CS 250 SDLC Clifton Brann

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Looking at the process from a Software Tester’s point of view, it is clear to me that the broad strokes of the concept, with an appropriate amount of detail is most helpful. A user story that says “I want a list.” Is helpful, but lacks some of the crucial details that would require further investigation on the part of Developer. It would save some time if the answers to some of the basic questions like: What is on the list? How should the list be ordered? How should the list be displayed? Where should the list be located? , were answered by the Product Owner before it was brought to the Developer. It is only by having a clear understanding of what the intended functions are, can the Tester create a test that will accurately test for what the Product Owner wants. Since Testers are involved with the User Stories from the beginning, it seems like they are essential in finding out the finer details that will later be required by the Developers to develop the correct features and functions for the product. (*Scrum. Read about the Role of a Tester in Agile Team*., 2021)

I think clear, concise, and unambiguous communications between the Product Owner and Tester are key . For example, If the Product owner wants a list of choices, the Product Owner should include: the number of choices, the order of the choices (Ascending, descending, alphabetical…), and any preferred groupings, etc. This sort of information makes it easier for the Tester to build the tests for the features described in line with the Product Owner’s expectations. Unfortunately, when there is ambiguity or opportunity for misinterpretation, that is usually exactly what will happen. By asking questions for clarification is part of the Testers job. By helping to refine or groom the User Stories, the Tester also develops the tests for the functions and features to assure that they are present. (DeCesare, M, 2024)

Some of the details missing in the user stories were: What should the order for the travel packages listed by cost be: from most expensive to least expensive, or the other way around? For the user story about customized locations, does the user want more places similar to where they have been, or do they want different places from where they have already been? These two features need to be developed more before they can be implemented, because there is too much ambiguity, but its nothing a short conversation between a Tester and the Product Owner couldn’t fix. I do understand that there is inherent uncertainty as a part of the process, and that details are worked out as the product is developed.

As the Tester is designing the tests for the new feature, they will naturally come across items they have questions about, and they should discuss these questions with the appropriate person or people to get the answers they need. I think they would need to contact the Product Owner, and discuss what the needs, wants and desires of the users were, to find out what it actually was that they wanted, and then engineer a test to check for those functions I the feature.

Sample email between Tester and Product Owner

Dear Product Owner,

As the Tester on Agile Team for SNHU Travel, I would like to ask yo ua few questions to clarify my understanding of the new features.

For the list of destinations based on price:

How should the list be organized, by price, from low to high or high to low?

Should the user be able to specify a minimum and maximum price brackets to search within?

How should the destination data be listed? Should it be listed: location description and price?

Are there any other particulars that need to be addressed? (Colors to use or stay away from, particular fonts etc?)

For the list of customized destinations:

What should the destinations be - places similar to where the user has already travelled or new and different places from where the user not travelled?

How should these be arranged or listed? By price high to low or vice versa, alphabetically, or by some other criteria (popularity?)

And the same as above is there anything particularly that needs to be addressed, in terms of colors, fonts, other preferences, etc?

I look forward to hearing back from you so I can continue to develop the appropriate tests for the stories.

Many Thanks,

Clifton Brann

Tester, Agile Team SNHU Travel

References

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