

Individual 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) `2d087d82d8f117678b75a6a70efdad435fc0f8c4`
 - * 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.