The Computerworld Honors Program

Honoring those who use Information Technology to benefit society

Final Copy of Case Study

YEAR:
2012

STATUS:
Laureate

Organization name:
Microsoft

Organization URL:
www.microsoft.com/s2b

Project Name:
Students to Business

What social/humanitarian issue was the project designed to address? What specific metrics did you use to measure the project's success?

The Microsoft Students to Business program helps students connect to internships and jobs at companies using Microsoft technologies. Since 2010, student employment has been declining, especially for young people under the age of 25. This program is aimed at this audience, to help them gain the experience they need and introduce them to companies that Microsoft works with and that need the skills they are learning. In 2011, more than 30,000 students were connected to employment opportunities. In the last 2 years, the S2B program has more than tripled the number of students it has helped, reaching 175,000 registered students, adding access to 25 countries in 2011 -- reaching now more than 100 countries.

Please describe the technologies used and how those technologies were deployed in an innovative way. Also, please include any technical or other challenges that were overcome for the successful implementation of the project.

The S2B program is a .Net-based portal that uses Microsoft Azure to host a mobile application and web widget that offers job searching and company research from any web-enabled device or Windows Phone. Using Microsoft Azure, we were able to build one application that could be easily localized and adapted to any website and platform. We are just now embedding this application across many sites and platforms to enable young job searchers to find opportunities more easily on their local sites and in their local languages. Using .Net and AJAX, we are able to quickly localize and modify each portal for local requirements and legislation. Students register in

the Microsoft-sponsored program portal, where they have access to learning materials, certification discounts, free software and a listing of internship and job opportunities posted by Microsoft customers and partners. Students may profile themselves, highlighting their Microsoft technology experience, and apply for jobs. Registered employers may search for students who have the appropriate Microsoft skill, such as SharePoint, .Net or Silverlight, and filter for students with experience in Imagine Cup or with a Microsoft certification. Maintaining multiple platforms, in multiple languages, while monitoring and offering dynamic reports across the sites was a challenge and required SQL reporting services.

Please list the specific humanitarian benefits the project has yielded so far.

Young graduates and students are exposed to more job opportunities and are given internship experiences that help them become more employable. Companies that traditionally pay large sums of money for trained technical talent are able to reduce costs and find young people with the skills they need and the willingness to learn their businesses. Companies that are using Microsoft technologies to run their business have an easier and more economical time finding talent, as typically, of the 5 students selected for an interview, 1 can be hired, as a majority of these students have been proactive in learning Microsoft technologies and have participated in various Microsoft learning and development programs.

Please provide the best example of how the project has benefited a specific individual, enterprise or organization. Feel free to include personal quotes from individuals who have directly benefited from the work.

Hasan Tuncer, a computer science senior at Koc University in Istanbul, recently completed his S2B internship at Digiturk, Turkey's largest satellite television provider. Tuncer especially valued Digiturk's willingness to let him work on ambitious projects that took advantage of what he's learned. "When I started working there, they told me I would be implementing Web applications," says Tuncer. "But after three days, they noticed that I had some experience with multimedia networks and wireless television, so they put me on a project to implement an Internet browser for televisions." There are many example of students from various countries around the world that have received an opportunity with Microsoft technologies, and many examples of companies that have mentored or hired them for full-time employment.