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September 19, 2021

Journal -Tester

With test case development a critical stage in the creation of a new product or experience, it only makes sense that the user stories make sense and are easy to follow. The submitted user stories for this project were exactly that, easy to follow but also not detailed or wordy, allowing for a certain level of creativity and innovation within the teams. Sometimes, users have a hard time articulating what exactly they want to see; some can be hung up on the notion of something “looking better” or “being different” but don’t know how to explain what that exactly means. I could see this starting to be the case in the initial discussion between the users and the product owner, when Nick said he “liked to have top destinations listed” for him. This was a good start, but very vague. Having the focus group discuss together, though, helped to flesh this idea out to a “final product” that could be developed. As the users discussed all of the features that they would like to see, they were able to bounce ideas around one another and narrow down what they wanted, ultimately helping the team develop more focused test cases for their stories.

Not everyone is a visual person, though, and seeing a representation of what a user envisions would help the team develop a feature that the users really want. Describing a “top five destination list” is a good start, but understanding what the customer would like that list to look like in the end would help out even more. As it is, the design of the list is kind of up to the developer, who may or may not have an eye for design. This could result in multiple iterations and user tests before landing on a final design that satisfies everyone. To get this information, I would have worked with the original focus group more, having them try to flesh out what they visualize when they picture a list (or whatever other feature is on the docket). While not everyone is able to draw or design, having a rough sketch to jump off from can give developers even more of a head start on creating a solid user experience. Likewise, having another focus group that showcases potential designs would also be a good way to narrow down the look and feel of the desired features.

Example Email Conversation

Email

To: Christy

Subject: User Story Design Ideas

Dear Christy,

In developing the test cases for the user stories you submitted, we have some questions regarding the overall design of the features. I’ve included several ideas (as an attachment) that the team thinks users would really like, and I was hoping you could help us narrow down the options to just one that we work towards developing. We are currently developing a core engine that can be modified to fit any of the designs as necessary, so there is some time before we need a firm answer. Thanks!

Lawrence

Email

To: Lawrence

Subject: Re: User Story Design Ideas

Dear Lawrence,

Thank you for the question and the attached designs. They all look great, it’s tough to decide! However, based on the user focus group and what they all discussed, I am going to have your team start development on “Design Model #2”, as it is the closest to what current markets are showing as popular amongst our demographic of users. If you have any other questions, please feel free to email me! I look forward to seeing your final product!

Christy