Saber com Lógica
Website Content improvement

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Learnings Report

Abstract—This activity was carried out under the course Independent Studies IV. In my honest opinion, I think I fulfilled the goals I had for the activity. Along this semester, I've learned to establish a better communication with my group mates, although it was a bit difficult during the first weeks of the activity. Besides communication, I think I have improved other *soft-skills* with this activity, namely responsibility skills, learning skills, self-motivation, time management improvement and also some team working skills. I also believe I improved my *hard-skills* by a fair amount, namely skills related to the inner workings of wordpress. Even though I had worked with wordpress before, I've learned new things that I didn't know of.

Index Terms—learning, communication, responsibility, soft-skills, team, wordpress, plugins, memberships.

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1 INTRODUCTION

IN this report I intend to reflect in general about the activity that was carried out during this semester. I will address what I've learned with the activity, including the skills developed, both *soft-skills* and *hard-skills*.

I'll start with a small section with the main expectations I had for the activity, and also talk a bit on how the activity was carried out, since it started until the end.

Other topics I'm going to talk about in this report are the main skills developed and/or improved, and I'll also talk a bit about how the activity was carried out.

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To finish, I pretend to enumerate what I've learnt, and make a final conclusion.

2 EXPECTATIONS

In the past, I've worked with Wordpress in my free time, I found about it, set up a home server and tried some tutorials out, to learn more about it. However, due to some other reasons, I slowly started losing interest in it, and I stopped working on it.

For this reason when I found out about this activity, I think it would be beneficial to me, because I'd not only be able to improve my knowledge about Wordpress, but also extend it even further. As it is a group activity, I had the expectation to learn more from my group mates as well, while also improving and developing many other *soft-skills*.

3 ACTIVITY CARRIED OUT AND WORK DEVELOPED BY THE TEAM

A short time after I chose this activity, I was contacted, as my group mates were, by our coaching team, which proposed a meeting with the promoter of the activity, Engineer João Silva.

	LEARNINGS					DOCUMENT					
(1.0) Excellent	Context×2	Skills×1	Reflect×.4	Summ×.5	Concl×.5	SCORE	Struct ×.25	Ortog×.25	Exec×4	Form ×.25	Titles ×.5	File ×.5	SCORE
(0.8) Very Good												
(0.6) Good	0.6	0.7	0.7	0.5	0.6		0.6	0.8	1.0	0.8	0.8	0.6	
(0.4) Fair												
(0.2) Weak												

In this meeting, we got to know each other, and discussed for some time about the work that had to be done for the activity.

After this initial meeting, the group didn't communicate for some time, this was an issue that had to be solved as soon as possible.

On the next meeting, which I and Ricardo Maia were present, we came to the conclusion that we had to start our work as fast as we could, as there were other teams dependent on our work.

About a week after this meeting, there was still absolutely no communication between the group members, which was very worrying, at least for me.

Because of this, I decided to start working on the activity right after, as there was much work to do.

I contacted Ricardo and informed him of the situation, as it was decided in the previous meeting that we would lead the activity, mainly because the remaining team members didn't show up for the previous meetings, and they didn't seem interested at all.

To start the work, it was essential to have a working copy of the Saber com Lógica (SCL) website, so I could actually test my work, and see if it worked accordingly to planned.

For this, I contacted the promoter of the activity, Engineer João Silva. He gave me a *localhost* version of his website, which I used to start working on the activity.

3.1 Work developed

Before even starting to change things in the Wordpress *localhost* SCL server, I had to find out many information about Wordpress, how it worked, how the plugins worked, how these plugins integrated with Wordpress itself, and how to install them.

I eventually found out how it all worked after reading some information about various topics, while I was doing this, I also found out about some of the best plugins for the purpose of this activity.

I chose two plugins, Paid Memberships Pro, a plugin that manages everything related to the memberships, from registering, to payment,

and also for access controlling. The other plugin I chose was iThemes Security plugin, formerly known as Better WP Security. This plugin has the purpose of detecting and improving many security flaws that might exist, and it helps to maintain the website secure.

After installing the plugins mentioned above, I started to configure them, according to the needs of the activity, and tried to do what was pretended, however, it was not that simple.

There were many issues that started to arise, the plugin Paid Memberships Pro offered a vast quantity of options to configure and select, for both memberships, users but also for access controlling and the payment gateways of paid membership levels.

One of the issues was the payment gateway. The promoter of the activity, Engineer João Silva wanted to integrate a payment gateway that wasn't supported by the plugin. This payment gateway, known as MeoWallet, supports easier payment solutions, such as paying for a membership level on a ATM machine, for example.

The MeoWallet payment gateway also supports testing with virtual currency, so this was considered a benefit, so it could easily be tested while developing the solution.

Another issue that was found was the login system. The plugin by default uses the main Wordpress login page, which is shared for both administrators and users registered on the website, which is not the best solution. When a registered user uses the Wordpress login page and logs in, the user is redirected to a Wordpress page that is only used by Administrators.

