Case Study:
Super-Ada App for Nice Tuesday

This document describes a Futurice Chilicorn Fund charity project for Nice Tuesday.

Customer

Nice Tuesday is a Finnish nonprofit run by volunteers. It was founded in 2006 as a network for women in IT and has grown to be the biggest professional network for women in IT in Finland. Nice Tuesday organises the annual Super-Ada event that aims at encouraging girls and young women to study technology by representing the IT industry now and in the future.

The next Super-Ada event will take place on 11th Feb 2017.

Challenge

In 2017 the Super-Ada event is organised for the fourth time. The main goal is to attract especially girls and young women between 16 and 22 years to the IT industry. In addition to that, the event brings together female influencers, learning institutions and corporations within the industry.

The primal theme of the event is a fun competition track consisting of different technology-related work tasks. The girls compete in teams of 3-4. There are eight different stations and the winning team will be rewarded with summer jobs.

The event has grown in popularity and would benefit of an app for the competitors and the companies that give them grades. This being an IT event, it will also make it seem more professional for the attendees.

There has also been some international interest towards the event concept. Having the concept supported by apps would make it easier to copy to other countries.

Chosen approach

There are three different use cases that the solution needs to cover:

- The people attending the event should be encouraged to visit every company station to undertake the tasks there
- The companies need an easy way to grade the teams
- The admin manages the attendee lists and forms them into teams

Additionally, if there's a tie between the top teams in the competition, the admins would like to have a way to resolve it without relying on drawing lots.

We decided that for the teams (attendees) and the companies having actual apps is a sensible solution. For the admins, however, a simple web based user interface is better. As a result we set out to design and build two apps and a backend with some admin views. All of these elements are fairly simple.

The team app should allow the team to:

- Set a team description
- Take a team picture
- Find out where the company stations are, and which ones they have attended
- See their team score
- Solve a puzzle of some sort, to get extra points (this is for resolving the tie)

The company app should allow the company representatives present in the event to:

- Easily find the team currently visiting them
- Grade the performance of the team

The admin functionality required:

- Add attendees and teams to the system
- Add companies to the system
- List, modify, and delete all the added information
- See the team scores

For the app technology we decided to go with React Native. This gives us both Android and IOS support, using mainly the same codebase. For the backend we chose Node.js and PostgreSQL.

Choosing this stack allowed us to use Pepperoni – Futurice's open source react native blueprint for building cross-platform mobile experiences rapidly with ready-to-use integrated building blocks for common mobile app features.

Project

Futurice senior designer Annina Antinranta kicked off the design together with Super-Ada founder Suvi Erjanti. Several sessions later the basic functionality for the app was ready, and Futurice designer Alena Parshina started with the graphical design.

We had agreed with Minna Kivihalme, director at Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences, that their students will implement the apps. This would be done through their Softala concept, where students create services and solutions for companies. Softala lecturer and software development teacher Juha Hinkula introduced us to the student group, and we got the project underway.

Our student group: Markus Mäkelä, Sari Nuolivirta, Miika Mäkiniemi, Kai Lehto, Juha Paavola, Petri Kortelainen, Jere Vilkkula, and Tuuli Tiilikainen. Great team!

As Futurice's [Pepperoni](#) was chosen to be the tech stack for the implementation, it wasn't difficult for us to provide mentoring and coaching for the team. We arranged our André Medeiros, the creator of Cycle.js, to give the team an introduction to React Native.

Futurice developer Rasmus Eskola started to work with the team about a day each week to help with practicalities. Later in the project our Riku Rouvila, a [Tammerforce](#) developer, arranged a hands-on [Redux](#) course for the team.

The team has been working on the apps and making some design calls supported by our designers. Currently the Softala project is nearing its end and we have had a few sprint reviews for the results. The customer has been happy with the results.

The apps are looking good. Some tweaks need to be completed by Futurice now that the school project has ended, and of course testing and production deployment. It has been a very ambitious project, but it went well. We have already agreed to continue cooperation with Softala the coming year.

