Chase Knoblock

CS 250

Final Project

10/20/24

Now that the work on the SNHU Travel site has been completed, our team will take part in a Sprint Review and Retrospective. By taking the role of Scrum Master, I was able to better understand how each part of the team used different agile techniques to develop our product, including the changes made as we drifted away from the waterfall development method. After our client reached out to us asking for a new SNHU Travel website, as a Scrum Master, I put together an agile development team. To do this, I took the team members and incorporated agile techniques, such as Daily Scrum Meetings, that allowed us to take a very small chunk of our day to discuss what has been done, what is going to be done, and what difficulties lay ahead for each team member. For our team to change our ways and incorporate the agile process, it was important to improve communication between every member, this includes the Scrum Master, Product Owner, Developers and Testers.

The Product Owner was in charge of the product backlog. This meant making sure that our team was focused on the projects that was most important to our client and company. The Product Owner is able to create a work plan and is responsible for what is developed by the team. Specifically, for this project the Product Owner created a backlog of tasks, using user stories, to be completed and prioritized each task. In this backlog, the Product Owner would determine not only the importance, but the size of the task and specified what is the expected outcome when the task has been developed.

The Developers created the product! By communicating with the Scrum Master and Product Owner, the Developers gained a real sense of what the users expected of the product they created. Once the Developers are given a backlog with the user stories, they created the code that allowed the site to perform the way the users wanted. Even after changes were called for and our client wanted to focus on health and wellness vacation destinations, the Developers responded very well and made the necessary changes to the site. Though changes were made, after speaking with the Developers, we updated our goals and continued to aim for the same deadline as before the changes.

As for the Testers, they made sure our product was of the quality the users expected. By collaborating with the Developers and by utilizing the user stories created by the Product Owner, the Testers made sure the SNHU Travel site performed the way our team planned. Testers are similar to detectives. They will dig deep to understand how the product should perform, how the product should look, and will seek out any issues or bugs within the product swiftly.

User stories are a fantastic tool for development teams to use to understand what exactly they are creating and what is expected of them, as they come straight from the user’s expectations. While extremely useful, sometimes user stories are a little vague or perhaps the development team requires a bit more detail in the behavior or design of that user story. This is where it is vital for the Developers to communicate with the Scrum Master and Product Owner so that any lingering questions can be answered. Whether communication occurs via email, or a short meeting is held, the agile process allots time to be taken by the team to communicate. This will increase clarity by making sure everyone is on the same page and promotes a trust within the workplace. This further communication is how user stories are completed efficiently and to the desired quality.

The user stories were initially created to make sure the SNHU Travel site users could use filters such as types of vacations, locations, and prices, set preferences in their profile, or find an updated list of the top vacations based on their preferences, and more. However, in the middle of the development, changes were called for and the site was to be focused on health and wellness travel types and locations. With the agile approach, the team was able to adapt to the changes being requested and the user stories were updated so that a filter would show the top health and wellness vacations. By effectively adapting, the user story was completed within the timeframe we planned. The team was able to avoid slowing down and keep moving forward. If the team were to still be using the waterfall method, the older sprint goals would likely have been finished first before beginning the changes requested. Because of the agile approach, the requested change was included into the development along with other parts of the site as progress was continued.

Maintaining communication between each team member is highly important in our team’s success. Daily Scrum Meetings were incorporated. This allowed each member to discuss what they have done, what they plan to do, and what challenges they may be facing. The team is able to speak face to face with each other, ask/answer important questions, and everyone is considered to be on the same page after the meeting. This promotes inclusion, instills trust within each other, and hold everyone accountable. User stories is another example of communication between the users, the Product Owner and the rest of the development team. The user stories displayed not only what the users expected, but what the Product Owner and the company expected. The user stories described the process the development team should take while creating the product. Any questions that different people had, such as Developers or Testers sent emails to whom could answer those questions. For example, an email was sent from a Tester to the Product Owner, asking for clarification on user stories submitted to them.

**Sample Email:**

To: Product Owner

Subject: User Story Clarifications

Dear Product Owner,

I am working on the test cases for our development based on the user stories provided. There were just a couple questions I had or wanted some clarification on. Are you able to assist with the following questions?

**User Story #3:**

* Should we include a “save” option for users to save their favorite trips?
* Is there a different idea or specific function of the “save” option that the users expect or would prefer?
* Will there be a different page that opens when the user wants to look through their saved trips?

**User Story #4:**

* When users set preferences, are their other options that should be included other than “price range” and type of vacation? This might help narrow down options for the user and increase matches in customized lists if there are more options.
* Are the preferences pre-made by us and then selected by the user or are they able to type in whatever preference they like?

Thank you for any information you can provide,

Tester Chase.

This e-mail led to further understanding of the tasks being performed and asked if additional pieces could be made to better please the client and users. Finding time in the day to communicate with each other is the essence of the agile approach and without communication, teams will often struggle and are unsuccessful.

Many Scrum-Agile principles are very important and very useful to Scrum-Agile development teams. Some principles that were very important to the team’s success would have been the collaboration between team members and the product backlog prioritization. Because the backlog was reviewed and tasks were ranked on the value it added to the customer and the business, our team was able to decipher what exactly needed to be done and what would take the most time and/or be the most important, leading to a larger focus on the more important tasks. An organizational tool that is very helpful is JIRA. JIRA is a project-management tool that helps agile teams coordinate their projects and uses a Kanban organizational style to help the team move through development. Each member can view this progress, and progress can be tracked and updated in real time.

The Scrum-Agile approach is full of pros and cons. Some of its pros are certainly its flexibility. This approach allows teams to be very adaptable. Regarding the SNHU Travel project, had we not been using an agile approach, the changes made midway through development could have seriously delayed the products timeline. The Scrum-Agile approach increases communication and productivity of each team member, creating an all-collaborative team that works together every day in its development. Though an original plan is set as most projects are started, the agile approach allows the team to revisit that plan and make changes accordingly.

The Scrum-Agile approach may present some cons to a development team. For example, if a team is trying to learn the Agile approach, it may seem overwhelming with the flexibility and freedom that it brings. It may be hard for a team to find its bearings as it learns what is best for it. Timelines can be hard to picture or predict. Again, because the flexibility the team now has, a team may find it very difficult to understand how long a project will take, especially given the amount of change that could occur to the project during the development cycle. However, even with some difficulties that come with the Scrum-Agile approach, I believe this approach is the best approach for the SNHU Travel development project, based on its flexibility and teamwork-driven process.