Determining Relevancy: How Software Developers Determine Relevant Information In Feeds

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Alex created task “1942 Alarms don’t work if phone is off”
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Ted delivered code for “2037 Kill alarm when call comes in”
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Each developer faces 50 new items a day for a single project
Alex created task “1942 Alarms...
7186 MediaPlayer not calling
Changes to Google Calendar API
Just pushed out #Android NDK...
Wake screen before launching ...
Ted delivered code for “2037 K...
Joe delivered “3116 [TimePicke...
7836 system_server consumes ...
Ryan started integration build f...
Use onStartCommand() metho...
adroidsblog: Mozilla unveils Fi...
7037 Different virtual keyboard...
Alex delivered “1944 Problem ...
Service API changes starting wi...
...56 more...
How do software developers determine relevant information in feeds?
Interview-based Study

5 professional developers, using a project environment with feeds

2 interview sessions per developer, each 20 – 60 minutes, four days apart

30 recent and randomly selected news items per session from 2 feeds (change set and work items)

- Developer statements for each item on relevancy
  27% of items relevant, 8% somewhat, 65% not relevant
Reasons for Identifying News Items as Relevant or Irrelevant

- Content
- Target of Content
- Previous Interaction
- Relation with Creator

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Information in a Project Environment

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Context to Ease Relevancy Determination (Second Session)
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Work Context (source code)
- Helpful for 79% of news items in context
- 60% participants conceived it as generally helpful

Team Context
- 80% participants conceived it as generally helpful
Summary

Determination of relevancy (and irrelevancy) is individual and situation dependent

Structure of information can be used to provide context and ease determination