

HIGHER TECHNICAL INSTITUTE

COURSE IN COMPUTER STUDIES

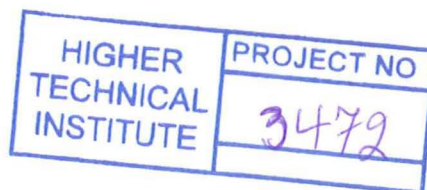
DIPLOMA PROJECT

CS/309

**A WEB BASED MEMBERS
MANAGEMENT SYSTEM FOR THE
CYPRUS COMPUTER SOCIETY**

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PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Preface

Web based systems are becoming more and more popular as the time goes by. Several companies moved from standalone local programs to distributed remote applications accessible from the web and specifically from their browsers. Technology brought new ideas in development and distributed web based systems, which became today, each company's necessity. During the development of the CCS's new systems addition, I realized that in such a complex system, you cannot modify a simple module without being fully aware of its existence. Each module serves a certain part in the system and its contribution cannot be ignored. This HTI project started, as the title says, for the creation of a web based management system. As simple as it may sound, developing such an add-on on a new system might be rather simple. In the case of an existing system though, the complexity and the effort that was given can only be shown at the end result. A simple add-on module could not support the whole system. So to make it more flexible and to increase its life cycle, various other modifications were performed, practically through all of the existing modules; this was done of course to meet the Society's requirements. After the completion of this project, the title that was first assigned, looks incomplete and does not show the effort or the complexity of the system that was first built and then modified. A more appropriate title would be: "Modifications of the CCS's site - Enhancing the Administrators', Companies' and Members' functionality". This title, in my opinion, covers the sections that were involved. A general idea of the new functionalities can be found on this document. Further details on the new functionalities can be found on the User Manual.

Acknowledgments

Personally, I would like to thank Mr. Panicos Masouras for his valuable guidance during the development of this project and for the useful tips that helped me overcome problems that I faced with the system. I would also like to thank, George Stratis, who was the original author and creator of the site, along with Mr. William Schleifer, who is the IT Manager at Netymology, Both have given me valuable information on how the system was constructed and also provided me technical information for the CCS server and the CCS web based system. Finally I would to thank Theklia Kouridou for her contribution in the development of this documentation.

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1.1 INITIAL INVESTIGATION

1.1.1 Introduction

In a world where computers comprise a big part of our everyday lives, we tend to develop application that would make our lives easier and simpler. Since computing is so important, most countries worldwide create organizations for giving out solutions and generally keeping the computer society alive. Here in Cyprus this organization is called 'Cyprus Computer Society' and its main tasks are to provide technical information, job opportunities, technological trends and events and above all, keep the community active. The Cyprus Computer Society (also called CCS for short) is one of the most active societies in the Cyprus computing scene. That led the society to create a site that would give fully freedom to the society's administrators while providing simple interfaces to use. The current system, which is basically a CMS (Content Management System), was constructed by another student called George Stratis. It was written in PHP and MySQL is used as backend. The whole system is running on an Apache server. More technical information will be discussed later on. The current system is now hosted on one of Cyprus' leading hosting companies called Netymology. Netymology specializes in web design, e-commerce websites, web applications for content management, interface design, identity and branding. The current system though, faces some serious problems that had to be resolved in order for the organization to fully utilize a web CMS. These problems caused the organization to do a lot of work manually instead of doing it online as it was intended to be. Some of these problems were mass email instability, limitations on the subscriptions, lack of member's groups and general report generation. These, among many others, have to be resolved in order for the system to run smoothly with no error and misses.

As an HTI project, the investigation and eventually development as well as fixing the current system is to be carried out. That will allow the CCS to work mainly through their site and eliminate as much as possible all the manual work.