**Sprint Review and Retrospective of SNHU Travel Project**

Assignment 1 – Week 7

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# Impact of Team Roles on SNHU Travel Project

The Scrum framework outlines three roles for the Scrum Team: the Product Owner, the Scrum Master, and Developers (Schwaber & Sutherland, 2020, pp.6-9). For the SNHU Travel project, a further distinction was made to include Developers and Testers. The Product Owner worked as an interface between the stakeholders and the Scrum Team, holding a focus group with customer’s clients to collect user requests and requirements, organizing them into the Product Backlog, and creating User Stories for the rest of the Scrum Team to use for development of the SNHU Travel site. The Scrum Master provided structure by creating a team charter, setting expectations, goals, and outlined how the project was to be conducted. The Scrum Master also worked with the Product Owner to ensure backlog management and set up Scrum events, such as Daily Standups, to ensure proper application of the Scrum framework.

Within the Development team, the Developers and Testers worked together to help reach the Sprint goals. The Tester turned user stories identified by the Product Owner into test cases, with measurable and clearly outlined inputs and expected results, ensuring that the Developers knew what was expected of them. The Tester also revised the test cases when the Product Owner presented a change in direction from the client, allowing the Developers to reflect a shift in focus to wellness and detox travel. Developers contributed by creating code and updating existing code as changes arose, making sure that the current features aligned with the test cases from the Testers and the user stories created by the Product Owner. When the client requested a shift in focus to detox and wellness travel, for example, the Developers updated the destination suggestions to reflect this new focus, allowing us to reach the Sprint’s goals.

# Scrum-Agile’s Effect on User Story Completion

The Scrum-agile approach to software development had a beneficial effect on completion of user stories. Users made requests and gave requirements to the Product Owner, who added them to the Product Backlog, and then created user stories from them. When users requested a section of the site to show them travel suggestions, for example, it was added to the Product Backlog, and a user story was created from that item. This allowed test cases to be developed by the Tester. In combination, the user stories and test cases communicated not only the technical requirements, but the spirit of the users’ request. These could be seen by the Developer, who was able to implement the features necessary to fulfill the user stories and test cases. As a result, the desired feature was implemented with minimal friction, and users will be able to see a top-five list of destinations.

# Scrum-Agile’s Responsiveness to Interruption and Change

Due to Scrum-Agile’s focus on change and short-term planning proved effective in handling a sudden shift in development. After the development of the top-five destination list, the client requested a change in focus to detox and wellness travel. Since high-level planning was not overly specific, this shift was handled easily. The Product Owner communicated this change to the team, and the Developer was able to update the images and text of the site to reflect this change in focus. Because of Scrum-agile’s Sprint structure, where features are developed incrementally and changes shown to the client through and at the end of every Sprint, changing the site to reflect the desired travel types was done completed successfully without a change in deadline. The ease with which this was done suggests that any sort of variability can be handled with this framework.

# Effective Team Communication within the Scrum-Agile Framework

Scrum-Agile facilitates effective communication within teams. The emails in the “Journal: Developer” assignment (Norris, 2021, p.2) show this clearly:

Given the changes presented by the Christy after her meeting with the customers, I need the test cases to be updated to reflect the change in focus to detox and wellness travel. I’m changing focus on my development in order to reflect these changes. Having the updated test cases ready will allow us to more quickly finalize the changes and make sure they work with what we already have so we can meet the Sprint goals. Please let me know as soon as possible what changes you intend to include and when you think they might be done.

This email, written to the Tester from the Developer, was precipitated by the change in Sprint goals. The Developer states what they need from the recipient, what they are working on themselves, and relates the request to the success of the project. The Developer also invites a response and clearly sets the expectation on what that response should contain.

Another email from the same document (Norris, 2021, p.2), is written from the Developer to the Product Owner:

Could I get the changes that have been made in a reply to this email? That way, I’ll have ready access to the changes in written form and be able to address them if needed. I also need some clarification for content given the new focus on detox and wellness travel. Are the customers wanting to provide travel to specific resorts and businesses that offer those services, or just to destinations known for them? Also, could I get the Product Backlog and our project tracking updated to reflect those changes? This will enable me to make sure I can meet the requirements for this Sprint! Please let me know what you plan to change and keep me updated on progress!

This email also displays effective communication by providing specific and actionable requests, again explicitly relating a prompt response to the success of the Sprint and ultimately the project. A response is again solicited, with the needed response clearly stated.

# Scrum-Agile Practices, Organizational Tools, and Success

Scrum-Agile outlines several tools, events, and practices that helped the SNHU Travel project be a success. User Stories, Test Cases, and the Product Backlog are all tools that were integral to the process. In Scrum-Agile, the overall project is broken up into events called Sprints, which are made up of smaller events. The Product Backlog is where all work items are kept. In each Sprint, there is a Sprint Backlog (Schwaber & Sutherland, p.11), which is a subset of items from the Product Backlog, selected for completion in each Sprint. Having these outlined gave us a visible, concrete goal for the Sprint. User Stories were selected to be met for the sprint, and during Sprint Planning were prioritized and given a “size”, a subjective rating of how difficult they would be to complete. User Stories became Test Cases, which gave Developers a clearly stated goal. These Tools and the related Scrum Events streamlined and clarified the Development process and allowed us to reach the Sprint goal.

# Scrum-Agile’s Effectiveness

From the outset, the SNHU Travel site had an incredibly short deadline of only five weeks. Scrum-Agile’s lack of managerial overhead let us get right to work and react quickly to changes as they occurred. One potential drawback to Scrum-Agile’s approach is that everyone must understand and be able to perform their role effectively. When forming a new team, it may take some time for everyone to get up to speed and work together optimally, even if they do know how Scrum-Agile works. Scrum Agile also does not try to account for all variability or form a detailed plan up-front, and so does not provide a start-to-finish timeline, total budget, or many concrete details from the outset. It may also take considerable effort to change company culture to match the Scrum-Agile framework. That said, given the very uncertain nature of web development and the incredibly short timeline of the project, the Agile-Scrum approach was perhaps the best possible framework to use.

# References

Charles G. Cobb. (2015). *The Project Manager’s Guide to Mastering Agile : Principles and Practices for an Adaptive Approach*. Wiley.

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Schwaber, K., & Sutherland, J. (2020, November). *The Scrum Guide*. https://www.scrumguides.org/docs/scrumguide/v2020/2020-Scrum-Guide-US.pdf.