TEDxIST 2015

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Learning Report

Abstract—TEDxIST is an event held by LAGE2 at IST-TagusPark. I'm currently the one responsible for the divulgation team. Before joining the team, I was hoping that I could improve my communication skills, my knowledge in event organization and get some glimpses of fund-raising. I ended up as team leader what turned out to be a good experience in terms of managing different people and work distribution. I also had to chance to improve my web development knowledge in terms of Foundation, HTML and CSS.

As I got to participate in the phase where there were no disjoint teams, I learned a little from every area, specifically, besides divulgation, fund-raising and contacting speakers. Last but not least, I also had the chance to work with LaTeX. In the end, I believe this experience was very profitable in terms of both soft and technical skills.

Index Terms—leading, event, organization, web development, TED, TEDxIST, LaTeX, paper

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1 INTRODUCTION

I'VE never had the chance to work on an event organization. TEDxIST is not a huge event, as it is only for 100 people but it still involves a lot of work.

I was hoping I could learn a lot with the previous members that already organized past editions. My main focus was soft skills although I knew I was probably going to do some technical work as well. I gained team leadership skills and communication skills while team leader and contacting speakers and sponsors.

2 LEADING A TEAM

I WAS chosen by my fellow colleague Diogo Rato, the TEDxIST 2015 coordinator, to be the divulgation team leader.

As a team leader, I had to manage the work distribution amongst all team members in an equal manner which I realized later was not always possible. This is where I got to improve

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most of my leading skills as I had to be aware of the different schedules and work load of the members. After that I had to gather the work done by the members and report to the coordinator.

I had never experienced this kind of hierarchical structure where there is a leader and tam members. It was great as I could experience both.

As a leader, and by attending the weekly meetings, I learned that you need to listen to everyone's opinion in order to retrieve the maximum information and make the best choice for the team and their individuals.

I also learned that you need to take into account that every member is a different person with different attitude and opinions.

3 WEB DEVELOPMENT

THE development of the website was subsectioned in two parts, the programming, in HTML and CSS using the Foundation framework, and the design of the website.

For the programming part, the work was done using an agile software development technique known as pair programming. This technique consists on two people working at

	LEARNING					DOCUMENT						
(1.0) Excelent												
(0.8) Very Good	CONTEXT x2	SKILLS x1	REFLECT x4	S+C x1	**SCORE**	Structure x0.25	Ortogr. x0.25	Gramm. x0,.25	Format x0.25	Title x0.5	Filename x0.5	**SCORE**
(0.6) Good												
(0.4) Fair	1.6	0.6	2.4	1	5.6	0.25	0.15	0.2	0.25	0.4	0.5	1.75
(0.2) Weak												

the same time in the same code where one individual is programming and the other is reviewing the code as it is being written. For the design part, me and my fellow colleague Diogo Rato also worked as a team.

3.1 Design

[handwritten: This in Activity related!]

We began with the design of the website, as it was expected. The only knowledge I had regarding design was some general proportion notions I learned in Person-Machine Interface (PMI) and some self-learning on some websites dedicated do web design.

None of us had ever before built a TEDx website so we thought that it would be important to check some already done TEDx websites and gather some information from those websites.

Some of the websites were very well built and designed and focused on simplicity and minimalism. So, we thought it was a good idea to keep our website simple and clean.

At this point, I now knew how to properly subdivide a site and that we must have an attractive homepage in order to make the visitors' first-impression a good impression.

I also learned that it's important not to use many colors, but to keep our color palette simple, with the right colors which normally are gradients of grey or white adding to the TEDx's red and black.

3.2 Programming

Regarding web programming, I was already proficient in HyperText Markup Language (HTML), Cascade Stylesheet (CSS) and JavaScript (JS) but so far I had never really got to work with frameworks. I only had the chance to work with SAPO's INK framework on a minor project of mine.

My colleague Diogo Rato suggested we used Foundation which is a worldwide used framework for building websites. I agreed it would be a good choice as he showed me that it is indeed a very useful tool and that makes everything easier, specially regarding grids.

With Foundation there are many already defined CSS classes that when included in our HTML elements specify the behaviour and positioning of those elements.

I also had the chance to learn a bit more about PHP during the process.

4 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, I learned a lot while doing this activity. The aspect I improved the most, in my opinion, was the team leading, how to properly communicate with others in order to achieve an effective communication.

My knowledge concerning team leading was almost none but now I know how to interact with team members. I also ended up improving a lot of work scheduling as I had another extra-activity besides classes.

As for web development, I learned that there are several frameworks very useful for building websites that make the development much easier for the programmer. Foundation is one of those frameworks and I'm looking forward to use it in future web projects.

Finally, I also learned a lot from my TEDxIST colleagues each one of them in particular.

André Joaquim My name is André de Matos Joaquim. I'm 21 years-old and I'm from Lisbon, Portugal. I concluded my BSc in Computer Science in 2014 at Instituto Superior Técnico (IST) and I'm on the first year of the MSc in Computer Science with Distributed Systems as major and Software Engineering as minor.