The 3th and 4th of November saw the SAP InnoJam being held in Amsterdam, a pre-conference event leading up to the SAP TechEd in the RAI Convention Centre. Several students who are enrolled in the Business Process Integration minor at the University of Applied Sciences Amsterdam (HvA) were lucky enough to participate in this melting pot of innovative ideas and creative solutions.

The event lasts a mere 30 hours within which diverse international groups consisting of programmers, students and SAP professionals use "design-thinking" methods to not only develop but also create solutions to several real problems that have been facing the health care industry for decades.

The several students which represented the University of Applied Sciences Amsterdam (HvA) were divided among 7 teams which all worked on a different exercises focusing on the creation of a new software solution which would empower your doctor to make better decisions about your health.

My team consisted of four German students of which three were enrolled in a programming study back in Germany. One of them was studying Administration and, just like me, lacked any programming skills. Then there were Oliver, a very quiet British programmer who turned out a computer genius, and Egbert, a Dutch SAP programming professional. Together, we were to come up with a solution to make the 100.000+ medical papers that are published yearly easy accessible for healthcare professionals.

Faces from left to right: Michael, Nico, Julia, Matias, me (Laurens), Martin, Egbert and Oliver.

To guide us through the several steps of the design-thinking roadmap was Julia, a 'design-thinking professional' from Germany. Together, we used the entire Sunday to research, brainstorm, gather, judge, develop and better the ideas we came up with to co-create our ultimate solution.

Our general product was a search engine solely open to healthcare professionals in which all papers could be searched by key words to enable the quick find of relevant information to the condition they were dealing with.

Also, we wanted to add the possibility to search set diagnoses by doctors worldwide in the same way. By making these available to healthcare professionals you enable them to see how other doctors have treated certain disorders and if their approach was effective. By doing so, you really empower the doctor to make better decisions about a patient's health.

After elaborating on the idea, it was time to actually realize what we've put to paper. From 7PM on Sunday until 3PM the next day the teams had time to realize their product by programming using the latest SAP HANA software. These 20 hours were well spent by a lot of teams, as many programmers worked throughout the entire night with either little or no sleep at all. Not having any programming skills proved itself useful as it made my presence during the night needless and granted me almost a full night's sleep.

The next morning, it turned out most of our programmers had worked the whole night to ensure the proper functioning of our idea in a software environment. Though, as the clock passed the 3PM deadline and the team presentations were due, our product wasn't working as stable as was expected making for somewhat of an improvised presentation which didn't really show the power of what our idea had to deliver.

The experience itself was both educational and fun, leaving everyone pleased of their work and the ideas we've come up with which, when actually working and implemented, could well improve the medical condition of people worldwide.