Race your application

Every team member tends to have a special skill. Not skills such as eyebrow dancing, walking like a crab or moonwalking, but useful skills. Many development teams consist of people who are either best at front-end development, back-end development, testing or system engineering. Since every team member is mainly focused on one aspect of an application not everyone is as aware of the overall result. In this activity participants will race through their application and thereby get to know it as a whole, including its strengths and weaknesses. Among others, participants will come across bugs and room for improvements.

Activity in one sentence

Participants race through their application fulfilling a task or user scenario.

Goal

To get to know an application as a whole, including its strengths and weaknesses.

Target group

Team members who are not familiar with all aspects of the application they are developing, but are only familiar with a subset.

Necessities and perquisites

- 2 to 6 participants, preferably team members
- A room with a projector, blackboard or equivalent, enough tables to accommodate participants
- Computers, tablets, mobile phones etc. to perform the race on
- A number of tasks or user scenarios to fulfill
- A timer
- Camera to record the session, if desired

Steps

1. Instruct the participants to take a seat at one of the computers, tablets, mobile phones etc.
2. Hand out a chosen task or user scenario to each participant
3. Instruct the team members to start on their task or user scenario and start the timer
4. Stop the timer when one of the participants finished their task or user scenario

5. Instruct the participants to discuss their experience performing their task or user scenario. What are their highlights? What was easy to do? What problems difficulties did they run into? Where do they see room for improvement?
6. Document the noticed strengths, weaknesses, bugs and room for improvement
7. Repeat step 2 to 6 if more than one round with tasks or user scenarios is executed
8. Declare the winner and hand out a small prize

Outcomes

Participants got to know their application and experienced its strengths and weaknesses.

Notes

- The tasks or user scenarios have to be prepared. These should include a number of requirements, bugs and room for improvements to fuel further discussion

Variations

- The participants develop additional tasks or user scenarios together, explicitly naming the bugs, requirements and room for improvement they are aware of
- Participants develop tasks or user scenarios for each other to perform