



## **BizKonnnect – A Business Networking App**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Business networking is crucial for the growth and success of any enterprise, particularly small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs). However, many SMEs struggle to develop a vast network of connections and resources that can aid in their expansion. In response to this challenge, this research proposes a Business Networking App that will enable businesses to connect with relevant partners and grow their networks in a more effective and cost-efficient manner. This app will provide a digital platform for businesses to collaborate, communicate and network, enabling them to expand their businesses in a more agile and innovative way. The proposed model offers SMEs a comprehensive marketing strategy that saves them time and money while also facilitating their connections with the right partners. This research has significant implications as it provides a new way for SMEs to increase their networks and achieve business success. The proposed model aims to contribute to the development of innovative solutions for SMEs to leverage digital technologies to their advantage, enabling them to grow and compete in the dynamic business environment.

**Keywords:** Business Networking, Collaboration, Referrals, SMEs, Small Businesses

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### **1. Introduction**

The competitive business landscape can be challenging for small businesses, especially when they are competing with larger brands. Small businesses may struggle to access the same level of resources, reach, and technology as their larger counterparts. As a result, they may find it difficult to grow their customer base, increase their market share, and expand their operations. Guru Dev Teeluckdharry [3] suggests that reciprocity can benefit SMEs by facilitating cooperation, joint ventures, mergers, and acquisitions. Collaborative networks enable SMEs to learn from each other in terms of resources, technology, e-commerce, and organizational capabilities, leading to higher efficiencies and comparative advantages. Collaboration can be a powerful tool for small businesses to overcome these challenges, but it can be difficult for them to find suitable partners or mentors.

This is where the proposed system, BizKonnnect, comes in. It offers a range of features that can help small businesses overcome the barriers to collaboration. The platform provides a convenient and efficient way for businesses to connect with like-minded individuals, explore new business opportunities, and communicate with potential partners, mentors, or customers. It also offers a job candidates CVs section, allowing businesses to easily find new talents or fill required positions. Additionally, by providing a platform for businesses to showcase their products and services to a wider audience, the proposed system can help small businesses increase their visibility and attract new customers and clients. With its user-friendly interface and easy-to-use features, the proposed system is an ideal solution for businesses looking to grow and expand their operations.

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### **2. Related Work**

This section provides a review of prior research papers and related work that offer information about previous systems or methods. In this paper, a system is proposed to assist businesses in increasing their awareness and engagement for better profitability and collaboration.

The study by Ignatius Mpando et al. [1] in Zimbabwe shows that business networking can improve SME performance through increased innovation. SME managers can benefit from these insights by accessing new ideas through networking. Ross Brennan et al. [2] analyzed B2B marketing literature and 10 large B2B tech companies' social media use. US firms led in social media engagement, using it to position themselves as thought leaders and drive market change on platforms like LinkedIn, Facebook, and blogs. Guru Dev Teeluckdharry [3] proposed a framework for Mauritian SMEs to grow through business networking, marketing, and industry analysis, with a focus on enhancing the "Made in Mauritius" brand and adding value to the global economy. The framework aims to form business networks based on six motives, including legitimacy through association with efficient SMEs and large enterprises in foreign markets. Daniel Tolstoy et al. [4] studied the impact of product and service differentiation on SMEs' customer reference marketing in foreign markets using a sample of 188 Swedish SMEs. The study aimed to contribute to small business literature. Ramona-Alexandra Neghină et al. [5] identified key requirements for online networking among entrepreneurs through a focus group of 15 eCommerce entrepreneurs. Yvette E. Gelogo, et. al [6], proposed developing a social business mobile application using Drupal as a case study. Drupal is a content management system that allows for the creation of custom modules with unique source code to meet specific requirements. Yigit Aslan [7] research highlights the importance of LinkedIn for B2B lead

