

Event Organization and Promotion

Diogo Miguel Barrinha Barradas

Activities Report

Abstract—The present report describes the execution of my activity which involved a close collaboration with NEIIST and SET External Relations team. Starting from task distribution, I became responsible for organizing a workshop in DSI/RNL Services and an Android programming workshop. Also, I was assigned to minor tasks such as to aid in the organization of (Quase) Tudo Sobre LEIC and (Quase) Tudo Sobre MEIC, while promoting relevant activities that come to NEIIST through e-mail.

The DSI/RNL services workshop took place in Alameda campus with members from each entity as speakers. Although being timely organized and promoted, a workshop like this in a less known theme requires an extra effort in promotion, once the attendance was well below the expected. The Android workshop was co-organized with IEEE-IST Computer Science Student Branch and took place both in Alameda and Taguspark campi, involving the organization and promotion of two separate sessions. This workshop was considered a success once the attendance met the expected numbers, filling up the room in Taguspark.

The task performed in SET had as outcome the ongoing contact with several companies to sponsor the event and the confirmation of three speakers.

Index Terms—Event, External Relations, Organization, Promotion, Workshop.

1 INTRODUCTION

THIS report describes the activity I performed for the Independent Studies course at Instituto Superior Técnico (IST), while being a collaborator with Núcleo Estudantil de Informática do Instituto Superior Técnico (NEIIST). Section 2 of the report describes the way tasks were distributed among collaborators, what were my primary tasks and which tasks I organized in an autonomous fashion. In Section 3 to Section 5 I detail the tasks I performed in ongoing NEIIST events and the work developed while taking part of Semana Empresarial e Tecnológica (SET) External Relations team. Section 6 concludes this document, stating the main difficulties faced and in what way my efforts can be driven to achieve results.

- *Diogo Miguel Barrinha Barradas, nr. 73578,
E-mail: diogo.barradas@tecnico.ulisboa.pt,
Instituto Superior Técnico, Universidade de Lisboa.*

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2 TASKS DISTRIBUTION

On the 29th September 2014, NEIIST collaborators got together in a meeting in order to discuss the main events that should take place through the semester. The distribution of tasks was performed among the collaborators, according to their availability and motivation. A call for collaborators for SET organization team also took place.

During the meeting i was assigned to help other collaborators in two ongoing NEIIST events. I was also assigned to organize an Android programming workshop and a DSI/RNL Services workshop on behalf of NEIIST. On the 3rd November 2014 the SET coordinator contacted me with the objective of inserting me in their External Relations team, with whom I am working with to this day.

The main ways of performing event promotion in NEIIST are through well known social networks, namely Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram and Google+. Usually we also design posters to spread in the campi to advertise our own events. As assigned, i am responsible for event promotion in all of the

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above social networks, excluding Google+. As it is, I took responsibility for sharing relevant NEIIST, SET, Semana Informática do Instituto Superior Técnico (SINFO), Hacker School events/information. I also share relevant activities that come to us through email, such as companies internships, competitions or events promoted by Departamento de Engenharia Informática (DEI), among others.

3 COLLABORATION IN NEIIST EVENTS

3.1 (Quase) Tudo Sobre LEIC

- Date: 28th October 2014
- Place: Room VA1, Alameda

The objective of (Quase) Tudo Sobre LEIC was to set up a session with several freshmen from the Bachelor's degree in Information Systems and Computer Engineering, where we could get them together with several colleagues further in their studies to share their experience about the course. The aim was to make it an informal discussion about the difficulties faced along the track and how to tackle them in the best way possible.

My task was to propose and secure a speaker belonging to the Mentorado program at IST. I personally contacted Tiago Diogo, not only a mentor at the Mentorado program but also former course delegate of the Bachelor's degree in Information Systems and Computer Engineering. After discussing the presentation model of the event, Tiago Diogo accepted the invitation.

3.2 (Quase) Tudo Sobre MEIC

Presenting itself as a more formal introduction to the different fields of study in the Master's degree in Information Systems and Computer Engineering, (Quase) Tudo Sobre MEIC is an event which gets together students and teachers in order to give the former an overview of each field available. It has proven to be a successful event in past years.

At the time of writing of this report, the event is provisionally scheduled for March, as me and Patrícia Santos (collaborator in NEIIST) wait for more details about the Master's degree reformulation. However, we already have the

list of the new and reformulated curricular offering along with some suggestions of teachers to contact.

4 WORKSHOPS

This section aims to describe the procedure of the workshops I organized, difficulties faced and respective results.

4.1 DSI/RNL Services Workshop

- Date: 4th November 2014
- Place: Laboratory 14, RNL

This one hour workshop was aimed at colleagues from the first years of studies in the Alameda campus. Its main focus was to give an overview on the Information Systems made available to the students in IST, either through Rede das Novas Licenciaturas (RNL) or Direcção Serviços Informática (DSI), empowering new users with technologies unknown to them or enabling intermediate users to perform their tasks more efficiently. Some of the services covered were the tuning of permissions in the Sigma cluster, an overview in Andrew File System (AFS), an overview in RNL's cluster, among others.

