

NET-A-PORTER

NAP – UCL Project Team 28 Customer Service Chatbot

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Bi-Weekly Report #1
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Project Overview (4/10/2016 – 12/10/2016)

Over the course of this week, we mainly accomplished three things. Firstly, our team met up to get to know each other better through our first meeting in the Malet 1.05 Lab. We did a sharing on our past projects, the challenges we faced and problems we wanted to avoid, and also our goals for this upcoming project. Secondly, we set up a channel via Slack to coordinate our communications in a professional manner. Lastly, we set up a client meeting with the NAP project co-leads, Robin and Irina, at the company's headquarters in Westfield. The meeting was on Monday, 10 Oct, 2016. Irina gave all 3 teams a company presentation which gave us an insight on the company's organisation structure and key business focuses. We ended the meeting with an office tour led by Irina and Robin.

Our assigned project is to develop a Customer Service Chatbot that serves to support the company's fashion advisors to better serve customers. The product should be accessible from different platforms such as on the web and the various messaging applications. It will use natural language processing to help customers with customer service related questions, such as item recommendation, sizing and fit, returns policy, etc.

Meetings Summary

Attached are the minutes to all meetings we have had prior to this report.

Our team aims to meet as often as possible in order to continuously stay up to date with our current progress and keep all members involved. These internal meetings will be short discussions to update one another on our current tasks and making sure that we are efficient and effective in work delegation.

We also plan to keep our client informed when we complete key development milestones through the bi-weekly reports and in-person meetings at their office.

Tasks Completed

- Team meet up and introduction
- Established means of communications - Slack
- First client meeting and received project briefs

Problems to be Resolved Before Next Meeting

Irina has set up a mailing list to disseminate general information to all 3 teams. However, some members of our team has not received the most recent email, so we thought that our emails might not have been included. We will make sure that we feedback this issue to Irina and get it resolved.

Our team also needs to seek confirmation with Dr Yun Fu on our assigned project as there seems to be some miscommunication on the type of projects that NAP has proposed for collaboration.

Plan for Next Two Weeks

Our team will research on the most effective and suitable technologies needed for our project. This include programming languages, libraries, frameworks, 3rd party APIs, etc. We may then consult our findings with our client for advice.

Through the first client meeting, we came to an understanding that this project is flexible in terms of scope and requirements and that we can be creative and propose any changes. Therefore, we need to be active in communication and getting client feedback as we start devising the MoSCoW requirements and paper prototypes. This ensures that there will no ambiguity in the form and function of the final product.

Contributions

Wayne Tsui

I researched on our client's profile after receiving my team allocation. Initially, I thought that our project was going to be a web application on analytics. Since I assumed that we are going to working with data, I felt that was important for me to understand our client's business so as to come up with relevant data queries to draw business insights.

Nonetheless, my client profile research is still relevant and applicable in developing the customer service chatbot. To understand the business is key in providing the right answers to customers' queries. In our case, we also need to be predicting what problems are the most frequent and efficient to be solved by a chatbot.

Lastly, I tried some existing chatbot applications to get some ideas on UI and UX implementations.

Aouss Sbai

After the first team meeting, we knew that our project would be about designing a web application which would be about analytics. Without having the design brief from the client, I decided to research broadly about the technologies that could help the team for the development phase. Came up with Laravel, a modern PHP framework centred around web design, to which we could associate the d3 JavaScript graphic library for data visualization. We still need to discuss these things with the 2 other teams to have better coordination and overview of the project.

Jason In

Our team went for the client meeting on Monday at 10a.m. We were told by our client, Irina that there would be 2 VR and 1 chatbot related projects assigned to us, and the other 2 teams. Irina didn't tell us specifically which project we would be doing on Monday. Thus, we could only wait for Dr Yun Fu's reply. An email from Dr Yun Fu was sent to us telling us that our team was assigned to work on the chatbot project. After some quick researches, I found that there was a bot framework built by Microsoft that could perhaps be implemented in our project. The technology we will use is undecided at the moment. We are going to have our second team meet up on Thursday, which is tomorrow.