needed a software solution for managing their activity for the B-SkillFUL project and gathering data for further analysis and reporting. The project had many stakeholders starting from management staff at Swisscontact, to training institutes which deliver the training to the actual trainees. The requirements included enrolment, profiling and keeping track of the vast number of trainees, providing the training institutes with interfaces for managing the training process and making all the data visible to the management at Swisscontact. This was further complicated by the widely spread locations of the project, the large number of participants and the wide variety of training courses. There was a concern about the lack of Internet speed at some of the training locations and the relative lack of computer skills of the users.





“ Kaz has created a real time data solution for Swisscontact that has enabled us in efficient problem solving and effective decision making ”

Imran Uddin
Manager MRM, B-SkillFUL

SOLUTION

Given the uniqueness of the software platform and the userbase, we decided to approach the challenge by concentrating on usability first. Our design and product team met with the B-SkillFUL team, the would be users to understand the challenges and based on that created wireframes and mock-ups of the screens. These were then tested for usability and fine-tuned. One major goal in the design process was to keep the interfaces lightweight to cover the low internet bandwidth challenge.

The finalized mock-ups formed the specifications for the software development process. A Microsoft .NET based web application was built with a javascript front-end. Given the large volume of data, we chose MS SQL server as the database. To address the challenges of potential users without computer skills, we produced detailed video tutorials for the common tasks and that enabled such users to follow the steps one by one to get the jobs done. This reduced the need for hands on training to such users.

BENEFITS

The software platform is now deployed in selected districts throughout Bangladesh and is being used by 29 partner training service providers with profiles of tens of thousands of trainees. It helps the training institutes register, manage and run the training programmes at the same time as pushing almost real-time data to the B-SkillFUL management for analysing the performance of the project. Our lightweight interfaces, which has been designed from day one with usability in mind, makes it possible to be used at remote locations. The system acts as the management information system (MIS) for the B-SkillFUL project of Swisscontact and it uses the platform to generate regular reports for donor organisations and other stakeholders of the project. Thus the platform has become an end to end solution.



Design and Graphics



Testing



Software development



Hosting and deployment



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