

Project Retrospective – OpenSeach Metadata-Hub

Most of us joined the project without knowing each other and without knowing what would be ahead. We had some initial problems because not every member understood what the project really was about. If the developers do not know what the project is about, they can not do the right research. Since product owners do not have a deeper technical understanding of the technologies the developers have to work with, it is essential that developers do research and communicate with the product owners about what is possible and how things could be implemented.

We realised early, that neither the product owners nor the developers had a good understanding of the project in the beginning. After the product owners understood the mission, we had additional out-of-schedule meetings to make sure everyone knew what we had to do.

Our advice for future AMOS projects is:

Have your first industry partner meeting as soon as possible and make sure everyone (also developers) attends, even though it is not strictly required. If the product owners fail to grasp the whole idea behind the project in the first meeting and thus can not communicate a clear vision to the team, you will have starting problems if the developers have no clue besides what the product owners can tell them. It probably takes several industry partner meetings for the product owners to develop a clear vision. You can not afford to lose this time as developers. Make sure you know what technologies you have to work with and start researching these early. Do not wait for someone to explicitly tell you what to read. Have additional developer meetings in the beginning and make sure every developer can run the code that you produce. Furthermore, git knowledge is key. Make sure everyone knows the basics and mind the importance of a clear branching structure. If you do not know what tags, ssh-keys, branches, etc. are, don't be shy to ask your teammates for help! If you see your teammates struggling, help them if you can. Helping each other out will make you grow together as a team.

As mentioned above, we had some initial problems. By helping each other out and doing what we just advised, we overcame all initial problems.

Our developers started pair programming and we had regular product owner – developer meetings. After sprint 4 we gained momentum and everything went quite smooth. At this point, the product owners had a clear vision, we overcame some initial social loafing problems and the developers were able to solve problems without needing product owner feedback for minor things.

We kept our momentum and a good vibe in the team until the end. The product owners became a bit overzealous during the last sprints, what led to some minor pushbacks. It is not an especially motivating feeling for developers when almost no ticket from a sprint can be successfully completed, because there was just too much work. The planning poker does help a little bit, but estimating wrongly will happen, even in the last sprints. Nonetheless, we managed to fully implement everything our industry partner asked for and even some additional stuff.

We all learned how important good and effective communication is and we all definitely improved in this regard. Our product owners learned how to manage a team and improved on spotting obstacles before they become a problem. Our developers gained valuable experience regarding teamwork and also improved their programming and problem solving skills. Our scrum master always helped us out when things didn't go that smooth. Her retroboards were always well prepared and using the concept of the popular game *Among Us* to play a game of „finding the meeting creature“ during the scrum master day was a clever and fun idea.

We are very happy with what we accomplished as a team and we even had a final in person meeting with our industry partner with some food and beer. We are glad that our team was composed as it was and we had a lot of fun.