
UX in Agile Before and During Development

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Abstract

Agile project management processes (Agile) such as Scrum, DSDM, XP and Kanban, have become a de facto standard for software development practice. The context of Agile strongly affects the possibilities of IT professionals to conduct UX activities in their software development.

In this workshop we aim to address successes, challenges and best practices from integrating UX activities in Agile. Particularly, we want to focus on two periods for the integration: Before the actual agile project management starts and during the agile projects.

The overall objective of this workshop is to provide a venue for researchers and practitioners, from within and outside of HCI, to discuss and suggest good ways of integrating UX in Agile. The workshop has two goals: (1) Identifying best practices, case studies and work-in-progress relevant to successes and challenges of integrating UX activities in Agile. (2) Identify and discuss suggestions for good ways of integrating UX activities in Agile.

Author Keywords

User Experience; Agile processes; User Centred Design; Scrum, Kanban, User perspectives.

ACM Classification Keywords

H.5.m. Information interfaces and presentation (e.g., HCI): Miscellaneous;

Introduction

Since the 1990s, agile processes, and especially Scrum, have become popular for software development. Scrum [8], the most commonly used process [7], focuses on delivering functioning software early and continuously, and emphasizes speed, communication and developer collaboration in the software development process.

Agile processes have received much attention, mainly due to their openness and flexibility towards changed requirements, design ideas, and value contribution, e.g. [6]. Agile development team members have been highly motivated for agile processes because these processes allow for greater autonomy than previously used processes. Two of the basic features of agile development is speed and communication [2]. Yet, the requirements on quality, user experience (UX) and other aspects of great importance for the users are not explicit in the agile processes [4]. Although many development organizations report great success of employing agile development, only a few explicitly describe how UX activities could be included in agile projects [8].

An integration of UX activities spans the entire development process as can be seen in the descriptions of activities provided by the User Experience Professionals Association (UXPA) [10]. UXPA divides UX activities into: Research, Evaluation and Design. This spans from doing user research in contexts, over being responsible for test of products during the entire development process, to having responsibility for

interface, information, and interaction design. This broad understanding of the UX professional role prevails in the online practitioner oriented UX Magazine [1]. In UXMag, implementation and data analysis is additionally included in the responsibilities of the UX professional. UXMag describes the multiple roles of the UX professional as being: User Researcher, Usability Tester, Data analyst, Information architect, UI designer, and Senior UX designer, with the latter being responsible for the overall process of UX work. Taken together this shows a desire for broadening the scope of the roles and the responsibilities. The results of a recent study show that UX professionals have a very broad set of responsibilities [3] some of which are not classically considered part of the UX role, like sales and business development responsibilities. Interestingly both these responsibilities rely heavily on a customer centered focus rather than a user centered focus. UX professionals had to be strong salespersons as they constantly had to justify UX tasks to persuade customers to pay for UX activities.

In this workshop we aim to address success stories, challenges and best practices from integrating UX activities in Agile. Particularly, we want to focus on two periods for the integration: Before the actual agile process management starts and during the agile projects. We want to focus particularly on these questions: What UX activities work well in each of these phases? What are the challenges experienced while integrating UX during these phases? Who should be conducting these activities? Who are the main actors involved in these phases? When are users involved in the process? What are the main artifacts supporting good UX in each of these phases? How is the UX role perceived by other roles?

Description of the Workshop

The overall objective of this workshop is to provide a venue for practitioners and researchers, from within and outside of HCI, to gather descriptions on successes and challenges of the integration of UX in Agile. Additionally, we want to discuss and suggest good ways of integrating UX in Agile, both before the actual development starts and during the software development. By Agile we mean for example: Scrum, Kanban, XP, DSDM, Lean software development, Continuous software development.

This workshop is aimed at both academia and industry (e.g., academic or industrial researchers, graduate students, designers, developers, project managers), where the experience from integrating UX activities in Agile may vary along with people's backgrounds and areas of specialization or expertise.

The main benefits of the workshop is to provide a forum for practitioners and researchers to gain better understanding of the best practices and challenges of integrating UX activities in agile development. Additionally, the workshop will be a forum for practitioners and researchers to collaborate on defining good ways and strategies to integrate UX activities in agile development based on current research and experiences from practice. Hopefully, this workshop will result in extending the collaboration of the UX in Agile community and writing of publications based on the outcome of the workshop but also to foster further research-industry collaborations.

The full day workshop will be based on active participation and discussions. The participants listen to presentations on descriptions of successes and

challenges experienced, best practices, case studies and work-in-progress on integrating UX activities in Agile. Workshop attendees discuss in groups good ways of integrating UX activities both in the pre-phase and the development phase of agile projects. Attendees draw a suggestion of process of integrating various UX activities in agile on an A2 sheet (poster). Based on these experiences the participants will actively discuss in groups and suggest good ways of integrating UX activities in Agile. Finally the groups will discuss and prioritize lessons learned from the workshop.

Call for Participation

Potential participants are asked to submit 2-6 page position papers in the ACM SIGCHI format – for long papers (not the extended abstract format) see: <http://www.sigchi.org/publications/chipubform>.

The position papers should describe the authors' view on the topics of the workshop, which are the following:

- Descriptions of successes and challenges, best practices, case studies and work-in-progress relevant to integrating UX activities in Agile, particularly focusing on two phases in the development; before the actual agile software development project start and during the agile project. What is the key to the success?
- Success stories, best practices, case studies and work-in-progress relevant to integrating UX activities in Agile in different domains such as the games industry, healthcare, and safety critical systems. Does the success of conducting the UX activities depend on the domain?

- Managing and responding to feedback on the UX from using products/services. How is the UX feedback gathered?
- Responsibilities of the various roles in the software development underpinning UX in Agile. What are the responsibilities of the various roles?
- Perceptions of the UX role. How is the UX role perceived by project management, developers and other roles?
- Additionally, we are open to other topics related to the integration of UX activities in Agile.
- A website will be made to share the call for papers and information about the workshop, if accepted.

Recruitment Strategy

A programme committee will review submissions based on quality, originality, and their potential contribution to achieving workshop goals. Depending on the nature of workshop contributions, findings from the workshop hopefully will be presented either as an overview report in an HCI journal or as a special issue in an HCI journal. More broadly, this workshop constitutes an arena for the community of HCI and agile professionals to exchange ideas. This workshop is based on the experiences gained in a workshop at NordiCHI 2014 in Helsinki on UCD in Agile and a workshop at NordiCHI 2016 on Stakeholder Involvement. The NordiCHI2014 resulted in a book in the HCI series at Springer, (Cockton et al. 2016) presenting the workshop papers in an extended form.

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