

Creative week

This document is the second and last in my writing about Creative week, the first document can be found here

<http://agileblog.danskerne.se/#post26> – I cannot reveal all information about what

we did, simply because it is confidential, if you are working for Sony, you can contact me to get additional details if needed (rune.hvalsoe@sonymobile.com), I will however try to describe the most important learning's in this document.

We executed Creative week in week 39 and 40, it was to my knowledge the first time that Sony Mobile tested this kind of event, and it was very exciting to be a pioneer in this area.

We have now had the demo of our creative week, so we have started to look back and reflect and learn, so we can make it even better next time.

After the exercise in week 36, we had 35 ideas, we asked the developers to create teams and select topics before Thursday w38, it turned out that even though we had been planning this event for a very long time and all developers had been looking forward to participate in this, not everyone was able to select a topic or team at the end of Thursday - I guess we was expecting something like this, i.e. the reason why we selected Thursday was to be able to give those who did not select a topic/team an extra push during Friday – and it did help, everyone had selected a topic, a team and a week for our Creative week, the only extra challenge was that too many people wanted to start w39, we know that we next time should work a little extra to secure that everything is in place and that we have a good balance between the weeks.

A total of 20 developers and one graphical designer participated in the Creative week; they created 6 teams of the size 1 to 6 people. A lesson learned was that 7 people did not participate, as their role was not matching with our setup, i.e. all ideas was focusing on software developers and we had 2 managers, 3 team lead and 2 verification engineers, I would claim that it should be possible to include them in creative week, but we “forgot” to include them this time, we will find a way to address this next time we have creative week, there is absolutely nothing that prevent others from joining the creative week, either as developers or within other areas.

It was amazing to watch the developers during the creative week; they had so much fun, and was creating amazing things in just a week! The teams were very different in what they worked with:

- Some was working outside their normal comfort zone, i.e. in SW areas where they did not normally hang out – they learned something new and created new innovative stuff at the same time!
- some was working with their normal focus area, i.e. they was implementing stuff that they did not have time to do in their daily work, or stuff that had low priority from the company, but that they believed was super interesting – and their PO was impressed!



We decided to have the demo Monday week 41 as a breakfast meeting, we invited the 2 sections, the remaining 4 sections in our department, managers from other departments, customer sales people and other stakeholders, the purpose of the demo was not only to demo the outcome from our Creative week, but it was also to spread the message that all sections at Sony should try to have Creative week – most of the ideas behind our new features have been created by developers, I believe that it is important that we get the developers into the loop of creating our backlogs, it will not only create a lot more new interesting ideas, but it will also engage the developers at a completely different level, the products will be part of them, I have seen amazing things when this happens!



We were building up the demo, with focus on the visual show, this was working very well! We forgot to record the demo on video, which makes it very difficult to share with those who did not participate, we will include this in the future, we even consider to have one extra demo with the same content, so we can capture it on video and those who did not have time to join the first demo will have a chance to see it.

There is a lot of work to do after the demo:

- Contact with stakeholders to develop the ideas further
- Secure that ideas not implemented is evaluated by the relevant PO
- Secure that the implementations done which was related to our own backlog and PO also get the right priority, so we make the code production ready (demo is only proof of concept)
- Preparing the next creative week!

The demo and the result from our Creative week was above our wildest dreams, so we are already preparing the next Creative week and our sister sections are preparing their first Creative week!

We got a lot of feedback from the developers, the highlight is :

- Nice to be able to do other than what PO tell us to
- PO was very impressed about the outcome (seeing is believing)

- Nice to test ideas without pressure to deliver

Reference:

<http://www.onextrapixel.com/2012/08/20/fostering-tried-and-tested-creative-and-innovative-solutions/> - borrowed the scramble picture at the beginning of the article, it is also a good article worth reading!