

Case Study: COVID-Tracking App

MIBAR COVID-Tracking App Delivers Safe Return to Work



COVID-Tracking App

Key Features:

- COVID questionnaire
- In-Office Requests (booking a socially distanced seat at the office)
- Client Requests (tracking exposure off-site)
- Notifications and easy approval or denial process for HR
- Visibility and dashboards for HR

Software

Power Platform

Executive Summary

Inspiration can strike for anyone at any time. For the development team at MIBAR, this is exactly what happened during our transition back to a somewhat normal office experience. As an innovator and leader in the Microsoft Power Platform, we encourage our employees to identify weaknesses and create solutions that overcome challenges.

The encouragement we provide our employees has resulted in unique applications, workflows, and analyses that help not only our clients, but our team members as well. So when we noticed a manual, paper-based, and somewhat risky process in our return to work, we did what we do best—built a solution to address it.

Paper, Pens, and Less Than Stellar Visibility: A High-Touch, Manual Return to Work

Headquartered in the center of Manhattan, the MIBAR office spent the better part of 2020 vacant. Whether by law or by choice, the MIBAR leadership team took major steps to equip staff members and consultants with all the tools they needed to get the job done from home, ensuring that we didn't miss a beat for our clients over the course of the pandemic.

The Path Back: Ramping Up Attendance and the Need for Contact Tracing

But months later, it was time to start the move back. With the safety of our workforce a top priority, we have taken every reasonable step to stop the spread and protect our people during the return to in-person work.

Our process of returning to work involved a strategic ramp up, encouraging employees to come into the office twice in September and four times per month during the fourth quarter. But in order to follow guidelines set by the State of New York, we wanted to take steps to understand who may have been exposed in the event that an outbreak does occur.

The Challenge: Stopping the Spread and Practicing What We Preach

But as we started the move, we realized an issue—our process of tracking staff exposure, temperatures, and symptoms was flawed.

Initially using a paper-based check-ins, check-outs, and seating, we noticed that the process was not only inefficient, but could actually do more harm than good. Employees had to pick up a pen and touch the same piece of paper that others touched before they could enter or exit the office. Though we were lucky to avoid any incidents, such a process posed both an unnecessary risk and an unfriendly user experience.

“In the age of this virus, [a paper-based approach] seemed like a very silly way of approaching this very common problem that businesses face or will face,” said Tom Berzok, Solutions Consultant at MIBAR. “Especially in one of the nation’s COVID hotspots, the use of pens and paper just wouldn’t do. We needed a better way to ensure safety, cleanliness, and compliance at our office.”

MIBAR Develops COVID-Tracking HR App Using Power Platform

Immediately after noticing the challenges and risk that a paper-based COVID-tracking system posed, we got to work.

Our HR and leadership teams needed to understand who was coming in, when they entered and exited, where they were sitting, and whether or not an employee may need to stay away or get tested.

In order to make this happen, our Power Platform expert got to work.

Using the low-code PowerApps development platform, the flexible language of the Common Data Service, and the workflow-enabling Power Automate solution, our team was able to get up and running with this solution with just a little bit of work.

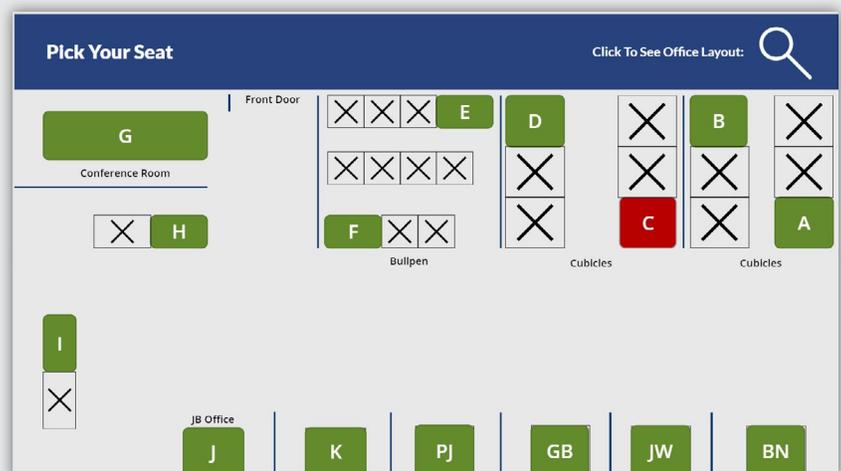
PowerApps: Building a COVID-Tracking Application with Ease

Considered one of the easiest and quickest ways to build a powerful application, the first step in the process was to build a product in PowerApps that replaced the manual, paper-based log system. Providing fast and easy access, a friendly user experience, and a minimal touch logging process, our PowerApps-built COVID-tracking solution that employees quickly embraced.

The approach to this is two-pronged: In-office requests and client requests, followed by a COVID questionnaire.

In-Office Requests: Booking a Socially Distanced Seat at the Office

An in-office request documents the date that an employee intends to come into the office and the reason for the request. For those coming into the office on a MIBAR request, the employee simply goes through the process and essentially books time and seat at the office—much like they would do at a movie theatre or sporting event. If seats are filled for the requested day, employees can simply move to the next day to find an available seat.



Client Request: Tracking Exposure Off-Site

The other approach to this is the client request. In the event that an employee needs to serve a client at their place of business, employees can document where they will go and the date that they will be there. This will provide the necessary information to help track exposure in the event that one of our employees was exposed in the field.