generation, with 80% of leads coming from the platform. Brand equity is also emphasized as crucial in B2B decision making. Barry Berman's [8] study compares traditional marketing programs that target consumers with referral marketing programs that target both referrers and referred consumers. Umut Ayman, et. al [9], studied Ingoes, the first mobile app for the property market in Northern Cyprus, which provides a competitive advantage as a unique real estate app in the mobile marketing industry, designed for B2B activities with local business partnerships. Hadjer Khider, et. al [10] used Model Driven Engineering (MDE) and social recommender systems to improve BP model reuse. They defined meta-models, compared their approach, and generated a program for recommending BP models based on a LinkedIn user profile input. Shady Boukhary, et. al [11] developed and tested a Clean Architecture model using Flutter for mobile app development. The architecture package proved effective and efficient, allowing for parallel programming and ease of testing. The model was tested by building a complete application for the Hotter'n Hell racing event, and was compatible with various devices. Dilkhaz Y. Mohammed, et. al [12], proposed creating a cross-platform taxi service library for Android and iOS developers using Dart Object-Oriented Programming, Dio, and Retrofit. The study found that using these tools reduces development time, simplifies the codebase, and increases application productivity and efficiency. By publishing the library on an official repository, programmers can easily use and update the package as needed.

The related work focuses on business networking systems, covering topics such as innovation, social media, framework development, industry analysis, and mobile application development using Flutter. The studies aim to enhance SME growth, improve networking between entrepreneurs, and increase productivity and efficiency of business applications.

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### 3. Research Objectives

The research objective is to propose a system that facilitates business networking and idea sharing for SMEs, small businesses, and developing businesses. These businesses face difficulties in meeting their specific requirements and receiving dedicated support and resources from industry experts in the digital market. The proposed system aims to provide a platform that fulfils these requirements and offers dedicated support and resources from industry experts to assist them in crucial stages of their operation. The system also aims to enhance business networks, improve engagement with potential clients, and boost business profits through increased creativity and innovation. Additionally, the system will promote increased creativity and innovation among SMEs and small businesses by facilitating idea sharing and collaboration. The proposed system will help businesses develop new ideas and approaches that can improve their operations and enhance their products or services.

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### 4. Proposed System & Methodology

#### 4.1 System Block Diagram:

In Figure 1, the system block diagram is demonstrated, starting with a splash screen leading to a typical Login/Sign up page. Users must provide their details, such as email, phone number, password, company name, username, etc., to register. After successful registration, users can log in and access modules on the Home Screen, including Explore Leads, Referrals, Dashboard, User Inbox, etc. The REST API retrieves leads stored in the database, powered by Django. The administrator can manage events and create seminars, among other tasks.