Although the registered users don't have any type of administrative permissions, which results into the users not being able to do anything at the page, and as such, the page shouldn't be even displayed, to start with.

These were some of the issues that I found while working on the activity.

3.2 Work developed by the remaining group members

A long time after the last group meeting, and after I met with the promoter, Engineer João

Silva to show the work I have done, the deadline for the activity was approaching, and the remaining members of the group started to get worried and decided to get some work done as well.

They picked up from where I finished, and after another meeting with the promoter, it was decided they would work on one of the issues that was found out earlier, namely, the integration of the new payment gateway, MeoWallet.

More information about the work developed by the remaining members of the team can be found on our activity report.

4   LEARNING AND EVOLUTION OF THE *soft-skills*

In this section I will reflect about each *soft-skill* acquired, and also the experience obtained for each one of them.

4.1   Communication

Communication is an absolutely essential *soft-skill*, not only in this activity, but many other activities, it is also one of the many *soft-skills* that helps us through our lives.

For this activity it was necessary to communicate between the group mates, so we could plan our work accordingly.

To communicate with the group, we exclusively used email. I tried by best to keep my emails short, simple and brief enough, so they could easily be read and understood quickly. If a message is long and not brief enough, there's always the risk that the person receiving it will spend much more time understanding it, or alternatively, simply not reading it at all.

Like in the previous activity I did last semester, I think I improved my communication skill a little more, but there's still some points I could improve.

4.2   Time management and Organization

In this activity I tried my best to organize and manage the time I had, in the best way I could, in order to not take too long and also to save more time for other courses, projects and personal time.

To achieve an optimal time management, I tried to plan ahead with enough time, according to the tasks I had to do.

In general, I think the activity slowly improved my capabilities for organization and time management.

4.3   Self-Motivation

I feel that my self-motivation was improved in a sense that it was slowly being developed as I worked in this activity.

To start with, since I picked this activity for the course this semester, I found it very interesting. Along the semester, while working on the activity, I slowly started to get more and more motivated to look for more information, and get some work done as soon as possible.

4.4   Responsibility

Responsibility was another of the *soft-skills* present along the activity.

The work we had to develop in this activity was crucial for other teams to continue or maintain their work, for example, in order to not disrupt the IST server, where the publishing and reviewing team was working, publishing their articles, I worked in a *localhost* version of the SCL website.

However, if I was working directly on the IST server of SCL, I would have to be very careful when testing and making changes to the website. If something bad happened I would be responsible for it. Other people would be using that server for their work, and if something happened to it which didn't allow people to continue their work, I would be responsible for it.

4.5   Report Writing and Production

Like on the previous semester, I have developed and extended my ability to write good reports. It is necessary to be careful and be aware of little details that might be less correct, these need to be corrected. Grammatical errors and phrases badly structured are examples of these details.

In a content level, when writing reports like this one, and other reports in general, it is

necessary to verify if what we write is in the correct section, or if it should be placed in another section that it would fit best.

5 LEARNING AND EVOLUTION OF THE *hard-skills*

In this section I will reflect about each *hard-skill* acquired, and also the experience obtained for each one of them.

5.1 Wordpress

In this subsection, I will talk about the *hard-skills* learned and/or improved while working on the SCL activity, namely, the Wordpress working skills.

Like I refered in the expectations section, long ago, before this activity, I found out about Wordpress during my personal time. I set up a personal server and tried Wordpress out while I followed some tutorials. However, due to classes and other projects, I started to lose interest in this little personal project, and I stopped working on it.

One of the reasons I picked this activity was to improve my Wordpress skills, and extend them even further.

5.1.1 *Wordpress Articles, Pages and Categories*

Ever since I got the *localhost* version of SCL website, I started to explore the administrative part of the website, in order to get a feeling of how it worked in general.

I found out that Wordpress works in a simple easy way. Each post is an article, that contains the information. This article belongs in a Category.

Wordpress also has many pages, that can be configured according to what the user wants. It is possible to create new pages, modify current ones, or delete pages that are not needed anymore.

5.1.2 *Wordpress Plugins*

The next interesting part was finding out about the Wordpress Plugins, how they are installed, how they are activated and how they work in general.

There are many plugins, used for various purposes. For this activity I mainly learned about security and authorization plugins, but I also learned more about other plugins that were already installed and being used in the website.

6 CONCLUSION

As I have mentioned before in this report, I honestly believe I have achieved the minimal goals for the activity.

However, some of my expectations for the activity were not met. When the activity started, I was hoping we as a group, would work together more often, split tasks between each group member, and start as early as possible, however, as shown above, this did not happen. Because of this, the activity, for me, took way more time than expected to achieve the pretended goals.

Either way, I believe what truly matters is that with this activity I improved several of my *soft-skills*, and also some *hard-skills*, which is the main objective of this course.