

Why is software development so expensive?

A case study with the Census Crunch – an application as simple as it can be

The Census Crunch doesn't do much. It just presents the data of all U.S. transport companies (1.7 million companies) in a manner you can handle and segment. Here is how long it took to develop each feature.

Initial development:

- Setup database
 - Setup importing of FMCSA's CSV file
 - Search form with min/max number of trucks
 - Quick-and-dirty list of results
- About 6h

Page title in browser
10m

Navigation bar
16m

Search by state
18m

Page with details about a business
1h9m

Fix some typos, e.g. "Number of drivers" instead of "Number of power drivers"
5m

Pagination controls
1h53m

When a value is empty, show empty (it used to have the word "None")
18m

Installing on a server
35m

Name	State	Power units	Drivers	Email
DOUG ANDRUS DISTRIBUTING LLC	IL	264	285	CHUCK.MECHAM@DOUGANDRUS.COM
BUILDERS TRANSPORTATION CO LLC	TN	244	244	MORGAN@BUILDERSTRANSPORTATION.COM
WHEELER MACHINERY CO	UT	204	121	MBREWER@WHEELERCAT.COM
DAIRY FARMERS OF AMERICA INC	KS	255	255	J.HODGINS@DFAMILK.COM
DYNO NOBEL INC	UT	247	172	CARL.BYRD@AM.DYNONOBEL.COM
HERSHEY'S ICE CREAM	PA	291	283	PATRICK@HERSHEYSCREAM.COM
PILOT FREIGHT SERVICES	PA	213	222	EMORRISON@PILOTDELIVERS.COM
GARDA CL ATLANTIC INC	FL	233	80	ADRIANNA.NICHOLSON@GARDA.COM
QUARLES PETROLEUM INC	VA	205	138	DBROWN@QUARLESINC.COM
ROBERT HEATH TRUCKING INC	TX	298	290	JSTEPHENS@ROBERTHEATH.COM

Make list sortable by clicking on headings
2h29m

After clicking "submit", the form must have the values entered (it used to give you an empty form with the search results).
8m

Simple "search for"
33m

"About" menu item
11m

Text in "about" page
30m

Export search results as CSV
1h36m

Modify CSV so that Excel does not interpret zips as numbers etc.
17m

In the email address, create link to what is usually the transport company web site.
14m

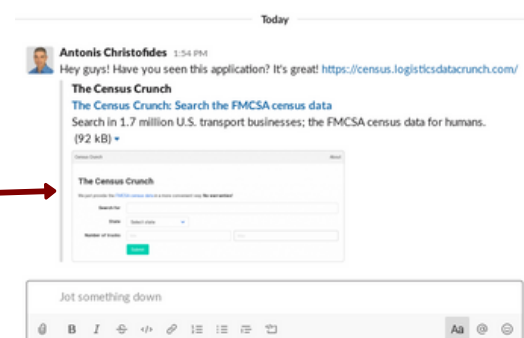
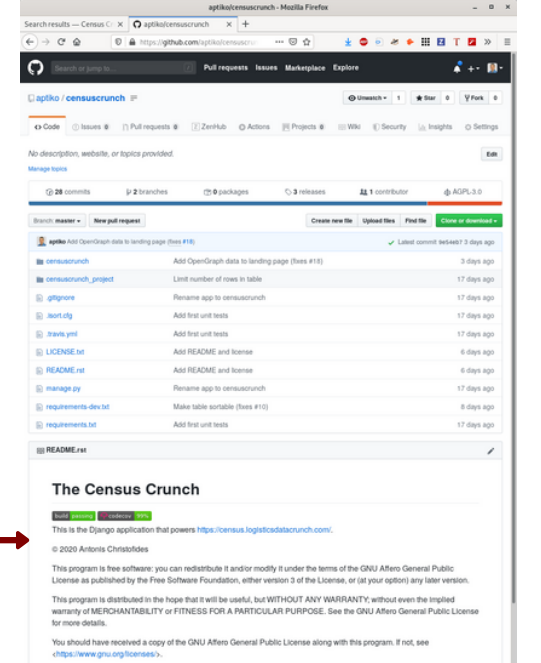
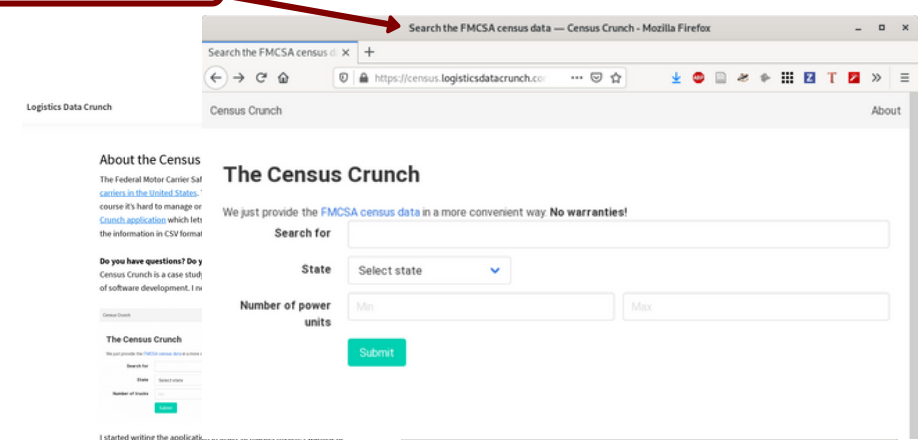
Improvements in list: add columns state, power units, drivers, email; remove DOT number. Show "do-business-as" name if it exists, otherwise legal name. Truncate name if long.
13m

Licensing information
13m

Add information such that when pasting "https://census.logisticsdatacrunch.com/" on Facebook, LinkedIn, Slack, etc., it automatically shows info about the site.
25m

Improve page title in browser for landing page
7m

Initially the landing page was the list of all companies—then it became just a search form. This change took 19m



Total: 18 hours
More info: <https://logisticsdatacrunch.com/censuscrunch>
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