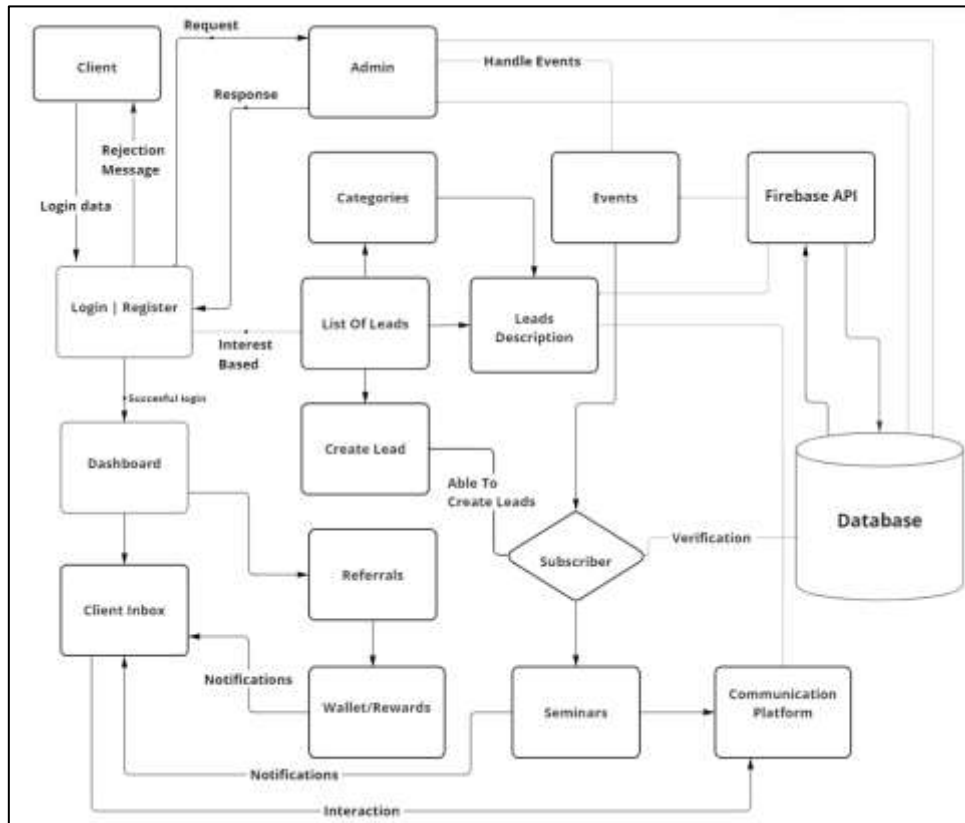


Figure 1) Block Diagram of Bizconnect App

#### 4.2 Methodology:

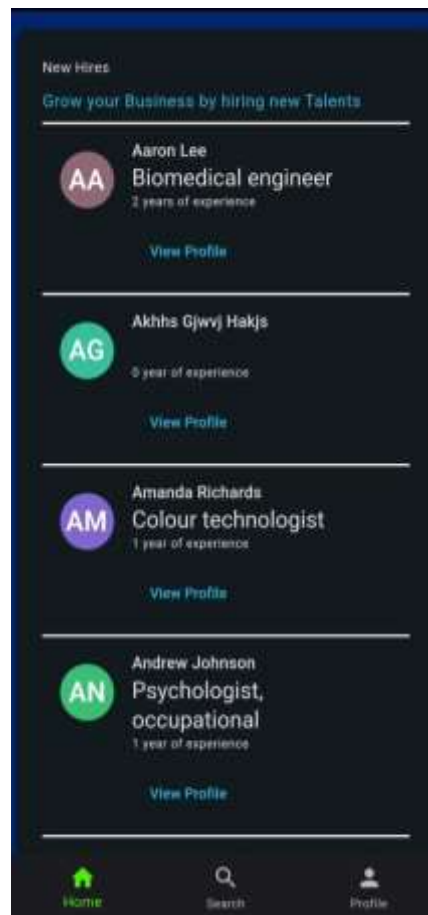
Through the use of the latest technology, such as Flutter framework, REST API, and Django, the system provides users with a seamless experience in expanding their network and staying informed about new trends and opportunities in their field. The system starts with a user registration process, where users input their information and undergo manual verification by an administrator to ensure accuracy. Once verified, users can access various modules within the application, including Explore leads, Referrals, Dashboard, and User Inbox, among others. These modules provide users with a comprehensive view of their business activities and allow them to connect with other professionals in their field. One unique feature of the proposed system is the referral program, where users can earn coins by sharing the app with their network. This incentivizes users to expand the user base and strengthen the overall community, while also allowing them to extend their subscription through earned points. In addition to generating leads and providing a referral program, the proposed system periodically informs users about new business trends and opportunities through seminars. Only subscribed users can enroll in these seminars, either through an invitation or through in-app notifications sent by the firebase API.

## 5. Results & Analysis

The result section includes partial screenshots of the proposed system's interface.



**Figure 2) Home Screen**



**Figure 3) New Hires Screen**

Figure 2 shows the Home Screen of the application. Here, users will find everything they need to stay up-to-date and organized with their professional life. Whether they're looking for upcoming seminar events, business requests, important notifications, or new job candidates CVs.

Figure 3 shows the New Hires Screen of the application, it includes the job candidates CVs. When it comes to finding new talent for the team, app's job candidates CVs section (New Hires) on the home screen, makes it easy to review and compare resumes. Filter by qualifications, experience, and other criteria to quickly find the best fit for the research team.