In-Office Request

Employee
Tom Berzok

Request Date
11/5/2020

Client Requests Submitted for This Date: **1**

Request Type
Client Office

Client
Please Write the Name of Your Client

Available Seats:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| A | B | D |
| E | F | H |
| I | J | |

Submit Request

COVID Questionnaire: Connecting Appearances to Exposure

Following the requests, employees will plan their appearance and complete a questionnaire. Pairing easily understood yes/no questions regarding symptoms, test results, and potential recent contact with a temperature log, employees will know immediately if they are approved or denied. Beyond this, the app provides an easy check-in and check-out process that will deliver any information to the head of HR.

COVID-19 Questionnaire

Employee
Tom Berzok

1. Have you experience a fever of 100.4 degrees F or greater, a new cough, or shortness of breathe within the past 10 days?
No

2. In the past 10 days, have you gotten a positive result from a COVID-19 test that tested saliva or used a nost or throat swab? (not a blood test).
No

3. To the best of your knowledge, in the past 14 days, have you been in close contact (withing with anyone while they had COVID-19?
No

Temperature
Ex. 98.6

Hello Tom Berzok: Thursday, November 5, 2020

MIBAR[®]
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Submit an In-Office Request | **Review Submitted Requests**

Questionnaire Submitted | You are not permitted to be in the office. Please return home.

Common Data Service: Providing the Integration, Logic, and Language

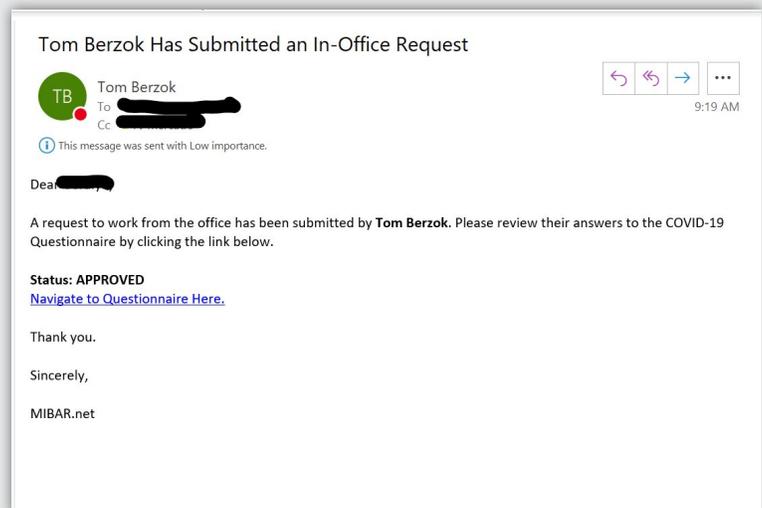
An easily built and user-friendly application is one thing, a back-end that delivers insights is another. That's where the Common Data Service comes in. The Common Data Service allows data to be integrated from multiple sources into a single store, making integration easy. Our solution needed to notify the right people about the information put into the app, namely our Head of HR.

Power Automate: Facilitating the Reporting and Approval Workflow

The third layer of the solution came from Microsoft's Power Automate. Our Head of HR needed to receive notifications each time an employee submitted a COVID questionnaire documenting potential exposure, symptoms, and temperature to approve or deny a request.

Easy Approval and Denial Based on Questionnaire

To make this happen, we set up the workflow to send an email for each day and each person who submitted a questionnaire. In this, the head of HR would receive an email stating "[Employee A] submitted questionnaire on [DATE] and [TIME]. They are [approved/rejected] based on the questions."



End of Day Roundup

In addition to the instant notification, another workflow provided an end of day roundup of the people who filled out the questionnaire, the people who said they'd be coming in, and whether or not they were present.

| Date | Employee ID | Request Status | Q1 Exposed | Q2 Responder | Q3 Contact |
|------------|-------------|----------------|------------|--------------|------------|
| 10/28/2020 | [Redacted] | Approved | No | No | No |
| 10/28/2020 | [Redacted] | Approved | No | No | No |
| 10/29/2020 | [Redacted] | Approved | No | No | No |
| 10/28/2020 | [Redacted] | Approved | No | No | No |
| 10/28/2020 | [Redacted] | Approved | No | No | No |
| 10/28/2020 | [Redacted] | Approved | No | No | No |

Connecting the Team with Microsoft 365: Shared Calendar Keeps Everyone on the Same Page

Paired with the end of day roundup, we wanted to keep our entire team on the same page. Much like the use of a vacation calendar or PTO calendar, data flows through the application to keep everyone informed of who is in the office or plans to be in the office on a given day.

The Results: Safe, User-Friendly, Automated—And Available for Clients

By building an app, connecting the data, and facilitating the reporting, even the most hesitant of employees can put trust in our commitment to their safety.

Today, MIBAR has taken steps to move back to the office safely, and has in turn developed a client-facing application designed to deliver a win-win-win:

- **Employees are able to submit responses to the questionnaire from the safety of their own devices, at their own convenience, whenever and wherever they may be.**
- **HR Staff gets the necessary information about requests, questionnaires, and attendance.**
- **Executives get to feel comfortable knowing that they have encouraged a safe return.**

Get to know more about our COVID-Tracking Application by [**reaching out here**](#).