Work Plan

Stage one of our project was very difficult to plan for, an ad hoc group was thrown together randomly and many of us did not know each other which made things very slow to start. After a few group meetings and after our initial client meeting we had a much better idea of our group, our strengths and weaknesses and what we were actually required to do in order to create our project.

Prior to our client meeting everyone in the group was tasked to write down at least two questions each which they should then ask our client. We set up a Facebook group that we could use to contact each other and share information. We also set up a Google document that we all had access to and could add and share information.

After summarising the minutes from our client meeting our group came up with several ideas that we wished to include in our application and a few ideas about how to approach the task. This became the basis of our functional requirements.

Before we could start to build anything we had to do some base research. Using our criteria sheet for the project we split this into distinct sections and members of our group were allocated different tasks to focus on, functional requirements; acceptance criteria; legal, social, ethical and professional issues and planning. We also decided to create consumer based surveys to identify what features we should definitely endeavour to include in the final product, everyone contributed questions to this in an identical manner to the client questions.

Now that we had begun to conduct independent research there was a lot of information that was harder to share, we repurposed our existing google doc and created a master document that contained links to everyone’s individual research. This was also a great tool for version control.

During this phase a Gantt chart was drawn up, Gantt charts are very useful tools used extensively in business and are very effective to plan and achieve tasks and set deadlines. The Gantt chart contained information about all our group, client and tutor meetings, everyone’s individual tasks and deadlines and ‘milestones’ such as hand in dates for work, we also used this to create ‘soft’ deadlines to give ourselves some extra time to sense check and collaborate our work.

Stage one of the project was focused very much on the initial group project and not so much on actually building our product. Using our criteria sheet once again and utilising the same group members that had conducted the initial research we then allocated the sections of our group project that we would all work on individually and also allocated an individual to write an introduction and conclusion and another member who would compile the work at the end. To share this information we used our master Google document to share our links to our contributions.

After going through all these processes for stage one we are much stronger as a group and are in a much more comfortable place to be able to plan ahead for stage two of the project.

We are going to further split our Google documents to reflect each stage of the project, this will make it much easier to navigate and make the document less cluttered and it will be much easier to find the information you are looking for. We also have the criteria for phase two of the report. This has been divided already into sections that will be assigned to individuals or pairs that wish to undertake them, many of these tasks are extensions of stage one tasks so in the interest of continuity these will be performed by the same people.

Stage two is more focused towards building the project, this will be split up into distinct tasks and allocated to different group members based on their strengths and preferences in a similar manner that the research tasks were allocated in stage one. As a group we will decide on these tasks and milestones as well as tasks for writing the interim report, these will then be turned into a stage two Gantt chart that will be utilised for everyone to easily follow and be able to track their own tasks as well as both individual and group deadlines.

During stage one everyone was left to their own devices and was allowed to work at their own pace, this worked reasonably well and while not all of our self-imposed deadlines were hit everything was still completed with enough time to check before the actual deadline. For stage two of the project we will use our Gantt chart much more effectively and review it at every group meeting to make sure that everyone is contributing and will hit all of our soft deadlines. As we will now start to build our project alongside writing a report of similar size and content to this one we will need to ensure that everyone optimises their use of time.

An unforeseen issue arose in stage one in the form of deadlines for other work due at the same time. As our group members do not have identical modules we also have some coursework that differ and are set and due at different times. For Stage two we are now fully aware of this problem and we will integrate all our coursework timeframes with our project plan to ensure that everyone has a fair and equal amount of time to focus on not only the group project but their own individual work outside of the project.