

SEGP2 Group 3 Milestone 4 Report

Total Hours Spend: approx. ... hours

Executive Summary

Milestone 4 began by reviewing the findings from Jian Huang's research into various plugins frameworks adopted by other software projects. The decision to take the path of converting the existing Earth plugins architecture (code inclusion) to the proposed API (Application Programming Interface) plugin architecture. The group had agreed not to work any tickets as this task is expected to be heavy and will relinquish all the budgeted hours.

Both Huang and Ken took up the task for laying the groundwork for the API framework. Since this is supposedly a continuation from Milestone 3, and Ken were not present during Huang's presentation on the proposed API framework, both of them had spend most of the time trying level out expectations on the tasks taken. Unfortunately, constant communication failures, and personal and academics commitments had plagued this pair from moving forward as quick as expected. Ken had expressed that he had spend about 53 hours in this milestone, while Huang had estimated he had contributed ... hours this sprint.

While both the MSE members were busy working on the API framework base, the BE(SE) members worked on other aspects of the project. Jon had volunteered to take over the administrative tasks of the group. Besides that, it was planned to have both Jon and Sahil to explore the front-end of Earth and try to get the same API concept applied onto the front-end. However, Sahil "isolated" himself from the group and was not able to provide progress updates to the group, which forced Jon to work alone, while consulting both Ken and Huang when doubts arises. Overall progress from Jon had been good, where he already had an idea what and how should the front-end API should be done. Jon had reported that he had spend ... hours in this sprint, inclusive of all the hours taken for administrative work. Unfortunately, the group does not know how much time Sahil had spend on any aspect of this project, as of the time of this report is written.

Milestone 4 can be considered as another unproductive milestone. This is because there is no solid plugin prototype developed and presented, which was the expected deliverable during planning time. The following are the key takeaways of this sprint for this group:

- **Lack of member commitments:** It was observed that other academic commitments (research project and course assignments) and personal commitments (waged work) had affected the overall performance of the members of this group. For one case, no work has been done at all.
 - Plan: To stress the importance of this project to be delivered back to a real customer (RSP) and lack of commitments will not only discredit ourselves, also the school in general.
- **"Do more with less" is difficult to achieve:** It was planned and discussed that the we, as a group, will not be affected by the decreasing number of head count. The group agreed to strived to do more with less, but not committed after each member had been swamped with other commitments. Also, this strategy is related to the previous takeaway.
 - Plan: Put forth this problem to the full group and had it solved by everyone by the upcoming meeting.

Individual Reports

Attached are the individual reports of each member of the group.

Ken's Milestone 4 Report

Executive Summary

I have self-assigned myself to work with Jian Huang on the plugin framework, as proposed by himself at the end of Milestone 3. I have spend about the first 10 hours trying to brainstorm with him on how this proposed framework work. Due to communication issues, it required me unexpectedly more time to learn about the idea. Besides that, I have also spend time trying to catalogue the school computers for our use. And due to an unexpected software issue, the troubleshooting took away quite an amount of time away from doing actual work. At the end of this milestone, a redesigned plugin framework surface was delivered.

