Journal Entry Three – Product Tester

Melissa Chessa

Southern New Hampshire University

CS 250: Software Development Lifecycle

Professor Hicham Elhayboubi

03-23-2025

Journal Entry Three – Product Tester

This week, I stepped into the role of a product tester for the SNHU Travel Slide Show project. The task was to interpret the previously created user stories and transform them into actionable test cases. While the user stories provided a helpful foundation, I quickly learned that moving from broad user intent to detailed, step-by-step testing requires more clarity and collaboration than I initially expected.

The most helpful elements in the user stories were the clearly written goals, especially the format: "As a user, I want to... so that I can...". This format allowed me to understand both the functionality and the why behind each feature. For example, in User Story 1, the goal of hiding unwanted destinations gave me a direct idea of what a filter system would need to include. The Implementation Guidance sections were also very helpful, as they offered concrete suggestions for how the feature might function, like using checkboxes or saving user preferences.

However, as I began drafting the test cases, I realized how important communication with the Product Owner becomes during this phase. Without ongoing collaboration, it's easy to misinterpret feature expectations or assume that certain elements exist. In my case, many of the features described in the user stories — like filtering by price or seeing personalized recommendations — were not actually implemented in the Slide Show GUI. Communicating these gaps early on is critical to adjusting expectations and avoiding wasted effort writing tests for non-existent features.

What was missing from the user stories was detailed information about the current state of the application. It wasn't clear whether the features described were already implemented, in progress, or just aspirational. It also would have helped to know what limitations I should expect in the wireframe prototype. I realized I needed more specific acceptance criteria and clarification around how far along each feature was in development.

To get this additional information, I would reach out to the Product Owner early in the testing process. Below is a sample email I would send to request clarification:

*To: Product Owner*

*Subject: Clarification Needed on User Story Implementation for SNHU Travel Slide Show*

Dear Product Owner,

As I began developing test cases for the SNHU Travel app, I noticed that some user stories (such as filtering destinations or showing personalized recommendations) reference features that do not appear in the current application version. Before I finalize the test cases, I’d like to confirm whether these features are expected to be included in this wireframe or if they are planned for future development.

Specifically, could you clarify the following:

* Are destination filters (such as climate preferences) available in this build?
* Will the app include user-specific recommendations or is it meant to show a fixed list for now?
* Should price filtering functionality be testable in this version?

Understanding the extent of what’s currently implemented will help guarantee that my test cases accurately reflect the application’s functionality. Thank you for your time and guidance.

Sincerely,

Melissa Chessa

Software Tester – SNHU Travel Project

Having clear communication like this helps bridge the gap between user expectations and what the development team is building. It also helps testers create more accurate, realistic, and valuable test cases. I’ve learned that asking the right questions is just as important as writing good test cases.

**References**

Bilavendran, P. (2025, February 20). How testers can communicate effectively in today's business world. Testsigma. <https://testsigma.com/blog/effective-communication-for-testers/>

Concepta. (n.d.). How to define stakeholders for your software development project. Retrieved from https://www.conceptatech.com/blog/how-to-define-stakeholders-for-your-software-development-project

Mountain Goat Software. (2024). User stories and user story examples by Mike Cohn. Retrieved from https://www.mountaingoatsoftware.com/agile/user-stories

Scrum.org. (2020). User story or stakeholder story? Retrieved from <https://www.scrum.org/resources/blog/user-story-or-stakeholder-story>

Sixsentix. (2023, July 17). The key rules of effective communication in software testing projects. <https://www.sixsentix.com/insights/the-key-rules-of-effective-communication-in-software-testing-projects>