7-1 Final Project Submission

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Applying Roles

The Scrum master facilitates the Scrum events that get the project organized, running, and completed. The Scrum master helps the team function at their best levels by clearing roadblocks and helping the team hold each other accountable. The product owner represents the customer. They define what the project will look like and what features the customer has requested. In the SNHU Travel project the customer requested the website feature the top 5 vacation destinations. The product owner creates the product backlog and user stories for the development team. The development team determines how they want to accomplish the work set forth in the product backlog and user stories. They are a small cross-functional, self-organizing team that maximizes their abilities, productivity, and success.

User Stories

The development team determines how they want to turn the backlog and user stories into sections of useable product. They choose the most important stories from the backlog first. They can also divide a user story into more manageable pieces as needed. The development team assigns story points to each user story and determines how much can be completed in the current sprint. Scrum specific software is used to organize the user stories and backlog and create transparency within the entire Scrum team. The daily standup is the time the development team comes together and discusses what user stories they have completed, what is next, and the impediments to completing the user story. The goal of each sprint is to turn each user story into a functioning piece of the end product for the customer to review. After the review of the website with the top 5 vacation destinations highlighted, the customer determined they would like to see a slideshow instead. After the sprint is complete the team attacks another set of user stories for completion in the next sprint. This cycle is repeated until all user stories have been addressed.

Interruptions

Scrum by definition is agile. Meaning it is flexible, can change direction quickly and easily. Interruptions, where there are too many, can hamper the ability of the team to complete a Sprint effectively and on time. Agility ensures the customer is getting the product they want, and changes requested by the customer can be accommodated, like the changes requested by the SNHU Travel customer to create slideshows instead of the list. Interruptions have positive and negative consequences. It increases the pressure on the development team, that the sprint be completed on time. However, interruptions can also increase creativity as a means to switch gears quickly and effectively. Interruptions are also a natural by-product of Scrum due to the high involvement of the customer in the development process. The daily standup allows for quick identification of the interruptions and mitigate the overall affect on the current sprint. Using Scrum specific management software also identifies coming changes through the transparency created through the software.

Communication

Communication in a Scrum team means transparency. The team needs to encourage transparency among themselves and hold each other accountable to that. An important concept of Scrum is face-to-face communication. This is another communication tactic that improves transparency within the entire team. It allows for quick answers instead of waiting for a response from an email. If the development team members do not feel comfortable speaking up, it is the responsibility of the Scrum master to identify the impediment and coach the team through the issue.

**Sample Email**

**To: Product Owner**

**CC: Scrum Master**

**Subject: User Story Clarification**

The development team has reviewed the user stories and have a few points that need clarification to determine if the user story has achieved done status. Can you answer the following or come to the next standup, tomorrow at 9 am conference room 1, and address these user story questions?

**User Story 1:**

* There is need for clarification as to the number of items on the top item list (one document says 5, another 10). How many items does the customer want in their top list?
* Does the customer want the top list the first thing they see on the splash page, or do they want a splash with a link to separate list?

**User Story 2:**

* How many types of destinations are there? Can we be provided with a list of types of destinations?
* How many excursions are there? Does the customer want to sort by excursions available?

**User Story 3:**

* How many data points does the customer want for a profile? Since the website is responsive to the profile, how much of that data needs to be part of the responsiveness?
* What kind of sortable list headings would the customer like? A list of the names of those columns would be helpful as well.

Organizational Tools

The product backlog is the most important tool in Scrum. It lays out the blueprint of the customer’s vision. This new product backlog triggers the sprint planning meeting. This meeting gives the team members the opportunity to assign story points, decide on the scope of the current sprint, and create the sprint backlog. The development team gets together every morning in the daily standup, along with the Scrum master and product owner, if needed, and discuss the three questions. What was accomplished yesterday, what will be accomplished today, and what are the impediments. At the end of each sprint there is a sprint review. This gives the team a chance to celebrate what has been accomplished and demonstrate for the customer, and the team, the current deliverable. Finally, when the whole project is complete there is a retrospective. This is another time to celebrate the completion of the project and demonstrate to the team, and others, the competed project. This is also the time to analyze what went wrong during the project and what went right. This will allow the team to improve for the next project.

Agile Process

A drawback of Scrum is that they can drag out longer than originally promised to the customer. Scrum is based on continuous improvement, not necessarily a definite deadline. The Scrum-agile approach is easy to understand and simple to use. For projects like web development and software development, agile is one of the best tools for any organization to implement. It allows for the flexibility needed to accommodate changes in adding and removing features. Agile allows the team to work on the overall project in smaller more manageable pieces. Which in turn means the customer gets to see small snippets of functioning and useable software or website more frequently. This keeps the customer and team motivated to complete the project. Scrum-agile was clearly the best approach for the SNHU travel website project because it allowed for the customer to make needed changes midway through the project.