Reflection - Katie Siegel

Peer Review

Casey: Overall, Casey was a great team member; she was always on time with her work, and stayed positive even when we were fixing annoying bugs. Casey was very good at keeping code organized and following good coding practices. She knew when work had to get done, and was always on top of deadlines. I would definitely work with Casey again on a future project, especially as this is the second such project I have worked with her on.

Qui: Overall, Qui was also a great team member. Qui tackled a lot of the Javascript, and was particularly great at learning how to use graph.js. Because of her, we had an awesome graph for our demo, which was a very significant feature. Personally, Qui was always positive about deadlines, but knew when to push when we had to get something done. Qui was also particularly talented at finding bugs, managed to catch some mistakes that other members of our team had made. I would definitely work with Qui again on a future project.

Annie: Overall, I really enjoyed working with Annie, and like Casey and Qui, she was a great team member. Annie's eye for aesthetics led to her helping me, Casey, and Qui a lot with design decisions. For example, when any of us were positioning elements on a page, we always consulted with Annie and got her opinion before proceeding. So, her insights were essential to the integrity of our final project. Annie was also very agreeable and on top of all of the aspects of the project that were due at each deadline.

Evaluation

The four of us worked very well on a team. We always consulted each other on problems, and frequently worked together in a single room, which enabled us to communicate extensively. For example, we had meetings multiple times a week in the Maseeh basement, the Burton-Conner conference room, or the Student Center reading room. During these meetings, we would make a list of the things that we had to complete and then work through these actionables. Whenever one of us ran into a problem, one other person would sit by them and pair program; this always enabled us to find the problem.

The cohesiveness of our team meant that there was very little conflict. In fact, I would say that there was no conflict at all; we joked a lot at each of the meetings, yet still made very significant headway at each meeting. I would definitely work with the entire team again; in fact, I think that this team helped me learn what to look for in a team. We each respected each other, which led to a lot of trust among each other to get tasks done right; no team member ever betrayed this trust. Each team member put in equal effort, and no one thought that another team member was slacking.

Lessons Learned

Overall, I learned three significant lessons.

1. I learned that, when working on a long-term project, choosing team members is the most important decision to make. If I had had any other team, I definitely do not think that the project would have gone as smoothly or as harmoniously.

2. I learned that making the first draft of the design doc and the MVP as polished and functional as possible would make the final versions of each easier to complete. I am very glad that we worked a lot on the project early on, because it meant that we could focus on adding a lot of features/functionality for the final version.

3. I learned that working with an API is not as daunting as it initially seemed. The documents may have been a little bit slow to sift through initially, but overall the Twilio API was highly intuitive, and I soon became used to finding relevant information in the docs. In the future, I will definitely look to use companies' APIs in my software projects, since they add interesting functionality that I would not be able to create on my own.