

**Project Title:** Ants

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### **Overview of the Product**

Ants is the first online space for nonprofits and volunteers to meet. Volunteers and community members find opportunities to get involved with nonprofits and activist organizations on our platform. Organizations can make posts for events they're hosting, like petitions, fundraisers, marches, and volunteer events. Organizations can track their volunteers and see dashboards for engagement. Volunteers are able to search for organizations they want to follow and get curated recommendations based on their location and interests. Volunteers have a feed of events and posts from organizations they follow.

### **Stakeholders**

There are two types of stakeholders that use Ants: volunteers and nonprofit organizations. Volunteers can be many different individuals, and anyone can find an opportunity to volunteer on Ants. Currently, volunteer opportunities are decentralized and difficult to find. Most volunteers are older than 35 years old and are less active on social media. They need simple, clear technologies to help them find volunteering opportunities. There are also much younger volunteers in our age demographic who are more technology savvy. We kept the older demographics in mind when building Ants UX/UI.

Nonprofit leaders are typically older and less familiar with technology. One study found that 83% of nonprofit leadership is older than 40 years old and not utilizing technology. We built simple UX features on Ants to ensure that nonprofit organizers could easily share their events and information.

### **Market Opportunity and Value Proposition**

There are 1.5M nonprofit organizations registered in the U.S., and the nonprofit sector contributes an estimated \$1 trillion to the U.S. economy each year. Our goal at Ants is to ensure that nonprofit organizations are empowered to host events and find volunteers and volunteers can easily find opportunities to support their favorite causes. In a survey of more than 700 nonprofits

leaders, 85% believed that technology was critical to their success but only 23% had a long-term strategy of how to use technology effectively.

Our goal is to empower nonprofit organizations to focus on what they're best at, making impact, by taking care of all their technical needs. By consolidating information into one online space, nonprofit organizations can source from a much larger pool of volunteers and reduce the strain of marketing. Volunteers can find actionable events for the causes they are passionate about.

### **Technology**

The technologies used to build this platform were: React, Javascript, Heroku, MongoDB, Mongoose, Bcrypt, Bulma, and Sass. React was the framework for building Javascript UI components. Heroku was used to deploy our web app to the web. MongoDB and Mongoose were used for our database management and API routes. We collected data like volunteer information, nonprofit information, follows, posts, and statistics like which posts are popular. We used the Bcrypt library to encrypt passwords. We used Bulma and Sass for styling and UI.

### **Competition**

The current solutions in the market are confusing and difficult to navigate. Some nonprofits use email listservs or Facebook events to advertise their organization. These are both narrow and temporary solutions. One-off events are difficult to track and have high churn rates. Other nonprofits use their own website and white-label event management tools. While these technologies are effective, they don't bring in new volunteers and take a lot of time and money for upkeep. Ants is the perfect solution for nonprofit organizations to find a wide group of volunteers with little money and upkeep involved.

### **Costs and Revenue**

Ants is designed for nonprofit use, so we limit fees and profit from the platform. We currently offer the product for free, but we would eventually build a freemium model for nonprofit organizations. These organizations could pay for premium features like more advanced internal tools, dashboards, and marketing communications.