4.1.1 Organization

The first concern taken into account was to find and contact the proper people to present the workshop. This was fairly easy, since both DSI and RNL administration had shown interest to contribute to the event. I have managed to secure the presence of Valmiky Arquissandás, System Administrator at DSI and three members of the administration at RNL: Samuel Bernardo, Rodrigo Bruno and Tomás Pinho. The second concern was to set a place for the workshop, properly equipped with computers and network access. I reserved Laboratory 14 for that effect, with the cooperation of RNL administration. The date of the workshop was also an important aspect to consider. I drift away from dates with tests and project deliveries, not to set the workshop in a date with too much workload.

4.1.2 Promotion

Having the logistic aspects covered, I turned to the design of a poster/banner to share the event in the social networks. There was a design available for a similar themed workshop in NEIIST archive, which I modified to suit the present workshop.

At this point there was a timeframe of a week to promote the event. Despite from sharing the event in the social networks pages related to IST, I managed to get entrance to the Facebook group of the Information Systems and Computer Engineering freshmen and ask for a larger highlight in that post, throughout the week. I have also spoken with some freshmen I have met, letting them know about the upcoming event and what they would benefit from attending. The event was shared several times a day in Facebook, the most popular social network among students.

4.1.3 Execution and Results

In the workshop day we were disappointed to state that it did not correspond to our expectations. The students present were well under the room's capacity (about forty), as there were only about six attendees and none of those were freshmen, our target audience. I received some feedback from the attendees, who stated that the session was useful to clarify several doubts about the systems presented.



Figure 1. DSI/RNL Services workshop session in Alameda

Figura sobre a qual se refere o texto!

4.2 Android Workshop

- First Session Date: 24th November 2014
- First Session Place: Room 0.73, Taguspark
- Second Session Date: 26th November 2014
- Second Session Place: Room VA1, Alameda

This two hours workshop was aimed at colleagues from IST, both in the Alameda and Tagus campi, therefore involving two separate sessions. The objective was to present a beginner level introduction to programming in the Android OS, while covering basic Android concepts and architecture. It was the first of two series, ranging from the Beginner to Intermediate level, the latter set to be organized in the future.

This workshop was an opportunity to collaborate with other IST student groups, namely Núcleo de Estudantes de Engenharia de Telecomunicações e Informática (NEETI), IEEE-IST Computer Science Student Branch (IEEE-IST) and Laboratório de Apoio à Gestão de Actividades Extracurriculares dos Estudantes (LAGE2). The organization was split between me and Gonalo Vicente, member of IEEE-IST.

4.2.1 Organization

After accepting the challenge to co-organize this workshop with Gonalo, he asked me to find suitable speakers. With the recent success of FénixEdu Android application among IST students, I contacted Frederico Sabino, developer of the application in FénixEdu at DSI. He promptly accepted the invitation and proposed the cooperation of Ricardo Barata, fellow developer in FénixEdu. Upon meeting and discussing the details about the workshop, I analysed the evaluation calendar for the semester in order to choose a suitable date which we all agreed upon.

We were expecting a large affluence to the workshop once it is a well known technology that many students are fond of. I contacted Gabinete de Operaões Pedagógicas (GOP) to request the reservation of room VA1 in Alameda and contacted Ana Marcelino (responsible for the space management) to request the reservation of a room with a video pro-

jector in Taguspark. The reservation for video projection material in Alameda was requested through an online platform made available by Departamento de Engenharia Civil (DEC), while in Taguspark the room 0.73 was meant to have a video projector installed.

Another issue faced was to secure sufficient electrical outlets in the rooms where the workshops would take place. While Gonalo assured me that the room in Taguspark had enough electrical outlets available, the same did not happen in Alameda, once the room reserved for the desired capacity was an amphitheater. The electrical extensions available at NEIIST were insufficient and I contacted a number of entities in IST Alameda in order to check if we could borrow some for the workshop. I contacted Lu s Revez at DEI who had several, yet small. Ultimately, LAGE2 lent us some larger electrical extensions that a collaborator from NEETI brought to the workshop session in Alameda.

4.2.2 Promotion

The poster for the workshop was designed by a collaborator of NEETI. Besides the usual information about the time, place and speakers, I asked Carina Fonseca (President at NEETI) to make sure to include the software each user should bring already installed to the workshop. I and Gonalo performed the validation of the poster, and asked for the replacement of IEEE-IST logotype. Then, I printed the updated poster and posted some in RNL while others were posted in the Taguspark campus.

Once we were expecting the sessions to fill-up, I designed a sign-up form, not only to have an idea about the affluence but also to set a priority list. Gonalo from IEEE-IST created the event in Facebook, along with a promotional text. The event was then publicized in the remaining social networks and NEIIST website, referring to the sign-up form. We started promoting the event a week before the first session took place.