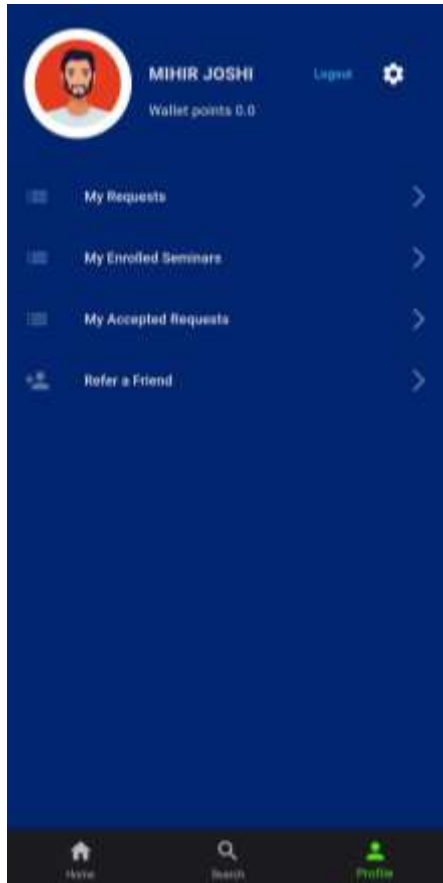
**Figure 4) Search Screen**

Figure 4 shows the search screen of the app, this allows the users to search for different types of information based on specific keywords. The screen has three tabs: Profile, Businesses, and Requests.

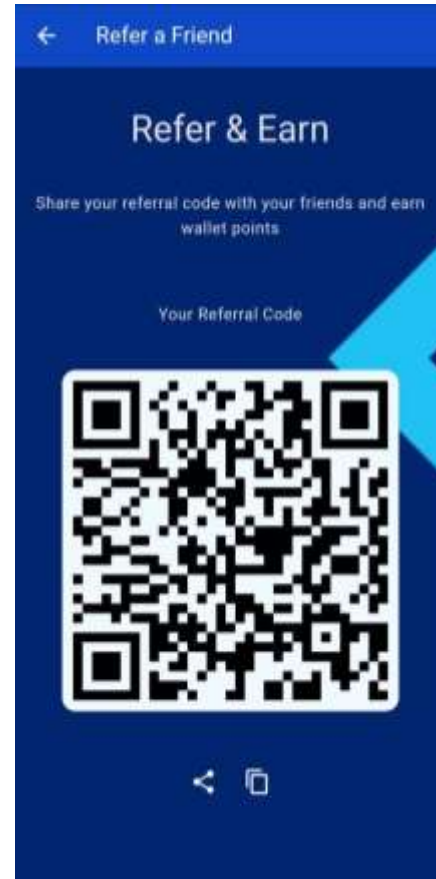
The Profile tab allows users to search for other user profiles based on specific keywords. The app then displays a list of matching profiles, including profile pictures, usernames, and brief descriptions. Users can then click on a profile to view more details, such as their interests, and contact information.

The Businesses tab allows users to search for businesses or services based on specific keywords. The app then displays a list of matching businesses, including their name, and contact information. Users may then click on a business to view more details, such as their hours of operation, customer trust, and product offerings.

The Requests tab would allow users to search for specific requests or needs posted by other users. The app then displays a list of matching requests, including a brief description and contact information for the user who posted the request.



**Figure 5) User Dashboard Screen**



**Figure 6) Referral Screen**

Figure 5 shows the user dashboard screen. On the dashboard screen, users can view their created business requests, including the status of each request, such as whether it is pending, in progress, or completed. Additionally, users can view their accepted business requests, which are requests that have been approved by other users or administrators. The user dashboard screen also includes information about seminars that the user has enrolled in. This information may include the seminar title, date, and time, as well as any relevant materials or resources that are available for download.

Figure 4.16 shows referral screen, where users can easily send referrals and earn points for their recommendations. To get started, user can simply share a unique QR code or referral link via messaging apps, email, or social media. As user referrals sign up or make purchases using the unique link or QR code, they'll earn points that can be redeemed for reward

## 6. Conclusion

Business networking has become an essential aspect of modern business, enabling individuals and companies to establish relationships, expand their networks, and reach their target audience more effectively. With the rise of digital communication, business networking apps have become increasingly important, offering businesses a convenient way to connect and collaborate with others. Through the use of case studies and analysis, this paper has demonstrated the benefits of using these apps to build and maintain business relationships.

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