As a side track Alena redesigned the [Super-Ada](#) [website](#) to a modern look that goes well with the apps. The student team could not have stretched to do the technical website revamp, but fortunately another Tammerforce developer Viljami Kuosmanen stepped up and implemented the changes.

Super-Ada App

Some screenshots from the app:
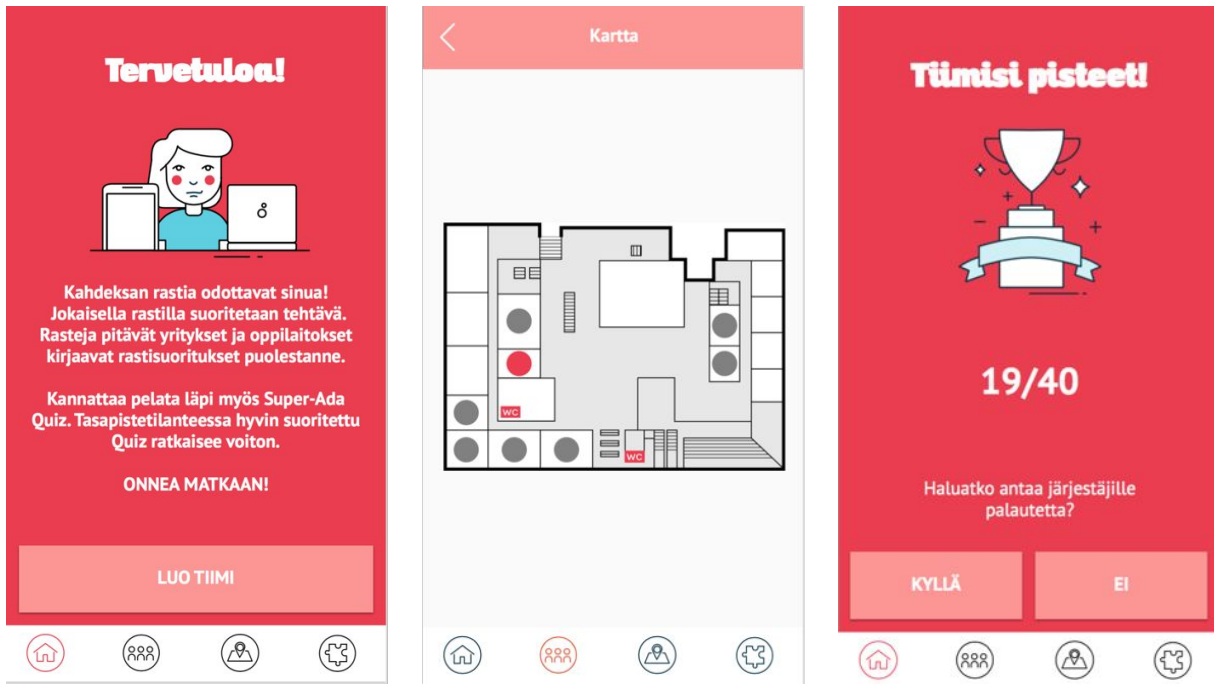
The admin backend is just a simple browser viewable collection of lists, allowing basic user management, listing, and reviewing the received feedback from the participants.

What next?

We are still finalising the app at the time of writing. The new website for Super-Ada is going live.

At the event Futurice will be present – we are one of the eight companies who hold stations there – and we will gather feedback on how our apps work, so that we can do some improvements after the event, if necessary.

We will also publish the entire infrastructure as open source before the Super-Ada event.

More information

If you are interested in this project or solution, get in touch!

Futurice
Teemu Turunen, Corporate Hippie
teemu.turunen@futurice.com

Super-Ada
Suvi Erjanti, Founder
suvi.erjanti@nicetuesday.fi

Haaga-Helia
Minna Kivihalme, Degree Programme Director
minna.kivihalme@haaga-helia.fi

Web links
Chilicorn Fund: www.chilicorn.org
Futurice: www.futurice.com
Haaga-Helia: www.haaga-helia.fi
Nice Tuesday: www.nicetuesday.fi
Super-Ada: www.superada.net
Pepperoni: www.getpepperoni.com