

MilkCrate Case Study

The Problem

MilkCrate's mission is to simplify sustainable living by making it fun, trackable, and responsible. Like tracking health with Fitbit, MilkCrate aims to bring the same idea into improving sustainability. Through the release of their personal app, MilkCrate successfully proved this can be done and done well. This success attracted larger organizations interested in partnering with MilkCrate to track internal sustainability. Universities and large corporations have stepped up to the sustainability challenge by signing up with MilkCrate. This was great news for them but it required a serious rethinking of the app. Morgan Berman, the founder and CEO at MilkCrate, came to SparkNET with a twofold request. First to transform the current individual app into a tool for organizations, and second to create a more sophisticated experience that could cause a ripple effect of sustainability into the community around these organizations. The idea of the social connection and how it could inspire a domino effect of community support was pivotal in moving the app forward. App users could currently engage with events and had the ability to view a basic business list, but they lacked the sense of community this new version needed.



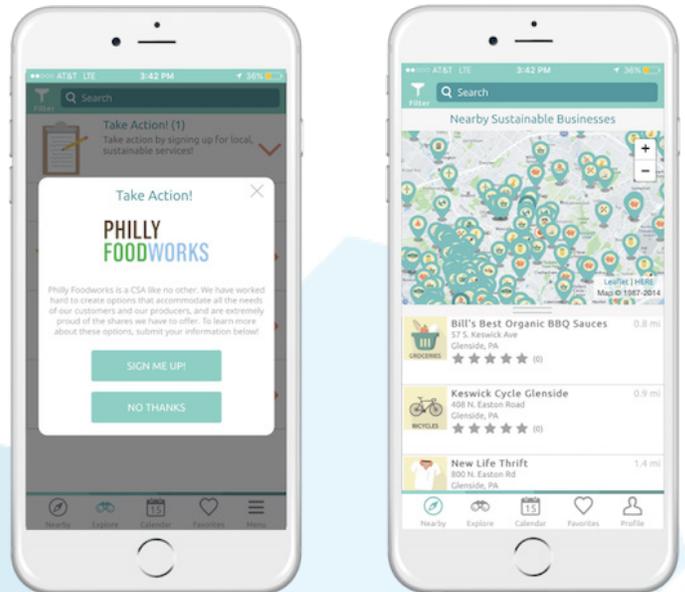
An existing mobile app required a robust upgrade offering more elaborate functionality and better structure for a supportive community within the app. The second part called for development of a web app for use by non-mobile users both on the main interface as well as the administration side of the app. Tasked with CloudMine integration as a key requirement, SparkNET needed to bridge the gap between the new web app and CloudMine's database system in use by the existing mobile app. The integration required building up SparkNET's own backend so that the app could run with all the newly desired functionality.



The Solution

SparkNET's role in MilkCrate's enhancements has tremendously changed their business model from the individual user signup to a dynamic system where users could actively engage with their organization or university for a greater good. The integrated competition between users lends itself to the community-centric approach, creating a business model that is more attractive to those who would like to advertise their companies and services within the app.

SparkNET leveraged Angular JS, CoffeeScript, and SASS in building the mobile app, and employed Ruby on Rails for the front end and back end of the web app and its console. The development team integrated with CloudMine for the login authority and worked to ensure support for a large number of concurrent users as well as those users contained within the general database. The new functionality allows the app to successfully upload 100,000 users all at once.



The Result

Initial beta testing proved successful, forming a good platform for gaining further investment and publicity around the app. Large clients continue to show interest in signing up for MilkCrate.

Through this project, SparkNET honed our skills in CoffeeScript, allowing our teams to work more effectively and efficiently within JavaScript in a simpler way. Our team also discovered best practices in interacting with CloudMine, a versatile tool that allows for simplified development and swifter build times.

MilkCrate generated unique designs that could quickly come to life at the hands of a skilled development team. They also gained experience in pitching the app to potential clients and investors and fine tuned their quality assurance to include thorough testing on an app.

Development continues with further agreed-upon updates, such as bringing the database work internally, adding a CO2 tracker, and introducing gamification with teams, leaderboards, and reward systems. The future iterations will come to market upon finalization of the estimates and required components of the next build.