Tasks and Activities Assigned

- Create API standards base on the functionality of the file monitor.
 - Sub-task 1: Look at the file monitor system and list (extract possible API methods needed).
 - * Description: Prior to this task, it took me 8 hours to try to understand Jian Huang's proposal. The long time taken was due to communication breakdown between both us, as he had troubles articulating his thoughts clearly to me which caused a lot of confusions and misunderstandings. Another 5 hours were taken up to polish up my RoR skills after the semester break, and trying to fully understand how the framework can be "imported" like Java, and be sub-classed/instantiated for use.
 - * Idea/Solution: N/A
 - * Affected files: `earth_plugin_layers.pdf`
 - * Git commits: (segp2) `1de2df0b33a8d66198e10960db50fa8984fd4b`
 - * Estimated time taken (planned): 16 hours
 - * Estimated time taken (actual): 14 hours
 - Sub-task 2: Develop (code) the API itself (just for file monitor).
 - * Description: Initially, we planned that we are going to give the most hours for this task. However, due to personal and other academic commitments, the hours were not met. During this task, a lot of issues were encountered. The language barrier that I had with Huang, coupled with our naivety about how the "require" keyword is used cost us 16 hours to get the initial prototype working.
 - * Idea/Solution: N/A.
 - * Affected files: `file_monitor.rb`, `api_eta_printer.rb`, `api_file_monitor.rb`
 - * Git commits: (pamalite/earth) `2d087d82d8f117678b75a6a70efd4d435fc0f8c4`
 - * Estimated time taken (planned): 62 hours
 - * Estimated time taken (actual): 16 hours
- Replace what is current available on file monitor.
 - Sub-task 1: Re-develop file monitor with the proposed API.
 - * Description: This task was done in the previous task.
 - * Idea/Solution: N/A
 - * Affected files: N/A
 - * Git commits: N/A
 - * Estimated time taken (planned): 64 hours
 - * Estimated time taken (actual): 0 hours

- Sub-task 2: Publish standards and API
 - * Description: This task was not taken due to an absent of a proper functional prototype to be documented.
 - * Idea/Solution: N/A
 - * Affected files: N/A
 - * Git commits: N/A
 - * Estimated time taken (planned): 1 hour
 - * Estimated time taken (actual): 0 hours
- Cataloguing SEGP2 computers
 - Description: This task was self-assigned to create a central repository of all the computers provided by the school. It was undertaken due to the fact most of the members have trouble locating the machines. The catalogue was created on the SEGP2 forum, and some FAQ written to give specific answers to very frequently observed issues face by myself.
 - Idea/Solution: N/A
 - Affected files: <http://forums.cs.adelaide.edu.au/mod/forum/discuss.php?d=7243>
 - Git commits: N/A
 - Estimated time taken (actual): 1 hour
- Setting up VNC for remote desktop purposes
 - Description: This task was self-assigned to mitigate the issue of an unexpected locked lab. It took me quite a few of my time to figure out how to tunnel VNC protocol through SSH within the school LAN.
 - Idea/Solution: N/A
 - Affected files: <http://forums.cs.adelaide.edu.au/mod/forum/discuss.php?d=7254>
 - Git commits: N/A
 - Estimated time taken (actual): 8 hours
- Setting up Aptana IDE on SE1.
 - Description: This task was self-assigned as it has something to do with my on-going research project to allow developers to log their time without actually logging them. However, this experiment was met with a disaster after it was revealed that Aptana might had reconfigured the underlying Rails library. Most of the time was spend on troubleshooting the issue.
 - Idea/Solution: N/A
 - Affected files: <http://forums.cs.adelaide.edu.au/mod/forum/discuss.php?d=7243>
 - Git commits: N/A
 - Estimated time taken (actual): 10 hours

Resource Contributions

For this milestone, I have estimated that I had spend about 53 hours (including 4 hours meeting time) over the spread of 3 weeks. I have only a budgeted 45 hours (15 hours per week) for this semester. The other 15 hours were spend on my research project.

Looking at the hours I felt that I have not had a productive 53 hours. Most of the hours were mainly spending on troubleshooting and leveling language barriers with my task partner.

Rooms for Improvement

- Better time-estimations: Failure to estimate time required a particular tasks had always been a setback for the group, besides myself. Since this is the first time the nature of the tasks were different from the previous milestones, it takes some time to get myself into my comfort zone. I am aiming to give better time estimates in the coming last few milestones.
 - Plan: Review more on past milestones, and perform reality checks during planning.
- Better communication with other members: It was almost impossible to communicate with my task partner due to language barriers. I had to resort to language translations and lengthy explanations to get a simple thought across. My aim for the coming milestones is to improve my way of “internationalizing” my thoughts as efficiently as possible to get the discussions moving as fast as possible.
 - Plan: Level communication expectations between my task partner and I before any discussion take place.