

Student Name: Jared Nickson

Student Email: 2305434@student.uwtsd.ac.uk

Student Number: 2305434

Assignment Title: Reflection

Module Title: Emerging Trends

Module Code:

Reflection:

This reflection evaluates my experiences throughout the project whilst working as a team to create a mobile app designed to reduce doomscrolling for users through a gamified system featuring cute interactive animal mascots with a customisable room.

My role at the beginning of the project was to be a 3D modeller. I was initially excited about the opportunity to create original assets for the app to make the environment come to life. However, we were presented with several challenges throughout the project, such as; team dynamics, roles, and project limitations regarding the idea. This reflection therefore examines how well the group worked together, my contributions in the project, my own frustrations, the overall performance of the group, and the limitations, risks, and scopes of our idea. Drawing from this reflection, I gather valuable knowledge for future work in collaboration.

Throughout the project our team maintained a structured approach to organisation, we had weekly in person meetings with each meeting lasting roughly 2 hours or more, alongside Discord for quick questions, progress reports, and notes we can check back on. These meetings were to ensure that we each had a thorough understanding of the project plans, progress updates, and final decisions. However, attendance to these meetings were largely inconsistent, with only the same three members (including myself) present at all meetings. The inconsistencies presented some gaps in collective input which occasionally led to slower progress. Team communication was generally well organised in terms of documentation and scheduling, but conversations got heated at times, particularly around the use of AI images despite the project brief allowing for the use of AI images. This led to prolonged ethical debates that derailed constructive debate and caused some tension around the benefits and negatives of using AI images.

My original assigned role of 3D Modeller evolved into ways I was not anticipating. Early within the project, the team began sourcing pre-made 3D assets rather than allowing me to create assets from scratch. Whilst this drastically accelerated the progress of the project, it rendered my core responsibility as 3D Modeller effectively redundant. I found that I had very limited modelling tasks, where I only managed to model a handful of assets, this made me struggle to add any more meaningful contributions relating to my skillset. Due to this problem, I had shifted my role in the project to be a researcher, gathering information on gamification mechanics such as the currency system which is the idea I formalised and proposed to the group. This adaptation was necessary to keep the performance of the group; however, it left me feeling that my skills were underutilized, I also questioned my value to the team and it left me worried that my limited 3D Modelling output would reflect poorly on my abilities. On a positive note, this experience taught me the importance of actively seeking out alternate tasks when the primary role became redundant.

Objectively, I would rate the team's performance as **3/5**. On a positive side, our communication methods were decent and reliable, and the team members who were present at every meeting ensured our steady progress throughout the project. The Hackathon/Final Presentation resulted in a success as we secured 1st place in the competition and won £250, an outcome that reflects the quality of a collective despite internal hurdles. However, the rating also accounts for the inconsistent attendance, and my own role becoming significantly constrained, and the app idea feeling rather limited in scope. This led to a feeling we had less substantive material to present than ideally desired. Such issues prevented us from a higher level of efficiency.

The design of the “Pawsumo” app also carried inherent limitations. With the core concept of the app being to discourage doomscrolling with the use of gamified mechanics like the use of a customisable room and cute interactive mascots, although engaging it was very straightforward, which resulted in far stricter opportunities to create the app more complex.

With our reliance on sourced pre-made 3D assets, it introduced potential risks such as asset consistency, originality, and compatibility issues, however these risks were ultimately mitigated. Heated debates over the use of AI images highlighted another risk such as our differing design philosophies and opinions on the use of AI images which could have resulted in the break down in collaboration and a tenser environment if not managed. And, Finally, inconsistent attendances created worry in some members due to the potential for missing knowledge gaps, doing the same things as each other, or speaking the same things as each other during our presentations. Despite these challenges, we as a collective delivered a decent prototype and scored first place in the Hackathon competition.

In conclusion, this group project was a valuable learning experience that highlighted both the benefits and limitations of teamwork. My consistent attendance to each meeting and willingness to adapt and change roles reinforced my reliability and ability to adapt to complex situations which are qualities I will carry forward. The challenges around initial role clarity pointed towards the importance of early defined roles, which is great to keep note of in future collaborative works. Although we ultimately scored first place, it is great to remain humble and recount the limitations of the project for use in future works. Overall, the project has strengthened my adaptability and reliability, however moving forward I aim to be more assertive to utilise the fullness of my expertise, which will prepare me for professional environments where flexibility and communication are essential for success.