4.2.3 Execution and Results

The first session took place in Taguspark campus. Upon arriving at the room I realized there

was no video projector in place, as I had been told. However, the problem was solved upon request of a video projector at the reception counter. Unlike the DSI/RNL Services workshop, the affluence matched our expectations and we got a full room in Taguspark. The main issue arose when we understood that many of the attendees did not bring the software pre-installed as suggested. The poor Wi-Fi access registered in that room/day demanded a large effort from the speakers in order to get the workshop running while some attendees were struggling to install the software needed. We got photo coverage from Grupo de Fotografia do Instituto Superior T cnico (GFIST) from LAGE2 in this session.

The second session took place in Alameda campus. Although the room was not filled up we still got around thirty attendees, as it can be seen in Figure 2. Not all of the attendees brought the software pre-installed (we did reinforce the convenience of it after the first session) but the Wi-Fi access was good and all of them installed the software quickly. In a general way, this session turned out to be smoother than the first, in one hand from the experience acquired from the speakers in the previous session, and for the better internet access conditions in the other.

We received feedback from some of the attendees at both sessions. They were glad to state that the content of the workshop was very interesting, praising the fact that it did not only focused in the practical aspects of programming Android applications, but also gave an overview in the lifecycle of an Android application and its eventual publishing online.



Figure 2. Android workshop session in Alameda

5 COLLABORATION IN SET

- Date: 3rd November 2014 - Present

I took preference in putting my efforts as an External Relations team member at SET, comprising the functions of contacting companies and potential speakers to make SET come to life.

5.1 Contacting Companies

When I joined the team, there was already a data infrastructure put in place, with a large database of companies to contact. Each member of the team had several companies assigned. My task consisted in contact my list of companies by e-mail in first instance and clarify any aspect of the organization, should I be asked. Some of the companies did not reply to my e-mail and I repeated the contact as established in the External Relations protocol. From now on, the companies from which we did not get an answer shall be contacted by telephone. In it's majority, start-ups do not seem to have favorable conditions to sponsor our event.

5.2 Contacting Speakers

Similarly to the list of companies, each team member had a list of desired speakers to contact. I managed to secure the three speakers I got in contact with, namely Paulo Rosado (Out-Systems's CEO), Vasco Pedro (Unbabel's CEO) and Jaime Jorge (Codacy's CEO). Their talks are already being promoted by SET Marketing team.

6 CONCLUSION

The activity I performed can bring value to the student community by empowering the audience with new technology knowledge or by exposing them to new information. I stated a large difference of interest in a workshop in a well known technology and a workshop in not such a popular theme. While I considered the Android workshop to be a success, the same cannot be said about DSI/RNL Services workshop. There is a bigger need to alert the target audience for the importance of such

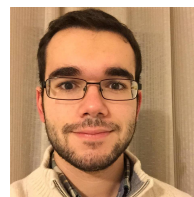
events, once they can benefit from what they learned on an everyday basis, while studying in IST. Therefore, a bigger effort in promotion has to be done to accommodate this kind of events. Another important aspect to be considered is to always check the true conditions of the place where the event will take place. Only by doing that we can be prepared before-hand for the kind of problems faced in the room at Taguspark and find a timely and effective solution.

The task developed on behalf of SET gave me a look behind the scenes of what it takes to organize such a big event. The process of gathering companies sponsorship is harder than I previously thought, involving several weeks of negotiations and some setbacks (not getting an answer at all being the most common). In this kind of situation, persistence is key to achieve results.

To conclude this report, I reckon that communication is fundamental to make any event of this kind come to life, not only to coordinate efforts in organization but also to take feedback of the attendees once the event is over, enabling us to better suit the needs of our audience in the future.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author would like to thank NEIIST for the opportunity to collaborate with fellow students and student organizations in order to make these events come to life. He would also like to thank the availability and effort shown by the teams at FénixEdu, DSI and RNL, whose support was fundamental to the success of the described events.



Diogo Barradas is a 21 years old student at IST. He has completed his Bachelor's degree in Information Systems and Computer Engineering and is currently pursuing a Master's Degree in Information Systems and Computer Engineering, majoring in Distributed Systems and Enterprise Information Systems. He has a keen interest in information security and digital privacy.

In this type of document (technical), the conclusion should start with a summary of the subject addressed and then should highlight the results.

APPENDIX

STATEMENTS OF EXECUTION



Para os devidos efeitos, declara-se que o(a) aluno(a) Diogo Miguel Barrinha Barradas, número mecanográfico 73578, no 1º semestre do ano lectivo 2014/2015, exerceu o cargo de Colaborador no NEIIST – Núcleo Estudantil de Informática do Instituto Superior Técnico, tendo realizado as actividades Organização e divulgação de eventos.

Lisboa, 12 de Janeiro de 2015

A Direcção do NEIIST:


SIGN HERE
(Vânia Mendonça - Presidente)


SIGN HERE
(Denise Pedro - Vice-presidente)


SIGN HERE
(Rita Gomes - Vogal)


SIGN HERE
(Manuel Alves – Gestor Financeiro)